

EDUCATION

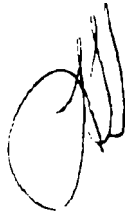


UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

July 21, 1997

MEMORANDUM TO THURGOOD MARSHALL JR.
SECRETARY TO THE CABINET

FROM:

 LESLIE T. THORNTON
CHIEF OF STAFF
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

SUBJECT:

THE PRESIDENT'S RACIAL RECONCILIATION INITIATIVE/
AGENCY BEST PRACTICES

This memorandum sets out the Department of Education's "best practices" as they relate to the President's Racial Reconciliation Initiative. It is divided into four categories: (I) Enforcement of Civil Rights; (II) Assistance and Outreach in Program Practices; (III) Policy Initiatives; and (IV) Equal Employment Opportunity/Personnel Practices. **You should note that this morning, Secretary Riley met for ninety minutes at my request with his senior officers and very senior staff on the issue of the President's Racial Reconciliation Initiative. Our very productive discussion resulted in the direction by Secretary that the Department of Education try to become a model for the initiative. He has asked each component head to set up within their respective divisions a mechanism – perhaps even a strategic plan – to begin a dialogue on race that would involve all of the Department's employees and report up to the senior officers and the Secretary. He has also asked that this dialogue result in concrete changes or initiatives within each division as needed. I will try to keep you updated as this new initiative proceeds.**

You might also note that various grant opportunity initiatives have been developed throughout the department that reflect a commitment to minority capacity building.¹ Please let us know whether this type of information would also be useful.

¹ For example, in FY 1996, the Department's Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) initiated a rehabilitation minority capacity building effort. RSA announced and held a competition to enhance the capacity and increase the number of minority applicants applying and successfully competing for grants, cooperative agreements and contracts offered by the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS). Following a competition with nearly 30 applications, 13 cooperative agreements were made to educational institutions and non-profit service agencies. One of the grants included provisions for the funding of a consortium of five minority educational institutions. Thus, a total of 17 entities are directly involved in the effort. In addition, a consultant, with expertise in capacity building, diversity and rehabilitation, was selected as the National Coordinator of the cooperative agreements.

I. ENFORCEMENT OF CIVIL RIGHTS

A. General Responsibilities of the Office for Civil Rights

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) of the Department of Education enforces Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin, in all programs and activities of recipients of federal financial assistance. Coverage extends to almost 15,000 school districts, more than 3,600 colleges and universities, about 10,000 proprietary organizations, thousands of libraries, museums, vocational rehabilitation agencies, and correctional facilities. OCR responds to complaints of discrimination received from the public, conducts agency-initiated compliance reviews, and provides technical assistance to help people and institutions.

In 1996, Title VI complaints received by OCR alleged discriminatory ability grouping practices, discriminatory discipline practices, discriminatory student assignment policies, discriminatory interdistrict student transfers, unlawful school segregation, racial harassment, discriminatory student housing practices on college campuses, and discriminatory academic grading practices. Examples of issues raised in compliance reviews are ensuring that nondiscriminatory practices are followed in the placement of minority students in special education and low track courses, ensuring that access to English language instruction as well as content courses and other educational benefits are afforded to limited English proficient students, ensuring student assessment practices are nondiscriminatory, and providing nondiscriminatory access to gifted and talented and other high ability programs and classes. OCR provides assistance to enable institutions to come into compliance during the complaint resolution process or during a compliance review.

The Office for Civil Rights also engages in a broad range of proactive outreach through such activities as onsite consultations, conference sponsorship and participation, training classes, workshops, and community meetings. Written and telephone guidance is also provided in response to tens of thousands of inquiries received annually.

B. Evaluation of State Efforts to Ensure No Discriminatory Effect Based on Race in States with a History of *De Jure* Segregated Systems of Higher Education

On January 31, 1994, the Department published in the Federal Register a Notice of Application of Supreme Court Decision in United States v. Fordice (59 Federal Register 4271). In Fordice, the Supreme Court held that States that operated *de jure* segregated higher education systems have an affirmative duty under the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to dismantle those systems and their vestiges. In the Notice, the Department reaffirmed that all States with a history of *de jure* segregated systems of higher education have an affirmative duty to ensure that no vestiges of the *de jure* system are having a discriminatory

effect on the basis of race. OCR noted that if it receives information that a State has not met this affirmative duty it will take appropriate action. Additionally, OCR stated that it will apply the Fordice standards to all pending Title VI evaluations of statewide higher education systems with OCR-accepted desegregation plans that have expired and that the Department affirms its position that States may not place unfair burdens upon black students and faculty in the desegregation process.

C. Investigative Guidance Concerning Racial Incidents and Harassment Against Students at Educational Institutions. 59 Federal Register 11448 (March 10, 1994)

In March 1994, the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights announced investigative guidance under Title VI on the procedures and analysis that OCR staff will follow when investigating issues of racial incidents and harassment against students at educational institutions. In the guidance, which interprets Title VI as prohibiting racial harassment, we emphasized that the existence of racial incidents and harassment on the basis of race, color or national origin against students is of major concern to the Department. Racial harassment denies students the right to an education free of discrimination.

II. ASSISTANCE AND OUTREACH THROUGH PROGRAM PRACTICES

A. Access through Student Financial Aid

The largest share of Department resources is distributed based on financial need, including postsecondary student financial aid. The Federal Student Financial Aid Programs do not consider race in determining eligibility for or the amount of aid a student receives. However, because the Federal Student Financial Aid Programs are means tested, they provide significant support to racial and ethnically minority students. Overall, a third of Federal student aid recipients in 1995-96 were minority – 16 percent were African-American; 12 percent were Hispanic; 5 percent were Asian or Pacific Islander; and 1.4 percent were Alaskan or Pacific Islander².

It is important to note that the more means targeted the aid program is, the more likely that the students benefitting will be minority. For example, the most means targeted of the Federal student financial aid programs is the Pell Grant program. In 1995-96, 45 percent of Federal Pell Grant recipients were minority – 21 percent were African-American; 17 percent were Hispanic; 6 percent were Asian or Pacific Islander; and 1.8 percent were Alaskan or Pacific Islander. The least means targeted of the Federal student financial aid programs is the PLUS program, which provides loans to parents of dependent

²Data are not collected on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). These data were collected as part of the 1996 National Postsecondary Student Aid Survey.

students. In 1995-96, only 23 percent of PLUS recipients were minority – 13 percent were African-American; 6 percent Hispanic; 3 percent Asian or Pacific Islander; and 0.9 percent Alaskan or Pacific Islander. The other aid programs are somewhere between these two extremes.

In administering the Federal student financial aid programs, the Department has taken a number of steps to reach out to institutions that serve large numbers of minority students. Most recently, the Department undertook targeted technical assistance to historically black colleges and universities by sending a Title IV Program Technical Assistance Team to more than 20 institutions. The team conducted a management assessment which was used to develop and structure a customized institutional plan of work for improving Title IV program management. Also, the plan of work is used to assist institutional staff in meeting program compliance requirements. The plan of work is developed collaboratively with institutional staff with responsibility for the management of the Title IV programs. In award year 1996-97, students attending historically black colleges and universities received \$196 million in Pell Grants, an average of \$103,422 per institution. In award year 1997-98, nearly \$81 million in campus-based funds were allocated to historically black colleges and universities.

It is important to note that historically black colleges and universities and tribally controlled community colleges are exempt from the sanctions that result from having cohort default rates under the FFEL programs that are in excess of 25 percent for three consecutive years. This exemption recognizes that minority students are more likely to have difficulty finding employment and are likely to earn less than non-minority students even after successfully completing a postsecondary education program.

Following are the highlights of the Department's fiscal year 1998 request for the Federal student financial aid programs:

- Total financial aid available would grow to \$47 billion, a 10 percent increase over the 1997 level. Grants, loans, and work-study opportunities would be provided for over 8 million students, or 450,000 more than in 1997.
- Pell Grant maximum award would increase by \$300 to \$3,000—the highest level ever—to improve access to postsecondary education for students from the neediest families. The number of recipients would increase by 348,000 to over 4 million.
- Need analysis for independent students without dependents would be changed to provide more equitable treatment of these students and allow more of them to qualify for student aid.

- A \$27 million increase for the Work-Study program would add 28,000 new recipients as part of the President's commitment to increase the number of recipients to 1 million by the year 2000. The President also has called upon colleges to use a significant portion of their new Work-Study allocations for students serving as tutors in the America Reads Challenge initiative.
- Student loan origination fees would be reduced from 4 percent to 2 percent on Stafford Loans and from 4 percent to 3 percent on other loans—cutting in half the fees charged to the neediest borrowers. In addition, the interest rates charged while the student is in school or in deferment would be reduced.
- The FFEL guaranty agency system would be streamlined to clarify the Federal Government's role as sole guarantor of all student loans. Guaranty agency retention of default collections would be reduced from 27 percent to 18.5 percent—the same rate as the Department's cost of collections—and lender risk-sharing would be increased as an incentive for default prevention.

In addition to the Federal student financial aid programs, the Office of Postsecondary Education supports a number of other programs designed to enhance institutional capacities and provide student services. These programs are highlighted briefly below.

- **Title III: Aid for Institutional Development:** The 1998 request includes \$134.6 million, a \$6 million increase over 1997, to support operations, academic improvements, and endowments for Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Hispanic-serving institutions would receive an 11% increase in support to \$12 million.
- **Minority Science Improvement:** This program provides financial assistance to improve science and engineering programs at postsecondary institutions with predominantly minority enrollments. It is designed to enhance the capacity of such institutions to develop and maintain quality science education programs, and to help increase the representation of minorities in science and engineering careers.
- **TRIO:** Supports postsecondary education outreach and student support services that encourage individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds to enter and complete college. These services complement the student financial aid programs by helping to ensure postsecondary education access for disadvantaged students and by providing them with the support they need to successfully complete postsecondary programs. \$525 million is requested.

- Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need: Supports fellowships to outstanding students. Participating graduate schools must seek out students from underrepresented groups.
- Howard University: \$196 million is provided for its academic operations, endowment, and Hospital.
- Historically Black College and University Capital Financing program: Promotes diversity and equal opportunity in American higher education by providing a federal guarantee for bond financing for the repair and construction of facilities at Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

In addition to these programs that either explicitly (in the case of the Title III programs) or implicitly (in the case of the TRIO programs) target minority institutions and students, the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education supports a variety of projects that address issues of diversity in higher education. Summaries of some of the exemplary projects highlighted in *Lessons Learned*, an occasional publication of the Fund, are contained in the appendix to this document.

