

To: Tanya Hughes, Executive Director  
From: Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director  
Re: **CHRO Outreach Activities**  
Date: February 1, 2025

## **OUTREACH ACTIVITIES**

### **Outreach Successes:**

- **Social Media**  
Followers: 2K on Facebook and 1,264 Instagram  
The CHRO's Social Media Team of Jody Walker-Smith and Spencer Hill, and assistance of Courtney Shields, created 13 posts for the agency's Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn accounts.
- **Human Rights Close to Home Youth Summit**  
**Attendees: 120**  
01/08 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp, Attorney Jody Walker-Smith and Michael Mitchell attended the Human Rights Close to Home Youth Summit at UCONN's Dodd Center for Human Rights. Cheryl presented her "Building a Community" game to high school students that addressed social justice, wealth gaps, implicit bias, and other challenges when it comes to creating a truly inclusive community. She also presented "Program This" to teach how to create a "roadmap" for a social justice movement as youth and consider how the choices we make and what we do impacts our society and the people within it.
- **Informational Interview**  
01/13 – Attorney Jody Walker-Smith met with DDS employee connected through DEIBAJ collaborative who is interested in civil rights work for an informational interview.
- **Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System Attendees: 10**  
01/13 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp attended this meeting
- **Bloomfield Public Schools**  
**Attendees: 4**  
01/14 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp met with District Director of School Improvement Lisa Lamenzo and Career and Community Support Specialist McKenzie Hudson to discuss the possibility including Kids Court Academy to their school afternoon programs.
- **DEI Resource Discussion**  
**Attendees: 30**  
01/15– Attorney & DEI committee co-chair Jody Walker-Smith facilitated a discussion of the social justice and DEI themes in the movie Wicked. More than 1/3 of agency staff voluntarily joined and participated.

- **CT MAC monthly meeting**  
**Attendees - 150**  
 01/15 - Legal Director Kimberly Jacobsen attended the monthly meeting of the CT Management Advisory Counsel.
- **MLK Bell Ringing Ceremony**  
**Attendees: 40**  
 01/20 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp and State Program Manager Johnette Tolliver attended the ceremony at the State Capital with the MLK Jr Celebration Coalition for which CHRO is the secretariat
- **CTRP3 Community Outreach Subcommittee**  
**Attendees - unknown**  
 01/22 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp participated in the outreach meeting, to discuss upcoming outreach events in Cheshire and East Hartford and State Agency outreach for website inclusion of CTRP3 information
- **CTRP3 Advisory Board Meeting Subcommittee on Outreach**  
**Attendees - unknown**  
 01/23 - Subcommittee meeting on Outreach for the CTRP3
- **CHRO MLK March**  
**Attendees - 150**  
 01/25 - Legal Director Kimberly Jacobsen attended this event.
- **MLK Jr Children's March & Bell Ringing Ceremony**  
**Attendees: 100+**  
 01/25 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp coordinated the event that was held in Cheshire, CT. The event was attended by Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz, the Governor's Chief Equity Officer Mariana Monteiro, Congresswoman Jahana Hayes, State Treasurer Erick Russell and Representative Geraldo Reyes, all of whom made inspiring remarks to the children in St. Peter's Church. Remarks were also given by children who were representatives from KCA and the Waterbury North End Recreation Center. The children made signs for peace and marched the streets of Cheshire stopping at the Cheshire Historical Society to view the scroll showing names of slaves in the town, where Donna Campbell, Chair of the MLK Jr Celebration Coalition gave remarks. They also stopped at the Cheshire Town Hall where Mariana Monteiro gave remarks. There was also media coverage from WTNH channel 8.
- **Mass Law Consortium**  
**Attendees - 8**  
 01/27 - Legal Directors Michelle Dumas Keuler and Kimberly Jacobsen and Attorney Spencer Hill interviewed prospective intern candidates

