

# Hispanic Employee Affinity and Network Groups Resource Guide



**NCLR**  
40 YEARS  
*A Stronger  
America Together*



Making the  
**CONNECTION**  
in Corporate America

sodexo\*

The National Council of La Raza (NCLR) – the largest national Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization in the United States – works to improve opportunities for Hispanic Americans. Through its network of nearly 300 affiliated community-based organizations (CBOs), NCLR reaches millions of Hispanics each year in 41 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. To achieve its mission, NCLR conducts applied research, policy analysis, and advocacy, providing a Latino perspective in five key areas – assets/investments, civil rights/immigration, education, employment and economic status, and health. In addition, it provides capacity-building assistance to its Affiliates who work at the state and local level to advance opportunities for individuals and families.

Founded in 1968, NCLR is a private, nonprofit, nonpartisan, tax-exempt organization headquartered in Washington, DC. NCLR serves all Hispanic subgroups in all regions of the country and has operations in Atlanta, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Phoenix, Sacramento, San Antonio, and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

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# Hispanic Employee Affinity and Network Groups Resource Guide

Making the  
**CONNECTION**  
in Corporate America

National Council of La Raza  
Washington, DC

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#### **Special Thanks**

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Sodexo is committed to providing a diverse and inclusive work environment and  
has received widespread recognition for its leadership in this area.



# **NCLR**

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or visit our website at [www.NCLR.org](http://www.NCLR.org).

## FOREWORD

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In early 2007, the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), with the support of Sodexo, launched a research initiative to find out where Hispanic Employee Affinity/Network Groups are across industry sectors and how they are organized and to establish a connection for future opportunities to enhance workforce development opportunities, partnership around key initiatives, and promote diversity in Corporate America. This valuable information is now compiled and presented here as a unique resource guide produced by NCLR of Hispanic Employee Affinity/Network Groups in Corporate America. Through this guide, affinity groups can easily connect with one another as well as with Hispanic community groups and organizations working to improve the quality of life for Hispanics in the U.S.

In addition, we asked participating companies key questions about the role of affinity groups in their organizations and the value they find in supporting them. The feedback we received provided insight into how Latino employees are impacted by affinity groups and what companies seek to gain by providing a platform for dialogue and interaction among distinct groups.

Key points identified through the effort include:

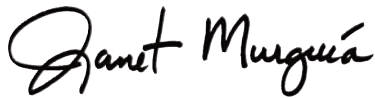
- Nearly 90% of responding companies stated having a formal Hispanic Employee Affinity/Network Group.
- More than 80% of responding companies stated a desire to be in contact with other affinity groups as well as with Hispanic-serving organizations to share knowledge and information.
- All of the responding companies stated that the main purpose of their affinity groups is networking.
- Companies that have supported diversity and inclusion initiatives for longer periods of time and that apply comprehensive approaches to meeting diversity goals view affinity groups as their best resource for talent recruitment, retention, and development.

It is evident that Hispanic Employee Affinity/Network Groups represent a powerful resource for talent recruitment, retention, and development as well as for community engagement and service. They are well organized and represent a long history within many of our nation's leading companies. The opportunity to further use the resources presented by Hispanic Employee Affinity/Network Groups is yet to be tapped. NCLR envisions many opportunities, starting with creating a first-of-its-kind dialogue with

this vast network of Latinos throughout the country to positively impact diversity challenges within Corporate America and to engage Latinos in meaningful causes and events important to our community on a national and local level.

We hope that you find this resource guide to be a useful tool in your work and look forward to receiving your comments for creating an updated version in the years to come.

Regards,



Janet Murguía  
NCLR President and CEO



Dr. Rohini Anand  
Sodexo Senior Vice President and  
Global Chief Diversity Officer

## AFFINITY AND NETWORK GROUPS

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Predating current diversity and inclusion initiatives, Hispanic Employee Affinity/Network Groups have long provided a meeting place for individuals with common interests and backgrounds and are now becoming more organized, better funded, highly visible, and more business-focused in their missions. Groups today are positioned to help their employers identify and grow the best talent available in the market. Yet, we see in the data that, although leadership recognizes this opportunity, many are struggling with “activating” programs to strategically access the talent we know is out there..

While there is no standard definition of an affinity group used across corporations, we found that it is generally described as:

- Voluntary, employee-driven association organized around shared interests or characteristics
- Offers employees an opportunity to share experiences, provides advice, and addresses unique concerns of its employee members
- Serves as a resource for orienting new employees, offering employees a forum for the exchange of ideas, and providing personal and professional leadership opportunities
- Serves as a resource to the company by promoting diversity and cultural understanding and awareness
- Helps the company understand the value and business benefit of diversity and inclusion across the company

## OBJECTIVE

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While Latino employees are joining these groups and employers are supporting them, we still do not see adequate numbers of Latino representation in key roles at many U.S. corporations. An opportunity exists to examine how to harness the energy within affinity groups to help drive more recruitment, retention, and advancement of Latinos within Corporate America.

