



CHICAGO URBAN LEAGUE



**The Final Frontier
The African American
Path to Top Management
in Chicago**

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Executive Summary

Private Sector

Comparison of the proportion of leaders who are African American in Chicago-area businesses from the 1970s to 1990s indicates little improvement.

- Whereas in the late 1970s approximately 1 percent of officers and directors of large businesses were African American, in the late 1990s the proportion had risen to at most 4.4 percent.
- Only 2.6 percent of corporate officers in large Chicago-area based corporations are African American and only 7 percent of corporate directors are African American.
- 75 percent of large Chicago-area corporations do not have a single African American corporate officer.
- 46 percent of large Chicago-area corporations do not have a single African American on their board of directors.
- Corporations tend to promote executives who attended elite graduate schools. Members of corporate boards are drawn from top management of other companies, as well as leaders in a variety of fields. They tend to be in their mid 50s to early 60s.
- African Americans are under-represented in three major pools of people from whom top managers are promoted: graduates of elite graduate schools, high salaried executives, and executives 50 or more years old.
- African Americans are badly under-represented among partners of major Chicago law firms and are somewhat under-represented among leaders in unions headquartered in Chicago.

Public Sector

Comparison of the representation of African Americans in government from the 1970s to the present indicates significant levels of improvement.

- African Americans are represented in general proportion to their numbers in the population in the Chicago City Council, Illinois state legislature and Cook County Board.
- Significant gains have been made in the representation of African Americans in the Illinois judiciary.
- African Americans are represented on government boards and commissions in Cook County where African Americans live. However, the larger the regional jurisdiction, the lower the proportion of African American representation.
- The city of Chicago has gradually improved African American access to managerial positions since the 1960s, but the high point appears to have been at the end of the Sawyer administration in 1989.
- In the late 1990s, African Americans are represented in managerial positions in county government in excess of their proportion of the Cook County population.
- The combination of the desegregation orders of the early 1980s, white flight from the Chicago public schools, and school reform have resulted in significant increases in African Americans in management positions in the Chicago public schools

Non-Profit Sector

- African Americans have made gains in representation among top leadership in higher education but remain under-represented.
- African Americans are well represented among leadership of

social welfare organizations, heading more than one-quarter of United Way member agencies as executive directors and make up almost one-quarter of board members of United Way member agencies.

Recommendations

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 and its subsequent amendments, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its subsequent amendments, the monitoring and enforcement powers of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and various provisions in federal, state and local law for affirmative action have provided a framework in which improvement in African American access to decision-making positions in the public and private sectors has taken place over the last 30 years. It is essential that this framework remain in place for these gains to be sustained, and in the case of the private sector, improved upon.

In order to increase the presence of African Americans among corporate officers and board members the following also needs to occur:

- Graduate schools, and elite graduate schools in particular, need to understand their mission as preparing leaders in their fields who will address the need for racial diversity at all levels of society, as well as high levels of expertise. These schools must actively recruit African American students and develop admissions criteria that better reflect a student's capacity for growth and future leadership than do standardized tests.
- Corporations must eliminate barriers to minority promotion throughout the organization, and particularly at the highest levels where promotion can depend upon social relationships as well as work performance.
- Corporations should move beyond traditional criteria for selection of members of their boards of directors and recruit outstanding leaders from fields other than top corporate management.
- A support institution should be created for African Americans in middle and upper management positions in the private sector to assist them with strategies for upward mobility and dealing with resultant stresses in order that as many as possible would move into top management positions.
- Additional minority business development programs should be initiated in order to create more successful minority-owned or -operated businesses that will generate future corporate leadership.

Introduction

The top managerial positions in corporate America remain one of the last preserves in our nation that African Americans have yet to penetrate in meaningful numbers. Analysis by the Chicago Urban League in 1965, in the late 1970s, and now at the end of the 1990s indicates slow progress that has yet to yield anything close to parity in African American representation in the region's or the nation's top corporations, financial institutions or law firms that make up the top level of the private sector.¹ This report, rather than seeking only to document the racial disparity among leaders, attempts to provide the framework for understanding why the lack of African Americans in private sector leadership has persisted.

African Americans have made their greatest gains in leadership in the political arena and in the institutions of government that must respond to political or legal pressure. Thirty years ago, Illinois had never had an African American U.S. Senator, or state attorney general or secretary of state. Chicago had yet to elect an African American mayor. Since then most large American cities have elected an African American mayor. Legislatures and city councils in jurisdictions with large African American populations have had increasing numbers of African Americans elected to them.

Two simple circumstances explain most of the increase in African American political leadership in Chicago, Illinois and elsewhere. First, African Americans have been elected increasingly to office when there were sufficient numbers of African American voters to overcome white racial bloc voting that had generally excluded blacks from citywide offices. In Chicago, Cook County and Illinois, African Americans have needed multi-racial coalitions to win election but, as in the case of Harold Washington's election to mayor, it was mobilization of a significant number of African American voters that drove the

electoral process. Carol Mosely Braun and John Stroger were able to exploit divisions among the white electorate, as did Washington in his first primary, to move to general election races against weak Republicans.

The second major enabler of minority candidacies has been the legal protections afforded by the Voting Rights Act of 1965, its amendments, and subsequent decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court that for the most part have been favorable to African American political interests. Even during the 1990s, when African American political interests in other states were damaged by federal court decisions, blacks in Illinois continued to win victories. Legal defense of the principle of one person-one vote has assured that African American representation in most legislative bodies would be at least roughly proportionate to the number of African Americans living in the jurisdiction. The result has been steady increases over the last 30 years in the number of African Americans with seats in the state legislature, Chicago City Council, Cook County Board, and Cook County judiciary.

The expanded power of African Americans in the electoral process has driven the appointment of African Americans to positions on commissions and boards. As our analysis shows, commissions and boards in Cook County and Chicago have significant African American representation. Boards such as the RTA, which encompass a wider geographic area in which African Americans are a smaller proportion of the total population, have far less representation of African Americans. Elected officials are aware that the failure to appoint members of minority groups that are critical for maintaining political coalitions can hurt their future candidacies. Mayor Byrne's replacing African Americans with whites on the Chicago Board of Education and the board of the Chicago Housing Authority in the early 1980s helped

to solidify African American support behind Harold Washington.²

The need for responsiveness to African American constituents has also driven the parity in executive leadership and board membership of Chicago's not-for-profit service-provider community. Leadership of United Way member agencies in Chicago is roughly proportional to representation of minority people in Chicago. This is a result of a number of factors including the United Way's advocacy for racial diversity on the boards of its membership organizations and the indigenous nature of most social service organizations. As with the political context, African American representation among leadership is a product of a growing constituent base and policies that have been supportive of greater minority leadership of organizations.

The racial structure of leadership of the private sector could not be more different. As this report documents, most large corporations, banks and law firms headquartered in the Chicago area have few or no African Americans in their top management positions. While this analysis cannot finally ascertain the reasons for this, when we compare the public domain, where African Americans have succeeded in attaining top positions, to the private one, where they generally have not, it seems potentially significant that the two driving forces behind success in the public sector have little influence on the top levels of the private sector.

First, there is no legal or regulatory mandate for African American inclusion that operates effectively at the top levels of the private sector. Monitoring and regulation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission do not extend to corporate officer, CEO or board positions. Certainly outright discrimination in hiring for these positions would not be countenanced. However, corporations clearly do not feel pressured le-

gally to maintain racial diversity in top management positions.

The second factor in the private sector in contrast to the political context is that corporate constituents are not organized in ways likely to pressure corporations to increase numbers of minority persons on corporate boards and among corporate officers. Constituents of (or buyers for) most private sector products and services have little voice in how the good or service is produced. Buying constituencies are rarely organized and those constituents who do have an organized voice are stockholders owning significant portions of the company, and for the most part these are white males or financial institutions. Despite the new information about economic power of the African American community, it remains a small fraction of the total buying power of the national economy. Many industries engaged in sales to government or other business-to-business transactions may have few or no minority constituents. In the absence of direct pressure to accomplish it, corporations persist in hiring and promotion for corporate vice presidents and appointments of board members that conform to traditional relationships and standards that have tended to exclude African Americans.

As Sharon Collins has demonstrated, corporations often have tracked promising African American executives into what she has termed "racialized" positions.³ These are occupations such as leadership in human resources or diversity programs that exist largely because of race and rarely lead to management positions such as CEO, COO, CFO or the board of directors. Lower echelon human resources or racial/ethnic diversity positions rarely lead to vice presidencies in the high-paying positions such as vice presidencies in finance, marketing or production.

Adding to the problem is the lack of

representation of African Americans in the pools of managers from which top management is typically promoted. As this analysis will indicate, African Americans are under-represented among the most highly paid executives — from which come vice presidents and board members; vice presidents — from which come presidents and board members; executives and professionals over 50; and graduates of elite law schools and management schools.

Our analysis suggests that the size of the pool need not be as large an encumbrance to promotion as it has been, but it probably has been a contributor to the problem historically. Our case analysis of boards of directors of several randomly selected large companies shows that boards are typically composed of a mix of individuals. Some of them are experts in the firm's line of business; others are not. There is no single mix of management skills that must be represented on corporate boards of directors and with imagination and purpose, corporations could name increasing numbers of African Americans to their boards by breaking only somewhat with tradition, without compromising board functions.

Moving more African Americans into corporate vice presidential and other top management positions within corporations is a tougher problem because from the viewpoint of the corporation, the stakes are higher in parting with what they may view as tradition. The corporate officers have far more responsibility for running the company than do board members. To the extent, therefore, that major corporations must have top managers with skills honed at the most elite schools, then blacks must be admitted to and graduate from those schools in greater numbers, as has been demonstrated they can. It is important for these universities to accept this as a challenge, and as part of their mission to address the leadership needs of the wider soci-

ety.

However, it is also clear from our analysis that it is possible to reach top management within a corporation by climbing the corporate ladder, from at least close to the bottom, one step at a time. Accomplishing this requires persistence on the part of the employee, as well as absence of discrimination in promotions on the part of the company.

There are time-honored pathways to the top of private sector institutions that require meeting particular qualifications along the way. Getting enough African Americans into the pipeline takes time, and changing corporate culture that has been perceived as highly successful takes great effort. Corporations generally will not undertake what they consider "experiments" when huge amounts of money or the corporate future is thought to be at stake unless either their survival is at risk or there is a high likelihood of great payoff. People with high degrees of fiduciary responsibility tend to trust people who are like themselves, with whom they feel they can effectively communicate, who they think will share their values, and who have experiences that are either similar to theirs or that they feel they understand.

