

Champaign County
Racial Justice Task Force
September 14, 2017 – 6:30 p.m.

Lyle Shields Meeting Room,
Brookens Administrative Center
1776 East Washington Street, Urbana, Illinois

Agenda Item

- I. **Call To Order**
- II. **Roll Call**
- III. **Approval of Agenda**
- IV. **Approval of Minutes**
 - A. August 31 minutes
- V. **Public Participation**
- VI. **Presentations**
- VII. **New Business**
 - A. Vote on Final Drafts from Subcommittees
 - Housing
 - Structural
 - Financial Release Conditions
 - B. Establish final report working group and deadlines
- VIII. **Adjournment**

Champaign County Racial Justice Task Force (RJTF)
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, August 31, 2016
6:30 pm

I. Call to Order

Maryam Ar-Raheem called the meeting to order at 6:40pm. Eight members were present at this time.

II. Roll Call

Members Present: M. Ar-Raheem, L. Branham, E. Dee, (arrived 6:42pm) A. Felty, R. Hughes, A. James, E. Patt, H. Ross, G. Walter.

Members Absent: S. Balgoyen, S. Byndom, S. Lerner, C. Randolph, S. Silver, D. Turner,

III. Approval of Agenda

Gerry Walter moved to approve the agenda. Artice James seconded. The motion carried.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Esther Patt moved to approve the minutes. Gerry seconded the motion. The motion carried.

V. Public Participation

Albert Stabler

Bert was happy with how the last meeting went, including how decisive and focused the group was in light of the new discussion by the Sheriff to invest in a new jail. He has written pieces for Smile Politely and the Public I, and he encourages the momentum the task force has.

Sheri Williamson

Sheri is a social worker. She is starting a public affairs show on WEFT covering a variety of topics. On her first show, she will be discussing race so she wanted to be her to learn what the discussion is about.

VI. Presentations

No presentations.

VII. New Business

Vote on final report draft

The group addressed the various sections of the final report in order to approve them by vote.

Community Engagement

Gerry spoke about small changes made to this section. Some things were made more specific and inclusive.

Amy addressed the Police Training Institute and spoke about a citizen who has been through three PTI's and who said this one is the best he has seen. This PTI, according to him, focuses on the law and practices. He urged that we advocate that this one be retained.

Gerry moved that the Community Engagement section be adopted by the task force. Artice seconded the motion. The motion carried by vocal vote unanimously.

Police Practices

Ryan reviewed the Police Practices section again including a few small changes to grammar suggested by Lynn.

Ryan moved to approve the Police Practices section. Ellyn seconded the motion. Artice said that the County Board should begin looking at its policies. Maryam spoke about Durrell Cruz who studies Urbana's Police Practices. He called for the review of the IDOT study. He said that despite the IDOT study and the city's conclusion about the disparities, it has not resulted in any written change in policy. Maryam asked if we could add any language to emphasize the recommendations in the report. The group discussed how this could be added. Ellyn spoke briefly about her presentation to the County Board last week.

A friendly amendment was added: Recommendation 4. "*Local law enforcement agencies should investigate...*" Added at the end of Recommendation 4: "The County Board and municipalities should ensure that local law enforcement agencies meet this obligation." Ryan accepted the friendly amendment.

Henry came to the County Board and he said Ellyn and Ryan did a good job speaking about everything the task force has been doing. He also said that he really feels the spirit of the work in the drafts, and he thanked the task force for including his voice in the report. He is proud of the work.

The motion passed unanimously by vocal vote.

Juvenile Justice

Maryam spoke about the final draft of the Juvenile Justice section. One main focus was the effort to reduce the number of juveniles introduced into the criminal justice system.

Esther moved approval of the section. Artice seconded the motion.

Esther moved to suspend the rules for a member of the public to speak. Artice seconded. The motion carried. James Kilgore made a comment regarding the statistics presented in the Juvenile Justice section.

Maryam stated that the language needs to be more clear. Lynn introduced a friendly amendment to strike the sentence under "Local Detention of Youth and Racial Disparity in Detention": "Champaign locks up 23% of the youth population and contributes to 3.6% of statewide detention admissions." Esther and Artice accepted this friendly amendment. The motion passed by vocal vote.

Restorative Justices and Practices

Lynn spoke about the comments Ryan had regarding arrest vs. conviction data on page 3. The group discussed statistics for violent crimes. Lynn said they are trying to make the case that restorative justice and practices can help reduce racial disparities in the criminal justice system. Ryan introduced concerns about the first and third explanations on racial disparities.

Lynn moved to adopt the RJP section with the following changes: on page 3, delete #1 and #3 explanation on racial disparity, and the second section will read: “combating the effects of othering people of color.” Second sentence: “othering of people fosters...” 1st and 3rd footnotes to be deleted. Last sentence “other people of color.” Ryan seconded the motion.

The motion passed by vocal vote.

Fees and Costs for Criminal and Traffic Proceedings

Esther spoke briefly about minor changes made to this section. She moved to approve the section. Gerry seconded the motion.

Esther proposed an amendment to the motion to change the language of Recommendation 6. “The Champaign County Board should investigate with other local governments programs and policies to reduce the burden of cost of auto insurance.” Gerry agreed to the amendment. The motion was approved by vocal vote.

The group decided to postpone discussion and votes on the remaining sections until the next meeting. Amy noted that she was happy with Esther’s revisions to the Structural section.

VIII. Adjournment

Artice moved to adjourn.

Housing for People with Criminal Conviction Records (final)

Priority Step: Remove barriers to achieving stable housing for people with criminal conviction records.

Although persons with criminal conviction records are not a protected class under the federal Fair Housing Act, on April 4, 2016, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Office of General Counsel issued a memo to all public housing authorities warning that a policy of denying housing to people with criminal conviction records might violate the Act, even if racial discrimination is not intended, if the policy is too broad and is found to have a disparate impact based on race.

The memo noted:

“As many as 100 million U.S. adults – or nearly one-third of the population – have a criminal record of some sort. . . . Since 2004, an average of over 650,000 individuals have been released annually from federal and state prisons and over 95 percent of current inmates will be released at some point. When individuals are released from prisons and jails, their ability to access safe, secure and affordable housing is critical to their successful reentry to society.

“Across the United States, African Americans and Hispanics are arrested, convicted and incarcerated at rates disproportionate to their share of the general population. Consequently, criminal records-based barriers to housing are likely to have a disproportionate impact on minority home seekers.”

The memo urged that any exclusion of an applicant because of criminal record be based on evidence and “not just by invoking generalized concern about safety.”

The Housing Authority of Champaign County’s (HACC) eligibility criteria used for HACC-owned, public housing and for the Housing Choice Voucher program include:

- Family members who are ex-offenders must have been compliant with all parole requirements a minimum of **five years** prior to final eligibility determination.
- No member of the family may have engaged in drug related or violent criminal activity for **five years** prior to final eligibility determination, conviction or arrest not necessary.

Significant problems with this policy include:

- Inability to obtain housing or to re-unite with one’s family increases the risk of recidivism;
- The policy has no rational relationship to safety of housing communities because it does not distinguish crimes committed at the place where the convicted person had resided from crimes not related to the convicted person’s former housing.
- Even first time offenders whose sentence is probation for a period of less than five years are subject to a five year ban from subsidized housing.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development has not required Housing Authorities to take any action in response to the 2016 memo. The burden to challenge the policy falls on the individual applicant who has the means to take court action to challenge HACC’s regulations.

Municipal Laws: City of Champaign

City of Urbana and City of Champaign municipal code chapters on Human Rights, originally adopted in the 1970's, prohibit discrimination in employment, credit, housing and access to public accommodations on the basis of a person's "prior arrest or conviction record."

However, in 1994, City of Champaign added an exception, limiting non-discrimination protection only to persons who have lived outside of jail or prison for at least five years. The policy has a disparate impact on African American people both because of the race disparity in criminal convictions, and because of the race disparity in incomes. According to the U.S. Census Bureau 2015 population estimates for Champaign County, 41.5% of African Americans have incomes below the poverty level compared to 17.2% of Caucasians.

If a person with a conviction record for any crime, no matter how serious, is from a home-owning family, the family can reunite immediately upon the person's release. And it remains unlawful in City of Champaign to deny the purchase of residential real estate based on the applicant's conviction record.

However, if the person is a renter, as are most low income and indigent people, Section 17.4-5 of Champaign municipal code provides a broad exception: anyone convicted of a forcible felony or a felony drug charge may be lawfully denied housing until he or she has lived outside of jail or prison for at least 5 consecutive years without another conviction related to drugs or force.

In October, 2016, the Champaign County Re-Entry Council recommended that the Housing Authority of Champaign County change its eligibility policies and that the City of Champaign change its Human Rights law to prohibit discrimination in housing based on criminal conviction records without a 5-year delay for each applicant.

Also in October 2016, the City of Champaign's Human Relations Commission recommended to the Champaign City Council that it change its Human Rights law to repeal the section allowing discrimination in rental housing based on conviction record. At the time of this report, the mayor and city council have not yet decided to place the proposal on an agenda.

In response to research showing that housing discrimination based on criminal record boosts recidivism and has a disparate impact on racial minorities, on August 14, 2017, the City of Seattle, Washington approved a measure barring landlords from using criminal record as a basis for denial of any rental housing except owner-occupied properties. This is an example of a policy change that can and should be taken by City of Champaign officials to reduce the racial disparity in access to housing opportunities.

Recommendations

1. The Housing Authority of Champaign County should change its eligibility policies to provide fair housing rights to all applicants with criminal conviction records except when U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development rules require a public housing authority to reject an applicant due to criminal record.
2. The Champaign County Board should urge the Housing Authority of Champaign County to change its policies as described above.
3. The Champaign City Council should repeal Section 17.4-5 of the city code.
4. The Champaign County Board and local law enforcement officials should urge Champaign City Council members to repeal Section 17.4-5 of the city code to help reduce recidivism and racial disparities in the criminal justice system.

Racial Equity – What does Champaign County look like?

“Racial equity is about applying justice and a little bit of common sense to a system that’s been out of balance. When a system is out of balance, people of color feel the impacts most acutely, but, to be clear, an imbalanced system makes all of us pay.”

– Glenn Harris, President, Center for Social Inclusion, New York City

The Champaign County Board is investigating the evidences and effects of racism within its towns, cities, and countryside. An examination of the demographics of our many county communities and of our city neighborhoods and schools shows clear racial divisions that have come about through long-established and hard-to-change practices and policies that have divided people by skin color.¹ Below are just a few examples that stand out:

- the historical practice of red-lining² supported by realtors, bankers, and community norms to create and maintain an identifiable “North End” in Champaign-Urbana, predominantly composed of African-American individuals and families,
- the reality of Sundown Towns³ in Champaign County, where signs and practices both tacit and explicit keep small towns “white,” even in 2016,⁴
- the refusal to allow some African-American college students to live on campus as late as 1968 when Project 500⁵ was instituted at the University of Illinois, an undertaking based on good intentions to increase racial diversity among students, but one fraught with frustration,⁶
- the building of railroad overpasses and underpasses that selectively support and undermine business concerns,⁷
- the laments of various local governments, school districts, and business persons that they “want to hire for more racial diversity, but can’t find qualified applicants,”⁸
- the mostly white rural farming communities in Champaign County,⁹ even though, historically, many African-Americans coming from the South had advanced farming skills developed through generations of tending farms owned by Southern white landowners.¹⁰
- the general exclusion of African-Americans in unions and skilled trades in Champaign County, and recent difficulties with racial discrimination in the Facilities and Services department at UIUC.¹¹

These are clear testimony to the social and economic forces that are active and potent, developed over many decades, which shape our neighborhoods, educational and work environments, faith communities, and friendships. We are like many other communities in our nation when we examine data about housing and neighborhood make-up, unemployment and underemployment figures, hiring practices, high school graduation rates, and infrastructure projects.

