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VOCATIONAL TRAINING TO IMPROVE JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINORITY GROUPS

JOHN PATRICK WALSH*

THIS paper presents some reflections on vocational training for improving job opportunities of disadvantaged minority groups. In keeping with the theme of the symposium, emphasis is given to the role of state and local agencies. However, the background of new federal government programs and resources for strengthening local action in the job training field will also be touched upon.

Job training is but one of many approaches for achieving equal employment opportunity considered in this symposium. This fact helps to set the role of training into proper perspective. It is not a cure-all for unemployment problems. Training programs do not in themselves create jobs. Nor do they automatically eliminate discriminatory employment barriers. Job training is simply one of a number of essential tools which can profitably be used to help open up employment for disadvantaged groups.

JOB AND TRAINING NEEDS

The importance of vocational training for minority group members stems from their unfavorable position in today's labor market. Four basic facts need only be mentioned to illustrate this point. First, minority group workers are concentrated in jobs at the lowest end of the skill ladder. A far higher proportion of nonwhites than of whites are employed as farm hands, non-farm laborers, low-skill service workers, semi-skilled operatives, and at related jobs. In the average month of 1963, for example, one-fifth of all nonwhite male workers were nonfarm laborers and 8 per cent were hired farm hands. The corresponding figures for white workingmen were only 6 and 3 per cent, respectively. At the other extreme, nonwhites are grossly underrepresented in the professional, technical, managerial, clerical, sales, and skilled craftsman fields.

Second, the lowest skilled occupations are not only the lowest paid, but they have the highest rates of unemployment. Laborers had the highest average unemployment rate last year—12 per cent—and semi-skilled operatives, low-skill service workers, and related occupations were also well above the national average for joblessness. In contrast, the unemployment rate for professional and technical workers was only 2 per cent, and other white collar and skilled workers experienced less than average joblessness. Overall, the unemployment rate of nonwhites averaged 11 per cent in 1963, compared to only 5 per cent for whites. Unemployment rates for predominantly white minority groups, such as Puerto Ricans, are also excessive. Moreover, even when members of minority groups do have work, they experience involuntary part-time

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joblessness and other forms of underemployment to a much greater extent than other workers.

Third, employment for unskilled and low-skill workers in future years will be increasingly scarce and sporadic. It is this segment of the labor force which will be most affected by automation and other technological change. The occupations which will have the highest growth rates in coming years are those requiring relatively advanced education and technical skills.

Fourth, a very high proportion of minority workers lack the educational attainment and vocational skills needed to move into the technical, skilled, or white collar occupations which offer the best future job opportunities. In 1960, 16 per cent of all nonwhites in the labor force had less than 5 years of schooling; 4 of every 10 had less than 8 years of school. Only one-fourth of the total had a full high school education. Although the level of schooling attained has been rising generation after generation, the complexity of job requirements has also been increasing. There remains a wide gap between the qualifications of minority workers and the kinds of jobs that they must look to in the modern labor market.

The combination of these four adverse conditions highlights the role that training can play in improving job opportunities for minorities. Youngsters need to be equipped with appropriate academic and technical skills to qualify for the expanding technical, white collar, or craftsman occupations. Employed workers need assistance to retrain for steadier, higher-paying jobs and to upgrade their skill levels. And unemployed workers need help in obtaining both training and some means of subsistence while preparing for new jobs.

THE HEREDITARY NATURE OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY

Evidence has now been clearly marshalled to show the critical importance of intergenerational mobility in this country. Witness these facts—in a nation which prides itself with considerable justification—that social and economic status is not a matter of heredity:

In this country one out of every three unemployed persons never went beyond grade school.

Two out of three unemployed persons in this country are high school dropouts.

Incredible as it may seem, one out of every three persons being examined for service in the Armed Forces fails—and one-half of the failures are persons who cannot pass the Armed Forces Qualification Test, a test designed to measure an individual's ability to serve in the Armed Forces—equivalent to the attainment of something less than an elementary school education.

Currently, about one-quarter million people fail the AFQT and the number is expected to go up to about one-third of a million annually in the years ahead.

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In a recent survey of these mental rejectees we found that:

Almost one-half came from families which have 6 or more children.

