

HOMELESS WORKERS

A Labor Market Analysis

August 1997

**ECONOMIC
ROUNDTABLE**

A Nonprofit, Public Policy Research Organization

HOMELESS WORKERS

A Labor Market Analysis

August 1997

prepared for the
LOS ANGELES HOMELESS SERVICES AUTHORITY

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HOMELESS WORKERS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For most working age homeless people, steady employment is the only feasible avenue to economic independence and a better life. In addition to enabling economic self-sufficiency, work constitutes the single most important link most individuals have with society, offering a foundation for reconnection with the larger community. Looking at homeless individuals in terms of their educational and employment backgrounds and capabilities for work, as well as identifying barriers to their reemployment, gives us a vantage point on the often bleak and intractable phenomenon of homelessness that is both hopeful and pragmatic.

In the absence of data that reliably enumerates Los Angeles County's homeless population, this report analyzes data from the four sources listed below to provide a partial, but we believe useful, profile of Los Angeles County's homeless workers and their labor market connections.

1. The Census Bureau's 1990 five-percent Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS).
2. Case records and Unemployment Insurance wage and claims data obtained by the Economic Roundtable for 1,256 homeless job seekers served by downtown Los Angeles employment programs in 1991 and 1992.
3. An Economic Roundtable survey conducted in 1995 of 139 homeless individuals living on the streets of downtown Los Angeles.
4. Life stories of homeless individuals.

The principal data resource for this analysis was the Census Bureau's 1990 PUMS data set, which was used as a roughly representative sampling of homeless people.

Homeless Workers and the Labor Market

Defining characteristics that distinguish homeless workers 16 to 64 years of age from the general county population in the same age range with work histories are that they are extremely poor, more mobile, and much less likely to be married. In the year prior to the census survey, 54

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percent of homeless workers had incomes below 26 percent of the poverty level (i.e., less than \$1,613), compared to 4 percent of all working age individuals in the county with work histories.

Homeless workers were significantly younger than the Los Angeles County population, much more likely to be African-American, and less likely to be latino, white, or Asian. A majority of homeless workers had obtained a high school degree, and a significant number had some college experience or a college degree. One in three homeless persons with a work history had been employed in service or laborer occupations. Just over half of homeless workers had been employed in professional services, retail, and construction industries.

Seventy-six percent of homeless workers were employed in 1989 or 1990, or both years. The remaining 24 percent of homeless workers can be considered "long term unemployed". Recent workers were more likely to be latino, and less likely to be white, significantly younger, and better educated than the long-term unemployed. Homeless persons who worked in 1989 were employed for the most part in low wage jobs. The average hourly earnings of homeless workers in 1989 was \$6.19, which is equivalent to an annual income of under \$12,400. While most homeless workers worked close to 40 hours per week in 1989, they worked an average of only 24 weeks. Thus, like many of the "working poor", homeless persons were more likely to have worked full-time than part-time hours, but in high turnover, low-wage jobs.

Labor Market Disconnection

The pervasive reality of homeless workers is that they are losing, or have lost, connection with regular employment and opportunities to earn a livable income. The ratio of homeless workers moving in a positive direction to workers moving in a negative direction at the time of the census survey was roughly one to three; 22 percent were maintaining or increasing their labor market connection while 78 percent were moving away from the labor market or had no labor market connection at the time of the census survey.

If the total number of homeless individuals of working age are added to these figures, 31 percent of whom have never worked, it can be estimated that at a given point in time, roughly 15 percent of homeless individuals of working age are maintaining or strengthening a work force connection. Similarly, looking at the total population of working age homeless individuals, including those with no work history, it can be estimated that 35 percent are moving away from the labor market, working declining numbers of hours or having lost all work in the past year, and 50 percent are in a state of stagnant unemployment, having never worked at all or experiencing long-term joblessness. These ratios represent what is occurring at a given point in time rather than the total balance of negative and positive outcomes among people who experience homelessness at some time during the year.

Job Availability and Turnover

There is evidence that a high percent of job openings in low-skill occupations in Los Angeles County are created by job turnover, suggesting that labor market disconnection among homeless workers is an interactive result of both job instability and instability in individual lives. A frequently held image of the employment process is that individuals find jobs, successfully adjust to work requirements and become stably employed. This image is contradicted by Employment Development Department data showing that 66 percent of the county's job openings in low skill occupations (jobs requiring less than one year of training) are the result of workers becoming separated from their jobs, or job turnover, rather than job growth. The fact that two-thirds of low-skill job openings result from turnover means that employment in this sector of the labor market is not a matter of finding and keeping a job, but rather a matter of finding a succession of jobs. Workers who are socially isolated and lack a family or social network to assist them in finding reemployment are at a disadvantage.

The annual number of openings projected through 1999 by the Employment Development in low-skill occupations, both from turnover and industry growth, is 72,948; 48,374 from turnover and 24,614 new jobs from industry growth. The number of new jobs is sparse compared to the large number of unemployed and discouraged workers already in the county workforce and the large number of welfare recipients who will be seeking jobs as a result of welfare reform.

Homeless Job Seekers in Downtown Los Angeles

An analysis of agency records for 1,256 homeless job seekers in downtown Los Angeles who participated in employment programs found that most individuals had previously demonstrated their ability to be contributing members of the economy. Three-quarters (77 percent) had held jobs that lasted longer than one year, over half (54 percent) had held jobs that lasted longer than two years, and nearly one-third (30 percent) had held jobs lasting longer than five years.

Employment services provided for nearly all homeless job seekers consisted of rudimentary assistance in looking for a job rather than skill development or supportive services. An ironic feature of job training programs is that more expensive service modalities such as long-term skill development and supportive services are more likely to go to low-risk clients who have a higher probability of producing positive outcomes for service providers and funders. Those with the highest levels of need and risk, such as homeless job seekers, frequently receive short-term and comparatively superficial forms of employment assistance.

Only half of the job seekers (52 percent) received some form of public benefits to support themselves. Even though homeless job seekers have critical needs for assistance in stabilizing

their lives and becoming reconnected with the mainstream of society, half (48 percent) had no visible means of support other than short-term assistance from homeless service providers.

Long-Term Employment Outcomes

Information about long-term employment outcomes of homeless job seekers was obtained by linking Social Security numbers of clients served by downtown agencies with records from the State Unemployment Insurance data base maintained by the Employment Development Department to obtain information on employment and earnings of these clients one to two years after they had participated in an employment program.

Information about long-term employment outcomes for homeless job seekers is sobering. Once homeless, lasting employment is persistently elusive. Fifty-nine percent earned nothing and 70% earned less than \$1,000 in annual income following their participation in an employment program and search for a new job. Less than 9 percent had annual earnings of \$10,000 or more, which would reflect full-time employment at minimum wage. Factors that by themselves do not appear to have a significant impact on employment outcomes include age, gender, ethnicity, and duration of previous jobs. Factors that do appear related to differences in earnings include: education, occupation, and industry. The most significant of these factors is education, which opens doors to better paying jobs and industries with higher quality employment opportunities.

Surveys of People Living on the Streets

Face-to-face interviews with 69 people living in the Crocker Street encampment conducted in 1995 found: (1) pervasive drug use in the encampment, (2) high levels of concern about personal safety, (3) strong interest in jobs — 84 percent said they would take a job that paid five dollars an hour to sweep streets — and (4) that drug rehabilitation services were available to them. These responses led to the question of why people who were concerned about their safety and wanted jobs were not utilizing available rehabilitation programs in the downtown area.

In a follow-on survey homeless individuals identified the five factors that are most important when choosing between staying on the street and trying to enter a residential program: (1) protecting their sense of dignity, (2) personal safety, (3) being with friends, (4) having the freedom to do what they want, and (5) finding ways to make money.

The five problems homeless individuals identify as being most important when asked why people go through programs for helping them get off the streets, but still return to Skid Row are, in

rank order: (1) there is no money or place to go after people complete programs, (2) people are dropped if they relapse, (3) it is hard to get into residential drug rehabilitation programs, (4) programs don't last long enough, (5) and programs don't offer all the needed services.

Respondents indicated that programs need to last much longer than the typical sixty to ninety days to really help people get off the streets. Fourteen to fifteen months was the average program duration identified as being needed to provide adequate support for building a new life. In addition, nearly four out of five respondents said programs should be located outside the downtown area.

Life Stories of Homeless Individuals

A "job club" was organized to gain a clearer understanding of life experiences, individual perceptions, and actual successes and failures of homeless job seekers, as well as provide long-term help to participants. Today, of the seven most regular members of the club, three have jobs and two others found jobs but lost them. Some of the common themes that emerge from their life stories include:

1. By the time they were young adults six of the seven individuals had made significant progress toward holding down jobs and becoming economically self sufficient, the driving force being the energy and optimism of youth. But liabilities carried forward from childhood overtook and derailed this progress.
2. Six of the seven experienced long-term addiction and the seventh short-term addiction, all to crack cocaine.
3. All seven have been socially isolated for most of their lives and have not had the support of normal social networks in attempting to solve problems of addiction and employment.
4. Six of the seven have entered drug rehabilitation programs, experiencing multiple relapses, and four of them eventual success; the seventh has not entered a program.
5. Six of the seven have employment histories, five of the seven have skills that qualify them for more than one occupation.
6. There were infrequent windows of opportunity when individuals were ready to make a serious commitment to recover from addiction and find a job. These intervals of high motivation followed bottoming-out experiences such as incarceration. There were very few support systems to help individuals hold onto the clear thinking they did inside jail when they re-entered the daunting and lonely world outside jail gates. Similarly, it was

difficult for individuals to gain admission to a residential drug rehabilitation programs within the window of motivational opportunity if the bottoming-out occurred while they were on the streets.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Many people who are homeless want to have jobs and have the ability to work productively. A smaller number not only want work but have summoned sufficient hope and commitment to make a serious effort at rebuilding their lives and gaining stable housing, employment and personal relationships. The operational implications of this two-tier perspective are that basic opportunities to work and earn survival resources should be available to all homeless individuals, and in-depth support for recovery and for long-term employment should be available if and when individuals are ready for a fundamental commitment to making a new start in their life.

Tier I is local day-labor markets. More than four out of five men and women living on downtown streets said they would accept jobs at minimum wages cleaning up streets. The social costs of failing to provide opportunities for gainful employment, and thereby the dignity of demonstrating one's worth, are high. Research conducted by California's Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs found that the average drug and alcohol abuser costs society over \$32,000 a year. Basic decency as well as an intelligent understanding of our collective self interests leads us to provide jobs for people who are willing to work. We recommend that local day-labor markets be organized under public auspices to provide jobs for anyone willing to show up at an early hour and meet prevailing employment standards for sobriety and conscientious work efforts. If no private employers need their services, individuals should be entitled to public employment cleaning streets, parks, public buildings, or other useful community services.

Based on the value of minimum-wage earnings, individuals should have the opportunity to work for four or five hours per day, which would entitle them to vouchers for a night's lodging in a single room occupancy hotel or shelter that provides reasonable privacy and security for possessions, three meals, and a small amount of cash (perhaps \$2.50 per day). Individuals who show up for jobs five days a week and work acceptably should be entitled to lodging in a room offering privacy and security for their belongings, and three meals a day, for a week. By paying primarily in vouchers rather than cash the demand for these jobs will largely be limited to the homeless and taxpayers will be reassured they are not paying for drugs or alcohol. Individuals who show themselves to be exceptionally good workers should be rewarded by opportunities for better jobs, more hours of work, training, or improved pay. This will enable some individuals, particularly those who are first-time homeless and cyclical homeless, to find a near-term exit from homelessness. Similarly, individuals with significant rehabilitation needs who demonstrate strong motivation should become candidates for Tier II assistance.

We recommend starting with one pilot day-labor market in downtown Los Angeles. This area has the region's largest concentration of homeless individuals as well as businesses that can use short-term workers, and public sector entities that can supervise individuals in doing work that benefits the public. After the program has been tested and refined, and is operating successfully it should be replicated in other urban nodes throughout the county where there are concentrations of homeless individuals. Public costs will include modest expenses for operating the day-labor markets, and costs not covered by private employers for voucher redemption payments to service providers for shelter and meals, and small cash payments to homeless workers.

Potential public revenue sources to pay for day-labor markets as well as Tier II programs include job training grants, state and federal demonstration grants, public works budgets, grants administered by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, community redevelopment tax increment funds, city and county general funds, and (as a last resort) reallocation of a portion of the money currently going into General Relief.

Tier II is comprehensive rehabilitation and employment services for strongly motivated individuals. Most beds in homeless shelters and sleeping spots on streets are occupied by people whose passage into homelessness and subsequent rootlessness and placelessness has lasted longer than a year. Their journey into homelessness has taken time, and similarly the journey out and the process of extricating themselves from the damage done by homelessness takes time. In order to effectively help chronically homeless individuals, programs must offer adequate resources and duration of service to rebuild lasting, stable ties to the larger community. In addition, programs must become adept at recognizing, and acting within, that narrow window of motivational opportunity when individuals are strongly and purposefully determined to rebuild their lives. The central challenge in overcoming homelessness is reconnection of the individual with the larger community. This ultimately manifests itself through success in creating viable, lasting connections around work, housing and social relationships.

Homeless programs can lay the foundation for reconnection with society by respecting and engaging clients as individuals, listening to what they have learned through previous failures and how they recommend programs should be designed. Essential program ingredients for helping chronically homeless people become stabilized and productively employed include:

1. Comprehensive, timely support when there is a window of strong commitment to making a serious effort at building a new life.
2. Integrated services offering shelter, food, legal help, drug treatment, income maintenance, health services, personal counseling, development of affirming personal relationships, skill development (where necessary), and job placement.

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3. Effective employment, training and job placement services that:
 - competently assess and respond to client needs and abilities
 - develop individualized transition-to-work plans for each client
 - channel clients' skills, interests and aptitudes into demand-occupations
 - provide training and supportive services tailored to individual client needs
 - combine classroom and on-the-job training
 - ensure that clients have the skills and competencies employers require
 - place workers with employers who offer stable employment
 - provide ongoing post-placement support and counseling
4. Innovative job creation strategies including public service, entrepreneurial programs and worker-owned cooperatives that make stable employment possible despite severe job shortages in the region and high turnover rates in low-skill jobs.
5. Sustained help in the form of nine to twelve months of residential enrollment as well as case management strategies that set high standards for individuals yet maintain connections with them even if they relapse.
6. Service delivery environments that replicate the strengths of healthy families, foster honest communication, respect the dignity of each individual and provide spiritual resources for building a new life.

HOMELESS WORKERS

Chapter 1

OVERVIEW

For most working age homeless people, steady employment is the only feasible avenue to economic independence and a better life. In addition to enabling economic self-sufficiency, work constitutes the single most important link most individuals have with society, offering a foundation for reconnection with the larger community. This report examines work histories and capabilities of homeless individuals in Los Angeles County and offers recommendations for making employment programs more effective in improving the difficult lives of homeless job seekers and reducing the cost of their social dependency.

We may not recognize the stereotypical unkempt, dispirited and alienated homeless person as a fellow worker, but most do have occupations, have held jobs, are at least high school graduates, and do have many potentially productive years ahead of them. Looking at homeless individuals in terms of their educational and employment backgrounds and capabilities for work, as well as identifying barriers to their reemployment, gives us a vantage point on the often bleak and intractable phenomenon of homelessness that is both hopeful and pragmatic.

In the absence of data that reliably enumerates Los Angeles County's homeless population, this report analyzes data from the four sources listed below to provide a partial, but we believe useful, profile of Los Angeles County's homeless workers and their labor market connections.

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The principal data resource for this analysis was the Census Bureau's 1990 PUMS data set, which was used as a roughly representative sampling of homeless people.

APPROACH TO USING CENSUS DATA

The 1990 census significantly under-counted Los Angeles County's homeless population and was biased toward counting and interviewing homeless in known locations (e.g., shelters), as opposed to people sleeping on streets, under bridges, or in parked cars. The impact of this bias may be mitigated by the fact that most homeless people are highly mobile, with many individuals moving from the streets to shelters, and back to sleeping on the streets again. It is plausible that the sample captured by the census is roughly representative of the county's homeless population at the time of the census. Despite its limitations, this is the best data sample of which we are aware for describing the county's homeless. The core problem in using census data to describe homeless individuals is not the quality of data, rather it is the quantity of data. The PUMS data set is a particularly rich source of labor market information, and in the absence of other findings invalidating the value for PUMS for providing an approximate sampling of the county's homeless population we believe it provides valuable insights into employment histories and patterns of labor market disconnection among homeless individuals.

The PUMS data has a category which contains records of homeless (and other) people — "Noninstitutional Group Quarters". This data has two valuable characteristics: First, it provides complete records of individual respondents, containing all of the information obtained from the census long-form questionnaire. This makes it possible to identify multiple inter-related characteristics that typify homeless individuals. And, second, records of homeless individuals are part of a larger data set that covers the entire population of Los Angeles County, making it possible to analyze homeless workers within the context of the region's total workforce.

PUMS data also has at least two weaknesses that must be taken into account in using it to describe the homeless. First, the category of Noninstitutional Group Quarters contains nonhomeless individuals who must be filtered out, including students in dormitories, military personnel in barracks, and people in religious group quarters. And second, the category of Noninstitutional Group Quarters does not show family relationships among individuals. A careful filtering process (described in Appendix A) leaves a residual of 1,076 records representing a population of 21,992 individuals who can reasonably be presumed to be homeless.

There is reason to believe that this sample is approximately representative of Los Angeles County residents who were homeless at the time of the census survey in 1990, but it is important to note that there has not been an attempt to make it representative of the total population of people in the county who have been homeless at some point in their lives. The total population of people who have been homeless can be seen as having three subgroups: (1) people who had a one-time experience of homelessness because of aberrations in their circumstances that they were able to overcome; (2) people who are marginally housed and have periodic episodes of homelessness, perhaps associated with cycles of substance abuse or personal difficulty; and (3) people who are chronically homeless.

Given that the chronically homeless will occupy shelter beds or places on the sidewalk 365 days a year for many years, while the cyclically homeless may occupy those spots 60 to 90 days of the year, and the one-time homeless may occupy them for just 30 days, it is inevitable that the percent of "bed days" accounted for by the chronically homeless is higher than the percent they represent of the total population of people who have been homeless. By attempting to survey all of the people who are homeless at a single point in time the census sample unavoidably includes a percent of the chronically homeless that is larger than their share of the total population of people who have been homeless. The total population of homeless will have more people with sufficient strengths, skills and resources to escape homelessness than is reflected by the PUMS data. The value of the PUMS data is for describing the homeless population needing help on any given day, which is weighted toward the chronically homeless.¹

¹Dennis P. Culhane and Randall Kuhn, "Patterns and Determinants of Shelter Utilization Among Single Adults in New York and Philadelphia: A Longitudinal Analysis of Homelessness," 1995, Annual Meeting of Eastern Sociological Association, Philadelphia, PA. The authors identify three cohorts of homeless shelter users: (1) recent homeless who stay in shelters for fewer than 45 days within a two-year period, this group accounted for one-half of adult shelter users; (2) repeat homeless who were admitted to shelters four or more times in a two year period; and (3) long-term homeless who stayed in shelters 365 or more days in a two year period. Findings indicate that one-half of men and one-third of women experienced readmission to shelters within two years of first admission. The authors contrast this longitudinal analysis of the homeless population with "point-prevalence" analyses that look at the homeless population at a single point in time. Their findings suggest that the total number of people who were homeless in a year was three times higher than the number counted at a single point in time. Our thanks to Michael Neely, director of Homeless Outreach Program, for introducing us to this study.

Chapter 2

Homeless Workers and the Labor Market

The PUMS homeless records include 827 cases, representing 17,578 individuals, who were between 16 and 64 years old. Of these potential workers, 543 cases, representing 12,168 individuals, have work histories. These records showing work histories represent 69 percent of individuals of working age. PUMS records include an additional 13 cases over 64 years of age with work histories. The information that follows is drawn from this sample of 556 records representing 12,663 homeless individuals who have been part of the work force.

PROFILE OF HOMELESS WORKERS

1. *Poverty, Mobility and Marital Status (Graph 1)*

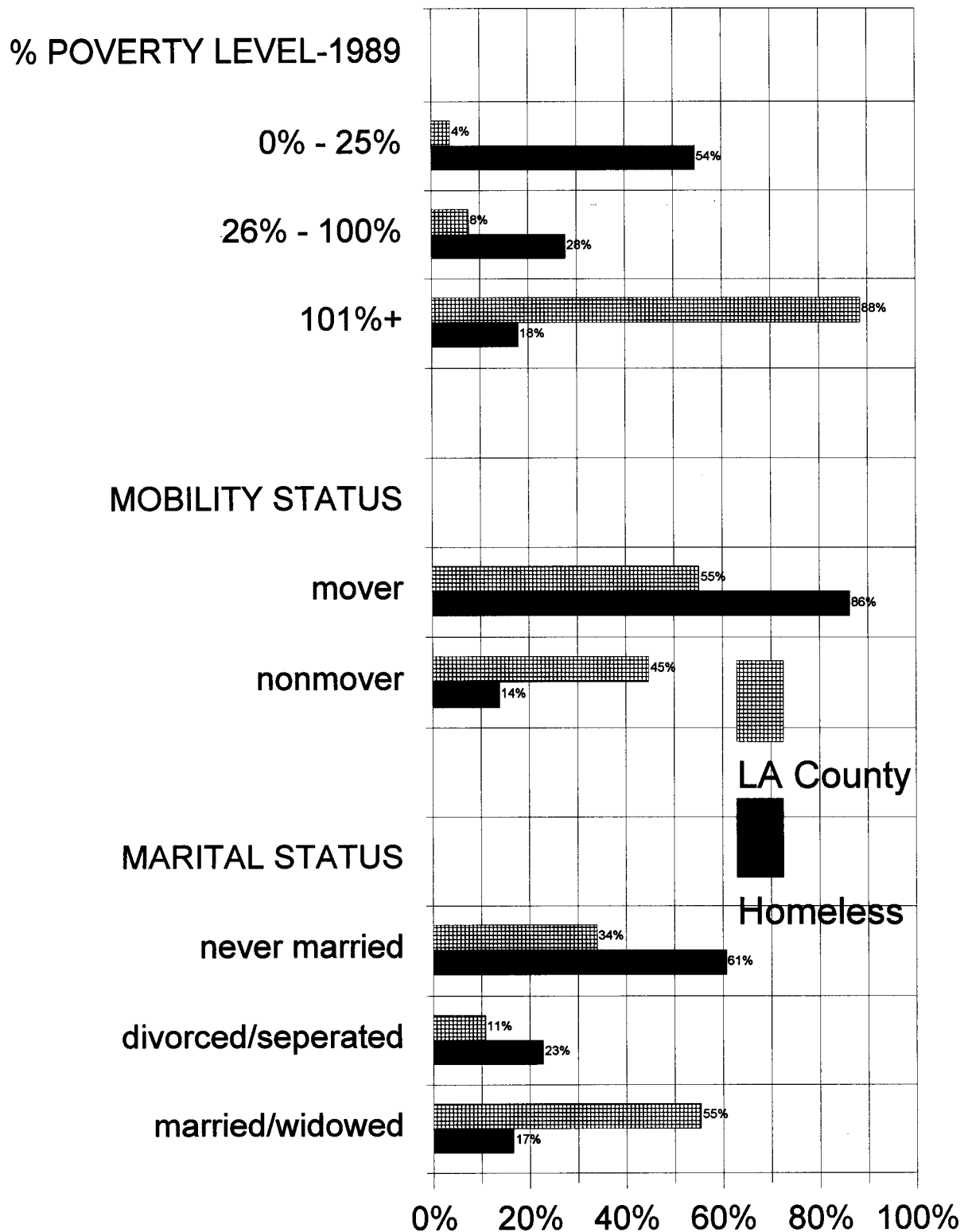
Defining characteristics that distinguish homeless workers 16 to 64 years of age from the general county population in the same age range with work histories are that they are extremely poor, more mobile, and much less likely to be married.

- In the year prior to the census survey, 54 percent of homeless workers had incomes below 26 percent of the poverty level (i.e., less than \$1,613), compared to 4 percent of all working age individuals in the county with work histories. There is a very high probability that the percent of homeless workers in acute poverty was even higher in 1990 because labor force participation for these workers declined from 1989 to 1990.
- In the year prior to the census survey, 88 percent of all working age individuals in the county with work histories had incomes over the poverty level (\$6,451 for a single person under 65), compared to 18 percent of homeless workers. The most distinctive characteristic of homeless workers is extreme poverty.
- Homeless workers were significantly more likely to have moved in the past five years than the overall county work force (86 percent versus 55 percent).
- Most homeless workers lack connection with a nuclear family. Sixty-one percent had never been married, another 23 percent were divorced or separated, and only 17 percent were married or widowed, compared to 55 percent of the total county work force.

GRAPH 1

16 TO 64 YEARS WITH WORK HISTORY-1990

Homeless Vrs. All L.A. County Workers



2. *Age (Graph 2)*

Homeless workers were significantly younger than the Los Angeles County population.

- Fifty-six percent of homeless workers were under the age of 35, compared to 47 percent of persons in Los Angeles County who were at least 15 years of age.
- Only 19 percent of homeless workers were 45 years of age or older, compared to 35 percent of persons on Los Angeles County.
- The probable explanation for the younger age of the homeless is that the two major age-based entitlement programs, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security, eliminate poverty (and thereby homelessness) among older workers. It would clearly be in the public interest to achieve this outcome at an earlier age through employment and economic self-sufficiency rather than at a later age with significant reliance on taxpayer-funded SSI benefits.

3. *Ethnicity (Graph 3)*

Homeless workers were much more likely to be African-American than the Los Angeles County population, and less likely to be latino, white, or Asian.

- Thirty percent of homeless workers were African-American, compared to 11 percent of persons in Los Angeles County.
- Twenty-eight percent of homeless workers were latino, compared to 37 percent of persons in Los Angeles County.
- Thirty-five percent of homeless workers were white (non-latino), compared to 41 percent of persons in Los Angeles County.
- Five percent of homeless persons were Asian, compared to 10 percent of persons in Los Angeles County.

4. *Education (Graphs 4-6)*

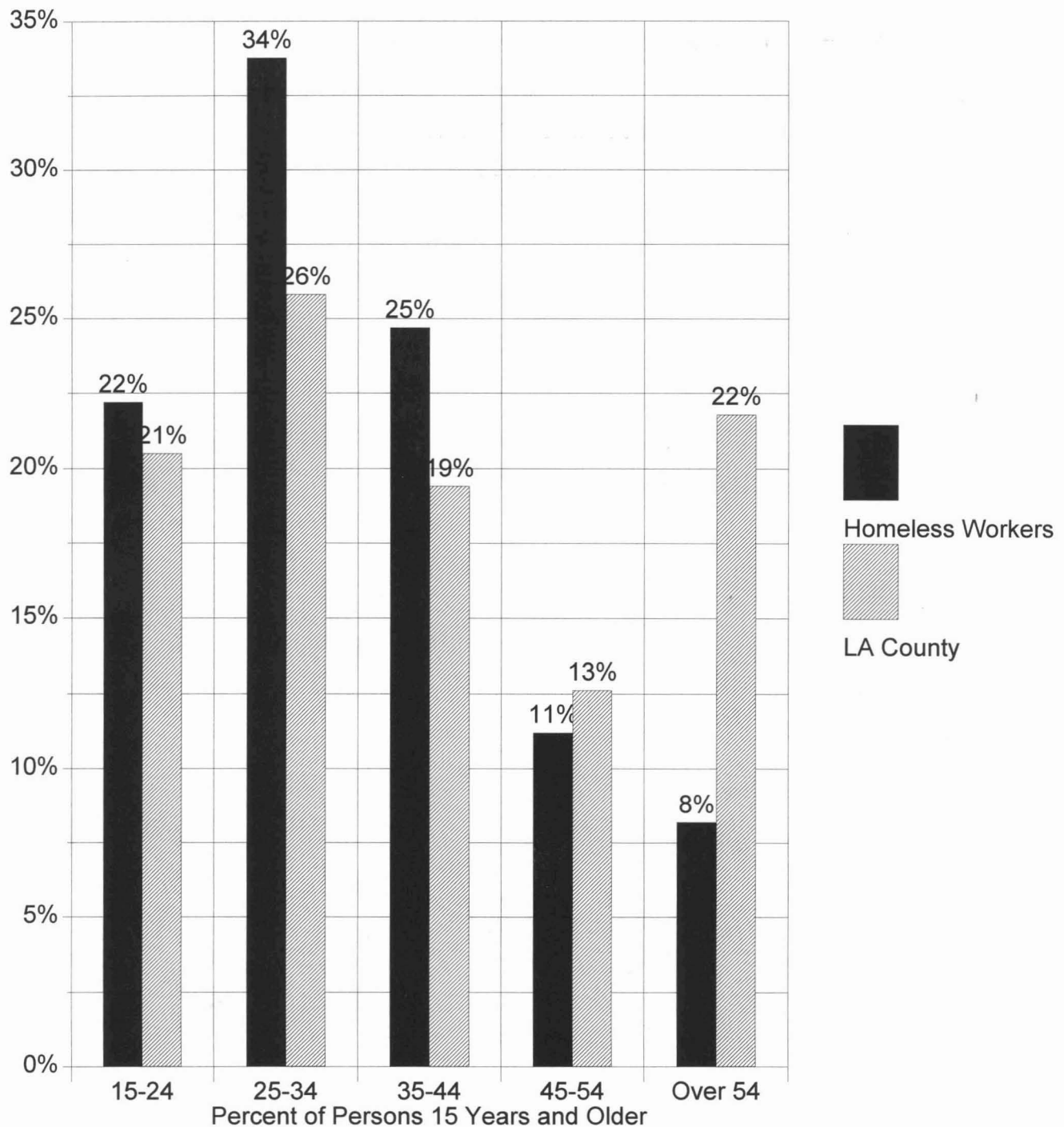
A majority of homeless workers had obtained a high school degree, and a significant number had some college experience or a college degree.

- Sixty-one percent of homeless workers had obtained high school degrees, compared to 70 percent of persons in Los Angeles County who were at least 25 years of age.

