

CONFERENCE EXAMINES IMMIGRANT YOUTH ISSUES

Daily News (New York)

March 28, 2000, Tuesday, SPORTS FINAL EDITION

Copyright 2000 Daily News, L.P.

Section: SUBURBAN;

Length: 324 words

Byline: BY RAPHAEL SUGARMAN DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Body

Being the new kid on the block - or in the classroom - isn't a piece of cake, especially if you happen to be from a far-off country.

Haitian immigrant Wislene Charles and Edwin Zambrano of the Dominican Republic learned that lesson the hard way when they moved here and started attending a New York City public school.

"It was a nightmare. I felt like I was almost completely on my own," said Charles, 19, a Crown Heights resident who moved here from Haiti with her family in 1991. "My teachers didn't know how to speak my language, and some of the kids picked on me. They said I should go back to the country where I'm from."

Studying the issue of immigrant youth in the city and making immigrant kids more comfortable in the classroom, in the playground and, ultimately, in the workforce, were among the goals of a conference last week at the New School for Social Research.

The conference, formally called "New American Youth in New York," was sponsored by the college, City Councilman Kenneth Fisher (D-Brooklyn) and the city's Department of Youth and Community Development.

More than 200 people attended the day-long event, including teachers, elected officials, staff of city agencies and nonprofit organizations.

Charles and Zambrano spoke at the event, as did Satita Brown, executive director of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans.

A morning panel on immigrant students in the public school system included Lillian Hernandez, the executive director of the Board of Education's Office of Bilingual Education; Margie McHugh of the New York Immigration Coalition, and Marie-Lucie Brutus, a consultant for a Haitian bilingual assistance center.

Hernandez conceded that despite the huge influx of immigrants into city schools recently, the board has no exact count as to their numbers.

Other issues included youth employment, police and juvenile justice, and parents and the schools.

Graphic

Wislene Charles speaks at conference.

CONFERENCE EXAMINES IMMIGRANT YOUTH ISSUES

Classification

Language: ENGLISH

Subject: CITY GOVERNMENT (90%); TEACHING & TEACHERS (90%); EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION EMPLOYEES (90%); MULTILINGUALISM (89%); IMMIGRATION (89%); MIGRATION ***ISSUES*** (89%); LANGUAGE & LANGUAGES (89%); PUBLIC SCHOOLS (89%); EDUCATION SYSTEMS & INSTITUTIONS (78%); STUDENTS & STUDENT LIFE (78%); BILINGUAL EDUCATION (78%); LEGISLATIVE BODIES (77%); FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION (77%); NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS (76%); LABOR FORCE (73%); HISPANIC AMERICANS (72%); ASSOCIATIONS & ORGANIZATIONS (71%); JUVENILE JUSTICE (68%)

Industry: PUBLIC SCHOOLS (89%); EDUCATION SYSTEMS & INSTITUTIONS (78%)

Geographic: NEW YORK, NY, USA (92%); NEW YORK, USA (92%); HAITI (93%); UNITED STATES (92%); DOMINICAN REPUBLIC (79%)

Load-Date: March 28, 2000

End of Document