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This report discusses the results of a study undertaken by the Board to examine the causes of the persistent underrepresentation of Hispanics in the Federal workforce compared to their participation in our nation's civilian labor force.

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Achieving a Representative Federal Workforce: Addressing the Barriers to Hispanic Participation

A Report to the President and the Congress of the United States by the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board

THE CHAIRMAN

U.S. MERIT SYSTEMS PROTECTION BOARD
1120 Vermont Avenue, N W.
Washington, D C 20419

September 1997

The President
President of the Senate
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Sirs:

It is my honor to submit this U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board report, "Achieving a Representative Federal Workforce: Addressing the Barriers to Hispanic Participation." This report is provided in accordance with the requirements of 5 U.S.C. 1204(a)(3).

The report examines the causes of the persistent underrepresentation of Hispanics in the Federal workforce compared to their participation in our nation's civilian labor force. Approximately 6 percent of the Federal workforce is Hispanic compared to more than 10 percent of the civilian labor force. Hispanics remain the only underrepresented minority group in the Federal workforce. This situation is inconsistent with the statutory goals of a workforce that is hired and advanced on merit and that is also representative of "all segments of society."

The study finds that any successful efforts to significantly increase the representation of Hispanics in the Federal workforce must include strategies to address several major demographic barriers that, in combination, disproportionately affect Hispanics. Further, past improvement efforts have been hampered by misperceptions on the part of many managers that underrepresentation does not exist and that, in any case, managers should not be held accountable for efforts to achieve a diverse workforce. The study concludes, in part, that Federal agencies also need to devote a greater proportion of their recruitment resources to efforts to hire well-qualified Hispanic men and women.

We believe you will find this report useful as you consider issues relevant to achieving equity and fairness within the Federal workforce and in our nation's diverse society.

Respectfully,

Ben L. Erdreich

U. S. Merit Systems Protection Board

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Achieving a Representative Federal Workforce: Addressing the Barriers to Hispanic Participation

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Executive Summary

It is the policy of the United States to have a Federal workforce that is reflective of the Nation's diversity. As noted in previous MSPB reports, the Government has made commendable progress in achieving the statutory goal of a representative workforce. In fact, among the major racial and ethnic minority groups, only Hispanics are employed in the Federal Government at a rate significantly below their level of participation in the U.S. civilian labor force. This report explores the reasons for the persistent underrepresentation of Hispanics in the Federal workforce. It finds that there are multiple barriers to overcome in achieving full representation and, hence, multiple strategies for change are required. The report concludes with a discussion of recommended actions.

Background

In the course of research conducted in recent years by the Merit Systems Protection Board, the issue of Hispanic representation in the Federal workforce has become one of particular concern. In reporting the results of demographic and minority studies it conducted during the period 1990-95, the Board noted that Hispanics were the only underrepresented minority group in the Federal workforce.

Reinforcing our concern about this issue have been requests from several organizations that urged us to examine the question of Hispanic underrepresentation as part of the Board's statutory mission to conduct periodic studies of the civil service and other merit systems. Those studies share a common theme in their focus on the degree to which Federal departments and agencies are adhering to the merit system principles and whether the "public interest in a civil service free of prohibited personnel practices is being adequately protected." In this context, the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 articulates in the merit system principles a concurrent goal for Federal managers. That goal requires that Federal employees be selected and advanced solely on the basis of relative ability, knowledge, and skills *and* that the resultant workforce be representative of "all segments of society." The challenge for Federal managers, as the Board has noted in previous reports, is to successfully meet both statutory objectives.

In undertaking the current study, the Board sought to better understand the causes for Hispanic underrepresentation in order to suggest possible remedies that Federal employers might apply to increase the number of well-qualified Hispanic men and women in Federal jobs. As outlined in this report, our research finds that the aggregate underrepresentation of Hispanics in the civil service has persisted despite decades of special emphasis programs intended to increase their representation. Although some progress has been made, the percentage increase in the employment of Hispanics in the Federal Government has consistently lagged behind that of other minority groups. The study found multiple causes for this situation, some of them outside the control of Federal managers. The ability of Federal managers to address those causes within their control is further complicated by the Government's current downsizing efforts.

These issues, among others which are summarized below and are discussed in more detail in this report, make the problem of Hispanic representation in the Federal workforce uniquely challenging to deal with. The results of our study suggest that the environment in today's Federal workplace demands especially intensive efforts to recruit well-qualified Hispanics and to apply the Government's limited affirmative recruiting resources in areas where underrepresentation is most severe.

Findings

1. Hispanics remain the only underrepresented minority group in the Federal workforce.
Figures reported by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) indicate that as of 1995 Hispanics made up 6.1 percent of the Federal workforce, but 8.1 percent of the comparable civilian labor force. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) reports that in 1995 Hispanics made up 5.9 percent of the Federal workforce, but 10.2 percent of the civilian labor force. The figures differ because they are calculated somewhat differently. Nevertheless, both confirm Hispanic underrepresentation in the Federal workforce.

2. Commitment to full Hispanic representation in the Federal workforce is hampered by managers' and supervisors' beliefs about their role in achieving diversity and their perceptions about Hispanic underrepresentation.
In a Governmentwide survey administered by MSPB, some 65 percent of White managers and supervisors (and 49 percent of Hispanic managers and supervisors) indicated they did not believe that Hispanics are underrepresented in their work units. Responding to a survey item concerning workplace diversity, only 35 percent of White managers (and 63 percent of Hispanic managers) agreed that selecting officials should be held accountable for achieving a workforce that is as diverse as the available civilian labor force. The responses of these survey participants suggest a need for a better understanding of representation issues and a greater emphasis on affirmative employment programs, particularly with respect to Hispanic representation.

3. Despite well-documented gains made by minorities in expanding their representation in the Federal workforce, racial and ethnic discrimination still appear to have an effect on job opportunities for minorities.
According to earlier MSPB research, there are measurable differences in the employment-related experiences of minority and nonminority Federal employees and not all of the differences can be explained by patterns of education, experience, and other merit-based factors. These measurable differences—and the belief that they exist—are reflected in the individual discrimination complaints filed each year by Hispanic employees in a variety of Federal agencies, the class action complaints pending or settled in several Federal agencies, and periodic findings of discrimination by the EEOC involving Hispanic employees.

4. Because of a combination of several powerful demographic realities, even the total elimination of discrimination from the Federal workplace—were that possible—would not alone result in achievement of full Hispanic representation.
These demographic realities are:

Geographic concentration. There is a major mismatch between where most Hispanics live and work and where most Federal jobs are located. Only 34 percent of civil service jobs are located in the ten States that account for over 86 percent of the U.S. Hispanic population.

Federal downsizing and the changing civilian labor force. The Federal workforce was reduced by 12.8 percent from 1991-96, and with this decline have come fewer opportunities for agencies to hire additional Hispanics. An additional concern is the possibility that downsizing could disproportionately affect Hispanics. Although Hispanic representation in the Federal workforce increased from 5.4 to 6.0 percent during 1991-6, the percentage of Hispanics in the civilian labor force grew at an even faster rate, and is expected to reach 11.1 percent by 2005. With such growth in the Hispanic population occurring simultaneously with Federal downsizing, special outreach efforts will be needed to close the gap between

Hispanics' representation in the Federal workforce and their representation in the civilian labor force.

