

The Culturally Displaced and Project C.I.T.I.E.S.

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CULTURAL displacement, that is, the movement of people conditioned within one culture or subculture to the alien and sometimes hostile conditions of another, is a phenomenon having tremendous impact upon persons in the nation's central city areas.

While it is important that the culturally displaced adapt their life styles to the general configuration of the receiving culture, so is it important that the "receiving" culture be an "accepting" culture, recognizing the necessity for change to occur through time and the need of the displaced to retain certain satisfying elements of their original native identity.

Commensurate with and antithetical to the tremendous influx of migrants, in-migrants, and immigrants is the fact that central city agency personnel, those charged with serving the culturally displaced, are increasingly operating on a problem-reaction basis. Increasingly complex and sometimes contradictory operational procedures as well as staggering case loads too often force the final desperate measure of agency success to be determined by whether or not they can "keep the lid on." Harried personnel consciously or subconsciously substitute ethnocentrism for cultural understanding.

Project C.I.T.I.E.S. (Community Internship Training In an Educational Setting) is

designed to sensitize community-service and university personnel to the native conditioning processes of the Puerto Rican in-migrant.

A Study of Transition

In selecting the Puerto Rican as a representative transitional group, it is recognized that understandings and insights acquired regarding potential displacement problems of this group do not necessarily imply direct transferability to another. It is believed, however, that the Puerto Rican in-migrant represents an almost ideal mean of transitional representation between the in-migrant on the one hand and the in-migrant or mainland migrant on the other.

Project objectives thus seek the increased humanizing of agency and university personnel. Participants attend two orientation sessions which deal with recent Commonwealth social, economic, and political developments, as well as with the sheer mundane logistics of moving a participant group through a program. On the assumption that one is increasingly effective in a service role as he is commensurately familiar with the conditioning backgrounds of those he serves, the project participant then spends two weeks on the Island of Puerto Rico.

The group is afforded many opportuni-



The author welcomes Angel Calderon Cruz, on-site coordinator from Puerto Rico, who works with the C.I.T.I.E.S. participants.

ties to see that cultures are neither good nor bad, only different, and different for reasons observable through personal, on-the-spot observation—natural phenomena within the total influence of a person's natural environment.

Admittedly, this short span of time is barely adequate for purposes of sensitivity. Participants are not "immersed" in the culture; acculturation, therefore, is not a project objective. It is believed desirable, however, to involve participants in a limited experience rather than none at all. Pre- and post-internship sessions with Commonwealth and mainland indigenous representatives guard against false conceptions and sweeping generalizations.

Added to two pre-internship orientation sessions and a two-week experience on the Island is the opportunity, upon return, for interested university personnel to participate in a "reverse" internship. Thus, those wishing to combine the native culture experience with the additional insight of inner city follow-up may do so through assignment to an agency serving the day-to-day needs of those recently arrived on the mainland. Professors and students either teaching or preparing within areas of central city service may, if they wish, work hand-in-hand with those already in the field.

The following calendar of activities, with some modification each year, is representative.

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

Saturday. Depart Chicago O'Hare Airport 10:00 a.m. Arrive San Juan International 5:30 p.m. Group met by Commonwealth State Department personnel.

Sunday. 9:00 a.m.—Department of Barzanquitas for orientation and lunch at Commonwealth and University of Puerto Rico Training Center for Hotel Employees. Opportunity for discussion with professors and students arranged.

Monday. All-Day Familiarization Seminar.

9:00 a.m.—Orientation session with Commonwealth State Department personnel presentation and discussion of ethnic-cultural and historical evolution of Puerto Rico.

1:00 p.m.—Orientation session, Institute of Puerto Rican Culture. In-depth presentation and discussion of Puerto Rican culture and traditions as well as activities conducted for the preservation of Puerto Rican cultural identity.

Tuesday. C.R.U.V. (Corporation for Renovation and Urban Living.)

9:00 a.m.—Description of C.R.U.V. plans and activities followed by field experiences re: public housing developments, analysis of effects on family unit, costs, services, strengths, and weaknesses.

