

*CT General Assembly's  
Commission on Equity and Opportunity*

*Annual Report*

2017



## MISSION

To inform and engage all policy makers about constituent needs for the African American, Asian American, Pacific Islanders, and Latino and Puerto Rican populations in Connecticut. We are a nonpartisan agency with a data driven, cross-cultural approach to policy innovation. We work to eliminate disparities by creating opportunities, building connections and promoting change.



Commission on Equity and Opportunity

## VISION

As the Commission on Equity and Opportunity, our vision is:

- To be a leading policy agency in Connecticut,
- To be a recognized and trusted source for information,
- To break barriers and empower communities, and
- To create equity and opportunity for future generations.

## ***Table of Contents:***

Mission and Vision Statements	1
Letter from Executive Director	3
Letter from Commission Chairperson	4
Commission Board Members	5
Commission Staff	6
Commission Mandate	7
Latino Statistics	9
African American Statistics	11
Asian Pacific Americans	13
2017 Legislative Session Summary	14-17
2017 Highlights	18-21
2017 Report Card	22
Graduation Rates	23
Unemployment Rates	24
Poverty Rate Reductions	25
Health Insurance Coverage	26
2018 Legislative Focus	27
Meet the Commission	28



*Subira Gordon  
Executive Director, CEO*

January 2018

Dear Senator Osten and Representative Walker,

I am forwarding this annual report for the Commission on Equity and Opportunity, (CEO) as required by PA 16-3. The Commission on Equity and Opportunity was formed on July 1, 2016 as a result of the consolidation of three legislative commissions: the African-American Affairs, Asian American and Pacific Islanders American Affairs and the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commissions. The commission is divided into three policy divisions to represent each consolidated commission.

Since its inception, the CEO has focused its efforts on creating an agency that can adequately represent all three demographic groups within in the community and at the legislature. CEO's mission is to inform and engage all policymakers about constituent needs for the African American, Asian American and Pacific Islanders, and Latino and Puerto Rican populations in Connecticut. The CEO is a nonpartisan agency with a data driven, cross-cultural approach to policy innovation. It works to eliminate disparities by creating opportunities, building connections and promoting change.

Since July 2016 we have collaborated with various community groups to host educational sessions that address our mandate. This annual report will highlight some of the work done since that time as well as provide Results-Based Accountability information for the communities that we serve.

I look forward to continue working with you to move the needle on public policy that will serve all residents in the state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Subira Gordon".

Subira Gordon,  
Executive Director



*Alan Tan  
Chairperson, CEO*

January 2018

Dear Senators Formica, Osten, Representative Walker, and Members of the Committee,

Pursuant to Public Act 16-3 of the 2016 May Special Session and Chapter 23h of the Connecticut General Statutes, it is my pleasure as Chairperson to present to you the 2017 Annual Report of the Connecticut General Assembly's Commission on Equity and Opportunity.

In 2017, the Commission worked to build a solid process and foundation to ensure the equal representation of our diverse and unique historically underrepresented communities, while addressing policy issues specific to the three constituencies that we serve. With that in mind, we worked to connect with our constituencies by honoring past African American legislators, celebrating the Lunar New Year with the annual celebration at the Capitol, and celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month.

In addition to community engagement events, the Commission worked on issues mandated by statute, such as the Re-Entry Study and the Fair Chance Employment Task Force.

The Commission appreciates and understands that the State's fiscal health leaves less resources to address the very real concerns and needs of all of our State's Citizens, let alone address the historically underserved and underrepresented populations of Connecticut. In that regard, the Commission has worked hard to ensure that the State's contribution can help the Commission leverage more support from our federal and other governmental partners to achieve our shared public policy goals.

We hope that as we look towards 2018, that the Commission can continue to work with our federal, state, and local partners to ensure the fair representation of the historically underrepresented populations in the State of Connecticut and to best advise the legislature about the concerns of their constituents in a fair and non-partisan manner. We have a very unique model here in the State of Connecticut, where our Commission remains a part of the Legislature and not the Executive Branch, and it is our hope that together, we can continue to create a model of policy innovation that is fiscally responsible, one that other States throughout our great nation would hope to emulate.

I look forward to continuing to work with you and the other members of the General Assembly to formulate public policy that will serve all of the residents of our great State.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alan C. Tan", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Alan C. Tan  
Chairperson, Commission on Equity and Opportunity

## ***Commission Board Members***

***Alan Tan, Chairperson***

***Dr. Ruby Corby O'Neill, Vice Chairperson***

***Dr. Dennis Canterbury, Vice Chairperson***

***Dr. Agnes Quiñones, Treasurer***

*Ramón L. Arroyo*

*Brenda DelGado*

*Dr. Tekisha D. Everette*

*Charles Frazier, Jr.*

*Josephine Fulcher-Anderson*

*Jay González*

*Theodore C. Hsu*

*Robert W. Ike*

*George Mathanool*

*Angela Rola*

*Pablo Soto*

*Alexander Tettey, Jr.*

*Elena Trueworthy*

*Luis A. Valdez, J.D., M.B.A.*

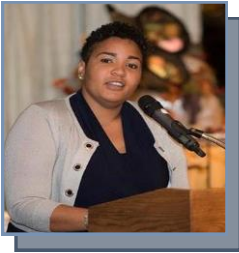
*Regina Vermont*

*Arvia Walker*

*Dr. Clifton Watson*

*Alphonse Wright*

## ***Commission Staff***



***Subira Gordon,  
Executive Director***



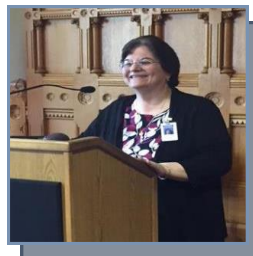
***Werner Oyanadel,  
Senior Commission Analyst***



