



# 2005 ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN Federal Career Advancement Summit



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hosted by **SECRETARY ELAINE L. CHAO** U.S. Department of Labor and  
**ACTING DIRECTOR DAN G. BLAIR** U.S. Office of Personnel Management



*Federal Career Advancement Summit*



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# 2005 ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN Federal Career Advancement Summit



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The remarks of the speakers and presenters at this event reflect, in many instances, their personal views and not necessarily the official views or policies of the U.S. Government or the agencies they represent. The inclusion of references to particular nonFederal entities should not be construed as an official endorsement of any such entity, its products or services.



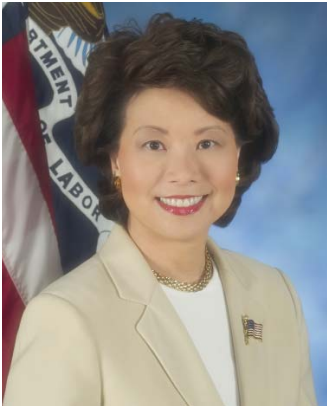
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**SECRETARY OF LABOR  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20210**

Dear Friends:

Since 2002, the Department of Labor has been proud to cosponsor the Asian Pacific American Federal Career Advancement Summit in order to reflect on the accomplishments of Asian Pacific Americans in government and explore ways to better utilize their talents on behalf of our nation.

America faces new challenges every day, and with these challenges comes the need for qualified men and women ready to serve their country and their fellow citizens. The number of Asian Pacific Americans in the Federal workforce is rising, but there is still more to be done. The goal of these Summits is to make Asian Pacific Americans more fully aware of the rewards of public service, the skills required for success, and the many opportunities for advancement. Since the first Summit in 2002, the agenda has featured experts in many professional fields and generated tremendous feedback from over 3,000 participants.

This publication highlights achievements to date and reaffirms our ongoing commitment to build on that record in a way that offers maximum benefits to Asian Pacific Americans in Federal service. Under the leadership of President George W. Bush, I am confident this country will continue to draw on the strength of its diverse heritage to ensure a brighter future for all Americans.

Sincerely,

Elaine L. Chao

# 1. MEETING A NEED AND BUILDING ON SUCCESS

**“I care deeply about helping individuals advance within our mainstream society. I know from my own experience that it is not always easy. These Summits provide the tools and knowledge necessary to stay on the path to advancement.”**

U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao

U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao, along with the Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, has hosted the annual Asian Pacific American (APA) Federal Career Advancement Summit, held in Washington, D.C. during Asian Pacific American Heritage Month in May since 2002. The Summits are designed to address the needs of one of the fastest growing segments of the American workforce — the Asian Pacific American (APA) community.

While all employees interested in the advancement of APAs are encouraged to register at this annual event, the conferences target APAs at the GS-9 through the SES level. Beginning with just 275 attendees in 2002, more than 900 attended the 2005 Summit as word spread to APA professionals across the Federal government. All those who have attended received valuable insights on leadership, communications, and other skill sets necessary to advance within Federal government careers, as well as new insight on the professional fulfillment to be found in public service.

The APA Federal Career Advancement Summits are occasions focused on addressing the unique needs of Asian Pacific Americans, and offer an outstanding opportunity for APA Federal employees to develop management skills and identify strategies to increase their qualifications for top leadership positions. In addition to a keynote address from Secretary Chao and other top speakers, the annual agenda features workshops and breakout sessions, as well as individual executive coaching sessions where attendees receive career advice tailored to their specific needs or areas of interest.

The APA Summits have been generously supported by many agencies and departments across the Federal government. As a diversity and training initiative, the funds allocated for this event often come from designated training, diversity or recruitment accounts. Federal agencies also have the opportunity to support the Summits as a partner, exhibit/sponsor, volunteer coordinator, program adviser, or member of the planning committee.

The Department of Labor and Secretary Chao are committed to allocating ongoing resources necessary to maximize attendance and sustain the success of these outstanding APA Summits. Following President George W. Bush’s example of nominating a record number of Asian Pacific Americans to his Administration, these Summits seek to equip Asian Pacific Americans already in public service with the management and interpersonal skills that will help them become leaders, both in the government and in their community. ■





# A PROUD RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENT

2.



**“May is Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, a time to recognize and celebrate the many accomplishments and contributions of Asian Pacific Americans in our country.”**

U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao

## **ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS IN FEDERAL SERVICE: Key Facts**

- ▶ President George W. Bush appointed more than **300** APAs to political positions in the Administration, including **38** in the Senior Executive Service.
- ▶ President George W. Bush has appointed **2** APA Cabinet secretaries — both appointed in the first month of his first term. He has also asked them to continue serving in his Cabinet in his second term.
- ▶ President George W. Bush appointed **38** APAs to positions requiring Senate confirmation in the first term.
- ▶ Representing the inclusive nature of the Bush Administration, **10** of the Asian Pacific American presidential appointees requiring Senate approval are immigrants to the U.S.
- ▶ A record number of **23** APAs have served in the White House, **11** of whom are Commissioned Officers.



## A MESSAGE FROM

# AMBASSADOR JULIA CHANG BLOCH

3. *The Honorable Julia Chang Bloch, President of the U.S.-China Education Trust and former U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Nepal, served as mistress of ceremonies at the Asian Pacific American Federal Career Advancement summits in 2004 and 2005.*

Julia Chang Bloch is former U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Nepal and currently President of the U.S.-China Education Trust.

Beginning as a Peace Corps volunteer in Malaysia in 1964 and culminating as ambassador to Nepal in 1989, Bloch became the first Asian Pacific American to hold such rank in U.S. history.

A native of China who came to the U.S. at age nine, Ambassador Bloch grew up in San Francisco and earned a bachelor's degree from the University of California at Berkeley, and a master's degree from Harvard University.



It was my great pleasure to serve as mistress of ceremonies at the third and fourth annual Asian Pacific American Federal Career Advancement Summits in Washington, D.C. These Summits were created under the leadership of U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao and have become an important way to assist Asian Pacific Americans achieve career success.

It has been a pleasure for me to watch these Summits grow and improve. The presentations of the Summit are so worthwhile and help build the careers of more and more APAs in the Federal government. I am honored and thankful to be part of this effort to help Asian Pacific Americans achieve career success in public service and continue to take their rightful place in mainstream America.

The Summits are also a great opportunity to network with Asian Pacific American colleagues and exchange information, encouraging all those in attendance to share experiences with each other, keep their minds open to learning, and meet the many exhibitors offering new career paths to explore.

The representation of APAs in government service is important not only personally, but for our country. I have been fortunate during a long career in public service to see up close so many dedicated men and women who work for America at home and overseas. Based on my experience, I believe that maintaining America's power depends on the quality of those who answer the call to public service. It is an honorable profession that deserves the best.

Our country is facing so many challenges, perhaps a broader range of challenges than ever before. In today's world of great danger and great opportunity, government must attract and retain top professionals to meet those challenges and ensure our national success in the 21st century. I would like to see more and more of the best and brightest Americans in public service be Asian Pacific Americans. These APA Summits are an important part of that effort. ■

A MESSAGE FROM **SAMUEL MOK**  
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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4.



**“Serving my fourth tour in the Federal government, I am reminded once again of the expectations and responsibilities placed upon me by my peers, my community, and the constituents we serve. It is an honor and a privilege to do such challenging work. I have been especially pleased to see more and more Asian Pacific Americans join me on this career path, and look forward to even greater participation by APAs in the future, particularly in management positions. It is a worthy goal and we are going to achieve it.”**

# THE HONORABLE DAN G. BLAIR

5. ACTING DIRECTOR, U.S. OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

## MORNING KEYNOTE ADDRESS

**Blair Highlights Proud Past and Bright Future for Asian Pacific Americans in Government Service**

The Honorable Dan G. Blair, Acting Director,  
U.S. Office of Personnel Management



Good morning, and thank you, Ambassador Bloch, for that kind introduction. I am honored to be here today to join you at this very valuable career summit. This summit is focused on providing management insights, skills training and career opportunities for Asian Pacific American government employees. I can't think of a better forum and more excellent opportunity than you have today. You are the government's future, and I am so glad that you are here and that I am able to share this time with you.

First, I want to thank Secretary Elaine Chao for extending this kind invitation to me to speak here today. When President George W. Bush nominated Elaine Chao to be Secretary of Labor, he said, "Her successful life gives eloquent testimony to the virtues of hard work and perseverance." Well, it is going to be your hard work and perseverance, too, that will enable you to achieve results and meet your dreams when it comes to your own professional aspirations.

I know that is why you are here today, to learn one more thing, discuss one more issue, make one more contact, and take back to your office one more skill. Please hone those skills because we need you and your leadership abilities, intelligence and creativity. Why do we need you? Let me tell you a little bit about what is going on in government. Over the next two years, 70 percent of Federal senior executives are going to be eligible to retire. That is seven out of ten of the nation's senior executives who are carrying out the most important programs in government today. It is a high number and it poses a high risk for government, but with that high risk comes a high reward.

Our senior executives are a dedicated and tough bunch and many are going to stay around for longer than many expect. But using historical projections, our statisticians anticipate we will still lose more than one-third of our top executives in that timeframe. As you would expect, looking at those numbers and knowing how critical our senior management is, an exodus of this magnitude will create significant shortages in a wide variety of jobs, and that spells opportunity for everyone in the audience today.

It should come as no surprise that leadership focus at the Office of Personnel Management is on succession planning and how to fill those jobs. OPM is committed to creating a Federal leadership corps with the skills to lead in every field and the flexibility to get results in every agency. That is what the President's Management Agenda is all about. To meet this commitment, OPM announced nearly two years ago the creation of a government-wide Senior Executive Service Federal candidate development program (CDP).

As we prepare to select our inaugural class, we anticipate this candidate development program to set the standard for such programs government-wide. It will have a world-class program of instruction with selected courses and training specifically devoted to and developed for it. It will be delivered by OPM's prestigious Federal Executive Institute located in Charlottesville.

This will be a professionally implemented program producing top quality leaders. These graduates will be ready to come and serve their government. Some departments already have CDP programs in place. However, many smaller departments and agencies do not. Hopefully, this will fill that gap. It is more efficient for OPM, as the government's human resources center, to operate the CDP on a government-wide basis than for many small agencies to develop their own programs.

We hope that our new program will fill that void in order to allow you and other interested, talented Federal workers the opportunity to move up through the pipeline into the senior ranks of government service. Some hard-to-fill positions in technology and other fields are also going to benefit from this government-wide approach. We are actively recruiting inside and outside the government for the next generation of leaders. This is a very broad recruitment approach and we are asking a number of organizations to share in our mission and help us do the job of recruiting talented people.

We will select CDP candidates using traditional Senior Executive Service merit staffing procedures. We hope to eventually produce one or two programs of approximately 50 candidates a year. As a unique incentive, OPM will offer a temporary increase to agencies' SES position allocations in order to support their participation in a centrally managed CDP.

While the allocation quantity is critical, the quality is much more important. That is why I am talking to you today. Our employees should feel strongly that their agencies have robust leadership. Our surveys reveal that this is one area where we need improvement government-wide.

So again, we need you. We need you to fill those vacancies. We need you to fill those skill gaps. We need you to fill those areas where we are lacking. Our candidate development program is one of many ways we can provide strong leaders as part of a broader, seamless approach to overall executive and management development.

We are also engaging in long-range planning. Our executive readiness program under construction is designed to reach, enlist and prepare high-potential GS-13s, GS-14s, and GS-15s who may be two to three years away from the candidate development program. This is an important part of our leadership development pipeline. So as you can see, we have people coming in at the GS-13, GS-14 and GS-15 level and in the CDP level as well. All are an important part of succession planning.

I would like to see a show of hands this morning. How many of you have heard about our candidate development program? I am glad to see that. We take great pride in trying to make this available to everyone. You are doing the right thing in not waiting for someone to knock on the door, but taking proactive approach to learning and seeing what government opportunities are available.

