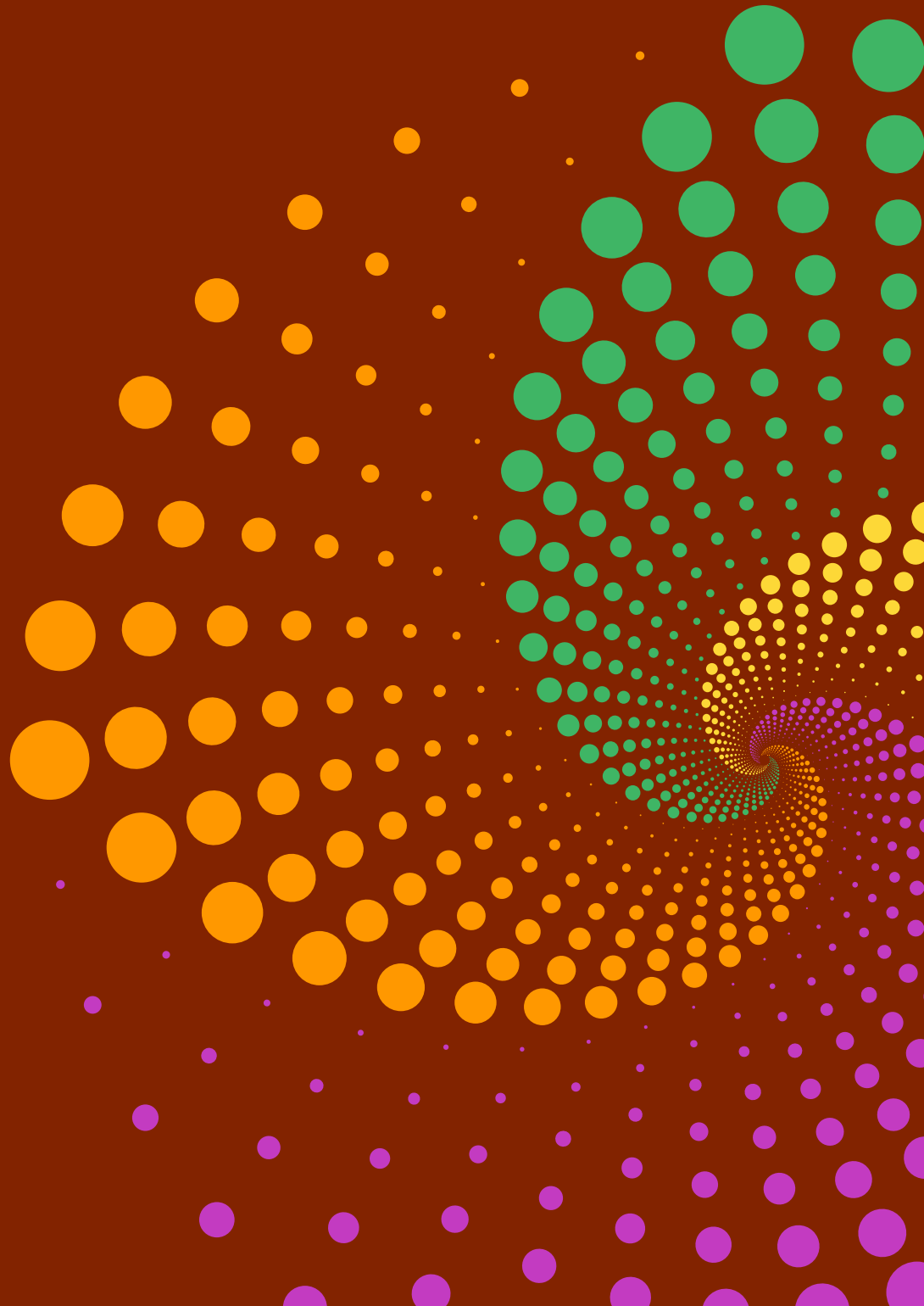




# Segregation Yesterday and Today

*Exploring Possibilities  
for Systemic Change*



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# About the Author

## **Susan Eaton**

Susan Eaton is Professor of Practice at at Brandeis University's Heller School for Social Policy where she also is Director of the Sillerman Center for the Advancement of Philanthropy. She is the author of several books and numerous articles about the history, harm and potential remedies for racial, ethnic and economic segregation in schools and housing.

Since its inception, the National Collaborative for Health Equity (NCHE) has dedicated its programs and activities to creating health equity in the United States by ending racial and ethnic health inequities. NCHE's leadership, staff, and consultants always recognized that ending racism requires achieving and sustaining meaningful progress toward this goal. Beginning in 2020, NCHE joined over 150 other nonprofit and philanthropic organizations in leveraging the pillars of the Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation (TRHT) Framework to inform programs, policy research, and action. These five pillars (Narrative Change, Racial Healing and Relationship Building, Separation, Law, and the Economy) offer a comprehensive and holistic conceptual framework for action to end racism and jettison the deeply embedded belief in a false hierarchy of human values.

NCHE's vision is embodied in our name. We work in collaboration with others to help our nation achieve health equity. NCHE's mission is to promote health equity by harnessing data, developing leaders, and catalyzing partnerships across the many sectors that share responsibility for creating a more equitable and just society. As NCHE continues to collaborate with others, we implement three key strategies: (1) Supporting Leaders, (2) Applying Data Research and Information, and (3) Expanding the TRHT Movement. NCHE equips institutions and leaders to work effectively with and within historically marginalized and excluded communities, providing tools to help improve the social, economic, and environmental conditions that shape health. We help organizations and communities to envision and actualize an America that has faced and redressed historic and contemporary effects of racism in all its forms.

I am pleased to present this new collection of briefs offering insights into each TRHT pillar. Leaders, practitioners, and researchers can utilize these resources committed to overcoming the unique racial history and legacy of the United States.

The original organizations that participated in the design phase of TRHT in 2016 were included in a platform created by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, *Connected Communities*. Based on preliminary Connected Communities research, these participating organizations and representatives from over 150 nonprofit entities could reach over 189,000,000 people in the United States. A lot has happened since 2016. The momentum continues to increase for the expansion of local and national efforts to address and heal from the historic and contemporary effects of racism.

While the potential of reaching almost 200 million people has yet to be realized, recent surveys suggest that tens of millions are aware of the effort, and the work continues to expand. As the momentum has increased, resistance and backlash to this progress grows. The resources or tools provided in these briefs can help leaders, practitioners, and researchers maintain momentum in the face of resistance.

There are many consequences of chronic exposure to structural racism and racial discrimination. The most insidious consequences are disease and health inequities. Our failure to effectively address and redress America's legacy of racial hierarchy has economic costs that reach well into trillions of dollars for our society. But it is communities of color that bear the lion's share of the burden of the costs of failing to eliminate racism and its consequences. The courageous and dedicated work of leaders in communities across America provides hope that we will succeed in overcoming racism. We offer these resources as support for these ongoing efforts.