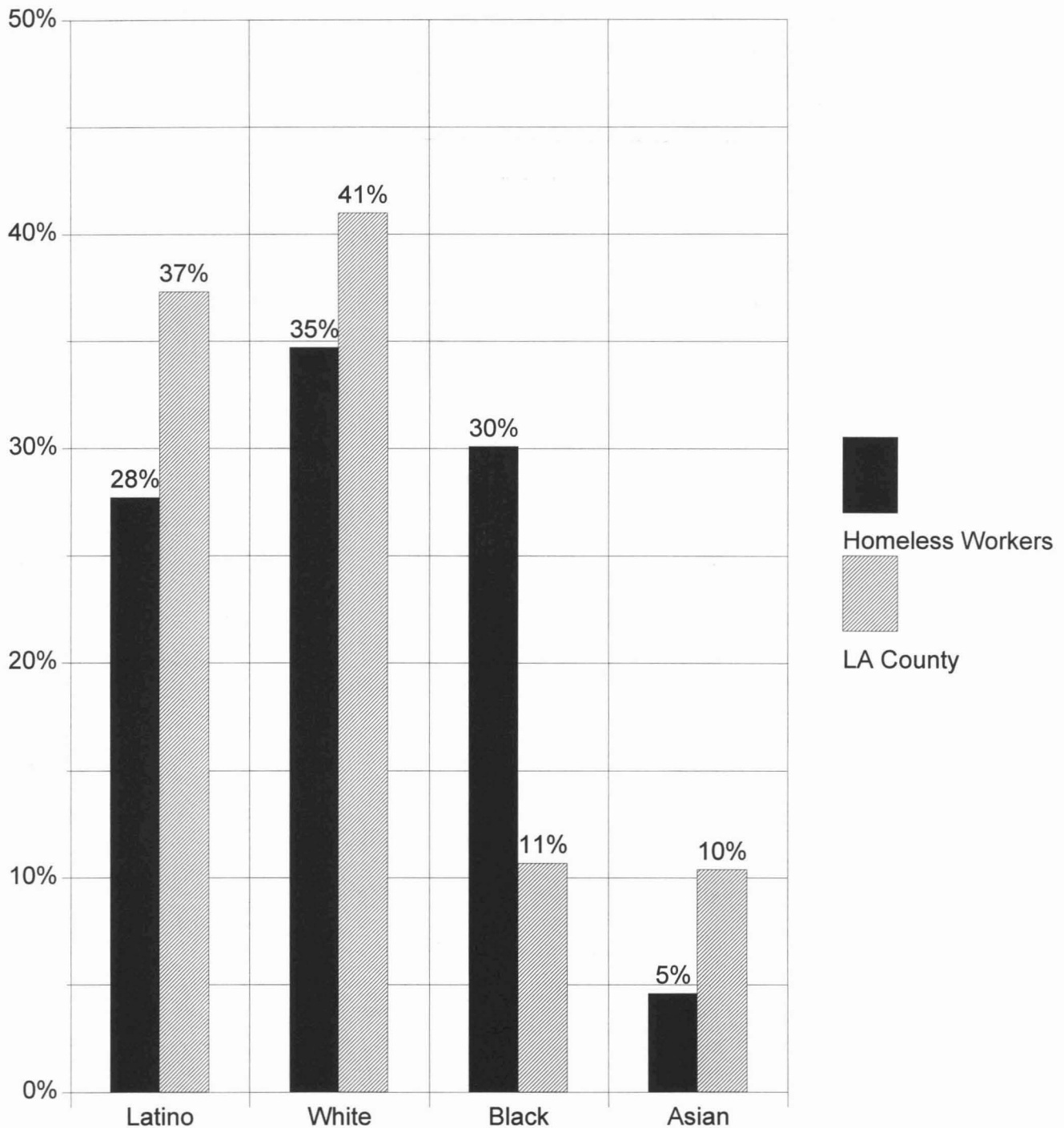
GRAPH 2

AGE COMPOSITION

Homeless Workers in LA County



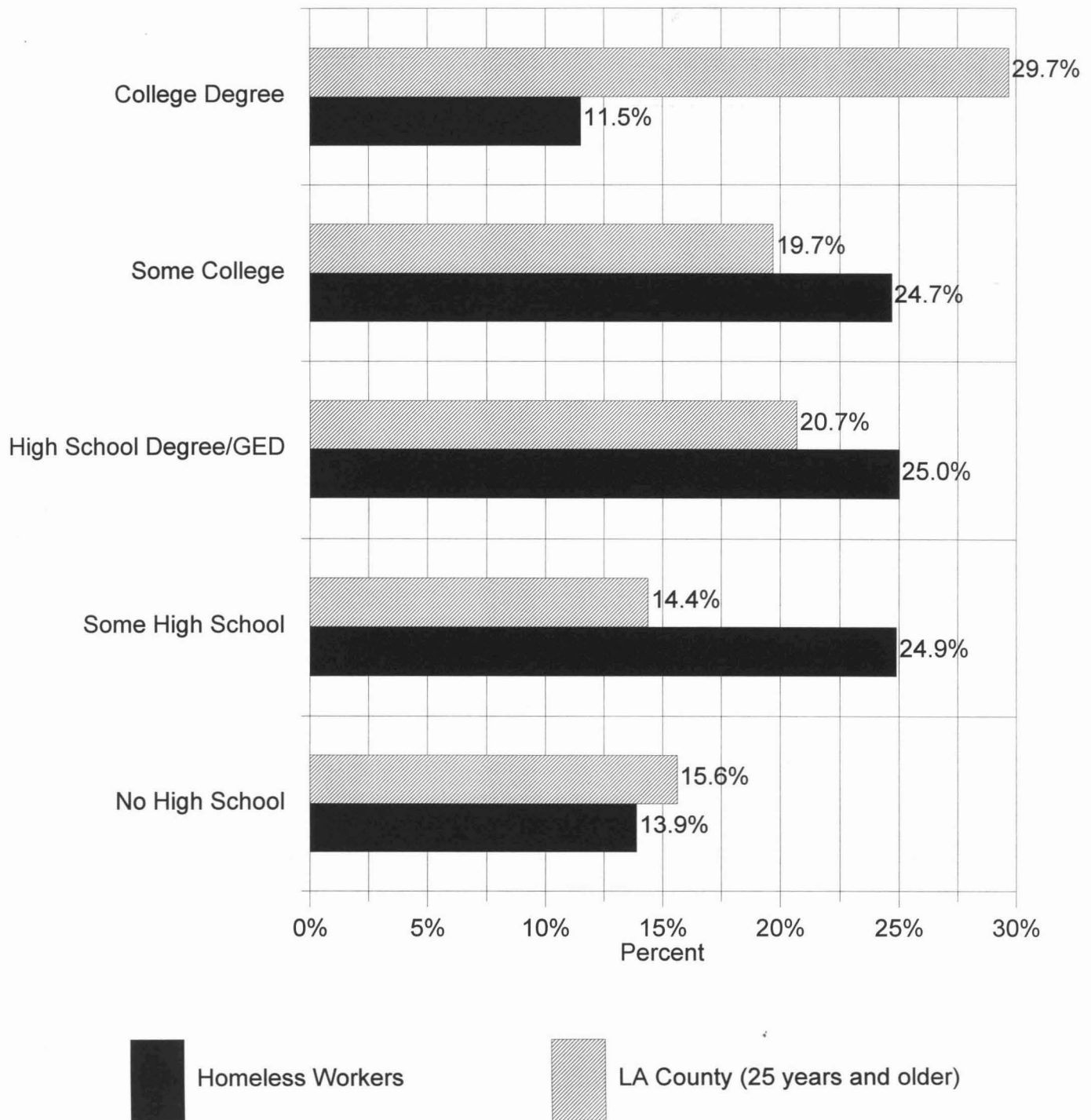
GRAPH 3
ETHNIC COMPOSITION
Homeless Workers in LA County



GRAPH 4

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

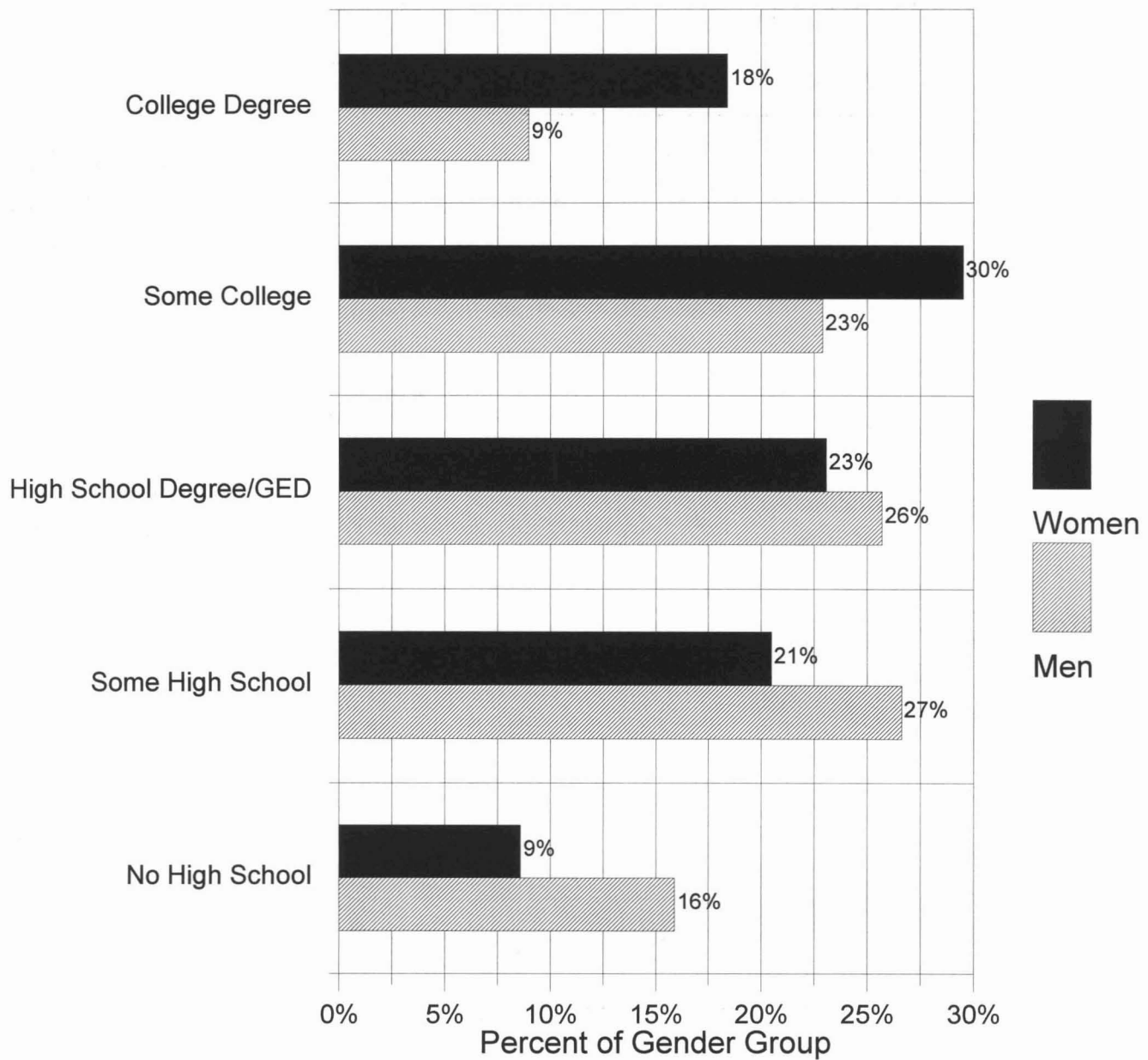
Homeless Workers in LA County



GRAPH 5

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY GENDER

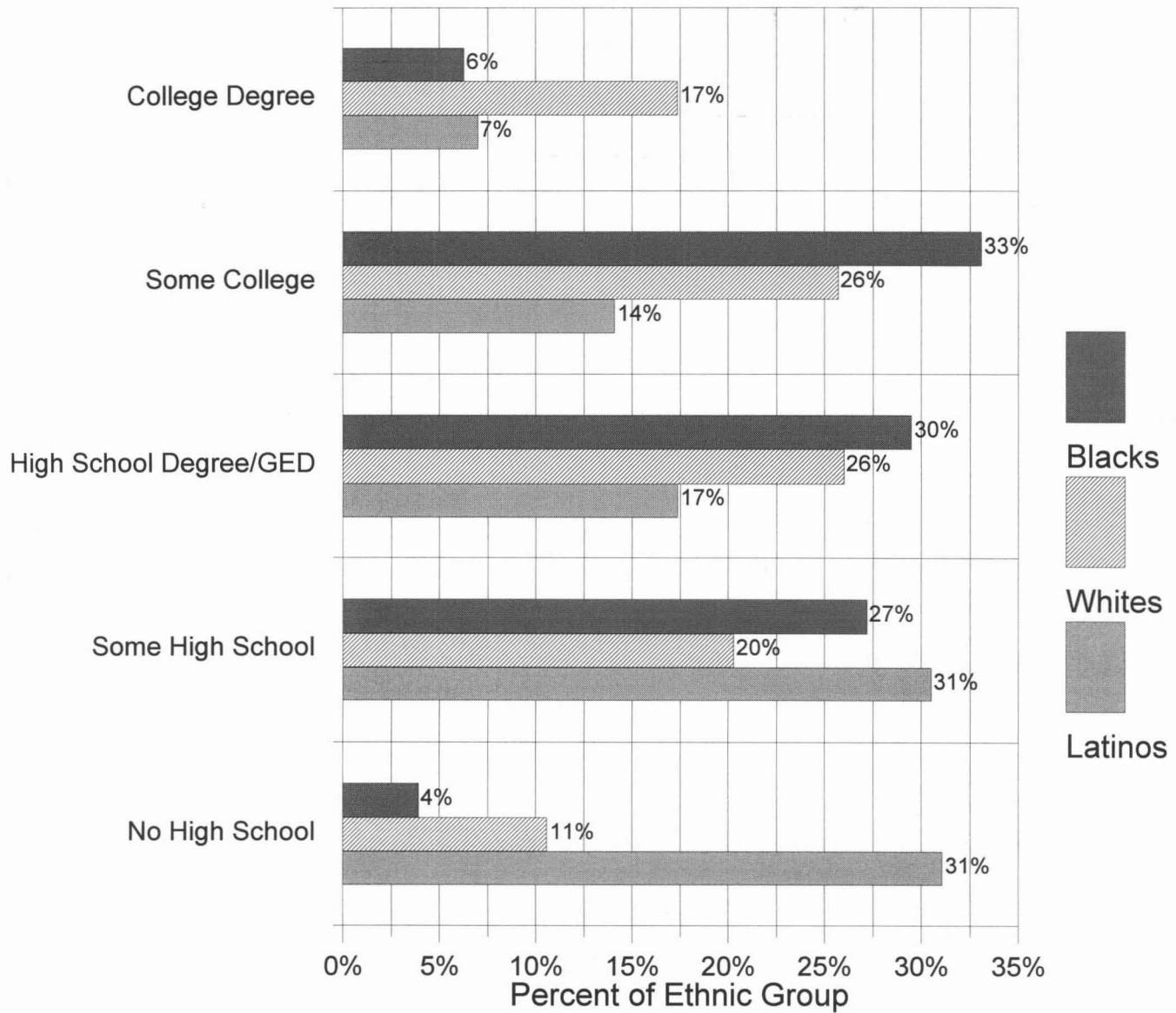
Homeless Workers in LA County



GRAPH 6

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY ETHNICITY

Homeless Workers in LA County



- Twelve percent of homeless workers had obtained college degrees, compared to 30 percent of persons in Los Angeles County at least 25 years of age.
- Homeless female workers were more likely to have obtained high school and college degrees than homeless male workers. Seventy-one percent of women had obtained a high school degree compared to 58 percent of men. Eighteen percent of women had obtained a college degree compared to 9 percent of men.
- Whites were more likely to have obtained a college degree than blacks or latinos. Seventeen percent of whites had obtained a college degree, compared to 7 percent of latinos and 6 percent of blacks.
- Sixty-nine percent of both whites and blacks had obtained high school degrees, compared to only 38 percent of latinos.

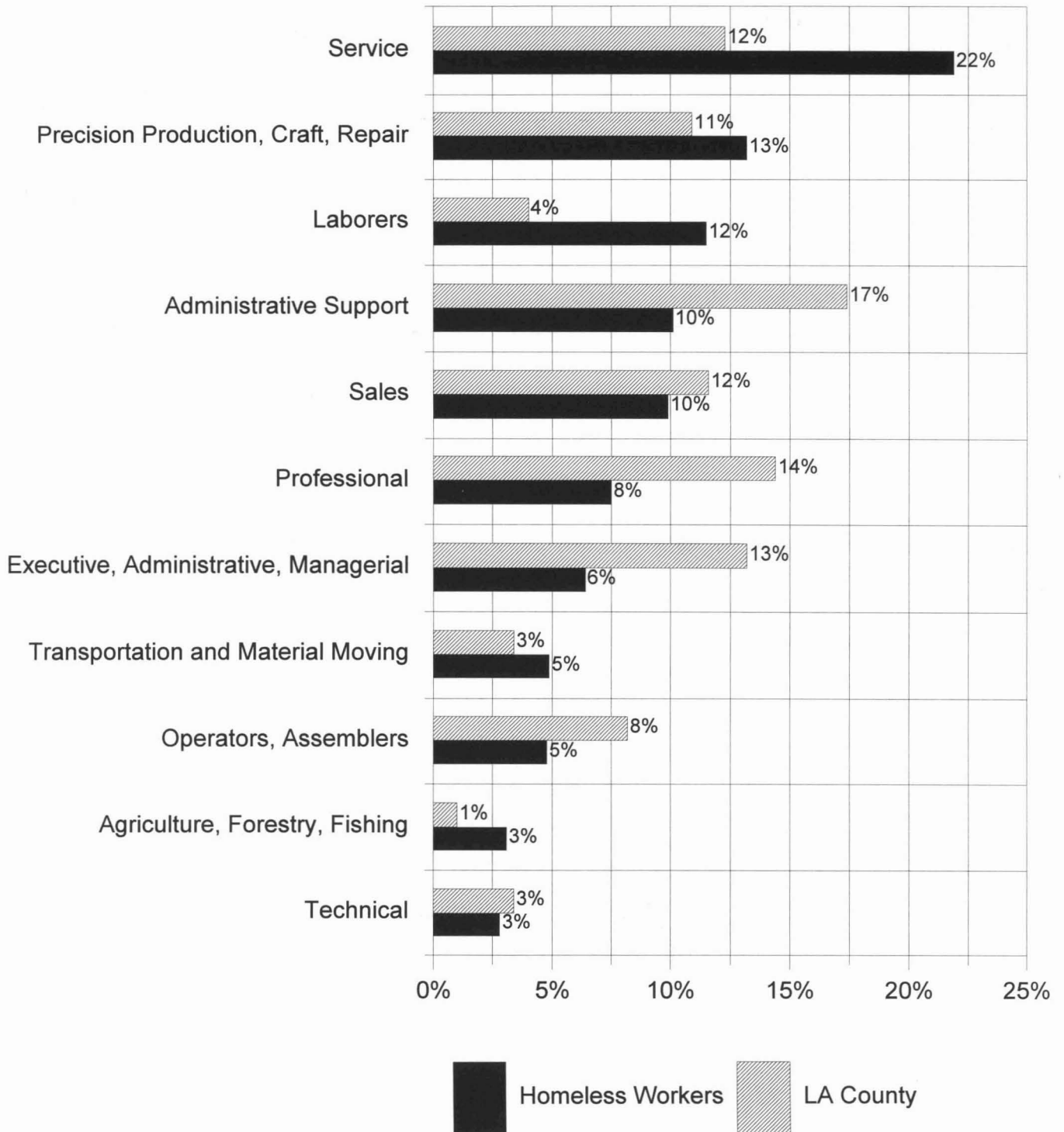
5. *Occupation and Industry (Graphs 7-8)*

One in three homeless persons with a work history had been employed as service workers or laborers. Just over half of homeless workers had been employed in professional services, retail, and construction industries.

- Service occupations were the most common occupations of homeless workers, including cleaning and janitorial work, food service, and security guards. Twenty-two percent of homeless persons had been employed in service occupations, compared to 12 percent of the Los Angeles County workforce.
- Homeless workers were also highly concentrated in laboring occupations. Twelve percent of homeless workers had been laborers, compared to 4 percent of the Los Angeles County workforce.
- Homeless workers were somewhat more likely to have been employed in precision production, craft, and repair occupations than the Los Angeles County workforce.
- Homeless workers were much less likely to have been employed in administrative support, professional, and administrative and managerial occupations, and somewhat less likely to have been employed in operator and assembly occupations, than the Los Angeles County workforce.
- The professional services, retail, and construction industries employed the most homeless workers. Twenty-three percent of homeless workers had been employed in professional services industry, compared to 21 percent of the county workforce. Eighteen percent of

GRAPH 7

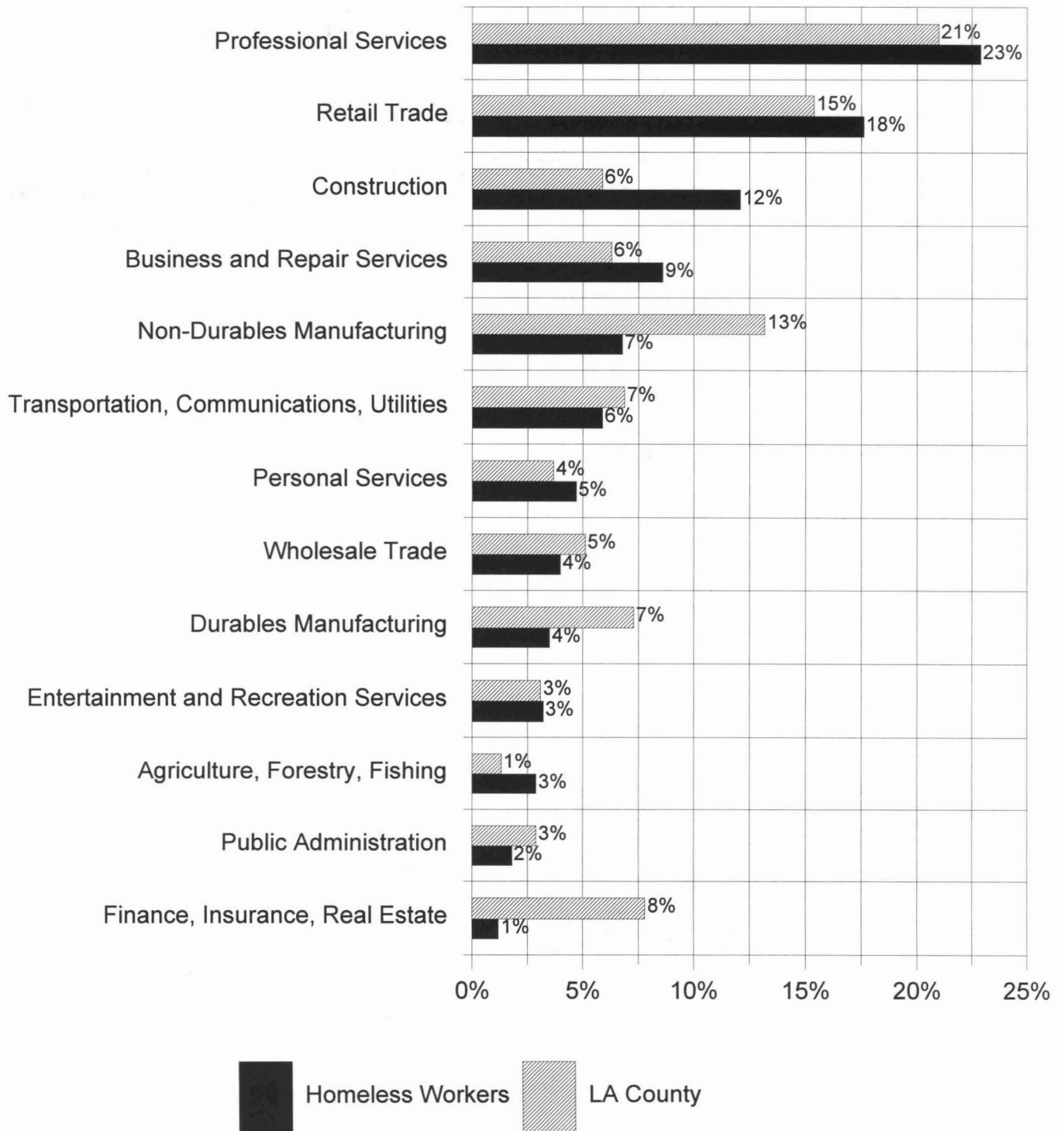
OCCUPATION OF HOMELESS WORKERS Los Angeles County



GRAPH 8

INDUSTRY OF HOMELESS WORKERS

Los Angeles County



homeless workers had been employed in the retail industry, compared to 15 percent of the county workforce. Twelve percent of homeless persons had been employed in the construction industry, compared to 6 percent of the county workforce.

- Homeless workers were more likely to have been employed in business and repair services industries than the county workforce. They were less likely to have been employed in manufacturing or finance, insurance, and real estate industries than the county workforce.

6. *Detachment from the Labor Market: Characteristics of Recent Workers and Long-Term Unemployed (Graphs 9-12)*

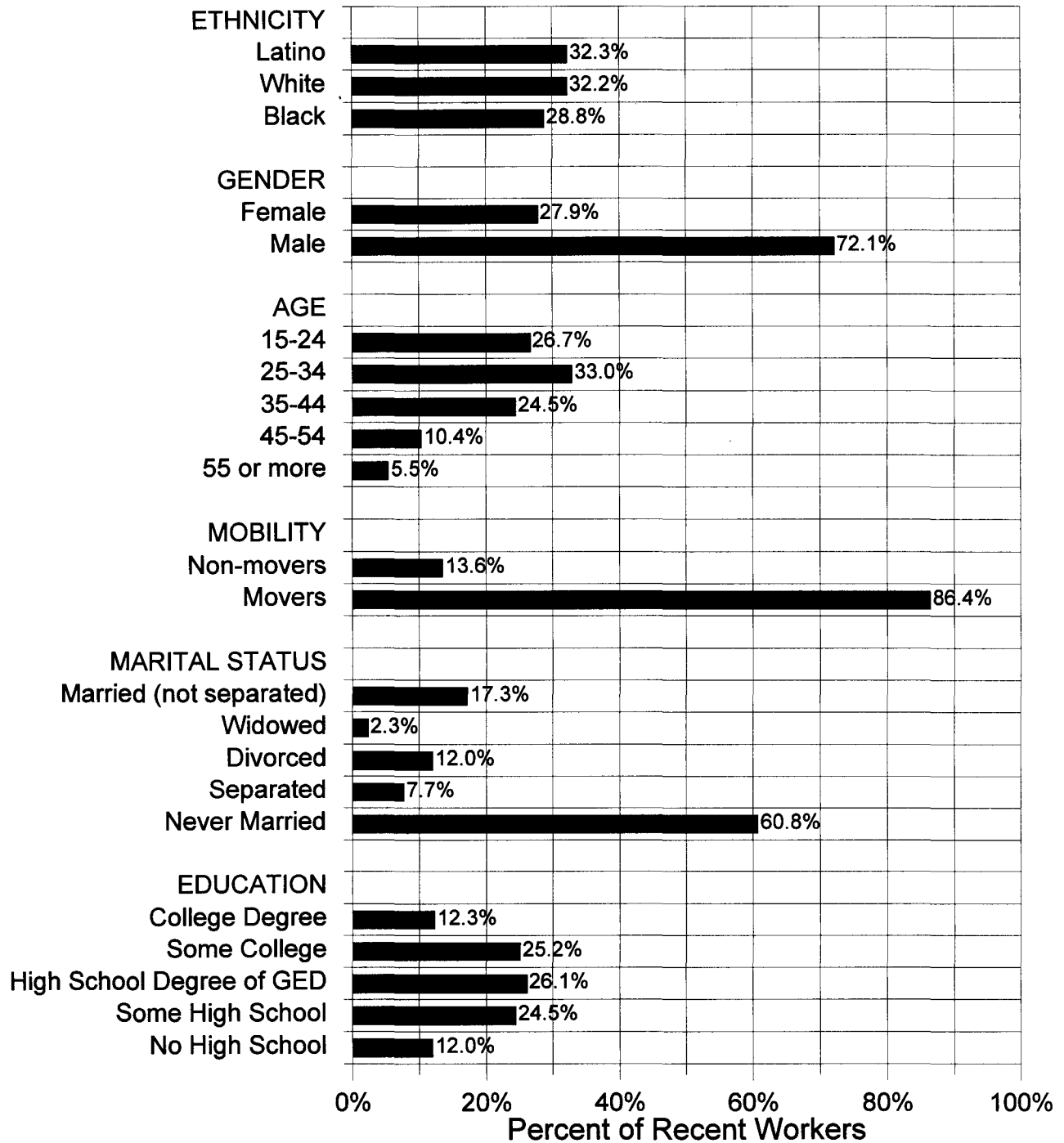
Seventy-six percent of homeless workers were employed in 1989 or 1990, or both years. The remaining 24 percent of homeless workers can be considered "long term unemployed". There were significant differences between these groups of workers, with respect to ethnicity, age, marital status, education, industry, and occupation.

- Recent workers were more likely to be latino, and less likely to be white, than the long-term unemployed. Of recent workers, 32 percent were latino, 32 percent were white, and 29 percent were black. Of long-term unemployed, 43 percent were white, 35 percent were black, and 13 percent were latino.
- Recent workers were significantly younger than the long-term unemployed. Sixty percent of recent workers were under 35 years of age, compared to 45 percent of long-term unemployed. Sixteen percent of recent workers were 45 years of age or older, compared to 31 percent of long-term unemployed.
- Recent workers were more likely to be married than long-term unemployed. Seventeen percent of recent workers were married, compared to 3 percent of long-term unemployed.
- Recent workers were better educated than long-term unemployed. Sixty-four percent of recent workers held a high school degree, compared to 52 percent of long-term unemployed. Twelve percent of recent workers had a college degree, compared to 9 percent of long-term unemployed.
- Recent workers were more likely to have been employed in laborer, sales, administrative support, and machine operator and fabricator occupations than long-term unemployed.
- Long-term unemployed were more likely to have been employed in service, transportation and material moving occupations than recent workers.