Hispanic qualifications for Government occupations. Jobs in the professional and administrative occupations, most of which require education above the high school level, make up about 53 percent of Federal jobs, and this percentage is increasing. At the same time, blue-collar jobs are held by about 14 percent of the Federal workforce and are steadily declining in number. This is significant for Hispanic representation in the Federal workforce because in the civilian labor force, which is the source from which the Government recruits new employees, a much higher percentage of Hispanics occupy blue-collar jobs than does any other racial or ethnic group. Blue-collar experience in the civilian labor force is qualifying for equivalent blue-collar civil service jobs, but is unlikely to prepare individuals for other types of jobs. In addition, the percentage of the Hispanic population whose education has prepared them for professional and administrative jobs is relatively low. In 1995, 9.2 percent of Hispanics had a bachelor's degree or higher education, while 24.2 percent of non-Hispanics had reached that level.

Citizenship requirements in the civil service. In most cases, non-Government employers are able to hire anyone in the civilian labor force, without regard to the citizenship of the candidates. Most Federal employers may hire only U.S. citizens for Federal Government jobs. (A major exception to this rule is the U.S. Postal Service, which may hire noncitizens.) Because about 35 percent of Hispanics in the U.S. labor force are not citizens, and thus are effectively barred from most Federal employment, the pool of Hispanics from whom the Federal Government may hire is significantly smaller than that available to non-Government employers.

5. For the most part, agencies do not have reliable systems to monitor the apportionment and use of resources for affirmative recruitment. Based on agency responses to an MSPB questionnaire concerning Hispanic recruitment, information that tracks the major aspects of agencies' Hispanic recruitment efforts is not readily available and is difficult to assemble. Top agency management, in most cases, does not appear to be closely monitoring the progress of Hispanic employment programs, nor are they funding outreach efforts commensurate with the degree of Hispanic underrepresentation in their workforce. Monitoring the resources being channeled into special emphasis recruitment and apportionment of those resources based upon the magnitude of the underrepresentation problems will become more important as agencies face a future of limited resources.

Conclusions

Underrepresentation of Hispanics in the Federal workforce is inconsistent with the statutory goal of a workforce representative of "all segments of society." Further, as the Board has noted previously, the Federal Government, as the Nation's largest employer and enforcer of laws, has a special obligation to be fair and inclusive in all its employment practices. Therefore, if the Government is to employ Hispanic men and women in the same proportions as they participate in the civilian labor force within any reasonable time frame, we must reconsider past approaches to meeting this goal.

As noted, only some of the obstacles to achieving the goal of full representation of Hispanics in the Federal workforce are within the control of Federal managers. Actions to address the obstacles that are within their control, therefore, must be aggressively pursued. Federal agencies, for example, must remain vigilant in aggressively identifying and eliminating instances of discriminatory treatment of Hispanics which constitute illegal prohibited personnel practices. Discrimination has undeniably played a role in the history of Hispanic employment issues and there is no evidence to suggest that it has somehow been totally eliminated from the Federal workplace.

What the findings from this study also suggest, however, is that in light of all of the barriers that exist with regard to the fuller employment of Hispanics, the Federal Government must do more than simply attempt to eliminate overt discrimination if it is to significantly increase the representa-

tion of Hispanics in the Federal Government. To achieve the goal of a workforce representative of all segments of society, therefore, Federal agencies must pay special attention to *all* of the barriers to Hispanic employment. The following recommendations are intended to assist in this regard.

Recommendations

1. Federal departments and agencies should develop integrated strategies for increasing the representation rate of Hispanics in the workforce. The strategies should be implemented and monitored in a systematic manner, and should include measures such as:

- Establishing entry-level positions in principal agency occupations at locations with large Hispanic populations in order to increase the Hispanic applicant pool from which candidates for employment are drawn.

- Increasing the number of Hispanic managers in order to provide more mentors for Hispanic employees within the agency and a greater connection with Hispanic communities.

- Emphasizing the importance of senior-level leadership in efforts to achieve a fully diverse workforce so that line managers, in turn, are motivated to pursue the goal of full representation of Hispanics in the workforce.

2. Federal departments and agencies should assure that their managers and supervisors have comprehensive and accurate information about the current representation of ethnic and minority groups and are committed to doing their part towards achieving the statutory goal of full representation.

3. Because Hispanics remain the only significantly underrepresented minority group in the Federal workforce and the obstacles to full Hispanic representation are particularly severe, agencies should devote a greater proportion of their recruitment resources to hiring well-qualified Hispanic men and women.

CHAPTER 1
Introduction

Reasons for this Study

For some time, the issue of Hispanic representation in the Federal workforce has been of concern to the Board. In a 1993 report on workforce demographics, we cited the aggregate underrepresentation of Hispanics in the Federal workforce and recommended that agencies "* * * intensify recruitment of Hispanic men and women."[1] In a subsequent report on minority employment we again noted that Hispanics remained the only underrepresented minority group in the Federal workforce.[2]

The aggregate statistics available tell the same story: Hispanic underrepresentation persists. Although the figures reported by the two agencies that monitor representation vary somewhat, both confirm Hispanic underrepresentation in the Federal workforce.[3] The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission reports that Hispanics made up 6.1 percent of the Federal workforce in 1995, compared with 8.1 percent of EEOC's ideal labor force. The Office of Personnel Management reports that in 1995 Hispanics made up 5.9 percent of the Federal workforce, but 10.2 percent of the civilian labor force. It should be noted that the EEOC's Federal workforce figure (6.1 percent) includes a number of agencies not included in the OPM figure, and its ideal labor force figure (8.1 percent) is based on the 1990 census (the reasons for this are discussed on page 6 of this report). Also, OPM includes Puerto Rico in its calculation of the civilian labor force.

It was not only reports of underrepresentation and our own research findings that suggested a need to examine Hispanic representation in the Federal civil service. We also were contacted by several organizations that recommended we study these issues. These organizations—the National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives (NAHFE), the National Council of La Raza, and the National Puerto Rican Coalition—emphasized the need to "* * * find answers to the question of Hispanic underrepresentation if we are to have a truly diverse Federal workforce,"[4] and the need to "* * * develop concrete recommendations for remedying [Hispanic underrepresentation]."[5]

Law and Policy

It is the policy of the United States that the Federal workforce reflect the Nation's diversity. The Civil Service Reform Act states that a properly adminis-

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[1] U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, "Evolving Workforce Demographics: Federal Agency Action and Reaction," Washington, DC, November 1993, p. xi.

[2] U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, "Fair and Equitable Treatment: A Progress Report on Minority Employment in the Federal Government," Washington, DC, August 1996.

[3] The Federal Government has approximately 3 million civilian employees, counting the employees of the judicial and legislative branches, and the executive branch, including the U.S. Postal Service, Government corporations, and other quasi-governmental units. However, this study examines only the executive departments and agencies, currently employing 1.7 million permanent employees. In addition to excluding the legislative and judicial branches, our study also excludes the U.S. Postal Service, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and other quasi-governmental entities as well as the employees of the intelligence-gathering agencies such as the CIA and NSA.

