

Welfare—Census Grants

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Welfare -
Census Grant

**Welfare-to-Work Census Grant: Linking Welfare-to-Work and the Year 2000 Census
Talking Points and Background for John Podesta**

- I'm pleased to see Secretaries Daley and Herman joining forces for such an innovative initiative. This Welfare-to-Work grant reinforces two of the President's top priorities: helping more people who live in the poorest communities move from welfare to work, and helping the 2000 Census get an accurate count of these communities so that no one is left behind.
- This initiative builds on the success of this Administration's welfare to work efforts:
 - **Individuals are moving from welfare to work in record numbers.** As the President announced last month in Chicago, all 50 states met the welfare reform law's overall work requirements in 1998. Record numbers of people on welfare are working, and numerous independent studies confirm that most people who have left welfare are working as well.
 - **Companies have learned that welfare to work is good for business.** Over 12,000 businesses of all kinds have joined The Welfare to Work Partnership since its May 1997 launch; these companies alone have hired an estimated 410,000 people from welfare.
 - **The federal government is doing its part.** Under the Vice President's leadership, federal agencies have hired also over 14,000 former welfare recipient., far beyond the goal of 10,000 set in April 1997. Commerce and Labor have surpassed their goals, with Commerce hiring over 5,000 former recipients (most hired by the Census Bureau) and Labor more than 160. (The White House has also hired 8 people.)
 - **We must follow through to help those still on welfare move to work and succeed on the job.** The Welfare-to-Work grant awarded to Goodwill Industries today is an important step. But unless Congress approves the President's call to reauthorize the Welfare-to-Work program, there will be no more funds to support such critical efforts.
 - **The President has called on Congress to invest an additional \$1 billion to extend the Welfare-to-Work program.** The Welfare-to-Work program will help more long-term welfare recipients and low-income fathers work and support their families. Funds are targeted to those individuals and communities who need the most help.
 - **The President also urges Congress not to renege on its bipartisan commitment to reform.** Specifically, he calls on Congress to resist proposals to cut or delay availability of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant to states created by the 1996 welfare reform act. Unfortunately, the House Labor-HHS bill proposes to do just that.
- In short, we've made tremendous progress moving people from welfare to work. The grants awarded today testify to that. Now it's time for Congress to join the President in building on these gains -- for the year 2000 and beyond. [At closing, introduce Secretary Herman].

Background on WTW/Census Grant

The Departments of Labor and Commerce are working together to train as many as 10,000 welfare recipients to become 2000 Census enumerators, creating a unique employment opportunity. The two agencies created this initiative to move welfare recipients into temporary unsubsidized jobs and, later, permanent jobs, while helping the 2000 Census get a more accurate count of individuals in high poverty areas around the country.

Goodwill Industries, a national community-based organization, has been awarded \$20 million in DOL Welfare-to-Work competitive grant funds to provide job readiness, post-employment and supportive services for as many as 10,000 Welfare-to-Work participants. The organization will coordinate with the Census Bureau's local Census offices to prepare and retain Welfare-to-Work participants as Census 2000 enumerators and crew leaders.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20230

WELFARE-TO-WORK CENSUS 2000 EVENT

DATE: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 1999
TIME: 10:00 - 11:00 AM
LOCATION: National Press Club, Ballroom
FROM: Morrie Goodman
Prepared by: Karen A. Cowles 482-1523

I OBJECTIVE

To host a national media event involving the White House Chief of Staff, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Labor, and the Census Bureau Director to jointly announce the recipient of a \$20 million grant in order to generate positive publicity for Census 2000, specifically drawing attention to approaching census and the need for thousands of census workers. In addition, we want to promote a positive Welfare-to-Work story and the unique partnership between two government agencies and a national nonprofit organization working together to ensure an accurate count.

II BACKGROUND

The Department of Labor will award a \$20 million grant to a national nonprofit organization -- which serves as an umbrella for state, local and tribal affiliates in all 51 states -- to facilitate employment and supportive services for up to 10,000 temporary hires of WtW participants for Census 2000 jobs, particularly enumerators and crew leaders. These community-based local providers will work with local Census offices in recruiting assistance recipients for Non-Response Follow-up activities in April, 2000. They will also provide case-management services, and full-time job placement and follow-up functions for those who successfully complete their temporary census jobs. The grant has been awarded to Goodwill Industries International.

Working in partnership with DOL, we have a unique opportunity to develop a program that would help assist recipients to get temporary unsubsidized jobs, while helping the Census Bureau get a more accurate count of individuals in high poverty areas and /or challenging rural communities around the country. Over 4,600 recipients throughout the country have been hired for Census 2000 already.

