

**Managing & Understanding the Hispanic Workforce:  
A Diversity Management Workshop for Employers in the Forest Industries**

**March 27-28, 2006**

**Who Should Attend this Workshop?**

The USDA Forest Service's *Wood Education and Resource Center* and Virginia Tech's *Sloan Foundation Forest Industries Center* are co-sponsoring a diversity management workshop that is designed for employers in the forest industries, from primary producers to secondary manufacturers, who employ or who are considering employing members of the Hispanic workforce. This interactive training workshop provides you with the opportunity to increase your understanding and to improve your management skills while meeting the cultural, communication, and legal challenges of working with a diverse workforce.

**Workshop Objectives**

- To provide employers with an interactive learning opportunity to improve their skills in managing and understanding the communication, cultural, and legal challenges of employing a multi-cultural workforce.
- To assist employers in managing the legal aspects of employing Hispanic workers.  
*Discussion will include the I-9 verification process, the H2B Program, employer compliance issues and end with a question and answer session with a lawyer specializing in immigration.*
- To overcome the language barrier.  
*Activities will include the opportunity to learn new Spanish language skills or enhance existing Spanish language skills that are needed to communicate with a diverse Hispanic workforce. Emphasis will be placed on industry specific vocabulary and phrases.*
- To guide employers in creating a business culture that values diversity and that provides a supportive environment for Hispanic employees.  
*Discussion will focus on employee advocacy at work and in the community.*
- To provide education in cultural awareness training, multicultural supervision, and multicultural team development.  
*Discussion will focus on blending cultures in the workplace and promoting from within.*
- To provide the latest resources and the most up to date information related to managing the Hispanic workforce.  
*Information will include employee resources, job and safety training resources, language training resources, and best practices from other industries.*
- To create a forum for employers in the forest industry to share their solutions to common management problems in the areas of hiring, training, retaining, and managing this multicultural workforce with the goal of developing a list of best practices specific to the forest industries.

## WORKSHOP AGENDA

**Monday, March 27, 2006**

7:30 a.m. Registration and Continental Breakfast

8:30 Welcome and Introduction of Speakers  
*Steve Milauskas, Director, USDA Forest Service and the Wood Education Resource Center*

*David Brinberg, Director, Sloan Foundation Forest Industries Center at Virginia Tech,  
Robert O. Goodykoontz Professor of Marketing*

### *Breakout Session I: Improving Multicultural Management Skills*

9:00 Exploring Cultural Differences and Overcoming Communication Barriers. Discussion will focus on creating a business culture that values diversity and that provides a supportive environment for Hispanic employees.  
*Alfredo Martinez, Hispanic Specialist Group, University of Georgia*

10:30 Mid-Morning Break

10:45 Creating a Workplace Culture that Supports Diversity. Discussion will focus cultural awareness training, multicultural supervision, multicultural team development, fostering multicultural acceptance in the workplace, and advocating Hispanic employees at work and in the community.  
*(tbd)*

12:00 Lunch (Provided)

### *Breakout Session II: Enhancing Communication and Improving Safety*

1:00 p.m. Survival Spanish for the Forest Industries. Activities will include the opportunity to learn new Spanish language skills or enhance existing Spanish language skills needed to communicate in the multicultural workplace. Emphasis will be placed on industry specific vocabulary and phrases through interactive role play.  
*Barbara Kraft, Virginia Tech*

2:30 Break

2:45 Beyond the Interpreter: Overcoming Language and Literacy Barriers to Safety and Training. Discussion will focus on alternative communication and training tools such as the visual training aids and mentoring as a compliment to language education.  
*Barbara Kraft, Virginia Tech*

3:15 Afternoon Break

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- 3:30 Factors for Successful Employee Training. Discussion will focus on communication strategies for developing effective job orientation and training methods to maximize employee job understanding and safety.  
*Dr. Alfredo Martinez, Hispanic Specialist Group, University of Georgia*
- 4:00 Roundtable Discussion. The speaker panel will facilitate an interactive session where participants are invited to share ideas relating to the issues of multicultural workforce management strategies, overcoming communication barriers, and creating a workplace culture that embraces diversity.  
*Panelists: Alfredo Martinez, Barbara Kraft, and Mary Connerly*
- 5:00 Adjourn
- 6:00 --- Dinner at Pipestem Resort/Other

**Tuesday, March 28, 2006**

*Group Session I: Keeping It Legal*

- 8:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast
- 8:30 Employing a Legal Workforce. Topics of discussion will include avoiding common immigration pitfalls, assessing immigration status and complying with the I-9 process, and obtaining employment authorization. A presentation of new legislative developments will also be covered.  
*Bill Benos, Williams Mullen, Richmond, Virginia*
- 9:15 To Be or Not to H2B? Discussion will include an overview of H2 programs, the H2B program as a resource for employers in the forest industries, and guidelines for participating in the H2B program.  
*Libby Whitley, President, Mid-Atlantic Solutions, Inc.*
- 10:00 Job Safety in a Multicultural Workplace. Discussion will focus on decreasing job related injuries and improving employee relations by developing a comprehensive safety program to address the unique safety training needs of a multicultural workforce.  
*Justine Flint, Corporate Safety Director, The Brickman Group*
- 10:45 Break
- 11:00 Roundtable Discussion. The speaker panel will facilitate an interactive session where participants will have the opportunity to ask questions and share experiences relating to the safety, legal, and employment issues presented earlier.  
*Panelists: Bill Benos, Libby Whitley, and Justine Flint*
- 12:00 Lunch Provided

*Group Session II: Best Practices*

- 1:00 p.m. Panel Discussion of Best Practices From Industry Representatives

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*Virginia company representatives (i.e. The Brickman Group, Old Virginia Brick, Valleydale Foods, Rowe Furniture) tbd*

- 2:00            Group Discussion Identifying Best Practices for Employers in the Forest Industries. Participants will come together to share their solutions to common management problems in the areas of hiring, training, retaining, and managing a multicultural workforce. A list of best practices specific to employers in the forest industries will be compiled and forwarded to all workshop participants.
- 3:00            Workshop Evaluations and Adjourn

### **Fee and Registration**

(Insert information)

### **Location and Lodging**

(Insert information)

### **Course Instructors**

Barbara Kraft, Spanish for the Green Industry, Virginia Tech

(Insert bio)

Alfredo Martinez, Hispanic Specialists Group, University of Georgia

(Insert bio)

William J. Benos, ESQ, Williams Mullen, Richmond, Virginia

(Insert bio)

Libby Whitley, Mid-Atlantic Solutions, Inc., Lovington, Virginia

(Insert bio)

Justine Flint, The Brickman Group, Gaithersburg, Maryland

(Insert bio)

Mary Connerly, Professor of Management, Virginia Tech (tbd)

(Insert bio)

Guest Panelists from Industry (tbd)

Representative from the U.S. Forest Service (tbd)