

# 2011 State of Black Los Angeles

AND INTRODUCING THE

# Healthy Neighborhood Index™



Los Angeles Urban League

the James Irvine foundation  
*Expanding Opportunity for the People of California*

The California  
Endowment

WEINGART  
FOUNDATION

THIS REPORT IS DEDICATED TO  
DR. WINSTON DOBY  
FOR HIS VISIONARY THOUGHT LEADERSHIP  
IN HOLISTIC NEIGHBORHOOD TRANSFORMATION

APRIL 2011

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## ON THE COVER

"AFTER YOU ARE CLOTHED,  
THEN WHAT? AFTER YOU  
ARE FED, THEN WHAT?  
...YOU ARE STILL A DREAMER.

ART AND CREATIVE  
EXPRESSION PLAY A  
CRUCIAL ROLE IN NEW  
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT,  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
REVITALIZATION AND  
HEALTHY, WELL-EDUCATED  
COMMUNITIES."

— CHARMAINE JEFFERSON,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
CALIFORNIA AFRICAN  
AMERICAN MUSEUM

**The powerful obelisk on our cover, created by esteemed Watts Tower Arts Center Artist-in-Residence Dominique Moody and six women from an innovative California African American Museum community workshop, embodies an idea that is firmly embraced by the residents and many community partners of Black Los Angeles: together, we can build something that is strong, beautiful and enduring.**

"In the Flow of Asê" interprets in glass, copper, and stenciled West African symbolic proverbs ideas central to the themes of family, community, courage, and the will to overcome obstacles. "Asê" (ah-SHAY), a term from Nigeria's Yoruba people, affirms the power of words spoken and feelings expressed in stories that bind us together. The obelisk's dazzling pieces fit together in a joyous mosaic of diversity.

The piece is part of the California African American Museum (CAAM) collection. *Chartered by the State of California in 1977, the California African American Museum houses an extensive permanent collection, frequent exhibitions, educational programs, workshops, children's events, and more. Executive Director Charmaine Jefferson provides visionary leadership to the museum, a community treasure.*

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and Introducing the

## Healthy Neighborhood Index™

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Los Angeles Urban League



April 2011

Dear Partners, Friends and Community Stakeholders:

The 2005 State of Black Los Angeles report was a groundbreaking effort that had a profound effect on readers of all persuasions and across all sectors. Co-authored by the United Way of Greater Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Urban League, the comprehensive and candid report presented staggering data and told a harrowing story of the African American condition and the community in which we attend school, work, and live.

To paint its portrait, the earlier report used an invaluable new instrument: the Racial Equality Index. This objective tool, prepared by the international consulting firm Global Insight, Inc., was customized with data and perspectives unique to Los Angeles County. For the first time, here was a way to understand the status of the Black community relative to other Los Angeles racial and ethnic groups.

Though considered by some to be long on probing problems and short on offering solutions, the thought-provoking report spurred people and organizations into action. In response, we took decisive and bold steps to seek solutions that would not only raise awareness but also galvanize community members and stakeholders to fight back against the unacceptable and dire statistics revealed in the earlier State of Black Los Angeles. In 2007, we developed and employed a place-based model for community change: Neighborhoods@Work®.

Through Neighborhoods@Work®, we have assembled a holistic concentration of resources to bring about revitalization in a targeted geographical area (Park Mesa Heights neighborhood in South Los Angeles). The replicable, systemic change initiative is supported by data-driven, clear outcomes and leverages critical partnerships, corporate, foundation and community resources.

Now five years later, after the 2005 report, the disparities and challenges are being met head on, and preemptive strikes are being waged through collaboration and innovative ideas in education reform, community safety, health advocacy, preventive foreclosure measures, and employment opportunities are on the rise despite the devastating setbacks of an unprecedented economic downturn.

We recognize that the fight is far from over, and that progress takes time. Positive outcomes in Park Mesa Heights are evident even at this point. Importantly, however, as a 1993 Ford Foundation report noted: "...improving the quality of life in distressed neighborhoods is clearly a long-term process." In fact, experts generally estimate such changes require an average of 10 years to become sustainable. We will continue to develop and explore new ideas, methods, and tools that will foster even greater results as we battle the disparities that plague our neighborhoods.

While the 2005 report focused primarily on how Black Angelenos fared compared to other racial groups, including Latinos, Asians and Whites, the new 2011 report updates the original data, lays bare the present conditions and incorporates a versatile tool called the Healthy Neighborhood Index™. This advanced tool allows users to view conditions through a neighborhood-focused lens. It can be used to gauge neighborhood quality compared to other familiar, geographical areas within close proximity (e.g., communities, cities, other neighborhoods).

Our intention is that everyone who is committed to creating lasting community change will use this report and adopt these tools to better understand the often daunting challenges and discover other innovative solutions that remain untapped. We believe we've taken a giant step in the right direction. Even a giant step forward, however, is just one step. Progress requires a next step. Among us collectively lie the answers; let us take great leaps together to find them.

With generous support from The California Endowment, The James Irvine Foundation, Weingart Foundation, and The Nielsen Company, the Los Angeles Urban League presents the 2011 State of Black Los Angeles.

**Blair H. Taylor**  
President and CEO

# PARTNER'S MESSAGE



April 2011

Dear Partners in Neighborhood Change:

The California Endowment, the James Irvine Foundation, and Weingart Foundation offer sincere congratulations to The Los Angeles Urban League and the broad coalition of organizations, residents and community partners who have contributed vast amounts of time and energy to address issues raised in the 2011 State of Black Los Angeles Report. Together, they have forged important neighborhood change models that have proven to be effective solutions to the problems facing African-American and low-income communities.

We are proud to be in the company of those who support the collaborative effort to help transform neighborhoods into places where schoolchildren can thrive, where they can travel to and from their classes in safety, where nourishing foods are readily available and reasonably priced, where housing is stable and affordable, and where collective good health is a given.

Our foundations, with their long history of supporting community-based efforts of great merit, share the concern of residents and organizations for the future of their communities. We have seen and addressed needs in areas where help is critically needed: from education, youth and community development...to the arts, health and human services. However, we all recognize that we must constantly search for better, more creative tools to help us reach our goals.

The 2011 State of Black Los Angeles Report, with its Racial Equality Index, and The Healthy Neighborhood Index are excellent tools that no doubt will be used often by community change agents to formulate knowledgeable community solutions. Both the report and the index are part of an intentional learning strategy to inform and guide community change. Thus, they are an important part of the move to overcome the challenges that prevent many African-American and low-income neighborhoods from moving swiftly toward overall health and productivity.

It is a privilege to support such efforts. We wish the Los Angeles Urban League and its determined, committed collaborators continued success. It is gratifying to know that we share a vision in which all communities share equally in our nation's great promise.

**Robert K. Ross, M.D.**  
President and CEO  
The California Endowment

**James Canales**  
President and CEO  
The James Irvine Foundation

**Fred Ali**  
President and CEO  
Weingart Foundation

# INSIDE THIS REPORT

“The findings of the 2005 State of Black Los Angeles put us on our mark. The 2011 report effectively picks up the baton and moves us forward.”

—John Mack,

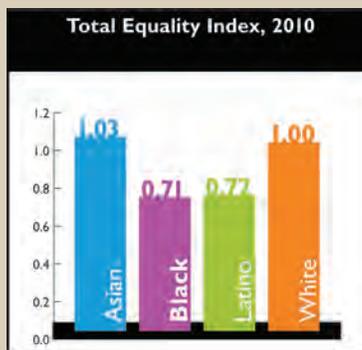
President, Los Angeles Police Commission

The 2011 State of Black Los Angeles is a comprehensive update of the 2005 State of Black Los Angeles report, which delivered a clear but sobering picture of the social and economic status of Los Angeles’ Black residents. The new report measures tangible progress since 2005 via the Racial Equality Index and introduces a new tool, the Healthy Neighborhood Index™. The 2005 State of Black Los Angeles was produced in partnership by the Los Angeles Urban League and United Way of Greater Los Angeles, based on the National Urban League’s annual State of Black America report.

The Los Angeles Urban League, **The Nielsen Company** and **UCLA** provide the backdrop of the 2011 report via an illuminating profile of Black Los Angeles. Through custom research and analysis of Black Los Angeles, we introduce readers to a highly diverse and multifaceted black community.

## 2011 State of Black Los Angeles: Racial Equality Index

- The 2011 State of Black Los Angeles Report updates the status of the racial equality of Black Angelenos versus other ethnic groups.
- As shown below, Blacks’ outcomes on equality measure only 71% of those of Whites. Latino outcomes also trail those of Whites, while Asian outcomes slightly exceed those of Whites.
- The report explores the drivers of the inequality and tracks progress.



## Problems & Solutions: Neighborhoods@Work® and Building Healthy Communities

- The 2011 State of Black Los Angeles also presents solutions underway to address the daunting challenges revealed in the 2005 report.
- It examines the **Los Angeles Urban League’s Neighborhoods@Work®** and **The California Endowment’s Building Healthy Communities** collaborative – two bold neighborhood revitalization solutions to the bleak picture painted by the 2005 State of Black Los Angeles report.

## Healthy Neighborhood Index™

- Additionally, The Los Angeles Urban League adds a new tool in its effort to inform and revitalize communities – the Healthy Neighborhood Index™, an objective measurement of a community’s well-being across six disciplines: health, safety, education, housing, economics, and civic engagement.

- The Racial Equality Index focuses on the relative standing of Black Angelenos across the disciplines versus other racial groups in Los Angeles, while the Healthy Neighborhood Index™ focuses on a specific neighborhood’s outcomes compared to those of Beverly Hills and other communities.

Healthy Neighborhood Index™	Beverly Hills	Park Mesa Heights	L.A. City/County
	1.00	0.47	0.63

- While the Racial Equality Index and Healthy Neighborhood Index™ are related in that they measure gains in the six disciplines, they are separate measures that use separate data. Hence, results for each may vary by category.

- The report will illustrate how the Healthy Neighborhood Index™ works by applying it to a real neighborhood, Park Mesa Heights, as a real-time case study in action. As shown above, Park Mesa Heights’s outcomes are only 47% of those of Beverly Hills.

Healthy Neighborhood Index™	Index Score	Recession-Adjusted
Park Mesa Heights	0.47	0.49

- The report also presents a Recession-Adjusted Healthy Neighborhood Index™, which adjusts for the effects of the economic downturn and conservatively estimates that, had there been no recession, the score for Park Mesa Heights would have actually increased by 2 points.

At the outset of the new millennium, dedicated individuals and organizations took a hard look at some approaches to solving problems that affect the quality of life for Black Los Angeles. They published their findings in the 2005 State of Black Los Angeles Report.

This watershed report delivered a realistic picture of the social and economic status of Los Angeles' Black residents via the Racial Equality Index. The report revealed persistent inequalities: African-American Angelenos ranked at the bottom of virtually every major index measuring equality in the areas of health, safety, education, economics, housing, and civic engagement. Clearly, a fresh direction was needed to address these disparities.

"Interventions aimed at individual problems were simply not working," concluded Los Angeles Urban League President and CEO Blair Taylor. Fostering home ownership without creating jobs that enable homeowners to pay their mortgages was not working. Tackling low-performing schools without tackling the gang violence that plagues them was not working.

Organizations absorbed the results laid out in the 2005 report and sought new approaches, changing the ways good people make the world better. One such approach employs holistic, place-based neighborhood change initiatives that tackle challenges in a manner that recognizes the connections amongst them. Neighborhood block club members team with local law enforcement to ensure that students can travel to school safely — and arrive ready to learn. As students learn, they become career-ready and college-bound... and actually have more employment opportunities awaiting them. Solutions like these are transforming outcomes for Black Angelenos.

Many Black Angelenos have prospered during recent years. Many more, from schoolchildren to seniors, still must contend daily with grave socioeconomic challenges. Our canvas is painted with many colors, some

deeply troubling but some hopeful. We think a careful examination of the 2011 State of Black Los Angeles will persuade you that the portrait is far from finished; working together, we can add dimension to it. Holistic, targeted neighborhood collaborations are the brushstrokes that will produce the kind of picture we all want to see.

We hope this report provides you with some insights into the **"tireless exertions and passionate concerns of dedicated individuals."**

"HUMAN PROGRESS IS NEITHER AUTOMATIC NOR INEVITABLE... EVERY STEP TOWARD THE GOAL OF JUSTICE REQUIRES SACRIFICE, SUFFERING, AND STRUGGLE; THE TIRELESS EXERTIONS AND PASSIONATE CONCERN OF DEDICATED INDIVIDUALS."

— REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

"It is gratifying to see the process that began in 2005, with the first State of Black Los Angeles, propelled forward by so many hands-on stakeholders."