In Champaign County, this task force is searching for evidence of racial disparity in the criminal justice system and seeking ways to correct any inequities found. This subcommittee report searches for deeper causes that interrupt people’s quest for productive lives and in increase their involvement with the criminal justice system. The results of more than fifty interviews are in answer to two questions: first, “what educational opportunities and what challenges have shaped your current life situation” and second, “what has helped or hindered you in accessing educational and employment opportunities.” The responses show the ways that race has affected these individuals’ progress and lives in our county.

In the report below, the reader will find broadly framed definitions of two terms that became part of our understanding of what people we interviewed deal with: implicit bias and structural racism. While these complex terms are the subject of much research, and while we cannot present the full implications of what these two terms encompass, it is important to at least present working explanations to guide the reader toward understanding the depth of racial inequities in everyday living. We also present a brief overview of restorative justice and restorative practices before reporting a few specific interviewee narratives and comments.

Finally, we list interviewees' recommendations for action in three broad categories: education, trauma-informed training, and employment/business concerns specific to Champaign County. These recommendations are offered to the County Board and to the community as a whole with the hope that they will help address and eliminate racial inequity through improved awareness and actions for everyone.

Though the County Board as a body cannot implement all of the recommendations in this subcommittee report, both the Board and its individual members can become advocates and proponents for change in powerful and meaningful ways.

Implicit Biases – Awareness First, Responsible Action Next

"It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences."

- Audre Lorde, *Our Dead Behind Us: Poems*

"Race is the child of racism, not the father."

- Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*

Describing how racism works is a difficult task. When people live long enough on the "white side" of racism – born into it and heir to its many weighted advantages – it is hard to recognize the ways it affects them and the institutions around them.¹² Racial bias is part of the fabric of people's lives and thinking. Never explicitly stated, it nonetheless dominates our interactions with one another. It is visible in many instances as implicit bias.¹³ Sharon Davies defines "implicit bias" in her work at The Ohio State University:

Implicit biases are easily triggered evaluative beliefs or stereotypes that can influence our understanding of others and our behaviors toward them without our full awareness. They are related to, but distinct from, explicit or overt expressions of bias. The key distinction is that the operation of implicit bias is largely hidden from our consciousness. Indeed, research shows that most of us are profoundly unaware of how often deeply embedded automatic associations linked to race, sex, age, and other identity markers affect our perceptions of others and our actions concerning them. Worse, these easily triggered associations can even contradict firmly held egalitarian commitments to be fair to others irrespective of our differences.¹⁴

Davies gives us a starting point in examining the specifics and the mechanisms of racism: "[T]he first step in addressing the effects of implicit biases is simply to be aware that they exist. Once aware of those potential blind spots in our judgment, we can take conscious and well-planned steps to change what is before us." Davies says that every decision, "made one by one over time," is consequential and has a cumulative effect.¹⁵

Our recommendations can help bring implicit biases to the level of conscious recognition.

Structural Racism – What Does This Term Mean?

The best definition and explanation of "structural racism" which our subcommittee found is quoted

immediately below.

Structural Racism: A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequity. It identifies dimensions of our history and culture that have allowed privileges associated with “whiteness” and disadvantages associated with “color” to endure and adapt over time. Structural racism is not something that a few people or institutions choose to practice. Instead it has been a feature of the social, economic and political systems in which we all exist.¹⁶

A paragraph from another document identifies some particulars of structural racism:

Like all other aspects of society, racialization¹⁷ impacts economic arrangements. Its cumulative and structural effects, or *structural racism*, are manifest in ways that perpetuate race-based economic inequities. Racialization and the political economy continually interact, from who controls sources of wealth in society, such as land, labor and capital, to where people live, go to school, get access to transportation and healthcare ... [to] who has controlled resources and who has been marginalized and/or excluded.¹⁸

Our interviewees have identified both formal and informal structures – laws, policies, practices, and norms – that contribute to and maintain racial inequities in our lives. We found copiously detailed research reports from other communities,¹⁹ and this Racial Justice Task Force (RJTF) has collected local data and statistics in its larger report. Previous studies concerning racial equity in Champaign-Urbana and research by doctoral students from UIUC frame relevant questions and convey the results. We support the use of all such sources to identify and make structural changes to eliminate inequities.

Restorative Justice and Restorative Practices – A Powerful Place to Begin

Some of our interviewees felt very positive about local pilot projects based on restorative justice. As set forth by author Howard Zehr, restorative justice is a process of establishing fruitful and honest discussions to uncover problems while envisioning every person’s role in change.²⁰ Champaign County has many opportunities to use restorative justice to be on the cutting edge eliminating racial inequities and racism from our lives. The RJTF has more to say about restorative justice and practices in other sections of its larger report.

Stories (Narratives) – Where We Meet One Another to Learn and to Become Friends

“Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign. But stories can also be used to empower, and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people. But stories can also repair that broken dignity.”

– Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Our subcommittee has listened carefully to interviewees’ personal and professional stories to understand what has determined their educational paths and what has shaped their working lives. They are African-American, white, and interracial, from ages 8 to 85. We share a few examples of what we heard, and we reference others in the recommendations. The wide variety of personal experiences lets us see how implicit bias and structural racism affects the well being of people in our community.

Erma Bridgewater – An interview from the Champaign County Historical Archives

We wish to acknowledge the transcription of an interview with Erma Bridgewater from the Champaign County Historical Archives.²¹ We encourage people to take ten to fifteen minutes to read and reflect upon her memories. Mrs. Bridgewater talked about instances of racial prejudice from her childhood, college years, and adulthood in Champaign. Her 1992 interview with Dallas Brown, a UIUC student at the time, is part of the local record at the Champaign County Historical Archives.

Other interviewees, both African-American and white, were reflective and specific their experiences. Their stories were typical of Mrs. Bridgewater's, detailing what we call "micro-aggressions"²² today. We present just a few examples to show the range of what people in our community people are saying.

Stories of fear – prejudice that separates people

Again and again, African-American interviewees related their encounters with racial bias. Several white people expressed fear of people of color. Some white women said they were afraid of "the North End" in C-U and declared it unsafe to drive through even during the daytime. One woman said she reads the newspaper to know who to be afraid of and where to be afraid to go. Both African-Americans and white interviewees felt immense frustration in the face of such prejudices and made suggestions about how to counter racism in Champaign County.

A story of economics – how structural racism causes far-reaching disparities in wealth and well being

One African-American minister shared his frustration about funding needs for church-based activities for children. He brought to light a complicated chain of cause-and-effect. Churches are mostly racially segregated in our communities, and he hears of white churchgoers saying things like, "If they [African-Americans] want activities for their children, they should provide them like we do." But summer camps, sports, classes, trips, and year-round programs require planning, supplies, and supervision – all of which cost money, even with generous volunteer hours. The criticism leveled at African-American pastors and their congregations doesn't take into account a basic, underlying reality: African-Americans have a harder time than their white counterparts do finding full-time jobs that pay a living wage or establishing their own businesses to support their families. With less income, tithing cannot fully support the church services they want for their children and youth. African-American pastors usually have full-time jobs outside the church to support their own families, because they face the same challenges as their parishioners. On the other hand, mainly white churches can generally support full-time pastors and provide additional financial resources to organize church programs. Ironically, the majority of jobs that African-American pastors and church members hold are in white-owned businesses because of long-standing economic practices around obtaining business loans in our community. That "double whammy" – less money available for church programs and less time available for pastors – means that African-American churches cannot provide the same kind of programs that white churches take for granted. Why, asked the African-American pastor, can't the white churches see this problem and spend some of the money sent elsewhere in the world to help support programs in our own community? This is one example of economic disparity in our county.

A story from the 1950s

Urbana's Lakeside Terrace was built in 1952 as a successful multi-racial, multi-cultural housing development that one African-American woman remembers fondly. Her mother was often invited on informal ride-alongs with the Urbana police to share information about neighborhood needs so that the department could direct community resources, on a small but meaningful scale, to people in need. Those personal, helpful relationships alleviated significant stress before anger, frustration, and despair became destructive. Our interviewee recommended having open and friendly interactions with our police and other governmental bodies again. Such relationships, based on trust, strengthen our communities.

A story of caution

A white person expressed concern about a conversation with a new, young police officer who was eager to watch for criminal behavior – to "catch" people doing wrong. The interviewee was thoughtful about the difference between "getting" people and "getting to know" people. It was obvious which attitude the interviewee valued in building unity and in constructive policing practices.

We also found individuals and groups of people consciously working to address racial discrimination. We mention some examples below and know that there are many more.

- **Kudos to Donna Pittman.** The recently appointed director at the **Champaign Public Library** has staffed the downtown library with an African-American security person who interacts with children and youth to feel safe and welcome. Additionally, after-school programs for middle school students have increased in number and variety; students have places other than the café area to socialize after school and to enjoy new activities.
- **UIUC has a website for reporting acts of intolerance at the University** since 2010. We encourage people to see and use <http://www.conflictresolution.illinois.edu/tolerance/reporting.asp>.
- **We applaud Katie Blakeman, Champaign County Circuit Clerk, for organizing the first expungement and record-sealing summit** held in October 2016 at Stone Creek Church in Urbana. Expungement is a process that removes the records of certain categories of first-time offenders from general view, making the records unavailable through state or federal searches. When previous offenders seek employment, expungement removes one more barrier.
- **Many people praised Avicenna, organized and supported by the Central Illinois Mosque in Urbana.** This free clinic proves healthcare for the uninsured and underinsured in our community and has made a significant difference in people's lives. See <http://www.avicennahealth.org>.
- **The YMCA on campus, several departments at UIUC and Parkland, and many religious groups** are exploring social and racial justice through speakers, programs, panels, discussions, and action steps. The number of programs has increased in the past three years.

Recommendations for Education

It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.

– Frederick Douglass

Several African-Americans, age 50 and older, described overt racism in our local public school systems.²³ Many younger African-American interviewees said that not enough people “look like me in my school,” a visible bias that made them feel unwelcome and less wanted. Students said that some teachers seemed afraid of students who are not “white.” Some said that sports was the only connection that they had to school. White teachers and administrators “called the shots” that often seemed “fired” at African-American youth. Here are their suggestions for change.

