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Profile of Pensacola & Escambia County: A Public Discussion

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September 20, 2005

Message from the Chairman

For the last three months, the citizens form all walks of life in the City of Pensacola and Escambia County have been engaged in a series of discussion forums concerning the study, *Profile of Pensacola: Demographic, Housing, and Economic Characteristics.* As stated in the Profile, this most important and timely study revealed the fact that, amidst the successful renewal, redevelopment, and revitalization in our area, there are" conditions {that} are particularly prevalent among the African-American population." The disparate conditions which were highlighted in the study prompted the leadership of the Gulf Coast African American Chamber of Commerce and the City of Pensacola to partner with Escambia County, City of Century, the business community, non-profit and religious organizations, and educational institutions to develop an agenda to begin to openly discussing plausible solutions to the identified problems.

I am happy to report that the initial objectives of the Gulf Coast Chamber have been realized. It is now time for IMPLEMENTATION! Stakeholders in our communities have spoken. New roles, responsibilities, and commitments have been identified for local government, educational institutions, community development corporations, and private businesses. In order to solve these problems, it will take a collective effort.

This will in fact be a communal process.

Full implementation of identified solutions will take time, resources, and a major commitment of all concerned. I challenge all good and fair minded people in this area to move aggressively forward on this worthwhile agenda. It is my hope that the report which follows will not be placed on the shelf.

I wish to thank all those who participated directly or indirectly in this process.

Cornelius Wooten
Chairman Board of Directors
Gulf Coast African American Chamber of Commerce

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History of the Initiative

What started out as discussions between two entities that historically focus on acquiring and safeguarding equal treatment of social, civil, political and economic rights broadened into a county-wide initiative to change a community. After talks with leaders of the local chapter of the National Association of the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 2004, the Gulf Coast African American Chamber of Commerce began formulating a plan to get the community – the whole community – talking about a report published in February 2003 by the City of Pensacola that illustrated gaps in several areas between African Americans and White Americans in the Pensacola area. This report, entitled *Profile of Pensacola: Demographic, Housing and Economic Characteristics*, highlighted the disparate conditions under which some of its African American citizens in the City of Pensacola and Escambia County lived daily. Although it was authored by the City of Pensacola, it was clear from the outset that the alleviation of these disparities would have to occur across the whole of Escambia County.

After that initial meeting, leaders of the Gulf Coast Area Chamber of Commerce met with leaders of the City of Pensacola to devise a strategy to engage citizens in solving its own problems. It was quickly suggested that this should not and must not be done by these two entities alone, as noble as their intent was. This effort had to engage both traditional and non-traditional leaders from every community, including local, state, and federal governmental agencies, private industries, educational institutions, community-based organizations, religious and faith groups, civil and human rights associations, and citizens of both Pensacola and Escambia County.

In order to capitalize on the vast experiences, divergent leadership styles, and broad range of groups in the community, a steering committee was assembled from seven sectors – education, financial, business, community, faith-based, health care, and political. Twenty-six citizens were tasked with guiding the process of the initiative without influencing a particular outcome. In other words, they were asked to follow the will of the public in the face of historic forces and political roots that often caused the disparate conditions in the first place. They would be asked to listen to strong words and phrases like *racism, institutional injustice*, and *indifferent policies* and find solutions to the problems that stemmed from these truths – both real and perceived.

For the most part, they did. Understanding that the disparate conditions cited in the *Profile* did not occur overnight or with a particular individual or entity, it was often hard to listen and find a solution to which the entire problem was not understood, and sometimes misunderstood. Yet, since the first public discussion, the steering committee has attempted to intertwine the public's will in the solutions to the inequities and balance those solutions with economic, political, and social constraints that bind us all. This initiative has been an attempt to live what the drafters of the Constitution declared:

We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union…

It must be said that one challenge facing all of us, as suggested by Dr. Thomas Boston, is not to take on too much but to bring attention to the issue and hand it off.

By your actions, only you can decide to face history. The future success of this initiative depends on it.

The Steering Committee

Guided the process....Offered a different point of view....
Set the pace....Prepared to make the change

Leroy Boyd, President
Movement for Change, Inc.

