

Barrio de Langley Park

A Neighborhood Planning Newsletter Published by Action Langley Park
Issue Number 252, September-October 2012

Hispanic Festival

Sunday, September 16

Each year The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County holds a Hispanic Festival on over 40 acres of beautiful parkland at Lane Manor Park (7601 West Park Drive adjacent to University Boulevard just west of the University of Maryland campus).



Photos from a past Hispanic Festival

The festival was founded in 1980 and continues to grow each year. The festival, which draws crowds of 10,000 to 15,000 people,

celebrates the culture and heritage of Latinos and Latinas in Prince George's County and the DC/Maryland/Virginia metro area.

The Festival offers a variety of activities, entertainment and cultural experiences for people of all ages. Activities include the main stage with live entertainment (singing, dancing, more) ethnic foods, an interactive children's area, carnival rides and games, craft booths, a teen area, exhibitors/displays, face painting, music, pony rides, and more. Fun!!

**FREE ADMISSION!
¡ENTRADA GRATIS!**

The performing groups include Grupo Folklórico de Panama representing Guatemala, Embajadores de Folklore representing Bolivia, Grupo Folklórico Los Quetzales of Mexico, and more.



The festival has developed sponsors, and the sponsors have made it possible to cover the costs of a major festival. Among the major sponsors are Radio America, Telemundo, and Capital One Bank. Of course, the hard work organizing of the event has been done from within—by Lydia Ocasio and others in offices in the Langley Park Community Center building and elsewhere.

20 September 2012: Enjoy the Hispanic Festival, but don't forget that four days later, on the evening of Thursday, September 20th, Action Langley Park's open meeting is from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Langley Park Community Center.

ALVIN CRAWLEY TAKES CHARGE

On September 7th, Bill Hite headed north to Philadelphia; on the 10th, interim superintendent Alvin Crawley became the leader of Prince George's County's school system. Let's hope for the best. Interim status can be difficult because some people in the system might think: here today, gone tomorrow, so why worry about implementing his ideas or even letting him know what's going on. So Mr. Crawley will have to be a very clever system manager.

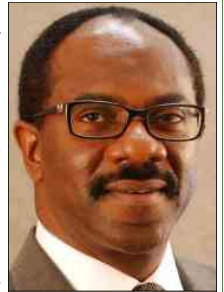


Photo (cropped by BLP) courtesy of PGCPs

He is being paid at a level that assumes he is a good leader: \$215,000 until the end of June 2013. That's about a thousand dollars a working day. Let's hope he more than earns it! It is quality that is important, not dollar quantity.

One worrisome aspect of the Hite-to-Crawley change is the frequent changes of PGCPs leadership. One comments contributor to a Washington Post article: "Superintendents of school districts move around in a manner similar to Major League Baseball managers; and to even less effect. A manager can't control the raw material coming into the business." That is, it takes more than a good leader to make significant changes, so he will need a lot of help. Let's hope all of us can and will help.

What do we know about him? Well, here's a quote from Arlington Superintendent Patrick Murphy, who was his colleague for several years, that gives one some optimism: "He's a great guy. I'm really happy for him. I know he had expressed some interest in pursuing a superintendency and I think he's a great fit and match for Prince George's County." (Quoted in the *Washington Examiner* 8 September 2012) We hope you're right, Mr. Murphy.

DEPORTATIONS, SEPARATIONS

ICE deported just under 400,000 men, women, and children during the 2011 fiscal year and the current pace will lead to about the same number in the 2012 fiscal year. The countries to which more than nine out of ten people were sent are Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. Somewhat fewer than half of the deportees had a criminal record.

How many families were torn apart? "After the Dream Act stalled in Congress, President Obama issued an executive order giving some immigrants the chance to work and avoid deportation for two years. The policy, which applies to those who entered the country before the age of 16, has divided some families. ... [But for many] came the hard news that they were not eligible. Now, friends, siblings and spouses who for years shared the same precarious status find themselves on opposite sides of a divide, one preparing for lawful work or access to student loans, the other bracing for the tap of an immigration official."

