

The Realities of Poverty in Delaware

2005-2006



Published by the Membership of the Delaware Housing Coalition

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Mission

The mission of the Delaware Housing Coalition is to advocate for safe, decent, and affordable housing throughout the state. Our goal is to affect, impact, and shape the environment relating to housing. We are committed to fostering the growth and long-term flourishing of grass roots constituencies which develop their power; nurture their own problem-solvers and leaders; and work together to change the conditions which prevent them from obtaining safe, decent, and affordable housing.

We are very grateful for the support of the Citigroup Foundation. This publication was made possible by the Citigroup Summer Internship Program in 2005. Terri Hasson is Vice President for Community Affairs for Citicorp Trust Bank, fsb and Citibank Delaware, members of Citigroup.

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Introduction: Overlooked Realities

Ken Smith

During a period most of which has been described as “the longest peace-time expansion of the U.S. economy,” the poverty line for a family of four, expressed as an hourly wage has risen slightly from 1989 through 2003, going from \$6.09 (\$12,674) to \$9.04 (\$18,810). In the accompanying graph, a line describing the current state minimum wage of \$6.15 would run along at \$12,792, just grazing the top of the 1989 figure (although the minimum wage was not that high then) and progressively would lose ground to the 1999 and 2003 marks.

Even measured by such a modest threshold, the number of persons in poverty in Delaware during this period rose at an average rate of 900 a year. The number of people in poverty in the state increased by 12,000.

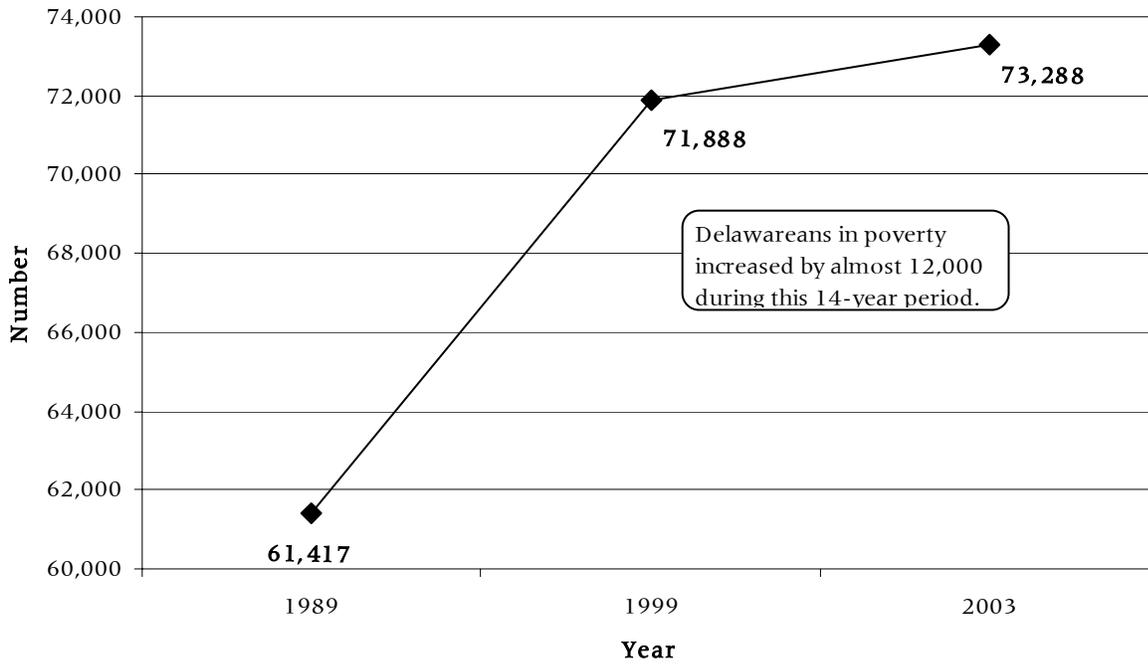
In 2003, when a full-time wage of \$9.04 still kept someone at the threshold of poverty for a family of four, the two-bedroom “housing wage” was \$14.06, the amount needed for a family to rent a fair market two-bedroom in Delaware (without paying more than 30% of that wage for housing). Today that housing wage stands at \$16.46, over two and a half times the minimum wage.

Some of the things which I have taken away from a reading of this publication include:

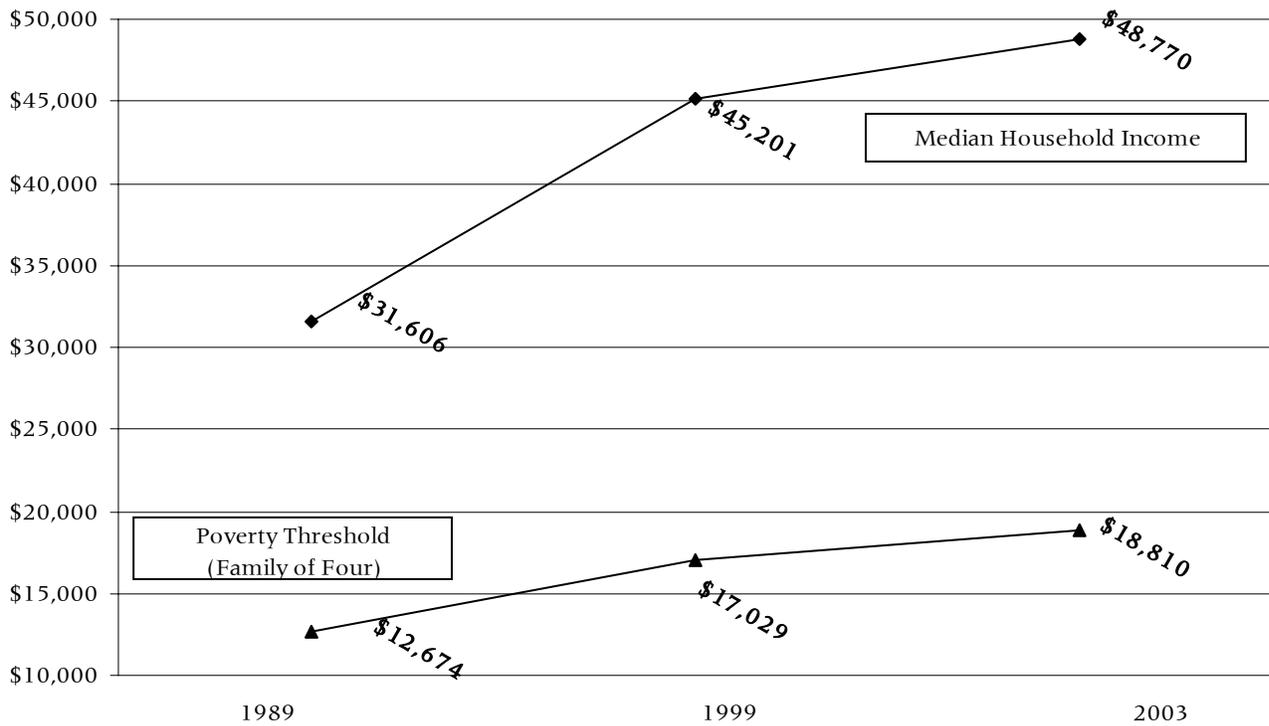
- **Delaware’s Rank:** The First State is among the top ten states for AIDS rates per 1000. It is the twelfth most expensive two-bedroom market in the country. Regrettably, there are other dubious achievements to be listed in this category.
- **Racial Disparities:** African Americans comprise 12% of the US population but 37% of those served in healthcare programs for homeless. In the nation’s prisons, 64% are people of color.
- **Privatization and Criminalization:** As our commitment to a basic level of social provision declines, we tend increasingly to characterize as aberrant some groups for which we previously offered social benevolence and the use of the “criminal justice” system rises sharply.
- **Structural Adjustment:** Going through our own form of *perestroika*, we in the West have seen white-collar workers, public housing tenants, and others sharing the fate of Third World countries no longer able to compete in the market and still have a minimally decent standard of living.
- **People’s Initiative:** The involvement of people, especially the poorest among us, in the affairs that directly affect their lives is a phenomenon to which government is constitutionally allergic. Despite rhetoric to the contrary, forms of participation in social processes tend to remain on the level of placation.
- **Distribution of Advantage:** This is still, albeit little admitted, a primary function of political-economic mechanisms and the managers of these mechanisms. While the all-pervasive “Market” is often given credit or blame, all economic mechanisms, just like all political ones, have managers. Abdicating to the “Market” is settling for having our lives managed by this class of functionaries.
- **Free Trade in Things But Not in People:** A bold, post-Cold War consolidation of the world political economy has been underway for some time that would claim an almost unqualified right of unimpeded commerce and investment across borders, a right given to corporate entities but denied to persons.
- **Our Collective Original Sins:** We still suffer – and how deeply! – from massive theft of land and labor, which is to say, wealth, with which we have not yet made an honest reckoning.
- **Solutions:** These are more plentiful and diverse than we think, if we are willing to re-think the roots of the problems themselves.

We have a disturbing and unusually tenacious ability to be distracted from bare facts, such as the misery and degradation of our fellow human beings. We can only read the contributions which follow with a mixture of gratitude and reawakening, as their words call us back to overlooked realities.

Persons in Poverty in Delaware, 1989 - 2003



Delaware Median Incomes and Poverty Thresholds (Family of Four), 1989 - 2003



The HIV/AIDS Epidemic in Delaware

Carissa Pleiss

Carol is a 43-year-old African American woman with four children. She found out before the birth of her fourth child that she is HIV positive. Life has not been easy for Carol. For the past three years, she has experienced the hardships of being a single, minority mother, living on the brink of poverty, who is infected with a life-altering disease.

She is not alone.

Scope of the HIV/AIDS Epidemic

According to recent HIV/AIDS Surveillance Data issued by the State of Delaware Division of Public Health, there are 2,986 individuals documented as living with HIV/AIDS in our state, with 2,153 persons residing in New Castle County. The Delaware HIV/AIDS Epidemiological Profile (EPI) indicates that the City of Wilmington has been acutely affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic, with nearly 72 percent of the state's infected people residing in zip codes 19801, 19802 and 19805. This study further states that Delaware consistently ranks among the top ten states for AIDS rate per 100,000 of population, with African Americans comprising two-thirds of the cases statewide.

National HIV and AIDS statistics published in the EPI Profile indicate the modes of HIV transport in both males and females.

In men, 55 percent contract HIV through sexual intercourse with men, 21 percent through injection drug use, 8 percent through men who have sex with men and inject drugs and 6 percent through heterosexual contact. In Delaware, 41 percent of HIV positive men contracted the disease by sexual intercourse with a man, 38 percent through injection drug use and 11 percent through heterosexual contact.

Nationally, 45 percent of women contracted HIV through heterosexual contact, 20 percent by injection drug use and 1 percent by a blood transfusion. The remaining 34 percent are related to other modes and cases with risk not identified. In Delaware, 50

percent of women infected with the HIV virus contracted it through heterosexual contact, 42 percent through injection drug use and 8 percent that was not reported or identified.

Delaware differs with the national average in that the rates of transmission through injection drug use are close to double the national average. African Americans are also disproportionately affected, with one in 50 blacks testing positive for HIV.

Carol's past housing experiences have been extremely unstable. "I've had some really hard times. I've lived with my children in a crack house, in a motel and in three shelters. I waited years and years on the Section 8 housing list and had my voucher revoked. I've been through a lot."

When she was homeless, Carol found that the 30-day limit that is enforced in most shelters in Delaware is not reasonable. "Other shelters in big cities like New York have no limit on how long you can stay. Thirty days is not a whole lot when you've got kids and no job and you're trying to survive."

No longer homeless, Carol works full-time as an administrative assistant while her children are in school and daycare. "The biggest problem with housing in this state is that there is simply not enough affordable housing for people like me who need it so desperately," says Carol. "I'm working now, but I'm barely making it. Some days my health isn't so good. I don't qualify for Section 8 anymore, but I want to provide my family with a place to live together."

Housing Needs of Persons Living with HIV/AIDS

As the administrator of federal Ryan White Title II funds used for HIV supportive services throughout the state, the Delaware HIV Consortium is a recognized leader in assessing the needs of and planning appropriate services for persons living with HIV/AIDS. In keeping with their mission "to eliminate the spread of HIV/AIDS and to create a seamless

continuum of care for all people infected and affected in Delaware”, the Delaware HIV Consortium is a recognized source of information on the array of services and programs available for persons living with this disease.

The Consortium’s 2003 Treatment Needs Assessment, a community planning tool that establishes priorities for funding and service enhancement, indicated that housing for people with HIV/AIDS in Delaware is a continual pressing issue. Focus group participants and key informants from all segments of the epidemic listed housing as a critical need. In fact, the Treatment Needs Assessment Subcommittee identified housing as a top priority, surpassed only by medical care, medication, and early intervention services. The 2003 Statewide Coordinated Statement of Need, which identifies current and future needs of Delawareans living with HIV/AIDS, includes a priority recommendation to “increase the availability of affordable housing for people living with HIV/AIDS”.

The Delaware HIV Consortium’s 2002 Strategic Plan included housing as a key area of development for the agency. The Plan stipulates that the Consortium assumes a leadership role in HIV/AIDS housing by evaluating housing needs and determining housing gaps for individuals living with HIV/AIDS. As part of this strategic goal, the Consortium has worked closely with the Delaware’s Homeless Planning Council, as well as the Consortium’s Treatment Needs Assessment Subcommittee on identifying gaps in housing services for people with HIV/AIDS.

With advances in treatment options, many individuals with HIV are living longer lives, creating an ongoing need for permanent, independent housing options for this population. Lack of decent, affordable housing can prevent HIV-positive persons from obtaining proper medical management and other needed supports. In spite of improved medical treatment, many persons with HIV/AIDS have been unable to return to the workforce, and often support themselves and their families on low fixed incomes. Securing decent, affordable housing is a perennial struggle for people with HIV/AIDS.

Carol will never forget the day she got her rental voucher. “I waited over two years on the waiting list and I couldn’t believe it was actually going to happen. I love my place! I can take the bus to the clinic, my case manager’s office, work, wherever I need to go.”

Rental Voucher Program

The Delaware HIV Consortium has worked diligently to increase the availability of housing for Delawareans with HIV/AIDS. Since 1997, the Consortium has operated Delaware’s only Rental Voucher Program (RVP) for persons living with HIV/AIDS to address the complex housing needs of this population. The majority of this program’s financial support comes from federal Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) grants. Federal Ryan White Title II dollars also support this program.

The Consortium designed the Rental Voucher Program with the knowledge that housing is crucial for the HIV/AIDS population where adherence to drug treatment regimens is rigorous and where permanent housing facilitates access to consistent medical care. The goal of the Consortium’s RVP is to support the implementation of housing opportunities for persons living with HIV/AIDS so that they are able to live with stability, dignity, and wellness.

Clients are referred to the program by HIV/AIDS case managers from the Delaware Divisions of Public Health and selected community-based organizations from around the state. Through their contact with case managers, clients access Ryan White funded supportive services such as: transportation, food programs, mental health and/or substance abuse counseling, and pharmacy assistance. Consortium housing staff members screen applications and place eligible clients on the program’s waiting lists. When a rental assistance voucher becomes available, a packet is mailed to the client who has a 60-day timeframe to find decent, affordable housing in the private rental market. All assisted units are inspected by a qualified housing inspector to verify that they meet HUD Housing Quality Standards. Once rental assistance begins, clients are required to meet regularly with their case managers throughout the course of their participation in the program in order to ensure access to Ryan White funded supportive services needed for their health and stability. Rental assistance clients are recertified on an annual basis.

DHC housing staff verifies income and housing expenses and adjusts the rental voucher amount accordingly. Clients are strongly encouraged to apply for all other subsidized housing programs for which they qualify in order to allow other eligible clients on the waiting lists to receive rental assistance. A detailed Provider Manual has been developed for this program and is continually updated with current income guidelines, HUD Fair Market Rents, and other pertinent information. This manual is distributed to all HIV/AIDS case management

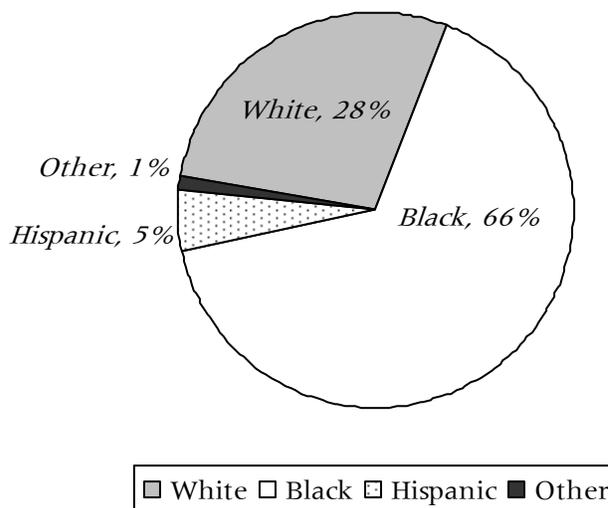
providers in the state. Guidelines have been created for the program to define eligibility, protect client confidentiality, describe program procedures, and list client responsibilities. There is an Advisory Panel consisting of housing program staff, HIV/AIDS case managers and grantors, which meets regularly to review and assess program progress and to discuss issues related to effective service delivery and community need.

Compelling evidence of the need for this rental assistance program lies in the fact that the waiting lists consistently contain over 200 households. These lists are compiled as HIV+ individuals apply for services through case management, are screened, and found to be eligible on the basis of HIV status and income. As of September 1, 2005, the statewide waiting lists numbered 244 households. The Wilmington waiting list contained 112 people with HIV/AIDS and their families. Of this number, 54 households have been on the list for a year or more. The waiting list for New Castle County (outside of the city limits) contained 65 individuals and their families. Of this number, 35 households have been on the waiting list for a year or more. These waiting list numbers have remained consistently high for the past few years, with close to 200 households in Wilmington and New Castle County combined. Downstate, there were 22 people on the waiting list for Kent County, with seven on the list for a year or more. In Sussex County, there were 45 people waiting, with 16 being on the list for one year or more.

In an effort to address the need for affordable housing and to decrease the waiting time for rental assistance, the Delaware HIV Consortium utilizes federal Ryan White funds to provide short-term rental assistance for clients on our housing program waiting lists. These funds provide rental assistance to eligible households for a period of up to 18 months, or until HOPWA funded rental assistance becomes available. This program provides \$211,430

“Time spent on the waiting list for HOPWA rental assistance vouchers averages two years.”

Distribution of Delaware AIDS cases by Race/Ethnicity, reported through 2004



Source: Delaware HIV/AIDS Epidemiologic Profile 2004. Delaware Dept. of Public Health

under its current contract, and serves an additional 25 to 30 households each month. Currently there are 165 households receiving rental assistance each month. The average amount of monthly rental assistance is \$450 per household.

For the most recent fiscal year ending June 30, 2005 (FY2005) the Consortium assisted 200 households, utilizing almost \$840,000 in federal HOPWA and Ryan White dollars for rental assistance vouchers. Income for the majority of households was extremely low, with 91% of assisted households earning no more than 30% of median adjusted income, 8% were low income, and 1% were moderate income. Additionally, 42% of active participants were female-headed households. The race/ethnicity breakdown of households receiving rental assistance was: 80% African American, 17% Caucasian, and 3% Multi-Racial/Hispanic ethnicity. During this timeframe, 148 households moved off the waiting lists and 120 households were added to these lists. At the beginning of the FY2005, the waiting lists numbered 303 eligible households. By year's end these numbers had decreased to 250 households. Time spent on the list averages two years.

