



During October 4-6, 2018 in Ontario, California, Visión y Compromiso hosted its sixteenth annual conference at the Ontario Convention Center, “Building Bridges for a United and Resilient Community.” Attended by nearly 900 promotores, community health workers, and others who support their work, Visión y Compromiso’s conference continues to be the largest of its kind, bringing together a predominantly Spanish speaking workforce representing community clinics, hospitals, family resource centers, school districts, county health and behavioral health departments, housing organizations, and many community based organizations.

The goals of the conference were to: (1) Facilitate networking and sharing resources and best practices among promotores, community health workers, program directors, and others interested in their community work; (2) Increase the capacity of promotores and community health workers to serve their communities; (3) Advocate for the promotor model as a vehicle for community development and transformation; and (4) Strengthen the national movement of promotores, community health workers and other community leaders.





Visión y Compromiso's Sixteenth Annual Conference would not have been possible without the invaluable support of our sponsors:

GOLD SPONSORS:

California Health Care Foundation, Kaiser Permanente and L.A. Care Health Plan;

EVENT SPONSORS:

Marguerite Casey Foundation, DentaQuest Foundation, Sutter Health, LIBERTY Dental Plan, Blue Shield of California Foundation, Anthem Blue Cross, The California Endowment, Inland Empire Health Plan, and AARP;

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Blue Shield of California, Los Angeles Regional Network Committee, Nevada Regional Network Committee and Park Parthenia Apartments.

This conference represents an extraordinary collaborative effort planned and executed in partnership with a committee that develops the conference theme, program agenda, and all tasks related to the event. Planning Committee members included: Visión y Compromiso staff, promotores, program directors, and health care professionals representing PALS for Health/ALAS Para tu Salud, Braille Institute of Los Angeles, UCLA-LOSH, USC-CTSI, American Cancer Society, Health Net, ADN Conciencia Theta, California Health Collaborative, and representatives from Visión y Compromiso's regional committees in the San Fernando Valley, Los Angeles, Inland Empire, Coachella Valley, Orange County, San Francisco Bay Area, Central Coast, Kern County, Tulare County, and Nevada. Talented and informative, 52 facilitators donated their time to ensure the outstanding quality of this event for our participants.





OUR CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

The largest convening of promotores in the U.S., Visión y Compromiso's conference now draws an increasing number of community health workers representative of other racial and ethnic backgrounds. As organizations continue to integrate the promotor and community health worker model into their programs and services, we have also seen a growth in participants from Anglo-American, African-American, Vietnamese, and Guatemalan Indigenous Mayan communities. Participants originated from 121 cities including diverse regions of California, 11 states, and Guatemala. Ninety percent (90%) of participants identified as women.

THE CONFERENCE PROGRAM

This year's theme, "Building Bridges for a United and Resilient Community," captures the essence of the promotor movement, reflects the *espíritu de servicio* (service from the heart) that defines their approach to their community work, and highlights their strength and power as they strive for social justice. This theme was integrated into 2 plenaries and 33 workshops offered throughout the 2 days and pre-conference events.

For the third year in a row, Visión y Compromiso integrated pre-conference events into the program to strengthen the collective impact of the Promotoras and Community Health Workers Network (Network). Events included a business meeting for members of Regional Committees in California and Nevada, and the Promotores Institute Advisory Group, experienced practitioners of the Promotor Model who are helping to build this innovative training institute.

Pre-conference events were followed by an extraordinary welcome reception organized by members of our regional committees, led by our staff, and attended by more than 400 people. This reception set the tone for celebrating 16 years of convening as a movement.

To ensure that conference topics would be relevant to the varied skills and knowledge



needed by the workforce, promotores, community health workers, and other health professionals were invited to submit ideas for conference workshops. Designed by the conference sub-committee, a dedicated group of program directors and promotores, the conference program provided attendees with information in Spanish and English about the workshops. Interactive presentations reflected a wide variety of topics to build participants' skills as local resources and to increase their knowledge about best practices for a range of situations. Topics affecting individuals, families and communities from across the lifespan were organized into six learning tracks: advocacy, workforce development, environmental health, mental health, physical health, and research. As always, the program was designed for promotores and community health workers, however, because more administrators attend the conference each year, additional workshops were directed to program managers, directors and supervisors to increase their capacity to integrate the promotor model into their work.

