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ABSTRACT

All institutions which enroll minority students must implement a strong supportive services program to assist these students. As we all know, many institutions profess to offer programs of this type. However, if we look beneath the slogans and the back-patting, we often find that students entering college with low Grade Point Averages and poor academic skills are not being given the kind of help needed to enable them to successfully compete in the university. The Challenge Program, sponsored by the University of Michigan-Flint, in conjunction with the C. S. Mott Foundation, could serve as a model, and as proof of what supportive services can do. Their supportive services program is designed for freshman and sophomore students at the University who do not meet the standards for regular university admittance. The Challenge student differs from a regular student in that he received more intensive followup, counseling, tutoring, and other supportive services during his freshman and sophomore years at the University. Since 1969, 113 students have been serviced through this program. The Challenge model is at present largely academically oriented. The service which this paper envisions must be able to lead the student to a pragmatic conclusion in his search for a career. (Author/JM)

MANDAMUS FOR CHANGE IN STUDENT SERVICES

by

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There is a continuing argument among Black Educators in this country. The basic conflict concerns which type of training best suits the needs of Black Americans. There are those who see the university as the best avenue of social mobility. There are those who see the trades as that avenue.

This is by no means a new problem. It was a point of argument between Booker T. Washington and William DuBois. Washington founded Tuskegee Institute to provide industrial training in addition to basic education. He believed the Black population needed to acquire the practical skills which would allow them to contribute to the industrial life of the country:

> The colored boy has been taken from the farm and taught astronomy--how to locate Jupiter and Mars--learned to measure Venus, taught about everything except that which he depends upon for daily bread.
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He believed industrial education would build economic self-reliance. Thus the Black man would gain in self-esteem and become a viable part of the labor force. He saw education in practical terms.

DuBois held a much broader view. While he was not against industrial training, he leaned toward a more traditional academic learning. He believed such education would insure civic and social development:

> The foundations of knowledge in this race, as in others, must be sunk deep in the college and university if we would build a solid, permanent structure. Internal problems of social advance must inevitably come--problems of work and wages, of families and homes, of morals and true valuing of the things of life; and all these and other inevitable problems of civilization the Negro must meet and solve largely for himself, by reason of his isolation; and can there be any possible solution other than by study and thought and an appeal to the rich experience of the past?
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Such a foundation would impart to Black students the tools to solve the problems of race conflict.

Neither protagonist in this argument advanced his ideas to the total exclusion of the others. It was not a polar argument; the emphases differed, but each recognized the truth and importance in some of the ideas of the other. In this sense, then, the debate has persisted to our own day. How may education best facilitate the advance of Black people? Must we designate our energies to the industrial trade and skills? Or need the argument be dichotomous at all? In other words, is there some intelligent coordination of the two? This paper holds to the view there is no need to divorce academic and skill training entirely. Let us not fall into the stereotypical falsehoods of the last century. We are a race, but we are many and varied. Our people have different abilities, desires, and needs. We must not force all Black people into a mold and thus use up our energies on channeling people into directions that will be uninteresting, impossible, or impractical for some. Our job is to see the opportunities in a practical, level-headed way; it is to get young people going in a direction that will be to their benefit. Education must be relevant to the needs of the people in the community. It must be practical without being limited.

One of the problems in analyzing this classic difficulty in education is that we continue to think of education opportunities in a nineteeth century context. But the education needs of today differ greatly from those of the last century, and even the last decade. Of course, one of the ironies of this problem is that the choice involved in this two-sided coin -- academic or practical -- places strain on education of the White community just as it does on the Black; hence, the model which the paper wishes to place before you pertains to children and young people of whatever race.

