



**Hispanic Council on Federal Employment
Sixteenth Public Meeting
February 27, 2014**

On February 27, 2014, the Hispanic Council on Federal Employment (HCFE) held its sixteenth public meeting at the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in Washington, D.C. Katherine Archuleta, Director, OPM, and Hector Sanchez, Chair, National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA) Co-chaired the meeting. Participants included:

Name	Title and Organization
Lynne Baldrighi (alternate for Paige Hinkle-Bowles)	Director, Human Resources Strategic Programs and Advisory Services, Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory services, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), Department of Defense (DOD)
Cristina Bartolomei (alternate for Kimberly Castillo)	Vice Chair, National Council of Hispanic Employment Program Managers (NCHEPM)
Kimberly Castillo	Chairperson, NCHEPM
Sara Clemente (alternate for Brent Wilkes via teleconference)	Director of Federal Affairs, League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
Georgia Coffey (via teleconference)	Deputy Assistant Secretary for Diversity and Inclusion (D&I), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Maria Elena Vivas-House	Senior Executive Director, Internship Program, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU)
Maria Holleran Rivera	Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA)
Nimesh Patel (alternate for Catherine Emerson)	Executive Director, D&I, Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
Gilbert Sandate	Chair, Coalition for Fairness for Hispanics in Government
Wilfredo Sauri	Director, Data Analysis and Reporting, Office of Human Resources (HR) and Director, D&I Division, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Zina Sutch, Ph.D. (alternate for William Milton, Jr.)	Director, Diversity, Recruitment, and Work/Life Division, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

OPM employees in attendance included: Carmen Garcia, Human Resources (HR) Specialist; Sergio Gonzales, Deputy Chief of Staff, Mauro Morales, Assistant Director and Counsel, Office of Public Engagement. Approximately 20 members of the public attended the meeting, including Lynn Morin, National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives (NAHFE), Patsy Trujillo, Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Jose Marrero and Manuel Oliveres, President, International Association of Latino Public Administration Executives (IALPAE), Inc.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Katherine Archuleta, Director, OPM and Council Co-chair

Hector Sanchez, President, NHLA and Council Co-chair

In opening remarks, Mr. Sanchez welcomed Director Archuleta to her new position as Co-chair of the HCFE. He addressed the work the HCFE is doing and mentioned to the members that now is a good time to take a closer assessment of the HCFE, why it was created and how they can take the HCFE to a higher level of commitment. Mr. Sanchez stressed that this is a time to raise crucial ideas and move the critical issue of Latinos in the government forward.

Director Archuleta discussed her priorities below to provide context of her role and members' roles on the HCFE.

1. Director Archuleta's priority is to recruit, train and retain federal employees.
2. Make America's workforce look like America. "That is what we refer to as D&I."
3. Ensure that the systems from recruitment to retirement work—Recruitment starts with USAJOBS.
4. Information technology (IT) modernization—On March 11, Director Archuleta will unveil her IT Modernization Plan that will inform all of these initiatives through a systems approach.

As the new Director of OPM, on a daily basis, OPM must consider HR policy, systems and practice, as well as how to make the recruitment to retirement life cycle a pleasant experience. This includes "benefits," such as healthcare, thrift savings, other contributions and finally, how that pays off for someone who has been in service for five years.

Recruitment is based on what the organization's hiring needs are. For example, if in 2014, an agency will hire 1,000 people, of those 1,000 people, 66 percent (or 660 people) are already hired by the government and moving around. The 33 percent are going to be new jobs/new hires. The Director expressed that if they are doing well in this effort, people are moving up and that relates to retention. Regarding the 33 percent new hires/new jobs, they must ensure that the skills and talents match. This might be the critical skills gap in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), in addition to replacing retirees (another part of the succession planning). Director Archuleta must consider the protected classes, including veterans and people with disabilities. Then, she has to make sure she is following all laws, rules and policies under U.S. law. The piece having the biggest impacts are the dollars agencies have available. The bottom line is a D&I foundation must be implemented to achieve those goals.

Regarding agencies who are actually hiring, the pieces (such as hiring veterans and people with disabilities) are not mutually exclusive. Considering the huge investment in hiring, it is important to consider retention. The top 20 external hiring positions are IT management, correctional officers, miscellaneous administration and program officers, miscellaneous clerk and assistant, nurses, contracting, custodial workers, management and program analysis, border patrol enforcement, health aide and technician, police, patent examiners, custom and border protection, practical nurse, general engineers, quality assurance, general inspection and investigation, social scientists and general business industry. These occupations show STEM matters because the government is hiring the most in STEM.

