Immigration Reform: Dr. Ray Marshall Explains How Other Countries Have Succeeded

The First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin invited Dr. Ray Marshall to speak at their Public Affairs Forum on January 27th. The Public Affairs Forum provides a platform for people with influence in the world of public policy to present on topics of import to the people of Austin. From the city’s mayor to state legislators and public functionaries, these speakers provide the public with thought provoking analysis of today’s most pressing issues.

Dr. Ray Marshall, former Secretary of Labor and the Center’s founder, returned to the Public Affairs Forum to speak about an issue that has been central to his decades-long career in public policy - immigration reform. The title of Dr. Marshall's address was, Sensible Immigration Reform: Lessons from Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom.

Addressing the need for immigration reform in America head-on, Dr. Marshall took an in-depth look at what other ‘immigrant countries’ have done to incorporate laborers from abroad, primarily focusing on how the United States could benefit from their experience. As the United States struggles with the negative impact of having millions of undocumented workers that labor without the benefit of workers' rights and who often earn well below a living wage, it is clear that a new policy must be formulated to address this issue.
The Center has published a report that analyzes the outcomes of local workforce development services funded by Travis County. Research found reason for optimism, with positive results shown across the board even during a national recession.

**RMC in the Press**

**Dr. Ray Marshall's Immigration Policy Proposal is Referenced in the New York Times.** As immigration reform takes center stage for lawmakers in Washington, the Center's namesake adds to this discussion. Suggesting that the Federal Government create a panel of experts to determine the number of temporary visas granted to immigrants, based on economic sector data, Dr. Marshall's plan addresses the real dilemma facing American immigration policy today. High demand for unskilled workers combined with restricted access to temporary visas.

**Center is Awarded Contract for HACA ROSS**

The Ray Marshall Center has been awarded a contract to conduct a detailed process analysis of the Resident Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) Program administered by the Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA). The ROSS Program supports Priority One programs that connect public housing residents with workforce development and supportive services available through community-based partnerships. The evaluation will include a detailed examination of client flow, services, partnerships, and outcomes, as well as forms and procedures for client intake, initial assessment, case management, and program performance measurement. The ROSS Services Delivery Assessment Report will be completed June, 2013. Heath Prince and Dan O'Shea are serving as co-principal investigators for the project.

**Dan O'Shea Presents GROW in McAllen**

Dan O'Shea represented the Ray Marshall Center, Project GROW's evaluator, at a two-day project launch event on January 24th and 25th in McAllen. The event included participatory workshops and presentations from the RMC, technical assistance providers, administrators, planners, and program service delivery staff. Project GROW partners discussed ongoing work on programmatic and data collection refinements, as well as processes related to client flow, education and training services, and financial and program reporting requirements. Project GROW intends to begin enrolling clients by mid-March of this year. RMC research staff will begin field work in the BWA region in April.

Grow Regional Opportunity for the Workforce: Expanding the Border for Lower Skilled Adults (GROW) is a Department of Labor funded project that aims to transform the workforce development system in a five-WIB region along the Texas-Mexico border. The Border Workforce Alliance (BWA) - a consortium comprised of the Cameron, Lower Rio, Middle Rio, South Texas and Upper Rio Workforce Investment Boards - is partnering with regional employers, one-stop operators, community colleges, training providers, and community-based organizations, as well as with national workforce intermediary Jobs for the Future, to align and strengthen workforce system components in order to accelerate credential attainment and career entry by lower-skilled
promotes illegal immigration and hinders immigrants' ability to access workers rights and adequate living wages. Read the article here.

Dr. Christopher King Speaks on the Federal Reserve's Economic Development Podcast Series. RMC Director, Chris King, was interviewed by Alfreda Norman from the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. As Vice President and Community Development Officer, Ms. Norman promotes community and economic development and fair and impartial access to credit across the Eleventh District in Texas. Click here to listen to the podcast.

The Build a Better Texas Report was Released at the State Capitol
This report, produced by the Workers Defense Project, garnered statewide attention when it was released in January. Dr. Ray Marshall wrote the introduction to the report and the Center adults, and to meet the skilled workforce needs of key industry sector employers.

The Local Investments in Workforce Development Evaluation: Travis County-funded 2009/2010 Participants Plus, Longer-Term Outcomes for Capital IDEA

The Ray Marshall Center has produced a report that analyzes the outcomes of local workforce development services funded by Travis County. In 2010, the County invested $1.91 million through ten providers that provide training and wrap-around programs to help lower income and disadvantaged workers develop workforce skills for long term career development. The Local Workforce Services Evaluation draws on several data points in order to answer questions such as; "are services being delivered as planned?" and, "what outcomes are achieved?"

The Ray Marshall Center analyzed employment data on 4,150 participants, collected before, during, and after their participation in the program. Using employment and earnings as the two primary performance measures for this evaluation, the Ray Marshall Center's analysis shows positive results across the board, despite the fact that the country experienced a severe recession during the time-period under analysis. Read it here.