We seek greater educational opportunities for Blacks, but the opportunities must be realistic ones which will prepare the individual to cope and function in a modern, fast-changing society. What we must insist upon is a <u>full</u> range of opportunities relevant to America in the latter part of the twentieth century. It is not a question of technical versus academic education, but of the opportunity for each individual to develop his full potential and go as far as his interests and abilities can carry him. We must not deal in terms of either/or, but rather in terms of expanding the entire range of occupational and professional opportunities, and of making them available to Black students. It must be entirely clear that this paper is talking about a model of higher education which allows jet engine mechanics as well as business administrators and professors. Of course we want more Black doctors, lawyers, teachers, nuclear scientists, economists, linguists, and every other kind of professional and scholar. The point is that while there will always be a need for qualified professionals and while we should never discourage entrance into those fields, there are a great many other new and expanding occupational fields which should be considered no less prestigious, desirable, and necessary, and which offer great new opportunities for Black students.

Our educational system has grown tremendously over the past decade. There are more classrooms and more teachers serving more students than ever before at every level of education.

More is happening, at least quantitatively, in all fields of education and the opportunities are broader in both the academic and occupational education areas. But what does this mean for Black students? More Black students are going on to higher education, in both two-year and four-year institutions. But "more" is a relative term, and not nearly enough Blacks are receiving the education they need to qualify for the jobs of our present and future society. Still 80 to 90 percent of Blacks are not going on to any kind of advanced education beyond high school, not to mention the large percentage of Blacks who drop out of high school.

According to the latest census, Blacks are still far below Whites in educational attainment. Of employed men between the ages of 25 and 64, the figures for Blacks and Whites vary widely. Of the total of 3,171,000 working Blacks, 39.6 percent completed high school, 12.6 percent one year of college, and 5.7 percent four years or more of college. Of the 34,265,000 White working males, 67 percent completed high school, 30.9 percent completed one year of college, and 17.7 percent completed four or more years of college.

Add to this the younger generation, and the figures are somewhat better, but still far from acceptable. The proportion of Blacks 20 years of age and older who have high school diplomas rose from 24 percent to 39.7 percent between 1960 and 1970, up two-thirds. For the same period, the percentage of Whites with secondary diplomas rose by one third from 45.4 to 61.8 percent. In the age of 20 to 29, the percentage for Blacks rose from 40 to 62 percent, and for Whites from 65 to 82 percent.

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EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT - 1970 CENSUS

	Employed Males Between 25 and 64	High School	1 Year College	4 Years College or More
Blacks	3,171,000	39.6%	12.6%	5.7%
Whites	34,265,000	67%	30.9%	17.7%

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS - 20 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER

	1960	1970
Blacks	24%	39.7%
Whites	45.4%	61.8%

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS - 20 TO 29 YEARS OF AGE

	1960	1970
Blacks	40%	62%
Whites	65%	82%

But of what good is the high school diploma for Black or White when it becomes simply a passport to the unemployment line. The whole thrust of our public school system is to prepare youngsters for a higher academic degree. Yet, only 20 percent of all our students ever attain that degree. The others leave school unprepared for the world they must face.

We must rethink and restructure our entire educational system at both the secondary and post-secondary levels so that it provides skill training which will open up new opportunities and careers for the vast majority of students who do not go on to higher education. This need is especially acute for Black students.

Unemployment figures indicate the seriousness of the problem. The average jobless rate for 1971 was 5.9 percent, the highest in a decade. For Blacks, the 1971 unemployment rate averaged well over the 10 percent mark. Of course a sluggish economy is partly to blame, but another major reason, which will not improve with the economy, is the nature of the job market in our advancingly technological environment. Another intangible, but important factor, is the entire matter of job discrimination. Although unemployment is high, there are many jobs unfilled because of the lack of untrained and unskilled manpower. There is no place for unskilled workers.

Another way of illustrating the situation is by looking at the growth of manpower development and training programs. The number of manpower program participants rose from 998,000 in fiscal year 1969 to 1,340,000 in fiscal year 1971. Minority group participation was 668,700 in fiscal year 1969, and rose to 927,700 in fiscal year 1971. Eighty percent of Job Corps enrollees in 1971 were minorities. About 70 percent of these minority enrollees were Black.

