

# Progressive Center Head Lists Programs; City Housing, Education Termed Inadequate

by DAN RINK

Mrs. Lorraine Harper, Director of Scranton's Progressive Center, the only Central City Neighborhood Youth Community Center serving the Black Community, describes the function of her organization as being "engaged in the recreational and training programs of children and young adults in such fields as cooking, dancing, swimming, and tutoring. We have many social work cases, and we try to solve some of the problems of unwed mothers, drug addicts, and young people who have physical or emotional troubles.

"We help high school students select and apply to colleges. We are in contact with government agencies concerning such things as grants, rent subsidies, and food stamps. We even find leads on job openings and apartments."

"Mrs. Harper, who is majoring in Sociology in the Evening College,



MRS. LORRAINE HARPER  
Center Director

cited the assistance of the approximately 35 volunteers who help with the work of the Center, which is subsidized entirely by LUF. "There are 25 people from the Scranton Prep-Marywood Seminary Action Group

## Mardi Gras February 13

The French Club will hold its first annual Mardi Gras Dance Feb. 13, 9 P.M. to 1 A.M. in the Student Center Auditorium, Reading Room and Faculty Mezzanine.

The "Fat Cat" will play and the \$1.50 admission includes a cold buffet at 11 P.M. Informal or funny dress, or original costume is invited and two prizes will be given for most original appearance. A Mardi Gras Queen will be elected.

Tickets may be purchased at the box one hour before the event or from club moderator Dr. Njegos Petrovic, 357 St. Thomas Hall. Club members, faculty and administrators will be admitted free of charge.

who give generously of their time and themselves: they are terrific!"

Mrs. Harper noted that only two students from the University and none from Marywood have offered their services to the Center.

The Progressive Center, which is located at 414 Olive Street, is presently offering a course in Negro History. Mrs. Harper, commenting on the course, observed, "The course of Black Study, which will be taught by Mr. Robert Mitchell, will analyze Black American History by focussing on the roles of Blacks and their contributions. The study will span several centuries and will develop into the present."

She continued, "It is our hope that this course will awaken school systems to the possibility of presenting a separate course on Black History which would introduce the community to the Black point of view."

The classes began January 17, and will continue each following Saturday for six weeks from 2:30 until 4:30 in the afternoon. There is a nominal registration fee of one dollar, and anyone may attend. Mrs. Harper stated that approximately sixteen people had already enrolled in the course, with the University and Marywood yet to report.

When asked to evaluate the urban renewal programs in Central City, Mrs. Harper stated, "People have been talking about Urban Renewal for years, but it has been only within the past few months that there has been any noticeable progress. Renewal is not moving forward fast enough; too often it has been the prey of political strategy and adverse outside influences."

The mother of two cited a bright area when she spoke of the availability of jobs for Negroes. "The jobs are here now; there were not nearly so many openings for Blacks a few years ago. The people are being trained to acquire and hold a job."

"But as far as housing goes, it stinks! Private rents are sky-high, and people will do anything to keep

Blacks from renting or buying from them. A quoted rent of \$100 a month over the phone suddenly becomes \$150 when the Black appears to look at the apartment. Or the apartment unfortunately 'was just rented.' These people give the excuse that they do not want our large families..

"With the exception of Viewmont, Country Day, Oakmont, and Bellefonte Apartments, the Negro has a

scholarship .

"The public schools are overcrowded and lack modern equipment. The guidance departments at the high schools are inadequate quantitatively and qualitatively; the counselors must learn to care for the students and—guide them properly. Scranton Tech should be a college preparatory school, but it should be on a slower pace than Central. The



Typing class at the Progressive Center. (Photo by Carroll).

hard time getting a decent apartment in Scranton."

"Concerning education, I would have to say that the local colleges have been extremely responsible in attempting to help the young Black. The University has even offered any Black student who qualifies a full

vocational school at Tech should be moved to a separate location. A new high school is desperately needed.

"There is still bigotry in Scranton, but it is hidden. In certain parts of the city, racism still appears. But this is something we cannot worry about."

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## CLUB PRESIDENTS

(Continued from page 3)

SBP DiMatteo recently attended the Jesuit College and University SBP Conference and came away with ideas as to how Student Government can raise money to offset expenses incurred and perhaps put an end to such things as the Percentage Policy.

Mr. DiMatteo is looking into the feasibility of incorporating some of these ventures which have netted some colleges \$8,000 to \$10,000.

In another development from the Club Presidents, Greg Haydon, a member of the Association, has put forth the possibility of fire and theft insurance in the dormitories. This investigation is the result of the Lynett Hall fire during the Thanksgiving Holidays and the rash of thefts in the dorms over the Christmas Vacation.

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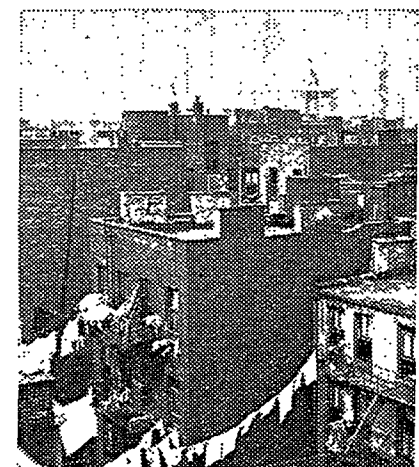


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