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Diversity in People: Single-Father Families

While a lot of attention and research has focused on single-parent families where the parent is the mother, limited attention has focused on single-parent families where the father is the parent. Single-father families are a small, but growing segment of our society.

In 2003, 39 million family groups in the United States included children, up from 30 million in 1970. However, during that period of time, the proportion of married couple households with their own children declined from 40% to 23%. Single-mother families increased from 3 million in 1970 to 10 million in 2003, while the number of single-father families grew from less than half a million to more than 2 million. From 1970 to 2003 the proportion of single-mother family groups grew from 12 percent to 26 percent and that of single-father family groups grew from 1

percent to 6 percent.

Several factors have contributed to the increase in single-father families. Factors include an explosion in the divorce rate, the introduction of no-fault divorce laws, lessening of cultural bias toward females as the only acceptable nurturer by courts, an increase in joint custody arrangements, greater interest in women to pursue careers and personal goals, and greater attention paid to the wishes of children by the court systems.

Single-father families are a small, but growing segment of our society.

Additionally, more fathers are requesting sole custody of their children in divorce cases and more mothers are choosing not to contest custody. Further, the number of never-married fathers who have assumed custody of their dependent children has increased. A small percentage of children live with widowed single fathers.

Single-father households may be comprised of a father and his children only; a father, his children, and a cohabiting partner; or a father, his children, and extended family members. The most common household pattern is a father and his own children. Hispanic, African-American, Asian, and Native American children are more likely than Euro-American children to reside in single-father families. Single father families today are more likely to have young children present, yet very few receive child support payments from the mother.

While single-father families tend to be poorer than married fathers, they typically fare better economically than single-mother families. Single fathers tend to be older and are more likely to be in the paid labor force than are single mothers.

Single fathers face some of the same concerns faced by all working par-

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ents, such as acquiring adequate childcare. Childcare concerns are most stressful for single fathers with children between ages 5 and 11. But, single fathers face additional concerns not experienced as often by single mothers. Many men feel they are judged, as well as judge themselves, by their success at work. This often leads to strong internal conflicts over the amount of time they devote to work and the need to devote time to their children. Arriving late or leaving early, missing work, and having to reduce work and work-related travel cause stress.



The social system is set up primarily to help the single mother. It seems that many workers are not prepared to deal with a single father. One single father described the reaction he received at the grocery checkout line when he attempted to use the WIC card he had been given to purchase formula for his daughter. The male cashier accused him of falsely using the WIC card because he knew that such cards are not issued to men. Another was chastised by the doctor when he learned that the father was raising the child alone without the mother.

Fathers of adolescent daughters may struggle with establishing and being comfortable with an appropriate level of intimacy. And finding support networks for

single fathers is more difficult than for single mothers.

Single fathers are not the only ones who may experience difficulty when children are raised by their fathers. Given the traditional view of women as nurturers and homemakers, women who agree to give custody to the father frequently are portrayed as unloving, uncaring, selfish, and unwomanly. These negative images may have little to do with the woman's actual reasons for not seeking custody. These may include inadequate finances, child's preference for living with the father, difficulty in controlling children, and physical and emotional problems experienced by the woman.

A greater number of single fathers are able and desire to raise their own children, providing them with nurturing and caring homes. Stronger supports systems should be developed and greater recognition should be given to these fathers and their families.

References:

- America's Families and Living Arrangements: 2003.* (2004, November). US Census Bureau.
- Bloir, K. *Single, Custodial Fathers.* Ohio State University Extension Fact-sheet HYG-5310-98.
- Single, Custodial Fathers.* <http://singleparentnetwork.com/Articles/Detailed/135.html>.
- Cripe, S. *Man of the House.* <http://www.fathermag.com/902/single>.

Quotes that Reflect Diverse Religions

Bahá'í

The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens.

Bahá'u'lláh

Buddhism

The Four Noble Truths

*Suffering is universal.
Suffering is caused by ignorance.
Ignorance can be overcome.
The way is the Eightfold Path.*

Christianity

Jesus' words: *If you love Me you will keep My commandments.*

John 14:15

Whatever you do to the least of My brothers and sisters you do to Me.

Matthew 25:40

Hinduism

That man attains Peace who lives devoid of longing, free from all desires, and without the feeling of "I" and "mine."

Islam

We believe in God and that which is revealed to us: in what was revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the tribes: to Moses and Jesus and other prophets by their Lord. We make no distinction among any of them, and to God we have committed ourselves.

