

HACE, Building Latino Careers



Cristina Grieco e Oliveira

Founded in 1982, the Hispanic Alliance for Career Enhancement (HACE). HACE is a leading national non-profit organization dedicated to building Latino careers through leadership and career development of Latino students and experienced professionals and recruitment programs for the acquisition of this talent by leading corporations, the government and other institutional employers. Now, twenty-three years later, this Latino-focused organization comes to Miami! LatinBiz sat down with Cristina Grieco e Oliveira, Director for the Southeast Region, to learn more about, and to welcome, HACE to South Florida.

Q.Welcome to Miami, Cristina! How does HACE's build Latino careers?

A. We partner with companies who support Latino diversity and who want to hire from this growing market and we work effortlessly to prepare our Latino professionals for great careers at the blue chip companies we work with. We also work to help Latino students, in high school and college, to build that pipeline right from the start. We have a presence at twenty-five of the leading universities in the country, mentoring and guiding tomorrow's Latino superstars.

Q. And how did HACE arrive in Miami?

A. We are based in Chicago, and have been there since 1982. Over these twenty-three years, HACE has gone through many changes, and in 2001, HACE was "reborn." Our President and CEO, Abe Tomás Hughes, felt the need to redesign HACE to position the organization as a leading source of Latino talent to some of the best and largest employers in the United States. We also noticed that HACE needed to expand into different parts of the country, to carry out our mission and to help Latinos throughout the U.S. Our national expansion began with Texas, then New York, followed by Florida and lastly, California.

Q. And how did you become involved in HACE? What is your role in this expansion?

A. I had just moved to Chicago in 2002 and since I was in a job search, a friend of mine told me about HACE. I started as a volunteer in the Marketing Department, and I helped out in other areas as well. Consequently, I was hired to do marketing and events and after that, I became an Account Manager and managed five of HACE's Corporate Members, including Target, Walgreens, and CNA as examples. In August of 2005, I moved to Florida to be the Director of the Southeast Region.

Q. Congratulations! You mentioned Corporate Members, could you elaborate a little on that?

A. Thank you! HACE has a Corporate Membership program, which is designed for corporations to get the maximum benefit of working with HACE. If a company becomes a Corporate Member, it means a year-long relationship, benefiting at the highest level of our services. The company will

be assigned an account manager at HACE, who will handle the account to guarantee that all deliverables are met.

Q. What services does HACE offer its Corporate Members?

A. There's a list! First, they have automatic participation in our four Regional Career Conferences in 2006 throughout the country, and they have prime location at all of them. Another one of our most popular programs is our Latino Recruitment Series. It's similar to a company open-house, usually held at a company's headquarters where we bring a great group of qualified Latinos in direct contact with hiring managers and company executives. Other than that, we also have our campus recruitment events, Mega Networking Fiestas, job postings, resume subscription services, e-mail blasters and recognition in our newsletters, conference guides and other venues. There are many other year-round comprehensive services we offer both our Latino professionals as well as our companies, so I'll just ask that readers visit our website and stay tuned for more here in Florida and the Southeast.

Q. What specifically will you be doing in Miami?

A. I'm very happy to say that we begin our activities in Miami with a Regional Career Conference on February 24th! That event will officially launch HACE in the Southeast. After that, we will begin our monthly networking and recruiting events, to continue living our mission of bringing Latino Professionals and corporations together. Our other 2006 conferences will happen in New York in April, Chicago in June, and Houston in November. In 2007, we will have five conferences, adding on California.

Q. Can you tell us more about the Miami Conference?

A. Absolutely! It will be on Friday, February 24th, at the Miami Beach Convention Center. There is no charge for Latino professionals and job seekers, their resume is their admission ticket. We will have over fifty employers, among them companies, academic institutions, government, non-profits, and healthcare. It's a one-day event, and there will be a career help center so job seekers can receive help with their resumes and also career guidance. Latino professionals can also take advantage of various professional development workshops, hosted by our Corporate Members. We'll soon have news on how to pre-register for this great opportunity on the HACE website and we look forward to working with the Latin Business Club, the Hispanic Chambers, NSHMBA, ALPFA and many other organizations on this first program of ours.

Q. It sounds like a great event and we are excited about our participation!

A. Thank you, we are looking forward to it. We are also very excited to be launching HACE in the Southeast Region; I know that this will be a strong opportunity to reach out to many Latinos and to fulfill our mission. The partnerships that we have started with organizations here in Florida, such as the Latin Business Club, will be instrumental to establishing HACE here.

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