— Elise Buik, *President and CEO, United Way of Greater Los Angeles*

## T I M E L I N E

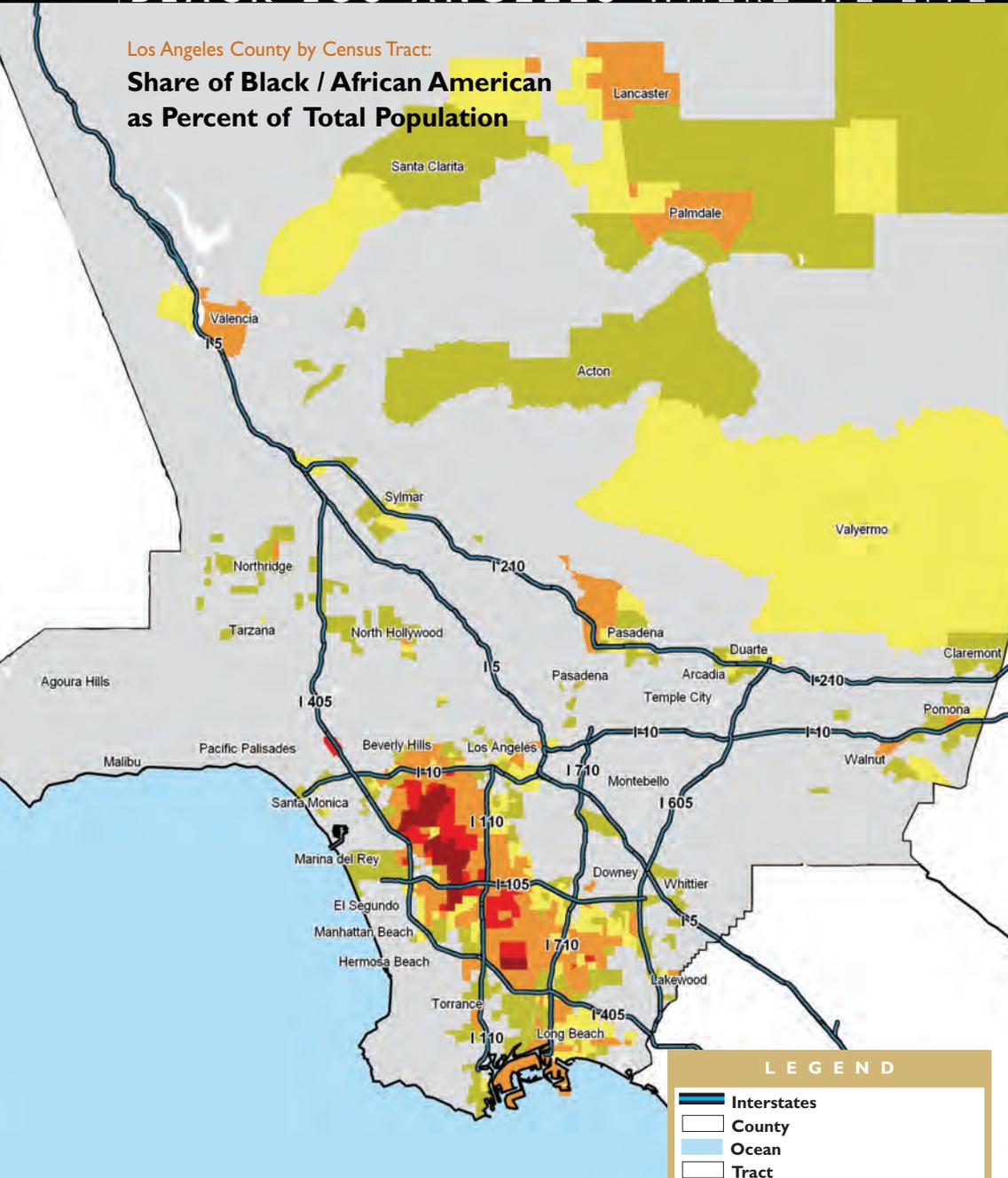
# 'Interesting Times': A Timeline

- 1781** • El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora de la Reina de Los Angeles — the Spanish town that would eventually become the city of Los Angeles — is established by settlers, the majority of whom are of African ancestry.
- 1921** • The Los Angeles Urban League is established to remedy employment, health services and housing inequalities for Blacks and other minorities.
- 1963** • On the steps of the Lincoln Memorial during the March on Washington, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivers his "I Have a Dream" speech, calling for racial equality and an end to discrimination.
- 1964** • ACLU files de facto school segregation suit against L.A. Board of Education.
- 1965** • The Watts Rebellion leaves 34 deaths, and widespread damage.
- 1968** • Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, TN.
  - Crenshaw High School opens in South LA community, later known as Park Mesa Heights.
- 1972** • Martin Luther King, Jr. General Hospital (King/Drew Medical Center) opens.
- 1973** • Tom Bradley becomes the first African American mayor of major U.S. city.
- 1980s** • Concerned Citizens of South Central Los Angeles lead protest movement to halt construction of a municipal solid-waste incinerator plant in South Los Angeles.
- 1984** • Los Angeles is host to the XXIII Summer Olympics where Black women — who account for only 6% of the U.S. population — win 75% of all the track and field medals won by American women.
- 1992** • Civil unrest results in 55 deaths and \$785 million in damages following the acquittal of White police officers charged in beating of Rodney King.
- 2002** • Foundation Giving to Minority Non-Profits study by Greenlining Institute shows that only 3.6% of grant funds from the top 24 private foundations went to minority-led organizations.
- 2005** • Antonio Villaraigosa becomes first Latino mayor of Los Angeles in more than a century.
  - First State of **Black Los Angeles Report** released by the Los Angeles Urban League and the United Way of Greater Los Angeles.
  - Crenshaw High School loses its accreditation.
- 2006** • 'Black Men Left Behind' study released by Columbia University Press shows African-American men falling behind society in every major category. (Ronald B. Mincy, Columbia University / editor - Urban Institute Press, 2006)
- 2007** • Working with community partners, the Los Angeles Urban League launches **Neighborhoods@Work®**, a place-based initiative to bring lasting, positive change to a geographic area: Park Mesa Heights.
- 2008** • Barack Obama is elected the first African American president of the United States.
  - **Greater Crenshaw Educational Partnership (GCEP)**, a nonprofit partnership, is launched with co-founders Los Angeles Urban League, the USC Rossier School of Education and the Tom & Ethel Bradley Foundation, as a targeted educational reform effort to help improve educational outcomes at Crenshaw High School.
  - Study finds Blacks nearly three times more likely than Whites and others to be stopped and searched (while walking and driving) by L.A. law enforcement officers. (*American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California*)
- 2009** • The California Endowment launches **Building Healthy Communities**, a statewide place-based collaborative in which communities collaborate to achieve healthy and safe environments. Providing after-school playgrounds for children and changing local public policies are examples of the collaborative's many goals for healthy neighborhoods.
  - Crenshaw High School registers 25% percent increase in graduation rate, for a 58 percent total increase since community and partners launched a focused effort on educational outcomes. *Source: California Dept of Education*
- 2011** • Study says 42% of African Americans have hypertension, 29% of Whites and 26% of Mexican Americans. (Center for Disease Control's National Center for Health Statistics)
  - August unemployment hits 16.3% for Blacks, 12% for Latinos, 8.7% for Whites. *Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, as cited in the Los Angeles Times, September 26, 2011*

"The real history of African American triumphs and contributions should no longer remain a secret. It should explode into our classrooms and into our conscience."

— **Bernard Kinsey**,  
art collector, philanthropist  
and author

Los Angeles County by Census Tract:  
**Share of Black / African American  
 as Percent of Total Population**



## Mapping Black Los Angeles

Maps display Census tracts shaded by the concentration of the African American population.

- The non-gray shades contain nearly 80% of all Black people in LA County.
- Section in dark red, red and orange shaded areas, contain over 55% of all Blacks in LA County.

Source: 2011 Nielsen Pop-Facts demographics, The Nielsen Company.

\*The term "Black" refers to residents of African descent. It includes African Americans as well as people from the Caribbean and Africa. "Asian" includes Asians and Pacific Islanders.

## Our Demographics: 2000-2010

**Rank** — In 2000, Los Angeles had the seventh largest Black population among all the metropolitan areas in the U.S. The decade witnessed a shift in Black migration to the southern United States. By 2010, Los Angeles' Black population had dropped to ninth place.

**Number** — About 900,000 African Americans lived in Los Angeles County in 2000. By 2010, there were 50,000 fewer. The White population also dropped, while Latino and Asian populations rose sharply, increasing by 12% and 18%, respectively.

**Percentage** — Roughly 9.7 percent of the Los Angeles metro area was Black in 2000. Ten years later, it was 8.4 percent.

**Statewide** — California's Black population was estimated at 6.6 percent in 2000. In 2010, the number had declined to 5.9 percent of the state's residents.

**Countywide** — Los Angeles County's Black population accounted for 41 percent of residents in 2000. By 2010, that percentage had dropped to 38 percent.

**Where we are** — Most Black people still live in the city of Los Angeles. The next largest Black population centers are the cities of Long Beach, Inglewood, Compton and Hawthorne. From 2000-2011, Lancaster and Palmdale replaced Carson and Pasadena as the cities with the sixth and seventh largest Black populations in the Los Angeles metro area.

"At the heart of our measurement and analysis is the desire to understand. Working together with the Los Angeles Urban League on the State of Black Los Angeles, we believe that understanding is the means to positive change."

—**Monica Gil**, Senior Vice President, Government and Public Affairs, The Nielsen Company

# Myth Busters

Los Angeles Urban League and Nielsen Company present "Myth Busters." These enlightening discoveries deepen the understanding and shatter stereotypes of Black Los Angeles. These findings can guide the development of products, services, and community programs tailored to the Black community.

## Myth Buster #1

African Americans in Los Angeles are 66% more likely to read *Parenting* magazine than the typical LA resident. <sup>1</sup>

## Myth Buster #2

Black Angelenos are 49% more likely to read the *Smart Money* business and financial magazine than the typical resident of the Greater LA area. <sup>1</sup>

## Myth Buster #3

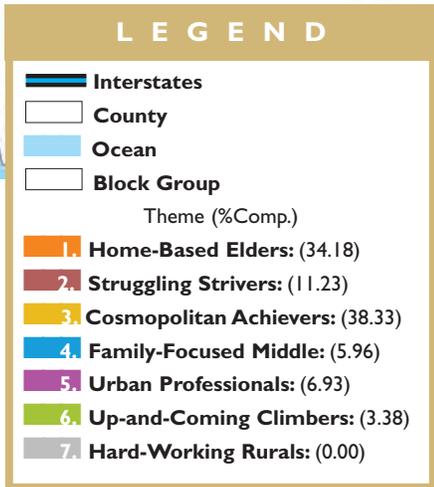
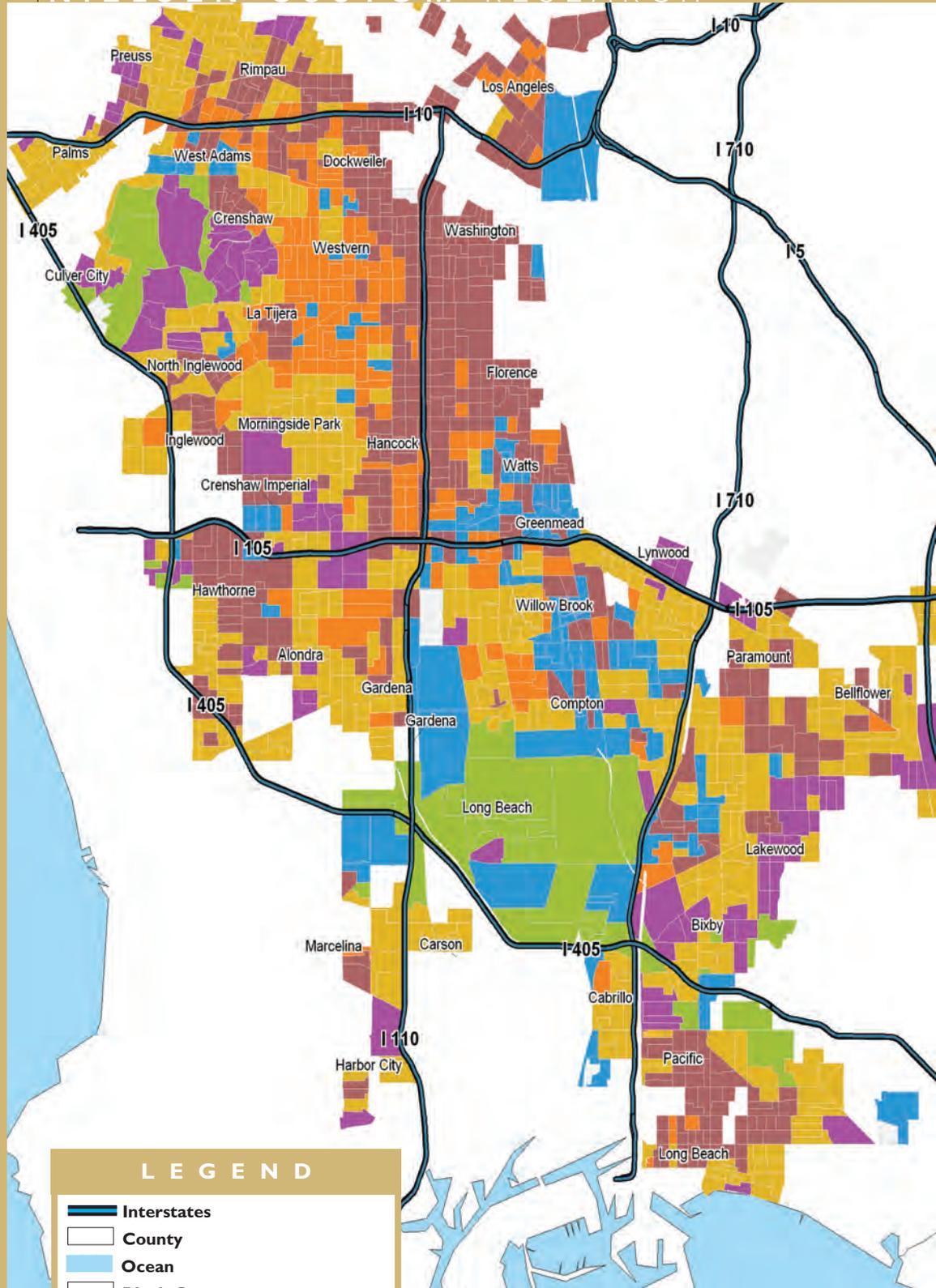
Black Los Angeles residents are 57% more likely than typical Angelenos to have purchased home improvement products in the last six months. <sup>1</sup>

## Myth Buster #4

African American neighborhoods (those with a higher than average African American population) have roughly the same number of museums, historical sites and other cultural or educational institutions, when compared to Los Angeles neighborhoods overall. <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Source: Nielsen @Plan, based on Los Angeles Internet users 18+, Q4 2011

<sup>2</sup>Source: The Nielsen Company, Business-Facts. Components of the database derived from Infogroup Inc., a Third Party Licensor; Copyright 2011.



GREATER LOS ANGELES BY LIFESTYLE GROUP

LA Urban League and the Nielsen Company present research that revealed a highly diverse and multifaceted black community and identified custom consumer groups based on lifestyles and demographics where the "Black LA" communities are most commonly found.

The map to the left shows the predominant household types within the South Central area of LA County. The (numbers) in the legend indicate the group's share of all South Central residents e.g., Urban Professionals is 6.9% of households in South Central.

- **Home-Based Elders**, longtime homeowners on tightly fixed incomes, are at or nearing retirement. Given their home-centered lifestyles, they are big television viewers. They also frequent local veterans clubs, play bingo or keep in touch on their prepaid cell phones.  
16% of Black LA; Median Income: \$22,900; Median Age: 69.3; Presence of Children: 9%

- **Struggling Strivers** are among the nation's most economically challenged. These young to middle aged parents and singles live modest lifestyles. Hampered by low education levels and uncertain employment in service industries, fewer than 5% own real estate. They enjoy movies, TV and parenting magazines.  
24% of Black LA; Median Household Income: \$21,600; Median Age: 36.0; Presence of Children: 58%

- **Cosmopolitan Achievers** are educated, active, adventurous upper-middle class professionals who pursue activities from health clubs to kayaking. These early adopters are on top of technology trends from the Internet to the newest smart phones. With many single friends, this group likes dancing, clubbing and movies.  
28% of Black LA; Median Household Income: \$55,600; Median Age: 42.7; Presence of Children: 33%

- Members of the **Family-Focused Middle** tend to have child-centered households. Many own their homes despite modest incomes, spending their money on activities such as camping, gardening, and buying toys for their children. Pets, children's videos and Parenting Magazine are frequently found in their homes.  
15% of Black LA; Median Income: \$39,070; Median Age: 43.8; Presence of Children: 49%

- **Urban Professionals** enjoy high incomes, advanced degrees and sophisticated tastes. Their neighborhoods include million-dollar homes, high-end cars and upscale shopping. Multiple computers, flat-screen TVs and impressive wine collections enhance the lives of these couples and families, whose activities range from theater to international travel.  
9% of Black LA; Median Household Income: \$156,300; Median Age: 50.0; Presence of Children: 40%

- **Up-and-Coming Climbers** are suburban, white-collar couples. College-educated professionals, they fill their new or renovated homes with exercise equipment, home theaters, and pets. Focused on their children, they are a ready market for computers, action figures, dolls, board games, bicycles, and camping equipment.  
8% of Black LA; Median Household Income: \$98,800; Median Age: 50.0; Presence of Children: 40%

- Scattered across the non-metro and rural areas, **Hard-Working Rurals** are younger families with high school educations and blue-collar jobs, empty nest couples, and even a few exclusive families escaping urban congestion. Active campers and RV enthusiasts, they also enjoy outdoor sports like basketball, baseball, skiing, boating, backpacking and mountain biking. Country lifestyle and home decor magazines are popular reading.  
0.4% of Black LA; Median Household Income: \$78,300; Median Age: 51.2; Presence of Children: 34%



## BLACK LOS ANGELES —

## MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

## NIELSEN CUSTOM RESEARCH

Working with the Los Angeles Urban League (LAUL), The Nielsen Company conducted a custom segmentation analysis of Los Angeles (LA) County neighborhoods, based upon African Americans as a percent share of total population and segmenting neighborhoods with the highest concentrations. Taken together, these "Black Communities" account for two-thirds of the total Black population in LA County and are 32% African-American, on average. The custom analysis provides breakthrough insights on a vibrant and diverse community, and could be invaluable to any company or agency marketing products and services or tailoring programs to this dynamic group.

Source: The Nielsen Company and GfK MRI, part of The GfK Group. (see page 43 for additional source data)

“California’s future rests in the strength of its communities. With new, innovative strategies, we can transform neighborhoods block by block to improve quality of life and ensure that current and future generations thrive in the increasingly knowledge-based economy.”

— Dale Bonner, Former California Secretary of the Business, Transportation & Housing Agency

**Racial Equality Index** *an objective tool that measures how well the Black population in Los Angeles is faring relative to the area’s Whites and other racial and ethnic groups.*

The National Urban League created the Equality Index in 2004. The index was developed by global Insight, Inc., a highly regarded international consulting firm. Like other familiar indexes, such as the Dow-Jones and the Consumer Price Index, the Equality Index summarizes a great deal of data into a single figure that can be used to track changes over time. The index covers six areas:

- Education**
- Economics**
- Health**
- Criminal Justice**
- Housing**
- Civic Engagement**

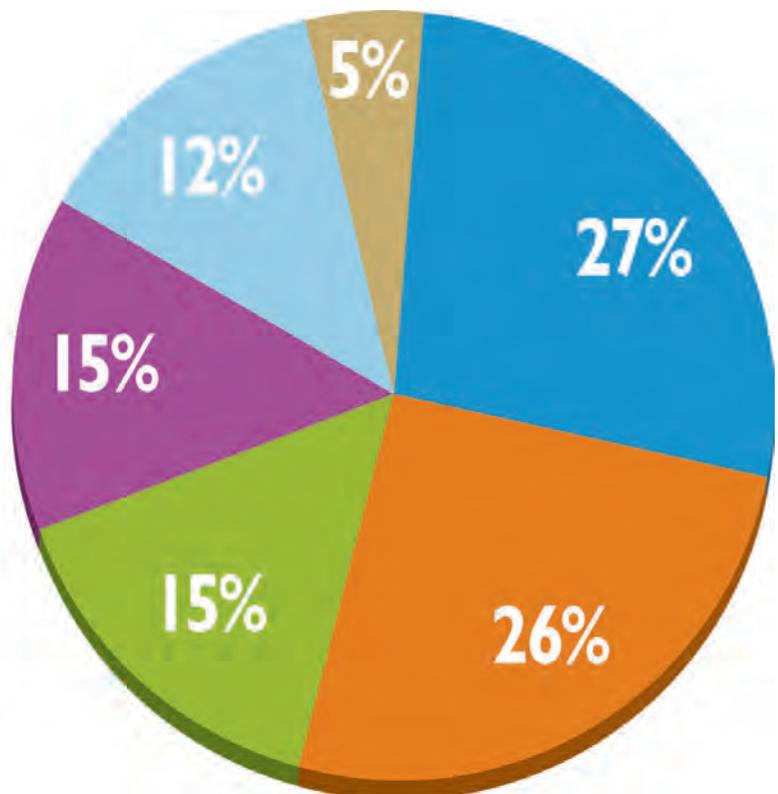
The 2011 State of Black Los Angeles report builds on the 2005 report and **updates the Racial Equality Index**. The result is an illuminating look at how Black Angelenos are faring in the multiethnic matrix of Los Angeles, and at how their relative standing has changed during the first tumultuous decade of the new millennium.