One-fifth have fathers who are not working.

One-fifth are from families which have been on relief in the last five years.

Seventy per cent of them never went beyond grade school.

Over half of the fathers of the rejectees had never finished the eighth grade. Only 16 per cent of their fathers had finished high school.

And so the picture develops—with minority groups making a sizable contribution to the rejectee group.

The following table highlights the relationship between educational attainment of young people and their parents' economic positions.

Father's Occupation	Per cent of persons 14-24 whose educational attainment is below the national average for their age (1959) ¹
Professional	4%
Managerial	7
Sales	7
Clerical	11
Skilled	14
Semi-skilled	21
Unskilled	37
Service	21
Farmers	28
Farm Laborers	52

The range is enormous (4 to 52 per cent). Among manual workers the proportion of young people, who are educationally disadvantaged and whose fathers are unskilled (37 per cent), is 2 ½ times the corresponding proportion (14 per cent) for those whose fathers are skilled.

Similarly, family income clearly has a critical role in affecting the relationship between father's educational attainment and college attendance thus underscoring the "social heredity" concept. This is how the data look for October 1960.

PER CENT OF PERSONS 16-24 WITH COLLEGE ATTENDANCE²

	Family Income			
	Under \$5000	\$5000-7499	\$7500-9999	\$10,000+
Father did not graduate from high school	13%	23%	33%	41%
Father graduated from high school	45%	55%	71%	74%

1. Census Bureau, Series P-20 No. 112 (Dec. 29, 1961).
2. Census Bureau, Series P-20, No. 110 (July 24, 1961).

The pathway out of the circle of poverty and unemployment is through programs of education and training geared to the needs of the future—programs that break the bonds of “social heredity” and lead individuals to new ways of life. To do this certain barriers must be broken.

VARIED APPROACHES

Granting that job training has a major role in helping minority groups move into the mainstream of productive life, we may next ask which specific approaches are most likely to achieve the best results. Much remains to be learned about the provision of job training for disadvantaged people. We are learning every day that special techniques and adaptation of programs are essential for successful training projects.

To begin with, there is increasing awareness that the kind of skills which many minority workers must acquire are much more complex than superficial occupational techniques. For a large proportion of minority group workers, a program of vocational training must take into account and attempt to influence unfavorable character and behavior patterns resulting from cultural influences and conflicts, physical and cultural deprivation, and adverse family and neighborhood pressures. Attitudes, motivation, and self confidence become a part of preparing for better jobs.

Second, experience under the Manpower Development and Training Act has called attention to the necessity for providing elementary literacy and related academic education to many minority group members before or simultaneous with specialized vocational training. Without such basic education, many workers could not even qualify for regular vocational training courses, which require specified levels of reading and arithmetic for admission. Some groups are handicapped by language problems; for them, language courses are an essential part of vocational training. Obviously, too, teaching methods, curricula, and textbooks require adaptation to meet the job training needs of individuals lacking language, reading, or similar skills.

Third, mention should be made of the host of non-educational needs that must be met to help disadvantaged workers enter and stay in training. The provision of baby-sitters, transportation, counseling on family or health problems—all are a part of vocational training for problem groups. So, often, is training in hygiene, conventional courtesy, and how to dress properly. Such problems offer a challenge to the creativity and ingenuity of local and state vocational training, employment, welfare, and other agencies concerned with this matter. They offer a wide field for forward-looking and varied experimentation to seek out unique procedures tailored to the employment needs of particular components of different minority groups.

With this introduction, I would like now to offer some more detailed thoughts on the kinds of approaches that require consideration in job training for disadvantaged minorities. Because of the wide differences between the train-

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ing needs of different components of minority groups, it may be helpful to consider three categories of people separately: in-school youth, the "dropouts," and adult workers.

IN-SCHOOL YOUTH

Most of the responsibility for preparing the individual for effective participation in the labor market falls upon the regular system of public elementary and secondary schools. It is encouraging to note, therefore, that school systems are increasingly aware that for minority groups this responsibility cannot end with the mere establishment of courses to teach specific occupational skills. The schools are stepping in to help overcome the total range of social and psychological problems which handicap the minority worker in search of jobs.

