Partnering to Increase Social Mobility

YMCA of Greater Charlotte Stakeholder Roundtable Discussion
May 19, 2015

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Based on presentation given March 19, 2015 at Foundation For The Carolinas “Leading on Opportunity” speaker series
Charlotte-Mecklenburg is a great place to live and work.
But... ranked last in upward mobility
• What are the chances for a child succeeding, independently of family status and the environment where she grows up? (inter-generational mobility)

• Sample: children born 1980-1982

• Child and parent pairs coded by 741 commuting zones

• Compared adult children’s positions on the national income distribution with their parents’
How do children from below-median income families fare by adulthood?

Data source: Equality of Opportunity Project, 2014
Upward mobility is especially low across the south and parts of the rust belt.

Average income percentile of children whose parents were in the 25th percentile.
Nationally, mobility varies by demographics

Percent of Americans who move up from the bottom of the income ladder

- African American: 45% (Any upward mobility from bottom quintile), 25% (Upward mobility to at least the middle)
- White: 68% (Any upward mobility from bottom quintile), 35% (Upward mobility to at least the middle)
- Single-earner family: 49% (Any upward mobility from bottom quintile), 24% (Upward mobility to at least the middle)
- Dual-earner family: 84% (Any upward mobility from bottom quintile), 50% (Upward mobility to at least the middle)

Land of Opportunity: Community characteristics affect opportunity for all

• Segregation

• Income inequality

• Quality of school system

• Social capital

• Family structure
Segregation

People separated from other people and living far from where they work
Charlotte-Mecklenburg is racially segregated
...and economically segregated

9th of large metros in segregation of the wealthy, college-educated, and working class

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 American Community Survey
Public schools reflect the social and economic landscape

Schools with high concentrations of poverty and students of color have multiplied

Data source: North Carolina Department of Instruction
Income Inequality

How equally is income distributed across the community
One fifth of households made more than half the income

$30.5 billion of income was generated in Mecklenburg in 2013. How was it divided among the income quintiles?

- **Bottom** (3%): $24,000
- **Second** (8%): $43,000
- **Middle** (13%): $67,000
- **Fourth** (22%): $115,000
- **Top** (53%):

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 American Community Survey
### Income Inequality

#### Income gap by race/ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Median Household Income</th>
<th>Poverty Level for Family of 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>$70,382</td>
<td>$23,834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>$37,531</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>$36,717</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>$75,222</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 American Community Survey
Quality of School System

Differences in mobility emerge when children are relatively young
47% of CMS 3rd graders were proficient on end of grade reading tests, just above state average (45%).

For economically disadvantaged students, 29% were proficient.
Social Capital

People connected to each other and civic institutions
Social capital in Charlotte-Mecklenburg

58% of Mecklenburg residents voted in 2000 election.
67% voted in 2012.

Data source: North Carolina Board of Elections
Single parent households experience greater mobility challenges, which then extend into the community.
Single-parent households are growing

47,000 single-parent households in Mecklenburg.

38% of households with children are single-parent, up from 31% in 2000.

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 American Community Survey
Neighborhood affects mobility

The New York Times

The Upshot

IMPORTANCE OF PLACE

An Atlas of Upward Mobility Shows Paths Out of Poverty

MAY 4, 2015

Income in adulthood for children whose families moved to a better place

Children who moved at age 10 ended up with incomes that were about halfway between the average incomes of kids who spent their entire childhoods in one of the two places.

The later families moved, the less their children were affected.
Compounding neighborhood challenges

Poverty

Single-parent households

Voter participation

Race/ethnicity

- White
- Black
- Hispanic
- Other
YMCA: a resource for neighborhood change
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Presentation available at http://mseap.uncc.edu/presentations