



DIALOGUE ON DIVERSITY

NEWS ADVISORY

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HEALTH CARE SYMPOSIUM

HEALTH CARE REFORM: THE HALTING PROGRESS IN AN ONWARD MARCH

MAY 11, 2011, REGISTRATION: 8:30 A.M. PROGRAM: 9:30 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS CONFERENCE HALL

555 NEWS JERSEY AVE. N.W. WASHINGTON, D.C.

IN COLLABORATION WITH OUR HOSTS, THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
AND WITH SPONSORSHIP OF KAISER PERMANENTE, PFIZER, INC., AND SOUTHWEST AIRLINES
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Washington, D.C. April. 28 — In its 2011 Health Care Symposium, scheduled for May 11 in Washington, Dialogue on Diversity, hosted by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), spotlights the many fronts in the vast enterprise of health care in America. While the most public attention has gone to the disputations over the now one year old federal health care reform legislation (the ponderously named Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act., or PPACA), it is the orderly brigades of health care workers, administrators, insurers, economists, nutritionists, and biological scientists who quietly carry on American society's steady advance against acute illness, chronic disorders, and the insidious forces of our decadent lifestyles that steadily undercut "wellness". Their labors, to be sure, are most of the time prosaic, but often, again, yield the transformative products that are born of the acute insights of science and engineering.

- **Randi Weingarten**, President of the American Federation of Teachers, our host for the day, receives the Dialogue's recognition in its Education Trailblazer Award: Ms. Weingarten, as chief of the AFT, a society of professional workers (one embracing, alongside school teachers, a goodly brigade of health care professionals as well), has fashioned a newly creative force in education, with initiatives that now contemplate a broad public interest. Ms. Weingarten is the quintessential voice of this broad interest, speaking for education itself and at once for that chain of prime social issues that are linked with it.
- An introductory session brings **Hon. Donna M. Christensen**, Delegate of the U.S. Virgin Islands in the House of Representatives, and herself a physician by profession, in a greeting and account of the health care access conditions in her own and other U.S. territories, in the light of both the available resources and the provisions of the newly instituted health care reform statute. **Mary L. MacDonald**, Director of the Federation of Nurses and Health Care Professionals within the AFT, welcomes attendees on behalf of the hosting AFT organization.
- The opening panel takes up the thrust and parry of argument over the enacted but unquiet health care reform statute. **Karen Davenport**, now of The George Washington University's Health Care Policy team, summarizes the state of the new law's several provisions in the briskly advancing process of their implementation. **Teresa Niño** of CMS, the agency administering the Medicare and Medicaid systems, reviews the status of those programs, with their persisting long-term momentum, tweaked by the effects of the PPACA, and under anticipation of any further impacts at the hands of the budget-trimming hawks in the political realm. **Mayra Alvarez**, now Director of Public Health Policy in the Office of Health Reform at HHS, and formerly a key Senate committee staff person, present in the cockpit of negotiation that determined the final form of the recently enacted health care reform bill, brings a close up account of the awesome job of designing regulations that will spell out the operation of the statute and of otherwise implementing the new law.
- The preventive phase of health care, the subject of the second panel – proposing a broad conception of "prevention", one essentially merging with what has come to be called the "wellness" campaign – is described by a lineup of presenters: **Jennifer Ng'andu**, Deputy Director of the Health Policy Project at the National Council of La Raza, reviews the broad reach of the preventive enterprise and its key import in the health care, or "wellness" project, with a special focus on the needs of the Latino and other minority communities – a phase of health care that, for all its praise, has been badly slighted in insurance and even Medicare practice during the decades leading to the present health care cost crisis. **Lisa Pino**, heading the Department of Agriculture's S.N.A.P. (formerly food stamps) program, describes the federal interest in nutrition as an investment in building a fit and able national population. **Melissa Bishop-Murphy**, of Pfizer (one of our 2011 sponsors), lays out the structure of that pharmaceutical firm's subsidized medications program for economically disadvantaged households. **Katie Skinker** of the American Kidney Fund (one of the supporting organizations in this year's and earlier Symposia), lays out the rationale for screening tests, such as those offered without cost by AKF at the Symposium site, to alert otherwise complacent persons of potentially harmful medical conditions.

