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TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD

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PARTICIPANTS:

Moderator:

RON HASKINS
Co-Director, Center on Children and Families
Senior Fellow, Economic Studies
The Brookings Institution

Panelists:

MARY WATERS
Professor of Sociology
Harvard University

DAN BLOOM
Director, Health and Barriers to Employment Policy Area
MDRC

JUAN RANGEL
Chief Executive Officer
United Neighborhood Organization

JANE OATES
Assistant Secretary of Employment and Training Administration
U.S. Department of Labor

CECILIA ROUSE
Member, Council of Economic Advisers

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. HASKINS: My name is Ron Haskins. I'm a Senior Fellow here, along with Belle Sawhill. We run a center called the Center on Children and Families. Belle was out of town today. We're here to mark the publication of a new volume of *The Future of Children*--here it is, it's beautiful. No one knows what the name of this color is, but it's a beautiful color, nonetheless.

In this volume, this particular volume is devoted to examining the increasingly difficult and complex issue of making the transition from adolescents to adulthood in modern America.

As a parent of four children who are either already through this difficult phase, if there is such a thing as being through it, or are in the midst of it, I can give personal testimony to the vital importance of this topic.

My experiences leads me to claim that it was a parent of a transitioning youth who invented the aphorism, life is a series of major failures and minor successes. We mark the publication of each issue of *The Future of Children*, which is a joint project of the Center on Children and Families here at Brookings and the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton, by writing a policy brief and building the public event around the policy brief on one of the most important and interesting issues covered in the volume. Usually we try to select something that has policy

importance. And in this case we've selected second chance programs as a partial solution to the problem of high school dropout. And Dan Bloom and I have written a policy brief on this topic, and second chance programs are also the topic of this particular event.

Our project on transitions grew out of a MacArthur Network that met for the first time in 1999, shows there's some stability in our field, and several people from the network, in fact, probably a majority of authors are from that network. And we want to thank the MacArthur Foundation not only for the network, but also for their support for the volume itself and for this event.

Here's our plan for the event. We're going to begin with an overview of the entire volume featuring one of its editors, Mary Waters of Harvard. The other editors of the volume are Gordon Berlin and Frank Furstenberg. You have Mary's bio, but let me say, as a part-time student of immigration policy, I know enough to know that Mary is one of the most important researchers on immigration in the nation. Her recent books, Inheriting the City and The New Americans are must reads for anyone who wants to understand what happens to immigrants after they arrive in America.

Immediately after this event, Mary is going up to the Hill to lecture members of Congress about their pitiful performance in correcting several obvious flaws in immigration policy. If they listen to her, we'll all be much better off.

Following Mary, Dan Bloom, a Senior Researcher at MDRC, will provide a brief overview of our policy brief on second chance programs. His resume doesn't show this, but Dan holds the world's record for participating in or supervising the greatest number of random assignment experiments on the most important topics, including second chance programs.

We'll then turn to our distinguished panel, and after I introduce them, each will make an opening statement, followed by withering questions from a half baked moderator. And then we'll turn to the audience for some truly penetrating questions. So Mary.

MS. WATERS: Thank you, Ron. I'm very happy to be here and to see our volume finally out and in such a lovely package. And so what I want to do is to give you an overview of how we came to put this volume together and what's in it. And as Ron mentioned, it grows out of the work of MacArthur Network on the transition to adulthood that was an interdisciplinary network of different scholars from around the country who – this is basically our swan song, we're just finishing the network.

And when we began, the idea of the network was that there were these giant changes happening for young adults in American society, and that the institutions and the public policy had not kept up with the changes that had happened to this age group.

There's a big debate in psychology about whether or not you can conceptualize young adulthood as a stage of life the way that

adolescents is. And there's a lot of new work coming out of psychology, as well as on different aspects of young adults lives.

The major changes that have happened to young adults in recent decades are that it has become a longer process of moving to full independence from your family and from other institutions. It's become more complex. It's harder to actually measure and model how people move into adult roles. There's not an orderly sequence the way that there was for a brief period of time after World War II. And so it's a complex period in which people move into and out of independent statuses. And youth are much more heavily dependent on their families of origin during this transition, so that it's more difficult for them to become independent quickly.

So demographers have generally thought about becoming an adult as reaching these various milestones or demographic transitions, completing formal schooling, leaving their parents' home and living independently, working full-time, marrying or partnering, and having a child.

As these milestones, which used to be during a period right after World War II, in the 1950's, especially early and especially bundled together, as these have become less orderly and more elongated, there's also been a tendency for people, both young people themselves and also older people, to begin to finding adulthood in terms of these demographic transitions and also in terms of a psychological self-assessment and

maturity, that you're an adult when you begin to feel like an adult or when you begin to call yourself an adult, and that these demographic transitions, norms are really changing in American society, so these demographic transitions are not as important to people defining others as adults. In the introduction to the volume, we talk about why these changes have occurred. One is that changing gender norms and greater independence for women mean that there's a longer period before people marry and a greater period of independence for women, and women and men are making many of these transitions at the same time, there's not an earlier transition for men than for women.

Increasing schooling is a very big part of this change. So as more people go to college and as college and university takes much longer, that has elongated the period before people reach full independence.

The changing labor market is much more difficult for young people, especially young people with lower educational credentials, but young people at every age, to establish a secure full-time employment, and so that leads to a postponement of independence, and also rising housing prices.

So you actually see different patterns of the transition to adulthood in areas where there's lower housing prices. You can see that people can move more quickly into independence from their family of origin. In places like New York and big cities where the housing prices are much higher, it

takes a longer period of time before people can move out. So here are just a few slides showing between 1950 and 2007, the growth of young people in school, you can see them on 18 to 24 year olds, but even among 30 to 34 year olds and 25 to 29 year olds, there's been an increase in the number – in the proportion of people who are still in full-time school and in part-time school.

There's also been this decline in marriage and this – a later age at marriage. And so, once again, this postpones the period in which young people have created or reached full adulthood.

So when we began to look at these demographic patterns, we also looked at what – the mismatch between the institutions that we have in our society for young adults and the reality of this greater period of dependence.

So one example that we had given for the last decade, which is about to be fixed in the new health care bill, is that young people would go off of their parents' health care insurance, if their parents had insurance, and if they were in full-time school, they could keep it for a little bit longer, but then they would need to find a job themselves that gave them health insurance. And, in fact, young adults were one of the groups with the highest rates of not having health insurance precisely because there is this period of quasi independence and churning in the labor market in which people don't get jobs with benefits. So one of the aspects

of the new health care bill is that young people will be allowed to be on their parents' health care through a period in their 20's.

High schools are designed still in many ways as if people finish at age 18 and go on to universities or go into full-time work. And they are not designed – and go on to kind of full-time adulthood at age 18. And they are not designed in a way that eases the transition into adulthood for young people who are not going on to a university or a community college.

Colleges and universities still – many of them think of themselves as servicing traditional students, people who are being supported by their parents, not working full-time, not parents. Twenty-seven percent of people in two year and four year colleges beat this definition of a traditional student. Most people are non-traditional, they're either working, they're parents themselves, they're combining work and school, they're not being supported by their families as they go through university. Foster care is another example in special education, vulnerable populations. Many of the laws and the programs that support people have a cliff in which they fall off of these supports at age 18 or 21, as if they become completely independent functioning adults, whereas young people who are supported by their families have this long period of ongoing support.

So one of the things that goes through all of the articles in the volume is the difference by social class, that more affluent families are

better able to support their young people through this period when institutions and public policy are not supporting young people, they're hit with a double whammy. They have this period in which they need support, and their families can't give them that support, and we don't have institutions to provide that.

So in the volume, we document the changes. We have a chapter that looks at immigration, which is an interesting phenomena because first generation immigrants who are very highly represented among young adults have the most rapid and early transition to adulthood because they've left their family of origin and come and are working full-time because many of them come as young adults. And second generation, the adult children of immigrants, actually have the longest transition to adulthood because many of them are in school for a longer period of time and immigrant families have more multi generational families that live together, so that immigrants who are 30 percent of this young age group, age 18 to 24, are actually represented among those people with the quickest transition to adulthood and the most elongated transition to adulthood.

