

# News

## For Immediate Release

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## Top Leaders Address 2005 Multi-cultural Business Forum

(SACRAMENTO Oct. 11) – Businesspeople learned how to capture part of the Sacramento region’s rapidly-expanding ethnic marketplace today at the 2005 Multi-cultural Business Forum.

The Treasurer of the United States and a best-selling author and TV personality helped explain the importance of diversity in business at the event held at the Sheraton Grand Sacramento.

The Sacramento Asian, Black and Hispanic Chambers of Commerce hosted the event along with the Sacramento Business Journal and Valley Vision, a nonprofit that promotes civic involvement and regional planning and solutions.

As the capital of one of the most diverse states in the U.S. and one of the world’s largest economies, it’s fitting that the City of Sacramento’s diversity is so rich. Everyone was a minority when TIME Magazine named Sacramento “America’s Most Diverse City” in 2002: 41 percent of residents were non-Hispanic white at the time, 15.5 percent black, 22 percent Hispanic and 17.5 percent Asian/Pacific Islander.

The forum aims to leverage that diversity with workshops and networking opportunities meant to help businesspeople across the spectrum – small and large -- understand and learn from each other.

Sacramento Mayor Heather Fargo recognized the gathering by issuing a proclamation naming Oct. 11 as “Sacramento Diversity Day.”

“The power of the ethnic community has never been stronger in our region,” noted Diana Borroel, president and CEO of the Sacramento Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

Indeed, the economic clout of African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians and Native Americans nationwide is significant: African-Americans have \$723 billion in spending power, for example, and Hispanics \$686 billion.

"We intend to play a leadership role in shaping an agenda for economic opportunity that serves everyone in the region," said Pat Fong-Kushida, president and CEO of the Sacramento Asian Pacific Chamber of Commerce.

Workshops at the unique half-day event highlighted best practices for marketing and procurement; legislative, market and demographic changes that impact businesses of all sizes; effective marketing strategies for multi-cultural consumers; and networking strategies for top business professionals, community leaders and potential new clients.

"By leveraging our diversity, we can all prosper, from corporate to individual proprietorships," said Velma Sykes, executive director of the Sacramento Black Chamber of Commerce.

Organizers awarded the 2005 "Excellence in Diversity Award" to Sutter Medical Center for its external and internal efforts at valuing and promoting diversity. The nonprofit hospital grants more than \$1 million to local organizations each year for culturally and linguistically appropriate services for the uninsured and underinsured; provides extensive translation and diverse spiritual care services for patients; recruits diversity and holds an annual Cultural Awareness Celebration.

"Sutter Medical Center shows a commitment to diversity across all levels: patient care, contracting, hiring and outside community giving," Borroel said.

Top speakers included United States Treasurer – and former University of California Davis student -- Anna Escobedo Cabral. Cabral formerly headed the Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility, a nonprofit which partners with Fortune 500 companies to increase Hispanic representation in employment, procurement, philanthropy and governance. She also directed the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Latino Initiatives.

Dr. Bertice Berry also addressed the group. Her works include the inspirational bestseller *I'm On My Way, But Your Foot Is On My Head*, the humorous bestsellers *Sckraight From the Ghetto, You Might Be Ghetto If* and the sequel *You STILL Ghetto*.

Berry has appeared on "The Oprah Winfrey Show," "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno," and "B.E.T. Live" with Tavis Smiley thanks to her razor wit and profound humor on tough subjects as race and sexism in America. She donates all royalties from her book sales to organizations that help families of terminally ill children, fundraise for orphanages and provide resource information to low-income families.

Attendees closed the day networking and enjoying ethnic foods.

For more information on the Forum visit [www.multiculturalbusinessforum.com](http://www.multiculturalbusinessforum.com).

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