Qur'an 2:136

Janism

All life is bound together by mutual support and interdependence.

Judaism

Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One.

The Sh'ma

Sikhism

(There is) One Supreme Being; Truth Eternal is the Name; Creator of All; Fearless; Without Rancour; Timeless Form; Beyond (the realm of) Incarnation; Self Existent; Revealed through Divine Grace.

Mool Mantra

Zoroastrianism

To think a good thought, to speak a good word, to do a good deed is the best. Everlasting happiness to him who is righteous.

Yasna 28:11

Diversity Activity—February is Black History Month

February is Black History Month. Test your knowledge of African American history. Circle the correct answer.

- African Americans represent approximately what percentage of the United States population?
 - 5%
 - 13%
 - 28%
 - 45%
- Who was the first Black astronaut to make a space flight?
 - Mae Jemison
 - Ronald McNair
 - Guion Buford
 - Gerrard Jones
- Next to Michael Jordan, who has the second-highest NBA scoring average?
 - Magic Johnson
 - Julius Erving
 - Wilt Chamberlain
 - Jackie Robinson
- In what year was the Martin Luther King, Jr. federal holiday first observed?
 - 1965
 - 1973
 - 1981
 - 1986
- Historians estimate that during their most popular period in the latter half of the 19th century, what percentage of America's cowboys were black?
 - 10%
 - 25%
 - 30%
 - 35%
- The efforts of Martin Luther King Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement prompted which president to sign the first major Civil Rights legislation of the 20th century?
 - John F. Kennedy
 - Bill Clinton
 - Richard Nixon
 - Lyndon B. Johnson
- What is Gullah?
 - An African American hair style
 - African American cuisine
 - A clothing style
 - A language
- In what year was Martin Luther King Jr. assassinated?
 - 1962
 - 1964
 - 1968
 - 1974
- Who was the first African American justice to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court?
 - Clarence Thomas
 - Ralph Bunche
 - Thurgood Marshall
 - Daryl Dawkins
- Who was the founder of Black History Month?
 - Frederick Douglas
 - Carter G. Woodson
 - Sojourner Truth
 - Rosa Parks

Answers on page 8.

Visit the following Web sites for a wealth of resources related to Black History Month and African-American history.

Black History: Exploring African American Issues on the Web site — <http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/BHM/AfroAm.html>.

Black History Month: Heroes of the Civil Rights Movement — <http://www.infoplease.com/spot/bhmheroes1.html>.

Black History Month Activities (elementary, middle, high, all ages) — http://www.gale.com/free_resources/bhm/activity.htm#freedom.

Diversity Resource—Coming Together: Race in Wisconsin

Coming Together: Race in Wisconsin is a new program that uses video clips to spark interest and discussion among 4-H youth, ages 12-18 on the subjects of race and diversity. A primary goal of the program is to give youth the tools to identify community held prejudices and to encourage positive interaction with people they consider to be different from themselves.

This new program was created in partnership with Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development and Wisconsin Public Television. They received assistance from the Wisconsin Educational Communications Board and the Urban League of Greater Madison. While this program was designed to address the unprecedented demographic changes in Wisconsin communities, the concepts also apply to communities in other states.

Coming Together: Race in Wisconsin consists of three activity modules – “Understanding Personal Cultural Identity,” “Identifying and Dispelling Stereotypes,” and “Adapting to a New Home” (immigration). The modules can be implemented in any order and each will take approximately 45 – 60 minutes with the option of continuing for a longer length of time if you wish. Each module contains a set of video clips to be watched as the basis for discussion and activity.

Each module begins with a Video

Segment Worksheet with the description of the video clip and space for taking notes while watching the clip. Facilitator questions are provided to help youth to process the information learned from the video clip. Additional activities are suggested to encourage youth to apply the lesson to their own lives. Suggestions for the facilitator and Web sites for additional information are included.



The program guide and video are available free of charge. Go to: <http://www.wpt.org/comingtogether/>.



**“An actress can only play a women. I’m an actor. I can play anything.”
~Whoopi Goldberg**

Women World Head of States

The top political leadership positions in many countries around the world are held by women. Listed below are current and very recent leaders.

