

The Hispanic Pulse



April 26, 2010



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Bill Hernandez

As I complete my Master's in Organizational Leadership I reflect at all the changes within our department and the effects they may have. Therefore, I have chosen to write about Organizational Change.

Organizational change may take a wide variety of forms which can include different forms of organizational action. The pursuit of organizational change is usually related to the goal of improving performance and productivity which can be obtained through many forms of organizational change. Some variations of organizational change can include growth, modernization or improvement and development of skill, reduction in workforce or reorganization, financial reorganization, or any combinations therein.

Presently, there is an organizational change occurring within the MDPD. Director Loftus has had to reduce the administrative staff and realign various entities due to financial deficiencies. The transformation of our organization is reliant almost entirely on the leadership style and the culture that are present in the organization. We have had to do "more with less" and find out ways to be self sufficient in specific areas. Leadership is crucial to the successful implementation of organizational change and together we must all adhere to the reorganization and support the decisions made.

Leadership is a key factor in a succession of development in which establishing vision, implementing change and guiding staff members, are linked in a continuous process. Sustaining a culture of change requires the type of constant effort and commitment that only leaders can properly direct. Especially in times of uncertainty and change, employees look to the leader figures in the organization. Leaders are key to casting the vision for change, directing it and reinforcing it at all levels. Without the vision and guidance of leadership, productive change is not possible.

In addition, leadership is so important to the process of transformation because it is related to the external environment. Leaders serve as a "go-between" the internal and external environment. Just as leaders do not exist in isolation, neither do their organizations. Leaders must be in tune with the external environment in which their organization functions as well as the organization's own internal environment. During times of change, leaders mediate between the two in order to maintain balance by making sure neither clashes with its counterpart. The successful transformation of any organization is reliant on the leadership's proper handling of these environments and ability to adapt the direction to changing circumstances.

The distinction must be made between leaders of change and change agents. While the former typically hold senior and top management positions, the latter can be found at all levels within the organization. Successful implementation of change depends on the premise that strong leaders will cultivate and support change agents through training and development, and equally important - listening. The focus on developing and strengthening change agents is a crucial part of the change process which only leadership can complete.

During the difficult process of change, good leaders establish a climate of trust between themselves and their staff, thereby fostering faith that things will get better. Doing this makes dealing with radical change easier on everyone. On the other hand, poor leadership creates a lack of hope, which, if not properly addressed prior to implementing change, can ultimately lead to the failure of said change.

Leadership throughout the entire life cycle of the organizational process is the key to successfully achieving a healthy transformation.

Hispanic Police Officers Association

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The Hispanic Pulse
We are on the Web:
www.hpoadade.org



Hispanic Police Officers Association

April 26, 2010

HPOA Meeting at HPOA Office
at 7:30 p.m.

May 8, 2010

Domino Tournament,
Miami Airport Hilton, 6:00 p.m.

May 31, 2010

HPOA Meeting at HPOA Office
at 7:30 p.m.

Board Members



Executive Vice President
Alex Alfonso



2nd Vice President
Eric Garcia



Treasurer
Willy Gonzalez



Secretary
Marcos Martinez



Sergeant at Arms
Bobby Fortich

HPOA OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Anthony "Tony" Pando

The Hispanic Police Officers Association is both proud and pleased to announce its selection of Officer Anthony "Tony" Pando as the HPOA's Officer of the Year for 2009, for his remarkable bravery and composure while handling the scene of a violent domestic dispute.

Officer Pando, along with Officers Elba Masferrer and Idania Felipe, responded to a domestic dispute on July 16, 2009. Amid hysterical screaming and the sounds of a violent struggle emanating from within the residence, as Officer Pando knocked on the door and announced the arrival of Miami-Dade Police. In fear of her life, a woman, terrified and bleeding, ran out of the house, screaming in Spanish that the man inside was going to kill her. Her young daughter followed, also terrified and screaming. The subject, in a violent rage, emerged from the house with a pickaxe, constantly threatening to kill the woman. The subject's son attempted to stop him by holding onto the pickaxe, but he was overpowered by his father. The subject raised the pickaxe menacingly over his head and came after the woman, paying no heed to the officers' commands to stop, and raging all the while that he was going to kill her.

With the victim's life clearly in danger, Officer Pando knew he had to take action. However, because of their positions, using his firearm may have put the others in danger as well. Thinking of the safety of everyone at the scene, Officer Pando instead utilized his Electronic Control Device (ECD). In doing so, Officer Pando was able to safely and effectively subdue the subject, and save a woman and her children from the subject's brutal violence.

