

FOCUS[®]

The magazine of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies

BLACK VOTE STRONG; MORE BACK BUSH

Black Caucus Grows

By Joe Davidson

Those African Americans who were disappointed by President Bush's election victory might find at least some satisfaction to counter their pain in two Election Day facts.

One: Black voter participation increased by 25 percent. And two: The number of Congressional Black Caucus members will grow by four, reaching 43 members come January.

"A 25 percent increase in turnout from one election to the next is a great turnout and an enormous achievement," says David A. Bositis, a Joint Center senior research associate. Still, those two achievements couldn't overcome a strong sense of distress that Bush's victory generated in much of the Black community.

At the same time, Bush's victory was facilitated by greater African American support this year — by a significant amount in some states — than four years ago. Despite the serious disagreements many Black

—Continued on page 10

IN THIS ISSUE...

- 2 **Perspective**
My Heart and Soul Remain as I Move On
- 3 **Q&A: Eddie N. Williams**
Man Who Molded Joint Center for Three Decades Retires
- 9 **Medicaid Drug Rules Concern Politicians**
Survey Also Shows Misperceptions
- 12 **Educators Overlook Child Development**
Academics, Behavior Tightly Linked

IN TRENDLETTER...

- 5 **Political Report**
Survey Details Black Alienation From Bush
- 7 **Economic Report**
Programs Seek Boost in Black High-Techs

My Heart and Soul Remain as I Move On

In the November 1972 maiden issue of FOCUS, I wrote that the challenge for the then two-year-old Joint Center was “to be both a center for intellectual discovery and wellspring of practical political knowledge. The times dictate that we be a clearinghouse for information on minority group involvement in the political process. Our own pride dictates that we be a center for excellence — an organization whose ability is unquestioned and whose credibility is beyond reproach.”

That was my first column in FOCUS. This is my last. The end of November marks my last day — after 32 years — as Joint Center president. During those three decades, I am proud to report, we have met the challenge. What was an infant organization has matured to become the nation’s premier think tank on issues of importance to African Americans.

The Joint Center has accomplished much over the years. The list of things that have given me great personal pleasure and provided the Joint Center with a solid institutional foundation is long. A few of them are:

- Creating FOCUS magazine
- Publishing the annual Roster of Black Elected Officials
- Developing DataBank, our on-line statistical data center
- Establishing a national Health Policy Institute
- Helping to organize almost every national organization of Black Elected Officials, beginning with the Congressional Black Caucus.

Of course, while I take great pride in these accomplishments, they were achieved with the hard work and sacrifice of talented and dedicated employees and a very supportive board of governors. They truly are the Joint Center’s backbone. To them, I offer a heartfelt “thank you.” It may be a cliché to say the staff and board members, both past and present, have been the wind beneath my wings, but without them this institution would not have gotten off the ground.

I use the word “institution” with purpose and consideration. When Louis Martin, the Joint Center’s first chairman and the namesake of our “Great American” award, recruited me for this job, I made it clear that my goal would be to develop the Joint Center into an institution with staying power. I believed then, as I do now, that institution-building depends on excellent staff, sound infrastructure, responsive programs and publications and quality service to our leaders and community.

I feel great pride because we have reached that goal. Now it is time for new leadership. I am very pleased that the board has chosen Togo D. West, Jr., to continue building this institution.

His resume is rich with public service and policy making. He has served as Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Secretary of the Army. His long history of service extends well beyond government and includes being president of the National Capital Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America and chairman of the board of directors of the Greater Washington Board of Trade. He also managed to find time to teach law at Duke University. The Joint Center is fortunate to have him as its new president.

After Louie recruited me to the Joint Center, he would say that he took me to the mountaintop to show me its great promise. Louie was right, and the Joint Center’s promise keeps expanding. My heart and soul will always belong to this institution. ■


PRESIDENT

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Q&A Eddie N. Williams

Man Who Molded Joint Center for Three Decades Retires

This year marks the end of an era — a long, successful era — for the Joint Center. Eddie N. Williams, who has been the Joint Center's president for 32 of its 34 years, is retiring. He recently spoke with Joe Davidson, editor of FOCUS, the magazine Williams founded, about his decision to leave, how things have changed during those years and the importance of continuing to build the institution under the leadership of its incoming president, Togo D. West Jr. This is an edited transcript of that conversation.

FOCUS: *You are so identified with the Joint Center, and the Joint Center is so identified with you — you've been here for all but two years of its existence. Why are you leaving?*

WILLIAMS: Well, I've been here 32 years, and I think it's time for a change. I had urged the board to create a succession plan as early as 1999.

I think that [leaving] is good for me. I think it is good for the institution, to have fresh eyes, fresh ears, fresh legs, new leadership. Fortunately, I'm not leaving because I'm ill or addled, I don't think. But I do think it's the time for a change.

FOCUS: *And what are your personal plans for the future?*

WILLIAMS: I plan to take a little time and do some things I haven't been able to do with my 24/7 commitment to the Joint Center. I've about half-created (at the time of the interview) a consulting firm, at least on paper, legally. And I would like to try my hand at a little work in the private sector — in the for-profit sector. I may also do some things at a university that might take advantage of my experiences, skills and interests.

FOCUS: *Will the consulting be in the area of politics or public affairs?*

WILLIAMS: I think it will mainly be in the area of management consulting, human

resource development, strategic planning. Helping both for-profit and nonprofit organizations in areas in which I think I have some expertise, whether it's communications or outreach to Black leaders, or understanding those issues, or using the skills, the tools of research, and whatever, to address issues and problems.