III PARTICIPANTS

White House Chief of Staff John Podesta
Secretary of Commerce William M. Daley
Secretary of Labor Alexis M. Herman
Census Bureau Director Kenneth Prewitt
President & CEO Goodwill Industries International Fred Grandy
Michelle Patterson, Successful Welfare-to-Work Census Employee (Philadelphia Regional Office)
Mr. Ray Uhalde, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Employment & Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, will serve as the moderator

IV SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

The event will take place at the National Press Club in the Ballroom. A podium and head table will be set up in the front. You will be seated at the head table with the five other participants next to Secretary Herman. Mr. Ray Uhalde of the Department of Labor will moderate the event and will introduce the first speaker, Mr. John Podesta. [Mr. Podesta will then introduce Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman] You will then be introduced by Secretary Herman. Following your remarks, you will introduce Census Bureau Director Kenneth Prewitt. Following Dr. Prewitt's remarks, he will then introduce the grantee, Fred Grandy, Goodwill Industries International. Following Mr. Grandy's remarks, he will then introduce Ms. Michelle Patterson, a successful Welfare-to-Work participant and employee of the Census Bureau's Philadelphia Regional Office. Following Ms. Patterson's brief remarks, Mr. Uhalde will open it up for Q & A from the press. The event is scheduled for 60 minutes.

V PRESS PLAN

Your remarks and statements will be on the record.

VI LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

Attached are talking points and Q & A's on Census 2000 and background information on the Department's involvement in this initiative. For your information, also attached are materials prepared for Secretary Herman from the Department of Labor.

September 28, 1999

Welfare-to-Work and Census 2000 Talking Points

- ❑ Census 2000, the largest peacetime mobilization in our nation's history, will entail filling more than 860,000 census positions.
- ❑ The Department of Commerce has worked with the Department of Labor to designate up to \$20 million in competitive grant funds for a Welfare-to-Work Census 2000 Employment Project.
- ❑ Goodwill Industries, a national service provider with state and local affiliates, has been awarded a grant to identify, recruit and train welfare recipients for jobs as Census enumerators, crew chiefs and clerks.
- ❑ Applicants who successfully complete the temporary census jobs will be placed in private or public positions by the grantee organization serving that jurisdiction.
- ❑ The Census Bureau has exceeded its goal of hiring 4,000 new workers through the federal Welfare-to-Work Initiative. As of August 27, 1999, a total of 5,317 Welfare-to-Work employees have been hired.
- ❑ These census employees, like all the others, meet the job qualifications, including a test of basic skills, an age requirement and employment references.
- ❑ Census 2000 jobs will be short-term, up to ten weeks. Enumerators will be required to work evenings and weekends.
- ❑ Census workers will be needed to deliver census questionnaires in rural areas in March 2000. Others will participate during the nonresponse follow-up in April and May 2000.
- ❑ Pay is competitive with local markets and ranges from \$8.25 - \$21.50 per hour, depending on the location and position filled.
- ❑ These new hires will help the Census Bureau ensure that traditionally undercounted populations are more accurately counted in the upcoming census.
- ❑ Historically undercounted populations include African Americans (4.5%), Hispanics (5%), Asian and Pacific Islanders (2.3%) and American Indians living on reservations (12%).
- ❑ Vice President Al Gore has said, "More and more people are moving from welfare to work, and I'm proud the federal government is doing its part....Clearly, welfare-to-work can pay off for both employers and employees..." August 2, 1999.

September 28, 1999

Frequently Asked Questions about Census 2000: How to Get a Job with the Census Bureau

- ☐ How many people does the Census Bureau expect to hire for Census 2000?

The Bureau needs to fill about 860,000 positions to conduct the 2000 census. In order to hire and retain enough local staff, the Bureau must recruit several million applicants.

- ☐ Where will employees be needed?

This year, the Census Bureau is opening and staffing 520 local census offices around the country. The local offices report to 12 Regional Census Centers that were set up to manage and oversee Census 2000 activities. The regional centers supplement the work of the Bureau's 12 permanent Regional Census Offices.

Census forms will be processed at four Data Capture Centers. The center in Jeffersonville, Indiana, is a permanent Census Bureau facility. The other three data processing centers are in Pomona, CA; Baltimore County, MD; and Phoenix, AZ. The Bureau also will operate 15,000 Questionnaire Assistance Centers in hard-to-count communities around the country. These centers will be staffed by a combination of paid employees and volunteers, and will offer help in filling out census forms in English and more than 30 other languages.

