

Hispanics left out, study says



WASHINGTON (AP) — Less than 1 percent of top officials of Fortune 500 industrial companies are Hispanic, and an even lower number have such jobs in Fortune 500 service firms, a study released Monday says.

The Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility said Hispanics have only 81 of 11,881 executive positions in the 500 industrial corporations.

In some cases, it said, one person counts several times, such as Roberto C. Goizueta, chief executive officer of Coca-Cola and member of four corporate boards.

To match their share of the population, there would have to be 1,070 Hispanics in such jobs, said association President Richard Jose Bela, author of the study released Monday. His Washington-based group monitors corporate treatment of Hispanics in hiring, promotion, contracts and philanthropy.

Among the Fortune 500 service companies, Hispanics hold just 72 of 12,600 executive posts in only 58 of the corporations. Their proportion of the population would call for 1,134 positions, the study said.

Hispanics are best represented in the beverage, soap and cosmetics, building materials, and motor vehicles and parts industries, the study said. They are least represented in transportation, life insurance, diversified financial and utility industries.

There are no Hispanics among top executives in the rubber and plastic, oil production and aerospace industries, it said.

"It's as if we're not on their radar screen," said Frank Cota-Robles Newton, executive director of the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda. "It's about time corporate America paid attention to

us."

"Hopefully, we'll start to see some parity in hiring and promotion," Newton said. "There are some CEOs who don't know anything about Hispanics."

Newton's group, an umbrella group of 27 Latino rights organizations, recently created an advisory committee for corporations to consult on Hispanic issues.

That panel is gathering statistics about Hispanic people and issues that concern them for companies to use as they make decisions about philanthropy and marketing, Newton said.

"Maybe by getting that into their hands they'll pay attention," Newton said. "This will help us overcome some of that invisibility."

Rita Elizondo, executive director of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, said Latino groups are focusing on getting more contracts for Hispanic-owned businesses and raising sensitivity in marketing.

For example, she said, many companies often advertise only on Spanish television stations, and are "caught in the trap that if it's Hispanic, it must be on Spanish TV."

"The majority of the Hispanic community is bilingual," Elizondo said. "This says to me they're insensitive to what's going on. I don't think anybody's actually sat down, looked at the numbers and paid attention to what's there. The bottom line is that if you're sensitive and responsive to the Hispanic community, that's going to translate into dollars."

There are 23 million Hispanics in the United States, with \$188 billion in spending power, according to the Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility. Most are concentrated in five Southwestern states, New York, Florida and Illinois.

Clinton nominates ex-ambassador

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Clinton, hoping to end a controversy, nominated on Tuesday career diplomat Alexander Watson, a former ambassador to Peru, to be the top State Department official responsible for Latin America.

Clinton had given strong consideration to appointing a New York lawyer, Mario Baeza, who drew opposition from conservative Cuban exile groups on grounds that he could not be counted on to pursue a hard-line policy toward Cuba.

If confirmed by the Senate, Watson, 53, would replace Bernard Aronson, a Bush administration holdover as assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs.

Watson was one of six State Department nominees announced Tuesday by the White House.

Watson most recently had served as the second ranking official at the U.S. mission to the United Nations. He is considered by some colleagues to be the most skilled Latin Ameri-

canist in the foreign service.

Shortly before the inauguration, Baeza seemed the likely nominee but exile groups rallied against him, citing in particular a trip to Cuba he made last year with more than 120 U.S. businessmen.

The purpose of the visit, partly sponsored by the Cuban government, was to examine Cuba's new policies toward foreign private investment. To many exiles, the trip seemed inconsistent with the U.S. economic embargo against Cuba.

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