

Wednesday,
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La Voz Diaria

The Daily Voice

The Daily Newsletter of NOPHNCSE's 11th Annual Training Conference

Chief Knight's Address

Report by Jolene Lau, Hawaii State
Public Affairs Specialist

Three years ago, Bruce Knight gave his first national address to the NOPHNCSE in Fort Worth, Texas. He felt that it was a great opportunity to welcome such a wonderful audience.

As we celebrate the second anniversary of the 2002 Farm Bill and the record investment in conservation, the Chief extends his sincere gratitude to each employee for implementing and delivering Programs with success.

address continued on back page

Serving Diverse Hispanic Communities Panel- Informative and Inspiring

by Reina O'Beck, NOPHNCSE Publicity Chair



The Hispanic farmer panel composed of guest speakers Manuel Jimenez, Tony Servano, Pedro Torres, and Brett Melone provided conference participants with a farmer's opinion and perspective on NRCS services.

These suggestions included implementing programs to improve marketing and land use.

Panelists received questions from facilitators Dr. Sharon Nance, Dr. Daniel

Mountjoy and audience, focusing on how farmers survive in the industry, their goals for the next five years, and how NRCS can best support small farmers.

Mountjoy encouraged employees to listen to farmers and assess their needs in order to serve them effectively.

Workshop Summaries:

Documentary- Mendez vs. Westminster: For all the Children/ Para Los Ninos- Summary by Lori Valadez, State PAS, Montana

When Sandra Robbie read about the Mendez vs. Westminster lawsuit she knew it was a story she had to tell. The end result was an Emmy award-winning documentary-Mendez vs. Westminster: For all the Children/ Para Los Ninos.

Mr. Mendez attended an integrated school in Southern California in the 1920s. He did



AUCTION TOTAL: \$5,332.50

Announcements:

- **Conservation Tour TODAY! Bring your hat, sunscreen, and insect repellent.**
- **Drop your \$10 donation for the hospitality room (Room 1629) at the registration table.**

Visit the Hospitality Room

Would you like to visit and network with NOPHNCSE friends? Come check out the Hospitality Room. Carlos Velasquez, Hospitality Room Chair, will be accepting donations at the registration table and in the room itself. He will also be the Hospitality Room Host! Thank you Carlos.

Tomorrow's Highlights:

- Cultural Competency
- Unconscious Discrimination
- Nat'l Civil Rights Committee
- Awards Banquet

Knight's address continued...

Chief Knight raised five challenges to us:

1. Make our Civil Rights Statement a reality by providing service to all segments of society. Starting with good outreach, we each have a moral obligation to serve the growing number of Hispanic producers.
2. Encourage limited resource farmers to apply for cost-share programs since the maximum levels have increased from previous years.
3. Encourage partner leaders to increase their workforce diversity because NRCS has an awards program that recognizes partners for their workforce diversity efforts.
4. Make sure that old and new Farm Bill Programs are provided to all eligible applicants by raising awareness to minority leaders with the opportunities available. Especially encourage minority TSPs to work with us, or provide management staff with identified barriers.
5. Continue to support workforce diversity. Chief Knight applauds the audience for participating in the training and networking at this conference.

Successful recruitment takes hard work and great effort. Chief Knight thanked all the Hispanic Managers for promoting diversity nationwide. Pleased with job announcements, Spanish publications, and student programs, Chief Knight stated that NRCS is the USDA agency with the highest rate of Hispanic recruitment.

Workshop Summaries continued...

Biggest change is from ArcView to ArcGIS, but with the options limited to customer service toolkit to simplify usage. ArcGIS will be a simplified version for users but have a full-blown GIS as an option. If all programming for toolkit users goes as planned, they won't need ArcGIS I training, only training in customer service toolkit 5.0 to learn new buttons and functionality. Development is still in progress.

XP Operating System- Luis Gamboa, ITC

Summary by Colette Kessler, Area PAS, South Dakota

Luis Gamboa provided tips for customizing the Windows XP operating system. Simple adjustments can make a more efficient workspace. Luis shared tricks from the Start menu through favorites to help "de-clutter" the desktop.

Alternative Dispute Resolution- Janis Lewis, ADR Specialist

Summary by Bill Conlin

Conflict will be with us until our last breath. However, the ADR program, begun only in the last few years, can make life easier by resolving conflict- especially dealt with in its early stages. ADR is successful resolving 1-on-1 conflicts and group conflicts. ADR is not adjudicative in finding resolution as is typically found in formal or adversary approaches such as EEO (Civil Rights) and administrative grievance (Human Resources). ADR has several options available as tools. These are facilitation, mediation and negotiation. Mediation is frequently chosen, which employs a neutral third party to resolve conflict. ADR is not a process to determine who is right or wrong or implore laws. The participants must agree to come in good faith. ADR has shown itself to be effective in resolving conflict. Contact www.info.usda.gov/nrcs/mgmt/adr.htm for more information.



Conference participants were intellectually stimulated during breakout sessions.

Workshop Summaries continued...

not understand why his children would not be granted the same opportunities 20 years later. All across the Southwest, Mexican children were segregated into their own schools at the time.

Mr. Mendez filed a lawsuit- and won. The Mendez case desegregated schools in California- seven years before Brown vs. Board of Education.

"The Mendez story was a great model of social change," said Robbie.

Customer Service Toolkit-

Next Generation

Summary by Amanda Hasemeier, Pennsylvania

Pilot for new customer service toolkit will be in August at 15 field sites. National rollout and training in October/ November.