

**THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HISPANIC JOURNALISTS
D.C. CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

Date: Nov. 10, 2010

Location: National Public Radio
635 Massachusetts Ave, NW
Washington, DC

IN ATTENDANCE: Head count was 25 people. Everyone did not sign the attendance sheet. Those who did: Brandon Benavides, Nicole A. Baltazar, Vanessa Green-Skyrmes, Claritza Jimenez, Suzanne Gamboa, Raisa Camargo, Elvia Malagon, Luis Carlos Lopez, Charlie Ericksen, Tony Marcano, Felix Contreras, Michele Salcedo, Eloise Quintanilla, Melisa Diaz, Rosalba Ruiz, Diana Marrero, Marisol Bello and Joanna Hernandez.

NAHJ D.C. Chapter President Brandon Benavides called the meeting to order at about 7:25 p.m.

Chapter Treasurer Marisol Bello gave the financial report. The D.C. Chapter currently has \$6,168. She broke down the cost for the previous two mixers, which both averaged around \$1,000. She stressed the need for the chapter to be frugal and begin actively fundraising.

NAHJ National President Michele Salcedo next spoke. She provided an update on the financial picture of the organization and made herself available to answer questions.

Salcedo said that National is facing challenges. For the second year in a row, the convention has not been profitable. She was speaking of the 2009 gathering in Puerto Rico as well as the 2010 conference in Denver. She reminded everyone that every alliance partner of UNITY: Journalists of Color has gone through similar bumps in the financial road, but that we are the only organization going through this for two straight years. "We cannot go another year without making a profit," she said.

Salcedo reminded everyone that former NAHJ President Ricardo Pimental had announced the organization's shortfall during his term, so this is not a total surprise. The shortfall "is six figures," she said, less than last year, but still substantial. Currently, the National Board is discussing ways to raise funds. "We need to shore up as much of our resources as we can," Salcedo said. She later said that "general operating funds is where we are having problems."

One of the actions the National Board has taken is to forgo sharing national membership dues with the chapters for 2011. She said she didn't have exact figures on how much the organization is gaining from withholding the chapters' share of membership dues, but that on a whole, membership will bring in approximately \$100,000 to National. Also, funds from inactive Chapters have also been retrieved by National.

There is also an ongoing 2011 membership drive, which has boosted National membership by 300; membership coming out of the Denver convention was about 1,375, and at the time of this meeting it stands at about 1,675. National is striving for 2,000 members by the time of the 2011 Multimedia Convention and Career Expo at Walt Disney World in Orlando. She asked for members' help in identifying people at their places of work who were once members and encouraging them to rejoin NAHJ. "Personal outreach is working," she said.

She thanked those who have already given suggestions and offered help. "You see value in this organizations," she said. As an example of some of the organization's accomplishments, Salcedo pointed to NAHJ's sponsorship of the "Beyond the Border" project, a joint venture helmed by New York University Professor Yvonne Latty and University of Arizona Professor Dr. Celeste Gonzalez de Bustamante, where students from NYU traveled to the Mexico border to report on stories that were not being told and students from UA came to New York to report on what happens when immigrants travel beyond the border. There is a link to the project on the National Web site: nahj.org.

Salcedo stressed that this is the time for everyone to actively participate in helping the organization. NAHJ will still give out scholarships, "but we need operating funds to help stabilize." There has been trims to the budget, to the tune of about \$200,000, Salcedo said. "We have cut, and we're looking for places to cut," she said. "We're doing a lot of stuff with little resources." To save on rent, National is also looking to relocate out of the National Press Building. Also the National Board is setting up a month-to-month fundraising plan that commits the Board to raising \$36,000 before year's end, some of it by their own personal donations. She stressed how important it is to encourage people to attend the convention, which is set to take place June 15-18, 2011, at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort.

She talked about how many news organizations have pulled back on funding. Many members are now having to take vacation to attend. And she was met with gasps when she shared that the Parity Project is in trouble. It was originally funded by the Knight Foundation and the McCormick Tribune Foundation. Knight is no longer around and McCormick just informed National that they will not longer be funding the project. "We're trying to see what we can do to salvage it," Salcedo said. She spoke highly of Kevin Olivas, Parity Project director and of the challenges he faces. Charlie Ericksen asked if there were any dedicated proposal writers on staff and a discussion ensued about the various organizations where National was applying for grants. Ericksen volunteered to be part of a committee to explore fundraising. Salcedo accepted his help and thanked him. She encouraged others to join as well.

Salcedo asked that anyone who has further questions to please contact her directly at president@nahj.org instead of relying on getting information from the rumor mill.

Benavides expressed solidarity with National and that the chapter will continue to work hard by encouraging people to join and through fundraising.

Speaking next was NPR's Stu Seidel, deputy managing editor for news, who answered members questions, including about election coverage; the Latino vote; how Latinos fit into NPR coverage and staffing; rally coverage, memos sent to staff and other controversies; and the lack of Latinos in attendance at news meetings where decisions are made on what goes on the air. He mentioned that they are currently looking to fill a newly created position of Senior Editor of Diversity, with the objective of broadening NPR's news content perspective.

Next up was Kathy Park, reporter with the local ABC station WJLA, who invited everyone to a fundraising event on Friday, Nov. 19, which sounds like a lot of fun. It is a Night of Trivia, where teams of 10 will compete against each other. Many local news organizations have created teams and will be attending. Sandra Endo of CNN will MC the event to be held at NPR. The cost to participate is \$30 per person if you are part of a team of 10, or \$35 if you plan to join as an individual. For more information, Kathy gave her email address: kpark26@gmail.com

NPR's Felix Contreras spoke next. He said it was an interesting time to be working for the company, as diversity is a hot topic. He's a member of the Diversity Council, of which the Senior Editor of Diversity position was borne. He said the Council is working on diversifying content as well as hiring at the company. The current pipeline is not working, and they are looking to fix that to enhance more hiring of people of color.

Contreras then spoke of a multinational Spanish-music podcast he worked on with Jasmine Garsd, host and producer of Alt.Latino, which has really taken off. The problem is, they were funded for incubation, which allowed them to focus on the project for several months, but there was no plan for what to do with it if it was a success. Still, they are moving forward with the project, although both now are back to also working their regular gigs. Garsd said the following is huge, almost in line with All Things Considered. To check out the blog and the show, go to npr.org/altlatino.

Benavides thanked everyone for attending and invited everyone to the chapter board meeting in December, date and location TK.

The meeting ended about 9:15 p.m.