



ACTION PLAN TO INCREASE HISPANIC REPRESENTATION AT THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE (April 2014)

I. HECFAA's MISSION AND VISION

The Hispanic Employees Council of Foreign Affairs Agencies (HECFAA) was founded in 1982 to represent Hispanic employees at the Department of State. HECFAA's mission is to enhance awareness of the contributions of Hispanic employees to U.S. foreign affairs agencies; assist in the recruitment, retention, and promotion of Hispanics; and develop the leadership abilities of Hispanics at U.S. foreign affairs agencies.

HECFAA is based on the fundamental belief that having a more diverse and representative Civil and Foreign Service contributes to and strengthens the ability of the United States to advance key foreign policy goals; these goals include protecting our national security interests, respecting human and civil rights, and expanding political, social and economic inclusion overseas. By cultivating a diverse Civil and Foreign Service, the Department of State demonstrates to its audiences, foreign and domestic, in word and deed, the promise of a representative democracy with equal opportunity.

HECFAA's vision is to ensure a diverse workforce at the Department of State and to ensure Hispanic employees have the tools and resources necessary to make meaningful contributions to the Department and broader foreign affairs agencies.

II. ISSUE OF CONCERN

Hispanic representation in the Civil and Foreign Service at the Department of State has stagnated at 5% since the 1980s when the U.S. Hispanic population was approximately 6.4%¹. Since then, the workforce percentage has remained the same although the U.S. Hispanic population is now 16.7%. While parity may be years away, action must be taken now to reduce this disparity. The Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) most recent [Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program \(FY2011\)](#) report ranked the Department of State near the bottom of all cabinet-level agencies on the issue of Hispanic workforce representation. Furthermore, Hispanic representation at the Under Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Ambassadorial, Deputy Assistant Secretary, and Deputy Chief of Mission levels are equally unsatisfactory, and of the 169 members of the Senior Executive Service, only 5 are Hispanic (2.9%). (See Table 1 and 2)

A diverse, talented American workforce that reflects the racial and ethnic composition of the United States is imperative. In fact, according to the Foreign Service Act of 1980 "the

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, Hispanic Population in 1990:
<http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0056/tab01.pdf>



members of the Foreign Service should be representative of the American people.”² Promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion in the federal workplace enables the United States government to audaciously advance key foreign policy goals, such as respect for human and civil rights; equitable economic growth and opportunity; and strategic national security agendas. It must, therefore, be a priority to find innovative ways to improve Hispanic recruitment, retention, and promotion at the Department of State, both in the Civil and Foreign Service.

III. CONTEXT

HECFAA, along with 60 of its members, hosted a luncheon on April 29, 2013 in which Secretary of State John F. Kerry said that it is “absolutely unacceptable” that Hispanic representation at the Department of State is well below many of the other U.S. government agencies. He further noted that the number of Hispanics serving in government, as a whole, needs to change.

“We need to redouble our efforts when we go out there to do mentoring and we need to do proactive recruitment and think about how we are going to set a target and go out there and figure out how we enlist every single one of you and more so that we have a proactive effort to go out to colleges and universities and places of learning across the country where we can find folks who want to be Civil Servants, FSOs, ...whatever it is that people want to come in and join up as. We’ve got to be able to find a place.”

“The bottom line is as proud as we are and as progressive as we are with the advances that we have, we still need to go further and everybody knows it, so I think for the next three to three-and-a-half years, I really want to make sure that next year when we are gathered, that we have a plan in place, that we’re executing the plan, and that we’ve made some movements that everybody can point to and say that we’re on track to get the job done. We’re going to grow this and we’re going to do it together.”

As a result of this conversation and the Secretary’s call for a plan to increase Hispanic representation at the Department of State, HECFAA submits the following action plan for the Secretary’s consideration.