- **CBA DEI Committee meeting**  
**Attendees: TBD**  
 01/28 – Attorney Jody Walker-Smith attended the CT Bar Association’s DEI committee meeting.
- **Minority Contractors Council Legislative Breakfast**  
**Attendees - 20**  
 01/28 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp, State Program Manager Johnette Tolliver and Micheal Mitchell attended the breakfast where Cheryl gave remarks to convey the importance of legislative participation to accomplish progress on Civil Rights goals.
- **Affirmative Action Training**  
**Attendees - 100**  
 01/29 - State Program Manager Johnette Tolliver facilitated this training on Affirmative Action to statewide agency heads and EEO officers along with Gary Madison and Jase Olavarria and Spencer Hill. Deputy Director Sharp also gave inspirational remarks reminding them on the importance of being knowledgeable about equity and equality and how together strengthens the cause.
- **CTRP3 Forum**  
**Attendees: 25**  
 01/30 - Held at the Cheshire Public Library. Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp served as one of the panelists on the discussion of racial profiling. She was also accompanied by Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell
- **DEI Committee monthly meeting**  
**Attendees: TBD**  
 01/31 – DEI committee co-chair Attorney Jody Walker-Smith led the committee’s monthly meeting, including discussion of DEI topics and committee projects.
- **Informational Interview**  
 01/31 – Attorney Jody Walker-Smith met with high school senior interested in civil rights work for an informational interview.

## Future Outreach Activities:

- **Growing Together Legislative Press Conference**  
02/03 – Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp will attend the press conference at the Legislative Office Building
- **CT DEIBAJ Collaborative Meeting**  
02/03 – Attorney & DEI committee co-chair Jody Walker-Smith will attend a meeting of DEI professionals across state agencies to collaborate in efforts to support inclusive workplaces.
- **CHRO Fair Housing event**  
02/05 - Legal Directors Michelle Dumas Keuler and Kimberly Jacobsen will train the public on fair housing law.
- **Urban League 10th Annual Black History Celebration**  
02/06 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp, Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell, State Program Manager Johnette Tolliver and Michael Mitchell will to be in attendance. Black History celebration to be held at the Mark Twain House & Museum.
- **White Privilege Conference planning**  
02/06 - CHRO will be a host organization at this conference. Team meeting to plan for event. This conference brings together educators, scholars, and professional and community leaders from across the United States to explore anti-oppression, anti-colonial, and anti-racism work in areas such as race, class, immigration, gender, sexuality, disability, etc.
- **PILG – Public Interest Law Group**  
02/06 - Legal Directors Michelle Dumas Keuler and Kimberly Jacobsen will interview prospective intern candidates
- **A CATIC Symposium for Real Estate Law as a Catalyst for Closing the Racial Wealth Gap**  
02/07 – Attorney Jody Walker-Smith will attend this symposium at UConn Law.
- **Growing Together General meeting**  
02/11 - Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp will attend.
- **DEI Newsletter**  
TBD – Attorneys Jody Walker-Smith, Spencer Hill, and Megan Graefe and Affirmative Action trainee Jase Olavarria will prepare and publish a DEI newsletter.
- **UConn Law School DE & I class**  
02/19 - Legal Director Kimberly Jacobsen will talk about being a lawyer with a disability at this class.

- **CTRP3 Advisory Board Meeting**  
02/20 - Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp will attend.
- **CWCSEO Hosts: When Does Freedom Begin” Powerful Film Screening and Panel Discussion**  
02/21 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp to be in attendance.
- **UCONN Diversity Training**  
02/24 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp to be in attendance.
- **Growing Together General meeting**  
02/25 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp to be in attendance.
- **Kids Court Academy**  
02/25 First session begins Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp and Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell to be in attendance.
- **White Privilege Conference**  
02/26 - CHRO will be a host organization at this conference. Team meeting to plan for event. This conference brings together educators, scholars, and professional and community leaders from across the United States to explore anti-oppression, anti-colonial, and anti-racism work in areas such as race, class, immigration, gender, sexuality, disability, etc.
- **CTRP3 Community Outreach Subcommittee Meeting**  
02/26 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp and Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell to be in attendance.
- **CHRO Youth Justice Summit planning meeting**  
02/26 - Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp and Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell to be in attendance.
- **DEI Resource Discussion**  
02/26 – Upon request by attendees, Attorney & DEI co-chair Jody Walker-Smith will lead a second discussion of social justice and DEI themes in the movie Wicked open to all agency staff.
- **Dartmouth Interviews**  
02/27 - Legal Directors Michelle Dumas Keuler and Kimberly Jacobsen will interview prospective intern candidates.
- **Food and a Film - Black History 365: Dream in Color**  
02/27 - CHRO will be hosting this screening and panel discussion for Black History Month.

