

CHOOSING A CAREER

Study finds severe shortage of black health professionals

WASHINGTON, D.C.—A new study of black health professions in American released recently said "severe shortages" exist in the nation's supply of minority doctors, dentists, pharmacists, and veterinarians and warns the problem will worsen in the eighties and beyond unless remedial action is taken.

The study, conducted for the Association of Minority Health Professions Schools, said predictions of impending surpluses of physicians and other health professionals simply do not apply to blacks.

Although blacks accounted for 11.7 percent of the U.S. population in 1980, the study found that blacks comprised only 2.6 percent of all doctors, 2.9 percent of dentists, 2.3 percent of pharmacists, and 1.6 percent of veterinarians.

Louis W. Sullivan, M.D., president and dean of Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta and president

Louis W. Sullivan, M.D., president and dean of Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta and president of the Association, said in a preface to the study that the ratio of blacks to whites in medicine and other healing professions historically has been low.

"This is the legacy of decades of segregation and discrimination, which, until the late 1960s, resulted in unequal educational opportunity, including a relative lack of access to health professions education for black Americans," Sullivan said.

"As a nation, we need to utilize the most talented individuals available for the demanding health professions in an effort to improve health status of our citizens and to improve our nation's system of health care," he said. "For blacks, who are aware of the fact that, compared with whites, their lives are shorter, their pregnant mothers and their infants die more frequently, and they have a greater burden of

illness and disability, the statement that the United States has the best system of medical care in the world has a hollow ring."

In addition to Morehouse School of Medicine, the Association of Minority Health Professions Schools includes the Meharry School of Medicine and Dentistry, Nashville, Tenn.; Charles R. Drew Post-graduate Medical College, Los Angeles, Calif.; Tuskegee Institute School of Veterinary Medicine, Tuskegee Institute, Ala.; Florida A & M University College of Pharmacy, Tallahassee, Fla.; Texas Southern University School of Pharmacy, Houston, Texas; and Xavier University College of Pharmacy, New Orleans, La.

At present, of the 127 medical schools in the U.S., four minority schools produce almost 25 percent of the black physicians; of 58 dental schools, the two minority institutions produce 38 percent of the black dentists; of 71 pharmacy schools, the four minority schools produce 45 percent of black pharmacists; and of 27 veterinary medicine schools, predominantly black Tuskegee produces 75 percent of all black veterinarians.

The study found that black health professions students and institutions are generally under much greater financial pressure than those of whites—a significant obstacle to increasing the number of black health professionals.

Black students, the study notes, generally come from lower-income families, tend to be older, and are more likely to incur greater indebtedness to become doctors or other health professionals. The study said current federal student aid policies, which are heavily tilted toward loans tied to commercial interest rates rather than scholarship grants and subsidized loans, are making it more difficult for minority students to enter and continue health professions education.



Nurse Practitioner finds job rewarding

by Lanita Duke

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," as the medical philosophy of Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Mariah A. Taylor, R.N., M.S.D. Her activities include teaching sex education to third graders. "These kids are very well versed. They were down to knowing the anatomy of men and women. The kids lead the way but I interjected the word 'respect' into their vocabulary—whether this person was respe-

cting your body by touching your breast or genitals. I steered them away from the concept of the body as being 'nasty.' We took sex to the level of respecting that other person whether they wanted to be touched or not. I wanted to give them a healthy outlook on their own sexual development. Although they were only eight or nine years old they asked some very mature questions. One little boy asked if his sperm was mature enough to get a girl pregnant. What I did was pick up the pieces and sort of put them together."

Mrs. Taylor's forte is pediatrics. "The biggest problem affecting Afro-American children in Portland is nutrition—the lack of proper nutrition. If you look at the total child I think the problem is also being deprived of a good healthy image of themselves. Self-image has a lot to do with health. What you think of yourself and who you think you are

affects how you are going to take care of yourself. The real 64,000-dollar-question is, do you have the means to take care of yourself?"

Out of the shortage of doctors in the inner city came the concept of Nurse Practitioner. "A Nurse Practitioner is a Registered Nurse who specializes in a given field. We are called a mid-level practitioner. We are not at the level of a physician nor do we have the traditional constraints of a Registered Nurse. A Pediatric Nurse Practitioner has an advanced degree in nursing and has within that training and added degree of certification. Our main purpose is wellness and health maintenance types of things. I never operate within a vacuum. I always utilize other physicians and health professionals."

Since Mrs. Taylor deals with those under 18 wondered how she dealt with babies having babies. "What I try to get the person to see is, regardless of what happened, their first responsibility is to keep their head up high. What has happened, has happened. They have to start thinking about themselves and their child. I focus not on the fact that they had a baby and they are just a child themselves but on the health of the family. Regardless of what has happened they should feel proud of themselves and deal with their new life."

Mariah Taylor's office is located at 5311 N. Vancouver. She can be reached at 284-5239.

Statistics teacher specializes in theory of games

Dr. David Blackwell, professor of statistics at the University of California at Berkeley, is one of the nation's leading mathematicians.

