



# NEW HORIZONS



## THE NATIONAL NEWSLETTER OF HISPA

Issue 1

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2005



### Message from the President

By César Bocanegra  
National President

Welcome to the first New Horizons issue of 2005.

The Board is excited about the new year and is looking forward to addressing the challenges that are coming as SBC and AT&T have formally begun the merger approval process. We are spending significant time strategically reviewing these HISPA-impacting events and preparing our organization's "response" to the fast-arriving changes. Board leadership has proactively met with leadership at HACEMOS (SBC's Employee Initiated Organization for its Hispanic/Latino community of employees) to discuss at a very high level the missions and objectives of our organizations. We are also building upon our strategic partnerships with the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), the National Society of Hispanic MBAs (NSHMBA), the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) and our Alumni groups.

Our intent is to determine direction and efficacy so that our organization can continue to survive and strive.

As we identify avenues for growth and change, we will share our findings and recommendations to the HISPA membership. As a "living" and interactive organization, we will seek ideas, input and approval for the direction we take as an organization. As members, we are all part of the decision-making process that will determine HISPA's future.

An integral part of our 2005 Strategic Business Plan is to emphasize and improve communication. In 2004, we established quarterly "All Member" conference calls. We will continue this year to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to have their voice heard.

Please know that HISPA is committed to serving the needs of our membership. Along with your local leadership teams, the National Board is committed to creating a better, brighter future for HISPA:

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### And our appointed Chairs:

Sarah Romero  
Awards/Recognition Officer

Luis Mercado  
Parliamentarian

Catie Olivares  
By-Laws Chairperson

Lloyd Lopez  
**HR Chairperson**

Stacie McGee  
Recording Secretary

Frank Diaz  
Conference Chairperson

Dusty Stephens  
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Newsletter Editor

### HISPA Champions

**Nancy Pryor**

**Vince Alonge**



### HISPA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MARCH 4<sup>TH</sup> – 6<sup>TH</sup>

BRG Strategic Meeting, Atlanta, GA

MARCH 30-APRIL 3

HISPA Presidents' Leadership Training Seminar (HPLTS),  
Red Bank, NJ

MAY 2005

American Cancer Society Relay for Life (Multiple locations  
nationwide)

**ADDITIONAL HISPA NEWS AT:**

<http://www.hispa.org>

### ★ VOICE ★

The "Voice" corner is a space where members can share their experiences and ideas in support of Diversity. Please submit your message of 100 words or less to Teri Grado, Communications Director, at [tgrado@att.com](mailto:tgrado@att.com).

**HISPA FACTOID:** HISPA members contributed over 7,800 hours of community service in 2004!

# BRG Conference, Atlanta, GA

Reported by César Bocanegra

The Business Resource Group (BRG) Council comprised of HISPA, The Alliance of Black Telecommunications Workers, the Women of AT&T (WATT), the Intertribal Council of AT&T Employees (ICAE), Individuals with Disabilities Enabling Advocacy Link (IDEAL), LEAGUE and the Asian/Pacific American Association for Advancement (4A), met March 5 in Atlanta, Georgia to discuss BRG Goals for 2005. Also included on the agenda were the AT&T Annual Shareholders Meeting to take place in San Diego in May, a possible Joint Professional Conference in 2006, Annual Shareholders Meeting, the SBC/AT&T Merger, and AT&T Constituency Relations.

## BRG GOALS

The Council agreed on implementing a set of BRG Goals for 2005 which include Strengthening the BRGs and: 1) Increase Awareness and Understanding/ Grow Membership, 2) Provide Professional/Personal Development/ Defining the 2006 Joint Conference, 3) Strengthening Relationships with BRG Champions and AT&T Diversity managers and 4) Measure & Celebrate BRG Successes.

In addition, the Council agreed to demonstrate the intrinsic value of BRGs by : 1) Partnering with AT&T in Marketing and Branding Opportunities, and 2) Reaching out to the Community.

## SHAREHOLDERS MEETING

The BRG Council expressed an interest in having visibility at the AT&T Shareholders Meeting to take place in San Diego, CA, this May and is exploring having a presence.