Transition to Mainstream Affordable Housing Programs

While some rental assistance participants have left the program due to a move to independent housing or alternative subsidized housing programs, others have been incarcerated, have died, or have not complied with program rules. No matter the reason for departure from the program, it is clear that program turnover cannot keep up with the demand

for affordable rental housing. The Consortium estimates that an additional \$1 million would be needed annually to provide rental assistance for the 244 people on our statewide waiting lists.

With the challenges of reduced levels of federal funding coupled with long waiting lists, Consortium housing staff recommends that our clients explore mainstream affordable housing programs such as Section 8. The Consortium's 2005 Consumer Survey, which helps assess program effectiveness, shows that 39% of rental assistance households had applied to other affordable housing programs, although 61% reported that they had not done so for various reasons including: ineligibility, long waiting lists, and no knowledge of such programs. The Consortium's housing staff continues to impress upon HIV/AIDS case managers and housing program clients that they must explore other housing options. The Consortium has sponsored training sessions for case managers that focus on accessing mainstream affordable housing programs, with information sessions featuring Delaware's Section 8 providers. Many downstate case managers place their clients on Section 8 waiting lists and the Consortium's rental assistance program waiting list as part of the initial client intake and assessment process. This is because the downstate Section 8 programs continue to accept applications, unlike Wilmington and New Castle County Section 8 programs, which are likely to be closed to new applicants. In 2005, three downstate households transitioned from the Consortium's rental voucher pro-

gram to Section 8, compared with only one New Castle County household.

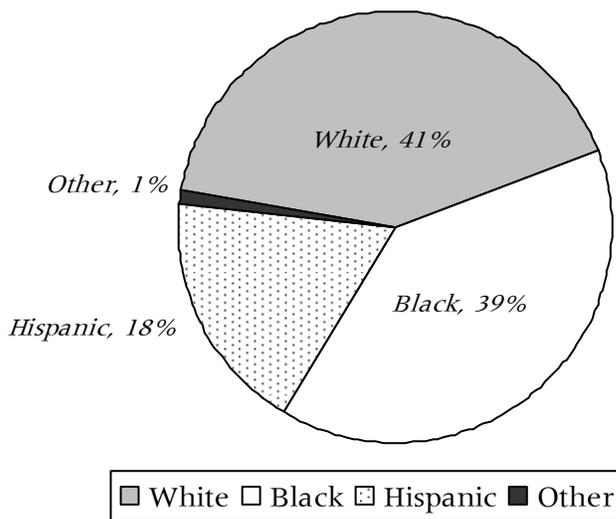
Program Evaluation

The Delaware HIV Consortium regularly evaluates our rental assistance program's effectiveness in meeting program goals of: achieving housing stability, reducing risks of homelessness and increasing access to care for persons with HIV/AIDS in Delaware. Our evaluation tool is a Consumer Survey that has been distributed biannually to active rental assistance households since 1999. The most recent survey was mailed in August 2005 and the response has been very good, with a 50% response rate. Survey results show that 65% of households had been homeless at some point prior to receiving rental assistance and 35% would be in danger of homelessness without this assistance. To measure housing stability, our program statistics show that 85% of assisted households remained in stable housing during the reporting period, by remaining compliant with rental assistance program policies. With regard to client access to care, 100% of responding households reported that they had recent contact with their case managers, primary health providers, and/or HIV health providers and that they were receiving supportive services such as transportation, food, nutrition programs and mental wellness counseling.

And Carol has utilized many of these programs firsthand. She describes her life experience as difficult, but much more manageable with the help of HIV housing programs and supportive services. She is so grateful for the help she received and could not have gotten where she is without the hard work of her case manager and other supportive service providers.

"I am now able to live a normal life and support myself because of the people who helped me. I'm putting my life back together and have my kids with me all under one roof. And I am so very thankful for that."

Distribution of National AIDS cases by Race/Ethnicity, reported through 2004



Source: Delaware HIV/AIDS Epidemiologic Profile 2004. Delaware Dept. of Public Health

Health and the Homeless

Judi Haberkorn

The concept of housing typically elicits images of a physical structure. Although that vision reflects reality, it does not provide a thorough description of the benefits of adequate housing. Housing, in relation to a person's health status is critical. Beyond a buffer from the elements of nature, the housing of present day enables a citizen to access some of life's necessities. Clean drinking water, a means of adequate sewage elimination, and safety from criminal acts, are just a few of the health benefits provided by adequate housing. An examination beyond the obvious benefits elicits items such as the benefit of an address when seeking employment; many of the forms required by an employer necessitate a home address. Employment in the United States is one of the few avenues to securing much-needed health insurance, without it citizens are greatly limited in accessing adequate health services. The relationship between housing and health is integral; this paper will examine the specific effects of homelessness on the health of marginalized populations.

The Scope and Severity of the Problem

Within the literature, there is an ongoing debate regarding any attempts to quantify the homeless population. For example, the U.S. Census Bureau, in its most recent census tracking, did not even attempt to count the homeless, rather there are statistics given on those individuals that live in emergency shelters or transitional living quarters. This paper will not add to the debate, the focus will rather be on the health realities that exist for the homeless in America.

The homeless have been identified as a population for the last 18 years with the establishment of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act. A significant section of that Act permitted for the establishment of health care services for the homeless; the current agency charged with the responsibility for those services is the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration. The federal funding provided to the states through the HRSA has continued to increase dramatically from its inception; in 1990 over \$35 million was appropriated to the states.

This figure has nearly *quadrupled* to a staggering \$137 million solely dedicated to programs that assist the homeless with health care needs (<http://bphc.hrsa.gov/hchirc/about/default.htm>, 2005)

The composition of people who receive the services from grantees is quite reflective of the disparity that exists between the majority and the marginalized in society. For example, although according to the U.S. Census of 2000 African Americans comprise only 12% of the U.S. population, they make up 37% of those served by the health care programs for the homeless. In addition, of those served in 2003, "... 71 percent, of homeless clients had no medical care resources", no insurance, no way to access care (<http://bphc.hrsa.gov/hchirc/about/default.htm>, 2005)

This lack of insurance leads to dire consequences. According to the American Medical Student Association, "the death rate of homeless persons is almost four times greater than that of the general population" (<http://www.amsa.org/programs/gpit/homeless.cfm> [AMSA], 2005) Also, "...among the urban homeless, 53% of the newly-reported cases of TB have been attributed to new primary infections... as compared to 10% of the reported cases in the general population" (AMSA, 2005, p. 4). Additional effects of a lack of housing are abundantly evident in the management of chronic diseases; "...diseases such as hypertension and diabetes...are almost impossible to control among the homeless" (AMSA, 2005, p. 4).

The adult population only describes a portion of the homeless population in America. According to the National Coalition for the Homeless, children make up "...approximately 39% of the homeless population" (<http://www.nationalhomeless.org/who.html>, 2004 p. 2). To grasp the severity of what it means to be a homeless child in America, studies such as one recently conducted in New York paint the bleak picture:

...61% of homeless children had not received their proper immunizations

Poverty Status in 2004								
	Less than 50% of Poverty Level Income	50 – 74% of Poverty Level Income	75 – 99% of Poverty Level Income	100 – 124% of Poverty Level Income	125 – 149% of Poverty Level Income	150 – 199% of Poverty Level Income	% Below 100% of Poverty level	% Below 200% of Poverty level
United States	16,231,729	9,749,604	11,180,177	12,679,033	12,402,805	26,116,078	13.06%	31.05%
Delaware	37,847	21,399	20,436	29,549	29,137	65,451	9.92%	25.39%

Source: 2004 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

(compared to 23% of all New York City two-year olds); 38% of homeless children in the City’s shelter system have asthma (an asthma rate *four* times that for all New York City children and the highest prevalence rate of any child population in the United States); and that homeless children suffer from middle ear infections at a rate that is 50% greater than the national average. (<http://www.nationalhomeless.org/health.html>, 2004).

Barriers to Health for the Homeless

Beyond the obvious lack of an adequate physical shelter from nature’s elements, homeless adults and children face innumerable barriers to achieving any semblance of health. The lack of proper diet, the inability to control the types of food that they ingest and little to no access to medications are all contributing factors to poor health status amongst the homeless. In addition to aforementioned, the vast majority of homeless are without health insurance, which therefore compels them to be relegated to the scarce resources of their respective communities; such as emergency rooms, free health clinics or state sponsored facilities (AMSA, 2005).

The providers of health services also face great

barriers when a homeless patient is encountered. One of the first lines of defense against infection or a worsening in condition is housing. The inability for a patient to get shelter hinders their ability to recover from their condition (<http://www.nationalhomeless.org/health.html>, 2004).

Delaware

Despite the fact that for over the last 10 years Delaware has experienced unprecedented growth in the gross state product as well as consistently falling below the national average for unemployment rates, the poverty rate in Delaware has increased during the decade of the 1990s (Kerrigan, 2000).

The face of poverty in Delaware is *disproportionately* one of a racial or ethnic minority, a female head of household, and a resident of the City of Wilmington. Although, not all of the problems reside in Wilmington; for example, “the child poverty rate in Kent and Sussex Counties has nearly doubled in recent years” (http://www.uwde.org/PublicationsAndMaterials/dcna_summary.pdf, [UWDE] 2004).

As stated earlier, those who are in poverty and/or homeless face incredible barriers to health. One of the most formidable barriers is a lack of access to appropriate care. Due to the fact that Delaware has a “...limited number of primary care providers and dentists who treat Medicaid clients” this only adds to an already challenging situation (UWDE, 2004). For instance, over a third of the clients served by the Food Bank of Delaware in 2001, reported having “... at least one household member in poor health” (<http://www.fbd.org/hungary.htm>, 2001).

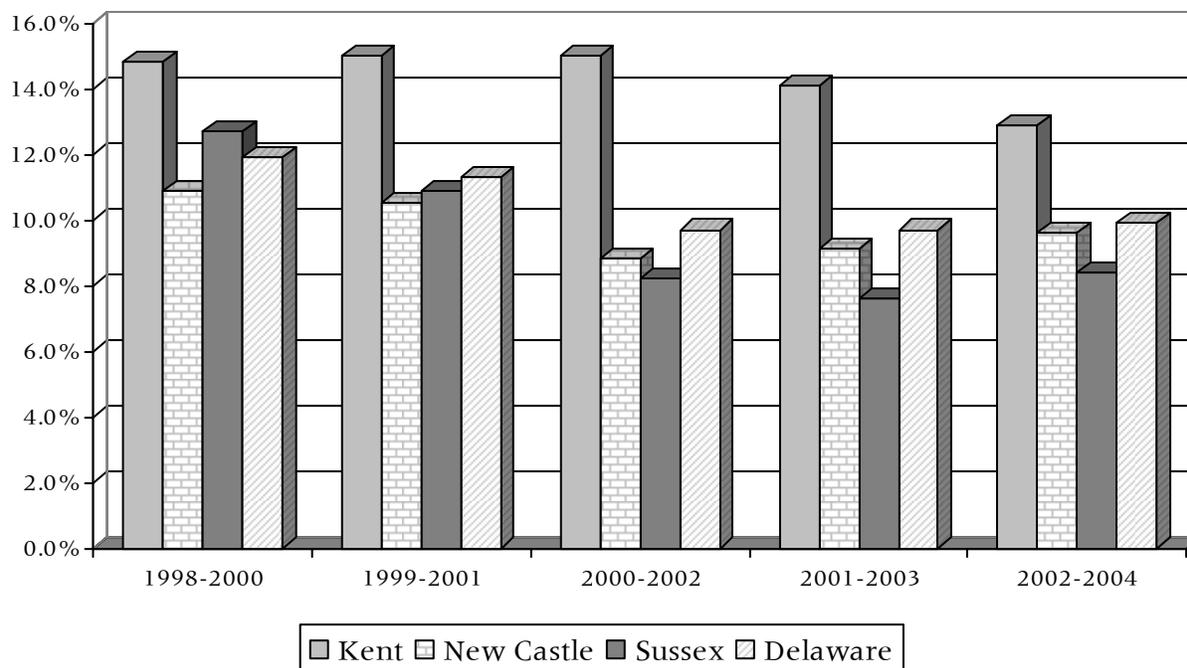
Conclusion

If the trends of the last few years are any indication of the future, the lives of those in poverty or worse yet, those who are homeless in Delaware are going to continue to face barriers to accessing affordable housing and by default at a disadvantage for positive health status. Table 2 outlines the median home price for the counties listed as well as the percentage increase since 2000. The figures are daunting and more so alarming for those who advocate for the

Delaware Homeless Population, 2000	
Statewide	1040
New Cast County (net Wilmington)	73
Wilmington	734
Kent	159
Sussex	74
<i>* Point-In Time Estimate</i>	
<i>Source: (Kerrigan, 2000)</i>	

	2005 Median Home Price	Percentage Increase since 2000
NCC	\$243,500	89%
Kent	\$208,000	81%
Sussex	\$284,600	117%
<i>Source: Delaware Housing Coalition, 2005</i>		

Percent of Population Without Health Insurance by County
1998-2004



Source: Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research, University of Delaware

needy. Although there may not be hard and fast statistics for the number of homeless in Delaware, there is enough evidence from those who serve the poor and homeless that their health is in jeopardy. Measures need to be taken as a community to address this grave health disparity.

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Homelessness in Delaware

January 2005 Point-In-Time Study

January 2005 Point-In-Time Study				
		County Breakdowns**		
	Statewide	New Castle	Kent	Sussex
Persons	1365	1028	168	117
HUD-Defined Homeless				
Sheltered	946	933	168	117
Unsheltered	35	35		
Hotel/Motel	62	10		
Doubled-Up	50	50		
Sheltered (Permanent Supportive Housing)	272			

Source: Homeless Planning Council of Delaware Point-in-Time Survey (January 24, 2005)
 ** A minimum of 52 persons were using motel vouchers on the night of January 24, 2005. The county of use for these vouchers was not reported.

August 2005 Point-In-Time Study

August 2005 Point-In-Time Study				
		County Breakdowns**		
	Statewide	New Castle	Kent	Sussex
Persons	1722	1182	193	227
HUD-Defined Homeless				
Sheltered	832	752	154	164
Unsheltered	162	136	11	15
Hotel/Motel	178	37	17	4
Drop-in Centers	183***	183***		
Doubled-Up	129	74	11	44
Sheltered (Permanent Supportive Housing)	238			

Source: Homeless Planning Council of Delaware Point-in-Time Survey (January 24, 2005)
 ** A minimum of 52 persons were using motel vouchers on the night of January 24, 2005. The county of use for these vouchers was not reported

Homeless Subpopulations

Homeless Subpopulation	January 2005			August 2005		
	Sheltered*	Unsheltered	Total	Sheltered*	Unsheltered	Total
Chronically Homeless	92**	21	113	157**	75	232
Seriously Mentally Ill	246	12	258	225	29	254
Chronic Substance Abuse	345	15	360	407	82	489
Persons with HIV/AIDS	60	7	67	92	38	130
Victims of Domestic Violence	35	5	40	90	16	106
Children in Families	347	8	355	301	6	307
Unaccompanied Youth	9	0	9	2	0	2

Source: Homeless Planning Council of Delaware Point-in-Time Surveys
 * Includes data from emergency shelters, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, motel/motel
 ** Does not include Permanent Supportive Housing

The Prison, Poverty and Homelessness Connections

Joseph M. Walls, A.A.S.

Prison policies too often result in poverty and homelessness for the families of Delaware's incarcerated citizens. While committing crimes is rightly condemned and punished by our communities, is it necessary to also condemn and punish the children of offenders?

What Crime Does to Families

Many offenders had spouses and children when they were arrested. Whether the offender resided within the home or was estranged from their family prior to being arrested, the support their family relied upon is denied from the day of arrest.

Many offenders' stories are similar to mine. I was arrested when I was 32 years old. I had lived with my wife (28 years old) and two small children (5 and 4 years old). We did not have an extravagant life style: we lived in a simple two-bedroom apartment, we drove a used car, we mostly ate at home, and we did not go out for expensive entertainment. Even with this modest life style, it still cost (in 1986) about \$1200 per month to support my family.

I was a hustler and under-employed salesman. My wife was employed as a waitress. Together our incomes barely covered the \$1200 we needed to pay our bills. We pretty much lived from week to week, and had no savings. When I was arrested my contribution to the household was eliminated. What did this mean to my wife and children? It meant that they now had to live on less than \$700 a month! Now, rather than just getting by, my wife was unable to pay the bills and eat too. Therefore, shortly after being arrested, my wife and children faced poverty and homelessness. Because of **my actions**, my family was thrown into crisis. A crisis that, to this day, they have not recovered from.

Families are Crime Victims Too

When a person commits a crime we hear a lot about the "victims" of that crime. However, when we think about the people the offender has harmed, how often do we think about the offender's family and the effects prison has upon them?

Between 1980 and 2000 the Delaware prison population exploded by over 344% from 1,436 to 6,374 inmates.¹ Of this number, minorities represent 64.2%² of the prison population and people from the middle to lower economic classes³ represent over 90% of the prison population.⁴ While overall employment within Delaware has increased and Delaware's unemployment rate has decreased, Delaware's poverty rate has remained constant.⁵ Could this be because so many parents are in prison, unable to contribute support for their children?

The connection between employment and a family's well being is amply documented. Joblessness or underemployment robs a family of self-respect, leads to frustrations⁶, drug or alcohol use, domestic violence⁷, disintegration of families, and repeat crime (i.e., recidivism). It only makes sense that to help solve these problems, we need to find ways to improve employment opportunities for offenders.

Nationally, about 2% of children have one parent in prison, for minority children the figure is almost 8%. In Delaware, about 57,000 children are in homes where parents lack full-time employment.⁸ For children raised in such homes, their odds of future delinquency and adult criminality are raised by 40%.⁹ Thus, when we think about "crime victims", the families of the imprisoned should be included.

Economic Crimes

The majority of crimes can be explained as economic crimes. Offenses involving theft, burglary, robbery, and drugs (and most assaults or homicides related thereto), are committed by individuals who weigh the "gains from illegal conduct against the risks", are motivated by "self-interest", wanting to improve their economic standing in the community or family. Because they lack marketable skills that may serve as an alternate route to social advancement, most offenders turn to crime as the only way to rise up out of poverty. For instance, in "most cases the decision to commit a specific [crime] arises from a perceived need of cash. Many times this money is needed to meet basic needs such as paying for rent, electricity, buying food" or "to maintain a certain

lifestyle in order to keep up with the demands of peer pressure".¹⁰ Such crimes are considered "either or" crimes: either not committed by those with economic alternatives or committed by those without.

Regardless of how we may rationalize the motivations for crime, there are certain things that are obvious. Namely that most crime is committed by young men (ages 17 to 30), from broken homes (most without fathers in the house), who lack vocational training (mostly high school dropouts), were unemployed or had difficulty keeping jobs (no steady income) and were using alcohol or drugs (impaired reasoning).¹¹ Since we know the characteristics of most offenders, we must ask what is the Criminal Justice System doing to resolve these problems?

What Prisons are Doing

Delaware's criminal laws are designed to "insure the public safety by preventing the commission of offenses through the ... rehabilitation of those convicted".¹² To accomplish this mandate, Delaware's prisons are required to "provide for the treatment, rehabilitation and restoration of offenders as useful, law-abiding citizens within the community".¹³

However, according to the Board of Parole, within "three years of release, 67 percent of former inmates were rearrested for a serious offense".¹⁴ Say What? What does "67 percent" really mean? It means that too many Delaware citizens are being murdered, assaulted or robbed by offenders who are not prepared for release from prison.

Since so many of Delaware's murders, assaults or robberies are the result of drug related crimes¹⁵ and committed by repeat offenders, we are back to the economic root of most crimes and the failure of our prisons to "treat", "rehabilitate" or "restore" those that end up in prison. Unfortunately, Delaware's prisons have been a systemic failure for decades.¹⁶

What Prisons Should be Doing

To remedy these systemic problems, structural changes are needed within Delaware's prisons. In addition to effective treatment programs, offenders need effective employment training and experience.

