

Oxford Consortium for Human Rights

Community Action Summit

Human Rights Education, Democracy, and Legislative Action

Trinity College | Hartford, Connecticut

Presented by: Trinity Human Rights Studies, with additional support from Trinity Political Science, Trinity Theater and Dance, and the Austin Arts Center.

Thursday October 15, 2026

Morning Program

8:00 – 9:00 a.m. | Breakfast and Welcome

Location: Smith House, Reese Room

Benjamin Carbonetti — Director, Human Rights Studies Program and Principal Lecturer in Human Rights, Trinity College

Sujata Gadkar-Wilcox — Connecticut State Senator; Professor of Legal Studies, Quinnipiac University

9:00 – 10:15 a.m. | Session 1: OCHR Alumni and Human Rights and Political Engagement: Hartford Voter Captains Project

Location: Smith House, Reese Room

Trinity College Political Science Students Chloe Libby, Malika Rice, Dang Do — Assistant Professor of Political Science, Trinity College

10:15 – 10:30 a.m. | Coffee and Tea Break

Location: Smith House, Reese Room

10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | Session 2: A Connecticut Legislative Perspective on Criminal Justice Reform

Location: Smith House, Reese Room

Sujata Gadkar-Wilcox — Connecticut State Senator; Professor of Legal Studies, Quinnipiac University

Lucy Dathan — Connecticut State Representative; Chair, House Government Oversight Committee

Zoë Gluck — Deputy Director of Policy, Connecticut House Democratic Office

Richard Hanratty, Jr. — Legislative Policy Counsel, Office of the Governor, Connecticut

Per Sigurd Våge — International Advisor/Director, Norwegian Correctional Service

Andrew Clark — Director, Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy, University of Connecticut

Gary Winfield — Connecticut State Senator; Chair, Judiciary Committee

Thursday October 15, 2026

Afternoon Program

12:30 – 1:30 p.m. | Lunch

Location: Hamlin Hall

“Fireside Chat” on Connecticut and Housing Policy

Location: Hamlin Hall, Emeriti Lounge

Bob Duff — Connecticut State Senator; Senate Majority Leader

Evonne Klein — Board Member, Impact CT; Former Connecticut Commissioner of Housing

1:45 – 2:30 p.m. | Session 3: Human Rights and Anti-Trafficking: The CT Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Council

Location: McCook Auditorium

Beth Hamilton — Executive Director, Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence

Krystal Rich — Executive Director, Connecticut Children’s Alliance

2:30 – 3:15 p.m. | Session 4: Human Rights and Education in Connecticut: A Panel of Program Leaders

Location: McCook Auditorium

Sandra Sirota — Director, Human Rights Close to Home, University of Connecticut, Human Rights Institute

Benjamin Carbonetti — Director, Human Rights Studies Program and Principal Lecturer in Human Rights, Trinity College

Stephan Sonnenberg — Associate Professor of the Practice in Human Rights Advocacy and Conflict Resolution, Wesleyan University

3:15 – 3:30 a.m. | Coffee and Tea Break

Location: McCook Lobby/Patio

3:30 – 4:30 p.m. | Session 5: OCHR Student Experience

Location: McCook Auditorium

OCHR alumni — Quinnipiac University, CT State Community College, and Trinity College
CT State Community College; Stacey Beasley, Madison Flebotte, Saedi McLaughlin

Quinnipiac University; Quinto Melnick, Melody L. Saboori

Trinity College; Marianna Oliveira, Ari Martinez

4:30 – 5:00 p.m. | Keynote Address

Location: McCook Auditorium

Christina Royal — Interim President, CT State Community College

Christina Royal became Interim President of CT State Community College in August 2025. Previously, she led Holyoke Community College from 2017 to 2023 as its first woman, first multiracial, and first queer president. Her leadership emphasized equity and removing barriers for students, including first-generation students, adult learners, and students living in poverty.

At Holyoke, she established a Student Emergency Fund, expanded mental health services, launched El Centro to support Latinx students, and helped transform shared governance. She later served as a President-in-Residence at Harvard's Graduate School of Education and founded an executive coaching and consulting practice. Dr. Royal holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Marist University and a doctorate in education from Capella University.

5:15 – 7:00 p.m. | Reception

Location: Hamlin Hall

Light food and drinks

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Friday October 16, 2026

8:30 – 9:00 a.m. | Light Breakfast and Welcome

Location: Smith House, Reese Room

Welcome remarks: Benjamin Carbonetti — Director, Human Rights Studies Program and Principal Lecturer in Human Rights, Trinity College

Coffee and light breakfast

9:00 – 10:15 a.m. | Session 1: "MindStylz II: How Stylists and Barbers Can Address Mental Health Issues in Communities of Color"

Location: Smith House, Reese Room

Lena Stefano, B.A.

