



**Message From The President**

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Eric Bencomo  
President  
SF HAAC

SF HAAC Members,

I hope everyone had a great Summer and enjoyed time with your family and friends. During the Summer, SF-HAAC was busy hosting a variety of events throughout the San Francisco Region. We recently held two Limitless workshops in Fresno and Sacramento.– both workshops were successful events. In this edition of our Si Se Puede newsletter, we will highlights these events and you will hear first-hand testimony on the positive impact these workshops have on our members. We will also highlight a recent event in Los Angeles, were HAAC members had the opportunity to hear Tri-Counties Area Director, Glen Banks talk about work-life balance and the importance of leadership. In honor of Mexican Independence Day, we will be sharing an article submission on the history of Mexican Independence Day which is celebrated every year on September 16th

Lastly, I am pleased to announce our first ever SF-HAAC GALA on Friday, October 3, 2014. We will celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month and take a moment to highlight and reminisce all of HAAC’s accomplishments. I welcome you to join us in celebrating this fun-filled event.

I hope you enjoy this Si Se Puede newsletter and I look forward to seeing you at the Gala event.

Regards,

*Eric Bencomo*

SF-HAAC President

*Dreams are extremely important. You can't do it unless you imagine it.”  
George Lucas*



Message From The Vice President



Albert Meraz  
Vice President  
SF HAAC

As another year comes to a close, it's a great time to reflect on our accomplishments and plan for greater things to come. As Vice President of SF HAAC, I think about all the great things we accomplished over the past two years, such as hosting community improvement projects, networking events, and numerous career development workshops entitled, *Limitless—Your Potential for Personal Growth and Development*.

Many participants of the *Limitless* workshops shared positive feedback, saying they felt *reenergized, refocused* and *ready to take charge of their own careers*. Many attendees asked, *How did this workshop come to life?* or, *How did you come up with the idea for this workshop?* I would like to share with you, the story, behind the

*Limitless* workshop and how the concept originated.

In the summer of 2013, SF HAAC was invited to attend the 84<sup>th</sup> Annual League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) National Convention & Exposition in Nevada by Bill Zielinski, former San Francisco Regional Commissioner. LULAC is the oldest and most widely respected Hispanic Civil Rights Organization in the United States. It was created at a time in our country's history when Hispanics were denied basic civil and human rights, despite contributions to American society. The founders of LULAC created an organization that advances the economic condition, educational attainment and civil rights of the Hispanic population of the United States.

Representing SF HAAC at the LULAC convention was, Jason Welsh, former Inland AVP and I, Albert Meraz, Vice-President. Over 5,000 participants from all over the nation attended this convention, including top leaders from government, business, and the Latino community. During the convention, we attended several town hall meetings, workshops, and forums that covered issues and topics concerning the Hispanic community and workforce. Some of the topics covered included Diversity in the Federal Government, Managing Change, Conflict Resolution, Managing Up, Building LGBT Latino Power, Mentoring and Succession Planning, and Empowering Nuestra Comunidad through Civic Engagement.

We heard powerful and uplifting messages from keynote speakers such as Honorable Joe Biden, Vice president of the United States, Jose Fernandez, Retired NASA Astronaut and Bill Zielinski, former SF Regional Commissioner. The following are a few excerpts of their speeches:

*No matter where you are in life, it's a matter of whether you prepare yourself and are ready to take on the opportunities. I think the key to everything is that you have to prepare yourself. You have to study and get a good education. You have to have a good work ethic and you have to have the support of your family. You put all those things together, and you can achieve any dream.*

~Jose Fernandez, Retired NASA Astronaut



*Our Agency workforce is diverse, a fact that is exemplified in our San Francisco Region. The dynamics and substance that the advisory groups bring to our Region is to be commended. SF HAAC has achieved great accomplishments over the last twenty years. By being inclusive, diverse, and by listening to the needs of their membership, they have helped develop employees' skill-sets within the Agency. SF HAAC is active in local communities and has had tremendous success in developing its members achieve their full potential.*

*~Bill Zielinski, former SF Regional Commissioner*

While listening to the captivating speakers and absorbing the important subject matter, we paused and thought to ourselves, how we can bring this back to our SF HAAC membership and share what we learned? After several discussions on the subject, Jason and I agreed, the best thing we could take back to our membership was the knowledge and resources needed to develop one's self personally and professionally.

