

THE TOLEDO BLACK AGENDA

Addressing Six Critical Pillars Vital
to the Success and Equality of the
Black Community



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Introduction

The racial inequity that exists today is the direct result of “Structural racism,” a term that asserts our country is steeped in policies, practices and culture that, either by purpose or by indifference, exclude and oppress people of color. While we recognize that racism affects all people of color, this document was created by representatives of the Black community for the Toledo Black community. It is our response to the murder of George Floyd and to an ongoing system of unrestrained and unrelenting racism in this country toward Black people, a system that is moving a race of people onto a path of genocide in plain view of the entire country, without any organized and aggressive voices being raised to stop it. This is our call to action to make “Black Lives Matter.”

Across the United States, cities are declaring that racism is a public health crisis. Toledo City Council and the Lucas County Commissioners each, unanimously, passed the same such declarations. These words truly represent a step in the right direction. However, words in a declaration alone will not institute change. Concrete actions must be planned and executed to give credibility and effect to these well-intentioned government decrees.

The broad term “Public Health Crisis” reflects significant impacts on a community’s health, its life expectancy, and its economy. Structural racism affects the health of Black people in every aspect of their lives. Without question, the data and research make it clear that racism is a systemic and ongoing public health crisis with serious consequences for the health of Lucas County Black citizens. It is also clear that racism has a profound and pervasive impact across all the factors that shape our health. This includes our healthcare delivery systems, education, housing, food, economic, environmental, criminal justice and political systems.

Uniform support, from all sectors of the community, of the recommendations in this document along with zero tolerance for inequity will drive momentum towards true, lasting and effective change for the Black community in Greater Toledo.

Acknowledgements:

As the facilitators of this process, we gratefully acknowledge the hard work, time and talent of all the individuals who made this document possible. The forming of the Unification Coalition proved beneficial in our ability to organize and execute. For roughly three months of intense weekly meetings, we have done it!

Lisa McDuffie	Robin Reese
Convener	Co-convener

PART I: THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE/ POLICE REFORM PILLAR

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

According to the report to the United Nations on Racial Disparities in the U.S. Criminal Justice System (4/19/18), the U.S. is a world leader in the rate of incarceration. The flow of the Criminal Justice system is policing, entry into the system, prosecution and pretrial services, adjudication, sentencing, sanctions and corrections, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics. As the NAACP pointed out in their Criminal Justice Fact Sheet, the system is comprised of three institutions: Law Enforcement, the Courts and Corrections. It may seem as if these are simple steps to follow, yet our country's criminal justice system is fundamentally broken. While the universal statement is spoken that all people are innocent until proven guilty, the reality of the operation of the current system often renders a "guilty" verdict for some before they are even tried and convicted.

"The American criminal-legal system is a stain on our democracy. The system replicates and reinforces patterns of racial and economic oppression that trace from slavery — and the result is a criminal-legal bureaucracy that denies millions of people the opportunities, legal equality, and human rights they deserve while fueling the world's highest incarceration rate. Bringing fairness and dignity to our legal system is one of the most profound civil and human rights issues of our time." **Vision for Justice 2020 and Beyond: A New Paradigm for Public Safety, September 2019.**

This Criminal Justice/Police Reform report focuses a great deal on law enforcement; not because the other phases of the Criminal Justice System are any less important, because they certainly are, but because the primary impetus for the most recent movement and global outcry for racial justice was ignited as the world watched helplessly as George Floyd was murdered by a police officer right in front of our eyes. This unadulterated view into the everyday reality of so many Blacks in this country sickened many, and motivated countless others.

The very entry into the Criminal Justice System occurs at the hands of police officers. Racism exists in every aspect of our society and in our systematic structures. When analyzed closely, the disparate treatment of Black individuals by some police officers have a lasting effect, that alters their lives in ways not experienced at the same rate of any other race.

There is no question that significant reforms are needed in all phases of the Criminal Justice System. This report simply touches on just some of the data, systematic improvements and recommended changes that need to be implemented if true equity is to be achieved. This

report is meant to start the conversation and insist on action to eradicate these grave injustices.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Statistically speaking, the NAACP national office provided data at a glance:

- A Black person is five times more likely to be stopped without just cause than a White person.
- A Black man is twice as likely to be stopped without just cause than a Black woman.
- 65% of Black adults have felt targeted because of their race.
- 1,025 people have been shot and killed by police in the past year.
- There are somewhere between 900 and 1,100 people who are shot and killed by police in the United States each year.
- Since 2005, 98 non-federal law enforcement officers have been arrested in connection with fatal, on-duty shootings. To date, only 35 of these officers have been convicted of a crime, often a lesser offense such as manslaughter or negligent homicide, rather than murder. Only three officers have been convicted of murder during this period and seen their convictions stand. Another 22 officers were acquitted in a jury trial and nine were acquitted during a bench trial decided by a judge. Ten other cases were dismissed by a judge or a prosecutor, and in one instance no true bill was returned from a grand jury. Currently, there are 21 non-federal law enforcement officers with pending criminal cases for fatal shootings.
- Fatal police violence is the sixth leading cause of death for men ages 25 to 29 across all racial groups.
- The lifetime risk of dying from police violence is at its highest from ages 20 to 35, and this applies to men and women of all races.
- On average, Black Americans are exposed to four police killings of other unarmed Black Americans in the same state each year.
- Despite the fact that more white people have been killed by police, Black people are disproportionately impacted. While white people make up a little over 60% of the population, they only make up about 41% of fatal police shootings. **Black people make up 13.4% of the population but make up 22% of fatal police shootings.** This does not take into consideration other forms of police brutality, including non-lethal shootings. (See Info below)

The number of people shot to death by the police in the United States from 2017 to 2020, by race.

	2017	2018	2019	2020
White	457	399	370	42
Black	223	209	235	31
Hispanic	179	148	158	13

Other	44	36	39	3
Unknown	84	204	202	13

Source: [Statista](#)

Racial bias coupled with police training that focuses on 110 hours of gun and defense skills and only 8 hours of basic communication to deescalate is a major culprit (**New York Times, 6/13/20**). Law enforcement culture should embrace a guardian—rather than a warrior—mindset to build trust and legitimacy both within agencies and with the public. Most people would believe police officers need guns, batons, pepper spray and tasers. The NY Times 6/19/20, reports that calls to the police for service for 10 major US cities (including one Ohio city) showed less than 2% were calls for violent offenses, with most violent offense calls being at or below 1%. Over [80% of offenses charged](#) are misdemeanors (Papers.ssrn.com).

THE HISTORY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Black people have long suffered at the hands of law enforcement. The birth and development of the American police can be traced to a multitude of historical, legal and political-economic conditions. The institution of slavery and the control of minorities, however, were two of the more formidable historic features of American society shaping early policing. Slave patrols and Night Watches, which later became modern police departments, were both designed to control the behaviors of minorities (Law enforcement Museum 7/10/19).

After the Civil War, slave patrols ended, but new laws known as [Black Codes](#) were adopted. These codes dictated how, when and where Black people could work and how much they would be paid. They also restricted [Black voting rights](#), dictated how and where Black people could [travel](#) and limited where they could live (History.com editors).

Black Codes were replaced by [Jim Crow laws](#) that controlled Black people and focused on rejection of their civil rights. For about 80 years, Jim Crow laws [mandated separate public spaces](#) for Blacks and whites, such as schools, libraries, [water fountains](#) and restaurants – and enforcing them was part of the police’s job. Blacks who broke laws or violated social norms such as talking back, looking a white person directly in the eyes- often endured [police brutality](#) (Usappblog 10/5/17).

Black people were subjected to “Terror Lynchings” and police didn’t punish the perpetrators. Nor did the judicial system hold the police accountable for failing to intervene when Black people were being murdered by mobs. Entire families, entire communities were run out of their homes and many were killed. And yet, law enforcement did nothing.

Michelle Alexander, a highly acclaimed civil rights lawyer, OSU Kirwan Institute Appointee, and author of *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* gives an account of how disgruntled slave owners and white politicians in the South wanted to maintain the status quo after the Civil War. Both laws and violence were used to keep Blacks in their place. In one well-documented way, they did this by funneling Black people into the penal system and labeling them convicts. Black people were arrested for contrived charges and refused due process. Once in the system, Black prisoners were farmed out to former slave owners and put to work on the same plantations as before. Even worse, now that Blacks were “free,” the slave owners no longer had any real incentive to keep them alive. As a result, prisoners were often worked to death.

RACISM IN CURRENT LAW ENFORCEMENT POLICIES

This racist history connects with today’s racial profiling. Racial profiling has been conceptualized as the targeting of an individual based on race and not on criminal activity ([Satzewich & Shaffir, 2009](#)). Racial profiling is not just limited to unwarranted stops by law enforcement of racial and ethnic minorities or “driving while Black” ([Harris, 2002](#); [Lundman & Kaufman, 2003](#)), but can occur when “shopping while Black” ([Gabbidon, 2003](#); [Harris, 2003](#)) and even “standing while Black” ([Garrett, 2000](#)). Racial profiling by law enforcement, has reinforced the mistrust of police by Black people.

Michelle Alexander’s *New Jim Crow* points out, suspicion of drug use is what allows law enforcement to target Blacks people. Exceptions like the “stop-and-frisk” rule allow police to search anyone they might suspect of engaging in criminal activity without obtaining a warrant first. Many people are unaware that they do not have to consent to random police searches and, as a result, most people give tacit permission to be searched, which sometimes results in the discovery of drugs.

In the case *Florida v. Bostick*, the Supreme Court overturned a lower court’s ruling that the defendant’s Fourth Amendment rights were violated when police searched his bag while aboard an interstate Greyhound bus. The Supreme Court decision holds that as long as consent is provided, any incriminating evidence discovered during a random search is admissible in court, since any “reasonable” person would feel free to decline police requests to search his or her belongings. Law enforcement officers are also allowed to use pretexts in order to search

civilians for drugs. This means that an officer can stop a motorist for a presumed traffic violation, even if his or her true intention is to check whether said motorist is in possession of illegal drugs.

In *Ohio v. Robinette*, the Supreme Court ruled that police are not required to inform motorists during a pretext search that they are not required to consent, though, as Alexander notes, during a traffic stop in which they are already in perceived trouble with law enforcement, most people are unaware of their right to refuse. Even the right to refuse searches has limits, leaving people of color largely at the mercy of law enforcement during pretext searches. Other Supreme Court rulings have granted officers the power to arrest motorists for minor traffic violations if they do not consent to officers' request to search their vehicles—even if the only penalty for said violation is a fine. The myriad erosions of the Fourth Amendment have encouraged law enforcement execute a pipeline to prison for Black people.

To explain how the system is racist, Alexander's book clearly distinguishes drug law-enforcement from other types of police activity. While traditional crimes usually begin with a lead or a tip that directs police toward a specific person, drug crimes are often sought out by the police themselves. This means that law enforcement officers have total control over whom they select as part of their search for drug crime. Alexander blames the media's sensationalized coverage of crack cocaine in the 1980s for influencing the average person's ideas about what a drug abuser looks like. As a result, many people—including law enforcement—target Blacks as potential drug criminals despite evidence that proves Whites use drugs at the same or higher rate as Black people. In 2000, the National Institute on Drug Abuse reported that White students used crack cocaine at eight times the rate of Black students.

First-time drug offenders can face 10 years imprisonment; thousands of Black Americans, following plea-bargaining, languish in jail for crimes they did not commit because of fears of these mandatory sentences. On release, they enter a parallel shadow society, where employment opportunities disappear, creating "a closed circuit of marginality".

To understand how a system can have racist results without explicitly racist motives, Alexander says the law enforcement's unfettered discretion on who or where to search for drugs allows implicit personal bias to influence the demographics of who is labeled as criminals.

POLICE BRUTALITY

The use of deadly force by police is another issue that has been overlooked in America. The Washington Post reported in August 2019, police shootings are a leading cause of death for Black men. Poorly investigated murders, have shown the Black community that BLACK lives don't matter because you can die from allegedly selling cigarettes, allegedly using a counterfeit

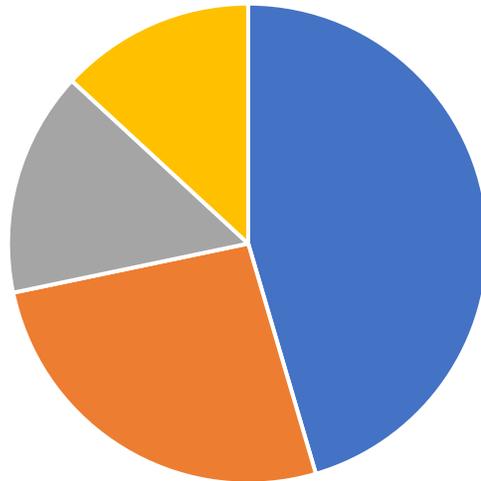
\$20 bill, during an innocent jog, a traffic stop reaching for the license and registration the officer requested, sitting on your own couch, in your own home watching tv, sleeping in your own bed, wearing a black hoody and being 12 years of age playing with a toy gun. The lists and despicable reasons are endless.