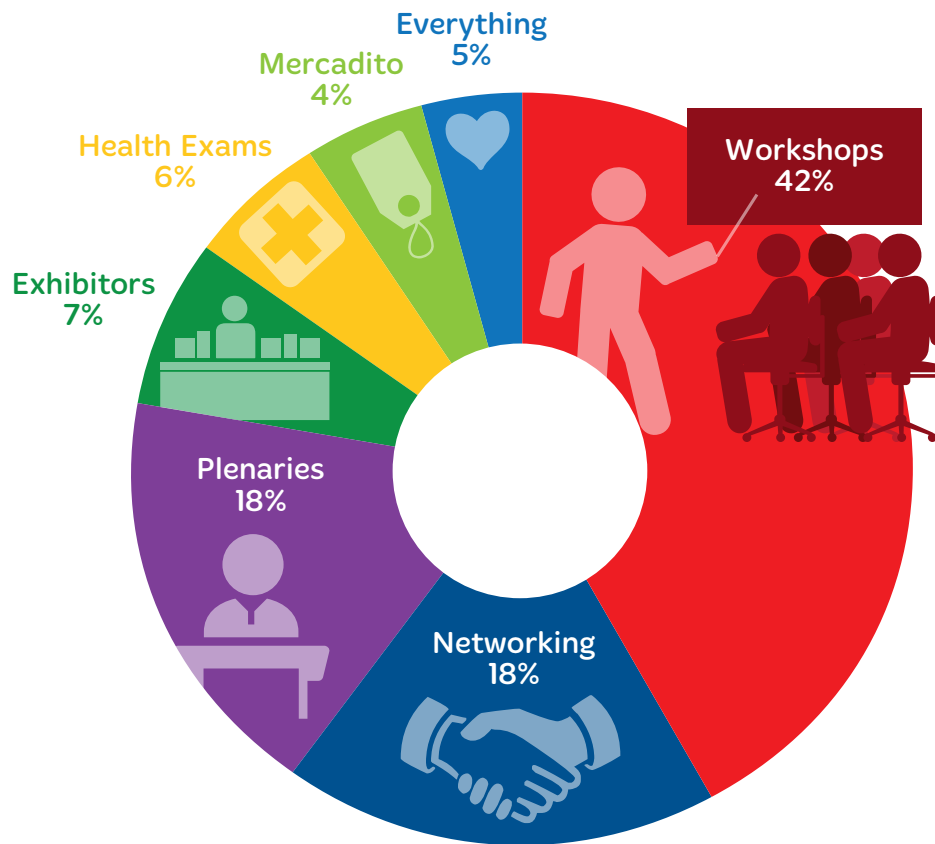
In addition, plenary sessions were planned as a call to action on the conference theme, "Building Bridges for a United and Resilient Community." On Friday and Saturday we offered a plenary session that provided the participants an opportunity to learn and engage with our keynote speakers and the theme of this year's conference. Facilitated by Teresa Niño, Friday's plenary "Structural Racism in Our Society" was presented by Rosa Martha Zarate (Señora del Canto, Activist, and Liaison/Coordinator, Alianza de Ex-Braceros del Norte) and Flojaune G. Cofer, PhD, MPH (Director of State Policy & Research, Public Health Advocates). Both presenters acknowledged the racism in the U.S, the destructiveness of institutionalized racism and discussed how immigrants experience racism.



