

“Our country is a fabulous country. It is. Mainly, because the people are so great. And our country is richer because of the Hispanic influence. I know. I came from a state that has a tremendous Hispanic influence. And I know I shouldn't say this: I happen to think it's the greatest of all states, but partly because of our history and tradition and relationships in the Hispanic community.”

President George W. Bush

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Executive Order 13171, Hispanic Employment in the Federal Government, was issued on October 12, 2000, to focus on the continued underrepresentation of Hispanics in the federal workforce. The Executive Order requires an annual report to the President from the Director of the Office of Personnel Management on the progress made by agencies and recommendations. While the Administration has set a strong example for Federal agencies and departments by recruiting and hiring highly qualified Hispanics, continued, sustained and aggressive leadership is needed to make meaningful progress in correcting the chronic underrepresentation of Hispanics in the overall Federal workforce.

### **Hispanic Underrepresentation Remains a Problem**

Efforts to improve Hispanic employment in the Federal government date back at least three decades. Progress has been limited at best, and Hispanics today remain the most underrepresented minority group in the Federal workforce. According to the most recent census survey, Hispanics represent over 12.5 percent of the general population and comprise 11.8 percent of the national civilian labor force (CLF). Yet only 6.6 percent of permanent Federal employees are Hispanic. Moreover, the gap between Hispanics in the Federal workforce and in the CLF is growing. Further, for Hispanics in the Federal workforce, career paths show less progress than other groups; the current internal career development programs that ensure a steady flow of Senior Executive Service candidates do not seem to be reaching Hispanic men and women already in the Federal ranks.

The Federal workforce must present an image of public service that is inclusive and provides opportunity to all citizens. Not only is this the right thing to do, it makes good business sense. There is growing recognition, made even more evident by the events for the last month, that the Federal government needs to recruit new talent into its workforce. In today's competitive labor market, the net must be cast as widely as possible. Further, to be truly citizen-centered, it is important that the Federal government continues to build and maintain a workforce that reflects the rich diversity of our people.

### **Actions under Executive Order 13171**

Executive Order 13171 calls for the establishment of an Interagency Task Force on Hispanic Employment with senior-level representation to help carry out its objectives. These members are predominately political appointees, many of whom have only recently been confirmed. In the interim, the Office of Personnel Management established a Work Group on Hispanic Employment, which developed the criteria used for assembling this first report.

The Work Group surveyed Federal departments and agencies on specific practices in management accountability, innovative marketing and recruitment strategies, effective results-oriented hiring and retention strategies, identifying barriers to improving Hispanic representation, and use of the bilingual/bicultural hiring authority. Agencies also were

asked to report on how these activities aligned with the agency's Annual Performance Plan under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA).

The Interagency Task Force on Hispanic Employment in the Federal Government convened on October 4, 2001. Members were given an opportunity to review the draft report, and their additional input has been incorporated.

### **Agency Progress and Activities**

Agency reports demonstrated varying degrees of progress and activities in the five survey areas:

- **Management accountability** – Some agencies have established reporting requirements and scorecards to compare the performance of various agency components; others have incorporated a critical element into the performance plans for managers and supervisors and/or established a reward and recognition system. Still other agencies ensure that their leadership is aware of the agency's concerns and commitment.
- **Innovative marketing and recruitment strategies** – Many agencies have developed multiple approaches, which include establishing partnership agreements, innovative marketing, outreach, and targeted recruitment at Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs).
- **Effective, results-oriented hiring and retention strategies** – At least one agency created a database for resumes collected at career and job fairs, while other agencies have conducted targeted recruitment activities at HSIs, pursued marketing and advertising strategies, and enhanced recruitment from all sources.
- **Identifying barriers to improving Hispanic representation** – Few agencies reported on their process and/or results in identifying barriers to improving Hispanic representation. At least one agency established a consultation process with either community organizations or advisory councils composed of senior agency employees. A few limited themselves to discussing the hiring processes as a barrier.
- **Bilingual-Bicultural Program** – Only two agencies reported using the Bilingual-Bicultural program.

### **Next Steps and Conclusion**

Agency personnel and operations must reflect the commitment of the President to Hispanic employment. Department and agency leadership is essential to the successful accomplishment of this objective.

