

NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON RACIAL & ETHNIC DIVERSITY

NCORED Network News

WITH A VOICE FROM...

American Indian Caucus

Asian Pacific Islander Caucus

Black Caucus

Latino Caucus

WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Message 1

NASW Foundation Awards Focus on Diversity 3

NCORED Charge 4

Musings from the Chair 4

The Aftermath 5

Who Will Remember Them? 6

Pacific Islander Americans and 9/11. 7

A Story from the Heart 9

American Indian Caucus Salutes Awardees 9

Message from the API Caucus President 10

Biracial Identity Development and Implications for Therapeutic Intervention. 12

Summary of Black Caucus Steering Committee Activities 12

New for 2002–2003! 15

The Legacy of Elmer P. Martin, PhD 16

Need for Reparations for African People in America. 17

Puerto Rican Female Student and Transformative Education 19

Special Needs of Older Latinos: Ethnic and Cultural Considerations 21

Resources 22

NCORED Leadership Directory. 23

NASW Caucus Chairs Directory 23

The content of the articles are the views of the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the National Association of Social Workers.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Terry Mizrahi

Greetings to social workers of color and all those interested in issues of racial and ethnic diversity.

I'm writing this article a day after I heard President Clinton give a wonderful speech at the Hunter College community. As usual he was brilliant—visionary and strategic at the same time. I've used the term "practical visionary" to ground my approach to the NASW presidency and that was what he was offering. What he outlined was a series of choices for the United States and the world. He assumes that the world is already interdependent and connected, but the planet is not integrated. In fact, he sees the forces for chaos as much as the forces for integration on the horizon. He presented all the contradictions that exist—the highest economic growth and the decreasing amount of poverty, yet the poorest are getting poorer, and the "divide" between the rich and poor, and among racial, ethnic, and tribal groups, is not easing. Indeed, he noted that hatred of "the other" is as old as civilization itself and needs constant attention and engagement to address. He does not believe that these conflicts are a "zero sum" where one group's gain is another's loss. Yet the polarization is real.

He believes that the United States must use its wealth to assist in abating some of these divisions through international bodies as well as our country's own leadership—a Marshall Plan of sorts. He does not believe that the United States is hated for its wealth and culture, but rather for what it does (or doesn't do) with that wealth. For example, contrary to public opinion, I learned that the American people believe that the United States spends 10%–15% on foreign aid and should spend 2%–3%; in reality, it spends less than 1% and does less than the other 22 developed countries. Yet he has faith in the democratic process once the American people obtain the pertinent facts.

The way his speech is related to my Presidency is with respect to the need to focus attention on majority and minority wishes, while also doing enough to benefit the profession as a whole. In this way, everyone under the social work umbrella is positively affected by what we do. Some of these umbrella issues include “workforce”; we are addressing ways to increase our competency and our compensation. Salaries and working conditions will rise if we can demonstrate our effectiveness and advocate for the services that work; for example, the May issue of *NASW News* features a meeting with the Labor Department to look at how social work is defined, which affects those who can and do call themselves social workers.

Also in the policy arena, another umbrella issue is “welfare reform.” NASW is investing tremendous resources and leadership in welfare reform or what I call the issue of “economic security.” (See the April and May issues of *NASW News* for information on my Blue Ribbon Panel and on TANF Reauthorization.) Of course, the majority of Americans on welfare are Caucasian, but the public perception is the opposite. Leadership on that issue will benefit all poor Americans, but disproportionately African American and Latino people. Overall, we need closer links among policy, practice, and research, and we need input from and feedback to social workers from diverse backgrounds in order to remain relevant to our membership.

The same holds true for “image and influence” and related areas where we need increased activity. We need to promote the diversity of social work and social work practitioners as our strength. A former NASW Executive Director said: “Social work is the profession that looks the most like America.” This is certainly true for our leadership. I have made a conscious effort to appoint competent social workers from a racially and ethnically diverse pool of candidates. Indeed, over 40% of our national committees are people of color, and the number has been growing over time. Yet, our membership is not 40% people of color. In spite of our proactivity in this area, I understand that the perception among various ethnic and racial groups at the grassroots level is that we are not doing enough to address their needs and those of their constituencies. We need to hear in what areas we should be investing, and we need members to get involved to make those issues a reality. NASW will do much to dispel these feelings by our programs, not our pronouncements. Progress is evident. And, under my leadership, building a larger, more diverse organization will continue to be high priority.

One important project that began under Ruth Mayden’s leadership is the cultural competency standards. We are working to assure that there are implementation and evaluation plans that ultimately accompany these standards. We are all proud of the work of NCORED under Clara Simmons’ leadership. Connections to the caucuses, the sections, our 56 chapters, and other social work organizations are among the ways we will build the power of social work. I invite you to browse the www.naswdc.org website and e-mail me at president@naswdc.org. ■

NCORED NETWORK NEWS

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Clara Simmons, Editor
Mailed annually to NASW members of color.

NASW FOUNDATION AWARDS FOCUS ON DIVERSITY

The National Association of Social Workers Foundation, a subsidiary of NASW, is a charitable organization created to enhance the well-being of individuals, families, and communities through the advancement of social work practice. Among its functions are the fellowship, scholarship, and awards programs. The awards are of particular import for people of color. For the doctoral fellowships, dissertations that include a diversity component are encouraged. The Consuelo W. Gosnell Memorial MSW Scholarships are awarded to masters' degree candidates in social work who are interested in working with American Indian/Alaska Native and Hispanic/Latino populations in the United States. The Verne LaMarr Lyons Memorial MSW Scholarship is awarded to a MSW student who has interest and/or demonstrated ability in health/mental health practice and a commitment to working in African American communities. ■

NASW FOUNDATION 2002–2003 FELLOWSHIP AND SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Jane B. Aron Doctoral Fellowship on Healthcare Policy

Deneece Ferrales University of Texas, Austin

Eileen Blackey Doctoral Fellowship on Welfare Policy

Silvia Dominguez Boston University, Boston

Consuelo W. Gosnell Memorial MSW Scholarship Program

Olivia Arrieta Arizona State University,
Tucson

Vanesscia Lynn Bates Washington University,
St. Louis

Hector Dominguez Georgia State University,
Atlanta

Anne Farina St. Louis University, St. Louis

Braulio Garcia University of California,
Berkeley

Lori Moussapour New York University,
New York City

Edith R. Pavez Fordham University,
New York City

Dawn C. Phillips State University of New York,
Buffalo

Carrie Schonwald University of Washington,
Seattle

Marquita Rose
Thompson University of Washington,
Seattle

Verne LaMarr Lyons Memorial MSW Scholarship

Mary F. Williams Virginia Commonwealth
University, Richmond

For more information: www.naswfoundation.org.
E-mail: naswfoundation@naswdc.org.
Phone: 202-336-8211.

Applications for the 2003–2004 awards will be accepted from August 15, 2002 – December 13, 2002. ■

NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON RACIAL AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY

The National Committee on Racial and Ethnic Diversity (NCORED) is an ongoing mandated committee that reports on a regular basis to the NASW Board of Directors on matters of policy and coordinates with the Program Coordinating Committee on activities related to the program. NCORED promotes conditions that encourage respect for the diversity of cultures, including equality of opportunity in all activities of the association. A particular focus is on those groups that have historically been subject to racism. It is comprised of up to seven members who are representative of diverse racial and ethnic groups in accordance with the specification of groups identified under the association's Affirmative Action Program.

