Uncle Sam: nation's largest employer

WASHINGTON — The federal government is the nation's largest single employer. For as America has continued to grow in stature, wealth and productivity, so has the federal government.

Today, the work of civil servants touches the life of every American many times every day. Federal workers are engaged in some of the world's most exciting and important work.

They are plumbing the depths of oceans, exploring the reaches of space, finding cures for deadly diseases and developing new ways to grow better crops.

Federal workers forecast the weather. They conduct our relations with other nations around the globe.

Civil servants print and mint our money, control air traffic, regulate immigration, collect taxes and duties. They protect national forests, conserve natural resources, bring electricity into rural homes and operate the Social Security program.

There are jobs in the federal civil service to match nearly any job known to industry. And there are many jobs in the civil service which do not have a counterpart elsewhere.

To carry out its wide ranging missions, America's leading employer has a continuing need to recruit well qualified new workers in a wide variety of career fields.

Just to replace those who retire, die or leave the federal service for other reasons, Uncle Sam recruits several hundred thousand new employees each year.

In addition to the nature of the work itself, civil service offers tangible attractions that compare favorably with those found in private employment.

In general, pay is comparable to salaries offered in industry for work of similar difficulty and responsibility.

Opportunities for advancement are excellent for persons who demonstrate they are ready for more responsible assignments, and training programs are conducted to further career development.

Federal employees earn liberal vacation and sick leave allowances, are members of a model retirement system and are offered excellent life insurance and health benefits coverage for which the federal government pays part of the cost.

The headquarters offices of most federal agencies are located in Washington, D.C. Their field establishments are scattered throughout the United States and its territories, and some are in foreign countries.

Contrary to popular belief, out of more than 2.8 million federal employees, only 12 per cent are stationed in the Washington, D.C. area.

Under the civil service merit system, appointments to jobs are made on the basis of ability to do the work — ability demonstrated in competition with other applicants.

All qualified applicants receive consideration for appointment without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, sex, politics or any other nonmerit factor.

Opportunities to apply for specific types of positions are announced when there is a need to fill such positions. The announcements tell about the jobs — what experience or education one must have before an application will be accepted, whether a written test is required, where the jobs are located, what the pay is, etc.

Only some of the examinations require a written test.

In addition to education and experience requirements, there will be some general requirements applicants will have to meet.

The usual minimum age is 18, but for most jobs high school graduates may apply at 16.

However, job opportunities are best for those who graduate. Young people are urged to complete their education before applying for full-time work.

More information about a specific program or specific job in the civil service can be had by writing the personnel officer at a nearby federal installation, or by writing to the U.S. Civil Service Commission, Washington, D.C. 20415.

Also, one may write or visit a Federal Job Information Center.

School gets $1 million

ATLANTA — Spelman College recently received $1.25 million from the Advanced Institutional Development Program (AIDP).

The grant, covering a four-year period, will be used to establish four new divisions, an office of freshman studies and an office of staff development.

Plans also call for strengthening the office of institutional research, division of natural sciences and admissions.

The four new divisions include education, humanities, social science and fine arts.

AIDP coordinator, Robert Fritsch said the Office of Institutional Research will employ outside consultants and funds to be used in the office of admissions will expand the preadmissions counseling program.

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An Equal Opportunity Employer M/F

How UL guides young to good careers

By Donald Woods
Economic Development Department
National Urban League

NEW YORK — Ever since the National Urban League conducted its pioneering and highly successful "Pilot Placement" program for black college graduates in the early 50's, the agency has emphasized that in choosing a career the black student must examine the broad spectrum of job possibilities that the economy provides at any point in time.

Consequently, thousands of qualified blacks have been encouraged and assisted by the league in the last 25 years to secure skilled jobs in areas other than the "traditional" careers — teaching, social work, the ministry.

Concurrently, the league, along with other civil rights groups has pressured white commerce and industry to expand job opportunities at all levels for qualified black students.

But although much progress has been made in the last quarter century, minorities still find themselves grossly underrepresented in many skilled job categories.

Working closely with some 52 major corporations (all members of the League's Commerce and Industry Council) Urban League career counselors and job developers are making sure that black graduates capitalize on those job positions that economic forecasters slate for rapid expansion — professional, technical, managerial.

Today the nation's economy is based on the interrelated activities of designing, manufacturing and marketing, and therefore skills commensurate with these activities will constantly be in demand even during times of economic hardship.

A recent survey by the U.S. Department of Labor, for example, projects that too few architects, geophysicists and chemists are being trained, nationwide, to fill the jobs that will open up in the next decade.

While the Urban League has no intention of dissuading black liberal arts students from pursuing those disciplines for which they have a propensity, we must honestly advise that in today's economy, the social science graduate is hard pressed to market his or her skills.

According to reports from the league's 103 affiliates scattered across the country, corporations and industry are either actively seeking or willing to provide openings for blacks qualified to work in business administration, accounting, engineering, computer science, biology, marketing, banking and medical technology.

Needless to say the need for more black doctors and lawyers will remain fixed for some time to come.

Understanding these shifting demands and priorities of the nation's economy, the 34 public black colleges are beginning to provide academic programs that go beyond the traditional basic training.

For example, today, about 33 of these colleges award bachelor's degrees in business as opposed to 19 just a few years ago. Statistics also reflect an increase in the number of economics, accountancy, computer science and medical technology courses.

There are even banking programs at two black colleges that are completely underwritten by the American Bankers Association.

But for the majority of black college students in the nation (65 per cent of whom are registered in predominantly white universities), the major concern is not the availability of courses that are relevant to changing needs of the economy but the inadequacy of career counseling services.

Given the awareness of shifting economic developments it is imperative that all college counseling components and social service agencies provide black students with all available information regarding career options and career preparations.

Aware of the need for proper career counseling, the Urban League has consistently and deliberately emphasized job guidance as an integral element of its various education programs.

For example, in the league's innovative Black Executive Exchange Program which allows successful black executives from commerce and industry to deliver lectures at black colleges in their specialized fields, great care is taken to ensure that open dialogue between guest lecturer and students is conducted after the lecture.

At these "rap sessions," students frankly question the executive about his experiences in the white corporation and about the potential for upward mobility. Arrangements are also made by the participating college for the black executive to "rap" with other student groups and community youth clubs.

The League's Summer Fellowship Program which provides for black college faculty to spend a summer in government or industry was also consciously designed to supplement the counseling services of black colleges.

With the exposure and experience gained during the summer, the faculty member is better equipped not only to enhance the content of his lectures but also to advise his students as to the inner workings of business, industry and government.

Moreover, the summer

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