- ☐ What types of jobs are available?

Most of the temporary workers will serve as enumerators during peak operations in the spring and summer of 2000. Enumerators, who work out of local census offices, will visit households that do not mail back their census forms to collect information from the residents. In rural areas, enumerators drop off a census form and verify the location of the home. Local offices also will hire crew leaders to supervise teams of enumerators and check their work, as well as some clerical staff. Data entry and clerical jobs are available at the four Data Capture Centers.

- ☐ Are there minimum qualifications for census jobs?

Census workers must be at least 18 years old and must not have a criminal conviction (except for minor traffic violations) since that age. Men born in 1960 or later must be registered with the Selective Service. Applicants must take a written test and pass a security and employment reference check. The 28-question test evaluates basic skills and knowledge required to perform a variety of census jobs. Federal law provides hiring preference for qualified veterans.

- ☐ Do I have to be a U.S. citizen to be eligible to work on the Census?

No. The Census Bureau recognizes that immigrant communities may be among the most difficult to enumerate, especial those with recent immigrants. While federal law requires a preference in hiring for U.S. citizens and immigrants from certain countries, the Census Bureau will make every effort to hire qualified and eligible non-citizens to reach immigrant communities.

- The Census Bureau has been criticized for giving a hiring preference to immigrants on a so-called "allied country list." Why is the Bureau relying on the list?

As previously stated, federal law prohibits the hiring of non-citizens. Some exemptions from this ban exist for citizens from certain allied countries, or other countries specifically listed in the appropriations law. Neither the Census Bureau nor the Commerce Department has any authority to add countries to this list. However, the same appropriations law provides the Census Bureau with the flexibility it needs to hire non-citizens from countries not on the list when they are needed because of their language skills, or on an emergency basis, for up to 60 days.

- When will the work start?

The Census Bureau will begin recruiting and testing for temporary Census jobs in November, with most hiring occurring between February and March. Most of those hired will work between April and July. The Census Bureau will promote a toll-free number as hiring time approaches (NB. Census prefers that this number not be publicized until closer to hiring as the telephone lines aren't yet equipped to handle the calls and the jobs aren't yet available.)

- How much do census workers earn? Do they get any benefits?

Census workers are paid an hourly wage ranging from \$8.25 to \$20.00, depending on the average wage in their community and the type of work they are hired to do. (The hourly wage range may increase after the Bureau completes a review of census tests.) Employees are paid weekly and will be reimbursed for mileage and costs. Census 2000 employees also can earn bonuses for high productivity and high-quality work. However, as temporary employees, they are not eligible for health or life insurance or retirement benefits, and they do not earn leave. They are eligible for unemployment compensation.

Military and federal civilian retirees will be able to work in temporary census jobs without losing their retirement benefits. Census 2000 employment also won't affect eligibility for recipients of public and Indian housing assistance. The Census Bureau is working with individual states to encourage recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families to apply for census positions.

- We heard that there was a Welfare-to-Work employee at the Census Bureau in Suitland who has been accused of fraud. What can you say about this?

I'd ask Dr. Prewitt to respond.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Bureau of the Census
Regional Census Center
841 Chestnut Street, Room 5101
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Michelle Patterson

A Success Story

Welfare-to-Work

Michelle Patterson, a 31-year-old mother of two, was a recipient of public assistance for 11 years. She graduated No. 4 in her class at Simon Gratz High School, Philadelphia, PA, in 1985 and two years later gave birth to daughter Nadira, who is now 12. Unmarried and jobless she applied for assistance to care for her daughter. Two years later she had another child, Nehemiah, now 10-years-old.

Although she initially applied for assistance because of need, Michelle admits that she became dependent because of an attitude of indolence she developed as a result of staying on the system beyond the time necessary to establish self-sufficiency. She attended PSI Institute where she received a certificate of completion for computer programming and data entry, and later enrolled in Temple University for one year, majoring in computer and info science. She has held various unsatisfactory jobs at fast food restaurants to supplement her assistance check. Finally, becoming frustrated with both, she suddenly quit work in 1995 vowing never to work fast food or below a certain wage again. She said that she was determined to utilize all of her skills in her next job.

