

OPPORTUNITY

A Publication of the New Jersey Office of Economic Opportunity

In a "Statement of Consensus", the United Community Funds and Councils of America endorsed the principle of maximum feasible participation enunciated by the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. UDFCA is the national organization of the largest national volunteer social welfare and private fund-raising group in the country. Part of that "consensus" is reprinted below:

"The citizen leadership traditionally associated with voluntary health and welfare activity should participate actively in the planning and operation of the new community programs associated with the "War on Poverty." Personnel should be made available to these programs, on a lend-lease basis if necessary, by both voluntary agencies and corporations.

"Voluntary community fund-raising groups should include funds in their budgets to match Government appropriations for local community action programs and should insist upon representation on community committees administering these programs . . .

"Voluntary agencies should develop methods by which their clients and the residents of areas they serve can participate meaningfully in the operation of their own programs."

BOLD: Monmouth's Work-Experience Plan

"It will be a long time before Mrs. D. earns enough money to be off assistance," wrote the caseworker for the Monmouth County Welfare Board, "but for once in her life, she has been given the opportunity to move in a more positive direction."

The opportunity for Mrs. D., a 40-year-old mother of seven illegitimate children, was provided by Operation BOLD (Blot Out Long-term Dependency), a work-experience program recently launched by the Monmouth County Welfare Board with funds available under Title V of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

Work experience programs offer job training for unemployed heads of families on welfare rolls to help develop skills that may assist them in finding jobs.

Operation BOLD began last August with a \$523,115 OEO grant pro-

viding basic education and work training for 60 male heads of families on welfare and 120 mothers receiving Aid to Dependent Children funds. It is one of eight New Jersey programs operating with Title V funds.

The State itself runs one project and the cities of Newark and Trenton have been conducting programs similar to BOLD for the past two years. In addition, Camden, Passaic, Union and Bergen Counties have projects similar to that in Monmouth.

So far, more than 2,500 heads of families have been assisted by the eight work experience programs. Many participants no longer receive welfare payments because of their work training experience; others have had their payments sharply reduced because of permanent em-

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COPE Youth Corps Seen As Successful After First Half Year

A unique Neighborhood Youth Corps program in Newark completed its first half year of existence this month with an impressive record of success.

The program, called COPE (Career Oriented Preparation for Employment), is conducted by the Jewish Vocational Service through the United Community Fund of Essex and West Hudson Counties, with funds received through the United Community Corporation, Newark's antipoverty agency. The \$1 million project also differs from most NYCs in its belief that counseling, psychological testing and education are as important as job training.

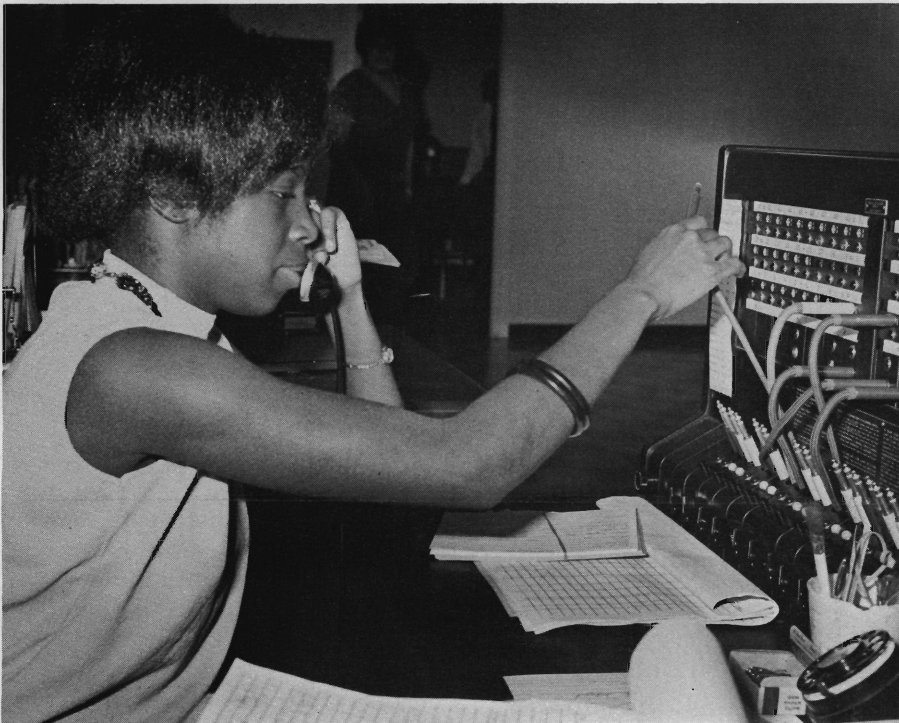
In the six months since the program began, more than 400 young men and women between the ages of 16 and 21 — both in and out of school — have taken part. Of these, 64 have been placed in jobs, have returned to school or have joined the military services; 86 are still receiving some services and 250 are presently enrolled and working at \$1.25 an hour (for a maximum of 30 hours a week, if out of school, and 15 hours a week if in school.)