1. **Hire more African-Americans.** This was the number one request among younger people: “hire people who look like me, who aren’t afraid to show that they like me, who can teach well, and who care about my learning.”²⁴ Schools that say they can’t “find” qualified African-American applicants²⁵ may find the reason rooted in our community’s reputation of being difficult to live in according to our interviewees. African-Americans noted that asking people to teach in a school where they themselves were treated as second-class students is unrealistic.
2. **Expand and sustain use of the National Name Exchange.**²⁶ “Founded in 1976, the National Name Exchange is a consortium of fifty-five nationally-known universities which annually collect and exchange the names of their talented and underrepresented ethnic minority students in an effort to increase the enrollment of traditionally underrepresented peoples in graduate education.” Students from across the country attend UIUC through this program, yet none of the local high school counselors and teachers whom we talked with had heard of the program. This is an excellent opportunity for Champaign County students who qualify. The Dean of Students office at Parkland College is aware of and promotes the National Name Exchange.
3. **Discuss race and racism openly and honestly in our schools.**²⁷ Interviewees called discussion of race “the elephant in the room” in Champaign County. African-American and white students are

separated by an “equity” gap, not an “achievement” gap,” according to a long-retired African-American school administrator.²⁸ When each school and each teacher accepts all students and treats them respectfully, students can give their full attention to learning. Racism distorts and destroys the kind of relationships that students and teachers need for good education to take place.²⁹

4. **End the system of detentions and suspensions; they “smell of fear and inadequacy” and do not solve the problems students are facing.** The term “holding pens” was used to describe detention and isolation rooms. Youth expressed resentment about treatment that demeans and angers them, including being behind academically and not being taught what they need to learn. They want people to listen to their concerns, and they want teachers whom they trust to have their best interests at heart. Interviewees felt that racial discrimination was especially evident in disciplinary actions. [We studied a report from the Kirwan Institute which named “implicit bias” as a main factor in disproportionate discipline and lower academic achievement of African-American students in schools.³⁰]
5. **Initiate training about implicit bias as part of professional development among all public school personnel: staff, teachers, aides, building administrators, and district administrators.**³¹ Our subcommittee recommends that seven people (Don Owen, Susan Zola, Samuel Byndom, Matt Stark, Jennifer Tatum, Karen Simms, and Sara Balgoyen) take the lead in addressing how to make implicit bias visible to all C-U school personnel. They might ask UIUC and Parkland experts to assist. The efforts that have begun in this area can be supported and intensified.
6. **Implement trauma-informed counseling in all schools for both students and adults.** A punitive approach does not promote addressing problems and healing from trauma at any age.³² Using ACE scores³³ to measure childhood traumas and to build support based on individual needs,³⁴ trauma-informed training can help everyone progress. We recommend that teachers have sufficient trauma information to make better decisions about referrals to school specialists.
7. **Retire the SRO (School Recourse Officer) program, hire counselors, and add restorative justice to support healthy adolescent development and success in school and in life.** Schools that promote collaborative and cooperative learning help children and youth mature; what happens in schools shapes the future. Instead of punishment and police action, our students want places to learn and practice academic and social skills without being treated as “pre-criminals.”³⁵
 - a. Examine the differences in data between Urbana and Champaign schools since 2006 with the implementation of the SRO program in Champaign high schools and middle schools. Urbana does not have the same full-time SRO program. This is a ready-made, ten-year-long experiment. Our subcommittee recommends that a UIUC professor undertakes this comparison with a doctoral student or a graduate class.
 - b. Our school environments should focus on healthy adolescent development for all students. Their general well being and behavior can be appropriately addressed by hiring a sufficient number of full-time behavioral specialists, instead of SROs.³⁶
 - c. Restorative justice involves well-developed listening and responding skills and is being piloted in some local schools. We recommend restorative practices as a natural companion to behavioral training. [Restorative justice is addressed in more detail in other sections of the RJTF report.]
 - d. We reviewed the Champaign Unit #4 Summary Report³⁷ for 2015-16 assessing school and community satisfaction with the SRO program. The summary contains responses from a focus group of sixty-four (64) students hand-picked by the principals in the three

middle schools and two high schools in Champaign. [Champaign serves 10,000 students each year.³⁸] The summarized responses are not broken down by race; answers to only eleven of the twelve focus group questions are cited; and no indication is given of how positive and negative comments were dealt with. We wonder if these results represent the thoughts and experiences of the general student body at these five schools.

- e. The Summary Report also gives results from parent surveys. We find that the presentation of data (yes/no-type responses) in bar graph de-emphasize the “no” responses and skews the data toward the “yes” responses in three ways.³⁹

- 8. **The Champaign County Board and Park Districts could open a “driving park” for teens and adults learning to drive.** “Why do we usually think about school buildings as the only places for learning?” asked one interviewee. She suggested a welcome and safe place to practice parallel parking, turning, and backing up as a great place to gain skills and confidence. Such a practice area would help “protect” young drivers and other new drivers from practicing on the streets, and might decrease the number of traffic stops and accidents overall.

Trauma-Informed Training and Practice – Assessing the Health of Our Communities

Our subcommittee is concerned about the effects of long-term discrimination that structural racism causes. **Intergenerational trauma** is “the transmission of historical oppression and its negative consequences across generations.”⁴⁰ The impact of sustained trauma on the health and well being of families and on whole communities is a topic of current research among populations which have historically been subjected to unfair discriminatory practices. The results of long-term trauma continue to adversely affect later generations who were not directly involved in the original trauma.⁴¹

Our interviewers spoke of intergenerational trauma that has harmed African-Americans in Champaign County, relating vivid memories of discrimination that their own parents, grandparents, and neighbors suffered. Though there have been little documentation of local trauma, there is evidence that harm existed and continues to exist. Racial discrimination has been legally abolished, but it has not ended.⁴²

We are fortunate to have a trauma-informed trainer working in the community through the Champaign-Urbana Area Project (CUAP). Karen Simms is training agency people and volunteer citizens about the ways trauma is manifested in people’s actions and reactions. She also explains the kind of responses and treatments that help people recover. Trauma doesn’t stem just from traffic accidents and one-time experiences. Long-term, unrelenting stress is traumatic and life changing. It alters our brain chemistry and perceptions of possible threats, and it causes autonomic reactions that “freeze” thinking and judgment. The resulting behaviors may look like impulsive and irresponsible acts of choice, but they are not. The danger of treating behavior produced by traumatic responses as willful behavior has become a matter of life and death across the nation. While we recognize that war veterans have PTSD, we need to know that people who have suffered and internalized the stresses of racism have the similar physical and emotional reactions that need to be acknowledged and healed.⁴³

Trauma-informed training sessions are already helping local participants recognize and begin to heal the effects of both one-time and long-term traumas. [For a detailed list of causes and symptoms of PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), please see this reference.⁴⁴] Our subcommittee feels this important community-based program should be supported and expanded to help people understand trauma better.

Recommendations (for individuals) around trauma-informed training, community and schools:

- 9. **Ask people to tell their stories and listen respectfully to know firsthand what they have suffered.**

10. **Attend the CUAP trauma-informed training workshops.** Host or attend a one- or two-hour introductory session, a six-hour training, or a 40-hour workshop. Provide support and encouragement for someone else to attend.
11. **Advocate for each school district to put trauma-informed practices into place for students, families, and staff.** Some schools in New Orleans, where Hurricane Katrina left both emotional and financial scars on people of all ages, have implemented trauma-informed practices for students. Harsh discipline and suspensions have been replaced with trauma-informed counseling. The interventions cited in a report published in January 2017 show encouraging short-term and longer-term results.⁴⁵

Recommendations (for communities) around trauma-informed training, community and schools:

12. **Extend support for CUAP's trauma-informed outreach and training in the community.** Several educational programs for agencies and community members can address trauma as one root cause of violence and anger. Training that recognizes stress can reduce violence and engage people in the community in healing and productive ways.⁴⁶
13. **Create a partnership with UIUC, Parkland, and the new Carle/UIUC medical center to undertake a local epigenetic study of trauma.** Use the findings to improve health and well being. Studying intergenerational trauma among African-American families and finding effective interventions to increase resilience⁴⁷ is one way to promote healing and recovery from epigenetic trauma. A successful pilot study of research and treatment would be beneficial for communities across the nation. We recommend that Chancellor Robert Jones of UIUC, Nathan Stephens (director at the Nesbitt African American Cultural Center at UIUC), Patricia Avery (director of the CUAP), and Karen Simms be instrumental in outlining the scope of such study and setting it in motion.
14. **Create specific programs/resources for children and youth with incarcerated parents/close relatives/caretakers.** Incarceration creates its own emotional turmoil, stress, and frustrations that schools are seldom equipped to discover and deal with. Children and young people withdraw, become depressed, act out, fall behind, and are otherwise overwhelmed. Interviewees noted that such services are needed for our school-age children who are struggling in this way.⁴⁸
15. **Support the First Followers Re-Entry Program for people returning from incarceration.** Successful re-integration into community life has specific needs. Often whole families need extra support and counseling while members make this transition.
16. **Add an on-line reporting site for reporting incidences of racism or hate in Champaign County.** Earlier in 2017, the Human Rights Commission of Columbus, Ohio, launched a web "portal" through which residents can report incidences of racial bias or "hate-induced" crimes.⁴⁹ This is similar to the UIUC website for reporting "acts of intolerance" cited earlier in this document.⁵⁰ We suggest that the County Board create a community site, advertise it widely, and follow up on incidents reported through restorative circles and/or other appropriate options.
17. **Continue to show the film *Racial Taboo* with its follow-up discussions that draw people together as they learn about the history of racial discrimination in our country.** White people who see the film often comment that they didn't know the history of oppression since the end of legal slavery in 1865.⁵¹ African-Americans who view the film often say, "Yes, I know those things. I have been subjected to those practices." Participants talk together in small groups, exchanging personal experiences on their way to knowing one another better and to understanding the origins of racism in the United States. This can increase personal understanding of racism.

Recommendations for Employment and Business Concerns

“Chronic unemployment and disproportionate incarceration rates leave many African American families fragmented, powerless and all but incapable of stability. ... Imagine the impact of generation after generation after generation of familial disintegration.”⁵²

– Dr. Joy DeGruy

In light of the ways that structural racism has negatively impacted the financial well being of African-American families and individuals, we make the following recommendations based on interviewees’ comments. These suggestions are offered as “templates.” In reality, people need to consult together to determine what to do. Our interviewees across all races want the same things: knowledge, access to opportunity, fair treatment in employment, and respectful relationships with others.

The simple request: “Offer gainful employment with opportunities for advancement.”

18. **Hire African-Americans for full-time employment with the same benefits as other full-time employees.** “Gainful” employment includes pay that meets a family’s needs, not part-time work in place of full-time positions. Full-time employment creates stability and dependability, reduces stress, allows families to lead productive lives, and lets people plan for the future. Note to employers from one interviewee: If what you are offering isn’t a job you would fairly choose for yourself, for your adult children, or for your spouse, please reconsider what you are asking for.
19. **Recognize that most people need variety, encouragement, and challenge for their work to be satisfying.**⁵³ Professional growth, skill development, and collaborative work on new projects with other people provide elements of satisfaction and increase retention rates. Expect a learning curve and provide adequate and courteous training for all new employees.⁵⁴
20. **Establish internships and volunteer opportunities for all high school youth.** By the time a person graduates from high school, (s)he can have visited at least three different kinds of businesses, offices, or sites to have an idea of what the jobs are. This school/business partnership program can include summer visits.
21. **Create a central database in Champaign County where employers can post notifications to alert potential employees.** Organize the information according to categories of skills and experiences. People could have access from any computer connected to the Internet.
22. **Work closely with the Champaign County Black Chamber of Commerce (CCBCC)⁵⁵ and set a goal of 100% gainful employment with opportunities for advancement in our county.** We heard the idea for this goal from both African-American and white people of many ages. The CCBCC website says: “When African-American communities are doing well, then all communities are doing well.”

Growing the health of our community

“What is power? It is the ability to tell people what the problem is, who is responsible and what should be done about it. That’s what power is.”