GRAPH 9

CHARACTERISTICS OF HOMELESS WORKERS

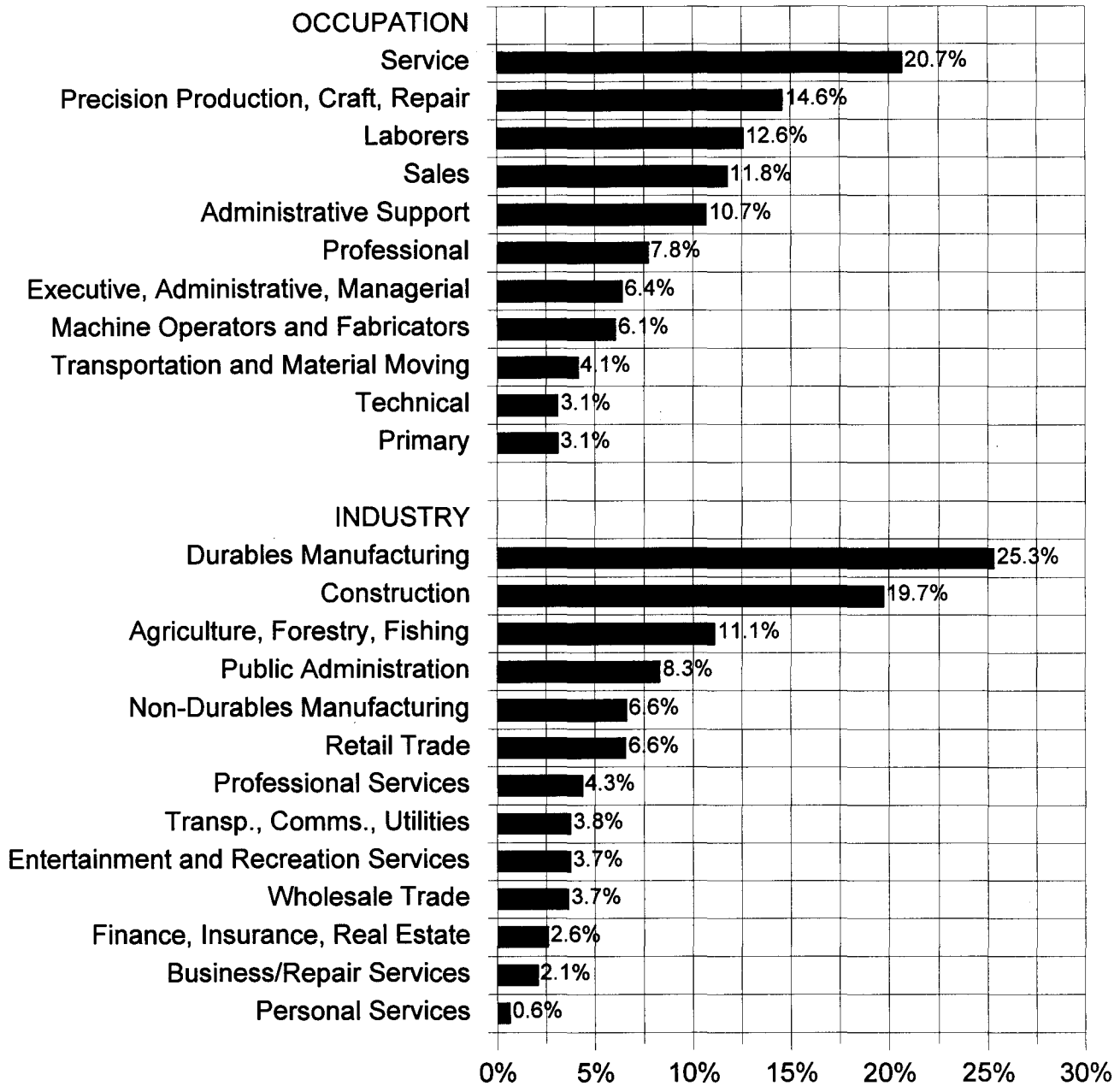
Recent Workers



GRAPH 10

INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATION

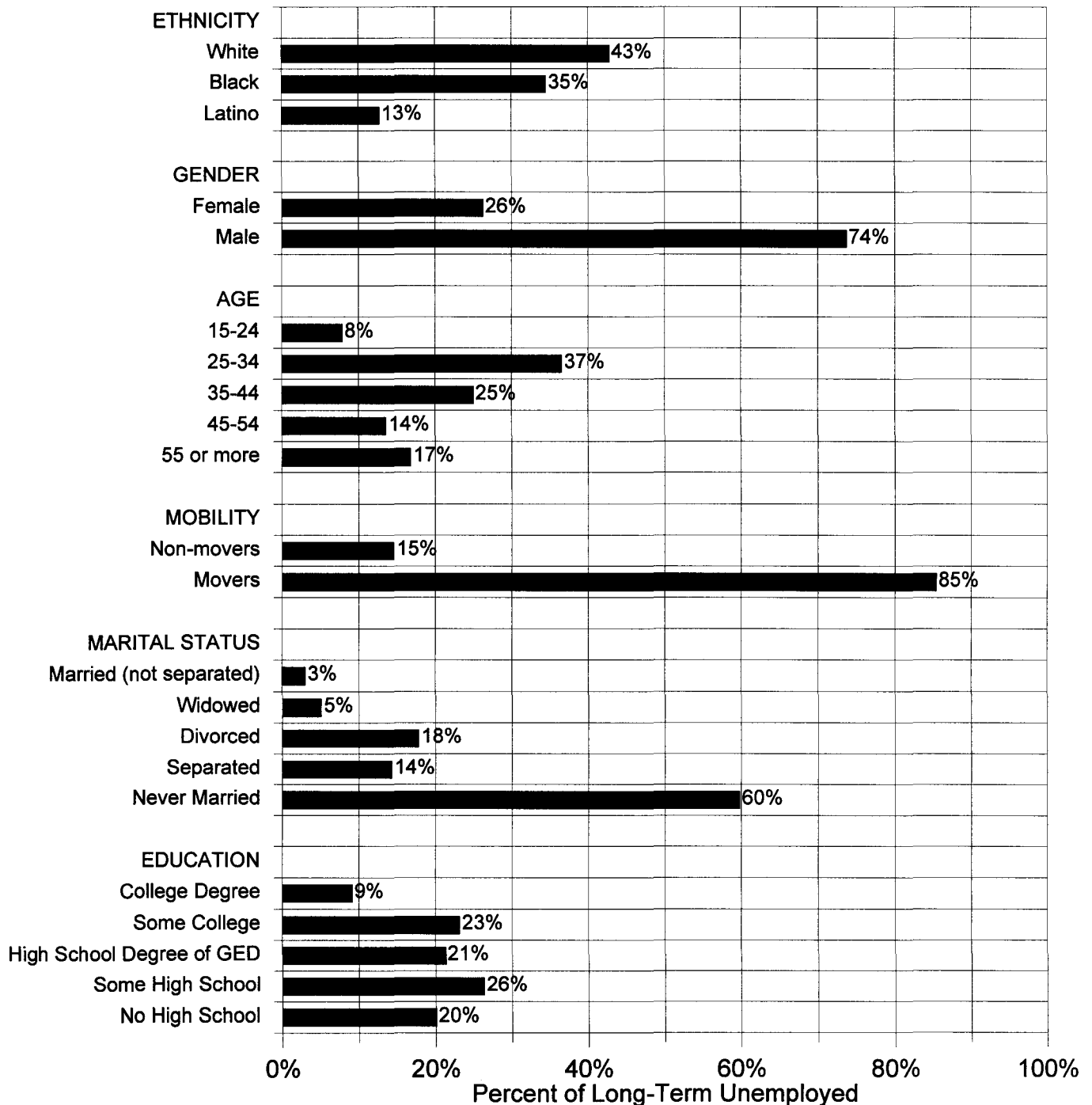
Recent Workers



GRAPH 11

CHARACTERISTICS OF HOMELESS WORKERS

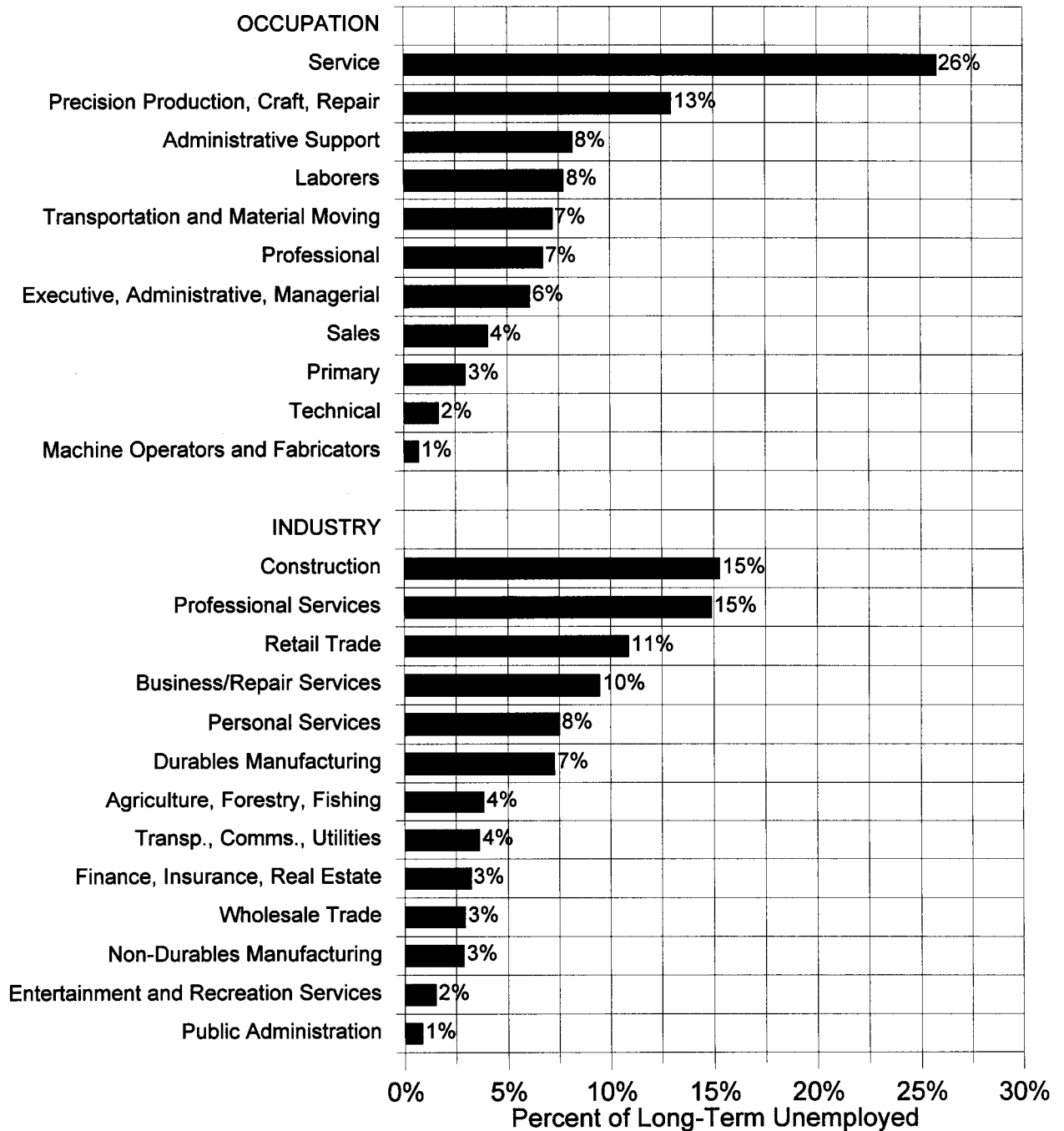
Long-Term Unemployed



GRAPH 12

INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATION

Long-Term Unemployed



7. *Job Characteristics of Homeless Persons who Worked in 1989 (Graphs 13-17)*

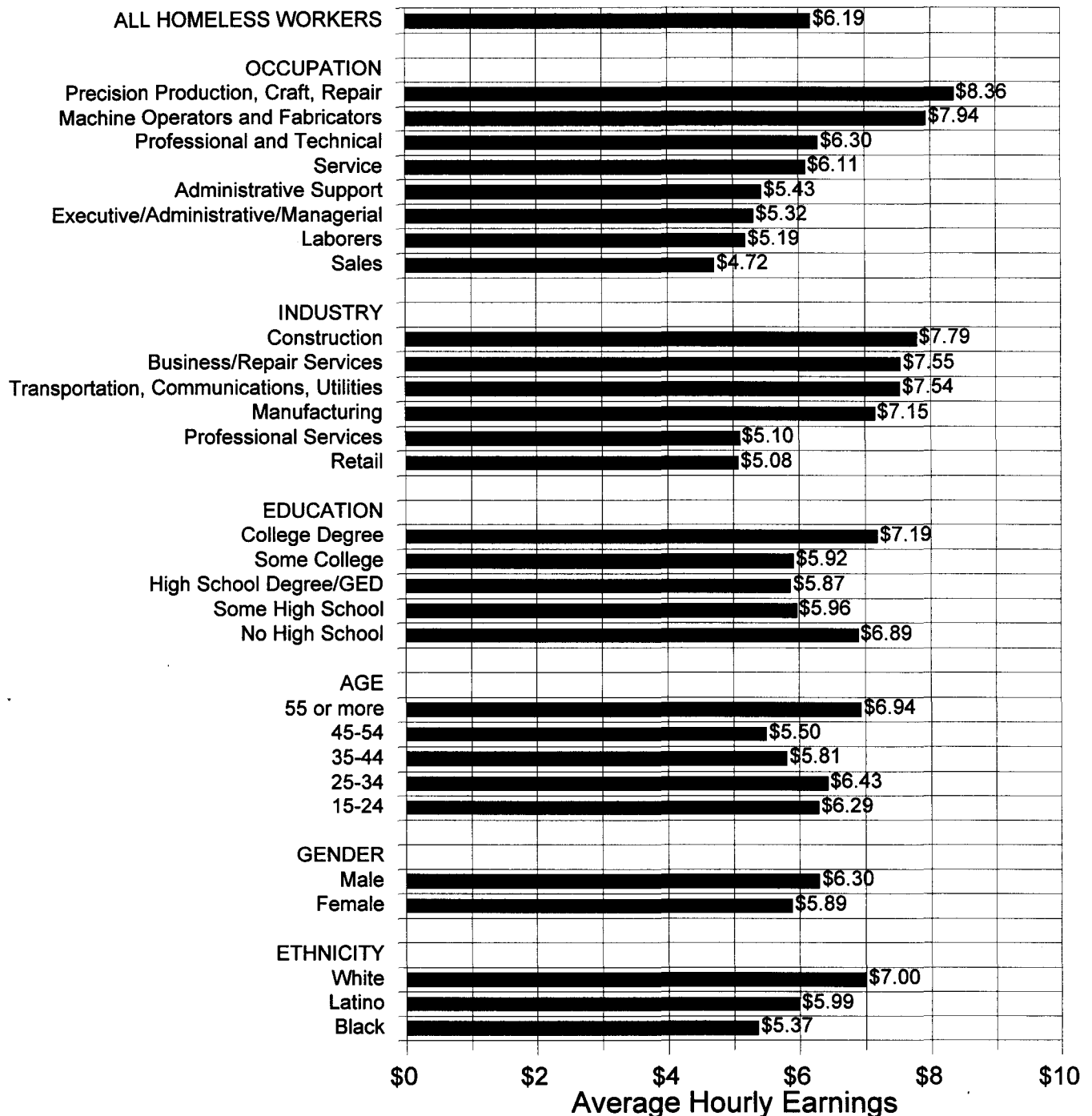
Homeless persons who worked in 1989 were employed for the most part in low wage jobs. The average hourly earnings of homeless workers in 1989 was \$6.19, which is equivalent to an annual income of under \$12,400. While most homeless workers worked close to 40 hours per week in 1989, they worked an average of only 24 weeks. Thus, like many of the "working poor", homeless persons were more likely to have worked full-time than part-time hours, but in high turnover, low-wage jobs.

- The average wage and salary annual income of homeless persons who worked in 1989 was \$5,041. The average hourly income of homeless persons who worked in 1989 was \$6.19.
- Average hourly earnings of white workers were \$7.00, compared to \$5.99 for latinos and \$5.37 for blacks. Males earned \$6.30, and females earned \$5.89 per hour.
- Persons who worked in precision production, craft, repair, and machine operator and fabricator occupations had average hourly earnings of \$8.36 and \$7.94 respectively. Persons who worked in administrative support, managerial, laborer, or sales occupations earned close to \$5.00 per hour. The highest hourly earnings were obtained by persons working in construction, business and repair services, transportation, communications, and utilities, and manufacturing industries. The lowest wages were earned by persons in professional services and retail industries.
- There was no direct relation between education and average hourly earnings. Homeless persons with a college degree and those without a high school degree received the highest earnings in 1989. Although homeless persons with high school or college degrees stand a better chance of finding stable employment than those without at least a high school degree, as shown later in the discussion of post-program earnings of job seekers, many persons with degrees are currently homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- Age and earnings were not correlated. Persons in the 35-54 age group — the prime wage-earning years — earned less than those in the 16-34 and 55 and older age groups.
- If we consider 2,000 annual hours to equal a full-time, full-year work schedule, homeless persons were employed an average of only 46 percent of a full schedule in 1989. This is explained primarily by the low number of weeks worked. Homeless persons worked an average of 37 hours per week in 1989, but worked an average of only 24 weeks.

GRAPH 13

AVERAGE HOURLY EARNINGS IN 1989

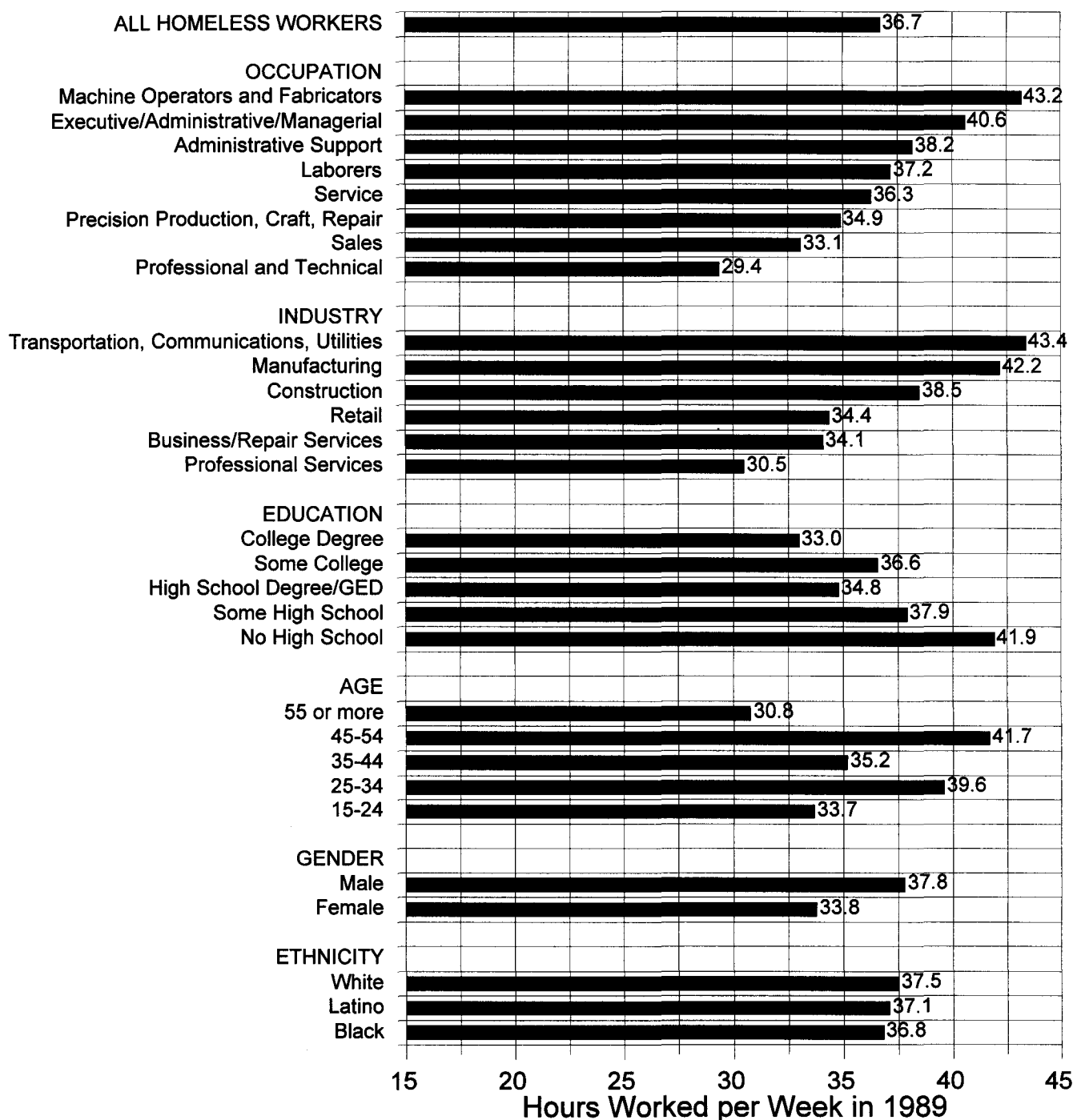
Homeless Workers in LA County



GRAPH 14

USUAL HOURS WORKED PER WEEK

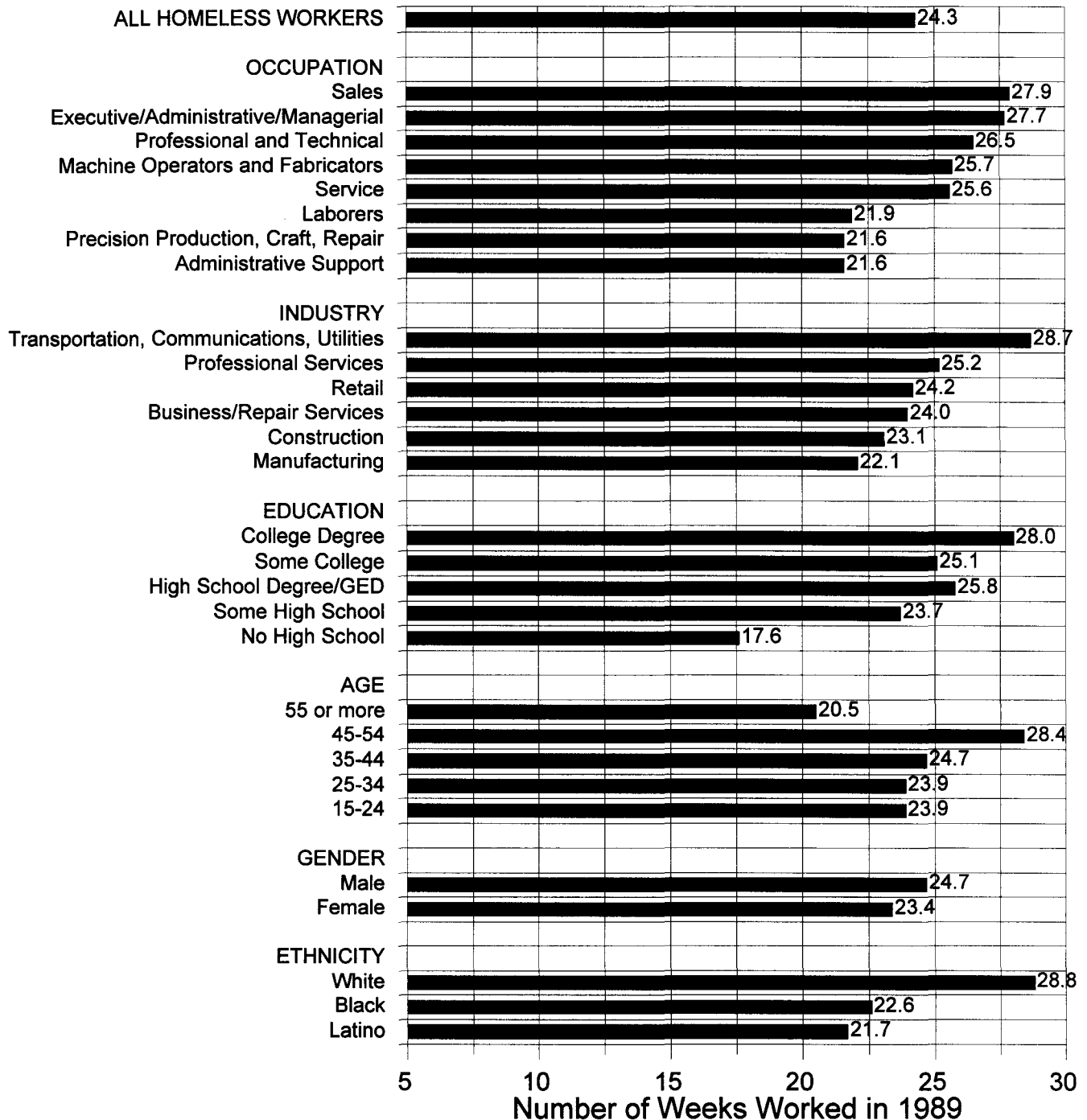
Homeless Workers in LA County, 1989



GRAPH 15

WEEKS WORKED IN 1989

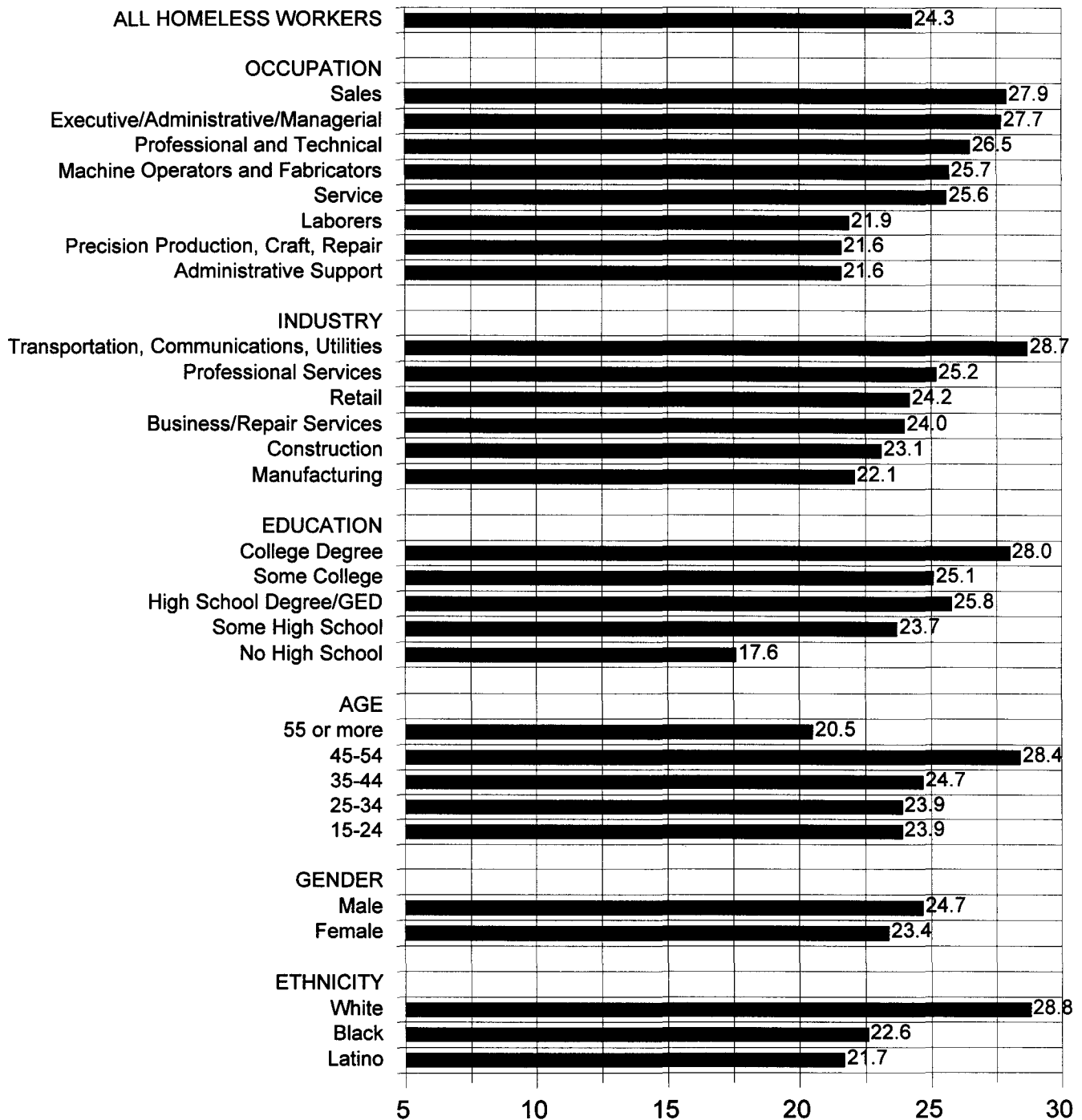
Homeless Workers in LA County



GRAPH 16

WEEKS WORKED IN 1989

Homeless Workers in LA County



LABOR MARKET DISCONNECTION

The process of disconnection from the labor market is shown sweeping across every occupation in Graph 18, which compares the average weekly hours worked in 1989 with those worked the week before the census survey in 1990 in each job family. The pervasive reality of homeless workers is that they are losing, or have lost, connection with regular employment and opportunities to earn a livable income. Machine operators, assemblers and inspectors, who have been heavily impacted by aerospace layoffs, had the greatest absolute loss of hours, losing an average of 28 working hours per week. Mechanics and repairers, some of them likely to have been laid off because of defense downsizing, had the most extreme setbacks, losing 86 percent of the hours worked in 1989. Workers in agricultural and related occupations (which offer very low pay) had the least severe setbacks, losing 29 percent of the hours they worked in 1989.