*Sincerely,*



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gail C. Christopher".

Gail C. Christopher  
Executive Director  
National Collaborative for Health Equity

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# 1.

## Introduction

In 2023, separation by invented racial categories and socioeconomic status is a defining feature of our American landscape, our social institutions, and our public spaces.

At the root of much of this separation is the belief in a hierarchy of human value, or racism. It is this belief that has given rise to America's peculiar antinomy. We are a multiethnic democratic society marred from our earliest days by the theft of Indigenous lands and slavery. From this diseased root metastasized a tangle of laws, government policies and practices, and acts by private institutions and individuals that spread and worsened segregation in every sector of our lives. This separation is not a benign demographic outcome of an erroneous belief in a hierarchy of human value. Segregation is an independent force that, by keeping us apart, helps calcify racist beliefs and worsens imbalances in resources and power.

As Yale Law School professor and sociologist Monica Bell writes:

*Segregation entails the distribution of ethnic groups across a coherent geographic area (separation), and the movement of marginalized ethnic groups into identifiable and stigmatized enclaves (concentration), in order to establish and reproduce hegemonic racial hierarchy (subordination), to control and economically exploit disadvantaged groups, and hoard social and political opportunity for advantaged groups (domination).<sup>1</sup>*

Understanding this, the architects of the Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation (TRHT) movement designated “Separation,” along with “Law” and the “Economy” as the three pillars in which “systemic change must occur in order to achieve the transformation to a society in which we embrace our common humanity and in which institutions are inspired to develop policies and practices that ensure sustainable racial equity.”\*

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\* The first two TRHT pillars, “Narrative Change” and “Racial Healing & Relationship Building,” are what the TRHT architects term “the people-work” necessary to fuel transformation to bring about sustainable racial equity ([https://www.nationalcollaborative.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/NCHE\\_TRHTInfoInteractive\\_REV\\_MECH.pdf](https://www.nationalcollaborative.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/NCHE_TRHTInfoInteractive_REV_MECH.pdf)). Also see The Urban Institute, *How Immigrants*

To aid in this transformation, this brief is intended to grow readers' understanding of (1) the nature, roots and causes of racial and economic segregation; (2) the damage segregation exacts in people's lives and their communities; and (3) hopeful models and insights from community-based practice and research that might reduce segregation and (or) redress its harms.

This brief is divided into three sections. Section 1 offers a brief overview of current segregation trends and an accessible review of the most recent and most rigorous research on segregation's harms. Section 2 is a view into a variety of ongoing efforts designed to reduce or avoid worsening segregation and (or) redress and repair the harm exacted by segregation. Section 3 offers lessons learned and links to organizations and resources geared toward practitioners in local communities.

Most research and redress efforts concern the well-documented history of government-enacted and government-abetted segregation against African Americans. This brief draws mainly from that research and those practices. It is important to acknowledge that other racial groups—Native Americans, Asian Americans, Latino Americans—have also been harmed by being systematically separated from myriad opportunities afforded

disproportionately to White Americans. While histories differ considerably, all these marginalized groups have faced discrimination and have been cut off from institutions and neighborhoods that could have aided wealth building and access to high quality schools, health care, and other resources necessary for thriving. In some cases, this separation of other ethnic groups was easier to accomplish because of the foundation laid by the segregation of Black Americans.<sup>†</sup>

The nation as a whole is harmed by this separation. But there are valid reasons for centering African Americans in this exploration. Most government and institutional actions were explicitly aimed at them. Also, for most immigrant groups, particularly Asian immigrants, segregation tends to decline in two or three generations.<sup>2</sup> This hasn't been the case for African Americans nor even for African American immigrants, until relatively recently. And for Native Americans, the unique history of land theft, movement to reservations, and cultural genocide, in addition to systematic separation from resources, calls for culturally responsive redress to local contexts, sovereignty, treaty agreements, and tribal government arrangements. All these groups can learn from each other's distinct histories of segregation and resulting movements to reduce and redress its harms.

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*Are Reshaping Residential Segregation*, Neighborhood Change Database (n.d.) (<https://apps.urban.org/features/ncdb/immigrants-reshaping-residential-segregation/index.html>) — this database shows that even in cities with very high levels of Black-white segregation, Latino immigrants tend to settle in middle-income neighborhoods and that over generations, segregation typically declines.

<sup>†</sup> It is important to distinguish between Jim Crow segregation, expressed in law and associated with the U.S. South and later deemed unconstitutional, and the oft-termed “de facto” segregation that was created by a tangle of policies, programs and government incentives and private action over decades. This brief deals mainly with the second, more contemporary form of segregation, though Jim Crow segregation, of course, has also engendered lasting harms.

# 2.

## Why Everyone Should Learn and Care About Segregation

Segregation damages people and our shared society in at least two ways.

One, systemic manifestations of separation have disproportionately conferred economic, health, educational, and other types of benefits to White people. This system has disproportionately harmed people of color, particularly those who are economically disadvantaged. Over centuries, laws, policies, practices, and beliefs have cut off people of color and their communities from the resources and financial assets, power, conditions and other opportunities that contribute to well-being and self-determination. Segregation not only creates poverty, it also concentrates poverty in pockets of our wealthy nation. Even middle-income Black families are more likely to live in a poorly resourced neighborhood with a high poverty rate than are low-income White families.<sup>3</sup> As will be discussed in section 2, myriad disadvantages of growing up in concentrated poverty carry through adulthood.

Two, segregation cordons us off from fellow human beings whose cultures, experiences, and social and economic statuses differ from our own.

This perpetuates the very stereotypes, bias, and racial preferences that formed in the context of segregation and subjugation, and it impedes opportunities for relationships that could challenge the false belief in a hierarchy of human value. It also reduces the capacity for empathy and opportunities for creating just, shared communities in our diverse nation.

The problem is not that people of color are cut off from White people. For people of color who have been historically marginalized, culturally defined communities are often life-sustaining, providing the foundation for healthy identity development, affirmation, social bonding, and creation of culturally sustaining institutions. This is partly why contemporary efforts to redress the harms of segregation might not prioritize integration as the cure, but instead or in addition, call for investment in communities of color.

## Where Are We and How Did We Get Here?

The United States is still a highly segregated nation in spite of its growing diversity and an overall decline in racial segregation.\* A typical white person lives in a neighborhood that is 75 percent White and only 8 percent African American, whereas a typical African American person lives in a neighborhood that is 35 percent White and 45 percent African American.

