



DIALOGUE ON DIVERSITY

Over Twenty Five Years of Service to America's Diverse Communities

News Advisory

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DIALOGUE ON DIVERSITY POLICY FORUM 2018

Washington, D.C. April 23, 2018 – Dialogue on Diversity presented its twenty third annual Forum on Public Policy with emphasis on a bill of issues of special import for women, who, after all, led by Dialogue president Ma. Cristina Caballero, formed the founding cadre of policy aficionados in the early 1990s. Presented April 18th at the Busboys and Poets restaurant and bookshop just north of Downtown Washington, Ms. Caballero remarked, “the Forum takes up in order the painful question of domestic violence, moving to the uses of STEM studies, those zeroing in on technology and mathematics, and their special pertinence for young women and persons of minority ethnicities, who are otherwise apt to be passed over in the rugged rivalries nowadays for the preferred posts in a technologically advanced economic world.” Emphasis was directed to the specific questions of the labor market and its demands for technologically literate candidates for the desirable posts. The day’s agenda moved during the afternoon sessions to a detailed review of some of the pertinent questions touching immigration practice and law, and finally to the ultimately dismaying topic of human trafficking. **Angela Arboleda**, former Staff to then Majority Leader Harry Ried, now executive with the Herbalife food products colossus, with its marketing army of small entrepreneurs, related her own story of education and career steps.

Ivonne Díaz-Claisse, holder of a doctorate in mathematics, an advisor to ETS at Princeton, New Jersey, and head of HISPA an organization presenting Role Models of Latino and other minority ethnicities as vital proof, targeting high school and college level students, of the career opportunities and the economic and social advantage of plunging into the arduous learning experience that is the unique path to mastery in technical subjects.

Luz Patricia Mejía, an OAS official heading a commission monitoring the performance of Latin American countries in enforcing the anti-domestic violence agreement reached in 1994 at Belém do Pará (in North East Brazil). Ms. Mejía reports steady, but far from complete progress under the Convention, the first uniform DV standard, this with the OAS imprimatur, for the multiple Latin American countries. Three Speakers detailed work on the domestic violence problem within the U.S. **Natalia Otero**, Director of D.C. Safe, working with parties to DV cases in the D.C. Courts system, **Jessica Tuñón**, describing her Netwalking counseling firm, and **Melina Olmo**, reporting on the continuing stresses in Puerto Rico.

Lucero Ortíz, Legal Services Director at Carecen, a Washington-based immigration services group with a largely Central American clientèle, and **David Bier**, expert immigration analyst at the Cato Institute, gave respectively a close up view of the travails of immigrants, the fear that indocumentados themselves live with and the terror felt, by even those whose own immigration status is safe, for their household members and friends whose status might be disclosed if any of the kinship circle make official contacts. Mr. Bier, approached the question from the point of view of economic theory and statistical studies of the metrics of immigrant life: the inflows of migrants both through regular channels and through extra-legal border crossings and overstays, is quantitatively much below the historical rates of arrival during the enormously productive “long” nineteenth century (up to the 1920s). *with it massive economic growth and burgeoning cultural developments. Free labor flows, it is further argued, are the classic route to optimal allocation of resources over uses – which in this case means laborers, skilled and unskilled alike, ending up in the countries where their activity yields “the biggest bank for the buck.” Entrepreneurial and engineering and artistic creativity are at stake: is the society to be one of vitality or sterility?*

The final and most moving segment of the day's agenda was the dissection of the phenomenon of human trafficking, **Katherine Soltis** of Ayuda described efforts she has spearheaded in suburban Virginia in building an anti-trafficking network with a hot-line and counselors to begin repair of the psychic harms that mark persons escaping from the trafficked environment. **Jackie Reyes-Yanes** of the D.C. Office on Latino Affairs reviewed that office's extensive efforts against trafficking activity in D.C. itself. **Andrea Rojas-Solari** of Polaris, one of the country's premier anti-trafficking organizations, discussed strategies for prevention and repair of harms. **Christina Kiritz Arnold** heads Prevent Human Trafficking, active both in the U.S. and in Thailand and elsewhere in S.E. Asia. A video showed a young Thai girl being safely enrolled in a distant school to keep her from being alone as a target of traffickers in her own home when parents were off working.

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