

FOR RELEASE

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## Taking a Step Towards Racial Equity THE CHARTER OAK STATE COLLEGE FOUNDATION

*A Call-to-Action with solutions to close the gap on disparity...and an Answer!*

**NEW BRITAIN – May 4, 2021**

The 2020 Shea Lecture Series, *Economic and Racial Disparity and Solutions*, was a collaborative effort to bring about awareness and solutions to the long-standing issues of poverty, economic, and racial disparity. The series is concluding with a [call-to-action](#) and the release of the Shea Lecture [White Paper](#), an in-depth accounting of the solutions.

The Shea Series illuminated common denominators of poverty, and the lack of equal access and equal opportunity as being paramount to improving lives. Higher Education is a leading factor in improving the economic standing of people in low paying jobs, living in poverty.

**Glenn Davis**, First Vice President, Community Development of Liberty Bank and COSC Foundation Lecture Chair, closed the series stating, "The overall objective of the Shea Lecture initiative is to provoke critical thinking and dialogue among students and the broader community concerning crucial social issues. Beyond simply being a forum for discussion, this year's forum is intended to be a *Call to Action*."

The Charter Oak State College and the COSC Foundation are responding to the *Call-to-Action* with a call for funding and support for a new program - ***Intent on improving tomorrow for Parents (of Color)*** -. This **program** will be aimed at removing the barriers to higher education through (online) degree completion at Charter Oak State College for parents of color, married or single, living in poverty in Connecticut.

**Liberty Bank Foundation is answering the call and providing a grant of \$6,000 in scholarship funding.**

The \$6,000 will be used to provide (3) three \$2,000 scholarships to students / Parents of Color (living in poverty) for the 2021/2022 Academic Year.

The Shea Lecture provided a rich and insightful discourse presented by a distinguished panel of experts from across the state's landscape. A deep understanding into racial injustice and its adverse impact as expressed through the lenses of key economic pillars in our society, e.g., Education, Housing, Business and Community Development, Healthcare, Financial and overall well-being.

The panel and the paper include insights from **Dr. Fred McKinney**, Keynote Speaker, Quinnipiac University School of Business, **Seila Mosquera-Bruno**, Charter Oak Alum and Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Housing, **Glendowlyn Thames**, Deputy Commissioner, Connecticut

Department of Economic and Community Development, **Dr. Wilfredo Nieves**, President Emeritus, Capital Community College, **Dr. Brooke Palkie**, Chair, Health Science and Technology Department, Charter Oak State College, **Jason Jakubowski**, Charter Oak Faculty and Foundation Board Member, President & CEO, Foodshare, **Tiffany Donelson**, CEO & President, Connecticut Health Foundation, **Christopher Clarke**, Financial Advisor, Merrill Lynch, Chairman of the Connecticut Chapter of Bank of America's Black Professionals Group, and the Minority Business Network of the West Hartford Chamber of Commerce, **Tracy Allen**, Owner and Impact Strategist, TVA Consulting, and Co-Chair & Education Coordinator of SCORE (Greater Hartford), and a Foundation Board member, **Chris Conway**, Executive Director, West Hartford Chamber of Commerce, **President Ed Klonoski**, Charter Oak State College, and **Carol Hall**, Executive Director, COSC Foundation.

The White Paper is available for download on the West Hartford Chamber of Commerce, [Minority Business Network website](#) along with recordings of the three Shea Lectures. Also, please consider how you can impact **Life-Changing Degree Completion** opportunities by visiting <http://bit.ly/Give2CharterOak>. *The Foundation is exempt from tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.*

**Commemorative Tee-Shirts:** Two designs to choose from, please visit: <http://bit.ly/SheaLecture-WeShine-BridgeTheGap-Tee> or <http://bit.ly/SheaLecture-WeShine-Tee>

**The Charter Oak State College Foundation, Inc.** was founded September 15, 1977. The Charter Oak State College Foundation is dedicated to supporting flexible and comprehensive degree completion opportunities for adults, and technology innovations through the work of Charter Oak State College. The Foundation Board of Directors provides volunteer leadership for development and fundraising programs and stewardship of the Foundation's assets in order to assist deserving and underemployed adult students with college costs; award scholarships; and encourage technological initiatives that enable the College to be a leader in higher education. The Foundation is exempt from tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. ([www.charteroak.edu/foundation](http://www.charteroak.edu/foundation))

**Founded in 1973, Charter Oak State College** ([www.CharterOak.edu](http://www.CharterOak.edu)) is Connecticut's public online college, offering associate and bachelor's degrees in high-demand fields including Health Information Management, Nursing, Criminal Justice, Early Childhood Education and Business Administration. The College offers master's degrees in Health Care Administration, Health Informatics and Organizational Effectiveness and Leadership. Charter Oak is accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education and governed by Connecticut's Board of Regents for Higher Education.

**The West Hartford Chamber of Commerce** has been serving the local businesses, nonprofits, and residents for over 100 years. Through their various programs and resources, they provide networking opportunity, marketing support, business advocacy and community engagement.

Learn more at [WHChamber.com](http://WHChamber.com)

**Colorful Conversations: West Hartford Chamber of Commerce Minority Business Network**, for details visit: <https://www.whchamber.com/minority-business-network>

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