[4] Letter to Ben L. Erdreich, Chairman, U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, from Gilbert Chavez, President NAHFE, Dec. 7, 1993.

[5] Letter to Ben L. Erdreich, Chairman, U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, from the National Puerto Rican Coalition, Dec. 15, 1993.

tered Federal personnel management system "should provide the people of the United States with a competent, honest and productive work force *reflective of the Nation's diversity.*"[6] And, in a similar vein, the first merit system principle provides that Federal recruitment should "endeavor to achieve a work force from all segments of society."[7] To help meet the diversity objective, Congress placed affirmative recruitment requirements into the Reform Act. In 5 USC 7201, it required the Office of Personnel Management to oversee agency-conducted recruitment efforts designed to eliminate minority underrepresentation. The law, in this section, defines "underrepresentation" quite broadly. Under these provisions, underrepresentation will be deemed to exist and to require affirmative recruitment effort whenever, as has been historically true with regard to Hispanics, the percentage of a minority group in any position is lower than the percentage of that minority group in the civilian labor force as a whole.

It is against this legal and policy background that we seek to identify the obstacles that have prevented the full representation of Hispanics in the Federal workforce and to suggest strategies that may be utilized to surmount those obstacles.

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[6] 5 USC 1101 note, Findings and Statement of Purpose of the Civil Service Reform Act (emphasis added).
[7] 5 USC 2301 (b)(1).

CHAPTER 2
Methodology

Statistical Sources

We conducted research for this study using several statistical sources. The most important data source for measuring the various aspects of the Federal workforce is the Central Personnel Data File (CPDF) maintained by the Office of Personnel Management. This data base contains a variety of information about the Federal civilian workforce, including data summarizing activities such as hiring, separations, and retirements for each quarter of the fiscal year. We also used data from the Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program annual report published by OPM as well as the "Annual Report on the Employment of Minorities, Women, and People With Disabilities in the Federal Government," published by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

To compare the Federal workforce with the overall U.S. labor force, we used statistical information from the Civilian Labor Force (CLF). This is a data base that tracks all persons 16 years of age or older in the noninstitutionalized, nonmilitary population of the United States who are employed or unemployed and seeking work. The CLF data base, which is maintained by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, is updated using the monthly Current Population Survey conducted by the Bureau of the Census. The CLF data are supplemented by analyses of the civilian workforce drawn from the decennial census conducted by the Bureau of the Census.

Survey Material

To gauge understanding and acceptance of the Government's special emphasis program for Hispanics, in 1995 we surveyed a representative sample of Federal managers and supervisors on their knowledge of and attitudes towards diversity and the Hispanic employment program activities. This primary survey material was supplemented by data obtained from a survey conducted for our earlier cited report, "Fair and Equitable Treatment: A Progress Report on Minority Employment in the Federal Government."[8] This latter survey provided insights on the perceptions of Hispanic employees in the civil service.

In addition, to assess the level of resources being used by agencies to address the underrepresentation of Hispanics, we surveyed the directors of Equal Employment Opportunity at the 23 largest Federal departments and agencies[9] that collectively employ 92 percent of the civil service workforce. We asked a number of questions about how agencies are implementing program initiatives and how resources are being allocated to Hispanic employment programs.

Interviews

To supplement our survey data, we interviewed a number of Hispanic program officials, human resources professionals, and private sector experts to solicit their views on Hispanic employment.

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[8] See footnote 2.

[9] These are the Departments of the Air Force, Agriculture, the Army, Commerce, Defense, Education, Energy, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, the Interior, Justice, Labor, the Navy, State, Transportation, the Treasury, and Veterans Affairs; and the Environmental Protection Agency, the General Services Administration, NASA, the Office of Personnel Management, the Small Business Administration, and the Social Security Administration.

These interviews provided us with a better sense of the perceptions of various participants in the Government's recruitment and placement process as well as the perceptions of those who are advocates for Hispanic employment. We also conducted telephone interviews with program officials at centers of Federal employment in California and Texas, the States with the largest Hispanic population. The information collected from these interviews is necessarily subjective, but it provides us with a sense of how people's assumptions and attitudes affect how they view the aggregate underrepresentation of Hispanics in the civil service.

CHAPTER 3
Background

Government Diversity Programs

Federal agencies are required to have two formal plans addressing the goal of full representation in their workforces. One of these is the "Affirmative Employment Plan," administered by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.[10] This plan has rather elaborate requirements for structuring the agencies' programs for recruiting minorities, women, and persons with disabilities, and for reporting to EEOC on program structure and workforce demographics. Agencies are required to determine the representation of all targeted groups in each major occupation within an agency or department and then compare the agency's minority group representation with the representation of these groups in comparable occupations in the CLF. Agencies then must develop plans to correct significant underrepresentation identified in their workforces by this process.

The other plan required of Federal agencies is the Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program (FEORP),[11] administered by the Office of Personnel Management. OPM requires agencies to develop plans to increase the numbers of the identified groups within the agencies' recruitment pools based on the analysis in the Affirmative Employment Plan.

While both of these plans require agencies to actively recruit minority candidates to increase diversity in the civil service, the programs must operate within the merit system and not as an exception to it. The programs do not set hiring quotas nor do they grant any preferential treatment in hiring. For example, in the examining and selecting process, no candidate is given additional credit or considered ahead of other equally qualified individuals based on his or her minority status.[12] All candidates must compete on their own merits and may be actively considered only if among the best qualified available candidates for a vacant position. These principles, which guide the administration of Government diversity programs, derive from the same law that prescribes diversity as a governing principle of Federal hiring:

> Recruitment should be from qualified individuals from appropriate sources in an endeavor to achieve a work force from all segments of society, and selection and advancement should be determined solely on the basis of relative ability, knowledge, and skills * * *.[13]

Measuring Representation in the Federal Workforce

Some objective means is needed for measuring progress toward full minority participation in the

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[10] The current EEOC program is contained in Management Directive (MD) 714, October 1987.

[11] 5 CFR 720.205.

[12] Candidates for competitive civil service appointments (jobs not filled by current employees) are examined and assigned scores based on their qualifications. By law, managers may select from among only the three highest scoring candidates for each job filled. The law grants special preference only for veterans, who by law are assigned 5 or 10 points in addition to the scores earned on civil service examinations and are referred to selecting officials ahead of nonveterans with scores equal to the veterans' augmented scores. In addition, a manager may not bypass a veteran to select a nonveteran with the same or lower score.

[13] 5 USC 2301(b)(1).

civil service. In the evaluation of the two diversity plans required of Federal agencies, this measurement is done statistically by comparing the makeup of the actual Federal workforce with a benchmark. OPM uses the civilian labor force of the United States (including Puerto Rico) as its benchmark. The aggregate representation of each minority group in each cabinet department and independent agency is compared with the percentages of the minority groups in the civilian labor force. If a minority group is not represented in the Government agencies at least at the same level as in the benchmark, that group is underrepresented. This is a straightforward methodology, but it does not provide information in sufficient detail to allow agencies to target their recruiting to specific occupations.