The following report provides a broad assessment of the status of African Americans in decision-making positions of Chicago area public and private sector institutions. The report contains several types of analysis:

Part One begins by reporting results from a recent survey by the Chicago Urban League of African American representation among corporate officers and boards of Chicago-headquartered companies, as well as leadership of local law firms and unions.

In order to provide a framework for remediating these deficits, a detailed analysis is undertaken of the structure of corporate boards and profiles of membership in different types of companies.

The report then analyzes the pool from which top corporate leaders are selected, graduates of elite universities, high level executives and professionals, and executives who have at least reached mid-career.

Part Two examines the achievements of African Americans in the public sec-

tor, detailing African American representation among Chicago area elected officials, among administrators of government, and on appointed commissions.

The final section reports on representation of African Americans in management of higher education and non-profit organizations.

1 The Private Sector

- Only 2.6 percent of corporate officers in large Chicago-area based corporations are African American and only 7 percent of corporate directors are African American.
- 75 Percent of large Chicago-area corporations do not have a single African American corporate officer.
- 46 Percent of large Chicago-area corporations do not have a single African American on their board of directors.

Numerous studies of African Americans in management have documented the difficulty African Americans have had reaching the highest levels of corporate management or areas of management where the most strategic decisions are made.⁴ The findings of this study of Chicago-area corporations are no different.

African Americans have made marginal gains in attainment of board or officer positions of major corporations headquartered in the Chicago area, but remain substantially under-represented at that level. The 1965 Chicago Urban League survey did not uncover a single black board member or corporate officer. By 1977 over 100 blacks had reached that level, yet they still represented less than one percent of all board members and officers of Chicago-area companies (Table 1).⁵

The results of our most recent survey indicate that improvement has continued but at a slow pace. Of the 56 large companies that responded to the Urban League survey, 41 of them, over 75 per-

cent, do not have a single African American officer. Of these 56 companies, 26, or 46 percent, do not have a single African American director.

Overall for our sample companies, a total of 2.6 percent of corporate officers are African American and only 7 percent of corporate directors are African American. Of the 56 companies, none had more than two African American board members or officers.

A 1998 study by The Conference Board uncovered similar findings nationally. Only 36 percent of 614 companies surveyed had an African American on their board. Thirty-two percent of manufacturers, 41 percent of financial companies, and 39 percent of non-financial services companies surveyed had at least one African American. These figures were similar to the 1997 figures. With an average of 10 members per board, approximately 3.5 to 4 percent of board members of these 614 companies would be African American.⁶

A 1990 study of 589 corporations nationally found that only 121 corporations

Table 1
Black Representation in Board or
Officer Positions

	Firms	Positions	Blacks	% Black
1999	56	1,297	56	4.4%
1977	381	12,938	117	0.9
1965	240	4,047	0	0

(21 percent) had an African American board member. Of those 121 companies, only 20 had two African American members and one had four.⁷ How dismal the record of America's largest corporations is for promoting African Americans into top positions is evidenced by a 1997 article in *Ebony* magazine hailing as a "significant increase" the finding that from 1994 to 1997 the number of African Americans sitting on Fortune 1000 board national had gone from 148 to 179.⁸

According to Bacon, African American board members were most likely to be found in the largest companies. Among companies valued at over \$3 billion, slightly over half had an African American board member. Approximate-

ly 20 percent of companies with value between \$1 billion and \$3 billion had an African American board member. Among publicly-owned companies beneath \$1 billion, few had an African American board member.⁹

The problem of African American representation among corporate leaders is not unique to any particular type of company. As Table 2 shows, blacks are under-represented among leadership of large corporations in each major industrial category. Transportation and utilities, firms that are the most closely regulated by government, not surprisingly, have on average the best representation of African Americans in top management.

Table 2
Corporations by Industry

	Firms	Positions	Blacks	% Black
Board Members				
Manufacturing	25	231	16	6.9%
Transp/Utilities	8	69	7	10.0
Services	9	75	5	6.6
Wholesale & Retail	5	36	1	2.7
FIRE	9	103	7	6.8
Total	56	514	36	7.0
Officers				
Manufacturing	25	384	8	2.1%
Transp/Utilities	8	85	5	5.8
Services	9	123	3	2.4
Wholesale & Retail	5	81	2	2.5
FIRE	9	110	2	1.8
Total	56	873	20	2.6

Law Firms

- African Americans represent less than 1 percent of partners in major Chicago-based law firms.

African Americans remain hugely under-represented among partners of major Chicago law firms. Among the 2,950 partners of Chicago's 25 largest law firms as identified by Crain's Chicago Business, only 20 African American partners could be identified, or less than one percent. However slight, this does represent an increase over the record of previous years. The 1965 League analysis failed to uncover even a single partner and the 1977 analysis found only three (Table 3).

The gateway to the top law firms is indeed narrow. A scan of the backgrounds of the partners of the major

Chicago firms indicates a strong bias toward hiring and promoting graduates of the nation's most selective law schools.

In order to improve further on what has been a weak record in the past, it will be essential for top law schools to continue recruiting and admissions practices that allow minority law students access to the top legal jobs. The loss of affirmative action programs at the University of California and the University of Texas will further narrow the pipeline of applicants that the top law firms appear to deem acceptable.

Table 3
Black Representation in Law Firms

	Firms	Positions	Blacks	% Black
1999	24	2,950	20	0.7%
1977	59	1,023	3	0.3
1965	54	757	0	0.0

Labor Unions

The past 30 years have seen a steady increase in the representation of African Americans among union leadership. From 1965 to 1999, representation in union leadership has increased from around 13 percent to over 30 percent.

In the most highly unionized professions, African Americans are 11.8 percent of workers in manufacturing, 7.4

percent of workers in construction, 9.0 percent in wholesale trade, 16.2 percent in business and repair services, and 22.5 percent in transportation, communications and public utilities. African Americans appear, therefore, to be somewhat over-represented among union leadership in comparison to their overall representation among all workers (Table 4).

Table 4
Black Representation in Labor Unions

	Unions	Positions	Blacks	% Black
Total				
1999	19	221	68	30.8%
1977	41	673	138	20.5
1965	60	819	108	13.2
Internationals				
1999	1	4	1	25.0%
1977	3	65	6	9.2
1965	4	94	15	16.0
District Councils				
1999	2	29	9	31.0%
1977	13	150	9	6.0
1965	23	211	20	9.5
Locals				
1999	16	188	58	30.9%
1977	25	458	123	26.9
1965	33	514	73	14.2

The Pathway to Top Management

Where do corporate board members come from and what are corporations looking for in their top management?

One of the major barriers to minority participation on corporate boards is that corporate leadership tends to be drawn from among other corporate leaders. Board members may be current company employees, or "outside" members. About half of all "outside" corporate board members are selected from among executives in the manufacturing or financial industries with most of these coming from manufacturing. Other sources of corporate board members (about 5 to 10 percent each) are law, insurance, education, and former company employees.¹⁰ Thus if African Americans have had a hard time penetrating the officer level positions of large corporations, they are unlikely to be selected to the boards of other large corporations.

Large, publicly owned corporations are inherently conservative. With large amounts of money at stake, boards search for CEOs and fellow board members in whom they have a high degree of confidence and with whom they feel personally familiar and comfortable. A recent study that reviewed what boards look for in their CEO illustrates the point. Over 90 percent of corporations responding to the survey rated most highly business sense, decisiveness, ability to motivate, integrity, vision and ability to delegate tasks. The least valued at-

tributes included independence (36 percent), flexibility (44 percent), appraising (45 percent) and risk taking (49 percent).¹¹ Clearly large corporations attempt to minimize risk in their leadership and this can make it difficult for individuals who may be outside conventional business or social circles to penetrate the top levels. Another survey found that the top attribute in a CEO was leadership and communication with stockholders.¹² To the extent that an African American is viewed as different in corporate leadership circles, it militates against his or her promotion to a top job.

In part because it takes individuals many years to develop the resume typical of most corporate board members, and in part because most publicly held corporations highly value maturity and stability in their top management, board members tend to be much older than the average employee. Nationally, the average board member of a publicly held company is 59 years old.¹³ The average tenure of a board member is nine years. The typical board member joins a board at around 55 years of age and remains through about the age of 64. When we consider, then, who is likely to become a board member, we are looking at individuals who are in the latter half of their careers and have attained a high degree of professional stature in a major industry area.

Mapping Upward Mobility

The Path to a Corporate Board

In order to understand the reasons for such low representation of African Americans on corporate boards and to begin to explore possible avenues for remediation, it is useful to look closely at the sociology of corporate board membership. Case study examination of the structure of corporate boards of several large publicly owned corporations provides insight into the pathway to membership on a corporate board. The following analysis provides graphic representation and discussion of the boards of several types of companies representative of the types of businesses that need to increase their representation of African Americans at the board level: A Fortune 500 manufacturer headquartered in Ohio, an Illinois utility company, a mid-sized Chicago-based manufacturer, and a mid-sized Chicago-based hi-tech business service company.¹⁴

The graphics are designed to indicate crucial information about the path to board membership, current age and age at joining the board, length of service on the board, and the occupation or qualification of the individual for membership. Service on the board is indicated by the gray bar.

1. Fortune 500 Company

Figure 1 illustrates the professional histories of members of the Board of Directors of a Fortune 500-size building materials firm. The firm has 13 board members. Two are female and none are African American. This is typical of large corporation boards. Fortune 500 companies usually have national or even international board membership. Although the company is headquartered in Ohio, it includes four New Yorkers, two members from London, England, and other members from Minnesota, Mary-

land, Utah, Connecticut and Washington state. With this size company, the search for board members need not be geographically limited.

Fortune 500 corporate board members are typically highly accomplished men in their mid to late 50s, and this company is no different. Only one board member was in his 40s. The board includes a former state governor, several CEOs of major corporations, a university president, and a former U.S. ambassador. In order to fit the typical profile of this board, a future member would need to have begun a career with a high trajectory of accomplishment in the late 1950s or early 1960s, a rarity among African Americans.

It is not clear, however, that the board members of this company necessarily bring acumen specific to the industry in which the company operates. Outside of Members 1, 6 and 11, who had leadership positions in finance, it is hard to see the contribution of other outside members besides experience in leadership of large organizations. These positions, as well as the finance-oriented positions, could have easily been held by African Americans, except for the general absence of African Americans in CEO and corporate vice presidential positions. The company does have extensive presence in the U.K., which may account for the presence of two board members with corporate affiliations there.

