

AUBURN UNIVERSITY  
CENTER FOR GOVERNMENTAL SERVICES



*The Effects of  
Hispanic Immigrants  
on the State of  
Alabama*

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AND PUBLIC FORUM



Public Health. In her position as Assistant Director she assists the Director of Minority Health in reviewing and consulting on Department program policies to assess their cultural competence and potential for reducing health disparities, and increase accessibility to health care systems. Ms. Sosa helps to educate private and public agencies about the needs of the state's growing Hispanic population, and also teaches the new immigrants about the health care system in Alabama.

Originally from El Salvador, she has worked in the areas of public health and nutrition for over 20 years, both in the delivery and management of health care services. Sixteen of those years she has worked as a healthcare professional with the Department of Public Health.

Jim Toney (Education Specialist, DOE)

Mr. Jim Toney is an Education Specialist for the State Department of Education in Prevention and Support Services. He holds degrees from Auburn University, Memphis State University, and The University of North Alabama. His primary responsibilities include school attendance and discipline, School Incident Report (SIR) assistance, dropout initiatives, and technical assistance to school systems.

Frank W. Williamson – Alabama Department of Education

Mr. Williamson currently serves as an Education Administrator with Prevention and Support Services with the State Department of Education. He has served as a teacher and school administrator for 20 years.

*An event that brings together experts to discuss and collaborate  
on immigration issues in the State of Alabama ...*

The Center for Governmental Services focuses on identifying Governmental Excellence and Best Practices and routinely holds associated events. The first Governmental Excellence and Best Practices Conference was held in 2003 in Montgomery Alabama. The last conference was held in Washington, D.C. at the National Press Club on Improving Public Trust and Transparency in Government. The conferences bring together professionals from all levels of government, academics, and professionals representing the private sector to discuss and collaborate on best government practices.

Department.

Gwendolyn Lipscomb, RN, MSN – Alabama Department of Public Health

Mrs. Lipscomb is employed with the Alabama Department of Public Health and serves as Director of the Office of Minority Health. In this role she advocates for effective health services for the states underserved, and diverse ethnic and racial populations. Mrs. Lipscomb reviews and consults on health policies to assess their cultural competence and potential for reducing disparities in health status, and increase accessibility to health care systems. Mrs. Lipscomb has over 39 years experience in both the delivery and management of health care services.

Mrs. Lipscomb holds an Associate of Science in Nursing from State University of New York a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Georgia State University, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and a Master of Science in Nursing from Troy State University.

Jene Llinkford – Hispanic Ministries for the North Alabama Conference, UMC

Jene Llinkford is Pastor and Coordinator of the Hispanic Ministries for the North Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church located in the Decatur area. The ministry provides legal assistance to immigrants and is recognized by the board of Immigration Appeals as a Immigration Legal Services Provider. Pastor Llinkford is accredited as a representative for Legal Services. He is a recognized spokesperson for advocating comprehensive Immigration Reform. Llinkford currently serves as minister with Forrest Chapel United Methodist Church, UMC.

Mike Moore – Revenue Officer, City of Opelika

Mr. Moore is the Revenue Officer for the City of Opelika. Moore earned a degree in Public Administration at Auburn University. He previously served as President of Alabama Municipal Revenue Officers Association and as Chairman of the Board of Directors for AMROA. Moore is a Certified Municipal Revenue Officer and a Certified Business License Official.

Jay Reed – Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc.

Jay Reed is Vice President of the Alabama Chapter of Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc. (ABC). Mr. Reed works directly with the Gen-Sub Committee, Safety Committee, University of Alabama Student Chapter Committee, Federal PAC, Future Leaders In Construction and Hispanic Immigration Task Force. He is responsible for supervision of the Membership Department and the Meeting & Events Planner. In the absence of the President, he is responsible for supervising all ABC staff. Mr. Reed serves as the ABC Industry liaison for AIA, ACEC and OSHA. He is associate publisher for Alabama Construction News and Editor of ABC Safety E-Newsletter and Construction Advisor for Business Alabama. He provides ABC National's publication Construction Executive with construction industry trends in Alabama. Mr. Reed also serves on the Board of Directors for the Alabama Council of Association Executives and is on the finance committee for the Attorney General of Alabama.

Julia Sosa, MS, RD - State Office of Minority Health, ADPH

Ms. Sosa is the Assistant Director of the State Office of Minority Health of the Department of

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The issues surrounding immigration within the state of Alabama are critical. The impacts are of great magnitude, and will be for years to come, and for future generations – for our children and our grandchildren. The impacts will be evident through America's economy, work force, healthcare, education, government, social welfare, and on society in general.

It's not only the questions associated with erecting fences at the southern border of the United States, whether to provide driver's licenses, the bright colors, sounds and unique aromas that we sometimes equate with other cultures. These considerations cut to the very core of what America is and who Americans are – and our nation's foundations as a melting pot.

Regardless of your politics, religion, principles, etc., the fact is that immigration is alive and well in the state of Alabama.

The Center for Governmental Services (CGS) has developed an initiative to examine and research questions surrounding the effects of immigration in Alabama. This round table discussion represents the first in a series. CGS will provide additional opportunities for discussion through the CGS Initiative on Immigration.

