

PITTSBURGH ECONOMIC QUARTERLY

University Center for Social and Urban Research

UCSUR INTRODUCES QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY

by Scott Beach and Sabina Deitrick

UCSUR is pleased to announce its new Pittsburgh Quality of Life Survey. The Quality of Life survey addresses important regional issues and will be conducted annually.

The Quality of Life survey will become an important resource for those analyzing quality of life issues and trends in the Pittsburgh region. Main areas of the survey include economic, environmental, community, political, transportation, and housing conditions, along with health, welfare and safety is-

sues. Information can be organized along different demographic, economic and social variables. The Quality of Life survey will allow us to analyze trends and changes in many realms in the Pittsburgh region.

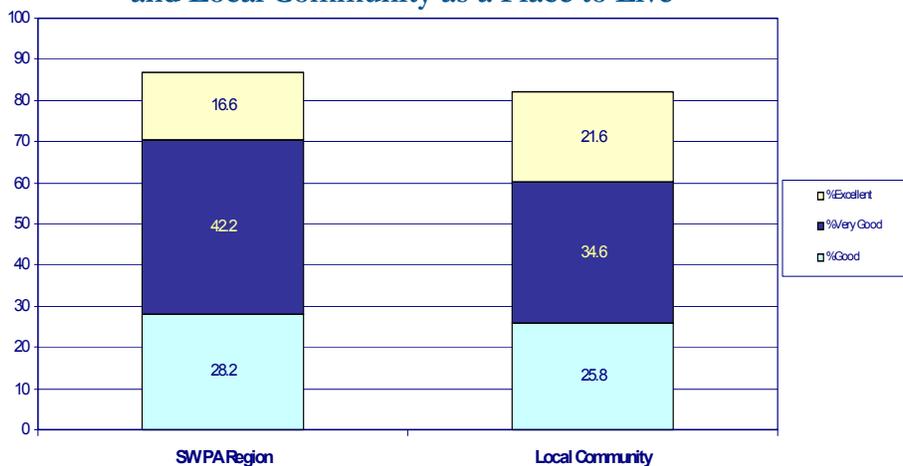
The Quality of Life survey fits into a long established tradition of research attempting to gauge the conditions of a place and its people. Pittsburgh was one of the first cities in the nation to assess urban life and conditions in the early 20th century. The Pittsburgh Survey was sponsored by the Russell Sage Foundation in 1907 and 1908. Its use extended from social reform recommendations at that time to benchmarks against which to assess changes in the subsequent years. Its importance cannot be overstated. As Maurine Greenwald and Margo Anderson (*Pittsburgh Surveyed*, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1996, 10) noted, “(at) the end of the twentieth century, an elaborate array of knowledge-building professions and institutions all could trace some of their roots to the kind of research done in the Pittsburgh Survey and the social survey movement more generally.”

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Figure 1. Allegheny County Resident Ratings of SW PA Region and Local Community as a Place to Live



PITTSBURGH COLLEGE GRADUATES: SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO?

by Susan Hansen

How do recent graduates decide where to live and work? And how can they be persuaded to remain in the region where they attended college? These are vital questions for many states and cities currently experiencing a “brain drain” – a net outflow of college graduates, particularly those in technical and scientific fields.

Susan B. Hansen, Carolyn Ban, and Leonard Huggins have recently published

an article in *Economic Development Quarterly*: “Explaining the “Brain Drain” from Older Industrial Cities: The Pittsburgh Region” (May 2003). This report documents the results of a combined telephone and Internet survey conducted in 2001 of 2,131 recent graduates of three Pittsburgh-area universities —University of Pittsburgh, Carnegie Mellon, and Duquesne.

Hansen, Ban, and Huggins wanted to find out why so many college graduates were leaving Western Pennsylvania. They asked their respondents about their educational backgrounds, their value priorities concerning careers and geographic location, their methods of finding jobs, the major reasons they remained in Pittsburgh or settled elsewhere, and their future plans.

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Increasingly, cities and regions around the world are attempting to link quality of life issues to their own economic growth and development. Regional surveys provide an important basis for making informed policy choices and decisions. They have also been used as marketing tools to attract investments, businesses, and residents to a region.

