

# OPINION

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## Bill Gates Needs Help Building bridges for students

BY JUDGE GREG MATHIS



The economy, to put it bluntly, is in the toilet. In November, more than half a million Americans lost their jobs. Major corporations are filing bankruptcy and small businesses are closing their doors.

Every one, even the very wealthy, is feeling the pinch. And we've yet to hear any predictions on when this economic crisis will start to resolve itself.

One group that is particularly vulnerable in all of this: low-income students.

Only about 25 percent of students from low-income families fin-

positions. Jobs that would normally go to them are going to candidates who, in a better economy, wouldn't bother applying.

Without a college degree, the job search is longer; the unemployment rate for people without that diploma is four times higher than those who have one.

Gates' new program is sorely needed. But he needs help. Other wealthy foundations, like Ford and MacArthur, for example, also need to create similar or complementary funding programs.

Money isn't all that is needed. Smaller not for profits focused on

*We must all make a commitment to ensuring our young people go on to receive their college degree.*

ish college. For black and Latinos that number is around 20 percent.

The rising costs of secondary education and a lack of bridge programs that take these students from under performing high schools to college make it difficult for these young people to transition to higher learning successfully. As a result, many of them end up dropping out.

Microsoft founder and philanthropist Bill Gates wants to help. Through his foundation, he will donate nearly \$70 million in an effort to double the number of low-income students who either receives a college or vocational degree by their 26th birthday.

Most of the money won't go directly to students. Instead, it will go to programs designed to help students succeed in college.

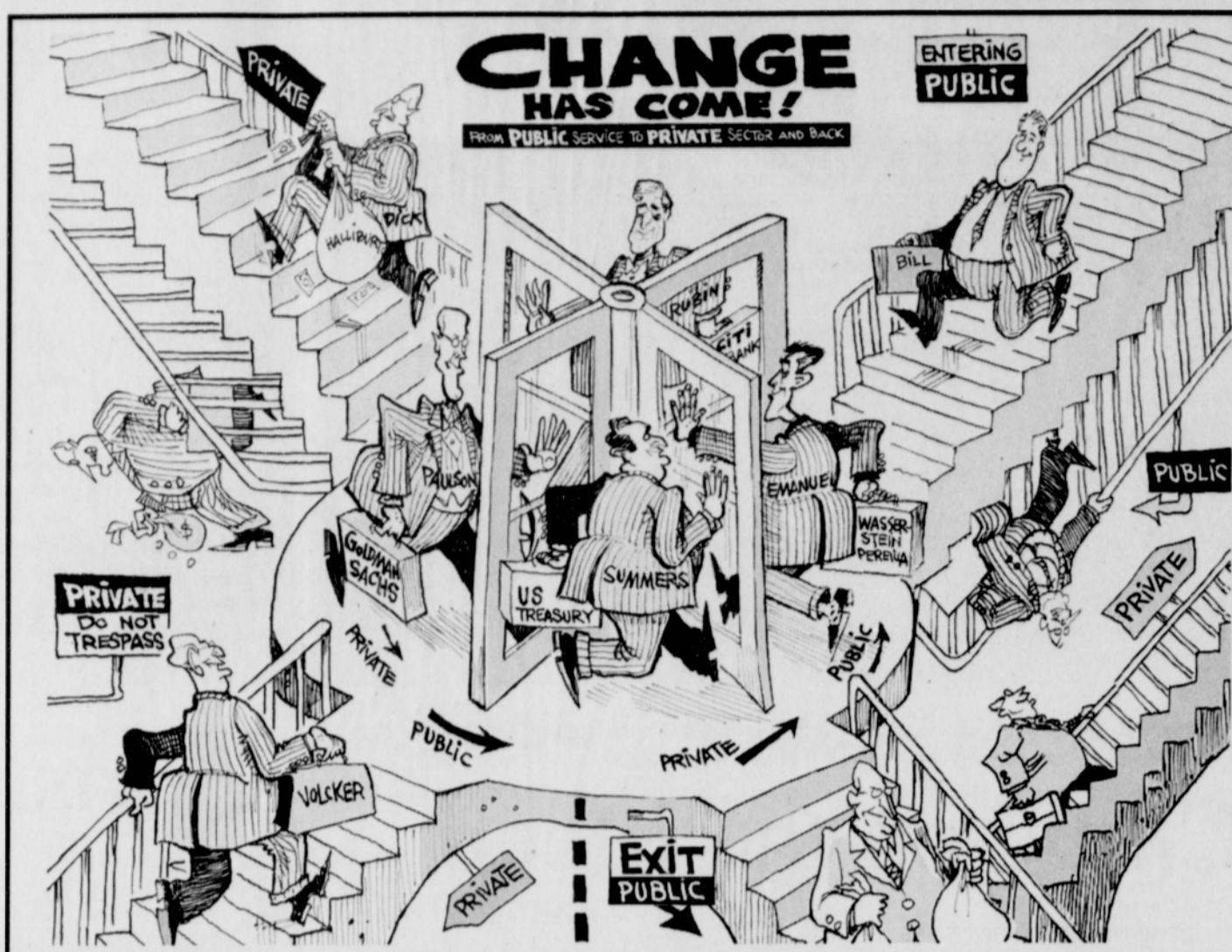
Not having a college degree limits a persons earning power over their lifetime. During a recession, non-degreed individuals are competing with those who have degrees for a limited number of