National studies show residential segregation declining overall between most racial groups, in large part because of increasing diversity, the declining share of White people and the growing share of people of color.<sup>4</sup> However, high levels of segregation remain, particularly in the Northeast and Midwest. Our public schools remain divided along racial, ethnic, and economic lines even as the public school population grows more diverse. In 2020-21 more than a third of students went to schools where 75 percent or more students were of a single race or ethnicity.<sup>5</sup>

But it is not necessarily present-day segregation that should be the primary focus. This is because most of the inequalities we identify today can best be understood, at least in part, as present-day effects of *past* discrimination. Of course, racism is still a reality, but research traces today's racial inequalities to roots spreading back through generations.

In his 2017 book, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*,<sup>6</sup> Richard Rothstein offers the most accessible and comprehensive story about the mechanisms and laws through which the federal government aided and abetted residential

segregation on a massive scale in metropolitan areas across the United States. Rothstein details the use of practices explicitly targeted at Black Americans. This includes exclusive housing covenants that prohibited sale of a property to African Americans and government-sponsored “redlining” that stigmatized neighborhoods of color and labeled them unsafe for investments. With this foundation laid, segregation led to disinvestment in identifiable communities of color and harmed other racial groups, such as Latinos. Segregation by race and economic status is now sustained and exacerbated by other government and private practices, including exclusionary zoning, discrimination in insurance, mortgage lending, and rental practices, and unequal provision of services such as transportation and recreational space.

This national context and sense of overall trends is helpful for practitioners, but the history, severity, nature, and long-standing consequences of segregation vary by racial or ethnic category and socioeconomic status, just as the history and the intensity of segregation and its consequences differ by region, community type, and social context. Many user-friendly tools, provided in section 4, allow community members to measure segregation at the local, state, and regional levels, often broken down by race and ethnicity.

Data is important. But it is the local stories of segregation that draw a straight line from policies and practices that created and sustained segregation to today's segregation, concentrated poverty, and racial inequality.<sup>7</sup> These histories are not well known and are not typically taught in

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\* In 1990, U.S. metropolitan areas were about 73 percent white, 13 percent Black, 10 percent Hispanic, and 3 percent Asian. By 2020, White people were only 53 percent of the metro populations and the Black population was 13 percent, the Hispanic population 21 percent, and the Asian population 8 percent (U.S. Census). The neighborhood of a typical White resident in the 100 largest metropolitan areas became slightly less White between 2000 and 2018, decreasing from 79% to 71% White. The neighborhood of the average Black resident crossed the threshold from majority-Black to a diverse plurality because of Latino or Hispanic population growth (M.A. Turner & S. Greene, *Causes and Consequences of Separate and Unequal Neighborhoods: Structural Racism Explainer* (n.d.), <https://www.urban.org/racial-equity-analytics-lab/structural-racism-explainer-collection/causes-and-consequences-separate-and-unequal-neighborhoods>. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/even-as-metropolitan-areas-diversify-white-americans-still-live-in-mostly-white-neighborhoods/>).



schools but do hold enormous power. In communities across the United States, documenting and telling these segregation stories are what often begin the process of redress for segregation's harms. The Othering and Belonging Institute provides a [curated list with links](#) to some of these stories in a variety of forms.

For example, in **Hartford, Connecticut**, federal, state, and local policies, coupled with discrimination in insurance, lending, and renting and commercial disinvestment over decades created an extremely segregated metropolitan region. Initially, these policies and practices confined the African American population, most migrating from the U.S. South, to the city's northern sections. This laid the foundation for the later segregation of Puerto Ricans, who had migrated in the 1950s for work in factories and on tobacco farms. Meanwhile, White residents, often aided by loan programs not available to African Americans, moved to prosperous nearby suburbs to which African Americans and Latinos, by means both subtle and direct, were unable to move. Commercial investments followed that White movement, and nearly all-white, well-resourced public schools sprung up as well.<sup>8</sup> Local zoning practices help sustain segregation today. A 2019 investigation by the *Connecticut Mirror* and *ProPublica* found that more than three dozen Connecticut towns have blocked construction of privately developed duplexes and apartments over two decades, typically through "exclusionary zoning." In 18 of those towns, the blocking of multifamily housing had occurred over nearly three decades.<sup>9</sup>

In 2020, in Connecticut, more than two-thirds of people of color live in only 15 of the state's 169 cities and towns.<sup>10</sup> Nearly one in every 10 of the 115,657 people living on a poverty-level income in the Hartford metro area resides in communities with poverty rates of 40% or greater. The average annual household income in the metro area's concentrated poverty neighborhoods is just \$37,810, as compared with \$101,865 in all the other neighborhoods across the metro area. Greater Hartford is the ninth most segregated region for African Americans among the 100 largest metro areas in the nation and the 34th most segregated between White and Latinx residents.<sup>5</sup> In the region, 30 percent of Latino and 26 percent of Black residents live in high poverty neighborhoods as opposed to just 1.5 percent of white residents. The inequality is even more pronounced in public schools, with 35 percent of Black children and 55 percent of Latino children attending "high-poverty" schools. Only 4 percent of White children attend such schools, while 86 percent of all White students are in low-poverty schools.<sup>11</sup>

From the other end of the country, in **Alameda, California**, a city on a peninsula in the East Bay area just outside of Oakland, comes a story not only of confinement but of dispossession and destruction of an African American community.<sup>11</sup> In his 2013 study and journalistic accounts, Rasheed El Shabazz (also known as Reginald James) finds that a combination of federal, state, and local policies, greed, and the prejudice of individual White residents dispossessed well established Black communities that had been present since

§ There are a variety of ways to measure segregation within regions. The most commonly used measure is the "dissimilarity index." This measures whether a particular racial group is distributed across a region in the same way that another racial group is. Thus, a dissimilarity index of "0" reflects absolute integration, with no group needing to move in order to accomplish even distribution. A value of "1" is absolute segregation, with all members of one of the groups needing to move to achieve equal distribution. The U.S. Office of Housing and Urban Development considers a dissimilarity index at above 0.55 to reflect "high" levels of segregation. In Hartford's defined Labor Market Area (LMA), the dissimilarity index between Hispanic and whites is 0.62; for Black and White people it is 0.71. (S. E. Eaton, *A Steady Habit of Segregation: 2020* [The Sillerman Center for the Advancement of Philanthropy, the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, the Poverty Race and Research Action Council, 2020], <https://www.prrac.org/hartford-segregation-report-2020/>).

¶ All calculations from the National Equity Atlas, available at [https://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Neighborhood\\_poverty#/?geo=03000000000025540&year=2000](https://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Neighborhood_poverty#/?geo=03000000000025540&year=2000). For neighborhoods, *high poverty* is defined in this case as neighborhoods where at least 30 percent of residents earn low incomes. In the case of schools, *high poverty* refers to between 50 and 100 percent of students living below the federal poverty line. *Low poverty* refers to a school where 25 percent or fewer students live below the federal poverty line.

