



Diverse Workplace e-Newsletter

June 9, 2009



Good Morning!

In this issue we focus on two organizations that are changing lives every day:

- CONEXION, a Latino leadership program focused on putting the right people together for a mutually beneficial outcome (www.conexion-all.org)
- The Corporate Work Study Program at North Cambridge Catholic High School (www.myncchs.org)

I will also update you on the activities of Matt Weed, a blind Ph.D. at Yale. As always, I'll conclude with a few anecdotes in Keep Smiling.

Just click "reply" to send along your comments. Connect directly to me on LinkedIn.com and increase the diversity of your network: http://tinyurl.com/3abnh_t

All the best,

Frank McCarthy

LATINO LEADERSHIP CONEXION



More than 60 million Latinos will live and work in the United States by 2020 - 100 million by 2050. These demographics provide an alarming wake up call to corporate America on two fronts: the emerging Latino workforce and the development of Latino leadership.

Conexion understands the increasing value of Latino professionals and the momentous necessity of preparing future Latino leaders. Phyllis Barajas, the sparkplug igniting this dynamic organization, founded *Conexion* four years ago

to develop the next generation of Latino leaders for companies, non- profits, start-ups, government and education. *Conexion* is a response to the demand for Latino talent.

To date, forty young Latino junior executives have participated in this demanding program. Thirty mentors have volunteered their time and energy to work with their mentees for one year; some mentors have worked in all four years of the program. The mentors come from a variety of backgrounds and life experiences. They are change agents who share in the vision and mission of *Conexion*:

- To create a pipeline of Latino leaders who understand the challenges and opportunities of the world around us for their own benefit and the benefit of their families, communities and country.
- To promote and sustain the long-term prosperity of the United States by converting Latino talent into the next generation of leaders that preserves the quality of life of the country.

Each year, over a ten month period, *Conexion* pairs small groups of fifteen mid-career Latinos with experts in diverse

fields who serve as mentors for one-on-one conversations. In addition all groups meet monthly to engage in open sessions that explore real world challenges. By the end of the program, the Latino participants will have undergone a transformation that broadens their perspectives and goals, increases their self confidence and strengthens their determination to grow, succeed and give back. Vince Lombardi, one of the greatest football coaches of all time, believed: "Leaders are made, they are not born. They are made by hard effort, the price which all of us must pay to achieve any goal that is worthwhile."

Conexion is much more than a mentoring program. It is the basis of lifelong relationships and the cornerstone of a network that is ever growing. Here a few of *Conexion* success stories:

- A young man from the first cohort of *Conexion*, a natural communicator, networker and doer and a former missionary in South America for ten years, is now the Director of Diversity at a major university.
- A woman with great credentials but underutilized in a major corporation has been promoted twice in the past two years. "I got great practical advice from my mentor and genuine support from the whole group,"
- One member formed and now operates a non-profit environmental organization in Peru.
- "My participation in *Conexion* marked a turning point in my career. Although sometimes I was conscious of it, I realized that for several years I worked hard without paying much attention to my career development, my individual goals and what it meant to be a Latino professional in the United States at this time. Being part of *Conexion* changed all that. They don't preach about cultural differences and being Latino. On the contrary, we have healthy discussions about becoming better leaders, individual growth and what it means to be a Latino professional in these times. It inspired me to be surrounded by so many talented and humble individuals."
- "I want to take a minute to thank Phyllis Barajas for making *Conexion* happen. *Conexion* has affected the lives of Latinos on the brink of a greater possibility to not only see themselves as capable and ambitious but to realize the leadership potential we carry within us. The impact this experience had on me far exceeded anything I could imagine and I now have a new vision for myself, my capabilities and what I can do to affect the lives of others as I have been affected by the *Conexion* program. Thank you."
- Mary Skelton Roberts, a member of this year's cohort, stated recently: "*Conexion* is the kind of leadership development program more Boston Latinos could benefit from. The program encourages its members to develop their skills and build the kinds of relationships, which support professional and personal growth."

Conexion is an amazing organization that does what it says it is going to do. *Conexion* is synonymous with success; every person is a success story. The members feel connected, supported and enjoy building a lasting community. Phyllis Barajas says it best, "What we do actually works."

