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Study shows America's bound by race

Stereotypes affect labor, housing markets

BOSTON (AP) — Race continues to play a powerful role in the chances for success in America, from job opportunities to education to housing, according to a sweeping five-year study of Boston, Atlanta, Detroit and Los Angeles.

The Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality, released Friday, found that racial stereotypes and attitudes heavily influence the labor market, with blacks landing at the very bottom.

The mammoth, seven-volume survey was sponsored by the Russell Sage Foundation, a private center that researches social policy, and the Harvard University Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality and Social Policy. It looked at 9,000 households and 3,500 employers in the four cities.

The 50 researchers found that race is deeply entrenched in the country's cultural landscape — perhaps even more

than many Americans realize or are willing to admit.

"I think this study tells you not only that some of these perceptions are true, but it tells us in more detail where inequality is being generated," said Alice O'Connor, a historian at the University of California at Berkeley who wrote the introduction to the report.

Initiated in the early 1990s, the project attempted to understand the patterns of racial inequality in modern, metropolitan areas and how race has been affected by economic changes.

According to the study, race has a pervasive influence at many levels, manifesting itself in everything from highly segregated housing to labor markets that prefer hiring some racial groups over others. Stereotyping is often at play, particularly when it comes to where people want to live and whom they will hire, Ms. O'Connor said.

Blacks "continually end up at the bottom in terms of preferences for neighbors as well as when employers talk about hiring preferences," she said.

While the study found that

"Clearly there is a heavy burden that minorities face in the job market. Minorities are working, but they're diverging in their good fortune from whites."

Katherine Newman

urban studies professor at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government

minorities are doing better in the strong economy of the 1990s, it found that they are making less money and working fewer hours than their white counterparts. It also found that they had a significantly harder time landing a job.

In Detroit, for example, it took unskilled, unemployed whites an average of 91 hours to generate a job offer. It took blacks 167 hours.

"Clearly there is a heavy burden that minorities face in the job market," said Katherine Newman, an urban studies professor at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. "Minorities are working, but they're diverging in their good fortune from whites."

Both the household surveys, conducted by telephone between 1992 and 1994, and the em-

ployer interviews identified pervasive stereotypes, particularly regarding blacks.

Blacks, many of those surveyed said, are more likely to be on welfare, more likely to commit crimes and harder to get along with than other groups.

In the work force, where native-born blacks are losing jobs to recent immigrants, employers indicated blacks rank low on their hiring preference charts.

"We didn't get a whole lot of employers coming out and saying, 'Blacks are worthless,'" Ms. O'Connor said. Instead, she said, employers used certain phrases or code words. For example, they would talk about "inner-city" employees or neighborhoods.

Employers also were fearful of relocating to areas that were perceived as heavily minority.

County schools seek community support

Officials' new program to be sponsored through private sector

By Weenam Chua
THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

VALDOSTA — County school administrators will look to the business community to help promote excellence in education with the creation of a new foundation.

The Lowndes Education Improvement Foundation, or LEIF, will operate with financial and non-financial support from the private sector.

Programs funded by the foundation are intended to provide grants to teachers to develop teaching techniques and classroom projects to enhance learning, promote student performance and recognize academic excellence, set up a parent university to get adults involved with public education and other special projects.

A board of directors will manage the private, third-party, not-for-profit corporation.

At Tuesday's school board work session at Moulton-Branch Elementary, superinten-

dent Thomas Hagler announced a LEIF luncheon will take place Oct. 18 at the Valdosta Country Club to introduce the program to business representatives.

Transportation and construction issues took up the bulk of discussion at the work session.

Plans are being finalized for addition driveways at Moulton-Branch and Hahira elementary schools. Traffic jams, especially when school lets out, have made it necessary to add the new entrances. Board member James Council reminded the board similar work needs to be addressed at Lowndes Middle School.

In other business, the school board agreed to hire Michael E. Clark and Associates, of Macon, for \$3,400 to consult on repairs for the Lowndes High School roof. Clark will guide the system on repairs so they will be consistent with the school's long range facilities plan.

More serious leaks at the facility prompted the board to ap-

prove some emergency repairs costing around \$37,000. These repairs should be completed Dec. 1.

Transportation executive director Mike Booker and operations director Tommy Folsom updated the board on EduLog, a piece of software designed to computerize the planning of bus routes.

Inaccurate information from initial training sessions and incorrect data entry from the company provides the software set

back implementation, Booker explained.

When the system is online in January, the system will have the capability to track every student's movement on the buses. That's a problem now because of bus transfers.

