

State of Connecticut



African-American Affairs Commission



2015
ANNUAL REPORT



2015 ANNUAL REPORT

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LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR

January 2016

The Honorable Dannel P. Malloy
Governor of the State of Connecticut
State Capitol
Hartford, CT 06106



Alphonse Wright
AAAC Chairperson

Dear Governor Malloy,

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the State of Connecticut African-American Affairs Commission (AAAC) 2015 Annual Report (Public Act No. 09-7 Sec. 144. Sect 2-121(b) (7) (c) of the General Statutes). During the year, the Commission successfully fulfilled its mission to improve and promote the economic development, education, health and political well-being of the African-American community in the State of Connecticut.

The AAAC served the Legislature as a valuable resource. The Commission provided important data, guidance and leadership on important legislation in education, economic development, criminal justice and housing. The AAAC served a major role by reaching out to the African-American Community and others with public forums on improving education, wellness, behavioral health and police/community relations. Some of the Commission's major accomplishments included:

- Proposed to address chronic absenteeism, low number of minority teachers in public education, the need to provide cultural competency for teachers and out of school suspension as well as expulsion for students in kindergarten to second grade
- Led a coalition to pass a student loan bill of rights and coordinated the only statewide effort to have students complete FAFSA (College Goal Sunday-CT)
- Produced the only comprehensive statewide college and university scholarship and financial aid resource for students
- Assisted with legislation that removed the municipal exemption from the MBE/SBE Set Aside Programs
- Supported criminal justice reforms with the Second Chance Society and Excessive Force Legislation and
- Supported legislation that ensured that residents who received housing subsidies are able to access mobility counselling

During the year the Commission sponsored or co-sponsored round table discussions, forums and an international conference. These events focused on political engagement, access on health, educational support and economic development. The annual Classic Awards Gala and Black History Month program focused attention on some of the many significant contributions made by African-Americans in Connecticut.

Despite limited resources the African-American Affairs Commission continued to serve the state well. The Annual Report provides data that reflects the progress made to improve the lives of residents. The Commission believes that thoughtful strategies and policies will help keep our communities growing and improving.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alphonse Wright". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alphonse Wright
AAAC Chairperson

Mission Statement

To improve and promote the economic development, education, health and political well-being of the African-American community in the State of Connecticut through advocacy, information sharing, cultural awareness, community networking and influencing legislation.

Legislative Mandates

Focus efforts to improve quality of life outcomes in educational achievement, health equity, economic prosperity, social and criminal justice and political well-being for the African-American population of the state;

- Make recommendations to the General Assembly and the Governor for new or enhanced policies, programs and services that will foster progress in achieving quality of life outcomes.
- Review and comment on any proposed state legislation or recommendations that may affect the African-American population of the state and provide copies of any such comments to members of the General Assembly.
- Advise the General Assembly and Governor concerning the coordination and administration of state programs that affect the African-American population of the state.
- Gather and maintain current information regarding the African-American population of the state that can be used to better understand the status, condition and contributions of such African-American population and shall be made available to legislators and other interested parties upon request.
- Maintain a liaison between the African-American population of the state and government agencies, including the General Assembly.
- Conduct educational and outreach activities intended to raise awareness of critical issues for the African-American population of the state.

2015 Annual Legislative Report

In the 2015 session the AAAC both proposed and testified on a significant number of bills many of which passed both chambers and were signed by the Governor. The Commission also worked on significant policy issues that became important as the session progressed and proved that they would be of great importance to the African American community.

Education

Connecticut continues to have the largest achievement gap in the country and the 2015 session saw a number of bills that were geared towards addressing some of the challenges that are facing minority students. The AAAC proposed that the state take a serious look at chronic absenteeism and create a plan that would help to lessen the number of students that are becoming truant as a result of their absenteeism. The Commission also proposed a requirement that all teachers receive cultural competency training as a part of their in-service requirements. Studies have shown that students learn more and are more successful when they have teachers and administrators that are reflective of the student body. With a very low number of minority teachers in the state we believe that giving all teachers cultural competency training was a step in the right direction. Along with the work on cultural competency we also supported a measure to create a minority teacher recruitment taskforce which will give recommendations on best practices on how to recruit and retain minority teachers.

There are large discrepancies in disciplinary action in Connecticut's schools. Students of color are suspended, expelled and arrested at alarmingly higher rates than their white counterparts. The commission supported bills that are aimed at reducing these numbers as well a measure to prohibit out of school suspensions and expulsions for students in kindergarten to second grade.

Student loans

The AAAC lead a coalition to pass a student loan bill of rights, the first of its kind in the country, which will assist many families with the student loan process. African American students are twice as likely to borrow and tend to borrow twice as much as white students. This law requires the department of banking to create a student loan ombudsman position which will act as an advocate for borrowers and be an intermediary between student loan servicers and borrowers. This office will also create a student loan education course which will be helpful for many first time college students.

Housing

Connecticut is one of the most segregated states in the nation. This has contributed to the state having the largest achievement gap as those with the least resources are not able to access safe neighborhoods or attend high performing schools. The commission worked to pass a law that will ensure that residents who receive housing subsidies are able to access mobility counselling. The counselling will include information on jobs, access to transportation, schools and crime rates in current and potential neighborhoods for recipients.

Criminal Justice

The 2015 session saw a lot of criminal justice reforms. The governor started out the session with a policy deemed

“the second chance society” which would lower many non-violent drug offences from felony convictions to misdemeanors. The AAAC was a strong supporter of these policies due to disproportionate minority contact with the police and the racial disparities that exist in the criminal justice system. Another important component of this new law is that individuals who are arrested multiple times for drug possession are diverted to treatment programs rather than to prison.

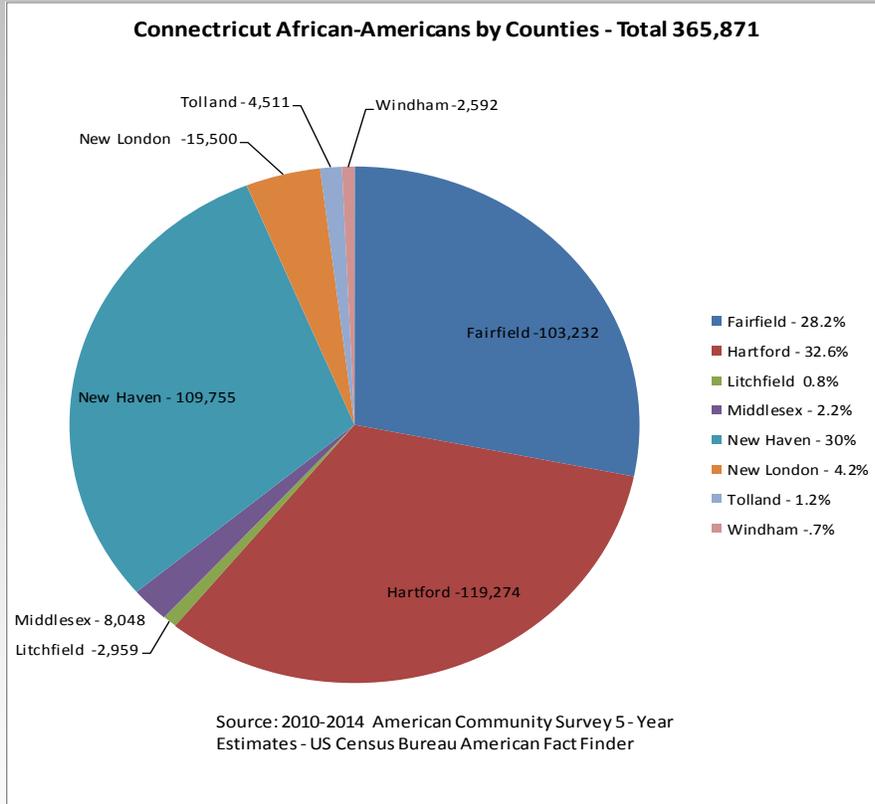
In response to the many atrocities that have been seen across the country where police have shown excessive force when dealing with unarmed blacks which has resulted in the death of many, the AAAC supported “the use of excessive force” legislation. This police reform law will equip every police officer in the state with a body camera; require police officers to receive use of excessive force training, require police departments to actively try to recruit minorities to their force in areas with a high percentage of minorities in the population and requires the appointment of a special prosecutor in police involved deaths. Connecticut has seen its fair share of deaths of minorities by the police. This law will be transformative and will help to protect the police as well as residents of the state.

The AAAC also supported juvenile justice legislations which would eliminate the shackling of youth in court as well as expand the duties of the Juvenile Justice Policy and oversight Committee, (JJPOC). After several years of trying to pass second look legislation which would eliminate life sentences for youth who commit serious crimes this year this bill passed both chambers. The AAAC provided testimony as there are huge racial disparities in sentencing and 100% of youth serving a life sentence for a crime committed under the age of 18 are African Americans.

Economic Development

One of the major pieces of legislation that the AAAC participated in was removing the municipal exemption from the MBE/SBE set aside program. By lifting this exemption many minority contractors will be eligible to bid on projects that are in their own towns or municipalities. This is beneficial to the African American community because while the economy is recovering, black families are still faced with large unemployment numbers and the poverty gap in Connecticut continues to widen. We also testified on a bill that would broaden access to the small business express program for minority businesses. Both of these measures will help minorities to gain access to small business dollars which are available in the state.

