

## Building High Impact Nonprofits of Color

### The Challenge for Communities and Nonprofits of Color

Studies demonstrate that there is a significant gap between the people who rely on nonprofits for critical financial and social services and the charitable organizations that serve them. According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, at least 60 percent of nonprofits serve people of color. However, according to a study by Commongood Careers and Level Playing Field Institute, “Nonprofit employees are approximately 82 percent white, 10 percent African-American, five percent Hispanic/Latino, three percent other and one percent Asian or Pacific Islander.” As the country becomes more demographically diverse, we must ensure that nonprofits become more representative of the communities they aim to serve. When examining organizational leadership, this gap persists. According to the 2006 report by the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance (formerly American Humanics), up to 84 percent of nonprofits are led by Whites, and 95 percent of foundations and other philanthropic organizations are led by Whites.

This lack of diversity in the nonprofit sector is mirrored by a disturbing reality in communities of color across the nation. According to Prosperity Now’s Assets & Opportunity Scorecard, 44 percent of all families and 60 percent of households are just one crisis away from financial ruin. Also, households of color have approximately one-tenth the median net worth of white households (\$12,377 and \$110,637, respectively).

In order to address the significant financial insecurity facing families and communities of color, the Racial Wealth Divide Initiative of Prosperity Now has committed to working with local organizations of color to strengthen their capability and access to resources. In our assessment and work over the years, we have learned that nonprofits of color, in particular, are well positioned to serve communities of color. These organizations are knowledgeable of the history and presence of financial and economic trauma in their affected communities and are able to develop programs, advocate for policies and share practices that are informed by the community.

### The Racial Wealth Divide Initiative’s Approach

Communities of color need nonprofits of color with high impact asset-building services to address the national challenge of a broad and deep racial wealth divide. It is through this lens, that we approach the work of the *Building High Impact Nonprofits of Color* project. The goals of the project are to:

- Assist in developing high impact nonprofit organizations of color focused on advancing economic opportunity nationally;
- Build an understanding of the intersection of income, assets and the racial wealth divide;
- Establish networks across sectors to have lasting local influence and advance social change;
- Improve relationships between organizations of color, local organizations and asset-building institutions; and,
- Equip organizations of color to become leading voices in local and national asset-building dialogues and decisions.

To accomplish these goals, we are undertaking three key activities. First, in partnership with the Georgetown Center for Public and Nonprofit Leadership, we created an organizational development curriculum designed to build leadership and organizational capacity and provide targeted and individualized training to cohort organizations. Second, we provide asset-building and racial inequality workshops to organizations to improve their understanding of the connection between

assets and the racial wealth divide. Finally, we provide networking and convening opportunities so organizations of color can build relationships within and across networks. These opportunities also increase their access to key influencers and decision makers in their respective cities and beyond.

By the end of 2017, through the *Building High Impact Nonprofits of Color* project, we would have worked in four to five cities and with over twenty organizations, to position them to take advantage of new resources that will allow them to apply the capacity-building strategies and skills they developed through the project. Over the long-term, Prosperity Now's Racial Wealth Divide team aims to continue partnering with these organizations to support their growth and development, share Prosperity Now resources and analysis, and continue learning about best practices at the local level for addressing racial economic inequality.

## **Building High Impact Nonprofits of Color Project Activities - To Date**

After assessing the information gathered from research and interviews, Prosperity Now's Racial Wealth Divide Initiative coordinated over 40 in-person site visits with the organizations of color that are most aligned with our requirements.

We have selected the following organizations for the first and second cohorts:

### **New Orleans, LA (Cohort 1)**

- [Ashé Cultural Arts Center](#)
- [Jericho Road Episcopal Housing Initiative](#)
- [MOVN Community Development Corporation](#)
- [Puentes LatiNola](#)
- [VAYLA New Orleans](#)

### **Miami, FL (Cohort 1)**

- [ConnectFamilias](#)
- [Hispanic Unity of Florida](#)
- [Miami Children's Initiative](#)
- [Partners for Self-Employment](#)
- [Sant La Haitian Neighborhood Center](#)

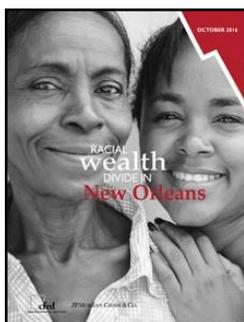
### **Chicago, IL (Cohort 2)**

- [Chinese Mutual Aid Association](#)
- [Gads Hill Center](#)
- [Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation](#)
- [North Lawndale Employment Network](#)
- [Spanish Coalition for Housing](#)

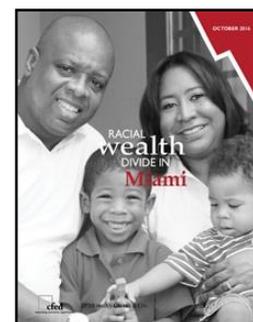
### **Baltimore, MD (Cohort 2)**

- [Bon Secours Community Works](#)
- [CFUF](#)
- [Druid Heights CDC](#)
- [Latino Economic Development Center](#)
- [Muse 360 Arts](#)
- [Urban Alliance](#)

The RWDI developed data profiles for New Orleans, LA and Miami, FL to help better understand the challenges facing communities of color in these cities. For Baltimore and Chicago, similar profiles will be released in early 2017.