As a result of the exemplary manner in which the officers responded to this volatile incident, Officers Masferrer and Felipe were awarded the Miami-Dade Police Department's Bronze Medals of Valor and also the Lifesaving Award. In addition, because of the heroic actions taken by Officer Pando, he was awarded the Miami-Dade Police Department's Silver Medal of Valor and Lifesaving Award. He was also selected as MDPD's Distinguished Officer of the Month for October 2009.

The HPOA is proud to have brave men and women, like Officer Tony Pando, as members of our Association. For his dedication to the protection of life and selfless devotion to justice, we are grateful for his service and commend him for a job well done.



THE CINCO DE MAYO HPOA DOMINO TOURNAMENT

Ladies bring your man out this year and play dominoes and dance the night away. The HPOA will be celebrating Cinco de Mayo on Saturday, May 8, 2010 at the Hilton on Blue Lagoon. This year the HPOA will have a DJ to help celebrate as others play dominoes in the Tavernier room located on the second floor.

After the huge success of November's tournament, we are ready for another great event. In addition to an evening of fun with friends, members will enjoy an open bar, food, cigars, and raffles throughout the event. The raffle will include a bottle of Johnnie Walker Blue and a Custom made domino table donated by Karel Rosario and the Family Domino Tables Company. All proceeds and cover charge (\$20) will go to the HPOA Scholarship Fund. So come out and support and you will be guaranteed a great time.

The tournament will take place on Saturday, May 8, 2010, at the Airport Hilton, located at 5101 Blue Lagoon Drive in Miami. The fee is only \$20 per person, and registration begins at 6:00 a.m. See you there!



FLORIDA PREPAID SCHOLARSHIPS

In addition the Fall 2010 HPOA scholarships, we are pleased to announce that the HPOA will also be awarding three (3) Florida Prepaid College Plans scholarships in the amounts of \$500, \$300, and \$200, for the upcoming enrollment period in October 2010.

These scholarships will be awarded to HPOA members only and will follow these guidelines:

- Each member is entitled to only (1) one entry form. Should a member be the spouse or significant other of another member, it will be only (1) one entry per family.
- The member must be in good standing with the association (e.g. dues, etc.)
- The member must have a child / children at the time of enrollment & participation.
- The member must provide proof of enrollment with the Fla. Pre-Paid program (e.g. a/c balance), and said account balance shall have a pending or outstanding balance (e.g. a/c will not be paid in full or complete).
- The member winning an award not having a child enrolled at the time shall have a new account opened directly through the HPOA towards the Fla. Pre-Paid program, following all applicable rules and guidelines of said program.
- All eligible members are allowed to participate every year regardless of being a prior winner on a previous year, provided that all other eligibility rules are met.
- The Board Members shall have the right(s) to amend, change, cancel, and or improve any and all guidelines, to the best interest of the association and its members.

Additional information and entry forms will become available to members sometime around August, two months prior to the annual open enrollment in October. Members can obtain more information about the Florida Prepaid College Plans at their website: <http://www.myfloridaprepaid.com/index.asp>.

ANNUAL HPOA SCHOLARSHIPS

The HPOA will be awarding 10 separate scholarships for the Fall 2010 school term. Three (3) scholarships will be in the amount of \$2,500 each and seven (7) will be in the amount of \$1000 each.

An applicant must be a dependent son or daughter of any full-time HPOA member and must be attending a college or community college that is regionally accredited, or be enrolled in a degree-seeking program, in the school term beginning in the fall of 2010.

Applications are available at the HPOA website, www.HPOADade.org, under the "Documents" tab. Please note that although the link is titled HPOA 2009 Scholarship Awards, the link will take you to the 2010 application package. Please make sure the applications are complete at the time of submission. The HPOA will not disqualify any application that meets the above criteria; however, any section of the application that is incomplete or left blank will be scored accordingly, thereby making the application less competitive.

Deadline: Scholarship applications must be received in the HPOA office by Friday, April 30, 2010. Mailed submissions must be postmarked by April 30, 2010.

Please feel free to contact Amy Alvarez, HPOA Executive Secretary, at 305-594-1173, if you have any questions, if you need a printed copy of the application, or need any further information.

