



Cornwall Center for Metropolitan Studies
E-Newsletter – March 5, 2003

Announcements

New Editions to the Cornwall Center's Website

Two new sections have been added to the Cornwall Center's website: [External Resources](#) and [Events](#). The *External Resources* section gives site visitors access to external links that are useful when conducting urban research. The external sites have been organized into categories, and include: housing, planning, economic development, community development, Newark resources, and New Jersey resources. The new *Events* section lists upcoming Cornwall sponsored events. The Center's web address is www.cornwall.rutgers.edu. These two sections are just the beginning as we strive to make the site a resource for the local research community.

Rutgers-Newark Faculty Head to the Urban Affairs Conference

Several Rutgers-Newark faculty will attend the annual Urban Affairs Conference in Cleveland, OH. The conference titled “Shaping Our Urban Future-Utilizing Creativity, Vision, Policy and Advocacy to Make Change” will run from March 26th to March 29th.

Dr. Elizabeth Strom, Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science, will present her paper, “**The Arts as Economic Development Strategy**”. The paper examines the increasing use of cultural policies by local economic development agencies as economic development tools. The research relies on a study of the web sites and annual reports of several hundred public and nonprofit development organizations in large US cities, as well as case study research in Charlotte, Seattle, Philadelphia, and Newark. The case study research was funded by the Cornwall Center.

Dr. Dennis Gale, Professor in the Departments of Public Administration and Political Science, will moderate a panel entitled: “**Revitalizing the City: Federal, Regional, and Local Roles**”. This panel examines the challenges of stimulating meaningful revitalization in central cities. Presenters will explore: 1) fiscal policies in the construction of a performing arts and sports arena, 2) early evaluation of changes in a key federal revitalization program, and 3) survey results shedding light on the propensity of suburbanites to visit their central city for entertainment and culture.

Panel papers to be presented:

1. Gerald Miller and Jonathan Justice, “**Revitalization, the Performing Arts Broadly Defined, and their Financing in Newark**”
2. Dan Schulgasser, “**Forward to the Past: An Early Evaluation of HUD’s Round III Empowerment Zones/ Renewal Communities Program**”
3. Wayne Eastman and Dennis Gale, “**Attracting Suburbanites into Newark: An Attitudinal Survey**”

Cornwall Center for Metropolitan Studies Publications

Senior Research Analyst, Dr. Kelly Robinson recently contributed a chapter entitled “**Revolving Loan Funds**” to *Financing Economic Development in the 21st Century*, edited by Sammis B. White, Richard D. Bingham, and Edward W. Hill. The publisher is M.E. Sharpe of Armonk, NY. This 2003 book is a follow-up to the editors’ 1990 classic, *Financing Economic Development*, and includes lots of new material and several new chapters.

Rutgers-Newark Faculty Publications

Dr. Sherri-Ann Butterfield, Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, recently authored the book chapter: “**Something in Between: Locating Identity Among Second-Generation West Indians in New York City**” in *Mighty Change, Tall Within: Black Identity In The Hudson Valley*. Myra Armstead (ed). New York: SUNY Press.

News

Local News

Snead Prevails in Second School Board Vote

The Newark schools advisory board has affirmed its support for a new leader despite strong public opposition. In a controversial 5-4 decision the board opted to offer the job to Waterbury, Connecticut Superintendent David Snead over the district’s acting Superintendent, Marion Bolden. The decision mirrored an earlier vote that was thrown out because it was conducted in executive session and prior to public comment. Bolden supporters packed the meeting on February 25th hoping to influence board members to reconsider.

The final decision is in the hands of the state board of education that has run the district since 1995. New Jersey Education Commissioner William Librera will make his recommendation to the board on March 5.

Related article: “Newark board votes to oust school chief.” Star-Ledger, Wednesday, February 26, 2003.

<http://www.nj.com/news/ledger/jersey/index.ssf?/base/news-0/1046247066238190.xml>

Decline in Number of Essex County School Board Hopefuls

The number of candidates for Essex County school board seats has declined significantly. As the February 24 filing date passed, the *Star-Ledger* reports that only half the district races are contested. Even in Newark, where 14 individuals will vie for the three available positions, the number is down from 19 last year. The elections will take place on April 15.

Related article: “Fewer run for school seats in Essex.” Star-Ledger, Tuesday, February 25, 2003.

<http://www.nj.com/news/ledger/essex/index.ssf?/base/news-2/1046157252324130.xml>

In related news, the New Jersey Department of Education has posted the election season calendar and timetable on its web site. The *2003 School Election and Budget Procedures Calendar* is available at: <http://www.nj.gov/njded/finance/fp/calendar.pdf>

Newark Crime Statistics

The Newark police department reports that the city continues a nearly decade long drop in crime that has decreased rates in some categories by more than 50%. From 2000 to 2001 the overall crime rate declined by 4.67%.

The theft rate declined by 14%, and auto theft dropped another 11%—down more than 55% since it's apex in the early 90's. While Newark's homicide rate remains above average compared to similar urban municipalities, the total number of murders declined from 2001 to 2002.

Access the latest crime statistics at: <http://www.newarkpd.org/> then select stats.

Newark, Essex County launch anti-gang campaign

Combating gang violence is the number one youth-related priority for the law enforcement community in Newark and Essex County, according to Newark Mayor Sharpe James and Deputy Mayor Ras Baraka at a summit held at Rutgers-Newark's Paul Robeson Center on February 13. The summit brought together local leaders, public officials, and social service workers for a graphic presentation on local gang culture and its devastating effect. Newark leaders proposed a "holistic" approach that includes encouraging healthy lifestyles and providing positive incentives and diversions for young people.

