

**Buffalo is building
a new shared
future, one with
prosperity, equity,
and opportunity, on
every side of Main
Street.**

**Together, we
are tackling the
divisions and
disparities that hold
us all back.**

**The Racial Equity Dividend:
Buffalo's Great Opportunity.**

Buffalo is shaking off its 20th century slump.

Energy, enthusiasm, investment, and hope for the future now fill the city's streets as well as the headlines of news stories shared across the country.

But this report reveals there is a racial equity gap that creates a divide within our community – a divide that prevents all of us from moving forward.

Buffalo is building a new shared future, one with prosperity, equity, and opportunity on every side of Main Street.

Together we are tackling the divisions and disparities that hold us all back.

Fulfilling our region's potential will require policy changes within government and will require institutions and businesses to explicitly focus on diversity, inclusion, and equity. It will require eliminating the disparities that are created across our segregated neighborhoods, and it will require a broader community and individual understanding of the way these issues impact us all on a daily basis.

With the momentum already underway, it is clear Buffalo believes in change, Buffalo is committed to progress, and that Buffalo is going to benefit – big time – from a collective commitment to achieving **racial equity: situational fairness that eliminates the outcome differentials that are too often predicted by race.**

Buffalo believes in change. The time is now to close the gaps in equity and create a region ready for the future.

A wealth of research informs us that segregation and racial inequity are bad for individuals, society, and the economy. In order to become a truly great city and region, the next chapter of Buffalo's history must not be a story of contrasts and divisions, of different sides of Main Street, of different levels of opportunity, divided by neighborhood and divided by race.

Because of a web of past and present challenges – formed by the policies and actions of **institutions**, of lingering **place-based** segregation, and in conscious and subconscious actions and reactions of everyday **people** – people of color face disadvantages and disparate opportunities compared to their white peers.

Ensuring that racial equity is achieved while we improve outcomes for everyone will be even more important in an increasingly diverse region and nation – as business, culture, and even relationships are ever more connected at a global scale.

The Racial Equity Dividend: Buffalo's Great Opportunity.

Buffalo is committed to progress. Understanding racial equity gaps helps us track our progress as we work to close them.

Racial equity gaps -- the disparate opportunities and outcomes experienced by different races -- can be witnessed across a host of indicators in **education and job readiness**, in **criminal justice and safety**, in **quality of life and neighborhoods**, and in **income and wealth**.

Across each person's lifetime, these equity gaps overlap, with disparate opportunities in one area impacting differential outcomes in others. Though trends in some categories are headed in the right direction, setbacks are occurring in others. But substantial gaps remain across all categories for most people of color, and these gaps are often most pronounced for African Americans.

In order to overcome these gaps and improve prosperity for everyone, the region must have an intentional focus on racial equity.

Buffalo is going to benefit, big time. When we close the gaps, we will all benefit.

Buffalo can achieve a Racial Equity Dividend: the benefits that the entire region will see economically, in more vibrant neighborhoods, and in a higher quality of life when all people have access to the same level of opportunity.

Erasing the racial equity gap will be game changing for our region.

Closing the racial equity gap in...

...education and job readiness would mean **over \$1 billion** in increased regional GDP annually.



...criminal justice would mean nearly **54,000 individuals with reduced barriers and enhanced access to workforce participation** over the next decade.



...our neighborhoods would mean **more than 36,000 additional families purchasing a home**.



...income and wealth would mean an **additional \$12 billion in wealth** for area families.



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Buffalo believes in change

Changes in our economy, our waterfront, our population, and in our outlook are crucial pieces of our shared prosperity.

Buffalo is the Queen City on the Lake.

Buffalo's majestic position at the confluence of Lake Erie and the Niagara River draws people from around the country and around the globe. Buffalo was built by people of all cultures and backgrounds. Before settlers crossed the Atlantic, native populations nurtured an impressive legacy that impacts our region to this day. From the opening of the Erie Canal to the Great Migration, to families from Puerto Rico, Burma, and Somalia — people of every heritage, perspective, and hue have added to the richness of diversity in our city.

The nation is becoming more diverse by the day, and by 2040 a majority of the country's residents will be people of color. In Buffalo Niagara, our diversity also continues to increase and is helping shape a resurgence in struggling neighborhoods, stabilizing our region's population for the first time in decades, and providing our workforce for the future.

Education & Job Readiness

Criminal Justice & Safety

Quality of Life & Neighborhoods

Income & Wealth



Why equity? Why now?

**Buffalo is the
City of No
Illusions.**

In good times or in bad, Buffalo sees through to what is real. No matter the odds, deep down we know what is most important.

We all want a good paying job so we can support our families. We want healthy, vibrant, and connected communities so we can enjoy Buffalo's unsurpassed quality of life. We want to leave the city a better place for future generations, and we want our kids to have the best opportunities to reach their full potential and find fulfilling careers that allow them to raise their families here as well.

These are the common values that unite us.

When we envision our ideal Buffalo, we envision an equitable community where all people have the opportunity, resources, and tools needed to achieve their potential, and to lead healthy and fulfilling lives with rewarding work.

We envision a Buffalo where everyone has the ability to access, experience, and participate in all our region holds.

Our region's renewed economic outlook gives us the unique opportunity to fulfill this vision and ensure we are creating enduring prosperity for our shared future.

But the inability for all to participate in what Buffalo has to offer has divided us for too long.

We live in separate and unequal neighborhoods, attend inequitable schools, and have inequitable access to jobs, housing, parks, entertainment, and services.

Outdated and misguided policies of a much different past divided us by race, class, and ethnicity.

The impact of these policies and practices is still apparent today.

Being divided has too often turned us against each other. When we don't see ourselves in the person on the other side of the street, or the neighborhood around the corner, we fail to recognize that our challenges are shared challenges, that our hopes and dreams, needs, and wants -- as Buffalonians -- are fundamentally the same.

But, we know what holds one of us back, holds us all back. We know that when our neighbors can't prosper, none of us can truly reach our potential. When we allow anyone's potential to go unrealized, our region suffers the consequence.

We know when we don't have enough skilled workers to fill available jobs, businesses suffer, and without everyone having the ability to participate, our economy suffers as a whole.

We know when family members can't get opportunities here, they move away. When we lose neighbors, the houses

in our neighborhoods go vacant, shops and services close, our communities lose vitality and our tax base diminishes, we can't afford to maintain our parks and roads, and we end up cutting teachers, police, and fire fighters.

Inclusion = growth

Metro areas with high rates of racial inclusion have positive growth rates in employment and population.³

We know when our reputation suffers because of our entrenched segregation and our deep inequities, we fail to attract high quality workers and entrepreneurs looking for diverse, vibrant, and integrated communities.

And we know when we fail to celebrate the diversity that is all around us, we are ill preparing our children for an increasingly multi-cultural world.

Segregation holds us all back

People of all races have limited economic opportunity in highly segregated regions.⁴

But we also know, and we have proven, as a community we are better than that.

We have come together to turn around an economy once thought a lost cause; to reignite a downtown that is once again the business, entertainment, and residential hub for our region; to re-envision and recreate

a waterfront that once drew more derisive jokes than people; and to change the perception of our city. But most importantly, we have come together to change our own outlook and belief in our own community.

The lights are back on in Buffalo and we see very clearly the progress that we've made as well as the challenges ahead of us. We see clearly that the only way to finish the work of remaking our city is working together, side by side and pulling in the same direction.

That's why we've come together to face inequity head on, to move beyond our divided past and call people in to our new shared future. People and organizations from all walks of life and from every sector — business, government, civic, community, philanthropic, academic — have joined in the work of ensuring all people have the opportunity to succeed and the chance to be a part of the new Buffalo.

In actions big and small we are building Buffalo together, so that we all grow stronger.

Our Future Workforce

33% of the region's K-12 students — representing our future workforce — are children of color.¹

Education is key

By 2020, 43 percent of all jobs in the country will require an Associate's or higher degree.²

¹ New York State Education Department, 2014.

² University of Southern California Program for Environmental and Regional Equity, Policy Link, 2015.

³ Eberts, Ericcek, Kleinhenz, 2006.

⁴ Chetty, Hendren, Kline, Saez, 2013.

A changing region in a changing nation

In the later part of the 20th century, Buffalo wasn't good at change. Most news was bad news. The opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway, the loss of the steel plants, and the decline of manufacturing led to the fall of downtown and the decline of established neighborhoods across the region. The pain of these economic changes was real and profound, rattling the foundations of all that had come to define us as a welcoming community of progress and opportunity.

But in the 21st century, Buffalo is relearning how good change can be. Changes in our economy have led to a new wave of high-skilled jobs and an unprecedented building boom as new businesses, new apartments, and condos sprout throughout the city.

Changes on our waterfront have brought hundreds of thousands to once forgotten places and inspired a new generation to believe in Buffalo again.

Changes in our population have seen young people and families investing in the city and beyond, spurring vitality and hope in neighborhoods across the region.

Our regional resurgence has been sparked by a reawakening of our entrepreneurial spirit. The new ideas that are turning our fortunes around could only have happened when people from varied backgrounds and experiences came together in new and exciting ways.

Retaining and attracting diverse talent is a phenomenon that builds on itself, and Buffalo is on the cusp of a wave of change with vast potential to take our region to the next level.

Our Changing Neighborhoods

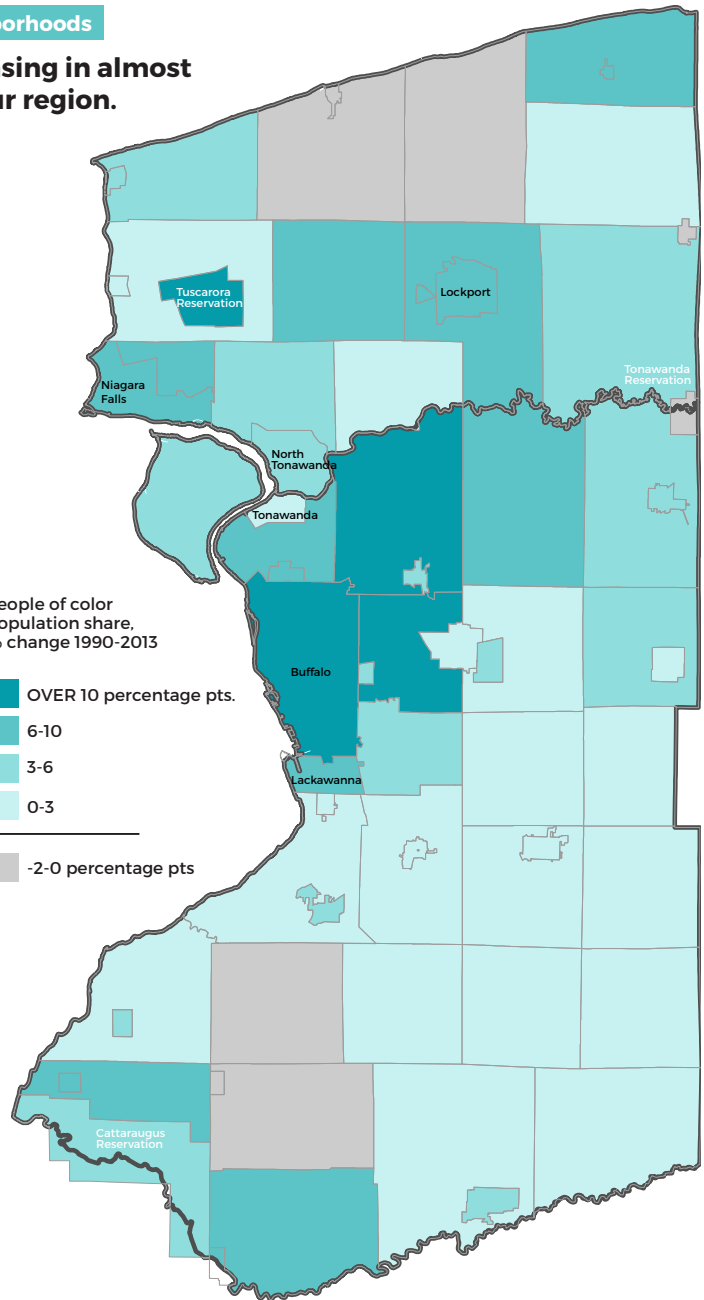
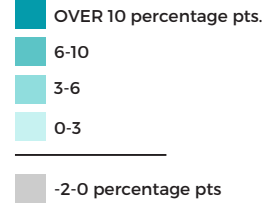
Diversity is increasing in almost every corner of our region.

Municipalities that have become...

...more diverse

...less diverse

People of color population share, % change 1990-2013

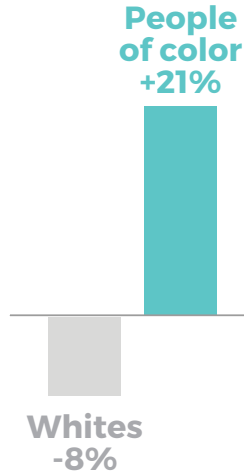


SOURCE: U.S. Census (1990), U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (2009-2013). See Appendix for Data Sources and Notes.

Our Changing Populations

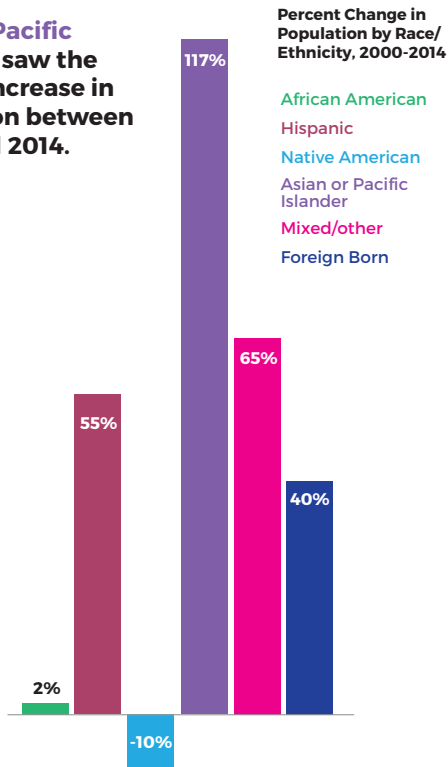
Percent Change in Population by Race/Ethnicity, 2000-2014

Buffalo Niagara's increasing diversity is curbing the decades long trend of population loss.



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2014. See Appendix for Data Sources and Notes.

Asian or Pacific Islanders saw the biggest increase in population between 2000 and 2014.

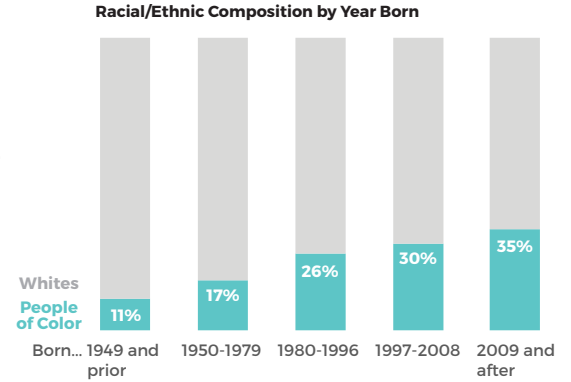


SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2014.

Our Changing Youth

With each passing generation, **people of color** make up a larger share of our population, so the region will continue to grow more diverse in the future.

People of color make up a third of the youth population, compared to one-fifth of the adult population.



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2014.

Our Changing Workforce

Year after year, **people of color** are earning a larger share of college degrees awarded from local institutions, so the region's skilled workforce will continue to grow more diverse.

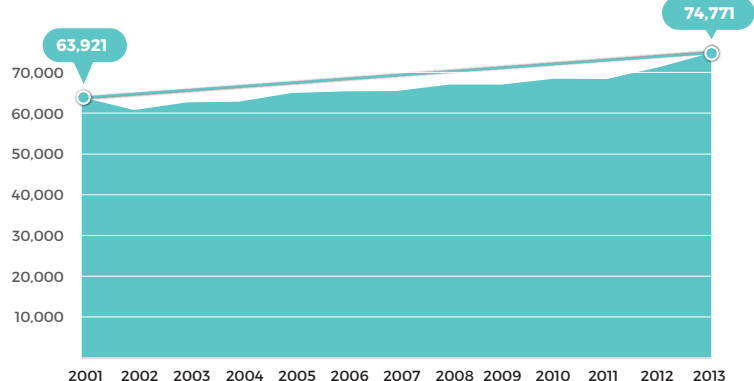
Percent of College Degrees Awarded by Race/Ethnicity

	2000	2010	2013
People of color	16%	19%	21%
Whites	84%	81%	79%

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistic, IPEDS Database, 2000, 2010, 2013.

From 2001-2013, along with a slight increase in the total number of jobs in the region, there has been a steady and substantial increase in jobs held by **people of color**.

Average Annual Employment, People of Color 2001-2013



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, Quarterly Workforce Indicators, 2001-2013.

Why Buffalo believes in racial equity



Some of us are denied access to opportunity. We must lift this burden from our collective shoulders if we are all to prosper.

Francisco Vasquez, Ph.D.
President/CEO,
Child and Family Services

Because when you change one life you change the world. Imagine what changing a whole city could do.



Howard Zemsky
Managing Partner,
Taurus Capital Partners

Improving racial equity is critical to the economic revival of our region.



Alphonso O'Neil White
Chair,
Greater Buffalo Racial Equity Roundtable

We are all created equal and all people deserve the same chances in life.



Most Reverend Richard J. Malone
Bishop,
Catholic Diocese of Buffalo



As a community, we believe that every person has worth and value and one of our obligations is to create an environment where everyone is positioned to succeed in reaching their full potential.

Byron W. Brown
Mayor of Buffalo

We seek a just and fair human community where one's racial identity results in neither advantage nor disadvantage.



Paul Vukelic
President/CEO,
Try-It Distributing Company, Inc.





“ It is part of my religious faith.

Bishop R. William Franklin
Episcopal Diocese of Western New York

It is a moral imperative that is essential to the economic and social health of our community.



Danis Gehl, Ph.D.
Associate Executive Director/Director of Education,
University at Buffalo Educational Opportunity Center

“ Without Racial Equity, we will never enjoy true peace on this earth, in ourselves, for our friends, family, and loved ones.

Jack Quinn
President,
Erie Community College



Realizing our racial equity goals will assure that the region will maximize its economic potential.

Dottie Gallagher-Cohen
President & Chief Executive Officer,
Buffalo Niagara Partnership

Racial Equity is important because it creates an environment where enjoying the benefits of the “American Dream” becomes a reality for African-Americans.



Rev. George F. Nicholas
Chair, Concerned Clergy Coalition of WNY
Senior Pastor, Lincoln Memorial United Methodist Church



**Buffalo is
committed
to progress**

We are focused on what works, creating a region that is standing united and moving forward together, with opportunity and prosperity for all.

Buffalo is the City of Light.

Buffalo tackles big challenges and sets an example for the rest of the world to follow. From electric street lights, to solar panels, from the air conditioner to the pace maker; and from the Niagara Movement to our growing community-wide focus on racial equity, we are a region that just isn't comfortable on the sidelines waiting for someone else to go first.

Understanding what contributes to the gap across four inter-related issues tells us there is no one cause and no one solution to the challenges we face.

A set of indicators will allow us to track our progress toward equity across our region.

Education & Job Readiness

Criminal Justice & Safety

Quality of Life & Neighborhoods

Income & Wealth

Understanding what contributes to the gaps

Bringing institutions, places, and people together for racial equity.

There are multiple elements at play that create racial disparities. Our institutions; the places we live, work and play; and the individual actions we take each and every day have a major influence on the outcomes we see in the community, even if we don't always recognize it. But these same elements have the potential to be reoriented to intentionally solve our region's equity challenges to create increased opportunity and prosperity for all, furthering a new shared future.



How institutions impact equity

Our institutions — our governmental agencies, health care, and education systems, our financial, insurance, and real estate industries, our service delivery systems, and our media — are all vitally important contributors to the way we live our lives and the way we experience our city and our world.

But these systems were largely built in, and of, an era not reflective of the diverse region in which we now live. Some of the practices and policies carried out by these institutions are holdovers from this earlier era and continue to divide us and to disadvantage people of color.

This kind of inequity exists, for example, from housing discrimination and racial profiling, to the differential treatment faced by students and by job applicants. These forms of disparities are sometimes intentional, but are more often subtle and unnoticed by those carrying them out — an unwitting by-product of business as usual.

How place impacts equity

The legacy of segregation continues to burden our community. The data reinforce what we know to be true — despite improvements in recent decades, Buffalo Niagara is a region that is still deeply divided by race (see pages 18-19).

When we inhibit the flow of talent and ideas -- or of social and financial capital -- within our community with arbitrary cultural and geographic borders, we limit the experiences we all have, and we each lose out on the richness of all our region has to offer.

And when people of different races are removed from one another's community, economic, educational, and civic spaces, those spaces will remain inequitable, and the promise of our shared potential will remain unfulfilled.

How people impact equity

Cultural attitudes and messages about race are all around us, and have been since we were born.¹ Though it is unrealistic to think we aren't influenced by these messages, we can acknowledge that we carry them with us and understand how they impact our actions and decisions.

These influences impact our assumptions and split-second judgments and our notions of good and bad, and create an unspoken hierarchy-driven framework to the way we see race in our daily lives. The realization of the impact these implicit biases can have has led organizations like Google, Microsoft, and even the Marine Corps to implement widespread implicit bias trainings.²

The actions we take, consciously or in ways we take for granted, can and do move the needle toward — or away from — racial equity. Our ability to change the way we think about race, and the way we talk about and act on these issues will be the cornerstone of our ability to advance equity and grow prosperity in the region.

There is no one cause and no one solution to the racial inequities we face.

As a community we are taking the initiative and the lead. We are focused on overcoming our disparities to achieve equity and better outcomes for everyone in the region.

It is no small task to reexamine how we act and react to these crucial elements in our lives, but Buffalo is and has always been about heavy lifts. The data shows us that the factors leading to inequity are both broad and complex -- the solutions to these challenges will be as well.

To solve them, more and more people are joining together from throughout the region and creating new energy and excitement for our shared future in the process. To achieve racial equity we are changing the way we do business to improve education and employment opportunities, to invest in our neighborhoods, and to ensure equitable treatment under the law.

Together, we are building momentum and moving forward every day.

¹ Kirwan, 2015
² Ibid.

Understanding how places impact equity

Despite increasing diversity, our neighborhoods are still divided by race.

Although people of color are making up a growing share of the population in nearly every community across the region, most areas remain predominantly white while the majority of people of color are concentrated within central city neighborhoods.