Conexion collaborates with and receives support from companies, institutions, associations and organizations whose leadership and management teams understand the importance of "advancing Latino leadership." *Conexion* definitely needs more financial support to take it to the next level, to grow nationally and to serve more people. To learn more about becoming a corporate sponsor contact Phyllis Barajas at: contactus@conexion-all.org

Interested in becoming a *Conexion* mentor? *Conexion* selects senior executives from top companies and organizations in the Massachusetts area; executives with demonstrated track records of achievement and a proven willingness to develop talent and support inclusion.

Be the change you want to see in the world. Mahatma Gandhi

THE CORPORATE WORK STUDY PROGRAM NORTH CAMBRIDGE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL



NCC is a co-educational Catholic school, offering students of multicultural backgrounds and limited economic means a rigorous college preparatory program in a safe, nurturing environment. Through a comprehensive curriculum, the

Corporate Work Study Program, and a close partnership with families, the School prepares its graduates to become exceptional community leaders and persons of strong moral character. The School embraces the cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity of the student body, enabling each student to develop a unique sense of personal responsibility, global awareness, and spiritual growth.

Last month I visited North Cambridge Catholic High School. I met with the new President, Jeff Thielman, an old friend, and the Business Development Director, Therese Gupta, MSW. I'll bring the great work that is being done at this school to your attention in two ways: a letter from Jeff Thielman and a note to our readers written by Terry Gupta, who is the job developer at NCC.

Here's Jeff's letter taken from the schools website (www.myncchs.org).

North Cambridge Catholic High School is an exciting place. Our students are from a variety of racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. They live in many parts of greater Boston and get on trains, buses or subway cars earlier in the morning to arrive on time for the 7:30 a.m. start of school.

Here at school they are one family, united in their desire to succeed in school and work and eventually to go to college. For the past several years, 100% of our graduating seniors have gone to college, and last year 93% of our graduates went to four-year colleges and universities.

North Cambridge Catholic High School is a proud member of the Cristo Rey Network, an association of 24 high schools in which all students share entry-level jobs to earn tuition and gain real world job experience. The work program transforms our students' lives and brings life and energy into the companies where our students work. This year 265 students are working at 70 companies in greater Boston. We are grateful to our corporate sponsors for their support.

Please visit North Cambridge Catholic High School when you have some time. You'll enjoy meeting our students and learning first-hand about our unique Corporate Work Study Program.

Terry's note to our readers:

I first met Matthew through his essay, an important part of a student's application to the North Cambridge Catholic High School's (NCC) Corporate Work Study Program. NCC, you may have heard, is the school that works! Literally. Through employee leasing and job sharing, students fill full time entry level administrative jobs at over 70 of the top companies in the Greater Boston area from September to June and earn money to finance a good portion of their tuition. We empower students from some of the most economically challenged families in our communities to earn a private, college-preparatory education and a solid competitive edge to embark upon meaningful careers.

Matthew writes that he wants to attend NCC so that he can gain experience in the business world. It turns out he wants to be a "successful entrepreneur" so that he can show others that it is possible to "make it out of poverty". He also wants to operate a successful business "that is also fair to all my employees." He shares that some of his working mother's experiences have been less than kind. Hmmm - curious. I called his Mom. Just wanted to check in, I told her, on Matthew's application - and by any chance if she had helped him write his essay. She shared that they had a fire in the apartment and he had mailed it out before she had a chance to even see it. She hoped he had not written anything inappropriate, due to the stress they were under this past week. We shared a few tears as I welcomed them to the incoming class.

This year, we have over 1100 applications for the 120 seats to be filled by incoming students. Will you consider giving a student this life-changing chance to work with you? Working together, we can build a more solid and sustainable foundation for economic growth. Every action can make a big difference to ensure quality education and opportunity for all.

Today's student workers are tomorrow's full-time employees, customers and suppliers. The ripple effect of this success is powerful!

We are a school that works and we welcome you to become a part of this exciting initiative. Please contact me at 617-877-0154 or tgupta@myncchs.org for more information.

NETWORKING FOR MATT WEED

Matthew Weed Ph.D., although **totally blind** since age ten, has a BA in Political Science from Yale, an MPA in Domestic Policy from Princeton, an MA in Genetics from Harvard, a Master of Philosophy in Genetics from Yale, and a Doctor of Philosophy in Genetics from Yale.