Alameda's earliest years. Shabazz highlights the use of racial covenants that prohibited sales and rentals to people who were not White. He quotes a 1913 advertisement for the development of Waterside Terrace: "There are restrictions against Japanese, Chinese and Negroes...These restrictions are thrown about this property, as it is the intent of the owners to make this the modern high-class home place of the city."<sup>12</sup>

Shabazz also recounts the story of African American migration to Alameda in the 1940s and the city's development of public housing for the new workers during World War II. But in 1958, the city's housing authority abolished a 760-unit housing project and sold parcels to private developers who built the Buena Vista Park Apartments with help from a subsidized federal loan. Owners kept rents low under the loan agreement but, Shabazz documents, in the late 1980s, with the loan paid back, owners doubled residents' rents. Low-income and predominantly African American tenants protested and appealed to the city for help, eventually resulting in Section 8 vouchers for many families. However, 325 families did not qualify for subsidies, which led tenants and housing advocates to sue the City of Alameda for discriminatory housing policies in 1989. The parties settled in an agreement that maintained the restrictive zoning that had been established in 1973 but did replace the 32 "lost" units.<sup>13</sup>

In 1973, the local electorate voted in favor of a measure to prohibit multifamily housing, which is the most economically viable way to create affordable housing. This limited the construction of affordable housing for more than four decades. In 2020, activists placed a measure on the ballot that would have repealed this measure and allowed for multifamily housing. The amendment failed with 60 percent of voters opposed to any change.

The story of injustice in Alameda is also one of active resistance on the part of Black residents and organizations such as the NAACP and, more recently, Housing Opportunities Provided Equally (HOPE), whose members picket on Sundays to raise awareness about discriminatory housing practices. Over the decades, residents organized protests, filed lawsuits, and brought attention to their cause. Such activities continue today as Black and Latinx residents in California's East Bay must fight for affordable housing in one of the most exclusionary housing markets in the nation. Shabazz's work chronicles the unbroken chain through history, noting that "current fights to expand affordable housing opportunities and increase tenant protections are rooted in this history" of discrimination and displacement supported by city government.<sup>14</sup> Meanwhile, observers note that rising housing prices in the city of Alameda and in the larger region are fueling declines in Black student populations in the public schools.\*\*

A photo essay and article by the research team at the nonprofit organization, the Redress Movement, tells the story of housing segregation in **Charlotte, North Carolina**.<sup>15</sup> As in many other communities, this included the widespread use of racial covenants, discriminatory lending, and government-backed urban renewal projects that destroyed Black communities.

In the early 20th century, segregation pushed Black families to sections of the city that were cut off from the prosperous White sections. In a community called Brooklyn, though, Black residents established successful businesses, lobbied for funding for a high school, and formed strong bonds. This "institutional scaffolding," the research team writes, was necessary to face current and ongoing oppression and the

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\*\* According to data from the State of California, the city of Alameda's public schools saw the share of Black students drop from 11 percent in 1990 to 6.5 percent in 2020, or from 967 to 715 students (California Department of Education, California Department of Education releases 2021–22 statewide school enrollment data (retrieved March 29, 2023, from <https://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/ne/yr22/yr22rel20.asp#:~:text=Total%20Enrollment,enrollment%20statewide%20since%202014%E2%80%9315>).

segregation tactics to come. Around the 1900s, developers began using racial covenants, first in pricier neighborhoods across the city and later even in middle class and working class neighborhoods. Local banks helped cement discrimination and segregation in place by funding the mortgages for these homes. By the 1930s, the U.S. government's mortgage underwriting standards included redlining, which further cut off these well-established segregated Black neighborhoods from funding and other resources while identifiable White neighborhoods received the funding necessary for White families to invest in a home and grow assets for decades to come. By 1960, according to the Redress Movement's report, about two-thirds of White Charlotte families owned their homes, while less than one-quarter of Black families did.

Then, in 1960, two decades after city officials had rezoned the Black community of Brooklyn for industrial use, officials slated the residential area and its schools for demolition. This displaced more than 1,000 families as demolitions in mostly Black neighborhoods would continue at a time when Black families had limited choices for housing, thereby increasing their rent burdens and cutting off vital community bonds. As is true in many neighborhoods of color, highway

construction, benefitting growing White suburbs, contributed to the destruction of Black communities in Charlotte. Today, interstate highways are a huge cement triangular barricade that loops around historically Black neighborhoods.<sup>16 17</sup>

A UNC Charlotte–Urban Institute report found that the neighborhoods declared “too risky” under discriminatory redlining practices of the past still had the city's lowest homeownership rates in 2017.<sup>18</sup> Another study found that formerly redlined neighborhoods, such as the West End, have among the poorest measures of air quality and remain among the city's most segregated for African Americans.<sup>19</sup> The Redress Movement links the housing struggles of today to this history of segregation and dispossession. The team notes that from 2013 to 2019, the share of the city's zip codes that offered “affordable” rents for the median salary of Black families dropped to less than 20 percent. During 2021, corporate investors bought a quarter of all homes sold in the city that year, the majority of them in Black or Latinx neighborhoods. These trends make the city unaffordable for people earning low incomes, regardless of race. From 2013 to 2019, the share of zip codes that were affordable for low-income renters dropped from 34 to 10 percent.<sup>20</sup>

## What Segregation Wrought

Understanding segregation's harms requires a multidisciplinary exploration of outcomes in all areas of life. This section explores the following questions: In what ways does segregation impede thriving and harm health, well-being, and educational opportunities? How does segregation cut off communities of color from resources? How does it exacerbate racism and harm democracy and block relationships that could lead to healing and transformation? The link between segregation and inequalities in every facet of life is exceedingly well documented. This section will acquaint community-based practitioners with some of the most rigorous and relevant findings.