The repeated use of deadly force, shootings of unarmed Black men and women, by police and castigators and the prevalent disregard of Black people in our criminal justice system are a portrait of systemic racism that has oppressed Black people for 400 years. It is the reason why Black parents have to have “the talk.” For generations, “the talk” has been a staple of Black life. Parents try to guide their children through the racism they may encounter as they go about their daily lives or encounters with police that can turn deadly in the blink of an eye (Death Shapes How Parents Navigate the Talk 6/8/20). Parents tell a child, if you are ever stopped by police: don’t talk back, don’t reach for anything, put your hands on the steering wheel and don’t move them, when asked for license and registration- move slowly and tell the officer what you are doing. Most Black kids have the lessons memorized, but how do you explain the outcome when a Black man, woman, boy or girl has done everything the talk tells them and they still end up- thrown on the ground, stomped or shot. We resent needing to have the talk at all, but the bigger question is in 2020, why do we still need to have this talk! The stress of racial trauma is painful and Black people have seen numerous social injustices and with little to no retribution. The demonstrations and protests seen all over the world and in our own community after the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and even the shooting of Jacob Blake stem from hurt, anger and reaching a boiling point.

LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

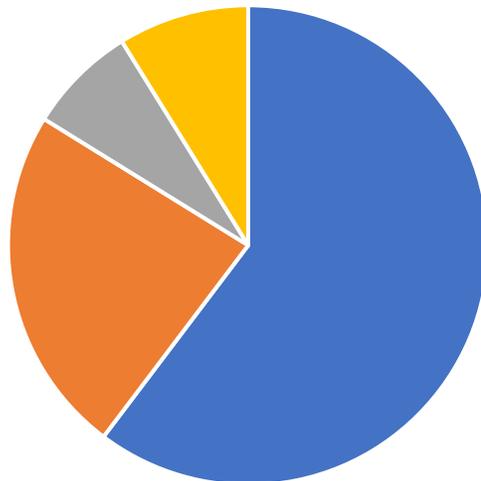
According to **2019 Bias Free Policing Administrative Review**, the Toledo Police Department (TPD), has a policy that says police services are delivered equitably, respectfully and free of bias in a manner that promotes broad community engagement, trust and confidence. “Stopping, questioning, detention, arrest, or other disparate treatment of any person based solely on their race, ethnicity,...is considered bias-based profiling.” The report states, Toledo Police Department does not tolerate biased-based profiling and further went on to explain “Criminal profiling.” Criminal profiling, not to be confused with racial profiling, is **acceptable** because it allows officers to act on facts that are known to the officer. The report says: “Toledo Police Department has several procedures in place to help ensure that racial, ethnic, and/or gender characteristics are not being used by officers as a basis for traffic stops and/or subject stops.” The report concludes there should be no bias in police activity, however, the statistics show that Black Men are 45% of arrests compared to 26% for White males; Black females are arrested 15% compared to white females at 13%. In the Juvenile system: Black males account for 47% of arrests compared to White males at 15%; Black females 26% compared to White females 9%.

Arrests



■ Black males ■ White males ■ Black females ■ White females ■

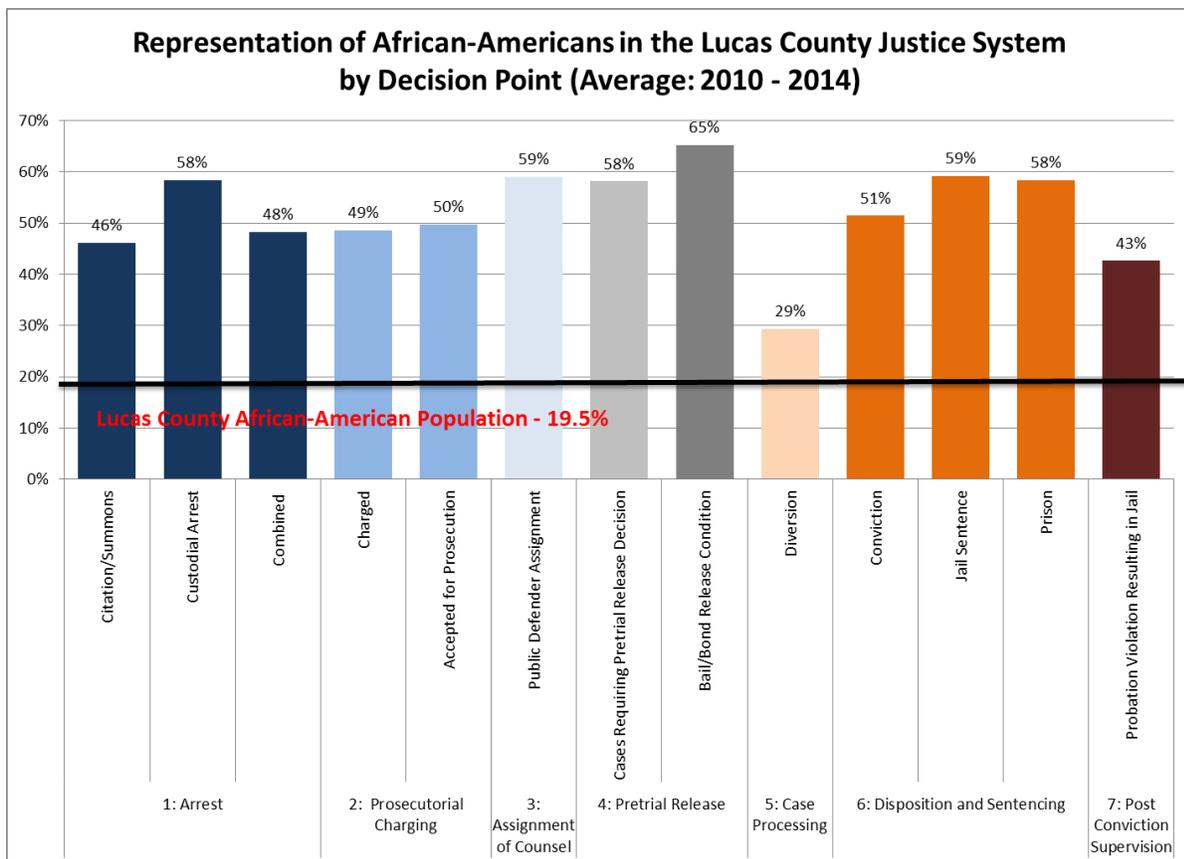
Juvenile Arrests



■ Black males ■ Black females ■ White males ■ White females

These statistics would make some believe that Black people are prone to criminal activity or that there is something inherently wrong with Black people. Neither is true. The data highlights racially-biased practices that target Black people. Even when data is clear, the reviewer suggests there was no bias.

According to the 2015, MacArthur Foundation’s Racial and Ethnic Disparities study, Lucas county was committed to changes designed to reduce their use of jail incarceration and ways to address the disproportionate impact on communities of color. In 2014, a Black person was 6.9 times more likely to be arrested than a White person. Blacks more than double the average in every category except Diversion! (See chart below). How can facts be ignored or denied when they are obvious in the outcomes. Our community identified numerous goals to address the disparate treatment. The Black community would like an update on progress made from every level of the Justice system in Toledo/Lucas County. The structurally racist pipeline to prison must be dismantled immediately.



(Lucas County Racial and Ethnic Disparities Study 9/2015)

COURT SYSTEM

According to the Denver Post, in an article published June 23, 2020 “Nearly All Americans Back Criminal Justice Reform” when polled, 29% say the system needs a complete overhaul, 40% say it needs major changes and 25% say it needs minor changes. Only 5% believe no changes are needed. When a deeper evaluation is conducted, 57% of Blacks (nearly 6 out of every 10) say it needs a complete overhaul while only 26% of Whites (4 in 10) felt the same. This reality demonstrates an acute awareness and lack thereof of the need for reform. We need a criminal justice system that is fair and equitable for Black people; one that protects the rights and freedoms of all at every stage. There is little doubt that our current system fails to deliver on that promise.

All people should be presumed innocent, but disparate treatment of Black people is well documented in court proceedings. One out of every three Black boys born today can expect to be sentenced to prison, compared one out of 17 white boys (NAACP Fact Sheet 2020). Inequities in sentencing point to the need for reform. For example, 5% of illicit drug users are Black, yet Black people represent 29% of those arrested and 33% of those incarcerated for drug offenses. Black and White people use drugs at similar rates, but the imprisonment rate of Black people for drug charges is almost six times that of White people. As of October 2016, there have been 1900 exonerations of the wrongfully accused, 47% of the exonerated were Black.

CORRECTIONS

The criminal justice system in the U.S. imprisons more people than any other industrialized nation in the world at a disproportionate number of whom are Black, low-income, and nonviolent. In our country, a disproportionate number of Black individuals are incarcerated in comparison to their composition in the U.S. population. Studies suggest that a variety of factors are at play including law enforcement practices, neighborhood crime rates, offender’s socioeconomic status, and state and federal level sentencing policies. According to the Report to the United Nations on Racial Disparities in the U.S. Criminal Justice System (4/19/18), Blacks are 5.9 times more likely to be incarcerated than Whites. Based on a 2018 Pew Research Study, in 2016, Blacks made up 12% of the U.S. population, but 33% of the sentenced prison population. According to the NAACP’s Criminal Justice Fact Sheet, Black women are imprisoned at twice the rate of White women.

Furthermore, since Blacks are more likely than Whites to be criminally profiled and stopped by police, they are more likely to be arrested for things that could be a citation. But once arrested, they are more likely to be convicted; and once convicted, they are more likely to experience

lengthy prison sentences. Evidence of other racial disparities that exist at other levels of the criminal justice system include data indicating that Blacks are more likely than Whites to be denied bail, to have a higher money bond set, and to be detained because of an inability to pay the bond. Additionally, once imprisoned, Blacks experience more challenges with gaining parole. Racial bias has been said to be a contributing factor.

Prisons, parole and probation boards also reflect disproportionate treatment for Black people. The NAACP Fact Sheet reports the following statistics: There are three million people in jail and prison today. Between 1980 and 2015, the number of people incarcerated increased from roughly 500,000 to 2.2 million due to the privatization of our prison systems. Black males are incarcerated at more than five times the rate of white males. Black women are incarcerated 2 times more than white women. Black children represent 14% of the population yet they represent 32% of children who are arrested, 42% of children who are detained, and 52% of children whose cases are judicially waived to criminal court. In 2012 alone, the United States spent nearly \$81 billion on corrections. Spending on prisons and jails has increased at triple the rate of spending on Pre-K-12 public education in the last thirty years. Prisons are overpopulated. Since 1970, our incarcerated population has increased by 700% (NAACP Fact Sheet 2020).

Not only do those who are imprisoned suffer, but incarceration affects the mental health of the family and their economic survivability. Children experience issues in school and are six times more likely to get involved in the criminal justice system. (NAACP Fact Sheet, 2020).

Thirty Five percent of the individuals executed under the death penalty within the last 40 years have been Black. Black people represent only 13% of the general population. There is no doubt that Black people are pursued, convicted, and sentenced to death at a disproportionately higher rate than any other race.

We must address unfair policing, reduce the number of Black people unnecessarily entering the system, abolish racial disparities, enhance prison conditions, reduce overcrowding, and build programs that help individuals realize opportunities for rehabilitation and successful re-entry. Yet, this final step is not just about re-entry, but true reintegration back into society despite the odds being greatly stacked against him or her. Prison release is also a broken part of the system because there are a myriad of ramifications that are felt. Take for example how our current laws and policies deny people with arrest or conviction histories the right to vote. Because of the racial disparities in the criminal justice system, these policies disproportionately exclude Black Americans from the ballot box. As of 2016, almost 8% of Black adults nationwide were disenfranchised because of a felony conviction. Additional obstacles include blocked access to education, barriers to employment, hurdles with securing housing and eligibility for public

benefits while all but precluding eligibility for student loans. Black individuals encounter these along with a wide range of other collateral consequences. Barriers like these render it virtually impossible to rebuild a successful life. These barriers must be eliminated.

There must be accountability. Years of massive racial injustice and violence simply cannot be silenced any longer. It is time for America and every community to commit to reform: true reform.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REFORM

A wide range of measures need to be considered and implemented to even begin the transformation of our criminal justice system at each and every stage, but here we focus on a handful of suggestions.

