



# **Racial and Economic Equity: What the Data Says and What to Do About It**

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Director of Race to Equity Project**

**January 12, 2016**



# Our Plan for the Webinar

1. Economy/Equity in the State: With close attention to Jobs, Race, and Ethnicity
2. The Local View: What it means in communities
3. Toward Equity: What we can do in 2016



# THE STATE OF WORKING WISCONSIN

## 2015

*By the Numbers*

**81¢**

In 2014, the ratio of women's to men's median wages was .81, meaning that for every one dollar a man made, a woman made 81 cents.

**1  
IN  
5**

Wisconsin posted the nation's highest unemployment rate for African Americans in 2014: 19.9 percent. That rate is 4.6 times higher than the state's white unemployment rate.

**43%**

In 2001, one-in-four students in Wisconsin public schools were economically disadvantaged. By 2013, that number nearly doubled to 43 percent.

**>1 in 4**

**↑2¢/year**

Wisconsin's median worker earns \$17.38 per hour. Over the last 35 years, the inflation adjusted median wage for workers in Wisconsin has gone up just 71 cents per hour. That's an annual raise of just \$0.02/hour.

Workers who work at an hourly wage of \$11.55 or lower, even full-time and year-round, cannot keep a family of four out of poverty. 730,000 Wisconsin workers - 27 percent of the entire state workforce - hold poverty wage jobs.

If Wisconsin had enjoyed the same rate of job growth as the rest of the nation across the course of the recovery, the state would have 90,000 more jobs today.

**90,000  
MISSING  
JOBS**

*View full report at [cows.org](http://cows.org)*

# Some Key Issues in the WI Economy

1. Long Term Wage Stagnation
2. Bad Jobs Problem
3. Extreme Racial Inequality
4. Family Income Decline

# Long Term Wage Stagnation

- ✓ *Wisconsin's median worker now earns \$17.38 per hour.*
- ✓ *Over the last 35 years, the inflation adjusted median wage for workers in Wisconsin has gone up just \$0.71 per hour.*
- ✓ *Annual raise \$0.02/hour, 1979 to 2014*

# The Bad Jobs Problem

- ✓ *More than 1 in 4 workers work at an hourly wage of \$11.55 or lower (annual income at poverty line for a family of four with full-time work)*
- ✓ *730,000 workers in the state. Not just teens, second incomes, starting wages. Low wage grind.*
- ✓ *Low wages, volatile hours, few benefits.*

# Dynamic Sectors with Low-Wage Jobs, WI

## FOOD SERVICE



MEDIAN WAGE  
\$8.40/HR



**69%**  
*of workers earn  
poverty wages*

## RETAIL



MEDIAN WAGE  
\$10.87/HR



**52%**  
*of workers earn  
poverty wages*

## RESIDENTIAL & HOME HEALTH CARE



MEDIAN WAGE  
\$12.35/HR



**39%**  
*of workers earn  
poverty wages*

# Wisconsin: Extreme Racial Inequality

- ✓ *The nation's highest unemployment rate for African Americans in 2014: 19.9 percent.*
- ✓ *Rate 4.6 times higher than the WI white unemployment rate.*
- ✓ *Repeated across nearly every social and economic indicator. WI black white disparity is consistently among the worst in the nation.*