Source of quotation: NYTimes 9 September 2012)

The Lies

AU's Professor Allan J. Lichtman, writing in the *Gazette* (7 September 2012), asserts that those favoring gambling in the state have made false assertions about the results of legalized gambling in the state. Proposition 7 on the November ballot will decide yes or no on expanded gambling in the state. Here is a mini-summary; the full article is at <http://www.gazette.net/article/20120907/OPINION/709079705/&template=gazette>.

Lie 1: Gambling will save the horse-racing industry. AJL: Slots were to be sited at tracks, but none is there now. So gambling and horse racing have been decoupled.

Lie 2: Offering gambling is a gift for our children's education. AJL: But any money raised by the state is not dedicated to education.

Lie 3: Said initially, slots gambling is okay, but not casinos. AJL: But a full-service casino is, with voter approval, coming to PG County and probably elsewhere.

Lie 4: Legalized gambling will add vast new revenues for the state. AJL: But advocates have been dramatically overestimating the intake.

Lie 5: We're expanding gambling for the good of the state. AJL: Or maybe the politicians on either side of the current conflict who have received large donations from the gambling stakeholders. Maybe one "good" is the millions spent on advertising to sway the public one way or another.

Leading the Opposition (It's Ugly)

"Give the new television ad asking voters to approve Maryland's Question 7 credit for one thing: It is spot on in accusing the opposition of being bankrolled by an out-of-state gambling company worried about losing revenue at its marquee location in West Virginia. Of course, the ad doesn't mention that the group who sponsored it — For Maryland Jobs & Schools Inc. — is a front for the gambling giant MGM, which stands to reap hundreds of millions if voters allow a sixth casino in Prince George's County." (*Baltimore Sun*, 6 September 2012) This manipulation is almost (or more than almost!) an argument to approve the 6th gambling facility. How dare MGM try to dictate political outcomes in Maryland.

Are You Under the Influence?

Here are ten clues from the National Council on Problem Gambling. Answer yes to one or more, and you may be a problem gambler—so stay away from the tables.

1. You have often gambled longer than you had planned.
2. You have often gambled until your last dollar was gone.
3. Thoughts of gambling have caused you to lose sleep.
4. You have used your income or savings to gamble while letting bills go unpaid.
5. You have made repeated, unsuccessful attempts to stop gambling.
6. You have broken the law or considered breaking the law to finance your gambling.
7. You have borrowed money to finance your gambling.
8. You have felt depressed or suicidal because of your gambling losses.
9. You have been remorseful after gambling.

"Gambling" continues at bottom of next column



REDISTRICTING: WHERE'S LANGLEY PARK?

The redistricting plan for Maryland was approved by the General Assembly and Governor Martin O'Malley in 2011. However, a referendum will be on the November election ballot because a sufficient number of state residents (citizens) signed a petition to have the redistricting plan on the ballot. If a majority of voters cast ballots against the redistricting plan, the process would have to start again. A merry-go-round!

Clearly, the redrawn districts created a classic case of gerrymandering; the district lines wander around the state for political advantage. But Maryland is far from unique; other states practice gerrymandering, although it does seem that our state is especially good at it. In sum, we have legally drawn district lines, but our state laws enable people to challenge them.

The drawn lines impact the residents of Langley Park. The neighborhood is still in District 8 and represented by Chris van Hollen; but soon, it will be in District 4 where Donna Edwards is the incumbent. She is running for re-election and is likely to be returned to Congress. But if the redistricting is overturned, then in 2014 the district in which Langley Park is located may return to 8, stay in 4, or perhaps move to yet another district. But don't worry; the neighborhood will not be moved into Virginia.

An article by Ms. Edwards appears on Page 3, below.

STOP FOR SCHOOL BUSES?

A survey of behavior around school buses in the state reveals that in one day, more than 4,500 motorists failed to stop when the bus had its "arms" out and stopping lights were blinking. So maybe 4,500 drivers were (a) using a cell phone or texting—thus not paying attention to the road, (b) under the influence of alcohol or other drug, or (c) don't give a darn about the lives of children. Scary. Every violation should result in a heavy fine and suspension of the driver's license.