As the baseline group for Index calculations, White residents of Los Angeles were assigned a constant score of 1.00. A score above 1.00 means Blacks and/or other groups are faring better than Whites; a score below 1.00 indicates the opposite.

The Los Angeles Equality Index areas/components were weighted based on a poll of those invited to participate in a Leadership Summit convened to prepare for the 2005 State of Black Los Angeles report.

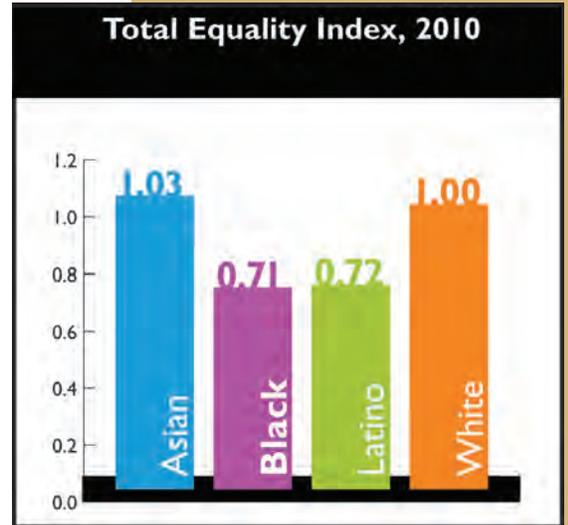
### Los Angeles Racial Equality Index Weighting

- Education 27%
- Economics 26%
- Health 15%
- Criminal Justice 15%
- Housing 12%
- Civic Engagement 5%



**The overall index reveals that outcomes for Black residents are only 71% of those of White residents.**

- Racial Equality Index results for Black Los Angeles demonstrate that, relative to Whites, Black and Latino residents are farthest behind any as they strive to enjoy equal standards for themselves and for their families.
- Black Angelenos lag Whites and Asian on the Equality Index primarily due to lower component scores in Economics (0.59), Housing (0.68), and Criminal Justice (0.70).
- The lower Equality Index score for Latinos relative to Whites derives mainly from lower scores in economics, education and civic engagement, in particular.
- Overall, Asian residents exceeded the 1.00 benchmark assigned to Whites. Underpinning their higher Equality Index score were higher marks, relative to Whites, in health and criminal justice.



Racial Equality Index	Asian	Black	Latino	White
Education	0.99	0.79	0.69	1.00
Economics	0.86	0.59	0.62	1.00
Health	1.64	0.73	0.97	1.00
Criminal Justice	1.05	0.70	0.77	1.00
Housing	0.91	0.68	0.73	1.00
Civic Engagement	0.47	1.02	0.50	1.00
<b>Total Equality Index</b>	1.03	0.71	0.72	1.00

"This work is about real people, real lives, and measurable change. It's about the people behind the numbers."

— **Renita E. Smith,**  
Vice President - Strategy,  
Los Angeles Urban League

**The Index Over Time**

**Improvement for Blacks**

- Due to modest improvements in criminal justice, economics, health and education

**.71** (in 2010)  
**.68** (in 2005)

Researchers say that, at the current rate of improvement, it could take generations to close the present 29-point gap between Blacks and Whites

Over the last five years, the State of Black Los Angeles Racial Equality Index improved by three percentage points.

Our goal for the next five years: Double the rate of improvement.

**The positive:** However modest, the three-point improvement in the overall Equality Index score for Black Angelenos is reason for optimism. Racial equality has not yet become permanently ingrained within the region's social structure.

**The negative:** Unless we accelerate the rate at which the Black-White equality gap is narrowing, it could take nearly 100 years to close it completely. Given the 29-point gap that exists, the three-point rate of gain achieved over the past decade simply will not accomplish the task.

**Racial Equality Index: The Education Index**

“Education is the locomotive that pulls our children up the hill to a better life; we owe it to them to lay the tracks.”

— **Atty. Virgil Roberts**, Board Member, Alliance College-Ready Public Schools

*Educational quality for Blacks was approximately 80% of the quality scored for Whites – the shortfall is evident across preschool, all grade levels and college attendance measures. However, the Education Index gains over time are especially promising.*



**Education Index Over Time**

**.79** (in 2010)



**.74** (in 2005)

Weighting: 27% of Overall Index

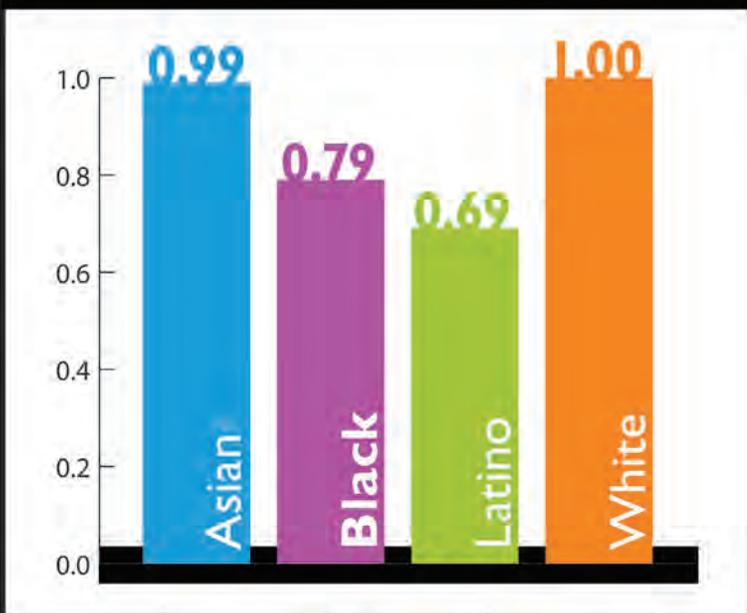
The Education Index score for Blacks in Los Angeles has improved five points due to:

- increased rates of high school graduation, and
- increased percentages of Blacks passing high school exit exams.

**Nevertheless, Black Education equality still lags relative to Whites due to:**

- lower percentages of those who ever attended college,
- lower percentage to earn, minimally, an associate’s degree,
- lower percentage of age-appropriate children enrolled in preschool.
- Blacks’ Education Index score is especially depressed by their higher rates of high school dropouts relative to Whites (22.8% for Blacks vs. 8.4% for Whites) and due to lower UC/CSU-required course completion rates (25.8% for Blacks vs. 40.4% for Whites).
- Lower college attendance rates, fewer college degrees at any level, and a lower percentage of age-appropriate preschool enrollees lower the quality of educational outcomes among Los Angeles Blacks.

**The Education Index, 2010**



## What were the factors?

Education Index	Asian	Black	Latino	White
<b>Weighted Scores</b>	0.99	<b>0.79</b>	0.69	1.00

### UC/CSU-required course completion rate

- 26 percent for Black students compared to 40 percent for White students.

### Graduation Rates

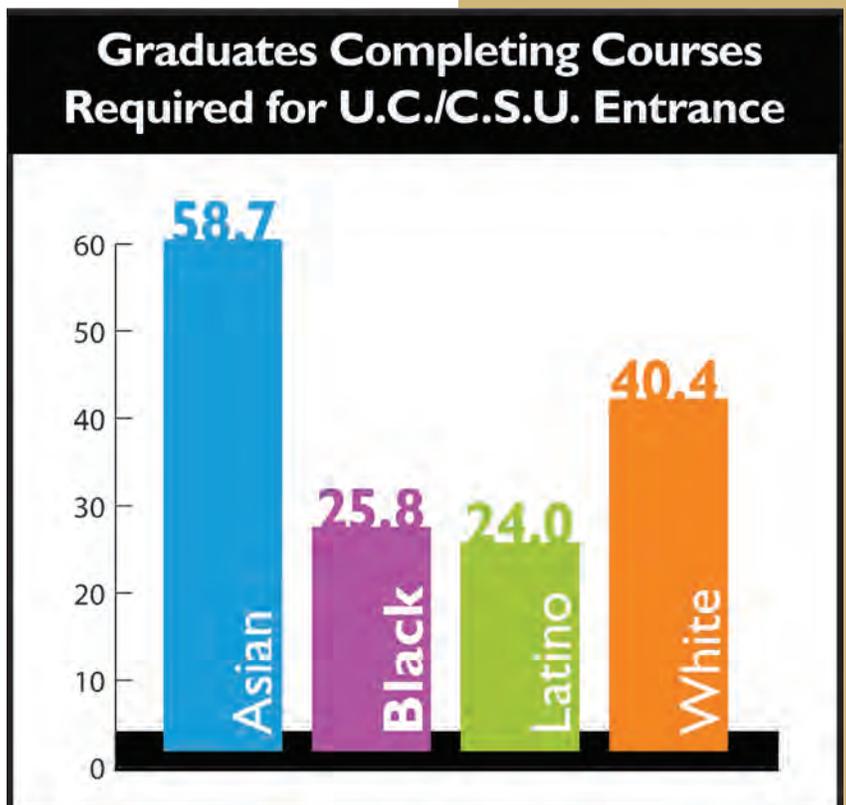
- More than 77 percent of Blacks finished high school; nearly 92 percent of Whites finished.
- Some 14.8 percent of Blacks earned college degrees; 27.3 percent of Whites earned them.

### School Achievement Scores

- Black children’s fourth grade average reading exam score was 209; Whites’ average was 245.
- Math scores - the average score was 195 for Blacks, 222 for Whites.
- As for the high school passing-level exit exam scores, the success rate was 95 percent for Whites, 65 percent for Black students.

### Enrollment and Dropouts

- An encouraging 53 percent of Black children were enrolled in preschool, compared to 59 percent of White children.
- The four-year high school dropout rate, a chilling 22.8 percent for Blacks, was only 8.4 percent for Whites in Los Angeles.



**The 23% high school dropout rate for Blacks dwarfs the 8% rate for Whites.**

“Educators are collaborative by nature. The great gains at Crenshaw High School give us reason to cheer, with one collective voice, for the entire community.”

— Karen Symms Gallagher,  
Dean, USC Rossier School of Education

Racial Equality Index: The Economic Index

“Economics, housing, health, education, public safety, civic engagement. A neighborhood can make progress as a whole if it unites to address these key areas.”

— L.A. City Councilmember  
Bernard C. Parks, Eighth District

Improvements in the Economic Index vs. 2005 are driven by relative gains for Blacks in measures of unemployment, poverty, and per capita household income, although Black economic outcomes remain only 59% of White outcomes.

Employment Index Over Time

.59 (in 2010)



.55 (in 2005)

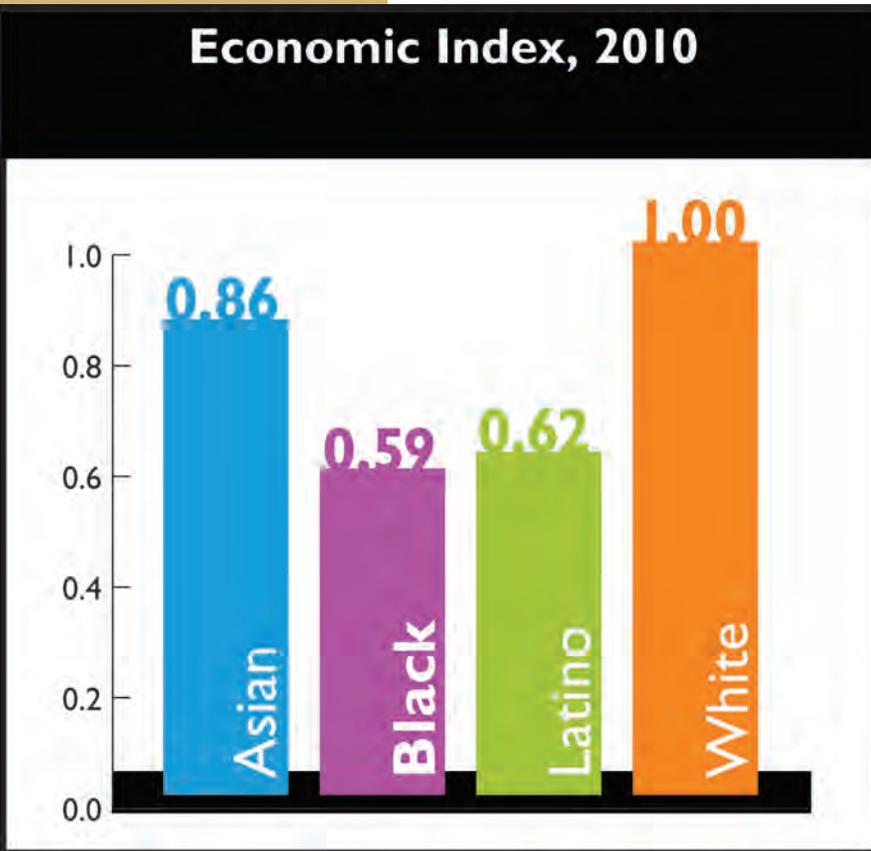
Weighting: 26% of Overall Index

• The economic equality index score of 0.59 says Blacks in Los Angeles fell far short of equality with Whites in 2010. Blacks scored lower in per capita income, employment, poverty, and business ownership.

What were the factors?

Median Household Income

• At \$49,000, the median household income for Blacks was 57 percent of Whites’ median income, which was nearly \$86,000.



Economic Index	Asian	Black	Latino	White
Household Median Income	\$75,500	\$49,000	\$49,800	\$86,000

Unemployment Rates	Asian	Black	Latino	White
Unemployment Rate*	4.1%	16.3%	12.8%	8.8%
Unemployed or not in Workforce	40.5%	45.7%	37.3%	39.9%

\*Source: Economic Roundtable, A Nonprofit, Public Policy Research Organization 2009



### Employment

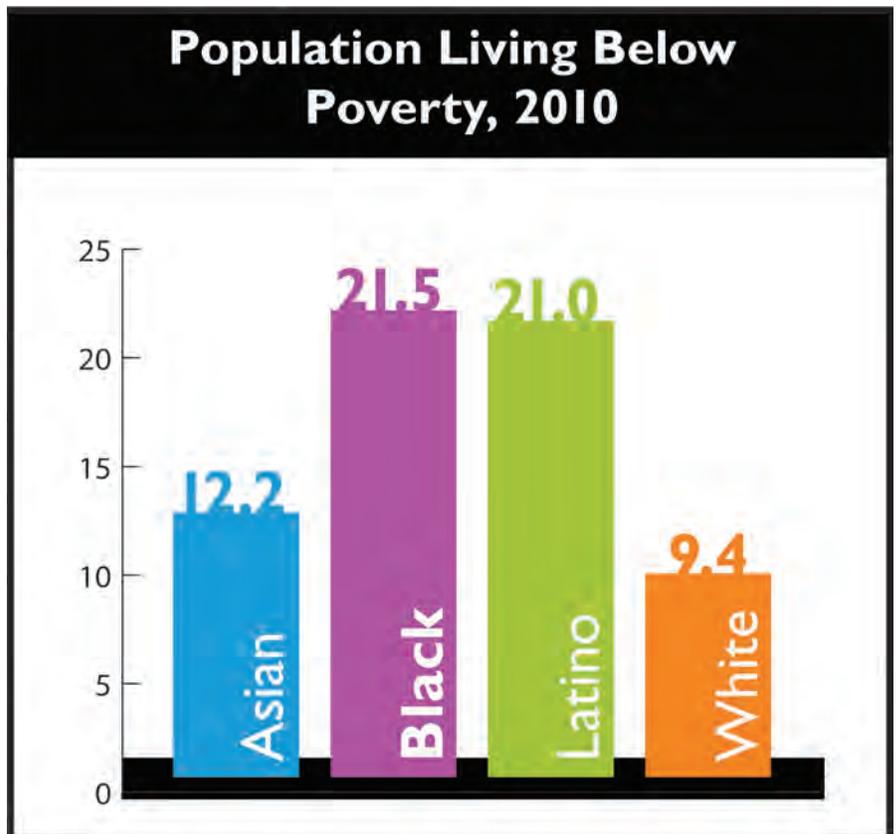
- Blacks felt the impact of a 16.3 percent unemployment rate, compared to Whites' 8.8 percent (nearly twice the rate).
- Blacks also have the highest percentage of residents who are unemployed or not counted in the workforce at all.

### Poverty

- The poverty rate for Black residents in 2010 was 21.5 percent. The rate for whites was 9.4 percent.

### Business Ownership

- Business ownership is a key driver of the local economy, employment, wealth creation and financial independence.
- The percentage of Black Angelenos who own their own businesses is 6.2 percent. Nearly 17 percent of Whites are business owners.
- Latinos scored the lowest in business ownership (4%), while Asians exceeded the score for Blacks and Latinos with 11%.