Board members also heard from LHS principal Ann Rodgers about plans to move the school to block scheduling.

To contact reporter Weenam Chua, please call 244-3400, ext. 237.

The Valdosta Daily Times

4A — Wednesday, Oct. 6, 1999

▶ YOUR OPINION

Offense not intended

My apologies to Ari Santas and the People's Tribunal if I misconstrued their efforts in raising awareness of the Willie Williams case.

Rallies and public meetings are essential to make the justice system work. Neither the police nor any other organization can control the actions of all their members at all times. It is up to us to let our elected officials know when justice is being miscarried.

I only wanted to sound a note of caution so that the People's Tribunal would see themselves as an adjunct to the legal system, and not a substitute for it. I commend them for their efforts and hope I didn't seriously offend anyone.

Matt Flumerfelt
Valdosta

Community

Public forum was missing the public

More than half the people who attended were school officials

By Weenam Chua
THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

VALDOSTA — City school administrators and board members addressed public concerns Monday, ranging from transportation to summer school funding.

Of some 50 people who showed up at 7:30 p.m. at J.L. Newbern Middle School, more than half were school and central office administrators who were there to help answer any questions.

The forums were created two years ago to let the public voice their opinions but only two persons asked questions.

Danny Parsons wanted the board to consider providing full busing privileges to cheerleaders to and from home games. If football and basketball players are provided transportation to and from home games, cheerleaders should be treated the same way, he said.

"The cheerleaders ... I feel they have the same qualifications as the ball players," he added.

Interim moments of silence were broken up by Joan Washington, who asked questions ranging from use of Creatine by ball players to summer school funding.

School administrators explained that in the past, coaches could supply Creatine and sent out letters asking parents if their sons could take the herbal supplement. While it is no longer given by coaches, the supplement can still be purchased by students at stores.

Washington also asked about how high school students would

cope with rising graduation standards.

"I was wondering if summer school could be free since we have so many students at the high school who qualify for free or reduced lunches anyway?" she asked.

Superintendent Sam Allen explained the summer program at the high school is self sufficient.

"There is no money from the school district that goes to the summer school at Valdosta High," he added. "The large number of kids we have at summer school have not been our children. They've come from other school systems."

Including serving Lowndes County Schools and area school districts, the summer program at VHS even attracts students from as far away as Milledgeville, Allen explained.

Administrators also explained the school district could not require failing students to attend summer school. Letters are sent out to parents of those students urging them to enroll, according to assistant superintendent Vickie Burt.

The next public forum is scheduled to be held at 7:30 p.m. May 8 at S.L. Mason Elementary School. Unlike normal board meetings, anyone wishing to make comments can do so without having to submit a request ahead of time. There is no time limit.

"I just wished we had a little more public participation," said board chairman Joe Crane. "We appreciate what we have."

To contact reporter Weenam Chua, please call 244-3400, ext. 237.

THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Monday, Oct. 18, 1999

50 cents

Candidates face questions at public forum

Williams' death
a major topic

By Emma Johnson
THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

VALDOSTA — More than 200 people gathered for a public fo-

rum sponsored by the People's Tribunal Sunday evening to which all local candidates for elected positions were invited.

The 7 p.m. event opened with a half-hour of introductions, welcomes, prayers, soloists and songs sung by all visitors of The Church at Pine Hill.

The People's Tribunal is a lo-

cal activist group interested in racial, political and economic equality. The group has actively brought attention to the death of Willie J. Williams, who died while in custody of the Lowndes County Sheriff's Office. The People's Tribunal believes Williams died due to excessive force used by sheriff's deputies.

Attending candidates included Alphonso Hall, candidate for City Council District 1, Dexter Sharper, candidate for City Council District 1, Hoke Hampton, incumbent candidate for City Council District 3, R.H. "Bobby" Ferguson, candidate for City Council At-Large, Joseph "Sonny" Vickers, candidate for

City Council District 3, Jennifer Rashwan, candidate for City School Board District and Dallas Bennett, running for City School Board District 5.

Candidates not attending included Marvin Snyder, a district

See FORUM on Page 3A

Continued from Page 1A

Forum: Candidates take questions on Willie Williams case

6 candidate for the Valdosta school board who called saying he had prior engagements, and unopposed mayor incumbent James Rainwater, who said he "didn't see a reason to come," according to Tribunal vice-president Ari Santos.

Candidates were given three minutes to introduce themselves.

The People's Tribunal then asked three prepared questions, after which the the audience was allowed to pose questions.