B. Elementary and Secondary and Vocational Education

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which provides services to educationally disadvantaged students in areas with high concentrations of poverty, serves a high percentage of minority students. To ensure that children in the poorest areas are served, the Title I statute was amended in 1994 to better target funds towards the students in the poorest schools.

The Title I statute also requires States that have challenging academic content and performance standards for all students to use those standards for Title I students as well, thereby eliminating any practice that held Title I students to lower standards. To ensure that Title I schools are providing effective services, the statute also requires each Title I school to make "adequate yearly progress." The statute also contains strong accountability measures for schools that do not make adequate yearly progress.

The Title I statute, as amended in 1994, also expanded the authority to provide more meaningful and flexible services to all students in schools that serve 50% or more low-income students. These "schoolwide" projects, by not distinguishing between Title I and non-Title I students, should help to eliminate distinctions made in the services provided to students and thus ease tensions caused by "unnecessary labeling" of students.

Services to Indian students have also been improved with improvements to the

Indian Education Act, that better ties services to performance standards. Furthermore, Bureau of Indian Affairs schools are eligible for more program services through the expansion of the definition of "local educational agencies."

C. Affirmative Action

1. *Minority Teacher Training Recruitment*. This program makes grants to institutions to support programs to encourage minority students to enter the teaching profession. Specifically, the program is designed to: (1) improve recruitment and training opportunities in education for minority individuals, including minority language individuals; (2) increase the number of minority teachers, including minority language teachers, in elementary and secondary education; and (3) identify and encourage minority students in the 7th through 12th grades to aspire to and prepare for careers in elementary and secondary school teaching. The program also is designed to prepare and place students as teachers in urban and rural public or private nonprofit elementary or secondary schools with at least 50 percent minority enrollment.

2. *Institute for International Public Policy*. The program supports access to graduate education in international studies for minority and disadvantaged students. It is designed to increase significantly the number of African Americans and other under-represented minorities in international service, including private international voluntary organizations and the foreign service of the United States.

3. *Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program*. This program provides disadvantaged college students at the undergraduate level with preparation for doctoral study. At least two-thirds of the project participants must be low-income and first-generation college students. If an institution chooses to include students who are not low-income and first-generation, they must be from an under-represented group, defined by regulation as Black, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaskan Native.

D. Desegregation in Elementary and Secondary Education

1. *Magnet Schools Assistance Program*, 20 U.S.C. 7201-7213; 34 C.F.R. Part 280. This program provides grants to local educational agencies to assist in the desegregation of schools served, to reduce or eliminate or prevent minority group isolation.

2. *Desegregation Assistance Centers*, 42 U.S.C. 2000c-2; 34 C.F.R. Parts 270, 272. This grant program funds regional Desegregation Assistance Centers which provide technical assistance, including training, at the request of school boards and other responsible governmental agencies, in the preparation, adoption and implementation of plans for the desegregation of public schools, and in the development of effective methods of coping with special educational problems occasioned by desegregation.

E. Other

1. *Programs to Strengthen Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Minority Serving Institutions.* The Department administers several grant programs to provide assistance to HBCUs and other minority serving institutions and are designed to strengthen and enhance them. These include the Strengthening HBCU Program and Strengthening Historically Black Graduate Institutions, 20 U.S.C. 1060-1063c; Hispanic-Serving Institutions Program, 20 U.S.C. 1059c; HBCU Capital Financing Program, 20 U.S.C. 1132c-1132c-7; Exemption from Federal Family Education Loan Program High Cohort Default Rate Termination For HBCUs and Tribally-Controlled Community Colleges, 20 U.S.C. 1085(a)(2)(c); and Minority Science Improvement Program, 20 U.S.C. 1135b-1135b-3.

2. *Bilingual Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 7401.* The purpose of the grant programs authorized by Part A of Title VII is to increase the capacity of school districts to educate limited English proficient children and youth to meet the same rigorous standards for academic performance expected of all children and youth.

3. *Inclusion of Under-served Populations.* A large number of programs administered by the Department include provisions designed to ensure the inclusion of populations that have been under-served, including minorities, in order to make these programs accessible to all segments of the population. These include provisions designed to increase participation of minorities in programs, to increase research studies of these special populations, to increase the numbers of teaching and instructional personnel trained to meet the special needs for these populations and to teach in academic subjects in which they are under-represented. Also included are outreach strategy requirements in State plans, requirements regarding elimination of race discrimination and stereotyping, special training to counsel and train these populations and their parents, and requirements that States take steps to overcome barriers to access to technology devices and services for under-represented populations.

4. *The Improving America's Schools Act (IASA).* The IASA added, at the Administration's request, a new provision on equity for students and teachers to the General Education Provisions Act. This provision seeks to assist the Department in implementing our mission to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation, by ensuring equal opportunities for students and teachers to participate in any program administered by the Department. Each applicant for funds under an applicable program is required to describe in its application the steps it proposes to take to ensure equitable access and participation by addressing the special needs of students, teachers, and other program participants.

III. POLICY INITIATIVES

A. National Tests

In order to raise standards for all children and to ensure that there are not dual standards, the President announced in the State of the Union address that the Federal Government will develop voluntary national tests in fourth grade English reading and eighth grade mathematics which will first be given in the spring of 1999. The national tests will provide parents and teachers with information about the achievement of their children and students relative to rigorous standards in the areas of reading and mathematics. While the civil rights groups have expressed concern over possible misuses of the test to the detriment of minority children, they have also expressed agreement that this effort may be the first important national effort in education designed to ensure all children – including minority children – are afforded the real tools they need to succeed and for minority children – a commitment to the high standards and rigorous course work that is often available to non-minority children but not minority and/or inner-city children.

B. Hate Crimes

The Department of Education's Safe and Drug-Free School's program in collaboration with the Department of Justice (OJJDP) is funding a national training project to assist communities in a comprehensive approach to reducing hate and bias crimes within their local communities by targeting the training to community teams from all sectors of the community including juvenile justice agencies, victims assistance programs, members of the religious community, and public health services organizations. The trainings emphasize the dissemination of information of best practices in violence prevention and prejudice reduction, building effective collaboration among vested partners and the implementation of innovative practices. The training is based on a curriculum developed by the Education Development Center, Inc. called *Healing the Hate: A National Hate Crime Prevention Curriculum*.

C. Support for Diversity/Affirmative Action

In February 1994, the Department promulgated final policy guidance on nondiscrimination in federally assisted programs, generally referred to as the "race-based scholarship guidance." Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 59 Federal Register 8756 (February 23, 1994). The guidance clarifies how colleges can use financial aid to promote campus diversity and access of minority students to postsecondary education without violating Federal anti-discrimination laws. In the guidance, the Secretary encourages the continued use of financial aid as a means to provide equal educational opportunity and to provide a diverse educational environment for all students.

The Department is working with the Harvard Project and others, on the development of legal and research based arguments in support of diversity in educational programs. This has included participating and sponsoring meetings and symposiums.

The Department participates in a joint ED/DOJ task force on affirmative action litigation. This group meets biweekly and coordinates all affirmative action litigation, OCR investigations, technical assistance and other policy work that the government is involved with in the education area.

Most recently, the Department has made a request for proposals regarding *The Outcomes of Diversity in Higher Education*. The Department's Office of Education Research and Improvement seeks to examine and evaluate the effects of increased proportions of race/ethnic minority students participating in higher education, of attempts to improve the climate of campus life for those students and of inclusion of racial/ethnic minority perspectives and experience in critical areas of the curriculum that prepare all students for participating in the workforce that is both increasingly multicultural and serving diverse racial/ethnic groups.

IV. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY/PERSONNEL PRACTICES

A. Outreach

The Equal Employment Opportunity Group (EEOG), Office of Management, maintains contact with internal employee minority interest groups such as the Education Hispanic Employee Council, The Asian Pacific Americans at Education, the Coalition of African American Employees, and the AFGE Local. Traditionally, contact with external minority organizations for the purpose of recruitment has been left up to the individual Principal Office's Executive Offices. For example, the Office of Postsecondary Education – the Department's largest organization – participates in Asian/Pacific Recruitment Days, minority job fairs, maintains contact with the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, and colleges and universities with large percentages of Hispanics and Asian/Pacific Americans. However, the department's EEOG recent reengineering effort has resulted in several recommendations involving outreach activities and initiatives including the development of plans to establish and maintain contact with local and national minority, women, and disabled individuals organizations.

B. Overall Departmental Management Initiatives

The Department's strategic plan includes a commitment to a fair, efficient, and responsive workplace. A number of Departmental initiatives have been introduced that, in combination, ensure that Senior Leaders and employees are more aware of principles and policies relating to equal employment, have the opportunity and a variety of venues to

raise concerns and issues relating to race that may arise in the workplace, increase the opportunity for training on issues relating to race, diversity, and related issues, and hold managers accountable for their compliance with EEO principles and policies.

1. *Multi-input performance appraisal system.* The Department implemented a performance appraisal system in 1996 that gives employees an opportunity to provide feedback on the performance of their coworkers and supervisors. In addition, all supervisors have a critical element on the use of management practices that support EEO, labor-management partnership and merit system principles.

2. *Informal Dispute Resolution Center (IDRC).* The IDRC was established in 1996 as a one-stop shop for all employment-related disputes. It provides counseling and mediation services that permit early resolution of disputes and, therefore, may resolve concerns or problems that otherwise might become complaints of discrimination due to the absence of alternative venues for resolving disputes. It has been recognized as an innovative reinvention initiative by other government agencies – IDR Center staff have been invited to conferences and asked to speak with other agencies about its establishment, operation, and results.

3. *Labor Management Partnership.* In 1996, the Department received the National Partnership Award for its work in partnership with the employee union. Under the broad umbrella of the partnership, management and labor work together on an array of issues of concern to the workforce, including communication issues and matters intended to improve understanding and working relationships among a diverse workforce.

4. *Revised New Employee Orientation.* As part of their initial orientation training in the Department, new employees receive a presentation on EEO principles and policies and information about the IDRC.

5. *Consultant Skills in Management.* The TDC has assembled a cadre of consultants with expertise in management, workforce diversity, and EEO practices to assist managers in handling these issues on a confidential basis.