2015 SNAPSHOT OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS IN CONNECTICUT



Total Population—365,871

Females—190,462 Males 175,409

Gender	Females	Males	Total
Under 18 years	46,510	49,350	95,860
18 and 64 years	123,355	113,211	236,566
65 and over	20,597	12,848	33,445

Total Populations in Households	342,504
Total in Family Households:	290,377
In married-couple family:	130,244
Relatives	129,286
Nonrelatives	958
In male householder, no wife	24,260
Relatives	21,592
Nonrelatives	2,668
In female householder no husband	135,873
Relatives	131,215
Nonrelatives	4,658
In nonfamily households	52,127

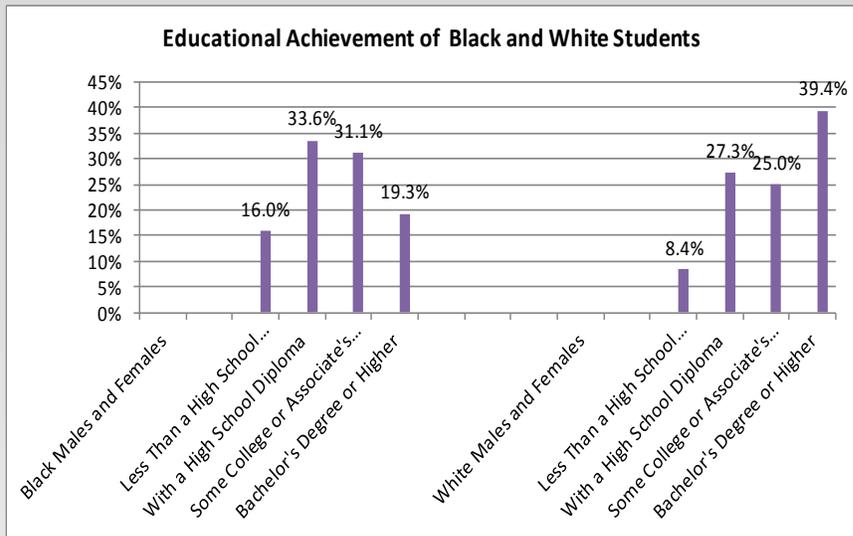
Marital Status for population 15 years and over (Black or African-American Alone)

Total 288,165

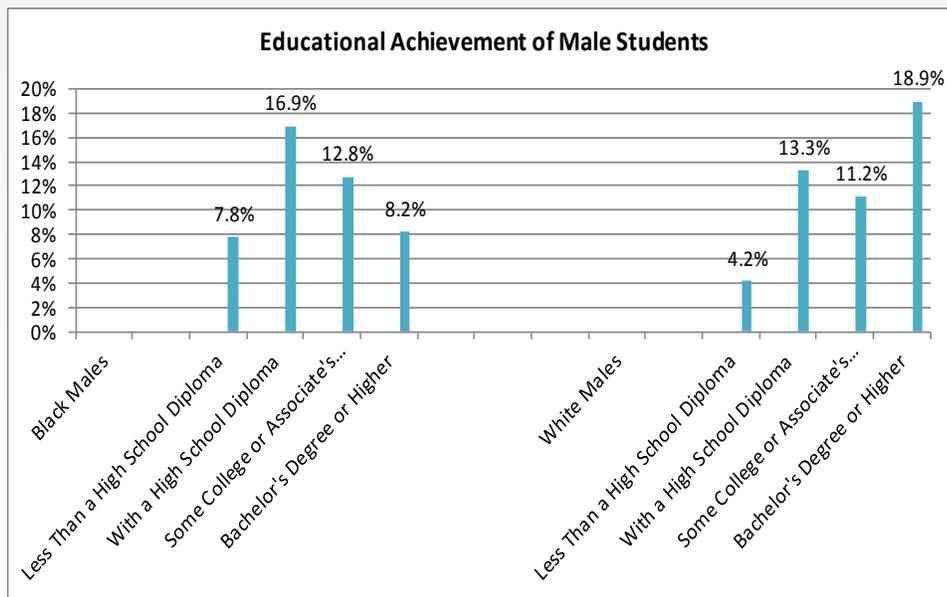
Female and Male		Male	
Never Married	146,961	Never Married	71,650
Now married, except separated	85,033	Now married, except separated	44,671
Separated	8,651	Separated	3,211
Widowed	14,104	Widowed	3,211
Divorced	33,416	Divorced	12,564
Female			
Never Married	75,311		
Now married, except separated	40,362		
Separated	5,440		
Widowed	10,893		
Divorced	20,852		

Source: US Census Bureau, American Fact finder 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Educational Attainment of African-American Students compared to White Students in Connecticut

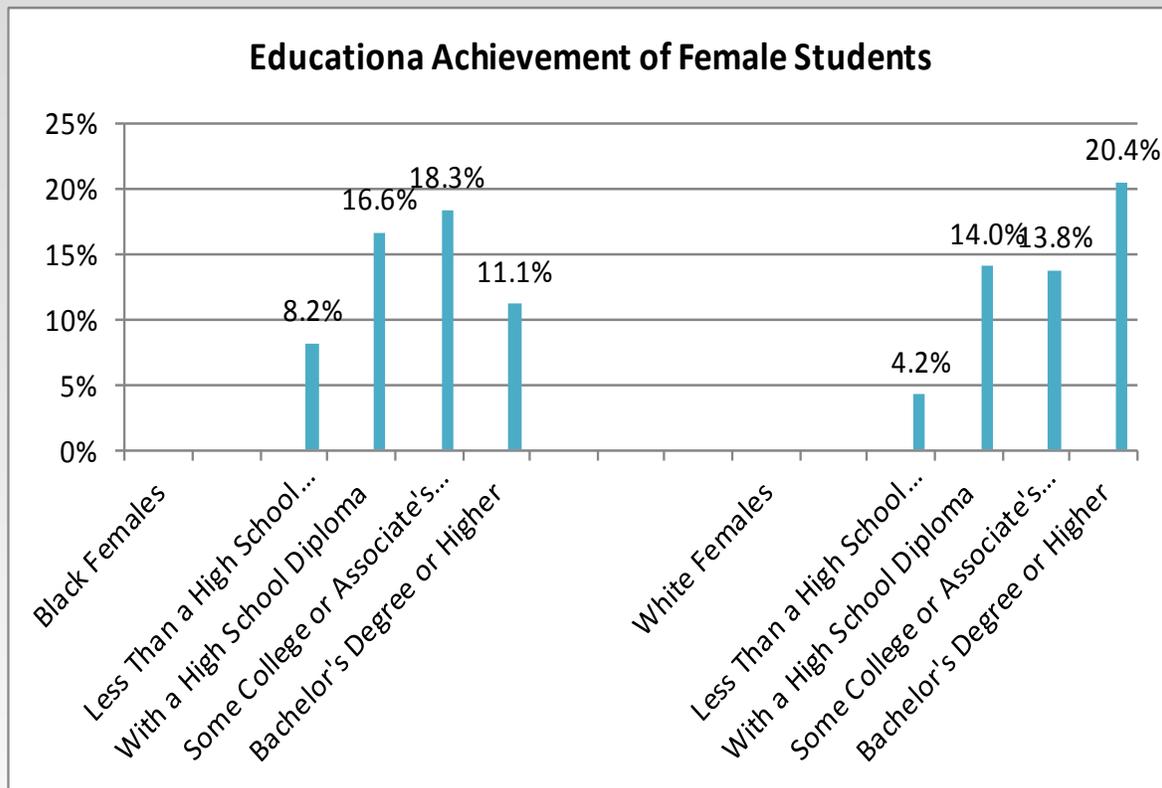


Educational Achievement is defined as earning a bachelor's degree or higher. During the latest reporting year 2014, on a percentage basis white students ranked higher on educational achievement than African-American students. Conversely more African-American students had less than a high school education compared to white students. Combined a larger percent of African-Americans had a high school diploma and some college or an associate degree than whites. As stated earlier, this is supported by the fact that twice the percentage of whites earned bachelor degrees or higher than African-Americans. A strategy to increase earning BA degrees for African-Americans would be to focus on those who have some college or an associate degree. Programs like Go Back to Get Ahead should be funded and supported.



The disparity between African-American males and white males was more pronounced.

Educational Attainment of African-American Students compared to White Students in Connecticut — continued



African-American females were more closely aligned with white females than African-American males and white males. However, the disparities still exist. African-American females fared better than their male counterpart.

Source: American Fact Finder 2011-2014 American Community Survey 1– Year Estimates

