

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF
CHARLES LOUIS KINCANNON
DIRECTOR, U.S. CENSUS BUREAU**

The 2010 Census: Recruiting, Hiring, and Training a Diverse Workforce

**Before the Subcommittee on Information Policy, Census, and National Archives
U.S. House of Representatives**

26 July 2007

Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity to discuss the U.S. Census Bureau's commitment to diversity—a commitment implicit in our unique mission to serve as the leading source of data about the nation's people and our economy. We collect information throughout America in every neighborhood and community, from O'Fallon Park in St. Louis, Missouri to Edgemont in Dayton, Ohio. It is vital to the quality of the data we produce to maintain public trust and cooperation, starting with a workforce that looks and sounds like America. Diversity not only encourages public trust, it increases our ability to work in diverse communities by enriching our perspective. For the Census Bureau, diversity is who we are as a nation and underscores the fundamental cultural values of our people.

The primary goals of the Census Bureau's Strategic Plan are to provide benchmark and current measures of our population and economy. However, we could not accomplish these goals without first achieving our supporting goal: to "*maintain a high quality and motivated workforce and provide the environment to support them.*" One of our key objectives in meeting this goal is to "promote a culture of achievement by investing in human capital;" this includes acknowledging the need for proper planning "to ensure that the skill mix of the federal workforce will enable the Census Bureau to meet its mission. As the nation becomes more diverse, the Census Bureau's staff must reflect the increasing diversity of the American population if it is to do its job effectively," and this expectation is included as part of the performance plan for every manager.¹ For the Census Bureau, diversity encompasses the range of ways in which we differ from one another including race, gender, age, ethnicity, and physical ability, but also other less obvious characteristics such as educational background, geographic location, and work experience.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, *U.S. Census Bureau Strategic Plan FY 2007-2012*. Washington, DC, June 2007, page 13.

To ensure the Census Bureau fulfills its commitments with regard to diversity, we have undertaken a number of organizational changes such as the establishment of the Diversity Program Office and the Diversity Council. In addition, several initiatives have been implemented to further enhance our efforts, such as recruiting and internship programs directed at increasing diversity within the agency. The Diversity Program Office is a component of the Human Resources Division and manages the programs that promote awareness and understanding of the importance of diversity to the Census Bureau's mission. This office is responsible for implementing broad-based diversity education programs, collaborating on recruitment and retention strategies, and developing resources and initiatives to promote diversity tenets as drivers of organizational change. This office is also responsible for supporting the Diversity Council, which is an advisory group comprised of management and union representatives. The goals of the council are to promote diversity awareness and understanding; review and evaluate policies and practices; and provide recommendations on diversity management at all levels of the Census Bureau. Diversity is more than mere inclusion; the Census Bureau views diversity comprehensively, taking diversity into consideration in every aspect of our work, from recruiting to hiring to workforce development to acquisitions. The Diversity Program Office and Diversity Council's mandates address a broad range of activities, including training, opportunity, and accessibility.

One of the most important long-term strategies for ensuring a highly qualified, motivated, and diverse workforce is through opportunity, specifically with recruitment and internships. The Census Bureau maintains a robust college recruitment program. As part of our efforts, key members of the Census Bureau's staff and management attend career fairs, conduct on-campus interviews, hold information sessions, and partnership with university officials and campus minority organizations. Annually, we visit more than seventy colleges, nearly half of which are minority serving institutions, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities, to recruit entry level candidates for mission critical positions such as statisticians, mathematical statisticians, information technology specialists, geographers, and cartographers. Of those successfully recruited into entry level mission critical positions last year, nearly one-third were from minority serving institutions, Hispanic serving institutions or institutions with considerable minority enrollment.

The Census Bureau uses internships to build a pipeline of diverse, high quality talent at the entry level; develop skills and competencies necessary for our mission critical occupations; and as a result, increase the talent pool for our future workforce. We have successfully worked with several organizations to reach out to minority students,

including Oak Ridge Associated Universities (ORAU), the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), Minority Access, and American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES). We partner with the Workforce Recruitment Program that reaches out to and places students with disabilities, encouraging them to apply for federal employment. We also effectively utilize the Federal Career Intern Program (FCIP), Presidential Management Fellows Program (PMF) and the Joint Program in Survey Methodology (JPSM), as well as a post-doctoral research program to attract candidates with particularly valuable skills. This year, we recruited 130 interns. 25 percent are African American, 22 percent are Hispanic, and 4 percent are Asian or Pacific Islanders. Our goal in recruiting these interns is to give them an opportunity to contribute in a meaningful way to the Census Bureau's mission. To that end, these are not merely summer jobs; we encourage the Census Bureau's managers and team leaders to give interns the opportunity to participate in professional activities and discussions. Many interns have been surprised by the quality of their experience and that they were given the opportunity to do "real work" alongside the professionals at the Census Bureau.

