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BUSINESS BRIEFS

U of M Makes Analysis of Family Income

ANN ARBOR—Family income hit an all-time high in Detroit during 1967. But early this year, there were signs that the auto industry recession was having its greatest impact on those families least able to afford it.

These are two of the principal findings of the University of Michigan-Detroit area study's (DAS) annual analysis of family income in Wayne, Macomb, and Oakland counties. The DAS is associated with the U-M department of sociology and institute for social research.

DAS Director Harry Sharp reports that typical family income in metropolitan Detroit reached \$6,200 last year, up \$200 from 1966. This figure includes money from all sources received by those persons who are related by blood or marriage and are living together in one household. Half the Detroit area families had incomes greater than this amount, half had less.

But those families whose breadwinners were unemployed in February and March this year had typical 1967 incomes \$2,500 less than those still employed, Sharp notes. "The current recession seems to be having its greatest impact on those workers least able to withstand an economic setback," he comments.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS from the DAS family income study: During the past seven years, median family income in the Detroit area rose 35 per cent—about four times as fast as the cost of living.

The income of husband-wife family units rose faster than those of single, widowed or divorced breadwinners.

White family income rose at a rate somewhat greater than that of Negroes.

When only employed family breadwinners are considered, there's no evidence that any one occupational group received greater increases in purchasing power than others.

But the family income of blue collar craftsmen and foremen remained "substantially above" those of white-collar clerical and sales people.

INCOME CHANGES in the 1961-67 interval show the most dramatic shifts in the upper-income brackets. Almost three times as many Detroit area households had incomes over \$10,000 in 1967 as in 1961. Four out of 10 families had incomes of \$7,000 or more last year—twice the 1961 proportion.

But at the other end of the income scale there was relatively little change in the proportion of families with incomes below \$3,000. This group fell from only 16 to 12 per cent of the families studied. Comments Sharp:

"While some low income families moved into middle income brackets and were replaced by low income migrants to Detroit, this movement is probably not as great as that of middle income families into upper levels and already high income families moving even higher."

income were found among families with different educational levels. College-educated family breadwinners typically had an income \$3,400 greater than those who had only six years of formal education.

In 1961, the median income of white families in metropolitan Detroit was 137 per cent that of Negroes. By 1967, this figure jumped to 156 per cent—meaning that white families in general had incomes half again as high as Negroes.

Differences in income levels of residents of the city of Detroit and those living in suburban areas also increased. Typical income of city residents increased 27 per cent during 1961-67; for suburban areas, the gain was 47 per cent.

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Herbert F. Burr, owner of Herbert Burr Shoes, 255 N. Woodward, Birmingham, has been elected to head the Michigan Shoe Retailers association for 1968-69. Burr, 1331 Quanton, Bloomfield village, was chosen at a luncheon meeting in the Stadler Hilton hotel in Detroit last month.

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