
A Comparative Analysis
of Selected Statistical Conditions
of African Americans in Washington

**WASHINGTON STATE COMMISSION
ON AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS**

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This report is an attempt to compile information on conditions affecting African Americans in the state of Washington. This report examines selected statistical conditions in the areas of employment, education, health, law and justice, economics, employment and housing.

From the information available it is apparent that, if current trends for African Americans in these areas continue, conditions will be far worse than those which prompted the public policy, legislative and social initiatives of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

This report is guided by two specific questions that affect African Americans: 1) how are African Americans faring in selected issue areas and programs; and 2) how do African Americans compare with the majority white population of the state in those same issue areas and programs?

The difficulty of gaining access to disaggregated information impeded our efforts to determine the status and conditions of African Americans in many of our research areas. The lack of readily accessible, targeted data on African Americans calls into question the state's commitment and/or motivation to accurately forecast the potential needs and solutions for this segment of the population.

The goal of this report is to provide information on the African American population in selected issue areas. Much of the existing data is either not disaggregated for race or has not been updated since the 1980 U.S. Census. The Commission was able to include specific information in most areas, and is optimistic that through our efforts in writing this report, information difficult to access this year will be more accessible in the future.

This report was made possible through the assistance of The Washington State Institute for Public Policy at The Evergreen State College, the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas, the Washington State Human Rights Commission and the Office of Financial Management.

Office of Financial Management

- Based on 1989 estimates, African Americans comprise 2.8 percent (131,570) of the state's population. (Chart 1)
- Of that 131,570, 83 percent of the African American population is concentrated in King and Pierce counties.
- Ninety-two percent of the African American population resides in the western region of the state (counties west of the Cascade Mountain range).
- Ninety-one percent of African Americans reside in metropolitan areas (cities with populations over 50,000).
- A major characteristic of the African American population is its relative youth--specifically a large age cohort 15 to 34 years old, which includes high numbers of males 20 to 24 years old. There is a smaller older age population, suggesting out-migration and/or a higher mortality rate.
- Median age for African Americans is 24.0 years. Median age for whites is 30.5 years, suggesting a larger number of older adults in the latter population. Asian Americans have the highest, or oldest, median age. The Hispanic population has the lowest, or youngest.

Washington State 1989

Population Estimates

African American	3%
White	88%
Asian American	4%
Hispanic	4%
Native American	2%

Chart 1
Office of Financial Management

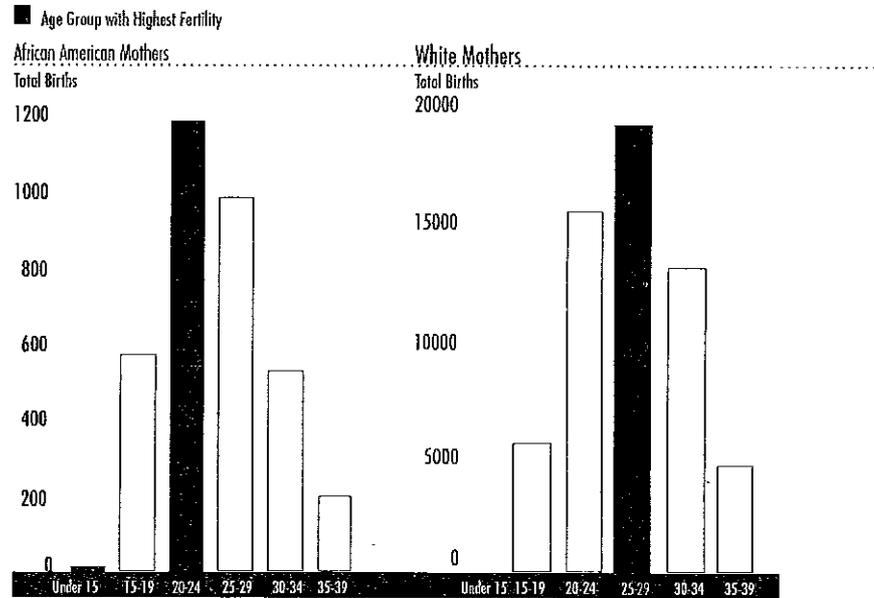
Birth Rates

Department of Health

Overall, African American women give birth at younger ages than their white counterparts. In 1988, the largest number of births among African American women (1,179 of a total of 3,586) occurred between the ages of 20 and 24. Comparatively, the birth rate for white women peaks in the age cohort that is 25 to 29 years old (19,208 of 58,625). (Chart 2)

Chart 2
Department of Health

African American Women Give Birth At Younger Ages



African Americans have a fertility rate of 94.37 live births per 1,000 population. Whites have a rate of 66.46. Hispanics have the highest rate (143.64).

The birth rate for African American women in all age cohorts represented 4.9 percent of the total live births in Washington in 1988. African American women represented 8.6 percent of all births in the cohort 15 to 19 years of age and 6.1 percent of births occurring in the cohort 20 to 24 years of age. These two cohorts represent the most disparately high ratios of African American to white births. (Chart 2)

Department of Health

Infant Mortality

During the 1980s white infant mortality in Washington declined from a rate of 12 to a rate of 9 per 1,000 live births. For African Americans, the rate increased to 16.2 percent per 1,000 live births in 1988 after declining to a rate of 13.3 in 1985. Statewide, there was a 22 percent increase in infant mortality for African Americans from 1986 to 1988. There was a 10 percent decline in the infant mortality rate for whites in the same time period. Seattle had the highest infant mortality rate for African Americans in the state (24.8 percent in 1988). This rate was over two and one-half times the statewide rate for whites (9.2 percent in 1988) (Charts 3,4). Nationwide, there was an infant mortality rate increase of 35 percent for African Americans during the 1980s.

Chart 3
Department of Health

Washington Infant Mortality Rates

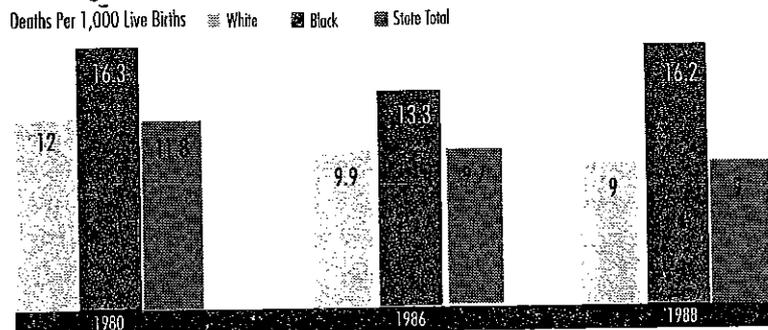
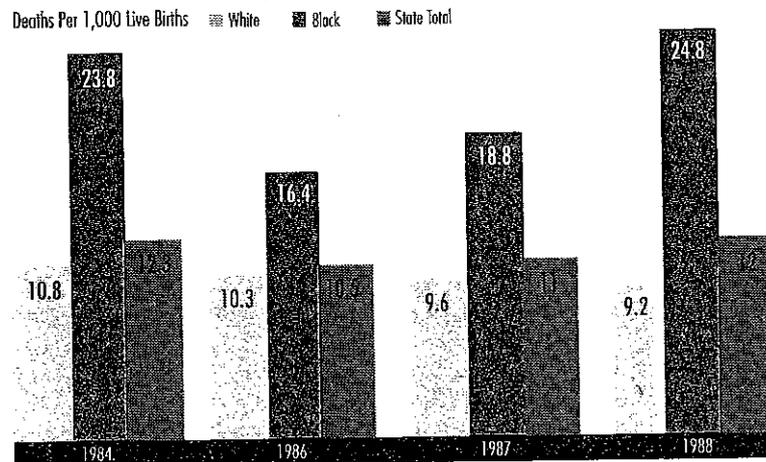


Chart 4
Department of Health

Seattle Infant Mortality Rates



*Report on Racial Patterns
in Infant Mortality,
Patricia Starzyk*

Neonate and postneonate infant mortality rates for 1983-85 demonstrate for African Americans in Washington a neonate ratio of 10.0 percent and a postneonate ratio of 7.2 percent. Nationwide, for all races, the rates were 11.8 percent for neonate, 6.5 percent for post-neonate.