Dr. Ray Marshall and RMC Principal Investigators Contribute to Release of Build a Better Texas

"Low wages, hazardous work, and payroll fraud inflict high costs on Texas residents, taxpayers, and responsible employers. Companies that do not pay a living wage are being subsidized by workers, their families, and the public. The cost of injuries, illness and death of uninsured workers are borne by their families, medical providers, and employers who do provide health insurance. In the absence of administrative remedies and effective employee protections, workers are forced to seek relief through litigation, which can be uncertain, time consuming, and expensive," states Dr. Ray Marshall in his introductory comments for "Build a Better Texas: Construction Working Conditions in the Lone Star State." Center researchers Bob Glover and Dan O'Shea served on the Academic Advisory Committee for this report released by the Workers Defense Project during a press conference at the Texas State Capitol on January 29, 2013. You can read Dr. Marshall's introduction and the complete report here.
Upcoming Events

Developing the Workforce Needed to Fuel Our Companies:
February 27th
Center Associate Director, Dr. Heath Prince, will travel to Houston to present on the Regional CEO Conference Panel at the event hosted by JP Morgan Chase & Co.

Center Research Associate Greg Cumpton will Present to CREST on Monday, February 25th. Greg Cumpton will give the Austin Chamber of Commerce's College Readiness and Enrollment Support Task Force (CREST) an update on the Student Futures Project.

The Ray Marshall Center Congratulates Associate Director, Dr. Heath Prince, for Completing and Receiving His Ph.D.

In December, Heath Prince completed his research on multidimensional poverty measurement in developing countries and received his PhD in social policy from the Heller School at Brandeis University. Dr. Prince joined the Ray Marshall Center in March 2012 as associate director and research scientist, after spending the early part of his career at the Center for Law and Social Policy and Jobs for the Future. He is responsible for leading and contributing to several key research projects in education and workforce development as well as providing administrative oversight of Center operations. Congratulations Dr. Prince!

Dr. Christopher King Speaks on the Federal Reserve's Economic Development Podcast Series

Dr. Christopher King, Director at the Ray Marshall Center, spoke to Alfreda Norman with the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas on the Federal Reserve's Economic Development Podcast Series in December. The topic of discussion for the podcast was, "Why Connecting Economic and Workforce Development Matters." You can listen here, or read the full transcript of the interview here. In light of recent shifts towards a service and knowledge economy, and further expounding upon the presentation he gave to the Future of Workforce Development Conference in Kansas City, Dr. King explains that economic development and workforce development paradigms have begun to merge in the last decade. In a less hierarchical marketplace, employers have less time to develop the long-term skills that are
needed of their employees. Local workforce boards and community and technical colleges are increasingly relied upon to provide much needed training for workers who can no longer depend on the traditional "career ladder," as companies have moved away from long-term worker training models. Along with local colleges, non-profit organizations are playing an important role in workforce training. For example, Capital IDEA in Austin, has developed a strategy to provide long-term occupational training to workers who seek employment in the local health industry. By following up with participants years after they have completed the program, the Ray Marshall Center has observed what long-term impacts this program has on workers. Employment and wage data show that participants in the program have had markedly more success in the health labor market than their counterparts. Finally, Dr. King explains that communication between civic organizations will play an important role in local economic development. Limited local funds will demand that these organizations work more efficiently in the future.

**Exploratory Return on Investment Analysis of Local Workforce Investments- APPAM**

On November 8th, 2012, **Tara Smith**, Research Associate at the Ray Marshall Center, presented an **Exploratory ROI Analysis of Local Workforce Investments** at the APPAM (Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management) Fall Research Conference. In her presentation, Mrs. Smith focused on one particular research question; "What is the ROI of Capital IDEA participation from the participant, taxpayer, and social perspectives?"

Graphs depicted in this presentation compare the employment and salary trajectory of IDEA participants to a comparison group and...
results show that the former has an advantage in the workforce. The presentation also provides a 10 and 20 year cost-benefit analysis of the program.

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Project Updates

**Center Researchers Lead Focus Groups for Participant Experience in CareerAdvance®**

Researchers from the Ray Marshall Center traveled to Tulsa, Oklahoma, at the beginning of December 2012 to conduct focus groups with participants of the CareerAdvance® program. CareerAdvance® is a two generation program that provides parents of children in Tulsa's Head Start programs with education, vocational training, and peer support to complete certifications in the healthcare sector. One of these focus groups targeted participants who had graduated from the program. The initial results were positive, indicating that several were hired by employers in the health field, while others sought to further their education.

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**Center Publishes Findings on ACAN Member Organizations**

ACAN seeks to increase regional capacity to provide critical and effective support to traditionally underrepresented college students, and to help ensure that they enter college and persist in their studies through completion. The project has two primary goals: 1) to increase ACAN member awareness of the nature and breadth of college access and persistence services offered in Central Texas and identify service gaps; and 2) to increase the capacity of ACAN member organizations for program evaluation and continuous improvement activities.

The Center's report, Central Texas College Access and Persistence Program Evaluation: Outcomes and impacts Summary Report, presents a summary of findings from the evaluation of college access and persistence services delivered by three ACAN member organizations. The findings in the report show that all three ACAN member programs appear to have a significant, positive impact on participants' college access.