Profiles of the number of hours worked per week in 1989 and 1990 by the PUMS cohort, shown in Graph 19, show that the largest group in 1989 worked 40 hours, and the largest group in 1990 worked 0 hours, with the number of completely unemployed workers almost doubling in size between 1989 and 1990. The change resembles a chain of workers pulled away from the labor market, with the number working full-time dropping 68 percent, a small number working part-time with a downward cascade toward fewer hours, and the number working no hours at all increasing by 82 percent.

A profile of the number of work losers, those with no change, and work gainers is shown in Graph 20. The reader is reminded that the PUMS sample used for this study represents the county's homeless population at a single point in time and therefore includes more of the chronically homeless than are found in the total population of people who have been homeless at some point in their lives. The changes in work force connection occurring among homeless workers at the time of the 1990 census survey can be summarized as follows:

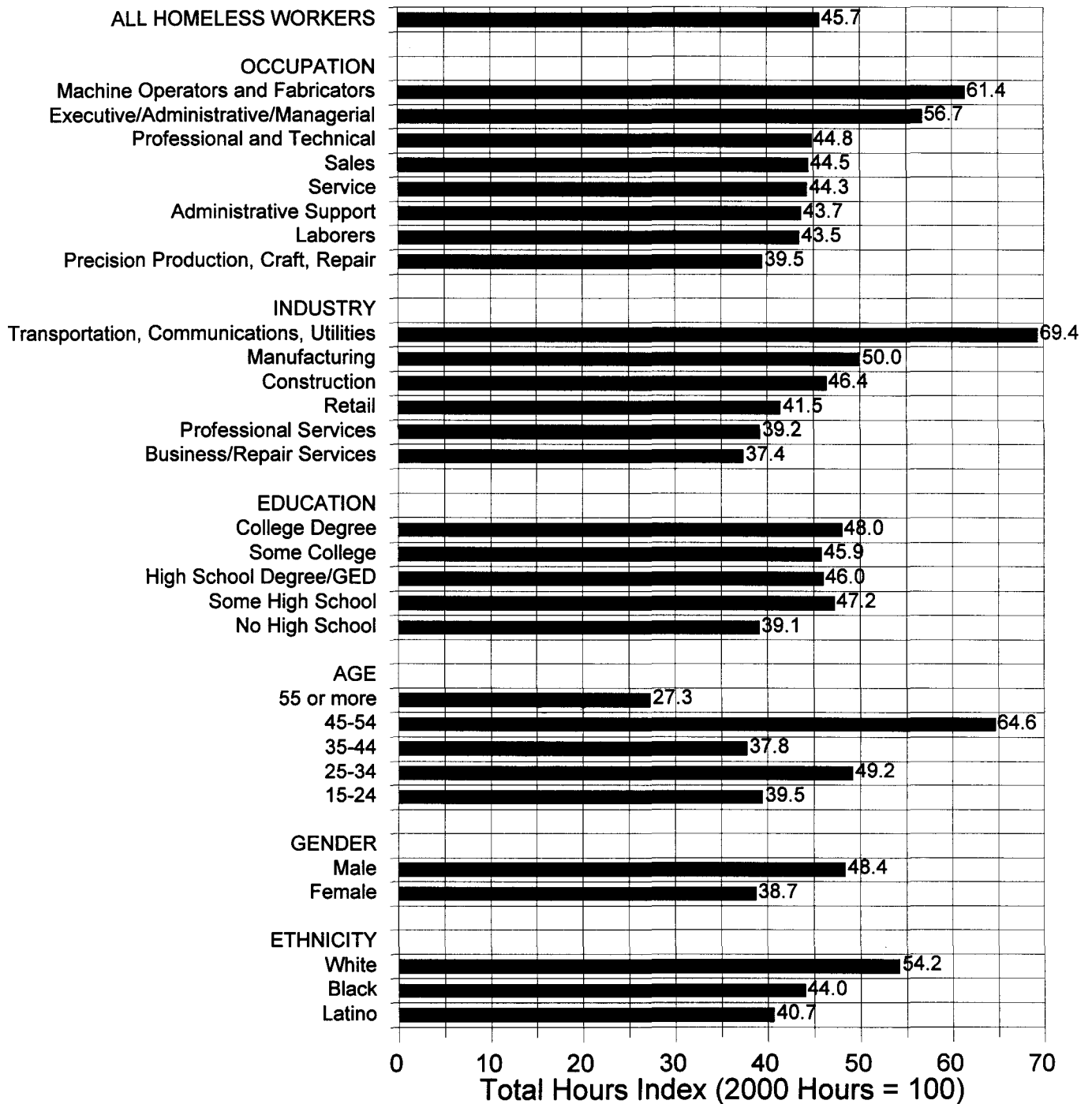
- 26 percent were at bottom for at least two years, working no hours in either 1989 or the week before the census survey in 1990 (making up most of the spike with "0%" change in the middle of Graph 20²) — these were described earlier as the long-term unemployed;
- 52 percent were moving toward bottom, working fewer hours in 1990 than in 1989. Three-fifths of this group lost forty hours per week of work, going from full-time employment to complete unemployment;

²In a small fraction of these cases individuals worked at some other point in 1990, creating a two percentage point divergence from the data shown in Graphs 11 and 12.

GRAPH 17

TOTAL HOURS INDEX

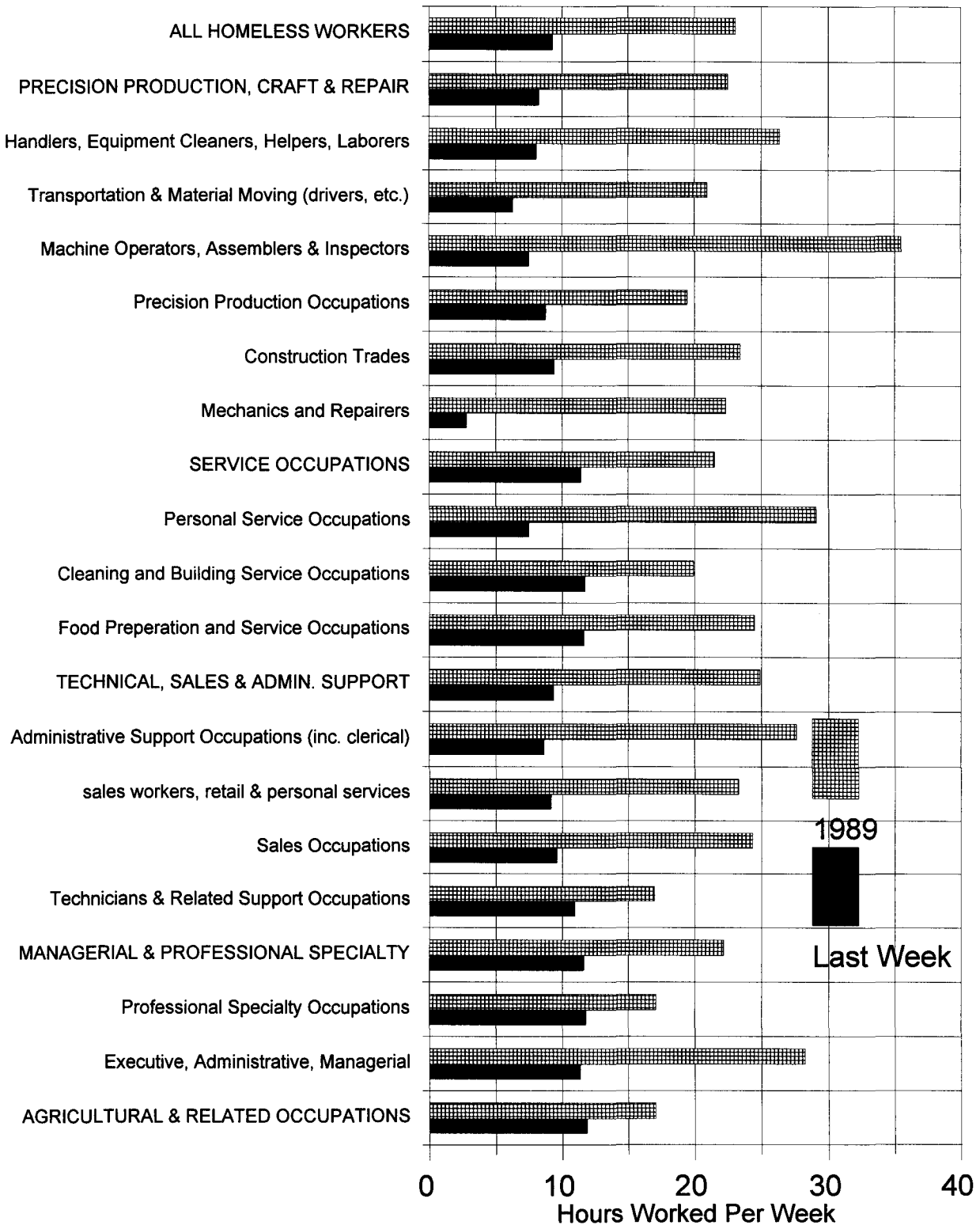
Homeless Workers in LA County



GRAPH 18

NUMBER OF HOURS WORKED PER WEEK

L.A. County PUMS Data - 1990 Census

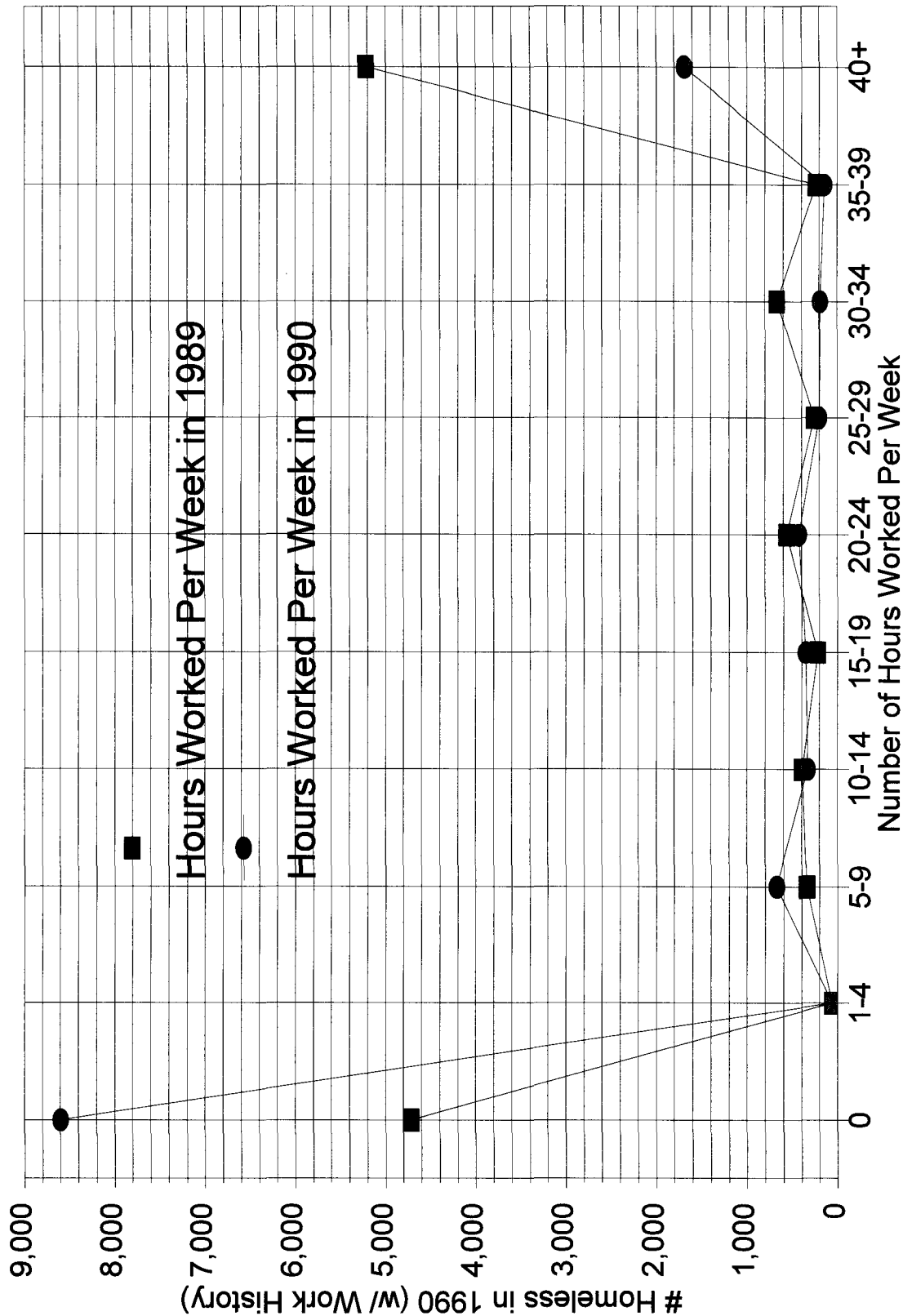


Graph based on 556 PUMS records representing 12,663 people (520 other records representing 9,086 people showed no work history)

GRAPH 19

HOMELESS WORKERS IN L.A. COUNTY - 1990

Hours Worked Per Week in 1989 vrs 1990

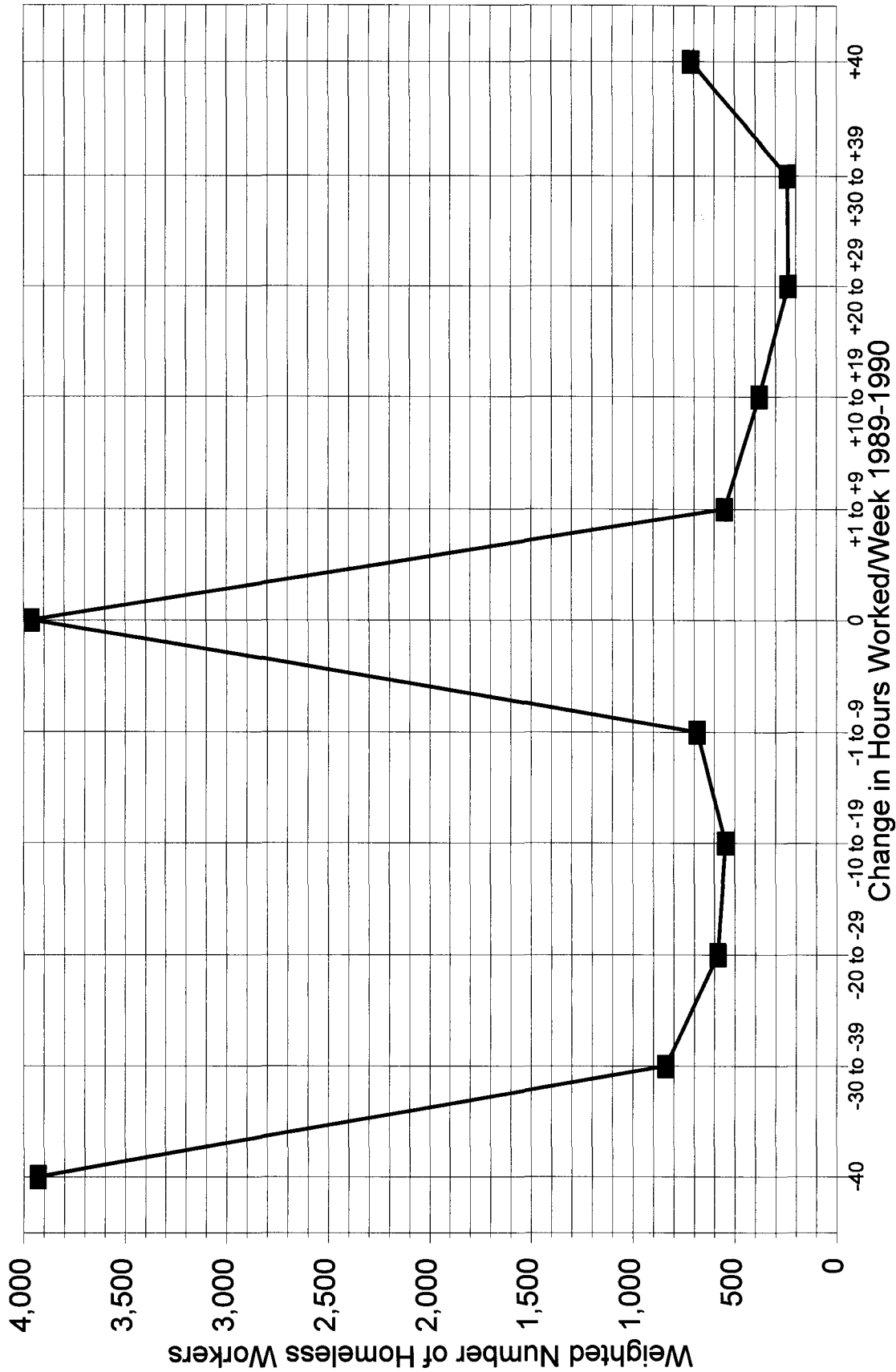


Graph based on 556 PUMS records representing 12,663 people (520 other records representing 9,086 people showed no work history)

GRAPH 20

CHANGE IN HOURS WORKED BY HOMELESS

1990 PUMS Records w/ Work History



Graph based on 556 PUMS records representing 12,663 people (520 other records representing 9,086 people showed no work history)

- 5 percent worked a constant number of hours in both 1989 and 1990 (accounting for about one-sixth of the "0%" change spike); and
- 17 percent worked more hours in 1990 than in 1989, strengthening their connection with work.

This suggests that the ratio of homeless workers moving in a positive direction to workers moving in a negative direction at the time of the census survey was roughly one to three; 22 percent were maintaining or increasing their labor market connection while 78 percent were moving away from the labor market or had no labor market connection at the time of the census survey.

If the total number of homeless individuals of working age are added to these figures, 31 percent of whom have never worked, it can be estimated that at a given point in time, roughly 15 percent of homeless individuals of working age are maintaining or strengthening a work force connection. Similarly, looking at the total population of working age homeless individuals, including those with no work history, it can be estimated that 35 percent are moving away from the labor market, working declining numbers of hours or having lost all work in the past year, and 50 percent are in a state of stagnant unemployment, having never worked at all or experiencing long-term joblessness. This profile is supported by the earlier finding that recent workers were significantly younger and long-term unemployed significantly older than the overall population of homeless workers. This would be accounted for by workers losing labor force connections and aging in the pool of long-term unemployed who predominantly fail to reconnect with jobs.

It should be remembered that these ratios represent what is occurring at a given point in time rather than the total balance of negative and positive outcomes among people who experience homelessness at some time during the year. The cross section of homeless workers captured by the census survey includes chronically homeless individuals who are experiencing multi-year episodes of declining employment or stagnant unemployment as well as cyclical and one-time homeless individuals who are experiencing short-term episodes of displacement followed by reconnection with permanent shelter and possibly jobs. These short-term episodes capped by positive outcomes are of shorter duration than experiences of chronic homelessness, and therefore occur more frequently within a given year relative to the number of episodes of chronic homelessness than is shown in the freeze-frame of census survey data.

JOB AVAILABILITY AND TURNOVER

There is evidence that a high percent of job openings in low-skill occupations in Los Angeles County are created by job turnover, suggesting that labor market disconnection among homeless

workers is an interactive result of both job instability and instability in individual lives. A frequently held image of the employment process is that individuals find jobs, successfully adjust to work requirements and become stably employed. This image is contradicted by Employment Development Department data showing that 66 percent of the county's job openings in low skill occupations (jobs requiring less than one year of training) are the result of workers becoming separated from their jobs, or job turnover, rather than job growth. This information is shown in Graph 21 for job families encompassing 1,760 Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT) occupations requiring less than a year of training that are found in the county labor market.

A break-out of openings from job turnover in 65 low-skill DOT occupations with 200 or more job openings expected per year in the county is shown in Graph 22, with the average percent of openings in all 1,760 low-skill occupations accounted for by turnover shown at the bottom of the graph. Very few occupations offer protection against worker churning. There are only 2 occupations in which fewer than 30 percent of openings are created by turnover and 23 occupations (including many of the largest) in which over 70 percent of openings come from turnover. Some of these jobs are actually declining in total number of workers, but high turnover rates continue to create new openings. The phenomenon of frequent job turnover is also borne out by the earlier finding that when homeless workers have jobs they generally work full time, but they only have jobs about half the time.

The fact that two-thirds of low-skill job openings result from turnover means that employment in this sector of the labor market is not a matter of finding and keeping a job, but rather a matter of finding a succession of jobs. Workers who are socially isolated and lack a family or social network to assist them in finding reemployment are at a disadvantage in this labor market. Similarly, workers destabilized by personal, social and economic catastrophes may be unable to extricate themselves from a downward spiral in which they become less and less employable in a competitive labor market.

The annual number of openings projected through 1999 by the Employment Development in the largest low-skill occupations, both from turnover and industry growth, are shown in Graph 23. The total annual number of job openings projected for all 1,760 low-skill occupations is 72,948; 48,374 from turnover and 24,614 new jobs from industry growth. The number of new jobs is sparse compared to the large number of unemployed and discouraged workers already in the county workforce (estimated to number 595,300 in 1996³), and the large number of welfare recipients who will be seeking jobs as a result of welfare reform (possibly numbering 250,000⁴).

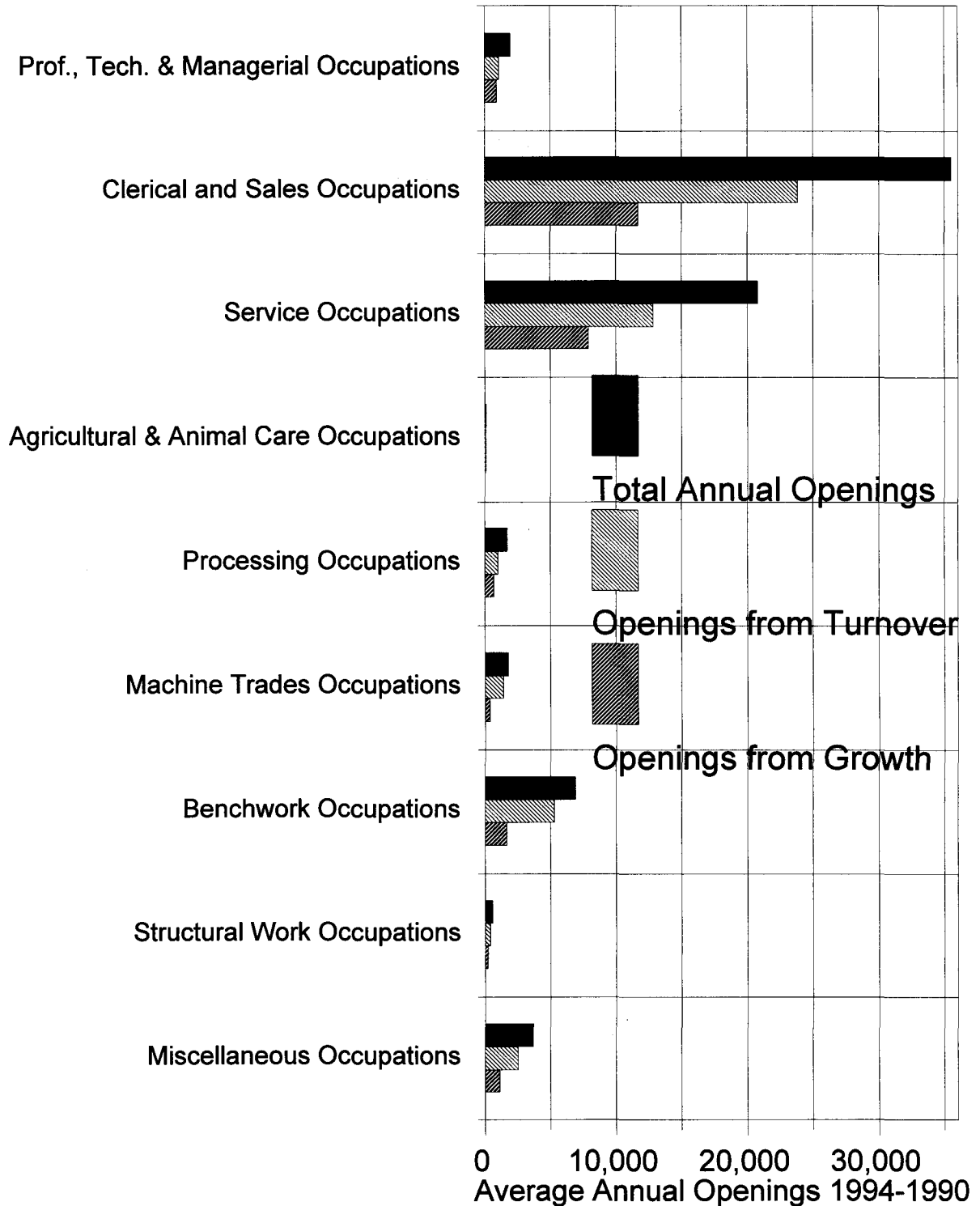
³Southern California Interuniversity Consortium on Homelessness and Poverty (Daniel Flaming, editor), "Jobs Welfare and Homelessness," July 1995, p. 7.

⁴Jennifer Wolch and Heidi Sommer, "Los Angeles in an Era of Welfare Reform: Implications for Poor People and Community Well-Being," commissioned by the Human Services Network, April 1997, p. i.

GRAPH 21

LA Co OPENINGS IN LOW-SKILL JOBS

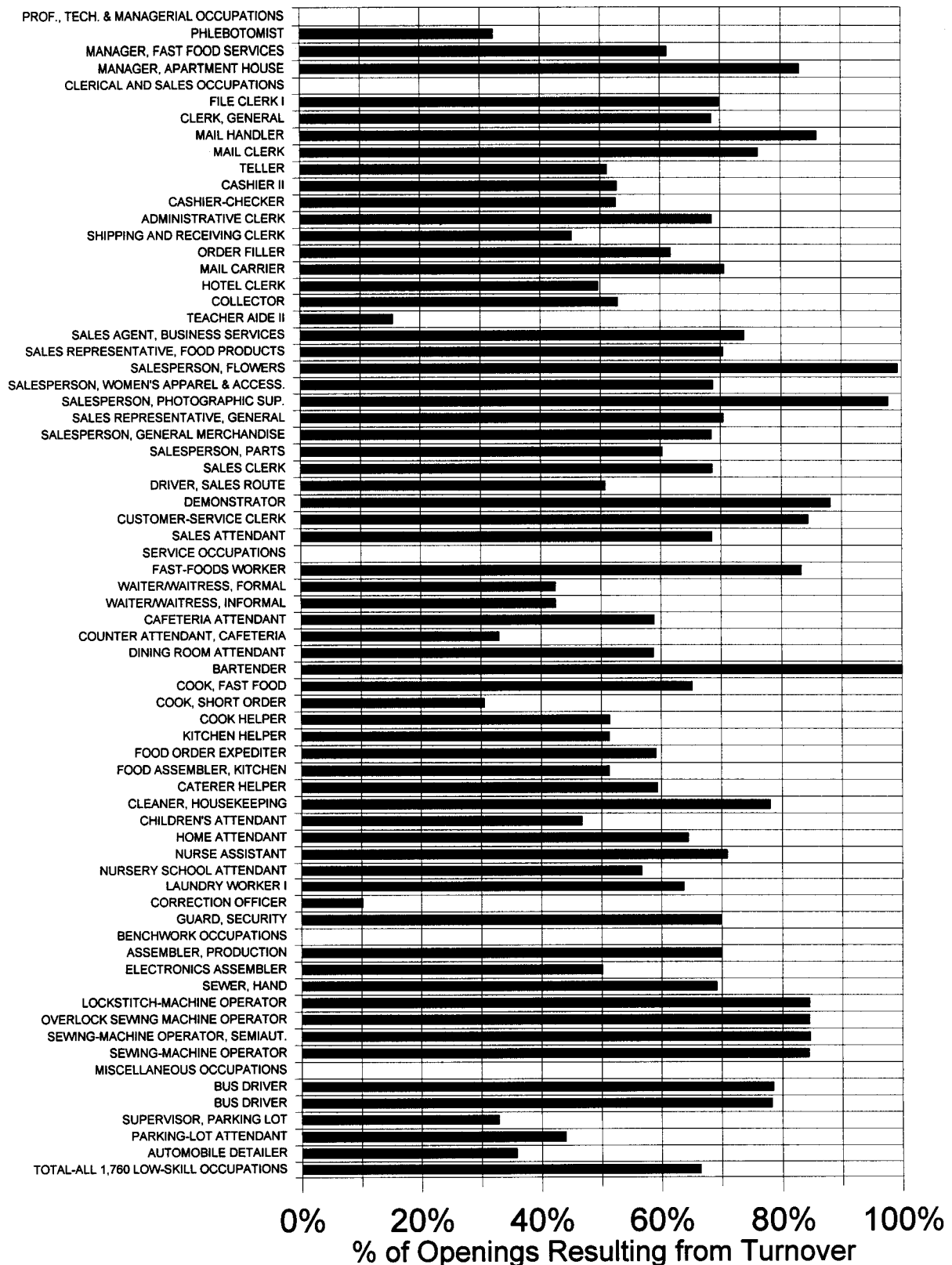
Job Families for 1,760 Occupations



GRAPH 22

LA Co JOB OPENINGS CREATED BY TURNOVER

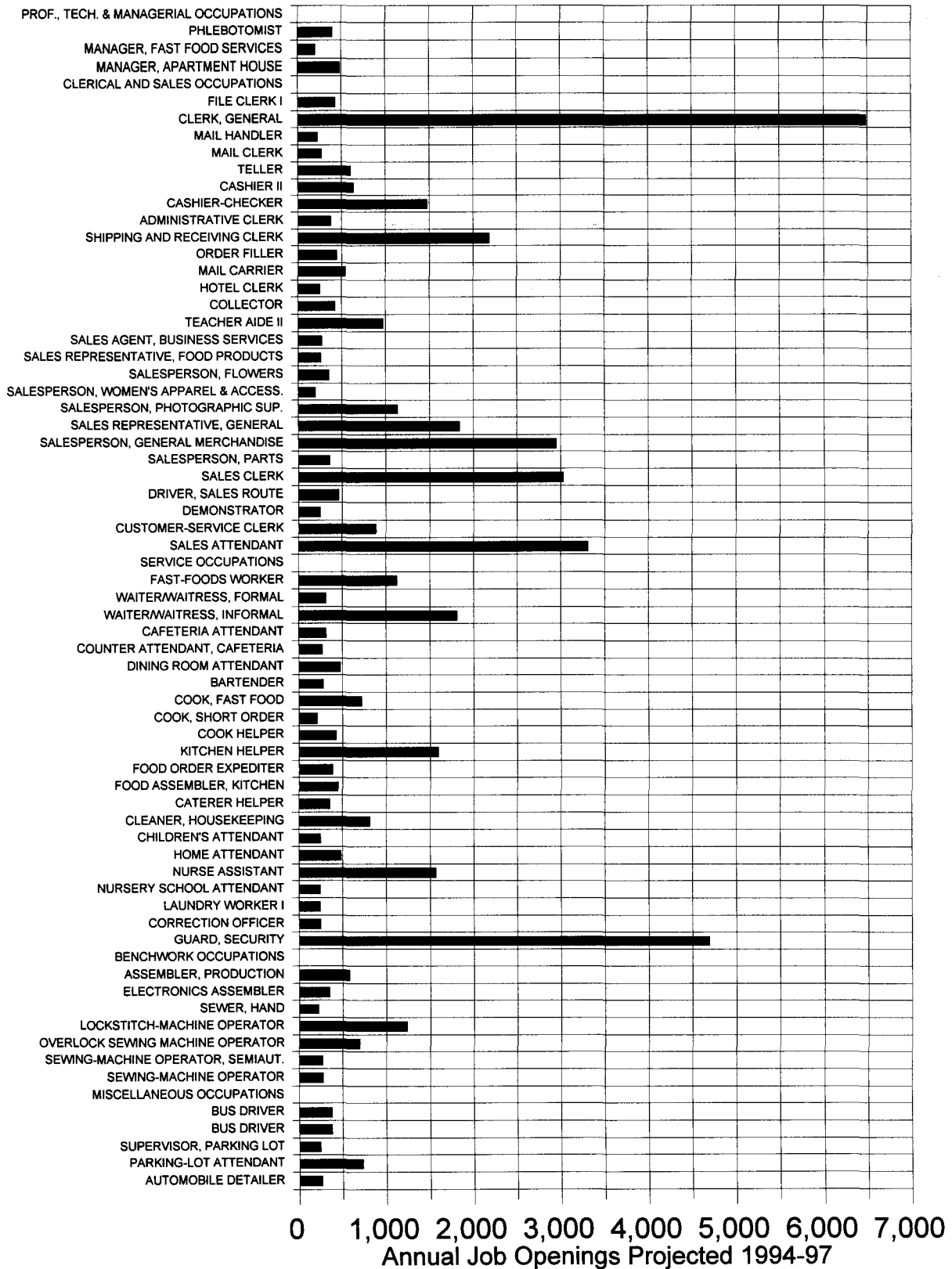
200+ Openings/Yr. & <1 Yr. Training



GRAPH 23

LA COUNTY OPENINGS IN LOW-SKILL JOBS

200+ Openings/Yr. & <1 Yr. Training



With increasing competition for scarce low-skill jobs as a result of welfare reform it may well become much more difficult for homeless job seekers to reconnect with the work force. Alternative strategies such as public sector employment and targeted job creation, including worker-owned cooperatives that offer both empowerment and self determination, may be needed to provide stable employment opportunities for many homeless workers.

