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In this Issue:

New Mexico Hosts Annual Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Conference 1
Governor Richardson Demonstrates Commitment to FBCI..... 1
Outstanding New Mexico Volunteer Receives Presidential Commendation 2
Director Hein’s Remarks to New Mexico Conference Attendees 2-5

New Mexico Hosts Annual Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Conference

On March 15th, Director Jay Hein delivered the keynote address at New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson’s Conference for Faith-Based and Community Organizations (FBCOs). The conference was sponsored by the University of New Mexico (UNM), UNM’s Research Service Learning Program and Governor Bill Richardson’s Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (OFBCI). The conference’s purpose was to inform FBCOs throughout New Mexico about the federal and state funding and partnership opportunities available to assist them in expanding their valuable services to those in need. Over 350 people attended the conference.



U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman sent a letter of welcome to the participants. Representatives from the Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (CFBCI) at the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Education, Health and Human Services (HHS), Housing and Urban Development and Labor participated at the conference by leading technical assistance workshops. Shayam Menon, Director of the Education CFBCI, instructed participants about the legal requirements that come with the receipt of government funds; Erica Pelman, Special Assistant at the Labor CFBCI, shared tips for writing a successful grant application; Erin White, Deputy Director of the Agriculture CFBCI, joined New Mexico’s Rural Development liaison to present information about programs to strengthen rural communities; and Greg Morris, Director of the HHS CFBCI, offered information about available HHS funding opportunities.

Governor Richardson Demonstrates Commitment to FBCI

In a greeting to the March 15th conference, Governor Bill Richardson of New Mexico welcomed conference attendees and expressed his appreciation for their efforts to serve those in need in their state. He said, “[T]he organizations you represent offer a safety net of social services to those New Mexicans who are most in need. Approximately 1,500 nonprofit organizations in our state provide health, education and human services to our people. Through this conference you will learn strategies to become more successful in obtaining federal grant money to help keep your good work going.”

Governor Richardson further demonstrated his commitment to supporting the work of faith-based and community social service organizations in a private meeting with Director Hein after the conference. Governor Richardson met with Director Hein to strategize the next steps for advancing the Initiative in New Mexico.



To learn more about New Mexico’s OFBCI, visit: www.nmaging.state.nm.us/Faith_Based_Initiatives.html.

OFBCI Newsletter

Outstanding New Mexico Volunteer Receives Presidential Commendation

At the March 15th New Mexico Conference, Director Hein presented Diane Harrison Ogawa, Executive Director of the PNM Resources Foundation and Director of Community Relations for PNM Corporation, the President's Volunteer Service Award (PVSA) to recognize the extraordinary contributions she has made to her community. The President's Council on Service and Civic Participation created the PVSA as a way to thank and honor Americans who, by their demonstrated commitment and example, inspire others to engage in volunteer service.



Diane Harrison Ogawa grew up in a family in which volunteering was a way of life. She participated in

her earliest service experiences through her church and first volunteered in New Mexico by serving on the board of St. Martin's Hospitality Center, a faith-based homeless shelter in Albuquerque. In addition to participating on the board of directors for numerous nonprofits, Diane engages in many direct service projects. For example, she organizes staff from her office to volunteer at the Ronald McDonald House in Albuquerque. Diane believes volunteering should be a family affair and encourages her daughters to lead a life of service. She works with her husband and daughters to coordinate bone marrow drives and to produce tote bags full of food and sanitary items to distribute to the homeless during the holiday season. Diane's volunteer hours have exceeded 500 hours per year since 1999.

Director Hein's Remarks to New Mexico Conference Attendees Albuquerque, New Mexico March 15, 2007

It is my privilege to be with you today and to bring greetings from President Bush. As you may have read in the papers this week, the President just returned from a trip to several Latin American countries where he discussed America's commitment to our neighbors to the south. New Mexico has special relationship with these countries of course, and we are committed to helping expand social justice throughout the Western Hemisphere over the next two years and beyond.