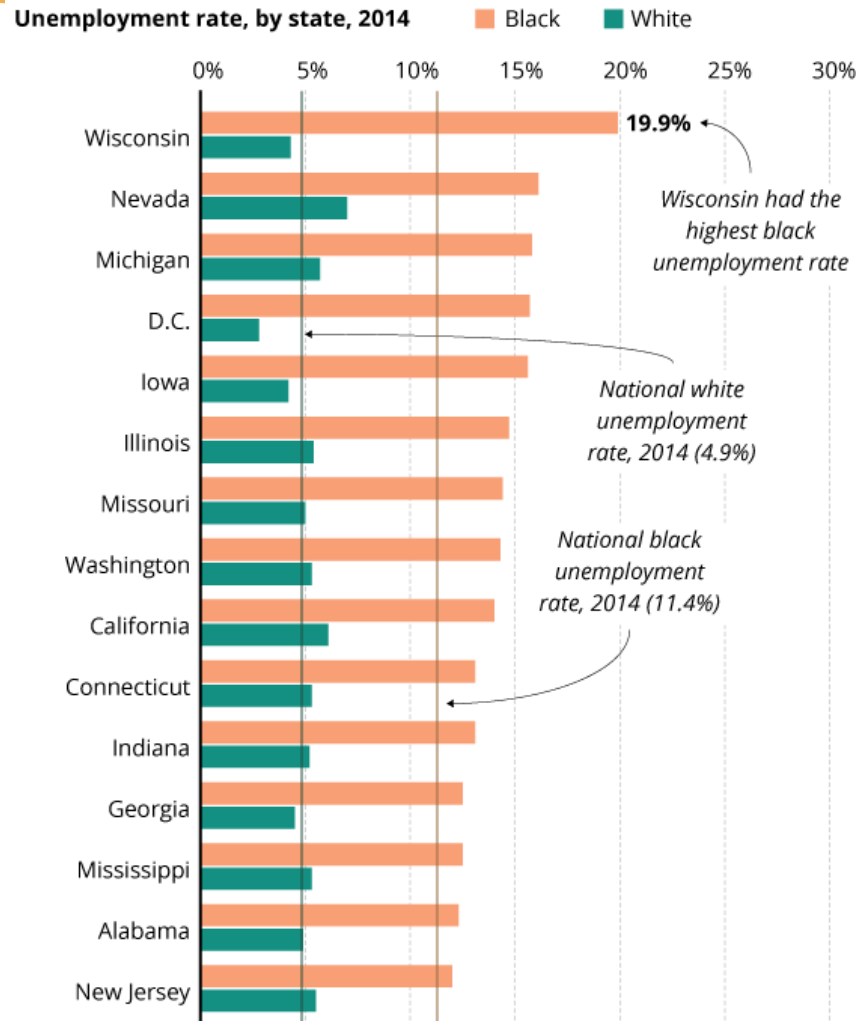


# The Latest and Best Data Disparity Data for the State of Wisconsin

- \* Unemployment
- \* Child poverty
- \* Median household income
- \* Graduation rate



