OFFICE OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT: The New Careers Experience

The Office of Career Development has been administratively located under CURA since late fall, 1969. CURA provides the Director, Esther Wattenberg, and Assistant Director, Sally Flax, as well as some money for promoting student participation in community programs. This affiliation with CURA allows the Office of Career Development to establish their programs in that area of the University or community that best meets the needs and objectives of the individual program. Office of Career Development is located at 1507 University Ave. S.E., Room 300, Minneapolis, Minn. 55414.

Background

The collective disorders of the ‘60’s indicated one persistant fact: a large portion of Americans considered themselves outside the mainstream of American life. Major institutions came under sharp attack for their inability to respond to the American dilemma, “a nation moving toward two societies, one black, one white, separate and unequal.”

The “War on Poverty” was invented as a response. In that repertoire of programs New Careers emerged as one strategy to open up the social systems to repair the inequities of the past. It was described as the most daring and socially innovative of all the government programs in those years of ferment.

Drawing its legislative authority from the 1966 Scheuer amendment to the OEO Act, and provided with financial muscle from the Department of Labor, it was intended to provide experimentation in one of the most crucial areas of American life. That is, to prepare unemployed and low income persons to enter career jobs in public human services and to move them up a ladder by education and training to become “new” professionals. The ideas of para-professional, career ladders, upward mobility, work-study, task analysis, and performance-based credentials took on fresh meaning.

To translate this rhetoric into an operational program required bold new designs in a whole network of inter-related spheres of activity. Its broad purposes and objectives included anti-poverty goals, manpower, job creation, and changing the route to professional credentials. Experimental designs were to test out:

—new staffing for social service agencies
—new occupational roles in the professions
—new styles of supervision based on “cross cultural fertilization”
—new modes of service delivery, to reach the alienated
—new educational alternatives to provide knowledge and recognized credentials to a group with educational deficiencies and life and learning styles different from the traditional student.
—new support systems for those who, because of poverty and/or race, had been excluded from the opportunities of higher education and career development as an the to significant employment.

The use of nonprofessional personnel was not new. But the New Careers concept as expounded by Arthur Pearl and Frank Riessman in their 1965 publication, New Careers for the Poor, brought a new focus for the paraprofessional movement: the indigenous person, himself of the consumer group, to be trained and educated to become a “new” professional. They defined the New Careerist as a “bridge” person between the poor and the minority community and the social agencies impinging on the life of that community. The indigenous paraprofessional was to bring his unique and vital style, his street savvy, and his special relationships with the ghetto community into a reorganization of service delivery patterns in health, education, welfare, housing and corrections agencies — to make them more accountable to their client groups.

The indigenous paraprofessional was to serve as an antidote for a professionalism judged outmoded, ineffective, and lacking in vitality. Riessman and Pearl recommended that residents from the disadvantaged community be drawn into a work-study program that would provide jobs with a purpose and a future in the human services, the fastest growing sector of our economy. At the same time education and training would be provided for upward mobility in advancing ladders of promotion in a career development model.

The New Careers movement is rooted in these major premises:
— a true belief in the concept of accepting each individual not for what he has been but for what he can become
— an unwavering commitment to changing institutions for the purpose of providing flexible and realistic options for diverse populations.

The University’s New Careers Program

The University of Minnesota, in May of 1967, was the first major institution of higher education to commit itself to planning a program and providing an educational component for the New Careers Program. It was administrated by the Hennepin County community action agency authorized under the OEO Act. The politics of OEO and of New Careers, of a militant Civil Rights movement, and the style of confrontation at that time, did not provide a tranquil background. The original 2 year New
Careers experience proved to be, in the cool language of the social scientist, full of "creative tensions" both within and without the University.

It is not easy for an institution like a university to change itself, particularly at a time when other colleges throughout the country were reluctant to do so. Four major factors, in our judgement, contributed to the University's involvement and subsequent support for a variety of experimental models:

—the General College, a 2 year institution folded into the larger institution with a national reputation for experimentation and creativity.

—the Training Center for Community Programs, created in a small unit committed to cooperative Community-University programs which had already given a very strong clue as to the potential of human resources waiting to be tapped in the urban community.