We have a chapter by Tom Brock on higher education outcomes, which concentrates on two year community colleges. Brock makes the argument that while this increase that you see in higher education has happened, that more people are going to college, both four

year and two year college, persistence and graduation rates have remained stagnant over time.

So the five year graduation rate for four year colleges is only 60 percent, and the five year graduation rate for two year colleges is only 32 percent. And so Tom Brock, in his chapter on higher education, describes some programs that the network and MDRC tried to institute to look at what happens in community colleges and four year universities to try and increase persistence. And two of the experiments we did in community colleges, and the Opening Doors project used financial incentives to try and keep young people in college and also created learning communities that tried to create more of a sense of belonging to the community college.

They had modest effects. The financial incentives actually had greater effects than the learning communities. But this is an area that really we think is very important because of all students who attend higher education, 37 percent are attending community college.

Sheldon Danziger has an article on labor market changes which document the declining wages for young men, while there's rising women for young women in this age group, but the growth in churning in the labor market, job turnover, as well as the difficulty of getting full-time employment that pays well enough means that there's a longer period in which young people cannot reach financial independence, and while they

can't establish the relationship with marriage declining, there's a strong correlation between those two things.

And they, at the end of their chapter, propose that the EITC could be expanded for young people because most of them are not married. It could be a way, if it was increased for single people, of helping to support people through this period of dependence. There's a chapter on civic participation, and the idea there, Connie Flannigan and her co-author talk about how civic participation is also very class bound, so that more affluent young people are more likely to take part in civic affairs, but also – but this could be an arena in which there could be an institution which actually could function to ease the transition into adulthood, that could create a base for getting skills and community service, and also providing this kind of quasi independence from families. And so this is an institution that we could build up in the future for young people.

We have a chapter on the military which I actually found the most interesting, probably because I knew the least about it. But the military is an institution that's had to cope with this idea of how you help people make the transition to adulthood because it is populated by young adults.

And in the military, there is a much earlier and more stable transition to adulthood because there is good jobs, daycare, health care, all the kinds of social supports that young people don't have outside of the military. And so the authors of the chapter on the military review all of the

ways in which the transition to adulthood is supported for young people in the military as a transition to adulthood, and they argue that the military used to be a hiatus between adolescents and adulthood, and now it actually, because they're trying to get people to stay in for careers in the military, it is now a place in which adulthood is supported and the transition to adulthood is supported.

Finally, the last chapter in the volume is one on vulnerable youth, and it looks at young people aging out of foster care, special education, young people with disabilities, all of whom are supported by public policy and institutions as young people and in the juvenile justice system, and then they hit these age, 18, 21 and 25, in which they fall off of these much more supportive institutions and often times are left without anything.

And so they make the argument that many of these young people who have these problems are covered by overlapping institutions, and there is no coordination across those different areas, and there is also beginning to be recognition that young adulthood is a period in which we need to support people more who have these issues, but there's still a long way to go in terms of both building support for them and also coordinating across all of these different social service providers. Thank you.

MR. BLOOM: So Ron said I've done a lot of experiments in my career, and I have, and I'm going to try a really radical one now, which

is to talk without Powerpoint, and we'll see how disoriented I get, hopefully it'll be okay.

So there's a lot of debate actually about how to measure high school graduation rates in the U.S. And experts even seem to disagree about whether the high school graduation rate has been rising or falling over the past 30 years. And being modest people, Ron Haskins and I decided not to wade into that debate, but instead we try to highlight a few points that we think most people can agree on.

First, a substantial proportion of young people leave high school before graduating, and while many of them do eventually continue their education, often by trying to get a GED, a large proportion don't succeed, so we find ourselves in a situation where somewhere between three and a half and six million people between 16 and 24 years old are considered high school dropouts. Again, experts disagree about how to count them, but either number is quite large. Second, the dropout problem is disproportionately concentrated among low income and minority kids, and it's also true that when more advantaged kids do drop out of school, they're much more likely to get back on track, whereas low income and minority kids are much more likely to flounder and become seriously disconnected from both school and work, and that's, as Mary said, one of the themes that runs through the volume.

The third point is that whether the dropout rate is rising or falling, I think most people would agree that the consequences of dropping

out of high school are much more severe today than they were say 30 years ago, and I think the main reason is that changes in the labor market that have dramatically decreased the availability of good paying jobs for people who don't have any post-secondary education or training.

It's obviously very difficult to have post-secondary education or training if you haven't finished high school. Anyone who follows Andy Sum's research knows that employment rates for young high school dropouts and actually for other youth, as well, had fallen to alarming levels even before the recession started. The other big change over the past 30 years is that rates of incarceration have sky rocketed, and young high school dropouts, males in particular, are much more likely to end up in prison. And spending time in prison has negative implications for many critical life outcomes, not to mention public budgets and public safety.

And then finally, while it's very hard to prove these kind of causal connections, it's striking that as employment opportunities have fallen for young high school dropouts, so have their marriage rates, and rates of non-marital child bearing simultaneously increasing.

So what's being done? On the one hand, you've got reforms in the K to 12 system to try to prevent young people from dropping out, and on the other hand, you've got a set of what we call second chance programs that target specially high school dropouts. And these range from very well known or national programs like the Job Corps and Youth Build and the National Guard Youth Challenge Program to, you know,

literally hundreds of local organizations run by churches, non-profit organizations in the community.

And, of course, when many dropouts, maybe most dropouts decide to try to continue their education, they don't go to a "youth program", they go to a local GED program that may be run by a library, a community college, a school district or some other organization. So one of the interesting trends is that there's sort of this blurring between what you would think of as high school and a second chance program. So on the one side, there are these multiple pathways initiatives in many school districts where the school districts are creating new educational options for kids, which look very different from traditional high schools in many cases.

And then on the other side you've got non-profit organizations like Youth Build, which is a national program known for serving dropouts and targeting the GED, but now runs alternative schools, alternative high schools and charter high schools, so there's sort of this blurring between what used to be very I think distinct categories.

Most of these second chance programs have never been formally evaluated and never will. I mean most of them are very small programs that the most sort of rigorous evaluation techniques wouldn't be probably appropriate. So there's this kind of interesting gap between strong views of practitioners who feel that they know sort of what works in this area and what you can sort of "prove" from rigorous studies where the evidence base is much more limited. And we looked at the results from 11

random assignment evaluations over the years that tested second chance programs, and we characterize the results as mixed. On the one hand, several of the programs substantially increased GED receipt, several of them also increased employment and earnings, at least in the short term, and a few also reduced duress or other measures of criminal justice involvement.

The reason they're mixed is that none of the studies that followed young people for more than a couple of years found lasting improvements in their economic situation or in their living standards.

Now, it's important to note, this doesn't negate the gains that happened in the short term just because in the long term you didn't see those kind of differences, but it's obviously not the result that we would all hope for.

So where does that leave us? As in many areas of social policy, we've got a really big problem. We've got mixed or incomplete evidence, and we've got a lot of strongly held views from practitioners and others about what we should do.

Now, some people have suggested that really the only viable approach is to focus on prevention. They say we need to beef up the education system all the way from preschool to high school to make sure the kids don't drop out, because once they do, it's too late, there's nothing you can do about it. I think we can all agree that it's best if students don't

drop out, we'd all prefer that, and that reforms in the schools need to be a central focus of how to address the dropout problem.

We didn't focus on high school reform strategies much in this brief, but I think we will talk about some of them this morning. But despite these exciting changes in public school systems, I don't expect the dropout problem to be licked any time soon.

So Ron and I suggested sort of a two part approach to try to increase the amount of resources that are targeted to dropouts while simultaneously building better evidence so that we can be sure the taxpayer dollars are well spent. Although there's lots of programs out there now, they don't come close to meeting the need.