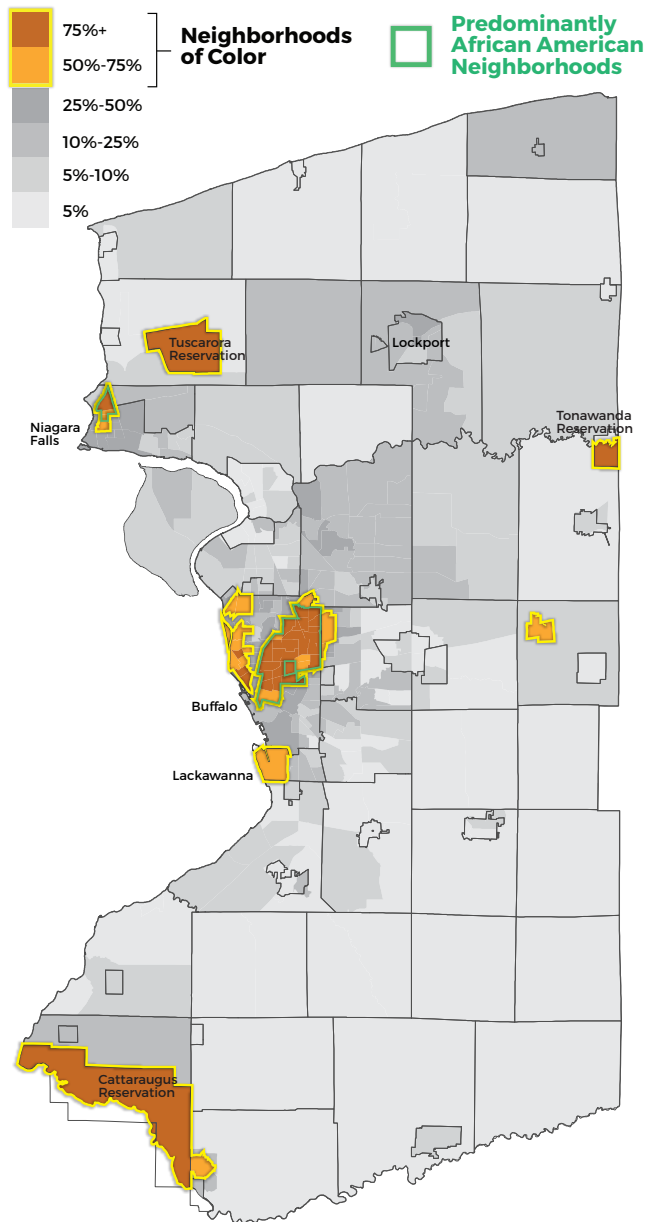
These divisions matter because place matters – the neighborhoods that we live in shape our experiences, our opportunities, and our collective future. For those residing in neighborhoods of historical disinvestment where diminishing access to essential goods and services limits opportunities, the possibilities of achieving a more prosperous future are reduced compared to those in vibrant neighborhoods.

To further bring to light these place-based inequities, several of the indicators presented in this report are broken down by neighborhood composition. Predominantly white neighborhoods (where more than 50% of the population are white) blanket the region’s rural and suburban areas and are the only communities in the region that have seen overall growth since 1970. Neighborhoods of color (where 50% or more of the population are persons of color) and predominantly African American neighborhoods (where 50% or more of the population are Black/African American) have experienced a long history of institutionalized disinvestment that has curbed the availability and inflow of capital and opportunity while creating self-reinforcing stigmas of these neighborhoods as symbols of poverty, crime, and blight.

The effects of concentrated poverty are disproportionately felt by people of color.

Reflecting the impacts of systemic inequity, the divided region we see today shows that neighborhoods of concentrated poverty are, more often than not, also neighborhoods of color. For instance, over half of residents in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty (where poverty rates are 20% or higher) are also within a neighborhood of color. Even more striking, nine out of ten people living in a neighborhood of extreme concentrated poverty (where poverty rates are 40% or more) also live in a

**% of Population
People of Color**



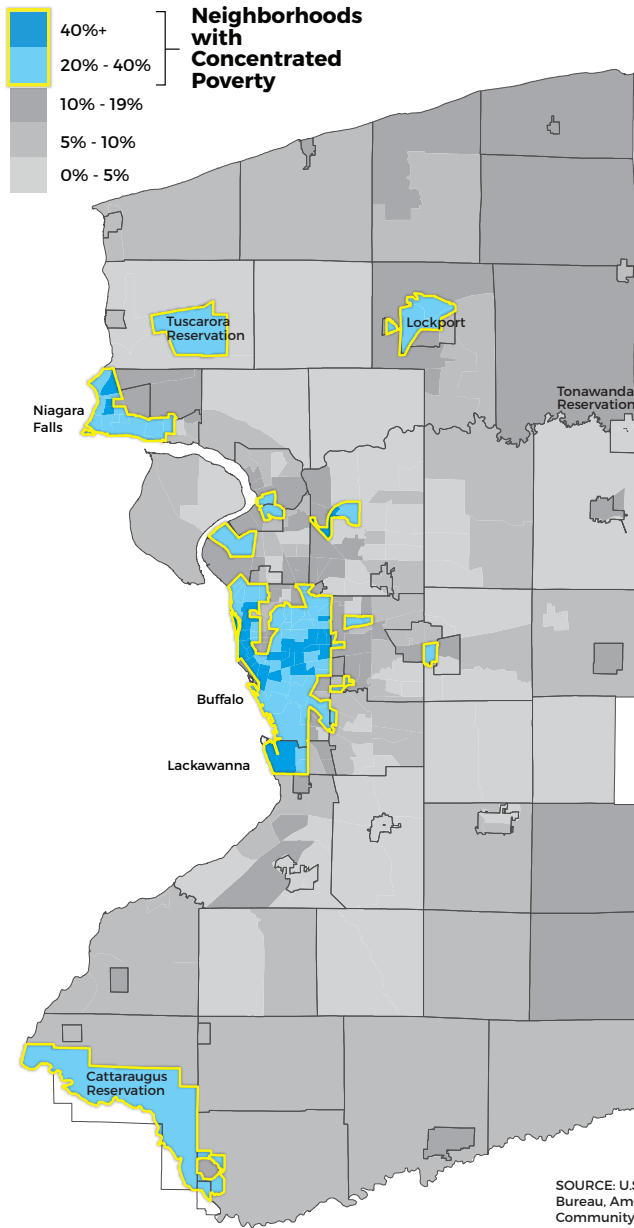
SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (2009-2013).

neighborhood of color. While the overall poverty rate for the region is 14%, it is significantly lower in predominantly white neighborhoods (11%) and substantially higher for neighborhoods of color (40%).

Research suggests that when families of similar socio-economic status live in an area of lower poverty, children are more likely to attend college and realize higher incomes as adults. If people of color continue to face neighborhoods of concentrated poverty at disproportionate rates, inequity will persist, limiting our ability to achieve our collective potential.¹

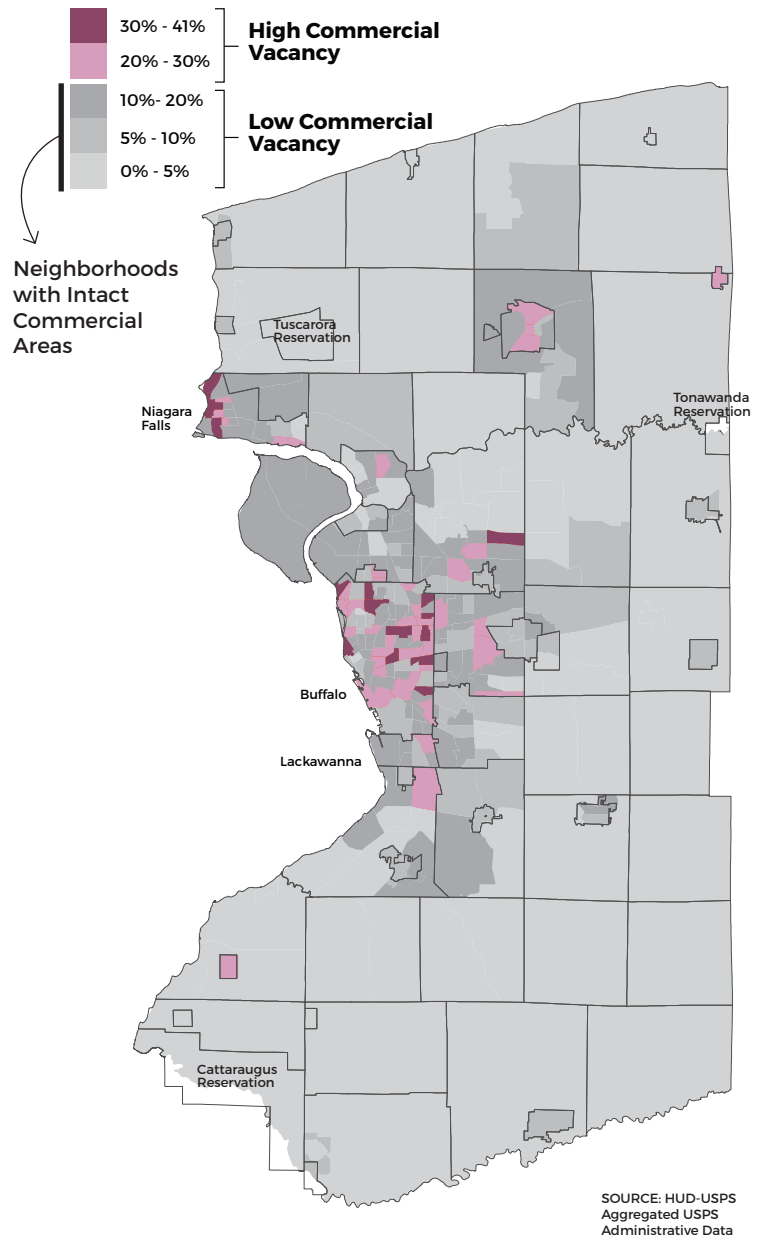
¹ Chetty, Hendren & Katz, 2015.

Poverty Rates Across Buffalo Niagara



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (2009-2013).

Commercial Vacancy Rates Across Buffalo Niagara



SOURCE: HUD-USPS Aggregated USPS Administrative Data on Address Vacancies, Quarter 4, 2014.

Shifting commercial activity from walkable Main Streets to suburban strip malls has left many neighborhoods of color with shuttered commercial areas.

Commercial areas with high rates of vacancy weaken the vitality of surrounding neighborhoods and deter reinvestment. Additionally, high commercial vacancy rates can greatly impact quality of life for neighborhood residents by limiting the number of jobs and essential services, like grocery stores and doctor's offices, that exist nearby.

Automobile-oriented development over the last several decades has steered commercial activity outward from the central city, at the expense of established neighborhoods -- many of which are neighborhoods of color-- creating transportation challenges for many of the region's residents without access to automobiles. So, while 87% of white residents live in a neighborhood with intact commercial areas (where under 20% of business addresses are vacant), only half of residents of color can say the same. As long as neighborhoods of color remain places of inequitable investment, the future prosperity of our region will continue to fall short of our potential.



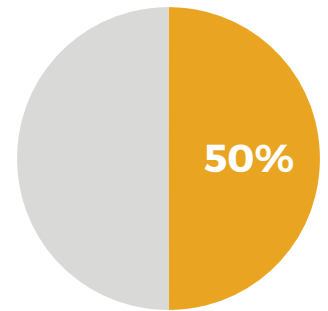
Every child should have the opportunity to learn and to flourish in high quality schools that help to discover and nurture their potential.

But inequitable opportunity means not all youth have access to the education and circumstances that set them up for success in school, college, and career.

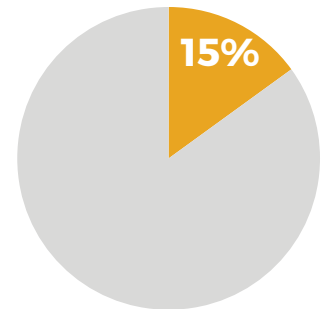
We hold education to be both a right and a responsibility, as the key to a brighter future and a better world. But because of a variety of systemic influences, research has shown a child's socio-economic status — their parents' educational attainment and their family income level — strongly impacts their likelihood of succeeding in school.¹ These same systemic influences contribute to all students' performance suffering when schools and districts face concentrated poverty.² In impacted schools and districts, staff often do not have the resources, training, and support necessary to handle community and social issues that cannot, ultimately, be separated from instruction.³

Cultural biases are regularly found in standardized testing that also impact performance measurement for individuals, schools, and districts⁴ -- as does the consideration of students with Limited English Proficiency (for instance, LEP students comprise 12% of Buffalo Public Schools' population -- 72% of all LEP public school students in the region⁵). Rigid performance measures that don't account for these factors further create stigmas around schools in communities of color, often pushing families of means to find other options.⁶

Buffalo Niagara Children Under the Age of 6 in Poverty



CHILDREN OF COLOR



WHITE CHILDREN

SOURCE: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (2009-2013).



INDICATORS TO TRACK PROGRESS

- Students Attending Schools in Good Standing
- 4th Grade Students Proficient in English
- High School Graduation Rate
- Timely Graduation from College
- Youth (16-24) Employed or In School

Studies have also shown that students of color often face inequitable expectations from teachers and administrators compared to those encountered by their white peers – which can manifest as either lax instruction and grading or harsher judgment.⁷ National and local statistics⁸ show that children of color are disciplined more often and receive harsher punishments than white students. This removes students from the classroom and decreases their amount of learning time. These factors often reduce children’s internal belief in their success and academic performance and prospects. Once a child’s performance falls behind grade level, it is increasingly difficult for them to ever catch up, diminishing their chances of graduating, going to college, or finding employment.

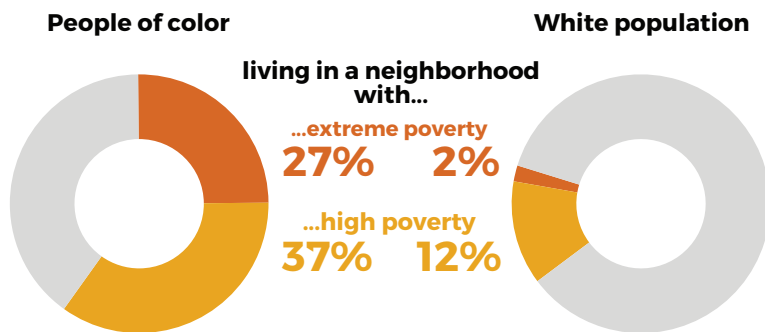
When parents’ outcomes have been shaped by inequitable opportunity, their children are likely to face challenges as well. Children of color are more likely to come from families confronting stresses that impact their ability to provide educational support at home.

Selected Characteristics of Families in Buffalo Niagara, by Race

	Families of Color	White Families
Parents holding a college degree	21%	36%
Percent Single Parent Family	65%	32%
Teen Pregnancy Rate	4.4%	1.2%
Working a 2nd or 3rd Shift Job	23%	16%

SOURCE: Analysis of IPUMS data, 2007 - 2011; US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014; NYS Department of Health, 2012. See Appendix for Data Sources and Notes.

Buffalo Niagara Residents Living in Neighborhoods with Concentrated Poverty



SOURCE: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (2009-2013). See Appendix for Data Sources and Notes.

¹ McKinsey & Company, 2009.
² Poverty & Race Research Action Council, 2015.
³ Aikens & Barbarin, 2008.
⁴ Banks, 2006.
⁵ US Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, 2011-2012.
⁶ Clotfelter, 2004.
⁷ Harber, 2012.
⁸ US Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, 2011-2012.



Understanding what's contributing to the gaps across education and job readiness

The public school system in Buffalo Niagara is fragmented into nearly 40 different districts. Despite growing diversity throughout the region, parallel, fractured government systems create inequitable rules and outcomes. With school systems divided largely along persistently economically and racially divided municipal lines, poverty levels and racial composition vary widely across these districts. These inter-district disparities contribute to vastly different educational experiences for our region's children.

No one cause, no one solution

How Institutions Impact Equity

Long standing structural issues are in place that create outcome differentials within the local education system.



In the 1970s a federal school desegregation order applied to the Buffalo Public Schools but not to suburban districts. Though additional resources for early implementation led to initial accolades, as these resources diminished and more white families moved to the suburbs, the district's population shrank, and today the region and the district's schools are highly segregated.¹

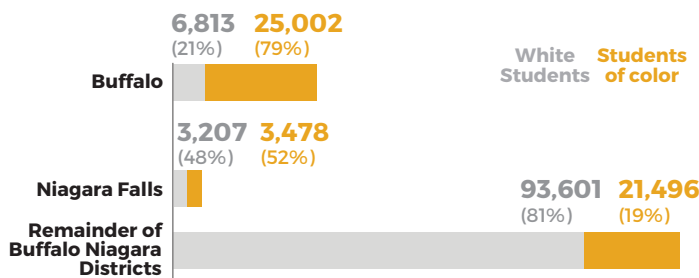
School district lines combine with exclusionary policies – such as zoning that restricts multi-unit housing or requires large minimum residential lot sizes or large minimum square footage – to limit the ability of low-income families to move into wealthier districts and attend higher performing schools.² Racialized concentrated poverty means tremendous odds are stacked against students and teachers in struggling districts and schools.

The Buffalo Public Schools is, by far, the largest district in the region. It is home to almost 21 percent of Buffalo Niagara's students -- our region's future workforce. But it is disproportionately home to students of color (51 percent of all those in the region) and students receiving free or cost-reduced lunch (36 percent of all those in the region). When the Buffalo Charter Schools are included, these numbers jump even higher (almost 64 percent of students of color and 46 percent of free and reduced cost lunch recipients).³

But with an enrollment vastly diminished from its peak, the Buffalo Public School system has also been left with out-sized infrastructure and high legacy costs. For instance, the district spent more than \$105 million on retiree pensions and benefits in 2014-15 – nearly equivalent to the \$107 million it spent on compensation for all of the 1,765 regular-education teaching positions that same year.⁴

Despite an active and committed faculty and staff and a host of community partners implementing innovative programming to increase the opportunity and outcomes for all students, racial equity challenges remain within the Buffalo Public Schools. In 2015 a successful civil rights suit demonstrated entrance policies to higher performing criteria-based schools systemically disadvantaged students of color, compelling the district to devise changes to its admissions processes.⁵

Racial Composition by District throughout Buffalo Niagara, 2014



SOURCE: NYSED School District Report Cards, 2014.

¹ Pasciak, 2014. Segregation within the Buffalo Public Schools is measured by the presence of either more than 80% white students or 80% or more students of color in any one school.

² Patterson, Silverman, et al., 2008.

³ NYS School Report Cards, 2010-11. 77% of BPS students were eligible for free or reduced cost lunch, as were 82% of Buffalo charter school students, compared to 30% of students in all other public school districts in the region.

⁴ Buffalo Public Schools Budget, 2014-15.

⁵ Buckley, 2015.

⁶ Aikens & Barbarin, 2008.

⁷ Delaney-Black, et al., 2002.

⁸ National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2015.

⁹ Center for American Progress, 2014.

¹⁰ Harber, 2012.

¹¹ US Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, 2011-2012.

How Places Impact Equity

When school systems are limited by municipal borders, geographically concentrated poverty leads to districts with high rates of student poverty and a high concentration of students with social challenges that often lead to educational challenges. High poverty districts are often under-resourced, lacking the amenities and special programs of school districts in wealthier communities. With more students in need, there is a lower ability for schools to address children's specific challenges that hinder academic success.⁶

Children living in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty, for example, are exposed to additional stresses and, more often, trauma which has been shown to reduce academic performance such as reading ability and standardized test performance.⁷ Students who are exposed to violence have more difficulty focusing and learning, and take on riskier behaviors, leading to "lower grade point averages, more negative remarks in their cumulative records, and more reported absences from school than other students".⁸

Access and engagement in schools is impacted by transportation as well. The desegregation era busing program implemented within the Buffalo Public Schools moved away from a tradition of neighborhood based schools, meaning longer hours on school buses for children, and a more limited ability for parents lacking private transportation to take an active role in their children's school.

How People Impact Equity

Structural cultural biases also impact those working hard to educate children in challenging conditions. In highly demanding situations, we often subconsciously rely on these ingrained cultural messages to guide our actions. Research shows that teachers and administrators are not immune from race-based assumptions. Expectations that children of color can't learn to the level of their white peers can become self-fulfilling prophecies.⁹

A phenomenon known as "cultural deficit thinking" toward students of color – essentially lowered expectations of these students' abilities – can result in harsher judgment or less critical feedback, diminishing students learning potential as well as self-esteem.¹⁰ Racially biased application of school discipline policies also means that a disproportionate number of students of color are suspended from school, leading to lower academic performance, greater dropout risk, and an increased likelihood of falling into the criminal justice system.¹¹



Momentum to build on

Say Yes to Education


Partners across the government, business, civic and philanthropic sectors came together to launch the Say Yes Buffalo partnership in 2011. Say Yes is a multi-pronged effort to increase academic performance and achievement across the Buffalo Public School System. Say Yes has a goal of increasing high-school graduation rates as well as post-secondary education completion rates so that all members of our community can participate as vital members of our economy and our society. With its partners, Say Yes is helping to provide wrap-around support services beginning in Kindergarten, such as academic readiness, mental health supports, health and well being services, family supports, legal clinics, and financial aid and college entrance prep. By providing a major incentive to all students graduating from Buffalo Public and Charter Schools – that tuition to State University of New York or City University of New York schools will be covered through the Say Yes scholarship program – Say Yes is giving hope to countless students who previously thought college was out of reach. Nearly 100 private colleges have also signed on to Say Yes Buffalo to offer special scholarship opportunities to Buffalo graduates.



Understanding how to read the indicators

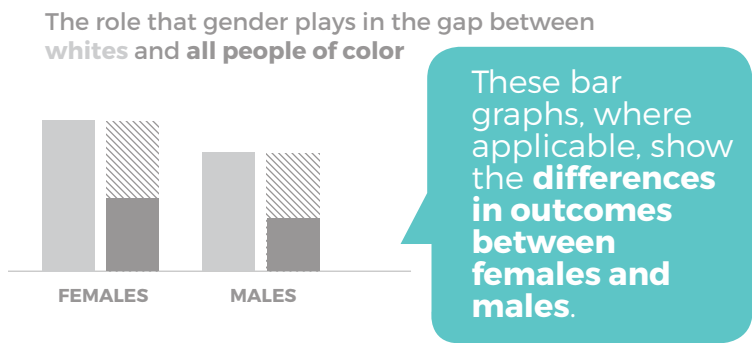
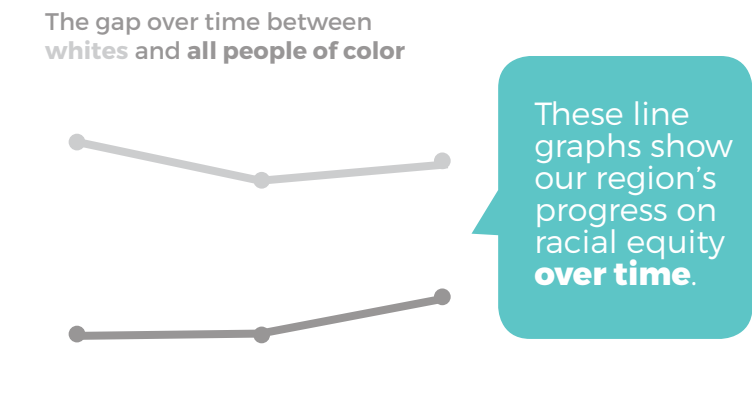
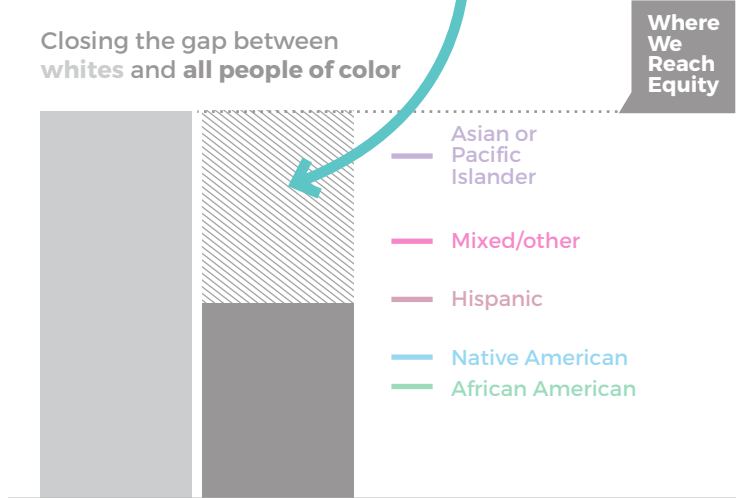
Each indicator presents data specific to Buffalo Niagara to examine how racial equity is faring in the region in education and job readiness, criminal justice and safety, quality of life and neighborhoods, and income and wealth. Progress on each indicator will play an important role in achieving prosperity in our shared future.

