

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

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Outreach Successes:

- **Social Media**
Followers: 2K on Facebook and 1,292 on Instagram
The CHRO's Social Media Team of Jody Walker-Smith and Spencer Hill, and assistance of Courtney Shields, created 20 posts for the agency's Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn accounts.
- **CT DEIBAJ Collaborative Meeting**
02/03 Attorney Jody Walker-Smith attended a meeting of DEI professionals across state agencies to collaborate in efforts to support inclusive workplaces.
- **Constance Baker Motley Webinar**
02/05 Attorney Jody Walker-Smith attended a webinar sponsored by the CT Bar Association's DEI committee titled Past is Present: How Racism Has and Does Shape Immigration in America Confirmation.
- **CHRO Fair Housing event**
Attendees 176
02/05 Legal Directors Michelle Dumas Keuler and Kimberly Jacobsen trained the public on fair housing law
- **CHRO Community Engagement Ambassador (CEA) Meeting**
Attendees: 15
02/06 Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell and Legislative Aide Darcy Strand the CEA Committee meeting via Teams to discuss, collaborate, and plan future outreach opportunities for the agency.
- **Urban League 10th Annual Black History Celebration**
Attendees: 100+
02/06 Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp, State Program Manager Johnette Tolliver, Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell and Storekeeper Michael Mitchell attended the Urban League's 10th Annual Black History Celebration held at the Mark Twain House & Museum
- **PILG – Public Interest Law Group**
Attendees:15
02/06 Legal Directors Michelle Dumas Keuler and Kimberly Jacobsen and Attorney Spencer Hill interviewed 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 attended this symposium at UConn Law.
- **When Does Freedom Begin” Powerful Film Screening and Panel Discussion**
Attendees: 10
02/21 Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp, State Programmer Johnette Tolliver, Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell and Storekeeper Michael Mitchell attended this screening and panel discussion held at the State Capital.
- **UCONN School of Business Diversity Training**
Attendees: 30+
02/24 Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp along with Executive Director Tanya Hughes and State Program Manager Johnette Tolliver provided training to UCONN students at the Storrs campus on workplace diversity. Storekeeper Michael Mitchell attended.
- **Kids Court Academy – Year 5 Kickoff**
Attendees: 61+
02/25 First Kids Court Academy session. Guest presenter Devin Brown, Environmental Justice Project Manager Office of Health Equity Connecticut Public Health, provided a deeper understanding environmental justice to the youth
- **Artists’ Collective Meeting**
Attendees: 6
02/26 Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp, Executive Director Tanya Hughes, State Program Manager Johnette Tolliver and Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell met with the Artists Collective’s Executive Director Kimberly Kersey to discuss plans for the Civil Rights Museum within their facility
- **Youth Justice Summit Meeting**
Attendees: 4+
02/26 Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp and Jase Olavarria met with UCONN Law School regarding preparations for the upcoming Youth Justice Summit in the fall for where youth from across the state will participate.
- **Food and a Film - Black History 365: Dream in Color**
Attendees: 70+
02/27 Hosted a screening and panel discussion for Black History Month. Discussion was moderated by Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp. Panelists were Gail Hardy, Executive Assistant State’s Attorney - Office of the Chief State’s Attorney, Melvette Hill, Executive Director - Connecticut General Assembly's Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity, Tiffany Young, Senior Director, Community Engagement and Advocacy | YWCA Hartford Region, Johnette Tolliver, CHRO State Program Manager and Michelle Dumas Keuler, Managing Director – Housing/Training - Commission Counsel - Legal Division. Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell, Representative Anthony Pragano and Storekeeper Michael Mitchell organized the event.

- **CHRO Food and a Film – Black History Month**
02/27 Attorney Jody Walker-Smith attended the CHRO’s Black History Month Food and a Film event.
- **CHRO Food and Film**
02/27 Legal Director Kimberly Jacobsen attended this event remotely
- **DEI Committee monthly meeting**
Attendees: TBD
02/28 DEI committee co-chair Attorney Jody Walker-Smith led the committee’s monthly meeting, including discussion of DEI topics and committee projects.
- **Human Rights Close to Home Youth Summit**
Attendees: 20
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.