The Fortune 500 board will generally have members who are large stockholders in the company, but for the most part they will not be stockholders with controlling interest. On this particular board, the CEO and board chair had over 500,000 shares of company stock, but no other member had interest in the company remotely close to that amount. A strong financial position in the company was not, therefore, necessary to be elected to this Fortune 500 board.

Figure 1
Professional History, Board of Directors, Fortune 500 Company

Year	97	95	90	85	80	75	70	65	60	55	50	45	40	35	30	25	20
Member 1													Born				
Member 2													Born				
Member 3																	
Member 4																	
Member 5													Born				
Member 6																	
Member 7																	
Member 8																	
Member 9																	
Member 10 Female																	
Member 11																	
Member 12																	
Member 13 Female																	

Indicates tenure on Board of Directors

2. Illinois Utility

As Figure 2 demonstrates, the public utility has a similar board profile to the Fortune 500 firm in terms of length of service of the typical board member and typical age of board members.

The utility tended to have board members who were more locally affiliated. Only four of the eleven board members were from places other than Illinois. Even though not of Fortune 500 size, the utility did have members of national stature, such as the president of one of the nation's largest telecommunications firms and presidents of several other large firms. Two of the board members were from companies that manufactured

equipment used in the utility's industry, but most of the board members were, as in the case of the Fortune 500 company, top executives from companies unrelated to the utility's industry.

The utility has two female board members and one African American. The women are a retired advertising executive and the head of an investment company. The African American is the chairman and CEO of an Ohio-based manufacturer, which is a smaller company than those headed by most of the white executives on the board. The African American is also the youngest member of the board and joined it in his early 40s, a relatively young age for a corporate board member.

Figure 2
Professional History, Board of Directors, Illinois Utility

Year	97	95	90	85	80	75	70	65	60	55	50	45	40	35	30	25	20
Member 1								Chairman & CEO Professional Services Firm	Illinois				Born				
Member 2								Chairman, President & CEO of Company	Illinois				Born				
Member 3								President & COO Food Processor	Illinois			Born					
Member 4								Ret. President & CEO Manufacturer	Illinois						Born		
Member 5 Female								President & CEO Investment Firm	Illinois				Born				
Member 6								Management Professor & Former CEO	Illinois						Born		
Member 7								President Energy and Services Firm	Virginia				Born				
Member 8 Black								Chairman & CEO Manufacturer	Ohio						Born		
Member 9								Ret. President & COO Manufacturer	Ohio							Born	
Member 10 Female								Ret. Exec VP Advertising Firm	Illinois					Born			
Member 11								President, Telecommunications Firm	New Jersey						Born		

Indicates tenure on Board of Directors

3. Mid-Sized Manufacturer

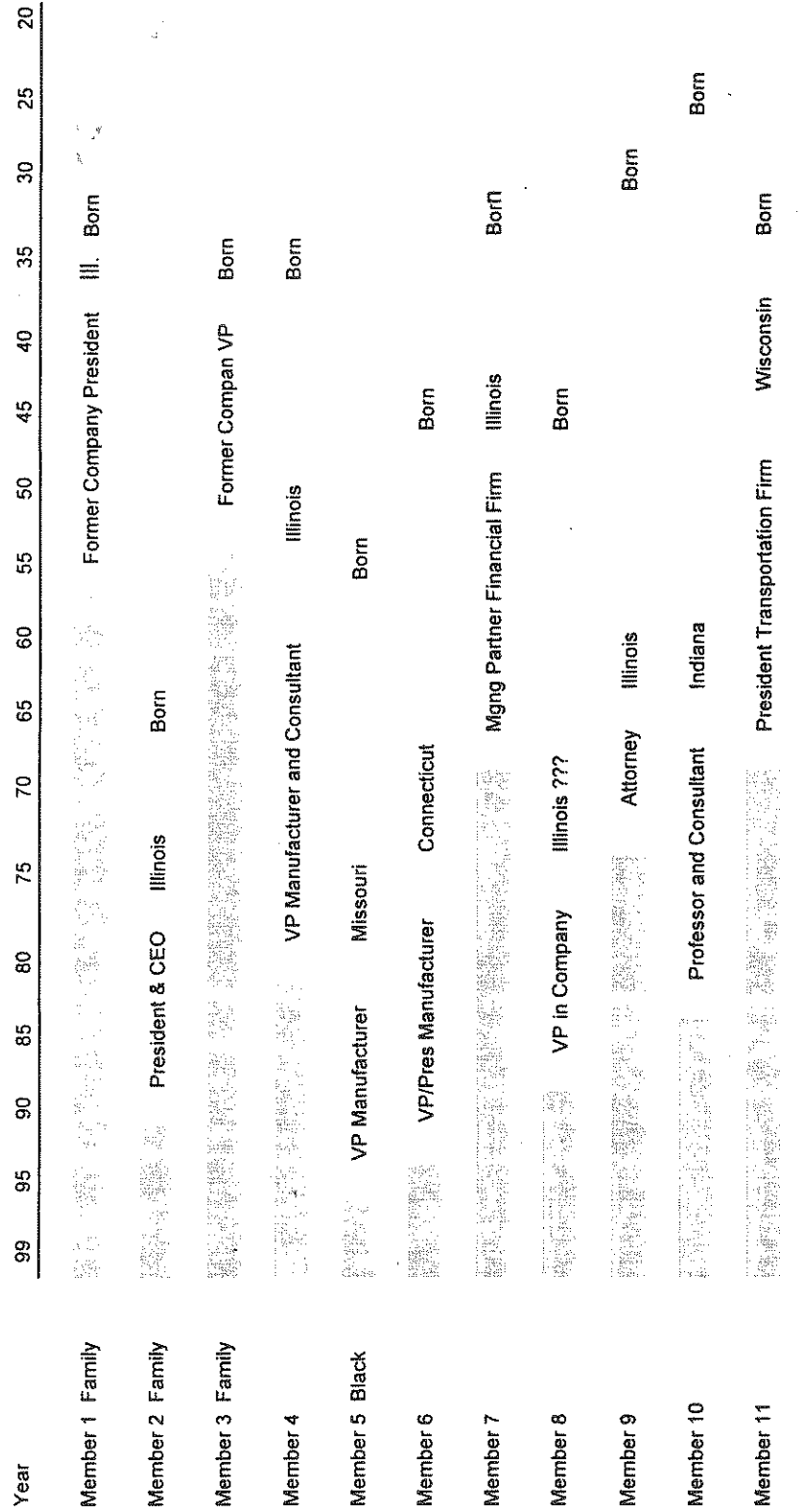
The mid-sized manufacturer, headquartered in Chicago, is typical of many manufacturing companies in the nation. It has approximately 700 employees and is still led by members of the founding family. The company was founded in the early 1940s and three of its board members are members of the founding family. One was the CEO from the early 1960s through the late 1990s, a second has been a vice president, and later chairman, since the mid-1950s. Both of these men achieved these leadership positions within a few years of finishing college. The current president and CEO finished college in the mid-1980s and went to work immediately in management positions in the company.

Compared to the board members of the Fortune 500 company and the utility, these board members have had lengthy terms: four of them close to or

more than 20 years. Most of these board members began their careers in the late 1950s or 1960s, and although they are highly successful, they do not have the executive stature of the members of the Fortune 500 or utility boards. This board includes a geology professor, owner of a car dealership who is a member of a prominent family, the company's legal counsel, and presidents of mid-sized companies.

The firm does have one African American board member. In his early 40s, he is the youngest outside board member. He is the co-president of a major division of a Fortune 500 corporation and appears to be one step away from the type of professional profile of the typical board member of a Fortune 500 corporation. His credentials include an MBA from an elite university and a series of vice presidential promotions within his Fortune 500 company.

Figure 3
Professional History, Board of Directors, Illinois Manufacturer



Indicates Tenure on Board of Directors

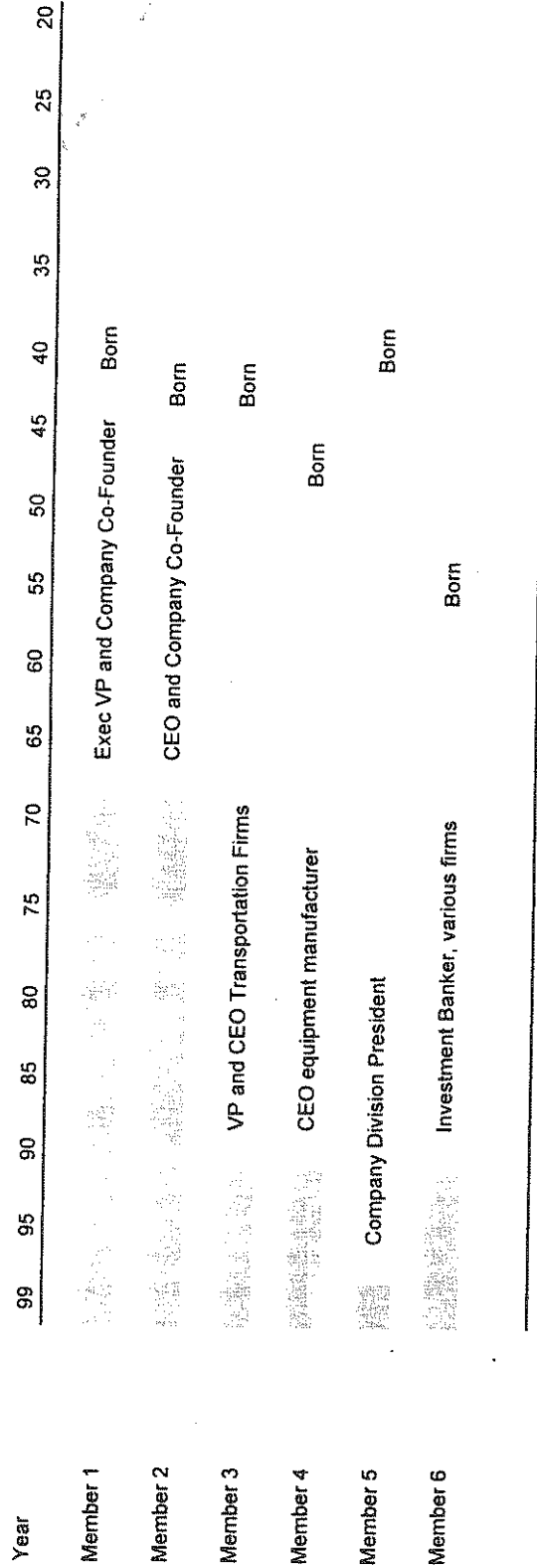
4. Mid-Sized High Tech Company

The board of the mid-sized high tech company consists of only six persons. While the company is publicly owned and traded on a stock exchange, it is controlled by three of the board members who have 54.6 percent of the board voting power. Two of these individuals were the co-founders of the company. Thousands of these mid-sized companies exist in the United States and because of the tight control exerted by founding board members and sometimes family members, they can be difficult to invest

in (when not publicly traded) or to reach top management in without being a corporate insider.