—the General Extension Division which, with its flexibility and its easy adaptations, could cooperate in the experimental aspects of a new educational program.

—the presence of a new president, Malcolm Moos, who came to the University with an avowed commitment to joining the University and the Community in a fresh partnership; and the unwavering support of top administrative officers, notably Fred Lukermann.

The atmosphere, then, was congenial. Resources were made available, and the New Careers staff (several of whom had been with the Training Center for Community Programs) was brought together. They responded to what they considered one of the most challenging issues to face higher education. Martin Luther King in the fall of 1968 described the challenge very well: "Universities adapting to the new needs of the day must learn to develop the abilities of people...who should be trained on the job, get university credit for their experience, learn in relevant courses and develop a liberal arts knowledge that is built around their concerns."

The program participants were poor and minority persons, ranging in age from 22 - 59 (median age 34), unemployed or underemployed, most with dependents, and with marked discontinuities in their educational and work histories.

The design of an educational component for a work-study program involved University staff in close cooperation with the staffs of those agencies providing the jobs for the New Careerists, and with professionals both within the University and from the community. The experimental nature of the project demanded that they all work together to define new occupational roles, to design field work experiences eligible for academic credits, and to mesh the skills and knowledges from the academic and real world which the professional would require of this new paraprofessional staff person.

The Minneapolis schools, which provided a major share of the jobs (115 out of 207 slots), gave the program an emphasis in the education system, initiating a fruitful collaboration between the University and the school system, preparing the way for the Career Opportunities Program now so successfully creating new patterns of team teaching here and in 152 other cities. The special nature of educational institutions prompted the wide sharing of training materials and other consultation and technical assistance. Ongoing exchanges with Washington agencies through these publications and congressional testimony afforded an influence on the nature of evolving program guidelines in successive new careers legislation.

The University of Minnesota New Careers Research Program

One of the unique features — and greatest strengths — of the Minnesota project was the fact that it had the only research unit attached to an operational program in that period 1967-9. Funded by the Department of Labor, the research papers played a significant role in shaping other demonstration proposals throughout the country, contributing to program planning, evaluation and consequent recommendations for new program directions. Three such contributions were not applicable for New Careerists to have certain areas of interest or need satisfied very early in the program. The 4 major areas of need in the beginning of employment are:

1. influencing point of view: orienting clients to the agency and its resources, as well as to other community resources, and the "bridge" function particularly as it relates to the permitting the New Careerist to interpret the community to the agency, taking full advantage of his "indigenerity."

2. service functions: expediters, outreach, developer of new programs for previously neglected and/or alienated constituents.

3. therapeutic functions: role model, such as the ex-offender working with juveniles, the AFDC recipient working with other persons on welfare; other roles such as supportive, helping, and intervention or advocacy.

These models were shared with employing agencies as an aid in their own job development, and also served as a scheme whereby new careers programs could evaluate the effective use of para-professional staff persons, one of the most difficult aspects of the new careers experiment.

—Job Satisfaction—In "Job Interests and Job Satisfaction of New Careerists," their research findings indicated the striking need for New Careerists to have certain areas of interest or need satisfied very early in the program. The 4 major areas of need in the beginning of employment are:

1. understanding the agency hierarchy and the lines of authority and communication

2. being able to work with some independence and feeling of accomplishment

3. knowledge of agency policies and
opportunities for advancement

4. utilization of unique abilities in a social service or helping capacity.

One may speculate that prior relationships with these agencies — as clients — nurtured the suspicion and distrust evidenced by these needs. If they were not met very early, the dropout rate was apt to be high. Where agencies were insensitive to these needs, terminations were more frequent and the effective use of paraprofessionals was not realized.

So it was that the rather enormous social and educational charges placed on the back of this one little program became the all-consuming activity of the New Careers Office and of the New Careers Research Project from 1967-69. This activity was carefully documented and widely shared around the country. It became a part of the basic model for new careers type programs which have since proliferated in a variety of professional fields throughout the country.

OTHER DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS IN THE NEW CAREERS MODEL

Under this rubric, the Office of Career Development (nee New Careers Program) has initiated and administered a number of experimental or demonstration programs. These programs grew out of legislation and funding which followed upon the Scheuer New Careers Amendment as specific amendments to HEW, OEO, and Manpower legislation for Vocational Education and Rehabilitation, Manpower Training and Development, Public Service Employment. All the programs explore new occupational roles and patterns of service delivery, and test special job-related curricula, remedial and special education features, and supportive services.