Georgia Blackmon, Owner
The Gathering Awareness & Book Center

Elvin McCorvey, President
Pensacola Branch of the NAACP

Dr. Percy Goodman, MD

Eddie Todd, Principal
Eddie Todd Architect

Burnette L. King, First Vice President
Pensacola Branch of the NAACP

Honor Bell, Director
*Naval Education Training Center, Office of
Community Service & Outreach*

Linda Darden
Sixth Avenue Baptist Church

Dr. Gael Frazer, Vice President of
Institutional Diversity
Pensacola Junior College

David Powell, Vice President
Sacred Heart Hospital

Rev. Hugh King, Pastor
Greater Union Baptist Church

Carol Carlan, City President
Wachovia Bank

Jim Paul, Superintendent
School District of Escambia County

Dr. John Cavanaugh, President
University of West Florida

Dr. Thomas Delaino, President
Pensacola Junior College

Buzz Ritchie, CEO
Gulf Coast Community Bank

Al Stubblefield, President
Baptist Health Care Pensacola

Dr. Irvin Williams, Vice President for Diversity
Baptist Heath Care Pensacola

Ronald E. Brown, President
Performance Excellence.biz

Mike Whitehead, District 1 Commissioner
Board of County Commissioners

Evelyn Hammond, Mayor
City of Century

Benny Barnes, President
Century Chamber of Commerce

Dr. Cornelius Wooten, Chairman of the Board
Gulf Coast African American Chamber of Commerce

Thomas Bonfield, Manager
City of Pensacola

Kevin Cowper, Director of Planning & Neighborhood
Development Department
City of Pensacola

Robin Woods, Research Consultant

Research Interns

Ashley Dahlin
Sophomore majoring in Journalism
Pike's Peak Community College

Billie Holmes
Sophomore majoring in Political Science and History
Howard University

Thanks!

The Community

Got the word out....Attended a meeting....Suggested a better way.... Hosted a speaker....Brought a friend....Talked with a foe...

American Cancer Society
American Diabetes Association
American Heart Association
American Lung Association
Baptist Health Care
Baptist Ministerial Alliance
Bellview Middle School
Board of County Commissioners
C.I.R.C.L.E. Community Clinic
Catholic Charities
Century Chamber of Commerce
Cerex
Children Service Center
City of Pensacola
Coldwell Banker JME Realty
Community Information Network
Cox Communications
Eastside Neighborhood Association
Emotional Freedom Techniques
Escambia County Community Land Trust
Escambia County Community Redevelopment Association
Escambia County Health Department
Escambia County Property Appraiser
Escambia Federation of Education Association
First Steps Pediatric
Florida State Rep. Holly Benson
Florida Department of Elder Affairs
Florida Department of Health – Volunteer Health Services
Florida State University Medical School
Great Family Network
Gulf Coast African American Chamber of Commerce
Gulf Coast Community Bank
Hands On Pensacola, Inc.
Health & Hope Clinic
Independent News
Independent Sun

Lakeview Center
Magic 106.1 FM Radio
Milk & Honey Outreach Ministry
Moulton Properties
Movement for Change, Inc.
NAACP
New American Press
New York Life Insurance Company
North American Family Institute, Inc.
Northwest Florida Blood Center
Northwest Florida Business Climate
Office of U.S. Representative Jeff Miller
Pelican Real Estate
Pensacola Area Chamber of Commerce
Pensacola Business Journal
Pensacola Habitat for Humanity
Pensacola Junior College
Pensacola News Journal
Pensacola Opera
Pensacola Voice
Rebuild Northwest Florida
Sacred Heart Health System
Sanders Beach Community Association
School District of Escambia County
Sickle Cell Association
St. Joseph's Free Medical Screening Clinic
Studer Group
United Way of Escambia County
University of West Florida
Virginia College
WBQP TV Channel 12
WEAR TV 3
Woodland Heights Neighborhood Association
WRNE 980 AM Radio
WSRE TV 23
WUWF 88.1 Radio
WUWF TV 4
Citizens of Pensacola & Escambia County

Thank You Very Much!

Speakers

Acknowledged the past....Proposed a different way....
Offered to help....Prepared for the future

June 7, 2005   General Discussion and Overview

Kevin Cowper
City of Pensacola

Dr. Thomas Delaino
Pensacola Junior College

Alexis Bolin
Old South Properties

Dr. Irvin Williams
Baptist Health Care Pensacola

June 21, 2005   Economic Characteristics

Dr. Thomas D. Boston
Professor, Economics
Georgia Institute of Technology

July 26, 2005   Housing Characteristics

Chris Jones
Escambia County Property Appraiser

Betty Salter
Pensacola Habitat for Humanity

Pat Hubbard
City of Pensacola

Charles Allcott
Gulf Coast Community Bank

Randy Wilkerson
Neighborhood Enterprise Foundation, Inc.