Specific Responsibilities

Given that issues of ethnic and racial diversity are core to all association work, this committee shall

- develop, promote, and/or collaborate on methods of insuring inclusion of racial and diversity issues in NASW policies and programs
- promote the development of knowledge, theory, and practice as related to racial/ethnic diversity
- review proposed Delegate Assembly public social policies for their impact on people of color, and make recommendations for their acceptance or modification
- monitor policy changes and data affecting policy changes, with regard to racial and ethnic groups both native born and immigrant
- identify ways to eliminate racist and ethnocentric social work practices and policies and make recommendations to appropriate organizational units for action. ■

MUSINGS FROM THE CHAIR

Clara Simmons

Summary of NCORED Activities

NCORED continued to forge ahead this program year, whistling like the little engine “I know I can, I know I can” but at times feeling like “I wish I could.” The goals we established were ambitious, fueled by the successful completion of the *NASW Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice*. This has been a busy year for the committee. We reviewed public and professional policies for the Delegate Assembly, disseminated the cultural competence standards, identified potential workshop presenters, and designed training materials. We sought funding, collaborated on warning membership about racial profiling through the INP (International Committee, NCORED, and the Peace, Social, and Economic Justice Committee) coalition, served as liaison to the caucuses, and fostered an exchange of ideas through the *NCORED Network News*. In the next program year we will increase our focus on developing the Standards outcome statement and foster collaboration with state committees of color.

A major goal was the dissemination of the Standards. In a nine-month period the Standards were presented in several venues in United States, Ghana, and Cape Town, South Africa, to approximately 1,000 social workers, health care professionals, students, and volunteers. The requests are exceeding our capacity to respond.

A related goal was to expand the number of trainers to achieve the ultimate objective of providing trainers for at least each chapter in the continental United States. The initial audience would be individuals who are experienced trainers or who have cultural competence expertise. Also targeted are the presidents and executive directors who volunteered to be trainers at the NASW Annual Leadership Training on the Standards.

NCORED's training materials are being collected and critiqued. They will become a part of a compendium that is being prepared by the Curriculum Development Subcommittee. This group is responsible for developing a format to provide some consistency in the interpretation of the standards and designing sample experiential exercises, lectures, and pre-post questionnaires.

In order to refine the materials and train trainers, funds are required. A concept paper has been written as a first step in grant preparation. A potential source is a workforce-training grant to reduce racial and ethnic disparities.

Developing outcome statements is a major goal, which has not been addressed to date. The target date for completion is March 2003.

We completed the second edition of *NCORED Network News*, an annual publication mailed to NASW members of color. It is the major vehicle of communication with our constituents. In response to reader suggestions, practice articles by and about people of color and an emphasis on students are some new features in this issue. We relish feedback on what you find interesting to read. Share your needs, interests, or concerns by contacting your Caucus Chair listed on the last page of this newsletter or the NCORED Chair at claras@ameritech.net. ■

THE AFTERMATH

Clara S. Simmons

Forever etched in our memory is the destruction of the World Trade Towers in New York, damage to a wing of the Pentagon in Washington, DC, the heroism and now immortal phrase “let’s roll” of airline passengers who crashed in Pennsylvania. September 11, 2001, changed our lives. We became fearful, realizing our vulnerability. There was a surge of patriotism and a desire to help the 9/11 victims. Also unleashed were heinous acts against people perceived to be the enemy. Mosques were vandalized. Brown people, women with veils, men with beards were threatened. People who looked a certain way were detained by law enforcers.

The eruption of violence brought flashbacks to many people of color who had experienced racist attacks—African Americans recalled the “lynchings”; Japanese Americans recalled the “internment.” The fear of terrorist attacks made many people feel racial profiling was a necessary modus operandi for national security. Alternative views were challenged as unpatriotic. Major newspapers were ripe with letters to the editor admonishing people of color who see racial profiling as a discriminatory practice. Racial

profiling, the way a person looks, cannot be the sole factor used by law enforcers in discharging their duties. We must be vigilant in responding to the various ways that discriminatory practices emerge.

The aftermath of 9/11 heightened our awareness of many unsettling issues. NCORED joined the International Committee and the Peace, Social, and Economic Justice Committee to express our joint concerns and publicize the NASW position. The NASW Board of Directors accepted the position statement of our INP Coalition in January 2002. In the website article “September 11, 2001: Terrorism and Fear, It’s Time to Rebuild and Deal with the Aftermath,” (www.socialworkers.org/pressroom/events/terror/healing.asp) we wrote:

“Americans should refrain from discriminating against people who share a religion or an ethnic makeup with those who are identified as terrorists. In rooting out the causes of violence against the United States, it would be tragic if we harm or turn against individuals or groups solely because of their apparent similarity to known terrorists.

“The NASW INP Coalition draws on what is the best of the American belief system and encourages other social workers to do the same. As Americans, we respect the rights and freedoms encompassed in the U.S. Constitution. As a profession, we are committed to working toward the furtherance of global peace and social justice and advocating for people who are vulnerable, abused, and unable to speak for themselves. As social workers, we are committed to upholding the standards of our profession. We care for our families, our communities, our nation, and the world.

“We support reasonable security measures to protect the United States from further attacks and the loss of innocent lives. However, we protest the violation of human rights and civil liberties of any people.”

In this issue of the *NCORED Network News* other views about the 9/11 aftermath are expressed through two poems, *A Story from the Heart* and *Who Will Remember Them?*, and the article *Pacific Islander Americans and 9/11*. ■

WHO WILL REMEMBER THEM?

Esperanza Martell

9/18/01¹

And then there are the ones with no name
The faceless ones
The many brown people
The ones without papers
Without dental records
Without family here
The workers of the underground economy
The homeless
The shadow people of New York
From here, from there, from every part of the world
The ones who walk the streets of this city in fear that
they will be
discovered
Imprisoned, tortured, deported
Living their lives in anonymity
All like the rest of the disappeared on that day
Immersed in one way or another in the capitalist dust
cloud of destruction
Like the rest of them, in that moment believing in the
illusion of the
American dream
A dream that kills, maims, distorting all that is good
And in deep unbelievable ways hurting all of us
There are no pictures for them
There are no flowers for them
There are no candles for them
And their names will never show up on any memorial
But they died just like everyone else
And can die again tomorrow
In a tomorrow of injustice, hate, despair
Or one of light, life, love, and justice
Who will remember them?
I light a candle of peace, for them, for me
To give light for eternity
With a dream of peace in my lifetime
I will remember them
And the many who have fallen in our worldwide
walk for peace

¿QUIÉN LOS RECORDARÁ?

