

National Urban League: The State of Black America

The State of Black America, the National Urban League's seminal annual publication now in its 41st edition, has become one of the most highly-anticipated benchmarks and sources for thought leadership around racial equality in America across economics, employment, education, health, housing, criminal justice and civic participation. Each edition of the *State of Black America* contains thoughtful commentary and insightful analysis from leading figures and thought leaders in politics, the corporate arena, NGOs, academia and popular culture. The *State of Black America* also includes the National Equality Index™, a quantitative tool for tracking racial equality in America, now in its 13th edition of the Black-White Index and its eighth edition of the Hispanic-White Index. This year's report features the fourth edition of the Metropolitan Area Equality Index, ranking roughly 70 metro areas based on unemployment and income inequality for both Blacks and Hispanics.

New to the 2017 *State of Black America* is the "Solutions Circle," a special feature that shines a well-deserved spotlight on the innovative, solutions-oriented programming offered by select National Urban League affiliates. Visit www.stateofblackamerica.org to access and experience all that the 2017 *State of Black America* has to offer, including complete data sets and expert analysis for the 2017 National Equality Index; full city lists of the Black-White and Hispanic-White Metropolitan Area Equality Index rankings for unemployment and income; ready-for-download versions of the *Main Street Marshall Plan* and the Executive Summary; complete essays from our guest contributors and Solutions Circle authors; as well as additional data, report findings and press materials.

The *Main Street Marshall Plan* is a strategic investment in America's urban communities that protects progress. From universal early childhood education to a comprehensive urban infrastructure initiative, the *Main Street Marshall Plan* is a sweeping and decisive solution to the nation's persistent social and economic disparities. The plan would protect NUL progress to increase federal funding for public schools, with a focus on equity to eliminate resource gaps; expand the ESSA pre-K program, so that every child has access to a high-quality, full-day pre-K program; double the nation's investment in the Pell Grant program to expand the number of students receiving funding, and increase the maximum Pell Grant award; enact a federal living wage of \$15 per hour, indexing wages to inflation; create a new Main Street Small and Micro-Business Financing Plan; expand summer youth employment programs; expand financial literacy, homebuyer education and counseling, and broaden access to low-income housing rental assistance; make the New Market Tax Credits Program permanent; fully fund the Medicaid, Medicare and Children's Health Insurance Program, and prevent a switch to block grants; protect the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the Emergency Food Assistance Program, the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, The National

School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program and the Summer Food Service Program; incentivize more doctors to accept Medicaid, particularly in states with a high percentage of Medicaid recipients and a lower percentage of doctors who accept Medicaid While the Obama years were no panacea for America's long-standing racial inequities, they were a steady climb toward improvement, and we are determined to keep moving forward to protect our progress.

The National Urban League (www.nul.org) is a historic civil rights and urban advocacy organization dedicated to economic empowerment in historically underserved urban communities. Founded in 1910 and headquartered in New York City, the National Urban League has improved the lives of tens of millions of people nationwide through direct service programs that are implemented locally by its 88 affiliates in 36 states and the District of Columbia. The organization also conducts public policy research and advocacy work from its Washington, D.C. bureau. The National Urban League, a BBB-accredited organization, has a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, placing it in the top 10 percent of all U.S. charities for adhering to good governance, fiscal responsibility and other best practices.

