

**Diversity as our Strength: A Community Conversation in Fulton County
Meeting Summary**

Thursday November 2nd, 2006

11:30 am. – 1:30 pm

**Board Room, Thomas Cole Research Center for Science and Technology
Clark Atlanta University
Atlanta, GA**

Welcome and Opening Remarks. Dr. Ron Finnell, Director, The Southern Center for Studies in Public Policy, Clark Atlanta University welcomed all present. (Read from chart, need to get copy of chart).

Asian Communities:

The Asian community is trying to be more proactive; to not be as sheltered as previous generations may have been. Stated Asians are very introverted and they value things differently. The youth look for answers w/ friends instead of their parents. There are struggles for immigrants such as trying to get proper identification documents or they may not be aware that their documents have expired. The culture of older Asian is more reserved.

Faith Based Communities:

Newly arriving citizens, Latinos may congregate amongst themselves; Asian tend to go both ways and mix, although Asians may be attracted to extremely conservative churches where women are not allowed to participate in the service. Many churches do make an effort, and it could just be dependant on the faith. There tends to be little to no diversity in mainline protestant. The most segregated hour in America is Sunday at 12 noon; proving that the church has a long way to go in accepting diversity.

What challenges are faced?

One main issue is language. A good solution may be to have info available in both languages in public and governmental facilities.

How has our nation handled immigration? – A question which needs an answer

****There has been a huge reverse in migration w/ blacks from the north. People have to be able to make a choice. Integration has some major challenges. The Browning of America is real. Be welcoming don't integrate.****

Governments:

Many governments have no plan of action/comprehensive plan or resources available to get a plan of action installed. We need to be teaching and educating groups, not just telling them where to go, but taking the time to show them how to get there, put forth

some action and effort. Local governments have a long way to go and many people consider the government to be one big entity. People need to see uniformity in order to trust the government. The government has good faith but resources are put into the wrong place.

Immigration in Atlanta: *Bridging the Gap* fills in the area that is needed. And every government funded program has decreased while the work continues to increase.

Diversity has its time and place, with the younger generation being more diverse and reaching out to the older generation.

The number one enemy of diversity is fear. The more we work with the fear the more open we are to diversity.

What people say and how they act are (2) different things. It has to come down to the people who deal with people; i.e. clerks, administrator, etc.