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COLLEGE STUDENTS AIDING THE WELFARE-TO-WORK PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the considerable success of the welfare-to-work program initiated in the Clinton administration and the effectiveness of a complementary student led program at Arkansas State University designed to help 91 people get off welfare and become productive citizens. We conducted a series of three workshops twice over a two-year period designed for 91 individuals enrolled in the welfare-to-work program from a nearby community Paragould, Arkansas. The first workshop was on improving consumer skills in order to make better use of scarce income. Our other two workshops provided mostly women with advice on proper dress for job interviews and techniques for getting and holding a job. We had the interviews and then critiqued them by giving suggestions on dress, comportment and answers to help them avoid mistakes. This program also provided them with second-hand business dress suits for their interview. We monitored each participant for 12 to 18-months to determine the success of our three-stage program. A year later 69, or 75% of the 91 had gotten the first job. After 18 months to 2 years the number successfully off welfare was 97,8% or 89 had gotten a job or had been promoted to a better position. Ninety -eighty percent had successfully completed the transition from welfare to work. We were able to help get these ladies off the welfare rolls and all assistantship programs with our workshops beginning in 2003.

We ran a regression analysis on the subjects, plus another 33 individuals in the program who did not attend our workshops and acted as a control group to discover the effectiveness of our program in dealing with the ability of these individuals to remain off welfare. Our independent Y variable was job success. We discovered the following dependent factors to be significant and positive at the .01 level of significance: Attendance at the workshops, Marital status, number of attempts to get a job, the number of people living at home, and age. Factors that were not significant were race, length of time between workshop and attempt to interview, number of years on welfare, or type of occupation. We examined all of these factors and found some very interesting things about our subjects. The average weekly salary of these women ranged from a minimum wage to \$18.23 per hour with an average of \$9.98 per hour, well above the minimum wage rate. We are proud of the success of our programs in helping people find rewarding work opportunities.

INTRODUCTION

Our ten member Students in Free Enterprise [SIFE] Team had the opportunity to help 91 people enrolled in the welfare-to-work program from a nearby community Paragould, AR. We conducted a series of 3 sets of workshops 2 times between 2002 and 2005. The first group contained 48 individuals and were trained beginning in May of 2002 and ending in July 2003. and the second group of 50 people were trained beginning in the May of 2004 and ending in August of 2005. These two groups consisted of 17 adult men and 74 women. Five of the participants were Hispanic, 30

white, 3 Asian, 46 African-American, 6 mixed race and 1 handicapped The first workshop of the series was a five hour evening workshop on developing and improving consumer skills in order to make better use of scarce income. We began with a PowerPoint presentation on consumer buying habits. All of the points made in the presentation were included in our companion booklet "Wise Consumer", which was distributed to all participants. We interrupted the presentation every half hour, with a game we called "The Price is Right". Participants were asked which was the best buy? If they were correct they won all of the item as a prize. We then explained the answer. For example which is the best bargain per ounce, soft drinks in a can?; Soft drinks in a liter bottle; or in a small plastic 12 oz. bottle?. The answer is the best buy is the liter bottle followed by the can and the most expensive was the plastic bottle, which was nearly 2.5 times more expensive than the lower price litter bottle. We gave them an example of how much they and a family of four would pay assuming that they drank 8 ounces of coke per day per person in one year. Everyone was surprised at the difference in costs. For the liter bottle it would cost \$181.04 per year; for the cans it would cost \$340.58 per year and for the 14 oz. Bottle it would cost \$741.68 per year. We also used Popcorn, pre-popped, microwaved or unpopped bag. The most expensive was the prepopped; followed by the microwaved; and the best buy was the unpopped bag. We did this with a variety of foods including fresh, frozen and canned spinach, Potato chips, fresh or frozen potatoes. People began to see the power of becoming a wise consumer in stretching a limited income. We ended the workshop with a discussion and a brief test to determine the success of our workshop.

