Participation Of The Negro In

The WPA Summarized In Report

WASHINGTON, D. C. — Wages paid nearly four hundred thousand Negro workers employed on projects of the Works Progress Administration in 1939 and the early part of this year benefited more than 200,000 persons including dependents, counting an average of 3.3 persons in each WPA worker's family.

Southern states having the highest percentage of Negro workers in WPA employment were Louisiana, South Carolina, and Georgia. In Tennessee and Arkansas the proportion of Negro workers to total employment of projects was highest in Tennessee and North Carolina and lowest in Tennessee and Florida.

The facts are brought out in the annual report of the race relations office of the WPA, prepared by Edgar Smith, staff advisor in race relations, WPA headquarters.

The report commends the efforts of the WPA in providing an opportunity for better work for a fair wage. Negroes along with other workers have been enabled to preserve their morals, the report comments, while the experienced worker has maintained his skill and the inexperienced worker has gained training and experience.

"The Works Progress Administration," says the report, "saved the unemployed Negro worker from privation and want, and in a great many instances from actual starvation. It provided the Negroes training in some type of work in which private industry had refused him opportunity for employment, and at the same time reduced his employment because he lacked experience and training. Undoubtedly the Works Progress Administration in 1939 and during the early part of 1940 will be the means of opening some industrial closed doors in some industries for Negroes in 1939 and 1940."

Through the efforts of the race relations office of the WPA a drive was made to secure sponsors for projects which would employ Negro workers. The conservation of Negro welfare organizations, Negro labor and the workers themselves were assured, and the results are described in the report as gratifying.

Complaints Against South

It was complained from some Southern communities that city governments sponsored large construction projects as auditoriums, motion picture theaters, parks and the like intended for the use of white persons only, although the governmental and Federal funds came from tax monies paid by colored and white citizens alike. Comparatively little material sponsorship of such facilities for use by Negroes was reported, according to the report of the race relations office.

Projects initiated by the city of Columbus, in the employment of Negro workers totaled 2,415 during the past year. It is reported, these were included in a map tracing the project of the Rural Electrification Administration which employed 124 colored workers and the skillful workmen who are setting and grounding miles of underground. There is a report in operation at Howard University. The computations of the race relations office extend to some degree in homemaking classes for Negroes; self-culture classes, club and recreation projects.

$5 On Radio Program

The ten-year-old Ruth Thornton, 9A pupil in Public School 118, won $5 and a game on the "What's My Name" program over radio station WELP on Wednesday night.

Guarded her money, Mrs. Ruth Thornton, of 329 West 166th street, Ruth went to the studio on invitation of the sponsor and returned her mouth with an amount.

This was accepted to learn that her ticket, number 1019, had been drawn as making her the one of the program and the splendid. When she appeared before the audience she was asked several questions about movie stars and if she had answered the questions correctly she would have been given 

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