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OPPORTUNITY

TASK FORCE

A Tale of Two Communities

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The Equality of Opportunity Project

Q: *What are the chances for a child succeeding, independently of family status and where she grows up?*

THE EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY PROJECT
Raj Chetty, Nathaniel Hendren, Patrick Kline, Emmanuel Saez, Nicholas Turner
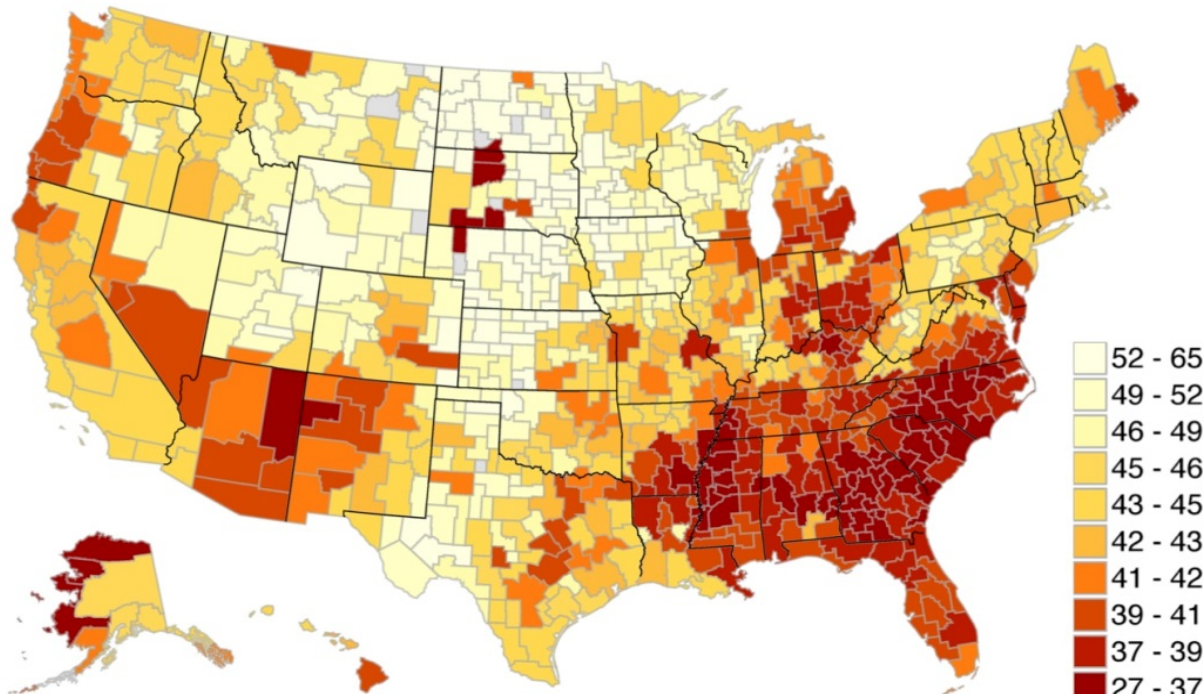
Raj Chetty, Harvard University
Nathaniel Hendren, Harvard University
Patrick Kline, University of California Berkeley
Emmanuel Saez, University of California Berkeley

A: *Not good*

Especially in the American Southeast

Especially in Charlotte, NC

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Charlotte 50th Out 50 Cities

The Geography of Intergenerational Mobility in the United States
Average Child Percentile Rank for Parents at 25th Percentile

Legend:
- 52 - 65
- 49 - 52
- 46 - 49
- 45 - 46
- 43 - 45
- 42 - 43
- 41 - 42
- 39 - 41
- 37 - 39
- 27 - 37

Top 5 Cities
San Jose (10.8%)
San Francisco
Washington DC
Seattle
Salt Lake City

Bottom 5 Cities
Indianapolis
Dayton
Atlanta
Milwaukee
Charlotte (4.4%)

Land of opportunity? Not by a long shot

Charlotte is nation's worst big city for climbing out of poverty

The prospects for escaping poverty are worse in Charlotte than in any other big metro area in the nation.

Any time Charlotte is worst in the country in anything, it should get residents' attention. Economists at Harvard and Cal-Berkeley have produced a detailed study of income mobility and find that Charlotte ranks 50th among the 50 biggest U.S. cities, and 97th out of 100.