1. Discontinue police policies and practices that result in harm to members of the Black community.
2. End qualified immunity, a defense that shields officers from being sued and has been interpreted by courts so broadly that it allows officers to engage in unconstitutional acts with impunity.
3. Prohibit all police neck hold maneuvers, including chokeholds and carotid control holds. Prohibit the use of no-knock warrants, especially for drug searches.
4. Support a reimagining of public safety that drastically reduces the presence of and need for armed law enforcement in Black communities. Reduce the budgets of police departments and redirect the funds to underfunded agencies and community-based programs best equipped to address experiences or behaviors that are often inappropriately criminalized, such as homelessness, substance use, and behavioral health crises.
5. Develop a task force to investigate steps to remove police from schools and promote positive school climates through comprehensive student support services.
6. Eliminate federal programs that provide military equipment to law enforcement.
7. Develop a national public database that would compile the names of officers who have been fired, forced to resign, or had their licenses revoked due to misconduct.
8. Negotiate police union contract provisions to ensure police officers are held accountable for misconduct promptly and appropriately (2-8 NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund).
9. Abolish “Crime Suppression” techniques in predominately Black neighborhoods that often result in arrests and harassment for minor offenses, traffic violations and so called

“suspicious behaviors” that go unchecked in other neighborhoods. These police contacts result in Blacks being disproportionately represented in the criminal justice system.

10. To build trust and promote a culture of transparency, law enforcement agencies should make all department policies available for public review and regularly post the following on the department’s website: information about traffic stops, summonses, arrests, reported crime, and other law enforcement data aggregated by demographics.
(Obama’s 21st Century Policing)
11. Develop innovative ways to establish balance between accountability for criminal activity and safety for law abiding citizens living in over-policed neighborhoods. Often, the two are treated as the same. Trust must be restored in the police by establishing community-based models that seek to protect and serve ALL members of any community through fair and humane interactions.
12. Require police to police themselves through mandatory reporting of peer wrongdoing, and institute severe penalties for failures to report.
13. Give Citizen Review Boards subpoena power and actual authority to intervene in investigations and exact disciplinary strategies for police officers accused of wrongdoing.
14. Require prosecutorial accountability and transparency regarding who is charged, who receives a plea deal, enrollment in diversion programs and prison sentences handed down.
15. Law enforcement agencies should consider the potential damage to public trust when implementing crime fighting strategies. Implement policies that mandate the use of external and independent prosecutors in cases of police use of force resulting in death, officer-involved shootings resulting in injury or death, or in-custody deaths (Obama’s 21st Century Policing).
16. Eliminate Mandatory Minimum Sentences and instead use alternatives to arrest and for incarceration for low-level offenses such as: use of non-monetary sanctions; reclassify criminal offenses and turn misdemeanor charges that don’t threaten public safety into non-jailable infractions, or decriminalize them entirely; issue citations, rather than making an arrest, for low-level crimes; and institute reasonable grace periods for missed court appearances to reduce the use of “bench” warrants.
17. Sentence fewer people to incarceration, but when needed shorten excessive prison sentences and improve release processes. Release those incarcerated for offenses that are now legal (example, selling of marijuana).
18. Deal with Collateral “Penalties” For Imprisoned Blacks (i.e., restore voting rights, work to create programs for securing housing, etc).
19. The establishment and enforcement of a robust, mandatory racial diversity training program focused on anti-racism, implicit bias and procedural fairness training must be a part of the initial changes needed to acclimate those working in the criminal justice

system to greater levels of cultural sensitivity. This would include youth diversion programs. Training should start in the academy with courses specifically on history of law enforcement that includes slave codes, etc. All members of the criminal justice system (Judges, Prosecutors, Police, Prison, Probation and Parole Officers) must attend. Officers should be required to take and pass Implicit Bias Tests to weed out individuals with white supremacist ideologies.

20. Commit to hire, appoint and elect more Blacks in critical roles in law enforcement, the courts and corrections such as judges, magistrates, bailiffs, police officers, prison administrators and workers as well as prosecutors, to name a few.
21. Officers should police in areas they live, so they know everyone, and everyone knows them and have a vested interest in the area they live and work.
22. Police officers to carry individual malpractice insurance. In the event of a lawsuit, taxpayer dollars are not included in such settlements.
23. Police officers should be required to have more education. It's too much power to have with a 2-year degree. It should be higher educational standards for the task at hand.
24. Create a process to identify and eradicate the infiltration of supremacist group affiliation in law enforcement ranks and in the community.

Other measures will need to be implemented including but not limited to, (i) stop mandating programming requirements that impede or delay release on parole; (ii) Properly fund and oversee indigent defense; (iii) increase the dollar threshold for felony theft; (iv) Keep criminal justice, juvenile justice, and immigration processes separate; (v) Decriminalize youth and stop prosecuting and sentencing them as adults; and (vi) Create a pre-arrest restorative justice model for juveniles for all offenses that are not first and second-degree felonies.

According to the COVID-19 Ohio Minority Health Strike Force Blueprint: data must be reported on race ethnicity and income in a consistent way in order to assess the impact of law enforcement and criminal justice policies on particular groups and to identify opportunities to reduce disparities and inequities in the criminal justice system. We need to immediately develop a data-driven process for the collection and analysis of data. Policies must be devised and adopted to address factors and measure the impact of the policy changes implemented such as online dashboards to show arrest rates, charging practices, and jail populations, for example. To be successful, we must drive towards greater transparency. It will be necessary to collaborate with local experts as part of the erection of a criminal justice data infrastructure as recommended by the NCSL in "Criminal Justice/Data Analysis is Driving Justice Reforms" (July 31, 2020).

In summary, the overarching goal must be to address inequities created by the criminal justice system by dealing with unfair and harmful policing, confronting injustice in the court room, reform excessive sentencing, and establish a prison process that includes reintegration and re-entry into society to become productive individuals.

PART II: THE ECONOMIC JUSTICE PILLAR

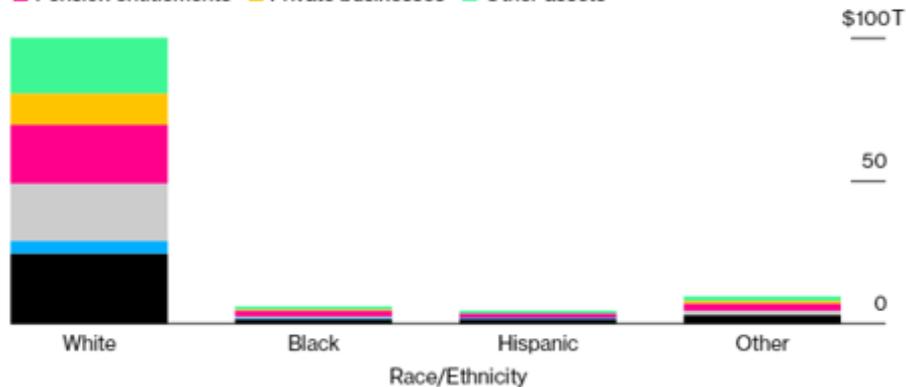
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Economic Statics at a Glance

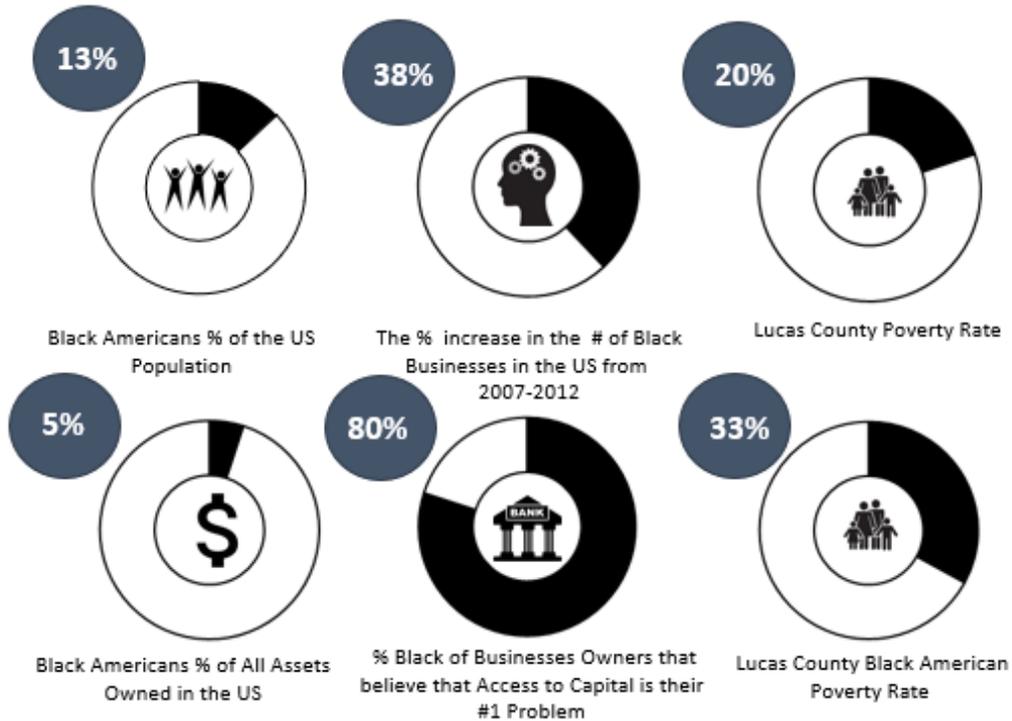
Assets by Race/Ethnicity

Whites held slightly more than \$100 trillion in assets at the end of Q1 2020

■ Real estate
 ■ Consumer durables
 ■ Corporate equities and mutual fund shares
■ Pension entitlements
 ■ Private businesses
 ■ Other assets



Source: Federal Reserve
Note: Data as of Q1 2020



The median net wealth for White American families was \$171,000 compared to \$17,600 for Black American families, in the most recent Federal Reserve Survey of Consumer Finances published in 2016. Economic Justice is a goal that generations of Black Americans have been striving to achieve. After centuries of inequalities, the wealth gap between Black and White Americans remains vast. When exploring the financial root causes of this wealth gap one must look at the assets, liabilities and income as well as the historic and current hurdles an ethnic group faces in accumulating wealth.

THE WEALTH GAP- ASSETS, LIABILITIES, & INCOME

The latest Census and Federal Reserve data show that White Americans make up 60.1% of the population but account for 82.3% of the assets owned while Black Americans account for 13.4% of the population but only account for 4.7% of the assets owned. Census data also shows that White Americans account for 71.3% of debts owed (while accounting for 60.1% of the population) and Black Americans account for 8.6% of the debt owed (while accounting for 13.4% of the population). When digging into the data it shows that White Americans hold most of their debt in lower interest rate mortgage debt (69.2%) while Black Americans hold a large percentage of their debt in higher interest rate consumer credit products (43.3%). Income is also a huge factor in the wealth gap.

Household income is used to acquire assets and to pay off debts. Income is also used as a measure to apply for mortgages and credit cards; consequently, the amount of income you have often helps you obtain lower interest rates on the debt you acquire while helping you to lower your monthly debt payments. In Ohio the average household income for a White American family is \$54,200 while the average household income for a Black American family is \$29,000. This household income disparity holds true for Lucas County where the average household income for a White American family is \$50,700 while the average household income for a Black American family is \$22,700.

THE WEALTH GAP- HISTORICAL CONTEX

The historical wealth gap between White Americans and Black Americans is mainly due to not being able to benefit from the transfer of wealth from generation to generation. The years of chattel slavery, decimation of thriving black communities, not earning a fair working wage, not being able to purchase and/or retain real estate, and not being able to obtain competitive financing have negatively impacted this generational transfer of wealth. In 2016, 26% of White Americans received inheritances, while only 8% of Black Americans received inheritances. Obtaining education is a means to accumulating wealth individually, however, the byproducts of systemic racism can even pose a challenge to this basic freedom. Closing the wealth gap between Black and White Americans will take investing in entire communities.

The latest Census Survey data shows this by highlighting that the median net worth of a White American family with *no* bachelor's degree is \$98,100, while the median net worth of a Black American family with a bachelor's degree is \$68,200. Investing in the neighborhoods with the most need and in well-constructed Opportunity Zones are key components to revitalizing

communities. Instead of investment, we find that community hubs like the Frederick Douglass Center have been abandoned at worst or have garnered inconsistent support, at best. The work needed to revitalize other higher need neighborhoods to be economically sustainable has been unfunded. In thriving communities, transferring wealth from one generation to another is seamless.