– Kevin Phillips

When the RJTF began its work in February 2016, one question raised was how to solicit and use community input on issues concerning the criminal justice system. This subcommittee has purposefully reached out to many people who shared their experiences. All of us, with the County Board, share the power to change our community for the better based on what we have learned about racial biases and inequities that lead, in part, to the disparities in the criminal justice system.

We thank everyone who worked with us, local people of many ages and colors who have lived, gone to school, worked, and retired in Champaign County. We suggest that our community is fundamentally no different from others in this country. And we are optimistic that we can shape a better future.

As one participant in a Racial Taboo discussion in 2016 so aptly explained –

“White privilege is the difference between biking into the wind and riding with the wind at your back.”

We seek to keep the wind at everyone’s back as we walk forward together.

¹ The Center for Social Inclusion was founded in 2002. Its website <http://www.centerforsocialinclusion.org/our-work/what-is-racial-equity/> begins a lengthy report on racial equity with the following scenario:

Imagine two neighborhoods.

In one neighborhood is [one family] the Smiths. The Smiths’ neighborhood is stagnating, with abandoned homes, poor schools, and over-policing. Most of their neighbors, including themselves, are people of color.

In the adjoining neighborhood is [another family] the Jones. [Their] neighborhood has plenty of fresh food markets, a robust bus system, parks, health centers and good schools. Families flock there because all of these services translate to economic opportunity and good health. Most of the families who live in this neighborhood, including the Jones, are [w]hite.

The racial composition of their neighborhoods didn’t just happen on their own. Who lives in which neighborhood and whether that neighborhood has decent housing, good schools, and well-paying jobs is determined by multiple, institutional policies and practices. Whether intentionally or not, these policies and practices have often discriminated by race, which is why we see so much difference in life outcomes based on race.

² Redlining: “In the United States, redlining is the practice of denying services, either directly or through selectively raising prices, to residents of certain areas based on the racial or ethnic composition of those areas. While the best known examples of redlining have involved denial of financial services such as banking or insurance, other services such as health care or even supermarkets have been denied to residents (or in the case of retail businesses like supermarkets, simply located impractically far away from said residents) to result in a redlining effect. Reverse redlining occurs when a lender or insurer targets particular neighborhoods that are predominantly nonwhite, not to deny residents loans or insurance, but rather to charge them more than in a non-redlined neighborhood where there is more competition.”

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Redlining>

³ Sundown Towns in Illinois, a database being expanded as we read by James Loewen, author of *Sundown Towns: A Hidden Dimension of American Racism*.

<http://sundown.tougaloo.edu/sundowntownsshow.php?state=IL>

⁴ One African-American interviewee visited Mahomet in 2016. Her experience of driving to a friend’s home in Mahomet with another African-American woman shows that young people there are that still learning racism. One evening about sundown but before it was very dark, the two women turned off I-74 and drove into town on the main road. A car with white teenagers passed them and shouted the N- word at their car. Though they weren’t further harassed on that trip, the incident caused such anxiety that the interviewee said she will not return to Mahomet. Colleagues have also warned her that Tolono is not safe for African-Americans.

See <http://sundown.tougaloo.edu/sundowntownsshow.php?id=1694> for notes about Tolono.

See <http://sundown.tougaloo.edu/sundowntownsshow.php?id=1636> for notes about Mahomet.

In Champaign County, Loewen lists the following towns as probable/possible Sundown towns based on reports by people who have lived in or visited them.

Fisher – possible

Homer – possible

Mahomet – probable

Philo – probable

Sidney – possible

St. Joseph – probable

Tolono – probable

⁵ Project 500 was the first extensive effort by the University of Illinois to offer equal educational opportunities for all of the residents of Illinois. Spurred by the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968, students and community residents urged the university to enroll students traditionally underrepresented on campus. In 1967, only 372 of 30,400 students were black. In 1968, [565 newly admitted African American](#) and Latino students entered the student body. The details of the project were poorly carried out, and miscommunication between students and the university bureaucracy led to a protest at the Illini Union on September 10, 1968 that resulted in the arrest of 240 black students. <http://guides.library.illinois.edu/c.php?g=348250&p=2350891>

Also see the eBlack Champaign-Urbana online for some information about Project 500 and for issues concerning African-Americans in Champaign-Urbana. The site was created by Noah Lenstra when he was a student at UIUC.

http://eblackcu.net/portal/items/browse?search=project+500&submit_search=Search

⁶ Interviewees who lived in C-U at the time of Project 500 recalled students renting rooms with families living in the North End (segregated area north of University Avenue) while they attended the University of Illinois. At least some African-American students were not allowed to live in campus housing that was available to other students.

⁷ For consideration at planning meetings for CUUATs (Champaign Urbana Urbanized Area Transportation Study (CUUATS) under the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) through many years, drivers using Bradley Avenue have asked for an overpass or underpass for the railroad crossing at Bradley and Chestnut Streets. Traffic is often stopped for long periods of time. An answer given was “There is not enough money to construct this. Maybe in the future.” However, in other places where a railroad on a main thoroughfare caused significant traffic back-ups, underpasses have been constructed. Residents expressed resentment that their request for traffic improvement through a predominantly African-American area of the twin cities is routinely put off or ignored.

⁸ This is a summary of several people’s remarks about city government and school district diversity hiring reports through the years. Interviewees remarked upon the repeated refrain of “we would hire if we could” about African-American applicants. The result has been a dearth of African-Americans in administrative leadership and policy-making positions, particularly in the City of Champaign and in County offices. Urbana has done better, interviewees say, but diversity needs to increase so that all voices are “at the table” and involved in making decisions that affect everyone in our communities.

⁹ A report on Illinois farm operators on September 9, 2010 says: “Only 98 out of Illinois’ nearly 77,000 farms are operated primarily by African-American farmers who collectively cultivate fewer than 10,000 acres, according to the 2007 census of agriculture – that’s not even close to 1 percent of Illinois’ more than 26.7 million acres of farmland.” <http://illinoistimes.com/print-article-7738-print.html>

This same report notes that “systematic racial bias in the distribution of farm loans by the U.S. Department of Agriculture” was proven and acknowledged in court. “Led by North Carolina farmer Tim Pigford, black farmers responded to USDA discrimination with a class action lawsuit, now known as *Pigford v. Vilsack*.” “The government admitted wrongdoing and settled the case in 1999.” The article also says: “For the last 15 or 20 years, Terrie Ransom, a volunteer with the Springfield Illinois African-American History Foundation, has studied the migration of blacks to Illinois. He says a wave of African-Americans bought land, much of it in the Alton area, in the 1830s and 1840s, but on the whole whites had more buying power than most blacks at the time. Regardless, African-Americans – both slaves and free blacks – coming to Illinois at that time had backgrounds in agriculture, an area where they looked for employment, Ransom says.”

¹⁰ Although black families were sometimes included in the Homestead Act of 1962, they or their ownership of land “mysteriously” vanished if the bank found a way to take it or if the land proved to be valuable because of oil and natural gas resources. [Black farmers had few opportunities to be successful and little recourse to the law.] <http://www.nationalbcc.org/news/beyond-the-rhetoric/1460-did-your-family-benefit-from-the-homestead-act>

¹¹ Interviewees spoke of historic practices of “good old boy” networks and nepotism keeping unions and the trades full of white applicants and trainees in Champaign County. Relatively few African-Americans have gained spots in skilled trades. Even at UIUC, the record is spotty. Our subcommittee listened first-hand to the mistreatment of five of seven aggrieved men and one woman from Facilities and Services about incidents and remarks of racial discrimination during recent years. In April 2016, a white man was fired for leaving a noose on the desk of an African-American co-worker. African-Americans in that department have been subjected to demotions, firings, being assigned desk space in unused and unclean basement areas, and being overtly denied opportunities to apply for promotions within their fields of expertise, specifically because of their race. The University had prompted an internal inquiry into racial discrimination in about 2014, but the results do not seem to be publicly available. See news articles at <http://dailyillini.com/news/2016/05/06/swastika-vandalism-found-in-campus-buildings-ui-employee-dismissed-for-leaving-noose/> and <http://www.news-gazette.com/news/local/2016-04-29/fs-noose-incident-prompts-probes.html>.

¹² One excellent book that helps white people understand “white privilege” is *Waking Up White: Finding Myself in the Story of Race* by Debbie Irving, 2014. The author, a privileged white woman born in 1960 in Winchester, MA, describes her journey to understand what racism looks like. She deconstructs the concepts of race and privilege to offer insights that let her readers really “connect” with racism. At the end of the book, Irving invites readers on a journey to make positive differences in dismantling racism.

¹³ A helpful list of what “white privilege” looks like in everyday life is compiled in “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” by Peggy McIntosh, 1988. <https://www.deanza.edu/faculty/lewisjulie/White%20Privilege%20Unpacking%20the%20Invisible%20Knapsack.pdf>

¹⁴ See “Driving Campus Diversity One decision at a Time,” by Sharon Davies, 2016: <http://www.aacu.org/liberaleducation/2016/fall/davies>. Davies is the executive director of the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at the Ohio State University. For a second clear definition and list of characteristics of “implicit bias,” see a second report from the same institute: <http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/researchandstrategicinitiatives/#implicitbias>

¹⁵ “Left unaddressed, implicit biases can influence countless judgments and choices made [daily] – all day, every day. The cumulative result is an unintentional reproduction of the status quo and patterns of decision making that profoundly constrain the diversity and inclusiveness of our institutions. Because decisions are made one by one over time ... they can seem less consequential than they actually are. (Surely one hire, or one admissions decision, can’t be that important?) As long as individuals remain unaware of their own implicit biases, the effects of implicit bias itself will go unconsidered, and harmful associations connected with race, gender, age, and so on will continue to go undisrupted.”

Davies also says that people can change their biases and behavior, “Unlike explicit biases, which today we tend to believe are confined to a relatively small groups of bigoted individuals, brain science has shown that implicit biases are pervasive. They even influence the perceptions and judgments of individuals who have heightened professional obligations to act impartially and even-handedly, such as judges and teachers.

“People sometimes despair when they first learn about implicit bias. (If implicit bias is an automatic cognitive process that operates without our permission or even awareness, what can we do about it?) Happily, recent research suggests that just as implicit associations are learned, they can gradually be unlearned, freeing us to act in alignment with our intentions to treat others fairly. ... To be effective, however, interventions to counter the harmful effects of implicit bias require a genuine and steadfast commitment to build and embrace diversity. ...”

¹⁶ See the Aspen Institute’s glossary of terms: <https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/files/content/docs/rcc/RCC-Structural-Racism-Glossary.pdf>

¹⁷ *Rationalization* is “the process by which racial understandings are formed, re-formed and assigned to groups of people *and* to social institutions and practices, and to the consequences of such understandings. ... The effects of racialization accumulate over time.” [page 5]

https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/race_power_policy_workbook.pdf [To access this workbook, the reader may have to copy and past the link into the browser bar.]

“All of the discrepancies between whites and communities of color that we see today: the wealth gap, the education gap, higher incarceration rates, higher unemployment rates, and disparities in health outcomes, are evidence of structural racialization. Segregation in housing and discrimination in lending have cumulative effects: fewer sources of family wealth, as well as fewer investments in, and limited services for, communities of color. Likewise, patterns of residential discrimination and disinvestment affect the quality of schools in communities of color.