America is known as the land of opportunity, the study's authors say, but the accuracy of that label depends upon where in America you live. In Charlotte and much of the South, most people have the opportunity to be about as well off as their parents, but no better. Charlotte children born in the bottom 20 percent in household income have a 4.4 percent chance of reaching the top 20 percent. Poor children's chances of moving to the top are double to almost triple that in places such as Seattle, San Jose, Boston, Salt Lake City, San Francisco and Washington, D.C.

Perhaps Charlotte kids are moving out of poverty, but just not to the top 20 percent? No. The report shows Charlotte ranked 98th of 100 on the overall movement of kids born to parents at the 25th percentile of income.

The research may be the most exhaustive of its kind. The economists compiled data from millions of earnings records, including all U.S. children born from 1980-82 and their incomes 30 years later.

Kids who grow up in Charlotte, they found, have less chance of moving up the income ladder than those in any developed country for which data are currently available.

This is troubling regardless of one's political stripes. No one is guaranteed a certain income, but the idea of equal opportunity goes to America's core. In Charlotte and all of the Carolinas, it's a myth.

The researchers found three major factors that they say are correlated with in-come mobility: racial and income segregation; inequality; schools; social capital and family structure.

The poor tended to stay poor more in cities that are the most segregated along racial and income lines. When poor people are dispersed across middle-class neighborhoods, their children tend to do better. That's why the City Council's approval last week of an affordable housing project in south Charlotte was an important moment. The children who grow up there will probably attend better schools and become friends with kids from a broader mix of income levels. In the long run, that will translate into better lives for them.

Carol Hardison, CEO of Crisis Assistance Ministry, sees another possible cause for Charlotte's ranking: the relative newness of Charlotte's wealth. Major philanthropy aimed at helping disadvantaged children, such as through Project LIFT, is a relatively recent phenomenon here. Older cities have enjoyed such efforts for generations.

"We have 150,000 people in poverty and one Project LIFT," Hardison told the Observer editorial board. "Go to Boston or Philly – they have 100-year-plus philanthropists who have been involved with not just short-term solutions but doing the research and unwinding problems."

There are no easy fixes, but awareness is a prerequisite. Then we need to encourage mixed-income neighborhoods, grow social capital and constantly work to reduce the student achievement gap. Perhaps Charlotte's City Council could get started at its retreat this week.

TODD SUMLIN - tsumlin@charlotteobserver.com
Students show off their new laptop computers at Druid Hills Academy, a Project LIFT school, last year.

Hardison
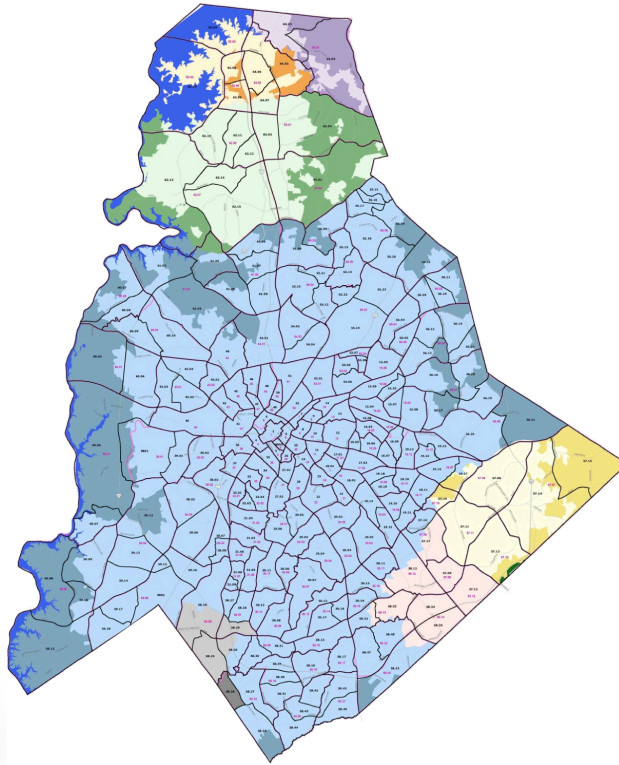
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I see a place where *I will always struggle,* and so will my children, even if we work hard.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg IS NOT an opportunity community.

I see a place where *I can get ahead* and build a future for my family if we work hard.