Not only job skills, but appropriate character and personality development are required for a successful adaptation to the labor market. Early school experiences must help, for example, in the development of good work habits, patterns of cooperation, amenability to supervision, orientation to the routines of steady job-holding, responsiveness to economic incentives and penalties, and career-orientated "ambition." As part of this general orientation, the youth must learn proper speech, dress, and interpersonal relationships. As he advances in high school, the student must somehow learn how to seek and hold a job.

For some groups who have special problems of adjusting to the expectations of employers and other workers in the labor market, this kind of school preparation may be extended even further afield. For example, many youths in rural farm areas must migrate to the city in search of a job. For them, the regular educational program may well include special counseling on such items as how to adjust to city life, how to find a place to live, how to manage wisely on cash incomes, where to get medical and other kinds of help, etc. Teaching the children of migratory farm workers how to use modern plumbing and electrical appliances is as important a part of their vocational training as teaching specific job content. Teaching the use of public transportation systems and city maps may be essential for equipping Indians and Puerto Ricans for industrial jobs.

A second point with respect to in-school youth is the increasing recognition of the need for adequate vocational counseling. This includes early identification of the aptitudes and interests of students, often by measures custom tailored to the cultural backgrounds of the youths involved. For minority groups, counseling also requires active efforts to develop career aspirations and to expose young members of poor, isolated minorities to the widest possible range of job experiences. We cannot expect Negro slum children to strive to become economists or chemists unless they first learn about the content and utility of such distant occupations. Cooperative efforts of school systems and the public employment service have been useful in this aspect of vocational preparation.

Third, it must be accepted that a high school education is almost essential

for any youth who is entering the labor market in the near future. Although a reasonable case can be made to the effect that a high school diploma is not really necessary for many of the beginner jobs for which it is currently required, the fact remains that persons who have not completed high school will face increasing difficulty in the job market. This has many important implications for the educator of disadvantaged youths. He is being called upon to make extra efforts to keep problem youths in school who previously dropped out and became society's problem. Some local authorities have responded to this challenge by new approaches: the adjustment of school curricula to the special aptitudes and interests of the students, incentives to attract exceptionally well qualified teachers to schools in which minority group members are heavily concentrated, special counseling and individual tutoring, and various forms of financial assistance. Significantly, the "War on Poverty" program, recently outlined by the President, includes the provision of part-time jobs to help keep needy students in school.

Discussion of ways to supplement and support occupational training for disadvantaged persons should not, of course, cause us to lose sight of occupational training, itself. It is in this area that the most experience and the most definite answers are available. Here the problems are more tangible—the need for the latest shop equipment, the need for better school books, and so on. Of particular importance to this conference is the well-documented fact that schools for nonwhites are substandard in some parts of the country. Another problem in this area has been the failure of some vocational training to keep up with the rapid pace of technological change, or with changes in manpower requirements. Industrial processes may change faster than school equipment and school teachers. Some rural schools are still focusing heavily on training for agricultural occupations, even though a high proportion of their students must seek nonfarm jobs. Also, some schools accommodating mainly minority groups are said to be giving inadequate emphasis to training for more skilled, technical occupations which the erosion of job discrimination has recently brought within the reach of Negroes and other sub-groups. The solution of such problems is essential to enhance equal employment opportunities.

One should note that the recently enacted Vocational Education Act of 1963 expands federal assistance for updating vocational education and relating it more closely to manpower needs and trends. However, it should be emphasized that responsibilities for preparing youths for the labor market in the regular school system are overwhelmingly of a local or state character. Although the federal government seeks to encourage the improvement of the school systems and provides some financial assistance for vocational education meeting appropriate standards, it is the state and local educational and allied authorities who are faced with the challenge of devising and applying the most effective on-the-spot programs.

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YOUNG "DROPOUTS"

What about youths who do not complete high school or who otherwise enter the labor market without adequate occupational skills? How can state and local agencies meet their responsibilities to such young people? This question is of particular importance for minority groups, for disadvantaged youths have the highest "dropout" rate of all.