As I said earlier, 70 percent of Senior Executive Service members will be eligible to retire in the next few years. Those are real vacancies and those vacancies can be filled by the people in this room if you take advantage of the opportunity. We have those jobs. The opportunities are there, and we have the numbers to prove it. Asian Pacific Islander representation in the Federal civilian workforce today is greater than the representation in the national civilian labor workforce. As of September 2004, approximately 4.9 percent of the permanent Federal workforce were Americans of Asian and Pacific Island descent, compared to 4 percent in the U.S. civilian labor workforce.

**“We are all on the threshold of something new and exciting in the American civil service of the 21st century.”**

The Honorable Dan G. Blair, Acting Director,  
U.S. Office of Personnel Management



Asian Pacific Islander representation in the higher-paying professional administrative occupations rose 13 percent in 2004 as well, 2.5 times greater than representation in the overall Federal workforce. Our statistics show that Asian Pacific Islander representation comprised 2.6 percent of all Federal employees at senior pay levels.

There is a lot of talent, energy and potential in this room. I expect that we will tap into it. The government will improve considerably when we see more of you in leadership roles, including senior leadership in every Federal agency. At OPM, we are doing everything we can to make sure that if someone dedicates their career to serving their country, they will not bump into a glass ceiling or any other kind of ceiling.

Of the approximately 6,800 SES members today, only 12 percent are minorities and 27 percent are women, so we have a ways to go. But there are many, many ways to move up faster and smarter. I invite you to use our Web site, [usajobs.gov](http://usajobs.gov), and learn more about how to open those doors.

The key to your next promotion, pay raise and new job is flexibility. At OPM, we are making progress to improve Federal hiring, retention and personnel practices. We are giving agencies early recruitment and payout authorities to help them reshape their workforces. One of the benefits of that is to make room for a new generation of leaders, the leaders that I see in this room today. You need to know all about flexibilities like category rating, which gives managers the ability to consider a broader range of qualified candidates. Another flexibility is direct hire, which allows agencies to waive competitive hiring rules to fill hard-to-fill positions.

These are just two examples of the way the Federal government is changing how it brings people in to serve us. These changes will benefit not only those of you here, but the taxpayers as well. Flexibilities like student loan repayment have also enabled us to hire the best and the brightest. You have quite a bit of debt out there. In this way, we allow agencies to tap into that and tap into good students who are graduating from the best universities in order to fill government positions. The career decisions that you make tomorrow are going to be affected by the changes in human resources happening today.

Dan G. Blair has been Deputy Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management since 2001 and served as Acting Director from 2004-2005. Prior to joining OPM, Mr. Blair served on the staffs of both House and Senate committees charged with Federal civil service oversight. A native of Missouri, Mr. Blair received his bachelor's degree and law degree from the University of Missouri at Columbia.

**“OPM is committed to creating a Federal leadership corps with the skills to lead in every field and the flexibility to get results in every agency. That is what the President’s Management Agenda is all about.”**

The Honorable Dan G. Blair, Acting Director,  
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You should also stay current with government-wide personnel reforms, particularly the changes being made at the Department of Homeland Security and Department of Defense. OPM and the Department of Homeland Security were given the authority to develop a contemporary and merit-based personnel system for the melding of the 24 disparate agencies and offices and departments that came together to be the Department of Homeland Security. Those regulations were published and made final last January. Building on that success, we have proposed a new national security personnel system for the Department of Defense and published draft regulations. We are currently involved in the meet-and-confer process with those departments’ union leaders.

Pay plans are changing. Pay for performance will be the salary model for the future. President Bush is strongly committed to opening the Federal workforce at every level to qualified Americans of all backgrounds. It will be good for America and good for government when we can match your knowledge, skills and abilities to decisionmaking positions throughout the Federal workforce.

At OPM, we are always talking about KSAs. It is time to update those KSAs and add new skills. We want to hear from you. We need you and are being very proactive about letting you know it. Our outreach efforts at OPM include participation at job fairs, conferences and other venues to promote Federal employment opportunities. OPM sponsored a number of nationwide recruitment fairs, many of which were conducted in cities across the country, including New York, Denver, Detroit, Miami and San Diego. We drew a well-qualified audience.

Let me relate my experience at the New York job fair. I was not enamored with the concept of job fairs because I always felt they did not draw the best and the brightest when we went to these places. I was proven wrong. On a warm spring day approximately a year ago in New York City, we went to the job fair at Madison Square Garden. Fifteen-thousand people showed up dressed like you are today, armed with resumes, writing samples and references. These people were ready, willing and able to work for America.

So it is not only you, but across America today we are seeing an explosion of interest in Federal service. Whether it is due to 9-11 or a new sense of patriotism, it is something we appreciate and something to take advantage of because if you do not have the systems in government that give applicants the attention they deserve, the treatment they deserve, we will lose a valuable window of opportunity.

We have also visited a number of military installations that provide services for our veterans coming back from Iraq and transitioning from military life to civilian life. We go to where the best people are and the best candidates are located. One of the places where we find a great source of recruitment is the USAJobs Web site. We have had over 17 million visitors over the last year alone, so people are interested in getting to work. I hope that you will use that valuable resource, as well as the many training opportunities at your home agency to update your career, learn about new flexibilities, and find out what your agency is doing to open doors.

I believe the promise of America is secure with talented, dedicated people like you. Americans see the men and women in government who perhaps in past days were viewed as bureaucrats, but now are viewed as dedicated civil servants, public servants who can

react quickly and bravely when our country is attacked. The primary mission of our government today is to protect us and make sure we have the people on board in all the agencies with the right skills, in the right places, doing their job of ensuring the security and safety that our government promises to every individual. That is the job of everyone in this room.

We appreciate your participation, your support and your ongoing contribution to meet the needs of our most important customer, the citizens of the United States. We are all on the threshold of something new and exciting in the American civil service of the 21st century. People make our Federal government work.

As you proceed through your conference today, remember that you are the ones the forefront of making government better, safer and stronger. Each of you contributes to the homefront effort to make American stronger, and for that, thank you very much. I appreciate the opportunity to talk with you this morning. ■

**“I believe the  
promise of America  
is secure with  
talented, dedicated  
people like you.”**

The Honorable Dan G. Blair, Acting Director,  
U.S. Office of Personnel Management





# LINDA TUAZON-MILLER

PRESIDENT, FEDERAL ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN COUNCIL

10.

## REMARKS

### FAPAC's Tuazon-Miller Shares Interests and Concerns of APAs In Government

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Linda Tuazon-Miller. On behalf of the members of the Federal Asian Pacific American Council, we would like to thank you and Secretary Chao for inviting FAPAC to participate at this fourth annual Asian Pacific American Federal Career Advancement Summit.

The Summit has played a critical role in the career development of many APAs in Federal government service, and we appreciate this effort to build a stronger bond between APA communities and help APA government employees maximize their professional potential. We believe it is necessary to continue community outreach and career development initiatives on behalf of APAs across the government.

Established in 1985, FAPAC represents the interests of over 100 Federal agencies and the District of Columbia government. FAPAC is the organization that promotes equal opportunity and cultural diversity, and serves the goal of encouraging the participation and advancement of APAs in government. We share your interests, your concerns and your problems.

I am proud to announce that this year we are celebrating our 20th anniversary and we will have our 20th annual National Training Conference and Career Fair. The theme for this year's conference is *Bridging the Gap Between Our Differences: Promoting Diversity*. The conference will once again offer opportunities for professional and personal development through workshops and seminars, challenging Asian Pacific Americans to aim high and use their unique professional talents to benefit all people.

Thank you again for your ongoing efforts and support for APAs in Federal government. Your works reminds us that APA employees are an important part of the Federal government workforce, and that more work must be done to encourage the participation and advancement of APAs in government.

We appreciate this shared mission, and look forward to continuing our beneficial partnership with you and the Department of Labor. ■



Linda Tuazon-Miller  
President,  
Federal Asian Pacific American Council

Linda Tuazon-Miller is President of the Federal Asian Pacific American Council and an equal employment opportunity manager for the Federal Communications Commission. Prior to joining the FCC, Ms. Tuazon-Miller worked with equal opportunity issues for the Department of the Army and the United States Coast Guard. A certified EEO investigator and trained mediator, Ms. Tuazon-Miller is the recipient of many awards for her work in the equal employment and civil rights field.

# THE HONORABLE DAVID S. C. CHU

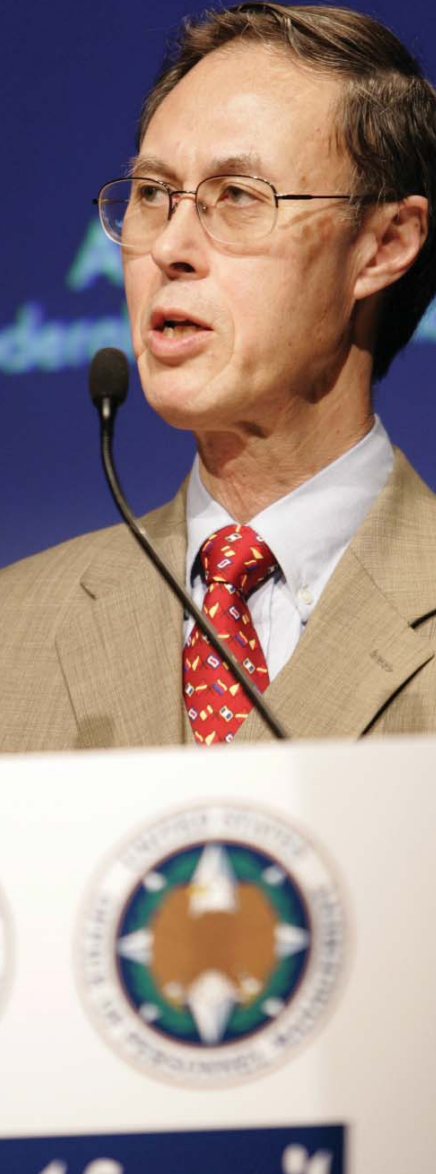
UNDER SECRETARY FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

11.

## PLENARY ADDRESS

### Chu Outlines Human Resource Initiatives at the Defense Department

The Honorable David S. C. Chu,  
Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness,  
U.S. Department of Defense



Thank you for that warm welcome. It is indeed a great privilege to be here this morning and have the opportunity to address this group, and say a few words about two major personnel initiatives that I think will be of interest to those assembled here this morning.

First, what we are doing within the Department of Defense to modernize the civil service that ably supports our military forces; and second, the Department is assisting those seriously wounded in the current conflict in Afghanistan and Iraq to recover from their wounds and resume their military service or begin a promising career in the private sector.

This is the fourth annual Asian Pacific American Federal Career Advancement Summit, and each one, in my judgment, has further advanced the knowledge and abilities of Asian Pacific Americans to consider the great opportunities that exist in the Federal government and how you might advance your careers and the careers of your colleagues.

Let me turn first to the issue of civil service modernization. I should put it in context for you. I think people in this audience are aware that the President campaigned in 2000 on a platform focusing in the transformation of military forces as a centerpiece of his national security strategy. Despite the burdens of the current conflict, transformation remains the most important responsibility on the agenda of the Secretary of Defense.

Now, when one uses the word “transformation,” and I know in most audience there is a slightly puzzled reaction, what exactly does one mean by the phrase? I was originally trained as an economist. There is a story told about economists that illustrates what we intend to convey by the use of this word. As the story goes, the alumnus of a major graduate program returns to his alma mater some 20 years after receiving his degree. He comes back to visit one of his favorite professors. He arrived at examination time, and since she is engaged in proctoring the examinations, he takes a seat in the back, opens the exam booklet, and to his astonishment discovers that the questions on the exam are the same questions on which he wrote answers 20 years before. At the close of the examination, he goes up to her a bit concerned and expresses his concern. After all, he asked her, isn't it a poor test of the students' knowledge to keep asking the same questions? Wouldn't they be too focused on one area of expertise and not have a broad view of their abilities? She smiled and answered: “Remember, in economics, we do not change the questions, we just change the answers.” And that, I would argue, is the spirit of transformation.