C. Reinvention of the Equal Employment Opportunity Group

The Department chartered a Quality Improvement Team to develop a model system for processing, investigating, resolving, and, as appropriate, settling equal employment opportunity complaints filed by Department employees. The QIT group's recommendations included establishing the IDRC and improving coordination between the EEOG, the Office of the General Counsel, and the Human Resource staff of the Department. In addition to implementing those recommendations, the EEOG has implemented recommendations to provide Senior Leaders a quarterly report on the status

of EEO matters in the Department – including complaint activity and work force profiles – and they have made themselves available for individualized briefings to Senior Leaders, ensuring that EEO matters are a priority with the Senior Officers.

D. Mandatory EEO training for Managers and Other Training Opportunities for All Employees

The Department is developing a mandatory training program in EEO matters for managers and also is developing other training opportunities for employees related to conflict resolution, team building, cultural diversity, and related issues.

E. Personnel Practices

The Department's personnel office promotes diversity in recruitment and hiring in the following ways:

(1) maintains an extensive vacancy announcement distribution list which includes Historically Black Colleges and Universities, member schools of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, and schools with substantial percentages of Asian-Americans;

(2) places recruitment advertisements in minority publications; e.g., Hispanic Magazine, local Hispanic newspapers, Ebony Magazine, etc.;

(3) contacts colleges, obtains lists of minority students who graduated with honors, and sends them letters inviting them to apply for consideration under our outstanding scholars program;

(4) contacts and visits local governments to obtain their assistance in placing minorities in our student employment programs; and

(5) manages a very active summer employment program which recruits and places minority applicants for summer work.



THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON

JUL 18 1997

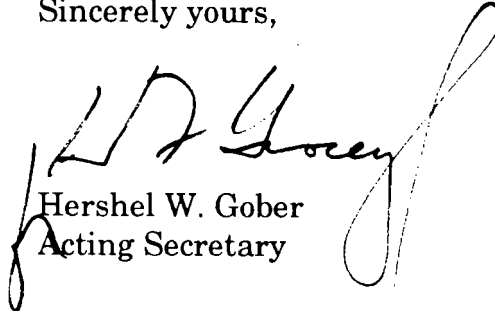
Mr. David Beaubaire
Special Assistant to the Cabinet Secretary
160 Old Executive Office Building
Washington, DC 20502

Dear Mr. Beaubaire:

Enclosed is the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) "Best Practices" on race initiatives report.

We fully support the President's Initiative on Race and will work cooperatively to ensure the success of the Initiative. Questions regarding this submission should be directed to Mr. Eugene A. Brickhouse, Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration, at (202) 273-4901.

Sincerely yours,



Hershel W. Gober
Acting Secretary

Enclosure

HWG/ejh



Putting Veterans First

BEST PRACTICES ON RACE INITIATIVES DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

1. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is committed to supporting the President's Initiative On Race to enhance race relations in our Nation.
2. VA is firmly committed to making the Department an employer of choice. VA is preparing to move into the 21st century by establishing corporate goals to provide "One VA" world class customer service and to create and maintain a high performing workforce to serve veterans. These corporate goals will be accomplished by ensuring that VA's workforce reflects the diversity of the customers it serves, the Nation's veterans and their dependents. To ensure that employees will be able to carry out the mission of the Department with maximum productivity, VA has also reinforced its commitment to fostering respect among all employees through "Zero Tolerance" for sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace.
3. In support of providing a work environment that recognizes that racial differences are welcomed and valued in VA in all areas of employment and that quality service will be provided to customers without regard to race, the following "best practices" have been implemented throughout the Department:

A. Executive Communications to Employees

Frequent communication is provided to employees through the Secretary's daily Broadcast message on electronic-mail, All-Station letters to VA facilities, All Employee Letters, directives, and publications such as the EEO Update. Through these forms of communication employees are informed of departmentwide policies, program initiatives, all special observances, and national conferences which address workplace issues and also provide information of interest to minorities and other employees.

Information has been disseminated to all employees regarding the Secretary's commitment to equal opportunity programs and a work environment free of discrimination which reflects the diversity of this nation. Information has also been disseminated to Senior Executives on timeliness standards for processing EEO complaints of discrimination and sexual harassment and on the inclusion of specific objectives relating to the achievement of affirmative employment goals and the prevention of sexual harassment and discrimination in their performance standards. All facilities have received information announcing and encouraging support of minority and women's national conferences such as the annual National Blacks In Government Training Conference, Federally Employed Women National Training Program, the National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives Annual Executive Leadership and Diversity Conference, National Hispanic Heritage Month, Black History Month, Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, National

Native American Indian Heritage Month, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday and Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week.

B. Executive Accountability

All VA senior executives are required to have specific EEO performance standards pertaining to achievement of affirmative employment goals and prevention of discrimination and sexual harassment. Effective accomplishment of EEO performance standards has been identified as a factor which should be considered in determining performance awards for executives.

The Office of Equal Opportunity has also recommended that supervisors who are not in the Senior Executive Service be required to have specific EEO performance standards pertaining to achievement of affirmative employment goals.

C. Succession Planning

A succession planning system will be established and enable VA to identify, develop and maintain managerial and executive cadres which will reflect the diversity of VA's workforce and customers and possess the skills, core competencies and values critical to providing leadership to the Department.

D. Effective Resolution of Discrimination Complaints

The current Discrimination Complaints Service uses the latest document-imaging technology to improve efficiency and access and thereby, significantly reducing the use of hard copies (paper documents) to process work. This technology allows for the receipt, preparation, review, modification, and storage of documents by use of computer technology, rather than by handling forms or other paper records.

A toll free telephone "EEO Info" line has been installed to provide employees with information and advice on discrimination and sexual harassment complaints.

A pilot program was created to test Alternative Dispute Resolution techniques in the EEO complaint process. Entitled "VA-EMP Program," the pilot program uses specially trained mediators to assist in informal resolution of complaints. The program is presently being tested in the Washington - Baltimore Metropolitan Area.

A VA Task Force has been established to conduct a thorough review of VA's EEO complaints processing system to ensure that the Department's sexual harassment and discrimination complaints system provides each VA employee access to a fair, neutral, and efficient EEO complaints process, answerable directly to the Department's highest executive level. This initiative will contribute to VA's

goal of a workplace culture and environment that is conducive to zero tolerance of sexual harassment and discrimination.

The Task Force has developed a report that recommends 1) the establishment of an office of complaint resolution which will report to the Secretary through the Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration rather than through a line component, 2) the appointment of full-time EEO Counselors and Investigators who are supervised by the office of complaint resolution, and 3) the removal of VA facility directors from any role in managing the EEO complaint process.

E. EEO Publications

The Office of Equal Opportunity develops “White Papers” to expand employees’ knowledge and understanding of diversity and important aspects of the EEO complaint process. The “White Papers” are distributed to key officials and made available to other employees. The “White Papers” address topics such as Dealing With Diversity, Elements of An Affirmative Employment Program for EEO, Understanding the Causes of EEO Complaints, EEO Advice for Supervisors and Managers, Program Suggestions for Persons With Collateral EEO Duties, and The Role of Management Officials During the Processing of an EEO Complaint.

The EEO Update is published on a quarterly basis and provides employees, supervisors, and managers with current information on EEO programs, legislation, policies, and EEO case law.

F. Diversity Initiatives

All employees, including supervisors and managers, were required to complete a 4-hour mandatory training program on diversity entitled Diversity In The Workplace. The training provided information and sensitivity training to assist VA employees in recognizing, valuing and managing diversity and reducing prejudice. The training also assisted employees in recognizing the strengths of diversity within VA and its contribution to the Department’s mission, vision, and effectiveness.

G. Special Observances

Special programs are conducted at the headquarters and field facility levels in support of observances such as Black History Month, National Hispanic Heritage Month, Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, Native American Indian Heritage Month and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s Birthday. Programs include speakers, audience participation, exhibits, and displays. Educational forums are also conducted to focus on developmental

opportunities for minorities and other employees.

H. Partnerships with External Stakeholders

A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between VA and the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACUs) to foster a supportive relationship to increase employment and educational opportunities in VA for students of HACUs. An Executive Steering Committee on Hispanic Employment was established to ensure effective implementation of the MOU.

A Partnership Agreement will soon be signed between VA and the National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives to address employment, training, and advancement of Hispanics at the GS-13 level and above.

I. EEO Training

The EEO Counseling Facilitator course was redesigned and a new Advanced EEO Investigator's Training Course was developed. The courses provide EEO counselors and investigators with critical information which allows them to carry out their responsibilities in a more timely and effective manner.

Regional and local EEO technical training seminars are conducted annually to provide training for EEO managers and complaint liaisons on the discrimination complaint process, the complaint tracking system, and affirmative employment reporting.

Annually, several thousand supervisors and managers participate in the EEO National Training Program for Supervisors and Managers. The training addresses the roles and responsibilities of supervisors and managers, the need for EEO laws, factors contributing to discrimination, ways to avoid EEO complaints, complaint resolution, constructive routes to communication and agreement, sexual harassment in the workplace, and sexual harassment law.

A Pre-Conference Training Program is conducted for VA employees at the Blacks In Government Annual Training Program and the Federally Employed Women's National Training Program. The purpose of the program is to provide employees with information to enhance their careers, update employees on EEO initiatives, and provide them an opportunity to dialogue with key VA officials.

The Bedford VA Medical Center hosts an annual National Native American Conference and Pow-Wow. Numerous Native American Indian tribes are represented at the Pow-Wow. Special emphasis program managers who manage Native American programs at the facility level are provided training on how to effectively manage their program to increase employment of Native Americans.

J. Outreach and Recruitment

The Department annually participates as an exhibitor at annual conferences of national minority and women's organizations. The conferences include the following:

American Indian Science & Engineering Society Annual Conference
Blacks In Government Annual Training Conference
Congressional Black Caucus Conference
Federal Asian Pacific American Training Conference
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Annual Convention
National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education Annual Conference
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities Annual Conference
National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives Annual Executive Leadership and Diversity Conference
National Hispanic Career Fair
National Image, Inc.
League of United Latin American Citizens Annual Conference
Rio Grande High Technology Minority and Women's Job Fair
United States Hispanic Leadership Conference
National Urban League Convention

Local facilities also participate in regional and local job fairs sponsored by organizations and area colleges and universities.

K. Advertisements in Professional Publications

Recruitment advertisements for health care professionals have been placed in publications targeted to minorities. VA advertisements have appeared in Minority Nurse, the National Black Nurses' Association Program Book, Journal for Minority Medical Students, Allied Health Magazine Minorities Issue, 1994 Hispanic Year Book, Hispanic Business, The Black Collegian, Patriots, The Black EOE Journal, Black Executive Exchange Program Journal, The Annual NAACP Convention Program Book, Diversity Supplier & Business Magazine, Hispanic Magazine, Native American Connections, and The Crisis.

