



DIALOGUE ON DIVERSITY HEALTH CARE SYMPOSIUM 2009 SPOTLIGHTS HEALTH CARE REFORM DEBATES

May 1, 2009, Washington, D.C. — Dialogue on Diversity's 2009 Health Care Symposium *Affordability and Equity: An End of All Exploring? Or Just the Beginning?* is held this year on May 13th, once more at the National Education Association in Washington. The Symposium brings together from the metropolitan area and beyond women entrepreneurs and the policy-conscious of diverse cultures and occupational niches, to hear and critique the expertise of a distinguished array of health care specialists, in a year of reform of the basic structures of our health care system. "Women entrepreneurs far too often," says **Ma. Cristina Caballero**, Dialogue president, "are all but unmindful of their own urgent health needs and are at once baffled by the challenges of furnishing health insurance for their employees. This Symposium is their wake-up call and, we hope, a source of useful counsel." Along with the N.E.A., Symposium sponsors include Kaiser Permanente, pharmaceutical giant Pfizer, and Southwest Airlines.

- Where? National Education Association, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C
- When? Wednesday, May 13, 2009, 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
- What? Expert panelists discuss the salient health care reform proposals; the remarkable pharmaceutical industry, its pricing, regulation, and massive R&D; cultural specificity in the delivery of health care services; and the latest practice in confronting our society's chief health threats. No attendance fee (Continental Breakfast and Lunch provided). No-cost health screening. Register by Friday, May 8 at the Dialogue web-site: www.dialogueondiversity.org, or at dialog.div@prodigy.net.
- Who Should Attend? Women entrepreneurs, both aspiring and experienced, including owners of micro-enterprises and home-based businesses; Medical and Health Care Professionals; and staff of Civil Society organizations and governmental agencies concerned with health care.

The day's program features remarks at the midday session by **Rep. Grace Napolitano** of California's 38th District, who has championed the cause of mental health during her years in the Congress, repeatedly stressing the ravages of mental disorders, especially those afflicting the under-twenty young people of vulnerable ethnic populations. Newly confirmed DHHS Secretary **Kathleen Sebelius** is invited as principal lunch session speaker, as is **Cecilia Muñóz**, Intergovernmental Affairs Director at the White House, speaking on her special S-CHIP portfolio.

After greetings by **M. Rita Jaramillo** of the host NEA and introductory remarks by **Susan Scanlan** of the National Council of Women's Organizations, the Symposium opens with an examination of the cultural and ethnic differentials in health care delivery. **Monica Villalta** of Kaiser Permanente, **Dr. José Ruales** of the Pan American Health Organization, and the President of Latinos for National Health Insurance, **Dr. Jaime Torres**, sketch the travails of the hemisphere's minority populations. For the Symposium's afternoon session former PAHO Deputy Director **Dr. Cristina Beato**, along with **Dr. Yanira Cruz**, President of the National Hispanic Council on Aging, lead a roundtable discussion, *Understanding, Prevention, and Remedy*, a review of current health threats to the American population. **Dr. Elena Rios**, Founder and President of the National Hispanic Medical Association, appears as featured speaker at the Symposium's midday session, while **Del. Donna M. Christensen**, Delegate of the U.S. Virgin Islands, reviews the health care delivery challenges in that Caribbean island territory.

The central focus in the Symposium is to voice the broad range of views reflected in both the official and the informal debates on the future of the American health care system. There is broad public recognition of the sufferings of those excluded from any adequate reach of the excellent medical facilities developed in the U.S. What to do, however, is a matter of sharply clashing opinion. Panelists, all close students of the medical care phenomena, reflect the range of views. Among them are **Nina Owcharenko** of the conservative Heritage Foundation, **Dora Hughes**, Counselor to the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, the agency that will have the principal hand in carrying out a reform program once enacted, **Melissa Bishop-Murphy** of sponsoring Pfizer, with a commentary on the health care problem from the key perspective of that leading pharmaceutical producer, advocates of an extended Medicare apparatus touted as a "single payer" system, and a sharp-eyed insurance broker launching a trenchant critique of many of the popular plan variants.