Mike Dolman
Gulf Coast Community Bank

August 9, 2005   Health Care Characteristics

Dr. Rodney Soto
Director, Stroke Center
Sacred Heart Hospital

September 13, 2005   Education Characteristics

Norm Ross
School District of Escambia County

Dr. John Cavanaugh
University of West Florida

Dr. Thomas Delaino
Pensacola Junior College

Monica Hayes
Director, Office of K-20 Equity and Access
Florida Department of Education

Solutions

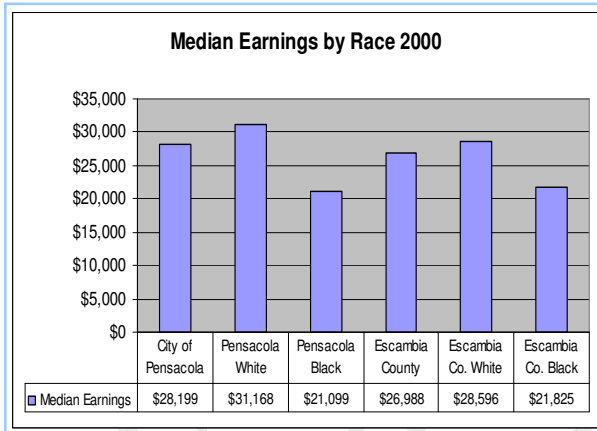pEnSaCola/US

Methodology of Process

One goal characterizes this initiative: **to bring community consensus for defining answers and implementing optimal solutions to the challenges depicted in the *Profile of Pensacola* for the residents of the City and the County.** From the outset, one of the strategies used to meet this goal was to engage the public in corporate and open discussions about how to solve the challenges and sustain the solutions. The aim was to share the data so that the public would come to its own conclusion. To that end, a series of public discussions was used for each characteristic (economic, housing, health, and education), followed by sector committee meetings that further defined the solutions. Information was gathered, programs were researched, and data was analyzed from suggestions by citizens at the public discussions and the sector committee meetings.

Throughout this initiative, we have constantly asked the following question: *Is what brought us to this point systemic, institutional, or personal responsibility*? The method to gaining commitment was through awareness, understanding, and acceptance of the solutions.

What follows is a compilation of the solutions proposed by the citizens, punctuated in bold type by the optimal solutions. The importance of listing all solutions by the citizens cannot be overstated. Because the problems addressed in the Profile are singularly identified, i.e., education, median income, housing tenure, the solutions must be multifaceted and accessible to all willing to decrease the disparity. A solution for one citizen or agency may not suffice for another citizen or agency. It is in this realization that it must be understood, that amidst conflicting values and priorities, this document and the solutions contained within will not completely solve the disparity problem.
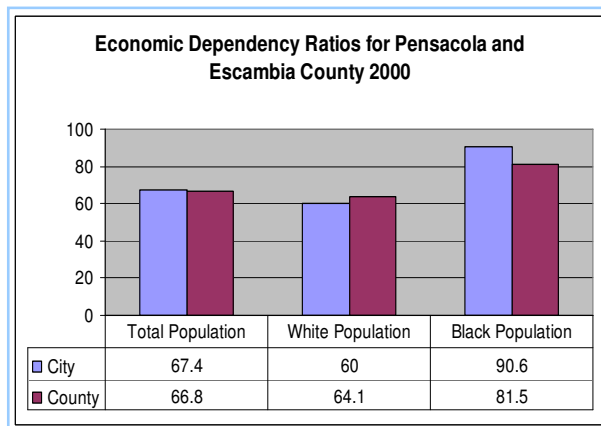

I think we should try it this way instead of....

There was this program on the Internet....

The guidelines for distribution can be changed to better utilize....

At a conference, this agency talked about....

By instituting this program, we have reduced....

We discontinued the policy and noticed an increase in....

I thought the funds were to be appropriated for....

Economic Characteristics

Median Earnings by Race 2000

	City of Pensacola	Pensacola White	Pensacola Black	Escambia County	Escambia Co. White	Escambia Co. Black
Median Earnings	$28,199	$31,168	$21,099	$26,988	$28,596	$21,825

Unemployment by Race

2000	Unemployment Rate	White Population	Black Population
City of Pensacola	6.6%	4.1%	13.9%
Escambia County	6.6%	5.4%	11.6%

Economic Dependency Ratios for Pensacola and Escambia County 2000

	Total Population	White Population	Black Population
City	67.4	60	90.6
County	66.8	64.1	81.5

Individual Poverty Rate

2000	Total Population	White Population	Black Population
City of Pensacola	16.1% 8,964	7.1% 2,573	34.1% 5,796
Escambia County	15.4% 41,978	10.2% 20,164	31.2% 18,627

I find that just as with the scarecrow in Frank Baum's classic story [Wizard of Oz], the knowledge of how to build great places already exists out there.