- **Economic inequality.** We know that segregation has and continues to engender economic inequality, even if segregation is declining overall. Segregation concentrates poverty in neighborhoods and schools, which compounds the harms of individual poverty.<sup>21</sup> The harms of concentrated poverty—poorer health, more exposure to pollution, less access to health care, healthy food, and adequately resourced public schools, more exposure to violence, incarceration, and poor quality housing—are not shared equally.<sup>22</sup> Nationally, about 24 percent of Native Americans, 20 percent of Black Americans, and 17 percent of Latinos live in high-poverty neighborhoods compared to just 4 percent of

White residents. Disparities in schools are even more extreme, with 74 percent of Black and Latino, 70 percent of Native American, and just 32 percent of White students attending schools where at least half of the students qualify for free and reduced lunch.<sup>23</sup> One way segregation engenders these inequalities is because racially identifiable areas and institutions make it easier for government officials, private investors, and businesses to overlook communities of color and focus instead on serving the interests of the equally easily identified, more powerful, wealthier, Whiter communities. Similarly, easily identifiable Black and Latino neighborhoods make it easier for authorities to over-surveil and punish them. Research even indicates that segregation enabled predatory targeting by the real estate finance industry.<sup>24</sup>

- **Health and health care.** Racial segregation and concentrated poverty have long been linked to poorer overall well being, health, and safety for both adults and children.<sup>25</sup> Decades of research by social epidemiologists and other health researchers have established strong relationships between health care access, health, and racial segregation, particularly for Black Americans.<sup>26</sup> Generally, people living in predominantly Black and Latinx neighborhoods do have poorer relative health on numerous measures—asthma, heart disease, and diabetes—and even have higher relative mortality rates.<sup>27</sup> A 2017 meta-analysis showed a strong association among Black mothers between segregation and low birthweights and preterm births.<sup>28</sup> Also, segregation in housing has created segregated health care and less access to quality health care for Black Americans living in segregated communities. When families are unhealthy, they may be less able to move to communities with more opportunities, thereby reducing chances for social mobility.<sup>29</sup>

Recent studies demonstrate that residential segregation has exacerbated racial disparities in access to testing for COVID-19, as well as in COVID-19 infection and even death for Black residents.<sup>30</sup> Testing sites were more common in White neighborhoods as was access to care.<sup>31</sup>

- **Pollution and climate change.** Evidence suggests that communities of color created through racially discriminatory policies and practices are more likely to suffer the negative effects of pollution and climate change.<sup>32</sup> For example, in Chicago the National Resources Defense Council found that the common practice of placing polluting businesses such as scrap yards in neighborhoods with high concentrations of African Americans and Latinos had greatly increased those residents' exposure to pollution far beyond that experienced in more affluent, majority-White neighborhoods.<sup>33</sup> A 2022 study by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development found that the city had violated residents' civil rights by locating polluting businesses in Black and Latino neighborhoods.<sup>34</sup> Several investigations in recent years have found that the highest exposures to unhealthy, often life-threatening levels of heat follow the path of historic and current-day segregation. In a 2019 study of 108 urban areas nationwide, formerly redlined neighborhoods of nearly every city studied were hotter than other neighborhoods, sometimes by nearly 13 degrees.<sup>35</sup> The study, resources said, reveals "that historical housing policies may, in fact, be directly responsible for disproportionate exposure to current heat events."<sup>36</sup> In a 2022 report, the Milwaukee-based nonprofit organization Groundwork found that historic redlining maps and modern satellite imagery "reveal a relationship between federal race-based housing segregation and vulnerability to extreme heat and flooding in Milwaukee today."<sup>37</sup>
- **Violence and policing.** Several investigations by the Princeton University sociologist Patrick Sharkey reveal that the "distribution of violence" is tightly linked with segregation by economic status, race, and ethnicity.<sup>38</sup> This violence is then compounded by police violence and disproportionate levels of incarceration, which in turn worsen economic disadvantage.<sup>39</sup> Narrower studies have found that segregation itself, in addition to the "concentrated disadvantage" created by segregation and discrimination, contributes to both higher rates of homicide victims among Black

and Latino residents as well as higher rates of homicide offenses in historically segregated communities.<sup>40</sup> Tufts University professor Daanika Gordon's in-depth study of a highly segregated Rust Belt region details the mechanisms of a Black neighborhood that was both over-surveilled and underserved by emergency services. The opposite was true in the nearby predominantly White neighborhood.<sup>41</sup>

- **Home valuation.** Past and present-day segregation impedes wealth-building and limits opportunities for social mobility. A 2018 report from the Brookings Institution found that majority-Black neighborhoods hold \$609 billion in owner-occupied "housing assets" and more than 3 million businesses. The Brookings analysis found that in the average U.S. metropolitan area, homes in neighborhoods where the share of the population is 50 percent Black are "valued at roughly half the price as homes in neighborhoods with no Black residents."<sup>42</sup> However, home and neighborhood quality did not fully explain the devaluation of homes in Black neighborhoods. Homes of similar quality in neighborhoods with similar amenities are worth 23 percent less (\$48,000 less per home, on average, amounting to \$156 billion in cumulative losses) in majority-Black neighborhoods, compared to neighborhoods with very few or no Black residents.
- **Social networks.** The Harvard economist Raj Chetty and his team find that friendships between people with high socioeconomic status and those with lower socioeconomic status are a strong predictor of social mobility over the long term.<sup>43</sup> But, in general, he finds that friendships are strongly class-based, especially among people with high socioeconomic status. Chetty's studies find that living in a "connected place" even early in childhood contributes to upward mobility over the long term. Obviously, it is not easy to build relationships with people of higher

socioeconomic status if they aren't around your neighborhoods and schools. This speaks to the need, for example, for increasing opportunities for integration through more inclusive housing policies, redrawing school district borders, making it easier for people with lower incomes to move to wealthier communities. This is easier said than done, as government-enforced public school district borders, coterminous with segregated housing patterns, are themselves geographic boundaries that cement and fuel segregated housing patterns. Because of these stark patterns of segregation, families with means and status can choose their public schools by moving to a particular community, affirming and furthering segregation and the divisions it enforces.

- **School quality.** Schools that serve large shares of students in poverty also tend to be under-resourced. Educators there must tend to an array of social challenges, such as hunger, homelessness, and the economic precarity of families. One of the most powerful predictors of racial gaps in educational outcomes is the level of poverty in a student's school.<sup>44</sup> It is more difficult to attract and retain high-quality teachers to higher poverty schools, and schools with disproportionately high shares of African American and Latino students tend to have higher rates of teacher absenteeism and less experienced teachers.<sup>45</sup> Such schools tend to have fewer opportunities for advanced coursework and are typically less likely to have counselors or nurses on permanent staff and more likely to have security guards.<sup>46</sup> A 2017 investigation by the nonprofit EdBuild found that despite educating the same number of students, school districts with larger shares of Black and Latino students receive \$23 billion less overall than predominantly White schools.<sup>47</sup> The disparities do not exist in every state, and they vary widely across the country. However, one reason for the overall spending gap is that public schools rely heavily on local real estate taxes.

This section has explored some of the harms segregation and its attendant, concentrated poverty, does to historically marginalized groups. But we are all harmed by separation. Given the high levels of polarization in our society and rising inequality, political philosophers and ethicists stress that intentional efforts to bring typically separated groups together are vital for fostering connectedness and a strong foundation for a pluralistic democracy. In her book *The Imperative of Integration*, University of Michigan professor Elizabeth Anderson writes,

*Segregation impedes the intergroup communication needed for democratic institutions to gather and use widely dispersed information about problems and policies of public interest. It blocks the mechanisms needed to hold office-holders democratically accountable to all the people.... It makes elites insular, clubby, ignorant, unaccountable, and irresponsible.<sup>48</sup>*



# 3.

## Working Toward Transformation

Individuals and organizations across the United States are working to undo segregation and/or repair the harms it has caused.

