

Message From The President

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Erika Leonard

AVP - 4 - Northern:

Juan García

AVP - 5 - Tri-Counties:

José Velasco

AVP - 6 - Inland:

Jason Welsh

AVP - 7 - L.A. Metro:

Arcenio Carrillo

AVP - 8 - Southwest:

Julissa Pérez

AVP - 9 - FHFB:

Angelica Castillo

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Sara Serrano

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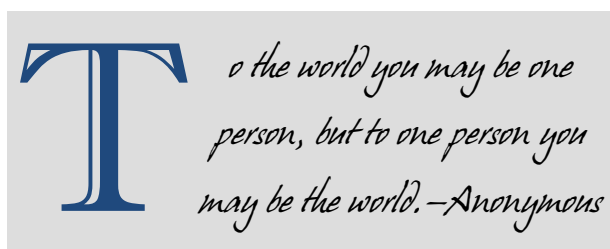
Eric Bencomo
President
SF-HAAC

SF-HAAC Members,

As you all know, the holidays are fast approaching and 2013 is coming to an end. The year has come and gone. As I reflect on 2013, I think of all of SF-HAAC’s great accomplishments. This includes our first of four “*Limitless—Your Potential for Personal Growth & Development*” workshops, our 2013 Mentor Program, area meetings and mixers, and the countless community service outreach events held throughout the region.

In the *Winter 2013 Sí Se Puede Newsletter*, you will see that SF-HAAC has been extremely busy reaching out to the membership and to local communities. As I continue to reflect on 2013, I also think of how we as SF-HAAC members and employees of the Agency have worked with compassion, diligence, and dedication toward the public that we serve. I cannot be any prouder to lead an organization that consists of hard working public servants that go above and beyond on a daily basis to make a difference in the lives of others.

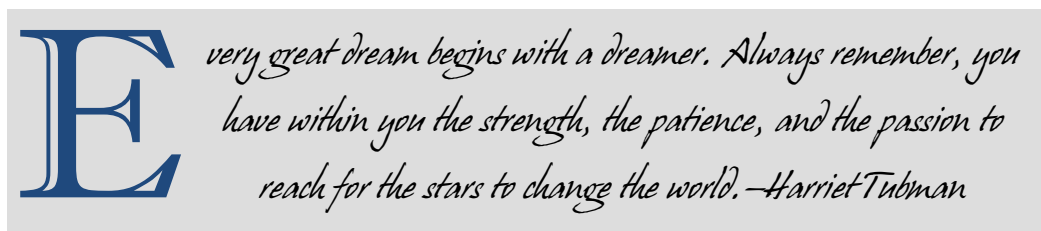
I want to wish everyone a Happy and Joyous Holiday Season and that you enjoy this time with your family and friends. It is important that we take this time to appreciate our loved ones, to reflect on the differences we have made in society, and to prepare ourselves for the upcoming year.



I look forward to seeing all of you at the upcoming 2014 SF-HAAC events.

Best wishes,

Eric Bencomo
SF-HAAC President



Events Around the Region — SoCal Mixer

A full house of over one hundred twenty five employees gathered at Luminarias in East Long Angeles for a multi-area HAAC Meeting. Members stepped out of their comfort zones and spent their Friday evening networking with other HAAC members. The



keynote speaker, Hy Hinojosa, recently promoted to Assistant Regional Commissioner of Management and Operations Support (ARCMOS), spoke to the captivated audience about his successful career path. Mr. Hinojosa stressed several things including: doing the best at your current position; being flexible and mobile; being professional at all times (representing the agency well); taking on new chal-

lenges and becoming involved; and networking. He also spoke of finding and connecting with mentors within and outside the agency to form a “Board of Directors” to consult with along your career journey. He cautioned the audience to be able to remain positive even in the face of adversity or disappointments as the leadership in the agency is concerned with how you handle difficult as well as routine situations.—By José Velasco



Events Around the Region — South Coast Area

The mixer was a total success! It was great having the opportunity to speak to such a motivated group. This mixer reminded me of the great talent we have. This group is both eager and willing to prepare themselves for future challenges. I hope to witness firsthand how they apply what they have learned, and their positive contributions to the agency and their careers.—By Gabe García