Careers in Community Development and Urban Planning (CUP) 1970-71:

Participants and Agencies: 40 minority and low income students working in urban agencies such as State Planning, HRA, City Planning, Model Cities, TCOIC, OEO, Minneapolis Institute of Arts and Public Library, Metro Council, etc.

Objectives: To bring more minority persons into urban agencies and to provide skills and knowledge for resident staff members in such community-controlled agencies as OEO and Model Cities; the development of indigenous social planning paraprofessionals.

Special Features: Curriculum development which gave an impetus to the Urban Studies major at the University and led to a reader for beginning students (the “Study of the City”); a beginning attempt to teach resident staff members research and evaluation skills, included in a survey manual for general student use; the use of community and interdisciplinary faculty for broad urban studies curriculum.

Public Service Careers (PSC)-U of M/Model Cities Cooperative Project, 1971-73:

Participants and Agency: 149 “disadvantaged” (by DOL definition) residents of Minneapolis and St. Paul Model Cities brought into entry jobs in the University’s Civil Service System; 45 present employees at the lowest levels provided upgrade opportunities.

Objectives: To overcome the oft disappointing hiring record of New Careers, after the federal salary support was withdrawn, the PSC program operated on the basis of HIRE NOW, TRAIN LATER, designed to break down barriers to the employment of the disadvantaged and to provide training and supportive services to contribute to job retention and career development.

Special Features: Training for supervisors of participants; new career ladder proposal to encourage the promotion from within of females and minorities, the Administrative Trainee (now under consideration by the Director of University Personnel); use of Reading and Study Skills Center for vocational testing, remedial education, GED preparation, tutoring, and special work-related skills acquisition; development of broad range of training resources and support services, including a Directory of Community Resources.

Emergency Employment Act (EEA)—with Civil Service Personnel

Participants and Agency: 127 Academic and Civil Service positions, full time and part time for students, within the University system.

Objectives: To provide employment, at a time of high unemployment, for the disadvantaged, the returning veteran, and for those persons displaced by shifts in market demand, notably the engineer and teacher.

Special Features: The creation of many part time positions for the disadvantaged students and Vets; the molding of resources with PSC to provide a work-study model for staff in community based programs.

Community Health Worker (CHW) 1972-73:

Participants and Agencies: 32 students, low income and minority residents in a work-study program, attached to neighborhood health centers i.e. Freemont Clinic, Pilot City, Community/University Health Care Clinic, Smiley’s Point Clinic, etc.

Objectives: To effect changes in the delivery of health care through the education and training of a new health paraprofessional.

Special Features: A two-pronged special interdisciplinary curriculum to provide the indigenous staff person with a health care skill and patient advocacy skills; a directory of community services for use by the Community Health Worker; the election of 2 students to the board of the Hennepin County Health Coalition, the new policy body for a consortium of Health centers.

Family Day Care Training Project 1973-74: — with Ramsey County Welfare and the Coordinated Child Care Council of St. Paul

Participants and Agencies: Some 150 credit and audit students each quarter who provide Family Day Care to children whose care is supported by federal monies; 10 work-study paraprofessionals (Family Day Care Consultants) to staff neighborhood Child Development Resource Centers, recruited from the caregiver population throughout Ramsey County (emphasis on minority representation from Mexican-American, Black and Indian communities). The Consultants work closely with the licensing staff of Ramsey County Welfare.

Objectives: As an outgrowth of our concern for the child care arrangements of working women, to upgrade the quality of family day care through training, neighborhood resource centers, and a new paraprofessional staff person able to make home visits, provide consultation, materials and community referral to other child care resources.
Special Features: Coursework on radio and television for a homebound population; use of field trips as a learning experience, with Field Trip Educational Packets offering clues for cognitive learning; lending of "Toys 'n Things" from accessible neighborhood facilities; development of educational materials which can be used by successive groups of family day care parents; opportunity for group discussion and interchange of ideas and resources through credited coursework, workshops and seminars in the resource centers.

