

Skilled immigrants pose more immediate threat

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don't need to worry about competition from Mexico, but from other countries.

"It's much more dramatic at the high wages," he said. "These are the jobs that are going to India and Pakistan."

Legislation recently passed by the Senate would set up a guest worker program, primarily for Hispanics, and allow a pathway to citizenship for illegal immigrants already living and working in the U.S. A stronger, more punitive bill passed earlier by the House would declare undocumented workers felons and speed their return to their homeland. Emotions run high on both sides and the immigration debate and it is not yet clear whether the House and Senate can reach a compromise acceptable to both chambers.

National opinion polls show that while African-Americans are generally supportive of undocumented workers, they worry about the possibility of losing jobs.

Recent data from the Department of Labor shows that despite the creation of 138,000 new jobs in April, the overall black unemployment rate is 9.4 percent, well above the national unemployment rate of 4.7 percent.

One newly-created group, Choose Black America, believes that unlawful immigration can exacerbate that gap.

"This is not an argument with Hispanics. I don't care who it is. If you have 12 million anybody coming in, it's going to come out of my pocket," says a member of the group, Kevin Fobbs, president of the Nation Urban Policy Action Council in Detroit. "It's not a radical idea to stand up for protecting your children or protecting your community," he said. "It's not being racist. It's not being politically incorrect. It's being American."

Although Fobbs views illegal immigrants as taking from the federal treasury and not giving anything back, the Urban Institute released a study that found the opposite. In addition to undocumented workers paying sales tax for items they purchase, the Social Security

Administration estimates that three-fourths of undocumented workers pay payroll taxes and contribute \$6 to \$7 billion into a Social Security system they are barred from enjoying.

Bernard Anderson, an economist and professor at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, said blaming the high black unemployment on immigrant workers is unfair.

"Their (immigrant) presence in the American labor market has not had a major detrimental effect on the wages and employment of African-American workers," Anderson said.

According to Anderson, there isn't any statistical evidence to back up the talk of immigrants "stealing" jobs from blacks.

"Most of it is based on observation and anecdotes. It's not based on systematic research," he said. "Either black workers have left the labor market altogether or black workers have moved on to other jobs that pay more or pay the same."

A 2004 study by George J. Borjas, a Harvard University professor of Economics and Social Policy, presents a contrary picture.

"Although the 1980-2000 immigrant influx lowered the wage of white workers by 3.5 percent and of Asians by only 3.1 percent, it reduced the wage of blacks by 4.5 percent and that of Hispanics by 5.0 percent. The adverse impact of immigration, therefore, is largest for the most disadvantaged native-born minorities," the study said.

Claud Anderson, president of the Harvest Institute a Washington, D.C. based black think tank, is deeply concerned about the issue.

"As a direct result of massive immigration, the last 50 years totally eradicated progress blacks made in income," he said.

According to the Census Bureau, between 1967 and 1990, there was a 12 percent increase in the black median family income. Over that same period, black income relative to white wages remained unchanged. The Bureau reports that median black family household income of \$30,134 was the lowest of all.

For Class of '06 and parents, graduation is start of new life

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said Tracy Y. Espy PhD, vice president of servant leadership and a sociology professor at Pfeiffer University's Charlotte campus.

"While high school can provide opportunities for independence, students usually find in their first semester that they have much more independence and control of their time," she said. "This new-found freedom can present an array of concerns if students are not disciplined and organized. They can find themselves having a difficult time determining how much and how often they should study and prepare for classes. Students can also struggle with transition to college socially."

West Charlotte High School graduate Karol Holt will be attending North Carolina Central University in Durham. She admits to some unease about her first extended separation from friends and family.

"It's going to be hard because I don't know what to expect," she said. "I am basically walking into an unknown territory. I am not going to be sure what to do and what not to do. Attending Upward Bound (a college experience program) will give me a little insight on what to expect as far as managing school, my time, and social skills."

Holt plans to major in biology, wants to become a pediatrician.

Phyllis Worth Dawkins will have to make adjustments, too. Her daughter, Demi, is off to Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. Dawkins believes Demi, a South Mecklenburg High graduate,

will do just fine academically and socially despite being hundreds of miles away. Any concerns about separation anxiety will give way to preparation to move to another stage in life.

"I'm just so proud of her," said Dawkins, a dean at Johnson C. Smith University. "It shows Demi's independence, and her courage to leave North Carolina."

For students making the leap to living on their own, the most pressing concern in most cases is being on their

own for the first time, Espy said. Other issues that may occur can be adjusting to a roommate and negotiating living values in a small space with someone new.

College freshmen "may struggle with finding and connecting to a group of other students with similar interests and values," Espy said. "While these may be a few of the issues in transitioning to college, colleges and universities generally have resources to assist students in succeeding in making transitions."

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Camp honors athlete's memory

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strated during his lifetime," said Pam Brown, Julian's mother.

A ceremony will be held at Revolution Park Friday at 11 a.m. - Julian's 15th birthday.

Julian, a freshman at Myers Park High School who played for Charlotte United Futbol Club, was killed April 25, 2004, in a bus accident in France. Julian, a midfielder, was fatally injured when the bus carrying the under-14 North Carolina Olympic Development team crashed in Paris. He was a straight-A student at Myers Park.

The camp is the latest memorial to Julian. A soccer tournament has been played the last couple of years in Charlotte.



NORTH CAROLINA YOUTH SOCCER

Julian Brown, a freshman at Myers Park High School, was one of two American soccer players killed in a 2004 crash in Paris. A soccer camp named in Julian's honor was held this week at Revolution Park.

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