

RESEARCH

College Experiences and Career Success: A Comparison by Major and Race

Carol B. Meeks, Anne L. Sweaney, & Sharon Y. Nickols

The family and consumer sciences profession has undertaken the goal of greater diversity among student bodies at the various institutions of higher education. Papers presented at the Project 2000 Summit Conference: Building Minority Participation in Home Economics document the under-representation of persons of color in the various specializations within family and consumer sciences (see the Fall 1991 and Fall 1994 issues of *Home Economics FORUM*).

This study funded, in part, through a Kappa Omicron Nu research grant examined college experiences and career success of African American and White graduates from 1983 to 1993. The goal was to make recommendations for educators in colleges and universities that will enable them to provide educational experiences for minorities to foster career success. The survey questionnaire covered sources of support, employment experiences, career success, job satisfaction, career self-efficacy, locus of control, and demographic characteristics.

The 88 respondents in this study received their Bachelor of Science degrees from The University of Georgia. There are 34 housing and consumer economics graduates and 54 social work graduates in the study. The sample includes 26 percent African American and 35 percent White from social work, 17 percent African American and 22 percent White from housing and consumer economics.

Findings that would be useful to faculty and staff in programs of family and consumer sciences are highlighted here. Because most graduates report working at least part-time while completing their undergraduate degrees, institutions of higher education may need to develop more flexible course schedules to accommodate students' need to earn income. White respondents in both degree programs were significantly more likely to receive financial support from their parents' savings than were African American respondents. African American respondents, however, were more likely to receive grants as a source of support. The overall level of financial support from parents was limited. The findings emphasize the need for loans, grants, and employment alternatives for all students. As financial programs supporting the development of human capital are diminished at the federal level, institutions of higher education are challenged to develop alternative sources of financial aid. It is critical that families place a high priority on saving for their children's education.

African American respondents received a higher level of social support from their churches compared to White respondents. On the other hand, White respondents received social support from sororities and fraternities and other organizations. These sources of social support follow traditional patterns. African American churches always have nurtured their members. Similarly, social organizations, especially at predominately White southern universities, have been important to undergraduate students for decades.

All housing and consumer economics respondents and 96 percent of social work respondents report receiving social support from their family while attending college. The importance of family and friends cannot be underestimated. Therefore, those few students not receiving social support from family and friends are at a serious disadvantage. These students might be prime candidates for faculty mentoring. The different

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cultural patterns of social support should be understood by faculty and other campus administrators so that they can meet student needs.

Career planning and placement offices provide substantial support to students. The African American housing and consumer economics students had the highest use of career planning and placement services. Housing and consumer economics faculty consistently make use of career planning and placement services such as mock interviews and resume services, through class assignments. This campus resource can supplement faculty efforts.

“The experience of earning a university degree appears to have reduced the variability of culture and program of study so that graduates demonstrate similar attitudes, job performance, and success.”

Alumni noted the influence of an outstanding faculty member in their career development. Respondents identified the importance of the faculty in career counseling and networking with potential employers and expressed a desire for greater interaction with faculty. Faculty need to be aware that their long-term impact can be significant, and university administrators need to reward and recognize these efforts.

From the career literature, three constructs related to career success were measured in this study, along with a self-assessment variable. These constructs were job satisfaction, career self-efficacy, and locus of control. Based on these measures, all respondents, African American and White graduates of both programs, reported relatively high levels of career success.

There are no significant differences by race or degree for any of these constructs, except for the content component of job satisfaction. African American housing and consumer economics graduates and White social work graduates report the highest mean satisfaction with the job content components (i.e., intrinsic rewards of the job and opportunity for advancement). As faculty and career counselors work with students in their job searches, they should make students aware that there are many dimensions of a position that may ultimately give them satisfaction with their job and that cannot be captured by starting salary alone. However, salary data did indicate that housing and consumer economics African American graduates had mean salaries that were higher than any other group. Mean salary of all respondents was \$24,424.

The findings on career self-efficacy (i.e., interpersonal skills, political skills, and ability to advance one's career) highlight that these graduates are equal in these three essential components of job performance. The respondents' self-assessment of their career success indicates they see themselves as successful, and there were no significant differ-

ences by degree or race. Recent graduates can provide good examples for faculty to cite as they work with current students. The uniformly low scores on locus of control indicate that these alumni believe they have internal control over their lives. They place little credence on the influence of external forces or chance.

