



La Voz

Newsletter

April 2011

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President's Message

Angel Figueroa, President



It is now the beginning of April and our agency awaits a budget for the rest of the year. When you read this, it is possible that the budget for the Federal Government has been approved by Congress and the President, but as I am writing this message it has not been resolved. As a result of this delay, the NRCS Chief has rescinded employee travel approval to attend any of the employee organization training conferences. It is my hope that as the budget is resolved we will be approved to participate of the training offered to us in San Antonio. Our conference planning team is continuing to pursue the training conference. Agenda and registration information can be viewed on our Web site.

On another front, I have been working toward completing the NOPHNRCSE Strategic Plan and have asked for assistance from the strategic planning experts in NRCS. I hope that with their assistance we can complete this project and have it posted on our Web site. This strategic plan will help the organization focus on strategic goals that will benefit our members and strengthen our partnership with NRCS.

I would like to welcome the new members to NOPHNRCSE and hope that you take advantage of every opportunity that you may have.

Please remember to raise any concerns or ideas about our organization functions to your Regional Representatives, who will bring the ideas to the National Council.



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2011 Elections

Mike Castillo, Nominations/Elections Chairperson

In accordance with article X of the constitution, the Nominations/Elections Committee is conducting the 2011 elections of the following positions: Vice-President, Treasurer and Regional Representatives for the Southeast, South Central and West Regions. All ballots must be submitted by April 23, 2011. You can vote online at www.nophnrcse.org. You will need to be a member in good standing and login to the Web site to vote online.

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Moderators Needed

Milton Cortés, Moderators Committee

Details are getting into place for the 2011 NOPHNRCSE Training Conference in San Antonio, Texas. If you would like to help out as a moderator during one of the sessions that will be scheduled in the program, please let one of the contacts below know of your interest.

As a moderator, your primary duties will be to help those on a panel or guest speaker get settled for their presentation, welcome everyone to the session, and keep the program on time.

Milton Cortés – Chair Moderators Committee, milton.cortes@nc.usda.gov

Alvin Perez, Co-Chair, Alvin.perez@nc.usda.gov

Irma Hernández, Member, Irma.Hernandez@wdc.usda.gov

Sylvia Jenkins, Member, Sylvia.A.Jenkins@tx.usda.gov

Bianca Soto, Member, Bianca.soto@me.usda.gov

Let us know of your interest in participation with your supervisor's knowledge. Once you express willingness to be a moderator, you will receive follow-up information.

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The National Organization of Professional Hispanic NRCS Employees in Twitter

Diana Irizarry, Communications Committee

As you know, we are living in the social network era. Most of us have an account with Twitter, Facebook or some other social media. These are good tools to know what's new with: friends,

family, organizations, colleges and everything else that you can imagine. For this reason, the NOPHNCRCSE communication committee created an account in Twitter to let the world know about what's going on within the organization. The Twitter account can be found at <http://twitter.com/NOPHNCRCSE>. The email address NOPHNCRCSE@gmail.com has been created for the Twitter account. This new email address will avoid the use of personal email and let other members take over the Twitter account in the future. It is part of the communication committee's responsibility is to keep this account up to date. The tweets only allow up to 140 characters displayed on the profile page. If you want to use Twitter as a media to announce an activity, deadline or something related to NOPHNCRCSE you can contact me at diana.irizarry@nd.usda.gov.

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National Hispanic Heritage Month Theme Solicitation

Felipe Garcia-Santos, First Vice Chairperson, National Council of Hispanic Employment Program Managers

Each spring, the National Council of Hispanic Employment Program Managers (NCHEPM) solicits nominations for the National Hispanic Heritage Month theme. This year, the NCHEPM is requesting that submissions be sent to Felipe Garcia-Santos at Felipe.Garcia-Santos@va.gov.

Your nomination must include your name, title, organization, address, phone number, and email address so the winner can be contacted.

Please note that all nominations will be considered and the winning nomination will appear as the 2011 National Theme. Nominations must be received by COB Friday, April 15, 2011.

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Job Application Support Cadre Now Available

Cori Calvert, Recruitment and Career Development Committee Chairperson

The NOPHNCRCSE Recruitment and Career Development Committee members are proud to announce a new service to our NOPHNCRCSE members. The Job Application Support Cadre will be available to review resumes, Optional Application for Federal Employment Form OF-612, and knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) narrative responses to NRCS job applications. The Cadre will provide comments and suggestions on submitted application materials directly to the applicant. If you are a NOPHNCRCSE member who is applying for an NRCS position and would like to have your application material reviewed by a cadre member, please contact the Recruitment and Career Development Committee chair, Cori Calvert, at cori.calvert@ca.usda.gov. Your application material will be reviewed by a cadre member who will respond to you directly with comments and suggestions within nine business days.