UCSUR's Survey Research Program conducted the Pilot Study of the Quality of Life Survey for Allegheny County earlier this year. This is the first piece to report on the preliminary conclusions from the survey.

A random-digit dialing (RDD) telephone survey was conducted between February and April, 2003 with 443 Allegheny County residents. RDD sampling gives all telephone households (including unlisted numbers) in the county an equal chance of being selected. The margin of error for the overall survey estimates is approximately +/- 5%. This article summarizes a few of the key basic survey findings. (Future issues will present additional data).

Respondents were asked to rate the Southwestern Pennsylvania region and their local community as 'excellent' 'very good' 'good' 'fair' or 'poor' places to live. A vast majority – 87 percent — rated the region as a 'good,' 'very good,' or 'excellent' place to live (Figure 1). Satisfaction with local community was nearly as high, with 82 percent reporting that their community is a 'good,' 'very good,' or 'excellent,' place to live (also Figure 1). Within these ratings, over one-fifth – 22 percent – found their local community to be an 'excellent' place to live, compared to 17 percent rating the region as 'excellent'.

These data show high levels of overall perceived quality of life among Allegheny County residents.

The ratings of the region as a good or better place to live compare favorably with results from other regions. Similar data from a Phoenix, AZ sur-

QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY (CONT')

vey conducted in 1999 found 73% of respondents rating regional quality of life as 'good' or 'excellent.'

The ratings of the local community were similar, though slightly lower, than national findings. The Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey conducted in 2000 found that 85% nationally rated their community as a 'good' or excellent' place to live.

Respondents were also asked to rate various regional quality of life domains using the same 5-point scale. Once again, ratings fell in the upper ranges across most categories.

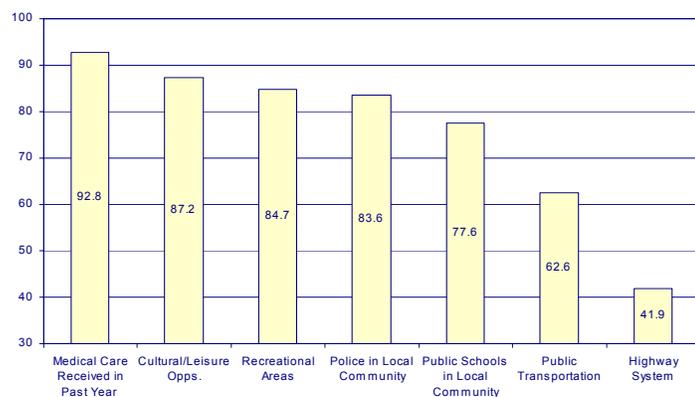
Medical care received in the past year attained the highest ratings, as 93 percent of respondents rated medical care received as "good" or higher (Figure 2). Cultural, recreational and leisure opportunities, along with recreational areas, such as parks, trails and playgrounds, followed in most favorable ratings, with 87 percent and 85 percent respectively rating them as 'good' or better. Also rated highly were police in the local community and quality of local schools. The public transportation system was found to be good or better by 63 percent of respondents, while the regional highway system received the lowest ratings,

with only 42 percent finding road quality to be good, very good, or excellent.

Survey data such as these can serve not only to inform public policy, but as a marketing tool for the region. UCSUR is currently seeking funding to conduct: (1) 400 additional surveys with randomly selected Allegheny County residents, (2) 500 surveys of African Americans in Allegheny County, and (3) 800 surveys with randomly selected residents from the 5-county region surrounding Allegheny County. This would allow for more sophisticated analyses involving breakdowns of the findings by race, sex, age, residence, and so on. The survey could also be conducted in smaller geographic areas, resulting in community-level quality of life profiles. Individuals or organizations interested in participating or supporting such surveys should contact Scott Beach at UCSUR.

Preliminary data from UCSUR's Quality of Life Survey paint a positive portrait of perceived quality of life in Allegheny County and Southwestern Pennsylvania. The survey finds satisfaction levels high at both the regional level and local community level on important quality of life issues.

Figure 2. Percent of Allegheny County Residents Rating Various Regional Quality of Life Domains "Good"/ "Very Good"/"Excellent"



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They surveyed two groups of graduates to compare graduates with degrees from 1994 with more recent graduates from 1999.

