



# Briefing

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EDITOR

## A DIVERSITY OF ISSUES

Diversity in the workplace: If you haven't given it much thought, you'd better start thinking. The U.S. work force is becoming increasingly diverse. By the year 2000, women will make up almost half the work force and minorities and immigrants will hold at least a fourth of jobs. Only a small percentage of those entering the work force will be white men.

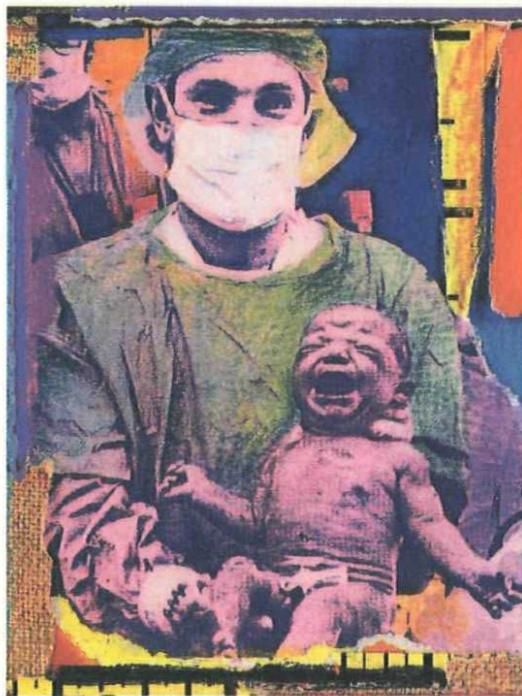
In addition to cultural, ethnic, and gender differences, "diversity" also refers to disparities in age, educational level, and physical ability. How will Catholic healthcare organizations attract and retain culturally diverse employees? How will they resolve conflicts resulting from cultural differences?

The changing demographics of the work force reflect the changes in our society. How will Catholic healthcare organizations satisfy their diverse communities and reach their goal to improve those communities' overall health?

To answer these questions, Portia L. Hunt identifies the skills leaders in the healing ministry must develop if they are to sensitively utilize human resources and understand the community and its needs (p. 26). Robert L. Veninga (p. 30) adds specific suggestions for creating an environment where diverse employees are valued as a source of skills and strength. He offers guidelines for assessing and changing hiring practices; developing diversity goals, so the work force reflects the community's composition; and identifying and resolving conflict.

In an interview with *Health Progress's* Gordon Burnside on p. 36, Peter Giammalvo de-

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scribes how Holy Cross Health System, South Bend, IN, has taken its diversity efforts beyond affirmative action. Each facility in the system has developed educational programs for employees and included diversity in strategic plans, taking into account the cultural, ethnic, and religious groups in its area.

Edward Morgan and Deborah D. Sampsel look at a proactive approach to serving a culturally diverse population (p. 38). Mercy Hospital, Toledo, OH, went into the community to find out how the hospital's outreach programs for the elderly could attract more African Americans and Hispanics. Researchers learned that the hospital's beliefs about community needs did not always match what community residents wanted.

The Mercy Hospital article shows that the first step toward making the most of diversity occurs when people become conscious of others' values, beliefs, needs, struggles. The personal perspective of journalist Rachel L. Jones on p. 34 reminds us of the wisdom in using God-given resources effectively and responsibly. We must not waste human talents and potential.

## ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

Nor must we squander environmental resources. This is especially true for Catholic organizations, which espouse the Catholic values of the common good and respect for human dignity—values that are lived out in a respect for the planet's limited resources.

The Catholic Health Association, like many CHA members, recycles waste paper, cans, cardboard, and other items. For some time, *Health Progress* has been printed on recycled paper with soy-based ink. Now we have discontinued the ultraviolet coating on the cover, making the entire journal recyclable.

Unfortunately, readers in some communities may have trouble finding recycling companies that accept magazines. The American Forest and Paper Association (800-878-8878) publishes a free directory to help *communities* find buyers and markets for their recyclable paper, although it does not address magazines specifically and is not geared to individual consumers. As we learn more, we'll keep you posted.