FOCUS: *How has America, and Black America in particular, changed during your 32 years at the Joint Center?*

WILLIAMS: Well, I think America has changed dramatically in terms of its economic and military might, in terms of its influence in the world. It has changed in terms of its technological innovation, as a pace setter and world leader.

It has changed also in a greater degree of accommodations in race relations and human relations and diversity. It's got a long way to go, however, to live up to its own ideals. But I think it's moving in the right

direction, however slowly that might be.

African Americans also have changed during this time. As a group, I think we are better prepared to both take advantage of the opportunities that exist [and] to demand opportunities.

FOCUS: *How do you define the impact of the Joint Center?*

WILLIAMS: I think the Joint Center's impact is threefold. One, we produce information that is available to the public, particularly people who are in leadership positions, Blacks, Whites, anybody. We focus on those who are in the public policy arena.

Secondly, we make sure we get information in the hands of African American leaders who are on the cutting edge for action. These are the advocates. And we have an impact through them.

Thirdly, I think we have an impact by our direct association with many of the

Eddie N. Williams Career Highlights

- Joint Center president, 1972-2004
- Past Grand Sire Archon of Sigma Pi Phi fraternity (The Boulé), the oldest African American fraternity in the United States, 1998-2000
- Fellow, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, which "recognizes men and women whose intellectual leadership has made a decisive difference in their profession or scholarly discipline," since 1998
- Recipient, MacArthur Foundation Prize Fellows ("Genius") Award, 1988
- University of Chicago vice president for public affairs and director of the Center for Policy Study, 1968-1972
- Chicago *Sun-Times* op-ed columnist, 1970-1972
- Department of State foreign service reserve officer, 1961-1968
- *Atlanta Daily World* reporter, 1957-1958
- University of Illinois, B.S. degree (journalism), 1954
- Honorary doctorate degrees from Bowie State University, University of the District of Columbia, Chicago State University, Dillard University, and Benedict College
- Citations for leadership by *Ebony*, *National Journal* and *Washingtonian* magazines; the Black Leadership Forum, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Korean American Alliance, the Congressional Black Caucus and other national caucuses of Black elected officials
- Member, National Coalition on Black Civic Participation (chairman emeritus), National Academy of Public Administration, and Council on Foreign Relations

activists and civil rights groups in helping to think through the issues of the day or the priorities that ought to be pursued.

FOCUS: *Thirty years ago, in talking about what you would like the Joint Center to become, you used the phrase, “a poor man’s Brookings Institution.” Does that still hold?*

WILLIAMS: I still use it. I use it for effect, for humor. But it makes the point. I mean, Brookings is fairly well known, and I want the Joint Center to be well known, as well known as Brookings.

And by “poor man,” I meant we work on the issues relating to low-income people, minorities, the disadvantaged. If you don’t look at those who are the least among us, it is kind of hard to figure out the right thing for the best and most powerful among us to do.

And I think that’s our role, not to just talk about the employment in America, but the employment of African Americans and other minorities, to make sure that gets on the table and doesn’t get left out. And I think we’ve been that voice.

FOCUS: *The Joint Center was affected by the slumping economy, like everywhere else. Do you think that the mission has been at all compromised, or diverted, or in any way hindered because of the cut-backs in contributions that all nonprofit institutions have suffered?*

WILLIAMS: I don’t think its mission has been hampered or hindered as a result of the downturn in the economy. I think we were unable to do all the things that we wanted to do, that we knew needed to be done. That’s where we were hurt.

FOCUS: *When Juan Williams wrote his historical essay on the Joint Center, he said that one problem is the organization’s “lack of ready made public identity.” Do you agree that’s a problem, or is the work of the Joint Center necessarily behind the scenes, providing information for elected officials and other leaders, but work that the general public, even the Black public, might not necessarily recognize?*

WILLIAMS: I think I would agree with your framing of it. We were not, and are not, a household name—that’s for sure. We do not have chapters scattered all over

the United States like the Urban League or the NAACP. We have not taken all of our scarce resources and pumped them into a PR firm. We’ve decided to put [them] into products and quality, and let that speak for us when it comes to visibility.

FOCUS: *What do you see for the future of the organization?*

WILLIAMS: You know, when I came, I said — perhaps [I was] overly ambitious and irreverent for that relatively young age —that if the Joint Center was looking for someone who was not necessarily a charismatic civil rights leader, but who was committed to building an institution, I would consider that to be a challenge, and everything I have done has been aimed at institutionalizing this place.

The first step is getting it a publication that would have some visibility and force. Developing our own symbols. Developing programs and relationships. I mean, that’s all part of building an institution, and more importantly, putting in a staff with an infrastructure that works.

So that’s something I feel very, very proud of, and obviously that’s something I would think needs to be emphasized as the institution moves ahead. I know that that’s a course of action that the board is very supportive of, and I believe that my successor will be very supportive of it as well.

FOCUS: *How has the Joint Center changed during your tenure?*

WILLIAMS: The first major change — The Joint Center used to out-source a lot of its research. And I said, “I would like to get that money and create a staff in the Joint Center.” And that’s what I did. We still use some consultants, but we created the staff.

The other thing is, we wanted to get into the field to work with Black elected officials in a hands-on way. We knew it was important to provide training and information to Black elected officials, because they were relatively new to the field of governance. And so that’s what we did around the country in conferences and workshops.

And the Joint Center played a role in creating every Black caucus of politicians that exists, even the Congressional Black Caucus, because my predecessor, Frank

Reeves, was involved as early as ’69 and ’70 in working on the Caucus.

