

Conference Collaboration Fosters Cooperation with Hispanic Community

Summary

The newly formed MetroTex Association of REALTORS® worked with local chapters of the National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals to present two statewide conventions for Hispanic real estate professionals. The conventions attracted national attention and helped to establish continuing links between the Dallas area REALTOR® groups and area NAHREP affiliates.

13,000
MEMBERS

Background

The MetroTex Association of REALTORS® (MetroTex), which is located in the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area, learned that about one-quarter of Hispanic wage earners in the area were saving money to purchase a home. The median income of these wage earners was \$40,000. The Association knew that there was housing in the Dallas-Fort Worth area for which they could qualify, and decided to reach out to this community.

What the Association Did

Marty Martinez, a member of the MetroTex Board of Directors, is also active in the Dallas-Fort Worth chapter of the National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals (NAHREP). When the NAHREP chapter expressed a need for educational programming, Martinez suggested a collaboration between MetroTex and the chapter to organize the event. Realizing that there were only five NAHREP chapters in Texas, the decision was made to invite all the chapters—and suddenly the event organizers were holding a statewide NAHREP convention.

A convention task force was set up with representatives from the local NAHREP chapters and the MetroTex Association of REALTORS® to plan programming for the event. Topics included problems Hispanic real estate agents were having in the field and how to best address those problems. “The representatives from these organizations knew their membership and were key in identifying programming needs,” says Claire Shahzad, director of REALTOR® services for MetroTex.

A joint bank account was set up, with the NAHREP groups in charge of the money and MetroTex responsible for maintaining financial records. “We didn’t want to take an assertive role, so we did a lot of the administrative and event-planning work,” says



Shahzad. Through their contacts, MetroTex was able to help the NAHREP groups establish a record of business with caterers and the convention center.

Funding for the convention came from fundraising done by the NAHREP chapters. MetroTex helped with obtaining support and funding from the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and the Texas Association of REALTORS®. In total, they raised over \$65,000 in sponsorships and contributions.

Outcomes

On January 21-23, 2004, the first state NAHREP convention took place. Attendance was higher than anticipated, with over 350 attendees, including the national president of NAHREP, a NAHREP co-founder, and the leadership team of the Texas Association of REALTORS®. There was a scheduled session for the NAHREP leaders to meet with the leaders from the state and local REALTOR® associations, during which they were able to get to know one another and discuss ways to improve cooperation between their organizations to meet the needs of the Hispanic community.

A NAHREP certification course was presented as part of the function and around 80 people were in attendance. MetroTex was able to have the course approved for mandatory continuing education credit, the first time the course had been offered under the state's continuing education requirements.

A second statewide NAHREP convention was held in January 2005 in San Antonio. "We knew we had to keep this thing going," says Shahzad. "We put them in touch with the San Antonio REALTOR® groups, and we passed along our notes and information about logistics and how we did it." Other avenues of cooperation have been opened as a result of the convention. Shahzad notes, "This event clearly demonstrated the strength of working together."

Contact

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