In contrast, for affirmative action planning purposes, EEOC constructs a benchmark ideal workforce by determining the participation of women and minorities in particular occupations in the civilian labor force (not including Puerto Rico). From the full labor force base taken at the time of the decennial census, EEOC subtracts occupational categories that are not represented in the Federal workforce and weights the remaining occupations based on their prevalence in the Federal workforce. This ideal workforce is compared occupation by occupation, with the Federal workforce and where appropriate, comparisons are made by specific geographical area.

Issues in Measuring Hispanic Representation

As noted above, these different methods of calculating minority representation result in somewhat different measures of the percentage of Hispanics in the Federal workforce. According to OPM's FEORP report, as stated earlier, Hispanics made up 5.9 percent of the Federal workforce and 10.2 percent of the civilian labor force of the United States and Puerto Rico in 1995.[14] EEOC's calculations put Hispanics at 6.1 percent of the Federal workforce in 1995 compared to 8.1 percent of its benchmark civilian labor force.[15] Despite the differences, however, the essential message of these measures remains the same: Hispanics are the only minority group that is underrepresented in the Federal civilian workforce. It is also useful to put these measurements into context by looking at some of the technical issues that affect the way representation is calculated. These issues are discussed below.

Currency of detailed data. Although EEOC makes comparisons along narrow occupational lines to ensure that solutions to underrepresentation of any given group can be narrowly tailored to the problem, this approach has an inherent technical difficulty. The detailed analyses of the labor force that EEOC makes using CLF data require that a full enumeration or a very large sample of the labor force be used. A full enumeration of the labor force is done during the deccenial census. Updates to the CLF are done by using a monthly sampling survey which is far too small to accurately calculate the racial, gender, and ethnic makeup of individual occupations and of labor force representation in specific geographical areas. Thus, the EEOC calculations of the ideal labor force that are currently used reflect the status of the workforce in 1990, the last time the sample was large enough to calculate individual occupations. Although the most recent detailed data are from 1990, we know that the aggregate representation of Hispanics in the CLF has increased significantly. In 1990, the aggregate representation of Hispanics as determined by EEOC was 8.1 percent.[16] The Bureau of Labor Statistics calculates that by 1995 aggregate representation of Hispanics stood at 9.3 percent[17] of the CLF of the United States.

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[13] 5 USC 2301(b)(1).
[14] U.S. Office of Personnel Management, "Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program, Fiscal Year 1995," Washington, DC, July 1996, p. 13.
[15] U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, "Annual Report on the Employment of Minorities, Women and People With Disabilities in the Federal Government For the Fiscal Year Ending 1995," Washington, DC, October 1996, p. 4.
[16] Ibid., p. 11.
[17] U. S. Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1996 (116th ed.) Washington, DC, 1996, table 615. (As discussed previously, the 1995 labor force figure differs from that reported by OPM because OPM has chosen to include the labor force of Puerto Rico in its calculations.)

Definition of Hispanic. Another complication in measuring Hispanics in the CLF against those in the civil service is the different way in which these two data bases define the term "Hispanic." In the Federal workforce, people may identify their race and national origin as only one of the following: American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian or Pacific Islander; Black, not of Hispanic Origin; Hispanic; or White, not of Hispanic Origin. "Hispanic" is defined in the civil service data base as "a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish cultures or origins. It does not include persons of Portuguese culture or origin."[18] The terms "Black" and "White" specifically exclude persons of Hispanic origin. Thus, in the Government workforce Hispanic is used as a racial category, equivalent to and separate from the other recognized racial categories.

The civil service definitions are further complicated by the fact the generally used categories described above are applicable to 49 States and the District of Columbia, while alternate classifications are used for civil service positions in Hawaii and Puerto Rico. In Hawaii, Asians are categorized by their country of origin (e.g., Japan, Korea). In contrast, in Puerto Rico all employees are placed in one of two categories: Hispanic and non-Hispanic.

In contrast to the civil service data base, the CLF data base identifies persons as Hispanic based on their answer to the question: "What is the origin or descent of each person in this household?" Those who report themselves as Mexican-American, Chicano, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American (Spanish countries), or other Hispanic origin are designated as Hispanic.[19] This ethnic designation is in addition to racial identifiers, so that a person in the CLF who is Hispanic is also Native American, African American, Asian, or White.

Civil service age restrictions. Beyond the dissimilar ways in which Hispanic individuals are identified in the CLF and the Federal workforce, the CLF does not align with the Federal workforce in terms of age. The CLF includes persons 16 years of age and older. But the Federal Government generally may not hire 16- and 17-year olds, thus excluding this portion of the CLF. This may slightly increase the underrepresentation of Hispanics, because Hispanics are proportionally more heavily represented in this youngest cohort of the labor force than are non-Hispanics.[20]

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[18] Standard Form 181, "Race and National Origin Identification."
[19] Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1996, p. 5.
[20] While Hispanics made up 8.9 percent of the population 16 years and older in 1994, they made up 12.4 percent of the 16- and 17-year olds. (U. S. Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1995 (115th ed.), Washington, DC, 1995, table 22).

CHAPTER 4
Factors Affecting Hispanic Representation

Despite well-documented gains made by minorities in expanding their representation in the Federal workforce, the aggregate underrepresentation of Hispanics in the Federal workforce makes it clear that the affirmative employment programs of Federal agencies have not yet achieved their ultimate goal. Achieving a workforce that reflects the diversity of the American population will require Government agencies and their managers to be aware of representation issues, sensitive to demographic realities, and committed to action that will result in real progress for the Hispanic minority. And all of this must take place in an environment rife with challenges to agencies' ability to adequately address underrepresentation problems. Some of these issues and challenges are discussed below.

Attitudes, Awareness, and Environment

Managers have always had a key role in achieving diversity in their workforces. They make the hiring, placement, and promotion decisions within the merit system rules. Their attitudes and focus are of great importance in increasing the representation of Hispanic men and women in Federal jobs. Therefore, as part of this study, we surveyed a sample of supervisors and managers to learn about their understanding of Federal diversity programs and of the roles of line managers and staff offices in the programs. We asked all respondents to identify themselves by racial/ethnic category, so we were able to analyze responses according to these categories. As discussed below, we found that the responses of survey participants signal the need for greater emphasis and understanding of affirmative employment programs, particularly with respect to Hispanics.

Commitment to diversity. We asked managers and supervisors whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement, "Selecting officials should be held accountable for achieving a workforce that is as diverse as the available civilian labor force." Only 35.3 percent of White respondents agreed or strongly agreed, while 63.1 percent of Hispanic respondents agreed or strongly agreed, and 70.7 percent of other minorities agreed or strongly agreed. In the aggregate, only 41.8 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. This suggests that a substantial majority of supervisors and managers do not feel responsible for increasing minority representation in their work units. The much higher agreement rate of minorities also suggests that increasing the representation of minorities in the managerial ranks should be part of the strategy to increase Hispanic representation.

