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Dani Carlson
Director of Communications
216-282-4583
dcarlson@communitysolutions.com

In Cuyahoga County, poverty disproportionately impacts people of color

Black people were more than three times as likely to live below poverty as white people

CLEVELAND, OH – New analysis by The Center for Community Solutions shows that in nearly every economic measure, people of color fare worse than their white counterparts in Cuyahoga County.

About 1 in 5 Cuyahoga County residents live in poverty, but poverty is not distributed equally among race/ethnicities. Not only are Black people in Cuyahoga County more than three times as likely to live in poverty than whites, the median income for white residents is also 2.1 times that of Black residents. That means that on average, Black workers earn just \$0.46 for every dollar that a white worker earns in our region.

“The earning disparity between white and Black households is only growing,” said Associate Director Emily Campbell who is the author of the report. “In 2010, white households made about \$6,000 more than their Black counterparts, today that disparity has grown by nearly 80 percent to a nearly \$10,500 difference today.”

Community Solutions also learned that the unemployment rate for Latino or Hispanic workers in Cuyahoga County is about twice as high as that of non-Hispanic white workers, and Black workers are three times more likely than their white peers to report being unemployed but actively looking for work. People of color in Cuyahoga County were almost twice as likely to have needed help with finding a job in the past 2 years. Close to 30 percent of Latino or Hispanic residents and 18 percent of Black residents faced serious problems with the cost of transportation to get to work or school, which could mean people of color have greater difficulty accessing opportunities which could help them climb out of poverty.

The information for this piece came from an analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau and a survey performed by Community Solutions in partnership with The Council for Economic Opportunities in Greater Cleveland (CEOGC) to learn new information about the challenges poor people face directly from the low-income residents themselves. More than half of the 434 people surveyed reported household income of less than \$25,000. This is the fourth in a series of reports we have published about the survey.

In order to eliminate or reduce racial disparities in poverty and related issues, more intentional responses will be required from government, funders and service providers.

For more information about the study, please visit CommSols.com/PovertySpeaks. To speak with Campbell please contact Dani Carlson at dcarlson@communitysolutions.com.