—7-Eleven

(Continued from Page A1)

Britt's store on Garrison Boulevard.

Another factor of Britt's departure was her failing health, which she attributes partly to pressure created by Southland. "I asked them to buy the store from me, as opposed to taking it from me, because of my physical condition. I had a mild heart attack and it wasn't a concern to them."

Jim Ransom, the owner of the store in the 2600 block of Liberty Heights, discussed the problems of independent 7-Eleven operators.

"Cookie was very active in trying to create changes to improve our situation. They tried to take the store last week, but people picketed the store to prevent it from happening. We are trying to create change to help us."

Ransom commented further. "We have been to Annapolis to seek legislation against them, (Southland), to protect us. We need fair franchising laws, like they have in Washington, D.C."

One provision of the Fair Franchising Act in Washington, extends Southland's 72-hour closing policy to 60 days.

Why the sudden proliferation of closings in Baltimore, as well as Washington? Ransom said that in his estimation "It's the age-old game; when blacks complain, they cut them down."

Southland also receives a franchise fee of up to $60,000 when a new franchise is established.

We attempted to contact Kathleen Callahan-Guion, the Southland District Manager, as well as the Baltimore Marketing Manager, Jay Tingle. Neither was available for comment by AFRO press time.

—Richmond analysis

(Continued from Page A1)

black firms in Richmond which is over 50 percent black.

Minority participation moved up to 40 percent during the period the requirement was active. But since the July 1987 court ruling, the participation has dropped to as low as 2 percent.

The Supreme Court decided that Richmond had not presented sufficient proof that discrimination existed before the plan was adopted.

The ruling affected approximately 190 other localities and 36 states that had similar programs.

Richmond has been getting calls from affected localities across the country, said Mrs. Gladys Jackson-Weston.

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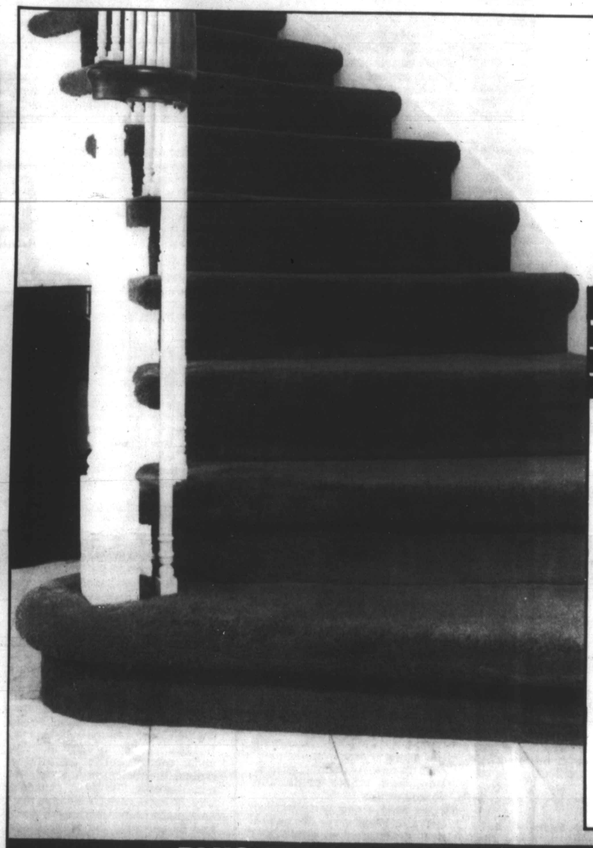

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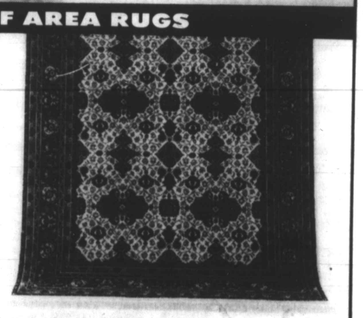

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The Afro-American — Section B

METRO PROFILE

Lifestyle B4
Kids Talk B7

Shirley Marcus: Filling the gap at D.S.S.

By Alisa Samuels
AFRO Staff Writer

It may take patience, hard work and stature to revamp the Baltimore City Department of Social Services which has been sinking in turbulent waters recently.

These are the qualities Shirley E. Marcus, the department's new interim director, hopes she can muster from her respective role models — her mother Edelle Marcus, former politician Victorine Adams and Morgan State University anthropology professor Dr. Irene Diggs, to make the department's waters calm during her temporary guidance.