Drug Treatment

The need for "effective" treatment is well known.¹⁷ Unfortunately, state law does not require treatment programs to be supervised by treatment professionals. For obvious reasons, current treatment programs are ineffective: most "counselors" in our prisons lack any formal treatment training or certification

CHART A
Cost of Re-entry
First Month of Release

Clothes (socks, underpants, undershirts, pants, shirts, coat, shoes, etc. from Goodwill Industries or other thrift shop)	\$200
Food (\$5 per day for 30 days, no eating out, only basics)	\$150
Rent (\$100 a week, one-room efficiency)	\$400
Transportation (\$3 a day, public transportation only)	\$100
Utilities (Electricity and Phone calls)	\$50
Total	\$900

and they leave the treatment "programs" to be run by troubled offenders. Because of this inability to effectively treat offenders suffering from substance abuse or other mental health problems, too many of these offenders are being released with the same problems that contributed to their original arrest and, therefore, are rearrested: they commit more crimes and cause more victims. To remedy these problems, the treatment function should be transferred from prison staff to professionals within the Department of Health and Social Services.¹⁸

Prison Industries

Not so well known is the need for "effective" vocational training and employment. In addition to increased utilization of work release, the most effective way to reduce poverty and keep families together is relevant prison industries programs.¹⁹ Prison industries exist in every state, including Delaware.²⁰ The one feature that distinguishes Delaware from other states (and the federal) prison systems is that Delaware prisons do not permit local businesses to operate inside our prisons and, therefore, Delaware's prison industries are underutilized and operate at a loss.²¹ These inefficiencies can be corrected simply by allowing small businesses to operate our prison industries. In addition to atoning for their crimes through public service works²², offenders could be employed by small businesses in automotive, furniture, clothing, farming, food service, recycling, and light manufacturing/fabrication shops²³, or by selling their own products or services.²⁴

When privatizing prison industries, we must keep in mind the purpose for prison industries: to provide training to offenders and income to offenders' families, not to exploit offenders. We should re-

member that prison industries have a sordid past as virtual slave operations.²⁵ To protect offenders from exploitation, there must be some type of protection for offenders who have prison industry jobs: such as a safe work environment, workers rights, and a minimum wage.²⁶

It is important that offenders be allowed to earn a minimum wage.²⁷ This is not about enriching offenders; it is about holding families together and preparing offenders for release with sufficient savings so that neither they nor their families are a continuing burden upon Delaware taxpayers. Under Delaware law, offender's wages can be apportioned between child support, victim compensation, court costs, the costs of imprisonment, and release (or gate money) savings.²⁸ By paying an offender a minimum wage (say \$5 an hour), for a forty-hour workweek, an offender will be able to send a minimum of \$100 a week²⁹ home for child support. One hundred dollars a week may not sound like much, but to a struggling single parent, that \$100 would mean a lot.³⁰

Conclusion

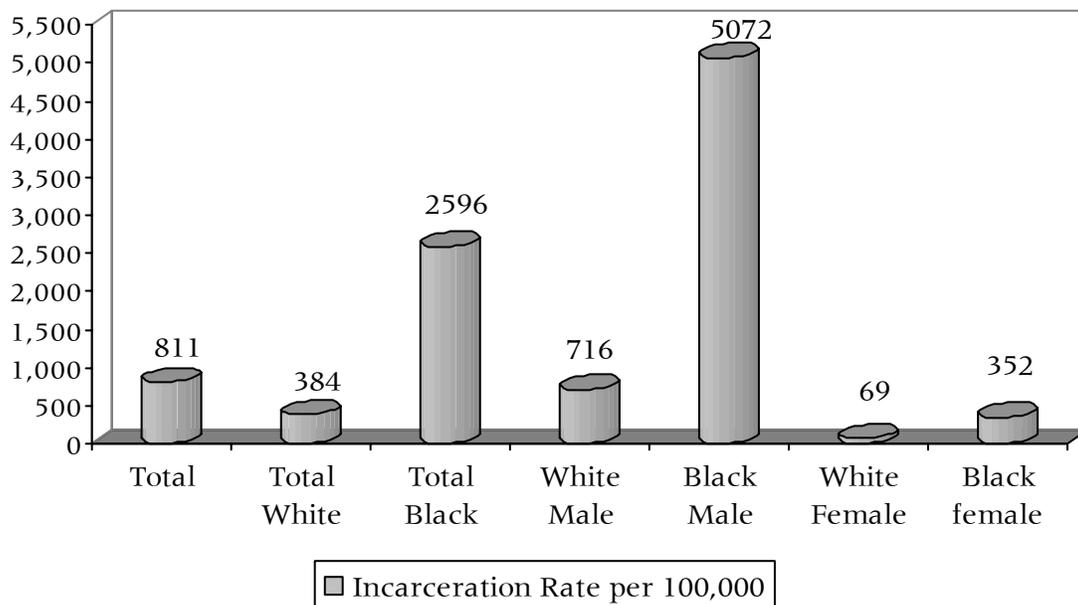
Under current conditions, when an offender is sent to prison he is prevented from working and supporting his family. For 24 hours a day the offender is forced to sit idle in his cell. In the Delaware Correctional Center, Delaware's largest prison with over 2500 offenders, there are less than 400 jobs, of

which less than 150 are prison industry jobs. For those lucky enough to win the job lottery, their average pay is \$30 a month for non-industry and \$50 a month for prison industry jobs. Many of these offenders are serving extended sentences of 20 or more years in prison. For years they are forced to rely upon state taxpayers for all their food, clothing and shelter. They are not allowed to work and earn money to support their family or save for their release. What this means is that for years, offenders (and their families) are conditioned to not work, conditioned to rely upon handouts from the state. If we continue to prevent offenders from contributing to their family's housing wage³¹, families will continue to face poverty and homelessness.

Under current conditions, the day an offender is released, the offender becomes a burden upon taxpayers or their family. The first month of an offender's release, the offender will need to spend more than \$900 for the bare necessities (Chart A). However, prisons provide only \$50 for gate money (release money). If an offender is not allowed to earn wages sufficient to save and prepare for release³² just where do we think the remaining \$850 needed to survive that first crucial month is going to come from? Is it no wonder that so many released offenders return to what they know best – street crime – for their basic survival?

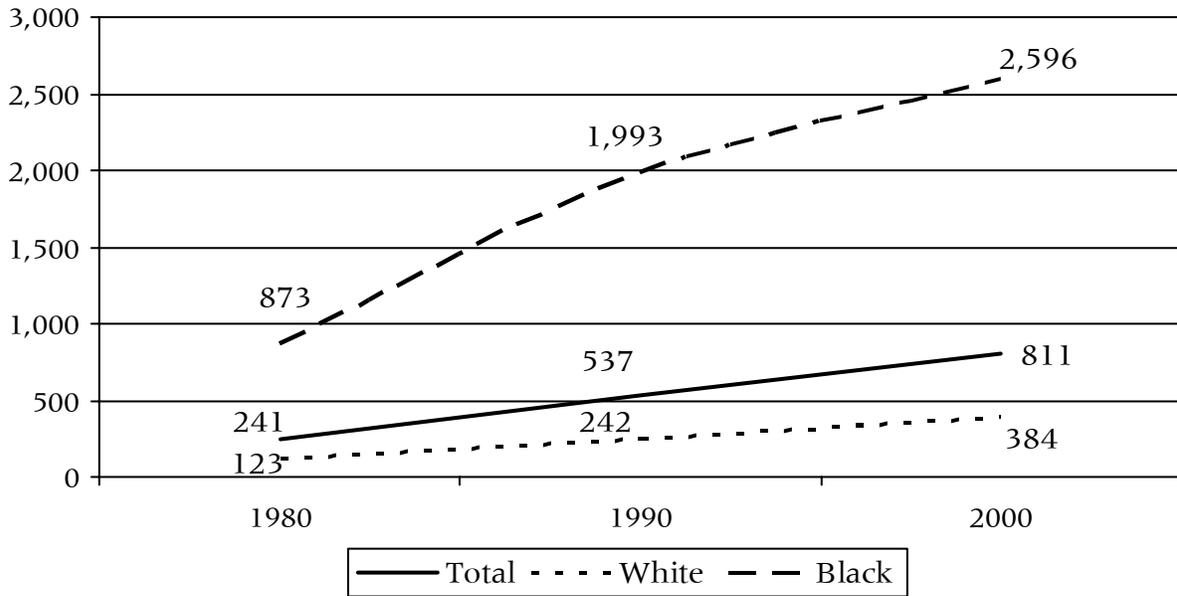
By permitting Delaware's small businesses to oper-

Delaware Incarceration Rates by Race and Gender, 2000



Source: Eichler (2004). *Race and Incarceration in Delaware*.

Delaware Incarceration Rates, 1980-2000



Source: Eichler (2004). *Race and Incarceration in Delaware*.

ate prison industries, millions of tax dollars (currently budgeted³³ for prison industries) would be saved or made available for other needs; offenders would be provided meaningful work experience and be able to earn income from which they can pay child support or victim compensation; prisons would have lowered tension and misconduct, and society would see offenders released who are prepared to become meaningfully employed and law-abiding members of our community.³⁴

For me (and so many other prisoners) the main benefits would be the ability to help support my wife and children. The money prison industry wages could have provided for my family would have helped to keep them off welfare, it would have helped my wife pay for child care so she could keep a full time job, it would have helped my children know that I still valued them, it would have helped to keep my family together, and, just maybe, my son would not have ended up in prison too!

Endnotes

¹Race and Incarceration in Delaware: A Preliminary Consideration, by Thomas P. Eichler (2005), pp. 10-11. (hereafter "Race and Incarceration").
² Id.
³ Defined as less than the median household income of \$49,152 a year.
⁴ 2005 survey of the Delaware Correctional Center prison population conducted. NAACP Prison Branch #2032. Smyrna, De.

⁵ Delaware and U.S. Table, p.11. The Realities of Poverty in Delaware, DE Housing Coalition, 2003-2004, Dover, DE (hereafter "Realities of Poverty"); Brown, R. (2005, Aug.31). Delaware's poverty rate stays steady. *The News Journal*, pp. B1, B2.
⁶ Chalmers, M. (2005, Aug. 1). Jobless parents take emotional toll on kids. *The News Journal*, pp. A1, A5.
²³ Walls, J. (2005, April 13). Statement in Support of Prisoners Work and Victim Compensation Act, NAACP, Smyrna, De; Montgomery, J. (1988, Feb. 5). Inmates eyed for inputers. *The News Journal*, p. B1; see also notes 19 and 20, supra.
²⁴ Arizona is a good example of Inmate Operated Businesses. see *Hale V. Arizona*, 967 F. 2d 1356 (9th Cir. 1992); Walls, J. (1995, Feb. 15). Summary Budget Report Upon The Department of Corrections Budget For FY 1996. IMPAC. Smyrna, De.
²⁵ Lichtenstein, A. *Twice the Work of Free Labor*, Verso, NY (1996); Unknown (2001, July 16). *Hard Time: Capitalism and Racism Struck a Cruel Bargain in Alabama*. *The Wall Street Journal*, pp. A1, A10.
²⁶ Walls, J. (1995, Feb. 10). Statement In Opposition To Exclusion Of Inmates From Minimum Wage Coverage Under Senate Bill 21 Before he Delaware State Legislature. IMPAC. Smyrna, DE.
²⁷ The state minimum wage is currently at \$6.15 per hour. 19 Del.C. 902(a)(but see SB 62, March 24, 2005).
²⁸ 11 Del.C. 6532(f)(in that order).
²⁹ As 40 hrs. X \$5 = \$200, minus \$100 for costs and savings, leaving \$100 a week.
³⁰ Brownell, C. The Economic Status of Single Mothers in Delaware. Pp. 12-13. *The Realities of Poverty in Delaware*. De. Housing Coalition, 2003-2004. Dover, De.
³¹ Melhunek, M. *The Housing Wage, Realities of Poverty*, pp. 50-51.

Tearing Down Traditions and Taking Charge: Community Participation

Tina Riley

It's been his idea (*i.e. he knows what's best for the people*) and the rest of us are along for the ride
Civic Leader

Please join me and other civic leaders and housing professionals for a strategic...to define ways to improve housing opportunities for our residents
Elected Official

"We've been thinking about what to do with [neighborhood] for the four years we have been planning
Elected Official

The average monthly rent at...according to a survey completed in October by a local government office. (Tenants wrote and led this survey process)
Media Article

...they talked like we were not in the room...
Tenant

...she doesn't know she's only a tenant...
Property Manager

Why are you here? Who invited you?
Housing Authority Employee

Typically, Section 8 people don't ask for this type of consideration.
Housing Authority Employee

These sentiments represent the traditional attitude that some people have toward the poor. These attitudes manifest themselves when third parties make decisions that affect marginal populations without ever including this group in the process. This practice assumes that poor people are not necessary to the decision making equation. Furthermore, it supposes that tenants and marginalized populations are not capable of providing useful solutions to housing issues. Perhaps this behavior suggests, as well, that decision makers are unwilling to work with the people they are talking about. Ultimately it perpetuates a "do for" mentality instead of a "do with" way of thinking. If we contend

that community includes everyone, then the practice of tenant exclusion must be acknowledged as pernicious, and ended.

With the emergence of active civic associations homeowners are presumably ensured a place at the decision making table. However, renters are consistently left out. Many times this is a disenfranchised and marginalized group of people. Typically, they are not viewed as part of the solution—just people whose lives others profess to be working to improve. Even when the value of their input and involvement in a project is recognized it is too costly, time consuming or difficult to break from tradition and honestly engage their participation.

In a response to criticism for this practice of exclusion, some groups have attempted to seek formal input from the poor in the community. These efforts are oftentimes futile exercises which are offensive to the participants. A person who is really seeking change will avoid guessing and take the time to talk to the people she claims to be working for. Perhaps we can offer some resolution or insight into this phenomenon of 'surface inclusion' by defining community and what it means to have true citizen participation.

Community is generally thought of in terms of geography. However, many would contend that a community is not limited by geographic boundaries or even citizenship. For this article let us define community as all people who happen to live in close proximity to each other. More importantly, community is not limited to a dominant group or institution such as governments, organizations, professionals, churches, businesses or residents; rather it is all of these people. This definition is the beginning of change. Community must no longer be seen as fragmented, but inclusive of all 'stakeholders.' Furthermore, we must help those who will be directly affected by the outcome of certain decisions to realize and exercise their power. The journey of realizing this power starts with inviting those formerly left out to be a true part, if not the leaders, in a process that will dictate their future.

Everyone seems to be climbing some sort of ladder. Even those populations who appear to have achieved self-actualization are striving for more power. Sherry R. Arnstein, in her 1969 article, described citizen participation using a ladder. There were eight levels discussed:

1. Manipulation
2. Therapy
3. Informing
4. Consultation
5. Placation
6. Partnership
7. Delegated power
8. Citizen control

The bottom rungs of the ladder (1-5) are plagued with mere rituals of participation while the top rungs (6-8) represent actual power. This article was written many years ago, but the culture of control still remains today. There has been rhetoric to define citizen participation, but that terminology is not always followed by a desire to allow the poor to become a part of the social, economic and political process. People do see the value in tenant involvement. So much so that it can be said that most people actually support whole community participation. However, they want to be insulated from the disruption to decision making which comes from making this involvement authentic. Traditional power holders have to be willing to relinquish some of the privilege and let those typically left out have an opportunity to move up the ladder of participation. Part of the problem is that marginalized community participation is often seen as a separate program. As a detached program it is very difficult to achieve the goal of inclusion and empowerment.

Empowerment only occurs when power relationships are challenged. This can be accomplished by working toward the top rungs of the aforementioned "Ladder of Participation." Community organizing that does not accept existing power relationships supposes that the end result will be: winning real, immediate concrete improvements in people's lives; helping participants realize their own power; and altering the relations of power. The ultimate goal is to redistribute power so that traditionally ignored populations can have a say in their future.

Since I started tenant organizing, I have witnessed many groups find their place at the bottom of the ladder. Advisory committees and public relation councils serve as vehicles of manipulation as the so-called advisers are the ones being advised, managed and patronized by the power holders. There are various ploys which are used to insulate the process from tenant involvement. Tenant councils are given

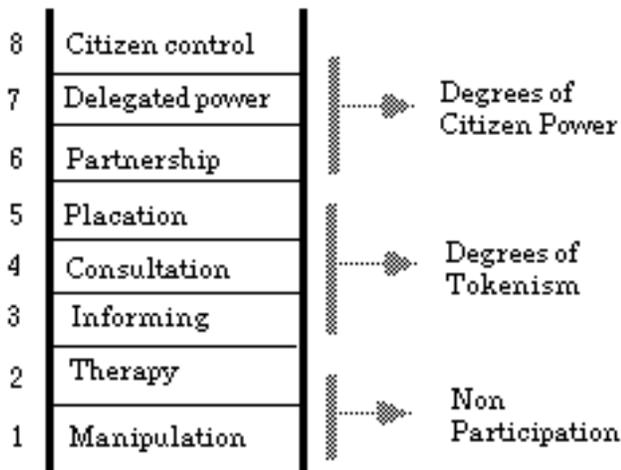
erroneous information at such a late date that the window of influence has expired. Many times tenants are distracted by demands to fix the way that they think and behave in order to be more like that of the management. Power holders go through the motions of participation by getting input from tenants through 'focus groups' and 'surveys.' At the end of the day they can say that they consulted the entire community because so many poor people attended a meeting or filled out a survey. Community members walk away feeling like they had some input, but really having had no effect on the planning process. Tenants are placated by having a 'representative' elected to a board, on which their interests are continually outvoted or ignored. Sometimes the presence of a poor person even brings funds to an organization.

While strides have been made, it is rare to see communities reach the highest rungs: true partnership, delegated power or citizen control. These rungs of the ladder require that the marginalized have certain bargaining tools in place. The leaders from this population must be accountable to the greater marginalized community and the whole community. There must also be financial resources. We must not blame the poor part of community if these things do not exist. Much of the work of an organizer is preparing the traditionally left out part of the community to see the value in and take on this leadership role. It is almost like training the trainers while simultaneously preparing the environment where entire communities can thrive.