***Lucía Goicoechea-Hernández,  
Senior Special Projects Coordinator***



***Denise Drummond,  
Public Information Officer***



***Clarisa Cardone,  
Senior Administrative Assistant***

## ***COMMISSION MANDATE***

Sec.127. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2016) (a) There is established a Commission on Equity and Opportunity (CEO) which shall be part of the Legislative Branch. The commission shall focus on issues affecting each of the following underrepresented and underserved populations: African Americans, Asian Pacific Americans, and Latinos and Puerto Ricans. The Commission on Equity and Opportunity shall constitute a successor to the African-American Affairs Commission, Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission and Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission in accordance with the provisions of subsections (b) to (d), inclusive, and subsection (f) of section 4-38d and section 4-38e of the general statutes.

PA 93-411 Sec. 24 (Effective July 1, 2016) (a) The Commission on Equity and Opportunity shall:

(1) Improve and promote the economic development, education, health and political well-being of the African Americans, Asian Pacific Americans, and Latinos and Puerto Ricans communities in the State of Connecticut. We accomplish these goals through information sharing, promoting cultural awareness, community networking, and legislation.

(2) Review and comment on any proposed state legislation and regulations that would affect the populations represented by the CEO in the state;

(3) Advise and provide information to the Governor on the state's policies concerning all represented CEO Communities;

(4) Encourage CEO populations' representation at all levels of state government, including state boards and commissions;

(5) In response to the challenge of its mandates, the CEO continues to be an advocate for Connecticut's under-represented CEO populations by setting legislative priorities and working cooperatively with state commissions and agencies as well as local and national organizations for the benefit of its constituencies.

(6) Conduct educational and outreach activities intended to raise awareness of critical issues for CEO represented populations of the state. Source: Public Act 09-07 (i.e., HB No. 7007 as adopted 10/2/2009)



# 2017 LATINO STATISTICS



# **540,000**

## **LATINO POPULATION**

**15%**

Latino Percentage of statewide population

**11%**

Latino percentage of statewide population under age 18

**28**

Median age of Latinos

**\$24,000**

Per Capita Income of Latinos

**12%**

Unemployment rate for Latinos

**62.4%**

Latino households that pay more than 30 percent of income for housing

**52%**

Poverty rate for Latino children

**16%**

Of Latinos without health insurance

**6.1%**

Infant mortality rate for Latinos

**481%\***

2014 purchasing power of Latinos in CT totaled \$13.4 billion—  
\*increase from 1990

**31%**

Of eligible Latino residents who voted in 2015

### Sources:

<http://www.pewhispanic.org/states/state/ct/> [http://www.pewhispanic.org/files/2016/09/CT\\_14.pdf](http://www.pewhispanic.org/files/2016/09/CT_14.pdf)

[http://kff.org/other/state-indicator/infant-mortality-rate-by-race-](http://kff.org/other/state-indicator/infant-mortality-rate-by-race-ethnicity/?currentTimeframe=0&selectedRows=%7B%22nested%22:%7B%22connecticut%22:%7B%7D%7D%7D)

[ethnicity/?currentTimeframe=0&selectedRows=%7B%22nested%22:%7B%22connecticut%22:%7B%7D%7D%7D](http://kff.org/other/state-indicator/infant-mortality-rate-by-race-ethnicity/?currentTimeframe=0&selectedRows=%7B%22nested%22:%7B%22connecticut%22:%7B%7D%7D%7D)

<https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/new-americans-connecticut>



# 2017 AFRICAN AMERICAN STATISTICS



**362,296**

**AFRICAN AMERICAN  
POPULATION**

**11.6%**

**African American Percentage of  
statewide population**

**100,857**

**African American percentage of  
statewide population under age 18**

**32**

**Median age of African Americans**

**\$22,381**

**Per Capita Income of African  
Americans**

**13.2%**

**Unemployment rate for African  
Americans**

**60.4%**

**Of African American households  
that pay more than 30 percent of  
income for housing**

**30.5%**

**Poverty rate for African  
American children (2014)**

**7.6%**

**Of African Americans without  
health insurance**

**10.2%**

**Infant mortality rate for African  
Americans**

**29.9%**

**African American buying power  
as share of state's buying power**

**Sources:**

[suburbanstats.org/population/how-many-people-live-in-Connecticut](http://suburbanstats.org/population/how-many-people-live-in-Connecticut)

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/09/accessible>

<https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2016/unemployment-rates-for-african-americans-by-state-in-2015.htm>

<http://yaledailynews.com/blog/2015/10/01/child-poverty-rate-stagnates-in-connecticut/>

<http://kff.org/other/state-indicator/infant-mortality-rate-by-race-ethnicity/?currentTimeframe=0>

[http://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Housing\\_burden/By\\_race~ethnicity%3A32961/United\\_States/Connecticut/Year%28s%29%3A2014/Tenure%3ARenters](http://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Housing_burden/By_race~ethnicity%3A32961/United_States/Connecticut/Year%28s%29%3A2014/Tenure%3ARenters)



## 2017 ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN STATISTICS



**135,565**

**ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN  
POPULATION**

**4.7%**

**Asian Percentage of statewide  
population**

**.005**

**Asian percentage of statewide  
population under age 18**

**32**

**Median age of Asians**

**4.0**

**Unemployment rate for Asians**

**35.7%**

**Of Asian households that pay  
more than 30 percent of income  
for housing**

**6.3%**

**Of Asians without health  
insurance**

**NSD**

**Infant mortality rate for Asians**

**.042%**

**Asian buying power as share of  
state's buying power**

Sources: [suburbanstats.org/population/how-many-people-live-in-Connecticut](http://suburbanstats.org/population/how-many-people-live-in-Connecticut)

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/09/accessible>

NSD – Not Sufficient Data

<https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2016/unemployment-rates-for-african-americans-by-state-in-2015.htm>

Selig Center for Economic Growth, Terry College of Business, The University of Georgia, June 2013.

