

COURT

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action plan aimed at increasing black employment in the fire department to 28 percent — the share of blacks in the county labor force.

The plan set a temporary goal of promoting blacks to half of all fire lieutenant openings each

year until 28 percent of those jobs were held by blacks.

A group of white firefighters sued in 1982, saying the promotion goal discriminated against them.

The fire department ended the 50 percent annual goal in 1989 because it had met the 28 percent overall goal. But the white

firefighters' lawsuit continued because they were seeking back pay.

The 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled for the white firefighters last year, saying the promotion goal violated the Constitution's guarantee of equal protection and a federal civil rights law.

The appeals court said it

found no valid basis for the 50 percent promotion goal when blacks made up a much smaller share of the firefighters eligible for promotion.

In the Pittsburgh case, the court turned down Duquesne Light Co.'s argument the award won by Frederick Claus should be overturned because there was no evidence of

anti-white bias.

Claus joined Duquesne Light Co. in 1964, and since 1985 he has been its director of engineering. In late 1987, Claus sought a promotion to manager of construction and engineering. The job went to James Griffin, who is black.

Claus later was denied another promotion.

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PROGRAM

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tional GED programs incorporated in public schools, Hernandez said.

However, Chicanos need a program like HEP because many of them don't succeed in public schools, mainly for economic reasons, he said. Some are forced to drop out of school to help support their families and others must follow seasonal crops.

Students who are recent immigrants have an especially difficult time in public schools because most high school credits from Latin American countries cannot be transferred to U.S. schools, he said.

As a result, public schools place recent immigrants in a lower grade-level than they should be, he said. Often, these students drop out because they are uncomfortable going to school with younger students.

"[These] kids are dropping out of school because they are not receiving an adequate education," he said.

However, HEP can encourage students to succeed in a way public schools cannot, he said. The program offers instruction in both English and Spanish, making it easier for non-English speaking students to learn.

In addition, HEP provides students with classes in self-esteem and life skills, which will help them reach their full potential, he said.

He said the program places emphasis on counseling. HEP's counseling program is specially designed for Chicanos, said HEP counselor Jose de la Pena. The primary goal is to help students adjust to the dominant culture.

"[These students want] to be part of this tapestry that is called America with all of its wonderful hues and colors," Pena said.

The HEP program has a high success rate, Hernandez said. Each term more than 80 percent of HEP's students pass their GED exam.

Hernandez said he fears if HEP is cut, Chicanos will lose a valuable educational opportunity that cannot be replaced. He believes government attempts to streamline students into the public school system will likely fail.

"It is more or less a fallacy that these kids are going to be served [by the public school system]," he said.

Eight die in Alabama jet crash Monday

ALEXANDER CITY, Ala. (AP) — An Air Force jet crashed Monday in a wooded area while trying to land at the airport in this eastern Alabama town. All eight people on board were killed.

The plane was trying to make an unplanned landing at the Alexander City airport when it crashed near a subdivision 4 miles from Alexander City, said Lt. Frances Sconi, a spokeswoman for Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland.

The plane had been en route to Randolph Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas, said Lt. Col. Johnny Whitaker, a spokesman for Randolph.

He said the jet, which had taken off from Andrews, was based in Randolph and was carrying a crew of two and six passengers.

Tallapoosa County Coroner Daniel Phillips said eight people

were killed.

A Pentagon official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told The Associated Press that both military and civilian personnel were aboard the plane.

The plane did not appear to strike any homes when it went down around 6:30 p.m.

"It sounded like an earthquake when it came over our house," resident Miranda Wyckoff told the Alexander City Outlook.

Wyckoff said she heard three explosions, including one as the jet plunged to the ground.

Fire Chief Ronnie Betts said the plane broke into pieces.

"Not much is intact," he said. Whitaker said he was waiting for a list of passengers.

Defense Department spokesman Kenneth Bacon in Washington said the plane was a C-21, a military version of the Learjet executive aircraft.

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