Because Hispanics remain the most severely underrepresented minority group in the federal workforce, agencies must target their recruitment resources more effectively, especially within non-traditional markets, to take advantage of the full range of opportunities available to recruit Hispanics. Once on board, agencies must assure that the

full range of development and advancement opportunities are available to Hispanic employees. Small agencies may have to work closely to identify barriers to recruitment and hiring, and jointly devise new or innovative practices to address the identified barriers.

As the Federal government's human resources agency, OPM is taking pro-active steps to enhance Hispanic recruitment government-wide and will help agencies develop integrated strategies by facilitating the sharing of information and best practices and through the Interagency Task Force on Hispanic Employment.

To better meet the objectives of this Administration, OPM will take the following specific steps: (1) provide guidance to agencies to ensure that they are taking full advantage of existing managerial flexibilities and programs; (2) assure the development of clear measurement and accountability guidelines; (3) convene a conference of agency officials to identify and address barriers to effective recruitment and utilization of Hispanics; (4) showcase innovative agency outreach, recruitment, hiring, career development, and retention efforts; and (5) submit semi-annual statistically based reports to the President.

## BACKGROUND

This Administration has an unequivocal commitment to a Federal workforce that reflects the greatness of our nation's diversity. To date, that commitment has not been fully met.

According to the latest census, Hispanics represent over 12.5 percent of the general population. They also represent 11.8 percent of the national civilian labor force (CLF), the measure used to determine whether groups are adequately represented in the Federal ranks. However, only 6.6 percent of permanent Federal employees<sup>1</sup> are Hispanic. They are the only underrepresented minority group in the Federal workforce. Reports from several Federal agencies, including OPM, the General Accounting Office (GAO), the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and the Merit Systems Protection Board (MPSB) have confirmed this fact.

Executive Order 13171 of October 12, 2000, affirms ongoing policies and establishes additional policies designed to improve Hispanic representation in the Federal service. The Executive Order assigns major responsibilities to Federal agencies as well as to OPM. Each Federal agency is required to take steps to establish and maintain a program for the recruitment and career development of Hispanics in Federal employment. These agency programs must reflect a continuing priority for eliminating Hispanic underrepresentation in the Federal workforce and incorporate actions under the Order as strategies for achieving workforce diversity goals in the agency's Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Annual Performance Plan.

OPM's responsibilities under the Executive Order are twofold:

1. Establish and chair an Interagency Task Force with representation at the level of Deputy Secretary or equivalent to carry out the various goals and responsibilities outlined in the Order, and
2. Issue an annual report to the President beginning on October 12, 2001, with findings and recommendations on the progress made by agencies on matters related to this Order.

Under the leadership of the Director of OPM, the Interagency Task Force was established and convened on October 4, 2001. This is the first annual report to the President. In addition, an interagency Working Group was established to assist OPM in implementing the Executive Order.

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<sup>1</sup> This is based on OPM's Central Personnel Data File (CPDF), which collects information from most Executive Branch agencies (except the Postal Service, the Postal Rate Commission, and the intelligence agencies) and a few Legislative Branch agencies.

The Working Group determined that it was essential to survey all Federal agencies to obtain critical information to meet the requirements of the Executive Order and to help OPM prepare its report to the President. Specifically, agencies were asked to provide:

1. A list of specific practices that had worked best for improving the agency's recruitment, retention, and promotion of Hispanics, and how these aligned with the agency's Annual Performance Plan under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA).
2. The number of hiring opportunities the agency projected or had identified for Fiscal Year 2002.

## **LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES AND PRACTICES**

### **1. Management Accountability**

Management accountability is an element of almost every recommendation on the issue of Hispanic under-representation. Executive Order 13171 charges agencies with ensuring that the performance plans for executives and managers specifically address accomplishments in diversity recruitment and career development, and that accountability is predicated on these plans. The Order also charges agencies with ensuring that managers and supervisors receive periodic training in managing and maintaining a diverse workforce. Furthermore, agencies must make the elimination of Hispanic under-representation in the Federal workforce a continuing priority and incorporate actions under the order as strategies for achieving workforce diversity goals in the agency's Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Annual Performance Plan.

