URBAN EDUCATION:

STILL SEPARATE AND UNEQUAL

2019 STATE OF BLACK KANSAS CITY

URBAN EDUCATION: STILL SEPARATE AND UNEQUAL

CONTRIBUTORS

Michael Barrett, Esquire

Susan Taylor Batten

Kimberly Beatty, Ed.D.

Mark Bedell, Ed.D.

The Honorable Stephen Bough

Irene Caudillo

Tyler Cukar

Dana Tippin Cutler, Esquire

Gwendolyn Grant

Cokethea Hill, Ph.D.

Corstella Johnson, MPH, CHES

Shary M. Jones, PharmD, MPH, BCPS

Bridget McCandless, M.D.

Amy McCart, Ph.D.

Jerrihlyn L. McGee, DNP, RN, CNE

Frederick W. McKinney, Ph.D.

Marc H. Morial, Esquire

Elle Moxley

Zora Mulligan, Esquire

Julius Niyonsaba

Aaron North

James R. Nowlin, J.D.

Clint Odom, Esquire

Michael Price

Tara Raghuveer

Kim Riley

Joshua Rowland

John L. Rury, Ph.D.

Steffon E. Staley, M.S., LPC, BIP, NCC

Bette Tate-Beaver

Qiana Thomason, MSW, LCSW

Joyce Townser, RN, BSN, MSA

Patrick Tuohey

Brian L. Wright, Ph.D.

Urban League of
Greater Kansas City

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Message from the President

GWENDOLYN GRANT
President & CEO
Urban League of Greater Kansas City

As we prepare to celebrate our centennial in 2020, I am reminded of a passage written by W.E.B. DuBois in his 1903 book, *The Souls of Black Folk:* "Herein lies buried many things which if read with patience may show the strange meaning of being black here at the dawning of the 20th Century. This meaning is not without interest to you, gentle reader; for the problem of the 20th Century is the problem of the color line."

Further, I am reminded of the late American historian John Hope Franklin, who in 2003 observed: "Since by no measure could America be said to have addressed the problem, it remains the problem of the 21st Century."

Think about that. A century passed between the time W.E.B. DuBois made his prophetic declaration and the time John Hope Franklin observed that America had not addressed the problem. Now we find ourselves, 116 years since DuBois' writing, facing the sad reality that the problem of the color line remains unresolved. Moreover, since 2016 we have witnessed a seismic negative shift in race relations.

Hate crimes are on the rise, up 9% in 30 major American cities in 2018 as reported by The Center for the Study of Hate & Extremism.

Racial profiling dominated news broadcasts and social media in 2018. Vox, an American news and opinion website, reported in December 2018 that **911 calls on black people were one of 2018's biggest stories about race**. In the article, P.R. Lockhart writes: "From using a phone in a hotel lobby, trying to cash a check at a bank, to babysitting white children, mowing lawns, selling water,

eating at Subway, sleeping in a college common room, and entering their own apartment buildings, this past year has brought us countless stories of black men, women, and children who were trying to go about their daily lives only to be interrupted by a stranger challenging their presence, challenges that often culminated in interaction with the police.

"Being racially profiled for 'Living While Black' is not exactly a new phenomenon. But the wave of coverage these types of incidents received this year was unprecedented.

"National politics—along with a rise in reported hate crimes and a resurgence of white supremacist movements—has emboldened white people frustrated by their perceived loss of power to take out their fear and anxiety on communities of color" (Lockhart, 2018).

Locally, racial profiling by law enforcement is increasing. According to the Missouri Attorney General's 2018 Missouri Vehicle Stops report, **blacks were 91% more likely than whites to be stopped by law enforcement.** The figure was 85% in 2017.

Blacks in Kansas City struggle to achieve economic self-reliance. **The median net worth of black households is only $17,600 compared to $171,000 for white households.**

Black median household income is only 54% of white median household income, and the percentage of black households in poverty (24.67%) is substantially higher than the percentage of white households in poverty (7.97%).

As more African-American families migrate from Kansas City's urban core to surrounding cities, including Lee's Summit, Liberty, Blue Springs, and Overland Park, many of their children are subjected to racial bullying at the hands of white students and educators.

At the same time, Kansas City Public Schools remain highly segregated. **Only 10% of the students are white, and the black/white achievement gap persists. The average ACT score for black students is 14.4 compared to 22.8 for white students.**

Certainly, all of these facts are distressing. So, how do we write a brighter future for Kansas City?

To do so, we must push back on racism, discrimination, hate speech, micro-aggressions, and racial bullying whenever and wherever they show up.

We must engage in difficult conversations about race, equity, inclusion, and power. And when we come to the table for dialogue, we should do so acknowledging that talk alone will not solve our race problems. We must come to the table with the mindset, the will, and the resolve to deconstruct the structural and systemic barriers that have marginalized and disenfranchised African Americans all these years.

In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "Only when they are in full possession of their civil rights everywhere, and afforded equal economic opportunity, will the haunting race question finally be laid to rest."

So, the Urban League is determined to prick the consciences and spark the imagination of those of us who have the power to do something to change these inequities.

Imagine the change you want to see, then become the person in the mirror to make that change.

- **Imagine what it would be like in Kansas City if we invested the resources needed to link the Crossroads with the 18th & Vine Historic Jazz District to attract more retail and housing to the area.**

- **Imagine what it would be like in Kansas City if we invested more money in educating our troubled youth than in incarcerating them.**

- **Imagine what our neighborhoods would be like if we solved the affordable housing crisis.**

- **Imagine how Kansas City would look if the Mayor and City Council executed tax incentive reform ordinances to ensure equitable economic development in the urban core.**

- **Imagine what would happen to our children if each one of us mentored or tutored one student in our public schools.**

- **And then imagine** what would happen to our public schools if institutions of higher learning held individuals who aspire to teach to higher standards.

- **Just imagine.** Think about it. Then take a look in the mirror. The change begins with you.

In the words of the late Paul Wellstone, American academic, author, and politician: "The future will not belong to those who are content with the present. The future will not belong to cynics and people who sit on the sidelines. The future will belong to people who have passion and are willing to work hard to make this country better."

If you want to make Kansas City a better place, take a look at yourself, and then make a change!

Our work continues.

Imagine the change you want to see, then become the person in the mirror to make that change.

— GWENDOLYN GRANT

DuBois, W.E.B. (1903). *The souls of black folk*. Chicago, IL: A.C. McClurg & Co.

Lockhart, P. R. (2018, December 31). *911 calls on black people were one of 2018's biggest stories about race*. Vox. Retrieved from https://www.vox.com/identities/2018/12/31/18159465/living-while-black-racial-profiling-911-police-racism.

2019 STATE OF BLACK KANSAS CITY

EQUALITY INDEX

Executive Summary
&
Key Findings

GWENDOLYN GRANT

President & CEO

Urban League of Greater Kansas City

Executive Summary

The *2019 State of Black Kansas City – Urban Education: Still Separate and Unequal* provides an in-depth look into the prevailing issues that undergird the socioeconomic gaps between blacks and whites in Greater Kansas City. In addition to a special collection of essays and op-eds that spotlight urban education issues, this report includes the **Black/White and Hispanic/White Equality Indexes**. The equality indices were created to capture empirical evidence of African-American and Latinx progress in economics, health, education, social justice, and civic engagement since the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Further, the Equality Index measures how African Americans are doing in these areas on a 100-point scale. Whites are used as the benchmark (100 points) because the history of race in America has created advantages for whites that continue to persist in many of the outcomes measured.

The University of Missouri-Kansas City's (UMKC) Institute for Human Development in partnership with UMKC's Center for Economic Information conducted the Equality Index research following the same methodology as the National Urban League. Each category is weighted based on the importance the NUL applies to each as follows:

- **ECONOMICS: 30%**
- **HEALTH: 25%**
- **EDUCATION: 25%**
- **SOCIAL JUSTICE: 10%**
- **CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: 10%**
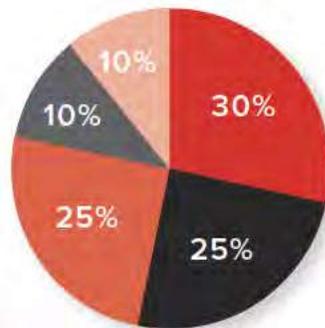
TO ACCESS THE COMPLETE 2019 BLACK/WHITE AND HISPANIC/WHITE EQUALITY INDEXES AND EXPERT ANALYSIS, VISIT THE URBAN LEAGUE OF GREATER KANSAS CITY'S WEBSITE:

https://www.ulkc.org/social-justice

BLACK / WHITE

EQUALITY INDEX

Key Findings

The 2019 Equality Index of Black Kansas City is 73%. This means that rather than having a whole pie (100%)—full equality with whites in 2019—African Americans are missing about 27% of the pie.

BLACKS

73%

WHITES

100%
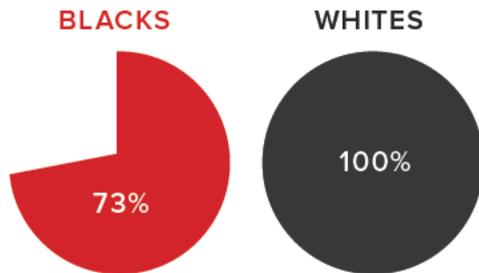
A comparison of the Equality Index of Black Kansas City for previous years with the 2019 Index illustrates that progress has been static in all categories.

A closer look at the sub-indices for each category of the Equality Index sheds some light on these outcomes.

EQUALITY INDEX OF BLACK KANSAS CITY*

YEAR	2006	2007	2008	2010	2015	2019
BLACK/WHITE INDEX	**73%**	**75%**	**75%**	**74%**	**72%**	**73%**
ECONOMICS	54%	57%	58%	53%	57%	61%
HEALTH	80%	82%	83%	78%	77%	75%
EDUCATION	78%	79%	78%	85%**	78%	77%
SOCIAL JUSTICE	65%	62%	67%	58%	52%	55%
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT	1.09%	1.14%	1.08%	1.09%	1.07%	1.09%

*Index percentages are rounded to the nearest value.

**The measurable increase in education in 2010 was due in large part to significant changes in weights of the sub-indices in education as determined by the National Urban League and Global Insights. If we had used the exact weights for the sub-indices in 2010 that were used in 2008, the education index would have increased from .782 to .799, an increase of only 2.1%.

ECONOMICS – 30%

Four key weights in the **Economic Sub-Index** highlight the poor economic conditions of the black community:

1) **Median Household Income** is only 54% ($37,968) for blacks compared to whites ($70,078) in 2019, a decrease of 1% from 2015.[1]

2) **Median Net Worth of Households** for blacks in 2019 is only 10% ($17,600) compared to their white counterparts ($171,000).[2]

3) The **Poverty Rate** for black people is 200% (24.96%) more compared to their white counterparts (7.97%).[3]

4) The **Rate of Home Ownership** of black people is only 56% compared to their white counterparts. This is a drop of 9% from 2015 levels. The Kansas City real estate market has expanded from 2015 to 2019. Yet, black people have not been the beneficiaries of a booming real estate market in the region. Black home ownership increased only 4.8% during that period, while white home ownership rates increased 21.3%.[4]

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

BLACK
$37,968

WHITE
$70,078

MEDIAN NET WORTH OF HOUSEHOLDS

BLACK
$17,600

WHITE
$171,000

POVERTY RATE
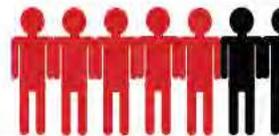
BLACK 24.96% / WHITE 7.97%

RATE OF HOME OWNERSHIP
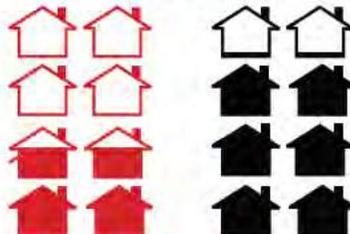
BLACK 42.66%   WHITE 76.06%

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1   2019 Equality Index: State of Black Kansas City, UMKC Institute for Human Development and UMKC Center of Economic Information, p. 13.

2   Ibid.

3   Ibid.

4   Ibid.

Employment is another indicator of economic well-being. For both black men and women, the **Civilian Unemployment Rate** for black people are substantially higher than the rate for whites. However, the **Labor Force Participation Rate** for black people increased from 96% in 2015 to 123.6% in 2019.[5]

HEALTH – 25%

In the Kansas City region, the **Health Sub-Index for 2019 is 74.9%** compared to 77.4% in 2015. This represents a decrease in the Health Sub-Index for black people of 2.5%. A driving factor in this Sub-Index is the fact that Missouri and Kansas are two of 14 states that have not expanded Medicaid Coverage.[6]

The **Age-Adjusted Death Rate** for black people has deteriorated substantially since 2015. The index value in 2019 is 74% while the rate in 2015 was 86%. The **Life Expectancy at Birth** index is 94% in 2019 compared to 99% in 2015. The **Fetal Death Rate** for black people per 1,000 deteriorated substantially in 2019 as well. The Fetal Death Rate Index is 24% in 2019 compared to an index rate of 39% in 2015. Fetal Death Rates were more than triple the Fetal Death Rates of whites.[7]

The **Incidence of Obesity (BMI>=30)** deteriorated from 2015 levels as well. The Incidence of Obesity is almost one-third higher for black people than whites with a 2019 index value of 68%. This index value in 2015 was 71%.[8]

AGE-ADJUSTED DEATH RATE

PER 100,000

BLACK 933

WHITE 686

LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH

YEARS

BLACK 73.6

WHITE 78.39

FETAL DEATH RATE

PER 1,000

BLACK 6.47

WHITE 1.53
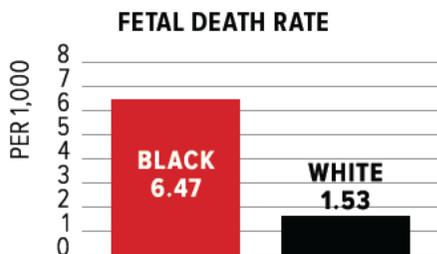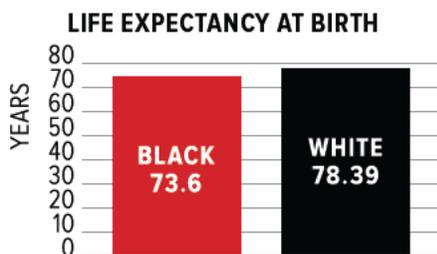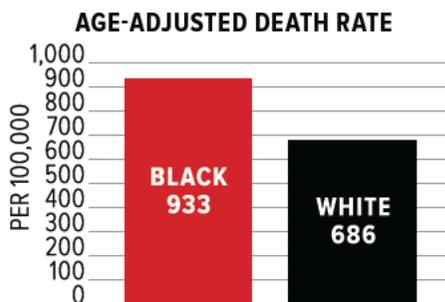
5 Ibid., p. 15.
6 Ibid., p. 17.
7 Ibid., p. 18.
8 Ibid.

Access to Care variables contribute negatively to both the Health Sub-Index and the overall Equality Index for black residents of Kansas City. The **People Without Health Insurance** variable had an index value of 46% in 2019 compared to an value of 52% in 2015. The Access to Care component was 56% in 2019 compared to an index value of 59% in 2015.[9]

EDUCATION – 25%

Black students in Kansas City are performing worse educationally than whites in the Kansas City region. The **Education Sub-Index for the 2019 Black Equality Index is 76.8%**, compared to the 2015 Sub-Index of 77.5%.[10]

Key contributing variables include: (1) the percentage of **Classes Taught by Highly Qualified Teachers**; (2) the percentage of **Adults (25 and older) who are High School Graduates**; (3) the percentage of **Adults (25 and older) with a Bachelor's Degree**; and (4) **ACT Composite Scores**.[11]

A lower percentage (38%) of classes for black students are taught by highly qualified teachers than classes for white students.

Blacks students graduated from high school at higher rates than did white students. However, twice as many white students as black students obtained a Bachelor's degree.

The average Composite ACT scores for black students is 14.4 compared to an average composite score of 22.8 for white students.

CLASSES TAUGHT BY HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS

BLACK 38%
WHITE 100%

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES
(ADULTS 25 AND OLDER)

BLACK 32%
WHITE 23%

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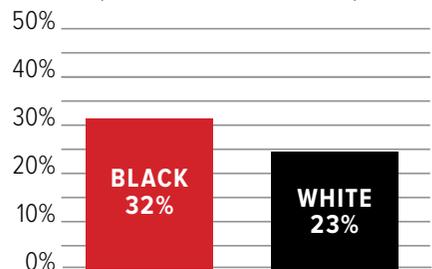
9   Ibid., p. 21.

10 Ibid., p. 24.

11 Ibid., p. 25.

Additionally, **Student Status and Risk Factors** are included in calculating the Education Index. Because the performance of children at school is linked to conditions in their households, these variables were selected: (1) **Poverty**, (2) **Children with No Parent in the Labor Force**, (3) **Attendance**, and (4) **Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunches**.[12]

> BASED ON THE POVERTY RATE IN JACKSON COUNTY **99.8% OF BLACK STUDENTS** ARE ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED PRICE LUNCHES COMPARED TO **20% OF WHITE STUDENTS**

Black children in Greater Kansas City are two to three times more likely than white children to live in poverty and live in a household with no parent in the labor force. Moreover, 99.8% of black students in Jackson County are eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunches compared to 20% of white students. In Wyandotte County, 84.6% of black students are eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunches compared to 50% of white students. Less than 1% of white students in Johnson County are eligible compared to 4% of black students. These data were not available for Clay and Platte Counties.[13]
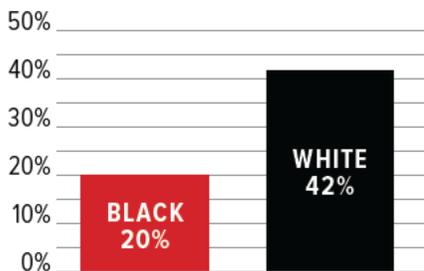
BACHELOR'S DEGREE (ADULTS 25 AND OLDER)

BLACK 20%	WHITE 42%

ACT COMPOSITE SCORES

POINTS

BLACK 14.4	WHITE 22.8
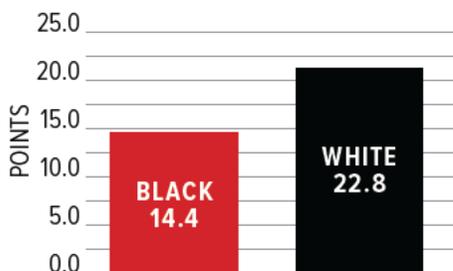
Discipline variables that are indicative of the high probability of black children being removed from mainstream classrooms were also included in the Student Status and Risk Factors. In Jackson County, black children are 7 times more likely than white students to be suspended from school for 10 or more days; and in Wyandotte County, black students are 3.4 times more likely than white students to be suspended from school.[14]

12 Ibid., p. 28.
13 Appendix A, 2019 Kansas City Black Equality Index, Student Status and Risk Factors Component.
14 Ibid.

SOCIAL JUSTICE – 10%

The **Social Justice** findings are alarming. Black people have noticeably longer **Prison Sentences** (7.7 years) compared to those of white people (5.8 years). Differences that are even more disturbing are in the **Murder Victimization Rate**, with 77% of victims from the black population compared to 20% of the victims from the white population.[15]

Equality Before the Law constitutes 70% of the Social Justice Sub-Index. There are major differences in the index values for the variables that make up the Equality Before the Law component. In particular, the Incarceration Rate for whites is less than 25% of the Incarceration Rate for Blacks in both Missouri and Kansas. In Missouri, Blacks are 91% more likely to be subjected to traffic stops, yet whites have a higher contraband hit rate. In general, the indicators for Kansas have much lower index values than do the indicators for Missouri.[16]

The **Homicide Rate (21%)** in the region is almost five times as great among blacks as it is among whites. The **Homicide Victimization Rate** Index value is 26%, four times as large for blacks as it is for whites. Prisoners Under Sentence of Death is five times higher for the black population than it is for whites.[17]

AVERAGE PRISON SENTENCE FOR ALL OFFENSES

YEARS

BLACK 7.7 YEARS — WHITE 5.8 YEARS

MURDER VICTIMIZATION RATE

PERCENT OF VICTIMS

BLACK 77% — WHITE 20%
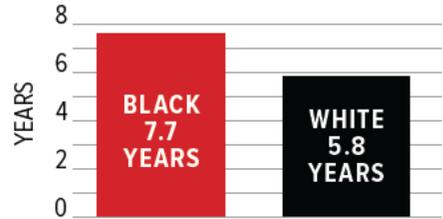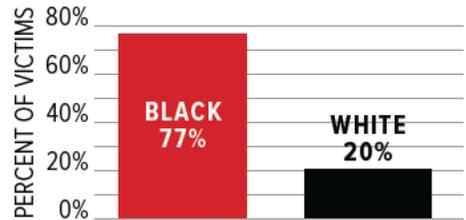
PRISONERS UNDER SENTENCE OF DEATH
5X HIGHER FOR BLACKS THAN IT IS FOR WHITES

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15 2019 Equality Index: State of Black Kansas City, UMKC Institute for Human Development and UMKC Center or Economic Information, p. 30.

16 Ibid., p. 31.

17 Ibid.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT — 10%

This **Civic Engagement Sub-Index value of 108.6%** illustrates that black people are more civically engaged than whites locally. Two variables that serve as major indicators of Civic Engagement are the percentage of **U.S. Citizens 18 and Older Who Voted** and the percentage of **Workers 16 and Older Who Work in the Private Nonprofit Sector**.

The **Democratic Process** component is calculated from one variable: the percentage of registered voters from the population of U.S. citizens 18 and over. The index value for this component is 95%. This value suggests relative equality in voter registration. In actuality, there are differences between Missouri and Kansas with regard to the Democratic Process component. In Missouri, black people were more involved in voting behaviors than whites, while the opposite was true in Kansas.

U.S. CITIZENS REGISTERED TO VOTE
(DATA FROM 2016 ELECTION)

MISSOURI
VOTE

BLACK 77%   WHITE 75%

KANSAS
VOTE

BLACK 61%   WHITE 72%
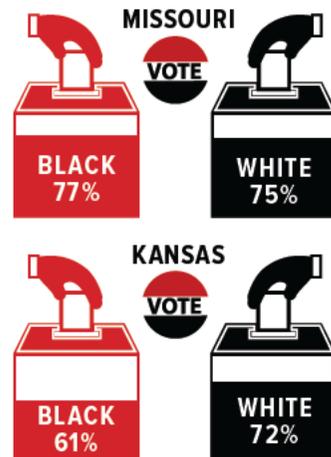
According to Missouri data from the 2016 election, 77% of black U.S. citizens over 18 were registered to vote, compared to 75% of whites. In Kansas, 61% of black U.S. citizens over 18 were registered to vote, compared to a white voter registration percentage of 72%. Index values of 103% in Missouri and 85% in Kansas indicate that great inequality is occurring in the Democratic Process in Kansas.

The **Community Participation** component has an index value of 105.33% in 2019 compared to an index value of 98.2% in 2015, suggesting that black people are more involved in the armed forces and the non-profit sector than whites in the Kansas City region.

18 Ibid., pp. 33–35.
19 Ibid., p. 35.

Collective Bargaining is captured by the percentage of **Those Employed Who are Union Members**. The index value of 117% for the unionism variable shows that a significantly higher percentage of Black people are in unions than whites.

Two components comprise the **Government Employment Sub-Indices**: percentage of **Government Workers in the Employed Population over 16** and percentage of **Public Administration Employment in the Employed Population over 16**. Both Government Workers and Public Administration Employment variables contribute to the very high index value of 139.4% in 2019 compared to an index value of 134.7% in 2015 for the Government Employment component. It therefore raises both the Civic Engagement Sub-Index and the Black Equality Index.[18]

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19 2019 Equality Index: State of Black Kansas City, p. 35.

Conclusion

The **Kansas City Black Equality Index of 72.5%** reveals that much work must be done for the black population to achieve equality and fare as well as the white population. The **National Black Equality Index of 72.5%** denotes the pervasiveness of this inequality across the United States.

All five of the areas of inequality that were examined—**Social Justice**, **Economics**, **Health**, **Education**, and **Civic Engagement**—are intertwined with one another.

In 2019, the Social Justice, Economics, and Civic Engagement Indices increased from 2015 levels. The Health Index and Education Index decreased in 2019 from 2015, reflecting inadequate attention to the health needs of the black community in the Kansas City region. The Health Index should not have decreased from 2015 to 2019, given access to care by the Affordable Care Act, but the refusal of the legislators to expand Medicaid Insurance in Missouri and Kansas was a contributing factor. Concerted, collaborative efforts will be needed to address the multiplicity and complexity of these issues. The importance of continued assessment as a means to determine whether strategies to improve equality are making a meaningful difference cannot be overstated.[19]

TO ACCESS THE COMPLETE 2019 BLACK/WHITE AND HISPANIC/WHITE EQUALITY INDEXES AND EXPERT ANALYSIS, VISIT THE URBAN LEAGUE OF GREATER KANSAS CITY'S WEBSITE:

https://www.ulkc.org/social-justice

HISPANIC / WHITE

EQUALITY INDEX

Key Findings

The 2019 Equality Index for Hispanic Kansas City represents the second comparison between Hispanic and non-Hispanic white Kansas City residents. The first comparison of Hispanic and non-Hispanic white Kansas City residents was conducted in 2015.

Both indices follow a methodology used by the National Urban League in its most recent Equality Index publication. This method compares the value of indicators in several categories for Hispanic residents of Kansas City with the value of the same indicators for non-Hispanic white residents of Kansas City. The Index uses data from the five most populous counties of the Kansas City Metro Area: Clay, Jackson, and Platte in Missouri, and Johnson and Wyandotte in Kansas.

The 2019 Kansas City Hispanic Equality Index of 77.2% shows a marginal improvement of 1.3% in four years. Hispanics have achieved little progress from 2015 to 2019.[1]

HISPANICS

77.2%

NON-HISPANIC WHITES

100%
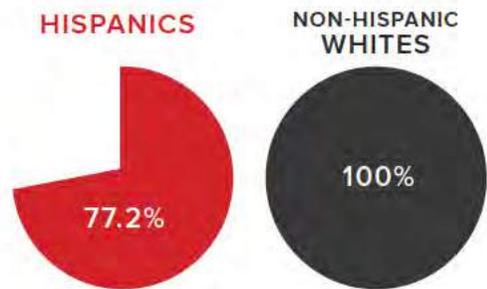
DISTRIBUTION OF HISPANIC POPULATION IN 5-COUNTY KANSAS CITY METRO AREA

37%

26%

25%

3%

9%
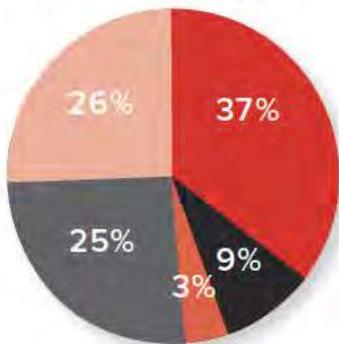
- **JACKSON (MO): 37%**
- **CLAY (MO): 9%**
- **PLATTE (MO): 3%**
- **WYANDOTTE (KS): 25%**
- **JOHNSON (KS): 26%**

1   2019 Equality Index: State of Hispanic Kansas City, pp. 2, 6.

ECONOMICS – 30%

In the Kansas City region, the **Economics Sub-Index of the Hispanic Equality Index for 2019 was 64%.**[2] There are four key weights in the Economic Sub-Index that highlight the poor performance of the Hispanic community. They are: (1) **Median Household Income**, (2) **Median Net Worth**, (3) **Poverty Rate**, and (4) **Rate of Home Ownership.**

Hispanic **Median Household Income** is 63% of that for non-Hispanic whites, and **Median Net Worth** of Hispanics is 7% of that of non-Hispanic whites. In 2015, Median Household Income was 75% compared to their non-Hispanic white counterparts. The **Poverty Rate** of Hispanic people is more than double the poverty rate of non-Hispanic whites, while the **Home Ownership Rate** of Hispanic people is 70% that of non-Hispanic whites.

Median Income (25% of the Economics Sub-Index)[3] There are three variables that are equally weighted in calculating the Median Income component of the Economics Sub-Index: **Median Household Income, Median Male Earnings,** and **Median Female Earnings.** For Hispanic men, the Median Earnings

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

HISPANIC
$44,405

NON-HISPANIC
WHITE
$70,078

MEDIAN NET WORTH OF HOUSEHOLD

HISPANIC
$12,329

NON-HISPANIC
WHITE
$171,000

POVERTY RATE

HISPANIC
23.02%

NON-HISPANIC
WHITE
7.97%

RATE OF HOME OWNERSHIP
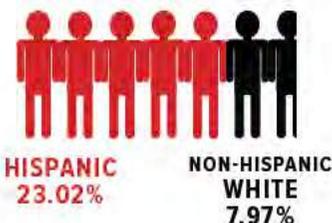
HISPANIC
53.12%

NON-HISPANIC
WHITE
76.06%
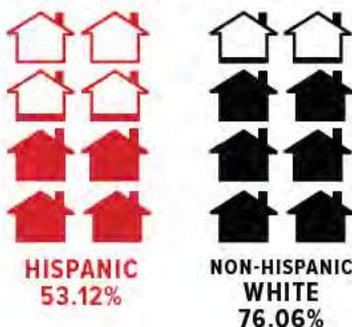
2 Ibid., p. 12.
3 Ibid., p. 13.

are 69% compared to their non-Hispanic white counterparts, an increase of 3% from 2015. For Hispanic women, the Median Earnings were 68% compared to their non-Hispanic white counterparts, a decrease of 5%. The Median Income Index was 69%, a decrease of 1% compared to 2015. Median Household Income was 71%, a decrease of 4% compared to their non-Hispanic white counterparts. The overall value for the Median Income Index in the Economics Sub-Index is 69%, a decrease of 2% since 2015.

Poverty (15% of the Economics Sub-Index)[4] The **Overall Poverty Rate** (percentage of households below the poverty line) of non-Hispanic white households, relative to that of Hispanic households, accounts for 60% of the value of the Poverty component. The remaining 40% comes from the ratio of percentage of non-Hispanic white households to percentage of Hispanic households in the three lowest categories of income relative to the poverty line (each of these gets one-third of the remaining 40%).

Because higher poverty numbers reflect a worse economic condition, we look at the percentage of **Non-Hispanic White Households in Poverty** divided by the percentage of **Hispanic Households in Poverty** to get a number that grows when things become more equal. The index value of the Poverty component is 50%. The Poverty component has the lowest index value of all six components of the Economics Sub-Index for Hispanic people, and therefore, brings the Economics Sub-Index down.

Housing and Wealth (34% of the Economics Sub-Index)[5] The **Rate of Home Ownership** for Hispanic people is only 53% compared to the non-Hispanic white home ownership rate of 76%. As a result, more non-Hispanic white people have more wealth from home ownership than Hispanic people. In addition, compared to non-Hispanic whites, the **Mortgage Denial Rate** Index and the **Home Improvement Denial Rate** Index were substantially higher.

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4 Ibid., p. 13.
5 Ibid., p. 14.

HEALTH — 30%

In the Kansas City region, the **Health Sub-Index of the Hispanic Equality Index for 2019 is 103.73%**.[6] The national value for the Hispanic Health Sub-Index is 104.2%. This represents a decrease in the Health Sub-Index for Hispanics of 0.5%. A driving factor in this Sub-Index is the fact that Missouri and Kansas are two of 14 states that have not expanded Medicaid coverage. In addition, a lack of information in the Hispanic community about health care access contributes to this factor.

KEY HEALTH VARIABLES:[7]

The Hispanic **Death Rate** is much better than the Death Rate for non-Hispanic whites, with the index value of 155% suggesting that Hispanics are faring far better than non-Hispanic whites. The Hispanic **Life Expectancy at Birth** of 82 years is also better than the Life Expectancy at Birth for non-Hispanic whites of 78 years (index value of 105%). However, the **Incidence of Obesity** is almost one-third higher for Hispanics than non-Hispanic whites (index value of 73%), and the **Fetal Death Rate** for Hispanics is higher than the rate for non-Hispanic whites (index value of 78%).

Physical Conditions (10% of the Health Sub-Index)[8] Four variables contribute to the calculation of the Physical Condition component of the

AGE-ADJUSTED DEATH RATE

PER 100,000

| 800 |
| 700 |
| 600 |
| 500 |
| 400 |
| 300 |
| 200 |
| 100 |
| 0 |

HISPANIC 465

NON-HISPANIC WHITE 686

LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH

YEARS

| 100 |
| 90 |
| 80 |
| 70 |
| 60 |
| 50 |
| 40 |
| 30 |
| 20 |
| 10 |
| 0 |

HISPANIC 82.07

NON-HISPANIC WHITE 78.39

FETAL DEATH RATE

PER 1,000

| 8 |
| 7 |
| 6 |
| 5 |
| 4 |
| 3 |
| 2 |
| 1 |
| 0 |

HISPANIC 4.6

NON-HISPANIC WHITE 3.6
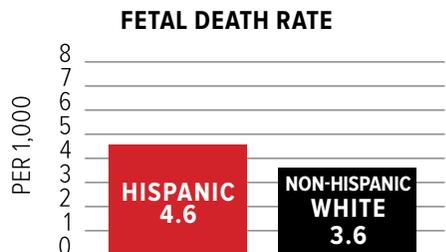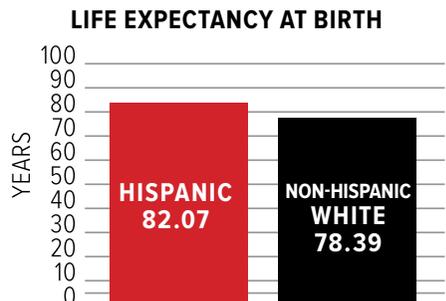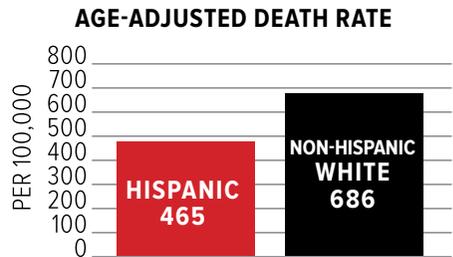
6 Ibid., p. 16.

7 Ibid., p. 17.

8 Ibid., p. 18.

Health Sub-Index. The **Incidence of HIV/AIDS** among Hispanic people has an index value of only 45%, which means that the incidence of HIV/AIDS is much higher in the Hispanic community as compared to the non-Hispanic white community. The **Incidence of Being Slightly Overweight** has an index value of 108%, which means that the incidence of being slightly overweight is 8% lower among Hispanic adults than among non-Hispanic white adults. The index value for the **Physical Condition** component for Hispanic residents of Kansas City is 80% in 2019 compared to 85% in 2015.

Access to Care (5% of Health Sub-Index)[9] The **People Without Health Insurance** variable had an index value of 45% in 2019 that was no change from 2015. The Access to Care component was 56% in 2019 compared to an index value of 59% in 2015. Another alarming statistic in the Hispanic community is the number of people who reported **Fair or Poor Health**. The index value was 62% in 2019 compared to an index value of 81% in 2015. A primary driver in the health variables deterioration is the failure of Missouri and Kansas to expand Medicaid.

Children's Health (10% of the Health Sub-Index)[10] The Children's Health Index is 60% in 2019. For the three variables that make up this component, the **Incidence of a Negative Outcome** for Hispanic children (Uninsured Children, lack of Medicaid Coverage among Children, and lack of Private Health Insurance Coverage for Children) is at least twice as high for Hispanic people as it is for non-Hispanic white people. The **Incidence of Obesity** is higher among Hispanic children than for non-Hispanic white children. These negative outcomes for Hispanic children are unacceptable in our society.

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9   Ibid., p. 19.
10 Ibid., p. 21.

EDUCATION – 25%

In the Kansas City region, the **Education Sub-Index for the 2019 Hispanic Equality Index is 69.45%.**[11] The following variables had substantial weight within the Education area: percentage of **Classes Taught by Highly Qualified Teachers**, **Composite ACT Scores**, percentage of **Adults (25 and Older) who are High School Graduates**, and percentage of **Adults (25 and Older) with a Bachelor's Degree**.

A lower percentage of classes are taught by Highly Qualified Teachers for Hispanic students than non-Hispanic white students. The average Composite ACT Scores for Hispanic students were 14.8% compared to 22.8% for non-Hispanic whites. The percentage of High School Graduates was higher for Hispanic students than non-Hispanic whites. However, twice as many non-Hispanic whites as Hispanics obtained a Bachelor's degree (42% vs. 16%).

CLASSES TAUGHT BY HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS
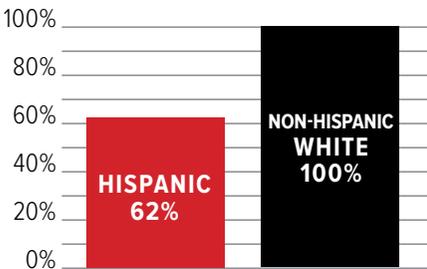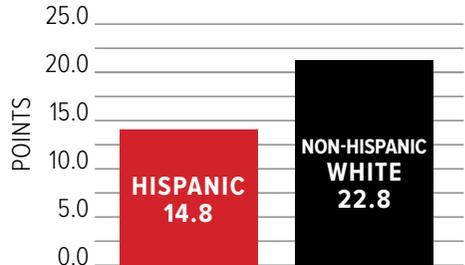
HISPANIC 62%　NON-HISPANIC WHITE 100%

ACT COMPOSITE SCORES

POINTS

HISPANIC 14.8　NON-HISPANIC WHITE 22.8

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES (ADULTS 25 AND OLDER)

HISPANIC 27%　NON-HISPANIC WHITE 23%

BACHELOR'S DEGREE (ADULTS 25 AND OLDER)

HISPANIC 16%　NON-HISPANIC WHITE 42%
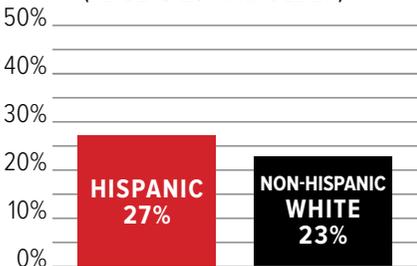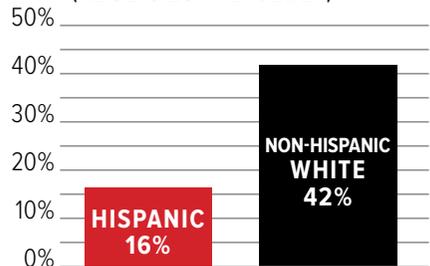
11 Ibid., p. 23.

SOCIAL JUSTICE – 10%

In the Kansas City region, the **Social Justice Sub-Index for the Hispanic Equality Index is 74.7% in 2019** compared to 70.3% in 2015.[12] One important variable carried the greatest weight in the calculation of the Hispanic Social Justice Sub-Index. This variable is the **Average Prison Sentence for All Offenses**. The average Prison Sentence for Hispanic people is 6.1 years, and the average for non-Hispanic whites is 5.8 years. The index value for this variable is 95.1% in 2019 compared to 80.9% in 2015. This represents a marked improvement from 2015 but still documents longer Hispanic prison sentences, compared to those of non-Hispanic white people.[13]

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT – 10%

In the Kansas City region, the **Civic Engagement Sub-Index for the 2019 Hispanic Equality Index is 72.7% in 2019** compared to 61% in 2015. This index value illustrates that Hispanic people are less civically engaged than non-Hispanic whites.[14]

Two variables that serve as major indicators of Civic Engagement are the percentage of **U.S. Citizens 18 and Over Registered to Vote** and the percentage of **Workers 16 and Older Who Work in the Private Nonprofit Sector**. Only 56% of Hispanics are registered voters compared to 74% non-Hispanic white people.[15]

U.S. CITIZENS REGISTERED TO VOTE
(DATA FROM 2016 ELECTION)

VOTE

HISPANIC
56%

NON-HISPANIC
WHITE
74%
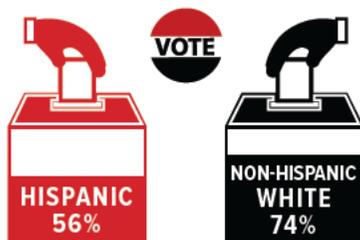
The **Community Participation** component has an index value of 69.4% in 2019 compared to 50.1% in 2015. Across all counties in the five-county Kansas City region, the greatest inequality was in being a **Veteran of the Armed Forces**, with non-Hispanic white people being much more likely to hold this status.

12 Ibid., p. 28.
13 Ibid., p. 29.
14 Ibid., p. 31.
15 Ibid., p. 32.

Conclusion

The **Kansas City Hispanic Equality Index of 77.2%** reveals that much work must be done for the Hispanic populations to achieve equality and fare as well as non-Hispanic white populations. The **National Hispanic Equality Index of 79.3%** denotes the pervasiveness of this inequality across the United States.

All five of the areas of inequality that were examined—**Social Justice, Economics, Health, Education,** and **Civic Engagement**—are intertwined with one another.

In 2019, the Social Justice, Economic, and Civic Engagement Indices increased from 2015 levels. The Health Index and the Education Index decreased in 2019 from 2015, reflecting inadequate attention to the health and education needs of the Hispanic community in the Kansas City region. The Health Index should not have decreased from 2015 to 2019 given the increased access to care under the Affordable Care Act, but the legislatures' refusal to expand Medicaid Insurance in Missouri and Kansas is a contributing factor. Concerted, collaborative efforts will be needed to address the multiplicity and complexity of the issues.[16]

TO ACCESS THE COMPLETE 2019 BLACK/WHITE AND HISPANIC/WHITE EQUALITY INDEXES AND EXPERT ANALYSIS, VISIT THE URBAN LEAGUE OF GREATER KANSAS CITY'S WEBSITE:

https://www.ulkc.org/social-justice

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16 Ibid., p. 33.

