

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY I.D.E.A. COALITION

A County-wide coalition to promote Racial and Social Justice through Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (I.D.E.A.)

The following document is a narrative that captures significant problems in our community, as defined by directly impacted community members themselves. These three barriers emerged as priorities during a series of town hall meetings and surveys held in the winter and spring of 2023. The next steps will be to develop solution teams to address these challenges. This report highlights one of the three barriers identified by the community.

BUSINESS/JOBS/ EMPLOYMENT

Contents:

- Narrative defining the problem and causes of the hurdles to employment and entrepreneurship among the Black and Latino communities.
- Comparative data.
- Solutions offered by community members who attended April 2023 Town Hall meetings.
- Solutions proposed from the full I.D.E.A. Coalition meeting in May of 2023.

IDEA Project Director:

- Leecroft Clarke

Steering Committee:

- **Alicia Ekstrom**, The Chautauqua Center
- **Amanda Gesing**, YWCA Jamestown
- **Amit Taneja**, Chautauqua Institution
- **Amy Rohler**, United Way of Southern Chautauqua County
- **Carey Lee**, Chautauqua County Child Advocacy Program
- **Diane Hannum**, Northern Chautauqua Community Foundation
- **Elizabeth Torres** - City of Jamestown
- **Jaci Spoon**, UPMC Chautauqua
- **Jacqueline Phelps**, The Resource Center
- **Kevin Whitaker**, Jamestown Public Schools
- **Kristan McMahon**, Robert H. Jackson Center
- **Raymond Rosas**, City of Dunkirk
- **Vicki Sapp**, SUNY Fredonia

Implementation Team:

- **Ilka Figueroa**, Child Advocacy Program
- **Indo Quinones**, YWCA Jamestown
- **Jordan Steves**, Chautauqua Institution
- **Lindsey Goold**, United Way of Southern Chautauqua County
- **Liz Jones**, Chautauqua Region Community Foundation
- **Michelle McDowell**, Jamestown Public Schools
- **Patricia Graves**, Community Engagement Liaison
- **Sandra Lewis**, Community Engagement Liaison
- **Shiloh Rivera**, Community Engagement Liaison
- **Sylvester Cleary**, Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES
- **Vidalys Holmes** - UPMC Chautauqua



Business/Jobs/Employment

“Black and Hispanic people are smart, hardworking, and want to be successful. Find them, mentor them, promote them.”

Definition of the Problem

The impacted communities expressed many concerns about business, jobs, and employment among historically marginalized individuals within our community. Black and Latino workers face more hurdles to get a job than their white counterparts. They continue to face systematically higher unemployment rates, fewer job opportunities, lower pay, poorer benefits, greater job instability and barriers around job requirements and certifications.

These persistent differences reflect systematic barriers to quality jobs, such as outright discrimination against Black and Latino workers, as well as occupational segregation—whereby Black and Latino workers often end up in lower-paid jobs than whites—and segmented labor markets in which Black and Latino workers are less likely than white workers to get hired into stable, well-paying jobs. This could be well-paying jobs at the time of hire or through training and promotion.

While there has been no lack of entrepreneurial ventures among Blacks and Latinos, systemic racism, a persistent lack of adequate support and funding, disadvantaged family backgrounds, and less education has made it much harder for Black and Latino owned businesses to thrive.

There is also a need for programs providing mentoring, internships, or apprenticeship-type training that may help to reduce historical inequalities in business performance. Increasing opportunities for the acquisition of human capital and business capital should also be viewed as vital goals for minority business development.

Many organizations engage in training focused on cultural awareness/responsiveness, and diversity, equity and inclusion, however, once these trainings are completed, organizations need to take the next steps in implementing what is learned to address systemic issues within the organization. This includes offering employment testing, applications, and other materials in dual languages to prevent barriers to accessibility.

The Problem at a Glance

- Barriers to employment (e.g., childcare, transportation, education)
- Unable to access resources to start and/or grow a business
- Lack of opportunities for upward mobility
- Higher unemployment rates, being underemployed
- Lack of access to capital, contracts, and markets
- Paid lower wages than White counterparts
- Lack job stability

- Hired, managed and supervised by all White staff
- Limited job opportunities
- Good paying jobs are not advertised where Black and Latinos readily know they are available to apply

