

the

Hispanic Network



www.kernhispanicchamber.com or kchcc.org • February 2005

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Eloa Lopez



Dear Members and Friends,

Let me start by thanking the membership for electing me as your 2005 Kern County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce President. I'm humbled that you have the faith in me to lead the Chamber's agenda forward. I promise to work hard to assure that we have continued success in 2005. I'm also proud to say that you have elected a very hard working and committed Board of Directors, four of whom are past presidents of the Chamber.

By the time you receive this newsletter, we will be 30 days into 2005, and your Board of Directors and I are strategically planning for the FUTURE of the Kern County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. We started off by having Part I of our Strategic Planning Meeting on Saturday, January 15. We discovered that in order to set our short-term goals, we needed to set our long term goals first. We are planning Part II of our Strategic Planning Process which will be held on Monday, January 31, and by that time, we should have a good idea of what direction we need to take KCHCC in the next 5 to 10 years. Once we do that, we will break those goals up into a time line and thus come up with our short-term goals.

By the time you receive the March newsletter I should not only be able to give you our goals but to report where we already are in accomplishing those goals.

Let me also mention that Part I of our Strategic Planning meeting was facilitated by Peter DeArmond and Susan Scaffidi of Bakersfield College's Corporate and Community Services Department. I am proud to say that they are brand new members of the Chamber.

Our first mixer of the year was hosted by State Farm Insurance and what a welcome they gave us. Those who were able to join us that evening enjoyed the good food and took advantage of the new friends and relationships that were made that evening.

The Annual Installation Dinner will be on February 5th at the Doubletree Hotel and if you haven't planned on being there I hope you'll join us. This year's Installation Event will be especially notable because we are celebrating the Kern County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's 20th Year Anniversary, thus making our theme "20 Years of Excellence." We have invited all of the past presidents of the Chamber to attend. I'm also proud to announce that this Year's Keynote Speaker will be Melinda Guzman Moore, President of the California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Get ready for an exciting night because this woman is dynamic! Also, following the installation of our new Board, join us for dancing and music by Soulful Heart.

Let me end my letter by again thanking the membership, Board Members, and staff for your continued passion and commitment to make the Kern County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce a network of businesses creating and helping businesses.

See everyone at the Installation Dinner. ♦

Calendar of Events

February 5 6pm - Midnight
2005 Installation Dinner Program
DoubleTree Hotel
\$60 pp or \$500 table of ten

FEBRUARY MIXER:
February 9 5:30-7:30pm
C & R Fence Co.
1516 East 19th Street
\$3 Members - \$5 Non-members

February 17 7:30 am
Government Relations
Jungle Cafe - 700 Truxtun
Speaker:
Tracy Leach, Political Consultant

February 21 Office Closed
President's Day

Celebrating 20 Years of Excellence

The Network

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Politics Overwhelming You? Come Join the Club!

By Hilary Whitcomb, State Farm Insurance

Do you know that politics touch every aspect of your life? You cannot be born, nor die, without the government having a say in it, and you definitely **cannot** run your business without them weighing in on everything from how you treat your employees to the information you communicate to your clients! With politics being so intimately involved in your life, do you feel like you understand it? Do you feel like you truly have a voice in Sacramento and DC? Do you know how to communicate with your legislators?

If you don't, don't feel bad – many of us don't know how much we can affect the political world in which we live. Let's learn about it together! Come to the February Government Relations Committee Meeting on **Thursday, February 17, 2005 at 7:30 a.m.**

Please plan on joining us and enjoy the delicious Jungle Café breakfast while **Tracy Leach**, a leading Kern County political consultant, educates all of us on what we can do to make sure that California is a good place to live and do business and our responsibilities as citizens of this great nation and state! ♦

Mark your calendars for this exciting opportunity!

11th Annual Legislative Conference California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce

March 7

5:30pm-7:30pm Opening Reception

March 8

9:00am-11:30am Legislative Sessions
12:00pm-1:30pm Luncheon
2:00pm-4:00pm Capital Visits
4:00pm-5:00pm Governor's Briefing
5:30pm-7:30pm Latino Appointees Reception

For more information and to register, visit www.cahcc.com



Mission:

To provide effective governmental advocacy on behalf of California Latino business owners, that will result in more economic opportunity, growth and prosperity while respecting the rights of employees, environment and community.