All three universities have been attracting more students from outside the Pittsburgh region in the last few years. Students are attracted here by the quality of education offered as well as by the cultural and economic opportunities they perceive in the Pittsburgh region. The results indicated that 1999 graduates were more likely to stay in the region than 1994 graduates, due in part to an improving area economy.

To assess the factors that most directly influenced career choice, the sample was divided into 821 Stayers — working in Pittsburgh at the time of the survey — and 969 Leavers employed elsewhere.

A logistic regression analysis of these two groups showed that Duquesne graduates and those who placed a high value on closeness to family in the area, low housing costs, or ample opportunities for continuing education were more likely to remain in the Pittsburgh region after graduation. CMU graduates and those who strongly valued high salaries, chances for advancement, or amenities, including cultural activities, ethnic diversity, nightlife, and participatory sports, were more likely to leave (see graph).

The study also found that the region is losing disproportionate numbers of minorities and graduates in high-tech fields, and is attracting few immigrants. The major competition for area graduates was from neighboring states, rather than the Sun Belt. Low salaries and lack of advancement opportunities, especially for women, minorities, and two-career couples, were the primary reasons respondents gave for leaving.

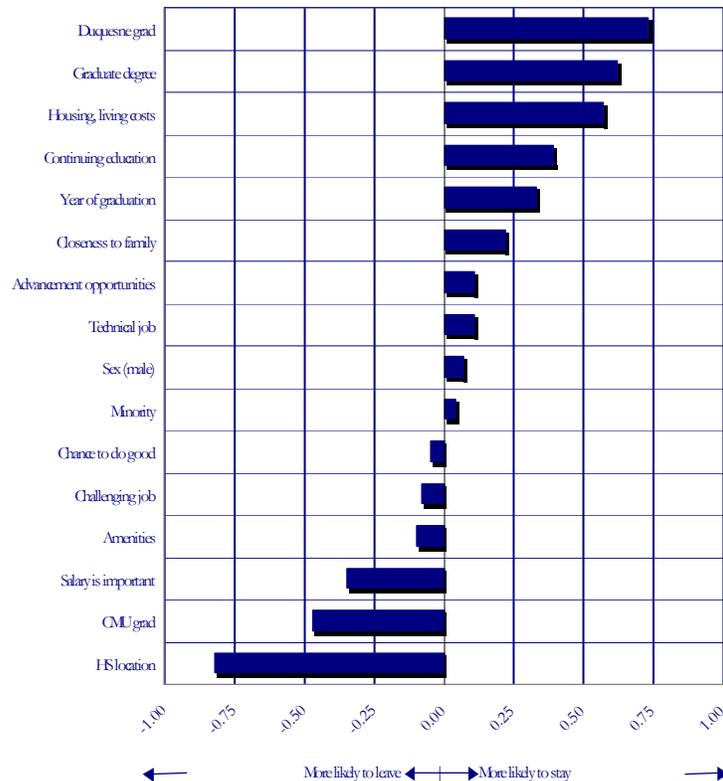
Leavers earned more money at comparable educational levels than stayers. For African Americans, the differences are greater than for whites, with two-thirds of leavers earning more than \$50,000 per year, compared to only 41 percent of stayers.

Both men and women who leave the region earn more than those who stay at comparable educational levels. Women earn less than men, on average, but the difference in earnings between women leavers and stayers is much greater than men. The region is losing many female graduates who expressed concerns with low salaries, the “glass ceiling,” and inadequate child care.

The lack of opportunities for two-career couples ranked second only to salary as the reason previous Pittsburgh job holders gave for leaving the area, and this issue was far more important for women.

The study suggested several policy recommendations to help retain recent area graduates and to attract more highly skilled workers to the region. These include keeping higher education affordable, addressing salary inequities (especially for women and minorities), highlighting the area’s cultural and recreational opportunities, improving career counseling by universities in the region, and creating a climate more welcoming of cultural and ethnic diversity.

Predictors of Staying or Leaving the Pittsburgh Region



POPULATION CHANGE IN THE PITTSBURGH REGION, 2000-2002

BY PAUL FLORA

The Pittsburgh region's population has fallen in each of the past four decades. Since 2000, the downward trend has continued at the same pace as in the 1990s, according to annual population estimates by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Whether the current decade ends in another loss depends upon future changes in the region's number of births, deaths, in-migrants, and out-migrants (both domestic and international). This article reviews recent trends in total population change and in the components of population change for the recently redefined Pittsburgh MSA and its seven counties (Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler,

Fayette, Washington, and Westmoreland).

