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Unemployment recently reach a 25 year high, but has begun to fall.

## High unemployment puts stress on local families and workers

By David Schwartz

In our culture, being laid off is often considered a personal failure, and many quietly blame it on themselves. According to a government study in 2010, 12.4 percent of families in the U.S. include an unemployed person, and in minority families, the percentage of unemployment jumps closer to 20%.

"You don't notice [unemployment] by looking around. Unemployed people don't wear labels or even discuss their situation with acquaintances – we're not really comfortable discussing unemployment in our culture – it seems like a personal failing even when it's not," said Tom Fricke, an Economics teacher at ARHS.

The number of families with at least one unemployed member neared 9.7 million in 2010, and according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for Massachusetts is 7.4 percent, while at a national level it is 9.1 percent. Since the 2008 economic crisis, the national unemployment rate has gone down 0.7 percent.

However, Fricke said that the released data might not tell the full story, as it hides the phenomena such as underemployment and discouraged workers. "There are also heavy regional

effects – Amherst's unemployment rate doesn't match Springfield or Las Vegas for that matter," said Fricke.

Fricke said the effects of the unemployment crisis are not equally felt between the private and the public sectors. One of the largest public sector employers in the area is UMass.

"Public sector employment is a little insulated from the economy as a whole. State tax revenue and local school funding have been on the ropes for a while now. I've seen some cuts in teaching staff over the past few years. Another aspect in the public sector is underemployment, such as people being only able to work part-time," he said. However, "there are vacancies, if you're willing to relocate," Fricke added.

The rippling effects of the 2008 banking crisis have been felt by all citizens, including people in our community. Collin Morley (name changed upon request), a sophomore at ARHS has two hardworking parents saving for his sister's college tuition. However, on Thursday, August 4, 2011, Morley's father was laid off from his job as a web editor at a local newspaper.

It came as a total surprise to Morley's father and his family. Morley's father worked at the

newspaper for about five years, and was laid off because the newspaper could not afford to keep employees due to the decline of the news industry.

Morley's father has been continually searching for a job in the news industry but has not yet found one. "My mom wasn't happy, of course, although she kept quite a cool head and helped him work on his resume," he said.

Because his father's sudden loss of employment came as a total surprise, Morley's mother had to work "extra hard to keep a decent income, but it has been pretty difficult to cut back," he said.

Morley's father does not think Obama has taken the job crisis seriously enough, and he doesn't think congress has taken the crisis seriously at all. Morley's father is a strong supporter of the Occupy Wall Street movement because he believes they are doing a good job focusing national attention on the inequalities in our current economy.

Morley's family members actively follow the Obama Jobs Bill and are strong supporters. Morley and his family have a strong hope for the future, with his father currently working on a book about the crash of the news industry.

## Sibling rivalry does not always happen

By Cassandra Jeshke

Carissa Fuller, of 2013, is one out of a set of triplets along with Ashley and Brianna Fuller.

Carissa describes her relationships with her sisters as needing to understand each other and the need to get along as crucial aspects of sisterhood. "[It] is hard to describe when you have sisters the same age as you and a twenty-one year old brother. My sisters and I get along a lot better, and we don't fight as much then we do with our older brother," said Carissa.

The connections shared between the triplets are something not easily replicated between different aged siblings. "We sometimes say the same thing at the same time, or we finish each other's sentence. One time my cousin said she saw us move in our sleep at the same time... I know we can give each other certain looks and know what they mean" recalls Carissa.

Many believe there is more arguing and frustration between twins and triplets, and Carissa distinguishes no excessive quarreling. "Being called my sisters names, teachers not being able to tell us apart, having to share the same friends were pretty much a daily challenge. Some of them have become easier like sharing friends. But the teachers mixing us up still happens a lot," said Carissa.

Carissa Fuller's sister, Ashley, '13, also feels quite compatible as well as different with her siblings. "I usually don't get along with my siblings that often, usually we are always fighting about the littlest things," said Ashley. "[I] strongly believe there are more quarrels between me and my siblings as opposed to single siblings."

Ashley describes her individuality between her sisters

as challenging. "Most people don't really realize that my sisters and I are individuals even though we might be triplets. Most people just assume that we are all alike when we are all completely different. People who meet us for the first time usually can't tell us apart so we are constantly getting called any name," said Ashley.

The Fuller trio shares special connections whereas other 'single siblings' lack this ability; "Even though I might fight with my sisters a lot we usually are always on the same page with certain things and we sometimes even finish each other's sentences," said Ashley.

Despite the immediate connections and similarities the sisters share, they also have their individual personalities that define them. "I feel as if I am more independent and I have a lot more interests in different things like for an example, we hang out with different friends, we play different sports, and we wear different things," said Ashley.

Ashley describes her accounts with sibling rivalry, but does not believe it is anything more than siblings of different ages. "I don't usually become jealous. Except for if my sisters were to get something from my parents that I didn't get, but I think that's normal for all siblings," she said. She believes competition is abundant within most families whether or not the children are twins or triplets.

"Most of the time, since we're becoming closer every day. We get to learn a lot of new things about the other that we didn't know," said Carissa Fuller. "Honestly, they are always there for me even if we aren't exactly on 'speaking terms', so yes I do consider my siblings to be my best friends," said Ashley.