More specifically, we felt that SF HAAC could supplement the internal developmental programs that had been cut back or suspended in the austere fiscal environment of 2013. The theme, *Limitless*, was chosen to remind employees that there are countless ways they can develop themselves, from reading a book to going to college to learning a new skill. After returning from the convention, we shared the *Limitless* concept with the Executive Council and, before we knew it, we had a solid product, which would involve collaborative efforts from all involved.

The SF HAAC Executive Council is committed to providing quality educational opportunities to develop and enable participants to realize their potential by strengthening their knowledge, skills, and professional competencies. With the *Limitless* workshops, we expanded opportunities for personal growth and self-development for our members all across the San Francisco Region.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the entire Executive Council for helping us deliver the *Limitless* message. I would also like to thank the membership, who took time to invest in their personal and professional self-development.

Additionally, on behalf of the Executive Council, I would like to thank Grace M. Kim, SF Regional Commissioner, the Regional Executives, and all the managers for their support. A special thank you to our speakers at our workshops, Al Ballon, Stockton DM and Fernando Peralta, Fremont DM.

*¡Si Se Puede!*



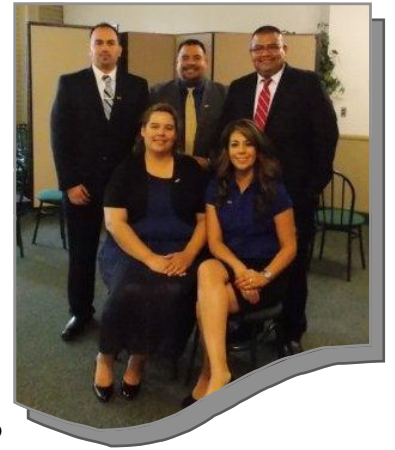


## HAAC Limitless Workshop, Fresno, CA

**Kristina Cisneros**, Service Representative, Visalia, CA

I am so glad I had the opportunity to attend this workshop. The guest speakers Al Ballon and Hy Hinojosa were inspiring and very educational. I realize now that issues I once identified as problems are actually stepping-stones to opportunities available to me. I look forward to utilizing the techniques presented to me to move forward in my career with the agency. I found this workshop as a positive networking system. I have expanded my connections outside of my office. I also enjoyed seeing familiar faces. I left this workshop knowing I do want to be more adaptable. I will listen to

the concerns of others and be the architect of my own destiny. I have taken action on the strategies the executives and managers shared with me. I have kept the motivation alive. I am ready to reach my full potential! *¡Si se Puede!*



**Latasha Harper**, TE, Hanford, CA

I had the pleasure of attending the Fresno, CA. We heard from career-based issues such as communication, the importance local resources for continuing our presentation entitled “Making was highly motivating. He of being a leader in our current adapting to the ever-changing significance of developing our strengths and building upon areas we already do well.

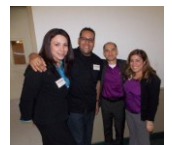


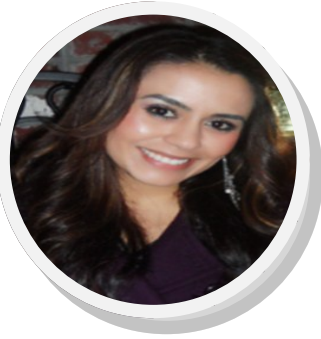
Limitless workshop in several speakers on key effective of having a mentor, and education. Al Ballon’s “Yourself Indispensable” outlined the importance positions as well as environment of our agency. He stressed the