An important objective of affinity groups is to engage Latinos to participate in critical community events and civic opportunities which have an impact on the lives of Latinos everywhere. It is clear from respondents and one-on-one phone interviews we

conducted with a few Hispanic Employee Affinity/Network Group leaders that individuals want to “get involved” and want to feel that they are part of something larger than their single group. Through this new resource guide, there may be an opportunity to create a dialogue among groups so that members can learn from one another and together give back to the Latino community in more impactful ways.

The research effort as a whole provided a positive snapshot of the state-of-the-state where Hispanic Employee Affinity/Network Groups are concerned. Yet, as always there is a strong opportunity for improvement to diversity challenges presented by the current low numbers of Latinos in leadership positions within Corporate America. In addition, a vehicle for engaging large numbers of Latinos who are in the workforce comes at a time when, as a community, we need as much networking, collaboration, and sharing of information as possible.

## METHOD

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To collect information, a strategic online questionnaire was developed including 30 key questions related to Hispanic Employee Affinity/Network Groups. The online survey was shared with a preapproved list of contacts across Corporate America via a personal invitation from NCLR President and CEO Janet Murguía and her team. Respondents were promised confidentiality and given four weeks to complete the survey. All responses were gathered by Sodexo’s technical assistance team and shared with J Priego Communications and NCLR project leaders for review on an ongoing basis.



## RESPONDENTS

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Fifty distinct companies responded, including:

- Forty-four companies which provided their name and completed the survey (Contact information begins on page 10)
- Six companies which completed the survey but did not provide their name

ADP	Freddie Mac
Aetna Inc.	The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company
A.G. Edwards & Sons, Inc.	IBM Corporation
Alcatel-Lucent	Intel Corporation
Alcoa	J.C. Penney Company, Inc.
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Bausch & Lomb	Pacific Gas & Electric Company
Charles Schwab Corporation	Pepsi Bottling Group
Chevron Corporation	Prudential Financial
Citi	Rockwell Collins
The Coca-Cola Company	Ryder System, Inc.
ConAgra Foods	SC Johnson
Coors Brewing Company	Shell Oil Company
CSX Corporation	Sodexo
Darden Restaurants, Inc.	Time Warner Inc.
Eastman Kodak Company	Wells Fargo & Company
Ford Motor Company	Yum! Brands, Inc.

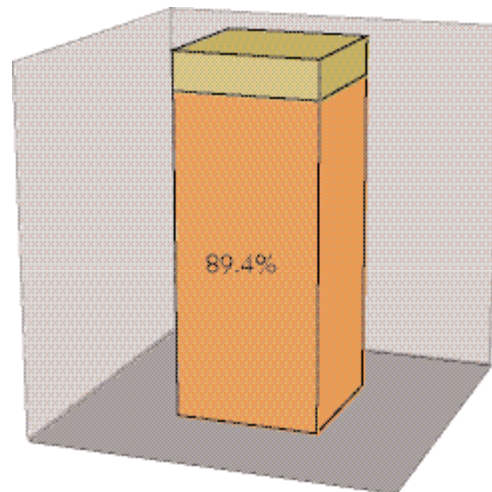
## KEY FINDINGS AND INSIGHTS

The research revealed several interesting findings regarding affinity/network groups which may help to frame future discussions about how best to create the most diverse and inclusive workplaces possible and show us the elements of a truly effective affinity group. As the topic of diversity and inclusion in the workplace gains more and more recognition, we are certain to hear a great deal more about the role of affinity groups.

### Do most companies in Corporate America have employee network/affinity groups?

- The majority of responding companies have some form of employee network group in place; 89.4% reported having a specific Hispanic Employee Affinity/Network Group.

COMPANIES WHO HAVE A SPECIFIC  
HISPANIC AFFINITY/NETWORK  
GROUP IN PLACE



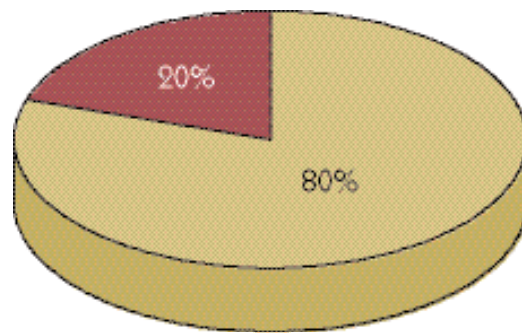
### Why do U.S. companies have Hispanic Employee Affinity/Network Groups?