Presidents and Prime Ministers

Bangladesh	<i>Khalda Zia</i>	Since 2001
Finland	<i>Tarja Halonen</i>	Since 2000
Germany	<i>Angela Merkel (Federal Chancellor)</i>	Since 2005
Ireland	<i>Mary McAleese</i>	Since 1997
Latvia	<i>Vaira Vike-Freiberga</i>	Since 1994
Liberia	<i>Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf</i>	Since Jan. 16, 2006
New Zealand	<i>Helen Clark</i>	Since 1999
Phillipines	<i>Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo</i>	Since 2001
Sri Lanka	<i>Chandrika Kumaratunga</i>	1994-2005
Ukraine	<i>Yuliya Tymoshenko</i>	Jan – Sept. 2005

Governor Generals

Bahamas	<i>Dame Ivy Dumont</i>	Since 2001
Canada	<i>Michaëlle Jean</i>	Since 2005
St. Lucia	<i>Dame Pearlette Louisy</i>	Since 1997

Queens

Denmark	<i>Margrethe II</i>	Since 1972
Great Britain	<i>Elizabeth II</i>	Since 1952
Netherlands	<i>Beatrix</i>	Since 1980

Diversity Around the State—Staying Safe While Consuming Fish: Awareness Education for Philadelphia’s Southeast Asian Community

by *Leona Joseph, Extension Educator Philadelphia County*

Shore anglers who consume fish from the Delaware River above Pennsylvania recommended limits are potentially exposed to high levels of PCB and mercury. A 2003 survey of Philadelphia area anglers found that two-thirds of Vietnamese and Cambodian anglers or their family members reported eating wild fish. Most federal and state fish consumption advisories are issued in English and Spanish. Therefore, many Southeast Asian immigrants are unaware of advisories. Potential health risks of exposure to these contaminants include increased risk of cancer, increased risk of nerve damage and developmental damage in fetus and children.

The Philadelphia County Cooperative Extension’s *Nutrition Links* program participated in a project lead by researchers from Temple University’s Biology Department and the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary designed to deliver educational programs to community residents; utilize a targeted media campaign; and provide print materials to maternal and infant health care providers to increase safe fish consumption among this population. Project partners included the *Pennsylvania Sea Grant*, a project to improve economic and environ-

mental health along the state’s waterways; the *Southeast Asian Mutual Assistance Associations Coalition (SEAMAAC)* whose mission is to enable Southeast Asians to thrive in the Philadelphia Area through maintaining diverse programs and services including health education programs; and Temple University student interns.

Nutrition Links education advisors Deborah Winans and Luz Stella Valencia received training to deliver the program with translators and lead cooking demonstrations utilizing ethnic recipes. Cooking demonstrations involved teaching participants how to prop-



erly fillet and cook wild fish. Three *Safe Fish Consumption Awareness* programs were implemented between September and December, 2005. Approximately 75 women residing within Philadelphia’s Vietnamese and Cam-

bodian neighborhoods participated in these programs.

The program focused on the following major points:

- *Fish and shellfish are an important part of a healthy diet, but some fish and shellfish contain high levels of mercury and PCBs that may be harmful to health.*
- *Eating fish is beneficial but wild fish, in particular, may contain these contaminants as a result of air and water pollution.*
- *If too much wild fish is eaten, these chemicals may build up in the human body and potentially cause health and developmental problems.*
- *Pregnant women, nursing women and children less than 15 years old are most at risk.*
- *Federal and state fish consumption advisories provide guidelines about eating wild fish so that exposures to these contaminants are kept to a minimum.*
- *Besides considering the type, origin and amount of fish that can be eaten, there are ways to prepare and cook fish that also reduce the risks of exposure.* (Adapted from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection 2005 Fish Consumption Advisory, <http://www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/deputate/watermgmt/Wqp/WQStandards/FishAdvis/fishadvisory05.htm>).

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Diversity in the Workplace—How to Attract a Diverse Workforce

By Juan Lopez-Campillo

Now that we know what the 21st century workforce will look like, we must strategize about how to attract this diverse workforce. Below are some practical suggestions for recruiting a diverse pool of applicants.

1. **Begin with a clearly-defined statement of principle.** A diversity mission statement will help focus your goals and direct your initiatives. An example might be the following:

XYZ Company recognizes the importance and value of diversity and is committed to promoting diversity at every level of its corporate structure. One of the main goals of our diversity initiative is to engender and maintain a corporate culture that supports and encourages diversity, such that all employees feel they are fully included and valued. We value highly the perspectives and varied experiences which are found only in a diverse workplace. We believe diversity to be the differences among people, such as race, culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, language and experiences, and we value the different perspectives that diversity of our employees brings to the company.

