

celebrating  
**25 YEARS**  
of excellence

**2016** marks the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the San Francisco Hispanic Affairs Advisory Council (SF-HAAC). To celebrate this momentous occasion and historic milestone, and to commemorate Hispanic Heritage Month, SF-HAAC is hosting its 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Dinner & Gala. YOU are hereby invited to attend a wonderful evening of dinner, dancing, culture, and fun!

**DATE:** Saturday, October 8, 2016

**LOCATION:**

Scott's Seafood  
Jack London Square  
2 Broadway, Oakland, CA 94607  
[www.scottsjsls.com](http://www.scottsjsls.com)

**COST:** \$50 per person

This event is open to all employees and their family members. Registration information will be sent out via email in August.

We look forward to seeing you at the Gala!

*Gala Committee, Erika Leonard & Angelica Castillo*

**President**  
Albert Meraz

**Executive VP**  
Jason Welsh

**Secretary**  
Sara Nolasco

**Treasurer**  
Javier Rodriguez

**Member-at-Large**  
Eric Bencomo

**AVP - 1 - So Coast**  
Manuel Zaragoza

**AVP - 3 - Bay**  
Vacant

**AVP - 4 - Northern**  
Ricardo Cervantes

**AVP - 5 - TriCounties**  
Heriberto Farfan

**AVP - 6 - Inland**  
Margaret Gomez

**AVP - 7 - L.A. Metro**  
Alfonso Moreno

**AVP - 8 - Southwest**  
Roxanna Nolan

**AVP - 9 - FHFB**  
Angelica Castillo

**Advisor**  
Al Ballon

**Advisor Program Chairs**  
Erika Leonard  
Alfonso Moreno

**Committee Chairs**  
Jose Velasco– Awards  
Rene Rubalcava– Elections

**¡Sí Se Puede! Team**  
Mayra A. Ramirez  
Suzanne Nuñez  
Rey Arquero  
Susana Diaz

**Member At Large**  
Eric Bencomo

**Web Designer**  
Jason Welsh

### HAAC Advisor Program

The most valuable assets of any company are the skills of its employees. The HAAC Advisor Program recognizes this and aims to address the challenge faced in our organization to find effective ways to develop and grow employees. Advisor programs provide opportunities for skill learning and development that can lead to career advancement. It facilitates connections between seasoned professionals and protégés to cultivate necessary skills.

This year, we have selected 15 of the most diverse, enthusiastic and driven HAAC members to participate in the program. They have been paired with accomplished individuals who are volunteering their time, and are committed to help guide them through the various assignments in the program, including the creation of an SSA-45, the development of a career plan in the form of an Individual Development Plan (IDP), as well as provide traditional mentoring by identifying resources, discussing challenges/obstacles and suggesting better ways of handling stressful or unfamiliar situations. This dynamic relationship

allows mentors to help protégés shorten the learning curve by teaching specific skills and preventing missteps by sharing lessons learned.

In addition to the one-on-one mentoring commitment, HAAC has made a tremendous investment in Advisor Program participants by awarding each one of them a year-long Fred Pryor certificate where they can participate in an unlimited number of professional seminars to increase and gain practical business skills. In the few months since the program started, mentees have already attended several live seminars and taken over 100 online trainings. It is exciting and motivating to be surrounded by people eager to learn and improve themselves professionally and personally. As the co-chairs of the program, we could not be more proud of the participants, or more grateful to the mentors. There is something to be said about this demonstration of support for our upcoming leaders. Thank you and Congratulations to the participants of the 2016 Advisor Program for taking your career into your

own hands. You will get out of it what you put in...Remember, the sky is the limit! Hopefully in the near future, you will all be in a position to pay it forward.

Erika Leonard and Alfonso Moreno, SF-HAAC Advisor Program Co-Chairs



**Erika Leonard**



**Alfonso Moreno**



Daniel Adams  
SR, Visalia  
6 years with agency

*Q: What motivated you to take control of your career?*

I felt ready for change, but wasn't quite sure where to start. When the announcement for HAAC's Advisory Program came up, I thought it was the perfect opportunity. I'm excited to have been chosen to participate in the SF-HAAC advisory program.

*Q: What do you expect to get from the Advisor Program?*

To bridge the gap between success and where I stand now in my career.

*Q: What additional things, if any, are you currently working on to further your self-development?*

I am working with my supervisor to implement activities I've listed on my IDP. I'm also working on getting back into college to finish my degree in Business Management. In the meantime, I'm taking advantage of the Fred Pryor & LMS training opportunities.



