

U.S. Department of Labor Hispanic Worker Initiative

Overview



President George W. Bush's administration is committed to helping Hispanic workers find and prepare for new job opportunities. The President has established an Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans to help fulfill this commitment. The Department of Labor is also helping fulfill this commitment through its Hispanic Worker Initiative.

The Department's Hispanic Worker Initiative is focused on helping Hispanic Americans take advantage of job opportunities in high growth sectors of the economy such as hospitality, health care, service and construction. These growth sectors of the economy offer ample opportunity for employment and career advancement.

However, Hispanic workers face some unique challenges in attaining the necessary education and skill requirements. Among the challenges are: more than two in five Hispanics aged 25 and older have not graduated from high school; two in five Hispanics are foreign born, which presents language and cultural barriers, and Hispanics are more likely to live in poverty.¹

As a result of these and other factors, Hispanics are much more likely to be unemployed, and those that are employed typically earn less than non-Hispanic workers.

The Labor Department's Hispanic Worker Initiative is pursuing the following strategies to address the challenges faced by Hispanic Americans, and help them prepare for and find good jobs at good wages:

- Help Hispanic Americans develop language and occupational skills
- Help Hispanic youth stay on an educational path that leads to rewarding careers
- Encourage collaboration between employers, community colleges and the public workforce system to help Hispanic Americans build the skills required in growing industries

The Department will continue to explore more innovative projects throughout the year that address the identified workforce challenges of Hispanic Americans. The Hispanic Worker Initiative is part of a larger effort at the Department of Labor to link the resources of the \$15 billion public workforce system to job opportunities that exist in growing industries.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, "The Hispanic Population in the United States: March 2002," issued June 2003.

