



# Managing the Hispanic Workforce



March 27-28, 2006

*Wood Education and Resource Center  
Princeton, WV*

## ***About the Workshop***

The USDA Forest Service's *Wood Education and Resource Center* and Virginia Tech's *Sloan Foundation Forest Industries Center* are pleased to co-sponsor a diversity management workshop designed to improve your management skills in working with the growing Hispanic workforce. The two-day interactive workshop will focus on meeting the cultural, communication, and legal challenges associated with hiring and managing this multicultural workforce.

## ***Who Should Attend***

Employers and managers in the forest industries, from primary producers to secondary manufacturers, who employ or who are considering employing members of the Hispanic workforce.

## ***Workshop Objectives***

- To assist employers in managing the legal aspects of employing Hispanic workers. *Discussion will include the I-9 verification process, the H2B Program, employer compliance issues and end with a question and answer session with a lawyer specializing in immigration.*
- To overcome the language barrier. *Activities will include the opportunity to learn new Spanish language skills or enhance existing Spanish language skills that are needed to communicate with a diverse Hispanic workforce. Emphasis will be placed on industry specific vocabulary and phrases.*
- To guide employers in creating a business culture that values diversity and that provides a supportive environment for Hispanic employees. *Discussion will focus on employee advocacy at work and in the community.*
- To provide the latest resources and the most up to date information related to managing the Hispanic workforce. *Information will include employee resources, job and safety training resources, language training resources, and best practices from other industries.*
- To create a forum for employers in the forest industry to share their solutions to common management problems in the areas of hiring, training, retaining, and managing this multicultural workforce with the goal of developing a list of best practices specific to the forest industries.

## *Guest Speakers*

### **Alfredo Martinez – Keynote Speaker - Founder, Georgia Hispanic Specialists Group, University of Georgia**

Recognizing the need for improved communication between business administrators and the growing Hispanic labor force, Dr. Martinez created the nationally recognized Georgia Hispanic Specialists Group at the University of Georgia. This multi-disciplinary, multi-institutional group has implemented a series of training programs throughout the Southeast to promote awareness of cultural differences and the impact they have on productivity, work place safety and human relations. A native of Mexico, Dr. Martinez earned his PhD in Plant Pathology from Montana State University and has published numerous articles in national and international peer-reviewed journals.

### **Barbara Kraft - Instructor, Spanish for the Green Industry, Virginia Tech**

Ms. Kraft has been an Instructor at Virginia Tech for the past seven years. She developed the Spanish for the Green Industry class four years ago to further prepare Horticulture and Agriculture students for their careers in the Green and Agriculture Industries. Barbara is currently collaborating with the Sloan Foundation Forest Industries Center at Virginia Tech to develop Spanish training for employers in the forest industries. Barbara is a native speaker of Spanish having grown up in Mexico, Venezuela and Spain. She is a graduate of Virginia Tech with a Bachelors in Spanish and a Masters in Curriculum and Instruction.

### **William J. Benos, ESQ - Williams Mullen, Richmond, Virginia**

Mr. Benos is a partner in the International Practice Section at Williams Mullen. He practices business immigration law and represents clients in international and domestic corporate and commercial transactions. He also chairs the firm's Immigration Practice Group, where he combines his business and immigration expertise to advise international clients with matters involving inbound and outbound investments and the movement of personnel. He serves as an adjunct professor at the University Of Richmond School Of Law, teaching an externship in international business law and a course in immigration law.

### **Justine Flint - The Brickman Group, Gaithersburg, Maryland**

For the past 16 years, Ms. Flint has worked with Brickman, a leader in the commercial landscape services industry. As Corporate liaison to Brickman's field offices, Justine ensures that its Hispanic labor force has all the tools and training they need for a safe, fulfilling work experience. Justine is a Certified Safety Manager and is certified by the Department of Labor as an OSHA Outreach Instructor. She is also a member of ASSE (American Society of Safety Professional) and NCS (National Safety Council). Justine has helped develop and implement many of Brickman's safety programs, which have resulted in the company maintaining one of the best safety records in the industry.

### **Libby Whitley – President, Mid-Atlantic Solutions, Inc., Lovington, Virginia**

As founder and president of Mid-Atlantic Solutions, Inc., Ms. Whitley has assisted more than 300 employers nationwide in developing cost-effective, sophisticated recruiting and compliance practices and in providing the best solutions for obtaining capable, reliable, legal labor through the H-2A and H-2B temporary nonimmigrant visa programs. She has been a frequent speaker at industry conventions and has taught seminars in wage/hour and OSHA compliance, immigration, anti-discrimination and civil rights laws. She is listed in Who's Who in Business, Who's Who in American Women, Outstanding Women in America and was named in the "Top 100 Lobbyists of 1991" by Washington business magazine *Regardies*.

## *Workshop Agenda*

**Monday, March 27, 2006**

7:30 a.m. Registration and Continental Breakfast

8:30 Welcome and Introduction of Speakers

*Steve Milauskas, Director, USDA Forest Service and the Wood Education Resource Center*

*David Brinberg, Director, Sloan Foundation Forest Industries Center at Virginia Tech, Robert O. Goodykoontz Professor of Marketing*

### *Breakout Session I: Improving Multicultural Management Skills*

9:00 a.m. Exploring Cultural Differences and Overcoming Communication Barriers. Discussion will focus on creating a business culture that values diversity and that provides a supportive environment for Hispanic employees.