The 2000 decennial census reported the region's population decline as 0.2 percent per year during the 1990s, compared to the nation's annual 1.2 percent population increase. For Pittsburgh, this represents an improvement from the 0.4 percent and 0.7 percent annual declines in the 1970s and 1980s, respectively.

Between 2000 and 2002, the Pittsburgh MSA's population declined by just over 11,100 people. Population grew in Butler and Washington counties, while it fell in the remaining five counties in the region. Allegheny County's total population fell by 10,096 residents from 2000 to 2002,

or a 0.4 percent decrease per year. (See graph and table.) Butler County's growth registered 1.0 percent per year from 2000 to 2002. It now has company in the region, as Washington County grew 0.3 percent per year over the same two years.

Demographers refer to the typical pattern of population growth from births outweighing deaths as "natural increase." But in 1996, with a population heavily laden with elderly residents and lower than average fertility

...Pittsburgh's population decline continues...

Demographic Components of Population Change July 1, 2000 through July 1, 2002

Region	July 1 2002	Births	Deaths	Change	Net Natural Migration	Net Domestic Migration	International Adjustments	Other July 1 2000
Allegheny	1,269,904	28,563	30,326	-1,763	-12,278	4,654	-709	1,280,000
Beaver	179,351	3,628	3,937	-309	-1,520	128	-99	181,151
Butler	178,078	4,062	3,242	820	2,563	179	-55	174,571
Fayette	146,654	2,965	3,607	-642	-1,174	40	-70	148,500
Washington	204,110	4,219	4,952	-733	1,771	116	-57	203,013
Westmoreland	368,428	7,073	8,923	-1,850	505	239	-230	369,764
Old 6-County MSA	2,346,525	50,510	54,987	-4,477	-10,133	5,356	-1,220	2,356,999
Armstrong	71,673	1,410	1,797	-387	-188	16	-76	72,308
New 7-County MSA	2,418,198	51,920	56,784	-4,864	-10,321	5,372	-1,296	2,429,307
Greene	40,520	860	917	-57	-117	34	-26	40,686
Indiana	88,780	1,565	1,769	-204	-682	156	-30	89,540
Lawrence	94,104	2,051	2,203	-152	-336	37	-57	94,612
10-County SWPA	2,641,602	56,396	61,673	-5,277	-11,456	5,599	-1,409	2,654,145

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Population Estimates Program

Natural Change -- Births minus deaths.

Net Domestic Migration -- The difference between internal in-migration to an area and internal out-migration from the same area, where both the origin and the destination are within the United States.

Net International Migration -- The difference between immigration to an area and emigration from the same area, where either the origin or the destination is outside of the United States.

Total Fertility Rate -- The sum of age-specific birth rates for a population of women in a period of time, most often a year. The TFR may be interpreted as the average number of lifetime births women may be expected to have if they bore children at the rates that women of all ages did in the given year or other period. The TFR can be expressed for 1,000 females during childbearing lifetimes.

rates, the Pittsburgh region began registering more deaths than births—a “natural decrease.”

Among the seven counties in the Pittsburgh MSA, only Butler County registered more births than deaths. The other five outlying counties had annual natural decreases that exceeded Allegheny County’s -0.1 percent per year.

The Pittsburgh region may not see a return to natural increases until the baby boom generation has passed on. Meanwhile, as the baby boom cohort ages into retirement, other metropolitan areas will likely join Pittsburgh with natural decreases.

Relatively low fertility rates also contribute to the decreases. According to the Allegheny County Health Department, Allegheny County’s total fertility rate has been below the replacement rate – 2100 — for decades. In 2000, the rate was 1729.7, below the U.S. rate of 2,130, the first time the U.S. reached the replacement level in three decades.