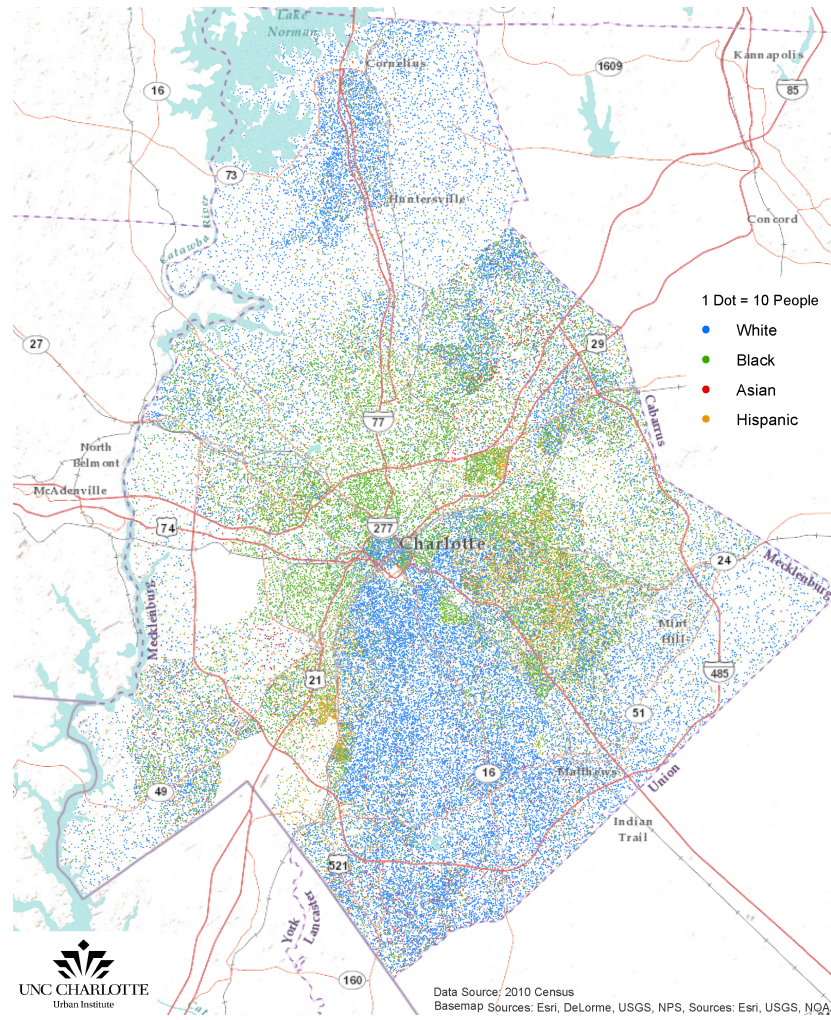Charlotte-Mecklenburg IS an opportunity community.

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What We Have Learned So Far...