Urban League of **Greater Kansas City**

Kansas City Maps

The following maps provide extensive information to supplement the indices in describing the status of residents in the Kansas City metropolitan area:

Map 1   2014 African-American Population, Kansas City Metropolitan Core

% African-American Population

- Zero Population
- Less than 5%
- 5 - 10%
- 10 - 15%
- 15 - 25%
- 25 - 50%
- More than 50%

Kansas City, Mo
Kansas City, Ks
Counties

Data Source:
2010 Decennial Census

Map prepared by:
The UMKC Center for Economic Information

Map 2   2019 African-American Population, Kansas City Metropolitan Core

% African-American Population

Less than 5%	Kansas City, Mo
5 - 10%	Kansas City, Ks
10 - 15%	Counties
15 - 25%	Zero Population Areas
25 - 50%	
More than 50%	Data Source: 2016 American Community Survey

Map 3   2014 Latin-American Population, Kansas City Metropolitan Core

% Latin-American Population

Zero Population	Kansas City, Mo
Less than 5%	Kansas City, Ks
5 - 10%	Counties
10 - 15%	
15 - 25%	
25 - 50%	
More than 50%	

Data Source:
2010 Decennial Census

Map prepared by:

The **UMKC** Center for Economic Information

Map 4   2019 Latin-American Population, Kansas City Metropolitan Core

% Latin-American Population

- Less than 5%
- 5 - 10%
- 10 - 15%
- 15 - 25%
- 25 - 50%
- More than 50%

- Kansas City, Mo
- Kansas City, Ks
- Counties
- Zero Population Areas

Data Source:
2016 American Community Survey

5   2.5   0   5 Miles

UMKC
CEI   Center for
Economic
Information

Map 5   2014 Median Household Income, Kansas City Metropolitan Core

Median Household Income

Zero Population	Kansas City, Mo
Less than $35,000	Kansas City, Ks
$35,000 - 50,000	Counties
$50,000 - $75,000	Data Source:
$75,000 - 125,000	American Community
More than $125,000	Survey, 2006-2010

Map prepared by:

The UMKC Center for Economic Information
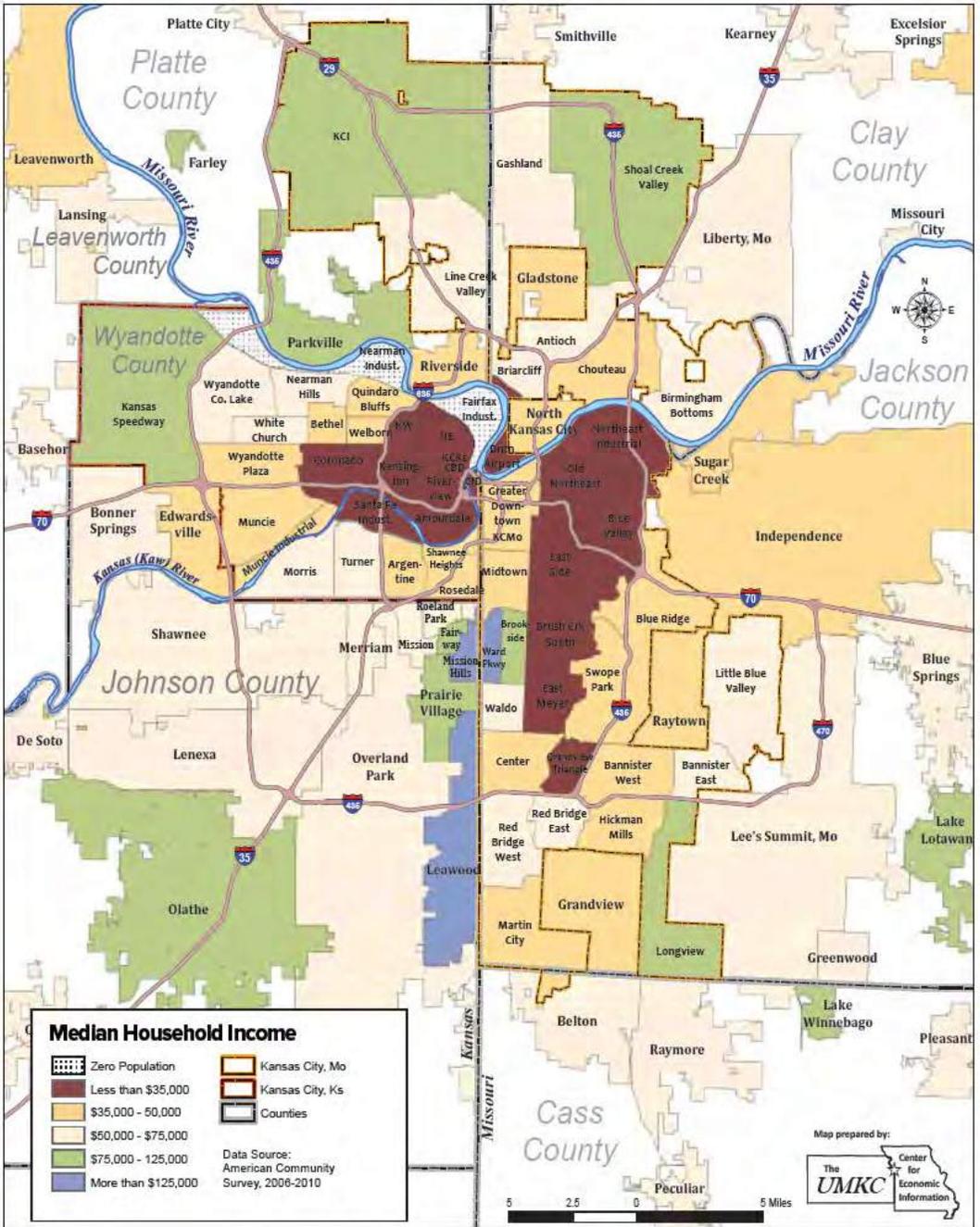
Map 6 2019 Median Household Income, Kansas City Metropolitan Core

Median Household Income

- Less than $35,000
- $35,000 - $50,000
- $50,000 - $75,000
- $75,000 - $125,000
- More than $125,000

Kansas City, Mo
Kansas City, Ks
Counties
Zero Population Areas

Data Source:
2016 American Community Survey

5   2.5   0   5 Miles

UMKC
CEI   Center for Economic Information
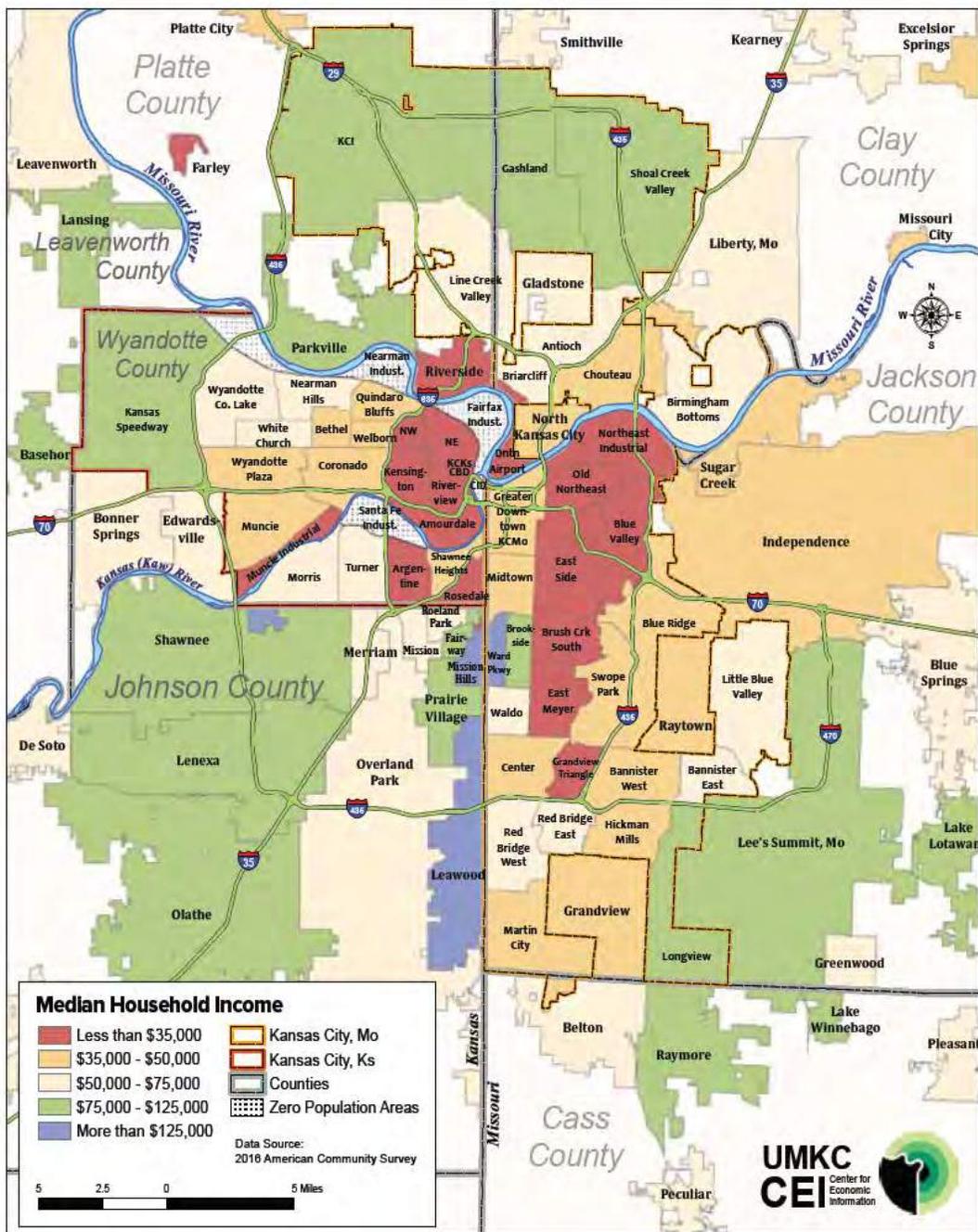
Map 7   2014 Population Living below Poverty Level, Kansas City Metropolitan Core

% Population below Poverty Level

Zero Population — Kansas City, Mo
Less than 5% — Kansas City, Ks
5 - 10% — Counties
10 - 20%
20 - 35%   Data Source:
More than 35%   American Community
             Survey, 2006-2010

Map prepared by:

The UMKC   Center for Economic Information

Map 8 2019 Population Living below Poverty Level, Kansas City Metropolitan Core

% Population below Poverty Level

Less than 5%		Kansas City, Mo	
5 - 10%		Kansas City, Ks	
10 - 20%		Counties	
20 - 35%		Zero Population Areas	
More than 35%			

Data Source:
2016 American Community Survey

5   2.5   0   5 Miles

Map 9   2014 Unemployment, Kansas City Metropolitan Core

Map 9   2014 Unemployment, Kansas City Metropolitan Core

% Unemployed

- Zero Population
- Less than 5%
- 5 - 10%
- 10 - 15%
- 15 - 25%
- More than 25%

Kansas City, Mo
Kansas City, Ks
Counties

Data Source:
American Community
Survey, 2006-2010

Map prepared by:
The UMKC Center for Economic Information
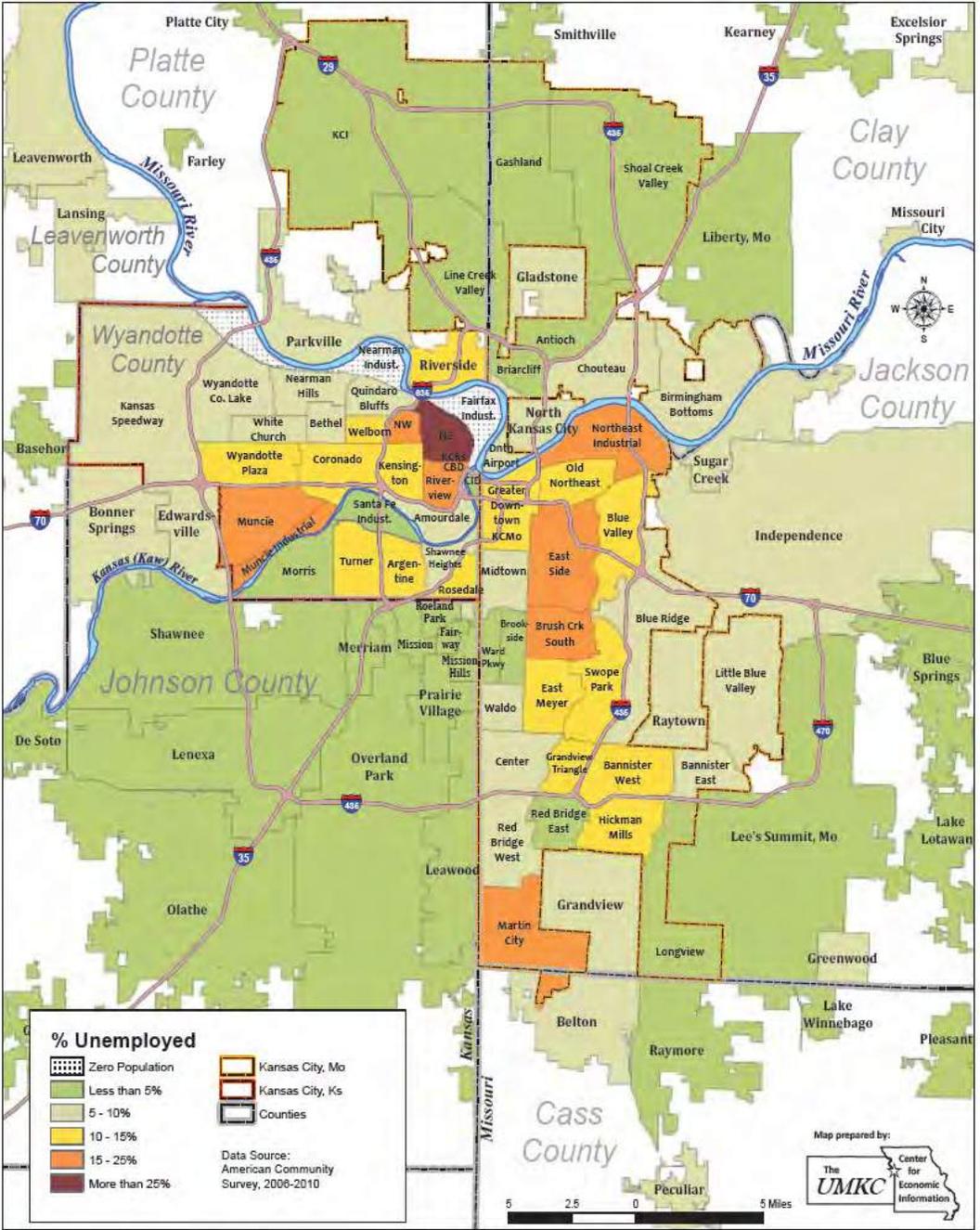
Map 10 2019 Unemployment, Kansas City Metropolitan Core

Map 11 2014 Educational Attainment Persons Age 25 and over without a High School Degree, Kansas City Metropolitan Core

% without a High School Degree

Zero Population
Less than 5%
5 - 10%
10 - 25%
25 - 50%
More than 50%

Kansas City, Mo
Kansas City, Ks
Counties

Data Source:
American Community Survey,
2006-2010

Map prepared by:

The UMKC Center for Economic Information

Map 12 2019 Educational Attainment Persons Age 25 and over without a High School Degree, Kansas City Metropolitan Core

% without a High School Degree

- Less than 5%
- 5 - 10%
- 10 - 25%
- 25 - 50%
- More than 50%

- Kansas City, Mo
- Kansas City, Ks
- Counties
- Zero Population Areas

Data Source:
2016 American Community Survey

5   2.5   0   5 Miles

UMKC CEI
Center for Economic Information

Map 13 2014 Educational Attainment Persons Age 25 and over with at Least a Bachelor's Degree, Kansas City Metropolitan Core

% with at Least a Bachelor's Degree

- Zero Population
- Less than 5%
- 5 - 10%
- 10 - 25%
- 25 - 50%
- More than 50%

- Kansas City, Mo
- Kansas City, Ks
- Counties

Data Source:
American Community Survey,
2006-2010

Map prepared by:

The UMKC
Center for Economic Information

5   2.5   0   5 Miles

Map 14 2019 Educational Attainment Persons Age 25 and over with at Least a Bachelor's Degree, Kansas City Metropolitan Core

% with at Least a Bachelor's Degree

- Less than 5%
- 5 - 10%
- 10 - 25%
- 25 - 50%
- More than 50%

- Kansas City, Mo
- Kansas City, Ks
- Counties
- Zero Population Areas

Data Source:
2016 American Community Survey

5   2.5   0   5 Miles

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CEI
Center for
Economic
Information

URBAN EDUCATION:

STILL SEPARATE AND UNEQUAL

Special Collection

URBAN EDUCATION: STILL SEPARATE AND UNEQUAL

COKETHEA N. HILL, PH.D.

The enduring underperformance of African-American children is an educational crisis. Along all major points of the academic continuum, African-American students, particularly males, are faring worse than any other comparative subgroup. These disparities are enduring, persistent, endemic, and "too devastating to be tolerable" (23). These disparities have draconian implications both individually—in their quality of life and life trajectory—and collectively, for the nation's ability to compete in a global economy. Across every major U.S. system— housing, employment, education, income, wealth, health care, banking, child welfare, and criminal justice—African Americans are experiencing the worst disparities (10, 19, 29, 49). This stark epidemic is not solely the result of a meritocratic society, but rather of a system of structural racism created with the express purpose of preventing African Americans from achieving equitable outcomes.

It has been more than 60 years since the passage of the Civil Rights Act and the Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling that "separate but equal" schools are unconstitutional, and yet as a nation we are still addressing policies and discriminatory practices in schools, workplaces, and governmental agencies that routinely produce inequitable outcomes for people of color. Several recent reports are bringing awareness of disparate outcomes for black youth, and while there has been substantial improvement in academic outcomes for students of color, there is a significant distance left to travel to a more equitable and inclusive destination. According to the American Psychological Association Presidential Task Force on Educational Disparities (2), "pervasive ethnic and racial disparities in education follow a pattern in which African-American, American Indian, Latinx, and Southeast Asian groups underperform academically relative to Whites and other Asian Americans. These educational disparities (1) mirror ethnic and racial disparities in socioeconomic status as well as health outcomes and health care, (2) are evident in early childhood and persist through the K-12 education, and (3) are reflective in test scores assessing academic achievement such as reading and mathematics, percentages of repeating one or more grades, drop out and graduation rates, proportions of students involved in gifted and talented programs, enrollment in higher education, as well as in behavioral markers of adjustment, including rates of being disciplined, suspended and expelled from schools" (2, p. 7).

As America's ethnic composition diversifies, our schools and classrooms welcome students from various cultures, communities, and economic and linguistic backgrounds. Many of these students are greeted by a less diverse, middle class, predominately female teaching force. Most of these teachers enter the profession with good intentions to help all students; however, more than good intentions are required to "bring about the changes needed in educational programs and procedures to prevent academic inequities among diverse students" (23, p. 13). Research suggests that the relationships students have with their teachers can have an immediate influence on their motivation and behavior (41). Fostering strong relationships between teachers and students positively connects students to schools (52).

Monahan et al. (40) highlighted several characteristics of classrooms that promote feelings of school connectedness, which include adult and student relationships that are positive and respectful. Bryan et al. (7) cited research suggesting that although prior academic achievement is one of the strongest predictors of academic achievement, the students' connectedness to their respective teacher(s) is also highly associated with academic success. In recent years, the vast and steadily increasing demographic divide between teachers and students has become an educational and public concern (13). Currently, less than 20% of teachers are racial/ethnic minorities, yet minority students are the demographic majority in public schools in the United States (13, 22). According to a report by the U.S. Department of Education (51), students of color will be 56% of the student population by 2024. Currently, the elementary and secondary workforce is overwhelmingly white (82%). This gap is long-standing and not likely to be closed any time soon (13). Crosnoe et al. (16) contend there is a wealth of social psychological research demonstrating individuals' preference for same-race interactions, and this racial ethnic mismatch may cause students to feel less connected to teachers. Cherng and Halpin (13) investigated whether minority students have a more favorable perception of minority teachers compared to teachers who are not of their race. In data collected on 2,700 teachers in grades 4–9 across 317 schools in six U.S. cities from 2009 to 2011, over 157,000 students were recruited to evaluate their teachers. The study found that minority students perceived minority teachers as more supportive of them than non-minority teachers.

The U.S. Department of Education report (51) indicated that both qualitative and quantitative studies have found that teachers of color can improve the educational experience of

all students, and compared with their white peers, they are more likely to have higher expectations of students of color, confront issues of racism, develop more trusting relationships with students (particularly those who share a cultural background) and that teachers of color tend to serve as advocates and cultural brokers. Gershenson, Holt and Papageorge (26) found that when a black teacher and a white teacher evaluate the same black student, the white teacher is about 30% less likely to predict the student will complete a four-year college degree. White teachers are also almost 40% less likely to expect that their black students will graduate high school. Research has shown that African-American primary students matched to the same race as their teachers perform better on standardized tests, but little is known about the long-term benefits of this same-race pairing.

Most recent research by Gershenson, Hart, Lindsay and Papageorge (25) found that assigning a black male to a black teacher in the third, fourth, or fifth grades significantly reduced the probability that he would drop out of high school (29%), and the chances of dropping out for the most economically disadvantaged males fell by 39%. The authors contend that low income African-American students who have at least one black teacher in elementary school are significantly more likely to graduate from college. This assertion

is not to presume that educators from racial, ethnic, social, and economically different backgrounds cannot teach economically disadvantaged students of color successfully, or that teachers of color have a monopoly on promoting the success of racially matched students. Rather, the assertion amounts to the argument that any educator lacking the ability and willingness to understand the chasms that may exist between their own cultural orientation, beliefs, biases, and norms and those of their students may place their students in jeopardy of not realizing their full potential.

Teaching is not devoid of culture; it is a contextual and situational process (23, 35). Teacher preparation programs that build the capacities of educators to leverage ecological factors will be much more effective at preparing teachers to enter the workforce ready to educate all children. These factors include the home culture of diverse students, their prior experiences, and the cultural background and ethnic identities of both the teacher and students. There is a growing body of evidence to suggest that employing culturally relevant/responsive pedagogical practices is one way to address the discontinuity that diverse students of color experience in U.S. schooling (4, 8, 14, 24, 35, 36, 37, 48, 53). Culturally Relevant Pedagogy is a theoretical and pedagogical framework whose major goal is to give students

from diverse backgrounds an equal chance to experience educational success and mobility. Jackson and Boutte (30) contended that examination of conventional classrooms against the backdrop of typical dimensions of African-American culture reveal that schools are lacking important aspects (spirituality, harmony, verve, creativity, movement, affect, communalism, expressive individualism, social time perspective, and oral traditions)—thus making schooling a remote and foreign experience for many black students.

This mismatch between the home culture and the structure of mainstream education can place students of color at a higher risk for dropping out, due to lack of connectedness to school. Although there is strong empirical evidence to support school bonding/connectedness as a protective factor for all youth (12, 40, 52), few research studies have directly examined the extent to which school connectedness is influenced by race/ethnicity and the effective strategies that strengthen this relationship (32, 43). Additionally, this research tends to skew towards explicating racial variations in connectedness to school from a deficit-based model: correlating weak bonds to school with disengagement, involvement in delinquent behavior, and ultimately dropping out of school (7, 54). Limitations of this research suggest there is a need for evidence-based strategies that increase

students' connectedness to school and improve academic performance. Gay (23, 24), Ladson-Billings (34, 35, 36, 37), Ladson-Billings and Tate (38), and Thornton (2014) suggest that in order to promote academic achievement of students of color from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, it is imperative that teachers make learning culturally relevant.

The intersection of race, socio-economic status, and inequities in access to quality education is one of the most pernicious threats to participatory democracy (1, 9, 31). Closing the racial/ethnic achievement gap, which is apparent as early as kindergarten, continues to represent one of the most persistent challenges to the American educational system (20). A great deal of political, social, and educational attention has been focused on schools and their ability to reduce or exacerbate differential outcomes between white students and their peers of color (3, 6, 33, 55).

Research suggests that economic disadvantage, unequal access to health care, and inequitable school funding explain some racial differences in achievement; however, disparities continue to exist after controlling for these factors. According to Yang and Anyon (55), quantitative measures of socioeconomic status fail to explain between 45% and 60% of the black-white differences in test scores, reflecting longstanding evidence that

racial status is associated with some of the most profound disparities in academic outcomes (3, 20, 32, 44).

There is also a growing consensus among researchers that African-American students experience school differently than their white peers (12, 16, 32, 44, 46, 55). This attention to the differential experiences of students of color in public school has been highlighted across an extensive body of observational, experimental, and qualitative research documenting differential treatment, biased perceptions, disparities in the use and enforcement of exclusionary discipline practices, and disparate experiences in schools based on the racial/ethnic background of students (3, 6, 18, 32, 44, 55). Feelings of alienation, discrimination, and isolation can have a profound impact on a student's ability to establish bonds to school (5, 21, 39, 43). This is particularly true when analyzing and evaluating school discipline policies and racial inequality (11, 17, 45, 46).

Zero-tolerance school policies and exclusionary discipline practices such as suspensions have been identified as having differential racialized outcomes leading to school detachment, academic failure, and increased involvement in the juvenile and criminal justice systems for African-American and Latinx students (17, 45, 47). With 82% of the adult prison population and 85% of the juvenile

justice population comprised of school dropouts, many researchers (15, 28) have been examining the rise in punitive reprimands in the educational system and large-scale changes in the United States penal system, and the connectivity between these two non-related entities. This relationship has been described as the school-to-prison pipeline (STPP), which refers to "the increasing connection between school failure, federal, state, or local school disciplinary policies, and student involvement in the justice system.... the connection between these initially dissimilar institutions is spurred by failing schools with low graduation/high dropout rates, zero tolerance disciplinary policies, and student disengagement" (45, p. 2).

This vicious cycle perpetuates academic failure, which leads to behavior challenges, which then lead to office referrals and suspensions, which over time lead to dropout and juvenile delinquency. Christle, Jolivette and Nelson (15) reported that despite the widespread use of suspensions, they are not effective in reducing the behavior they are designed to correct, and suspensions are a major reason youth drop out. Proponents of zero-tolerance policies argue that it sets the expectation for pro-social conduct by specifying rules and consequences (17).

Proponents also suggest that the certainty of punishment has greater deterrence effects than the severity

of punishment and that removal of disruptive students from the classroom prevents the "contagion" effect on peers when the punishment is enforced. This premise is supported in the literature as a way to enhance the learning environment for students by reducing disruption that impedes academic instruction. It is well established that disruptive behavior in the classroom reduces academic achievement for the general student population (17).

Cuellar and Markowitz (17) and Skiba et al. (46) have highlighted numerous organizations including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the U.S. Department of Education, the American Bar Association, the Children's Defense Fund, and the American Psychological Association that have been critical of the use of zero-tolerance policies, specifically school suspensions and expulsions, pointing to the potential downsides of exclusionary practices that have been correlated to poor educational outcomes for the excluded students. These outcomes include missed educational opportunities, poor school performance, and dropping out of school altogether. Such outcomes limit students' accumulation of human capital while increasing the likelihood of involvement in the juvenile justice system. Students who experience repeated negative educational outcomes are more likely to end up in

prison than on a sustainable college or career pathway (28, 42, 43, 45).

African-American children continue to experience school differently than their white peers. The U.S. school system refers, suspends, excludes, and fails minority children at significantly higher rates compared to their proportional makeup in the school system (3, 23, 27, 43). The forefathers of the historical American educational system, from its genesis, did not design the educational system to serve ALL students. The inclusion of the poor, women, African Americans, Latinos, Asians, Native Americans, Gay, Lesbian, Transgender, and Immigrants evolved from a belief that education was a right—a civil right. Our current school system is not merely a relic of an unequal past; the people who govern these systems today—who own and operate these educational systems—must engage in the hard work of interrogating their data by asking questions such as who does this policy benefit? Who does it hurt? Who is marginalized? Whose voice or perspective is absent? What other information do we need to take into account? Why are some students disproportionately represented? What must we do differently? Is power, agency, and authority equitably representative of the student body?

Educational leaders must take a careful and investigative analysis of the data produced by their respective system of education (achievement, expulsions,

suspensions, withdrawals, recruitment, hiring, curriculum) and disaggregate the findings by race, gender, socioeconomic status, language, ability, and national origin. Then they must ask themselves if it accurately reflects efforts and intent, if it aligns with who they are as a person, as an educational leader, or at minimum, the mission of their respective school. For if you truly believe that education is "the great equalizer," that ALL children can learn, and any other altruistic, benevolent cliché about education, then we must be vigilant and unapologetic about disrupting inequity wherever it evidences itself—from teacher unions to school board and every classroom, principal, and superintendent in between. For it's not "the system" of education that continues to perpetuate inequity; it's YOUR system of education. This ownership uniquely positions you with the power and authority to change it. Our children are depending on you!

Portions of this article are reprinted from the dissertation: Hill, C. N. (2018). *Culturally relevant pedagogy, student connectedness to school and reading achievement: A study of the Children's Defense Fund Kansas City Freedom Schools Initiative* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Kansas).

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THE DATA SHOWS KANSAS CITY'S
SCHOOL SYSTEM IS COMPLICATED,
SEGREGATED, AND INEFFICIENT

ELLE MOXLEY

Urban League of **Greater Kansas City**

Both traditional public schools and charters in Kansas City are increasingly segregated, expensive to run, and losing high school students, according to a new report from Kansas City Public Schools.

KCPS is calling it a "system" analysis because it looks at charter schools as well. (Charter schools are public schools that operate independently of KCPS.) Think of it as a snapshot of 20 years of education choice in Kansas City.

"What we really want is for the community to unify behind a vision—not multiple visions—of what a successful education system looks like," said Mike Reynolds, chief research and accountability officer for the school district. "There have been too many different methodologies for determining success and failure."

Reynolds said the response has been mostly positive as the district has shared its findings with the charter school community.

Here are the big takeaways, as well as how the system analysis could help shape the conversation about public education in Kansas City.

The school system is more segregated today than it was in the 1990s.

The year before charters started opening in Kansas City in 1999, 32 of the district's 65 schools, not including seven majority-white schools in Independence, were segregated. By 2017, 78% of schools in the system were segregated—25 district schools and 30 charter schools. (KCPS did not include in its original count the seven majority-white schools because they were annexed by Independence in 2007 and did not qualify as segregated.)

KCPS used the same definition of segregation as the U.S. Government Accountability Office: any school where more than 75% of students receive free or reduced price lunch and more than 75% of students are black or Hispanic. The number of "intensely" segregated schools also increased—schools where more than 90% of students are poor and more than 90% of students are black or Hispanic. In 1999, just six schools were intensely segregated. In 2017, 27 schools—10 district, 17 charter—were intensely segregated. That's

Number & Percentage of Intensively Segregated Schools

KCPS   Charter

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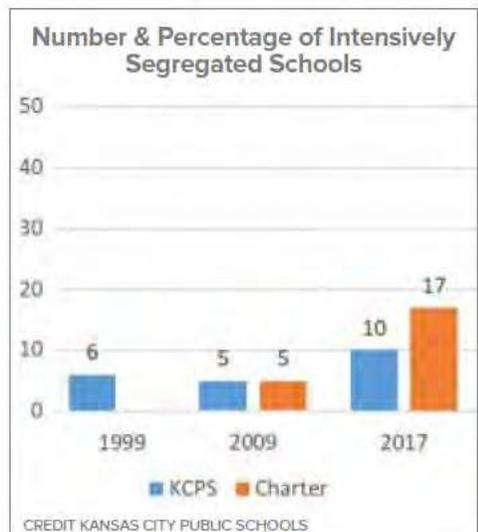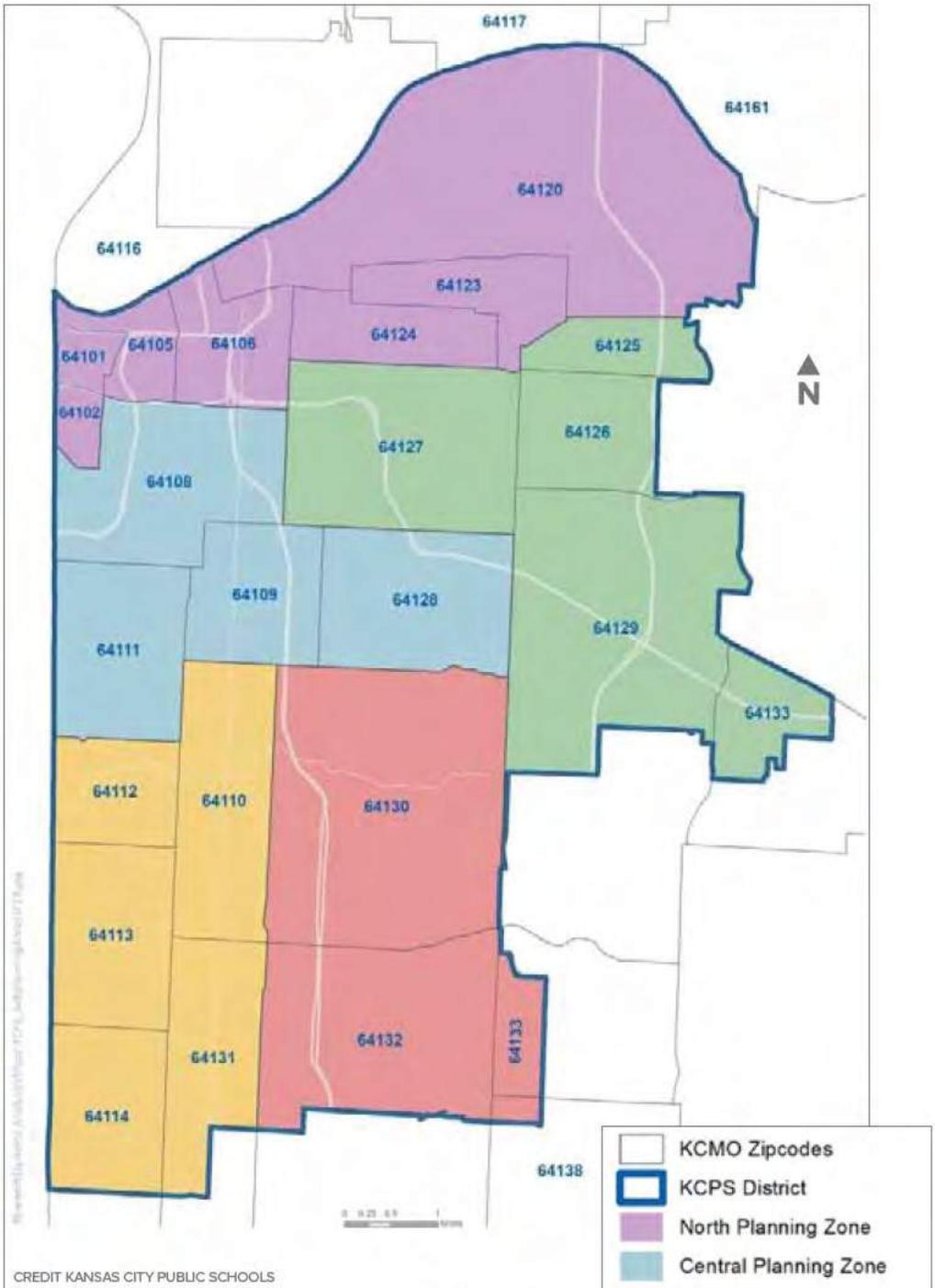
KCMO Zip Codes & KCPS Planning Zones

Legend:
- KCMO Zipcodes
- KCPS District
- North Planning Zone
- Central Planning Zone
- East Planning Zone
- Southwest Planning Zone
- Southeast Planning Zone

partly because white families continue to opt out of the system. Only 10% of students in public schools in Kansas City are white, and about half of them attend just seven schools: Académie Lafayette, Crossroads, Quality Hill, Citizens of the World, Border Star, Hale Cook, and Lincoln College Prep. In 2017, nearly a quarter of the white students enrolled in the Kansas City system went to Académie Lafayette, a school that captures just 3.5% of the public school students.

Hale Cook, in Waldo, is the only KCPS neighborhood school where a majority of students are white.

Charter schools aren't opening in the neighborhoods that need better schools.

KCPS estimates schools have seats for about 33,500 students system-wide. (It's an estimate because the district doesn't know the exact capacity of all the charter schools.) Only 31% of students in the system live in the nine zip codes that make up the Central and Southwest planning zones—an area that includes the Crossroads, Midtown, Brookside, and Waldo—but half of all seats are in that part of the city.

Meanwhile, there aren't enough seats for students who live in the North, East, and Southeast attendance zones. And school quality lags, particularly in the Southeast, where only a quarter of schools in the system are accredited. (To be clear, the state doesn't accredit individual schools, but KCPS used building APR—that is, the Annual Performance Report score from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education—as a proxy for school quality.)

The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, a pro-charter think tank, reached a similar conclusion in a report it put
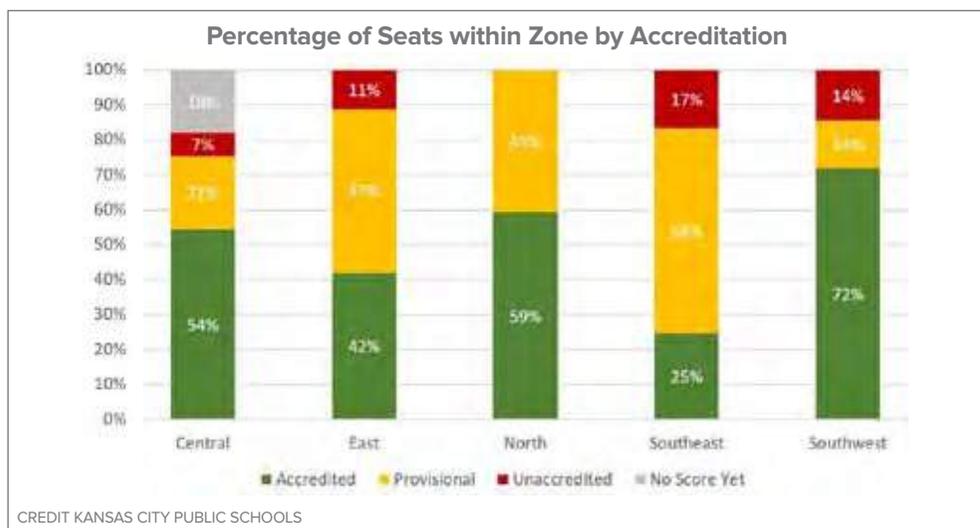
Percentage of Seats within Zone by Accreditation

■ Accredited ■ Provisional ■ Unaccredited ■ No Score Yet

"WHAT WE REALLY WANT IS FOR THE COMMUNITY TO UNIFY BEHIND A VISION — NOT MULTIPLE VISIONS — OF WHAT A SUCCESSFUL EDUCATION SYSTEM LOOKS LIKE."

—MIKE REYNOLDS, KCPS CHIEF RESEARCH AND ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER

out last year about charter school "deserts"—high-poverty zip codes where there aren't any charter schools. In Kansas City, there are more charter schools in middle-income neighborhoods. Troost Avenue wasn't labeled, but it was easy to see the enduring history of residential segregation in where schools were located.

Expect the district to push back against plans to locate new schools, particularly high schools, in the Southwest attendance zone, which has twice as many seats as students. KCPS has already passed on a proposal to reopen Southwest High School as a district-sponsored charter.

Black enrollment is declining, while Latino enrollment is growing.

Both district and charter schools are still majority black, but black families are leaving the city for education opportunities elsewhere, particularly the suburbs. The population within KCPS boundaries fell 10% between 2000 and 2015, but the number of black school-aged children plummeted 42%. Over the same time period, the number of school-aged

Latino children increased 124%. Today, one in every four students in the Kansas City system is Latino.

As the number of Latino students has increased, so too has the number of students with limited English proficiency. About 25% of KCPS students have limited English proficiency, compared to 19% of charter school students. More than three-quarters of the charter students who are English language learners are concentrated at just four schools: Alta Vista, Scoula Vita Nuova, Kansas City International Academy, and Frontier.

Operating so many schools is costly.

System-wide, schools in Kansas City spend a lot on administration, transportation, and overhead—$80.2 million more than the comparably sized Springfield, Missouri, Public School District, according to the KCPS analysis. In 2017, the Kansas City system had 26,520 students in 83 schools, with an average per-pupil expenditure of $14,234. Springfield had 25,780 students in 53 schools, with an average per pupil expenditure of $9,323.

Student Race/Ethnicity SY2010 & SY2017

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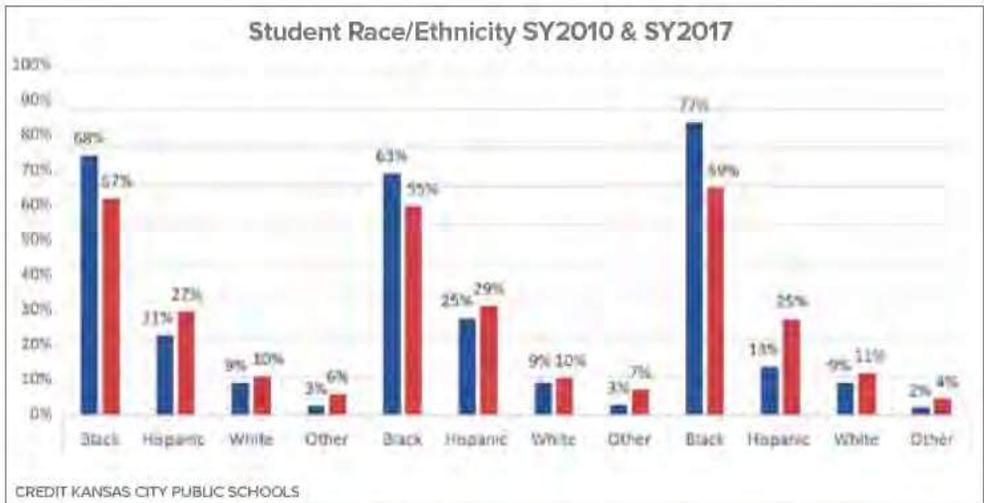
The system analysis argues that choice creates inefficiencies. In Kansas City, there's a critical shortage of bus drivers, yet four or five buses will roll down the same street to take kids to different schools. As a result, Kansas City spends two and a half times as much as Springfield does on transportation.

That's something KCPS would like to change. When the district entered negotiations with a new bus company earlier this year, they also helped several charter schools reach an agreement with Student Transportation of America.

"The busing example comes up a lot because busing is really expensive," local education blogger Rebecca Haessig told KCUR last month. "And while it's true that every dollar spent on busing isn't being spent in the classroom, when we get too caught up talking about economies of scale,

what we lose is that education is about students, and not all students are the same."