Andrew VanOrden, A.A.

10:30 – 11:30 a.m. | Session 2: Storytelling: Performance, Human Rights, and Hartford at Trinity College

Location: Smith House, Reese Room

Rebecca Pappas — Associate Professor of Theater and Dance, Trinity College

Deborah Goffe — Executive Director, Austin Arts Center, Trinity College

12:00 p.m. | HartBeat Ensemble: A Lesson from Aloes

Location: Goodwin Theater, Austin Arts Center

By Athol Fugard. Directed by Vernice Miller.

Set in apartheid-era South Africa, Athol Fugard's *A Lesson from Aloes* brings together former anti-apartheid activists whose relationships have been strained by repression, surveillance, exile, and suspicion. As they confront questions of loyalty and betrayal, the play explores the deeply personal consequences of political oppression and the difficult choices faced by those who resist it. Through an intimate story of friendship, marriage, and political commitment, *A Lesson from Aloes* examines what happens when a repressive system erodes not only rights and freedoms, but also trust between people.

About the Summit

The Community Action Summit, organized by Trinity College in partnership with the Oxford Consortium for Human Rights, brings together community leaders, advocates, policymakers, practitioners, students, and scholars to engage with pressing human rights challenges. Designed to bridge academic conversations about human rights with the work being done in communities, the Summit creates opportunities to share experiences, exchange ideas, and explore approaches to advancing human rights and social justice. Drawing on Trinity College's commitment to engaged human rights education and the Oxford Consortium's international network, the Summit connects local Connecticut experiences with broader human rights conversations, emphasizing collaboration, community engagement, and meaningful action. Through discussions, workshops, and opportunities for dialogue, it seeks to strengthen relationships across disciplines and institutions, elevate community knowledge, and foster lasting partnerships that extend beyond the event itself.

Presenter Biographies

Benjamin Carbonetti

Director, Human Rights Studies Program and Principal Lecturer in Human Rights, Trinity College

Benjamin Carbonetti specializes in teaching and evaluating human rights concepts, measurement, and fulfillment. His teaching includes Introduction to Human Rights and International Human Rights Law and the Senior Research Colloquium. He holds a PhD from the University of Connecticut.

Sujata Gadkar-Wilcox

Connecticut State Senator; Professor of Legal Studies, Quinnipiac University

Sujata Gadkar-Wilcox represents Connecticut's 22nd Senate District and is Executive Director of the Oxford Consortium for Human Rights. At Quinnipiac, she teaches constitutional, comparative, and human rights law. A Fulbright-Nehru Scholar, she has organized human rights workshops at the United Nations and Oxford University.

Lucy Dathan

Connecticut State Representative; Chair, House Government Oversight Committee

Lucy Dathan has represented New Canaan and Norwalk since 2019. She currently chairs the House Government Oversight Committee and serves on the Appropriations and Human Services committees. Her professional background includes accounting, international finance, and service as a technology company chief financial officer.

Bob Duff

Connecticut State Senator; Senate Majority Leader

Bob Duff represents Connecticut's 25th Senate District, which includes Norwalk and Darien, and has served as Senate Majority Leader since 2015. His legislative work includes education funding reform, affordable housing, paid family and medical leave, and protections for LGBTQ residents. Before joining the Senate in 2005, he served in the Connecticut House of Representatives.

Dang Do

Assistant Professor of Political Science, Trinity College

Dang Do studies race, representation, voter mobilization, and lobbying in American politics. A former California Senate Fellow, he directs Trinity's Legislative Internship Program and teaches Congress and Public Policy. His work includes Hartford's Voter Captains Project. He earned his PhD at the University of California, San Diego.

Zoë Gluck

Deputy Director of Policy, Connecticut House Democratic Office

Zoë Gluck works in policy for the Connecticut House Democratic Office. Her legislative experience is extensive and includes service as a committee clerk, legislative aid, senior committee clerk and deputy director of policy at the Connecticut General Assembly for Connecticut House Democrats.

Richard Hanratty, Jr.

Legislative Policy Counsel, Office of the Governor, Connecticut

Richard Hanratty, Jr. is an attorney and government affairs professional with extensive experience in legislative and regulatory agency operations. His work includes drafting legislation as a Senior Legislative Attorney and now works on policy at the Connecticut Governor's Office.