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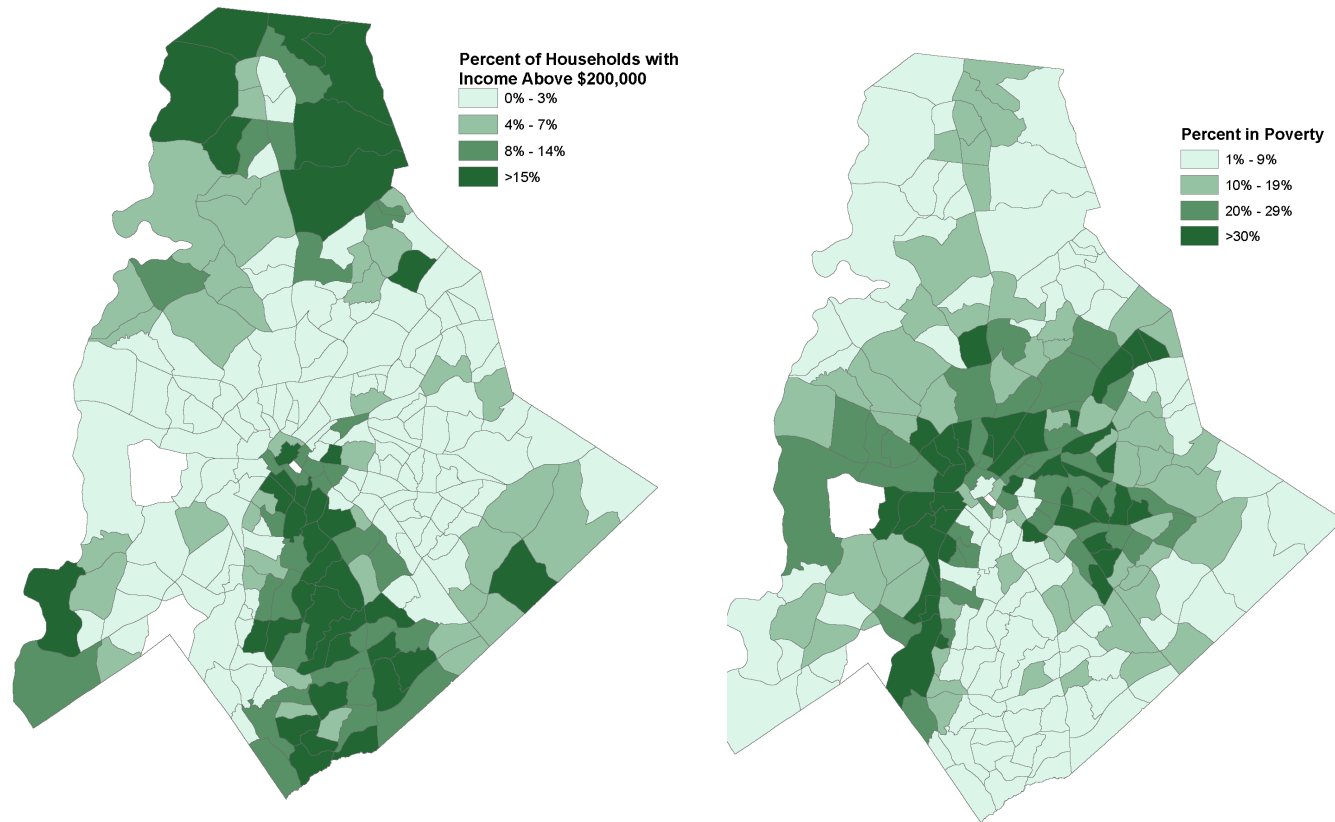OPPORTUNITY
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5 Opportunity Predictors

SEGREGATION

$$\$ \neq \$$$
INCOME INEQUALITY

SCHOOL QUALITY

SOCIAL CAPITAL

FAMILY STRUCTURE

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We Are Segregated
by race and ethnicity

SEGREGATION

1 Dot = 10 People
- White
- Black
- Asian
- Hispanic

Data Source: 2010 Census
Basemap Sources: Esri, DeLorme, USGS, NPS, Sources: Esri, USGS, NOAA

UNC CHARLOTTE
Urban Institute

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We Are Segregated by income

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

INCOME INEQUALITY

Percent of Households with Income Above $200,000
- 0% - 3%
- 4% - 7%
- 8% - 14%
- >15%

Percent in Poverty
- 1% - 9%
- 10% - 19%
- 20% - 29%
- >30%

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

We Are Segregated by income

Families in Poverty
- 40.0% & higher
- 30.0% - 39.9%
- 20.0% - 29.9%
- 10.0% - 19.9%
- 0.0% - 9.9%
- No Data

Esri, HERE, DeLorme, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS user community
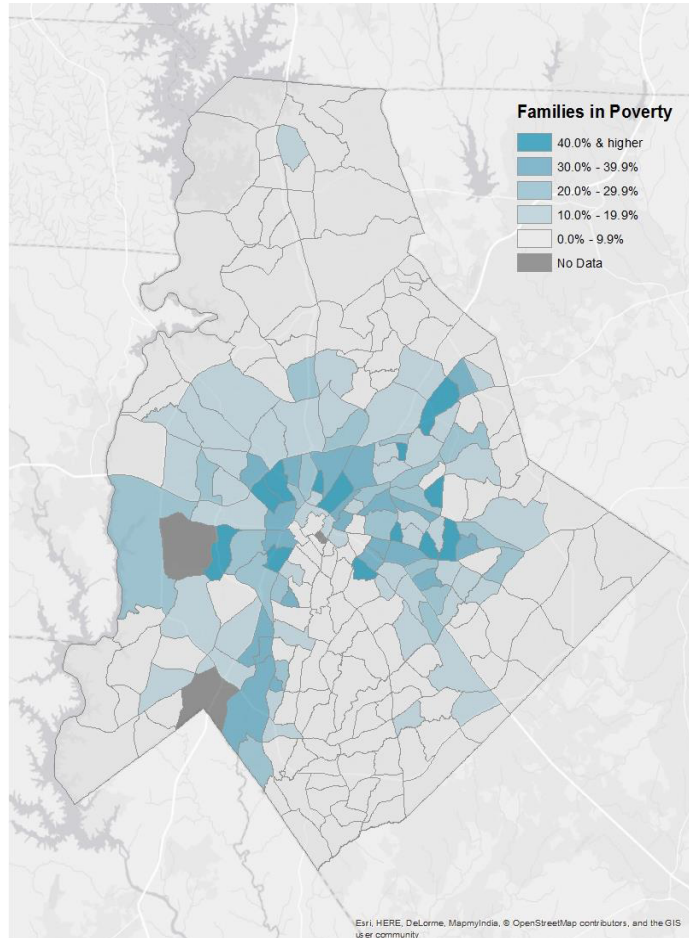
One in five children in Mecklenburg County lives in poverty (~50,000 kids)