- **DEI Committee monthly meeting**  
02/28 – DEI committee co-chair Attorney Jody Walker-Smith will lead the committee’s monthly meeting, including discussion of DEI topics and committee projects.
- **GRANTS**  
We wrapped up the three grants from HUD: CARES, Health Equity and COVID-19. We were awarded a HUD partnership grant so that CHRO can partner with the Connecticut Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity (CECSEO) to plan a fair housing webinar and video PSA. We have also applied for several grants with OPM to use CARE funds for civil rights conventions and conference and to get needed staff and equipment to meet the demands presented post-pandemic.
- **VIDEO PROJECTS**
  - **PSA on Allyship**  
The Executive Interns of the CHRO have created a public service announcement on allyship. It was released to the public in mid-August of 2020.
  - **Life after Incarceration Video Project**  
The Executive and Deputy Directors and members of the legal department will begin production of a documentary film on policing, incarceration, and civil rights in Connecticut. The film will focus on Connecticut as a national leader in reducing the number of incarcerated individuals in Connecticut and the civil rights forward thinking and action in Connecticut. It will focus on the housing and employment challenges faced by formerly incarcerated individuals and will be used as a training tool for future seminars and conferences that will focus on this topic. This is a long-term project with a target date of 2022 for completion. The project will focus on the lives of at least three formerly incarcerated individuals and look at any civil rights injustices that may have contributed to the negative outcomes for these three individuals. Two formerly incarcerated individuals were interviewed for the film, by CHRO intern Matt Stayner.
  - **What is Affirmative Action? What is Contract Compliance? Video Project**  
In order to address the misnomers related to affirmative action and contract compliance the CHRO will develop, produce, post and distribute a short video project about affirmative action and contract compliance, its purpose, who is helped, what it all means, how people in the state of Connecticut are helped by these programs, the detrimental effects of not having these types of programs and how both programs are good for business and business friendly. The project will be led by CHRO Deputy Director, the AA/CC Unit and CHRO Attorney Michelle Dumas Keuler.
  - **SB3**  
On October 1, 2019, the CHRO rolled out its sexual harassment training video that was filmed at 450 Columbus Boulevard in Hartford. The video is available to all CT employees and their staff. The video complies with the statutory mandate that the CHRO provide training materials and free training for the public by October 1, 2019. The law changed in 2021 and has been updated; so, has the video.

- **From Lemonade to Light Post Documentary**

The CHRO will be producing a documentary film that has been entitled Lemonade to Light Post. The focus of the film is human trafficking as a civil rights issue in Connecticut. Human trafficking disproportionately affects African American females in Connecticut and the CHRO will define the issues and interview experts who can help solve the crisis in Connecticut. The CHRO will also take a broader look at the issue to address all the civil rights issues embedded within the subject matter of human trafficking.

## **CONTRACT COMPLIANCE/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION OUTREACH**

### **Future Activities:**

None Reported

### **Past Activities:**

- **01/07 - Contract Compliance Training for DECD Urban Act Grant Recipients  
Attendees: 30**
- **01/08 - Contract Compliance Technical Assistance Training  
Attendees: 16**
- **01/08 - Contract Compliance for Training Municipalities  
Attendees: 5**
- **01/21 - Contract Compliance Training for State Grant Recipients  
Attendees: 5**
- **01/22 - Contract Compliance Training for Municipalities  
Attendees: 3**
- **01/23 - Contract Compliance Training for Municipalities  
Attendees: 6**
- **01/27 - Contract Compliance Training for State Grant Recipients  
Attendees: 13**

### **AA/CC**

AA TA: 22

CC TA: 1634

AA Meetings: 4

CC TA Session: 1

AA Special Projects:

## **REGIONAL OUTREACH AND HOUSING AT A GLANCE**

### **Housing**

#### **Future Activities:**

None reported

## Past Activities:

- **Legal Division Monthly Meeting**

**Attendees: 24**

01/09 - Housing Secretary Stephanie Chenard discussed New Mentor system. Went over the SharePoint merge for legal folder 6. Reviewed what needs to be in telework logs. Went over EEOC updates and executive notes.