Department of Health

A major portion of infant mortality in the African American population can be directly attributed to the great number of low birth weight (below 2500 grams) infants born to African Americans (Native Americans have the highest proportion of low birth weight babies in Washington). In 1988, 10.8 percent of African American infants in the state were of low birth weight compared to 4.8 percent of white infants.

Other factors contributing to a high infant mortality rate in Washington for African Americans include: a sharp decline in prenatal and postpartum health care services available to moderate and low income women; a decrease in availability and/or complete lack of access to pregnancy preventive services for African American women; a sharp decline in the number of health practitioners in the obstetrics field; and the increasing misuse of drugs and alcohol in young pregnant women of all races.

Mortality

Department of Health

Rates calculated in 1985, the most recent available, indicate that African Americans experience a higher rate of death from all causes than do their white counterparts. This higher ratio is echoed within these individual cause of death categories: cardiovascular disease, cerebrovascular disease and homicide.

Between 1980 and 1985, overall age adjusted rates (calculated per 100,000 population) have decreased for African American deaths due to homicide and cardiovascular and cerebrovascular disease. Deaths due to homicide decreased by 35.2 percent. Deaths from cardiovascular and cerebrovascular disease were reduced by 15.5 and 17.7 percent, respectively.

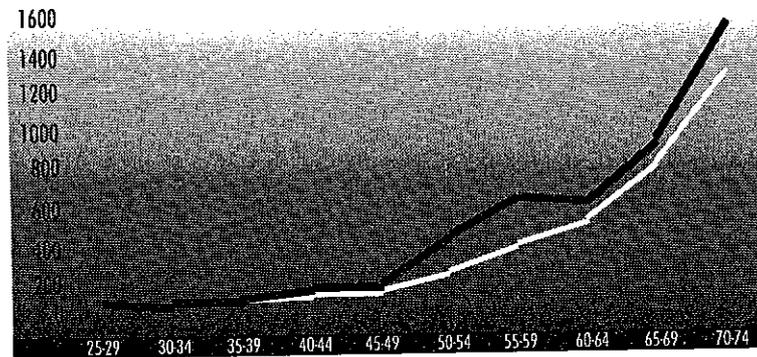
Chart 5
Department of Health

Deaths from Cardiovascular Disease

by Age Group

■ African American □ White

Deaths Per 100,000 in Population



In 1985, rates for mortality due to cardiovascular disease for African Americans were approximately twice the rate for whites in the cohorts that are between 30 and 59 years of age. The disparity is most marked in the age cohort that is 25 to 29 years of age, with African Americans experiencing a death rate seven times that of whites. However, since the scaling of the graph must range from zero to 1,600, the magnitude of this disparity is not readily apparent since the rates for that age cohort range from 3.14 for whites to 21.04 for African Americans. Both values are too small to be readily visible on this scale.

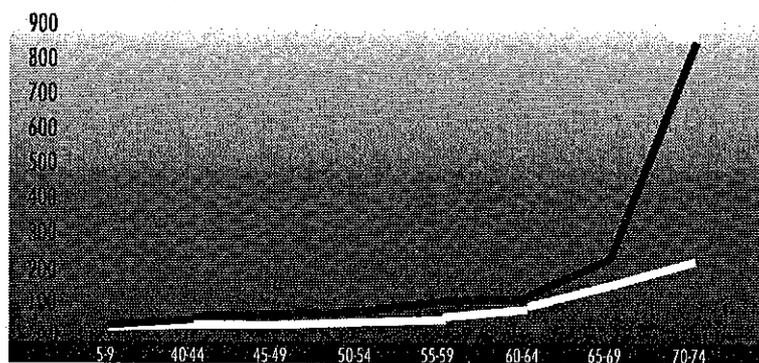
Department of Health

In 1985, African American mortality due to cerebrovascular disease, especially stroke, was five times the rate for whites within the age cohort that is 45 to 49 years of age. African Americans experience 150 to 500 percent of the mortality rates due to cerebrovascular disease for whites within the age cohorts that are 40 to 74 years of age.

Chart 6
Department of Health

Deaths from Cerebrovascular Disease

by Age Group ■ African American □ White
Deaths Per 100,000 in Population



African Americans experience markedly more deaths due to homicide than do whites. Overall age adjusted rates calculated per 100,00 population indicate a rate of 22.1 for African Americans as compared to 4.1 for whites in 1985.

Department of Health

Disparities between African American and white death rates due to homicide were particularly high in the following age cohorts: 20 to 24 (9 to 1), 65 to 69 (13 to 1), and 70 to 74 (38 to 1). Except in the six cohorts where no deaths by homicide were reported for African Americans (0-4, 5-9, 10-14, 55-59, 60-64 and over 75 years of age), African Americans had higher mortality ratios than did whites.

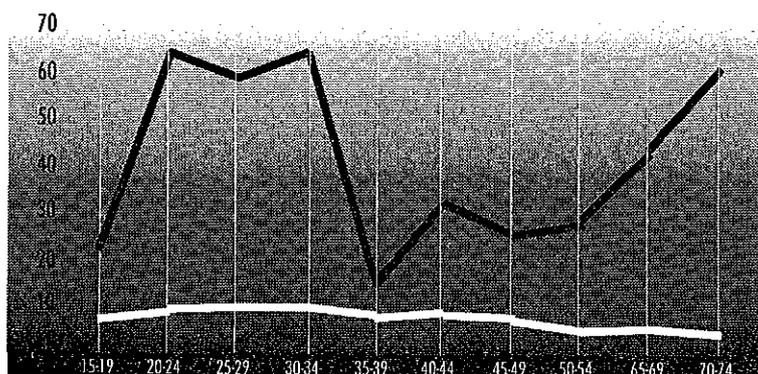
Office of Financial Management

Life expectancy for African Americans, at 70.31 years, is shortest of all groups in the state. Whites have an expectancy of 75.33 years. Asian Pacific Americans have the longest life expectancy at an average of 81.19 years

Chart 7
Department of Health

Deaths from Homicide

by Age Group ■ African American □ White
Deaths Per 100,000 in Population



State & Federal Funding for Public and Mental Health Programs

Washington Basic Health Plan

In Washington, 785,000 people under the age of 65 were uninsured in 1988. The Washington Basic Health Plan does not disaggregate uninsured citizens in the state by race or ethnic group, therefore it is difficult to determine how many African Americans in the state are uninsured, but because of income levels and employment considerations it is logical to assume that many of the uninsured are African American.

At least 40 percent of the uninsured are children, and 50 percent are under the age of 25.