ONE WAY THAT PLACES CONTRIBUTE TO THE GAP



Though there are many factors contributing to each racial equity gap, this box points out **just one way that institutions, places, or people impact** the disparities demonstrated by the indicator.

As we work to improve outcomes for everyone, this shaded bar highlights the extent of the existing **racial equity gap** between whites and all people of color.





Students Attending Schools in Good Standing

% of K-12 students attending a public or charter school that is not in the bottom 5% of NYS schools for ELA and math performance or has a graduation rate above 60 percent.

All children deserve a high quality education, but systemic disparities mean **children of color** are less likely to attend schools considered in good standing by New York State.

Why It Matters

Though school quality is only one factor in a student's educational success, it is critically important with implications on classroom experience, exposure to curricular offerings, and overall opportunity to succeed.¹ When we close the gap in school performance, we will be offering more students opportunities to learn in equitable environments while being exposed to classmates from a range of backgrounds and perspectives.²

Measuring the Gap

While nearly all of the region's white students attend schools in good-standing, fewer than three-quarters of students of color are afforded the same opportunity. This gap has been persistent, and is widening. The proportion of the region's students of color attending good-standing schools has fallen in recent years, and the gap is most pronounced for African American students.

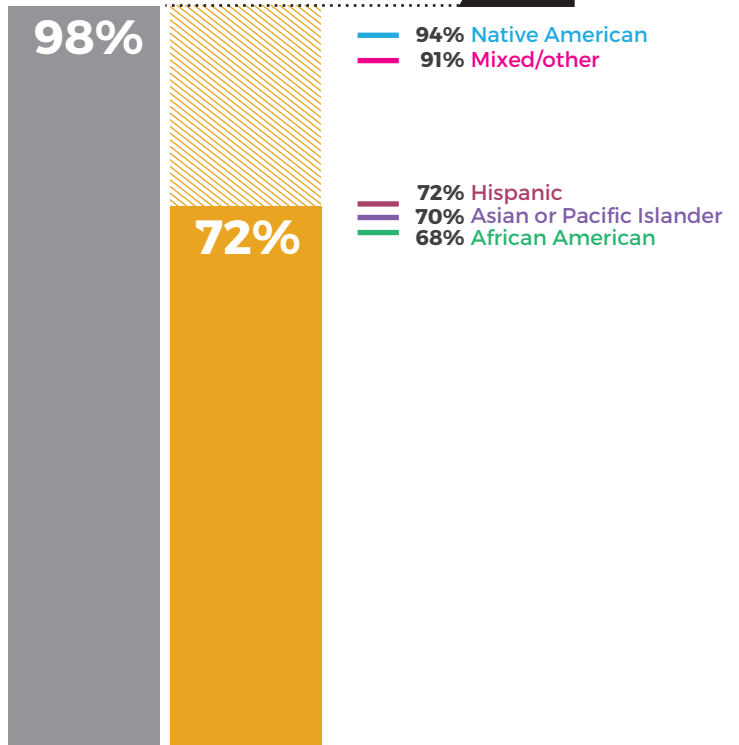
ONE WAY THAT INSTITUTIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THE GAP



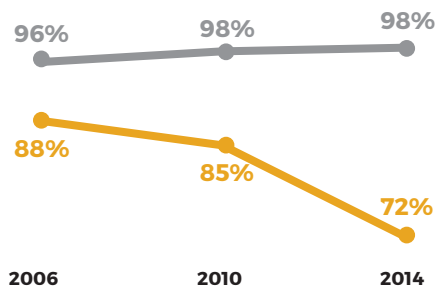
High poverty and diverse schools face extenuating circumstances (such as a higher percentage of students with Limited English Proficiency) that may not be reflected in their performance designation. But not obtaining "good standing" designation creates a stigma that leads some families of means to avoid a school or remove their children to other schools, lowering the number of higher performing students and increasing the school's overall challenges against standardized metrics.³

Closing the gap between whites and all people of color

Where We Reach Equity



The gap over time between whites and all people of color



SOURCE: NYS Dept. of Education, 2006, 2010, and 2014. See Appendix for Data Sources and Notes.

¹ Poverty & Race Research Action Council, 2015.

³ Ibid.

² Clotfelter, 2004.



4th Grade Students Proficient in English

% of students scoring at level 3 or 4 on the NYS assessment for Grade 4 English Language Arts.

All children deserve a high quality education, but systemic disparities mean **children of color** are only half as likely to be proficient in English by 4th grade.

Why It Matters

Cultivating a quality workforce for the future starts in early childhood and through the K-12 level. When we close gaps in early education, we are setting the stage for all students to be lifelong learners and follow a path toward career opportunities.

Measuring the Gap

New York adopted more rigorous testing in 2010 and again in 2013 with the introduction of Common Core leading to a drop in proficiency scores across the board,¹ but young persons of color are still meeting proficiency in English Language Arts standards at a rate half that of their white classmates. This gap has stayed consistent for over a decade and is widest for African American, Hispanic, and Native American youth. Trends for young males of color are even more pronounced as only 16 percent are meeting English proficiency at the fourth grade.

ONE WAY THAT PLACES CONTRIBUTE TO THE GAP

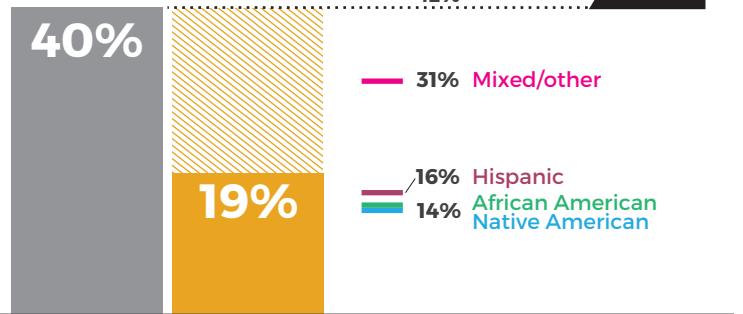


Children living in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty face additional challenges, stresses, and, more often, trauma which reduces their ability to concentrate on academics.²

¹ Hernandez, Gebeloff, 2013.

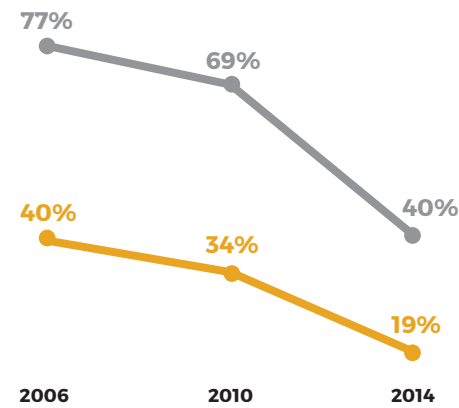
² Delany-Black, et. al., 2002.

Closing the gap between whites and **all people of color**

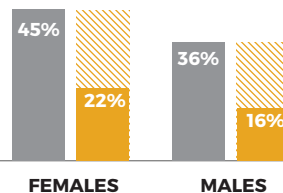


Where We Reach Equity

The gap over time between whites and **all people of color**



The role that gender plays in the gap between whites and **all people of color**



SOURCE: NYS Dept. of Education, 2006, 2010, and 2014.

High School Graduation Rate

% of students graduating from public high school within 4 years of enrolling.

All children deserve a high quality education, but systemic disparities mean **children of color** are less likely to graduate high school in four years.

Why It Matters

Whether students pursue a track toward college or a career in the trades or services, a high school diploma is often necessary to advance. When we close the gap in high school graduation rates, we will better address current workforce needs, strengthen a critical joint in our longterm workforce pipeline, and enable a generation of young people to be better equipped to expand earnings and employment opportunities over their lifetime.

Measuring the Gap

While high school students of color are significantly less likely to graduate high school in four years than their white counterparts, trends appear to be moving in the right direction. As high school graduation rates rise for all students in our region, the gap between students of color and their white classmates is shrinking. While rates can fluctuate from year to year, the racial equity gap is six percentage points lower than what it was only four years ago.

Across racial and ethnic groups, African American and Hispanic students are faring the worst, and males of color are failing to graduate at rates worse than females.

ONE WAY THAT PLACES CONTRIBUTE TO THE GAP

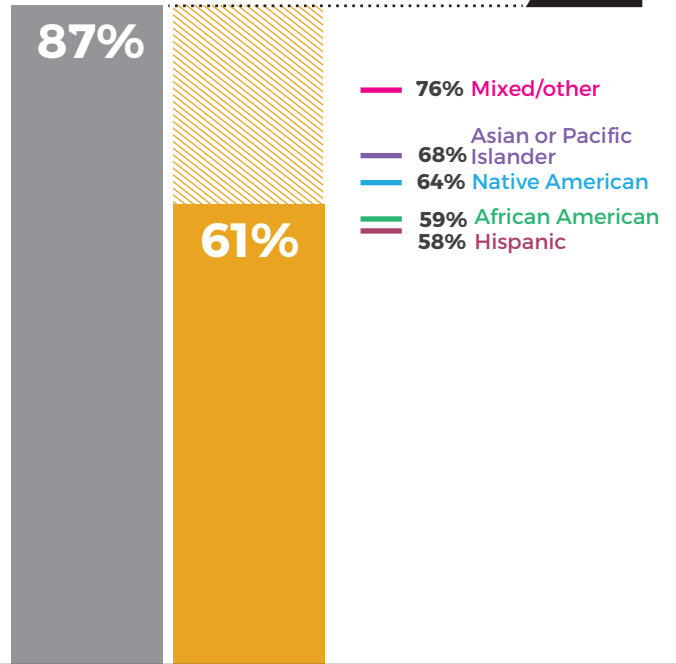


Districts with high rates of poverty often lack the amenities and special programs available within wealthier districts. With more students in need, there is a lower ability to address children's specific challenges to guide them successfully to graduation.¹

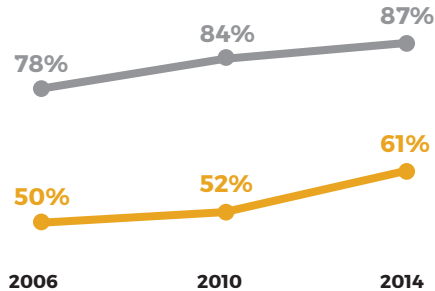
¹ Aikens & Barbarin, 2008.

Closing the gap between whites and all people of color

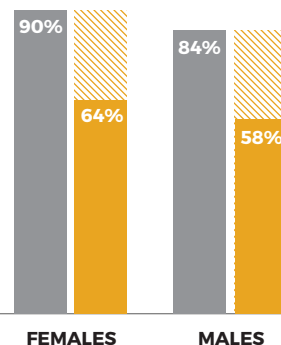
Where We Reach Equity



The gap over time between whites and all people of color



The role that gender plays in the gap between whites and all people of color



SOURCE: NYS Dept. of Education, 2006, 2010, and 2014.



Timely Graduation from College

% of students attending a college or university in Erie or Niagara counties that graduate within 150% of normal time (6 years for 4-year degrees and 3 years for 2-year degrees).

All children deserve a high quality education, but systemic disparities mean **young adults of color** are less likely to finish college on time.

Why It Matters

Measuring college graduation rates helps us understand the churn of potential new applicants to the regional workforce, as well as how college students are meeting the educational goals they set out when they enrolled in our institutions of higher learning. When we close the gap in graduation rates, we will have a stronger and more diverse talent pool of regional workers, as well as a young population with less student loan debt for extra semesters taken.

Measuring the Gap

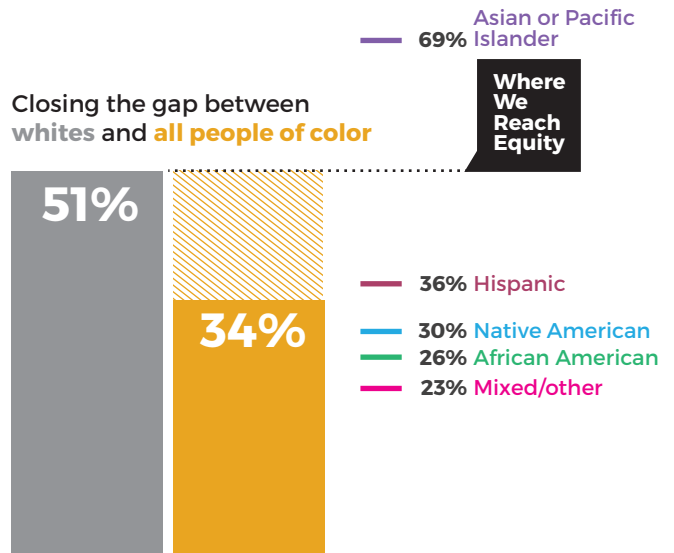
More than half of the white students attending area colleges graduate within six years, but only around one-third of people of color are meeting this threshold. Students of mixed and other races possess the lowest attainment levels, followed by African American students. Despite an across-the-board dip in completion rates between 2002 and 2010, the rate for white students has mostly recovered since then, while the rate for people of color has not. Females receive timely degrees at a higher rate than males, but the gap between whites and people of color remains consistent for both groups.

ONE WAY THAT PLACES CONTRIBUTE TO THE GAP

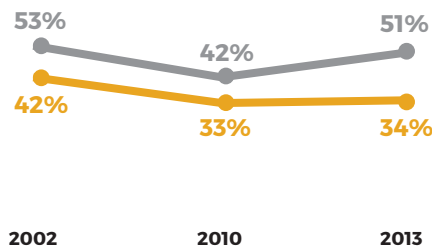


The generational cycles of poverty and wealth accumulation mean that college students of color are more likely to come from low- or middle-income families. Lacking a financial safety net, these students are more likely to need to take a lighter course load or delay finishing school in order to work to support themselves and their families.¹

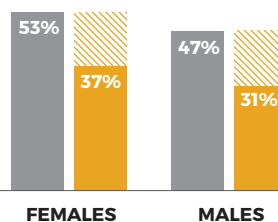
¹ Conley, 1999.



The gap over time between whites and all people of color



The role that gender plays in the gap between whites and all people of color



SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS Database, 2002, 2010 and 2013. See Appendix for Data Sources and Notes.

Youth (16-24) Employed or in School

% of the population age 16-24 who either hold a job or are enrolled in school.

All children deserve a high quality education, but systemic disparities mean **youth of color** are less likely to be employed or in school.

Why It Matters

When young people are not working or in school, they are unlikely to obtain needed skills and experiences that prepare them for life. When we close the gaps in youth engagement, we can improve graduation rates, better serve our workforce needs, and increase the amount of youth who are participating in productive activities -- making a positive impact on our regional economy.

Measuring the Gap

Young adults of color are almost 10% less likely than young white adults to either be working or in school. The gap has been cut in half since 1990 when just over 70% of young adults of color were either in school or working compared to 90% of whites. Despite a growing percentage of young adults of color that are working or in school, the gap is still largest for African American youth as fewer than 80% are working or attending school. Young males are consistently less likely than females to be working or in school, though this gender disparity is much more significant for young adults of color than whites.

ONE WAY THAT INSTITUTIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THE GAP



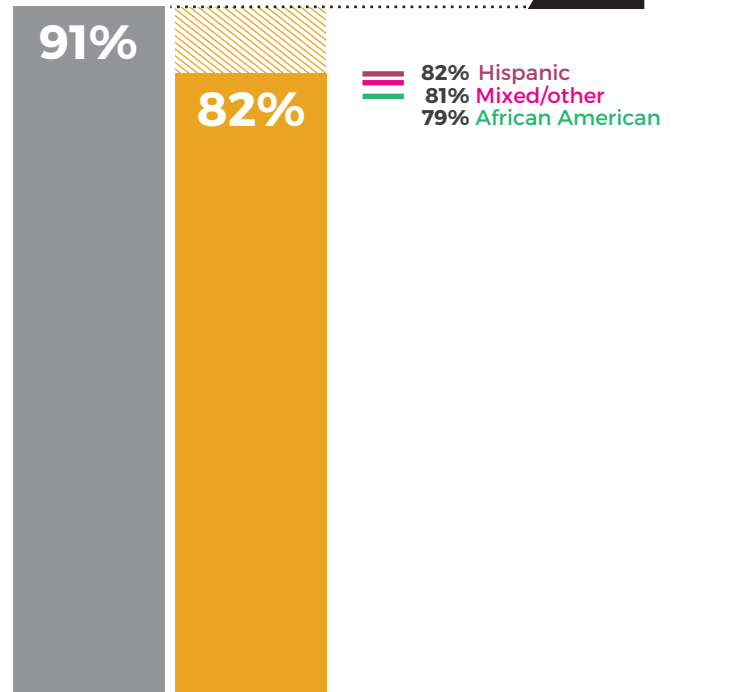
Racially biased application of school discipline policies means that a disproportionate number of students of color are suspended from school, leading to lower academic performance and a much greater dropout risk.¹ Without a high school education, youth are at a disadvantage for finding employment.

¹ Losen & Martinez, 2013.

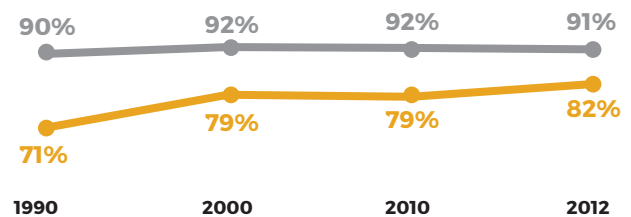
Closing the gap between whites and **all people of color**

Asian or Pacific Islander
95%

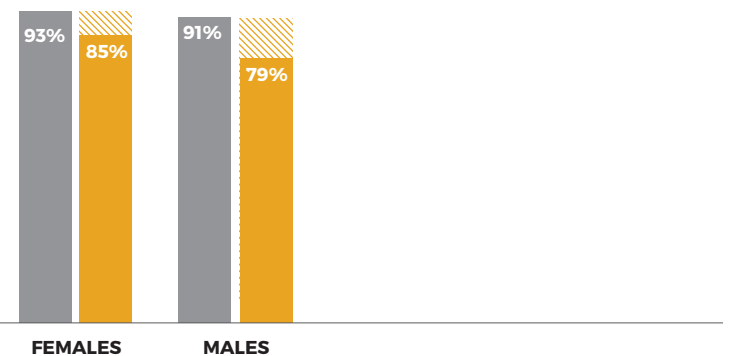
Where We Reach Equity



The gap over time between whites and **all people of color**



The role that gender plays in the gap between whites and **all people of color**



SOURCE: National Equity Atlas, 2012, using census data from IPUMS-USA: Analysis of IPUMS data, 2008-2012. See Appendix for Data Sources and Notes.



The notion of “liberty and justice for all” is instilled in all Americans from an early age, and helps define what we value most about this country.

But inequitable treatment for people of color throughout the criminal justice system has far reaching consequences for individuals, families, communities, and the ultimate functioning of our democratic society.

Our freedom and fair treatment under the law, regardless of race, color, creed, or wealth is vitally important to our success. However, recent high profile cases across the nation suggest that this promise of equity has yet to be realized. Our region is not immune from disparities between whites and people of color in the justice system.

Disparities in discipline start even before children first learn the concepts

of liberty and justice through the Pledge of Allegiance. But these trends begin in our school systems, with children of color experiencing disproportionate treatment as early as Kindergarten – where suspensions are handed out with surprising regularity.¹

Cultural and media messages that ingrain notions of people of color as criminals create a social context where actions of people of color are viewed through this lens, while these same actions by whites are much more likely to be seen as lapses in judgment or even just harmless mischief.² These situations are compounded when police forces do not resemble the communities to which they are assigned and credibility with the community is diminished.³

The inequitable treatment to which these factors contribute has substantial impacts on the trajectory of people’s lives from youth through adulthood. People of color are arrested at greater rates, by far, than whites in Buffalo Niagara. People of color also face increased rates of convictions and much harsher sentencing than whites for similar infractions.⁴ In addition to reduced educational opportunities at an early age, criminal

People of color make up 20% of our region’s population above the age of 16, but account for...



47% of all arrests

44% of all convictions

Source: New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2014. Figures include all persons age 16 or older.



INDICATORS TO TRACK PROGRESS

Arrest Rates for Juveniles, 16 and 17 year-olds, and Adults

Juvenile Detention Rates

Convictions Resulting in Incarceration, 16 and 17 year-olds and Adults

¹ Buffalo Public Schools, 2014 Suspension Report, 2014.

² Russell-Brown, 1998.

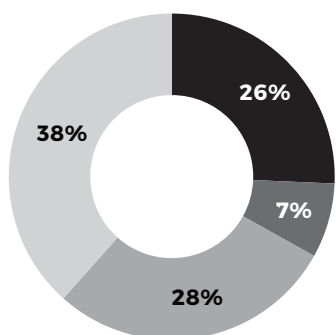
³ Ashkenas & Park, 2015.

⁴ U.S. Sentencing Commission, 2012.