Esperanza Martell

9/18/01

Y entonces están los que no tienen nombres
Los sin rostros
Toda la gente de color
Los que no tienen documentos
Ni archivos dentales
Sin familia aquí
Los que trabajan en la economía subterránea
Los desamparados
La gente en las sombras de Nueva York
De aquí, de allá, de todas partes del mundo
Los que caminan las calles de esta ciudad
Con el temor de ser descubiertos
Encarcelados, torturados, deportados
Viviendo sus vidas en el anonimato
Todos como el resto de los desaparecidos aquel día
Sumergidos de una forma u otra en la nube de polvo
capitalista de destrucción
Como el resto de ellos en aquel momento,
creyendo en la ilusión del sueño americano
Una ilusión que mata, mutila, destorcionando todo lo
que es bueno
Y lastimándonos a todos de formas profundas e
increíbles
Para ellos no hay retratos
Para ellos no hay flores
Para ellos no hay velas
Y sus nombres nunca aparecerán en ningún memorial
Pero ellos murieron como todos los demás
Y pueden morir otra vez mañana
En un mañana de injusticia, odio, desesperanza
O uno de luz, vida, amor y justicia
¿Quién los recordará?
Yo enciendo una vela de paz para ellos, para mí
Para que dé luz por la eternidad
Con un sueño de paz en mi vida
Yo los recordaré
Y a los muchos que han caído en nuestra caminata
mundial por la paz

Translated by Susana Cabañas ■

¹ *Esperanza Martell is a Puerto Rican social worker in New York.*

PACIFIC ISLANDER AMERICANS AND 9/11

*Halaevalu O. Vakalahi
Lattisha Lei Wallace*

No matter who you are or where you come from, your life has and will continue to be impacted by the tragedy that took place on September 11, 2001. Although the impacts of this event vary, the United States has placed certain individuals and groups under a microscope. One of the groups being significantly affected by this tragedy, in both abrupt and subtle ways, is Pacific Islander Americans, which includes people from Polynesia, Melanesia, and Micronesia who are either recent or longtime immigrants to the United States. Because they come from many islands and diverse cultures in the South Pacific, implying a generalized impact of 9/11 on these people may be misleading; nonetheless, a few reflections are briefly offered here.

In order to fully understand the immediate impacts of 9/11 on Pacific Islander Americans, these people must be critically analyzed in the context of the complexity of historical and cultural experiences of colonization, immigration, and oppression. Experiences of Pacific Islander Americans with colonization and immigration as mechanisms for oppression carry throughout their history from generation to generation, manifested in the practice of marginalization, blocked access to resources, and denial and violation of basic human rights. Grounded on such historical and cultural experiences are complex and complicated immediate impacts of 9/11 on macro, mezzo, and micro levels which are both negative and positive in nature. For instance, racial profiling, racial discrimination, and differential treatment of Pacific Islander Americans, often immigrants and lacking linguistic expertise, in institutions (i.e., employment, education, and social welfare) have become daily realities. Systemic barriers are abundant and magnified as people of color are stratified into minority groups, with Pacific Islander Americans at the bottom of the spectrum having very little sociopolitical power, particularly after 9/11, and leaving them to compete for survival among themselves as minority groups. Because Pacific Islander Americans are stratified at the bottom of U.S. society and behind in achievement of resources compared to other populations, their marginalization has significant damaging effects on

the bio-psycho-social and spiritual dimensions of the self. Although marginalization is often very subtle and thus difficult to identify and eliminate, Pacific Islander Americans tend to be marginalized primarily in economics and social supports. Pacific Islander Americans are often the last to be hired, thus they are first to be fired. Nowadays, Pacific Islander families are distressed as resources become scarce. Pacific Islander mothers are being required to work to supplement household income, which has had negative implications for child welfare. Furthermore, there's an increasing number of Pacific Islander Americans involved in the child welfare and criminal justice systems as a result of social problems, such as substance abuse, family violence, and criminal activity (Fong & Furuto, 2001).

In spite of the challenges of 9/11, the resilience of Pacific Islanders as a buffer has proven advantageous. In Pacific Islander communities in Hawaii, this tragedy has brought families and communities closer together and has strengthened cultural identity, especially among the young. In an article written by Mary Kaye Ritz (2002) in the *Honolulu Advertiser*, high school students on the island of Oahu shared their outlook for their futures and dreams. Emerging themes among students include their realistic yet positive outlook on the future, their desire to remain in Hawaii close to family and culture, and their energetic willingness to contribute to the local communities' safety and protection. These students are well aware of the negative impacts of 9/11 on their families' economic status, yet many of them are committed to working in fire departments and law enforcement agencies as a way of contributing to the betterment of their communities.

Furthermore, this event has strengthened informal networking and personal responsibilities among members of the Pacific Islander community. For example, Pacific Islanders on the North Shore of the island of Oahu are utilizing their skills in growing crops, fruits, and vegetables and weaving handicrafts to sell as ways to supplement their household incomes. On two Saturdays a month, the local Kahuku Hospital sponsors a farmers' market in which community members sell their products at very affordable prices, or barter with other community members. From personal experiences, the farmers' market provides not only monetary resources but also opportunities for rejuvenation of the mind

and spirit through community members gathering together, “talking story,” relaxing to music, and seeing old friends and family members. As documented in the research, personal spirituality, high family bonding, attachment, commitment, community harmony, and promotion of positive values and attitudes are protective factors for social problems (Hawkins, Catalano, & Miller, 1992). Unfortunately, in spite of its initial success, the financial benefit of the farmers’ market has become limited because of overwhelming community needs and limited funding as a result of 9/11. Even with scarce resources, the local hospital continues to sponsor the farmer’s market because it provides some benefits at some levels to the community that it serves.

As stated earlier, for Pacific Islander Americans and other ethnic minority groups, 9/11 has brought about both bitter and sweet experiences of differential treatment and marginalization as well as strengthening cultural identity and community ties. As experts in prevention and intervention, group work, administration, policy, and research, social workers have a critical role in advocating on behalf of and partnering with Pacific Islander Americans and other groups in the fight for social, economic, and political justice in association with 9/11 and other tragedies occurring in the United States. ■

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- Halaevalu O. Vakalahi, PhD**, is a member of the National Committee of Racial and Ethnic Diversity. She is an Assistant Professor at Brigham Young University-Hawaii, with areas of interest including policy, juvenile delinquency, and adolescent substance abuse among Pacific Islanders.
- Lattisha Lei Wallace, BA**, is a graduate of Brigham Young University-Hawaii, with areas of interest including law and Pacific Islander issues.

A STORY FROM THE HEART

A Native American grandfather was talking to his grandson about how he felt about the tragedy on Sept. 11th.

He said, “I feel as if I have two wolves fighting in my heart.

One wolf is the vengeful, angry, violent one.

The other wolf is the loving, compassionate one.”

The grandson asked him, “Which wolf will win the fight in your heart?”