When they think of how to increase Hispanics in the federal workforce, they have to think about it in a large context, i.e. how they are recruiting, what the systems implications are and how to ensure that the right people are applying, that they get through the systems to be considered for the jobs, to actually getting the jobs. They have to be sure the pipeline to Director Archuleta is actually filled, and the pipelines of people who are applying are in the top 20. The need for lawyers will not be as high as for someone who has IT skills.

The Federal Aviation Administration will have 1,000 air traffic controller positions available. Ms. Villalobos and other agencies recruited to get air traffic controllers to apply and as a result a total of 44,000 applicants applied for the 1,000 positions. Assessment of those applications is a scientific proposition. If they do not have the right skills, they do not get to stage two. They have to think collectively about how to prepare their community and students for these jobs.

They must prepare college students, mid-career people, interns and seniors/elder experts who are opportunities for the 33 percent. They have to think about it systematically. Director Archuleta talked with Hector Sanchez about how the HCFE helps put this in context so they will accomplish the desired outcome. Right now, success is at 8.2 percent. She wants to work with members to change that number in a surgical and achievable way that can be measured annually, as well as to figure out what success will look like in hiring Hispanics. Director Archuleta and members need to talk about construction of the committee that will enable Director Archuleta to drive the mission. She asked members what advice they can provide to create success in 2014, what the goal is in 2014, what her measurable goals are for 2014, 2015 and 2016 and what piece they will be able to achieve. For example, making Hispanic representation 25 percent by 2014 would not be achievable. Maybe they can do something with interns, college students, mid-career or elders. She refers to “they” as members’ advice, but frankly, it is Director Archuleta’s responsibility.

Mr. Marrero asked if Director Archuleta looked at how much the government is hiring Hispanic veterans. Director Archuleta said there is clearly room for growth in that area. They are doing better with returning veterans who are available to be placed than they are doing with the general population. Women veterans are doing the worst. Director Archuleta is talking to the Veterans Council and Shinseki and said they are not doing well in hiring women veterans and Latinos, so she suggested focusing surgically to hire Latina veterans. Mr. Marrero said the mandate that says they have direct hiring authority is out of date and suggested polishing it up to give them opportunities to have better jobs.

HNBA said Director Archuleta’s remarks were focused on 33 percent of new hires; however Latinos are already in the 66 percentile. HNBA asked if there will be a focus on retention and development of Latinos in the government when Director Archuleta develops retention and development strategies. She said absolutely.

REPORT AND CLOSE OUT OF 2013 WORK GROUPS

Mr. Sanchez was concerned that the groups were not successful in terms of members’ attendance. The required work and organizational and personal commitments are not there. The commitment must be there. Director Archuleta suggested that she and Mr. Sanchez look at this because the work group model does not fit in where she needs advice. She prefers for it to be a discussion about where to focus retention and communications work,

rather than members doing her and her staff's accountability. She would rather members give her advice about what she needs to do.

The Coalition for Fairness for Hispanics in Government said it begs for a revisit of the HCFE's role and purpose. For the past two years, members carved out the groups to provide recommendations to the OPM Director on how to move the needle on Hispanic representation. What Director Archuleta said changes that paradigm. If the HCFE will be reactive, one might question its feasibility. Director Archuleta said she wants members to be proactive. She would like, as she moves through this process, to proactively say where she is and ask if it sounds right.

Mr. Oliverez said Director Archuleta reoriented the HCFE and he bought 100 percent into it. President Johnson established the Inter-Agency Committee on Mexican American Affairs in a memorandum (memo) that also established the president's cabinet as the board of directors of the memo. Later, Senator Montoya and Congressman Roybal made that into Public Law 100 which established a Cabinet Committee on Opportunities for Hispanic-Speaking People of which he was the executive director of program operations. The committee established the 16 point program and the identification of Hispanics in the census in 1970.

When it comes to making progress in terms of Hispanic representation, it can only happen if people have the clout of a cabinet committee and public law that Senator Montoya and Congressman Roybal put together. The Chairmen Martine Castillo and Henry Ramirez sat at the White House with the cabinet committee and were able to present their position on underrepresentation. With all of these committees, first, they established a council under the Executive Order signed by President Clinton, and then the HCFE was born, but the people who decide on hiring are first line hiring managers and supervisors in agencies. Unless we have the clout and ability to influence them, we will be in the same boat for 40 more years. Director Archuleta said she has met with agencies' secretaries over the last two months and this is top priority. She recently met Secretary Sebelius and others. Director Archuleta is the HR representative for the entire government and she must come up with a plan. She feels empowered to do this by the President and his cabinet.