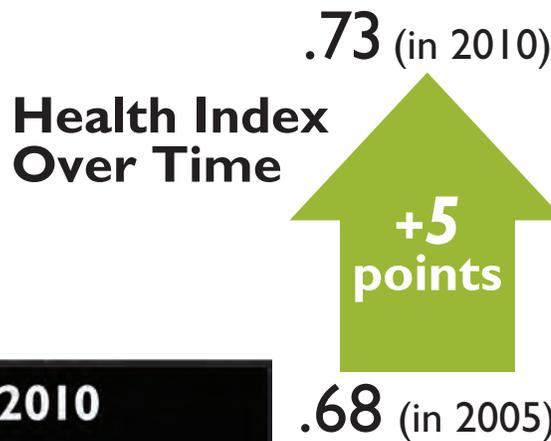


Racial Equality Index: The Health Index

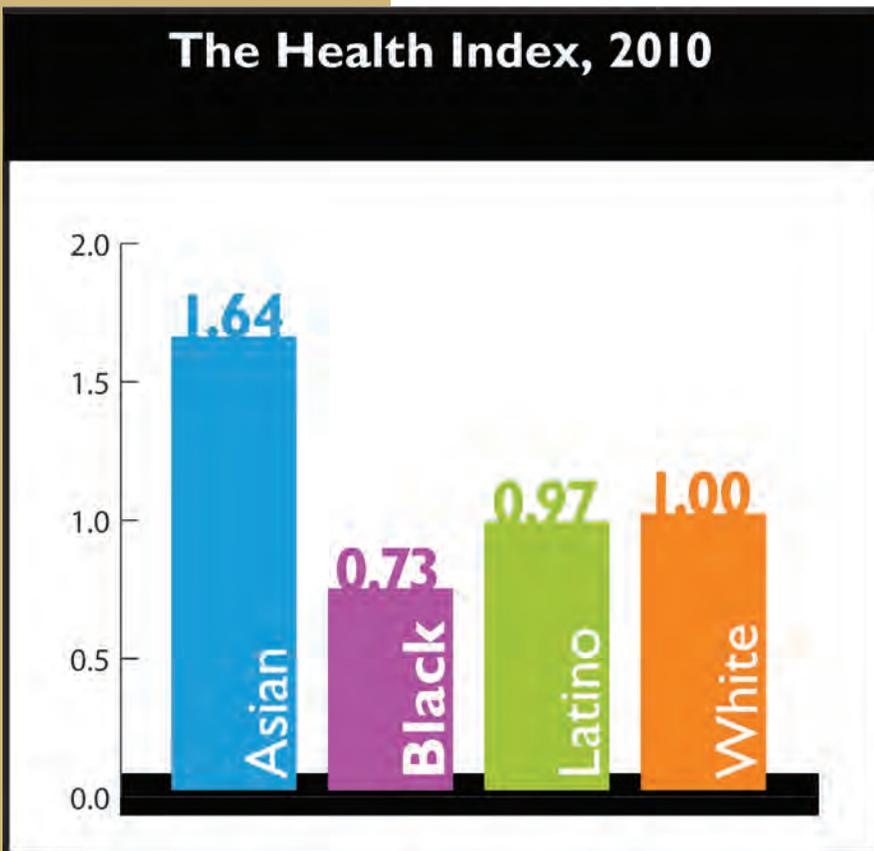
“Our health doesn’t begin in a doctor’s office. Where we live, work, learn and play has a profound impact on our health.”

— Robert K. Ross, MD,  
President and CEO,  
The California Endowment

Black Angelenos have experienced improvements in Health quality since 2005, although they continue to trail Whites on almost all Health indicators.



Weighting: 15% of Overall Index



- The lower health score for Blacks relative to Whites is driven by infant death rates, self reported health status, indicators from physical fitness tests, and the higher than average number of births to unmarried women.

- The health index score says Black health quality weighs in at three quarters of that of Whites and is the lowest among all racial groups in the index.

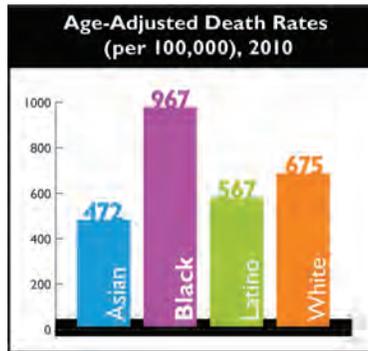
- The health quality experienced by Blacks is vastly inferior to that of Asians at 1.64 and Latinos, whose 0.97 health component score nearly equals that of Whites. High death and obesity rates, low levels of self reported health status, indicators from physical fitness tests and a higher average number of births among the racial groups are

cited as the reasons for the disparity.

- Latino’s health outcomes (0.97) are among the highest of any demographic groups - including whites and especially for immigrant Latinos.\* Over time, Latino scores are declining (see following page) as immigrants adopt behaviors and experience conditions that contribute to adverse overall health.

\*UCLA School of Medicine, Center for the Study of Latino Health Study: Chartbook 1997 Los Angeles California

Life expectancy as measured by death rates is sobering. In 2010, Blacks' death rate was 967 per 100,000. Whites' rate was 675.



**Childhood Obesity**

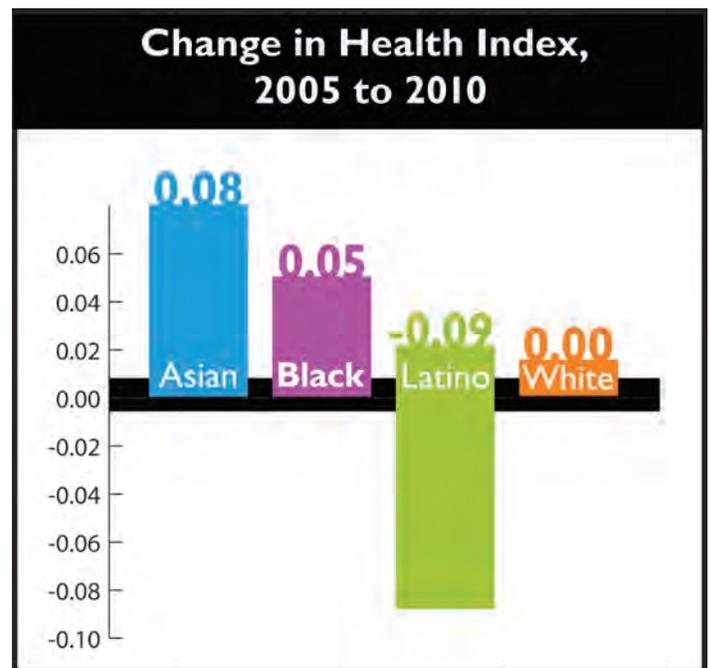
- Some 19 percent of Black boys in grades five, seven and nine were overweight, compared to 16 percent of White boys.
- In the same grades, 21 percent of Black girls were overweight and only 11 percent of White girls.



Health Index	Asian	Black	Latino	White
Prevalence of Overweight Among Children Grades 5,7,9—Boys	17%	19%	29%	16%
Prevalence of Overweight Among Children Grades 5,7,9—Girls	8%	21%	24%	11%
Obese (% of Population)	6.0	27.7	28.7	16.6

**Changes relative to 2005**

- The Health Index score for Blacks from 2005 to 2010 improved significantly relative to Whites' index score, increasing by five points, from 0.68 to 0.73.
- The main factors that drove the increase in Blacks' health score were improvements in the infant death rate, a decrease in the average number of "self reported" unhealthy days and days with limited activity in the past month, and scores in the physical fitness tests for seventh and ninth graders.



**What were the factors?**

- In 2005, the State of Black Los Angeles report highlighted major disparities in health conditions and services for Blacks. While gains are evident five years later, most medical professionals confirm that health conditions tend to change over a minimum period of 10-years.
- Changes in health conditions across all racial and ethnic groups are influenced by a combination of changes in a variety of conditions and services, and measures of awareness, attitude and behavior.

Racial Equality Index: The Criminal Justice Index

“You might have green parks, good schools, full employment. But public safety is a pillar of any healthy neighborhood. Can you fully enjoy life without it?”

— **Charlie Beck**, *Los Angeles*  
Chief of Police

*By nearly all measures, citywide crime is steadily declining. Nevertheless, the Criminal Index score for Blacks is stable as Blacks tend to be disproportionately involved in and impacted by incidents of crime.*



Weighting: 15% of Overall Index

- Blacks in Los Angeles scored 0.70, indicating that Blacks’ standing with respect to the criminal justice system is only seventy percent of Whites.
- The lower score for Los Angeles’ Blacks (relative to Whites) is driven by higher incidents of reported hate crimes, homicides and felony/misdemeanor arrests.
- The factors that were largely responsible for Blacks’ gains in criminal justice relative to Whites were improvements in the average length of jail time and in the percentage of those granted probation for felony convictions.

Criminal Justice Index	Asian	Black	Latino	White
Stopped While Driving (%)	10.1	19.8	11.2	12.6
Average Jail Sentence (in avg. months)	19	25	20	17
Felony Arrests (% of population)	0.49	4.14	1.33	0.80
Homicide Rates	2.2	48.7	13.5	2.3
<b>Criminal Justice Weighted Index</b>	1.05	<b>0.70</b>	0.77	1.00

**Crime in Los Angeles**

- Violent crimes, including rapes and aggravated assaults, are down 12.5 percent - or 655 fewer crimes – than the previous reporting period.
- Citywide homicides are down roughly 12.5%.

**Race & Crime in Los Angeles**

- Blacks are much more likely to die from homicide than whites, and Latinos somewhat more likely.
- Black men are less than 9% of the Los Angeles County’s population, but they represent nearly a third of homicide victims (source: LA Times: Homicide Report).
- Over a three year reporting period, one in 1,000 Blacks became homicide victims; more than 10 times the rate for Whites and nearly four times the rate for Latinos.

Criminal Justice Index	Asian	Black	Latino	White
Homicides by race or ethnicity	107	1,067	1,709	370

(over a 3 yr period: LA Times Homicide Report)

**What were the factors?**

**Equality Before the Law**

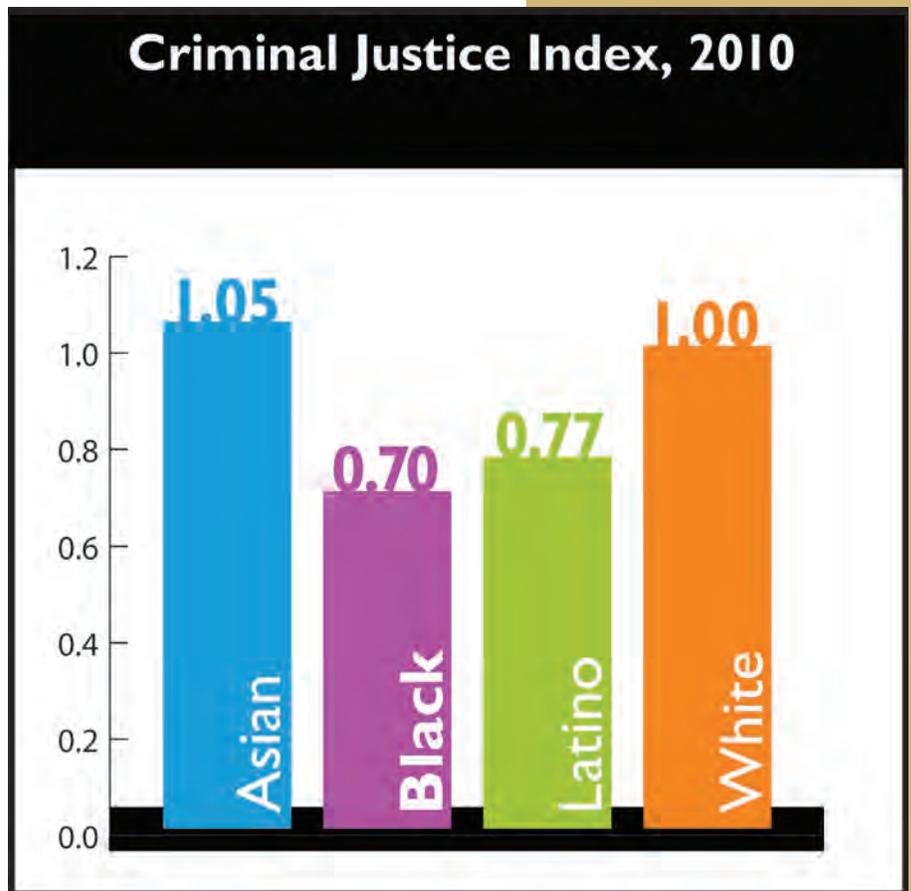
- For Black men, the average jail sentence was 25 months. For Whites, it was 17 months; 32% longer, for similar offenses.

**Arrest Rates**

- The percentage of felony arrests for Blacks was 4.1 percent. For Whites, it was less than one percent. For misdemeanors, the arrest rate for Whites was only 1.8 percent. Blacks’ rate was 6.3 percent.

**Homicide and Victimization**

- Calculated at the number of homicides per 100,000 people, the Black male homicide rate was 48.7. The rate for White males was 2.3 percent. The rate of hate crimes against Blacks was 28.2 percent; for Whites, it was 0.60 percent.



Racial Equality Index: The Housing Index

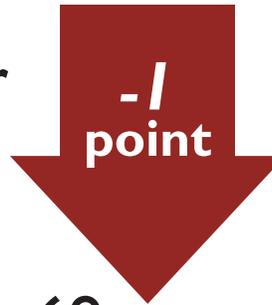
“It is amazing, the sense of well being that comes from owning your own home or running your own business. It spreads throughout a community.”

— Dr. Lula Ballton, Co-Founder & Former CEO, West Angeles Community Development Corporation

Lower average income levels, insufficient moderate-to-low income housing and higher than average property values contribute to the lower Housing outcomes of Black Los Angeles residents.

Housing Index Over Time

.68 (in 2010)



.69 (in 2005)

Weighting: 12% of Overall Index



- Between 2005 and 2010, the severe economic downturn impacted housing outcomes relatively equally across racial groups, with the exception of the index for Asians which increased four points.

- The quality of housing outcomes for Blacks in Los Angeles is about two-thirds that of Whites.

- The lower score for Blacks is influenced principally by their higher percentages in crowded housing, higher household poverty rates, and lower home ownership rates. Asians in Los Angeles experienced the only gains in housing outcomes between 2005 and 2010.

- Other negative housing outcomes for Black Angelenos, although to a lesser extent, are housing affordability, average family size and housing disrepair problems.

## What were the factors?

### Home Ownership

- Blacks' home ownership in 2010 was about 40 percent. Whites' was 66 percent.

### Crowded Housing

- In Los Angeles, 14.9 percent of Black households had more than one person per room, compared to 6.6 percent of White households.

### Housing Affordability

- The 2010 "rental burden" or percentage of renters paying over 30% of their income in rent, for Los Angeles Blacks was 52 percent, only slightly higher than Whites at 47 percent. Housing and transportation continue to comprise the two largest shares of most household budgets.

### Households Below Poverty Level

- *Despite representing only 9% of the population in Los Angeles, Blacks make up 25% of households living in poverty, a driver of other factors in the Housing Index like home ownership, quality, crowding and affordability.*



## Other trends impacting Housing:

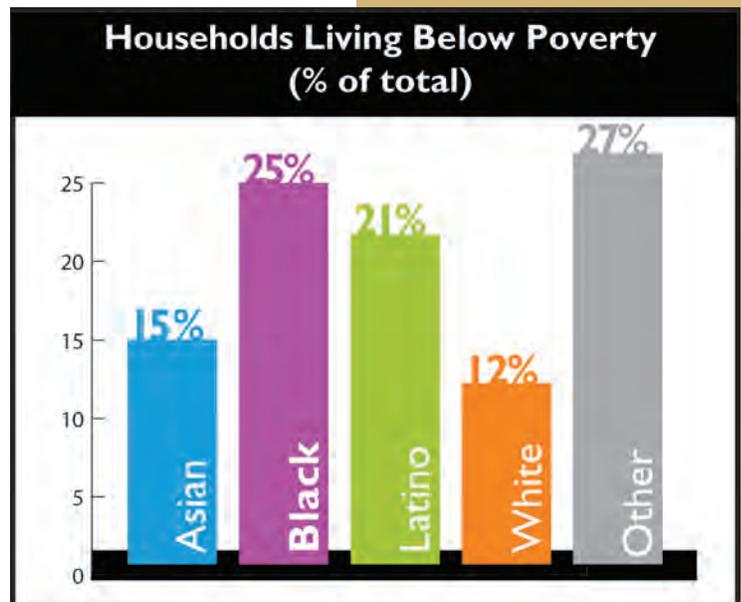
- Los Angeles has a lower share of the sub-prime mortgage market than most U.S. metro areas. As a result, the foreclosure rate in Los Angeles is low relative to the national average.

- Homeowners in Los Angeles spend a higher portion of their income on housing (26%) compared to the U.S. average of 22%.

- Vacancy rates in the city are increasing as both renters and previous homeowners are pushed to more shared living arrangements to mitigate the impact of the economic and housing downturn.