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Public Solutions to Disparity in Economic Characteristics

Median Income

- Education and Training
    - Promote goal setting in high school and other educational settings. Inclusion in an educational institution of the purpose of a written, attainable plan to reach a career and/or financial goal promotes the importance of financial education and literacy.
    - Provide access to training to move ahead in current job and jobs moving into area.
    - **Increase awareness of opportunities in skilled trades as viable, credible careers, using vocational classes and training centers as educational options for higher education.**
    - Assess current skills of the workforce. Historically, skills have been assessed from an industry-needs/business perspective and not the individual worker.

- Business and Industry
    - Increase minority-owned businesses.
    - Establish a business incubator to support prospective business owners.
    - Increase business and management skills in existing small business owners.
    - **Attract businesses that bring in increased wages and opportunities. (Research is currently being conducted by the Pensacola Area Chamber of Commerce to revise the targeted industry study report conducted in 2002 with a focus to include industry clustering as a mechanism to attract businesses.)**
    - Assess current hiring and business practices of public and private sector to ensure compliance with equal opportunity laws.
    - Assess current incentives for diversity in public and private sector.
    - Get businesses to do the right thing.

- Systemic
    - **Develop support networks in educational and social systems of individuals and families. Strive to decrease negative generational thinking about career and education possibilities.**
    - Devise a way to move citizens from the underground economy into the mainstream economy, including transference of business and social skills.

Unemployment

- Education and Training
    - Implement mentoring and early intervention in youth, especially those in the age range of 16-18 years of age.
    - **Advise colleges and companies to offer opportunities or programs that teach skills necessary to the job, either formal education or on-the-job training. These skills could include "soft skills," i.e., resume writing, work etiquette and "hard skills," those specific to job requirement, including technological skills.**
        - **College and companies already offering training should evaluate effectiveness of programs.**
        - **Address literacy**
    - Establish resource centers for education and training in areas within walking distance from targeted groups, especially for individuals and families in housing

areas and at the northern end of the county.
  - Buildings/properties currently not in use in these areas could be used for this purpose.

- Business and Industry
  - **Businesses and business associations should assist in creating a vision of opportunity for employment standards and practices.**
  - Promote programs that offer employment incentives to business owners. These are typically found in municipally-sponsored plans for targeted areas, i.e., enterprise-zones, community redevelopment agency districts, etc.

- Systemic
  - Conduct a definitive study on unemployment in area, assessing why those who are unemployed or discouraged remain so, and why employers choose not to hire them and implement retraining programs.
    - Approximately 27% of unemployed African American persons appear to be between ages of 18-30 years of age, should be a focus or targeted group.
  - Raise expectations of youths and teenagers in educational, social, and business settings
    - Gain commitment from parents, community
    - Show the good that comes from involvement in a young person's life through public awareness campaigns, sponsored by different segments of the community – business, educational, social, etc.
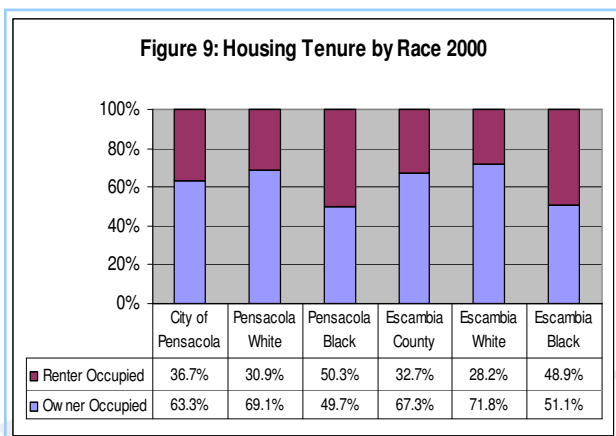

Poverty

- Education and Training
  - Retrain for new job skills for those already out of K-12 system
  - Incorporate income and budgeting methods and established programs in K-12 system.
  - Evaluate programs in other school districts affectively overcome the biasness in thinking those in poverty can not learn or perform at higher levels. Determine the factors that play a role in the success of these programs.
  - **Look at skills needed in current and future job market and work back from there, making sure to include the necessary resources.**
    - **Examine industry shifts, i.e., from manufacturing to service and technology industries**