Managerial awareness. When asked, "Do you believe that Hispanics are underrepresented in your work unit(s)?," 65.1 percent of White managers answered no. Significantly fewer—but still almost half—of Hispanics (49.4 percent) said no. These results may seem surprising given what we know about the aggregate employment levels of Hispanics. One explanation for this perception, even among Hispanic managers, may be the unequal distribution of Federal jobs and Hispanic workers. (As we discuss later in this report, Federal job concentrations and Hispanic population centers are not located in the same places.) Managers are likely to base their perceptions on their local environments. Since so much of Federal civil service employment is in areas with few Hispanics, managers are likely to perceive their workforces as having representative numbers of Hispanics, given their local communities. This

perception is likely to have the effect of making managers less concerned about increasing Hispanic representation in their work units.

Discrimination. While affirmative employment programs have helped expand representation in the Federal workforce, racial and ethnic discrimination, be it subtle or overt, still exists and can still affect Federal job opportunities for minorities. According to earlier MSPB research on this subject, there remain measurable differences in the employment-related experiences of minority and nonminority Federal employees, and not all of the differences can be explained by differences in education, experience, and other merit-based factors.[21] These differences place the approximately 2,000 individual formal charges of discrimination based on Hispanic origin that are filed annually in a larger context. These measurable differences—and the belief that they exist—are reflected in the individual discrimination complaints filed each year by Hispanic employees in a variety of Federal agencies, the class action complaints pending or settled in several Federal agencies, and periodic findings of discrimination by the EEOC involving Hispanic employees.

Demographic Factors and Civil Service Requirements

Although discrimination undoubtedly continues to interfere with Hispanic hiring, the total elimination of discrimination from the Federal landscape—were that possible— would still not result in the achievement of full Hispanic representation in the Federal workforce unless other actions were taken. The reason for this is the interaction of several demographic and civil service requirements that act as a powerful impediment to increasing the number of Hispanic men and women hired for Federal jobs. In planning the future of their Hispanic employment programs, it is critical that agencies—and Federal managers and supervisors—be aware of these factors, and that they fashion recruitment strategies accordingly. A discussion of these factors follows.

Geographic concentration of the Hispanic population. There is a major mismatch between where most Hispanics live and where most Federal jobs are located. Hispanic populations are concentrated geographically, with two States, California and Texas, accounting for over half of the Hispanic population. These and eight other States are home to over 86 percent of the Hispanic population of the United States. Table 1 shows the Hispanic population and the Federal civil service presence in these 10 States. Note that California and Texas have only 16.3 percent of the permanent Federal jobs, and all 10 States combined have only 34.9 percent of all permanent civil service jobs. The distribution of Federal jobs compared to the distribution of the Hispanic population acts as an obstacle to full Hispanic participation because most job searches by applicants and most recruiting efforts by employers focus on the local commuting area. This is particularly so for jobs in blue-collar occupations (in which the greatest percentage of Hispanics are employed).

Table 1. Distribution of Hispanic Populations and Civil Service Positions, 1995

Geographic Location	Number and (Percent) of Total Hispanic Population	Number and (Percent) of Total Federal Jobs in These States
Total U.S.	26, 797,000 (100)	1,711,909 (100)*
Total California and Texas	14,403,000 (53.7)	278,231 (16.3)
Total for the 8 Other States with Significant Hispanic Population**	8,696,000 (32.5)	317,936 (18.6)
Remaining 40 States and D.C.	3,698,000 (13.8)	1,115,742 (65.2)

* This reflects only those permanent civil service jobs in the 50 States and the District of Columbia. It does not include jobs in the U.S. territories and possessions or in foreign countries. Percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.
**New York, Florida, Illinois, Colorado, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Arizona, and New Mexico.

Sources: population, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1996; civil service positions, Central Personnel Data File.

[21] "Fair and Equitable Treatment: A Progress Report on Minority Employment in the Federal Government," p. xi.

While the geographic concentration of the Hispanic population has negative effects on overall Hispanic representation in Federal jobs, there are exceptions. The concentration of Federal installations in Texas and in metropolitan San Antonio, in particular, illustrates the positive impact on aggregate Hispanic representation rates when Federal jobs are located in areas of high Hispanic population. As of September 30, 1995, metropolitan San Antonio had 29,133 permanent Federal civil service employees, of whom 12,473, or 42.8 percent, were Hispanic. The thousands of Hispanics employed by the Government in metropolitan San Antonio contribute greatly to the overall representation of Hispanics in the Federal workforce. They were, in fact, 12.1 percent of all Hispanics employed in the entire permanent civil service. Metropolitan San Antonio's population is 56 percent Hispanic,[22] one of the highest concentrations in the United States.

Government occupations. In recent years, the mix of occupations in the Federal workforce has been changing rapidly. As table 2 shows, in the 5-year period from 1991 to 1996, professional and administrative jobs, which typically require education beyond the high school level, have grown both in absolute numbers and as a percentage of all jobs. By the end of that period they made up over half (nearly 53 percent) of all permanent Federal jobs. Over the same period, clerical and blue-collar jobs declined markedly, from 32.6 percent to 25.3 percent of permanent jobs.

Reductions in the number of clerical positions can be traced to technological advances. Much of the work once accomplished by clerical workers has been taken over by electronic data bases that are maintained by higher skilled workers. Further, the proliferation of personal computers and the creation of networks of such machines has eliminated much of the need for typists and file clerks, so the number of clerical workers is likely to continue to decline.

The decline in blue-collar jobs reflects their concentration in the Department of Defense. That department has been cutting infrastructure in response to the end of the Cold War and the changing role of the Nation's armed forces. Cuts have been accomplished by congressionally mandated base closings and the contracting out of industrial activities. In all likelihood, the decline in blue-collar jobs in the civil service is a trend that also will continue.

This reduction in blue-collar jobs and the growth in professional and administrative jobs has particular significance for Hispanic representation. First, since most Federal jobs will continue to be in the administrative, professional, and technical occupations, those are the areas in which Hispanics can make the most progress. And, in fact, Hispanics have increased their numbers significantly in the professional, administrative, technical, and other categories as shown in table 3. At the same time, overall Hispanic employment has dropped in the declining clerical and blue-collar occupations—as has that of nonminority employees—as the total number of positions has declined.

For Hispanics, this sharp decline in blue-collar jobs in the civil service makes it harder to achieve full representation in the Federal workforce. This is so because of the large propor-

Table 2. Civil Service Workforce by PATCOB Category, 1991, 1996

PATCOB Category	Percentage of Federal Workforce, 1991	Percentage of Federal Workforce, 1996
Professional	21.7	23.5
Administrative	25.8	29.4
Technical	17.7	19.2
Clerical	16.0	11.3
Other	2.2	2.5
Blue-collar	16.6	14.1

Note: Civil service jobs are broadly categorized within the CPDF by a system called "PATCOB" (professional, administrative, technical, clerical, other, and blue-collar)

Source: Office of Personnel Management, Central Personnel Data File

[22] Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1996, table 46.