SITUATION ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Businesses are at the center of thriving communities; this was on display during the height of the Dorr Street Corridor. Businesses should be in neighborhoods. There is a need to rebuild the small business backbone in the African-American community through innovative means like business incubators and an investment in technology. The first business incubator in the US began in 1959, and they rose in popularity in the 90s. Businesses such as, Dropbox and Air BnB, have benefitted from being a part of business incubators in their early days. When starting a business incubator, we must have all the elements to help participants succeed and scale. Some of those elements include: research and determining viability of business, business development, mentorship, funding, and team development. Established programs and organizations that are fixtures in the African-American Entrepreneurial Community like Assets Toledo, the Port Authority, the Toledo Urban Credit Union, University of Toledo's Minority Business Development Center and University of Toledo's Minority Business Assistance Center Program should have the adequate funding to assist everyone who needs help. Financial education at places like the Financial Opportunity Center and Premier Bank (formerly First Federal Bank) should be leveraged for future entrepreneurs and businesses to gain sound financial footing. Innovative new programs like Jumpstart and Afro-Tech initiatives need room to grow and be embraced to propel Toledo to become a hub for Black technology businesses and investments in technology.

Investing into a business takes time, expertise, most importantly capital. Historically, African-American businesses have an incredibly hard time accessing capital. Investing in Black businesses is not only impactful to the entrepreneurs and the Black Community, but to the overall markets. The most recent census data shows that 28.79% of small businesses are minority owned and 9.35% black owned. In Ohio 13.56% of small businesses are minority owned and 8.97% black owned. In Lucas County and Toledo, 17.58% and 25.67% of businesses are minority owned. From 2007-2012 the number of minority small businesses grew 38%, showing that these businesses have the resilience to grow during economic downturns even though 80% of black small business owners, in a more recent survey, state that access to capital is their largest business challenge. The current Toledo capital landscape includes Community Development Financial Institutions, Super Regional Banks, Community Banks, Credit Unions, The Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority and The Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA) Minority Business Development Division (MBDD). Each one of these entities have a role to play to support the African-American community and African-American entrepreneurs. They could create a new loan fund specifically for entrepreneurs of color or for businesses which hire primarily people of color. A fund like this could provide loans (average size \$50,000 to

\$150,000) to businesses which cannot secure conventional bank financing. There is also a need for local funding/venture capital pitch opportunities and small business loan opportunities geared towards or inclusive of black business owners.

A community-wide push to increase deposits and enhance the offerings at the Toledo Urban Federal Credit Union, would allow them to become more impactful business lenders to the community and deploy those funds in the forms of more small loans to the people and businesses that need them. Larger financial institutions should leverage their Community Reinvestment Act dollars to support underserved communities and Community Development Financial Institutions to ensure that there is the appropriate access to capital.

For African-Americans who do not want to pursue their own businesses but would like to pursue the American dream by earning a living wage and having successful careers working for a business or a governmental entity, pipelines into high wage-earning careers & trades need to be highlighted. Pipelines into professions & trades should be available to all Americans. However, for Black Americans, discrimination and historical injustice have created significant barriers to opportunities. Pathways should not only be into education institutions but also into trades. In research from Strata Institute, revealed that 43% of college graduates from 2010-2017 worked in jobs that did not require a degree. Focusing on career pathways that lead to a living wage and low debt is key. According to a McKinsey report & the US Bureau of Labor Statics, 56% of African- Americans find themselves in supportive roles rather than directive roles compared to 43% of the general population being in supportive roles as opposed to directive roles. In 2016 the median estimated annual income for a person in a directive role was \$68,914 compared to \$32,232 in a supportive role. Initiatives are needed that highlight career choices for Black Americans at an earlier age and promoting programs and educational choices that focus on mentoring Black American students like University of Toledo's Excel and Historical Black Colleges and Universities. Investments in career education and awareness can ensure that the pathways that members of the Black American community choose are pathways to careers that help with the progression up the socio-economic ladder.

We must reverse the trends that systematically stymie the growth and transfer of black wealth. With access to proper resources, we can ensure that the African- American Community has a real opportunity of revitalizing our community, owning thriving small businesses, and decreasing the historic wealth gap.

SUMMARY

- Invest in plans that truly change neighborhoods and that are created with the neighborhood voice (not just created about the neighborhood). An example of this type of plan is the Junction Plan.
- Invest in the neighborhoods with the most need and in well-constructed Opportunity Zones.
- Establish neighborhood based Black Business/ Entrepreneurship Incubators (example location-Frederick Douglass Center).

- Substantially invest in Community Banks and in funding their economic empowerment programs and capital to provide loans to people and businesses in underserved communities. Increase access to capital for black businesses.
- Establish and ensure that there is a continuum of pathways into professions & trades.
- Establish teen & college entrepreneurship exposure programs, promote HBCU (Historical Black Colleges & Universities) education and support youth pipeline programs into high paying professions (Example pipeline programs: NSBE Jr. Chapters (National Society of Black Engineers, for engineering) and ACAP-Ohio (Ohio's Accounting Careers Awareness Program presented by the National Association of Black Accountants, The Ohio Society of CPAs and The Ohio State University's Fisher College of Business).

PART III: THE EDUCATION PILLAR

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Achieving quality education has been a struggle for Black Americans in this country since its inception. However, we have seen glimpses of historical references that highlight the tenacity, necessity, and achievement of great strides dating back to educational leaders such as Fannie Jackson Coppin, Mary McLeod Bethune, Anna Julia Cooper, and the seminal Brown v. Topeka Board of Education U.S. Supreme Court decision.

Education is the only organizational system in the United States that touches and has the propensity to touch every American citizen. Therefore, it is pertinent in 2020, and beyond, that education be examined in its totality in the education of Black children considering the current political climate and Black Lives Matter movement. Black Americans continue to receive low quality education (opportunity/achievement gap, lower standardized test scores) in comparison to their White counterparts (Watson & McClellan, 2020). The juxtaposition of education when comparing Black students with other students of comparable housing, parental education level, and parental income shows disparate discrepancy and are interconnected with American historical practices of systemic housing discrimination and segregated education (Delpit, 2012). Comparable statistics and circumstances levels out when controlling for systemic racism. Therefore, we posit that when systemic racism is addressed in totality, there will be an increase in academic achievement, improvement of school culture, increased parental engagement, and other contributing factors that will sustain neighborhoods, communities, and localities.

PURPOSE OF EDUCATION

We posit that the purpose of education is:

1. Academic
 - a. Literate and educated population
 - b. Provide equitable access AND quality instruction

2. Economic
 - a. Create pathway for upward social mobility

- b. Create sustainable skills to achieve adequate housing, healthcare, and quality education for future generations
- 3. Political and Civic
 - a. Produce democratic and critical thinking citizens
 - b. Change agents
 - c. Knowers of political processes (intersections with criminal justice, judiciary, etc.)

CONTEXTUAL STATISTICS

The statistics are very important in an effort to contextualize the state of residents while offering a snapshot of the complexity of the responsibility of school districts as well as the municipalities in which the residents reside. As stated, education as a system touches every American and every resident in Toledo, however, it must be noted that statistics such as poverty rates and housing valuation has a disparate impact on educational attainment and the resources allocated to achieve optimal levels of education.

Toledo Residents

In 2018-2019, the city of Toledo had approximately 274,973 residents. Of that 27.1% are Black, 74,242. Toledo's population is declining between 1-3% annually. The median household income in Toledo in 2018 was \$35,339, for Black Toledo residents, the median household income was \$21,788, whereas the states median household income was \$54,021. Toledo has poverty rate of 26.5%, whereas 37% of Black Toledo residents are living in poverty. The median home value in Toledo in 2018 was \$78,400 whereas the states median home value was \$144,200 (<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/toledocityohio>).

12% of Toledo residents have a bachelor's degree

.8% of Toledo residents have a doctorate degree

32.6% of Toledo residents have a high school diploma/GED equivalent

<https://datausa.io/profile/geo/toledo-oh/>

In the greater Toledo area, there are approximately 40,000 students enrolled in public and parochial schools. Of that TPS, the 4th largest urban school district in Ohio enrolls 23,166 students whereas 13,056 are enrolled in parochial and approximately 3,583 enrolled in early literacy/pre-K programs. TPS has a 65% minority population with Black students comprising 44%, totaling 10,251 students. TPS as a district has 85% economically distressed population with Black students comprising 45%, totaling 9,044. (<https://sites.google.com/a/tps.org/tps-data-dashboard/>)

The greater Toledo area also has robust parochial school system. Approximately 13,056 are enrolled in local parochial schools. Of that population, approximately 31% are minority and mostly Black. The actual data set on Black students in parochial schools is an estimate because of varying reporting mechanisms in contrast to public data set required by local public-school districts. However, approximately 85% of the minority students that attend parochial schools use the EdChoice voucher program provided through State of Ohio Department of Education. The voucher program allocates approximately \$4,650 towards parochial school tuition and fees. The voucher does not cover 100% tuition and fees. This allocation which is normally ascribed to local school districts is reduced by the number of students that exit the public-school system. However, the local school district, TPS in this matter is still responsible for transportation and servicing of IEP's of students that reside in their district with no increase in allocation of state budget. Therefore, TPS is strained financially while still adhering to state mandates to service all students that reside in their district regardless of those students attend a TPS school. A common practice and mandated by the state are that TPS school counselors are servicing students in parochial school districts by overseeing the management of IEP and 504 documentations in conjunction with TPS providing transportation to and from parochial schools. It can be asserted that parochial schools are being subsidized by the state via TPS which in sum strains an economically distressed district.

The state data shows for the area states that 14% of all students have a learning disability, requiring an IEP or 504. These students have a 72% graduation rate. These statistics encapsulate the local area. However, the data is unclear and unavailable regarding educational attainment, educational success, diversity, cultural competence or anti-racism that encompasses the educational experience within parochial schools. Therefore, our recommendations for educating Black students in Toledo ALL educating entities that are responsible for or have taken responsibility for educating Black students.

<https://www.neighborhoodscout.com/oh/toledo/demographics>

<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Scholarships/EdChoice-Scholarship-Program>

<https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/SurveyGroups.asp?group=1>

The Importance of Quality Pre-K

Research demonstrates that the early years (birth through age five) are among the most important phases for children's cognitive and social development. Preschool programs have been shown to improve outcomes for young children throughout their lives. Accordingly, Pre-K programs are among our most effective public investments: research shows an economic return of up to \$8.90 per dollar invested in Pre-K programs.¹

Half the nation's largest cities raise local funds dedicated to improving quality and/or access to Pre-K. All the major citywide Pre-K programs we examined during our research operate based on a public funding mechanism. Funding has chiefly been drawn from new sales taxes, city funds, school levies, or property taxes. Successful programs have a number of characteristics in

¹ Robert Lynch and Kavya Vaghul (2016). "The Fiscal, Economic and Societal Gains of a Universal Pre-Kindergarten Program in the United States, 2016-2050. Washington Center for Equitable Growth.

common, including creating high quality settings to drive positive outcomes; ensuring access to high quality care; creating Pre-K to grade 3 alignment; engaging partners to ensure a successful mixed-delivery system; ensuring a system of continuous improvement; building in flexibility as the program evolves; focusing on service coordination; and instituting effective outreach practices.

Access to Quality Pre-K in Toledo

Toledo is home to about 4,000 4-year olds. Nearly 40% of these children live under the federal poverty level (FPL), which is only \$25,100 for a family of 4, and 80% are in families under 200% of FPL. In 2018 only 18% of children, across the city, entered kindergarten “ready to learn” based on district Kindergarten readiness assessments.² Families with low incomes constantly struggle to afford the high cost of childcare, particularly high quality care, which includes a strong component of early learning curriculum-led instruction.³ While existing funding sources are an important part of the current early childcare education (ECE) system⁴, they are not sufficient to help all families access child care that goes beyond safe and affordable care to provide quality early education that prepares their children to succeed in kindergarten and beyond.

Significant support for childcare in Toledo already exists, including publicly funded programs, philanthropies, and community organizations. Current funding totals about \$27.5 million for 3- and 4-year olds, most of which derives from federal sources funneled through the state to local agencies. We estimate, however, the total cost to serve 3- and 4-year olds in high quality care would be \$60 million.⁵ Thus, less than half the total need is currently being met. The city contains enough licensed center and family home childcare slots – about 8,400 – to serve all 3- and 4- year olds. However, most of these slots are not high quality, which is defined as 3-, 4-, or 5-star ratings in the Ohio Step Up to Quality (SUTQ) system. We estimate that about 40% of these slots will be in high quality settings in late 2020. This proportion is likely to grow over time, as the state’s quality rating regulations require all licensed providers to be rated at least 3 stars in the SUTQ program by 2025. The implication for a new Pre-K program is that by 2025 all

² At the beginning of each school year, children in public school kindergarten programs are assessed using Ohio’s Kindergarten Readiness Assessment. [This assessment includes ways for teachers to measure a child’s readiness for engaging with kindergarten instruction while aligned to Ohio’s Early Learning and Development Standards.](#)

³ “Child care” is defined in this report as formal, licensed care for children between the ages of birth to five offered between the hours of approximately 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday, in family home or center-based settings. Hours may be part-time to full time and should include educational based curriculum programming during the primary hours of the day. “High quality” childcare is defined in this report to encompass ingredients of formal evidence-based curriculum for six hours a day, more highly qualified teachers, lower teacher and group size ratios, and other higher standards of care as supported by research.