If the "dropouts" do not acquire an adequate vocational education, they can look forward to persistent joblessness and under-employment. Unemployment rates vary directly with the education of workers, rising from 1.5 per cent for college graduates to 10 per cent for individuals with only a few years of school. The unemployment rate of 16- to 24-year-old youths who never completed high school is almost double the rate for high school graduates—14 and 8 per cent, respectively. A recent study of nonwhite youths who left high school in 1962 found that fully one-third of those who left before completing their studies had no jobs 4 months later. Moreover, a disproportionately large number of the "dropouts" were holding unskilled or temporary jobs making for a life of sporadic unemployment and chronic underemployment. Unless effective means are found to prepare the "dropouts" for productive employment, society will be shouldered with more serious burdens and adjustments—unemployment and underemployment, the vicious cycle of poverty, the climbing crime rate, mounting "relief" rosters, and a host of related welfare problems.

The point that I would like to underscore is that the job training needs of the "dropouts" cannot be met in the same way as the needs of in-school youth. It is becoming increasingly clear that programs which merely establish ordinary vocational training classes and invite the "dropouts" to return to a formal school setting cannot meet their special needs. New approaches are required, designed to solve the varied social, psychological, and economic problems that led to discontinuing formal schooling in the first place. This involves developing ways to offset adverse attitudes and motivations to create aspirations for further schooling and better jobs, and to gear training to the level of ability and interest of the "dropouts." It involves attention to introducing new environments and social settings in which training can be accepted and supported. Often, youths who entered the labor force without adequate vocational preparation are unable to take training unless they are assisted to meet special financial needs; e.g., they may have family obligations rarely found among in-school youths.

Work in this challenging field has demonstrated the usefulness of intensive vocational and personal counseling to help disadvantaged youths avail themselves of vocational training and employment opportunities; enlistment of family and neighborhood support; individual tutoring; financial assistance; and training in basic literacy and related academic skills as a prelude to occupational training. Since the "dropouts" are unreceptive to institutional train-

ing, the development of on-the-job training programs in cooperation with employers and other organizations in the community is of particular value. Wages paid to on-the-job trainees, the encouragement of co-workers, and the direct relationship between the training and future employment, help to motivate the student in this type of occupational program.

Recently, recognition of the importance of the total environment and outlook of disadvantaged youths in the training process was shown in the President's proposal for a "Job Corps." If this proposal is accepted, young volunteers with employment or training needs will receive work experience and vocational training away from home, in a camp setting where wholesome attitudes can be developed and facilities conducive to vocational training will be available. The theory here is, in part, that youngsters with special learning or motivation problems cannot be expected to show good performance in unfavorable social and physical environments—in poorly lighted and heated rural shacks or crowded slum apartments amid persons unlikely to encourage work or study. The human and physical environment of the camps would be structured to foster character development and good citizenship as well as skill training. A similar approach is found in the Vocational Education Act of 1963, which authorizes and finances projects to test the feasibility of providing vocational training on a residential basis.

UNEMPLOYED AND UNDEREMPLOYED ADULT WORKERS

The third category of minority group workers requiring consideration in vocational training programs are the adults who lack adequate occupational skills to obtain steady work. These include jobless workers, those employed intermittently or at very low wages, and workers who must retrain because demand for their occupations is declining. In the latter group are the pick and shovel laborers, the seasonal farm hands, and other occupational groups in which minority workers tend to be concentrated. Sometimes, the problems of the adult workers are complicated by old age or bad health. As previously noted, they are often complicated by very low educational attainment—inability to read the labels, instructions, and manuals, or to write the bills and requisitions which are an essential part of today's jobs. In the case of Americans of Mexican descent, Puerto Ricans, Indians, and others, there may be language problems which tend to disqualify workers from training and jobs.