Sal Aguilar  
CR, Mesa  
9 years with agency

*Q: What motivated you to take control of your career?*

I have excelled at my current position and I'm looking for my next challenge, ready to move out of my comfort zone.

*Q: What do you expect to get from the Advisor Program?*

I feel the HAAC Advisor program will guide me towards the next career level.

*Q: What additional things, if any, are you currently working on to further your self-development?*

I look forward to completing several Fred Pryor seminars along with SSALMS courses throughout the year.

### Microsoft HOME USE PROGRAM



### HUP– Home Use Program

This program enables Federal employees, State DDS employees, and agency contractors to purchase a licensed copy of Microsoft Office to install and use on their home computer for only \$9.95.

<http://qifwhup.ssahost.ba.ssa.gov>





Costa Nikoloutsopoulos  
Disability Specialist, WNPSC  
6 1/2 years with agency

*Q: What motivated you to take control of your career?*

Throughout my career, I have enjoyed working with others to solve problems with efficient, high-quality work. I hope to continue this through increasing levels of responsibility.

*Q: What do you expect to get from the Advisor Program?*

Through the guidance of a seasoned leader (my mentor), I expect to further-develop my own leadership competencies. This includes things such as conflict management, and developing workload management skills to handle different groups of employees.

*Q: What additional things, if any, are you currently working on to further your self-development?*

In addition to the HAAC Advisor Program, I have sought to

gain leadership skills by volunteering in extra projects within my home component, the Disability Processing Branch (DPB) in PC5. Recently, I led a training designed to teach my colleagues on how to use a specialized computer program to speed up the processing of disability cases. Also, I worked in a group setting to create a PowerPoint presentation related to training new-hire Benefit Authorizers (BAs) on Disability Cessation, and I am currently working on developing a portion of the training material for a new class of Disability Specialist hires. Additionally, I worked with my supervisor to have a seasoned BA come to my desk for an hour, where I provided training on using eWork, thereby enhancing his abilities. Last month, I co-hosted a Meet an Executive and trivia-night event.



Monique Hernandez  
CR Phoenix  
9 years with agency

*Q: What motivated you to take control of your career?*

Knowing that no one else will and realizing that I am capable of so much more.

*Q: What do you expect to get from the Advisor Program?*

I have no expectations, just excited and humbled to have great people investing in me.

*Q: What additional things, if any, are you currently working*

*on to further your self-development?*

Furthering my education by taking classes online, Reading more, and focusing on a good work life balance.



Claudia Lamp  
Generalist TE, Morongo Basin  
10 1/2 years with agency

*Q: What motivated you to take control of your career?*

After attending the 2015 SF-HAAC Regional Leadership Training event in Garden Grove, I was re-motivated to take control of my career. Talking with and listening to fellow employees' stories made me realize I am not alone. It was a great event to help me realize I have control of where my career takes me.

*Q: What do you expect to get from the Advisor Program?*

When I started the advisor program I had no set expectations, but I have since realized that I can make the most of the experiences I gain from

fully participating. My mentor is a wonderful asset in helping me take control of my career.

*Q: What additional things, if any, you are currently working on to further your self-development?*

I have started developing my own personal and business skills by utilizing the programs that have been made available to me, such as the Fred Pryor online classes.



Dolores Lliguin  
OS, Hemet  
12 years with the agency

*Q: What motivated you to take control of your career?*

After attending the 2015 SF HAAC RLT and hearing the great speakers like, Bill Zielinski, Rafael Moya, and Hy Hinojosa I felt inspired to do more and take charge of my career. All the speakers had one thing in common, perseverance and resiliency.

*Q: What do you expect to get from the Advisor Program?*

I expect to fine tune some of my current leadership skillsets and enhance, or create new leadership as they relate to the leadership core competencies.

*Q: What additional things, if any, are you currently working on to further your self-development?*

I am currently attending the Fred Pryor training, and have participated in webinars on topics including management, communication, and conflict management. Additionally, I have volunteered to take on additional work in my office, while maintaining my existing responsibilities.



Ashley Lozano  
Case Intake Specialist, ODAR  
4 years with agency

*Q: What motivated you to take control of your career?*

My purpose is to help those who are in need and motivated by the unlimited possibilities in doing so; and I thought what better time to start moving forward and fulfilling my life purpose than RIGHT now!

*Q: What do you expect to get from the Advisor Program?*

I feel truly honored to have been selected for this opportunity and through this program I expect to not only enhance technically and professionally but I believe my overall personal growth will be profoundly impacted for the bet-

ter, as well.

