

A View From The Governor's Office

By Gov. Raymond P. Shafer

This Administration underscores its commitment to help persons who want to help themselves by providing the prime requisite — opportunity.

Our continuous work-training programs for the poor are firmly designed to counteract the poverty cycle.

A new 24-week phase just begun will provide career-related experience for some 900 low-income citizens. Working in State institutions, the trainees, mostly from families receiving public assistance, are being trained in a variety of work experiences concurrent with job training and remedial education. Some participants take high school equivalency courses to develop fully their potential.

These programs are in three categories — Neighborhood Youth Corps, New Careers and Commonwealth Careers. The newest program, Commonwealth Careers, which I initiated last July, is entirely State-funded and designed for general assistance recipients. Operating on three-month cycles, it is currently entering its fourth phase, with nearly 200 participants.

The oldest of the projects, the State-wide Neighborhood Youth Corps (NYC) was initiated in the summer of 1965 to provide high school students of low-income families with vacation work experience and the opportunity to earn money to stay in school. A job-training project at State institutions was added to the NYC program in January, 1966.

There are currently two separate Neighborhood Youth Corps programs: summer work experience for boys and girls designed primarily to prevent high school dropouts and year-round work for persons training in all areas of institutional work. The institutional NYC project has 345 persons enrolled.

The New Careers project was pioneered in Pennsylvania during my Administration in September, 1967. This program offers special training in clinical jobs in institutions. These jobs provide good prospects for promotion because they are of a more technical nature. There are 365 persons enrolled.

Since these programs were instituted, more than 900 persons have been placed in full-time permanent employment.

The current cost of the Neighborhood Youth Corps and New Career programs is estimated at \$950,000. Eighty percent of that cost will be paid by the United States Department of Labor with the Commonwealth making up the remaining 20 percent.

The Department of Public Welfare has earmarked \$575,000 for one year in personnel and training funds for the Commonwealth Career Program.

The Commonwealth Career Program reinforces the State's drive to expand opportunities for the needy. It takes a positive approach to their employability, replacing the mere "working out the grant" concept with a dignified work plan that offers

the chance to get ahead — opening a door too often closed to persons in this category.

The program also is aimed at areas of the greatest need and at persons on the assistance rolls who do not have educational or employment credentials, but do have potential for employment.

These career-opportunity programs are sponsored by the De-

partment of Public Welfare in cooperation with the Pennsylvania State YMCA, the Bureau of Employment Security in the State Department of Labor and Industry, the Department of Community Affairs, the county Boards of Assistance, and the State Department of Public Instruction.

The retention rate for these trainees after becoming employees compares favorably with that of regular employees. Since their inception, these programs have proven to be a major resource for the hiring of new employees for the State institutions, Nursing homes, general hospitals, and other health services also benefit by hiring these trained people.

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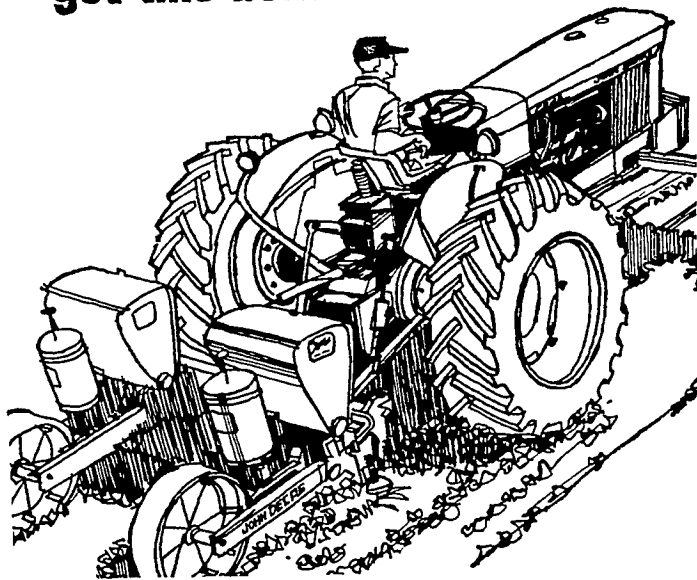
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