So programs themselves are always going to be run at the local level, but we argue that the federal government has an important role in funding and promoting innovation and building and disseminating evidence about what works. So part one of this approach would focus on evaluating and improving and hopefully we're appropriately expanding existing youth programs, so there is a lot out there already. These programs, many of them have fairly well developed institutional infrastructures to support program improvement efforts. And fortunately this whole effort is well underway. The Job Corps was evaluated a couple of years ago, rigorous evaluations of the National Guard Youth Challenge Program, the Service and Conservation Corps are underway, and the

Labor Department is about to fund a rigorous evaluation of the Youth Build program.

And these are all programs that are built around the kind of positive youth development principals that experts believe work best, so hopefully the results will be better than some of what we saw in the past.

I think it's important to note that the purpose of evaluations like this, at least in my mind, is not to give the programs a thumbs up or a thumbs down. I've done a lot of these evaluations over the years, and the results are rarely straight forward.

The idea is that when evaluation results are mixed or even a little disappointing, that we actually make changes to the programs to try to make them work better, and then we go back and test whether the changes have, in fact, improved their performance. There's also, by the way, a sort of parallel effort going on to replicate and expand youth programs that have strong evidence behind them, this is already going on. The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation has been a leader in this effort. And the new Social Innovation Fund, although it doesn't focus exclusively on youth, may also bolster these efforts.

So the second part of our agenda would focus on areas where there aren't as many large scale or existing programs out that there can be tested and improved and expanded.

In those areas, we recommend a set of multi site demonstration projects that would target specific gaps. The

demonstrations would be large enough to actually serve a sizeable number of youth, so these aren't little tiny things, but they would also be structured as rigorous experiments to make sure that we have a legacy of knowledge.

Because high school dropouts are quite diverse, we suggest that the demonstrations might target different subsets of the population. For example, one might focus on young people in GED programs. Half a million people pass the GED each year, most of them are under 25 years old, but studies suggest that they don't do well in the labor market, in part, because few of them complete any post-secondary education or training. But there are lots of interesting efforts out there to build links between GED programs and post-secondary programs, and a group of them could be funded and tested.

At the other end of the spectrum, another gap is for kids who have very low reading and math levels. The good news is that many existing youth programs out there focus on outcomes now and they're very performance driven, that's a good thing. The bad thing about that is, it may make them unwilling to take a chance on an older teen or a young adult who's reading at the fourth or fifth grade level. Those young people are really unlikely to finish their GED in the period of a program, and so they don't help the performance measures.

We've recently been seeing youth programs focused even more on moving kids into college. That may make them even less likely to

focus on a kid who's not even ready for a GED class. So we need to test new instructional and vocational strategies for kids who, frankly, are not going to college, at least any time soon. A third set of demonstrations might target kids who are sometimes referred to as disconnected. These kids are very unlikely to volunteer for all the kind of programs that I've been talking about so far. And the purpose of these tests would be to identify strategies that can successfully engage these young people in productive activities.

The strategies might include paid jobs, financial incentives, opportunities for service. Of course, the reality is that many of these youth, as Mary was talking about, are not actually disconnected, they're connected with systems like criminal justice, foster care, mental health, and so those kind of projects would probably have to be done in coordination with those kinds of systems. These are just three examples, I'm sure others could identify equally important gaps to address.

So we're not naïve. Devoting resources to high school dropouts in a period of very constrained resources is a hard sell, especially because we don't have a lot of proven models. On the other hand, ignoring these young people until they end up in prison or in the public assistance system doesn't seem responsible on either fiscal or moral grounds. The key is to figure out a way to invest while simultaneously building evidence so that hopefully we don't have the same forum again in ten or 20 years. Thanks.

MR. HASKINS: I think now we have a wonderful panel to respond to these presentations, to perhaps bring up ideas and suggestions of their own. Ceci Rouse, who gives new meaning to the term “just in time delivery”, I predict that after the first two panel members have spoken, Ceci will come flying in and occupy her chair.

Ceci is reputed to be one of the smartest economists in the country. I’m a psychologist, I’m on the floor with all economists, so I’m not going to make that claim, but I’ve been working with Ceci for many years, and she’s a brilliant lady, and she’s also an editor of *The Future of Children* in her normal life, when she is not serving in a democratic administration. And we expect her back at Princeton some day perhaps soon to occupy her role there, as well as her role in *The Future of Children*.

Jane Oates is the Assistant Secretary of the Department of Labor for Employment and Training. She formerly worked for Governor Corzine, and also for many years for Senator Kennedy, and has a wealth of experience in education, especially higher education. I might point out to people that get confused about assistant secretaries and deputy and all this, as a person, did everything I could think of, including some that were a little questionable, to become an assistant secretary in various republican administrations. I have developed a theory over the years that assistant secretaries are really the backbone of administrations, and the reason is that they actually have to do stuff, and especially if they come

with an agenda, which, of course, Jane did not, but if they come with an agenda, it's amazing how much power our system gives to assistant secretaries. So every time you need an assistant secretary, pray that they're good.

And then finally Juan Rangel from – CEO of United Neighborhood Organization, which is the largest Hispanic community based organization in Chicago, as many of you probably know and as the volume makes clear, Hispanics, and especially Mexicans, have among the lowest high school graduation rates in the nation, and Juan is reputed to have one of the best programs in the country for convincing these kids to stay in school.

As you can see, we're not unlike the Obama Administration, Brookings is trying to become a pipeline for smart people who come from Chicago to D.C., so – that'll be the day – knows – I've already introduced you, we've said several incredibly clever things about you, one of which was that, as an economist, you give a completely new meaning to the term "just in time delivery." All right. So let's begin with – give Ceci time to catch her breath, so let's go ahead and start with Jane.

MS. OATES: Thank you, Ron, so much. I want to start with some of the things that Dan brought up, if I might. For those of you that aren't familiar with the Department of Labor, the Employment and Training Division, we do run Job Corps and Youth Build and a significant number of local youth programs funded by the Work Force Investment Act.

But I want to talk a little bit about what Dan said about evaluation. We have definitely in the last year devoted serious time and serious dollars to rigorous evaluations. A random assignment evaluation for Youth Build is about to be underway, and a serious evaluation of Job Corps will be developed this summer to go underway next year so that we can really look at the value add of these programs.

But I want to talk a little bit about the resistance of the locals, the people who run these programs, to the term "rigorous evaluation." They are risk averse, they live in constant fear that if someone finds they're not doing something as well as they should be, their funding will be cut. And they really do believe from the core of their being that they are the only safe haven for the students that they serve. It's not about their job, it's about how there's no where else for these students. So part of our convincing them that evaluations are good and rigorous evaluations are better will be a real leap of faith with Capital Hill that they don't react to the first or second or third negative finding and reduce funding for these programs.

Not saying that poor programs should not be shut down, but programs that aren't meeting every high level standard should be given the time and the technical assistance to improve.

The young people who come to Job Corps especially, that's a residential program, as Dan said, the young people who come there come for one of two reasons, either they or their caregivers, family, have

recognized that the environment they're in is not nurturing and they need to get a new environment, a residential environment, or they have left school because they find education irrelevant. So they come to Job Corps and often to Youth Build in a non-residential setting to put some relevance in their education. Every time I meet with these kids, they say now I understand why I needed to learn geometry, I get it. So that relevance is very important to them. They also come to these programs for that support network that many of them can't find at home or in their neighborhoods. Both of these models build on cohort models.

At the Job Corps, you belong to the family that is your dormitory; at the Youth Build, you belong to the family that is that Youth Build cohort. And there are many off limit things, cursing, violence, zero tolerance, you know, in Job Corps. If you attack somebody, you're gone, and that's not the way it is in many of their home environments.

In Youth Build, if you curse, if you attack someone, you're immediately pulled out and counseled about the impact of your actions. But all of that is soft; let me talk for a moment about the hard skills and where I think our programs really need to improve.

It's amazing to me when I look back in democratic and republican administrations that the Department of Labor has put out billions of dollars a year and never insisted that those programs lead to an industry recognized credential or a pathway to a degree. That changed with the appointment of Secretary Solis. If you think about all the billions

that we spent in band aids, without giving kids and young adults clear pathways, it's almost immoral. So beginning last June, every Job Corps – every Youth Build, let me start with them, has to have one of three recognized pre-apprenticeship credentialing programs. Everyone starting this May who graduates from a Youth Build will be a certified pre-apprentice.