The questions in front of the national security establishment are questions that have been posed before, but in different circumstances and different times. Particularly in this era in which terrorism threatens the peace and stability of the nation, we in the department must reconsider how we approach our responsibilities. That includes the very important set of responsibilities discharged by our civil servants.

We have two objectives in modernizing the civil service at the Department of Defense. The first is to ensure that we appeal to the young people of this country, people like yourselves, as a choice, as an alternative, as a possible step on the career ladder. We know from polls and the stories that our own recruiters tell us and from our own personal reactions with this next generation that too frequently we do not appeal. As one installation manager said to me, the good young people will not take the jobs.

We recognize that the hiring process is too slow. We recognize the assignment process is too cumbersome. We recognize the reward system is too oblivious to high performance, tends to reward tenure rather than achievement. And so one of our key objectives, one of the three key objectives in this set of reforms is to modernize those staffing practices so that indeed we can appeal to the broad spectrum of qualified young Americans who might be interested in Federal service in the Department of Defense.

Secondly, we recognize that our relationship with our labor union partners in the Defense Department must change if we are to be constructive and successful in the use of civil personnel of the Federal government in the future. Under previous statutes, the Department of Defense had to bargain every issue with every local union. There are 1,366 local unions in the Department of Defense. You can imagine how quickly one reaches the solution of important questions when we are aiming toward a new pattern of national bargaining which we think will bring greater uniformity and greater ability in the end to the civil service and the Department of Defense.

Third, we recognize that the process for dealing with those who do not behave well in the civil service, and they are a very small number, but have the potential to contaminate the workplace for everybody else, needs to be more expeditious and needs to better support the prerogatives of management. The core of that set of changes involves how disciplinary matters are appealed, and again we have some changes pending in that regard.

Stepping back from these three principal objectives, you might ask the larger question of why transformation of the civil service is important. It is important from the Secretary's view, and I think in the view of most of us working at the Department of Defense, because if we do not modernize the national civil service, the civil service will continue to be a limited option for the nation. You can see this in how the department managed to draw down from the Cold War. Interestingly enough, we reduced the civil service portion of the workforce of the department, a portion that is certainly larger than the active military personnel.

As an economist, I find that an extraordinary result because most civil servants are engaged in infrastructure-type functions that do not vary as much as the size of the military force changes. Indeed, the Secretary believes, and I think with great merit, that in many respects we have over-militarized certain functions at the Department of Defense. We have too easily turned to a military force because it is flexible, agile, and responsive, or we have turned to contractors who are also agile, flexible and responsive.

So the agenda of the civil service is to give it the same agility, flexibility and responsiveness as these other services and restore it as a strong option for the nation as it meets its national security objectives.

I am pleased to say that the Congress agrees with the President's recommendations in this regard. President Bush signed the National Defense Authorization Act authorizing the

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The Honorable David S. C. Chu,  
Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness,  
U.S. Department of Defense

Department of Defense and the Office of Personnel Management to develop a new human resource management system for the Department of Defense that would improve the way we hire, assign, compensate and reward our employees, all the staffing issues I mentioned earlier, while preserving the core merit principles, veterans preferences and important employee protections and benefits that are fundamental to a successful civil service.

Last summer, we conducted over 100 focus groups and 50 town hall meetings worldwide to gather input from our employees, their supervisors, union officials and human resource practitioners. This extraordinary effort led on Valentine's Day of this year to publication in the Federal Register of a proposed regulation outlining the fundamental features of the new system. Public comments were extensive. We received over 58,000 comments, and will use these comments as we prepare the final regulations governing the new system.

We are now involved in the statutorily directed meet-and-confer effort to find common ground on issues raised. This process will continue for at least a month and we will advise Congress of results and complete the final regulations. We recognize that we owe our employees training on this system. We owe our managers training so they can do a good job with the new authority Congress has granted the department.

Let me turn briefly from discussing this modernization of the civil service, to what it means and the kinds of careers to which you can look forward to and to which you could consider joining at the Department of Defense. I want to say a few words about what the department is doing to reintegrate both into uniform service and into civilian life those members of our armed forces who have suffered serious wounds in the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. I should note that of the 12,000 or so wounded in this conflict so far since March of 2003, approximately half have been able to return to service within 72 hours and among those who have not been able to return to service in that short period of time, a significant fraction have been able to recover from their wounds and proceed with their military careers. The efforts that I describe focus on those for whom the healing process will necessarily take longer.

Each service has developed a program to support its injured personnel. The Army has its disabled soldier support system. The Navy has its wounded Marines and service initiatives. The Air Force has something a program for helping airmen recovering together and the Marine Corps has its Marine for Life program. The Department has opened a severely injured joint support operation center to ensure that no individual and no family of individuals who need help in this important transitional period are without the assistance they require. The center is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If you have a friend or relative or your own family needs that assistance, I urge you to have them call the center and seek the care and assistance that they might need.

I am proud to say that the center is joined in its efforts by several other cabinet departments, including the Department of Labor, the Veterans Affairs Department and the Transportation Security Administration. Labor is helping us obtain civil service and private sector positions through its One Stop Career Centers around the country. The Department of Veterans Affairs promotes access to medical care and benefit support for those who suffered serious injuries. The Transportation Security Administration has assigned officers and sent them to coordinate itineraries to ensure the injured receive expedited and appropriate care in the airport security screening system.

**“Asian Americans are represented in the American military approximately in the proportion that they are in the population of the nation at large. There is a long tradition of important service by Asian Pacific Americans in the armed services of the United States, going all the way back to the earliest days of the republic, perhaps as early as the War of 1812.”**

The Honorable David S. C. Chu,  
Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness,  
U.S. Department of Defense



As we think about these individuals who serve our country, it is important to remember the Asian Pacific Americans who are wearing the uniform of our country at this very moment. Asian Americans are represented in the American military approximately in the proportion that they are in the population of the nation at large. There is a long tradition of important service by Asian Pacific Americans in the armed services of the United States, going all the way back to the earliest days of the republic, perhaps as early as the War of 1812.

You are probably familiar with the great stories of that participation in World War II, the uplifting spirit of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team from Hawaii. Asian Pacific Americans were often denied, in the early years of that conflict, the right to serve in the country's uniform, but flocked to enlist when the opportunity was open to them. As you know, the 442nd became the most decorated unit in the American service in the Second World War.

The extraordinary military service of Asian Pacific Americans continues down to the present day and is epitomized in my judgment by a young lady who was written about in USA Today just a few days ago. That is Major Tammy Duckworth. Major Duckworth's father was an American who had served in the Army in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam Conflict. She spent her early years in Southeast Asia. Her parents moved back to Hawaii when she was in high school, where she was able to graduate from high school and attend the University of Hawaii, where she earned her bachelor's degree. She earned her Reserve commission as part of the ROTC program at George Washington University when she came there for graduate studies, and earned a master's degree in international relations. She trained as a helicopter pilot, entered the Army Reserves, served as a platoon

**D**r. David S. C. Chu serves as the Secretary of Defense's senior policy adviser on recruitment, career development, pay and benefits for 1.54 million active-duty military personnel, 1.3 million Guard and Reserve personnel, and 680,000 civilian workers. He has a long career in public service as an active-duty military officer and as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Program Analysis and Evaluation. Earlier, he was Assistant Director for National Security Affairs at the Congressional Budget Office. Dr. Chu received his bachelor's and doctorate degrees from Yale and holds the Department of Defense's medal for distinguished public service.



The Honorable David S. C. Chu,  
Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness,  
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**“The extraordinary  
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leader, became company commander, and served in Iraq when her unit was mobilized for service in 2004.

On November 12, 2004, then-Captain Duckworth was flying her Blackhawk assault helicopter on a mission near Fallujah. Her aircraft came under insurgent machine gun and rocket-propelled grenade fire and one of the rocket-propelled grenades penetrated the bubble on the floor of the aircraft beneath her feet, costing her a partial loss of both legs. She is recovering today.

You saw her extraordinary spirit in that article and you saw the extraordinary effort the Army is making to assist her recovery. That spirit is epitomized in her outlook, which, as she recently told a reporter, is: “I want to stay in the Army and I want to fly helicopters for the Army again.”

I ask you to join me in saluting all those Asian Pacific Americans, including Major Duckworth, who served in the Nation’s uniform at this historic moment in our country.

Thank you very much. ■



# LUNCHEON KEYNOTE ADDRESS

## Secretary Chao Reaches Out to Asian Pacific Americans in the Federal Workforce

Washington Convention Center | Washington, D.C. | May 3, 2005

Thank you, Ambassador Bloch, and thanks so much for being our Mistress of Ceremonies today.

Welcome, everyone, to the fourth Asian Pacific American Federal Career Advancement Summit. It is amazing to look out across this room and see how much this event has grown. The first Summit for Asian Pacific American Federal government employees was launched in 2002. The first Summit had more than 275 people, most speakers were from the Department of Labor, and it was held in the auditorium of the Department of Labor Building.

With each passing year, the numbers grew and grew. This year, so many people signed up that we had to hold the Summit at the Washington Convention Center. Four years ago, we had one cosponsor—the Office of Personnel Management. This year, there are 11 Federal departments, agencies and organizations cosponsoring this event, and more exhibitors than ever before are signing up as well. In fact, we have had to turn away exhibitors.

The attendance in this Summit is a reflection of the government's focus on diversity and the growing awareness of the talent of the Asian Pacific American workforce in the Federal government. According to the latest OPM figures, Asian Pacific Americans already comprise about 4.9% of the Federal workforce, so there is still room for improvement.

As you may know, President George W. Bush has appointed a record number of Asian Pacific Americans. He has appointed 289 Asian Pacific Americans to top leadership positions, including 94 Presidential appointments requiring Senate confirmation. Please let me recognize some of them, who are here with us today: David Chu, Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness; Ed Moy, Associate Director of Presidential Personnel; and Sam Mok, Chief Financial Officer of the U.S. Department of Labor.

I also want to thank Karen Czarnecki, Director of the Office of the 21st Century Workforce at the Labor Department, and her team. They have worked very hard to make this Summit the best one ever. And let's also thank the tremendous number of volunteers who are devoting their own personal time to help out on this event. Thank you.

These summits are all about you. We ask for your feedback after each event. Your comments and insights helped us refine the program, so we can help you reach your goals. This year, we designed the summit around the three skills you identified as most important to your career advancement. In addition to technical expertise, of course, those three areas are marketing, networking and presentation skills. This summit brings together a menu of top presenters and experts in each of these areas to help you refine your skills.

We are once again offering executive coaching sessions. We have received feedback that this is a great tool for those of you applying for Senior Executive Service positions. And



U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao

we have brought back, by popular demand, Tim Koegel, author of *The Exceptional Presenter*. The communication workshop is important because communication is key to effective leadership. In fact, it is impossible to advance within a complex organization like the Federal government without the ability to communicate clearly and persuasively both verbally and in writing.

As you go through the day, let me offer some thoughts to you. First, it is important to learn to be a leader. And, as I just mentioned, the ability to communicate is critical to being a good leader. America has one of the most diverse workforces in the world. People come from all different ethnic backgrounds and heritages. Individuals all think differently. So being appointed to a leadership position does not automatically make you the leader. A leader must be able to persuade the team that the direction he or she wants to go in is best for the mission. Once people are convinced, then they will follow you. Therefore, the ability to motivate and inspire others is the key quality that distinguishes top leaders from everyone else

You may ask, in addition to attending this summit, how do I hone my leadership skills? Well, a lot of people hone their leadership skills outside the workplace. That is why team sports, which teach leadership, are so important in American culture. Volunteer work with nonprofit organizations is another way in which people can practice leadership skills. The most important thing to remember is that leadership comes through practice. And like everything else, you get better at it as you practice. So, don't get discouraged if you don't do well in the beginning. You will get better as you lead.

The second critical component of leadership is, interestingly enough, teamwork. In most large organizations, people work as a part or a member of a team. Teamwork requires knowing how to communicate. Again, that communication skill is very important—knowing how to communicate or voice your opinion in a constructive, non-threatening way. And it means participating constructively, without overwhelming others.