The grandfather answered, “The one I feed.” ■

AMERICAN INDIAN CAUCUS SALUTES AWARDEES

Hilary Weaver, Chair

The American Indian Caucus has not met since the last newsletter; however, members of the caucus have been engaged in various other NASW projects. Two are on the panel of the Consuelo W. Gosnell Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship is awarded to 10 MSW students that have demonstrated a commitment to working with Latinos and/or Native Americans. This year’s recipients are doing terrific work. The caucus is delighted to feature three of the Native American awardees: Vanesscia Lynn Bates, Dawn C. Phillips, and Marquita Rose Thompson. ■

CONSUELO W. GOSNELL MEMORIAL MSW SCHOLARS

Vanesscia Lynn Bates

Ms. Bates is a full-time, first year MSW student enrolled in the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University, St. Louis. She received her Bachelor of Social Work degree from Arizona State University. A Navajo, raised by her great-aunt on the Navajo Reservation, she was fortunate to work with a skilled and compassionate social worker that helped her with many personal issues. She believes there is an increasing need for more American Indian professionals in social work. Ms. Bates has worked as a Residential Treatment Specialist in a group home for developmentally disabled clients; and she completed her undergraduate field placement at the Salt River Pima–Maricopa

Indian Community Social Services as a Case Manager Intern. Currently, Ms. Bates is working as an Intern for the White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges and Universities in Washington, DC. She plans to focus her career on designing and implementing programs and public policies that are consistent with American Indian customs, lifestyles, and traditions.

Dawn C. Phillips

Ms. Phillips is a part-time, second year MSW student enrolled in the graduate program in the School of Social Work, the State University of New York at Buffalo. She completed the required core courses for a Bachelor of Art’s degree in the Social Sciences Interdisciplinary Program with a concentration in Health and Human Services/Community Mental Health and was part of the first class accepted into the new graduate BA/MSW program at the University of Buffalo. Ms. Phillips is a mature student who never gave up her dream of finishing her education and working as a social worker. For 14 years she juggled the demands of raising children, working in a secretarial position at the University of Buffalo that progressed into an Administrative Assistant position, and attending school part-time. In September 2001 she began working as Prevention Case Manager at the Native American Community Services (NACS) Agency—a nonprofit agency that services the needs of the urban Native American community in Buffalo and Niagara Falls, NY. As a member of the Six Nations and growing up on the Tuscarora Indian Reservation, she has a background that enables her to work effectively with other Native Americans. Ms. Phillips will complete her degree in May 2003.

Marquita Rose Thompson

Ms. Thompson is a part-time, second year MSW student enrolled in the Master of Social Work Program at the University of Washington, Seattle, WA. Now in her mid-40s, she began her college-level study after raising her two children. She earned an Associate of Arts degree at Peninsula College in Port Angeles, WA; and a Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences, graduating Magna Cum Laude, as a distance student at Washington State University, Seattle, WA. Although she is not an enrolled member of a Native American tribe, she grew up playing with many Native American cousins and has an affinity with Native Americans. She is doing her foundation practicum at the Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe. Her career goal is to work in a disadvantaged area of the United States among indigenous peoples. ■

ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER CAUCUS

MESSAGE FROM THE API CAUCUS PRESIDENT

Sharlene C.L. Furuto

Ni hau and Aloha to All! Much has been happening lately: 9/11 was a defining crisis for us all, and many effects continue to impact us as consumers, practitioners, and educators; recent reports from the Census 2000 help us further identify APIs and our needs; our own APIs involved in NASW committees and commissions assure that our voice is heard at the decision-making table; the Delegate Assembly is the structure to govern our professional association; and we must always be open to professional development.

I invite you to share with me your thoughts, recommendations, and complaints so that we may collaborate to move the social work profession forward. Keep the spirit of API sparking in your professional and personal endeavors! ■

Sharlene C.L. Furuto,
NASW API Caucus President
furutos@byuh.edu

work phone: (808) 293-3838

work fax: (808) 293-3448

mailing address:

Brigham Young University–Hawaii Box 1923

Laie, HI 96761

APIS ARE GROWING, MIXING, AND MOVING

Asian and Pacific Islander Population Is Growing and Moving!

In February 2002, the U.S. Census 2000 released the following statistics in *The Asian Population: 2000*—11.9 million or 4.2% of the U.S. total population of 281.4 million were Asian and 874,000 or 0.3% were Pacific Islanders! For the first time, respondents were able to indicate whether they were one race or Asian group alone or more than one. Of the Asian population, 10.2 million or 3.6% reported only Asian and 1.7 million people or 0.6% reported Asian as well as one or more other races. The Census questionnaire allowed respondents to select one or more races from the following: White; Black, African American, or Negro; American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian Indian; Chinese; Filipino; Japanese; Korean; Vietnamese; Other Asian (with boxes to print the race); Native Hawaiian; Guamanian or Chamorro; Samoan; Other Pacific Islander (with boxes to print the race); and Some Other race (with boxes to print the race).

API Are Mixing with Other Races and Asian Groups!

Fifty-two percent of Asians who were more than one race indicated they were Asian and White. Japanese were the most likely to be of two or more races (31%), and Vietnamese were the least likely (8.3%). Chinese was the largest Asian group in the United States—2.3 million were Chinese alone and 0.4 million were Chinese and at least one other race or Asian group. Filipinos numbered 2.4 million—1.9 million reported Filipino alone and 0.5 million reported Filipino in combination with one or more other races or Asian groups. Asian Indian numbered 1.7 million alone with an additional 0.2 million Asian Indian in combination with one or more other races or Asian groups.

Where Do API Really Live?

Fifty-one percent of the Asian population lived in only three states: California (4.2 million), New York (1.2 million), and Hawaii (0.7 million). The 10 places of 100,000 or more population with the highest percentage of Asians were: Honolulu, Hawaii (68%),

and the remainder were in California—Daly City (54%), Fremont (40%), Sunnyvale (34%), San Francisco (33%); Irvine and Garden Grove (32% each), Santa Clara and Torrance (31% each), and San Jose (29%).

Our Pacific Islander Population

Of the total 874,000 Pacific Islanders, 399,000 people or 0.1% reported only Pacific Islander and 476,000 people or 0.2% reported Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander as well as one or more other races. Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander refers to people with origins from Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands. The most common combinations of races were Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander *and* Asian (29%), Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander *and* White (24%), and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander *and* White *and* Asian (19%). Of all races, the Pacific Islander population had a much higher proportion of respondents reporting more than one race. Also, it was the only race where the number of respondents reporting two or more races was higher than the number reporting a single race!

Pacific Islanders Live Where?

Seventy-three percent of the Pacific Islander population lived in the West. Fifty-eight percent of the Pacific Islander population lived in just two states, Hawaii and California. The Pacific Islander population exceeded the U.S. level of 0.3% of the total population in seven western states: Hawaii (23%), Utah (1.0%), Alaska (0.9%), Nevada (0.8%), Washington (0.7%), and Oregon (0.5%). Pacific Islanders are spreading across the United States. In 1990, Pacific Islanders enumerated in Hawaii represented 44% of all Pacific Islanders, but by 2000 the proportion declined to 32%. Likewise, in California Pacific Islanders represented 30% in 1990 but declined to 25% in 2000. Of all places in the United States with 100,000 or more population, Honolulu had the largest number of Pacific Islanders with 58,000. New York, Los Angeles, and San Diego each had Pacific Islander populations between 10,000 and 20,000.

So What?

