

Advance.

February 13, 1972

The program is oriented to prepare participants for this type of work by teaching them basic math, English usage and science. Two professionally-trained teachers, Edmund Gomez and Mrs. Joan Wick, are provided by Skill Advancement and work with the students for several hours each Tuesday and Thursday afternoon.

Both attempt to motivate participants to learn, and use audio-visual and other up-to-date techniques as an integral part of their teaching. A more personal atmosphere is also encouraged as students and teachers alike sit around large tables in attractively-painted, carpeted rooms.

Funding for the program comes from a combination of sources. The teachers are paid by Skill Advancement, while additional personnel, such as job counselors, are on the Urban League's payroll. But the ward workers at Willowbrook, those who are perhaps closest to the students at Willowbrook, also help out by purchasing books and other materials, and by providing transportation to and from the school twice a week.

A volunteer Miss Lucy Vitale,

also works with students, teaching them music and how to play instruments, such as the guitar.

The success or failure of the program is difficult to determine at this point, David Smith claimed, both because it is still in its formative stages and also because thus far the response of prospective employers has been less than encouraging.

#### NEED A CHANCE

"We need sympathetic employers," Smith said. "Sympathetic in the sense that they are willing to give a kid a chance." He added, "There's really nothing greatly wrong with any of these kids."

Only three employers have expressed an interest in hiring those who participate in the program, Smith noted, and that was after a filmed report on the program was shown on a local television station news show. Although several persons were sent for interviews, no jobs materialized.

The five-month grant which is funding the program is due to expire in May. "Whether it's going to be continued or not is a big question," Smith noted. "We do want to continue it, but the real question is whether we ought to."

"The employers have got to do something to help. We can train them, but unless someone gives them a job, it is all in vain."

Page 2 of 2 pages