Table 3. Hispanic Representation in Federal Departments and Agencies: September 30, 1991 and September 30, 1996			
PATCOB Category	No. Hispanics 9/30/91	No. Hispanics 9/30/96	Percent Change 1991 to 1996
Professional	14,949	16,067	+7.5
Administrative	23,435	27,634	+17.9
Technical	19,348	21,472	+11.0
Clerical	19,913	12,792	-35.8
Other	4,364	5,617	+28.7
Blue-Collar	23,669	19,152	-19.1
TOTAL	105,678	102,734	-2.8
Source: Office of Personnel Management, Central Personnel Data File			

tion of Hispanics employed in blue-collar jobs in the civilian labor force, the pool from which the Government recruits Hispanics. In 1994, 58 percent of Hispanics in the CLF were employed in blue-collar occupations, in contrast to 40 percent of all persons in the CLF employed in these jobs.[23] The much higher representation of Hispanics in these occupations is significant because of the importance of work experience in qualifying for civil service jobs. While working in blue-collar jobs in the labor force is qualifying for equivalent blue-collar civil service jobs, that work experience is unlikely to prepare individuals for other types of jobs in the civil service.

This occupational distribution of Hispanics can be better understood by examining Hispanic educational attainment. The percentage of the Hispanic population whose education has prepared them for professional and administrative jobs is relatively low. Overall, a far smaller percentage of Hispanics than non-Hispanics have completed advanced education. As table 4 shows, in 1995, 9.2 percent of Hispanics had a bachelor's degree or higher level of educational attainment, while 24.2 percent of non-Hispanics had reached that level.

While this demographic factor is beyond the power of Federal managers to remedy directly, the Government has initiated action to address concerns about education. Executive Order 12900, Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, requires Federal agencies to prepare plans to, among other actions, eliminate unintended regulatory barriers to the participation of Hispanic Americans in federally administered education programs and ensure that Hispanic-serving school districts and institutions of higher education know of Federal program opportunities.

Over time these remedies may considerably improve prospects for increasing Hispanic representation in the Federal workforce. In the short term, however, the much lower percentage of Hispanics with education beyond high school means that it will require special efforts to recruit those who are well qualified for the increasingly professional civil service workforce. These factors,

Table 4. Percentages of Hispanics and Non-Hispanics Who Have Attained the Indicated Education Level, 1995 (For persons 25 years old and over; percentages by highest level of attainment)		
Highest Level of Attainment	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
Less than high school graduate	46.6	15.7
High school graduate	26.3	34.6
Some college, but less than a bachelor's degree	17.8	25.4
Bachelor's degree	6.5	16.0
Advanced degree	2.7	8.2
Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1996, table 243		

[23] Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1995, table 649.

coupled with the high concentration of Hispanics in blue-collar occupations in the civilian labor force imply a critical need for Federal employers to aggressively seek out well-qualified Hispanic candidates to fill Government jobs.

(It's also important to note that Hispanic representation at lower grade levels is higher than their aggregate representation in the Federal workforce. Thus, advancement of Hispanics already in the workforce is another issue that merits the continuing attention of Federal managers. Table 5 displays the distribution of Hispanic Federal workers by grade level grouping.)

Federal downsizing and the changing CLF. The pressure to downsize agency workforces has been continuous since 1991. Over the period 1991-96, the permanent civil service workforce was reduced by 12.8 percent. As shown in table 6, Hispanics increased their representation rate over this period from 5.4 percent of the total workforce to 6.0 percent of the workforce, but this did not result in a net increase in the number of Hispanics in permanent jobs. Further, it must be recognized that the large aggregate decline in the number of civil service positions has reduced agencies' opportunities to hire additional Hispanics.

Although Hispanics have increased their representation in the Federal workforce to 6 percent, they have grown as a percentage of the CLF even more. As table 7 shows, by 1995 Hispanic representation in the CLF had increased to 9.3 percent, and it is projected to grow to 11.1 percent by 2005. With such growth in Hispanics' share of the CLF occurring simultaneously with Federal downsizing, special outreach efforts are likely to be needed to close the gap between Hispanics' current representation in the Federal workforce and their representation in the CLF.

Furthermore, this pressure to downsize the Federal workforce can be expected to continue for the foreseeable future. The Base Closure and Realignment Commission has identified a significant number of military installations that Congress has approved for closure by 2001. Language has been included in an appropriations measure approved by the Senate to increase contracting out of functions now performed by Federal employees.[24] Further, the continuing burden of finding savings to balance the budget will most likely fall heavily on civil service employment. Current downsizing and the high potential for future employment cuts are likely to have significant impact on Federal recruiting in general and Hispanic recruiting in particular.

Among the more serious consequences of downsizing—at least with respect to Hispanic representation—is the inordinate Governmentwide effect that closing certain military installations is likely to have. For example, Kelly Air Force Base, which is located in San Antonio, Texas, has been designated for closure in connection with plans to cut military infrastructure. This one installation employs 40 percent of all the Hispanics in the Department of the Air Force's permanent civilian workforce, and 6.4 percent of all the Hispanics in the entire Federal civil service.[25] Obviously, elimination of the civilian jobs at Kelly Air Force Base will seriously decrease Hispanic representa-

Table 5. Hispanic Representation in the Federal Workforce by Grade Level Grouping, September 30, 1996

Grade level grouping	No. employees in grade grouping	No. Hispanics in grade grouping	Percentage Hispanics in grade grouping
GS 1-4	123,291	9,798	7.9
GS 5-8	441,997	31,437	7.1
GS 9-12	599,811	34,431	5.7
GS 13-15	317,445	10,932	3.4
Blue-collar	242,156	19,152	7.9
Subtotal	1,724,700	105,750	6.1
Senior pay levels	15,024	376	2.5

Note: These data include full-time, part-time, and intermittent positions, and both permanent and temporary positions
Source: Office of Personnel Management, Central Personnel Data File

[24] Senate bill 1023, 105th Congress.
[25] U. S. Office of Personnel Management, Central Personnel Data File.

Table 6. Permanent Employees in the Departments and Agencies of the Federal Government					
As of Sept. 30:	No. of Hispanics	No. Non-Hispanic Minorities	No. of Whites	Total Employees	Percentage of Hispanics in the Workforce
1991	105,678	426,955	1,433,940	1,966,573	5.4
1992	106,482	428,878	1,423,619	1,958,979	5.4
1993	104,660	422,261	1,373,329	1,900,250	5.5
1994	103,736	413,045	1,319,472	1,836,253	5.6
1995	103,073	402,027	1,266,643	1,771,743	5.8
1996	102,734	389,602	1,221,646	1,713,982	6.0
% change 1991-1996	-2.8	-8.7	-14.8	-12.8	+11.1
Source: Office of Personnel Management, Central Personnel Data File					

tion in the Federal workforce as a whole unless offsetting gains are made elsewhere.

To reiterate, the rapid growth of Hispanic representation in the civilian labor force at a time when the Federal workforce is shrinking and the future of many Federal programs is in doubt complicates the problem of overcoming Hispanic underrepresentation. With Federal hiring on the decline and the threat of further cuts looming, many agencies are reluctant to hire for long-term, career-oriented, developmental programs. Yet, for the Federal workforce to match the growing presence of Hispanics in the CLF, more hiring, rather than less, is required.