What are the implications for a multirace population on the move in social work practice and policy for you? Your state? The United States? ■

APIS IN NASW LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

The Asian Pacific Islander population is also moving and shaking NASW in a variety of positions: Ivy Mok—the national Board of Directors and Awards Committee; Muriel Yu—Texas Chapter President and Council on Social Work Education Asian American Social Work Educators Association President; Jeanette Matsumoto—National Committee on Nominations and Leadership Region XII Representative, Affirmative Action Task Force, and NCOWI; John Tomoso—Professional Development and Advocacy Committee; Nelson Kin-Man Wong—alternate on the National Committee on Nominations and Leadership Region XII; Valli Kalei Kanuha—Social Work Editorial Board; Martha Ozawa—Encyclopedia Update Committee; Sharon Otagaki and Elise Young—Competence Certification Commission; and there are others!

In addition, the following APIs are NASW chapter presidents: Lisa Natividad—Guam, Jeffrey Jue—California, and Sharon Otagaki—Hawaii; and executive directors: Debbie Shimizu—Hawaii, Janlee Wong—California, and Sister Trinie Pangelian—Guam. Contact these above-mentioned folks and others with your input for your voice to be heard at the national office!

KEN LEE—KNEE/WHITTMAN LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENT

Our most recently nationally honored API member is Ken Lee, well-deserved recipient of the prestigious Knee/Wittman Lifetime Achievement Award! Congratulations to Ken, who is, among other positions, a former Hawaii Chapter president and national Board member, and the highlighted example of so many others whose stellar example and leadership in the social work profession make us feel proud! ■

COMMUNICATING WITH E-TECH

This year, with no national or regional NASW conference, we APIs will have minimal opportunity to discuss common issues and concerns face to face. What's been on your mind lately? What have you observed about services to our clients/ourselves? What would you like to discuss? Contact me (see above) and let's dialog! Is there interest in a chat room? Real-time dialog? ■

SOVEREIGNTY FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

As APIs, we need to consider some policies coming to the Delegate Assembly floor. The Hawaii Chapter, for example, is proposing a new policy regarding Sovereignty and the Health of Indigenous People. Essentially this policy states that the Alaskan Natives, American Samoans, Chamorro, First Nations People, Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians), and Taino Indians are all indigenous people of the United States, its territories, and commonwealths. Additionally, these cultures have all been colonized in their own lands—exploited and dominated economically and/or politically by another country—and have lost their sovereignty.

This new policy statement proposes not only that sovereignty is of a political, governmental, and/or economic concern but also includes a loss of self-determination, disenfranchisement, and devastating spiritual, mental, and physical health for indigenous people. Social workers must recognize that the effects of colonization on indigenous people have resulted in the loss of ancestral lands, the right to self-governance and self-determination, and extreme loss of the basic human right to health in mind, body, and spirit. NASW supports efforts of all indigenous peoples colonized by the United States toward sovereignty and to gain and sustain the physical, emotional, and spiritual health of these people. How do you feel about sovereignty?

Other policies of interest to APIs to be discussed at the Delegate Assembly are cultural competence in the social work profession; racism; and immigrants and refugees. See your state Delegate for a copy of these policies and provide feedback whether to leave them as is or revise. ■

BIRACIAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTION

Heather Sakai

The demographic explosion of biracial persons in the United States today has spawned a growing interest in this population. “The number of children in interracial families grew from less than one-half million in 1970 to roughly 2 million 20 years later” (Rodriquez, 2000). With these growing numbers there has emerged a particular interest in issues surrounding the development of biracial identity, finding that children from dual backgrounds must establish a dual identity from the very start of their lives (Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995). In the preschool years, children begin to recognize racial dissonance, or “an initial awareness of differentness . . . between self-perceptions and others’ perceptions of them” (Okun, 1996, p. 245). The biracial child receives special attention from others with questions like, “What are you?” or comments like, “People who are mixed are so attractive.” Biracial individuals often construe these comments as representative of negative attention. They feel stripped of the ability to form a personal identity and focus instead on their physical appearance (Okun, 1996). A study by Kich (1992) found that Japanese/White biracial children felt particularly scrutinized by those asking about their racial background (as cited in Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995).

Dual background impacts every stage of an individual's development—from the development of self-esteem during the early school stage to maintaining confidence in old age. The unique challenges biracial individuals face are scattered throughout the life cycle. Some examples include racism directed at one or the other racial group of their heritage, automatic entrance into interracial relationships and facing the related stress, and raising multiracial children in a society that is not always welcoming. Each challenge causes the individual to face both external and internal battles, complicating the already complex normal pattern of development. As such, it is an automatic social work practice issue.

Biracial identity development theory is essential for understanding clients with mixed heritages. It is essential to a social worker's knowledge base and its practice implications are profound. Once educated on

this theory, social workers will be better able to treat biracial clients and their families. Social workers should recognize the complex nature of biracial identity and consequently understand the associated issues with which the individual must deal. Because biracial identity is a large part of most individuals' perceptions of themselves and of the world, clinicians must be aware of various conflicts and issues these clients will inevitably carry with them into the counseling session. For example, social workers practicing individual therapy with a biracial individual in early adulthood must understand the complexities involved in choosing, and then maintaining, interracial relationships. Appreciating biracial identity development theory will also allow the social worker to keep the client on a "healthy" track to identity formation, also allowing for racial ambiguity or complete disregard for identity progression from time to time. The clinician might also wish to share current theory with the clients so as to support them throughout the course of their growth.

Social workers must provide for clients an open forum for discussion about their biracial identity for themselves and as society perceives it. Biracial individuals are often spoken to in regard to their dual background, but they rarely have the opportunity to process their own feelings and reactions. These individuals often receive conflicting messages about identity from their parents, who are of a different racial/cultural background (Gibbs, 1998). The clinician's job is to offer a safe space for the clients to discuss their identity and their place in society, providing assurance and validation.

The clinician should help the clients distinguish themselves from sole identification with race (Gibbs, 1998). Because society's fascination with dual background/unique physical appearance often takes over, clients' self-esteem might be dependent on the reactions they receive and opinions they are given regarding their race. Thus, the individual has the tendency to identify only as a racial being. Instead, the social worker should promote the inner strengths of the individual so as to take the focus off physical appearances. This, in turn, suggests that therapy sessions must not be constantly dominated by discussions of race.

The family is thought to be crucial in helping the biracial individual with the stress associated with developing an identity. Knowing this, family and significant others, if at all possible, should be involved in treatment, "particularly so that one . . . can avoid being stigmatized as the family problem" (Gibbs, 1998). Important to investigate is the support or lack thereof by extended family members. Often, extended families sever ties (emotional or physical) when biracial children are born, affecting these individuals for the rest of their lives. Family sessions will allow discussion about the biracial client's development and the pressure placed upon him or her, either consciously or unconsciously, by the parents or others. By talking about the obvious racial issues playing themselves out within the home, the family will be better qualified to fight hurtful silence and possible isolation of the biracial individual. Also, families can assist biracial individuals by teaching them about each side of their heritage and, better yet, to value each side equally. ■

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Heather E. Sakai is a graduate student at Mandel School of Applied Social Science, Case Western Reserve University. Sakai, whose mother is white and father is Japanese, would love to see increased research about biracial children with Japanese heritage. She is also passionate about encouraging social workers to learn biracial identity development theory and develop the skills in working with biracial families. Sakai has received numerous honors and awards, including Case Western Reserve University’s Mental Health Research Fellow, Mandel Scholars Award, and Japanese American Citizen’s League scholarship. She is a featured writer for *Mavin*, a magazine that is targeted for biracial readership.