I had some officials in here the other day from the National Organization of Black County Officials. We were involved in getting them set up—NBCLEO [National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials], getting them set up. And even in my time, helping to set up the [association of] Black state legislators.

I’m not sure we had much to do with the Black school board members, but the others we did.

The basic goal never changed. The methodology did. The goal still is to increase the influence or impact of African Americans in the political and public policy arena. And to build coalitions.

And it will change more. I mean, I can’t predict what the future will be. I do know that we, over the past several years, made a conscious effort to invest as much as we could spare into [the Joint Center’s] DataBank. I do see that as being part of the force of the future.

And it’s now gotten to the point where I think we all can see it more readily, and it’s beginning to pay off, and we’ve convinced some foundations of its efficacy, of its capacity.

I think my successor will be able to take that and expand it, and maybe move it to the point where it will be profitable. It can sell services to corporations and others who need packaged information, especially businesses that are in the consumer sector.

FOCUS: *Do you have any advice for your successor?*

WILLIAMS: Keep building the institution. Institutions survive people, survive leaders. In the Black community, we have seen so many of our organizations, when the leader goes, whether by death or destruction, the institution can’t [survive].

The difference between that [an organization] and an institution is that the institution is sort of like the amoeba or the paramecium; it heals itself, and it keeps growing, until a new leader takes hold.

So I would say keep building the institution, in whatever [way] is consistent with the new leader’s vision of what the Joint Center is and ought to be. You’ve got to keep building the institution. ■

POLITICAL REPORT

Survey Details Black Alienation From Bush

By Joe Davidson

President Bush won a second term in the White House despite poor grades given him by African Americans on policy issues. African Americans are much more critical of his performance than the general public is, according to the Joint Center's 2004 National Opinion Poll.

At the same time, however, "the priorities of Blacks and Whites were closer in the 2004 survey than in our 2000 survey," wrote David A. Bositis, the senior research analyst who conducted the survey and authored the newly released survey report. "This greater similarity has likely been influenced by our occupation of Iraq, terrorism and the state of the economy."

This year, employment/economy, the war in Iraq and prescription drugs/healthcare were the issues Black respondents cited as the most important problems. Those same issues were cited by the White and general populations surveyed. Interestingly, mentions of crime and education dropped sharply among all three groups.

That doesn't mean crime and education issues are no longer important. They remain very much so. But, as Bositis told FOCUS, "you can only have one most important national problem" when selecting an item among several.

Although neither the Black nor the general population survey groups cited education as a major issue, it was a domestic policy centerpiece of Bush's campaign. Bush repeatedly promoted his "No Child Left Behind" program, telling a suburban Phila-

delphia audience: "If you give the people the tools necessary, they can realize great dreams here in America. And the most important tool of all is to make sure every child has an education."

Yet, both Black and general population respondents to the survey gave "No Child Left Behind" low marks. Among African Americans, almost three times as many gave the program fair or poor grades (67 percent) as gave it excellent or good grades (23 percent). The general population rated Bush's education program higher, but 56 percent still gave it poor or fair marks, compared to just 32 percent who rated it good or excellent.

The poll was conducted between September 15 and October 10. Bositis emphasized that it was not a poll of registered or likely voters, but a national survey of 1,642

adults selected at random. That includes a national sample of 850 Black adults and 850 people from the general population. Responses from 58 African Americans were counted in both samples.

One of the more surprising results was what Bositis calls "generational flip-flop." Previous Joint Center surveys had shown a lessening of Democratic Party identification among young African Americans. "This is the first time in recent Joint Center surveys where younger African Americans became more Democratic and older African Americans became less," Bositis wrote.

In the 18-25 age group, Democratic identification among Black people jumped to 71 percent this year from 51 percent in 2000 and 54 percent in 2002. At the same time, Democratic identification dropped for every other age group, with those ages 51 to 64 showing the largest drop. Fifty-five percent of that group said they were Democrats this year, compared to 77 percent four years ago.

The overall effect of these changes is that Democratic identification was the same as in 2002, at 63 percent, and down by 11 points from 2000. Black Republican identification

Black Partisanship

	Democrat			Independent			Republican		
	2004 %	2002 %	2000 %	2004 %	2002 %	2000 %	2004 %	2002 %	2000 %
Total	63	63	74	23	24	20	10	10	4
18-25	71	54	51	22	34	36	12	15	5
26-35	63	56	70	20	29	24	12	15	5
36-50	62	65	79	26	21	18	9	12	4
51-64	55	70	77	24	21	18	15	5	3
65+	66	75	82	20	16	13	12	7	1

Views On Iraq

	Black Population		General Population	
	Yes %	No %	Yes %	No %
Approve of handling of Iraq	20	72	42	51
Iraq war helped war on terrorism	22	66	42	45

Source for all tables: 2004 National Opinion Poll, Joint Center.

remained at the 10 percent level registered two years ago. It was 4 percent in 2000.

Although fewer African Americans consider themselves Democrats and more say they are Republicans now than during George W. Bush's first presidential campaign, this shift is not reflected in Bush's approval ratings. In fact, the opposite is true.

Bush's ratings among African Americans (30 percent favorable to 67 percent unfavorable) were far lower than those he received in 2002 (51 to 39 percent favorable to unfavorable), and also worse than in 2000 when he was elected president (29 to 55 favorable to unfavorable). The general population sees him much more favorably, according to the survey, with 53 percent viewing him favorably and 45 percent unfavorably. Nevertheless, even these ratings are also down dramatically from 2002, when 72.8 percent of the general population gave Bush favorable marks.