2. **Emphasize competence-based credentials rather than past experience.** Often times, minorities and women will not have extensive past experience. This fact can be attributed to a number of reasons. For example, a woman who is just entering the workforce after caring for her children for a number of years may not have the same level or type of experience as some of her peers. Yet raising children has likely given her skills and experience that her childless counterparts lack. Accordingly, it is crucial that your company is clear about what qualifications are needed - and how these qualifications can manifest themselves. Be certain that you are not penalizing prospective applicants for lack of past experience when such experience is not necessary for the position or can be demonstrated in other, non-traditional ways. Along those same lines, be sure that the qualifications established for a given

position are really ones needed to do the job and are not ones based on historical assumptions.

3. **Build strategic business alliances.** Develop and maintain relationships with local business organizations that cater to the needs and interests of minority candidates (e.g. people of color, women, etc.). For example, membership in local African-American, Asian-American, or Hispanic Chambers of Commerce will increase your networking base and, thus, increase and diversify your applicant pool.
4. **New approaches to advertising.** Try placing job listings in newspapers that have a diverse audience. Advertising in periodicals whose readership is primarily composed of, for example, women or people of color may allow you to reach new candidates in different communities. It also conveys a message to those communities that your company is committed to diversity.
5. **Recruit from colleges.** Establish formal relationships with schools that have diversity in their student bodies. Importantly, Historically Black Colleges ("HBCs") are an excellent place to recruit minority talent. Most majority colleges also have cultural organizations from which to recruit. Sponsoring internship programs for qualified minority students is another way to attract talented people of color.
6. **Networking.** Incorporate nontraditional networking channels to produce a diverse applicant pool. This can be a critical part of any successful diversity recruitment effort.
7. **Rethink hiring requirements.** Companies often find that unduly strict qualification requirements actually eliminate good candidates while letting in sub par employees. Review your hiring criteria to insure you are not omitting potentially excellent employees because they lack qualifications that, in actuality, have nothing to do with the position.
8. **Get the word out.** Every job advertisement, every brochure, every piece of literature about your company should mention its commitment to workplace diversity.

Source: This is an excerpt from the article *Cultural Differences in the Workplace: Stereotypes vs. Sensitivity* by [Juan Lopez-Campillo](#). The entire article may be accessed at <http://www.laborlawyers.com/CM/Seminar%20Materials/seminar%20materiala548.asp>. Reprinted with Permission from Fisher & Phillips LLD

Diversity Calendar

February 2006

African American History Month

- 2nd *Candlemas* – Christian. Celebrates the presentation of the baby Jesus in the Temple of Jerusalem 40 days after birth.
Groundhog Day – U.S.
Vasanta Panchami – Hind, Sikh. Honors Saraswati, the goddess of learning, wisdom, and fine arts.
- 3rd *Setsbun* – Japan. Bean-Throwing Festival. Marks the last day of winter according to the lunar calendar. Priests or stars at temple throw beans into the crowd, which shouts “Fortune in, Devil’s Out.”
- 8th *Ashura* – Islamic (sundown). Somber day dedicated to the martyrdom of Hussein, grandson of the prophet Muhammad
Nirvana Day – Buddhism. Anniversary of Buddha’s passing away – northern tradition.
- 12th *Lantern Festival* – China, Taiwan. Marks the end of the Chinese New Year celebrations and the first full moon of the New Year.
Tu B’Shevat – Jewish (sundown). Israel’s New Year Celebration for trees.
- 14th *Race Relations Day* – U. S. Holiday to encourage understanding among all races
Valentine’s Day – U.S. Day dedicated to romantic love.
- 19th *Brotherhood/Sisterhood Week* – Christian, Jewish. Sponsored by National Conference for Community and Justice to promote cooperation among Protestants, Catholics, and Jews, and tolerance of all faiths.
- 20th *President’s Day* – U. S. Celebrates the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln (12th) and George Washington (22nd).
- 22nd *Abu Simbel Festival* – Egypt. Day when the light of the rising sun reaches the 180-ft. deep innermost chambers of Abu Simbel, the great temple of Ramses II.
- 26th *Intercalary Days* – Báhá’í. A period of rejoicing, generosity, and welcoming neighbors in preparation for the upcoming period of fasting March 2nd – 20th.
Maha Shivaratri – Hindu. Honors the Lord Shiva, who on this night danced the Tandav, believed to be a dance of creation, preservation, and destruction.
Meatfare Carnival Sunday – Orthodox Christian. Marks the last day of meat eating prior to Holy Pascha.
- 28th *Shrove Tuesday* – Christian. A day to confess sins, day before Ash Wednesday.