That means that our union apprenticeship programs, our registered apprenticeship programs will no longer be able to tell us they couldn't find women or people of color because we're delivering them on a platter, people who are just that, ready to enter those trades as the construction trade improves, hopefully, and creates new jobs.

For our Job Corps folks, as well as our Youth Build folks, we are not only now recognizing that they need to have that industry recognized credential, that pathway to the first job, but we're beginning real connectivity with the local community college.

By the time Secretary Solis' administration is over, my goal is that every Job Corps person who stays for at least a year will have at least one community college credit, at least one, and will have a clear pathway wherever they return home, because many of them leave their home state to come to a Job Corps. They will know the name of the person at their community college who's waiting to greet them and the name of the person at their local one stop who's waiting to greet them.

Because these young people, and not so young, some of them are 26 when they leave Job Corps, you can come in up until your 24th birthday and stay for up to two years, they need to be able to know that when they go back, they're learning and their skill development has to continue. There's no way when they leave a Job Corps site that they can think they're done learning for life, because the jobs that they're entering, just like the jobs that most of us are entering, are going to change over the course of the next year and ten years.

So they have to understand that education and training is a life long pursuit, they have to be ready for that journey, and they have to be equipped. So that means that I probably spent more time than any of my predecessors speaking with community college people, talking about building those bridge programs, because a bridge has to be built from both ends, it doesn't work if you just build it from Job Corps to no where, we have to have a destination and a commitment from both ends. And we have to build a new world of stackable credentials, so that if you have certain credentials, you understand how they build toward a path of at least an advanced certificate or hopefully a two or four year degree.

I think that folks need to leave our Youth Build programs, and remember, they come in, some of them, reading at the third to fifth grade reading level, operating below eighth grade on math, some of them not speaking English very well, not because they're not native English speakers.

We have both examples of people who are native English speakers who have not mastered the language in written communication or oral communication, and we have second language learners. But they have got to realize that the stackable credentials that they're leaving with will lead them to a degree beyond an associate's degree, on into a PhD, if that's where their aspirational levels are. That's been missing in our programs.

Our programs have seen their success as placing them in a job that pays fill in the blank, maybe a job that pays $10 an hour, that's not bad until you try to live in Washington, D.C. on a job that pays $10 an hour, or in New York City, or in Los Angeles, and it goes on from there. We need to make our completers, our graduates in all of our second chance programs understand that the second chance is just getting back on the road, the road continues. So as we begin the evaluations, as we begin demonstrating to you, the taxpayers, that the bridges that we're building are real, are long term, and might have additional cost at the end of them, may have additional cost as these young people need more specific transitions.

Let me give you an example. My Job Corps right now don't use the treo program. I think some of the treo programs are life changing. And some of our discussion with our community college friends have been, how do we bring the treo programs like student support services into the Job Corps, so that that real sense of personal support translates

into personal career and academic support as they move on to their next level.

I hope that if Ron is nice enough to have this panel a year from now, we'll be able to come back with really specific things that we found were building blocks to take these second chance programs to the next level. Thank you.

MR. HASKINS: Thank you very much. Juan. Juan, if you want to go to the mic, go ahead.

MR. RANGEL: No, this is fine.

MR. HASKINS: Okay.

MR. RANGEL: I have some prepared remarks, and then I'm looking forward to your questions. So first of all, thank you very much, Ron, for the opportunity to share my thoughts with all of you on the state of education in the Hispanic community, and specifically the dropout rate that threatens the potential for this immigrant community, and in the process, hopefully give you an insight into the Hispanic community and offer an example of what can be done to prevent this problem.

Let me begin my remarks with the premise that I work under, that is the belief that the Hispanic immigrant families come to this country with the same vigor and determination to get ahead as its immigrant predecessors from around the world throughout our nation's history.

Hispanic immigrants are no different in understanding and accepting the hardship and challenges that are brought about by their

travels through the United States. And although we as Hispanics or Latinos choose to cast ourselves as the now largest minority in the country, we hardly resemble that the term “minority” has come to be defined as or understood to mean. It is my belief that Hispanics do not see themselves as victims of American society looking for a handout in order to prosper, but rather as willing participants in the classic and uniquely American tale of advancement.

It is the story of people who understand that the only guarantee for success in America is the opportunity to pursue happiness through hard work. It is the story of a community willing to pull itself up from its proverbial bootstraps to reach economic security and are willing to meet any challenge that is put before it in order to succeed.

It is the community that I call – that has what I call the right ingredients for success as an emerging middle and upper class. With its core family values, tremendous work ethic, religious beliefs, entrepreneurial spirits, and street savvy, Hispanics are poised to be the next great American success story.

However, our community’s failure to succeed, as evidenced by the current lackluster academic performance of its youth across the country, may come in spite of its innate spirit and drive. The inability of our education system to harness our subspirit and unwillingness to challenge the Hispanic community’s deficiencies, coupled with the low expectations that society has set for yet another minority group, and the

politically correct tendency to coddle this perceived down – community, along with the cultural reluctance among Latinos to challenge itself for academic success, I believe all have contributed to one of the largest dropout rates in the nation, as well as to a pervasive and violent gang culture that threatened to undercut that immigrant potential.

In this controversial book, *The Case Against Immigration, Both Legal and Illegal*, Mark Krikorian argued that the immigrants of today haven't changed from those of yesteryear, but that our country has, and our institutions have, unable and perhaps unwilling to challenge immigrants to live up to our nation's expectations for succeeding, as assimilated Americans, I tend to agree.

But this should not be an argument for keeping immigrants out, but rather it is an argument for challenging and remaking the institutions responsible for educating the next education – the next generation of Americans, Hispanic Americans included. That is why the work that I do with the United Neighborhood Organization, UNO in Chicago, and our charter school network aims to challenge the myth or conventional wisdom of Hispanic immigrants who cannot or will not assimilate. Our schools, the UNO schools, are the foundation of that assimilation process, as all American public schools were intended to do.

Hispanic parents do value education, they do relish the opportunity to witness their children walk down the aisle in full cap and

gown as graduates. They celebrate the accomplishments of their kids with great fanfare in pompon circumstance.

I see it every June, as parents rush to capture the moment on video at kindergarten or eighth grade graduation ceremonies, or in their lavish spending in honor of their daughter's quinceanera, the Hispanic right of passage for girls who turn 15.

But perhaps it is the dreadful economic success under immigrant work ethic that eventually trumps even academic success. Our community is still at the stage of, if my child graduates from high school, not when. The expectations are low because working at the age of 16 is just as good. Culturally, there is no shame in work, it is revered, equal to a high school diploma. What is needed is a cultural shift in our schools, one that supports the aspirations of Hispanic immigrants. By cultural shift, I do not mean a call for diversity in our schools, no instituting culturally sensitive testing, or having language appropriate books or curriculum, all that has been tried and has failed. What I am referring to in a cultural shift is an approach that supports the strong willed community in its drive to succeed.

Hispanic families are ready to meet us where we expect them to be. Hispanic schools need to challenge our community to do better, to demand excellence and not coddle mediocrity.

Schools need to support the family by expecting that parents will be involved with their children, which Hispanic parents do, but lack the guidance for how to spend quality time with them

We must celebrate and honor their determination that drove them to this country, not lament our condition or underestimate our potential. We must create or recreate the American public school with the culture of high expectations, a disciplined and highly structured environment, a clean and orderly school, with uniforms for students, involved parents, a college bound goal in curriculum, an English emerging model, a structure that supports, but continually assesses teacher performance, and an unabashed will to support families towards their assimilation as successful Americans. Well -- is not the Hispanic school, but an American school that has worked for immigrants from around the world throughout our nation's history. It worked for many in the past, and it certainly can work for our newest and largest neighborhood community of today. Thank you.

MR. HASKINS: And now, just in time, Rouse. Thank you for coming.

MS. ROUSE: You're very welcome. I'm very sorry that I was late. There's not much to say. This is a great day. I was a member of the MacArthur Network and one of the editors of *The Future of Children*, so this is fantastic.

