

African American Leadership Alliance: New study compares African American well-being in Milwaukee to other cities, reveals opportunities for positive change

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Milwaukee, WI (July 24, 2020) – The African American Leadership Alliance of Milwaukee (AALAM) today announced the results of a new study that measures the overall well-being of the city's Black community. The study reveals key catalytic areas where there is opportunity to drive positive systemic and structural change.

The AALAM/UWMCED Index of African American Well-Being in the Nation's Largest Metropolitan Areas, presents a systematic compilation of where Black Milwaukee ranks compared to the nation's 50 largest metropolitan areas on 30 indicators of community well being, including employment, community health, social and economic conditions, education, and conditions for youth and children. Sponsored by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, the study was published by Dr. Marc Levine, Professor Emeritus and Founding Director of UW-Milwaukee Center for Economic Development.

While the study found that Milwaukee's Black population lags far behind other major metropolitan cities, the history of redlining, exclusionary zoning and discriminatory lending practices has undeniably contributed to some of the largest racial disparities that impact the well-being of African Americans in Milwaukee. Despite these systemic factors, the preliminary analysis suggests that reducing racial segregation; enhancing Black educational attainment; and increasing the numbers of Black executives and managers at Milwaukee companies could be critical drivers

to improving overall community well-being.

“In examination of these statistics, the report shows that Black Milwaukee consistently ranked last or in the bottom ten among the 50 metro areas studied in the composite index,” explained Levine. “Although, the results are devastating, there are certain potential drivers that have a reasonably strong association with the index values: economic leadership (Blacks holding management and top executive posts associated with better outcomes); metropolitan area residential segregation (high segregation is associated with poor outcomes); and the educational attainment of African Americans in the metro area (fewer high school dropouts and more college graduates associated with better outcomes). By having an intentional focus on these potential drivers, it could lessen the gap between Milwaukee and the average top-ranking metros in the country that will help make major strides toward racial equity.

Despite the sobering reality of Black Milwaukee, AALAM sees opportunity to change the narrative and take on the challenge to help improve these indicators. AALAM will own this data, monitor the progress of these well-being indicators and share the results with the broader community annually.

“AALAM is proud to be a part of this important research,” AALAM Board Chair, Antonio Riley, said. “We are uniquely positioned to concentrate on advancing African American leadership as its mission to produce socio-economic change for the Black community.”

“We are truly invested in and committed to making Milwaukee a global destination where African Americans are thriving, instead of surviving. In the current political and social environment, we believe now, more than ever, that AALAM must create sustainable, system-wide change across our city and region,” Riley said passionately.

With a new President/CEO in place by September, AALAM will accelerate its high leverage strategies that will seek to increase and retain the number of African Americans in leadership roles in the private, non-profit and public sectors. AALAM plans to take on the role as the convener to connect human resource recruiters and professionals to African American talent in our community, with the support of its strong coalition of more than 200 cross-sector Black leaders and allies.

To improve better business outcomes, AALAM will work with strategic partners like

the Greater Milwaukee Foundation and Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce to gain broad-based commitment and investment from local CEO's to increase a thriving pool of diverse and talented African American leaders.

AALAM will also continue to deliver its premier African American Leadership Program, offering career pathway programming to develop high-performing African American leaders, which has a proven track record of success over the past 10 years.

For more information about The AALAM/UWMCED Index of African American Well-Being in the Nation's Largest Metropolitan Areas or to download the complete report, you may find it on the following sites:

- AALAM: <https://www.aalamilwaukee.org>
- Greater Milwaukee Foundation: www.gretermilwaukeefoundation.org
- UW-Milwaukee Center for Economic Development:
https://dc.uwm.edu/ced_pubs/57/

Please visit AALAM's YouTube channel, to watch the Q&A interview with Dr. Marc Levine to learn more about the opportunities and challenges of the African American Well-Being Index results.