Chapter 3

Homeless Job Seekers in Downtown Los Angeles

PROFILE OF HOMELESS JOB SEEKERS

The Economic Roundtable worked with fifteen homeless service providers to create a data base describing characteristics, skills and employment outcomes of homeless job seekers in downtown Los Angeles. The downtown area of Los Angeles was defined as the area bounded by the Santa Monica, Harbor and Hollywood freeways and the Los Angeles River. The agencies were:

- Catholic Charities
- Chrysalis
- Chicana Action Service Center
- Fred Jordan Mission
- Good Shepherd Center for Homeless Women
- Homeless Outreach Project
- Los Angeles Coalition to End Homelessness
- Los Angeles Mission
- Project New Hope
- Salvation Army Harbor Light Center
- Skid Row Development Corporation
- Shelter Partnership
- St Vincent de Paul Cardinal Manning Center
- Union Rescue Mission
- WorkNet Services

Participating agencies met to identify information they could provide from case records, assess the reliability of different types of information, and determine what would be most useful for understanding homeless job seekers. Participants agreed on sixteen data elements that are routinely collected by agencies, have reasonable reliability, and are most relevant to obtaining employment. The categories for information extracted from agency files for the 1,256 individuals who make up the data base are shown in the summary table on the following page.

Four agencies that offer employment services to large numbers of homeless job seekers agreed to provide information about clients they served in 1991 and 1992. Information was sought about clients from the downtown area who were actively seeking a job two to three years earlier

SUMMARY OF DATA ON DOWNTOWN HOMELESS JOB SEEKERS

1,256 Cases

<i>Residence at Intake</i>	Transition House 27% Weingart Center 23% St. Vincent's Center 8% Los Angeles Mission 2% Salvation Army 1% Union Rescue Mission 1%	Harmony House 1% Harbor Light 1% Other Nonprofit 3% SRO Hotel 23% Street Address 10% Living on the Street 1%	Number of Cases with Data
			1,247
<i>Age</i>	<25 3% 25-34 15%	35-44 45% 45-54 30%	55+ 8%
<i>Gender</i>	Male 88%	Female 12%	813
<i>Race</i>	Black/ African-American 72%	Latino 13%	White 11%
			Asian, Native Am. Other 7%
<i>Education</i>	Did not complete high school 16%	High school diploma or GED 46%	Some college (no Bach degree) 31%
			4-year college degree or more 7%
<i>Vocational Training</i>	Some trade/business/voc. school 33%	None 67%	672
<i>Incarceration History</i>	Has been incarcerated 23%	No incarceration 77%	684
<i>Health Problems</i>	Physical 7%	Mental 2%	No health problems 91%
<i>Length on Skid Row</i>	Number of months:	1 = 52% 2 = 11%	3 = 6% 4-12 = 17% 13-24 = 5% 25+ = 8%
<i>Receiving Food Stamps or GR/ AFDC/ SSI/ SSDI</i>	Yes 52%	No 48%	688
<i>Longest Time with One Employer</i>	Number of months:	1- 6 10% 7-12 13%	13-24 23% 25-60 24% 61-120 25% 121+ 5%
<i>Found Job While Being Assisted by Agency</i>	Yes 40%	No 60%	1,256
<i>Occupation of Placement Job</i>	Placement Occupation: Security Guards 22% Helpers, Laborers 11% Sales 8% Secretarial, Gen. Office 7% Vehicle Operators 5% Food Service 5% Installers, Repairers 5% Social Service 3%	Construction 3% Clerical 3% Writers, Entertainers 3% Janitors 2% Production 2% Personal Services 2% Supervisors, Service 2% Middle Management 2%	497
<i>Industry of Placement</i>	Placement Industry: Construction 2% Manufacturing 5% Transport., Utilities 4% Wholesale, Retail 15%	Fin., Ins., Real. Est. 3% Services 47% Health 7% Government 3%	487
<i>Security of Placement Job</i>	Perm. Full Time 75%	Perm PT 15%	Temp Full Time 4%
			Temp PT 6%
<i>Wage per Hour of Placement Job</i>	\$4.25 or below 17%	\$4.26 - 4.99 8%	\$5.00 - 5.99 33%
	\$6.00 - 6.99 16%	\$7.00 - 9.99 17%	\$10.00 - 14.99 8%
	\$15 plus 2%		

so that there would be a significant follow-up interval in which to assess their employment outcomes. In every instance it was necessary to go through files one-by-one to extract information and enter it into the project database. This work was performed by the Economic Roundtable. Some of the information elements were more consistently available than others from client files. Out of the 1,256 files that were utilized, the information most readily available was whether the individual found a job while being helped by the agency (all 1,256 cases), and the information least available was hourly wage of placement jobs (397 cases).

Four basic criteria met by all individuals in this data set were: (1) the person was homeless and residing within the geographic boundaries of downtown Los Angeles identified earlier; (2) the person voluntarily applied for enrollment in an employment program; (3) a homeless service provider determined that the individual should be enrolled in its employment program; and (4) the person actively participated in the employment program. The predominant type of employment program operated by homeless service providers is a supported job search program in which clients are: (1) oriented to the world of work through classes on appropriate work attitudes and personal deportment in job interviews; (2) assisted in preparing a resume; (3) given information and resources for identifying job openings; (4) given access to a telephone for seeking job interviews, bus tokens for traveling to interviews, and clothing to wear to interviews; and given general encouragement and counseling by a job placement worker.

Over 95 percent of the job seekers in the data base received this form of short-term, inexpensive employment assistance. An ironic feature of job training programs is that more expensive service modalities such as long-term skill development and supportive services are more likely to go to low-risk clients who have a higher probability of producing positive outcomes for service providers and funders. Those with the highest levels of need and risk, such as homeless job seekers, frequently receive short-term and comparatively superficial forms of employment assistance.⁵ For the most part this pattern of service availability is not determined by individual agencies but by regional and national policies regarding program design and resource allocation. The principal federal employment and training program, the Job Training Partnership Act, significantly under-serves homeless individuals.

The profile of homeless job seekers produced from this data base is consistent with the profile produced out of countywide 1990 PUMS data. Many of the job seekers had achieved a level of education normally associated with stable employment. Based on information provided by the downtown homeless, lack of education does not account for their unemployment and economic disenfranchisement. More than four-out-of-five (84 percent) had at least a high school diploma, and nearly two-out-of-five (38 percent) had at least some college education. Only 16 percent did not have a high school degree. And 7 percent had graduated from college. One-

⁵National Commission for Employment Policy, "Understanding Federal Training and Employment Programs," U.S. Government Printing Office, January 1995, pp. 22-26.

third of the job seekers indicated that they had received vocational training through a trade, business or vocational school.

Half of the job seekers (52 percent) received some form of public benefits to support themselves. Possible types of benefits included: General Relief, Food Stamps, Aid for Families with Dependent Children, Supplemental Security Income, Social Security Disability, or State Disability Insurance. Even though homeless job seekers have critical needs for assistance in stabilizing their lives and becoming reconnected with the mainstream of society, half (48 percent) had no visible means of support other than short-term assistance from homeless service providers.

Using agency case records it was possible to determine the duration of the longest job previously held by each of these job seekers, an important piece of information not available from standardized data sources. Agency records showed that most individuals had previously demonstrated their ability to be contributing members of the economy. Three-quarters (77 percent) had held jobs that lasted longer than one year, over half (54 percent) had held jobs that lasted longer than two years, and nearly one-third (30 percent) had held jobs lasting longer than five years, as shown in Graph 24.

Despite having above-average levels of education and long-duration work experience, only 40 percent of the job seekers found employment while being helped by an agency; 60% did not find employment. An apparent 60 percent unemployment rate among active job seekers with seemingly credible employment credentials suggests that the most significant barriers to employment are in areas of personal stability and intactness rather than job related skills. The downward spiral into homelessness is often associated with substance abuse, incarceration, social isolation and disconnection from families, and feelings of profound loss and hopelessness. Unfortunately, long-term, comprehensive services to stabilize individuals and support them while they build the foundation for a new life are generally not available in homeless programs.

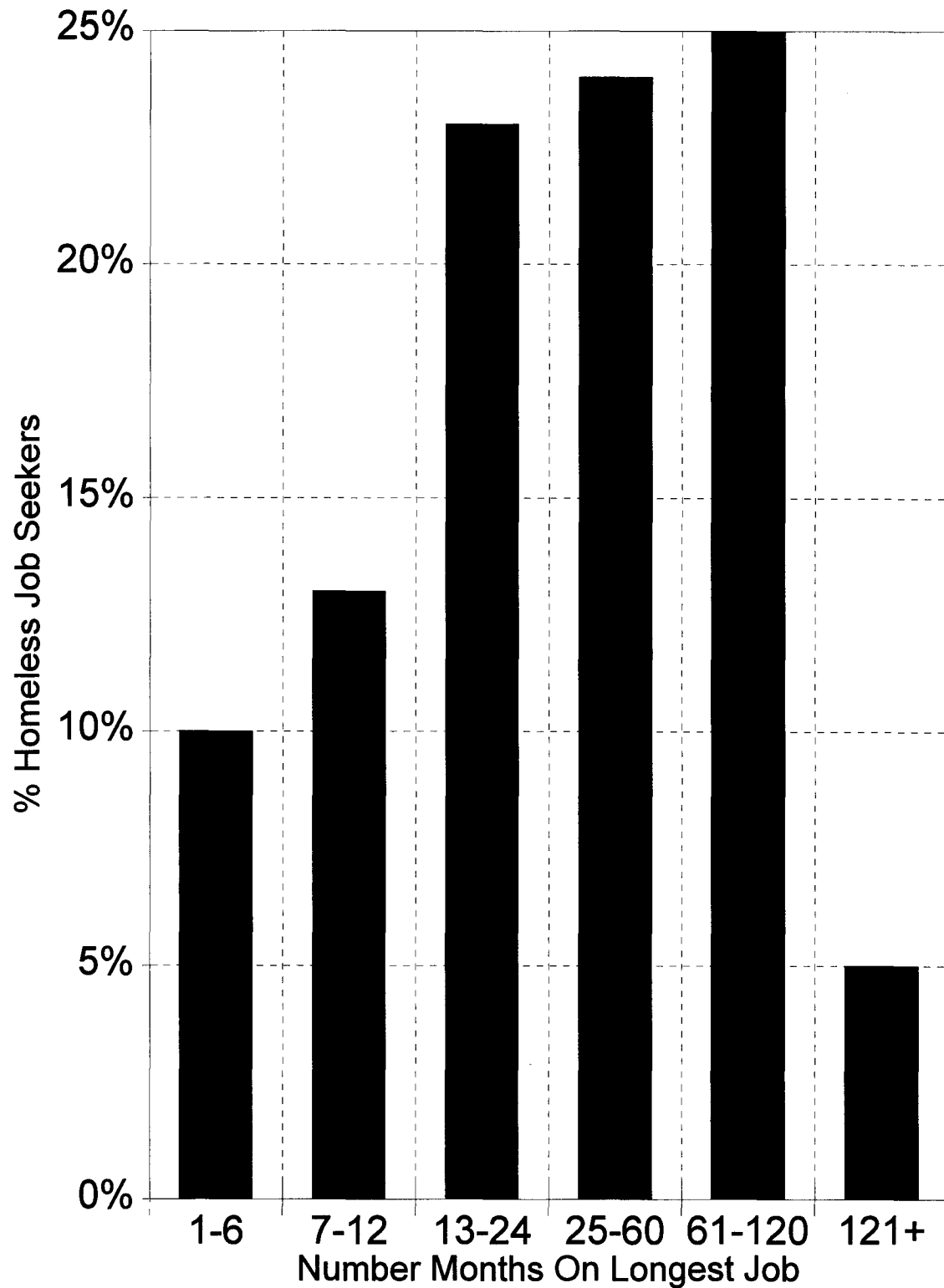
More than one-fifth (22 percent) of the homeless job seekers who found employment took jobs as security guards. This was followed in frequency by 11 percent who took jobs as helpers or laborers, 8 percent who took jobs in sales, 7 percent who took secretarial jobs, 5 percent who took jobs as vehicle operators (drivers), 5 percent who took jobs in food service, and 5 percent who took jobs as mechanics or installers. Four percent found jobs as managers or supervisors, and 2 percent found jobs in precision production, engineering or professional-technical occupations.

Three-quarters of the individuals who became employed found jobs which they described as permanent and full time. Another 15 percent found permanent part time jobs, 4 percent found temporary full time jobs, and 6 percent found temporary part time jobs. Taken all together, 90 percent of the individuals who became employed described their jobs as permanent, and only

GRAPH 24

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Homeless Job Seekers In Downtown L. A.



10 percent described their jobs as temporary. These expectations of a permanent job stand in marked contrast to actual employment outcomes discussed in the next section.

The jobs which homeless individuals found tended to have low pay. One-quarter accepted jobs paying under five dollars an hour. One-third accepted jobs in the five dollar an hour range (at least five but less than six dollars an hour), and another third found jobs in the six to nine dollar an hour range (at least six but less than ten dollars an hour). The top ten percent found jobs paying more than ten dollars an hour.

The average placement wage of individuals who found employment was \$6.64 per hour. At this average hourly rate, an individual working 2,000 hours a year would earn \$13,280. In contrast, the average annual wage of an employed person in Los Angeles County in 1991 was \$26,981.⁶ Even though this group of homeless job seekers had significant levels of education and in many cases substantial work histories, when they re-entered the labor market they commanded slightly less than half the earnings of an average working person in the regional labor market.

LONG-TERM EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

Information available from agency records left many questions unanswered about the actual success of these individuals in making their jobs permanent. Are job finders really on a path toward economic self sufficiency that is different from those who didn't find jobs, or are large segments of both groups part of a pool of casual laborers who are intermittently employed? Did people who lost jobs find new ones? What kinds of earning patterns did individuals experience?

Information about long-term employment outcomes was obtained by linking Social Security numbers of clients served by downtown agencies with records from the State Unemployment Insurance data base maintained by the Employment Development Department to obtain information on employment and earnings of these clients in 1993. The case records for all 1,256 job seekers yielded 1,223 valid, unduplicated Social Security numbers which could be used to obtain information about how much, if any, income had been reported for the individual in 1993.

Information about long-term employment outcomes for homeless job seekers is sobering. Once homeless, lasting employment is persistently elusive. Fifty-nine percent earned nothing, and 70% earned less than \$1,000 in annual income in 1993, following their participation in an employment program and search for a new job. Stated another way, of the 40 percent of homeless job seekers who found work after participating in an employment program, only one-fourth found and held onto a full-time job.

⁶Derived from employment and payroll information released by U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *County Business Patterns 1991 - California*, p. 78.

Although 75 percent of the homeless individuals who became employed (or 30 percent of all homeless job seekers) found jobs which they described as permanent and full time, less than 9 percent had annual earnings of \$10,000 or more, which would reflect full-time employment at minimum wage, in 1993. A summary of earnings outcomes is shown in the table below and in Graph 25.

Table 1

1993 Earnings of Homeless Job Seekers Served in Downtown Los Angeles in 1991-92

<i>1993 Income</i>	<i>Number Job Seekers</i>	<i>% Job Seekers</i>	<i>Cumulative % Job Seekers</i>
\$30,000+	3	.25%	100.00%
\$25-29,999	7	.57%	99.75%
\$20-24,999	8	.65%	99.18%
\$15-19,999	26	2.13%	98.53%
\$10-14,999	64	5.23%	96.40%
\$5-9,999	104	8.50%	91.17%
\$2,5-4,999	83	6.79%	82.67%
\$1-2,499	72	5.89%	75.88%
\$1-999	134	10.96%	69.99%
\$0	722	59.04%	59.04%
TOTAL	1,223	100.00%	

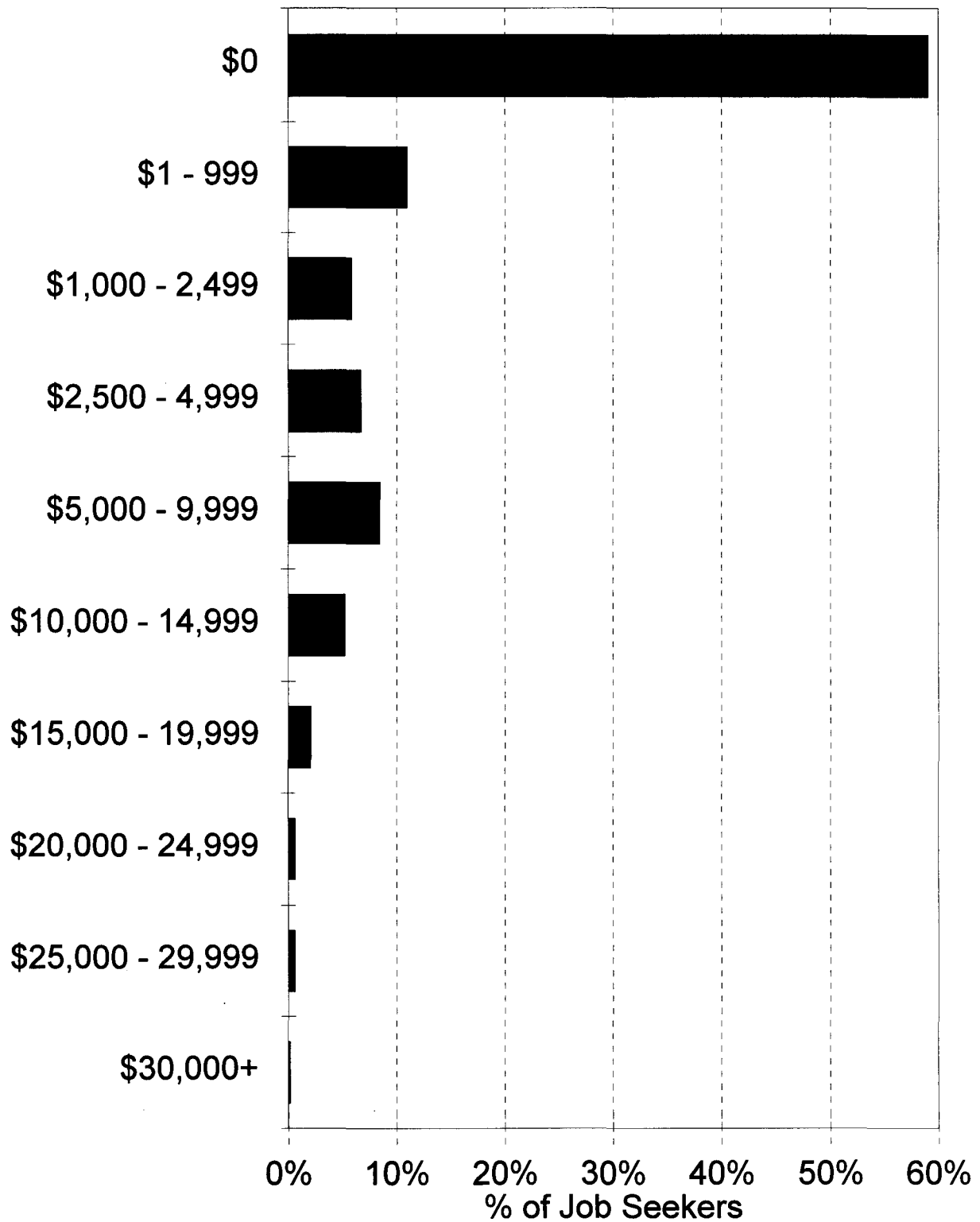
The central finding from reviewing annual earnings of downtown Los Angeles' homeless job seekers one to two years after they have participated in an employment program is that 91% failed to find a full time job and hang on to it. Factors that by themselves do not appear to have a significant impact on employment outcomes include age, gender, ethnicity, and duration of previous jobs. Factors that do appear related to differences in earnings include: education, occupation, and industry. The most significant of these factors is education, which opens doors to better paying jobs and industries with higher quality employment opportunities. A profile of earnings outcomes for subgroups with different levels of education is shown in Graph 26. What stands out most clearly in this graph is that individuals without a high school diploma have a higher rate of complete failure to earn any income than other groups.

It should be noted that one small program providing long-term rehabilitation and support services, but representing only 3 percent of the group of downtown homeless job seekers that were studied, had employment and earnings outcomes for its program graduates that were over

GRAPH 25

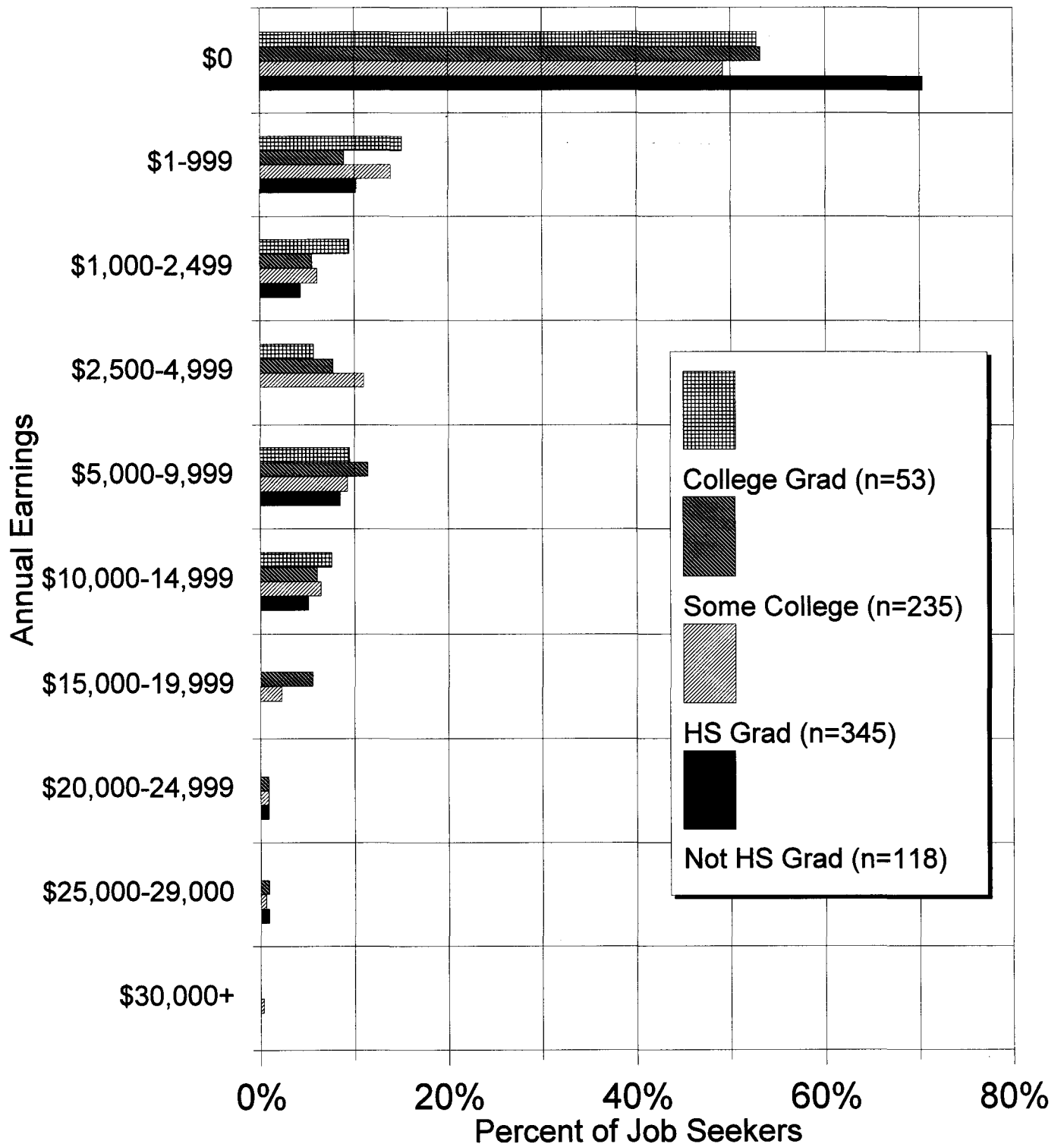
1993 EARNINGS OF HOMELESS JOB SEEKERS

1,223 Clients Served in Downtown L. A.



GRAPH 26

ANNUAL EARNINGS BY EDUCATION Homeless Job Seekers - Downtown L.A.



twice as high as those of the overall study group. The dramatically superior outcomes of this small sample suggest that comprehensive, long-term services can significantly improve job finding and retention outcomes.

FINDINGS FROM SURVEYS

In collaboration with the Southern California Inter-University Consortium on Homelessness and Poverty, the Economic Roundtable employed two homeless workers to conduct face-to-face interviews with 69 people living in the Crocker Street encampment in May 1995. Respondents reported: (1) pervasive drug use in the encampment, (2) high levels of concern about personal safety, (3) strong interest in jobs — 84 percent said they would take a job that paid five dollars an hour to sweep streets — and (4) that drug rehabilitation services were available to them. These responses led to the question of why people who were concerned about their safety and wanted jobs were not utilizing available rehabilitation programs in the downtown area.

A second survey instrument was prepared to investigate how homeless individuals explain under-utilization of some available services as well as the low rate of lasting change in the lives of people served by residential programs. The survey was again conducted through face-to-face interviews of people living on the street. The same two homeless interviewers conducted 139 interviews in May and early June of 1995. Women were over-sampled to obtain a reliable number of female respondents. Questions asked in this survey and a summary of responses are shown on the following page.

The five factors homeless individuals identify as being most important when choosing between staying on the street and trying to enter a residential program, ranked by importance, are: (1) protecting their sense of dignity, (2) personal safety, (3) being with friends, (4) having the freedom to do what they want, and (5) finding ways to make money. The ranking of these priorities by homeless respondents is shown in Graph 27. Concern about protecting personal dignity is a top priority for all groups, but significant differences in other priorities emerge when respondents are broken out by age, gender, and rehabilitation experience in Graphs 28 and 29.

- being with friends and being settled in one place are particularly important, respectively, for women and men with rehabilitation experience
- finding ways to make money is particularly important to people (especially men under 35) without rehabilitation experience
- feeling safe and secure is very important for women over 35
- finding and keeping a job is important for people with rehabilitation experience

SERVICES FOR DOWNTOWN HOMELESS

Summary of Responses 7/26/95 (n=139)

The Homeless Research Group is conducting a survey about services needed in downtown Los Angeles. We would appreciate it if you would take a few minutes to answer some questions.