Traditions are hard to change, so organizations create a mission to address pathologies or needs, get a non-profit status and settle for 'business as usual.' That usually results in providing services with community governance pretty much non-existent. In many ways, providing a service is an easier task than doing the work to build up the whole community. Doing so would require the almost unheard of feat of dismantling tradition and privilege. **Are there groups that are willing to show a community the pathway to community control?**

The practice of creating direct services prevents

“The journey of realizing this power starts with inviting those formerly left out to be a true part, if not the leaders, in a process that will dictate their future.”



those on the margin of communities from achieving self sufficiency, local initiative and in turn a decent life. There is definitely a need and positive value to providing services. A hungry person needs a food closet to meet the immediate need. **However, beyond that, can he be a part of a community where businesses are locally owned and create sustainable income; where the need for food is met with more permanency?**

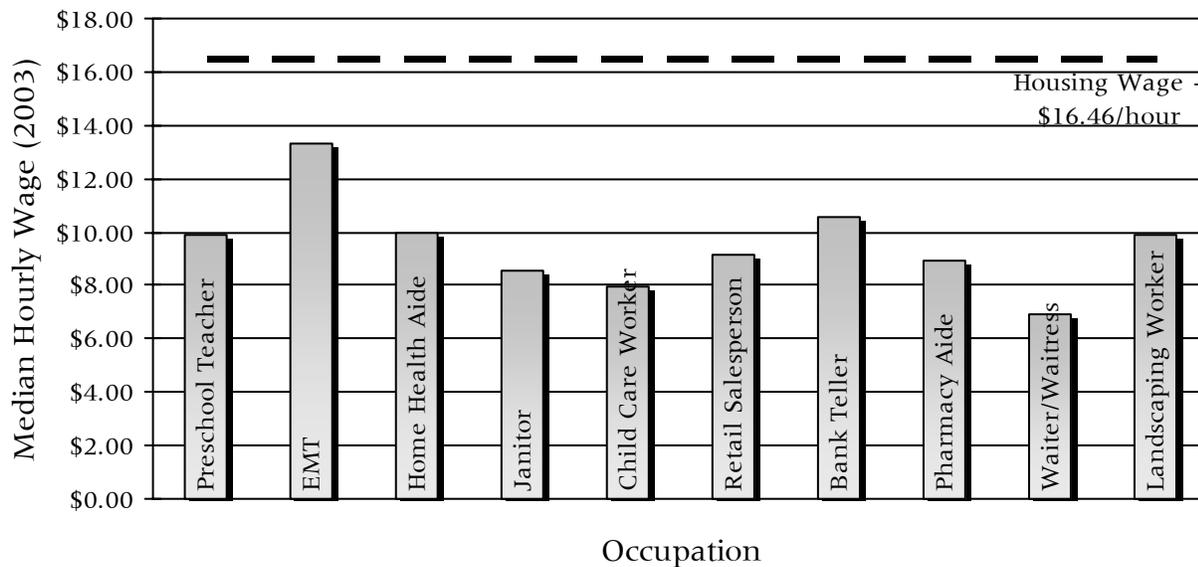
There are forces that do not support community. The current market says that as long as you have money then you can buy any piece of property. In a quest to make more money communities are seen as

disposable. We see it with expiring-use Section 8 contracts, HopeVI projects and budget cuts. The government continues to create budgets and programs that devalue community. **Can whole communities organize to remedy this trend?**

YES to all of these questions. There are examples of community control all throughout the nation. None of these success stories happened overnight. It seems that well meaning groups and individuals must be willing to commit to a process rather than a specific end. The process involves activities that educate and prepare the marginal part of community to take political, social and economic control. In such a process, the have nots are teaching the haves what changes are necessary to create a more equitable society. The have are sharing their experience, resources and privilege with the have nots. This is the journey to leveling the playing field.

This relationship starts at the level of partnership and will eventually transition to complete community control. The partner may bring much needed resources and information to the table. It is important that the haves are not focused on self interests like funding, sustainability or a preconceived end. The goal for such a chosen group must be to develop community leaders and communities. They may start the process, but they must be committed to having the marginal part of the community truly participate.

Median Wage of Selected Occupations and Housing Wage



Sources: Out of Reach 2005, National Low Income Housing Coalition and Delaware Department of Labor, Office of Occupational and Labor Market Information

The Housing Wage

Fair Market Rent (FMR)				
	One BR	Two BR	Three BR	Four BR
Delaware	\$730	\$856	\$1070	\$1289
New Castle County	\$616	\$682	\$892	\$1198
Kent County	\$792	\$947	\$1158	\$1397
Sussex County	\$572	\$635	\$869	\$894

The Housing Wage – Hourly Wage Needed to Afford Fair Market Rent (FMR)				
	One BR	Two BR	Three BR	Four BR
Delaware	\$14.03	\$16.46	\$20.58	\$24.80
New Castle County	\$11.85	\$13.12	\$17.15	\$23.04
Kent County	\$15.23	\$18.21	\$22.27	\$26.87
Sussex County	\$11.00	\$12.21	\$16.71	\$17.19

Annual Income Needed to Afford Fair Market Rent (FMR)				
	One BR	Two BR	Three BR	Four BR
Delaware	\$29,188	\$34,241	\$42,808	\$51,578
New Castle County	\$31,680	\$37,880	\$46,320	\$55,880
Kent County	\$24,640	\$27,280	\$35,680	\$47,920
Sussex County	\$22,880	\$25,400	\$34,760	\$35,760

Work hours/Week Necessary at Minimum Wage to Afford FMR				
	One BR	Two BR	Three BR	Four BR
Delaware	91	107	134	161
New Castle County	77	85	112	150
Kent County	99	118	145	175
Sussex County	72	79	109	112

Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition, *Out of Reach 2005*

Land Use and Affordable Housing

Gina Miserendino

The land is a mother that never dies.
Maori

Security of tenure, affordability, adequacy, accessibility, proximity to services, availability of infrastructure, and cultural adequacy.

The right to housing per *Article 11 (1)*
UN Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, 1951

Humankind's ability to survive, let alone thrive, is inextricably related to its dynamic relationship with the land. The realization in practical terms of this tenet has been demanding from our collective start and continues to challenge us as a society. We need to ensure that basic human needs, especially housing, are met, **and** a long term, viable land policy is implemented. In the United States we have yet to achieve either discrete goal, no less reach equilibrium between them.

Our country has an admirable history of devoted and capable advocacy, and movement toward, reaching the goals of housing for all and a socially equitable policy which respects the land. However, in general, efforts have progressed on parallel tracks toward each individual goal, there has been little collaboration. Sometimes even, the energies have clashed. With respect to working toward achieving a balance of both, we can borrow from civil rights attorney Lani Guinier's philosophy that we need to move from a stance of *either/or* to *and/both*.

We must review our heritage of how land use has been organized, especially with regard to our collective understanding of public jurisdiction over rights to private property.

Few ideas have bred more mischief in recent times, for the beauty and health of landscapes and communities, than the belief that privately owned land is first and foremost a market commodity that can be used in whatever way earns the most money.¹

Early, continuing injustices

The United States of America has not succeeded in creating equal opportunity regarding access to land. Painful reminders that remedial work is needed abound. The unresolved consequences of dubiously-intentioned transactions with Native Americans are a prime example. America's renegeing on our promise of *forty acres and a mule* to freed African American slaves is yet another. Despite some progress, our record is dismal. Public policies following World War II including racially and economically discriminatory ones from the Federal Housing Authority, Federal Highway Administration and Tax Code, resulted in increased racial and economic segregation as well as voracious consumption of land.² This trend continues with the lack of implementation of the court ordered remedies by the US Department of Agriculture in Pigford vs. Glickman. This case addresses USDA's admitted disparate lending policies, charging their omission caused significant harm to black farmers (including seven Delawareans).³

Affordable Housing

Generally accepted standards deem housing as affordable if no more than 30 percent of a household's income is spent on housing costs. With this formula, a *housing wage* is determined and reported annually in *Out of Reach*. This housing wage is the amount a family needs to make while working 40 hours per week, year-round, and still be able to rent a fair market rate (FMR) two bedroom unit. The *Out of Reach 2005* reports the Delaware statewide FMR.⁴ for a two-bedroom unit is \$856/month. The 2005 housing wage for Delaware is \$16.46/ hour.

Michael Stone "challenges the conventional standard that every household can afford a certain percent of their income for housing."⁵ He says a family is *shelter poor* if "after paying for their housing needs they are unable to meet their non shelter needs even at a minimum level of adequacy." Similarly, Nandinee Kutty⁶ created a new measure, "Housing-induced Poverty"(HIP). Using the 1999 American Housing Survey, Kutty figures 3.8 million Americans above the official poverty threshold would be in poverty after buying a pov-

erty basket (all non housing items necessary for a household to live at a minimal level). This measure would increase by 2.7 percent the number of households living in official poverty. It would raise the percent of Black households living in poverty from 26.6 to 30.1; Other⁷ households from 23.6 to 26.3; Hispanic households from 22.8 to 25.9, Asian & Pacific Islander households from 13.1 to 18.3; and non Hispanic Whites from 10.8 to 13.3.

The Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League commissioned “The Self Sufficiency Standard for Delaware”⁸ to determine what families in Delaware need to cover basic living costs. For example in 2003, for a family of two adults, one preschooler and one school age child; both adults need to make \$8.64/hour or \$36,477/year to cover their basic needs in the Dover MSA.

Transportation is emerging as a crucial component of housing affordability. The Housing and Transportation Affordability Index, “prices the trade-offs that households make between housing and transportation.”⁹ This research reports that Americans spend an average of 19 percent of their income on transportation, ranging from 10 percent in transit-rich areas to nearly 25 percent in others. And, for median income families, transportation costs are second only to housing. The distance from work and community amenities factors strongly in land use decisions as well.

Land Use

Figuring strongly into the affordable housing equation is public policy regulating use of land. Current notions of private property have evolved from our diverse heritage. Signs of private property have been found in civilizations from the Stone Age on, as well as many variations of common property views.¹⁰

Freyfogle states that Thomas Jefferson took the middle road between John Locke’s “natural rights” and Benjamin Franklin’s views that almost all property was subject to “public convention.”¹¹ He states that Jefferson’s views on the right to property “..chiefly had to do with a man’s ability to acquire land for subsistence living at little or no cost: It was a right of opportunity, a right to gain land, not a right to hoard it or resist public demands that owners act responsibly.” There were two guiding principles for private land use before the Civil War, “sic utere tuo ut alienum non laeduas” or “Use your own so as not to injure others” and “salus populi suprema lex est” or “The good of the people is the supreme law.”¹²

A leading national developer of affordable rural

housing, the Housing Assistance Council, reports a disturbing trend taking place in our rural regions, one primarily associated with urban areas—gentrification. It is defined as “.. the process by which higher-income households displace lower-income residents of a community, thereby changing the essential character and flavor of that community.”¹³ Further noted is the importance of the racial and class-based dimensions of gentrification. They report this phenomena is occurring because:

..unparalleled growth of the market in the U.S. since the late 1990s has led to increased homeownership and asset appreciation across the country...not all this growth has been equitable, and the community development field has become increasingly concerned about the displacement of low-income families.¹⁴

The American Farmland Trust confirms that the Delmarva Peninsula is the least developed ocean-front region in the eastern US and is under intense pressure from resort developers and homebuilders.¹⁵ Thirty-nine percent of the agricultural land in Delaware disappeared in the last 70 years due to commercial and population expansion.¹⁶ In addition to farms, rural areas are comprised of small towns which have their own identity apart from either farms or nearby cities that need attention from policymakers as well.¹⁷

Growth can be controversial but is not necessarily bad. Michael Kinsely says the term growth is used to describe both *development* – things that can make a community better such as living wage jobs, as well as *expansion*– things that make a community bigger. He maintains that “many development options require little or no expansion.”¹⁸ Suburbanization of rural areas is not the answer. “Suburban developments in rural areas have many negative consequences that threaten ..the entire agricultural economy and natural resource base that define Delaware’s character and quality of life.”¹⁹

Models that Work

There are examples of affirmative public policy and private efforts which take into account the need to use our land wisely and to ensure that we reach the goal of housing for all. A description follows of efforts recognizing both environmental and housing goals as interdependent.

Smart Growth

“Smart Growth development is development that serves the economy, the community, and the environment.”²⁰ It can incorporate a wide variety

of public policy tools to address affordable housing by: 1) Increasing the supply of affordable housing by creating new stock and spreading affordable housing to communities and neighborhoods where it has traditionally been excluded; 2) Preventing the displacement of existing low (and sometimes moderate) income residents from gentrifying neighborhoods; 3) Reinvesting in existing communities; 4) Discovering or creating new funding tools; and 5) Creating a regional framework of housing affordability / permanent affordability. Governor Ruth Ann Minner's *Livable Delaware* incorporates many smart growth components into its agenda and process.

Inclusionary Zoning

Across the country, there is a serious lack of affordable housing even for the not-so-poor. Inclusionary Zoning is a tool for municipalities to create a percentage of moderately-priced housing in new market rate developments. These programs are targeted toward moderate incomes. Over 100 municipalities have adopted ordinances which have resulted in over 17,000 *moderately priced dwelling (housing) units* being built. Ordinances can cover: project size, density bonuses and other incentives; definitions of "affordable" prices or rents; income limits; a control period; design guidelines and oversight. New Castle County's voluntary ordinance has yet to create any affordable units. Sussex County passed a voluntary MPHU program in January 2006 with strong developer incentives.

Limited Equity Homeownership

Delaware land is being developed at accelerating rates and increasing being used for upper-income households' vacation or retirement homes, or for investment. Other models need to be seriously considered if there is to be any chance at balancing the use of land yet available with the basic human right to housing. Many conclude that the only way to seriously address this crisis is by implementing models which limit equity by separating the ownership of the land from the housing unit or other alternative mechanisms. Cooperatives, mutual housing associations and community land trusts are models of limited equity home ownership which have been discussed in a DHC *Housing Journal* (Winter 2004). A discussion of community land

trusts (CLTs) follows.

For more than 35 years the Institute for Community Economics (ICE) has worked to establish and strengthen community land trusts. Key features of a "classic" CLT are: *non profit, tax-exempt organization, dual ownership, and leased land*. – the CLT acquires the land, while the structures on the CLT land are purchased by the household with a long-term (99 year) lease on the land; and *perpetual affordability* – the CLT retains the option to purchase any residence when the owner sells. An agreed-upon resale formula limits the homeowner from receiving a free market rate of return on investment and assures that future modest-income households will have access to affordable housing. In Delaware, the West Rehoboth Community Land Trust was established by community leaders in that Sussex County community. It will buy land and build houses which stay perpetually affordable in an area where prices have soared well beyond working families' means. A regional CLT, the Diamond State CLT, has also been established with a mission "To strengthen communities by creating and stewarding perpetually affordable housing and promoting sustainable use of the land" focusing on Kent and Sussex Counties. These community land trusts will work to balance community and individual interests in Delaware.

Conclusion

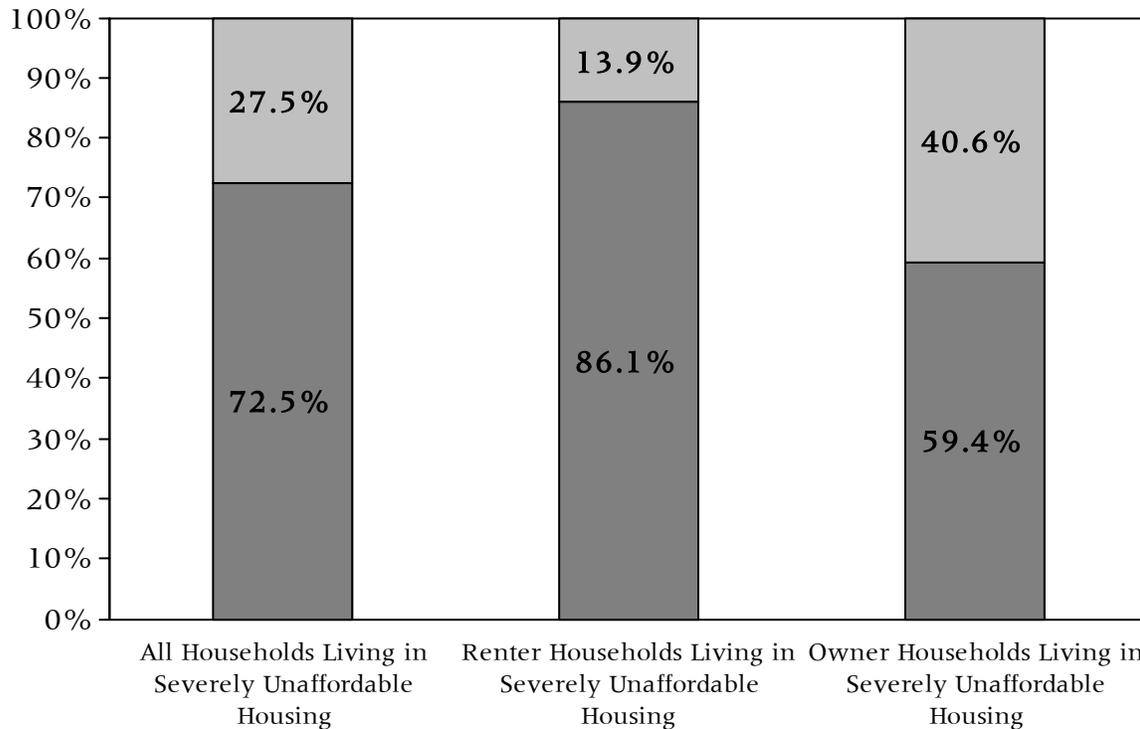
These three efforts are exemplary methods of demonstrating that access to affordable housing and equitable, efficient use of land can be achieved. Progress in the implementation of each model needs to be studied and adjusted to local conditions. Other models may complement these goals. We must proactively consider these and other ideas in our quest for housing for all **and** equitable land use.

Notes

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2. Richards, Lynn, From 1954 to 1997 urban land area almost quadrupled in the 48 contiguous states; from 1992 to 1997 the national rate of development more than doubled. *Alternatives to Subsidizing Edge Development Strategies for Preserving Rural Landscapes*, Terrain, www.terrain.org/articles/10/richards.htm
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6. Kutty, Nadine K., *A New Measure of Housing Affordability: Estimates and Analytical Results*, [Housing Policy Debate](#) Vol.16 Issue I Fannie Mae Foundation 2005
7. *Other* includes American Indians, Aleutians, Eskimos & other races
8. Pearce, Diana, Ph.D. with Jennifer Brooks *The Self*

“Smart Growth development is development that serves the economy, the community, and the environment.”²⁰

Extremely Low Income Households in Delaware Living in Severely Unaffordable Housing, 2003



■ Extremely Low Income Households (30% or less of AMI) □ Other Households (Above 30% of AMI)

Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition (2005)

Sufficiency Standard for Delaware, January 2003 commissioned by Metropolitan Urban League

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12. Ibid p. 6

13. Yagley, James et. al. Housing Assistance Council, *They Paved Paradise...Gentrification in Rural Communities*, February 2005

14. Ibid p. 3

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19. Edgell, D. and Edwards, D. Barrett, Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination *Equity in Agriculture: Preserving the Value of Delaware's Rural Lands*, September, 2005

20. Arigoni, Danielle *Affordable Housing and Smart Growth: Making the Connection*, Smart Growth Network and National Neighborhood Coalition, 2001

21. New Castle County area median income(AMI for family of four(4)= \$74,700, 30% AMI (extremely low)- \$22,750, 50% AMI (very low income- \$37,950), 80% AMI (low income) - \$58,000. Kent County area median income (AMI) for a family of four(4) =\$56,700, 30% AMI (extremely low)- \$17,000, 50%AMI (very low)= \$28,350, 80% AMI (low)\$45,350. Sussex County area median income(AMI) for a family of four(4) = \$55,100, 30% AMI (extremely low)- \$16,550, 50%AMI (very low)= \$27,550, 80% AMI (low) \$44,100.

Can Zoning Do Justice?: Examining the Potential of Inclusionary Zoning to Facilitate Access to Affordable Housing

Bethany Welch

Sufficient food, safe drinking water, freedom to worship, public education—these are qualities of life in a democratic society that most Americans would likely agree we should safeguard. In fact, laws, public policies, and charitable intervention often do just that. However, affordable housing is rarely given the same protection. More often than not, housing is an issue left to the devices of market forces.

A look at the current state of domestic housing reveals that one in eight Americans spend fifty percent or more of their income on housing (Drew, 2005). For the 37 million Americans who live below the poverty line, this is a critical issue that has implications for how they make choices about other necessities (Lipman, 2005; U.S. Census, 2005). Those who are underemployed or considered to be “working poor” also face serious barriers to securing affordable housing, namely on two fronts—cost and location. For example, long-term residents of gentrifying neighborhoods may find themselves forced out by rising rents and increasing property taxes. Moreover, people seeking to live near, or in reasonable proximity to, employment opportunities are impeded by the high cost of purchasing a home and the lack of rental units available.