- **D.E.I Discussion – WICKED**

**Attendees: 22**

01/15 - Housing Secretary Stephanie Chenard watched the movie WICKED and talked about different circumstances that happened in the movie and how it relates to real life. Discussed how the movie portrayed race and how it reflects the work that we do.

- **Coloring Book**

**Attendees: 2**

01/17 – Housing Investigators Renee Clark and John Torres created a fair housing coloring and activity book to hand out at the M.L.K walk and future events.

- **Technology Committee Monthly Meeting**

**Attendees: 9**

01/27 – Housing Secretary Stephanie Chenard attended the meeting where they went over if our regions had any tickets into BITs. Discussed early stages of website development, and the process of renaming documents from the website. Went over the Microsoft 11 update push out. Talked about A.I and CHATGPT and how we should go about training people / if we should train people on how to use it.

- **Investigator Monthly Meeting**

**Attendees: 30**

01/22 - Housing unit attended. A free form discussion held to go over intake, case issues, and other areas for investigators.

- **Monthly Reentry Roundtable**

**Attendees: 10**

01/28 – Housing Investigator Jacqueline Elam attended the monthly meeting of CT agencies and state offices that provides information and connects returning citizens to vital services for successful reentry in their community. Continued planning for April Reentry Month event tentatively scheduled for 4/24/25: Reentry Employment & Resource Fair.

- **Food Share Mobile Site Hartford Northend Senior Center**

**Attendees: 68**

01/30 – Housing Investigator Cyndi Dryfe helped passed out food to senior citizens in need.

## Capitol Region

### Future Activities:

None reported

### Past Activities:

- **CHRO Technology Committee**  
**Attendees 5**  
01/04 - Representative Na'eelah Bakari Attended the monthly tech committee meeting.
- **2025 Inaugural Puerto Rico, Puerto Ricans|Connecticut Summit**  
**Attendees: 150**  
01/11 - Regional Manager Jose-Michael Gonzalez and Investigator Jose Arnaldo Guadalupe attended In-Person an outreach event/meeting presented by the Puerto Rican and Latino Caucus, Connecticut General Assembly in conjunction with UCONN Puerto Rican Studies Initiative, Hispanic Health Council, Connecticut Puerto Rican Parades and Festivals, and Connecticut Latinas in Politics with a focus on discussion of policy issues and the articulation of community responses, to develop a collective agenda, that can address the particular experiences of Puerto Ricans in Connecticut, gathering the perspectives of stateside Puerto Ricans and other stakeholders in Connecticut to develop a collective agenda that can help shape public policies and legislation that address the inequalities experienced by Puerto Ricans in Connecticut. Contributions made to the discussion focused on resources and access and providing cultural and protected class perspective and advocacy regarding Health Inequalities and Community Strategies and Environmental Justice Issues in Connecticut, which are the 2025 focus of CHRO initiatives.
- **CT Statewide Management Advisory Council**  
**Attendees: 100**  
01/15 - Regional Manager Jose-Michael Gonzalez attended a TEAMS event/meeting by the Connecticut Statewide Management Advisor Council in the capacity of elected CHRO Representative with focus to assist the Governor's Office, OPM, and DAS with bringing CT MAC initiatives to fruition.
- **CHRO DEI Resource Discussion**  
**Attendees: 21**  
01/15 - Representative Ann Galer attended DEI Resources Discussion on the film Wicked.
- **CHRO Community Ambassador Group January meeting**  
**Attendees: Internal about 9**  
01/16 - Representative Laura Roxbury attended the monthly community engagement committee, which discussed the outreach program for this year. She also volunteered to be part of the planning subcommittee.

- **Children's March and Bell Ringing Ceremony in Honor of Martin Luther King**  
**Attendees: 50**  
01/25 - Representative Franklin Sykes attended In-Person an outreach event presented by CHRO and St. Peter's Episcopal Church with the focus on Martin Luth King Junior Holiday March for Unity, Peace, and Hope. Contributions made was to celebrate the power of our youth and elevate their voices by uniting in love as they marched through the streets of Cheshire, CT.
- **CHRO DEI Committee Meeting**  
**Attendees: 10**  
01/31 - Representative Ann Galer attended monthly agency-wide DEI Committee Meeting.