Office of Financial Management

In Washington, state and federal funding for public health and mental health programs decreased from \$ 67,243,403 in 1985 to \$ 34,768,744 in 1989.

HIV/AIDS

Department of Health

A total of 1,828 persons were diagnosed as having Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) between December 1982 and July 1990. Since 1982, 123 African Americans have developed AIDS. This number comprises 7 percent of the state population with AIDS. Of the 123, 116 are adult males, 5 are adult females, and two are children. There has been an increase in the proportion of AIDS cases occurring in African Americans each year, rising from 5 percent prior to 1987 to 13 percent during 1990.

In Washington State, 69 percent of African Americans with AIDS identified themselves as homosexual or bisexual, 11 percent are intravenous drug users (IVDU) and 13 percent identify themselves as both homosexual and IVDU. Four percent of African American AIDS cases are due to heterosexual transmission, 1 percent are due to transfusions, and only 2 percent have no identified risk factor. The exposure groups (risk factors) in the African American population with AIDS indicate that a greater percent are intravenous drug users than in non-African Americans with AIDS (11 percent vs. 4 percent respectively).

The exact prevalence of infection with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) in the African American population is difficult to determine and is the subject for studies by the National Centers of Disease Control and the state Department of Health. The Department of Health has estimated that there are at least 14,000 HIV-infected people in Washington State. If the distribution of HIV infection parallels AIDS case reporting data, over 1,000 of these infections have occurred in African Americans.

Sickle Cell Anemia

Department of Health

On a national level, sickle cell anemia affects one out of every 400 African American newborns. Sickle cell anemia is divided into three active types: SC, SB thalassemia, and SS type. Of these, the SS type is considered the most life-threatening.

Based on 3,586 live African American births in Washington State for 1988, 14 African American infants would be expected to have sickle cell disease within that year. Of that total, approximately 8-9 will have SS type, 3 will have the SC type, and 2 will have the SB thalassemia type. In addition, based on national statistics, 290 African American infants would have the benign sickle cell type (AS).

National Institutes of Health

Medical studies conducted in the mid 1980s clearly demonstrated that morbidity and mortality caused by sickle cell anemia are substantially reduced if children with the disease are identified early and enter into comprehensive health care programs.

Vocational Training Within the Community College System

Vocational training in Washington is accomplished through two distinct systems: 1) the vocational technical training institutes (VTIs) and 2) the community colleges.

In the community colleges, training is divided into four categories: 1) occupational preparatory; 2) occupational supplemental; 3) occupational apprentice; and 4) home and family life.

In 1988-89, 41,708 men and 56,877 women were enrolled in vocational programs within the community college system. African American men comprised 2.9 percent (1,212 enrollees) of the total male enrollees and African American women comprised 1.7 percent (984 enrollees) of the total female enrollees.

African American women represented the only racial or ethnic group of females that did not exceed the enrollment of their male counterparts in vocational training programs.

In 1989, areas of major enrollment for vocational training in the community colleges for African American males included: 1) business management and administration (197 enrollees); 2) allied health and health sciences (110 enrollees); 3) precision production (129 enrollees); and 4) engineering (105 enrollees). Areas of major enrollment for African American women were: 1) allied health and health sciences (178 enrollees); 2) business management and administration (298 enrollees); and 3) vocational home economics (203 enrollees).

In the last five years, enrollment in vocational programs in the community college system for African American men has increased slowly, from a low 2.0 percent of total enrollment in 1987 to 2.9 percent of total enrollment in 1989. However, the rate for African American women has remained relatively stable at 1.7 percent of the total women enrolled in vocational programs during those three years.

Vocational Training (VTIs)

Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises

The total 1988-89 enrollment at vocational technical institutes in Washington was 194,365. African Americans represented 7,658 or 3.9 percent of this total; 3,433 were males and 4,225 were females.

The major areas of participation for African Americans were business related fields (3,196 enrollees or 42 percent of all African Americans enrolled) and industrial arts (616 enrollees or 8 percent of all African Americans enrolled). The technical and health fields were the areas of least participation with a total enrollment of 12 African Americans, representing less than 0.2 percent of all African Americans enrolled in all programs.

Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

Total participation for African American students in specific fields was proportional to that of white students. Of the 163,441 white students, 60,920 (37%) were enrolled in business related fields. The 623 white students were enrolled in the technical and health fields represented 0.4 percent of all whites enrolled.

During the 1988-1989 school year, 21,505 students completed vocational training programs. African Americans equalled 519 or 2.8 percent of the total.

Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship and Training Division, State Department of Labor and Industries

In 1988-89, 6,705 persons were enrolled in the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Programs; persons of color comprised 15.6 percent of the total. African Americans comprised 4.7 percent or 315 of all apprentices; 289 of these enrollees were male and 26 were female. These numbers do not include apprentices involved in federal apprentice programs within the state.

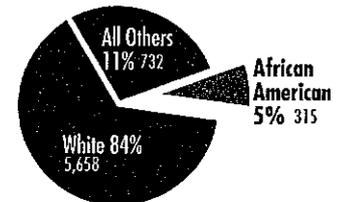
The 315 African American participants were enrolled in the following apprenticeship programs: carpentry (41 enrollees), painters (40 enrollees), electricians (29 enrollees), roofers (26 enrollees), factory laborers (23 enrollees), operating engineers (21 enrollees), masons (21 enrollees), public utilities (10 enrollees), industrial workers (10 enrollees), plasterers (10 enrollees), ironworkers (8 enrollees), sheet-metal workers (7 enrollees), plumbers (5 enrollees), boilermakers (4 enrollees), machinists (4 enrollees), asbestos workers (3 enrollees), and meat-cutters (3 enrollees). In addition, there were 19 African Americans enrolled in plant programs, and 29 enrolled in state On the Job Training Programs.

Apprenticeship and Training Division, State Department of Labor and Industries

African American participation in apprenticeship programs directly reflect population distributions within the state. The majority of African American enrollees are located in King and Pierce counties.

Washington State Apprenticeship and Training

Participation as of October 1989



*Chart 8
Department of Labor and Industries*

Government Contracting

Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprise

Of \$1,066,341,175 in state contracts awarded in FY 1989, \$13,194,666 (1.2 %) were awarded to African Americans. The total for all Office of Minority and Womens Business Enterprises (OMWBE) participants was \$97,003,730 (9.1%). (Chart 9)

Of the \$269,558,366 of contracts awarded by the Washington State Department of Transportation, 3 percent (\$8.26 million) were awarded to African Americans. The total for other groups of color was 16 percent (\$41.92 million). (Chart 10)

Attainment of overall OMWBE goals has fallen short for each fiscal year since 1984. MBE participation rates in 1989 were 2.8 percent in architecture and engineering, 14.77 percent in construction, and 5.2 percent in consulting; except in the area of construction, the state fell short of achieving their 10 percent attainment goals in these categories.

The state also fell short of its 8 percent MBE attainment goal in Goods and Services with a rate of 5.7 percent. This shortfall is particularly significant due to the prevalence of African American businesses that fall within this category.

National Urban League

In 1989, African Americans owned 301,000 or 2.1 percent of all business nationwide, representing a decrease of 39,000 businesses since 1982. Ninety-five percent of African American businesses nationwide are sole proprietorships with less than two employees.

Washington State African American Business Association

Less than one percent (380 of 41,000) of businesses licensed by the City of Seattle are African American owned.