# African American Unemployment



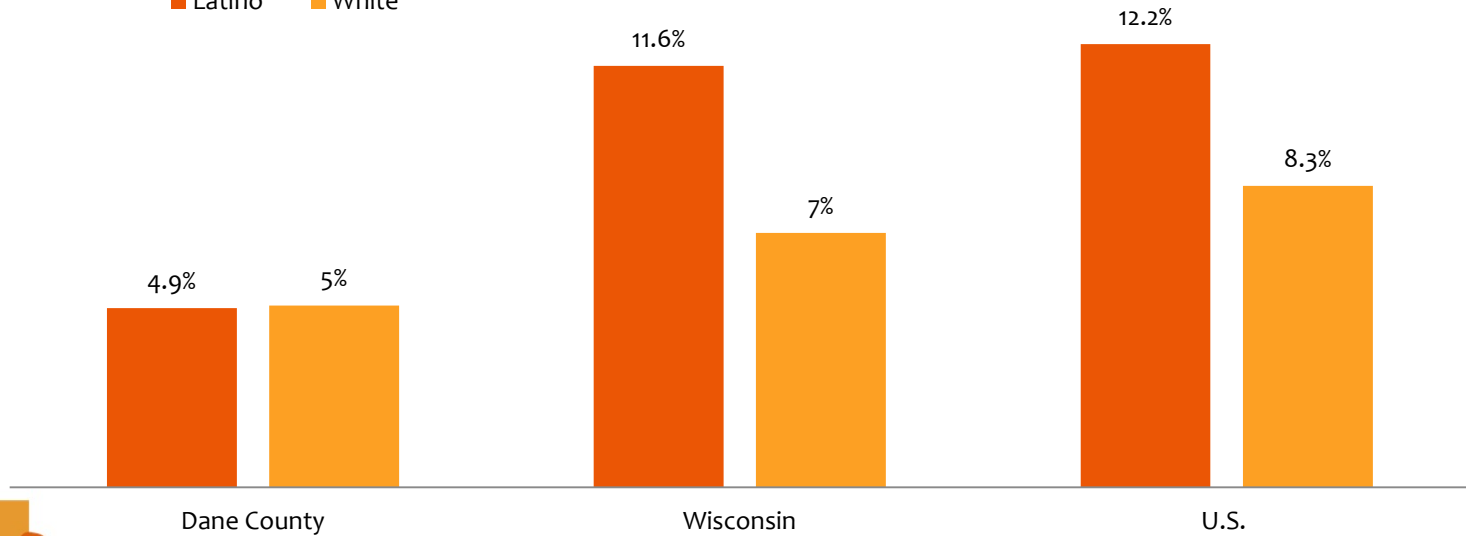
RACE TO  
EQUITY



# Latino Unemployment Rate

## Unemployment Rate (2010 - 2012)

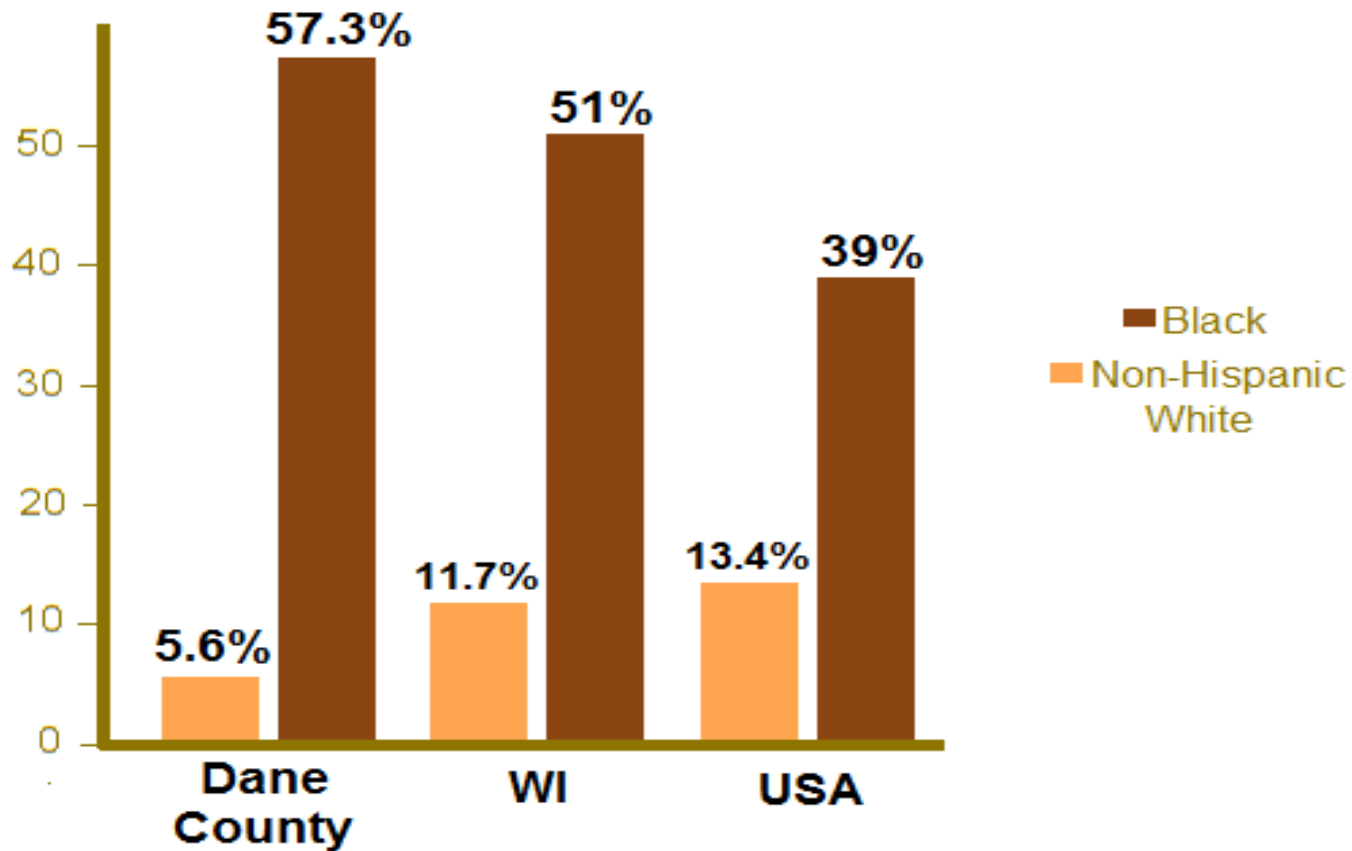
Latino White