The adult group presents perhaps the greatest challenge of all. It is truly a "hard-core" group, lacking the potential adaptability of younger members of minority groups, often bordering on illiteracy, and often hampered by inability to adjust to the dominant American culture. State and local authorities are faced with this key question: Is it too late to equip unemployed or underemployed disadvantaged adult workers with marketable occupational skills? Within this key question there are more specific ones. For example, how can vocational training be supported by measures to retread interpersonal skills,

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to inculcate behavior patterns acceptable to future co-workers and potential supervisors, to shift orientation from outdoor to indoor work, from active to sedentary work, and from manipulation of large tools to handling of small and delicate work instruments? Also, how can reading and writing be taught quickly to persons of advanced years to prepare them for the unfamiliar routines of formal training? It is at the grass roots level that ways must be found to teach the unemployed middle-aged Negro laborer how to hold a pencil properly, how to speak clearly and dress appropriately, to develop the self-confidence required to ask questions and give answers in class, and to develop the habits of regularity required for coming to classes and keeping job appointments.

Also a knotty problem in providing new job training opportunities for disadvantaged adults is the need to finance the cost of training and to provide some means of earning a livelihood for the trainees and their families. Programs which do not meet this basic need cannot, of course, hope to reach the minority group members who need the most help. It is worthy of note that a number of states had taken steps to pay for training and to provide living allowances for unemployed workers even before the federal government moved into this field in the last several years. Some states also permitted workers to enter vocational training courses without losing their unemployment compensation benefits. There has been experimentation with vocational training for public welfare recipients. As usual, the 50 states and the local governments served as laboratories for the development and testing of pioneering programs which were later accepted and enacted by the national government.

FEDERAL ACTION—

THE MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING ACT

No discussion of job training to improve employment opportunities for minority groups can omit mention of some of the new tools made available in this field by federal action. Just recently, for example, the Secretary of Labor issued new rules for apprenticeship programs supervised by the Department of Labor which are expected significantly to reduce discriminatory practices and to create new opportunities in craft occupations. In this paper, however, I will limit discussion to the law which has so dramatically opened new horizons in job training—the Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962 (MDTA).

The MDTA establishes a program for training unemployed and underemployed workers in occupations in which there is a reasonable expectation of finding a job. Weekly living allowances are authorized for unemployed heads of families with at least two years of work experience, and for jobless members of families in which the head is unemployed. Allowances may be received for as many as 52 weeks, with an additional 20 weeks for workers who require literacy and other preliminary education to qualify for admission to occupational training courses. The amount of the weekly allowances equals the average un-

employment compensation benefit paid in the trainee's state of residence (the national average is about \$35) but may be increased by up to \$10 a week under special conditions.

Provision is made for special training programs for youth in need of further schooling or vocational preparation. Reduced living allowances of not more than \$20 a week may be paid to youths in the 17 through 21 age group enrolled in such programs.

The MDTA is administered jointly by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare. The Secretary of Labor is responsible for determining the areas and occupations for training, testing and counseling workers, and selecting eligible workers for training. He also has the task of helping to place individuals who complete their training in suitable employment and of evaluating their progress after completion of their courses. The Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare is responsible for the actual provision of training when it is handled by schools on a classroom-type basis.

The Act also requires the Secretary of Labor to encourage on-the-job training (OJT) programs for training jobless workers or for upgrading the skills of underemployed individuals. Such programs may be proposed by employers, employer organizations, labor unions, community groups and other qualified bodies.

The relevance of the MDTA to the problems of training minority group members is quite clear. I would like to call attention, however, to the flexibility which was written into the law so as to provide adequate services to the "hard-core" unemployed or underemployed. For example, provision has been made not only for actual training, but for intensive counseling, testing, and related services to support the training process. The establishment of separate youth training programs permits the identification of disadvantaged young workers who need special handling, the preparation of curricula and teaching methods tailored to their special needs, and the provision of a variety of supportive services to encourage successful completion of training and successful job experience. Availability of weekly allowances for both adults and young trainees has made it possible for many low income people to take training who could otherwise not afford to do so. Training in basic literacy, arithmetic, and other fundamental educational skills has been provided to supplement job skill training. Use of the training and related facilities of private agencies with special expertise in solving difficult manpower problems or working with problem groups has been authorized to supplement government resources. In many other ways, a flexible approach has been followed to maximize the contribution of the MDTA in ameliorating the Nation's manpower problems.

Perhaps the best illustration of the open-minded and searching outlook which has been shown in administering the Act is the authorization of a wide variety of experimental and demonstration projects. The purpose of these projects is to test, develop and demonstrate pioneering approaches and pro-

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cedures for training, counseling, or otherwise assisting unemployed and underemployed workers with especially difficult training or employment problems. These programs have often involved the participation of private agencies and a variety of local and state government bodies in order to bring the best available resources to bear on difficult situations.