⁴ “Early child care education system” refers to the early learning and child care providers who are formally licensed; and, local and state agencies who provide technical support, collateral partnerships for children and staffing, funding, and regulatory licensing and quality standard rate setting.

⁵ The projection is based on the number of likely participants in a Pre-K program and the true cost to provide high quality care. This estimate is based on \$13,000 per child for a 3- and 4- year old receiving full-day high quality early education and child care.

childcare providers in the city may meet the new programs quality requirements, thus providing enough quality-rated slots to serve all likely participants. However, funding will need to expand to keep pace with the number of available slots.

CONCLUSION

Toledo’s young children have high needs and poverty is endemic throughout city. Every major city in Ohio, and a growing number of cities across the country, now have a publicly funded Pre-K program. Investing in preschool is recognized as a non-partisan investment with long-term educational, social, and economic benefits. Moreover, new programs can build upon a firm research base to develop best practices for success. This is an ideal time for Toledo to pursue this landmark education milestone.

A recommended potential program model assumes an estimated program budget of \$7 million. Tuition credits comprise about 75% of the program budget and the remaining percentage covers quality improvement and supports; evaluation and data support; outreach and marketing; and management and administration. The total program costs assume around 1,000 eligible participants in each age cohort (i.e., age 3 or age 4) at the start of the program, increasing over an eight-year period as more high quality preschool slots become available.

A “universal access” to Pre-K program focused on high-quality care to 4-year olds in Toledo is financially feasible within the proposed funding amount and would have a great positive community and economic impact in both the short term and the long term.

⁵The projection is based on the number of likely participants in a Pre-K program and the true cost to provide high quality care. This estimate is based on \$13,000 per child for a 3- and 4- year old receiving full-day high quality early education and childcare.

Recommendations:

- A. *Early literacy* – We demand universal Pre-K curriculum that is affordable and accessible to all.
 - a. Culturally relevant pedagogy
 - b. Anti-racism training for all early child development centers/staff

- B. *School Culture* -We demand restorative justice be central to all endeavors within the schoolhouse. We believe restorative practices will disrupt and dismantle the school to prison pipeline. We believe restorative practices will support parent engagement and parental support efforts
 - a. Anti-racism training required for all staff

- i. Collaboration with TFT union and equity officers to draft schedule
 - b. Restorative justice discipline and policy implementation
 - c. Continuous professional development for all staff
 - d. 1 school counselor per building
 - e. Convene a task force to examine moving TPD/SRO out of schools because we believe school should be a place of learning and not a local for the school to prison pipeline.
 - i. We understand extreme cases arise and in those extreme cases we posit a community-based approach and all options exhausted prior to reaching out to local law enforcement
 - f. Equity audit must be completed bi-annually
- C. *Curriculum* – We demand all curriculum be culturally relevant and culturally accurate. We believe all curriculum should be diverse, pedagogically sound, and interwoven throughout the academic year via updated textbooks, technology, and other diverse platforms.
- a. Access to technology
 - b. Building on accurate historical accounts
 - c. Culturally sustaining
 - d. Active Learning
 - i. Technology
 - ii. Arts/Music
 - iii. Problem solving
 - e. Variations in assessment – no sole reliance on standardized testing measures
 - f. Increased access to gifted education for Black students
- D. *Culturally Competent Teachers, Administrators, and Staff* – We demand emphasis and action be placed on preparing teachers of children to mandate culturally competent training programs pre/post-employment. We know that Black children fare better when they are valued and see themselves valued in their educational experience.
- a. *Higher Education*
 - i. Culturally competence requirements in teacher preparation programs
 - ii. Hiring and recruiting diverse faculty in education
 - iii. Increasing pipeline programs into education profession
 - iv. Collaborations with HBCU in teacher preparation
 - b. Pre-K to 12
 - i. Hiring and recruitment of diverse teachers, administrators, and staff
 - ii. Cultural Competence
 - 1. Anti-racism training for all
 - 2. On-going professional development
 - 3. Mechanisms for dealing with teacher trauma and burnout

- iii. Phase out TPD/SRO and replace with mental health/school counselor
 - iv. Strengthen affinity groups locally and nationally
 - 1. NABSE – National Alliance of Black School Educators
 - 2. TABSE – Toledo Alliance of Black School Educators
- E. *Community Connection* – We believe the surrounding communities of schools are crucial to the sustainability, vitality, and success of the residents.
- a. Community as Hubs model
 - i. Aids in fostering parental engagement and support
 - ii. Mental health resources
 - iii. Networking with affinity groups to provide cultural resources
 - b. Fundraisers/Endowments
 - i. Create pipeline for scholarships & funding for college/trades

Implementation (1-5 year plan)

We demand immediate action be placed on ensuring quality education for Black students in the city of Toledo. The contextual statistics and changing social climate are ripe for sustainable positive change for Black children. In implementing, the goal is to focus on equity, cultural competence, anti-Black racism, and dismantling the school to prison pipeline.

1. Phase 1 - Choose 8 Schools – Pilot sites
 - a. Perform equity audit on each school (Terrence Green’s – community-based equity audit)
 - i. Curriculum
 - ii. Teacher/staff receptiveness
 - iii. Parent perception and engagement
 - b. Principal and district leadership report results
 - c. Required anti-racism training for all
2. Phase 2 – Re-evaluate and 5 more schools
 - a. District policy changes
 - i. discipline/restorative justice
3. Phase 3 – Reduction to elimination of TPD/SRO in schools
 - a. 1 school counselor per school – (currently 1 counselor per 2 buildings)

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PART IV: HEALTH CARE EQUITY & JUSTICE PILLAR

Executive Summary

“Of all of the forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking and inhuman.” So said Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr in remarks made in 1966 at a gathering of medical and human rights advocates. The issue of equity in healthcare is not a new discussion for this country but rather one that has long been defined by race and social status. African American women in Lucas County Ohio can count on losing their babies in their first year of life twice as often as their white counterparts. Death from illnesses such as Coronavirus, hypertension and diabetes can routinely be found in communities of color at far higher rates than in other areas of the city. Black men can expect to have fewer years to spend with loved ones due to an average death of 7 years earlier than white men. The list of health disparities between African Americans and almost any other group are significant and frightening.

When considering how to change the health status of Black people, it is critical to remember that disparities are not naturally made but rather are the result of an intention to develop policies and practices that marginalize communities of color. If we are serious about improving the health status of this community, we must ask hard and unflinching questions. We must ask why the housing stock in our neighborhoods is allowed to remain infested with lead, well known to impair the cognitive ability of our children. We must challenge our elected officials to answer the question why, in the most progressive and technologically advanced time in our history, in the richest country in the world, issues of food insecurity continue to exist. We must develop reasonable, responsive, innovative and well-formed solutions that will directly address the needs of those in our communities. Most importantly, we must reverse those practices that perpetuate health inequity and injustice. There can be no fear of confronting history and its fostering of the intentional development of public policies that “ghettoized” neighborhoods making them unhealthy places for families to live. Tough questions with no easy solutions but all necessary inquiries in the movement toward healthcare equity.

The issues of health equity and justice are complex and massive in scope when considering a pathway toward their attainment. And while there are a significant number of health concerns that should be addressed in pursuit of these ideals, this document will identify only those that require immediate consideration.

Two things are without question. The first, the data and research are clear that unfettered racism is a systemic public health crisis with serious consequences for the health of Black Ohioans. The second, we can no longer ignore the oppressive presence of health inequity and injustice. To do so places an entire community at great peril.

Introduction and Purpose

The issue of equity in healthcare is a complicated one. To improve health for everyone, hard, unflinching questions must be asked, and reasonable, innovative and well-formed solutions designed to directly address the needs of those disenfranchised in our communities must be provided. There can be no fear of confronting history and its fostering of the intentional development of public policies that “ghettoized” neighborhoods making them unhealthy places for families to live. We must ask why housing stock is allowed to remain infested with lead, well known to impair the cognitive ability of our children. We must challenge our elected officials to answer the question why, in the most progressive and technologically advanced time in our history, in the richest country in the world, issues of food insecurity, educational process that fail many children in our urban centers and environmental issues that deprive our communities of life sustaining basics like water, still exist? Employment and associated advancements are still unevenly available and the inability or unwillingness to provide equal access to health care, especially specialty care, remains of great concern. Tough questions with no easy solutions, but all necessary inquiries in the movement toward healthcare equity.

What Is Health Equity?

A basic principle of public health is that all people have a right to health care⁶. When access to care is denied, significant negative differences in the health status between groups occur. These differences most often affect those who are marginalized because of socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, disability status, geographic location, or some combination thereof. People in these groups not only experience worse health but also tend to have less access to those resources which typically form the foundation of healthy communities. Suitable housing, sound education nutritional food and safe neighborhoods are all examples of what are now called the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) and are considered essential resources in the pursuit of Health Equity.⁷

The actual definition of Health Equity is complicated by the influences of those elements related to SDOH and its similarity to its counterparts, Health Disparities and Inclusion Health. The World Health Organization defines **health equity** as the “absence of avoidable, unfair or remediable differences among groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically, geographically or by other means of stratification” in the pursuit of optimal health status.⁸ It is, as defined within the Veterans Health Administration’s Health Equity Plan, “the understanding of how people’s social characteristics and environments affect health...”⁹ These are the definitions of health equity to be used within this document.

⁶ Brennan Ramirez LK, Baker EA, Metzler M. Promoting Health Equity: A Resource to Help Communities Address Social Determinants of Health. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2008.

⁷ Ibid

⁸ The World Health Organization definition’ www.Int/topics/health-_equity/en

⁹ The VA Health Equity Action Plan; US Department of Veterans Affairs; Veterans Health Administration, Office of Health Equity, pp.3

Health inequities are not naturally made. They arise from racial and class inequities; from decisions that this society has made. The single strongest predictor of our health is our position on the class pyramid.

The issue of Health Equity is both massive in scope and complex when considering a pathway toward its attainment. And while there are a significant number of health issues that should be addressed by this community, this document will identify those health issues that require immediate consideration. One thing is without question; the data and research are clear that racism is a systemic and ongoing public health crisis with serious consequences for Black Ohioans. It is also clear that racism has a profound and pervasive impact across all the factors that shape our health. This includes our healthcare delivery systems, education, housing, food, economic, environmental, criminal justice and political systems, among others.¹⁰

INEQUITY HAS BEEN INTENTIONALLY CREATED AND PROTECTED OVER CENTURIES THROUGH THE IMPOSITION OF RACIST AND DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES AND SYSTEMS TARGETING UNDERREPRESENTED, OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES

THE PRAXIS PROJECT, WORKING PRINCIPALS FOR HEALTH JUSTICE & RACIAL

Health disparities on the other hand, are the health-related outcomes present in ***marginalized communities*** which are directly attributable to the systematic and ***unjust distribution*** of those critical resources mentioned above.

Equally important is the somewhat derivative definition of ***Inclusion Health***. This term is used to define a number of groups of people who are not usually well provided for by healthcare systems, have poorer, access to healthcare, experiences and health outcomes than even the most vulnerable of our population.¹¹ This definition covers people who are homeless, vulnerable migrants (refugees, those undocumented, asylum seekers) and sex workers to name a few.¹² The conceptual differences between these terms are subtle but significant. It is important however, that they and their differences be understood as each is important in this discussion.

Health Justice-A Definition

The blatant and persistent inequities in the delivery of health care have spawned a new partner in the battle for equal access. The call for health justice is one properly combined with that of health equity, using the force of law to provide the underlying legal support necessary to ensure the full and equal distribution of those social resources required to facilitate the elimination of health disparities. In fact, while this concept also considers the legal system to be complicit in the perpetuation of inequality by the enactment of laws that perpetuate poor

¹⁰ Health Policy Institute of Ohio, August, 2020 and a number of other sources were used in this section, to include but not limited to, The St. Paul-Ramsey County Public Health, Health Equity Plan; COVID-19 Ohio Minority Health Strike Force Blueprint, the VHA Health Equity Plan and the Center for Health Equity Action Plan 2018-2023

¹¹ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/itphimenu/definitions-for-health-inequalities/>

¹² *ibid*

health¹³, it strongly advocates for the use of civil rights laws to enforce a “healthcare for all” model of care.¹⁴

For the purposes of this document, Health Justice theory states that health equity can only be achieved through the equitable distribution of the benefits and burdens which exist in the healthcare system.¹⁵

Plan Purpose

The purposes of this Health Care Equity Plan are several:

- (1) To better educate the community regarding the inequities in the delivery of health care that serve to disenfranchise those most vulnerable residents—those who are Black and poor.
- (2) To illustrate why a “Health in All Policies” (HiAP) methodology is critical to the elimination or significant reduction of disparities in the health care system. HiAP is a collaborative approach to improving the health of all people by incorporating health care considerations into decision making across multiple sectors and policy areas.
- (3) To identify those health related concerns in our community that require immediate attention and to present strategies that help to focus the work and commitment to transformation, required for the success of this initiative, and
- (4) Ultimately, to provide suggested pathways toward the elimination of the barriers to Health Equity and Health Justice for everyone.