[http://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Housing\\_burden/By\\_race~ethnicity%3A32961/United\\_States/Connecticut/Year%28s%29%3A2014/Tenure%3ARenters](http://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Housing_burden/By_race~ethnicity%3A32961/United_States/Connecticut/Year%28s%29%3A2014/Tenure%3ARenters)

## *2017 Legislative Session Summary*

The 2017 legislative session ended with many gains for our communities. While there is still much work to be done, we are proud of our accomplishments and look forward to continuing this trend of progress. The Commission provided testimony for several bills this session, many of which successfully passed both chambers. This report provides an overview of the bills that we supported.



Commission on Equity and Opportunity



## ***Commission on Equity & Opportunity (CEO)***

### ***2017 Legislative Session Summary***

#### **Education**

**Early Literacy Legislation** – [Public Act 17-101](#) will now require that the results of the reading instruction survey be distributed to teachers and supervisors for the purpose of informing such teacher's professional development in reading instruction. It also establishes a reading readiness program that provides tiered support in early literacy to schools and school districts.

**Institutional Aid for Immigrant Students** – allows undocumented students equal access to institutional aid. Currently, all students, citizens and the undocumented, pay a portion of their tuition into a fund that provides grants to Connecticut residents on the basis of financial need. This aid is currently available to all students except those who are undocumented. This bill would have allowed the fund to be accessed by every student. [HB 7000](#) and [SB 17](#) – **Both bills were assigned a Calendar Number - Died**

**Tuition Integrity Act** – establishes thresholds and limits for the spending of students' federal aid funds by for-profit higher education institutions. It also prohibits these institutions from (1) advising students in certain ways about borrowing funds to finance their higher education, (2) offering unaccredited programs in fields that require accreditation for licensure, and (3) enrolling students with criminal convictions in programs for fields that bar such individuals from employment. – [sSB 972](#) **Matter Pass Retained in the Senate ~ Higher Education Committee Vote Tally 12-9 – Died**

**The Establishment of Reduced-Isolation Standards for Magnet Schools** – [Public Act 17-172](#) – **Raised HB 7201** – The purpose of this law is to apply the reduced-isolation setting standards of the 2013 stipulation and order for Milo Sheff, et al. v. William A. O'Neill, et al., as extended, to all inter-district magnet schools in the state. This new law addresses the inequitable nature of the current magnet system by creating a unified standard for all inter-district magnet schools in Connecticut in a way that does not negatively impact the educational opportunities for students enrolled in existing programs. – **passed unanimously both Chambers of the Connecticut General Assembly**

#### **Criminal Justice**

**Community Reentry Study** – [Special Act 17-15](#) the goal of this law is to improve the rate of successful community reentry for persons released from correctional facilities through the provision of enhanced employment opportunities. The Commission on Equity & Opportunity (CEO) is required to study and recommend ways to provide (1) persons recently released from correctional facilities with enhanced employment opportunities, and (2) potential tax incentives to employers who provide employment opportunities to persons recently released from correctional facilities.

**Isolated Confinement** – [Public Act Number 17-239](#) prohibits the Department of Correction (DOC), with limited exceptions, from holding an individual under age 18 on administrative segregation status. The new law also requires the DOC commissioner, by January 1, 2019, to study and submit a report to the Judiciary Committee on the use and oversight of all forms and phases of housing for inmates on restrictive housing status. While Connecticut has decreased its use of solitary confinement, a recent national study found that Connecticut was the second worst state in the country regarding disproportionally placing Black men in solitary confinement.



**Licensing of Barbers & Hairdressers** – [Public Act No. 17-112](#) – This law will exempt barbers, hairdressers, and cosmeticians from having to submit to criminal history checks as a prerequisite for state licensure. CEO believes this action enhances opportunities for individuals – regardless of felony convictions that have already paid their debt to society – seeking to enter the profession of barbers, hairdressers, and cosmeticians in the State of Connecticut.

**Occupational Licensing for Persons with Criminal Histories** This bill requires the Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Labor to encourage state agencies, boards, and Commissions that issue occupational certificates or licenses to help people with criminal histories with the certification and licensing processes. [HB 6398](#) ~ **Assigned a House Calendar Number – Died**

**Civil Asset Forfeiture Abolition** – [Public Act No. 17-193](#) – Requires a conviction before property seized by law enforcement officials pursuant to a lawful arrest or search may be forfeited to the state in a civil proceeding. The new law also updates the circumstances under which the court must return the property to its owner. Civil asset forfeiture disproportionately affected people of color going through a legal proceeding.

**Police Body Cameras** – [Public Act No. 17-225](#) - Expands and extends by one year, to FY 19, a grant program administered by OPM that reimburses municipalities for, among other things, purchasing body cameras for use by sworn members of municipal police departments. This law expands the types of law enforcement personnel and equipment eligible for the program to include electronic defense weapon recording equipment and first-time purchases of dashboard cameras. The legislature also established a 26-member task force to examine the use of body cameras by state and municipal police and report its findings and recommendations to the Judiciary and Public Safety and Security committees by February 1, 2018.