Our strategies to create opportunities and encourage interns to consider federal service and our efforts to form partnerships with organizations and universities have been quite successful. These partnerships are essential in addressing current and future needs. Two noteworthy partnerships are with the University of Puerto Rico and the University of Texas, San Antonio. The goal of these partnerships is to help increase the representation of Hispanic Americans at the Census Bureau, as well as promote research opportunities and collaboration between the Census Bureau and university faculty. We have presented a series of professional and technical lectures at each university, many conducted by senior management at the Census Bureau. These lectures and other research opportunities help promote interest in the Census Bureau and the federal statistical system, as well as encourage students to pursue opportunities at the Census Bureau. Over the last three years, our partnership efforts have yielded internship opportunities for 72 students and placements of 16 diverse, high caliber professionals into permanent positions. These partnerships have proven to be a successful strategy in attracting and hiring diverse talent.

Just as we are working to build this pipeline, we continue to recognize the importance of maintaining and increasing diversity among our current workforce. As we fill vacancies, especially at the higher grade levels, we advertise both externally (non-government) and internally (government). This ensures that we attract and yield a large diverse candidate pool. Additionally, we are reaching out to stakeholders, such as members of the Race and Ethnic Advisory Committees and professional and minority

organizations. We have identified several strategic activities also intended to develop a more diverse workforce, such as conducting focus groups with current employees and attending annual conferences of minority organizations. Just as we are looking for bright talent at the entry level, we are also looking for bright “mid-career” talent to fill higher grade positions, as well as the SES positions. Over the past two years, approximately 64 percent of the vacated SES positions were filled by minorities and/or women. The Census Bureau’s current headquarters workforce, including all levels is comprised of approximately four thousand employees—nearly thirty percent are from minority communities. This proportion is largely consistent with minority participation in the civilian labor force. Once again, nearly 30 percent of the employees in the higher grades (GS13 through SES) are members of minority communities. Of these employees approximately 17 percent are African American, seven percent are Asian, four percent are Latino, and one percent are American Indian or Alaska Native.

It is important to build upon the progress we’ve made over the past few years, especially as we begin gearing up for the decennial census. We will hire more than 500,000 people to work in every neighborhood. As mentioned earlier, it is especially vital to our success to recruit a diverse workforce. We are building on the recruiting success of Census 2000, when we met or exceeded our recruiting goals within minority communities. Our recruiting strategy for the 2010 Census includes proven tools such as competitive pay, hiring exemptions, hiring locally from the communities we are enumerating, and a census recruiting website and toll-free jobs line. Just as in Census 2000, we have contracted with Westat, a research organization, to analyze the pay rates for each county in the United States to establish the hourly pay rates according to the local conditions. We are also seeking waivers and hiring exemptions from restrictions that would affect the hiring, benefits, or pay of certain individuals. For example, we intend to seek waivers or exemptions for persons receiving benefits from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

For those seeking jobs, we intend to make it easier to find the jobs. We are setting up a recruiting website that will provide key information such as local pay rates and job requirements. The toll-free jobs line will give applicants a quick, easy, and efficient way to contact the local census office (LCO) in their area, where staffers will be ready to respond to questions as well as schedule callers to take the test we require as part of the application process. It is important to emphasize the importance of local recruitment and hiring. The Census Bureau intends to advertise jobs within each community working with partner organizations and the media. In fact, we have posted a Request for Information in preparation of seeking small, disadvantaged businesses to help us purchase local media in order to place recruitment advertisements throughout the

country. Of course, we will not simply rely on advertising to recruit decennial workers. We will hire recruiting assistants for each LCO to work with local community organizations to recruit census workers in the neighborhoods in which they live.

The Census Bureau also is working to emphasize diversity in our major 2010 Census contracts. The recipients of each contract will be required to meet strong goals for small disadvantaged businesses, which include minority-owned businesses. For example, the Field Data Collection Automation contract has a small disadvantaged businesses goal of eight percent, while the goal for the Decennial Response Integration System contract is ten percent. These goals will ensure that over \$50 million of each contract is targeted to small, disadvantaged businesses. The goals for the communications contract we will award in September will be as strong. Finally, the award fees earned by the companies receiving 2010 contracts will be based in part on the fulfillment of the established subcontracting goals.

We believe these aggressive strategies, along with our outreach and partnership efforts, will contribute to a more accurate census, especially in hard-to-count communities. In fact, we are relying on our partners to help promote census jobs within their communities and to identify other local organizations and contacts. The partnership and recruiting staff will be in close contact with our partners as they seek to publicize jobs and to find convenient and safe locations for testing and training space, which is incredibly important both in terms of saving resources and allowing people to feel comfortable about taking jobs with the census.

In an ever-changing nation, we must continue to implement strategies that enhance our efforts to recruit a diverse and skilled workforce. A diverse workforce that looks and sounds like America is crucial to gaining the public trust and cooperation required for a successful census. The Census Bureau is committed to this goal and to ensuring we have the right workforce to count every person living in America. We believe this is a goal that is consistent with the highest ideals of our nation and is, ultimately, the source of our strength as a people.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for support of these goals, and I would be happy to answer any questions.