What can be done to address the cost and location issues? Could zoning be used as a tool to create more equitable and just communities? This article seeks to explore how inclusionary zoning, a policy instituted at the county or municipal level, might be instituted to both produce and provide access to affordable housing. While this does not necessarily mediate the cost concern, it does have implications for location and supply. Second, it will consider to what extent the policies speak to the disproportionate burden of the housing crisis that has been carried by minority communities. Of particular interest to the discussion at hand is the inclusionary zoning policy of New Castle County, Delaware.

Inclusionary zoning is a strategy being employed with increasing frequency by local municipalities to address a range of housing issues. It has been pro-

posed as an antidote for: rising home prices, skyrocketing rental units, gentrification and displacement, residential segregation, and the reduction of public housing funds (Katz & Turner, 2003; Myerson, 2005). The concept is relatively simple, require new housing developments over a certain threshold of units to reserve a specific portion of the units to be marketed as affordable. This means that they are targeted to residents who are underserved by the local housing market, typically identified as those earning between 65%-80% of the area median income (AMI) (Myerson, 2005). The unit affordability is then maintained at that rate for a specified number of years, usually anywhere from twenty to fifty years depending on the rental or ownership status. The goal is that low to moderate-income residents will now have access to housing within their price range, and perhaps in a location that was previously inaccessible. Furthermore, some inclusionary zoning policies are designed to distribute the affordable units across a region or distinct geographic area, in this manner potentially reducing residential segregation patterns. Persons of color are unduly burdened by the limited affordable housing options, often finding themselves left with even fewer choices than their white counterparts. This is due largely to a history of official and unofficial policies that create what Georgetown law professor Sheryll Cashin refers to as, “communities of great abundance and communities of great need” (2004).

Although inclusionary zoning has recently gained national attention, policymakers, developers, and housing advocates have spent over two decades refining zoning solutions in the interest of securing benefits for multiple stakeholders. In the mid 1970s, Montgomery County, Maryland enacted an ordinance to respond to a strong real estate market and the spatial mismatch between residential communities and expanding employment sectors (Werwath, 1994). The ordinance declared that, “all subdivisions of 50 or more dwelling units must include a minimum number between 12.5% and 15% of moderately priced units of varying sizes to accommodate different family sizes” (Salsich, Jr., 2001). As an incentive to creating the affordable units, developers

received a density bonus of up to 22%. This can be understood as permission to increase the number of units in a specific parcel without incurring additional costs or fees; thus, increasing the profitability of the space. Montgomery County's policy formed the basis for what is now considered the model for inclusionary zoning, producing 10,781 affordable units by 2000 (Brown, 2001).

Cost is an obvious component of the housing equation. However, identifying the point of conflict between location and affordable housing can be perplexing. Why would both affluent and distressed communities be effected by market pressures? In the case of affluent communities, the tendency is for housing to be built and maintained as single-family units designed for ownership. This feature of suburban living often excludes renters and the costly home prices prohibits many employees from living in proximity to what is increasingly the greatest concentration of retail, service, and light manufacturing industry (Katz, 2004). Inclusionary zoning can address this spatial mismatch by providing homeownership and rental opportunities for low-income families in these developing areas. For example, the inclusionary ordinance governing the City of Burlington, Vermont states that one of its purposes is to:

To mitigate the impact of market rate housing construction on the limited supply of available land suitable for housing, thus preventing the city's zoning ordinances which allow residential development from having the effect of excluding housing that meets the needs of all economic groups within the municipality (City of Burlington, 2002).

In contrast, distressed urban neighborhoods located close to central business districts are attracting a new wave of households who value the convenience and amenities of urban living. Unfortunately, long-term residents of these communities, who are overwhelmingly minority and low-income, face threats to their neighborhoods and homes. When gentrification, revitalization, and mixed-income development converge on these fragile communities some residents gain, but the outcomes are not equitably distributed (Rose, 2001). Each of these forces brings about a different sort of change; each has the potential to displace residents (Cordova, 1991). PolicyLink Senior Associate Kalima Rose argues that the displacement can be mediated by influencing the policies that govern land use; "Communities need to evaluate zoning and public land giveaways and steer them in the direction of their aspirations" (2001).

Delaware and New Castle County

What does this phenomenon look like locally? Both homeowners and renters are feeling the pressure of a rapidly intensifying housing market. Over the last five years, the median cost of a home in New Castle County has risen by 42% (DHC, 2005). Meanwhile, residents of the City of Wilmington have experienced a marked increase in poverty, which has particularly affected its children (United Way of Delaware, 2004). Nearly forty percent of Wilmington residents who are in rental properties spend 30% or more of their household income on rent (U.S. Census, 2000). The numbers are more alarming when isolated to low-income families, which is defined as 31-50% of the AMI, or in this case for County residents, households earning \$37,950 per year. Of these households, 67% pay more than thirty percent of income for rent, a situation known as a "housing cost burden" (NCC, Dept. of Community Services, 2005). Affordability can also be framed in terms of hourly wage. For example, a New Castle County resident working at Delaware's minimum wage, presently \$6.15/hr, would need to work one hundred hours a week in order to afford a two-bedroom rental at Fair Market Rent (FMR) (described as requiring less than 30% of the wage earner's income on housing). This is eight hours more than the expenditure of energy and hours required by the average Delaware State resident (Pitcoff, 2004).

A desire to address the state of affordability and access to housing has driven many policymakers to embrace inclusionary zoning ordinances. In New Castle County, a document known as the Unified Development Code (UDC) was adopted in 1998 in part to limit rezoning that was favorable to land speculation, an action that has certain impact on housing prices. At the same time that the UDC was enacted, an inclusionary zoning policy was instituted. Both are subject to the overarching directions of the Comprehensive Development Plan, which guides decisions regarding land use throughout the County. However, despite the good intentions of the ordinance, the New Castle County inclusionary zoning policy has not yielded any affordable housing units.

Much like Montgomery County, MD; Fairfax County, Virginia; Washington, DC; Boston, MA; Burlington, VT and a growing list of urban and metropolitan regions have implemented ordinances with proven results. What distinguishes these practices from New Castle County's policy? A recent assessment of inclusionary zoning revealed that effective policies have three primary attributes; they are "simple, flexible, and enforceable" (Myerson, 2005). When the policy is applied to both rental

and owner-occupied properties, housing developers throughout the area are subject to the same expectations. This uniformity increases the likelihood that local developers will abide by the ordinance.

Nevertheless, the housing market does ebb and flow. Policymakers and advocates must maintain responsive, or flexible, policy mechanisms when faced with a market driven economy. At present, density bonuses may often be coupled with fee waivers or fee reductions and expedited review of applications and permits. Perhaps future incentives could take into account the improved social impacts of mixed-income communities. In the case of New Castle County, the affordability control is held in perpetuity instead of to a confined period. Defining a specific time frame lessens the permanence of the affordable housing unit once it is built, but may

Figure 1.

A sampling of initiatives designed to address changing communities:

- Community organizing campaigns to mobilize tenants and residents
- Inclusionary zoning policies
- Land banking and land trusts
- Workforce housing incentives
- Mixed-income development, both residential and commercial
- Smart-growth, regional planning
- Limited-equity housing cooperatives

increase the number of units produced. A more flexible control period might also improve the attractiveness of the incentives, thereby bolstering the strength of the provision.

Finally, voluntary inclusionary zoning policies have not proven to produce the anticipated outcomes that are sought to strengthen communities (Brunick, 2004). For example, a voluntary process in Cambridge, MA was in effect for ten years without producing any units. However, following the adoption of a mandatory inclusionary zoning policy in 1999, 135 affordable units have been created, with almost 60 more to come (Brunick, 2004). This failing has been attributed to the voluntary status of the ordinance. While it offers a density bonus and payment of impact fees by sources other than the developer, the policy has not proven attractive enough to utilize. The policy must be enforceable

for it to be a valuable tool to address what some are predicting will soon be a national affordable housing crisis (Drew, 2005).

Who benefits from inclusionary zoning?

Inclusionary zoning does have the capacity to do justice. It can do so by creating affordable housing units through responsible stewardship of local government decision-making powers and private or non-profit investment. Moreover, the policies hold greater power when considered in the context of a larger geographic collective, for as one regional development expert remarks, “the fate of the cities is linked with that of the suburbs, the fate of business with that of the workforce, and the fate of the middle class with that of the poor” (Pastor, et. al., 2000). Nonetheless, secondary impacts have been more difficult to demonstrate.

Residential segregation continues to be a real and persistent threat to vibrant, equitable communities. While recent research argues that the policies have not proven effective in reducing segregated communities, others maintain that correcting exclusionary land use policies has, in fact, impacted housing patterns (Porter, 2005; Rusk, 2001). Unlike the Moving to Opportunity programs in the 1990s that relocated families from urban enclaves of concentrated poverty to middle-income locations, inclusionary zoning is a passive intervention. Second, it has not seemed to reduce the stigma on rental properties for those with lower income, or for those who are not in a position to be homeowners (such as the elderly, those facing chronic illness, disability, mental health, and other barriers). In general, the ordinances do not guarantee rental units will be produced in what have been exclusively single-family dwelling neighborhoods/developments. Provisions must be made within the policy to address this issue, in the way that Montgomery County, Maryland constructed their ordinance.

The in-lieu options embedded in some inclusionary zoning policies permit developers to divest their commitment to provide the affordable units in the area of new development or redevelopment (Werwath, 1994). This incentive is perhaps the most controversial element of the policy because of its potential to neutralize anticipated gains in reducing residential segregation and the effects of concentrated poverty by allowing the new units to be located in areas already facing poverty concentration. As one recent report notes, “Locating affordable housing in high-poverty neighborhoods that hinder access to quality schools, good health care facilities, and regional job centers only entrenches racial and class inequalities” (Robinson & Grant-Thomas, 2004).

Conclusion

At the outset of this discussion, access to housing was juxtaposed with other quality of life concerns that Americans have taken great pains to safeguard. Although inclusionary zoning measures could take the nation's cities and regions one step closer to correcting the unequal treatment of these issues, the policy mechanism cannot be expected to achieve it alone. *Figure one* offers a brief sampling of initiatives currently being used to address changing communities. The tools may be employed independently, but are more efficacious as part of an overall strategy to address societal housing patterns and deeply rooted systemic inequities.

There is good news that the climate for protecting access to affordable housing in Delaware may be shifting. In early July of this year, newly elected New Castle County Executive Christopher Coons designated affordable housing as a target area for his administration. He cited the sharply rising home prices as reason to explore this issue further (New Castle County, press release, 2005). The plan includes measures, "to increase opportunities for affordable home ownership and to support rental opportunities." Similarly, the New Castle County Department of Community Services recently released Strategic Plan has defined several specific housing goals and objectives related to promoting decent affordable housing. Strengthening the County's inclusionary zoning policy should be part of these county-wide efforts. Perhaps in this way, the Delaware region will come to embrace the assertion that, "affordable housing must be opportunity housing," and in doing so, ensure that all Delaware residents have an (Rusk, 2001).

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Homeownership—Challenges and Limitations

Joe Myer

The shift in priorities to Homeownership

For more than a decade, there has been a shifting focus by the federal government and many states towards "Homeownership". This shift can be seen by the various federal initiatives, communities and states looking to increase their rate of ownership, and the reduction in rental production programs for the poor. This should not be a surprise because the many benefits of homeownership make for good politics. Whether it be gaining equity, community stability, tax advantages, revenue for communities, or pride often associated with ownership, the list is substantial. Let's face it -- homeownership represents one of America's dearest held values.

Much headway has been made on the homeownership front. Fueled by attractive mortgage interest rates and local down payment and settlement help programs, Delaware has achieved one of the highest homeownership rates in the nation. However, substantial gaps exist if African American and Hispanic families are to enjoy these opportunities. Doing our part, NCALL recently reached the 5,000 homebuyer milestone through our education and counseling services.

Opportunities for homeownership should be coupled with an educational component. Time and time again, homeownership education and counseling has proven to be such an important aspect in the home buying process, yet it is still sometimes left out. Budgeting, debt reduction, learning how to shop for a mortgage, or determining what payment a household is comfortable can make all the difference in the world. Work on credit issues can help a buyer get the best rate and terms possible. It is unconscionable to offer programs appealing to first-time homebuyers without offering objective education and counseling that empowers consumers to make the best financial choices on what is typically their largest financial investment.

Equity – the driving force

Equity, a property's value less what is owed, drives the concept of asset or wealth accumulation. Real estate often appreciates in value while an owner is

paying down their mortgage, creating equity that apartment renters do not enjoy. In days past, equity was used to make a major home repair or addition, to put a down payment on a new home, or perhaps send a child to college. Today, it takes Herculean discipline for a family not to squander their equity on the daily telemarketer offers to refinance, consolidate, and spend. Owners who gained equity recently in Delaware fueled by the escalation in house values, are being tempted to pull the equity out of their houses and use it for other purposes. With consumer debt at an all-time high, equity is often proposed to consolidate and pay off credit card debt. More and more, consumers are using precious equity for daily operating expenses via home equity loans or lines of credit. However, when the equity is spent and a family stays mortgaged to the hilt, their immediate house is at risk. If we don't guard and protect our equity, we could well have a situation where more homeowners own less of their homes than ever before.

If it sounds too good to be true . . .

With rising prices, and as homeownership becomes out of reach, creative schemes abound with all sorts of adjustable rate and interest only mortgages to get you into the house banking on family income increasing sufficiently to pay escalating rates in years to come. Rising housing costs cause buyers to mortgage to the hilt with no room for life's issues. What happens if prices level off and interest rates rise? Does the family budget cover increased gasoline and heating fuel costs? A lender advancing more than a property is worth, even up to 125%, will be paid well for their risk and the owner who is upside down risks losing their house. Borrowers need to weigh the potential consequences and count the cost well. Will our taste for consumption and willingness to mortgage everything but the cat and dog cause a rash of foreclosures?

Rising costs price buyers out of the market

Delaware has been discovered. Rising prices still seem affordable to persons retiring or moving from other states or purchasing a second home. More and more of the Delaware population are being

Median Family Income in 2004 inflation-adjusted dollars			
	United States	Delaware	New Castle County
All Households	\$53,692	\$60,352	\$68,122
Head of Household – White, not Hispanic or Latino	\$59,907	\$66,367	\$74,704
Head of Household – Black or African American	\$34,851	\$43,204	\$48,119
Head of Household – Hispanic or Latino	\$36,820	\$34,980	\$33,022

Source: 2004 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

priced out of the home buyer market. In Delaware, there is insufficient housing stock for modest income, first-time homebuyers. Too little stock means first-time or lower income buyers are forced to look at “fixer-uppers” or substandard units, the ones with hidden costs and often in the least appreciating locations. Prices are reaching such heights that you have to ask yourself how a major portion of Delaware’s population will be able to afford to live in the First State. Incomes are not keeping pace and the affordability gap has widened dramatically, catching most off guard. This could lead to an increased demand for affordable rentals, which would require a shift in resources to accommodate.

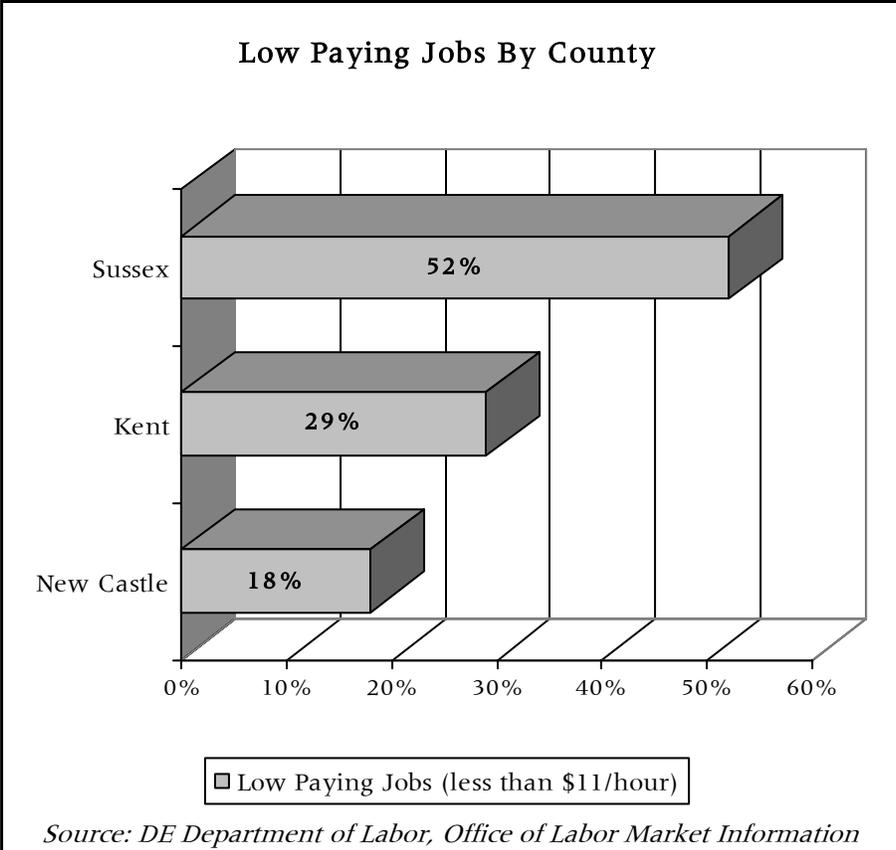
Rental Housing

Virtually all new real estate development relates to the beach or is high priced homes in new subdivision after new subdivision. There is very little affordable development and the little that is, is being negatively impacted by not being able to find general contractors or sub-contractors. Unfortunately, while homeownership has been elevated, HUD’s Section 8 and Rural Development’s Rental Assistance (rent subsidies) for new construction have virtually been dismantled due to cost. The affordability gap between what it costs to build and operate apartments has often required a deep rent subsidy over the years to serve residents below 50% of median income. Most affordable rental production today stems from the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program which serves a fairly narrow line

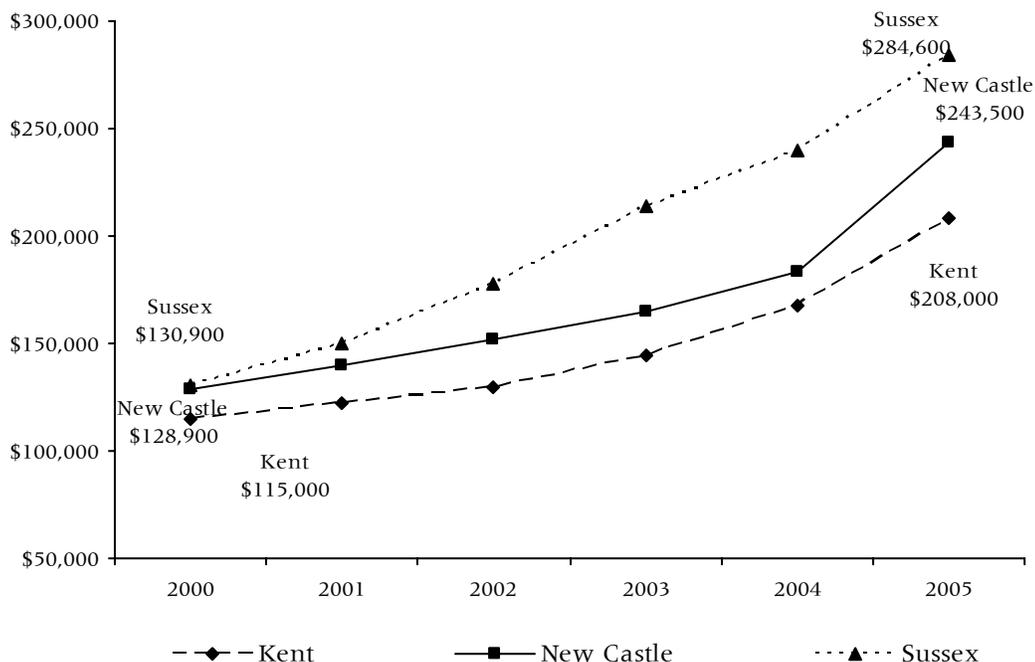
of residents between 50% and 60% of median income in standard form. To reach lower income and at-risk households, other subsidies must be combined with the credits to bridge the gap. Plus, we are saddled with the problem of preserving apartments for the long-term because any type of land use is endangered now that Delaware is discovered. Decent, affordable rental housing is a necessary part of Delaware’s housing continuum and for our workforce.