- Since 1970, the percentage of the Black population in Los Angeles has declined 50% to less than 9% of the total population, reflecting increased Hispanic and Asian immigration, particularly in South Los Angeles. The Black "flight" is partly driven by unaffordable housing in the city.

- The largest percentages of Los Angeles' homeless population are in South and Metro Los Angeles; African Americans make up approximately half of the Los Angeles County homeless population (compared to Latinos at 33%, Whites at 14% and Asians at roughly 2%).

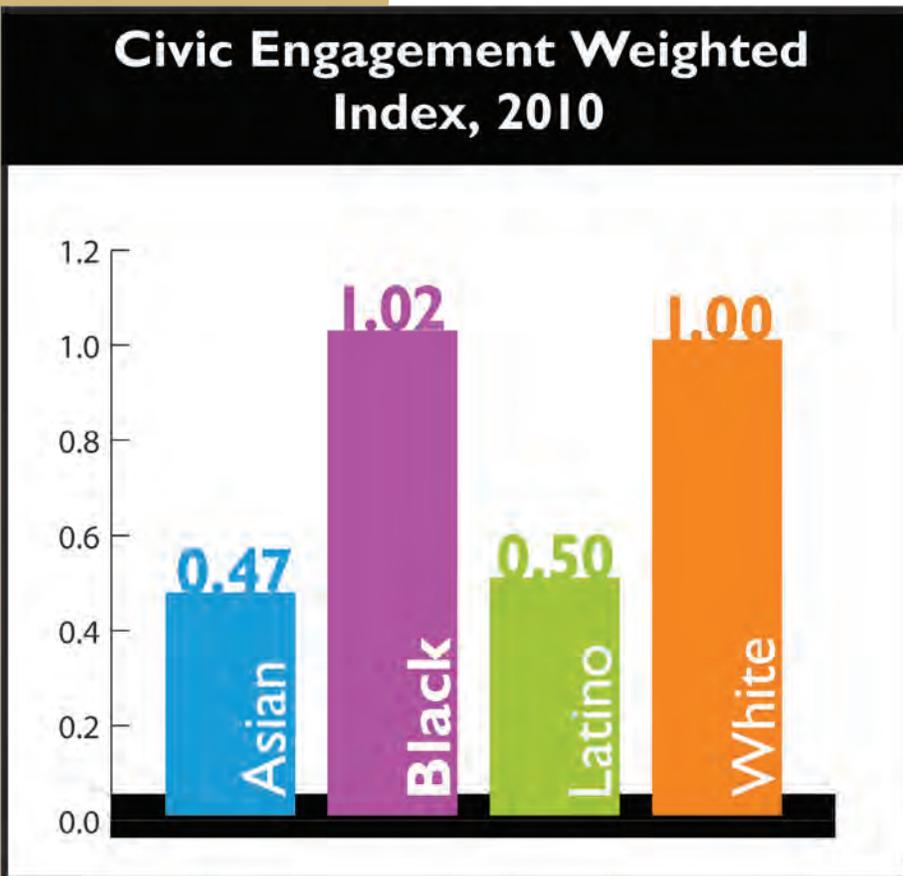
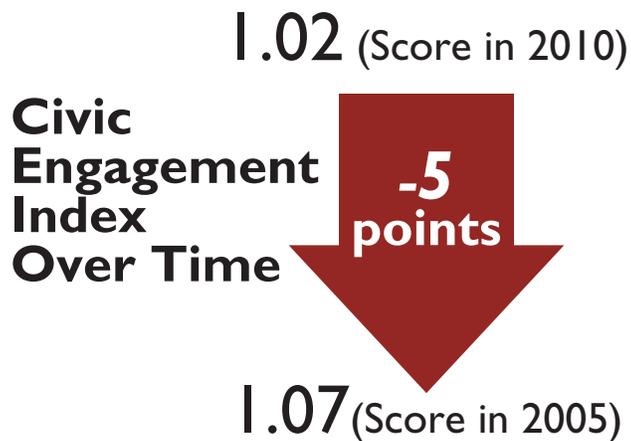


Racial Equality Index: The Civic Engagement Index

“Now at the dawning of the 21st century we suggest that the most critical question facing our American Union is the question of the meaning of what it is to be a citizen; there is need for urgency, for there can be no more compelling task than rebuilding civil society, the core of which is civility—and without civility there is no community.”

— Dr. Lewis King, Senior Scholar, Tom & Ethel Bradley Foundation, Professor of Psychiatry, UCLA

*Black Angelenos’ civic participation levels are slightly higher than those of White residents due to voter registration and union representation.*



**Weighting: 5% of Overall Index**

- Blacks achieved a higher index score compared to Whites because of stronger voter registration and union participation rates.
- Since 2005, the Civic Engagement score declined five points, however, due to a downward trend in unionization and armed services participation.

**What were the factors?**

**Armed Services Participation**

- In Los Angeles, the fraction of Blacks who are veterans is nearly on par with that of Whites.

**Union Representation**

- The percentage of Black workers represented by a union at 26.5. The figure for Whites was 10.2.

# Problems... and Promise

As the 2011 State of Black Los Angeles results show, Black Los Angeles has experienced progress, but grave challenges remain. Black Angelenos' position at the very bottom of every major index—despite the proliferation of nonprofits and the increased flow of funding to South Los Angeles—sounded an alarm. New approaches were desperately needed.

Paradigm-changing intervention at the neighborhood level, or place-based neighborhood change, is such an approach. Place-based neighborhood change is the holistic concentration of resources in a geographically-targeted area to achieve lasting change in outcomes, policy, and systems. Place-based approaches such as the Los Angeles Urban League's Neighborhoods@Work® and The California Endowment's Building Healthy Communities collaborative are successfully countering the daunting issues raised in the 2011 State of Black Los Angeles.

## Why Place-Based Neighborhood Change?

Place-based neighborhood change has emerged as a solution to the challenges of Black Angelenos because it focuses on the overall quality of life in the "places," or neighborhoods, in which Black Angelenos live. Place-based change is a *holistic solution* for interconnected neighborhood health, housing, safety, education, employment and civic engagement problems.

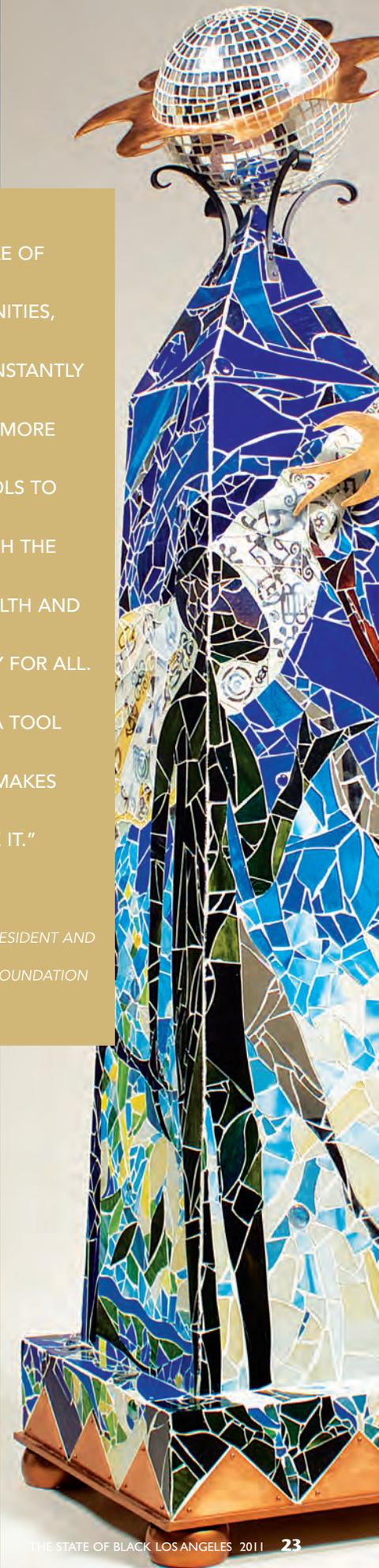
The problems are connected, and therefore must be dealt with in a manner that recognizes the impact of one issue on another: If you are chronically ill, your employment is in jeopardy. If you can't work, you may lose your home. If you cannot focus at school due to trauma from gang harassment on your way to school, you cannot prepare yourself for college or career. In turn, the lack of education limits employment and housing opportunities. Interconnected problems demand holistic solutions

**"WHEN THE CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP IS RE-IMAGINED, RE-TOOLED AND RE-LAUNCHED, WHEELS BEGIN TO TURN. THE URBAN LEAGUE PROGRAM HAS WHEELS TURNING."**

—SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS,  
*Los Angeles County Beard of Supervisors, Second District*

"FOR THE SAKE OF  
OUR COMMUNITIES,  
WE MUST CONSTANTLY  
SEEK BETTER, MORE  
CREATIVE TOOLS TO  
HELP US REACH THE  
GOAL OF HEALTH AND  
PRODUCTIVITY FOR ALL.  
WHEN SUCH A TOOL  
IS FOUND, IT MAKES  
SENSE TO USE IT."

—FRED ALI, *PRESIDENT AND  
CEO, WEINGART FOUNDATION*



## Neighborhoods@Work®: A Model of Neighborhood Change

How do we know that the community is changing? We see it, feel it, and hear it everyday... from those who know best — the people who live here.

— Pamela A. Bakewell,  
Chief Neighborhood Officer,  
Los Angeles Urban League

Neighborhoods@Work® is a concerted effort to transform Park Mesa Heights, a 70-block area of South Los Angeles. Launched by the Los Angeles Urban League in 2007, in response to disturbing results presented in the 2005 State of Black Los Angeles Report, the model seeks to improve conditions in economics, housing, education, health, public safety and civic engagement.

The operative words for Neighborhoods@Work® are “holistic,” “collaborative” and “targeted.” A *holistic* approach across disciplines, it unites 100+ partners in a *collaborative* effort directed at a *targeted* community, creating synergies in programs and policies that disconnected, individual efforts cannot hope to achieve.

Ultimately, Neighborhoods@Work® has twin goals:

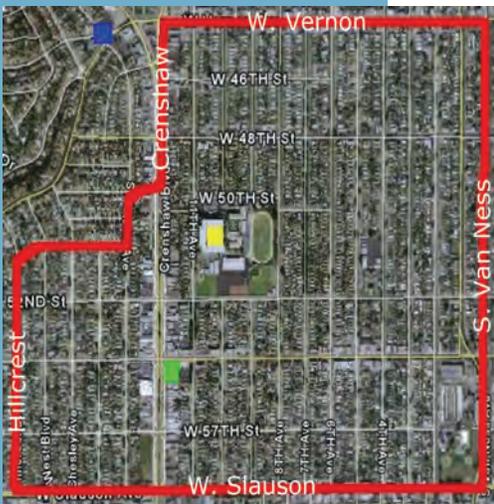
- 1) to create a best practices model for sustainable neighborhood change,
- 2) to see that model replicated throughout urban communities locally and nationwide.

### Why Park Mesa Heights?

In 2007, Park Mesa Heights faced several challenges:

- 41% High School graduation rate,
- 22% Unemployment rate,
- Violent crime rate 250% LA average,
- Incidence of preventable disease 120-150% of LA average, and
- Predominantly African American population.

These challenges, along with the neighborhood’s assets – a stable home-ownership base, solid lower middle incomes, respected community leadership, and neighborhood pride — made it a viable candidate for revitalization.



Map of 70 block area

### Neighborhoods@Work® leverages the resources of over 100 partners, including:

- Local schools
- Law Enforcement: LAPD, Sheriff, California Highway Patrol
- Neighborhood Council
- Block clubs
- Business owners
- University partners: UCLA School of Public Affairs and USC Rossier School of Education
- Clergy & faith-based partners
- Greater Crenshaw Educational Partnership (GCEP), a nonprofit comprised of USC Rossier School of Education, LA Urban League, and the Tom and Ethel Bradley Foundation, to guide school reform at Crenshaw High School.

### The results are compelling:

- A 25 percent decrease in crime in an area whose crime rates were 250% of the citywide average – and where previously one in three students were once assaulted en route to school each day.
- A 58 percent hike in the graduation rate at Crenshaw High School, once one of the 15 lowest-performing schools in Los Angeles Unified School District.
- Employment gains and foreclosure prevention even during a severe economic downturn.
- Improvements in health awareness and behaviors, with an eye toward longer-term changes in health conditions.

# HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOOD INDEX™

## Introducing ...The Healthy Neighborhood Index™

### What is The Healthy Neighborhood Index™?\*

- This report introduces the Healthy Neighborhood Index™, a breakthrough tool initially developed to assist the work of the LA Urban League's innovative Neighborhoods@Work program and other holistic neighborhood reform efforts.
- Based upon the methodology of the Racial Equality Index, the Healthy Neighborhood Index™ is an objective measurement of a community's well-being, relative to other communities, across multiple dimensions — health, safety, education, housing, economics, and civic engagement.
- Although the Healthy Neighborhood Index can be applied to any neighborhood, the Healthy Neighborhood Index initial benchmark neighborhood utilized in this report is Beverly Hills. "Like other familiar indexes, such as the Dow Jones Industrial average and the Consumer Price Index, it summarizes a great deal of data into a single figure that can be used to track changes over time.
- Each area of the Index has a separate score, and these scores are combined into the total Healthy Neighborhood Index™ to summarize the extent to which different neighborhoods are characterized by different living conditions, i.e. higher unemployment, higher obesity rates, and lower housing affordability.
- The Healthy Neighborhood Index™ benchmark neighborhood is Beverly Hills. Since Beverly Hills outperformed all other neighborhoods on virtually every aspect of the Healthy Neighborhood Index™, it is a useful comparison neighborhood. Communities scoring higher than 1.00 can be seen as faring relatively better than Beverly Hills; lower scores indicate the opposite.

### Why is it unique?

- This pioneering tool is the first ever to distill a vast amount of data, collected not at a city, county, or even zip code level – but at a neighborhood level – into a single composite figure that captures the condition of a neighborhood.
- The Los Angeles Urban League leveraged its firsthand experience in place-based change, combined with the research expertise of our university partners – to identify the appropriate data that captures the critical indicators of success or failure in place-based change.
- The tool is an "open-architecture" tool, available to any organization that has a need to measure neighborhood change.\*

### How is it used?

The Healthy Neighborhood Index™ tool is used to:

- Assess and monitor the success of their neighborhood change efforts across the disciplines of health, safety, education, housing, economics, and civic engagement.
- Prioritize and allocate resources to those parts of a community that are in greatest need.
- Assess the nature and degree of revitalization needed in a target neighborhood and guide efforts to expand neighborhood reform efforts to new communities.

### A Real-Time Application

In this report, the Healthy Neighborhood Index™ is applied to the Park Mesa Heights, the Neighborhoods@Work target neighborhood. The following analysis of Park Mesa Heights results is a real-time case study that demonstrates the Healthy Neighborhood Index™ in action.

The 2005-2010 period is an important one to analyze, since the Los Angeles Urban League began to implement Neighborhoods@Work in 2007. Following the results of the Healthy Neighborhood Index™ over time will provide important information about the extent to which Park Mesa Heights changes after program implementation.

*It is important to note that the Neighborhood Index method does not constitute a comprehensive evaluation of the Los Angeles Urban League's Neighborhoods@Work initiative. The Neighborhood Index provides valuable information about the overall direction of Park Mesa Heights' health over time and relative to other important comparison areas that reflects program influences.*

"I cannot underscore enough the importance of a cohesive neighborhood armed with an intelligent plan of action and willingness to link arms with its neighbors. This sort of collaboration ensures positive enduring change for the community and City as a whole."

— Honorable

Antonio R. Villaraigosa

Mayor, City of Los Angeles

\*For more information on how to use the Healthy Neighborhood Index™ for your community's needs, see "The Healthy Neighborhood Index™: Frequently Asked Questions"

## Healthy Neighborhood Index™: The Tool in Action The State of Park Mesa Heights

*Healthy Neighborhood Index results indicate that Park Mesa Heights did not lose ground relative to Beverly Hills over the study period despite the severe recession that disproportionately affects African-Americans.*

<b>2005 Score: 0.47</b>	<b>2010 Score: 0.47</b>	<b>NO CHANGE</b>
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### 2010 Overall Index Results:



“The challenges facing our communities can be daunting, but data-driven tools like the Healthy Neighborhood Index help us to focus on the critical needs of our communities and to track our progress toward solutions. The value of such data cannot be overestimated.”

— James Canales, President and CEO, The James Irvine Foundation

# Outcomes Hold Steady Despite Devastating Economic Downturn

Neighborhood inequality between Park Mesa Heights and Beverly Hills is greatest in economics, housing, and public safety. Education and health outcomes are less than 60% of those in Beverly Hills. Civic engagement outcomes are only two-thirds of those in Beverly Hills.