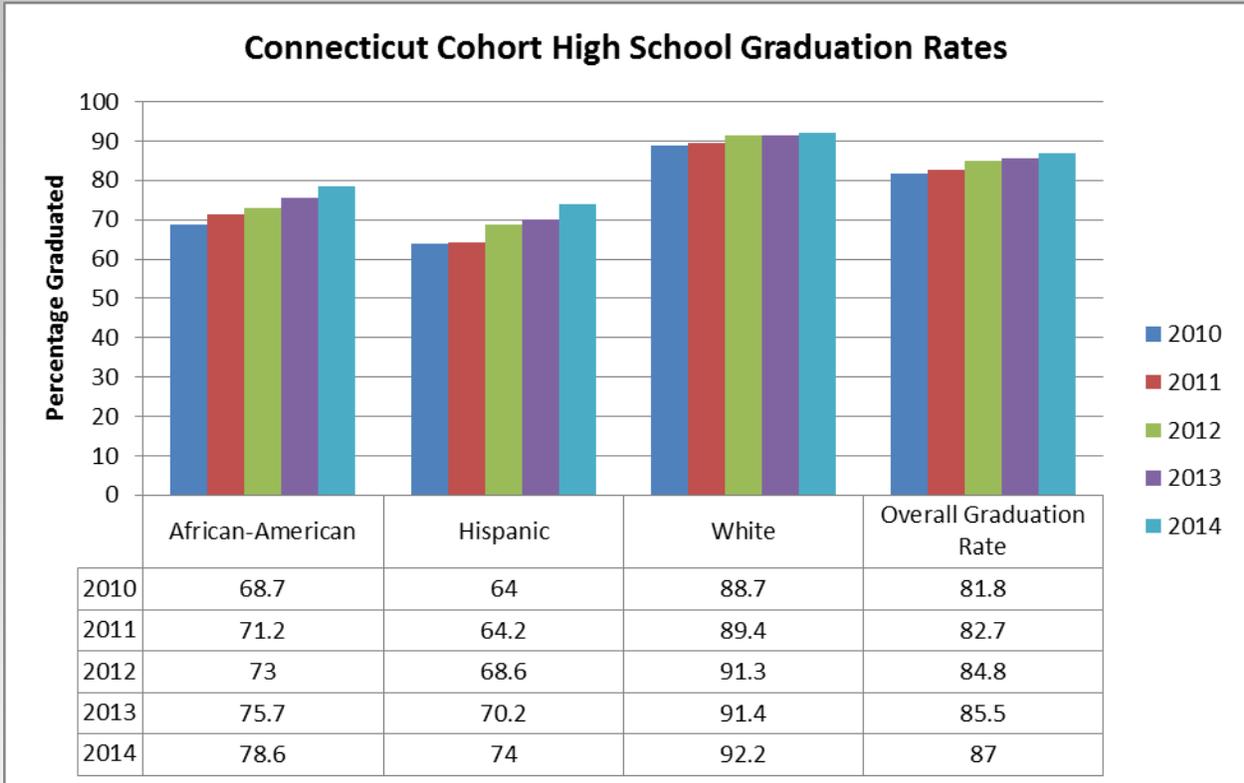
School Enrollment

Population 3 Years and Enrolled in School	118,321
Nursery and Preschool	7,504
Kindergarten	5,815
Elementary (Grades 1-8)	42,520
High School (9 - 12)	27,057
College or Graduate School	35,425
Not enrolled in school	233,986
Total Black Students	225,130
Male:	102,955
Less than high school diploma	17,597
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	38,152
Some college or associate's degree	28,726
Bachelor's degree or higher	18,480
Female:	122,175
Less than high school diploma	18,365
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	37,472
Some college or associate's degree	41,304
Bachelor's degree or higher	25,034
Total White Students:	1,984,788
Male:	944,326
Less than high school diploma	82,634
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	264,078
Some college or associate's degree	221,623
Bachelor's degree or higher	375,991
Female:	1,040,462
Less than high school diploma	83,164
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	278,180
Some college or associate's degree	273,703
Bachelor's degree or higher	405,415

Source: American Fact Finder 2011-2014 American Community Survey 1– Year Estimates

**Result 1:
All Connecticut Residents of African Descent Achieve Educational Success**

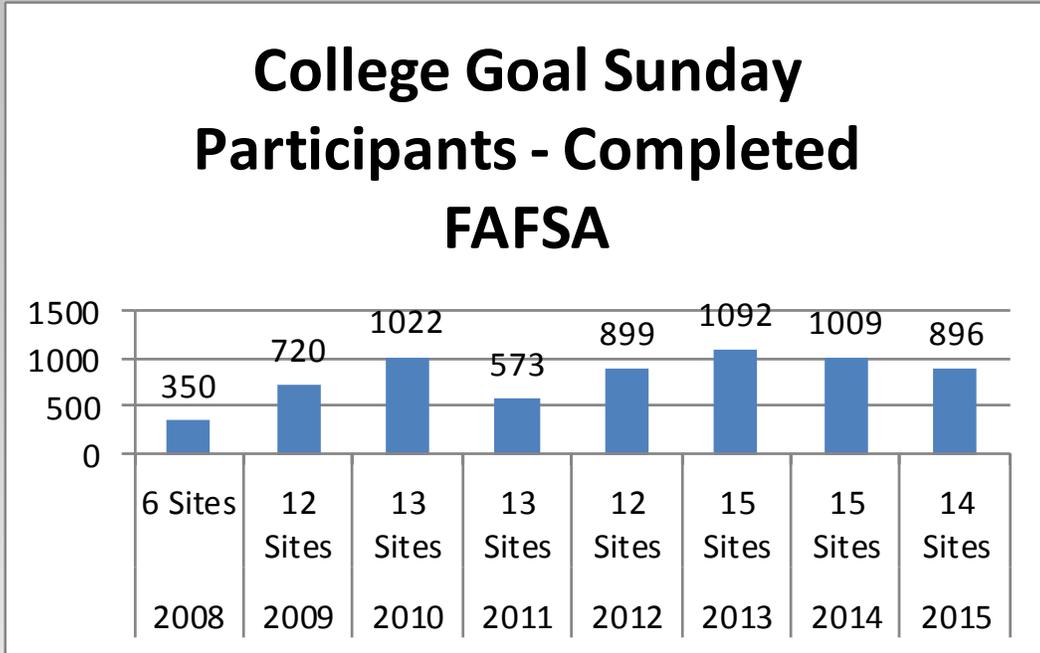
Indicator 1: African-American Graduation Rate



Story behind the baseline: From 2010 to 2014 the high school graduation rate for African-American student has shown very good progress. The graduation rate for African-American students has increased 10 percentage points while the rate for White students and the overall rate for the state were 4% and 5% respectively. More importantly the graduation gap between African-American students and White students has decreased from 20% to 13.6% in the 5 year period. Compared to the overall state, the rate decreased from 13.1% to 8.4%. Proposed strategies to turn the curve: 1) Support the implementation of Common Core 2) Assist with the implementation of individual student success program 3) More support and funding of the Commissioner Network school and 4) Improve efforts to improve the Minority Teacher Recruitment programs.

Source: CT Dept. of Education

Indicator 2: First Generation and Low Income Students completing FAFSA forms for college financial aid

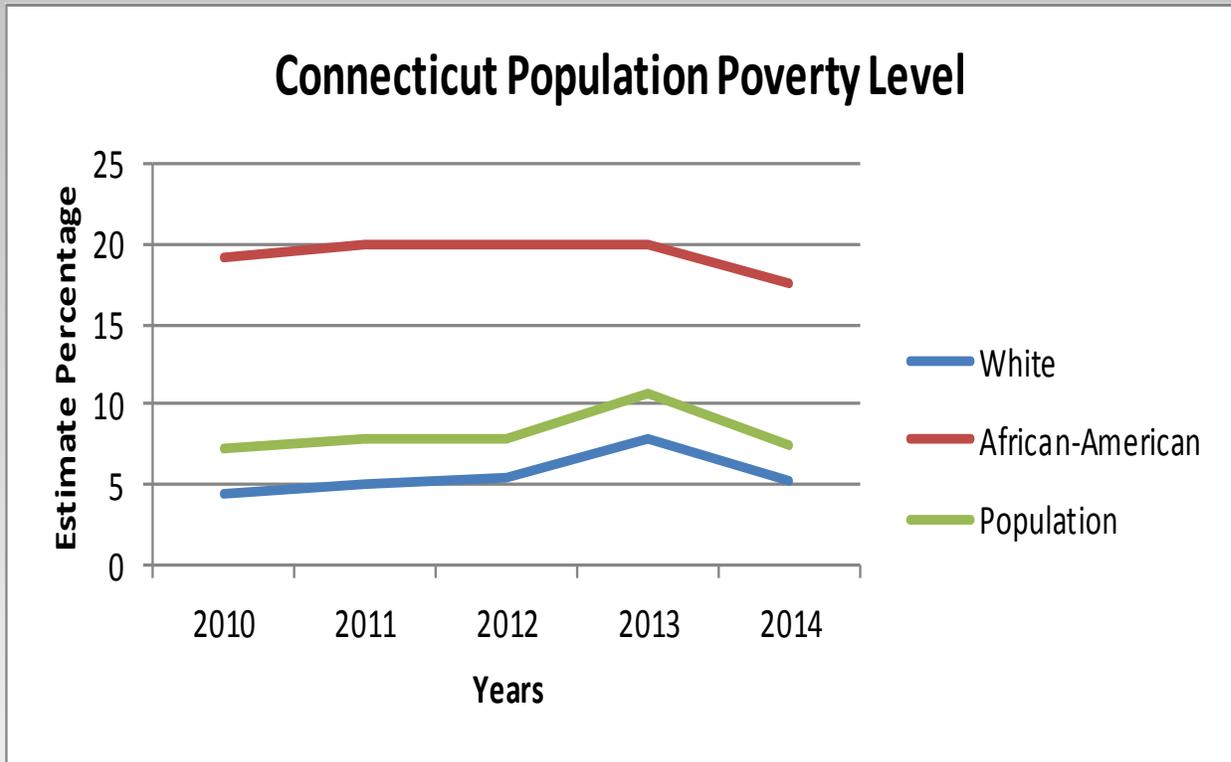


Story behind the baseline: The increasing cost of post-secondary has been a barrier for students to attend college. For first generation and low income students, financial aid is available but without guidance through the process of applying for financial aid many students are eliminated from the process. College Goal Sunday (January 2015) guides students and their families through the FAFSA process and gives students the opportunity to qualify for federal financial aid. Financial aid is necessary for nearly all of these students. In order to be considered for financial aid students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). There was decrease in participation due to one less site and inclement weather causing rescheduling dates. Proposed strategies to turn the curve: 1) Secure funding from national sources to support College Goal Sunday – CT (CGS); 2) Increase the number of sites and be more flexible with days to hold CGS; 3) Assist efforts to reduce student loan debt for higher education 4) Continue partnership with community based organizations, foundations and professional associations and parents to recruit high school seniors and volunteers; 5) Publish and distribute Scholarship Directory.