**Police Accountability** – This bill would require a preliminary status report within 40 days for a death as a result of physical force by an officer. It also creates guidelines for police shooting at motor vehicles, created a requirement for bodycams in cities with a population of greater than 75,000, standardized complaint and reporting processes, created a death in dignity clause and required a study to be completed on independent police oversight. [HB 6663](#) – **Died**

### **Transportation**

**Regulations for Transportation Network Companies** – [Public Act No. 17-140](#) – This new law (1) creates a new regulatory structure for transportation network companies (TNCs) (e.g., Uber and Lyft) and (2) modifies certain aspects of taxi and livery vehicle regulations to make them more similar to the structure created by this new law. CEO supported this proposal because of the positive economic impact this industry can bring to minority communities.

### **Public Health Issues**

**Diabetes Advisory Council** -- This bill required DPH, in consultation with DSS and the insurance department, to study ways to implement the recommendations of the diabetes advisory council as follows: 1. Secure Medicaid coverage for diabetes self-management education; 2. Devise a plan and seek financial support to increase the state's pool of diabetes educators who represent at-risk populations; 3. Modify cost-sharing of diabetes self-management, including ensuring that such education is not subject to insurance deductibles or copayments; and 4. Build the capacity for a state-wide diabetes self-management education program with an emphasis on culturally and linguistically appropriate standards and improved

access. The bill also would have required the DPH commissioner, by January 1, 2019, to report on the study and related recommendations – [HB 6237](#) – **Bill Passed House – Died**

**Dental Hygienist Continuing Education** – §§ 3 & 4 of [Public Act 17-146](#) requires dental hygienists, every two years, to complete at least one contact hour of training or education in cultural competency as part of existing continuing education requirements. The requirement applies to registration periods beginning on and after October 1, 2017

**Community Health Workers (CHW)** – [Public Act No. 17-74](#) This law establishes a statutory definition for a “community health worker,” and based on that definition, requires the director of the State Innovation Model Initiative Program Management Office to study the feasibility of creating a community health worker certification program. CHWs play a vital role in delivering healthcare that is equitable, and are an important resource to all communities, especially those at a higher risk for poor health outcomes.

### **Technical Issues**

**CEO Membership** – This bill, if adopted by the legislature, would have decreased the membership of the Commission on Equity and Opportunity to thirty-three members (currently at 63) among other issues non-related to the CEO. This technical change was important to the Commission staff which would have allowed the CEO Board of Commissioners to reach Quorum easier and as a result be more functional responding to its legislative mandates. [Raised sHB 7277](#) ~ **assigned a House Calendar Number – Died**

### **Bills monitored by CEO**

**Development of a Plan for Universal Preschool** – [Special Act No. 1](#) – **Died**

**State Constitutional Amendment to Permit Early Voting** [HJ No. 95](#) – **Died**

**Extending the Hours of Election Day Registration** [HB 6423](#) – **Died**

**Hate Crimes** – [Public Act 17-111](#)

## 2017 Commission Events

### 2017 Oral Health Forums



The Commission on Equity and Opportunity hosted forums on Oral Health throughout the state. Executive Director, Subira Gordon, met with oral health professionals and State Senator Paul M. Formica in New London at the Generations Family Health Center to discuss the importance of good oral health practices on overall health.

Despite major improvements, oral health disparities exist for many racial and ethnic groups, by socioeconomic status, gender, age and geographic location. Social factors can contribute to these differences; lifestyle behaviors, tobacco use, frequency of alcohol use, and poor dietary choices. Just like they affect general health, these behaviors can affect oral health. The economic factors that often relate to poor oral health include access to health services and an individual's ability to get and keep dental insurance.

### Annual Lunar New Year Celebration



The Asian Pacific American Coalition and the Commission on Equity and Opportunity hosted the 11th Annual Lunar New Year Celebration, Year of the Rooster. The Rooster is tenth in the Chinese zodiac. Each year is related to an animal sign according to a 12-year cycle. The Lunar New Year Celebration brought together the Asian Pacific American Coalition, the Commission on Equity and Opportunity, community members, elected officials, and the general public together to celebrate and highlight the Asian American and Pacific Islander culture and traditions. The Celebration was cosponsored by the CT Asian Pacific American Bar Association and the South Asian Bar Association of CT. Elected Officials attending this year's celebration included Representative William Tong, Representative Jonathan Steinberg and Representative Prasad Srinivasan.

### Financial Literacy Conference



Executive Director, Subira Gordon and over 100 professionals, policymakers and financial literacy supporters joined the Connecticut Jump\$tart Coalition to explore the challenge of using financial education to stem the student debt crisis. Ms. Gordon was a part of a panel that focused on student debt policy at the state level. She presented on how students of color are affected by the student debt crisis.

### Comcast Newsmakers - Subira Gordon



Comcast Newsmakers is a short-form news platform where leaders and innovators exchange ideas and tackle the issues facing communities across America. Subira Gordon, Executive Director of the Commission on Equity and Opportunity let viewers know the challenges of representing the 30 percent of Connecticut's population who are underserved and under-represented. The interview segment was taped in February at Infinity Hall and can be viewed at: [Comcast Newsmakers](#).

### **Celebrating Former African American Legislators**



The Commission on Equity and Opportunity recognized and honored former African-American Legislators at the State Capitol. The Commission honored: Reginald Beamon, Joseph Mann, Ernest Hewett, Ernest Newton, Eric Coleman, Thomas Coble, Thirman L. Milner, Sanford Cloud, Jr., Judge Maurice B. Mosley, Bruce Morris, Sr., Kenneth Green, Marie Kirkley-Bey, Thomasina Clemons, Charles Clemons, Jr. and Andre Bumgardner.