Meetings will be held at various locations throughout Alabama. Future meetings will include discussions on agriculture, transportation, local and county government, healthcare, and education.

The Center for Governmental Services will also provide technical support, training, survey services and outreach for governmental agencies, industry, and business as it relates to our immigrant populations in Alabama.

Don-Terry Veal, Ph.D.  
Director

## *Participant Biographies*

### **Sue Ann Balch – International Education at Auburn University**

Ms. Balch graduated from Auburn University in History and Political Science. She has taught school at several locations in the state of Alabama and in Virginia. Ms. Balch also attended graduate school at both Auburn University at Montgomery and Auburn University. She completed law school while working as an Academic Counselor in the College of Engineering at AU and then served as law clerk for Circuit Judge Richard Lane. She is a trained mediator in both District and Circuit courts, and is a licensed Attorney in Alabama and in Federal Courts. Ms. Balch currently serves as President of the Alabama Association of International Educators. Balch is the Assistant Director of International Education for Auburn University, and is also the Primary Designated Service Officer and Responsible Officer for the United States Department of State, and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service for AU.

### **Bobby Bright - Mayor, City of Montgomery**

On November 9, 1999 Bobby N. Bright became the City of Montgomery's 56th mayor. He is currently serving his second term. Mayor Bright is an Attorney and practiced law from 1983 to 1999. He holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science from Auburn University; a Master's of Science Degree in Criminal Justice from Troy State University; two-time graduate of The National Judicial College; and a Juris Doctorate Degree from the Jones Law Institute located in Montgomery.

### **John Gaber – Professor, Community Planning, AU**

Dr. Gaber is an Alumni Professor in the Community Planning Program at Auburn University. His educational background includes a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a specialization in Urban Studies from the University of California at Los Angeles; a Master of Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Southern California; and a Doctor of Philosophy with a focus on Urban Planning. Dr. Gaber previously served as a fellow for the Center for Rural Community Revitalization and Development at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

Dr. Gaber has extensive teaching experience in Community and Regional Planning. He has served as Program Chair for the Community Planning Program, School of Architecture, in the College of Architecture, Design & Construction at Auburn University. Since 2006 he has served as a Professor in the Community Planning Program at the College.

### **Bill Ham, Jr. - Mayor, City of Auburn**

Mayor Bill Ham, Jr. was elected to the Auburn City Council in 1986 and has served as Auburn's Mayor since 1998. Recently, Mayor Ham was recognized by the Alabama League of Municipalities for 20 years of public service to the citizens of Auburn. The City of Auburn has experienced tremendous success in every area of government during Mayor Ham's terms

in office, including record appropriations to Auburn's award winning public school system, the addition or expansion of more than 10 public parks and recreation facilities, and the recruitment of more than 40 industries representing a capital investment of over \$527 million for the City of Auburn. The City of Auburn and Auburn University have enjoyed a long-standing, working partnership under the leadership of Mayor Ham. Major City and University partnership projects include the merging of the Auburn University and City of Auburn Police Divisions, the construction of the new Auburn Tennis Center, the Auburn-Opelika Robert G. Pitts Airport, and the Auburn Research Park. Mayor Ham is an Auburn native and a 1977 graduate of Auburn University. He is the owner of Varsity Enterprises, Inc. and serves on numerous community boards, including the Auburn University Research and Technology Foundation and as Chair of the Auburn Airport Advisory Board.

### **Bob Howell - News Anchor, WSFA 12**

Mr. Howell's career as a news anchor at WSFA 12 began in 1976. He spent the next 22 years anchoring more than 10,000 newscasts and serving as the News Departments Managing Editor. Although Mr. Howell left the station in 1998, he returned in 2004 to once again anchor the news at 6 and 10 p.m. He has co-hosted telethons, produced award-winning documentaries and has hosted WSFA 12 Newsmakers, and Alabama Illustrated.

Mr. Howell's wealth of knowledge of significant issues, personalities and events in the communities served by WSFA 12 is key to the success of the news departments. When not anchoring newscasts, he can be found teaching in the Hall School of Journalism at Troy University's Main Campus. He has been teaching future journalists for 19 years.

### **Bill James - Public Safety Director, City of Auburn**

Mr. James is a graduate of Auburn University in Building Sciences. He has been employed with the City of Auburn for nearly 20 years. Of those 20, he spent 16 of those years as a Building Official and Supervisor over building and fire codes, and three years as the Public Safety Director. James recently earned certification in emergency management through the Auburn University program, Emergency Management for Government and the Public Sector.

### **Father James Kane – Hispanic Ministries, Episcopal Vicar**

Father Kane was ordained as a Priest in 1970 with the Vincentian fathers. Father Kane served in various capacities in the Republic of Panama until he was sent to Opelika to serve with the Hispanic ministries of the Opelika/Auburn area. Earlier this year Arch Bishop Lipscomb appointed him Episcopal Vicar for the Hispanic Ministries in the Montgomery/Dothan areas.

### **Jose R. Lanes - Economist, Professor and Department Head, AU**

Dr. Jose R. Lanes is an economist and professor of organization and leadership at the College of Education. He was born in Cuba and came to the US as a political refugee forty years ago. He has conducted research in immigration and has published extensively on that topic. He joined the Auburn family in 2006 as Department Head of the Foundations, Leadership and Technology