

Visión y Compromiso

2016 CONFERENCE REPORT

**Fourteenth Annual Promotores and
Community Health Workers Conference**

**The Power of My Voice and
My Actions**

El Poder de Mi Voz y Mi Acción

October 27-29, 2016

ONTARIO, CALIFORNIA



Visión y Compromiso's 14th annual conference for promotores and community health workers (CHWs) was a huge success! In what continues to be the largest conference of its kind, Visión y Compromiso convened nearly 900 promotores, CHWs and those that support their work during October 27–29, 2016 at the Ontario Convention Center.

Participants (86% women, 13% men, 1% transgender) came from diverse regions of California, 15 states (AL, AZ, CO, GA, ID, MA, MD, NJ, NV, NY, OR, SC, TX, UT, WA) and Guatemala; 69% of participants have attended this conference at least once before.

This convening continues brings together a predominantly monolingual Spanish speaking workforce of promotores and other CHWs representing community clinics, hospitals, family resource centers, school districts, county departments, housing and community organizing groups. Moreover, participation of

CHW representatives from African-American, Vietnamese and Guatemalan Mayan communities grew.

CONFERENCE GOALS

- 1** To facilitate networking, resource sharing and dissemination of best practices among promotores and CHWs, program directors and others interested in their work.
- 2** To create a learning community to increase the capacity of promotores and CHWs to serve their communities.
- 3** To continue to advocate for the promotor model as a vehicle for community development and transformation.
- 4** To strengthen the promotor and CHW movement nationally.

PLANNING

This extraordinary effort was planned and executed in partnership with a conference planning committee comprised of 14 Visión y Compromiso staff and promotores, program directors and health care professionals representing the following organizations: The March of Dimes, Blue Shield of California, County of Los Angeles—Department of Public Health, El Sol Educational Neighborhood Center, Esperanza Community Housing Corporation, PALS for Health/ALAS Para tu Salud, Braille Institute of Los Angeles, UCLA-LOSH, University of Southern California—CTSI, American Red Cross, Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma, LA Care Health Plan, American Cancer Society, National Council of La Raza/California State University Long Beach Center for Latino Community Health, Evaluation and Leadership Training, Stanford Cancer Institute, EPIC Management LP, and members of Visión y Compromiso's regional committees from the San Fernando Valley and Los Angeles, Kern and Tulare Counties. Committee members developed the conference theme, focus and program and coordinated all tasks associated with planning, implementing and evaluating the conference.



SPONSORS

This conference would not have been a success without the invaluable support of our sponsors including **Platinum sponsors:** Anthem Blue Cross and Care More; **Gold sponsors:** Kaiser Permanente, American Cancer Society, Marguerite Casey Foundation, California Healthcare Foundation, First 5 LA, Univision, The California Wellness Foundation, L.A. Care Health Plan and Liberty Dental Foundation; **Event sponsors:** California Department of Public Health, Community Partners, Dignity Health, Inland Empire Health Plan, Sanofi and Sutter Health; and the **Contributing sponsors:** The California Endowment, Charles R. Drew University, DentaQuest, PG&E, Wonderful Health & Wellness.

Our **Welcome Reception Co-Sponsors** were our Regional Network Committees from the Central Coast, the San Francisco Bay Area, Kern County, Napa County, San Diego County, Stanislaus County, the San Fernando Valley, as well as the Simon Foundation. Other contributors included those who were represented on our planning committee, served as presenters, and donated their time, talents and treasures to ensure a high quality event for our participants.





THE PROGRAM

Every year Visión y Compromiso and the conference planning committee work together to identify the conference theme. The Power of My Voice and My Actions captures the growing activism in the promotor movement and echoes the self-determination of each promotor and the collective power and impact that our individual actions can have. This theme was integrated throughout the two-day conference and reflected in the two plenaries and more than 50 workshops. Further, each workshop had learning objectives aimed at increasing skills, knowledge, best practices, community participatory research, program development, or sustainability.

For the second year in a row, Visión y Compromiso integrated a third conference day to provide a forum for our Regional Network Committees to hold business meetings including a workshop on effective conflict resolution to improve committee members abilities to address conflicts when working together or in coalitions.

Conference workshops were offered within a context of holistic health and included physical, mental, environmental, and social health as well

as advocacy, and personal and professional development. The workshop topics included:

- bailoterapia for both beginners as well as advanced instructors
- balancing technology and the media
- managing the effects of secondary trauma
- working with the witness
- reducing C-Sections in California
- kidney health
- building research integrity and capacity among promotores and CHWs
- self-care in the workplace
- the legislative process and community participation
- promoting healthy nutritional behaviors among children in rural Guatemala
- disparities related to autism spectrum disorder and other developmental delays
- creating safe space for transgender youth
- female entrepreneurship
- surviving physical, sexual and emotional abuse
- glaucoma education to prevent vision loss

- healthy aging
- using social media for your outreach
- oral health in a socio-political context
- effective outreach and education to the communities we serve
- and many more.