Black Caucus

SUMMARY OF BLACK CAUCUS STEERING COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Sophia Manning

Debra O’Neal, Co-Chairs

The Black Caucus continues to be a voice for African American social workers within the profession. The Black Caucus Steering Committee meets quarterly to discuss issues affecting the national association, our profession, our communities, and our clients. The Committee serves as a resource for information concerning the involvement of African Americans in the national association by informing Caucus members of upcoming leadership position nominations, as well as a resource for job announcements.

On July 13, 2001, the Steering Committee held its regular meeting at the National Office in Washington, DC. It was a very productive meeting, including comments by Dr. Betsy Clark, the new NASW Executive Director. In response to a request by Sophia Manning, Black Caucus Co-Chair, Terry Mizrahi, NASW President, provided us with a list of potential committee appointments that she planned to make. *This was an exciting opportunity for the Black Caucus.* Manning distributed the list to the Steering Committee and other African American caucus members with an interest in being considered for a committee appointment. Most of the members were interested in appointments to the following committees:

- Book Committee
- *Health & Social Work* Editorial Board
- *Social Work* Editorial Board
- *Social Work Research* Editorial Board
- Publications
- *Children & Schools* Editorial Board
- NCORED
- International Activities Committee
- Finance Committee
- National Committee on Inquiry
- Professional Development & Advocacy Committee
- Program Coordinating Committee
- Verne LaMarr Lyons Award Panel
- Investment Panel

Other members interested in serving on a national committee and the Caucus Steering Committee can contact Sophia Manning at Sophia.Manning@IHAS.com or Debra O'Neal at doneal@Quixnet.net.

The Caucus needs individuals willing to work on various projects to continue to strengthen the Caucus outreach to African American social workers within NASW. It will continue to host the Whitney Young Memorial Lecture and Tea even though there will not be an annual meeting of the association in 2002. The Whitney Young Memorial Lecture and Tea will be held November 8, 2002, at the Gallaudet University Kellogg Conference Center, Washington, DC. More information about time, cost, and CEUs will be published in *NASW News*. The Planning Committee is seeking members willing to work. Please contact Marianne Wood at (410) 706-8044 or e-mail: MWOOD@ssw.umaryland.edu.

The Black Caucus has developed a database of 441 names and addresses of individuals that responded to our newsletter solicitation for members interested in working on the Black Caucus Steering Committee. In addition, we have a database of 108 members who attended the 2000 NASW Conference, the Black Caucus Annual meeting, or the Whitney Young Lecture in 2001. We are looking at various ways to maximize this information to keep African American members of NASW informed about the Black Caucus. We are seeking a volunteer for the Steering Committee that can assist with this endeavor. Volunteers may contact the Black Caucus Co-Chairs.

Our Deepest Sympathy: We learned that the mother of our colleague Marianne Wood died on the morning of February 22, 2002. Her mother lived 90 years on this earth and was ready to go. She had been sick for many years. The family teamed together, sacrificed and cared for her in Marianne's sister's home. Death is difficult, but a part of life. Let's keep Marianne in our prayers and send your condolences.

Thanks for your support in past and present projects. We need your continued support to continue to strengthen the Caucus and its outreach to African American social workers within NASW. Contact one of the Caucus Co-Chairs for meetings dates and time. We look forward to hearing from you. ■

NEW FOR 2002-2003!

Marianne Wood

For the past two years the Black Caucus has been involved in two major initiatives. One has been gathering and compiling information on African Americans who have made contributions, including publications, to the field of social work. This included distributing a survey to members to assist us in identifying these important social workers. The other was developing a model for and providing assistance to local chapters to establish mentoring programs. This included developing materials and establishing two pilot programs, one for the Maryland NASW Chapter and one for Metro Washington NASW Chapter. Both of these initiatives are ongoing under the direction of Sondra Jackson, LCSW, and Marianne Wood, LCSW-C, respectively.

For 2002-2003, we are ready to embark upon a new initiative that is very timely, "The Economics of Social Work." According to the May 2002 issue of *NASW News*, the "social work profession needs to be more involved in the formulation of professional definitions and data collection by federal agencies." This would subsequently give "a more complete picture of who is practicing social work," and allow for planning by the profession in determining supply and demand. This is also related to salaries and how we "sell" ourselves as a profession. The Steering Committee agreed that this endeavor would definitely be of interest to our members. According to an article in the May 6, 2002, issue of *Time* magazine, social work is one of the jobs that has the largest projected growth for 2002-2010. This is a factor that we definitely need to capitalize on. Please join us as we embark on this exciting initiative for the next two years! ■

THE LEGACY OF ELMER P. MARTIN, PHD

Sophia Manning

“One of the great measures of a people is its culture, its artistic stature. Above all things, we boast that the only true altruistic contributions of America are Negro in origin. We boast of the culture of Ancient Africa.”

—Paul Robeson, *The Messenger*, October 1924

Some of you may be aware of Dr. Elmer P. Martin, whereas others may not. Dr. Martin was one of the great visionaries of our time. Dr. Martin was a man of a profound sense of pride and respect for his culture and heritage—for his people. Dr. Martin expired June 2001 at the young age of 54 years while traveling in Egypt on a research and information-gathering trip. His impact on the history and culture of Americans of African descent will outlive many generations.

Dr. Martin was a man of scholarly pursuit who was a full professor in the Department of Social Work and Mental Health at Morgan State University. Beginning in 1976, he taught courses on Black families, the Black community, social work research, and the politics of social work. Dr. Martin also held faculty positions at Morehouse College, Atlanta; Grambling College, LA; Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland; and Cleveland State University.

Dr. Martin also co-authored three books with his wife Dr. Joanne Martin: *Social Work and the Black Experience*; *The Helping Tradition in the Black Family and Community*; and *The Black Extended Family*. (These books may be purchased from NASW) He has also written a number of papers and articles. Dr. Martin was a member of the National Association of Social Workers, the National Association of Black Social Workers, the Alpha Delta Mu Honor Society, the Golden Key Honor Society, the African American Museum Association, and the American Association of Museums.

Dr. Elmer Martin and his wife worked together to display and tell Black people the truth about their history. He had the vision to “institutionalize” our history—meaning to build institutions that would capture the spirit of our slogans and preserve our history and culture. Without such institutions, he declared, “every generation is destined to have to start from scratch”—from this insight, a seed took root, out of which grew The Great Blacks in Wax Museum in Baltimore, MD. Dr. Martin stated, “Our goal is to establish a museum that is not only to have our contemporaries look upon the greatness of the men and women honored here, but also to tell their story so that each may serve as an example and inspiration to the generations unborn.” This museum is one of the most enlightening cultural displays of the history of Americans of African descent. After visiting and experiencing the museum, you will never be the same.

Dr. Martin will be missed, but his legacy lives on through the vision that continues to be fulfilled by his wife Dr. Joanne M. Martin. The NASW Black Caucus is planning an event in the near future to be held at The Great Blacks in Wax Museum to honor the legacy and support this important work. If you would like to be informed when this event will occur, please provide your e-mail address to: creative1020@usa.net. ■

NEED FOR REPARATIONS FOR AFRICAN PEOPLE IN AMERICA

Aminifu R. Harvey

“Power concedes nothing without a demand.”