Wednesday. Public Welfare Division, Department of Social Services.

9:00 a.m.—Orientation and discussion followed by participant involvement in company with assigned social workers in field.

Thursday. Courts Administration.

9:00 a.m.—Meeting with Administrative Director, Puerto Rican Court System.

10:30 a.m.—Visit to court session and subsequent discussion with Juvenile Court personnel, San Juan Superior Court—Family Relations.

1:30 p.m.—Visit to courts in session and subsequent discussion with Criminal Affairs Division personnel (Probation System).

Friday. Department of Education.

9:00 a.m.—Meeting and discussion with Secretary of Education followed by visits to public schools in company with exchange teachers and students as well as Puerto Rican School System personnel.

Saturday-Tuesday. Participants depart for Adjuntas (rural mountain village) for extended visitation to and interaction with public and parochial schools, police, women's apparel fac-

tory, local coffee and citron ranches, and then with residents who have migrated to mainland and returned, are about to migrate, or have relatives in either category. Return to San Juan area Tuesday evening.

Wednesday. 9:00 a.m.—Police Headquarters Building for orientation, discussion, and subsequent field studies (gambling, vice, youth division, traffic, etc.).

Thursday. 9:00 a.m.—Meeting with Director, Psychiatric Hospital, Drug Addiction Center, to discuss various aspects of drug addiction, research and treatment programs, and outpatient follow-up activities.

1:30 p.m.—Parks and Recreation Headquarters for meeting with Director and subsequent visitation to operating programs. "Leisure time is often more conducive to deviant social behavior than work time. What Puerto Ricans do with their leisure time . . . should be meaningful to visiting agency personnel in their total perspective of a group's culture(s)." This statement is quoted from a Puerto Rican official.

Friday. Individual participant follow-up activities on respective agency basis. (Those not having scheduled counterpart agency are scheduled, or schedule themselves, with those contacts which they feel to be most appropriate to "back home" roles.)

Saturday. 9:00 a.m.—Evaluation Seminar with Department of State personnel and/or participant-selected Island representatives.

7:00 p.m.—Depart for mainland.

This calendar of activities represents attempts to incorporate the following features into the program:

1. Puerto Rican agencies listed are generally counterparts of those within which participants work in northern Illinois. In planning activities with such agencies, the Director has stressed the importance of a minimum of lecturing-type orientation and the necessity for maximum emphasis upon field-type, on-site experiences.

2. While participant housing is provided in the metropolitan San Juan area (the location of all Puerto Rican agency headquarters), early and continuous activities are planned for rural-type experiences, those most appropriately suited to interaction with potential Puerto Rican in-migrants.

3. Each year's calendar has provided for "follow-up" days. The total number of days allocated for this purpose varies each year as Title I (Higher Education Act) and university funds collectively influence the length of on-Island residence. Follow-up days permit individual participants the opportunity to pursue respective agency interests in depth.

4. Built-in cross-agency exposure—for example, police become familiar with school activities and vice versa—is believed essential to post-internship continuing cooperation as each agency person sees at firsthand the contributions (sometimes overlapping) and commonly shared goals of the other.

Within two months following return to the mainland, each participant is asked to submit a written evaluative statement regarding project strengths, weaknesses, and "back home" application of insights and understandings gained as a result of project experience. In addition, a 1½-day evaluation session is scheduled wherein discussions are held relative to these three evaluation points, and participants are given the opportunity to raise further questions relating to any aspect of the total experience. Again, a member of the Commonwealth State Department and/or a central city representative is on hand to work with the group.

Project C.I.T.I.E.S., now completing its fifth year, is a small project by usual funding standards and total number of participants involved. It has been and is, however, a project dedicated to human understanding and the underlying premise that agency service effectiveness will only be achieved as those in the agency role truly understand the "client" population they serve. There must still be a place in the age of accountability and of number-of-bricks-laid-per-hour society to accept as significant the comment of participant after participant upon return to the mainland: "I am now a little bit Puerto Rican."

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