- Business and Industry
  - **Raise the priority of resolving poverty for elected officials in Escambia County (Board of County Commissioners, City Council of Pensacola, School District of Escambia County) to resolve the disparity in light of the county recording the highest poverty rate in Florida in 2003 among the state's 16 largest counties, according to U.S. Census Bureau figures released in August 2004 (as reported by the Pensacola News Journal on August 27, 2004).**
  - Assess other financial incentives for employees given the current minimum wage standards
    - Use federal, state, and local incentives available to businesses

- Systemic

- o **Assess effective use of current funding to programs established to assist those in poverty, public and private, to ensure that dollar is directly impacting those in poverty.**
- o Assess institutional acceptance of educational standards leading to contributing factors of poverty and the impact this acceptance has on continuation of program, i.e., if program is not working to move those engaged into employment, why is that program still made available to the public.
- o Devise a marketing campaign (public service announcements) targeted at different areas
  - ▪ Those currently in elementary school and their parents.
    - • Discuss generational cycles of poverty
    - • Include corporations, agencies, faith-based organizations, alumni associations, neighborhood associations for mentoring opportunities and track impact on education and poverty
  - ▪ Those in corporate settings
    - • Work with corporations to increase awareness of skills and jobs needed
    - • Encourage company-sponsored mentors
  - ▪ Those out of the K-12 educational system
    - • Showing retired citizens to mentor, i.e., SCORE, RSVP
  - ▪ Address lack of responsibility of community as a whole – "We care as a community"
    - • Address it as a crisis
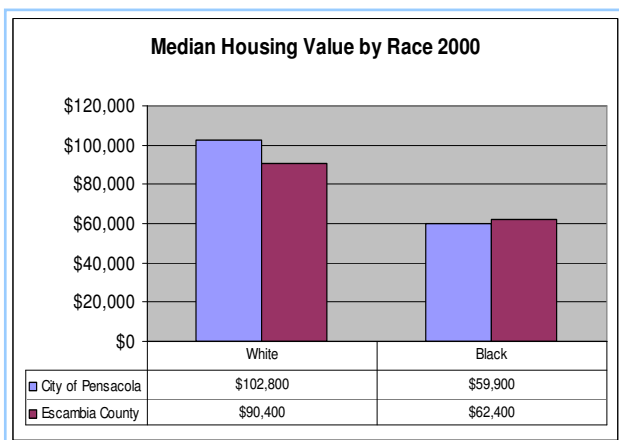   - • Accept where we are with a plan to move forward

Housing Characteristics

Figure 9: Housing Tenure by Race 2000

	City of Pensacola	Pensacola White	Pensacola Black	Escambia County	Escambia White	Escambia Black
Renter Occupied	36.7%	30.9%	50.3%	32.7%	28.2%	48.9%
Owner Occupied	63.3%	69.1%	49.7%	67.3%	71.8%	51.1%

Housing Tenure

1990 & 2000	1990 White Owner Occupied	2000 White Owner Occupied	1990 Black Owner Occupied	2000 Black Owner Occupied
City of Pensacola	65.2%	69.1%	49.3%	49.7%
Escambia County	68.2%	71.8%	50.2%	51.1%

Median Housing Value by Race 2000

	White	Black
City of Pensacola	$102,800	$59,900
Escambia County	$90,400	$62,400

As with the tin man, the heart of passion of people to create better places is there as well.

Public Solutions to Disparity in Housing Characteristics

Home Ownership

- Have a shared vision of what area will be in developing or expanding housing areas, partners (residents, development, and government)
    - Make certain requirements in order to stimulate diverse socioeconomic populations living in housing, i.e., parental participation in school; participation in self-sufficiency programs for education, training, or employment
    - Employ requirement for mixed income housing to not have external physical difference based on property being subsidized, affordable, or market rate
- **Encourage non-homeowners to start smaller in order to build equity, advancing in housing costs as financial capacity dictates**
    - **Explore rent-to-own opportunities and undersigned mortgages**
    - **Address economic factors to home ownership**
    - **Challenge person in public housing to seek or improve employment to move from public to market housing**
    - **Expand mentor programs, especially with faith-based communities**
    - **Educate about importance of good credit, savings, management of income, and fear of rejection**
        - **For children in grades 4 – 12, educate on the value of money and establishment of credit at appropriate grades**
- Address and halt planning and development policies and practices that lead to gentrification
    - Encourage balance of growth and development of neighborhoods through discussions that are transparent
    - Educate existing neighborhoods and neighbors about zoning requirements and planning
    - Target areas for planning
        - Address "not in my backyard" attitude of residents and associations by discussing both positive and negative consequences of planning for growth and/or development in area