So expect charter school advocates to push back on the efficiency argument. They'll also probably dispute some of the district's financial analysis as they lobby state lawmakers to change the foundation formula. The Missouri Charter Public School Association estimates that charter schools miss out on about $2,000 per pupil from local property tax revenue. Locally, KCPS puts that amount closer to $300 because the district isn't actually able to collect all the money it's allocated.

So many different grade configurations make it hard to move through the system.

In Kansas City, there are K-4 schools, K-8 schools, schools that stop in sixth grade, separate middle schools, and

combined high schools. Because so many schools in the system lack a defined "feeder" pattern—that is, a clear path from elementary school to middle school to high school—families have to keep making choices as their children progress through the system.

Complicating matters still further, there are a lot of schools that only take students in certain grades, such as kindergarten (for elementary schools) or fifth grade (for middle schools). Other schools don't "backfill" empty seats with new students as others leave.

Leslie Kohlmeyer is director of programs for Show Me KC Schools, a nonprofit that helps families understand their school options.

"If you look at the charters, (a lot of them) are feeding directly into themselves," Kohlmeyer said. "Crossroads had zero ninth grade seats available this year. No one could come in from outside. University Academy had around 10 for nearly 100 applicants. The same situation at Hogan. Frontier, same thing. Kauffman, zero for ninth grade."

Families leave because they don't like their high school options.

Public schools in Kansas City lose nearly half of all students between kindergarten and 12th grade. Among KCPS students who leave, 52%

transfer to another public school district or a private school. Among the charter students who leave, 55% transfer to a school outside of the system. Between 2014 and 2017, transfers out of charters into the surrounding suburban schools increased 88%.

That leaves about 6,000 students in 15 system high schools. KCPS Superintendent Mark Bedell often complains that he can't provide students with a complete high school

SY2017 Charter Transfers

Other 10%
KCPS 22%
Out of State District 18%
Surrounding MO Suburbs 27%
Another KC Charter 23%

SY2017 KCPS Transfers

Other 10%
Another KCPS School 26%
Out of State District 17%
KC Charter 22%
Surrounding MO Suburbs 25%
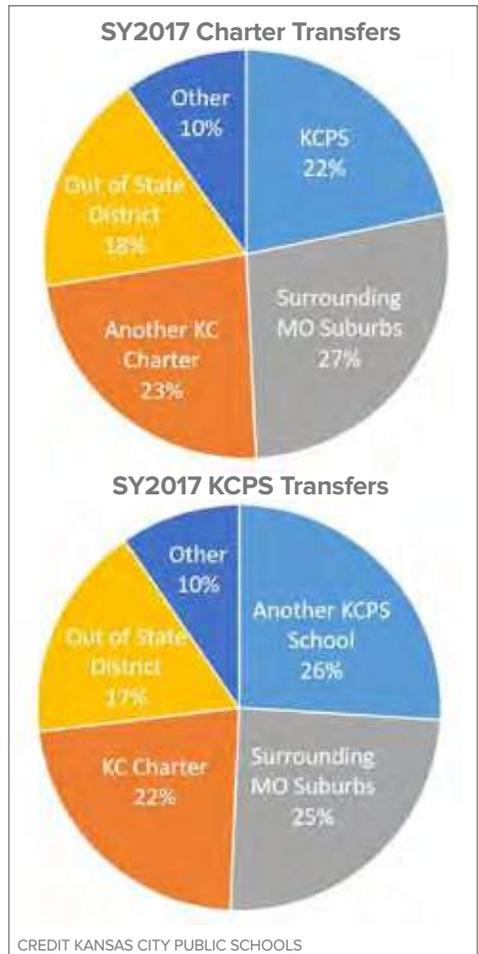
experience—academic, athletics, and activities—because each cohort is so small. He's made bringing back sports to schools like East one of his top priorities, pointing out that Springfield is spending almost twice as much per pupil on extracurricular activities as schools here do.

Are there too many schools in Kansas City? The system analysis stops just short of making that argument. But as more charter schools open—and invariably close—expect district officials to point out the impact on kids and families.

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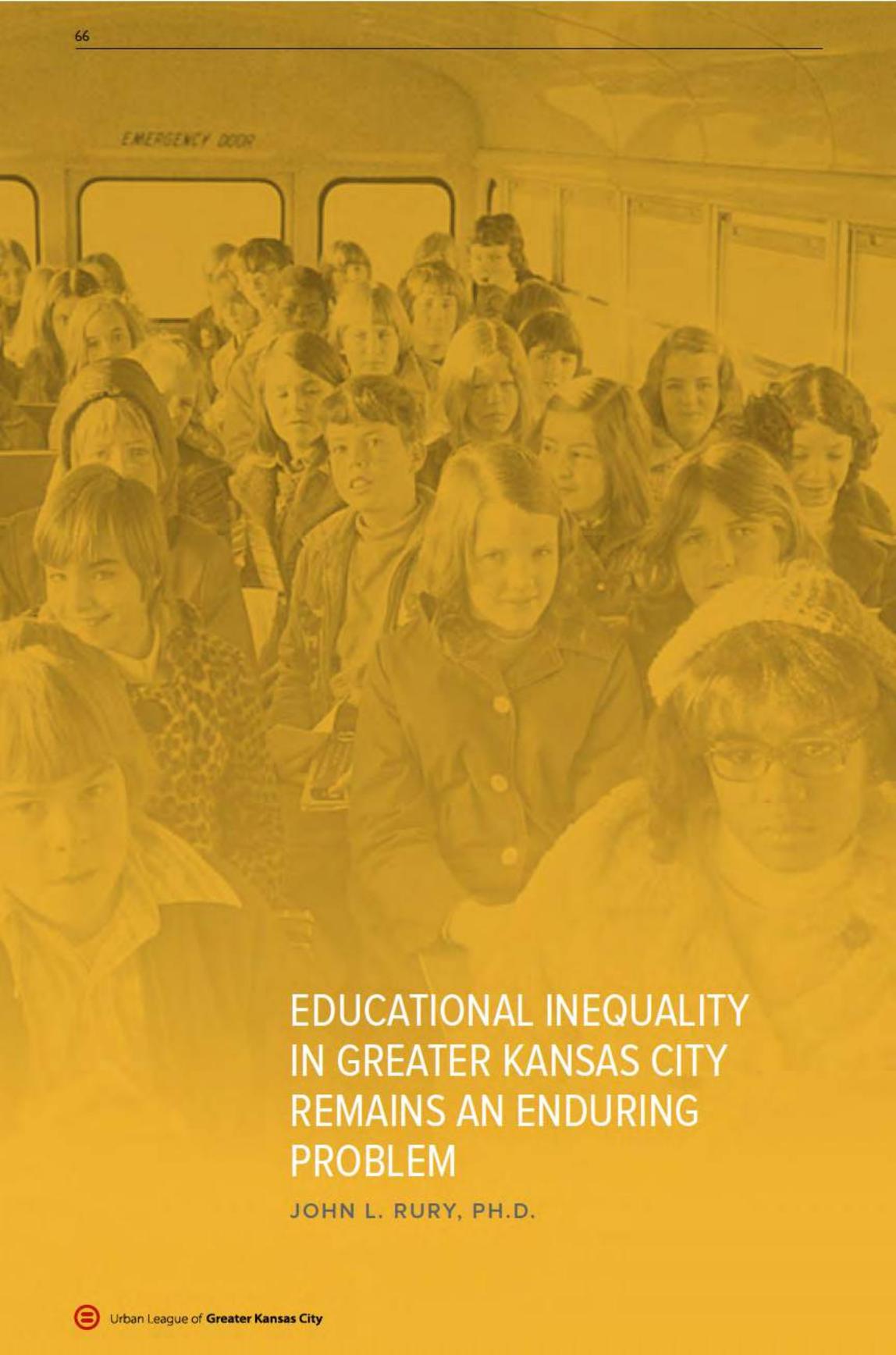
EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITY IN GREATER KANSAS CITY REMAINS AN ENDURING PROBLEM

JOHN L. RURY, PH.D.

If educational inequality has long been a problem that has plagued African Americans, it certainly has been true in Kansas City. The city's schools were formally segregated until 1955 and then experienced limited desegregation, massive white flight, and eventual resegregation. The district has struggled in the years since that era. Suburban districts, many located wholly or partly within the city's municipal boundaries, excluded black families interested in better schools for their children by a variety of measures. Many of the districts have flourished. The result was an educational geography of inequity that continues to be evident today.

Residential Segregation, Poverty, and Disadvantage

School district boundaries became crucial markers of social status and racial segregation in the long postwar period, and they continued to be salient decades later. But certain changes did, in fact, occur. Eventually, growing numbers of African Americans and members of other minority groups found their way across these lines, especially in districts to the south of the city center. In this respect, Kansas City came to exhibit a pattern of change emblematic of the era. Putatively inner ring suburbs, most within municipal Kansas City, Missouri, witnessed a racial transition as African-American families began arriving in greater numbers.

Some of these areas eventually became predominantly black, as many whites moved out—or ceased to move in—and property values declined. Since most such changes took place within the city, it may be apposite to say that formerly "suburban" districts came to be seen as "urban."[1]

Much of this movement occurred after 1980, and within several decades African-American settlement extended nearly to the city's southern border. As indicated on Map 1, in the years following 2013, blacks were located throughout the metropolitan area but remained clustered in South Kansas City. This meant that school districts that previously had excluded blacks began to serve a rapidly diversifying clientele. Hickman Mills had become predominantly African American by that time, and Raytown—once an epicenter of racial exclusion—served a sizeable black population. The movement of more affluent blacks to the east of Raytown, into Independence, Lee's Summit, and Blue Springs, was taken by many as a hopeful sign of improved racial tolerance and integration. Indeed, by 2017 the region's segregation index had dropped 15% since 2000, among the largest such shifts in the country.[2] Even so, most of the region's African-American residents remained grouped in census tracts where they represented a clear majority, and there has been evidence of racial tensions in the suburbs—especially Lee's Summit.

The black population in central city neighborhoods declined somewhat, shifting to the south and east. Like other metropolitan areas, Kansas City had acquired a sizeable black middle class, along with somewhat lower levels of residential segregation, but concentrated poverty continued to be evident as well.[3]

Meanwhile, most of Johnson County and North Kansas City remained predominantly white, sustaining longstanding historical trends. The dynamics of racial integration, constrained by barriers such as the river or the state line, continued to reflect concerns that influenced earlier generations of African Americans in assessing the metropolitan landscape. Many did not see these parts of greater Kansas City as welcoming, Johnson County in particular. Despite the efforts of black realtor Donald Sewing and other pioneering middle-class African Americans decades earlier, that affluent and highly educated corner of the region continued to evade meaningful racial integration. While its black population grew to 4% by 2010, this was the lowest level of the area's principal counties. The absence of African Americans

Map 1:
Percent Black or African-American Population, 2013–2017

Insufficient data
less than 10%
10.0 - 24.9
25.0 - 49.9
50.0 - 74.9
75.0% and higher

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey.
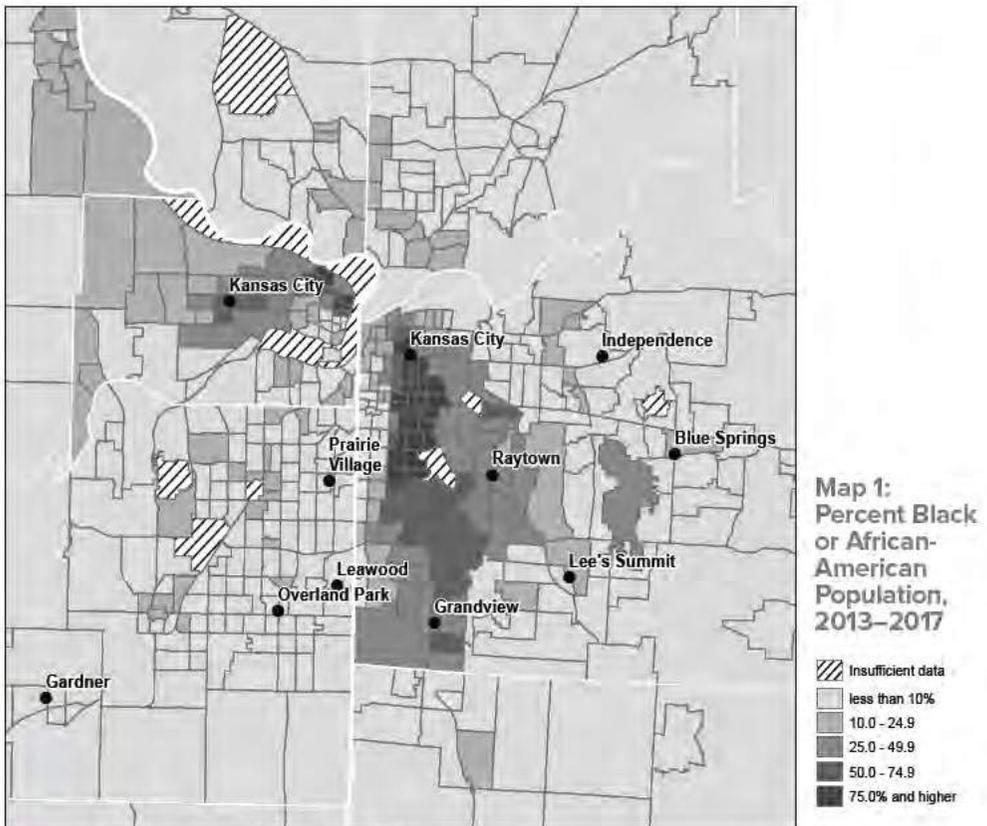
Urban League of **Greater Kansas City**

was especially evident in the older J.C. Nichols communities of Prairie Village and Mission Hills, long known as fashionable enclaves with a somewhat liberal social orientation. The fact that so few blacks lived in these neighborhoods could hardly be considered an accident.

The same was undoubtedly true of communities north of the river, many of which were considerably more affordable than stylish Johnson County. The black population of Clay County in 2010 was just 5%, despite its proximity to the historic city center. The presence of so few African-American families in the Northland also suggested they were not generally welcomed there, likely reflecting the reluctance of real estate agents to show them homes. And within the urban core, the legendary Troost "Wall" was still clearly evident in 2010. While blacks had moved into census tracts west of Troost to the north of 47th street and to the south of 75th, prosperous neighborhoods around the Country Club Plaza and Brookside continued to count relatively few of them. This too was not a coincidence; neighborhood associations likely remained vigilant there as well, keeping real estate agents in line regarding sales to those deemed undesirable.[4]

The geo-spatial distribution of poverty adds another dimension to these matters. As indicated in Map 2, the greatest concentration of household deprivation affecting children remained in the city's oldest African-American neighborhoods to the east of Troost, extending directly to the south of the city center. Census tracts in the Raytown and Hickman Mills school districts exhibited somewhat lower numbers of poor households, but still well above the national average. This included areas of black settlement and portions of the south "suburban" districts that had firmly resisted African-American settlement in the 1960s and 1970s. Lower poverty rates represented evidence of the black middle class, which had moved out of older black neighborhoods to the south and east. Yet one of the highest concentrations of poverty households existed in the southwest corner of Jackson County, where more than 60% of the families in one census tract reported income below the federal poverty threshold. Interestingly, a significant number of whites lived in these neighborhoods as well, representing about a quarter of the population. In these parts of the region, it seems, concentrated poverty did not affect only African-American children.[5]

Most of the area's child poverty, however, remained squarely within the Kansas City, Missouri School District, and another large concentration existed across the river in Kansas City, Kansas. It was the region's two central cities where the clear majority of its poor families were located, and in this

respect Kansas City was similar to other major metropolitan areas. The historic black commercial center at 18th and Vine Streets had been reduced to a few museums and restaurants and little other activity, despite investment to sustain its cultural heritage. Many middle-class African Americans departed, and poverty rates remained stubbornly high. These were telltale signs of the continued association between race and concentrated poverty. In many adjacent neighborhoods, poverty levels ranged between 25 and 40%, and large numbers of students in local public schools lived in these areas.[6]

High poverty rates also existed for children in other racial and ethnic groups, most of whom also lived in one of the region's central cities. This was readily evident, for example, in the growing Hispanic community located in the southeast quadrant of Kansas City, Kansas.[7] But deprivation for African Americans was historically more severe than for most whites and other minority groups, abetted by much higher levels of residential segregation, and this continued to be readily evident in the 21st century.[8] More than a quarter of the households in these neighborhoods were headed by

Map 2:
Percent of
People under
18 in Poverty,
2013–2017

Insufficient data
less than 10%
10.0 - 19.9
20.0 - 29.9
30.0 - 39.9
40.0% or higher

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey.
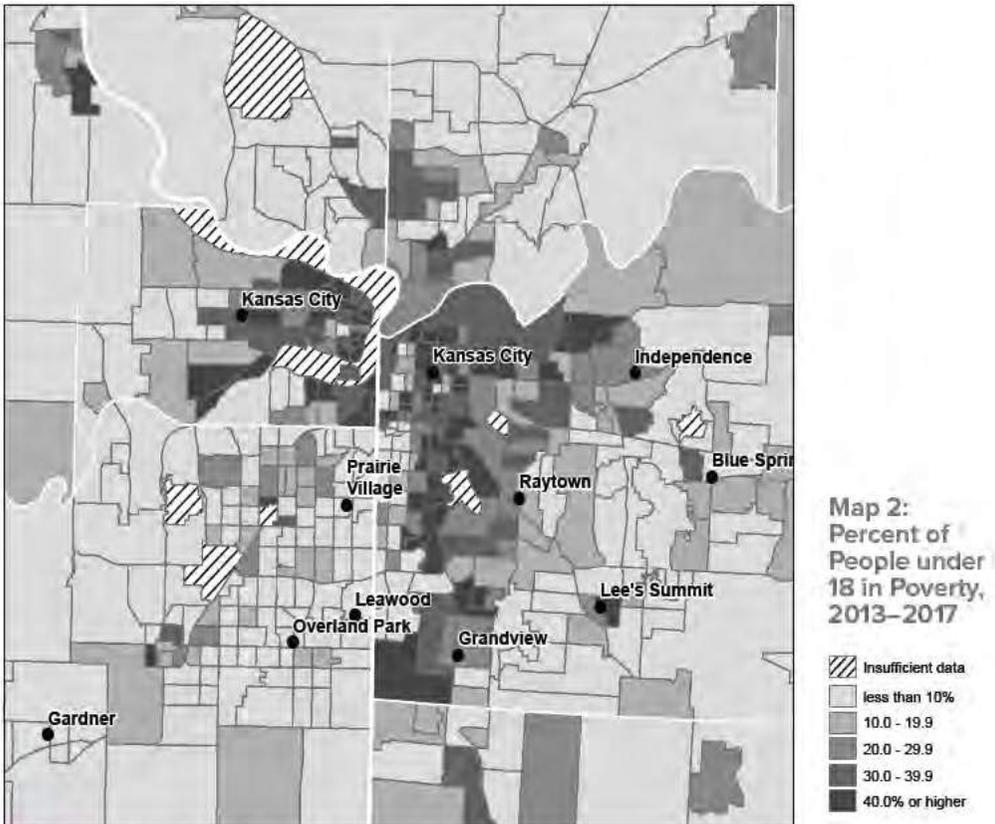
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single parents, most of them women. As research on school success suggests, these are circumstances with significant implications for educational inequality. It can aptly be described as concentrated disadvantage.[9]

Yet another dimension of educational advantage or disadvantage in the past, of course, was the geo-spatial distribution of adult educational levels, particularly those with a bachelor's degree or higher. Map 3 displays the location of greater Kansas City's college-educated adults in 2010, and the distribution is remarkably similar to that observed in earlier decades. The greatest number of such individuals lived in Johnson County, especially in the J.C. Nichols communities along its eastern edge, extending south into Leawood and the Blue Valley School District. Decades after the postwar era when it began to grow rapidly, this segment of the metropolitan area remained the premier local site of concentrated advantage, with low rates of poverty and very high levels of adult education. Outlying suburbs to the east and north on the Missouri side of the region also had acquired telling numbers of well-educated adults, but not to the same degree. On the other

Map 3:
Percent of
People with
Bachelor's
Degree or
Higher,
2013–2017

Insufficient data
less than 10%
10.0 - 24.9
25.0 - 39.9
40.0 - 64.9
65.0% and higher
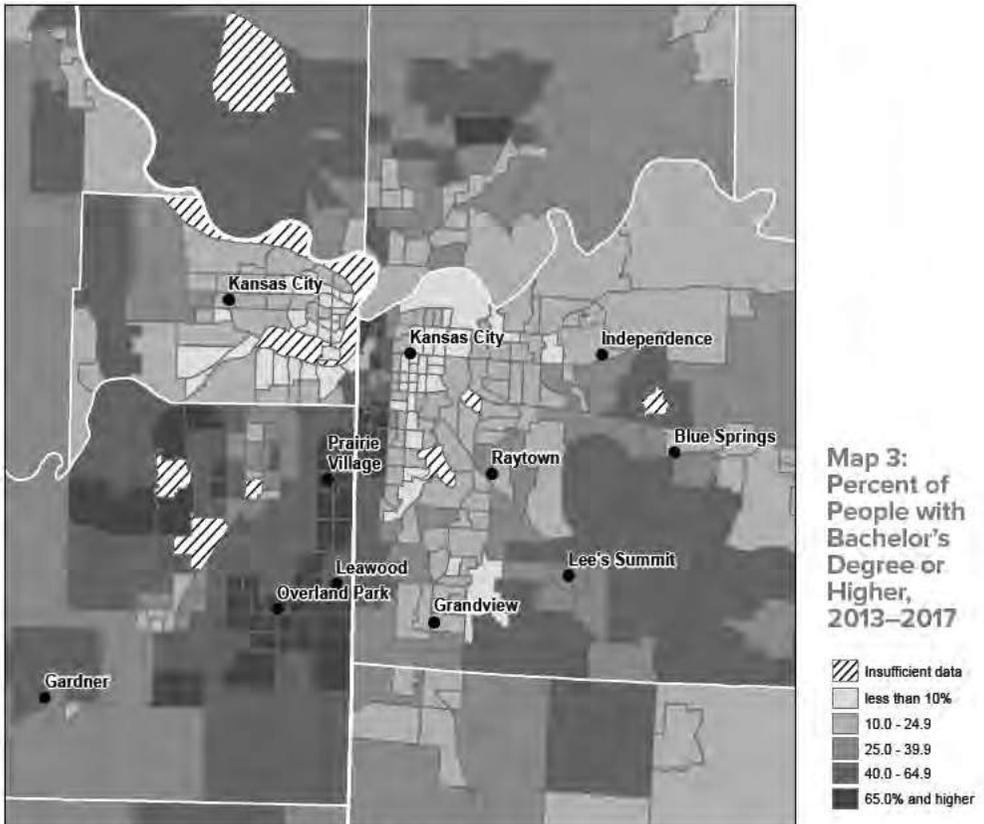
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey.

hand, most of KCMSD, along with much of Independence and other portions of Jackson County, exhibited many fewer adults with this level of attainment. These circumstances compounded the effects of poverty and other disadvantages faced by children and youth in these communities.

Poverty and Test Scores

In the era of school accountability, only in its infancy during the 1970s, standardized tests scores have become a common metric for comparing school districts and forming judgments about their merit. This is no less true in Kansas City than in other metropolitan areas, although the state line makes comparison of schools in Missouri and Kansas somewhat difficult, since each uses a unique assessment system.[10] Families seeking "good" schools, in that case, often rely on other indicators, including college readiness exams. In the Midwest, most high school students interested in college take the ACT, including 75% of high school seniors in Kansas and 74% in Missouri.[11] In multi-state metropolitan areas, assessments such as this offer a convenient means of judging the academic standing of local education systems, even if they provide an incomplete picture of student achievement.

Using tests such as the ACT to compare schools or districts is tricky, as the number of students taking them can vary. Also, factors such as parental

education, poverty, and family structure affect achievement a great deal, so test scores are not typically a good reflection of what schools contribute to it. Even so, parents interested in preparing their children for college often look for institutions with high scores, creating an expedient map of the metropolitan education marketplace. Media outlets understand this and occasionally publish composite ACT scores to compare districts or schools. In 2013, *The Kansas City Star* did just that, listing test results for most of the area's public high schools.[12]

As presented in *The Star* article, the ACT scores also offered a revealing point of contrast between urban and suburban schools. Since institutions were grouped by district, these differences were hard to miss. Table 1 provides test results for area districts, listed by state, with the percentage of families living below the federal poverty line in each one. These are composite ACT scores derived from averaging school-level results for 2012 and 2013. While not the complete list, it represents the range of such indicators throughout the region, along with district poverty levels in 2012. The correlation between district poverty levels and ACT scores was -.95, indicating that higher levels of deprivation were strongly associated with lower district-wide test performance.

Examining these data, it is immediately evident that the lowest composite scores in both states were found in the central cities. Most institutions in these settings served large numbers of poor and minority students, including many who had experienced severe hardship. Their levels of poverty were the highest in the region, approaching 40% of all families. Magnet schools in these districts performed much better than these averages, but they enrolled relatively small numbers of students. Lincoln High, for example, was one such institution in KCMSD serving a predominantly black population of high achieving youth.[13]

At the other end of the geo-spatial spectrum were districts serving affluent and highly educated constituents, located in the well-heeled communities of Johnson County, Kansas, or in more remote districts in Missouri suburbs. Districts to the south—Center, Raytown, Grandview, and Hickman Mills—had seen mounting poverty since 1980 and exhibited generally lower scores. The same was true of Turner, a small Wyandotte County district adjacent to Kansas City, Kansas. In Johnson County, the Shawnee Mission schools made a good showing, even if their Blue Valley neighbors had the highest scores in the region. Olathe and De Soto to the west did well too, reflecting their relatively low numbers of families in poverty. It was telling, however, that Blue Valley had the lowest poverty levels of all. By and large, the highest performing districts in both states had poverty rates below 10%, far below the national average at the time.

As the test scores and poverty levels suggest, crucial distinctions between urban and suburban schools continued to be evident in the 21st century. Since these are mainly scores for high school seniors, they represent the cumulative results of education in these systems for many students. Suburban districts

Table 1: Composite ACT Scores and Families in Poverty for Kansas and Missouri Districts in Greater Kansas City, 2012 & 2013

District or Region	Composite ACT Score	Families in Poverty 2012
U.S. Average	*20.3*	*21%*
MO State Average	*21.6*	*20.6%*
Kansas City, MO	16.2	38%
Hickman Mills	17	31.8%
Independence	20.5	24.8%
Grandview	18	24.4%
Center	18.4	23.8%
Raytown	19.8	21.2%
North Kansas City	21.1	14.5%
Blue Springs	23	11.5%
Lee's Summit	23.1	9.4%
Park Hill	23.6	8.9%
Liberty	22.3	6.7%
KS State Average	*21.9*	*17.2%*
Kansas City, KS	16.6	36.5%
Turner	18.9	30.7%
Shawnee Mission	23.6	9.9%
Olathe	23.6	7.5%
De Soto	23.1	4.7%
Blue Valley	24.9	3.1%

Sources: *The Kansas City Star,* August 23, 2013; U.S. Census, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, Ages 5 to 17 in Families in Poverty, available at https://www.census.gov/datatools/demo/saipe/saipe.html?s_appName=saipe&map_yearSelector=2012&map_geoSelector=aa_c&menu=grid_proxy&s_measures=5_17_fam_snc&s_district=2010140,2005490,2918540&s_state=20,29&s_year=2012

with large numbers of poor and disadvantaged students, such as Center, Turner, or Hickman Mills, also had lower test scores.

Raytown had become an integrated school system with middling poverty levels, and its test scores were just slightly below the state average. The older suburban districts of Independence and North Kansas City were just a bit higher. It was affluent and highly educated Johnson County, Kansas, on the other hand, that exhibited the most significant suburban advantage. Schools in Park Hill, Liberty, Lee's Summit, and Blue Springs, at somewhat farther remove from the urban core, also did well. As a rule, in that case, it was the outlying districts that showed the highest levels of ACT performance—those with the greatest wealth, parental education, and other attributes to support their students.

By 2010 these patterns were hardly a surprise to most people in the region, and my research indicates they had been evident since the 1950s to one degree or another. As these contemporary data indicate, the metropolitan educational hierarchy that was forged during the postwar era remained largely intact nearly a half century after the desegregation controversies of the 1970s. The geo-spatial distribution of academic achievement that social scientists have identified nationally is clearly evident across the region. The area's

black population remains highly segregated within both of its central city municipalities, and poverty is concentrated in many of the same neighborhoods.

This was highlighted in the fall of 2017, when Kansas City Public Schools (formerly KCMSD) once again failed to reach basic accreditation standards established by the State of Missouri.[14] As *The Kansas City Star* noted, the district's major difficulties included its poor attendance record and the many students switching schools each year, problems endemic to high poverty neighborhoods.[15] On the other hand, concentrated wealth had accumulated in other sectors of the metropolis, especially in Johnson County and certain locations in Jackson, Platte, and Clay counties in Missouri. By and large, these areas lay well outside the central cities, providing resources for community schools that continued to exclude most poor and African-American children. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the experiences of growing up in these widely disparate urban and suburban settings held very little in common. And that could hardly bode well for the future.

These are the contemporary dimensions of social and educational inequality manifest in geographic terms. Even if the Kansas City Public Schools regain state accreditation, these patterns of inequality will likely remain evident.

They are quite stark, and they also have proven to be enduring. They remain the principal challenge facing education within the region—a problem that most of the area's leaders seem to have little interest in addressing.

1   Aaron Tyler Rife, "Shifting Identities in South Kansas City: Hickman Mill's Transformation from a Suburban to Urban School District" (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Kansas, 2014), Chs. 4 & 5.

2   Eric Alder, Maria Rose Williams and Savanna Smith, "KC Area has been One of the Most Racially Segregated in America. But not Anymore," *The Kansas City Star*, January 6, 2019, available at https://www.kansascity.com/news/local/article223888475.html. The local segregation index dropped from 71 to 60 in this time span, and the region fell from being the 11th most segregated metropolis of greater than a million residents to the 27th.

3   James R. Shortridge, *Kansas City and How It Grew*, Ch. 7. On recent tensions, see Maria Rose Williams, "Lee's Summit Schools Split over Training about Race," *The Kansas City Star*, September 28, 2018, p. 4A, and "Lee's Summit School District Needs to have a Tough Conversation about Race," *The Kansas City Star*, September 29, 2018, available at https://www.kansascity.com/opinion/editorials/article219217130.html.

4   Mid-America Regional Council, *Fair Housing and Equity Assessmen*t, March 2014, Chapter 2: Segregation. On the continuing racialization of space in greater Kansas City, see Kevin Fox Gotham, *Race, Real Estate and Uneven Development: The Kansas City Experience*, 1900-2010, Second Edition (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2014) Conclusions. Also see Shortridge, *Kansas City and How It Grew*, Ch. 7. The liberal views of residents in this area was discussed in oral history interviews: John Rury interviews with Franklin McFarland, April 2012, and David Cord, March 1, 2012.

5   Given the fact that white households were a minority in this part of the city, varying between 20 and 30%, it seems likely that many of them were also quite poor. Very few Hispanics lived in these census tracts. In largely black neighborhoods with lower levels of poverty, household incomes above $45,000 in 2010 dollars ranged between 30 and 45% of all families, suggesting a sizeable black middle class. Data drawn from Social Explorer.

6   Shortridge, *Kansas City and How It Grew*, pp. 182–184. On crime in the area, see Robert A. Cronkleton and Ian Cummings, "Two Dead, 8 Injured Days after KC Police Pleaded for Help in Stopping Violence," *The Kansas City Star*, August 5, 2018, available at https://www.kansascity.com/news/local/crime/article216130815.html, and Kelsey Ryan and Ian Cummings, "Crime Statistics Reveal Kansas City's Disturbing Homicide Trend," *The Kansas City Star*, July 2, 2017, available at https://www.kansascity.com/news/local/crime/article159204444.html. Poverty levels in particular census tracts were taken from Social Explorer.

7   On the Hispanic community in Kansas City, Kansas, see Shortridge, *Kansas City and How It Grew*, pp. 146-147.

8   See, for instance, Linda M. Burton, Maybeth Mattingly, Jaun Pedroza, and Whitney Welsh, "State of the Union, 2017: Poverty," The Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality, available at https://inequality.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Pathways_SOTU_2017_poverty.pdf.

9   The extent of single-parent households headed by women had increased, mainly in predominantly African-American neighborhoods. In 2010, the American Community Survey showed some twenty census tracts in Kansas City, Missouri, where they numbered in excess of 30% of all households, and an equivalent number where they represented more than 20%. In tracts to the east of the historic ghetto area, their numbers were much lower. Data taken from Social Explorer.

10 For example, see the editorial, "Low Test Scores Show KC, Hickman Mills School Districts Falling Far Short of Goals," *The Kansas City Star*, October 6, 2016, p. 8A.

11 Maria Rose Williams, "Students' ACT Scores in Missouri and Kansas Beat the National Average," *The Kansas City Star*, August 26, 2015, Available at http://www.kansascity.com/news/article32441295.html.

12 Joe Robertson, "Scores on ACT Point to Many Disparities," *The Kansas City Star*, August 21, 2013, available at http://www.kansascity.com/news/local/article325697/Scores-on-ACT-point-to-many-disparities.html. Although veteran reporter Robertson was careful to discuss the various factors associated with variation in scores, especially the number of students taking the test, the list offered a ready means for ranking institutions across the region for anyone interested in doing so.

13 On local magnet schools, see Andrew Vaupel, "These are the Top High Schools in Missouri and Kansas," *Kansas City Business Journal*, April 19, 2016, available at https://www.bizjournals.com/kansascity/news/2016/04/19/top-public-high-schools-in-missouri-and-kansas.html.

14 Maria Rose Williams, "A Year after Hitting Mark, KC Schools Again Miss Critical State Measure," *The Kansas City Star*, November 15, 2017, available at http://www.kansascity.com/news/local/article184867878.html. Although the district has improved its standing somewhat since then, it is unlikely to compete with high performing suburban districts even if accreditation is eventually restored. See Steve Kraske, "Are KC Public Schools on the Verge of a Breakthrough? Full Accreditation within Reach," *The Kansas City Star*, November 25, 2018, available at https://www.kansascity.com/opinion/opn-columns-blogs/steve-kraske/article222039045.html.

15 Regarding the effects of high mobility and its relationship to student poverty, see Russell W. Rumberger and Katherine A. Larson, "Student Mobility and the Increased Risk of High School Dropout," *American Journal of Education*, Vol. 107: No. 1 (November 1998) pp. 1–35; Virginia L. Rhodes, "Kids on the Move: The Effects of Student Mobility on NCLB School Accountability Ratings," *Penn GSE Perspectives on Urban Education*, 2017, available at http://www.urbanedjournal.org/archive/volume-3-issue-3-spring-2005/kids-move-effects-student-mobility-nclb-school-accountability-r; and Janet D. Dalton, "Mobility and Student Achievement in High Poverty Schools" (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, East Tennessee State University, 2013). Electronic Theses and Dissertations. Paper 1159. http://dc.etsu.edu/etd/1159.

HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT: CULTURALLY RELEVANT PEDAGOGY IN ACTION

BRIAN L. WRIGHT, PH.D.

HEY BLACK CHILD,

DO YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE?

WHO YOU REALLY ARE?

DO YOU KNOW YOU CAN BE WHAT YOU WANT TO BE

IF YOU TRY TO BE WHAT YOU CAN BE...

The first stanza of this lyrical empowering poem written by Useni Eugene Perkins celebrates black children and encourages them to dream the impossible dream and take the necessary steps to make their dreams a reality. Guided by this poem, in the sections that follow, I frame a discussion of culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) as a way of knowing and a set practices that can be used to cultivate and nurture the brilliance of black children *hidden in plain sight.* Too often the cultural and personal identities of black children are marginalized and distorted in classrooms, resulting in a focus on what black children do not know, do not understand, and cannot do as opposed to what they do know, do understand, and can do (Wright, 2019). CRP takes a strengths-based approach to cultivate and nurture the strengths, gifts, and talents of black children in school and within the context of their families, cultures, and communities.

What is Culturally Relevant Pedagogy?

CRP "is a pedagogical framework that grounds and informs every aspect of a teacher's practice" (Escudero, 2019, p. 1). CRP "empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (Ladson-Billings, 1992, p. 382). In essence, CRP focuses on the academic and personal success of students as individuals and as a collective by ensuring students engage in a rigorous decolonized academic curriculum—instruction that is culturally relevant and responsive to the languages, literacies, and cultural practices of students from culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse backgrounds hidden in plain sight. CRP understands and affirms as well as situates the cultural and personal identities of students, empowering and equipping them to identify, disrupt, and dismantle structural inequities (e.g., power, privilege, racism)—and positioning them to take a stand for equity and social justice to transform society. CRP distinguishes between what it means to be "schooled" versus "educated." A compelling quote by Duncan-Andrade further substantiates the difference between schooling and education: "Schooling is the process by which you institutionalize people to accept their place in a society…. Education is the process through which you teach them to transform it" (as cited in Escudero, 2019, p. 2).

CRP should "provide students with a lens to recognize injustices and stand against them" (Baines, Tisdale, & Long, 2018, p. 118), as well as empowering students to use a variety of strategies for understanding their educational contexts, including schools and communities, toward addressing issues to change and/or transform these contexts.

CRP Hidden In Plain Sight

CRP affirms the cultural and personal identities of black students by rejecting the notion that their languages, literacies, histories, and cultural ways of knowing are deficits and pathological. Furthermore, CRP challenges socioeconomic inequities and motivates students to succeed academically while promoting pride in their cultural backgrounds. The goals, objectives, and aims of CRP is not to rank and sort students of color based on the extent to which they are able to assimilate into white middle-class culture; instead CRP recognizes, honors, and extends the gifts and talents of students from culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse backgrounds—in this case, black students (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Paris & Alim, 2017; Wright, 2019).

In a CRP classroom, students know who they are, and their self-identity, voice, and agency are cultivated and

CRP TAKES A STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH TO CULTIVATE AND NURTURE THE STRENGTHS, GIFTS, AND TALENTS OF BLACK CHILDREN IN SCHOOL AND WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR FAMILIES, CULTURES, AND COMMUNITIES.

nurtured by their teachers. Informed by this perspective, hidden in plain sight are the rich and diverse languages (e.g., African American English—AAE as a vital and legitimate language practice), literacies (e.g., Urban Critical Literacy skillfully navigating urban settings, Hip-Hop as a form of expression), and cultural ways of being (e.g., verve—high levels of energy; easily excited; physically active when engaged and mentally stimulated; can become "loud" when excited or engaged) that many black students, boys in particular, bring to the classroom environment (Wright, 2017; Wright with Counsell, 2018). Culturally competent educators who are guided by CRP draw upon the social, affective, psychological, physical, academic, and cognitive characteristics and skills of all students to develop culturally responsive ways to converse and engage with them in ways that are both mindful and intentional. Similarly, culturally competent educators who use CRP structure and design learning activities that are customized to students strengths and interests (Wright with Counsell, 2018).

When educators utilize CRP, they have a particularly sharpened lens that allows them to recognize, identify, cultivate, and nurture the gifts and talents of all students; in particular, those who have been historically marginalized. These culturally competent educators see what is often hidden in plain sight; they demarginalize the strengths and assets of their students. They utilize various decolonized methods to maximize students' learning opportunities. They connect them to the content as it relates to their lived experiences by assigning real value to the funds of knowledge they bring to the classroom. Culturally competent educators use CRP to validate, empower, and situate the cultural and self-identities of their students to promote their voices and agency (Wright with Counsell, 2018).

CRP in Action: Suggestions and Recommendations

In practice, CRP acknowledges the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different racial-ethnic groups in school and society as important legacies that impact students' attitudes, beliefs, and dispositions. The CRP approach delivers critical content that is grounded in the strengths and interests of all students.

- CRP in the classroom builds meaningful relationships between home and school experiences as well as between academic and "everyday" lived socio-cultural realities.

- CRP in the classroom incorporates multicultural information, resources, and materials in all the subject areas routinely taught in school. These resources and materials are not a part of the additive level (i.e., ideas and issues that are safe); they represent the transformation level (e.g., the development of empathy, multiple points of view, opposing points of view) and social action level (e.g., change, solutions, empowerment, equity/justice).

- CRP teaches students to know, understand, and value their own and others' cultural heritage as well as to confront inequity and bias toward others.

- CRP utilizes a wide variety of instructional strategies that are contextual and promote different styles of learning that appeal to varied learning modalities (e.g., visual, auditory, tactile).

- CRP creates a classroom environment of respect for students and a belief in their capability while creating opportunities for academic success.

- CRP recognizes and engages the gifts, talents, strengths, and assets of all students that are hidden in plain sight.

When CRP is used with the fidelity that is responsive and responsible to all students—black children in particular—their gifts and talents are visible in plain sight and are cultivated and nurtured to ensure that the black child always knows who they are and can be what they want to be.

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MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS: A STRATEGY TO SURMOUNT SOCIAL, CULTURAL, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS TO EDUCATION

BETTE TATE-BEAVER

On our block in Northeast Kansas City, a number of children have adopted my life partner and me as their community grandparents. One of the first to adopt us was Rebeca. She was a lively, intelligent, personable seven-year-old selling lemonade with friends when we met, and it has been a joy to remain engaged with her for the past six years. Though she was very bright, it was clear from our many visits that this beautiful little girl of color was not at all engaged in school.

dream for students of color locally and nationwide.

A contributing factor is implicit bias in the classroom. Well-intentioned educators retard the progress of children of color. Students who otherwise would have been in a gifted program go unchallenged and held to low expectations. Families' lack of trust in educators and the educational system only adds to the social, cultural, and psychological barriers.

[IMPLICIT BIAS IN THE CLASSROOM] WELL-INTENTIONED EDUCATORS RETARD THE PROGRESS OF CHILDREN OF COLOR. STUDENTS WHO OTHERWISE WOULD HAVE BEEN IN A GIFTED PROGRAM GO UNCHALLENGED AND HELD TO LOW EXPECTATIONS.