One of the really important things about this volume and about this panel in particular, and I think that is embodied in all that has been said, is that as we go forward in our labor department as our economy, we know that skills are going to become – they're already really important and we have no reason to believe that that's going to slow down any time soon. If you look at data on the occupations that have been growing over the past decade or two and the occupations that have been declining, what you see is, the skills that are involved in the occupations that are growing are those that require non-routine analytical skills, non-routine interactive skills, non-routine manual skills. They require you to be able to think on your feet, they require you to be able to problem solve on the job.

The occupations that are in decline are those occupations that require more routine kinds of tasks. And why is that? It doesn't take a PhD to understand that, it's that those are the types of tasks that can be replaced with technology, with a computer, with some other kind of machine.

If you talk to employers, employers bemoan the lack of critical thinking skills among our college graduates, certainly among our high school dropouts or high school graduates. They also talk about the lack of interpersonal skills that students have, as well.

And the thing that's really remarkable in the data is that if you correlate those skills, or at least the people who have those skills with

their education levels, what you see is, they've at least tried some level of post-secondary college. And so those skills, you know, I don't know if it's completely causal, but those skills do seem to be embodied in probably what is a very high quality high school education, as well as some post-secondary education and training, as well.

And as Jane mentioned, we also, and I think this came out in one of our other network volumes, as well, is that as we look at the job – if we look at job tenure, it's not that you're going to have your lifetime job, you're going to go work at AT&T or IBM and be with IBM for 30 years, individuals are increasingly going to have multiple jobs over a career, which means that you have to have those general skills that are applicable in more than one place in order to go from job to job to job, because our economy is evolving, it's becoming more global, you've got to remain nimble, you've got to remain versatile.

And so what does this mean for high schools, what does this mean for our students? It means that they really – high schools and colleges and elementary and preschools, elementary schools, preschools, middle schools, they've all – they've got to become places where students get meaningful skills that are going to valued in the labor market, that allow them to be nimble and to remain versatile. So Jane talked a lot about what the Department of Labor is doing, and one of the things that I think is so interesting, I'm on the Council of Economic Advisers, which means that I get to kind of observe the different agencies at work, and as

we try to sort out, as well, we see this big task ahead, and then how do you sort out who's going to handle what, and how do we make sure that all of the different buckets are filled so that when you put the puzzle together, you have a nice picture, even if not any one agency or any one department is doing everything.

And so this administration I think is really, as Jane talked about, is really pushing the Department of Labor and the Department of Labor programs to be – having more of that educational skills training content and to be – make sure that that – the training that is received there is meaningful.

With the employer recognized credentials, it is a marvel to be in a room with Jane Oates and Martha Canter from the Department of Education and to watch these two women work together in a way that probably is unprecedented, to see the collaboration between the Department of Labor and Department of Education in trying to make sure we get this right and that they're all aligned. But one of the things that's evolving a little bit, and I don't know if this is intentional or not, is the Department of Labor is taking a little bit more ownership on those programs that are kind of the second chance programs, where there might be more – the Department of Labor really has a compared advantage on the employer relationships. I think they're newer to the relationships within educational institutions, and so they're taking a little bit more of a lead on the second chance programs.

Department of Education is taking a bit more of a lead on the keep kids in school and the retention in school types of strategies. And I think – this doesn't mean that there's no – never the – shall meet, but I think that it means that they're just developing where their strengths are going to be and how we're going to put this picture together.

So Jane talked a little bit about what's happening in the Department of Labor, so I thought I would talk a little bit more about what's happening in the Department of Education.

So, first of all, I will get to ESCA in just a second, but first of all, you know, this is a Secretary of Education that is most concerned about those schools which are just chronically failing. So when we get to the high school level, we're talking about those dropout factories, but there are elementary and middle schools, as well, that just have really unacceptably low levels of achievement. And as part of the Recovery Act last year, there was $3.5 billion that was allocated to what are called School Turnaround Grants, and these are grants that are first pushed as states and then are pushed to local school districts, where they're meant to institute one of four really, you know, serious reform models, either you're turning around the school, you're firing the principal and a lot of the teachers, or you're restructuring the school, and I think they call this restart model, you're restructuring the school so that you're having somebody else come in and run the school, you're closing down the school all together, or you're adopting some other very serious reform

where you say, look, the way we've been doing it is just not working, and we're not just going to tinker, adopt some new little program that might help around the edges, but we're really going to make a fundamental change in the school.

So that's $3.5 billion, those dollars – there are 26 states; I actually went online yesterday to check out what New Jersey thinks it's going to be doing with its dollars, and so that's serious money. That is a little bit of the – that's also finding its way into elementary and secondary education, as well, but this is one of the precursors.

In the President's FY 2010 budget, also there's a high school graduation initiative. This is $50 million, which is also a grant program to scale up innovative programs that are aimed at keeping kids in school, also alternative high schools. We all recognize that the traditional high school, however reformed it might be, is not going to serve all students well, that there need to be alternative high schools.

Students need to be engaged, they need to be met where they are, and we – so we need to find alternative ways to accelerate their learning. There's $100 million in the President's FY '11 budget for career pathways and to get students into – that are interested in doing these early college programs, or AP programs, and so, you know, the high school curriculum is not really working for them, so let's see if we can make those bridges on to the community college, as well.

Now, all of these are bit – if you look at the administration's blueprint for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Reauthorization, you will find elements of those, as well, in the – on our vision for ESEA reauthorization. That, obviously, is the federal government's biggest footprint in this space. And, yes, if you think about the vision for ESEA reauthorization, unlike – No Child Left Behind, for example, really focused on progress grade to grade, are you at grade level. Our vision free ESEA is more college and career ready standards. We can talk about what that really means. But the point is, it's really saying the whole system has to be oriented towards ensuring and towards at least trying to get students through high school and graduating with very high levels of knowledge and achievement.

And so it really is a fundamental shift in trying to say, let's not just worry about grade, we'll keep our eye on the prize here. And so you'll see in the blueprint really, you know, tough measures for schools that look like they are chronically failing, and yet also support for a program to these early college programs, support for alternative high schools and the like.

So in all of this, we are also very interested in evaluation, and that's very important, because I think, as we all know, this is one area where we don't know, and we would like to know more, and it's important that if we're really going to make a difference, that we have some evidence on what really works. Thanks.

MR. HASKINS: Great, thank you very much. I want to get one thing – everyone on the panel respond to this quickly, don't give long answers, but – so when I went to high school, I lived in a little town called Charlotte, Michigan, and near Charlotte was a place called Lansing, and Lansing had lots of car factories, the biggest Oldsmobile factory in the country.

And I went to high school with guys who fooled around all the time, and I would say to them, you know, boy, you're never going to get into college, and they would say, so what, I'm going to Oldsmobile, I'm going to get a job for what today would be, you know, start at 50,000 with benefits, so no problem.

Well, as you made a point in your remarks and other people touched on briefly, so here's my question, are those days really gone forever? Are we never again going to have an economy that has lots of high wage jobs with benefits for people with low skills?

MS. ROUSE: I would vote those jobs are gone. I think that –

MR. HASKINS: And nothing to replace them, though.

MS. ROUSE: I see nothing on the horizon to replace them. I think – it doesn't say that people aren't going to be able to get $50,000 a year as salary with benefits, but they're going to have to have a different level of knowledge and skill.

MR. RANGEL: I would agree. I think, using Chicago as an example, I think for – and using Hispanic immigrants as example, as well, the steel mills provide tremendous job opportunities for people. You can drop out and have a very good, high paying job in the steel mills; that doesn't exist anymore. So I think it is a very different shift.

MR. BLOOM: I've got nothing to add.

MR. HASKINS: You agree?

MR. BLOOM: I mean yeah.

MR. HASKINS: Yeah, you do agree, okay.

MS. OATES: I agree.

MR. HASKINS: You have to agree because you already said it.

MS. OATES: I don't think they're gone, they're going.

MR. HASKINS: So it's going to get worse, in other words?

MS. OATES: I think – yes. I think it'll get better before it gets worse, because I think in construction and some of these other fields, you're going to see rebound – has been so bad. I think –

MR. HASKINS: But that's temporary –

MS. OATES: -- I think, yeah.