Housing Values

- Address policies and procedures (systemic or institutional) that exist to value homes with realtors, realtor associations, appraisers, homeowner associations, financial institutions to ensure discriminatory practices are eliminated
    - Educate neighborhood associations, realtors, homebuilder/developer associations, developers about need to market neighborhoods to all, regardless of race or ethnicity
- **Educate about steps to own a home, including how housing prices are established and availability of housing advocacy programs. This solution can be paired with encouraging existing homeowners to make improvements of current homes or buying of larger homes to increase home value amongst targeted population.**
    - **Educate about mortgage, financing, and housing options**
- Encourage pride in ownership of property and neighborhood, i.e., marketing campaign through public service announcements, property appraiser inserts
- Tackle transition in neighborhood when it comes to a hot market
- Develop a marketing campaign to non-homeowners who are qualified but are looking for a home.

- o Use social organizations, churches, to develop a list with an predetermined goal for increase in home ownership
- o Pair prospective homeowners with lenders, mortgage companies, perhaps using a real estate expo
- o Explore family patterns of homeownership and educate later generations about benefits of homeownership. This can be accomplished through targeted surveys and advertising campaign.
- Educate consumers (perspective home buyers) and realtors about negative outcomes of perception of certain neighborhoods

Health Characteristics

Major Causes of Death

	White	Black	Disparity
Total Deaths	899.9	1205.9	37%
Heart Disease	210.6	337.2	59%
Cancer	207.3	230.1	10%
Stroke	72.7	140.0	92%
CLRD	52.9	33.7	<54%>
Diabetes	25.9	70.3	187%
Pneumonia/Flu	17.2	22.3	40%
Cirrhosis	14.0	10.1	<66%>
AIDS/HIV	4.4	29.5	800%

What has been lacking in far too many places I visit, as with the cowardly lion, is Courage.

Public Solutions to Disparity in Health Characteristics

Accessibility

- Address accessibility as a community-wide effort or campaign by public, physicians, insurance industry, heath care agencies, advocates, and hospitals
  - Conduct marketing campaigns to raise awareness, including programs that seek to decrease practices that negatively impact health, and by using targeted community health fairs through faith-based organizations, schools, community centers, businesses
  - Work with established groups to seek funding through federal health programs, i.e., National Institute of Health, Food & Drug Administration, Department of Agriculture
- Encourage changing the culture of local schools and community practices that impact health of children and teenagers, i.e., education, meals, exercise, removing sodas and greasy foods
  - Start with education as early as 3 years old in pre-K setting and engage continuous education
- **Encourage personal responsibility for healthy life style through incremental steps to healthy lifestyle**
  - **Taking ownership of the need to be informed and removing self-inducing behaviors that often appear as "victim syndrome"**
  - **Working with local neighborhood associations, municipalities, law enforcement to address safe communities for engaging in exercise routines**
  - **Encourage pre-natal care**
  - **Educate about self-management**
- Address the lack of affordable health care with physicians, hospitals and insurance industry with a plan to seek short term alternative solutions and long-term policy and procedure changes that cause the challenge
- Address conditions related to poverty
  - Facilities in impoverished areas are challenged by lack of quality health staff, physical conditions
  - Language barrier between physician and patient
- Explore lack of trust because of past experiences or generational experiences directly with physicians and hospitals
- Address cultural and religious objections to institutionalized medicine, balancing the objections with the need to have the patient around an already established support system, i.e., family.
- Address the lack of medical institutions not in areas of high concentration of minorities and lower socioeconomic classes.
  - Incorporate factors that become barriers to accessibility, i.e., transportation, temporary loss of income while seeking care
- Examine the decreased level of health care caused by cultural bias, antipathetic staff, medical and insurance barriers
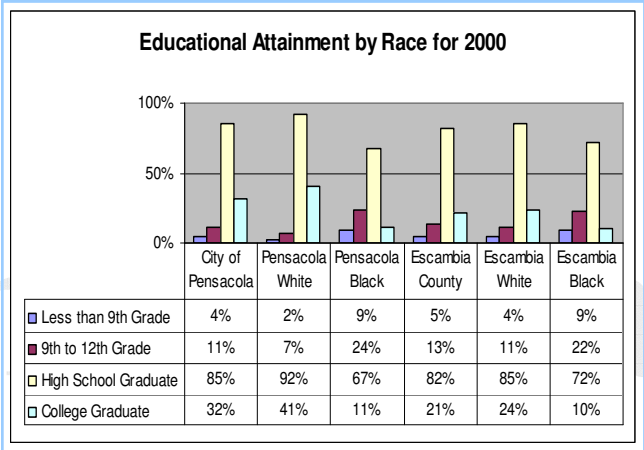
Preventative Care

