



MINI-NEWSLETTER

FOR MAY, 2009

DIALOGUE ON DIVERSITY

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Friends of Dialogue on Diversity

Welcome to the May Mini-Newsletter from *Dialogue on Diversity*. This issue reports further on the 2009 Health Care Symposium of May, including summaries of the Symposium presentations and an attached review of the economic basics in the health care reform picture; a commentary on the nomination of Judge Sotomayor and on the doctrine of her opinions; a glimpse of the Billion Dollar Roundtable (the Supplier Diversity Summit); and thoughts on the Dialogue's coming Entrepreneurship/IT Conference in June.

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NEW VOICES, NEW RHYTHMS AT THE LABOR DEPARTMENT

THE 2009 ENTREPRENEURSHIP/IT CONFERENCE

PFIZER'S *HELPFUL ANSWERS*

ANALOG OUT, DIGITAL IN

JUDGE SOTOMAYOR AND THE CHORUS OF HER DETRACTORS

SUPPLIER DIVERSITY ASPIRES TO THE BIG LEAGUES



It is a matter of no little pride for us at Dialogue at Diversity that one of our champions and most steadfast friends in the Congress, Rep. Hilda Solis of California, has moved to Cabinet position at the outset of the new, history-making Administration. As Secretary of the Department of Labor, she shoulders a broad range of responsibilities, in a daunting range of statutory and customary fields of action and foci of concern that constitute the



multi-sided job of the contemporary Labor Department. Secretary Solis's advent on the scene represents the tone of new voices and the sense of new rhythms in the work of the Department.

We ask readers' indulgence for dwelling on fine moments past, but we print with pleasure the above photograph, a moment much remembered, as then Rep. Solis presents the Dialogue's Lifetime Achievement Award to another old friend of the Dialogue, Raul Yzaguirre, the long-time head of the venerable National Council of La Raza. (Public Policy Forum, March 2008). In the lower photograph Rep. Solis presents to Ma. Cristina Caballero of Dialogue on Diversity the citation placed in the Congressional Record in recognition of the Dialogue's Public Policy Forum 2007.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

THE ECONOMIC BASICS, THE CRUCIAL IMPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS, HOUSEHOLDS, AND EMPLOYERS -- THE CORE POLICY QUESTIONS

Dialogue on Diversity's recent Health Care Symposium, held May 13, 2009 at the National Education Association, brought in review some of the principal points in the current discourse on health care and its legislative reform. We hope that the arguments voiced and the actions urged in

our discussions of May 13th will be useful in shaping the health care reform project the Congress has undertaken.

THE GOALS -- THE MORAL AND CIVIC CASE FOR HEALTH CARE REFORM Under an evolving public philosophy it is probably realistic to speak of the entitlement to health care as a pretty basic “right” in contemporary society. The duty to see to it that a full and decent measure of health care is provided to the country’s inhabitants (several speakers argued that the range of health care provision should extend to the undocumented migrants as well as the rest of the population) rests, first, on humanitarian grounds, but also on considerations of human capital investment, which is required for dealing with the demographic bulge lying ahead over the next few decades.

THE CHALLENGES: The main deficiencies in the present schema of health care and medical practice in the U.S. can be summed up under several headings:

Portability and Pre-existing Conditions. In any plan of reform all persons must be included on even terms with everyone else. They must be able to change jobs, change insurers without the dire bar of the “Pre-existing Condition”.

Poverty and Cultural Marginalization: Health care coverage must be afforded for the poor and for those with cultural, linguistic, and geographical barriers to adequate care.

Prevention: The larger thrust of present health care goes to curing diseases once they strike. A systematic program of prevention needs to be set in motion. – here everyone can help by improving their own and their families’ “lifestyle” practices that can make a decisive difference in health outcomes.

Reorganization and Rationalization of the Health Care Apparatus Nationwide: outmoded communications and record keeping practices, reluctance to adopt proven methods and practices, and sluggish interaction among the medical providers involved in the care of a particular patient result in needlessly high expense.

Reorganization of Governmental and Private Medical Insurance Plans: The administrative bureaucracy in the medical insurance industry is widely thought to consume inordinately large portions of the insurance premium expenses that burden employers, institutions, individuals, and other insurance consumers. Creating a stimulating mix of private and governmental insurance providers promises to reduce very substantially this voracious cluster of administrative practices. Several speakers at the Symposium recommended a “single-payer” system, relying solely on a government operated plan.

Along with the Symposium host N.E.A., 2009 health care program sponsors included **Kaiser Permanente**, pharmaceutical giant **Pfizer**, and **Southwest Airlines**.

An extensive report on the deliberations of the Health Care Symposium was delivered to the members of the Congress, both the leaders of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee and the Finance Committee in the Senate, and the leadership of the Black, Hispanic, and Asian caucuses, and to members of the Education and Labor and the Ways and Means Committees in the House, those committees chiefly concerned with fashioning the long awaited health care reform legislation. [The full report, which is briefly outlined above, may be found by clicking here on the Dialogue's website www.dialogueondiversity.org.](http://www.dialogueondiversity.org)

THE DAY OF DARK SCREENS . . .