of as

Hy Hinojosa shared his personal journey with the agency and how his life experiences helped him relate to the public we serve every day. He reminded us of the importance empathy with the public as well as the ability to adapt to change particularly eServices it plays a fundamental part of the work we do in the agency. Fernando Peralta presented on “Managing Up.” I found his presentation very valuable, (and entertaining) in re-assessing the way I communicate with my manager, co-workers, and the public. He shared excellent strategies to overcome common communication barriers and better convey ideas in a concise manner. Rene Rubalcava, Steven Marshall, Karla Montemayor, and Leticia Salcido shared their struggles and successes in their individual career paths. The challenges they faced including long commutes. Finding a right work/life balance as they navigated their way to their individual positions, gave me greater insight in what it takes to truly be great in our agency. Meeting people from different offices and being motivated by the speakers was a wonderful experience. This was my first HAAC workshop but definitely won’t be my last!





**Yesenia Lopez, CR, Modesto, CA**

Limitless can be defined as a number of things; such as, boundless opportunities, unlimited resources, vast possibilities, an abundant wealth of knowledge, numerous ideas, a profound amount of attainable dreams and a great deal of potential. What does all this have to do with you and I? The HAAC Limitless workshop will answer just that! Participation brought to light not only what it takes to be “Indispensable” as taught by Al Ballon or how to “Manage Up” in the words of Fernando Peralta, this workshop exceeded my expectations! It was a great opportunity to learn about our leader’s struggles and their successes in achieving their goals. I began to build my own roadmap in becoming a better employee. Meeting people from different walks of life and learning about their efforts as well as their achievements is an experience that will inspire you and motivate you. If I can choose one thing to take away from this workshop, it would have to be Eric Bencomo’s definition of success; *Success is not defined by a title, but rather the self-gratification of feeling good about what you do. Do not wait for tomorrow what you can do today.* I recommend you take a step to explore your potential and make sure you do not miss this opportunity. In Al’s words, *you must constantly be learning, or else you will make yourself obsolete.* Stay tuned for the next scheduled workshop.

**Jessica Arauza, CAMP, Sacramento State University Student, Sacramento, CA**

As first-generation Latina college student at Sacramento State, I benefit from the academic/ equity program support. I am intrigued by this focus of career and job preparation while in college. Let’s face it, aside from a select group of teachers who underscore the importance of networking and professionalism, when do you ever really get a lecture on effective organizational communication or the importance of having a mentor? When invited to *Limitless Your Potential Growth & Development*, I immediately jumped at the opportunity to attend. Paired with my mentor for the day, Erika Leonard, I was provided with her first-hand experience with HAAC and her journey in her professional development. Being in the presence of someone highly assertive and knowledgeable was a lesson within itself. I appreciated her guidance and shared experience in her field throughout the day. Through the panel of directors who shared their experiences, I learned the importance of self-motivation, effective communication, being action-oriented, and having a good work-life balance.



Fernando Peralta equipped me with imperative information in “Managing Up.” For many students and particularly women, we are often times socialized to be complacent with landing ourselves a “good job” but not taught to assume leadership roles within our respective organizations. Peralta emphasized the importance of being a leader in every position. He said you must lead initiatives in each position you fulfill. A main take-away for me from this segment was how trust and expertise result in credibility, which I found to be a very powerful and useful lesson in the walks of leadership. The highlight of my *Limitless* experience was Al Ballon’s lecture: “Making Yourself Indispensable.” Ballon discussed the two alternatives we are working towards: Being indispensable or being obsolete. Ballon laid down the tips for making oneself indispensable, including: Interpersonal skills, importance of attitude, getting feedback from our peers and higher-ups, and personal capability. After hearing Ballon’s insightful workshop, I could not help but think, “How did I not know this? Why are we not learning this in the college classroom?” I am very thankful to have had an opportunity outside of my traditional classes to partake in such a great learning experience. College students have an enormous pressure to be successful but are never really told how to achieve that success.