**“The doors of mainstream America are opening wider than ever before, so there has never been a better time to assess your goals, nurture your talents, and pursue advancement within the Federal government.”**

U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao





Secretary Chao is the nation's 24th Secretary of Labor and the first Asian Pacific American woman to be appointed to a President's Cabinet in U.S. history. Prior to joining the Bush Administration, Secretary Chao served as Distinguished Fellow at the Heritage Foundation, Director of the Peace Corps, and CEO of United Way of America. Earlier, she served as Deputy Secretary of Transportation and Chairman of the Federal Maritime Commission. She also served as Vice President of Syndications at Bank of America Capital Markets Group and as a banker with Citicorp. Secretary Chao received her bachelor's degree from Mt. Holyoke and master's degree in business administration from Harvard University.

Many of us were brought up in a traditional Asian home in which speaking out of turn or in a loud voice was considered rude and disrespectful. You waited your turn to give your input or voice your opinion. In my very first job, I remember waiting patiently for my turn to speak. It never came. People were constantly interrupting each other. I am not counseling you to be rude, good listening skills are so important, but it is important to speak up confidently and appropriately when you have something to say. That does not mean speaking louder than everyone else or being openly confrontational. Being able to listen, digest, and come up with solutions is an invaluable skill.

Third, as you do your job, it's important to understand that the ethics rules, the personnel rules and the contracting rules are to be taken seriously. Some people erroneously believe that the higher up they go, the less the rules apply. Actually, I have found the opposite to be true. The higher you rise in an organization, the more you are expected to be a role model for others. And the higher your position, the more attention and scrutiny you will attract.

Over the past few years, the public has been shocked by a series of scandals involving the top leadership of important institutions. The public now demands a higher standard of conduct and accountability for its leaders, and the government is no exception. So understand the spirit and letter of the rules of your organization, and don't cut corners.

Fourth, don't be hesitant to cultivate relationships and seek out good counsel and advice from knowledgeable people. America is an open and informal society. Most people are easy to approach, generous of spirit, and willing to help. This is especially important for women, because we are still making our way into leadership positions. Let me take this opportunity to say that half of the members of the top leadership team at the Labor Department are women. That is the best record of any Federal government department.

It is not necessary to have formal mentors. Build your own network of people from whom you can seek advice. Meet new people. It is actually one of the great experiences in life. Now, if there is a mentorship program in your department, like DOL, that's great. Use it. One of the benefits of mentorship is that it gives you an opportunity to learn the qualities your agency is looking for in its leadership team. Then you can evaluate your own skills against these standards and see where you need to fill in the gaps. But if there is not a mentorship program, don't get discouraged. Seek out your own counselors. Build your own network.

The fifth and final quality that leaders cultivate is personal initiative. That means taking charge of your projects and assignments, including your own career advancement, instead of waiting for others to direct you. You are taking a step in the right direction by attending this conference. Our community is known for its hard workers who are loyal, dependable, and technically more than proficient, but advancement in the workplace is not so simple or so straightforward. There are many qualities that are as important as technical competence. The ability to get along with coworkers is one of them. These relationship skills, sometimes called soft skills, must be cultivated from the inside out. These soft skills are sometimes culturally based. For a lot of Asian Pacific Americans, even those who have been here for decades, the cultural gap is still a factor.

Many of you have asked for a module on emotional intelligence, so it was added to this year's training sessions. Emotional intelligence is all about how to understand and relate to others. This is especially important when cultural differences are involved. In fact,

U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao



**“According to the latest OPM figures, Asian Pacific Americans already comprise about 4.9% of the Federal workforce, so there is still room for improvement.”**

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understanding and bridging cultural differences are some of the most difficult challenges in the workplace today. Leaders with these skills are highly valued.

Today, our country is more diverse than ever before. Asian Pacific Americans are one of the fastest growing segments of our society. We are branching out beyond traditional career paths, and making contributions to all walks of American life. Asian Pacific Americans have flown to the moon. They have won Nobel prizes not only in the sciences, but in literature. They have designed some of our nation's most cherished national monuments and public buildings. And Asian Pacific American athletes have won gold medals for the United States in the Olympics.

The doors of mainstream America are opening wider than ever before. So there has never been a better time for you to assess your goals, nurture your talents and pursue advancement within the Federal government.

Throughout my career, I have tried to help other Asian Pacific Americans realize their potential and their dreams. That is what this summit is all about. It is a way to help you achieve your goals. It is a way to further contribute to our country, which has given our communities and the world so much hope, freedom and opportunity. As you advance, I hope you will be a mentor to others and try to help others along the way.

You have a great afternoon ahead of you. Thanks for investing in yourself. I hope you have a great day at the conference. ■



# SHARING THEIR STORIES AND ACHIEVING SUCCESS

20.



L-R: Daliza Salas; Dr. Sumiye (Sue) Okubo; Dr. Yann King; Dr. Russell G. Chew; Yoko Albayrak

## ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS IN THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE

**Moderator Salas:** Let's start with Dr. Yann King. Yann, could you tell us how you prepared for your executive leadership position? What were the challenges you faced in leading people in a mixed cultural setting? What do you think you have learned from this experience? Do you have any career strategies you would like to share with us?

**Dr. King:** Yes, thank you, Daliza. Good morning everyone. It is a great pleasure for me to be here and I want to thank you for inviting me.

There are several things I would like to share with you this morning. One is about communication skills. I talk about this simply because it has been a major challenge for me, as I was not born here and I do not have the use of English as my native language. In the early days, my mentor, my professor helped me a lot and we worked together to overcome my fear of public speaking, but nothing worked for me.

I tried very hard until one day I found something that was very weird and very out-of-the-box: I learned to tell jokes. I viewed a huge labyrinth of joke books and discovered that to tell a good joke is not hard. What is hard is finding someone to try it out on when you have a good one. In my case, of course, my wife became the obvious target.

At the beginning I told her all the jokes I knew and she was there, always laughing, smiling, and I felt very good about that. I thought I had it made. Until one day, I called to my

### Moderator

**Daliza Salas**, *Director, Human Resources, U.S. Department of Labor*

### Panelists

**Yoko Albayrak**, *Deputy Associate Chief Financial Officer, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, U.S. Department of Labor*

**Dr. Russell G. Chew**, *Chief Operating Officer, Air Traffic Organization, Federal Aviation Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation*

**Dr. Yann King**, *Deputy Chief Information Officer, Information Technology Center, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management, U.S. Department of Labor*

**Dr. Sumiye (Sue) Okubo**, *Associate Director for Industry Economics, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce*

wife and said: “Have you heard my last joke?” And she answered: “I hope so.” [Laughter] So I tried another strategy. I said: “Stop me if you have heard this one.” And she did. [Laughter]

So, it started to dawn on me that all the while she was laughing, it was not that my jokes were smart, it was that she was.

But come to think of it, telling a good joke requires good preparation. It requires a good story, a good organization, a good delivery, and good timing. All these are also the essential elements of good communication skills.

I also tried very hard to improve my writing skills. Every time I saw a good piece of writing, I would copy, save it, and file it so I could apply it later on to my own writing. Of course, I ended up building a huge library of writing samples, but it worked for me. So yes, I want to tell you that both writing skills and speaking skills can be learned. Take my words here. You just have to put more consistent time and effort into it, and someday you will get it. And if you want to know some little tricks on how to get it done, I don't have the time here, but later on after the session I would be happy to share my secret tricks.

In the broadest sense, good communication means you have the capability to understand yourself and manage yourself and motivate yourself. You have the capability to better understand the feelings, concerns and needs of others, and the capability to guide, be guided, and work with them.

The things I have just mentioned are called emotional intelligence. I know there is a session here today that you can attend on this topic and also you can very well pick up a book. There are many books about this and very good information to learn from. If you can achieve good writing, speaking and interpersonal skills, you have a much better chance of moving up the career ladder to become an effective manager, supervisor and leader.

I want to quickly share two other things with you. The first is the need to continuously expand your professional portfolio. Today in government to be a specialist in a special field is no longer good enough. You have to know more, learn more, and do more. Think about it: the government can easily hire contractors to deliver a very well-defined scope of work. What the government is really looking for is someone with knowledge beyond mission delivery, who can take on an unknown challenge. To deliver these results takes commitment, determination and hard work that expands your professional portfolio.

Let me also share a few words about job applications. What I want to tell you is summed up in just three words: apply, apply, apply. You have to apply to win. And don't believe the idea that all job vacancies are wired. There are still many, many opportunities for you, and the retirement of the baby boomers will open it up further. You have to apply. If you tell me that you have applied hundreds of times and you are not getting anywhere, then my advice would be go back and look at your application. Have you improved your writing skills so you can prepare an attractive resume? Have you improved your speaking skills to deliver an effective interview? Have you expanded your portfolio to demonstrate that you are the one with the knowledge and skills to take on new challenges that attract the eyes of selecting officials?

**“In the broadest sense, good communication means you have the capability to understand yourself and manage yourself and motivate yourself. You have the capability to better understand the feelings, concerns and needs of others, and the capability to guide, be guided, and work with them.”**

Dr. Yann King, Deputy Chief Information Officer, Information Technology Center, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management, U.S. Department of Labor



**“When you look at how you might advance in your career, you must look for opportunities to seize and take control of, and be seen as someone who takes action to fix a problem.”**

Dr. Russell G. Chew, Chief Operations Officer, Federal Aviation Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation

Finally, let me say a few words about our cultural heritage – our commitment to our family, education, community and the people around us. This precious gift was given to us and we must cherish it. I remember a passage from a book describing the words that echo around Mount Rushmore: Uphold it high in the sky for they will endure until the wind and the rain alone shall wear them away. So love your heritage and be proud of it. Be happy and make others happy.

Once a reporter was talking to the famous comedian Bob Hope and said to him: Mr. Hope, you are famous and have all the money you want. Why are you still taking the time and trouble to perform? Why don't you just relax, retire and go fishing? And Bob Hope replied, “Hey, fish don't laugh; people do.”

Thank you very much.

**Moderator Salas:** Thank you very much, Yann.

Let me now turn to Dr. Chew. Would you share with us your experience working with a mentor and developing an effective network? What is the most important career advancement strategy or advice that has worked for you?

**Dr. Chew:** Thank you, Daliza, for inviting me to join this panel and for putting this program together. It is my first one, and it is an honor to be here. It is a rare opportunity for me to share my career experience.

Let me begin by describing where I come from. I do not have a long government career. I have only been with the government a little over a year-and-a-half now. About 20 years of my experience is in the private sector. I did have a mentor. In the beginning, my mentor was the Executive Vice President for Operations at American Airlines, who later became the Vice Chairman of American Airlines. When I look back on my career, the benefit of having a mentor was not just his experience and willingness to tell me what was important to the organization, but it helped me avoid mistakes in developing what I was going to contribute to the company.

I am often asked how I developed a relationship with such an important official. I think it is really a combination of my selecting him and he selecting me. What develops is a balance. When you look at how you might advance in your career, you must look for opportunities to seize and take control, and be seen as someone who takes action to fix a problem.

Now, it is true that many cultural things in both the private sector and government actually lead to situations where you may not feel free to do that. But to me, the key to my career was finding those opportunities, and they are everywhere. I am sure that in your jobs today, you can think of many things that need to be fixed, that need to be addressed. With that knowledge, you can demonstrate your ability to produce results. I must add that it did not happen overnight. I was probably at American Airlines for 10 years before I really benefited from having a mentor.

As to networking, I never really consciously worked at developing a network. It happened along the way. I think as you work diligently at your job, you will develop a network among

**“Throughout my career, I have been willing to move beyond the status quo. I have sought challenges, pushed the envelope, tried new things, welcomed change, and led new efforts.”**

Dr. Sumiye Okubo,  
Associate Director for Industry Economics,  
U.S. Department of Commerce



those you work most closely with. That means in order to develop a wider network, you need to think about changing jobs and take many positions that you may not particularly feel qualified for. You end up learning a lot along the way. Seizing the opportunity to take on a new challenge and educate yourself is really what advanced degrees give you. They give you a credential for getting in the door and the opportunity to be seen as someone who can really effect change and produce results.