➤ A highlight of the midday session of the Symposium is the appearance of **Dra. Ana Nogales**, head of Nogales Psychological Counseling in Los Angeles (and the Dialogue's 2004 Mentorship Award laureate) discussing the domestic relations embroilments that impose sometimes unbearable strains on family relationships and on the children who are trapped in the middle. Dra. Ana, as she is known in her regular television broadcasts, is the author of a series of books, the most recent: *Parents Who Cheat*, a catalogue of the griefs experienced by children whose parents' infidelities have broken the family bond.

➤ The much bruited about term "cultural competency" is expounded in the first of the afternoon's panels as the now conventional formula designating those multiple blockage phenomena by which effective medical/health care is impeded in the delivery phase to those many communities and classes of persons marginalized by language, income levels, cultural mores, and other factors. **Monica Villalta**, Director of Diversity Programs for Symposium sponsor Kaiser Permanente, Mid-Atlantic States, describes the array of programs this uniquely creative health care provider has put into play to penetrate the barriers to effective access, cultural and linguistic on the one hand, but also those sounding in class and economic condition. **Guadalupe Pacheco**, Senior Advisor at the Office of Minority Health in DHHS, describes the recently rolled-out National Partnership for Action, a plan projecting progress in the many-faceted task of serving the diversity of the country's cultural communities. The plan strategy targets HHS's own agencies and, in the country at large, the varied players in health care provision, to bring the most effective focus in the work of reducing disparities in access, resources, and medical care delivery. **Marcos Pesquera** of Adventist HealthCare deals with the access and disparities problems – the plight of the poor and those isolated behind ethnic walls who are effectively shut off from the boons of the existing – but effectively out of reach – medical care techniques. **Arilma St. Clair**, President of Washington's Association of Hispanic Nurses, takes up the questions of language and culture barriers. It is the nurses who are most directly on the firing line in this deeply problematic dimension of the operative barriers, those of meaningful communication. The ever present nurses may often constitute the effective interface between mainstream physician and minority ethnic patient.

➤ The hugely important topic of electronic health records and the adoption of information technology in the health care industries generally, is discussed by an expert panel led off by **Harley Geiger** of the Center for Democracy and Technology. The tough basic questions: the extent of the job to be done – the distance in dollars and years – in installing an infrastructure in health care institutions and providers capable of erecting interoperable systems, with real-time access, for plenary health history briefing on the universe of possible patients – or anything approximate to this state of perfection – and the possible sources of the commensurate funding. And the equally detailed and dauntingly delicate task of securing privacy for those countless, not quite faceless, patients lurking in a string of servers around the continent.

➤ The final panel deals with the cutting-edge lore in the diagnosis and treatment of major health threats to the U.S. population. **James Albino**, of the White House Office of National AIDS Policy, and **Daniel Montoya**, of the National Minority AIDS Council, discuss the incidence of HIV/AIDS as both a medical and a public policy concern. **Rebecca Medina** speaks on the detection and treatment of cervical cancer. **Manuela McDonough** of the National Council of La Raza, discusses the dangers and temptations of obesity, the bearer of a host of medical ills, both for children and adults. Other expert panelists discuss Diabetes, Hypertension, Cardio-Vascular disorders, and other conditions.

➤ The Symposium proceedings conclude with the celebration of the perennially outstanding labors of those often little known figures whose efforts have for long imparted an enlivening vitality to the life of Latino and other diverse communities that form the larger Washington, D.C. metropolitan region. The major significance of their achievement is duly recognized in the Local Leadership Mentorship and Diversity Awards. Honorees for 2011 are **Angel Luis Iréné**, the long time Director of VIDA Senior Centers, and **Susan Russell**, of Life Skills, for her work with children afflicted with Down's Syndrome.

ABOUT DIALOGUE ON DIVERSITY: Founded in 1991, Dialogue on Diversity is a national network of women entrepreneurs and professionals, actively promoting constructive dialogue among Latino and other ethnic and cultural communities, with especial emphasis on their economic viability through entrepreneurship. America's minority entrepreneurs are the fastest growing segment of the U.S. economy. They promise to be the backbone of American economic strength in the 21st Century. Dialogue on Diversity's cycle of public policy conferences and its annual entrepreneurship programs both celebrate and advance that promise.

Free Testing Facility (9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.) for Hypertension, Diabetes,
and other Conditions — provided by the American Kidney Fund
Simultaneous Translation (English/Spanish) Available

No fee for this Program [Register Online for 2011 Health Care Symposium](#)

Continental breakfast and a light lunch provided. Door Prize and Giveaways for Attendees

Register online at www.dialogueondiversity.org

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