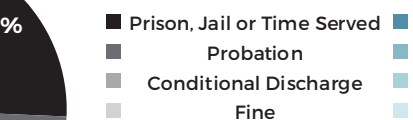
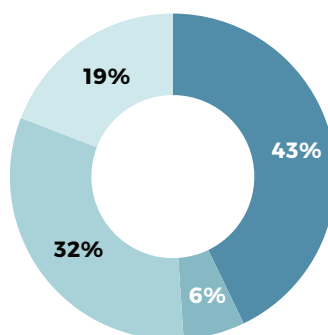


Dispositions by Race for Persons Age 16 and older, 2014

White Defendants

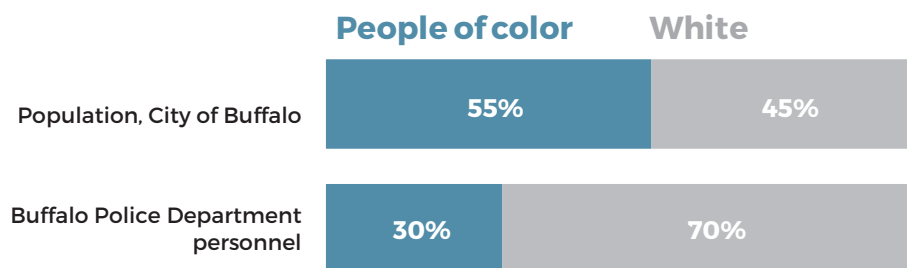


People of color Defendants



Source: New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2014.

Racial Breakdown of Buffalo Police Department, in comparison to the Citywide Population



Source: The Buffalo News, 2015; US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2014

records have a major influence on the ability to find employment at every age.

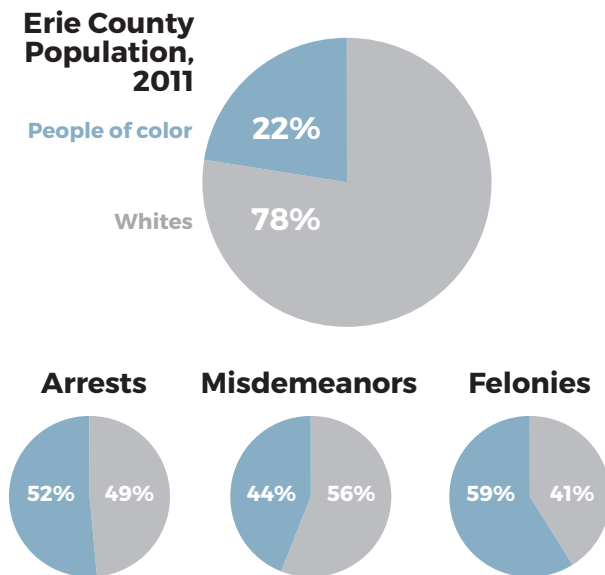
Communities with a disproportionate share of incarcerated residents experience ripple effects caused by removing wage earning potential and social capital capacity, including destabilization of families and neighborhoods. The public fiscal impacts of mass incarceration and inequitable justice are also sizable from the local to the federal level – a situation that is increasingly viewed as untenable all across the country.⁵

⁵ Liu, 2014.



Understanding what's contributing to the gaps across criminal justice and safety

Despite national drops in crime, incarceration rates have grown dramatically throughout the past generation. This growth has largely been comprised of people of color. An analysis of federal and state prison populations concluded that people of color were incarcerated at greater rates than whites and that people of color who were incarcerated tended to be younger than incarcerated whites. These totals accounted for roughly "0.5% of all white males, more than 3.0% of all black males, and 1.2% of all Hispanic males" including "between 6.6% and 7.5% of all black males ages 25 to 39".¹



SOURCE: NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services (2007-2011) from "Alarming Disparities: The Disproportionate Number of African American and Hispanic People in Erie County Criminal Justice System", Open Buffalo (2013).

No one cause, no one solution

How Institutions Impact Equity

Disciplinary inequities at a young age reveal structural inequities within criminal justice and safety systems. Studies repeatedly show a disparate application of school discipline toward students of color.² These early interactions at the school level often lead to uneven outcomes within the criminal justice system.³



Disproportionate numbers of arrests and sentencing outcomes are seen between races even when infractions are known to occur at roughly the same rate. Marijuana usage, for instance, is known to occur in similar proportions in whites as in people of color, and yet people of color are many times more likely to be arrested for possession of marijuana than whites. But, when arrested, people of color are also much more likely to be charged with more severe crimes than whites.⁴

Starting with infractions as seemingly innocuous and basic as traffic violations, some "tough on crime" policing policies have become a means for sweeping and arresting people of color, regardless of witnessing any criminal activity or receiving complaints. Extreme cases of "Broken Windows" policing practices -- which vigorously pursue minor infractions -- include policies such as Stop & Frisk, that created countless numbers of unjustified searches infringing on primarily people of color's civil rights and has since been ruled unconstitutional.⁵

Because of lower incomes and segregated professional networks, defendants of color are less likely to be able to access a private defense attorney and must more frequently rely on the public defenders office. However, often the public defenders office is under-resourced.⁶ When coupled with an ingrained system that promulgates a culture of plea bargaining, with upwards of 90 to 95 percent of state and federal cases now decided without a trial, disparate impacts on defendants of color are compounded.⁷

Mandatory minimum sentences regularly spur defendants to plead to lesser charges or risk long sentences, but charges are seldom reduced to the same extent for people of color as whites.⁸ In an oft-cited example of the inequities within sentencing laws, punishments for people found in possession of crack cocaine (a drug more commonly associated with lower income communities - particularly communities of color) - long faced much harsher minimum sentences than those found with powdered cocaine (which is more often associated with whites and higher income individuals).⁹

¹ US Department of Justice, 2011.

² US Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, 2012.

³ Kang-Brown, et. al. 2013.

⁴ Goldstein, 2013.

⁵ Open Buffalo, 2013.

⁶ US Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs, 2011.

⁷ Devers, 2011.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Palazzolo, 2013.

How Places Impact Equity

Compared to predominantly white neighborhoods, neighborhoods of color located in denser and more urban areas are likely to have a much heavier police presence. Over-policing leads to higher likelihood that any residents will have additional oversight by and interactions with police, and minor offenses are more likely to be observed and lead to arrest. Research shows that patrolling in neighborhoods with higher crime rates can predispose officers to view residents with suspicion rather than objectivity, and heavy police presence creates greater animosity toward police from residents, increasing tension and the potential for conflict.¹⁰

Court access issues also play a role in racial disparities. When defendants or paroled offenders have transportation and access issues that prevent them from reaching the courts or their supervising officer at scheduled times, these lapses in attendance can lead to warrants for arrest and additional or harsher punishment.

How People Impact Equity

For many children of color, childhood indiscretions that happen at an early age have been found to set in place a trajectory informed by systemic cultural biases that equate youth of color with criminal activity.¹¹ The criminalization of youth has impacts on the perceptions held — and the actions which are taken or not taken — by community members, by law enforcement, or by the courts.

Community members may be more inclined, for instance, to consider an unknown person in their neighborhood or a stopped vehicle to be suspicious if the person involved is of color. Implicit bias in police officers may be manifest in increased traffic stops for minor issues and/ or general suspicion, or it may be manifest in increased use of force. Implicit bias may also be demonstrated by prosecutors who show less leniency for people of color, or by juries and judges whose courtroom decisions may also be skewed.¹²



Momentum to build on

Open Buffalo Justice and Opportunity Table

The Open Buffalo Justice and Opportunity Table is bringing together stakeholders from throughout the city, as well as the Buffalo Police Department (BPD), to improve community police relations and promote a restorative rather than a punitive culture.

Acknowledging that the racial disparities in discipline start at an early age, growing a culture of mutual respect and equity begins in our communities and all our systems and structures -- within our schools, institutions of faith, and organizations in our neighborhoods. These are the places where the aggrieved and the accused can reach a shared resolution. Restorative Justice training is also extending to the community with the development of Peace Hubs at neighborhood based institutions throughout the city to solve conflicts without resorting to police intervention.

Open Buffalo and its partners, such as Back to Basics Ministries and Prisoners are People Too, are strengthening relationships with the Police Force and other arms of the judicial system. From the Buffalo Snug Violence Prevention Initiative to community leaders being present and visible at community events to head off problems before they occur, to the attendance of the BPD's Community Policing Lieutenant at regular meetings of the Open Buffalo Justice and Opportunity Table, people and organizations are working together to identify community concerns and create cooperative relationships to enhance safety and reduce arrests and incarcerations.



¹⁰ Weitzer, Tuch & Skogan, 2008.

¹¹ Rios, 2006.

¹² Kirwan, 2015.



Arrest Rates for Juveniles, 16 and 17 year-olds, and Adults

Arrests, per 100 people in an age cohort, for a given year.

We all deserve equal protection under the law, but differential treatment within the justice system means people of color are more likely to be arrested at every age.

Why It Matters

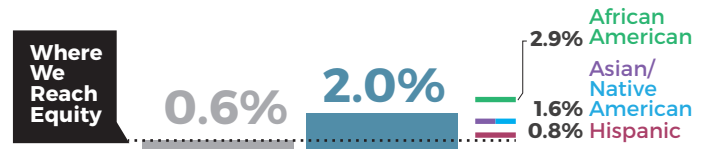
Regardless of one's age, being arrested can be a traumatic experience with lifelong consequences. As a youth, being arrested can correlate with high rates of dropping out -- or being pushed out -- of school.¹ For adults, having an arrest on one's record can impact one's ability to qualify for a job or professional license or get access to services like affordable housing.² When we close the gap in arrest rates, we will see more children staying in school and advancing their educational and career prospects, as well as a larger number of adults finding work and providing for their families.

Measuring the Gap

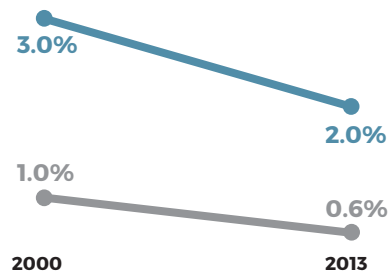
The arrest rate for children of color is more than three times greater than their white peers, and for African American children, the rate is nearly five times as great. This gap grows for children of color in their teens to an arrest rate that is four times greater -- but the arrest rate for African Americans grows to six times greater. These gaps hold relatively steady for adults as well. For juveniles (ages 7-15), the arrest rate for both people of color and whites has fallen by a third since 2000.

Closing the gap between whites and people of color

JUVENILES, 7-15 YRS



The gap over time between whites and all people of color



SOURCE: NYS Department of Criminal Justice, 2014; US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2013. See Appendix for Data Sources and Notes.

ONE WAY THAT PEOPLE CONTRIBUTE TO THE GAP



The use of racial profiling has been part of the public discourse around policing in communities of color for a quarter of a century. While a national analytical database is currently being assembled to track these issues, no reliable data yet exists at a broad scale. However, if not addressed, perceptions of racial profiling alone are a detriment to positive police/community relations.³

¹ Reynolds, et al., 2001.

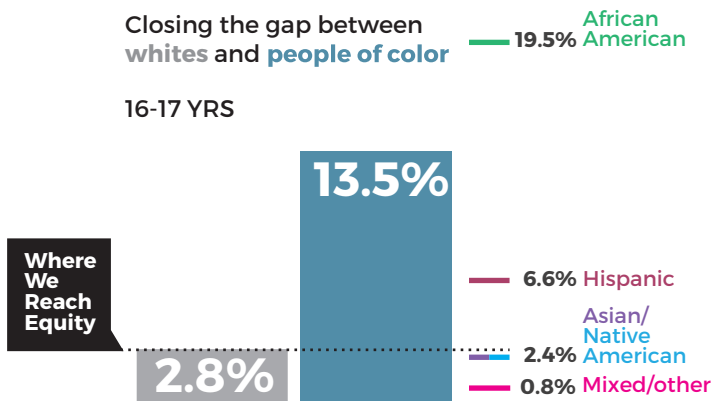
² The Wall Street Journal, 2014.

³ US Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2008.



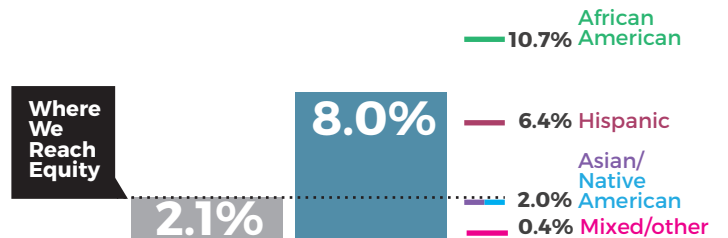
Closing the gap between whites and people of color

16-17 YRS

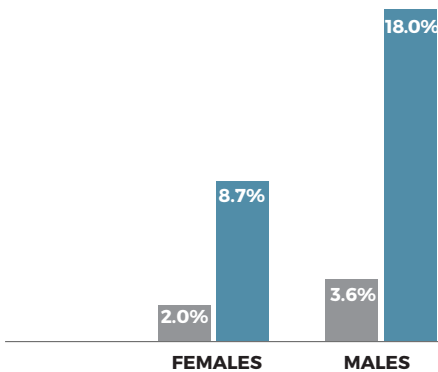


Closing the gap between whites and people of color

ADULTS, 18+ YRS

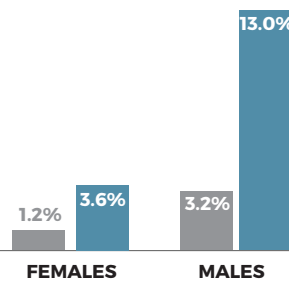


The role that gender plays in the gap between whites and people of color



SOURCE: NYS Department of Criminal Justice, 2014; US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2013.

The role that gender plays in the gap between whites and people of color



SOURCE: NYS Department of Criminal Justice, 2014; US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2013.



Juvenile Detention Rates

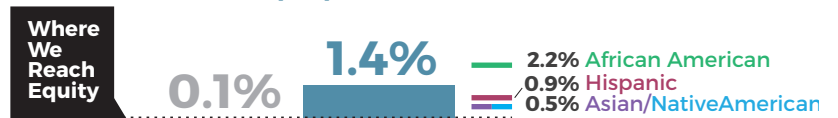
Juveniles detained, per 100 people age 7 - 15, for a given year.

We all deserve equal protection under the law, but differential treatment within the justice system means **children of color are more likely to be detained.**

Why It Matters

Incarceration of juveniles and adults has burdensome financial costs on public expenditures and a wide range of negative social consequences for individuals who are imprisoned at some point in their life.¹ At the individual youth level, detention often has longterm economic and health detriments and is found by numerous studies to be less effective than criminal justice interventions that keep youth in their communities.² When we close the gap in youth detention rates, we will see more youth involved in productive activities and will see cost savings that can be redirected toward other safety and education interventions.

Closing the gap between whites and **people of color**



SOURCE: NYS Department of Criminal Justice, 2014; US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2013. See Appendix for Data Sources and Notes.

Measuring the Gap

Even while only 1.4% of children of color become detained in a juvenile detention center, they are over ten times more likely to be detained than white children. Meanwhile, African American children are more than twice as likely than other children of color, and over twenty times more likely than white children to be held in a juvenile detention center.

ONE WAY THAT INSTITUTIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THE GAP



A progression of inequitable treatment within all stages of the criminal justice system means that, by sentencing, outcomes are skewed against defendants of color. Studies on the progression of youth through each stage of the criminal justice system reveal a “cumulative disadvantage” in which the disparities in outcomes become increasingly comparatively worse for children of color at every stage of the process.³

¹Western, 2002.

²Holsinger, 2011.

³National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 2007.

Convictions Resulting in Incarceration, 16 and 17 year-olds and Adults

% of dispositions that result in a sentencing of jail, prison, time served, or jail & probation.

We all deserve equal protection under the law, but differential treatment within the justice system means people of color are more likely to be incarcerated upon conviction of a crime.

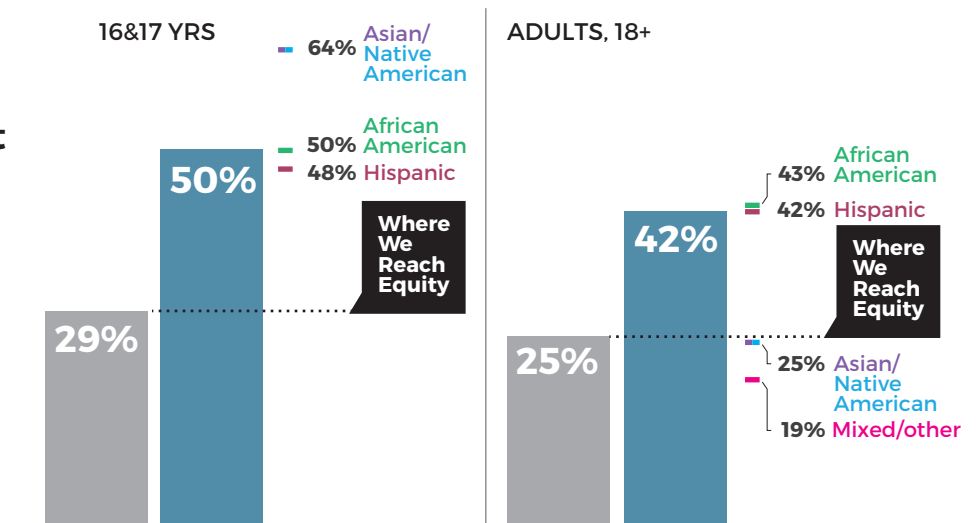
Why It Matters

Rising rates of incarceration, and in particular gaps along racial lines, has become a critical criminal justice and social issue at the national scale. When we close the gap in incarceration rates, we can expect to see lower costs to state and county governments and more people contributing to our region's economy and quality of life.

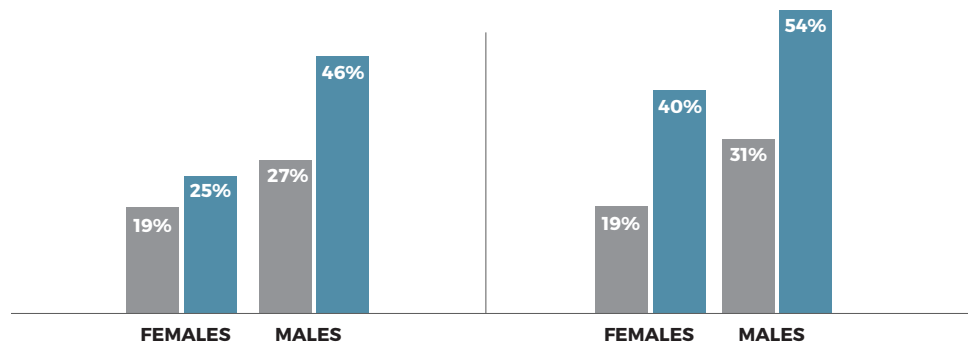
Measuring the Gap

In keeping with national studies that reveal harsher sentencing for people of color relative to whites for similar infractions, if convicted, people of color, ages 16-17 are 1.8 times more likely to be sentenced to jail or prison than whites of the same age group. This disparity is even greater for Asian/Native American and African American youth who were sentenced at rates of 64% and 50%, respectively. Across all racial groups, females are less likely to be incarcerated after being arrested than their male peers. However, females of color age 16-17 are even more likely than white males of the same age to be sentenced to incarceration. In adulthood, the incarceration rate for females of color falls below that of white males while the overall

Closing the gap between whites and people of color



The role that gender plays in the gap between whites and people of color



SOURCE: NYS Department of Criminal Justice, 2014; US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2013. See Appendix for Data Sources and Notes.

gap between whites and people of color drops slightly. Yet adults of color are 1.7 times more likely than white adults to be incarcerated after being convicted of a crime, a disparity which is even more pronounced for African Americans -- particularly African American males who have the highest rate of convictions resulting in incarceration of any group (54%).

¹ U.S. Sentencing Commission, 2012.



Our neighborhoods are where the American Dream comes to life, the place where we plant our roots and build a better life for our children.

But systemic disinvestment in neighborhoods of color has diminished the presence of opportunities and amenities that we all need and want in our communities.

Where one lives has a tremendous influence on the type of life one leads – access to shopping, services, and parks, but also impacts on education, career opportunities, and even health. Yet, the Buffalo region is highly segregated with vastly inequitable outcomes.¹ The results of these inequities are clear locally, as a higher percentage of people of color live in underserved neighborhoods of concentrated poverty.

Fewer amenities and lesser access have major implications for individuals and families. Though many neighborhoods of color are centrally located, they also are home to many of the region’s transit-dependent (see page 46), limiting people’s ability to

Predominantly white neighborhoods and neighborhoods of color differ in how likely you are to....

	Predominantly White Neighborhoods	Neighborhoods of Color
...be exposed to pollution and airborne toxins.	34%	92%
...be living near a highway or high traffic road.	5%	66%
...be surrounded by vacancy and blight.	3%	13%
...be underserved by banks.	3.5	1.8
...have less access to supermarkets.	0.6	0.2



INDICATORS TO TRACK PROGRESS

- Median Neighborhood Home Value
- Childhood Elevated Blood Lead Levels
- Living in a Neighborhood with Intact Commercial Areas
- Not Living in Concentrated Poverty

SOURCE: US EPA, Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool Data, 2015 (airborne toxins and highway proximity); HUD-USPS Aggregated USPS Administrative Data on Address Vacancies, Quarter 4, 2014 (residential vacancy); Reference USA, 2015 (banks and supermarkets); US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (2009-2013). See Appendix for Data Sources and Notes.

reach jobs outside of the city. Residential vibrancy, marked by an active housing market and a low presence of vacant homes, also lags. Widespread institutional disinvestment has also diminished commercial vibrancy and availability of such needed resources as health care, banks, and healthy foods in most neighborhoods of color.