In the end, all of us actually learn by doing. In that process, you educate yourself and those around you, and produce results that ensure you are seen as someone who takes the initiative and makes change. I also must caution everyone that when you work with a lot of other people, you never know where those people might end up in your career. You may be working for someone and they may end up working for you, or someone may be working for you that you end up working for. So it is important to develop your relationships and develop positive ones.

If I were to sum up the most important aspects of career advancement, it is, number one, use good judgment. That means getting a lot of opinions, and if you have a mentor, use the mentor to make sure that the judgment you are exercising is in fact perceived as good judgment.

Secondly, work on developing very good communication skills. I think this is very difficult in a mixed cultural environment, but it is something that you must actively pursue. It does not happen on its own. You must actually pursue it.

Third, seek to learn new things. That often means changing jobs and, even if you have been in government for a while, to consider going to the private sector and bringing that experience back to the government. It is valuable information that will make your credentials even more valuable.

Fourth, seek to produce results, not just input, but actual output in terms of results. It is harder to do, but it is far more meaningful to the people you work for.

Finally, maintain an optimistic outlook, a positive side to everything you are trying to accomplish, even when things are not going well. People will not only want to work with you, but will be excited about what you are trying to achieve.

**Moderator Salas:** Thank you very much, Dr. Chew. That was very interesting.

Dr. Okubo, would you say that networking is critical to success in terms of hearing about job opportunities, getting informational interviews and so forth? Also, would you share with us what you feel is the most important career advancement strategy that has worked for you?

**Dr. Okubo:** Good morning. I want to thank the APA Summit for inviting me to participate on this panel. It is an honor.

I am the Associate Director for Industry Economics at the Bureau of Economic Analysis. BEA is the agency in the Federal government that tells us how well or how badly the economy is operating. Is gross domestic product rising? Is personal income increasing? Is the trade deficit widening? At my group, we can tell which industries are growing and which are declining.



Dr. Sumiye Okubo, right,  
Associate Director for Industry Economics, U.S. Department of Commerce

**“It sounds risky, but I believe in myself. I always accomplished the task I was given. I worked hard and often times stayed up all night to finish. I am a hard-working person....”**

Yoko Albayrak, Deputy Associate Chief Financial Officer, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, U.S. Department of Labor

I just have a few minutes, but I want to make three points this morning about career advancement. One, don't settle for the status quo; two, networking and career advancement; and three, developing an effective network.

First, as to not settling for the status quo, I am an economist. I chose economics rather than going into the business world as I had originally planned. As a senior in college, I sat in a class as my professor was lecturing about how we can apply economic theory to practical problems. For instance, did antitrust decisions really reduce monopoly power, and how do we evaluate that? I felt, wow, this is really interesting. So I changed from business to economics. I saw economics as an exciting way to understand the status quo and how one might improve on it. Economics gave me the tools to make a difference in my job.

Throughout my career, I have been willing to move beyond the status quo. I have sought challenges, pushed the envelope, tried new things, welcomed change, and led new efforts, all of which allowed me to travel, prepare and present papers, join new associations, improve productivity, and find new colleagues to add to my network. I had a very professional life and each review can leverage your discipline and training to work for you in a similar fashion. It is up to you to find those ways.

The second point is networking. I have held a number of positions. When I started looking for a job out of graduate school, I had no idea what networking was. It certainly was not a buzzword back then. I have gotten each of my jobs through my network of university professors, graduate school friends, colleagues at work and professional organizations, and friends.

One of my favorite professors helped me get my first job at the Federal Reserve Bank in Richmond. I used my membership in the American Economic Association to get my second job, where I met a great boss who became my mentor. He taught me how to be an economist. He taught me how to apply all those theories that I learned in graduate school, and helped me learn how to maneuver in a bureaucracy and get resources. I followed him to my next job, before moving to the private sector.

When I decided to move back to Washington, one of my graduate school friends helped me find a very exciting opportunity setting up and managing a new program. My next two jobs resulted from my working with an economics professor and then my current boss on a collaborative project about foreign direct investment. They liked my work and invited me to apply for openings.

So I have taken networking beyond finding out about job opportunities and practice interviews. My network is broad, deep and lasting. I have friends, colleagues and bosses in my network who have been part of my support system for decades. In addition to the obvious job opening announcements, they provide access to career support, guidance, advice and encouragement. They watch my back and bolster my reputation. They are my extra set of eyes and ears.

How do you develop an effective network? First, your network is an investment in your future. Don't ignore them just because they are not there to help you at the moment to find a job or anything else. I keep in touch with colleagues at my former jobs and with friends. I call and e-mail, and arrange lunch or dinner. How often depends on how important they are to you. I keep my phone list current, change addresses and e-mail, as well as personal data about spouse, children, hobbies and so on.

So when you go to a gathering, make it a networking opportunity. Make a connection at each function. Have an agenda in mind. Are you looking for a job? Are you looking for an apartment? Are you looking for a tennis partner? And think about what you have to offer, like what might be useful information or who you know who might be able to answer a question that arises. And remember to thank someone in your network when he or she helps you – immediately.

In the past 10 to 15 years, I have given some attention to extending my network among Asian Americans and to bolstering others, especially women and Asian Americans in their careers or personally through a professional organization such as the Asian American Government Executive Network Agency, which has a mission of mentoring, networking and helping others develop and grow in their careers.

I also represent the Commerce Department on the White House Initiative for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to advance APAs in their workplace and in our communities. This network has been an important one to me.

Thank you.

**Moderator Salas:** Thank you very much.

You have heard from both Dr. Chew and Dr. Okubo how important networking is, and that it is not always business-related networking. Our colleagues, friends and buddies on the tennis court, all of them are part of our networking group and we should foster those relationships. You never know when that next tip is going to come from and you are going to learn or hear of something that will be important for your career.

Ms. Albayrak, how did you prepare for your executive leadership position after a long career in private industry? Could you talk to us about the challenges that you have faced leading people in a mixed cultural setting? What did you learn from that experience? Could you share some of your career strategies with the audience today?

**Ms. Albayrak:** Good morning.

I have three points I would like to make. The first one is, how I prepared for executive leadership programs. My first job was with a small startup company, and later I joined a

**“I strive for excellence and seek responsibilities. It is important to accept leadership roles that challenge you. My advice for how to prepare for executive positions is to be flexible and pursue opportunities that come along.”**

Yoko Albayrak, Deputy Associate Chief Financial Officer, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, U.S. Department of Labor



**“If you can achieve good writing, speaking and interpersonal skills, you have a much better chance of moving up the career ladder to become an effective manager, supervisor and leader.”**

Dr. Yann King, Deputy Chief Information Officer, Information Technology Center, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management, U.S. Department of Labor



global Fortune 500 company with 150,000 employees worldwide. During my career, I was exposed to all aspects of business operations and the challenges that come with it. In many cases, I essentially relied on my own instincts, and I still do that. I have learned a great deal on the job by observing the actions of those in leadership positions.

One lesson learned over the years helped me sharpen my business skills and establish my own management style. I strive for excellence and seek responsibilities. It is important to accept leadership roles that challenge you. My advice for how to prepare for executive positions is to be flexible and pursue opportunities that come along.

I faced many challenges in my career, and the difficulties were great, particularly when balancing American and Japanese ways of doing business. As a Japanese-American, I am often able to bridge the gap between the two management styles and resolve contentious issues affecting the company’s operations. I also understand the different government systems. I have learned not to be judgmental, but open-minded and respect these differences.

I am not sure if that can be called a career strategy. When possible, I never said “no, I can’t.” It sounds risky, but I believe in myself. I always accomplished the task I was given. I worked hard and often times stayed up all night to finish. I am a hard-working person, but at the same time received great support from my bosses. They are the ones who helped me to get ahead and made me look good.

In return, I try to make my bosses look good. I advise you to get to know the people you work for and know how to deal with them and attend to their needs and concerns. And be patient. Always remember that the organization is people, and once people believe in you and trust you, they will help you achieve your organizational and personal goals.

I hope I have answered the question. Thank you.

**Moderator Salas:** Thank you, Ms. Albayrak.

Now we come to the part where you participate and we interact with you. We invite you to come forward. There are microphones in different parts of the audience. Don't be shy. This is your opportunity to ask the distinguished panel your questions about how they got where they are.

**Question:** Thank you. I appreciate the really candid advice this morning. It is very, very insightful.

My question is about networking. Dr. Chew mentioned that sometimes you need to change jobs in order to expand your network, and Dr. Okubo uses her network to land jobs. My questions to either one of you, or both, is can you help us understand how much time should be invested in maintaining a network, say, on a weekly basis? Oftentimes, I find myself so preoccupied with doing my work that I forget about the networking aspect. Even though I meet a lot of people in my profession, I believe, as both panelists mentioned, that it takes time to maintain your network. I am just very curious what amount of time you spend maintaining your network.

**Moderator Salas:** Dr. Chew, would you like to take that?



Daliza Salas, right, Director, Human Resources, U.S. Department of Labor

**Dr. Chew:** Yes. As I mentioned, I probably have spent less conscious time building a network, but took more and more responsibility in job-related activities. I did a lot of industry work. In fact, the reason I am in the government now is that I spent a lot of time interfacing with the government on behalf of American Airlines, even on issues that were not my responsibility. There was a lot of risk in that, of course, but you must take risks and learn as you go. That is why it is so important to be able to communicate because that becomes the means of forming your network indirectly.

If I had to estimate the time spent networking as part of my job, I would say maybe 10 percent. If you spend all your time working, you need to spend at least 10 percent of your time communicating what you are working on to the people you work with throughout the organization. That will expand your influence and your notoriety with those who know that you are achieving something.

**Moderator Salas:** Dr. Okubo, do you have anything to add to that?

**Dr. Okubo:** I don't know whether I would quantify any percentage time. It depends on how you want to define "networking." To me, it is establishing relationships with coworkers and friends. My job requires that I work with people all the time, including not just the people who are in my group, but people outside of my group. So I spend a lot of time talking to my peers and colleagues at work, and also people who are interested in the work that my agency does. My group also does research, so I am in touch with people who do research.

Some of you might consider networking as part of my work, since I need to be in contact with people who are interested in what we do and how they might contribute to improving our work. I also have a lot of friends I keep in touch with. They may have been professional friends originally, but they have become personal friends.

So I do make a special effort to keep in touch with my friends and contact them on a regular basis. It depends on how close they are to you, whether you talk to them once a week or see them once a year. I certainly write Christmas cards once a year to keep in contact with people I have known for a long time. You might say that I am a people collector in the sense that I do not let friends go. I keep in touch with them on a fairly regular basis. Of course, it is up to you whether you want to do that or not, because it is a kind of investment.

**Question:** I want to thank the panel for all the advice and tips.

I am fairly new to the government. I started working for the Library of Congress after working in high tech for about 10 years. Often in my work I find internal politics and personalities cause problems, not necessarily the project or budget or things we have to accomplish. You all seem to have done a good job of connecting with your management structure. I just wanted to ask if you have advice for dealing with internal politics, egos, and disparate personalities.

**Moderator Salas:** Dr. King, would you like to take that question?

**Dr. King:** That is beyond the scope of my talk here. [Laughter].

Offhand, I think as to office politics, I have experienced this and know that it is very hard. One time I had a supervisor and later I found out that when he came to that position, he just wanted to replace everyone who was there before. So as to office politics, I don't have a strict answer for you. I believe you just have to play it by ear. You will want to analyze carefully someone who is playing politics with you, and if you see a chance to change this person's attitude or plan or strategy, you should do it.

Sometimes you encounter something that cannot be changed. In that case, my advice is to look around for other opportunities. And like one of my copanelists said, you have to move a lot. Don't stay in one place and feel comfortable that you are doing a good job. The general rule is that after one year at a job, you should apply for another job. You need to look around and continue to apply, apply, and apply. That is the way to move up. If you stay in one place, sometimes people will take you for granted, and you are not going anywhere.

