

New data changes black-Hispanic dynamic

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) - Frank Gilbert has watched the nation's demographics shift from his front yard as more and more Hispanics have moved into the neighborhood where the 78-year-old retired postal worker, who is black, raised three daughters.

About five years ago, Hispanics began buying homes that blacks once owned across the street and down the block from Gilbert's one-story house. Now, black and Hispanic neighbors navigate the friendships and tensions that come with living side-by-side.

"We're going to have to learn how to get along because we all live in the same neighborhood," Gilbert said.

"Everybody wants the same thing: They want better homes, they want better education for their children, they want work."

Census Bureau estimates released this past week show Hispanics outnumber blacks for the first time, making them the largest minority group in the United States.

The Hispanic population rose almost 5 percent between April 2000 and last July, to 37 million. The non-Hispanic black population grew about 2 percent, to 36.1 million.

Black and Hispanic groups such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the National Council of La Raza have seen the changes coming for years, and each

has emphasized the importance of working on a common agenda.

Yet some see challenges as Hispanics reach this milestone. They warn of resentment among blacks who - after building a long and proud history of fighting for civil rights - may now see issues of interest to Hispanics gaining more attention than black causes.

"African-Americans do feel threatened," said Percy Hintzen, chair of the African American studies department at the University of California, Berkeley. "They do feel their power and their clout eroding."

Over the years, Gilbert and his wife have befriended their new neighbors. A Hispanic

mechanic who lives across the street helped Gilbert fix his car, refusing payment but saying he'd take some gumbo the next time Gilbert's wife fixed a pot.

Gilbert greets Leonor Gonzalez and her children as she walks them to and from school. Sometimes the kids translate for their Spanish-speaking mother and they strike up a conversation.

"It's peaceful here," said Gonzalez, 33. Blacks and Hispanics "get along very well."

Felisha West, another black resident, said one recent example of the change is that fliers inviting people to homeowners' meetings are now in English and Spanish.

However, she noted that there can be resentment.

Some blacks feel they struggle to "get a house. It's hard for them to get a car. It's hard for them to just make it to the next level," West said. With Hispanics, "it just seems like they walk over and get everything."

But Sonia Perez, La Raza's deputy vice president of research, said blacks and Hispanics share concerns about educational, economic and health disparities.

"What's important is really to look at how we are doing as a community, not how big one is or the other," she said.

There are many recent examples of the groups working together in California, where Hispanics have outnumbered blacks for decades.

First African Methodist Episcopal Church, the oldest black congregation in Los Angeles, has started a Hispanic ministry.

The NAACP's San Jose/Silicon Valley branch has two Hispanics and two Asians on its 27-member board and another board member of Middle Eastern descent, said Rick Callender, the group's president.

The Los Angeles Urban League, which has long served the black community, provided social services to 78,000 people last year - 51 percent black and 31 percent Hispanic.

"We are not going to abandon our historical African-American roots or constituency," Callender said. (See *Dynamic*, Page 12)

Interns

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posting for these positions on the department's Web site at www.ed.gov/offices/OM/edjobs.html. Click, "ED Job Openings," and then, "Group I." The announcement also appears on U. S. Office of Personnel Management's USAJobs Web site, www.usajobs.opm.gov, and the new www.studentjobs.gov site.

Applicants must submit: A resume or application form (OF-612); Proof of continuing enrollment (transcript or letter from the registrar); Proof of academic good standing (transcript); Two academic references (name, title, contact information);

Brief essay (500 words — two pages) on the link they see between the philosophies of Dr. King and education policy or public policy and administration. and a one-page cover letter on why the student wishes to be a Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholar and accomplishments or goals that embrace King's philosophies.

The U. S. Department of Education's Human Resources Services will review the application packages for legal, regulatory and program requirements.

The application deadline is Feb. 21. Scholars will be notified by March 31 of their acceptance to the program.

Magic

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by Merck & Co., and Kaletra and Norvir, made by Abbott Laboratories, pose a threat to GlaxoSmithKline's profits.

GlaxoSmithKline still controls about 50 percent of the market for HIV drugs, with sales topping \$1.1 billion in 2001, the most recent year for which comprehensive figures are available.

"So if anyone complies with their treatment, or if new African-Americans start using HIV drugs, there will be some benefit for us," Hare said. "But this campaign is beneficial for everyone. There is something in it for African-Americans with HIV, for doctors, and yes, something in it for Magic and for GlaxoSmithKline."

Many major drug companies have educational AIDS campaigns. Abbott, for instance, sponsors free testing at community AIDS organizations.

AIDS is the leading cause of death for blacks between the ages of 24 and 44. One in 50 black men and one in 160 black women are believed to be HIV-positive today. About one in three does not know he or she has it.

Hare said the traditional methods of marketing HIV drugs do not always reach blacks.

"This group doesn't particularly trust the health care system," he said. "Research shows that they want someone they believe. And they believe in Magic Johnson."

For a long time, rumors abounded that Johnson had been cured or was on some secret treatment formula. According to the company, Johnson, who was not available for comment, feels this campaign gives him a chance to further dispel those rumors.

"We are trying to get across that Magic looks good because Magic takes his meds everyday, not because he is taking some tailored potion," Hare said. "The stuff he takes is available to everyone."

HIV treatment is expensive. The drugs are usually taken in combination with one another, and each can cost from \$1,500 to \$6,700 a year in the United States.

GlaxoSmithKline and other leading HIV drug makers froze prices last year as a gesture to the AIDS community, but some activist groups are unhappy that the companies are not offering any low-cost incentives along with the publicity campaign.

"Telling people to get tested and seek treatment and not providing the resources is corporate irresponsibility," said Michael Weinstein, president of AIDS Healthcare Foundation, the country's largest provider of HIV/AIDS medical care. "The only issue left to tackle with AIDS is the cost of medication."

He said the GlaxoSmithKline campaign is clearly a commercial for its products, but is helpful anyway.

"It's identity advertising. But it's inspiring. Putting Magic out there to people is a very positive thing. He is the ultimate symbol of living well with HIV," he said.

Marty Algaze, communications director for the Gay Men's Health Crisis in New York, said an important first step in reaching blacks is showing that an HIV diagnosis is not a death sentence.

"If Magic can get more people to get tested and get on HIV drugs than I am all for it," Algaze said.



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