

# Hitting a Home Run With a Diversity Initiative



A Workshop for the  
National Head Start Association's  
32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Training Conference  
in Orlando, Florida

Presented by  
**The National Transportation Center for School Children**

A Division Of:



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*A Planning and Consulting Company*

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# Diversity Self-Assessment

1. Do you have a good working knowledge of the cultures, values, backgrounds and histories of stakeholders in your organization?
2. Are you aware of stereotypes that you possess regarding diverse stakeholders in your organization?
3. Have you set personal goals that will help you appreciate those who are different from you?
4. Are you aware of the impact of prejudice on underrepresented groups in your organization?
5. Do you value the contributions made by diverse stakeholders?

# DIVERSITY--THEN & NOW

1. What was your neighborhood like when you were growing up?
2. What is the neighborhood like now?
3. Is your neighborhood different or are you different?
4. What did you like most/least about your old neighborhood?
5. What do you like most/least about your new neighborhood?

# The West Report

*Charting Pathways to Excellence*

August 2004

## SCORING BIG MAY MEAN HITTING A HOME RUN WITH A DIVERSITY PROGRAM

Many companies want to move from good to great and are searching for new approaches and strategies to reach this next step. Some companies have found that brokering the talents and “know how” of a more diverse employee base has improved their overall performance. Supporting this trend is the recently published report of DiversityInc Magazine on the “Top 50 Companies for Diversity.” The chart below identifies the characteristics most frequently aligned with diversity programs of these companies.

### DIVERSITY PROGRAMS OF THE TOP 50 COMPANIES PROMOTE THE USE OF

**CEO Involvement** to assure that there is a champion who leads the diversity initiative and holds key people in the organization accountable for their actions and inactions.

**Executive Leadership** to promote diversity at all levels of the organization.

**Mentoring** to promote effective matching of minority employees with tenured employees in order to learn more about the business and the corporate culture as a means to improve advancement opportunities.

**Additional Compensation/bonuses** for employees and managers to gain their “buy in” and assistance in achieving diversity goals.

**Metrics** that provide for an accurate profile of the company so that changes needed to the diversity initiative can be made.

**Supplier Diversity** policies that promote exposure to and increased use of minority and women-owned businesses.

**Affiliations** with minority-based organizations in the community such as the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, National Association of Women Business Owners, Minority Supplier Development Councils and the Urban League to demonstrate involvement with off-site diversity programs and initiatives.

**Tracking Techniques** to account for and highlight progress made toward meeting goals.

### WHAT IS THE ROI FROM YOUR DIVERSITY PROGRAM?

#### Organizational Benefits

- ◆ Enhanced global markets
- ◆ Expanded employee talent pool
- ◆ Improved employee performance
- ◆ More satisfied, diversified customers
- ◆ Lower employee turnover rate
- ◆ Improved bottom line
- ◆ Less stressful work environment
- ◆ Exceptional quality in products and services
- ◆ Increased customer loyalty

#### Employee Benefits

- ◆ Committed and focused employees
- ◆ Communications up and conflict down
- ◆ Peer/supervisor relationships improve
- ◆ Positive attitudes increase
- ◆ Productivity rises
- ◆ Employees eager to achieve goals
- ◆ More satisfied employees
- ◆ Teamwork participation up

## USEFUL TIPS TO SCORE BIG WITH YOUR DIVERSITY PROGRAM

- Brainstorm ideas addressing the benefits and the barriers, the key players, the focus, timeframe and priorities
- Develop a vision, program goals and objectives as well as strategies
- Establish a Diversity Steering Committee that is lead preferably by the CEO or a Senior Executive who is a Direct Report to the CEO
- Allocate adequate resources to support the initiative
- Brand the initiative
- Determine methods to evaluate the initiative
- Distribute widely successes and lessons learned from the initiative

## BARRIERS THAT MAY ADVERSELY IMPACT YOUR DIVERSITY PROGRAM

- ◆ Management resists change
- ◆ There are inadequate resources (both human and capital) to support the initiative
- ◆ The initiative is too narrow, focusing generally on employee recruitment rather than employee recruitment and retention, education, procurement, and promotion
- ◆ Management is not held accountable for changes and does little to promote the initiative
- ◆ Implemented as a HR goal as opposed to a strategic business plan or goal

## PUT YOUR DIVERSITY PROGRAM IN THE BALL PARK

Contact



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## WE CAN HELP YOU!