Five of the six board members of this company are in their 50s and one is in his 40s. All are white males. The co-founders joined the board in 1969 and the four others during the 1990s. The three members who are not company employees include the presidents of two mid-sized companies and a managing director of a financial institution. Each of the directors holds 21,000 or more shares of the company.

Figure 4
Professional History, Board of Directors, Illinois High Tech Firm



Indicates Tenure on Board of Directors

Some Inferences

What do these examples of corporate management structure tell us?

- African Americans are at a disadvantage because they had relatively fewer educational and career opportunities during the 1950s and 1960s when the trajectories of the CEOs and corporate vice presidents of the 1990s began.
 - The lack of access to wealth to start businesses has limited the number of African Americans who would operate or have accumulated great personal wealth from companies that they might have founded.
 - Most of the members of corporate boards have professional backgrounds only tangentially related, if related at all, to the work of the company on whose boards they serve.
- Board members, particularly of older, larger companies, are selected for their reputed wisdom and community stature. There is nothing inherent to the operation of these boards to preclude members being selected who might come from what would be considered nontraditional or unconventional backgrounds.
- Increasing numbers of African Americans have credentials comparable to those of members of the boards of thousands of mid-sized companies. Being asked to join these boards can be difficult, however, because they are controlled by tight social circles that may include the company founders in the case of newer companies, or families.
 - African American Americans joining corporate boards will tend to be younger members of boards.

The Path to Becoming a Corporate Officer

The next corporate level beneath the board of directors is the officers of the corporation, most of whom are the company's vice presidents. As with corporate board members, almost all corporate officers are white males.

There are very few positions at the top of corporations but there are various pathways to attaining them. A review of the careers of the corporate officers of the Fortune 500 company presented above illustrates two.

Graduation from an Elite University

One method of corporate ascent appears to be graduation from one or more of the nation's (or world's) elite universities followed by a series of career moves that progress the leader to higher positions (Table 5). These people probably reach the top because of high degrees of transferable skills and highly competitive resumes. It is unclear

the degree to which the nation's top business or law schools recruit people who would perform well wherever they worked, or how much the top schools make talented people into even higher performers. The outcomes are, however, clear. Graduates of the top 16 MBA programs in the nation as ranked by *U.S. News and World Report* averaged over \$90,000 in starting compensation. Schools ranked 36 to 50 averaged about \$25,000 less.¹⁵

Many of the top managers of large corporations are products of the nation's elite universities. As Bowen and Bok have documented, the probability of reaching the top of a company is greatly enhanced by graduation from one of these schools.¹⁶ Although the "high-technology" company described above has only four executive officers, three of the four are products of elite universities and worked for other companies before joining the company (Table 6).

Table 5
Products of Elite Schools: Fortune 500 Company

<p>Senior Vice President & CFO Vanderbilt University/Stanford MBA 19-year career with investment firm before joining the company</p>
<p>Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary Vassar/Oxford-Rhodes Scholar/University of Miami JD Attorney, then VP of major corporation before joining the company</p>
<p>Senior Vice President, Strategic Resources Georgetown University/Case Western MBA Variety of positions with various firms before joining the company</p>

Table 6

Top Management: Mid-Sized High-Tech Company

President

BS University of Oklahoma, Harvard MBA

Senior Vice President, Business Development

BA and MBA, University of Chicago

Vice President, Technology Development

BS and MS Case Inst. of Tech., Ph.D. Case Western Reserve, MBA Lake Forest Grad School

Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer

BA Beloit College, Stanford MBA

Starting Closer to the Bottom

The record of top managers of the Fortune 500 company also demonstrates that it is possible to reach the top without education from an elite university, although a far smaller percentage of these persons reach it. This path begins with graduation from a non-elite university, joining a company in an entry-level position, and working one's way to the top

within the company. Generally these people get to the vice presidential positions because of their business skills and their particular knowledge of the company and its market. Five of the top 12 executives in the Fortune 500 company, including the CEO, earned no more than a four-year degree and built their careers through long service within a single company (Table 7).

Table 7

Top Management "Hard Workers": Fortune 500 Company

Senior Vice President, North American Building Materials

BA U. of Oklahoma, 22 years with one company, attaining VP of Finance, joined the company as a president and controller

Vice President and President Insulating Systems Business

BS from Purdue, joined the company as sales rep. in 1978

Vice President & President System Thinking Sales & Distribution Business

Bachelors in marketing Indiana University, joined the company as sales rep in 1974

Vice President & President International Building Materials Systems Business

BA Arizona State, joined the company as sales rep in 1972

Chief Executive Officer

BA West Virginia University, 35 years with Fortune 500 company before joining the company as CEO

Summary

- Attendance at elite undergraduate and graduate educational institutions enhances an employee's likelihood of attaining a top management position, but it is not a prerequisite. Talented people can begin at middle entry level positions in firms, such as sales management, and attain a top management position.
- As has been documented elsewhere, African Americans are rarely in the top corporate management positions today because of lack of access to high quality educational opportunities during the 1950s and 1960s. Also as Sharon Collins has shown, many African American middle managers with strong career trajectories have been diverted into "racialized" positions such as diversity manager, community affairs, or human resources. These positions are considered to be outside of the company's core functions of production, marketing and finance and rarely lead to the highest salaried, top positions in the company.
- Affirmative action has facilitated the attainment of elite credentials for thousands of African Americans who should be positioned to move into top management positions in the future. Should affirmative action commitments at elite institutions disappear and/or African American enrollments in these institutions decline significantly, this will have a long term negative impact on the ability of African Americans to attain top management jobs in the 2020s and 2030s.

The Management Pipeline

The path to top management is highly competitive. Unless corporations take affirmative steps to promote minority candidates into top positions, in the absence of discrimination we would expect the representation of African Americans in top positions to be in rough proportion to their proportion among all executives who might conventionally be considered qualified. Three major types of traditional qualification that we have discussed above are easily measured: the proportion of graduates of elite graduate schools who are African American, the proportion who already have high-level executive or professional positions, and the proportion of executives or professionals who fall within the age range from which corporate board members, or vice presidents, typically come.

Indeed, as the following analysis indicates, African Americans are under-represented among those attending the most elite universities, holding high-paying executive or professional positions, and those executives or professionals 50 years old or more.

Education

As the analysis of corporate top management above indicates, the process of preparing individuals for careers in top management generally begins with education. Setting aside the winnowing process that begins with primary and secondary education and extends through undergraduate school, the nation's graduate schools, MBA programs and law schools are the proving grounds for those most likely to reach top management.

The percentage of African Americans who have completed degrees at four-year

colleges and universities, and the percentage of African Americans with professional degrees has increased substantially over the past 30 years.

- The number of African Americans enrolled in undergraduate schools has increased from almost one million in 1976 to over 1.3 million in 1996.¹⁷ In 1970, it was only 400,000.
- The number of African Americans in graduate programs has increased from 78,500 in 1976 to 125,500 in 1996.
- The number of African Americans enrolled in professional schools has nearly doubled over the last decade, from 11,200 in 1976 to 21,500 in 1996.
- The percentage of African Americans in law schools has increased from around 1 percent in 1960 to 7.5 percent in 1995.¹⁸

However, in terms of MBAs, law degrees and Ph.D.s, African Americans remain substantially below parity with non-blacks, leaving them in a continued position of disadvantage as a group.

MBAs. Of a total of 93,437 masters degrees awarded nationally in business management and administrative services in 1994, only 4,855 were earned by African Americans.¹⁹ As Table 8 demonstrates, African Americans also continue to make up a small percentage of the graduates of the highest rated business schools in the nation, the schools whose alumni are most likely to occupy the top management positions in large companies.

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Table 8
 Number of African-Americans Receiving MBAs and
 Percentage of All MBAs Awarded for 1995-1996
 to African Americans in the *U.S. News and*
World Report Top Management Schools

Universities	Total African American MBAs Awarded	% of MBAs Awarded to African Americans
Stanford University	26	8.6%
Harvard University	38	4.9%
Northwestern University	51	4.4%
University of Pennsylvania	24	3.3%
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	10	2.6%
University of Chicago	35	3.2%
Columbia University	8	0.9%
University of Michigan	61	9.3%
Duke University	41	9.6%
University of California Los Angeles	21	4.4%
University of Virginia	10	3.5%
Dartmouth College	4	2.2%
New York University	30	2.5%
University of California—Berkeley	10	3.2%
Yale University	2	0.9%
Cornell University	13	3.5%
University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill	18	7.2%
Carnegie Mellon University	6	2.2%
The University of Texas—Austin	36	4.6%
Purdue University	24	11.7%
Emory University	25	9.4%
Indiana University	17	4.3%
University of Rochester	14	4.1%
University of Southern California	24	4.4%
Vanderbilt University	9	3.4%

Source U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System Completions Survey, 1995-1996.

Law Degrees. Progress has been made in enrollment of African Americans in the nation's law schools, an important avenue to top management. Most of the elite law schools nationally exceed the average African American enrollment of 6.9 percent in the nation's law schools in 1998 (Table 9).²⁰

Four historically black universities, Howard, Southern, Texas Southern, and North Carolina Central, have black enrollments over 45 percent and have the highest black enrollment percentages in the nation. However, the fifth highest, City University of New York, drops to 16 percent.

