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A CITY OF CHANGE: These structures, a new building next to an old one; a mural on Blackshear Elementary School; and Project Row House showcase the growing transformation of the African-American community.

Inside:



INSIDE: A GENEROUS SERVING: IT staff and other members of the campus community enjoy a Thanksgiving lunch, which benefited the United Way and Target Hunger. See Page 5.

African-Americans in Houston See Less Restrictive Racial Barriers

As some African-Americans in Houston have succeeded in reaching middle-class status, many more are stuck in poverty, according to a new analysis of survey findings by Rice University's Kinder Institute for Urban Research.

In February, Stephen Klineberg, founding director of the Kinder Institute, presented "The Changing Face of Houston's African-American Community: Findings From 33 years of Houston Surveys" at Houston's Clayton Library for Genealogical Research. The presentation was followed by a panel discussion moderated by community activist Larry Payne. The eight-member panel included Rod Paige, former U.S. Secretary of Education; Bob Harvey, president and CEO of the Greater Houston Partnership; Judson Robinson III, president and CEO of

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A Boathouse on Buffalo Bayou

Imagine waking up before 5 a.m., driving 45 minutes to Clear Lake for a 90-minute workout and then heading back to Houston during rush-hour traffic, five or six days a week.

The Rice Crew, the university's rowing club team, did exactly that until volunteer coaches, David Alviar and Mike Matson '12, embarked on a mission to move the team's on-water home closer to the Rice campus.

Working with the Buffalo Bayou Partnership and the Texas Dragon Boat Association, the coaches spent hundreds of hours last fall with other volunteers to construct a boathouse and a dock along Buffalo Bayou on Houston's east side.

"To our knowledge, this is the first rowing boathouse in the Houston city limits ever, let alone the bayou," Matson said.

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the Houston Urban League; and Cindy George, reporter for the Houston Chronicle.

According to the survey, about one-fifth of African-Americans reported having household incomes of more than \$75,000, while almost 40 percent have incomes of less than \$25,000. In sharp contrast, about half of the Anglos said their annual household income was more than \$75,000.

Up until the 1980s, Houston was essentially a biracial Southern city controlled by white men, Klineberg said. Today, Harris County is comprised of 33.3 percent Anglos, 40.8 percent Latinos, 7.7 percent Asians and 18.4 percent blacks.

“About 70 percent of everybody in Harris County today who is under the age of 20 is

generally continue to live in and to perceive a different reality than do Anglos and Latinos,” Klineberg said.

From immigration issues to universal health insurance to party affiliation, blacks and whites do not see eye to eye. Concerning immigration, African-Americans are somewhat less likely than Anglos to believe that immigrants generally contribute more to the American economy than they take. African-Americans are more likely to believe that their community is in direct competition with immigrants for the less skilled jobs.

Anglos in general believe that racism has disappeared. Blacks perceive a different reality. When asked if “blacks and other minorities have the same opportunity as whites in the U.S.

all Americans.

With regard to party affiliation, blacks overwhelmingly remain Democrats regardless of whether they are rich or poor. Anglos and Latinos tend increasingly to become Republicans as their personal income rises.

While blacks and whites might have differing views on social issues, there are signs, especially among the younger generation, that the two groups are coming together in other ways. “Younger Americans of all ethnicities have come of age in a different world, one in which ethnic diversity is a taken-for-granted part of their reality and intergroup friendships are much more common,” Klineberg said. About 65 percent of blacks born after 1976 said they had been in a romantic relationship with someone who was not African-American. This was the case for just 12 percent of those born before 1940.

“Even as younger blacks report that they have personally experienced discrimination,” Klineberg said, “they are coming to believe that the structural barriers of racism and discrimination are less determinative than they were in the past.”

After Klineberg’s presentation, the eight panelists contributed their thoughts on the results of the survey. “We have talked about education and the No. 1 barrier to education being poverty as opposed to apathy,” said panelist Rev. James Dixon of Community of Faith. “Minorities, particularly African-Americans, don’t have a problem with apathy, it’s poverty. We’ve got to address the real constraints of poverty, the causes of poverty and then the cures for poverty. If we engage the best minds in that conversation, we would be getting some place.”

Michon Benson, an English professor at TSU and panel participant, said: “What we don’t want to do is to equate poverty with a pathological situation. Poverty is situational. Unless the community builds an environment of literacy, there is not too much that will happen to turn that situation around.”

Panelist John Wilburn, director of strategic initiatives at the Center for Houston’s Future, added: “The way Houston navigates its future will be a guidepost for the rest of the nation.”

DAVID D. MEDINA

Director
Multicultural Community Relations
Public Affairs



DATA-DRIVEN DIALOGUE: Stephen Klineberg, founding director of Rice’s Kinder Institute for Urban Research and a Rice sociology professor, presented a survey of the African-American community to more than 200 people, who readily engaged in a conversation about the changing landscape of their community.