According to Albert Ascher, COPE director, enrollees who satisfy the financial criteria (\$3,100 annual income for a family of four) are assigned to a job site at one of 50 metropolitan social agencies of the United Community Fund. Under the guidance of an agency supervisor, they serve in sub-professional jobs like teachers and nurses aides, community organizer assistants and clerical and maintenance positions for an average of six to nine months.

Each week, the enrollees attend group counseling sessions of one

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ONE MINUTE, PLEASE — Miss Marjorie Robinson, 18, of 467 S. 14th Street, Newark, is a COPE graduate now working fulltime as a telephone switchboard operator at its headquarters in downtown Newark.

ployment.

Mrs. D. was granted ADC assistance in 1960 after the putative father of five or her children deched said. In addition, one quarter of the enrollees are attending COPE's adult education courses (five hours a week) which include reading, numerical studies, Negro history and current events.

"While the enrollee is going through the program, we are gathering a dossier based on his work experience and psychological testing," Ascher continued. "Those suffering from serious medical deficiencies are referred to the State Rehabilitation Commission; those in need of normal medical care, don't get it."

Upon completion of the program, enrollees — after consultation with counselors — decide upon a career. At least 50 per cent are placed in the social agencies where they once worked as trainees — UCC member agencies and local and area hospitals. Many take jobs as teacher aides in the Newark Pre-School Program, for example, as laundry workers at St. Michael's Hospital, or as switch-

board operators at the Salvation Army.

"We are working in a partnership with established social agencies and new antipoverty groups," Ascher said. "And COPE has found complete cooperation between the social agencies, public associations and antipoverty groups — a cooperation which demonstrates that people who care about helping will easily get together, regardless of their employer."

John C. Bullitt, NJOEO director, recently referred to this partnership between antipoverty agencies, religious oriented groups and private social agencies as "a new breakthrough by private fund-raising organizations in the war on poverty."

"The COPE neighborhood youth corps has demonstrated in a very short time the value of government, sectarian and private group cooperation in the cause of social action," Bullitt said. "Through this project, many sub-professional jobs are being filled — jobs that weren't filled before, jobs that free professional social service workers to concentrate on the needs of the poor."

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and a half hours and receive bi-weekly individual counseling, As-Training at the Stella Wright Boys Club, Gerald planned to become a sertesd the family. Referred to the Monmouth County Welfare Board by her local city board, Mrs. D. complained that being confined to the house made her nervous. She expressed desire to prepare for a career that would help her support her children and remain independent. Having completed the 10th grade, the woman chose office work, rather than a factory, domestic service or nursing job.

Like the other welfare recipients recruited for BOLD, Mrs. D. was given a General Aptitude Test. When some 30 of the women tested revealed reading skills below the 6th grade level, they were immediately placed in the program's basic education phase, offering special classes run by the Asbury Park Board of Education.

These women attended up to 25 hours of classes a week (for 17-20 weeks) or until they could pass the Aptitude Test on re-examination.

Exempt from this phase, Mrs. D. and 70 others went directly into work training. Having demonstrated a strong clerical aptitude on the exam, she was placed as a general clerk in a small hardware store to receive from six to eight weeks of on-the-job training.

Mrs. D. was one of 25 who chose to train in secretarial, sales and accounting work in small, private businesses in the area. Another group of 12 began their training as nurses, dental aides and receptionists at county hospitals and private nursing homes.