The college years are the formative years for professional development. The influence of faculty, support from family and salient social groups, financial support, career planning and placement services, and other positive experiences can reinforce the strengths that students bring to the university. Preparing minority students for entry into careers requires a comprehensive approach.

This study makes a contribution to the sparse literature of factors that contribute to the career success of minority graduates. It confirms that recent graduates of these applied professional programs experience career success. The experience of earning a university degree appears to have reduced the variability of culture and program of study so that graduates demonstrate similar attitudes, job performance, and success.

Dr. Meeks is Dean, College of Family and Consumer Sciences, Iowa State University. Dr. Sweaney is Professor and Dr. Nickols is Dean, College of Family and Consumer Sciences, The University of Georgia.

Note: a copy of the complete report *College Experiences and Career Success: A Comparison by Major and Race* is available by request from Dean Sharon Y. Nickols, College of Family and Consumer Sciences, The University of Georgia, Dawson Hall, Athens, GA 30602-3622.

Taking Charge of Change: A Review of Two Books

Anne M. Weiner

The literature in the area of organizational leadership has recently been enriched by the publication of two books that address change in the corporate sphere. One author argues the case for moral leadership and the other provides a process for successfully implementing change. James O'Toole is Vice President of the Aspen Institute and was formerly on the faculty of the Graduate School of Business at the University of Southern California. John

Each of these men showed respect for their followers and based their long-term course on what was morally right. He follows with examples of moral leadership from the corporate world. Max DePree of the Herman Miller furniture company is one of the corporate leaders discussed in the book, and O'Toole quotes DePree's view on leadership as "liberating people to do what is required of them in the most effective and humane way possible." Later in the book, this view is repeated in an observation from Warren Bennis that "leaders don't just do things right; they do the right thing."

Several chapters of this book are

common, higher-order values that transcend the narrow self-interest of . . . conflicting constituencies" (p. 258).

O'Toole concludes with a discussion of President Vaclav Havel as a prime example of moral leadership. His leadership of the Czech republic is based on the values of decency, reason, responsibility, tolerance, and human rights. He entrusts the operations of the country to other leaders who share his values. Above all, Havel has a strong and abiding caring for the people of his country.

The philosophy of moral leadership presented by O'Toole bears examination by leaders in education and government as well as the

Jefferson, Lincoln, and Theodore Roosevelt—as examples of leaders who employed the principles of moral leadership.

therefore for the . . . leader to create a . . . system that will appeal to



Call for Papers

for publication in
**Reflective Leading in the
 Public Interest:
 A Dialogue about Practice**

published by

Kappa Omicron Nu Honor
 Society in collaboration with the
 Board of Human Sciences and
 the Council for
 Administrators in FCS

Dr. Bonnie Braun and
 Dr. Dorothy I. Mitstifer, Editors

Objective: This collection of essays will focus on application of the reflective human action theory in the arena of public policy making. Its purpose is to address the questions: "How are individuals and institutions in our profession contributing to the public good?" "How is action moderated by reflective human action?"

Overview: The rationale for work in the public policy arena lies in the legislation that permits us to operate as 501(c)(3) organizations. The reason the federal government allows associations such as ours to exist is that we provide goods and services for the common good of the citizenry. Because we are dedicated to

leadership, it is reasonable to seek examples where we're reaching beyond the development of our own members to the contributions we make to the public. The goal of this collection is to inspire students and professionals to apply reflective leadership in the public policy arena. The essays may give other professionals ideas and inspiration for their practice in addressing practical, persistent problems that are part of the public issues arena.

As a nonpositional leadership perspective, reflective human action features the principles of accepting chaos, sharing information, developing relationships, and embracing vision—all supported by authenticity, ethical sensibility, and spirituality. But most importantly, this theory encourages reflective engagement—searching for meaning and thinking about what you are doing while you are doing it.

Discussion: This collection of essays is intended to cite "mini-case examples" of how members of our profession apply expertise to issues affecting citizens—in local municipalities, counties, states, and nationally. Family and consumer science professionals are working on such issues as welfare reform, adolescent

pregnancy, infant and children's health, nutrition and health care of the elderly, Medicare and Medicaid funding, adolescent mothers and their children, family preservation, substance abuse prevention, teen health centers, school dropout, violence prevention, etc. which could serve as examples.

Authors are encouraged to WRITE about personal experience in public policy development and implementation and REFLECT on action.

