



Cultural Appreciation in the Massachusetts Trial Court

A Model For Enhancing Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

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IN MEMORIAM: THE HONORABLE RALPH D. GANTS

September 29, 1954 – September 14, 2020

Chief Justice Ralph Gants on
Disparity in Sentencing 2016:

“We need to learn the truth
behind this troubling disparity
and, once we learn it, we need
the courage and the
commitment to handle the
truth.”



Our Mission

The Trial Court is committed to:

- Fair and impartial administration of justice;
- Protection of constitutional and statutory rights and liberties;
- Equal access to justice for all in a safe and dignified environment with policies and practices that strengthen and support diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- Efficient, effective, and accountable resolution of disputes;
- Prompt and courteous service to the public by committed and dedicated professionals utilizing best practices in a manner that inspires public trust and confidence



Objectives



- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) requires executive level commitment and leadership.**
- **Building an adaptive organizational culture around cultural competency and cultural proficiency are important components to serving and meeting the needs of diverse populations.**
- **Data driven analysis and the use of metrics are important in crafting, formulating, and driving policy change.**
- **Diverse multi-level employee involvement and participation are important to successful organizational implementation of DEI.**

Essential Takeaways



An informed commitment to DEI are essential factors in delivering justice with dignity and speed.

The TC seeks to ensure fair and equal access to the court system through a diverse workforce that is reflective of the communities we serve, interconnected in its scope and mission, and committed to delivering justice with dignity and speed.

Our Cultural Proficiency/DEI Champions focus on improving the Trial Court's efforts to build a more supportive, respectful, and culturally competent workforce.

Our champions promote behaviors and practices that lends themselves to inclusion, connectivity, and shared TC values and attitudes.

Improve access to justice through community discussions, engagement, and transparency , and outreach.



HOW DID WE GET HERE?

Trial Court Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Initiatives



- Trial Court All Court Judges Conference on Race & Implicit Bias, September 16, 2015
- Trial Court Race & Implicit Bias Advisory Committee – 2016
 - Signature Counter Experience 2.0 – 2017-present
 - Workforce Diversity and Cultural Competence Training for the Massachusetts Probation Service – 2017-ongoing
 - Recruitment of Cultural Proficiency Champions 2017-ongoing
 - Cultural Appreciation Week - 2017, 2018, 2019, (Virtual Celebration October 2020)
 - Creation of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Domain in SP 3.0 - 2018
 - Establishment of the Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion - 2018
 - Community Engagement Sessions, Brockton, Roxbury, Dorchester, Roxbury, Chelsea – 2018-ongoing
 - Leadership Development and Increased Education and Training
 - Community Outreach Pilot with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC)
 - Massachusetts Bar Association Judicial Diversity Task Force
 - Implicit Bias Training for Security 2019

Our Overarching Theme



- The Massachusetts Trial Court's commitment to racial equity and justice lies in its commitment to providing equal access to justice for all residents of the Commonwealth.

How is this accomplished?

- Provide equal access to justice for all in a safe and dignified environment with policies and practices that strengthen and support diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Trial Court Workforce by Race & Ethnicity



Count of employees		pay period end date				
xref_sex	description	03/18/17	03/17/18	03/16/19	03/14/20	09/12/20
F			3	9	8	12
	American Indian/Alaska Native	13	11	10	13	13
	Asian	82	78	83	88	92
	Black/African American	453	464	489	497	489
	Hispanic/Latino	345	364	385	425	437
	Native Hawaiian/Oth Pac Island	2	3	3	2	2
	Not Specified	2	14	28	29	35
	White	2736	2690	2668	2626	2563
F Total		3633	3627	3675	3688	3643
M		1	1	6	9	12
	American Indian/Alaska Native	9	10	11	10	10
	Asian	35	44	43	42	41
	Black/African American	344	327	347	344	338
	Hispanic/Latino	178	182	204	223	231
	Native Hawaiian/Oth Pac Island				1	1
	Not Specified		1	3	3	5
	White	2080	2022	2007	1992	1946
M Total		2647	2587	2621	2624	2584
U	Asian				1	
	Black/African American		1		1	
	Hispanic/Latino	1	3	1	5	2
	Not Specified					3
	White	4	3	4	14	4
U Total		5	7	5	21	9
Grand Total		6285	6221	6301	6333	6236

Impact of Differential Treatment as Reported by MTC Employees (2018)



Cultural Proficiency Champions



- **225 plus Trial Court employees**
 - District Court
 - Juvenile Court
 - Boston Municipal Court
 - Superior Court
 - Probate & Family Court
 - Housing Court
 - Land Court
 - Massachusetts Probation Service
 - Security Department
 - Facilities Department
 - Jury Commission
 - Office of Community Corrections
 - Office of Court Management
 - Fiscal Department
- **Trained in Race and Implicit Bias**
- **LGBTQ**
- **Racial and Ethnic Disparity**
- **Gender and Sexual Orientation**
- **Religious Affiliation**
- **Physical Abilities**
- **Cross Cultural Communication**

Cultural Proficiency Champions

The role of the Cultural Proficiency Champion is to work toward enhancing the Trial Court's commitment to its employees, customers, and other court personnel and users by maximizing the full potential and benefits of a diverse and culturally competent workforce.



