



*The Federal Executive Board's Diversity Council  
Presents*

## ***“Hope Through Diversity”***

**Tuesday, March 30, 2010  
Bishop Henry Whipple Building**

### **Program Descriptions and Agenda**

**7:30 – 8:00**

**Registration**

**8:00 – 8:15**

**Welcome**

**Presentation of Colors – Rosetown Memorial, Post 542**

**Kathleen Schlener – Diversity Council Co-chair**

**Ray Morris, Executive Director, Federal Executive Board**

**8:15 – 9:30**

**Tapping the Strength in Our Diversity – Sharon Sayles-Belton**

This session will explore how education, housing, health care and transportation public policies affect our ability to serve diverse populations and ensure their full participation in society. Sharon Sayles Belton, former mayor of Minneapolis and life-long community volunteer, will share her experience and commitment to equal opportunity, equity, and social responsibility.

**9:30 – 9:45**

**Break**

**9:45 – 11:00**

**Breakout Sessions I:**

**Hmong Culture – Wa Yang, Neighborhood House**

In this session you will learn about:

- The journey of Hmong from China to Southeast Asia to the United States;
- Why many Hmong were placed in refugee camps in Laos and Thailand after the end of the Vietnam War;
- The 18 Hmong tribes;
- Shamanism in the Hmong culture and how many Hmong have adapted Christianity; and
- Traditional Hmong marriages and funerals.

**History of Jazz - Yolanda Williams**

The History of Jazz is more than the story of a musical genre. It has provided the soundtrack to American life since the late 1890's. Even more than that Jazz presents a model for freedom, diversity, collaboration, and for creative thinking. In this presentation attendees will come to know Jazz as a possible sound-scape for today's world

and explore the ways in which this music and its history can inform us today.

### **Changing the 515 Laws that Discriminate against Minnesota Same-sex Couples – Jane Bowman**

Nearly eight out of 10 Minnesotans said government should treat people no differently because of their sexual orientation. Almost 70 percent of Minnesotans agreed that “gays and lesbians should have the same rights and responsibilities as everyone else.” Unfortunately, Minnesota’s laws aren’t living up to Minnesotans’ expectations; there are 515 state laws that discriminate against same-sex couples, conferring a right, benefit, or obligation to a married spouse and denying the same to thousands of Minnesota's same-sex couples and their families. Learn about the state of same-sex rights and what Project 515 is doing to move Minnesota towards equality.

### **Understanding Adult Learning Disabilities – LDA Minnesota (Learn Dream Achieve)**

Participants will gain a better understanding of the definition of LD and the difficulties LD adults deal with in everyday life and learning. They will also receive a copy of the Screening Checklist for Adult Learning Disabilities adapted by LDA Learning Center for ABE providers. The presentation is based on Bridges to Practice, A Research-based Guide for Literacy Practitioners Serving Adults with Learning Disabilities.

### **Somali Culture – Garat Ibrahim, Neighborhood House**

In this session you will learn about:

- The civil war that forced many Somalis to leave their country;
- Why Somalis settled in Minnesota;
- Islam and its role in Somali society;
- Ways to interact with members of the opposite sex; and
- The importance of tradition and reputation in Somali culture.

**11:00 – 12:00**

**Lunch**

**12:00 – 12:30**

**Musical Presentation – Cleveland Junior High Drum Band**

**12:30 – 12:45**

**Break**

12:45 – 2:00

## **Breakout Sessions II**

### **Child Survivors Return to “Normal” Life – Fred Amram**

Survivors of the Holocaust and other genocides have stories to tell about their survival and about their efforts to integrate into a new life. Fred Amram shares some of his experiences and speculates about the art of surviving.

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### **Tai Chi – Ruth Anne Plourde HealthSource Solutions**

Tai Chi is a soft martial art that originated in ancient China. Today, it is practiced throughout the world as an exercise for better health. Clinical studies have shown that the slow, fluid movements of Tai Chi improve balance, strength and flexibility while promoting relaxation. Participants

will learn about the different forms of Tai Chi practice that will relax them, yet energize them for the rest of the day.

**2:00 – 2:15**

**Break**

**2:15 – 3:30**

**Breakout Sessions III**

**Latino Culture – Enrique (Cha Cho) Estrada, Neighborhood House**

In this session you will learn about:

- The differences between the terms Latino, Chicano and Hispanic;
- The many cultures that are defined as Latino, Chicano and/or Hispanic;
- Varied migration stories;
- How Latinos are progressing in key measurements such as education, health and income; and
- Family and gender roles in Latino families.

**Employment First – Raising the Expectations for People with Disabilities – Bob Niemiec/Don Lavin**

People with disabilities, America's largest minority population, are far less likely to be employed than their peers. Most national studies place the unemployment rate for people with significant disabilities to be in the range of 60-70%. Much of this discrepancy can be attributed to low expectations of people with disabilities, especially those with significant disabilities. Those low expectations creep into all aspects of life, from community living to the contributions and competencies of people with disabilities in employment. The Minnesota Employment First Coalition began in the fall of 2005 with a mission to raise those expectations by working to make employment the first and preferred option for Minnesotans with disabilities. In this presentation, you will learn about the efforts of the Coalition and how all employers – public and private – can benefit from the inclusion of people with disabilities in their workforce and how those businesses can become the driving force for changing expectations and helping Minnesotans with disabilities take their rightful place alongside their neighbors as contributing members of their communities.

**Multi-Generational Workplace – Ray Morris**

The presentation will explore the differences between the unprecedented four generations in the government workplace. Motivating factors, career planning differences, life-work priorities, and methods for managing and working within the multi-generational workplace will be explored in this interactive presentation.

## **Eating on the Run - HealthSource Solutions**

Most Americans eat at least one meal away from home daily. These meals can challenge your efforts toward healthy eating. This seminar will help participants:

- Choose healthier foods to stock their kitchens;
- Make healthier meals;
- Choose healthier snacks; and
- Make better decisions when eating out.

Maintaining balanced eating habits will be easier after attending this class. Participants will walk away with a deeper understanding of how to choose well when eating on the run.