### **e'nigme–Puzzle Series By Artist Hertz Nazaire**



The énigme exhibit was displayed in the State Capitol/Legislative Office Building Concourse from February 15th – February 28th. The Artist, Hertz Nazaire was born in Port-Au-Prince, Haiti and has been painting and sharing his love for art in Bridgeport, CT for over 20 years. Senator Marilyn Moore and Senator Edwin Gomes from Bridgeport stopped by to view the exhibit and chat with the artist.

### **Policy Day For Communities of Color**



The CT General Assembly's Commission on Equity and Opportunity and the Hispanic Federation hosted Diversity in Public Policy – Policy Day for Communities of Color in Connecticut. Policy Day was a unique one-day public forum that brought together distinguished leaders, policymakers, community advocates, and constituents from across our state to discuss and advance successful initiatives that support and promote government policy, program initiatives, and discuss our mission of building strong families and strong communities. The topics discussed include budget stability and equity, quality and equitable education for all of Connecticut's children, and achieving health equity.

### **The Senate Report – Werner Oyanadel**



Senator George S. Logan's latest edition of *"The Senate Reports"* featured Werner Oyanadel, Senior Legislative Policy Analyst of the Latino Policy Division of the CT General Assembly's Commission on Equity and Opportunity. Senator Logan and Mr. Oyanadel discussed the state's advocacy efforts on behalf of Connecticut's Latino & Puerto Rican communities and the ongoing effort to provide relief to the people of Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria. The show can be viewed at [accessvtv](https://www.accessvtv.com).



### Asian Pacific American Heritage Month



The Commission on Equity and Opportunity celebrated Asian Pacific American, (APA) Heritage Month at the State Capitol. During APA Heritage Month the Commission explored the culture's diversity as well as celebrated the significant achievements and contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in our communities. Speakers included State Senator, Tony Hwang, State Representatives Joe de la Cruz, Prasad Srinivasan, and William Tong and CEO Vice-Chairperson, Alan Tan.

### 2017 Classic Awards



The Commission celebrated the achievements and exemplary service of individuals who have had a positive impact on our communities. Honorees were recognized for their integrity, courage and commitment to public service and social advocacy. They have enhanced their communities by reforming the criminal justice system, impacting civil rights and providing volunteer work to enrich and sustain the culture and economic survival of African Americans. Man of the Year & Lifetime Achiever, Bobby Ramos, Woman of the Year, Attorney Cheryl Sharp, Youth of the Year, James Parris and Shineika Fareus, Business Award, The Farmington Valley Chapter Of The Links, Inc.

### Annual Kids Speak Conference



Public Information Officer, Denise Drummond served as a facilitator at the Annual "Kids Speak Conference" at the UCONN Law School. More than 500 students from urban, suburban and rural schools from around the state came together to discuss topics related to civil and human rights. The forum raised the consciousness of students regarding equality, diversity, anti-bullying, equal protection, and segregation.

### Asian American & Pacific Islander Gambling Awareness Conference



The Commission on Equity and Opportunity's Senior Special Projects Coordinator Mui Mui Hin-McCormick along with the Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling, Problem Gambling Services and the Asian Pacific American Coalition of CT hosted the Inaugural Asian American & Pacific Islander Gambling Awareness Conference at Middlesex Community College. The keynote presentation was by Dr. Timothy W. Fong, MD on Gambling Disorders and Physical Health.

### Governor Malloy's Bill Signing Ceremony



The Commission on Equity's Executive Director, Subira Gordon and Public Information Officer, Denise Drummond along with many community leaders, politicians and organizations across the political spectrum attended Governor Dannel Malloy's *Bill Signing Ceremony* at Faith Congregational Church in Hartford. Governor Malloy signed legislation to reform Connecticut's criminal justice system. A total of nine bills were signed which included reforms to the pre-trial bail system, requiring a criminal conviction in order for the state to forfeit an individual's assets, and allowing barbers and hairdressers to obtain a state license despite having a prior conviction.

### Governor's Prevention Partnership - EDCORPSCT



The Governor's Prevention Partnership hosted an Open House at Simpson-Waverly School where the Commission's Public Information Officer, Denise Drummond along with a small group of partners, funders, and friends learned about EdCorpsCT. The program is doing great work and continues to support the school in the areas of reducing chronic absenteeism and improving academic support and family engagement.

### The Forum 2017



The Commission on Equity and Opportunity continues to co-sponsor State Representative Brandon McGee's annual event "The Forum" which is held at Trinity College in Hartford. The theme of this year's event was empowering people about how to get civically involved. The focus was on re-entry work, the voice of the millennial, the role of the church in politics and a dialogue about Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), which was recently ended by an order of the President of the United States. CEO's Senior Legislative Policy Analyst, Werner Oyanadel continues to serve as a panelist along with a number of elected officials.

### Literacy Forum



The Commission on Women, Children and Seniors, Commission on Equity and Opportunity, the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus and the State Department of Education jointly hosted an important literacy forum where experts, educators and stakeholders focused on the transformative power of early literacy interventions.



**Quality of Life Result:**

- All members of the Commission on Equity and Opportunity populations of the State attain educational success.
- All members of the Commission on Equity and Opportunity populations of the State realize full employment.
- All members of the Commission on Equity and Opportunity populations of the State achieve reductions in poverty rates.
- All members of the Commission on Equity and Opportunity populations of the State are covered under health insurance.

## 2017 Program Report Card: Graduation Rates for 3 Divisions of Commission on Equity & Opportunity

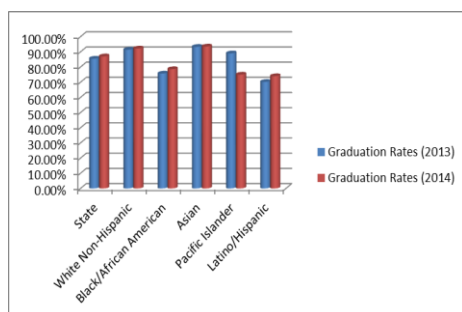
*Quality of Life Result:* All members of the Commission on Equity and Opportunity populations of the State attain educational success.