The Cumulative Impact of Healthcare Inequity

Racism and the inequities it creates are well documented as drivers of health disparities and overall poor health in the Black community. While these are avoidable differences in health outcomes among groups,¹⁶ the ongoing trauma of systemic or institutional racism^{17 18}, results in an unequal allocation of social resources that shape health status. Resulting imbalances can

¹³ Benfer EA. Health Justice: A Framework (and Call to Action) for the Elimination of Health Inequity and Social Injustice. *Am Univ. Law Rev.* 2015;65(2):275-351. In addition, a number of laws including “The Health Equity and Accountability Act”, the Health Care Rights Law and a number of Civil Rights laws have been developed and used in support of the right to health care for everyone.

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Fred M. Feinsod, MD, DSc, MPH, CMD, and Cathy Wagner, RN, MSN, MBA, CHPN, CLNC; *Annals of Long Term Care, Volume 16 - Issue 1 - January, 2008 - ALTC*

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Most often systemic racism and institutional racism are used interchangeably and is done so within this document

¹⁸ Systemic/Institutional Racism is defined by the Aspen Institute policies and practices within and across institutions that, intentionally or not, produce outcomes that chronically favor, or put a racial group at a disadvantage.

be seen in conditions that shape and define Social Determinants of Health.¹⁹ But beyond these things, evidence suggests that the stress of the experience of racism may have its own physical impact. “It’s about access and unequal treatment, but it’s also about much more than that” states April Thames, PhD, Associate Professor of Psychology and Director of the Social Neuroscience in Health Psychology lab at the University of Southern California.²⁰

The toxicity of lifelong exposure to discrimination has been found to impact health in general and neurologic health in particular.²¹ Several studies have shown a clear biological link between poor health outcomes and racism, even after controlling for other factors that might serve as proxy; access to health services for example.²² In fact, changes to the neurological, endocrine and immune systems have become common, contributing to a great number of additional health maladies including high rates of infant mortality, hypertension and heart disease.²³ The presence of these illnesses and other comorbidities render Black people more vulnerable to illnesses like COVID-19, shortens lifespans and increases medical complications from otherwise survivable diseases.²⁴

There are also real differences in how people are treated when they obtain care. The examples are many and range from providing significant misinformation (telling a patient with suspected Multiple Sclerosis that “Black people don’t get MS²⁵”) to disparities in the way illnesses are managed. For example, Black patients experiencing a stroke are one quarter less likely to be given thrombolysis, the treatment which is known to be most effective, than White patients.²⁶ In her book CASTE, Isabelle Wilkerson discusses that empirical studies show physicians often disregard the reports of pain from Black patients, wrongly believing that Blacks in particular have higher pain thresholds. This, according to Wilkerson, has led physicians to undertreat or deny pain medication to Black patients—even those with metastatic cancer—while readily prescribing medication to White patients reporting equivalent levels of pain. The disparity is so severe that Blacks as a group receive pain medication at levels beneath the threshold established by the World Health Organization.^{27 28}

¹⁹ COVID-19 Ohio Minority Health Strike Force Blueprint, 2020, page 8

²⁰ Shaw, Gina; Neurology Today, 7/9/2020; *It’s a Public Health Crisis—How Systemic Racism Can Be Neurotoxic for Black Americans*

²¹ Ibid

²² Shaw, Gina; Neurology Today, 7/9/2020; *It’s a Public Health Crisis—How Systemic Racism Can Be Neurotoxic for Black Americans*

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ Sanchez, Tatiana; The San Francisco Chronicle, 8;20/2020; *Does Racism Make Us Sick?*

²⁶ Shaw, Gina; Neurology Today, 7/9/2020; *It’s a Public Health Crisis—How Systemic Racism Can Be Neurotoxic for Black Americans*

²⁷ Wilkerson, Isabel, Caste, *The origins of our Discontents*, pp. 188

²⁸ Hoffman, Kelly M., et al., Racial Bias in Pain Assessment and Treatment Recommendations and False Beliefs about Biological Differences Between Blacks and Whites, *Proceeding of the National Academy of Sciences*, 113, April 19, 2016.

California Surgeon General Dr. Nadine Burke Harris is a pediatrician who has studied the profound health effects of childhood trauma and stress. Dr. Burke Harris identified the long term environmental and racially tinged experiences of Black and Brown people to be a major cause of the higher rates of COVID-19 in those communities. We (this country) have created these differences— and they are literally leading Black and Brown people to die in far greater numbers, than others” she said.²⁹

Health in All Policies Methodology

The Health in All Policies methodology should be strongly considered in developing the policies and practices required for the implementation of this plan. Health in All Policies (HiAP) is a collaborative approach that integrates and articulates health considerations into policymaking across a number of sectors intended to improve the health of all communities and people. HiAP recognizes that health is created by a multitude of factors beyond, beyond the scope of traditional public health activities.³⁰ Undeniably, factors associated with Social Determinants of Health (SDOH), serve to shape not only the quality of lives of those in our community but also their health status. Using a HiAP framework for the implementation of this plan allows for healthcare to be in the forefront of policy and decision making while supporting the seamless integration of both health equity and health justice concerns.

The Five Key Elements of Health in All Policies are as follows.³¹

1. Promote health, equity, and sustainability.

Health in All Policies promotes health, equity, and sustainability through two avenues: (1) incorporating health, equity, and sustainability into specific policies, programs, and processes, and (2) embedding health, equity, and sustainability considerations into government decision-making processes so that healthy public policy becomes the normal way of doing business. Promoting equity is an essential part of Health in All Policies.

2. Support inter-sectoral collaboration.

Health in All Policies brings together partners from many sectors to recognize the links between health and other issue and policy areas, breaks down silos, and builds new partnerships to promote health and equity and increase government efficiency. Agencies that are not typically considered as health agencies play a major role in shaping the economic, physical, social, and service environments in which people live, and therefore have an important role to play in promoting health and equity. A Health in All Policies approach focuses on deep and ongoing collaboration, rather than taking a superficial or one-off approach.

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ Centers for Disease Control; cdc.gov/policy/hiap

³¹ Rudolph, L., Caplan, J., Ben-Moshe, K., & Dillon, L. (2013). *Health in All Policies: A Guide for State and Local Governments*. Washington, DC and Oakland, CA: American Public Health Association and Public Health Institute. This section was taken in its entirety from this source.

3. Benefit multiple partners.

Health in All Policies is built upon the idea of “co-benefits” and “win-wins.” Health in All Policies work should benefit multiple partners, simultaneously addressing the goals of public health agencies and other agencies to benefit more than one end (achieve co-benefits) and create efficiencies across agencies (find win-wins). This concept is essential for securing support from partners and can reduce redundancies and ensure more effective use of scarce government resources. Finding a balance between multiple goals will sometimes be difficult, and requires negotiation, patience, and learning about and valuing others’ priorities.

4. Engage stakeholders.

Health in All Policies engages a variety of stakeholders, such as community members, policy experts, advocates, members of the private sector, and funders. Robust stakeholder engagement is essential for ensuring that work is responsive to community needs and for garnering valuable information necessary to create meaningful and impactful change.

5. Create structural or procedural change.

Over time, Health in All Policies creates permanent changes in how agencies relate to each other and how government decisions are made. This requires maintenance of both structures which can sustain inter-sectoral collaboration and mechanisms which can ensure a health and equity lens in decision-making processes across the whole of government. This can be thought of as “embedding” or “institutionalizing” Health in All Policies within existing or new structures and processes of government.

Ohio by The Numbers

When it comes to developing a health system rooted in the principles of health equity and justice, the numbers below will show that Ohio and Lucas county face significant challenges.

- Ohio **consistently ranks among the bottom half of states on measures of health and wellbeing.** For example, Ohio ranks 38 out of 50 states on **America’s Health Rankings 2019 report**.
- In the Health Policy Institute of Ohio’s **2019 Health Value Dashboard**, Ohio ranks **46 out of 50 states and D.C. on health value, a composite measure of population health and healthcare spending**, This means that Ohioans are less healthy and spend more on health care than people in most other states.
- Ohio is in the bottom quartile (42 out of 50 states) for Black child wellbeing based on the **Annie E. Casey Foundation 2017 Race for Results Report**, indicating that Black children in Ohio do not have adequate supports to achieve optimal health.
- Ohioans of color face large gaps in outcomes across socio-economic factors, community conditions and health care. This, in turn, drives poorer health outcomes among Ohioans of color, such as higher rates of infant mortality and premature death.

- Women of color and low-income mothers, are [several times more likely](#) to suffer from postpartum mental illness but [less likely to receive treatment](#) than other mothers, according to recent studies.
- According to the study, “Suicide attempts rising among Black teens.” Reuters, Oct 16, 2019, while the overall proportion of teens reporting suicidal thoughts or plans declined for all racial and ethnic groups during the study period, the proportion of **Black teens attempting suicide surged by 73%**.
- A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report found that Black women are about three times more likely to die from causes related to pregnancy, compared to White women in the United States. (Source: “[Huge Racial Disparities Found in Deaths Linked to Pregnancy](#),” New York Times, May 7, 2019)
- In Cleveland, Ohio Black babies are dying at a rate of 7 times that of White babies. Generally, in Ohio, Black infants die at a rate of 2-3 times that of White infants³²
- Black children are almost three and a half times more likely to die within 30 days after surgery than White children, according to a new study published in the journal Pediatrics³³
- Twenty percent of Ohio children live in poverty (Spotlight on Poverty and Opportunity 2019)
- Blacks have the highest mortality rate for all cancers combined compared with any other racial and ethnic group.³⁴
- The likelihood of having two or more significant conditions is 60% by the age of 75-79 years, and more than 75% by 85-89 years causing most Seniors to suffer complications from comorbidities.³⁵
- Food insecurity in Ohio has nearly doubled from 13.9% to 23%³⁶
- In Ohio, more than one-in-six older adults (17.6 percent) face the threat of hunger. Ohio is among the 10 worst states in the nation for food insecurity among older adults, with over 457,000 Ohioans over age 60 who are either “marginally food insecure” or “food insecure,” according to a recent report by Community Solutions, “Fighting Food Insecurity Among Older Adults” (2017)
- Suicide attempts for Black teens rose 73% in 2019 while they fell for every other group.

³² 2018 Infant Mortality Annual Report, Ohio Department of Health

³³ Bruck, Taylor, *Black Children Face a Higher Risk of Death After Surgery*, News1; July 27, 2020

³⁴ Ibid

³⁵ Day, Dr. Richard, *Comorbidities in Older Americans*, GP. August 2, 2017

³⁶ National Association of Food Banks, Press Release, June 15, 2020; *Food Insecurity Rates Nearly Double Since COVID-19*

Lucas County by the Numbers³⁷

- 19.3% of Lucas County residents live in poverty, higher than the national average of 13%.
- Those poorest are women 18-34 years of age
- 38.2% of Toledo children live in poverty, compared to 28.1% in Lucas county (Toledo and Lucas County Poverty Study 2019).
- In Lucas County, white babies died at a rate of 4.7 per 1,000 live births, while the rate for Black babies was 13.7.
- In Lucas County, Ohio and the United States in 2012-2016, Blacks had higher cancer mortality rates than Whites.
- In Lucas County, one in nine (11%) Lucas County Black adults were diagnosed with cancer at some point in their lives, increasing to 25% of those over the age of 65 based on the 2017 Health Assessment.
- In Lucas County, Blacks have a higher rate of co-morbidities than Whites³⁸
- 36% of those over 65 in Lucas County rated their health as fair or poor³⁹
- Four percent (4%) of Black adults reported they had heart disease, increasing to 13% of those with incomes less than \$25,000 and 14% of those over the age of 65 according to Healthy Lucas County's 2018 Community Health Assessment.
- According to the same report, 22% of Lucas County African American adults had been diagnosed with diabetes, increasing to 45% of those over the age of 65.
- By 2030, older adults will make up 25% of the population in Lucas County.
- 28% of Lucas County residents and 1 in 4 children experience food insecurity⁴⁰

Health Statistics for Black American Men⁴¹

Without a doubt, we are losing a generation of Black men in America. Black men suffer worse health than any other racial group in America. As a group, Black men have the lowest life expectancy and the highest death rate from specific causes when compared to both men and women of other racial and ethnic groups.