Mientras se gana algo no se pierde nada.
(As long as something is gained nothing is lost.) — Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra

Events Around the Region — Tri Counties Area

Over twenty employees from Tri-Counties, LA Metro and LA TSC attended a meeting at RUSH Street in Culver City, CA on Wednesday, August 21st. Tri-Counties AVP José Velasco and HAAC President Eric Bencomo both spoke briefly about the difference between



hand accounts of their experiences. Many present were potential applicants for this year's LDP program and received encouragement, tips and invaluable advice, not only on how to become an LDP associate, but also what it takes to advance in the agency. The restaurant served delicious appetizers and provided a perfect relaxed atmosphere that facilitated meaningful and topical interaction. Those in attendance expressed gratitude for the opportunity to receive motivation and practical advice from successful colleagues.

—By José Velasco



ordinary and extraordinary. In attendance were more than six graduates of SF region's Leadership Development Program, many of whom are currently managers. Attendees had an opportunity to listen to associates provide first-

Events Around the Region — Inland Area

On Saturday, August 17, 2013, the Inland Area chapter of SF-HAAC hosted a BBQ and Area Mixer for all members to attend. The event took place in Riverside and was attended by approximately 20 – 30 members and guests. Attendees enjoyed authentic culinary creations such as ceviche de camaron, pollo asado, y agua fresca de hierbabuena, all hand-prepared by resident Master Chef and Inland AVP, Jason Welsh.

If you missed this awesome event, no te preocupes (don't worry 😊) because we have many more events like this one in store for next year. Our next area event is a Highway Cleanup and Graffiti Removal Project, planned for Saturday, January 18, 2014. If you would like to volunteer for this project or would like to receive more information, please contact me by email.

—By Jason Welsh



Events Around the Region — Bay Area & FHFB

The new Area Vice Presidents for Bay and the FHFB, Angelica Castillo and Erika Leonard, kicked off the start of their new term by hosting a “Meet an Executive” mixer with Regional Commissioner, Grace Kim and Deputy Regional Commissioner, Steve Breen at an authentic Mexican restaurant in the quaint town of Pleasanton. The AVPs expressed their gratitude to Grace and Steve for supporting HAAC and were excited about upcoming events planned for our members.

Things do not happen.
Things are made to happen.
—John F. Kennedy

Regional Commissioner Grace Kim spoke on the valuable role HAAC and all Advisory Councils play during these challenging times in the Agency and stressed the importance of HAAC providing development and leadership opportunities for our



members. Deputy Regional Commissioner Steve Breen encouraged all members to get involved within our council and reach out to other councils to continue to develop and bring leadership to the Agency.

After a great dinner and quality time spent socializing and networking, it was hard to say good-bye, but all good things must come to an end and everyone walked away having made a new friend and inspired to get more involved in HAAC.

—By Erika Leonard

Events Around the Region — Cal Central Area

"I was motivated to attend the HAAC meeting for networking. I enjoyed the motivational speakers and had an opportunity to meet some awesome employees. I would recommend HAAC and will attend next time!"
—Lupe Magdaleno, CR



"I enjoyed the meeting, networking with people and the presentations. I didn't know what to expect when I went. I was pleasantly surprised with the content of the whole meeting. I especially enjoyed speaking with both our Area Director, Tuan Nguyen and Bay's Area Director, Rafael Moya. Both from very humble beginnings and look at them now... anything is possible. Great inspirations!"
—Norma A. Galvan, ADO Supervisor



SF-HAAC members in the Cal Central Area had an opportunity to network with Bay and Cal Central Area Directors Rafael Moya and Tuan Nguyen during a membership meeting in Fresno, CA on July 19, 2013. Rafael spoke to over 30 attendees about his history with the agency and the key role played by membership in advisory councils. Tuan also shared his history with the agency and how diversity is one of the key strengths in our agency. Al Ballón (Cal Central DAD) also spoke to the membership of the importance of seeking out a mentor to assist you in your career. The evening concluded with an opportunity for members to speak one-on-one with the executives." —Trish Nicasio, Former Cal Central AVP



