



CITY OF NORWALK

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Mayor Rilling Announces LaToya Fernandez as the City of Norwalk's First Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer

(Norwalk, Conn.) Today, November 2, 2022, Mayor Rilling announced that LaToya Fernandez joined Norwalk as the City's first Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Officer. November 1 was her first day with the City of Norwalk.

"As a City, we are always striving to improve and fulfill our vision of becoming a more inclusive and equitable community," **said Mayor Rilling**. "Today, I am proud to have taken another step forward in this work by welcoming LaToya Fernandez, the City's first Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer. Fernandez's background in community engagement and cultural responsiveness will help us expand opportunities for residents across Norwalk and ensure our City best serves historically underrepresented communities. As a former educator and community leader in equity and justice, Fernandez has a track record of bringing City leaders and community members together to advance equity. I know her skill set will contribute meaningfully to the City of Norwalk, and I look forward to the progress we make."

"I am excited to serve in this new role to advance Mayor Rilling's vision of making Norwalk a more inclusive and equitable city," **said LaToya Fernandez, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer**. "I hope to combine my passion for equity and social justice with my skills in community organizing and youth empowerment to improve access to opportunities for all Norwalk constituents. I look forward to identifying policies and best practices that will positively impact Norwalk's workforce and benefit the community."

Most recently, Fernandez was the Director of the Restorative Justice Project and Youth Speak Up at the Center for Children's Advocacy in Hartford. Her background also includes working closely with the City of San Jose, California, to facilitate community engagement discussions and navigate social justice issues.

As the DEI Officer of the City of Norwalk, Fernandez will be responsible for developing and implementing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) strategic goals and activities. She will be tasked with setting key equity performance objectives and operational indicators and identifying training opportunities to help educate employees and managers on how to achieve DEIB objectives. She will play an integral role in monitoring trends that impact diverse constituents and implementing practices that improve access to City services, resources, and opportunities for residents.

The Common Council approved funding for this position in the budget earlier this year. The opening for this position was posted from May 11 through June 1, after which the City received nearly 40 applications and conducted interviews with candidates in September.

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