Director Archuleta has a commitment to hiring interns. Mr. Marrero said that interns are the vehicles that exist for hiring Latinos.

APPLICANT FLOW DATA

Dianna Saxman, Deputy Associate Director, HR Solutions, OPM

Last year, the HCFE asked OPM to undertake the applicant flow data project. The HCFE said it did not know what the applicant pool looked like before the hire was made. HR Solutions built a capability to look at data at each segment, across agencies and positions. They posted that data for federal agencies to use. The VA met with the HCFE and showed their data. They also showed the data for OPM's 301 series, a group that OPM is hiring. With regards to the data, they examine full external hiring, and then break down demographics.

Ms. Saxman presented on USAJOBS demographic data, USAJOBS and USA Staffing applicant flow data trends. The example of FAA is very realistic in terms of the chances of getting hired. Director Archuleta said Ms. Saxman's presentation covers 2013 data. The 2014 and 2015 budgets are getting smaller and these numbers will go down.

Ms. Saxman said regarding the applicants who are referred through USAJOBS, there is work to see why the trend is the way it is. Director Archuleta said something happens between the time a person is referred and the time a person is selected. Her team is studying that trend. Ms. Saxman said they added veterans' preference to see how it impacts each stage of the process. It is having an impact on women. Director Archuleta said Latina veterans are very important because they allow opportunities to make significant changes.

Ms. Morin asked if there is data on STEM versus administrative jobs. Ms. Saxman said this was a random sampling and covers all jobs, but HR Solutions can provide that data to reveal more across an occupational group. Ms. Sutch, with USDA, asked how agencies get the information. Ms. Saxman said they take all of the data and put it on a secure site and agencies have all of the data to use for their analysis. HHS requested access to the data.

Ms. Villalobos, Director, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, OPM, said for everyone's Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program (FEORP) reports, ODI asked them to report on how their applicant flow analysis is going. ODI has been analyzing the reports to see how they can assist agencies that use USA Staffing. They have a work group with the experts to make sure they can cross fertilize ideas.

Mr. Oliverez noted the large number of applicants who were not qualified and asked if anybody is looking at why that is happening. Director Archuleta said USA Staffing should review why people are not making it through the hiring process, for example, due to an application problem or skills gaps. If it is part of a systems problem, Director Archuleta wants to know why. Mr. Oliverez said agencies are spending a lot of time training veterans how to apply. Director Archuleta said OPM needed to hire a staff member with a specific skill. Sixty people applied on USAJOBS. Of those 60, only 16 actually filled out the application properly. Director Archuleta wondered if this was due to applicant shortcoming or OPM system problems. Director Archuleta has to look at the applicant and the application system. She is concerned about systems and if qualified people are applying, why they are not making it through the system.

Mr. Oliverez referenced Director Archuleta's comments on the Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) program and noted that OPM is working with the Department of Labor (DOL). VA said they have been working on the applicant flow and are very interested. Ms. Coffey added that a big chunk of veterans hired do not come through USA Staffing. They come through direct hire and non-competitive hiring authorities. Ms. Saxman said that is why for the Fiscal Year 2013 data for USA Staffing, they are showing 35 percent, but government-wide, it is 45 percent. That is why there is a discrepancy. Director Archuleta mentioned that the opportunities veterans offer to employ more Latinos are very important. That is why OPM is working with the Veterans' Council.

SKILLS GAPS & FUTURE STEM WORKFORCE

Shanaz Porter, Group Manager Forecasting and Methods, OPM

Ms. Porter's team develops workforce strategies to close gaps. She said some of the paradigm shifts are skills gaps they are looking to fill that require technical knowledge. Dynamics internally in the workforce cause these shifts. The question is how to retain employees and get them ready to transition. Many employees will be retained. Since the

workforce is aging, knowledge management is important. Agencies are taking on more complex challenges and need a dynamic workforce to foresee challenges.

Director Archuleta said in terms of applicants agencies hired in 2013, information technology was number one. Agencies are hiring generalists, but not a lot. This is information they need to provide to universities. If there is an interest in going into the public sector, the skill development must be where the need is. Ms. Porter said there is a heavy emphasis on STEM. Applicants need transferrable skills because the culture of work is changing. Preparation of prospective and current employees is essential to meet these challenges. Ms. Porter said they decided as a unit to have a stringent process to focus on three to five mission critical occupations and collaborate with agencies on their specific mission critical occupations.