Table 9
Enrollment of African Americans in Elite Law Schools and the Percentage of Enrollment that is African American Identified by the *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*

Universities	Total African American Law Degrees Awarded	% of Law Degrees Awarded to African Americans
University of North Carolina	88	12.8%
George Washington University	180	12.6%
University of Illinois	75	12.4%
Columbia University	135	12.2%
University of Southern California	75	12.1%
Georgetown University	218	10.4%
Emory University	64	10.0%
Vanderbilt University	54	10.0%
Harvard University	153	9.2%
Fordham University	130	9.2%
Yale University	53	9.2%
University of Pennsylvania	65	9.0%
Duke University	53	8.7%
Stanford University	45	8.2%
Boston College	64	7.7%
Northwestern University	47	7.5%
Cornell University	40	7.5%
University of Virginia	83	7.4%
University of Michigan	76	7.3%
University of Chicago	40	7.3%
University of Iowa	47	7.2%
New York University	74	5.6%
University of California—Berkeley	43	5.2%
University of California—Los Angeles	51	5.1%
Washington and Lee University	15	4.1%
University of Minnesota	23	3.0%
University of Notre Dame	14	2.7%
University of Washington	14	2.7%
Brigham Young University	2	.5%

Arrangement of data reprinted in *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education (JBHE)* from *Official American Bar Association Guide to Approved Law Schools (1999)*, *JBHE* (Summer 1998, number 20), pp. 88–89.

As Table 10 indicates, the loss of affirmative action programs for the university systems in Texas and California will have a deleterious effect on the supply of African American lawyers with elite law school credentials and can be

expected to significantly diminish the pool of African Americans who will be considered qualified to serve on corporate boards and in top management positions in future decades.

Table 10
Impact of Terminating Affirmative Action Programs at Leading Law Schools

	First-Year Black Enrollment, U of Texas Law School	First-Year Black Enrollment, UC-Berkeley Law School
1988	42	19
1989	35	27
1990	37	30
1991	34	11
1992	44	24
1993	31	21
1994	37	31
1995	36	21
1996	29	20
1997	5	1

In *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* (Spring 1999, Number 23), pp. 114,115 from Office of Institutional Studies, University of Texas at Austin and Office of Admissions, Boalt Hall Law School.

Doctorates. African Americans continue to be badly under-represented among young scholars receiving Ph.D.s. As Table 11 indicates only 4.6 percent of Ph.D.s awarded in 1996 went to African Americans.

Generally, a doctorate is not a degree that leads to a top management position in a corporation. However, particularly in high-technology fields and management, it is common for university faculty engaged in advanced research to form their own technology development, en-

gineering, research, or consulting firms. These firms can grow into large enterprises quickly and leadership of these firms can be a qualification for selection to a corporate board. The continued very low representation of African Americans at only slightly over 2 percent in the scientific areas of engineering, life sciences and physical sciences is problematic for generating future African American business leadership in fields that will be central to the future of the American economy.

Table 11
Percentage of Ph.D.s Awarded
to African Americans
by Field, 1996

Arts and humanities	3.0
Business and management	4.3
Education	10.0
Engineering	2.2
Life sciences	2.9
Physical sciences	2.0
Social sciences	4.9
Professional fields	7.5
Total	4.6

The Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac (p. 24,
"Summary Report 1996," National Research Council)
XLV Number 1 8/28/98

The Workplace

A major determinant of the likely number of future top managers who will be African American, is the quantity of African Americans now occupying middle-management positions who might be expected to reach the top in the next ten to twenty years. As the following analysis of executives and professionals in the Chicago area in 1990 indicates, significant racial disparities exist across occupations that lead to top management positions in most industries.

Overall, the pool of potential top man-

agers from which companies were most likely to promote their vice presidents and executive officers during the 1990s lacked large numbers of potential black candidates. Table 12 presents the representation of African Americans among various levels of total income. For instance, less than 1 percent (0.7%) of African American executives have total incomes exceeding \$129,000 while more than 5 percent (5.3%) of non-African Americans do.

The pools of executives from which top managers who might be African American would generally be selected

is the percentage of all people in the high-income management pools who are African American. Only 7.6 percent of all executives are African American. And as Table 13 below shows, of the executives making large amounts of money, less than 2 percent are African American.

Differences in occupational achievement become increasingly large at the top of the occupational ladder. While the average African American and non-African American worker, supervisor and professional is separated by about \$10,000 in salary, at the executive level the difference jumps to over \$17,000 (Table 14).

Differences in average salary levels between African American executives and other executives exist across all major industries (Table 15). The largest differences were among manufactur-

ing and construction executives, where non-black executives averaged nearly twice the salary of black executives.

Disparity in salaries is not necessarily an indicator of lack of pay equity. Other research indicates that much of the disparity in salary is attributable to such factors as education and age. However, the salary disparity is an indicator that among managers, African Americans hold fewer senior positions, work for companies that pay less on average, and may have less responsibility or authority.

Non-black executives also tended to be older than black executives, meaning that there are more non-blacks who will fit the typical profile of the corporate board member. In only three of the major industrial categories, did African Americans have an average older age than non-black executives.

Table 12
Percentage of African American Executives and Professionals at Various Salary Levels

	Executives		Professionals	
	African American	Other	African American	Other
Over \$129,000	0.7%	5.3%	0.6%	3.7%
Over \$100,000	0.9%	8.6%	0.9%	5.5%
Over \$80,000	2.2%	12.6%	1.5%	7.8%
Over \$60,000	5.9%	22.0%	3.4%	13.3%

Source for Executive data, 1990 Public Use Micro Data Series.

Table 13
Percentage of Executives and Professionals at Various Salary Levels Who Are African American

	African American Percentage of All Executives	African American Percentage of All Professionals
Over \$129,000	1.1	1.6
Over \$100,000	0.9	1.6
Over \$80,000	1.5	2.0
Over \$60,000	2.2	2.6

Table 14
Mean Salary for Chicago-Area Employees, 1989

	African American	Other	Difference
Executives	\$28,829	\$46,433	\$17,604
Professionals	26,420	36,413	9,993
Supervisors	25,303	35,413	10,110
Workers	18,425	27,556	9,131

Note Salaries and occupations are self-reported and include leadership of businesses of all sizes.

Table 15
Industry Categories

	% Black	Average Salary		Average Age	
		Black	Other	Black	Other
Executives					
Professional & Related Svcs	10.2%	\$28,184	\$42,164	42.3	41.8
Manufacturing	3.7	33,869	57,037	40.0	43.3
Retail Trade	7.6	23,438	36,178	34.6	38.7
FIRE	7.5	30,025	48,501	38.7	39.2
Transp, Comm, Pub Util	10.0	39,392	46,113	42.8	42.2
Construction	2.8	26,865	50,557	40.1	42.1
Wholesale Trade	3.4	33,461	50,166	36.9	41.9
Business and Repair Svcs	5.7	27,655	47,979	38.8	39.3
Public Admin	22.9	26,999	35,493	44.6	44.9
Personal Services	9.0	19,458	31,931	42.4	39.9
Entertainment & Recr.	6.7	16,115	31,401	33.1	37.9
Professionals					
Professional & Related Svcs	10.5%	\$25,973	\$36,539	42.7	41.6
Manufacturing	3.7	32,720	38,697	35.6	39.4
Retail Trade	6.3	24,030	28,767	38.4	40.0
FIRE	7.0	26,334	48,829	38.5	37.2
Transp, Comm, Pub Util	11.2	38,804	43,933	38.3	40.4
Construction	4.4	32,325	43,901	39.1	41.2
Wholesale Trade	4.7	31,212	39,105	34.3	37.4
Business and Repair Svcs	6.6	25,218	34,814	38.0	38.0
Public Admin	24.3	26,518	32,910	41.1	41.4
Personal Services	7.7	12,146	21,460	37.8	35.9
Entertainment & Recr.	7.4	15,757	19,501	31.1	33.3

Comparison of 1975 and 1997

A comparison of the employment records of companies reporting to the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission shows that there has been improvement in the representation of African Americans among officials, managers and professionals across industries but that representation still falls substantially short of parity.

As Table 16 shows, in 1975, African Americans comprised 15 percent of the Chicago area workforce but were only a little more than 4 percent of managers and professionals. By 1997, African Americans were 16 percent of the workforce and had increased to nearly 8 percent of managers and professionals. During the decade the number of African American managers increased by 27,000, or 17 percent. This enlarges considerably the size of the pool from which corporations might draw their top managers.

The economic base of the Chicago area has undergone substantial change during the past 25 years. The region has seen a major decrease in manufacturing jobs, and a substantial increase in employment in finance, insurance and real estate, in services, and in transportation and utilities. EEO-reported black employment in durable manufacturing fell from over 66,000 in 1975 to almost 26,000 two decades later. On the other hand, black service employment in EEO-reporting companies increased from around 39,000 in 1975 to almost 86,000 in 1997.

There was no major industrial category in 1975 in which African Americans were represented in management in proportion to either their presence in the industry or overall presence in the workforce, and that remains true in 1997. As Table 16 shows, in 1975 African Americans were 7 percent of managers in services, 6.2 percent of managers in retail trade, and 5.5 percent of

managers in wholesale trade. In all other industrial areas, African Americans made up less than 5 percent of management of EEO-reporting companies. African Americans were 5 percent or more of professionals in companies in retail trade, finance, insurance and real estate, and in services. African American representation was particularly low in manufacturing and wholesale trade.

Over the next 20 years there was improvement in representation of African Americans among management, but numbers still fall far short of what they would be if African Americans were represented in management in the same proportion as in the workforce or in the particular industries. By 1997, African Americans were over 12 percent of managers in the transportation and public utilities industries, and around 8 percent in retail trade, finance, insurance and real estate, and services. Among professionals, African Americans were almost 12 percent in finance, insurance and real estate, 10 percent in retail trade and 8 to 9 percent in services and transportation and public utilities.

The areas of greatest improvement have been transportation and public utilities and in finance, insurance and real estate. In 1997, there were more than 4,000 more black professionals and 1,500 more black managers in the Chicago area than there were in 1975 in finance, insurance and real estate. Transportation and public utilities have seen increases of almost 1,900 black managers and over 1,500 black professionals over the 20-year period.