The Cause

- **Internal Culture/Environment within Employers**
 - Lack of local and targeted hiring policies
 - Lack of DEI trainings
 - Culture within organization
 - Need for opportunities for workforce training/apprenticeships
 - Lack of support within organizations (mentorship, development within organizations)
 - Lack of representation of POC in businesses and organizations
 - Need more outreach/recruitment to communities of color
 - Evaluation of educational standards
- **Community Support**
 - Lack of support with grant/loan programs (accessing, applying, etc.)
 - Stipulations with resources
 - Need for grant/loan programs that are more inclusive and available (without barriers)
 - Gap in services that are needed (ex: MWBE, Inc. certifications, etc.)
- **Barriers**
 - Childcare
 - Transportation
 - Language

The Effects

- Very few minority owned/multicultural businesses
- Lack of knowledge of opportunities/resources to start/grow business
- Underrepresentation in executive/higher paying positions

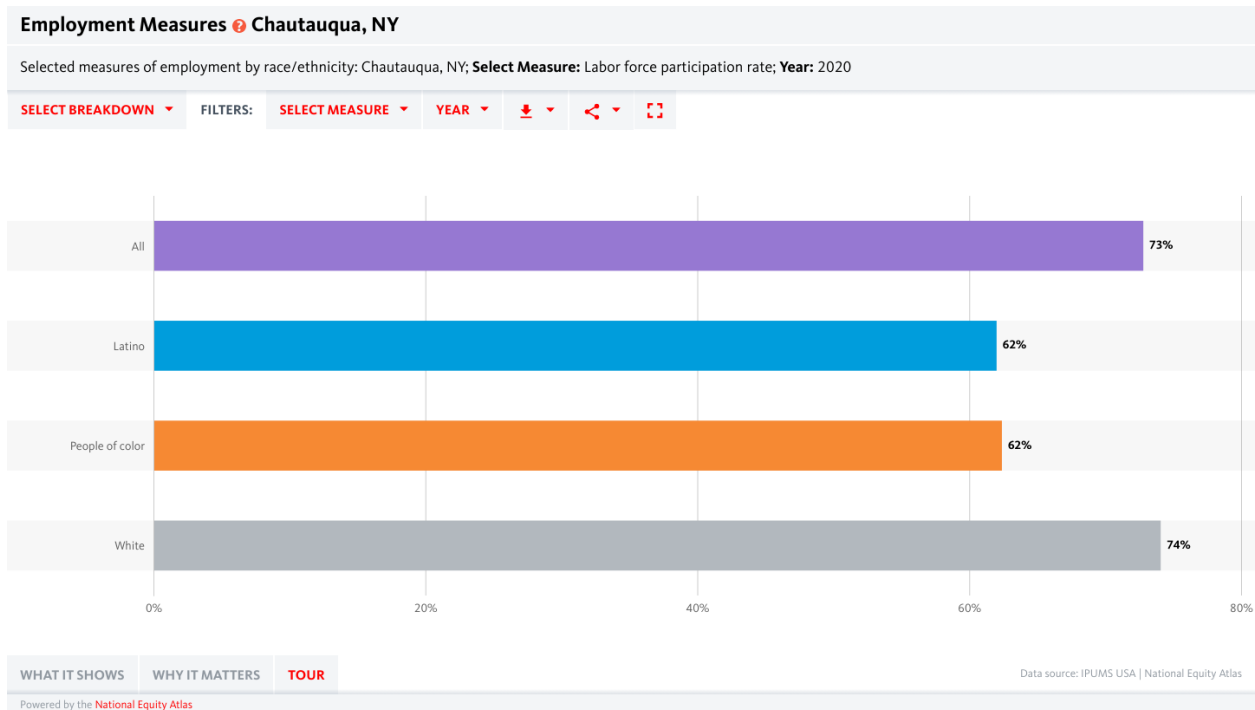
Examples/Personal Experiences From Town Hall:

- “I passed the electrical exam for the IBEW twice. When I did my interview there were 8 white men and nobody of color. Pretty sure my ethnicity was the issue”
- “A lot of Latino people who work in factories said factories are firing a lot of Latin people for defending themselves against white people”

- “There are a lot of Hispanic people here that want to start their own businesses, but they can't because they don't know where to get the information”
- “Often have to jump through many hoops and overcome barriers in order to even begin to think about opening a business in order to be successful”
- “Do not reject anyone because they only speak a little English, they often have great skills and should be treated fairly, given equal opportunities (employment and advancement)”

The Data

Employment: In an equitable economy, everyone who wants to work would have a good job. However, marginalized groups are less likely to have these opportunities, and have higher rates of unemployment.