BAKERSFIELD CITY COUNCIL

declared February 5, 2005

as

**Kern County Hispanic
Chamber of Commerce** *Day*

~ In recognition of 20 Years of Excellence ~



Celebrating 20 Years of Excellence: Stories From the Start

This record is shared by Manuel G. Lerma, one of the original founding members of the Kern County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

It was September 1985 when it all started. A meeting was held at NEDA Small Business Consulting Office which was located at 218 South Chester. Certain individuals by the name of Tony Alvarado, Angel Diaz, Esther Manzano, John Enriquez, Frank Beadle, Henry Rodriguez, and Manuel G. Lerma gathered together for one common goal and vision – the establishment of the Kern County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

The group discussed activities of Hispanic Chambers of Commerce that already existed throughout California and the United States. The State convention for the California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce was taking place in one week, and there had to be a minimum of five members needed in order to participate as a local Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. These were the original six individuals that paid the initial dues of \$50 each that were utilized to attend and register the Kern County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and be recognized with voting registration fees.

There is much discussion on who were the actual original founders of the Chamber. Several meetings were held in close proximity to one another and additional individuals involved in those meetings included: Dr. Jess Nieto, Felix Ramirez, Tony Manzano Sr., Cirilio Garcia, John Enriquez, Angel Diaz, and possibly others.

The start was bumpy to say the least - operating an organization with almost zero funds, but the original six members turned to about twelve that formed the most important nucleus that is needed to grow a new organization in very unfriendly territory.

Most of the original cast of characters were raised in the 1940's, 50's, and 60's. To say that they experienced discrimination would be an understatement. The race riots in the 1960's were proof of the problems that plagued this great country of ours.

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Corporate and Community Services can help your organization today!

Are you spending too much time putting out fires instead of concentrating on what's really important in your business? Are you looking for ways to make your organization more efficient and effective?

Contact the professionals at Corporate and Community Services of Bakersfield College. We have expert, certified consultants and trainers who understand the problems you face, and can help you find just the right solution, whether it's organizational development, training, or both. Tell us what you need -- we'll listen, and help you come up with a practical solution that delivers the results that you want in the workplace. At Corporate and Community Services...

“We do training right.”

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Alicante and Virginia Ave Schools Recipients of Ball Donations



This year at the Annual Christmas Party, the Law Offices of Young & Nichols partnered with the Kern County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and those members of the Chamber who felt a desire to extend their hands to others this holiday season and donated an unusual holiday gift – balls.

Hosts, guests, and attendees brought an estimated 60 sports balls, plus donated money to purchase more balls in order for some of our local school children to be able to enjoy their times of break and recess.

The balls were picked up by representatives of Alicante School in Lamont and Virginia Avenue School on the eastside of Bakersfield.

Both schools were in need of these items and excited about the ball donations.

Thank you to everyone who brought a ball or donated money for the purchase of more balls. We made some area school children a little bit happier. ♦

Installation Dinner and Program • February 5, 2005 DoubleTree Hotel from 6pm to Midnight

Ultimately... We All Prosper As We Grow!

Membership Drive 2005 Brings Spicy Competition to Worthy Cause

by Mark Olague, Bank of the Sierra

Beginning February 14th and running through March 9th, the Kern County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce is having its annual membership drive, and the competition is heating up!

This year the Membership Drive is underway with some friendly competition between four teams of eight individuals each. Team captains are Art Hernandez, Dan Johnson, Tony Martinez, and Mark Olague.

The drive will culminate with each team participating in telephoning prospective members on March 8th and March 9th at the Jungle Café.

The teams will be competing against each other to obtain as many new members as possible. Our membership drive **goal is to sign up 75 new members**. That's approximately 20 new Chamber members per team - a very obtainable goal.

Team Captains are eager to accept new teammates for this hearty competition.

Join us on March 8th and 9th for the membership drive at the Jungle Café where we will have prizes for participating individuals who are signing-up new members along with getting past members of the Chamber to rejoin.

The teams will also be selling advertising space for the new membership directory at this time.

Team captains for the winning team will also receive a special prize!

The Membership Committee is very excited about the membership drive and welcomes all chamber members' participation in this event.