African-American or Latino, the two groups most likely to be living in poverty,” Klineberg said. “We know what poverty does to your ability to succeed in the public schools, and it is a safe statement to make that if Houston’s African-American and Latino young people are unprepared to succeed in the knowledge economy of the 21st century, it is hard to envision a prosperous future for Houston.”

The black community, said Klineberg, has been enhanced during the past three decades by middle-class African-Americans moving from the North into cities such as Houston and by the influx of highly educated African immigrants.

Even as some blacks become better educated and enjoy a prosperous life, their views of society continue to be different from whites. “The data make it clear that blacks as a group

today,” 64 percent of whites agreed with that statement compared with only 31 percent of blacks. Moreover, two-thirds of all African-Americans agree that, “Black people in the U.S. are still a long way from having the same chance in life that white people have.” Only 31 percent of whites feel this way.

As to what role the government should play in working for economic and social justice, blacks and whites have opposing opinions. “Anglos express far greater opposition than either blacks or Latinos to strengthening government initiatives,” Klineberg observed. As their personal incomes rise, Anglos are less likely to support more government intervention to help the poor, such as universal health insurance. The wealthiest black, in contrast, is no different from the poorest African-American in supporting health insurance for

Boathouse *Continued from Page 1*

“This is a labor of love,” Alviar said. “We are totally happy doing what we’re doing. We believe in what this can provide students that the classroom alone cannot. This teaches them things like unity, support for each other and leadership, which is hard to reproduce anywhere else.”

“Buffalo Bayou Partnership is very excited about the Rice Crew and Texas Dragon Boat Association moving to Buffalo Bayou,” said Anne Olson, president of the Buffalo Bayou Partnership.

“Our goal is to activate the waterway as much as possible, and this fits right in with what we are doing. As time goes by, we would love to work with the Rice Crew in developing a community boating program. We think this would be very popular and help us draw even greater numbers of Houstonians to the bayou shores.”

The students are grateful for the new facility, which is made of two conex containers that the coaches, students and volunteers fused together.

Lovett College senior and team president Thanasis Kouris said that none of this would have been possible without the coaches. “They devote a lot of their time to this team, which is incredible,” he said. “They do it for no pay. They do it because they love the sport, and they’d love to see rowing become a big thing in Houston. They’re fantastic.”

The Rice rowing team was created in 1987 but was dormant until recently. Its former practice location discouraged students from joining and Hurricane Ike put the team out of commission for a few years. Since Alviar and Matson began coaching the team last year, membership has tripled to about 25 members.



EARLY ENCOURAGEMENT: The Rice Crew is hoping to continue to grow the team and entice more community involvement.

Alviar and Matson are not done yet. In December, they plan to compete in the trans-Atlantic race called the Talisker Whiskey Atlantic Challenge in hopes of raising money to build a boathouse on the banks of the Buffalo Bayou. They plan to be the first U.S. duo in four years — and the first Texan duo — to participate in the 2,700-mile rowing race that starts in the Canary Islands near the coast of Africa and ends in Antigua in the Caribbean.

“It’s the Everest of rowing,” Matson said. “It is one of the hardest events in racing. David and I will be at sea together on a 26-foot rowboat for 40 to 50 days rowing around the clock. When one of us is sleeping or eating, the other will be rowing.”

“Because it’s so difficult, it draws attention,” he said. “Our goal is to draw attention for some of our fundraising goals, which include moving from the conex structure into a true boathouse.”

► Follow the team at ricecrew.org and see more at <http://news.rice.edu/2014/10/20/rice-crew-moves-to-buffalo-bayou/#sthash.LdoulaF3.dpuf>.



AT HOME ON THE WATER: The Rice Crew team now trains at Buffalo Bayou, where a boathouse was constructed to house boats and equipment.

DAVID RUTH

Director
National Media Relations
Public Affairs

A Good Day to Read

Members of Rice's Public Affairs office spent an afternoon in January entertaining a group of students at MacGregor Elementary School by reading to them about the history of the civil rights movement.

Annually, the department selects a committee to stage enriching activities and celebrations for its staff. The group decided to end the year with a community service project reading to students at MacGregor Elementary School.

MacGregor, a school close to the Rice campus, is a Title 1 school comprised mostly of black and Hispanic students. Its mission statement appealed to the group as well: "MacGregor instills academic excellence and social values that mold productive citizens for tomorrow."

The Public Affairs team chose a black history theme for the reading sessions. Mary Lowery, assistant director of university relations, read a story about Rosa Parks to second graders.

"The students were thoroughly engaged in an interactive conversation about this civil rights leader and were eager to learn about her story," said Lowery.