Statistically speaking, Black men live 7 years less than men of other racial groups. They have a higher death than Black women for all leading causes of death. Black men suffer more from preventable oral diseases that are treatable, have a higher incidence of diabetes and prostate cancer. In Lucas County, Black men have a 38% obesity rate and 44% are considered overweight. Suicide is the third leading cause of death in 15-24-year-old Black men. In 2017,

³⁷ Health Data for African Americans in Lucas County can be deemed unreliable due to low response rate to 2017 African American Health Assessment data collection methodology conducted by the Lucas County Health Department. Some of the data represented in this section is from state and federal sources whose methodology can be considered more accurate.

³⁸ 2026-2017 Lucas County Health Department African American Health Assessment, pp. 53-65

³⁹ Ibid

⁴⁰ Connecting Kids to Meals, Connectingkidstomeals.org

⁴¹ This section is taken in large part from; Kennard, Jerry, Health Statistics for Black American Men; very well health, June 24, 2020

homicide was the number one cause of death for young Black men between the ages of 15 and 44.

Recommendations

Health inequality and a lack of attention to health justice exists throughout our health care system. While a number of recommendations for improvement can be proffered, we focus on those listed below:

The Purposeful Incorporation of the Health in All Policies (HiAP) methodology in all areas of Social Determinants of Health. The result of the utilization of the HiAP approach will be health, equity, and sustainability. Additionally, the engagement of stakeholders in true collaborative efforts will drive effective change.

Intentional and Authentic Engagement of Blacks in the Development of Programs Created to Serve the Black Community. Here, we underscore the critical nature of involving every level of the Black community in planning from the outset. Understanding what will impact a community requires meaningful input from that very same community. To achieve Health Equity, authentic collaboration, transparency and diversity is not an option, but a requirement.

Highlighting the Availability of Services as well as Stressing Personal Responsibility. In our community, a wide range of services are being offered, yet Blacks continue to suffer health-related challenges at a much higher rate. Take for example, our statistics about Black men in Lucas County suffering from obesity and being overweight. For many, these are conditions that can be addressed through healthier eating and engaging in physical activity. Black men must take personal responsibility for their health. No one else will or even can do this for them.

Identify ongoing Implicit Bias trainings that health care workers must attend; increase workforce diversity overall in the Health Care System, and inspire all community organizations (board members, leaders and employees) as well as community members to engage in Implicit Bias trainings to help dismantle racism at all levels of the Health Care System. Concurrently, it is imperative that the health and human service providers across geographical areas-communicate and collaborate to maximize available services and resources to serve the Black community.

Devise a strategic plan for improving co-morbidities for those in the Black community who suffer from conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, high cholesterol, cardiovascular disease, COPD, and obesity. The plan must include a wide variety of points of emphasis including, but not limited to healthy eating, active living, engaging in preventive screenings, the elimination/reduction of tobacco and alcohol products through available cessation programs, encouraging regular medical check-ups and increased consultations with a family doctor. It is important to note that attention must be placed on the often-overlooked barrier of transportation as public transportation is a

primary means of getting to work, going to medical appointments, and even for grocery shopping. Without access to transportation, many of the tactics outlined above will fail.

Confront Infant Mortality Rates in the Black Community. At every level (federally, state-wide and locally), the infant mortality rates among Blacks well exceeds that of other races and ethnicities. The keys to reducing these figures involve (i) educating Black mothers about proper care methods to be utilized and connecting them with proper available and affordable resources, (ii) tackling and resolving root cause concerns that Black mothers hold that preclude them from seeking appropriate health care services during pregnancy; (iii) providing effective training for health care providers on racism and implicit bias and (iv) developing a full continuum of maternal and infant care engaging all relevant types of providers.

Addressing Food Insecurity and Overall Health. According to USDA, 22.5% of Black households are food insecure which is significantly higher than the national average of 12.3%. Lack of access to healthy foods results in a myriad of ramifications. Due to alarmingly high poverty rates in the Black community, decisions are often being made to pay rent, utilities and other necessities ahead of healthy food purchases due to limited resources. Specific tactics for addressing food insecurity include:

(i) Increasing daily access to healthy foods and fresh produce for children, adults and seniors. This is critically important because presently, Black communities are often disproportionately surrounded by food deserts. “Food deserts” are an area where people do not have access to affordable and nutritious food. As such, unified and coordinated efforts to make public transportation, ride-sharing and other manners of transportation available to residents will be vital.

(ii) A comprehensive and unified effort to educate children, adults and seniors about the federal programs designed to support those in need will increase access. These federal programs include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Child Nutrition Programs (i.e., the National School Lunch Program, the Summer Food Service Program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program with a focus on children and seniors to name a few, etc). All these programs offer supplemental funding and benefits to parents as well as access to free nutritious meals for kids. For children, academic performance is directly related to poor nutrition (lower test scores, lack of sleep, increased tardiness, repeated grades, more absences and behavioral instances that interrupt the learning day). As such, it is difficult to break the cycle of poverty when kids are set up to fail at an early point in their lives.

(iii) Healthy eating and engaging in physical activity are interrelated. Members of the Black community must not only become educated about the nexus between these two but must be willing to engage in both

regularly to drive towards a healthy lifestyle for increased strength, endurance, vitality and life expectancy. While joining a gym or enrolling in a yoga/Zumba class is ideal, at a minimum, members of the Black community should be encouraged to walk 20 to 30 minutes three to four times a week to help improve their overall health.

Behavioral Health is often a hidden, but critical factor that contributes to overall health. We must work to ensure access to comprehensive, integrated mental health and addiction screenings and services for the Black community including the promotion of early intervention measures. To experience any level of success with this, proper execution of programs and messaging strategies that reduce the stigma associated with seeking help for mental health and addiction services in the Black community must be carefully crafted and deployed. Similar to the efforts being done at the statewide level, local agencies must work together to increase culturally meaningful screening, early intervention, and linkage to treatment and recovery services across the spectrum for mental and substance abuse disorders. (See COVID-19 Ohio Minority Health Strike Force Blueprint.) This pandemic has highlighted the acute need for enhanced attention to be placed on the availability of Behavioral Health services. There has been sickness, death, job loss, uncertainty, financial challenges, racial unrest, and isolation.

Inside of these efforts, however, we must pay particularly close attention to the increasing Black teen suicide rates and “cries for help” resulting from peer pressure, stress, domestic abuse at home, bullying and other triggers.

As noted above, a myriad of critical issues needs to be addressed all of which contribute to overall health. Some additional issues that will need to be addressed include (1) environmental issues that are alarmingly present in the Black community with unsafe housing conditions or the presence of lead, for instance as well as providing clean drinking water along with other factors that can hamper or enhance one’s life; (2) combatting stress, violence, trauma and toxic situations, (3) providing effective, comprehensive services for Seniors and for individuals with disabilities, (4) contending with isolation due to COVID-19 and especially for aging Seniors, and (5) dealing with the digital divide, just to name a few.

None of the above changes will be possible unless there is coordinated collaboration among service providers across the region along with a suitable increase in funding investments in the service organizations that render these indispensable services.

PART V: THE HOUSING PILLAR

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the housing pillar is to address the racial disparities in Toledo's housing market in the areas of rental, homeownership, and community development. Housing is a basic need, thus essential for personal, family and community stability. The call to improve current and legacy living conditions of black people must be addressed while simultaneously working to improve the quality of education, creating living wage opportunities and building an economic future for a better community. The Housing pillar equally influences the current and generational impact by the clear lack of economic, education, mental health outcomes and physical health indicators. An individual's inability to maintain a home reduces the capability to earn a safe and affordable housing option, overpowers one's psychological and physical health, long-term concentration, successful graduation from school, and in the place of employment.

The historic redlining and other government-backed discriminatory lending practices embolden segregation and disinvestment that impacts the black community today. The Housing pillar uplifts the urgency to recognize this injustice as a public health issue. The ability for an individual to own a stable, quality, safe and affordable house impacts all health outcomes. According to leading health experts, blacks have a shorter live expectancy and represent the majority of diseases and conditions that impact health indicators. LEAD is a public health crisis. Since 2016, nearly 1,000 Toledo children age 6 and younger have had confirmed blood-lead levels higher than the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's threshold for concern. Estimates are that nearly 3,500 children in the city now are suffering the lifelong, permanent disabilities that come with lead poisoning (Toledo Blade 2019)

The City of Toledo's residents are majority renters and not homeowners, and Black Toledoans are the majority of renters. In 2019, according to a Blade analysis of federal mortgage data, Black Toledoans are twice as likely to receive a denied conventional home loan application compared to other race applicants.

Black renters, especially single mothers, are evicted at a higher rate than other races. Studies suggest that there is a high correlation between eviction rates, minorities and poverty. The high unemployment rate for black workers and increased home prices create a high probability that applicants won't secure the necessary down-payment to achieve homeownership.

Educational advancements also factor into the link to homeownership, for both blacks and whites, but black households with a bachelor's degree are less likely to own their home compared to whites who earned a high school diploma.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

a. The Market

The city of Toledo has approximately 274,973 residents. Of that, 27.1% are Black, 74,242. Toledo's population is declining between 1-3% annually.

The median household income in Toledo in 2018 was \$35,339, for Black Toledo residents, the median household income was \$21,788, whereas the states median household income was \$54,021

Toledo has a poverty rate of 26.5%, whereas 37% of Black Toledo residents are living in poverty

Sales Market - The median home value in Toledo in 2018 was \$78,400, whereas the states' median home value was \$144,200. A home for some families represent household wealth and often represents the most significant asset on a household's balance sheet, according to the Survey of Consumer Finances. However, the racial gap in the homeownership rate has limited the financial benefits that accrue to black households, contributing to the broader racial disparity in wealth accumulation.

Rental Market - Some studies have covered up the racial disparities by labeling the issues in the black communities under the banner of poverty. Pointing the blame for the lack of affordable housing is due to the transit nature of people in poverty. Rent in Toledo is also considered to be on the inexpensive, with median rent averaging \$709 per month, compared with the national median rent rate of \$1,419 per month. 51% of all renters in Toledo are paying rates that are considered a burden to the renter.

b. Housing Crisis Statistics

- In 2017, the black homeownership rate (41.8 percent) was the lowest of all racial and ethnic groups. Between 2000 and 2017, the black homeownership rate dropped 4.8 percentage points—a loss of about 770,000 black homeowners—while the homeownership rates of other racial and ethnic groups either remained constant or increased.
- Median household income for black households is substantially lower than for white households (\$38,183 versus \$61,363 in 2017). The homeownership gap is larger for low-income households likely because low-income white families, on average, have higher household wealth, and young white adults are more likely to have access to financial support from their parents. Reducing the income gap would reduce the black-white homeownership gap by about 9 percentage points.

- More than 50 percent of white households have a FICO credit score above 700, compared with only 20.6 percent of black families. Thirty-three percent of black households with credit histories have insufficient credit and lack a credit score, while only 17.9 percent of white households have missing credit scores. The share of black families with a mortgage would increase 10.6 percentage points if their credit score distribution were the same as the distribution for white households.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The COVID pandemic elevated the urgency to address the inevitable onslaught of evictions and potential homelessness post CARES ACT protections. We see the need to create a sustainable plan for safe, affordable housing within black communities. The following is a list of tangible solutions:

Renters

- More money and easier access to emergency rental assistance programs
- Pay to Stay ordinance
 - Local eviction moratorium
- Eviction Taskforce with member(s) from the Black community
- Outreach and Education
- Funding for and Creation of safe, healthy and affordable rental housing
- Creation of Tenants Associations
- Right to Counsel for eviction cases
- Eviction Record Sealing
- Holding Slum Lords responsible for conditions issues
 - Lead
 - Air Quality – mold/mildew
 - Repairs to make properties safe, healthy, and habitable.

Homeowners / Buyers

- Change lending practices
 - Demand policy changes nationally
 - provide sustainable alternative solutions at the local level
- Build Trust with lending institutions - Improving diversity within the industry offers an opportunity to build Trust with black borrowers who have lost confidence in financial institutions from past experiences.
 - Improving Loan Officer Diversity/Inclusion
 - Promote an equitable and accessible housing finance system
- Outreach and Education

- create opportunities to simplify and improve accessibility to down payment assistance programs.
 - **Urban Institute** states there are more than 2,500+ down payment assistance programs across the country with several of the program's funds not being utilized. This is because of a lack of awareness and understanding about the availability of the programs.
- outreach and counseling for renters and mortgage-ready millennials
- Sustain homeownership
 - Pre-purchase and Post Purchase Counseling and support services
 - Legacy building
 - Education

Community Development

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) is an approach to sustainable community-driven development. Beyond the mobilization of a particular community, it is concerned with how to link micro-assets to the macro-environment. Asset Based Community Development's premise is that *communities can drive the development process themselves by identifying and mobilizing existing, but often unrecognized assets*. Thereby responding to challenges and creating local social improvement and economic development.