This section provides a window into that work. The 2023 book, *Just Action: How to Challenge Segregation Enacted Under the Color of Law*, by Richard and Leah Rothstein, offers readers examples of actions they can take in their own communities to win redress for segregation.<sup>49</sup>

Two different types of actions and efforts seem to have emerged. In the first category are efforts to reduce or prevent worsening segregation. This often includes the development of policy and

practices to reduce segregation, perhaps through redrawing segregative school district boundaries or writing inclusive zoning regulations. In the second category are efforts that do not necessarily reduce segregation per se but account for and repair the damage it has caused in various areas of life, for example through investment in communities of color or the provision of particular services such as parks or health care facilities. We consider each broad category below.

### Reducing or Preventing Segregation

Several communities have found success by engaging in a government-initiated process called Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH).<sup>50</sup> After the Trump Administration's efforts to undermine it, this program, in its most recent iteration, requires that recipients of funds from the Office of Housing and Urban Development complete an "analysis of impediments" (AI) that

prevent creation of truly open and fair housing. Specifically, fund recipients are expected to take "meaningful actions, in addition to combating discrimination, that overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on [race, national origin, and other] protected characteristics."<sup>51</sup> For some communities the

AI process was an opportunity to engage and educate a wide swath of community members about a municipality or a region's long history of segregation and then devise solutions and action plans to counteract it.

The long-time civil rights lawyer and fair housing expert Michael Allen has chronicled many of these endeavors.<sup>52</sup> Allen writes about a grassroots nonprofit, **Greater New Orleans** Fair Housing Action Center (GNOFHAC) that introduced the concept of a "People's AI" "designed to engage community members in identifying, analyzing, and responding to segregation and other fair housing barriers that they experienced every day, but that had been omitted from the AI produced by the City of New Orleans."<sup>53</sup> This resulted in the People's Analysis of Impediments (AI) for New Orleans.<sup>54</sup> GNOFHAC was later selected as a contractor to develop a new "AI" for the City of New Orleans and the Housing Authority of New Orleans.

Allen also discusses **Texas**, where following major hurricanes the federal government allocated about \$3 billion in disaster relief to the state. However, two local non-profits, Texas Appleseed and Texas Low Income Housing Information Service, who had successfully demanded transparency in race and housing data, revealed that plans for recovery would have worsened racial and economic segregation in the state. For example, the state had plans to rebuild multi-family housing in segregated neighborhoods. Also, its restrictions on rebuilding some single-family homes would have likely required homeowners of color to return to segregated communities. The plans also would have allocated millions of dollars to communities with long histories of segregation and hostility to low-income housing. The two nonprofits were able to spur community engagement, file a complaint with HUD, and negotiate an agreement with the state to put hundreds of millions of dollars toward rebuilding housing that did not exacerbate segregation, consistent with the AFFH. Under the agreement, any local community seeking funds from the state must engage in a community-engagement process to create a housing assessment that describes how their plans would not exacerbate segregation.

Meanwhile, in **Connecticut**, the Open Communities Alliance, founded in 2013, convenes and works to educate and empower a growing multiracial, urban and suburban coalition of residents, activists, local academics, and elected officials in this highly unequal state. The group works to combat and "de-design" segregation and its harms through legislation, investigative reports, litigation, community education, and engagement. The group's public engagement and publicly accessible reports have culminated in a variety of bills and lawsuits to ensure inclusionary zoning, greater housing choices, and appropriate counseling for families that wish to move to "high opportunity" communities and that wealthy, predominantly White communities create more housing for low-income families. The group won a major victory in 2018 when, as a result of a lawsuit by the Open Communities Alliance, the U.S. Office of Housing and Urban Development agreed to implement an administrative rule that would create more housing choices for low-income families and families of color, resulting in more residential integration.

Nearly 30 communities including, for example, **Richmond, Virginia, Buffalo, New York and Columbus, Ohio**, participate in housing mobility programs. These programs help low-income families with children use federally funded and locally administered Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs) to move to neighborhoods with less poverty, better schools, less crime, and more resources such as grocery stores and parks. These programs typically offer a range of services, including assistance in searching for housing and short-term financial help.<sup>55</sup>

Since its launch in 2020, the members of Century Foundation's Bridges Collaborative have created a a hub for educators and other practitioners working to create and sustain racially and socioeconomically integrated schools and neighborhoods. The collaborative provides space and opportunity for local actors to "learn from one another, build grassroots political support, and develop successful strategies for integration."<sup>56</sup> Century Foundation researcher Emma Britton Miller details efforts in **Howard County**,



**Maryland**, to redraw school district borders both to use school buildings more efficiently and to reduce socioeconomic and racial segregation.<sup>57</sup> In this generally affluent and rapidly growing county between Washington, DC, and Baltimore, educators recognized that the economic and racial segregation in their school district was both unjust and damaging to their community. The county school superintendent built a broad base of support among parents, educators, and community leaders as he worked to reconfigure school district boundaries to ensure socioeconomic diversity, which resulted in greater racial diversity. Communication with community members, including translation into multiple languages, was of paramount importance. In the midst of a pandemic, students entered newly desegregated schools, first online and then, as schools reopened, as they were welcomed into new buildings. More redistricting occurred in 2023 as educators opened a new high school.<sup>58</sup>

In **Greater Hartford, Connecticut**, a regional system of nonselective magnet schools brings together students from the city of Hartford and its surrounding suburbs. The state funds the schools in both the city and its suburbs as part of a remedy to the decision in the lawsuit, *Sheff v. O’Neill*. In *Sheff*, the Connecticut Supreme Court ruled that the racial segregation in the region denied students the equal educational opportunity promised by the state constitution. Though the magnet schools and their funding mechanisms have engendered their share of controversy in recent years, research indicates that magnets have remained popular, have increased racial diversity in the region, and are associated with measurable achievement gains.<sup>59</sup> Through the **Sheff Movement Coalition**, parents and advocates organize and inform community members about—and advocate for policies to support—the integrated schools and transfer programs won through the lawsuit.