IV. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

² Public Law 96-465, Title 1, Section 101
<http://uscode.house.gov/statutes/1980/1980-096-0465.pdf>



To address the issue of concern noted in Section II, the following goals, objectives, and concrete actions should be executed by the Department of State and HECFAA community:

GOAL 1: INCREASE HISPANIC RECRUITMENT & HIRING IN THE DEPARTMENT– Building a Workforce Reflective of all Segments of Society, With Particular Emphasis on the Hispanic Community

Objective 1: Increase the percentage of Hispanic Employees in the Department of State’s Civil and Foreign Service. (Table 1)

<http://intranet.hr.state.sbu/offices/rma/Documents/Diversity2.pdf>

Proposed Actions:

- The Department of State should allocate funding to hire and compensate low income student interns through a competitive award program. HECFAA members have engaged with highly qualified students at recruiting events who work and attend school simultaneously and would be more likely to participate in the Department’s internship programs if the Department could offer a competitive award program. (Table 3)
POC: DGHR (REE & CSHRM) and HECFAA
- HECFAA will utilize recruitment events for the creation of a Hispanic job-seeker distribution list, thus establishing a register, with a shelf-life of three years, of students, recent graduates, and qualified applicants interested in full-time careers with the Department of State. (Table 4)
POC: HECFAA
- Bureau Executive Offices should establish human capital and workforce succession plans and strategies that aim to increase Hispanic representation in the workforce.
POC: DGHR and Bureau Executive Directors (M, BEDs meetings)
- Increase Hispanic representation on the selection committees for the Pickering and Rangel Fellows, along with the Board of Examiners and Diplomats in Residence. (Table 5)
POC: DGHR (REE, CDA & CSHRM) and HECFAA (Outreach)
- The Bureau of Human Resources should share Foreign Service Exam and Presidential Management Fellow training materials (both written and oral assessment) at HECFAA sponsored events. HECFAA will also develop a best practices training program to better equip candidates for successful results.
POC: DGHR (HR/REE & CSHRM) and HECFAA

Objective 2: Improve national awareness of the Department of State to Hispanic communities while communicating our mission within the Department.



Proposed Actions:

- HECFAA will actively engage and liaise with the Recruitment Outreach Office to facilitate the Department of State’s presence at recruitment events targeted toward diverse communities, including the Hispanic community throughout the United States and utilizing, in particular, the Diplomats in Residence program. *(Table 6)*

POC: HR/REE & HECFAA

- HECFAA will collaborate with social and professional networks to promote awareness within the State Department about the Hispanic community (such as Hispanic Heritage Month and networking events with other affinity groups and professional organizations).

POC: S/OCR & HECFAA

- HECFAA will actively engage with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs to ensure that the Hispanic community is aware of and engaged in our international academic exchange programs. Additionally, HECFAA will work with the Bureau of Human Resources to ensure career information is shared with U.S. citizen program participants.

POC: ECA, DGHR(REE) & HECFAA

- The Bureau of Human Resources, Office of Diversity Management Outreach, and Bureau of Public Affairs, in coordination with HECFAA should develop a multi-media, national communication, and outreach marketing campaign targeting the Hispanic community to disseminate information about hiring events, job vacancies, webinars, press releases and other employment-related communications. *(Table 6)*

POC: PA (Hometown Diplomats Program), DGHR (HR/REE) and S/OCR/DMO

- HECFAA will deploy Hispanic Civil and Foreign Service Officers as “Envoys” to Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) and diversely populated cities through the Diplomats in Residence, Diversity Career Networking Events, Hometown Diplomats, and Volunteer Recruiter programs with funding from the Bureau of Human Resources. *(Table 6)*

POC: DGHR (HR/REE) and S/OCR

Objective 3: Strengthen relations with Hispanic community issues stakeholders, to include Hispanic affinity groups, Latino policy advocacy groups, Hispanic professional organizations, and Hispanic Serving Institutions, to have the greatest impact by multiplying our efforts with other affinity groups and organizations outside of the Department.

Proposed Actions:



- HECFAA will develop a list of recruitment and public engagement opportunities available through Hispanic Serving Institutions.
POC: HECFAA
- HECFAA will coordinate with relevant State Department offices to provide HECFAA members the opportunity to participate in said opportunities.
POC: S/OCR, HR/REE, HR/CSHRM & HECFAA
- HECFAA will be inclusive of and coordinate with other foreign affairs agencies' Hispanic affinity groups.
POC: S/OCR, HR/REE, HR/CSHRM & HECFAA.
- HECFAA will work with HR to ensure that the Department of State is represented appropriately on boards looking at the recruitment, retention, and representation of Hispanics across the broader federal government.
POC: S/OCR, HR/REE, HR/CSHRM, and OPM

GOAL 2: RETAIN TALENTED HISPANIC EMPLOYEES IN THE DEPARTMENT'S WORKFORCE– Cultivating a Work Environment that is Inclusive of Hispanics and Provides Leadership and Career Development Opportunities

Objective 1: Leverage the talents of the Hispanic workforce and empower diverse perspectives through the Department of State career leadership development.