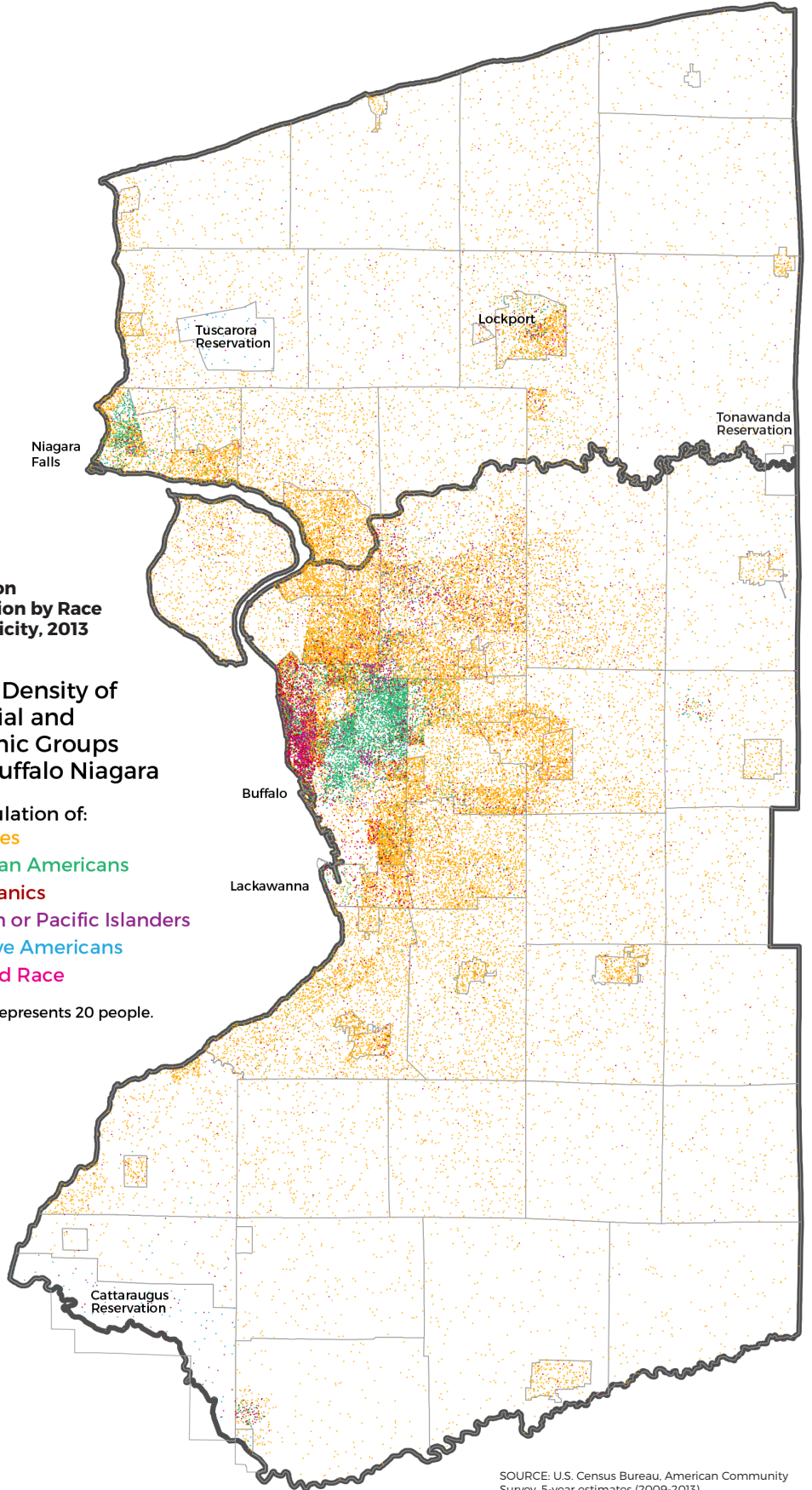
These types of access disparities are detrimental for neighborhoods of color, but demonstrable disparities in physical environments across communities are also harmful. People living in neighborhoods of color are much more likely to be exposed to environmental health hazards, such as airborne toxins and lead. A much higher premature death rate experienced by people of color underscores the dramatic impact that these factors can have.

Population Distribution by Race and Ethnicity, 2013

Dot Density of Racial and Ethnic Groups in Buffalo Niagara

- Population of:
- Whites
 - African Americans
 - Hispanics
 - Asian or Pacific Islanders
 - Native Americans
 - Mixed Race

1 dot represents 20 people.



¹University at Buffalo Regional Institute, 2014.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (2009-2013).

Understanding what's contributing to the gaps in residents' quality of life and neighborhoods in our region

No one cause, no one solution

How Institutions Impact Equity

Residential segregation remains so pervasive in Buffalo that it can be hard to see the mechanisms that set it in place decades ago. However, a set of policies and investment decisions carried out in the 20th century led to the fragmented communities where we live today.

In the 1930s, the federal government – through a depression-era bureaucracy known as the Federal Home Owners' Loan Corp. – established a policy to back mortgages only for white families, and only if they purchased in white neighborhoods. The agency's color coded maps came to define redlining -- the practice of denying services to residents of a geographic area due to the demographic composition of the people who live there. This practice persisted for nearly fifty years with banks across the country making most loans only within these guidelines. Localities contributed to segregation by adding zoning restrictions on the types of housing that could be built,¹ and racial real estate covenants restricted people of color from buying properties.²

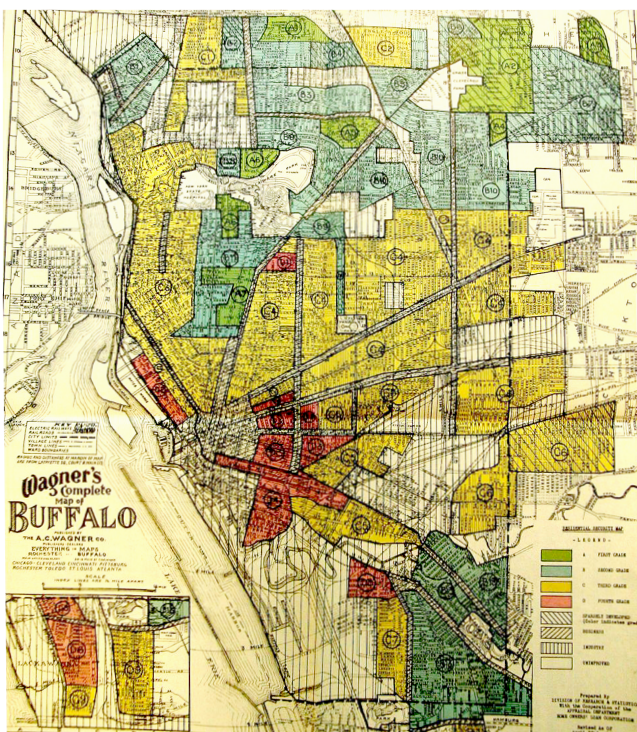


Through the post-war boom years and beyond, policies – including those established by the GI bill – restricted investment in communities where people of color lived and denied the chance for middle-income families of color to build wealth in their homes like their white counterparts. Real estate interests helped spur racial tension through a practice known as blockbusting, which created neighborhood turnover by manipulating housing prices and stoking concerns over mixed-race communities, encouraging white flight and destabilizing neighborhoods.³

Locally, municipal housing was intentionally segregated by applying the federal government's 1935 Neighborhood Composition Rule, essentially establishing a permanent low-income African American community on Buffalo's east side.⁴ Investment in highways to speed new suburban residents away from the city, like the Kensington Expressway, cut through communities of color, displacing residents and destroying businesses. These deteriorated conditions created social and economic instability in neighborhoods of color, and the lack of opportunity for local youth set the stage for the race revolts of the late 1960s.⁵

Civil unrest led to further disinvestment, and Urban Renewal policies followed which bulldozed huge swathes of neighborhoods where established communities of color lived – specifically, those neighborhoods that faced the harshest capital restrictions under the government's redlining maps. This neighborhood clearance effort led to further displacement and economic erosion.⁶

1937 Home Owners' Loan Corp. Residential Security Map



Source: Residential Security Map, Buffalo N.Y., City Survey File, Record Group 195, National Archives II, College Park MD

How Places Impact Equity

Community reinvestment policies at a national, state, and local level have never been comprehensive enough to overcome a legacy of discriminatory practices. Federal affordable housing programs, for instance, continue to reinforce concentrations of poverty.⁷ Banks continue to determine how much they will lend based not just on the quality of a house, but on the perceived quality of the surrounding community through comparable sales analysis. In some neighborhoods, primarily neighborhoods of color, decades of disinvestment in both housing and commercial activity and in the public realm have lowered housing values to the point where the ability to gain home loans even for basic upkeep has become challenging through conventional channels. When cash is the only purchase option, middle-income families get pushed to neighborhoods where conventional lending is available. This limits the purchasing pool in poor neighborhoods, further forcing down values and creating an enhanced opportunity for speculative and absentee purchasers. Lower values also trigger decisions by existing owners not to invest in modernization and maintenance, such as abating lead paint hazards which can create major negative health consequences particularly in young children.⁸



How People Impact Equity

Structural cultural biases often impact the decisions we make in ways that we may not fully recognize. Fair Housing testing continues to reveal illegal biases and inequitable treatment for families of color looking to purchase or rent housing.⁹ Studies have demonstrated that families of color are shown fewer housing options and in fewer neighborhoods than white families.¹⁰ Particularly throughout the subprime mortgage crisis people of color, regardless of their income or credit scores, were more likely to be offered less advantageous loan terms than white counterparts of equal ability to pay. Through mortgage brokers and front-line underwriters, implicit bias or outright discrimination pushed communities of color underwater — through such mechanisms as Adjustable Rate Mortgages and balloon payments — in greater proportions than whites, erasing community and individual wealth gains in unprecedented numbers.¹¹



Momentum to build on

Green and Healthy Homes

A host of community and governmental partners were assembled by the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo in partnership with Erie County and the City of Buffalo to improve the health and energy efficiency of homes in neighborhoods across the City. This collaboration has been designated as a national Green & Healthy Homes Initiative site under the coordination of a group of federal agencies led by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. This innovative partnership brings together service providers as well as regulatory agencies to take a whole-house approach to improving housing conditions as well as health outcomes.

In addressing mold, lead, and other household health hazards in addition to weatherization, the partnership was able to prioritize interventions in low-income households with the most vulnerable populations. Rather than focusing on funding stream regulations, this shared approach brought together multiple agencies to focus on the needs of families.

Due to the disproportionate impacts of lead poisoning in Buffalo's neighborhoods of color, coordinated efforts are needed to improve the prospects for all families. Home interventions and public education campaigns conducted by Green & Healthy Homes partners have helped to reduce lead poisoning in Buffalo's children (see page 43).

In addition, the initiative focuses on economic impact, not just in cost savings to families now with reduced energy bills, but also in creating a green jobs career ladder within the weatherization field for local residents.



¹ Patterson, Silverman, et al., 2008.

² Maryland Law Review, 1974.

³ University at Buffalo Regional Institute, 2014.

⁴ Kraus, 2000.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ross, 1971.

⁷ University at Buffalo Regional Institute, 2014.

⁸ President's Task Force on Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks to Children, 2000.

⁹ University at Buffalo Regional Institute, 2014.

¹⁰ Turner, et. al., 2013.

¹¹ Brescia, 2009.



Median Neighborhood Home Value

The “middle” home value, where half of all homes are valued below and half are valued above.

All neighborhoods should be vibrant and healthy places to live, but systemic disinvestment means neighborhoods of color are less likely to have high housing values.

Why It Matters

A range of housing values is important to allowing broad participation in home ownership across the income spectrum, but concentrations of low-value properties limit the ability of families to prosper. Though rapid increases in housing values can lead to displacement, on an individual family level, housing values that appreciate over time help build wealth as homes are often our largest and highest-valued possession. When we close the gap in neighborhood housing values, we can expect to see more stable neighborhoods, increased wealth levels for homeowners, and greater economic equity for future generations.

Measuring the Gap

Housing values in neighborhoods with high concentrations of people of color are just a fraction of the values seen in predominantly white neighborhoods. This gap is long standing and appears to be widening. The gap is widest for predominantly African American neighborhoods where average housing values are just a third of what they are in neighborhoods comprised primarily of white households.

ONE WAY THAT INSTITUTIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THE GAP

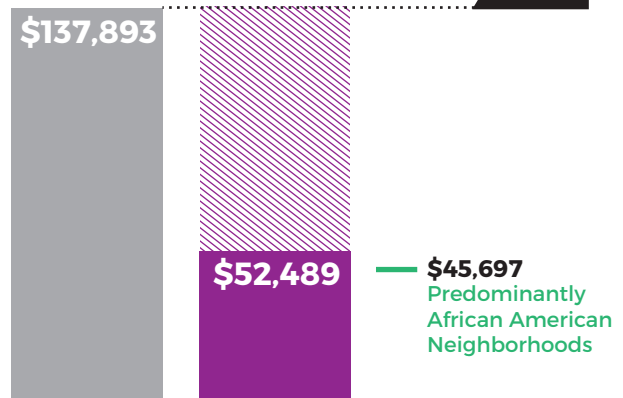


Neighborhoods where people of color lived were unable to access bank capital for decades because of governmental underwriting policy. This disinvestment created large scale deterioration in neighborhood quality and its effects can still be felt to this day.¹

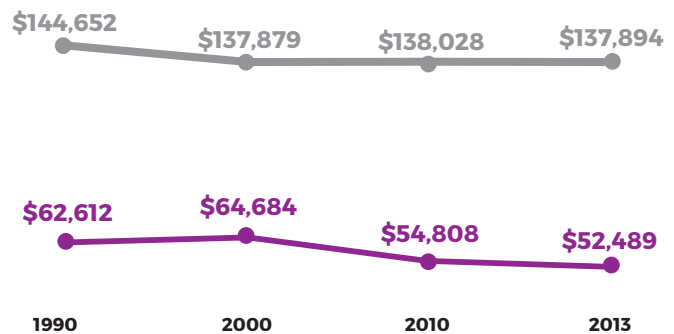
¹ University at Buffalo Regional Institute, 2014.

Closing the gap between predominantly white neighborhoods and neighborhoods of color

Where We Reach Equity



The gap over time between predominantly white neighborhoods and neighborhoods of color



SOURCE: US Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (2009-2013); U.S. Census (1990, 2000, 2010). See Appendix for Data Sources and Notes.

Childhood Elevated Blood Lead Levels

% of children screened for lead levels that registered 10mcg/dL of lead or greater in their blood.

All neighborhoods should be vibrant and healthy places to live, but systemic disinvestment means residents of neighborhoods of color are less likely to be free of lead paint hazards.

Why It Matters

With our aging and deteriorating housing stock, too many children in our region are exposed to health and safety risks in their own homes. In addition to physical ailments, lead poisoning can lead to permanent developmental delays and lifelong learning difficulties.¹ When we close the gap in childhood lead exposure, we can expect to see increased academic performance and lower health care costs as fewer children will struggle with lead poisoning.

Measuring the Gap

Children from neighborhoods of color are twelve times as likely as children from predominantly white neighborhoods to test for elevated levels of lead in their blood. The problem is worst in ZIP Codes in neighborhoods of color in the City of Buffalo, where blood tests revealing elevated lead levels are significantly more common than the region-wide rate.

The good news is significant progress has been made over the past decade. Tests showing high lead levels in children's blood have decreased in both neighborhoods of color and white neighborhoods. The bad news is that while progress is being made, the gap based on where children live remains significant.

ONE WAY THAT PLACES CONTRIBUTE TO THE GAP



A disproportionate share of the region's people of color reside in our central cities and inner ring communities. The City of Buffalo is home to some of the oldest housing stock in the nation.² With all homes built prior to 1978 having an enhanced risk of lead paint,³ these hazards are disproportionately experienced by children of color.

Closing the gap between predominantly white neighborhoods and neighborhoods of color



The gap over time between predominantly white neighborhoods and neighborhoods of color



SOURCE: NYS Department of Health (2012); US Census, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (2009-2013). See Appendix for Data Sources and Notes.

¹ President's Task Force on Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks to Children, 2000.

² University at Buffalo Regional Institute, 2014.

³ President's Task Force on Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks to Children, 2000.



Living in a Neighborhood with Intact Commercial Areas

% of population living in a census tract with commercial vacancy rates below 20%.

All neighborhoods should be vibrant and healthy places to live, but systemic disinvestment means people of color are less likely to live in neighborhoods with intact commercial areas.

Why It Matters

Active commercial areas are an important amenity for quality of life, but a high presence of shuttered businesses are an impediment to encouraging new investment in neighborhoods. Commercial vacancy contributes to blight within communities and decreases overall neighborhood vitality. Without doctors offices, grocery stores and other retailers, transportation burdens -- in both time and expense -- are heightened. Access to local job opportunities is also diminished.

Measuring the Gap

While almost nine in ten white residents in the region live in neighborhoods with low commercial vacancy rates, fewer than two in three people of color do. Though the disparity impacts all people of color, it affects African Americans most, with just over half of this population living in neighborhoods with vibrant commercial districts. A drop in occupancy rates -- felt more severely in neighborhoods of color -- occurred throughout the region in 2010 but has since stabilized close to 2008 levels.

ONE WAY THAT INSTITUTIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THE GAP

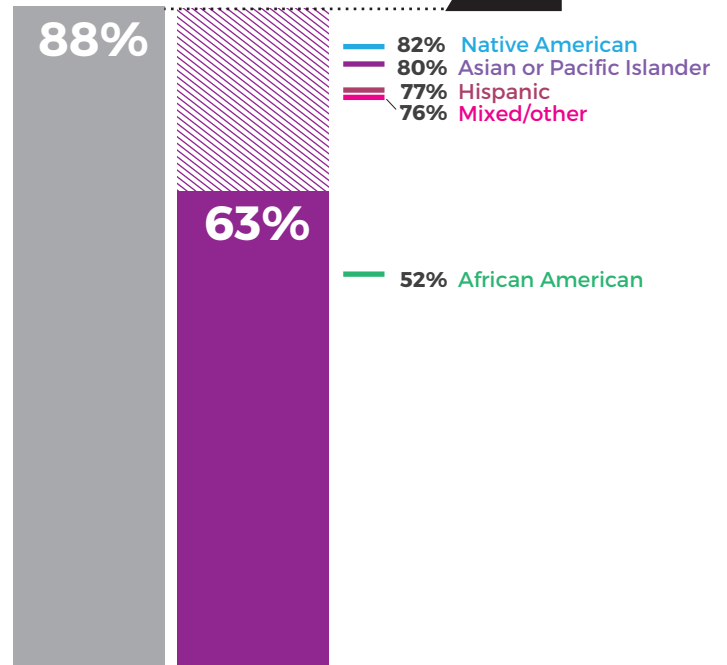


The post-war highway building boom and continuing outward migration shifted retail and office activity away from downtown and traditional neighborhood Main Street development patterns - draining vitality from neighborhoods that have a larger presence of people of color.¹

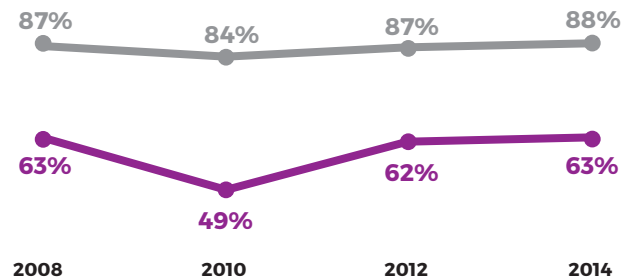
¹ Kraus, 2000.

Closing the gap between whites and all people of color

Where We Reach Equity



The gap over time between whites and all people of color



SOURCE: HUD-USPS Aggregated USPS Administrative Data on Address Vacancies, Quarter 4, 2014; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (2005-2009; 2008-2012; 2009-2013); U.S. Census, 2010. See Appendix for Data Sources and Notes.

Not Living in Concentrated Poverty

% of population living in a census tract with a poverty rate below 20%.

All neighborhoods should be vibrant and healthy places to live, but systemic disinvestment means people of color are less likely to live outside of concentrated poverty.

Why It Matters

Research shows that neighborhoods with high poverty limit opportunities for all their residents -- regardless of whether or not they themselves are in poverty. Residents can be isolated from jobs, quality education, and commercial amenities. These neighborhoods also tend to have higher rates of reported crime, blight, and environmental hazards.¹ When we close the gap in neighborhood poverty concentration, we can expect to see stronger neighborhoods across the board, along with greater access to opportunity for all residents.

Measuring the Gap

While a third of the region's people of color are in poverty, 64 percent live in a neighborhood that faces the challenges of high degrees of poverty. This disparity is even greater for the African American population as eight out of ten live in a high poverty neighborhood, double the actual African American poverty rate of 38 percent. This indicates that many working poor and middle class families of color experience impacts of poverty just because of where they live. Even more troubling is that this pattern has been compounded since 2000.

ONE WAY THAT INSTITUTIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THE GAP



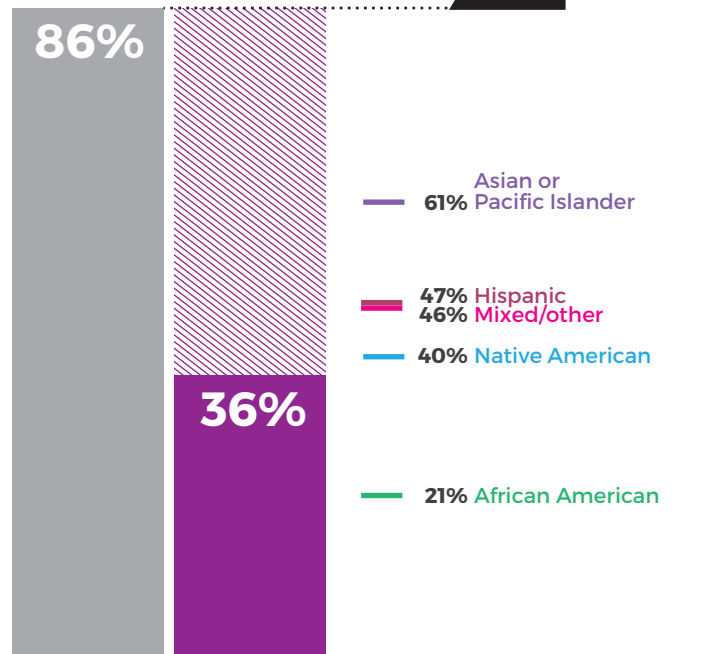
Large lot and single family-only zoning in many suburban communities limits the ability of lower-income families to rent or purchase in many areas of the region. Exclusionary zoning limits options for working class families and contributes to concentrations of poverty elsewhere in the region.²

¹ University at Buffalo Regional Institute, 2014.

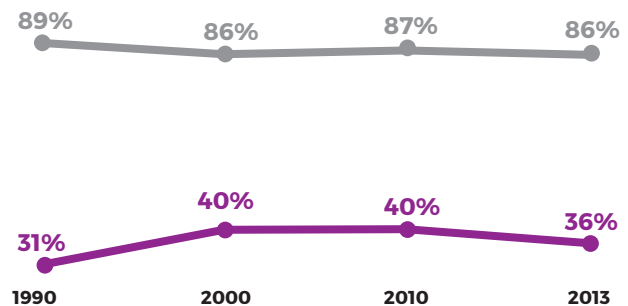
² Patterson, Silverman, et al., 2008.

Closing the gap between whites and people of color

Where We Reach Equity



The gap over time between whites and people of color



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau (1990, 2000, 2010); U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (2009-2013). See Appendix for Data Sources and Notes.



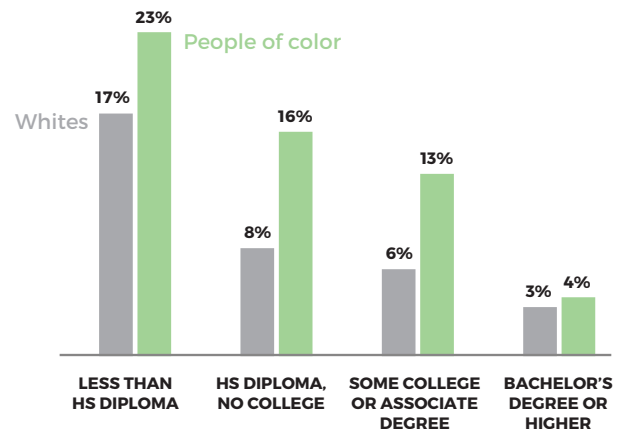
We all pride ourselves on our ability to support ourselves and our families, to contribute to our communities and to build assets to leave behind.

However, for people of color deep structural challenges, including generations of inequitable opportunity, have created additional barriers to the success we all seek.

Buffalo has struggled through tough times, but we are finally seeing jobs and opportunity grow. Yet, despite the gains made by people of color in education and employment, unemployment rates for those of color across every educational attainment level are still significantly higher than those of their white counterparts. And even now, as Buffalo's economy expands, wages for people of color have been stagnant and are actually shrinking against those for whites.