**Contribution to the Result:** The Commission on Equity and Opportunity's Board and Staff collaborated with the partners below to continue narrowing the educational achievement gap among CEO's represented populations in Connecticut.

**Partners:** Central Connecticut State University, Asian Family Services, CT Asian Pacific American Bar Association (CAPABA), Asian Pacific American Coalition of CT, Chinese Cultural Center, Vietnamese American Coalition of CT, African American Cultural Center-UCONN, Trinity African Students Association, Africana Student Organization-CCSU, Legislative Members of the Connecticut House and Senate.

### How Much Did We Do?

Graduation rate comparison for 2013 and 2014 outlined below reflects an upswing in the rates among majority from one year to the next:



#### Story behind the baseline:

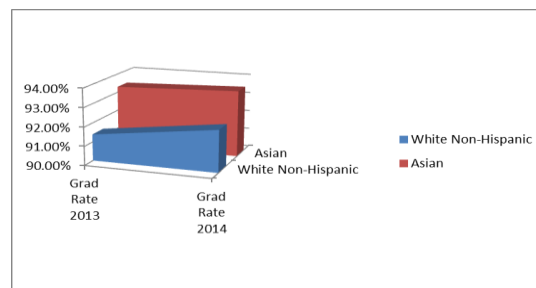
The graduation rate statewide is 85.50% for 2013 and 87% for 2014 of school-aged population. White non-Latino rates were 91.4% and 92.2% respectively. In the Black/African American community the rate was 75.7% and 78.6% respectively; the Asian rates were 93.3% and 93.5%; Pacific Islanders 89% and 75% and for Hispanic/Latino rates were 70% and 74% respectively for the years 2013 and 2014. Source: US Census ACS



Trend: [Use ▲ ▼, or ◀ ▶]

### How Well Did We Do It?

We are able to track 4 of the communities CEO represents and demonstrate comparisons with statewide residents and White non-Latino residents.



#### Story behind the baseline:

Connecticut's educational gap is in 50<sup>th</sup> percentile in the United States; many students impacted come from the Latino and African American communities.

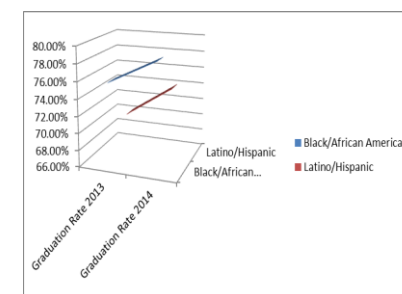
The above chart reflects the Asian community surpassing the White non-Latino population as well as the other 3 populations we track in its graduation rate in 2013 and 2014.



Trend: [Use ▲ ▼, or ▶ ▶]

### How Well Did We Do It?

The Black/African American graduation rate increased by 2.9% from 2013 to 2014 and the Hispanic/Latino rate increased 4 points from 70% in 2013 to 74% in 2014.



#### Story behind the baseline:

The goal for the Commission on Equity and Opportunity is to continue assisting with the increase of the rates across all 4 populations we serve. It is our hope to partner with above supporters and others in the community to continue increasing the graduation rates among all 4 populations until they are all in the 90 or 100 percentile.



Trend: [Use ▲ ▼, or ▶ ▶]



## 2017 Program Report Card: Unemployment Rates for 3 Divisions of Commission on Equity & Opportunity

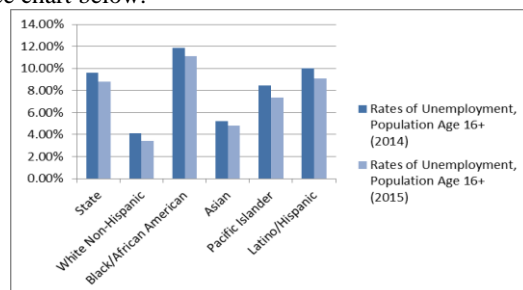
*Quality of Life Result:* All members of the Commission on Equity and Opportunity populations of the State realize full employment.

*Contribution to the Result:* The Commission on Equity and Opportunity's Board and Staff will work to make an impact in realizing full employment among CEO's represented populations in Connecticut.

*Partners:* Connecticut Department of Social Services, Connecticut Department of Labor, Community Renewal Team, Hispanic Federation, NAACP, Urban League of Greater Hartford, Asian Family Services, CT Asian Pacific American Bar Association (CAPABA), Asian Pacific American Coalition of CT, Chinese Cultural Center, Vietnamese American Coalition of CT, African American Cultural Center-UCONN, Trinity African Students Association, Africana Student Organization-CCSU, Legislative Members of the Connecticut House and Senate, print and broadcast media in under-represented communities and Governor's Office.

### How Much Did We Do?

The Commission on Equity and Opportunity (CEO) charted the unemployment rates in 2014 and 2015 for all 4 of the populations it serves. All are trending downward. See chart below.