### Park Mesa Heights Healthy Neighborhood Index by Component

HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOOD INDEX	PMH	Beverly Hills
<b>Economics Index</b>	0.30	1.00
<b>Education</b>	0.57	1.00
<b>Health Index</b>	0.58	1.00
<b>Housing Index</b>	0.43	1.00
<b>Criminal Justice Index</b>	0.43	1.00
<b>Civic Engagement Index</b>	0.67	1.00
<b>TOTAL INDEX</b>	<b>0.47</b>	1.00

- Between 2006 and 2009, the overall Neighborhood Index score did not change for Park Mesa Heights, as gains in the index were offset by losses in the index. Park Mesa Heights’s economics and housing outcomes worsened as a result of the negative impacts of the economic recession and housing market bust, while education outcomes improved.
- If Park Mesa Heights had not improved in educational outcomes to the extent that it did relative to Beverly Hills, than its overall Neighborhood Index score would have worsened over the period of the study.

Note: 2011 Healthy Neighborhood Index Report based on a range of data available from 2006-2010. The majority of available data on Park Mesa Heights is from 2008 and 2009, corresponding to the first 2 ? years of Neighborhoods@Work, which launched in mid-2007.

## The Healthy Neighborhood Index™ Recession-Adjusted Simulation Results

*Interventions by Neighborhoods@Work, residents, and partners would have increased Park Mesa Heights's index by a full two points, if the devastating economic downturn had not occurred.*

<b>2005 Actual Score: 0.47</b>	<b>2010 Recession-Adjusted Score: 0.49</b>	<b>+2 Points</b>
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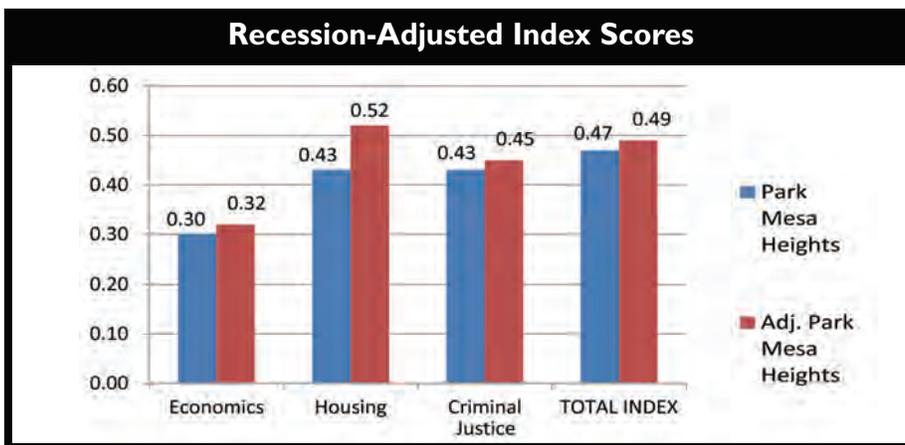
- The study reports Neighborhood Index results for the time period from 2006 through the most recent period of 2009, or the latest year for which data is available. During this period, the housing boom collapsed and the U.S. economy entered its deepest and longest period of economic contraction since the Great Depression.
- These national and regional shocks are likely to have had big impacts on the outcomes reported, particularly in the areas of economics and housing, including home price declines, foreclosure rate increases, and job losses.
- Healthy Neighborhood Index results reveal that these national and regional shocks had large, negative impacts on the economic and housing outcome measures recorded in this report – particularly a large, negative and disproportionate impact on Park Mesa Heights relative to the other comparison neighborhoods.
- In order to quantify the negative impact of the recession, a simulation of the Healthy Neighborhood Index™ was conducted by holding the following outcomes at pre-recession levels:<sup>1</sup>
  - Economic Index outcomes: unemployment rate, poverty level, etc.
  - Housing Index outcomes: housing affordability, foreclosure rates, etc.
  - Property crime outcomes (Public Safety Index)

## When Adjusted for the Recession, Outcomes Improve

The technique simulates what the outcomes in the Healthy Neighborhood Index would be if the economic recession had not occurred and the housing market had not deteriorated. It involves holding constant the conditions of the economy and housing market similar in 2006 (pre-recession) and 2009/2010 (the latest available data).

### Recession-Adjusted Healthy Neighborhood Index Results

The Neighborhood Index results demonstrate that Park Mesa Heights would have fared much better relative to Beverly Hills had the economic recession and collapse of the housing market not occurred over the study period.



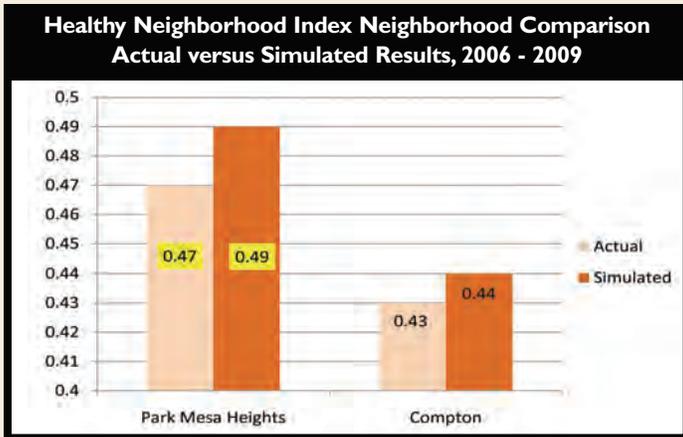
- Park Mesa Heights would have had a full 2-point increase in the Neighborhood Index scores if not for the devastating effects of the economic recession and collapse of the housing market.
- The recession-adjusted Housing score for Park Mesa Heights was nearly 9 points higher than the unadjusted index score, indicating that the collapse of the housing market had a particularly crippling effect on housing outcomes.

<sup>1</sup>What a recession means for Black America" Algernon Austin January 18, 2008 Economic Policy Institute, Brief 241 <http://www.epi.org/publications/entry/ib241/> Given the availability of data at the time, the Healthy Neighborhood Index data utilized covers only two initial years of Neighborhoods@Work launch—2009 and 2010. Significant results accrued in 2010, which would have further improved the index for Park Mesa Heights.

## Recession-Adjusted Healthy Neighborhood Index™

It is also helpful to compare Park Mesa Heights' recession-adjusted index to other neighborhoods.

Please see the full report for a more detailed discussion on the demographic characteristics of the neighborhoods above at [www.laul.org](http://www.laul.org)



- As shown above, Park Mesa Heights was most severely impacted by the recession, consistent with findings that African-American communities, and to a lesser extent, low-income and Latino communities, are disproportionately affected by economic downturns.
- After adjusting for the recession, the increase in index score is larger for Park Mesa Heights than for Compton, the community with the most similar demographics.
- In absolute terms, independent of how the neighborhood outcomes changed relative to other cities, Park Mesa Heights saw a 15-point improvement after adjusting for the recession, an increase of 6-points versus the unadjusted index score.

Again, regardless of changes versus other more affluent neighborhoods that have had a history of strong financial and other resources, Park Mesa Heights residents benefited from a 15% improvement in overall outcomes over the time period of Neighborhoods@Work interventions.

### Why The Recession-Adjusted Index Is A Conservative Estimate

The Simulation Technique potentially understates the full impact of the recession and the full positive impact of Neighborhoods@Work. Thus, the Recession-Adjusted Index scores are most likely higher than the numbers presented here and are the minimum estimated scores for the following reasons:

- This recession-adjusted 2-point increase is a conservative estimate because only the economics, housing, and public safety outcomes have been adjusted. The other disciplines, education, health, and civic engagement have not been adjusted -- despite the fact that they are interrelated outcomes.
- Thus, education, health, and civic engagement outcomes are also likely to have been negatively impacted by the economy. For example, stress-related illness may increase and academic achievement may decrease. This analysis does not reflect any economics-related adjustments in those outcomes.
- Additionally, the safety index is understated because although we adjusted property crime rate for the effect of the economy, we did not adjust for the fact that trust in law enforcement is increasing, which typically drives an increase in reported violent and other crimes due to enhanced communication.<sup>2</sup>
- Lastly, the recession-adjusted number is further understated because the economics and housing interventions were launched later in the Neighborhoods@Work model, as part of a gradually-staged Neighborhoods@Work launch plan.

### Implications for Neighborhoods@Work

• Assuming that it took one year to begin to fully implement Neighborhoods@Work programs, then such programs were likely fully functioning for approximately two years for the purposes of this study's time horizon. More time is needed for the full impact of Neighborhoods@Work to manifest, in light of the widely held view that a "long-term" process is required for meaningful neighborhood change.<sup>3</sup>

- The 2-point gain, or 4%, over the two years suggests that if Neighborhoods @Work maintains current levels of investment and sustains current levels of program effectiveness; over a 10 year period overall observed gaps in outcomes between Beverly Hills and Park Mesa Heights should narrow by 10 points, or a 20% increase in the index.
- Lastly, Park Mesa Heights experienced absolute improvements in outcomes, which means that they are actually better off -- regardless of changes relative to other more affluent neighborhoods.

The following is an analysis of the Park Mesa Heights Healthy Neighborhood Index™ by component.

<sup>2</sup>Enhancing Law Enforcement Response to Victims: A 21st-Century Strategy – Implementation Guide, International Association of Chiefs of Police, funded by U.S. Department of Justice, 2003

<sup>3</sup>"Comprehensive Neighborhood-Based Initiatives," Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research, Vol. 2, No. 2, May, 1996.

**Healthy Neighborhood Index™  
Education Index**

*Though challenges remain, strong alliances, targeted interventions, and hard work by Neighborhoods@Work and community partners yield substantial gains.*

<b>2005 Score: 0.49</b>	<b>2010 Score: 0.57</b>	<b>+8 Points</b>
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**Weighting: 27% of Overall Index**

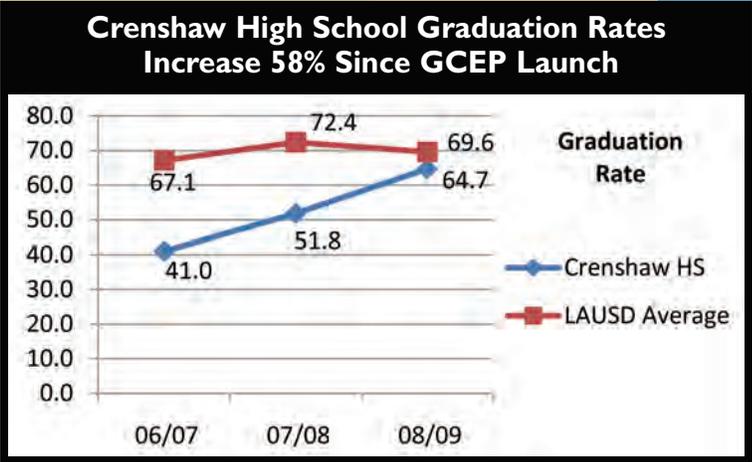
*Education is the key that Park Mesa Heights residents need to overcome the past and secure the future in this 21<sup>st</sup>-century, highly-skilled, technology-driven economy.*

Although Park Mesa Heights’ education outcomes remain only 57% of those in Beverly Hills, the improved score reflects intensive work by students, parents/caregivers, residents, community partners, and Neighborhoods@Work.

“When our children feel the support of their community, when they are applauded and encouraged and challenged, when they feel safe, their minds open up to the exploration of knowledge.”

— Carrie H. Allen, Principal, Crenshaw High School

- School and Student Performance**
- Academic Performance Index (overall school performance) scores increased sharply across Park Mesa Heights at Crenshaw High, Audubon Middle and Angeles Mesa Elementary schools.
  - Just 21% of Park Mesa Heights fourth graders scored in advanced range of California’s standardized math test.
  - Crenshaw High School, once one of the fifteen lowest-performing schools in LAUSD, registered a 58% increase in graduation rate, narrowing the gap versus the LAUSD average.



Relative to other neighborhoods, Park Mesa Heights outcomes increased by 8 points, or 16%. However, when measured in absolute terms, independent of changes in other neighborhoods, outcomes increased by 24% — a tremendous gain for a neighborhood with some of the historically lowest-performing schools in the city.

Source: California Department of Education, [www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov)

**Neighborhoods@Work: Working on Learning**

**Goal:** To ensure that Park Mesa Heights students are prepared to graduate from high school on time, work-ready, college-bound, and prepared for life.

The Neighborhoods@Work collaboration with Greater Crenshaw Educational Partnership (GCEP), a nonprofit formed by USC Rossier School of Education, the Tom & Ethel Bradley Foundation, and LA Urban League, is transforming educational outcomes at Crenshaw HS via professional development, parent/caregiver engagement, student enrichment opportunities, and an array of academic interventions.

The Neighborhoods@Work Pre-K12 Collaborative links Crenshaw HS with its family of schools to improve elementary, middle, and high school outcomes by aligning curriculum and sharing best practices.



**Healthy Neighborhood Index™**  
**Economic Index**

*Community interventions fostered by Los Angeles Urban League - Neighborhoods@Work help to lessen the impact of severe economic downturn on an already fragile neighborhood which is disproportionately impacted by recession.*

<b>2005 Score: 0.32</b>	<b>2010 Score: 0.30</b>	<b>-2 Points</b>
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**Weighting: 26% of Overall Index**

The economics index score decreased, consistent with reports showing that African-American unemployment and income are hardest hit by economic downturns. However, despite the severity of the recession, the index score decline was limited to a 2-point decline, due to community intervention. When adjusted for recessionary impact, the Economic Index would have increased by 2-points.

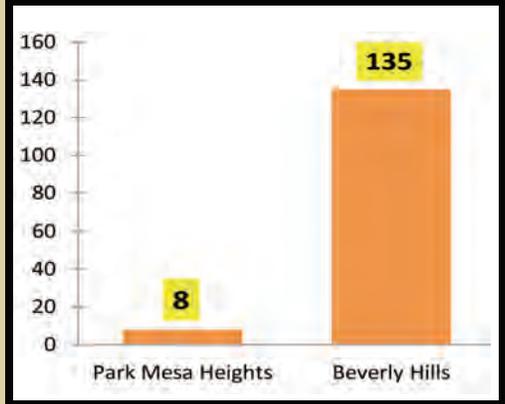
Education opens the door...  
 Let's make sure there are  
 employment opportunities on  
 the other side of it.

— David Crippens,  
 Consultant – DCL & Associates

**Economics**

- Income**
  - Median income level is \$39,000
  - Well below Beverly Hills' median of \$250,000
  - Above Compton's median of roughly \$27,500
- Poverty**
  - Family poverty rate is 19.2%
  - Well below Compton's 26% rate
  - Exceeds Beverly Hills' 6.1 rate and Ladera Heights' low 3% rate
- Jobs**
  - Unemployment rate a stunning 49%
  - Eight jobs for every 100 people
  - 135 jobs for every 100 in Beverly Hills

**Jobs Per 100 People**



When measured in absolute terms, independent of changes in other neighborhoods, outcomes decreased by 5%, driven primarily by increases in the poverty rate and declines in employment rate and household income.

**Neighborhoods@Work: Working on Working**

**Goal:** to reduce Park Mesa Heights' unemployment and equip its labor force for the twenty-first century marketplace.

- Neighborhoods@Work's South Los Angeles Employment Collaborative was established to reduce chronic unemployment in Park Mesa Heights by devising effective new strategies. We launched the South Los Angeles Employment Collaborative of employers, job trainers, businesses, residents, and nonprofit and government organizations, many of whom are major employers.
- Neighborhoods@Work ushered 186 Park Mesa Heights residents into jobs and served 143 businesses.
- The Neighborhoods@Work Entrepreneurship Center and Career Development Institute helps start-up businesses forge twenty-first century business plans, strategies and marketing.



## Healthy Neighborhood Index™ Health Index

Health index scores remain the lowest of all comparison neighborhoods, despite improvements in health outcomes. Long-term solutions (10 years minimum) are key in changing outcomes.

<b>2005 Score: 0.59</b>	<b>2010 Score: 0.58</b>	<b>-1 Point</b>
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**Weighting: 15% of Overall Index**

Park Mesa Heights health outcomes are only 58% of those in Beverly Hills, as the result of high rates of chronic disease such as heart disease/stroke, diabetes, and HIV/AIDS.