Fertility rates in the region have consistently fallen below U.S. rates. Even during the “baby bust” decade of the 1970s, when the U.S. nadir was 1774.0 in 1975, Allegheny County fell

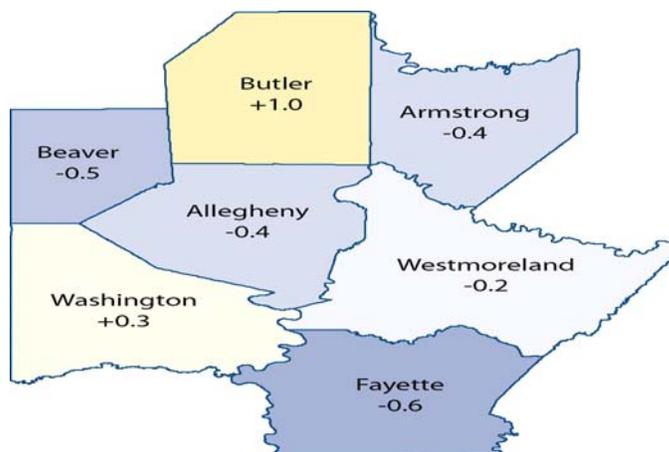
...Low fertility rates contribute to the decreases...

lower, to 1376.9 in 1978. The City of Pittsburgh fell even lower, to 1265.6 in

the same year.

Foreign immigration also contributes to population growth. The net inflow of foreign immigrants may have increased slightly in recent years. From 2000 to 2002, the Pittsburgh MSA attracted an estimated, net 6,048 international migrants—more than 60

Population Change: July 1, 2000 through July 1, 2002 (percent change per year)



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Population Estimates Program

percent of the net 8,961 estimated between 1990 and 1999.

Within the Pittsburgh MSA, Allegheny County attracted 87 percent of the net foreign immigrants; Westmoreland County was a distant second with just 4 percent. Despite its preeminence within the region, Allegheny’s net international migration pales compared to most large U.S. counties.

In recent decades, the largest contributor to Pittsburgh’s population losses has been net domestic migration—more people moved away to other parts of the country than moved to the region from within the country. Relative advantages among regions, e.g. job opportunities, wage rates and living costs, are among the key factors that determine the direction of domestic migration.

Since the 2000 Census, the Pittsburgh MSA lost an estimated net 12,659 domestic migrants. This is a slightly slower pace than was reported from 1990 to 1999. Examining county

level data reveals the rivalrous nature of regional development as Armstrong, Butler, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties all recorded net gains in domestic migration from 1990 to 1999, certainly at the expense of Allegheny County, which experienced losses of 90,356 persons. The net gains continued from 2000 to 2002 for Butler, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties.

Overall, population losses have been slower in the Pittsburgh MSA since 1990. Turning the tide to experience population gains is difficult in the face of slowly changing natural demographic forces that suggest future decreases. The possibility for growth largely depends upon in-migration, and upon creating an economic climate of better job opportunities relative to other regions.

DIFFERENCES IN PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE BY RACE AMONG OLDER ADULTS IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY

