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## U. S. Census Chief Tells Why African-American Count is Critical

By Pharoh Martin

**NNPA National Correspondent**  
WASHINGTON (NNPA) - For years there have been charges that African-Americans are under-represented in the U. S. Census counts conducted once every decade.

"It's very possible that some African-Americans or Spanish speaking persons were under-counted in previous Census because there may have been some belief that making face-time with the government was not in their best interests," acknowledges Arnold Jackson, chief operating officer for the decennial Census.

Jackson, who is black, says although the last Census in 2000 had an under-count of less than one-half percent, he believes masses of people have gone uncounted in the past because of a lack of returned data. Fewer than 60 percent of

African-Americans returned their 2000 Census questionnaire compared to 77.5 percent of whites, according to the Census Bureau.

This is the reason that Jackson says that the next Census, to begin April 1, 2010, will involve a full court press - and vast strategies - to assure the maximum number of hard-to-count individuals are counted.

"We'll have 140,000 people running across the country verifying addresses and updating our database," Jackson said in an interview with the NNPA News Service.

But, the Census Bureau can't count who they can't find. And for a long time racial minority groups have shied away from giving the government the information they needed to get a more accurate count of the country's population by not responding to mailed

questionnaires.

With an estimated 310 million people residing in the United States, counting each person is one of the largest, most arduous processes the government undertakes. The Census Bureau is making it a priority of locating "hard-to-count" groups such as blacks and immigrants. They will start by sending 145 million households a questionnaire with 10 questions that will be available in multiple languages. The questionnaire has been revised and streamlined from the previous long form version that many considered as too intrusive.

The questionnaires, which every citizen will be required to answer by law, will provide the Census Bureau with a bulk of its data. Jackson stresses that the form will only take ten minutes to complete and that all responses will be used for

statistical purposes only. According to Census.gov, the U.S. Census Bureau does not ask about the legal status of respondents in any of its surveys or Census programs.

In addition, an army of Census takers will essentially canvass every neighborhood across the country on March 30th to make sure their address lists are accurate.

The 2010 U.S. Census will cost taxpayers almost \$12 billion, according to a 2008 budget request submitted by the Department of Commerce. This is the most expensive count ever, which Jackson says underscores the crucial purpose of the count.

Jackson stresses that ignoring the Census can have long standing consequences for communities.

For example, the 2010 Census data will directly affect how more than \$3 trillion in federal funding is allocated to local and state agencies and programs over the next 10 years. The count also determines how many congressional representatives states get.

The data gathered in the Census also helps to shape policy decisions for the rest of the decade. It will also measure just how much the U. S., as well as Puerto Rico and the U.S. island areas, have changed since 2000 and help determine responses to those changes.

Because of the vast undertaking, Census takers will use hand-held computers, GPS systems and mapping technology instead of paper maps. Such devices will ensure accuracy and improve the efficiency of the national population count.

The Census Bureau will also partner with national grassroots organizations that have specific missions to reach out and ensure that "hard-to-reach" groups are represented.

The Black Leadership Forum, African-American Women's Clergy Association; and the National Coalition on Black Participation are some of the more than 250 partner organizations that have signed on. These groups will serve in advisory rolls for potential issues and barriers that may keep citizens from participating such as immigration and displacement from hurricanes and other disasters. They will also serve as watchdogs to assure that racial minority groups are accurately represented in order to get funding and congressional representation.

Meanwhile, the count is set to begin 11 months from now.

"If we feel that you may have a discrepancy with your questionnaire we'll call you back" Jackson said. "We may call eight million households out of 145 million."

### NC labor groups urge end to public bargaining ban

RALEIGH (AP) - North Carolina labor advocates and the state NAACP president have urged lawmakers to end a ban on collective bargaining for public workers that they say is a hold-over from segregation times.

The Rev. William Barber of the state chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People said May 26 that lawmakers passed the ban 50 years ago to keep Northern unions from organizing black workers. Barber said at a news conference that blocking collective bargaining by public workers helped protect the Jim Crow laws of the 1950s.