A GREAT DAY OF FUN AT THE ANNUAL HPOA PICNIC

The Annual HPOA picnic was a huge success! Those of you who stopped by can attest the food was great and so was the music... and even the weather was terrific! And there was no shortage of activities to entertain the kids. Everything from face-painting to pony rides, bounce houses to rock-climbing walls... the kids sure did have it good! The very best part of the day was being stress-free day, enjoying good food and fun with friends and family. A special thanks to our members who worked so very hard to make the event such a great one.

WEBSITE NEWS

Some of you may have noticed that the link to the Scholarships still reads "HPOA 2009 Scholarships Awards." We are currently in the process of updating some our links with our web administrator, but it is taking some time. We are constantly updating the website with new and current information, and we appreciate you letting us know when you spot an error.

We are diligently working to correct this and any other issues with the website. Thanks for your patience!

JESUS BENCOMO

Retired MDPD Police Division Chief,
HPOA Co-Founder, and First HPOA President

Jesus Bencomo, a first-generation Cuban-American, began his career with the Public Safety Department (PSD) in PSD Academy Class #46 in April 1968, under Sheriff E. Wilson Purdy.

“Achieving graduation was a great accomplishment,” says Bencomo. “Back in those days, there were a lot of obstacles. Racism was prevalent.” After graduation, Officer Bencomo was assigned to uniform patrol at the Airport District. He later became a detective in the Physical Offenses Bureau (POB). The POB investigated homicide, sexual battery, and robbery cases at that time. He also spent several years as a uniform patrol officer at Central District. He was promoted to Sergeant while still in Central District and went from patrol to supervise a specialized unit known as the Vice, Intelligence, and Narcotics (VIN) squad under the General Investigations Unit (GIU). “It was a time when dope was on the rise and began infiltrating Dade County” Says Bencomo. “I remember one time that we did a raid with Joe Benitez and recovered an Igloo ice chest full of money. We couldn’t even close the lid because it has so much money in it! Bolita was another popular trend at the time,” he recalls.

In the mid-70’s, he was transferred to the original West District. At the time it was a store front in the shopping cen-

ter on Bird Road and 115 Avenue, where the Home Depot is now. It was during this time that the first informal gatherings of Hispanic police officers began to take place to discuss employment-related issues facing Hispanics on the department. Racism was a hard problem to fight in the department, and was especially challenging locally for Hispanics. While racism was being felt by both Blacks and Hispanics, alike, Hispanics were “suffering locally,” which meant they did not have much of a voice. It was this need for a unified “voice” that drove the Hispanic Officers Association’s (HOA) founders to come together. And with the inception of the Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunities Act, Hispanics were finally able to fight back against the racism that permeated the department. Bencomo became a founder and the first President of the HOA, later renamed the Hispanic Police Officers Association (HPOA).

After several other assignments, Sergeant Bencomo obtained a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice degree. After graduation, Bencomo went to Crime Scene, went to Bomb

School and became a Bomb Technician. He later became a Police Commander under Director Bobby Jones’ departmental reorganization and assigned to then Captain Fred Taylor. Commander Bencomo decided to once again pursue his education and graduated from St. Thomas University with a Master of Science in Management and Administration in December 1985.

Bencomo served as Bureau Commander for Court Liaison until promoted to Major of District 8 (future Hammocks District). It was just a storefront at the time, but Major Bencomo was tasked with overseeing all phases of the construction of the new district station, from site selection to ribbon-cutting. Although he carried out this assignment through completion, he never served as Major in the new district station. He was moved to Kendall District. Bencomo states, “I liked this assignment the best. I felt that I was actually doing something for the community. I could get involved. There was a lot of direct contact with the public you were impacting,” Shortly thereafter he was promoted to Division Chief over South Operations Division.

Then Hurricane Andrew struck South Florida. It was like nothing MDPD had ever experienced. Bencomo states that Hurricane Andrew was both the greatest professional challenge of his career with MDPD. “The job of those officers under my direction was incredible,” he says. “Everybody did their

job... and then some. They sacrificed their families to help the community. That’s something to be recognized.” Chief Bencomo was later reassigned and retired from North Operations Division in May 1996. “It has been my sincere pleasure and honor to have met so many fine friends and police officers. I was very fortunate to have such a great career.”

Looking back at his law enforcement career, Bencomo has this final thought:

When asked what his greatest HPOA achievement he stated was, “Being able to advance our Hispanic reputation in the Department. There were many on the Department at the time that said Hispanics were ‘not qualified’ to do this job or to get promoted because of various reasons. I would always respond by stating, “if all things are equal; meaning we score the same on promotional exams or get the same scores on our evaluations, then in fact we were better suited for the job because we could speak, read, and write Spanish, which was becoming a real need in our community.”

