



# EDUCATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

San Antonio Hotel & Lodging Association  
119 Heiman, Ste. 300 | 78205  
Thursday, October 10, 2019 | 9:00 a.m.

**PRESIDING OFFICER: Dinesh Rao, CHAIRMAN**

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Isabelle Berry, Tamara Benavides, Jeffrey Chatham, Ashli Johnson, Penny Nichols, Neil Patel, Dinesh Rao, David Uminski

**STAFF:** Liza Barratachea, Penny LaMaestra, Michelle Whitlow

- I. Rao called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Uminski motioned for approval of the previous meeting's minutes, Johnson seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.
- II. Rao opened the meeting by welcoming Neil Patel, Associate General Counsel for the Texas Hotel & Lodging Association, to the group. Neil is in charge of THLA's Education Foundation and Rao asked him to brief the committee on their goals and initiatives. Currently, THLA is preparing for their annual Short Course program which teaches participants about everything from operation management to food and beverage training. In five days, participants will learn almost everything there is to know about thriving in a hotel work environment. Barratachea stated that the Board has approved SAHLA to sponsor 10 spots at Short Course and will soon be soliciting applications from members to attend. Patel said that while the San Antonio Association has the only Education Committee, he is excited to work with the local Associations across the state to recruit teachers to come to the seminar and learn about the opportunities for their students in hospitality. In addition to Short Course, Patel and Barratachea are working with Chaudry to bring awareness and change to the SOC Code situation. Standard Occupational Classification Codes (SOC) for the hospitality industry are wildly misleading and inaccurate due to inadequate participation in the Dept. of Labor's annual survey. The survey is a physical piece of mail that is easily missed and oversimplified in their analysis of jobs in the industry. This issue is larger than just San Antonio or Texas and they are working with AHLA to create a strategy to make a change with the Dept. of Labor at a national level.
- III. Rao then reported on the status of the Wage / Benefit Survey SAHLA was conducting with Lobby Lights. Since the company was sold and they no longer provide the follow up services they did last year with outstanding surveys, we did not get the response we were hoping for and currently do not have enough data to compare it to last year or to make any conclusions/statements on the state of our workforce at this time. We are currently regrouping to see where to focus our efforts on follow up and how we can instruct members on the easiest way to complete the survey.
- IV. Rao asked the committee to summarize the priorities our education / workforce should be working on as we move into the end of the year to keep us focused and on track in 2020. The committee consensus was to 1) create a speakers bureau of members willing to go to schools/classes to speak about careers in the industry; 2) build a bridge from schools to hotels for a teacher externship program where they can attend day/half-day workshops at hotels; 3) finish collecting and analyze the wage / benefit survey data to develop talking points and printed collateral that accurately represents industry careers; 4) utilize these tools to communicate our story to the community.
- V. There being no further business, Rao adjourned the meeting at 10:06 a.m.

Approved by:

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Motion

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Second