A state Senate committee discussed the repeal May 26 but took no action.

Business groups oppose the change, saying limiting unions holds down the size and cost of government.

## St. Aug. Alumna Honored with National Postal Stamp

RALEIGH - Saint Augustine's College will celebrate famed alumna and former teacher, Dr. Anna Julia Haywood Cooper, in whose honor a United States postal stamp will be released, with a special dedication event on the campus on June 18 at 11:30 a.m.

Dr. Cooper, born into slavery, was a quiet feminist, civil rights activist and scholar who - after Emancipation - tutored at Saint Augustine's College Normal School at the early age of eight. Her life of 105 years was filled with accomplishment, to include her graduation from Saint Augustine's Normal School and Collegiate Institute, Oberlin College, and the completion of her doctoral studies and dissertation at Gilde Internationale in Paris, then at Columbia University. At the age of 66, she was only the fourth known African-American woman to earn the doctorate degree and among the first women to do so in France. She worked her way through school, and raised two foster children while in her forties. She then adopted her half brother's five orphaned grandchildren (ages six months to twelve years) when she was in her late fifties. She also wrote and presented a paper entitled, "The Negro Problem in America" in London at the first Pan-African Conference.

Betsy Shaw, a 31-year volunteer tour guide with the Raleigh cemetery, plans to attend the event out of sheer admiration for Dr. Cooper.

"I knew that she was very distinguished and courageous. She was an early forerunner for all of us - during a time when we women didn't do much. I just think it took so much courage," said Shaw, who was instrumental in raising the money for a headstone plaque for Dr. Cooper's unmarked grave. Shaw's involvement in this endeavor is included in a Smithsonian publication that accompanied an exhibit at the National Museum of American History and the Anacostia Community Museum about Dr. Cooper.

So courageous was this Saint Augustine's school alumna that



she took on the school board of Washington, D.C., when they decided to dilute the curriculum for African-American children based on the thought that they could not learn as easily as their White counterparts. Dr. Cooper asserted that this was unjust and unlawful; she too, not just her White colleagues, was preparing her students for Yale and Harvard. As a result of the dispute, she was dismissed as principal, but she landed on her feet and became chair of languages at Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri, then returned to M Street where she had served as principal and as a Latin teacher. During her latter years, she also served as president of a university which specialized in adult education and evening classes.

Cooper not only paid for her husband's headstone, but purchased and dedicated one of the stained glass windows in the College's Historic Chapel in honor of her husband, George A. C. Cooper, also an alumnus. She is known for her book, A Voice From the South, and her famous quote: "The cause of freedom is not the cause of a race or a sect, a party or a class - it is the cause of humankind, the very birthright of humanity." The quote is included on every U.S. passport.

## Obama observes Memorial Day at Arlington cemetery

By Darlene Superville

WASHINGTON (AP) - President Barack Obama avoided a racial controversy on his first Memorial Day in office by sending wreaths to separate memorials for Confederate soldiers and for blacks who fought against them during the Civil War.

Last week, a group of about 60 professors petitioned the White House, asking the first black U.S. president to break tradition and not memorialize military members from the Confederacy, the group of Southern states that supported slavery.

"The Arlington Confederate Monument is a denial of the wrong committed against African-Americans by slave owners, Confederates and neo-Confederates, through the monument's denial of slavery as the cause of secession and its holding up of Confederates as heroes," the petitioners said. "This implies that the humanity of Africans and African-Americans is of no significance."

The White House ignored the request.

Obama laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery, a customary presidential undertaking on Memorial Day. He also had one sent to the Confederate Memorial there, a traditional practice but not well publicized. Obama also took the unprecedented step of sending a wreath to the African American Civil War Memorial in Washington's historically black U Street neighborhood.

That memorial - to the 200,000 blacks who fought for the North during the Civil War - had been mentioned as a compromise in recent days.

