



# OPPORTUNITY STARTS AT HOME

## CIVIL RIGHTS ADVOCATES ARE HOUSING ADVOCATES

**“Housing discrimination is the unfinished business of civil rights.”**

*Sherrilyn Ifill, President of the NAACP Legal Defense & Education Fund*

### **Racial Inequities Are Deeply Rooted In Housing Segregation.**

- “Black per capita income is lower in regions with higher levels of economic and black-white segregation (Acs, Pendall, Treskon, Khare, 2017).” Quoted from [How Housing Matters](#)
- In many cities throughout the country, opportunity varies significantly neighborhood-by-neighborhood (i.e., employment rates, school quality, poverty levels, income, crime, infrastructure, services, transit, health care, groceries, banks, etc.). High-opportunity neighborhoods offer a family the most chance for economic mobility, but due to pervasive housing segregation, families of color are disproportionately residing in lower-opportunity areas. For example, in the City of Dallas, 73 out of 79 “high-opportunity” neighborhoods are majority white. By contrast, 7 out of 10 majority black neighborhoods are the lowest-opportunity areas ([Opportunity Dallas, 2017](#)).
- One-fourth of the black-white SAT score gap can be attributed to racial housing segregation ([Card & Rothstein, 2006](#)), which remains pervasive throughout American cities today.

**“Residential segregation is at the heart of racial inequality in the country. All of the disparities in the U.S. — in education, in income, wealth, employment, health — between the races are all fundamentally linked to residential segregation. There’s no real way to deal with disparities between black and white people without dealing with this.”**

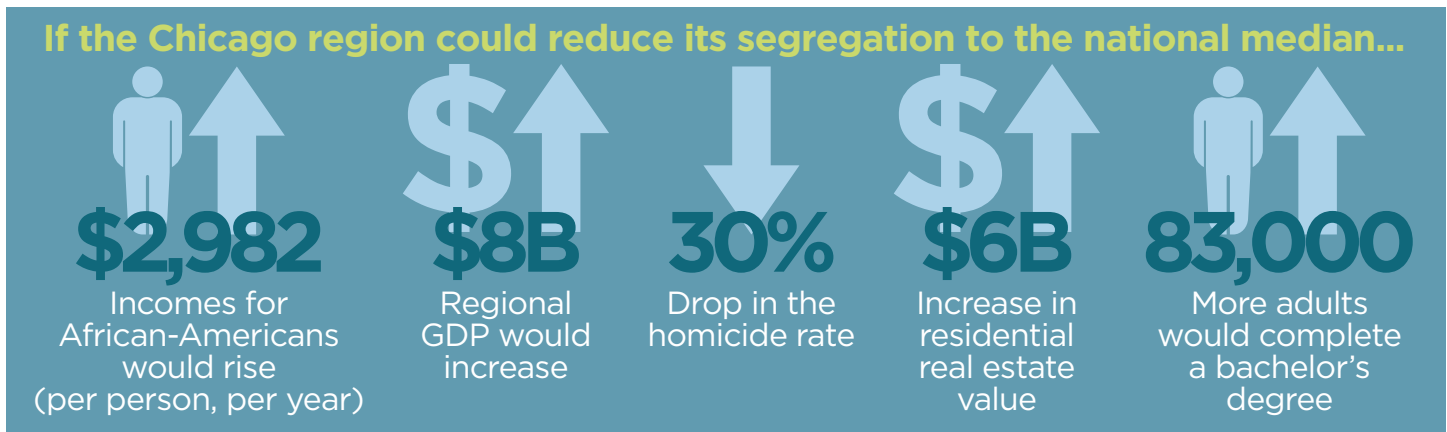
*— Myron Orfield, University of Minnesota Law School*

### **Housing Segregation Is A Significant Driver Of School Segregation, Which Causes And Perpetuates Racial And Socioeconomic Achievement Gaps.**

- In most school districts, attendance boundaries are drawn along neighborhood lines, thereby cementing residential segregation in public schools. In 2014, 43% of students of color were attending high-poverty schools, compared to just 8% of white students ([National Equity Atlas](#)). Research shows that the likelihood of a school’s success declines significantly when the student body is concentrated in poverty.

## Strategically Placed Affordable Housing For Low-Income Earners Can Help Reduce Residential Segregation And Concentrated Poverty, And Promote Mixed-Income Neighborhoods

- Housing segregation is costly and excludes minorities from neighborhoods that offer strong schools and job prospects.



Source: [Urban Institute and Metro Planning Council](#)

- A lack of affordable housing exacerbates segregation. Due to a legacy of discrimination, white families typically have much higher net wealth and incomes than families of color, which creates large differences in purchasing power. As such, white families can disproportionately afford more expensive neighborhoods of opportunity. Due to policies and practices in both the public and private sectors, affordable housing for low-income households is often unavailable in desirable areas, which contributes to racial residential segregation ([Urban Institute, Promoting Neighborhood Diversity, 2009](#)).
- Diverse, mixed-income neighborhoods benefit everyone. Residents of diverse neighborhoods are able to interact on a daily basis — they harbor less prejudice and racial stereotypes, can better handle diverse working environments, are more culturally sensitive, and have more expansive social networks ([Urban Institute, Promoting Neighborhood Diversity, 2009](#)). Research shows that diversity makes everyone smarter and more innovative. ([Rock & Grant, 2016](#)).

**“Places that are more segregated by race or income tend to have lower levels of upward mobility.” — Raj Chetty, Harvard University**

### People Of Color Disproportionately Encounter Housing Discrimination.

- In 2013, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) published a study reporting on discrimination against people of color seeking to rent apartments. The study found that:
  - “Black renters who contact agents about recently advertised housing units learn about 11.4 percent fewer available units than equally qualified whites and are shown 4.2 percent fewer units.”
  - “Hispanic renters learn about 12.5 percent fewer available units than equally qualified whites and are shown 7.5 percent fewer units.”
  - “Asian renters learn about 9.8 percent fewer available units than equally qualified whites and are shown 6.6 percent fewer units.”

From [HUD, Housing Discrimination Against Racial and Ethnic Minorities](#)

**For more information, please visit [www.opportunityhome.org](http://www.opportunityhome.org)**