March 2006

Women’s History Month

- 1st *Ash Wednesday* – Christian. The first day of Lent, a 40-day period of penance and self-examination.
- 4th *Casimir Pulaski Day* – Poland, U.S. Honors birthday of the patriot soldier who led an unsuccessful uprising against foreign intervention.
- 6th *Great Lent Day* – Eastern Orthodox Christian
- 8th *International Working Women’s Day*. International. Established by the International Conference of Women in Helsinki, Finland to acknowledge contributions made by women.
- 14th *Purim* – Jewish. Celebrates rescue of Jews of ancient Persia from a plot to destroy them.
Holi – Hindu, Sikh. Festival of Color.
- 17th *St. Patrick’s Day* – Ireland, U.S. Remembers the patron saint of Ireland who converted the island to Christianity in 432 C.E.
- 20th *Navruz* – Iran (sundown). New Year celebration, originates from Zoroastrian Persia.
Spring Feast – American Indian. A day to honor planting and the coming and going of seasons, includes prayer, song, and storytelling.
- 21st *Benito Juarez’s Birthday* – Mexico. Celebrates the birth of the first Mexican president of Indian descent.
Feast of Naw-Ruz – Báhá’í New Year.
- 25th *Annunciation* – Orthodox Christian. Remembers the visit of Archangel Gabriel to Mary of Nazareth announcing God’s wish for her to become a Virgin Mother of the Messiah.

April 2006

- 1st *All Fools Day* – International.
- 9th *Palm Sunday* – Christian. Marks the beginning of the Christian Holy Week.
- 13th *Maundy Thursday* – Christian. Celebrates the Last Supper when Jesus instituted the Holy Eucharist.
Passover – Jewish. Eight-day festival marking the liberation of the Israelites from bondage in Egypt.
Buddhist New Year – Buddhist.
- 14th *Good Friday* – Christian. Ends the Lenten season and commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.
Vaisakhi – Hindu, Jain, Sikh. Marks the first day of the Hindu New Year. Birthday of the Sikh nation.
- 16th *Easter* – Christian. Celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
Palm Sunday – Eastern Orthodox Christian.
- 20th *Festival of Ridvan* – Báhá’í. (sundown) Commemorates the 12-day period of formal Declaration of Baha’ullah to his family and followers in a garden outside Baghdad, Iraq.
- 23rd *Easter* – Coptic and Eastern Orthodox.
- 25th *Yom Hashoah: Holocaust Memorial Day* – Jewish.
- 26th *Administrative Professionals Day* – U. S.
- 27th *Gathering of Nations Powwow* – U.S. Native American. A three-day celebration that brings over 500 tribes and nations to Albuquerque, NM.

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Program impacts included increased participant awareness of the dangers of eating wild fish and skill development for safe preparation. Phuon Mak is a Cambodian immigrant who eats fish about three times per week as was customary in his homeland where fish was plentiful in the rice fields, and free. Community workers state that poverty makes wild fish from the Delaware River a popular supplement to immigrants' diets. "I didn't know that before" commented Phuon regarding the risks to eating wild fish. Youeta Yi was seven months pregnant and learned valuable information from the Khmer-language brochure received during the program "The catfish has more mercury. That's why I'll pick the other one". "In the future, I will remove the skin and the head and the black meat" was the take home message for 73 year-old Tran Trinh Thoa. (Quotes excerpted from *Ethnic groups warned about fish*, Philadelphia Inquirer article written by Gauitra Bahadur, December 17, 2005.)

Below are the correct answers to the quiz on Page 3.

Answers to Black History Month Quiz

1. b—13%
2. b—Ronald McNair
3. c—Wilt Chamberlain
4. d—1986
5. b—25%
6. d—Lyndon B. Johnson
7. d—Language spoken along the Southeastern coast of the United States, especially on the Sea Islands off the coast of South Carolina. Gullah is spoken today by ancestors of people who were brought from West Africa to the West Indies and then to America as slaves.
8. c—1968
9. c—Thurgood Marshall
10. b—Carter G. Woodson

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