

## **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SUCCESS STORY: “Beyond Translation” - Improving EPA’s Relevance in the Hispanic Community**

### **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT THEMES:**

- Translate environmental challenges in the Hispanic community into partnering opportunities
- Partner with Hispanic community leaders and sister organizations to fulfill EPA’s mission of protecting the environment and human health
- Replicate successful outreach strategies in other multilingual communities

### **ISSUE:**

EPA has to proactively seek new opportunities to effectively engage the Hispanic community to become environmental stewards. Improving the quality and availability of environmental and public health information (in English and Spanish) in a manner that is relevant to the Hispanic community is an important first step in enlisting Hispanic support. This presents a challenge to our Agency as a whole and to our Region as well. In spite of the population growth among Hispanics over the past decades, this community is largely under represented in shaping the Agency’s national and regional agenda. An urgent need exists for EPA to improve communication and create regional collaborations with the Hispanic community in order to effectively address these environmental challenges, maximize use of limited resources, encourage positive environmental behaviors among Hispanics, and translate actions into success stories which will serve as models for the Hispanic community and other multilingual communities as well.

### **ACTION TAKEN:**

On October 17-18, 2006, EPA Region 6, hosted the “***Beyond Translation Forum***” in San Antonio, Texas, where more that 100 Hispanic community leaders and representatives of nonprofit, grass-roots and civic organizations, leaders in business and academia, the media, and local, state and federal government officials came together to discuss environmental challenges and opportunities, explore ideas for improving the Agency's service to Hispanics, and to enhance partnerships and networks. The discussions focused on the areas of community partnerships, public health and the environment, economic opportunities at EPA, and the education pipeline for environmental careers.

### **RESULTS:**

Subsequently, EPA has partnered with community leaders and organizations to form five workgroups to address the priorities that emerged from the discussions.

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The teams will work together for one year on a project that can be easily replicated in other Hispanic communities and potentially in other multilingual communities as well.

The key goals and objectives:

- **Make Environmental Health Information Relevant to Hispanics:**  
Develop an assessment tool that will identify the environmental health priorities of the Hispanic community. The tool will help organizations prioritize resources, and will enhance communications and developing awareness campaigns.
- **Create Environmental Awareness and Job Fair Opportunities:**  
Foster Environmental Awareness & Related Careers Events in predominately Hispanic schools by partnering with sister organizations and using cultural theater as a method of communication.
- **Increase Recruitment Efforts in the Hispanic Community:**  
Develop a marketing plan that promotes the Agency as a potential employer of choice for Hispanics. Work with Hispanic Serving Institutions to increase the number of Hispanic applicants to internship and permanent positions at EPA.
- **Encourage Greater Economic Opportunities for Hispanics**  
Increase outreach efforts to Hispanic-owned businesses, community-based organizations and Hispanic serving institutions to increase the Hispanic Community participation in EPA procurement, grant and research opportunities.
- **Enhance Communications Network to Increase Hispanic Access to Environmental and Public Health Information:**  
Develop a communications strategy that links information, resources and opportunities with Hispanic leaders, community-based organizations and media outlets.

On October 2007, our Region plans to take this outreach initiative, **Beyond Translation**, one step further. An additional 100 community leaders will be invited to join Houston's Department of Health and EPA Region 6, in Houston Texas, to hear about the initiatives of the workgroups, their strategies, lessons learned from the first forum, networks established, and resources obtained. As part of the forum, there will be a session entitled "**De Mi Comunidad – A La Tuya**" ("From My Community to Yours") where communities that want to start their own projects can replicate successful community efforts. The overall goal is to continue to increase EPA's relevance to the Hispanic community, broaden our

partnerships and collaborations, and continue to work proactively with communities that are in greater need of resources.

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