We saw a similar disengagement in school from bright African-American and Latinx kids in the neighborhood and around Kansas City. Despite stereotypes, these were all families with two parents in the household. From talking with the kids visiting our home, it was apparent they were aware of the media's representation of their communities, their families, and their abilities. This overpowering message creates social, cultural and psychological barriers for young people. It reverberates in the heads of these students through the lessons of their teachers, textbooks, and curriculum, all instructing them to "know your place" and reminding them that reaching beyond historical limitations is a nearly impossible

During our many front porch and kitchen table gatherings, where we engaged in lively discussions, whetted their young adventurous minds with tales of our travels, read children's books, and enjoyed snacks that only grandparents would provide, we also exposed Rebeca and other children of color on our block to H. Rich Milner's book, *Start Where You Are, But Don't Stay There: Understanding Diversity, Opportunity Gaps and Teaching in Today's Classrooms*. What got their attention were two graphics in the book, showing how the level of education that a person attains affects that individual's annual and lifetime earning ability. For example, a person without a high school diploma

Annual Earning Ability Based on Education Level

Education Level	Annual Income
No High School Diploma	$21,150
High School Diploma	$28,150
Bachelor's Degree	$48,800
Master's Degree	$58,250
Doctorate Degree	$85,400
Professional Degree (Physician/Attorney)	$104,000
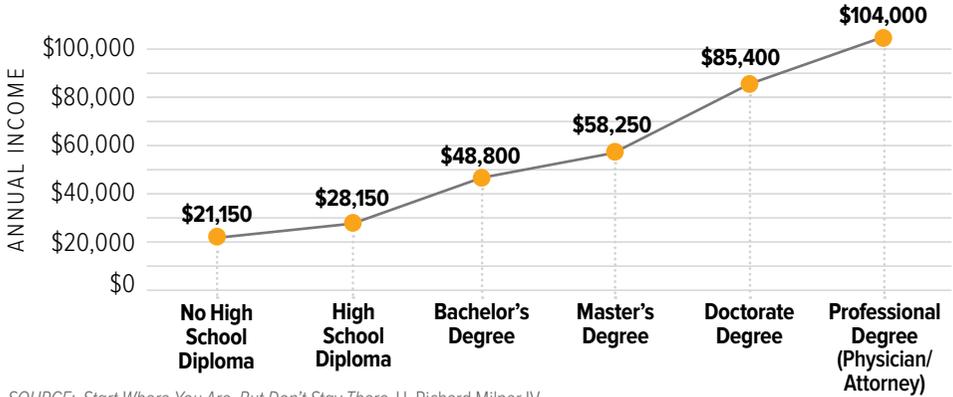
SOURCE: Start Where You Are, But Don't Stay There, H. Richard Milner IV

can only expect annual earnings of $21,150. With a high school diploma, that only rises to $28,150 a year. The kids know too well their parents' financial struggles with such earnings, and none of that is appealing. Their eyes, however, light up as they follow the charts—annual earnings climb to $48,800 for individuals with a bachelor's degree, $58,250 for persons with a master's degree, $85,400 for those with a doctorate, and $104,000 for people, such as physicians or attorneys, who earn a professional degree.

The lifetime earnings chart in *Start Where You Are, But Don't Stay There* also amazed our adopted grandkids—$766,951 for people with no high school diploma, $1,037,759 for persons with a high school diploma, $1,838,432 for a bachelor's degree, $2,127,947 with a master's degree, $3,105,793 with a doctorate, and $4,015,613 with a professional degree.

Lifetime Earning Ability Based on Education Level

Education Level	Lifetime Income
No High School Diploma	$766,951
High School Diploma	$1,037,759
Bachelor's Degree	$1,838,432
Master's Degree	$2,127,947
Doctorate Degree	$3,105,793
Professional Degree (Physician/Attorney)	$4,015,613
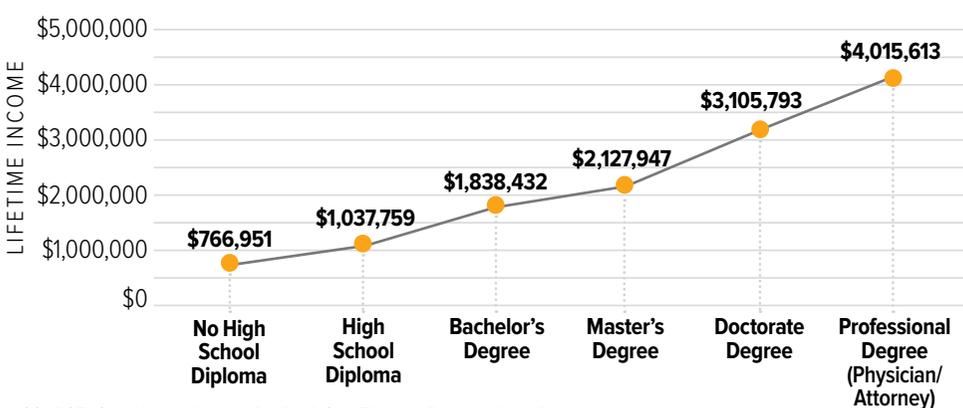
SOURCE: Start Where You Are, But Don't Stay There, H. Richard Milner IV

This stuff really matters to children of color. Why? Because they have been marketed to all of their lives, Lewis W. Diuguid explains in his book, *A Teacher's Cry: Expose the Truth About Education Today*. While kids may not have been taught to manage money well, they have been taught to value money. So putting the value of their education into terms they understand and value makes their schoolwork suddenly relevant and important to them in ways they could not see previously. This information as well as financial education are what schools need to teach repeatedly, empowering children to leap over the social, cultural, and psychological barriers to education.

her school to speak to the other children. She insisted that we share Milner's statistics with her classmates to motivate them, as she had been motivated.

It all shows that our children, with the right mentoring and inspiring information, can be high achievers once the value of their education, in their minds, exceeds the social, cultural, and psychological barriers that schools and society construct. None of this comes as a surprise to me or other advocates of multicultural education. In my years with the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME), much of the research and work of our 2,000+ members has focused on

...OUR CHILDREN, WITH THE RIGHT MENTORING AND INSPIRING INFORMATION, CAN BE HIGH ACHIEVERS ONCE THE VALUE OF THEIR EDUCATION, IN THEIR MINDS, EXCEEDS THE SOCIAL, CULTURAL, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS THAT SCHOOLS AND SOCIETY CONSTRUCT.

The importance of this message became real when we quizzed Rebeca about the grades she was earning in school as a sixth grader. She proudly announced she was making straight As. That was a remarkable feat, considering that previously she had been a solid C student. We were pleasantly surprised when Rebeca also invited us to

overcoming opportunity/education gaps, often widened by these same barriers. It is our responsibility as Black, Brown, Yellow, Red, and White community members and leaders to help effect real change, and to provide the advocacy, leadership, and encouragement necessary to help Black and Brown students overcome these barriers.

Diuguid, L.W. (2004). *A teacher's cry: Expose the truth about education today.* Irvine, CA: Universal Publishers.

Milner, H. R. (2010). *Start where you are, but don't stay there: Understanding diversity, opportunity gaps, and teaching in today's classrooms.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

TO BE YOUNG, GIFTED, BLACK, AND DISABLED

KIM RILEY

Some people have a "because of" testimony. "Because I came from a stable, loving family, I'm a productive member of society." Others have an "in spite of" testimony. "In spite of growing up in a violent community and having a dysfunctional family, I made it." Then there's another category entirely for the "no matter what" group. "No matter what I do, society doesn't see my potential or believe I have value." This invisible population is our brothers and sisters with disabilities.

In 2015–16, the National Center for Education Statistics reported the number of students ages 3 to 21 receiving special education services nationwide was 6.7 million, or 13% of all public school students.

I first became familiar with the plight of this population in 2001 when my then two-year-old son was diagnosed with autism. Up until then I thought I understood life as a member of a marginalized population. After all, I was born to teen parents, grew up on Kansas City's Eastside, was educated in public schools, then went on to be a first-generation college student whose higher education was funded with a full Pell grant. But none of my struggles could prepare me to parent an African-American son with a disability.

There are countless interventions to prevent underserved and underrepresented students from falling through the cracks, but that's not the case for students with disabilities. The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education reported in 2017 that there were 20,499 youth ages 16 to 21 who received special education in schools across the state. Unlike their fellow marginalized peers, students with disabilities may not regularly be introduced to college and career options, such as tours of college campuses and vocational training programs. There are no measurable school-mandated college and career readiness standards or statewide coordinated systems connecting students with post-secondary opportunities. In fact, families practically need a secret knock or password to land a post-secondary opportunity for their children.

At a transition meeting in 2017, my child's case manager stated my son would likely stay home after graduation and learn to make himself a sandwich. I rejected her low expectations and struck out on my own, reaching out to other parents to find out about options. Thanks to my network, my child defied the case manager's predictions and began participating in a life skills/job training program after graduating in May.

Our story is unique. Many parents are forced to quit their jobs and care for their adult children after high school graduation. Also, many

of these young people in urban communities fall victim to crime because they're vulnerable and not engaged in structured learning or work environments.

In 2017 the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported 18.7% of persons with a disability were employed, compared to 65.7% of those without a disability. Seventy-five percent of individuals with cognitive disabilities living in the Kansas City metro area experience chronic unemployment.

It's Time for Change

As daunting as the statistics are, there are actions we can take to level the playing field for these youth.

ACTION STEP #1 – ADVOCATE FOR CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS

A 2009 study entitled "The Intersection of Race, Culture, Language, and Disability" examined the challenges faced by families of color. According to the researchers, "when there is indeed the presence of a developmental disability and families of color seek services, they are likely to encounter systems and structures that are not prepared to help them navigate services while living life at the intersection of race, culture, language, and disability, which results in them ultimately receiving culturally unresponsive and inappropriate services and interventions."

Long-term employment success is inextricably tied to providers addressing the ethnic, cultural, and linguistic needs of these families when connecting students with disabilities to post-secondary opportunities.

ACTION STEP #2 – DEMAND SCHOOL DISTRICTS ALLOW ALL PARENTS ACCESS TO THEIR CHILD'S CLASSROOMS

Believe it or not, some school districts have policies (under the guise of compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) banning parents of children in self-contained classrooms from visiting their children's classrooms. The rationale is that special education students have the right to keep their disability status a private matter, and outsiders visiting the classroom would essentially "out" them. Rather than adopting overarching policies, districts should consider options such as requesting parents sign waivers either granting or denying permission for visitors to observe the classroom with their child in it. Visits can then be scheduled while students requesting anonymity are out of the classroom, such as during speech or occupational therapy sessions.

This policy is particularly troublesome for black students, who are overrepresented in the special education population compared to their white peers. It is essential that parents have the right to observe their children in their natural classroom environment so they can study how their children learn when teachers introduce new tasks. They can then replicate the same teaching styles at home and share them with future job coaches and support coordinators.

ACTION STEP #3 –
DEMAND HIGHER WAGES FOR DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

Boosting employment rates for youth with disabilities is directly correlated with the ability to hire and retain quality workers, known as direct support professionals, to assist with daily living tasks such as getting dressed and transportation. A 2015 National Core Indicators study cited an average salary of $10.56 per hour and a 49.1% turnover rate in Missouri, with 8% of jobs remaining vacant from time to time.

This worker shortage impacts all families, but it has a disproportionate impact on youth from poor households who are limited to public assistance rather than being able to pay higher wages like more affluent families.

ACTION STEP #4 –
ADVOCATE FOR MEDICAID EXPANSION

Under Missouri's current outdated Medicaid system, persons with disabilities are locked into poverty due to low income and personal saving levels required to maintain coverage. Medicaid expansion coverage would promote employment by allowing recipients to earn greater income and not requiring asset tests.

Medicaid also impacts this population when they switch to adult medical providers, which are in high demand due to the state's refusal to pass Medicaid expansion. If the state passes Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act, Medicaid primary care rates will rise and be in line with Medicare reimbursement levels—resulting in a larger pool of providers for the population.

We, as a people, are well aware of our history. We know our ancestors were dragged to this country in chains, sold on auction blocks, and survived slavery, black codes, Jim Crow, lynchings, and countless atrocities. We look to their example as we battle today's forces who are fighting to reenslave us. But let's not forget the struggles of the rest of us—those who still sit in the back of the bus. We have to commit ourselves to demanding equity for the forgotten members of the black race—those with disabilities.

WHY KANSAS CITY SCHOOLS STRUGGLE TO EDUCATE STUDENTS WHO COME AND GO IN CLASSROOMS

ELLE MOXLEY

Kansas City's most vulnerable students are switching schools so often that educators can't always get them caught up before they move again.

The circumstances of poverty frequently force families to move. An eviction notice goes up on the door, and soon that family's belongings are out on the curb. A day, a week, or a month later, a child shows up at a new school. It doesn't matter if it's the first day of school or the last—that student is now that school's responsibility.

For decades, student mobility was the problem no one talked about. Teachers were told not to make excuses, even as the ins and outs wreaked havoc on their classrooms.

Urban League of **Greater Kansas City**

But not acknowledging the problem didn't make it go away. And it minimized just how traumatic these moves really are for kids.

"We have to remove the barrier to the greatest extent possible of access to education," said Stacy King, the director of family and student services for the Center School District. "No kid should have to ask, 'How am I going to get to school?'"

High Mobility

KCUR 89.3 spent the 2016–17 school year at Ingels Elementary in the Hickman Mills School District, tracking how often students moved in and out of second grade teacher Aubrey Paine's class. Paine started the year with 22 students. Over the next 10 months, 13 students came and went; 26 were in class at the end of the year. Paine rarely knew when a new student was going to turn up—only that their name had suddenly appeared on her roster.

Ingels is a high-mobility school in a high-mobility district, but there are dozens of schools like it in Kansas City.

Pitcher Elementary Principal Karol Howard counted "only" 148 moves in or out of her school of 295 during 2018–19. That might not seem like cause for celebration, except there were 170 the year before.

In fact, nearly 40% of students in the Kansas City Public Schools are new to the district each year.

"A lot of times these students don't come with very tangible records, if they have records at all," said Mike Reynolds, the chief research and accountability officer for KCPS.

His office tries to track those records down, but it's not easy in a city with 14 public school districts and more than 20 charter schools, not to mention a state line bisecting the metro.

"So a lot of times we are completely blind as to what happened to these students previously, and just as important, what happens to these students after they leave us," Reynolds said.

Reynolds said KCPS teachers need about two years to get kids who've fallen behind caught up. They rarely get that long. In fact, about 15% of all KCPS students are enrolled for fewer than 30 days.

The differences in academic achievement are stark. KCPS fifth graders who've been in the district for three years score about 40 points higher on the Missouri Assessment Program, or MAP test, than their peers with unstable enrollment. That's half an achievement level. And KCPS 11th graders who've been in the same high school all three years score about two points higher on the ACT college entrance exam.

"We're not going so far as to say that this is the sole factor in these students' achievement, but without a

THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF POVERTY FREQUENTLY FORCE FAMILIES TO MOVE. AN EVICTION NOTICE GOES UP ON THE DOOR, AND SOON THAT FAMILY'S BELONGINGS ARE OUT ON THE CURB.

question, students who get evicted... have worse academic outcomes than students who don't," Reynolds said.

Sharing the Data

Until very recently, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education didn't publish mobility data on its website, even though it collected those statistics from schools.

Educators in unaccredited districts found this particularly galling because high mobility is one of the factors that makes it hard to regain accreditation. Couldn't state education officials at least acknowledge what they were up against?

It would seem they're finally ready to do just that. In June 2019, as the state board considered an accreditation appeal from Riverview Gardens in St. Louis, Michael Jones said unaccredited and provisionally accredited districts rarely get the benefit of the doubt, even though their students are low-income and highly mobile. Jones, who represents St. Louis on the state board and attended segregated schools as a child, added that students of color have always had to play by different rules.

"You presumed if you were a black team playing a white team, you were not going to get any calls from the referee...I think we need to have a really more honest conversation about what it means to be a black child in the state of Missouri," Jones said.

Several state board members agreed that high poverty schools with highly mobile populations need more support.

Quinton Lucas, the newly elected mayor of Kansas City, lived that reality. Having experienced homelessness as a child, he has said the best way to support transient students is to build more affordable, dignified housing in the urban core.

"That's why I rattle on and on about housing policy. Right now you have parents moving around due to rent challenges," Lucas said. "The creation of more affordable housing units is key for us to be able to actually address the mobility issue."

Helping Families

Here's what schools are already doing to try to stabilize families.

Together with Legal Aid of Western Missouri, KCPS launched a Justice

in the Schools program during the 2018–19 school year. They hired a full-time attorney to help families, particularly with housing issues such as evictions.

Center and Hickman Mills are partnering with community organizations and each other to help families experiencing homelessness. A federal law, McKinney-Vento, requires schools to provide transportation to homeless students, even if they've moved out of the district. But that isn't usually enough support for a family in crisis. So the

Kansas, Public Schools' successful effort to get all the social service organizations in Wyandotte County in one room.

Teachers and principals are also figuring out how to get kids who are behind caught up. One of the KCPS success stories is Pitcher Elementary, where students rotate through the learning lab to get small group instruction from retired teachers Principal Howard hires with grant money. It's been an incredibly effective strategy, and the school's test scores are some of the best

"THE CREATION OF MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS IS KEY FOR US TO BE ABLE TO ACTUALLY ADDRESS THE MOBILITY ISSUE."

—KANSAS CITY MAYOR QUINTON LUCAS

school districts in South Kansas City want to create a one-stop shop where families can access various social services.

"They're on-site to help families apply for services that normally there's a long waiting list for," said Leslie Washington, a student support specialist in Hickman Mills. "Transportation is an issue for a lot of our families."

It's an approach modeled on "Impact Wednesdays," the Kansas City,

in the district. The problem is, the funding is always about to run out, and Howard spends a lot of sleepless nights worrying about what happens to her students when it does.

And this is the hard truth about what happens when students switch schools abruptly. There's only so much the school can do to stop it. In fact, the solutions to this foundational problem in urban education can't come from the schools. They have to come from the community.

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MITIGATING HIGH STUDENT MOBILITY: A SUPERINTENDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

MARK BEDELL, ED.D.

As a public education leader in Kansas City, when I consider the state of our community, the biggest issue I see in our path to improvement is student mobility. In Kansas City Public Schools, daily we see the negative impact of student mobility.

Student mobility refers to the rate of student transfers to and from our schools in a given academic year. Every school experiences some student mobility, but ours in KCPS is extraordinarily high, about three times the state average in Missouri. Many of our schools and classrooms see a constant churn of students moving in and out. We have a lot of teachers who will see six to ten new students just this school year. This instability creates an unsustainable situation. Simply put, high student mobility is bad because of the disruption it causes across our education system.

In the classroom, teachers need time to figure out the best way to individualize teaching for each student, to measure each student's growth, and put those lesson plans into practice. This process is interrupted every time a student leaves or a new student arrives. There are many instances in which no school records come with these new students. We end up enrolling these students and making inaccurate assumptions about their academic standing, which in turn negatively impacts teaching and learning. Furthermore, teachers in classrooms with high student mobility experience increased work-related stress and anxiety.

KCPS experiences every day the negative impact of student mobility, and we have a pretty good idea why it is so high in our community. The lack of affordable housing, chronic evictions, and the proliferation of school choice are the primary culprits. Knowing the causes and effects means that KCPS and the community can begin to craft some solutions.

We are taking a number of steps within KCPS to address the issue of high student mobility. At the classroom level, we instituted an assessment program called iReady that gives teachers the ability to effectively and efficiently measure where every student is in their academic development and

determine the best way forward. This means students have a better shot at catching up with their peers even when they move. iReady is a tremendous resource when school records lag for students who have transferred. We have seen iReady have enormous benefits in our schools just in the first year of implementation.

We are also taking steps at a systematic and community level to address this challenging student mobility issue. Following are just a few examples:

- Justice In the Schools – a program to provide free legal services for families, particularly those facing eviction
- Early Head Start – high quality care and education for the babies of KCPS high school students
- Sprint 1Million Program – free wifi hotspots and data plans for high school students
- KCATA Partnership – free passes for secondary school students on KCATA busses
- Plaza Comunitaria – education and support for Mexican nationals and other Latinos, in partnership with the Consulate of Mexico in Kansas City
- Mentoring – providing students with positive, guiding experiences with responsible, caring adults
- Trauma-Sensitive Care – training and equipping all KCPS staff to recognize and respond positively to the impact of trauma on students and families

In KCPS, we're doing our part to mitigate the effects of and ultimately solve the issue of high student mobility. We also know that there is more to do. But the solution must involve our entire community working together. We must help each other help our families develop stable lives with deep roots in our neighborhoods. Only then will we begin to thrive.

EQUITY FOR ALL: BEST PRACTICES

AMY MCCART, PH.D.

All children, regardless of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or their ZIP code, have a fundamental right to receive a high quality education. Additionally, all children means each and every child in a community, whether they struggle to learn, are high achievers, live in poverty, are culturally or linguistically distinct, or have extensive physical support needs. Data shows that black students, especially black boys, are suspended at higher rates and are more likely to be tracked into special education than their white counterparts. There is a persistent achievement gap between black and white students, and black children are less likely to be taught by highly qualified teachers than white students. To ensure that all children have access to quality educational opportunities, equity must be a priority.

This requires a shift in mindset among all educators from a one-size-fits-all approach to an equity-based education delivery system. The conversation will then move from "Who are we able to support in our schools?" to "What supports do we use to ensure the success of all students?"

Our Equity Model

Using our Equity Model, SWIFT works to support schools, their districts, and state education agencies to establish systems through which all students are successful. This begins with the understanding that student needs and challenges are indeed complex. But this complexity does not have to be an enduring problem that stifles their academic and social success. We view an equity-based, multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) as a way to reform, refocus, and/or refine a school's structural systems to provide an integrated safety net of academic, behavioral, and social-emotional support that matches school and community resources to the needs of students. Student needs and the support the school provides are continuously monitored by a dedicated and empowered team of school personnel. This team adjusts and realigns student support based on progress toward success. Measures of success are comprehensive, multifaceted, and inclusive of the voices of the students, their families, and school personnel.

ALL CHILDREN, REGARDLESS OF RACE, ETHNICITY, SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS, OR THEIR ZIP CODE, HAVE A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO RECEIVE A HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION.

Urban League of **Greater Kansas City**

Multi-Tiered System of Support

Administrative Leadership

Integrated Educational Framework

Family & Community Engagement

Inclusive Policy Structure and Practice

From using our Equity Model, we have confirmed four key findings:

- Historically marginalized students are successful when academic and behavioral supports are matched to their needs.

- Segregating students who need support is not a successful strategy.

- Leveraging the knowledge, strengths, and shared aims of people in the schools and across the whole system will bring sustainable results.

- A focus on equity as opposed to inclusion is important for success.

Our "all means all" philosophy means all students' needs are determined using data, with de-emphasis of categorical labels; all adults in the school are responsible for all students; and any resource is available to any student when they need it and for as long as they need it. By not segregating students, teachers, and resources, the school culture is free to learn, transform, and continuously improve in ways that permeate the whole school fabric.

We have learned the importance of relying on the people who already are part of the system—who know the students, live in the local culture, and bring a diversity of strengths. We have also learned the importance of strong district-school relationships and the reciprocal relationship of policies to practice and practice to policies.

We must celebrate, in ways big and small, those who have committed to educating our city's students. We must have optimism and a belief that all students can succeed. And lastly, despite the ongoing racism, microaggression, abuse, violence, isolation, and segregation experienced by persons of color, we know that systems can and do change.

CREATING CULTURAL CHANGE IN HIGHER EDUCATION FOCUSED ON EQUITY:
A COMMENTARY

KIMBERLY BEATTY, ED.D.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion issues have taken center stage nationwide. As racial tension continues to capture the nation's attention, it is increasingly important that higher education administrators play leading roles in designing and executing diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies that can be embedded into the mission, culture, and fabric of our institutions.

Higher education leaders who are bold enough to embrace equity as an institutional core value will reap enormous benefits in student success, employee satisfaction, and community trust. A diverse and inclusive environment in which resources, access, and power are equitably distributed empowers all stakeholders, including students, faculty, administrators, and the community at large.

Talking about and writing about equity is far easier than implementing equity and inclusion strategies that work. To achieve success, we must take measures to ensure that we are speaking a common language and articulating a shared vision for our institutions.

Equity is the new buzzword, but how is it defined and what does it mean for your college or university? The University of Manitoba-Human Resources defines equity as: "The guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all students, faculty, and staff, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. The principle of equity acknowledges that there are historically underserved and underrepresented populations and that fairness regarding these unbalanced conditions is needed to assist equality in the provision of effective opportunities to all groups." This definition may evoke both negative and positive reactions.

Motivating administrators, faculty, and staff to experience shifts in mindsets and behaviors will require relentless resolve, focus, and commitment even in the face of explicit and implicit opposition. We must stay the course to concretize and operationalize this definition of equity. To do so effectively may require massive and fundamental changes in core institutional values, policies, and practices.

Executing equity inside higher education organizations is not a one-off event. It is a marathon. It is not for the faint of heart. But it is an opportunity that can lead to the kind of systems change that is required to ensure that all students, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, or socioeconomic status, have equal and equitable access to a high-quality education. It is an opportunity that can contribute to a more inclusive society that embraces the principles on which our founding fathers built this nation: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

"WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS TO BE SELF-EVIDENT, THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL, THAT THEY ARE ENDOWED BY THEIR CREATOR WITH CERTAIN INALIENABLE RIGHTS, THAT AMONG THESE ARE LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS."

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THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION = THE FUTURE OF OPPORTUNITY

AARON NORTH

JERRIHLYN L. MCGEE, DNP, RN, CNE

ZORA MULLIGAN, ESQUIRE

There are many ends to education which may never change—among them are self-discovery, cultural awareness, and appreciation for diverse perspectives. Another consistent end to formal education is being empowered and prepared at all ages after high school graduation for learning, work, and life outside our education systems and institutions. The future of education will be evident in what is required and prioritized to get or make the jobs in our current and emerging economies.

The worlds of learning and work are changing. Employers demand formal postsecondary credentials for nearly two-thirds of all jobs, and increasingly the credentials in demand are more varied than traditional four-year college degrees. Those traditional degrees continue to be vital and desired by employers, just not as the exclusive paths to getting or making good jobs.

students graduate from college within six years compared to nearly 60% of white students. These disparities are alarming, as is the fact that those college completion percentages are based on students who went to college in the first place, not all students who graduated high school or left high school before completing. The majority of high school graduates in both Kansas and Missouri do not graduate from college.

As a nation and as a bi-state Kansas City region, we bring a great deal of investment and intentionality to college entrance and completion as the path to economic mobility. Even with that attention and those resources, the majority of high school graduates in either state are not graduating from college, and the gaps between white and non-white student completion rates are significant and distressing.

THE WORLDS OF LEARNING AND WORK ARE CHANGING. EMPLOYERS DEMAND FORMAL POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS FOR NEARLY TWO-THIRDS OF ALL JOBS, AND INCREASINGLY THE CREDENTIALS IN DEMAND ARE MORE VARIED THAN TRADITIONAL FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE DEGREES.

In Kansas, 69% of high school graduates enroll in college. In Missouri, that rate is 51%. Those numbers represent all students graduating from high school across all races, income levels, and geographies. When race is factored in for both states, approximately 33% of black

If the future systems and institutions of education are going to empower students for the world of work and learning outside of high school or college, then the same intensity and intentionality with which we have focused on college completion must also be brought to bear in the

non-degree education pathways that increasingly lead to the jobs and careers that enable economic mobility and growth. That expanded emphasis and investment of resources does not take the place of college completion; it is in addition to it. The era of "either/or" related to college enrollment after high school is ending. The age of "both/and" is emerging as the reality in which students of all ages will navigate the coming education landscape.

Consider a future in which students earning four-year college degrees do so at an average age of 34 instead of 24. That 34-year-old recent college graduate may have earned a certification or licensure in high school that allowed her to begin working in a well-paying job immediately after graduation while continuing to acquire licensures and certifications that advance her position and salary in that field (or related fields) over the next several years. As a career path becomes clearer to her, she begins a four-year course of study at a college or university that will position her for new growth opportunities in management. Her employer helps pay for some or all of those costs. That student earns her degree at the age of 34 knowing very well how that degree fits in her career path and clearly understanding the value of that credential. She also has low or no debt associated with that degree and has been earning increasing wages since

the age of 18 with little or no delay in that earning trajectory.

There are dozens of variations on that hypothetical education pathway, including two-year degrees and other credentials as educational ends. Equity in the future of education requires access to information, navigation, mentoring, resources, and guidance for all students in that increasingly complex learning landscape after high school. That information and access are especially critical for students too often overlooked or underrepresented based on the color of their skin or the socioeconomic group they represent.

As a region, we can meet the future of education on our own terms. State and regional leaders can develop an approach to postsecondary education that is as diverse as the citizens they serve. We can hold ourselves accountable for the racial diversity of who crosses the stage on graduation day holding a diploma or degree, not just the racial composition of the entering class. We can also care more about what happens to students six months, one year, and two years after graduation rather than just whether or not they graduated. It is imperative that the systems and institutions of the future adapt, evolve, and respond at a rate that ensures what and how students are learning is as valuable as possible in the world beyond the classroom.

⊜ ON THE ROAD TO EQUITY IN EDUCATION –
URBAN LEAGUE RECOMMENDATIONS

Minority students, especially African-American boys, are subjected to in-school and out-of-school suspensions at higher rates than white students. When students are repeatedly suspended from school or are sent to a Buddy room for an in-school suspension, they miss out on much-needed quality instruction. This loss of academic time negatively impacts grades, test scores, student confidence levels, and students' feeling of connectedness to school. Additionally, many public schools employ demerit systems to document a variety of discipline infractions.

1. To drastically reduce the number of out-of-school and in-school disciplinary infractions received by students of color while maintaining safety within the school environment, the Urban League recommends the following:

   - **The Missouri and Kansas Departments of Elementary and Secondary Education should require that discipline data reporting requirements be expanded to include demerit systems and Buddy room systems data.** To ensure transparency and accountability, these data should be disaggregated by race, gender, ethnicity, ability, language, and national origin.

   - **All school districts and charter schools should establish School Discipline Advisory Councils to review all student codes of conduct handbooks and discipline practices through an equity lens and provide feedback, input, and recommendations** to address any policies and practices that may contribute to inequities in the system.

   - **The Missouri and Kansas Departments of Elementary and Secondary Education should mandate that all school districts and charter schools design and institutionalize Culturally Relevant Pedagogical (CRP) frameworks into every aspect of the teaching and learning process.** Additionally, **all teachers and administrators should be required to complete rigorous CRP professional development programs** to learn how to design culturally relevant curricula and instructional strategies.

2. Comprised of 68 schools, 23 Local Education Agencies (LEA), and four Charter sponsors for fewer than 35,000 students system-wide, Kansas City's School System is highly segregated, fragmented, and inefficient. To address this fragmentation and foster economies of scale, the Urban League recommends that **the number of Charter sponsors be reduced from four to two.** KCPS would remain as one of those sponsors.

3. The Urban League of Greater Kansas City has been an engaged advocate for quality education for all students for more than 40 years. Our primary areas of focus have included such issues as site-based leadership, teacher quality, and student achievement (black/white achievement gap, test scores, attendance, parent engagement, graduation rates, college readiness, and degree completion), primarily for the most vulnerable students, including low-income students and students of color. Longitudinal data collected by the Education Trust and the National Urban League's Washington Bureau documents that teacher quality and site-based leadership are the most effective drivers of high student achievement. Therefore, **the Urban League recommends** that **Kansas City Public Schools pilot a site-based leadership model similar in design to the Empower Schools Empowerment Zones model.**

Empowerment Zones[1] are a school's partnership with a district that sustainably provides a cohort of Zone schools with wide autonomy and strong accountability under innovative governance. Zone schools remain part of the district, yet operate under a site-based structure that supports existing schools to take advantage of their newfound freedoms and selectively add new talent and leadership where needed.

An Empowered school looks the same as the traditional school (same building, same district, same students), and it works with existing leaders and educators in the building. However, it operates with a key difference: meaningful school-level autonomy.

With autonomy over budget, staffing, schedule, curriculum, and culture, leaders and educators at the school level can create an environment tailor-made for the needs of their unique set of students.

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1 https://www.empowerschools.org/what-we-do/empowerment-zones/
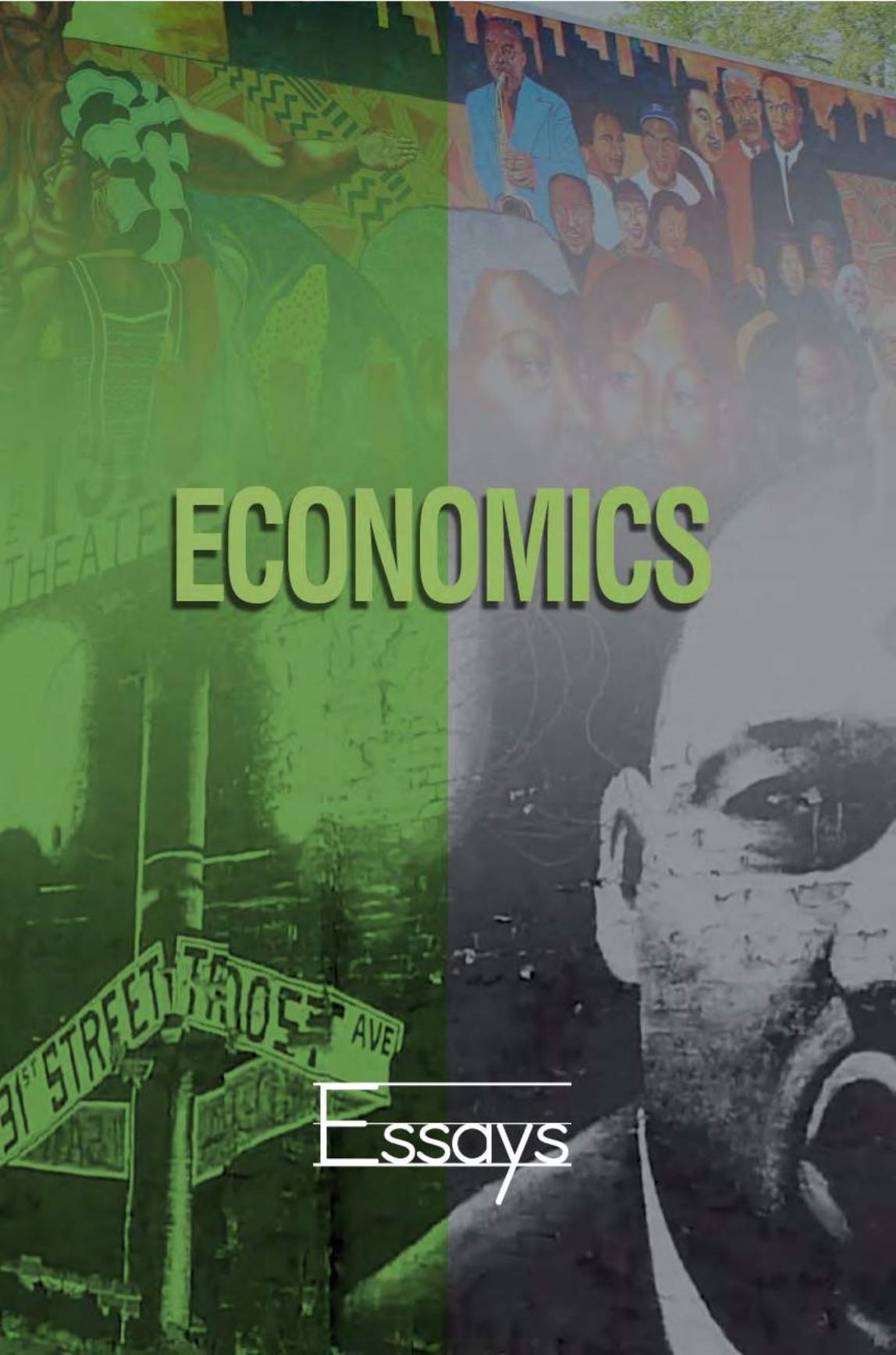
ECONOMICS

Essays

ORCHESTRATED URBANISM

TYLER CUKAR

The American city is at a transformative moment; urban cores are being rethought, re-worked, and revitalized. An influx of investment and people has put enormous pressure on land and property, resulting in the displacement of historically marginalized black communities. Designers, developers, and cities are looking to capitalize on this moment to shape the future of cities. To ensure this is done in socially, racially, and economically equitable ways, discerning how cities arrived at this moment is critical. Multifaceted American cities like Kansas City are not happenstance; they are the well-orchestrated result of centuries of surreptitiously implemented race-based policies, social ethos, and long-lasting systemic problems. Patterns resulting from centuries of racially motivated policies are ingrained in our cities. As their origins become forgotten, their perpetually self-reinforcing impacts are not understood.

To foster equitable cities, the lens through which we view the American city must be adjusted. The lens must become a tool to understand the cause and effect relationships between past racial policies and built urban form. To adjust the lens, we must peel back the city's form and culture like an onion, revealing a layered relationship of events. A city's history will show itself as a web of interconnected, compounding events that shaped our cities. Using this lens, any project should react to what created place and for whom, and not only who will live there but who was there in the past. With these questions, the conversation surrounding equitable growth can be directed towards the more strategic, solution-focused question: What do we do now?, striving to "un-design" this racially divisive legacy.

Kansas City's inequality is as acute as ever. To address this, we must understand how we got here. In the late 19th century, the city was racially mixed, with "market forces" driving residential patterns—meaning there were no legal barriers to housing. Wealthy white Kansas Citians established many of the historic neighborhoods we know today (e.g., Hyde Park, the Plaza), while black residents settled on the Eastside near Troost, adjacent to Church Hill, the historic black core during the Civil War. However, middle-class whites struggled to define an identity. As home ownership increasingly became a badge of social standing, middle-class whites grew anxious and sought ways to control where blacks lived,

resorting to social, political, and physical means. This was achieved in overt ways, such as violence and fear, but also in more subtle ways that appeared to be for the good of the city. City beautification was common, such as ramming the parks system through historic black neighborhoods. Zoning was another tool; it limited the Eastside to industrial use or the under-valued mid-rise apartments.

A more explicit way whites controlled neighborhoods was through racially restrictive covenants, a method perfected by J.C. Nichols. This further confined the surging population of black residents to a narrow tract of land east of Troost. Though restricted, black Kansas Citians were able to create thriving communities, a city within a city, that created many of Kansas City's cultural touchstones that all residents loved, including jazz evolution, the Negro League, and world-renowned barbecue.

Following the Great Depression, the area east of Troost was formally disinvested in through New Deal policies. As part of the 1934 Housing Act, the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) studied 239 cities, determining which neighborhoods were desirable for lending. The HOLC created color-coded maps ranging from green (A), the most desirable, to blue, yellow, and finally red (D), areas considered too risky for loans—a

practice known as "redlining." The maps were accompanied by write-ups for each neighborhood stating the reason for the grade. Kansas City's Eastside neighborhoods were, in entirety, given a D grade. The write-up of the 65% black Eastside justified the grade, stating, "a homogenous invasion of the negro...values were shot long ago." This guaranteed that no new money would be provided for home construction, renovation, or businesses. Any person looking for a new home or moving to the city would not be able to locate in these neighborhoods. Investment in black communities was officially over.

With the implementation of the G.I. Bill following World War II, the suburban exodus ballooned. Kansas City expanded its boundaries from 60 to 130 acres, allowing the city's tax base to expand, but further decimating black neighborhoods by pulling funds further away from the core. Priorities shifted to connecting downtown to these far-flung enclaves. With the 1956 Federal Highway Act, Kansas City implemented some of the earliest miles of the interstate system, which barreled through black neighborhoods. Now, following nearly 100 years of societal, political, and economic disinvestment, the Eastside was physically cut off. As a result, blight, a term originally referring to crop-killing bacteria, was suddenly used to designate areas for urban

renewal, a process heavily applied within black communities. The areas deemed "blighted" followed the same historic racial lines from the previous 70 years.

The next 40 years would see the disinvestment and negative perception continue. Kansas City had become "hypersegregated"— decades of coordinated, racially driven policies created a system of inequality. The disinvestment not only impacted where people lived but ensured that income and education levels were low and employment and

line between the haves and the have-nots. Gentrification is on the rise in neighborhoods on Kansas City's East and West sides. Economic inequity, born in the draconian policies of the past, has become institutionalized. Economic development is practically non-existent in the inner city.

To address these ramifications, cities must make deliberate, intentional decisions that directly address the structural racism. Inclusion must be as intentional as exclusion has been historically. American cities are in the early stages of new growth

ECONOMIC INEQUITY, BORN IN THE DRACONIAN POLICIES OF THE PAST, HAS BECOME INSTITUTIONALIZED. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS PRACTICALLY NON-EXISTENT IN THE INNER CITY.

economic opportunity limited. The differences in Kansas City's income and education levels, home values, and crime rates typically align along either side of Troost. Again, they follow the same boundaries that were targeted for violence and policy control in the teens and 1920s, were redlined in the 1930s, and were slated as blighted in the 1950s.

This is structural racism, the impact of which has played out with painful clarity in Kansas City, which remains one of the most segregated cities in the country. Troost remains a dividing

and response, which brings with it both great tension and opportunity. With one side having experienced generations of systemic oppression, the other seeking affordability and urban lifestyles, how can these mesh?

Cities are not static; they constantly change. To design equitable cities for the future, we must acknowledge and address head-on the racial drivers of the past. The city of today was built on past events, and the success of cities in the future relies on the reconciliation of past decisions with present needs.

THE COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT ACT: ASSESSING THE LAW'S IMPACT ON DISCRIMINATION AND REDLINING

CLINT ODOM, ESQUIRE

Congress passed the Community Reinvestment Act of 1977 (CRA) because of concerns that federally-insured banking institutions were not making enough credit available in the local areas in which they were chartered and acquiring deposits. Disinvestment practices allowed depository institutions to accept deposits from African Americans in inner-city neighborhoods and reinvest them in more affluent, suburban areas.