African Americans have been less successful in attaining leadership positions with manufacturers. In 1975, less than 3 percent of managers in durable manufacturing were black and that number has increased by less than 1 percent over the past 20 years. In the late 1990s, less than 4 percent of managers and professionals in durable manufacturing, and only about 5 percent of managers and

Table 16
Comparison of 1975 and 1997

	Officials and Managers		Professionals		Officials & Mgrs.	Professionals
	Total	Black	Total	Black	% Black	% Black
1997						
Mining	210	6	109	9	2.9%	8.3%
Construction	1,631	34	1,097	34	2.1%	3.1%
Mfg.-Durable	32,189	1,167	34,449	1,305	3.6%	3.8%
Mfg.-Nondurable	25,520	1,273	22,165	1,168	5.0%	5.3%
Trans & Pub Util.	22,510	2,789	24,854	2,074	12.4%	8.3%
Wholesale Trade	14,294	594	11,726	610	4.2%	5.2%
Retail Trade	24,086	2,075	6,425	642	8.6%	10.0%
FIRE	28,360	2,312	42,663	4,998	8.2%	11.7%
Services	47,048	3,681	137,367	12,584	7.8%	9.2%
1997 Total	195,848	13,931	280,905	20,424	7.1%	8.3%
1975						
Mining	358	4	299	1	1.1%	0.3%
Construction	1,451	10	1,596	46	0.7%	2.9%
Mfg.-Durable	48,455	1,423	26,649	448	2.9%	1.7%
Mfg.-Nondurable	26,172	1,171	15,478	536	4.5%	3.5%
Trans & Pub Util.	16,115	893	12,718	491	5.5%	3.9%
Wholesale Trade	11,337	247	4,347	92	2.2%	2.1%
Retail Trade	25,476	1,577	3,472	176	6.2%	5.1%
FIRE	21,472	806	14,051	708	3.8%	5.0%
Services	17,227	1,201	47,019	2,656	7.0%	5.6%
1975 Target	168,063	7,332	125,629	5,154	4.4%	4.1%
Change, 1975-1997						
Mining	(148)	2	(190)	8	1.7%	7.9%
Construction	180	24	(499)	(12)	1.4%	0.2%
Mfg.-Durable	(16,266)	(256)	7,850	857	0.7%	2.1%
Mfg.-Nondurable	(652)	102	6,687	632	0.5%	1.8%
Trans & Pub Util.	6,395	1,896	12,136	1,583	6.8%	4.5%
Wholesale Trade	2,957	347	7,379	518	2.0%	3.1%
Retail Trade	(1,390)	498	2,953	466	2.4%	4.9%
FIRE	6,888	1,506	28,612	4,290	4.4%	6.7%
Services	29,821	2,480	90,348	9,928	0.9%	3.5%

Table 16 continues

Table 16
Continued

	1975		1997		1975	1996
	Total	Black	Total	Black	% Black	% Black
Total Workers						
Mining	1,642	56	981	56	3%	6%
Construction	19,080	2,063	20,885	1,640	11%	8%
Mfg.-Durable	453,708	66,312	248,070	25,913	15%	10%
Mfg.-Nondurable	224,457	37,591	183,929	23,074	17%	13%
Trans & Pub Util.	160,775	25,081	203,165	40,236	16%	20%
Wholesale Trade	81,126	6,549	88,541	9,428	8%	11%
Retail Trade	211,545	30,387	236,305	41,095	14%	17%
FIRE	122,159	15,617	153,613	25,779	13%	17%
Services	204,288	39,232	442,175	85,795	19%	19%
	1,478,780	222,888	1,577,664	253,016	15%	16%

professionals in non-durable manufacturing were African American. Wholesale trade, an industry closely related to manufacturing, has also lagged in promotion of African Americans into management and the professions.

The other major industry that has had a disappointing record with respect to African Americans in management has been construction. In 1975, less than 1 percent of managers and less than 3 percent of professionals in the industry were African American. By 1997 those percentages had increased only to 2.1 percent and 3.1 percent respectively.

That manufacturing, wholesaling and construction would be the most difficult industries for African Americans to make managerial and professional gains

in may be unsurprising. Manufacturing and construction lost substantial numbers of employees in EEO-reporting companies and wholesaling reported only a small increase from the 1970s to 1990s. To the extent that job losses or slow growth were a function of downsizing, affirmative efforts would have been necessary to increase the number of black managers at a time that firms were actually decreasing in size. Also to the extent that firms that rely on a high level of customer contact, such as services, FIRE and retail have needed to be increasingly responsive to minority customers, firms in these industries may have felt increased pressure to have more African Americans in managerial positions.

Age

The pipeline for top executives is built not only of a candidates' education and income levels, but also their ages. In order to understand the composition of corporate boards and officers at the end of the 1990s, it is essential to understand where African Americans were in their careers at the end of the 1980s when those top managers were promoted into place.

Three major age categories are relevant for investigating the role of age in creating the pool of potential top managers. The youngest age cohort, individuals 30 and under in 1990, was born during the 1960s and were in college and/or graduate school during the 1980s. At 30, they generally remain too young to have assumed top positions in large companies.

The second group is those executives age 31 to 49. This is the group of managers who were born between 1940 and 1960 and the youngest of them would have attended graduate school or started working after the crucial years for civil rights in employment of the mid 1960s. They, then, were the first black cohort in American history to have significant legal remedies against employment discrimination, and to have bene-

fited from affirmative action and EEO monitoring of employers.²¹

The third, and oldest, age cohort is the executives 50 or more years old who were born before the 1940s. They started their careers before the advent of civil rights legislation affecting employment.

As Table 17 demonstrates and as was noted above, African American executives tend, on average, to be slightly younger than non-black executives. For each industrial category except public administration, blacks made up a greater proportion of executives age 31 to 49 than they did executives over 50. This indicates progress in African Americans reaching executive positions. However, it also indicates that the pool of African Americans in their 50s during the 1990s, the group from which the corporate vice presidents and board members of the late 1990s were selected, was relatively small. The African Americans in the pool of most likely candidates from which corporations were selecting their top management in the late 1980s and early 1990s were those who were born too early to benefit substantially from the expansion of educational and employment opportunities in the mid 1960s.

In each industrial sector except public administration, the group of African American executives over 50 in 1990

Table 17
Black Executives as a Percentage
of All Executives by Age

	31-49	50 or older
Professional & Related Svcs	11%	10%
Manufacturing	4%	3%
Retail Trade	6%	5%
FIRE	8%	6%
Transp, Comm, Pub Util	12%	8%
Construction	3%	2%
Wholesale Trade	4%	1%
Business and Repair Svcs	6%	5%
Public Admin	22%	24%

was 10 percent or less. In the key sectors of manufacturing and finance, insurance & real estate, the percentage of executives who were African American was 3 percent and 6 percent respectively. The biggest gains have occurred in transportation, where the percentage of executives who are African American moved from 8 percent for the cohort over 50 years of age, to 12 percent for executives aged 31 to 49, and wholesale firms where only one percent of executives over 50 were black in 1990 to 4 percent of executives age 31 to 49. Only in public administration, where blacks have tended to have greater opportunities to attain management positions, are blacks a greater percentage (24 percent) of older executives than younger ones (22 percent)

Table 18 presents the same type of analysis for professionals. Among professionals, the pattern is the same for all industrial categories except professional services, business services, and public administration. In the cases of professional and business services, in 1990 blacks made up a smaller percentage of executives in the 31 to 49 age cohort than in the over 50 cohort. Substantial gains in black representation were made among younger professionals in manufacturing (1 percent to 4 per-

cent), transportation (7 percent to 13 percent) and wholesaling (2 percent to 5 percent). In general, blacks were roughly as likely to have attained professional as executive positions in each industry.

Blacks have been substantially more likely to have attained supervisory positions with firms than executive or professional positions, although they remain underrepresented in many industrial sectors. As Table 19 shows, blacks exceed 18 percent of supervisors in both age cohorts in professional services, transportation and public administration.

Because only the youngest supervisors have any chance of working through the ranks to become top management, Table 19 includes data for the age cohort under 30. Only in public administration, which does not normally lead to a top private sector management position, does the representation of blacks among young supervisors exceed their representation among middle-aged supervisors.

Looking at the same data a different way, we can observe that a greater proportion of non-black executives were over 50 in 1990 than were black executives. Thus on average, black executives tend to be younger than non-black executives, indicating that while still

Table 18
Black Professionals as a Percentage
of All Professionals by Age

	31-49	50 or older
Professional & Related Svcs	10%	12%
Manufacturing	4%	1%
Retail Trade	7%	6%
FIRE	8%	8%
Transp, Comm, Pub Util	13%	7%
Construction	4%	4%
Wholesale Trade	5%	2%
Business and Repair Svcs	6%	9%
Public Admin	26%	24%

Figure 6
Percentage of Black Professionals in All Industries
by Age

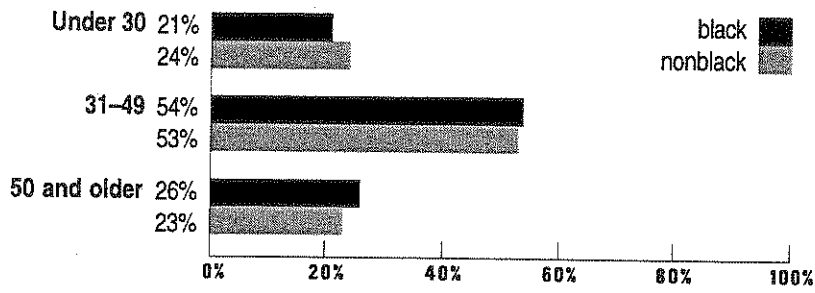


Figure 6
Percentage of Black Supervisors in All Industries
by Age

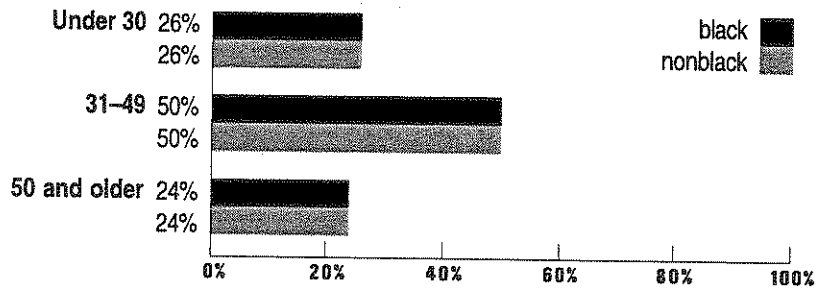


Table 19
Black Supervisors as a Percentage
of All Supervisors by Age

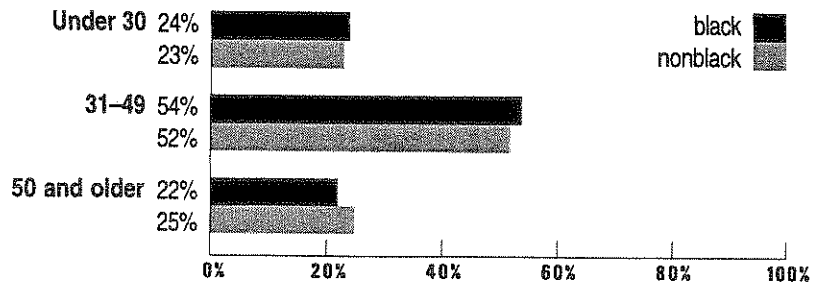
	30 and under	31-49	50 and up
Professional & Related Svcs	18%	18%	22%
Manufacturing	9%	8%	8%
Retail Trade	10%	8%	5%
FIRE	12%	12%	10%
Transp, Comm, Pub Util	13%	21%	22%
Construction	3%	4%	3%
Wholesale Trade	4%	6%	3%
Business and Repair Svcs	10%	8%	16%
Public Admin	34%	18%	29%

represented less among executives than they should be, African Americans will likely be better represented in the future than they have been in the past.