L. Recognition of EEO Accomplishments

The Secretary conducts an Annual EEO Awards Program to recognize individuals departmentwide who have excelled in promoting equal opportunity in five categories: 1) non-supervisory employees, 2) supervisors and managers through GS-14 and equivalent, 3) managers and executives GS-15 and above,

4) EEO representatives, and 5) people with targeted disabilities and disabled veterans. Award winners are honored at a ceremony with a cash award and a plaque. The ceremony is supported at the highest levels of each major organizational component.

Local facilities have also established EEO Recognition Awards. The Washington, DC Medical Center, for example has established “EEO Excellence Awards” which are given to supervisory and non-supervisory employees in recognition of significant contributions to the medical center’s EEO Program.

One of VA’s major organizations, the Veterans Health Administration, established an annual Diversity Awards Program to recognize and support health care facilities for developing innovative and specialized local programs to further diversity and excellence within their workplaces. Winning health care facilities received cash awards.

M. Outreach to Minority Academic Institutions

VA’s involvement with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), HACUs and Native American Serving Institutions contribute to the Department’s efforts to build a diverse workforce.

The VA Recruitment Bulletin is distributed to HBCUs and HACUs to provide information about nationwide VA employment opportunities.

VA participates in student internship programs such as the Summer Internship Program sponsored by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities which serves Hispanic students in the United States and Puerto Rico and the Federal Recruitment Program for People with Disabilities Program which recruits disabled college students for summer jobs. In addition, VA participates in summer hire and stay-in school programs which provide on-the-job training for minority disadvantaged students.

The Veterans Health Administration, a major VA organization, developed and published a Career Options Handbook to highlight employment opportunities at VA health care facilities for students at HBCUs. The handbook has been distributed to all HBCUs.

A partnership was established with the Department of Energy to sponsor regional “Successful Partnering Conferences” for HBCUs, HACUs and Native American Serving Institutions to enhance relationships between Federal agencies and minority academic institutions. Invitations were extended to hundreds of schools located in the geographical region of the conference sites. The conferences provided faculty and students from the institutions with information on opportunities for employment, internships, grants, contracts, research

opportunities, and training within each agency. Conferences were conducted at Prairie View A & M University in Houston, Texas and Florida International University in Miami, Florida.

VA implemented on-line service with the Federal Information Exchange System (FEDIX) to advertise opportunities for employment, research grants, fellowships, and other information about VA for students and faculty at Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Hispanic-Serving Institutions. This initiative has resulted in thousands of inquiries from college students about VA opportunities.

VA utilizes the Student Career Experience Program as a vehicle to recruit students from HBCUs. The program allows undergraduates and graduates to gain valuable work experience, training and education in high demand career fields based on mutual agreements between VA facilities and academic institutions. Upon the student's completion of their education, they are appointed non-competitively to career positions in VA as physical therapists, physician assistants, health care administrators, registered nurses, social workers, and another associate health professionals.

Annually, VA announces opportunities for scientists of VA medical centers to work in cooperation with faculty and students of HBCUs. There are three separate components to this initiative:

- 1) The opportunity for collaborative research studies between VA medical centers and faculty of HBCUs.
- 2) The opportunity for scientists of HBCUs to work for a period of time in the laboratories of senior investigators in VA medical centers. This educational detail allows these individuals to engage in concentrated research activity, to pursue a specific research project and to learn new research techniques.
- 3) The opportunity for scientists in VA medical centers to apply for research training for advanced science students enrolled in HBCUs. This initiative is coordinated with faculty at HBCUs. It recognizes the need to introduce students to research methodology and techniques as well as stimulate their interest in careers in biomedical or behavioral research.

The VA Black Hills Health Care System at Fort Meade, South Dakota, established a new EEO-Native American Student Career Experience Program with several Historically Native American Tribal Colleges in western South Dakota and North Dakota. Student internships were provided for students at the medical center and the Veterans Industries clinic at McLaughlin, South Dakota.

VA provides educational assistance payments to eligible veterans, dependents, reservists, and service members while they are in approved training programs. These educational assistance payments are used by veterans to complete their academic studies at minority colleges and universities.

N. Career Development

All employees are encouraged to participate in executive and management development programs. Minority employees participate in Leadership VA, the Women's Executive Leadership Program, the Executive Potential Program, the Federal Executive Institute, and the New Leader Program.

The Veterans Benefits Administration has also developed a component wide training program, the Leadership Enhancement and Development Program, designed to identify and develop individuals in mid-level grades (GS-9 through GS-12) with leadership potential. Minorities have successfully been identified for participation in the program.

VA employees are afforded an opportunity to gain college credits through the Tuition Support Program. Through the program, employees participate in academic studies off-station, continuing education courses, and in-service training programs.

VA facilities are involved in mentoring programs. The Central Texas Veterans Health Care System at Temple, Texas, for example, worked with the Waco Independent School District to mentor students in mathematics to improve their Texas Assessment Academic Skills scores. The students were also included in a shadowing program to gain work experience and become aware of job opportunities within the VA system.

Upward mobility training slots are established by VA organizations and are used to provide on-the-job training, formal instruction, and independent study for positions such as veterans benefits counselor trainees and computer assistants with promotion potential to computer specialist positions.

O. Establishment of the Center for Minority Veterans

The Center for Minority Veterans was established by Congress to reach out to minority veterans who are underserved to ensure that they will have appropriate access to VA services and benefits. Establishment of the Center affords minority veterans, as primary stakeholders, an opportunity to address their concerns and provide input on issues that impact them. In support of its mission, the Center has carried out the following initiatives to ensure that the needs of minority veterans are met:

Monthly telephone conferences are conducted with minority veteran organizations to address issues of concern. This initiative provides officials of the Center an opportunity to update the organizations on VA initiatives and to obtain input from their customers on the quality of services that are delivered by VA.

A Minority Veterans Business Owners Seminar scheduled for August 29, 1997 in Los Angeles, California, will focus on informing minority veteran business owners on opportunities provided by VA and the Federal government. The Conference is being co-sponsored by VA's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, the Small Business Administration, and local banking agencies in the Los Angeles community. A total of four conferences have been planned for locations throughout the country.

A network of several hundred collateral duty minority veterans program coordinators has been established in VA facilities. These coordinators provide outreach into the community and assist veterans in obtaining available benefits and services. Monthly telephone conferences are held with the coordinators to address issues facing veterans as well as other problems which occur in the field that impact upon delivery of services to veterans.

Medical sharing agreements have been implemented that will make health care more available to Native American veterans by eliminating the need for the veterans to travel so far to obtain needed medical services. Other sharing agreements will provide direct medical care on the Oneida reservation through a sharing agreement with the Oneida Community Health Clinic and Indian Health Services Facility.

Plans are being implemented to place a Vet Center on the Navajo Indian reservation. This will be the first one stop Vet Center which will provide benefits, counseling, and compensated work therapy. The Department of Labor will also provide job training assistance to veterans.

Bilingual publications and a fact sheet have been printed in Spanish for Hispanic veterans to provide more effective communication with minority veterans who speak a second language.

A collaborative partnership has been established with the Veterans Health Administration to encourage the National Cancer Institute to

bring state of the art treatment trials for cancer to VA for minority veterans.

A Home Page has been established to provide key information for minority veterans who have access to computer technology.



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Washington, D.C. 20460

JUL 18 1997

OFFICE OF
CIVIL RIGHTSMEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: White House "Best Practices" Response

FROM: Rafael DeLeon *Rafael DeLeon*
Acting Director

TO: Peter Robertson
Chief of Staff

Following is a compilation of Environmental Protection Agency "Best Practices" activities pertaining to President Clinton's initiative on race relations. Office of Civil Rights' staff have included activities with which they are familiar, supplemented by input from the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization and Special Assistant Angela Chung.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

As the designated lead on *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations* (E.O. 12898), the Environmental Protection Agency has undertaken several significant environmental justice initiatives:

- * The National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC) was established in 1994, to provide broad stakeholder involvement in environmental decision-making. Members include representatives from industry, academia, state/local government, and community-based organizations. Among its many accomplishments, the NEJAC has hosted five Brownfields' Public Dialogue Sessions, organized the Agency's first public Roundtables on Relocation and Enforcement (Relocation in Pensacola, Florida and Enforcement in San Antonio, Texas), and developed and published a *Model Plan for Enhancing Public Participation*;
- * After the NEJAC/EPA Superfund Relocation Roundtable, the Escambia Treating Company site in Pensacola, Florida was selected as a relocation pilot. This Superfund site is a mixed industrial and residential area located in a predominantly low-income, African-American community. Approximately 350 households will be relocated due to human health concerns related to dioxin-contaminated soils and contaminated groundwater. The Pensacola Relocation

pilot will serve as a national model and be considered in revisions to the Agency's Superfund Relocation Policy;

- * Over the past four years, EPA has awarded over \$25 million in environmental justice grants to community-based organizations, state/local governments, and academic institutions in predominantly minority communities and low-income communities. These funds (including EJ small grants, community/university partnerships, pollution prevention, and brownfields) have provided much-needed resources and technical assistance to communities that are working on local solutions to local environmental justice problems;
- * During the past three years, EPA has placed over 300 interns (approximately 70% of whom are minority) in positions throughout the Agency. This is an Agency-wide program managed by the Office of Environmental Justice, with funding from the sponsoring program or regional offices. Approximately \$4 million has been allocated to the program.

MINORITY ACTION PLANS

In April 1997, Administrator Browner requested the head of each agency program office to commence a dialogue with minority employees about problems those employees face in the workplace because of their minority status. Senior officials were asked to identify minority problems and barriers in the areas of hiring/recruitment, awards, training, promotions and assignments and to submit plans for addressing these concerns at the local level. Upon completion, these plans were submitted to a review panel for evaluation. The panel will report shortly to the Administrator on monitoring the local plans and cross-cutting initiatives that can be implemented agency-wide. This timely initiative has real potential for improving agency practices that impact minority, as well as, non-minority employees.

DIVERSITY FORUM

The Office of Civil Rights is sponsoring two initiatives designed to foster diversity awareness and understanding at the annual Blacks in Government Conference in August. The first involves a panel discussion on Diversity and Race Relations featuring accomplished individuals from a variety of fields including government, education and religion. The forum will include dialogue between the panelists and the forum participants.