The favorable/unfavorable ratings are key to predicting how voters will cast their ballots. Right direction/wrong track ratings can play the same role. The Black and general populations agreed that the country was on the wrong track under the Bush administration, with African Americans holding the most negative views about it.

As Bositis writes, "For each African American who thought the country was on the right track (18 percent), there were four who responded that it was on the wrong track (74 percent)." Fifty-seven percent of the general population said the country was on the wrong track, with just 36 percent of that sample saying it was going in the right direction.

Because of the implications that high wrong-track ratings have for Election Day, this survey finding is "a big deal," Bositis said, especially for incumbents.

Those negative ratings were reflected in the 69 percent of African Americans surveyed who said they would vote for Massachusetts Senator John Kerry for president, compared to the 18 percent who said they favored Bush. However, that 18 percent is

double the proportion who favored Bush for election in both the Joint Center 2000 survey and in the actual vote four years ago. On the same day the new survey report was released, October 19, a *New York Times* poll of likely voters indicated that 17 percent of African Americans favored Bush.

Exit polls said 11 percent of Black voters actually chose Bush, with Kerry winning a very strong 88 percent of African American support.

No matter the margin, the survey or the polling place, Black people were overwhelmingly opposed to Bush and his major policies. In addition to the low grades they gave his education program, African Americans vehemently oppose the war against Iraq. Seventy-two percent of Black Americans in the Joint Center poll said they disapprove of his handling of the invasion and occupation. Twenty percent said they approve. Furthermore, by a 66 percent to 22 percent margin, "African Americans thought the war in Iraq has hurt the war on terrorism."

Given this outlook, it is noteworthy that Secretary of State Colin Powell remains a

popular figure across the whole population, despite having his credibility challenged when no weapons of mass destruction were found in Iraq. Although Powell's ratings were down from 2002, 69 percent of Black respondents still gave him a favorable rating, as did 74 percent of the general population. "On balance, General Powell was the most favorably viewed figure in the survey," the report says. "This was also the case in the Joint Center's 2002 National Opinion Poll."

In just one area, the survey showed that African American opinion is more conservative than that of the general population — official recognition of gay relationships. Neither marriage nor civil unions for gay people have strong support among Black Americans. The poll found that while a plurality of Black people (47 percent) favored some form of legal recognition, 46 percent favored no recognition. By contrast, among the general population 57 percent favored some form of recognition and only 37 percent favored none. ■

Federal Role in Health Programs

Do you think the Federal government is doing enough to help states with health programs such as Medicaid?

	Yes	No	Don't Know
	%	%	%
Black Population	23	24	46
General Population	29	28	37

Support for Recognition of Same Sex Unions

	Legal Marriage	Civil Union	No Recognition
	%	%	%
Black Population	23	24	46
General Population	29	28	37

Rating the Federal Government's "No Child Left Behind" Program

	Excellent/Good	Fair/Poor	Don't Know
	%	%	%
Black Population	23	67	10
General Population	32	56	12

ECONOMIC REPORT

Programs Seek Boost In Black High-Techs

By Cecilia A. Conrad

Although the high-tech sector has lost the luster that it enjoyed during the boom of the 1990s, high-tech jobs are still among the most attractive in the U.S. economy. But during times of boom and bust alike, African Americans are persistently underrepresented in the industry.

In the 2000 Census, African Americans represented 12 percent of the population, but only 6.7 percent of computer science professionals, 3.9 percent of engineers, and 7.5 percent of engineering and science technicians. At least the trend is in the right direction. The figures from a decade earlier were worse. In the 1990 Census, African Americans represented 11.8 percent of the population, but only 5.7 percent of computer science professionals, 3.5 percent of engineers and 6.9 percent of engineering and science technicians.

Although some of this may be explained by the concentration of high-tech jobs in metropolitan areas with relatively small African American populations, geography does not explain everything. Even in cities with large African American populations, there are comparatively few Black people in high-tech jobs, according to an ongoing study by the Joint Center supported by the Alcoa Foundation. For that study, the Joint Center is reviewing changes in African American high-tech employment between 1990 and 2000 in the 25 cities with the largest Black populations.

The term “high-tech” in this article refers to jobs that require preparation in science, mathematics, or computer skills. Most high-tech jobs require a postsecondary

education, and Black people are underrepresented among college graduates, especially among graduates with degrees in science and engineering. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, African Americans in 2000 accounted for only 8.2 percent of the bachelor’s degrees and a little more than 10 percent of the associate degrees awarded in science and engineering.

These percentages are greater than the percentage of Black people in high-tech jobs nationally. And though Black people are underemployed in high-tech generally, within some metropolitan areas they are employed almost as equally in high-tech jobs as they are in the pool of workers with the requisite education. This is particularly true for high-tech jobs that require associate’s degrees such as computer support and service occupations; computer, automated teller and office machine repairers; science and engineering technicians; and computer programmers and operators.

For example, in Atlanta, African Americans constitute 29.7 percent of the city’s pool of workers with associate’s degrees and hold 26 percent of its high-tech jobs requiring associate’s degrees. African Americans constitute 17.7 percent of Atlanta’s pool of workers with bachelor’s degrees and hold 16 percent of its high-tech jobs requiring bachelor’s degrees or higher. In Charlotte, NC, the pool of workers with associate’s degrees is 16 percent Black and the share of high-tech jobs requiring associate’s degrees held by Black people is 15 percent.