*Limitless* not only inspired me to strive for ultimate success, but also provided me with the understanding on what it takes to get there.



## FHFB- Food Bank of Contra Costa, & Solano Counties Event

# SEPTEMBER IS



**Kelly Rodriguez**, ORC (Detail) Western Development Program Associate, Richmond, CA

On Saturday, July 12, 2014, volunteers from FHFB SF-HAAC worked at the Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano Counties in Concord, CA. The volunteers sorted and boxed thousands of pounds of fresh vegetables.

The HAAC members were pleased to see that the Food Bank distributes fresh produce, along with my other healthy food items, to the community. The volunteers learned that summer is one of times of greatest need. Thousands of children who normally receive a free breakfast and lunch are out of school for summer recess, yet the Food Bank receives the fewest donations at this time of year. The HAAC members enjoyed this opportunity to give back to the community mission



and join in the Food Bank's to fight hunger.





### Tri Counties & LA Metro Mixer



#### Jose Velasco, DM, Santa Maria, CA

We held the first meeting of SF HAAC Tri-Counties and LA Metro areas in the City of Commerce, CA. "If you always do what you've always done, you will always get what you've always got, and someone else will end up in your spot." This is a quote by former SF Regional Commissioner Pete Spencer summarizes the meeting exceptionally well. The meeting was extremely inspiring and a big success. Some described the vibe of the event as electric and productive.

(from as far north as Santa Maria from the LA TSC). The event challenging the participants to members.

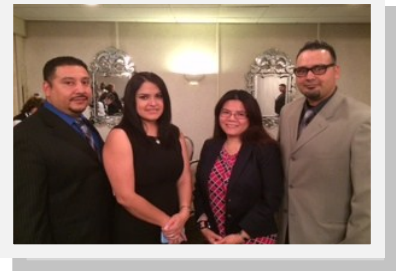


Over 35 people attended representing sixteen offices to as far south as Fountain Valley; including some started with a welcome and a call to action; make the most of the opportunities HAAC provides its

Mr. Glen Banks gave a dynamic -life balance, and leadership. The benefited tremendously from Mr. dedicated public service. He highlighted that many of those present represent the "face" of the Federal government to our public and that to get ahead one must start from our everyday situation; strive to get along with our co-workers and do the best we can at the jobs we currently hold. He also encouraged everyone to be flexible, mobile and strike a balance between personal and professional lives as success in one is intertwined with the other. Another key he highlighted was to seek out a mentor within the agency who is at least two levels above one's current position and maintain an honest and open dialog on mapping out and navigating a career path. Participants networked and solidified connections with each other.

and energizing presentation on customer service, work participants

Bank's years of



#### Heidy Morales, CR, Huntington Park, CA

Every time I attend a HAAC event, I leave feeling that I have gained valuable information and made new connections. The opportunity to network and to hear inspirational speakers was exceptional and invaluable. I was pleased to have the opportunity to see acquaintances from various offices and to make new friendships and introduce myself to the agency employees at all levels. I was intrigued to learn how using virtual details helps to expand the view of the agency by the participant. I shared my own experiences using the LMS website and the wealth of knowledge that is available to someone who wishes to improve on their teambuilding skills. Glen Banks inspired me, as did Eric Bencomo's presentations; each gave an overview of their career paths and growth in personal development. I began to look at ways I could develop my personal talents, both at work and outside of the agency. I knew I wanted to improve on my public speaking skills, so I joined Toastmasters International. I have found that the way to get the most out of each event is to approach and engage others in conversation and also, by asking for advice and sharing your own experiences. The HAAC events are not only fun, but also leave you feeling motivated and with a feeling that





## Día de la Independencia

**Julissa Pérez, CR, Colorado River Basin, CA**

### *Día De La Independencia De México*

Every year, Mexico's Independence Day is celebrated on September 16th. This day in 1810, marked the beginning of Father Hidalgo's revolt against Spanish rule. After 11 years of struggle, Mexico proclaimed its independence from Spain thanks to the brave and humble people, and their leaders including Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, Jose Maria Morelos y Pavón, among others.