Dr. Blackwell is a mathematician and teacher who has been a pioneer in statistics for nearly 40 years. He has taught at Berkeley since 1954. He specializes in the fields of set theory and the theory of games such as bridge and chess.

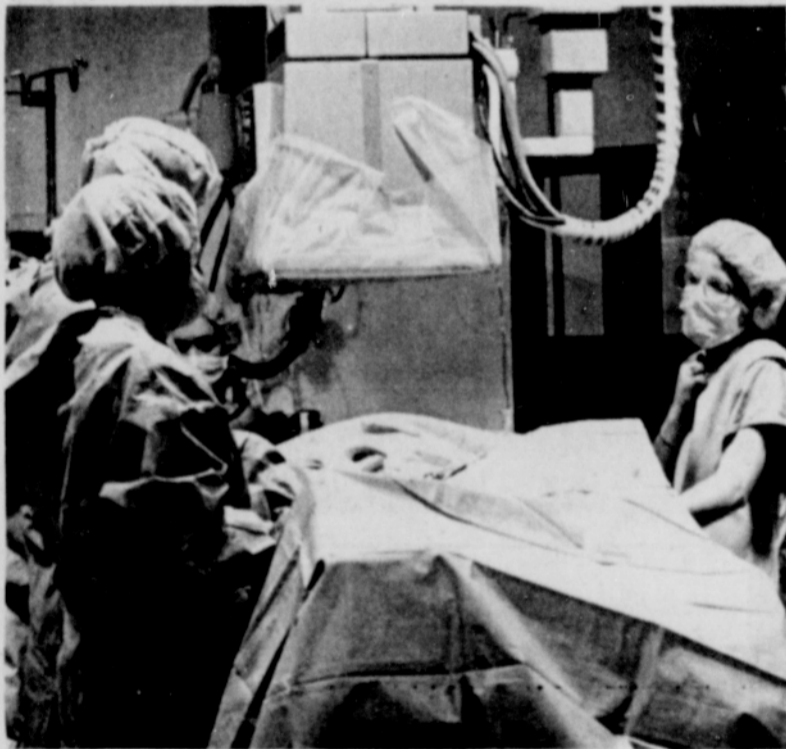
Born in Centralia, Ill., Dr. Blackwell received his bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Illinois in mathematics, a field not pursued by many blacks in the 1930s.

He began his teaching career at

Southern University in Baton Rouge, La., and later taught at Clark College in Atlanta, Ga., and Howard University before moving to Berkeley.

Active in numerous professional organizations, he is currently the only black member of the National Academy of Sciences. Four universities have awarded him honorary doctoral degrees in recognition of his outstanding teaching and research in statistics.

As a university professor, Dr. Blackwell hopes that even more students will experience the challenge of mathematics and its application to science and technology.



NE Emergency Food Program seeks director

The Northeast Emergency Food Program announced its decision to accept applications for the position of Program Director for their Inner Northeast program for feeding the hungry.

The N.E.F.P. is a joint venture of the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon Caucus A, Albina Ministerial Alliance, Urban League and the Northeast Neighborhood Office. The program anticipates a solid base of funding from these and other churches, foundations and community organizations. Its goal in the next six months is to provide emergency food boxes for 50 families per week by January 1984.

The N.E.F.P. Board approved a salary of \$15,000 per year and will accept resumes until August 12, 1983. Only the most qualified candidates will be interviewed for the po-

sition. For a complete description of the job, please call the N.E.F.P. Office or stop by in person. The address is 4815 N.E. 7th Avenue and the telephone number is 284-5470. Address all resumes and inquiries to the Northeast Emergency Food Program.

The minimum qualifications for this challenging new position include a B.A./B.S. in business of public administration or relevant social service field, knowledge of the Inner Northeast Portland community and of food resources for low-income persons, demonstrated ability to work well with people of varied ethnic, income and social backgrounds and to do grant writing and fundraising. Two years administrative experience in a supervisory position related to food emergency relief efforts is also required.

Pay chart

The following table compares salaries and wages in occupations: 1982 Wage or Salary

Occupation	1982 Wage or Salary
WHITE COLLAR	
Chief accountant.....	\$61,225
Corporate attorney.....	76,202
Personnel director.....	57,859
Chemist.....	53,658
Engineer.....	62,494
Physician.....	*88,000
BLUE COLLAR (hourly)	
Steelworker.....	\$13.96
Autoworker.....	13.01
Tool & die maker.....	10.04
Apparel worker.....	5.98
Electrical worker.....	13.62
Plumber.....	12.25
Highway constructor.....	9.95
Carpenter.....	11.10
Coal miner.....	12.68

*—estimated

The figures for hourly workers represent industry averages. Some workers—particularly in the professions—could earn considerably more. Some physician-specialists, for example, earn upward of \$200,000 a year.

The salary and hourly figures are from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, except for physicians, whose earnings were obtained from the U.S. Statistical Abstract and from Medical Economics magazine. The white-collar salaries are averages for experienced professionals.

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