Majority of kids in poverty are children of color:

- **35.7% of all Hispanic children**

- **30.7% of all Black children**

- **19.7% of all Asian children**

- **4.7% of all White children**

$ ≠ $
INCOME INEQUALITY

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

We Are Segregated
by educational achievement

SCHOOL QUALITY

3rd Grade Reading Proficiency
- 7% - 16%
- 17% - 27%
- 28% - 46%
- 47% - 63%
- 64% - 89%
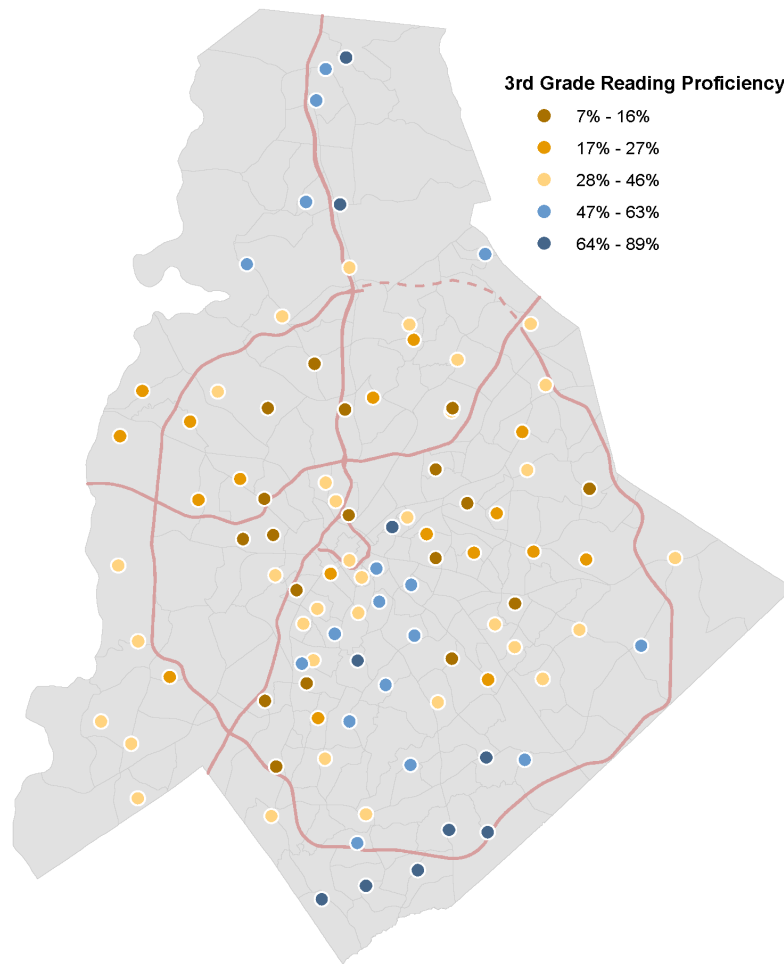
47% of CMS 3rd graders were proficient on end of grade reading tests

For economically disadvantaged students, **29%** were proficient

Segregation and achievement are closely linked together

1 in 3 schools are segregated by poverty

1 in 2 schools are segregated by race

1 in 5 schools are hyper-segregated by race

1 in 6 schools are imbalanced white

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We Are Segregated
by levels of social capital