I appreciated Gov Richardson's fine words welcoming us. Governor Richardson is not only an innovative governor seeking to make New Mexico a safer, healthier and more prosperous place to live, he is also a national figure who seeks to make America a better world citizen and a more compassionate nation.

These two interests come together in the New Mexico FBCI which convenes us today. Governor Richardson understands that the FBCI extends state government's reach to places that are hard to serve and to people who often lack proper service. This is a very pragmatic problem-solving approach to the initiative, which is a refreshing departure from the rhetoric and debate that swirls around the initiative in

Washington. It's why governors are among my favorite public officials (second to my boss, of course) and why I so enjoy visiting leaders such as yourselves who are getting the work done in neighborhoods.

New Mexico as FBCI Engine

Governor Richardson and his faith-based liaison, Nancy Pope, recognize that FBCOs are the first responders to natural disasters and human need of all forms. They understand that the New Mexico state government cannot do its job without the nonprofit sector, and thus they have set clear goals to strengthen public-private partnerships in the state.

Understanding that you can't partner with groups you don't know, the Governor's Office conducted an extensive outreach program to create a database of 1,600 nonprofits. This was goal number one and it was accomplished last year.

Its second goal focused on training state nonprofits on the federal grant making process. Using the OFBCI's "How to Access Federal Funds" guide, Nancy and her colleagues trained 340 groups on the guidance material.

And third, the state officials provided education and training to 70 nonprofits to strengthen their organizational capacity to win and effectively administer grants.

These three goals resulted in over two dozen new New Mexico groups applying for federal discretionary grants which contributed to an increase of \$8 million in grants won by state nonprofits. The grand total of discretionary dollars received in New Mexico last year totaled \$28 million dollars and that amount will likely continue to increase thanks to events such as today's conference.

It is remarkable that we filled the room with 350 nonprofits today who are interested in growing their budgets and extending their missions through better partnerships with the state. I understand that another couple hundred groups had to be placed on a waiting list which means that the initiative will continue to grow in New Mexico.

Beyond this discussion of state outreach and general grants, I'd like to highlight a particular state success story. The state of New Mexico recently won a \$22 million/three-year federal grant competition for a program called Access to Recovery. ATR is an innovative new national program designed to provide vouchers to those suffering from addiction so that they can determine their own best path to recovery.

Well, I should say that we thought it was an innovative program. But the real story is that you have had ten years experience with this voucher model through a local program called Albuquerque Metro Central Intake. AMCI experienced a lot of success here in New Mexico and it helped prove the value and efficacy of the substance abuse treatment voucher model to federal policymakers.

Thus, your innovation helped set new federal policy and then we created the ATR program which enabled you to expand service beyond Albuquerque. The new funding also helped you register more providers and, most importantly, to expand service to many more New Mexicans burdened by addiction. The state is on track to serve 12,000 clients and the eligible providers increased from 35 under AMCI to 105 under ATR (40 FBO and 65 secular).

This is how government is supposed to work: local innovation, shared learning through implementation and new federal-state partnerships to facilitate continuous improvement. That is just what happened with AMCI and now ATR. The state is now setting

new targets in central intake and assessments as well as outcome evaluation. Greg Morris from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is here today and I'm sure that he'll be delighted to discuss next steps in our ATR partnership with you.

A Stronger Federal-State Partnership

Speaking of federal-state partnerships, I'm pleased to report that 33 governors and over 100 mayors voluntarily participate in the FBCI. They have set up offices and named liaisons to multiple state programs to foster more government-nonprofit partnerships. But even in states without formal FBCI structures, leaders are advancing FBCI strategies to reform policy, launch new programs and train nonprofit organizations to better solve social problems in the communities. In sum, the FBCI is growing in all 50 states.

It is our job at the federal level to support this growth. We have Centers for Faith-based and Community Initiatives at twelve cabinet agencies to do just that. Our center directors and their staff serve as a portal for states and nonprofits to access the federal government and they help their federal colleagues design better programs and strategies to accommodate state-nonprofit collaboration.