“The thing to remember about structural racialization is that **racialized outcomes no longer require racist actors** [emphasis is in the original text]. It is built into the institutions and practices. Getting rid of a racist person does not change the practices. The critical aspect of racism that we must address today is the accumulation and incorporation of long-standing racialized practices into all of our social and economic structures.” [page 36] [“Race, Power, and Policy: Dismantling Structural Racism”]

¹⁸ *ibid*, page 11.

¹⁹ *Structural Change for Equality: An Integrated Approach to Development*. This long and excellent report is from San Salvador, dated June 2012. It paints broad strokes for the reallocation of resources to many sectors. It is of interest to see how one large community approached inequality in a systematic way.

http://www.cepal.org/pses34/noticias/documentosdetrabajo/7/47427/2012-SES-34-Structural_Change.pdf

²⁰ One very readable and straightforward description of Restorative Justice is *The Little Book of Restorative Justice* by Howard Zehr and Ali Gohar.

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/book/the-little-book-of-restorative-justice/id957617410?mt=11>

²¹ See Erma Bridgewater: A Transcription of an Oral Interview, 1982, by Dallas Brown, the Champaign County Historical Archives, 1995. <http://digital.urbanafreelibrary.org/repository/00040000042.pdf>.

²² A **micro-aggression** is the casual degradation of any marginalized group. The term was coined by psychiatrist and Harvard University professor Chester M. Pierce in 1970 to describe insults and dismissals that he regularly witnessed non-black Americans inflicting upon African Americans.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microaggression>

²³ For instance, some high school counselors and teachers steered African-American students away from college-bound courses and discouraged them from applying to universities, suggesting that they pursue careers that were not “beyond their abilities.”

²⁴ A report published on May 12, 2017, “How to Hire More Black Principals,” by Lillian Mongeau, looks at ways to gain more diversity among school leaders by changing strategies used to find qualified people with mindsets and skills to help all students succeed. The report cites benefits for students such as higher academic performance, higher acceptance into gifted programs, and higher graduation rates for African-American students. One program mentioned that has had good success is *New Leaders*, a non-profit program to train principals. Such programs are creating a new “pipeline” to school leadership for underrepresented principals. <http://hechingerreport.org/hire-black-principals/>.

²⁵ This isn’t limited to African-American teachers, administrators, and school staff so that children and youth see a good representation of people in different jobs all through their school years. Guest speakers, community liaisons, and mentors – all contact groups – should be representative of all people. Schools should critique and choose textbooks and on-line learning materials for inclusion and diversity.

²⁶ See <https://apps.grad.uw.edu/nne/general/index.html>. The University of Illinois, both the UIUC and UIC campuses, accept students through this channel, including such universities as Stanford, Caltech, Emory, Northwestern, Princeton, Yale, Harvard, and MIT. (For a complete list see <https://apps.grad.uw.edu/nne/institutions/participating.html>.) One African-American Master’s student at UIUC says this program has opened doors to education that she could not have accessed otherwise.

²⁷ A good word about recent work in Urbana: Urbana schools were recognized last year (2015-16) for winning a silver award as a School of Opportunity – one of only eight (8) gold and twelve (12) silver in the nation. The nation-wide evaluation centered on high schools with “practices designed to close opportunity gaps” among all students regardless of demographics and test scores. See

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2016/09/12/the-20-schools-that-won-2016-schools-of-opportunity-awards-and-why-they-were-selected/>. One part of the scoring rubric judged how well schools “responded to student needs.” Urbana High School was cited for “a full-time social worker, psychologist, and nurse along with four guidance counselors to ensure that students’ needs are addressed.” Also mentioned was “Leading for Racial Equity,” a professional development opportunity for staff. See <http://schoolsofopportunity.org/recipient-details/urbana-high-school>.

²⁸ Resources, accessibility, and exposure. Those three things define where there is an equity gap, said the retired school administrator. To paraphrase, a classroom must have all three for students to be equally successful: factual knowledge and information that is accurate, access to that knowledge in understandable form for each student, and repeated interaction with the knowledge in order to practice and “own” it for oneself.

²⁹ Some interviewees in Champaign, students and staff, said their observations about racial inequities were unwelcome and potentially dangerous. Students felt a need to watch their backs, and teachers and staff were wary of being harassed or released from employment if they spoke up about racial inequities, even when participating in supposedly “safe” settings around evaluation and improvement.

Concerning the equity gap between African-American and white students, we heard that students below third grade were not evaluated for learning disabilities because of Champaign district policy, blamed on the State of Illinois by at least one administrator. That person said that the State “required” students to be two or more years “behind” academically before they could be tested for special education help. Yet students transferring from other Illinois districts, even in first and second grade, arrive with IEPs and aides assigned for their educational needs. Those students do significantly better, according to their teachers, than Champaign students who are not “old enough” to be evaluated for learning disabilities. More than one interviewee [in early 2017] said that Champaign schools fear another discrimination lawsuit and don’t want to add any African-American students to special education programs. [To clarify, some students have learning disabilities identified by a doctor such as autism or health impairments such as asthma. Champaign schools do address medical diagnoses.] But district criteria make it nearly impossible for children to be identified with potential learning needs. Children must be two years behind academically and have to be “stable” in the same school for at least two years. If they change schools, even within the district, their teachers can’t recommend testing; the two-year “clock” begins again.

There were several complaints about “uneven” teacher retention. Some African-American teachers have been released from their contracts because of unexplained “parent complaints,” while white teachers with records of serious parent complaints have been retained for years. Both parents and staff mentioned lack of transparency and consistency in retention decisions.

Interviewees also commented about gifted placements. In at least one elementary school, it is difficult for bright African-American students to be accepted into the “gifted” program. Only one test is given in the first grade to determine placement, and parents must request a re-test to challenge the results – something white parents seem to be comfortable doing. Those parents seem able to persuade principals to place their children into gifted classrooms, but African-American children are seldom advanced even when they are ahead of white classmates in academic understanding and skills. Even African-American students who are seen as gifted and who are advocated for by their classroom teachers are seldom assigned to the gifted classrooms; those classes are “full” by the time the results for the following year are announced.

These kinds of disparities begin in students’ early years.

³⁰ See Thomas Rudd, “Racial Disproportionality in School Discipline: Implicit Bias Is Heavily Implicated” from the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, The Ohio State University.

“ ‘Implicit bias’ is heavily implicated as a contributing factor when we analyze the causes of racial disproportionality in school discipline. In this context, implicit bias is defined as the mental process that causes us to have negative feelings and attitudes about people based on characteristics like race, ethnicity, age and appearance. Because this cognitive process functions in our unconscious mind, we are typically not consciously aware of the negative racial biases that we develop over the course of our lifetime. In the general population, implicit racial bias often supports the stereotypical caricature of Black youth—especially males—as irresponsible, dishonest, and dangerous. In an ideal world, teachers and

school administrators would be immune to these unconscious negative attitudes and predispositions about race. But, of course, they are not. So, for example, a 2003 study found that students who displayed a “black walking style” were perceived by their teachers as lower in academic achievement, highly aggressive and more likely to be in need of special education services (Neal, et al., 2003).”

<http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/racial-disproportionality-in-school-discipline-implicit-bias-is-heavily-implicated/>

³¹ For an example of uncovering implicit bias, see any Horatio Alger exercise. The exercise creates a powerful demonstration of how race, gender, class, and religion change an individual’s access to opportunities. It makes visible the privileges and roadblocks at work at a structural level. (Copy and paste this link for the site to open properly: <http://indiana.edu/~pbisin/uploads/files/61.pdf>.)

Another version of this exercise which emphasizes the economic repression of African-Americans as opposed to the economic advantages of people who call themselves white is on page 16 of this site:

https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/race_power_policy_workbook.pdf.

³² For an extensive look at what a trauma-informed schools program looks like, copy and paste this link:

<http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/From-Punitive-to-Restorative1.pdf>.

³³ See a good explanation of ACE scores, copy and paste this link: <https://acestoohigh.com/got-your-ace-score> and calculate your own childhood trauma score. Also visit the CDC website for more information about violence prevention and ACE measurements. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/>.

³⁴ Karen Simms, Champaign’s local trauma-informed trainer, notes that seven (therapeutic) R’s that are most effective in changing brain chemistry affected by trauma: rewarding, respectful, rhythmic, repetitive, relational, relevant, and restorative. These elements are not currently integral to school counseling, but brain research supports their use in creating a healing environment.

³⁵ Two interviewees involved with implementation of the SRO agreement in Champaign schools said that violence and criminal activity are have increased during the last five years in the two high schools in Champaign. They want to see the program of stationing full-time police with offices in school buildings expanded into the elementary schools, citing the need for police to protect safety. However, many more interviewees were concerned about the deteriorating atmosphere and attitudes among students and staff because SROs were present. Students felt disrespected by SRO contacts that began with assumptions of “guilt” by officers investigating reported infractions. They claim that officers say they “know” who is “guilty” from past experiences, and that causes students great frustration and anger.

For instance, one Champaign parent’s son was involved in a situation concerning a stolen phone. The incident was investigated and the student was questioned by the dean and found to be part of a conspiracy of a stolen phone with another student. The content of this investigation was shared with the SRO and a felony charge was filed for theft over \$300 but deferred to the youth assessment center for mediation; however, the family of the student whose phone was stolen was listed as “failing to participate.” What actually happened was that the parents weren’t notified of the incident until three days afterwards that the investigation had been turned over to the SRO. The parents made a complaint to the principal who acknowledged that the dean was new and that it was an error not to notify the parents immediately of the student’s involvement. The parents said they could have come up with a solution before the police were involved. The student was sanctioned by the school with a day of in-school suspension. The parents cooperated fully with the youth assessment process and the case was ultimately closed due to the complainant’s failure to participate.

In other instances, interviewees emphasized that schools are not safe places when such encounters diminish trust and respect, cause fear, and too often lead to injustice. Deans and school counselors are the appropriate people to talk with students. If there are potential issues with the law, parents should be brought in, students be notified of their rights, and legal counsel be available as necessary. In other words, as one person said, what any parent would want for his or her own children is what schools must want for all children.

Another parent recommended that the old “Officer Friendly” program be re-instated in schools with a visiting policeman or policewomen who understands and likes youth.

Yet another interviewee said that, even though the Champaign school district says that SRO written notes are not part of a legal record, reports have been compiled and have appeared as part of legal

proceedings. These practices seem to be more frequent as deans, counselors, and building administrators turn to SROs to address matters of discipline and other incidents instead of using guidance and behavioral interventions first.

³⁶ What does a behavioral specialist/interventionist do? (S)he is trained to determine the causes of unwanted behaviors and then to help people unlearn and replace those with new behaviors.

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-attention-issues/treatments-approaches/educational-strategies/behavior-intervention-plans-what-you-need-to-know>

³⁷ One member of the Racial Justice Task Force obtained a copy of the Summary Report. We were unable to find this on the Champaign School District website, though the information should be available at the Unit #4 district office if people wish to ask for it. It is in powerpoint format.

³⁸ On April 25, 2017, Orlando Thomas, Director of Achievement and Student Services, said Champaign schools total student population is almost 10,000 each year.

