

EXISTING ECONOMIC MOBILITY COMMUNITY ASSESSMENTS

A Tale of Two Markets: Equitable Housing Platform for Cuyahoga County

The Equitable Housing Platform for Cuyahoga County highlights the strong connection between economic instability and housing instability in the area, as discussed in A Tale of Two Markets. A primary platform objective is to promote greater economic mobility. The platform recognizes that investing in fair and just housing has the potential to combat poverty and racism. Typically, renters earn wages, while homeowners earn salaries. Renters, especially Black residents, are more likely to struggle with the cost of housing, leading to economic instability. Additionally, there are obstacles that hinder non-White residents from owning homes, contributing to the disproportionate accumulation of wealth across the County. As the saying goes, "Housing is something that affects everybody. It is one of the few ways the average joe can build wealth. Just go to work and your home appreciates."

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Cuyahoga County Housing Stakeholder Group Member in A Tale of Two Markets: Equitable Housing Platform for Cuyahoga County



Cuyahoga County Nonprofit Landscape Assessment 2022

The Funders Collaborative on COVID Recovery commissioned the Cuyahoga County Nonprofit Landscape Assessment to gain insights into the nonprofit sector and identify opportunities for post-pandemic support. The assessment analyzed 10 industries within the nonprofit sector and revealed that the average nonprofit employee's salary is below a livable wage, and almost half of all nonprofits have less than three months of financial reserves. Industry-specific findings included reports on Community and Economic Development organizations, Early Childhood workers, Basic Needs and Emergency Services organizations, and Workforce Development organizations.

Community and Economic Development organizations are financially stable, with four times the sector average in government grants and a lower reliance on foundation funding. These organizations are also more racially representative of the population they serve, with 60% of their leadership teams and 52% of staff identifying as BIPOC.

The salaries of Early Childhood workers in Cuyahoga County are nearly 30% lower than the median wages of nonprofit workers in the county. Full-time Early Childhood workers earn only \$7.55 per hour, which is nearly 20% less than Ohio's minimum wage of \$9.30. As a result, many Early Childhood workers likely have part-time jobs and frequently switch jobs to make ends meet. These low wages disproportionately affect women, who make up 94% of the workforce, with 15% being Black women and 21% being Hispanic women.

Basic Needs and Emergency Services organizations in Cuyahoga County are typically small, with nearly 20% more likely to be smaller compared to the overall nonprofit sector. These organizations often have revenues under \$200,000 and are run by only 1-2 staff members. In terms of Workforce Development, only 51 nonprofit organizations focus primarily on this area in Cuyahoga County, with only a few focused on Job Counseling and Job Training. This is concerning because prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Cleveland had the second-highest poverty rate for working-age adults in the US. The full economic impact of the pandemic

Basic Needs and Emergency Services

Data suggests these organizations have a ratio of nearly 68 volunteers to every 1 staff member, suggesting a majority are operating as almost fully volunteer-led and/or donation-based organizations. Meanwhile, Cleveland, the main metropolitan area in Cuyahoga County, has the highest child poverty rate, the second highest working age adult poverty rate, and the third highest older adult poverty rate in the Country — three statistics indicating the need for basic needs is likely large and complex. Overall, the median expenses reported for Basic and Emergency Needs organizations are 47% lower than the median expense for all nonprofits in Cuyahoga County — illustrating how under-resourced these organizations are.

Cuyahoga County Nonprofit Landscape Assessment 2022

remains uncertain, but it is likely that the working-age adult poverty rate in Greater Cleveland has increased due to significant inflation. Additionally, recent data from another Northeast Ohio study indicates that the workforce is rapidly changing, with over 400,000 people quitting their jobs, nearly 482,000 people needing training to advance, and over 76,000 retiring earlier than expected. As the economy and inflation fluctuate, employment vacancies continue to be a challenge. There is an urgent need to increase the availability of programs that prepare working-age adults living in poverty for career pathways with financial success.

Team NEO's Aligning Opportunities in the Northeast Ohio Region 2022

The Aligning Opportunities report by Team NEO provides data-driven insights into the talent demand/supply gap in our region. Recently, Intel announced a \$20 billion investment creating over 20,000 jobs in the state, while Ford intends to add 2,000 new jobs in Lorain County focused on electric vehicle production, and Ultium Cells LLC is ramping up production at one of the world's largest electric battery facilities in the Mahoning Valley. Despite these developments, there is still a mismatch between talent supply and demand in the region, with demand outpacing supply. The pandemic has exacerbated this situation, especially in high-performing industries like health care, manufacturing, and IT, where occupations cut across multiple industries. The need for a diverse talent base has become increasingly important. Addressing labor force participation as a community will be crucial moving forward. While population and labor force declines have impacted our competitiveness over the last two decades, labor force participation is only down by 1%, and unemployment is slightly lower. Higher education still offers opportunities to increase one's quality of life and long-term earnings potential, with postsecondary degrees in demand, although employers are also valuing skills. STEM careers offer higher wages than non-STEM occupations and are projected to grow. Team NEO is promoting a talent development strategy that includes on-the-job training, certifications, associate's and two-year pathways. Only 17% of jobs in the region offer a living wage for two adults and two kids (\$72,571), while 70% offer a self-sustaining wage (\$32,531). Prosperity, as measured by family-sustaining wages, is a key metric in a vibrant economy.

Team NEO's Lost Opportunities & Misaligned Opportunities

The wage gap has a disproportionate impact on women's ability to repay student loans, particularly for minority women, which affects their loan repayment timeline. The American Association of University Women (AAUW) reports that women hold two-thirds of the total student debt, with women graduating with an average of nearly \$22,000 in debt, compared to \$18,880 for men. Black women, in particular, graduate with an average of \$37,558 in student debt. The burden of student loan debt is particularly challenging for Black graduates, leading to limited professional growth, reduced workforce opportunities and negative impacts on the economy, such as delayed home purchases and marriages.