Presidents traditionally visit Arlington National Cemetery to personally leave a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns, a marble structure holding the remains of unidentified U.S. service members who died during war. Presidents then have aides deliver wreaths to other memorials or monuments, generally including the Confederate Memorial.

Wreaths also were left May 25 at memorials to the USS Maine and the Spanish American War.

In brief but solemn remarks after he laid the wreath and observed a moment of silence, Obama saluted the men and women of America's fighting forces, both living and dead, as "the best of America."

"Why in an age when so many have acted only in pursuit of narrow self-interest have the soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines of this generation volunteered all that they have on behalf of others," he said. "Why have they been willing to bear the heaviest burden?"

"Whatever it is, they felt some tug. They answered a call. They said 'I'll go.' That is why they are the best of America," Obama said. "That is what separates them from those who have not served in uniform, their extraordinary willingness to risk their lives for people they never met."

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Historic Holy Cross Church

## NCCU Goes 'The Extra Mile' for the Sake of Historical Holy Cross Church

North Carolina Central University announces approval of its proposal to move the historic Holy Cross Catholic Church from its current location at 1400 South Alston Avenue to the historic corridor at 1912 Fayetteville Street beside NCCU's Shepard House.

Daniel Ellison is chair of the Historic Preservation Commission of the Durham City-County Planning Department that authorized the project. During the May 5, meeting, Ellison said, "NCCU is to be commended for going the extra mile," which is just about as far as the church will be moved.

"We are trying our best to accommodate the necessary growth of our campus in a manner that is consistent with our respect for our present neighbors and for the history we share," said NCCU Chancellor Charlie Nelms.

It is fortunate that the slate-roofed, one-story building can be lifted from its foundation and moved intact to the corner of Fayetteville and Formosa Streets. No changes are planned to either the exterior or interior of the church but it will be repurposed as meeting space for NCCU and the community.

Dedicated in 1953, the small, picturesque stone structure was home to one of the oldest African-American Catholic congregations in the state. The building and the 3.6 acres on which it stood were sold to the state for the development of the campus while the parishioners moved to a new and larger Holy Cross Sanctuary at 2438 South Alston Ave., in 2006.

The relocation of the church was prompted by the need to begin construction of NCCU's new 65,000 square foot facility for the School of Nursing. Transporting Holy Cross was not part of the original funding package so NCCU administrators petitioned and received an additional \$2 million from the State Legislature through the diligence of Rep. Henry M. "Mickey" Michaux, Jr.

Recently, the visual impact of the church has been dwarfed by the much larger campus structures adjacent to it on Alston. Placement closer to the road and alongside the small historic homes on Fayetteville Street will afford the church the visual impact it deserves.

## NC death penalty opponents rally against restarts

RALEIGH (AP) - The head of North Carolina's NAACP said the state ought to take steps to keep prosecutors and juries from disproportionately imposing death sentences on black defendants.

The Rev. William Barber said May 21 the evidence that racial prejudice plays a role in sending innocent black men to death row became clear last year. In a six-month period ending last May, three black men who spent years on death row were released after evidence surfaced that their trials were faulty.

Legislation that passed the state Senate would allow an accused killer to challenge his conviction or death sentence if he can show that race played an inappropriate role. An amendment to the bill would allow executions to restart after a two-year halt.

## Speaker Blue is now officially an NC state senator

RALEIGH (AP) - Former House Speaker Dan Blue has a new title: North Carolina state senator.

Blue switched from the House to the Senate on May 16. Supreme Court Chief Justice Sarah Parker administered his oath in the Senate chamber while his family and new colleagues looked on.

He will serve out the two-year term of the late Sen. Vernon Malone. Wake County Democrats picked Blue two weeks ago. Gov. Beverly Perdue made the appointment official May 16.

Blue was elected to the House in 1980 and served as the state's first black House speaker for four years. He remained in the House until 2002 to run unsuccessfully for the U.S. Senate, then returned to the chamber in 2006.

Now Wake County Democrats must choose someone to finish Blue's House term.