³⁹ The three ways: First, “yes” responses are highlighted in bright yellow so that they stand out more than any other bar. Second, the “no” responses are broken into three separate categories, each with a separate bar: “no” can equal “disagree,” “no knowledge,” or “blank” [no response given]. That makes the “no” responses look much lower in frequency than the “yes” responses. However, if the “no’s” are combined, they are closer to the number of “yes’s.” Third, the number of parents who didn’t answer the survey at all was not represented, so approximately half of middle and high school parents *could be* counted as “not agreeing” by choosing not to turn in a survey. If that were shown in the graph, it would become apparent that support for the SRO program is not clearly given by a majority of parents. We suggest that these “flaws” in the presentation of the data directly challenge the conclusion drawn by the school district that there is strong support for the SRO program. Finally, the penultimate “slide” of the presentation gives percentages for the 2014-15 schools year that are incorrect. It counts 100 “no’s” as “less than 1%” of the 2,517 responses, but 100 is about 4% of 2,517. The “yes” responses are given as 95%, but 1,965 of 2,517 is about 78%. And the questions left blank for that response make up the remaining 18%. [Similar errors are made for the 2015-16 school year given in the same slide.] Taking into account the number of parents who didn’t answer the survey, the percentages are different from those given.

⁴⁰ See the Executive Summary definition of “intergenerational trauma” in a study from Calgary, Canada. <https://www.scribd.com/document/88321218/Report-InterventionToAddressIntergenerationalTrauma>

⁴¹ *ibid.* This reports outlines the harms caused and strategies developed, in consultation with Aboriginal people, to help heal from trauma. Unnumbered pages from section titled “Background” say that “Many Aboriginal youth in Canada ... face devastating health and wellness consequences due to historical oppression. Ongoing discrimination and stereotypes that have health and wellness consequences, the effects of past injustices which have marginalized or collectively harmed Aboriginal peoples, have had lasting negative [impacts]. ... [Intergenerational Trauma] has been seen in the descendants of Survivors who may not have experienced the trauma of abuse themselves. [T]he cumulative effects of trauma are passed down along generations and often are amplified or cause other unpredictable impacts.”

⁴² See *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome* by Joy DeGruy, 2005. The first African slaves were brought to Virginia to work with tobacco crops in 1619 – nearly 400 years ago. For almost 250 years, from 1619 to 1865, African-Americans were bought and sold, beaten and killed at will, tortured and raped by those who claimed ownership over them and who were unconstrained by any law. Families were separated, wealth stolen or denied, and protestations harshly punished. “Isn’t it likely that many slaves were severely traumatized?” Dr. Joy DeGruy asks. “Furthermore, did the trauma and the effects of such horrific abuse end with the abolition of slavery?” DeGruy reminds us that emancipation after the Civil War has been followed by 150 more years of discrimination and denial of equality and freedom, lynchings, Jim Crow laws, and such practices as convict leasing where men were often taken from their families and worked to death. There was often no recourse under the law for African-Americans.

Dr. DeGruy quotes Yael Danieli, editor of the *International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma*, on these long-term effects: “The intergenerational perspective reveals the impact of trauma, its contagion, and repeated patterns within the family. ... [I]ts impact may be passed down as the family legacy even to children born after the trauma.” An example of such a legacy is in the chilling account of psychological scars that racism left on one African-American family found in the recollections of William E.

Cross, Jr. He writes about his parents' and other relatives' experiences with overt racism in post-Civil War times and into the 1950s. See William Cross, "Black Psychological Functioning and the Legacy of Slavery: Myths and Realities" in the 1998 International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma, pp. 387-400, edited by Yael Danieli. <http://www.springer.com/us/book/9780306457388>

⁴³ Trauma can be caused by physical, emotional, and sexual abuse; by neglect, hunger, and abandonment; and by any situations that cause intense fear. Trauma can affect newborn babies and any other age person. Think in terms of "brain chemistry changes" and think about "fight, flight, or freeze." Intergenerational trauma is also made more profound by the stress of continuous discrimination and mistreatment. Some of resulting trauma-induced behaviors include overwhelming fear or anxiety, withdrawal from present reality, explosive anger, and violence.

⁴⁴ According to DeGruy's book, page 114, a PTSD diagnosis is justified when a person has one or more of the following traumatic experiences:

- a serious threat or harm to one's life or physical integrity
- a threat or harm to one's children, spouse, or close relatives
- sudden destruction of one's home or community
- seeing another person injured or killed as a result of accident or physical violence
- learning of a serious threat to a relative or close friend being kidnapped, tortured, or killed
- experiencing intense fear, terror, an helplessness
- The result is more serious and long lasting when the experience is of human design.

In Champaign County, our African-American friends and neighbors are part of a nation that has caused four hundred years of traumatization without reliable acknowledgement and means to heal that mistreatment. Our county has shared in the legacy of Sundown Laws, Ku Klux Klan terrorism, redlining practices, unfair discrimination in employment, and unequal opportunities in education. It is no surprise that we find symptoms of extended, intergenerational trauma among our African-American citizens of all ages. DeGruy lists some of those symptoms on page 115 of her book:

- feelings of wariness, fear of police, fear of those with power to harm
- psychological distress and reactivity to both internal and external cues
- sense of impending doom or death – no expectations of a normal life length
- difficulty sleeping and difficulty concentrating
- restricted affect and emotional responses
- diminished interest or participation in activities
- outbursts of anger and irritability
- feelings of detachment and estrangement from others

⁴⁵ Our local school systems in Urbana and Champaign are beginning to take up trauma-informed counseling for school children. An article about New Orleans is rich enough in detail to let us identify what kinds trauma our local children, youth, and adults might be dealing with. <http://hechingerreport.org/a-new-movement-to-treat-troubled-children-as-sad-not-bad/>

⁴⁶ We recommend re-starting and supporting "best strategies" programs that have been successful locally in the past. They have all been beneficial. One program that increased positive contact and discussion among people of all races and backgrounds was the Studies Circles program about Race and Race Relations in 1997 and 1998. The Cities and the Human Relations Commissions of Champaign and Urbana, both schools districts, an Urbana Rotary Club, and by many volunteers were sponsors. The materials were used again by participants in Racial Taboo discussions groups beginning in January 2016 to promote conversation and friendship.

In addition, the 40 Assets Program re-surfaces periodically. It is helpful in evaluating family, community, and school support to better meet the emotional, physical, and educational needs of children and youth.

⁴⁷ See <http://bigthink.com/philip-perry/the-bad-news-trauma-can-be-inherited-the-good-news-so-can-resilience> for positive news about research on overcoming trauma through treatment.

⁴⁸ See <https://www.districtadministration.com/article/when-parents-schoolchildren-go-prison> for a recent program described in the March 2017 *District Administration* publication.

⁴⁹ See the report in *The Republic*, by Julie McClure. April 14, 2017.

<http://www.therepublic.com/2017/04/14/human-rights-commission-launches-online-hatecrime-reporting-mechanism/#.WPEupS8SmSO.facebook>.

⁵⁰ See <http://www.conflictresolution.illinois.edu/tolerance/reporting.asp>.

⁵¹ About 1400 adults and high school youth have seen *Racial Taboo* in the Champaign-Urbana area between October 2015 and March 2017, thanks to private funding as well as funding from the Champaign County Community Coalition.

⁵² DeGruy, *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome*, pages 150 and 151

⁵³ One interviewee asked that employers “get serious” about the kinds of jobs they offer. A job designed to do one thing, over and over, such as sitting at a table as a full-time hall monitor in a school, can cause stress out of boredom and the waste of time and human capacity. People are capable of much more. Employers and the employees, working together, can design work descriptions to cover that call for thought and creativity. Everyone would benefit from such improvements. It’s no wonder, said the interviewee, that some jobs have high turnover and produce “bad attitudes.” Employers should ask themselves, “Is this a job I could do for very long?”

⁵⁴ Some African-Americans say they have been “fired” the first or second day on a new job without ever hearing what is expected of them or what they have done “wrong.” White workers generally are given help and the benefit of the doubt. The rewards of engaged employees and improved company reputation is a win/win for everyone.

⁵⁵ See the Champaign County Black Chamber of Commerce <http://www.theccbcc.org>. The website introduces itself and has different levels of yearly membership from \$5 to \$100. To quote: “The CCBC looks at building black business, expanding black business, and promoting black business. It is a proven fact that when African-American communities are doing well, then all communities are doing well. We hope to build a sustainable chapter that has enough substance and structure to address some our toughest issues. I look forward to working with you in the future to inspire our community to the next level.”

PRETRIAL JAIL CONFINEMENT AND RACIAL DISPARITY (DRAFT July 21, 2017)

Priority Step: Limit and Avoid the Imposition of Financial-Release Conditions

Significant Racial Disparity in Champaign County's Jail Population

A study of Champaign County's criminal-justice system completed in 2013 by the Institute for Law and Policy Planning (ILPP) found significant racial disparity in the county's jail population. A profile analysis, which is a "snapshot" of the jail population on a specified day, revealed that 64% of the people confined in the jail were black.¹ Another way of examining a jail's population, known as a tracking analysis, found that 57% of the people released from the jail during a one-year period ending in December 2012 were black.² This racial disparity in the jail population persists today. For example, on December 5, 2016, 71% of the people confined in the jail were African Americans.³ By contrast, 13% of Champaign County's population is black.⁴

Disparate Impact of Financial-Release Conditions on African Americans

Most of the people in the Champaign County jail have not been convicted of the crime for which they were arrested.⁵ They are simply awaiting the outcome of such decisions as whether a criminal charge will be filed or dismissed or how their case will otherwise be resolved. ILPP reported that the racial disparity in such pretrial confinement is even greater – 12% higher – than the substantial racial disparity in the county's overall jail population.⁶

"D-bonds" are the primary means of securing pretrial release from jail in Champaign County.⁷ D-bonds require a person to pay 10% of the bail amount set by a judge in order to be freed from jail.⁸ Thus, if a judge sets bail at \$20,000, a person must pay \$2,000 for his or her freedom during the processing of the criminal case.

Champaign County does not yet collect or report data, broken down by race, on the number and percent of people confined in the county jail due to their inability to post bond of varying amounts. But it is evident from research in other jurisdictions that cash bail leads to people being incarcerated pretrial simply because they lack the financial resources to post bail. For example, in 2013, more than half of those incarcerated pretrial in New York City's jails could not afford to pay \$2500 or less in bail, and 30% of those arrested for felonies and 46% of those arrested for crimes that were not felonies were unable to pay bail as low as \$500 or less.⁹

Champaign County also does not collect and report data on the income levels of persons incarcerated in the jail or break down these statistics by race. But the ILPP report did find that a majority of people in the profile sample and close to half in the tracking sample were unemployed.¹⁰ Compared to the overall jail population, more pretrial detainees were unemployed (+10%) and black (+12%).¹¹ The ILPP study also reported that the majority of the people confined in the jail had neither a high-school degree nor a GED.¹² Both unemployment and limited education are highly correlated with low income and poverty.¹³ It can therefore safely be said that the people incarcerated in the county jail are not only disproportionately African Americans but typically people with low, if any, incomes before their arrest.

African Americans in this country are disproportionately unemployed, working in jobs paying only the minimum wage, and living below the poverty line.¹⁴ Because of this correlation between lack of wealth and race, the adverse impact of financial-release conditions, including unnecessary pretrial incarceration, falls most heavily on African Americans, whether in this county or elsewhere.

Failure to Appear

Snapshot views of the Champaign County jail population show that on any one day, two to three dozen people remain incarcerated pretrial for three or more days, unable to pay relatively low bail amounts of \$100 - \$2,500 (bond \$1,000 to \$25,000). In at least half of these cases, release on recognizance was denied because of a prior failure to appear in court (FTA). The majority of the people unable to pay low bail amounts after three days are African American (50% on 3/14/17, 64% on 3/31/17, and 75% on 4/14/17).