### Neighborhoods@Work: Working on Health

**Goal:** improve the health and well-being of Park Mesa Heights residents.

- Established a formal health collaborative with residents, medical professionals, UCLA School of Public Health and Charles Drew Medical Center.
- With support from The California Endowment, the LA Urban League and UCLA School of Public Health mapped Park Mesa Heights's chronic health challenges
- We have teamed with partners to create a "good health movement" with health fairs, mammogram and prostate cancer screenings, nutrition training, and fitness challenges

#### Access to Prenatal Care

- 17.1% of expectant mothers receive no first trimester prenatal care versus 2.9% of mothers in Beverly Hills
- The number climbed from 13.4% in 2005

#### Death Rates

- Death rate is 16% higher than Beverly Hills's rate
- Primary causes: heart disease, diabetes, HIV/AIDS

#### Access to Prenatal Care

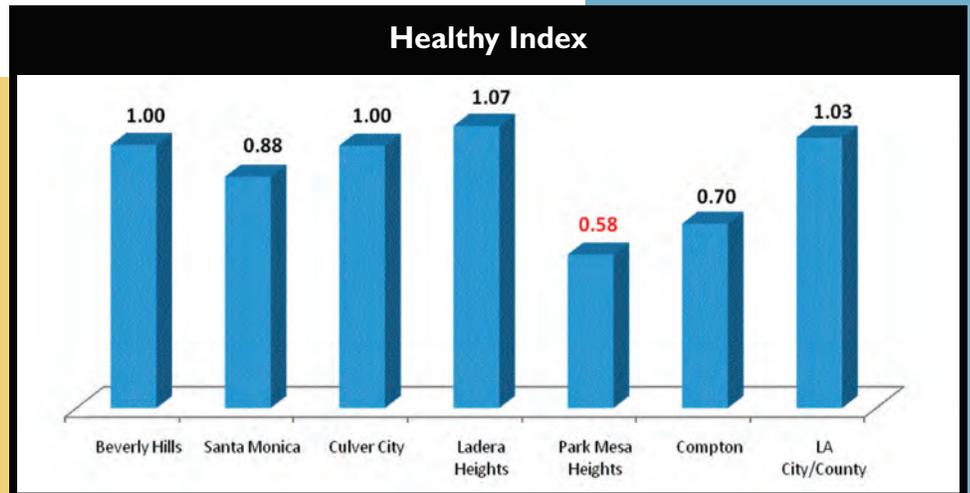
- 30.6% child obesity rate outstrips every comparison neighborhood
- More than 70% higher than Beverly Hills
- Adult obesity rates even higher at 35.1%

"Advocacy + commitment + resources = sustainability.  
Knowledge + access + action = a healthy community.  
You do the math!"

— D'Ann Morris, Deputy  
Neighborhood Officer - Health,  
Los Angeles Urban League

- In absolute terms, independent of changes in other neighborhoods, health outcomes increased by an encouraging 24% — primarily due to decreases in low-birth-weight infants and decreases in heart disease and HIV/AIDS death rates.
- However, relative to improvements in outcomes in other neighborhoods, the index relative to Beverly Hills declined by 1 point.

- Park Mesa Heights' health outcomes are lowest of all comparison groups, including Compton as the community has the lowest levels of access to health-care, quality food choices, and safe options for outdoor activities.



**Healthy Neighborhood Index™**  
**Public Safety Index**

*Shattering effects of severe economic downturn drive decrease in safety index due to surge in property crimes – despite significant 25% decrease in violent crime and a 15% decrease in total crime.*

<b>2005 Score: 0.45</b>	<b>2010 Score: 0.43</b>	<b>-2 Points</b>
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**Weighting: 15% of Overall Index**

**Violent Crime and Property Crime**

- **Significant progress: Violent crime fell by 7.51 crimes per 1,000 residents from its 2005 rate**
- **Violent crime rate remains 7 times higher than Beverly Hills, slightly lower than Compton**
- **Property crime increased by 4.3 crimes per 1,000**

**Young Male Homicides**

- **Park Mesa Heights’ rate second highest among comparison neighborhoods, after Compton**

**Police Presence**

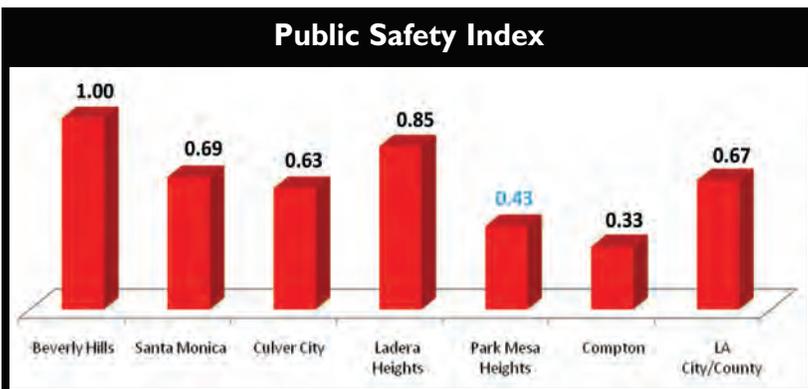
- **Police coverage per 1,000 residents: at 3.25, approaches Beverly Hills in ranking due to additional police coverage from Safe Passage Program**

Property crimes increased significantly while violent crime plunged in a neighborhood whose crime rate was once 250% of the city average in 2006. The increase in property crime rates is in line with expectations of behavior during periods of economic downturns.

**Neighborhoods@Work: Working on Safety**

**Goal:** Reduce crime, improve the perception of public safety and create safer neighborhood conditions.

- Established an award-winning partnership with residents, school staff, LAPD, the Sheriff’s Department, CHP, LA School Police, and a security firm to reduce truancy and create Safe Passage Program for Crenshaw HS students.



- Launched groundbreaking collaborative with the State of California, dedicating on-the-ground CHP & LAPD unit to control speeding and gunshots on Crenshaw Blvd.

- Neighborhoods@Work received three LAPD awards for significant reductions in crime, improved quality-of-life for residents, and enhanced police-community relations.

- Relative to index changes of other neighborhoods, the crime index declined by two points.

• However, in absolute terms, independent of other cities, safety outcomes improved by 20%, which means that residents are tangibly better off due to that 20% improvement – regardless of changes in outcomes in other neighborhoods like Beverly Hills.

- Despite significant improvements in crime, the index nevertheless declined because:
  - In terms of the index scores, violent crime declined by 42% in Beverly Hills versus a 32% decline in Park Mesa Heights. However, notably, this crime reduction of 32% occurred in a city with historical crime rates that outpace city averages by 250%. The significance of this reduction in crime has been recognized via awards from LAPD recognizing Neighborhoods@Work for contributing to efforts that led to significant reductions in crime, improved quality-of-life for residents, and enhanced police-community relations.
  - Additionally, the male homicide rate for Park Mesa Heights, although on half that of Compton, outpaces the rate for Beverly Hills significantly.

• Therefore, despite significant and measurable improvements in violent crime in Park Mesa Heights, the impact on the overall index score is diminished when compared to Beverly Hills where the level of violent crime is relatively negligible.

• Finally, research indicates that reported crimes increase when trust in law enforcement increases as a result of intervention initiatives like those employed by the Neighborhoods@Work Safety discipline.

Source: [http://www.responsetovictims.org/pdf/pdf/IG\\_repaginated\\_09\\_Final.pdf](http://www.responsetovictims.org/pdf/pdf/IG_repaginated_09_Final.pdf)

**Healthy Neighborhood Index™  
Housing Index**

*Park Mesa Heights' housing index sank by 9 points as housing prices plunged 50% and foreclosures increased, as the result of the severe economic downturn.*

<b>2005 Score: 0.52</b>	<b>2010 Score: 0.43</b>	<b>-9 Points</b>
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**Weighting: 12% of Overall Index**

Park Mesa Heights, hard-hit by the downturn, experienced a drastic decline in housing outcomes. Results would have been worse without community interventions by Neighborhoods@Work and community partners, as shown on p.32.

The recession-adjusted housing component score for Park Mesa Heights was nearly 9 points higher (0.52) than that estimated using the actual values (.43), indicating that the collapse of the housing market had a particularly negative and disproportionate influence on outcomes in Park Mesa Heights.

**Neighborhoods@Work:  
Working on Our Homes**

**Goal:** To maintain high homeownership rates and improve the financial health of residents.

- Increase financial stability via credit counseling, home buying education courses, financial literacy and foreclosure reduction programs.
- Neighborhoods@Work foreclosure avoidance workshops convene single lenders with small groups of homeowners for customized counseling. Attendees report 100% resolution of their issues.

**Housing Prices**

- Median home price \$251,000, down from \$559,000 in 2005

**Foreclosures**

- At 3.14%, Park Mesa Heights rate is nearly four times higher than Beverly Hills rate

**Housing Affordability**

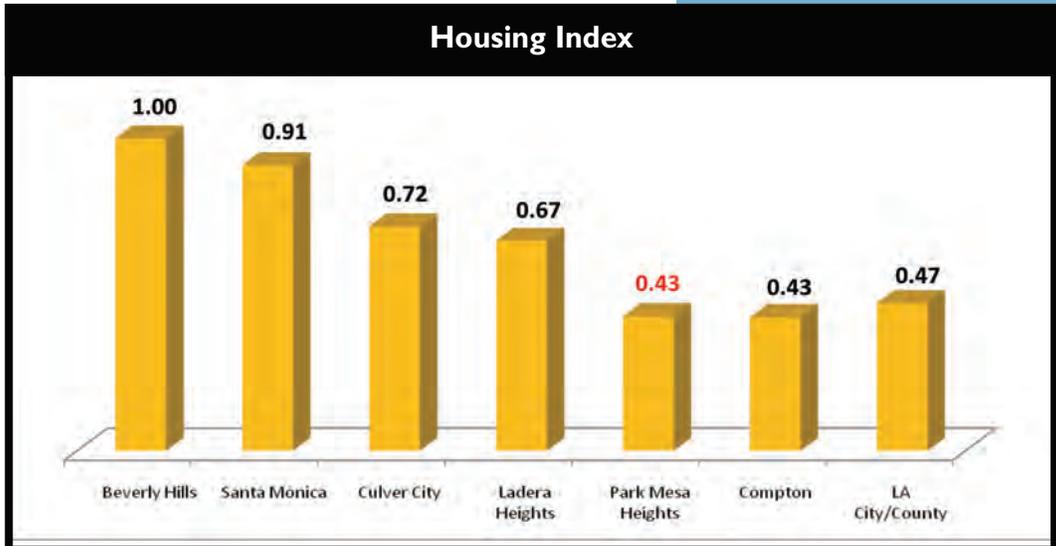
- 60.5% of renters pay over 30% of income on rent

**Home Ownership**

- Remains relatively high at 53.9%, higher than Beverly Hills or Santa Monica. Park Mesa Heights has more single family housing than those areas

*Relative to Beverly Hills, the housing index decreased by 9 points.*

*In absolute terms, independent of changes in Beverly Hills, outcomes deteriorated by 40%, the sharpest decline of all index scores.*



**Healthy Neighborhood Index™**  
**Civic Engagement Index**



- Over the study period, the Neighborhood Index score for civic engagement in Park Mesa Heights increased by 3 points relative to that in Beverly Hills – primarily due to increase in nonprofit organization spending by Neighborhoods@Work and partners.
- Other neighborhoods saw declines in nonprofit spending over the study period probably because of the decline in the economy negatively affected nonprofits’ ability to raise money and secure grants.
- Historic election of President Obama also drove higher voter registration and turnout.

<b>2005 Score: 0.67</b>	<b>2010 Score: 0.70</b>	<b>+3 Points</b>
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Weighting: 5% of Overall Index

**Voter Turnout**

- General election turnout approached 80%, partly due to the historic Barack Obama candidacy
- Turnout rate favorable versus comparison neighborhoods

**Nonprofit Density and Spending**

- Nonprofit spending up due to investment by Neighborhoods@Work and partners

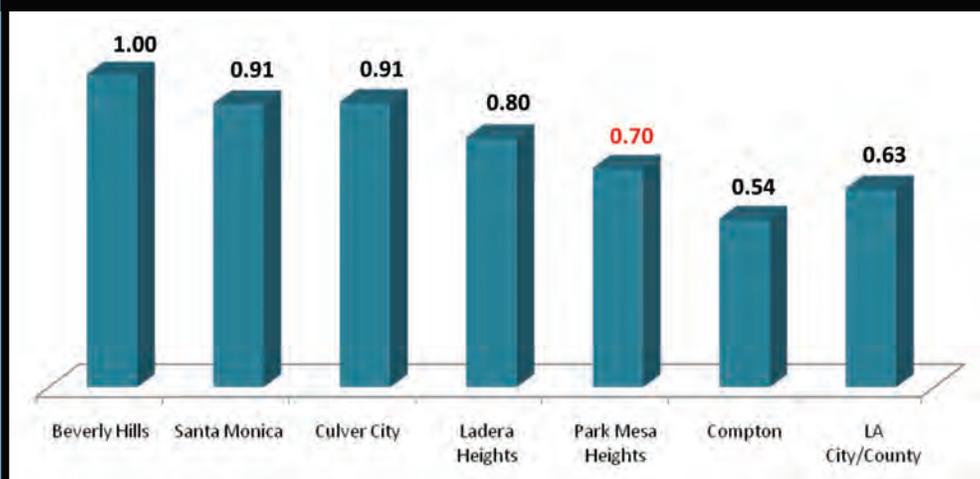
High voter registration and turnout increased the index. Nonprofit spending also increased, due to increased investment by Neighborhoods@Work and other community partners, despite an economic downturn that depressed spending by nonprofits.

**Neighborhoods@Work: Working on Collaboration**

**Goal:** To broaden Park Mesa Heights civic engagement via partnerships with schools, government, neighborhood councils, block clubs, business owners, clergy and stakeholders.

- Elicited direct feedback from nearly 3000 residents and over 1200 community surveys.
- Helped 1900 residents complete 2011 census forms.
- Telephone-based town halls with leaders like Mayor Villaraigosa and Police Chief Beck keep information and ideas flowing both ways

**Civic Engagement Index**



## Building Healthy Communities:

*Another Model of Neighborhood Change*

### *The California Endowment's Building Healthy Communities*

The California Endowment's Building Healthy Communities collaborative is another example of a solution at work. A 16-year-old, private, statewide health foundation, The Endowment's mission is to expand access to affordable, quality health care for underserved individuals and communities, and to promote fundamental improvements in the health status of all Californians.

This forward-thinking institution recently embarked upon an ambitious journey toward a solution to the problems plaguing neighborhoods across California. This journey began with the realization that place matters. What follows is a description of the Endowment's journey:

#### **A New Vision, a New Framework**

*After 14 years of disease-specific initiatives & thousands of grants to organizations across the state, The California Endowment had the following realizations:*

- They were not completely satisfied with the impact of those investments.
- Once funding for projects ended, it was difficult to sustain gains and improvements over the long-term.
- Many factors — socioeconomic, environmental, and cultural — impact the health of a community.
- A range of factors must be addressed, permanently, to effect improvements.
- They began the task of rigorously reviewing our past in order to shape the strategic direction and priorities of our future.

#### **Defining a 'Healthy Community' — A Safe Place**

*At the height of our planning and analyzing we decided that we really needed a dose of authentic voices —from folks who are struggling on a daily basis with the realities of life in an underserved community.*

A conversation was arranged through Carla Sanger, executive director of LA's BEST, with a group of mostly Latino parents to learn what they needed for their children to be healthy and to combat barriers to optimal health for their kids.

- They heard that: The local park was overrun by dangerous activities,
- the streets were unsafe for the kids to play and get exercise,
- city programs were beginning to charge fees for summer activities that were once free,
- and graffiti was abundant and a draw for gang activity.

#### **'A Place Where Bullets Don't Fly'**

*Youth Uprising in Oakland produced a video entitled "What Is a Healthy Community?" providing an opportunity for adolescents, mostly African-American, to offer their thoughts about what a healthy community means to them.*

- Several youth described a healthy community as a place where bullets don't fly, and where their friends are not buried prematurely.
- Others discussed the sheer lack of positive activities for young people.
- A young lady described the preponderance of liquor-deli stores in the community, where healthy foods are impossible to find.

*As shown in the preceding analysis, Neighborhoods@Work is a place-based neighborhood change solution that is beginning to make positive impact on Park Mesa Heights outcomes. The early progress indicates the potential effectiveness of place-based strategies that bring an array of holistic, purposeful programs to bear on the issues of a community within a defined geographic area.*

*The California Endowment has developed another example of a place-based strategy that is at work on a statewide level across 14 California communities. Building Healthy Communities is a place-based change initiative in action.*

## Building Healthy Communities: 'Place' Matters: A Realization and a Solution

"...health doesn't begin  
in a doctor's office."

— Dr. Robert K. Ross,  
California Endowment

### The biggest realization:

Where we live, work, learn and play has a profound impact on our health. This is about more than improving health insurance coverage or increasing the numbers of doctor visits – it is about all of the factors that are interconnected and affect our health. What surrounds us shapes us, and if we are living in unhealthy surroundings, our health will reflect that.

- availability of healthy foods in those places
- recreation for kids & families
- air quality
- safety
- access to parks
- transportation

**The solution:** The California Endowment's 10-year, multi-million dollar plan to improve health in 14 underserved, geographically and ethnically diverse communities throughout California. Youth and adult residents, leaders, organizations, schools, business, health care, law enforcement and other sectors in each of these communities are working together—something that has not happened before—to take a holistic approach to improve both community and individual health. The ultimate goal: building communities where children are healthy, safe and ready to learn.

**The 14 Communities:** The California Endowment ultimately selected a range of communities reflecting California's diversity: **Boyle Heights, Central Santa Ana, Central/Southeast/Southwest Fresno, City Heights, Del Norte County and Adjacent Tribal Lands, Eastern Coachella Valley, East Oakland, East Salinas (Alisal), Long Beach, Richmond, Sacramento, South Kern, South Los Angeles, and Southwest Merced/East Merced County.**

**The Goals:** Each of the 14 communities was presented with 10 groundbreaking outcomes—or goals—that have been identified as the main ingredients of community health.

Local residents are equipped and empowered to change local public policies that are contributing to the poor health of the community.