Other Essex County leaders have also weighed in—participating in town meetings and announcing local initiatives directed at reducing the spread of gang violence. The mayors of Irvington, East Orange, and Maplewood, joined a host of other local leaders at a recent meeting that proclaimed the need for a collaborative effort to combat gangs. Irvington is the site of a gang-related drug crackdown launched by state and local police and the FBI. Local communities are calling for better intelligence, stiffer penalties, and stepped up prosecution of offenders.

Evidence of gang membership and related violence has increased dramatically in Newark and Essex County in recent years. Police officials estimate that Newark is home to more than 2,600 gang members, a figure that represents a significant increase in recent years.

Related articles: "Newark tries to coordinate anti-gang game plan." Star-Ledger, Friday, February 14, 2003.

<http://www.nj.com/news/ledger/essex/index.ssf?/base/news-2/1045207854303680.xml>

"The raids begin, to Irvington's relief." Star Ledger, Friday, February 21, 2003.

<http://www.nj.com/news/ledger/jersey/index.ssf?/base/news-3/104581186726710.xml>

"Officials call for a broader team-up to stem gangs." Star-Ledger, Friday, February 28, 2003.

<http://www.nj.com/news/ledger/essex/index.ssf?/base/news-2/1046416902234550.xml>

Newark's Watershed Proposal

The Newark City Council recently approved the mayor's plan to shift control of the city's watershed and water utility operations to a newly created nonprofit agency. The 5-4 vote faced opposition from council members who believed the proposed plan would result in significantly higher water prices.

Mayor Sharpe James contends that the plan will provide more than \$75 million dollars in revenue for the city. James proposes to use the new revenue to provide property tax relief as the

city phases in a property reevaluation program that could cause some properties' tax burden to increase by more than 30%.

Related article: "Watershed Proposal Advances in Council." Star Ledger, Thursday, February 20, 2003. <http://www.nj.com/news/ledger/essex/index.ssf?/base/news-2/1045725076116600.xml>

New Tax Assessments Spark Concern Among Property Owners

The results of Newark's first tax reevaluation in 42 years generated protests among some local property owners worried the increased values will translate into much higher taxes. The City Council is braced to challenge the newly assessed property values by filing suit against the state-appointed assessment firm alleging the inspections were not performed correctly. The full impact of the assessment on tax bills remains unclear pending adoption of a new tax rate and passage of proposed offsets, like the mayor's Water Optimization plan.

Related article: "Newark rolls out new tax assessments." Star-Ledger, Sunday, March 2, 2003. <http://www.nj.com/news/ledger/essex/index.ssf?/base/news-2/104658917264230.xml>

State News

New Jersey Child Welfare Agency Gets New Leadership

Human Services Commissioner Gwendolyn Harris announced the appointment of Colleen Maguire to lead reform of the states' child protective services system. Under Maguire's direction a new Division of Child Protection and Permanency will replace the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS). The streamlined agency will focus exclusively on child abuse investigations, foster care, and adoption placements. The beleaguered DYFS fell into sharp criticism for apparent administrative failures in a shocking case of abuse and death involving three Newark brothers.

Related article: "Child welfare agency gets no-nonsense boss." Star-Ledger, Friday, February 21, 2003.

<http://www.nj.com/search/index.ssf?/base/news-0/104581228926710.xml?starledger>

National News

Congress finalizes FY2003 spending plan for domestic programs

(Source: LISC Online eNewsletter)

Congress set FY 2003 spending levels on domestic programs for the fiscal year that began last October 1. HOME funding is increasing in FY 2003 by \$125 million, to \$1.9 billion. In addition, \$75 million will be available through states and localities for HOME-eligible down payment and closing cost assistance to homebuyers. CDBG funding to localities and states will be roughly flat. Section 8 vouchers will be renewed, but no incremental vouchers are funded. The CDFI Fund will receive \$75 million, down from \$80 million. Section 4 capacity building is funded at \$28.25 million through LISC and the Enterprise Foundation, plus \$4.25 million through Habitat for Humanity International. Rural Housing and Economic Development grants will total \$25 million. Rural Community Development Initiative will provide \$6 million.

Excerpt from: Local Initiative Support Corporation eNewsletter, February 25, 2003. For a full text version of the newsletter visit:

<http://www.liscnet.org/resources/enews/2003/feb/25/enews.html>

For a summary on the status of all FY2003 appropriations bills visit:
<http://thomas.loc.gov/home/approp/app03.html>

Upcoming Events

Faculty Seminars

The first Spring 2003 Cornwall Faculty Seminar has been moved to **Thursday, March 13th from 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm**. This event will be held in cooperation with the Institute for Ethnicity, Culture, and the Modern Experience. Dr. Sherri-Ann Butterfield will present, "**Privilege and Peril: Ethnic Identity and Socioeconomic Status Among Second Generation West Indian Immigrants**". The seminar will be held in the Robeson Campus Center. If you are interested in attending please contact Ms. Irene Welch at 973-353-1750 ext. 221 or Irenew@andromeda.rutgers.edu.

The Cornwall Center for Metropolitan Studies will continue to circulate our E-Newsletter to publicize urban-related topics and events on the Newark Campus.

If you would like to add an item to our newsletter or if you would like to add / remove a name from our list please contact Katherine Accousti at accousti@andromeda.rutgers.edu or 973-353-1750 ext. 224.

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