Source: College Goal Sunday - Connecticut

**Result 2:
All Connecticut Residents of African Descent are Financially Successful**

Indicator 1: Percent of African-American households living below the poverty level



	White	African-American	Population
2010	5%	19%	7%
2011	5%	20%	8%
2012	6%	20%	8%
2013	8%	20%	11%
2014	5%	18%	8%

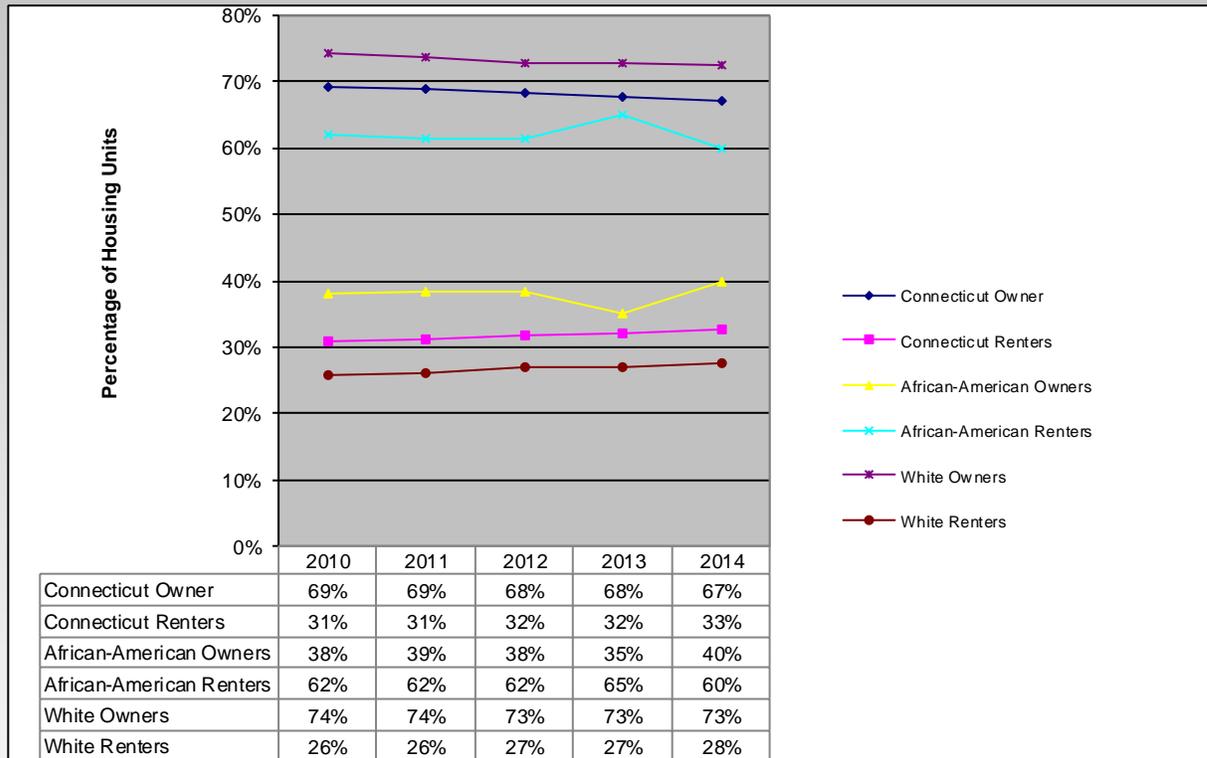
Story behind the baseline: In 2013 the population poverty level was the highest since 2010. After remaining flat at 20% for African-Americans, the rate decreased to 18% which is nearly four times the rate for whites and more than twice for the general population. The decrease may be the result of beginning health care coverage. Proposed strategies to turn the curve: 1) Strengthen employment efforts that economically uplift working poor families from poverty, e.g. earned income tax credit, individual development accounts and support increasing the minimum wage; 2) Offer opportunities to attend programs in financial literacy; 3) Provide legislation that removes barriers preventing minority owned businesses from securing state contracts, 4) Support efforts to provide more affordable housing.

Source: US Census Bureau, American Fact Finder 2009-2014 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates – 1 Year

Indicator 2: Percent of African-Americans who own homes

Connecticut Housing

Home Ownership Compared with Rental Units

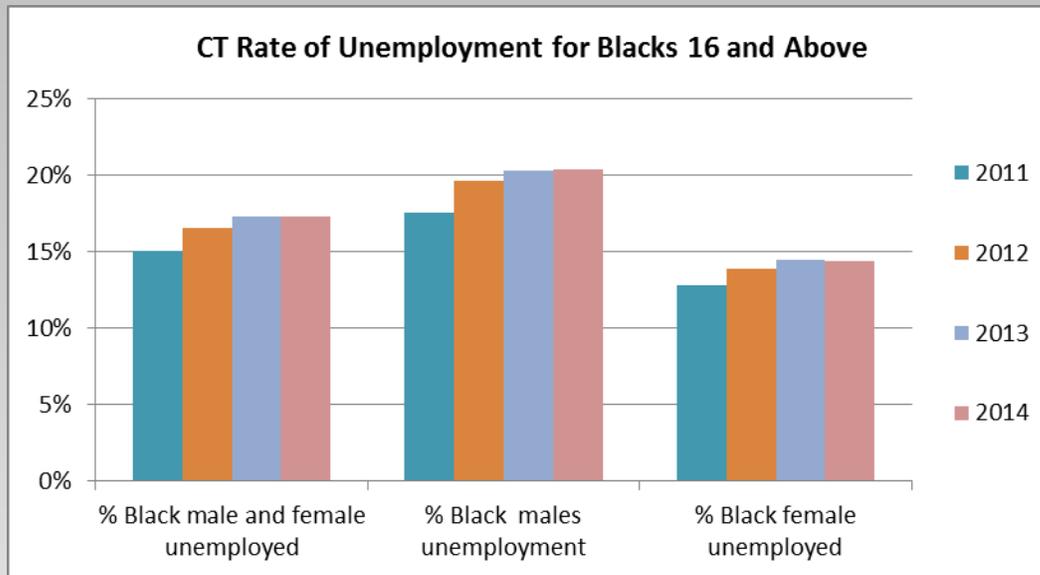


Story behind the baseline: Home ownership is an indicator of financial security, wealth and self-sufficiency. Statewide most population groups are home owners rather than renters. More African-Americans rent homes than own home homes. In 2013 fewer African-Americans owned homes than the previous year but the trend improved in 2014 by 5%. . This is understandable since the rate of poverty for African-Americans increased.

Proposed strategies to turn the curve: 1) Invest in affordable housing developments; 2) Promote first time homebuyer opportunities in low-income communities; 3) Promote fairness in lending policies; 4) Assist homeowners facing foreclosure with information; 5) Support legislation and housing coalitions that advocate for affordable housing.

Source: US Census Bureau, American community Survey 2010—2014 1 Year Estimates

Rates of Unemployment in Connecticut Comparison for African-American and White Residents 16 Years and Above African-Americans



Blacks 16 years and above

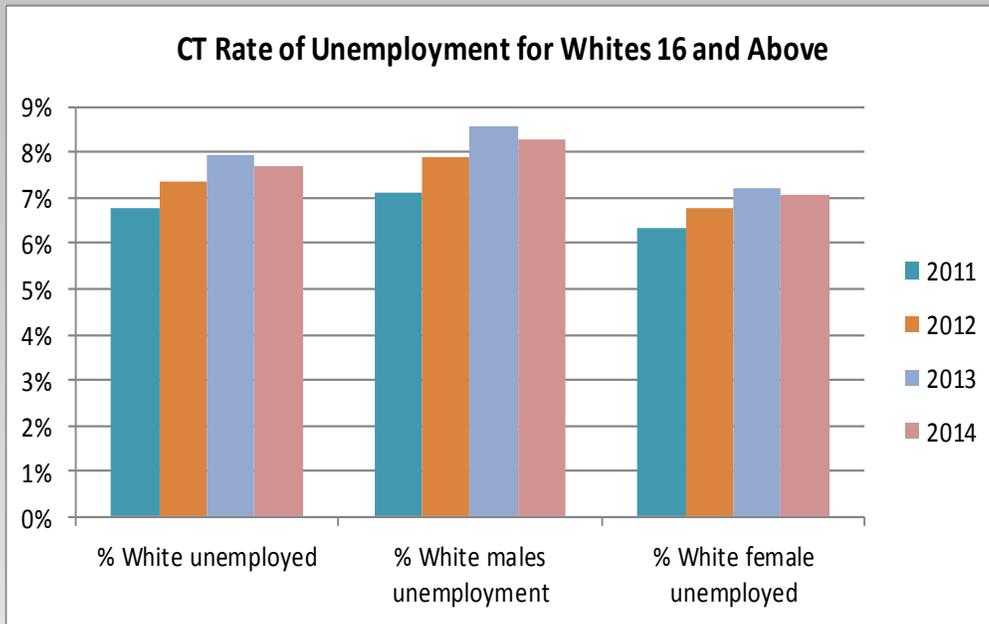
Year	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total males and females in the civilian labor force	181,787	186,548	191,940	194,029
Total males and females unemployed	27,276	30,889	33,143	33,521
Total males in civilian labor force	84,446	87,175	90,383	91,702
Unemployed Black males	14,815	17,109	18,363	18,706
Total females in civilian labor force	97,341	99,373	102,059	102,853
Total females unemployed	12,461	13,780	14,780	14,815

Story behind the baseline: The rate of unemployment for African-Americans has consistently been above the state average before and since 2007. The unemployment rate statewide took a significant jump in 2013 with African-Americans experiencing the greatest increase. Towards the end of 2014, Connecticut was catching up with the rest of the nation with improvements in the rate of unemployment.

Proposed strategies to turn the curve: 1) Support and encourage employment programs that reach urban centers; 2) Circulate announcements regarding employment opportunities on the website and email blasts; 3) Improve the overall educational attainment for African-Americans.