Wages for people of color are lower than that of their white counterparts at every educational level, from those lacking a high school diploma up to and including those with advanced degrees.¹ With diminished wages, people of color are spending a greater portion of their income on housing and transportation, leaving a depleted share of income for other necessities and discretionary purchases. Known as "the high cost of being poor", families with lower incomes often are unable to access conventional

Unemployment Rates in Buffalo Niagara by Educational Attainment, 2012



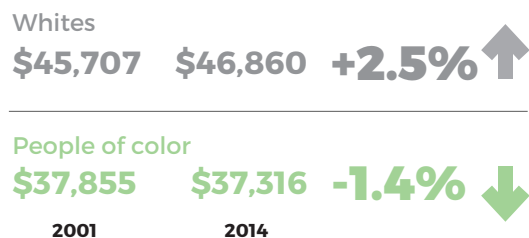
Source: National Equity Atlas, using 2012 census data from IPUMS-USA.



INDICATORS TO TRACK PROGRESS

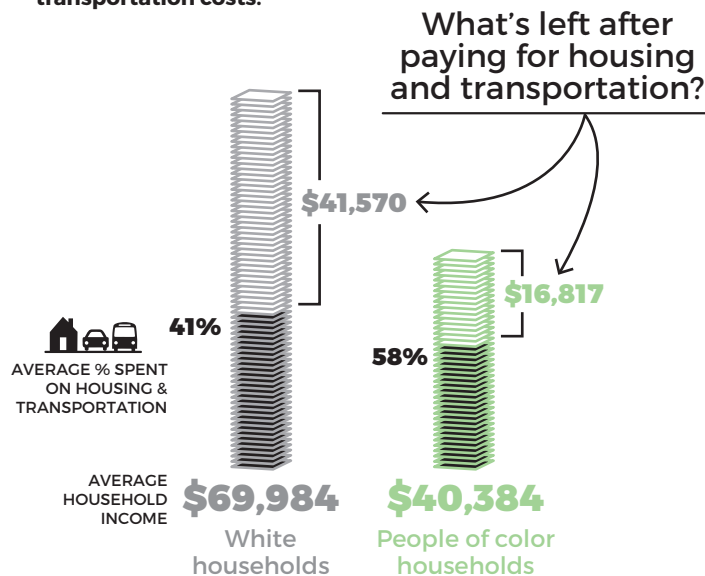
- Children not Born into Poverty
- Employed Workforce
- Median Family Income
- Homeownership Rates

Since 2000, the average annual wages for non-Hispanic whites have grown while wages for people of color have declined in Buffalo Niagara.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Quarterly Workforce Indicators, 2001 and 2014. See Appendix for Data Sources and Notes.

In Buffalo Niagara, white households not only have higher average incomes than people of color households, they also spend a smaller percentage of their household income on housing and transportation costs.



SOURCES: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, 2009-2013 and 1-year estimates, 2013. ESRI, Consumer Expenditure Data, 2011. See Appendix for Data Sources and Notes.

lending and credit. Shut out of the mainstream economy, many are pushed into a parallel economy that offers higher costs and fees for lesser products and services which decreases the ability of families living in poverty to advance economically.² And, as exemplified by the exploitative lending seen during the sub-prime mortgage crisis, these higher cost practices are often intentionally targeted at communities of color.³

The resulting wealth gaps, in many ways dating back generations and partially explained by people of color's longstanding inequitable access to mainstream lending (see page 40), means that a greater proportion of children of color are born into financial instability and the cycle of poverty.

Mortgages Made Per 1,000 Housing Units in Buffalo Niagara, 2014

Mortgage Type	Predominantly African American Neighborhoods	Neighborhoods of Color	Predominantly White Neighborhoods
New Purchases	2.7	4.2	23.9
Home Improvement Loans	2.7	2.8	4.5
Refinance Mortgages	1.7	1.9	10.4
ALL Mortgages	7.2	8.9	38.8

SOURCES: Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council, 2014. Mortgages include only those that are HMDA-reportable. See Appendix for Data Sources and Notes.

¹ US Department of Labor, 2015.

² University at Buffalo Regional Institute, 2014.

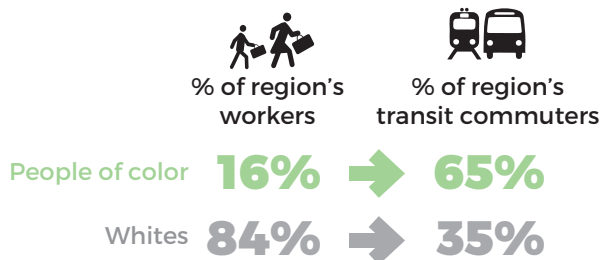
³ Apgar, Herbert, Mathur, 2009.



Understanding what's contributing to the gaps across income and wealth

The large wealth gap between families of color and white families is well documented. One national study found that the median white household had more than \$111,000 in wealth holdings, while the median African-American household had just over \$7,100 and median wealth for Latino households was roughly \$8,300. The wealth gap is attributable to differentials in home ownership, education level, employment, and wages, but also in a differential rate of return on each of these factors. In other words, the financial return for people of color that are homeowners or college degree holders is less than the return for whites, and a household of color that raises their income also experiences a lesser increase in cumulative wealth than white households.¹

Fewer than a third of the region's jobs are accessible by public transit. Workers of color are much more likely to be affected by this limited access.



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates (2014); U.S. Census Longitudinal-Employer Household Dynamics Program, LODES Data (2011); NFTA Transit Stops (2013). See Appendix for Data Sources and Notes.

No one cause, no one solution

How Institutions Impact Equity

Disparities in income and wealth are heavily impacted by disparate conditions in geographic and social segregation, in educational attainment, and in criminal justice.



Due to inequities in each of these realms, the generational cycle of poverty is not easily broken. Decreasing social mobility also has a disproportionate effect on people of color, as a greater portion of people of color are born into poverty -- a lingering legacy of segregation and discrimination.

The U.S. government's official policies that denied mortgage support to both people and neighborhoods of color, for example, had a profound effect on individual families' ability to accumulate wealth and greatly reduced the housing values within neighborhoods of color.² These depressed housing values are not easily overcome. In fact, current underwriting practices for mortgage loans strongly consider neighborhood conditions, meaning that low housing values within a neighborhood further restrict investment.

Insurance companies that charge more for car or household coverage based on urban locations, credit card companies and banks that give higher interest rates to those of lower incomes, rent-to-own stores which charge high fees to those who are unable to secure traditional credit -- each of these are contributors that make life more expensive to those lacking wealth or to those living in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty.³

But attempts to break the cycle of poverty, starting with the ability to find employment and begin to amass wealth, depends on one's educational attainment, which, as demonstrated elsewhere in this report, is inequitably skewed away from people of color. Employment also depends on the ability to access a job -- something that is more difficult in the region's neighborhoods of color. Finding employment often also depends on one's network -- the people one knows from social, familial, and professional settings. In addition to challenges faced as employees, a comprehensive New York State study found that businesses owned by people of color were substantially underrepresented in the marketplace due to discrimination faced as entrepreneurs.⁴

¹ Demos, 2015.

² See page 38.

³ Watson and Epstein, 2006.

⁴ New York State Department of Economic Development, 2006.



How Places Impact Equity

Places impact income by increasing burdens to job access. Lower cost housing is concentrated in primarily high poverty urban neighborhoods, and the dearth of commercial activity in these communities contributes to a geographic jobs/housing mismatch that disproportionately impacts people of color. The hub-and-spoke style of the region's public transportation system is more conducive to first shift commuting from the suburbs to downtown than to reverse commutes to the disbursed service sector jobs often found in suburban communities and often taking place outside of traditional 9-to-5 hours. Coupled with lower auto-ownership rates in neighborhoods of color, job access and income suffer.

Wealth accumulation is also skewed by place. A legacy of 20th century capital restrictions that diminished investment in neighborhoods of color combines with current real estate practices to suppress present values in neighborhoods of color, leading to lower housing value appreciation for homeowners compared to other neighborhoods that didn't face these restrictions.⁵



How People Impact Equity

Culturally embedded implicit bias can impact people of color's ability to find work and advance in their careers. Studies have found managers are 50 percent to 240 percent more likely to choose a white candidate than an equally qualified candidate of color.⁶ This bias starts at the resume screening process as candidates with African American "sounding" names are 50% less likely to be interviewed.⁷

Managers unfamiliarity or subconscious discomfort with difference can lead to harsher judgment or reliance on a single minor mistake, misinterpretation, or misunderstanding in an interview, resume, or application to reject a candidate of color. Often these types of job denials are not about a candidate's lack of ability, but are masked under the notion of someone not being a good "fit".⁸

When formalized protocols and objective criteria are established in the workplace, people of color are more likely to have greater representation in the workforce, to advance to increased positions of authority, and to face smaller wage gaps than when undefined and arbitrary evaluation criteria are prominent.⁹

⁵ Demos, 2015.
⁶ Pager & Shepard, 2008.
⁷ Bertrand, 2003.
⁸ Kirwan Institute, 2015.
⁹ Pager & Shepard, 2008

Momentum to build on

The Buffalo Opportunity Pledge

In early 2015, City of Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown announced the Buffalo Opportunity Pledge -- a community-wide commitment to fostering diversity, inclusiveness, and equity in the city.

To date nearly 4,000 individuals and more than 165 businesses and organizations representing over 50,000 employees, members, and students have signed the pledge affirming their commitment to understanding, respecting, celebrating, and embracing our differences to create a stronger, more economically advanced community.

The pledge affirms the pressing need to focus on equity as an economic engine, one that can spur prosperity throughout the city, help attract top talent and tap into the unrealized potential of current residents.

The pledge calls for both individual and collective action, specifically recognizing these aims as core values of the city and asking organizations to build and operationalize cultures that are true to this vision.

The signers of the pledge recognize that, by working together, the City, its residents and businesses can increase workforce participation, increase wealth for all residents, and build a thriving and inclusive city with opportunity for all, decreasing poverty and lifting up neighborhoods in the process.

Signers of the pledge acknowledge and commit to an evolving and ongoing process to find and invent solutions to further equity and opportunity.





Children Not Born Into Poverty

% of children below the age of six that are in a household above the federal poverty line.

We all strive to provide for ourselves and our families, but generations of inequitable opportunity means **children of color** are less likely to be born into families above the poverty level.

Why It Matters

Poverty tends to be both cyclical and persistent. Research shows that children that are poor at birth have significantly higher poverty rates at all ages than children who are not born into poverty. Because poverty correlates with so many other types of outcomes -- education, wealth generation, safety, quality of life, etc. -- when we close this gap, we can expect to see benefits across a wide range of racial equity gaps.¹

Measuring the Gap

Half of the very young population of color are in poverty compared to only 13 percent of white children below the age of six, and the gap is widest for our African American population. While progress can be seen between 1990 and 2010, recent US Census estimates suggest this trend may be regressing as fewer young people of color are above the poverty line in 2013 than in 2010.

ONE WAY THAT INSTITUTIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THE GAP



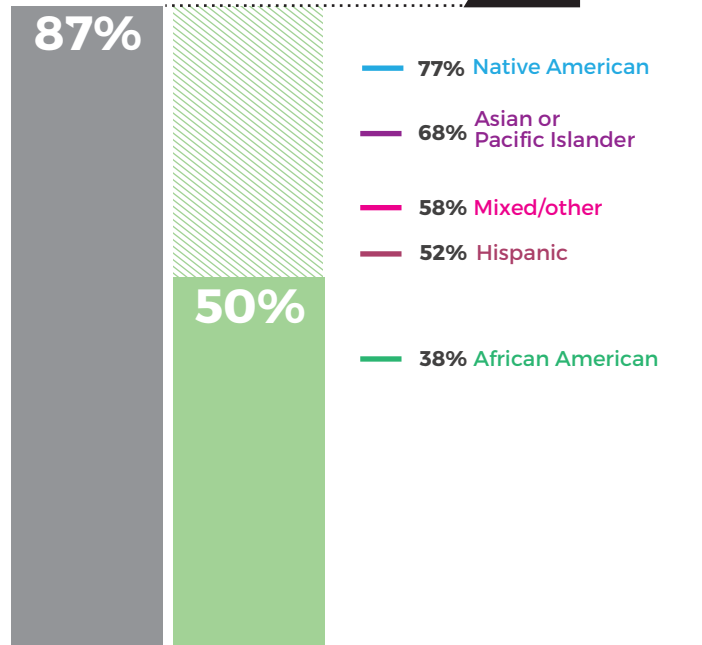
A lack of family supportive policies means greater economic instability for low- and moderate-income workers who have children, particularly those in service industries and shift workers. Inaccessible childcare options, whether due to geography or offset shift times, complicate balancing childrearing and work.²

¹ Duncan, et al., 1998.

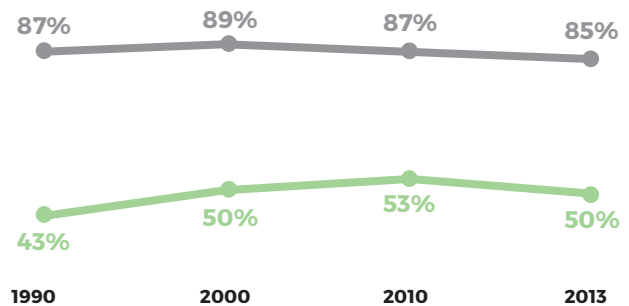
² Watson, et al., 2015.

Closing the gap between whites and children of color

Where We Reach Equity



The gap over time between whites and all people of color



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau (1990, 2000); U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (2010, 2013).

Employed Workforce

% of active civilian labor participants that are employed.

We all strive to provide for ourselves and our families, but generations of inequitable opportunity means workers of color are less likely to be able to find employment.

Why It Matters

Lowering unemployment is one of our region's most important economic development goals. It helps measure business growth as well as how it translates to opportunities for our workers and their families. When we close the gap in unemployment, we can expect to see greater workforce participation rates, a broader tax base, lower public expenditure costs, and more wealth for families and households across our region.

Measuring the Gap

Workers of color are over twice as likely to be out of work and looking for a job than the region's white workers. These gaps are even wider for men. Looking at individual racial and ethnic groups, the gap is widest for African American and Native American workers, both with employed rates below that of the overall rate for people of color.

This data does not include individuals who are out of the labor force because they are unable to work or have given up hopes of finding a job. For people of color who are over the age of fifteen, 45 percent are out of the labor market compared to 36 percent of the working age white population.¹

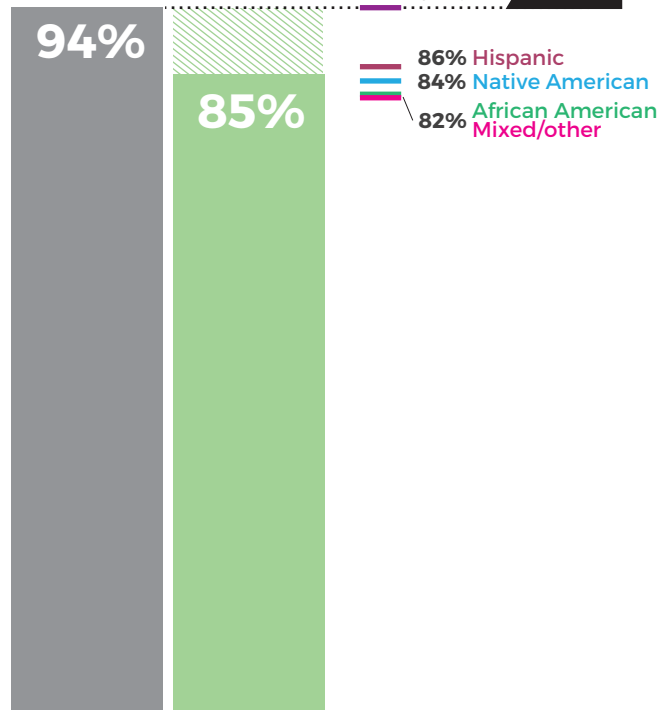
ONE WAY THAT PEOPLE CONTRIBUTE TO THE GAP



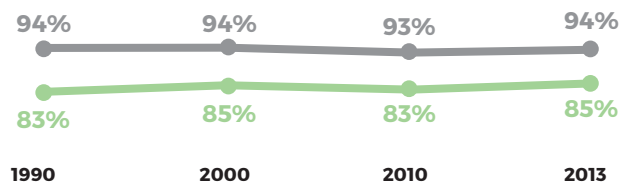
Studies have shown that job applicants with names that are associated with African Americans are less likely to receive a call for an interview than those with traditionally white names. This bias, whether intentional or not, severely reduces a person of color's chances of securing a job.²

Closing the gap between whites and all people of color

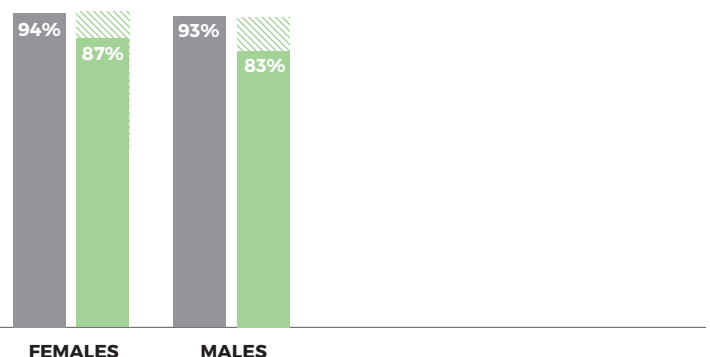
Asian or Pacific Islander
94%
Where We Reach Equity



The gap over time between whites and all people of color



The role that gender plays in the gap between whites and all people of color



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau (1990, 2000); U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 3-year estimates (2008-2010); U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates (2013).

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates (2013).

² Bertrand, 2003.



Median Family Income

The “middle” annual income, where half of all incomes are below and half are above, for household units of related people living together.

We all strive to provide for ourselves and our families, but generations of inequitable opportunity means families of color are more likely to earn less annually.

Why It Matters

Median family income measures the dollars families have to meet basic necessities, devote to recreation, and save for the future. When we close the gap in family income, more households will have the financial capacity to pay for adequate child care, secure reliable transportation, pay for and invest in their homes, and build savings.

Measuring the Gap

The median family income for families of color is half that for white families. Asian/Pacific Islander families have average family wages closer to that of the average white families, while all other family groups of color are less than half. Considering that when controlling for inflation, median income has decreased at a greater rate for families of color than white families since 2000, trends for this equity indicator are heading in the wrong direction.

ONE WAY THAT INSTITUTIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THE GAP

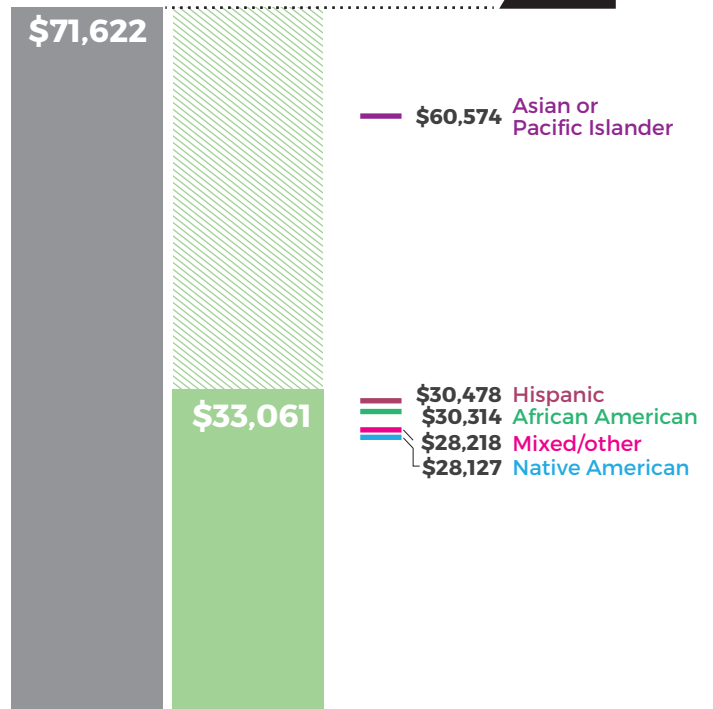


Because of discrepancies in educational attainment, even if meeting all other levels of experience and job requirements, people of color are less likely to be able to advance in the workplace when degree prerequisites are added to positions that do not necessarily require formal education or certificates.¹

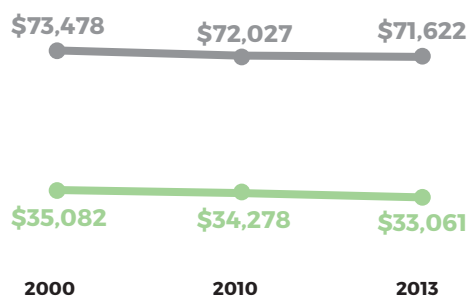
¹ US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2006.

Closing the gap between whites and all people of color

Where We Reach Equity



The gap over time between whites and all people of color



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau (1990, 2000); U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (2010, 2013). Incomes are inflation adjusted to 2013 dollars. The 2013 income for People of Color omits Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders because of a large Standard of Error

Homeownership Rates

% of housing units (home, apartment, etc.) that are owned by one of the individuals living in it.

We all strive to provide for ourselves and our families, but generations of inequitable opportunity means families of color are less likely to own their homes.

Why It Matters

For many families, owning a home provides much more than just a roof over one's head. Owning a home can provide an asset with the potential to appreciate over time and be leveraged to pay for large costs like higher education. When we close the gap in homeownership, more families will have wealth-generating assets and be able to benefit from mortgage tax credits. Further, we can expect to see greater stability in neighborhoods and civic participation.

Measuring the Gap

Homeownership rates for households of color are half that of white households. This trend remains persistent across most racial and ethnic groups. While households of color saw modest growth in homeownership rates between 1990 and 2000, recent US Census estimates suggest these trends are regressing post-Great Recession.

ONE WAY THAT INSTITUTIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THE GAP



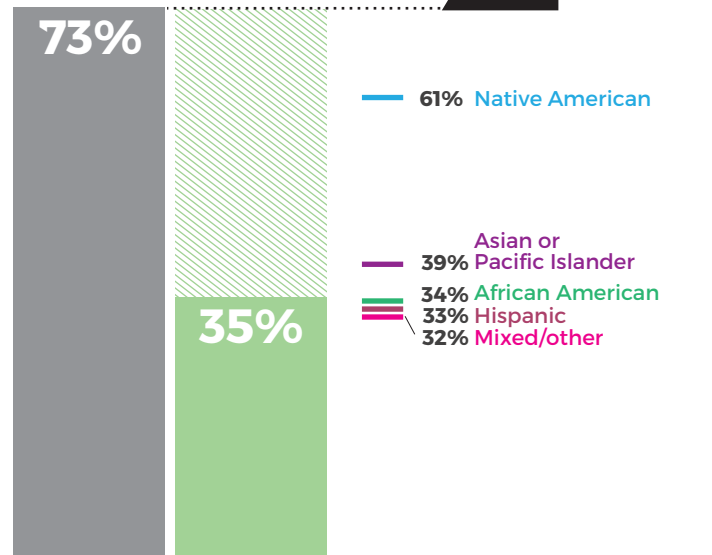
Though financial institutions are prohibited from making lending decisions based on race under the Fair Housing Act, recent Attorneys General prosecutions at both a national¹ and local² level reveal accusations of continued racially biased lending practices by some lenders.