## SBC/AT&T MERGER

Regarding the SBC/AT&T Merger, "Rules of Engagement" were discussed. The Council is also exploring SBC's Diversity Vision.

## JOINT PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE IN 2006

The BRG Council will explore all possibilities of a joint conference in 2006.

## AT&T CONSTITUENCY RELATIONS

The standard has been African American, Asian, and Hispanic organizations. The events the company will support include National Council of La Raza (July 15-19 in Philly), LULAC (Little Rock, June 27-July 2), National Urban League and NACCP. Constituent Relations would like the support of HISPA and Alliance chapters at these events.

The Council will work with AT&T to expand constituency relations promotions and funding to other BRG-specific organizations.

## *New Horizons*

New Horizons, the national newsletter of HISPA, is published quarterly. Please send all articles and inquiries to Teresa Grado, Communications Director at [tgrado@att.com](mailto:tgrado@att.com).

Steven Estrada, Editor

[sestrada@att.com](mailto:sestrada@att.com)

Visit us on the web at <http://www.hispa.org>!

## Job Shadow Day:

### The real story told through the eyes of the students

*By Luis F. Mercado, Jr., New Jersey member and National Parliamentarian*

**"It was their eyes that told the real story of February 2, 2005!"**

On February 2, 2005, fourteen 8<sup>th</sup> grade students from the A.C. Redshawn School in New Brunswick, New Jersey were treated to a very special day in Bedminster as guests of HISPA's New Jersey Chapter. What better reason than **National Ground Hog Job Shadow Day** for Luis Mercado, Mildred Medina, José Almirall, and Isabel Cabrera to plan an event showcasing the diverse culture (including employees) of AT&T – on the heels of the SBC announcement. Everything seemed to fall into place with the arrival of the students who at first appeared to be nervous which didn't last very long with the calming presence of José González – their soft spoken energetic math teacher. Mildred's contagious smile also went a long way in easing any apprehensions while waiting for Luis' formal welcome and agenda review. Our first presenter was Marco Avila who spoke of coming to the United States at age 17 from Ecuador, learning English, later attending Engineering School, and achieving a degree in Civil Engineering – plus other professional certifications. The student's eyes were certainly opened wide when Marco shared some pictures taken while performing bridge inspections in New York City – a job prior to joining AT&T. One in particular showed him tethered nearing the top of the famous Verrazzano Narrows Bridge (joining Manhattan with Staten Island) – once the world longest suspension bridge. The next speaker was Steve Peralta who began by asking "Does anyone know what a patent is?" His thought-provoking introduction set the stage for the telling of a very inspiring story about a teenage boy who came to the U.S. from Guatemala (at a very young age without family support) overcoming great language and academic odds to eventually attend Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and have a successful career at Bell Labs with some patents "under his belt." It turns out the nameless boy was Steve's father prompting many to eye the future with great optimism. Everyone was left with the impression anything is achievable with hard work, commitment, and an education.

José Almirall helped to energize everyone with a team building exercise. The students were broken into teams of three to create promotional ads for Pepsi, Gap, Nintendo, among a few other brands with worldwide recognition. With color markers, easel paper, and 10 minutes of preparation, we were all treated to some very imaginative advertisements – with many bi-cultural (and bilingual) formats. Lunch was next on the agenda (capably planned by Isabel) and included All-American fare: Pizza (including salad, cookies, & sod) was in order for our multi-cultural guests. Judging by the smiles in the conference room, Isabel's menu selection was a huge hit. A surprise was next with the arrival of Norma Rossomando of AT&T's Access Management Organization who took the students on a tour of AT&T's Global Network Operating Center (GNOC) which included a tour of the history of telecommunications museum. Norma, along with Vince, gave participants a truly unique opportunity to receive an overview of AT&T's Network capabilities plus monitoring features. Talk about "eyes wide open," you should have seen the students' (and teacher José González') reactions while touring the museum and later when with the simple push of a button by Norma the movie screen magically vanished into the walls uncovering below the operational GNOC. The students couldn't wait to approach the observation window to look more closely upon the monitors, screens, and GNOC personnel. Questions were asked about the experiences during high call volume holidays and impacts to the GNOC on September 11, 2001. Proudly the museum is now home to an actual coin pay phone originally installed on the 107<sup>th</sup> floor of the Observation Tower. You could almost hear a "pin drop" while everyone walked past the sealed encasement eyeing the charred phone.