Source: American Fact Finder 2011-2014 American Community Survey 1– Year Estimates

**Rates of Unemployment in Connecticut
Comparison for African-American and White Residents 16 Years and Above
African-Americans**



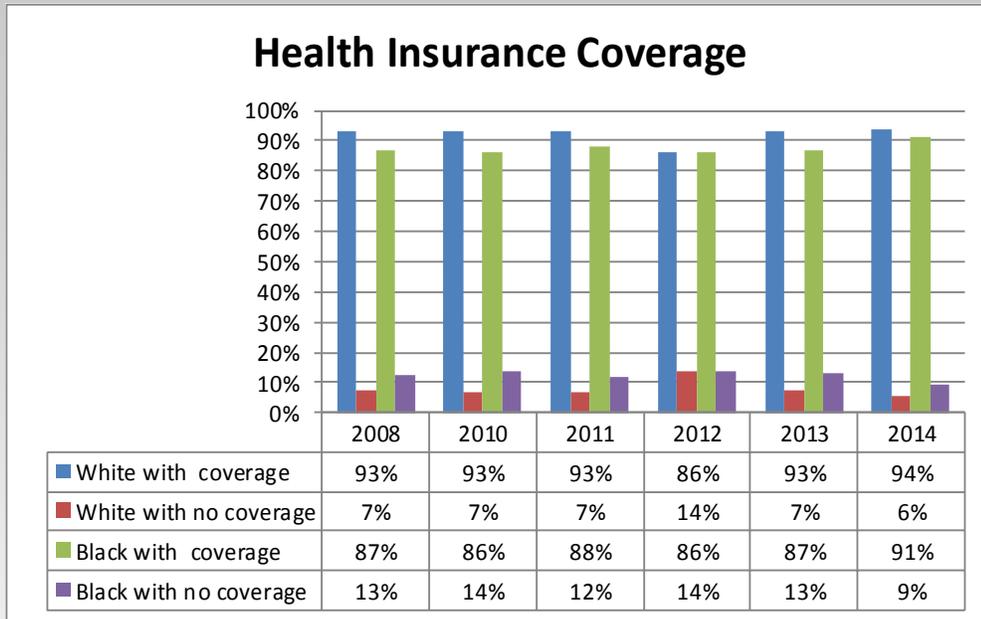
Whites 16 Years and above

	Year	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total males and females in civilian labor force		1,418,409	1,417,201	1,409,980	1,400,538
Total males and females 16 & above unemployed		96,071	104,436	111,711	107,862
Total White males in civilian labor force		745,880	737,338	733,099	727,678
Unemployed White		53,114	58,305	62,727	60,389
Total females in civilian labor force		678,301	679,863	676,881	672,860
Total females unemployed		42,957	46,131	48,984	47,473

**Result 3:
All Connecticut Residents of African Descent Achieve are Healthy**

Indicator 1:

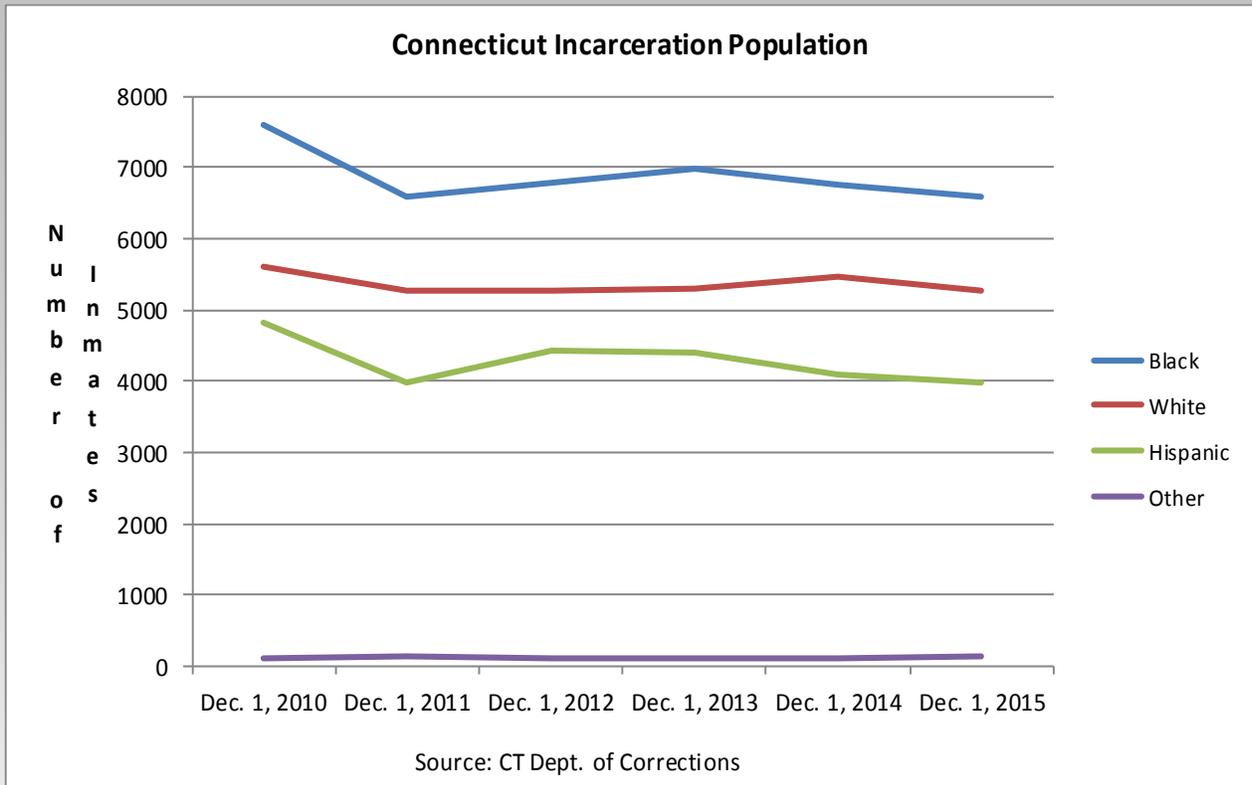
Percentage of African-Americans with public health coverage or no health coverage



Story behind the baseline: According data from the US Census, African-Americans in Connecticut without coverage are twice as likely to not have health insurance coverage than whites. This trend has continued since 2008. Proposed strategies to turn the curve: 1) Support implementation of Access Health by encouraging and supporting enrollment; 2) Promote awareness of healthier living through proper nutrition, regular visits to physicians and free health screenings and 3) Provide advocacy organizations with opportunities to inform legislators and the public. The AAAC is a member of the CT Commission on Health Equity and the City of Hartford Cancer Task Force. The Commission partners with the American Cancer Society, the American Red Cross, the Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, Southern Connecticut, Inc., DPH, DSS, Susan G. Komen for the Cure and the NBC Channel 30 Health Care Round Table.

Source: US Census Bureau, American Fact Finder 2008– 2014 American Community Survey 1-year Estimates

Criminal Justice



	Dec. 1, 2010	Dec. 1, 2011	Dec. 1, 2012	Dec. 1, 2013	Dec. 1, 2014	Dec. 1, 2015
Black	7,613	6,580	6,779	6,976	6,752	6,580
White	5,610	5,284	5,259	5,298	5,478	5,284
Hispanic	4,832	3,995	4,420	4,396	4,094	3,995
Other	117	123	105	116	112	123

The inmate population in the Connecticut Department of Corrections (DOC) has decrease since the end of 2010. The African-American inmate population has decreased at a rate of 13% on par with the overall rate of 12% for DOC. It is anticipated that the number of African-American inmates will continue to decrease with legislation passed during the 2015 Legislative Session, namely A Second Chance Society.



PROGRAMS

ISSUES

ACTIVITIES

SUMMARY OF RACIAL PROFILING AND TRAFFIC STOPS

The Racial Profiling Prohibition Project entered its fourth year by issuing its first full report on Traffic Stop Data Analysis and Findings for 2013-2014. There were approximately 600,000 traffic stops made during this period by Connecticut law enforcement agencies. It is the most common interaction the public has with law enforcement. Although the report does not identify any law enforcement agency in Connecticut as using the illegal practice of racial profiling, it did present data suggesting that there are statistical racial disparities with traffic stops by some departments.

There were 92 municipal police departments and 13 district State Police Troops that submitted reports. The aggregate findings for Connecticut reports that a total of 13.5 % of motorists stopped during the period were observed to be African-American. A comparable 11.7 % of stops were of motorists from a Hispanic descent. The results from the Veil of Darkness analysis indicated that minority stops were more likely to have occurred during daylight hours than at night. The statistical disparity provides evidence in support of the claim that certain officers in the state are engaged in racial profiling during daylight hours when motorist race and ethnicity is visible. These results were robust to the addition of a variety of controls including time of day, day of the week, state traffic volume, department level fixed effects, and department volume controls. The results from the post-stop analysis confirm that the disparity carries through to post-stop behavior for Hispanics. When vehicles were searched for illegal contraband, the hit rate for white drivers were twice that of minority drivers. That is to say that when minorities were stopped and searched they were half as likely to possess illegal contraband as were white drivers.

Five departments were identified to exhibit a statistically significant racial or ethnic disparity that may indicate the presence of racial and ethnic bias. They included Groton Town, Granby, Waterbury and State Police Troop C. Seven other departments showed stop data that exceeded the disparity threshold levels in at least three of the four benchmark areas as well as in a majority of the 12 possible measures. Those departments are Wethersfield, Hamden, Manchester, New Britain, Stratford, Waterbury and East Hartford. Meetings were held with these departments to understand the findings. Most departments were implementing steps to address the disparities.

