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Minnesota Community Corrections Association

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February 20, 1979

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Dear Conference Participant:

Enclosed please find a copy of the preliminary report for the Community Conference on Alternatives to Incarceration for the Minority Defendant held November 16-17, 1978, in Hennepin County.

Our next step is to have the planning committee develop recommendations, action steps, and possible solutions. As a participant at the conference, we ask you to read the report, write down your reactions and suggestions, and send them to the committee at: MCCA, 2414 Park Avenue, Minneapolis Minnesota 55404, by March 12, 1979.

The committee will meet March 14th at 10:00 AM in the C-2300 Conference Room at the Hennepin County Government Center. You are welcome to attend this meeting.

Thank you for your continued participation.

Sincerely,

Co-Chairman, Thomas Christian
Director, Minnesota Community
Corrections Association

Richard Draves, Co-Chairman
Director of Indian Services
Minnesota Department of
Corrections



TFC/kam



February 5, 1980

Dear Director:

The Alternatives to Incarceration Action Committee has made a recommendation to the Hennepin County Personnel Department of hiring as classified employees three minority recruiters. More specifically, an American Indian, Black and Hispanic person to do intensive recruitment in their respective communities.

We also recommended that the County make available the following services that would enhance the number of qualified candidates for jobs within the county.

- I. Recruitment
- II. Pre-screening candidates
- III. Introduction to the World of Work
- IV. Job Seeking/Keeping Skills
- V. Tutoring (Written Test)
- VI. Follow through with Candidates

We suggested a possible alternative the county could use in providing the above services -- the use of sub-contracting with respective community based organizations.

The recruiter would accomplish I, II and VI as their primary responsibility.

The total minority staff composition of Hennepin County is estimated as five and a half percent (5½%). There are no minorities in thirteen department. The initial application rate of minorities is estimated at thirteen percent (13%), with a dropout rate of eleven and a half percent (11½%). In spite of the County's recent change to the rule of seven (7), an increase of minority staff is not that significant.

Although we commend Hennepin County in their effort to increase the minority employees, we feel an additional and more concerted step is needed. Therefore our recommendations.

Mr. Tom Dudley, Director of Personnel, requested letters of support from the respective communities to demonstrate there is active support of our recommendations. We are requesting your endorsement and support for recommendations to significantly increase the number of racial minorities in the county system.

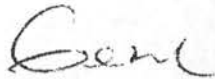
February 5, 1980

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Please write your letter of support to Mr. Tom Dudley, Director of Personnel, A-305, Government Center, Minneapolis, MN 55487. We would appreciate a copy of your letter so we can attach it to our recommendations.

If you have any questions, please contact me at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Eugene D. Buckanga
Alternatives to Incarceration/
Urban Coalition

EDB/eee
Enclosure



PROPOSAL

SUBMITTED TO: HENNEPIN COUNTY PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT

*SUBMITTED BY: ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION COMMITTEE/
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MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55403*

*CONTACT: EUGENE D. BUCKANAGA
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF
ISSUE ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH*

DATE SUBMITTED: FEBRUARY 12, 1980

The Hennepin County Affirmative Action Program is one of the best concerted efforts in the State of Minnesota. Hennepin County's commitment and goal of attaining a 7.5% racial minority staff composition is commendable.

However, upon reviewing the Hennepin County EEO-4 dated June 30, 1979, it reflects a total of 288 racial minorities out of 5,752 full time employees or 5.01%. The report also indicates a lack of racial minority staff in 13 departments, particularly in the county administration and/or appointed county commissioners staff. The report shows no racial minorities in top level administration positions.

In those departments where the clientele is made up of large segments of racial minorities; racial minority staff are under represented. Court Services, for example, has a disproportionate low number of minority staff compared to the number of minority people going through the court system.