Let me share an example of how this gets done by introducing you to the Small Business Administration. You may be wondering, "What does the SBA have to do with the FBCI?" Well, I'm pleased to introduce you to the story of John Woosely and Victor Pena to illustrate. John is director of the SBA district office in New Mexico and Victor is a New Mexican hero.

Victor Pena was a medical doctor in Cuba before arriving in Albuquerque as a political refugee in 1998. In spite of his medical training, Dr Pena supported his family by driving a truck route between New Mexico and Oklahoma. But even that proved difficult over time due to his lack of US citizenship.

Dr. Pena found refuge again, this time at Catholic Charities here in central New Mexico. Following an assessment of Victor's situation and interests, Catholic Charities staff connected him to WESST Corporation which operates a Refugee Microenterprise Development Training program. At RMDT, Victor learned marketing and sales techniques en route (pun intended) to becoming self employed.

Even though there is no private enterprise in Cuba, Victor possessed an entrepreneurial spirit. In his words, "You have to risk making your own way. If you don't take the risk, you won't succeed."

Victor succeeded. He initially borrowed \$10,000 from the New Mexico SBA micro loan fund to start a real estate business. He named his business Real Estate Express and he earned his brokers license. Victor now employs 4 real estate agents, he serves 99% Spanish speaking clients and his personal income increased 300 percent over the past 3 years! He just renewed his third loan through WESST Corp which continues to be his business partner.

Refugee resettlement...pathway to citizenship and assimilation...economic development...and expanding home ownership all rolled into one strategy. This is the power of the FBCI and the efforts of all of you assembled in this room. Congratulations to the New Mexico SBA, WESST Corp and of course to Victor Pena.

Progress Made, Challenges Await

Hunger, rural economic development and education are three big targets established by the Governor as next targets for his FBCI. Following this conference, my office will collaborate with Nancy and her state government colleagues to work on FBCO strategies for each of them. Note: FBCI leaders from USDA and the Education Department are in attendance at this conference. Their agencies have programs in each of the three target areas so they can jump start the process today.

Of course, the issue of immigration will be a top tier policy issue both for the 110th congress and next presidential election. And of course, New Mexico is on the front lines of this debate. Congress should act to support the comprehensive reform favored by President Bush and Governor Richardson. There are eleven million illegal immigrants in US, a number that has doubled over the last ten years. The number will likely double again over the next ten if comprehensive reform is not adopted.

Illegal immigration is bad for a nation of laws and even worse for the immigrant and his or her family. The life of the undocumented is harsh. They cross the border at great personal risk and cost in search of jobs that few Americans want though the US economy greatly needs. In return, they receive inadequate health care and no pension or other benefits and yet they do often pay taxes and contribute billions in remittances each year.

While congress debates fences, guest worker programs and enforcement options, churches and nonprofits are busy building citizens through education, assimilation and human services. One of the nation's finest examples is PUENTE (People United to Enrich the Neighborhood Through Education). As many of you know, PUENTE is Spanish for "Bridge" and that is why Sister Jennie Lectenberg founded the organization. She wanted to build a bridge in her community of Los Angeles between cultures and between despair and hope.

In Sister Jennie's words, "One of the most important gifts we can give to any human being is the opportunity to help them help themselves so they can participate in family, community and the economy. And it all begins with education." Sadly, half Latinos in US don't graduate from high school which is a dire circumstance in the knowledge economy.

Sister Jennie discerned a lag in Latino youth literacy largely due to their parents' low English proficiency. In response, PUENTE instructs both parents and children: 2,500 students per day (300 preschool and K; 150 after school; 150 high school students; and 1900 adults. With a staff of 60 and a \$3.5 million annual budget, PUENTE offers innovative computer based technology for multiple stages of education: ESL, SAT prep, adult education. To support parents as leaders of their homes and parents as the child's first teacher, PUENTE offers ESL for first generation immigrants and Spanish as a second language for the second generation.

