

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** May 9, 2022

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## **New Research Highlights Racial Inequities in the Columbus Area Workforce and Targeted Strategies to Advance Shared Prosperity**

*The report provides a data-informed blueprint for fostering cross-sector collaboration and workforce equity*

**Columbus, Ohio (May 9, 2022)** — The Columbus metropolitan area is one of the fastest-growing economies in the nation. But new research shows that the prosperity generated by the area's tremendous growth has not been shared equitably with all workers.

[\*Advancing Workforce Equity in Columbus: A Blueprint for Action\*](#) — released today by the National Equity Atlas (a partnership between PolicyLink and the USC Equity Research Institute) with One Columbus, the Workforce Innovation Center, Emsi Burning Glass, and JPMorgan Chase examines the state of racial equity in the Columbus labor market.

People of color make up a rapidly growing share of the Columbus area's workforce, but they continue to face stark inequities in employment and wages, according to the analysis. In fact, workers of color tend to be overrepresented in lower paying occupational groups, while white workers are overrepresented in higher paying professions. This segregation in the workforce hampers the region's economic growth. In 2018 alone, racial economic exclusion cost Columbus about \$10 billion in unrealized GDP.

"This research gives us important context as we work to remove obstacles and connect people to the private sector jobs being created in growing businesses across our region," said Kenny McDonald, president and CEO of the Columbus Partnership.

The report outlines several strategies for building a more equitable Columbus workforce:

- Center racial equity, community voice, and neighborhood needs in the workforce development system, and unify economic development and workforce development strategies.
- Lean into regional partnerships to break silos in workforce development.
- Bring jobs to the people and people to the jobs.
- Engage employers to adopt best practices in hiring, retaining, and promoting workers of color.
- Dramatically expand apprenticeships, and develop targeted strategies to support people of color through these programs.
- Cater services to immigrant workers and workers for whom English is a second language.
- Expand on career pathways that start with entry-level positions in target sectors with good employment prospects.

"We are proud to partner with Columbus organizations in sharing this important research," said Michael McAfee, president and CEO of PolicyLink. "Our findings reveal the whole truth of the

struggles and strengths of the region's economic sectors, and they'll be invaluable as local leaders and communities in Columbus work together to move forward and craft solutions that actually work.”

Achieving the vision of an equitable Columbus workforce will require cross-sector collaboration to dismantle barriers to racial economic inclusion and cultivate equity in education, training, hiring, advancement, and the social determinants of work that support positive economic outcomes for workers and families.

“As a firm, JPMorgan Chase remains laser-focused on building an inclusive future that benefits all workers and communities,” said Corrine Burger, Columbus location leader for JPMorgan Chase. “These data-driven insights will be key to regional efforts to make Columbus one of the strongest and most forward-thinking cities in the world.”

JPMorgan Chase has invested \$12.5 million into central Ohio, including \$7 million in the future of work through the firm's Global Career Readiness initiative. The firm is working with partners, including Columbus State Community College, Columbus City Schools, Ohio State University, and Ohio Excels, to help prepare local students with real-world skills and experiences they need for in-demand jobs of tomorrow.

Funded by JPMorgan Chase, this analysis will help inform the firm's philanthropic decisions — in the face of a shifting labor landscape — as part of the [New Skills at Work](#) initiative to prepare people for the future of work and the firm's new [\\$30 billion commitment](#) to advance racial equity and drive an inclusive economic recovery.

This report is one of nine regional analyses in the Advancing Workforce Equity project, which aims to help regions across the nation advance equity in their local workforces and economies. The full report, including the data and tailored strategies, can be accessed at [nationalequityatlas.org/research/workforce-equity-columbus](https://nationalequityatlas.org/research/workforce-equity-columbus).

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*Advancing Workforce Equity in Columbus: A Blueprint for Action* was developed through a partnership of [One Columbus](#), [Workforce Innovation Center](#), [PolicyLink](#), [USC Equity Research Institute](#), and [Emsi Burning Glass](#), with support from [JPMorgan Chase](#).