Proposed Actions:

- Collaborate with membership to advertise and advise on participation in inter-office/inter-agency details, rotation assignments, and training opportunities.
POC: HECFAA
- Continue to compile and distribute success stories and “Profiles in Leadership Excellence” to recognize the work of our distinguished members of State Department positions. Dialogue will focus on public service, career management, and leadership, as well as mentoring opportunities.
POC: HECFAA
- Develop and encourage participation in a HECFAA mentoring program to foster strong relationships, share available resources, and teach new skills to enhance the careers of Hispanic employees. HECFAA will promote participation in the Department's formal mentoring program as well. (*Table 7*)
POC: CSHRM & HECFAA
- Conduct outreach to Hispanic leaders within the Department– through individual mentorship or networking events– to collaborate, network, and share their



experiences in leading, managing and delivering high-impact results throughout the Department of State.

POC: HECFAA Leadership

- Facilitate EEO Program Managers, within bureaus, to meet with HECFAA regularly, to develop relationships and address Hispanic employment initiatives and programs, while collaborating recruitment efforts and events.

POC: M (BEDs), DGHR (HR/REE,) and S/OCR

- Emphasize and enforce EEO/diversity requirements in the critical performance elements of hiring officials.

POC: DGHR (HR/CSHRM and HR/CDA), S/OCR, and OPM

Objective 2: Cultivate a collaborative and inclusive organizational culture which promotes the retention of Hispanics while institutionalizing shared accountability for an organizational culture of diversity and inclusion.

Proposed Actions:

- HECFAA will advocate for a program that allows GG schedule employees (*pay scale for FSI and USUN mission employees*) to accomplish rotational assignments throughout the Department of State, both domestically and overseas. This would broaden career opportunities for GG schedule employees, and benefit Foreign Service and Civil Service officers, by allowing them the opportunities to teach at FSI.

POC: M, DGHR (HR/CSHRM), FSI, and OPM

- HECFAA will issue an annual performance report of progress in Hispanic employment, outreach, and retention such as the Annual report issued by OPM and publish the key statistics in State Magazine.

Metrics: Data included in OPM's [Annual Report to the President on Hispanic Employment in the Federal Government](#)

POC: DGHR (HR/REE, HR/CDA, and HR/CSHRM)

- HECFAA will convene an annual meeting between all of the Department's diversity reporters to review workforce composition statistics by each employment category.

POC: S/OCR, DGHR (REE, CSHRM, RMA, CDA)

- HECFAA will monitor and report on SES/SFS statistics such as the number competed and promoted, specifically categorized by race, nationality, and origin.

FSO metrics found in:

http://intranet.hr.state.sbu/offices/rma/Documents/CurPromotionStatistics%20Grade_Cone_ERG.pdf

POC: DGHR (HR/CDA, HR/RMA and HR/CSHRM) and OPM



- HECFAA will encourage DGHR to publish and share their Bureau Evaluation Plan for transparency into current human capital efforts as it relates to recruitment, hiring, retention, development and promotion programs such as the Pickering and Rangel Fellowships, Diplomat-in-Residence program and the examination process for the Foreign Service.

GOAL 3: PROMOTE MORE INTO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS - Developing Hispanic Stakeholder Relations through Effective Leadership and Accountability Increase

Objective 1: Equip the Department of State leaders with the knowledge and skills to effectively lead a diverse workforce while also increasing opportunities for Hispanics to serve in senior leadership roles.

Proposed Actions:

- Increase Hispanic leadership roles throughout the bureaus, both by function and region by sharing and highlighting leadership opportunities with the affinity groups. In particular focus to the positions where Hispanics are missing in positions shown in Table 1.

POC: S, M, COM, SES, and DGHR

- Increase representation of Hispanics in leadership positions to participate in the decision-making process for establishing mechanisms to recruit, retain and evaluate candidates for both Civil and Foreign Service.