And even though the GNOC tour would have been a fitting end to the day, the best was yet to come! After returning to conference room we were joined by volunteers; Isabel Cabrera, Evelyn Lopez-Artache, Mildred, José Almirall, José Cedeno, Saul Umanzor, and Bob Handal. They assembled for the "Job Shadowing" portion of the agenda. "Job Shadowing is an academically motivating educational activity dedicated to giving kids an up-close look at the work of work." Specifically, students were paired with our volunteers to learn about their day-to-day responsibilities and many other aspects of work life. The students were also prepared to ask a few poignant (i.e., challenging) questions – written in advance – suspecting many were a true surprise to the volunteers.

In closing remarks, Mildred offered a summary of the day's events (including shared learning) while students eyed gifts from HISPA along with a special surprise picture taken by Chuck Pason – AT&T's official photographer. Initial feedback was very positive and the students' eyes again told the unspoken story of a successful experience.

If you are interested in planning a Job Shadow Day the members HISPA New Jersey's Chapter are ready to assist.

Happy Ground Hog Day 2004!



8<sup>th</sup> grade students from the A.C. Redshawn School in New Brunswick, New Jersey

# CHAPTER NEWS

## WASHINGTON, DC

HISPA of the Nation's Capital recently held their 2005 elections, the results of which are as follows: President Susie Valenzuela; Vice President Alexandra Carrasco; Finance Director Jackie Simpson; Membership Director Teresa Rodriguez; and Fundraising Director Montse Salop. The offices of Secretary, Communications Director and Professional Development Director remain vacant.

HISPA-DC chapter members Montse Salop, Steven Estrada and Roberto Quinones attended the 2005 National Council of La Raza (NCLR) Capital Awards dinner on Tuesday, March 8<sup>th</sup> at the Building Museum in Washington, DC. The NCLR recognized Senator Christopher Dodd (D-CT), Representative Chris Cannon (R-UT) for their work in Congress on behalf of the Latino community on issues such as education, immigration, and health care. NCLR also presented a public service award to Llano Grande Center for Research and Development for its efforts to improve opportunities for Latino students in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzalez began the ceremony by addressing the audience on his commitment to justice for all Americans. The event was vice-chaired by AT&T and represented by AT&T Vice President of Congressional Relations, Peter Jacoby.

## NEW JERSEY

HISPA-NJ hosted a fundraising event with a performance of "Tango Ida y Vuelta" on February 12<sup>th</sup> at the Union City Park Theater. The event was led by Rod Castillo and Jim Charneco. HISPA-NJ members, family and friends got together on a Saturday evening to enjoy the musical, an elegant bilingual show that tours throughout Latin America. Wonderful music, dance, poetry, drama, and hilarious comedy, made it a show for all audiences. It was written and directed by *five-time ACE Award winning actress*, Lilia Vega.

In addition, On January 15, HISPA NJ hosted its annual *Three King's Day Banquet* at the Seabra's Armory in Perth Amboy. HISPA NJ reached out to alumni and friends to ensure the success of the annual event. NJ members met new people, danced with old friends and were inspired by Yvonne Shepard's, the event's keynote speaker, presentation: "*Ready, Set, Go*". Ms. Shepard was President and Chief Operating Officer of AT&T of Puerto Rico in 1992 and Marketing Vice-President for AT&T Global Markets in 1995. Ms. Shepard's speech focused on taking advantage of the opportunities outside AT&T and spending quality time on ourselves, finding our passions and becoming creative in making a living with it.