In **Ohio**, public school educators created the program, Erase the Space, which brings together students from demographically distinct school

districts to get to know each other and engage in facilitated dialogue around social issues.<sup>60</sup>

In **New Jersey**, a group of parents, faith leaders, activists, and civil rights lawyers organized to engage community members and bring wider attention to the extreme segregation in that state’s public school system and potential remedies for it. In 2016, a forum explored the feasibility of school district consolidation to reduce segregation in the state’s schools. In 2018, plaintiffs filed the lawsuit, *Latino Action Network v. New Jersey*, claiming that the requirement that students attend school based on where they live creates segregation that harms all students. At this writing, plaintiffs are still awaiting a decision a year after the case was heard in state court in 2022.<sup>61</sup>

Generally, moving from what researchers term “low-opportunity” neighborhoods to higher opportunity neighborhoods tends to confer myriad benefits to movers, though certainly not in all circumstances.<sup>62</sup> Research on a wide variety of programs demonstrates improvements in health and well-being,<sup>63</sup> income, educational attainment and social mobility for movers.<sup>64</sup> Similarly, levels of school desegregation and racial and economic diversity are predictors of long-term economic gains and educational attainment for African Americans.<sup>65</sup> Numerous studies synthesized in meta-analysis show that greater contact between racial groups in schools predicts lower prejudice and other positive intergroup outcomes such as empathy.<sup>66</sup> Diverse classrooms, researchers conclude, help promote these positive effects of intergroup contact to the extent that they provide opportunities for children from different groups to interact, become friends, and establish norms of inclusion, equal status, and equity across groups.<sup>67</sup>

But for people of color, predominantly White environments can exact harm. Historically, many Black teachers lost jobs to White educators and many Black educational leaders also were ousted as White principals and superintendents were installed. Black, Latinx, and Native American

children often have been forced to assimilate to White culture and faced overt and covert racism in White dominated schools.<sup>68</sup> <sup>††</sup> Racism certainly persists in our institutions and communities. But to be clear, in the modern vision of integration, all people are enabled and encouraged to bring forth their full identities and seek opportunities wherever they are located, practice self-determination, make contributions and benefit from a sense of belonging that does not require assimilation to any dominant culture. Curriculum and anti-racist practices in schools, now under attack in many conservative states, reflect that

growing awareness. In many communities across the United States, a reckoning with segregation, past and present, is a necessary prerequisite for reaching true integration. This reckoning and redress ideally would involve everyone, but it would center the contributions, desires, and expertise of historically marginalized groups.<sup>\*\*</sup> Today's redress proposals might include efforts to increase integration, but they nearly always prioritize investments in communities of color so people can thrive wherever they are and where they choose to live, work, learn, and play.

## Redressing Segregation

The national nonprofit organization, the Redress Movement, educates the public about the continuing harms of segregation and helps local communities win repair for segregation. Formed a few years after the publication of Richard Rothstein's book, *The Color of Law*, the emerging organization is a hub and information center for redress efforts around the nation. It partners with local communities to provide information and technical assistance and to provide space for local residents and leaders to learn from their counterparts. More generally, the National African American Reparations Commission advocates nationally for reparations for slavery and multiple forms of discrimination.<sup>69</sup>

Using funds earned from the sales of marijuana, in 2020 the Chicago suburb of **Evanston, Illinois**, approved its Restorative Housing Program, the city's first reparations initiative. Acknowledging "the harm caused to African-Americans" from discriminatory housing policy and practices and inaction on the part of the city from 1919 to 1969,

in its first year the program provided 16 African American residents \$25,000 each to put toward a down payment on a home, mortgage payments, or home repairs.<sup>70</sup>

After advocacy and activism and community-based education around the history and harms of segregation in the region, in 2021, officials in the city of **St. Paul, Minnesota**, the state's capital, apologized for the municipality's role in discrimination against African Americans. They acknowledged that the practices and inaction on the part of the city contributed to long-term harms, particularly in the areas of housing and wealth. Since then, an advisory committee recommended that cash payments be made to Black residents. Also in St. Paul, the Inheritance Fund provides housing-related assistance to descendants of residents of the predominantly Black Rondo neighborhood, who were displaced and then harmed by practices and policies that created and exacerbated segregation. Qualifying descendants can receive up to \$100,000 in down-payment assistance to buy a

<sup>††</sup> For thoughtful reflection on this, see S. Lallinger, *Is the Fight for School Integration Still Worthwhile for African Americans?* The Bridges Collaborative (2023, January 12). Retrieved April 2, 2023, from <https://tcf.org/content/report/is-the-fight-for-school-integration-still-worthwhile-for-african-americans/>

<sup>\*\*</sup> For an excellent framing of and deliberation on this question, see V. S. Walker, Second-Class integration: A historical perspective for a contemporary agenda, *Harvard Educational Review* 79(2) (2009), 269–284. <https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.79.2.b1637p4u4093484m>

home anywhere in St. Paul. If they choose to buy a home within the boundaries of historic Rondo, they can get an additional \$10,000 in assistance to “recognize the lost community wealth being addressed with the homebuyer’s investment in the historic Rondo community.”<sup>71</sup>

In 2018, the city council of **Durham, North Carolina**, passed a resolution calling for local and federal reparations. Two years later, in 2021, the council approved \$6 million for local reparations efforts, including affordable housing and green infrastructure projects in Black neighborhoods.<sup>72</sup> In 2023, the city of **Boston** launched a new Task Force on Reparations.

Mayors Organized for Reparations and Equity (MORE) is a coalition of city mayors committed to local action for reparation. As of 2023, there are 13 mayors in the coalition, including the mayors of **Los Angeles, St. Louis, Denver, and Kansas City**. They have all committed to form their own commissions, to begin reparations funding, and to support federal bill HR 40, which would create a commission to study and develop proposals for reparations for slavery and discrimination in the United States.<sup>73</sup>

Meanwhile, **California** is the first state to complete an accounting of the harm caused by slavery and racial discrimination more generally and to propose reparations. Its task force is still in the process of making formal recommendations to the state legislature. The recommendations include cash payments to qualifying residents, adopting a Black studies curriculum and more investment in Black-owned businesses.

In **Buffalo, Albany**, and the **Greater Rochester area in New York State**, people discovered that their homes still had racial covenants on the deeds. In Brighton, a suburb of Rochester, this led to organized efforts for homeowners to scrub deeds of the racist language. The City Roots Community Land Trust offers a how-to guide on its website.<sup>74</sup> Then, in March 2022, the New York State Assembly passed a bill to require

new homeowners to scrub the racist covenants from their deeds. This bill died, but the effort has raised awareness and advocacy for redress from past policies and practices that harmed African Americans. Learning about racial covenants also spurred wider advocacy for repair from segregation in **Charlottesville, Virginia**,<sup>75</sup> and **Modesto, California**. The University of Minnesota’s Mapping Prejudice project focuses on the continuing harms caused by racial covenants and other forms of discrimination. It offers policy and advocacy solutions that can be applied at the local and state levels.<sup>76</sup>

The Redress Movement highlights several local communities, including **Baltimore**,<sup>77</sup> **Detroit**<sup>78</sup> and others that were able to win partial redress decades after highway construction and urban renewal resulted in segregation and displacement in communities of color. These new investments were made possible by activism and advocacy that led to the provision of state and federal funding.