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These programs should enjoy full support for as long as they are needed, but they are remedial programs which would not be needed if our schools were offering students the education and training they need to take advantage of the full range of available opportunities. Government spends billions of dollars each year trying to reduce the pool of unemployment through manpower training programs, yet the schools continue turning out an unending flow of untrained youth to refill the pool. We must put at least as much emphasis on efforts to stem the flow as we do in trying to drain the pool.

We as Black professionals in higher education must realize that most students who start the road to a B.A. degree do not achieve this goal. Black professionals must begin to develop at institutions of higher learning a system of supportive service -- not remedial programs, but programs to provide students with the opportunity for developing their potential to its fullest; we must realistically speak up and be prepared to give practical guidance when a skill area rather than the traditional B.A. is called for.

I project that with the increase in the number of students enrolling in institutions of higher learning due to the attempt by these traditionally middle- and upper-class institutions to include Blacks, Chicanos, Indians, and low-income Whites in their student populations, there will be new and grave needs because these students will bring with them all the cultural and social ramifications of their position in a society which has systematically excluded them on the basis of their ethnic backgrounds.

I submit that something must be done to keep the partially open door from becoming a trap door that drops minority students back into society as failures without degrees or marketable skills. Black professionals in higher education must institute programs of supportive services to insure that all Black students will either obtain a college degree or suitable job skills for the world of tomorrow. Those who have been misdirected to professional training in terms of a college degree must be redirected into suitable career opportunities.

What are supportive services? In the college these are any and all services required by a student to successfully complete his education and his career placement. You, at this point, may be reminded that my concept of college education is not the traditional one of completing a four-year professional degree. The concept that I call for gives equal emphasis to a certificate in electrical instrumentation, for example, as to a degree in electrical engineering.

What supportive services does a student in college need? Of course he needs traditional academic advisement because he will meet many obstacles. In addition, and of equal importance, the minority student may have adjustment problems which, if not correctly handled, will impede his academic progress. Such situations require more than a faculty member who helps the student choose the right courses. Such an adviser is only a part-time helper who tries to deal with a student's total needs without having counseling training or real understanding of what is happening to that student.

As our society becomes more technologically advanced, we must realize that (whether or not we admit it) our colleges are changing. No matter how we try in Freshman English to cajole, debase, and plead with them, most students are entering colleges to receive training for some vocation or profession, not for the sheer value of and personal pleasure obtained from learning. The days when we could in good conscience present education for its intrinsic value alone are over. This reluctance to face facts has caused us to train an excess of professionals in many areas such as teaching. We have failed many of our past students because they completed school without the training needed for jobs. As Booker T. Washington once stated:

> It seems to me that the temptation in education and missionary effort is to do for people that which was done a thousand years ago, or is being done for people a thousand miles away, without always making a careful study of the needs and conditions of the people whom we are trying to help. The temptation is to run all the people through a certain educational mold, regardless of the condition of the subject or the end to be accomplished.
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Dr. Raines states that over half of our junior colleges have inadequate counseling services; it is my belief that the situation is no better at the university level. He defines the role of counseling as consisting of the following duties: "(1) Conducting counseling interviews; (2) Interpreting occupational information; (3) Identifying sources of occupational information; (4) Studying manpower needs within the community; (5) Developing effective methods for disseminating career information." I feel a sixth role should be added. That must be the practical job of helping place the student in a position.

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We must begin to provide career counseling to Black students. As Dr. Collins states:

> Most college counselors are poorly prepared to do vocational counseling with professional skill.
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The Black professional has the obligation of insuring that minority students are provided with these services in order that they do not spend hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars preparing for a career or profession that will not exist at the time of their graduation. The educator must be able to diagnose the needs of students and he must then have the proper supportive services at his disposal to which to refer the student.

To begin with, however, the educator must have a complete service. It must be staffed by individuals who are able to relate personally to the student as well as be intellectually competent.