Per Sigurd Våge

International Advisor/Director, Norwegian Correctional Service

Per Sigurd Våge's career in Norway's justice system has included work as a prosecutor, judge, police lawyer, prison governor, and regional correctional director. From 2019 to 2021, he served as a rule-of-law expert in Kyiv, supporting development of Ukraine's probation service.

Andrew Clark

Director, Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy, University of Connecticut

Andrew Clark leads an institute that brings together university researchers and policy experts to address issues facing Connecticut. Before joining the institute in 2005, he served as legislative committee staff and as a legislative aide where he assisted with development and passage of criminal justice reform legislation.

Beth Hamilton

Executive Director, Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence

Beth Hamilton leads a statewide sexual violence coalition. Her work spans survivor advocacy, prevention, professional training, and public policy. She has helped develop statewide responses to sexual violence in schools, on college campuses, and in correctional settings, and previously worked in domestic violence advocacy and direct survivor services.

Evonne Klein

Board Member, Impact CT; Former Connecticut Commissioner of Housing

Evonne Klein served as Connecticut's Commissioner of Housing from 2013 to 2019, leading the establishment of the state's Department of Housing. During her tenure, Connecticut financed the construction of 24,000 housing units, including 22,000 affordable units. A former First Selectman of Darien, her public service has focused on expanding affordable housing and strengthening communities.

Andrew VanOrden

Psychology and Philosophy Student at Quinnipiac University; Member of the Connecticut Psychological Association Social Justice Speaker Series committee

Andrew VanOrden is Oxford Consortium for Human Rights alum with an intense interest in how people come to do wrong and what can be done to help them do right.

Krystal Rich

Executive Director, Connecticut Children's Alliance

Krystal Rich leads statewide efforts to strengthen trauma-informed responses to child abuse and prevention systems. She co-founded the Regionalized Human Trafficking Recovery Taskforce and serves in leadership roles addressing child abuse and trafficking. She also teaches at the University of Connecticut School of Social Work.

Sandra Sirota

Director, Human Rights Close to Home; Assistant Professor in Residence, UConn

Sandra Sirota studies human rights education in formal and community settings in the United States and South Africa. She directs UConn's Human Rights Close to Home program and coordinates Early College Experience in Human Rights. She earned her doctorate at Teachers College, Columbia University, with a focus on peace and human rights education.

Stephan Sonnenberg

Associate Professor of the Practice in Human Rights Advocacy and Conflict Resolution, Wesleyan University

Stephan Sonnenberg has taught at Harvard and Stanford Law Schools, Seoul National University, and the University of Vienna. He helped develop Bhutan's first law school and served as an associate dean and inaugural faculty member. He holds degrees from Brown, Tufts, and Harvard Law School.

Lena Rosemarie Stefano

Graduate Researcher in Community Psychology, Central Connecticut State University

Lena's research interests include how empathy and intercultural competence promote understanding across cultural differences and how these processes can be leveraged to strengthen communities, improve well-being, and foster positive social change.

Christina Royal

Interim President, CT State Community College

Christina Royal became Interim President of CT State Community College in August 2025. Previously president of Holyoke Community College, she has led initiatives to expand access and support historically marginalized students. Her leadership focuses on equity, student success, and reducing structural barriers to opportunity.

Deborah Goffe

Executive Director, Austin Arts Center; Artist-in-Residence in Theater and Dance, Trinity College

Deborah Goffe is a dance maker, performer, educator, and performance curator. She founded Scapegoat Garden in 2002 and previously taught dance and performance curation at Hampshire College. Her work supports local arts communities and examines cultural networks among artists with marginalized identities. She holds an MFA from California Institute of the Arts and an MA in performance curation from Wesleyan University.

Rebecca Pappas

Associate Professor of Theater and Dance, Trinity College

Rebecca Pappas is a choreographer whose interdisciplinary work explores the body as an archive of personal and social memory. Her projects often involve filmmakers, visual artists, poets, and scientists. She teaches choreography, dance history, and performing arts and community at Trinity, and co-edited *The Oxford Handbook of Jewishness and Dance*. She holds an MFA from UCLA.

Gary Winfield

Connecticut State Senator; Chair, Judiciary Committee

Gary Winfield represents Connecticut's 10th Senate District, which includes New Haven and West Haven. A U.S. Navy veteran, he has served in the Connecticut General Assembly since 2009 and in the State Senate since 2014. As Chair of the Judiciary Committee, Winfield has been a leading legislative voice on criminal justice reform, civil rights, racial equity, and police accountability.