*Alfredo Martinez, Georgia Hispanic Specialists Group, University of Georgia*

10:30 Mid-Morning Break

10:45 Managing a Multicultural Workforce. Discussion will focus cultural awareness training, multicultural supervision, multicultural team development, fostering multicultural acceptance in the workplace, and advocating Hispanic employees at work and in the community.

*Justine Flint, Corporate Safety Director, The Brickman Group*

12:00 Lunch (Provided)

### *Breakout Session II: Enhancing Communication and Improving Safety*

1:00 p.m. Survival Spanish for the Forest Industries. Activities will include the opportunity to learn new Spanish language skills or enhance existing Spanish language skills needed to communicate in the multicultural workplace. Emphasis will be placed on industry specific vocabulary and phrases through interactive role play.

*Barbara Kraft, Virginia Tech*

2:30 Break

2:45 Beyond the Interpreter: Overcoming Language and Literacy Barriers to Safety and Training. Discussion will focus on alternative communication and training tools such as the visual training aids and mentoring as a compliment to language education.

*Barbara Kraft, Virginia Tech*

3:15 Afternoon Break

3:30 Factors for Successful Employee Training. Discussion will focus on communication strategies for developing effective job orientation and training methods to maximize employee job understanding and safety.

*Dr. Alfredo Martinez, Georgia Hispanic Specialists Group, University of Georgia*

4:00 Roundtable Discussion. The speaker panel will facilitate an interactive session where participants are invited to share ideas relating to the issues of multicultural workforce management strategies, overcoming communication barriers, and creating a workplace culture that embraces diversity.

*Panelists: Alfredo Martinez, Barbara Kraft, Justine Flint, and Jim Hamilton*

5:00 Adjourn

6:00 --- Dinner

## **Tuesday, March 28, 2006**

### *Group Session I: Keeping It Legal*

8:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast

8:30 Employing a Legal Workforce. Topics of discussion will include avoiding common immigration pitfalls, assessing immigration status and complying with the I-9 process, and obtaining employment authorization. A presentation of new legislative developments will also be covered.  
*Bill Benos, Williams Mullen, Richmond, Virginia*

9:15 To Be or Not to H2B? Discussion will include an overview of H2 programs, the H2B program as a resource for employers in the forest industries, and guidelines for participating in the H2B program.  
*Libby Whitley, President, Mid-Atlantic Solutions, Inc.*

10:00 Job Safety in a Multicultural Workplace. Discussion will focus on decreasing job related injuries and improving employee relations by developing a comprehensive safety program to address the unique safety training needs of a multicultural workforce.  
*Justine Flint, Corporate Safety Director, The Brickman Group*

10:45 Break

11:00 Roundtable Discussion. The speaker panel will facilitate an interactive session where participants will have the opportunity to ask questions and share experiences relating to the safety, legal, and employment issues presented earlier.  
*Panelists: Bill Benos, Libby Whitley, and Justine Flint*

12:00 Lunch Provided

### *Group Session II: Best Practices*

1:00 p.m. Best Practices. Participants will have the opportunity to learn from leaders in other industries about the programs and management strategies they have implemented to enhance productivity and improve employee relations with their Hispanic workers. A list of best practices will be compiled and forwarded to all workshop participants.

2:00 Break

2:15 Best Practices (continued).

3:00 Workshop Evaluations and Adjourn

## *Location & Lodging*

The workshop will be held at the Wood Education and Resource Center (WERC) in Princeton, West Virginia. WERC is easily accessed from I-77. Take Exit 14 (Concord University Exit). Go west on Athens Road for ¼ mile. Take a right onto Cornbread Ridge Road. When Cornbread Ridge Road turns to the left, continue straight onto Hardwood Lane. WERC parking is 200 feet on the left. For additional information about WERC, please call 304-487-1510 or visit <http://na.fs.fed.us/ea/werc/werc.shtm>. Princeton, WV is located 91 miles from Roanoke Regional Airport (ROA) and 95 miles from Charleston WV Airport (CRW).

Lodging is available at the Holiday Inn Express in Princeton, West Virginia. The Holiday Inn Express is easily accessed from I-77. Off I-77, take exit 9 to Rt. 460 West. Off 460, take a right onto Ambrose Lane. The Holiday Inn is located just ahead at 805 Oakvale Road. Participants are responsible for making their own reservations. Rooms are being held at the Holiday Inn Express until February 25<sup>th</sup> at a reduced rate of \$84 a night. To reserve a room, please call 304-425-8156. Be sure to mention the name “Virginia Tech” for the reduced rate. Other area hotels include the Hampton Inn (for reservations call 304-431-2580) and the Comfort Inn (for reservations call 304-431-2580).

## *Fees & Registration*

The 2-Day workshop fee is \$490 which covers registration, instructional materials, continental breakfasts, coffee breaks, lunch, and dinner on March 26<sup>th</sup>. To register, complete a registration form and return with payment to the address below. Registration forms are available online at [www.forestindustries.vt.edu](http://www.forestindustries.vt.edu). You may also register online at [www.forestindustries.vt.edu](http://www.forestindustries.vt.edu). Your registration should be received no later than **Monday, March 13, 2006**. Register early because registrations are limited to the first 30 applicants. For additional information, contact Anne-Collins Albimino at 540-231-3095 or email [aalbimin@vt.edu](mailto:aalbimin@vt.edu).

Send completed registration forms to:

Conference Registrar  
Continuing and Professional Education  
702 University City Boulevard  
Virginia Tech, Mail code 0272  
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

Phone (540) 231-5182

Fax (540) 231-3306