Resources and creativity

Whether it be for rental or homeownership the



Median Home Prices by County, 2000-2005



Sources: County Associations of REALTORS®

affordability gap will be costly to overcome. Deep rental or homeownership subsidies will be needed to address those who are at-risk and ill-housed. Affordable housing must become a greater priority with commensurate resource allocation. Status quo funding at state level pushes us further and further behind each year. Every year that passes without decent, affordable housing as a funded state priority is an opportunity missed that cannot be recouped. Federal funding coming into Delaware may have to be allocated differently and require different policies to address our growing problem. Local governments must study and implement policies that will assure all citizens can enjoy affordable housing opportunities.

A balanced approach

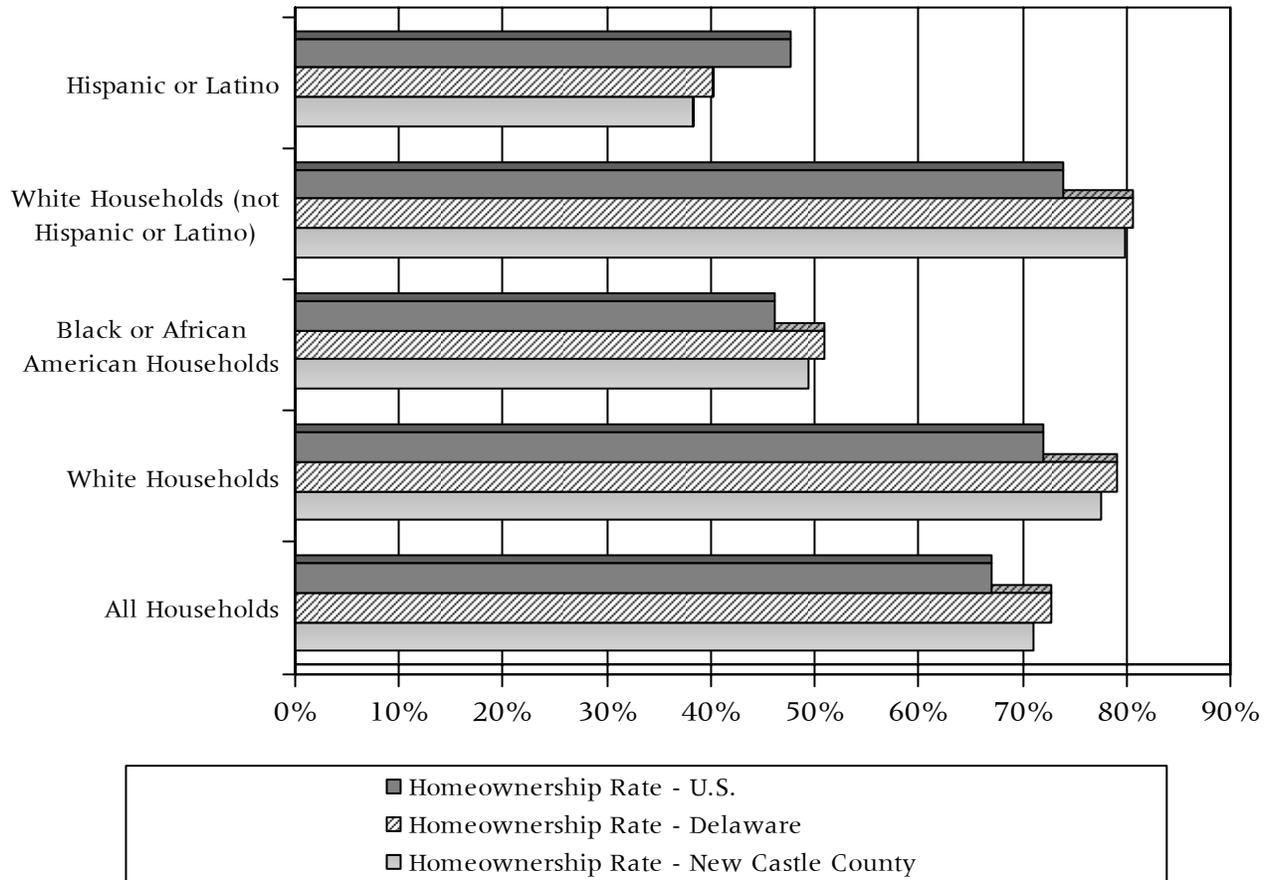
Homeownership and rental opportunities should be made available for families and elderly in Delaware. Opportunities should be affordable offering decent, safe housing and suitable living environments. People should not be priced out of their neighborhoods and communities. Elderly should not have to move away from their network of friends and associates. Too often resources are placed heavily on homeownership without addressing needs for the very poor. Homeownership cannot serve everyone. Adequate resources should be placed towards serving the very poor in Delaware, the

group with the greatest need according to the state's Housing Needs Assessment. With housing needs so great along the entire continuum, a rebalancing of priorities may be necessary.

Not business as usual

Decent, affordable housing whether for rental or ownership is crucial to families and elderly households. Substandard and overcrowded conditions take their toll on health, educational performance, esteem, stability, and security, impacting employers, employees, and our communities. New and creative vehicles need to be tried and implemented. Whether it be Community Land Trusts, manufactured housing, better funded nonprofit developers, new sources of financing, policies requiring affordable development, and more are needed as we face this major hurdle.

Homeownership Rate by Race of Householder- 2004



Source: American Community Survey, 2004. U.S. Census Bureau

Food Stamp Use			
	United States	Delaware	New Castle County
Percentage of all Households Receiving Food Stamps	7.22	6.53	5.22
Percentage of Households Receiving Food Stamps with at least one person in household 60 years or over	22.18	19.08	19.88
Percentage of Households receiving Food Stamps with children under 18 years old	61.51	75.87	74.91
Percentage of Households receiving Food Stamps with income below poverty level	60.43	47.91	45.35
Percentage of Households receiving Food Stamps with 1 or more persons with a disability	52.83	47.89	54.53
Percentage of Households with income below poverty line <i>not</i> receiving Food Stamps	65.70	68.54	73.24

Source: 2004 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

Wealth: Reproducing Inequality

Marlena Gibson

Wealth inequality is so great in the United States today, and has been for so long, that the statistics are simultaneously unsurprising and unbelievable. The top 1% of the population, the next 9%, and the remaining 90% of the population each own one-third of the nation's wealth (Kennickell, 2003). The second decile also holds a disproportionate amount of wealth: when further broken down, the bottom 80% holds only about 16% of the nation's wealth (Allegretto, Bernstein & Mishel, 2005, p. 276). The U.S. population is currently about 298 million people: approximately 238 million people own 16% of the wealth in this nation.

Racial Wealth Gap

The distribution of wealth is far more unequal than the distribution of wages or incomes. Wealth inequality is most dramatic between whites and non-whites, particularly whites and African Americans: "Race – constructed from a European vantage point – has always been a basis on which U.S. society metes out access to wealth and power" (Lui, 2004, p. 42)

Melvin Oliver and Thomas Shapiro's book *Black Wealth/White Wealth* brought intense attention to the issue of the racial wealth gap in the late 1980s. Their findings, such as that 61% of black households have zero or negative net financial assets; that 79% of black households did not have enough net financial assets to survive at the poverty level for three months, and that 73% of all black children grow up in households without financial resources, drew new attention to the enormous levels of economic inequality to which American society is either ridiculously accustomed or chooses to ignore. Their work, exposing wealth as "the buried fault line of the American social system" exposed and reminded us all that while earned income affects families' ability to get by, wealth and assets hold the promise of getting ahead (p. 268).

More recent data on the racial wealth gap are just as disturbing as those used in *Black Wealth/White Wealth*. For more recent years, the Survey of Consumer Finances (SCF) is an excellent source of

data. The net worth (assets minus debts) of the typical family of color fell 7% from 1995-2001, to \$17,100. In that same period, typical white families' net worth grew 37%, to \$120,900. In 2001, the average black household had a net worth equal to about 14% of the average white household. 31% of black households had zero or negative net wealth in 2001. (Aizcorbe, Kenickell, & Moore, 2003).

Perhaps the worst condemnation of our society's weak overtures towards improving economic equality is that the wealth gap not only holds steady, it continues to grow. From 1998-2001 alone, the gap between the net worth of typical white families and families of color grew by 21% (Aizcorbe, Kenickell, & Moore, 2003). A long list of forces combines to insure that families of color not only start behind, but that they stay behind and in many cases fall farther behind.

Recreation of Wealth Inequality

Wealth inequality's most insidious consequence, among many, is the perpetuation of gross race and class inequality. This presents serious challenges to American notions of an "equal starting point" and "level playing field" in our society. It should not come as a surprise and yet, because it is such an affront to deep-seated belief in an "American meritocracy," it is somehow still shocking to acknowledge that wealth "provides enduring advantages and disadvantages across generations" and that those advantages and disadvantages are distributed overwhelming along lines of race (Shapiro, 2004, p. 33). Wealth inequality is, to a large extent, self-perpetuating: it recreates wealth inequality in future generations.

Beyond Income Inequality

For decades, we have looked to differences in income, education and employment to explain black/white socioeconomic disparities (Avery & Rendall, 2002). Recent years have witnessed an increasing understanding of the importance of the role of wealth and assets in the financial stability of low and moderate income households. Even after acknowledging the importance of wealth inequality

in overall socioeconomic inequality, we have still emphasized differences in income, education and employment to explain differences in wealth.

These sources, while important, do not completely explain the pervasive and persistent inequality of wealth and asset ownership in the United States. Many studies (of the few engaged in this kind of work) have found that the correlation between income and wealth is actually fairly weak. Moderate improvements in income equality are leading to only marginal, if any, improvements in wealth equality. As Thomas Shapiro notes in the introduction to *The Hidden Cost of Being African American*, it is the disturbing reality that “black and white professionals in the same occupation earning the same salary typically move through life with significantly unequal housing, residential, and educational prospects, which means that their children are not really on the same playing field.” (2004) Wealth is often the source of these differences.

Savings Patterns

Differences in savings patterns are also often cited as a possible reason for differences in asset ownership. While there are not a lot of studies available on this specific issue, reviews have shown that there is no evidence that African Americans have a lower savings rate than whites (Shapiro, 2004, p. 96). Long-term studies examining patterns in wealth accumulation have found that inheritances play a much greater role in the wealth accumulation of whites than of African Americans (Gittleman & Woolf, 2000). Simply put, “noninherited wealth is more equally distributed between whites and blacks than is inherited wealth” (Avery & Rendall, 2002). Wealth is most definitely hereditary.

Transformative Assets

Shapiro (2004) discusses inherited wealth and assets as “transformative,” acknowledging that it is wealth that allows families to make major changes: to buy a house, invest in education, weather financial hard times, change careers, or start a business. Specifically, “transformative assets” refer to

“the capacity of unearned, inherited wealth to lift a family economically and socially beyond where their own achievements, jobs and earnings would place them. These head-start assets set up different starting lines, establish different rules for success, fix different rewards for accomplishments, and ultimately perpetuate inequality.” (p. 2-3)

A couple is able to buy a more expensive house in a more expensive area with better schools because a

family member helped with a down payment. Grandparents help pay for private school, or a new car, or college tuition. “Loans” that helped pay for college and avoid burdensome student loans - become gifts. There might be help covering expenses while starting a new business, or changing careers. All of these are occasions where the role of wealth and assets can be transformative.

Homeownership

In the course of research for *The Hidden Cost of Being African American*, Shapiro (2004) and his researchers interviewed hundreds of individuals and families. While the results of those interviews were dramatic and revealing on many fronts, the author found that many of interviewees’ most intriguing comments were related to their homes.

For the vast majority of households in the U.S., most if not all of their wealth is held in the form of their home. While the rhetoric of homeownership revolves mostly around building equity, there is much more wrapped up in homeownership. How, when, and where a household purchases a home can have massive impacts on many other areas of their lives. It affects job opportunities, other costs such as transportation; the general cost of living; if and how much that home will appreciate; and, perhaps most importantly for the recreation of inequality – and most important to the families interviewed - educational and other opportunities for children.

As a result of what Shapiro discovered in those interviews, he notes, “How young families acquire homes is one of the most tangible ways that the historical legacy of race plays out in the present generation and projects well into the future.” (p. 3) This plays out in four key ways:

- it is harder for equally creditworthy black families to qualify for home mortgages;
- blacks receive far less family financial assistance with down payments and closing costs;
- black homeowners pay higher mortgage rates; and
- homes in African American communities appreciate less in value.

Interviews found that overwhelmingly, even in cases where transfers of wealth are not in monumental amounts, assistance with buying a home is incredibly important. Assistance with a downpayment can mean a great increase how a family can spend on a home, where and, in some areas, if they can buy a home at all. Cash assistance for moving-in costs, furniture, needed repairs, and other things can also have a large impact, preventing the family from going into debt or, again, allowing them to afford a

higher-priced home. Lowering monthly housing costs can of course also have a positive impact on the families' ability to save in other ways and/or increase their standard of living. White families are overwhelmingly more likely to reap these benefits of family assistance and/or inheritance, particularly when purchasing a home.

Divided Lives

Housing is an incredibly important means by which inequality is perpetuated, and housing segregation ultimately has a litany of effects on neighborhoods, families, children, education and community life. From 1970 to 1990, there was a remarkable increase in the concentration of poverty and affluence. As Massey (1994) describes, "After 1970, however, the promise of mass social mobility evaporated and inequality returned with a vengeance, ushering in a new era in which the privileges of the rich and disadvantages of the poor were compounded increasingly through geographic means." (p. 395)

Our lives and worlds are more and more divided. Where we live, work, shop, worship, where our children go to school – all are becoming increasingly separate. Separation breeds more separation, a lack of community, and chips away at our sense of the common good, community interest, and mutual aid across lines of class and race. Geographic concentration, amplified by wealth and income inequality,

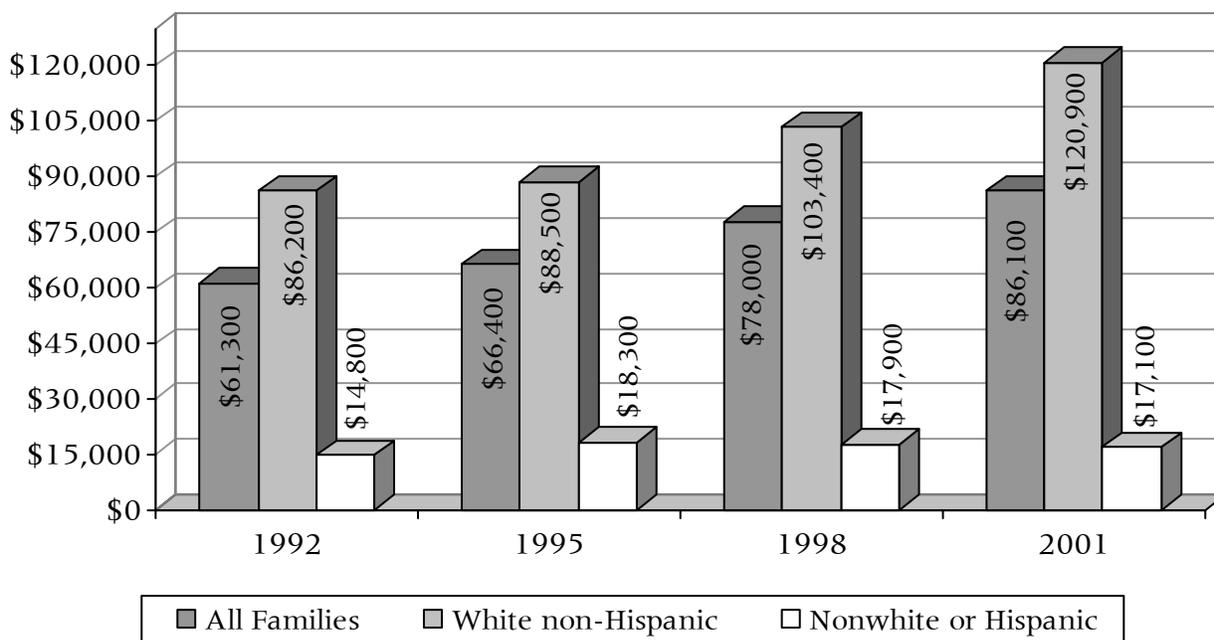
further reinforces lines of race and class (Massey, 1994).

Moving father apart

Gains in income equality made in the past four decades have been modest at best. In 2000, an all-time high was reached – the average black family earned 64 cents for every dollar earned by the average white family. (Shapiro, 2004, quoting the State of Working America). The persistent problem of income inequality is exacerbated by the even more persistent problem of wealth inequality. Indeed, wealth inequality has the potential to slow and even reverse improvements in overall economic equality.

Avery & Rendall (2002) measured lifetime inheritances (wealth transfers that occur throughout one's lifetime) as well as wealth inherited. They found that the black/white gap in lifetime inheritances is estimated to be much larger for the baby boom generation than for previous generations. Their study suggests strongly that "combined with the stalling of blacks' progress in earnings relative to whites' since the 1980s, the baby boom generation may thus have begun a reversal of progress toward racial economic equality, with inheritances playing a key role in this reversal." (p. 1300) Not only will the impact of inheritances slow progress toward greater economic equality but it is quite likely that

Median Family Net Worth 1992-2001



Source: Aizcorbe, Kenickell, and Moore (2003)

Wealth* by race, 1983-2001 (thousands of 2001 dollars)						
	1983	1989	1992	1995	1998	2001
Average Wealth						
Black	\$50.8	\$53.5	\$57.4	\$47.4	\$63.3	\$66.3
White	\$269.9	\$319.3	\$309.0	\$281.6	\$348.7	\$465.8
Median Wealth						
Black	\$5.2	\$2.4	\$13.0	\$8.5	\$10.9	\$10.7
White	\$77.7	\$92.3	\$77.4	\$70.9	\$88.7	\$106.4
Households with Zero or Negative Net Wealth						
Black	34.1%	40.7%	31.5%	31.3%	27.4%	30.9%
White	11.3%	12.1%	13.8%	15.0%	14.8%	13.1%
Average Financial Wealth**						
Black	\$25.6	\$26.2	\$32.7	\$24.7	\$40.8	\$43.2
White	\$198.9	\$241.4	\$237.9	\$219.0	\$276.8	\$369.7
Median Financial Wealth						
Black	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.2	\$0.2	\$1.3	\$1.1
White	\$21.6	\$29.2	\$23.8	\$21.0	\$40.8	\$42.1
* Wealth defined as net worth (household assets minus debts)						
** Financial wealth defined as liquid assets (excluding home equity)						
<i>Source: Allegretto, Berstein & Mishel (2005)</i>						

progress will be reversed by this enormous transfer of wealth. As Shapiro (2004) notes, “no matter how much blacks earn, they cannot preserve their occupational status for their children; they cannot outearn the wealth gap.” (p. 2).

Historical Legacy

As Meizhu Lui’s article “Doubly Divided: The Racial Wealth Gap” and others have clearly laid out, it is an unfortunate myth that the playing field was leveled by civil rights movement and laws of the 1960s. As Lui (2004) details, centuries of “deliberate government policies transferred wealth from nonwhite to whites – essentially, affirmative action for whites.” (p. 43). To fully understand the wealth gap, we must understand that centuries of disadvantage for some groups have also been centuries of advantage for others. Efforts to reduce inequality are hollow if those efforts ignore the vast legacy of advantage and privilege and fail to acknowledge the role of wealth in reproducing inequality.