The full report and analysis are available for review online at <http://www.ctrp3.org/reports/>

2015 COLLEGE GOAL SUNDAY

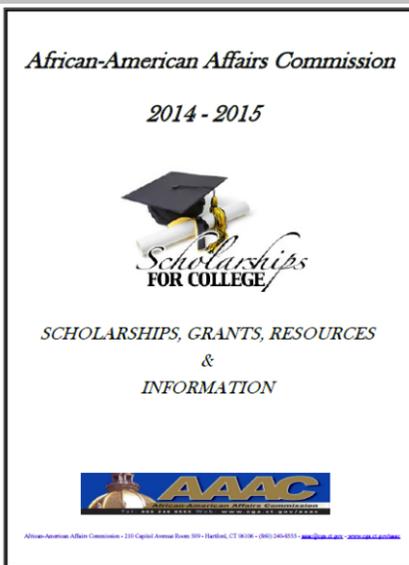
College Goal Sunday, (CGS) is a volunteer, charitable effort to assist low-income families and those who have no college-going tradition in accessing a higher education. CGS helps families complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, (FAFSA) forms required to qualify for college financial aid nationwide. In addition, valuable information is shared about the benefits of attending college, student support services, areas of study, and various degree programs.

This year the Commission coordinated College Goal Sunday-CT on January 24 & 25, 2015. Nearly 900 high school students attended and completed their FAFSA forms for college financial aid and 220 volunteers assisted at 14 locations around the state.



*2015 College Goal Sunday Volunteers
Hall High School, West Hartford, CT*

2014 -2015 AAAC Scholarships, Grants, Resources and Information Book



*2014 -2015 AAAC Scholarships, Grants,
Resources and Information Book*

To make the journey to college a little easier for CT high school seniors, every year the African-American Affairs Commission compiles a listing of available scholarships, grants, resources and information. The book contains brief descriptions of scholarships along with contact information and links that will direct students to scholarships and applications. The Commission distributed six hundred books to various high schools and families around the state.

Feel free to download this scholarship booklet by visiting www.cga.ct.gov/aaac.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH - ART EXHIBIT

During the month of February, in celebration of Black History Month, the State of Connecticut African-American Affairs Commission hosted its annual art exhibit. The 2015 featured artist was Artist – Andres Chaparro.

Andres Chaparro's artwork was on display in the Capitol concourse from February 16, 2015 - February 28, 2015. His work has been coined by critics as "AVANT BOP"; (fusing the concepts of Avant Garde & Bebop style of music) the creation of artwork directly and spontaneously inspired and created by jazz music.



Artist Andres Chaparro



Bill Costen – The Costen Cultural Exhibit

BLACK HISTORY MONTH - THE COSTEN CULTURAL EXHIBIT

The Costen Cultural Exhibit is a traveling collection of rare photographs, ephemera, memorabilia, fine art and collectibles. It was created by commercial hot air balloon pilot, photojournalist, collector and historian, Bill Costen. The exhibits address the interests of all age groups and include: slavery, civil rights, politics, government, invention, science, athletics, sports, aviation, military, music, dance, theater, literary arts, religion, radio, film, television and other forms of popular entertainment. The exhibit was on display on February 18, 2015.

BLACK HISTORY DAY AT THE CT STATE CAPITOL

On Wednesday, February 18, 2015 the African-American Affairs Commission and the Black and Latino Caucus hosted "Black History Day" at the State Capitol. Bill Costen of "Costen Cultural Exhibit" displayed his exhibit of rare photographs, ephemera, memorabilia, fine art and collectibles. Artist Andres Chaparro spoke about his art exhibit that was displayed, during Black History Month, in the Legislative Office Building Concourse. Other speakers included Tanya Hughes, Executive Director of the Commission of Human Rights and Opportunities and Virginia Pertillar, Executive Director of Citizens For Quality Sickle Cell.



HEALING THROUGH DIVERSITY & DIALOGUE CONSORTIUM

On March 7, 2015 the African-American Affairs Commission co-sponsored along with True Colors, Albertus Magnus College, End Hunger CT, Asian Pacific Affairs Commission and the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission "Healing Through Diversity & Dialogue Consortium". Empowering the community through dialogue brought the community together for community conversations on the topics of race, government, education and healing.



GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMISSION MEET & GREET

On March 25, 2015 The African-American Affairs Commission hosted a meet and greet in the Old Judiciary Room of the State Capitol for Commissioners and staff of the CT General Assembly's Legislative Commissions. In attendance was the Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission, Commission on Aging, Commission on Children, Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission, Permanent Commission on the Status of Women and the African-American Affairs Commission.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING PROGRAMS

The African-American Affairs Commission partnered with Capital Workforce Partners by providing a meaningful and productive work experience for Hartford area high school students. Students worked 25 hours a week in the AAAC office during the months of July and August. The AAAC also partnered with the Hartford Job Corps Academy throughout the school year. The AAAC assisted youth in developing positive social skills, career awareness, and work readiness.

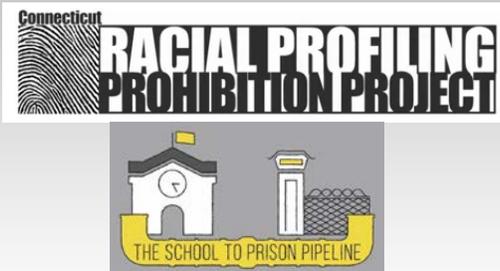


CENTRAL CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY HOSTS AAAC

The Commission's April 1, 2015 monthly meeting was held at Central Connecticut State University, (CCSU) in New Britain, CT, the downtown campus. Students, faculty and the public attended to hear the Commission address the topics of: High School Minority Graduation Rates, Health Disparities and Homelessness in the community.



SCHOOL TO PRISON PIPELINE IN CT



On April 13, 2015 the African-American Affairs Commission, the Amistad Committee and the City of New Haven Peace Commission held a forum at New Haven City Hall to discuss the CTRP3 Racial Profiling report and The School to Prison Pipeline in CT.

US-AFRICA TRADE: ENGINE FOR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

On September 18, 2015 at the McMillan Center, on the campus of Yale University, a number of prominent speakers addressed the US-Africa Business Conference. The conference was organized by five Connecticut based organizations: United States and Africa Development Organization (USAADO), Southern Connecticut State University, City of New Haven, Yale University, and the CT African American Affairs Commission.



2015 BILL SIGNING



PA 15-162

The AAAC led a coalition to pass legislation that helps borrowers navigate the student loan process.



PA 15-96

This law prohibits out of school suspension for students in K-8.



This law creates a minority teacher recruitment taskforce and requires all teachers to receive cultural competency training.



SSPA-15-4

This law called "the use of excessive force" requires a comprehensive reform of police practices.



Executive Director, Cassis with Governor, Dannel P. Malloy, Lieutenant Governor, Nancy Wyman and members of the Black and Latino Caucus.

2015 CLASSIC AWARDS

For sixteen years the AAAC has recognized outstanding Connecticut African-American men, women, business and economic development leaders, lifetime achievers and high school students. The honorees were selected from a distinguished pool of applicants submitted by the public.

The six Connecticut residents were recognized and honored for their outstanding accomplishments. Each recipient received a plaque from the AAAC, proclamations and citations from Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman, Secretary of the State Denise Merrill, Treasurer Denise Nappier, the Attorney General George Jepsen and Comptroller Kevin Lembo. Through the numerous corporate, non-profit organizations and private donors, each student received a scholarship award for \$2,200.00.

Awards were presented to: Man of the Year - Shafiq R. Fulcher Abdussabur, author, public speaker, racial profiling consultant, entrepreneur and law enforcement officer (Sergeant). Woman of the Year – Tamara K. Lanier, a 24 year veteran of the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch and a Chief Probation Officer II in the Norwich Probation Office. Lifetime Achievement Award was presented Carlton Highsmith, a corporate executive turned entrepreneur. The Business and Economic Development was awarded to Roberta Hoskie, a Real Estate Investor and Broker. The 2015 Youth of the Year scholarships were awarded to Drew Aliyah Valentine, a senior at Immaculate High School in Danbury, CT and Amamihechukwu Nnodum, a senior at Kolbe Cathedral High School in Bridgeport, CT. Also, certificates of achievement were presented to high school seniors who have demonstrated academic achievement.

The 2015 Keynote speaker was Dr. Khalilah L. Brown-Dean, an Associate Professor of Political Science at Quinnipiac University. Elder Reginald Green, Sr., the Assistant Pastor at New Hope Bible Way Church in Middletown, CT offered the Invocation. Dawn McKinley, Yvette (Stewart) Early, an elder at Mt. Calvary Church Ministries & Outreach Inc. and saxophonist Henry Bentley provided musical entertainment.

Jamilah Muhammad, known on the stage as “HoneyWata”, a devoted poet and performer for over 30 years, graced the crowd with her poetry.

2015 CLASSIC AWARDS KEYNOTE SPEAKER

The 2015 Keynote Speaker was Dr. Khalilah L. Brown-Dean, an Associate Professor of Political Science at Quinnipiac University in Connecticut. She is a frequent contributor to the Washington Post, CNN, Ebony.com, Fox News Radio, WNPR, AURN, CTV, and other outlets. Prior to joining Quinnipiac she was an Assistant Professor at Yale. Her work stands at the intersections of law, politics, and policy with specializations in American Politics, mass political behavior, crime and punishment, and political psychology. Professor Brown-Dean is a recipient of the Henry R. Spencer Award for Distinguished Teaching, the Graduate Associate Teaching Award, and has been recognized by the American Political Science Association and Pi Sigma Alpha for Outstanding Teaching in Political Science.