NEW CAREERS ISSUES AND PREDICAMENTS

Introducing the Service Society

New Careers, in many respects, stimulated the enormous interest in the human services which now pervades social planning.

For some time now economists have been forecasting, and in this case accurately, that we are moving in the post-industrial society to a "services society". In the down-home language of one economist: progressively fewer people will be sewing, growing and making and more and more of us will be fiddling with each other. Indeed the shifting ratio of the work force in goods producing vs. service areas attests to the arrival of a new era:


The New Careers movement has a strong interest in this transformation of the labor force, primarily in those human services which deal with meeting people's needs in the areas of environment, health, housing, corrections, education and welfare.

Two salient features currently distinguish the human services:

The enormous growth of persons delivering and receiving services in some aspect of education or organized learning activities both at the "core" (formal education) and on the periphery (business and governmental programs, anti-poverty agencies, adult education, correspondence and TV courses).

The increased consumer orientation of human services, undergirding the demand for accountability in what services are performed, how they are performed, by whom -- and a clamor for some measure of their quality and cost effectiveness.

The "age of accountability" is unfolding inevitably within the community control. Minority movements, are rallying for the consumer as service giver, for open schools, open enrollments, voucher systems, representation on local advisory and governance boards, and even on corporate boards regulating public interest businesses. There is a pervasive desire among many groups to retain their autonomy in order to assert more control over their own lives. For those transferring these concerns to their employment, their demand is for more meaningful jobs, for more leisure time, for more variety in tasks they perform. One of the dilemmas emerging is "Who will do the routine -- so-called dirty work?" in these sifting and sorting out times.

Major Issues

Some major controversies now engage the interest of New Career ideologues, evidenced in the recent books by Reissman and Alan Gartner, among others:

1. Education, Credentials and Vocationalism -- Will higher education be vocationalized by the presence of work-study programs, and will work-study indeed be integrated so that work will not simply be added as a substitute for certain courses?

While many initial new careers programs relied on workshops and in-service training, the University of Minnesota made a strong commitment to higher education, as noted in this excerpt from "Progress Report on Education", September, 1968:

Our experience...leads us inescapably to the emphatic conclusion that merely having in-service training sessions for New Careers that are only locally oriented, geared particularly to a specific career line, and disconnected from the continuity of accepted educational goals, are pitifully inadequate to both the potential of the New Careerist and the ultimate goal of permanent employment...The future needs of enrollees who will be facing unexpected changes in a complex and shifting employment picture demand a broad education equal to the full career choices in both the public and private sector that may be available to them at a later point.

More immediately, does the work-study program, with its conflicting demands and tensions, provide the paraprofessional with the systematic knowledge of his profession that will be required if he is to move up in a credentialed society, up into graduate programs that allow him to assume those professional positions where he is better able to advocate for the changes his constituents require? The quality of the program will be no doubt a deciding factor, as in so many of the proliferating external degree plans now available to all students.

A special feature of the University's program was the design of a new position of Intercultural Education Specialist. With supporting grants from the Center for Curriculum Studies, University faculty in a number of disciplines chose New Careerists as co-teachers in those courses dealing with poverty and race. No systematic study of the complicated variables involved has been undertaken.

Further evidence must be gathered as more and more colleges engage in special programs that bring a diverse population onto the campus, and as greater numbers of students seek alternate routes to the credential, to validate a range of educational alternatives appropriate for a variety of educational goals.

2. Career Ladders: Do They Work? -- There is a fear that many paraprofessionals are impacted at the bottom, and instead of offering a new route for moving higher and breaking the credential barrier, the new careers movement has instead instituted a range of aide positions all at a fairly low level of service, and with little power to influence new directions and new styles.

While our new careers research indicted the greatest success for enrollees in the more bureaucratic, hierarchical agencies, the question for the movement still remains to be carefully examined: do these agencies permit paraprofessionals to move up, to participate in policy making, to assume fully professional roles based on their experience and training, as well as their formal education?