The Hispanic Nine Point Plan, which is embedded in the Order, requires Federal agencies to report on their progress and successes in recruiting, employing, and training Hispanics in their annual Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program (FEORP) report. The Report to the President's Management Council, also embedded in the Order, incorporates several recommendations regarding management accountability under three main themes – providing guidance to managers and supervisors; conducting progress reviews; and holding managers and supervisors accountable for a diverse workforce, including Hispanic representation

In its diversity guide, *Building and Maintaining a Diverse, High-Quality Workforce: A Guide for Federal Agencies*, OPM recommends that agency heads hold their executives, managers, and supervisors accountable for achieving results. The guide recommends that agencies build accountability for hiring, retaining, and developing a diverse, high-quality workforce into the performance management systems for managers and supervisors. Furthermore, the guide recommends that agencies ensure that candidates for the Senior Executive Service demonstrate competency in "leveraging diversity," among other leadership competencies.

Accountability also includes identifying and celebrating success. The OPM diversity guide recommends that agencies recognize success; identify and reward champions of diversity; consider nominating senior executives for Presidential Rank Awards to recognize their accomplishments in building and maintaining a diverse, high-quality workforce; and consider establishing an agency-wide diversity award.

### **2. Innovative Marketing and Recruitment Strategies**

The purpose of innovative marketing and recruitment strategies is to improve the Government's capacity to attract strong candidates who are prepared both to meet the agency's strategic goals and priorities and to work in the agency's environment. The Executive Order charges agencies with providing a plan for recruiting Hispanics that creates a fully diverse workforce for the agency in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. OPM has provided



agencies with information about such innovative strategies over the past several years. The Hispanic Nine Point Plan asks agencies to support and implement the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans; provide employment information to students, faculty, and the Hispanic community; participate in the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) National Internship Program; and develop mentoring programs to motivate young people to pursue higher education and Federal careers.

In addition to the strategies set out in the Nine Point Plan, the Report to the President's Management Council incorporates several recommendations regarding outreach and employment for both entry- and senior-level positions. For senior level positions, they include developing specific recruitment strategies and activities to increase the number of Hispanics in the SES selection pool, helping prepare Hispanics to become more competitive for SES opportunities, and improving outreach efforts for SES vacancies to people and groups outside the agency. For entry-level positions, strategies include partnering with other Federal departments and agencies, disseminating information in Spanish to Hispanic media, using the flexibilities of the Student Educational Employment Program to bring Hispanic students into an agency's shortage category occupations, and appointing and supporting full-time Hispanic Employment Program (HEP) managers.

OPM's diversity guide also makes several recommendations. They include: ensuring that recruiters and selecting officials work closely with the agency's human resources and civil rights/diversity staff during the recruiting process, understanding the employer competition and its methods, and ensuring that the agency's message can be found throughout the communities. The *Guide* also recommends that agencies clearly state their mission and goals to ensure that candidates feel that their personal goals match those of the agency; design a long-term recruitment plan with input from managers, supervisors, and employees; and develop and maintain partnerships with academic and professional associations. Furthermore, the *Guide* recommends that agencies select and thoroughly train a diverse cadre of recruiters that includes representatives from program areas as well as staff areas. Finally, the *Guide* recommends that agencies follow up with candidates.

### **3. Effective, Results-Oriented Hiring and Retention Strategies**

After conducting effective outreach and recruitment activities, agencies must hire and retain high-quality candidates. Both the Hispanic Nine Point Plan and the Report to the President's Management Council recommend that agencies promote the participation of Hispanic employees in career development programs. In addition, OPM's diversity guide reminds agencies to review internal human resources policies, processes, and operations to ensure they are not barriers to making quick job offers; utilize existing hiring flexibilities and authorities, such as student employment programs, Presidential Management Intern (PMI) program, and selective placement; and pay recruitment and relocation bonuses, where appropriate. The *Guide* also suggests retention strategies that include a broad model of rewards to sustain employee commitment, including an emphasis on learning and development, a flexible and supportive work environment,

high-quality supervision and leadership, and effective rewards and recognition systems. Executive Order 13171 charges Federal agencies with improving outreach efforts to include organizations outside the Federal Government in order to increase the number of Hispanic candidates in the selection pool for the Senior Executive Service and to promote the participation of Hispanic employees in management, leadership, and career development programs

#### **4. Identifying Barriers to Improving Hispanic Representation**

The Executive Order requires that agencies assess and eliminate any barriers to the effective recruitment and consideration of Hispanics. These actions may include broadening the area of consideration to include applicants from all appropriate sources.