Ms. Porter also presented on the 21st century competencies. This is in line with work they are doing with the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act. The challenge is how agencies develop all employees so they gain these skills and how that leads to retention and engagement.

She also presented on federal workforce occupations of tomorrow, the current federal workforce composition, as of 2012, skills gaps and the percentage of people with college degrees. It is imperative for applicants, as well as managers, to understand the complex USAJOBS process. Ms. Porter's group trains managers on hiring authorities and processes.

Director Archuleta is looking at the 21 percent of the graduates who are graduating with STEM majors. This STEM profile is also what the private sector is looking for. Government is in direct competition with the private sector to hire this limited number of people with STEM majors. Director Archuleta is also focusing on developing mid-managers and elders. Secondly, she is looking at recruitment and considering how to persuade applicants to join the federal workforce. She needs to consider colleges and universities that are preparing students in STEM. Director Archuleta must be meticulous in selecting her targeted STEM audience.

Ms. Porter also presented on closing the gaps through recruitment and development. Ms. Porter's team created a track to get STEM students hired through the Presidential Management Fellows Program. Director Archuleta talked with California State at Fullerton and University of Texas at Brownsville and is looking at the "new west" because it represents the largest growth in the Latino population.

Regarding targeted schools, LULAC asked if a list will be provided to all of the agencies as a guide. Director Archuleta said she yes. Ms. Clemente asked if they are going to Puerto Rican universities. Director Archuleta said absolutely.

The Forecasting and Methods Group is looking at ways to help employees receive more rotational opportunities on GovConnect. An applicant must meet time-in-grade to be eligible for a position. This lets employees gain new skills. This helps build retention and is an engagement tool. She raised a question about how agencies retain their high performers to shift agencies to the next phase of where the government is going.

As a part of their retention efforts, the Government University provides low cost or no cost developmental opportunities in light of the budget constraints. This is an expansion of the

HR University (HRU) model. They are interested in providing educational opportunities to people in various occupations. Government University, through crowdsourcing, includes agencies' preexisting training. If employees would like to change occupations from the 343 series as managers or program analysts to science occupations, they can gain skills through the Government University. They also have government-wide coaching and mentoring programs to assist with retention.

Mr. Oliverez asked Ms. Porter what she will be doing in terms of what the GAO calls engagement. Ms. Porter said there is a high focus on involving the work on the Employee Viewpoint Survey scores, work they are doing with the management agenda and many OPM strategies. Director Archuleta said OPM should give members information on how OPM gathers data around employees' viewpoints. Ms. Porter said the Government University and GovConnect show the development of an agile work environment and make employees want to stay in government.

Sandra Rivera, with the EPA, said that EPA has a lot of STEM, but not a lot of Latinos. They do have a lot of Latinos with graduate degrees, but the problem is the EPA is very top heavy. If the EPA is going to recruit, they will recruit at a very low level. Unfortunately, many programs that brought Latinos to the agency no longer exist, such as the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) and Outstanding Scholars Programs. It will be interesting to see how these initiatives tie into agencies that are STEM based, such as EPA. Many applicants have MBA and doctorate degrees and do not see promotional opportunities and are subsequently leaving their jobs. Director Archuleta expressed the need to acknowledge people that might have left before (non-diverse employees) are not leaving anymore. There are not as many opportunities as there previously were, so now they are staying. Young people who hoped to rise into higher positions are not seeing opportunities. It is a serious issue.

On the other hand, there is a big retirement piece. At DOE, this year in 2014, 14,000 people are leaving the department. Due to the nature of DOE, most of those are highly skilled people. OPM has to work with Secretary Monis at DOE on how to hire women and people of color into those positions. The EPA has a Memorandum of Understanding with LULAC. Due to the work the EPA has done with LULAC, they have successfully recruited many Puerto Ricans with STEM, with predominantly science and engineering backgrounds, to Washington, D.C. to work for the EPA. At the last LULAC Conference in Puerto Rico, the EPA hired more than half of the applicants. Around half of those hires still work for the EPA within the last five years. LULAC said they hired more than 500 employees at the job fair and 15,000 people participated in that job fair. There was a large influx in unemployment in Puerto Rico because they recently let go of 10,000 government employees. That situation is also currently happening in Puerto Rico. That is an opportunity for agencies to hire.

Ms. Porter's other responsibility is workforce planning. While recruitment is critical, it is also important to ensure agencies know their workforces in terms of staffing and competencies. The Forecasting and Methods Group educates agencies about ensuring they have strong workforce planning processes and capabilities to be able to develop strategies to certify that their workforce is prepared now, or if they anticipate future gaps. This involves redeveloping employees, hiring and multi-sector.