1. Are you: 64% Male 36% Female 2. How old are you? Average = 36 Years

3. When you have to choose between staying on the street or try to enter a residential program, what things are important? Please rate how important the following things are to you:

	<i>Not Important</i>	<i>Somewhat Important</i>	<i>Very Important</i>
a. Protecting my sense of dignity	9%	10%	81%
b. Finding a place where I feel secure about my personal safety	13%	20%	66%
c. Being with friends and people I care about	18%	19%	64%
d. Having the freedom to do what I want	17%	23%	60%
e. Finding ways to make money	21%	19%	60%
f. Finding and keeping a job	26%	18%	60%
g. Being able to live without using drugs or alcohol	20%	26%	55%
h. Being able to keep my possessions	23%	32%	45%
i. Having people accept me the way I am	24%	32%	44%
j. Getting settled so that things are not always changing	27%	32%	41%
k. Being able to buy and use drugs	57%	23%	20%

4. How many times have you entered a residential program? 48% of respondents 1+ times

5. How important are the following reasons in explaining why homeless people go through programs for helping them get off the streets, but still return to Skid Row? Please indicate how much of a problem each of the following factors is:

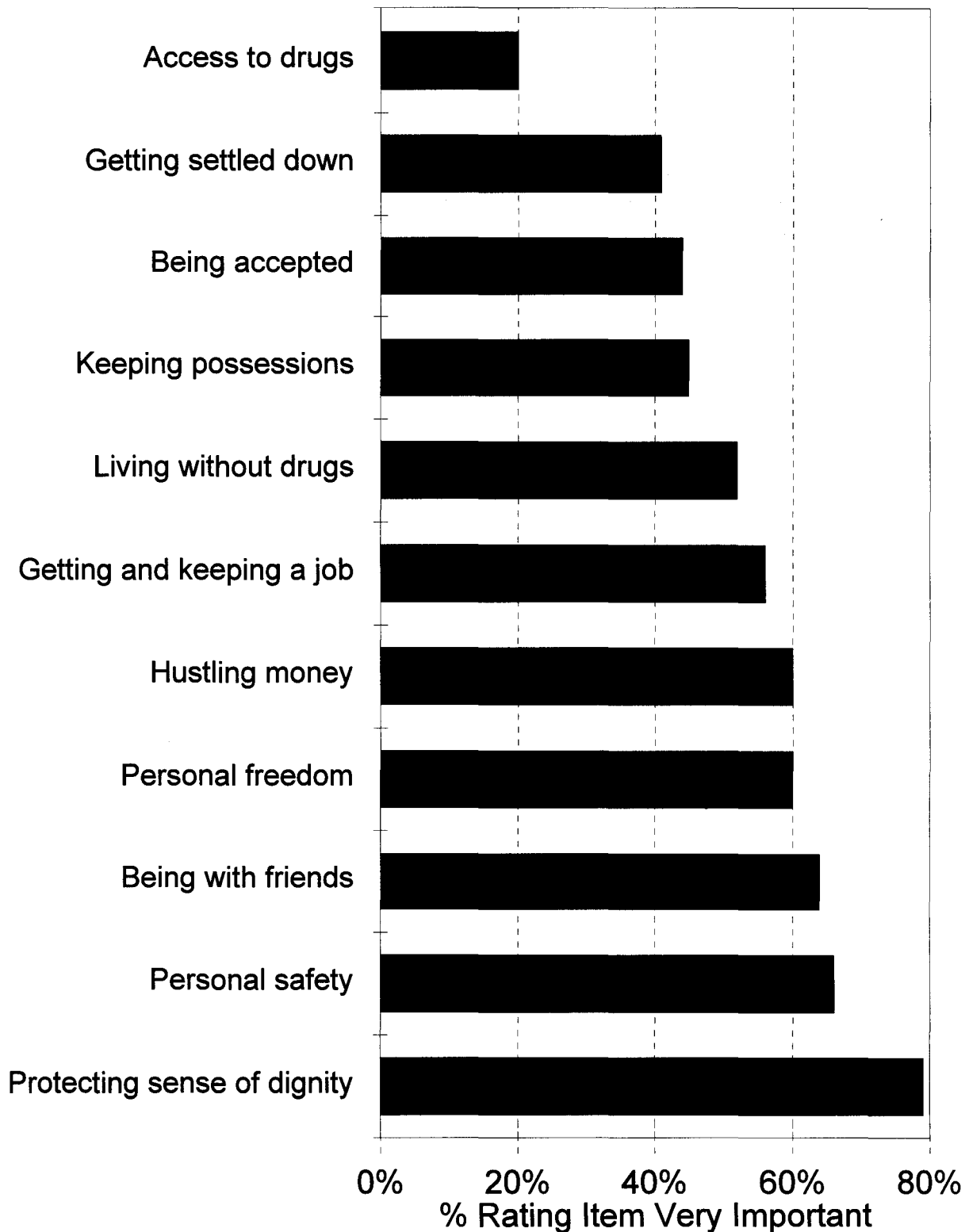
	<i>Not a Problem</i>	<i>Sometimes a Problem</i>	<i>Serious Problem</i>
a. Programs end without giving people money or a place to go	7%	13%	80%
b. Programs do not keep working with people if they relapse and start using drugs again	22%	8%	70%
c. People have to wait too long to get into residential drug treatment programs	23%	18%	59%
d. Programs do not keep on helping people long enough	37%	10%	53%
e. Programs do not offer all the services people need	27%	18%	56%
f. Programs are not set-up to deal with serious drug problems	41%	24%	55%
g. Programs have rules that are unreasonable or hypocritical	17%	37%	47%
h. Programs do not support a person's sense of dignity and value	11%	48%	40%
i. Staff do not really understand people and care about them	22%	39%	39%

6. For a program to really help people get off the streets, how long should it last?
Average: all respondents 14 months Respondents with residential experience 15 months

Where should it be located? 21% Downtown L.A. 79% Outside Downtown

GRAPH 27

THINGS MOST IMPORTANT TO THE HOMELESS IF CHOOSING BETWEEN STREET AND SHELTER

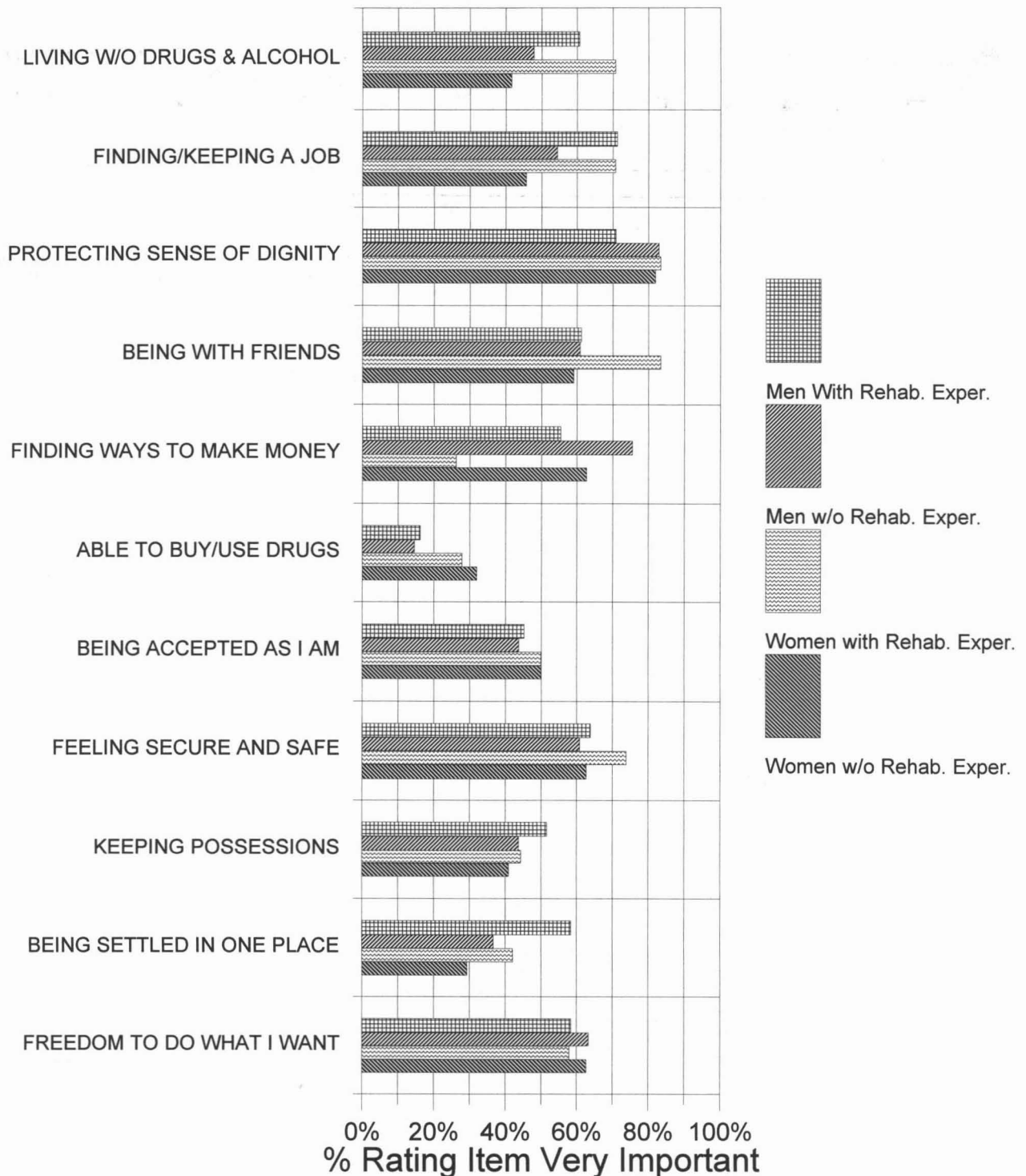


Survey of 139 homeless individuals living on the streets of downtown Los Angeles. Conducted from 5/19/95 to 6/6/95.

GRAPH 28

THINGS MOST IMPORTANT TO THE HOMELESS

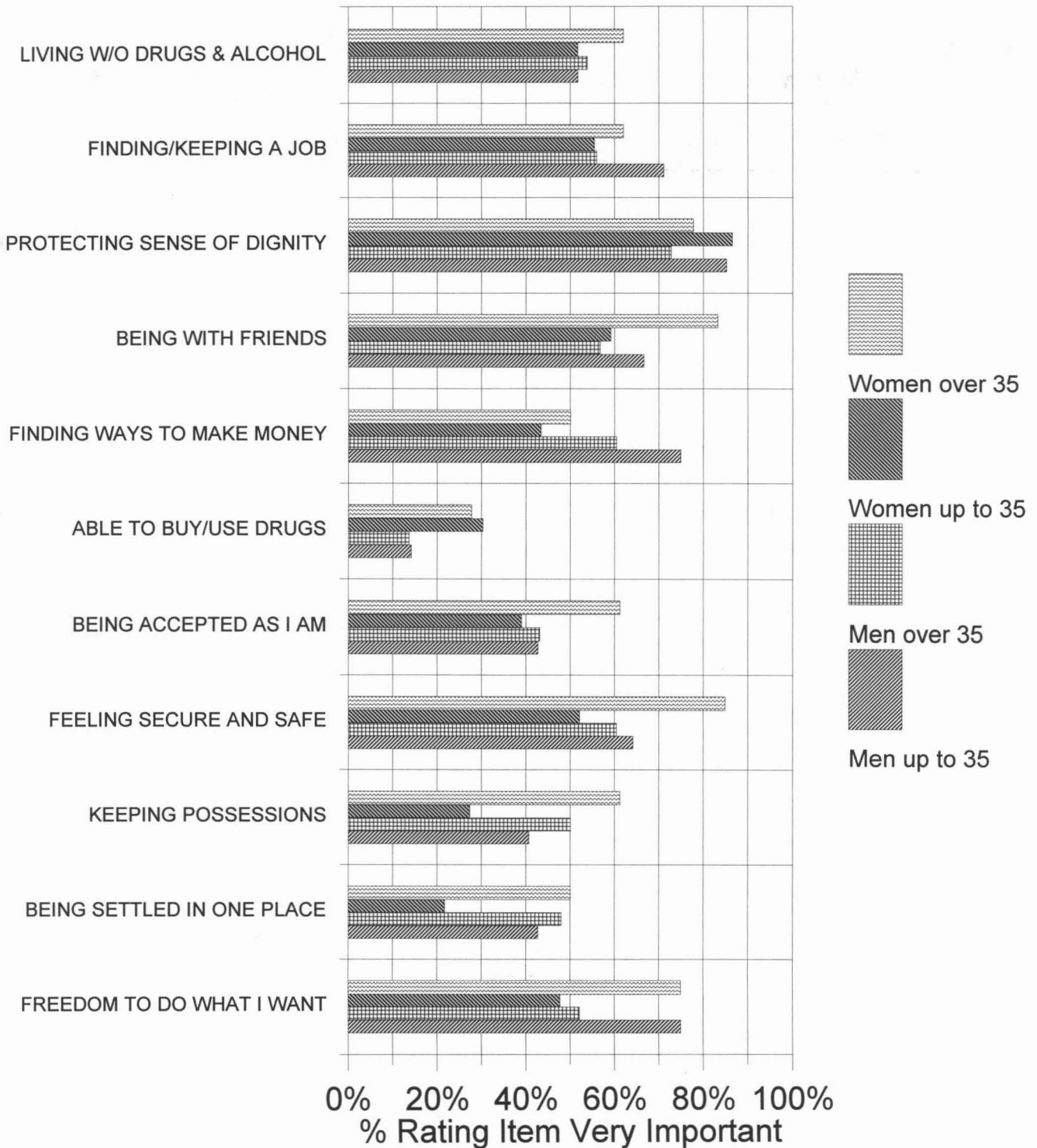
Gender and Rehabilitation Experience



GRAPH 29

THINGS MOST IMPORTANT TO THE HOMELESS

Comparison of Gender/Age Subgroups



The five problems homeless individuals identify as being most important when asked why people go through programs for helping them get off the streets, but still return to Skid Row are, in rank order: (1) there is no money or place to go after people complete programs, (2) people are dropped if they relapse, (3) it is hard to get into residential drug rehabilitation programs, (4) programs don't last long enough, (5) and programs don't offer all the needed services. The ranking of these priorities is shown in Graph 30, with responses of those who had rehabilitation experience shown separately from those who have not attempted rehabilitation. Significant additional differences in the importance attributed to these problems emerge when respondents are broken out by age and gender in Graph 31. For example:

- women over 35 are particularly concerned that people are dropped if they relapse
- men and women with rehabilitation experience are particularly concerned that jobs and housing are not available to people after they complete programs
- men and women over 35 express higher levels of concern than younger people that programs do not support their sense of self worth

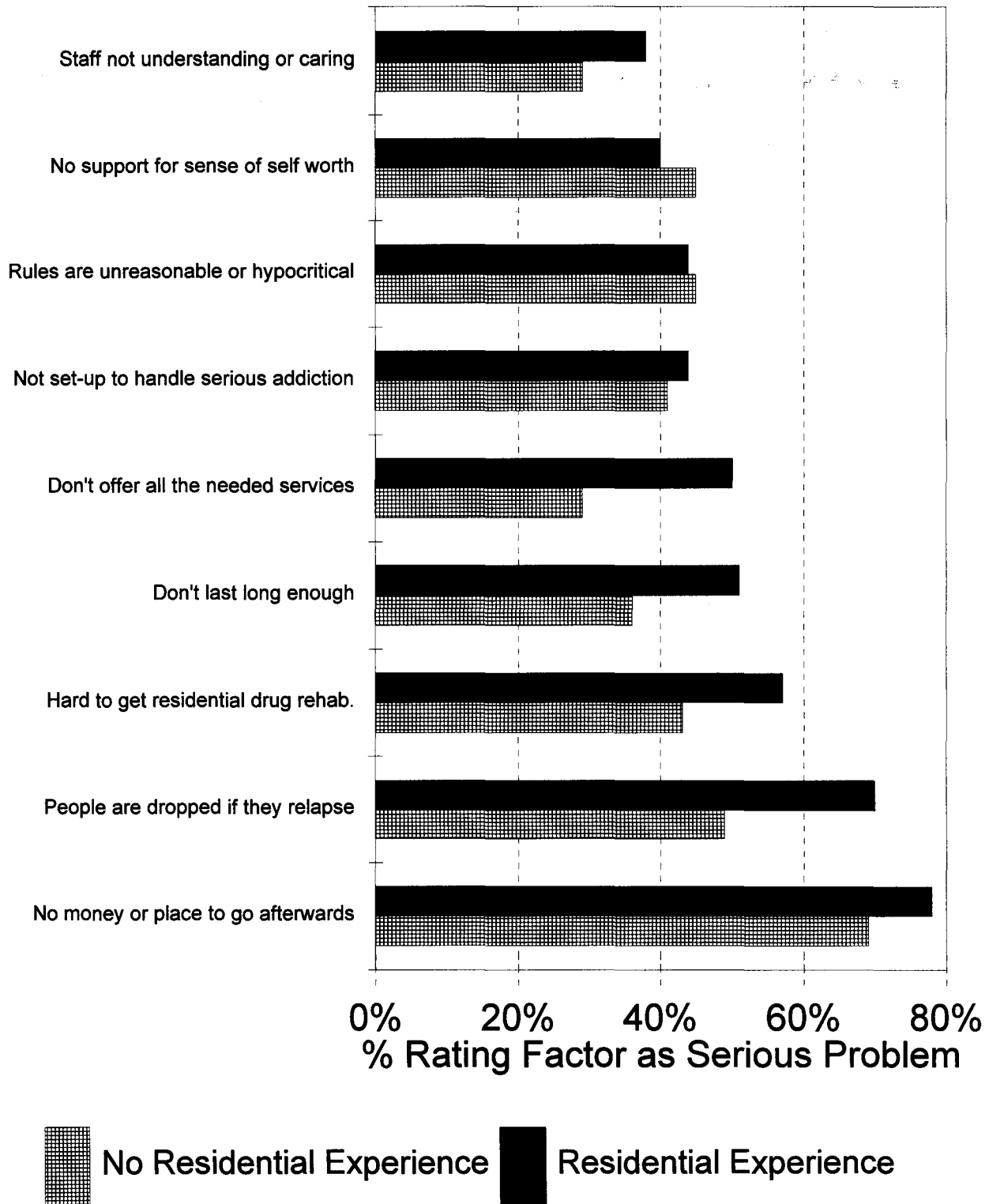
The need for more effective employment programs is underscored by the fact that all subgroups of people living on downtown streets said that the most important reason why programs do not succeed in helping homeless people get off the streets is that they end without giving people money or a place to go.

Another particularly important finding in the table summarizing survey responses is that programs need to be able to keep on working with people even if they relapse and start using drugs again. Downtown Los Angeles is a very slippery place for an addict; any progress people make is inevitably interspersed with failures.

One of the last question on the survey, that asked how long programs should last, elicited strong responses that programs need to last much longer than the typical sixty to ninety days to really help people get off the streets. Fourteen to fifteen months was the average program duration recommended by people living on the streets as needed to provide adequate support for building a new life. In addition, nearly four out of five respondents said programs should be located outside the downtown area.

GRAPH 30

WHY PEOPLE RETURN TO SKID ROW AFTER COMPLETING REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

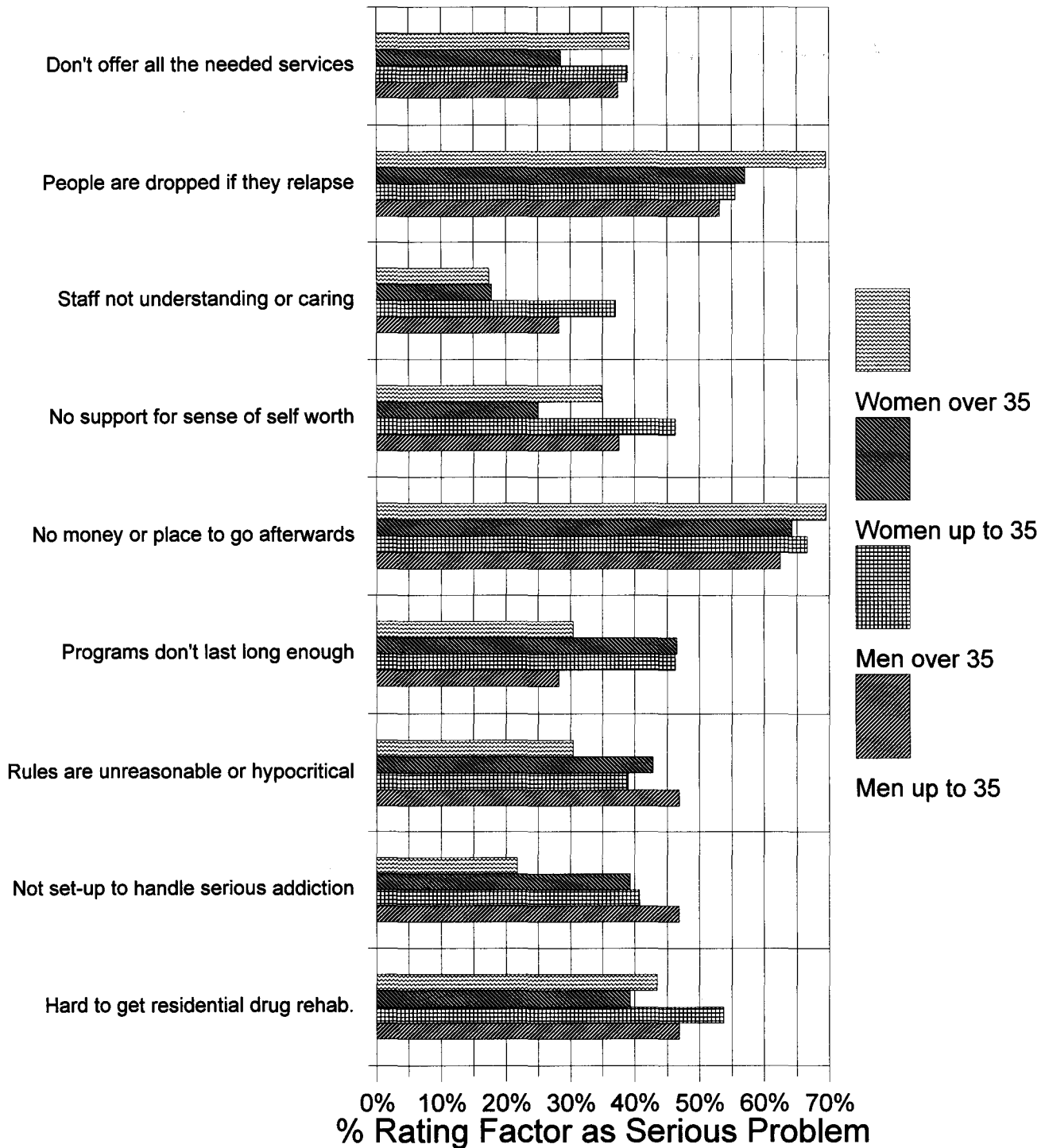


Survey of 139 homeless individuals living on the streets of downtown Los Angeles. Conducted from 5/19/95 to 6/6/95.

GRAPH 31

WHY PROGRAMS DON'T SUCCEED

Comparison of Gender/Age Subgroups



Chapter 4

Life Stories of Homeless Job Seekers

JOB CLUB MEMBERS

It is all too easy for those who are housed and employed to see the homeless from an impersonal distance. Individual life stories of homeless job seekers give human form to the desperate and often tragic struggle of many homeless individuals to overcome adversity and share ordinary certainties about the goodness of life enjoyed by the mainstream of society.

The Economic Roundtable organized a "job club" which met as a group every Tuesday for lunch at Clifton's Cafeteria, with frequent additional individual meetings. The purpose was to gain a clearer understanding of life experiences, individual perceptions, and actual successes and failures of homeless job seekers, as well as provide long-term help to participants. These meetings provided an opportunity to build candid relationships as well as learn first-hand about the difficult struggles and frequent failures of members as they attempted to rebuild their lives. The job club met from May 24, 1994 through June 6, 1995. Contacts continue with club members through collect call from jails, hospitals and rehabilitation centers; assistance in taking messages from prospective employers and friends; job references; telephone calls about new jobs; and wedding invitations. Sketches of seven regular members of the job club, and the personally-told life story of the member who helped organize the club follow (all names have been changed).

Carey

Founding member of the club, is 41 years old and has lingering anger over a prison term he served after a robbery victim wrongly identified him as the perpetrator. Carey has exceptional warmth and social grace. He was a construction worker at the Gas Company tower until his addiction got the upper hand. This project financed the start-up of a hand detailing and car wash business for Carey after persuading a judge to release him from jail. The project helped him achieve sobriety and found housing for him. His exceptional social skills and intelligence led to a viable business, but virtually all revenues went to drugs and the business folded after three months. It proved to be very problematic for a recovering addict to have money and be on the streets of downtown Los Angeles. Just before his most recent birthday Carey entered a rehabilitation program and has now been sober nine months — the longest period of sobriety since he was

fourteen years old. Carey now lives with his aunt and is enrolled in college with the goal of becoming a drug and alcohol counselor. His personal inventory of life experiences and recovery efforts are told later in this chapter.

Andre

A former professional welder and automobile assembly worker for Chrysler, he made a long descent into addiction and homelessness after his wife had a child by another man. He learned about drug use as a child, watching his father shoot-up heroin. Sobriety and a decision to start a new life came during a long stint in jail for possession of drugs. His mother arranged for him to talk with his 12 year old son, who was 2 years old the last time he saw him, while he was in jail. When Andre got out of jail his mother arranged to get his badly decayed teeth repaired, and put him on a train to Detroit to live with his brother. On the train he met Rachel, a steam roller operator from Jackson, Michigan. Andre says, "she's all right, she's sweet, she's treating me good." Andre married Rachel, got a job welding pipe and tanks, and now owns his own car. Looking back on his time on Skid Row in Los Angeles he says, "those drugs held me out there in California — blew 12 years of my life."

Kenneth

A self described addict, married, thirty-one years old, grandfather, killed a woman who was high on PCP in a previous job as a security guard. His dream is to be a police officer. The project paid for him to become re-certified as a security guard and helped him find housing. After becoming re-addicted and then sober ("it was cardboard city or get sober") he found a job as a group home counselor. When that job ended and he became re-addicted he moved into a church based, long-term recovery program in Texas near his mother's home. He is now holding down two security guard jobs, has purchased a car, has divorced the woman who shared his addiction on Skid Row, and has plans to remarry.

Brenda

Kenneth's former wife and mother of five children by a previous marriage, is a crack addict and a victim of childhood sexual abuse by her brother. She is a quiet woman with a great deal of common sense but haunted by pain from both the past and the present. While with Kenneth on Skid Row she supported them by working as a prostitute, "not so as to do it in his face, but it was pretty hard for him not to know about it." After entering rehabilitation she enrolled in a job training program at the Abram Friedman occupational center. They found her to be a very promising student but a crisis with Kenneth led her to leave the program. She is still seen on Skid Row, at other times she stays with her grandmother or her mother, who is raising her children and receiving her welfare benefits. She is the only person in her family who is not illiterate. Her mother hoped she would become a gospel singer, but her crack habit still holds sway over her intellectual and vocal gifts. Her comment, "except for crazy people, nobody

is homeless because they don't have money. The reason they're homeless is because they spend their money on drugs."

Marcus

Also known as "Shorty", Marcus is said to have run a thriving drug business in Philadelphia, where his wife is now a public defender. He became the father of a baby daughter, but left his family and enlisted in the Navy when his wife had a second child by another man. His daughter is now fourteen. He received a dishonorable discharge for going AWOL when he learned about his parents divorce. Wilma, his "wife," until the beginning of this year is several decades older than his 35 years. Marcus makes these comments about himself.

I came from a middle class family. My father was career Navy. My mother worked for the National Cash Register Company before she went into social work, real social work — volunteering at homes for unwed mothers, senior citizens, and America's favorites the Boy and Girl Scouts. This union produced two children. I have an older sister, as well as another set of brothers and sisters by a woman my father wasn't married to.

My family was dysfunctional. My parents and their parents before them wanted a piece of the "American Dream." My parents wanted their children to have better lives than what they had. "Better lives" is such an arbitrary outlook. You basically have nothing to compare it with except your neighbors and peers. People definitely are not interchangeable with one another. My life and experiences are as different from your's as your's are from mine.

One of my favorite phrases growing up was "Latch Key." Being a "Latch Key" there were very few to call a friend. In a way it made me independent and helped me understand the environment that is contained in a home to make it operate smoothly. My parents believed in education and subsequently I went to school all year round. I was an honor student.

By the time I was thirteen I had found my niche in "counter culture." Being blessed with a mind that was and is logical, analytical and "buck wild" made for an interesting life. At 16 I had my first brush with the law. The state of North Carolina called it aggravated assault.

I'm fiercely independent; the black knight who wants to wear the white hat. A firm believer in romance and chivalry also knowing that it is a

dying minority. I think that my biggest faults are that I'm lackadaisical and appear to be aloof. I find that I don't value a lot of other people's opinions because I can pat my own self on the back; there's less blood that way. I have created my image of myself and brought it to life. Whatever you see of me that is what I am at that moment, but I am not rigid nor unforgiving, just cautious of the territory that I have staked as mine. When I am blessed to awaken in the morning and look at the "man in the mirror" I need to be able to look him in the eye. He is the one I must prove myself to, no other on this earth. Some days I awaken blessed, with mind strong and active. Other times I have days that I need prayer to make it through. I'm not deeply religious but I am mindful.

I've lived most of my life in a gray area — I was smart enough to dabble. When you're the dope man you have power. They bring you money, they bring you food, they bring you clothes, they bring you women. They look out for you. It's genocide for our people, but you can't live without money.

[Speaking of the past] There was gun play — you'd come home, put on your strap, go across town and shoot some people, and come back home. It was just part of life. It's bad to be old or be a child on these streets. Like in the animal kingdom, the old and the young are subject to being eaten. It's the nature of things.

I'm tired, I'm so very tired. I came here with a purpose because I was born, but after that there was nothing. I've been wandering all my life and I'm going home. I need to clean up my own business, I can't worry too much about fixing other people.

Marcus recently attempted to achieve a reconciliation with his father, a retired Navy man in Northern California. He took a job as a telemarketer in Fremont. After a falling out with his father he moved to San Diego and was placed in a data entry job by a temporary personnel agency. He is now in jail for possession of drugs.

Wilma

Wilma, until recently Marcus' "wife", is fifty-five years old and was recently released from a term in jail for larceny. She has high blood pressure and unspecified neurological problems. She previously worked as a clerk for the Los Angeles County Probation Department, a job she got through the CETA program. Her son lives on Skid Row, across the street across from the Midnight Mission.