Role Description



- *Tasks CP champions with the role of engaging in discussions where Trial Court professionals are encouraged to value their own cultures as well as other people's cultures and to incorporate into the work-life, the perspectives and experiences of people who possess different racial, ethnic, and gender orientation.*
- Promote inclusivity and interconnectedness by modeling, mentoring, teaching and coaching the behaviors, values, skills, and attitudes which encourage and promote diversity within their offices.
- Focus on developing cultural proficiency and inclusion through broad-based collaborative partnerships.
- Identify opportunities for inter-department and community engagement around diversity and serve as the liaison to increase awareness of Trial Court efforts to improve and enhance cultural proficiency across our system.

CULTURAL APPRECIATION DAY

September 28, 2017



What is Cultural Appreciation Week?



- This event coincides with the Trial Courts ongoing efforts to move beyond the common conceptualization where diversity is seen largely through the spectrum of race.
- Our goal is to expand thinking beyond just the concept of race, and view diversity as encompassing numerous other factors which along with race includes age, physical ability, gender, religion, sexual orientation, marginalized status and other dimensions not included here.
- Cultural Appreciation Week is the Trial Courts signature event in promoting equal access to justice for all in a safe and dignified environment with policies and practices that strengthen and support diversity, equity and inclusion.

Why Celebrate Cultural Appreciation?



- Cultural competence and cultural proficiency are essential skills when it comes to effective work performance and providing quality customer service experience and outcomes.
- As a Trial Court, it is important we celebrate the rich tapestry and diversity of our employees and our communities.
- In taking time to share, engage, discuss and celebrate our uniqueness and differences, as well as welcome and invite diversity in all forms from our communities, we gain a deeper level of appreciation and understanding about ourselves and the people we serve.
- Within that appreciation and understanding, we find many commonalities as Trial Court employees as the people of our great Commonwealth.

CAW 2018 – Diversity, Equity & Inclusion



EMBRACING AND CELEBRATING OUR DIFFERENCES

CAW 2019 – Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

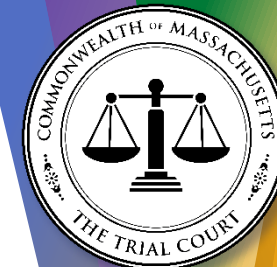


BEING WHO YOU ARE IN THE WORLD AS YOU ARE

“As a source of exchange, innovation and creativity, cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature.”

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization 2001.

CAW 2020 – A Virtual Celebration



JUSTICE AND CULTURE: BRIDGING THE GAP

Types of Activities



- Share information about each other's cultures.
- Employees share foods and engage in activities which offer ways for employees to learn more about each other's unique differences.
- Create opportunities for conversations which allows for a deeper exploration of each other's cultures to foster greater cultural understanding and the embracing of other forms of diversity and cultures that are different from our own.

Leadership Roles in Supporting CPCs



- Provide opportunities for CPCs to engage staff on topics and discussions around diversity and inclusion
- Support internal and external training opportunities for CPCs
- Work with CPCs to develop internal support and mentoring programs
- Take an active role in promoting diversity and inclusion
- Support and encourage activities and team building exercises which foster and promote a culture of understanding and acceptance
- Develop higher levels of diversity awareness and cultural competence and proficiency
- Work to ensure your department is reflective of the communities it serves

Employee Benefits

- Greater mutual respect and understanding
- Teamwork and cohesiveness
- Diverse thinking and problem solving
- Increased innovation
- Improved morale
- Increased employee productivity
- A stronger organizational culture



Community & Court User Benefits

- Greater awareness into and about the diverse users we serve.
- Improved cultural competencies.
- A higher level of cultural proficiency.
- A demonstrated capacity to service the needs of diverse court users.
- Improved access to justice through more effective and culturally competent court services.
- An affirmation of the Trial Court's commitment to the development of a highly skilled and engaged workforce that reflects the diversity of the Commonwealth.





CULTURAL APPRECIATION DAY

A Massachusetts Probation Service and Courts' statewide celebration

Thursday, September 28, 2017



Olga Lattarulo, Maria Pacheco, Yesnia Hernandez
at Chelsea District Court

Boston Municipal Court - Roxbury



Quincy District Court



Hampden Hall of Justice



Berkshire County



Barnstable Court Complex



SCENES FROM 2018 CULTURAL APPRECIATION WEEK

1. Newton
2. Leominster
3. Plymouth
4. Essex County
5. Brockton
6. Worcester



SCENES FROM 2019 CULTURAL APPRECIATION WEEK



1. Ayer
2. Boston
3. Stoughton
4. Concord
5. Fall River
6. Leominster



SCENES FROM 2019 CULTURAL APPRECIATION WEEK



1. Clinton
2. Franklin County
3. Dorchester
4. Boston - Land Court
5. Middlesex County
6. Orange



SCENES FROM 2019 CULTURAL APPRECIATION WEEK



1. Essex County
2. Southern Berkshire County
3. Plymouth
4. Dudley
5. Newton





Questions?

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