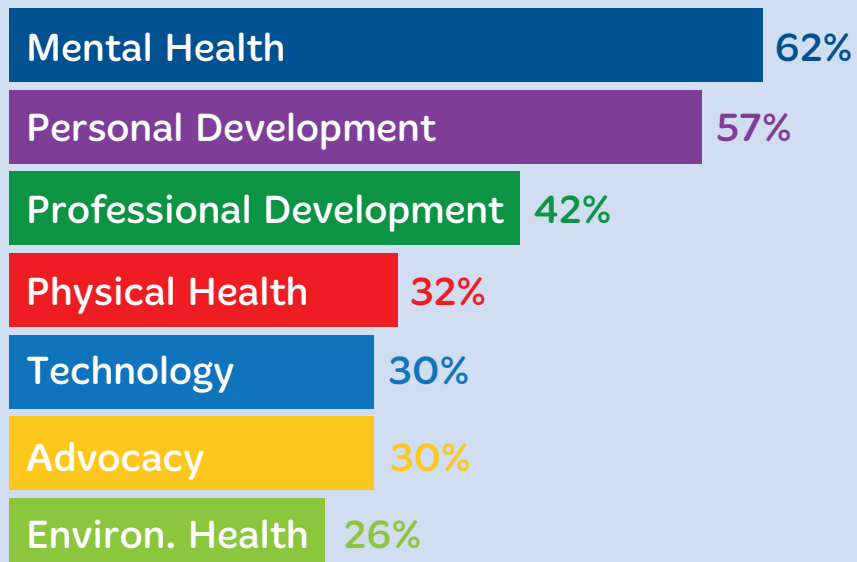
They provided an in-depth analysis of the impact of racism on communities of color and called for increased civic participation: becoming a citizen, getting involved in advocacy efforts, supporting candidates that are committed to our values and legislation that supports our communities, etc. On Saturday, "Our Actions Generate Social Change" was facilitated by Visión y Compromiso staff from the Network, the Education and Training Department, and the Director of Projects. This plenary demonstrated how participants could work together to identify concrete steps to promote an action-oriented agenda. The conversations were rich and the solutions simple yet meaningful. Positioning promotores as catalysts of change was the intent of both plenaries and we feel we accomplished this goal.

Eighty four percent (84%) of respondents to the conference evaluations were very satisfied/satisfied with the conference overall. Additionally, most participants were also very satisfied/satisfied with the plenaries (89%) and workshops (87%). Workshops (42%), plenaries (18%), and networking events (18%) continue to be the most useful aspects of our conference but also areas where participants would like us to improve.

