

NEWS CLIPS

STATES AWARDED FOR REDUCING OUT-OF-WEDLOCK BIRTHS

Earlier this month Health Human Services Secretary Donna E. Shalala announced that \$100 million in new bonuses were awarded to four states and the District of Columbia for achieving the nation's largest decreases in out-of-wedlock births between 1994-1997. The recipients — receiving \$20 million each — are D.C., Alabama, California, Massachusetts and Michigan. Under the 1996 welfare reform law, \$100 million will be made available annually for the program. "The welfare reform law transformed the welfare system not only by requiring work and parental responsibility, but also by focusing on the reduction of out-of-wedlock and teen births," said Shalala. "This is an important way to help reduce the risk of welfare dependency, and we're pleased to be making this first award of bonuses to these states and the District of Columbia." The full list of states and the percentage change in out-of-wedlock birth rates is posted at www.acf.dhhs.gov/news/ooowstate.htm

HOWARD AWARDED \$1.85 MILLION FOR AIDS TRAINING CENTER

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services recently announced that Howard University College of Medicine will receive \$1.85 million to establish a National Minority AIDS Education and Training Center. With funding from the Congressional Black Caucus Initiative, the center will provide clinical training and education for minority HIV care providers nationwide. "This center offers great benefits to minorities who are disproportionately affected by HIV and AIDS," said Dr. Claude Fox, director of the HHS Health Resources and Services Administration. "Increasing the pool of HIV care providers is a critical step forward in improving the lives of people most affected by this epidemic. Working closely with other Historically Black Colleges and Universities' schools of medicine, the center will offer clinical consultation to minority providers and give them access to information and resources that will standardize the treatment of HIV-positive individuals. The National Minority AIDS Education and Training Center is a part of a national network of AETCs that will operate in designated geographic locations. For information, call (301) 443-3376 or www.hrsa.gov/newsroom.

HUD AWARDS COLLEGES MILLIONS FOR COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION

Twenty-two colleges and universities recently split \$7.5 million among themselves from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to revitalize low-income neighborhoods near their campuses and bring new opportunities to the residents. The schools to receive the Community Outreach Partnership Centers grants are located in the following states: California, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and Vermont. awarded include: Howard and Georgetown universities, Cornell University, University of Tennessee-Chattanooga, Butler University and SUNY College at Cortland. "Colleges and universities are economic engines and anchors of stability in our nation's urban center," HUD Secretary Andrew Cuomo said. "These grants will help these institutions more effectively address the needs of their communities." The grants will fund a variety of programs, including a mentoring project to strengthen male family responsibility and a partnership with major health organizations to create jobs and career ladders for residents to become community health care workers. A part of President Clinton's America Goes Back To School Initiative, the available budget for FY 2000 could be doubled.

BIAS CASE COSTS TRANSIT AGENCY \$5 MILLION

BOSTON (AP) — A state transit agency has been ordered to pay \$5.5 million to a black employee who was subjected to years of pranks and racial slurs by supervisors. Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority foreman Hiram Clifton, 49, was awarded \$500,000 for emotional pain and suffering and \$5 million in punitive damages, the Boston Globe reported Saturday. MBTA officials said they would appeal the Suffolk Superior Court jury's verdict.

Floyd wipes out historic black town

PRINCEVILLE, N.C. (AP) — After years of neglect and corruption, things finally seemed to be looking up for this town founded by ex-slaves.

The leaking sewage system was fixed, and trash was being picked up regularly. A new town government had replaced the one that led to the first state takeover of a North Carolina town's finances. The town had \$600,000 in the bank and had secured federal grants to turn the few remaining original buildings into sites on a historic walking tour.

All of that progress was stopped in its tracks by Hurricane Floyd.

The flood was so powerful that it unearthed caskets from Wilson Cemetery, where town founder Turner Prince is buried. On Monday, only the tops of two-story houses

could be seen above the muddy waters of the Tar River.

But as he looked around at the faces in the Tarboro High School gymnasium, George Harrison realized that the town wasn't really gone — it was just taking shelter.

"It's just like being in Princeville," said Harrison, 66, whose family has been there for four generations and whose great-grandfather was Princeville's first policeman.