- Expand Your Understanding of Diversity in the Workplace and Contracting
- Recruit and Retain a Diverse Workforce and Customers
- Develop Policies and Procedures that Are Consistent with Employment Laws
- Manage and Resolve Conflict of a Diverse Workforce
- Improve Employee Satisfaction with a Diverse Workforce
- Enhance Effective Communication among Diverse Groups
- Integrate Diversity Goals into Performance Appraisals and Strategic Plans

### References:

1. M. H. West & Co., Inc. diversity project engagements and research, training manuals, surveys, and workshops
2. Best Practices in Diversity Management & Recruitment Seminar, June 21, 2004 ([www.hr.com](http://www.hr.com))
3. Employee Surveys: the Action Management Challenge Seminar, July 22, 2004 ([www.hr.com](http://www.hr.com))
4. DiversityInc Magazine, June/July 2004, Vol. 3, No. 3
5. Greater Richmond Partnership Inc., "The Young and the Restless: How Richmond Competes for Talent." July, 2004
6. Richmond Times Dispatch, June 26, 2004



# DIVERSITY FLASH

## M. H. West & Co., Inc., Issue 2, Volume I

September, 2003

M. H. West & Co., Inc. introduces "Diversity Flash" to keep clients and friends abreast of diversity issues and trends. This publication supports as well the firm's Diversity Consulting Group initiative. This month's edition focuses on the Changing demographics and its impact on the manner in which companies may transact and grow their business. Also featured are recent successful initiatives undertaken by public and private sector businesses. For questions or comments, please email us at [mhwestcon@aol.com](mailto:mhwestcon@aol.com).

### What is Diversity?

As companies decide to engage in a diversity initiative, they need to settle on defining diversity. A broader definition of diversity that describes the unique makeup of the organization's employees and customers is favored among companies. Generally, diversity means expressing tolerance and appreciation to differences in **Gender, Age, Education level, Race and Ethnicity, Culture, Religion, Disability, Work Experience, Socio-Economic Status and Sexual orientation.**

#### This Month is Hispanic Heritage Celebration

*Hispanic heritage month is gaining much stronger momentum, as consumers and companies are recognizing the contribution of the Latinos to the U.S. society. The celebration starts September 15 and runs through October 15. A number of corporate giants such as Heineken, Burger King and General Motors are honoring Latino culture through promoting educational and cultural movements of Latinos locally and nationally. Corporations are using such events to reach the rapidly growing Latino consumer base.*

### Latino Demographics

- ❖ From 1990, **Latinos** grew by **58%**.
- ❖ **Thirty-eight** percent of the U.S. population, or **38.8 million** is comprised of Latinos.
- ❖ According to Census Bureau numbers, **39%** of all minority-owned business are owned by Latinos; and from those **28%** are owned by Latino women.
- ❖ **Ten** percent of the U.S. residents speak Spanish, and **20%** of school children speak Spanish at home, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- ❖ Based on Census Bureau 2000 results, **28.1 million** people, which is **10.7%** of the U.S. population, speak Spanish at home, and **49%** of them speak English less than "very well".

### Diversity Factoids

- ❖ Based on the Census findings, the outcomes of the economic recession were felt mainly by **minorities** and **Midwesterners**.
- ❖ The number of the U.S. residents living in poverty increased by **1.7 million** last year, and the median household income declined by **1.1%**, according to the Census Bureau.
- ❖ Between 2001 and 2002, the official poverty rate rose from **11.7%** to **12.1%**, leaving **34.6 million** people below the poverty line
- ❖ Among minorities, **African-Americans** suffered the worst hit since the years of steady economic growth in the 1990's.
- ❖ The poverty rate among African-Americans rose to **24.1%** from **22.7%** a year earlier and median income fell by **3%**.
- ❖ A significant decrease in median income is also evident among other minorities; for Asians, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders the median income fell by **4.5%** and for Hispanics by **2.9%**.
- ❖ Although the poverty rates haven't changed much from 2001, the people under **age 18** and over **age 65** felt the effect of the recession much stronger than the rest of the workforce (people aged 18 to 64).

### Legal Issues

Two charges of racial, sexual and age discrimination have been filed against the media giant, CNN. The allegations indicate that the CNN Productions, Turner Broadcasting Systems and AOL Time Warner have kept news networks racially segregated in order to appeal to specific demographic groups.

The lawsuits hit CNN at the same time the media giant is facing a battle with Fox News for viewers and the resignation of Leon Harris, one of the top African-American newscasters. Although, there is no indication of the linkage between his resignation and the lawsuits at this time, Harris says he believes that there are more cases against CNN.

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## Consumers

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Reaching new Americans effectively requires both a company's cultural sensitivity and innovative thinking. Organizations need to recognize that their marketing strategies have to adjust as the market demographics shift, in order to reach the desired population.

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## Diversifying the Workforce

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Some successful tactics used by companies in recruiting minorities:

1. Start recruiting from middle schools by educating youth about professions and careers available in the company.
2. Recruit from community colleges, universities and vocational trade schools that have a reputation for targeting minority students.
3. Use your existing minority workforce as a resource for recruiting.
4. Attend and hire from minority career fairs.
5. Develop fliers and ad campaigns that appeal to targeted job applicants.
6. Design website that demonstrates your commitment to diversity recruitment.
7. Use ethnic publications, radio, TV and websites to advertise jobs.