Thoughtful analysis will help us, as individuals, and collectively as a profession to achieve the mission to which we are dedicated: empowered individuals, strengthened families, enabled communities.

Information and Deadline: Kappa Omicron Nu FORUM and Reflective Leading in the Public Interest are refereed publication outlets for both members and nonmembers. Manuscripts are due January 15, 1998.

For further information or to obtain a copy of "Guidelines for Authors," contact:

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 (see *Publications*)

John Kotter begins his volume, also entitled *Leading Change* (1996, HBS Press), with the observation that the past 20 years have seen tremendous change in organizations and that this trend toward transformation will continue. To address this, we need leaders who are successful change agents, but most executives have been trained in management rather than leadership. Kotter delineates errors that leaders often make and contends that successful change involves a

multistage process that will create needed motivation and overcome existing obstacles.

One of the major barriers to change is complacency, so Kotter's process begins with disrupting the status quo and creating a sense of urgency. Strategies that help set an atmosphere of crisis include eliminating signs of overt success and broadening the measures of accountability for managers to include customer and employee satisfaction.

The second strategy in Kotter's process involves forming a coalition of key leaders in the organization who have position power, credibility, and expertise to guide the change. Subsequent stages of the process are concerned with vision, both in developing a statement and communicating it broadly. The vision statement should be simple and repeated continually so it remains a focal point. The next stage of empowering broad-based action includes removing ob-

stacles, changing structures that undermine the vision, and encouraging risk-taking among employees. The stage concerned with generating short-term wins leads to the consolidation of gains and continued change. The final stage is significant in that it embeds the new approaches into the culture of the organization.

Kotter then describes the organization of the future where the environment will continue to demand change, spurred on by technological and social trends and the continued globalization of the economy. Successful organizations will foster broad-based empowerment with less bureaucracy and a willingness to take risks. An adaptive corporate culture will emerge, and all employees will be engaged in lifelong learning. Kotter concludes with the comment that "people who are making an effort to embrace the future are a happier lot than those who are clinging to the past."

The ideas presented concerning natural resistance and need for change are timely and similar to those of O'Toole and others. Kotter's process of creating major change provides a visionary guide for what it will take to lead the organization of the future. His strategies are bold and can be applied to organizations outside of the corporate world. It seems that all leaders can benefit from study and consideration of the work of these two authors.

Dr. Weiner is Professor, Department of Human Environmental Sciences, Central Missouri State University.

1997 Kappa Omicron Nu Election

Candidate Biographical Information (Order Drawn by Lot)

Vice Chair/Finance

Shirley Reagan

Dean, College of Applied and Natural Sciences, Louisiana Tech University.

Organizational Contributions:

Chair, Doctoral Fellowships Awards Committee, Omicron Beta Beta Adviser and wrote application to obtain the chapter, AAFCS Board of Directors, AAFCS Awards and Recognition Committee, Council for Accreditation, LAFCS President. CAFCS officer.

Philosophy related to KON mission of empowered leaders:

All students initiated into Kappa Omicron Nu assume leadership roles of different types and magnitudes throughout their lives. To enable these students to serve and promote our profession effectively, we must seek opportunities to actively teach as well as model leadership skills for these students.

Vice Chair/Finance

Mary E. Pritchard

Professor and Chair, School of Family, Consumer, & Nutrition Sciences, Northern Illinois University.

Organizational Contributions:

KON National President, Member of KON Leadership Faculty, Omicron Beta Gamma adviser, ACCI committees, AAFCS FE-RM committees, AAHS Board, CAFCS committee, ICEA editor, president, committees, IHEA board and committees.

Philosophy related to KON mission of empowered leaders:

As the trustee of the human and material resources of the society, the Kappa Omicron Nu board must direct these resources toward achievement of the outcome of

empowered leaders. Board actions should represent the values of the membership from a long-term perspective. Our presence should strengthen the profession.

Editorial Committee Candidates

Edna Page Anderson

Education Associate, Office of School Food services, South Carolina Department of Education.

Organizational Contributions:

KON Editorial Committee chair, KON Development Council, AAUW officer in South Carolina, AAFCS committees, AVA committee, AVERA reviewer, IFHE Council representative, NATEVHE Board member and committee chair, NCAHE Board and committee chair, Nutrition Council Board, AAFCS and affiliate officer.

Philosophy related to KON mission of empowered leaders:

I believe the mission is consistent with the values of KON. I also believe that in order to fulfill this mission KON must hold up its entire agenda—policies, programs, and practices—at every level to the mission of empowered leaders for consistency and adherence.