Two periods that serve as good examples of the impact of preferential treatment and deliberate policies are the Homestead Act and the policies of the New Deal. The 1862 Homestead Act transferred

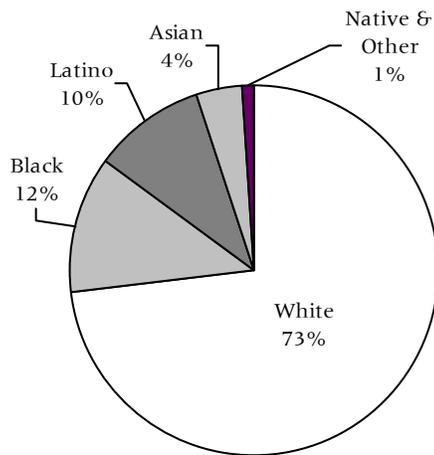
vast amounts of land from Indian tribes to white homesteaders; a recent study estimated that one quarter of today’s population has a legacy of asset ownership that can be directly linked to the Homestead Act (Williams, 2000).

The policies of the New Deal and post-WWII period led to dramatic increases in wealth and asset ownership as well as income and standard of living. As has been well documented, these benefits were far from equally distributed. African Americans were often barred, either explicitly or implicitly, from the asset-building programs that played such a large role in the buildup of wealth among the parents of the baby boomers. Social Security did not apply to domestic and agricultural work, neither did unemployment insurance, or the minimum wage. African American veterans couldn’t use the GI Bill to go to college if colleges would not accept them; could not use a low-interest mortgage to buy a home when faced with rampant housing discrimination.

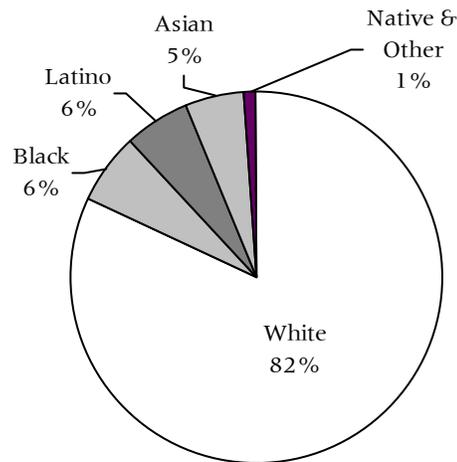
Ultimately, these policies are “the invisible underpinnings” of today’s black-white wealth gap: “wealth legally but inhumanely created from the unpaid labor of blacks, the use of violence – often

Income Distribution

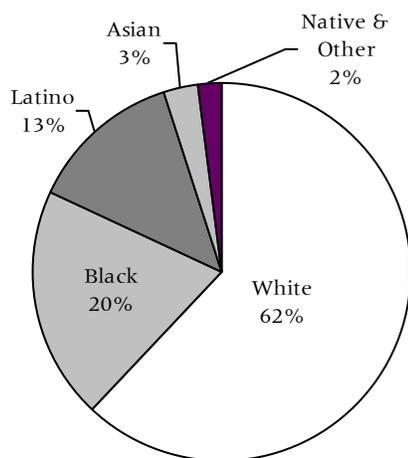
Entire U.S. Population



Highest-Income Fifth



Lowest-Income Fifth



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey 2004 Supplement – Vertical Income Distribution, in Leonard-Wright, Lui, Mota, Muhammad, and Voukydis (2005)

backed by government power – to stop black wealth-creating activities, tax-funded asset building programs closed to blacks even as they, too, paid taxes.” (Lui, 2004) The legacies of past inequalities continue to keep us separate and unequal today. Without great intervention, it will take many more generations before income and wealth inequality subside, if at all. Inherited wealth and transformative assets play a large role in reproducing deep inequality.

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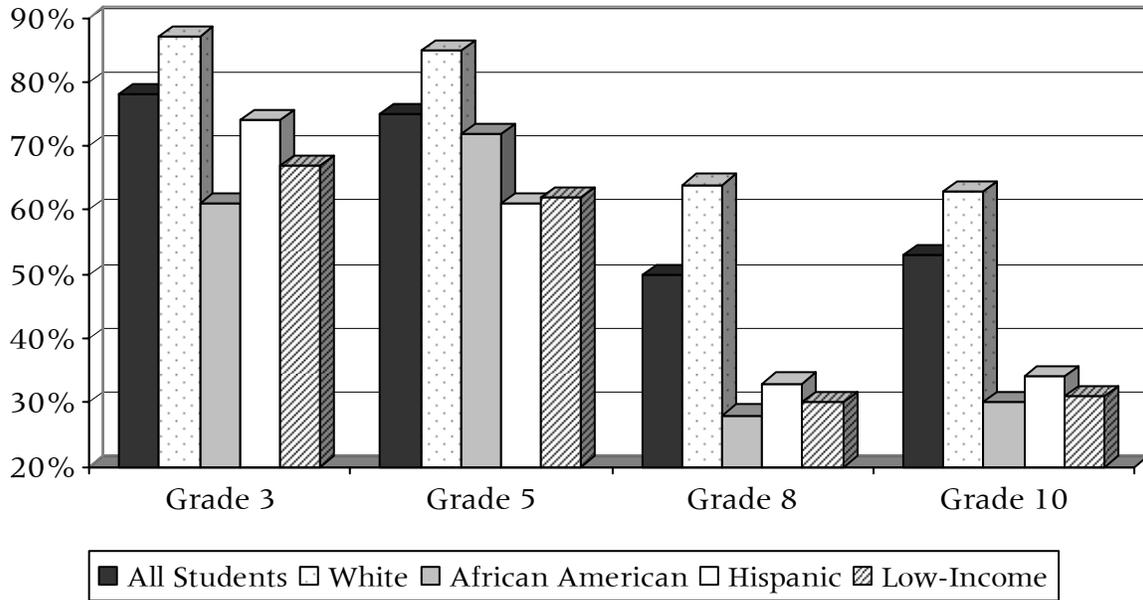
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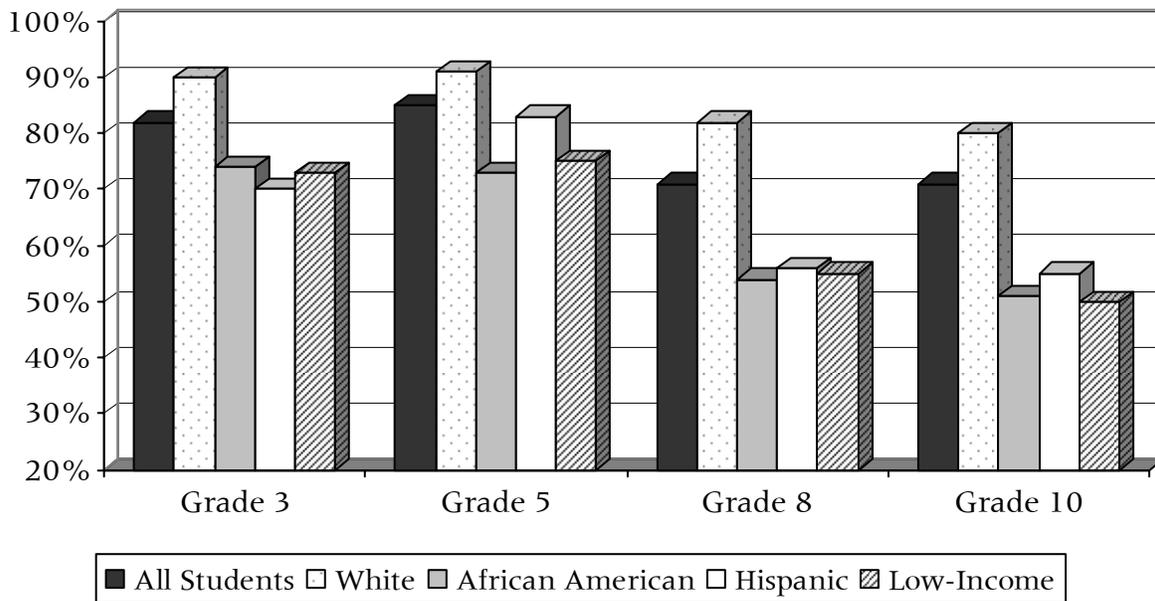
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% of Students Meeting Standards on DSTP Mathematics
(Delaware Student Testing Program), 2004



Source: Rodel Foundation of Delaware, 2005

% of Students Meeting Standards on DSTP Reading
(Delaware Student Testing Program), 2004



Source: Rodel Foundation of Delaware, 2005

No Family Left Behind: Including Parents in Delaware's Schools

Jenny Hoedeman

When George W. Bush's administration unveiled its plan for the future of America's public educational system in 2001, a collective groan must have sounded through the halls of every school in the nation. Let's be clear: the problem was not that we, the educators, wished to leave any particular child behind, it was that we could already foresee the unintended but inevitable results of such a black and white doctrine.

High-stakes testing would soon become the focal point of every child's school year, districts would begin to hand down edicts proclaiming this or that scripted curriculum to be the only acceptable content to teach, and teachers would need to justify every minute of their school day as specially designed to meet the appropriate state or national standard. In short, teachers, who could already lament that too much of their instructional time was taken up by "bureaucratic demands," were about to discover the *real* definition of the phrase.

Imagine for a moment that you are a teacher in a classroom of 30 students, all of whom are from families with low-incomes living in struggling, low-income neighborhoods. Only five of the 30 students are on grade level. Five of the remaining 25 below-level students have severe learning disabilities that have gone undiagnosed by an understaffed and inexperienced learning-support team. Five of the remaining 20 students are so emotionally distraught from any number of family or other problems that they cause constant, angry disruptions to everyone's learning. Five of the remaining 15 students are apathetic; they float through the day like shadows. The other ten try very hard but entered Kindergarten with crippling deficits in their literacy-readiness.

You have no assistant because no money exists for extra staff and no parent volunteers because most family members are working multiple jobs and/or attending school. Morale among teachers in your school is low because they are burnt-out and the principal is unsupportive and perhaps was moved to your school because of incompetence at a previous post. You pour your heart and soul into your class-

room and regularly work 11 and 12-hour days, yet you still come home feeling as if you have not even made a dent. Now imagine that rather than completely overhauling a system riddled with inequities and entrenched race- and class-ism, the federal government wants to hold *you* accountable for the fact that these 30 students will leave your classroom not much better off than they were when they entered.

No one can deny that we, as a nation, were in educationally dire straits when NCLB came onto the scene four years ago. Nor can we disagree that drastic measures were needed to turn around perennially failing districts and generations of students who just weren't learning. It is more difficult, however, to agree on the best way to effect permanent and positive change in districts and schools who face challenges of the magnitude described above. While the name "No Child Left Behind" evokes images of equality and opportunity, upon closer scrutiny it is a plan that *specifically and deliberately* ignores the true issues facing educators today at the expense of true progress in the ailing field.

To begin, let's take a closer look at No Child Left Behind, its rules, and their implications. According to the U.S. Department of Education, the NCLB doctrine boasts four core pillars at its center: increased accountability, more choices for parents and students, greater flexibility, and putting reading first.¹

Accountability

The first pillar, increased accountability, takes the form of a blanket requirement that *all* children in public schools meet or exceed a **Proficient** level in both reading and math by the school year ending in 2014. To be considered **Proficient**, a child must be performing at an average level for his or her grade. It is determined whether or not a child meets this goal by just two test scores (one each in reading and math) per child per year from 3rd through 8th grade. The results of these tests must be disaggregated, or broken down by indicators such as poverty, race, ethnicity, and disability so that *all* children are

counted. Schools must make adequate yearly progress (AYP) with each passing year or they will be subject to improvement, corrective action, or restructuring measures.

Choice

The second pillar is designed to give more choices to students and parents. In theory, students who find themselves “trapped” in a failing school (a school that repeatedly fails to make AYP) are then given the option to attend another school of their choice. Moreover, it is the district’s responsibility to use a portion of its federal funding to provide transportation for those students to alternative schools. Additionally, students who attend a school that is persistently failing, or has failed to make AYP for 3 or more years, have the option to use federal funding to obtain educational supplements, such as tutoring, from the provider of the family’s choice.

Flexibility

Another goal of NCLB is to give states more flexibility in how they spend federal funds. Funds designated for Teacher Quality, Educational Technology, Innovative Programs, Title 1 (a program for disadvantaged students) and Safe and Drug-Free Schools can be transferred among each other without federal approval. This way, schools can target areas that will most impact their unique needs.

Reading First

Finally, NCLB puts reading first with a program of the same name. The program funds professional development, scientifically-based instructional programs, materials, and strategies, valid and reliable screening, diagnostic and ongoing classroom assessments, and statewide accountability and leadership structures.² The goal of Reading First is to catch at-risk students in early childhood in order to close the gap before they fall farther behind.

At a glance, NCLB seems to make sense in many ways. It holds schools accountable and offers them money, programs, and, ostensibly, the flexibility to make improvements. Unfortunately, NCLB is flawed in both its assessment of the problem and in its effort to find a solution. First, for the sake of argument, assume, as NCLB has done, that the root problem lies within classrooms and schools. The National Education Association (NEA) argues that NCLB makes three key mistakes in its approach: punishing already struggling schools; underfunding; and emphasizing testing as the only measure of student – and school – success.

School Failure

Because rewards and punishments are based on test

scores, it is often the schools most in need of help that NCLB ultimately punishes most harshly.³ When faced with high-stakes testing, schools with resources to spare will throw everything they can at test-preparation. Their students’ scores will rise and they will be rewarded with more funding. Schools with little funding to spare cannot hope to keep up, and in the end will be punished doubly for these shortcomings.

When the school is labeled “failing,” students whose parents have the time, energy, and savvy required to navigate the system will find alternatives, leaving the rest behind, quite literally, to waste away until the situation becomes bad enough for a major overhaul such as privatization or closure. Solutions such as these are, again, band-aids for larger systemic shortcomings. Privatization has little data to support lasting change or success, and closure just reroutes the problem to other schools that are often just barely staying afloat themselves.

Underfunding

Second, NCLB has been criticized by the NEA and others for its “unfunded mandates.” An unfunded mandate is a requirement imposed by Congress on state or local governments with no federal funding to pay for it. While NCLB is by no means unfunded, it is significantly under-funded. Estimates range from a \$27 billion shortfall by the NEA to a \$9.6 billion shortfall by the NCSL (National Conference of State Legislatures).⁴ While this number is clearly debatable and not uninfluenced by politics and lobbyists, it is clear that NCLB further strains an already-struggling system.

High-stakes Testing

Finally, the NEA argues that No Child Left Behind encourages an emphasis on high-stakes testing rather than a true overhauling of educational practices. When a teacher knows that his or her bonus

Percentage of Students Performing at Proficient or Advanced Level in National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)		
	Delaware	Nation
Elementary School Reading	33%	30%
Elementary School Math	31%	31%
Middle School Reading	31%	30%
Middle School Math	26%	27%

Source: Rodel Foundation of Delaware, 2005

or job-security will be based on students' scores, it is no surprise that he or she will spend inordinate amounts of time preparing for and teaching to the test rather than instilling a love of learning or caring for and nurturing the whole child. At the end of the day, these tests are a deceptively incomplete, woefully inadequate, and generally misleading method for judging a child and his or her teacher's or school's educational worth. They are, however, an effective way to encourage schools and teachers to lose sight of the child as a human being.

Given the climate that NCLB has created, it comes as no surprise then that a) teachers are frustrated and disillusioned, b) schools are cutting everything except lunch out of a child's school day in order to make more time for math, reading, and the all-important "test-prep", and c) we are not spending enough time and energy addressing the *real* problem. While NCLB disappoints me, the teacher, in many ways, what frustrates me most as both a teacher and an American is our government's blind refusal to examine *why* we have students who struggle to succeed and *why* we have schools that perpetually fail. Yes, NCLB has helped to raise test scores (it left schools with no choice in the matter!) and yes, in the process NCLB has most likely improved the ability of many students to spit out correct answers and perform when demanded to perform. But what has NCLB done for communities and families? What has NCLB done to decrease segregation by race or socioeconomic status in schools and neighborhoods? What will NCLB do besides give our leaders a chance to sit on their laurels until 2014, believing that increasing *test scores on paper* is enough to fix our failure as a nation to bring equal educational opportunities to every student in the country?

Delaware's Students and Families

What will NCLB do for Delaware's students and families—especially those most vulnerable to the inequalities inherent in an impoverished child's educational opportunities? In July 2005, the Rodel Foundation of Delaware, an independent organization committed to the improvement of public education in Delaware, published a comprehensive report on the state of education in Delaware. Major findings included that Delaware's progress in the early grades was quite promising—especially in reading, but that success declined steadily as students grew older. Rodel attributes this drop in achievement partially to a corresponding drop in parental and community involvement as children pass to middle school and high school.⁵ Although the link between parent involvement and student achievement has been proven again and again, NCLB offers neither acknowledgement nor ideas on how to boost this

component of a child's success.

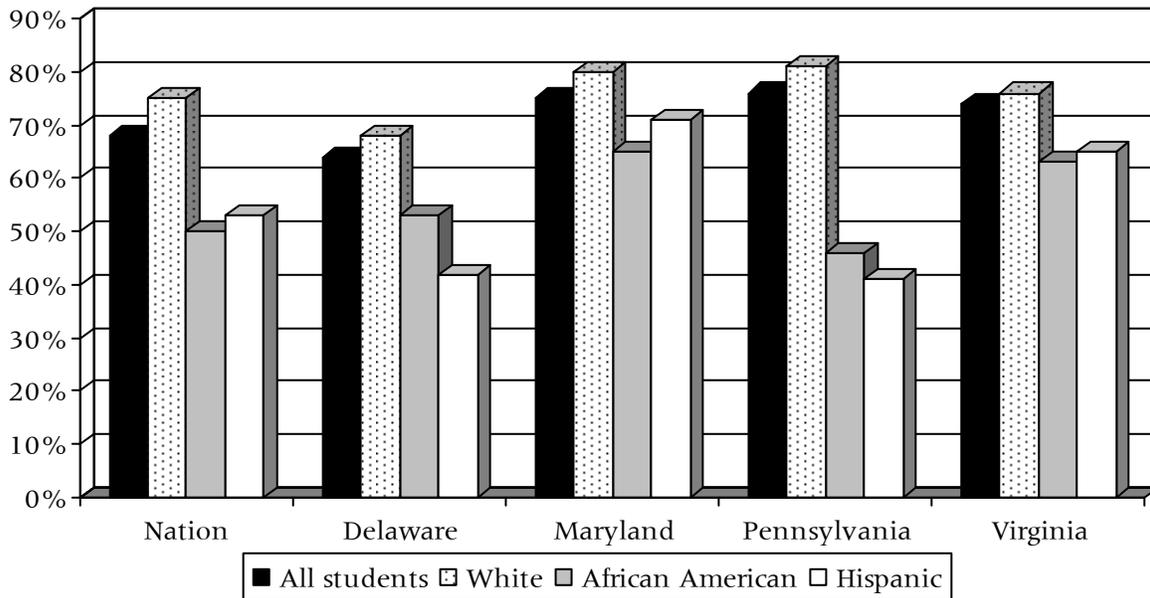
It is no surprise that Delaware is struggling with keeping parents involved. According to Cotton and Wiklund in their article written for the School Improvement Research Series, a decrease in parent involvement at the middle school and high school level is not uncommon and follows national trends.⁶ Even in the best of circumstances, the factors that decrease involvement as students mature include bigger schools that are farther from home, a more sophisticated curriculum, each student having several teachers, increased employment among parents of older students, and students beginning to establish some sense of separation and independence from their parents. A family struggling with poverty could be further prohibited by transportation costs, childcare concerns, or the emotional strain of running a single-parent household. These parents might look at their middle- or high-school aged child and breathe a sigh of relief, thinking the ball is now in his or her court. Quite the contrary, however, these older students require just as much support and guidance as they find their path to career and college.