Seattle Post-Intelligencer

Only 163 of the 1,571 African American owned businesses in King County had any employees in 1982. In that same year, these businesses earned only \$37.8 million in revenue as compared to the \$44 billion earned by all businesses in the county.

Seattle Human Rights Commission

Between 12 and 15 percent of the construction firms in the Seattle area are African American-owned. These firms receive approximately two to three percent of the area's construction business.

Minority Participation in All State Contracts

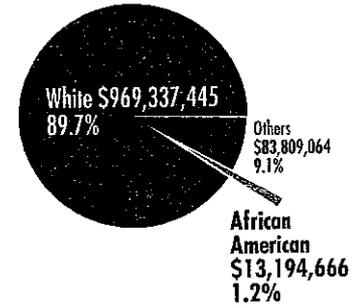


Chart 9
Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprise

Minority Participation in Contracts

Washington State Department of Transportation
\$269 Million Awarded
Dollars in Millions

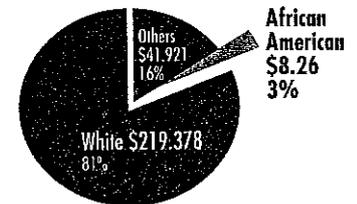


Chart 10
Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprise

Poverty Level

Office of Financial Management

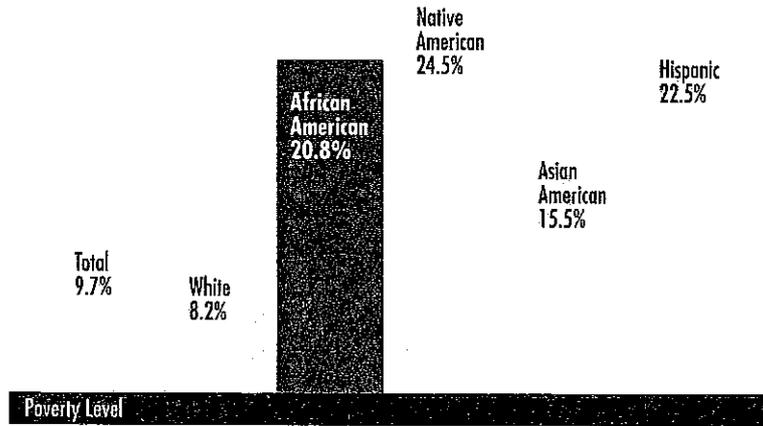
The rate of poverty and economic dependence in the I-5 corridor's urban counties rose slightly during the 1980s, from 8.4 percent in 1980 to 8.6 percent in 1988. In the rest of the state, the rate rose from 11.7 to 14.6 percent during the same period.

African Americans experience the third highest rate of poverty among all ethnic groups. (Chart 11)

Chart 11
Bureau of the Census

Washingtonians Below the Poverty Level

By Race 1980 Census Data



Department of Social and Health Services, Division of Income Assistance

Public Assistance

In January of 1990, whites comprised 72.8 percent of the state's public assistance population; African Americans comprised 10.5 percent. African Americans comprise 41 percent of the national public assistance caseload; whites constitute 27.2 percent of the national caseload. (Chart 12)

From surveys conducted on a sample of the state's public assistance population, it is estimated that African Americans represent 10.3 percent of those families eligible for assistance. (Participation rates by African Americans may exceed estimated eligibility rates due to probable underutilization of public assistance by other groups.)

Washington State Institute for Public Policy, the Evergreen State College

Nearly half of Washington assistance households reported some work in 1988. That work was not sufficient to raise their income levels beyond the need for public assistance, indicating further growth in the ranks of the working poor. The median job wage for assistance households reporting some work was \$4.50 per hour (a full-time, year-round wage of \$9,000) with two-thirds making below \$5.00 per hour. Most working poor are employed in the service and retail sectors (traditionally some of the lowest paying jobs in the job market).

Statewide Public Assistance Caseload as of January 1990

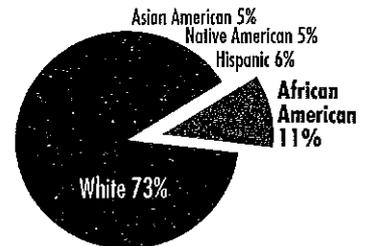


Chart 12
Department of Social and Health Services

Employment Security
Department

Household Income

While whites are rather evenly distributed across the household income scale, approximately 46 percent of African American households in Washington earn less than \$12,499 per year.

Eleven percent of African American households in Washington earned \$2,500 to \$4,999 per year. This represents the largest percentage within one income cohort.

Less than 10 percent of African American households reported earnings over \$35,000 per year.

Employment Security
Department

Employment

African Americans comprise 2.4 percent of the state's labor force (59,300 of 2,451,000). 45.1 percent of the total African American population is represented in the labor force.

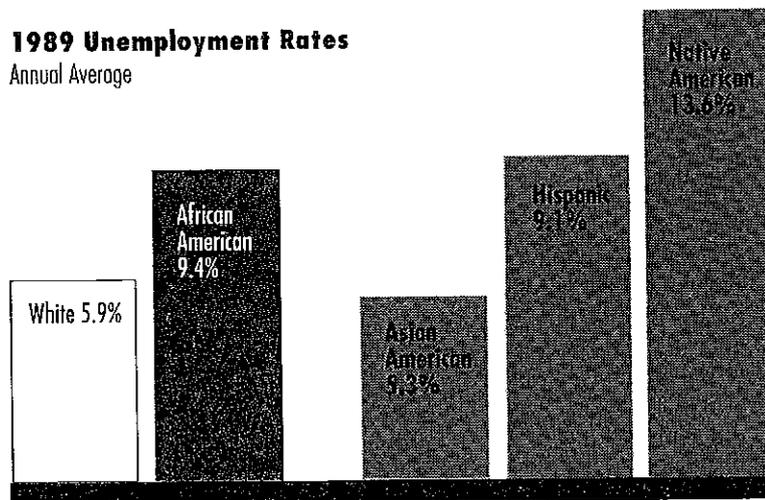
African Americans comprise 2.4 percent of employed members in the labor force.

Of the African Americans in the federal government's "able, available and actively seeking work" category, 9.4 percent are unemployed. In contrast, only 5.9 percent of whites in this same category are unemployed. (Chart 13)

Chart 13
Employment Security
Department

1989 Unemployment Rates

Annual Average



Adult Incarceration

Department of Corrections

While African Americans comprise roughly three percent of the state's population, as of October 1990, African American men represent 19.6 percent (1,472 of 7,511) of the state's male inmate population. African American women represent 24.0 percent (101 of 421) of the state's female inmate population. African Americans comprise 19.7 percent of the total inmate population (Chart 14).

Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs

There were 159,645 adult offenders arrested for crimes statewide in 1988. Of this number, 13,526 were African American, representing 8.5 percent of all adult offenders arrested. Comparatively, 139,060 white adult offenders were arrested in 1988 representing 87.1 percent of the total adults arrested.

Institute for Public Policy and Management, University of Washington

In 1982, African Americans were nine times more likely to be imprisoned than whites, and were five times more likely to be arrested than whites. In 1988, the rate of imprisonment for African Americans was nine times the rate for whites, while arrest rates for African Americans declined to three times the rate for whites.

Department of Corrections

Between July 1989 and June 1990, African American men comprised 22.4 percent of the male state penal admissions. African American women represented 22.5 percent of the female state penal admissions.