OPM's diversity guide reminds agencies to review internal human resources policies, processes, and operations to ensure they are not barriers to making quick job offers. Some of the barriers to progress in this area include the following: clearly stated agency commitment, diversity training, employee involvement, clear and widely-disseminated workforce information, senior management involvement, and the appointment and inclusion of Special Emphasis Program (SEP) managers.

#### **5. Effective Use of the Bilingual-Bicultural Hiring Authority**

The changing demographics of America mean that the public served by the Federal government is also changing. When agencies recruit and retain a workforce representative of America and when individual differences are respected, appreciated and valued, diversity becomes an organizational strength that contributes to achieving results.

For the past several years, Federal agencies have had the ability to hire applicants with Spanish-language proficiency and/or knowledge of the Hispanic culture, where these competencies enhance service to the public. Agencies make a determination of which entry-level jobs are a good fit for this "Bilingual/Bicultural" program. Applicants hired to fill these jobs are later "converted" to positions in the civil service.

## AGENCY REPORTS

### Management Accountability

Several agencies have incorporated a critical element of accountability into the performance plans for managers and supervisors. Some agencies have incorporated a reward and recognition system, while others ensure that their leadership is aware of the agency's concerns and commitment.

<b>Social Security Administration</b>	The Commissioner reviews the progress of the agency's recruitment initiatives during monthly meetings with direct reports. The progress report focuses on results, is simple (one page), is timely, tracks all groups (not just Hispanics), does not set numerical goals or quotas, is easy to generate, is comprehensive, and provides comparative metrics. The report has institutionalized top-level support for recruitment initiatives by bringing these efforts to the attention of the agency head.
<b>Department of the Navy</b>	The Navy implemented several actions to increase management accountability. The Secretary of the Navy asked that every command and activity increase Hispanic representation to 8% of the civilian workforce. The Department has implemented a Diversity Scorecard, which compares Navy's diversity efforts to those of other Defense agencies. The Scorecard displays individual command performance on hiring, separations, and promotions for all underrepresented groups. Commands use the scorecard to learn techniques and strategies from others that have been successful in meeting diversity goals. The Advisory Council on Hispanic Employment provides top level briefings on accountability held annually for the Under Secretary of the Navy and at Navy Commands.
<b>Department of Agriculture</b>	Established a civil rights critical element for supervisors. The Office of Civil Rights prepares a detailed performance standard for agency heads. At the end of the rating period, the Assistant Secretary for Administration prepares a rating on the civil rights element based on data compiled by the Office of Civil Rights. USDA prepares and widely disseminates among its officials a monthly report on Hispanic hiring.
<b>Department of the Army</b>	Includes an EEO and Organizational Management objective as part of its Total Army Performance Evaluation System. One or both of these objectives must be exceeded in order for the ratee to receive an exceptional performance evaluation

<b>Department of Commerce</b>	Incorporated a mandatory diversity critical element into managers' and supervisors' performance plans.
<b>Department of Energy</b>	Established a critical element in the performance plan of senior executives that stresses the importance of building and maintaining a diverse workforce, including eliminating Hispanic under-representation.
<b>Department of Labor</b>	Managers' performance plan contains an element that requires managers to collaborate in achieving the agency's EEO goals through recruitment, training, promoting diversity, and recognizing staff.
<b>Environmental Protection Agency</b>	Implemented a framework for management accountability that holds senior EPA leadership accountable through the SES awards and recognition process for the recruitment, development, and maintenance of an agency workforce that is free from discrimination.
<b>Farm Credit Administration</b>	Implemented a mandatory critical element that holds managers and supervisors accountable to proactively apply and promote the principles of EEO, affirmative employment, and diversity in all human resources practices, administrative actions, and management decisions.
<b>Merit Systems Protection Board</b>	All managers bear responsibility for the recruitment, retention, and promotion of Hispanics. The Performance Elements and Standards of each manager includes a diversity element geared toward respecting, demonstrating, and promoting fairness in the workplace.
<b>Office of Personnel Management</b>	Holds supervisors accountable for the diversity of their workforce. Includes a diversity element in its management performance standards in order to reach workforce diversity strategic goals.
<b>Selective Service System</b>	Reminds managers and supervisors of the agency's obligation to recruit from underrepresented groups. Each merit promotion certificate includes a short notice advising the selecting official of the agency's commitment to hiring underrepresented groups, which includes Hispanics.
<b>Small Business Administration</b>	Keeps managers informed of areas of under-representation in their workforce.
<b>Defense Logistics Agency</b>	Began assessing Hispanic employment issues through a series of focus group interviews with Hispanic employees from various geographical locations. In May 2001, DLA established a corporate work group composed of senior-level agency managers. The work group developed DLA's Hispanic hiring plan. The plan is called REAL, which stands for Recruitment, Employment and Advancement for Latinos.