What can the state do to educate parents and boost their willingness and ability to stay involved in their child's learning? In a 2002 policy brief about the state of parent involvement in Delaware, the University of Delaware Education Research and Development Center concluded that more attention should be paid to "helping parents understand what is reasonable to expect from their child at specific ages and giving parents guidance on how to get kids excited about learning."⁷ The study suggests the following questions for policy consideration:

- How committed are Delaware schools to involving parents?
- What parent involvement strategies are currently being used?
- How effective are the parent involvement programs in engaging different subpopulations of parents (i.e., low-income, minority, etc.)?
- How well are teachers prepared (through higher education, professional development opportunities, etc.) to involve parents?
- To what extent are teachers in Delaware effectively using parent involvement strategies?
- To what extent is communication between families and schools ongoing and two-way?
- What can be done to create a network to improve the quality of parental involvement in schools statewide?

One area where parents can feel empowered and where Delaware seems to be ahead of the curve is

Percent of Students Graduating from High School in 4 Years



Source: Delaware Department of Education

NCLB’s mandate of school choice. With a population of only 119,000 students in the entire state, a full 100,000 fewer students than the city of Philadelphia alone,⁸ Delaware has a unique opportunity to customize education statewide to meet the needs of its diverse population. State law affords parents the choice of *any* public school and does not even limit them to schools within their local district.⁹ While Delaware has historically used busing to help integrate its schools, in the year 2000 the Neighborhood Schools Act was passed which allows students to stay close to home and avoid long bus rides. While this does help to shorten long commutes for young children and keep them close to home, this poses the possibility of more students in poverty going to school together.¹⁰

Neighborhood schools with strong parent and community involvement have the potential to be vibrant community centers and nurturing second homes for children. Neighborhood schools comprised mainly of children in poverty, however, often suffer from the unintentional neglect of a parent body that is overwhelmed with the responsibilities of just living day-to-day. Without political clout to bring help or support from the outside, these schools have little hope of being categorized as anything but failing - due mainly to circumstances beyond the control of any group of teachers, administrators, parents, or students. A socioeconomic diversity of parents who have the time and energy to volunteer, organize and support each other and their children is necessary for schools to serve underprivileged populations

most effectively.

The Rodel Foundation asserts that Delaware can become one of the top states in education in the nation. It points to certain strengths in Delaware’s favor, including the relatively small number of students statewide, a strong state economy, Delaware’s preparedness to meet the demands of NCLB, support from both parties’ leadership, and high levels of state funding.¹¹ The foundation recommends focusing the most effort and money on about 1/3 of the state’s schools first in order to accelerate their achievement dramatically and cause a “ripple” effect of change across the state.¹²

The importance for Delaware, then, will be choosing which schools and which reforms in order to effect the most change. Delaware’s success will also hinge upon its outreach efforts to parents. Currently, fewer than half of parents in Delaware say they are aware of NCLB, and the percentage of parents who have taken advantage of NCLB’s free tutoring services (2.9%) lags far behind the national percentage (11.3%). The Rodel Foundation suggests that we need to continue to reach out to parents by ensuring that they are well informed and well trained to meet their children’s learning needs at home, feel welcomed and respected in the schools, and are encouraged to participate at the leadership level. Through efforts like these, Delaware can prove that NCLB should be about more than simply test scores and statistics, but about the people—the parents, the students, and the teachers, that are working hard

Immigration

Abena Aidoo

Introduction

According to the report put out by the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), the net number of immigrants arriving in Delaware was about 2,235 per year covering the period from 2000 to July 2004. The percentage increase of foreign-born people in Delaware since the 2000 Census is 14.7 of the state's annual average population change. This trend is not unique to Delaware, but can be seen across the United States and in other countries and explains to an extent the preoccupation of nations with the issue of immigration. Key to this preoccupation are the discussions that focus on the perceived advantages and disadvantages that immigration brings to both the sending countries and the receiving countries.

In terms of the receiving countries, it has been suggested that immigration provides a number of positive impacts. A UNU-WIDER policy brief (2004) on *Poverty, International Migration and Asylum* suggested that, "many receiving societies have recognized how immigration can be culturally enriching providing a source of fresh talent and ideas."

Rumbaut (1994) cited a number of positive impacts of immigration on receiving countries. First, he states that "entrepreneurial immigrants create jobs," (p. 614). For instance in 1980 in Los Angeles, a study found that among Koreans, 22% were self-employed and consequently provided employment for another 40% of Koreans. In addition, a national study of 411 counties with populations of over 100,000, using the 1980 census data, found that "the larger the foreign-born population, the larger the gains in employment: immigrants added twice as many jobs to the county as natives," (p. 615).

Secondly, Rumbaut stated that there was little evidence to support the claim that immigrants were responsible for unemployment in the U.S. Rather he suggested, research on both legal and illegal immigrants revealed the major economic benefits they contributed to U.S. natives. He adds that the entry of immigrants into urban labor markets (since this is where the majority of immigrants are concentrated)

in the U.S. helps to:

- increase native wages, as well as productivity and investment;
 - sustain the pace of economic growth;
 - revive declining sectors such as light manufacturing, construction and apparel;
 - push domestic workers up into supervisory and administrative jobs (which may not exist, if there was not the supply of immigrant manual labor); and,
 - fill the significant national need for skilled talents with immigrant professionals.
- (Rumbaut, 1994, p. 615).

The other side is the perceived negative impacts of immigration on receiving nations. First is the supposed contribution to unemployment referred to above. The second has to do with the supposed burden placed on the welfare and public assistance systems of these nations. Another negative impact has to do with the perceived increased threats to the security of receiving nation with the inflow of immigrants some of home might have ulterior motives. Recent acts of terrorism in the U.S. and around the globe add weight to this concern (UNU-WIDER, 2004).

Considering the sending or source nations, a number of positive and negative impacts have been suggested. On the positive side, immigration has been found to provide an important source of remittances for those left behind in the source countries. This enables them to afford the daily expenses that would otherwise be out of their reach (UNU-WIDER, 2004). Furthermore, the remittances also provide valuable foreign currency for the source governments to help them take care of their balance of payments deficits. Another benefit is the inflow of information on technological advances and other ideas on development needed by these source nations.

The UNU-WIDER policy brief (2004) mentions a number of perceived negative impacts that immigration has on sending nations. First, immigration is

said to result in a loss of skilled and creative workers, which has an adverse impact on these nations, particularly as they seek to build up their economies. Consequent to that is the brain drain, which results in the deterioration of education, research and business opportunities and a decline in the levels of social services.

Focus of the Article

In view of the perceived impacts that immigration has on both source and receiving nations, it is not surprising that there is widespread discussions on the pros and cons of restricting immigration. The focus of this article however, is to look at some of the factors that have influenced and continue to influence the growth of immigration and the situation of immigrants in the state of Delaware.

The next section will give a brief overview of immigration in the U.S. This will be followed by a close look at some of the factors that influence immigration. While there are several factors, the article will consider four: 1) Globalization; 2) the Structural Adjustment Program; 3) U.S. immigration and foreign policies; and 4) Migration Networks. The final section of the article will look at statistics that portray the state of poverty among immigrants in Delaware and the challenges that they face in their pursuit of making progress in their lives. Please note that international migration and immigration will be used interchangeably in the article.

Overview of Immigration Trends

The literature suggests that the current patterns of immigration globally, but particularly in the U.S., are very different from what they were in the past. Massey (1990) writes that “the modern history of international migration can be divided into four periods,” (p. 61). The first period dates from 1500 to 1800. During this period, immigration was dominated by Europe and was a result of the process of colonization and the growth in the economy resulting from mercantilism.

The second period was from 1800 to 1915 and resulted from a number of factors, namely, i) the industrialization of Europe; ii) the achievement of independence by several New World colonies; and iii) the spread of economic development to the newly formed countries (p.61).

According to Massey, the third period, from about 1920 to 1950, saw a limitation of international migration, which was a result of restrictive immigration laws, the Great Depression and World War II. The fourth period also referred to as the contemporary period, started from 1950 and marks the beginning of the global nature of immigration. It was, and

still is, characterized by a greater diversity in the source nations. It moved from being solely Europe to include the Third World countries. In terms of receiving nations, Massey suggests that countries in Europe that were previously source nations, such as Germany, France, Switzerland and the Netherlands, have now become receiving nations. He adds,

“the vast majority of immigrants to the United States, for example, come from Asia, Latin America, or the Caribbean – only 10 percent are currently from Europe – and the most important source countries are Mexico, the closest developing country; the Philippines, a former colony; Korea, which has a large U.S. military presence and extensive trade relations with the U.S...” (Massey, 1990, p. 62)

Bach (1986) in addressing the changing patterns of immigration asserts that the period after World War II saw an unparalleled move of people from “less developed regions to the advanced industrial states,” (p. 140). He adds that prior to the 1970s, the expectation had been that the immigrants would return to their home countries after their time in the host countries. However, the economic crises in the United States and in Western Europe cemented the permanence of most immigrants’ stay in these countries.

A closer look will now be given to the four factors affecting present day immigration trends, namely, globalization, the Structural Adjustment program (SAP), U.S. immigration and policies, and migration networks.

Factors Affecting Immigration: Globalization

Globalization refers to the liberalization of international trade and the revolution in communications (UNU-WIDER, 2004). According to the UNU-WIDER policy brief, globalization can be seen to influence immigration in a number of ways. The first has to do with the huge economic pressures that trade liberalization places on the economies of developing countries. This results, per the brief, in “increased unemployment, reduced social spending and a decline in living standards,” (p. 6); creating an impetus for their citizens to look for greener pastures elsewhere.

Another way that globalization impacts immigration is by expanding the communication and transportation possibilities. Through globalization, the flow of information is broadened, enabling people in developing countries to keep in touch with their already immigrated family and friends. This exposes them to the culture in the developed country, in this case,

the United States and increases the desire of those still living in the source countries to move to a 'better' place. With globalization have come cheaper transportation costs that once were prohibitive making the possibility of immigration attractive and affordable.

A third way, according to the UNU-WIDER brief is through the increased demand of high and low skilled labor in advanced industrialized states such as the U.S. The flexibility and competitiveness resulting from trade liberalization has caused many manufacturing companies to become reliant on low-cost labor, making the supply of labor from developing countries attractive. This is because the majority of individuals coming from the developing are more concerned about finding a job, not really how much it pays (Massey, 1990).

In "Globalization and its Victims", Amaladoss (1999) refers to globalization as:

"a form of economic colonialism. It leads to the further impoverishment of the poor countries who are obliged to follow policies set by the richer nations under the guise of structural adjustment programmes. It may permit the emergence of a few rich people also in poor countries, but who are in league with the rich everywhere..."(p. vii).

This invariably leads to difficult economic situations, thus raising the push for international migration.

The extended flow of information and communication mentioned above contributes to what Amaladoss refers to as *cultural globalization*. He suggests that the effect of this is the imposition of western cultures, which promote a materialistic outlook, a spirit of individualism and competition, and an attitude of consumerism; and this fuels the desire for individuals, particularly in the poorer developing countries to desire to acquire more and have the 'glamorous' lives of their developed counterparts. Closely linked with the issue of globalization is that of the Structural Adjustment program, which will be looked at next.

Structural Adjustment Program (SAP)

Amaladoss (1999) suggests that the SAP was put in place by the world's seven rich countries (forming the G-7) and administered through the IMF and the World Bank as a way to address the Balance of Payment (BOP) crises of developing countries. Bello, Cunningham and Rau (1994) on the other hand see the SAP as a brainchild of the Reagan era viewed as a way of 'resubordinating' the developing countries referred to as the *South* under the guise of alleviat-

ing the debt crises these countries were facing. Here too, the IMF and World Bank were to be the administering agents. The common thread then is to say that this was a program imposed on countries suffering under the burden of BOP deficits.

The basic tenets of the program required that countries seeking aid and loans from the IMF and the World Bank to help defray their debts had to engage in structural adjustment activities such as, i) the privatization of state enterprises, ii) putting an end to subsidies, and iii) opening the economies to foreign investment (Bello et al, 1994). Political adjustments were required in countries, such as Ghana, that had been under military rule to democratize in order to receive the funds.

Even though proponents of the SAP would like to suggest that the program was a success, several independent studies show otherwise. Some findings indicate that while the per capita income remained stagnant for countries in the South that had undergone structural adjustments in the 1980s, the per capita income of the richer countries in the *North* rose by about 2.4 per cent, widening the income gap between these two regions (Bello et al., 1994). Fernandez (in Amaladoss, 1999) states that the ratio of low- to high-income economies grew from 1:28 in 1970 to about 1:50 in 1990.

According to Bello et al., the countries hardest hit by the adverse effects of the SAP are found in Latin America and Africa. They report that in Latin America the effect of the SAP was to cancel out the progress made during the 1960s and 1970s. In addition, there was an increase in the number of people living in poverty from 130 million in 1980 to 180 million in the 1990s. Other adverse effects were felt socially as a result of the deteriorating economic conditions. For instance, in Columbia, there was an increase in drug activities and gangs; in Peru, violent clashes between insurgents and government forces were attributed to the harsh economic realities of an adjustment program gone bad.

Africa, particularly the sub-Saharan region, was gravely affected, according to Bello et al. (1994). This was reflected in the increase in total debt, the increase in the incidence of undernutrition and the collapse of public health systems. Ghana, a country considered to one of the most 'structurally adjusted' (Bello et al., 1994), could still not escape the adverse impacts of the program. While there was an evidence of apparent success, such as a fall in the annual rate of inflation from 123 in 1983 to 18 in 1998, signs of the negative results of SAP in Ghana seemed to outweigh the successes. For instance, Ghana's external debt rose from \$1.7 billion in 1983

to \$3.5 billion in 1990. In addition, an estimated 50,000 workers lost their jobs in the public sector/civil service as a result of the SAP. Even though later attempts to control this through PAMSCAD (Program of Actions to Mitigate the Social Costs of Adjustment) were made, it still left over 50 per cent of workers affected (Bello et al, 1994).

The relationship between the effects of SAP and immigration can be seen in the push for people in the developing countries to move to more developed countries as a way to overcome the worsening economic and social conditions that can be attributed (to an extent) to the structural adjustment activities the engaged in during the 1980s.

Attention will now be given to the third factor, U.S. immigration and foreign policies.

U.S. Immigration and Foreign Policies

The literature lists a number of U.S. policies that have been instrumental in the increase of immigrants to the U.S. Rumbaut (1994) mentions a few, such as the Bracero Program, a guest-worker program instituted in 1942 to mitigate the labor shortages in the southwest during World War II. The assumption was that after the period of employment these workers would return to their home countries. However, after the program was terminated many chose to stay increasing the number of undocumented laborers (p. 590).

The 1948 Displaced Persons Act opened the door for more refugees to enter the U.S. as it officially gave recognition to refugees. A clause in the 1952 McCarran-Walter referred to as the 'Texas Proviso' protected the growers and ranchers in this area against sanctions resulting from the hiring of illegal aliens. This also contributed to the increase in the number of undocumented immigrants. The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) however nullified that.

He also mentions other policies that have contributed to the increase in the number of immigrants, documented and undocumented, include the U.S. annexation of parts of Mexico resulting large Mexico-rooted communities between California and Texas; the colonization of the Philippines by the U.S. that contributed to the Americanization of the Filipino culture and made immigration more accessible for the Filipinos.

Cold war policies and the related military presence of the U.S. countries that would otherwise by subject to communist invasion have also contributed to the number and diversity immigrants. For instance, the U.S. military presence in South Korea and Viet-

nam has led to an increase in the number of immigrants from these countries, as well as countries in Latin America and the Dominican Republic.

A policy that is very significant and is relevant to the fourth factor is the 1965 amendment to the National Origins Quota Act (Bach, 1986). This amendment was known as the Hart-Celler Act of 1965 (Rumbaut, 1994). It abolished the national origins quota system (Rumbaut, 1994) that had discriminated against non-European immigrants (Bach, 1986), and gave "priority to family reunification over occupational skills," (Rumbaut, 1994, p. 588). The significance of this act is that it opened the door to more immigrants through the migrant networks that resulted and this will be looked at next.

Migration Networks

Migrant networks refer to "the sets of interpersonal ties that link together migrants, former migrants, and nonmigrants in origin and destination areas through the bonds of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin," (Massey, 1990, p. 69). The UNU-WIDER brief adds to the actors, families of migrants, firms, religious or social groups.

According to Massey (1990), migrant network influences immigration by lowering the costs of movement and thus increasing the expected returns to migration. In the UNU-WIDER brief, it is stated that migrant networks serve as a chief source of information on legal or employment opportunities, provide resources to fund travel and other socio-psychological support, all adding up to make the process of immigration more attainable and attractive.

The passage of the Hart-Celler Act of 1965 provided a legal basis for the formation of migrant networks. With its emphasis on family reunification, it set the stage for the formation of these networks as immigrants once settled, could send for their family members, who in turn could send for other relatives. Before long, a network is established benefiting not only family members, but also other members of the same sending geographic regions.

So what is the situation of immigrants in Delaware? The next section will attempt to provide answers.

Immigrants in Delaware

Data put out by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation for Delaware covering the period of 2002 to 2003 showed that the percentage of Hispanics living in poverty¹ was 31 compared to 9% for Whites and 26% for Blacks. Another noteworthy aspect of their data was the comparison made against data for the entire United States. Out of the three categories, only the Hispanic category was higher in Delaware

than the national: 31% versus 30%.

Families USA (2003) in their article, *Who's Uninsured in Delaware and Why?*, stated that "racial and ethnic minorities are more likely to be uninsured than are whites." Their data to support this statement indicated that while 18.4% of Hispanics were uninsured during this period, 9.6% of White (non-Hispanic) and 11.6% of Black (non-Hispanic) residents were uninsured.

Overall (2003) in a previous article addresses the many challenges that immigrants face. These include the social and psychological stress of being far from loved ones in their home countries and facing this unknown future, sometimes alone. There is the added stereotyping that casts a pall on these newcomers and makes their assimilation into the American culture all the more difficult.

Another challenge is the language barrier for non-English speaking immigrants and the difficulty it provides when it comes to finding better paying jobs. A casual discussion with a menial worker from an Asian country, revealed that this individual was a practicing pharmacist in the home country, but had relocated here to seek better opportunities for the children. The reason for settling for this lower-paying job was the language barrier, and yet the demands of the current job made it impossible to be able to get the tutoring in English necessary to provide better opportunities. It was clear from the discussion that the individual would prefer to be back in the home country, but was willing to make the sacrifice for the sake of the offspring (Personal Communication, 2005).

Conclusion

It is clear that the process of immigration, even though having taken different forms and influenced by different factors, is a permanent fixture in human existence. The discussion of the factors, namely globalization, the Structural Adjustment program, U.S. immigration and foreign policies and the existence of migration networks, was to attempt to explain the reasons behind the increasing numbers of immigrants to the United States, in particular, as well as other destinations. The information presented on immigrants in Delaware highlights the realities of poverty that exist among these groups, including higher rates of poverty and lower rates of insurance coverage.

Given that this phenomenon, immigration, is here to stay, it behooves policy makers to take a closer look at the issues at stake and seek to provide better options for the individuals who form an integral part of the state's economy. The UNU-WIDER brief sug-

gests that "more accurate and balanced information on the social and economic impacts of immigration, including the benefits of labour migration," could minimize the challenges faced by immigrants as their receiving societies become welcoming.

Endnote

¹They define poverty as making less than 100% of the federal poverty level.

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The Realities of Poverty in Delaware
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