Citizenship requirements in the civil service. Another obstacle to reaching full representation of Hispanics is citizenship requirements. A legally mandated eligibility requirement for employment in Federal civil service positions is U.S. citizenship. While limited exceptions are made for individuals with specialized skills that are in short supply, noncitizens are generally barred from civil service employment. This requirement means that the Hispanic employment pool from which Federal agencies may recruit is substantially smaller than that available to non-Government employers. While 2.9 percent of non-Hispanics in the civilian labor force were not citizens in 1990, 35.0 percent of Hispanics were not citizens,[26] and thus, were effectively barred from civil service employment.

Although the citizenship requirement certainly affects the size of the pool of Hispanics from which Federal employers are permitted to hire, the requirement alone is not an insurmountable barrier to Hispanics achieving full representation in the Federal workforce, particularly where there are offsetting factors. For example, Asians are fully

Table 7. Civilian Labor Force 1980-2005 (projected, yearly averages)					
	1980	1990	1995	2000	2005
Total persons in CLF (millions)	106.9	125.8	132.3	140.0	147.1
No. Hispanics in CLF (millions)	6.1	10.7	12.3	14.3	16.3
Percentage of Hispanics	5.7	8.5	9.3	10.2	11.1
Note: The 1995 figures are not strictly comparable to previous years due to changes in methodology. Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1996, table 615					

[26] Bureau of the Census, "Persons of Hispanic Origin in the United States," 1990 CP-3-3, 1990 Census of Population, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, August 1993.

represented in the Federal workforce even though a higher percentage of them are noncitizens (38.6 percent) than are Hispanics. In this case, a significant offsetting factor is the educational attainment of Asians. In 1990, 44.9 percent of Asian men and 35.4 percent of Asian women had completed 4 years of college or more (versus 9.8 percent for Hispanic men and 8.7 percent for Hispanic women).[27]

The principal prohibition on the hiring of noncitizens is Executive Order 11935, issued in 1976. An additional prohibition on the hiring of noncitizens is contained in traditional "boiler plate" language in annual appropriations measures passed by Congress. This language typically disallows the use of the funds being appropriated to pay noncitizens. These prohibitions expire with each fiscal year, but Congress has repeated the prohibition in each year's appropriations bills.

The prohibition on the hiring of noncitizens does not extend to all areas of Federal employment. Executive Order 11935 is limited to the "competitive service"; that is, permanent, tenured civil service positions. The appropriations prohibitions cover only those agencies for which the specific appropriations are made. It should be noted that the largest civilian Federal employer outside the competitive civil service, the U.S. Postal Service, has no prohibition on hiring noncitizens.

[27] Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1996, table 242; 1990 is the most recent year for which the Bureau of the Census has published this information on Asians.

CHAPTER 5
Agencies' Actions: Current Status and Potential Strategies

To learn how agencies are monitoring and allocating their resources to meet the challenge of increasing Hispanic representation, we sent questionnaires to the directors of EEO at the 23 largest Federal departments and agencies,[28] focusing specifically on how they apportioned resources to various elements of their affirmative action programs and to Hispanic recruitment in fiscal year 1996. We addressed our questionnaire to the EEO directors because they are the central point for affirmative action planning and reporting in their agencies. We asked agencies to tell us about the use of any special strategies to increase Hispanic recruitment and also requested that they quantify the following:

- The resources expended to recruit Hispanics and to recruit other minorities;
- The number of internship, co-op, and other student positions filled by Hispanics, other minorities, and nonminorities;
- The resources spent on direct agency employment programs under the executive orders for Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Hispanic-Serving Institutions at the college and university level; and
- The resources expended to attract Hispanics under the Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program.

We received responses from 15 of the 23 departments and agencies from which we solicited information. Among the responding agencies, four were unable to provide us with summaries of resources expended for Hispanic recruiting activities. That and all other aspects of our efforts to obtain the solicited information gave us a number of insights into Federal agencies' Hispanic recruitment programs.

Availability of Program Information

The first insight from our questionnaire came not from any statistics the agencies provided but from the process of attempting to gather the information. It appears that information tracking the major aspects of agencies' Hispanic program activities is not readily available and is difficult to assemble. For the most part, the agencies were not able to provide timely and comprehensive responses to our questions. In most agencies, responsibility for Hispanic program activities is dispersed within department and agency subelements, and information that might be useful in managing an agency-wide recruitment program is not centrally maintained. In addition, many of the recruiting activities for targeted populations are handled by the agencies' human resources staffs, which are organizationally isolated from the EEO function, so the recruiting programs are not necessarily coordinated with other aspects of the agencies' diversity programs.

The lack of readily available information at the departmental and agency headquarters level suggests that the success of Hispanic employment programs—or lack of it—is not being closely monitored by agencies' top management. Typically, if agency leaders focus on a program, staffs

[28] These are named in footnote 9.

tend to follow through on related activities and report regularly on their efforts. The activity in Hispanic employment programs is apparently not monitored very closely overall. Three of the departments and agencies that answered our questionnaire explained that little focus on Hispanic recruitment activity occurred in FY 1996 because of hiring freezes.

Allocation of Program Resources

A total of 12 departments and agencies reported on expenditures for minority recruitment (three of the agencies that responded did not have these data available).[29] For non-Hispanic recruitment, agencies reported using 396 work years of employee time and $6.14 million in other expenditures in FY 1996. For Hispanic recruitment, they reported 515 work years of employee time and $2.16 million in other expenditures for the same year.

Federal departments and agencies are also required, by specific executive orders, to provide special support to the educational programs of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's)[30] and Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI's) of Education.[31] These executive orders require that Federal departments and agencies report annually on their activities in support of HBCU's and HSI's. We asked agencies to tell us how much they spent on direct agency employment of college-level students under these two executive orders. A total of eight departments and agencies reported dollar amounts. Another five told us that the figures were not available, and two said that they had spent no money on direct agency employment because of hiring freezes. The eight agencies that reported said that in FY 1996 they had spent a total of $11,694,671 for HBCU's and $2,669,707 for HSI's.

In examining the information submitted by the responding agencies, we found no clear indication that they are funding their outreach efforts in a response proportionate to the degree of Hispanic underrepresentation in the workforce, nor do they take into account the severity of the obstacles to full Hispanic representation. The level of underrepresentation and the significance of the obstacles to higher Hispanic employment are factors that should play a part in agency decisions about how the scarce (and possible dwindling) recruiting resources are allocated. Monitoring the resources being channeled into special-emphasis recruitment and considering apportionment of resources based upon the magnitude of the underrepresentation problem will become more important as agencies face more staff and budget cuts.

Special Program Placements

One of the strategies agencies have successfully employed to place minorities in Federal jobs is the use of internships and other student programs. These programs acquaint the employee with the work of the organization, allow the agency to get to know the employee, and may permit the agency to place the employee in a permanent position, normally at entry level, when all program requirements have been met. When we asked departments and agencies about the results of their student programs for FY 1996, a total of 13 of them reported placing 1,166 Hispanics, 3,254 other minorities, and 6,522 nonminorities in student programs. In this group of agencies, 10.7 percent of the individuals placed in student programs were Hispanic, a percentage somewhat higher than the representation of Hispanics in the overall civilian labor force.