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NOPHNCRCSE Latina Highlight, Tanya Robles, Human Resources Specialist – California

In an effort to encourage recruitment, retention, development and advancement of Hispanic women in NOPHNCRCSE as well as NRCS, the Recruitment and Career Development Committee as part of their Women's Issues subcommittee will be highlighting a female NOPHNCRCSE member in each issue of La Voz. If you would like to recommend a NOPHNCRCSE member to be highlighted in the next issue, feel free to email the Recruitment and Career Development Committee Chair (cori.calvert@ca.usda.gov) with your recommendation.



Tanya Robles, human resources specialist in the California state office, has been working with USDA for 15 years of which 9 years have been with NRCS. Tanya was born and raised in Los Angeles, California and started working with the USDA as a Clerk in the Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP). Shortly after completing her bachelor's degree in English from California State University, Sacramento she was hired as a Human Resources Assistant with NRCS. Tanya has served on the Civil Rights Advisory Committee for two years, as Hispanic Emphasis Program Manager for three years, as well as worked on various details and committees. She currently is a "SuperUser" helping headquarters to assist West Region Human Resources Staff with USA Staffing. Besides staffing, another large part of her duties is to manage student programs for NRCS California. Each year, California maintains between 30 to 40 students. She has had the opportunity to work with university officials, agency liaisons, environmental groups, and various other partners across the country looking for students who have a passion for conservation. Tanya says "I may not be an NRCS scientist, but I am still very proud and love my job."

Tanya's favorite thing about working with NRCS is during the student recruitment season she enjoys speaking with students about NRCS and what a great place it is to work. Tanya expressed "Most employees not only love what they do, but they also have a strong bond with each other. I am a believer; we are a true family agency. Helping staff an agency in which the majority of its employees love what they do for a living is definitely one of my favorite things about working for NRCS."

Tanya's favorite part of being a NOPHNRCSE member is the invaluable opportunity to network with other members and meet so many fellow NRCS employees at conferences that she keeps in touch with over the years and considers them her friends. Tanya would like to say to all new members of NOPHNRCSE "If you can attend, take advantage of NOPHNRCSE conferences; and while there network, and go out of your way to meet and really get to know other members and visitors. It's really great when you see those same people again and again each year!"

Tanya spends much of her free time running. She runs to the park, nearby trails, in her neighborhood, downtown, and wherever she travels. Depending on the season, she likes to train for full marathons and other races. Her passion for running helps her stay active as well as

release stress while exploring the outdoors. Her dream is to travel around Europe and later this month she will realize that dream when she visits various countries in Western Europe for the first time. She is very excited about this new adventure.

In the future Tanya's career ambitions are to continue to grow with NRCS. She realizes there is so much more to learn in the human resources field but she is always willing to accept new challenges and learn about other administrative management areas such as finance and contracting to acquire a better understanding of the Agency's bigger picture. She believes such experience will someday make her a good Human Resources Officer or State Administrative Officer as well as a better mentor.

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New Census Milestone: Hispanics Reach 50 Million

By HOPE YEN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) -- In a surprising show of growth, Hispanics accounted for more than half of the U.S. population increase over the last decade, exceeding estimates in many states as they crossed a new census milestone: 50 million, or 1 in 6 Americans.

Meanwhile, more than 9 million Americans checked more than one race category on their 2010 census form, up 32 percent from 2000, a sign of burgeoning multiracial growth in an increasingly minority nation.

The Census Bureau on Thursday was releasing its first set of national-level findings from the 2010 count on race and migration, detailing a decade in which rapid minority growth, aging whites and the housing boom and bust were the predominant story lines.

The final count: 196.8 million whites, 37.7 million blacks, 50.5 million Hispanics and 14.5 million Asians. Hispanics and Asians were the two fastest growing demographic groups, increasing about 42 percent from 2000.

In a surprising show of growth, Hispanics accounted for more than half of the U.S. population increase over the last decade, exceeding estimates in most states. Pulled by migration to the Sun Belt, America's population center edged westward on a historic path to leave the Midwest.

The Census Bureau on Thursday will release its first set of national-level findings from the 2010 count on race and migration, detailing a decade in which rapid minority growth, aging whites and increased suburbanization were the predominant story lines. Geographers estimate that the nation's population center will move southwest about 30 miles and be placed in or near the village of Plato in Texas County, Mo.

"There is excitement," said Brad Gentry, 48, of Houston, Mo., who publishes the weekly paper in Texas County, noting that the U.S. population center typically carries symbolic meaning as the nation's heartland. "It is putting a spotlight on a corner of the world that doesn't get much attention. Most residents are proud of our region and like the idea that others will learn our story through this recognition."

Racial and ethnic minorities are expected to make up an unprecedented 90 percent of the total U.S. growth since 2000, due to immigration and higher birth rates for Latinos.