A different picture emerges when bachelor’s degrees are considered. Even with adjustments for the composition of the pool of educated labor, African Americans tend to be less well-represented in high-tech jobs requiring four-year college degrees than in

jobs requiring associate’s degrees, particularly in the South. In cities such as New Orleans, Houston and Oakland, African Americans’ share of both types of high-tech jobs is small. For example, in New Orleans, African Americans represent 18.2 percent of the pool of all workers with bachelor’s degrees but hold only 7 percent of high-tech jobs requiring a college diploma or higher. The disparity might be explained by the types of high-tech industries in these cities, by the availability of training and retraining opportunities, by the tightness of the local labor market or by the prevalence of racial discrimination. These are issues that require further study.

In the interim, the best policy prescription to increase the number of Black people in high-tech jobs is to increase their representation in the pool of workers with science and engineering training. BEST (Building Engineering and Science Talent) is a public-private partnership dedicated to achieving this goal (www.bestworkforce.org). Created to implement the recommendations of the Congressional Commission on the Advancement of Women and Minorities in Science, Engineering and Technology, BEST convened blue ribbon panels of practitioners, researchers and policymakers to examine best practices in both pre-college and postsecondary education.

Two BEST reports summarize its findings: *A Bridge for All: Higher Education Design Principles in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics and What It Takes: Pre-K – 12 Design Principles to Broaden Participation in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics*. *What It Takes* identifies nine pre-college programs that have each demonstrated positive results in at least one scientifically rigorous study. The nine programs are:

- *Direct Instruction*, an instructional model developed at the University of Illinois that groups elementary students by ability and features sequenced knowledge and skill development;

- *Project SEED (Special Elementary Education for the Disadvantaged)*, a supplementary mathematics program for grades K-to-3 that relies on active learning techniques;
- *Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)*, an in-school elective program that provides support for at-risk but motivated middle school and high school students who enroll in college preparatory classes;
- *The Algebra Project*, a curriculum that uses activities based on the lived experiences of students;
- *Foundational Approaches in Science Teaching (FAST)*, an inquiry-based curriculum in which student teams collect and analyze scientific data, survey the scientific literature, and write reports of their findings;
- *Gateways to Higher Education*, an outreach program of the State University of New York that features small classes and summer enrichment programs;
- *Project GRAD (Graduation Really Becomes A Dream)*, a holistic intervention program that promises college scholarships to participants;
- *Puente*, a program for English-learners; and
- *Yup'ik Mathematics*, a program for Yup'ik Eskimos.

A Bridge for All cites three undergraduate education programs as exemplary – the University of Michigan Women in Science and Engineering Residence Program, the Gateway Engineering Education Coalition, and University of Maryland- Baltimore County Meyerhoff Scholars Program.

The Meyerhoff Scholars Program has received national attention for its success in producing Black and Latino graduates who pursue careers in science, math and medicine. Two hundred and ninety-eight students have graduated from the program. Half are currently enrolled in graduate programs and more than 100 have completed graduate degrees. At the graduate level, the National Consortium for Graduate Degrees for Minorities in Science and Engineering has provided financial support to more than

450 fellows and has produced over 2,200 engineers and 120 Ph.D.'s. Another program receiving an exemplary rating is the Partnership for Minority Advancement in Biomedical Sciences (PMABS), a collaborative effort of four historically Black colleges and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

One of the BEST report's recommendations is for federal agencies to adopt criteria to take diversity into account when issuing grants to institutions of higher learning. The National Science Foundation's "broad impacts criteria" does this. Part of the evaluation of its grant-making portfolio, by an NSF advisory committee, is an assessment of the degree to which grants have helped to expand participation by minority undergraduate and graduate students in science and engineering fields. The National Science Foundation also administers the Computer Science, Engineering and Mathematics Scholarship, an award for academically talented low-income students financed with visa fees paid primarily by high-tech employers who import workers from other countries. This program may be ending, however, due to a drop in those visa revenues.

A third BEST report, *The Talent Initiative: Meeting America's Challenge in Science and Engineering*, ASAP describes a few private industry initiatives, including graduate fellowships offered by Bell Labs and a partnership between QUALCOMM and San Diego public schools to improve math performance in the city's lowest performing schools. Another private industry effort, not cited in the BEST studies, is CISCO Systems' Networking Academy (www.cisco.com).

The BEST reports tend to overlook the role of community colleges and proprietary schools in training high-tech workers. Yet community colleges provide an important bridge for high school graduates who are under-prepared for four-year college study. They are also crucial as suppliers of the training needed to adapt to technological changes in the workplace. A high percentage of Black and Latino students begin their college careers at community colleges.

African American Share of High Tech Occupations Requiring...

	Bachelor's Degree or Higher	Associate's Degree or Equivalent
South		
Atlanta MSA	0.16	0.26
Birmingham MSA	0.09	0.15
Greensboro	0.07	0.12
Memphis	0.18	0.28
New Orleans	0.07	0.13
Norfolk	0.11	0.18
Raleigh-Durham	0.08	0.17
Richmond	0.11	0.19
Sunbelt/Ports		
Dallas PMSA	0.08	0.12
Houston	0.06	0.12
Ft. Lauderdale	0.09	0.14
Los Angeles	0.05	0.08
Miami	0.08	0.13
Oakland	0.03	0.07
Riverside	0.04	0.06
East and Midwest		
Baltimore MSA	0.1	0.19
Chicago PMSA	0.07	0.12
Cleveland MSA	0.05	0.1
Detroit	0.07	0.12
New York	0.09	0.16
Newark	0.06	0.11
Philadelphia	0.06	0.11
St. Louis	0.05	0.1
Washington, DC	0.12	0.24

MSA = Metropolitan Statistical Area
PMSA = Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area

Inadequate education might not be the sole reason for the underrepresentation of Black workers in high-tech jobs, but any strategy that hopes to redress the situation must have education as a component. Resources are needed to expand, adapt and implement these successful models. ■

Cecilia A. Conrad is the Stedman-Summer professor of economics at Pomona College in Claremont, Calif. She also is director of the American Economics Association's "Pipeline Project" to increase the number of minority doctorate holders in economics www.vanderbilt.edu/AEA/mntr.htm.