The Challenge Program, sponsored by the University of Michigan - Flint, in conjunction with the C.S. Mott Foundation, could serve as a model and as proof of what supportive services can do. The University of Michigan - Flint supportive services program, Challenge II, is designed for freshman and sophomore students at the University who do not meet the standards for regular university admittance due to low grades, test scores, etc. The Challenge student differs from a regular student in that he receives more intensive follow-up, counseling, tutoring, and other supportive services during his freshman and sophomore years at the University. Since 1969, 113 students have been serviced through this program. Information regarding this segment of the program is as follows:

I. Background:

Most of the students have been recruited from the north Flint area. Seventy-four percent of the 113 students were Black, 13 percent were Chicano, and 13 percent were White students. It should be noted, however, that there were no Chicanos in Challenge II prior to 1971. Most of the students have come from small to moderately large families.

II. Academic Success:

A. Juniors - The first Challenge II students entered the University with a 1.97 overall high school Grade Point Average (GPA). They were predicted to achieve a GPA of 1.25. Their first semester (1969) overall GPA at the University was 2.36; their overall GPA as of January, 1972 is 2.39.

B. Sophomores - Upon entering in 1970, these students had an overall GPA of 1.68. They were predicted to achieve a GPA of 1.14. Their first semester overall GPA at the University was 2.30; their overall GPA as of January, 1972 is 2.30.

C. Freshmen - The freshman class of 1971 entered with a high school GPA of 1.54 (lowest of all three years). They were predicted to achieve a rate of .815. Their first semester overall GPA at the University was 2.91 as of January, 1972.

I propose that all institutions who enroll minority students must implement a strong supportive services program to assist these students. (Appendix I) As we all know, many insitutions profess to offer programs of this type. However, if we look beneath the slogans and the back-patting, we often find that students entering college with low Grade Point Averages (GPAs) and poor academic skills are not being given the kind of help needed to enable them to successfully compete in the university.

In the 1960's when it first became necessary for colleges and universities to heed the demands from minorities for equal opportunity in higher education, there were no experienced personnel in collegiate compensatory education. Therefore, the universities found themselves relying on the liberal professor, the computer programmer, or self-appointed community leaders for direction. That was seven years ago. We no longer have that excuse, for today we have many qualified people in this area.

Black professionals must begin to realistically appraise minority programs, for we can no longer tolerate inadequacy because we do not wish to criticize other Black programs. Our major concern must center around the question, "Are Black students being serviced?"

The universities in America are now in the process of redefining their roles as educational institutions, which I believe will in turn lead to their becoming more relevant to the needs of the urban community. It must be noted that the Challenge model is at present, largely academically oriented. The service which this paper envisions must be able to lead the student to a pragmatic conclusion in his search for a career.

As society becomes more highly urbanized it has become more impersonal, so that people have encountered an increase in emotional and psychological strains. When students enroll at the university, it is most important that the university not perpetuate these problems, but that it provide supportive services such as counseling, career guidance, financial assistance, and developmental courses such as reading and writing to assist students in dealing with these difficulties in order that they might function well within the university setting.

School has become a social ritual outside the field of human experience. We must break out of the educational mold which saw the university degree as the capstone of an individual's efforts, which cordoned off educational institutions into quadrangles divorced from the community, and which approached learning as something apart and above the concerns of everyday life.

The career education concept, which is gaining acceptance throughout the country, offers an opportunity to make education relevant to students and the community.

Under career education, a student will be prepared either for college or for an occupation when he leaves high school. The high school curriculum would be taught in terms which are relevant to the students' lives and to the field they will enter when they graduate. The student who leaves school and decides not to pursue higher education, either of an academic or occupational nature, would be equipped to compete in the job market. He would also have an adequate academic background to enhance the vocational skills he has acquired, and which would permit him to go on to post-secondary education at a later date, should he so desire.