Future Outreach Activities:

- **Social Media**
The CHRO’s Social Media Team of Jody Walker-Smith and Spencer Hill, and assistance of Courtney Shields, have planned posts for the agency’s Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn accounts.
- **Growing Together Connecticut General Meeting**
03/04 Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp will attend.
- **CTRP3/UCONN Law Forum**
03/20 Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp will be a panelist. Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell and Storekeeper Michael Mitchell will be attending.
- **Civil Rights Unites Tour – CHRO Disparity Study Launch (Virtual)**
03/06 Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp, Executive Director Tanya Hughes, Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell attended the launch. In 2021, the General assembly ordered a study to assess whether the state has “achieved the goal of facilitating the participation in state contracts of small and minority owned businesses” That study was published in January of this year. Key findings to be discussed
- **CBA Ladder Award Dinner**
03/06 Legal Director Kimberly Jacobsen will be awarded the ladder award, which honors a Connecticut woman attorney who has “left the ladder down” for women to follow in her footsteps, and values the importance of leadership development, mentoring, and supporting junior lawyers in their journeys to success. The award is presented by the Young Lawyers Section Women in the Law Committee at the annual Pathways to Leadership for Women Lawyers event.

- **Minority Construction Council – Women in Construction**
 03/06 Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell attended the celebration for women and construction. She shared with the group that the Disparity Study was launched and CHRO will be presenting parts on our Civil Rights Unites Tour.
- **Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System**
 03/10 Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp will attend.
- **The C.R.O.W.N Act – Examining the Intersection of Cultural Expression and Professionalism**
 03/11 Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp is one of the invited as a guest speaker at Central Connecticut State University where event is being held.
 Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell, State Programmer Johnette Tolliver and Storekeeper Michael Mitchell will attend.
- **Kids Court Academy Film – Something in the Air PBS America**
 03/11 This Program is an outgrowth or expansion of the CT Kids Speak and CT Kids Court Programs. CT Kids Court Academy is a free, 17-week attorney and social justice pipeline program for middle school and high school students.
- **Connecticut Disparity Study Presentation by Griffin & Strong, P.C.**
 03/13 Disparity Study will be launched to Construction Companies.
- **Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) School Discipline Collaborative Meeting**
 03/17 Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp will attend.
- **DEIBAJ Collaborative Meeting**
 03/17 Attorney Jody Walker-Smith will attend a meeting of DEI professionals across state agencies to collaborate in efforts to support inclusive workplaces.
- **Western New England University Internship event**
 03/19 Legal Directors Kimberly Jacobsen and Michelle Dumas Keuler will attend an internship event at Western New England University.
- **CHRO Legislative Breakfast at the Legislative Office Building**
 03/19 Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp, Executive Director Tanya Hughes, Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell other staff will attend the CHRO's legislative breakfast.
- **CTRP3 Wickham Memorial Library, East Hartford, CT**
 03/20 Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp will be a panelist and Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell has organized the event and will be in attendance.

- **CBA DEI Committee meeting**
03/25 Attorney Jody Walker-Smith will attend the CT Bar Association's DEI committee meeting.
- **CBA DE&I Committee meeting**
03/25 Legal Director Kimberly Jacobsen will attend this meeting.
- **3rd Annual Women's History Month Celebration**
03/25 Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp will emcee and moderate on this year's theme, "United in Purpose: Championing DEI Against the Odds,". Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell will attend.
- **CTRP3 Community Outreach Subcommittee Meeting**
03/26 Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sharp and Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell will be attending.
- **WPC26 – Youth Summit**
03/26 Outreach Coordinator Ana Mitchell, Bridgeport Regional Manager Travis Fuller, and Storekeeper Michael Mitchell will be tabling at the event.
- **WPC26 – Antiracism Conference**
03/27 - 03/29 Attorney Jody Walker-Smith will attend this three day-long antiracism and anti-bias conference. Attorney Walker-Smith arranged for the CHRO to co-host the conference, as well as a Youth Summit taking place on 3/26/25.
- **CBA Labor and Employment Symposium**
03/27 Legal Directors Kimberly Jacobsen and Michelle Dumas Keuler will attend this educational event.
- **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:

- **02/04 - Contract Compliance Technical Assistance Training**
Attendees: 22
- **02/04- Contract Compliance Training for Municipalities**
Attendees: 8
- **02/19 - Contract Compliance Training for DEEP Engineering Department**
Attendees: 9