Our second Welfare – to - Work Workshop was called "Dress for Success" we gave the 91 participants a PowerPoint presentation on preparing for a job interview called "So You Want a Job?". We began with a humorous skit in which the interview subject did everything wrong from using bad grammar, to inappropriate dress, to asking questions or making statements that were not appropriate. The announcer stopped the interview to make salient points about the process. All of the points in the presentation were included in our booklet "Dress for Success" which gave advice on dress, comportment and creating a written profile or resume. This was followed later in a third workshop with a mock interview in which each person was pared with a SIFE team member, who acted as the interviewer. We had two team members one served as the interviewer and the other an observer. After the interview we gave suggestions on how they might improve their interview. Every one of the individuals was scheduled go on an actual interview by the local department of Human Services. With the aid of the Paragould Salvation Army and a local women's professional group and a local cleaner we gave each participant a nice appropriate suit of used clothing for their interview. These participants were mostly women who were entering the job market for the first time or after a long absence from the job force. We had the interviews and then critiqued them by giving suggestions on dress, comportment and answers to help them avoid mistakes. We had another publication "The Most Common Mistakes in Job Interviews: which we distributed after the workshop reviewing our points made during the workshop.

RESULTS

We decide to follow our group of 91 participants plus another group of 33 who did not participate in our workshops and served as a control group at regular three months intervals. We conducted the first telephone interview after three months. Then we surveyed the group again after 6 months, then again in 12 to 18 months to see if they had continued down the road to success or not. We began with a brief post event survey and pre and post-test of 15 questions to determine if and what these participants had learned from our presentations. The average pretest score was 5.93 out of 15 questions on the post test the mean score had improved by almost double to 11.79 or 39.1%. even after three months the retention was still high relatively at 9.93. The workshop groups outperformed our control group by 66% which could not be explained by random chance according to our chi-square test of significance. They also gave the workshop a mean rating of 9.93 on a 10

point scale representing outstanding, One welfare mother of three said “I am going to get that job next week. You have helped me gain the self-confidence to succeed. Thank you.” We found that the most important indicator of our success was that 21 of these women had successfully gotten an interview, within three months, and a new job. After three months 69, or 75% of the 91 had gotten the first job. After 18 months to 2 years the number successfully off welfare was 91% or 83 had gotten a job and eight had been promoted to an even better position. Eighty-nine percent had successfully completed the transition from welfare to work. Only three continued to receive some form of assistance, food stamps. We were able to help get these families off the welfare rolls and all assistantship programs with our workshops beginning in 2003. They took pride in their new found independence.

A regression analysis was run on the data collected. We discovered several dependent [x variables] to be significant and positive at the .01 level of significance. The independent Y variable was success in getting a job and a second was salary in that job. We found no significant difference in the results using the two variables so we will only report data on the success variable.

Attendance at the workshops [x1] was significant, This is not surprising since 91% of those in attendance were successful where as only 34% or 11 of those in the control group were successful. The national average was slightly higher than the control group at 56%.

We were surprised to find that Marital status [x2] was significant, Of the 9% or nine people who were not successful 7 were divorced and one single. Of the 82 who were successful only 5 were divorced and 10 single, the others were all married. Being married definitely gave those women more stability and self-confidence in seeking and holding a job.

Another factor that was not a surprise was the number of attempts to get a job made before success [x3]. The average successful person got a job after 2.13 attempts. Those who were not successful made an average of 5.25 attempts. It may be that those people who were unsuccessful had some obvious obstacles that came out in the interview process and kept them from receiving work offers,

Another important factor was the number of people living at home [x4]. The larger the family the greater the need for a job since those who were successful on the first attempt had an average family size of 5.27 those who took two or more tries had an average of 3.68 and those who failed had an average of 2.24. The larger the family the greater the need and the greater the ratio of success.

Another significant factor was age [x5]. The average age of participants was 36.74. The average age of the successful individual on the first attempt was 22.21 those taking 2 or more attempts averaged 28.42 and those who were not successful average 31.87. This may indicate some age discrimination, since younger workers were more successful in getting jobs with fewer interviews. There were only 3 participants over the age of 50 in this study and two of them were not able to get a job during our time intervals. Their lack of experience when coupled with age seemed to be a significant predictor of failure.

Factors that were not significant were race [x6]. We were pleasantly surprised that race among this diversified group was not a significant at the .01 level of testing. Blacks and Hispanics were as likely to get a good job, as were whites. This is a good indication that with this group there was little overt job discrimination by race. Even looking at salary there seemed to be no significant difference in the salaries of these participants based solely on race. Blacks averaged the most at \$10.02 per hour, whites came in slightly lower at \$ 9.99 and Hispanics and other were also slightly lower \$9.79. These small differences were not significant at the .01 level of testing.