*Q: What additional things, if any, are you currently working on to further your self-development?*

I am currently on my spiritual journey and have recently attained my certificate as a Level I & II Reiki Energy Healing Practitioner. These spiritual practices have furthered my self-development immensely as I am discovering different ways that I can be of service to others, holistic healing being one of them. I am learning the true value of staying present and how being grateful through every experience truly enriches the quality of life.



Wanda McGhee  
SR, Feather River  
7 years with the agency

*Q: What motivated you to take control of your career?*

Taking control of my career is something I see as solely my responsibility. My motivation comes from my drive to improve myself and make meaningful contributions to the agency.

*Q: What do you expect to get from the Advisor Program?*

My expectations are to build professional relationships, strengthen my skills in networking, develop skills in leadership, and receive constructive feedback.

*Q: What additional things, if any, are you currently working on to further your self-*

*development?*

In addition to taking SSALMS and Fred Pryor courses to strengthen my leadership, administrative, and communication skills, I am working on my Master's in Public Administration degree through Arkansas State University.





Aisleen Moya  
SR, Salinas  
2 years with agency

*Q: What motivated you to take control of your career?*

My passion for helping others motivated me in taking control of my career. Assisting others has been my number one priority in career choice. I want to make a difference in others' lives. I believe we can all learn from one another no matter how far we are in life, personally and professionally. This is why I make it my priority to always keep an open mind and ask questions. My passion to succeed with a caring heart for members of the public who may have possibly lost a family member, or are learning how to adjust their daily life schedules with their new disability, or even have a language barrier and are afraid to ask for help. I need to keep learning and take training courses but most importantly taking control of my career.

*Q: What do you expect to get from the Advisor Program?*

I am very thankful for having the opportunity to be in the HAAC program. I believe that HAAC is a great opportunity to broaden my horizons and gain career advice that will help me get to my ultimate career goal. I am planning to take full advantage of the program to improve my writing, oral communication, and performance skills with the guidance of my amazing mentor and the program.

*Q: What additional things, if any, are you currently working on to further your self-development?*

I am taking courses through the SSALMS. I am using the guidance of San Francisco webpage Training and Development, The Commissioner's Writing Center and Fred Pryor workshops. I also volunteer work at church with Women's shelters, homeless shelters, and schools.



Suzana E. Perez  
Senior Case Technician, ODAR  
7 years with agency

*Q: What motivated you to take control of your career?*

My motivation is deeply rooted in my passion for public service. The more knowledge I gain and opportunities I encounter, the better of a resource I can be for my community and those we serve.

*Q: What do you expect to get from the Advisor Program?*

What I enjoy about the Advisor Program is that it really encourages its participants to immerse themselves in various self-development opportunities. My goal is to learn as

much as I can from my mentor and the activities, so that one day, I too, can pay it forward!

*Q: What additional things, if any, are you currently working on to further your self-development?*

At the end of this summer, I will be more than half way through the completion of my Masters in Public Administration with a focus in Health Administration at Cal State Northridge. I also have planned to complete SSALMS courses that focus on vital business skills.



Eric Phillips  
ATS, Northern ADO (detail)  
9 years with agency

*Q: What motivated you to take control of your career?*

I became motivated to take control of my career when I served on an 18-month detail with Operations Training and discovered positions in the agency that I had no idea existed. I then participated in the SF Flash mentoring program and heard the executives share their success stories. I thought to myself, "I can do that".

*Q: What do you expect to get from the Advisor Program?*

The SF-HAAC Advisor Program has so far exceeded all my expectations. I have a mentor that truly cares about my development and constantly challenges me to be

the best I can be and always seems available to provide advice and guidance. I came into the HAAC Advisor Program expecting to start my journey towards achieving my career goals and I feel confident that, thanks to my mentor, I am on the right path.

*Q: What additional things, if any, are you currently working on to further your self-development?*

In addition to developing an IDP and updating my SSA-45, I am taking various courses, such as Word, Excel, and Emotional Intelligence. I have also been reading "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" and trying to apply the principles to my life – both at work and at home.



Nicholas Ponce  
SR, Compton  
6 years with agency

*Q: What motivated you to take control of your career?*

Motivation came from friends in this Agency that have taken control of their careers. Motivation comes from this ever-progressing, cutting edge occupation and the privilege of being part of it. Most importantly, motivation to take control comes from the desire to provide a better life for my family.

*Q: What do you expect to get from the Advisor Program?*

I expect to learn how to take control of my career, and to be

a part of a network (HAAC) of highly skilled employees.

