

OPINIONS

Chesterfield has more diversity than area counties

Chesterfield's history and occasional reporting by the Richmond Times-Dispatch (RTD) and Style Weekly have created the misperception that the county lags behind in promoting diversity, but the facts are that Chesterfield employs more minorities at the highest levels of its government and school system than either Henrico or Hanover counties (see chart below).

MEDIA WATCH

Greg Pearson

All three county governments are managed by white males, but of the four Chesterfield deputy or assistant county administrators, there are three African-Americans and one white female. In Hanover, three white males

male. Hanover's assistant superintendents include a white male, white female, an African-American male and an African-American female. But in Henrico, there are two white males, one Hispanic male and one white female.

It also should be pointed out that Henrico, with the highest percentage of African-Americans in its population, has no top leaders in that ethnic group.

Of course, all three counties want the best leadership regardless of race or gender, and statistics never tell the whole story. But diversity is, quite simply, good business. And you get diversity in your leadership because you look for it and because you earn a reputation for promoting it. There's no better way

to recruit diversity than to look across the table during the interview and see diversity.

Intentionally or otherwise, the media plays a role in continuing negative stereotypes. For example, it could be argued that the RTD was simply reporting a news story in 2002 when it ran several pieces about a white supremacist church wanting to meet at the Chester Library. Some, however, thought there was an undercurrent about the county's policy that allowed the racist church to rent a library meeting room

Diversity in county governments							
Administrator/manager	Deputy/assistant administrator/manager						
	WM	WM	WF	BM	BF	HM	HF
Chesterfield	1		1	2	1		
Hanover	1		3	1			
Henrico	1		4	1			

Diversity in county schools							
Superintendent	Assistant superintendents						
	WM	BM	WM	WF	BM	BF	HM
Chesterfield		1	1	2	1		
Hanover	1		1	1	1	1	
Henrico	1		2	1			1

Racial mix of county population*			
	White	Black	Hispanic
Chesterfield	72%	21%	5%
Hanover	88%	10%	1%
Henrico	64%	27%	3%

WM = White male WF = White female
 BM = Black male BF = Black female *Based on
 HM = Hispanic male HF = Hispanic female Claritas research

and one white female hold similar positions. And in Henrico those managers are four white males and a white female.

The story is pretty much the same for the county school systems. Superintendents in Hanover and Henrico are white males, but Chesterfield's Marcus Newsome is African-American. And before him, Billy Cannaday, hired away by the state to run Virginia's public schools about two years ago, is also African-American.

Among assistant superintendents, Chesterfield has only one white male. The others are two white females and an African-American

like anyone else.

The same can't be said for Style Weekly's satire four months ago that portrayed Deputy County Administrator Pete Stith, an African-American, as Chesterfield's "only black administrator," who plays the front man when "a racially sensitive issue arises."

So in honor of Black History Month, we e-mailed Jason Roop, Style's editor, a copy of our diversity chart asking for comment. His response was to answer our questions with more questions. Asking questions could be considered avoidance.

Selected real estate sales

Subdivision Name	Property Address	BRM	BATH	1/2BATH	SQ FT	SOLD	ASSESSED
AFTON	6048 SARA KAY DR	4	2	0	1,360	\$149,500	\$148,200
ALEXANDRIA STATION	1218 RYANWOOD CT	3	2	1	1,601	\$219,000	\$152,200
AMBERLEIGH	9329 AMBERLEIGH CR	2	2	0	2,537	\$460,489	\$63,000
AMHERST	2738 AMHERST RIDGE LP	3	2	1	1,469	\$199,900	\$138,800
ANTLER RIDGE	7313 WHIRLAWAY DR	3	2	1	1,870	\$250,000	\$213,300
ARBOR LANDING	5700 STEPHENS POINT CT	4	2	1	2,524	\$303,500	\$288,400
ARBOR MEADOWS	6742 ARBOR MEADOWS DR						

Subdivision Name	Property Address	BRM	BATH	1/2BATH	SQ FT	SOLD	ASSESSED
		4	2	0	2,157	\$294,310	\$52,000
ARCHBROOKE	9019 ARCHWIND CT	5	3	0	2,274	\$207,000	\$170,200
ARCHWOOD	144 N ARCH RD	3	2	0	1,424	\$138,000	\$133,000

This is a sample of residential properties sold in the county in recent weeks. For a complete listing of recent real estate transactions, visit www.chesterfieldobserver.com and click on "real estate."

Key: * lot only. ** home/lot without additional information.

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