When she was 15 years old she married a man who turned out to be an abusive alcoholic. She stayed with him until her children were grown, becoming "free" for the first time in her life when she was in her forties. Wilma's daughter, Jeanette, visits Skid Row to see her and when telephoned, at Wilma's request, to tell her that her mother was all right she said, "Any news is better than no news. She needs to get over this, she's still living in the past. She needs to let go of it." Last year Wilma was admitted to the County-USC Psychiatric Hospital. After her release her friends said that some of the person they had known before seemed to be missing — her anger as well as her will to live seemed diminished. She was subsequently arrested for shoplifting, spent three months in jail, and is now on probation. As a condition of her probation she is required to become employed but her prospects for finding a job seem poor.

Raymond Raymond grew up in a military family. He is an intelligent man in his early thirties with an eye for opportunities, and occasional lapses in judgment. He completed two years of college as a chemistry major and was enrolled at Cal State Los Angeles last year when the financial aid program helping him was terminated. He worked in the post office from 1988 to 1992, and earned money on the side recycling cardboard. Raymond found what he called the "grand jubilee of all cardboard piles" and was loading his pickup when the sheriff deputies found him inside a cardboard factory and arrested him. He served six months in county jail, and became homeless after his release. Raymond has a remarkable memory — he can recall any telephone number he has seen and, for example, knows the names and telephone numbers of all the staff at all the shelters he has been in. He lost out on a job at a chemical factory because of high blood pressure but got a job as a security guard at Rancho Los Amigos Hospital. He earned enough money to get his old VW that had been stored at his sponsor's house running again, but then lost the car to a hit-and-run driver. Raymond has now moved on to a job as a technician making prosthetic devices.

Today, three of the seven job club members have jobs and two others found jobs but lost them. Some of the common themes that emerge from these life stories, giving human form to statistics about homeless job seekers include:

1. By the time they were young adults six of the seven individuals had made significant progress toward holding down jobs and becoming economically self sufficient, the driving force being the energy and optimism of youth. But liabilities carried forward from childhood overtook and derailed this progress.
2. Six of the seven experienced long-term addiction and the seventh short-term addiction, all to crack cocaine.

3. All seven have been socially isolated for most of their lives and have not had the support of normal social networks in attempting to solve problems of addiction and employment.
4. Six of the seven have entered drug rehabilitation programs, experiencing multiple relapses, and four of them eventual success; the seventh has not entered a program.
5. Six of the seven have employment histories, five of the seven have skills that qualify them for more than one occupation.
6. There were infrequent windows of opportunity when individuals were ready to make a serious commitment to recover from addiction and find a job. These intervals of high motivation followed bottoming-out experiences such as incarceration. There were very few support systems to help individuals hold onto the clear thinking they did inside jail when they re-entered the daunting and lonely world outside jail gates. Similarly, it was difficult for individuals to gain admission to a residential drug rehabilitation programs within the window of motivational opportunity if the bottoming-out occurred while they were on the streets.

CAREY'S PERSONAL INVENTORY

My name is Carey and this is my personal inventory. One of the steps in my recovery is to make a searching and fearless moral inventory of myself to sort through the confusion and contradiction of my life. I need to acknowledge that addiction had defeated me. For the past five years addiction has kept me living homeless on the streets of downtown Los Angeles. I made up my mind that I didn't want to die out on the streets. One of the programs that I had gone to spoke of that, that addicts of our types, the only thing they have to look forward to is jails, institutions and death. I looked back on my life and all I could see was addiction, jails and institutions, and there really wasn't anything left for me but death. I made a conscious decision to remove myself from that. This is the story of my life, my addiction and my recovery.

Childhood

My trouble started back when I was fourteen or fifteen. My childhood before that was okay. I didn't have a lot of things other kids had, but I was a pretty happy kid I guess, even though my father was alcoholic. My mother passed away when I was two. There were nine children in our family altogether, but me and my younger brother were the only two by my father and we were separated from the rest of the family. My aunt, who's my father's sister, felt that we would be better off with her and my father, so that's where we lived. We moved out — they took us from the rest of the kids.

My aunts and uncles on my mother's side of the family were drug dealers, pimps and stuff like that. My aunt on my mother's side, all she did was sell drugs. When I was young, before I got into drugs, I didn't fit in when I went over to her house. That kind of made me feel stupid because if I didn't fit in with my family, who did I fit in with? It was kind of crazy. I think my sisters and brothers were influenced a lot by that life style. I can see that today. My aunt didn't like me and my little brother to be around that. To this day she thinks that they are the reason why me and my little brother use drugs. I told her "it's not their fault. Nobody put a pistol to my head and made me do anything. I did it by choice."

When we were very little, me and my younger brother, Reggie, used to fight a lot, and I mean we used to fight a *lot*. He didn't like what I was doing, I guess he just didn't like me because my father kind of favored me a little bit. One day he threw a skillet of grease on the floor and then told my father I did it. I got a whipping for that.

Later, Reggie started running with a different crowd than I was and he got into some trouble with the law. They sent him to juvenile. When he came out he had been lifting weights and he had gotten a lot bigger than he was. He socked me up pretty good there one day. As a matter of fact there are still hard feelings today — we don't lay hands on each other anymore but in the past he has really expressed his anger toward me with his fists.

I remember that from a very young age, even before I got baptized, I never liked violence and I never liked guns, and I hated bullies. That's the only thing there was in our neighborhood where we lived. I wouldn't even go outside and play. I'd just stay in the house and listen to music. My dad used to think I was weird, but I just didn't like going and playing with the other kids. I was scared because a lot of them were getting killed and stuff like that.

I never was able to see eye-to-eye with my father. His alcoholism made him dysfunctional. He tried to raise me and my little brother by himself. We were on welfare — it was rough. I wasn't able to do a lot of things I really wanted to do with him, like go fishing or stuff like that. He used to come home drunk sometimes and holler at me and my little brother. He'd get me out of bed, twist my arm, and tell me to bring him some water. Those kind of things stuck in my mind. It was ugly to me — that whole thing. But I did love my father.

I had seen people pick on my father when he was drinking. My father'd get so drunk he'd let people take advantage of him — take his money and stuff like that. It really bothered me. Regardless of what he did I really loved my father and I didn't want anything bad to happen to him — he was always on my mind. After school I'd go to the park or something like that, but if he was drinking I'd be worried — about where he was at or what he was doing. In those very rough neighborhoods where we were living it was pretty bad, people getting robbed, and he'd be drunk and out there by himself. I couldn't stay with him all the time to make sure no one was bothering him. It used to worry me when we'd be waiting for him to come home and I'd

be wondering whether he was going to make it or not. That made me pray a lot for him, I just prayed that no one would come and say that somebody had shot my father or stabbed him or robbed him or something like that. Especially I saw a lot of young people taking advantage of older people. I dreaded that. Actually, he was all I had right then. I used to pray that he would not die a violent death. I just thank God that he got through it.

I never did understand until I first was introduced to AA myself what he was going through. I don't know what my mother's death did to him, if it did anything, but he used to always tell me that I would never be the man that he was. I used to say to myself "all you do is drink a lot" but I never told him that, I just said it to myself. Turns out I wound up the same because I was addicted myself.

When I was a kid, me and my younger brother lived with our father and grandmother, and we had a niece named Lynne. Lynne is my oldest sister's daughter — she brought her over for us to baby sit, and we wound up fighting. Two little boys beating up on one little girl — that wasn't very nice. When my sister came to pick her up she had a black eye and a swollen lip. This was long before I even started using drugs, but in the book it tells me that I have to go back to everything, and that's something I've felt bad about for a long time.

When I was fourteen I started hanging with a pretty hip group. They used to go to parties and everything, and I started hanging out with them and I was introduced to wine. I used to drink a little wine and it gave me courage because I was afraid to talk to girls. A lot of times I was ashamed because other kids lived in houses and stuff like that. We lived in a house but it was way in the back on a dirt road and I thought it was kind of ugly. The house itself wasn't a very nice looking house. It was in the back of some apartments. We did have a side yard and a back yard but the house itself was really sitting at the end of a driveway. The people who lived in these apartments, which were on the side of it, their company would come and block the entrance with their cars. You couldn't even see the house, you had to walk to the back to get in.

Just before I started using, when I was about fourteen, I had a cousin named Linda. She was much older than I was. She lived in Orange County. She came down and she stayed with us for about three nights. She was the first girl that I ever had sex with. That happened three nights in a row, and we had sex a few times after that as well. I never told anybody about it, but for some strange reason or another I have felt in my later years that her mother had found out, because my father said something to me about it, and that really bothered me. Not to say that I was better, but it wasn't my idea for it to happen in the first place. But when it was offered I accepted, so I'm just as guilty as the other party. I don't see her anymore. I don't know where she is — probably living with her mother. This put me in a bad relationship with her mother, my mother's sister. I never did have the courage to tell her what really happened. I can look in her eyes and tell there is something lacking between us in our relationship. I really

never even went around my Aunt Marie that much, and to this day I hardly ever see her. But maybe, hopefully, in my recovery I'll find the courage to tell her what really happened. Linda, she's just an alcoholic, been an alcoholic ever since I've known her. Maybe I can find the courage to tell her that I'm sorry it happened, it wasn't right. But that is down the road, I guess — because I haven't seen her.

Beginning of Addiction

I was pretty good in school. I went through elementary school with a breeze. And then I got to junior high school and I was introduced to alcohol. When I was introduced to alcohol it gave me something that I was looking for, and that was a shield. I could drink alcohol and forget about everything. By not feeling like a whole person I hid a lot of shame. In my addiction I did a lot of things that I wasn't very proud of, and doing those things kept me in my addiction — I didn't have the courage to face my problems.

I made it through junior high school, but my drinking progressed, and not only did it progress, I moved on to something else. I started taking pills. This friend I met introduced me to pills. I started taking then and I was in pretty deep. It didn't take very long till I didn't have to look for my friends to get high, I'd just get money and get high myself. And this was going on when I was at an early age. One of the friends I was hanging around with was in a car accident and got his leg cut off — he was loaded on pills.

I met this girl named Yvonne, she was a church-going girl, she was very nice. I used to go to church her. We didn't go too much to church when I was at home. During my upbringing we didn't go to church every Sunday or anything like that. But it was nice and I was looking for a change anyway, so I used to go to church with Yvonne and her folks every weekend. And I got baptized. The pastor at the church wanted me to be in the choir and everything. And I was all for that because I wanted to be wherever Yvonne was. Whenever we had an engagement or something big like that, where the choir had to perform, I wouldn't show up. I guess it had to do with the way I was living — I was too busy trying to hide things. I didn't feel that I fit in with the people at the church because they were living life on life's terms. Those were honest citizens. They used to go to work every day and all that stuff. Where I come from it just didn't fit. So I stopped going and Yvonne moved away.

That same year we moved to Orange County. My brother got into trouble with a group of people in our old neighborhood who had guns and my father moved quickly to a new neighborhood to get us, and especially Reggie, away from there. When I left L.A. I was going to Ralph J. Bunche. It was an all Black school. When we moved to Orange County I was all suddenly going to a school that had a few Latinos, a few Blacks and the rest were white. But it was truly an excellent school.

It was a culture shock, going to a whole different part of town with different people -- it was a shock to me. I got along with everybody, but I still didn't feel part of it. I wasn't gang-banging or anything like that, but because I came from a gang-related area I guess they probably thought that I was. A lot of times it got me in trouble because people would say things to me and I'd get all pissed-off. A lot of the white kids wouldn't even talk to me.

The class work was more advanced at Santa Ana Valley than it was in L.A. I guess I could have fitted in, I truly could have, had I been willing. But at that time I was drinking and using. Had I set that aside and really strived to fit in, I'm quite sure I could have. It wasn't that I didn't want to — but I was too much into my addiction. Being addicted I alienated myself. I started hanging around with the deadbeats, the ones who weren't doing anything, hanging around at the park. I guess I was bottled up in my own little world. I'm quite sure people wanted me to make it there but I guess I really wasn't ready.

My grades started dropping so they sent me to a continuation school. The continuation school was okay, I got along with everybody there. At the continuation school they make you go to school half a day and they put you in on-the-job-training the other half of the day. They had me at the Orange County purchasing department. I got along pretty good with the people there and they all liked me. So when I graduated I had a job at the Orange County purchasing department. That was real good coming right out of graduation and having a job with the county.

First Job

I was still using and it was in my way. The more money I made the more partying I did. I had run into some friends from L.A. that had moved to Orange County. We'd get together on the weekends and we'd just drink and smoke weed, because there weren't many pills out there, we'd drink a lot, I mean a *lot*. I started drinking hard liquor — JB, rum, anything we could get our hands on. One day I was driving one of the county cars and I had a wreck. I had been drinking, too. They didn't get mad, though, they sent me home for a couple of days. But I was so embarrassed I didn't even feel like going back. So they sent someone to the house to get me. I went back to work, but I eventually wound up losing the job. I could see that they had really went out of their way for me but I just wasn't ready. I was too into my addiction.

My whole life centered around getting loaded, one way or the other. If people weren't getting loaded they weren't cool. I guess that's the insanity of it. If you don't cross this line then you're not in the clique. I crossed that imaginary line a long time ago in my addiction, because it stopped being a recreational thing and it started being a necessity.

For a while after I graduated from high school and got a job I stayed together with my older sisters and brothers. I moved out of the house I shared with my father and my little brother.

We hadn't stayed together at all but we were sisters and brothers, and we tried to make it work. They were into their drugs and they never would share any of their drugs with me, but I knew they were doing them and I had my own little problem. I was an alcoholic then. I was real deep into my alcoholism and I was smoking weed. I got the impression that they didn't really too much like me to be around when they were getting high because they felt I was going to ask them something, or I would do something stupid to make them look bad, because I was a fool, believe me. I used to do some real crazy things in my drinking. That's another relationship that I really need to work on because I see my sisters going through their addiction today. One of my sisters turned Jehovah Witness, I haven't seen her in at least fifteen years.

I used to get high by myself and they say that's bad. When I left work I'd go by the store and get myself a pint of rum and a coke and I would drink that just so I could feel okay. I was living with my sisters and my cousin and they didn't think that was cool, which I don't think it was either. But everyone else was getting high and this was my thing, alcohol was my thing. They used to smoke their weed and all this other stuff, but we didn't get high together a lot, because when we did I used to act the fool.

When we lived in Orange County my sisters said, "you get along good with people," because I felt very comfortable with anybody, even around white people. I worked at Buffums in the Laguna Hills Mall and I think I was the only Black who worked there. I got along real good with the people. A lot of them would invite me to their house and stuff like that. It was nice. I guess I probably could have done a lot had I not been drinking. I can't say I haven't had opportunities. I've always liked to read. I don't think there's a lot of people in my family that like to read except me. I'd pick up a book in a minute.

Blackout Drinking

I was drinking rum. I brought a car and I only had that car for two weeks before I tore it up. I was a blackout drinker. They told me I had driven to L.A. to see my aunt. I had already drunk a whole pint of rum, and I brought another one and put it in my glove compartment. There was a girl in the car with me, her and her two kids and my cousin. Me and my cousin used to get high all the time. They told me that I went around a car at a stop sign and that I blew out a side of the Cadillac. After all that, with this lady in the car with me and her kids, the only thing that I could think about was trying to get my drink out of the glove compartment. That is the insanity part of it. My thinking told me that that's what I needed to do — to get my drink out of the glove compartment so I could settle my nerves. Thank God nobody was hurt. I had to get my car towed.

I was running away from responsibility — that was my main impulse, because I never went to see about that car. To this day I don't know what happened to it. They took it to the impound yard and that's where it stayed. I think the lady tried to sue me. I never answered any of her

letters. I think her lawyer sent me a letter — I never answered it.

Fear has been one of my main trouble points. I never was able to face my responsibility. I was always, I thought, a pretty nice person. I'm not stupid, but I never was responsible. I'd make it to work, but when my drinking got to be too much I stopped going. I just wouldn't face my responsibility. My sister kicked me out of the house because I wasn't able to keep up my end of the rent.

Addiction Takes Over

After staying in Orange County for six or seven years I moved back to L.A. in '78 and I started living with my aunt. I got a job with the CETA program, working at Martin Luther King Hospital for two years as a radiology technician. I started smoking PCP while I was there. It wasn't good at all. I wound up being in the emergency room at the same hospital where I was working, while I was supposed to be on my way to work. That was very embarrassing. They didn't say a lot about it. The guy who was the head of the department where I worked at, his name was Dr. Williams, he pulled me over and he talked to me. He said, "you know what, you want to do a little something extra on the weekends? I want you to come help me at my house." So I used to go over to his house. He was building a deck in his back yard and I helped him build it. He used to give me forty dollars a day for doing that. He thought that he was keeping me out of trouble, which he was, but I'd use the money to get drugs. That was the bottom line. After the two years was up they let me go because my performance wasn't really what they were looking for.

My aunt has always stuck by me and my little brother. She tried to raise us the best as she could. In my addiction I did some things to her that I really wasn't too proud of. Out of all the people in my life I would say my aunt has been the closest to me. She recognized I had a problem. She was the first one to tell me, "look, you need some help. Why don't you go to a program or something?" I stole a VCR from her, I never stole any money from her but I did steal a VCR from her, and she wasn't really too happy about that. She never called the police on me, although I believe that she was more or less afraid of me because of what I was doing. She didn't know how far I would go. When she saw that I had stole from her she wouldn't let me stay at her house, but she never did stop talking to me. We always talked, we always had communications. Right now, today, I think that one of the things I really enjoy the most is talking to her, and I let her know today where I am at in my recovery. Actually she's the only one that I've got that honestly understands what I went through — what I'm going through — me being an addict and all. She always told me "you'll get it together." I talk to her as much as I can. She's really in my corner.

My aunt knew what was going on, she said, "look, you know what — you need some help." That's when I was first introduced to the work of AA, in 1980. I took her advice, I went to a

program. I stayed in that program ninety days and when I got out of the program I went to sober living. I stayed in sober living for about ninety days. I stayed sober for six months. It felt good. I was taking care of my own business and everything without the use of alcohol or drugs. It really felt good. But they say you have to stop hanging around your old friends. For me this was pretty difficult because the people I used to get high with, well a lot of them were my family members — cousins and sisters and brothers. My cousins started hanging around and the next thing I knew I was getting loaded again.

I had to move out of the sober living home. My aunt really didn't want me to stay with her because she knew what I was doing then. So I started hanging around back and forth from my aunt's house to my cousins' house. They were smoking crack then and I started smoking crack. I don't know how I did it but I managed to get a job, a maintenance job. My aunt let me back in but it didn't last very long. Every time my cousins got paid, we'd spend our money on crack. It was miserable. I didn't like it, I didn't like what I was doing but I couldn't stop. I tried another program. I've been to four programs so far. Out of all the programs that I go to I always get something out of them. That's good, and it's finally sticking.

Needless to say, the second program didn't keep me sober. I never followed the instructions, I never read the book. I never applied the twelve-steps of AA to my life. I guess I just really wasn't ready for them anyway. So I continued to use and it got a little bad at my aunt's house. I eventually wound up moving to downtown L.A. This had to be around '83. I stayed downtown in L.A. a good four years. I wasn't using crack then, I was drinking. I was drinking a lot of wine, I guess I had turned into a wino. I eventually moved back, I started staying with my cousins.

Penitentiary

I continued a very miserable existence until around 1988, when I went to the penitentiary for a robbery that I knew nothing about. A woman definitively identified me from police photographs as the person who robbed her. A couple of years earlier I had taken some change from a drunk and the police had photographs of me as a strong-arm robber. The lady said I pulled a gun on her, robbed her at gunpoint and hand-cuffed her to an elevator. The police twisted everything I said against me. My aunt and girlfriend vouched for me but the lady I.D.'d me in court. She was white, from Olancho, California, and she was staying at the Holiday Inn downtown. The man who robbed her impersonated a security guard. After he gained her confidence he offered to help her take her luggage to her room. When he was in the elevator with her he took out his gun and robbed her. She was with him about half an hour and had a chance to get a good look at him. When I was in jail I racked my brains trying to figure out why she identified me, because I'd never laid eyes on her before. I think maybe it had something to do with insurance.

I've never had anything to do with guns — I've always been afraid of them. I fought the case for eleven months and nineteen days. My father died while I was in jail. The only person who believed I was innocent was the public defender. She was a fighter. I also got the impression the prosecutor didn't think I was guilty, but he was just doing his job. We had a jury trial and there was a hung jury. Then we made the deal to give me probation. The judge told me, she didn't tell me directly but I heard her say, that if I got arrested for anything else they'd give me the seven years.

My father went into the hospital while I was in jail and I wasn't able to be there with him. He died and I had to go to the funeral in handcuffs, but I was too ashamed to stay for the service. I went to the funeral before everybody got there and I viewed the body and then the officers took me back to the jail. I got along okay with my father when he was sober, but we had drifted apart over the years. I wanted to make things up with him while he was still alive but I didn't get a chance to.

I got out and I went back to living with my girlfriend, I had a girl friend named Karen. Then my sister that lived in the valley, she came and got me. She was trying to help me, she said "Well, come on out to the valley and I'll help you get a job and everything." She didn't want to see me go back to jail. She knew I was using. So I went out there and I did something that I really never, ever talk about. The first night I was there she was sleeping and I ran into someone who gave me a hit and that set me off. I stole her VCR and her stereo. I went and sold it and I brought some crack because I wanted to use. I hate to say it but that's where this disease took me. I stayed away from her house for two days. I was only right around the corner staying in a field. It was summer and I was just wearing torn-off old jeans, some rubber thongs on my feet and an old tee shirt, camping out and smoking crack with those people.

I think one of her friends saw me. My sister called the police and took them over to where I was staying. When she saw me she came over and pounded me on the chest with her fists and said "how could you do that? You stole my VCR and stereo and left the door standing open in the middle of the night with me and the children asleep in the house. How could you do a thing like that to us? If your father knew what you were doing he would turn over in his grave." That really hurt me, what she said about my father. I was very ashamed of myself. The police took me to jail and when I went to court the judge gave me the seven years. So I did about forty-four months altogether.

When I got out of the pen in '91 they sent me to a half-way house. I had really made a vow to myself while I was in prison that I wouldn't use any more. Little good did it do. While I was in the half-way house I went to a construction school and I became a carpenter's apprentice. I started using again because people in the half-way house were selling it and I was getting paid every week. I started using again before I even got out of the half-way house.

When I left the half-way house I said to myself, "Well, I have a job and I'm making money." My auntie, being the lady she is, knew that I needed help. She asked me to stay at her house while I worked, she knew I had just got a job. But I told her "no" and moved back to downtown L.A., and got me a room. I was working in the Gas Company tower. I had a job installing cabinets and office partitions in the tower while they were building it. That job lasted three months, I couldn't hold it. I've learnt that over the years. I've never been able to hold a job while I was using, and there's always been something. If it wasn't alcohol it was pills, or it was crack, or it was PCP. It's always been something.

Slipping into Homelessness

It got so bad I started leaving work at lunch time and I'd run down the street, because it wasn't very far from the Skid Row area where I got my crack, and I'd get me some crack and come back to work. One day I wound up not even going back to the job — instead, I was doing what I do best, getting high. I lost that job.

I was staying at the St. George Hotel right there on Third and Main. From my room I could look out the window and see the people living in the alley behind the Union Rescue Mission. I thought that was pretty disgusting because up until that point I hadn't stayed in the street but I seen these people camping out in tents and cardboard boxes and I said "damn, this is pretty deep down up in here." I even saw a pregnant girl down there. But I used to go down there and get my crack and go up to my room and smoke it. Mind you, I'd lost my job by now. I wasn't able to keep up my rent. I tried welfare. It lasted for a little while but me being the irresponsible person that I was I didn't keep that going very long.

So I moved into the Midnight Mission. They have a room-and-board program for people. You just do a little work and you get to stay all night. They fed you pretty good at the Midnight. I worked in the kitchen and I used to get sandwiches, ham and egg or any kind of sandwich, which you weren't allowed to take out of the mission. I'd put them in my pocket, and after the last meal was served I'd leave around six o'clock and I'd walk down Wall Street and sell them. I turned the corner on Fourth and Wall and there were a lot of guys that used to hang out between Fourth and Fifth on Wall — I knew they weren't leaving where they were at, they weren't going to any missions to get food. If you're living out of missions, sleeping on streets, that's an all-day thing—standing in lines to get beds, meals, showers, clothes, and everything. So I used to fix them sandwiches, pastries and stuff like that and take it over there and sell it to them. I'd make my money like that, which wasn't very much. Other times I'd make it all the way over to between Sixth and Seventh on Wall and sell the sandwiches there.

I was smoking crack at that time. It was around Christmas and they were out there washing windows and carrying peoples' luggage and I said, "well damn, what are they doing?" I was wondering, were they making any money? I tried it myself and somebody tipped me a ten dollar

bill and I was hooked. With my little hustle, selling sandwiches, I would be lucky if I came up with four dollars a day. When I got a ten dollar tip, and I said "man, that is pretty good."

I got discharged from the Midnight. It wasn't a spiritual program nor was it a rehabilitation program. It was just a room-and-board. If you come and do your job like you supposed to and are there on time they didn't mind what you do. But I stayed out very late every night, sometimes all night. They'd write this down every night, every time people'd come in and out. The least little thing that went wrong — I think I was late for work one day — and then they told me that was it. I guess they looked at my track record and they said "well, he's not doing very good anyway, he's in and out all night" — so they let me go.

Living on the Street

Then I started hanging around on Wall Street. It was really a last resort. I met a friend of mine named Andre and he and I stayed together. I washed windows, I fit in with the crew. When I first saw them I didn't really think they were all that hot; it was not something that I wanted to do. But out of all of the people I'd seen downtown they were the ones who were doing the most hustling. That was money, and I was ready to smoke me some crack so I needed some money. To me it sounded pretty good because I wasn't stealing anything from anybody and I wasn't hurting anybody, and I still had my money for my crack. I stayed downtown and I lived outside, homeless. I noticed there was a lot of little camps around there, so I just fell right on into it. I didn't call home for at least a couple of years. When I finally called my auntie they were a little mad at me because I hadn't called. They said, "Why don't you at least call or something and let us know you're still alive?"

When I was camping-out downtown a friend told me I had a powerful drive to let myself go, to get away from a lot of pain underneath. She said she thought I was hiding out behind a lot of fear that had to do with my mother dying when I was two and a lot of help I didn't get when I was growing up.

My existence went on and my friend, Andre, told me about a club he used to go to at night. There were six or seven people that used to hustle over on Wall Street and at six o'clock or seven o'clock when the bus station closed everything was over with and you just had to get your boxes and go to sleep, or some people would try to find burglaries to do. I wasn't really ready to go to sleep and I didn't want to do burglaries. So Andre showed me where the club, a taxi-dancing place, was and we used to go over there every night, washing windows and keeping an eye on people's cars, and making money to get crack. That got to be the thing to do for me. I wound up over there every night for the better part of four or five years. I got to know a lot of people that were working in the bank building across the street. People tried to help me get on my feet and everything, but I wasn't ready, I really wasn't ready. I'd make enough money to smoke me some crack all night. Then I'd take my ass over to Wall Street, lay down on the

street, and wake up every morning broke. It was okay for a while but then everything seemed to be a fool's paradise downtown.

To this day I can look at some of the things that I used to do and some of the places that I have went into and I can't figure out to save my life how I did it. I was having fun, that's what I thought. I didn't have any responsibilities, I didn't have to go here or be there, all I had to do was just smoke crack, do windows, hustle money, and it was cool. Everybody there was sleeping on the street so I slept on the street too. It lasted for years. It seemed to me as though it lasted for a long, long time.

It took something more for me to see for myself what I had to do. I knew I was doing bad, but it just really didn't matter to me then. I had a pretty close friend of mine, named Nancy, and she O.D.'ed. That kind of shocked me because I had just been talking to her a couple of days before and all of a sudden she was gone. It got to be a problem. It wasn't the drug, I simply can't lie, I like crack cocaine, I just don't like what I have to do to get it. Not to mention, it was tearing my insides up too, it was really screwing my body up.

People used to ask me, "What do you do with your money?" And I'd have to come up with some kind of lie. I'd stay out there regardless of whether it was raining or what, I would be out there, saying I was "keeping an eye on peoples cars" and stuff like that. It got to be pretty miserable. It got to the point that people were really laughing at me. They recognized my condition and it got embarrassing, it really was. Sometimes people would come out of the building and wouldn't even say anything to me, and that really said a lot.

A Moment of Clarity

I spent a lot of years putting irons in the wrong fires. I got so sick and tired of going through the same shit, asking people for money all of the time. In the past I've been afraid to succeed and because of that I've often sabotaged myself. People downtown are either drinking or smoking too much — they are people with problems. Only a few are really homeless because of not having any money and not being able to work. The first step is detoxification.

Somewhere in my mind I always had this dream of how my life's supposed to be. I honestly feel I can reach that if I just stay off crack or anything else, period. I honestly feel in my heart that I can make it. There are some things that I have to do first and what I'm doing now is one of them. I have made up in my mind that I am going to go through with my recovery no matter what. I don't care what happens, I'm going to stay sober. If it means that I don't have a job or I don't have a car, or I don't have this or I don't have that, fine! I don't want to go back to using drugs again because I already know what that's all about, I know what's going to happen.

I guess you might say I had a moment of clarity. I had already been introduced to the work of

AA and I knew that I really didn't have to be doing what I was doing. For me to see these people now, doing what they are doing so diligently, and I was with them for most of my life, it seems ridiculous to me. These people are just throwing their lives away and they think it is cool, but I was doing the same thing without ceasing, I wasn't able to stop myself. Who am I to say what they are doing is foolish? This went on for years. I used to always tell myself, "oh, I'll get it together next week," and this went on for years — "I'll wait a little while longer, I'll straighten out then." But a little while longer never came, it just never came, until now. When it came it wasn't because of me, because I know today in and of myself, on my best day, all I do is get loaded. It had to be a divine intervention because Carey didn't know how to do anything but get loaded.