The first prepared question, and many of the audience queries, asked candidates if

they would write a letter to the U.S. Justice Department demanding an independent investigation of the Williams case and local law enforcement agencies.

Sharper, Hoke, Vickers and Bennett gave strong affirmatives while Rashwan said "on a case-by-case basis."

Hall said if elected, he would need to consult other council members and attain more evidence, saying "I don't think I should just sign a letter without looking at the facts."

Ferguson said, "I'm not filled in enough to tell you what you

want to hear. But if I'm elected, I'll make sure I get things aired out right."

Other issues candidates addressed included drugs, polluted drinking water, double-taxation, homelessness, HIV-positive citizens and qualities candidates believe make good community leaders.

The audience animatedly responded to candidates' answers by applauding, laughing and occasionally booing.

To contact reporter Emma Johnson, please call 244-3400, ext. 227.

Racism isn't just black against white

DEAR READERS: Yesterday I began sharing some of the many comments from my readers regarding racism. Today I will continue. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: Thomas Anthony Jones Sr. is simply wrong in his statement that "there is no racism in the African-American community in the United States." Is he right when he says that black people are "discriminated against on a daily basis because of ... color"? Absolutely. Does that mean that only people belonging to the historically oppressive group can be labeled as racists? Absolutely not!

The pain of oppression is real and sharp. It shouldn't blind anyone, however, to the plain fact that racists come in all shapes and sizes, and yes, in all colors. You said it best, Abby, in your answer to "Cincinnati Educator":

"Racism is never 'OK,' regardless of the skin color of the bigot." — NEAL SUMMERLIN IN VIRGINIA

DEAR NEAL: To that I will add that racism and prejudice are a cancer of the spirit. They invade and destroy everything they touch. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: I'm a 16-year-old Asian-American. Mr. Jones declaring in an absolute statement that there is "no racism in the African-American community in the United States" is simply not true. Unfortunately, I have encountered racism from African-American individuals numerous times. I fully believe that the majority of African-Americans living in the U.S. are not racist, but I was extremely annoyed to read about someone declaring that there's none at all. I have noticed in general, whenever race relations are discussed in the U.S., it's always a matter of black or white. I think it's unfair not to include the opinions of other minorities, especially the increasingly growing Hispanic and Asian minorities that are projected to outgrow all other ethnic groups in the coming years. — JI H. CHONG, CATONSVILLE, MD.

DEAR JI: If your perception is true, I agree with you that it's unfair. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: As a proud Hispanic teen-ager, I found Thomas A. Jones Sr. to be driving in the wrong direction. His so-called "defense philosophy" is merely an excuse for intolerable behavior. His comment, "A black person is always surrounded by whites with racist attitudes," truly aggravated me. He implies that racism is a black-and-white issue when truly it is not. Mr. Jones should be teaching his children to love, not retaliate. Just because others' beliefs are immoral does not mean that you should make the same mistake. As long as society continues to make this an attack-and-defend situation, how can we ever make any progress? — KATRINA MONTANEZ, ARIZ.

Dear Abby



Abigail Van Buren

Columnist

State wants race policy upheld

SAVANNAH (AP) — The state has asked a federal court to allow the University of Georgia to continue using race as one of the factors for admitting borderline students next fall.

In papers filed this week in U.S. District Court in Savannah, the state said continuing to use race in admissions poses “no real threat of impending injury” to a group of women who filed suit to block the practice.

“In addition, the manner in which race will continue to be used as a factor in admissions has not yet been finalized by UGA,” the state said, adding that an immediate ban would be “inappropriate and premature.”

Even though state Attorney General Thurbert Baker has said the university has a slim chance of winning its case in court, he filed the brief on behalf of the school.

“This court should not now put the brakes to a system that has served UGA and the state well, that has resulted in the increased opportunity for a significant segment of our population,” Baker said.

The plaintiffs asked Judge B. Avant Edenfield earlier this month to stop the university from using race as a factor in admissions for the fall 2000 semester. They were responding to an announcement by university President Michael Adams, who said Sept. 30 that the school would continue using race in admissions as a way of ensuring diversity.

The women, all of whom were denied admission for fall 1999, claim in a discrimination lawsuit that the university would have admitted them if they were black males.

The suit is the third filed against the flagship university by Atlanta lawyer A. Lee Parks Jr.

Living

THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Saturday, Oct. 30, 1999 — 11A

Integration, busing and other programs have failed to join the races in love. Now a community group of blacks and whites have turned to the ...