DHS asked about cyber security. There was an effort to create a tag for human capital for cyber security. People in that field can be in a wide number of occupational series. DHS has the lead on that. From a D&I perspective, when an agency understands its current workforce, it helps the agency better target where skills and D&I gaps are. DHS asked if they are close to having that tag in place. Ms. Porter said he is referring to a cybersecurity data element that will be a part of the Enterprise Human Resources Integration System. For three to five months there has been an effort to categorize all people doing cyber security work. First, they informed agencies of this new requirement. Now, agencies are coding their positions. Ms. Porter's group anticipates receiving agencies' data within a month or so.

With regard on how to make jobs appealing, DHS is looking at DOJ attorney positions. Lawyers work jobs at DOJ that pay a lot less than nearby law firms would, but have opportunities they would never have at a law firm.

A participant asked, in terms of diversity, if Ms. Porter looked at the number of jobs that required a high school education versus college degrees and above. Ms. Porter said most jobs require specialized experience and education. It is partially because the jobs are at higher grades. Managers like to hire at the GS-13 and above. It is about encouraging managers at lower grades so they can develop pipelines and create career ladders for people to enter into the government, i.e. at GS-5 or 7 and go to GS-12 or 13. They must get managers not just interested in hiring for today. This could provide agencies opportunities to hire people with high school diplomas or people in high school.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Villalobos announced that the next meeting would be on April 17. Director Archuleta would like them to discuss the Second Term President's Management Agenda and Employee Viewpoint Survey (EVS) scores. Director Archuleta also would like to ensure the right people are on the committee. Universities are not represented in the membership. She said Mr. Sanchez and her will consider what it will take to be focused, while utilizing all of the talents and having all of the talents they need at the table. In the long run, what matters is how they increase Hispanics in government. Moving forward, they will be focused, surgical and accountable. Director Archuleta pledged to the HCFE and Congress that this is an important issue to her. She believes it will be her most important legacy. So, they have her full time and commitment.

Mr. Sanchez reflected on the purpose of the HCFE, why it exists and whether it needs a fresh start with new changes in the HCFE. He said that Latinos are the most underrepresented group in the government and that reflects the serious challenges their community faces. Mr. Sanchez said it is unacceptable for agencies to have 3.2 or 3.4 percent representation of Latinos at a time when they are working on the most important legislation in decades where Latinos are the most uninsured and Latinos are not helping put this legislation in place. Mr. Sanchez encouraged members to have a fresh start and be creative, strategic and critical, as well as to offer Director Archuleta all of their support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT/RECEIPT OF PUBLIC REMARKS

Michelle Arias, with the Department of State, thanked the members for their hard work. She told the HCFE that State wants to hear and share the HCFE's ideas on how they can do a better job.

The Coalition for Fairness for Hispanics in Government said the HCFE has come full circle on an issue they need to take credit for. They had an outstanding discussion on applicant flow data and where that is going in two years, after 40 years of trying to understand what the problem of underrepresentation is, i.e., the recruitment, hiring, screening, the best qualified list or selection process. So, the HCFE Accountability Work Group created the Hispanic Accountability Model based on the need for a government-wide snapshot of the whole process, i.e., the recruitment, screening, hiring, retention and advancement. The crux of the Hispanic Accountability Model was a data matrix that they are now seeing some benefits from a snapshot, and can see where some road blocks are where people are applying or being screened, but are not being selected. The HCFE can present to OPM and agencies about, the roadblocks, rather than 40 years of anecdotes of why individuals have not been hired. Now, they have empirical data they can use. In some small measure, the HCFE helped move that along. Mr. Sandate said he was sorry that Director Archuleta was not present to hear that.

Mr. Sandate thought there is value in getting that good mix. He said university representatives are good, but there are people who were not present at the meeting who have been on the HCFE in the past and who have worked on this issue for many years. He said the OPM staff is now doing a fantastic job of moving them in the right direction.

Ms. Castillo, the new Chair of the NCHEPM, introduced herself. The NCHEPM is an inter-agency Council of HEPMs and others. She encouraged people to become members of the NCHEPM. The NCHEPM is responsible for selecting the annual Hispanic heritage month theme. The NCHEPM has a column for this year's Hispanic month theme. She volunteered to share that link so organizations and individuals can submit themes.

ADJOURNMENT

Sanchez adjourned the meeting at 3:52 p.m.

Certification:



Veronica Villalobos
Executive Director,
Hispanic Council on Federal Employment