**Moderator Salas:** Ms. Albayrak, would you respond to the same question about politics in the office?

**Ms. Albayrak:** Okay. Depending on the definition of "politics" that you are using, I believe any organization, any place where people gather, politics will be there. There will be egos which we cannot avoid facing. My advice is to take a look at what you are dealing with and what may be stopping you from completing your tasks or giving your best. Most of the time, I just don't get involved deeply in office politics. I systematically organize how I can get things done.

If you yourself don't get involved, you can better focus on the task that needs completion or the things you need to accomplish. It simplifies things, like how you handle your children, your in-laws, or whatever you handle in your life. There are always politics to face, not just in government, but in families, organizations or anywhere you go. You just handle it and try not to get involved too much.

**“Work on developing very good communication skills. I think this is very difficult in a mixed cultural environment, but it is something that you must actively pursue. It does not happen on its own. You must actually pursue it.”**

Dr. Russell G. Chew, Chief Operations Officer, Federal Aviation Administration

**Moderator Salas:** Thank you very much.

Let's take a question from this side of the room.

**Question:** First, I want to thank all of you for taking the time to share your experiences with us. We appreciate it very much.

I have a couple of questions for all of the panel. First, while advancing in your careers, you mentioned the importance of a network, a mentor. In all those years, have you ever had help from other Asian Americans along the way? Second, now that you are there, perhaps in the Senior Executive Service, what are you doing to help your fellow Asian Pacific Americans?

**Dr. Okubo:** Can I answer that, Daliza?

**Moderator Salas:** Yes.

**Dr. Okubo:** Others may want to respond, but I would say that, no, on my way up there were no Asian Americans helping me with my career. I did find a mentor who helped me. He helped me get where I am, but my success is in part due to luck and hard work. Now that I am in SES, and I think I said this earlier, I am an Asian Pacific American, and our mission really is to help and mentor people and help them advance in their careers. It is a very important part of what I do and I do it on a personal level. I cannot mentor everyone, but it is very important for Asian Pacific Americans to help others, to reach down and push them forward. I have heard it described as “giving forward,” trying to help people advance in their careers and in their lives.

**Moderator Salas:** Thank you very much, Dr. Okubo.

I think by virtue of the fact that we are all here today spending time with you, some of us back for the second or third time, is evidence that we sincerely hope that many others will follow. We are not the first ones here. We may not be the second ones, but all of us have opportunities to share with those to come.

We now must end our panel discussion with you today, but thank you very, very much for listening and for the questions we had time to entertain.

Thank you all very much. ■

**“What the government is really looking for is someone with knowledge beyond mission delivery, who can take on an unknown challenge. To deliver these results takes commitment, determination and hard work that expands your professional portfolio.”**

Dr. Yann King, Deputy Chief Information Officer, Information Technology Center, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management, U.S. Department of Labor



# SECRETARY'S INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

WELCOMES ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS

30.

Each year, the Department of Labor welcomes students from across the nation to participate in the Secretary's student internship program. The program provides students with the opportunity to learn more about how Federal government agencies operate and to interact with the leaders of various agencies within the Department.

Through the internship program, Secretary Chao's goal is to mentor and cultivate a new generation of leaders by giving them a chance to serve their country. A highly competitive program open to all students currently enrolled in college or graduate school, the program is another initiative the Department of Labor is taking to increase opportunities and skills training for younger generations entering the American workforce. ■

**"I am committed to cultivating a new generation of leaders."**

U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao



More information on Department of Labor internships can be found at

**[www.dol.gov/internships](http://www.dol.gov/internships)**

# EXECUTIVE COACHING SESSIONS MAKE THE GRADE

31.

**“My session gave me new insight on where to go and how to get there. The coach could give the time to really apply general principles to my particular career path.”**

Executive Session Workshop Participant

A popular addition to the APA Summits in 2003 and 2004 focused on the career advancement of participants seeking personal career coaching. Each session was led by seasoned Federal senior managers for approximately 20 minutes in length. The format of these small group coaching sessions consisted of one current or former senior Federal employee and up to four Summit participants. Attendees were able to sign up for these career guidance sessions early in the day, and all slots filled quickly.

After reviewing biographies of the volunteer coaches, individuals were able to select the coach whom they believed would give the best professional and career advice tailored to their specific area of interest. Topics ranged from grade stagnation and managing the upward path to success, to dealing with different cultural approaches to promotions, teamwork, and project management. In addition, registrants could submit questions on career or professional subjects prior to the session so the coach would address them in that particular session.

Feedback from participants who attended an Executive Coaching session was overwhelmingly positive. “My session gave me new insight on where to go and how to get there. The coach could give the time to really apply general principles to my particular career path,” said one participant. Given this and other success stories, the Executive Coaching sessions will be an important feature of future Summits. ■



Far left: Dr. Celso Barrientos, NOAA Research, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce

# GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS

## INTERACTIVE WORKSHOPS FOCUS ON KEY ISSUES FOR ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS IN FEDERAL SERVICE

32.

### MARKETING YOURSELF

#### Take Charge of How Others See You and Your Work

##### Workshop Facilitator

**Eleanor Margulis**, *Senior Career Counselor*, Vantage Human Resource Services, Consultant to the U.S. Department of Labor

What you let others know has a great influence on their overall impression. This impression may even be carried into your work. In this workshop, participants learned principles of how to portray an accurate and reliable persona. This skill not only improves an individual's current job performance, but enhances his or her prospects of acquiring key projects and assignments. With many government agencies undergoing restructuring or reorganization to meet updated or new performance requirements, this factor may be crucial to career success.

This was a hands-on workshop led by Eleanor Margulis, an experienced career counselor, seeking to assist attendees in targeting key areas to enhance performance and marketability. Ms. Margulis identified the best ways to market or present yourself through exercises used in her practice as a career counselor. The workshop focused on how to plan one's career, identifying transferable and functional skills, and developing an accomplishments statement. The objectives for the workshop were to:

- ▶ discuss soft skills, including personal and social competencies and why they are important in how others perceive you;
- ▶ demonstrate the use of these competences through case studies;
- ▶ devise accomplishment statements to show others how you add value in the workplace; and
- ▶ develop a career action plan.

In addressing these objectives, Ms. Margulis noted that it is impossible to have 100 percent control of how others view you, but the odds of a favorable impression can be raised by remembering that successful skills are a combination of the soft skills, or interpersonal qualities evident in a personality, and the hard skills or job-specific skills required to perform the job itself.

Ms. Margulis strongly emphasized the importance of staying composed in trying circumstances, avoiding "shooting from the hip" in response to provocations in the workplace, and developing the ability to view personality issues for what they often really are: performance issues. It is really all about performance, because as workers achieve greater awareness of their own emotional triggers, they become more sensitive to others, and thereby enhance the ability to listen, anticipate needs, create bonds, manage conflict and achieve the kind of teamwork that is the hallmark of career success. ■



# CULTURAL AWARENESS AND YOUR CAREER

## Workshop Facilitator

**Maria Mercedes Olivieri**, *Lead Manager*, Strategic Recruitment and Employment Programs, Office of Human Resources Management, U.S. Department of Labor

Many Asian Pacific Americans are unaware of how behaviors developed in the context of foreign cultures are often viewed by other Americans. This session focused on some misinterpretations of these culturally-based behaviors and the impact they may have on a career in the Federal government.

The session began by examining what Asians, especially those raised abroad and immigrating to this country as adults or young adults, can do to overcome any negative impact of these behaviors. The task is important because Federal agencies often look to advance those who best move beyond these cultural barriers, adapt to their surroundings, and create an environment conducive to team building and partnerships. These qualities not only help individuals improve current job performance, but ultimately benefit the agency's organizational performance.

Accordingly, Ms. Olivieri offered an overview of the demographics of the Asian Pacific American community and highlighted some of the cultural differences. She emphasized the importance of awareness and how all of us would be well advised to expand our understanding of different values and cultural systems. Ultimately, cultural awareness is knowledge about and appreciation for different cultures, as well as your own. Heightened cultural awareness enables individuals to:

- ▶ see the world through multiple perspectives;
- ▶ enhance their communication and interpersonal skills;
- ▶ model open mindedness;
- ▶ understand and appreciate diverse communities;
- ▶ better explore your own cultural identity and how it impacts your view of the world; and
- ▶ advance career development through knowledge and understanding of different cultures.

Ms. Olivieri encouraged the audience to think about how everyone has different roots, family, stores, foods and holidays that enrich our respective cultures. She also noted the differences of the typical North American workplace from that of behaviors more prevalent in APA cultures. For instance, the North American workplace tends to be monolingual, predominantly Christian, direct, aggressive and independent, whereas the typical APA workforce is bilingual, multi-ethnic, encompassing varying religions, and typically indirect, modest and interdependent. She closed by highlighting the importance of being adaptive to all cultures and acquiring greater awareness of what is most effective and appropriate when building a career in the Federal government. ■





# PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

## Developing Leadership Skills for Career Advancement

### Workshop Facilitator

**James R. Calvin, Ph.D.,**  
Johns Hopkins University

The need for individuals who can communicate and exercise effective and inspired leadership has been a fundamental goal across the ages. So began the workshop led by Dr. James R. Calvin during a session highlighting specific businesses, organizations and behaviors that demonstrate the qualities of an effective leader-manager.

In a full-to-capacity session, Dr. Calvin made a number of points important to finding the pathways to leadership and career success. He emphasized that the purpose of the workshop was to pursue leadership goals applicable in both your work life and personal life, and outlined the following leadership models:

- ▶ **Directive leaders**, who make the following assumptions about people and organizations: people are motivated more by internal forces than by external prods; organizations need strong pushes toward coherence; and coherence and substance are more important than style;
- ▶ **Political Leaders**, where leadership as a philosophy of management rests on certain fundamental assumptions about human nature and the way people behave in companies and organizations; and
- ▶ **Values-Driven Leaders**, a leadership style that transcends the other two, and where a leader's actions serve purposes and reflect basic values that followers identify with personally.

In illustrating the practice of these leadership styles, Dr. Calvin insisted on audience participation and set up hypothetical real-world leadership situations in the office and asking attendees to respond to various scenarios. He also made extensive use of the insights on leadership promulgated by successful leaders, including:

- ▶ “Leadership is the art of accomplishing more than the science of management says is possible,” Colin Powell, *My American Journey*;
- ▶ “Leadership over human beings is exercised when persons with certain motives and purposes mobilize, in competition or conflict with others, institutional, political, psychological and other resources so as to arouse, engage and satisfy the motives of followers,” James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership*; and
- ▶ “Leadership is the ability to decide what is to be done and then get others to want to do it,” Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Dr. Calvin concluded by noting that effective leadership and effective management is the key operating domain for 21st century leader-managers. He emphasized the importance of better recognizing personal leadership goals and desires; thinking about the steps, practice and processes necessary for successfully linking leadership to management goals; and modeling leadership behaviors that generate positive perceptions and interactions at work. As a leader, Dr. Calvin stressed the importance of providing the “sky in which others can soar”—and knowing when to get out of the way. ■

# MAXIMIZING THE BENEFITS OF YOUR RETIREMENT SECURITY

## Workshop Facilitator

**Cris DeBolt**, *Benefits Officer*,  
Human Resources Center,  
U.S. Department of Labor

**“The bottom line is: the ultimate value of the retirement benefit depends on the employee with a personal stake in it.”**

Cris DeBolt, Benefits Officer, Human Resources Center, U.S. Department of Labor

As government employees, Asian Pacific Americans and all others are well advised to learn every detail of retirement benefit programs. This workshop led by Cris DeBolt was designed to meet this need and give participants a thorough overview of the requirements. Ms. DeBolt urged employees to take ownership of the system as it applies to them and thereby ensure maximum benefits when retirement day comes. In the interests of making informed decisions before that time, she offered the following brief overview of Federal retirement programs.