Attendees continued the celebration by recognizing those who made 2004 such a successful year for HISPA NJ. Last year was filled with lots of great activities: technical workshops, networking events, Executive Panel, BMW raffle fundraiser, Great Adventure tickets fundraiser, Relay for Life, Secret Santa and much more. First, each HISPA NJ Board member received a gift and then, our President, Carlos Morales, was recognized for his dedication to the chapter and his leadership. We also acknowledged one of our HISPA Champions, Vince Alonge, who attended the event and joined us in the celebration. Mildred Medina, HISPA National Financial Director and a very active member of HISPA NJ, provided an update on the HISPA initiatives.

## EL PASO

300 Easter baskets are needed this holiday and the El Paso HISPA Chapter has stepped up to challenge. It is a task that many may say is an impossible mission, but not for the motivated El Paso chapter. Last year, members rounded up 246 baskets and personally delivered them to the annual event. The event, organized by the El Paso Area Foster Parent Association, consists of a grand picnic for the children complete with munchies and drinks. Chapter members are busy preparing for the event and collecting Easter baskets, supplies to make baskets, and monetary donations. There will be a lot of work ahead for the chapter, but the reward will be tremendous. The El Paso HISPA Chapter will be there to complete the task.

The stage was set for a grand finale for a very special person. Her name is Lucy Tarango and she will be missed! Lucy dedicated 28yrs of her life in working for AT&T and in February she decided to pursue other interests. She chose to welcome retirement from the company by accepting a voluntary package. Founding the El Paso HISPA Chapter in 1991, she was an active member since day one until now. In 2004, she, with the support of Joe Hernandez, Claudia Rosales, Chris Carrillo, Gaby Rauda, Sylvia Calderon, and Isabel Castanon, revived the local HISPA Chapter. She was an active board member and served as the Finance Director in her last position. Lucy has chosen to remain an active associate member. On behalf of the El Paso HISPA Chapter, congratulations Lucy!

### **PHOENIX**

HISPA-Phoenix introduces the 2005 Executive Board: Jim Salas, President; George Velez, Vice-President; Alyssa Gardner, Fundraising Director; Erik Aldrete, Communications Director; and Sarah Romero, Development Director.

HISPA-Phoenix will be joining our sister BRG, 4A and the Arizona Dragon Boat Association at the 2nd Annual Arizona Dragon Boat Festival on Saturday and Sunday March 19th & 20th, 2005. The Desert Dragons Team which consists of 4A and HISPA members will be taking the water at Tempe Town Lake to compete against other dragonboat teams. Proceeds of the festival benefits AZDBA, 4A of Arizona, and the YMCA Strong Kids Program. Good luck Desert Dragons!!

### **CHICAGO**

The Chicago Chapter of HISPA was proud to present \$1000 in scholarship money to high school senior Abel Ortega to be used for his first year of college in the fall of 2005. Abel is a student at Farragut Career Academy in Chicago, IL and his contributions to his school and his community were cited as the primary reasons for receiving this award. In addition, Abel helps with managing the computer resources at his church and is a member of the National Honor Society. He hopes to pursue a career in computer programming and plans to attend the University of Illinois. Abel is ranked number 1 of 467 high school seniors in his class.



Pictured from left to right: Abel Ortega, Sr., Abel Ortega, Jr., John Z. Vasquez - President, Chicago HISPA and Mrs.. Pauline Lussenhop - College Counselor, Farragut Career Academy

In addition, HISPA - Chicago Chapter represented AT&T and HISPA at the 23rd National Conference of the United States Hispanic Leadership Institute Awards dinner held Friday, March 11, 2005 sponsored by AT&T.

## **CHAPTER NEWS** [continued from previous page]

The USHLI is led by Dr. Juan Andrade and its' mission is to fulfill the promises and principles of democracy by empowering minorities and similarly disenfranchised groups and by maximizing civic awareness and participation in the electoral process. The USHLI Conference has become a unique conduit for developing leadership, cultivating unity, and pursuing opportunity.

Award presentations were made to The William C. Velasquez Volunteer of the Year Award - Ms. Jesusa Rodriguez; Cesar E. Chavez Community Service Award - Ms. Marisa Rivera-Albert; and Lifetime Achievement Award - Mr.. Andrew Hernandez.

The featured speaker was Ms. Patricia Diaz Dennis, Sr. V.P., General Counsel and Secretary, SBC Communications, Inc.