#### Story behind the baseline:

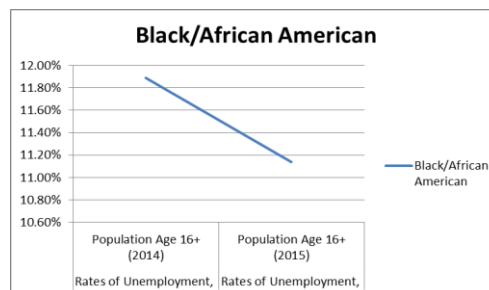
Connecticut's unemployment rate was 8.8% in 2015 down .8% from 2014. The largest rate reduction occurred in the Pacific Islander community with a 1.13% drop in 2015 over 2014. The CEO staff will continue to collaborate with its partners in order to continue the downward trend in unemployment for its populations.  
Source: US Census ACS



Trend: [Use ▲ ▼, or ◀ ▶]

### How Well Did We Do It?

While the Black/African American community realized a reduction in unemployment rate, they are still facing double digit unemployment.



#### Story behind the baseline:

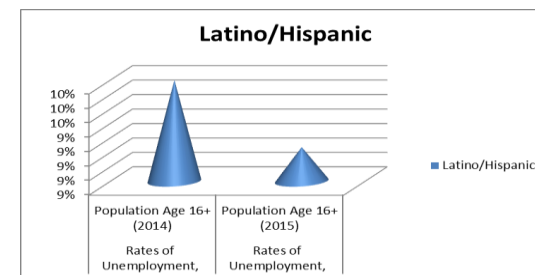
The CEO will collaborate with the State Department of Labor, Workforce Development, the Urban League and other community agencies to ensure that on the job trainings, apprenticeships and other employment resources are made available to further reduce the unemployment rate in the Black community.



Trend: [Use ▲ ▼, or ◀ ▶]

### How Well Did We Do It?

The CEO will work with such agencies as the Hispanic Federation and state agencies to keep the Latino/Hispanic community's unemployment rate down.



#### Story behind the baseline:

The goal for the Commission on Equity and Opportunity is to continue assisting with the overall reduction in the unemployment rates among the populations it serves. We plan to achieve this long-term goal by partnering with key collaborators in the state that have an impact in the lives of our represented populations.



Trend: [Use ▲ ▼, or ◀ ▶]

## 2017 Program Report Card: Poverty Rate Reductions for 3 Divisions of Commission on Equity & Opportunity

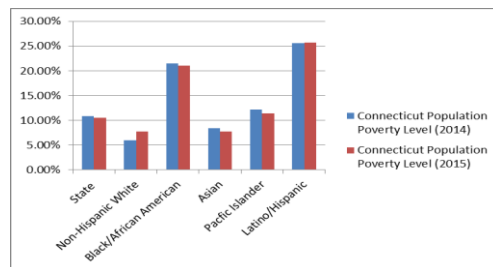
*Quality of Life Result: All members of the Commission on Equity and Opportunity populations of the State achieve reductions in poverty rates.*

**Contribution to the Result:** The Commission on Equity and Opportunity's Board and Staff will work with CEO's represented populations in Connecticut to continue to reduce the rates of poverty in their respective communities.

**Partners:** Connecticut Department of Social Services, Connecticut Department of Labor, Hispanic Federation, NAACP, Urban League of Greater Hartford, Asian Family Services, CT Asian Pacific American Bar Association (CAPABA), Asian Pacific American Coalition of CT, Chinese Cultural Center, Vietnamese American Coalition of CT, African American Cultural Center-UConn, Trinity African Students Association, Africana Student Organization-CCSU, Legislative Members of the Connecticut House and Senate, print & broadcast media in under-represented communities & Governor's Office.

### How Much Did We Do?

The Commission on Equity and Opportunity (CEO) identified poverty rates among the populations it represents to be in double digits below the poverty rate.



#### Story behind the baseline:

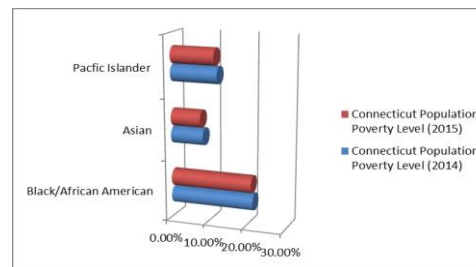
Connecticut's poverty rate went down .3% to 10.5% in 2015 from 10.8 in 2014. In the White, Non-Latino as well as in the Latino/Hispanic communities, the rates increased from 5.98% to 7.79% in 2015 and from 25.57% to 25.66% respectively. While the Black/African American, Asian and Pacific Islander poverty rates showed a decrease, at least 2 of the populations' rates are also in double digits. *Source: US Census ACS*



Trend: [Use ▲ ▼, or ◀ ▶]

### How Well Did We Do It?

At least 3 of the populations CEO represents are trending downward in the poverty rates when 2014 is compared to the rates for 2015 in each of the 3 communities.



#### Story behind the baseline:

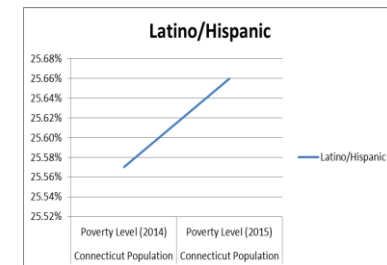
Connecticut's Pacific Islander, Asian, and Black/African American communities are making headway in reduction of poverty rates from 2014 to 2015. However, in the African American and Pacific Islander communities the rates are in the double digits and unacceptable.



Trend: [Use ▲ ▼, or ◀ ▶]

### How Well Did We Do It?

While the other 3 populations represented by the CEO showed signs of progress in reducing poverty rates, the Latino/Hispanic community rates increased by .09% in 2015 over 2014 rates.



#### Story behind the baseline:

The goal for the Commission on Equity and Opportunity is to continue assisting with the overall reduction in the poverty rates among the populations it serves. We plan to achieve this long-term goal by partnering with key collaborators in the state that have an impact in the lives of our represented populations.