MR. HASKINS: Yeah, okay, right. So we're in the soup for sure. I mean this really is the nature of our -- I think most serious national problem is that there is just not going to be a way that kids who drop out of school or kids who don't do well in school, or even, as several of the

panelists have already said, go beyond high school to get at least a credential of some kind, they're just, on average now, there will be exceptions, but, on average, they're not going to make it.

So that means we really do have to figure this out. So let me start with this, the administration – and I realize this is tricky, so I'm not trying to be aggressive here about the administration, but the administration, especially the Department of Education, I'm serious, I'm not, seems to be pushing very hard, and there are places around the country that I can name that are like this, that every kid is going to go to college. And I read a couple of Secretary Duncan's speeches lately, and they seem to say, you know, every kid is going to go to college. Well, Dan, I wrote down, you said these kids are not going to college. It sounds to me like a flat statement. You disagree with the secretary, evidently.

But anyway, this is a really tough line to draw. How do we do this? How do we do everything we can to get kids ready for college if they want to go, and we've got a lot of money and all that, but they have the desire, their parents, all that, they want to go, but there are going to be a lot of kids that aren't going to go, and what do we have for them? How do we balance these two things?

MS. OATES: Well, I think the President has been very careful about this. The President has never said everybody is going to go to college. He said that his goal is for everybody to have at least one year of post-secondary education, and I think that's very different. I think the

line we have to draw for at risk youth is that we're not making that decision for them when they're 18, that we have to make sure that every kid gets the most options when they leave a program, whether that program is a public high school or whether that program is a second chance program. We need to make sure that we're not funneling them incorrectly into a pigeonhole, that we're, instead, explaining to them their current options and preparing them so that they can take future options.

I think in high school reform, it means making sure every kid takes algebra, you know, and it's – there are simple things like that, but I think in second chance programs, it's building those bridges that I alluded to that are not limited to community colleges, but community colleges are a natural next step for so many of the kids.

So I think, you know, we need to be really careful. And for me, I don't know – I know we're talking about young people today, but I'm just as concerned for the 40 year old dislocated worker who lived in a time that wasn't "as enlightened" as we are right now. You know, getting that 40 year old dislocated blue collar worker, whether it's from a steel mill or whether it's from another manufacturing, to get them to come back to the table and say your life isn't over, believe it or not, your life is just beginning and we're trying to help you get to that new beginning. So I think there's lots of challenges across, but I think the young people is an area where I think we have lots of help in kind of figuring out how to do it better.

MR. HASKINS: I want to extract one thing, because I think it's a principle that is – I mean I personally agree with, and I believe it's in our brief, and that is that kids need additional chances, that's for sure. There's a lot of kids at 18 are just – they're going to do dumb things, shocking that 18 year olds will do dumb things, but they do, and sometimes they even wind up incarcerated, but, you know, a lot of kids can be less dramatic than that, so we need ways to come back into the system, that's really important.

And that's a huge problem in the immigrant community. We have, you know, especially for Hispanics and Mexicans, as you pointed out in your remarks, so what do you have in mind for them to make sure that they can make it as far as they can, at least complete high school and have a chance to go to college?

MR. RANGEL: Well, I don't think that we need to water down our programs within our schools. I think that, one, we have to be realistic about whether everyone is going to be university educated or not. It's creating options for them, as well. And trade schools and occupation careers, I think those need to be made available, I don't think that we do that very well right now. And there's nothing wrong with educating the next carpenter and electrician and so forth, but I think that it's creating options for youth at the same time.

MR. HASKINS: Anybody is welcome to answer this, but Dan, I'd be especially interested in your – a similarity that the Youth

Challenge Program, the National Guard Youth Challenge, which is discussed, and you mentioned in your presentation, and the David Olds program, is that an authority figure appears before the participant and gives very clear messages about here's what you should do.

They don't necessary pussyfoot around, they say you better do this, you better do this, you better do this. How important do you think that is in these second chance programs, that there's a, you know, that there's an authority figure that sets very clear goals and expectations and then arranges some kind of a system that there are consequences if you don't do the right thing?

MR. BLOOM: I, you know, challenge is an interesting example because it is very kind of extreme in that way, it's very rigid, and you know, very structured, and I've met a lot of kids that are in the program who really seem to appreciate – that's the thing they love about Challenge, is that there's a lot of structure and they know what to do, from minute to minute, they know what to do.

I think that the trick, I won't say the challenge because that's the name of the program, but the trick is, you know, we've also talked to kids two years later, and sometime – and Challenge is a very creative program, it has a mentoring component after kids come out of the residential part of the program, but we talk to kids two years later and they're actually saying that they miss – they're now 20 or 21 years old, in a pretty unfriendly economy, without a lot of family support, and saying I

kind of miss when I could wake up in the morning and somebody told me what to do and where to go.

And so I think that the trick is how to translate that into, you know, the skills that someone can then take forward and use in their own life to be able to manage themselves.

MR. HASKINS: Juan, what do you think of that?

MR. RANGEL: Well, I would agree. I think that kids and youth appreciate discipline and structure. They might not say that, but I think they do appreciate it. And I think that's part of the problem and the failure of the public school system, I don't think we do that right. I don't think the culture in the schools are set up for kids to succeed. And it's really having that kind of order in the school that kids eventually do come to appreciate.

MR. HASKINS: On that very point, the KIPP schools and all these schools, even the Harlem Children's Zone is very clear on this, they really set tough standards, especially about behavior, and they enforce it and they throw kids out of school if they're violent or if they do, you know, if they wear gang colors, anything like that, they're very strict.

MR. BLOOM: I think kids and parents rise to the occasion.

MR. HASKINS: Parents usually support that kind of thing, too. So okay, now, at the risk of boring the audience to death, let's talk about – the main point about research. So we have a lot of area – administration has done – I've written this – I think it's historic, literally

historic what the administration is doing with evaluation. And now we've got the first model really in operation, which is the teen pregnancy programs, the regs that are out and everything, I'm going to watch that, it's just fascinating. And pretty soon we're going to have the same thing for home visiting. So we have at least two programs where the standard is, random assignment, strong evidence, otherwise, you don't get the bucks. That's never – anything like that has been done.

So we have a lot of areas like this one, Dan. I mean our review shows, and we've got a nifty little table that you can look at, table one, that I think has 13 programs in it, and the evaluations are pretty good, so-so, all right, but they're certainly not what anybody would call tier one, I don't think. And we have a lot of areas in policy – so how are we going to nurture these areas that don't have strong evidence, and you're raising your hand, this is Brookings.

SPEAKER: The Department of Education has got this new program, Investing in Innovation, I3, and the whole structure of I3 is that there are three levels of evidence for programs, there is something that they're calling, I'm going to get the three levels wrong, but there is – the first level was, we've got a great hypothesis, there's been no evaluation, yet we're still getting our feet wet, but we think it's a great idea and we think it should be nurtured, so that's the first level, it will come to me later. The second level is called validation. This is where most of the grants are. This is where it's a little grayer, a little tougher, we're going to be relying

on all the outside evaluators to really help set some of the guide posts. But this middle tier says, we've done some of the basic evaluation, it may not be random assignment, we may have some, you know, comparisons that may be kind of a small sample so that we haven't really looked to see whether it's externally valid, whether it would apply to other situations, but we've got a little bit more evidence behind it, so we can put a little bit more money behind it.

And we think that we need to – and furthermore, with this extra money, you can do more – we can do more evaluations to go to the next tier, which is scale up, which is the very top tier, which is saying, look, these are programs that have had random assignments, these have been big programs, we can put a lot of money behind these programs.

We're really trying to bring that model to a lot of different – not only in the I3 program, but we applied it to the Social Innovation Fund, through SIF, we're trying to use it in other contexts, as well. So it's a whole framework for kind of there are the three levels of evidence, and we want to have everybody focused towards the most rigorous designs for impact, but recognizing that not every program, A, it's not feasible to do that with every program, and B, that it takes some time to develop that.

MR. HASKINS: Is this in writing anywhere?

SPEAKER: Yeah; I can probably find something for you.