Pictured left to right: (seated) Nelson Roldan, HISPA Guest; Mary Miller, HISPA; Rudy Acevedo, HISPA; Rosa Raso, HISPA Guest; (standing) Dan Caliendo, HISPA; Carmen Johnson, AT&T Human Resources and HISPA; Bernard Lewis, AT&T Guest; John Vasquez, HISPA; and Diana Raso, HISPA

### **DALLAS**

This year the Dallas Chapter has decided to take on its biggest challenge yet - entertaining over 300 children! Chapter members are currently in partnership with Hector P. Garcia Elementary PTA. Garcia Elementary is a high-performing, low-income school. The faculty, staff and parents are committed to ensuring their students reach their full potential. The Dallas chapter is proud to sponsor a Spring Carnival scheduled for April 23<sup>rd</sup> to benefit the school's PTA.

HISPA is securing external vendors, carnival games, food booths, ticket sales, advertisement, and local entertainment. Dallas HISPA members will be in charge of operations and will be manning a membership booth to attract members in the local community. We have extended invitations to surrounding middle school's organizations including a step team, ballet folklorico, mariachis, and cheerleaders to help with the entertainment.

## **HISPA Presidents' Leadership Training Seminar: Training, Development, Networking, Inspiration and More!**

*By Steven Estrada*

March 30<sup>th</sup> through April 3<sup>rd</sup>, HISPA will once again convene its annual HISPA Presidents' Leadership Training Seminar (HPLTS) in Red Bank, New Jersey and AT&T NJ locations in Bedminster and Middletown. The purpose of the HPLTS is to train and develop HISPA leaders so that they might more effectively run their respective chapters. These leaders are trained and developed through both formal and informal training. In addition to the developmental aspects of the seminar, HISPA leaders participate in the "Business" of HISPA. This HISPA business can include By-Laws changes, elections, dissemination of the 2005 HISPA Strategic Business Plan, and other important issues requiring voting.

HISPA invites targeted leaders including Presidents, Vice Presidents and Financial Directors or designees of any of the above titles. It is of critical importance that we not only develop our current leaders but also develop a "bench" of future leaders. Continuity has always been the key to HISPA's success.

Among the training and developmental opportunities scheduled for this year's HPLTS are: Career Development discussion with Pete Cornell, Vice President, AT&T Labs; an overview of the Hispanic Federation (a non-profit supporting education) given by one of its officers; a discussion of the HISPA Leadership Forum with Steve Peralta, AT&T Director; a discussion of AT&T/HISPA Synergies with AT&T VPs and HISPA Champions Vince Alonge and Nancy Pryor; a Leadership Presentation and Training led by Mirian Graddick-Weir, AT&T Executive Vice President of Human Relations; a tour of the Global Network Operations Center (GNOC); and a Leadership Seminar and Training held by Thumbprint Communications – the same company providing the same leadership training given to AT&T executives.

The meeting will conclude on Sunday after a community-supporting event to be held the day before.

Hosted by the New Jersey chapter of HISPA, the HPLTS is already shaping up to being one of the best ever held. This important NJ-led event develops, trains, and inspires our present and future leaders. HISPA's commitment to development and training of its members makes HISPA and AT&T stronger.

## Bringing Smiles to Families

*Submitted Bby Mayra Caceres*

It's so powerful to hear the stories of our member's involvement in their communities. A wonderful example is **Marco Avila**. Marco is not only very active in HISPA NJ, but he has found a way to return to his country to help the poor and orphaned children of his native Ecuador. He joined the **Ecuadent Foundation** to support their annual medical/dental mission trips to Ecuador, serving as a Program Coordinator and Translator since 1995. Marco describes the great need in many cities of Ecuador like Guayaquil, Riobamba, Cuenca, Ibarra, etc... (the highest rate of poverty in the country), and the kind of help Ecuadent is able to provide.