"Gambling" continued from last column

10. You have gambled to get money to meet your financial obligations.

The Gambling Exclusion Program

In Maryland, a problem gambler can declare himself excluded from gambling parlors! Already, more than 100 people have done that. All the problem gambler has to do is go to a casino or the gambling headquarters in Baltimore, fill out a multi-page form, respond appropriately during a short interview, and the exclusion will be in effect for two years—with renewal available. What if the excluded person gets into a casino? Then the person can be arrested!

Gambling Cures!

At the national level, there is a National Problem Gambling Helpline which can be called for free at 800-522-4700. And at the state level, there is an organization called the Maryland Council on Problem Gambling located at 503 Maryland Avenue, Baltimore. (We assume that the Baltimore location is not due to excessive gambling in that city.) The Council can be reached via telephone at 410-375-1421 and email at jfranklin.ipg@gmail.com. The web site is www.mdproblemgambling.com.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF LEGALIZATION VERSUS MASS DEPORTATION IN ARIZONA

Our title is the title of an August 2012 report by Dr. Raul Hinojosa-Ojeda at UCLA. The author asks: "What would happen to Arizona's economy were it to drive out all of its undocumented immigrants? Conversely, what would the impact be if all of Arizona's undocumented immigrants acquired legal status? Our analysis finds that Arizona would stand to see significant gains if legalization occurs, and significant losses if mass deportation became a reality." (The research focuses on Arizona but glances at six other states.)

Hinojosa-Ojeda's report is full of facts worth considering. And the report on Arizona is matched by various authors for different states. Clearly, the anti-undocumented immigrant gang should not be fearful of the Spanish-speaking "invasion" of people of color; rather, they should be fearful of the economic losses due to the deportation of good workers, good students, and good human beings.

Consider taxes. "Our analysis estimates that immigrants on the whole paid almost \$6 billion in taxes to Arizona in 2010, with undocumented immigrants contributing approximately \$2.4 billion."

Undocumented immigrants contributed an estimated \$2.4 billion in taxes to Arizona in 2010.

But why do some members of the "anti-gangs" work so hard to deport those who are undocumented? Some worry about the cost of schools, health clinics, and other

public services. And yes, those who are undocumented do add to the costs of these services. But as Hinojosa-Ojeda points out: "Debates about the economic and fiscal benefits and drawbacks of immigrants typically oversimplify the role that immigrants play in our economy. When one looks more closely, they will find that the impact immigrants (or any group for that matter) have on the economy is multifaceted and complex. Immigrants are not just workers; they are also consumers and taxpayers. The effects of their labor and consumption on economic growth and fiscal health must be factored in as we consider how to address the situation of having a large undocumented workforce."

Yes, there is complexity. And one might wonder about the connection with our economic situation today. Some people point to a House of Representatives whose members have regularly blocked jobs bills in the hope that a worse economy will lead to President Obama's defeat. But perhaps another factor is the harsh treatment, including deportation, of many undocumented residents. Can we multiply the findings for Arizona by fifty so that the economic hurt caused by our failure to pass a comprehensive immigration reform bill has caused a million or more jobs for citizens and legal residents?

The full report is at <http://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Arizona-2.pdf>

ARIZONA'S IMMIGRATION LAW

The very disappointing news from Tuscon is that a federal judge supported the Arizona law requiring police officers and other authorities to verify the status of people whom they suspect are in the country illegally. So the profiling by skin color and other such attributes will continue; "show me your papers" has withstood a key test.

MONEY IN POLITICS: A DANGER TO DEMOCRACY?

Congresswoman Donna Edwards and many other people think that unlimited and anonymous money pouring into political campaigns and influence efforts, as allowed by the Supreme Court's Citizens United decision, defeats the one-person one-vote basis of our democracy. Good thinking. Here is one of her statements on the subject.

Testimony of The Honorable Donna F. Edwards
Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Human Rights—July 24, 2012

Thank you ... for allowing me to testify at this important hearing to examine pending responses to the Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission (FEC)*¹ and related cases. There is no doubt that we have entered an unprecedented era in our political system — an era in which super PACs rule, and "one person, one vote" is more appropriate for a history lesson than a description of our current elections process.