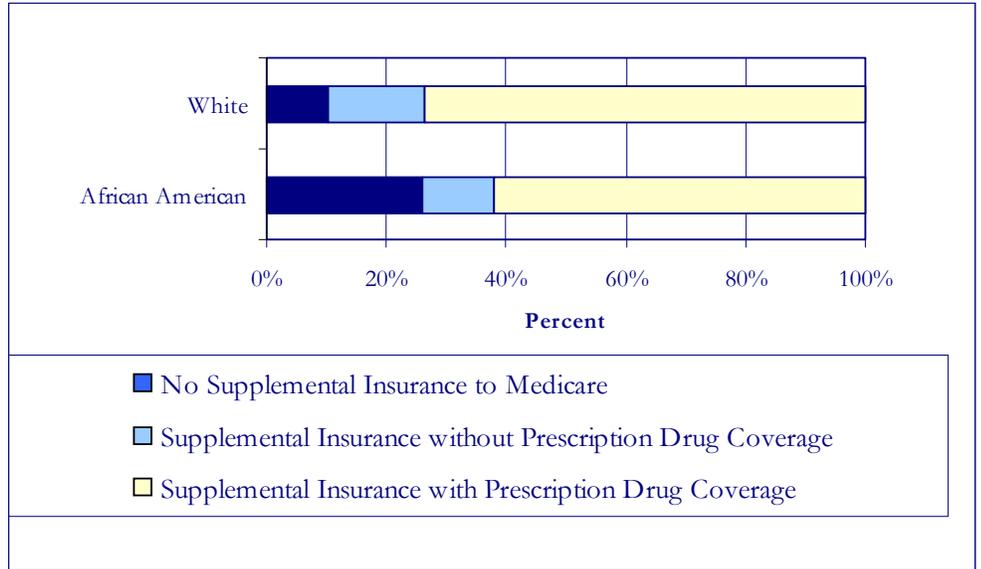
BY DON MUSA

Elderly residents of Allegheny County often have no or limited insurance or financial assistance to pay for their prescription drugs. A survey conducted recently by UCSUR and the Graduate School of Public Health at the University of Pittsburgh indicates that a significant proportion of Medicare enrollees age 65 and over in Allegheny County do not have prescription drug coverage, and that elderly African Americans are less likely to have drug coverage than whites.

The survey revealed that, overall, an estimated 28% of the elderly in the County do not have drug coverage as part of their health insurance package. Of these, almost 12% have no health insurance to supplement Medicare, which does not include prescription drug coverage. An additional 16% have supplemental insurance which does not include drug coverage. Supplemental insurance includes Medicare + Choice (Medicare HMOs), Medicaid, employer sponsored health plans, and both private and public supplemental plans.

Among older African Americans in the County, lack of prescription drug coverage is more common, with an estimated 26% having no insurance supplemental to Medicare and an additional 12% having supplemental insurance without drug benefits for a total of 38% of elderly African Americans in Allegheny County lacking any drug coverage (Figure 1). A recent analysis by the Kaiser Family Foundation¹ of data from the 1999 Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey conducted by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services found that those lacking prescription drug coverage fill fewer prescriptions and yet have higher out-of-pocket drug costs than those with drug coverage. Thus, lack of prescription drug coverage may

Figure 1. Health Insurance Coverage Medicare Enrollees 65+ in Allegheny County



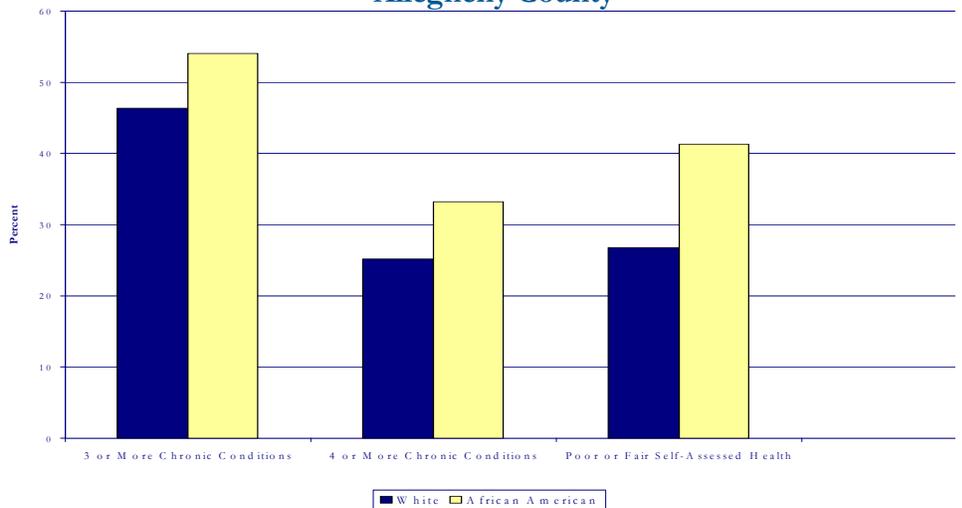
lead to both poorer health and greater economic hardship. The same study found that nationally (in 1999), 31% overall and 30% of African Americans had no prescription drug coverage. Lack of prescription drug coverage among African Americans therefore appears to be a greater problem in Allegheny County than nationally.

