

Changing Demographics

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This session focused on changing demographics in our communities. Specifically, the impact of ethnicity, immigration, in-migration and an aging population on community development was discussed. Finally, given the changing demographics, the future role and emphasis of community development was addressed.

Summary

- Migration in America is moving from the Northeast and Midwest to the Southeast and Southwest.
- The country is shifting from an industry-based economy to information-based.
- Population growth is increasing at an increasing rate – It took 29 years to grow from 200 to 300 million people; it will take 14 years to increase from 300 to 400 million people. The Hispanic population is the fastest growing ethnic group in the country. By 2014, the Hispanic population in Georgia will double that of the African American population.
- There is a greater percentage of poor people and a decrease in the percentage of middle class people. Prices are rising, but wages are not; graduation rates are down; there is an increase in single heads of households, teen pregnancies, etc.
- The net growth in businesses will come from immigrant- and women-owned businesses.
- Challenges:
 - rising cost of water
 - food shortages
 - unskilled workforce
 - workforce shortage
- Considering the changing demographics, we can no longer work in silos. We have to look at the bigger picture. Three changes that are needed in the field of community development are:
 - CD should promote holistic financial planning.
 - CD should be modified to be more inclusive of the immigrant community.
 - CD should (MUST) become involved in educational reform.

MEMORABLE QUOTE

When there is a crisis, there is always an opportunity.

For the survival of our economy, we have to support policies that support education.

QUESTIONS THAT REMAIN

What policy changes are needed to deal with the rapidly changing demographics?

How do we house, provide retail, jobs, education, etc., to accommodate the changing demographics?

Should everyone be a homeowner?

Being the wealthiest country in the world, how will we deal with the increasing number of people living in poverty in our country?