3. Professionalism: Is the New Careerist Really a "NEW" Professional? -- Jolting the conventional guardians of the human service institutions is a phenomenon described by Margaret Mead as "a revolt of all the people who are being done good to". Students, patients, clients, prisoners -- all want a share in the service delivery process, and an end to the monopoly of middle-class,
middle-life, middle-of-the-road professionals who imply they know what is best for all of us. Certainly the professionals still remain as the primary caregivers, but there are unmistakable signs that they are being nudged—if not pushed—to change.

New Careers is out in front in exploring the conflicts between professional and consumer in the service society, which Daniel Bell likens to the industrial era's conflict between capitalist and laborer. But we must question whether the paraprofessional has really introduced change in the professions.

In terms of service delivery, there is a good body of evidence that indicates that entirely new jobs have been created, such as Health Advocate, Family Health Worker, Expeditor, Program Developer, Parent Educator, Community Program Assistant. Also, services have been extended that are clearly worthwhile, and the outreach by indigenous staff has brought many previously excluded into the services network.

But many questions still remain for further research, particularly in three primary areas:

a) Is the professional changed through the process of cross-socialization with the indigenous staff member or does he perform essentially the same functions only with more hands helping?

b) What is the effect of the paraprofessional on the quality of service, and will a more cooperative, non-hierarchical structure serve the purposes of a society in transition?

c) Is the paraprofessional coopted by the professions as a buffer to the community, with no input into changing the professions? Is his socialization through his work and study destroying the unique contribution of his indigeneity or is he indeed becoming a new kind of professional through other than the wholly academic degree route?

Because of the complex nature of the myriad variables involved in these questions, research findings to date must be regarded as tentative in most areas. A review of the evaluative literature presents the inescapable conclusion that paraprofessionals have had an impact on the efficiency of service delivery, but an assessment of the effect on quality of service is yet inconclusive. The most interesting piece of research in our judgement that has appeared on the question of indigeneity and cooptation is the study by Margaret Thompson of the University's research staff, "Contamination of New Careerists by Professionalization: Fact or Fancy?" She states that, in fact, the community orientation becomes stronger the longer one works within the community and that instead of losing one's indigenous style the New Careerist simply adds another style to his repertoire.

4. Impact on the Participants: Stay-Ins vs. Drop-Outs — The composite of the successful participant in the Minnesota program was discovered to be the female, in mid-life, head of her own household, with dependents— a portrait corroborated by other findings reported in "The Effectiveness of Manpower Training Programs: A Review of Research on the Impact of the Poor" by Jon H. Goldstein in STUDIES IN PUBLIC WELFARE, November, 1972. The staff speculated that the stay-ins were insulated by a core of idealism and had the "coping ability" to alter their need structure to adjust to the realities of job requirements and prolonged educational requirements. The older female also often regarded the program as her "last, best hope".

The portrait of the drop-out indicates that many came into the program with higher expectations than the program could fulfill and were unwilling to put up with the heavy demands and tensions of a work-study program. Most often tended to be the young, black male with few family responsibilities, a high school graduate, unemployed prior to entry or employed in an unskilled job.

Despite these conclusions, we must still recommend self-selection as the only valid means of selection because no predictable pattern of indices emerged.

A most important word of caution for manpower planners: developing the capability of the new careerist takes time, money and organizational flexibility, in equal and full measure. Two year programs are only a beginning for many highly motivated students. Many New Careerists—whose appetites for moving on the UP escalator were only whetted in two years—needed the support of the University and other financial aide resources to complete their degree programs. The research findings ("Social Psychological Changes in New Careerists") revealed a significant increase in self concept, particularly after one year or more in the project. Nowhere was this increased sense of self more apparent than in those students who earned the BA degree, and most particularly those who went on into graduate programs. The meaning of the fateful phrase, "a heritage of success", was underscored by these high achievers, and the spill-over effect of their success on their families was an unexpected social gain.

**Observations on Reasearch and Evaluation**

If we can all agree that professional practice had become outmoded, ineffective, and lacking in vitality, we must also agree that the art of evaluating roles and quality of service is very much a primitive one. There is a tendency in research to count the "countable", but these figures often turn out to be insignificant factors in a total program. We will continue to speculate on the many sharply drawn issues and predicaments raised here—on cross-socialization in the academy and in the social agency, on developing the new professional, on the quality and quantity of service and on the changes in our institutions—and hopefully we will find new ways to better research these concerns, but not without noting one further word of caution.