Trend: [Use ▲ ▼, or ◀ ▶]

## 2017 Program Report Card: Health Insurance Coverage for 3 Divisions of Commission on Equity & Opportunity

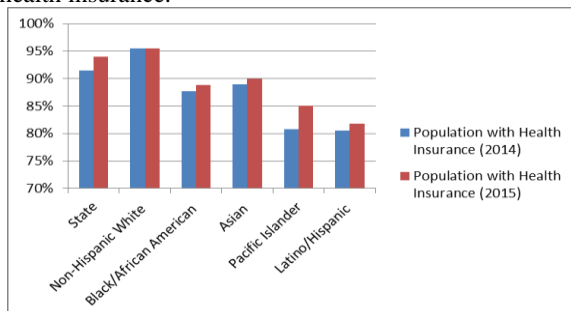
*Quality of Life Result:* All members of the Commission on Equity and Opportunity populations of the State are covered under health insurance.

*Contribution to the Result:* The Commission on Equity and Opportunity's Board and Staff will work toward helping CEO's represented populations in Connecticut in gaining health insurance coverage.

*Partners:* Connecticut Department of Social Services, Connecticut Department of Public Health, Access Health CT, Community Renewal Team, Hispanic Federation, NAACP, Urban League of Greater Hartford, Asian Family Services, CT Asian Pacific American Bar Association (CAPABA), Asian Pacific American Coalition of CT, Chinese Cultural Center, Vietnamese American Coalition of CT, African American Cultural Center-UCONN, Trinity African Students Association, Africana Student Organization-CCSU, Legislative Members of the Connecticut House and Senate, print and broadcast media in under-represented communities.

### How Much Did We Do?

The Commission on Equity and Opportunity (CEO) identified that 94% of Connecticut's population has health insurance.



#### Story behind the baseline:

The 4 populations represented by the CEO have realized increases in obtaining health insurance from 2014 to 2015. Once again, the Pacific Islander community realized the largest increase in health insurance coverage up from 80.8% in 2014 to 85% in 2015.

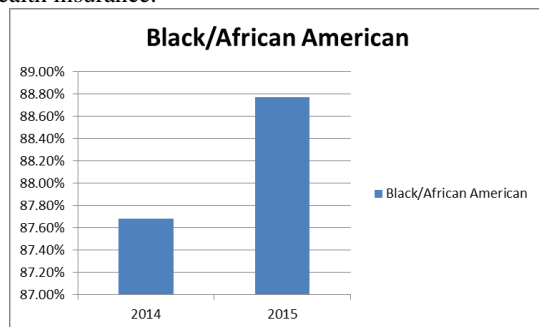
Source: US Census ACS



Trend: [Use ▲ ▼, or ◀ ▶]

### How Well Did We Do It?

We observed that the African-American community realized a small increase from 2014 to 2015 in obtaining health insurance.



#### Story behind the baseline:

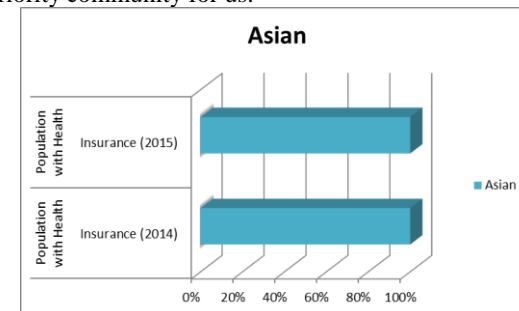
The Black/African-American community showed a 1.09% increase in obtaining health insurance from 2014 to 2015. We must work with partners in this community to ensure that the message is filtering through to everyone about how to obtain health insurance coverage.



Trend: [Use ▲ ▼, or ◀ ▶]

### How Well Did We Do It?

The health insurance rates for the Asian community increased only 1.01% from 2014 to 2015 so this is a priority community for us.



#### Story behind the baseline:

The intent of the Commission on Equity and Opportunity is to continue assisting with the continued increase in health insurance coverage among the populations it serves. We plan to achieve this long-term goal by partnering with key collaborators in the state that have an impact in the lives of our represented populations.



Trend: [Use ▲ ▼, or ◀ ▶]



## *2018 Legislative Focus*

The Connecticut General Assembly's Commission on Equity and Opportunity, (CEO) during the 2018 Legislative Session will address the educational opportunity gap, health equity, criminal justice reform and work with legislators to tackle the most pressing issues facing the minority populations in the state. A few of our targeted measures are listed below:

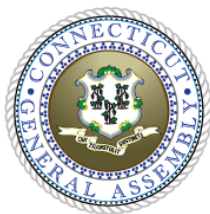
- Working to help close the degree and certificate attainment gap for students of color.
- Expanding racial impact statements.
- Reducing barriers to occupational licensing for immigrants and the re-entry population.
- Expanding access to public transportation.
- Creating parity in the justice system so misdemeanors in the state are treated as such.
- Streamlining health data collection across state agencies.

## *Meet the Commission on Equity and Opportunity*

The Commission on Equity and Opportunity's Commissioners and Staff inform and engage all policymakers about constituent needs for the African American, Asian American, Pacific Islanders, and Latino and Puerto Rican populations in Connecticut. We are a nonpartisan agency with a data-driven, cross-cultural approach to policy innovation as we work to eliminate disparities by creating opportunities, building connections and promoting change.



Commission on Equity and  
Opportunity  
18-20 Trinity Street  
Suite 202  
Hartford, CT 06106-1591  
(860) 240-1424 - P  
(860) 240-1476 - F  
[ctceo@cga.ct.gov](mailto:ctceo@cga.ct.gov)  
[www.cga.ct.gov/ceo](http://www.cga.ct.gov/ceo)



Commission on Equity and Opportunity