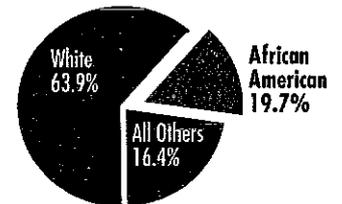
African Americans comprised 22.4 percent of total admissions (male and female) in 1989. Comparatively, whites comprised 58.0 percent of total admissions.

In 1989, 22.4 percent of total penal admissions were African American. Comparatively, in that same year, only 18.4 percent of total releases were among African Americans.

African Americans comprise 13 percent (4,243) of the total population in active community corrections (parole, probation, community supervision, interstate transfer). This is slightly more than the number of African Americans enrolled in the state's community college system (4,217).

The total population of African American adults incarcerated in the state's prison system (1,657) is larger than the total African American student population enrolled in four year public colleges and universities (1,622).

Adults Incarcerated as of June 1989



*Chart 14
Department of Corrections*

Juvenile Rehabilitation

*DSHS
Department of Juvenile
Rehabilitation*

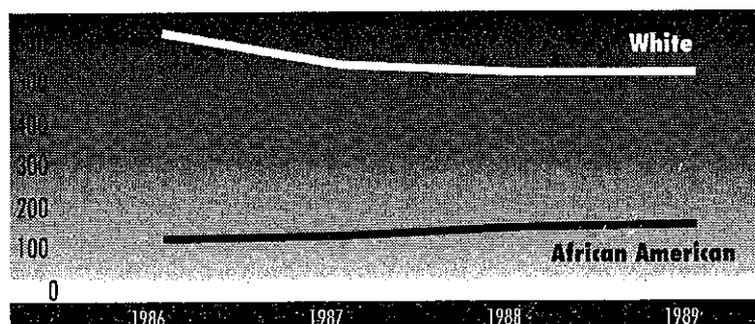
In 1990, African Americans represent 20 percent of the juveniles who are detained or under court/Division of Juvenile Rehabilitation supervision in Washington; African Americans represent the largest group of color within the system.

Youth of color represent 35 percent of the total overall population of juveniles under supervision; 67 percent of these youth are detained out of King and Pierce counties.

*Chart 15
DSHS
Department of Juvenile
Rehabilitation*

Washington Juvenile Incarceration

Ethnic Distribution



While the total numbers of juveniles under supervision has declined slightly since 1986, the number of African Americans in the juvenile incarceration system has increased. The white population of juveniles under supervision has decreased. The numbers for groups of color, other than African Americans, have remained steady. (Chart 15)

Justice System

Washington State Bar Association

African Americans represent 1.3 percent or approximately 200 of the attorneys in the state licensed to practice law. There are a total of 13,894 attorneys who are members of the Washington State Bar Association.

Minority and Justice Task Force

As of June 1990, there were a total of 371 judges in the state, African Americans represent 1.9 percent (7) of the judges in the state. All but one of the African American judges preside in courtrooms in King and Pierce county.

Washington State Patrol

In 1990, there were a total of 940 State Patrol officers in Washington state; 32 or three percent of that total were African American.

Seattle Police Department

Of Seattle's 1,052 commissioned police officers, 82 or 7.8 percent are African American. Approximately 9.9 percent of Seattle's population is African American.

Tacoma Police Department

African American officers comprise 5.6 percent (19 of 340) of Tacoma's police force. Tacoma's population is approximately 9.2 percent African American.

Department of
Community Development

Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)

ECEAP provides economically disadvantaged and poor children with developmental, social, dental and nutrition services.

Studies indicate that low income children who attend pre-school programs have an increased likelihood of success through high school over those who do not attend these programs.

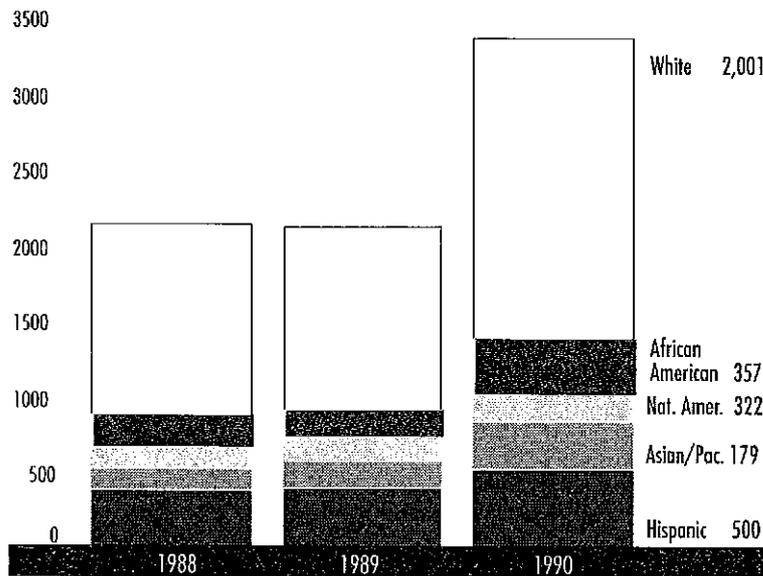
Low income pre-school participants also go on to have lower rates of delinquency and teenage pregnancies, be more likely to go to college, and have higher employment rates than those that did not participate in early childhood programs.

In 1989-90, African American children comprised 10 percent of the children enrolled in ECEAP programs. White children comprised 56 percent of the children enrolled in those same programs. (Chart 16)

In spite of a temporary dip in 1989, African American enrollment in ECEAP increased from 220 to 357, or by 62.5 percent, between 1988 and 1990.

Chart 16
Department of Community
Development

Participation in the
Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program



Note: In 1990, 107 children classified as "Other" and 107 classified as "No response" participated in ECEAP. These two classifications respectively posted 143.7 percent and 387.4 percent increases in participation from 1988 to 1990.

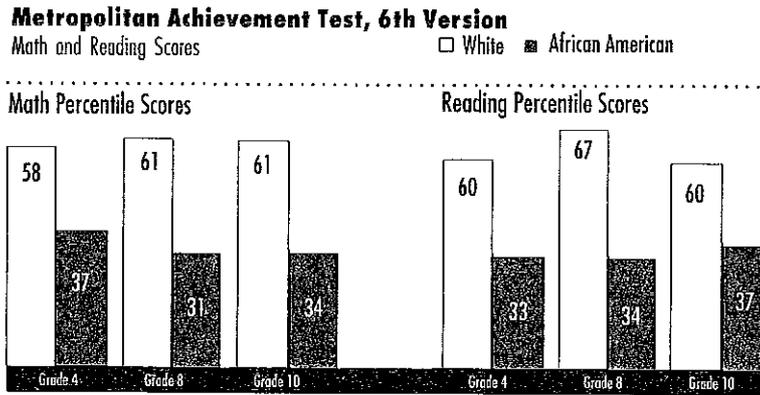
MAT6 Scores

Office of the Superintendent
of Public Instruction

The Metropolitan Achievement Tests, 6th Version (MAT6) are given each year to fourth, eighth and tenth grade students to measure language, reading and mathematics skills.