—Frederick Douglass

Reparations muster up all sorts of responses from people—people of African descent and people of non-African descent alike. Recently, I read an op-ed article by a popular African American journalist stating African Americans should stop wasting their time with reparations and spend more time on confronting the issues that African Americans face on a daily basis—high rates of crime, poor schools, and AIDS. I have heard non-African Americans say that people of African descent should just be glad to be in America even if they were slaves, because of the underdevelopment and wars in Africa today. I am amazed at such comments. I look at Africa today and see a direct relationship with the invasion of Europeans into that continent and their continued presence and struggle to control and regulate these countries. We must realize that anywhere from five to 10 million Africans were kidnapped from the African continent. These people were skilled artisans, educated scientists, healers, farmers, and civic leaders. Over 400 years ago, Europeans kidnapped human capital from Africa, thereby tearing families, communities, and nations apart, and leaving children homeless, at the same time forcing these kidnapped Africans to use their skills and knowledge as free forced labor to build and enhance what we now call the United States of America.

It is important to recognize that every industry in the world was involved and benefited financially through the slave trade and later the plantation system. The feudal and plantation systems served as models of exploitation for the present prison industrial complex. The banking industry in this country is rooted in the slave trade and plantation slavery through the financing of the production of cotton, tobacco, and rice. The Brown Brothers who financed Brown University were shipbuilders, earning their fortune on the production of vessels that engaged in the trade of products produced by and through the plantation system including slaves. Just as in the slave trade, today the prison industrial complex benefits all industries and trades: the textile industry, the

architects, the gun industry, the food industry, lawyers, social workers, the security industry, and so forth. Building prisons develops poor, rural, mostly white communities, while having an incarcerated population of over 50% Black and Hispanic. Amazingly, the national average distance for a person to travel to visit someone in prison is 500 miles, hence continued family disruption.

Reparations seems to be viewed as only addressing the issue of slavery but it must be viewed on a continuum: from the invasion of Africa to the present oppression of Africans worldwide; from the colonization and division of the African continent for the wealth and political enhancement of European countries after both World Wars, to dividing nation states to create new countries to the present day racism in America. The oppression of the African to enhance the physical wealth and a false sense of superiority of the European did not end with the Emancipation Proclamation. The end of de jure slavery factored in de facto and de jure oppression. After the Civil War, many Blacks had to become sharecroppers as the local and federal governments did little to assist them in the transition from slavery to independence. The federal government did seek to reimburse plantation owners for their loss of property including the human beings called slaves.

The era after the Civil War ushered in the Black Codes and local, state, and federal laws refusing to allow Blacks to own property or own their own businesses or even travel. This was just a continuation of the attack on not only the physical being of the African in America but of his/her psyche. Just as in slavery, when for a slave to escape to freedom was classified as a psychological disorder, draptomania—best treated by whipping with a cat of nine tails—white supremacists tried to destroy the psychological cultural groupness of the African in America. Culture is the spiritual, psychological and healing mechanism employed by a group of people to enhance their own welfare. When a group of people do not have their cultural mechanisms by which to survive and prosper intact, they are open to despair and self-generating destructive behaviors.

When Blacks established their own businesses they were hung or their businesses were often burned down. In Tulsa, OK, there existed a section of the city of Black businesses so prosperous it was called Black

Wall Street. Through attacks sanctioned by the local government, the businesses were actually bombed by airplanes, similar to what happened in Philadelphia under the Goode administration during the 1980s. The intent was to keep Africans in America from being self-determinative. Until recently, some local and federal laws forbade Blacks from being employed in certain industries including the federal government, and even forbade loaning federal monies to Blacks for home ownership, the chief source of wealth enhancement for most Americans.

Many African Americans are no better off today in comparison to their white counterparts than they were right after the civil war. Why? Because historically there has been an intentional concentrated effort to exploit us. Thus, there must be an intentional effort to give what is due for years of free labor, reduced wages for labor, unpaid scientific experiments, and intentional efforts to thwart wealth enhancement and the positive welfare of people of African descent. It is critical to remember that just as wealth is generated and accumulated from one generation to the next the same holds for poverty.

The Black community has not decided on the exact format or structure for reparations but we are in agreement that reparations must minimally be financial and that the Black community must be self-determinative (a social work value) as to the implementation. We do know that reparations have to involve healing of the African spirit through better educational facilities (separate but equal was a joke) and programs, improved health care facilities, better housing, and a detailed program of business ownership to foster wealth enhancement. Ultimately, the funds will have to be employed to lift the spirit of a race of people that has been attacked at its core of humanism and to develop a psyche that operates for the benefit of its own existence, framed in an African-centered approach to reality that has always been grounded in the betterment of society and living in harmony with nature. Social workers call this an ecological approach.

For information on the topic of reparations, I would suggest reading: *Black Labor White Wealth: The Search for Economic Justice* by Claud Anderson, Ed.D.; *For Whites Only: How and Why America Became a Racist Nation* by Ambrose I. Lane, Sr.; and *The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks* by Randall Robinson.

Since 1989, Congressman John Conyers has sponsored Bill HR 40, calling for Congress to conduct congressional hearings and to create formal findings on the nature and impact of slavery and postslavery discrimination on African people in the United States. You can call your U.S. Senator and Representative requesting them to support this bill.

The National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N'COBRA) is sponsoring the Millions for Reparations March in Washington, DC, on August 17, 2002.

In closing, let me suggest that social work is the only profession that has a mandate in its Code of Ethics to support social and economic justice. Since NASW is the largest association of social workers, it seems natural to be the organization that should publicly support the reparations movement. ■

Aminifu R. Harvey, DSW, LCSW-C, is an Associate Professor at the School of Social Work, University of Maryland, Baltimore.

Latino Caucus

PUERTO RICAN FEMALE STUDENT AND TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION

Barbara A. Candales

The community college system serves as a potential resource to recruit minority social services majors into social work education. This article provides findings from a study entitled “Nuestras Historias (‘Our Stories’): Transformative Learning Process and Female Puerto Rican Community College Graduates” (Candales, 2000) which may be helpful to social work educators seeking to recruit the Puerto Rican community college graduate into BSW programs.

It is well-known that students from minority groups, especially African Americans and Latinos, have lower rates of college degree attainment at both the Associates of Arts and baccalaureate degree levels than majority group students. Minority students in college, and in particular Puerto Rican community college students, seldom have been studied closely (Rendon & Garza, 1996; Rivera-Batiz & Santiago, 1995).

There may be several reasons why Puerto Rican community college graduates often attach special significance to completing their degrees. These reasons may relate to how they have persevered and achieved despite the social, economic, and educational disparities that their ethnic group has historically encountered. For others, it may mean finally being able to escape the stereotype or label assigned to Puerto Ricans by the majority population. Finally, for some graduates the Associate of Arts degree can serve as the stepping-stone toward realizing a new goal—the four-year degree. By completing a two-year degree, these students know they have achieved a milestone that few Puerto Ricans in their community college peer groups have been able to achieve (Candales, 2000).