As Figures 5, 6, and 7 show, for instance, 28 percent of non-black manufacturing executives were over 50 in 1990, compared to only 19 percent of African American executives in manu-

facturing. In retail trade, 20 percent of non-black executives were 50 or over, compared to only 12 percent of African Americans. Only among public administrators did the proportion of blacks over 50 in executive positions exceed the proportion of whites over 50 in those positions.

Figure 5
Percentage of Black Executives in All Industries
by Age



2 Leadership in Government

The past 30 years have seen a tremendous increase in the representation of African Americans among elected officials in Chicago and Illinois. This increase has been the result of a number of factors including the creation and enforcement of the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 and its subsequent amendments, increased numbers of blacks living in the Chicago area, mobilization of black voters, stronger willingness of white voters to support black candidates, and development of black political organizations.

Redistricting. The federal courts have generally favored the interest of maintaining fair representation of minorities in elected bodies in Illinois. During the 1990s the U.S. Supreme Court appeared to roll back voting rights gains made during the latter half of the century. However, voting rights for minorities fared far better in Illinois than elsewhere. The U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal of the decision of a local three-judge federal panel that sustained the three African American congressional districts and one Hispanic majority district in the Chicago area. The federal appeals court overturned a lower court ruling that would have denied creation of one additional African American super-majority ward above the number created in Chicago's 1992 ward map.

Following the 1990 Census, the Cook County Board drew its first ever district map, eliminating the former at-large election system. This resulted in an increase in African American representation on the Board from four members to five.

The Cook County judicial process also moved from utilization of at-large election of judges to judicial districts, a system that has resulted in substantial increases in the number of African American judges.

Population Changes. Increased Black representation in elected bodies has also resulted from significant increases in the

percentage of population that is African American, both in Chicago and in suburbs. The rapid decrease of the white population in Chicago for the first time left African Americans with a slim plurality in population total in 1990. The increasing African American percentage of city population has necessitated creating the number of African American majority wards and made possible the triumph of Harold Washington in the 1983 and 1987 mayoral elections. The migration of African Americans to suburbs, particularly in southern Cook County, has resulted in the election of African American leadership in the municipal government of many southern Cook suburbs, and the election of African American state legislators and one congressman.

Voter Registration and Turnout. The black community has had a mixed record with regard to participation in elections. Although the data is badly marred by difficulties of measurement and possibly inaccurate record-keeping blacks in Chicago appear to be registered to vote at roughly the same rates as whites.²² When turnout has been commensurately high, this has created the opportunity to elect black candidates to high offices. The most notable examples of this have been the 1983 and 1987 mayoral elections in which Harold Washington triumphed, and the 1992 election of Carol Mosely Braun to the U.S. Senate.

However, when African American turnout has been low, which has been the case more often than not, African American candidates and political interests have suffered. Despite a state legislative map created following the 1990 census that provided for an unprecedented number of African American majority districts, black candidates lost in 6 of those districts in the 1992 elections. In almost every case higher black turnout voting for the black candidate would have won the election. In the 1992 election, had black voters voted for a refer-

endum that would have increased funding for schools in the same numbers that they voted for Carol Mosely Braun for the Senate, that referendum would have passed. The creation of black majority electoral districts for city, county, state and federal legislative seats has generally protected black representation in those bodies from the damage of low voter turnout. However, it has made black politicians and their interests less of a factor in at-large elections such as those for the Chicago mayor and state and county offices.

Racial Bloc Voting. The last thirty years have seen a significant increase in the willingness of whites to support African American candidates, although racial bloc voting persists in most elec-

tions that involve candidates of different races. During the 1990s, Carol Mosely Braun was elected to the U.S. Senate, Roland Burris was elected Illinois attorney general, Jesse White was elected Illinois secretary of state, and John Stroger was elected to the presidency of the Cook County Board. Each of these candidates created a coalition of African American and white voters to win.

Abundant evidence also indicates that racial bloc voting persists. Chicago's mayoral elections had divided along racial lines almost completely until the most recent, when Mayor Daley won approximately 40 percent of the black vote. Table 20 documents the increases in African American representation at most levels of local government.

Table 20
Elected Officials

		Positions	Blacks	% Black
U.S. House of Representatives	1999	9	3	33.3
	1977	11	2	15.4
	1965	13	1	6.7
State Legislators	1999	177*	23*	13.0*
	1977	120	18	15.0
	1965	120	10	8.3
Cook County Officials Non-Judicial	1999	27	8	29.6
	1977	36	3	8.3
	1965	34	3	8.8
Cook County Officials Judicial	1999	404	74	18.3
	1977	295	21	7.1
	1965	138	8	5.8
Chicago	1999	53	19	35.8
	1977	53	14	26.4
	1965	59	7	11.9
Ward Committeemen	1999			
	1977	100	27	27.0
	1965	100	15	15.0

* Statewide - Not comparable percentage to 1977 or 1965.

Chicago Area Boards and Commissions

- Twenty-six percent of members of appointed boards overseeing governmental functions in Chicago are African American, an improvement over the past two decades.

The percentage of appointed board members who are African American has increased from less than 20 percent in 1977 to over 26 percent currently (Table 21). At least one African American sits on every board reviewed for this analysis. These include groups such as the Chicago Board of Education, Library Board, Chicago Board of Health, transit boards, the Workforce Development Board, the Election Commissioners and others.

Although by definition not directly elected, board and commission members are appointed by elected officials and are therefore only one step removed from

the electoral process. The percentage of African Americans on these boards and commissions would be higher except for inclusion of the Northeast Illinois Planning Commission and Regional Transportation Authority in the analysis, bodies that have wider areas of inclusion than Chicago alone and, therefore, a smaller proportion of African Americans in their constituency.

The expanded presence of African Americans on commissions is a product of the expanded base of African American political power and the necessity of maintaining racial coalitions for maintaining political power.

Table 21
Boards and Commissions

		Positions	Blacks	% Black
Comparable Boards with Additions	1999	137	36	26.3
	1977	226	39	17.2
	1965	77	10	13.0

Local Public Administration

City of Chicago

- The City of Chicago has gradually improved African American access to managerial positions since the 1960s, but the high point appears to have been at the end of the Sawyer administration in 1989.

The administration of city government has undergone profound changes since the last review of African Americans in decision-making positions in 1977. Since then Harold Washington, an African American, was elected mayor (1983 and 1987), resulting in the first significant access to leadership positions for African Americans in city government. Washington's death led to the transitional administration of Eugene Sawyer, an African American alderman and a compromise choice of African American and white Aldermen. The Sawyer adminis-

tration was followed by the election of Richard M. Daley as mayor.

Blacks made significant gains in access to administrative positions in City Hall from 1965 to 1977, and these have been followed by more gains since then.

The city's report of March 1999 indicates that 33.7 percent of upper management positions (Shakman Exempt) are filled by African Americans (Table 22). This figure is down from 45.2 percent of January, 1989 following six years of Chicago's having had an African American mayor.

Table 22
City of Chicago

		Positions	Blacks	% Black
City of Chicago	1999	832	281	33.7
with Additions	1977	192	54	28.1
	1965	156	2	1.3

Chicago Board of Education

- The combination of the desegregation orders of the early 1980s, white flight from the Chicago Public Schools, and school reform have resulted in significant increases in African Americans in management positions in the Chicago Public Schools.

African Americans have made substantial gains in attainment of leadership positions in the Chicago public schools. The schools have undergone substantial change during the past 20 years, the most significant of which has been the empowerment of local schools and ele-

vation of the principal as the school's authority figure. Prior to the 1988 reforms, principals were appointed and effectively supervised by the Chicago public schools' central office. With reform, principals gained greater control over their school buildings and staffs

and, with only a few exceptions, are hired and fired by their local school councils.

The Chicago Board of Education's September 1996 Racial/Ethnic Survey of Staff reported the percentages of African Americans in leadership positions listed in Table 23. These figures repre-

sent substantial increases over figures from the 1970s and 1960s, which were prior to the federal desegregation orders of the early 80s, and were from a period when the schools were tightly controlled by the mayor's office in a city with a far smaller black population proportionate to whites.

Table 23
City of Chicago

	Positions	Blacks	% Blacks
Position			
Executive Administration	33	13	39.4
Ret/Dist Administrator	18	9	50.0
Director/Administrator	99	35	35.4
Coordinator/Supervisor	150	84	56.0
Principal	448	292	52.3
Change over Time			
1977	80	20	25.0
1965	72	7	9.7

Water Reclamation District

- African Americans are under-represented among Water Reclamation District leadership.

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District's most recent report (1997) indicated that 9 percent (5 of 56) officials and administrators were African Amer-

ican and 11 percent (52 of 456) of professionals were African American (Table 24).

Table 24
Water Reclamation Districts

		Positions	Blacks	% Black
Water Rec.	1999	9	1	11.1
Metropolitan	1977	15	2	13.3
Sanitary Dist	1965	7	1	14.3

Cook County

- In the late 1990s, African Americans are represented in managerial positions in County government in excess of their proportion of the Cook County population.

Like the City of Chicago, government of Cook County has undergone significant change in the past two decades that has created greater opportunity for African Americans. Those changes began with the election of party outsider Richard Phelan to the presidency of the Cook County Board and the subsequent election of an African American, John Stroger.

The February 1998 report of racial classification of Cook County employ-

ees listed the figures in Table 25 for officials and administrators of County functions. African Americans are now represented in Cook County managerial positions in excess of their proportion of total population of Cook County (approximately 26 percent). These figures suggest improvement over figures for top management in Cook County government reported in the 1970s and 1960s.