Based on 1989 MAT6 scores, African Americans are continuously performing below their grade level. In the area of Mathematics, median scores for African Americans in grade 8 are in the 31st percentile, approximately half the median percentile for white students. In the area of Reading, African Americans performed between 23 and 27 percentile points below their white counterparts at all three grade levels. (Chart 17)

Chart 17
Office of the Superintendent
of Public Instruction

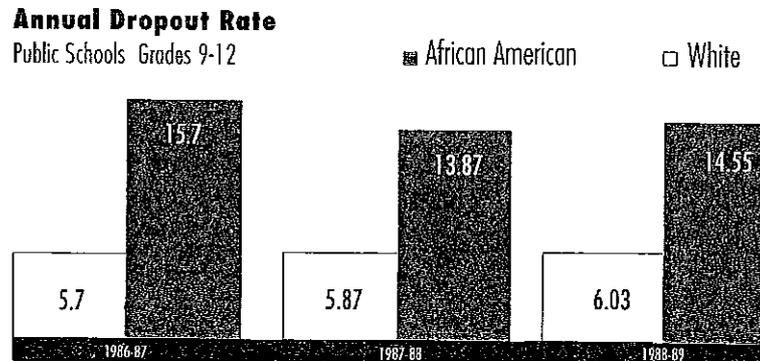


High School Graduation and Dropout Rates

Office of the Superintendent
of Public Instruction

Four percent (31,057 of 652,520) of the state's K-12 enrollment is African American. In 1989, African Americans, at 14.55 percent, experienced the highest annual dropout rate of the five major ethnic groups. African American students were nearly 2 1/2 times more likely than whites to drop out of school. (Chart 18)

Chart 18
Office of the Superintendent
of Public Instruction



High school graduation rates for African Americans, despite increases, lag behind total population and white percentages. In 1989, African Americans experienced a 70.36 percent high school graduation rate; their white counterparts experienced a rate of 82.61 percent. African American females have higher graduation rates than their male counterparts.

Higher Education

Higher Education
Coordinating Board

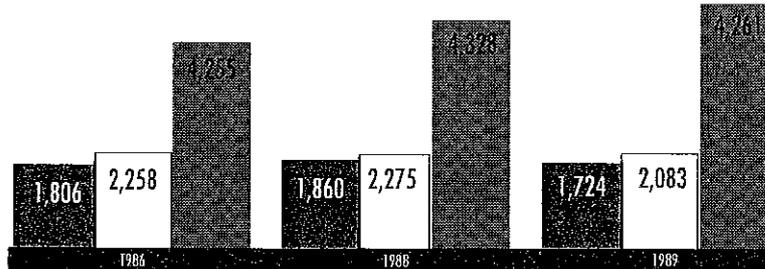
In 1989, African Americans comprised 2.1 percent of the total graduate and undergraduate enrollment in both public and private institutions in the state of Washington. African Americans in four year institutions of higher learning were enrolled at a rate of 1.7 percent of the total African American population; white students were enrolled at a rate of 2.1 percent of the total white population. Of all ethnic groups, Asian Pacific Americans have the highest proportion of their population enrolled in higher education (Chart 19).

Chart 19
Higher Education
Coordinating Board

Public Four-Year Institution Enrollment

Per 100,000 Population

■ African American □ White ■ Asian American



Office of Financial Management

Between 1980 and 1988, overall enrollment of persons of color in public four-year institutions increased by 35.5 percent. During the same period, African American enrollment increased by only 5.7 percent (from 1,549 to 1,637 students).

The number of bachelor's degrees conferred upon African Americans declined by 25 percent between 1983 (276) and 1987 (207). Between 1980 and 1988, African Americans experienced a 49 percent decline in public graduate and professional enrollment, the largest drop among all ethnic groups.

African Americans experienced the only decline (24 percent) among ethnic groups in the number of graduate and professional degrees conferred between 1983 (50) and 1987 (38).

African Americans received 15 percent (38 of 251) of the graduate and professional degrees conferred on persons of color in 1987. Of the 38 degrees, 22 were master degrees, 10 were doctorate degrees and six were professional degrees.

African American Enrollment in Four-Year Institutions

■ Public ■ Private

Total Total Total
2,166 2,365 2,269

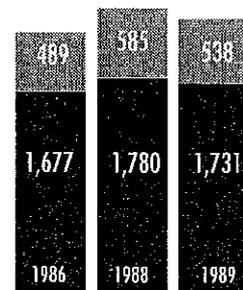


Chart 20
Higher Education
Coordinating Board

Community Colleges

Office of Financial Management

African American enrollment within the community college system increased by only 0.9 percent (from 4,165 to 4,204 students) between 1980 and 1988. Enrollment for all persons of color increased by 32.2 percent in that period.

Many students use "academic" associate degrees to transfer to four-year institutions. Of the associate degrees awarded to African Americans in 1987-88, approximately half were "academic" degrees.

Housing

*TRW Real Estate
Information Services*

The average price of single family homes in the King county area rose 32 percent between 1988 and 1989.

*Hebert Research
Corporation*

Housing costs went up an average of 74 percent and rent increased an average of 38 percent in the Puget Sound area during the 1980s. Incomes, especially for poor families, did not keep up with the increased costs of home-ownership and rental in the 1980s.

1980 US Census

There were 36,338 African American households in Washington in 1980. Eighty-four percent or 30,554 of all African American households were located in the Seattle-Tacoma area.

*Department of Housing
Development*

Low Income families spend up to 60 percent of their income on housing expenses.

Homelessness

*Department of
Community Development*

African Americans were four times as likely as whites to receive emergency shelter services (9,557 recipients in 1988).

In numbers disproportionate to their populations, ethnic minorities, especially African Americans, must rely upon King County shelter programs. While minorities make up only 12 percent of the county's population, they constitute 48 percent of those utilizing emergency shelters.

*Seattle-King County
Coalition for the Homeless*

The fastest growing segment of the homeless population are families with children. Families with children represent 1/3 of the homeless population in the Seattle/King county area.

Health

■ Conclusions

African Americans are at higher risk for all diseases due to a combination of poor economic conditions, availability/accessibility of health services, education/knowledge regarding health care issues, health habits, diets, as well as stressful living conditions.

African Americans suffer poor health care services and delivery. Many are faced with the added dilemma of not being able to afford health care and, thus, may not seek treatment.

Providing affordable and easily available health care could significantly reduce high morbidity and mortality rates in the African American population.

■ Goals

Universal access to health insurance must be provided on a statewide level, to include 17 percent of the state's residents who are not currently covered by health insurance.

Decrease African American infant mortality rates from 16.2 per 1,000 live births to 8.0 per 1,000 by 1993.

Provide adequate, accessible and affordable health care to all citizens.

Inform and educate all citizens on health care issues and risks.

■ Recommendations

Reduce the damage done by chemical abuse during pregnancy through: 1) comprehensive alcohol and drug awareness and prevention programs; 2) expanded access to programs geared to the needs of pregnant and parenting women; 3) appropriate health care and social services to drug affected newborns.

Follow through with plans by the Department of Health to provide universal newborn screening for sickle cell disease and other Hemoglobinopathies as of November 1, 1991.

Facilitate optimal health among infants by assuring access to comprehensive, community-based health services and routine pediatric care. Accessibility is important for low-income women who may have transportation problems.

Assure that existing maternal-infant health and social service practitioners are able to communicate well with expectant mothers from diverse ethnic groups.

Develop and implement programs to provide parental support and education around issues such as childhood diseases, child abuse, injuries and neglect.

Health Recommendations Continued

Develop a tracking system to follow moderate to high risk infants through their childhood years.

Increase funding for the expansion of local public health services (e.g., school health programs, immunization clinics, pre-natal and post-partum care, universal testing for hemoglobinopathies, and community health education) in large urban areas where the majority of the African American population lives.