MR. HASKINS: That would be great, I'd love to see that. Dan, what do you think of that?

MR. BLOOM: Yeah, I mean the sort of criticism that I've heard of the approach is that, you know, if you focus too much on the sort of who has the random assignment evidence behind it, you can stifle kind of innovation because not everybody – most people don't have it, and so this kind of tiered approach seems to me the only way to go.

And then on your other issue about the results being mixed, I mean that's the reality of what happens when you evaluate things in this very rigorous way, you rarely get like a homerun, you know, but you get – and Jane was talking about this also, you know, you get positives and you get some negatives, and then the point is, okay, so how do I now take this program and improve it learning from what I got. I mean the reality is, random assignment evaluations are a very, very high standard, and it's really hard to get all the outcomes going in the way you want them to.

MR. HASKINS: Okay. Anybody else want to comment on this? Mary? Okay. Audience, stand up, the microphone will come, grasp the microphone, stand up, give your name and where you are, and ask a brief question, a brief question, please, I'll stop you if it takes a long time. This gentleman right here.

SPEAKER: Having once been an assistant secretary for evaluation a long time ago, I think if we would evaluate the evaluations, we wouldn't have anymore, since they haven't found very much out. Part of that is because the first thing you need to do in an evaluation is try to see where you're going.

Now, the GED, James Heckman just wrote a paper that says the GED is worthless in the labor market, yet it's still used as an evaluation. If one takes a look at the math problems in the common cause standards, one is about sheep, you know, giving sheep back and forth, the other one, God knows what it means.

MR. HASKINS: There needs to be a question here or something.

SPEAKER: All right. So when are you going to start with the evaluations to make sure the thing you're using as the dependent variable is, indeed, the meaningful dependent variable, not washed out by labor market variation and not focusing on things like the GED? Any evaluation that has a GED in it is stupid.

SPEAKER: I think that you're making an excellent point, which is that we have to know what the – what are we trying to achieve with the program. And this is a process of learning. Jim Heckman's work on the GED I think actually really suggests that recipients who had a GED do better than a high school dropout, but is not as valuable as a high school degree, which is why I think you'll see in this administration more focus on a high school degree than a GED because we're learning.

I don't think – I wouldn't say that that's been wrong, I think we've just – the evidence has been coming in and I think we're learning. It's why Jane is talking about with her programs that we need industry recognized credentials. Industry recognized means that it will have value

in the labor market, and that is what is important is, we want better labor market outcomes. But your point is very well taken, when we do evaluation, and OMB is really trying to lead an effort on this and I think we're all learning and taking steps back and trying to focus on this, you know, garbage in and garbage out, if that evaluation will give you what looks like results, but you won't learn anything from it.

And so we're all making an attempt to make sure these evaluations are carefully constructed, including what is it that we really believe these programs should do and what are the best ways to measure them.

MR. HASKINS: So, Dan, what do you think of the more general point that, in evaluations, it's a common problem that you have the wrong outcome variables?

MR. BLOOM: Look, I mean some of it – it depends on what the evaluation is set up to do. I mean if an evaluation is set up to study a program that tries to get young people a GED, then a GED has to be one of the outcomes that you look at in the evaluation. The GED may not be the right thing for those kids to be getting because we maybe learn things about what GEDs mean in the labor market, but I'm not sure how you could measure the impact of a program that is geared to get kids GEDs without looking at what we've got.

MR. HASKINS: But generally, MDRC has done more evaluation than anybody else. As a general proposition, do you think

there's a problem that the outcome variables are not appropriate, are not important, are not the right ones?

MR. BLOOM: Yeah, some evaluations, sure. I mean I think there's a big variety of the quality of evaluations, and you know, I'm not going to say they're all well done, only the ones we do are really well done.

MR. HASKINS: So your actual answer to my question is – evaluation, we always have the right outcome?

MR. BLOOM: No, ours are problematic sometimes.

MR. HASKINS: All right. Another question, right here, right behind in the green. Is that green?

MS. MYERS: Hi, I'm Rebecca Myers and I'm with the National Association of Social Workers. And like many professions, we're facing severe shortages and difficulties recruiting at the same time as we're experiencing high demand. So we're very, very interested in the career pathways issue, and I'd like to hear just some more about how you're going about that. I think the career pathway is not always obvious to young people, so what are you doing to create those, be more clear about them, get them out to students, because we certainly need the help, and I think this is a real solution.

SPEAKER: Yeah, I think that's one place where we've been trying to focus and it leads very well from the evaluation question. I mean labor can't get the answers by themselves, we need to get CEA, we need

to get OMB, we need to get education, we need to get HHS. All of us need to be figuring out not only what the evaluation tools and measures should be, but also how do we clearly articulate this concept of career pathways.

Where we have landed right now is developing a common core of competencies, so that, for instance, if someone thinks they might like to go into social work and they take the first courses in that and then they realize, oh my God, I can't listen to all those people kvetching all the time, they don't have to go back –

MR. HASKINS: What was that term?

SPEAKER: Kvetching, that was a very technical term, that's right. You would only know it if you had your Yiddish book of common sense with you.

MR. HASKINS: I borrowed someone's.

SPEAKER: I could loan you a copy. But the issue is, for so many of our young people, as they transition, they make a mistake like that and then they feel like, oh my God, I don't have the energy to go back and start over again, not just disadvantaged youth or challenged youth, some of our own children.

You know, so I think this core competency model will lead to some flexibility, oh, so you didn't like social work, perhaps you'd like teaching, perhaps you'd like HR, you know, trying to make sure, and then doing the gap filling to say this is what you would have had to take to be a

social worker, this is what you have to take now, and if they don't get farther than those core competency kind of credits, then there's no lost time; if they do get a little further, like in teaching, they do their student teaching first semester of senior year and say, oh my God, I hate this, it's much more difficult to get them to the, you know, to their degree in the four year time frame.

So I think we're all still trying to figure that out. But that core competency model has been really effective with us working with education and HHS to just kind of get some common vernacular around which we could build pathways.

MR. HASKINS: Right there; I'll go to the back next time.

MS. STONEHILL: Good morning; I'm Harriett Stonehill, I'm the Director of the Megasfield Education Center here in Washington. And we have a program where we deliver the message to the parents, to the families of using the language of habits and abilities and strengths, like perseverance, and common sense, and focus, and working together, just as you said, all those habits and attitudes that one needs to bring to school, to a job, to finish any kind of project, and when we teach this to parents, that message, perseverance is worthwhile, you accomplish things by effort.

Teaching those habits, and we're in schools, and I trained in 48 states, foreign to national countries, that becomes the language that

families deliver to their children, education is important, education is your work, and supplement that with support to the parents.

My question is, how much do you recognize the value of the parents being the deliverer of this important message, that by developing habits, attitudes, strengths of character really can accomplish to keep kids in school, and we really need to train parents to be able to deliver this message, because the more parents know, the more they can deliver to their parents.

MR. HASKINS: Juan, how important are parents in your program?

MR. RANGEL: Well, I think that – I've often said that parents are the missing piece to any kind of school reform effort, because we all say parent involvement is important, but we give it lip service to a great extent. One of the things that we do is, an expectation that we have of our teacher is that they perform home visits. They go out and they visit the parents and they lay out those expectations, but also help them and guide them as how they can be better parents, how they can be supporting the efforts of the teachers in the school, because it doesn't help us if we do all the work at the school and it all falls apart at home. So the parents are just – they're key to the success.

MR. HASKINS: There is an issue here, though, we have a huge literature now that goes back at least four decades on parent programs, that is, programs that are specifically designed to involve

parents and get them to work with the kids in the programs are not overly successful in general. It's a very difficult thing to do. I mean I have seen programs where I think are more successful than other programs in this regard, but it's your run of the mill school, it's a very difficult thing to really get parents involved to do the right thing, it's a real challenge.

MR. RANGEL: But also, I think what we ask of our parents are very basic things. You know, there's a phrase that parents are the first teacher of a child, well, I don't know that we're asking them to be a teacher, we're asking them to be a parent.

And I think there's some very basic things that parents could be doing, like spending time with their children, asking them how their day went, and a lot of parents don't do that.

