



The **mission** of the **Connecticut** Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities is to eliminate discrimination through civil and human rights law enforcement and to establish equal opportunity and justice for all persons within the state through advocacy and education.

THE HISTORY OF KIDS COURT

In 1993, then UConn Law students, Cheryl Sharp and Rae Thiesfield, developed and launched the first Kids Court Competition in the Greater Hartford area to educate students about social justice, diversity, and civil and human rights issues.

The competition, which has been recognized nationally and locally, now sponsored by the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, still runs to this day. CT Kids Court Academy is an outgrowth of CT Kids Court. Tens of thousands of students have participated in Kids Court and the hope is that thousands of additional students will benefit from this pipeline program - KCA. We are proud to partner with the State Department of Education for Year #4 of Kids Court Academy.

CHRO Executive Director Attorney Tanya A. Hughes
CHRO Deputy Director Attorney Cheryl A. Sharp



KIDS COURT ACADEMY (KCA) YEAR #4:

PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS

An attorney and social justice pipeline program for middle and high school students

Co-sponsored by:

The State of Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities
The Connecticut Bar Association
The Educational Working Group of the Department of Justice
Connecticut State Department of Education
CHUMS



The CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, in cooperation with state and federal partners, is co-sponsoring the second year of the CT Kids Court Academy. This attorney pipeline program is an outgrowth of the CT Kids Speak and Kids Court Competition developed on the campus of UConn Law School in 1993.

What is CT Kids Court Academy?

CT Kids Court Academy is a pipeline program to develop interest in youth regarding civil and human rights law.

What is the focus of Kids Court Academy?

The focus of the program is civil and human rights law enforcement and social justice. The Program is designed to raise the social consciousness of youth regarding civil and human rights law in a series of one hour sessions where students will explore the law through case review, or film review. The law is a powerful tool and learning will be guided by a social justice or civil rights professional and include peer exercises and interaction.

What are the objectives of Kids Court Academy?

- To support the development of youth leadership and develop their interest in the law by exposing them to the law early
- to reduce discrimination and prejudice by having students participate in the program from rural, urban, and suburban areas
- To create a pipeline for CT law schools
- To inspire the next generation of change agents and civil rights leaders
- To offer an after school activity that will serve as academic enrichment, as well as recreational fun
- To provide an opportunity for youth to elevate their voices
- To expose youth to legislative and law-making processes

KCA

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Program will be 17 weeks (with a break in July) and will feature attorneys, law students, investigators, and other civil rights and social justice professionals, who will present a case or show a film and do an activity with the student participants on a bi-weekly basis for one hour. The bi-weekly meetings will be remote and held through Teams.

ELIGIBILITY

Students are eligible to register for the Academy if they are in the 5th grade (a maximum of ten 5th grade students will be registered), middle school (6th-8th grade), or high school (9th-12th grade) in the state of Connecticut. **Students will be eligible to participate in the Academy from year to year, once accepted, until they graduate from the Program.** We are going to conduct a small trial and accept five 4th grade students this year on a first come, first served basis.

ATTENDANCE

In order to get the greatest benefit from the Academy, attendance is required. The Program is seventeen weeks. Students may not miss more than 3 unexcused weeks of the Academy or they will be in danger of being removed from the Program.

WHEN DOES YEAR #4 START?

Kids Court Academy begins on **Tuesday, February 13, 2024**. The program will run from **3:45-4:45** via a Teams platform. The Academy will run every other Tuesday with the exception of Holidays and scheduled days off. We will take a summer vacation. A complete calendar will be released to all participants.

REGISTRATION

Teachers, students, and parents may register a student using the form online at **ct.gov/CHRO** or by sending an email to **Cheryl.Sharpe@ct.gov** that includes the student's first and last names, grade, school name, email address, parent/teacher name, home address, T-shirt, sweatshirt, and pant size.