The bottom line is that assimilation is the key to building productive and healthy citizens and FBCOs offer the most accessible and effective means to help immigrants learn American culture and become part of a community.

Solutions and Conclusion

In his first inaugural address, President Bush called on Americans to be citizens not spectators. He learned the power of America's armies of compassion by observing them first-hand in Texas combined with the inculcation of his family's deep-seated commitment to service. You may recall President George H.W. Bush's words, "Any definition of a successful life must include service to others."

To advance that ethic within his administration, President George W. Bush created the OFBCI during his very first week in office. The primary charge for

our office is to rally the armies of compassion by assisting nonprofit organizations. Following 9/11, the President launched USA Freedom Corps to increase and organize volunteers.

But as impressive as presidential action may be, we realize that the real work of service happens in communities. Mayors often remind us that there is no such thing as national poverty; the real poor actually live in communities. Thus, the Bush Administration compassion agenda is dedicated to nonprofits who share a zip code and a relationship with those you serve. And it's also dedicated to the volunteers who make your service effective and sustainable.

I'm pleased to report that volunteerism is alive and well in New Mexico. Volunteer rates in state have increased from 371,500 in 2002 to 402,400 in 2005 and the average New Mexican volunteer donates 100-499 hours per year.

Today's event co-sponsor, the University of New Mexico Research Service Learning Program is your state's answer to the Peace Corps. RSLP applies research and other valuable university resources to pressing needs of Albuquerque's real needs. I encourage you to hear more about this when Dean White speaks later today.

But now I'd like to close my remarks by introducing you to one of your own. Diane Harrison Ogawa is a general in the armies of compassion. Diane lives in Albuquerque with her husband and two daughters. She has been a volunteer since her childhood, an ethic that she and her husband have passed along to their girls. In response to her husband's battle with leukemia these past 5 years, Diane, her husband and daughters organized bone marrow drives. She and her daughters also produce tote bags full of food and sanitary items to distribute to homeless during holiday season.

Diane co-chairs Covenant Presbyterian church's \$40 million campaign with her husband to support overseas missions and US church development. In an even more impressive display of family legacy, her own mother chaired Covenant's mission committee years ago so you know Diane came by her service honestly. [This anecdote actually complies with

national trends: volunteerism is often intergenerational and 1 in 3 volunteers donate their time through a faith-based organization.]

On her own, Diane is nothing short of a powerhouse. As president of Manzamo Day School's Capital Campaign, Diane has gone beyond bricks and mortar to create a strategy asking 200 women for \$1,000 each to fund scholarships for children who can't afford the school.

Diane also supports education as a board member of Central New Mexico Community College where she played a valuable role in creating "New Mexico Resources," a website providing comprehensive health and human services information for low income New Mexicans. She is also a board member for the Golden Apple Foundation New Mexico where she helped raise a quarter million dollars for "Tribute to Teachers" honoring excellence in the classroom.

In the community, Diane is part of a group that created Future Funders program at Albuquerque Community Foundation which raised \$300k for foundation grants. And as a past chair of United Way of Central New Mexico "Women in Philanthropy Council," Diane's leadership led to a 25% increase in membership and 40% increase in dollars.

Beyond these impressive statistics, Nancy Pope says it best: "I cannot imagine our community without the impact of Diane. While there are many tireless community volunteers who raise significant dollars for needy charities, Diane is one of those rare visionaries who seeks to innovate, empower and enrich through her vision of philanthropy. Equally at home in the trenches and the corporate board room, she is just as frequently found with her sleeves rolled up working side by side on a hands-on project as she is with a group of excited collaborators around her conference table."

For such commitment to community, and on behalf of the President of the United States of America, it is my privilege to present the President's Voluntary Service Award to Diane Harrison Ogawa.

And we can't imagine a New Mexico without its nonprofits leaders gathered in this room. Thank you for what you do every day and best wishes.