LULAC Conference

This year, SF-HAAC was invited to attend The League of United Latin American Citizens to participate in the 84th Annual LULAC National Convention & Exposition in Nevada. As the premier Hispanic convention, the LULAC National Convention draws over 20,000 participants each year, including the top leaders from across all government agencies, business, and the Hispanic community. Jason Welsh, Inland AVP and I, Albert Meraz, Executive Vice-President represented SF-HAAC at the 2013 LULAC convention. Not having attended any prior LULAC conferences, we did not know what to expect. The week was filled with amazing speakers from across all federal government agencies, who spoke on topics pertinent to Hispanic communities across the United States. During the weeklong conference, we had the opportunity to attend some of the following workshops:

- Emotional Intelligence for Leaders
- Conflict Resolution
- Mentoring
- LULAC's LGBT Equality Project: Building LGBT Latino Power
- Diversity in the federal Government
- Introduction into the Senior Executive Service (SES)
- Empowering Nuestra Comunidad Through Civic Engagement
- Latina Trailblazers

These were just a handful of the many workshops offered at the LULAC convention. One of two special keynote speakers was William Zielinski, former Regional Commissioner of the San Francisco Region and current Acting Deputy Commissioner for Systems. In addition, Honor-



Dr. María Meléndez, Honorable Mayor of Ponce, PR; Jason Welsh, Inland AVP, Patricia Raymond, RPAO Center Director, Albert Meraz, SF-HAAC VP

able Joe Biden, Vice President of the United States was another keynote speaker who addressed the attendees at one of the evening banquets. One of the great features of this convention, is that it draws participation from all age

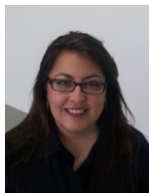
groups in the Latino/Hispanic community. There was a Career Fair, College Fair, Youth Conference and even a Young Adults Conference. Overall, having attended this conference really allowed us to learn about and support issues that affect the Hispanic community. Organizations like LULAC are

doing all they can to advance the economic condition, educational attainment, political influence, housing, health and civil rights of the Hispanic population of the United States. If this is something you are interested in, you might consider attending the 2014 LULAC convention in New York.

Albert Meraz
Executive Vice President
SF-HAAC

In order to succeed, your desire for success should be greater than your fear of failure. —Bill Cosby

SoCal Regional Workshop — “Limitless”



Maricela Dumond
2013 Mentee

The theme for the September 14, 2013 workshop hosted by HAAC held in Irvine, CA was “Limitless.” This was an event worthy of attendance. We heard from great speakers such as Tri-Counties Area Director Glen Banks, Cal Central Deputy Area Director, Al Ballón and other guest speakers who helped make this a successful and informative workshop. The speakers and presenters inspired us to con-



All our dreams can come true—if we have the courage to pursue them.
—Walt Disney



tinue working towards our goals, to become the “superstar” that we all have the potential to be and reminded us that a positive attitude goes a long way. Additionally, we learned about the local educational institutions that offer degrees, certificates and classes. These resources will help motivate us to continue aspiring towards achieving our personal goals and improving our current skills. This was a truly rewarding experience that offered a little bit of everything. Everyone can be a **SUPERSTAR!** ★



Hispanic Youth Institute (HYI) Awardee



Georgina Santiago
2013 HYI Awardee

My experience at the Hispanic Youth Institute was a unique one that continues to be life changing for me. I was nervous as a new LEAD for the program. Although I knew a few LEADS, I still did not know what I was getting myself into or if I would fit in. On the very first day, I felt like it was a huge family reunion and I was a new in-law being welcomed in. There was just so much love in the room; I felt welcomed with open arms. As we started the staff training, we had to share what we were most proud of and embarrassed about in ourselves...it got personal. It was a bit challenging for me to put myself out there to a group of complete strangers. Yet, the welcoming community gave me the courage to do so. That night, as we did the, “Why are we here?” portion of the training, I surprised myself when I stood up and shared my life story with these strangers who were now becoming friends. I felt compelled to share because I realized these people understood my struggles. It was interesting how we all came from different backgrounds, but were still coming together to help and encourage younger students. Once the night was over, I was ready for the students to arrive; it gave me the confidence that I needed to lead my familia the best way I could.