A lot of parents – and we don't sit around at dinner anymore like other people once used to. And with TV and everything else, and I think our kids' lives are consumed with a lot of other things, and then you have the whole idea the parents are working, and you have two parents that are now working, and it just – it's a challenging environment, but we don't allow that to become an excuse either.

MR. HASKINS: Back on the last row there, on your right.

SPEAKER: The early – studies indicated is the one group that had negative results from moving to the new welfare teenagers; additionally, someone mentioned that the one program that's always seemed to have positive outcomes were programs that people made

money while they were participating in them. Has consideration been given to looking at welfare recipients who are in their junior years, involving them in programs, work study programs where they're going to end up with high school diplomas and some certificate that they have these employment skills?

SPEAKER: I don't know. I mean we do work closely with our friends at ACF. I don't know anything specifically about they're looking at those programs. But I can tell you that in January, they started talking about the allowability of using the work – money for youth in temporary employment kinds of things as summer jobs. I don't know enough – know something about that, I don't know if they're looking at actually – but I would tell you, all of us agree that ending the battle between should I work or should I become educated needs to happen yesterday, so that more of these learn while you earn models are very attractive to making sure kids don't make the wrong decision, because they want to make $7 to pay for a movie ticket on Friday night.

MR. HASKINS: There may be something in the regulations, but in the statute, this kind of thing, if it were low income kids, would surely be permitted in TANF unless there's something in the regulation.

SPEAKER: The TANF Emergency Fund, one of the creative ways that governors and local businesses have been using them as a subsidized employment for TANF recipients.

MR. HASKINS: Here on the aisle, right there on the left, on your left as you're going backwards.

MS. HOFFINGER: My name is Beverly Hoffinger. I'm a linguist. But I think, you know, what we have been talking about seems to be focused on problem areas. But there are many success stories, you know. I mean the Jewish communities, Asian American communities, they seem to do quite well, you know, from this educational system, so I just wonder, since many linguists base their work on data from the field, so I just wonder if Education Department and the Labor Department cannot jointly sponsor a program on – to interview parents. I mean as this gentleman suggests, the parents have the missing piece. So why can't we just devise a kind of project to interview these parents how they succeed and then maybe we can pass on, you know, to other communities? That's all. I don't know --

MR. HASKINS: Boy, you lit up the panel. I would – since the panel is reticent to answer here, I'll step into the breach and say there are years and years of research about what good parenting is and what distinguishes parents who raise successful kids from parents who don't, and those very things are correlated with kids performance measures.

One of the most important for young children is the absence of physical punishment, the use of language, just the frequency -- how often the parent talks to the kid, and then how responsive that – so we really know a lot about that. And as I said before, we designed a lot of

programs to try to teach it to parents and get them to do it, but these programs are not notably successful.

I could go on to make conclusions about the difference between our various ethnic communities in the United States. Your claim that the Asian community certainly stands out as producing astounding kids academically and in terms of their income and so forth is certainly correct. But I'll bet you if you went into those homes, you'd see the same kind of thing that we've seen in these other homes, but the problem is that we just don't know how to replicate it, and if we go in other ethnic communities and say how come you're not more like Asians, that's a bad step, that ain't going to work. There's already plenty of resentment out there. Okay. Let's get back, all the way in the back in the pink thing. This is going to be the last question, I'm very sorry, but –

MS. EMBREY: Hello, Mary Louise Embrey, National Association of School Nurses. I was wondering if the panelists are familiar with the – familiar with current research and maybe encourage them to do more research on the connection between health and learning, which then ends up having more productive people in the work force and military and college.

And I think a simple solution is, if you had more school nurses doing these screenings to pick up simple problems that students have that puts them further and further behind in the educational system, and then, for instance, vision, hearing, so forth, that can be corrected, and

when it goes unnoticed, they obviously school gets too hard and they drop out.

MR. HASKINS: Well, the world health has not come up here, so you may have stumped the panel, too. Who's going to say –

SPEAKER: I'll take it, Ron.

MR. HASKINS: All right, okay.

SPEAKER: Let's go back to the first issue of our *Future of Children*, on school readiness. I think you've actually touched on a very important area, which is a connection between health and educational outcomes and the health and labor market outcomes. And people – I mean there's definitely the correlation that healthier people get more schooling, healthier people have higher incomes. The trick has been, is that really a causal relationship.

And there's more and more evidence that it really may be causal. And I'd just refer back to the first issue of *The Future of Children* that Princeton and Brookings did, which was on school readiness. And Janet Curry wrote a very nice summary article about the importance of the vision, hearing, asthma, and the whole relationship between health and healthy behaviors on school readiness was very powerful. And so we certainly – that's a growing area, I think it is more and more important, we're just now starting to fold it into – I think even these programs are starting – it's starting to be reflective in these programs, but I think we –

MR. HASKINS: That's a short question, a short answer. Let's do one more question, yes.

MS. WEBSTINE: Thank you. I'm Cheryl Webstine with the *Washington Times*. And my question is –

MR. HASKINS: Oh, what a coincidence, I picked someone from the media.

MS. WEBSTINE: So unlike you, Ron.

MR. HASKINS: How could I have known?

MS. WEBSTINE: Well, my question is about the gender gap, because we know young ladies are finding their way into school, we know they're finding their way into jobs, we know that they're the ones saying, I'm marriageable, where are the marriageable guys, and I know that –

MR. HASKINS: Not too delicately put, but you know.

MS. WEBSTINE: And President Obama has a wonderful program coming out about fatherhood, but we all know that being a baby daddy is not real attractive if you're looking at marriageability. So I wondered, just briefly, is there something that you're doing in these, you know, help them out of the dropout range, et cetera, that really targets the guys and really will help lift them up? That's my question.

MR. HASKINS: Juan, do you do that?

MR. RANGEL: I don't know that we distinguish it to that degree in terms of gender. I think that the expectations that we have for

all of our students are equal. I think it is harder – it's becoming harder and harder for the male students because there's a whole other culture that's tugging at them and pulling them away from the academic side.

But again, I think what we do, and people ask us, do we have an anti-gang program, do we have an anti-violence program, do we have an anti everything, no, it's called the school, that's what we do. And if you have the right culture, the right environment, very disciplined, very structured, I think it helps to address all these things. And I think a lot of times we look at other issues, including the health issue, and we get side tracked by some of these. I'm not saying that that's not an important one, but I think that's more of a fringes issue than taking on the education aspect, of course. Around the world there's very poor countries that want to teach kids how to read and write, certainly we can do that here. So I'm not sure if it's the health issue and all these other things that are part of the problem, but I'm not sure that that's the problem. I think we just have to get back to the fundamentals of what a school looks like and what we expect out of a teacher and out of parents and of students, as well.

SPEAKER: And our programs tend to be slightly more male, Job Corps and Youth Build. And what we do is, don't differentiate by gender, but teach responsibility. And while for many of our participants, getting their parents involved would exacerbate the problem, we teach them to be responsible adults, and part of that is responsible parenting when that time is right for you.

So I think that in taking it from the beginning and making, you know, an active citizen, so many of our programs do community service, and being a responsible active citizen, it begins with being a responsible active family participant, whether that's in a same sex or a different sex couple, whether that's with a family with children, whether that's caring for your grandparents, that responsibility is a broad definition rather than a narrow one. And I think individual case management may give a heavier dose response to those who are already in that situation, already fathering children or already pregnant.

MR. HASKINS: Please join me in thanking the panel. And before you rush out, let me make a brief comment. Washington has many achievements, but recently, the most amazing thing that Washington has done is take one of the most boring topics in the world, namely how you measure something, and turn it into a fight. And I'm, of course, speaking about poverty and the administration's recent proposal to change, well, not change the official measure, but come up with a new measure that will be featured in the fall of 2011.

So on May 6th, in this room, the Census Bureau is going to come and explain what they're up to. And we have a diverse panel of people who don't agree with them, both from the left and the right, so it should be an interesting discussion previously thought to be impossible about a measurement issue. May 6th, 9:00, see you here.

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I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

/s/Carleton J. Anderson, III

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