The goal for 2005 is to help the Kern County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce to reach a membership count of 500 businesses! "The more businesses join the Chamber and participate in the various services and events that we sponsor, the more businesses are out there that have assistance with helping their company be successful," commented Debbie Rodriguez, Marketing and Public Relations Chairperson for the Chamber. "When businesses prosper, everyone involved in our local economy wins."

This is a great opportunity for all our members to contribute to their Chamber. If you're interested in contributing your time to help our Chamber grow, please call Stacie Couch, Membership Committee Chair, at 636-0968 or Mark Olague at 325-0101.

If you would like to renew your membership, please contact the Chamber at 633-5495 or visit our website at www.kernhispanicchamber.com and request an application online or download the application there. ♦



From the 20 Year Celebration to the Keynote Speaker: Annual Installation Dinner Sure to be Noteworthy Event

Saturday, February 5th, the Kern County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce will hold its Annual Installation Dinner at the Doubletree Hotel. They will welcome Past Presidents of the Chamber, the new Board of Directors, and Keynote Speaker Melinda Guzmán Moore.

The no-host cocktails start at 6pm with dinner and program beginning at 7pm. Tickets to attend are \$60 per person or \$500 per table. Call the Chamber at 633-5495 for more information.

The Event will honor distinguished businesses and individuals that have made a difference for the local community. Awards will include: Business Woman of the Year, Business Man of the Year, Small Business of the Year, Large Business of the Year, Corporation of the Year, Community Service Award, and the President’s Recognition Award.

It will also honor the past presidents of the Kern County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce as they celebrate 20 Years of Excellence. *continued page 7*



Volunteer of the Month

Stacie Couch

Each month, the Chamber will recognize outstanding volunteers who have gone above and beyond the call of duty in supporting and promoting the Chamber and its interests. Our Volunteer of the Month for the month of February is **Stacie Couch**.

Stacie works as a Senior Staffing Manager for ACT-1 Personnel Services, a Talent and Technology Leader. Anyone who knows **Stacie** has seen the life and energy that she brings with her to any endeavor she participates in. **Stacie** serves as the Co-Chairperson for the Membership Committee for the Chamber, as well as serves on the Board of Directors for the Chamber. Her Membership Committee Co-Chair, Shelly Maurer says, “**Stacie** really invigorates the Membership Committee. She always has a great attitude and tireless energy.”

Being Co-Chair for the Membership Committee was a perfect fit for **Stacie** and the Chamber, as she has brought a lot of new members to the organization. She has also instituted some great ideas to get the membership more involved with the Chamber, like personally inviting members to attend mixers as guests of the Chamber so they can see how fun and beneficial the mixers are and using the Guest and New Member ribbons at the mixers so we can make sure they receive a warm welcome.

Stacie has also worked with the Chamber to develop a better system for tracking new members and making sure that they are invited to a mixer and receive their membership plaques.

Right now **Stacie** has taken the lead on the Membership Drive and is already creating so much enthusiasm for it. “I’m sure it is going to be a great success,” comments Maurer. “I have really enjoyed working with **Stacie** over the past year. She is such a team member and brings such a buzz to everything with which she is involved.” ♦

Stories From the Start ... continued

From Page 3

It was not long after our first successful coming-out reception that was attended by over 250 community leaders at the once famous Casa Royal that we were summoned by another Chamber in town to give account for ourselves and explain why we felt there was a need for another Chamber in town. Those who responded to this subpoena included two Ph Ds, several individuals with college degrees- one of which was a Master’s degree, and over 100 years of combined successful business entrepreneurship.

Recognized by the Chamber then was a lack of participation with a community that was comprised of over 30% Hispanics. Very little activity was conducted east of Union Avenue where there was the highest concentration of Hispanic and minority-owned businesses.

The list for the need (of creating the Hispanic Chamber) can go on and on including the need to organize and help each other and at the same time address several community concerns. The bottom line is participation in the economic development of our communities, our further development of leadership, and developing a united voice.

Taken by permission from an article written by Manuel G. Lerma entitled, “KCHCC Twenty Years of Pride, Progress, and Perseverance.” Mr. Lerma is a founding member of KCHCC and the Owner of The Lerma Company (TLC) Fiesta Foods, Fiesta Spices and Marketing Consultant.