We felt that the length of time between the workshop and attempt to interview [x7] would be significant but they were not. Even though the time gap was between 26 hours and eight weeks for those who were successful.

Another factor that we thought might be significant was the number of years on welfare [x8]. The only reason that this factor was not significant was that this number was fairly low for both the

successful and the unsuccessful group. Ranging between 6 months and eight years and averaging 2.42 years. We felt that this relatively low number was a reflection of a booming economy in Northeast Arkansas that made it easier for our welfare recipients to find work.

Another factor that we suspected might be significant was the type of occupation [x9]. Speculating that low paying unskilled jobs would be most successfully filled. This proved not to be true. Of the 82 people who were successful 51 [62%] were in retail-clerical occupations. Twenty-three [28%] were in food preparation businesses. The remaining 10 percent or nine individuals obtained more executive positions with local manufacturers.

Gender [x10] did not seem significant but since only 17 of the subjects were men we did not feel that our sample size was large enough to accurately reflect any gender bias.

The average weekly salary of these participants once employed ranged from a minimum wage to \$18.23 per hour with an average of \$9.98 per hour, well above the national minimum wage rate. We are proud of the success of our programs in helping people find rewarding work opportunities and believe that our effort did make a difference.

RESULTS

TABLE 1: STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Factor/significance	R2 SIGN AT .01 LEVEL	F-STATISTICS	T-RATIOS
X1 WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE	R2=.9634 S	2.32* (.0001)	6.204* (.0003)
X2 MARITAL STATUS	R2= .9806 S	14.13* (.0211)	8.909* (.0009)
X3 ATTEMPTS TO FIND WORK	R2= .9541 S	22.14 * (.0701)	4.0076* (.0032)
X4 NO OF PEOPLE AT HOME	R2=.9977 S	25.09* (.0001)	8.1046 * (.0031)
X5 AGE	R2=.9866 S	22.07* (.0005)	7 .0941 * (.0021)
X6 RACE	R2=.6114 N S	1.09 (.0402)	.0770 (.0550)
X7 TIME GAP	R2= .2991 NS	.171 (.0501)	.04801 (.0329)
X8 YEARS ON ASSITANCE	R2=.5874 NS	1.91 (.3002)	.0 323 (.0298)
X9 OCCUPATION TYPE	R2=.6963 N S	0.24 (.0401)	.0061 (.0311)
X10 GENDER	R2=.3467 NS	0,3001 (.2020)	.0102 (.3004)
VALUE IN () IS THE SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL OF THE 2-TAILED T TEST			
VALUE IN () IS THE SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL OF THE 2-TAILED T TEST			

YEAR	PARTICIPANTS	OFF WELFARE 6 MONTHS	OFF WELFARE 1 YEAR	OFF WELFARE 2 YEARS
2003	32	21 65.6%	28 75%	28 75%
2004	30	24 80%	29 96.6%	29 96.6%
2005	29	14 48%	16 55,17%	22 55,17%
TOTAL	91	69 75.8%	83 91.2%	89 97.8%

THE IMPACT OF HURRICANE KATRINA ON MISSISSIPPI'S CASINO INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

This research analyzes the impact of hurricane Katrina on gaming revenues and taxes in Mississippi. The magnitude and duration of the losses resulting from Katrina are empirically estimated with ARIMA forecasting models. Both state and local tax losses are estimated by region within the state. The findings include a substitution effect between the gaming regions in Mississippi after Katrina closed the majority of Gulf Coast casinos. The substitution effect leads to a reallocation in local tax revenues between the regions within the state and an offset of the negative impact at the state level. The overall shortfall and recovery time are shown to be far less than early estimates. The research concludes with a discussion of the potential for far greater losses if gaming laws are not further modified.

IS THERE A NEED FOR A YOUTH ARTS CENTER IN A SMALL COMMUNITY? AN EXPLORATORY INVESTIGATION

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the viability of establishing an Arts Center in Cumberland, Maryland, with the mission of skill development and empowerment of its youth (broadly defined as being anywhere within the 4-19 age range) residents. The proposed center is envisioned as a facility for teaching and mentoring area youth in diverse artistic disciplines that include the fine, visual, and performing arts. By learning and creating alongside the area's arts professionals, area youth get the opportunity develop their creative skills and to potentially earn income.