Design legislation that expands funding for community clinics, and provides competitive compensation and incentives to physicians that accept Medicaid and other state medical insurance coverage.

Design legislation that encourages small businesses to provide basic group health plans for their employees through participation in the Washington State Basic Health Plan.

Support community health groups that conduct community health education programs.

Work with these and other groups to understand the reasons for, and reduce homicides among African Americans.

Apprenticeships and Vocational Training

■ Conclusions

Comparatively, African Americans are under-represented in apprenticeship and vocational training programs throughout the state.

African American enrollment is concentrated in lower-paying, service-oriented training programs.

African American women are significantly under-represented in vocational training programs and their enrollment is almost nonexistent in apprenticeship programs.

■ Goals

Increase African American enrollment in all apprenticeship and vocational training programs.

Increase enrollment for African American women, particularly in non-traditional training programs, which will lead to higher paying jobs in the future.

Encourage overall increased enrollment in fields with an underrepresentation of African Americans.

■ Recommendations

Increase apprentice participation by establishing Urban Job Corps centers that would be more accessible to African American youth than the existing rural centers located far from African American population centers.

Support programs such as the Family Independence Program (FIP), which encourage single heads of household to enroll in vocational training programs by providing child-care expenses, tuition assistance and other services for low-income single parents.

Encourage vocational training as a viable alternative for young African Americans who wish to learn new job skills.

Encourage the Apprenticeship and Training Division of the State Department of Labor & Industries to establish a statewide network to help communicate the availability of training and apprenticeship programs.

Establish a link between African American professionals and training programs in the health and technical fields.

Help to establish vocational and apprenticeship training programs for African American parolees and inmates throughout the state.

Economics

■ Conclusions

African American businesses are suffering due to: 1) a lack of and inaccessibility to investment capital; 2) over-reliance on government contracts that have decreased within the last few years; and 3) a lack of role models (successful examples in the African American business community).

Poverty in the African American community is rising at an alarming rate. Income is the overriding factor that determines quality of life.

Income levels in the African American community remain low and a large proportion of African Americans are earning below the poverty level.

On a statewide level, African Americans are doing as poorly economically as their counterparts on a national level.

Economics Continued

■ **Goals**

Increase the success rate for African American businesses.

Decrease the number of African Americans below the poverty level.

Increase income levels (especially wages) for African Americans.

Provide viable and economically advantageous alternatives to public assistance.

■ **Recommendations**

Conduct community-based business development and information workshops targeted to African American businesspersons, professional associations, and service organizations (medical associations, bar association, etc).

Obtain and maintain data on African American participation in state and local economic development programs to determine service gaps and needs.

Track business trends and government policies that affect African American owned businesses through the Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE) and provide input to state agencies about the impact of these issues on the business community.

Adapt existing and develop additional finance programs that address the issue of equitable access to capital for African American owned business.

Enhance and improve state programs that offer business assistance to minority businesses.

Attain goals set by OMWBE for minority businesses, particularly in the Goods and Services category due to the prevalence of African American businesses certified within that category.

Establish a pool of African American business professionals and experts within the state to help promote and support new African American entrepreneurs in the state.

Increase employment rates for African Americans.

Improve wages in service sector jobs.

Develop comprehensive programs to cover gaps or poor service delivery in public assistance.

Law and Justice

■ Conclusions

African Americans are incarcerated and arrested at a rate much greater than the white population.

In the last four years there has been a 30 percent incarceration rate increase for African American juveniles while, during the same period, white juveniles have experienced a 25 percent incarceration rate decline.

There is a great need within the justice system for more African American attorneys and judges, as well as a larger proportion of African American law enforcement officers.

■ Goals

Eliminate disparities in arrest, prosecution and incarceration rates between whites and African Americans.

Increase the number of African Americans in law enforcement (i.e., police officers, correction officers and parole officers).

Provide education and/or training for African Americans in prisons, especially juveniles, at least through high school equivalency, if desired.

Create a justice system in which all races and ethnic groups are given the same fair and equitable treatment.

Increase the number of African American lawyers and paralegal professionals.

■ Recommendations

Develop and support conditional scholarship and loan programs designed to encourage African American enrollment in academic disciplines related to careers in law, particularly criminal law, or law enforcement.

Develop and support programs which conduct comprehensive research, analysis and monitoring of the disparate impact of race on the justice system (i.e. Minority and Justice Task Force).

Develop and support the use of sentencing alternatives to incarceration, especially for juveniles.

Increase the number and size of educational and vocational training programs in Washington state prisons (especially Class 1 industries) to ensure that opportunities are available to all interested persons.

Law and Justice Recommendations Continued

Develop and support intervention and other community programs to discourage "at risk" youth from engaging in criminal activities.

Ensure that race, ethnic origin, and class are not factors determining disposition in the justice system.

The high number of African Americans in prison must be studied and addressed. Ways by which to decrease that population, either through pre-trial diversion and other sentencing alternatives or through a correction of arrest/prosecution/sentencing disparities, etc. should be examined.

Re-examine legislation passed during the 1980s that was designed to correct racial disparities in arrests, sentencing and imprisonment, to determine why they have been ineffective in correcting racial disparities.

Provide access to vocational education and employment within penal institutions.

Education dollars appropriated should follow all juvenile offenders into the prison system, to assure that all inmates receive at least a high school education within the prison system.

Education

■ Conclusions

African American students have consistently scored lower in MAT6 reading and math sections.

African American students continuously perform below grade level and have experienced higher dropout rates than white students.

Early childhood education (e.g ECEAP, Head Start) can increase the likelihood of academic success for African Americans.

Enrollment rates throughout the higher education system remain static or are declining for African Americans. Numbers of degrees conferred echo these trends.

■ Goals

Ensure that all children, regardless of ethnicity, have the skills to enter higher education and/or the work force.

Improve the current information system for collecting data on the educational conditions of African American students in Washington.

Lower the high school dropout rates for African American students.

Ensure that all eligible four year olds are enrolled in early childhood education programs.

Ensure that by grade three, African American children are performing at or above their grade level.

Increase the number of African Americans enrolled in colleges and universities, and improve their retention and completion rate.

Ensure that financial considerations do not create a barrier to higher education for African Americans.

Increase recruitment and retention of African American students throughout the higher education system.

Increase the number of degrees conferred upon African Americans at all levels.

Increase numbers of African American faculty members as a means of providing role models within higher education.

Identify and remove other barriers to higher education for African Americans.

■ Recommendations

Conduct a comprehensive study on the status of education for African American children in Washington.

Continue to coordinate Head Start and ECEAP with daycare to ensure that all eligible children receive full time service. These programs can be combined to provide full time day-care and early childhood programs.

Continue to increase participation for African American and other children of color in Early Childhood Education Programs.

Create a diagnostic assessment (such as criterion reference testing) to be administered each semester at every grade level to assess whether students are attaining student learning objectives (SLO).

Education Recommendations Continued

Increase funding to the Learning Assistance Program (LAP), earmarking some of those monies to hire more teacher assistants for children of color who are at risk of dropping out, or in need of remedial help.

Develop pay incentives to schools that demonstrate significant academic improvements for students of color and economically disadvantaged students.

Ensure that by grade 3, African American children are performing at their grade level.

Explore funding to establish dropout prevention pilot programs throughout the state, particularly in areas with significant African American populations.