¹ Gupta, 2015.

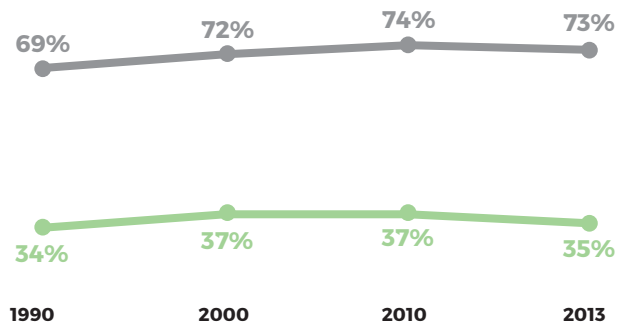
² New York State Office of the Attorney General, 2014.

Closing the gap between whites and all people of color

Where We Reach Equity



The gap over time between whites and all people of color



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau (1990, 2000); U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (2010, 2013). Disparity in 1990 may include people of Hispanic or Latino origin among White share.



**Buffalo is
going to
benefit,
big time.**

Equity is better for our bottom line. We know that when we come together and share in the work, we share in the benefit.

Buffalo is the City of Good Neighbors.

When we achieve equity and close the gap between persons of color and whites, the region will benefit with respect to education and job readiness, income and wealth, quality of life and neighborhoods, and criminal justice and safety.

The **four scenarios** that follow imagine a world where there is no statistical difference in outcomes for persons of color and whites.

These scenarios fast forward to the region's future when a person's race and ethnicity will have no bearing on their opportunity and achievement. These scenarios and the annual impacts that accrue assume a region similar to the one we have now in size and age. But we know that our population is not going to remain static. As persons of color grow in number, so too will the benefits and impacts of attaining racial equity.

Education & Job Readiness

Criminal Justice & Safety

Quality of Life & Neighborhoods

Income & Wealth



Buffalo is going to benefit when we close the gap in education and job readiness.

More young adults equipped for success in college and career.

When gaps are closed in academic achievement at the high school level, each year the region will experience...

...an additional **1,118 high school graduates earning an advanced designation Regents diploma,** representing a more rigorous education experience, ready to excel at work and college.

...an additional **968 students obtaining a high school diploma,** these are students who would have otherwise dropped out but will instead be equipped for work and prepared to advance their education beyond high school.

A stronger workforce prepared for jobs of the future.

When gaps are closed at the post-secondary level, Buffalo Niagara will be home to...

...an additional **19,550 adults with an associate's degree or higher** offering the skilled labor that area employers seek and a growing economy demands.

Regional employers will also benefit from an expanded pool of diverse candidates including **450 more on-time college graduates** each year from area colleges and universities completing an associate's degree within 3 years or a bachelor's degree in 6 years or less.

Higher levels of economic self sufficiency for individuals and families.

When the educational attainment gap is closed, the standard of living of families in the region will rise...

...an additional **3,989 adults will live above the federal poverty line** benefiting individuals, children, families and communities.

This represents **5% fewer adults (and their children) living in poverty** across the region.



Community investments benefit from reduced social service spending.

If Erie and Niagara County social service expenditures were reduced by a proportional 5%...

A larger, more productive economy, with additional businesses and jobs.

Closing the racial equity gap in educational attainment will generate higher earnings and productivity...

up to \$32.4 million/yr
in public expenditures could be avoided.

If these funds were repurposed for other uses and investments throughout the region, half of these dollars could cover annual salaries for

**an additional 100 teachers,
75 library workers,
50 police officers,
35 parks and recreational staff.**

The other half could be invested to spur business and job growth and infill commercial vacancies with

\$16.5 million/year
for economic development purposes.

...an estimated
\$1.026 billion gain in the region's annual gross domestic product

reflecting a greater number of higher-skilled jobs associated with a better trained and higher paid workforce.

This larger economy and greater production level could support
536 new businesses and 13,002 new full- and part-time jobs

in growing industries like advanced manufacturing and professional services.

This number of jobs exceeds the 10,000 at Kaleida Health, the region's third largest employer.

Interested in learning how this scenario was developed?

See Appendix (Scenario Methodology, pages 64-65) for a detailed description of the data and assumptions reflected in each scenario.

Buffalo is **going to benefit** when we close the gap in criminal justice and safety.

Equitable juvenile justice means fewer youth in the criminal justice system.

When youth of color receive equitable treatment...

Fewer adult arrests, convictions, and sentences means stronger families and communities.

When adults of color are arrested at the same rate as whites, the region will see...

Workers will have reduced barriers to employment.

When we reach equity in arrests...

...approximately
1,330 fewer children under the age of 18 will be arrested each year.

Hundreds fewer youth - an estimated 442, based on 2014 numbers - will be incarcerated in a detention facility.

...nearly
9,950 fewer arrests every year.

This amounts to about 27 fewer arrests every day, on average. When arrest and conviction rates are equalized, there will be 4,995 fewer convictions of adults of color annually.

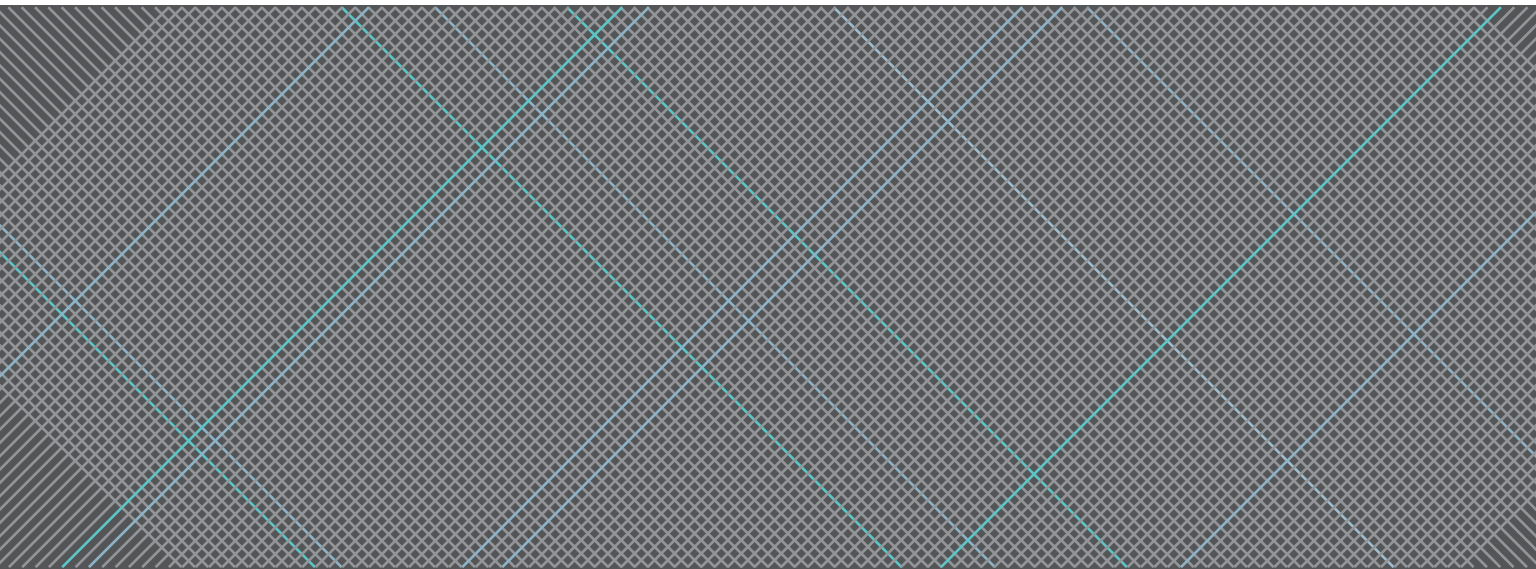
With equity in arrest, conviction and sentencing rates,

2,488 fewer adults will be sentenced to jail and prison each year,

which breaks apart families, creates lapses in work, and costs taxpayers.

...nearly
54,000 teens and adults (over age 15) will avoid having a criminal record over the next 10 years,

a barrier that creates obstacles to employment and reduces the chance an employer will call back to extend an offer by 50%. This projection assumes only half of those arrested have no prior arrests.



Community investments grow with criminal justice savings.

When we reach equitable treatment in arrests, conviction, and sentencing rates...

...County expenses associated with correctional services, including operation of the Erie County Holding Center, will **decline by a projected 43% or \$41 million per year, compared to spending in 2013.**

This reflects an estimated **average savings of about \$16,500 per person per year** for the 2,468 fewer individuals of color that will be sentenced.

Investments enhance neighborhoods across the region.

If these savings were invested back into the community...

...it could **cover the annual salaries for an additional 200 instructional staff at elementary and secondary schools across Erie and Niagara Counties; add 175 additional full time library workers; 150 police officers for community building; and 150 parks and recreational staff** for activities that engage the community and keep youth active outside of school.

Interested in learning how this scenario was developed?

See Appendix (Scenario Methodology pages 65-66) for a detailed description of the data and assumptions reflected in each scenario.

Buffalo is going to benefit when gaps are closed in quality of life and neighborhoods.

Nearly 100% of our children will attend a school in good standing.

When neighborhood quality for all residents improves...

...nearly **13,500 additional children in the region will attend a school in good standing**

rather than a failing school, and will be more likely to graduate from high school, prepared for work and career training. This improvement translates into approximately

150 additional graduates a year in the Buffalo City School District.

With no change in school performance, the majority of students enrolled in failing schools will not graduate from high school on time.

Home values in areas of need will nearly double with neighborhood quality.

When neighborhoods experience similar quality of life and investment levels...

...housing values in neighborhoods of color will **increase by \$71,119 per home, on average, an 88% rise.**

Aggregated, this represents an **increase in wealth of \$1.7 billion for the region.**

As investments increase and housing quality improves, nearly

1,409 fewer children will have elevated blood lead levels.

Greater residential mobility will foster job access and equitable opportunity for all.

Neighborhoods will be less segregated and more diverse, as equity is achieved...

...nearly **87,500 additional persons of color will no longer live in racially segregated areas, benefiting the region's smaller cities, suburbs, and villages.**

An equal number of white individuals will live in neighborhoods of increased diversity.

When the gap in concentrated poverty is closed...

neighborhood and school quality will improve for 28,053 children under age 15.

Research supports their annual earnings will be 31% higher by their mid-20s, contributing to an overall larger base of economic impacts for the region.



A healthier tax base benefits regional investments for community improvement and growth.

As home values increase, at current property tax rates, revenue for Erie and Niagara Counties would...

...increase by an estimated **\$12.3 million to support a range of county priorities**

from education in community colleges to public safety, health, and transportation.

This revenue could increase expenditures of Erie and Niagara Counties for economic development by nearly 80%, spurring new businesses and employment in areas where commercial vacancies are common and leave gaps in jobs and services.

Alternatively, counties could use this growth in property tax revenue of **3.7% to lower tax rates across the board.**

Better health and longer life expectancies reduce medical costs and support workforce and community engagement.

As neighborhood disparities decline and commercial infill happens...

...an additional **27,292 people of color will live in households with better access to supermarkets and other basic amenities**

within walking distance of their home or easily accessible by car.

Greater access to healthy foods and growing neighborhood walkability will contribute to

equity in obesity levels,

a leading risk factor for chronic disease and death.

An additional **13,232 adults will be at a healthy weight.**

By closing the gap in diabetes hospitalizations alone, **\$5.8 million a year in health care costs in the region could be averted.**

This does not even include savings from indirect costs created by gaps such as absenteeism, disability-related unemployment, and premature mortality.

Over the next three years, equity in life expectancy will result in

tens of thousands of people of color in the region living a longer life, beyond age 75, extending their years and passing their wisdom down from one generation to the next.

Interested in learning how this scenario was developed?

See Appendix (Scenario Methodology pages 66-67) for a detailed description of the data and assumptions reflected in each scenario.



Buffalo is going to benefit when we close the gap in income and wealth.

Economic expansion leads to declining joblessness

When gaps are closed in employment and unemployment across Buffalo Niagara...

...an additional **61,606 individuals age 16+ will have a job or be self-employed,**

leaving the rolls of those who are unemployed or have dropped out of the regional workforce.

Wage increases support resident spending and mean higher earnings and returns on investments over a lifetime.

When wage gaps are closed in Buffalo Niagara...

...wages paid to people of color already in the workforce will **increase by \$627M,** reflecting an \$8,369 annual increase for every person of color in the workforce.

Projecting this earnings level across 61,606 individuals added to the workforce,

incomes are projected to grow by \$3.5 billion per year throughout the region.

The current \$8,369 wage differential between whites and persons of color **amounts to \$251,070 over a 30 year working lifetime.**

Economic impacts mean new jobs, businesses, and greater regional output.

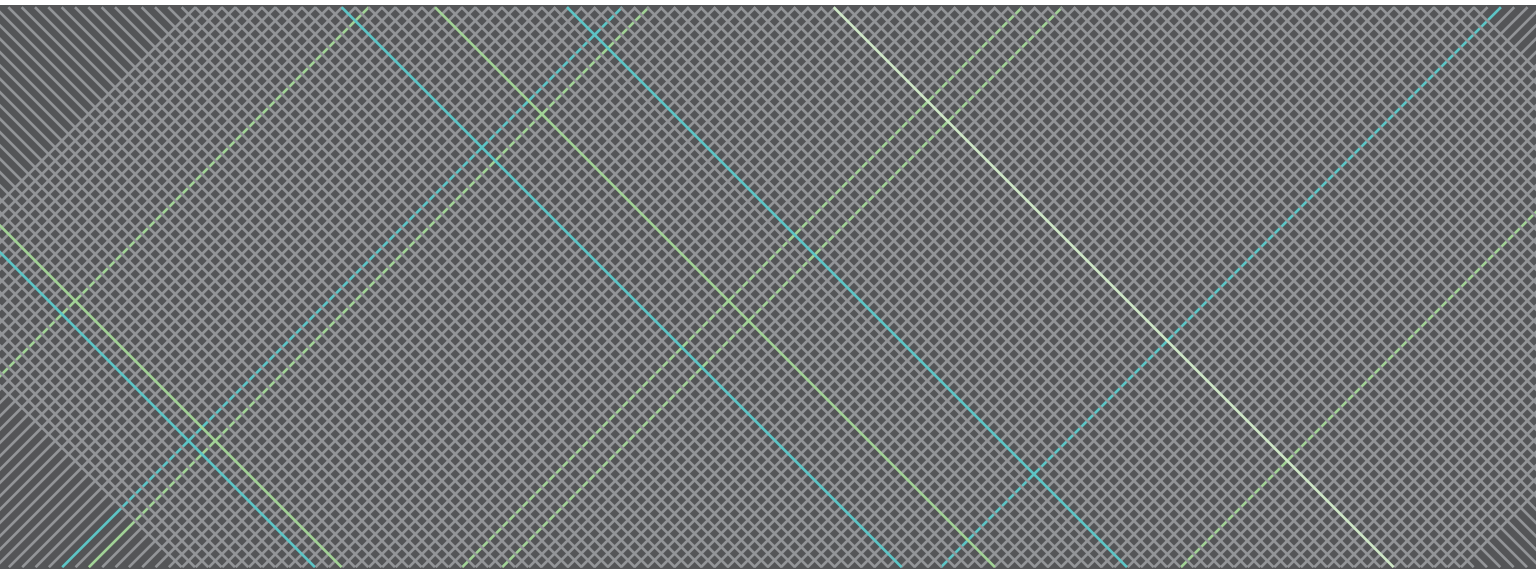
Equity in workforce engagement, employment, and compensation would support...

...an estimated **19,200 additional jobs in the region**

It would also increase regional output by \$2.6 billion as restaurants, retail outlets, realtors, grocery stores, and more expand their footprint in areas of the region affected the most by this greater purchasing power.

If these newly created jobs were in new businesses, an estimated **3,628 additional businesses**

would populate the region based on the employment averages of existing young business in Buffalo Niagara.



Business performance benefits from diversity.

The region will realize additional gains as workforce diversity increases...

A growing number of homeowners stabilize communities and contribute to regional wealth.

When gaps in lifetime earnings and credit access are closed...

Wealth building contributes to resilience and benefits future generations.

If net worth for families of color was the same as that for whites...

...racial diversity has been shown to lead to better business performance. Racially diverse businesses are more likely to have

higher than average profitability; higher than average market share; higher sales revenues; and more customers

than establishments with low levels of racial diversity.

...a projected **36,564 more individuals would purchase their own home.**

Home ownership is a key source of wealth accumulations for Americans and contributes to neighborhood stability.

Across the U.S., the median net wealth of homeowners is over 36 times as great as that of renters.

...the region would be an estimated **\$12 billion wealthier** reflecting greater home equity, savings, and investment holdings which are currently almost eight times greater among whites.

Interested in learning how this scenario was developed?

See Appendix (Scenario Methodology pages 67-68) for a detailed description of the data and assumptions reflected in each scenario.

Appendix

Scenario Methodology

Buffalo is going to benefit, big time

We suppose a region where all persons have an equal chance of attending a school in good standing, graduating from high school, participating in the labor force, securing employment, owning a home, staying clear of the criminal justice system, and more. Impacts from achieving equity project that performance on indicators for will no longer be discernable by race. Though we aspire to raise outcomes for all, for the purposes of these calculations, the elimination of racial equity gaps assumes that outcomes for all populations of color will rise or fall to the current level of the white population.

Though racial equity will not be achieved overnight, these scenarios fast forward to the region's future when a person's race and ethnicity will have no bearing on their opportunities and achievements. These scenarios and the annual impacts that accrue assume a region similar to the one we have now in size and age. We also assume that the regional economy and landscape can readily expand to accommodate an increase in college graduates, homeowners, wages, and more. The scenarios incorporate the latest and most reliable data available for the region from publicly available sources such as the U.S. Census, NYS Department of Education, and Office of the NYS Comptroller.

Assumptions and impacts also draw from and build upon work by others who have studied the impacts of racial equity at the national level such as research at the Altarum Institute for the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in *The Business Case for Racial Equity*, and PolicyLink and the University of Southern California (USC) Program for Environmental and Regional Equity (PERE) in *The Equity Solution: Racial Inclusion is Key to Growing a Strong Economy*.

Education & Job Readiness (pages 56-57)

More young adults will be equipped for success in college and career. Data for this indicator come from the NYS Education Department and reflect 4-year outcomes for the June 2010 cohort of students. The scenario assumes that 44% of students of color will graduate from high school with a Regents diploma with advanced designation. This percentage reflects the proportion of white students who graduate with this designation, up from 14% of students of color who earned a Regent's diploma with advanced designation at the end of the 2013-14 academic year. In a class of 3,686 students of

color across Buffalo Niagara, closing the gap will produce an additional 1,118 graduates with advanced designation. If students of color graduated from high school at the same rate as white students, 87% of students will graduate on time, up from 61% in 2013-14. In a class of 3,686 students of color, closing the gap produces an additional 968 graduates. These benefits accrue annually, assuming the number of students of color stays constant over future years.

A stronger workforce prepared for jobs of the future.

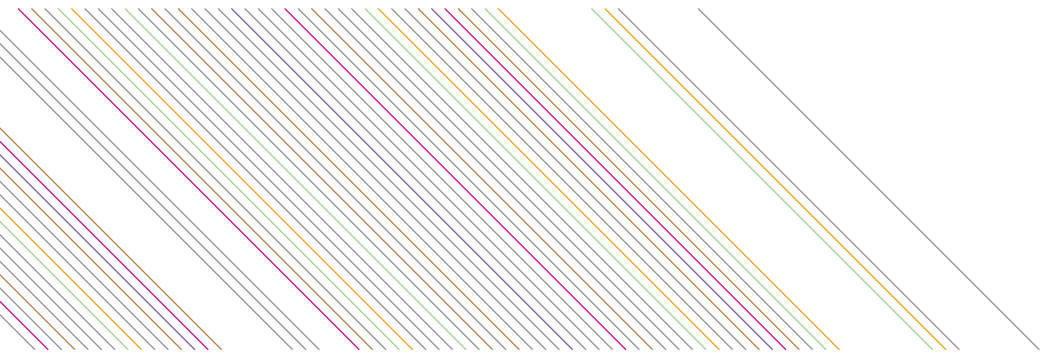
Data are from the 2013 American Community Survey (1-year estimates). The scenario assumes that 45% of persons of color age 25 and up will attain an associate's degree or higher, up from 30% in 2013. This percentage (45%) reflects the current educational attainment level of white, non-Hispanic individuals age 25 and up. With a population of 133,504 adults of color age 25+, closing the gap in educational attainment produces an additional 19,550 adults with an associate's degree or higher. The scenario assumes that 51% of students of color enrolled at colleges and universities across Buffalo-Niagara complete their degree within 150% of the normal time. This is three years for those enrolled in an associate's degree program and six years for those pursuing a bachelor's degree. Fifty-one percent reflects the proportion of white students who complete their degree within this window of time, up from 34% of students of color who graduated within 150% of the normal time in 2013. With a student body of 2,699, this increase represents an additional 450 students completing their degree on time each year, assuming the number of students of color enrolled at area colleges and universities remains constant over future years.

Higher levels of economic self sufficiency for individuals and families.

Data from the 2013 American Community Survey (1-year estimates) are used to estimate changes in poverty by race, ethnicity, and educational attainment level. Current poverty rates by educational attainment level for Buffalo Niagara are applied to the current population of color at various educational attainment levels as well as the projected population of color, assuming the gap in educational attainment closes for adults age 25 and up. The decline of 3,989 reflects 5% of the region's adult population age 25+ living under the federal poverty line.

Community investments benefit from reduced social service spending.

This scenario uses county budget data from the NYS Comptroller (2013) and county-level data on employment and pay by government function from the U.S. Census of Government (2012). It assumes a 5% reduction in the number of adults in poverty results in a proportional 5% reduction in Erie and Niagara Counties total spending on social services which totaled \$648.3 million in 2013. This amount included spending on social services administration,



financial assistance, Medicaid, non-Medicaid Assistance, employment services, and youth services. Average annual salaries for potential new positions across various government functions are calculated by dividing payroll for full-time workers by full-time employment. All dollars (salaries and social services savings) are adjusted to 2015 dollars using inflation factors provided by the U.S. Department of Labor.