Faced with substantial evidence of redlining—the practice of denying credit to certain communities, typically communities of color—Congress decided that market forces alone could not break down residential segregation patterns. The grant of a public bank charter creates a continuing obligation for that bank to serve the credit needs of the public where it was chartered. As a consequence, the CRA was enacted to "re-affirm the obligation of federally chartered or insured financial institutions to serve the convenience and needs of their service areas" and "to help meet the credit needs of the localities in which they are, consistent with the prudent operation of the institution."[1]

Redlining prevented African Americans from securing affordable homes and mortgages in decent neighborhoods and purposely segregated communities. Segregated into slums, African Americans were concentrated into poverty by way of intentional discriminatory policies and practices. African Americans were denied credit to purchase homes, start small businesses, and meet everyday living expenses. Blight, crime, and decreased property values resulted. Cities were left behind with no adequate tax base for basic services. With no desire to invest in these communities, too many African-American and minority neighborhoods continue to deteriorate.

Clearly, CRA is one of the most important civil and economic rights laws of the 20th century.[2] As a matter of economic justice, the CRA is every bit as important as the Civil Rights Act that dismantled discrimination in places of public accommodation, employment, and education. To dispute this, one would have to wholly ignore the conditions that gave rise to the law's enactment and the contemporaneous enactment of federal laws such as the Fair Housing

Act of 1968, the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act, the Affordable Housing Goals, and the Duty to Serve rule, to name a few.

However, in the 21st century, the law is in dire need of reform to better serve low- to moderate-income (LMI) communities, especially communities of color. CRA-regulated institutions have not met the needs of the community, allowing an array of nonbanks to enter the marketplace, many of which provide high-cost and often predatory products. This is a point on which both advocates and the industry agree. CRA can and must do more to provide low-cost loans and to make quality investments in communities of color, which was the intent of the law.

CRA was designed to help African Americans enter the financial mainstream and to increase investments in their communities. CRA incentivizes banks to address previous injustices and current market failures that were caused and can be fixed by the federal government and the banking industry.

Financial institutions have a continuing and affirmative obligation to serve low-wealth communities because of the material benefit they receive from the federal safety net provided by the government, including deposit insurance and the Federal Reserve's discount window.

Moreover, banks are not forced to lend to these communities at a financial risk or to the detriment of their shareholders.

Recent research has established that the CRA is meeting it objectives. Credit is more readily available in low- and moderate-income communities. African Americans have greater access to credit. And scholarly research has established that the CRA has been, at least in part, responsible for these gains. Stronger enforcement of the CRA and related fair lending laws, in part due to pressure by the Urban League and other community groups, along with market forces, has generally resulted in an increase in conventional home purchase lending to low- and moderate-income borrowers.

Lack of Lending in Communities of Color

Still, inequity in lending exists. LMI households are less likely to receive a loan from a CRA-regulated institution than higher income borrowers, according to the Government Accountability Office.[3] Households in higher-income and largely white neighborhoods are nearly 30% more likely to receive a loan from a CRA-regulated assessment area lender than a borrower living in a largely minority, lower-income area.

Lower-income households are more likely to obtain credit or conduct financial transactions through an alternative financial services (AFS) provider and less likely to have a checking or savings account with a bank or credit union than higher-income earners.

Nonbanks, which are not regulated under CRA, have drastically increased in market share, because CRA-regulated institutions are not fully meeting the needs of the community:

- Nonbanks originated 37% of all personal loans in 2017, compared to less than 1% in 2010;

- Nonbanks originated over 50% of all conventional mortgages in 2018, compared to 20% in 2007;

- Approximately 85% of all FHA mortgages were originated by nonbanks in 2018, compared to 57% in 2010; and

- Nonbank small business lending rose to 35% in 2015.

For good or for worse, this trend is likely to continue. All nonbanks are not bad. However, payday lenders, check cashers, some independent mortgage banks, and merchant payday lenders have the ability and incentive to prey on the financially vulnerable and strip wealth because CRA is not doing its job effectively.

According to Dr. Michael Stegman, a current Milken Institute fellow and former Obama and Clinton administration housing official, "[t]here are now more check cashers and payday lending outlets than there are McDonald's restaurants, Burger Kings, Target stores, JC Penney's locations, Sears, and Walmart combined."

While nonbanks provide more access to capital than traditional banks, they often do so at higher pricing. According to a recent University of California-Berkeley study, conventional mortgages originated by nonbanks are more expensive and priced higher due to discrimination, in addition to the lack of competition from CRA-regulated institutions.[4]

The African-American home ownership rate reached a peak of nearly 50% in 2004; it is now only 42.9%. The African-American home ownership rate is near where it was before the passage of the Fair Housing Act, and it is expected to continue to decline through the year 2030, according to the Urban Institute.

As it relates to access to capital for small businesses, in the National Urban League's experience, African-American microentrepreneurs are more likely to be denied small business loans; be approved for lower amounts at higher rates; self-finance; or self-select out of the

application process altogether. African Americans not only struggle in the conventional market; they struggle in securing loans backed by the Small Business Administration (SBA), often described as loans of last resort. African-American small businesses have received only approximately 2% of the loans originated under SBA's 7(a) flagship loan program since 2010 and only 3% according to the most recent available data.[5] As a result, many African-American microentrepreneurs rely on nonbanks, many of whom offer predatory products, such as merchant payday loans.

In addition to the lack of lending in communities of color, CRA-regulated institutions are not making quality investments in communities of color. Gentrification is an unintended consequence of CRA. Unfair and unbalanced use of CRA investments have helped to create gentrification and displacement, contrary to the purpose and intent of the law. According to a former CFPB official, the CRA "is based on geography, so it's perfectly possible to comply with CRA and have that pattern...That's not the idea, of course, but the law allows it."[6]

Suggested Reforms

Several reforms could be implemented to strengthen CRA's impact to ensure CRA-regulated institutions provide access to low-cost capital and make quality investments in communities of color, including:

1. Establish clearer standards for CRA eligibility. CRA modernization should establish "clearer standards for eligibility for CRA credit, with greater consistency and predictability across each of the regulators." CRA regulators should standardize CRA exam schedules to ensure uniformity and more predictability for regulated institutions.

2. Set assessment areas where banking services are delivered. Assessment areas should be where retail banking services are delivered and not wholly related to branch or ATM locations. Assessment areas should also be expanded to any state or Metropolitan Statistical Area where the lender achieves a significant market presence—such as one-half of one percent of all loans. This is the best way to keep CRA up to date and ensure banks are meeting the credit needs of their local communities.

3. Modernize the service test to measure how well banks are serving LMI communities. The service test must do more to incentivize banks to offer credit products to communities of color. There is a problem when 98% of CRA-regulated institutions get a Satisfactory or Outstanding rating.

4. Root out relationships with deceptive fringe lenders. Examiners should carefully examine institutions' relationships with high-cost fringe lenders to determine whether those fringe lenders' disclosure activities, including costs, terms, and conditions, have a deceptive impact on their customers.

5. Assess penalties on institutions with deceptive offerings. Institutions should be penalized if their offerings are likely to have a deceptive impact on the average customer.

6. Measure the rate of savings products offered to LMI consumers. Institutions should also be examined to see whether they effectively market savings products to lower-income consumers.

7. Give banks exam credit for the use of low-cost education loans. Banks' use of low-cost education loans must play a larger role on bank exams. CRA explicitly encourages CRA-regulated institutions to offer and provide low-cost education loans to LMI people and places.

8. Adopt regulations to encourage majority institutions to invest in minority-owned institutions.

9. Assess the performance of bank affiliates under CRA. Regulated institutions' affiliates should be assessed under CRA, regardless of whether the institutions seek to have them assessed. Currently, CRA regulations give banks the option to include the activities of their affiliates for consideration in their performance evaluations.

10. Include nonbanks under CRA regulations. Nonbanks have taken on the responsibility of serving LMI communities. The only place banks have a stronghold in LMI lending is in their assessment areas. Including nonbanks under CRA's purview would help ensure LMI communities' needs are met, while limiting access to excessive risk-based pricing. While some claim that increased data collection for regulatory or public uses is onerous, the data is "already provided to private data aggregators in machine-readable form." It would be a smooth transition for nonbanks to comply with CRA.

11. Assess bank compliance with Community Benefit Agreements. CBAs play a central role in helping to ensure the local needs of the community are met by CRA activities.

Conclusion

Immediately following the Civil War, Congress passed into law the Civil Rights Act of 1866, which stated that every citizen of the United States, including former slaves, had the same right to inherit, purchase, lease, sell, hold, or convey property, both real and personal.[7] As a nation, we have been struggling since to uphold this right and create the conditions to protect this right. The CRA is as relevant today as it was when it was enacted in 1977. The National Urban League urges Congress through its oversight and other powers to ensure CRA-regulated and nonbank institutions are adequately meeting the credit needs of communities of color. The CRA must do more to increase access to affordable credit and quality investments in communities of color, to address previous injustices, and to correct market failures that necessitated the passage of CRA.

1   Testimony of the Honorable Marc H. Morial, President and CEO, National Urban League Before the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee (Oct. 16, 2008); Testimony of Mark H. Morial, President and CEO National Urban League Before the House Committee on Financial Services, "Proposals to Enhance the Community Reinvestment Act" (Sept. 16, 2009).

2   *History of the CRA*, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, accessed at https://www.minneapolisfed.org/community/cra-resources/history-of-the-cra-new; Caleb Bobo, *From Dr. King to the Community Reinvestment Act: How His Dream Marches On*, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis (Spring 2018) ("[o]ver the next two decades, lawmakers and presidential administrations proposed and approved several changes to the CRA...That successful track record, like the origins of the ECOA and HMDA, can also trace its roots to the civil rights movement that King and so many others fought for during the 1950s and '60s that emphasized civil and economic rights.")

3   Options for Treasury to Consider to Encourage Services and Small-Dollar Loans When Reviewing Framework GAO-18-244 (Mar 16, 2018).

4   Robert Bartlett *et al., Consumer-Lending Discrimination in the Era of FinTech* (Oct. 2018), https://faculty.haas.berkeley.edu/morse/research/papers/discrim.pdf

5   Congressional Research Service, *Small Business Administration 7(a) Loan Guaranty Program*, R41146 at 23 (Mar. 4, 2019) accessed at https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41146.pdf

6   Aaron Glantz & Emmanuel Martinez, "Kept Out: Gentrification Became Low-Income Lending Law's Unintended Consequence, Reveal (Feb. 16,2018) (attributed to Boston College Law Professor and former CFPB official Patricia McCoy) accessed at https:// www.revealnews.org/article/gentrification-became- low-income-lending-lawsunintended-consequence/

7   "Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That all persons born in the United States and not subject to any foreign power, excluding Indians not taxed, are hereby declared to be citizens of the United States; and such citizens, of every race and color, without regard to any previous condition of slavery or involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall have the same right, in every State and Territory in the United States, to make and enforce contracts, to sue, be parties, and give evidence, to inherit, purchase, lease, sell, hold, and convey real and personal property, and to full and equal benefit of all laws and proceedings for the security of person and property, as is enjoyed by white citizens, and shall be subject to like punishment, pains, and penalties, and to none other, any law, statute, ordinance, regulation, or custom, to the contrary notwithstanding."

LACK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND GENTRIFICATION: TWO DRIVERS OF THE SAME HOUSING CRISIS

JULIUS NIYONSABA

Urban areas are experiencing increases in property values of certain neighborhoods due in large part to an influx of new affluent, educated residents moving into predominately poor and previously under-invested communities.

This phenomenon is referred to as gentrification. Lack of affordable housing and gentrification are two drivers of the same housing crisis.

Trends in the housing market continue to drive up housing costs and increase competition for existing housing stock, leading to the pricing out and displacement of residents in low- and moderate-income (LMI) communities nationwide, many of whom have lived in their communities for decades. These developments disproportionately impact black and brown communities—particularly those in urban areas—and pose serious challenges for the many citizens represented by National Urban League Affiliates.

Cities with the Number of Neighborhoods Gentrified

Gentrification 2000-2013
Number of Neighborhoods Gentrified
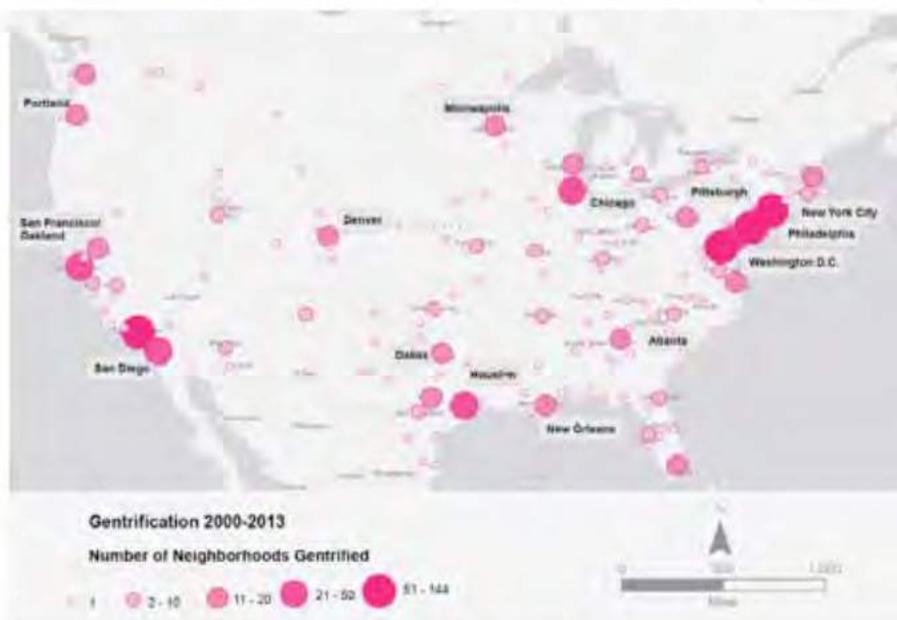
Source: National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC)

Why This Issue Matters

As a civil rights organization, we are concerned that affordable housing shortages are contributing to the displacement of long-time residents in our black and brown communities nationwide. Ensuring that every American can secure safe, decent, and affordable housing on fair terms is part of the National Urban League's 2025 Empowerment Goals.

Overview of the Affordable Housing Crisis

A comprehensive view of the affordable housing challenges faced by these communities illustrates that a wide array of issues—discrimination, wages, government policies, and loss of household wealth caused by the 2008 financial crisis, among others— continues to play a devastating role in preventing black and brown families in historically marginalized communities from benefiting from the economic growth brought about by the gentrification happening in their own communities.

U.S. home prices have rebounded since the 2008 financial crisis; sales of previously-owned homes have accounted for more than 90% of total sales. Meanwhile, sales of newly-built homes have failed to keep pace with demand, creating significant shortages in the supply of affordable housing nationwide. To the extent that new homes sales are taking place, much of that growth has been concentrated in the sale of new high-rise residential developments designed to lure wealthy individuals, which developers argue is the only way to recoup many of the skyrocketing costs—for materials and labor, as well as opportunity costs such as local zoning laws and opposition from so-called "NIMBY" (Not In My Back Yard) organizations.

These shortages in affordable housing and new home construction have the unfortunate effect of providing perverse economic incentives for current homeowners to block all new construction in their neighborhoods because their property values—and, therefore, their net worth—continue to increase as demand continues. As a result, wealthy homeowners in many large urban areas have weaponized zoning laws and regulations—e.g., requiring newly built homes to have backyards or two parking spaces for each unit, banning homes from being split into apartments or duplexes, mandating height limits for new buildings so they don't cast shadows— that effectively disincentivize developers from building new affordable housing due in large part to the significant costs, delays, and other hassles they may face.

Such efforts, while local, have far-reaching negative consequences that fall most heavily on the most financially vulnerable individuals in our society.

This includes increased rates of homelessness and displacement and sharp increases in the cost of living that impact everyone. Individuals who are displaced are also likely to face increased costs of transportation as a result of longer commutes to work, less time with their families, and higher stress levels due to the disruption.

At the same time, decreased federal investments in housing for low- and middle-income families have exacerbated this trend by driving up housing costs and increasing competition for existing housing stock. In 2019, the average price for a home in the United States is $226,800 (Zillow, 2019). For comparison, the average price for a home in 1980 was $93,400 after adjusting for inflation

(United States Census Bureau, 2012). In 2017, the average price for an existing home was four times the average U.S. income. In 2018, almost 11 million renters spent more than 50% of their income for housing, and three in four U.S. households eligible for federal housing assistance were turned away due to lack of funding.

Gentrification—generally defined by the increase in property values of a certain area due in large part to an influx of new affluent, educated residents into predominately poor and previously under-invested communities—has played the largest and most discernible role in the skyrocketing of rents, home prices, and property values in LMI communities nationwide. While

National Median Housing Costs vs. Median Income

Median House Prices ■ Annual Median Rent ■ Median Rent SF □ Median Incomes

Sources: US Census Bureau: Stanford; Statista

*All numbers adjusted to 2017 dollars.
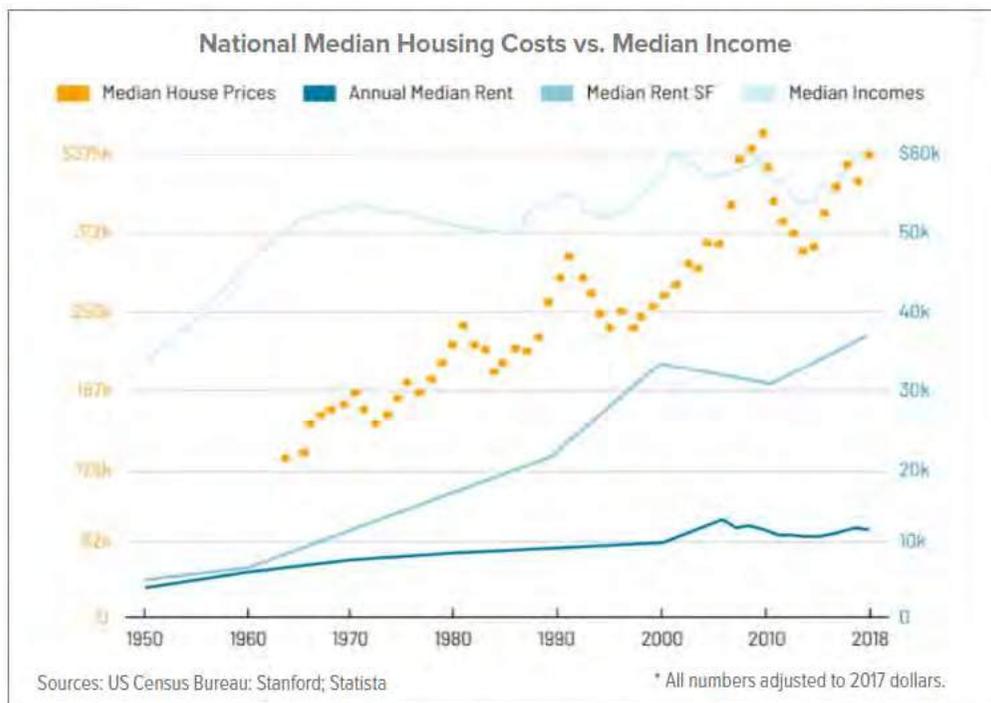
	Share of Eligible Kansas City Tracts Gentrifying	Tracts Gentrifying	Did Not Gentrify	Not Eligible to Gentrify	Total Census Tracts
Since 2000	**12.8%**	**10**	68	70	148
1990– 2000	**7.5%**	**5**	62	81	148

Source: Governing Analysis of 2009–2013 American Community Survey, US2010 Longitudinal Census Tract Data Base

wealthier entrants in these communities generally increase the tax base, create development and home rehabilitation booms, and increase the number of available services provided by businesses, they often also encourage other families with high incomes and educational levels to move in, leading to sharp increases in housing prices. These dramatic shifts have the effect of increasing the likelihood that longtime residents of a community will face displacement after finding that they can no longer afford to pay rent or buy homes.

While most of the gentrification and displacement has occurred in the largest U.S. cities, smaller U.S. cities such as St. Louis, the nation's 21st largest city, and Kansas City, which is Missouri's largest city, are also experiencing this trend. As a result, predominately poor, minority, and previously under-invested areas are experiencing differing levels of private and public capital investment, with downtown areas in both cities benefiting the most. These factors pose serious challenges that, if unaddressed, will only continue to exacerbate existing income inequality and housing affordability issues in the U.S.

Broader Black Home Ownership Trends

In 2000, black families in the U.S. had a home ownership rate of 46.3%, while white families had a 71.3% home ownership rate. In 2018, however, only 42.6% of black families owned their own home, while white home ownership stood at 70.5%. In Kansas City, 37.9% of black families own their homes compared to 70% of white families. This is, in part, why the median wealth for white Americans—roughly $140,000—is 12 times higher than that of black Americans, with two-thirds of that net worth directly attributable to home equity (Collins, Asante-Muhammed, Nieves, & Hoxie, 2016).

While the affordable housing crisis has many dimensions, the primary issue continues to be the mismatch between increases in housing costs—which now make up the single largest expense for U.S. families—and wages for most U.S. workers, which have barely changed since 1978 after

accounting for inflation. For example, a U.S. worker earning the federal minimum wage in 2018 would have needed to work 122 hours a week—approximately three full-time jobs—to afford a two-bedroom apartment, and 99 hours a week—or 2.5 jobs— to afford a one-bedroom apartment. A fulltime minimum-wage worker in the U.S. could afford to rent a one-bedroom home at the market rate in only 22 (roughly 1%) of the 3,000 U.S. counties.

Decreased local, state, and federal economic investments in the areas that most need it also continue to play a role. As families continue to be priced out and home values continue to increase, the opportunities afforded to those who own their own homes, such as accumulation of assets, will continue to be available to those with means while low and middle-income communities—particularly those of color—will be left out.

In addition, other financial hardships, such as student loan defaults, place home ownership almost out of reach. A recent study found that nearly half—49%—of all black student loan borrowers will default, compared to just 21% of white student loan borrowers. Moreover, nearly a quarter—23%—of black recipients of bachelor degrees but just 6% of white bachelor recipients are defaulting on their student loan debt.

With many middle- and low-income U.S. families still reeling from the 2008 financial crisis, policy makers

National Black Home Ownership Gap

Black households

1M
.5M
.1M

40-50%
30-40%
20-30%
10-20%
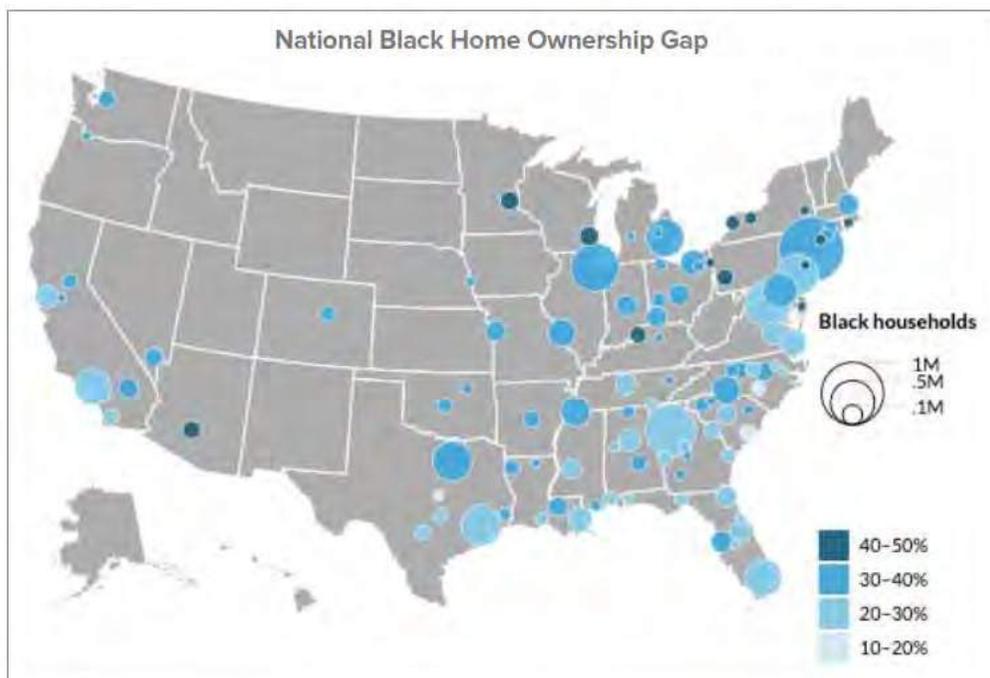
Highest/lowest Appreciating Areas in Kansas City Since 2000
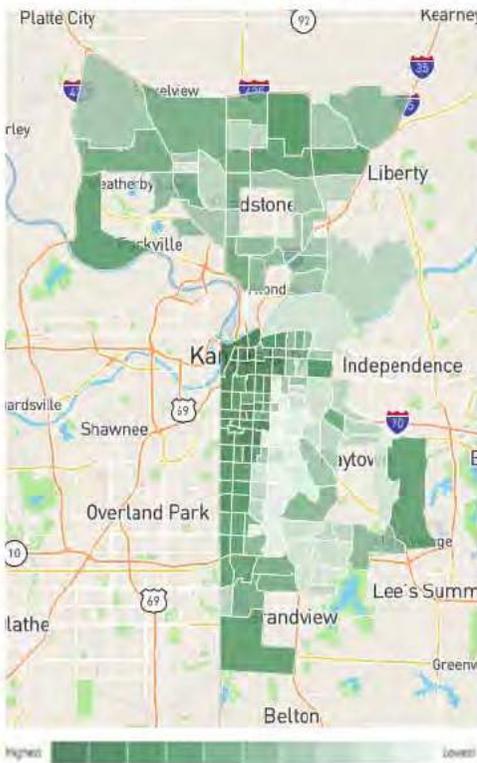
Highest Appreciating Kansas City Neighborhoods Since 2000

1. Southwest Blvd / W 31st St

2. E 19th St / Main St

3. Brush Creek Blvd / Prospect Ave

4. E 18th St / Prospect Ave

5. Westport

6. W 46th Ter / J C Nichols Pky

7. Troost Ave / E 55th St

8. E 39th St / Troost Ave

9. Rockhurst U / E 53rd St

10. Missouri Ave / Forest Ave

Source: Kansas City, MO Appreciation Rate Trends and Housing Market Data, Neighborhood Scout

are increasingly concerned that income inequality is preventing most families from purchasing a home. A 2019 report by the National Bureau of Economic Research found that income inequality in the U.S. has reached levels last seen prior to the Great Depression. Additionally, a May 2019 survey released by the Federal Reserve found that 39% of U.S. adults said they would not be able to cover a $400 unexpected expense without selling something or borrowing, and that 25% of adults skipped necessary medical care in 2018 because they were unable to afford the cost.

Policy Recommendations

- Encourage lawmakers to increase funding that incentivizes the building of new affordable housing units for extremely low-income individuals.

- Collaborate with property owners and neighborhood associations to change local zoning laws that pose barriers to the building of affordable housing projects in distressed communities.

- Support strengthening the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), which encourages banks and credit unions to meet the lending needs of low- and moderate-income individuals located in the communities in which they operate.

- Urge local officials to explore opportunities that have the

potential to bring much-needed capital investment and economic development to underserved areas with the right guardrails and enforcement structure. This includes Opportunity Zones, which provide incentives for investing in certain LMI areas nationwide.

- Ensure that any future reforms to existing Government Sponsored Entities (GSEs) include:

  – Preservation of current Affordable Housing Goals for GSEs that ensure that credit-worthy borrowers in underserved communities have access to affordable conventional loans and are not limited to government-insured or guaranteed mortgages

  – Enhanced Fair Housing and Anti-Discrimination Protections in mortgage lending that continue to try to remedy the historical marginalization of communities of color and discriminatory practices within the mortgage market due to federal policies

  – An effective and well-resourced structure for oversight and enforcement of fair lending and consumer protections

Kansas City, MO Home Prices

Price Range	Percentage
> $1,273,001	0.6%
$955,001–$1,273,000	0.8%
$637,001–$955,000	2.0%
$509,001–$637,000	2.0%
$382,001–$509,000	6.2%
$255,001–$382,000	16.7%
$128,001–$255,000	38.3%
$64,001–$128,000	20.9%
$0–$64,000	12.6%

0.0% — 100.0%

Kansas City, MO Home Ownership Rate

	Percentage
OWNERS	53%
RENTERS	47.1%
VACANT	13.3%

0.0% — 100.0%

Source: Governing Analysis of 2009–2013 American Community Survey, US2010 Longitudinal Census Tract Data Base

– Transparency so that regulators, other public officials, lenders, and members of the public have information about whether and how the system is serving different types of borrowers and communities.

Pending Federal Legislation

• The American Housing and Economic Mobility Act. Senator Elizabeth Warren's legislation would provide $445B over 10 years to build 3.2 million new housing units for low- and middle-income families by lowering the estate tax threshold. The funds would be directed to the National Housing Trust Fund (NHTC), which provides states with block grants to build, rehabilitate, and operate housing for extremely low-income individuals. This bill would also provide:

– $25B to the Capital Magnet Fund to help finance affordable housing and economic development as well as service facilities such as day care centers, workforce development centers, and health care clinics

Median Home Value (2012–2018)
KANSAS CITY VS. UNITED STATES

MEDIAN HOME PURCHASE PRICE

$220,000
$180,000
$140,000
$100,000
$60,000

2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018

* DATA BASED ON THE AVERAGE 3 BEDROOM SINGLE FAMILY HOME IN KANSAS CITY (2012–2018)

Metro Area
RWN Neighborhoods
United States

Median Monthly Rent (2012–2018)
KANSAS CITY VS. UNITED STATES

MEDIAN RENTAL PRICE

$1,500
$1,300
$1,100
$900
$700

2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018

* DATA BASED ON THE AVERAGE 3 BEDROOM SINGLE FAMILY HOME IN KANSAS CITY (2012–2018)

Metro Area
RWN Neighborhoods
United States

Median Home Value (2018)
KANSAS CITY VS. UNITED STATES

MEDIAN HOME VALUE

$100,227
$162,000
$202,000

$0 $55,000 $110,000 $165,000 $220,000

* DATA BASED ON THE AVERAGE 3 BEDROOM SINGLE FAMILY HOME IN KANSAS CITY (JAN 2018)

RWN Neighborhoods
Metro Area
United States

Median Monthly Rent (2018)
KANSAS CITY VS. UNITED STATES

MEDIAN MONTHLY RENT

$1,005
$1,275
$1,427

$0 $365 $730 $1,095 $1,460

* DATA BASED ON THE AVERAGE 3 BEDROOM SINGLE FAMILY HOME IN KANSAS CITY (JAN 2018)

RWN Neighborhoods
Metro Area
United States

Source: Real Wealth Network, 2019 Market Overview: Kansas City, Missouri, https://www.realwealthnetwork.com/markets/kansas-city-missouri/

- $10B in new competitive grants to encourage communities to remove local zoning barriers to affordable housing development

- $4B to create a new Middle Class Housing Emergency Fund to address urban areas that are experiencing shortages in available housing for middle-income families due to housing costs rising faster than incomes

- $2B to help homeowners whose housing wealth was destroyed by the financial crisis.

• Rent Relief Act. Senator Kamala Harris' legislation would create a refundable tax credit to U.S. households whose costs for rent exceed 30% of monthly income. Under Harris' Rent Relief Act, the refundable tax credit would be available to individuals who live in rental housing and pay more than 30% of their gross income for the taxable year on their rent, including utilities. Eligible individuals would qualify for the tax benefit by determining the total amount spent yearly on rent, taking into account the family's annual income, and the rate of the federal government's established fair market rent controls. Individuals who live in federally subsidized housing could also claim the value of one month's rent as a refundable tax credit. Subsidized rent is normally capped at 30% of a person's income, making them eligible for the tax benefit for rent-burdened residents.

• Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act. Senator Maria Cantwell's legislation would expand an exchange program established by the 2009 stimulus that allows states to trade in unused tax credits to the Treasury in exchange for cash to finance the projects directly. The bill would allow the credit to "carry-back" to five years, allowing investors to deduct excess tax credits against prior profits as far back as five tax years if the credit is reinvested in housing projects. Currently, investors can apply the tax credit only for the current tax year.

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GENTRIFICATION IS MOVING EAST AND WEST IN KANSAS CITY

MICHAEL PRICE

Are parts of Kansas City in the throes of being gentrified?

The answer would seem to be yes.

"For too long, the city has allowed developers to drive the bus," says former 5th District Councilwoman Alissia Canady, and she described the city's housing policy as a "hodgepodge."

She points to out-of-town speculators as causing problems.

Also, there are the unintended consequences of more affluent white people settling in low-income parts of town. As they do, rents and property taxes may rise, forcing people of color to move out.

Recently released data in the *New York Times* showed that since 2000, 13 census tracts east of Troost Avenue have seen white residents moving in (Badger, Bui, & Gebeloff, 2019).

Dee Evans, the African-American president of Beacon Hill McFeders Community Council, lives in one such census tract. In 2012, the mean annual income of households in her census tract was $39,000. But from 2012 to 2017, the mean income of white buyers moving in was $150,000.

As she approaches retirement, Evans has watched with alarm as the value of her home of 37 years has crept up. She's expecting her property taxes also to rise, and soon she'll be on a fixed income.

Evans lives near the new Beacon Hill development at 24th Street and Forest Avenue, where currently one house is for sale for nearly $700,000.

She could sell her own house at a profit, but she doesn't want to leave her community.

"Where would I go?" Evans said.

On the other side of town in the Westside lives septuagenarian Alice Gomez, a leader with the Westside Neighborhood Association.

In the mid-1990s, Gomez was involved in a painstaking local effort to draft the

Westside Area Plan with the city. It laid down zoning guidelines to protect the character of the area, which lies mainly west of the Crossroads district.

However, unbeknownst to Gomez and others in the Westside, the Greater Downtown Area Plan repealed their plan in 2010.

Now Gomez and others want City Hall to readopt the original plan. They fear expensive high-rise apartments are coming.

In response, the city Planning Department says the GDAP protects the Westside as much as the original plan and in some cases, more. It says the GDAP's commitment to double the population downtown really is focused on the streetcar corridor and not on neighborhoods like the Westside.

Beginning in 2019, the city wants to engage with the neighborhood about planning and assuage any fears.

What's beyond dispute is that parts of the Westside, like Beacon Hill, have seen a dramatic increase in house prices. Gomez doesn't want to sell, despite the hike she's seen in her property taxes.

"I'll leave the Westside when they carry me out in a coffin," she said.

According to John Wood, head of the city's Neighborhood and Housing Services Department, the city's policy is to help people maintain their properties and stay in them.

He points to the city's strategy for 30 of its empty lots in the Eastside's Key Coalition neighborhood as evidence that the city is serious about working with neighborhoods to provide affordable housing.

Karen Slaughter, head of the Key Coalition Neighborhood, is "very pleased" with the city's efforts there, but she urges the city to formulate a comprehensive plan that resists gentrification on all fronts.

At the moment the city has a draft housing policy, which earmarks $75 million for affordable homes. But there's no source yet for most of the funding, and by itself, it's unlikely to be enough to build the 5,000 units needed.

For Councilwoman Canady, big-ticket developments, such as luxury downtown apartments and hotels, have distracted City Hall for too long. Now is the time, she says, to focus on the residents of the city and stabilize their communities.

Back in Beacon Hill, Dee Evans has made many friends among her new white neighbors, many of whom are active in the community. But her message to City Hall remains the same: "Don't push us out!"

Badger, E., Bui, Q., & Gebeloff, R. (2019, April 27). The neighborhood is mostly black. The home buyers are mostly white. *New York Times*. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/04/27/upshot/diversity-housing-maps-raleigh-gentrification.html

EVICTIONS IN BLACK AND WHITE

TARA RAGHUVEER

Tiana Caldwell and her husband Derrick are in their 40s. They're a sweet couple, and they've known each other since middle school. Last spring, Tiana was re-diagnosed with ovarian cancer. Under the strain of health care costs, the family fell behind on rent. Their landlords took Tiana and Derrick to court and evicted them.

With a recent eviction, no one would rent to the Caldwells. After weeks of searching, they finally found a place that looked decent enough and put down a double deposit and the first month's rent. They were relieved. But on the first night, they took showers, and sewage came up through the pipes. The property manager wouldn't return their calls. They called the KCMO Health Department, who determined that the apartment was uninhabitable. Tiana and Derrick didn't get their deposit back. They moved into a hotel and lived homeless for months afterwards.

When I met Tiana and Derrick last December, Tiana asked me: "I grew up poor. Strike one. I'm a black woman. Strike two. I've had cancer twice. Strike three. How many strikes does it take before I'm out?"

Background

Tiana and Derrick are not alone in their struggle to pay the rent. In 2018, a person working full time, paid minimum wage, could not afford a two-bedroom apartment in any county in the United States (National Low Income Housing Coalition, 2018). More than half of all Americans spend over 30% of their income on housing (Environmental Systems Research Institute, 2019). Only one in five households qualifying for federal housing assistance receives it, leaving more people to rent from private landlords than ever before (Scally, Batko, Popkin, & DuBois, 2018). Under these conditions, most of us—especially poor people and communities of color—live one emergency away from an eviction or homelessness.

The national housing emergency has not skipped over Kansas City. The financial crisis hollowed out our neighborhoods. More people are renting in the private market. Out-of-state developers are investing in our rental market. Like many other American cities, Kansas City is haunted by a history of racial segregation, restrictive covenants, redlining, predatory lending, and disinvestment. For the most part, Kansas City's historic and contemporary housing struggles look like those of St. Louis, Milwaukee, and Omaha.

What sets Kansas City's housing story apart from other cities? We perfected many of those racist real estate practices before they spread around the country. From J.C. Nichols' restrictive covenants to our redlined maps, Kansas City was on the cutting edge of racism in housing. In *The Racist Housing Policies that Built Ferguson*, Ta Nehisi Coates wrote, "As it relates to black America, segregation must always be understood as a system of plunder. Once the big game has been fenced off, then comes the hunt" (2014).

between researchers, community organizers, neighborhood leaders, lawyers, and policymakers, compiled an evictions dataset for Jackson County encompassing most of metropolitan Kansas City, Missouri. The data, obtained through county court records, includes address-level eviction filings spanning 1999–2018. KC Eviction Project's data, like most data on evictions, is limited, presenting only formal evictions. Many more evictions happen informally, outside of the courts, and with no data to represent them.

"AS IT RELATES TO BLACK AMERICA, SEGREGATION MUST ALWAYS BE UNDERSTOOD AS A SYSTEM OF PLUNDER. ONCE THE BIG GAME HAS BEEN FENCED OFF, THEN COMES THE HUNT."

— TA NEHISI COATES

The ramifications of racist housing practices are still felt today. Black incomes are 60% of white incomes, but black wealth is just 10% of white wealth. Historically black neighborhoods suffer from the competing evils of disinvestment and gentrification. In America and in Kansas City, race and housing must be understood together as historically inextricable and therefore necessarily linked as we imagine housing justice now.

Eviction

Eviction offers a window into understanding housing, racial injustice, and poverty in Kansas City. Kansas City Eviction Project, a collaboration

KC Eviction Project has illuminated important findings:

• Eviction filings: There have been an average of 42 formal evictions filed per business day in Jackson County since 1999, or about 9,000 per year. In 2018, 9,402 evictions were filed, an increase of 110 evictions over 2017.

• Causes of eviction: Eviction filings on the basis of nonpayment of rent have increased substantially since 2012 and are at their highest levels in at least 18 years. The increase in these evictions suggests mounting strains in Kansas City's rental market related to a shrinking supply of truly

affordable units and increased churn in the rental market as a result of recent development.

- Eviction in the courts: In 2017 the landlord won 99.7% of the cases that made it to court. KC Eviction Project's analysis of eviction in the courts between 2006 and 2016 (Kansas City Eviction Project, 2018) revealed that 84% of landlords have lawyers, while only 1.3% of tenants have representation.

- New evictors: Limited liability companies (LLCs) filed 4,125 of the 9,292 evictions filed in 2017. LLC eviction filings have increased 30% since 2016 and 311% since ten years ago. LLCs offer shields for property owners, protecting them from personal liability while obscuring their identities. Anonymity can make it harder for tenants and cities to hold landlords accountable (Badger, 2018).

Race and Evictions

Evictions are concentrated on Kansas City's Eastside. In recent years, neighborhoods in midtown and the northeast have begun to see increased evictions as they gentrify, but the historically black parts of town remain

Evictions in Kansas City (1999–2016)

POPULATION PER SQ MILE

EVICTIONS PER SQ MILE

0–2000
2000–4000
4000–6000
6000–8000
8000+

0–250
250–500
500–750
750–1000
1000+

Source: Kansas City Eviction Project, 2018
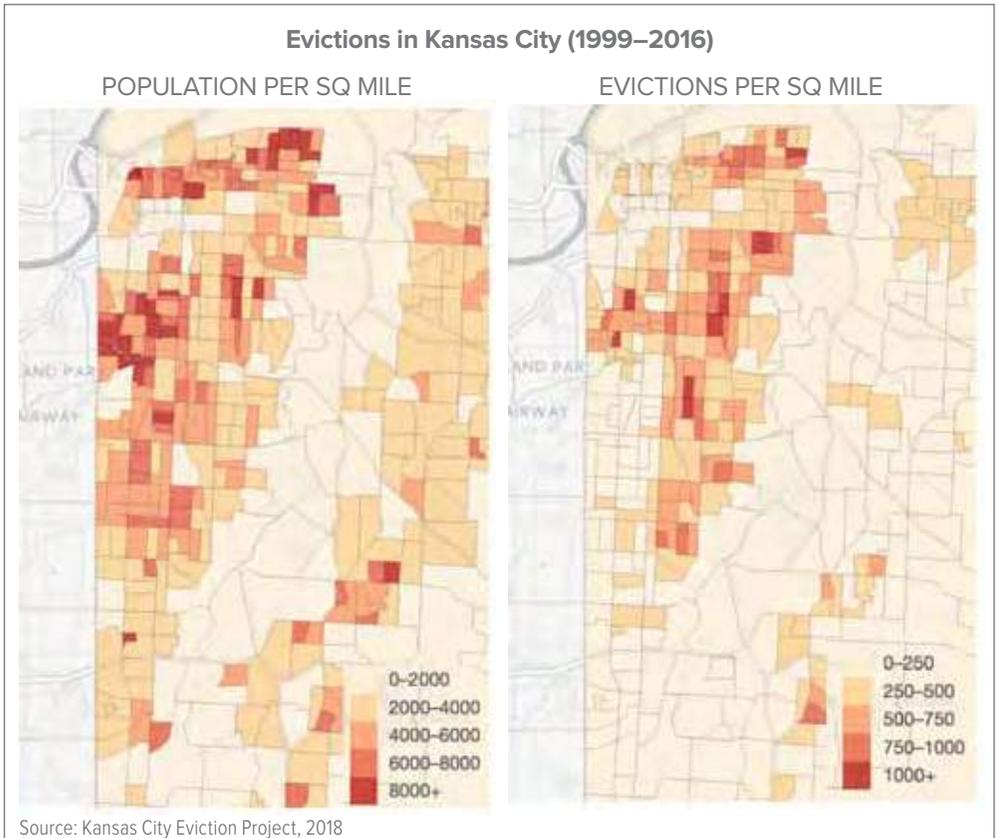
the hardest hit. At the most extreme, there are 19 times the evictions in a census tract on the east side of Troost than on the west side.