THE GREAT, LONG-AWAITED TRANSITION FROM ANALOG TO DIGITAL

U.S. residents in many quarters woke last week, June 12, to the dark screens of their antiquated television receivers -- now emblem of an honored but obsolete technology. Television transmissions, previously in analog form, have now taken on their new and sharper digital dress. A new receiver, cable service, or an adapter will come to the rescue. If you do not have an adapter, call this number: 888-DTV-2009 (in numbers: 888-388-2009) at the FCC, and give them your name and location. They will promptly send along a coupon, to be taken to your neighborhood electronics shop and get your free (or reduced price) adapter.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP/IT CONFERENCE 2009

Dialogue on Diversity will present its yearly roundup of supplier diversity experts, small business information technology specialists, and authorities on information sources, financial management, and capital access, in its annual ENTREPRENEURSHIP/INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE 2009. The Conference, titled *The Innovative Generation: Bright Days on the Potomac*, is presented this year on **Friday, July 17** (*the date was initially announced as July 15 – please change the date on your calendars*) at the U.S. Capitol's new Visitors Center, HC 215. A registration facility has been set up on the Dialogue's internet site, dialogueondiversity.org. Or let us know you will be on hand by an e-mail to dialog.div@prodigy.net, with your contact information. Continental Breakfast and lunch are provided. There is no fee for the Conference. As the title suggests, this program celebrates the vigor of the younger generation of women entrepreneurs, the 39-and-under crowd, and their role in breathing new life into the commercial scene in cities around the country at this confessedly dismal time in the new century's young economic history. Community business and non-profit leaders of the Washington metropolitan area will be honored at the lunch session. The entrepreneurs of the metro area are bringing back the bright days in our old but illustrious neighborhood. You will shortly receive a detailed agenda and the highlights from the speakers' roster for this program.

PFIZER'S HELPFUL ANSWERS

Under the title *HELPFUL ANSWERS* the Pfizer pharmaceutical company, one of the sponsors of the recent Health Care Symposium (about which see a detailed account later in this newsletter), call the country's attention to a cluster of programs, maintained both by Pfizer and by the pharmaceutical industry generally, for making available to low-income persons and households prescription medications free or at low cost. The newly instituted MAINTAIN program is designed specifically to mitigate the effects of the current economic slowdown. It is for users of Pfizer medications unemployed since January, 2009 and suffering a severe financial crunch. Information on all these programs can be had at www.pfizerhelpfulanswers.com. These programs, which have been for some time available, are underused, largely because people who are in dire need of this assistance are unaware that help is available. It is requested that our readers spread the word!

DIALOGUE ON DIVERSITY JOINS THE CHORUS OF SUPPORT FOR JUDGE SONIA SOTOMAYOR

From comments reaching our offices it may be supposed that the larger number of members and friends of Dialogue on Diversity have greeted the nomination of Judge Sonia Sotomayor to the Supreme Court with satisfaction, not to say delight. The Dialogue, happy enough to join the congratulatory chorus, sent around shortly after the announcement the message of congratulation set out just below. The nomination resonates with particular force in the traditions of American diversity in that Judge Sotomayor is the first Hispanic Judge – and the third woman -- to be nominated.

JUDGE SONIA SOTOMAYOR – AN INSPIRED PICK

Like large numbers of Americans, we are elated with the President's designation of Judge Sonia Sotomayor as the new Justice on the Supreme Court. Congratulations are in order for the remarkable Sonia Sotomayor herself, whose career has gone from success to success, and whose coming role as Justice promises profitable new directions for the high Court. Perhaps of greatest significance, Judge Sotomayor's perspectives on American life include an extraordinary appreciation of its diversity of cultures, a diversity of which she herself is part. Her deep understanding of the law and of judicial process, and her grasp of the essential American story, make her, as the President evidently saw, a winning nominee.

And kudos as well to the President, whose experience as a scholar in the constitutional basis of our law is on display in this inspired pick. We wish Judge Sotomayor a speedy and successful confirmation. Viva Justice Sonia!

THE BILLION DOLLAR ROUNDTABLE -- THE BIG LEAGUES OF SUPPLIER DIVERSITY

Washington was very recently host to the boldly creative initiatives of the Billion Dollar Roundtable, a consortium of the élite of supplier diversity executives from the largest of

American companies, who bring their experience, their well-honed reasoning, and the force of a lineup of economic power houses to the yearly gathering and to its deliberations. The Roundtable is a project of the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth University and **Professor Leonard Greenhalgh** (whose exposition of the key role of minority business in the present and future American economic scene, readers may recall, was one of the highlights for Dialogue on Diversity's Public Policy Forum March 5th on Capitol Hill). An audience of company representatives, officials of SBA and MBDA, and owners of high revenue producing minority business enterprises joined the lively day-long dialogue May 28th. The previous evening, after remarks by **Karen Mills**, the newly installed SBA Administrator, three new inductees, **Honda, Dell, and Avis Budget**, were brought into the club, now numbering sixteen companies, whose purchases from minority vendors have exceeded \$1 billion annually. Throughout the meetings emphasis was put on the need to bring minority businesses well into the mainstream of the country's economic life, with the special advantages of flexibility, innovation, and a main-line route to the culturally diverse markets of a population maturing in its diversity. *Minority* business does not need to remain a matter of *small* business. Dialogue on Diversity, representing Hispanic women entrepreneurs, was very proud to be part of the Roundtable sessions as an entity essentially concerned with exactly the potential residing in the diversity of American society.

JUDYTH KAY GILBERT

We are proud to congratulate our friend and National Advisory Committee member, Judyth Kay Gilbert, for her well earned recognition upon completing fifteen years of service with the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (the OPIC Bank). Ms. Gilbert serves as the Outreach coordinator for Women and Minority Owned Businesses, and is tasked with organizing OPIC conferences on International Investment. She was honored by the OPIC Service Award, presented by OPIC's Acting President, Dr. Lawrence Spinelli.

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ABOUT DIALOGUE ON DIVERSITY: Founded in 1991, Dialogue on Diversity is a international network of women entrepreneurs, 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 annual Entrepreneurship programs both celebrate and advance that promise.

These mini-Newsletters are issued each month. Please let us know if you would like a particular topic mentioned in the newsletter.