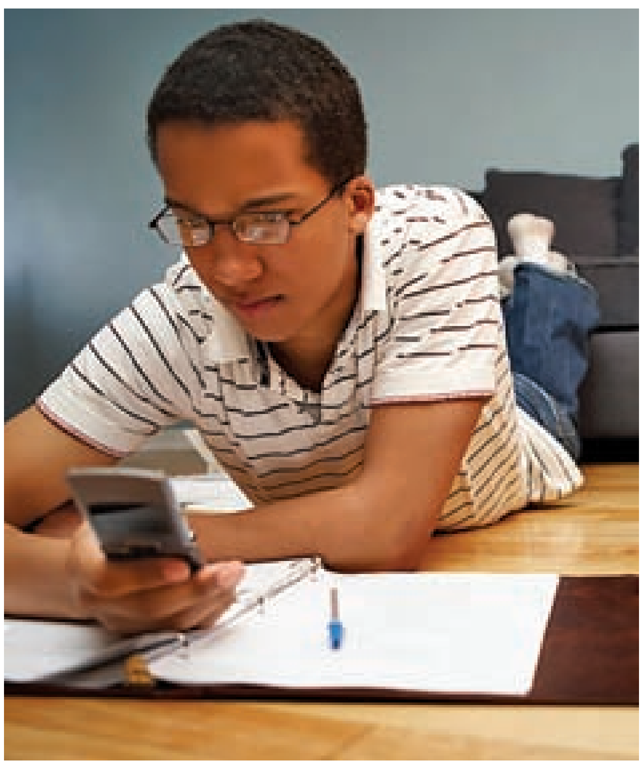
Number of Black Teachers Declines as Minority Student Population Increases



The number of minority teachers has declined since 1987, even though the minority student population has grown 17 percent over the same time period.

By Robert Bess
Special to the NNPA News Wire from the Westside Gazette

The minority population has grown tremendously since the year 2000. According to the Census Bureau, the Hispanic population growth is due to U.S. births–and Asian population growth is due primarily to immigration since 2012. That alone has fueled a 5 percent population growth in the overall population of these groups nationwide, according to the Pew Research Center.

Although there are probably many byproducts of this population growth, one of major concern is the effect that it has had on our education system in nine major cities in the United States.

In a study by the Albert Shankar Institute, it was found that though the population for minority students has increased continually and for the first time this past school year has outnumbered their white counterparts, the number of Black teachers has declined.

The cities included in this study were Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco and Washington D.C., which represent some of the largest school districts in the US.

The student population has continued to diversify, and there has been moderate attention given to the disparity that exists between white and non-white school systems. However, it has gone under the radar that minority teachers have declined although the minority student population has grown 17 percent since 1987.

Hispanic teachers have continued to increase but not at the rate of population growth of Hispanic students. Black teachers have borne the biggest burden during the recession. It should be noted that during the same time frame between 2003 and 2011, white teacher hiring in these systems grew, and in some cases doubled in largely minority settings.

The cities represented in the study have large education districts with large minority populations. There have been recruiting efforts conducted over the last decade with some success. But, the retention of these teachers continues to be low which offsets the relative success of the recruiting effort. To add insult to injury, due to the lack of experience of teachers in these districts, there have been funding challenges and educational outcomes have been substandard.

Local Black History Events and News

Jobs With Justice Screens 'At the River I Stand' Feb. 26

The Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) and Portland Jobs with Justice's PSU Student Labor Action Project (SLAP) will screen "At the River I Stand," a powerful documentary on the 1968 Memphis sanitation workers strike, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Feb. 26. The screening takes place at the Oregon AFL-CIO headquarters, 3645 SE 32nd Ave.

The film features Dr. Martin Luther King and the merging of the Poor People's Campaign, and a Worker's Rights Campaign.

There will be a short discussion afterward.

Know Your City Offers Final 'Hidden History of Albina' Tour in March

The Boise and Eliot neighborhoods in North Portland are rich in diverse history and culture,serving as the historic heart of Portland's African American community.

Know Your City and the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods (NECN) are partnering to provide "the Hidden History of Albina" tour. Tour destinations include public art, historic buildings, and green spaces. Here are some of the historic locations that

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will be visited:

- The only church in Portland where Martin Luther King Jr. preached, Vancouver Avenue Baptist Church.
- One of the few remaining black owned businesses on North Mississippi, Sons of Haiti Masonic Lodge.
- The historic headquarters of the Urban League of Portland.

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