The danger of *Citizens United* was heralded by Justice Stevens in his dissenting opinion. He could not have been more prescient when he warned that it would "undermine the integrity of elected institutions around the nation." Justice Stevens' warnings materialized initially during the 2010 election. But that was just the opening salvo.

At the start of the 2012 Republican presidential primaries, we began to see the true scope and danger of the *Citizens United* ruling. Restore Our Future, a super PAC supporting former Governor Mitt Romney and run by his former staffers, poured nearly \$8 million into Florida; Winning Our Future, a super PAC supporting former Speaker Newt Gingrich made a \$6 million ad buy there. After being targeted by Restore Our Future, Speaker Gingrich concluded, "I think it debilitates politics. I think it strengthens millionaires, and it weakens middle-class candidates." I could not agree more.

This is equal opportunity corrosion — Democratic-leaning groups are preparing to play too, even while doing a little "catchup" with Republican leaning groups. Sadly, the landscape continues to darken as we march toward the 2012 general election. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, 678 groups organized as super PACs reported receipts of over \$280 million and independent expenditures of more than \$145 million already in the 2012 cycle. [The figures are much higher now.]

Putting an end to the influence of secret money on our elections requires a three-legged stool approach. First, require increased disclosure of money in political campaigns; second, allow the public financing of candidates for Congress — if we don't own our elections, who will; and third, amend the Constitution to give Congress the authority to regulate political expenditures. ...

Now, some have questioned the need for an amendment to fix this problem. The Supreme Court has answered that question unequivocally in overturning Montana's century old limits on corporate spending. The Supreme Court has closed the door to reasonable laws to regulate campaign finance — and except for disclosure, the constitutional amendment door is all that remains open. We owe it to the American people to find consensus and walk through it. ... See her speech at this address: <http://www.c-span.org/DNC/Events/Donna-F-Edwards-at-the-2012-Democratic-National-Convention/C3873561/>

PARENTS' EDUCATION: SO WHAT?

Immigrants come to the United States with different socioeconomic backgrounds and levels of proficiency in English. It makes a difference! Premigration characteristics (such as education, work status, and occupation) of parents account almost fully for the test score disadvantage of Mexican-origin children of legal immigrants compared to non-Latino children of legal immigrants.

The level of cognitive stimulation (how often a parent reads to a child, for example) in immigrant homes is significantly related to parents' premigration and English skills, over and above their postmigration socioeconomic status. Families' socioeconomic status before migrating contributes significantly to their socioeconomic status after migrating, but in different ways for different groups of immigrants. Specifically, immigrant parents who previously held higher-status occupations tend to find lower-status jobs after migration, while those who were previously unemployed might be able to find jobs after migration.

Research reveals important aspects of continuity between immigrants' pre- and postmigration resources. Family social privilege or disadvantage often persists and is transmitted to subsequent generations.

Implications? We should care about the education of parents and organize ways to enhance their education—for the sake of the children!

COULD THIS BE TRUE?

From the Dream Activist organization: "On June 15th, Henry was taking a shower when a group of detainees turned off all the lights in the shower, threatened him with a blade, and proceeded to sexually assault him. In shock and fear, Henry returned to his room but the pain got to be too much to bear so he went to report the assault to the guards. Henry was cuffed and taken to the North Broward Medical Center to assess his injuries. The hospital staff confirmed that he had been sexually molested. Since that day Henry's life has been hell. Instead of investigating the incident Broward staff began to mock and ridicule Henry; telling him that they didn't believe him and even accused him of making up the whole incident. Soon after Henry was transferred to the Krome Detention Center, a facility meant for individuals with more severe criminal records. At Krome Henry is kept in almost solitary confinement, his phone access is limited and he has no contact with any other detainees. Henry is a low-priority case. There is no reason for him to even be detained in the first place. Henry was picked up on March 23rd outside of a Mexican grocery store. He said ICE agents just came up to him and detained him, saying a friend from work tipped them off. Henry does not have a record, he just has a wife and young daughter he is dying to get back to!"

