

On behalf of Tanya A. Hughes, Executive Director, Attorney Cheryl A. Sharp, Deputy Executive Director, and the Commissioners of the CHRO, we would like to thank the following organizations and individuals:

Executive Secretary Kellye Hudson
Outreach Coordinator Ana M. Mitchell
Rae Thiesfield Vann
The CT Kids Court Committee

CHRO Legal Department
CHRO Executive Interns

Kids Court Competition
Participants and
Entrants

Governor Ned Lamont
The State Legislature

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
Housing and Urban Development
The Chums, Inc.

The Honorable Juliett Crawford
The Honorable Donna Maria Wilkerson Brilliant
CHRO Commissioner Lisa Giliberto
CHRO Commissioner Alex Harris
CHRO Commissioner Nick Kapoor
CHRO Commissioner Edith Pestana



Connecticut Kids Court Final Competition 2025

Tanya A. Hughes, Executive Director
Attorney Cheryl A. Sharp, Deputy Director

Teams
4:30 - 6:30 PM

Welcome to the 2025 Connecticut
Kids Court Final Competition

Moderators
Deputy Director Attorney Cheryl A. Sharp
Managing Director Michelle Dumas Keuler

2025 Middle School Finalists

Ishvitha Balaji, from Avon Middle School, Avon

Varan Arjun Tamilselvan, from Renbrook School, Farmington

Aakash Kumar, from Irving A. Robbins Middle School, Farmington

Leila Chaar, from Roger Ludlowe Middle School, Fairfield

Khushi Bhargava, from Avon Middle School, Avon

2025 High School Finalists

Henvika Reddy Ramireddy Gari, from Farmington High School, Farmington

Lalitha Papanasam, from Farmington High School, Farmington

Mehk Bhargava, from Avon High School, Avon

Jacqueline Pena, from New Britain High School, New Britain

Brianna Mowad, from Holy Cross High School, Waterbury

Judging the Kids Court Competition:

The Honorable Juliett Crawford

Connecticut Superior Court Judge

The Honorable Donna M. Wilkerson Brilliant

Connecticut Superior Court Judge

Commissioner Lisa Giliberto

CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities

Commissioner Alex Harris

CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities

Commissioner Nick Kapoor

CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities

Commissioner Edith Pestana

CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities

HISTORY OF KIDS COURT

In 1993, then UCONN law school students, Cheryl A. Sharp and Rae Thiesfield developed and launched the first Kids Court Competition at UCONN Law School to educate students about diversity and civil and human rights issues. In 1996, after receiving approval from the Governor's Office, Attorneys Sharp and Thiesfield co-chaired the first statewide Kids Court Competition which kicked off with Kids Speak. Kids Speak is a day for students from across the state to come together and discuss topics related to civil and human rights. In 2000, CT Kids Speak and Kids Court was selected by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as one of the best practice award winners, and received the "**Simply the Best**" award. Following a brief hiatus, Kids Court resumed in 2011. Kids Court has been featured on **Fox 61 News** and in local papers throughout CT.

Tonight we are honored to continue the Kids Court Competition hoping to inspire the next generation of civil rights leaders. "...Make a career of humanity. Commit [ourselves] to the noble struggle for equal rights. You will make a greater person of yourself, a greater Nation of your country, and a finer world to live in." Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (address at the Youth March for Integrated Schools, April 18, 1959, Washington, D.C.)

CHRO

The mission of the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) is to eliminate discrimination through civil and human rights law enforcement and to establish equal opportunity and justice for all persons within the state through advocacy and education. The CHRO enforces human rights laws that ban illegal discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations and credit transactions; monitors compliance with state contract compliance laws and with laws requiring affirmative action in state agency personnel practices and establishes equal opportunity and justice for all persons in Connecticut through education and outreach activities.