Finally I decided that whatever it takes for Carey to stay sober, then that's what I'm going to do. When I was introduced to the work of AA in 1980, they told me that I had to get a sponsor, they told me that I had to work the steps, and I didn't know what the hell they were talking about back then. But today I do and it isn't easy. In this book that I'm reading it says the only thing I have to look forward to is jails, institutions or death. And I've been to jails and institutions, so I guess the only thing left for me is death. I don't want to die on the streets addicted, an addict. My back's against the wall, but it is getting better. I don't know a whole lot about this program but I am willing, I am truly willing, I'm just really grateful that I'm not out there sleeping in a box on Wall Street, telling myself that it's okay when I know damn well it isn't. I'm trying and I pray every night.

Family

We have family reunions now. I have nephews that I haven't seen since they were kids. One of them is twenty. My youngest brother, Reggie's sons, I haven't seen neither one of them since they were kids. I don't have any kids myself. I always wanted to be an example for my nieces and nephews, but I never was because I was into my addiction. Now that they're grown, they're not all on a bad path. Some of them are doing good. I have a niece that's working for the city now. And I have a nephew in the Navy, and another nephew that's in the Army. It's something that I feel I should have done. I will have to sit down and tell them what it was I was going through and maybe they'll understand, because as it stands now if I were to try to tell them something they'd probably just discard it and say "you never did anything." I haven't been to one of the family reunions yet because in my addiction I isolated myself. I wasn't ready to face that pain. All it would have took was for somebody to say, "what's you been doing?" and I would have probably just fell to pieces. I hid myself from my family.

Since I got out of the program this last time I've been visiting my relatives and talking to them. Some of them drink and stuff like that when I'm there, but it hasn't been a temptation for me. Last weekend I helped one of my sisters move her furniture to a new apartment and I had a chance hear about how she's doing. Every time I talk with one of my relatives they tell me that

they don't feel like the others like them, and that they feel cut off from the others. At this next family reunion I plan to tell them that this is not right, that it's not supposed to be like that in a family.

During the two years that I didn't call my aunt I kept telling myself "I better try to call because they don't know where I'm at but I know where they're at, and if I call one day and find somebody's gone then I'm going to really feel bad about it." I feel good that I did call because I'm very close to my aunt. She lives in a pretty rough neighborhood, she's living there by herself, but she takes care of herself. She doesn't go out, she's not a street person. I really want to be there for her because she's done a whole lot for me and my little brother. I'm looking forward to making my family reunion this year. I want to get in touch and expose some truths about myself so that maybe they'll understand. There's alcoholics and addicts in my family. Just now people in my family are starting to stay sober.

Today, my brother and I really don't see eye-to-eye, and that bothers me because I really love my little brother and I don't want to see anything bad happen to him. Every time I would tell Reggie "that's not right what you're doing," he would say "well who are you to tell me?" I guess justifiably so because I haven't been a very good example. He's a grown man now with a wife and two kids. He's still using drugs and stuff. He went to trial just a few weeks ago and was sentenced to seven years for possession of drugs with intent to sell.

My mom had me and my little brother — Reggie, we're Claburns and we're the youngest children. There's also Cottmans, Parks, and Bradleys — my mother had children by four different men. It's kind of screwed up. I've never seen a picture of my mother. I am going to try to find someone in my family who has a photograph of her.

I have an older brother, his name is Clarence, and he's been locked up in the penitentiary since at least '76 — it was after I graduated from high school. He got arrested for armed robbery-murder and they sentenced him to fifteen years to life. I think I went to see him once. This was during my addiction. My sisters would always tell me "why don't you go and see your brother" or "why don't you write your brother a letter?" But I never had time for that, I was always into my abuse. He called from prison one day and I talked to him. He said "man I think you're pretty chicken shit, you don't even want to come and see me." I had gone to see him once and that was it. Those words he said really stuck in my head. During that whole time he was in there I was afraid that he would one day get out and be angry with me. But he's out now and I've talked to him and he gave me a big hug. He's trying to get his life together, but I still haven't really had a chance to sit down and talk to him about what he's doing. That's another relationship that I really need to work on in time, because he's trying to get his life together too. I guess I kind of feel like I abandoned him. It's pretty rough, he spent the better part of sixteen or seventeen years in the penitentiary.

I have another sister Sharon, she's still drinking and I'd really just love to tell her "there's a better way, you don't have to do that." But our relationship has been so warped in the past, I don't even think she would really want to listen to me. I have a sister, Diane, she came to see me recently when I was in my program, she's the oldest. She gave me the impression she's a little bent out of shape because she felt that she should have set a better example when we were coming up. I kind of like told her, "look Diane, it's not your fault. We all have our problems. Everybody makes mistakes. We just really need to look past that and keep going."

I have a sister, Maxine, me and her were very close for a while when I was very young. She moved to Chicago, she stayed out there for a long time and I didn't communicate with her at all. She's the one I stole the VCR and a stereo from when I was in my addiction after I got out of jail. She told me some things that just really hurt, but we talk today. She's been sober five years now and she's a Christian. I really want to show that her I mean well, I told her I was going to give it back to her, and I will one day, with God's help I know I will. Me and my sisters still talk, except for Sandra, the one who's a Jehovah's Witness, it's been so long since I've seen her.

I have another brother, Charles. He's in jail and has been in jail for a year now or more. The life style that my sisters and brothers used to lead, after me and my little brother were taken away when my mother died, has led to a lot of pain in their lives.

Building a New Life

Something that I really want is a greater God conscience. In the twelve-step book it says that drugs are only five percent of the problem, ninety-five percent of the problem is Carey. Things are looking a little better now. I'm still striving for that spirit within. I'm not experiencing what they say is the "sunlight of the spirit" because I have all this other junk in me I need to get out, and that's a job within itself. They say this program has three speeds and that's slow, slow and slow. I just have to really pray and do the things that I need to do when I need to do them, regardless of whether I want to or not.

I've been to four programs. The first program I went to I stayed sober six months and it was pretty good. The last program I went into was before '87. It has been a long time since I've decided to put myself back into the work of recovery. This last time, this very significant time in my life from 1991 until today, has been about getting my whole heart ready to take a chance one more time on trying to making some of my dreams come true.

I've always wanted to have a spiritual life. I always wanted to put God first. I always wanted to have a wife and kids and a family, and a very successful career. I always wanted that. This was in my heart but I never was able to see any big opening for me to go strive for that. I remember I was on probation in Orange County and the probation officer asked me, "what

would you like to do?" I told him, "I like music, maybe a sound engineer or something like that." I can't remember his exact words, but he gave me the impression that he didn't feel I would be able to do that. Well, I didn't pursue that career anyway, but he just didn't give me the impression I was able to do that.

My dream today is that I just want to stay sober, one day at a time. Possibly in the future I'll be able to put some kind of dream together for myself. I haven't really set up any long-term goals. I just have short-term goals, and one of them is to maintain my sobriety at all costs. That's what I'm going to do.

Out of all the difficulty that has happened I still believe that there is only one power that's going to bring me out of this. After going through what I went through, what really slapped me in the face was seeing my picture in that paper and the caption under my picture that said, "this is Carey with all his worldly possessions in a bucket." That slapped me in the face, it really did. My truth was catching up to me. Everybody who is successful believes in something that keeps them going, something greater than themselves. I've never had that. I always went on my own and every time I did I messed it up. I never knew how to deal with people, places and things. If people would reject me I wouldn't know how to deal with that, so I'd go medicate it with some alcohol or some drugs. I wasn't dealing with life on life's terms. This time when I came in I was ready to follow some instructions. A counselor told me, "Carey what you need to do is exactly what you need to do, when you need to do it, regardless of whether you want to do it or not." I've been doing that. I do what is in front of me. What is in front of me now is to learn as much as I can. I've learned a lot already, but it's the application, I haven't applied it. I'm going to a lot of twelve-step meetings and I'm being honest with myself, not with other people but with myself first. It really feels good not having to lie to anybody about anything. I'm really a baby, I'm learning how to live right now.

I'm not alone, I'm finding a lot of love. Sometimes if you have a problem or are feeling bad there's what you call post-acute withdrawal. I get up in the morning, I pray and go take me a shower, and I'm feeling pretty good, but when I get around a corner and thirty minutes later I've gone from a real high to a real, real low. That alone has caused many people to just leave, throw in the towel. There's reasons for all of it and I try to find out the answers today, I don't try to lean on my own understanding to try to figure it out.

I know it's going to be a struggle. Anybody can stay sober for ninety days, but when you get out there on the streets and you run into some of those old friends, which I don't plan to but you never know, there's a whole lot of triggers. It could be a girl with a big butt or an old friend with some money, anything could happen. I'm praying a lot, and to tell you the honest-to-God truth, I don't feel I'm going to use any more, I really don't. Regardless of where I go or whatever happens, I'm not going to use, regardless, I'm not going to use.

Since I left my residential rehabilitation program three months ago I've started college and commenced looking for a job. I'm now on welfare, which I don't like, but it'll do for now. I've also gotten a little eye opener. I got a ticket riding on the Metro Rail, and now I have to appear in court for that ticket. But I'm not all bent out of shape about it because it's in front of me, and I know as long as it's in front of me I can deal with it if I stay sober. I'm on probation because of some old outstanding warrants and probation violations. The judge looked favorably on the fact that I turned myself in and that I had been sober for six months, and gave me another year of probation. That was a blessing, because I had really expected that I would have to do about three months in jail to clear up my record.

The good thing about it is I don't feel bogged down. I do feel I do need to sit down and kind of sort some more things out, but maybe that'll come a little later. As of now I'm just doing whatever is in front of me. People tell me it's not that bad if you just go through it. Half the problem is over if you just suit up and show up, and I've been doing that on a daily basis. It's working, I feel pretty good. I know it's going to take a lot of effort for me to get through these classes at the college where I've enrolled, and I'm willing to do that.

As far as my sobriety is concerned, I have to put forth even more effort to work on my recovery, but then again, I'm not in a program anywhere where I can sit and deal with these issues all day long. I have needs to be met out here. I'm making meetings and I do pray a lot. I've also heard people say that's not enough, that a lot of them have tried to do the same but they relapsed. The things they told me to do were to get a sponsor, work the twelve steps, and go to meetings. As far as working the steps, I'm starting on the very first step, which is writing this story about my life, and telling what powerless means to me and how unmanageable my life had become.

I think I'm doing okay. I still have those sick-assed thoughts about using and drinking, but I just don't act on them today. There have been times where I'd think about these things and the next thing you know I'd be off and running, but I'm not doing that today. They told me this is a program for people who want it, not for people who need it, and today I want to live. I haven't used any alcohol or drugs for nine months now, which is the longest time that I've been sober since I was fourteen years old. I know it's not going to be easy, but it'll be okay. I honestly believe that in my heart.

Earning a Living

I'm forty-one years old and I may look like a big, strong man but I'm really just a person full of fears. One of my fears is about having money in my pocket. I feel ready to work and I want to get a job, but I'm afraid of what may happen if I have money in my pocket that I could spend on drugs when I get one of those sick impulses.

Some fears I have to deal with are around trying to find employment. I've been trained for different jobs, but I haven't ever held onto any of them for very long. I learned how to bake in jail, and I learned how to repair small engines when I was in prison. Our small engine instructor, Mr. Washington, wanted to be cool with the inmates and brought in drugs for them to prove how hip he was. The last I heard he was an addict himself out on Venice Beach. I also got trained as a sheet metal technician, and I was a radiology technician and a carpenter's apprentice. Besides that I've had jobs in a nursery, doing building maintenance, tinting car windows, driving a delivery truck, conducting opinion surveys, and for a little while there I had my own car detailing business. Altogether I've worked for about seven years since I graduated from high school, the rest of the time I've been into my addiction or locked up.

In my past I've always been afraid of people, and I would imagine by me being sober now that fear just doesn't go away, it's just something that I have to deal with. I guess I'm very ashamed of my past, and therefore I'm reluctant to talk about it, especially to employers. There are a lot of huge time gaps in my employment history that do need to be addressed. Looking back, though, on the jobs I did have, I always did put forth a good effort. I do even remember the first job I had, they went out of their way to try to keep me, but I was too busy with my addiction so they had to let me go. It kind of lets me know I wasn't a bad employee, I just had a problem. Thanks to the grace of God that problem is behind me now, or it's where I can deal with it, or me and Him can deal with it.

I feel if I'm able to relate to people exactly how I feel without stumbling over my words — I do that a lot — I might put forth a positive image. A lot of times what I say and what I think are two different things, even though I try to say exactly what's on my mind, but it comes out wrong. I think that's an area I need to work on very much, especially my past — my employment record — and not lie about it. I think that if I can get to that point I'd be able to go and do an interview with a positive impact. That's something I will be working on. I do enjoy talking to people. But it scares me when people start asking questions like "were you ever convicted of a felony?" or "what were you doing between this date and this date?" A lot of times I've been driven to distort the truth. That's where I hit my stumbling blocks. I honestly feel that if I'm totally honest with whoever I interview with I'll probably come out a little bit better — by conveying where I'm at right now. It's something that I need to work on and I will be doing that.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

Many people who are homeless want to have jobs and have the ability to work productively. A smaller number not only want work but have summoned sufficient hope and commitment to make a serious effort at rebuilding their lives and gaining stable housing, employment and personal relationships. The operational implications of this two-tier perspective are that basic opportunities to work and earn survival resources should be available to all homeless individuals, and in-depth support for recovery and for long-term employment should be available if and when individuals are ready to make a fundamental commitment to a new start in their life.

TIER I: LOCAL DAY-LABOR MARKETS

Earlier we reported that more than four out of five men and women living on downtown streets said they would accept jobs at minimum wages cleaning up streets. The social costs of failing to provide opportunities for gainful employment, and thereby the dignity of demonstrating one's worth, are high. Research conducted by California's Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs found that the average drug and alcohol abuser costs society over \$32,000 a year.⁷ Basic decency as well as an intelligent understanding of our collective self interests leads us to provide jobs for people who are willing to work. We recommend that local day-labor markets⁸ be organized under public auspices to provide jobs for anyone willing to show up at an early hour and meet prevailing employment standards for sobriety and conscientious work efforts. If no private employers need their services, individuals should be entitled to public employment cleaning streets, parks, public buildings, or other useful community services.

Based on the value of minimum-wage earnings, individuals should have the opportunity to work for four or five hours per day, which would entitle them to vouchers for a night's lodging in a single room occupancy hotel or shelter that provides reasonable privacy and security for

⁷State of California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, "Evaluating Recovery Services: The California Drug and Alcohol Treatment Assessment (CALDATA)", April 1994, pp. 63-65. Costs include: criminal justice system costs, victim losses, theft losses, health care utilization, lost legitimate earnings, and income transfers.

⁸The concept of day-labor markets is put forward by Christopher Jencks, "Housing the Homeless, *The New York Review*, May 12, 1994, pp. 44-45.

possessions, three meals, and a small amount of cash (perhaps \$2.50 per day). Individuals who show up for jobs five days a week and work acceptably should be entitled to lodging in a room offering privacy and security for their belongings, and three meals a day, for a week. By paying primarily in vouchers rather than cash the demand for these jobs will largely be limited to the homeless and taxpayers will be reassured they are not paying for drugs or alcohol. Individuals who show themselves to be exceptionally good workers should be rewarded by opportunities for better jobs, more hours of work, training, or improved pay. This will enable some individuals, particularly those who are first-time homeless and cyclical homeless, to find a near-term exit from homelessness. Similarly, individuals with significant rehabilitation needs who demonstrate strong motivation should become candidates for Tier II assistance.

We recommend starting with one pilot day-labor market in downtown Los Angeles. This area has the region's largest concentration of homeless individuals as well as businesses that can use short-term workers, and public sector entities that can supervise individuals in doing work that benefits the public. The day-labor market should be a clearinghouse to match worker skills and abilities with employer needs. This will entail interviewing workers to identify and classify their occupational and experience backgrounds, and maintaining records of any assessments offered by employers of workers' performance. After the program has been tested and refined, and is operating successfully it should be replicated in other urban nodes throughout the county where there are concentrations of homeless individuals.⁹ Public costs will include modest expenses for operating the day-labor markets, and costs not covered by private employers for voucher redemption payments to service providers for shelter and meals, and small cash payments to homeless workers.

Potential public revenue sources to pay for day-labor markets, as well as Tier II programs described below, include job training grants (which now under-serve the homeless), state and federal demonstration grants for housing and employment, public works budgets for maintaining public spaces, grants administered by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, community redevelopment tax increment funds in redevelopment areas impacted by homelessness, and city and county general fund allocations. A last resort funding option is to utilize a portion of the money currently going into the county's beleaguered General Relief program.

General Relief was designed to provide basic support for destitute individuals with no means of survival, but grant amounts have been reduced to \$212 a month (plus medical benefits and food stamps), which is not sufficient for minimal shelter and food, and there is an imminent likelihood that the duration of benefits will be reduced to four months. One job club member described the program as "a whole lot of changes for a little bit of nothing." Many General Relief recipients report that they experience the bureaucratic process of applying for and

⁹A useful map of first, second and third-order agglomerations of homeless shelters and services in Los Angeles County is provided by Jennifer Wolch and Michael Dear, "Malign Neglect: Homelessness in an American City," Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco, 1993, p. 174.

receiving benefits as personally demeaning, although many report positive experiences in performing the work assignments that are required of those receiving benefits. As it is currently structured there is a fundamental lack of coherence and purposefulness in the General Relief program — it appears to reach only half the homeless who need it, providing them with less-than-subsistence support, and soon is likely to assist them for only one-third of the year. Creation of day-labor markets that enable individuals who work to survive would give much needed rationality to region's system for delivering emergency aid and assisting people in exiting homelessness.

TIER II: REHABILITATION RESOURCES FOR STRONGLY MOTIVATED INDIVIDUALS

Most beds in homeless shelters and sleeping spots on streets are occupied by people whose passage into homelessness and subsequent rootlessness and placelessness has lasted longer than a year. Their journey into homelessness has taken time, and similarly the journey out and the process of extricating themselves from the damage done by homelessness takes time. In order to effectively help chronically homeless individuals, programs must offer adequate resources and duration of service to rebuild lasting, stable ties to the larger community. In addition, programs must become adept at recognizing, and acting within, that narrow window of motivation when individuals are strongly and purposefully determined to rebuild their lives. For most individuals on Skid Row, homelessness is not the result of a single problem or abrupt reversal of fortunes, but the culmination of multiple problems and life adversities. Similarly, the path out of homelessness requires not only motivation on the part of the individual but patient, sustained, individually-tailored, comprehensive support services that address the different dimensions of each individual's problems. The central challenge in overcoming homelessness is reconnection of the individual with the larger community. This ultimately manifests itself through success in creating viable, lasting connections around work, housing and social relationships.

Homeless programs can lay the foundation for reconnection with society by respecting and engaging clients as individuals, listening to what they have learned through previous failures and how they recommend programs should be designed. Essential program ingredients for helping chronically homeless people become stabilized and productively employed include:

1. Comprehensive, timely support when there is a window of strong commitment to making a serious effort at building a new life.
2. Integrated services offering shelter, food, legal help, drug treatment, income maintenance, health services, personal counseling, development of affirming personal relationships, skill development (where necessary), and job placement.

3. Effective employment, training and job placement services that:
 - competently assess and respond to client needs and abilities
 - develop individualized transition-to-work plans for each client
 - channel clients' skills, interests and aptitudes into demand-occupations
 - provide training and supportive services tailored to individual client needs
 - combine classroom and on-the-job training
 - ensure that clients have the skills and competencies employers require
 - place workers with employers who offer stable employment
 - provide ongoing post-placement support and counseling
4. Innovative job creation strategies including public service, entrepreneurial programs and worker-owned cooperatives that make stable employment possible despite severe job shortages in the region and high turnover rates in low-skill jobs.
5. Sustained help in the form of nine to twelve months of residential enrollment as well as case management strategies that set high standards for individuals yet maintain connections with them even if they relapse.
6. Service delivery environments that replicate the strengths of healthy families, foster honest communication, respect the dignity of each individual and provide spiritual resources for building a new life.

Appendix A

FILTERING 1990 PUMS DATA TO IDENTIFY HOMELESS CASES

The Bureau of the Census identified fourteen types of living arrangements that are classified as noninstitutional group quarters in Appendix B — "Definitions of Subject Characteristics" of its report entitled, "1990 Census of Population: Social and Economic Characteristics." A critical step in this project was to filter 1990 PUMS records of individuals in noninstitutional group quarters to remove nonhomeless cases and leave a residual representing homeless individuals. Two assumptions regarding income that underlie this filtering process are:

- (1) People exhaust all of their financial resources before becoming homeless, and therefore records showing current incomes over the poverty level were removed.
- (2) People can plunge from being employed and housed into homelessness within a year if a financial disaster occurs.

The fourteen types of living quarters that are included under the heading "Noninstitutional Group Quarters" and the method for filtering-out nonhomeless living arrangements are listed below.

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS CLASSIFIED AS NONINSTITUTIONAL GROUP QUARTERS

<i>Category</i>	<i>Method for Filtering-Out Non-homeless Cases</i>
1. Rooming Houses Persons residing in rooming and boarding houses with 10 or more unrelated persons.	Isolate and remove cases showing employment at the time of the census survey and an income over the poverty level in 1989, plus anyone with an M.A. degree or higher.
2. Group Homes Includes "community-based homes" that provide care and supportive services. Such places include: a. <i>community homes for the mentally ill</i> b. <i>homes for the mentally retarded</i> c. <i>homes for the physically handicapped</i> d. <i>homes or halfway houses for drug/alcohol abuse</i> Includes persons with no usual home elsewhere in places that provide community-based care and supportive services to persons suffering from a drug/alcohol addiction and to recovering alcoholics and drug abusers.	Same as above — some segments of this population have much in common with the homeless and at times may in fact be homeless. Dissimilar cases can be minimized by isolating and removing cases in which data on income or employment status indicates the individual has re-entered the workforce or has a steady source of income.

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS CLASSIFIED AS NONINSTITUTIONAL GROUP QUARTERS

<i>Category</i>	<i>Method for Filtering-Out Non-homeless Cases</i>
e. <i>maternity homes for unwed mothers</i> Domestic care for unwed mothers; nursing services are usually available.	
f. <i>other group homes</i> Includes persons with no usual home elsewhere in communes, foster care homes, and job corps centers with 10 or more unrelated persons.	
3. Religious Group Quarters Includes, primarily, group quarters for nuns teaching in parochial schools and for priests living in rectories. It also includes other convents and monasteries, except those associated with a general hospital or an institution.	Isolate and remove cases in which the industry or occupation of employment indicates affiliation with a religious institution and the individual has a B.A. degree or higher.
4. College Quarters Off Campus Places occupied exclusively by college students with 10 or more unrelated persons.	Isolate and remove cases of students 18 through 24 years of age, and any students 25 or older working more than half time or earning incomes over the poverty level.
5. College Dormitories	same as above
6. Military Quarters Includes military personnel living in barracks and dormitories on base, in transient quarters on base, and on military ships.	Isolate and remove cases in which the industry of employment in 1989 was the military, and the military status code indicates the individual was on active duty at the time of the census survey.
7. Agriculture Workers' Dormitories Includes persons in migratory farm workers' camps on farms, bunkhouses for ranch hands, and other dormitories on farms, such as those on "tree farms."	Isolate and remove cases showing employment at the time of the census survey and an income over the poverty level in 1989.
8. Other Workers' Dormitories Includes persons in construction workers' camps, firehouse dormitories, job-training camps, and nonfarm migratory workers' camps (for example mining camps).	same as above
9. Emergency Shelters for Homeless Persons (with sleeping facilities) Includes persons enumerated during the "Shelter-and-Street-Night" operation. This category is divided into four classifications:	This group is the homeless residual intended to remain in the sample after the filtering process is complete.
a. <i>emergency shelters for homeless persons (with sleeping facilities)</i> Includes persons who stayed overnight on March 20, 1990, in permanent and temporary emergency housing, missions,	

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS CLASSIFIED AS NONINSTITUTIONAL GROUP QUARTERS

Category	Method for Filtering-Out Non-homeless Cases
hotels, and motels charging \$12 or less; Salvation Army shelters, and hotels and motels used for homeless persons.	
b. <i>shelters for runaway, neglected, and homeless children</i> Includes shelters/group homes which provide temporary sleeping facilities for juveniles.	
c. <i>visible in street locations</i>	
d. <i>shelters for abused women (shelters against domestic violence or family crisis centers)</i> Most shelters also provide care for children of abused women.	
10. Dormitories for Nurses and Interns in General and Military Hospitals Includes group quarters for nurses and other staff members. It excludes patients.	Isolate and remove cases showing employment at the time of the census survey and an income over the poverty level in 1989, plus anyone with an M.A. degree or higher.
11. Crews of Maritime Vessels Includes officers, crew members, and passengers of maritime U.S. flag vessels.	same as above
12. Staff Residents in Institutions Includes staff residing in group quarters on institutional grounds who provide formally-authorized, supervised care or custody for the institutionalized population.	same as above
13. Other Nonhousehold Living Situations Includes persons with no usual home elsewhere at YMCAs, YWCAs, youth hostels, commercial and government-run campgrounds, campgrounds at racetracks, fairs, and carnivals, and similar transient sites.	same as above
14. Living Quarters for Victims of Natural Disasters Includes living quarters for persons temporarily displaced by natural disasters.	The 1990 Census for Los Angeles County did not identify any such temporary facilities.

Results of Filtering Process

Based on these premises, records showing 1989 incomes up to \$40,000 but no current employment or other income were retained, including 47 records showing incomes between \$18,000 and \$40,000 in 1989 (these represented individuals who were unemployed at the time

of the census survey, had worked no hours in the preceding week and were less than 65 years old).

Beginning with 3,354 records of individuals in noninstitutional group quarters, the following twelve groups of records were filtered out:

- (1) 23 individuals whose educational attainment included a Masters Degree or higher
- (2) 44 individuals who had incomes over \$40,000 in 1989
- (3) 345 individuals who were employed at the time of the census survey and had earned incomes over the poverty level in 1989
- (4) 25 individuals who were employed at the time of the census survey and had 1989 incomes other than from wages and salaries that were over the poverty level
- (5) 382 individuals on active military duty at the time of the census survey
- (6) 1,246 individuals who were enrolled as students at the time of the census survey (students were excepted from this filter and included in the homeless residual if they met the following criteria: 25 years or older, still undergraduates, income in 1989 was under the poverty level, and worked less than 20 hours per week in 1990)
- (7) 16 employees of religious organizations with B.A. degrees or higher
- (8) 8 cases with 1989 income over the poverty level from interest, dividends, or rental income
- (9) 72 cases with Social Security income over the poverty level
- (10) 15 cases with 1989 retirement income over the poverty level
- (11) 19 individuals over 65 years of age with 1989 public assistance incomes over the poverty level
- (12) 83 individuals with no children and public assistance income over the poverty level in 1989

The residual of 1,076 records remaining after this filtering process are assumed to be homeless. When multiplied by PUMS weighting factors these records represent 21,992 people, including 14,953 males and 7,039 females.

APPENDIX B

The survey of homeless people living on the streets of downtown Los Angeles that was conducted in 1995 concluded with the following open-ended question: *"What is the most important advice you would give about helping the homeless?"* Answers given by homeless individuals after being asked this question are listed alphabetically below.

"Be honest to yourself"
"Be true to yourself"
"Build more hotels for the homeless so they can get off the street"
"Complete help"
"Continuing after care"
"Design programs that help people get jobs"
"Do for real about it and listen."
"Don't criticize"
"Don't look down on them and look at the real inner person"
"[Don't want to] live in the same area as drug users--stop the inflow of drugs--must use testing"
"Employ people who are empathetic to people"
"Find a home"
"Find support you need, address, phone number and employment"
"Get a job"
"Get a job"
"Get jobs"
"Get people away from downtown"
"Get them off the street and food"
"Give up more jobs"
"Go after your dreams"
"Go home"
"Help them find a job"
"Homeless must want to [help] self"
"Homeless need love -- employ them"
"Homeless services should work together"
"Humble yourself and build up"
"I am a recovering alcoholic- thank you"
"I don't know"
"If you need help, get help"
"It's up to the people, not the programs"
"Jobs and a place to stay"
"Jobs"

"Jobs"
 "Jobs, food, residence"
 "Keep trying"
 "Keep trying"
 "Make sure they have a place to stay when they leave a program"
 "More clean clothes for them"
 "More programs out of downtown area"
 "Need a residence to live"
 "Need more services for women"
 "Need to be more strict"
 "Nothing comes to a sleeper but a dream. If you feel you've lost , you have! You can always
 give-out, but never give up!"
 "Once you relapse, you're gone no matter what the reason"
 "Pray"
 "Pray"
 "Program staff are recovering just like the new person"
 "Programs are there to get help"
 "Programs aren't long enough nor do they offer enough support when people leave, like finding
 jobs"
 "Programs don't have enough money to provide all the services needed"
 "Programs need to be moved from downtown"
 "Provide job training when you leave program"
 "Put God first in your life"
 "Reinstate GR so people can survive. To prosper or fail within guidelines"
 "Respect everyone"
 "Respect them"
 "Seek a hand-up, not a handout"
 "Seek help"
 "Some programs are too close to drug areas--move majority of programs out of drugs area"
 "Stand, be heard and counted"
 "Stay off drugs"
 "Stay off drugs"
 "Stay out of trouble"
 "Stop drugs"
 "Stop using drugs"
 "Supply more places for people"
 "Take the bitter with the sweet"
 "The homeless are people too"
 "The homeless need some input."
 "The homeless network does not accommodate people without dysfunctions"
 "The homeless should be able to stay in the buildings that are vacant"

"The programs don't last long enough"
"Think before you give. Sometimes you make matters worse"
"To be strong"
"To know that we are people who have wants and needs"
"To stay off drugs and beer"
"To want to help him or herself first"
"Treat me with respect"
"Treat us with dignity"
"Try to help them see their greater selves and encourage them to rely on it!"
"Try to understand that we are all people"
"Understand that it could be you"
"We need affirmative action for blacks in downtown"
"We're not the problem we're made out to be."
"What happens to people who just loose their jobs?"
"Work with people after leaving programs"
"Working together"
"You have to have inner peace"
"You've got to help yourself first"

