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#### Experiment At Prairie View

#### College Educates Underprivileged

periment at Prairie View A&M College to upgrade the skills and social attitudes of disadvantaged rural persons in a 12-county area them better employment oppor-

tunities in urban environments. Entitled the Experimental and Demonstration Manpower Project, the program involves training in a specific job for each individual. Nine categories of trade and office occupations are being taught. In addition, the training includes cultural orientation and basic education in such fields as reading, writing, expressing oneself and

The age range of the trainees is from 18 to over 45, and both males and females participate. Most trainees have failed to complete high school, and many have failed to complete elementary

The 12 counties from which trainees have been drawn include Austin, Brazos, Burleson, Colorado, Fayette, Fort Bend, Grimes, Harris, Montgomery, San Jacinto, Waller and Washington.

'We are hopeful," said Dr. A. I. Thomas, president of the college, "that this project will score significant breakthroughs in methods of training, counseling and job placement to pave the way for greater job satisfaction, adequate income and social awareness of the deprived adults and their families in our rural population

While the immediate goals are humanitarian, in that we wish to uplift these individuals both

long-range benefits to our society in general, in terms of more productive members of the communwith the purpose of affording ity and thus less need for welfare

programs.' Prairie View conducts the program in cooperation with the Texas Employment Commission and the Texas Education Agency. The U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare is providing funds for operation of the project, as well as base and travel allowances for the

While similar programs have been conducted at other locations in the United States, the Prairie View experiment differs conspicuously from most in that the trainees commute daily from their homes to the campus, instead of living on campus. Trainees commute by buses which originate in Houston, Bryan, La Grange and Magnolia, with several pick-up points along the

The commuting feature, adopted because the program is aimed at heads of families or households, was better for all family members with the trainees continuing to live at home.

The project experiments also with special techniques of evaluating trainee progress and attitudes and counseling the trainees and families on personal as well as career aspects of their lives.

Another feature of the program, the establishment of a Business - Industry-Government Council, observes the progress of

economically and socially", Dr. training and counsels the project Thomas continued, "we foresee on both the training and job placement phases of the program. Some 20 executives of business, industry and government in this area will serve on the council.

Training is held from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, with the related basic education and cultural orientation taking place during parts of each

Two sections of 37 weeks each, with one following the other, are planned for auto mechanics, dry cleaners-pressers, hotel and restaurant cooks, landscape gardeners and meat cutters. The total for these classes eventually will be 200.

Three clery-typist classes totaling 80 students will be conducted for 22 weeks. At that point 20 of the students will be selected

stenography and the other 40 will be divided into two sections for 12 weeks of training as key punch operators. Twenty of the key punch trainees will then be selected for 40 more weeks of training in computer programming.

In all, the project envisions training 280 persons over an 18month period. Although nearly 2.000 persons made initial applications for training during an extensive recruiting effort over the past few months, the project staff is continuing to seek out persons who are both in need of the training and higher income and are deemed capable of advancing in the program.

Full-time counselors and job placement specialists assist with these important aspects of the

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