A larger, more productive economy, with additional businesses and jobs. This scenario uses data from the 2013 American Community Survey (1-year estimates for median earnings by educational attainment); the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2013 (gross domestic product and total full- and part-time jobs) and the U.S. Census of Business, 2013 (total establishments). The gain in GDP reflects a 2.2% increase in Buffalo-Niagara's GDP, or an increase of \$1.23 billion from a base of \$51.63 billion in 2013. This is proportional to the projected percentage increase in regional earnings, assuming the educational attainment of persons of color for every race and ethnicity meets or exceeds the educational attainment of white, non-Hispanic adults, beginning with the highest level of educational attainment. Median earnings by educational attainment level across all adults in Buffalo Niagara are used to project how regional earnings will increase from closing the gap in educational attainment levels. 2.2% is the projected increase in earnings, reflecting an additional \$644.4 million. The estimated increase in the number of jobs across the region reflects the current regional average of \$78,888 in output (GDP) for every full- and part-time job in the region. The estimated increase in businesses reflects the current regional average of \$1.05 million in output for every firm in the region. These averages are applied to the projected \$1.025 billion gain in GDP to estimate what this translates into in terms of firms and jobs.

Criminal Justice & Safety (pages 58-59)

Equitable juvenile justice means fewer youth in the criminal justice system. Data are from the NYS Department of Criminal Justice, 2014 and 2013 American Community Survey. The scenario assumes arrest rates are equalized for the population under age 18. When the gap in juvenile arrest rates is equalized for youth ages 7-15, there will be 0.6 arrests per 100 of this population in a given year, down from 2.0 per 100 for juveniles of color, translating into 478 fewer arrests across the region's 33,885 youth of this age. When the arrest rate is equalized for youth ages 16-17, there will be 2.8 arrests per 100 of this population, down from 13.5 for young adults of color. With an estimated population of 7,959 youth ages 16-17, closing the gap results in 854 fewer arrests. Combined with 478 fewer arrests of youth ages 7-15, 1,332 fewer youth under age 18 will be arrested each year when rates are equalized.

This assumes the population and composition of youth remains constant over future years.

Fewer adult arrests, convictions, and sentences mean stronger families and communities. Data are from the NYS Department of Criminal Justice, 2014 and the American Community Survey (1-year estimates). This scenario assumes arrest rates for the adult population of color is equal to the arrest rate for white adults. When the gap is closed, there will be 2.1 arrests per 100 of adults, down from 8.0 per 100, the current arrest rate for adults of color in 2014. With a population of 168,815 adults, this decline represents 9,941 fewer arrests a year. When both arrest and conviction rates are equalized, 5,079 fewer adults of color will be convicted. While this number assumes a higher conviction rate for adults of color, equal to that of whites (61.8% versus 53.9%), the higher rate is applied to a smaller number of arrests, when the gap in arrests is closed. When rates of arrest, conviction and sentencing to prison or jail are equalized, 25% of those convicted will be sentenced to jail or prison, down from 42% for adults of color. This translates into 2,488 fewer sentences to jail or prison every year, assuming population numbers remain constant over future years.

Workers will have reduced barriers to employment. Data are from the NYS Department of Criminal Justice, 2014 and the 2013 American Community Survey (1-year estimates). This scenario combines the number of arrests in 2014 for the population age 16-17 with the number of arrests for the population age 18 and up under two scenarios. The first assumes no change in arrest numbers, while the second assumes arrests for people of color are equalized with those of whites. The difference represents the number of individuals a year who will not be arrested. Only half of total arrests are estimated to represent arrests of individuals who do not have a prior criminal record. Assuming population numbers remain constant over future years, the number of decreased arrests for those with no prior criminal record is multiplied by 10 to estimate that 53,975 persons over age 15 will avoid having a criminal record by closing the gap in arrest rates over a 10 year period.

Community investments grow with criminal justice savings. Data are from the NYS Department of Criminal Justice, 2014 and the NYS Office of the State Comptroller, 2013 County Expenditures. Expenditure savings are estimated by applying county expenditures for correctional services per person age 16 and up sentenced to jail or prison (\$16,482/per individual) to the number of persons who will avoid sentencing to prison or jail, when arrest, conviction and sentencing rates are equalized (2,488 individuals). The result - \$41.0 million - is the estimated expenditures for correctional services by Erie and Niagara Counties that could be avoided by closing the

gap in arrests, conviction and sentencing. This represents a 43% decline in Erie and Niagara County expenditures on correctional services in 2013. The number of individuals age 16 and up sentenced to prison or jail in 2014 are used to estimate county expenditures per person sentenced.

Investments enhance neighborhoods across the region.

This scenario uses the estimated county expenditures savings of \$41.0 million to estimate the number of full-time salaries that could be filled across various functions of government using full time employment and salary data from the U.S. Census' 2012 Census of Governments for all local governments in Erie and Niagara Counties. All dollars are converted to 2015 dollars to estimate the number of annual salaries \$41.0 million could cover for elementary and secondary instructional staff, local library staff, police officers and parks and recreational workers.

Quality of Life & Neighborhoods (pages 60-61)

Nearly 100% of our children will attend a school in good standing.

Enrollment data by school status (failing, not failing) are from the NYS Education Department, 2014. Failing schools are defined by NYSED based on student performance in ELA and math and high school graduation. When enrollment in failing schools for children of color is equal to enrollment for whites, 98.4% of children of color will be enrolled in a school of good standing. Only 1.6% of children of color will be enrolled in a failing school, down from 28.5% in 2014. With a student population of 49,976, closing the gap results in 13,462 additional children enrolled in a school in good standing. The graduation rate at failing schools is 44%, based on four-year outcomes as of August 2014 for the cohort of students entering in 2010. If these students were enrolled in a school in good standing within the Buffalo City School District, the graduation rate would have been 10 percentage points higher, producing an additional 148 graduates a year, assuming student enrollment numbers remain constant.

Home values in areas of need will nearly double with neighborhood quality.

Average home value data are from the 2013 American Community Survey (5-year estimates). Average home values in racially concentrated census tracts of Erie and Niagara Counties are \$80,282, versus \$151,401 in census tracts where whites make up 50% or more of the population. Closing this gap will increase housing values in racially concentrated areas by \$71,119 or 88%. Across 23,424 homes, this represents an increase in wealth (associated with home values) of \$1.7 billion for the region.

The incidence of high blood lead levels is from the NYS Department of Health, reflecting tests conducted in 2012. The incidence rate for Zip Codes comprised of mostly white, non-Hispanic individuals is 3.23 incidences per 1,000, while the incidence in Zip Codes comprised mostly of individuals of color is eight times this rate at 38.02 incidences per 1,000. With 40,507 children under the age of 18 living in Zip Codes that are comprised of mostly people of color, the estimated incidence of high blood levels across the population of youth drops from 1,540 to 131 when rates are equalized across all Zip Codes to the rate currently experienced by mostly white populations. This represents a difference of 1,409 fewer children with high blood lead levels. Population numbers of children in Zip Codes that

are comprised of mostly people of color are from the 2013 American Community Survey (5-year estimates).

Greater residential mobility will foster job access and equitable opportunity for all. Population data are from the 2013 American Community Survey (3-year estimates). When the population of color reflects the proportion of people of color living in Erie and Niagara Counties, all municipalities in the region will be home to a population where people of color represent 21% of the total, up from 10% outside the cities of Buffalo and Niagara Falls and down from 49% in Buffalo and Niagara Falls. When people of color represent 21% of Buffalo's population, other areas of the region will gain a net 87,480 persons of color, while Buffalo will be home to 87,480 more white, non-Hispanic persons, assuming the city's population remains constant at 259,574.

When the gap in concentrated poverty is closed, 15% of children and families will live in areas of concentrated poverty, down from 60% for individuals of color, according to data from the 2013 American Community Survey (5-year estimates). With 61,251 children age 14 and under across the region, closing the gap will lift 28,053 out of concentrated poverty. Population data is from the 2013 American Community Survey (3-year estimates). Research supports that children whose families move to a better neighborhood when they are under age 13 have annual incomes in their mid 20's that are 31% higher than those children from families who do not move to better neighborhoods. See Chetty, Raj, Nathaniel Hendren, and Lawrence Katz, *The Effects of Exposure to Better Neighborhoods on Children: New Evidence from the Moving to Opportunity Experiment*, National Bureau of Economic Research, May 2015. Better neighborhoods are defined as ones in low-poverty areas. These findings are extrapolated here to slightly older children, including those under age 13, corresponding to population breakdowns by age available from the American Community Survey.

A healthier tax base benefits regional investments for community improvement and growth.

Property tax data for Erie and Niagara counties are from the Office of the NYS Comptroller, 2013. This scenario estimates that county-level property taxes will increase from \$334.73 million in 2013, to \$347.06 million, an increase of \$12.3 million. This is estimated by applying the current rate of property tax generation per dollar of home value (\$0.007) to the \$1.7 billion estimated increase in home values resulting from closing the gap between areas that are predominantly white (50%+) and areas of the region that are racially concentrated. Home value data is from the 2013 American Community Survey (5 year estimates). Current expenditures by Erie and Niagara Counties in the category of economic development totaled \$15.69 million in 2013, according to data from the Office of the NYS Comptroller. Increasing these expenditures by \$12.3 million (the projected increase in property tax generation) could increase total spending by 79% from 2013 levels.

Better health and longer life expectancies reduce medical costs and support workforce and community engagement.

Data on supermarket access are from the 2013 American Community Survey (5 year estimates) and Reference U.S.A. When racially concentrated areas have equal access to supermarkets, only 7% of householders in these

areas will be without a vehicle or beyond walking distance to a supermarket, down from 25%. With a population of 153,148, this translates into 27,292 additional individuals living in households with better access to a supermarket.

Obesity rates are from the PolicyLink/PERE National Equity Atlas. These are applied to population data from the 2013 American Community Survey (3 year estimates). When rates of obesity for populations of color and whites are equalized, the percentage of adults of color who are overweight or obese will decline almost 10 percentage points, from 73% to 65%. In a population of 165,404 adults of color living in Erie and Niagara Counties, this decline in the obesity rate translates into an additional 13,232 adults at a healthy weight.

The rate of hospitalizations for diabetes is from the NYS Department of Health and reflects data collected between 2010 and 2012. It shows adults of color are hospitalized for diabetes at nearly double the rate of whites (3.1% versus 1.6%). This is an estimated 5,078 hospitalizations among adults of color per year, in a population of 165,404. When hospitalization rates are equalized, there will be only 2,713 hospitalizations, a decline of 2,365. The average cost per inpatient stay for diabetes is \$2,359 in 2012 dollars. See Scientific Statement and Supplementary Data provided as part of The Economic Costs of Diabetes: Is It Time for a New Treatment Paradigm in DIABETES CARE, Volume 36, April 2013. Multiplying this cost by the number of diabetes-related hospitalizations that could be avoided by closing the gap, the region stands to save \$5.8 million in 2015 dollars.

Data on premature death is from the NYS Department of Health and reflect data collected between 2010 and 2012. Population data is from the 2013 American Community Survey (3-year estimates). Premature death is defined as death prior to age 75. When rates of premature death are equalized between individuals of color and whites, 34% of all people will die prematurely, down from 60% of persons of color. In a population of 238,800 persons of color in Erie and Niagara counties, this decline in the rate of premature death will result in over 62,800 living a longer life that does not end prematurely.

Income & Wealth (pages 62-63)

Economic expansion leads to declining joblessness.

Data are from the 2013 American Community Survey (1-year estimates). The scenario assumes that the jobless rate for persons of color age 16+ decreases from 56% to 23%. 56% is the current jobless rate for persons of color age 16+ and reflects those who are unemployed and/or out of the labor force (not working and not actively seeking employment). 23% is the jobless rate for the white, non-Hispanic population in Buffalo Niagara age 16+. With a population of 182,048 persons of color age 16+, the decline in the rate of joblessness represents an additional 61,606 persons of color who are employed.

Wage increases support resident spending and mean higher earnings and returns on investments over a lifetime. Data are from the U.S. Census, Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI), 2014, Q3 (wages) and the 2013 American

Community Survey and (1 year estimates). Wages paid to individuals of color in Buffalo Niagara would increase by an aggregate \$627 million if the 74,959 jobs held by persons of color in the region paid \$45,984 per year, the average annual earnings paid for jobs held by white, non-Hispanic individuals in Buffalo Niagara, based on earnings paid in the third quarter of 2014. This is up from average annual earnings of \$37,615 for jobs held by persons of color. The difference is \$8,369 per job per year. Assuming, in addition, the rate of joblessness is equalized and 61,606 persons of color are added to the workforce, earning \$45,984, on average per year, this would produce an additional \$2.83 billion in earnings. Combined with the \$627 million produced from equalization in wages, overall wage income is projected to increase by \$3.5 billion per year. The absolute value of the \$8,369 per year wage difference between white, non-Hispanic individuals and persons of color is \$251,070 over a working lifetime of 30 years. This does not reflect the present value. If \$8,369 a year over 30 years is discounted at an interest rate of 2.84%, the average rate over the past 30 years, the present value of this stream of money would be \$167,483.

Economic impacts mean new jobs, businesses, and greater regional output.

Data for this indicator come from IMPLAN, an input-output model using region-specific data to estimate the direct, indirect and induced impacts of changes in the economy. This scenario estimates total impacts associated with an additional \$3.5 billion a year in employment income for people of color generated through equity in joblessness and wages. This additional level of wage income is projected to support 19,238 jobs and \$2.6 billion in output, in 2015 dollars. Considering that Kaleida Health has 10,000 employees, according to 2014-15 Business First Book of Lists, this level of additional employment represents the addition of nearly two more Kaleida Health-like companies in the regional economy.

Business performance benefits from diversity. This scenario is based on research findings described by Cedric Herring in Does Diversity Pay?: Race, Gender and Business Case for Diversity, AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW, 2009, VOL. 74 (April:208-224). The study found that companies with the highest levels of racial diversity have revenues that are 15 times greater than companies with the lowest racial diversity (\$761M, on average, versus \$52M); and they have 52% more customers (35,000 versus 22,700). The most diverse companies are also more likely than not to have higher than average market share and profitability, while fewer than half of low-diversity companies have higher than average market share or profitability. For purposes of this study, companies with at least 25% people of color population are considered high in terms of their racial diversity.

A growing number of homeowners stabilize

communities and contribute to regional wealth. Data are from the 2013 American Community Survey (1-year estimates). The scenario projects that 73% of persons of color will own the home they live in. This represents an increase from a current 34% home ownership rate for householders of color. With 91,637 householders of color across Buffalo Niagara, this increase represents an additional 36,564 owner-occupied households. Across the United States, the median net worth of homeowners in 36 times as great as that of renters (\$195,400

versus \$5,400), according to Changes in Family Finances from 2010 to 2013: Evidence from the Survey of Consumer Finances, Federal Reserve Bulletin, Sept. 2014, p. 13.

Wealth building contributes to resilience and benefits future generations. Data are from the 2013 American Community Survey (1-year estimates) and Changes in Family Finances from 2010 to 2013: Evidence from the Survey of Consumer Finances, Federal Reserve Bulletin, September 2014. When median net wealth of white households and households of color are equalized, households of color will own, on average, \$142,000 in assets, versus \$18,100, based on averages across the United States. Across the region's 94,941 households of color, this represents an aggregate increase of \$12 billion in net worth for the region. Net worth represents the difference between the value of a family's assets (including house, vehicle, business equity, financial assets) and their liabilities and debts.

Data Sources and Notes

Buffalo believes in change

Change in Percent Share of Population People of Color, 1990-2013. Census figures on population by race/ethnicity are mapped by census tract and then used to sum population groups for each municipality. The non-hispanic white population is subtracted from the total population in each municipality to find the total population of people of color. The percentage share of the population as people of color in 2013 is subtracted from 1990 to give the mapped values. Census tract boundaries may not precisely match municipal boundaries. Population change for the villages of Barker, Farnham, North Collins and Youngstown are incorporated into their surrounding towns.

Percent Change in Population by Race/Ethnicity, 2000-2014. The population of people of color is found by subtracting the non-hispanic white population from the total population. This convention is repeated throughout the report for calculations of statistics for people of color in order to avoid double-counting of the Hispanic population which is an ethnicity inclusive of multiple races.

Buffalo is committed to progress

Education and Job Readiness

Living in Neighborhoods with Concentrated Poverty. High poverty areas are census tracts where 20% or more of the population lives in households with incomes under the federal poverty line; Extreme poverty areas are those where poverty rates are 40% or higher.

Selected Characteristics of Families. The educational attainment of parents by racial group is found from the educational attainment of all persons with their own children under 18 living in the same household from the Integrated

Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) data from 2007-2011 for the Buffalo-Niagara Falls Metro area. The percent of single parent families is found from Census ACS estimates by dividing the number of single parent families by the total number of family households with related children under 18 for each racial/ethnic group (2014). The teenage pregnancy rates represent the percentage of females age 15-17 in the region that become pregnant. The percent of workers working a 2nd or 3rd shift job is found from IPUMS data on time workers leave home for work. The number of workers leaving home for work either after 12pm or before 4am is divided by the total number of workers in each racial group to give the percentages shown.

Students Attending Schools in Good Standing. Schools in good standing are reclassified for previous years to find the historical trend using the following criteria: not in the bottom 5th percentile of NYS schools in English and Math performance, or with a graduation rate above 60%. The number of students enrolled in schools in good standing is divided by the region's total number of students in each racial/ethnic group to give the percentages shown.

Timely Graduation from College. Percentages do not include students of unknown race or non-resident status. Graduation rates were calculated for both 2- and 4-year institutions types. For 4-year institutions, graduation rates of full-time, first-time, degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates within 150% of normal time to program completion used the 2007 cohort. For 2-year institutions, graduation rates of full-time, first-time, degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates within 150% of normal time to program completion used the 2010 cohort.

Young Adults (16-24) Employed or in School. Rates for males and females are calculated using American Community Survey data from IPUMS-USA (2008-2012).

Criminal Justice & Safety

Juvenile Arrest and Detention Rates: Juveniles may be tried as adults at different ages, depending on the type and severity of the crime.

Incarceration Rates for Adults and 16-17 Year Olds. Incarceration rates represent the number of incarcerations as a percentage of the dispositions that result in conviction. Due to the small number of arrests reported for those of "other" races, the sample may not be representative of the entire population.

Quality of Life & Neighborhoods

Predominantly white communities and communities of color differ in how likely you are to... Communities of color are defined as census tracts where the residential population is comprised of 50% or more people of color (other than non-hispanic white); predominantly white communities are tracts where more than 50% of the population is non-hispanic white. (American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, 2009-2013). The percent of the population in these communities within areas of highly concentrated airborne toxins (ranked in the top 20th percentile of all block groups in the US) is determined

by EPA's EJScreen Data (2015), and NATA (2005). This includes high-ranking measures for any of the following: (1) Particulate Matter 2.5 (PM2.5) concentrations, (2) O₃-zone concentrations, (3) Airborne toxics Cancer Risk, (4) Airborne toxics respiratory hazard index, (5) Airborne toxics neurological hazard index. Population estimates are from ACS estimates (2009-2013) at the block group level.

The percentage of population living close to a highway or high traffic road is given by EPA's EJScreen Data (2015) as being above the 80th percentile of all block groups in the US in traffic proximity and volume, based on the level of vehicular traffic nearby and distance from the roads. Population estimates are from ACS (2009-2013) block group data.

The residential vacancy rate for communities of color and white communities is taken from HUD-USPS Vacant Address Database, dividing the sum of all residential addresses classified as vacant by the total residential addresses throughout all census tracts of each community type.

The number of banks and supermarkets per capita is found from Reference USA business database. Businesses within each community type are selected by NAICS code and geography and then totaled and divided by the total population (ACS, 5-year estimates, 2009-2013) to give the number per 10,000 residents. Supermarkets are grocery stores with 50 or more employees, as given by Reference USA.

Median neighborhood home value. These represent an average of median home values, weighted by the number of occupied homes in each census tract within each type of community. To find the historical trend, census tracts are reclassified by community type for each year using census figures on population by race/ethnicity. Values are adjusted for inflation to 2013 USD using the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index Inflation Calculator.

Childhood Elevated Blood Lead Levels. Communities are classified into racial/ethnic type by ZIP code (rather than by census tract) as NYS Dept. of Health data is reported by ZIP code. For the historical trend, ZIP codes are reclassified by community type for each year using census data.

Living in a Neighborhood with Intact Commercial Areas. The number of vacant business addresses in each census tract is divided by the total number of business addresses given by the HUD-USPS Vacant Address Database (2014) to find census tracts with a commercial vacancy rate below 20%. The percent of the region's population of each racial/ethnic group that resides within these neighborhoods with intact commercial areas is found from Census ACS (2009-2013) to give the percentages shown. Neighborhoods with intact commercial areas may include tracts located on rural routes with no commercial addresses recorded in the HUD-USPS data. For the historical trend, tracts are reclassified as having intact commercial areas for each year.

Not Living in Concentrated Poverty. For the historical trend, poverty rates by census tract are recalculated before determining the percent of the region's population of each racial/ethnic group living in areas of concentrated poverty in previous years.

Income and Wealth

Average Annual Wages. The average annual wage from

the QWI data reported by racial/ethnic group for 2001 is adjusted to 2014 USD (U.S. BLS, CPI Inflation Calculator) before calculating the percentage change in wages from 2001-2014.

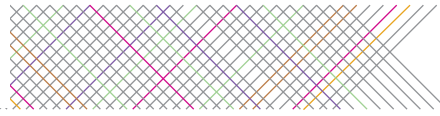
Percent of Household Budget Spent on Housing and Transportation. Average total spending on housing and transportation per household (ESRI, 2011) is compared to ACS data (2009-2013) on average household income by race at the census tract level. Average household spending on housing and transportation costs is divided by the average household income for each race in each tract. These figures (the average percentage of income spent on housing and transportation for each race in each tract) are weighted by the number of households of each racial/ethnic group in each tract to produce a regional weighted average percentage of income spent on housing and transportation for each race. For tracts where ACS data does not provide income data for an individual race, households are excluded from the calculation. Calculated percentages are applied to average annual incomes (ACS, 1-year estimates, 2013) to find the income remaining after housing and transportation costs. The average annual income of people of color represents a weighted average of all included racial/ethnic groups.

Mortgages Made per 1,000 Housing Units. The Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) first passed in 1975 requires certain financial institutions (based on different criteria for depository and non-depository institutions) to report data on the number of mortgages applied for and granted geographically and the demographics of the applicants. This data, from 2014, contains the full cohort of HMDA reported mortgage activity but excludes lending by organizations and individuals not meeting these criteria. Data for mortgages and for housing units is aggregated at the census tract level summed across the three neighborhood types. Neighborhoods of color statistics are inclusive of predominantly African American neighborhoods.

Jobs Accessible by Transit. The Network Analyst extension of ArcGIS Software was used to delineate areas within one half mile of a NFTA Bus or Metro stops (2013) along a road. The percentage of the region's jobs within these areas was estimated using spatial data on employment (US Census Bureau, Location Employment Dynamics, 2011). Employment density (jobs per acre) was calculated for each census block and multiplied by the percentage of each census block that fell within one half mile of NFTA stops to estimate the number of jobs accessible by transit.

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