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NOVEMBER 10, 2003

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Economic and Social Parity Possible in 200 years

Gaps in Quality of Life Persist for Metropolitan Chicagoans

While the quality of life for everyone in the six-country metropolitan area improved and gaps narrowed during the period of unprecedented economic prosperity of the past decade, the gaps between minority communities and white communities endured, and in some cases are growing. Income and other gaps closed by about 5 percent during the 1990s, a rate by which we can expect the gaps to be eradicated in another 200 years. More than one hundred years after Jane Addams mapped Chicago areas of race and class distress, the Human Relations Foundation/Jane Addams Policy Initiative, a program of Jane Addams Hull House Association, releases “*Minding the Gap: An Assessment of Racial Disparity in Metropolitan Chicago*”. *Minding the Gap* specifically looks at seven different quality of life indicators: Income, Employment & Wealth; Education; Housing; Transportation; Health; Crime, Law Enforcement & the Justice System and the State of Children.

“Fourteen years ago, a report was released examining human relations in Chicago that told us racism was alive and well,” stated Clarence Wood, President and CEO of Jane Addams Hull House Association. “Over the years, we have seen racial disparity impacted by a growing economic gap that has left many behind. The information in this report will help us create more effective, sustainable solutions by allowing us to deal with systemic barriers.”

“It is critical that we establish a floor under which no Chicagoan will fall.”

Minding the Gap will be released on Wednesday, November 12th at 9:30am at the Chicago Athletic Association, before an audience of over one hundred business, non-profit, education, religious and government leaders. The report is not meant to be used as an authoritative document, and contains no recommendations. Rather, the release of the report is just the first step in a process of managed community engagement involving a series of public forums, dialogue projects and workgroups convened to develop an action agenda.

Research for *Minding the Gap* was undertaken by Loyola University’s Center for Urban Research and Learning. Most data was gathered from a variety of existing sources from 1990-2000, relying heavily on the most recent U.S. Census account.



Closing the Gap to Create a Just and Equal Society

Where Are the Gaps?

Income, Wealth & Employment

The gap between high and low-income households in the region increased 11% between 1999 and 2000, the first rise in 7 years. For every \$1 earned in 2000 by a low-income household in the Chicago region, a high-income household earned \$3.86. Nationally, this ratio was \$1 to \$3.75.

Education

Students of color are less likely than White students to meet or exceed state standards on achievement tests. The students with the lowest scores live in the city of Chicago and in school districts with median household incomes below \$35,000 annually.

Health

- According to the city of Chicago's office on HIV/AIDS surveillance, the AIDS rate among all Chicago women nearly tripled in the last decade, with women of color accounting for 85% of all female AIDS cases.
- In Illinois, Latinos have the highest rate of non-elderly uninsured, 29%, followed by Blacks at 24%, Asian/Pacific Islander/Native American at 17%. For the White population, the rate is 10%.

Housing

Homeownership rates increased for all races. Homes owned by African Americans and Latinos are on average worth less than the homes of Whites and Asian Americans.

Welfare & Health of Children

- Between 1985 and 1995, the child poverty rate decreased for all racial groups in Illinois. However, there is a large gap in poverty between White children, and Black and Latino children.
- Chicago has one of the highest lead poisoning rates in the country. Non-Latino Black children have the highest rates of lead poisoning and the lowest rates of lead exposure testing. Neighborhoods with the highest rates are generally in the West and South areas of the city where the housing stock is older and often poorly maintained.

Crime, Law Enforcement & Justice

- African Americans are less likely to use drugs than Whites or Latinos. There is a gap between the number of African Americans who are convicted of drug possession or drug delivery and sentenced to prison, and the number of Whites and Latinos who are convicted of the same crime who get probation.
- Despite this higher drug use by White Illinois teens, African American youth who make up 15.3% of Illinois's youth population, are 59% of youth arrested for drug crimes, 85.5% of youth automatically transferred to adult court, 88% of youth imprisoned for drug crimes, and 91% of youth admitted to state prison.

Transportation

Suburban sprawl and traffic congestion impact all residents, but they particularly affect residents of the south suburbs. South suburban residents experienced increases in average commute times more than double that of other communities between 1990-2000 due, in part, to the fact that many jobs have moved to the northwest suburbs.