E. Audrey Clark

Professor, Department of Family Environmental Sciences, California State University, Northridge

Organizational Contributions:

CAFCS President, Chair of Council for Accreditation, AAFCS-LA District President.

Philosophy related to KON mission of empowered leaders:

Empowered leadership is built on the trust of the membership: recognition that the leader is committed to the vision held by members, will act ethically and responsibly on their behalf, and will seek ways to keep them informed and to develop consensus regarding issues related to their mission and goals.

*Editorial Committee
Candidates (continued . . .)*

Francille M. Firebaugh

Dean, College of Human Ecology,
Cornell University

Organizational Contributions:

Omicron Mu Co-Adviser, Assn. Of Women in Development board and committees, NASULGC board and committees, Ohio HEA president and committees, AHEAF.

Philosophy related to KON mission of empowered leaders:

I believe it is the duty of Kappa Omicron Nu to develop leaders who will work to promote scholarship, to produce scholarly publications, and to improve the lives of individuals and families.

Dottie Goss

Professor and Family Resource Management Specialist, Human Environmental Sciences, Oklahoma State University.

Organizational Contributions:

Omicron Rho Co-Adviser, AAFCS FE-RM division officer and committees, Assn. Of Women in Development board and committees, NASULGC board and committees, Ohio HEA president and committees, AHEAF.

Philosophy related to KON mission of empowered leaders:

Our members--each and every one--should have the confidence, knowledge, skills, and mentoring necessary to seek a variety of leadership roles in our society, profession, and in other arenas. I support our organization providing knowledge about the process of leadership development and mentoring to support members' growth.

*Nominating Committee
Candidates*

Glenda L. Lowry

Associate Professor, Director of Fashion Merchandising Program, Marshall University.

Organizational Contributions:

Kappa Epsilon Adviser, WVAFC president and committees, ITAA committees, Marshall University senate and committees.

Philosophy related to KON mission of empowered leaders:

Empowered leaders mean informed individuals who can see the whole picture and can make decisions in the best interests of everyone concerned when they are in positions of authority. These individuals can motivate, inspire, chastise, differentiate, focus, and represent whether leading or following.

Connie J. Ley

Professor, Family and Consumer Sciences, Illinois State University.

Organizational Contributions:

KON grant review committee, AAFCS Council for Certification and committees, AAFCS Agency Member Unit officer, AVERA officer and committees, CAFCS Board and committees.

Philosophy related to KON mission of empowered leaders:

It is my belief that each of us is a leader in various aspects of our lives. The individual leadership potential can be very unique because each of us is unique. Kappa Omicron Nu has emerged as a force for developing leadership in all FCS professionals and has endeavored to provide a means for each of us to reach our full potential as leaders.

Amelia G. Brown

Associate Dean, College of Applied Science and Technology, East Tennessee State University.

Organizational Contributions:

KON committees, CAFCS Board and committees, AAFCS committees, TAFCS officers, IFT Board.

Philosophy related to KON mission of empowered leaders:

Kappa Omicron Nu has established itself as a leader among honor societies. As we head into the next century, it is critical to select leaders as officers who can continue that direction and expand it to new horizons.

Kay R. Murphy

Assistant Professor, Family Relations and Child Development, Oklahoma State University.

Organizational Contributions:

Omicron Xi adviser, OAFCS officers and committees, OCFR officers, Oklahoma Family Resource Coalition officers.

Philosophy related to KON mission of empowered leaders:

As the adviser to a chapter I have experience with the intelligent, capable students who do not envision themselves as leaders. Because of this experience I have fully supported the KON mission to develop empowered leaders and view the mission as critical to the future of the profession. Mentoring others has been my role as an educator in public schools, higher education, in the classroom and while working with students outside the classroom. Thus my personal philosophy and KONs mission are integrated.

Frances Shipley

Professor and Chair, Human Environmental Sciences and Dean of the Graduate School, Northwest Missouri State University.

Organizational Contributions:

KOPhi national officer, Missouri HEA president, AAFCS committees, CAFCS officer

Philosophy related to KON mission of empowered leaders:

I believe there is a continuous need to develop individuals with

leadership qualities, skills, and commitment to professional vitality in FCS. Kappa Omicron Nu needs to take an active role in the development of new professional leaders who are adept scholars, creative thinkers, effective decision makers, and skillful communicators sensitive to the needs of individuals and the role of family and consumer sciences in society. Kappa Omicron Nu should lead in scholarship to expand the professional knowledge base and the development of new paradigms for the profession.