AA/CC

AA TA: N/A

CC TA: 1470

AA Meetings: 2

CC TA Session: 1

AA Special Projects:

REGIONAL OUTREACH AND HOUSING AT A GLANCE

Housing

Future Activities:

None reported

Past Activities:

- **Growing Together Press Conference**

Attendees: 50

02/03 Housing Representative Jacqueline Elam attended the Press Rally held at the Legislative Office Building to unveil their 2025 agenda, spotlight Connecticut's housing and economic challenges, and inspire our legislators to take bold action to make housing a top priority and drive meaningful change. CHRO is part of the Steering Committee.

- **Transit Equity Day**

Attendees: 88

02/04 Housing Representative Sunasha Dunham-Carson attend in honor of Rosa Parks Birthday. Rallies were held throughout the state. On the New Haven Green, different City Departments and Community Organizations championed clean air and transit equity through free or reduced fares. The event ended with participates enjoying a ride through the city on one of the brand-new Electric CT Transit Bus.

- **Legal Division Monthly Meeting**

Attendees: 24

02/13 Housing Secretary Stephanie Chenard went over the future of the CHRO regarding our new President. Discussed new mentor system. Reviewed CARs to be retained. Reviewed Timesheet codes. EEOC updates.

- **Information Technology Monthly Meeting**

Attendees: 9

02/24 Housing Secretary Stephanie Chenard discussed what's going on with BITs quarantined e-mails. Went over region tickets. Talked about splitting files for SharePoint, and the windows 11 update and how to prepare for it.

- **Kids Court Academy**

Attendees: 60

02/25 Housing Representative Shaun Jones Held intro – What is Environmental Justice? Various students representing varied grades and schools from across the state. CT Middle School and High School Students.

- **Reentry Roundtable**

Attendees: 10

02/25 Housing Representative Jacqueline Elam attended monthly meetings 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. Also requested a speaker to give brief presentation for CHRO Reentry Month Forum on 4/23/25.

- **CHRO Food and Film Festival**

Attendees: 28

02/27 Stephanie Chenard attended this month, we will be watching the short documentary, “Black History 365: Dream in Color” that emphasizes the importance of celebrating and Discussing Black history throughout the year, not just during February.

Capitol Region

Future Activities:

None reported

Past Activities:

- **CT Statewide Suicide Advisory Board**

Attendees: 35

02/04 Regional Manager Jose-Michael Gonzalez attended a Zoom event/meeting presented by the CT Statewide Suicide Advisory Board and Safe Rx Community Prevention Programs with a focus on discussion of locking prescription vials that contribute to the high need for safe storage of medications in the home and lethal means safety. Contributions made to the discussion focused on resources and access and providing cultural and protected class perspective and advocacy regarding providing to the public information on the mechanics of the devices, their simplicity, and portability and how to acquire them to address environmental justice which is a CHRO 2025 priority.

- **CHRO Community Ambassador Group**

Attendees: 9

02/06 Regional Manager attended the monthly community engagement committee, which discussed the outreach program for this year. Follow up meeting with Darcy strand regarding Civil Rights Unites Legislative breakfast March 19th plan.

02/06 Representative Laura Roxbury attended the monthly community engagement committee, which discussed the outreach program for this year. She also followed up with work on the new outreach series subcommittee planning.

- **CHRO DEI Resource Discussion**
Attendees: 21
02/26 Representative Ann Galer attended DEI Resources Discussion continuation on the film Wicked.
- **CHRO Food & Film: I Dream in Color-Black History Month 365**
Attendees: 30
02/27 Representative Ann Galer attended In-Person the event.
02/27 Regional Manager Jose-Michael Gonzalez attended virtually over TEAMS.
02/27 Clerical Dedra Morris attended In-Person the event.
02/27 Representative Oliver Morris In-Person event.
02/27 Representative Laura Roxbury attended In-Person event.
02/27 Representative Franklin Sykes attended virtually over TEAMS.
02/27 Representative Tausha Thomas attended virtually over TEAMS.
- **CT Statewide Suicide Advisory Board**
Attendees 35
02/28 Regional Manager Jose-Michael Gonzalez attended a Zoom event/meeting presented by the CT Statewide Suicide Advisory Board and CT Clearinghouse Educational Forum with a focus on discussion of Youth Suicide Crisis Prevention in CT. Contributions made to the discussion focused on resources and access and providing cultural and protected class perspective and advocacy regarding review of statistics and demographics on mental health and suicide among youth, overview of the mobile crisis intervention services, healthy coping skills, case examples, and resources for families in order to address environmental justice which is a CHRO 2025 priority.
- **CHRO DEI Committee**
Attendees: 10
02/28 Representative Tausha Thomas attended CHRO DEI Committee meeting.