The forum will also present noted Diversity speaker Byron Kunisawa, who will explore employment enhancement strategies for minority employees working in ethnically-isolated settings. The EPA Diversity Forum is designed to provide an opportunity for agency employees to learn new concepts in diversity and race relations. OCR expects that the forum will facilitate implementation of the above-noted Minority Action Plans.

MOU with HISPANIC ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

On May 2, 1997, EPA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACUS) to accomplish the following objectives:

- (1) increase educational, employment, research and development initiatives, and outreach opportunities for students and faculty members from Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), and the national Hispanic community;
- (2) increase Hispanic workforce representation in EPA;
- (3) provide Hispanic students and faculty members with training, developmental, and employment opportunities with EPA;
- (4) strengthen the Agency's support for HACU goals and objectives; and
- (5) support Executive Order 12900, "White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans."

One immediate result of the MOU was the hiring of 5 Hispanic student interns for summer employment. Another result was an agreement to co-sponsor the *Second International Conference on Natural Resources and Cultural Heritage*. EPA is one of five Federal agencies involved in this effort which is scheduled for the week of November 17, 1997, in Tempe, Arizona. Current plans provide for Administrator Browner to participate as a keynote speaker.

In a related initiative, EPA is developing plans to provide enhanced opportunities for American Indian students. Working through American University, the Agency hired two American Indian student interns for this summer. In a matter of days, EPA's Office of Civil Rights will hire an American Indian Employment Program Manager to foster employment and developmental opportunities among Native Americans.

COUNSELING FOR MINORITY BUSINESSES

The Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) is conducting a series of Counseling Sessions for small minority and women-owned businesses. Two sessions targeting minority businesses have already occurred. These educational/outreach sessions provide "hands-on" technical assistance regarding EPA's program requirements and the process by which business is conducted with the Agency. In addition, this initiative affords an opportunity for program offices to meet directly with new firms and to discuss their corporate capabilities.

MINORITY YOUTH PROGRAM

The Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization also provides a grant to the Greater Washington Urban League which supports a program introducing minority youth to a spectrum of environmental issues affecting the quality of health and life in their urban communities. This program challenges the enrollees to examine how water and air quality and land use practices are impacted by the relevant environmental statutes. Further, the youth are exposed to occupations in the environmental field.

If you have any questions, please call Rodney Cash at 260-4582.

July 21, 1997

As of 4:00 p.m., the Office of Cabinet Affairs has yet to receive the "Best Practices" memo from the office of the U.S. Trade Representative.



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY
Washington, D.C. 20503

July 18, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR DAVID BEAUBAIRE
SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE
PRESIDENT FOR CABINET AFFAIRS

FROM: WALT HOLTON *Walt Holton* *18 Jul 97*
DEP CHIEF OF STAFF

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT'S RACE INITIATIVE

1. The purpose of this document is provide Agency input on the President's Race Initiative.
2. In accordance with stated guidance, the following information is provided as ONDCP's initial input to support the President's Race Initiative. The information is somewhat broad but can be expanded as race initiative matures.

a. Category 1: Best Practices with Respect to the Internal Workings of ONDCP:

1. **Hiring** - all offices report that vacancy information is provided to organizations and individuals to foster diversity in the employment application process.

b. Category 2: External Programs and Activities:

2. **Breaking the Cycle** - the demonstration project will enable some nonviolent, drug dependent offenders to avoid criminal records through rehabilitation. (African-American and Hispanic)
3. **Southwest Border Initiative** - provides \$1 million to SAMSHA through MOU to develop demand reduction programs and conduct bi-national demand reduction conference in the spring of 1998. (Hispanic)
4. **Asian and Pacific American Families Summit** - will be conducted with ONDCP assistance, as part of the parent initiative, in the fall of 1997, by the National Association of Asian Pacific American Families Against Substance Abuse (NAPAFASA).
5. **President's \$175 Million Media Campaign** - advertising will target specific minority youth audiences and may utilize specialized minority media outlets. (Native American, Hispanic, African American and Asian American)
6. **Outreach to Constituent Groups** - ONDCP, through the Bureau of State and Local Affairs, liaisons with various state and local organizations, interests groups and government agencies. Routine communication with federal, state and local law

enforcement agencies includes regular outreach efforts directed to minority organizations. Through these efforts, organizations that have recently interacted with ONDCP on the office's policies and programs include, but are not limited to: Hispanic Command Officers; National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives; National Black Police Association; National Urban League; Women in Federal Law Enforcement; Minority Male Consortium; and, the Congress of Black Churches.

7. Review of Federal Sentencing Guidelines - ONDCP, working with the Attorney General's office, has reviewed racial disparities in the sentencing of drug offenders caused by the differences in sentencing guidelines for crack versus powder cocaine. From this review, ONDCP and Justice have recommended changing the sentencing guidelines to reduce the minimum sentences imposed upon first time crack offenders. ONDCP has submitted this recommendation to the President and has prepared an opinion piece for the Director, based on the review, to address for the American public the racial issues raised by the review.

c. Category 2: Planned External Programs and Activities

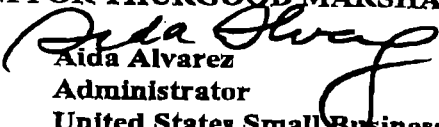
8. Low Income Parent, Care Givers and Mentors Initiative - will coordinate efforts of Child Welfare League and other prevention organizations in providing adult leaders with information and strategies in support of drug free lifestyles for youth.

9. Prevention Through Service Summit - will expand from roughly 30 national civic organizations to include African American sororities and fraternities, to address African American youth use of gateway drugs, including marijuana.

JUL 18 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR THURGOOD MARSHALL, JR.

From:


Aida Alvarez

Administrator

United States Small Business Administration

Subject:

**SBA Best Practices for the President's
Racial Reconciliation Initiative**

This memorandum presents a list of the Small Business Administration's current programs, policies, and procedures that are consistent with the themes expressed in the President's announced initiative on racial reconciliation. I think you will readily see that the SBA has in place a wide array of activities and approaches that serve to increase unity in our diverse American society.

The SBA, in particular, is designed to support the President's theme of economic opportunity. From its business education and counseling programs to its federal procurement and financing programs, the Agency is aligned consistently with the mission of providing opportunity to entrepreneurs who want to start or grow their own businesses. During this Administration, the SBA has made great strides in improving the diversity of our program participants, but much, much more needs to be done to open the doors wider.

As Administrator, my number one priority will be to increase access to capital and credit for all small businesses, especially small businesses that are underserved by the private credit markets. We believe that the underserved include women-owned and minority-owned businesses, as well as rural and inner city areas. With adequate access to capital and business ownership in the minority communities, some of the gaps between the races can be closed and reconciliation can progress. The SBA can and should do more to improve opportunities for firms with minority owners through counseling at small business development centers, business information centers, and by SCORE volunteers; the 8(a) and 7(a) programs, which support the development of small disadvantaged businesses through federal contracting vehicles; and especially through the small business finance programs, including 7(a) business loan guarantees, 504 certified development company loans, microloans, and small business investment companies.

The rest of this memorandum summarizes some of the activities at the SBA that reinforce the President's initiative. This list is a work in progress. The SBA will continue to gather information – especially from our field offices – as time progresses.

OFFICE OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Small Business Administration guarantees loans made by private-sector lenders to small businesses. These guaranties enable lenders to extend credit to businesses that otherwise would not qualify for loans.

Best Practices

The LowDoc Program is a subprogram within the Agency's primary loan-guaranty program. The SBA paperwork for a LowDoc loan application (for a loan of up to \$25,000) is much shorter than for a standard SBA-guaranteed loan. The reduced requirements cut the cost of processing a loan and therefore encourage lenders to make smaller-sized loans. In FY96:

- 26 percent of LowDoc loans went to women-owned businesses
- 18 percent of LowDoc loans went to minority-owned businesses
- 30 percent of LowDoc loans went to businesses in rural areas
- 43 percent of LowDoc loans went to new businesses

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE

The SBA's Office of International Trade is the only office in the Federal Government that exclusively targets small business clients for export-finance and trade-promotion assistance. Its mission is to expand employment and income opportunities for small businesses through increased exports of U.S. goods and services. Through the SBA's participation in 17 U.S. export assistance centers -- one-stop-shops for small business exporters -- we provide an A-to-Z menu of export-finance, trade-counseling, and lender-training assistance to the two communities we serve: small businesses and lending institutions.

Best Practices

At present, the SBA is developing a new tool called Export Express, which will enable more lenders without international in-house expertise to participate in the Agency's Export Working Capital Program. This transaction-based guarantee program enables small businesses with foreign orders to finance deals otherwise not attractive to lenders. Export Express will provide access to a new interactive Internet web site designed to overcome the complexity of international transactions by offering an automated, international risk-analysis tool to the participating lender. By offering this new tool to lenders, along with extensive trade-finance training, the SBA believes it can increase the number of lenders participating in the program and better serve the financial needs of small business exporters. Export Express is currently in the developmental stage and will be available in early 1998.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

The SBA's Strategic Plan includes the goal to "exercise effective and efficient executive management over Agency activities." Managers and supervisors are held accountable for operating in a manner consistent with merit systems principles, and for effective and efficient performance that supports mission accomplishment. The merit system principles are a set of values for people management that are just plain good management.

The SBA's internal programs are designed to continuously and aggressively promote appreciation for diversity and cooperation among our employees without regard to political affiliation, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, age or handicapping condition.

Best Practices

SBA has conducted diversity training for all SBA supervisors to improve their ability to successfully integrate people of different backgrounds and experiences into the SBA culture. The Agency operates two succession-planning programs, the District Director Candidate Development Program and the Senior Executive Candidate Development Program, which actively reach out to attract women and minorities. The results speak for themselves. The diversity of the SBA's 69 district directors (DDs) has increased significantly over the last four fiscal years, in part due to the 62.5 percent selection rate of women and minorities for the DD Candidate Development Program.

The number of minority DDs has increased from 23 percent to 32 percent, the number of female DDs has quadrupled, and the number of women and minorities among SBA's 47 senior executives has increased from 20 percent to nearly 32 percent in the last four fiscal years. The SBA's work force is 54 percent women, 23.6 percent black, 8.8 percent Hispanic, 2.9 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and 0.6 percent Native American. While this exceeds both the civilian labor force and the Federal work-force statistics for women and blacks, and exceeds the Federal work-force statistics for Hispanic employment, we will continue striving to employ a work force representative of the civilian labor force.