To read these profiles and learn more about the Racial Wealth Divide Initiative, please visit:  
[www.ProspertyNow.org/topics/racial-wealth-equity](http://www.ProspertyNow.org/topics/racial-wealth-equity)



## Racial Wealth Divide Initiative of Prosperity Now

Through the Racial Wealth Divide Initiative (RWDI), Prosperity Now is leveraging the connections we have established to national organizations; our growing network of state and local asset development partners; and expertise in technical assistance, policy analysis and advocacy and applied research to bridge racial economic inequality.

Specifically, our initiative will deploy three key strategies:

- Strengthen the ability of all Prosperity Now's programs to proactively address racial wealth inequality and deepen analysis of asset poverty challenges impacting communities of color.
- Launch and implement specific projects that highlight best practices for eradicating racial wealth inequality, including by collaborating with local and regional organizations.
- Bolster our influence and that of our partners to drive policy solutions that reduce racial economic inequality at the national, state and local levels.

## Prosperity Now

[Prosperity Now's](#) work makes it possible for millions of people to achieve financial security and contribute to an opportunity economy. We scale innovative practical solutions that empower low- and moderate-income people to build wealth. We drive responsive policy change at all levels of government. We support the efforts of community leaders across the country to advance economic opportunity for all. Established in 1979 as the Corporation for Enterprise Development, and recently rebranded to Prosperity Now in June 2017, the organization works nationally and internationally through its offices in Washington, DC; Durham, North Carolina, and San Francisco, California.

## Racial Wealth Divide Team

This initiative is led by Prosperity Now's Racial Wealth Divide team, which is currently comprised of the following staff members:

*Dedrick Asante-Muhammad, Senior Fellow of the Racial Wealth Divide Initiative of Prosperity Now.* Dedrick's responsibilities include providing strategic visioning and overall leadership for the initiative. Prosperity Now's Racial Wealth Divide Project will also lead wealth-building projects that will establish best practices and policy recommendations to address racial economic inequality. Dedrick comes to Prosperity Now from the NAACP, where he was the Sr. Director of the Economic Department and Executive Director of the Financial Freedom Center. Dedrick's past civil rights experience also includes his time at Reverend Al Sharpton's National Action Network, where he first worked as the National Crisis Coordinator and then as the National Field Director. Dedrick's professional work in economic equity began at United for a Fair Economy (UFE) where he was coordinator of the Racial Wealth Divide Project. While at UFE, Dedrick co-founded the State of the Dream report and has been a regular co-author of this annual report. Dedrick went on to the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) where he worked in the Inequality and Common Good Program, under Chuck Collins.

*Lillian Singh, Director of the Racial Wealth Divide Initiative of Prosperity Now.* As Director, Lillian works with the Racial Wealth Divide team to strengthen Prosperity Now's outreach and partnership with communities of color and advance Prosperity Now's racial wealth divide analysis. Previously, Mrs. Singh served as the Director of Strategic Partnerships for the NAACP National Economic Department. She directed alliances with external allies cross the corporate, private, government and nonprofit sectors—to advance economic equity goals. With respect to program management, she oversaw economic education initiatives focused on grassroots organizing and grassroots engagement, connecting NAACP state and local affiliates with corporate, private and national nonprofit partners. Prior to the NAACP, she worked at the D.C. Children

Youth Investment Trust Corporation (CYITC), a nonprofit organization working to increase the quality, quantity and accessibility of services for children, youth and families.

*Cat Goughnour, Senior Program Manager.* Cat works to bridge promising and best practices in program implementation to policy and research solutions, with the goal of decreasing income and wealth disparities in communities of color. Through the teams work with the African American Financial Capability project funded by the Northwest Area Foundation, she provides direct technical assistance to six communities of practice across the northern US, tailor programming and create curricula, manage stakeholder engagement, as well as goal setting, tracking and process and progress evaluation, while also assisting with primary and secondary research for Racial Wealth Divide Initiative projects. Additionally, Cat co-designs and co-facilitates Prosperity Now's racial equity goals, strategies and objectives.

*Jessika Lopez, Senior Program Associate of the Racial Wealth Divide Initiative of Prosperity Now.* Jessika manages communication efforts for the RWDI, helps manage both the Building High Impact Nonprofits of Color and African American Financial Capability projects. Jessika has over six years of non-profit experience primarily working in economic development in both the San Francisco Bay Area and Pittsburgh, PA. Most recently, as an MSW intern, Jessika was able to contribute to local neighborhood redevelopment efforts in the distressed Pittsburgh neighborhoods of East Liberty and Greater Hill District.