Let's hope either the report is incorrect or if correct then a gross error on the part of detention and ICE officials has been committed and they should be held responsible.

KEOKEE STREET SIDEWALK

Construction is taking place with the goal of having a well-maintained sidewalk along Keokee Street. Good! That will make it safer for pedestrians and those on a bicycle.

"Family social privilege or disadvantage often persists and is transmitted to subsequent generations."

Rape ... injuries ... solitary confinement ... phone access limited...

NEWS FROM CENSUS

The Census Bureau release on September 12 reinforces the view that some members of our society are living in situations of great difficulty, and that our society has enormous inequalities.

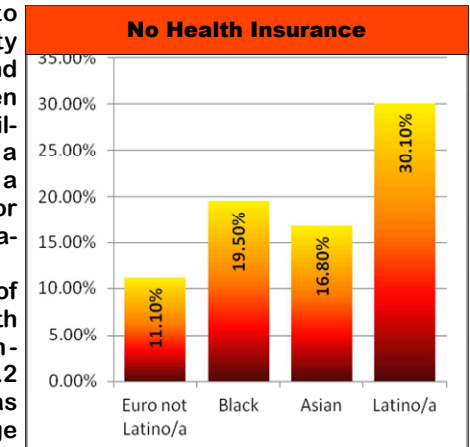
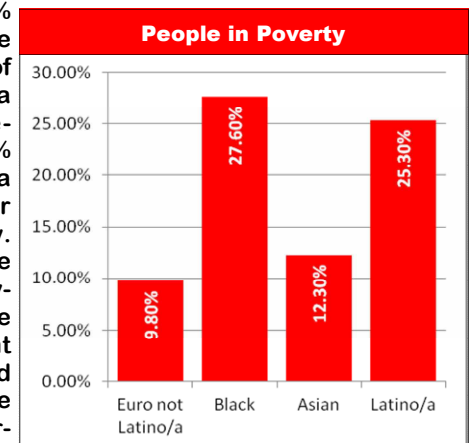
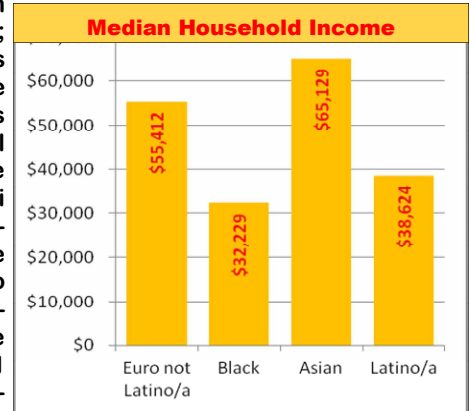
Based on the Gini index, income inequality increased by 1.6% between 2010 and 2011; this represents the first time the Gini index has shown an annual increase since 1993. (The Gini index is a measure of income inequality; zero represents perfect income equality and 1 perfect inequality.) Note that

Black household income is half that of Asian household income. The children don't have equal chances.

In 2011, 6.2% of married-couple families, 31.2% of families with a female householder, and 16.1% of families with a male householder lived in poverty. Again, there are great gaps: poverty is by far the most prevalent among Blacks and Latino/as. Age makes a difference: In 2011, 13.7% of people 18 to 64 (26.5 million) were in poverty compared with 8.7% of people 65 and older (only 3.6 million—thanks to Social Security and Medicare) and 21.9% of children under 18 (16.1 million—which is a great shame and a great danger for the future generations).

The number of people with health insurance increased to 260.2 million in 2011, as did the percentage of people with health insurance (84.3%). But almost one-third of Latino/as were without insurance.

These data cry out for action. Maybe step one should be to make sure that every child in the USA has access to good food, a good education, a safe home, and good health. That will give all of us—all!—a better future.