Mary W. McCray

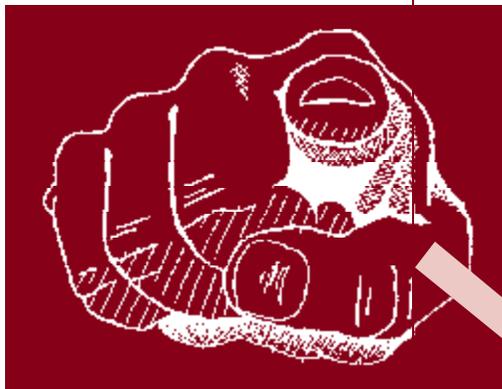
Professor Emeritus, Department of Human Ecology, Virginia State University.

Organizational Contributions:

Adviser of Kappa Beta Eta, VAFCS committees, AAFCS committees, DC HEA Board and committees.

Philosophy related to KON mission of empowered leaders:

It is the purpose of empowered leaders to promote activities that enhance the quality of life for individuals and families with emphasis on the following: high scholastic standards, leadership development, critical thinking, recognition for excellence, research, community involvement, cooperative efforts and networking, personal development, professionalism.



Don't forget to vote!

Cast your ballot by December 1, 1997!



KAPPA OMICRON NU HONOR SOCIETY

Kappa Omicron Nu Ballot

(Order Drawn by Lot)

Vote for Candidates as indicated

The Ballot must be postmarked no later than December 1, 1997.



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(vote for 1)**

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- Mary E. Pritchard

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(vote for 3)**

- Glenda L. Lowry
- Connie J. Ley
- Amelia G. Brown
- Kay R. Murphy
- Frances Shipley
- Mary W. McCray

**Editorial Committee
(vote for 2)**

- Edna Page Anderson
- E. Audrey Clark
- Francille M. Firebaugh
- Dottie Goss

Complete the ballot and mail to:

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Thank you.

The Nominating Committee: Betty J. Church, Judy K. Brun, Karen E. Craig, Charlotte Edwards, E. Katrina Rivers, Anne M. Weiner



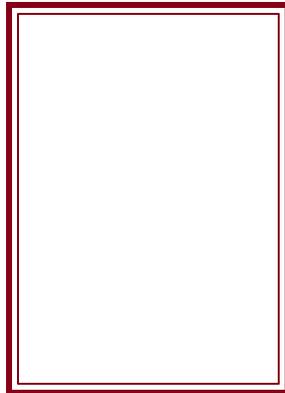
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Message from *Janelle Walter*

Chair, Board of Directors

This issue of Dialogue carries the candidate biographical information and the ballot for the 1998 election of the new members of our national leadership team. It is certainly reassuring that we have members who are willing to give generously of their time and expertise. We depend on all of you to participate in the election process and to consider applying for leadership positions in the future.



Opportunities are offered for you to indicate interest on the dues renewal statement, at KON functions, and through position announcements each Spring in Dialogue.

Our organization is contributing in significant ways to leadership, scholarship, and research for our various constituencies. For students we offer fellowships, awards, leadership opportunities, and professional development programming. Our professional members can take advantage of these same benefits as well as the diverse opportunities for writing and research. In this issue, you will note a report on a research grant

partially funded by Kappa Omicron Nu, and currently a number of research projects are being developed through our Leadership Academy. In addition to our serial publications, collections of thematic essays have contributed to the literature in our field—"The Concept of Theory in Home Economics" and "Toward a Theory of Family Well-Being." You will note elsewhere in this issue the Call for Papers for "Reflective Leading in the Public Interest: A Dialogue about Practice." We appreciate the collaboration of the two administrative groups in this important project. All of our efforts are intended to benefit the profession.

The Kappa Omicron Nu Board and Committees are working on your behalf to achieve the mission of Kappa Omicron Nu—empowered leaders. Your input and contributions are needed to continue our tradition of excellence.

We'll look forward to your support.

Correction

Due to a printing error, the name of Geraldine Olson of Oregon State University, winner of the Adviser Award of Excellence was unreadable. Our apologies and our congratulations on this outstanding achievement!

Kappa Omicron Nu Dialogue, Volume 7, No. 4 - Executive Director and Editor: Dorothy I. Mitsifer; Assistant Editor: Lisa Wootton.
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