The implications of a lack of drug

coverage, while serious for all groups, is more severe for older African Americans. The Allegheny County survey of the elderly also revealed that older African Americans here are more likely to have a greater number of chronic conditions and have worse self-assessed health than whites (Figure 2). This means that they are more likely to require a greater number of

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Figure 2. Health Characteristics Medicare Enrollees 65+ in Allegheny County



Differences in Prescription Drug Coverage (Cont)

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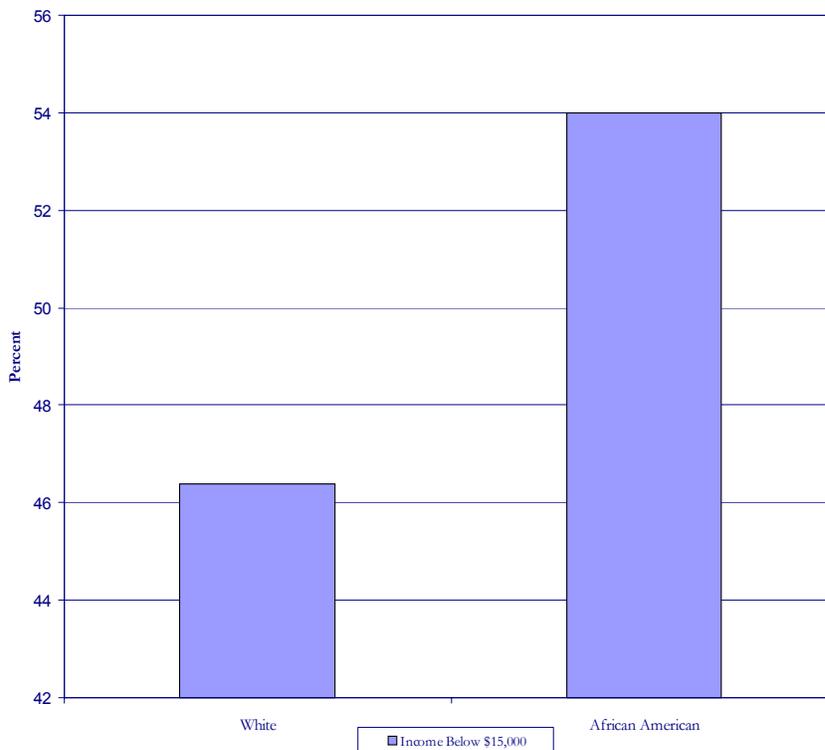
prescription drugs. At the same time, they have significantly lower incomes (Figure 3) and are therefore less able to afford the out-of-pocket costs of drugs. Putting these findings together points to a significant vulnerability of some older adults in Allegheny County, and to a potentially greater health and economic problems for African Americans here than nationally.

The Allegheny County survey of the elderly, one of the most comprehensive studies of its kind ever carried out locally, interviewed 5,094 Medicare enrollees age 65 and older about their health, health care and related issues. The survey was part of a National Institute on Aging funded research study of self-care for chronic disease (Myrna Silverman, GSPH, Principal Investigator), and also received support from UCSUR, the Center for Minority Health, the Department of Psychiatry, the University of Pittsburgh Institute on Aging, the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, and the Area Agency on Aging of Allegheny County. The survey randomly sampled Medicare enrollees in the County and was limited to those for whom a telephone number could be found. The margin of error for the survey estimates by race is at least + 2%.

'Kaiser Family Foundation, "How Do Patterns of Prescription Drug Coverage and Use Differ for White, African American, and Latino Medicare Beneficiaries Under 65 and 65+?" July 2003.

A detailed report describing the findings of the survey can be found at: <http://www.ucsur.pitt.edu/publications.htm>

Figure 3. Income Below \$15,000 Medicare Enrollees 65+ in Allegheny County



UCSUR is a hub for interdisciplinary research and collaboration. We maintain an infrastructure that is available to faculty and the community with the capacity to:

- Carry out all types of survey research.
- Conduct regional econometric modeling.
- Obtain, format & analyze spatial data and integrate it with other types of data (GIS).
- Acquire, manage & analyze large data sets including Census data.
- Conduct evaluation research.

VISITING SCHOLARS

This fall we welcomed **Katrin Grossmann** to the Center. Katrin is completing her doctorate in urban sociology at the Chemnitz University of Technology and conducting comparative research on Pittsburgh and Germany.

RECENT SPEAKERS

Estelle Richman, Secretary of Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, October 3.

Stephen M. Schmerin, Secretary of Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, November 21.

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Regional Economic Modeling with REMI.

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