POC: DGHR (HR/REE, HR/CSHRM, HR/CDA), and M

- Maintain and expand training and mentoring opportunities for new Hispanic leaders to effectively lead, manage and deliver high-impact results on behalf of the State Department (specifically long-term training opportunities and fellowships such as the Princeton Masters in Public Policy, the Pearson Program, Rusk Fellowships and others).

POC: M, DGHR (HR/CSHRM, HR/ER, HR/CDA) and FSI

- Collect and review resumes of Hispanics in the Department on a voluntary basis in order to advocate for qualified candidates for senior-level State Department positions. HECFAA's senior-level members, can also provide guidance to ensure those eligible for promotions illustrate their best examples of performance and their potential for performing work at the next higher grade, which is used by promotion boards to decide promotions.

POC: HECFAA's Professional Development and Mentoring Committees

- Create and promote training programs to develop the next generation of senior leaders to ensure a qualified applicant pool of Hispanic candidates for future leadership positions (e.g., LULAC's SES Training, National Hispana Leadership Institute).



POC: HECFAA



V. MONITOR PROGRESS

HECFAA shall regularly monitor this action plan’s progress, evaluate the recruitment, retention, and promotion of Hispanics, while developing Hispanic employee leadership capabilities within the Department of State. Through surveys, feedback, guidance, and metrics outlined above, the HECFAA Strategic Planning Group will evaluate the results of its efforts on an annual basis, and report on its progress in executing the activities outlined in this document to all HECFAA members. This evaluation will be reported to the HECFAA Board on a biannual basis.

VI. ANNUAL MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY

HECFAA plans to meet annually with the Secretary of State to evaluate progress utilizing the metrics set forth in Section V. This annual meeting will address progress made towards achieving HECFAA’s goal of increasing the recruitment, retention, and promotion of Hispanics, and the development of leadership capabilities of Hispanics within the Department of State, thereby making the department a model employer. As emphasized by the President, “The federal government is the nation’s largest employer...it has a special responsibility to act as a model employer.”

TABLE 1: Hispanic Representation in Leadership Positions

Hispanic Representation	Benchmark year: 2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Deputy Secretary	0							
Under Secretary	0							
Assistant Secretary	1							
Ambassadorial	7							
Deputy Assistant Secretary	4							
Deputy Chief of Mission	?							
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary (PDAS)	1							
Senior Executive Service								



Table 2: Percentage of Hispanics in the State Department Workforce Tracks

Population	Benchmark FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18
Hispanics in the U.S. population	17% = est. 53,741,903 people					
Percentage of Hispanic Civil Service	5.49% = 602 out of 10,980					
Percentage of Hispanic Foreign Service Generalist	4.93% = 390 out of 7,915					
Percentage of Hispanic Foreign Service Specialist	7.91% = 455 out of 5,752					
*Source: 2012 Current Population Survey – Bureau of Labor Statistics						

Table 3: Number of Hispanics in Internship Programs at the State Department

Participants	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
CHCI Interns	0			
HACU Interns	2			
HECFAA Interns	1			
DG Priority Interns	0			

TABLE 4: Database of Hispanic Job-Seekers (excluding State Department Employees)

Projections:	Benchmark FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
Size of Database	150				

TABLE 5: Hispanic Representation in Selection of Panels for Employment at the State Department

Hispanics in Selection Panels	Benchmark Year 2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Board of Examiners	N/A							
Pickering Panelists	4 out of 24							
Rangel Panelists	1 out of 9							
Diplomats in Residence	1 out of 13							



TABLE 6: Number of Hispanic Community Outreach Events

Events Targeting Hispanic Audience	Benchmark year: 2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Webinars & Media Campaigns	0							
Hometown Diplomats	4							
Student Outreach Events	4							
Hispanic Serving Institution Conferences	9							
HECFAA Events	1							

TABLE 7: HECFAA's Mentoring Program

<i>Participation within HECFAA</i>	Benchmark year: 2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<i># of Mentees</i>							
<i># of Mentors</i>							

TABLE 8: HECFAA's Membership

<i>Participation within HECFAA</i>	Benchmark year: 2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<i># of Paid Members</i>		81						
<i># Interested Members (unpaid)</i>								