Tim Wilson, Web developer, read a story about baseball star Jackie Robinson. "Reading to the students at MacGregor was an

"Reading to the students at MacGregor was an enriching experience for me and for the students. I feel like I learned as much from them as they did from me."

Tim Wilson

enriching experience for me and for the students," said Wilson. "I feel like I learned as much from them as they did from me." David D. Medina, Multicultural Community Relations director, read in Spanish a short biography about Martin Luther King Jr. to a group of bilingual prekindergarten students. "The students were attentive, well-behaved and inquisitive," said Medina. "Houston and the Hispanic community should be proud to have such beautiful children."

Although the stories covered serious situations, the 300 students and the 10 staff members passed the time quickly and reinforced the notion that not only is reading fundamental, it is just plain fun.

JAN WEST

Assistant Director
Multicultural Community Relations
Public Affairs



WELL-READ: Several members of Public Affairs spent an afternoon reading to elementary school students about the history of African-Americans.

Mathematics Transforms Hirsch Elementary School

Every Wednesday evening during the 2014 fall semester, the faculty at Hirsch Elementary School in the Spring Independent School District gathered in the library for the popular course Exploring Algebraic Reasoning in the Revised Elementary School Mathematics TEKS.

Rice University School Mathematics Project (RUSMP) offers the course to schools that want to update their knowledge on how to prepare students for the state test in algebra.

“Changes in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) place more emphasis on algebraic reasoning through the lens of number,” said Carolyn White, RUSMP director of elementary programs.

Teachers across the state are concerned about the increased number of questions on the STAAR that had not been taught at their grade levels. Principal Roosevelt Wilson, a past participant of the RUSMP Summer Campus Program, expressed this concern and requested RUSMP to offer the algebra reasoning course for his faculty.

Wilson made the request because he believes that teachers should share their experiences in



GETTING INSIDE ALGEBRA: Teachers gather to learn how to better prepare students for the state test in algebra.

asked teachers to investigate the revised TEKS for algebra. The teachers also focused on several problem-solving situations. They constructed fractions and used different models, such as area, length or set models. They used different strategies for multiplication and division and modeled decimals concretely and pictorially. They used equations and inequalities to express relationships between two quantities. Teachers received a plethora of resources to use with their students.

“I went from teaching students how to do math to involving them in how to apply math to real life situations,” said Charles Dorsey, a fourth-grade teacher at Hirsch.

Amy Qatanani, a fourth-grade teacher at Hirsch, added, “The Rice University School Mathematics Project has given me a different viewpoint for the delivery of mathematical concepts. It has provided the opportunity to have deeper conversations about math with colleagues, which helps us plan engaging activities for our classrooms.”

▶ Watch a short video that spotlights the collaboration and collegiality of the faculty at Hirsch during a RUSMP class at http://bit.ly/RUSMP_Hirsch. And watch part of an interview with Roosevelt Wilson, at http://bit.ly/RUSMP_Roosevelt.

ALICE FISHER

RUSMP Director of Technology Applications and Integration

ANNE PAPAKONSTANTINO

RUSMP Director

A Feast for the Common Good

Rice University’s division of Information Technology (IT) hosted a Thanksgiving lunch in November and invited the campus to attend. Participants were asked to choose one of three ways to support the event: contribute to the United Way campaign, donate canned goods to Target Hunger or bring side dishes for the lunch.

Beth Tobias from the United Way and Luis Rivas from Target Hunger spoke about the community services their organizations provide. Highlights of the meal included Cajun fried turkey, cornbread dressing, cranberry sorbet and a variety of homemade pies. A delicious lunch, with the bonus of giving to Houston community service organizations, was the perfect way to celebrate Thanksgiving.

In December, IT hosted a campuswide dessert fest to raise money for the Houston Area Women’s Center (HAWC), which provides shelter, counseling and advocacy for people who want to live free from the effects of violence. HAWC is a United Way agency and Tobias was a special guest at the event. IT staff prepared homemade goodies, including Black Forest cheesecake, tiramisu, cinnamon fudge, cocoa snowflake cookies and pumpkin cheesecake, among other desserts. This is the ninth year that IT has supported HAWC, and this year, with the generous support of the Rice community, the department raised more than \$600.

“With your donation, you are helping ensure that women and children escaping violent homes have a safe place to sleep,” said Rebecca White, HAWC president and CEO. “That callers to our hotline reach caring advocates who know how to help. That sexual-assault survivors have a hand to hold in the hospital and a place to turn for counseling. That children testifying in court about unspeakable abuse have a friend and advocate by their side.”

LIZ BRIGMAN

Senior Technical Writer
Information Technology

Helping Children Live Healthier

Recent studies have shown that obesity is affecting a number of children and adolescents by impairing their physical and mental health, school performance and overall quality of life.