Independence Day is one of the biggest holidays in Mexico. There are many parades, festivals, loud music, delicious food and more. I remember my parents taking me to "Las Fiestas Patrias," a local town event, and everyone shouting with such joy, "Viva Mexico!"

My parents have been in the United States for many years, but are very proud of where they came from. They have taught us to embrace our heritage. I am an American but love the Mexican culture. I am proud to be Mexican American.

**Heriberto Farfan, CR, Oxnard, CA**

Born in Michoacán, México, El Día De La Independencia de Mexico holds a very special meaning in my heart. Patriotism was instilled at a very young age at school in Michoacán, México. I remember every Monday, first thing in the morning, we would march down the school patio to do El Saludo a La Bandera and then follow by singing the Himno Nacional. I remember my school celebrated September 16 with a reenactment of the battle for independence and the day would end in a big party with my school principal chanting ¡ Viva Mexico, Viva Mexico!

As I look back in time, I realize how important it was for me to be part of such important acts of patriotism; it gave September 16 a different meaning but most importantly, it helped mold the person I am today.

September 16, 1810 represents the day I was given the opportunity to succeed. On such important day, my ancestors battled the Spaniards to give me the opportunity to follow my dreams and make a difference in this world. As September 16 approaches, I realize I am a living representation of what my ancestors wanted. I can proudly say I am Mexican, and even though I no longer live in such a beautiful country, I proudly embrace my Mexican culture by being the best I can be today. As my school principal used to chant, on this September 16, ¡VIVA MÉXICO!







## De Su Cocina a La Nuestra



Chef: Suzanne Nuñez, CR, Merced, CA

### *Corn Bread Stuffing*

#### Ingredients

Corn Bread Mix – **2 packages**, Celery – 1 bunch, Onions – 2 (white or yellow), Kielbasa sausage – your preference

Sage (rubbed sage or ground, they are two different versions of it), Chicken broth – 2 cans

#### Directions:

Makes 2 cake pans of cornbread. Make cornbread according of box instructions.

Crumble into roasting pan

1. Chop celery, sage, onions, sauté in lots of butter.
2. Pour over cornbread mix.
3. Sprinkle sage over cornbread mix.
4. Pour 1 ½ to 2 cans of chicken broth and mix.
5. Put into oven to make crispy and cook all the way through.
6. Cook at 350 degrees for 15 minutes.

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### *Jalapeño Popper Dip*

Chef: Julissa Perez, CR, Colorado River Basin, CA

#### Ingredients

1 cup of mayo, 2 (8 oz.) cream cheese packages, 5 Jalapeños (chopped), 2 small cans of diced green chiles, Panko bread crumbs  
Grated Parmesan cheese

#### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
  2. Mix the mayo, cream cheese, jalapeños, & green chiles in a bowl; spread into a round baking dish.
  3. Pour a layer of breadcrumbs over the mixture and then another layer of parmesan cheese.
- Bake in preheated oven until bubbly and crispy, 30 to 45 minutes

Se bate muy bien para que no se pegue en la cazuela.



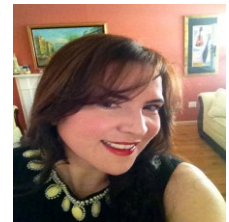
## De Su Cocina a La Nuestra



### *Queso Fundido*

Chef: Gulnara L Ormonde, CR, Fremont, CA

2 cups of Beans (Peruano/Pinto) -(Substitute-La Costena Pinto Beans Cans(4) already cook)  
 ½ tube of Chorizo- your Choice of meat  
 Queso Chihuahua al gusto  
 5 strips of Tocino/Bacon  
 1 can of Tuna  
 2 Chiles Picados en rajas (los de lata en vinagre)  
 Salsa Valentina a su gusto



#### Directions:

1. Fry the chorizo add the cooked bacon (picadito)
2. Once the chorizo and tocino are fried, then add the beans (they must be fully fried)
3. Se bate muy bien para que no se pegue en la cazuela.