*Q: What additional things, if any, are you currently working on to further your self-development?*

I plan on attending the Microsoft Basics and Advanced training seminar offered by Fred Pryor because I would like to gain computer automation skills.





Rosa M. Rodriguez  
HR Specialist, ETDT  
5 years with agency

*Q: What motivated you to take control of your career?*

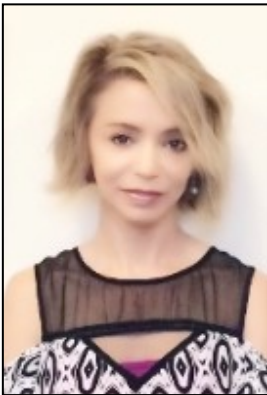
Although I enjoyed my job as a Benefit Authorizer, I needed a new challenge. I started attending development workshops hosted by advisory boards and used that as a jump start to change.

*Q: What do you expect to get from the Advisor Program?*

I hope to get from the Advisory Programs, the tools and insight to do a true self-analysis of my weaknesses and improve upon them with my mentor.

*Q: What additional things, if any, are you currently working on to further your self-development?*

With my current position with the Employee Training and Development Team I am attending and facilitating soft-skills training. They work as a constant reminder of how I can improve; both in my personal and professional relationships



Regina Villasenor  
SR, Chico  
7 years with agency

*Q: What motivated you to take control of your career?*

HAAC has given me the motivation to take control of my career. There are many opportunities for personal growth and advancement, all that is needed is hard work, sacrifice, and the willingness to make changes.

*Q: What do you expect to get from the Advisor Program?*

While participating the Advisory Program, I hope to step out of my comfort zone and take control of my career. I know that it will take a lot of work to achieve my short and long term goals. I plan on being open to being challenged

because I am willing to work hard to achieve my goals.

*Q: What additional things, if any, are you currently working on to further your self-development?*

Self-development is vital to my success and attending or taking online development courses is a tool that I am currently using. I hope to attend HAAC and other advisory council events, including the National Advisory Council Meeting in Baltimore this coming August. I am so grateful for the opportunity to participate in the Advisory Program and for the support of the HAAC council. Si Se Puede!



Phillip Estenson  
Assistant Module Manager,  
PC5  
8 years with agency

*Q: What motivated you to take control of your career?*

I was motivated to apply for the HAAC Advisor Program to receive mentoring from proven agency employees that have the desire to positively impact mentees.

*Q: What do you expect to get from the Advisor Program?*

I was ready to take the next step in the advancement of my career with the Agency but realized the need for a mentor that could assist me with achieving my career goals. With my participation in the Advisor Program, I am looking to obtain another perspective, as well as assistance and

guidance, for career advancement.

*Q: What additional things, if any, are you currently working on to further your self-development?*

Upon my completion of the Advisor Program, I envision both personal and professional growth to better position myself for future advancement opportunities.

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## Queso Fundido Pizzas

### Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 cup chopped onion (1 medium)
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- Dash salt
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 15 ounce can black beans, undrained
- 2 tablespoons water
- 4 12 inch flour tortillas
- 2 ounces uncooked chorizo sausage
- 8 ounces Chihuahua or Monterey Jack cheese, shredded (2 cups)
- 2 tablespoons tequila
- 1/2 cup salsa
- 1/2 cup snipped fresh cilantro
- 2 avocados, halved, seeded, peeled, and sliced or coarsely chopped
- 1 fresh jalapeno pepper, stemmed, seeded, and thinly sliced\* (optional)