Power of prayer

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and forgive their sin, and will heal their land." II Chronicles 7:14

By Elizabeth Butler
THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

VALDOSTA — A knock sounded at the door of the library meeting room where a community prayer group had just completed an hour of prayer, praise and Bible reading. Only group leader Ruth Council, member Sarah Jones and a journalist remained.

The visitor was a very young grandmother holding her grandchild. She asked where the Scripture was that says "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

While two of the group searched and found Philippians 4:19, Council asked the visitor, "How did you know we were here?"

"I heard you singing," she said. "I asked at the desk what was going on, and they said it was a prayer group."

"Will you pray for my two daughters?"

Jones, closest to the visitor, held her hand and prayed for her two loved ones.

The community prayer group was formed in July by Council, who is black, and Jackie Harris, who is white. Both had attended a race workshop earlier this year sponsored by Project Change and The Valdosta Daily Times. As Harris left, she whispered to Council, "I'm tired of talking. Let's do something."

"We decided the only thing we could do was to get a group of community people together to



Mike Tanner/The Valdosta Daily Times

Sounds of praying, singing and praising God fills the meeting room at the Southside Library when the community prayer group joins hearts and voices together the first Monday of each month. From left are Thelma Jordan, Sissy Burnette, Barbara Byrd, Jackie Harris, Ruth Council and Billy Burnette.

do nothing but pray," Council recalls. "We would not pray for individuals but for specific problems that we face in our community."

The prayer group meets at 10 a.m. each Monday at the Mae Wisenbaker McMullen Memorial Southside Library, 527 Griffin Ave., and at 7 p.m. the first Monday of each month at South Georgia Regional Library.

"We didn't want to meet in any church," Council said. "We didn't want to be identified with any specific church or denomination so people would feel welcome to come. From there, it has mushroomed. We are still desirous of more people to become involved."

Thirty-eight people, including eight pastors, have attended with 16 churches represented. It is the group's goal to reach all of the more than 100 churches in the city and county and get

members to join them in prayer.

"We come together for progress in our community — to pray for racial harmony, for denominational barriers to be broken, for economic barriers to be broken," Council said.

"We believe we can make a difference."

Council said things such as legislation, integration, marching and walk-outs have failed to bring the races together.

"We want to see people come together because they want to — not because they are made to. For instance, our group comes together every Monday because we want to. We feel prayer is the answer. It gives us an opportunity to share and communicate and face our problems systematically."

Council said people of any race (not just black and white) and any age may participate. People who are not affiliated

with any group are also welcome to attend.

In addition to Council, a member of St. Paul AME, and Harris, a member of First United Methodist Church, participants so far have included Clarice Apolski, Effie Barrett, Willie Daniel, Margaret Hastings, Eugenia Hobbs, the Rev. Diane Shedd, Myrl Smith, the Rev. Wayne Moseley and the Rev. Hale Bishop, First UMC; the Rev. David Cummings, Covenant Baptist; Pastor Sedonia Petty, House of Prayer Deliverance; Thelma Branham, Irwin Hill; Cissy Burnette, Billy Burnette, Aletha Johnson, Kelley Outreach; the Rev. Richard Pieplow, Messiah Lutheran; Donna Ebron, John Ebron, Sarah Jones, Bettye Wilson and Barbara Byrd, Morning Star Baptist; Anita Jackson, New Greater Vision; John Lee, River of Life; Dr. M. DiAnn Flowers,

"We want to see people come together because they want to — not because they are made to We feel prayer is the answer. It gives us an opportunity to share and communicate and face our problems systematically."

Ruth Council
Prayer group co-founder

Dr. G. Anthony Flowers, Harvest Bible Institute; Agnes Brown, Sylvia Marable and Thelma Jordan, St. Paul AME; Dorothy Cambridge, Elizabeth Foster, Susan Hatcher, St. Peter AME; Mary Nelson, St. Timothy AME; Geraldine Green, Hazel Hayes, Tabernacle Church of God in Christ; Anita Jackson, Union Baptist; and Janie Parish, New Covenant Church.

Thelma Jordan, a retired personal care home provider and member of St. Paul AME Church, says she found the prayer group to be "a warm group of people, like one big family."

"On my way here the first time, I was praying 'Let this be what I'm searching for. I can't be part of it if it isn't real.' But when I walked in, I found it to be what I was searching for — warm spiritual food to help me on my everyday journey. I'm truly hoping we will accomplish what we are here for — to prayerfully stamp out racism, to pray for the people who don't know God."

Co-founder Harris said, "I think we can change our community if we cooperate and pray. Prayer will change everybody and everything."