RACE TO  
EQUITY



# Percentage of Black Children Living in Poverty, 2010- 2012

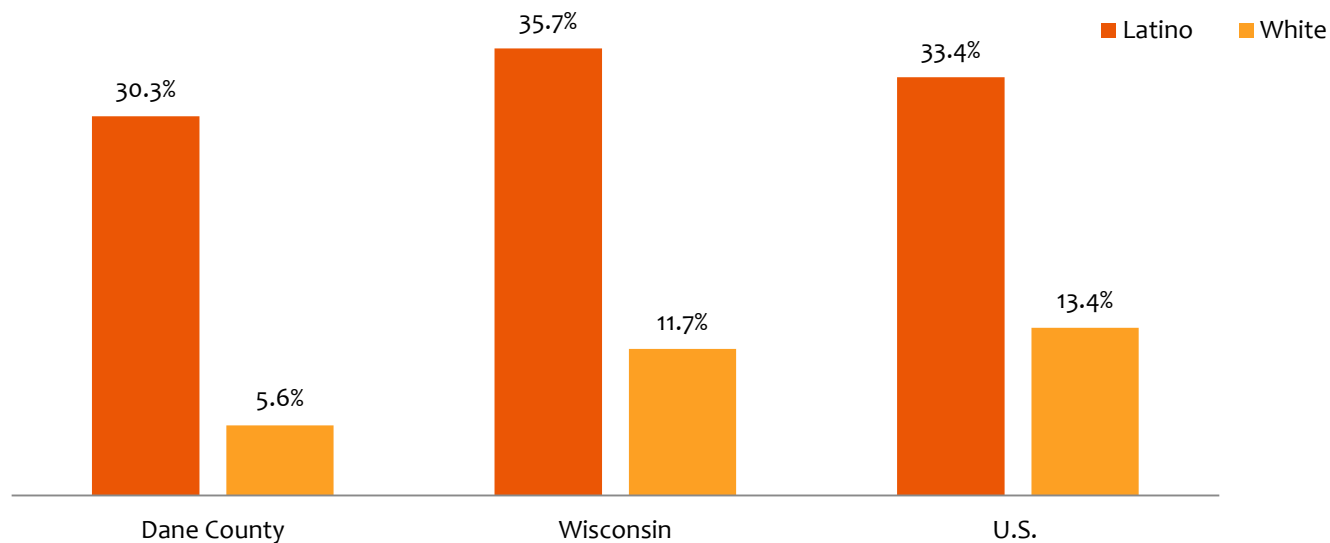


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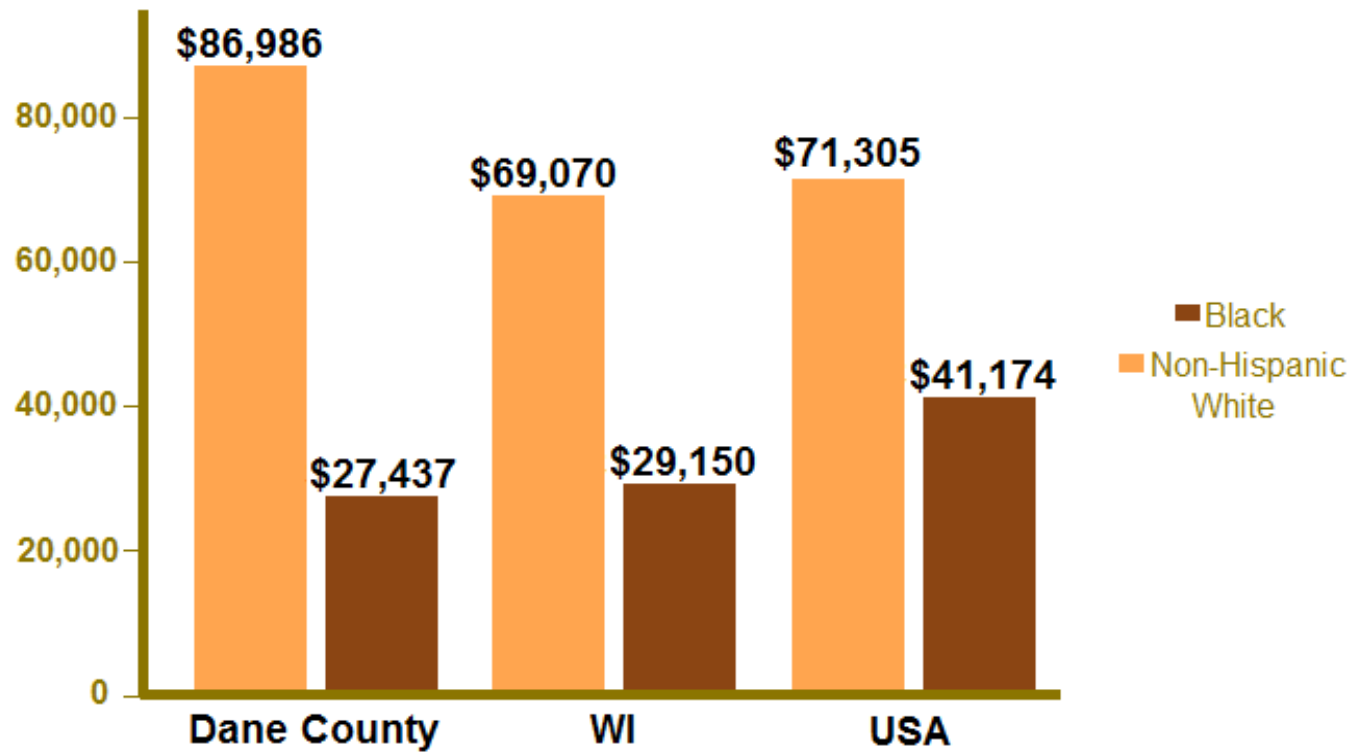