About 30 women were placed in the Family Aid Corps, a unique feature of BOLD. Corps aides are trained in homemaking skills by home economists for work as assistants to caseworkers.

While training, the women receive an extra \$41.25 a month for "work connected expenses" such as clothing, child care and book costs.

By late September, Mrs. D. was permanently employed earning \$65 a week in the hardware store.

History, Poverty A Mile Apart: A Negro Boy's Second Struggle Against His Past and Environs

Each day, a teenage Negro boy walks a mile between two vastly different worlds.

One world is Englishtown's 18th-century Village Inn, where George Washington ordered the arrest of Gen. Charles Lee for disobeying orders during the Battle of Monmouth.

The other is Pergolaville, a segregated settlement of some 40 one-story shacks, where the boy and several impoverished families live.

And the mile that separates them is the distance between the forgotten poor living in the shadow of a historic past and affluent present.

The boy is Johnny, a 19-year-old Job Corps dropout attempting a second tour with the Rural Manpower Development Program of the New Jersey Office of Economic Opportunity. RMDP is a work training and basic education program for youths and adults from rural sections of the State.

Since March, when he was paroled in RMDP custody for trying to alter a check, Johnny has walked the daily mile between worlds — from his sister's home in Pergolaville to the historic Inn in Englishtown, where a bus speeds him to on-the-job vocational training and educational courses at McGuire Air Force Base, one of 16 major RMDP field work sites.

At McGuire, Johnny has been learning to become a stock clerk in the hope of obtaining an adequate job when his probationary period expires early next month.

"I think many young dropouts who have a difficult time getting a job drift into the company of other losers," said Judge Leo Weinstein of the Monmouth County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. "I feel the economic approach in dealing with the 16 and 17-year-old group is an important factor. In other words, if you give a boy a job and something to do, you have a good chance of keeping him out of trouble."

It was this philosophy that prompted Judge Weinstein to release the boy in RMDP custody, instead of sentencing him to a six-month jail term. Since then, Johnny has been under the guidance of RMDP supervisors and counselors, who enrolled the youth nearly two years ago.

At the time, Johnny had just moved to Pergolaville from Montgomery, Alabama, where he had watched his widowed mother and two younger brothers lose their lives in a nighttime fire that engulfed the family farm. Johnny escaped, suffering serious burns of the head, hand and shoulder.

"I was in the house at the time. It was about two in the morning," Johnny recalled recently. "Everybody was asleep. My brother woke up and saw the whole house on fire and woke me up first. After we got my other brother out, we went back in to find the two

younger kids and my mother. But my mother went back in alone to save the children and never came out."

After a short hospital stay, Johnny came to live with his older sister and her husband in Pergolaville, a down-trodden section of Manalapan Township — just outside Englishtown and approximately six miles from Freehold, seat of Monmouth County.

Pergolaville is a small complex of 39 dilapidated shacks many of whose residents must rely on the most primitive outhouses and outdoor cold-water pumps (one for every three houses). The houses are linked by deeply-rutted dirt roads, which serve also as sidewalks; there are no sewerage lines or street lights. Rent for a five-room flat is approximately \$60 a month.

This is what Johnny came from Alabama to face in the aftermath of his mother's tragic death.

In a short time, he took a job building trestles for a contractor, but that lasted only a month. Soon after, he joined RMDP for the first time, receiving basic education and job skill training from June of 1965 to January of 1966.

A month later, Johnny went to the Blackwell Job Corps center in Laona, Wisconsin, where he was learning welding, pruning and building construction. But within a short time, the boy went AWOL and returned to Pergolaville.

TWO DIFFERENT WORLDS— At left, Englishtown's 18th-Century Village Inn, where Gen. Charles Lee, an American officer who disobeyed orders during the Battle of Monmouth, lived. At right, Pergolaville, a segregated settlement where most families live in tiny shacks a mile apart — present a stark contrast of the pride of America's past.



Johnny said none of the trades he was studying there really interested him, adding: "I guess I messed up a couple of times, too, and got on KP."