- **Strengthen relationships with medical community, including emergency room physicians and primary care physicians. Encourage medical community to become proactive in reaching out to the African American community, extending quality of care when making referrals.**

- o **Engage in localized education, availability of services, and screening**
- Work with insurance industry to ensure preventative care applications not perceived or practiced as discrimination
- Encourage personal responsibility for healthy life style through incremental steps to healthy lifestyle
  - o Taking ownership of the need to be informed and removing self-inducing behaviors that often appear as "victim syndrome"
  - o Working with local neighborhood associations, municipalities, law enforcement to address safe communities for engaging in exercise routines
  - o Encourage pre-natal care
  - o Educate about self-management

Addressing Agency Obstacles

- Educate targeted community about available alternative resources for uninsured, i.e., St. Joseph's Clinic, Health and Hope Clinic, CIRCLE Community Clinic, Escambia Community Clinic
- Conduct health fairs where people live. Use urban media outlets as a means of advertising.
- **Develop new methods and processes of care vs. treatment:**
  - o **Expand services of community clinics**
  - o **Urge collaboration between physicians, nurses, and medical support personnel and community based organizations**
  - o **Tap into pharmaceutical companies that donate or reduce costs of products and services; educate community about existence of services**
  - o **Recruit volunteers to assist at community clinics**
  - o **Find ways to overcome problem of when patient does not have any or adequate medical coverage but has discovered that they have a medical condition that needs treatment.**
- Get medical advocates for simplifying the paperwork process and incorporate technological advances, i.e., electronic file sharing
- Talk with political leaders and policy makers about advocating for healthy communities
- Involve heads of local hospitals in a discussion on the issue of "dumping" patients on community-based clinics
- Address physicians not accepting Medicare or Medicaid

Education Characteristics

Educational Attainment by Race for 2000

	City of Pensacola	Pensacola White	Pensacola Black	Escambia County	Escambia White	Escambia Black
Less than 9th Grade	4%	2%	9%	5%	4%	9%
9th to 12th Grade	11%	7%	24%	13%	11%	22%
High School Graduate	85%	92%	67%	82%	85%	72%
College Graduate	32%	41%	11%	21%	24%	10%

Overcoming the fear of change takes the greatest measures of courage.

Public Solutions to Disparity in Education Characteristics

During the first sector committee meeting on education, the public stated that there was an expectation of success for the education program in the county. Three components comprised the expectation: quality, productivity, and creation of good citizens after the first 12 years of the educational process. Six factors comprise the success of the education system: engaging curriculum, cultural aptitude/diversity; parental responsibility; mentoring and support systems; and personal accountability.

Engaging Curriculum

Primary stakeholder(s): School
Objective: To create a curriculum that stimulates and motivates students to participate in the educational process

- Make education a "state of the art" responsibility
- Encourage school district and higher educational institutions to be honest and open to the community about problems
- Work to restore pre-K program and overhaul pre-K through 5th grade – too many students are getting lost in the process
  - Provide additional funding for early education.
- **Assess why the School District of Escambia County does not appear to be connected to available resources to ensure equity in all facets of education**
  - **Information needs to be disseminated and made available to all students and parents. School district needs to ensure that programs are only benefiting a few students, i.e., advanced placement, honors programs geared towards White students; poverty-based, reading programs, ESE (handicapped) geared towards African American students**
  - **Information and resources are scattered and may be made accessible to those in middle and upper socioeconomic income levels, but not to those in poverty**
  - **Public may not have a clear understanding of the programs and processes in place**
- Create a shared vision of success by all stakeholders
- Assess what strategic plan the school district and higher education institutions have in place to move students to next academic level of success
- Determine if existing programs are effective with a open report of findings
  - There is the appearance that there is no measurement or auditing of programs
- Assess the need for an independent department or person looking at the school district data and making the local board accountable
- Ensure student and teacher understands the motivation and pay off to engaging in program or process
- Assess technology in each school
  - "Think globally, act locally" when looking at place in world market
- Ensure preparation of students in right to be educated across the board, regardless of if the student is going to college, vocational, or chooses to go to no school
  - Prep every child for college education
- Make alternative schools an opportunity to excel for students
  - Non-traditional environment must still achieve the end result of a quality education
- Highlight the value of education as a life-long necessity and not necessarily as "getting a good job"
  - Increase salary of teachers and substitute teachers