Dr. Khalilah L. Brown-Dean

2015 CLASSIC AWARD RECIPIENTS



Shafiq R. Fulcher Abdussabur
Man of the Year



Carlton L. Highsmith
Lifetime Achiever



Amamihechukwu Nnodum
Youth of the Year



Tamara K. Lanier
Woman of the Year



Roberta Hoskie
Business & Economic Development



Drew Valentine
Youth of the Year



Singer, Yvette Early



Poet, Jamilah Muhammad



Singer, Dawn McKinley

AFRICAN-AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION - COMMISSIONERS



Alphonse Wright



Dr. Dennis Canterbury



Donna Campbell



Rosetta Jones

Chairman Alphonse Wright has more than twenty years of Human Resources experience and twenty plus years sales experience including financial planning and as a mortgage broker, dedicated to meeting the needs of small business and individuals. As part of his commitment to give back to the community, he participated on a number of inner-city boards as well as the Connecticut State Board of Education. In Norwalk, he was Excel's Chairman of the Board. Excel is an organization that helps at-risk students graduate high school and attend college. As a result of Mr. Wright's willingness to represent his community and engage the political process, he received a letter of recognition from President George W. Bush, Congresswoman Nancy Johnson and Governor M. Jodi Rell. In addition to serving on the AAAC Board, Mr. Wright is secretary of his Masonic Lodge in West Hartford and Treasurer of McCullough Temple in New Britain. Mr. Wright is a U.S. Air Force veteran and a graduate of Boston University. He has two adult children who live out of state. Mr. Wright was appointed to the African-American Affairs Commission by House Republican Leader, Lawrence F. Cafero, Jr. in 2007.

Vice Chairman Dr. Dennis C. Canterbury, PhD. in Sociology, Binghamton University (State University of New York), is Professor of Sociology at Eastern Connecticut State University. He has published extensively on development issues including Neoliberal Democratization and New Authoritarianism (Ashgate 2005), European Bloc Imperialism (Haymarket 2012), and his latest book Capital Accumulation and Migration (Brill 2012). He has been a visiting Professor in the Institute for Development Studies and Department of Sociology and Anthropology, at the University of Cape Coast, Ghana and winner of the Connecticut State University System 2009 System-Wide Research Award. He was appointed to the African-American Affairs Commission by Senate President Pro Tempore, Donald Williams in 2010.

Secretary Donna Campbell was appointed to the AAAC in 2009 by State Senator Donald Williams. Donna currently serves on the AAAC Executive Committee as Secretary. She hails from Hartford, CT and is very active in the community, especially working with youth. She is employed at Women and Families Center in Meriden, CT as a Consultant. Mrs. Campbell is married to Marvin Campbell and is the mother of two sons, Rhashim and Marlon.

Treasurer Rosetta Jones retired in 2001 as Warden of Brooklyn Correction Institution. Her career began with the Connecticut Department of Corrections as a Correction officer. Spanning 22 years Ms. Jones ascended through the ranks as Lieutenant at Niantic Correctional Institution for Women; Executive Assistant to the Deputy Commissioner of Operations, Commissioner, Deputy Warden, and Warden. Ms. Jones holds a Master's Degree in Organizational Management and Leadership from Springfield College. She is Councilor women Town of Montville. She serves on the following boards; Finance Committee; Rules & Procedures Committee, Planning & Zoning, and Library Liaison; Garde Arts Center, Trustee (Vice President), Norwich NAACP (Legal Issues Committee); League of Women Voters; Montville Polish Club; Women's Network Southeastern Conn; Producer of Public Access Program "Town Matters," Board of Directors, Raymond Library, member of the Chinese & American Cultural Assistance Association. Recently elected, ACLU-CT Board of Directors. She was appointed to the African-American Affairs Commission in November 2003 by Governor John G. Rowland.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION - COMMISSIONERS



Dr. Edna Brown



Patsy Darity



Brenda DelGado



Thomas Ficklin

Commissioner Dr. Edna Brown resides in Vernon, Connecticut and has been in the field of education for 18 years. Currently, she is a tenured Associate Professor at the University of Connecticut, Storrs in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies and a Faculty Affiliate with the Africana Studies Institute at UConn. She teaches courses on diversity, ethnic and diverse families, aging across the lifespan and research methods. Prior to coming to Storrs, Dr. Brown was an Assistant Professor at the University of Tennessee, College of Social Work and a Research Investigator at the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan. Dr. Brown's research focuses on how cultural (race, ethnicity, religion) and social contexts (gender, social class, family configuration) affect coping, health, and wellbeing. Dr. Brown has a Master of Social Work and earned a Joint Doctorate degree in Social Work and Developmental Psychology from the University of Michigan. House Majority Leader Joe Aresimowicz appointed Edna Brown to the African American Commission in May 2014.

Commissioner Patsy V. Darity is the District Coordinator of Adult and Alternative Education for the Consolidated School District of New Britain. During her tenure as an educator in the Hartford Public School System she served in various capacities including Teacher, Coordinator, Assistant Principal, Principal, and Assistant Superintendent. She is an active member of Delta Sigma Theta Inc. and the First Cathedral in Bloomfield. Ms. Darity was appointed to Commission in 2010 by Speaker of the House Christopher G. Donovan.

Commissioner Brenda P. DelGado has worked in the area of health care administration for more than 30 years and is the former Executive Director of the Central Area Health Education Center, Inc. (AHEC) in Hartford. While under her direction the agency expanded its resources and became a respected collaborator in the community to help address health inequities in culturally diverse populations across central CT through community advocacy, education, and direct care. Brenda is also the past Chief of HIV Prevention Clinical Services for the CT Department of Public Health AIDS Division where she worked for 20 years. She is a CT Health Foundation Leadership Fellow and one of two to receive their first Health Equity Superstar award in 2012. She also received a Fellowship in Long term Care Administration from the National Black Caucus on Aging to and is a licensed Nursing Home Administrators in CT. She has a Certificate in Health Care Management from the UCLA John E. Anderson Graduate School of Management, a Bachelor's degree in Biology & Medical Technology, a Master's degree in Allied Health Administration and PhD (ABD) in Educational Psychology. Brenda currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Archdiocese of Hartford Office of Catholic Schools, the Office of Black Catholic Ministries, Jewish Federation Homes and the Cape Verde Santiago Scholarship Foundation. She is in her 3rd year as an appointed Commissioner on the CT African American Affairs Commission and is also currently an active at-large- member of the CT Multicultural Health Partnership.

Commissioner Thomas Ficklin attended Yale Divinity School following graduation from Bucknell University with a Bachelors of Arts in Political Science. Mr. Ficklin is President of the Ficklin Media Group, LLC established in 2008. His career has encompassed maximizing every previous experience towards increasing professionalism, commitment and private-public community benefit.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION - COMMISSIONERS



Robert Fields



Byron Francis



Charles Frazier



Josephine Fulcher-Anderson

Commissioner Robert Fields is a Connecticut native and Senior Partner at Millennium Strategy Group. Most recently, he served as a liaison to a New York-based fundraising firm where he provided operations, public relations, and compliance expertise to political campaigns nationwide. Robert has also helped organize and run several high level political campaigns throughout the United States. He is currently working towards a B.A. in International Studies at New York University. Power 30 under 30 2014 political edition named Robert as one of the countries rising young stars. Robert is an avid Yankees fan who loves to travel and goes golfing whenever the weather permits.

Commissioner Byron Francis resides in Torrington with his wife of thirteen years and their four children. He holds a B.S. Degree in Criminology from Central Connecticut State University and a M.S. of Business Degree from the University of New Haven. He is a U.S. Army Veteran. He is the founder and CEO of the Omni Point Realty Group. A real estate development and investment firm that has property holdings throughout Connecticut. Mr. Francis is the former Vice President of the Greater Waterbury NAACP. Commissioner Francis is currently working with members of the Torrington community to form the Torrington Advocate Group (TAG), which will be a nonprofit dedicated to helping at risk youth and underserved members of the community. Commissioner Francis was appointed to the African American Affairs Commission by Senate Majority Leader Bob Duff.

Commissioner Charles Frazier is President and Founder of Radiance Innovative Services a human service company offering professional training and human services. He is Vice President of Faith Dynamics, the ecumenical subsidiary division of Learning Dynamics, an award-winning training company focused on enhancing the market position of companies of all sizes. Charles has forged an enduring, mutually-beneficial partnership with the Connecticut Department of Children & Families (DCF), where he served the organization in multiple roles. Charles has served as an adjunct professor at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) and The University of St. Joseph. He also served as Field Placement Supervisor at Yale Divinity School. Charles holds an MBA in Marketing Management from the University of Hartford, an MSW in Casework from the University of Connecticut, and a BA in Sociology/Criminal Justice from Hampton University (VA). He is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) in the State of Connecticut, and is also a Certified Employee Assistance Professional (CEAP).