Upon his return, the youth got another job, this time installing septic tanks for a local merchant. After receiving his first check, however, he altered the figures (from \$19 to \$190). Before attempting to cash it, Johnny was confronted by authorities with the changed numbers and fled. Later, when the merchant pressed charges, the boy was sent to Judge Weinstein for a hearing.

With RMDP's help and Judge Weinstein's cooperation, Johnny was spared of conviction — and perhaps a jail term — in the hope that he would reform. Whether the boy will eventually succeed, however, remains in doubt.

"When we get a youth like Johnny — whose background and environment have inflicted serious personality and development damage — we learn not to expect miracles," said Gerry P. Falcey, RMDP chief. "Whenever we find a youth in a constant struggle with himself and society, we attempt to expose him to the benefits of the program, placing heavy stress on attitudinal development and keeping a close and continuous watch on his performance."

"Success in such cases is never easy," he added, "but it can be achieved through determination."



PASS THE COOKIES—Mrs. Katie Rodwell (left), Area Board 7's preschool teacher, instructs the children in table manners during a mid-morning cookies and juice break.

Newark's Area Board 7 Is First With Own Preschool Program

The first and only Pre-School program conducted by a neighborhood board of the Newark antipoverty agency began earlier this month.

About 25 disadvantaged four-and five-year-old youngsters from the Roseville section are attending daily pre-school classes at Area Board No. 7 (Progress in Action), of the United Community Corporation (UCC), Newark's antipoverty agency. Similar programs are planned for seven other UCC area boards throughout the city.

Like most Pre-School or Head Start projects, the Newark program offers health services, and a hot lunch, along with comprehensive pre-kindergarten learning experiences. The classes are conducted at Area Board No. 7's headquarters — 307 North 6th St., Newark in a subdivision of the Area Board's jurisdiction, which contains the highest incidence of poverty.

The Newark project is just one of hundreds of Head Start and Pre-School programs throughout New Jersey which reached more than 26,000 youngsters last year.

According to Mrs. Katie Rodwell, the pre-school teacher at Area Board No. 7, the children come from various family and environmental backgrounds.

"Some come from large families, most of which are on relief or welfare," she explained recently. "Some come from broken homes, where the father is missing. And all come from low-income families."

Mrs. Rodwell said the program has been beneficial to the children so far. "They have responded very well to the pre-school program," she added. "Two months ago, when the project first began, some of the children were timid and shy or even sad. Now they adapt very well."

Village Inn, where George Washington ordered the arrest of the Battle of Monmouth. At right, a view of Pergolaville, lack indoor water or toilet facilities. The two locales — just and the shame of its modern day poverty.



Trenton Teens Test Out-Doors Theory With 'Action Bound'

A theory developed by an English schoolmaster early in World War II to save the lives of young British merchant seamen is being adapted by United Progress Inc. of Trenton to help young men from the City's disadvantaged areas who have difficulty adjusting to their community and school environments.

Kurt Hahn, headmaster of the Gordonstoun School, developed the theory that through intense physical testing in a rugged, out-of-doors setting, young people can gain the self-confidence and inner strength they need to handle other difficult aspects of living.

During and since the war, this philosophy has been tried successfully by young men and women in Outward Bound camps in England, Australia, New Zealand and the United States. However, never in its history has the theory been adapted for an urban environment. This is what UPI is aiming to do with its pilot program, Trenton Action Bound, Inc.

Gregory Farrell, executive director of UPI, has worked closely with Joshua L. Miner, III, director of Outward Bound, Inc. in the United States, in developing the new program. Funds for the 15-month project were obtained from the Ford Foundation, the U. S. Office of Education and Outward Bound, Inc.

Kurt Hahn maintains that the concept of Outward Bound is as valid today as it was during the war: "We must protect the youth of today," he once said, "against a diseased civilization. We must protect him against the decay of care and skill, the decay of enterprise and adventure and the decay of compassion."

