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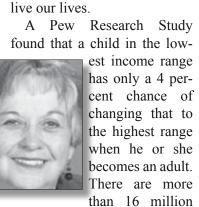
Broken Bootstraps on Path to Making It Rich

The tragedy of childhood poverty

BY M. LINDA JARAMILLO

"Making it big" in this country means being worth a lot of money. It is not easy to get rich (in money) if you do not have wealthy parents or grandparents. It is doubtful that someone who was born and grew up in poverty can become wealthy.

The assumption that a person "came from poverty, but worked hard and pulled themand made it big" is an unlikely reality in our current economic system. The problem is our broken. capitalistic culture regularly measures our importance and



children who live below the federal poverty level now and this number has grown by 23 percent since 2007.

Pulling ourselves up the by cause bootstraps in this country are not only weak, they are ing hard enough or not man- they are located. They must

success by how much money bia University indicates that more than one that pay very we make rather than the moral 22 percent of children in the and ethical values by which we United States are part of families whose incomes are less A Pew Research Study than \$23,550 a year for a famfound that a child in the low- ily of four. Basic expenses like to manage money you don't est income range housing, nutritious food, transportation, and health care and cent chance of child care cost twice that much annually.

> into consideration, this translates into the fact that 45 percent of children live in low income families. The most vulnerable are children under the ery child's basic needs are met age of 6 years old; 48 percent of children at this age are in low-income families.

> cuse them of either not workaging their money well. The have nourishing food and safe

low wages and are part-time or unstable. It is very difficult to make ends meet under these circumstances and impossible have. Bootstraps are broken and the children we say we value are paying the price.

Research also proves that Taking these basic needs poverty is the single greatest threat to the well-being of children. To turn the tide on the tragedy of childhood poverty, we must demand that evregardless of their family's income.

Every child must have ac-Sadly, we often blame the cess to early childhood educalic schools, no matter where

We cannot just take care of our own little neighborhood or community. We must invest in the future of ALL our children if we are to claim that we are a moral and just society. This is a problem with our economic system and not the fault of our children.

In the current flurry of political positioning by presidential candidates, I want to hear them describe how they will address this national tragedy of childhood poverty that is growing by leaps and bounds each year. I don't want to hear about how hard work helps you get rich. It's not about pulling up your bootstraps at all. It's time for us to commit to the well-being of all families.

The Rev. M. Linda Jaramillo is executive minister for Justice and Witness Ministries in the United Church of Christ.

selves up by their bootstraps the bootstraps is a myth, be- situation on parents. We ac- tion programs and quality pub-

The National Center for truth is that many of these par- shelter to thrive rather than just Children in Poverty at Colum- ents are working in jobs, often survive.

Never One to Shrink Away from a Worthy Fight

Julian Bond leaves a lasting legacy

BY MARC H. MORIAL Julian Bond lived his life as a tireless champion of the oppressed and maligned, a battle-worn warrior for civil rights, equality and social justice.

Bond fought the good fight, and at the still-youthful age of 75, he completed his course.

His longtime dedication to equal rights for African-Americans-and for all-are to be celebrated. But we must guard against fossilizing his life and legacy in tributes or textbooks.

Bond lived a life of action, clear mission and steadfast service. worthier tribute to him than including now-Congressman to pick up the baton he has John Lewis. passed and re-dedicate ourselves to the struggle to make the promises and opportuniall its citizens.

That struggle is an ongoing one that neither begins nor ends with one movement or personality. Individually and

system.

We must do it, be-They come to those who

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at because he was too young. Morehouse College in Atlanta. It was there, during the height first president of the Southern of the civil rights movement in Poverty Law Center, remaining the 1960s, that Bond began to on its board for the rest of his agitate in earnest, co-founding life after his tenure came to an the Student Nonviolent Coor- end in 1979. Later, he would dinating Committee along with also serve as chairman of the There could be no other Morehouse students,

communications director for five years. Bond was elected and his work as a civil rights ties of our democracy true for to the Georgia House of Representatives in 1965, but was plished writer, he was a lecnot allowed to take his seat be- turer and a professor, a televicause his white colleagues objected to his opposition to the "Eyes on the Prize," an iconic Vietnam War. It took a year, a documentary on the civil rights

collectively, we must take up protest march led by Dr. Martin movement. the baton to bring an end to Luther King Jr., and a Supreme the deadly scourge of police Court order, but the legislature brutality, close persistent eco- finally allowed him to take his nomic inequality gaps and ad- rightful seat in 1966. He spent dress destructive disparities in 20 years in the Georgia Legour nation's education islature, serving in both the House and the Senate.

In 1968, Bond became a nacause as Bond once tional figure after delivering famously reminded us a fiery speech at the Chicago all: "Good things don't Democratic National Concome to those who wait. vention. His performance was so impressive; his name was placed into the nominating pro-Bond was a student in a cess for vice president-a po-

> Bond went on to serve as the NAACP.

No matter the capacity, Bond was first and foremost He served as the group's an activist for equal rights. In addition to his political career leader, Bond was an accomsion show host and he narrated

Bond never stopped agitating because he fundamentally believed that, "the humanity of all Americans is diminished when any group is denied rights limited his philosophy to any community, region or nationality. He fought against segregation on our shores and apartheid in South Africa. He devoted himself to equal rights for all, including, most recently, the rights of the LGBT community.

Bond left a lasting legacy and continue. Whether it's the National Urban League.

challenges to voting rights or inequity in education funding, many of the challenges he faced yesterday continue to plague our nation today.

His lifelong fight for equalgranted to others." He never ity and justice must become our lifelong fight for the same. We can all become a part of his vision to create a more perfect union in our nation. Our prayers and heartfelt sympathy are with his family, along with our promise to continue Julian's fight.

Marc H. Morial is president philosophy class taught by sition he could not qualify for for us to explore, celebrate and chief executive officer of

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