MEDICAID DRUG RULES CONCERN POLITICIANS

SURVEY ALSO SHOWS MISPERCEPTIONS

By WILHELMINA A. LEIGH

In the wake of recently passed legislation establishing a prescription drug benefit for Medicare, the Joint Center, with the support of Pfizer Inc, conducted a survey of Black elected officials (BEOs) to assess their awareness and understanding of the pre-existing drug benefit in the Medicaid program.

The drug benefit is an option that all states and the District of Columbia select for their Medicaid beneficiaries. Medicaid is a federal/state program for low-income seniors, children, working families and people with disabilities. Medicare is a federally funded health program that also serves people with disabilities and the elderly.

A key concern of BEOs, cited by 70 percent of those surveyed, is that Medicaid limitations on prescriptions could make patient health worse. Large majorities of BEOs believe that limitations on prescription drugs could leave Medicaid beneficiaries without access to newer and more innovative drugs, force them to change medications while on an established and effective drug therapy, or require them to use drugs more likely to have harmful side effects. A majority also said the limitations do not result in long-term savings.

Slightly over half of BEOs reported that their states limit the medications available to Medicaid patients, although among those officials, 32 percent were unsure of the nature of these restrictions. Restrictions include requiring drugs to be on a list and limiting the number of prescriptions beneficiaries can get each month.

A total of 976 BEOs were interviewed between May and September 2004 by Research America, a survey management firm, using a questionnaire developed by the Joint Center. The study found that BEOs

rate health care issues and the Medicaid program high among their priorities and concerns. Forty-three percent of BEOs rated health care among their top three priorities, and 88 percent felt it was either somewhat or very important to know more about Medicaid to be successful at their jobs.

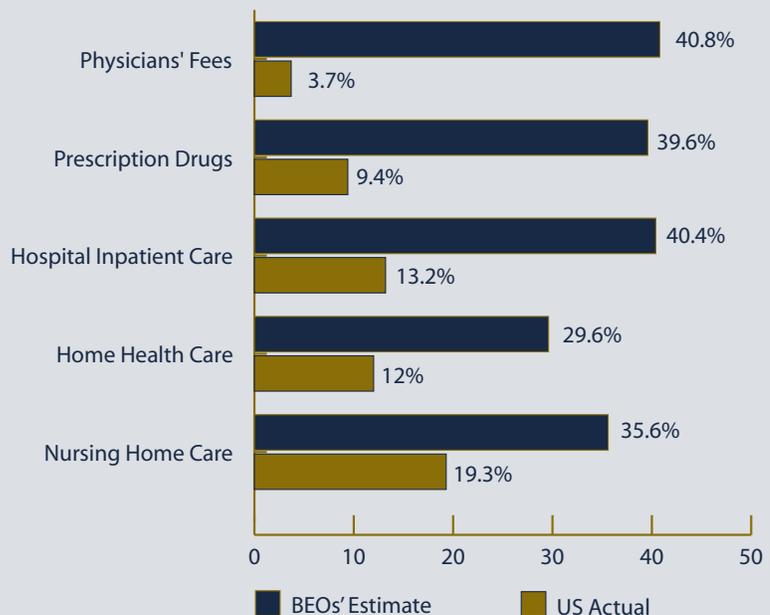
However, the survey also revealed gaps in knowledge among BEOs about who receives Medicaid benefits and about the categories that account for major program expenditures. These misperceptions could influence decisions by BEOs on important Medicaid funding issues.

On average, BEOs overestimated the share of senior citizens and the blind/disabled among Medicaid program beneficiaries. Seniors and the blind/disabled combined make up one-quarter of the beneficiaries; the BEO estimate was almost 75 percent. BEOs also estimated that just over one-third of the enrollees are children, when actually one-half are. In addition, these elected officials greatly overestimated the proportions of Medicaid expenditures for home health care, hospital inpatient care, physicians' fees, prescription drugs, and nursing home care (see chart).

Greater detail about the survey's findings and related work by the Joint Center's Health Policy Institute on pharmaceuticals and the health of African American will be posted next year on the Joint Center web site (www.jointcenter.org). ■

Wilhelmina A. Leigh is a senior research associate at the Joint Center.

Percentage of Medicaid Spending for Selected Purposes (US Actual - 2002; BEOs Average - 2004)



The estimates by BEOs equal more than 100 percent because they were asked about each category separately and were not asked to consider them as part of a whole.

The "actual" percentages add to less than 100 percent because there are categories of Medicaid spending that are not listed.

Sources: *The Joint Center; The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, "The Medicaid Program at a Glance."*

BLACK VOTE STRONG

Continued from cover

people have with Bush's policies on the war in Iraq, tax cuts and affirmative action, Bush increased his Black support during his first term. This time, the president won 11 percent of the Black vote, up two to three points from four years ago. Nonetheless, Massachusetts Senator John Kerry made a strong showing among Black citizens, winning 88 percent of their votes.