Among other variables such as income and family size, race is the most important determinant of whether or not a person will be evicted in Kansas City. Even when income is held constant, a white family earning the same as a black family is much less likely to be evicted. A larger white population in a given community means fewer evictions, while a larger black population means more evictions.

The 2018 eviction data shows black-majority census blocks accounting for 61% of evictions in Kansas City, even though black communities comprise 28% of the city's population. In parts of Marlborough, Santa Fe, Ruskin Heights, and other majority black neighborhoods, each block saw at least one eviction last year. On the streets surrounding Center High School, more than 10% of the mostly black residents were evicted in 2018.

Eviction is more than a forced move. It impacts physical and mental health, access to transportation, and jobs. Children face particular challenges with

Evictions by Black Population in Kansas City (1999–2016)

BLACK POPULATION PER SQ MILE

BLACK EVICTIONS PER SQ MILE

0–1000
1000–2000
2000–3000
3000–4000
4000+

0–250
250–500
500–750
750–1000
1000+
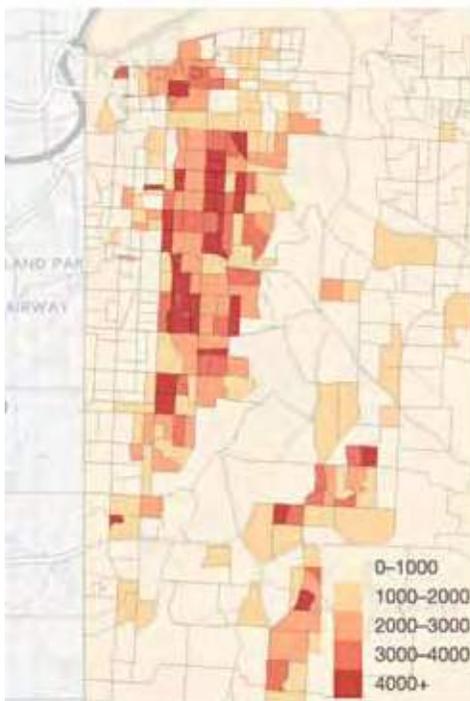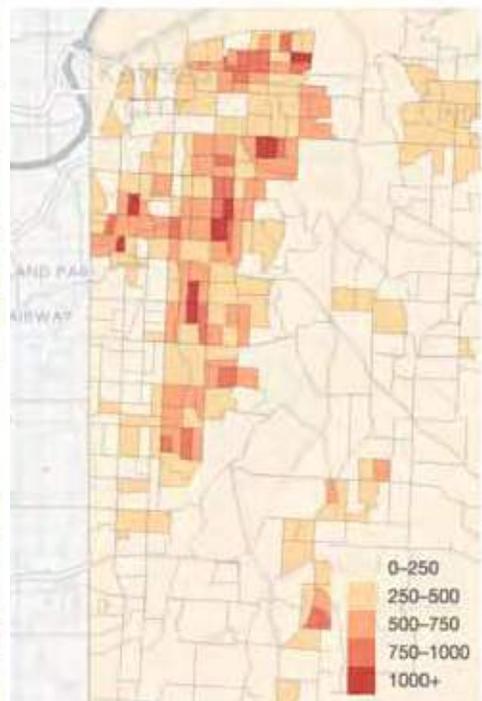
Source: Kansas City Eviction Project, 2018

Evictions by White Population vs. Black Population in Jackson County, MO (1999–2016)

EVICTIONS PER 1,000 PEOPLE (2016)

WHITE POPULATION PER 1,000 PEOPLE (2016)

EVICTIONS PER 1,000 PEOPLE (2016)

BLACK POPULATION PER 1,000 PEOPLE (2016)
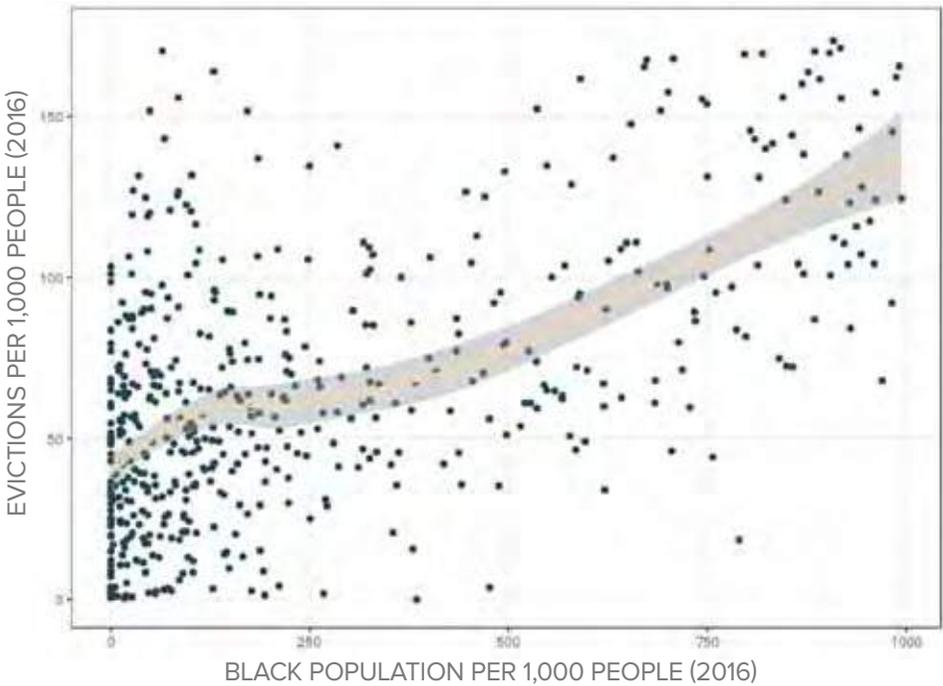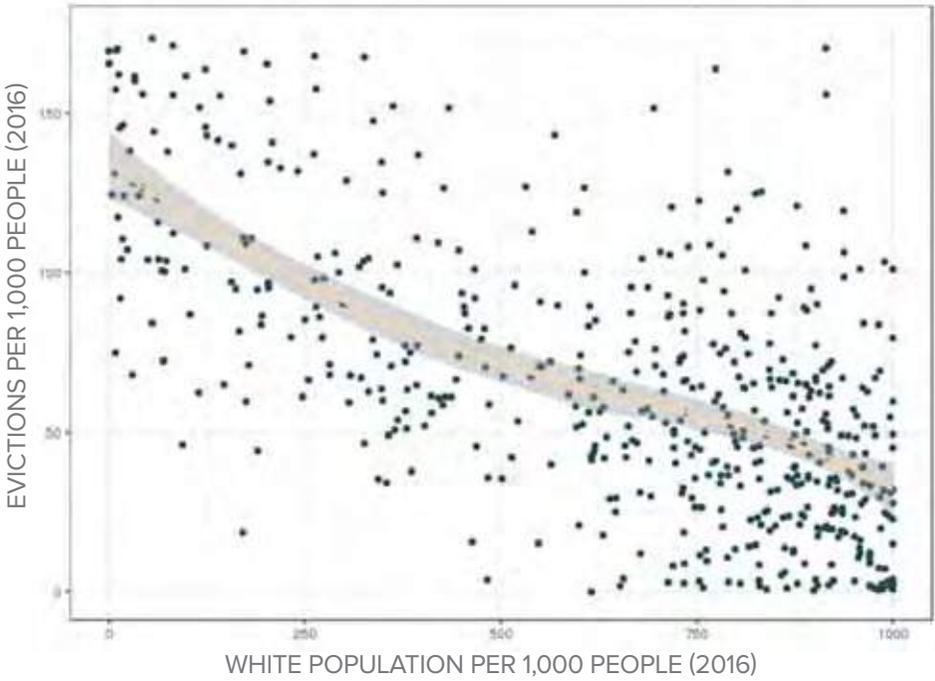
Source: Kansas City Eviction Project, 2018

evictions, especially when they have to change schools. Renters, already hard pressed to find truly affordable units in today's market, confront even more acute struggles with an eviction on their record. Eviction is both a cause and a condition of poverty, and black Kansas City is hurting the most.

Implications

Kansas City propagated racist housing policies; our city has a responsibility to lead the nation towards solutions rooted in a racial justice framework. While each progressive housing policy can be considered a racial justice intervention, we must also craft policies with explicit racial justice outcomes. Kansas City must pursue reparations for decades of racist policy, and we should adopt a racial justice impact assessment for each housing policy.

The Mayor and City Council should adopt a comprehensive housing strategy, sourced by the people who are closest to the problems. KC Tenants, a new group organizing a multiracial, multigenerational base of low income tenants, issued a People's Housing Platform in early March (KC Tenants People's Housing Platform, n.d.). The Platform includes potential interventions, ranging from a Municipal Tenant Bill of Rights to a reinvestment in public and community-controlled housing.

In the face of racism, Kansas City's communities of color have sustained a long tradition of revolutionary resilience and self-determination. We must invest in organizing the people who are the most impacted by the extractive and racist economy. People like Tiana Caldwell are claiming their power and will continue to struggle because, as she says, "If big developers are worth hundreds of millions, we are worth more."

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LEAD BANK'S CIVIC CONTRACTOR FUNDING PROGRAM EMPOWERS MINORITY CONTRACTORS

JOSHUA ROWLAND

Kansas City has finally reached consensus about the need for a new, efficient airport. The undertaking is huge. The size of our investment—the project will be larger than the combined value of the next five largest construction projects in the city—has been widely acknowledged, but the civic discussion has been narrowly limited to debate about the size of the project and which design/build team would win the contract.

Our political leadership has rightly required that all bidders for the airport job observe the economic development goals and ethics set forth in the "Terminal Workforce Enhancement Programs Agreement," popularly known as the "Community Benefits Agreement" (CBA). Citing research from the Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Transportation in 2015 and 2017, the CBA expresses a critical philosophy: that the economic benefits of billions of dollars in public spending should be shared with focus on economic justice and opportunity across the community. According to the Inspector General's report, as cited in the CBA, "there remain significant barriers for disadvantaged business enterprises to obtain work at the largest airports in the United States." The CBA cites additional research from a 2014 report of the Women's Law Center: "Even though women comprise nearly half of all workers in all occupations, women 'make up only 2.6 percent in construction and extraction occupations, and this number is the same as it was three decades ago....When employment rates of women in construction are examined by race, ethnicity, and gender together, the figures are even more dismal.'"

But, in this respect, too, the value of the airport project to Kansas City has been expressed largely,

EVEN THOUGH WOMEN COMPRISE NEARLY HALF OF ALL WORKERS IN ALL OCCUPATIONS, WOMEN 'MAKE UP ONLY 2.6 PERCENT IN CONSTRUCTION AND EXTRACTION OCCUPATIONS, AND THIS NUMBER IS THE SAME AS IT WAS THREE DECADES AGO…'

even in the CBA, as a matter of the present dollar amounts that could equitably be shared. For example, the Terminal Workforce Enhancement Program describes investments and commitments by the developer, Edgemoor Infrastructure & Real Estate, in new Transportation Services for MBE/DBE contractors and workers as: "Value: up to $3M" and Workforce Training "Value: up to $8.9M," as just two examples of programs called out in the CBA. Perhaps this narrow focus on today's dollar value of the contract was inevitable; the CBA acknowledges this fact. "The commitment of the developer to this important public policy has already paid dividends for the Project by making the overall Project plan more attractive to the City leadership and its citizens." In other words, in a divided, if not polarized Kansas City, the basic question of whether we would invest in a modernized airport was seriously controversial. Just getting to a signed contract was of the highest priority.

Now that we have that contract, however, what are we to conclude, or how are we to think about the stated intentions for economic access to airport work that the CBA has laid out? What should Kansas City

residents do to track Edgemoor's work and hold it and the City accountable for progress?

Concerned citizens need to become knowledgeable about the meaning and implications of the economic development strategies and tactics that are at play in the new airport. What is called for here is not merely bean-counting: Whether Edgemoor is investing in transportation solutions "up to the $3M" is too narrow a question. We should resist the temptation to be drawn into endless battles about how this entity or that entity sets up its accounting to comply with the CBA.

Instead, we need to pull ourselves and our leaders back from the detailed specifics that were necessary to get the contract signed and remember the big picture: the impact of equitable access to economic opportunity through work on and in the airport for economic justice in Kansas City. To put it another way, if we were satisfied that Edgemoor had honored its contractual (read "dollar value") commitments for workforce development and support, but Kansas Citians did not see those contract points turn into meaningful, multi-generational wealth creation and

business formation in low-income communities, then that failure would be on us. We would have missed perhaps the greatest economic justice opportunity for generations and would have only ourselves to blame.

If merely holding Edgemoor accountable to perform its contract is not enough, then what is? The lesson of Atlanta is heartening. The remarkable story of the way Atlanta's political, business, and civic leaders used the construction and continuing expansion of the Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport to build real wealth in its African-American communities is legendary. The creation of multi-generational African-American economic power in Atlanta has brought with it the political power that is always necessary to preserve historic results in the face of both competition and discrimination.

How has Atlanta succeeded in leveraging civic projects like its airport into sustainable and ongoing wealth creation, and how can we achieve that here in Kansas City? The short answer is intentional commitment: the will to make sure we deliver economic opportunity. Start with banking. Too often in our history, small but qualified and capable minority-led firms are frozen out of good civic work simply because they are small and cannot sustain—let alone build—their business when payment on their

work is delayed by bureaucracy or forces outside their control. These DBE/MBE/WBE firms are effectively penalized in securing financing just for the fact that they have previously been small or disadvantaged. The "Pay Without Delay" component of the CBA recognizes that slow pay is a fundamental obstacle to real opportunity.

Banks need to step up to meet this need by working with Edgemoor and with Kansas City, Missouri, but this should not be hard to do. For the impact of the billions of dollars of civic work to be fairly realized, banks must underwrite credit risk to take into account multiple critical factors that can move our city ahead: the strength of the community's support; the strength of Edgemoor's contracting oversight and selection processes; the near certainty that properly performed contract work will be paid for by Edgemoor or Kansas City, as the case may be. Acknowledging these factors, banks can be true to their mission by focusing on the capability of the small contractor to perform the work.

Lending this way works. Lead Bank's Civic Contractor Funding Program, in place since 2015, has made millions of dollars of credit available to minority- and women-led firms performing work for the City of Kansas City. Our underwriting acknowledges

that slow-pay by bureaucratic systems, rather than a lack of integrity or credit-worthiness of the borrowers, is at the heart of the challenge. By keeping credit terms consistent with the profitability and duration of the contracts, we have been able to provide financing to contractors who have historically been excluded from financing and bonding. We evaluate our Civic Contractor borrowers on the basis of whether they do quality work and will get the work done, confident in the knowledge that, if they meet this test, they will get paid.

This process is not magic, nor is it advanced finance. Nor is it limited to the new airport project. What we need to recognize and call for is that all banks that benefit from state or federal charters invest in extending credit to MBE/DBE firms. With the collective will to provide credit to MBE firms, we could change Kansas City for the better.

The goal for Kansas City, advanced by stakeholders who are committed to economic and racial justice in common cause with the business community, must be that the initial tactics embodied in the CBA generate sustained and recurring improvements in the financial power of disadvantaged communities. In other words, we should turn

our attention to the impact of the airport rather than the contract. We should press for the highest standards of accountability for the City and Edgemoor in fulfilling their commitments, but we must not lose sight of the real goal: wealth creation in minority communities.

As we know, circumstances will change over time. This means that we must ask new questions, constantly seeking new innovations to guarantee that the construction and total economic benefit of the airport creates long-lasting economic opportunity for people who have historically been denied this work. For example, given the transportation challenges noted in the CBA, should we consider new efforts to build workforce housing closer to the airport, recognizing that such an effort would require different tools, resources, and a new civic consensus? What curricula should our high schools, colleges, and universities implement to support the long-term opportunity of Kansas City?

Our new, modernized airport is going to be a big economic engine for the Kansas City region for generations. It is up to us to see to it that this engine drives Kansas City into a new era of shared and just prosperity for all.

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POLITICAL LEADERS SHOULD GET SERIOUS ABOUT TAX INCENTIVE REFORM

PATRICK TUOHEY

A recent study of economic development incentives conducted by employees of the City of Kansas City, Missouri, included the assertion, "A key factor in understanding the impact of incentives offered must be on whether the incentives improve the overall economy of Kansas City and its citizens." While the study that followed is highly questionable, it is certainly correct that any policy must be evaluated in terms of its likely impact on the overall economy. Unfortunately, in Kansas City as throughout Missouri and across the country, while the cost of economic development incentives is high, the value is at best uncertain.

As is the case in many municipalities, Kansas City's leaders often award incentives to private companies to encourage them to invest where they otherwise might not. This seems like a good way to accomplish important public policy goals by leveraging the talent and resources of private industry. For example, a city might offer a 10-year property tax abatement in order to reduce a developer's cost of investing in a moribund shopping center. Or a city might use a tool called tax-increment financing (TIF), which returns to a developer the increases in property, sales, and utility taxes paid on a project for up to 23 years, in order to encourage development in blighted areas.

At first glance, these approaches seem straightforward and worthwhile. Unfortunately, as the incentives have become increasingly common, they have started hollowing out the tax bases of taxing jurisdictions such as school districts, libraries, mental health funds, and county governments. These jurisdictions depend almost wholly on property taxes, while cities can more easily increase other forms of taxes. When a city offers property tax abatements, it is, in short, spending someone else's money.

The costs of all these incentives are adding up.

According to the 2018 annual report of the Kansas City Public Schools, "Property tax abatement and tax increment financing redirect over $30 million of commercial property taxes that would otherwise be available to the District and area Charter Schools." The same year the Kansas City Public Library tallied their exposure at $2.48 million. Kansas City straddles three counties. The financial impact to Jackson County, Missouri, in which most of Kansas City sits, is $5.04 million. For the city itself, the costs of abatements and tax redirection programs added up to just over $95.86 million for the year ending in April 2018. That's a larger amount, but a much smaller percentage of its total tax revenue.

Beyond the cost, the type and location of the developments that receive subsidies are galling. In downtown Kansas City, the premiere site for such incentives, taxpayers have supported through TIF the construction of world headquarters buildings for successful firms such as H&R Block and JE Dunn Construction, and through tax abatement, the construction of three luxury high-rise apartment buildings. As noted recently in *The Kansas City Star,* incentives have led to the building of so many hotels that the city's visitors

bureau fears a crash in hotel rates. All of this takes place on the back of the Kansas City Public School district, in which 90% of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.

Supporters of such development incentives argue that without them, development wouldn't happen at all. The additional tax money diverted away from schools, libraries, and the county to fund the development wouldn't exist at all, because the properties would otherwise sit dormant. To support their point in the case of TIF, they point to a "but-for" analysis required of every application. In short, the but-for analysis is meant to be a cost-benefit analysis that demonstrates without ("but for") the subsidy, the development would not take place.

The problem is the standards for such reporting have become weak. Often, the only supporting document for the but-for is an affidavit from the developers stating that without the incentive, they will not build. Sometimes the fact that the parcel is currently undeveloped is used as evidence that it never will be developed.

Furthermore, more rigorous analysis of the but-for in Missouri and around the United States suggests that (as in the case of a 2018 study conducted by the W.E. Upjohn Institute), "For at least 75 percent of incented firms,

the firm would have made a similar location/expansion/retention decision without the incentive." A 2017 study of TIF in Missouri by the Show-Me Institute found, "the use of TIF has not diverted investment or increased economic activity beyond what we would have expected if TIF was not used." These conclusions are similar to those of other studies conducted in St. Louis, Chicago, and elsewhere.

value of the study; one member of the City Council said the report "did not contain the necessary information" needed to help shape policy. It appears to have been more a public relations effort than a serious policy study.

In Kansas City, state statute requires that an 11-member commission oversee TIF spending. Five of these

"THE USE OF TIF HAS NOT DIVERTED INVESTMENT OR INCREASED ECONOMIC ACTIVITY BEYOND WHAT WE WOULD HAVE EXPECTED IF TIF WAS NOT USED."

(SHOW-ME INSTITUTE)

Companies know that the incentives offered by cities are low-hanging fruit, and as happened during the recent Amazon headquarters bidding war, cities will fall over themselves offering generous abatements, cash payments, and tax breaks. In Kansas City, the need to justify the incentive regime led the city to conduct an analysis of its incentive policy that included the quotation that began this essay. The city's study did not examine but-for analyses as did the rigorous studies mentioned above. It merely assumed that any development that occurred after an incentive was provided happened because of the incentive. Both *The Kansas City Star* and the *Kansas City Business Journal* questioned the

commissioners represent taxing jurisdictions such as schools, libraries, and the county. Six commissioners are appointed by the Mayor. This means that the city's development interests may always trump the other jurisdictions' budget concerns. Recent efforts at reform have included attempts to increase the power of the taxing jurisdictions, limit where TIF may be used, require that but-for analyses be conducted by third parties, and cap the percentage of property tax that can be diverted at 75% or 50%. None of these proposals have been implemented. Until political leaders get serious about reform, one can expect economic development subsidies to siphon away more and more public funds.

THE PATHWAY TO WEALTH REQUIRES A NEW MINDSET

JAMES R. NOWLIN, J.D.

Growing up in the rural foothills of Virginia, the son of a factory worker and truck driver, I never imagined that I would be so lucky that life would take me so far, or that I would one day publish a book titled *The Purposeful Millionaire: 52 Rules for Creating a Life of Wealth and Happiness Now*. I did, however, learn the value of hard work from my parents. Additionally, several of my teachers saw a special spark in me—they encouraged me to push harder and to dream beyond my circumstances. Though I did not know where my imagination would take me, each day my mind would open up little by little to greater possibilities beyond the comforts and limitations of my hometown. I would pray, "Dear Lord, please take me far, far away." And indeed, He did just that.

The sometimes horribly humbling lessons that I have learned over the years as a former corporate attorney turned entrepreneur, executive coach, and keynote speaker, are lessons that I wish to share with everyone who aspires to achieve higher in life, particularly with fellow African Americans who understand that without financial power, we have limited power. As such, in this column, I articulate a few of the 52 Rules that I have written about in *The Purposeful Millionaire*, as it is my responsibility to share with others the rules of the road to wealth creation, so they may have a smoother path than I did. While so many of us can speak all day long about setbacks and challenges regarding access to information, or why we are so far behind in household per capita income, when it comes to wealth creation and collective advancement, understand this—nothing is more important than our consciousness.

RULE #5: TO EARN MORE, YOU MUST LEARN MORE! KNOWLEDGE CREATES EMPIRES. THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR KNOWLEDGE. A LOT OF PEOPLE PRETEND TO BE EXPERTS, BUT THEY ARE NOT.

Though education is critical to all success, uplift does not always require the Ivy League. Every academic year, future six-figure workers and aspiring millionaires graduate from community colleges as well as from publicly-funded vocational schools. The democratization of education is well at work, if we are willing to open our eyes to see the blessings of these programs that are changing communities and the trajectories of families. To earn more, these students are learning more by taking advantage of accredited training programs that are highly accessible and affordable—and many are becoming all that they can be by not only learning in the classroom, but also by relinquishing all thoughts of fear, poverty consciousness, and limitation from their minds.

RULE #2: *TAKE THE FIRST STEP. YOU WILL NEVER HAVE AN AMAZING JOURNEY IF YOU DO NOT TAKE THE FIRST STEP, EVEN IF DOING SO SCARES THE DAYLIGHTS OUT OF YOU.*

Everything, great and small, that is created in one's life, first begins in the mind. With that knowledge, we have the responsibility to hone our consciousness to think in terms of extraordinary potential and abundance. That mindset does not mean that our focus should be on getting the flashiest car or the biggest house. It means that when we see wealth creation as a tool for unlimited empowerment, we must approach it with a doggedness and urgency like never before. Discipline creates wealth, wealth creates opportunity, opportunity creates freedom, and freedom is full of choices. We deserve more choices but can only have them if we have the financial means to access them.

In addition to these Rules, I lay out below some of the basic principles of the game of wealth creation. We must play by them and we must live by them. We must speak about them and share them with everyone we know. Read them and reread them until you understand them and they are infused in your subconscious. As a people, let's stop playing small. Let's no longer confuse extrinsic appearances with fear or envy consciousness. These principles are foundational for our greater understanding of the collective consciousness that must be in place in order for true wealth and influence to be achieved.

Though circumstances may sometimes be flat-out unfair, let us wash our minds free of any thoughts of limitation. Let us turn our focus to the power of the genius that is already within us and the mighty flow of abundance that is readily available to us. Once that is done, a new approach to business,

networking, and financial affairs will be unleashed, and the kind of automobile that we drive will become much less significant than the collective power of the financial balance sheets and positive impact that we are generating. Our focus must first be within!

Thoughts and Mindset

- Money is attracted to people who possess certainty and purposefulness.

- Most people do not simply decide to be wealthy. Wealth is a choice. To achieve it requires specific action. But it is a choice that is available to most of us.

- People spend time with folks with whom they feel most comfortable. The people around us help to create our mindset and opportunities. By changing our net-work, we can change our net-worth.

- Be careful whom you choose as mentors.

Discipline and Habits

- Successful people are not just lucky; they are disciplined. They have habits, rituals, and mindsets that brought about their success.

- Discipline is difficult. Frugality, delayed gratification, and the execution of long-term strategy are not easy, but they are all achievable.

- Wealth creation takes time. Be willing to live like no one else will for a few years so that you can live like no one else can for the rest of your life.

- Go deep, not wide, with what you are good at and sell it. Selling yourself is usually very complex, challenging for some to do well, or simply not a talent of most other people.

Attitude and Expectations

- Your circumstances must not be your thoughts.

- Always avoid cheap things (they will not last), cheap people (they undervalue the efforts and contributions of others), and shortcuts (they usually do not work in the long haul).

- If you dream small, you will live small. Many people are committed to achieving little dreams. Achieving little dreams sometimes takes just as much work as big dreams. So why not dream big?

- Always stay hungry.

Humility and Kindness

- Pray or meditate daily for your abundance—an increase to your health, wealth, wisdom, happiness, family, and like-minded friends.

- Be outgoing and kind to everyone. Give folks the benefit of the doubt, and always stay positive.

- Stay humble and be grateful.

- Genuinely acknowledge and celebrate each and every blessing that comes your way—even the small ones.

All of these principles were learned over time but began with a seismic shift in my mindset in my early professional years. The shift came by intentionally exposing myself to people who had achieved at significantly higher levels than me. I observed their habits. I took mental notes on everything they did, from how they tied their shoes to how they compartmentalized their time, to how they processed certain issues. On a daily basis, all of these learnings fed my subconscious the fuel it needed for a mindset of abundance, appreciation, and happiness. These thoughts are with me and cannot be taken from me. That is why I can breathe each day with the confidence that regardless of my future circumstances, every day of my life going forward will be better than the last—and by sharing as much strategic information as I can, I am choosing to bring others along with me.

Though early in life I had not been taught this way of thinking, I now know that each of us can train our minds to think in a certain way to create wealth, that our consciousness always creates our reality, and that reality is our future. Now my duty is to share that way of thinking with you. Now, never forget this last rule and the greatness that is already within you. Together we rise.

RULE #52: *YOU ARE THE ARCHITECT, CONSTRUCTION CREW, AND MAINTENANCE TEAM FOR YOUR LIFE. JUST BUILD IT!*

ON THE ROAD TO EQUITY IN ECONOMICS –
URBAN LEAGUE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Urban League conducted our first Equality Index in 2006. The Equality Index measures the progress African Americans have made in comparison to whites in economics, education, health, social justice, and civic engagement since the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act in 1965. We consider these two pieces of legislation the starting point for blacks to have equal opportunity to achieve social and economic parity. With 1964 as the starting line in the race toward equality, blacks have struggled to cross the finish line. In fact, progress along the road to equality in economics has been slow and static. As the 2019 Black Equality Index reports, African Americans have progressed only 61% on the road to equality in economics in Greater Kansas City. Blacks lag behind whites in home ownership, median household income, median net worth, employment, and access to capital for minority owned businesses.

To quicken the pace and move us closer to economic equality, **the Urban League recommends** the following:

1. Home ownership is one of the most important sources of economic stability and wealth creation. Only 58% of blacks in Greater Kansas City own their homes. To address this problem, **local banks and credit unions should work with the Urban League and other community-based organizations to create pathways to home ownership for low- and moderate-income individuals**.

2. The lack of quality affordable housing is a major problem throughout the city. This problem is exacerbated on the Eastside due to the lack of quality housing stock, either affordable or market-rate. These factors negatively impact economic progress for African Americans and other disadvantaged populations. **The City Council should apply an equity-based approach in the design of housing policies that defines affordability based on median household income in distressed communities where the median household income is significantly less than the citywide median household income**. Using the 70% of KCMO Median Household Income as the definition of "affordable housing" for all does not address the housing affordability needs of most low-income families.

3. Tax incentives have served as a valuable tool to foster economic development in the revitalization of downtown, the Crossroads, Crown Center, Westport, and projects in the Northland, while distressed areas with the greatest need

such as the Prospect Corridor remain blighted. Moreover, the overuse of tax abatements for wealthy developers to the detriment of local taxing jurisdictions is a problem that must be addressed. **The Urban League recommends** that **the City Council pass a comprehensive Tax Incentive Reform ordinance** that:

- Allows school districts to opt in or out of abatement projects;

- As recommended by Mayor Quinton Lucas during his 2019 campaign, the TIF Reform ordinance should: (1) reduce the time span of abatements from 25 years to 10 years; (2) exclusive of affordable housing projects, gradually drive down the 75% cap on abatements; (3) curtail incentives except in continuously distressed areas; (4) restrict blight to severely distressed census tracts; (5) provide no debt guarantees for economic development in vibrant areas; and (6) require up-front negotiation with taxing jurisdictions.

4. Finally, **the City Council should support State legislation that more specifically defines "blight"** using Colorado's State Statute (C.R.S. 31-25-103[2]), which requires that at least four of the following factors for blight determination to be made:

- Slum, deteriorated, or deteriorating structures;

- Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout;

- Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;

- Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;

- Deterioration of site or other improvements;

- Unusual topography or inadequate public improvements or utilities;

- Defective or unusual conditions of title rendering the title non-marketable;

- The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes;

- Buildings that are unsafe or unhealthy for persons to live or work in because of building code violations, dilapidation, deterioration, defective design, physical constructions, or faulty or inadequate facilities;

- Environmental contamination of buildings or property;

- The existence of health, safety, or welfare factors requiring high levels of municipal services or substantial physical underutilization or vacancy of sites, buildings, or other improvements.

5. According to a study conducted by the Minority Business Development Agency-U.S. Department of Commerce,[1] capital access remains the most important factor limiting the establishment, expansion, and growth of minority-owned businesses. Given this well-established constraint, the current financial environment has placed a greater burden on minority entrepreneurs who are trying to keep their businesses thriving in today's economy.

Minority-owned businesses have been growing in number of firms, gross receipts, and paid employment at a faster pace than non-minority firms. If it were not for the employment growth created by minority firms, American firms, excluding publicly held firms, would have experienced greater job loss between 1997 and 2002 than they did. While paid employment grew by 4% among minority-owned firms, it declined by 7% among non-minority firms during this period.

Minority-owned businesses continue to be the engine of employment in emerging and minority communities. Their business growth depends on a variety of capital, from seed funding to establish new firms, to working capital and business loans to expand their businesses, to private equity for acquiring and merging with other firms.

Without adequate capital, minority-owned firms will fail to realize their full potential. **The Urban League recommends** that **more aggressive measures be taken to provide capital for MBE firms**. Such measures should include the following:

- To foster the development and growth of minority-owned firms in Kansas City, it is imperative that all banks that benefit from state or federal charters adopt policies similar in design to Lead Bank's Civic Contractor Funding Program to extend credit to Minority Business Enterprise/Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (MBE/DBE) firms.

- In the late 1990s, Station Casino (currently known as Ameristar Casino), in partnership with Isle of Capri, established a $1 million fund to provide low-interest loans to minority- and women-owned businesses, and grants to nonprofits to build capacity for MBE/WBEs in Kansas City. Currently known as the Diversified Contractors Growth Fund (DCGF), the fund's assets total slightly more than $1 million. Liabilities include approximately $32,000 in outstanding loan receivables for four open loans. DCGF is managed by Port KC in collaboration with AltCap. Since its formation, only nine loans with an

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1   https://www.empowerschools.org/what-we-do/empowerment-zones/

average loan size of $40,000 have been awarded under the DCGF. The fact that so few loans have been awarded more than two decades since the fund's formation brings up several questions. Why so few loans? What are the barriers? What steps have been taken to address the problem?

- Port KC and AltCap should provide the answers to these questions in a report detailing the loan application/denial rate and basis for the denials. Moreover, an analysis of procedures, including the application process and underwriting requirements, is warranted.

- Robust efforts must be taken to increase awareness of the DCGF, provide user-friendly non-traditional access portals for applicants, and significantly increase the loan application and approval rates.

6. According to *Business Insider*, transportation presents a difficult and underreported challenge to low-income workers trying to find jobs and manage daily life in the U.S. without a car. This is a major problem for low-income minorities in Greater Kansas City who cannot afford to purchase a car and must rely on public transportation to get to work, school, medical appointments, or anywhere that is not within walking distance of their homes. Many low-income workers, students, seniors, and disabled Kansas Citians—the majority of whom reside in the urban core—rely on public transportation to get to work and to manage all aspects of their lives.

The cost of public transportation in Kansas City is $1.50. The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority estimates that a rider who uses public transit once a day to travel to and from work spends approximately $2,000 per year. Two thousand dollars per year is a significant amount of revenue in the budget of a low-income individual or family that struggles to pay rent and put food on the table. These low-income families struggle to pay to ride public busses, while tax revenue is diverted from KCATA to fund free rides on the KC Streetcar.

The Urban League joins with *The Kansas City Star* **Editorial Board and the Kansas City Area Transportation to recommend** that **the City Council pass an ordinance to provide free public transit for all residents of Kansas City** for the following reasons:

- Social Currency: Families will have more money to spend, and they'll do it in the local economy, generating more local sales taxes. Kansas City residents already pay for transit through a transportation sales tax. Paying an additional $1.50 fare is like being taxed twice.

- System Safety: Disputes over $1.50 account for more than 90% of assaults on operators. Removing the fare will eliminate a majority of the fare conflicts.

- System Efficiency: The current system has the capacity to handle a 30% increase in ridership immediately. The farebox generates only $9 million annually. That's just 10% of KCATA's budget. Removing fares results in faster boarding, which leads to improved on-time performance and improved customer satisfaction. Zero-fare transit would save more than half a million annually in administration costs. The $1.50 fare has more value out of the farebox than in it. It helps small businesses and generates local sales taxes.

To defray the costs associated with providing free public transit for all Kansas Citians, **the Urban League recommends** that **the City Council instruct the City Manager to restore to KCATA the $2 million in transportation tax revenue that is currently being diverted from KCATA to fund free rides on the KC Streetcar.** The allocation of public tax revenue to fund free transportation for a two-mile stretch of downtown while low-income tax payers struggle to pay to ride the bus to navigate their daily lives is unfair and inequitable.

HEALTH

Essays

UNDIAGNOSED AND UNTREATED PTSD PERPETUATES VIOLENCE IN KANSAS CITY

STEFFON E. STALEY, M.S., LPC, BIP, NCC

Severe, unexpected physical and psychological trauma can happen within seconds, but the ripple effect of that initial trauma can last a lifetime. The gaping wounds of gunshot victims, the battered face of a woman, or a child with a broken arm as a result of domestic violence will receive immediate medical attention and care. The inner workings that we do not see are the deeply imbedded psychological wounds, which we often refer to as "the hidden wounds." These are the silent injuries that often go untreated, unnoticed, and largely undiagnosed. These psychological wounds left from traumatic events have the capacity to perpetuate violent behaviors in Kansas City's children and adults. In addition, they can significantly impair children's and adults' ability to learn stress management skills, healthy coping strategies, and conflict resolution skills. All of these are necessary for victims to function peacefully at home, at school, at work, and in the community.

Trauma-related experiences are common for children, adolescents, and adults growing up in the inner city. Some examples of these traumatic experiences are repeated exposure to domestic violence in the home, the sudden death of loved ones, being assaulted, and exposure to the violent death of others. Repeated exposure to trauma can have a severe impact on the quality of life for those individuals. Evidence points to linkages between early childhood trauma and negative outcomes later in life, as measured, for example, by the Adverse Childhood Experience Score (ACES).

One major consequence of violence in the inner city is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). PTSD is a debilitating psychiatric disorder that may develop after exposure to a traumatic event. PTSD is different from other psychiatric disorders. It requires a specific type of event to transpire, and the individual is not able to cope and recover from the experience. First, to qualify for a diagnosis of PTSD, according to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-V*, the individual must have directly experienced a traumatic event(s), witnessed or learned about the traumatic event(s) to a close family member or friend, or have experienced repeated or extreme exposure to aversive details of traumatic event(s) (APA, 2013). It is characterized by intrusive and

avoidant thoughts, as well as hyper-arousal and negative cognition and mood. PTSD is frequently diagnosed in urban areas. PTSD symptoms have been linked with increased violence in those who suffer with the condition.

Researchers from the Department of Psychiatry at Emory University School of Medicine, New York University School of Medicine, and Howard Hughes Medical Institute confirmed that trauma experienced in childhood and adulthood were highly associated with being an offender of interpersonal aggression and violence. Childhood abuse, intimate partner violence, and exposure to violence contribute to aggressive impulses and difficulties in managing anger. The symptoms of violence in the urban core is a by-product of being traumatized.

When these symptoms go undiagnosed and untreated, individuals who remain in violent neighborhoods are likely to become perpetrators of violent crimes. PTSD symptoms interfere with developing healthy coping skills and interpersonal conflict resolution skills and adds significant deficiency in responding to stress. Trauma has the capacity to shape our views and our behaviors. Children and adults who experience "complex trauma" have increased depression, higher rates of suicidal ideations, and substance abuse.

Research suggests that earlier interventions for PTSD may benefit communities by reducing violent crimes and behaviors in urban communities. Treatments that have been peer reviewed and approved for the treatment of PTSD are: pharmacological treatments, psychotherapy, meditation, mindfulness, eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR), and cognitive restructuring, and a combination of these treatments.

Those in urban communities face many obstacles to treatment, including lack of access, lack of transportation, long waiting lists, cost, lack of insurance, housing insecurity, cultural attribution, entering the jail system, or simply electing to forgo treatment. When patients are treated in emergency rooms or other health care locations, the health care providers may not be trained to deliver appropriate, longitudinal care. Neglecting to provide appropriate, consistent, and timely treatment for PTSD impacts public safety and may contribute to more violent crimes.

At the root of violence is conflict and stress, handled poorly. Conflict is normal and healthy. It is when there is no resolution that conflict becomes fatal. It is not only the ruptures we need to focus on but the repairs.

It is imperative to recognize the impact of trauma on the lives of children and adults in Kansas City. Primary care providers, schools, and community organizations must assess the history of traumatic stressors and trauma symptoms early. During treatment and interventions, it is important to maximize the effectiveness of interventions at every level. Trauma-responsive approaches in the community must build on the strength, resilience, and resources of those trying to manage traumatic stress.

Recommendations for Treatment

- Careful assessment of PTSD in children, adolescents, and adults

- Continuum of behavioral care for children and adults

- Co-responder programs to distribute resources to individuals and families

- Community programs targeted toward prevention, assessment, and early intervention

URBAN COMMUNITIES FACE MANY OBSTACLES TO [PTSD] TREATMENT, INCLUDING LACK OF ACCESS, LACK OF TRANSPORTATION, LONG WAITING LISTS, COST, LACK OF INSURANCE, HOUSING INSECURITY, CULTURAL ATTRIBUTION, ENTERING THE JAIL SYSTEM, OR SIMPLY ELECTING TO FORGO TREATMENT.

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BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH IS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

CORSTELLA JOHNSON,
MPH, CHES

JOYCE TOWNSER,
RN, BSN, MSA

From HIV and sexually transmitted diseases to unintended pregnancy and infant mortality, health and health care disparities continue to disproportionately affect African-American women. Recently, stories of African-American women dying during or immediately following childbirth has encouraged an enhanced look at black maternal health (Roeder, 2019).

Within the U.S., rates of maternal mortality are steadily rising, but for African-American women, the rates are devastatingly high. In comparison to non-Hispanic white women, African-American women are three to four times more likely to die during or after childbirth. Most maternal deaths are due to pregnancy complications such as hypertension, stroke, and pre-eclampsia (American Heart Association News, 2019). Locally, Missouri is among many states facing the challenges of maternal mortality with rates higher than those of the U.S. Collective efforts are being made to address the steady rise of maternal deaths. However, black maternal health still remains a public health crisis.

According to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), there are levels of care that contribute to the existing and evolving reproductive health disparities experienced by African-American women. These disparities are introduced during various phases in the continuum of care and are realized at the patient, practitioner, and health care systems stages (Racial and Ethnic Disparities, 2015).

At the patient level, life stressors such as racism and socioeconomic status may affect birth outcomes; at the practitioner level, unconscious bias and stereotyping may impact the patient's level of care; and accessibility and availability of health care services, along with cost and

health care coverage, may perpetuate health inequities at the health care system level. These suggested levels reflect the social determinants of health that perpetuate reproductive health disparities among African-American women. Moreover, many African-American women continue to experience poorer quality of care, which has devastating results on their health outcomes.

A multi-faceted approach is needed to change the landscape for African-American women's reproductive health. Health care provider shortages, maternity ward closures, and limited access to reproductive care are pronounced barriers that affect the continuity of care (Chalhoub & Rimar, 2018). Increasing access to health insurance, quality health care,

and patient-centered and culturally appropriate care are recommended approaches to reduce reproductive health disparities (Chalhoub & Rimar, 2018; Roeder, 2019).