Finally, the program started and I had the privilege to meet my familia, Familia 7. These six young ladies were the reason I made a personal promise to have positive energy, no matter how sleep-deprived I was. Every minute spent with these ladies was amazing; we shared jokes, laughs, fun facts, meals, and even shed a few tears together. After sharing with them my, “Why Are We Here?” story, they began to open up to me and shared why they wanted to continue on with their education. Each of their stories touched me in a different way and gave me six more reasons why I should continue my education. On day two, I met numerous Hispanic Heroes in the community. The feeling of pride for my people grew, as I realized I was surrounded by Latinos from my community who were now successful. The Hispanic Heroes are definitely some new role models to look up to. Finally, day three arrived and, as we all prepared for the ceremony, I was sad that the program was going to be over. During the ceremony, Jason Acosta, the HYI Director, announced that two LEADS were receiving the Mentorship Award; I immediately made a list of possible winners. Then Gabriela Alvarado, one of the College Student Relationship Fellows, was preparing to announce the female winner. I was excited because I believed one of my friends was going to receive this award. When she announced my name, I was caught by surprise; immediately, tears began to run down my face. I feel honored to be given this award.



I am so glad that I was a part of this program because I gained a familia, a support system, and more importantly, another reason to keep pushing forward in my own life. Most importantly, I am glad I participated in this program because through it I realized not to be ashamed of where I come from or what I have been through. What matters is that I keep persevering to become another educated Latina; to promote my belief that one day being Latina and educated will be the norm.

Newly Elected Executive Council Members

Treasurer
AVP-South Coast-Area 1
AVP-Cal Central-Area 2
AVP-Northern-Area 4
AVP-Tri-Counties-Area 5
AVP-LA Metro-Area 7
AVP-South West-Area 8
AVP-FHFB

Javier Rodríguez
Jessica Becker
Mayra Ramirez
Juan García
José Velasco
Arcenio Carrillo
Julissa Pérez
Angelica Castillo

Please join me in congratulating them all and wishing them well in their new assignments.

Sincerely,

Eric Bencomo

SF-HAAC President

¿Qué Hay De Nuevo?

Upcoming LIMITLESS Workshops

- Bay/FHFB in February 2014
- Phoenix in February 2014
- Cal Central in March 2014

Mentor Program

The 2014 Mentor Program was announced on Friday, December 13, 2013. The application deadline is December 27, 2013.

*Congratulations to the
graduating class of 2013!!*

New Members

Area 1 - South Coast

Margaret Meisch

Area 2 - Cal Central

Rossy Magdaleno
Irma E. Kong
Lilia E. Haller
Miguel Garibay
Atorina Yonan
Fernando Avina Motanez
Lydia A. Valdez
Guadalupe Magdaleno
Karina Garay
Martín Hernández
Nigel Albert Marín
Norma Aida Galván
Evangalina García
Mayra Ramírez
Jessica Plascensia

Area 3 - Bay

Mary T. Parker
Michael R. Guerra

Area 5 - Tri-Counties

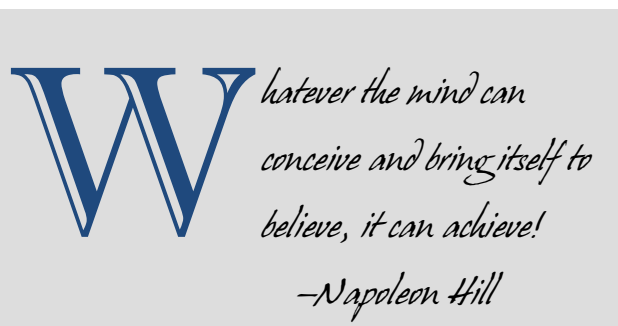
Henry A. Lawinski
Jazmin Flores
Isaac Melendez
Arisela Medina

Area 6 - Inland

Antonio Ramírez

Area 8 - Southwest

David Gonzalez Zachary
Tracy Russo Kunz
Anthony Brackett Almorn
Julissa Pérez
Rena Nicole Amarillas
Olga Móralez
Ashlee Nicole González
Alex Leyva



Member Benefits:

Business Cards

¡Sí Se Puede! eNewsletter

**Educational Scholarships for
Self & Eligible Family
Members**

**Participation in our
Mentorship Program**

**Self-Development and
Training Workshops**

**Networking with other
Professionals in our Agency**