**One example:** Multiple liquor stores often lead to increased crime, reduced child safety, and higher rates of alcoholism and other costly but preventable health conditions.

Through Building Healthy Communities, The California Endowment makes grants so communities are activated to change the systems and policies that are contributing to their poor health.

### The Beginning of 'Better'

#### Building Healthy Communities is driven by two forces:

1. The realization that we must hold ourselves accountable for doing better on behalf of the young people and parents described above—and many more just like them.
2. We are moved and inspired by the community leaders and organizations that are demonstrating "hope in action" for children and young people in impoverished communities across our state.



*The State of Black Los Angeles Racial Equality Index and the Healthy Neighborhood Index™ both clearly illustrate problems... and promise. Models like Neighborhoods@Work and Building Healthy Communities show us that neighborhood change is working. However, there is much work to be done.*

**The Advocacy in Action Agenda** is the first step in improving the quality of life and securing the future of each and every individual life behind the statistics in this report.

## **Advocacy in Action Agenda**

### **Economics**

- Create economic development collaboratives of corporate and nonprofit employers, employment and training service providers, small businesses, government, housing developers/investors, and residents to stimulate economic development and reduce unemployment.
- Promote development of “livable wage” jobs in the regional economy in industries such as transportation, green jobs, health care, construction, multimedia, and security.
- Stimulate housing and economic development via workforce housing, transit-oriented development, and commercial revitalization.
- Expand state and local contracting opportunities and mandate local/minority hiring on public projects such as the Crenshaw/LAX Transit Corridor project in South Los Angeles.

### **Education**

- Build education reform-focused collaborative of school districts, residents, schools, community partners, corporations, and foundations to expand early childhood educational options, extend learning opportunities (i.e., Saturday School), and align teaching strategies and dropout prevention across families of schools.
- Engage and empower parents to access resources, understand child development, and advocate for their children.
- Improve college admissions rates by emphasizing an “A-G” core college preparatory curriculum required for UC/CSU admission. Advocate for a more holistic approach to admissions to public state institutions.
- Devise strategies to increase community college and four-year college completion rates.
- Develop culturally relevant arts programming to enhance learning and socio-emotional well-being.
- Reintroduce relevant vocational curricula.
- Bring community resources to bear on improving outcomes for foster children.

“The young children in our care deserve more than hope. They deserve reserved seats in the great halls of learning.”

—Gisselle Acevedo, *President & CEO, Para Los Niños*



“Good things happen when good people work together to educate children. Graduation rates go up. The academic performance index goes up. Crenshaw High School is a marvelous example.”

— Beverly Ryder, *Executive Director, Greater Crenshaw Educational Partnership, Inc.*

## The Advocacy in Action Agenda

### Safety

- Expand community-wide strategic alliances to engage in public safety efforts such as community-oriented policing, student safe passage programs, mentorship, and faith-based youth activities.
- Collaborate with law enforcement to promote restorative justice and pilot holistic approaches to crime prevention and alternative sentencing, such as Juvenile Assessment Centers for first-time offenders, a Community Court, and a Teen Court.
- Eliminate or reduce racially-based sentencing disparities. Develop a system for tracking judges' records on harsh sentencing and hold them accountable through elections.
- Create opportunities and reduce recidivism by creating successful reentry for parolees: provide employment, record expungement, and family support services. Champion vocational training during incarceration.

### Health

- Establish, strengthen, and leverage linkages among families, health providers, schools, and other community institutions to improve health outcomes.
- Develop legislation and community-level programs to address critical health issues, including obesity and related chronic diseases (hypertension, heart disease/stroke), cancer, HIV/AIDS, and infant mortality.
- Improve access to health insurance and increase the number of health clinics in the community and in public schools.
- Disseminate culturally relevant health information to the community.
- Develop community infrastructure – parks, green spaces, farmers' markets and grocery stores – to improve health and fitness outcomes.

### Housing

- Collaborate with lending institutions, residents, community-based advocacy organizations, government and community partners on neighborhood housing strategies such as inclusionary zoning, mixed-use development, mixed-income housing, new credit and housing options, and housing unit purchase programs for public housing residents.
- Support homeownership via first-time homebuyer education, down payment assistance programs, and financial literacy /mortgage training.
- Address the foreclosure crisis by coordinating efforts of foreclosure prevention agencies, developing individualized counseling in place of "cattle call" foreclosure counseling, increasing the effectiveness of loan modifications, and tracking the long-term resolution of loan defaults. Advocate for improved bank foreclosure and loan modification policies.
- Assess the feasibility of a Crenshaw Housing Trust Fund that would direct investment toward the creation or rehabilitation of housing for families.
- Strengthen renter assistance programs. Use housing bond funds to build affordable rental housing units statewide and create more security deposit assistance programs for low-income renters.

### Civic Engagement

- Foster connections among residents by strengthening participation in neighborhood councils, block clubs, and other neighborhood engagement tools. Leverage technologies such as social networking tools and Tele-Town Hall forums.
- Empower communities to devise strategic organizing, electoral engagement, and public policy advocacy campaigns to hold decision makers accountable to the needs of disadvantaged communities.

## The Advocacy in Action Agenda

Our action agenda does not end here.  
Our top priorities over the next five years:

### Double the Rate of Progress in the Racial Equality Index

- Double the rate of improvement in conditions for Black Angelenos for a minimum 6-point improvement in the Racial Equality Index

Over the last five years, the State of Black Los Angeles Racial Equality Index shows a gain of three points. The century that it would take to close the equality gap between African-American Angelenos and Angelenos of other races is too long by decades.

We must deepen our efforts to improve employment, housing, and educational opportunities and preparedness. Black, Latino and other organizations must strategize together to create safer and healthier neighborhoods of engaged, connected neighbors. We must work through differences in the agendas of individual communities – and organizations – to achieve the agenda of a stronger Los Angeles not for only a few – but for all.

In the words of Cesar Chavez, "You are never strong enough that you don't need help."

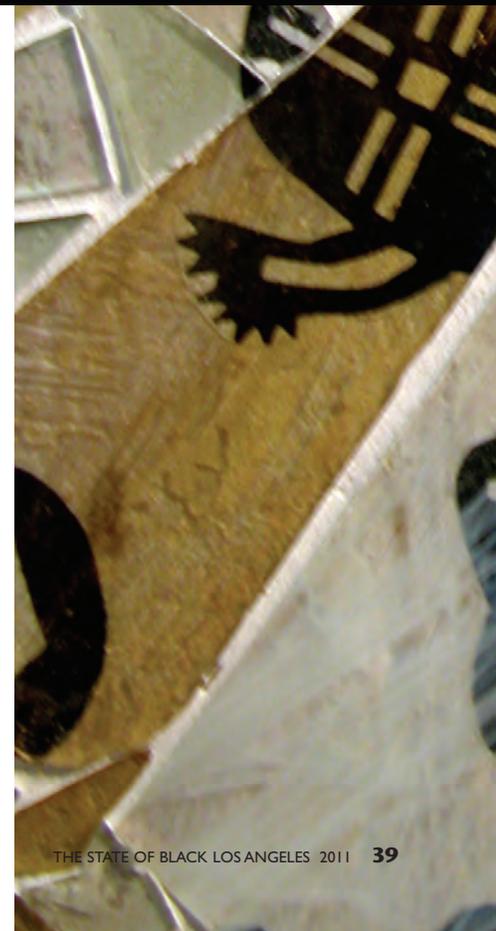
**“A change is needed... a profound change.” — Blair H. Taylor**

### Continue to Achieve Results and Expand Successful Neighborhood Models

- Achieve a 5 to 7-point improvement in the Healthy Neighborhood Index for Park Mesa Heights.
- Aggressively nurture and expand neighborhood change models locally and nationally.

As the Healthy Neighborhood Index shows, Park Mesa Heights averted a decline in its overall outcomes – even as a debilitating recession engulfs the nation and disproportionately impacts African-American neighborhoods. Neighborhoods@Work will continue to transform outcomes in Park Mesa Heights – and will march forward into the last bastions of African-American populations in this city. It will also leverage alliances with partners, including members of the 100-affiliate Urban League network, to transform neighborhoods beyond our city and beyond our state.

Building Healthy Communities is on its way toward statewide transformation, neighborhood by neighborhood. The communities participating in this active model are setting their own priorities. They are working to change local public policies that are detrimental to community health, to open school grounds for neighborhood use, to increase access to affordable fresh food, to make streets safer for walking and biking, to adopt smart growth policies through zoning, and more.



## The Advocacy in Action Agenda

“Change that is temporary is no change at all; it’s like a ripple on the water. To get change that lasts, we have to work together.”

— Theodore Thomas,  
Chair, Park Mesa Heights  
Neighborhood Council

Place-based neighborhood change is working. And it works best when it works for many. The neighborhood change models – and tools like the Healthy Neighborhood Index™ – are freely offered for use by other communities nationwide, in the pursuit of systemic and sustainable change.

### Focus on the African-American Male

- Place an intensified, intentional focus on the African-American male, who is at the bottom of every statistical category – and at the nexus of the challenges faced by Black Los Angeles.



“When we say a change is needed to address the crisis of the Black male, we mean a profound change,” said Los Angeles Urban League President and CEO Blair Taylor. “The long-range health of the community as a whole depends on it.”

Thankfully, the work is underway. Organizations like the California Community Foundation, The California Endowment, and others are teaming to tackle the issues of young men and boys of color. Academic achievement, safe living environments, and socio-emotional support are a few of the critical focus areas. The Los Angeles Urban League and partners are in the planning stages of an initiative that will focus on young Black males in the Crenshaw Corridor, the region’s largest concentration of African-Americans. A pilot summer institute, partially housed at Crenshaw High School, will provide a rigorous academic curriculum, mentoring, counseling, cultural enrichment, and more.



**“MANY BLACK MEN AND BOYS IN LOS ANGELES HAVE NOT KNOWN WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO BE VALUED, WELCOMED AND NURTURED. IT’S TIME THEY DID.”**

—DR. FRANKLIN GILLIAM, JR., DEAN, SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, UCLA

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Q. What is the Healthy Neighborhood Index™?

**A.** A healthy neighborhood has access to good jobs, attractive housing, competitive schools, green parks, a safe environment, and healthy, active residents. The Index is a breakthrough tool that measures outcomes in six “disciplines:” health, housing, economics, safety, education, and civic engagement, using objective data organized in an at-a-glance format.

### Q. How does it work?

**A.** Our Healthy Neighborhood Index™ uses the same methods as the Equality Index originally created to measure racial equality for the United Way and the Los Angeles Urban League’s 2005 State of Black Los Angeles report. Both indexes take huge amounts of data and condense it into a series of scores to help you track changes over time. The Healthy Neighborhood Index™, however, measures equalities and inequalities *within a specific geographic area and compares them to other neighborhoods.*

### Q. How was it developed?

**A.** The Healthy Neighborhood Index™ is based on the Racial Equality Index. Global Insight Inc., a respected international consulting firm, developed the Racial Equality Index by collecting and reporting data on six disciplines. Community stakeholders helped decide how to weight the issues.

### Q. What are the different ways to use this index?

**A.** If you are just getting started with neighborhood change, the Index can give you a clear, fact-based, initial snapshot of how your neighborhood is doing in the key discipline areas. If you’re already working on change, the Index can help you chart your progress, keeping you informed and on target. It can help to set your priorities, direct resources, and guide your expansion efforts.

### Q. How do we gather data for our own Healthy Neighborhood Index™? Is it necessary to work with a university partner or research team?

**A.** Much of the data you will need is public information, but it’s helpful to partner with a university for easier access to data and for quality of analysis. You may also contract with independent researchers or partner with a university or college to design courses in which students collect and analyze data.

### Q. Is your tool available in a working template for download?

**A.** Information on the types of data used in the Los Angeles Urban League Healthy Neighborhood Index™ is available in the full version of the report, at [www.LAUL.org](http://www.LAUL.org).

### Q. Is it necessary to gather data on a range of communities, for purposes of comparison?

**A.** To get the relative comparison needed for the index, you’ll need data from at least one benchmark community. For Park Mesa Heights, that community was Beverly Hills. Additionally, gathering data on additional communities provides deeper insight into your standing versus other neighborhoods. Your own neighborhood’s numbers are best understood against a backdrop of familiar neighborhoods.

### Q. Why is Beverly Hills the 1.0 standard against which Park Mesa Heights is measured? Is Beverly Hills considered the “ideal” neighborhood?

**A.** Since Beverly Hills outperformed all other neighborhoods on virtually every aspect of the Healthy Neighborhood Index™, it is a useful benchmark against which Park Mesa Heights can be measured. However, it is not necessarily the “ideal” neighborhood. Each neighborhood has its unique strengths. For example, Park Mesa Heights has cultural diversity, community pride and engaged neighbors.

### Q. How can we engage our community in a dialogue on Healthy Neighborhood Index™ results?

**A.** You can present the results at larger community forums, or via interactive breakout or focus groups. Social networking tools, webinars, and blogs also will generate “buzz” and stimulate discussion.

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# REFERENCES

## Selected References

The L.A. Racial Equality Index was prepared by Global Insight, Inc. using the same procedures as in the National Urban League State of Black America 2005, but with data for Los Angeles County. The Global Insight complete report and all data used in the L.A. Equality Index are available in The State of Black Los Angeles Full Report at [www.laul.org](http://www.laul.org).

Various local and state data sets ranging from 2006-2010 and research studies were also used in the report.

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### **The Nielsen Company data:**

Source: Nielsen segmentation provides the link between the geographic concentration of African-Americans and consumer behavior as observed through primary research. Segments are appended to the research respondents using the same characteristics that define the segments on the ground. These research studies, while national in scope, were projected to Los Angeles County based on the distribution of the segments within the county and their behavioral norms within the research studies.

As such, the behavioral data and segment demographics are not strictly drawn from within Los Angeles County, but rather are the projection of national norms as observed in the GfK MRI and Nielsen Convergence Audit surveys, into the census tracts and block groups identified as having above average concentration of African-Americans in Los Angeles County. Source: The Nielsen Company and GfK MRI, part of The GfK Group.



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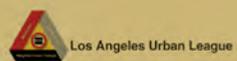
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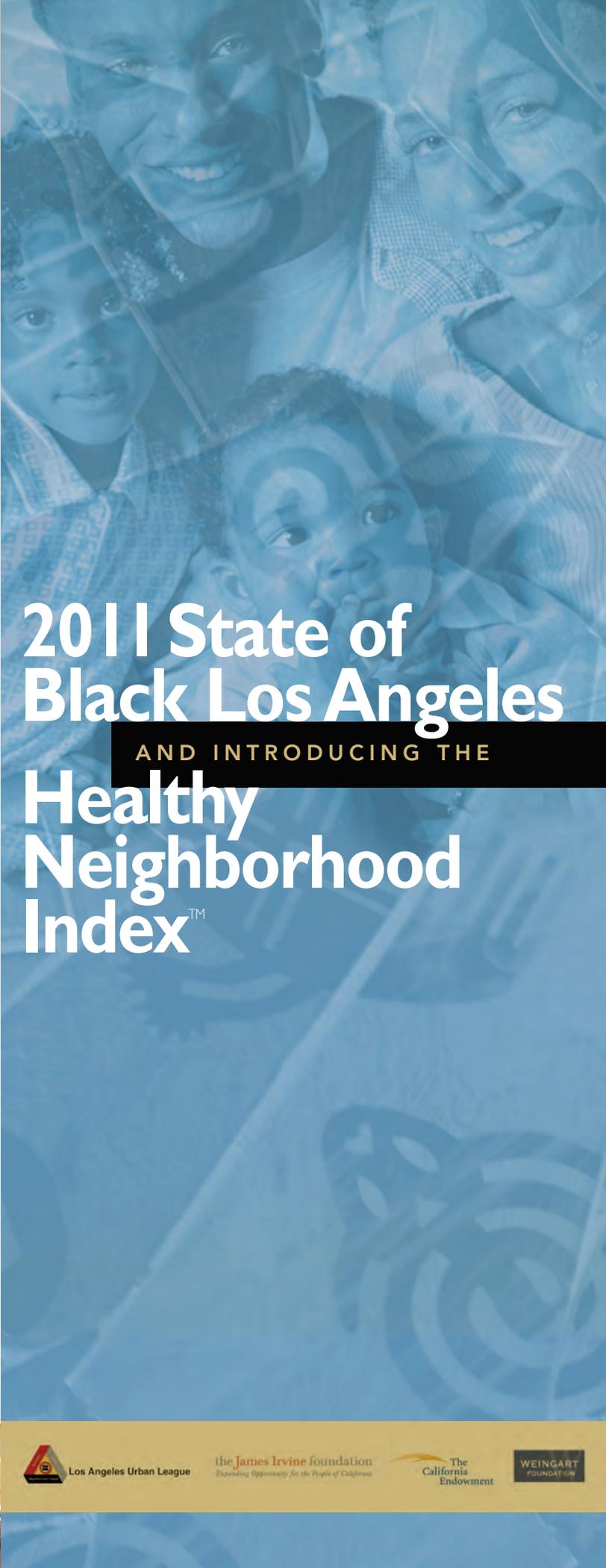




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