The Champaign County Sheriff's office reported making 64 arrests for FTA during the month of March 2017; 37/5% were people facing charges for city ordinance violations, and 17% were arrested because of failure to appear in a civil proceeding. After discussions with a member of the Racial Justice Task Force, the Champaign County Circuit Clerk has begun sending defendants in criminal cases automated telephone reminders of each of their court dates, an important first step in reducing the FTA rate.

Recommendations

The Racial Justice Task Force therefore recommends the taking of the following steps to begin reducing the racial disparity in the county's jail population:

1. Adopt and implement a court order to expand the issuance of notices to appear at the jail by the Champaign County Sheriff and the staff under his command.

The Illinois Supreme Court has devised bail schedules for some crimes.¹⁵ People arrested for these crimes can avoid pretrial detention simply by paying the sum listed in the bail schedule at the jail. On June 28, 2016, Judge Thomas Difanis, Presiding Judge of the Champaign County's Circuit Court, commendably issued County Administrative Order 2016-02. This order authorizes the Sheriff and the officers whom he oversees to issue notices to appear in court to persons arrested for theft, retail theft, and criminal trespass to land. The issuance of these notices to appear by the jail officials obviates the need for persons arrested for certain crimes to have the amount of money set forth in a bail schedule in order to avoid pretrial confinement in the jail.

The Racial Justice Task Force recommends the issuance of a court order, and its implementation by the Sheriff, to increase and maximize, in conformance with the law and public-safety needs, the issuance of notices to appear to arrested individuals brought to the jail. A mechanism should also be put in place to monitor, evaluate, and publicly disseminate findings on the implementation of this order to determine whether any additional refinements to the order are needed. The Task Force furthermore recommends that a working group, appointed by Chief

Judge Difanis, develop recommendations, for the court’s consideration, regarding the terms of this order and the mechanism for monitoring, evaluating, and disseminating information regarding its implementation. Possible members of this working group might include Chief Judge Difanis or his designee, a judge who presides over bond court, an attorney with criminal-justice expertise recommended by the Champaign County Bar Association or the Champaign County Criminal Defense Lawyers’ Association, a professor from the U. of I. Law School who has criminal-justice expertise, the Sheriff, and a community advocate who can share insights and recommendations from the impacted community. Courts commonly appoint such working groups to aid them in identifying steps to be taken to improve a criminal-justice system.¹⁶

2. Utilize validated risk-assessment instruments and well-trained pretrial-services officers to limit the imposition of financial-release conditions as much as the law currently allows.

Illinois law discourages the imposition of money bail, stating that it should be required “only when it is determined that no other conditions of release will reasonably assure the defendant’s appearance in court, that the defendant does not present a danger to any person or the community and that the defendant will comply with all conditions of bond.”¹⁷ The two evidence-based practices discussed below – validated risk-assessment instruments and pretrial services –have yet to be instituted in this county. If they are, it is unlikely – many would say impossible – that a court could conclude that only money bail could provide the reasonable assurance that a person will appear in court when required and not physically harm others while the criminal case is pending.

Validated Risk-Assessment Instruments. Validated risk-assessment instruments are now being used successfully across the country to aid judges in identifying when a person poses such a high risk of failing to appear in court or of endangering others while a criminal case is being processed that his or her confinement pretrial is necessary.¹⁸ These instruments also provide empirically grounded guidance to judges regarding the pretrial-release conditions, if any, a person should be subject to.¹⁹ Thus, through risk assessment, unnecessary pretrial incarceration and the imposition of unneeded pretrial-release conditions can be averted, both of which have been linked to higher recidivism rates.²⁰

Pretrial Services. In a well-structured criminal-justice system that follows evidence-based practices, pretrial-services officers take steps to facilitate compliance with release conditions. Some of these steps are designed to curb the failures to appear in court that trigger, as is occurring in this county, the issuance of arrest warrants and pretrial confinement. For example, their monitoring of compliance with nonfinancial conditions of release significantly reduces the FTA rate of moderate-risk and certain higher-risk individuals who remain in the community while their criminal cases are being processed.²¹

In 2013, both the Champaign County Community Justice Task Force and the Institute for Law and Policy Planning (ILPP) recommended that a comprehensive pretrial-services program, including validated risk assessment, be implemented in the county.²² These recommendations stemmed from pretrial services’ linkage to reduced recidivism and incarceration in jail. The Illinois Supreme Court also recently called on courts in Illinois to create a “fair, efficient, transparent, accountable and adequately-resourced system of pretrial services” that includes

utilization of an “evidence-based and validated risk assessment tool.”²³ The Court cited the presumption of innocence of people accused of crimes in issuing this call. The Racial Justice Task Force renews the recommendations of the Community Justice Task Force for still another reason – to help reduce racial disparity in the jail’s population by moving the county away from a money-based pretrial-release system. By instituting evidence-based practices to inform release decisions and diminishing reliance on, and utilization of, financial-release conditions in this county, the disparate effects of financial-release conditions on the economically disadvantaged, a disproportionate number of whom are African American, can be curbed. Who is and is not subject to pretrial confinement in Champaign County will then be based on objective assessments of risk, not on subjective judgments, the potential infiltration of implicit bias, and a person’s wealth.

3. Ensure that the validated risk-assessment instrument used in Champaign County is readily accessible to the public and does not include, to the extent possible, factors whose consideration has a disproportionate adverse impact on African Americans.

Risk-assessment instruments have now been developed to further limit racial disparity in pretrial-release and detention decisions. These instruments do not, for example, consider employment, education level, marital status, or whether a person owns or rents a home, factors that can lead to the disproportionate confinement of African Americans and are not needed for a risk assessment to be valid.²⁴ The Racial Justice Task Force therefore recommends that the validated risk-assessment instrument adopted in Champaign County limit, to the extent possible, the consideration of factors that augment racial disparity. The Task Force further recommends that this risk-assessment tool be readily accessible to the public. This step will help bring transparency into the pretrial-release decision-making process in Champaign County.

4. Ensure that the newly adopted practice of sending automated telephone reminders to all criminal defendants the day before each court appearance follows best practices.

The Circuit Clerk is to be commended for taking the initiative to implement one of the steps needed to reduce the FTA rate. The Racial Justice Task Force recommends that the Circuit Clerk or the Restorative and Criminal Justice Coordinating Council that the Task Force is recommending be created in this county examine the practices in jurisdictions that have successfully utilized notifications to reduce their FTA rates. Examined best practices should include the type, frequency, and content of the notifications.

¹ Institute for Law and Policy Planning. (2013, App. p. 12). *Champaign County Criminal Justice System Assessment: Final Report* [ILPP Report]. Berkeley, CA: ILPP. Retrieved from <http://www.urbanaininois.us/sites/default/files/attachments/02-champaign-county-criminal-justice-system-assessment.pdf>.

² Id. at App. p. 6.

³ This statistic is drawn from a web-based tool created by Dr. Bev Wilson and students in his Civic Technology course at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The *Race and Criminal Justice in Champaign County: Visualization Tools* can be accessed at <https://up494.shinyapps.io/VizTools>.

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *QuickFacts: Champaign County, Illinois*. Retrieved March 29, 2017, from <http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/RH1305210/17019#headnote-js-a>.

⁵ At the time of the ILPP study, 56% of the people confined in the jail were pretrial detainees. ILPP Report. (2013, App. p. 15). On March 28, 2017, 93% of the incarcerated people were listed as “unsentenced.” Champaign County Sheriff’s Office. (2017, March 28). *Division of Corrections Daily Report*. This figure, though, includes others in addition to pretrial detainees, such as individuals who have been convicted and are awaiting the imposition of their sentences.

⁶ Id. at App. p. 19.

⁷ The ILPP report listed the reason for the release of people from the jail during a one-year period. Forty-seven per cent posted bond, and 18% were released on recognizance (ROR). Id. at App. p. 9. ROR, also known as “Individual bond” or “I-bond”, does not require a monetary deposit to be paid upfront as a condition of release. Ill. S. Ct. R. 553(d). About a third of the jail’s population was released for other reasons, such as because they had completed serving a jail sentence. ILPP Report (2013, App. p. 9).

⁸ 725 Ill. Comp. Stat. § 110-7(1).

⁹ New York City Criminal Justice Agency. (2013). *Annual Report 2013* New York, NY: New York City Criminal Justice Agency.

¹⁰ Fifty-six percent of those in the profile sample and 48% in the tracking sample were unemployed. ILPP Report. (2013, App. pp. 6, 12).

¹¹ Id. at App. p. 19.

¹² Fifty-seven percent of the profile sample and 51% of the tracking sample had no high-school degree or GED. Id. at App. pp. 6, 12.

¹³ Proctor, B., Semega, J. & Kollar, M., U.S. Census Bureau, Economics and Statistics Administration (2016). *Income and Poverty in the United States: 2015*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

¹⁴ Plumer, B. (2013, August 28). *These ten charts show the black-white economic gap hasn’t budged in 50 years*. Retrieved from

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/08/28/these-seven-charts-show-the-black-white-economic-gap-hasnt-budged-in-50-years/?utm_term=.3aeef4314155. The U.S.

Census Bureau estimated that in 2015, 41.5% of African Americans in Champaign County were living below the poverty level, compared to 17.2% of white people. U.S. Census Bureau. Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months: 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Retrieved March 29, 2017, from

https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_15_5YR_S1701&prodType=table.

¹⁵ See, e.g., Ill. S. Ct. R. 528.

¹⁶ See, e.g., Municipal Division Work Group. (2016). *Report of the Municipal Division Work Group to the Supreme Court of Missouri*. Retrieved from

<https://www.courts.mo.gov/file.jsp?id=98093>

¹⁷ 725 Ill. Comp. Stat. § 110-2.

¹⁸ Pretrial Justice Institute. (2015, pp. 4-5). *Pretrial Risk Assessment: Science Provides Guidance on Assessing Defendants* [PJI Report]. Washington, D.C.: PJI. See also Danner, M.,

VanNostrand, M., & Spruance, L. (2015, pp. 10-12). *Risk-Based Pretrial Release Recommendation and Supervision Guidelines*. St. Petersburg, FL: Luminosity, Inc. (reporting that Virginia Pretrial Risk Assessment Instrument (VPRAI) reliably predicts pretrial risk or failure).

¹⁹ Id. at 2.

²⁰ Lowenkamp, C., VanNostrand, M., & Holsinger, A. (2013, p. 4). *The Hidden Costs of Pretrial Detention*. Houston: TX: Laura and John Arnold Foundation; PJI Report (2015, p. 2).

²¹ Lowenkamp, C. & VanNostrand, M. (2013, pp. 13-14). *Exploring the Impact of Supervision on Pretrial Outcomes*. Houston: TX: Laura and John Arnold Foundation

²² Champaign County Community Justice Task Force. (2013). *Recommendations*. Urbana, IL: Champaign County Board. Retrieved from <http://www.urbanainllinois.us/sites/default/files/attachments/03-recommendations-champaign-county-community-justice-task-force.pdf>; ILPP Report. (2013, p. 16).

