

My Brother's Keeper

Siblings of children with disabilities such as autism and Down syndrome are known to run the risk of internalizing their brother's or sister's challenges, but the phenomenon is especially acute among Hispanic families. According to a new study by the Bradley Hasbro Children's Research Center, Hispanic siblings show more symptoms of having internalized their siblings' disorders than children of other races do. Such symptoms can include a failure to cope well in relationships, separation anxiety and agoraphobia. While researchers aren't certain why Hispanic children show more effects than their peers, they do know that the phenomenon is leading to academic trouble: Hispanic siblings of children with special needs have lower grades and more school absences, perhaps because of greater family obligations, than their peers in other racial groups.

Light Bright Idea

At a time when energy prices are soaring and states are pinching pennies, the future is looking pretty bright for the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. That's because the HBCU is sitting next to a new, 17-acre, 7,800-panel solar farm that promises to help it cut its energy costs. The idea for the farm began about 3½ years ago, when rising electricity prices added almost \$1 million to the school's expenses amid a tight economy. Looking to stabilize its energy costs, the school decided to



team up with solar electricity company SunEdison of Beltsville, Md., to build a solar farm. The 2.2-megawatt farm, which SunEdison maintains, uses rotating panels that move from east to west to track the path of the sun.

As one of the biggest solar projects on the East Coast, it's expected to produce 3.4 million

kilowatt hours of power in an average year of starting operations. Already, within weeks of operating, the farm has produced carbon dioxide savings equivalent to taking 343 cars off the street for a year, says Dr. Ronald Forsythe, UMES's vice president of technology and commercialization. Perhaps most important, Forsythe notes, is the message the solar farm sends. "Renewable energy alternatives are no longer space-age technology," Forsythe says. "It's something that you can actually do now." Such a large-scale project has helped the school put the Eastern Shore region on the renewable-energy map: Five 100-acre projects are headed to the area, and Forsythe says a company has already approached the school about teaming up to create a wind project.

More Together, Still Apart

Here's the good news: Nearly all of the various racial groups are mingling more in schools. Here's the bad: Except for Blacks and Whites. In fact, nearly 60 years after *Brown v. Board of Education*, school integration among Blacks and Whites has shown almost no improvement from 1987 to 2007. "Whites are getting more integrated with Hispanics and Asians. Blacks are getting more integrated with Hispanics and Asians. Hispanics and Asians are getting more integrated with each other. But Blacks and Whites are not getting more integrated with each other. This is the one exception," says Dr. David Frankel, an associate professor of economics at Iowa State University. The continued segregation in schools is likely a reflection of residential segregation in urban and suburban areas, Frankel says.

Comment Tu Dis 'Racism'?

When it comes to social justice, the French and Americans can learn a lot from each other. At least, that's the hope behind the new Equality of Opportunity Media Library Web site (equality.frenchamerican.org) that launched this month. The forum, a spin-off of the French-American Foundation's Equality of Opportunity Program, explores strategies to help fight discrimination and push equal



opportunity. Created with a grant from the Ford Foundation, the site features video interviews, documentaries and publications that tackle such subjects as the controversies surrounding the collection of racial statistics, antidiscrimination laws and school segregation. Ioanna Kohler, the library's project manager, says the French-American Foundation hopes the site will promote dialogue and cross-cultural perspectives among academics, grassroots organizers, activists and journalists.

Pipeline Rerouted?

More minorities are earning bachelor's and master's degrees in science and engineering, but fewer are doing so at HBCUs. A new report from the National Science Foundation found that the percentage of Blacks earning science and engineering degrees from HBCUs fell to 20 percent in 2008, from 26 percent in 2000. While the report didn't cite reasons for the decline, it found the same trend occurring at schools that serve high numbers of Hispanics. Some of the report's other findings:

- HBCUs continue to be a powerful pipeline for Black science and engineering doctorates, even as the overall number of minorities with doctorates began flattening after 2000.
- The number of women in the sciences continues to rise, with participation highest in psychology and medical sciences.
- Among their peers, female minority science and engineering professors are the least likely to get support from federal grants or contracts.

— Compiled by Crystal D. Davis