Our investigation used target group-specific survey instruments in order to assess both the demand for and supply of such services from students (the target "consumers" of this facility) and parents (the most likely "purchasers" or "payers" for these services), as well as from the artists comprising the "supply" side of the talent/expertise pool willing to train and mentor area students.

Survey results indicate strong support for the concept of a Youth Art Center from both the demand (students and parents) and supply (artist) sides. We found that a Youth Art Center that caters to students in the age group 9-16 and offers classes in various arts on an after-school or weekend basis and costing each student between 20 and 40 per month will attract community patronage.

The results of this study establish a need for additional investigation from the standpoint of the identifying, architecturally modifying, as well as costing of a suitable site as well as that of sourcing needed capital from a variety of private, nonprofit, and governmental sources towards fulfilling this expressed need from the community. It is hoped that this study will impel other smaller communities to consider art centers as one of the viable ways of engaging and empowering its youth citizens.

INTRODUCTION

Art is universal in nature and is known to unite people regardless of age, ethnicity, social, or economic background. Art centers exist throughout the United States and cater to a range of creative sensibilities. Those dedicated to the youth, in particular, provide several economic, psychic, and all-round character building benefits to the young. The arts allow children to think creatively, to build their own ideas, to solve problems in more than one way and try new things. They provide children the opportunity to express themselves and to place their efforts in a larger cultural context. A nurturing, creative environment instills self-confidence and positive feelings about oneself as well as provides a mechanism for economic well being.

Given the above recognition and consistent with similar research on the efficacy of youth arts centers, referenced below, this study sought to examine the economic viability of establishing an Arts Center in Western Maryland with the mission of skill development and empowerment of its youth residents. This center is envisioned as a facility that will employ artists to teach and mentor area youth in diverse artistic disciplines that include the fine, visual, and performing arts. By

learning and creating alongside the area's arts professionals, area youth will develop their creative skills and have the opportunity to earn income. This training in entrepreneurship in the relatively early stages of life is expected not only to contribute to enhanced self-worth for its recipients but also serve to "incubate" a new generation of youth entrepreneurs in this region of Western Maryland.

A survey of youth arts centers in the United States reveals an almost infinite array in regard to types of artistic activities included (drawing, metalworking, photography, calligraphy, and ceramics among them), pace and manner of delivery (intensive, fast pace, or casual, leisurely, ongoing, one-time), cost to students (sometimes free of charge, but more often ranging from \$ 5.00 /hour to \$ 50.00/hour per student), composition of artists-teachers, the age of students-apprentices (2 years to over 25 years in age), and operating budget (as little as \$ 4,000 and as high as millions of dollars). They may offer classes after school, on weekends, or in summer time, in "camps". They may be located in renovated buildings, or in new and elaborate structures dedicated to the cause. Some of these centers serve a handful of students; still some have the capacity to accommodate thousands of young, aspirant apprentices. These are distributed in large, urban areas as well as in smaller towns in rural areas. These youth arts centers may have the support of government, at any level, or wealthy philanthropists. At some places, arts created can be sold, and yet in some other places, art works may be allowed to stay in galleries for demonstration only.

Within the context of the research noted above, this study sought to ascertain the need of community to consume the various types of artistic training as well as the artists to supply such services. The following sections describe the objectives of the research, the methodology used to gather and analyze data, as well as the analysis and conclusions of the study.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study were to investigate the following research questions:

- 1- is there any interest in establishing an arts center in Cumberland serving the young or young adult?
- 2- if such interest within the community exists, then what ages of students would this facility cater to? The design of the study had already excluded very young (less than 8 years) from the potential pool of students.
- 3- what types of arts are favored by students, parents, and artists in the community?
- 4- what days, times, and months of the year are favored by students, parents, and artists?
- 5- what are likely clients willing to pay for this training opportunity and how much would participating artists charge for their service?
- 6- what is the willingness of parents to purchase artistic products created in the facility and the likely amount spent on such purchases?

METHODOLOGY

In order to ascertain whether there is a need for a Youth Arts Center in Cumberland, Maryland, three distinct groups: parents, students, and artists residing within a fifteen-mile radius of the city were independently surveyed. Each group was given a survey with questions appropriate to it and assured respondents of anonymity. Sampling methods used in this study are consistent with procedures used in other similar studies. Survey instruments appropriate to each group not included here due to space limitations.

