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'If you take care of the community, the community will take care of you'
Gough Speaks on Best Practices in Translations

COLLEGE PARK, MD – **Lance Gough**, Executive Director of the Chicago Election Board, credited the late **Mayor Harold Washington** on Wednesday with inspiring the wide-ranging language outreach programs that the Chicago Election Board offers.

“Mayor Washington taught me that if you take care of the community, the community will take care of you,” Gough said. “In every community, we have to listen to the needs of all of the organizations, and we have to work together year-round, not just election time.”

Gough made the remarks as a guest speaker on the best practices for offering voter language assistance under the federal Voting Rights Act. The U.S. Election Assistance Commission hosted [the national gathering of election officials and voting-rights organizations](#). By law, Chicago is required to offer ballots and language assistance in Spanish, Chinese and Hindi but also provides certain voter services in Polish and Korean.

“We have to be at the health fairs, parades and ethnic celebrations registering people to vote. Just as important, we have to listen to the organizations’ needs,” Gough said. “That’s how you build coalitions to pass laws for Election Day Registration, Online Registration and now Election Day Registration. That’s how you can work together at election time to find poll workers, polling places and promoting options like vote by mail and early voting.”

During Gough’s talk, he emphasized Chicago’s work with:

- Web sites that can be navigated entirely in Spanish, Chinese, Hindi and Polish – instead of web designs that make the user find information in English and then hunt for the translation.
- Domain names like “eleccioneschicago.com” and “chicagowybory.com” that work better in Spanish-language and Polish-language media.
- Authentic translations and avoiding computerized shortcuts that might convert a word like “primary” to “grade school.”
- Community organization leaders and glossaries published by the Election Assistance Commission to check word selections provided by any outside translation services.

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