Eastern Region

Future Activities:

- **Shoreline Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Task Force**
- **DEI Resource Discussion**

Past Activities:

- **Learn Disability Summit at Mohegan Sun**
Attendees: 200+
02/08 Representative Zach Cobb and Secretary Cathy Chester attended this terrific annual event which is dedicated to empowering parents, caregivers, students and the community by sharing and cultivating a deeper understanding of the challenges and triumphs experienced by those living with a range of unique capabilities.

- **DEI Resource Discussion**

Attendees: 20+

02/26 Representatives Cameron Deslaurier and Dori Bruce attend the monthly meeting.

West Central Region

Future Activities:

Past Activities:

- **CHRO DEI Meeting**

Attendees: 10-15

02/03 Representative Christopher Blustein discussed plans for DEI for 2025 and how to react to changes in administration. Also proposed multiple outreach projects for the public (ex. Newsletters, guest speakers, social media updates, hosting our own events that celebrate diversity and other cultures, etc).

- **CHRO DEI Meeting**

Attendees: 30+

02/26 Representative Christopher Blustein discussed plans diversity and representation in the media (most of the discussion was on theater, film, and TV). This was a follow up to last month's debate on "Wicked". There was some turn out from the public and those from other agencies.

- **Black History 365: Dreams in Color**

Attendees: 30+

02/27 Regional Manager, Shawn Burns attended.

- **Greater Waterbury YMCA**

Attendees: 30+

02/28 Representative Sancha Works, Representative Christopher Blustein, and Trainee Ashanti Fleming attended the YMCA's Young Voices, Power Stories: A Black History Month Showcase, where they listened to and celebrated stories of Black influential leaders from students.

Southwest Region

Future Activities:

- **EEOC Training**

Attendees: 100+

03/04 South west Regional Manager Travis Fuller will attend EOC and JAN on Supporting Employees with Sensory Impairments. and participated in the ACLU Town Hall which covered various civil rights issues.

- **CHRO Community Engagement Ambassador (CEA) Meeting**

Attendees: 15

03/06 The CEA Committee will meet via Teams to discuss, collaborate, and plan future outreach opportunities for the agency.

- **CHRO Kids Court Academy**
Attendees: 50+
03/11 Bi-Monthly Kids court Academy Session hosted by Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp with participants engaging in discussions/ films relative to topics surrounding civil rights.
- **CHRO Writers Workshop**
Attendees: 10+
03/18 CHRO investigators met with, Executive Director, Tanya Hughes and Deputy Executive Director, Cheryl Sharp for an in-person writer's workshop, intake training and refresher course. (Capital Region)
- **Youth Summit at Capitol Community -WP26**
03/26

Past Activities:

- **CHRO Community Engagement Ambassador (CEA) Meeting**
Attendees: 15
02/06 Regional Manager Travis Fuller attended the CEA Committee meeting via Teams to discuss, collaborate, and plan future outreach opportunities for the agency.
- **Technology Committee**
Attendees: 10
02/25 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.
- **CHRO DEI Resource Discussion Meeting**
Attendees: 25+
02/26 Regional Manager Travis Fuller and Representative Martina Seminara 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 Food and Film: Black History Month**
Attendees: 50
02/27 Regional Manager Travis Fuller and Investigator Christine Rowan attended the film "Black History 365: Dream in Color", followed by a panel discussion

Media Inquiries: 0
 Legislative Meetings: 23
 Legislative Inquiries: 11
 Legislative hearings: 8 (11 bills)

Sexual Harassment Law: 44 (February) and 8348 (cumulative)