EDUCATION IN THE U.S.A

The U.S. Department of Education has recently issued a major report on the country's education, *The Condition of Education 2012*. It is online and so the large BLP staff has taken a look. Below are three interesting graphics: (1) The percentages of Whites and Blacks have declined, a reflection of aging plus the growth of the younger Latino/a and Asian populations. (2) The more educated the parents, the more likely the children will get more education. (3) Dropout rates have dramatically dropped among the Latino/a population. Check the report at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/2012045.pdf>.

Figure 1

Percentage distribution of public school students enrolled in prekindergarten through 12th grade, by race/ethnicity: Selected years, October 1990–October 2010

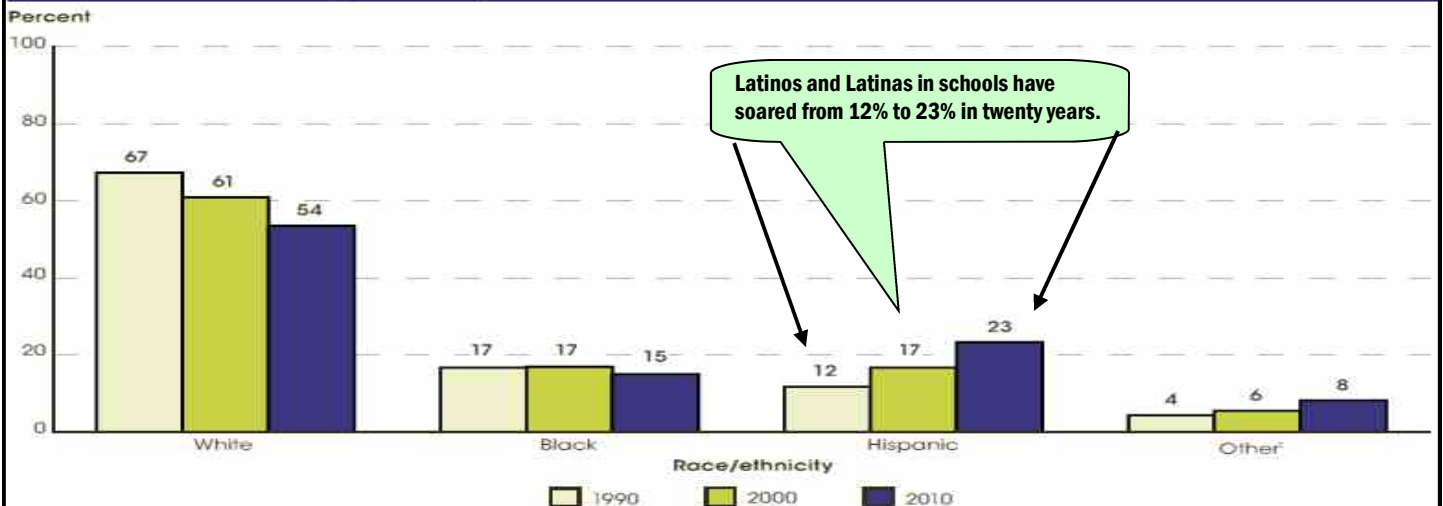


Figure 2

Percentage of 12th-grade students with definite plans to graduate from a 4-year college, by parents' highest level of education: 1990, 2000, and 2010