**Innovative Marketing and Recruitment Strategies**

Many agencies have developed multiple approaches. These include establishing partnership agreements with organizations such as the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) and its National Internship Program, developing innovative marketing programs, developing outreach to Latino organizations, and conducting targeted recruitment at Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs).

<p><b>Department of Agriculture</b></p>	<p>Established and trained a cadre of 60 recruiters who recruit for vacancies throughout the Department. Included in the cadre are USDA/Hispanic Serving Institution Liaisons. The cadre helped increase Hispanic recruitment from 211 in FY 1999 to 484 in FY 2001.</p> <p>Announces all vacancies for professional and administrative positions for 30 days, and expanded the area of consideration to all sources.</p> <p>Translated its recruitment brochure “Making a World of Difference” into Spanish. The brochure can be viewed in both English and Spanish on USDA’s website. More than 10,000 copies of this brochure have been distributed nationwide.</p> <p>The USDA Hispanic Serving Institution Liaisons promote USDA agencies and services to HSIs at all levels. The liaisons interact with faculty, students and the community and provide an USDA presence on a daily basis.</p> <p>Established a USDA/HIS Fellows Program that offers faculty and staff the opportunity to work and study with USDA staff for a period of 2-6 weeks. Eleven faculty members participated in the program this summer.</p>
<p><b>Department of the Army</b></p>	<p>Signed a partnership agreement with HACU, and participates in the HACU National Internship Program. The Army has established a Minority College Relations Program, which allows for potential involvement in the areas of research and development, grants, program evaluation, education and training, facilities and equipment, fellowships, internships, recruitment, Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA), Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), student tuition assistance, scholarships, and contract awards.</p>

<b>Department of Commerce</b>	Established partnerships with four national Hispanic organizations and nine HSIs. Developed several marketing pieces such as the <i>Realize Your Dreams</i> brochure, which is given to students at career fairs. Developed print and electronic media advertisements to recruit potential Hispanic employees.
<b>Central Intelligence Agency</b>	Interacts with Hispanic groups at schools that are top producers of Hispanic and other minority graduates. The campus-level program is designed to familiarize students with Agency opportunities. The CIA is working to develop closer relationships with Hispanic national organizations, including the Society of Mexican American Engineers and Scientists, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, HACU, and the National Hispanic Business Association. To increase Hispanic enrollment in its student program, the Agency selects students to participate in summer programs through a partnership with HACU. The CIA offers some of these students the opportunity to return during subsequent summers in the CIA Internship Program. The students receive limited tuition assistance.
<b>Defense Contract Audit Agency</b>	Partnered with OPM's Philadelphia Service Center to design and implement a productive college campaign on a large number of colleges and universities. Targeted many HSIs, including those in Puerto Rico, for visits.
<b>Defense Education Activity</b>	Established student teaching agreements with 151 colleges and universities, many of them HACU institutions. Places educator recruitment advertising in Hispanic publications such as <i>Hispanic Times</i> and <i>La Prensa</i> .
<b>Defense Threat Reduction Agency</b>	Established a Special Recruitment Program Branch to enhance ability to attract and sustain a diverse, high-quality workforce by forecasting future needs. Its staff includes a specialist dedicated to the establishment, management, and oversight of Hispanic recruitment issues.
<b>Department of Energy</b>	Established a Latino Science and Engineering Consortium to bring together six major Hispanic science related organizations and serves as a recruitment and communications tool to more than 10,000 Hispanic science and engineering students and professionals. Established partnerships with eight national Hispanic organizations that resulted in recruiting Hispanic students for the Department's