OFFICE OF NATIVE AMERICAN AFFAIRS

The SBA's Office of Native American Affairs (ONAA) targets the Native American business community nationwide. ONAA shares the trust responsibility of the Federal Government to provide services to Native Americans (American Indians, Native Alaskans and Native Hawaiians) in both rural reservation communities and urban areas. ONAA provides Native American business owners or prospective business owners (tribal, Alaska Native Corporations and individuals) with the opportunity to access capital and credit markets, business technical and management assistance, training and education.

Best Practices

ONAA established 15 reservation-based, high-technology tribal business information centers (TBICs) in the states of North Dakota, Montana, South Dakota, and on the Navajo Nation. Two additional reservation-based TBICs will be established in August 1997 in the states of Minnesota and North Carolina.

TBICs are used by Native American communities to assist small business owners in their efforts to start or expand their businesses. Staffed by Native Americans, TBICs provide technical and management assistance, loan packaging, small business workshops, and access to business software and hard-copy business resources.

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

The Small Business Development Center Program is a national network of centers providing management training, counseling, business planning and any other assistance that small businesses need to improve their businesses. The program also works with start-up companies and with outreach to the business community on behalf of the SBA and its programs. Funded by the SBA in 1997 at \$73.5 million, it is the largest non-credit funded program of the Agency. The SBDCs must match SBA funding dollar-for-dollar.

Best Practices

The more than 1,000 SBDCs can provide the national network for the Agency's initiative on Welfare to Work. The SBDCs will institute cooperative activities through state governments to provide structured, ongoing training that will develop entrepreneurial skills for potential business owners and to coordinate training with social service agencies for those seeking employment. The SBDCs will also work with small businesses to ensure readiness of small businesses to receive Welfare to Work recipients, ensuring success of the initiative.

In 1997 SBDCs provided counseling and training to more than 500,000 clients nationwide, 40 percent of whom were women, and 20 percent of whom were minorities.

OFFICE OF WOMEN'S BUSINESS OWNERSHIP

Through its 53 women's business centers located in 28 states and the District of Columbia, the SBA's Office of Women's Business Ownership administers a program that provides long-term training, counseling, networking and mentoring to potential and existing entrepreneurs, including a representative number of socially and economically disadvantaged women.

These women's business centers are community-based, directed and focused to serve a wide variety of geographic areas, population densities, and economic environments: urban, suburban and rural areas; local economies that vary from depressed to thriving; and areas that range from small metropolitan areas to entire states. From the program's inception in 1988, many of the centers have offered training programs to move women off public assistance to self-sufficiency. Today the centers offer a variety of innovative programs, including mentoring courses in several different languages and Internet training.

Preliminary client demographic data collected by the women's business centers suggests the following:

- Almost 44 percent are socially disadvantaged.
- More than 43 percent are economically disadvantaged.
- Nearly 40 percent are minorities.
- About 65 percent are employed full time.
- Median personal income is \$20,000.
- About 95 percent completed high school; 75 percent completed some or four years of college.
- More than 16.2 percent have received federal or state public assistance.

Best Practices

The Center for Women & Enterprise in Boston, which specializes in welfare-to-enterprise, targets economically and socially disadvantaged women. This center serves about 800 clients a year.

A new site operated in conjunction with the National Council of Negro Women serves rural Mound Bayou, Ruleville, and Bolivar County, Miss. The Organization of Native American Business & Entrepreneurial Network in Portland, Ore., provides a multi-dimensional program to assist Native American businesses in Oregon and Washington. In New Mexico, the Women's Economic Self-Sufficiency Team, headquartered in Albuquerque, serves women across the state, traveling to reach rural clients.

The Mi Casa women's business center in Denver, Colo., serves a high percentage of low-income Hispanic women. This organization was founded in 1976 by eight economically disadvantaged women who wanted to go back to school.

OFFICE OF SURETY BOND GUARANTEES

The Surety Bond Guarantee (SBG) Program is a partnership between the Federal Government and the surety industry. The program provides small and emerging contractors with their only opportunity to obtain bonding necessary to compete in the construction industry. These contractors do not qualify to obtain bid, performance and payment bonds in the standard market.

Best Practices

The prior-approval program (the SBA must approve each individual surety bond guarantee) issues 90 percent guarantees to the surety if the bonds are issued on behalf of a socially or economically disadvantaged contractor or if the contract is less than \$100,000. In FY 96 minority bond activity accounted for 26 percent of the total bond guarantee activity. SBA issued guarantees on 1,200 final bonds amounting to \$246 million. OSG intends to continue this standard practice for the foreseeable future.

OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

The SBA's Office of Veterans Affairs develops and monitors the SBA's programs to comply with the Congressional mandate that the Agency give "special consideration" to veterans.

Best Practices

OVA provides outreach to minority groups to provide information on SBA programs and to obtain input on how these programs can be tailored to meet the needs of specific groups.

OVA is in the process of conducting town hall meetings in predominantly black communities to ascertain the impact of the SBA's veterans programs in those communities and to determine what changes might better serve these communities. We have met at Miami's Liberty City and are in the process of scheduling additional meetings in East St. Louis, Ill., and Benton Harbor, Mich. Our goal is to develop recommendations on how we can best utilize SBA programs to meet the specific needs and expectations of veterans in the areas reviewed.

OVA is working closely with the American GI Forum of the United States, a Hispanic family organization, to present SBA programs to the Hispanic community. We are scheduled for the second consecutive year to be a presenter at that organization's 49th Annual National Education and Training Conference, where we will speak about SBA programs and obtain feedback on specific needs of the Hispanic veteran community. An official of this organization is a member of OVA's Advisory Committee on Veteran Business Affairs.

OFFICE OF DISASTER ASSISTANCE

In the wake of hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, wildfires, tornadoes and other physical disasters, the SBA provides low-interest, long-term disaster loans to help homeowners, renters, non-farm businesses of all sizes and nonprofit organizations rebuild.

Best Practices

To ensure that disaster loan assistance is made available to all victims of a disaster, the SBA places a great deal of emphasis on outreach and customer service. The Agency speaks with victims face-to-face to provide direct and personal assistance in completing the loan application forms and answering specific questions.

Temporary disaster offices are established in each impacted area which makes this assistance accessible to the individuals where they live. Individuals who have not visited the recovery centers or who have not returned the application are contacted by telephone. Newsletters are mailed to further explain the process and to encourage victims to come in for assistance. Local community organizations are contacted to facilitate group meetings within the community. Depending upon the location, materials are made available in both English and Spanish. All loan officers have access to the AT&T Language Translation service for individuals who do not speak English. Every attempt is made to employ bilingual staff to assist disaster victims.

SMALL BUSINESS INVESTMENT COMPANIES

The SBIC program provides long-term debt and equity capital to small business by licensing privately-owned and operated investment firms to make such investments and enabling them to supplement their private capital with government-guaranteed funding.

Best Practices

The Specialized SBICs (SSBICs) are SBICs licensed specifically to invest in small businesses owned by socially or economically disadvantaged individuals. Individuals who are members of certain designated minority groups are presumed to be socially disadvantaged. As such, these individuals obtain capital and management assistance through SSBICs. Over the past five years, SSBICs have invested \$642 million in more than 5,500 financings.

Through national trade associations, as well as through other official forums, regular SBICs are encouraged to seek out investment opportunities in minority-owned small businesses. During the period May 1, 1996, through June 30, 1997, regular SBICs invested \$50.8 million in 115 financings where at least 20 percent of the businesses were minority-owned. Of this total, \$25.9 million was in 81 financings where at least 50 percent of the businesses were minority-owned.

Because of recent changes in the law and certain banking regulations, the SBA, in conjunction with the Federal Housing Finance Board (the oversight body for the Federal Home Loan Banks), is aggressively attempting to create a new pool of money for investment in small business. Under current law, Federal Home Loan Banks now have the authority to invest in and/or own and operate SBICs. This, along with a new regulation which allows bank investments in SBICs to be counted toward CRA goals, has the potential to dramatically increase the flow of patient capital in underserved communities.

The SBA's Investment Division is currently considering opportunities to strengthen the SSBICs and further utilize their skills to increase the flow of debt capital to minority entrepreneurs. Along with the Office of Financial Assistance, the Investment Division is currently considering the feasibility of submitting a formal proposal to implement a pilot project which would allow a limited number of SSBICs to become non-bank 7(a) guaranteed lenders under SBA's 7(a) loan program.

Routinely, the Investment Division interacts with two national trade associations. One is the National Association of Small Business Investment Companies (NASBIC) which represents the majority of the regular SBICs. The other is the National Association of Investment Companies (NAIC) which represents the majority of the SSBICs. As a common practice, the Investment Division brings these two groups together to identify, discuss and seek resolution to SBIC program issues and concerns. This process contributes substantially to the resolution of conflicting interests and broadens the understanding of practices and problems unique to certain communities and industries.

OFFICE OF MARKETING & CUSTOMER SERVICE

The Office of Marketing & Customer Service (OMCS) develops and coordinates a customer-focused message that articulates the SBA's programs and services. It is responsible for all marketing and promotional materials including brochures, videos, signage, trade shows and ad slicks. OMCS also sponsors and conducts market-research activities that provide the SBA with empirical data regarding customer service and program efficiency. OMCS also seeks out and develops relationships with private-sector organizations for the purpose of leveraging the SBA's outreach efforts.

Best Practice

OMCS has conducted surveys of minority- and women-owned lending institutions as well as SBA participating lenders to determine their opinions and attitudes toward the SBA and our programs and services. The surveys also have been used to examine the communities and markets currently lenders focus on in order to identify areas in which the SBA may be able to assist them in reaching more diverse markets.

OMCS has cultivated a relationship with the National Association of Hispanic Publishers. As a result, the association's member newspapers will run an ongoing series of articles, in both English and Spanish, regarding small business and the SBA. The office has also developed a partnership with the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, in which the SBA will use local chapters of the chamber as distribution centers for SBA publications.

Based on feedback from SBA field offices, OMCS is currently producing Spanish-language versions of the agency's most popular publications.

Finally, OMCS attends and provides SBA representation at a variety of national conferences, trade shows, workshops and appropriate focus groups sponsored by organizations such as the National Counsel of La Raza, the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Congressional Black Caucus, the National Urban League and MANA.