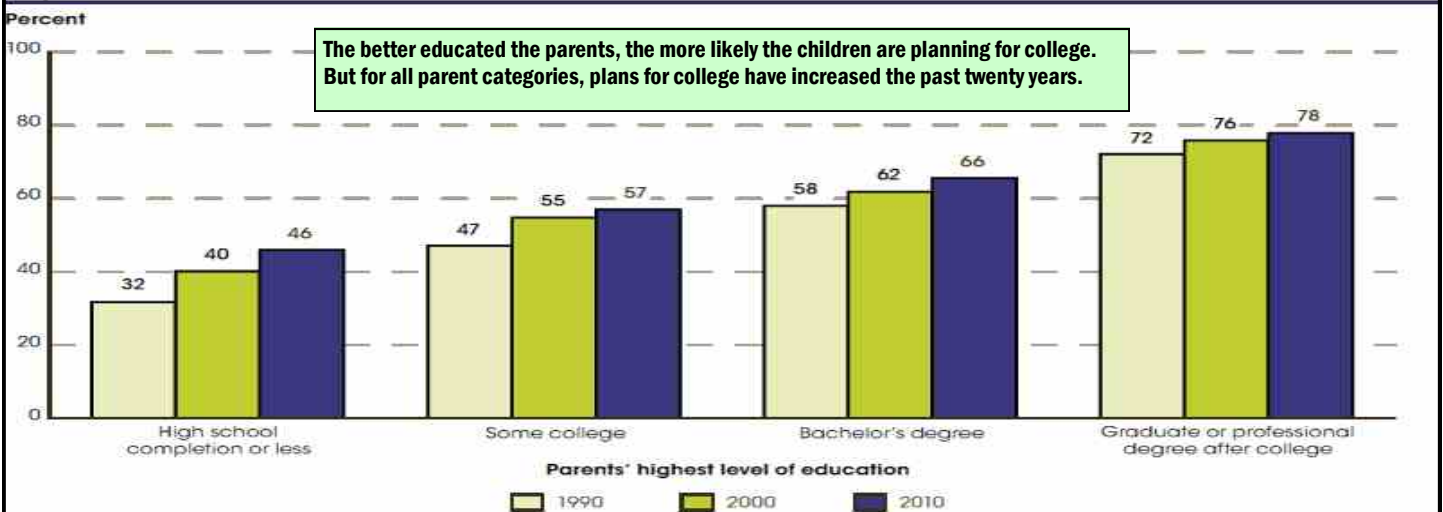
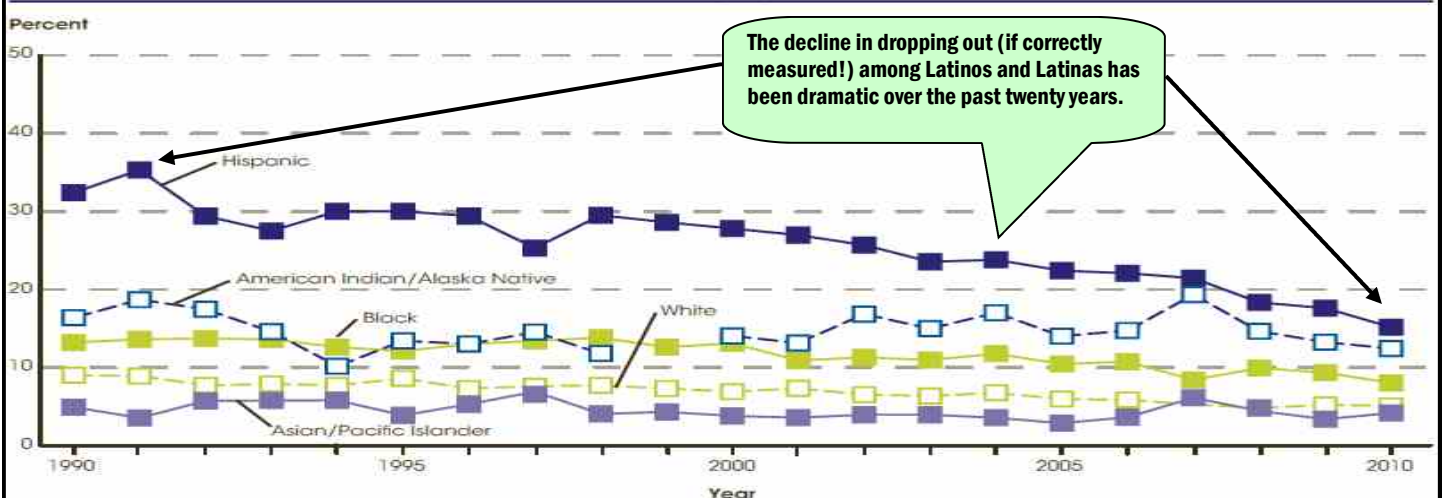


Figure 3

Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds in the civilian, noninstitutionalized population, by race/ethnicity: October Current Population Survey (CPS) 1990–2010



JOB OPENINGS

The Prince George's County, Public Safety Communications Division of the Office of Homeland Security (OHS/PSC) is seeking to establish a register of eligible candidates to fill current and future (a) Emergency Dispatch Aide Grade P14 positions and (b) Emergency Dispatcher I/II positions. Get all the details by emailing pscrecruiting@co.pog.md.us.