SOCIAL CAPITAL

Voter Participitation in 2012

- 58% - 71%
- 72% - 77%
- 78% - 82%
- 83% - 90%
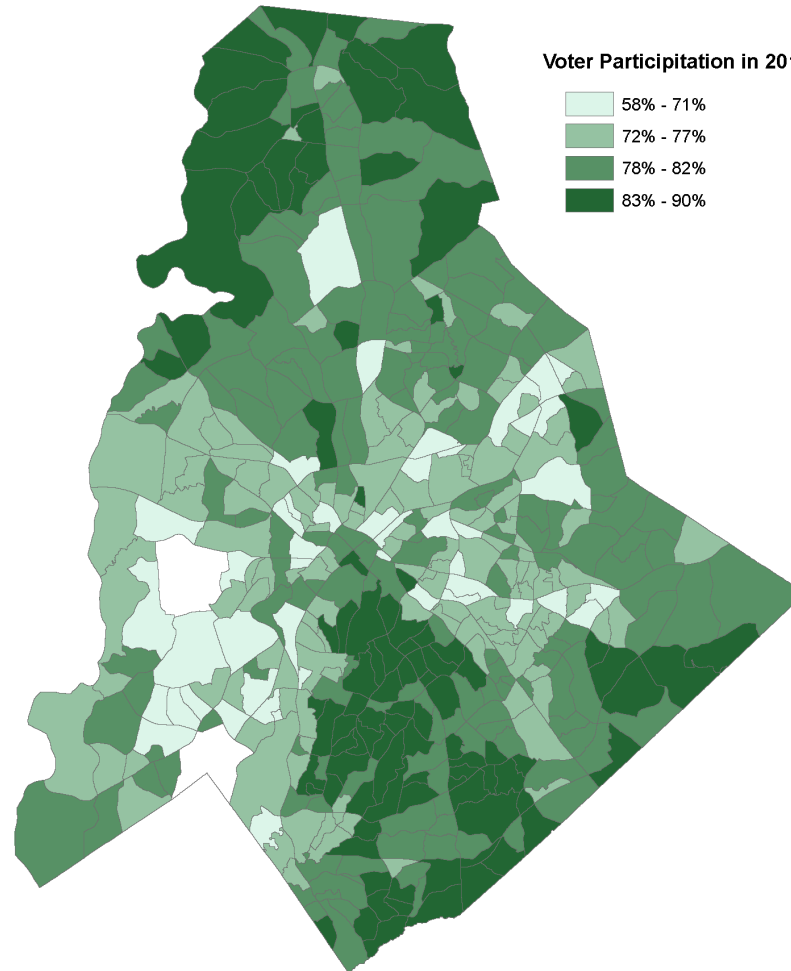
Voter turnout is a key indicator of the level of social capital in a community. The lighter areas are areas of lower turnout in the West and East; the darker areas in the North and South reflect higher turnout.

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We Are Segregated
by family structure

FAMILY STRUCTURE

Single-Parent Households
- 0% - 21%
- 22% - 41%
- 42% - 64%
- 65% - 100%
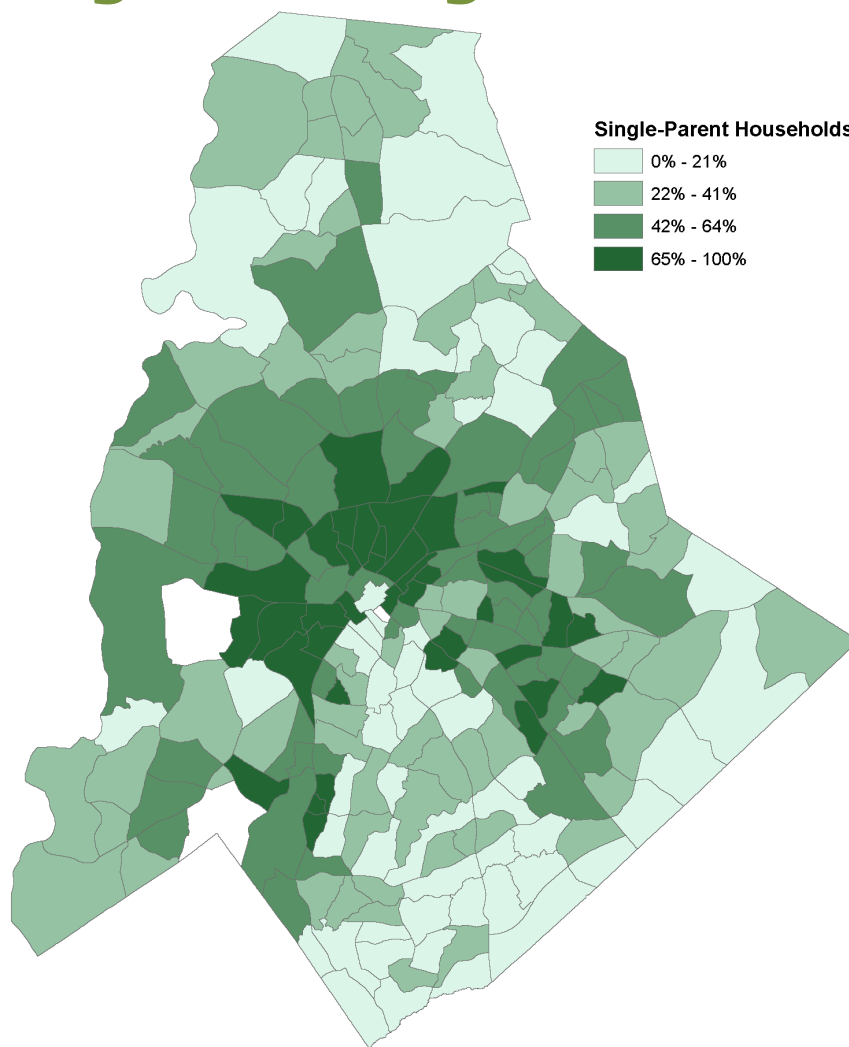
47,000 single-parent households in Mecklenburg.