Parents: Five hundred and one (501) parents were surveyed of which 481 were usable. Based on 2004 U.S. Census figures for Frostburg and Cumberland with an estimated 12,507 households, the sample represents 3.85% of the population. At $\alpha = 0.05$ (95% confidence level), and with a 5%

margin of error, this number exceeds the minimum sample size of 380 that would be required for statistical validity of reported results.

These parents were surveyed randomly, in person, in various locations in Cumberland, Frostburg, and LaVale. The three towns were selected to represent populations that would likely have the greatest interest in such a facility based in Cumberland. Parents were surveyed at the Country Club Mall, the Y.M.C.A., Downtown Cumberland, Frostburg Library, Beall Elementary School, The Goodwill in Cumberland, and several other retail stores in the three respective towns. In all cases, student interns received permission to conduct surveys from the managers / owners / principal supervisors of each establishment or institution visited.

Students: The Allegany County Board of Education was approached and consequently granted permission to survey students in public middle and high schools in the area. A total of five hundred and one (501) students were provided the survey questionnaires, of which 276 were determined usable. Given the number of area high school and middle school students of 4,414, this sample size represents 6.25% of the reference population.) At $\alpha=0.05$ (95% confidence level, and with a 5% margin of error, this number exceeds the minimum sample size of 354 that would be required for statistical validity of reported results. Surveys were administered solely within a classroom environment. Teachers at each school were provided the surveys and the students were instructed to fill them out as thoroughly as possible. The surveys were then collected and analyzed. Elementary school students were not directly surveyed due to the complexity of survey questions relative to the age group. However, parents of elementary-aged children were surveyed, thus assuring that the age group between four and ten was represented within the data.

Artists: The sample of artists was drawn from a list provided by The Allegany Arts Council in Cumberland. Artists were interviewed both in person and by phone. A total of fifty two (52) artists representing various artistic specialties were approached. Forty six (46) of the completed surveys were usable. Given the total estimated population of one hundred and fifty (150) such artists in the area, the sample represents over 30% of its reference group. At $\alpha=0.10$ (90% confidence level), and with a 10% margin of error, this number meets the minimum sample size of 47 that would be required for statistical validity of reported results. Artists were surveyed in person at the Frostburg State University Art Department, as well as in their respective galleries and studios.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF SURVEY FINDINGS

Desirability of Establishing a Youth Arts Center - The first question on every survey was “What is your opinion in regard to establishing a Youth Arts Center in Cumberland with classes and activities for various arts in various forms?” The response choices were “highly favorable, favorable, unfavorable, or highly unfavorable.” A majority of the community members – in each of the three groups surveyed indicated favorability towards the idea of a Youth Arts Center in Cumberland.

The majority in each group - parents, students, and artists – is favorably disposed to the concept of an Arts Center because they feel that there are not many options for extracurricular activities for the youth in the area. There is an abundance of athletic facilities; however, students who are less interested in sports have few other choices; thus, an Arts Center would provide a safe and creative environment for students both after school and at other times when classes would be offered.

Appropriateness of Arts Center by Age Group - Parents and artists differed in terms of their responses on the age group for which the Arts Center would be most appropriate. While parents desired the Arts Center to cater to the younger age groups between the ages of four and twelve, artists expressed their preference for the older groups, aged between nine and sixteen. We infer the

above evidence to indicate that it may be easier to teach older students who have had some experience with art materials and who have a better appreciation for the creative process. Despite the varying opinions on age appropriateness of the Center from the artist sample, there is, nevertheless, sufficient willingness to teach the younger age groups.

Types of Arts Favored by Students, Parents, and Artists - The most demanded types of arts in the student group were drawing and painting closely followed by photography, sculpting, jewelry making, and graphic design. These six types of arts were desired by 64% of the responding student population. 52% of the parent and 56% of the artist groups favored the same six artistic activities. Thus, the Youth Arts Center should, initially, focus on offering training in these types of arts.

Preference by Days, Times, and Months Among Students, Parents, and Artists - The largest number of students and artists wished to hold and/or attend classes on Mondays after school. Parents, on the other hand, agreed that Saturdays were their preferred day for classes to be offered. However, parents also suggested that after school would be their preferred time for their children to participate in the classes.