**Alternate Retirement Systems:** First of all, it must be determined whether a worker is participating in the appropriate system. The nature of the appointment, prior service and entry date on duty affects which retirement system covers an individual Federal employee. The options are:

- ▶ Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), for employees hired prior to January 1, 1984;
- ▶ Civil Service Offset Retirement System (CSRS-Offset), for employees with more than five years of CSRS service and at least a one-year break in covered service; and
- ▶ Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), for employees hired January 1, 1984 and after.

**Creditable Service:** Creditable civilian service is that in which FERS/CSRS contributions were both paid and never withdrawn from the retirement system. To ensure that all creditable service is accounted for, the following questions are useful: Was the work performed in temporary service to the government? Were full retirement deposits paid? Were the deposits ever refunded? Has all creditable military service been counted? Was there any work performed for U.S. Post Office during a holiday period, or service in the Peace Corps or Vista? If so, then it is vital to be credited with this service time and any corresponding deposits made to the retirement fund. Ms. DeBolt pointed out that many clients who seek retirement counseling have either forgotten or are unaware of the value of this temporary Federal service.

If retirement contributions were refunded to the employee for any creditable employment period, restoring these funds will have a different effect depending on the date of the refund, as well as whether the relevant coverage is CSRS or FERS. A benefits specialist will contact the U.S. Office of Personnel Management to determine how much payment may be required to restore creditable Federal service time.

**Retirement Eligibility:** When are you eligible to retire? The answer varies:

- ▶ Optional Retirement under CSRS is available at age 55 with 30 years of service; age 60 with 20 years of service; or age 62 with 5 years of service;

- ▶ Optional Retirement under FERS is available at minimum retirement age (MRA) with 30 years service; age 60 with 20 years service; age 62 with 5 years of service; and MRA with 10 years of service, but with a 5% benefit reduction for each year under age 62. MRA is age 55 to 57, depending on year of birth;
- ▶ Voluntary Early Retirement and Discontinued Service Retirement may occur at age 50 with 20 years of service, or at any age with 25 years of service if special criteria are met;
- ▶ Disability Retirement may occur at any age with five years of CSRS service or 18 months of FERS creditable service.

**Benefits Computations:** How much will you receive when you retire?

- ▶ Under CSRS, benefits are 1.5% of salary earned during the first five years of service; 1.75% of salary earned during the next five years; and 2% of salary for all years worked beyond 10 years. An employee with 30 years worked under CSRS will receive 56.25% of the highest three years of average salary;
- ▶ Under FERS, benefits are 1% of salary for each year worked. For a working career of 30 years under FERS, retirees receive 30% of the average salary during the highest three years of employment. Retirees at age 62 with at least 20 years of service will receive 1.1% for each year of service worked.

**Thrift Savings Plan:** Whether an employee is covered by CSRS or FERS, Ms. DeBolt encourages maximum contributions to the thrift savings plan (TSP), the tax-deferred savings plan which reduces taxable income while saving money for retirement. Employees have two approaches to participation. CSRS employees can contribute 1% to 10% of salary and FERS employees can contribute 1% to 15% of salary, to a maximum of \$14,000 in tax year 2005. The government matches FERS employee contributions dollar for dollar up to 3% of salary and 50 cents on the dollar for the next 2% of salary. The government also makes an Agency Automatic 1% of salary contribution. It is important that employees evaluate contributions each year and adjust accordingly to avoid losing matching funds, and employees age 50 or older can contribute an additional \$4,000 tax-deferred for 2005.

**Staying Ahead of the Curve:** Ms. DeBolt strongly encouraged all Federal employees to enroll, invest, contribute the maximum and get educated about retirement benefits. To ensure that this happens, employees should meet with a retirement benefits counselor at their place of work and attend periodic retirement seminars. The bottom line is: the ultimate value of the retirement benefit depends on the employee with a personal stake in it. ■



## Positive Approaches to

# MANAGING RELATIONSHIPS AT WORK

### Workshop Facilitator

**Lu Acosta**, *Project Director*, TATC,  
Consultant to the U.S. Department of  
Labor



Federal agencies often emphasize teamwork and cross-agency actions. In this kind of setting, Lu Acosta noted that managing relationships is particularly challenging, especially in a workforce that is so multicultural. Using state-of-the-art applied behavioral research, Ms. Acosta enabled participants to identify techniques for improving interaction with people up, down and across the organization, and thereby improve prospects for promotion to leadership positions.

Ms. Acosta began by asking attendees to divide into small groups and come to an agreed-upon description of behavior that often characterizes Asian Pacific American workers. Participants cited several traits, most notably a tendency toward group orientation, respect for authority, strong work ethic, and reserved business demeanor. Ms. Acosta explained how these qualities, while often admirable, may sometimes be counterproductive to achieving recognition as a leader. She emphasized that promotion to management positions generally occurs when a superior notices something special about a worker, something distinguishing him or her from the crowd.

To ensure notice is taken, Ms. Acosta stressed the importance of moving beyond reliance on superior job skills or academic credentials and building the kind of working relationships where an individual can openly express strengths and interests and let supervisors know with precision the ways in which you can help the agency succeed. The principle here is that leadership potential does not readily reveal itself unless the potential leader manages relationships. It is a way of designing your own reputation. According to Ms. Acosta, you may be a star, but who knows about your talents, accomplishments and aspirations? She agreed with attendees that many Asian Pacific Americans are acculturated to be modest or reserved about their abilities and accomplishments. A key part of managing one's career as an Asian Pacific American is therefore proactively managing relationships so that the message gets across about what you have done and can do on the job. Excessive modesty about letting the right people know of your abilities and accomplishments carries too great a risk of being overlooked when the plum jobs or projects come along.

Ms. Acosta pointed out that this does not require shameless self-promotion, but rather a positive and consistent approach to communicating visions, beliefs and talents with colleagues and managers. In this way, when opportunity knocks, you have managed relationships in such a way that appropriate decisionmakers are aware of you and more likely to reward you accordingly. ■

## Expanding Your Circle of Influence

# EFFECTIVE NETWORKING

### Workshop Presenter

**Brian Peters,**

*Director of Organizational Development and Training, TATC; Consultant to the U.S. Department of Labor*

Networking is one of the most important activities that job-seekers and those pursuing advancement in their careers need to master to ensure success. For job seekers, the reasons are clear: the vast majority of job openings are never advertised, so it is vital to have a network of contacts – a career network – that provides support, information and job leads. As Brian Peters noted in this seminar, effective networking for personal and professional growth is considered an art and it can be learned. If an Asian Pacific American or anyone else was not born with these skills, they can be acquired with proper guidance and finesse. Knowing how to build partnerships and coalitions with others internal and external to the agency can not only have a significant impact on a personal career, but directly impacts how well the agency itself achieves its goals and objectives.

In this workshop, Mr. Peters sought to help expand a person's network or circle of influence, and taught rules to apply networking for career transition and professional advancement. He launched the session with a practical exercise by asking attendees to introduce themselves to three people in the room and exchange general information about one another. Following this exercise, attendees were asked to talk openly about what made the exchange challenging. Most mentioned that it was awkward to talk about themselves to strangers, yet the exercise made networking seem deceptively easy because it was a structured event.

**“Networking means developing a wider list of contacts or people met through various social and business functions, and using them to advantage when looking for a job or advancing within an organization.”**

Brian Peters, Director of Organizational Development and Training, TATC; Consultant to the U.S. Department of Labor



Mr. Peters reiterated the benefits of networking, which include expanding one's network and building relationships. Networking means developing a wider list of contacts or people met through various social and business functions, and using them to advantage when looking for a job or advancing within an organization. People in the network may be able to provide job leads, offer advice and information about a particular company or industry, or introduce you to others in a way that expands the network itself.

Mr. Peters particularly encouraged attendees to attend professional meetings and participate in community events, as well as networking within a current job by identifying those individuals at all levels within the organization who may be suitable as mentors. As noted, one of the major obstacles the APA community faces when it comes to seeking mentors or networking in general is shyness, fear of rejection and lack of time. Therefore, Mr. Peters emphasized that one of the keys to successful networking is, first of all, to overcome the reluctance to ask for help. He noted that, in fact, most people enjoy helping others and it is vital that an individual speak up and communicate clearly in order for others to become advocates.

Secondly, Mr. Peters emphasized the importance of making the straightforward decision to actually devote the energy needed to make networking an effective career tool. Basic steps include getting organized with a business card file or computer database; staying in touch via regular phone calls, email and perhaps holiday greetings; and setting goals regarding the volume of daily or weekly outreach to contacts.

The payoff will come. As Mr. Peters noted, many studies and countless stories have shown that networking is a proven avenue of achievement for Asian Pacific Americans and all who aspire to get ahead. Regularly meeting industry and community colleagues keeps a person on top of trends and on the minds of those who may be able to offer a promotion, better job, referral or at least a hot tip. And finally, after all that effort, never take your network for granted: It is always vital to say "thanks." ■

**“ . . . most people enjoy helping others and it is vital that an individual speak up and communicate clearly in order for others to become advocates.”**

Brian Peters, Director of Organizational Development and Training, TATC; Consultant to the U.S. Department of Labor



# EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND YOUR CAREER

## Workshop Facilitator

**Adib Sabree**, *Project Director*,  
Vantage Human Resource Services,  
Consultant to the U.S. Department  
of Labor

This workshop focused on what “emotional intelligence” (EQ) means for the Federal workforce and discussed how this factor helps workers achieve mission-critical objectives. Participants learned about EQ and its related competencies, the benefits of EQ in the Federal workplace, and the established link between performance and EQ. Participants also took an EQ quiz and learned how to interpret their scores.

What is emotional intelligence? Mr. Sabree defined EQ as knowing and managing one’s feelings and being able to read effectively the feelings of others – and to act appropriately using these emotions – qualities that have been strongly tied to an individual’s success in the workplace. In fact, research suggests that a person’s emotional intelligence might be a greater predictor of success than his or her intellectual intelligence, despite an assumption that people with high IQs will naturally accomplish more in life. Mr. Sabree went on to discuss the benefits of having strong EQ and the heightened awareness of others which promotes communication. Essentially, EQ leads to more cooperative, self-disciplined, motivated, flexible and aware employees. Without it, the workplace suffers from a lack of innovation, reduced creativity, declining productivity, poor career development, high turnover rates, and even workplace violence.

Mr. Sabree outlined the six key leadership competencies directly related to EQ which help workers recognize how EQ fits into the workplace. Leaders with high EQ will:

- ▶ recognize how mood affects the team;
- ▶ cultivate the ability to change in midstream, adapt quickly to change, and accomplish things with “no bodies in the wake”;
- ▶ improve their facility at both accepting feedback and seeking it out;
- ▶ learn from past lessons; and
- ▶ embrace challenges with optimism.

Mr. Sabree closed by emphasizing the crucial importance of EQ as it relates to successful leadership in the Federal workforce or anywhere else in our lives, noting that “leadership is not a position, but a disposition. Successful leaders are not only more aware of themselves, but more aware of those around themselves.” ■



# THE EXCEPTIONAL PRESENTER

## Workshop Facilitator

**Tim Koegel**, *President,*  
The Koegel Group, Author,  
*The Exceptional Presenter*

**Whether presenting to an agency head, negotiating with a contractor, or conducting internal meetings, the fundamental presentation skills needed remain the same.**

Tim Koegel, *President,* The Koegel Group

Making the most of every speaking opportunity can place you at a competitive advantage when seeking to improve skills, enhance portfolios, and demonstrate well-rounded experience. This was the message from Tim Koegel, President of the Koegel Group, in his program entitled *The Exceptional Presenter*.

Whether presenting to an agency head, negotiating with a contractor, or conducting internal meetings, the fundamental presentation skills needed remain the same. During this workshop, Mr. Koegel offered attendees tips on how to strengthen their message and refine their presentation and communications skills, covering everything from posture to stage fright to opening lines. The participants learned critical delivery techniques for any presentation and how to practice those techniques so that even under high pressure, the performance shines.