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

One-third of all single moms in Mecklenburg County (12,163) are living in poverty

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

The Big Picture (so far)

1. There are no easy fixes; we need to be in it for long haul

2. Opportunity supports must start early in a child's life

3. Three types of capital are needed
   Human Capital
   Social Capital
   Financial Capital

4. A focus on single parent families is critical

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We Respond Together

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A Diverse Task Force

Partners

FOUNDATION FOR THE CAROLINAS

MECKLENBURG COUNTY · NORTH CAROLINA

CHARLOTTE

John M Belk Endowment
ELEVATE THROUGH EDUCATION

KF Knight Foundation
Informed & Engaged Communities

Z. Smith Reynolds
FOUNDATION

+ the community

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Knowledge and Data Experts

Key research sources

      UNC Charlotte

      Pew Charitable Trust Upward Mobility Project

      Brookings Institute

      Aspen Institute

      American Enterprise Institute

      Crittendon Women's Union (Boston)

      Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission (Britain)

Experts and Topics We Have Learned About

      Richard Reeves, Brookings Institute (economic mobility)

      Denise Watts, Project LIFT (education)

      James Ferguson, Attorney (community segregation)

      Dr. Amy Hawn Nelson, UNC Charlotte (school segregation)

      Dr. Betty Rintoul (early child development)

      Janet Singerman, Child Care Resources (child care access)

      Ann Clark, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS)

      Rosalyn Allison-Jacobs, consultant (reading proficiency)

      Dr. Robert Putnam, Our Kids author (social capital)

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Timeline

2015								2016									
May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct

Discovery Phase

Learning · Understanding Root Causes · Framing

Plan Development Phase

Visioning · Narrowing · Strategizing · Testing · Refining

Big Goal Setting

Factor 1
Factor 2
Factor 3
Factor 4
Factor 5
Factor 6

Content Experts and Data
- Current state
- Historical context
- New trends
- Early ideas
- Leverage points

Milestone #1

Discovery Report

What we have learned

Milestone #2

Opportunity Dashboard

What we want to change and measure

Milestone #3

Final Report

Actionable recommendations

Community/Stakeholder Engagement and Input

www.opportunitycharmeck.org

A Layered Approach

What are the attributes of individuals that the Task Force hopes to impact?

- Hopes/Aspirations
- Skills/Preparedness
- Connectedness/Social Capital
- Resilience/Grit

What about families most creates or constrains opportunity?

- Family Structure
- Family Traditions/Values
- Family Planning
- Family Income
- Parenting Skills/Resources

What in our community network of resources/ programs/support most creates or constrains opportunity?

- Neighborhood Characteristics
- Education Programs
- Life-Skills Programs
- Criminal Justice Programs
- Workforce Development Programs
- Faith Community
- Business Community

What are systemic or underlying forces and structures that most create or constrain opportunity?

