

DIVERSITY *in* the WORKPLACE

SPECIAL EDITION

Minority Women Make Workforce Gains

Women of color concentrated in certain industries

(AP) - Minority women are getting more private-sector jobs in America than they were 10 years ago but still face significant workplace challenges, a government report said.

Minority women made up nearly 15 percent of the U.S. private-sector work force in 2001, up about a third from 11 percent in 1990, said the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission study, "Women of Color: Their Employment in the Private Sector," released Thursday.

But many were still concentrated in lower-wage industries and jobs, the report found.

Although minority women have made gains in the workplace, "we see some stubborn patterns needing our attention," said commission chair Cari M. Dominguez. "Too many women of color are concentrated in certain industries and appear to have plateaued in lower occupational categories."

Black women were the largest group studied in the survey. Almost 8 percent of the private-sector work force - more than half of all working minority women - are black women. They are concentrated in lower-wage jobs.

The report found nursing and residential care facilities employed a higher percentage of black women - more than 23 percent - than any other industry. Next was the social assistance field, where black women employees comprise about 18 percent of the work force.

Black women were also over-represented in sales, clerical and service jobs.

The number of Hispanic women in the private-sector workplace grew the most in the last 10 years - more than doubling - to just under 5 percent of all private-sector workers.

The crop production industry has the highest percentage of Hispanic women among its employees - about 19 percent. About 16 percent of agriculture and forestry jobs are filled by Hispanic women. Personal and laundry services rank third for Hispanic women, who make up more than 13 percent of the industry's work force.

"The industries where these women of color are working are not the high-paying jobs," said Melissa Josephs, director of equal opportunity policy at Women Employed, a Chicago-based group. "There's still a need to have a commitment to breaking the glass ceiling."

Asian women, who make up more than 2 percent of the private-sector work force, were generally in better positions. They were most represented in the computer and electronics manufacturing industry, where they comprise nearly 5 percent of the work force.

Josephs lauded the study. "Employers should take it as an opportunity to look within their workplace to see if they really do have a focus on diversity and if they're meeting their diversity goals," she said.



High school students don medical clothes and gather around a mannequin on an operating table to experience a simulated surgery at Oregon Health Sciences University. An OHSU nurse directs the learning.

MedStars Experience Health Careers Up Close

Summer program focuses on underserved populations

A group of multicultural and underserved teens recently got a first hand look at potential health careers thanks to the MedStars Program at Oregon Health Sciences University.

The students participated in a five-

day exploration of the life of a health care student and professional health care provider.

The program was created to encourage multicultural and underserved high school students who are serious about medical careers.

"I like helping people and I've always been fascinated with everything having to do with medicine," said Whitney Alexander of northeast Portland.

The 16-year-old will be a senior at Grant High School. Her goal is to be a plastic surgeon in reconstructive and

cosmetic surgery. She volunteers at OHSU Doernbecher Children's Hospital and at Providence Medical Center.

Another student has gone from being homeless to taking the first step toward her dream of becoming a physician.

"I grew up with homelessness," said Laranda Lee, a student from a Transitional Living Program in Medford.

Her interest in becoming an anesthesiologist was sparked at age 16 when she was at OHSU with her mother who suffers from dementia.

"When I saw those nurses, doctors and others walking around I knew right then I wanted to be like those people. I wanted to help people. I realized, oh my gosh, I want to go to OHSU for school," Lee said.

Forecasts Call For Job Growth

Service industry creates half of new jobs

The Oregon Employment Department forecasts that the state will add 215,000 jobs in the next decade, increasing employment by 14 percent.

While this is good news compared with the current economic situation, the gains are modest compared with gains during the prior decade, when the state added over 300,000 jobs and grew by 24 percent.

Services industries are expected to account for almost half of the state's new jobs. Among the most rapidly growing services industries are health, business and private education services.

Population growth is expected to boost employment across a wide range of industries including construction, retail trade, finance, insurance, real estate and government.

Although Oregon's manufacturing sector is expected to add nearly 12,000 jobs, employment in many key manufacturing industries, such as high technology and transportation equipment, is not expected to regain pre-recession employment levels.

In addition, a number of manufacturing industries are expected to see job losses. Among these declining industries are several resource-based industries; lumber and wood products, food products, and paper products. The primary metals industry is expected to decline due in part to increased energy prices, combined with low market prices and international competition. Production of many labor-intensive products, including apparel and textiles, is expected to continue to shift overseas.

Regional forecasts suggest that job growth will vary from under 10 percent to more than 15 percent.

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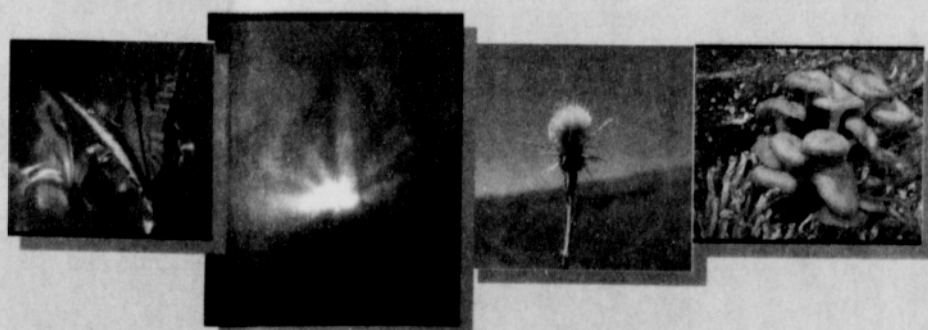


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