

Media Release

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State Partners with LatinoLEAD for Networking Event Connecting State Leaders with Diverse Communities

SAINT PAUL – This week, the State of Minnesota partnered with LatinoLEAD to hold the second in a series of networking events aimed to connect state leaders with Minnesota’s diverse communities. The event connected Commissioners and state leaders from twelve state agencies and the Governor’s office with members of the Latino community. The networking series is focused on providing a forum for building valuable relationships for government-community partnerships as well as increasing awareness of career opportunities within the state.

“Minnesota is growing more diverse every year, and it is critical that state government employees are a reflection of the people we serve,” James Burroughs, the state chief inclusion officer said. “This networking series plays an important role in attracting new talent to the state while also providing the opportunity for stronger partnerships with our communities of color.”

At the event, participants were able to connect one-on-one with state leaders, have their resumes reviewed, and hear from a panel of commissioners.

State leaders who participated on Thursday are:

- James Burroughs, Chief Inclusion Officer, Office of Governor Mark Dayton and Lieutenant Governor Tina Smith
- Kevin Lindsey, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Human Rights
- Shawntera Hardy, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of DEED
- Tom Landwehr, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- Cynthia Bauerly, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Revenue
- Mary Tingerthal, Commissioner, Minnesota Housing Finance Agency
- Gilbert Acevedo, Assistant Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Health
- Charles Zelle, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Transportation
- Myron Frans, Commissioner, Minnesota Management and Budget

- Edwin Hudson, Deputy Commissioner, Minnesota Management and Budget
- Alice Roberts-Davis, Assistant Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Administration
- Lisa Wojcik, Assistant Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Corrections

Previously, the state partnered with the Coalition of Asian American Leaders (CAAL) for a similar event last fall. The state plans to partner with different communities and organizations for future events, which are expected to happen quarterly.

Started in 2013, LatinoLEAD was created as an initiative of The Minneapolis Foundation. Luz Maria Frias, President and CEO, YWCA Minneapolis, serves as LatinoLEAD's current Chair. The group is a cross-sector consortium of Latinos working together to advance opportunity for Minnesota's Latino community. Members include corporate, civic, non-profit, business and academic leaders.

Ms. Frias shares, "having senior leaders within state government who are members of the Latino community will accelerate efforts to address systemic barriers across the state. With over 400 talented Latino professionals interested in making an impact, we're confident this partnership will yield impactful results."

The State of Minnesota's networking series aims to further Governor Mark Dayton's mission to ensure state government reflects the diverse populations

Since taking office, Governor Mark Dayton has taken a number of steps to increase diversity of the state workforce. This includes:

- Establishing the Diversity and Inclusion Council. In January 2015, Governor Dayton issued [Executive Order 15-02](#) establishing this council which studies state hiring practices and seeks to offer best practices.
- MMB created the State Office of Executive Recruiting in 2015. Since January 2015 the state hired about 170 executives and of those new hires, 51% were female, 8.2% reported having a disability, and 23.4% reported a racial/ethnic minority.
- In October 2015, the Department of Employment and Economic Development [established the Office of Career and Business Opportunity](#). Director Karen Fancois works with communities of color to break down barriers to opportunities for workers and businesses of color within state government, both in terms of finding employment and contracting with the state.
- In April 2016 Governor Dayton created the Chief Inclusion Officer position, [hiring James Burroughs to lead efforts around diversity and inclusion](#). James works with all state agencies to eliminate disparities, increase community engagement, and track the progress of agencies hiring, contracting, and working with communities of color.
- Also in 2016, the State of Minnesota launched an enterprise effort around recruiting, participating in three high profile events: the Minnesota State Fair MN Careers booth, the People of Color Career Fair, and the first State of Minnesota Career Fair. These events were the first time recruiters from all state agencies collaborated to showcase

the state as one employer, highlighting the wide array of jobs and career paths available to Minnesotans.

- In October 2016, Governor Dayton [re-launched Connect 700 and the Supported Worker programs](#), two state hiring initiatives aimed at removing barriers and creating opportunities for Minnesotans with disabilities. This effort supports Governor Dayton's [2014 executive order](#) directing state agencies to increase employment for people with disabilities to at least seven percent by August 2018.
- The Governor's Office also authorized an Equity Audit to solicit feedback from Community Partners and other Minnesotans to help inform us on the progress of our work in Diversity & Inclusion. You can read the audit on the Governor's website.

Below are pictures from the event



Tracey Gibson, director of state recruiting, retention, and affirmative action; moderates a panel with (Seated, from right) Minnesota Department of Transportation Commissioner Charless Zelle, Minnesota Department of Human Rights Commissioner Kevin Lindsey, Minnesota Department of Revenue Commissioner Cynthia Bauerly, and Minnesota Department of Health Assistant Commissioner Gilbert Acevedo.



State of Minnesota Chief Inclusion Officer James Burroughs talks about the State of Minnesota's efforts to increase diversity and inclusion.



LatinoLEAD's Luz Maria Frias welcomes event attendees.