- Housing
- Education
- Criminal Justice
- Segregation
- Cultural Values/Norms
- Explicit/Implicit Bias
- Exclusion/Inclusion
- Hiring Practices
- Income Inequality/Wages

•Individual

Family

Community

Systems/Structures

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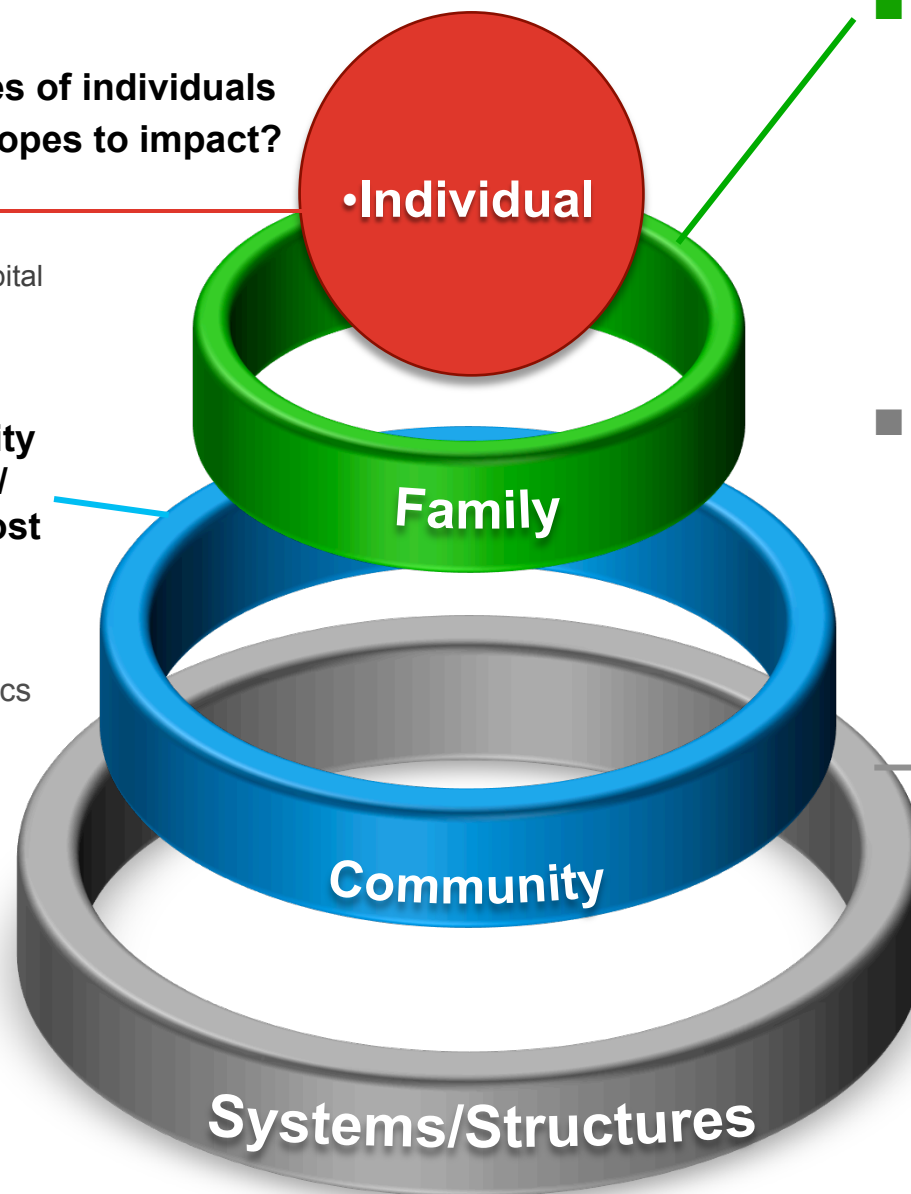
Engaging the
Community

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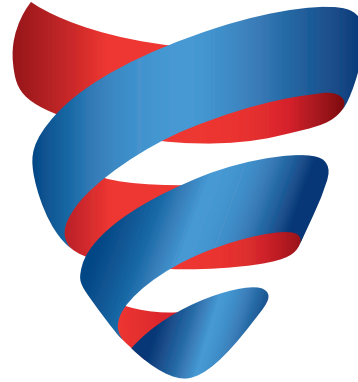# YOU CHOOSE HOW
to get involved!

3 Things You Can Do Right Now

1. SIGN UP on the website at www.opportunitycharmeck.org

2. FOLLOW the Opportunity Task Force on Facebook and Twitter

3. SHARE what you've learned today

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