In Ohio, which proved to be the state on which the election hung, African Americans gave 16 percent of their votes to Bush, a seven point jump from last time. That increase meant he received 55,000 additional Black votes this November, according to Bositis. "That had a big impact," he told a post-election briefing sponsored by the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation.

Both Bush's faith-based program, which funnels federal money to social projects run by religious organizations, and his opposition to same-sex marriage may have helped boost his Black support, which Bositis said increased among Black Christian conservatives. (See related information in Political Report). Measures banning gay marriage were on the ballots of 11 states, including Ohio, and were victorious in each.

In one way, Bositis said, Kerry's loss can be linked to a Massachusetts Supreme Court opinion, just as Bush's 2000 Electoral College victory was made possible by a U.S. Supreme Court decision. When the Massachusetts court legalized gay marriage last year, it motivated conservatives across the nation to fight the concept in their states. The resulting ballot measures boosted turnout among an ardent group of conservative voters who also backed Bush.

"Gay marriage drove the vote in many states," says Ronald Walters, director of the African American Institute at the University of Maryland.

In certain largely Black congressional districts, "the increase in voting was phenomenal," Walters adds, but "it was not enough

to offset the turnout in suburban and rural counties." In those counties Bush received strong support.

The overall turnout was high. About 120 million Americans voted, almost 60 percent of the electorate, according to Curtis Gans, director of the nonpartisan Committee for the Study of the American Electorate. But Bush defied the conventional wisdom that such a high turnout would help the Democratic challenger more than the Republican incumbent.

The conventional wisdom was correct about the youth vote, however. Voters between ages 18 and 29 were the only age group that cast a majority of its votes for Kerry, according to exit polling data compiled for news organizations by Edison Media Research and Mitofsky International.

About 5 million more young people voted this time than in the last presidential election, the Associated Press reported. Although the exit polls did not identify the Black portion of the youth turnout, Maya Rockeymore, a Congressional Black Caucus Foundation vice president for research and programs, estimated that "young African Americans turned out in record numbers."

Certainly the efforts of the hip-hop generation, led by such celebrities as Russell Simmons and P. Diddy, boosted that young voter turnout. Diallo Brooks, national cochairman of the Black Youth Vote National Advisory Board, said voter registration efforts had a "tremendous amount of success in engaging our community to vote, particularly young people." Hip-hop artists "made it in vogue to get out and vote," he added.

Some of those voters helped increase the ranks of the Congressional Black Caucus. Joining it will be Barack Obama of Illinois, who will be just the third Black elected U.S. senator since Reconstruction. Returning to the House after a two-year absence is Cynthia McKinney, who will represent Georgia's 4th district, which covers DeKalb County in the Atlanta suburbs. She will

replace Denise Majette, who lost her U. S. Senate race.

Emanuel Cleaver, from Missouri's 5th district (Kansas City); Al Green, from Texas's 9th district (east of Houston); and Gwen Moore, from Wisconsin's 4th district (Milwaukee) also were elected. All the new and current CBC members are Democrats.

The Caucus will need all the allies it can find, because Republicans will have a slightly stronger grip on the House and the Senate in January when the 109th Congress convenes. The Senate Republicans will increase their majority to 55 from 51, with 44 Democrats and one independent. In the House, the Republican majority rose by two, to 231, while the Democratic numbers fell to 201, a drop of four, with one independent and two races undecided at press time.

The increase in Republican senators "probably will not have much of an impact on strategies to prevent the seating of right-wing extremist judges by the U.S. Senate," predicted Hilary O. Shelton, the NAACP's Washington lobbyist. Those strategies are rooted in "the unfortunate, but justified, use of the filibuster," he explained. That tactic essentially allows an issue to be debated to death, and Republicans still will fall short of the needed number of votes to force a vote on the Senate floor.

The issue of judicial appointments almost certainly will be a critical one during Bush's second term. While no Supreme Court seats became vacant during his first four years, he is likely to have an opportunity to appoint three or four justices, including the chief justice.

Although this Election Day did not witness the degree of irregularities that embarrassed the 2000 vote, Shelton says that the NAACP received about 125,000 complaints about voting irregularities before and during Election Day. The complaints concerned problems with provisional ballots and demands by poll workers for identification from voters when none was required.

Shelton says the NAACP will push for voting changes, including same-day, onsite voter registration, in order to "make it much easier for eligible American voters to cast a vote and have their vote counted." ■

The Black Vote by State, Presidential Elections, 1996–2004 (Selected States)

State	BVAP (%)	Black Share of Actual Vote			Total Voter Turnout		Black Partisan Vote, 2000		Black Partisan Vote, 2004	
		1996 (%)	2000 (%)	2004 (%)	2000 (%)	2004 (%)	Gore (%)	Bush (%)	Kerry (%)	Bush (%)
Alabama	24.0	22	25	25	50.6	54.8	91	8	91	6
Arkansas	13.9	9	11	15	46.9	50.2	84	12	94	6
California	6.4	6	7	6	54.6	61.2	86	11	84	14
Florida	12.7	10	15	12	53.4	61.8	93	7	86	13
Georgia	26.4	25	25	25	45.3	49.6	92	7	88	12
Illinois	13.8	13	14	10	56.4	59.5	92	7	89	10
Louisiana	29.7	29	29	27	55.0	58.6	92	6	90	9
Maryland	26.4	19	22	24	54.6	57.0	92	7	89	11
Michigan	13.1	13	11	13	59.4	66.2	91	8	89	10
Missouri	10.2	5	12	8	61.2	61.0	84	14	90	10
New York	14.8	9	11	13	54.7	54.8	90	8	90	9
North Carolina	20.0	18	19	26	49.6	54.5	90	9	85	14
Ohio	10.5	9	9	10	56.4	64.6	89	9	84	16
Pennsylvania	9.0	9	7	13	53.7	61.2	90	7	83	16
South Carolina	27.2	25	22	30	46.7	50.8	91	7	85	15
Tennessee	14.8	13	18	12	49.0	54.5	92	8	89	10
Texas	11.0	10	15	12	47.8	51.8	91	5	83	16
Virginia	18.4	16	16	21	53.9	58.4	84	14	87	12