- ABCD Approach
 - Individuals – EVERYONE IS AND / OR HAS ASSETS AND GIFTS.
 - At the center are residents of the community who all have gifts and skills. Individual gifts and assets need to be recognized and identified. In community development you cannot do anything with people's needs, only their assets. Deficits or needs are only useful to institutions.
 - Associations – PEOPLE DISCOVER EACH OTHER'S GIFTS.
 - Small informal groups of people, such as clubs, working with a common interest as volunteers are called associations in ABCD, and are critical to community mobilization. They don't control anything; they are just coming together around a common interest by their individual choice.
 - Institutions – PEOPLE ORGANIZED AROUND ASSETS.
 - Paid groups of people that generally are professionals who are structurally organized are called institutions. They include government agencies and private business, as well as schools, etc. They can all be valuable resources. The assets of these institutions help the community capture valuable resources and establish a sense of civic responsibility.
 - Place based assets – PEOPLE LIVE HERE FOR A REASON.
 - Land, buildings, heritage, public and green spaces are all examples of assets for the community. Every place where people choose to be was chosen for good reasons, and whilst people remain those reasons remain.

A place might be a center of natural resources, a hub of activity, living skills, transit connection or marketplace. Whatever the strengths of a place are, the people of the community will be the closest to understanding it.

- Connections – INDIVIDUALS CONNECT INTO A COMMUNITY.
 - Asset Based Community Development recognizes that the exchange between people sharing their gifts and assets creates connections, and these connections are a vital asset to the community. People whose gift is to find and create these connections are called connectors. It takes time to find out about individuals; this is normally done through building relationships, person by person. The social relationships, networks and trust form the social capital of a community. ABCD recognizes the value of these assets and is a practical application of building relationships to increase social capital.
- Focus on mixed income-based communities
 - Discourage black flight
 - Build amenities for families
 - Improve parks and recreations within black communities
 - Bike trails and lanes
 - Improve Shopping options that are close to home
 - Grocery stores within 2 miles of home
 - Increase pride in the community
 - Alternative security and promote safety
 - Promote cleanliness and lawn care
 - Home maintenance and repair classes
 - Tax education
- Improve Housing Stock and options within black communities
 - Tackle housing supply constraints and affordability
 - Create tax incentives for first-time buyers, buyers that renovate dilapidated houses, and renters moving into homeownership
 - Use opportunity zone investments for developers/builders to build condo communities within those areas.
 - Rezone areas with large lots of unused land for factory-built homes and manufactured and modular homes
 - "some cities have taken bold actions to reform zoning and land-use regulations. Factory-built housing production, like manufactured and modular housing, could also increase homeownership affordability and supply..... Contrary to common perception, recent research highlights that some manufactured homes appreciate at similar rates as site-built homes.

Manufactured housing has evolved and could be an affordable solution for helping black families get on the path to homeownership." Urban Institution, Alana Mccargo - five-point plan to improve black homeownership.

- Blight elimination Plan for impact of community safety and livability
- Information for renter and homeowner support regarding rehab/ renovation and taxes

Research Sources

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<https://www.nareb.com/african-american-homeownership-falls-50-year-low/>

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<https://datausa.io/profile/geo/lucas-county-oh#housing>

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2019/07/15/469838/racial-disparities-home-appreciation/>

<https://www.urban.org/data-viz>

Education, workforce, and economic pillar reports.

PART VI: THE WORKFORCE PILLAR

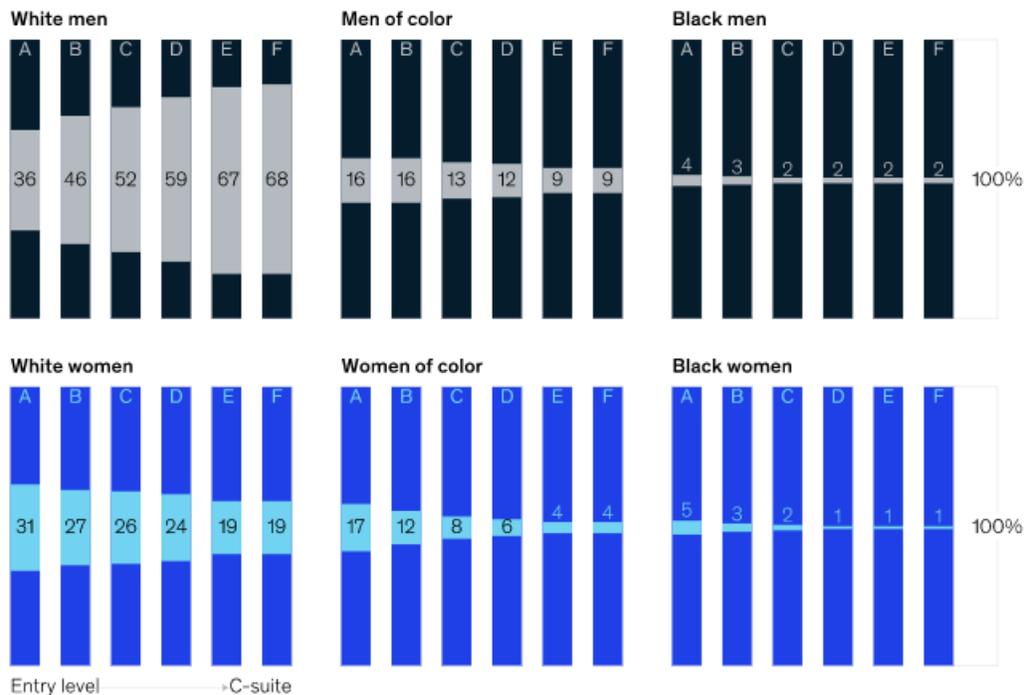
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Workforce at a Glance

The pipeline to highly compensated executive roles sheds professionals of color, especially Black professionals, at every level.

Share of professionals by role category, %¹

A Entry-level professional, B manager, C senior manager/director, D vice president, E senior vice president, F C-suite professional



¹From study of 279 North America-focused companies. Figures may not sum to 100%, because of rounding.
Source: *Women in the Workplace 2018*, joint report by LeanIn.Org and McKinsey, October 2018, womenintheworkplace.com

McKinsey
& Company

With the June unemployment rate being 11.1% for the United States, 10.1% for White Americans, and 15.4% for Black Americans, the workforce issues that have plagued us for decades are even more relevant now. During an economic crisis, African-American are usually the first to shed job. According to a recent [McKinsey Report](#) “39 percent of jobs held by black workers—seven million jobs—are now vulnerable to reductions in hours or pay, temporary furloughs, or permanent layoffs”. During June 2020, Black Ohioans were 13.1% of state residents, but represented 25% (Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services) of displaced workers filing initial unemployment claims. This data holds true for Lucas County where Black Americans were approximately 20.3% of the County residents, but represented 35% (Ohio

Department of Jobs and Family Services) of displaced workers filing initial unemployment claims.

More now than ever, it is very evident that to start addressing workforce issues you must first start by addressing the tone at the top of an organization. Boards and executive level positions lack diversity, especially when you are looking specifically at African- American board members, C-suite executives, and VP-level leaders in Corporate America. Boards and senior leadership set culture, policy, and corporate norms. This tone impacts recruiting, hiring decisions, promotions, and inclusion. The board and the leadership team decide what is going to be measured. If a diverse and inclusive work environment is going to happen, there needs to be diverse people and mindsets at the decision-making tables. As of July 21, 2020, there are only 3 Black CEOs serving at Fortune 500 companies- Kenneth Frazier of Merck & Co., Marvin Ellison of Lowe's, and Roger Ferguson, Jr. of TIAA. This number is down from seven less than a decade earlier. There are currently no African American women serving as a Fortune 500 CEO. In fact, there have only been 2 in the history of the Fortune 500 (Ursula Burns, former CEO of Xerox and Mary Winston, the former interim CEO of Bed, Bath, & Beyond).

SITUATION ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Corporations have identified this issue and are hiring more Black board members. In 2019, for the first time in history the Russell 3,000 had more than 10% of ethnic minorities populating their board seats, with 4.1% of these seats being held by African-Americans. The Nonprofit sector tends to do better than corporate as it relates to diversity, according to a BoardSource report in 2017, 4% of Nonprofit CEOs, 5% of Board Chairs, and 8% of Board members were Black. If cultivating a diverse inclusive workforce is going to be a priority, organizations need to think strategically, look inward to cultivate a pipeline of African-American leaders, recruit African-American board members and talent to fill impactful open positions.

Recruiting and retaining top talent is one of the top imperatives of most thriving businesses. Talent pool and development discussions populate most human resources departments' agendas. The focus should be on the fact that top talent wants to be in an inclusive culture. The business case for an inclusive culture is clear. According to a McKinsey study companies who have diverse talent improve their "customer orientation, employee satisfaction, and decision making". Organizations must look at their recruiting strategy and tools to ensure that their practices are meeting their goals. Top talent can be found via an in-house recruiting list and at consistently attended career fairs, but if the list you have used has not changed in years and it hasn't resulted in a diverse workforce, then the list needs to be reviewed.

When reviewing the list, ensure it includes Historically Black Colleges & Universities, Community Colleges, Trade Schools, and career fairs hosted by minority professional organizations. Also, be open to hiring employees that are re-entering the workforce from institutions. There are local workforce re-entry programs that you can partner with to help your

employees be successful. Review your assessment tools and process to ensure tools are being properly used and biases have been ruled out. Large corporations have had to pay millions because biases have been found in their pre-employment personality assessments.

Once you have identified and recruited talent makes sure your application process is inclusive. Ensure there are not questions on your application that perpetuate pay inequity and other biases. Salary history questions have long been used to screen out candidates or offer them an inequitable compensation package. This practice was banned in Toledo in 2019 through the enactment of Ordinance 173-19, titled "Pay Equity Act to Prohibit the Inquiry and Use of Salary History in Hiring Practices in the City of Toledo". Biases around not hiring employees with police records disproportionately impact African-Americans due to their disproportionate interactions with the police, which has been at the center of the recent social unrest. Review your application to ensure that you "Ban the Box", where you do not ask about arrest history and remove the questions about criminal history from your initial job application forms, while only asking about criminal history only in instances where it relates to the job in question. In 2016 Ohio passed House Bill 56 where they partially "banned the box", by limiting criminal records used in public employee hiring.

Once you have hired diverse talent you have to have an inclusive environment and processes in place to retain and develop talent. Diversity & Inclusion is not a human resource program but is about people being allowed to bring and to be comfortable with bringing their authentic-self to work. This commitment to Diversity & Inclusion must not only be the CEOs and the Board of Director's commitment but must cascade through executive leadership, managers, and front-line staff. An organizations' strategic plan must be reflective of this by being created in a manner that does a broad environmental scan which includes what is going on in all communities that impact the organization. Metrics and priorities that measure diversity and the impact of diversity should be considered and monitored. Inclusion is a talent & business strategy. According to the Harvard Business Review, companies who retain a diverse leadership team have a competitive advantage as they are 45% more likely to report a growth in market share over the previous year. Companies with a diverse leadership team are also 70% more likely to capture a new market.

Access to work and the ability to thrive in careers that pay a living wage is key to helping the African-American community close the wealth gap (see Economic Justice Pillar). It is challenging knowing that you are not getting paid what you are worth, especially when operating in non-inclusive environments. With the proper focus on workforce equity issues, successful, profitable, diverse, and inclusive workplaces are attainable.

SUMMARY

- Establish accountability for equity, diversity & inclusion at the senior management, CEO & Board Level. (Example: Organizations can take a stand against racism by being active with the CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion network)

- Meeting employees where they are. Focus on recruiting, developing and retaining employees reentering society from prison and other institutions (re-entry). As well as, recruiting employees from all levels of the social- economic continuum.
- Review recruiting processes and determine if they are inclusive.
- Review application processes and determine if they are inclusive.
- Ensure your organization is paying equitable wages across demographic groups, is supporting policies that ensure adequate childcare for working parents and is providing compensation & benefit packages that have suitable healthcare.

Additional Sources

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Monthly data (<https://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.us.htm> and <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t02.htm>)

McKinsey & Company, Delivering Through Diversity, January 18, 2018 (<https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organizations/our-insights/delivering-through-diversity>)

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