	<p>Student Diversity Partnership Program and the Mickey Leland Fossil Energy Fellowship Program.</p> <p>The DOE Hispanic Youth Symposium brings together 300 Hispanic youth from across Idaho to participate in a three-day leadership and development training program provided by DOE employees and partners from industry. The program has hosted more than 3000 students and has been instrumental in reducing Idaho's Hispanic high school dropout rate from 60% in 1990 to 33% today. Annually, more than 2000 students compete for 300 admissions to the three-day symposium.</p>
<b>Department of the Navy</b>	Encourages commands and activities to work with Hispanic Serving Institutions to strengthen academic undergraduate programs in the fields of science, engineering, and mathematics.
<b>Environmental Protection Agency</b>	The National Hispanic Outreach Strategy is an essential part of the agency's efforts to strengthen its relationship with Hispanics. This strategy has four pillars: (1) Employment and Professional Advancement; (2) Education Pipeline; (3) Economic Opportunities; and (4) Community Partnership.
<b>Farm Credit Administration</b>	Hired nine students participating in HACU's Internship Program, and converted four of them to the Student Career Experience Program.
<b>Department of Labor</b>	Established collaborative agreements with the National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives (NAHFE) and HACU to help raise awareness about Hispanic representation in the Federal government among DOL managers and Hispanic employees.
<b>Nuclear Regulatory Commission</b>	Its Hispanic recruitment strategy resulted in 15 on-the-spot offers to applicants at a University of Puerto Rico in Mayaguez job fair last year. In addition, another 19 applicants were invited to the headquarters office for further interviews. Before attending the fair, selecting officials reviewed resumes from qualified applicants in order to pre-screen the candidates.
<b>Office of Personnel Management</b>	Awarded a five-year, \$1.8 million contract to HACU to provide recruitment and screening services for referrals and interns for developmental assignments under the HACU National Internship Program.

### Effective, Results-Oriented Hiring and Retention Strategies

At least one agency created a database for resumes collected at career and job fairs. Other agencies conduct targeted recruitment activities at HSIs, design marketing and advertising strategies, and hire from all sources.

<b>Department of Commerce</b>	Created a database for resumes collected at career and job fairs. Agency managers and human resources staff have access to the database. Commerce also established a system to assess the efficacy of its outreach and recruitment activities.
<b>Defense Commissary Agency</b>	Conducts active recruitment at HSIs.
<b>Central Intelligence Agency</b>	Reaches out to the Hispanic professional community through print advertising in national publications and key websites with significant Hispanic readership.
<b>Department of the Navy</b>	<p>Attends job fairs and conferences as “One Navy Corporation” interested in enhancing the academic and Federal career successes of Hispanic Youths. The Navy issues a Calendar of Hispanic Targeted Recruitment Job Fairs and Special Emphasis Events which serves as a planning guide for recruitment throughout the states and Puerto Rico.</p> <p>Hosted a series of Career Planning Seminars to enhance the employment and advancement of people with diverse backgrounds. Employees are provided information on career planning, mentoring and executive development.</p> <p>The Navy's Advisory Council of Hispanic Employment (ACHE), which is made up of senior Hispanics, provides mentors for employees and information on career development.</p>
<b>Farm Credit Agency</b>	Held a week orientation session for all student interns. The interns met with top agency leaders who briefed them on the operations of the organization. Each intern was assigned a mentor to provide information and support during the internship. This approach helped the agency successfully convert 4 of 9 HACU interns to student appointments.
<b>Department of Labor</b>	Prepares an annual department-wide targeted recruitment plan, which includes aggressive outreach to the Hispanic community through participation with HSIs, career fairs, conferences, workshop presentations, and visits to colleges, universities and high schools with high concentrations of Hispanic students



<b>Office of Personnel Management</b>	Opened its job vacancies to all U.S. citizens by recruiting from all sources. This includes positions in the Senior Executive Service and managerial positions at GS 13, GS 14, and GS 15 levels
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### Identifying Barriers to Improving Hispanic Representation

Few agencies described activities to identify barriers. Those that did indicated that the hiring process itself is a barrier. However, a few use forums to identify barriers.

<b>Department of Agriculture</b>	In order to identify barriers, USDA hosted two leadership summits with the heads of 15 of the largest Hispanic organizations. The participants presented many promising ideas to increase hiring of Hispanics in the USDA workforce. A third summit will be held this fiscal year to continue USDA's commitment to improving Hispanic representation in USDA.
<b>Department of Commerce</b>	Commerce identified as barriers the inability to make on-the-spot offers at career and job fairs; reluctance to provide relocation expenses and retention bonuses; lack of ability to convert students serving in internships at DOC under grants with Hispanic organizations; and the high number of job vacancies limited to status applicants.
<b>Department of Navy</b>	The Advisory Council on Hispanic Employment helps identify barriers to Hispanic employment and development.
<b>Department of Labor</b>	Labor identified a hiring process that is too complex and takes too long to fill vacant positions; some inflexibility in the hiring process; limited promotional opportunities; and the low representation of Hispanics in developmental programs.