The 33 youths in the Action Bound program have already spent one of the past two summers at an Outward Bound Camp in Colorado or Minnesota or at Hurricane Island off the Maine coast. The boys

LIFELINE — Outward Bound instructors and enrollees rappell over the side of a cliff at a Colorado site where several Trenton Action Bound teenagers endured a series of physical tests last summer. At New Jersey locations, the boys will soon learn the techniques of the mountain rescue mission demonstrated at right.



chosen for UPI's summer programs all came from low-income, disadvantaged backgrounds. A few were dropouts; some had had minor run-ins with the police and all had failed to measure up to leadership abilities of which their teachers thought them capable. Their summer experiences were so stimulating and worthwhile that the UPI leaders were persuaded to try to build the Outward Bound concept into a big city high school and to extend the experience from one month to a whole year.

As outlined by Robert Hanson, staff director of Action Bound, the following goals have been set for the boys in the program: 1) to show a boy how to achieve goals he has never thought possible to achieve; 2) to change a boy's approach to problems he has always thought impossible to solve; 3) to develop a sense of self-reliance within each boy so he can withstand external pressures; 4) to help a boy rid himself of feelings such as hate and alienation and to replace them with self-confidence and hope; 5) to give a boy a set of realistic aspirations for the future; and 6) to develop within each boy

an understanding and appreciation of "the other guy."

Hanson believes the best way to achieve these goals, in line with the Outward Bound philosophy, "is to show the young men they can accomplish goals far beyond their expectations through a series of exciting physical tests." These tests include drown proofing, rappelling over the side of high cliffs, canoeing in white water, sailing in heavy weather and hiking and biking great distances. These tests will be on regular weekend trips which are being planned for the boys.

The first trip began with a 15-mile hike on the Appalachian trail from Blairstown to the Delaware Water Gap and ended with a rubber raft trip across the Delaware River. A second weekend was spent trying the ropes and obstacle course at "base camp" in Blairstown, a facility loaned to Action Bound by Princeton University. The leader of all weekend activities is Barry Crook who trained in Outward Bound techniques in England and who served on the Hurricane Island staff.

"The boys will be pushed beyond

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their conscious limits of endurance," Hanson says of the weekend plans. "A person's body can stand shocks far beyond what the person thinks it can and this we hope to prove to the boys."

At the summer Outward Bound camps, the final test for each camper is a three-day test of self-survival. Each camper is taken into the deep wilderness and left alone without food or water. The only equipment he is permitted is a sleeping bag, a few eating utensils, a knife, a wire snare and six matches. Hanson hopes the Trenton group will be prepared for the survival test by spring.

Besides the weekend activities which are the crux of the program, plans call for daily communication among the boys themselves and among the boys and some of the staff. Monday through Friday, two or three of the staff meet with the boys from 12:40 to 1:05 at Central High School, where most of the youth attend. It is hoped that the daily contact will help strengthen the group feeling developed on weekends. Leaders hope the boys

will grow so close they can solve each other's problems through peer group pressure and creative group interaction.

The talk at present sessions centers on preparations for forthcoming trips. The group feeling seems to be growing because the boys are talking about designing a jacket and a shoulder emblem which they can wear at school and on weekends.

The third phase of the program involves the boys' after-school hours. As most of the boys in Action Bound need to work to help their families, UPI is arranging for late afternoon and evening jobs. The jobs are with public service agencies so the boys will develop a sense of participating in the community and working with people who are less fortunate than themselves.

UPI is trying to arrange part-time jobs on juvenile review boards, the State Home for Deaf and Dumb children, the Cranbury Housing Association and at Trenton State College. It is hoped that the community service jobs will help spark what Kurt Hahn calls "the desire to serve," which he says is present in every youth regardless of his background.

The boys also will be urged to serve themselves through individual creative expression. A scheme is in the works to start a welding and sculpture class. The use of large, welding torches and heavy materials will add the necessary masculine touches to the proposed art project.

Hanson does not believe, even with the almost constant attention built into the program, there will be over-the-weekend miracles. He and the other carefully chosen, experienced staff members know that many of the boys will feel as one Hurricane Island camper who reported after a particularly long and icy swim that he hated every minute of it.

But, the leaders are hopeful that after a whole year of challenge and attention, the majority of the boys in Action Bound will feel the way another camper did at the end of his summer experience:

"Rappelling over that 110-foot rock face was the most frightening experience of my life. When I reached the ledge at the base of the cliff, however, I saw that my worries had been for nothing. When I meet obstacles in my life, I will remember the cliff."

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