This year our conference agenda also included topics offered in English for program directors looking for resources to support their work such as program development, return on investment (ROI), evaluation and supervision of promotores.

The structure of this year's conference was similar to prior years in that we requested that promotores, CHWs, agencies and health professionals submit proposals for conference workshops. The program sub-committee developed the structure for proposals to be accepted and ensured that relevant and appropriate topics would address a workforce with varied skills for working with diverse populations from urban and rural areas of California and other parts of the country. We were pleased to secure such a wide variety of



proposals touching on the lifespan of individuals, families and communities.

On Friday and Saturday, we offered morning plenaries that gave conference attendees an opportunity to engage with our keynote speakers on the conference theme. Friday's plenary, The Power of Our Voices and Our Actions, offered a historical context of racism in the United States. Led by Gloria Medina, the Training Director from



Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education (South Los Angeles) and Rosa Martha Zarate, a longtime activist and current Organizing Coordinator of Northern Ex-Braceros Alliance in the United States and Mexico, these two women spoke about how structural racism, and other forms of discrimination, harm our communities. Both speakers urged attendees to take collective action as one voice that can and will create social change.



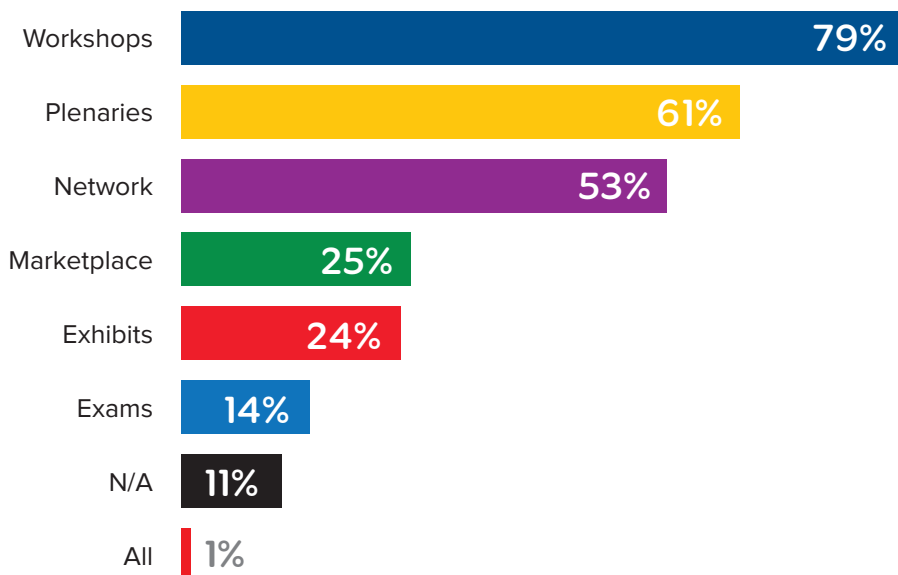
Saturday's plenary, The Power of My Voice and My Actions, was facilitated by Visión y Compromiso staff engaged with our Network of Promotoras and CHWs, Training Department and Project Managers. Incorporating an interactive approach, they discussed how racism, sexism, and "other isms" create divisions in our families and communities. Through a theatrical presentation, powerful visual images, and music, attendees saw

how the values of acceptance and respect can be solutions to reduce the gaps among us.

Ninety seven percent (97%) of respondents to the conference evaluation reported that they were "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with the conference overall. The most useful aspects of the conference were the workshops (79%), plenaries (61%) and networking (53%) which were also areas attendees would like us to continue to improve.

It has become a conference tradition for Visión y Compromiso to honor the leaders that support and advocate for the work of promotores at dinner on the first evening. It was a wonderful night of celebration with over 600 promotores in attendance. Together with Visión y Compromiso staff, we were proud to recognize the commitment, passion and service of five individuals from diverse regions of California who

What did you find most useful?





have contributed significantly to the advancement of the promotor movement. All five leaders are engaged with Visión y Compromiso's Network, programs and advocacy in the Counties of Stanislaus, San Luis Obispo, Orange, and San Diego.

During both days, participants obtained information and resources from exhibitors representing health care organizations and promotor/a programs. Thanks to the generous contribution of HealthNet, we were able to offer promotores medical screenings (blood pressure, glucose, BMI). In the future, we hope to be able to increase the services attendees can access at our conference.