Based on 2010 census data that has been released so far on a state-by-state basis, the number of Hispanics is now at roughly 47 million with figures for New York, Maine and the District of Columbia to come later Thursday. The 2009 census data estimated the Hispanic count in those

places at over 3 million, putting Hispanics on track to exceed 50 million. Demographers widely believe the 50 million threshold will be reached, with a total count close to 50.5 million.

Currently the fastest growing group, Hispanics now comprise 1 in 6 Americans; among U.S. children, Hispanics are roughly 1 in 4.

According to a Pew Hispanic Center analysis, the 2010 count of Hispanics was on track to be 900,000 higher than expected as their ranks surpassed census estimates in roughly 40 states. Many of their biggest jumps were in the South, including Alabama, Louisiana, North Carolina and Louisiana, where immigrants made large inroads over the last decade.

Asians for the first time had a larger numeric gain than African-Americans, who remained the second largest minority group at roughly 37 million. Based on the 2010 census results released by state so far, multiracial Americans were on track to increase by more than 25 percent, to about roughly 8.7 million.

The number of non-Hispanic whites, whose median age is now 41, edged up slightly to 197 million. Declining birth rates meant their share of the total U.S. population dropped over the last decade from 69 percent to roughly 64 percent.

"This really is a transformational decade for the nation," said William H. Frey, a demographer at Brookings Institution who has analyzed most of the 2010 data. "The 2010 census shows vividly how these new minorities are both leading growth in the nation's most dynamic regions and stemming decline in others. They will form the bulk of our labor-force growth in the next decade as they continue to disperse into larger parts of the country," he said.

The final figures come as states in the coming months engage in the contentious process of redrawing political districts based on population and racial makeup, with changes that analysts believe will result in more Hispanic-majority districts.

The population changes will result in a shift of 12 House seats and electoral votes affecting 18 states beginning in the 2012 elections. Most of the states picking up seats, which include Texas and Florida, are Republican-leaning, even as most of their growth is now being driven largely by Democrat-leaning Hispanics.

Among other findings:

- In at least 10 states, the share of children who are minorities has already passed 50 percent, up from five states in 2000. They include Mississippi, Georgia, Maryland, Florida, Arizona, Nevada, Texas, California, New Mexico and Hawaii.

- Over the last decade, Latino population growth was most rapid in the South, where many states have seen their Latino populations double since 2000. For the first time, Hispanic population growth outpaced that of blacks and whites in the region, changing the South's traditional "black-white" image.

- More than half of the cities with the largest African-American concentrations showed black population declines in the last decade, including Chicago and Detroit. In contrast, the suburbs of growing southern metro areas like Atlanta, Dallas and Houston saw some of their highest gains.

The Census Bureau calculates the mean U.S. population center every 10 years based on its national head count. The center represents the middle point of the nation's population distribution - the geographic point at which the country would balance if each of its 308.7 million residents weighed the same.

Plato, with a population of 109, is roughly 30 miles southwest of the present mean center in Phelps County, Mo. Based on current U.S. growth, which is occurring mostly in the South and West, the center of population is expected to cross into Arkansas or Oklahoma by midcentury.

The last time the U.S. center fell outside the Midwest was 1850, in the eastern territory now known as West Virginia. Its later move to the Midwest bolstered the region as the nation's cultural heartland in the 20th century, central to U.S. farming and Rust Belt manufacturing sites. Online: <http://www.census.gov/>

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Latin Sound Stamps



Legendary musicians and performers of the Latin sound, whose contributions have had a lasting influence on American music, will be honored Wednesday in Austin, TX, where the Postal Service will dedicate five commemorative Forever stamps.

“These colorful, vibrant images of our Latin music legends will travel on letters and packages to every household in America,” says Marie Therese Dominguez, vice president, Government Relations and Public Policy. “In this small way, we have created a lasting tribute to five extraordinary performers, and we’re proud and honored to share their legacy with Americans everywhere.”

The music legends featured on the new Forever stamps are noted for their contributions to several musical genres —Tejano, tango, samba, Latin jazz and salsa. The honorees are:

Tito Puente, the musical virtuoso known as *El Rey*, “The King.” With solos on the timbales and orchestral arrangements that have become Latin music classics, Puente helped bring Afro-Cuban and Caribbean sounds to mainstream audiences.

Carmen Miranda, who achieved fame as a samba singer before she became a celebrity in theater, film and radio. The “Brazilian Bombshell” appeared in 14 Hollywood musicals and recorded more than 300 songs.

Selena Quintanilla-Perez, known to fans simply as “Selena,” who helped transform and popularize Tejano music. A Grammy recipient, she broke many sales and awards records.

Carlos Gardel, one of the most celebrated tango artists of all time. Raised in Argentina, Gardel helped popularize the tango in the U.S., Europe and throughout Latin America.

Celia Cruz, who had a powerful contralto voice and a charismatic personality that endeared her to fans. The “Queen of Salsa” performed for more than 5 decades and recorded more than 50 albums.

The stamps go on sale tomorrow nationwide at Post Offices and online at usps.com/shop.

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