As one would expect, most of the experimental and demonstration projects undertaken to date have dealt with the needs of disadvantaged workers, primarily minority group members. The projects cover experimentation with methods of testing and training illiterate nonwhite workers for semi-skilled job opportunities: using closely supervised workshops to provide on-the-job training to problem youths, developing job opportunities for disadvantaged groups, trying advanced counseling techniques to motivate out-of-school and out-of-work youngsters to adapt to training and employment, retraining displaced factory workers for nonprofessional jobs in the growing health occupations, reducing discriminatory job requirements and a wide variety of other very interesting activities at the frontier of our knowledge in the manpower field.

In many cases, the conduct of experimental and demonstration projects is associated with intensive research programs developed and financed under the MDTA. By means of the broad research program authorized by the Act, answers to a variety of very basic questions about the employment problems of minority groups and other workers will gradually be brought to light.

Let's look at what can happen as exemplified by our experience with experimental and demonstration projects. As I have said, we cannot make jobs; but we can make opportunities. The job crisis confronting the Negro is so grave that I think it worthwhile to tell some success stories focused on the Negro, especially Negro youth. I do not say to you that we have solved the problem or even that we have worked out the way to solve it—but these stories can give us hope that there *will be* a solution—or an array of solutions—if we are constant in our search, bold in our devices and generous in our devotion to the cause of social justice and equal opportunity to reward equal effort.

In Norfolk, Virginia, the branch of Virginia State College, a Negro institution, undertook to train 100 "hard-core" unemployed for a year. The men averaged four children each, they were paid \$27 a week training allowance, and they were required to sign weekly certificates that they earned nothing on the side.

When the training was over, although the defense economy drive had closed off many of the usual Norfolk job opportunities, the dedicated staff of that college (1) placed the first Negro lineman with the telephone company, a man working in high visibility on the pole in the street, (2) placed the first mechanics with the local bus company, (3) placed the first production-line workers with a major automobile assembly plant, (4) placed sheet metal men in a major shipyard.

Now, many of those jobs were there all along, but no one knew it. The

bus company said it had "always" been willing to hire Negro mechanics, but none ever applied—because no Negro had such a job there. Retail stores said they wanted Negro clerks and Negro store guards. There had been none. Only vigorous job development campaigns flowing out of the need to place the trainees uncovered these openings.

There is a particularly tragic kind of American, the minority man who has doggedly pursued his education and then found he could not get the kind of job usually rewarding that effort. This is the Negro college graduate who does not catch on as a teacher in his southern home town—what other white collar job is there for him?—and who drifts north or gives up and settles down in sullen sureness he is rejected by his culture. Our training projects are discovering these men and either helping them acquire new skills or helping them directly to the right kind of job.

The experimental program in New Haven has been especially effective in breaking down the usual but meaningless barriers to entry-jobs set up by employers as mere screening devices—such requirements as a high school diploma, for instance, when that diploma has no bearing on job performance. But the New Haven manpower people have also been adept in opening what they call "real good jobs" for well educated youth and young men and women. Their first training programs for disadvantaged Negro and white youth were for high-status factory jobs—industrial draftsmen, laboratory technicians, industrial X-ray technicians. Young men, many of them Negroes, lacking high school diplomas were successfully trained and placed in heretofore unavailable jobs that had been opened up to them by the removal of the unrealistic diploma barrier. Given the opportunity they dedicated themselves to gaining needed skills and knowledge.

There remains the bottom of the barrel: the hopeless Negro youth marooned in city ghettos, ignorant of the geography of his own city, alienated from the educational system, out of school and out of work. He represents what James Conant calls "social dynamite."

In Chicago, the three major youth-serving agencies are the Y.M.C.A., the Boys Clubs, and the Youth Centers. They have pooled their resources under an experimental contract to prepare 1,000 school "dropouts," most of them Negro, for the world of work.

There is a difference, you see, and a vital one, between being able to do work and being able to get and hold a job.