## Eastern Region

### Future Activities:

- **Disability Summit at Mohegan Sun Casino**  
02/08

### Past Activities:

- **No Activities**

## West Central Region

### Future Activities:

### Past Activities:

- **Networking for MLK Children's March**  
**Attendees: 70+**  
01/09 Manager Shawn Burns, Representative Christopher Blustein, Trainee Ashanti Fleming, and Trainee Kristin Hegel networked with other advocacy and Human Rights groups about the upcoming walk.
- **CHRO DEI Meeting**  
**Attendees: 30**  
01/15 Representative Christopher Blustein met and discussed diversity and representation in the media (most of the discussion was on theater, film, and TV). There was some turn out from the public and those from other agencies.
- **Hamden Human Rights Committee**  
**Attendees: 10**  
01/16 Manager Shawn Burns and Representative Sancha Works met and did outreach at the Hamden Human Rights Committee meeting.

- **MLK Jr. Children's March for Peace**  
**Attendees: 80+**  
01/25 Manager Shawn Burns and Representative Sancha Works attended and participated in the march.

## Southwest Region

### Future Activities:

- **CHRO Community Engagement Ambassador (CEA) Meeting**  
02/06 - The CEA Committee will meet via Teams to discuss, collaborate, and plan future outreach opportunities for the agency.

### Past Activities:

- **CHRO DEI Resource Discussion Meeting**  
**Attendees: 25+**  
01/15 - Regional Manager Travis Fuller and Investigator Christine Rowan attended the DEI discussion on civil rights and DEI themes that uses movies, books, articles, and videos as bases for discussion. This provides opportunities to learn and grow together while interacting across units. This month's discussion was based on the movie Wicked.
- **CHRO Community Engagement Ambassador (CEA) Meeting**  
**Attendees: 15**  
01/16 - Regional Manager Travis Fuller and Investigator Christine Rowan attended the CEA Committee meeting via Teams to discuss, collaborate, and plan future outreach opportunities for the agency.
- **Dr. Martin Luther King Celebration at Yale Peabody Museum**  
**Attendees: 100+**  
01/20 - Investigator Matthew Diaz attended and tabled on behalf of the CHRO at the Peabody Museum event to celebrate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- **CHRO Basic Process presentation to the QUSL Mediation Clinic**  
**Attendees: 5**  
01/21 Southwest Regional HRO Representative Jessica Kohut and Capitol Region Representative Laura Roxbury met virtually with Quinnipiac Professor Brandon C Holt's Mediation Clinic Seminar to discuss CHRO complaint processing and mediation
- **CHRO MLK Jr. Children's March and Bell Ringing Ceremony**  
**Attendee: 70+**  
01/25 - Regional Manager Travis Fuller and Secretary Cathy Kendall attended and participated in the MLK Jr. Children's March and Bell Ringing Ceremony in Cheshire, CT.

- **Technology Committee**

**Attendees: 10**

01/27 - Southwest Regional HRO Representative Jessica Kohut met with the Commissions Technology Committee to discuss any technology concerns experienced in the regions as well as brainstorming potential future improvements.

- **ACLU of Connecticut Civil Rights Town Hall**

**Attendees: 100+**

01/30 - Southwest Regional HRO Representative Jessica Kohut will attend an ACLU of Connecticut Civil Rights Town Hall to discuss concerns regarding changes under the current political climate and its potential impact on citizens of Connecticut

- **ACLU/IRIS of Connecticut Civil Rights Town Hall**

**Attendees: 100+**

01/30 - Southwest Regional Manager Travis Fuller will attend an ACLU of Connecticut Civil Rights in conjunction with the Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services Town Hall to discuss concerns regarding changes under the current political climate and its potential impact on citizens/ immigrants of Connecticut. Primar

Media Inquiries: 0  
Legislative Meetings: 8  
Legislative Inquiries: 20  
Legislative hearings: 0

Sexual Harassment Law: 74 (January) and 8304 (cumulative)