While Hispanic placements in student programs in the 13 reporting departments and agencies represent a significant percentage of all such placements, the agencies reported that only 95, or 8.1 percent, of Hispanics placed through student programs were placed in permanent Federal jobs. The agencies also reported that 217 or 6.7 percent of non-Hispanic minorities in student programs were placed in permanent Federal positions. At least in the current employment climate, with many agencies still downsizing, it appears that relatively few participants in student programs, regardless of race or ethnicity, are placed in permanent jobs.

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[29] The agencies that responded were: the Departments of the Air Force, Agriculture, Commerce, Energy, the Interior, Justice, Labor, the Navy, State, and the Treasury; the Environmental Protection Agency; NASA; the Office of Personnel Management; the Small Business Administration; and the Social Security Administration.

[30] Executive Order 12876, November 1993.

[31] Executive Order 12900, February 1994.

Nevertheless, student employment programs remain an excellent way to acquaint Federal employers with the abilities of Hispanic workers and to expose Hispanic students to potential Federal job opportunities.

Another approach to hiring at the entry level is the establishment of training positions. Often these positions are centrally funded and provided by agencies to their field installations for the purpose of training and orienting newly hired employees in the agencies' principal occupations. A feature common to such programs is the organizational and geographic movement of the incumbents at the end of the training period. Concentrating such training positions in States with the highest Hispanic populations would increase the pool of well-qualified Hispanics available for selection. Further, placing Hispanics in training positions that require geographic mobility will assist in dispersing Hispanics throughout the civil service workforce.

In fact, there is some evidence to suggest that once in civil service careers, Hispanics may be more likely than other groups to be mobile. In surveying Federal managers in connection with the Board's previously mentioned report on minority employment, we found that a greater percentage of Hispanic respondents than any other racial grouping said they were willing to move to another geographic area for career advancement.[32] This suggests that if more career-entry and developmental positions are designated in those States with large Hispanic populations, placement of Hispanics in these positions will be a good strategy for dispersing Hispanics within the Federal civil service workforce in other geographic areas.

To learn whether this approach is currently being pursued, we asked EEO directors if their agencies had taken action to increase the number of entry-level career jobs in States with large Hispanic populations. The departments and agencies that responded reported no significant use of this approach. Nevertheless, this is an approach that agencies should consider seriously. California alone has over a third of the entire Hispanic population of the United States, and recruiting for trainee positions in such States would, without extraordinary efforts, give agencies access to large pools of Hispanic candidates.

Recruiting for the Shifting Civil Service Workforce

As our analysis has shown, the Federal civil service job mix has been shifting substantially. Professional and administrative jobs now constitute over one-half of all permanent jobs. Thus, to improve the representation of Hispanics it will be necessary to focus on recruiting them for professional and administrative jobs, and most candidates for these jobs will be people with education at the college level who are not current employees.

In this connection, one of the provisions of Executive Order 12900 on enhancing educational attainment of Hispanics directs OPM to develop a plan to "promote recruitment of Hispanic students for part-time, summer, and permanent positions in the Federal Government."[33] In response to this requirement, OPM published its plan, "Pursuing Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans: strategies for increasing recruitment of Hispanic students," in September 1995. The plan recounts appointment authorities and cites available hiring flexibilities such as outstanding scholar appointments.

In our inquiry to agency EEO directors we included a question on the specific actions the agency had taken to implement the OPM plan. While many agencies reported individual activities that fit under one or more of the categories listed in OPM's plan, none reported a systematic set of actions in response to the plan. We conclude that while the OPM plan was intended to stimulate systematic action by agencies, it has not done so. This reinforces the need for agencies to develop plans for such action.

Program Leadership

It is, perhaps, axiomatic that for any program to meet with real success, commitment of some influential person to the program and its underly-

[32] "Fair and Equitable Treatment: A Progress Report on Minority Employment in the Federal Government," p. 25.
[33] Executive Order 12900, sec. 7, February 1994.

ing principles is essential. This is particularly true when program success means overcoming powerful obstacles, as is the case with increasing Federal employment of Hispanics. Senior-level leadership is critical to this undertaking.

This is borne out by information we obtained in our interviews with Federal officials in California. One of the reasons given for the success of one large agency in increasing Hispanic representation in California was the presence of Hispanic executives, who clearly cared about the program. By making the recruitment of Hispanic professionals a priority, these senior managers have communicated—in a way that an agency's written policy statements cannot—that diversity is considered important to all managers' effectiveness. Senior managers must provide the leadership, so that line managers, in turn, are motivated to pursue this goal.

This notion is further supported by research conducted by the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO), which examined a number of "best practices" used in the Federal and private sectors to recruit, hire, and retain Hispanic employees. GAO found that in general, the Federal units and private companies that had been successful in hiring and retaining Hispanics had senior-level managers who were visibly committed to achieving a diverse workforce. According to one of these organizations, senior-level management sets the tone for an organization and in demonstrating a clear commitment to workforce diversity, senior leaders convey to other managers the message that diversity is necessary.[34]

[34] U.S. General Accounting Office, "Hispanic Employment: Best Practices Used by Selected Agencies and Companies," GAO/GGD-97-46R, Washington, DC, Mar. 10, 1997, p. 8. Although not intended as a comprehensive survey of Federal and private organizations, GAO's report provides a useful starting point for agencies to identify practices that will produce superior results.

CHAPTER 6
Conclusions and Recommendations

Underrepresentation of Hispanics in the Federal workforce is inconsistent with the statutory goal of a workforce representative of "all segments of society." It is also inconsistent with the requirements of the Congressionally-mandated Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program. Further, as the Board has noted previously, the Federal Government, as the Nation's largest employer and enforcer of laws, has a special obligation to be fair and inclusive in all its employment practices. Thus, it is appropriate for Federal agencies to vigorously pursue the goal of assuring that Hispanic men and women are employed by the Government in the same proportions as they participate in the civilian labor force.

The obstacles that Federal agencies face in increasing Hispanic employment are complicated. And not all of them are within the power of Federal managers and supervisors to change. All the more reason, then, for the Government to pay special attention to the problem, and to make sure that all its managers and supervisors are sensitive to the issues and are doing everything they can to improve the situation. Rather than viewing these challenges as a deterrent, Federal managers should see these as reasons to exert even more effort to increase Hispanic representation in the Federal workforce.

Recommendations

1. Federal departments and agencies should develop integrated strategies for increasing the representation rate of Hispanics in the workforce. The strategies should be implemented and monitored in a systematic manner, and should include measures such as:

- Establishing entry-level positions in principal agency occupations at locations with large Hispanic populations in order to increase the Hispanic applicant pool from which candidates for employment are drawn.

- Increasing the number of Hispanic managers in order to provide more mentors for Hispanic employees within the agency and a greater connection with Hispanic communities.

- Emphasizing the importance of senior level leadership in efforts to achieve a fully diverse workforce so that line managers, in turn, are motivated to pursue the goal of full representation of Hispanics in the workforce.

2. Federal departments and agencies should assure that their managers and supervisors have comprehensive and accurate information about the current representation of ethnic and minority groups in the agency's workforce and are committed to doing their part towards achieving the statutory goal of full representation.

3. Because Hispanics remain the only significantly underrepresented minority group in the Federal workforce and the obstacles to full Hispanic representation are particularly severe, agencies should devote a greater proportion of their recruitment resources to hiring well-qualified Hispanic men and women.