To fully appreciate the value to the individual Puerto Rican student of successfully completing a college education, it is important not only to understand the student perspective on the educational experience but also to determine whether and how this has been a transformative learning experience. In other words, has learning for these students led them to personal change and development and an altered sense of

future potential? Transformative learning may be formal or informal, structured or unstructured. Its central feature is that it engages the learner in dramatic change, in contrast to ordinary everyday learning or experience. When this kind of change occurs, it can have significant ramifications for the learner’s future. “Transformative learning shapes people; they are different afterward, in ways both they and others can recognize” (Clark, 1993, p. 47). Wildemeersch and Leirman’s (1988) “life world transformation model, (the model used in this study) can be understood as a frame of reference that gives meaning to the aspirations and actions of people” (p. 19). The model suggests that individuals can be partially transformed through “subjectively experienced challenges” (p.19) and it is these challenges that originate from personally based life events and experiences.

The 16 women in this study revealed a new sense of self, which included a more passionate sense of their Puerto Rican identity. The women felt they could now serve as role models for other Puerto Ricans looking toward education as the means to improve themselves. They talked about the inner changes that had enhanced their self-esteem, about their ability to surmount the numerous obstacles encountered, and how their cumulative accomplishments made them feel successful and proud. Their vision of the world around them had changed to include them as active participants. They no longer saw themselves as marginalized or on the outside looking in, but as having the capacity to create changes not only in their own lives but also in the lives of others like themselves. The women felt that they had achieved success at one level, but realized that they had more to achieve. For many this meant continuing with their education.

The women described being on a journey and “learning so much on the way.” They “found themselves”; they had become “more assertive, self-directed and motivated” women. Education had empowered them — “it had made a difference in how they felt, saw things, and did things.” They learned more about themselves, and in the process had learned about the world around them. (Candales, 2000)

Looking toward the future and establishing a new direction in life, or new goals to strive for, is a measure of a person’s transformation. These women

aspired for more in their lives despite the continuous barriers or obstacles they confronted along the way. Their future aspirations not only focused on themselves but also on the improved life circumstances for their children, families, and for the Puerto Rican community. They understood how important it was to help other Puerto Ricans realize the necessity of a solid education.

In conclusion, what is unique about these 16 women are their stories. These stories inform educators about the value and importance of their developing as Puerto Rican women, as well as their trials and tribulations of moving through the educational process with the hope of realizing their goal of completing a two-year degree. What is different about their stories are their expressions of success and empowerment as Puerto Rican women who emerged from one of the most disadvantaged minority groups (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1996) to complete a two-year college degree. ■

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Barbara A. Candales, PhD, is an Associate Professor and Director of the Social Work Program at Central Connecticut State University.

SPECIAL NEEDS OF OLDER LATINOS: ETHNIC AND CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

Blanca M. Ramos

The number of Latino elders is growing rapidly. According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, it is expected to rise over 500% and to reach 12.5 million by the year 2050 (Villa & Torres-Gil, 2001). As with other ethnic groups, this dramatic growth is primarily due to increased longevity and improved medical care. At the same time, more and more Latino elders are coming to the United States to reunite with their first-generation immigrant children. Latino elders are diverse and can trace their ethnic origins to various Latino subgroups. This diversity stems from historical, political, and geographic differences. Individual variations result from acculturation, migration experience, and sociodemographic differences. At the same time, certain social and cultural variables such as the Spanish language and minority status are shared.

In general, Latino elders face numerous stressors and oppressive conditions (Applewhite, 1998). Many have little or no income and live on a day-to-day basis. Some older Latinos have held jobs without retirement benefits. A few migrated late in life and were not able to accrue eligibility time or find employment in the United States. Latino elders often lack medical insurance and do not speak English well. As Latinos live longer, they also experience a sharp rise of chronic debilitating health conditions, particularly diabetes. In addition, they have high rates of cancer, arthritis, and heart disease (Aranda & Knight, 1997). As a result, many frail elderly Latinos are highly disabled, have acute medical needs, and require extensive long-term care (Delgado & Tennstedt, 1997).

Despite their multiple needs, Latino elders tend to underutilize formal services and to depend primarily on their families for care (Tennstedt & Chang, 1998). This preference is consistent with *familism* values, which are central to Latino identity and cherished by

Latinos of all national origins (Hurtado, 1995). Familism prescribes filial responsibility—the obligation to provide care within the family for aging family members. However, older Latinos cannot always rely on their families to effectively meet all their needs. Practicing filial responsibility in today's U.S. society is increasingly challenging for Latino families who like their elders often have few financial resources and live in oppressive environments (Purdy & Arguello, 1992). Also, providing care for highly disabled elders requires intense involvement and tangible assistance in day-to-day activities such as administering medication, monitoring blood glucose levels and dietary regimes, and transportation to health care professionals (Aranda & Knight, 1997).

Similarly, Latino elders may have fewer family members available to care for them. Their familial support systems may be smaller due to recent social trends, such as divorce, smaller families, and younger members leaving and relocating to pursue jobs and careers (McCallion, Janicki, & Grant-Griffin, 1997). For some elders, for whom family supports are not available at all, aging is a lonely experience. Their family members may live out of the area and even out of the country, or if in close proximity may not have the resources to provide assistance (Ramos, 2001).

Given the growth of the Latino elderly population and the precarious socioeconomic profile of its members, there is an urgent need for programs that address their many social disadvantages. For these programs to be effective, they must be culturally relevant and bring down current barriers to formal services. We must move beyond assuming Latino elders do not use services due to culturally bound prescriptions, or that they do not need services because they have access to extensive family networks. The NASW standards for cultural competence developed by NCORED (NASW, 2002) provide social workers with appropriate guidelines to respond effectively and respectfully to the special needs of older Latinos while paying close attention to relevant linguistic, ethnic, and cultural considerations. ■

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Blanca M. Ramos, PhD, CSW, is First Vice President of NASW Board of Directors and Assistant Professor, School of Social Welfare, State University of New

York at Albany. She is the recipient of numerous recognitions including the Albany Hispanic Community Service, New York State Office for the Aging, and Latina Leadership award.

RESOURCES

Music

BORDER–La Linea. CD by Latina singer–songwriter Lila Downs.

The Southern Poverty Law Center stated in the Spring 2002 (Number 21) issue of *Teaching Tolerance*: “Lila Downs knows what it costs to cross the border into the United States—and what it costs family members to stay behind. On her CD Border–La Linea, Downs’ expressive voice soars over and around pre-Columbian and Mexican folk instruments on 15 songs about the immigrant experience. Downs draws her lyrics from modern Mexican poets, ancient Indian myths and all-American Guthrie, turning them into multilingual music that is both political and poignant.”

Latino-Related Websites

Chicano/Latino Net: www.latino.sscnet.ucla.edu/.

Latino Issues Forum: www.lif.org/index.html.

Mexican American Legal Defense Fund: www.maldef.org.

National Alliance for Hispanic Health: www.hispanichealth.org.

National Interfaith Committee on Worker Justice: <http://www.nicwj.org/index.html>.

Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund: www.igc.org/IPR/index.htm.

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Bcandales@aol.com

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imoreda@aol.com

Saundra H. Starks
SaundraStarks@wku.edu

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ritatak@sfsu.edu

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