Cultural Aptitude / Diversity
Primary stakeholder(s): School
Objective: To create a welcoming, supportive and challenging relationship among all stakeholders

- Conduct diversity training to teachers, staff, and administration with top-down demonstration of practice
- Increased training for class room teachers to ensure inclusion and acceptance in the school
- **Provide an "ethos of caring" – caring students, parents, and instructors using a holistic approach to education**
- Hold a positive regard for students by instructors with an expectation of success
- Understand the needs of parents within their socio-economic environment
- Create a culture that motivates parents to want to learn about and be involved in the educational process
- Provide diversity in all school activities, both internal and external to classroom
- Ensure community embraces diversity in educational settings

Parental Responsibility
Primary stakeholder(s): Parent
Objective: To increase parent participation in the education process and the development of their children

- Ensure information is received from school system regarding student's progress and educational process and programs. Respond to it.
- Incorporate Parent-Teacher Associations and school advisory councils into parental support network
- Advocate for supportive work environment when dealing with educational involvement
- **Prioritize and make a conscious effort to participate in student's educational instruction, e.g. homework, after-school activities, away from school environment**

Mentoring and Support Systems
Primary stakeholder(s): Community
Objective: To initiate programs that provide off school property activities, improving career life experiences and role model engagements

- Provide more community emphasis on caregivers and communities reading to children
- Motivate civic clubs to engage in the educational process of students. Ensure it is understood that absence of children in school does not mean absence of stake in school.
- Provide mentoring for parents – focus on improving parental skills and employability skills
- Involve the community at every level – use every available resource
- When developing and instituting programs, ensure the basic resources are met in order for participation to be maximized, i.e., transportation, child care. Be aware of needs of target audience and amendable to incorporating necessary resources for successful change.
- **Ensure existence of a link between the Parent Teacher Organizations, School District of Escambia County (including George Stone Vocational Center), Pensacola Junior College, University of West Florida, and community-based organizations to provide continuous intervention through after-school programs, services, and tutoring.**
- Engage the business community in recruiting for a diverse faculty and staff, making a conscientious decision to engage education as a priority in economic development.

- Find a way (create an environment) where school administrators and teachers who want to advocate for change are encouraged to do so without stifling political environment and/or bureaucracy.
- Demand strong leadership willing to take bold steps to achieve success
- Create education committees for city, county governments to become partners

Personal Accountability

Primary stakeholder(s): Student
Objective: To hold students accountable for meeting school policies and make them responsible for their behavior

- Confront the countercultural values of education as unimportant and "selling out" to the mainstream
- **Connect the value of education to success in life with maintaining your cultural identity**
- Parental support demonstrating that education is good

A Call to Action

The successful implementation of this initiative requires three components: ***bold leadership, a shared vision,*** and ***creating opportunity.*** These components, instilled in us early on by Dr. Boston, demand that each of us employ more than a modicum of change and a new consciousness of expectation of ourselves, public officials, private corporations, educational institutions, community- and faith-based organizations, and many others. We kept the goal in front of the public: **to bring community consensus for defining answers and implementing optimal solutions to the challenges depicted in the *Profile of Pensacola* for the residents of the City and the County.** Objectively, we tried to interact, include, and incorporate what the public said in this document.

It is now time to act.

This call to action encompasses the four characteristics and what every leader can do to start the process of change in the disparate conditions cited.

Economic Action

Reassess the effectiveness of local, state, and federal employment programs that provide funds to decrease/eliminate economic inequities. Redistribute funds to those organizations that have achieved appreciable and measurable success.

Housing Action

Develop a comprehensive home ownership program to reach out and fund potential homeowners. The program will focus on the financial ability to purchase a home, the budgetary accountability to keep the home, and the personal responsibility to maintain the home.

Health Action

Create a public information and education forum that highlights the importance of health on the quality of life and economic drain. Identify where preventative medical care is available to the uninsured, underinsured, and underserved.

Education Action

Establish functional and authoritative office/committee at the City and County level that links educational institutions to municipal bodies. These offices/committees will network to utilize available resources to improve the quality and effectiveness of local educational institutions.

It is now time to act.

I find that just as with the scarecrow in Frank Baum's classic story [Wizard of Oz], the knowledge of how to build great places already exists out there.

As with the tin man, the heart of passion of people to create better places is there as well.

What has been lacking in far too many places I visit, as with the cowardly lion, is Courage.

Overcoming the fear of change takes the greatest measures of courage.

Dan Burden
Director of Walkable Communities, Inc.

pEnSaCola/US

Profile of Pensacola & Escambia County: A Public Discussion

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