In considering career education, we must be careful not to use vocational education and career education synonymously. Vocational education, the indispensable structure upon which career education is built, has to do with the skill development necessary for modern-day jobs. The skill training component of career education must be improved and strengthened if the benefits envisioned by career education are to be realized.

We must seek the strengthening of all segments of education so that each can complement the other and the system can offer students preparation for a broad choice of occupational, academic, and professional possibilities.

We must develop a modern educational system, totally interconnected, yet flexible, which will offer career education in a continual progression from secondary school, through two-year institutions, universities, and graduate and professional schools. The student could spin off from such a system at any point along the line, according to the career opportunities available and his own interests and abilities, with a sense of pride and accomplishment, instead of a sense of incompleteness. Such a career education concept will require a great change of attitude on the part of educators (the public attitude is already far advanced beyond that of educational professionals), massive teacher retaining, and the development of guidance counselors to assist students in such a system.

In the meantime, Black professionals and Black leaders in our schools and communities can assist Black students by making them aware of the career opportunities which exist and helping them to get the skills they need to qualify for them. There are great opportunities for Blacks to gain a foothold in the mid-management level and in career areas which require less than a four-year degree. These opportunities should not be looked upon as a lesser choice. There is no intrinsic virtue in being over-qualified or over-educated. Many of our universities are eliminating higher degrees in certain fields because they have no value in relation to the work to be done in that field. The only questions we should be concerned with is how to prepare students for relevant education which will allow development of their fullest potential and offer them the full range of career options.

Black students who exhibit Ph.D. potential should be strongly encouraged to pursue that goal. But where does that leave the vast majority of Black students? We certainly cannot realistically say that every Black should strive for a Doctorate or even for a Bachelor's degree. But we can realistically expect that every Black student gain the skill and expertise to qualify for the technical and para-professional careers which account for the bulk of job opportunities. Our educational system must change, and not just superficially; the meat of these programs must change to meet the changing educational requirements of our society. In place of the unskilled worker, we must have trained technicians. As recently as ten years ago, about ten percent of our youngsters could be absorbed each year in unskilled fields. Today it is down to less than four percent and is decreasing rapidly. At the other end of the

spectrum, job opportunities for college graduates in many fields are also shrinking. But between the two there is a vast area which is only beginning to be explored. An estimated 50 percent of job openings in the 1970's will require training beyond high school, but less than four years of college. An additional 30 percent of job openings will require only training from a vocational high school. While about two out of five graduates with liberal arts or education degrees are unemployed or seriously underemployed, an estimated 85 percent of high school graduates with vocational training find work in their chosen fields.

The Black professional should be prepared to provide the career counseling needed. To do this, he must broaden his own scope. The school can be the base of operations, but he must seek greater community involvement, enlisting the cooperation of other Blacks, such as the ministers, social action groups, and other leaders. He must involve the wider community of businessmen, bankers, government officials, and civic groups in order to gain full knowledge and understanding of where the opportunities lie, how the system works, and how to move within the system to get results.