A new Web-based health education program, however, is focused on addressing this serious public health concern. Quianta Moore, a scholar in health policy for the Baker Institute for Public Policy, and Ashleigh Johnson, a project manager for the institute, are collaborating with elementary-aged students, parents and teachers to develop a website that allows children to create their own avatar, play games and earn virtual currency, among other activities.

There is more to this website than children may realize: the games and activities incorporate key physical activity and nutrition concepts geared toward health behavioral change. The students play games while learning about important concepts such as overeating, reading and



ONLINE EMPOWERMENT: Children play games on a website that teaches them how to live a healthy life.

recognition of nutrition labels and how to eat a balanced meal. As school budgets for physical and health education are being cut and time constraints on physicians limit the amount of in-office nutrition education provided to children, this website offers a cost-effective, engaging solution for parents and their children. A crucial aspect of developing an effective program for children is to incorporate their needs and interests. Too often health care providers, policymakers and researchers develop interventions without getting buy-in from the targeted community. To be most effective, interventions cannot be developed in a vacuum and must actively engage the targeted community.

With the help of Sankofa Research Institute, led by Assata Richards, the researchers plan to perform focus groups with parents, teachers and students to get input on the website's design, navigation and concepts. Valuable insights gained from focus groups will then be used to develop a health education website.

Once complete, the website will be available for use both in schools and at home to aid in obesity prevention and reduction in elementary-aged students. This website will allow students to learn about health without adult assistance and gain information that can empower them to make knowledgeable, long-lasting decisions about their health. This project is part of a larger initiative that evaluates how technology can empower communities by providing them with health information and increase access to care.

Mathematics Plus Science Equal Better Students

Did you know that the Etruscan shrew, with an average body weight of 2 grams, is the smallest known mammal by mass? Yet this minuscule creature eats an astounding 1.5 times its body weight per day.

In comparison to the Etruscan shrew, humans are giants. Humans weigh an average of 65 kilograms. That is 32,500 times bigger than the shrew. Yet, humans certainly don't eat 1.5 times their body weight, 220 pounds in food each day. Why?

Eighth-grade math and science teachers in the ConocoPhillips/Rice University Applied Mathematics Program (AMP!), the newest teacher professional development program offered by the Rice Office of STEM Engagement (R-STEM), explored this question along with how animals conserve energy. Connections were made across biology and math concepts that will help strengthen students' learning.

AMP! is an exciting expansion of the ConocoPhillips R-STEM partnership, which includes the highly successful ConocoPhillips Rice Elementary Model Science Lab (REMSL), after which AMP! is closely modeled.

To assemble a strong, collaborative cohort of educators, the AMP! program recruited eighth-grade teachers in teams of two, one mathematics and one science teacher from the same school. A total of 30 teachers are participating in the program this school year, and they all are dedicated to diving deeply into the new AMP! mathematic-science integrated lessons targeting eighth-grade middle school students.

The first ever AMP! Summer Institute was held in July 2014 at Rice. Teachers were engaged in an intensive 40-hour training that set the foun-





dition for the yearlong professional development program. The week's activities included constructivist pedagogy preparation, coaching for aligning terminology, managing student misconceptions, technology training and guidance in customized, integrated lessons in mathematics and science.

During the lesson, *LegoMotion: Making Sense of Balanced and Unbalanced Forces*, teachers used fishing line, LEGO bricks, pulleys, wheels and counterweights to create a run similar to a ski lift to explore the TEKS-aligned factors they wished to investigate. The lesson elicited positive comments from the teachers who found the way that the instructors modeled the lessons beneficial. They also enjoyed learning how instruction based on inquiry focused more on student and content.

The institute concluded with a full day at the ConocoPhillips Houston headquarters. Teachers enjoyed a behind-the-scenes tour of the company's Real Time Operations Center and participated in a panel discussion about how mathematics and science are used daily at ConocoPhillips.

The Summer Institute, however, is just the beginning. Over the course of the school year, teachers will meet six times to continue to explore the connections between mathematics and science. They will discover the integration between the two concepts in a special class of chemical reactions known as precipitation reactions and investigate spatial thinking using satellite imagery and topographic maps linked to the Pythagorean theorem. As AMP! progresses throughout the school year, 30 math and science teachers will become better equipped with the skills to enhance learning in their classrooms.

▲ **TEACHERS TEAMING UP:** Eighth-grade math and science teachers work together to explore the connection between mathematics and science.

◀ (Left) A teacher pulls a string on a pulley to create a miniature ski lift.

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AT LARGE



INSIDE THIS ISSUE: The Rice Crew, the university's rowing club, now practices at Buffalo Bayou, where coaches, team members and volunteers built a new boathouse and a dock for the team.

David D. Medina, Director, Multicultural Community Relations, Office of Public Affairs