Table 25
Cook County Government

	Positions	Blacks	% Black
Departments			
Finance/Administration	47	18	38.3
Streets and Highways	3	0	0
Police Protection	5	0	0
Natural Resources/Parks	34	7	20.6
Hospitals	246	93	37.8
Health	4	0	0
Community Development	22	9	40.9
Corrections	10	5	40
Change over Time			
1977	22	2	9.1
1965	13	1	7.7

3 Leadership of Non-Profits

Post-Secondary Education

- African Americans have made gains in representation among top leaders of higher education but remain under-represented.

To ascertain the position of African Americans in institutions of higher education, the Urban League surveyed public universities, community colleges, and private institutions in the Chicago area.

- In the three major public universities, African Americans comprised almost one-third of board members and almost half of officers.
- In the community colleges, 14 percent of board members and 22 percent of officers were African American.
- Among the major private colleges and universities surveyed, 6 percent of board members and 8 percent of officers were African American.

The presence of African Americans on boards of trustees and among officers of the college or university appears related to their ties to the local community and responsiveness to government. All of the public universities had at least one African American on its board of trustees and among its officers. Most of the community colleges did as well. The independent colleges and universities were very different. While only 2 of the eleven survey respondents had African Americans among their board members, only four of the eleven indicated having African Americans among their officers. Clearly the distinction in accountability between the public and the private sectors that operates at the broadest level also operates in higher education (Table 26).

Table 26
African Americans in Higher Education

	Number	Positions	Blacks	Percent
1999 Total				
Public Universities	3	38	14	36.8
Community Colleges	6	80	14	17.5
Private Colleges and Universities	11	741	48	6.5
Officers				
Public Universities	3	16	7	43.8
Community Colleges	6	37	8	21.6
Private Colleges and Universities	11	129	10	7.8
Board Members				
Public Universities	3	22	7	31.8
Community Colleges	6	43	6	14.0
Private Colleges and Universities	11	612	38	6.2
Change over Time				
1999	20	859	76	8.8
1977	11	282	17	6.0
1965	7	380	5	1.3

Social Services

- African Americans are well represented among leadership of social welfare organizations, heading more than one quarter of United Way member agencies as executive directors and make up almost one quarter of board members of United Way member agencies.

African Americans have a strong presence in the management and delivery of social services in Chicago. African Americans make up over 26 percent of agency executive directors, 24 percent of board members and over 40 percent of staff (Table 27).

A number of reasons likely account for the strong African American representation in this sector. Many service organizations are rooted in the communities in which their constituents live. Many organizations are directly accountable to constituents, and may have constituents on their boards. African Americans make up around 40 percent of Chicago's population and a disproportionate number of people who utilize social services. Given the importance of organizational responsiveness to local and constituent populations, most Chicago social service organizations reflect their racial compositions in their leadership.

Social service organizations utilize different occupational ladders to their leadership. Boards of directors are more likely to have people with community ties or expertise in social services than wealth or high academic qualifications than are corporations or universities.

While there are social networks operate to define access to board of social service organizations, these tend not be anchored in corporate affiliations or graduation from an elite universities. Boards of smaller, community-based organizations tend to recruit from personal contacts within that community, a practice that can lead to a highly committed board, but too often weak on contacts that can help with fundraising.

Most of the largest social service agencies in Chicago are affiliated with the United Way and United Way member agencies represent a broad spectrum of service delivery. The United Way has been a strong advocate for racial diversity of management and staff of its member organizations.

The 1977 and 1965 studies utilized a significantly different definition of African American representation among policymakers among voluntary organizations, choosing to focus on the board members of a relatively small number of social welfare and religious organizations. This report measured African American representation by focusing on the race of the executive director of all United Way member organizations in Chicago. This method resulted in sub-

Table H
African Americans in Social Services

	Agencies	Positions	Blacks	% Black
1997 Board Executive Directors	146	147	39	26.5
1997 Board Members	146	4,205	1,022	24.0
1997 Staff	146	24,337	9,751	40.0
1977 Selected organizations	28	1,960	186	9.5
1965 Selected organizations	14	791	69	8.7

stantially higher representation of African Americans among social welfare leadership.

To the extent that the two methods

were comparable, there appear to have been substantial gains for African Americans in the social welfare field over the last two decades.

4 Data Sources in the Study

With the following sources, we are able to ascertain the broad cast of the position of African Americans in leadership positions in the Chicago area today, whether there has been improvement during the last 30 years, and what the likelihood of improvement is in the future if no affirmative steps are taken to move African Americans into leadership positions.

The report is comprised of data obtained from several types of sources:

1. Mail surveys with follow-up telephone calls to area companies, law firms, unions, social service agencies, and commissions seeking the racial identification of their leadership.
2. Published lists such as the black lawyers SIC that identifies the race of membership.
3. Public Use Microdata Sample from the 1990 U.S. Census.
4. Annual reports published by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.
5. Analysis of corporate proxy statements that include detailed information on board members and corporate officers.

Comparisons between 1965, 1977 and

the present were made by utilizing data from a previous report by the Chicago Urban League, Blacks in Policy-Making Positions in Chicago: A Follow-Up Study published in 1979. The report provides an excellent framework for comparisons, although in some instances different methodologies were used for data collection rendering some comparisons more meaningful than others. For instance, the 1979 report used key informants to identify members of corporate boards and corporate officers to a far greater extent than does this report, thereby allowing for a larger sample of corporations. Because of the tendency of corporations to respond to the current survey if they had African American members, the 1999 report probably over-states the level of black representation in corporations.

Data on African American representation among corporate officers and boards was obtained through a mail survey of the largest 250 publicly owned corporations in the Chicago area as identified by Crain's Chicago Business. The survey was initially distributed in 1998 with follow-up surveys to unresponsive companies in 1999.

Data on attorneys was compiled by comparing lists of partners obtained from the Martindale-Hubble guide with The Guide to Chicago's Black Lawyers 1997-1998, published by the Consortium of Legal Organization, for the largest 25 Chicago law firms as identified by

Crain's Chicago Business.

Data on unions was obtained by a telephone survey of unions headquartered in the Chicago area registered with the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Labor Management Standards.

Data on judges was obtained from a report from the Office of the Chief Judge of Cook County, "Circuit Court of Cook County" April 5, 1998.

Data on the Chicago Board of Education was obtained from the Racial/Ethnic Survey of Staff Reported as of September 30, 1996. Office of Accountability, Department of Compliance.

Data on the Chicago Fire Department was obtained from Statistical Summary of Active Fire Department Personnel by Job Title, Race and Sex, 01/21/98.

Data on the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District was obtained from the District's State and Local Government Information (EEO-4) report - 1997.

Data on City of Chicago management was obtained from "Shakman Exempt Positions" received from the City of Chicago Department of Personnel April 30, 1999.

Data on the Cook County Board of Commissioners and administration was obtained from the County's State and Local Government Information (EEO-4) report - 1997.

Data on the Chicago Police Department was obtained from "Chicago Police Department - Operational Strength (Exempt Rank)" Research and Analysis

Section, Research and Development, April 2, 1999.

Data on the CHA was obtained "CHA Breakdown by EEOC/Ethnic Sex as of 12/31/98"

Data on non-profit organization obtained from a report from the U Way/Crusade of Mercy, "United Member Agencies for FY '97"

Data from the following was obtained through individual communication: League staff and agency administrators in the spring of 1999: Chicago Public Library, Office of the Police Board, Regional Transportation Authority, Board of Election Commissioners, Chicago Transit Board, Chicago Board of Health, Chicago Department of Transportation, Zoning Board of Appeals, Regional Transportation Authority, Northeast Illinois Planning Commission, Public Building Commission, Chicago Park District, Chicago Workforce Board, Chicago Department of Planning and Development, Department of Buildings.

Information on public colleges and universities was obtained from telephone surveys of administrators of public universities, community colleges and independent colleges and universities located in the Chicago area.

EEOC Data was obtained from Job Patterns for Minorities and Women in Private Industry, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Washington, D.C. 1997 data published in 1998 and 1975 data published in 1976.

Notes

¹Roger Fox and Carolyn McCorkle, *Blacks in Policy Making Positions in Chicago: A Follow-Up Study* (Chicago Urban League, 1980); Harold M. Baron, *Negroes in Policy-Making Positions in Chicago: A Study in Black Powerlessness* (Chicago Urban League, 1968).

²Paul Kleppner, *Chicago Divided* (City: Publisher, date).

³Sharon M. Collins, *Black Corporate Executives: The Making and Breaking of a Black Middle Class* (Philadelphia, Pa.: Temple University Press, 1977).

⁴Kay Worrell, *Corporate Directors' Compensation in 1998* (New York: The Conference Board, 1998), p. 31; Ellis Cose, *The Rage of the Black Middle Class* (City: Publisher, date); Collins, 1997.

⁵Fox and McCorkle, p. 56.

⁶Worrell, p. 31.

⁷Jeremy Bacon, *Membership and Organization of Corporate Boards* (New York: The Conference Board, 1990), p. 11.

⁸*Ebony*, January 7, 1997, p. 38.

⁹Bacon, 1990, p. 11.

¹⁰*ibid*, pp. 6-8.

¹¹*Standards of Good Practice for Boards of Directors: Final Report* (Henley Management College, December 1993), Appendix 6A.

¹²1992 *Survey of Corporate Directors* (Greenwich, Conn.: Directors Publications, Inc., 1992), p. 36.

¹³Bacon, 1990, p. 21.

¹⁴Information on board members and officers was obtained from corporate annual reports and proxy statements from 1997, 1998, and 1999 for these companies.

¹⁵U.S. News and World Report website.

¹⁶William G. Bowen and Derek Bok, *The Shape of the River: Long Term Consequences of Considering Race in College and University Admissions* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998).

¹⁷*The Chronicle of Higher Education, Almanac Issue XLV, Number 1* (August 28, 1998), p. 18.

¹⁸Bowen and Bok, p. 7.

¹⁹*The African American Education Data Book, Volume I, Higher and Adult Education* (City: Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute of the College Fund/UNCF, 1997), p. 100.

²⁰*Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* 20 (Summer 1998), pp. 88-89.

²¹Collins, p. 45.

²²James Lewis, D. Garth Taylor, and Paul Kleppner, *Metro Chicago Political Atlas '97-'98* (Springfield, Ill.: The Institute for Public Affairs, University of Illinois at Springfield), pp. 137-148.