### **TIPS...BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH DIVERSE CUSTOMER AND EMPLOYEE BASES**

- ❖ *Commit to diversifying your workforce through effective recruiting and retention strategies.*
- ❖ *To succeed in the new marketplace, your firm has to mirror your target market.*
- ❖ *Develop your own corporate diversity definition that represents all your employee and customer communities.*
- ❖ *Use advertisements that speak your consumers' language. (For instance, the Hispanic population prefers that companies use Spanish language when talking to them).*
- ❖ *Use creative and appealing marketing tactics to communicate your brand message to your diverse customers.*
- ❖ *Become proficient in ethnic marketing through a myriad of traditional (radio, newspaper and TV) and electronic media (the Internet).*
- ❖ *Appeal to all customers by customizing your marketing message to different target audiences.*

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## Supplier Diversity

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*Steve Sanger*, who is a chairman and *CEO of General Mills*, received an award for corporate executive of the year at the 27th Annual Business Opportunity Fair of the Minnesota Minority Supplier Development Council (MMSDC).

Last year, the company spent **\$189 million** with minority-owned vendors and is planning on spending **\$300 million** by 2007.

### Upcoming Events

- Oct. 08 - **National Urban League job fair in Boston, MA** ([www.naacpcareerfair.com](http://www.naacpcareerfair.com))
- Oct. 09-11 - **Asian American Advertising Federation (3AF), New York City, NY** ([www.3AF.org](http://www.3AF.org))
- Oct. 11 - **1st Annual Latino Family Festival in St. Paul, MN** ([DiversityInc.com](http://DiversityInc.com))
- Oct. 13, 21, 23, 28 - **NAACP job fairs** ([www.naacpcareerfair.com](http://www.naacpcareerfair.com))
- Oct. 14-15 - **First Multicultural Foodservice & Hospitality Association National Symposium, Wyndham Anatole in Dallas, Texas** ([DiversityInc.com](http://DiversityInc.com))
- Oct. 27-29 - **Workplace Diversity Conference and Exposition in New York City** ([SHRM.org](http://SHRM.org))
- Nov. 5 - **EEO Workplace Symposium "Diversity in Action: Strategies for Success", Richmond, VA** ([www.urbanleaguerichmond.org](http://www.urbanleaguerichmond.org))

### Who Are We?

**M. H. West & Co., Inc.** is a leading planning and consulting firm that is recognized for innovative and practical solutions to challenges and opportunities experienced by its clients. The firm specializes in management, education and planning services.

## Think Global, Think Diversity!

Material adapted from:  
M. H. West & Co., Inc. project work and training resources;  
"Hispanic Heritage Month: Gaining Clout in Mainstream", *DiversityInc.com*, September 15, 2003; "More Americans in Poverty in 2002, Census Study Says". The New York Times, Sept. 26, 2003; "Charges of Racial, Sexual, Age Discrimination hit CNN", *DiversityInc.com*, Sept. 9, 2003; Star Tribune; "American Mosaic", Washington Business Journal, September 29, 2003



## About The National Transportation Center for School Children

The **National Transportation Center for School Children** (NTCSC) is a division of M. H. West & Co., Inc. and located in Richmond, Virginia. Marilyn H. West following three years of SBIR grant support to evaluate transportation systems of Head Start Programs nationwide created the NTCSC. The Center serves as a resource, consults with and offers technical assistance services to Head Start and other education and health and human services programs on a wide range of transportation issues. The Center publishes *The Transporter*, a FREE publication that contains guidance and tips on how to build and maintain transportation systems that promote the safe transport of children, youth and other passengers.

### The Mission of the NTCSC

To promote high standards and best practices on the transport of children and youth by serving as a nationwide resource and clearinghouse that creates strategies, models, plans, publications and other tools and makes these available to providers of transportation in the private and public sectors.

### How the NTCSC Can Help

The NTCSC can help promote excellence in the performance of transportation programs and solve issues and challenges such as laws, regulations, high driver turnover, vehicle age and high maintenance costs, long bus routes, negative passenger behavior, limited parental involvement, scarce financial resources, and operational efficiencies.

### About the Presenter

Marilyn H. West has over 35 years working with health, human service and education programs and agencies throughout the United States. She holds a graduate degree in health administration from the University of Pittsburgh (PA) and undergraduate degree in mathematics from Waynesburg College (PA). She is the founder and owner of her 14-year-old management consulting company of which the NTCSC is now a division. She serves on numerous boards in the public and private sectors in a leadership position. She is involved with the business community working on statewide and national issues involving healthcare, education and economic issues. Has participated in business process optimization and strategic and financial planning initiatives and has led the business process reengineering, organizational development and strategic planning initiatives for the firm. Has also substantial expertise in regulatory impact work, business counseling and development, community planning, workforce development, human resources, survey research, government relations and lobbying. Other areas of specialization are team building, continuous quality improvement, survey research, focus group and survey work, motivational speaking, customer service improvement, human relations, conflict management and retreat facilitation. Has assisted many organizations reverse poor financial performance, dysfunctional workforces and poor relationships between organizations and people. Serves as executive coach and mentor.

**For more information visit the NTCSC online at  
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