

Elections

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a decent approval rating at 52 percent, with 43 percent disapproving, and that could help carry the top of the Democratic ticket. The poll involved 938 registered voters and was conducted over a three-week period in October. It has a margin of error of

plus or minus 3.2 percentage points. The survey also touched on gay marriage, finding that an increasing number of people support it. About 43 percent of respondents said they support gay marriage, up from 29 percent in the same poll five years ago.

Another 22 percent said they support giving identical rights to gay couples but just not calling it marriage. Barreto said that support could be enough to sustain a gay marriage referendum if lawmakers pass one this coming year.

In another question on the survey, 48 percent said they support the legalization and regulation of marijuana in the state, while 42 percent oppose. A group is gathering signatures in hopes of putting that issue before voters next year.

Race

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n't necessarily transform power relationships; it's more than just integration and access. But you have to transform systems and structures in order for there to be real equality and equity. It's interesting we are at a conference called immigration integration. But as African Americans we know it's more than just integration, it's more than just assimilation, it's real systems change and the potential for economic justice changing this economic system (and) challenging the way this economy is fundamentally set up. To continue MLK work — he knew economic justice was where the work needed to go and I think we should continue that. TSN: What are some of the barriers that you feel the community creates? TJ: We internalize some of the things that have been said about us; we know that we are at the top of the health disparity list, with wealth gaps etc. I think one thing that we do is internalize some of those messages and stereotypes, and when you face a constant threat of unjust treatment it's easy to blame each other and not recognize that it's a whole system at work. That's one thing we can do differently to be a little more self-

one education need that we address right away. On the part of African Americans, those of us that are native born, whose ancestors were enslaved here, we don't always understand some of the issues that are pushing people here, we don't know where they are coming from, and it's complicated because many of us are in competition, forced competition with each other. We don't choose this, it's been forced upon us by the same economic racist system that we've always struggled with — in competition for jobs and things like that. We need to have an analysis around that it's really important and there is a lot that we can do to understand each other. TSN: What can we do to live in solidarity? TJ: We can recognize that our African American community is changing because of integration. A lot of Black folks in our community are from parents who were foreign born — Africans, a lot of Caribbeans — our communities as African Americans are diverse that way. I know that because of racism in this country we have to deal with the legacy of slavery. Our ancestors having been enslaved here is kind of the identity we

and stuff like that. But, we have to make sure we are able to hold both, at the same time, the changes and the diversity plus our unique history in this country. TSN: Once the African American community begins to realize that the dynamic of African Americans in the U.S. has changed, what are steps we can take to become accepting of this new idea? TJ: We can continue to be proud of ourselves and how far we came and what we've done to make this a better place for everybody, because it's really through the African American experience that immigrants can find their voice and be more politically active. We've contributed to a lot of that work and there is a lot to be learned from our experience; we can start to share that. We can build relationships with people, alliances with people, and we don't always have to see eye to eye for there to be cohesion and collective movement. That's not necessary — we don't always have to try to blend in. We can be uniquely who we are and I feel that's the way that we build authenticity. TSN: With all the work that you are doing, what do you want to see happen? TJ: I want to see movement building. I want to see people building relationships and having analysis about the systematic and structural stuff. I want to see the relationships transformed beyond just a campaign. We have to see the relationships transformed so when we organize again we have an understanding about who we are and how we work together. Lots of leadership devoted to the youth; I'd like to see us challenge this notion that if you talk about race and racism that it's divisive. We need immigrants of color to say, "We will talk about racism and we are not trying to adopt the white norms so we can avoid the scrutiny and the discrimination." I would like to see immigrants of color step up and recognize the racism that is very much a part of this country. TSN: Can you give me three steps that you feel are important in making that happen? TJ: Dialogue and outreach. For example, if you want to involve African American



Trina Jackson

support on a campaign, there has to be some bridge building and some relationship building and I think building our youth and nurturing them is a concrete area. TSN: What's the first step we can take to actively move this forward? TJ: (Regarding) our community leaders and elected officials: Those of us on the ground need to go to them and tell them that we need for you to take more leadership and be better role models for how we build coalition. We need for all of our Black community leaders — whether faith-based or from the Urban League — we need to see those visible community leaders building more coalitions with immigrants of color. We still look up to those leaders in our community; we still see them as representing the established Black leadership. It doesn't have to be so male oriented or straight oriented, but the visible, entrenched, Black leadership is what we need to see. For more information about the Network of Immigrant and African Americans in Solidarity, go to www.niaas.org. Traci Tate is a student in the University of Washington Department of Communication News Laboratory.

I'd like to see us challenge this notion that if you talk about race and racism that it's divisive

determined. I think the government continues to profit from this competition, this tension, which is why this Occupy Movement is helpful in advancing that conversation. Black folks have been dealing with all this stuff for a long time and we don't have to do this alone; we can reach out for allies. What sort of ignorance are you seeing when using the dialogue method? A lot of the immigrants of color do not know anything about African American history, don't know a lot about U.S. history as it pertains to African Americans, so that's

wear all the time; as a community we have to appreciate that we have diversity on that level and that's one place that we can start. What that means is us having internal dialogue with each other so we can begin to appreciate those kinds of aspects about our community as part of our African American heritage. This is hard for us because we are still struggling as Black folks whose ancestors were enslaved here and kept from a lot of the stuff that we see immigrants of color being able to do — buying homes, owning businesses, getting resources for schools

College

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rent middle-school students or younger, it's still a bargain, said program director Betty Lochner. "When you look at it over the long term, it's still a good deal," Lochner said. Program officials estimate that a child born today will pay more than \$150,000 for four years of tuition in 2029. Washington is one of 13 states with current prepaid tuition programs. Nine other plans have been suspended or closed, mostly because of financial instability. Only five, including Washington, are guaranteed by the state, which means the government would have to bail the program out if it couldn't meet its obligations. That guarantee scares lawmakers, who during the 2011 Legislature debated freezing the current Guaranteed Education Tuition program and starting a new, less

generous plan. But a state actuary report released in March said there is a less than 1 percent chance Washington's prepaid tuition program would not be able to meet its financial

Supporters of Washington's prepaid tuition program argued that freezing the current plan would not solve its financial challenges because that idea would cut the program off from future contributions.

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obligations over the next 50 years. If everyone in the plan cashed in their units this year, the plan wouldn't have enough cash to cover them, but that's how the program works; future college students pay the cost of current tuition.

Last year, families opened 15,280 new Guaranteed Education Tuition accounts as they watched college tuition going up. A study ordered by the Legislature and approved by lawmakers and staff came to the same conclusion that the program would

remain most solvent as is. It also found that the current tuition program is sustainable with a low risk that the state will need to bail it out as long as units are correctly priced. Lochner expressed confidence that would continue as long as Washington's universities don't start raising tuition more than once a year. Checks with the University of Washington and Western Washington University found that tuition has never increased more often than yearly. The study found that the custom monthly plan -- for which a parent signs up to pay the same amount each month to build a college fund for their child -- provides a steady flow of predictable income to the program.