TWO FEW JOBS

The unemployment figures are out for August, and at best they are slightly better than earlier in the year. By race and ethnicity:

- Euros, 7.2%
- African-Americans, 14.1%
- Latino/as, 10.2%
- Asians, 5.9%

Clearly, the declines in Europe and China plus blocked jobs bills in the House of Representatives have made significant improvements difficult.

JOB OPENING

Lourdes Sulc, Director of the Langley Park Community Center, has an opening for a staff member for the Center's after-care program. The work schedule is Monday to Friday from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. The ideal candidate should be Spanish-English bilingual, a college student or adult with some experience supervising children and/or with a background related to child development. A candidate's educational accomplishment or job experience will be considered. If interested, contact Ms. Sulc by telephone at 301 445-4508 or via email at Lourdes.sulc@pgparks.com.

WHAT & WHEN



Here we list upcoming ALP activities and other events that are called to our attention. Have an event to list? If so, send information well in advance to actionlangleypark@yahoo.com.

Now until October 21—Maryland Renaissance Festival, 1821 Crownsville Rd., Annapolis. It's mostly on Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. The space includes performances, craft shops, food and drink, and more. It isn't cheap: most adults pay \$17 and kids \$8. But there is a complicated fee schedule. For fees and lots of other information, check <http://www.rennfest.com/>.

September 16: Hispanic Festival. From noon to 6 p.m. at Lane Manor Park (adjacent to University Blvd. about one-half mile west of the University of Maryland). Lots of music, food, children's entertainment, more. More than 10,000 people may show up! Free entry, free music, free children's activities. Lots of food vendors. For information, contact Lydia Ocasio at 301 408-4355.

September 20—Action Langley Park Open Meeting at the Langley Park Community Center, 7 to about 8:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome; ideas always welcome! One focus will be the plans and accomplishments of the Neighborhood Initiative.

September 21—Visit Maryland Day is an open house for prospective University of Maryland (College Park) students and their families from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Visiting families park in the Stadium Drive Garage and go to Stamp Student Union for registration and welcome. Students visit various academic departments around campus and attend sessions in the Student Union throughout the morning and afternoon.

September 22—47th District Family Picnic. From noon to 5 p.m. in Bartlett Park, 4300 39th Place, Brentwood. The entire 47th delegation is hosting. Free food, games, music, and more. Plus we can lobby our representatives!

September 22, et cetera—Free Community Dinner & Food Distribution at St. Michael and All Angels Church, 8501 New Hampshire Ave. in upper Langley Park. From 5 to 6:30 p.m. This is a regular event on the third Saturday of the month. For information, call 301 434-4646.

September 22-25—National Immigration Integration Conference, Baltimore. For more information, go to <http://www.integrationconference.org/>. Note: Participation is not free, so check the costs for a day, a student, etc.

September 26, October 3, et cetera—Crossroads Farmers' Market, this and every other Wednesday afternoon (last market day this year is October 31. Halloween?!), 2:30 to 6:30 p.m., in the parking lot at the south end of the 7676 New Hampshire Avenue building. Lots of fruits and vegetables and live music and more. Sometimes the Amerigroup bounce bus is there!!

September 29—Hispanic Heritage Celebration at the Mount Rainier Nature Center. Music, food and craft vendors, and more. Details TBA.

November 1—Action Langley Park Open Meeting at the Langley Park Community Center, 7 to 8:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome. One focus: Health Check 2012.



November 11: Health Check at the LP Community Center noon to 3:30 p.m. There will be a wide range of health screenings plus information and counseling. Is your heart okay? Are you infected with HIV? How's your lung strength? Your oral health? Et cetera! Everything is free.

2013: May 5 —Langley Park Day, a festival of music, dance, food, information, and especially health (there's a big health fair). The whole world is invited!!! Everything is free except purchases of food or craft.