Cuando los frijoles empiezan a hervir, agregarse el resto de los ingredientes hasta fundir el queso.

### *Chili Bean*

Chef: Yanett Torrez, MSS, Lakewood, CA

#### Ingredients:

Buy 4 packets of Lawry's Chili spices and seasoning mix, 1 pound of ground beef (best for taste), 8 oz. pinto beans, 8 oz. Red kidney beans, 8 oz. White kidney beans, 8 oz. black beans, (different colors make chili very eye pleasing), 16 oz. tomato sauce, 1 fresh tomato, ½ fresh onion, 3 garlic cloves

#### Directions:

1. Open all bean cans and place in colander You may rinse beans if you wish Let sit
2. In a blender, combine tomato sauce, fresh tomato, onion and garlic by using chop feature
3. Pour contents in a deep pot, use the 16 oz. tomato sauce can to add 16 oz.'s of water to contents in pot (I like a lot of juice in my chili)

Bring to boil on medium heat, pour 1 packet of chili sauce to mixture

(Taste, if you want a stronger chili taste add more packets to your desired taste). Simmer on low heat, in separate skillet Brown ground beef, drain. Add beef to pot Fold in beans to pot so that a good mixture is obtained and the beans are not mashed Taste the mixture as you might have used more than one chili packet by now. Let simmer on low heat for 30 minutes and you are done.

This recipe is good on all kinds of foods Bon Appetite, mi amigos and remember, Si Se Puede !!!



¿Que Hay De Nuevo?

Limitless Workshop– Inland Area October 25— Details to Follow

**New Members—And Counting!**

**Area 2-Cal Central**

Amarjit Ghuman

**Area 4-Northern**

Cynthia Dragoo

Kellie Reddish

**FHFB**

Larry R Hill

Cecilia Jauregui

Gina C Perez

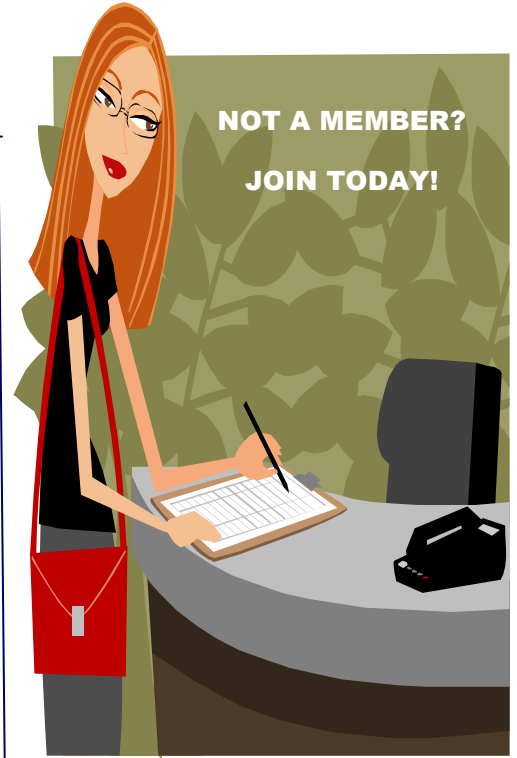
Octavio Perez

Rosa M Rodriguez

Jessica T Rojas

Lara Titos-Blanco

***When will your name be on this list?***



**Member Benefits:**

**Business Cards**

*¡Si Se Puede!* eNewsletter

**Educational Scholarships for Self & Eligible Family Members**

**Participation in our Mentorship Program**

**Self-Development and Training Workshops**

**Networking with other Professionals in our Agency**





# SF HAAC Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month

Featuring



DJ: PARKIT PRODUCTIONS

*Black tie Dinner and Dance*



[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3RD | 6:30 PM TO 11 PM

SCOTT'S SEAFOOD RESTAURANT | 2 BROADWAY, OAKLAND CA

