

Governor's Council on Women and Girls

Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity & Workforce Equity

New Co-Chair Leadership Team

**Assistant State Comptroller Tara Downes,
*Office of the State Comptroller***

**Deputy Commissioner Shante Hanks,
*Department of Housing***

**Deputy Commissioner Paul Robertson,
*Department of Economic and Community Development***

**Chief Workforce Officer, Kelli-Marie Vallieres,
*Office of Workforce Strategy***

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Financial Literacy

- Working group shared responses from survey sent to council members to gather information about existing state agency financial literacy initiatives
- Updates to the Financial Literacy portal, including 50+ national and statewide resources, are anticipated by April

Women-Owned Business Resources

- The Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) shared that an RFP was awarded to National Development Council to serve as one point of entry to match small businesses with both financial assistance and technical assistance - community lenders and technical providers create a profile and are paired with applicants
- DECD also noted a second RFP issued to supplement the loan-based program - allocating \$50 million over 5 years
- 50% of the financial assistance will be directed to minority-, women-, disabled-, veteran-owned businesses and businesses located in distressed municipalities
- Information about other opportunities is available at DECD's Business One-Stop portal which includes a virtual chat assistant

WORKFORCE EQUITY

- Department of Housing shared about the third Cohort for HCDLI
 - Applications were accepted through January 2022
 - Cohort is diverse in ethnicity and age and a majority are women. DOH is hoping that this program will bring more women into the field
 - The Cohort is training on Community Development Block Grants in March
- The Office of Workforce Strategy shared about CareerConneCT:
 - Funding to support best practices in workforce development to reskill & upskill or for workforce systems improvements
 - Grant application period closed last month; received over 50 applications totaling an upwards of \$250 million in requests
 - There is intention to allocate as much funding as possible to BIPOC, People with Disabilities, Re-Entry Population, Youth, and Veterans
 - They are hoping to retain some funding for a second round of applications in August and the Governor's proposed budget includes an additional \$15 million
- The Lt. Governor noted that Congressman Himes' office was successful in securing \$1 million in federal funding for the Housatonic Community College manufacturing program.

COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE EQUITY ANALYSIS DISCUSSION

In reviewing recommendations from the Comptroller's Office Equity Analysis, State agencies shared information about current activity, programs and initiatives with respect to three of the recommendations:

Statewide Partnerships

- Department of Administrative Services (DAS) shared about job posting outreach to community organizations and professional associations and connections with Historically Black Colleges and Universities and colleges with high percentages of Asian American and Pacific Islander students and Latinx students
- DAS also highlighted its partnership with New Haven Works whereby DAS staff connects with job applicants and if the job doesn't fit recruiters try to find a better fit
- DAS also noted that they have partnered with Department of Labor and conducted outreach to technical high schools and veterans

Paid Internships/Fellowships

- Lynn Raicik from Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology shared about the Internship Toolkit project, spearheaded by the Education & STEAM Subcommittee of the Council, which explains benefits of internships for interns and employers and will be available to agencies and outside organizations to help guide them in creating paid internship programs

Professional Development

- DAS shared about the Linked-In Learning resources for skills training and development and their plans to reboot Aspiring Leaders
- Department of Children and Families shared about their Executive Fellowship leadership development program with the Office of Early Childhood

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Office of Health Strategy Executive Director Vicki Veltri shared about CoveredCT; a proposed expansion of healthcare coverage eligibility for caretaker relatives with children and adults to up to 175% of the federal poverty level. Public hearings were held in February; the proposal was approved by State legislative committees and is currently awaiting federal government approval. Roll out for adults is anticipated for July.
- Department of Consumer Protection announced that they are participating in CareerConn program to share the guide for women interested in entering in the skilled trades
- HAYVN shared about their women-centric co-working space and programs in Darien, CT
- Women's Business Development Council shared about their Equity Match Grant Program and their Child Care Business Support Program, and announced that their annual Women-Owned Business Day is scheduled for April 21st