There is hinted at in the literature a subject that has been little examined, yet one that deserves our attention, namely the dilemma of research and the disadvantaged: using the poor person as a research subject.

The New Careers Office gathered the following assumptions that are generally made by poor people about research, described in an unpublished paper by R. Frank Falk and Mary Bible, "Cyclops versus Ulysses":

1. It is utterly without value: no matter how much time is spent in filling out forms or subjecting oneself to interviews, nothing happens to change one's life one iota.

2. Ressentment of "the use of the poor": a feeling of being defenseless against the prodding and prying of middle and upper middle class students and academics who alone profit from the exchange.

3. The giving of information is dangerous: it can result in the removal of benefits and can be hurtful to the poor person and his family.

NEW CAREERS (Cont'd on page 6)
National Leaders to Speak at "U", Revenue Sharing Symposium

National leaders representing all levels of government will take part in a University of Minnesota sponsored symposium on Revenue Sharing and the New Federalism in October and November.

Designed to explore in depth all facets of the revenue sharing movement, the Symposium is being arranged by Walter Heller, University Regents professor of economics and one of the nationally-recognized originators of the revenue sharing idea, and Arthur Naftalin, University Professor of Public Affairs.

The Symposium will consist of seven sessions, each featuring a national authority who is playing a major role in the evolving new federal-state-local relationships. Following their presentations they will engage in dialogue with Professors Heller and Naftalin and will be questioned by interlocutors selected by participating community organizations.

The Center for Urban and Regional Affairs is one of four University divisions and eight community organizations who are joining in sponsoring and arranging the series, the effort being — according to Professors Heller and Naftalin — to reach as wide an audience within the University and general public as possible.

The Symposium sessions and the featured lecturers are:

**October 3** — Professors Heller and Naftalin, “The Fiscal and Political Framework of Revenue sharing.”

**October 10** — Joseph Pechman, director of Economic Studies, Brookings Institution, who with Professor Heller authored the original Heller-Pechman revenue sharing proposal, “The Origins of Revenue Sharing.”

**October 24** — Murray L. Weidenbaum, Mallinckrodt distinguished professor of economics, Washington University, St. Louis, formerly assistant secretary of the treasury and chairman of the Nixon Administration’s Committee on Revenue Sharing, “The Nixon Proposal and Related Policies.”

**October 31** — Speaker invited but not confirmed

**November 7** — Edward K. Hamilton, deputy mayor of New York City and University of Minnesota graduate, “The Reaction of Local Government.”

**November 14** — Graham W. Watt, Director, Office of Revenue Sharing, Department of Treasury, “The Administration Looks Ahead.”

**November 30** — Senator Walter F. Mondale and Congressman Albert H. Quie, “Congress Looks Ahead.”

Sessions are scheduled 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., Room 125, University’s West Bank Auditorium Classroom Building. Registration for all sessions is $15. Send check (payable to the University of Minnesota) to: Extension Classes, 138 Wesbrook Hall, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis 55455 and tickets will be mailed. (Ample parking is available on campus in late afternoon and a parking map will be enclosed with tickets.)

NEW CAREERS (Cont’d from page 5)

4. Research is a kind of voyeurism on the part of middle class students to probe the nature of other lives and other life styles.

Like the professions, the belief system that surrounds research is also under attack, and further researching of the service consumer and the paraprofessional service provider must be wary of its own contaminating effects.

CONCLUSION

“It is reasonable to predict that five million new community service jobs will be created in the next ten years. Jobs will be developed within occupational categories drawn from the new career efforts of the anti-poverty, health, and model cities programs; they will also be created anew. Hopefully, all will be related to career development ladders, connected closely with institutions of higher education, and will build a living bridge between the needs of communities and the service activities of colleges and universities.”

(from Senator Walter Mondale in “Social Accounting, Evaluation, and the Future of the Human Services”, EVALUATION, Fall 1972, p. 29.)

But the New Careers concept has generated interest beyond the original constituency of the disadvantaged — the economically poor and minorities. The notions of lifetime education, work-study arrangements, external degree programs providing alternate routes to credentialing, self-development and fulfilling social roles — new careers and second careers — are consuming concerns of a much larger population.