Continue to develop and fund conditional scholarship funds that provide assistance and encouragement to African Americans seeking training in fields in which they are traditionally underrepresented.

Encourage the private sector to expand tuition assistance and career support programs for African American high school and junior high school students.

Develop tracking and counseling programs that will encourage community college graduates with "academic" associate degrees to transfer to four-year institutions.

Through collaborations between institutions and community organizations, design and implement culturally relevant support services for African American students in higher education.

Provide tuition waivers to economically disadvantaged students, particularly African Americans to help defray the cost of pursuing higher education.

Housing

■ Conclusions

An increasing number of families are finding themselves homeless or, at best, in decidedly substandard housing due to rising housing costs and static income levels.

Many African Americans, especially in urban areas, cannot afford housing because income rates are not rising in tandem with housing costs.

There is not enough low income housing available for families who need it.

Many African Americans spend a major part of their income, as much as 60 percent, on housing.

■ Goals

Provide affordable housing for all households, particularly for low-income households.

Decrease the number of homeless, particularly in major urban areas.

Provide rent subsidies and low interest financing for low-income home buyers who meet income qualifications.

■ Recommendations

Support legislation to increase the number of emergency shelters.

Encourage commercial banks to invest in community development by providing low interest loans to low and middle income home buyers.

Encourage the state to remodel and renovate abandoned/dilapidated homes throughout the state and make them available to needy families.

Encourage rejuvenation of urban African American neighborhoods by investing in comprehensive rehabilitation programs to address both housing and small businesses in a given geographic area.

Support and revitalize government low-income housing programs.

In its 1990 State of Black America Report, the National Urban League painted a grim picture of African American inequality in every major social and economic arena. According to their estimates, at current rates of "progress", African Americans will not reach parity in most areas with the white population until well into the 21st century.

On a national level, the decade of the 80s brought with it a sharp increase in the proportion of African American children living in poverty, an increase in African American single parent households, and the growth in the number of African American homes with unemployed heads of households. Roughly 6.4 million of the African Americans in this country were living in poverty in 1988; this represented an increase of 16 percent over the number of African Americans living below the poverty level in 1978.

In the area of health, nationally as well as statewide, mortality and morbidity rates for African Americans continue to be much higher than for the white population. Infant mortality rates for African Americans rose sharply during the 80s after three decades of steady improvement. Nationally, infant mortality rates for African Americans in 1988 was 18 per 1,000 live births, twice the white rate of 8.9 per 1,000 live births. In Washington, the infant mortality rates for African Americans was 16.2 per 1,000 live births in 1988, the white rate in the state was 9.0 per 1,000 live births. The rise in infant mortality rates for African Americans can be directly attributed to increases in poverty rates and teenage pregnancies, as well as a decline in the accessibility/affordability of prenatal health care services.

The effects of growing poverty and inequality are seen in the growing numbers of homeless people--particularly families. As the shrinking supply of affordable housing escalates, many African Americans in Washington are faced with the prospect of temporary shelters and homelessness. Statewide, the increase in homelessness is especially evident in the major urban areas in King/Pierce counties.

The housing crisis continues to be a state and national problem. The inflationary spiral of escalating housing costs have out-paced increases in the minimum wage.

Nationally, median family income for African Americans in the 1980s was considerably lower than median family income in the 1970s. In 1988, according to the National Urban League, the median family income for African Americans fell below the 1978 rate by \$400.00. In 1988, the median family income for whites was \$33,915, while for African Americans it was \$19,329. This \$14,586 disparity resulted in a national aggregate income gap of \$111 billion for African Americans.

During the 1980s, Supreme Court decisions dismantled many affirmative action programs intended to remedy historically discriminatory practices, particularly those impacting employment and government contracting. These factors, along with the failure of legislation to increase the minimum wage, as well as the increase in lower paying service sector jobs, have disproportionately impacted the African American community and have contributed to an increase in poverty rates and homelessness for African Americans.

Nationally, in 1989, African Americans had a 79 percent high school graduation rate; statewide African Americans had a 70.36 percent high school graduation rate during that same year. In addition, African American students continue to perform below their grade level in a higher proportion than their white counterparts. This is demonstrated by lower overall standardized test scores.

In higher education, African Americans are enrolled in four-year public institutions in Washington at a higher rate than their counterparts on the national level. Despite this, enrollment figures from the last decade indicate static or declining rates for African Americans throughout the state's higher education system accompanied by a decline in the number of degrees conferred.

Nationally, one out of every four African American men in their twenties is in jail/prison or under some sort of court supervision. In Washington, the rates for African American men were similar. African Americans were 9 times more likely to be incarcerated than whites. African American juveniles represented 20 percent of youths involved in juvenile rehabilitation in this state.

Extrapolating from the relatively small African American population in Washington state, it is apparent that, in many areas, African Americans in this state are doing as poorly as their counterparts at the national level.

*Commissioners**T.J. Vassar, Chairperson, Seattle**Henry Beauchamp, Yakima**Joanne R. Crosson, Seattle**Rev. James Giles, Bremerton**Tony Hudson, Tacoma**Thebna Jackson, Olympia**Dr. Maxine Minnis, Tacoma**Nancy Mitchell, Seattle**Gloria Morris, Spokane**Staff**James Kelly, Executive Director**Paola Maranan,**Administrative Assistant**Charles Howell, Secretary*

Washington State Commission on African American Affairs

History

The commission was created by Governor Booth Gardner, as stated in the enabling Executive Order (#EO 89-05), as an effort to fulfill the "duty of the state to improve the well-being of African-Americans by enabling them to participate fully in all fields of endeavor" and to ensure the availability of "the benefits of equality". At the end of the 1989 session, the legislature appropriated \$225,000 toward the operation of the commission through the 1989-91 biennium.

Duties/Purpose

The commission is a public policy research and planning agency which:

1. Advises the Governor and all branches of state government on issues such as education, employment, economic opportunity, social welfare and health care for African Americans.
2. Recommends to the Governor any revisions to the state's affirmative action goals and outlines strategies to eliminate underutilization of African Americans in the state's work force.
3. Works in concert with the Governor to advise the Legislature on issues affecting African Americans.
4. Assists African Americans in securing access to state agencies and programs.
5. Serves as the Governor's liaison to the federal government and local and private organizations on matters relating to African Americans in this state.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Washington State Commission on African American Affairs is to develop and promote public policy which enhances the social, economic, political, medical and educational health and welfare of African American people within Washington State.

The Commission will improve the conditions impacting African Americans by influencing policy in the public and private sectors. The Commission will influence policy by, but is not limited to pursuing, the following methods:

- researching and disseminating data on the status of African Americans
- promoting policies that benefit African Americans to the Governor's office, the legislature, and the business community; and
- utilizing all media to promote policies, both in the public and private sectors, that the Commission deem as necessary to increase access to and opportunities for participation, development and success for African American people.
- In addition to representing the interests and concerns of Washington State's African American citizens to the government of the state, the Commission may also support initiatives within local jurisdictions upon the request of African Americans in those local areas. The Commission shall build alliances with any and all commissions, advocacy groups, political action committees or other associations with whom it shares common goals.

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Seattle/King County Coalition for the Homeless
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Washington Basic Health Plan
Washington State Aids Case Reporting System
Washington State Bar Association
Washington State Department of Transportation
Washington State Family Independence Program
Washington State Institute for Public Policy
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