So what has he been doing since retirement? He’s never stopped. He claims to have found the “code” to staying alive and young: Keep Working! He’s currently the Corporate Security Manager for Amerijet International, Inc., and has been with them for the past 12 years. He enjoys spending time with his wife, Estrella, his son Jorge, who is now an attorney, and their daughter Jenny, who is a business furnishings designer for IKEA. On his free time, he spends time playing racquetball and golf... a lot of golf!

[A CHANGING OF THE GUARD LOOKING TO GET INVOLVED](#)

Be part of the Executive Board

Well, all good things must come to an end. But change always brings with it something new. It will soon be time to say farewell to our sitting HPOA Board Members and welcome new leaders to our great organization. Elections will take place in November, so if you are interested in obtaining a seat on our Executive Board, now is the time to start planning. HPOA by-laws require that candidates attend a minimum of five HPOA monthly meeting prior to Election Day. Since no meeting will be held in July, candidates must attend HPOA monthly meetings beginning in May 2010 through October 2010.

Upcoming HPOA meetings will be held on Monday, April 26, 2010, Monday, May 31, 2010, and June 28, 2010. So mark your calendars, get involved, and make a difference. Who knows? Maybe it will be your new ideas and inspirations that will lead the HPOA to new opportunities and a bright new future!

[KUDOS AND CONGRATS!](#)

Here's your chance to share those wonderful moments and let us all help you celebrate! E-mail our HPOA Treasurer, Willy Gonzalez, at willy@hpoadade.org to share your story and we'll post it in our new monthly column "Kudos and Congrats!"

Amira Ishmael was born on April 6, 2010 weighing 6 pounds, 4 ounces. Her proud parents are Lt. Nizam Ishmael who is assigned to the Town of Cutler Bay and Fiona Ishmael who is a Miami Dade County Public Schools teacher.



Karel and Kristy Rosario had a new born baby named Kaden Karel Rosario. Born on April 14th, 2010. Weight 9.7 lbs. 22 inches.



[NEW MEMBERS](#)

The HPOA is pleased to welcome the new members that have joined the Association in March 2010:

Edie Galvez	Kimberly Guerrier
Deborah Jones	Chele Victorin
Martin Giller	Osmaly Poveda

[HPOA REACHING OUT AND CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMMUNITY](#)

True to our mission, the HPOA once again lent a helping hand in to those in need. During the months of February and March, the HPOA contributed to a number of charitable organizations, including the Autism Speaks Miami Walk-a-Thon, the National MS Society, the Leukemia Lymphoma Society, the National MS Society, the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, to name a few.

We were also able to support law enforcement charitable organizations such as the DEA Survivors Benefit Fund, POAT, South East Police Committee, and the Miami Springs Fraternal Order of Police. And we helped our local community by supporting Weston Hawks Baseball and a St. Brendan High School Walk-a-Thon.



7th Men's Law Enforcement & Firefighter Emmaus Retreat

A Weekend Retreat for Men in Law Enforcement & Firefighters

-What is the Men's Law Enforcement & Firefighter Emmaus?
It is a retreat put on by men of the law enforcement and fire fighting community, based on the appearance of Jesus to his disciples walking along the Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35)

-Why a Men's Law Enforcement & Firefighter Emmaus?
Because every emergency first responder could use some time away from the hustle and bustle of today's busy world, allowing his Christian brothers in the law enforcement & fire fighting community to serve him.

-What happens during the weekend?
You will hear a few talks given by different men from different parishes, Bible, no lectures or assignments.

-When?
From Friday evening, July 16, through Sunday afternoon, July 18, 2010.

-Where?
Saint Brendan Catholic Church
8255 SW 32nd Street, Miami, Florida

-Is there a donation required?
Yes, a donation of \$100.00. However, do not let this prevent you from attending. If you need any assistance, speak to anyone of the below listed brothers.

-If I have any questions, whom should I contact?

Hector Llavaj (MDPD) 786.295.1713
Omer "OB" Blanco (MDFR) 305.525.6229
Billy Barrow (CPD) 305.519.4203
Eric Mendez (MDFR) 786.402.6256
Gaby Diaz (MDFR) 305.321.4229
Juan Perez (MDPD) 786.295.7345
Arnold Piedraita (MDFR) 786.261.6448

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