Most parents surveyed stated that they had full time jobs and their children were already involved in other activities that met during the week, so the weekends would be a more convenient time for them to transport the children to the Center. Artists and students may have liked Mondays because it is one of their least busy days. Students wished to attend classes at the center between two and three times a week. A majority of the parents surveyed said that they desired putting their children in a visual or performing arts class in order to provide a creative learning environment outside of the classroom.

User Willingness to Pay for Various Art Activities - The largest amount students would be willing to pay would be up to \$10.99 per month for classes offered at the center. The median and mode of the students surveyed also fell at \$10. This figure did not suit artists' needs. The mode for what artists found acceptable to charge per class fell at approximately \$40.00. The median, however, was significantly less at \$20.00. The mode and median for parents surveyed each fell around \$20.00. One major aspect that cannot be overlooked is that per capita income in Allegany County in 2004 was \$16,780, while the national per capita income in the same year was \$40,100. This huge gap in income could also have an effect on how much parents could actually afford to give up per month on additional activities for their students.

Parent Interest in Purchase of Art Products Created by Youth: In response to the question of whether parents would be willing to purchase works of art created by the youth, 325 (67%) responded affirmatively and 32 (7%) responded negatively, while the remaining 124 (26%) did not respond. Of those who responded favorably, 253 (78%) indicated that they would be willing to spend an average amount of \$53 annually. Therefore, the potential for revenue generation from creation and sale of art works can be averaged at an annual \$13,409 per household. To generalize these numbers to the broader population we assume the following: the total number of households in Frostburg and Cumberland amounts to 12,507.

While the above figure may seem inspiring at first glance, we advise serious caution in interpreting these figures as these are based on some serious assumptions relating to the willingness and ability of the youth clientele to produce works in the facility, as well as the space constraints and the general marketing and pricing decisions of the establishment. The economic viability of establishing a community Youth Arts Center cannot be fully assessed at this stage until further investigation of the start-up costs and recurring ongoing establishment expenses can be measured.

CONCLUSION

The results of this exploratory study reveal, quite decisively, significant interest within the community from each the target groups – parents, students, and artists - in establishing a Youth Arts Center in Cumberland. All three groups are in favor of the idea and would like to see a variety of classes offered in the visual and 3-D categories. While responses to the questions of appropriateness of the Center for various age groups, scheduling in terms of days and times, weekdays versus weekends, and costs that students and parents must bear, are not uniform across the three groups, the disparities are not insoluble along any of the above dimensions.

Based on the survey findings, a Youth Arts Center that caters to the age group 9-16 and offers classes in drawing, painting, photography, sculpting, jewelry making, and graphic design, on weekday after-school or weekend basis, costing each student between 20 and 40 per month will have the ingredients for attracting community patronage and earning revenues and, thus, experiencing economic success in its incipient stage. As can be expected, changes in customer profile (such as drawing or painting classes for 4-8 year olds), increase in the repertoire of services to include other types of art, as well as modifications in scheduling and pricing can be explored gradually once the Center gains a strong foothold in terms of community support.

Given the sufficiently strong interest within the community for a Youth Arts Center, follow-up research or feasibility analysis is recommended for the purposes of identifying, architecturally modifying, as well as costing of a suitable site to house such a facility. Sourcing of needed capital from various private, nonprofit, and governmental sources towards servicing this expressed need from the community, additional investigation of viable organizational structures, management composition, as well as estimation of recurring operational expenses would similarly be required in the next round of investigation.

REFERENCES

Available in the full manuscript.

THRIVING AS A CITY IN YEAR 2020: A MODEL FOR URBAN VITALITY

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ABSTRACT

The prognosis for American cities has been prophetically bleak since 1950, when we began taking the first steps to debase and dismantle our urban landscape. Yet no one could have guessed just how complete, or how irreversible, would be the ultimate end to city life in America. At a time when we were investing in the reconstruction of destroyed cities in Europe, we were investing in the destruction of cities in our own country.

Today fewer than ten cities remain as potentially viable cosmopolitan centers as we look to the year 2020 – from a field of over 300 in 1950. And even those ten are but a shadow of what they could have been, and remain vulnerable to the myopic leadership that left most American states without a single urban center.

As we approach 2020, what are the decisions and actions that will insure survival for those few remaining American cities? Are there remedial actions that could resuscitate some landscapes that were once cities? What is the likelihood that leaders will launch a renaissance of urban life in America? These are the questions that are addressed in this discussion, and that will determine whether vibrant urban centers will survive the next decade.