The estimated number of minority applicants presently applying for the open positions is 13 percent. However, a high number of the minority applicants do not show for testing and interviews. There is speculation of the reasons or causations for this initial high dropout rate. One is the length of time the hiring process takes. Second is the apprehension minority people experience in taking written tests. (It has been indicated that minority people quite often score lower on written tests or some tests are biased-culturally.) Third, to meet the immediate needs of providing the basic survival necessities, minorities and poor people tend to take the first available job offer and in some cases become underemployed.

We commend Hennepin County for adopting the recent change proposed by Commissioner Sivanich and supported by the Alternatives to Incarceration Committee of adding additional candidates if two or more positions are available. This important change provides an additional opportunity for minority people to be considered for employment.

In spite of the above-mentioned steps to increase the total minority staff composition of Hennepin County departments, we feel an additional step or measure should be implemented to compliment the steps already taken.

We, therefore, recommend that Hennepin County hire three racial minorities, American Indian, Black and Hispanic, to actively recruit potential candidates who meet minimum standards or qualifications of a select group of positions or any departments in which there is an apparent lack of minority staff.

The recruitment program could do some pre-screening of candidates to insure that only those people who meet the minimum standards or qualifications are referred. The Recruiters would also facilitate in the filling out of applications giving an in-depth review of the position for which the candidate is applying. This would be more information than is presently included in the County job announcement flyer.

The recruiters would use already established communication network within their communities, e.g., Indian community "mocassin telegraph", as well as knowing where and what methods are needed to effectively communicate the county's goals and commitments.

The recruiters would follow through with qualified applicants to insure that we have a high retention rate through the hiring process. Thereby, more qualified minority applicants can take advantage of the already established opportunities. The recruiters would provide an overview of the classification duties and responsibilities to potential candidates; provide an overview of the county system and of job security after the probationary period has successfully been completed; fringe benefits; i.e. health, dental, vacation, sick leave, retirement, etc.

It is anticipated the three recruiters would spend a large portion of their time in their respective communities. They would utilize a community based organization as the base of their operations.

It is further suggested to facilitate the effort of gaining more minority candidates the County provide the following services through sub-contracting:

1. Introduction to the World of Work
2. Job Seeking/Keeping Skills
3. Tutoring

Sub-Contracting: Hennepin County Personnel Department could extend "Request for Proposals" (RFP) to the three respective communities; Black, American Indian, and Chicano/Latino CBO's. The RFP's would include an overview of the minority recruitment program and the desired services -- job seeking skills, introduction to the world of work, tutoring (testing) and follow-up; needed to affectively carry out the intent of the program.

Job Seeking Skills: CBO's should have the capability to provide job seeking skills orientation. Quite often minority people fail to fill out completely or correctly the application forms. Training would center on neat appearances at job interviews, being able to express and answer questions in a more articulate fashion, being on time for job interviews, being knowledgeable concerning job classifications, duties and responsibilities, including role playing or mock interviews to point out weak areas. This would prepare the candidate for the interview and inform him/her of all the critical areas in applying for a job.

Introduction to the World of Work: Although this portion of the program may not seem important; it is another important area we feel needs to be included. The basic fundamentals of the world of work need to be

re-emphasized. Some applicants may be recent graduates of training programs, colleges and high school, but may never have an experience in adjusting to daily regular work schedules. That is an important part of how the world functions and operates. This orientation would provide an insight not only into gaining meaningful employment, but retaining employment to insure job security.

Tutoring: Some minority people have scored lower on some tests than non-minorities, as a result, they were not considered for employment. This is true not only for the public sector, but the private sector as well. Therefore, it is suggested CBO's provide some tutoring for preparation in taking the tests and in the actual testing process. The Hennepin County Personnel Department indicated an outdated test could be used for this purpose. The end result would be minority people becoming less anxious, apprehensive and more confident in taking tests.

Follow Through With Candidates: Hennepin County has a 13% minority application rate at present. However, the retention of minorities in following through drops to 1. - 1.5%. It is anticipated through the efforts of recruiters to provide follow up related services to qualified candidates. We can raise that figure substantially. Because of various causations of minority people dropping out; recruiters could resolve most or some of their problems. For example, some candidates need to meet the daily means of survival. These candidates could be referred to Day Labor agencies or other part-time or short jobs to meet their daily needs.