Commissioner Josephine Fulcher-Anderson has served as the supervisor of the Stamford, CT Ferguson library Southend branch for 28 years. She also served as the supervisor of the library's Bookmobile. Mrs. Fulcher-Anderson has dedicated her career to assisting and empowering adults and children through informational, educational, recreational and cultural programs. She has a Certificate in Executive Management from Columbia Business School, Master's Degree in Information and Library Science, Queens College, NY, A Bachelor Degree in Sociology with a Minor in Psychology from Charter Oak College, and Associates degrees in Library Science and Human Services from Norwalk Community College. She is a certified Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI) facilitator for the State. She is an active member of the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, Norwalk where she serves as a Steward and the Church School Superintendent. Her passion for reading has taken her to South African where she helped set up libraries. She served on the National Jackie Robinson Scholarship committee and the Person To Person scholarship Committee. She received the 2010 United Way of Costal Fairfield County Community Service Award. She is the Co-founder of the Stamford Kwanzaa Association and coordinator of the Mayor's Kwanzaa for the City of Stamford. Majority Leader Bob Duff appointed her to Connecticut's African-American Affairs Commission, in 2015.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION - COMMISSIONERS



Donald Harris



Darryl Hugley



Robert Ike



Stephanie Johnson

Commissioner Donald Harris currently serves as Chair of the Bloomfield Board of Education. A Bloomfield High School graduate, Mr. Harris received his BS from Springfield College, and his MS and 6th Year degrees from the University of Hartford. His career has included working for the Town of Bloomfield Parks and Recreation Department, as a Physical Education teacher at Bloomfield High School, as Director of Athletics for the Bloomfield Schools, as Vice Principal at Carmen Arace Middle School, and as Principal at Bloomfield High School. He is currently a Real Estate Sales Agent for William Raveis Realty. Donald has been a committed leader in Bloomfield for many years, and has an excellent understanding of the youth of the town. One of his goals as a Town Councilor is to promote economic development with an emphasis on the Center of Town, and promote the quality of life for all residents of the town. He also commits to supporting continued improvements in academic progress and the school infrastructures. In 2012 he was elected to serve on the CABA (CT Association of Boards of Education) board of directors.

Commissioner Darryl A. Hugley was appointed to the African-American Affairs Commission by Senate President Pro Tempore Speaker, Donald E. Williams in 2010. Originally from Hartford but now representing New Haven County, Mr. Hugley is an avid political activist. He currently serves as an Executive Board Member and Chair of the Criminal Justice/Urban Initiative Committee of the Greater New Haven Branch of the NAACP. Prior to that Mr. Hugley served as the Youth and College Advisor for the Connecticut State Conference of NAACP Branches. A proud father of his 9 years old son, Farrad D. Shabazz, Mr. Hugley and his son are avid practitioners of Muay Thai, Judo and Brazilian Jiu-jitsu. After earning a B.S. in Sociology/Criminology from Southern Connecticut State University Mr. Hugley decided to put his activism into writing. He is currently completing his Master's Thesis, at Southern Connecticut State University School of Graduate Studies on, "21 Century Black Nationalism in Urban America". A Prince Hall Mason with Oriental Lodge #6 in New Haven, CT, Mr. Hugley works as a Counselor for Yale New Haven Psychiatric Hospital.

Commissioner Robert Ike, Morehouse College, Atlanta, Ga, Yale University, New Haven, Ct, 2015 Commissioner State of Connecticut African American Affairs Commission, 1996-2003 and 2006-Present Bloomfield Board of Education, 2011 Commissioner Bloomfield Housing Authority, 2011-Present Chairman Bloomfield Republican Town Committee, 2009 Secretary Carmen Arace School Building Committee, 2004-2005 Bloomfield Town Council, 2003-2004 Bloomfield Library Board, 1994-1995 Bloomfield Parks and, Recreation Committee, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated, Appointed To African Affairs Commission by State Senator Lenard Fazzano

Commissioner Stephanie Johnson is a resident of New London, Connecticut and has worked in the healthcare field for more than 25 years. Ms. Johnson began her career at Lawrence + Memorial Hospital, where she is currently employed as a Registered Polysomnography Technologist (Sleep Tech) at the hospital's Sleep Center. She is the recipient of the AFL-CIO 2014 Political Courage Award and AFT National Everyday Hero Award for Healthcare. She is a volunteer at the United Way of Southeastern Connecticut.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION - COMMISSIONERS



Dr. Fred Pierre-Louis



Alexander Tettey, Jr.



Virginia Vermont



Dr. Clifton N. Watson

Chairperson, Fred Pierre-Louis, MBA, MS, Ed.D. is a proven leader in both community and professional arenas. He is a passionate team player with a keen understanding of group dynamics. He has sixteen years of combined business development and project management, and teaching and administrative experience. Commissioner Dr. Pierre-Louis received a doctorate degree in educational leadership from the University of Hartford. His academic achievements include: A Masters Degree in Secondary Education from the University of Bridgeport, EMBA from the University of Connecticut, an Advanced Business Executive Program from Amos Tuck Business School at Dartmouth College, B.A. in Chemistry from the University of Connecticut, Business Computer Programming, Computer Processing Institute, Bridgeport, CT. Commissioner Dr. Pierre-Louis is committed to continuous improvement and self-actualization of the individual. He is a member of the Stamford Public School Foundation, the board of trustees of Mead School, the Chairperson of the Smith House (for elderly citizens in Stamford), a member of Kappa Delta Pi International Honor Society in Education, and the chairman of the education committee of AAAC. He was appointed in 2006, by House Minority Leader, Robert M. Ward.

Commissioner Alexander Tettey, Jr. is a lifelong resident of East Hartford. He enlisted in the United States Marine Corps shortly after the events of September 11th, 2001. In an 11 year career, Alex served as a Combat Marksmanship Instructor, Marine Corps Martial Arts Instructor, and a Tactical Vehicle Mechanic. Deploying to Eastern Africa and Iraq, Alex is an Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom Veteran. Continuing as a public servant, he has worked as an Intern in the Connecticut General Assembly, was elected as Chairman of the Board of Regents for Higher Education Student Advisory Committee, and elected to the full Board of Regents for Higher Education here in Connecticut. In the past, Alex has served as 7th District Vice-Chairman of the East Hartford Democratic Town Committee, Vice President of the Greater Hartford Young Democrats, and Communications Director of the Connecticut Young Democrats. Additionally, Alex was employed in the office of United States Senator Richard Blumenthal. Currently, Alex is an undergraduate student with plans to major in International Relations and National Security, and is honored to be appointed as the African-American Affairs Commission's youngest commissioner.

Commissioner Virginia Vermont is from Fairfield County CT. She was appointed by Senate Minority Leader, Leonard A. Fasano in February 2015.

Dr. Clifton N. Watson is a native of New Haven and graduate of James Hillhouse High School. Clifton has taught on the collegiate level and has managed public education and youth development initiatives at Grand Street Settlement, Prep for Prep, and the Princeton Center for Leadership Training. Clifton is currently the Director of the Children's Aid Society's African American Male Initiative – a special project in response to the disproportionate rates at which black males are represented in negative outcomes associate with education, the criminal justice system, and health. Clifton graduated with a B.A in Africana Studies from the University of Connecticut, before earning a doctorate in history at Fordham University.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION - STAFF



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Executive Director

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Executive Director - Glenn A. Cassis has served as the Executive Director of the State of Connecticut African-American Affairs Commission since August 2006. Prior to joining the AAAC, Mr. Cassis, a New York native and Bloomfield resident, worked for nearly 20 years as the executive director of the Connecticut Pre-Engineering Program, Inc.(CPEP). Mr. Cassis is an active member of several professional and non-profit organizations, including the Association of Technical Professionals, Sigma Pi Phi – Alpha Psi Boule’ and the Hartford Branch of the NAACP. He serves as a board member or officer in the following organizations: Board of the United Way, and Deacon Board for Union Baptist Church. Mr. Cassis is the State Coordinator for College Goal Sunday and is a reviewer for the State Department of Higher Education. Mr. Cassis attended the University of Connecticut where he earned his undergraduate degree in political science and his graduate degree in arts administration.

Legislative Analyst – Subira Gordon started as the legislative Analyst for the AAAC in November of 2013. Since starting the position she has been involved in racial profiling meetings, been a part of the legislative committee with the commission on health equity, created monthly newsletters and worked on the 2015 Legislative Agenda for the AAAC. Prior to taking that position she worked for the House Democratic Organization as a policy analyst where she worked closely with the speaker of the house and caucus leadership on legislative issues.

Senior Legislative Secretary - Denise Drummond has been the Senior Legislative Secretary for the African-American Affairs Commission since 2001. She is responsible for the administrative functions of the Commission and aids in conducting research on legislative issues. Ms. Drummond coordinates the Annual Classic Awards and is responsible for the AAAC Connecticut Scholarship Guide. She attended Central Connecticut State University. Prior to joining the Commission Denise worked as the Executive Secretary at Allegheny Ludlum Steel Company in Wallingford, CT.



AAAC TALENT BANK

In order to comply with one of our mandates asking the African-American Affairs Commission to “encourage African-American representation at all levels of state government, including state boards and commissions”, the African-American Affairs Commission, (AAAC) is seeking to update and expand its Talent Bank.

The Talent Bank is a file of resumes and curriculum of African-Americans who are interested in appointment to state boards, councils, commissions or task forces as well as positions in public service and in the private sector.

We ask that anyone interested in being recommended for appointment to provide information about themselves and their interests to the African-American Affairs Commission. This information will be maintained in our commission database. As opportunities arise, the AAAC will make appropriate recommendations for the appointment of African-Americans to any and all vacancies.

Please feel free to complete and return the attached talent bank application via email aaac@cga.ct.gov, fax (860) 240-8444 via or U.S. mail at: 210 Capitol Avenue – Room 509, Hartford, CT 06106

AFRICAN-AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION – TALENT BANK

Name: _____

Last Name

First Name

Middle Initial

Address: _____ / _____

Street

City / Town

State/Zip Code

Telephone: _____ / _____

Phone #

E-mail address

Employer:

Racial/Ethnic Background: _____ Age: ___ 18-30 ___ 31-50 ___ 51 & over

Political Affiliation: ___ Democrat ___ Republican ___ Independent U.S. Citizen: ___ Yes ___ No

Education (Please Attach Resume):

_____ / _____ / _____

Degree

Major/Concentration

Institution

Graduation Year

Areas of interest for appointment:

___ *Education* ___ *Human Services* ___ *Health* ___ *Economic Development*

___ *Public Safety* ___ *Children / Youth* ___ *Housing* ___ *Other*

Describe community experience, organization's purpose, your role/title and dates served.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION – FRIENDS



AFRICAN-AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION – FRIENDS





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