Mayor Delia Perkins said these grandchildren and great-grandchildren of slaves are Princeville. And they are too proud of their heritage to let their town just die.

"That pride is going to be what pushes us to rebuild," she said as she walked around the gym, comforting neighbors. "They come from good stock."

The town of 1,900 was

founded at the end of the Civil War, when the newly freed slaves of Tarboro established Freedom Hill — also called Liberty Hill — on the south side of the Tar River in Edgecombe County. It is said to be the oldest town in the United States chartered by blacks. It was chartered as Princeville in 1885.

The Tar regularly flooded the town until a 3-mile-long earthen dike was built in 1965. But by then, floods and urban renewal had already claimed many of the town's historic buildings, including Prince's homeplace. At one point, people were so disgusted with the lack of services that they refused to pay their taxes. But in the two years since the state takeover, things really seemed to be back on track.

"A lot of people had started to build homes over

there," said Cathy Goss, who sat in the shelter nervously rubbing her thighs. "It was beginning to grow."

Then came Floyd.

When the dike burst, people scrambled to get out of town. Many, like Daisy Barnes, had nothing with them but the clothes on their backs.

"I really don't want to go back there," Barnes, 67, said as tears streamed down her cheeks. "I'm too scared. It might happen again."

Bobby Clark thinks he may have to abandon the barbecue restaurant he has run in Princeville for 12 years.

"With the town being pretty much 99 percent destroyed, I don't think I will be able to build a business back into Princeville again," he said outside the shelter at Tarboro High.

(See Floyd, Page 17)

College students taking on welfare projects

WASHINGTON (AP) — As the debate continues over the best way to help people move off welfare, hundreds of college students across the country are aiming for a simple, personal approach — helping people one by one.

They're scouring the classified ads, writing resumes, giving rides to job interviews and prodding unemployed people to think about long-term life goals. They aim to give, for free and with minimal training, the same sorts of help an entire industry of professionals is paid millions of dollars in government contracts to provide.

"We just problem-solve," explained senior Brian Kreiter, who arrived at Yale University eager to reach beyond the ivory towers and into the poverty-stricken streets of New Haven, Conn.

"That's what students are good at — working the system," he said. "We found they'll stop at nothing.

They'll call their parents' friend's uncle and find out who's a good pro bono lawyer."

The Yale group, which has served 57 clients since January, was formed about a year ago and quickly set its sights on expansion. Kreiter and co-founder Kirsten Lodal began by calling high school friends who had scattered to various colleges and prodded them to start their own chapters.

Now students in six cities have formed full-fledged groups. Two of them — Yale's and one at the University of Michigan — have started helping people. Students at 16 other schools plan to launch chapters this fall.

They've connected with the Welfare to Work Partnership, a group that prods businesses to hire welfare recipients and is lending the students its lists of interested companies.

"We see them as a great,

non-traditional way to carry our message," said Eli Segal, the partnership's president. "There are lots of ways young people can help with their energy and idealism, provided they have the wisdom to know what they don't know."

Student organizers realize there are some problems they shouldn't tackle themselves. "I would be terrified to have one of my students to try and do drug rehab with someone," Kreiter said, "but they sure as heck can find someone who can."

Claudia Valasco, 33, had been looking for work on her own for three months but hadn't found any when she walked into the New Haven student office.

"I had tried everything — agencies and everything — but nobody called me," she said.

She found Annie Moyer, now a junior at Yale, who asked what sort of job she wanted, then helped improve

Valasco's resume and scoured the paper for jobs at child care centers.

Moyer coached her new "client," whose English is a little shaky, before she called for an interview, and helped her get proper directions — a problem in the past due to the language barrier.

Valasco found work at a child care center, and now Moyer is trying to help her find another job that pays more.

"They are so friendly and they always call me (and ask), 'How's everything?'" Valasco said. "They always worry about me."

Students start off knowing little about child care or bus schedules or looking for work without much education. "But we have a lot of time and we have the willingness to figure it out," Moyer said.

Hoping to spread their work nationally, Kreiter and Lodal took several months off from Yale and moved to (See Welfare, Page 18)

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