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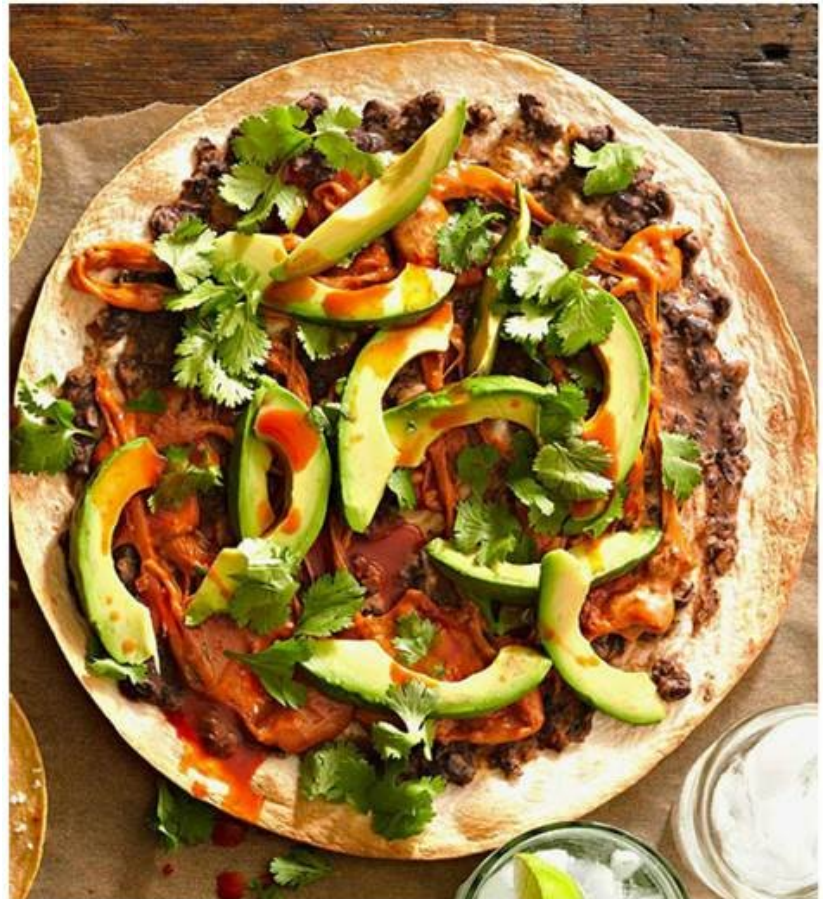
## Queso Fundido Pizzas (cont.)

### Directions

1. Place a pizza stone or a large flat baking sheet on the bottom rack of the oven. Preheat oven to 450° Fahrenheit.
2. In a small saucepan heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onion, garlic, and salt; cook about 3 minutes or until onion and garlic are tender. Stir in chili powder and cumin; cook for 1 minute more. Remove from heat; stir in beans and 2 tablespoons of the water. Transfer mixture to a food processor or blender. Cover and pulse with several on/off turns until bean mixture is spreadable but still chunky, adding more water if necessary to make a spreadable mixture.
3. For queso fundido, in a medium skillet cook chorizo over medium-high heat about 5 minutes or until fully cooked, using a wooden spoon to break up chorizo. Drain off fat. Add cheese, salsa, and tequila; stir until cheese is melted. Cover to keep warm.
4. Working with one tortilla at a time, evenly spread a thin layer of the bean mixture on tortilla. Transfer topped tortilla to the pizza stone or baking sheet. Bake for 4 to 5 minutes or until edges are crisp.
5. Transfer pizza to a cutting board; let cool for 1 minute. Spoon on with queso fundido and top with cilantro and avocado. If desired, sprinkle with a few jalapeno slices. Serve at once. Repeat with remaining ingredients to make four pizzas total. Cut each pizza into wedges before serving.

### From the Test Kitchen

*\*Because chile peppers contain volatile oils that can burn your skin and eyes, avoid direct contact with them as much as possible. When working with chile peppers, wear plastic or rubber gloves. If your bare hands do touch the peppers, wash your hands and nails well with soap and warm water.*





### **New Members**

#### **December 2015**

Farah Downing– Area 3

Graciela Cortez– Area 6

Stephen M. Bingcang– Area 7

#### **January 2016**

Jeremy K. Goyette– Area 3

#### **February 2016**

Diane C. Bayer-Torres– Area 4

Isabelle C. Gallardo– Area 4

#### **March 2016**

Vanessa A. Esquibel– Area 3

Rossy I. Magdaleno– Area 4

Christian S. Warrell– FHFB

Jordan L. Casillas– FHFB

#### **May 2016**

Lizeth Felix Sanchez– Area 5

Tayra Delgado– Area 5

Bernardino L. Jaime– Area 7

Griselda Sanchez– Area 7

Irene Guillen– Area 7

Jonathan Serrano– Area 7

Jun Y. Song– Area 7

Raul Jimenez– Area 7

Ana Ramos– Area 8

Desiree P Martinez– Area 8

Debbie Harris– Area 8

Fatimah M Williams– Area 8

Frederic C Straight– Area 8

Griselda Sanchez– Area 8

Michelle Hernandez– Area 8

Robert Orduno– Area 8

Shona A Barnes– Area 8



The agency offers the ability to learn different languages through Rosetta Stone. There are 31 languages to consider. Information about it is below and is from this link:

<http://personnel.ba.ssa.gov/ope/ces/wlrc/rosetta.htm>

The agency does not have unlimited capacity to sign up for Rosetta Stone. You may go on a waiting list if they are at capacity.

Note: If you sign up for this, select the Deputy Commissioner, Operations (DCO) as your component.