In October of 1997, because of her degree of job readiness, Michelle was placed in an intensive, four month job training program sponsored by Nueva Esperanza at 5th and Hunting Park in North Philadelphia. The main focus of the program is to place qualified participants in moderate to well paying jobs. After successfully completing the program, and because of the consistent efforts of the job placement counselors at Nueva, she was offered a position at the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of the Census in Philadelphia, PA. She began her position on May 4, 1998, as a clerk, GS-4 and has since been promoted three times, leading to her current position as an Administrative Specialist, GS-9. She is an active member of the New Life SDA Church in Logan, PA, where she volunteers as an assistant treasurer and youth director. She performs community services via monthly visits to the Tucker House nursing home at 10th and Wallace streets.

Michelle applauds the Welfare-to-Work program because of the individualized assistance it provides its participants. The administrators evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each client and places them in a program that will best suit their needs, utilize their abilities, and eventually lead to gainful employment. She is grateful for businesses like the Bureau of the Census, willing to offer former recipients a second chance at success. She attributes her current success, first to God without whom she could do nothing; then to her mother, Constance, for her continued support and encouragement; to the program for affording her an opportunity to grow, and to her immediate supervisor Mrs. Geraldine Robinson-Ervin, Administrative Supervisor at the Bureau, for her expert tutelage which provided her with a keener insight of the inner workings of Administration and inspired her to attain higher levels of achievement. Michelle has a short term goal of returning to Temple University to complete her course work and receive her degree in Computer and Information Sciences. Her long term goal is to stay within the government and achieve the highest level of Management of administrative functions.

Welfare-to-Work Census Grant
Linking Welfare-to-Work and the Year 2000 Census

The Department of Labor (DOL) and the Department of Commerce (DOC) are joining forces to train welfare recipients as enumerators in the Year 2000 Census, providing an unique employment opportunity. Working together, the two federal agencies created this innovative initiative to move welfare recipients into temporary unsubsidized jobs and, later, permanent jobs, while helping the 2000 Census get a more accurate count of individuals in high poverty areas around the country.

Goodwill Industries, a national community-based organization, has been awarded \$20 million in DOL Welfare-to-Work competitive grant funds to provide job readiness, post-employment and supportive services for as many as 10,000 Welfare-to-Work participants. The organization will coordinate with the Census Bureau's local Census offices to prepare and retain Welfare-to-Work participants as Census 2000 enumerators and crew leaders.

o **The Opportunity:** Census 2000 will be that largest peacetime mobilization in our Nation's history requiring over 860,000 census workers. In the 1990 it was estimated that as many as four million citizens were not counted. These Americans, especially children, low-income individuals, and minorities, may benefit from Welfare-to-Work participants hired as Census 2000 enumerators. They will play a key role in reaching these traditionally undercounted populations, ensuring a more accurate count of the American population as a whole.

o **The Jobs:** The Census Bureau will hire thousands of people to serve as census workers for the Decennial Census. These positions will be temporary jobs of eight to twelve weeks in duration paying about \$8 to \$18 per hour, depending on locality. In preliminary and planning activities during 1998 and 1999, the Bureau of the Census has already hired over 5,400 individuals as enumerators, crew leaders and clerks. In 2000, Goodwill Industries will facilitate this process by identifying and preparing this pool of Welfare-to-Work participants to be assessed, evaluated and hired by the local Census offices. These positions will be an excellent employment and training opportunity for WtW participants and offer the Census unparalleled support base to count all Americans.

o **The Services:** The winner of the WtW-Census grant will serve as the liaison between the Census Bureau and the WtW participants recruiting participants at a local level, providing case management and supportive services (child care, transportation, health, counseling housing emergency assistance, etc) in each State. Census would provide unsubsidized employment, including on-the-job training, and would provide a letter of recommendation at the end of the employment period. In addition, the grantee will also develop full-time, permanent jobs in the public or private sectors which participants would enter (with no break in employment) after their temporary Census work ended.

o **The Grantee:** In a competitive selection process, the Department selected Goodwill Industries, a national organization that has an established delivery system of local affiliates throughout all States, to connect Welfare-to-Work participants to Census 2000 jobs. Goodwill Industries will work with each State's service providers on recruiting WtW eligible individuals for the project, and would set up local arrangements so that supportive services could continue through the State WtW program after the jobs with the Census come to an end and the beginning of permanent job placement begins.

o **The Outcomes:** The Department believes that the work and support of the Census experience will provide WtW participants with effective work skills (appropriate attire, money handling, conflict resolution, interview skills, transportation/travel training) that will be valuable in helping them to permanently succeed in the workforce. In addition, employers will be eager to hire former recipients with a history of employment with Census. Moreover, the hiring of Welfare-to-Work participants as Census 2000 enumerators and crew leaders will ensure that traditionally undercounted populations will be more accurately represented in the Decennial Census.