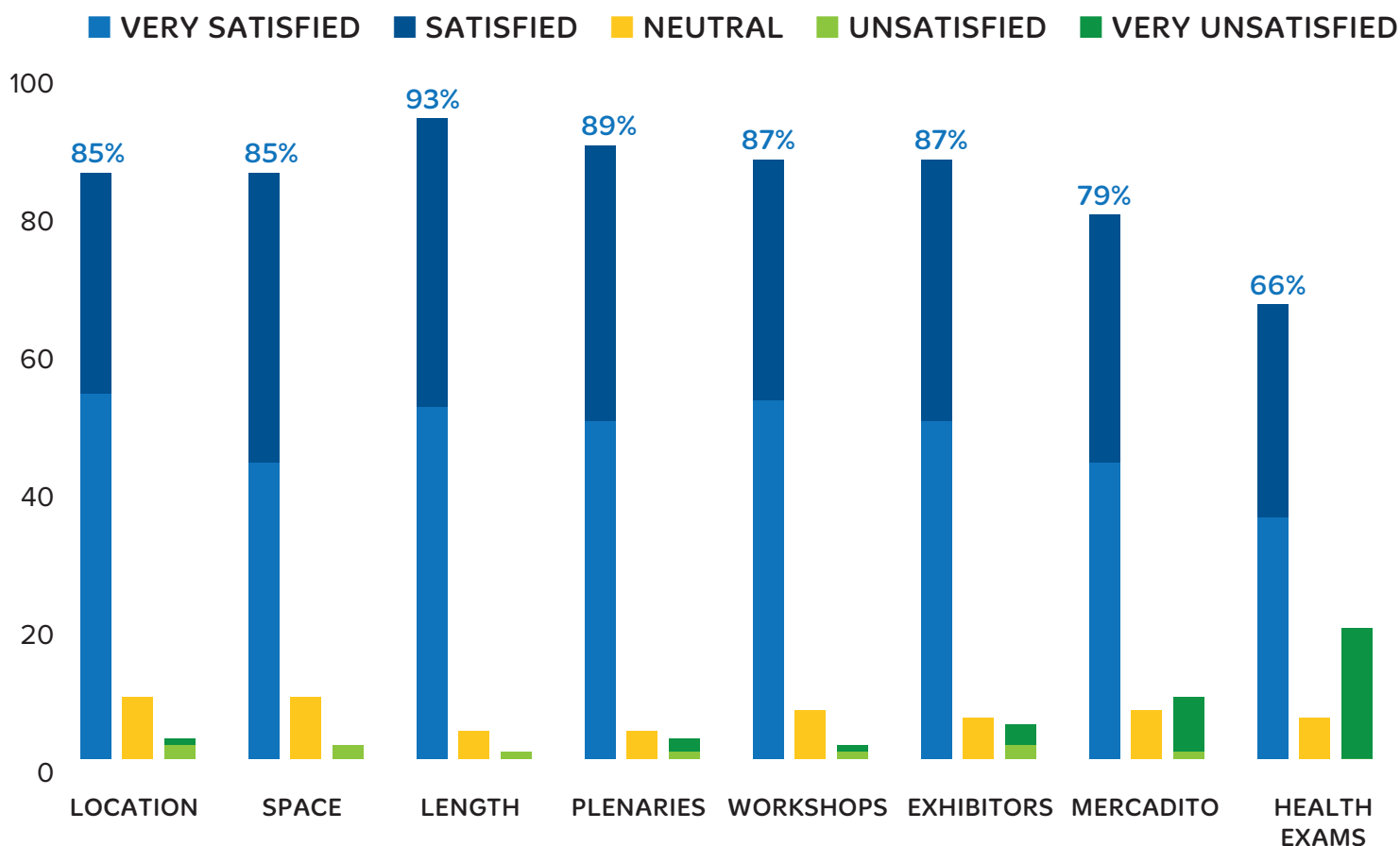
What did participants find most useful?



Topics of Interest for 2019 Conference Workshops



Levels of Satisfaction



Throughout the conference, participants met with exhibitors related to health coverage, health access, advocacy and organizations with promotor programs gathering information and resources and developing new relationships. This year, we expanded our health care exams providing screening related to oral health, blood pressure, glucose, Alzheimer's, and kidney health. Many promotores are uninsured so this opportunity is well received and appreciated.

Our marketplace provides promotores an opportunity to sell their own handicrafts and more, and it is always a big hit with our attendees. The marketplace promotes alternative economic development among promotores who are often

underemployed and/or volunteer workers. This activity supports their talents and microenterprise businesses, helps them sustain themselves, their families and, in some cases, rural communities in Mexico, and improves their own health and well-being.

We look forward to planning next year's conference to be held in October 2019 in Los Angeles; our attendees report being very satisfied/satisfied with both the length (93%) and the location (85%) of the conference. Two potential topics which may be addressed include mental health and personal development.

NEXT STEPS

Each year sees new attendees at our conference thanks to the many organizations that are integrating the Promotor Model as well as promotores who are spreading the word about a conference that is planned, organized and implemented by and for promotores and that is rejuvenating, educational, and helps connect them to a network of people, just like themselves, who are dedicated to the well being of the communities they serve. Today, Visión y Compromiso's Network of Promotoras and Community Health Workers is nationwide and energy generated at our 2018 conference has helped renew the commitment of leaders to formalize local networks of promotoras and other community leaders where they live; this has tremendous potential for the future work of promotores across the country and will create a common voice for self-determination that will strengthen the efforts of each group. Promotores are encouraged and proud that Visión y Compromiso stands as a strong voice for them and their work, fully committed towards integrating this model in community well-being. And, as the community of promotores and community health workers grows, so too will their role in eliminating health disparities and sustaining community well being.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit our websites at
www.visionycompromiso.org
and www.vycconference.org