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What Every Business Needs But Few Realize

It didn't take long on Saturday, January 15th, to realize that the Chamber was about to engage in a necessary and worthwhile endeavor.

The Chamber brought in professional consultants from Corporate and Community services of Bakersfield College to facilitate the process that now enables us to truly define our organization, determine where we want to see ourselves in years to come, and know how to get there.

It's called Strategic Planning: what every business needs but few realize it. There are various steps in the process of defining your organization or business' goals – steps that must be followed with the aid of an outside consulting firm such as this one.

Why do you need an outsider to facilitate this? Because an outsider can draw out the issues from the group and not hold an interest in the items that need to be discussed. They are non-biased and do not take a position on where to go; rather, they lead you to come up with the conclusions as a group.

The consultants with Corporate and Community Service don't come to the planning session with solutions for your business – only you can determine that. They help you to realize and plan those goals, and give you the tools you need in order to develop the strategies to accomplish those goals.

Words cannot describe the power of direction and purpose for your organization or business. Engaging all the stakeholders involved in the success of your business or organization creates a sense of ownership and buy-in because everyone contributed to the plan of success for the business. Everyone helped determine the direction to go in together.

If your business or organization has not scheduled a Strategic Planning Session with Corporate and Community Services, they do still have some opportunities available to work with and assist your company. For more information about how you can schedule an appointment to talk to one of the consultants from this business extension of Bakersfield College, call (661)395-4830 or email ccs@bakersfieldcollege.edu ♦

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From the 20 Year Celebration to the Keynote Speaker: Annual Installation Dinner Sure to be Noteworthy Event

The distinguished keynote speaker will be Melinda Guzmán Moore whose background is quite impressive.

About the Keynote Speaker

Melinda Guzmán Moore is a partner of the law firm of **Goldsberry, Freeman, Guzmán, & Ditora, LLP** where she practices business law, tort, labor and employment litigation. Ms. Guzmán is a former partner of **Diepenbrock, Wulff, Plant & Hannegan, LLP**. She was the first Latina to be named partner in a majority owned firm in Sacramento and in most of Northern California.

Ms. Guzmán is Chairwoman of the **California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce (CHCC)**. She is the first woman to serve in that position and was recently re-elected to a second term. Prior to her current position as Chair, Ms. Guzmán served as Vice President of the Central Region of the CHCC and was the third female President to be elected in the history of the **Sacramento Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (SHCC)**. Ms. Guzmán is also Chairwoman of the **Nehemiah Corporation of America**, one of the nation's largest down payment assistance programs for new homebuyers, and is a member of the Board of Trustees for the **U.C. Davis Foundation**. She is a well-respected business leader - known for her ethics and integrity. As such, she has founded the Latina Business Network in Sacramento, developed educational conferences for Latino high school and college students and continues to aggressively promote Hispanic business growth and development.

Ms. Guzmán was appointed General Counsel of the **United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce** in October of 2004, and she was most recently appointed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to serve on the **Board of Trustees for the California State University system**.

Other accomplishments and positions held include:

- Member of the **Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges**. Served until Nov 2003.
- Board of Director for the **Make A Wish Foundation** and the **Davis Community Television**

continued back page




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Installation Dinner Keynote

Speaker: Melinda Guzmán

cont...

- Provides on air talent for DCTV productions
- Served on the Comstock's Club and KVIE Channel 6 Board of Directors
- Honored by the National Association of Women Business Owners with the *Luminary Award* for her leadership in business
- Member of the Sacramento County Bar Association; State Bar of California (Member: California Minority Counsel Program; Former Member: Executive Committee, Law Practice Management Section); La Raza National Lawyers Association (Vice President, 1989); and Women Lawyers of Sacramento (former Board member).

Ms. Guzmán was born and raised in Fairfield, California and is the daughter of Amado and Anita Guzmán. Mr. Guzmán is a retired mechanic of the Southern Pacific Railroad. Together they raised four daughters, each of whom attended the University of California, Davis. Ms. Guzmán is a first generation University student and a graduate of the University of California at Davis (B.A., 1985; J.D., 1988). She is the first in her family to attend law school. She resides in Fair Oaks with her husband Donald B. Moore and their 19 year old daughter, Dominique, a student at CSU Sacramento. ♦

KCHCC

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