# Latino Children Living in Poverty

Percent of Children Living in Poverty (2010 - 2012)



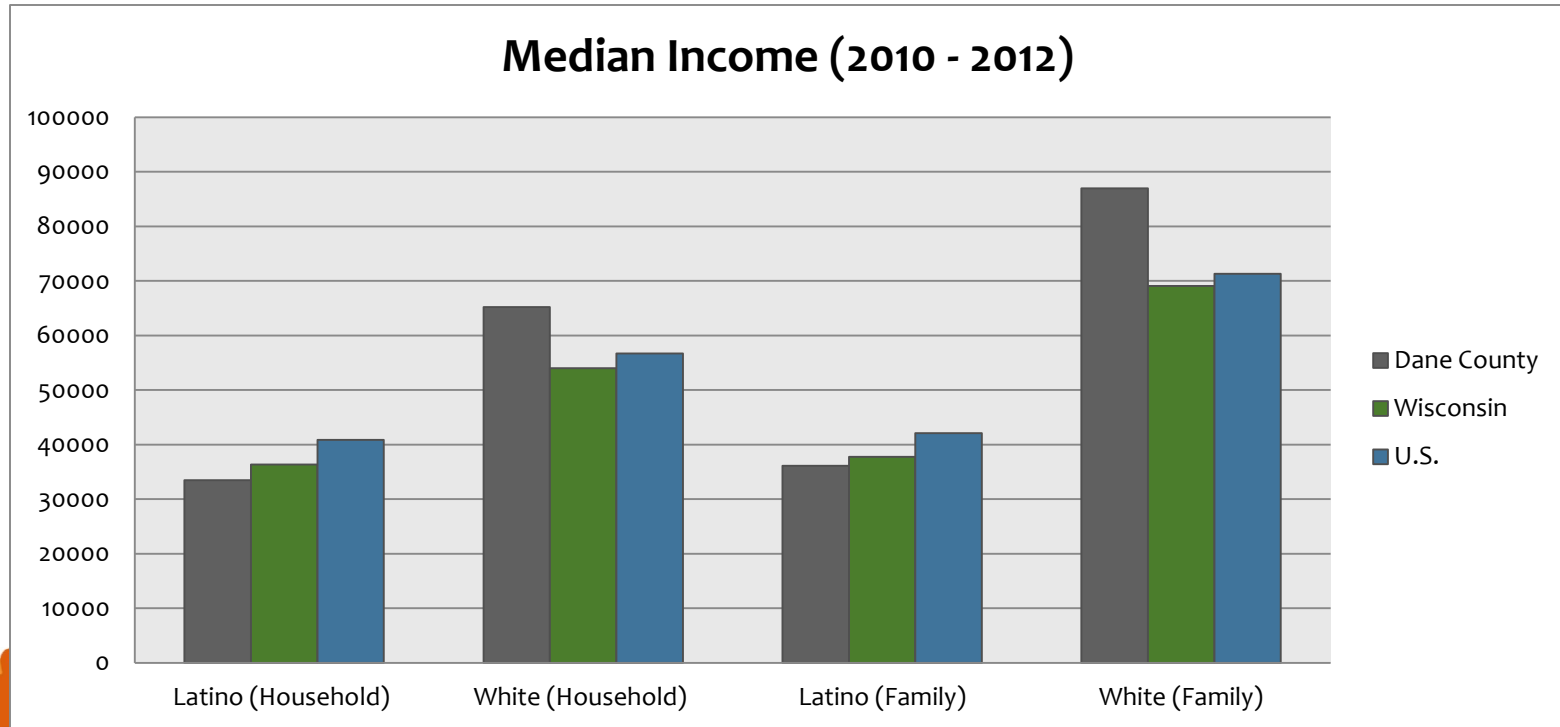
# Median Black Family Income, 2010 - 2012