Additionally, educating health care providers about the health disparities experienced by African-American women, as well as understanding the role of unconscious bias in perpetuating health disparities can adjust the health care landscape for African-American women (American Heart Association News, 2019).

As an increasingly diverse nation, with population growth rates predicting a minority-majority by 2050, it is imperative to ensure equitable care for all people, especially African-American women, in an effort to create and sustain a healthier nation.

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illicit opioids (Schwetz, Calder, Rosenthal, Kattakuzhy, & Fauci, 2019).

A pressing question is why opioid addiction is a public health crisis, yet crack cocaine addiction yielded a criminalization crisis (e.g., the War on Drugs). This piece seeks to compare and contrast the two epidemics and solicit a call to action to promote health equity in an effort to prevent future health care crises.

Cocaine, specifically its crystallized form known as crack, flooded urban streets in the late 1980s and early 1990s, destroying entire communities with significant public health implications, such as the increased spread of HIV and the escalation of violence (Watkins, Fullilove, & Fullilove, 1998). Primarily affecting the African-American community, the social effects of the crack epidemic, such as the collapse of both family and community functioning, are still felt 30 years later. Similarly, the opioid epidemic has seen a surge in HIV rates and a crippling of the standard family structure (Daley, Smith, Balogh, & Toscaloni, 2018; Schwetz et al., 2019). However, the opioid epidemic's significant effects have been among white Americans. Both epidemics have similar public health implications but evoke different interventions and societal responses.

The response to the opioid epidemic has demonstrated "that a less

A TALE OF TWO ADDICTION EPIDEMICS: LESSONS LEARNED TO PROMOTE HEALTH EQUITY

SHARY M. JONES, PHARMD, MPH, BCPS

Since it was declared a public health crisis, efforts to end the opioid epidemic have been robust and ongoing. Opioid overdoses claim approximately 2,000 lives every month (Sharfstein & Olsen, 2019). The root of the opioid epidemic stems from the late 1990s with opioid analgesics being prescribed for chronic pain, implying that long term use leads to an addiction of orally prescribed opioids and subsequently

punitive, more humanistic approach to responding to drug problems is possible" (Netherland & Hansen, 2016). This is a stark contrast to the crack epidemic answer, which utilized less standard public health practices and focused on legal systems and prisons as solutions to the problem (Watkins et al., 1998). The response to the crack epidemic also imposed added burdens on poor communities with increased public health threats and increased disease burden. These factors, coupled with poverty, created a chasm of perpetual despair (Watkins et al., 1998). It is difficult not to conclude that we, as a society, failed in our response to the crack epidemic (Watkins et al., 1998).

Health Equity: A Call to Action

While addiction is a blameless disorder that does not discriminate, the "racially stratified therapeutic interventions" witnessed in response to these two epidemics does discriminate (Netherland & Hansen, 2016). Racial disparities, specifically in health, are a persistent challenge (Artiga, Foutz, Cornachione, & Garfield, 2018). To truly obtain health equity, multisector system-level changes to target social determinants of health are vital to moving the lever. "Housing, education, health care, and transit—all of which are deeply tied to structural racism—fuel inequity and drug use" (Schaff, 2018). Health equity must be a strategic priority across these many sectors and others. There is a lot of work to be done, especially in addressing fundamental knowledge and translational gaps. Partnerships, sustainable solutions, and incentives, all designed to reduce disparities and address social factors, are steps in the right direction. The time is now to recalibrate population health outcomes to mitigate and prevent further racial and ethnic inequalities.

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MEDICAID EXPANSION IS IMPERATIVE IN MISSOURI AND KANSAS

BRIDGET MCCANDLESS, M.D.

Medicaid is a complex system. The simplest way to think of it is as a state/federal insurance program for low-income citizens. This means the program is governed by both federal and state rules. Since 1965, Medicaid has been a "categorical" program, which meant that a participant had to be both low income and fit into a particular category—a child, a parent with a child in the home, a senior, a blind or disabled adult, or a pregnant woman. Each category had its own rules.

Nowhere in the Medicaid program was there a category for poor and sick. The Affordable Care Act changed that. It redefined Medicaid as a program to provide health care coverage for people who qualified by being low income alone. That was the intent, anyway. A 2012 Supreme Court decision made Medicaid coverage optional for each state. As of today, 34 states have changed Medicaid from a categorical program to one that covers all people below 138% of the federal poverty level.

Missouri and Kansas have not opted to extend coverage to all qualifying low-income persons. In the state of Missouri, a single mother who makes more than $3,300 per year does not qualify for coverage. There are currently 350,000 people in Missouri and 150,000 people in Kansas who fit in this category in which they cannot

Uninsured Rate among Nonelderly Individuals by Race/Ethnicity and State Medicaid Expansion

■ Expansion States ■ Non-Expansion States

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	AIAN	NHOPI
Expansion States	6%	8%	14%	6%	20%	8%
Non-Expansion States	10%	14%	26%	11%	26%	20%
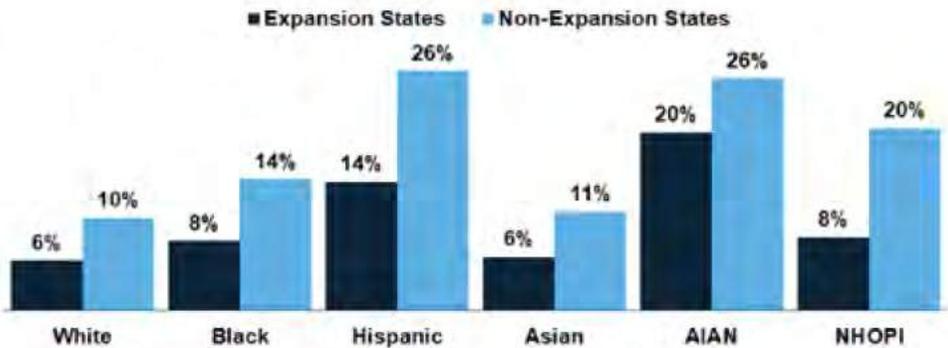
Note: Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race but are categorized as Hispanic for this analysis; other groups are non-Hispanic. Includes nonelderly individuals 0-64 years of age. NHOPI refers to Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders. AIAN refers to American Indians and Alaska Natives. All values have a statistically significant difference from Expansion States at the p < 0.05 level. State Medicaid expansion status is as of 2017.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation analysis of 2017 American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates.

KFF

qualify for Medicaid and cannot buy insurance on the marketplace.

Recent data validates the benefits derived in the states that expanded Medicaid.

- In Arkansas and Kentucky, expansion has improved participants' financial security, decreased the use of the emergency department as a usual source of care, and lowered the number of people reporting fair or poor health (Sojourner & Golberstein, 2017; The Stephen Group, 2016).

- In Ohio, expansion beneficiaries with jobs said Medicaid coverage has made it easier for them to maintain employment, and those without jobs said it made it easier to look for employment (Ohio Department of Medicaid, 2018).

Moreover, states that have expanded Medicaid have a much lower uninsured rate than those that have not (Center on Budget Policies and Priorities, 2018).

- People of color experienced significant improvements in insurance coverage under the ACA.

- Health insurance gains were largest for adults without a college degree.

- Despite the increased rate of insurance, significant coverage disparities still exist, with Latinx having the lowest rate of insurance.

- The 13 states that have not yet expanded Medicaid have large populations with people of color that would benefit from access to Medicaid (Artiga, Orgera, & Damico, 2019).

Additionally, Medicaid expansion has resulted in positive health behaviors and outcomes.

- Use of primary care, mental health services, and preventive care among Medicaid enrollees went up.

- More low- and moderate-income adults had a regular source of care (Mazurenko, Balio, Agarwal, Carroll, & Menachemi, 2018). Cancer screenings increased in people who previously lacked access or who had high cost of care.

- Low-income residents in Medicaid expansion states were more likely to afford their prescriptions for diabetes medications (Myerson, Lu, Tonnu-Mihara, Huang, 2018).

- The share of black adults who skipped doctors' visits because of costs declined 4 percentage points, from 21% to 17%.

- The share of Latinx adults that skipped doctor's visits because of costs decreased by 5 percentage points, from 27% to 22%. These declines translated into an estimated 2.4 million fewer black and Latinx adults age 18 and older in 2015 saying that cost prevented them

from visiting a doctor when needed, compared to 2013 (Hayes, Riley, Radley, & McCarthy, 2017).

- Medicaid expansion was associated with reductions in delaying mental health care because of cost and access to depression medications (Fry & Sommers, 2018).

Medicaid is one piece of the coverage puzzle, but it is an essential part of health and well-being for low-income people. The positive effects of Medicaid expansion in terms of preventive health care and beneficial outcomes far outweigh the costs.

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ACCESS TO NUTRITIONAL FOOD LEADS TO POSITIVE HEALTH OUTCOMES

QIANA THOMASON,
MSW, LCSW

The health care industry has seen an encouraging trend of individuals actively working to improve their health behaviors. Unfortunately, improved health behaviors aren't enough to drive positive health outcomes. Socioeconomic and environmental factors, such as where we live and work, our access to healthy foods, and other factors, layer in additional barriers to health.

In Kansas City, African-American communities that are challenged by lower income levels are directly impacted by "food deserts," defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as an area with a shortage of nutritious foods based on their proximity to grocery stores. I would argue that they are more accurately described as "nutritional deserts," where affordable sugary, fat-laden, highly processed, inflammatory, and genetically modified foods are much easier to come by than affordable healthy foods, drastically increasing the chronic disease burden in our community.

Impact of Nutritional Deserts in Kansas City

Kansas City's Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) has determined that six zip codes (64126, 64127, 64128, 64129, 64130, and 64132) are "high priority" based on being situated in nutritional deserts and marginalized communities, resulting in the lowest life expectancies in the city. In fact, over 15 years separate the average life expectancy of the longest- and shortest-living zip codes in our city (Kansas City, MO Community Health Improvement Plan 2016–2021, 2016).

According to 2010 U.S. Census data, residents of these six high-priority zip codes are approximately 63% African American (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). In Missouri, 39% of African-American adults are overweight or obese compared to only 31% of white adults (Trust for America's Health & Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2018), and 13% of African-American adults have

diagnosed diabetes compared to only 10% of white adults (Missouri Diabetes Report, 2019). When poverty and other structural ills challenge nutritional access, adverse health outcomes become an inevitability, including obesity, functional limitations, quality of life, life expectancy, morbidity, mortality, and excessive health care expenditures.

Proposed Solutions

The city's CHIP aims to improve nutritional access for these communities by increasing the number of farmers markets to improve our residents' access to locally grown, harvested, and marketed healthy foods. But increasing access to farmers markets alone will not move the needle on improving health outcomes. To improve access to nutritional foods, we must also include consideration of economics and culture at structural and family levels.

Whole and healthy foods must be as affordable as the readily available unhealthy options.

Community-based farmers markets should also consider the cultural preferences that are normative to

African Americans and increase access to foods that we want to cook.

Finally, reversing disinvestment in Kansas City's urban core without gentrifying it is paramount to nutrition access, such that investors deem our communities viable marketplaces.

How to Maintain Momentum

These solutions are good starting points for closing the nutrition gap that some of Kansas City's African-American communities face. To continue the momentum established by Kansas City's CHIP, organizations and community leaders must continue to pool our communities' brain-trust and resources to create and sustain nutritional access for the underserved at policy, structural, institutional, neighborhood, and family levels.

At Blue KC, we launched our Well Stocked initiative in 2018 with the vision of increasing access to nutritious food in underserved areas of Kansas City (Well Stocked, 2018). We are partnering with a myriad of local organizations to address nutritional disparities and make a meaningful impact in our community.

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ON THE ROAD TO EQUITY IN HEALTH –
URBAN LEAGUE RECOMMENDATIONS

In 1966, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., at the National Convention of the Medical Committee for Human Rights, said: *"Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane."* Access to quality affordable health care is a civil right. Yet African Americans and other disadvantaged populations in Missouri and Kansas are denied access to health care because both state legislatures refuse to pass legislation to expand Medicaid.

The refusal to place a higher value on the physical health and well being of all Kansans and Missourians than on partisan politics has severe negative consequences for the poor, low-income, under-employed, and unemployed people who cannot afford health insurance. In the *2015 State of Black Kansas City: Picture of Health*, Sheldon Weisgrau, a Senior Consultant with Rural Health Consultants, wrote:

> "The uninsured receive less preventive care than those with insurance and are sicker when diagnosed. After diagnosis, they receive less therapeutic care and fewer medications. They are more likely to have chronic illnesses and less likely to have them under control. They have greater chance of disability and death than those with the same illnesses who have insurance coverage.
>
> The uninsured have more difficulty holding jobs and earn less than those with insurance, and are more likely to go bankrupt if they get sick or injured. To put it simply, people without insurance are generally not as healthy or as wealthy as those with coverage. They are sicker, poorer, and more likely to die."

1. **The Urban League recommends** that **health care providers and business, civic, community-based, and philanthropic organizations in Missouri and Kansas form a bi-state collaborative lobbying strategy** to facilitate the passage of legislation to expand Medicaid in both states.

Kansas City has recorded approximately 100 homicides annually since 1968. According to *The Kansas City Star* Editorial Board[1], the number of homicides ballooned to 151 in 2017, a 24-year high. There were more than 200 homicides in the metropolitan Kansas City area in 2018, the majority of which took place in the inner city. As Steffon Staley reports in his essay, *Undiagnosed & Untreated PTSD Perpetuates Violence in Kansas City* (published herein), one major consequence of violence in the inner city is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

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1 https://www.kansascity.com/opinion/editorials/article223451930.html

Moreover, Staley points to research that confirms that trauma experienced in childhood and adulthood are highly associated with being an offender of interpersonal aggression and violence. Childhood abuse, intimate partner violence, and exposure to violence contribute to aggressive impulses and difficulties in managing anger. The symptoms of violence in the urban core are a byproduct of being traumatized. Undiagnosed and untreated, individuals who remain in violent neighborhoods are likely to become perpetrators of violent crimes. Research also suggests that early interventions for PTSD may benefit communities by reducing violent crimes and behaviors in inner cities.

Over the years, policy makers, law enforcement officials, and crime prevention organizations react to this persistent public health crisis by convening task forces to study the issues, appealing to the public to stop the violence, asking witnesses to cooperate with law enforcement by reporting violent crime perpetrators, holding prayer vigils, and more. Yet, the murder rate continues to rise.

2. Therefore, it stands to reason that measures should be taken to address PTSD as a crime prevention strategy. To that end, **The Urban League recommends** that **Health Forward, REACH Healthcare Foundation, and mental-health providers collaborate with urban school districts, charter schools, and faith, community-based, and youth service organizations to provide licensed clinical psychologists and other mental health services for youth, individuals, and families that are suffering from violence-related PTSD.**

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Essays

RACIAL DISPARITIES IN FEDERAL SENTENCING: UNEQUAL AND UNFAIR

THE HONORABLE STEPHEN R. BOUGH

While no one within the judicial system wants to see racial disparities in sentencing, a recent study by the United States Sentencing Commission reveals that black males receive 20% harsher sentences than white males. According to the most recent data gathered and analyzed by the Sentencing Commission, "after controlling for a wide variety of sentencing factors, the Commission found that black male offenders continue to receive longer sentences than similarly situated white male offenders" (United States Sentencing Commission, 2017). This article focuses on the basics of federal sentencing, the Commission's findings, and what the future holds.

How Federal Sentencing Works

After a criminal defendant is convicted of a federal offense, federal courts follow a two-step process in sentencing the offender.

Judges first determine the applicable sentencing guideline range based on a consideration of the nature of the offense and the offender's criminal history. Judges next consider factors set forth in 18 U.S.C. § 3553 to determine whether to vary outside the sentencing guidelines. Such factors include the nature and circumstances of the offense, the history and characteristics of the offender, the need for the sentence imposed to protect the public or afford adequate deterrence, the need to avoid unwarranted sentence disparities among similar offenders, and the need for education or treatment. Since the sentencing guidelines are discretionary, the Court has the authority to order a sentence that is higher or lower than the guideline range. The prosecutor can also ask for a departure below the guidelines for cooperation with the government, which is known as a government sponsored motion. The Department of Justice has expressed concern that judges' discretion under the § 3553 factors has led to an increase in unwarranted sentencing disparities.

The Sentencing Commission's Findings

The Commission found that black male offenders' prison sentences are on average 19.1% longer than those of white male offenders. The data demonstrates that black male

"AFTER CONTROLLING FOR A WIDE VARIETY OF SENTENCING FACTORS, THE COMMISSION FOUND THAT BLACK MALE OFFENDERS CONTINUE TO RECEIVE LONGER SENTENCES THAN SIMILARLY SITUATED WHITE MALE OFFENDERS."
(UNITED STATES SENTENCING COMMISSION, 2017)

offenders are 21.2% less likely than white male offenders to receive a non-government sponsored downward departure or variance. A non-government sponsored departure or variance includes those without a government motion, such as a downward departure awarded when the criminal history category over-represents the defendant's criminal history or where the judge simply decides based on a § 3553 factor to go above or below the suggested guideline. Even when black male offenders receive a non-government sponsored departure or variance, their sentences are still 16.8% longer than those of white male offenders who receive a non-government sponsored departure or variance. In contrast, with regard to offenders who receive below-range sentences based on their cooperation with the government, black male offenders receive sentences similar in length to white male offenders.

The data shows that black male offenders who are sentenced within the guideline range receive sentences 7.9% longer than similarly situated white male offenders. While this figure remains discouraging, it represents a decrease in disparity in the within-range sentences category from prior years.

Looking Forward

The data reflects that the sentencing of black men is unequal and unfair. The disparities between sentences for white and black men existed when the guidelines were mandatory and still exist today, even though the guidelines are advisory. The Commission has recommended requiring judges to demonstrate greater justification for sentences imposed that fall substantially outside the guideline range. Many civil rights organizations spent decades arguing that mandatory guidelines were too harsh, although when judges sentence within the guidelines, the disparity in sentencing is greatly reduced. The Commission continues to educate federal judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and the probation office on the racial disparities in sentencing to ultimately eliminate unequal sentences based on race.

United States Sentencing Commission. (2017, November). *Demographic differences in sentencing: An update to the 2012 Booker report*. Retrieved from https://www.ussc.gov/research/research-reports/demographic-differences-sentencing

THE IMPACT OF IMPLICIT BIAS ON OUR COURTS:
A MISSOURI BAR PAST PRESIDENT'S POINT OF VIEW

DANA TIPPIN CUTLER, ESQUIRE

Implicit bias or unconscious bias is something we all have. It is shaped by our experiences, family values, and media, among other forces that influence our lives and the world. Not all implicit biases are negative, but when implicit bias becomes the basis for how our courts hand out sentences, treat litigants and their counsel, or hire and promote court personnel, it not only negatively affects the justice system itself, but works to undermine how a community values the third branch of government. It can lead to the destruction of the Rule of Law, which is the principle that all people and institutions are subject to and accountable to law that is fairly applied and enforced.

I will have been an attorney for thirty years on October 13, 2019. My practice as an insurance defense attorney has taken me into courthouses all over our state. I have been warmly welcomed in some and treated like a four-armed alien in others. Many times judges have asked me if I was sure that I was representing the insurance company and not the individual, as if it was beyond their capacity to grasp that a nationally known insurance company had hired a black female attorney to defend them or their insured. My personal favorite was a judge's clerk who asked me in a loud voice if I was an attorney—even though I was sitting with all the other attorneys in the courtroom, dressed in a suit and carrying a briefcase. Why did these negative experiences occur? Some because of out and out racism and/or sexism, but most definitely because I did not fit the pre-conceived notion of what an attorney should be, even with the outward indicia of an attorney—a suit, a briefcase, etc.

This same implicit bias that does not expect a black female to be an attorney can and often does expect black and brown men to be criminals, and it has had an enormous impact on minority communities. When all the Court sees is a face of color but does not look beyond to see the person, it can result in harsher sentences. This same unconscious decision-making impacts our families in Family Court. Brown and black parents are kept from their children longer, and the decision to terminate parental rights is launched more quickly. Children of color find themselves in foster care

more frequently and for longer periods of time. Juveniles are punished more often and more harshly.

These issues arose in a real way for our state courts in the wake of the Ferguson protests. Missouri could have given lip-service to the scathing Department of Justice report on Missouri policing and courts, but Missouri's Supreme Court took the report as the foundation for positive change. Missouri overhauled the municipal system to reduce fines and make the courts more accessible, and it examined the look of the personnel serving the community. The Missouri Supreme Court took it a step further and created the Commission of Racial and Ethnic Fairness (CREF) to examine, across the judicial system, how to address issues of unfairness and implicit bias. Issues that have been addressed include the following:

• Beginning in Spring 2017 the Missouri Supreme Court made it mandatory for all court personnel and judges to obtain training in cultural competency, diversity, inclusion, and implicit bias on an annual basis. Such training is provided to circuit judges at the summer and fall judicial colleges. This training is provided in these areas to all court personnel including juvenile officers, clerks, bailiffs, and employees of all circuit courts. The recently adopted Juvenile Officers' Performance

Standards include a requirement for similar training effective in 2019.

• The Supreme Court adopted CREF's recommendation that a voluntary check box be added to the Attorney Enrollment Form that provides race and ethnicity information, similar to what was being done with gender. The hope is the data will allow the Court to assess the number of attorneys and judges in Missouri by race and ethnicity, and allow future focus on efforts to address any issues presented by the data. To date, the data shows that we have 35,000 attorneys in Missouri. Through voluntary compliance, 78.8% of attorneys in good standing reported gender, and 36.9% of attorneys in good standing reported ethnicity.

• Missouri's judiciary participated in a survey conducted by the National Center for State Courts regarding the racial and ethnic demographics of judges and court staff. The survey was completed through the use of grant funds in May 2017, and the data has been reviewed. Office of State Court Administration (OSCA) has begun the process of gathering the necessary information to complete the data set (which will include all court staff). The survey has been sent to the intended respondents, and the Court is in the process of reviewing the responses.

- The Missouri Supreme Court adopted CREF's recommendation by making new changes to the Missouri Rules of Civil Procedure Court Rule 37.04 regarding "Supervision of Courts Hearing Ordinance Violations" and Model Local Rule 69.01 entitled "Determining Indigent Status in Municipal Division Cases." MRCP 37.04 includes the following changes:

  – Municipal divisions and their judges shall ensure that when individuals must be held in jail in the interests of justice, this is done strictly in accordance with the principles of due process of law.

  – Municipal division judges shall inquire of defendants and allow them to present information about their financial condition when assessing their ability to pay and when establishing payment requirements for monies due.

  – Municipal division judges shall not condition an indigent defendant's access to a judicial hearing or the granting of probation upon the payment of fines or fees.

  – Municipal divisions and their judges shall neither assess nor collect unauthorized fines, costs, or surcharges.

  – Municipal divisions shall be operated in a manner reasonably convenient to the public and in facilities sufficient to the purpose.

  – Municipal divisions shall be operated in a manner that upholds the constitutional principles of separation of powers and the integrity of the judiciary as a separate and independent branch of government.

  – Municipal divisions shall be operated in accordance with the constitutional principles and legal requirements of open courts and open records.

  – Municipal division judges shall advise litigants of their rights in court.

  – Municipal divisions shall be well-managed and accountable to the law, with appropriate oversight of municipal division operations provided by the circuit court presiding judge of the judicial circuit.

The efforts our courts have made, in particular with regard to the municipal division, are essential to our communities' belief in the justice system. Most citizens of our state are likely to have contact with the judicial system at the municipal level. If municipal courts are not perceived as fair by the majority of the citizens it serves, the justice system and the

IMPLICIT BIAS OR UNCONSCIOUS BIAS IS SOMETHING WE ALL HAVE. IT IS SHAPED BY OUR EXPERIENCES, FAMILY VALUES, AND MEDIA, AMONG OTHER FORCES THAT INFLUENCE OUR LIVES AND THE WORLD.

Rule of Law fail. If the people do not believe the law is being fairly applied and enforced, then there is no law, and we are left with anarchy.

The changes our courts are making are needed and appropriate, but is it enough? The answer is no. The courts can always do better. We need change at the institutional level (rules governing the courts) and at the molecular level (judges enforcing the rules). We need judges to not only take the training, but to also embrace change and engage in self-examination. It is very easy for our judges to say, "Oh, I am not biased," and keep it moving. Or, "We do not have many minorities in my community, so this is not applicable to me."

But I would challenge every judge to scrutinize their sentencing history. Does it reflect unbiased decision-making? Look at your staff. Is it diverse? Observe how you and your court personnel treat diverse attorneys. Are you respectful? Examine how you converse with litigants. Is it fair? If your personal record in your courtroom does not reflect how you perceive yourself, then you have to make changes to broaden your thinking and actions. Some suggestions include joining a diverse bar association and going to the meetings; reading diverse authors for differing viewpoints on your long-held viewpoints or politics; attending a different church, synagogue, or mosque service; participating in diverse events (art shows, ethnic festivals, diverse symposia). These experiences outside of your usual world will change your view, how you think, and how you interact with the world.

Over the past 30 years, I have seen bias in our courts, but I am happy to report that now I see positive change and a willingness for self-reflection. What does this mean for us? It means Lady Justice is moving closer to her ideal—and that, my friend, is good for everyone in our community and in our state.

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CASH BAIL UNDERMINES JUSTICE

MICHAEL BARRETT, ESQUIRE

I want to tell you about two young men, Darren and Darrell.

Darren is a junior at the local college. Darrell is a dishwasher at one of the restaurants nearby. Both have regrettable Friday evenings. While leaving a party, Darren backs his SUV into a utility pole and is arrested for DWI and possession of a controlled substance. Meanwhile, across town, Darrell has a few drinks after work and is later pulled over and arrested for the same two offenses.

But that's where their experiences begin to differ. As Darren is being processed at the police station, his father arrives and posts bail. He goes back to his apartment that night and the next day he's at the game with his friends. Darrell, on the other hand, can't afford to post bail, and so he has to sit in jail until Monday, when he goes before the judge, who declines to reduce bail and calendars Darrell's next court date in two weeks, the same as Darren's.

At their next court appearance, Darren arrives wearing khakis and a button-down shirt, his hair is neat, and his attorney begins engaging the prosecutor on how Darren plans to apply to graduate school, how he comes from a great family, and that he's made Dean's List while serving as treasurer of his fraternity. Darrell, meanwhile, is brought into court in handcuffs and an orange jumpsuit, and his hair is a mess. His mother, seated in the front of the courtroom, whispers what Darrell already knows—that he's been fired from the restaurant and they've received a notice of eviction.

This is what cash bail does. It makes untrue everything we've been told about the American justice system: that the law treats people equally; that punishment doesn't come until after one is convicted. The reality is that nearly every jail in Missouri is full, and not with inmates who have been convicted of crimes, but rather with defendants—nearly all poor, and

THIS IS WHAT CASH BAIL DOES. IT MAKES UNTRUE EVERYTHING WE'VE BEEN TOLD ABOUT THE AMERICAN JUSTICE SYSTEM: THAT THE LAW TREATS PEOPLE EQUALLY; THAT PUNISHMENT DOESN'T COME UNTIL AFTER ONE IS CONVICTED.

predominately people of color—who stand innocent of the allegations they face. And that's not the end of the inequality. Defendants like Darrell, who are incarcerated pre-trial, are three times more likely to receive a sentence of incarceration following a conviction than those like Darren, who are released pretrial.

So what happened to Darren and Darrell? Darren finished the semester and, at some point, received a reduction to a fine-only offense, which his dad promptly paid. Darrell, on the other hand, had more immediate concerns. He needed to get his job back and fight that eviction, and so he pled guilty. The fact that his attorney told him there were problems with the case—an illegal stop and insufficient evidence—was of little consequence; exercising his constitutional right to trial would have meant months, perhaps even a year or more, sitting in jail.

The funny thing is, people think that eliminating money bail is a progressive idea, like ending the death penalty. However, unlike capital punishment, the widespread use of money bail is a modern phenomenon. Even in the late 19th century, the U.S. Supreme Court referred to pre-trial release as a traditional right to freedom "that permits the unhampered preparation of a defense, and serves to prevent the infliction of punishment prior to conviction." So, the argument against cash bail is not so much a push to modernize as it is a desperate plea to regain some core principles. Toward this end, the American Bar Association has done its part. They've condemned the use of money bail. It doesn't improve public safety; it doesn't increase the rate of appearance by defendants. Money bail undermines justice. It obliterates equality under the law. And it should end.

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⊜ ON THE ROAD TO EQUITY IN SOCIAL JUSTICE –
URBAN LEAGUE RECOMMENDATIONS

Concerns by the citizens of Missouri and the Missouri legislature regarding allegations of bias in traffic enforcement prompted the passage of SB 1053. SB 1053 created Section 590.650, RSMo., which became effective August 28, 2000. This statute created the Vehicle Stops Report and required that the Attorney General's Office collect and report on traffic stops conducted by law enforcement officers across the state of Missouri.[1]

Under § 590.650, RSMo., all peace officers in the state must report specific information, including a driver's race, for each vehicle stop made in the state. Law enforcement agencies must provide their vehicle stops data to the Attorney General by March 1, and the Attorney General must compile the data and report to the Governor, General Assembly, and each law enforcement agency no later than June 1 of each year. The law allows the Governor to withhold state funds for any agency that does not submit its vehicle stops data to the Attorney General by the statutory deadline.[2]

While this legislation allows the Governor to withhold state funds for any agency that does not comply with mandated reporting requirements, it stops short of including any sanctions for law enforcement agencies that report consistently high rates of bias in traffic enforcement.

Year after year since the passage of this legislation, the Attorney General has compiled and released the Vehicle Stops Report, which has consistently revealed that African Americans are stopped and searched at rates significantly higher than whites and at rates that are disproportionate to their share of the population in the state, yet no measures are required to ameliorate the situation. Consequently, as evidenced by the 2018 Vehicle Stops Report, blacks in Kansas City are 91% more likely than whites to be stopped while driving.

Without state legislative mandates directing law enforcement agencies to reduce the disproportionate rates at which law enforcement officers stop and search African-American drivers, this inequity in Justice Before the Law will continue.

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1 https://ago.mo.gov/home/vehicle-stops-report

2 Ibid.

1. Therefore, **the Urban League recommends** that **the Missouri Legislature amend SB 1053 to allow the Governor to withhold funds to law enforcement agencies that show patterns of racial profiling in their annual vehicle stops reports.**

The 2019 State of Black Kansas City Black/White Equality Index reports that African Americans are incarcerated at rates substantially higher than whites. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) cites America's bail system as a contributing factor. After an arrest—wrongful or not—a person's ability to leave jail and return home to fight the charges depends on money. That's because, in most states, people are required to pay cash bail. Originally, bail was supposed to make sure people returned to court to face charges against them. But instead, the money bail system has morphed into widespread wealth-based incarceration.

Poorer Americans and people of color often can't afford to come up with money for bail, leaving them stuck in jail awaiting trial, sometimes for months or years. Meanwhile, wealthy people accused of the same crime can buy their freedom and return home.[3]

A study in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics* showed that while the cash-bail system penalizes poor people, it also discriminates against African Americans, who tend to be treated more severely than white people by judges who set bail, regardless of the judge's race.[4]

2. To address the pernicious impact of cash bail on poor people and people of color, **the Urban League recommends** that **the Legal Aid Society, the ACLU, the Missouri and Kansas Bar Associations, and other stakeholders should work with local and state policy makers to implement some type of bail reform.**

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3 https://www.aclu.org/issues/smart-justice/bail-reform
4 https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/01/business/cash-bail-system-reform.html
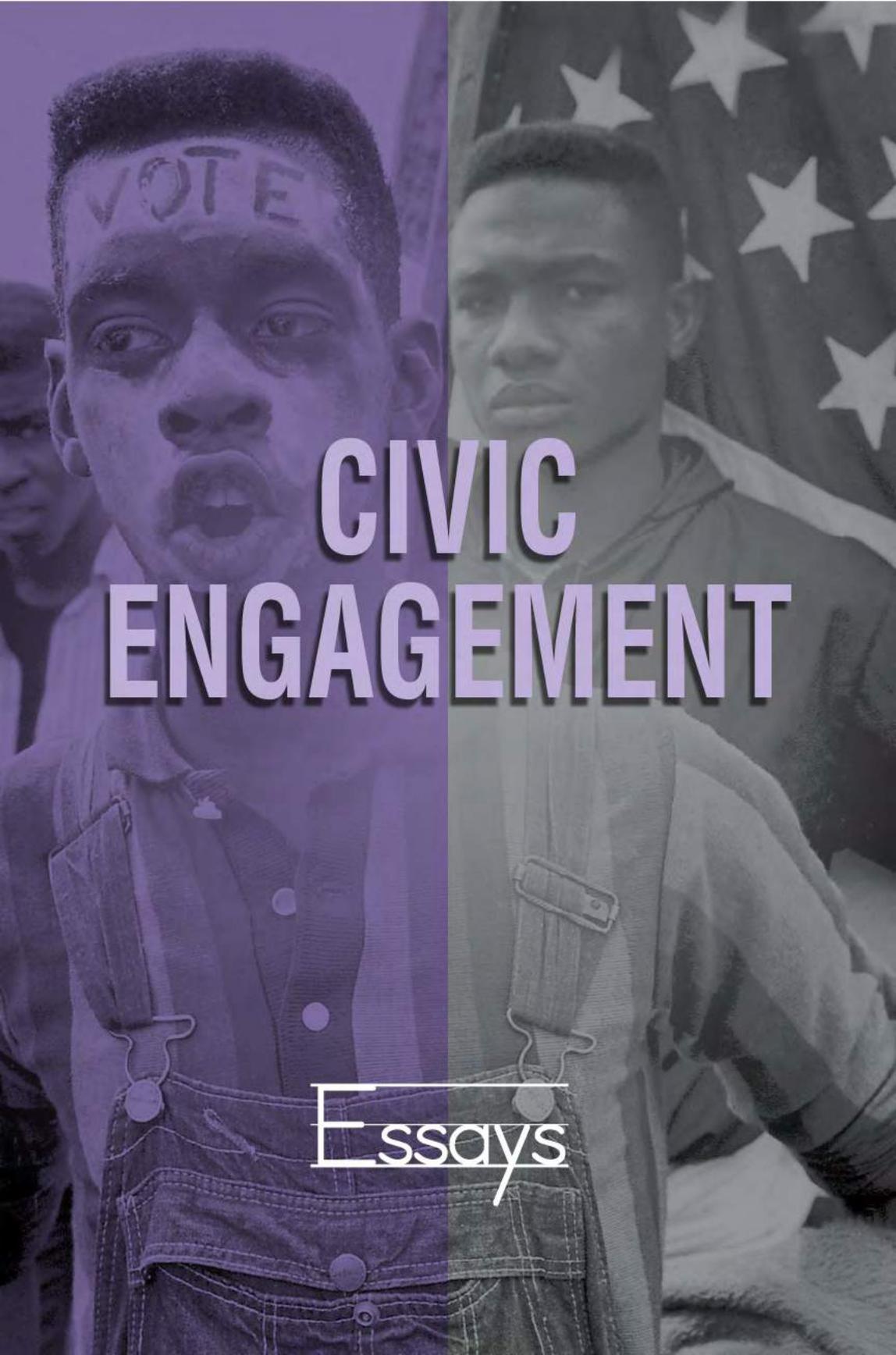
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Essays

FROM THE DESK OF MARC H. MORIAL, ESQUIRE

PRESIDENT & CEO,
NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE

Our rights are under attack by forces that are clever, sinister, diabolical, and intentional; and their allies run from the Supreme Court of the United States, to state legislatures all across the nation and around the globe, to allies inside the Russian Federation.

According to some estimates, the black voting rate matched or exceeded the white rate for the first time in American history in 2008, the first time a major party black Presidential candidate was on the ballot. Not coincidentally, a wave of racially-motivated voter suppression legislation swept the nation the year of the next federal election in 2010.

According to the Brennan Center, our partners in this report, state lawmakers in 2010 began introducing hundreds of voter suppression measures, from strict photo I.D. requirements to slashing early voting and throwing up roadblocks to registration.

The 2013 Supreme Court decision in *Shelby v. Holder* gutted a key provision of the Voting Rights Act, which required federal approval for states with a history of discrimination to make any changes to voting laws. Because preclearance had achieved its goal of eliminating racial disparity in voting rates, Chief Justice John Roberts reasoned that it was no longer needed. "Throwing out preclearance when it has worked and is continuing to work to stop discriminatory changes is like throwing away your umbrella in a rainstorm because you are not getting wet," Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg wrote in her dissent.

Shelby was just one of several blows against democracy the Supreme Court has struck in recent years. When it struck down campaign finance reform laws in *Citizens United v. FCC* in 2010, it unleashed the power of these Super PACs, where wealthy individuals could pour unlimited money into the American political process. And most recently, in *Husted v. A. Philip Randolph Institute*, the Court upheld the right

of states to use aggressive purges to remove voters from registration rolls, a process that disproportionately affects communities of color.

Racism also was a powerful tool used by Russian and other hostile foreign hackers and troll farms to manipulate the 2016 presidential and 2018 midterm elections. A Russian-linked social media campaign called "Blacktivist" used Facebook and Twitter in an apparent attempt to amplify racial tensions during the U.S. presidential election. It used the integrity of the Black Lives Matter hashtag (#BlackLivesMatter) to carry out an insidious campaign of voter suppression.

Efforts to suppress the black vote have coincided with a rapid diversification of the voting public. The projected 2020 electorate is 66.7% white, down from 76.4% in 2000. The sad fact is, as the black vote becomes more critical, efforts to suppress it grow stronger. In December 2017, Doug Jones became Alabama's first U.S. Senator elected by a multiracial coalition—in other words, without a majority of white voters. In an election plagued with allegations of voter suppression, Stacy Abrams came within a percentage point and a half of becoming Georgia's governor while winning only 25% of the white vote. Beto O'Rourke came within 2.5 points

of becoming the U.S. Senator from Texas, while winning only 31% of the white vote.

We must recognize that there is an entrenched political establishment that views these results with alarm and is directly motivated by them to enact restrictive voting laws. The fig leaf of voter fraud has been thoroughly debunked, and even a fraudulent commission established in 2018 to promote the myth imploded less than a year later due to a lack of credible evidence. Many politicians don't even bother hiding their true motive.

"The cutting out of the Sunday before Election Day was one of their targets only because that's a big day when the black churches organize themselves," a political advisor to Florida legislators told the *Palm Beach Post* in 2012.

Former Pennsylvania Governor Tom Corbett told a group of supporters during his 2010 campaign, "We want to make sure that they don't get 50 percent [turnout in majority-minority Philadelphia]. Keep that down."

North Carolina, in defending its "monster" voter suppression law, admitted in court, "counties with Sunday voting in 2014 were disproportionately black" and, as a result, did away with Sunday voting. The federal court that struck down the law said it targeted African Americans "with almost surgical precision."

In Wisconsin, a former state legislative aide explained why he quit in a 2016 post on Facebook, saying he was in a meeting of legislators when voter I.D. bills were being discussed. "A handful of the Senators were giddy about the ramifications and literally singled out the prospects of suppressing minority and college voters."

Our message to the enemies of democracy is this: We see you. We know what you're doing, and we won't let you get away with it. We will shine a light on these evil deeds.

states and localities with repeated voting rights violations must preclear election changes with the Department of Justice.

In the courts, at least 15 states have ongoing litigation against voter suppression laws. Six cases are pending in Georgia alone, five of them related to the most recent election cycle. Organizations like the NAACP, NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Advancement Project, ACLU, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, the League of Women Voters, and

OUR MESSAGE TO THE ENEMIES OF DEMOCRACY IS THIS: WE SEE YOU. WE KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING, AND WE WON'T LET YOU GET AWAY WITH IT. WE WILL SHINE A LIGHT ON THESE EVIL DEEDS.

These attacks on our rights have not gone unchallenged. A sweeping reform bill, H.R. 1, was the first legislation introduced in the 116th Congress. Among its provisions: creation of a new national automatic voter registration that asks voters to opt out, rather than opt in; promotion of early voting, same-day voter registration, and online voter registration; making Election Day a holiday; ending partisan gerrymandering in federal elections and prohibiting voter roll purging. H.R. 4, the Voting Rights Advancement Act, essentially would restore the preclearance provision of the Voting Rights Act, creating a new coverage formula to determine which

Common Cause are fighting back; and we are proud to stand with them.

This year's *State of Black America*® (http://soba.iamempowered.com/) explores the effect of voter suppression laws and the evolving role the black vote plays in our nation's democratic institutions. The goals of the National Urban League— equal access to jobs, education, housing, health care, and justice—are simply not achievable without full and direct access to the ballot box.

To paraphrase Justice Ginsberg, it's raining; and the National Urban League is determined to hand out umbrellas.

Recommendations

- Eliminate strict, discriminatory voter I.D. requirements

- Allow automatic voter registration, online registration, and same-day registration

- Restore voting rights to citizens convicted of felonies as soon as their sentences are completed

- Require paper verification of ballots in federal elections to prevent computer tampering

- When necessary, conduct post-election audits to compare paper records to computerized results

- Enact the Voting Rights Advancement Act, which restores the full enforcement protections of the Voting Rights Act of 1965

- Eliminate voter roll purging based on failure to vote or failure to respond to mailed documents

- Prohibit distribution of false information intended to dissuade people from voting

- Grant statehood for the District of Columbia, giving residents in the nation's capital full voting rights

- Create a national commission to identify and eliminate foreign interference in the American democratic process

- Move the U.S. toward the popular election of presidents through states' participation in the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact, with the goal of eliminating the Electoral College

THE ROOT OF ALL CHANGE IS POWER: *A COMMENTARY*

FREDERICK W. MCKINNEY, PH.D.

It is my firm belief that the primary drivers of systems change are economics and power. Understanding power—the capacity or ability to direct or influence the behavior of others or the course of events—and how to use it is essential to advancing our civil rights agenda.

Power comes in three forms: political power, economic power, and moral power.

African Americans have indeed come a long way from that first Juneteenth in 1865. It was inconceivable in 1865 that black Americans could have attained the political power that they hold in Kansas City today.

