



“Challenging People to Shape a Better Future Now”

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Dr. King Left us With a Charge

In an often expressed dream for a better America, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. called upon Americans to honor “all God’s children” and their rights to equality and justice. His powerful voice and leadership would be welcomed in the turbulent world around us.

Forty-three-years after the March on Washington, Dr. King’s dream of equality for all remains unrealized – the impact of racism persists and children of color still live with the consequences of the racial divide embedded in American society. Our leaders face mounting fiscal challenges, yet we urge the nation not to abandon children in need. As the struggling economy brings fear and despair to families and communities, America must marshal its resources to assure that our children have opportunities to thrive.

There is an intersection between Dr. King’s dream and efforts by government, non-profit advocates and communities working to improve the quality of life for vulnerable children.

Recent census data soundly demonstrates the challenges we face, as a nation, in assuring that future generations can succeed. The poverty rate for children in the U.S. is at 20.7 percent, with 35.7 percent of African-American children living in poverty, 33.1 percent of Hispanic children, 17.7 percent of white children and 14 percent of Asian-American children.

Even more disturbing is that those numbers are rapidly increasing. The census also found that 1.4 million children fell into poverty for the first time in 2009.

Efforts to revive the economy will grow even more difficult in the future if the nation doesn’t

AMERICA HEALING

Gail Christopher DN

address child poverty. The Center for American Progress says that in 2007, even before the recession, the economy took a \$500 billion hit from child poverty because of increased costs for health care and

reduced, if it becomes a national priority. Since 1994, England has cut its child poverty rate by more than 50 percent by establishing public policies such as these: providing tax incentives to single parents for finding jobs, improving public benefits for parents, increasing the minimum wage, allowing parents of young children to request flexible work hours and implementing a comprehensive

and memories (both conscious and unconscious) that have been passed down through generations. Related behaviors are encoded in the patterns of families, communities, ordinances and organizations.

The legacy of our racialized past remains embedded in today’s societal structures, continuing to negatively impact children of color. Persistent residential racial segregation and seemingly intractable disparities in life expectancies, disease burdens, poverty levels, incarceration rates and unemployment levels are symptoms of vestiges of centuries of structural bias in our society, made possible by the mythology of racism.

Dehumanization and denigration or privilege and separation defined the lives of millions of families and their children in America, for most of our existence as a country. Resilience, courage and success against engrained odds are often the untold story for many families of color.

It’s time for America to change.

A true monument to Dr. King would be the birth of a vigorous movement within communities across this nation to heal the divides that we have all inherited through the absurd belief systems of racial hierarchy and privilege based on physical characteristics.

This healing work requires honesty and courageous self-examination but it builds trust and alliances that yield creative solutions to seemingly insoluble problems. Let us honor Dr. King by realizing his dream for a healed America. Let’s do it for our children.

Dr. Christopher is Vice President of Program Strategies for the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, which has launched a \$75 million, five year “America Healing” initiative

Dr. King Left us With a Charge: To Honor All Gods Children. What will you do for the cause?

criminal justice, and decreases in productivity. In fact, economists estimate that child poverty resulted in a 4 percent decrease in the U.S. gross domestic product.

But the statistics don’t tell the entire story. There is an emotional

diverse preschool program. The Center for American Progress says that if \$90 billion a year for 10 years is used to fund policies addressing child poverty, the United States can reduce child poverty by 41 percent.

The poverty rate for Black children in the U.S. is 35.7 percent

toll on Americans when we recognize that our nation is failing our children. We cannot relegate millions of children to a future without opportunities, a destiny of poverty and social exclusion. That is not the American Dream, and it is an anathema to Dr. King’s dream for our nation.

We must embark on new ways to overcome current child and family poverty statistics and the trajectories they portend. Clearly a shift in federal budget priorities is needed. England has proven that child poverty can be dramatically

Furthermore, the nation must also address the legacy of the mythology of racism that fueled the nation’s early economic engines, jumpstarting the United States’ meteoric rise to its position as a world power. Racism played a critical role in the development of this country. Its hallmark was systematic dehumanization codified into law for centuries. Related inhumane, destructive and exclusionary practices left indelible impressions in the minds and hearts of people. These impressions or beliefs became feelings

How to Solve the NCAA’s Ethics Issue, Part 2

I previously suggested the NCAA should focus less on increasing penalties and more on inspiring players to voluntarily do the right thing. But occasional, intangible word plays are not enough. I suspect those teenagers most at risk of breaking the NCAA’s rules need a steady diet of something a little more tangible. Even politicians nowadays realize the prime incentive to motivate voting behavior is a single word – “jobs”.

I would be very interested to see what would happen is a major school had the imagination, insight, and courage to institutionalize pro influencers and use jobs as an incentive for infraction-free behavior. Here’s how you start: Offer a required course for student athletes that’s taught by executives from the vast number of businesses scoring big profits thanks to the popularity of college sports. Internships, counseling sessions and specialized resume-building should not be on the sidelines but in the starting line-up of what these players learn.

And if university presidents are serious about keeping players infraction free, they could require or “strongly suggest” that sports

THE SCHOOL OF LAW

Roger M. Groves

vendors participate in such pro-

will have greater access to these career resources. And it’s not like incentives are a foreign concept in America. We use them all the time to encourage behaviors. Corporate tax credits and individual home

from to institutionalize aggressive pro mentors? Start with the athletic programs themselves. A majority of schools from the six major conferences have increased their athletic budgets by double-digit percentages from fiscal years 2010 to 2012. In part, the increase is a trickle down from new rich TV conference contracts. Even Michigan, which nowadays wins football games only slightly more often than it loses, increased its athletic budget from \$84.6 million to \$109.8 million. That is a 29.8 percent rise in two years. On college campuses, these athletic budgets pay for a lot of administrative people, but not the people of greatest potential influence over those high-impact touchdown makers who are too often a high risk for infractions.

A tiny piece of the TV money major colleges bring in annually would be enough to start programs that help athletes find strong mentors, develop career aspirations and understand that booster handouts are far from their best option.

Roger M. Groves is Professor of Law at the Florida Coastal School of Law

Demand action from businesses that profit off collegiate sports

grams. I am confident businesses that gain sizable revenues from the players and the sports programs will gladly infuse resources to keep those valuable university

mortgage deductions are just a few used to inspire people to buy homes or businesses to invest in new plants, equipment or research and development. What’s more, our government offers tax breaks

Offer a required course for student athletes that’s taught by executives

contracts. Many of these business-people really want to help—they just need a more structured and accessible opportunity.

Incentives could be put in place whereby infraction-free players

for educators and grants to students that do not have to be repaid—it’s all done because we as a society believe an overall good will come from the nudge.

Where would the money come