SOURCE: Information on the black voting-age population is from the U.S. Census publication, *Projections of the Voting-Age Population for States, November 1998 (P25-1132)*. The actual share numbers from 1992-2000 are from Voter News Service. Total turnout numbers are from the Committee for the Study of the American Electorate

One Senator and Four Representatives Add to the Congressional Black Caucus

Barack Obama, senator-elect, Illinois

Obama moves from representing Chicago's South Side in the Illinois state senate to representing Illinois in the U.S. Senate. Before entering elective politics, he was a community organizer who worked with groups to improve job training, education and city services. Obama is a graduate of Columbia University and Harvard Law School, and was the first Black president of the *Harvard Law Review*.

Emanuel Cleaver, representative-elect, Missouri's 5th district

Cleaver has a long history in public service, including two terms as mayor of Kansas City and 12 years on the Kansas City Council. He also is a Methodist minister and founded the Kansas City chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Cleaver takes pride in his role in encouraging major corporations, including Transamerica and Harley

Davidson, to open operations in the Kansas City area. He is a graduate of Prairie View A&M University.

Al Green, representative-elect, Texas's 9th district

Green was president of the Houston branch of the NAACP for nearly 10 years. He also organized the Houston Fair Share program, which encourages corporations to partner with minority firms in joint ventures. Green is a co-founder of the Black and Brown Coalition, which works to foster cooperation between the African American and Latino communities. He is a graduate of the Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University.

Cynthia McKinney, representative-elect, Georgia's 4th district

McKinney returns to the House, where she had served for 10 years until her defeat two years ago. Her district covers DeKalb

County, outside of Atlanta. Before she was first elected to the House, she was a Georgia state representative from 1998 to 2002. McKinney graduated from the University of Southern California and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. She is working on a doctorate at the University of California.

Gwen Moore, representative-elect, Wisconsin's 4th district

Moore was a 16-year veteran of the Wisconsin legislature before winning a seat in Congress. She cites her experience as a teenage mother on welfare to counter stereotypes, saying "too many people feel that where you start dictates where you should end up." Moore began public service as a VISTA volunteer and rose to numerous state legislative leadership positions, past-president pro tempore of the state senate. She is a graduate of Marquette University.

EDUCATORS OVERLOOK CHILD DEVELOPMENT

ACADEMICS, BEHAVIOR TIGHTLY LINKED

By JAMES P. COMER

In today's economy, a college education often is needed to secure employment that generates a living and comfortable income. But a harsh and peculiar economic and social history keeps a disproportionate number of African Americans from earning a college degree.

Correcting this requires adopting an educational focus that includes much greater attention to the developmental issues of children than is generally the case. Schools in Asheville and Hertford, North Carolina; Westbury, New York; and New York City's District 17 are doing this with significant success in conjunction with the Yale Child Study Center School Development Program.

This program is unique among school improvement efforts in that it creates a change framework based on child and adolescent development principles. Traditional education programs focus primarily on curriculum, instruction and assessment. The Yale approach promotes home-school-community relationships that enable the involved adults to support student development. Good development makes desirable behavior and high-level achievement possible.

Children who have had life experiences that lead to their underdevelopment—physical, social, psycho-emotional, ethical, linguistic, and intellectual—are not prepared to do well in school. And teachers and school officials, through no fault of their own, are not prepared to create school cultures that can facilitate adequate development and learning. Yet, until this disconnect is fully addressed, none of the popular reforms being advocated—charter schools, vouchers, privatization, and others—will make a difference for the group of children and adolescents at greatest risk of being left behind.

When children are left behind, the social and economic costs to individuals and society are staggering. Indeed, they are much greater than what would have been the cost of preventing such outcomes. A continuation of such trends could undermine America's economic strength and its potential to become an even better democracy. This need not be the case.

Over a 35-year period, the Yale program created, and successfully tested, a framework for school improvement based on child and adolescent development principles. Across the country where this model has been faithfully replicated, most initially low-achieving students began to achieve

at and above grade level and displayed few behavior problems. In 2004, in all of the schools using the model in Asheville, at least 80 percent of the students were at or above grade level. This school district serves nine housing projects.

To achieve these kinds of results nationwide, educators must recognize that academic learning, child and youth development and student conduct are inextricably linked; that children who are developing well will learn well. To the detriment of students, the educational enterprise—teachers, administrators, parents, educational organizations and policy makers at every level—focuses primarily on political, economic and academic issues rather than on both the developmental and academic needs of children and youth.

To leave no child behind, it will be necessary to adjust the way educators are prepared so that they can support the development and academic learning of all students. School boards, certifications and assessment programs must require child development based training and practice, and measure classroom performances. Without these changes, the price of failure—for students, educators and the country—will continue to be great. ■

James P. Comer is a child psychiatry professor at Yale University and founder of the Yale Child Study Center School Development Program. His latest book is Leave No Child Behind.



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