In the last two decades, Kansas City has elected three black mayors and numerous African-American city council members; the superintendents of Kansas City Public Schools and Kansas City, Kansas, and Hickman Mills school districts are African American; the county executive and the sheriff of Jackson County are black; and the former police chief was also black.

If this was a game of poker, Kansas City would hold a royal flush! In a city of 450,000 citizens and an African-American population of 138,000, or 31%, these are impressive political accomplishments. Yet there is an understanding in this community that while we have come far, we still have a long way to go to overcome systemic and structural barriers to social and economic parity.

Political power in our democracy comes from the franchise. When we vote our interests, we elect representatives who promote our interests over the interests of those who oppose us. Democracy is in many respects civilized warfare. Instead of political factions engaging in violent confrontations to settle important decisions that impact the public good, we vote. Our history demonstrates clearly what happens when we do not vote; our concerns, if they are on the agenda at all, are rarely seriously addressed.

Political power through participation in the political process is absolutely essential to the development of our community. However, political power alone, while necessary, is not sufficient to achieve the improvements in our community that we desire. Economic power is necessary for this to happen.

Economic power is best defined as control over resources. I went to

New Haven, Connecticut, in 1976 to attend the Yale Graduate School of Economics, where I became the first African American to earn a Ph.D. in economics. As a trained economist, I have spent my professional career studying how scarce resources are allocated. The Kansas City's African-American community, like many African-American communities across this country, has a resource allocation problem.

Let me state clearly that we also have a wealth and income problem. African-American wealth is less than one-tenth the wealth of the typical white American. In 2016, African-American households earned $39,000 compared to $61,000 for whites, less than 65% of what the typical white household earned. When it comes to wealth, African-American households have on average $17,000 in wealth as defined by the difference between assets and financial liabilities. White American households have over $171,000 of household wealth on average, more than 10 times the wealth of the typical African-American household.

This is where we are. And despite these significant disparities, I believe our community is not without resources that can be allocated in ways that can create great wealth and income and fundamentally change the conditions for most African Americans. Growing wealth is the source of real power.

Wealth and increased income—economic power—can do what political power alone cannot do: transform communities and the lives of those most in need.

Poverty and the lack of wealth have consequences. Poor people have poor health. Poor people die young. Poor people are poorly educated. Poor people have poor self-esteem. Poor people become victims of their poverty. Poor people become dependent on the generosity of others. Poor people are incarcerated. Poor people are not free. Poor people are powerless.

Before describing what specifically I mean by reallocating the resources we have, I want to discuss the third form of power—moral power. Moral power is independent of political and economic power. Moral power is the power of the mind and the spirit. Moral power comes from a belief system that unhesitatingly and unapologetically calls out right from wrong. Moral authority and power is often the underpinning of political power. "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." From these moral statements we organize, we criticize , we analyze where we are and what we must do.

For the faith community, be it Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Taoist, Hindu, Buddhist, or something else, we base that moral perspective

on an understanding and faith in a higher moral authority. But I put to you that one need not be a member of any of these communities to have a moral compass that leads you to righteousness—the state of being right. Even an atheist can have moral power.

Moral power often confronts political and economic power when moral power is all that one has to offer. Some might say having moral power is like bringing a knife to a gun fight. Yet moral power is important and indeed critical to communities who lack either political power or economic power or both. Our own history of Rosa Parks saying she has a right to sit where she wants to sit on a public bus is the exertion of moral power. Mahatma Gandhi's walk to the sea to free Indians from British rule of more than one billion humans was moral power at work. Nelson Mandela's struggle for freedom in South Africa was moral power practiced at the highest level. The 1963 March on Washington that bore the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act was moral power.

Kansas Citians have the moral authority to change this community in order to achieve economic power. So what must be done?

First and foremost, we must take an inventory of our assets and our liabilities. What do we own? What do we control? What do we owe? And to whom do we owe it? Our community has a balance sheet. We must understand that balance sheet. It will be the measure of our economic progress and the accumulation of economic power. And it must be how we judge and evaluate the performance of our political representatives whom we have entrusted with political authority. This should be their scorecard. And if they are not up to the task, we must either support them in order to make them successful, or we must select someone else to bear this heavy load.

Secondly, we must develop a clear and persistent vision. In business, a company without a vision is doomed to failure. In sports, a team without a vision will never win a championship. In life, a person without a vision for themselves will live like a leaf blowing in the wind without direction or purpose or impact. In a community, a community without a vision is destined to remain poor.

This community's vision must be clear in the sense that we can see it and everyone in the community can see it, express what it looks like, and understand the actions that take us closer to the realization of the vision and the actions that take us further away from that vision. For example, my vision for this community is not just a black community that looks like

a more affluent white community. It is a community that celebrates the success of our youth, whether they are our children or our neighbor's children. It is a community that is physically and mentally healthy. It is a community that is clean. It is a community that respects its elders. It is a community that supports the educational development of our youth. It is a community where we don't need police protecting us from each other because we will stop being at war with each other. It is a community where entrepreneurs thrive. It is a community where no matter your beginnings, you can be who you want to be. It is a community that celebrates our culture. It is a community that respects those who do not look like us, worship like us, or even love us. Our vision is in our hands.

And finally, in order to create this vision, we must commit to working, saving, and sacrificing. Economic progress is not easy. It does not come to those who sit around waiting for their number to hit. Economic progress requires work and sweat and pain and forgoing the pleasures of today for the benefits of tomorrow.

Economic progress requires savings. Wealth is created when income exceeds expenses over long periods of time. Savings must be the personal goal of every household in our

community, regardless of our income. I refuse to believe that we cannot save money because we are poor. I was born in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. Both of my grandfathers and both of my parents picked cotton on the Arkansas side of the Mississippi River delta. They were as economically poor as anyone in poverty today. Yet they saved money and they instilled that practice in their children. Now my grandparents never became wealthy. But their children and their grandchildren were able to become owners of homes and businesses, professionals, and in some cases, wealthy.

My grandparents were probably no different from your grandparents. They wanted a better life for their children. Many of them moved north seeking a better life. Some of them ended up in Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York, and New Haven. We must take lessons from our ancestors and start saving for our children and our grandchildren. If we cannot give our children and our grandchildren a better economic foundation from which to start their lives, I submit to you that we will have failed them.

A brighter future for Kansas City can be achieved when we use our moral authority to exercise our political and economic power for the benefit of our community.
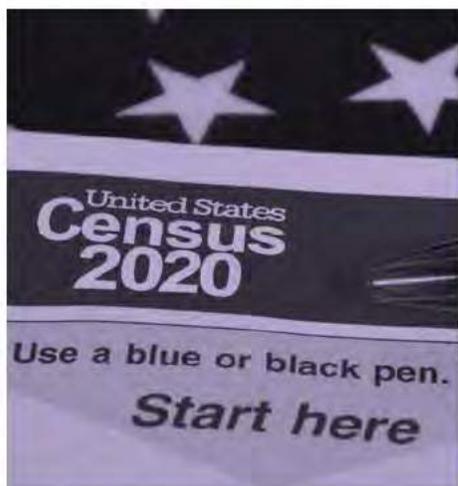
A FAIR CENSUS IS ESSENTIAL TO AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

MARC H. MORIAL, ESQUIRE

In a few months, our nation will embark on a process that will shape Kansas City's political, social, and economic future for years to come.

The U.S. Census, conducted every 20 years, determines our representation in Congress. It guides the distribution of federal funds and resources. Even decisions such as where to locate a fire station are influenced by the census.

Census data also guides the allocation of more than $800 billion in federal funding to programs that are crucial to families and communities. A skewed census means inequitable distribution of resources.

But there are powerful forces at work trying to keep people of color from participating in the census. As U.S. Representative Lacy Clay put it: "The same folks who don't want people of color to vote don't want us to be counted. The census is about three things: money, power, and information. And unless we rise up to save Census 2020, this rigged, intentional undercount will cost us political power at all levels; billions in federal funding; and vital information to help lift up the communities that we fight so hard for."

For Kansas City to receive its fair share of representation and funding and an accurate distribution of resources, all Kansas Citians must commit to participation in the census.

Without a fair and accurate census, the principle of "one person, one vote" as enshrined in the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution is meaningless.

We know from studies of past census operations that African-American children and black men are undercounted in great numbers, disproportionate to their numbers in the overall population. The National Urban League has formed a 2020 Census Black Roundtable to address these concerns.

FOR KANSAS CITY TO RECEIVE ITS FAIR SHARE OF REPRESENTATION AND FUNDING AND AN ACCURATE DISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES, ALL KANSAS CITIANS MUST COMMIT TO PARTICIPATION IN THE CENSUS.

I recently attended Supreme Court arguments over the controversial "citizenship question" that administration officials improperly added to the 2020 Census questionnaire. The question is intended to deter immigrants of all races, ethnicities, and legal status from participating in the census, leading to a severe undercount of vulnerable populations and diminishing their voice in public life.

Federal courts in New York and California struck down the citizenship question in February and March of this year.

The National Urban League joined other civil rights groups in filing a "friend of the court" brief opposing the citizenship question. As stated in the brief, "Given its foundational importance to American government and society, the census must be above partisan politics. The misguided decision to reverse seventy years of consistent census practice and insert an untested citizenship question undermines the integrity of the count, damages our communities, and violates the Census Bureau's constitutional and statutory duties to

conduct a full enumeration of the U.S. population."

The 2020 Census will take place at the height of the U.S. presidential campaign. Dirty politics, racist messaging, and campaign theatrics will detract from 2020 Census messaging encouraging the public to Be Counted.

If past is prologue, we can expect that saboteurs on social media platforms will try to deter communities of color from participating in the census to suppress redistricting efforts and the allocation of seats in Congress. Deterring minority populations from participating in the census would undermine enforcement of the Voting Rights Act because it would undercount the minority populations who rely on that data to bring VRA claims.

Conducting a fair count is a Constitutional obligation that must not be subject to partisan sabotage. We are committed to spending the next year raising awareness about the importance of a fair census and fighting back against any attempts to deter minority participation.

HOW DO WE LEVERAGE OUR GROWING LATINO POPULATION? OUR POWER IS IN OUR VOTE

IRENE CAUDILLO

For 43 years El Centro has been honored to be a voice for our Latino community; however, it is our goal to organize voices at the grassroots level, building a base that values our vote, effects positive change in our community, and knows our vote—our voice—does matter.

According to the Pew Research Center, a record 27.3 million of the total 57 million Latinos were eligible to vote in the 2016 presidential elections, up 4 million from the previous four years—the largest increase of any racial or ethnic group. Of those eligible, 44% were millennials—a higher share than in any other ethnic group.

Latino engagement is increasing largely due to our youth. More Latinos are native-born than foreign-born, the majority of whom speak English or are bilingual. These youth are becoming more and more educated as well. About 66,000 native-born Latinos turn 18 each month, so more of these young people are participating in the political process for the first time, and many are investing their time to support change for their families and communities.

While Latinos continue to increase in number and have the power to influence elections, we have historically not shown up to vote. There are a number of reasons we have not shown the power of our vote, including language barriers, delayed citizenship, a lack of knowledge about the voting process, and apathy that is often driven by a sense that the candidates do not understand or care about the issues that affect us. Another simple factor is that Latinos have not been asked to participate. Candidates and parties do not contact Latino voters because we have not voted in the past; and because no one asks, we don't show up at the polls.

According to the 2016 Kansas Civic Health Index, a report developed in a partnership between the Kansas Health Foundation and the National Conference on Citizenship (NCoC), civic health is defined as "a measure of well-being for a community, state, or nation and determined by how active citizens are engaged in their communities." In Kansas, Latinos:

- Are much less likely to report "always" or "sometimes" voting in local elections than whites (26.8% and 61.6%, respectively)

- Are roughly half as likely to contact public officials as whites (8.5% vs. 15.5%).

In addition, in the midst of a need for Latino civic engagement, current rhetoric has produced both fear and divisiveness among us. Latino children and their parents are our neighbors who attend our churches and schools. They are our coworkers who work for and with us in so many ways. Their well-being should be important to a community's well-being. Our country will be stronger when all who are eligible participate in the democratic process, as civic engagement creates inclusion and culturally relevant policies for all.

Locally, we continue to see a lack of Latino representation in the leadership of our communities. We must increase our political power to also elect those who look like us and care about our issues to truly represent us. If not, we will continue to be less represented both in the electorate and in policy-making processes.

Since 2015, El Centro has implemented nontraditional forms of increasing voter participation and engagement in Wyandotte and Johnson counties in Kansas. Through get-out-the-vote efforts including door-to-door canvassing, phone banking, and assisting with advance ballot applications, we have educated residents as a way to mobilize and increase Latino participation with year-round activities.

As the number of Latino voters increases, there is much work to be done to continue building the power of our vote. We encourage:

- Commitment to information in Spanish, through radio or printed materials

- Engaging Latino youth

- Investing in year-round, culturally responsive, civic engagement initiatives

- Forging relationships to build and sustain trust

- Educating Latinos about the electoral process, assisting with advance voting, and calling often to remind them of next steps.

ON THE ROAD TO EQUITY IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT – *URBAN LEAGUE RECOMMENDATIONS*

Blacks in Kansas City are more civically engaged than whites. As we go into the 2020 elections, it is important that efforts are made to protect our voting rights and to guard against election tampering. Therefore, the Urban League of Kansas City concurs with the recommendations of the National Urban League as follows:

- Eliminate strict, discriminatory voter I.D. requirements

- Allow automatic voter registration, online registration, and same-day registration

- Restore voting rights to citizens convicted of felonies as soon as their sentences are completed

- Require paper verification of ballots in federal elections to prevent computer tampering

- When necessary, conduct post-election audits to compare paper records to computerized results

- Enact the Voting Rights Advancement Act, which restores the full enforcement protections of the Voting Rights Act of 1965

- Eliminate voter roll purging based on failure to vote or failure to respond to mailed documents

- Prohibit distribution of false information intended to dissuade people from voting

- Grant statehood for the District of Columbia, giving residents in the nation's capital full voting rights

- Create a national commission to identify and eliminate foreign interference in the American democratic process

- Move the U.S. toward the popular election of presidents through states' participation in the National Popular Vote

About the Contributors

MICHAEL BARRETT, ESQUIRE

Michael Barrett is the current Director of the Missouri State Public Defender System. He previously served as Deputy General Counsel to Governor Jay Nixon (Missouri) and as Deputy Commissioner for Criminal Justice Programs under Governors Spitzer and Paterson of New York. Prior to becoming a lawyer, Michael was a foreign language interrogator for the Department of Defense and served as a member of the FBI's Joint Task Force Six out of both Chicago and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

SUSAN TAYLOR BATTEN

Susan Taylor Batten has more than 20 years of experience in directing, evaluating, and advising both public and foundation-related efforts to improve outcomes for children, youth, and families.

Susan joined the Association of Black Foundation Executives as President and CEO in January 2009. ABFE's mission is to promote effective and responsive philanthropy in black communities and counts among its members some of the most influential staff, trustees, and donors of grantmaking institutions in the U.S.

Susan was a member of the inaugural class (2005–2006) of ABFE Connecting Leaders Fellows, a program designed to foster the development of mid-career African-American leaders in the field of philanthropy. In 2008, she was named Change Agent of the Year by The Schott Foundation for Public Education. In 2015, Susan received the Pacesetter Award from the National Association of Security Professionals for her work to diversify the field of endowment asset management. She is a co-founder of the Race and Equity in Philanthropy Group and also serves on the board of the Forum for Regional Association of Grantmakers. Susan received her B.A. in English and Political Science from Fisk University and her MSW degree from Howard University.

KIMBERLY BEATTY, ED.D.

Dr. Kimberly Beatty began her tenure as Metropolitan Community College's eighth chancellor on July 1, 2017. She came to MCC from Houston Community College, the nation's fourth largest community college system, where she served as vice chancellor for instructional services and chief academic officer.

Kimberly has served on a number of boards at the state and national levels. She has demonstrated a strong commitment to student success and diversity, and a passion for strengthening the pipeline of college-ready students entering community college.

A three-time graduate of Morgan State University in Baltimore, Kimberly received a B.A. in English, an M.A. in English, and an Ed.D. in higher education, with a specialization in community college leadership. She brought to MCC 28 years of teaching and administrative experience in higher education, including 21 years of progressive leadership experience at community colleges in California, Virginia, and Texas. She has also served as a tenured associate professor in English.

MARK BEDELL, ED.D.

Kansas City Public Schools Superintendent Mark T. Bedell, Ed.D., is a talented, inspiring teacher and administrator and one of the top urban public school leaders in the United States. As the child of a working-class

family in upstate New York, he overcame significant challenges and was inspired to take his education seriously by teachers and other caring adults who pushed him to achieve his dreams.

His educational experience and leadership made Mark a natural choice for the Superintendent's post at KCPS in 2016. With guidance from students, parents, staff, and partners, Mark crafted and enacted first a post-entry plan and later a five-year strategic plan that placed student achievement at the center of the school system's work, made the central office more effective and efficient, improved School Board governance, and increased staff skills and morale.

In partnership with Metropolitan Community College and the Full Employment Council of Greater Kansas City, he led the effort to launch a Middle College Program to give 17- to 24-year-olds who never finished school an opportunity to earn a high school diploma and enter college. In June 2018, Mark and the KCPS School Board created an innovative Equity Policy to direct the school system's resources and programs so that every student has the opportunity to reach his or her greatest potential. Dr. Bedell has received many recognitions, including being named a "Superintendent to Watch" by the National School Public Relations Association and a "New Superintendent of the Year" by the Missouri Association of School Administrators. He is also one of only 51 people selected to participate in the "Missouri Influencer Series" by *The Kansas City Star*.

Mark's most important honor to date came in the spring of 2018 when students from

Southeast High School gave him an award of appreciation for his efforts on their behalf and the positive impact he will have on future students.

THE HONORABLE STEPHEN BOUGH

Stephen R. Bough is a United States District Court Judge in the Western District of Missouri. He is a 1997 graduate of the UMKC School of Law and 1993 graduate of Missouri State University. He was nominated to the bench by President Barack Obama and confirmed by the Senate in 2014.

IRENE CAUDILLO

Irene Caudillo was appointed President and CEO of El Centro in December 2013.

Irene earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia and her master's degree in public administration from UMKC. After graduating college, she created children and youth programs for nonprofit organizations, including El Centro and Wyandotte Mental Health Association, in Wyandotte County.

In 1994, she took a job with the Kansas City Missouri Health Department as Minority Health Outreach Director. Her duties included educating health providers on how cultural beliefs and practices impact health behavior. In 1997, she returned to Wyandotte County as Executive Director for Youth Opportunities Unlimited, Inc., an agency devoted to developing and maintaining collaborative efforts to improve the quality of life for Wyandotte County youth. In 2004, she joined Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas as the Director of Family Strengthening, where she directed and managed their social services throughout their 21-county service area. After serving as

the Director of Clinic Operations for Swope Health Services, she "came home" to El Centro as the Chief Program Officer.

TYLER CUKAR

Tyler Cukar, AICP, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP ND, is an Associate at FXCollaborative, where he practices at the intersection of urban design, planning, and architecture. Tyler approaches each project with an eye towards community and inter-connectivity by questioning "who" in addition to "what." He has worked on some of New York City's largest planning projects, including regional growth strategies, district revitalization, scenario planning, and transit networks and stations. By understanding the social, economic, and physical, he shapes the organizational and programmatic concepts that define cities.

Tyler has extensively researched race and social equity in the built environment and has been published, featured on NPR podcasts, and lectured at multiple national events on the topics. Tyler is an active voice in the New York City design community, a fellow at the Urban Design Forum, a member of the Association of Professional Architects NYMetro chapter's Diversity Committee, and a frequent guest critic at numerous universities including Columbia, Pratt, Parsons, NYU, and Cooper Union. Tyler holds a Bachelor's in Architecture with a minor concentration in architectural history/theory from the University of Arkansas and a Masters of Science in Urban Design from Columbia University.

DANA TIPPIN CUTLER, ESQUIRE

Dana Tippin Cutler is a partner in her family's law firm, James W. Tippin & Associates. She graduated from UMKC School of Law in 1989 and from Spelman College with a B.A. in 1986. Dana is a member of the American Bar Association, Jackson County Bar Association, and the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association. She is a past President of the Missouri Bar (2016–2017) and is a past President of the Missouri Bar Foundation. She was recently elected to the Council for the National Conference of Bar Presidents. She was appointed by the ABA President to serve on the Committee for Professionalism. She has served on the ABA Standing Committee for Judicial Independence and the Missouri Bar Trustees. Dana is a three-time recipient of the Missouri Bar's President Award for service. Her practice is concentrated primarily in education law (charter and hybrid schools in Missouri) and defense litigation. She is an active member of Concord Fortress of Hope and is the proud mother of three adult sons, Keith, Jr., Dean, and Austin Cutler, and is the co-judge of Couples Court with the Cutlers, a nationally syndicated two-time Emmy-nominated court television show, with her partner, in practice and in marriage, Keith Cutler, Sr.

GWENDOLYN GRANT

In addition to serving as President and CEO of the Urban League of Greater Kansas City, Gwen is engaged in numerous civic and community organizations, including the Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education, the Executive Committee of the Urban Neighborhood Initiative Board of Directors, President of the Kansas City Public Schools Buildings Corporation Board, KCPS Superintendent's Business/Economic Development Advisory Council, Citizens to Abolish Poverty Education Committee, Black/Brown Coalition, YMCA QALICB Inc. Board of Directors, YMCA System Wide Diversity and Inclusion Council, and more. Gwen is a Ruckette on KCPT's RUCKUS show, a weekly political free-for-

all that looks at the news of the day and the issues that face Kansas City in a lively roundtable format. The first female CEO in the Urban League of Greater Kansas City's 99-year history, Gwendolyn is a strong and passionate advocate for social justice and economic empowerment for African Americans and women. She is the recipient of numerous honors, including the National Urban League's Whitney M. Young Leadership Award for Advancing Racial Equity, William Jewell College Yates Medallion for Distinguished Service, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference Community Service Award, and the National Urban League Association of Executives Academy of Fellows designation.

COKETHEA HILL, PH.D.

Cokethea Hill is an innovative collaborator with over 15 years of experience working in the non-profit sector organizing communities, building collaborative partnerships, and strengthening assets in low-income urban communities. Known for her strategic approach to assisting organizations to align their organizational mission with the needs of the people they serve, Cokethea has a keen ability for building relationships and mobilizing others towards an identified goal. A native of Kansas City, she earned her undergraduate degree from Central Missouri State University, a Master's degree in Counseling Psychology from Avila University, and a Doctoral degree from the University of Kansas in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies.

A champion of diversity and inclusion, Cokethea worked as a research assistant with the University of Kansas on a federal grant from the Department of Education, Office of Special Education, examining the impact of inclusive education (educating children with severe disabilities in a traditional classroom setting among non-disabled peers) within a traditional educational model. This research resulted in two published journal articles. With a commitment to servant leadership, Cokethea has served on Kansas City's City Council, The Kansas City Public School Board, and as an ambassador for the Kauffman Center for Performing Arts.

Currently, Dr. Cokethea Hill serves as Leadership Development and Research Project Director at SWIFT Education Center.

CORSTELLA JOHNSON, MPH, CHES

Corstella Johnson is the Regional Minority Health Consultant for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health and Office of Minority Health, Region VII (MO, IA, KS, and NE). In this position, she serves as the regional minority health principal advisor to the acting Regional Health Administrator and Director for the Office of Minority Health for US DHHS. Her work includes identifying public health priorities and workable solutions for Region VII and promoting and implementing HHS federal programs and initiatives (such as the National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services), and providing technical assistance to partners and stakeholders within Region VII.

SHARY M. JONES, PHARMD, MPH, BCPS

Captain Shary Jones, Pharm D., MPH, BCPS, is a U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps Officer who serves as the Acting Regional Health Administrator for the U.S. Department and Health Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health in Region VII.

Prior to joining Region VII in June 2014 as the Deputy Regional Health Administrator, Capt. Jones served as a public health advisor in the National Vaccine Program Office, providing

oversight and guidance for the Interagency Adult Immunization Task Force. She was responsible for advising the Assistant Secretary for Health on the interagency coordination of adult immunization activities, including a wide range of policy and program coordination activities related to vaccines and immunization.

Capt. Jones also served as a consultant pharmacist for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services in the Center for Program Integrity. At CMS, Capt. Jones was responsible for developing algorithms and standard operating procedures and spearheading issues requiring technical knowledge of the field of pharmacy, as they pertained to Medicaid fraud, waste, and abuse.

Capt. Jones' experience is extensive, ranging from public health to HIV/AIDS and health policy. She is also a Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialist and certified immunizing pharmacist.

Capt. Jones completed an ASHP accredited specialty residency in geriatrics at Alamance Regional Medical Center in Burlington, NC, and is a graduate of the Howard University College of Pharmacy and the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

BRIDGET McCANDLESS, M.D.

Bridget McCandless served as the President and CEO of the Health Forward Foundation. The Foundation was established out of the sale of the Health Midwest Hospital System. The foundation fosters a culture of health by focusing on those in need through advocacy and partnerships that transform communities. Health Forward funds more than $20 million in grants each year to nonprofit agencies working to ensure that everyone has an opportunity for better health. Since its inception, the foundation has invested

more than $280 million in the six counties surrounding Kansas City.

Bridget currently serves on the Missouri Medicaid Oversight Committee, the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce board, the Missouri Women's Health Council, and the American College of Physicians Public Policy Board.

Bridget received an M.D. from the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Medicine, completed her residency in Internal Medicine at the University of Virginia, and received an M.B.A. in Health Care Leadership from Rockhurst University. Prior to joining the foundation, she served as founder and Medical Director of the Shared Care Free Clinic. She is the proud mother of Alexis, Maggie, and Nate, and has been married to her husband, Dennis Taylor, for 20 years.

AMY McCART, PH.D.

Amy McCart, Ph.D., is an Associate Research Professor at the University of Kansas Life Span Institute, with Adjunct Faculty status in the Department of Special Education. Amy's work in public education began in urban school districts, including the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools, the Recovery School District in New Orleans, Louisiana, and the District of Columbia Public Schools. She is now co-director of SWIFT Education Center, a national pre-K-12 research and technical assistance center with a mission to improve outcomes for all students, with emphasis on students of color and those with the most extensive need for support. She leads a talented team of technical assistance professionals serving urban, rural, and high need schools across the United States.

JERRIHLYN L. McGEE, DNP, RN, CNE

Dr. Jerrihlyn L. McGee is an RN, Clinical Assistant Professor, and Program Director at the KU School of Nursing with a significant

history of leadership in the practice and in academic settings. Jerrihlyn is also a long-standing member of the University of Kansas Medical Center's Diversity and Inclusion Cabinet, collaborating with an interprofessional team of colleagues on diversity, inclusion, civility, cultural competency, microaggressions, and unconscious bias initiatives. In partnership with PREP-KC and Kansas City Kansas Public Schools, Jerrihlyn oversees a summer program pipeline initiative striving to attract underrepresented and first-generation college students to the variety of health-related degree programs offered by KUMC.

Jerrihlyn has served on several initiatives and advisory boards for KCKPS and is a proud graduate of that school system. Jerrihlyn is also a mentor for students at the pre-entry, entry, and progression stages of their academic trajectory. She serves on the REACH Healthcare Foundation Board of Directors and works with several community partners and organizations in KCK and KCMO striving to improve community outcomes. Her scholarly works have largely focused on diversity, inclusion, access, and success of underrepresented and first-generation college students in higher education, health equity, civility, and cultural competency. Jerrihlyn is known locally and nationally for her work on workplace civility and cultural competency. She is a graduate of Xavier University, New Orleans, and KU School of Nursing, Kansas City, Kansas.

FREDERICK W. McKINNEY, PH.D.

Fred "Dr. Fred" W. McKinney is the Carlton Highsmith Chair for Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the Lender School of Business at Quinnipiac University. Additionally, he is the Director of the People's United Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

Fred received his Ph.D. in economics from Yale University in 1983 and his BA in economics from the University of California at Los Angeles.

Fred worked as the Managing Director for Minority Business Programs at Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth (2015–2018); President and CEO of the Greater New England Minority Supplier Development Council (2001–2015); Assistant Professor, University of Connecticut School of Business (1987–2001); and Assistant Professor at Brandeis University, Heller School (1983–1987). In addition, Dr. McKinney was a graduate assistant at the White House, Council of Economic Advisers 1978–1979.

Dr. McKinney has also owned and operated several successful ventures in the coffee industry.

A prolific writer, Fred has authored four books and more than 60 articles on minority business development and corporate supplier diversity.

He has been honored by numerous organizations; notably, in 2017, the United States Department of Commerce, Minority Business Development Agency presented Dr. McKinney with its highest award, the Ronald H. Brown Leadership Award.

He has also served on many boards of directors, including Yale New Haven Health System's Bridgeport Hospital, The Gateway Community College Foundation, Bridgeport Habitat for Humanity, The Forum for World Affairs, The Community's Bank of Bridgeport, Empower Yourself, and the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston's Community Advisory Board.

MARC H. MORIAL, ESQUIRE

As President and CEO of the National Urban League since 2003, Marc has been the primary catalyst for an era of change. His energetic and skilled leadership has

expanded the League's work around an empowerment agenda, which is redefining civil rights in the 21st century with a renewed emphasis on closing the economic gaps between whites and blacks as well as rich and poor Americans. A graduate of the prestigious University of Pennsylvania with a degree in Economics and African-American Studies, he also holds a law degree from the Georgetown University Law Center in Washington, D.C., as well as honorary degrees from Xavier University, Wilberforce University, and the University of South Carolina Upstate.

Marc's creativity has led to initiatives such as the Urban Youth Empowerment Program to assist young adults in securing sustainable jobs and Entrepreneurship Centers in five cities to help the growth of small businesses. Also, Marc created the National Urban League Empowerment Fund, which has pumped almost $200 million into urban impact businesses, including minority businesses through both debt and equity investments. He serves as an Executive Committee member of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, the Black Leadership Forum, and Leadership 18. He is a Board Member of the Muhammad Ali Center and the New Jersey Performing Arts Center. He has been recognized as one of the 100 most influential Black Americans by Ebony Magazine, as well as one of the Top 50 Nonprofit Executives by the Nonprofit Times.

ELLE MOXLEY

Elle Moxley covers education for KCUR, where her work has centered on the crisis in Kansas City classrooms created by students switching schools. Before coming to KCUR in 2014, Elle covered Indiana education policy for NPR's State Impact project. Her work covering Indiana's exit from the Common Core was nationally recognized with an

Edward R. Murrow award. She is a graduate of the University of Missouri School of Journalism.

ZORA MULLIGAN, ESQUIRE

Zora Mulligan is Missouri's Commissioner of Higher Education. She holds a Master's degree in Education and a Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Kansas, as well as Bachelor's degrees in Political Science and Psychology from Drury College. Zora was appointed Commissioner by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education in August 2016.

JULIUS NIYONSABA

Julius Niyonsaba currently serves as the National Urban League's Director of Financial and Housing Policy. Previously, Julius worked in the United States Senate for seven years, most recently as the top legislative aide on banking and financial services issues for Senate Democratic Whip Richard J. Durbin of Illinois. Prior to that, Julius worked as an aide for California Senator Dianne Feinstein.

Julius is a graduate of Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

AARON NORTH

Aaron North is the vice president of Education at the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, where he serves as a member of the Foundation's senior leadership team. He guides a team of officers who are funding or researching programs designed to ensure more Kansas City students have access to high-quality education options and opportunities to prepare them for life and education after high school.

Prior to joining the Kauffman Foundation, Aaron served as the founding executive director of the Missouri Charter Public School Association. Before leading the startup effort

at MCPSA, he worked for the education team at Volunteers of America of Minnesota as a school resource center director and in the Minnesota Department of Education's Office of Choice and Innovation. He taught high school English in rural North Carolina as a Teach For America Corps member and worked for Andersen Consulting and Sprint PCS prior to his teaching experience. Aaron has helped create or catalyze several education programs in Kansas City, including the Ewing Marion Kauffman School, Kansas City Scholars, and SchoolSmartKC. He is a Pahara-Aspen Fellow and serves as board chair of both Kauffman Scholars, Inc., and the Ewing Marion Kauffman School.

Aaron earned a Master's degree in Public Policy from the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota and a B.A. in English from the University of Kansas.

JAMES R. NOWLIN, J.D.

James R. Nowlin is the founder and CEO of a corporate consulting firm, Excel Global Partners. Having successfully consulted for Fortune 500 corporations and organizations such as G.E., Panasonic, AT&T, Xerox, General Motors, The Harris Institute, and The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, James draws upon years of experience navigating companies through significant change including restructurings, mergers and acquisitions, and cultural realignments.

The miraculous survivor of a near-death drowning accident, James speaks to his audiences with authenticity and delivers motivation by sharing the secrets of purposefulness and transformation that he has applied in his own life and with the clients he has served. Whether seeking to enhance workplace culture, increase employee retention, drive change management, or improve profitability, he

helps both individuals and organizations overcome negative, limiting beliefs to uncover road maps to greater success and their highest potential. He is, as one testimonial put it, "the Napoleon Hill of our times."

CLINT ODOM, ESQUIRE

Clint Odom currently serves as the National Urban League's Senior Vice President for Policy and Advocacy and Executive Director of the Washington Bureau. Clint previously served for a decade in the United States Senate as legislative director for Senator Kamala D. Harris of California, Democratic General Counsel of the Committee on Commerce, Science & Transportation, and General Counsel to Senator Bill Nelson of Florida.

Clint also served as a senior advisor at the Federal Communications Commission and practiced law at the firm Dow, Lohnes & Albertson (now Cooley LLP). He served as law clerk to the Honorable Henry T. Wingate of the U.S. District Court of the Southern District of Mississippi. He is a graduate of Louisiana State University and the University of Pennsylvania Law School.

MICHAEL PRICE

Michael Price is a filmmaker and journalist based in Kansas City, although he is originally from the United Kingdom. He studied law at Oxford University and then earned a master's degree in radio from the University of London. He went on to become a producer with the BBC TV national current affairs program "Panorama" before moving with his wife to Kansas City in 2013. His 2016 film, "Our Divided City," won a national public TV award, and his 2017 film "Water Rates and Rivers" won a Mid-America Emmy.

TARA RAGHUVEER

Tara Raghuveer is the founder and director of KC Tenants and the Kansas City Eviction Project. She is also the Housing Campaign Director at People's Action, a national network of grassroots organizations committed to economic and racial justice. Tara cut her teeth organizing in the immigrant rights movement. She was the Deputy Director of the National Partnership for New Americans, a coalition of the nation's 37 largest immigrant rights organizations. Tara has been featured in media such as the *New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *Washington Post*, and more. She has also written for the Urban Institute, *TIME*, and VICE. Tara's research on eviction and poverty in Kansas City is cited in the Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *Evicted*. She graduated from Harvard College, where she was the student body president. Tara is an Australian-born, Indian-American immigrant who came to the U.S. with her family in 1995 and grew up in Kansas City.

KIM RILEY

Kim Riley began her career as a newspaper reporter but quickly realized she needed to work to make things happen rather than merely reporting on events. "I realized early in my career that I need to wake up every morning and go to bed every night knowing I've made a difference," she says.

As a result, Kim made a calculated decision to use her talent and intellect to work with organizations in community engagement, public relations, marketing/recruiting, event planning, and fundraising capacities. Kim's career footprint has extended to Kansas City Public Schools, Metropolitan Community College, WellCare Health Plan, Greater Kansas City LISC, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City, Girl Scouts, and Swope Health Services.

She is a graduate of the University of Missouri School of Journalism and UMKC Bloch School, where she earned an Executive MBA.

Kim serves on the Health Forward Foundation Board of Directors and the Kansas City, Missouri Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities.

JOSHUA ROWLAND

Josh Rowland is the Chief Executive Officer and Vice Chairman of Lead Bank, a Missouri-chartered community bank. Lead Bank was named the Best Small Business of the Year for 2018 by the Kansas City Chamber of Commerce. Josh was honored to be one of the "Top 10 Most Innovative CEOs for 2018" by INV Fintech as well as ICBA 2018 Community Banker of the Year for the Central region. He is a featured speaker at national conferences. Most recently Josh served as co-master of ceremonies and panelist at the inaugural 2019 Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Conference in Kansas City.,

Josh received his Bachelor of Arts degree, with distinction, from Stanford University and a Ph.D. in English Literature from Yale University. He graduated Magna cum laude from Boston College Law School. Prior to joining Lead Bank in 2008, Josh practiced law as a commercial litigator, focusing on securities defense work at two American Law 100 firms. Josh serves as a board member of the Urban League of Kansas City, MOCSA, the Kansas City Symphony, and the Kansas City Art Institute.

JOHN L. RURY, PH.D.

John L. Rury is a professor of education and (by courtesy) History and African & African-American studies at the University of Kansas. His work has focused on the

history of inequality in American education and related policy questions. He serves on the executive committee of the Kansas City Area Educational Research Consortium.

STEFFON E. STALEY, M.S., LPC, BIP, NCC

Steffon Staley is the owner and a licensed psychotherapist at New Steps Behavioral Health. He is also a Mental Health Professional at Wellpath (Johnson County and Wyandotte County jails), a premier provider of health care to vulnerable clinical environments. His career spans twenty years of multifaceted experience in community mental health, private practice, school counseling, prison counseling, youth development, higher education, non-profit management, college access, psychiatric residential treatment, and board management. Steffon currently provides psychological services to children, adolescents, adults, families, and couples in the Kansas City metropolitan area. He also serves court-ordered clients with the surrounding courts.

Prior to establishing his private practice, Steffon spent his time serving inmates in solitary confinement as the licensed mental health professional at Lansing Correctional Facility. The main goal was to help inmates to "live a life worth living" while doing time in restrictive housing. Steffon has been in Kansas City for 10 years. During this time, he has had the pleasure of working and partnering with organizations such as Kauffman Scholars, Inc., Boys and Girls Club of Greater Kansas City, 100 Black Men of Greater Kansas City, St. Luke's Children's Psychiatric Hospital, Cornerstones of Care, and City Year. He is passionate about business, psychological trauma, education, and research.

BETTE TATE-BEAVER

Bette Tate-Beaver is the executive director of the National Association for Multicultural Education. The almost 30-year-old organization's focus on equity and social justice is a perfect fit for Bette's life passion and work—to effect positive change in this world.

Before joining NAME, Bette worked as a consultant in equity, cultural competency, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. She has worked with organizations such as the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, Achievement Architects, and the Bay Area Consortium for Quality Health Care to address racism and make our schools, libraries, and health care facilities more culturally responsive, accessible, and welcoming to all.

As a part of her work to address race, culture, and equity issues, Bette has led professional and cultural exchanges around the world for close to 20 years. She now leads annual exchanges to Cuba. Her passion and belief is that positive change can happen through the understanding and caring brought about by building relationships.

Bette was raised in Berkeley, California, where she began protesting for the rights of the underserved and under-represented in fourth grade. She attended The Evergreen State College in Washington State, where social justice work was a required part of the curriculum. The change agents who mentored Bette and were influential in her life included Maya Angelou, U.S. Rep. Ron Dellums, and Derrick Bell.

As an African-American/Native-American woman, Bette approaches her anti-racist work from a true historical family context of activism. A fifth-generation anti-racist, peace-building community activist, Bette has

deep roots in bringing together Black, White, Red, Latino, and Asian communities, working with and supporting the LGBT community, and fighting for the rights of the disabled. She models those who came before her, marching in their steps with a purposeful commitment to build up the underserved communities of color and tear down barriers to success.

QIANA THOMASON, MSW, LCSW

Qiana Thomason is the Vice President, Community Health for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City (Blue KC). She oversees strategies that promote holistic health and health equity through inclusion of the Social Determinants of Health into Blue KC's benefits and programs, alternative payment and care delivery programs, data and insights, and advocacy initiatives. Qiana and her team are focused on improving the health and wellness of Blue KC members and the Kansas City community and facilitating smarter spending on behalf of its customers. Qiana also provides thought leadership in care delivery transformation, including the integration of nutrition, behavioral health, and non-medical determinants of health, such as transportation, education, and affordable housing. A native Kansas Citian, Qiana is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with cross-cutting leadership experience between health policy, health care delivery, and managed care.

JOYCE TOWNSER, RN, BSN, MSA

Joyce Townser has served as the Region VII Regional Women's Health Consultant for the Office on Women's Health within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for 21 years. The Office on Women's Health provides national leadership and coordination to improve the health of

women and girls through advancing policy, educating professionals and community members, and supporting model programs. Her primary responsibility is focusing on preventive health, education, and wellness for women and girls throughout Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska. Joyce served as the Regional Women's Health Coordinator and Program Manager with the City of Kansas City, Missouri Health Department prior to joining DHHS. She has a diverse nursing background which include pediatrics, geriatrics, medical-surgical nursing, mental health, immunizations, community health, public health, and wellness and prevention.

PATRICK TUOHEY

Patrick Tuohey is the Director of Municipal Policy at the Show-Me Institute. He works with taxpayers, media, and policymakers to foster understanding of the consequences—sometimes unintended—of policies regarding economic development, taxation, education, and transportation.

BRIAN L. WRIGHT, PH.D.

Brian L. Wright, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor and Program Coordinator of Early Childhood Education in the Department of Instruction and Curriculum Leadership at the University of Memphis in Memphis, Tennessee. Brian's research focuses on high achieving African-American males in urban schools PreK-12, racial-ethnic identity development of boys and young men of color, African-American males as Early Childhood Teachers, and teacher identity development. Brian is the author of the award-winning book, *The Brilliance of Black Boys: Cultivating School Success in the Early Grades*, published by Teachers College Press and winner of the 2018 Philip C. Chinn Book Award–National Association for Multicultural Education.

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Urban League of
Greater Kansas City

1710 Paseo Boulevard
Kansas City, MO 64108
816.471.0550

www.ulkc.org

THE ROAD TO EQUITY

2019 State of Black Kansas City

Urban Education: Still Separate and Unequal
provides an in-depth look into the prevailing
issues that undergird the socioeconomic gaps
between blacks and whites in Greater Kansas City.
The data reveals that, while we have made
some progress, we have much more work
to do to enable African Americans and other
disadvantaged populations to secure economic
self-reliance, parity, power, and civil rights.
The Road to Equity is paved with potholes,
barriers, pitfalls, and detours, but we must stay
the course because a "greater" Kansas City
awaits on the other side of the finish line.

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