Marco reported that "most of the children we saw in the dental clinic had severe caries (cavities). We fitted a number of children with special orthodontic appliances. For children born with cleft or no palate, this is a lifesaving device. Most of the children we treated were from remote villages in the mountains surrounding Riobamba, traveling three to four hours to reach us. After the long trip they would wait most of the day for a chance to be seen. Their wait was well worth it. Major dental problems were corrected, and while the children waited we handed out coloring books and crayons, showed educational videos, and instructed them in proper oral hygiene."

The dental group performed **1,011** dental procedures. The Surgical team performed **101** procedures.

The entire team worked very hard to treat as many patients as possible. It was very difficult to turn around and say to people "No Mas," "no more". There is so much need that it is impossible to get to everyone. For this reason Ecuadent is devoted to returning to Ecuador every year.

The Ecuadent team consists of approximately 50 volunteers, including medical doctors, dentists, reconstructive surgeons, anesthesiologists, nurses, dental assistants, technical equipment staff and translators. In addition to providing time and expertise, all volunteers pay for their own travel and expenses for the two weeks in the mission. NJ members and friends have supported Marco with financial support and he is grateful. Marco is proud to be part of this incredible mission, **and for all the smiles they bring to those children and their parents**. Marco is making a difference in these peoples' lives and looks forward to the upcoming missions in Ecuador.



## AT&T's HISPA

### Staying on Course and Making a Difference

By Carlos Ruiz

When AT&T wants to be sure that it's developing the right programs for the rapidly-growing Latino market, it often turns to the Hispanic Association of AT&T Employees, or HISPA, for guidance.

HISPA is an all-inclusive Business Resource Group designed to strengthen its members through professional development and help the Hispanic community through volunteerism and charity. The 350-member organization provides valuable insight to AT&T decision-makers. When AT&T developed an unlimited plan for making calls from the U.S. to a number of cities in Mexico, they ran it by HISPA members for feedback. HISPA's National President Cesar Bocanegra was pleased. "As a Latino with family in Mexico, I am excited that my company introduced such a beneficial international calling plan," he says. That was music to AT&T's corporate ears.

But HISPA does more than provide a voice for Hispanic needs. The group "develops Hispanic employees to take on leadership positions," according to Bocanegra. The AT&T Western Region Sales Director acknowledges the role that HISPA has played in his career. "All my jobs at AT&T resulted directly or indirectly from having relationships with HISPA members."

While networking is important, HISPA members pride themselves on their community outreach efforts. Members work diligently at the local level. HISPA's El Paso chapter, a well-respected, highly-motivated group, each year organizes its *Dispensa* campaign, a project that feeds more than 300 families in El Paso, a city all too familiar with double-digit unemployment rates.

Chapter President Joe Hernandez says that this year they collected more than 5,400 cans of food – an all-time record – and distributed more than seven tons of food to local families. "We provide a food basket containing a whole fryer chicken, bread, tortillas, cereal, and ten different canned food items," the Site Support Administrator says.

The project is carried out with the assistance of other HISPA Business Resource Groups and "associate" members. "Even though we have 90 members, our numbers are upward of 300 to 400 because family members are associate members," Hernandez says.

The affinity for community service that involves the family reaches throughout the organization. Teri Grado, AT&T Reports Clerk, HISPA National Communications Director and Kansas City Chapter Vice President, includes her three children in most of the organization's community outreach programs.

Teaching her kids to care for their communities not only makes them strong citizens, it has also helped her 20-year-old daughter Teresa with her application to Harvard. Grado says, "Teresa submitted her essay, and the selection committee recognized her for her academic accomplishments and outstanding community work."

HISPA is often there for communities in need, including their own. Company downsizing left AT&T with only a quarter of its original employees. It also left many HISPA members looking for new jobs. Bocanegra says that the group is stepping up to help. "We've done resume-writing assistance programs and mock interviews – making sure they're up to speed," he says. "We prepare them for the market."

Bocanegra admits that HISPA is experiencing tough times with AT&T's downsizing, but in his eyes the end result will be positive. "We will build a HISPA that is stronger, not only in response to changes at AT&T and the telecom industry, but for the U.S. Latino community. We're in a revitalizing mode, a transitional time when we have the opportunity to refocus on our energies and adapt to changes at AT&T."

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