Reporting/Evaluation: It is suggested that monthly reports be submitted by the CBO's to the Personnel Department. An overall evaluation of the program would take place after a pre-determined time period after the program has been in progress.

Although the minority recruitment program would recruit for the entire

county, it is suggested we focus our primary efforts on those classifications that serve a high percentage of minority people.

We therefore suggest the following classifications:

1. Special Program Counselors
2. Chemical Dependency Counselors
3. Eligibility Technicians
4. Social Workers
5. Probation Officers
6. Child Care Workers (juvenile detention/county group home)
7. Correction Officer

PRELIMINARY CONFERENCE REPORT:
COMMUNITY CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION
FOR THE MINORITY DEFENDANT

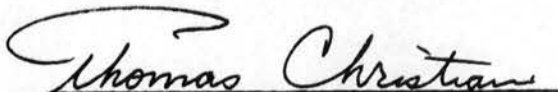
February 1979

Co-sponsors:

Urban Coalition of Minneapolis
Hennepin County Corrections Advisory Board
Minnesota Community Corrections Association
Hennepin County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

INTRODUCTION

This preliminary summary of the Community Conference: Alternatives to Incarceration for the Minority Defendant, which was held in the Hennepin County Government Center on November 16-17, 1978, has been prepared as a means to document the major problem areas which were identified by conference participants and recommendations developed in response to those problem definitions. It was recommended that the planning committee continue in existence as a means to study the conference recommendations and to develop strategies which can be responsive to them. This challenge has been accepted by the planning committee and, with the assistance and support of the conference co-sponsors and, more importantly, the conference participants, that challenge can be met.



Co-chairman Thomas Christian
Director, Minnesota Community
Corrections Association



Co-chairman Richard Draves
Director of Indian Services
Minnesota Department of Corrections

February 1979

On November 16 and 17, 1978, a Community Conference on Alternatives to Incarceration for the Minority Defendant was held at the Hennepin County Government Center. The conference brought together representatives from the various components of the criminal justice system in Hennepin County and agencies and individuals from the community who are involved in the delivery of correctional services. It was designed to examine the problems minorities experience in the correctional system and to develop a strategy for addressing those problems.

The conference was co-sponsored by the Urban Coalition of Minneapolis, the Hennepin County Corrections Advisory Board, the Minnesota Community Corrections Association and the Hennepin County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. A diversity of interests were represented by the 160 conference participants. The participants included the judiciary, probation officers, public defenders, prosecutors, citizens and representatives from the Black, American Indian and Hispanic communities.

Perspectives on the problems of racial minorities in the correctional system were addressed by general session conference speakers. These sessions included presentations on problems associated with the current range of alternatives to incarceration which was available for minority defendants, an educationally oriented presentation on the dispositional process, a discussion of culturally specific programming which emphasized the culturally unique needs of minority defendants, a review of current program alternatives which have been designed as alternatives to incarceration, and a session devoted to identifying ways in which special correctional needs of minority defendants could be addressed.

Issues raised during the general session presentations were discussed by conference participants in small group workshops. These discussion groups were intended to provide an opportunity for participants to examine in greater detail the issues raised in the general sessions, to develop recommendations for improving current community correctional alternatives and to focus attention on the differential needs of the minority defendant in the corrections system.

The final general session of the conference provided an opportunity for facilitators from each of the discussion groups to present consensus reports

developed in those workshops. In that considerable similarity was evidenced in the reporting from each discussion group, the following represents a consolidation of the conference recommendations:

- Discussion of correctional system staffing patterns, including community-based program alternatives, indicated the need to increase the number of minority staff. It was recommended that correctional system staff recruiting and selection procedures should emphasize minority staffing as a priority and, further, that a career ladder program for non-degreed permanent staff should be developed.
- In that confusion and disaffection was expressed regarding the current pre-trial screening procedures, it was recommended that a study be initiated to clearly define the existing procedures and to assess whether or not those procedures contain elements which discriminate against minority defendants.
- The disproportionate number of minority defendants involved in the criminal justice system has led in recent years to the establishment of programs designed specifically for this population. It is critically important that such programs be maintained and, accordingly, it was recommended that existing programs for minority defendants which have proven effective should receive priority funding consideration.
- Current community programs serving as correctional alternatives to incarceration which have not been designed specifically to serve as alternatives for minority defendants were identified as being deficient in meeting minority client needs. So as to more fully utilize these current programs and to enhance their capacity to serve the needs of minority defendants, it was recommended that a program analysis be initiated to determine what factors prohibit a more effective utilization of these programs as alternatives to incarceration for minority defendants.
- The record of minority-oriented community corrections programs indicates that programs designed specifically to serve this population are successful in meeting both the needs of the minority defendant and the objectives of the corrections system. It was recommended

that the development of additional culturally specific programs receive a high priority and, further, that initial attention should be given to exploring the need for a community-based residential program located within the Black community to serve young Black males.

- The importance of inservice training for correctional system personnel at all levels regarding the ethnic culture and life styles of minority defendants was identified. It was recommended that special training programs and opportunities for this purpose be established and available on an ongoing basis.
- The desirability of enhancing communication between the minority community and the adjudication and corrections systems was identified as a means to promote a better understanding of the needs of the minority defendant. By way of example, options discussed ranged from the involvement of individual community representatives as advocates in the various stages of the dispositional process to the development of special minority group committees to serve as a consultation resource to system personnel. It was recommended that a solicitation be extended to the minority community and interested agencies to develop proposals for promoting minority community involvement in the dispositional process.
- The importance of maintaining ongoing communications between the Department of Court Services and community corrections programs was stressed and it was recommended that a formal process be established to accomplish it.

In addition to the above problems and recommendations, two recurring themes were reported by each of the discussion groups. First, participants continually acknowledged that the prevailing sentiment of fiscal constraint will result in an emphasis on improving the existing system and current community-based programs as the first response to addressing the needs of minority defendants. Secondly, conference participants voiced a strong support for continuing the momentum generated by this conference. Various representatives of the conference planning committee indicated that there would

be a followup to the conference and that strategies for pursuing the conference recommendations would be developed.

As a wrap-up to the conference, Ms. Judy Healey, Executive Director of the Minnesota Council on Foundations, presented some personal observations as a conference monitor. The purpose of this session was to provide a brief, objective critique of the conference and to identify some of the underlying themes which kept recurring in the presentations and discussions. As an initial point, Ms. Healey observed that it was apparent a problem existed regarding the use of alternatives to incarceration for the minority defendant and that both representatives from the community and the system acknowledged its existence. However, opinions related to the resolution of the problem varied according to whether or not the problem perspective was community- or system-oriented. She observed that such a divergence was not unusual and indicated that representatives of both perspectives would have to develop a mutual respect and understanding for each other in order that energy and resources could more productively be devoted to resolving the problem. She continued and indicated that some of the discussions and comments were couched in terms of enormous generalizations which consequently prevented conference participants from addressing the realities of the situation--generalizations such as "there should be no prisons" when, indeed, the opinion would have been more accurate were it to have been stated that we do not need prisons as they presently exist. Generalizations are valuable in that they call attention to frustrations and problems; however, she urged that productive and realistic kinds of change could not occur until the more specific dimensions of a problem were identified. Additionally, Ms. Healey recalled several comments regarding the importance of partnership with the system. She added that in her opinion it was critical that a basic partnership be created within the community for without it it would be difficult to establish and maintain a partnership with the system.

In conclusion, Ms. Healey recalled comments by several people indicating they wanted solutions to problems and even one wanting assurances certain things would be done. In conjunction with the prevailing sentiment that there should be a commitment to a followup of this conference, Ms.

Healey suggested that solutions and assurances would only result from a commitment on the part of all conference participants to maintain their interest in mutually addressing the problems and in their resolve to work with each other for that purpose.

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