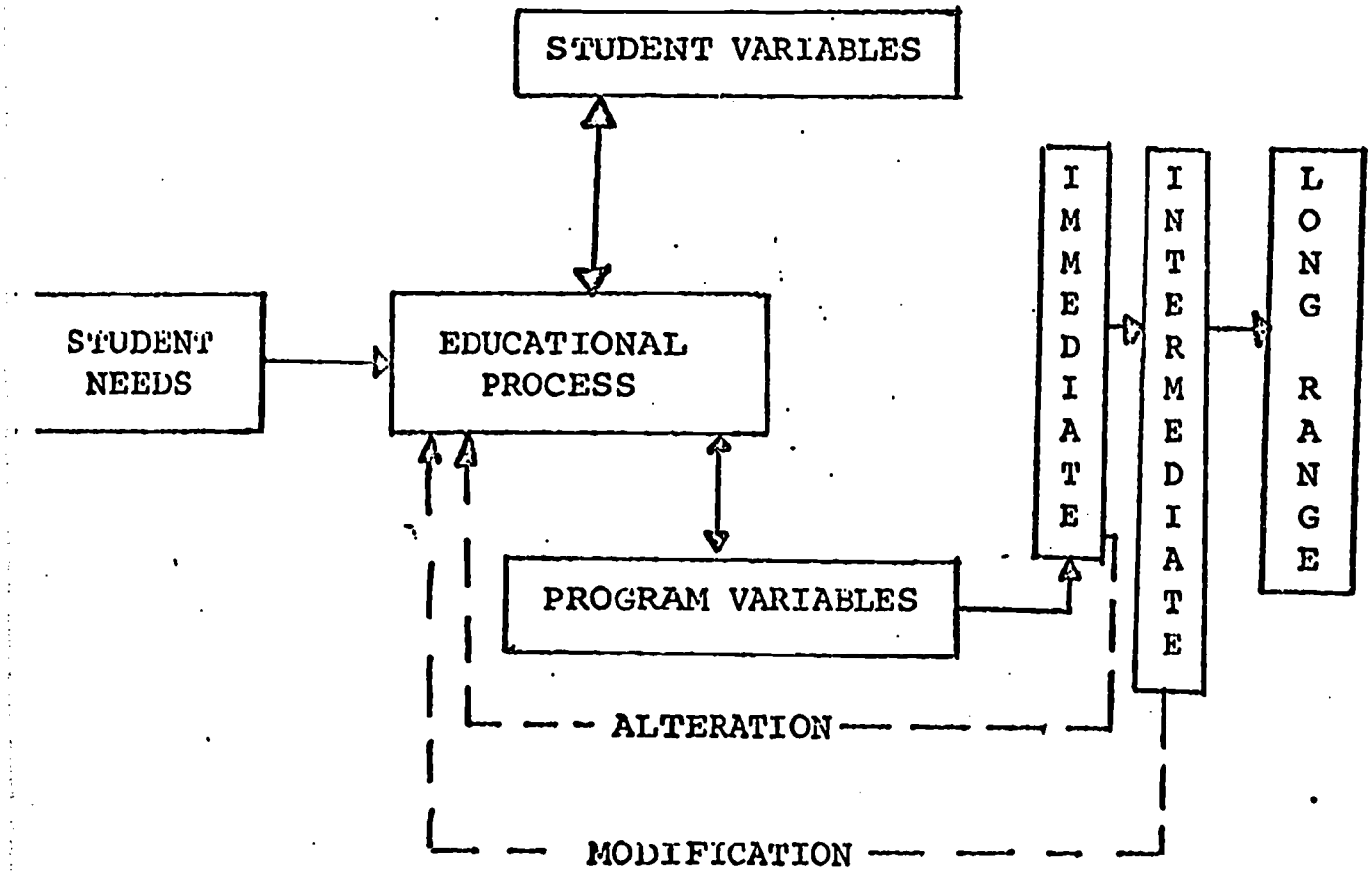
In assisting students in their career goals, the Black professional should be able to identify and interpret occupational information, know the manpower needs of the community, be aware of the educational services available to match up with those needs, and be able to reach the student who can best benefit from this information and counseling.

The growing network of two-year community colleges will play an especially important role in providing career opportunities for Blacks. The community college occupies a pivotal position. It can offer in a two-year program the training needed to qualify for many modern career positions, where needed it can supplement vocational education begun in high school, and it can be a transfer point for advanced career training at the university level. If it is to fulfill this role, we must have greater integration of the various levels of education into an interlocking system, and stronger fusion of the community and educationa institutions.

It is the responsibility of Black educational professionals to overcome some of their own prejudices concerning education, and to help broaden the choices available to Black students. We waste our time, and we waste the talents of Black students, when we continue debating the question of academic versus vocational education. Our students and our society need both.

APPENDIX I

EVALUATION SCHEMATIC FOR SUPPORTIVE SERVICES PROGRAM



FOOTNOTES:

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