

Schools without a majority: Implications and opportunities

Written by
Monday, 29 April 2013 14:30



The 16th annual Julian Parker Lecture will be held 7:00-8:30 pm on Thursday, May 9, in Opus Hall on the Minneapolis campus of the University of St. Thomas. This year's program is titled "Schools Without a Majority: Implications and Opportunities."

"Public perception lags far beyond reality in the public policy arena," said Bob Brown, coordinator of the Julian Parker series. "For those of us in education this is a particular problem since many adults in our area think of the schools as being like they were years ago – in this case overwhelmingly white with a smattering of various minority kids. Now Minneapolis, St. Paul, and some of the suburbs no longer have a white majority and are composed of a wonderful blend of black, white, Asian, Latino, and American Indian students. This has implications for hiring policies, curriculum, cultural awareness, etc.," Brown stated.

The lecture series is co-sponsored by the Minnesota Alliance of Black School Educators who use the occasion to present scholarships to outstanding students and to give an annual award to a person who has made significant contributions to diversity in Minnesota education. Other co-sponsors are the St. Thomas MA in Public Policy Program and Generation Next, a partnership which seeks to leverage research and available funding to tackle the achievement gap between students of color and their peers in St. Paul and Minneapolis.

The Julian Parker lecture honors the memory of the longtime head of education at Xavier University in New Orleans by bringing nationally recognized speakers on urban education issues and values to St. Thomas.

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The national speaker this year, Dr. Joe Scherer, is Executive Director of the Superintendents' National Dialogue. He will be followed by a local multicultural panel representing the numerically significant minority communities in our schools - Latino, African, Asian, and American Indian. Moderator of the panel will be Patricia Jensen, Director of the St. Thomas MA in Public Policy and Leadership Program. Following the panel there will be the audience follow-up discussions at tables where students from the St. Thomas in Public Policy program will be serving as recorders.

Prior to the program there will be a reception with light refreshments at 6:30 and following the program there will be coffee and conversation which will provide an excellent opportunity for networking. In addition to interacting with Scherer and the panelists, there will be opportunities to mingle with government officials, higher education faculty, school superintendents, other administrators and school board members, community organization leaders, and others.

Data from the State Demographer's office will be distributed to those attending the event to not only give the audience some basic demographic data showing the change in our population over time in our Metropolitan area and the state, but also get people to think of the opportunities these changes make.

The program is free but registration is requested by sending an email to rjbrown@stthomas.edu
[u](#) . Additional
information is available by contacting Brown at (651) 962-4992.