Matt is currently interviewing for positions in academic administration at the level of assistant, associate director or dean focusing on: undergraduate or graduate student advising, student affairs, faculty affairs, general academic affairs,

and development. He is interviewing in the Chicago area, California, the Greater New York City area and in Massachusetts.

I could go on for pages about Matt but suffice it to say that he is resilient, persistent, charismatic, creative and practical and often called inspiring. These characteristics have helped him to achieve great successes and do things that have opened all kinds of information and opportunities to thousands of blind, disabled and chronically ill people. He has built systems of student volunteers that both help the chronically ill and allow young people who are considering careers in health care the opportunity to engage in experiential learning about the needs and capabilities of this rapidly growing segment of our society.

Matt refuses to take "no" for an answer and has been able to find ways to help others to see the power of team work and mutually beneficial problem solving. Matt is unique and uniquely qualified to work with students and faculty.

If you are interested in seeing Matt's resume or would like to contact him, his direct dial is 203-436-2271; email: matthew.weed@yale.edu.

If you would like more information, please contact me, Frank McCarthy 508-350-0053 - frank@diverseworkplace.com

KEEP SMILING

SKIPPING CHURCH

Father Norton woke up Sunday morning and realizing it was an exceptionally beautiful and sunny early spring day, decided he just had to play golf. He told the Associate Pastor that he was feeling sick and persuaded him to say Mass for him that day. As soon as the Associate Pastor left the room, Father Norton headed out of town to a golf course about forty miles away. This way he knew he wouldn't accidentally meet anyone he knew from his parish. Setting up on the first tee, he was alone. After all, it was Sunday morning and everyone else was in church!

At about this time, Saint Peter leaned over to the Lord while looking down from the heavens and exclaimed, "You're not going to let him get away with this, are you?" The Lord sighed, and said, "No, I guess not."

Just then Father Norton hit the ball and it shot straight towards the pin, dropping just short of it, rolled up and fell into the hole. It was a 420 yard hole-in-one.

St. Peter was astonished. He looked at the Lord and asked, "Why did you let him do that?" The Lord smiled and replied, "Who's he going to tell?"

Recently Readers Digest asked a panel of comedians to select their ten favorite jokes. You've heard them all but they are still funny. Here are a few.

A ventriloquist is performing with his dummy on his lap. He's telling a dumb blonde joke when a young platinum-haired beauty jumps to her feet.

"What gives you the right to stereotype blondes that way?" she demands. "What does hair color have to do with my worth as a human being?" Flustered, the ventriloquist begins to stammer out an apology. "You keep out of this!" she yells. "I'm talking to that little jerk on your knee."

Every ten years, the monks in the monastery are allowed to break their vow of silence to speak two words. Ten years go by and it's one monk's first chance. He thinks for a second before saying: "Food bad."

Ten years later, he says, "Bed hard." It's the big day a decade later. He give the head monk a long stare and says, "I quit."

"I'm not surprised," the head monk says. "You've been complaining ever since you got here."

A turtle is crossing the road when he's mugged by two snails. When the police show up, they ask him what happened. The shaken turtle replies, "I don't know. It all happened so fast."

A priest, a minister, and a rabbi want to see who's best at his job. So they each go into the woods, find a bear, and attempt to convert it. Later they get together. The priest begins: "When I found the bear, I read to him from the Catechism and sprinkled him with holy water. Next week is his First Communion."

"I found a bear by the stream," says the minister, "and preached God's holy word. The bear was so mesmerized that

he let me baptize him."

They both look down at the rabbi who is lying on a gurney in a body case. "Looking back, " he says, "maybe I shouldn't have started with the circumcision."

About Diverse Workplace, Inc. (www.diverseworkplace.com)

Our **mission** at *Diverse Workplace* is sharing information on diversity in the workplace and providing **Diversity Recruiting Services** to companies and organizations that are serious about establishing and maintaining a diverse workforce.



Another Integral part of our mission is assisting diversity professionals to advance their careers by discussing job campaign issues and by sharing current market information.

Please review our updated website: www.diverseworkplace.com

The **DWI Newsletter** is published quarterly.

Beyond Diversity, our blog (www.diverseworkplace.com/blogspot) is published bimonthly and covers a variety of subjects including diversity issues, "Civil Rights Moments", job campaigning tips and comments, "Who's Where" and bios, etc.

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