Mr. Koegel's message was aimed at what it means to OPEN UP and Own the Room. OPEN UP is an acronym representing the six characteristics shared by exceptional presenters. The secret is not just knowing the characteristics, but understanding how to incorporate them into a presentation style. According to Koegel, the exceptional presenter is:

- ▶ **Organized** — Exceptional presenters take charge. They look poised and polished. They sound prepared. Listeners get the sense that they are not there to waste time. Their goal is not to overwhelm, but to inform, persuade, influence, entertain or enlighten. Their message is well structured and clearly defined;
- ▶ **Passionate** — Exceptional presenters exude enthusiasm and conviction. If the presenter does not look and sound passionate about his or her topic, why would anyone else be passionate about it? Exceptional presenters speak from the heart and leave no doubt as to where they stand. Their energy is persuasive and contagious;
- ▶ **Engaging** — Exceptional presenters do everything in their power to engage each audience member. They build rapport quickly and involve the audience early and often. If you want their respect, you must first connect;
- ▶ **Natural** — An exceptional presenter's style is natural. Their delivery has a conversational feel. Natural presenters make it look easy. They appear comfortable with any audience. A presenter who appears natural appears confident;
- ▶ **Understands the Audience** — Exceptional presenters learn as much as they can about their audience before presenting to them. The more that is known about the audience, the easier it is to connect with them; and



- ▶ **Practiced** — Those who practice, improve. Those who don't, won't. Exceptional skills must become second nature. To Koegel, practice is the most important part of the improvement process because if delivery skills are second nature, they will not fail under pressure.

Mr. Koegel emphasized that there are hundreds of opportunities every day to practice the skills of the exceptional presenter. The only thing needed is the desire to practice, but most people do not. If they do, it is on their way to present a proposal, interview for a job, deliver a keynote presentation or sell an idea to their boss. Mr. Koegel notes that the time to practice is not in “live” win or lose situations, but during normal daily routines when habits can be formed and mistakes are not costly.

Mr. Koegel's other major point was to encourage speakers to Own the Room. To “Own the Room” is a term describing how an actor can become so completely in character that he or she walks on stage with total confidence and therefore owns the room. “Owning the room” is what happens when a speaker has developed an open communication style, presenting total confidence and maintaining the highest level of professionalism even in the most challenging circumstances.

Mr. Koegel's ultimate message is that the speaker should hold him- or herself responsible for the success or failure of presentations, and do whatever it takes to ensure that the audience understands and remembers the message. The bottom line is: don't accept just plain average when you can be exceptional. ■

**Don't accept just plain average when you can be exceptional.**

Tim Koegel, *President, The Koegel Group*



Tim Koegel, *President, The Koegel Group*

# CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

## FOR THE ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN COMMUNITY

*Under the leadership of Secretary Elaine L. Chao, the U.S. Department of Labor has made outreach to minority communities throughout the country a top priority. As the first American woman of Asian descent to serve in a President's Cabinet, Secretary Chao understands the challenges and obstacles these communities face.*

*As part of the Department's outreach, Secretary Chao has made significant contributions to the advancement of Asian Pacific Americans through partnership activities, targeted compliance assistance, human capital development and enhanced enforcement of labor laws.*

### **Opening doors to Asian Pacific Americans at the highest levels of government**

President Bush has appointed more Asian Pacific Americans to positions in his Administration—more than 300—than any other President in history. Two of these are Cabinet Secretaries and 94 others are PAS (Presidential Appointees, Senate Confirmed) and PA (Presidential Appointees) serving in the highest ranks of the Administration. Twenty-three Asian Pacific Americans, a record number, have served in the White House under President Bush.

Secretary Chao is the first Chinese-American, and first Asian American woman, to be appointed to the Cabinet. She has appointed more Asian Pacific Americans to positions at the Department of Labor than any other Cabinet Secretary.

### **Enforcing Executive Order 11246 to fight discrimination against women and minorities, including Asian Pacific Americans by Federal government contractors and subcontractors**

Executive Order 11246 tasks the Labor Department with enforcing nondiscrimination in employment by *government contractors and subcontractors only*. Overall workplace discrimination issues are addressed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

Since 2001, the Department of Labor obtained settlements that provided over \$153 million in financial remedies to minority and female workers. In a number of these cases, Asian Pacific Americans received settlements under Executive Order 11246.

For example, in 2004, financial settlements in hiring discrimination cases in Texas alone awarded back pay of \$173,632 to Asian Pacific Americans and other minority applicants. Another \$1 million was awarded in 2005 covering lost wages, fringe benefits, and interest to minorities and women—including Asian Pacific Americans—in a case involving a Federal contractor in South Carolina.

Last year the Department of Labor recovered nearly \$18 million in financial remedies for 6,150 women—many of whom are of Asian descent—who had been subjected to illegal discrimination. In 2005, the Department of Labor conducted 50 Corporate Management Compliance Evaluations (CMCEs), also known as “Glass Ceiling” audits. CMCEs ensure that women and minorities do not face discriminatory barriers to advancement into management and executive positions.

## **Helping Asian Pacific Americans overcome challenges and more fully participate in the American Dream**

To help Asian Pacific Americans recover from the September 11 attacks, the Administration funded emergency efforts to assist dislocated workers in the New York City community.

Protecting the benefit plans of America's workforce, the Department's Employee Benefits Security Administration achieved monetary results of \$7.8 billion since 2001.

To improve the lives of Korean and other Asian Pacific American at-risk youth and young adults, the Department awarded a \$1 million grant in California through a competitive process to a coalition of faith-based organizations. The program will enhance the employability of nearly 1,200 participants by providing them with educational and vocational training, counseling, peer support, mentoring, life skills services, and job placement services.

To assist Asian Pacific American seniors, the Administration awarded a \$6.1 million competitive grant to the National Asian Pacific Center on Aging in Seattle, Washington.

Recognizing that economic freedom and entrepreneurship are a foundation for individual success and prosperity, the Growing America Through Entrepreneurship Project (Project GATE), allocated \$9 million to reach historically underserved ethnic populations and help diverse urban and rural populations create, support and expand small businesses.

To better serve the Asian Pacific American community, the United States Department of Labor's monthly employment report includes, for the first time, specific data on Asian Pacific Americans.

To make non-English speaking workers aware of government services and labor rules, the United States Department of Labor has worker safety awareness materials available in Chinese and Vietnamese. To ensure the safety of youth workers, the Department also distributes Chinese language manuals to teen workers.

## **Helping Asian Pacific American workers and employers understand their rights and obligations**

The Rapid Employee Assistance in Chinese Hotline, or REACH, is a Chinese language hotline in New York City for workers with questions about their pay. Chinese-speaking Department of Labor Wage and Hour staff answer the help number (212-264-4175) Monday through Friday. During non-business hours a recording instructs callers to leave a message in Cantonese, Mandarin, or Fujianese. A Chinese-speaking investigator then promptly responds to provide assistance. Along with the hotline, 39 Chinese employment agencies serving the New York City area are providing job seekers with information regarding their rights under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) in Chinese, reinforced through posters and wallet-sized cards.

In Houston, Texas, The Information Group for Asian American Rights (TIGAAR) was formed to educate the Asian American community about their workplace rights. TIGAAR is a collaborative partnership spearheaded by the United States Department of Labor with other government agencies and local Asian Pacific American community organizations. Through this program 403 employees recovered \$430,000 in back pay and benefits.

Northern New Jersey has the Compliance Outreach to the Asian Community and Hispanics (COACH) program. The COACH program goes into the Asian and Hispanic communities to work directly with employers and workers who traditionally have been reluctant to seek the Department's services. Outreach has taken place in Hudson and Essex Counties with visits to businesses in Jersey City, North Bergen, Union City, Guttenberg, and West New York. Most of the employers visited identified their ethnicity as East Indian, Pakistani, Korean, Filipino, Arab or Hispanic.

### **Fighting discrimination in low-wage industries with chronic violations, where large numbers of immigrant workers, including Asian Pacific Americans, are employed**

Since 2001, the Department of Labor recovered back wages totaling about \$883 million. In fiscal year 2005 alone, the Department's direct enforcement efforts in low-wage industries, such as garment manufacturing, health care, janitorial services, restaurants and the hotel industries, yielded \$45.8 million in back wages for particularly vulnerable workers. Nearly 96,511 workers in these industries received back wages.

In February 2003, 11 Chicago area Chinese-style buffet restaurants agreed to pay over \$665,000 to more than 100 workers employed as busboys and kitchen help. The workers, mostly Asian and Hispanic, worked as many as 66 hours a week and were not paid overtime. In some instances, employees were paid less than minimum wage.

In February 2003 as a result of a Department of Labor investigation, an owner of a garment factory in American Samoa was found guilty of 14 criminal counts including involuntary servitude, forced labor, extortion, money laundering and conspiracy to violate the rights of more than 200 Vietnamese and Chinese immigrant workers who operated his factory.

Results for fiscal year 2005 show a reduction in the average number of minors found employed in violation of the FLSA child labor provisions. On average 3.3 minors were found illegally employed per case compared to 3.6 in fiscal year 2004.

### **Creating opportunities for the growing Asian Pacific American community**

To foster a new generation of leaders and promote diversity in the workforce, Secretary Chao established an internship program at the United States Department of Labor that has benefited over 60 Asian Pacific Americans. Secretary Chao meets annually with Asian Pacific American interns in the Washington D.C. area to highlight careers in leadership and public service.

To help Asian Pacific Americans access career and leadership opportunities in the Federal government, Secretary Chao initiated the annual Asian Pacific American Federal Career Advancement Summit in May 2001. Drawing over 850 federal employees in 2005, this unprecedented training program aims to equip APA government employees with the skill sets to become leaders in the American workforce. In 2004, Secretary Chao introduced the *Asian Pacific American Federal Career Guide* explaining the Federal job search process, which is available online at [www.dol.gov/jobs/apa\\_fcg.pdf](http://www.dol.gov/jobs/apa_fcg.pdf). For more information about the annual Summit, visit [www.apasummit.gov](http://www.apasummit.gov).

Since 2003, the Department of Labor has hosted the Opportunity Conference, inviting other Federal agencies and non-profit organizations to address the unique needs of the Asian Pacific, Hispanic, and African American communities. Workshop topics have included small business development, accessing capital, doing business with the government, opportunities for faith-based and community organizations, and assistance to workers with limited English proficiency. The conferences have drawn attendees from across the nation and focused on helping Asian Pacific Americans, Hispanics and African-Americans continue to play leadership roles in the American economy. The November 2005 Opportunity Conference in Illinois marked the first regional expansion of this program. For more information about the conference, visit [www.opportunityconference.gov](http://www.opportunityconference.gov). ■

## BUILDING ON AMERICA'S PROMISE

In 2005, the U.S. Department of Labor once again hosted Opportunity Conference, the only government-sponsored event of its kind addressing the growing needs of America's largest minority communities and fastest growing sectors of the workforce: Asian Pacific, Hispanic and African Americans. The Opportunity Conference encourages the economic advancement of the Asian Pacific, Hispanic and African American communities and seeks to address their special needs. Over the years, the Opportunity Conference has kept growing and improving, and the 2005 Conference welcomed over 1,100 Asian Pacific, Hispanic and African Americans at the first Conference held in Chicago.

Under the theme *Building on America's Promise*, the Opportunity Conference features presentations tailored to help minority communities navigate the ever-changing business climate, with workshops focusing on the different components of economic development, including job training, access to capital, marketing, business startups, grants and procure-

ment opportunities, government procurement, and reaching out to workers with limited English proficiency. The goal is to ensure that minority Americans have the business and leadership skills needed by the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce as well as an awareness of opportunities to work with government.

America's ethnic communities are among the greatest catalysts of growth in our economy, opening record numbers of small- and medium-size businesses, creating new jobs, and generating billions in revenues every year. Our nation's continued success will be tremendously enhanced by ensuring that Asian Pacific, Hispanic and African Americans are able to prosper and become even more integral to the U.S. economy. The Opportunity Conference is an important part of that effort. ■

U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao is joined by Conference attendees



## 47. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## 2005 ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN Federal Career Advancement Summit



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