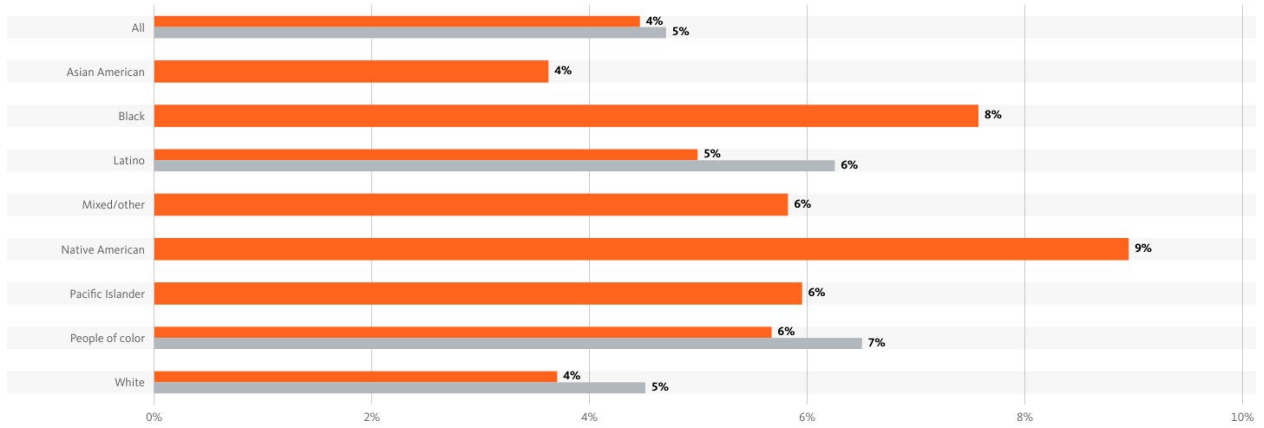


Unemployment 📍 United States vs. Chautauqua, NY

Unemployment rate by race/ethnicity: United States vs. Chautauqua, NY; Year: 2020

United States Chautauqua County, NY

SELECT BREAKDOWN FILTERS: YEAR



WHAT IT SHOWS WHY IT MATTERS TOUR

Data source: IPUMS USA | National Equity Atlas

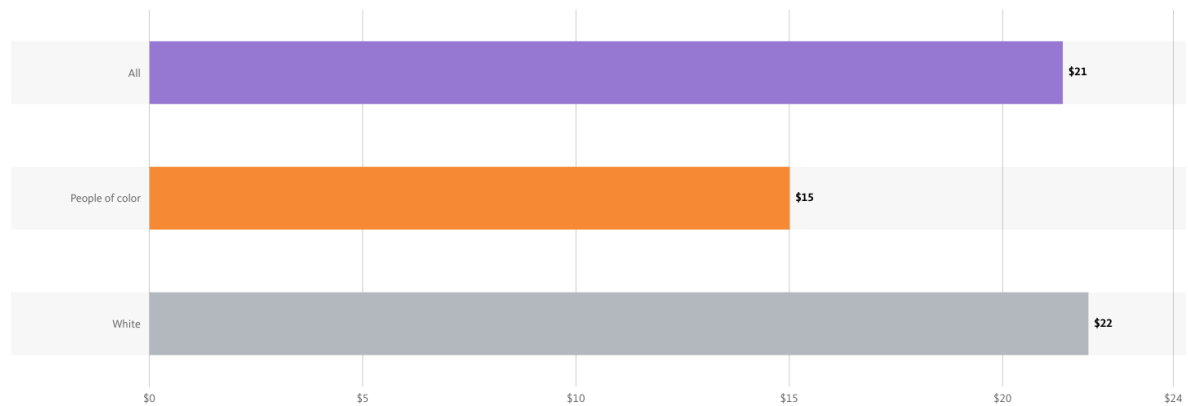
Powered by the National Equity Atlas

Wages: Median: In an equitable economy, all workers would earn a living wage, without systematic differences by race and gender. However, marginalized groups have a significantly lower median wage.

Wages: Median 📍 Chautauqua, NY

Median hourly wage by race/ethnicity: Chautauqua, NY; Age Group: 25 to 64; Year: 2020

SELECT BREAKDOWN FILTERS: AGE GROUP YEAR



WHAT IT SHOWS WHY IT MATTERS TOUR

Data source: IPUMS USA | National Equity Atlas

Powered by the National Equity Atlas

Working poor: All jobs should pay living wages. However, marginalized groups have a higher percentage of working poor.