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# Latino Median Household and Family Income

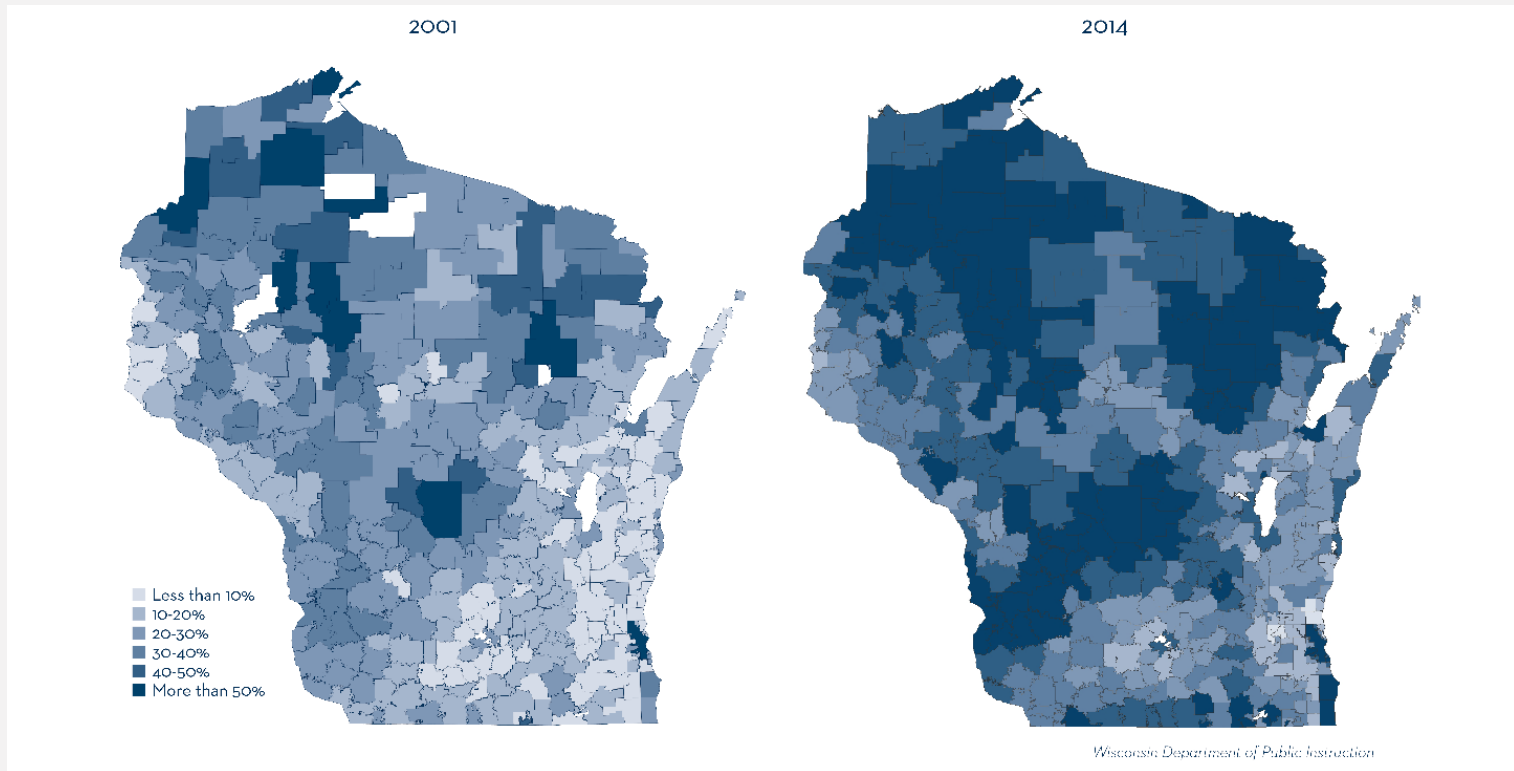


## Families, Schools, Community

- ✓ *In 2001, one-in-four Wisconsin public school students in Wisconsin were economically disadvantaged.*
- ✓ *By 2013, that number nearly doubled to 43 percent.*
- ✓ *Two of every five students in our public schools faces significant financial stress at home.*



