



• Educator
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HILTON
COSBY COLLEGE?
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PART II **KEITH O. HILTON**

One of the very first columns that I wrote four years ago (1988) was about Dr. Bill Cosby. It was titled "Dr. Bill Cosby: The Educator's Educator." Let me note that this was before he and his wife made their \$20 million gift to Spelman College.

CCSD REMAINS NATION'S 14TH LARGEST DISTRICT

The Clark County School District retains its rank as the nation's 14th largest school district, and by a slight margin continues to be the fastest growing of the top 50 districts, according to data from Educational Research Service.

All of the nation's 14 largest districts held steady at the same ranking from the 1990-91 school year to the 1991-92 school year, according to ERS, which annually tabulates enrollment trends for the nation's 50 largest districts.

Clark County, with a fall 1991 enrollment of 123,368, remains neck and neck with nearby San Diego, Calif., which ranked 13th with only 247 students more than Clark County. San Diego's 1991 enrollment was 123,615 students.

The ERS enrollment figure for Clark County differs from the district's official enrollment of 129,245 because different for-

mulas are used to calculate the number of kindergartners.

Clark County grew 5.71 percent from fall 1990 to fall 1991, the fastest rate among the 50 largest districts. Gwinnett County, Ga., the nation's 39th largest district, was on the heels of Clark County in terms of growth with a rate of 5.61 percent. From fall 1989 to fall 1990, Clark County led the nation's largest districts with a 9.23 percent growth rate.

Over the past 20 years, Clark County has been the second fastest growing district in the nation among the current top 50. It grew 65.07 percent from fall 1971, to fall 1991.

Only Palm Beach County, Fla., which grew 67.87 percent since 1971, experienced a faster growth rate. In contrast, many large metropolitan districts in the North and east, such as Baltimore and Detroit, saw their enrollment decline considerably.

EDUCATION

The purpose of this two part column is to again display some of my 1988 comments (verbatim for the most part) and to put on the table the suggestion that this man, his family, and the greater higher education community may be destined to wed (i.e., Cosby College):

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Not only has a new generation of young people "discovered" Dr. Cosby via "The Cosby Show", but even more began to tune in to "A Different World" as well.

Bill Cosby, Debbie Allen and Spike Lee are three of the most sensitive entertainers to portray college as a natural and automatic process for young people of African descent.

Even though some themes and actions of some of their college characters are questionable at times.

Look out Hampton, Fisk, Dillard. All things considered, mythical Hillman College is now emerging as one of the premier prototype African American institutions around.

It is my belief that young people are hungry for higher education—the real thing and the African centered thing.

If one can imagine the impact that "Hillman" is having, along with our one hundred plus African American colleges and universities, just think of the role that COSBY COLLEGE (as a liberal arts college) could play from this point on.

Drs. Bill and Camille Cosby, both visionaries, have now positioned themselves and African Americans to be on the cutting edge of education for many years to come.

In the process of advancing "African centered" education, the entire field of higher education advances.

PROGRAM TO INCREASE CULTURAL DIVERSITY OF COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT TEACHING STAFF

An innovative program enabling Las Vegas to grow its own bumper crop of minority teacher candidates has been launched by the Clark County School District, UNLV and the Southern Nevada business community.

Through the program, known as "Our Future," 27 district support staff employees from culturally diverse backgrounds are

pursuing elementary education degrees at UNLV.

"Our Future" students, who include secretaries, custodians and teacher aides, began taking university classes this March. Because a requirement to participate was approximately two years of college experience, participants should be ready for their first full-time teaching jobs in 1994. The program was born of mutual need. "The school district was exploring ways to increase the number of minority teacher candidates, in addition to out-of-state recruitment.

At the same time, UNLV's College of Education was working on ways to increase the number of minority students enrolled in the college.

A "Grow-your-own" approach made sense, said George Ann Rice, CCSD assistant superintendent of personnel. "Here we have a group of people who work in our schools and are interested in teaching," Rice said.

It will be interesting to see where the majority of African American educators (and others) align themselves with regards to African centered education (aka; Afrocentricity). It is also my belief that "African centered" education will be around for a long time mainly because it has always been around. Today the circle/family is expanding.

It is also my belief that just as multi-culturalism has been criticized, African centered scholarship will also continue to be attacked and questioned publicly and in the pages of some of the nation's most prestigious education journals.

The title of Dr. Camille Cosby's Univ. of Massachusetts dissertation was "The Influence Of Television Imagery On Selected African American Young Adults' Self-Perceptions."

It seems feasible that an entire liberal arts college's mission and curriculum could emerge from Dr. Cosby's research, interest and vision.

The idea of having something along the lines of a "Cosby College: for the study of African World Imagery" or "Cosby College: for the study of African Americans & Organizational Development" sounds promising, lucrative and marketable.

Will or should this institution become established? Not only should it be supported and encouraged, but HILTON: HIGHER EDUCATION also proposes the establishment of Authur Ashe College and Virginia-Vessey College as well.

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"They are already committed to the school district and to Southern Nevada. Everybody benefits. It meets the goals of a culturally diverse teaching staff and a more culturally diverse group of teacher candidates."

UNLV has tailored a program to meet the needs of participants, most of whom work full time, have families and have been out of school for awhile. Classes specifically for "Our Future" students are offered at nights and on weekends at locations convenient for them.

Financial assistance to cover the cost of tuition and books is coming in several forms. The school district is providing

\$102,000 out of \$180,000 it was allocated by the 1991 Nevada Legislature for minority teacher recruitment.

Meanwhile, Continental National Bank and Citibank contributed a total of \$10,000 so the the first group of students could begin its studies. The goal is to solicit more contributions from the business community.

School district and university officials hope that "Our Future" becomes an ongoing program. Already, the district has a waiting list of employees who want to participate. There are also tentative plans to broaden the program beyond elementary education.

CCSD TO WELCOME 700 NEW TEACHERS

Approximately 700 new teachers will join the Clark County School District for the 1992-93 school year, bringing the total licensed personnel staff to almost 7,700.

New teachers were wel-

comed to the district at luncheons for Friday, August 14, and Monday, August 17, at the Desert Inn Country Club. About 350 teachers attended each luncheon. Gov. Bob Miller was scheduled to attend Friday's luncheon. Special guests who attended both luncheons were Mayor Jan Laverty Jones, Superintendent Brian Cram and Bob Broniecki, president of the Clark County Classroom Teachers Association.

Also, three new teachers of the school year for 1991-92 were recognized. They were Steven Kelly, a third-grade teacher (See Teachers, Page 18)

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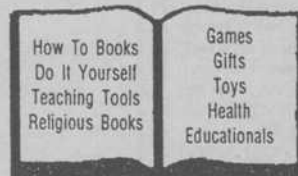
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