### Effective Use of the Bilingual-Bicultural Program

Very few agencies report using the Bilingual-Bicultural program.

<b>Social Security Administration</b>	Uses the Bilingual/Bicultural hiring authority extensively to fill customer service positions.
<b>Department of Agriculture</b>	In order to encourage its agencies to use the bilingual-bicultural supplementary examining method, Agriculture entered into a one-time reimbursable agreement with OPM to centrally fund the staffing services for entry-level professional and administrative positions covered by the Luevano consent decree.

While many agencies provided substantive information and worthwhile ideas, most fell far short in their reporting. Of special concern were those reports that indicated that they did not have any activities in place for any of the areas OPM surveyed. Furthermore, for each of the six issue areas on which we asked them to report, the number of responses varied considerably.

## NEXT STEPS

To better meet the objectives of this Administration, OPM will take the following steps:

- 1. Provide guidance to agencies to ensure that they are taking full advantage of existing managerial flexibilities and programs (e.g. bilingual and bicultural programs) in order to recruit and retain Hispanics.** Experience has shown that agencies are insufficiently aware of existing flexibilities designed to facilitate the employment and advancement of individuals in the Federal service. A concerted effort will be undertaken to address this need.
- 2. Ensure the development of clear measurement and accountability guidelines designed to address the President's priorities in providing equal opportunities for Hispanics to enter into the Federal workforce.** These guidelines will provide for the incorporation of critical performance elements into the performance plans of managers and supervisors, a means to compare the performance of various components of an agency or department, and other steps designed to ensure a proper degree of accountability.
- 3. Convene a series of meetings of agency officials designed to identify and address barriers to effective recruitment and utilization of Hispanics.** It is time we clearly identified the reasons behind our Government's inability to successfully address the problem of Hispanic underrepresentation and resolved them.
- 4. Showcase innovative agency outreach, recruitment, hiring, career development, and retention efforts.** Some agencies, such as the Social Security Administration, have done particularly well in the employment of Hispanics by using innovative recruitment approaches. We will ensure that all agencies have the opportunity to learn of these approaches so that they might be adopted, as appropriate.
- 5. Submit semi-annual statistically based agency progress reports to the President depicting Hispanic employment by occupational category and grade.** These reports will provide comparative data by which agency officials can track their progress and be better able to address specific areas of underrepresentation and workforce planning needs.

## CONCLUSION

The President has set a strong example for Federal departments and agencies by recruiting and appointing highly qualified Hispanics to work at the highest levels within this Administration. By this example, this Administration clearly demonstrates that it expects that Federal career opportunities will be open to all its citizens.

Although there have been consistent gains in the employment of Hispanics, the Federal workforce is not keeping pace with the civilian labor force (CLF). The underrepresentation gap between Hispanics in the Federal workforce and in the CLF is growing, even as we have more Hispanics entering the Nation's workforce. In addition, our statistics indicate that once Hispanics enter the Federal workforce, they do not progress at the same rate as their counterparts. Hispanics are employed in the lower grades; their average grade level is below the average GS grade for all Federal employees; and their higher educational attainment is not commensurate with their progression to high-level positions. This situation is more severe in the Senior Executive Service (SES). The current internal career development programs that ensure a steady flow of SES candidates do not seem to be reaching Hispanic men and women already in the Federal ranks. Structural barriers that impede this progress must be removed.

Agency personnel and operations must reflect the commitment of the President to equal opportunity for Hispanics. Department and agency leadership is essential to the successful accomplishment of this objective. Because Hispanics remain the most severely underrepresented minority group in the Federal workforce, agencies must ensure that their recruitment resources are effectively deployed to take advantage of the full range of opportunities available to recruit Hispanics. Once on board, agencies must assure that the full range of development and advancement opportunities are available to Hispanic employees.

As the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, I am personally committed to this effort and to assuring that the steps designed to ensure equal opportunity are successful and that your objective of a workforce that is truly citizen centered and representative of the great diversity of our nation is at long last met.