This year we brought back the marketplace for promotores to support alternative economic development strategies and the talents of promotores helping them to sustain themselves, their families and, in some cases, rural communities in Mexico. We believe that offering a space for promotores who often are underemployed or unemployed to promote their microenterprise contributes to their health and well-being.

We look forward to next year's conference. Beginning in January 2017 we will begin the planning for three days of relevant programming that addresses the needs of promotores via workshops, plenaries, exhibitors and networking opportunities. Our 15th annual conference will be held in Ontario, CA on October 5–7, 2017. Promotores and CHWs identified topics of interest

TOPICS OF INTEREST FOR 2017 CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

Mental Health	75%
Personal Development	63%
Advocacy	62%
Professional Development	49%
Technology	43%
Physical Health	36%
Environment	28%
Other	12%
All Topics	4%

for the 2017 conference including mental health (75%), personal development (63%) and advocacy (62%).

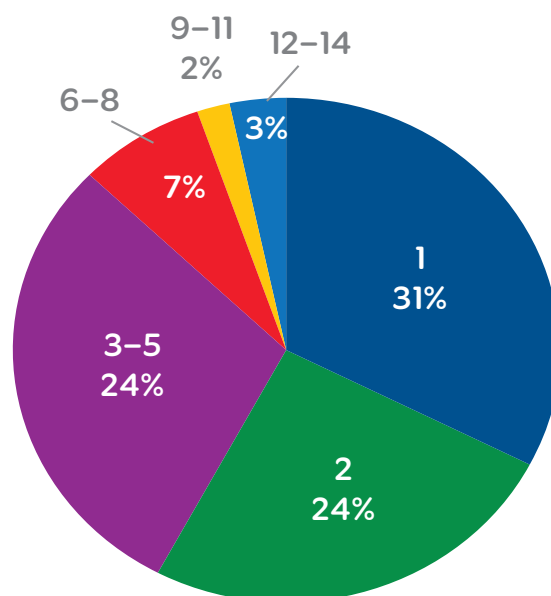
NEXT STEPS

Today, Visión y Compromiso is a national organization with a National Network of Promotoras and Community Health Workers. Our conference attendance has increased thanks to the many organizations that are integrating the promotor model and the personal invitations from promotores to an event that is both rejuvenating and educational. The number of youth participants has also increased (primarily those who are children of promotores) and they brought with them their youthful energy and transcendental spirit. The energy generated at this convening helped renew the desire and commitment of regional leadership groups and increased their interest in formalizing their networks, coalitions and promotoras programs.

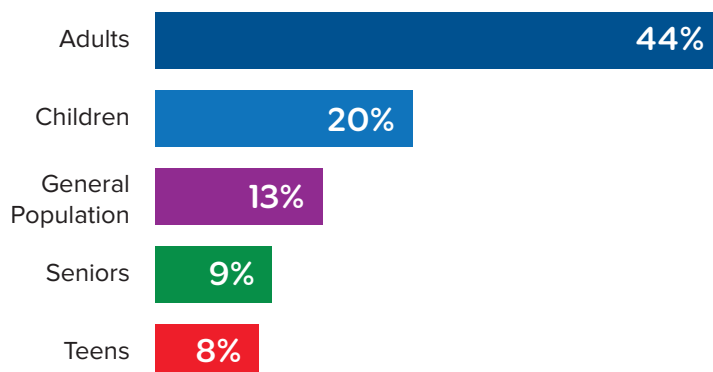
Being able to share resources and best practices in health education and health promotion helps promotores develop their scope of practice and expertise while also support them to begin to create a common voice. This next year promises to be one of organizational growth as we strengthen and sustain our Network groups in California, Denver, Nevada, Washington and Arizona. Building the capacity of our Regional Coordinators and Regional Committees will have tremendous impact on the future work of promotores in



How many times have you attended the conference?



What populations do you work with?



these states. At the end of the conference, promotores report feeling rejuvenated and proud that Visión y Compromiso is a strong voice advocating on their behalf. Their ability to work together across sectors promises to increase access to health care and other services. As the community of promotores and CHWs grows, so will their role in eliminating health disparities and sustaining community well being.

Visión y Compromiso remains committed to investing in promotores and CHWs throughout the US and beyond through capacity building and networking among and promotores and CHW programs, organizations, and advocacy efforts that support promotores as a viable workforce. In the coming year, Vision y Compromiso will continue to provide ongoing training and technical assistance locally in California and throughout a growing number of regions and states in order to continue to support and strengthen the infrastructure for a National Network of Promotoras and Community Health Workers.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit our website at
www.visionycompromiso.org