MDTA ACCOMPLISHMENTS

By the end of 1963, training under the Manpower Development and Training Act was substantially upgrading previous skills or providing for the learning of new skills, for the majority of persons enrolled in training programs. After sixteen months of operation under the Act, a total of 120,000 men and women had been approved for training in 450 different occupations. These various

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jobs represented just about every rung in the occupational ladder. Significantly, for the great majority of persons being trained, the occupations involved a new and improved skill. Comparing the kinds of occupations being learned by trainees with the occupational groups in which they were last employed before entering the training program, underscores the substantial upward shift in skill level involved in the training effort.

One out of every three trainees was authorized for training in a skilled occupation; another one-third are preparing for a white collar job, in the clerical, sales, or semi-professional areas. Together, the proportion being trained for the skilled and white collar jobs is double the proportion of the men and women employed in these areas prior to their entry into training.

Also significant is the fact that better than seven out of ten of those completing training in the programs for higher occupational skills are being placed and are finding steady employment. This is the "focus" of the program.

Nowhere is this laddering-up more evident than in the activities of non-white MDTA trainees. In the professional and managerial, clerical and sales, skilled and semi-skilled occupational groups, nonwhites were being trained in 1963 in larger proportions than their representation among all employed workers. Most significant is the training of over half the nonwhite enrollees in skilled and semi-skilled occupations, compared with only 27 per cent employed in these occupational categories. The following table shows this relationship.

OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING OBJECTIVES OF NONWHITES ENROLLED
IN 1963, AND OCCUPATION OF EMPLOYED NONWHITE PERSONS
IN 1963
(Per cent distribution)

Occupational Group	Nonwhite MDTA trainees enrolled in 1963	Nonwhite employed persons, 1963 ³
	100.0	100.0
Professional and managerial	8.9 ⁴	8.7
Clerical and sales	19.8	9.0
Service	17.3	32.8
Skilled	21.6	6.5
Semiskilled	29.4	20.4
Other	3.1 ⁵	22.6 ⁶

Increasing attention is being given to include the "hard-core" unemployed in the program. Almost half of the trainees had been out of work for 15 or more weeks prior to selection for MDTA courses. Over 40 per cent had never completed high school. The proportion of nonwhites in the group was 24 per cent—about the same proportion that nonwhites constitute of all unemployed

3. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Monthly Report of the Labor Force (Jan. 1964).

4. Occupations in this group are all refresher training or at the subprofessional or technical level.

5. Mostly agricultural.

6. Mostly unskilled.

workers. Almost one-third of the trainees were less than 22 years old and 10 per cent were over 45 years of age.

Of special importance is the fact that most nonwhite trainees are being prepared for the kinds of occupations which are expected to provide the best job opportunities in future years and which represent a marked advance over the lower occupational levels at which nonwhites have tended to be employed in the past. Of course, training of severely disadvantaged workers for more modest occupations in which job opportunities exist cannot be overlooked where necessary to help persons with low learning potentials adjust to labor market demands.

It is of special interest to this symposium that the MDTA assigns a key role to local and state agencies. The Congress recognized that use of the existing network of public schools and public employment offices was essential to the rapid and effective implementation of a large scale program to train the unemployed. Mobilization of state and local resources was backed by the financial facts of life; the law requires the states to pay part of the cost of training and training allowances after June 30, 1965.

State employment service agencies have been assigned major responsibilities for testing, counseling and selecting MDTA trainees. They play major roles in surveying local areas to determine occupations in which training needs exist, in placing "graduates" in jobs, and in evaluating their subsequent progress. The state vocational education agencies have been assigned major responsibilities for arranging classroom-type or institutional training in public and private schools. Several state apprenticeship agencies help the Department of Labor to establish and supervise on-the-job training. Development of training programs also involves consultation with local advisory committees which include labor, management and other representatives.

The point of this state and local participation is the wide range of initiative which it permits, the elbowroom for experimentation. No state or local organization need sit back and wait for final answers from Washington; it can start developing and initiating practical and forward-looking projects to help solve training and employment difficulties. This federal-state partnership will help make the manpower development and training program an effective and key part of the total fabric of national policies and programs for improving and conserving our human resources.