- Although most companies reported having affinity groups in place, they do not all have the same type of mission or reason for existing. More than ten different reasons were submitted as rationale for having affinity groups.
- The companies who have been pursuing diversity and inclusion goals for a longer period of time and that have more sophisticated approaches for meeting their goals view these groups as imperative to recruiting, retaining, and developing the best talent in the market. Affinity groups are a pipeline of talent.
- A significant number of companies leverage their affinity groups not only for talent but also for customer insights and product testing/feedback.
- Very few companies view the groups as solely existing for sharing of culture and tradition, although a small number did report this as their main activity.

### In what types of activities do these groups engage?

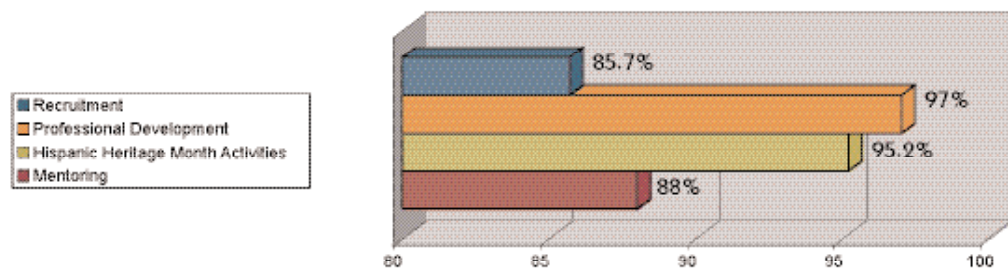
- 80% also said that they engage in some type of community outreach activity.

PERCENT WHO ENGAGE IN SOME TYPE OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH ACTIVITY



- Other activities reported in high percentages include :
  - Recruitment – 85.7%
  - Professional Development – 97%
  - Hispanic Heritage Month Activities – 95.2%
  - Mentoring – 88%

TYPES OF ACTIVITIES



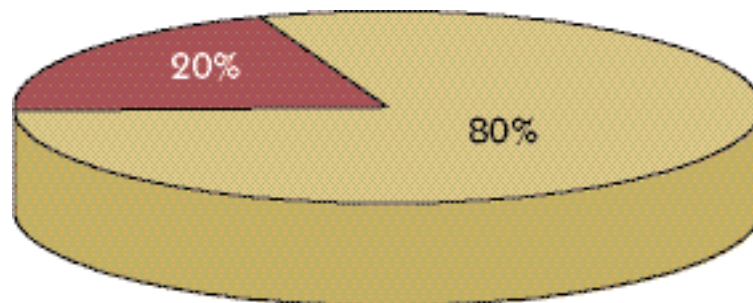
### Are Hispanic Employee Affinity/Network Groups well received by other groups within corporate organizations?

- Unfortunately, affinity groups are not entirely supported or embraced, with nearly 22% of respondents saying that the groups have been or are currently met with negative sentiment for a variety of reasons.

### How are the Hispanic Employee Affinity/Network Groups supported internally?

- Most groups have a management-level executive assigned to oversee their activity and also receive a budget allocation. This senior executive is usually the Chief Diversity Officer, a position which we noted existed for nearly 80% of respondents.
- We found disparity in how support is translated into financial terms for the groups with annual budgets ranging from \$5,000 a year to upwards of \$65,000 a year. The amount allocated for a group did not appear to correlate with the size or revenue of responding companies and is possibly dictated more by a group's activities and individual missions.

80% OF GROUPS HAVE MANAGEMENT LEVEL EXECUTIVE FOR OVERSIGHT



### **Is there an opportunity to network between groups at different companies and work together toward common goals benefiting the Latino community?**

- All respondents are interested in networking and being in touch with other groups for information-sharing and dialogues on best practices. It appears that the members of these groups are eager to meet other Latino professionals across companies to network, learn from each other, and collaborate on work in the community.
- More than 80% of respondents stated that they would be interested in receiving information about Hispanic community activities and issues.

### **How large are Hispanic Employee Affinity/Network Groups?**

- Respondents shared a wide range of membership numbers starting at 15 for one group and going as high as 2,200 for another. The average group appeared to have between 100 and 200 members.
- Members are spread across various cities and states in many cases, and the groups are often divided into regional chapters.

We hope that this first edition of the NCLR Hispanic Employee Affinity/Network Group resource guide is useful to all who receive it. Having the resources to make connections among Hispanic groups operating within Corporate America is important and can help to make a real difference in advancing a variety of causes which are meaningful to Hispanics in this nation.

We look forward to sharing updated and expanded information for your reference in 2009 through a second resource guide as well as through information and resources presented through the NCLR Annual Conference and other special events. Please visit [www.nclr.org](http://www.nclr.org) for up-to-date information on events and opportunities.

Hispanic Employee Affinity  
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Resource Guide:

Making the  
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