"My mother was a patient woman....Victorine Adams was a quiet woman, who quietly got things done and never pushed herself on others....(and) Dr. Irene Diggs had presence. When she walked into a room people wanted to know who that was," said Marcus, a tall and slender woman.

She retains her slim frame by jogging and running, although she enjoys cooking and baking.

The native Baltimorean said she is in the process of learning how to be patient and managing to accomplish things quietly, "in my own way".

Surprisingly, Marcus said: "I want to be like Dr. Diggs when I grow up." She laughed.

At 40, Marcus has been given a chance by three influential people- the mayor, the governor and the secretary of human resources to make her presence known.

Earlier this month Marcus, a black woman, agreed to act as acting director of the DSS, which serves mostly blacks, until a permanent director is found.

Mayor Kurt L. Schmoke fired the former director George Musgrove last year.

Marcus is no novice in managing governmental departments.

She packs 18 years of human services experience in her working briefcase with bachelor's and master's degrees from Morgan State University and the University of Baltimore.

The onetime community worker was deputy executive director for the Community Services Administration and director of the Maryland Energy Assistance Program before she was chosen to temporarily replace Musgrove as head of the $800 million-budgeted department.

More than 3,000 employees help to serve more than 200,000 customers in the social services agency.

When a permanent director is found, probably within six months, Marcus said she would return to her job as deputy executive director for the Maryland Department of Human Resources. Marcus said she understands her position is temporary.

Marcus has been acting director for only 23 calendar days and already realizes the department has shortcomings to overcome.

In the past, the department's foster and day care programs have been denounced for allowing several of its foster children to suffer sexual abuse.

"Unfortunately, the focus has been on the families that fall through the cracks; that two or three percent that we have not followed the correct procedure on in terms of case management," Marcus said in her fourth floor office on Guilford Avenue.

Marcus, who called herself a team player willing to listen to both staff and management's perspectives, said she hopes to accent the 97 percent positive during her stay by improving workers' morale and attitudes towards recipients with opportunities for advancement and staff training.

"By and large, I think this agency does a great job," she said, comparing it to a corporation.

The difference is "academicians would call this a soft service and not a hard product, like a screw or a widget," Marcus said, but the department offers innovative programs to help keep the agency pumping.

For example, the department in a joint venture with the state launched Project Independence- a welfare reform program in 1988, to help find welfare recipients jobs. Marcus said DSS is also developing a model office concept with the state to accommodate workers space needs.

In spite of these new programs, Marcus said the department needs to make improvements, starting with the basics: its facilities.

"There isn't a major corporation in this country that spends $800 million that could have the kinds of facilities we have," said Marcus recently, after touring DSS centers to meet the "frontline people face-to-face.".

During her tours, the affable Marcus said workers complained of excessive workloads and little work space.

Marcus admitted the workloads exceed standards, because there are job vacancies. She said the department would work to fill the numerous vacancies.

But "we have to meet the needs of the clients whether the worker is there or not," said Sue Fitzsimmons, a spokeswoman for the department.

Marcus, a member of the New Psalmist Baptist Church, said Jan. 17-two days after slain civil rights leader, Dr. Martin L. King Jr.'s birthday, King's life made it possible for blacks like her, news anchorman Al Sanders and entertainer Bill Cosby to succeed in life.

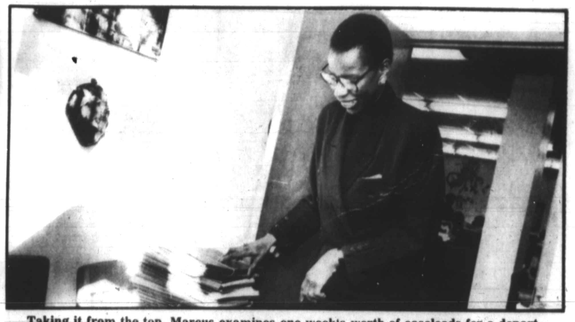
"His life informed us, his dream sustains us, yet the struggle continues," she told a New Psalmist congregation during a King celebration.

Department of Social Services Interim Director Shirley Marcus

Marcus being congratulated on her appointment by security guard Inez Mobley.

Marcus discussing office operations with eligibility supervisor Mariam Brown.

(l to r) Robin Scott, Shirley Marcus, Barbara Finley and Denise Cureton review procedure.



Taking it from the top, Marcus examines one week's worth of caseloads for a department social worker.