education can strengthen their mentoring programs. Faith organizations can create programs designed to help the young people from their communities make it through college. Church members can serve as mentors or tutors to young students.

We must all make a commitment to ensuring our young people go on to receive their college degree. The work force gets more competitive with each passing year. Jobs are being outsourced to other countries because of a lack of qualified workers here in America.

If we do not work to ensure that our young people are educated, this country will fall further behind in the global market place. We'll lose more jobs and it will be that much more difficult to rise to the economic and social prominence we are capable of achieving.

Judge Greg Mathis is vice president of Rainbow PUSH and a board member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.



## An Economic Recovery for Everyone

### Our plan supports urban communities

BY MARC H. MORIAL



The National Urban League just submitted its "Economic Recovery Plan for Job Creation in Urban Communities" to both President-elect Barack Obama and Congress.

Our plan is designed to help stabilize our reeling economy and stem the steady erosion of jobs that included 533,000 jobs lost in November and nearly 2

million jobs so far this year.

Some economic experts are forecasting that if this trend continues the unemployment rate will be least 9 percent by the end of next year. That could mean unem-

youth; job training for disadvantaged workers; help for the stalled-out auto industry; and the possible creation of a temporary public service program similar to the one that generated more than

study found that for every \$1 billion in investment, 48,000 jobs are created in one year. Without these much needed investments in infrastructure, many inner city communities are doomed to continue the cycle of joblessness and poverty. It is imperative that when we go to work rebuilding America, those who live in urban America are not left behind.

The National Urban League is urging Congress to specifically address the needs of disadvantaged workers through its seven-point plan:

employment rates as high as 17 percent for African Americans and 12.5 percent for Hispanics.

Clearly, we have not seen the promised benefits of the \$700 billion taxpayer bailout of Wall Street. Main Street and urban America need action now.

For months we have been calling for an economic stimulus plan that includes an immediate extension of unemployment benefits; more help to states for infrastructure projects, a greater investment in summer jobs for at-risk

100,000 jobs during the recession of 1974-75.

We agree with President-elect Obama, the nation's governors and mayors and a growing number of leading economists that the centerpiece of a job-focused recovery plan must be substantial investments in rebuilding the nation's infrastructure and shifting to a greener, more energy efficient and energy independent economy.

We know this will work. One Department of Transportation

1. Fund proven and successful models of workforce training and job placement similar to the Urban League's successful Urban Youth Empowerment Program.

2. Fund the Summer Youth Employment Program at a level of \$3 billion to put 2.5 million teenagers to work next summer.

3. Fund pre-apprenticeship programs in the construction industry targeted to "green jobs" to benefit disadvantaged workers.

4. Infrastructure plans should include more than roads, highways, bridges and levees. More Community Development Block Grant money is needed for renovation of schools, community centers, libraries, recreations centers, parks, etc.

5. A percentage of all infrastructure monies should be directed to job training, placement and preparation for disadvantaged workers.

6. Fund a temporary public service employment program aimed at creating 150,000-200,000 jobs in urban areas.

7. Congress must include provisions that establish and reinforce goals which ensure that minority and women-owned businesses participate fully in contract opportunities created by the economic recovery plan.

To read our full plan, log on to nul.org.

Marc H. Morial is president and chief executive officer of the National Urban League.

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Dr. Billy R. Flowers

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A: I had a patient once ask the same question. Her concern, however, was that Chiropractic might hurt. After becoming a patient, she began to make progress. Slowly but surely the nauseating effects of the migraine were leaving her. One day, relaxed and without pain, she said to me "I can't believe that I waited 20 years for this!" That's

one comment I'll never forget! The story had a happy, but isn't it sad that it had such an unfortunate beginning. So many suffer for so long with their pain. They literally waste years of their lives, waiting, thinking that it is just a temporary condition. Life itself is a temporary condition. We are all here for only a while. Why waste

one precious moment, let alone years suffering needlessly? Find your freedom through good health NOW... naturally. Find your freedom through Chiropractic...and make each day count. Isn't it time you stepped up to safe, effective Chiropractic?

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