OFFICE OF EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE (EEO&CRC)

The Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and Civil Rights Compliance (EEO&CRC) ensures, in a fair and objective manner, that Agency practices and policies prohibit discrimination based on race, color, sex, age, religion, disability, national origin and reprisal for SBA employees, job applicants and resources of SBA financial assistance. This authority is delegated to EEO&CRC by the SBA Administrator and monitored by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

This Agency's vision in carrying out these duties is to ensure reduction of EEO discrimination complaint backlogs as well as ensure fair and objective adjudication of all related matters; improve program output and results, and increase overall office efficiency by doing more with less; provide appropriate training for office staff and SBA employees; and build internal and external customer partnerships to foster affirmative action and affirmative employment, agencywide.

The Office of EEO&CRC, in cooperation with the Office of Human Resources created the Affirmative Action/Affirmative Employment Focus Group to promote racial reconciliation. Established last September, the focus group's four major recommendations will go far to reduce under-representation of women and minorities internally in SBA programs, and externally with our resource partners and interest groups. The recommendations also cover recruitment and compensation issues that affect all SBA programs. The focus group is made up of a diverse team of highly qualified SBA employees from our headquarters and field offices.

The Office of Human Resources will continue to track the progress made in reducing under-representation in SBA offices and programs and report quarterly. Data will be distributed to all Agency senior officials for reference and application. The focus group will continue to develop implementation plans for each of the four recommendations.

Best Practices

EEO&CRC has solicited input from Agency officials and drafted several examples of EEO elements to be included in the evaluation standards of all SBA senior executives. This will ensure that all levels of management know and consistently apply equal employment opportunity principles in an atmosphere that promotes racial reconciliation. The Executive Resources Board will review these proposed elements before it reconvenes in the fall.

Special Emphasis Programs (SEP)

The SBA is part of an interagency group (including HHS, Dept. of Education, USIA, FEMA) that sponsors special observances throughout the year. EEO&CRC is responsible for the SBA's participation in these joint events. Major annual observances include:

Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday	January
African-American Month	February
Women's History Month	March
Holocaust Observance	April
Asian Pacific Heritage Month	May
Women's Equality Month	August
Hispanic Heritage Month	September
Disability Awareness Month	October
Native American History Month	November

These programs foster racial reconciliation, understanding and diversity throughout the Federal work place and the private sector. They support and strengthen the EEO/affirmative employment program by addressing the unique concerns and needs of particular constituent groups and by helping to ensure that they are afforded equal opportunity in employment areas such as recruitment, hiring, training, upward mobility, employee recognition, career counseling and promotion.



Federal Emergency Management Agency

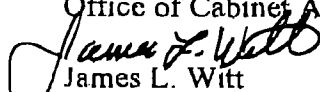
Washington, D.C. 20472

JUL 17 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR:

Thurgood Marshall, Jr.
Office of Cabinet Affairs

FROM:


James L. Witt
Director

SUBJECT:

Best Practices

Presented below are a list of "Best Practices" that we at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) believe clearly illustrate the commitment of our Agency and our employees to promoting diversity and opportunity both internally and externally.

Please contact George Haddow, on my staff, if you have any questions concerning our submission or require any further information. We will be pleased to expand further on any of the items listed below.

I) INTERNAL ACTIVITIES

1. One of six goals of FEMA's first ever Strategic Plan reads: "Revitalize the Agency and develop a more diverse and effective cadre of FEMA managers and employees."

2. Elevated the Office of Equal Rights to report directly to the Director of FEMA.

3. Hired a diverse group of political appointees including: the first African American to head the U.S. Fire Administration; the first African American to head the Federal Insurance Administration; an African American as Director of the Office of Emergency Information and Media Affairs; two African Americans, one Hispanic and one Asian as Regional Directors; and, most recently, one of the African American regional directors was appointed as FEMA's first African American representative to NATO.

4. Promoted diversity in the Disaster Assistance Employee (DAE) cadre. Headquarters staff have participated in Job Fairs sponsored by Cong. Albert Wynn (MD), the Congressional Black Caucus, Jefferson County West Virginia American Cultural Heritage Festival, Blacks in Government Association, New Mexico State University Hispanic Job Fair, Historically Black Colleges and Universities and the University of Texas Job Fair all of which were designed to recruit minority groups for both disaster and full time employment.

5. As part of the Agency reorganization completed in the Fall 1993, promoted diversity in filing supervisor positions throughout the Agency increasing the number of minority supervisors.

6. Sponsored Agency-wide cultural awareness training series.

7. Focused all Agency policies and programs, both internally and externally, on customer service and sponsored Agency-wide customer service training.

8. Increased minority business contracts with FEMA. Sponsored booths at the Congressional Black Caucus' annual conferences to distribute materials on FEMA procurement opportunities.

II) EXTERNAL PROGRAMS

1. Developed and implemented the National Arson Prevention Initiative in response to church burnings.

2. Developed the FEMA Community Relations Cadre to address the specific issues of disaster victims in their communities who might not have access to the traditional forms of learning about and receiving disaster aid. This cadre reaches out to the minority, elderly and disabled populations.

3. Established a cadre of Equal Rights Officers who work in FEMA disaster field offices to assist in recruiting local hires and disaster assistance employees from minority communities and to help managers address equal rights issues.



United States
**Office of
Personnel Management**

Office of Communications
Theodore Roosevelt Building
1900 E Street, NW, Room 5F12
Washington, DC 20415-0001

JUL 21 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR DAVID BEAUBAIRE
SPECIAL ASSISTANT
OFFICE OF CABINET AFFAIRS

FROM: DOUGLAS K. WALKER
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

SUBJECT: Racial Reconciliation Best Practices

Listed below are our responses to your request:

- **Minority Discharge Rates**

In February 1994, OPM released a statistical report on discharges of federal employees requested by a member of the news media. The data revealed that while discharge rates were low, they were significantly higher for minority (particularly African-American and Native American) employees than for non-minority employees.

Director King immediately called for an investigation and commissioned a study into the causes of this disparity. The analysis, conducted by OPM statisticians and a sociology professor at Brown University, concluded that the disparity in federal employee discharge rates was real, not a statistical aberration, and that the phenomenon was not new. It showed that the disparity exists in cases involving misconduct (e.g. insubordination) rather than in cases involving poor work performance (e.g. errors, missed deadlines).

Accompanying focus groups captured opinions on the disparity in discharge rates which ranged from actual bias or lack of cultural awareness to poor selection and development of supervisors and managers to minority employees' lack of understanding of "the System."

OPM recommended four actions on the part of agencies

- develop ways to help employees and supervisors on dispute avoidance and problem solving;
- train employees as appropriate in areas such as expected work behaviors and cultural differences and communications skills;
- monitor personnel actions to determine whether they are equitable;
- hold managers and supervisors accountable for taking personnel actions fairly.

- **Presidential Management Intern Program Recruitment**

Noting low minority participation in the Presidential Management Intern (PMI) program, Director King, former Deputy Director Lorraine Green and other OPM staff conducted active recruiting for potential PMIs at Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) and historically Black colleges and universities (HBCU) schools. In hopes that this year's 20th anniversary PMI class will be the largest and most diverse ever, OPM has requested a Presidential event in late summer/early autumn to swear-in the new interns as they begin their duties at the agencies.

- **HACU Partnership**

In April, OPM joined in a partnership with the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) to make information about federal job opportunities more readily available to the Hispanic community. OPM has provided five HACU schools (University of Arizona, Tucson; Florida International University, Miami; University of New Mexico, Albuquerque; University of Puerto Rico; Texas A&M University, Kingsville) with touch-screen computers tapped into the agency's job vacancy bank. The computers provide students and faculty members with federal job listings that are updated daily, as well as information on the PMI program and summer employment programs.

- **Creative Federal Downsizing**

OPM's Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program (FEORP) report for FY 1996 shows that while the federal workforce was reduced by another 52,628 persons on-board during the year, overall minority representation increased. All minority groups except Hispanics were better represented in the federal ranks than in the overall civilian labor force (CLF). The use of buyouts and other incentives to get long-time federal employees to leave reduced the number of newcomers (more likely to be minority and female) facing reductions in force (RIFs).

July 21, 1997

As of 4:00 p.m., the Office of Cabinet Affairs has yet to receive the "Best Practices" memo from the U.S. Information Agency.



U.S. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
Office of the Administrator

July 21, 1997

MEMORANDUM TO DAVID BEAUBAIRE, OFFICE OF CABINET AFFAIRS

FROM: ERIC DODDS, GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

SUBJECT: Best Practices for Initiative on Race

GSA's Record of Accomplishment in Reaching Out to Small Business in All Ethnic Groups - The General Services Administration (GSA) has the 4th largest procurement budget in the Federal Government (DOD, NASA, Energy, GSA). In its total awards to minorities and women-owned businesses, GSA is actually second only to DOD. In fiscal year 1996 the GSA produced its finest record thus far in contracting with all ethnic groups. Its contracting activities awarded nearly 12 percent of its total dollars (\$722,581,000) to minority vendors. In implementing this record, the Office of Enterprise Development (OED) has performed extensive outreach to all ethnic groups throughout the small business community as well as sought ways to raise the awareness within GSA of the inclusive nature of our mission.

OED has agency-wide responsibility for the small business program and outreach efforts of GSA to all ethnic minority groups to increase access for Federal procurement. GSA has received awards for these efforts, including awards and recognition from the:

National Black Business Council
L.A. Black Business Association
National Association of Minority Contractors
Asian Women Business Owners
National Coalition of Minority Businesses

OED has participated in numerous conferences, seminars, workshops, and other outreach efforts with minority trade associations, professional organizations, Chambers of Commerce, and trade shows for members of the Congressional Black Caucus.

- OED is headed by an appointee of the Clinton Administration who is an African-American female and who represents the interest and views of the Administration to these various constituencies.

18th and F Streets, NW, Washington, DC 20405



- Under this Administration OED has held procurement workshops to reach small businesses in the rural areas of Alaska, Arkansas, Hawaii, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, cooperating with local Chambers of Commerce (U.S., Hispanic, Asian, African-American, and Native-American), colleges and universities, and various professional associations and businesses to reach African Americans, Asians, Eskimos, Hispanics, and Native Americans.
- We have sponsored networking sessions and roundtables focusing on ethnic groups in the Washington, DC, area, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Missouri, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, and Texas.
- OED has presented workshops for historically Black colleges and universities as well as Hispanic educational institutions to assist them in obtaining Government surplus personal property.
- We have developed a data base that contracting officers can use to identify minority firms as possible sources of supply for their solicitations.
- OED has added to its office a senior staffer of Hispanic descent to reach out to that fastest growing minority segment of the country's population, and we are exploring other means of increasing diversity in the office.
- We have also initiated an Associates Program to bring personnel from other parts of the agency into OED for mutual benefit in sharing our various backgrounds and expertise.