## Wisconsin Students that are “Economically Disadvantaged” nearly doubles since 2001



# Wisconsin Education

Wisconsin's graduation rate gap widens to largest in U.S.



Journal Sentinel files

Teacher Barbara Rankin helps Lower Elementary School children with reading materials last year at Downtown Montessori School. The school has been more successful than some in closing the achievement gap between racial minorities and whites.

- \* Graduation rate for white students was 93% while graduation for African American students was 66%.
- \* In 2013-2014 21.9% of Latino students did not graduate on time in Wisconsin.

# What This Data Means on a State and Community Level

## 1. The Racialization of Disadvantage

- \* Exists in a place where poverty and poor outcomes have an exceptionally strong correlation with race and color. Put another way, disadvantage becomes highly racialized.

## 2. The Cost of Racializing Disadvantage

- \* All the above patterns have the alarming potential to foster stereotyping, profiling or differential expectations based on color – a tendency that exacerbates and deepens the racial equity challenge.
- \* Conscious racism may not be the primary cause of these disparities but their continuation may well foster and reinforce discrimination and differential expectations based on race.

3. These economic and racial inequities have a negative and harmful impact upon our educational outcomes and our state and local economies generally. Unemployed and underemployed families are less able to have the resources needed to foster long term stability and participate in the local economy.



# Moving Toward Greater Equity at the State and Local Level in 2016

- \* Acknowledging that race matters, place matters, class matters, policy matters and culture matters.
- \* Three areas of focus to move systemically towards greater racial equity locally and on the state level. A two –generation approach to the following:
  - \* Enhancing Employment and Earnings
  - \* Supporting Working Parents
  - \* Assuring Success in School



# Some Ideas for 2016

- Raise the Floor – think about wage standards, raise wages for lowest paid workers in social services and care work, enforce existing law by educating employers and workers
- Systematically Extend Opportunity – with strong focus on Black and Latino youth and connections to post-secondary education as well as good careers. Focus also on working adults and build tech college programs that are responsive to them.
- Focus on Inequality – Begin or help push forward a community dialogue on economic and racial inequality in your community. Build new connections, support new leaders, make real change.

# Principles and Values That Need to Inform All Our Efforts To Address the Racial Equity Challenge

- \* We need to authentically engage the families and communities most affected by these disparities in identifying and implementing solutions.
- \* Our approach needs to be a two generation strategy- - one that supports under-resourced parents while intensifying investments in at risk children, from cradle to career.
- \* Our agency and sector specified programs and services to be woven together into a more integrated whole - - one that is comprehensive and collaborative, not siloed.
- \* Our major investments of money and time must be more effectively targeted, recognizing the greatest needs are heavily concentrated among low-income families of color.
- \* Given the depth and breadth of problems, our responses have to be driven by urgency and sustained by long term commitment.



# Making Progress Is In All Our Interests

## Making Progress Is In All Our Interests

- \* Addressing racial disparities is critical, not only as a matter of simple justice, but also for our collective well-being. Narrowing racial resource and opportunity gaps will help to level the playing field for all citizens and, in turn, will make the communities we live in and surrounding areas a more supportive environment for high achievement by all our children and families, including those of color. This is not only the right thing to do morally, it is the smart thing to do economically. Unless all our communities are thriving, the long term social, cultural and economic fate of our communities will be far less promising.

**“A community is not resilient if it is not equitable.”**

\* Angela Glover Blackwell

**“Not everything in the world can be changed. But nothing can be changed until it is faced.”**

\* James Baldwin







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- **SUSTAINABILITY**
- **DEMOCRACY**

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# Stay In Touch



**Race to Equity**

**Wisconsin Council on Children and Families**



- <https://www.facebook.com/racetoequity>



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