²³ Supreme Court of Illinois (2017, April 28). Illinois Supreme Court adopts statewide policy statement for pretrial services. Retrieved from <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/media/pressrel/2017/042817.pdf>

²⁴ One such risk-assessment instrument, called the Public Safety Assessment-Court tool (PSA), has been developed by the Laura and John Arnold Foundation and implemented in thirty cities and states. Laura and John Arnold Foundation. (2016, August 8). *New data: Pretrial risk assessment tool works to reduce crime, increase court appearances*. Retrieved from <http://www.arnoldfoundation.org/new-data-pretrial-risk-assessment-tool-works-reduce-crime-increase-court-appearances>. A piloting of the PSA in Lucas County, Ohio resulted in a doubling of the percentage of people released on recognizance, a significant drop (by half) in crimes committed while on release pretrial, and a large decline (49% to 29%) in the FTA rate. Id.

Revised 8-31-17

Voices of Community Members: Education, Trauma and Employment

Members of the Champaign County Racial Justice Task Force (CCRJTF) interviewed more than 50 people, ages 8 -85 to hear their personal and professional stories to understand what has determined their educational paths and what has shaped their working lives.

The goal was to search for causes that interrupt people's quest for productive lives and increase their involvement with the criminal justice system. The wide variety of personal experiences provide a perspective on how implicit bias and structural racism affect the well-being of people in our community.

Stories (Narratives) – Where We Meet One Another to Learn and to Become Friends

Erma Bridgewater – An interview from the Champaign County Historical Archives

The late Erma Bridgewater, a community leader for decades, talked about instances of racial prejudice from her childhood, college years, and adulthood in Champaign during a 1992 interview with Dallas Brown, a UIUC student at the time. The transcript of that interview is part of the local record at the Champaign County Historical Archives.

Stories of fear – prejudgment that separates people

African-American interviewees related their encounters with racial bias. Several white people expressed fear of people of color. Some white women said they were afraid of “the North End” in C-U and declared it unsafe to drive through even during the daytime. One woman said she reads the newspaper to know who to be afraid of and where to be afraid to go.

A story of economics – how structural racism causes far-reaching disparities in wealth and well being

One African-American minister shared his frustration about funding needs for church-based activities for children. Churches are mostly racially segregated in our communities, and he hears of white churchgoers saying things like, “If they [African-Americans] want activities for their children, they should provide them like we do.” But summer camps, sports, classes, trips, and year-round programs require planning, supplies, and supervision – all of which cost money, even with generous volunteer hours.

African-Americans have a harder time than their white counterparts do finding full-time jobs that pay a living wage or establishing their own businesses to support their families. With less income, tithing cannot fully support the church services they want for their children and youth. African-American pastors usually have full-time jobs outside the church to support their own families, because they face the same challenges as their parishioners. Why, asked the African-American pastor, can't the white churches see this problem and spend some of the money sent elsewhere in the world to help support programs in our own community?

Interviewees' Recommendations for Education

Several African-Americans, age 50 and older, described overt racism in our local public school systems. Many younger African-American interviewees said that not enough people “look like me in my school,” a visible bias that made them feel unwelcome and less wanted. Students said that some teachers seemed afraid of students who are not “white.” Some said that sports was the only connection that they had to school. Some felt that white teachers and administrators “called the shots” that often seemed “fired” at African-American youth. Here are their suggestions for change.

Recommendations from interviewees included:

1. **Hire more African-Americans.** This was the number one request among younger people: “hire people who look like me, who aren’t afraid to show that they like me, who can teach well, and who care about my learning.”
2. **Expand and sustain use of the National Name Exchange.ⁱ** “Founded in 1976, the National Name Exchange is a consortium of fifty-five nationally-known universities which annually collect and exchange the names of their talented and underrepresented ethnic minority students in an effort to increase the enrollment of traditionally underrepresented peoples in graduate education. Too many high school counselors and teachers are not familiar with the program.
3. **Discuss race and racism openly and honestly in our schools.** Interviewees called discussion of race “the elephant in the room” in Champaign County. African-American and white students are separated by an “equity” gap, not an “achievement” gap,” according to a long-retired African-American school administrator.
4. **End the system of detentions and suspensions; “they smell of fear and inadequacy” and do not solve the problems students are facing.** The term “holding pens” was used by some to describe detention and isolation rooms. Youth expressed resentment about treatment that demeans and angers them, including being behind academically and not being taught what they need to learn. They want people to listen to their concerns, and they want teachers whom they trust to have their best interests at heart. Interviewees felt that racial discrimination was especially evident in disciplinary actions.
5. **Initiate training about implicit bias as part of professional development among all public school personnel: staff, teachers, aides, building administrators, and district administrators.**
6. **Implement trauma-informed counseling in all schools for both students and adults.** A punitive approach does not promote addressing problems and healing from trauma at any age.ⁱⁱ Using ACE scoresⁱⁱⁱ to measure childhood traumas and to build support based on individual needs,^{iv} trauma-informed training can help everyone progress. Teachers should have sufficient trauma information to make better decisions about referrals to school specialists.
7. **Retire the SRO (School Recourse Officer) program, hire behavioral specialists, and add restorative justice to support healthy adolescent development and success in school and in life.** Instead of punishment and police action, our students want places to learn and practice academic and social skills without being treated as “pre-criminals.” Our school environments should focus on healthy adolescent development for all students. Their general well-being and behavior can be appropriately addressed by hiring a sufficient number of full-time behavioral specialists, instead of SROs. Restorative justice involves well-developed listening and responding skills and is being piloted in some local schools. Restorative practices are a natural companion to behavioral training. [Restorative justice is addressed in more detail in another section of this report.]

Trauma-Informed Training and Practice – Assessing the Health of Our Communities

Intergenerational trauma is “the transmission of historical oppression and its negative consequences across generations.”^v The impact of sustained trauma on the health and well-being of families and on whole communities is a topic of current research among populations which have historically been subjected to unfair discriminatory practices. The results of long-term trauma continue to adversely affect later generations who were not directly involved in the original trauma.^{vi}

Interviewees spoke of intergenerational trauma that has harmed African-Americans in Champaign County, relating vivid memories of discrimination that their own parents, grandparents, and neighbors suffered. Though there has been little documentation of local trauma, there is evidence that harm existed and continues to exist. Racial discrimination has been legally abolished, but it has not ended.

We are fortunate to have a trauma-informed trainer working in the community through the Champaign-Urbana Area Project (CUAP), training people and volunteer citizens about the ways trauma is manifested in people's actions and reactions.

Interviewees' Recommendations for Individuals and Communities Around Trauma-informed Training, Community and Schools:

- 8. Ask people to tell their stories and listen respectfully to know firsthand what they have suffered.**
- 9. Advocate for each school district to put trauma-informed practices into place for students, families, and staff.** Some schools in New Orleans, where Hurricane Katrina left both emotional and financial scars on people of all ages, have implemented trauma-informed practices for students. Harsh discipline and suspensions have been replaced with trauma-informed counseling. The interventions cited in a report published in January 2017 show encouraging short-term and longer-term results.^{vii}
- 10. Create a partnership with UIUC, Parkland, and the new Carle/UIUC medical center to undertake a local epigenetic study of trauma. Use the findings to improve health and well-being.**
- 11. Create specific programs/resources for children and youth with incarcerated parents/close relatives/caretakers.** Incarceration creates its own emotional turmoil, stress, and frustrations that schools are seldom equipped to discover and deal with. Children and young people withdraw, become depressed, act out, fall behind, and are otherwise overwhelmed. Interviewees noted that such services are needed for our school-age children who are struggling in this way.
- 12. Support peer mentor based efforts to assist people returning from incarceration.** Successful re-integration into community life has specific needs. Often whole families need extra support and counseling while members make this transition.
- 13. Add an on-line reporting site for reporting incidences of racism or hate in Champaign County.** Earlier in 2017, the Human Rights Commission of Columbus, Ohio, launched a web "portal" through which residents can report incidences of racial bias or "hate-induced" crimes.^{viii} This is similar to the UIUC website for reporting "acts of intolerance."
- 14. Continue to show the film *Racial Taboo* with its follow-up discussions that draw people together as they learn about the history of racial discrimination in our country.** White people who see the film often comment that they didn't know the history of oppression since the end of legal slavery in 1865.^{ix} African-Americans who view the film often say, "Yes, I know those things. I have been subjected to those practices." Participants talk together in small groups, exchanging personal experiences on their way to knowing one another better and to understanding the origins of racism in the United States. This can increase personal understanding of racism.

Interviewees' Recommendations for Employment and Business Concerns

The simple request: "Offer gainful employment with opportunities for advancement."

15. **Hire African-Americans for full-time employment with the same benefits as other full-time employees.** "Gainful" employment includes pay that meets a family's needs, not part-time work in place of full-time positions. Full-time employment creates stability and dependability, reduces stress, allows families to lead productive lives, and lets people plan for the future.
16. **Establish internships and volunteer opportunities for all high school youth.** By the time a person graduates from high school, (s)he should have visited at least three different kinds of businesses, offices, or sites to have an idea of what the jobs are. This school/business partnership program can include summer visits.
17. **Create a central database in Champaign County where employers can post notifications to alert potential employees.** Organize the information according to categories of skills and experiences. People could have access from any computer connected to the Internet.
18. **Work closely with the Champaign County Black Chamber of Commerce (CCBCC)* and set a goal of 100% gainful employment with opportunities for advancement in our county.** We heard the idea for this goal from both African-American and white people of many ages. The CCBCC website says: "When African-American communities are doing well, then all communities are doing well."

ⁱ See <https://apps.grad.uw.edu/nne/general/index.html>. The University of Illinois, both the UIUC and UIC campuses, accept students through this channel, including such universities as Stanford, Caltech, Emory, Northwestern, Princeton, Yale, Harvard, and MIT. (For a complete list see <https://apps.grad.uw.edu/nne/institutions/participating.html>.) One African-American Master's student at UIUC says this program has opened doors to education that she could not have accessed otherwise.

ⁱⁱ For an extensive look at what a trauma-informed schools program looks like, copy and paste this link: <http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/From-Punitive-to-Restorative1.pdf>.

ⁱⁱⁱ See a good explanation of ACE scores, copy and paste this link: <https://acestoohigh.com/got-your-ace-score> and calculate your own childhood trauma score. Also visit the CDC website for more information about violence prevention and ACE measurements. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/>.

^{iv} Karen Simms, Champaign's local trauma-informed trainer, notes that seven (therapeutic) R's that are most effective in changing brain chemistry affected by trauma: rewarding, respectful, rhythmic, repetitive, relational, relevant, and restorative. These elements are not currently integral to school counseling, but brain research supports their use in creating a healing environment.

^v See the Executive Summary definition of "intergenerational trauma" in a study from Calgary, Canada. <https://www.scribd.com/document/88321218/Report-InterventionToAddressIntergenerationalTrauma>

^{vi} *ibid.*

^{vii} An article about New Orleans is rich enough in detail to let us identify what kinds trauma our local children, youth, and adults might be dealing with. <http://hechingerreport.org/a-new-movement-to-treat-troubled-children-as-sad-not-bad/>

^{viii} See the report in *The Republic*, by Julie McClure. April 14, 2017.

<http://www.therepublic.com/2017/04/14/human-rights-commission-launches-online-hatecrime-reporting-mechanism/#.WPEupS8SmS0.facebook>.

^{ix} About 1400 adults and high school youth have seen *Racial Taboo* in the Champaign-Urbana area between October 2015 and March 2017, thanks to private funding as well as funding from the Champaign County Community Coalition.

^x See the Champaign County Black Chamber of Commerce web site <http://www.thecbcc.org>.