GSA Actively Promotes Diversity - GSA is proud of its record of diversity in political appointments. In particular, GSA's Regional Administrators, who are the agency's chief representatives and spokespersons in the regions, have an excellent record of diversity. Of the 11 GSA regional administrators, 3 are Hispanic (27%), 2 are African American (18%), and 1 is Asian-Pacific American (9%).

GSA Celebrates Diversity - GSA is proud of its record in celebrating diversity. GSA's central office and all of the regional offices annually celebrate Asian-Pacific Heritage Month and African-American History Month. These celebrations included demonstrations, ethnic foods, speakers, and musical performances.

African Burial Ground - Several years ago during construction of a new federal building in lower Manhattan the remains of hundreds of Africans were uncovered. The disinterred remains are at Howard University being stabilized and studied. There is a reinterment scheduled for the Fall of 1998. An interpretive center is expected to open at the same time. This continues to be a sensitive issue which GSA continues to devote a great deal of time, energy and resources.

In addition, shortly after the death of Secretary Ron Brown, Administrator Barram suggested that the new federal building next to the African Burial Ground be named after Secretary Brown. This fitting tribute is based on Secretary Brown's New York roots, the elegance to the building itself and the fact that this building is of the finest buildings in the federal inventory.

Office of Equal Employment Opportunity - The Office of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) is responsible for administering the agency's discrimination complaints processing program (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act). This program deals with employment complaints based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, and reprisal for initiating participating in or opposing unlawful discriminatory practices.

The Office of EEO also has the responsibility for ensuring nondiscrimination in the Federally Conducted Programs and in Federal Financial Assistance Programs. The controlling statutes behind these two external programs are Titles VI and IX of the Civil Rights Act. These programs deal primarily with nondiscrimination in GSA's programs, activities and non-profit organizations and institutions that receive real and personal property.

GSA Programs to Aid Native Americans - GSA may transfer surplus real property to the Secretary of Interior for donation to an Indian tribe. Through May 1997, GSA has transferred 6,727 line items of Personal Property, to the Bureau of Indian Affairs with a total dollar value of \$31,345,038. (October 1, 1996 through May 31, 1997)

Tribal Organizations can use government discounted fares for travel when carrying out official business. Tribal Organizations can use GSA's long-distance data, video and voice telecommunications services, local telecommunications services and wireless services. GSA has signed MOU's with a number of tribes across the country to allow them to use GSA telecommunications services. GSA will continue its outreach to additional tribes. Executive Order 12999 permits schools on tribal reservations to obtain computer from GSA for their primary and secondary schools.

The "Study" and "Dialog" - Administrator Barram believes strongly the two most important legs of the President's initiative are the study and dialog sections. Administrator Barram has taken some small, initial steps to discuss the subject with the GSA leadership staff and intends to continue and expand the dialog.

Please contact me at (202) 501-1104 if you need any additional information or have any questions.

July 21, 1997

MEMORANDUM TO DAVID BEAUBAIRE, OFFICE OF CABINET AFFAIRS

FROM: ERIC DODDS, GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

SUBJECT: Best Practices for Initiative on Race

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Please contact me at (202) 501-1104 if you need any additional information or have any questions.



SOCIAL SECURITY

Office of the Commissioner

July 18, 1997

MEMORANDUM TO DAVID BEAUBAIRE

Cabinet Affairs

FROM:

Brian D. Coyne *BC*
Chief of Staff

SUBJECT:

"Best Practices" -- President's Initiative on Race

The Social Security Administration (SSA) has a long history of providing equal employment opportunities, which has resulted in a workforce that reflects the communities we serve. One of SSA's strengths is the diversity of its workforce. The diversity within SSA allows the agency to better understand the diverse public we serve, and it contributes to the quality of service we deliver to our constituency.

REPRESENTATION:

SSA has one of the best diversity records in government, with most ethnic groups well represented in its workforce. The minority composition of SSA's workforce is 37.5%. Listed below is the minority percentage breakout of SSA's workforce.

African Americans	27%	Native Americans	0.7%
Men	4.3	Men	0.2
Women	22.7	Women	0.5
Hispanics	7.9%	Women	71.2%
Men	2.1	White	40.9
Women	5.8	African-American	22.7
Asians	1.9%	Hispanic	5.8
Men	0.6	Asian	1.3
Women	1.3	Native American	0.5

ADVISORY COUNCILS:

The advisory councils at SSA are officially recognized by management and encourage equality in services for their specific minority community. The advisory councils seek ways to ensure their ethnic group is informed about its rights under the Social Security Act and the programs administered by SSA; ensure services are provided in the appropriate language when needed and participate in various community outreach projects. In addition, the advisory councils promote and stimulate recruitment, training, job development, mentoring and upward mobility of

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President's Initiative on Race

employees. The advisory councils at SSA are parallel to private sector organizations with similar objectives which foster mentoring programs, career advancement for minorities and promote organizational goals.

The "Best Practices" implemented by SSA have increased the recruiting, hiring and promotion rates of minorities. However, the challenge facing SSA is increasing the number of minorities in senior level positions within the Agency. The following charts provide hiring and promotion data for SSA.

EXTERNAL HIRES -- GS 1-15
FULL TIME AND PART-TIME PERMANENTS

EEO GROUP	FY 1996	FY 1995	FY 1994
African-Americans %	19.7	23.4	19.6
Hispanics %	14.3	8.9	12.8
Asians %	2.4	2.6	4.5
Native Americans %	0.7	0.3	0.8
All Women %	69.5	68.8	70.6

PROMOTIONS -- GS 1-15
FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME PERMANENTS

EEO GROUP	FY 1996	FY 1995	FY 1994
African-Americans %	35.6	30.7	26.8
Hispanics %	10.3	11.7	10.6
Asians %	2.9	2.7	2.1
Native Americans %	0.7	0.9	0.8
All Women %	79.2	82.8	75.0

One example of SSA's "Best Practices" is the advisory councils at the Agency. SSA has five advisory councils that work closely with management to address employment issues and emphasize the value of diversity in its workforce. Listed below are the five advisory councils at SSA and the year they were chartered.

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President's Initiative on Race

Pacific Asian Advisory Committee	(PAAC, 1977)
Committee for Employees with Disabilities	(CED, 1978)
Black Affairs Advisory Council	(BAAC, 1981)
Hispanic Affairs Advisory Council	(HAAC, 1981)
Women's Affairs Advisory Committee	(WAAC, 1991)

DIVERSITY CONFERENCE:

Another example of "Best Practices" is the SSA diversity conference "Seeking Common Ground: Celebrating Diversity" held during June of 1996 in Miami, Florida. This conference was hosted by all five advisory councils at SSA. Approximately 1,200 SSA employees attended the first national diversity conference. The major recommendation from the diversity conference was that the conference should be held every 2-3 years because it was a breakthrough in bridging the gap between ethnic groups. SSA's diversity conference is similar to diversity conferences held in the private sector with the same theme.

MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT:

SSA has an aging workforce population and is preparing to increase diversity of its workforce by training capable minority employees for leadership positions in the Agency. The goal is to have minority employees in the pipeline, ready to be integrated into senior positions at SSA.

Updating of "Best Practices" in senior management development are in the beginning stages and will be implemented in 1998. A SES candidate development program has been submitted to OPM and is scheduled pending approval to be administered in fiscal 1998-1999.

SSA has administered two Mid-Level Management Programs, initially in 1989 and again in 1993. To ensure that minorities, women and disabled employees received full advantage of these developmental programs, a barrier analysis (adverse impact study) was conducted at each stage of the multi-phase selection process. The barrier analysis ensures that women, minorities and disabled employees are treated equitably at each stage of the selection process. A high priority of the development program was to ensure that the final selectees were representative of SSA's diverse workforce. Barrier analyses will be conducted when new management development programs are announced.

DISCRIMINATION ISSUES:

Despite SSA's efforts, there have been some challenges to how the agency conducts its business. In January 1994 the Maryland Chapter of NAACP protested what it considered discrimination against African Americans in SSA. The NAACP asked to meet with the Commissioner and requested extensive equal opportunity data. SSA provided the data, and after an exchange of

Page 4

President's Initiative on Race

letters, Commissioner Shirley Chater met twice with Janice Washington, Director of Region VII of the NAACP. As a result, Commissioner Chater asked SSA's Black Affairs Advisory Council (BAAC) to develop a mentoring program for African Americans in SSA's Baltimore headquarters office. BAAC conducted a mentoring program in FY 1996 and is evaluating the results. Also as a result, then Congressman Kweisi Mfume requested that the Government Accounting Office (GAO) perform a follow-up to their 1987 study on African Americans in SSA. GAO closed their study with a letter to Congressman Mfume shortly before he became President of NAACP in 1996. The letter summarized GAO's inquiry but did not present any findings.

In 1997, EEOC recommended SSA accept a class action complaint of discrimination filed by three African American male employees. However, on May 9, 1997, SSA declined to adopt the EEOC recommendation. SSA analyzed the complaint, EEOC regulations, Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and case law regarding class actions, and concluded that there were compelling reasons for not accepting EEOC's recommendation since the employees failed to meet the requirement for certification of a class action complaint. Additionally, SSA feels strongly that no discrimination has taken place. African American men in SSA are at or above parity with their representation in the civilian labor force at every grade level; they are well represented among SSA hires and promoted at rates that compare favorably to that of all employees. In the past 4 fiscal years African American men in grades GS-13 to GS-15 increased 25.2%.

EEO COMPLAINTS:

The number of discrimination complaints filed against SSA has dropped slightly over the past 5 years, while the number of complainants has dropped over 35%. SSA generated 8.9% EEO complaints for every 1,000 employees in FY 1996 which is a significantly lower rate than the 15 per thousand employees for the government as a whole. In sharp contrast to increasing government-wide inventories, SSA's inventory of complaints has decreased 30% since SSA became independent in April 1995.

CONCLUSION:

SSA's strongest "Best Practices" are its advisory councils, diversity meetings and training programs. SSA has examined notable "Best Practices" in the private sector and adopted those measures for the Agency where applicable. SSA is constantly striving to improve in the area of diversity as our workforce must reflect the constituency we serve.