In **Miami**, decades after urban renewal and highway construction projects pushed out the Black population in the once vibrant African American neighborhood of Overtown, cutting it off from the larger city of Miami, a diverse group of residents and community leaders organized to reclaim space. Underdeck Miami<sup>79</sup> is a movement to build a large public greenspace under the highway that is informed by past histories of government-led disinvestment and the government’s seizure of private land in a thriving community that was cut off from the opportunities in the larger city and region. Walking and biking paths, open space, cultural programming, and historical monuments will connect this neglected area to the larger downtown area. “This connects Overtown to the downtown,” Nelson Adams, chair of Overdeck Miami’s Stakeholder Committee, told NBC 6 South Florida. “This is not just for some of us, but for all of us.”<sup>80</sup>

In some communities, people use the longstanding land trust structure to provide redress for segregation. Initially focused on providing land to African

American farmers in rural communities, the use of land trusts has expanded over the decades. Under a land trust agreement, a nonprofit or a municipality either purchases land or manages donated land. It may then sell or rent a home or building that sits on the land for well below the market value. The lease to the underlying land typically includes terms that require that the home remains affordable for the next buyer. At the same time, a homeowner will build equity through appreciation in the home's value.

For example, the city of **Seattle** recently donated a fire station and land to the Africatown Community Land Trust noting the “urgent” need for investments in the Black community. Africatown Community Land Trust developed several projects in recent years, including the Liberty Bank Building, which created more than 100 units of affordable housing and space for local businesses in central Seattle.<sup>81</sup> In 1988, community leaders and activists in **Boston** founded the Community Land Trust, Dudley Neighbors, Inc. After creating an entity with eminent domain authority, the organization condemned and rebuilt vacant properties that had been sites of arson and illegal dumping in the Dorchester and Roxbury neighborhoods. Other community land trusts that focus on redressing harms of segregation and racial discrimination operate in **Houston**<sup>82</sup> and **Baltimore**.<sup>83</sup>

The Redress Movement policy brief, “Property Taxes and Racial Redress,” reveals how the unequal tax burden on African Americans is connected to the history of government-created and government-incentivized segregation.<sup>84</sup> Offering concrete examples from the city of **Milwaukee, Wisconsin**, the brief's authors offer several ways for local activists and affected homeowners to redress this harm. The firm, Urban3, conducts equity-centered analyses of property tax burdens, including a recent study in **Asheville, North Carolina**, that linked unequal tax burdens of African Americans to historical segregation and systemic devaluing of homes in Black communities.<sup>85</sup>

This exploration of efforts to reduce, un-do, de-design, and redress segregation points toward several routes to repair. This exploration is hardly exhaustive, as there are numerous solutions being pursued in communities across the nation. Some require policy changes at local, state, or federal levels. Other solutions require engagement with systems such as banks or insurers or their regulatory agencies. Still others require organizing and collaboration and the creation of new entities. The next section zooms out to review some lessons learned and provides links so practitioners can learn more connect with others engaged in work to reduce and redress segregation.

# 4.

## Some Lessons Learned and Resources

### Lessons Learned

**The process of seeking redress or working to reduce or avoid segregation varies from place to place. But there are some common features.** Redress and segregation reduction efforts typically start with a recounting of history accompanied by a parallel accounting of current inequities and ongoing challenges. Such efforts typically include growing awareness through community-based education, public hearings, meetings, and webinars. This typically results in an identifiable coalition or even an official “commission” or “task force” and then the crafting of specific solutions to repair and correct the injustices of the past and the present. The Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation (TRHT) model is particularly well-suited for this work, in that it centers narrative, lived experience and community-based leadership that determines priorities and actions collectively.

**Local histories are vital progenitors of larger movements and action.** Providing hyper-local historical context and concrete examples highlights the policies, practices, and belief systems

that created racial segregation and concentrated poverty and very clearly demonstrates that the condition was driven by racism. This creates shared context and grounding for later conversations. It also reduces the burden often placed on people of color to “teach” White people in these settings. Inclusion of history also makes up for the lack of education about racism and racial history in the public schools and textbooks.

**Many movements balance community-based experience and histories with technical assistance and learning opportunities provided by national hubs or academic partners.** Typically locally driven and locally initiated, many nonprofit organizations and organized residents benefit from engaging statisticians and/or data and policy experts from educational institutions. Many have benefitted from the convening power and connections and technical assistance found through national hubs including The Redress Movement, The National Coalition on School Diversity, the Bridges Collaborative, and the Poverty and Race Research Action Council.

**In efforts to combat or redress segregation, the concept of “community” expands beyond traditional boundary lines.** Community members need to decide themselves what they want to do to reduce or redress segregation and how to best do it given local politics and circumstances. Notably, though, it has seemed helpful for some organizations and coalitions to define their stakeholder communities broadly, so that problems and solutions are widely owned. In other words, one small White neighborhood might be considered “a community” precisely because of the laws and policies and beliefs that engendered and sustained segregation. If one of the necessary components of redress is honest conversations about racism and interdependence, it is crucial that the very concept of a community be expanded. Community-based collaborative efforts to de-design or reduce residential and school segregation ultimately require a regional design that purposefully reaches beyond established communities and advertises itself as such. The idea of stepping across boundaries toward something “bigger” into a community of people committed to a shared goal is a potentially powerful draw. Small conversation groups are surely vital, but so too might be larger summits, “town halls,” and social events. “Big-tent” events may attract people who ordinarily might not volunteer to be a part of a conversation-based process.

**There is no magic bullet that will end or repair the multiple, intersecting harms of segregation. But there are many realistic goals and strategies to try right now.** Segregation was created by people whose beliefs engendered laws, policies, practices, systems, and structures that shaped opportunity and life chances in our nation. Ongoing work in states and local communities suggests that new beliefs, laws, policies, practices, and structures can help reverse and repair the harm. Often working together, community-based advocates, nonprofit organizations, socially concerned researchers and academics, and others have identified a wide range of policy levers, systems, structures and frameworks that can be used to reduce and redress segregation. Some of these—from engaging in the U.S. government-created Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing analysis to creating land trusts, providing direct cash payments, and making it easier for people to move—are explored in the previous section of this brief.

The listing that follows will help you learn more about the links between segregation and racial inequality, and also provide connections to organizations working toward repair and redress. There is a role for everyone in this work, including some unlikely allies. This includes ordinary concerned residents, skilled activists, health practitioners, landlords, business leaders (especially those in industries that played a role in creating and sustaining segregation), philanthropists, local, state, and federal elected leaders, litigators, and academics.

## Resources

- **Learning about current-day segregation.** There are several accessible tools that can help you measure and understand segregation in your community, region, or state. This includes the **Mapping Race and Housing Segregation tool** from the Othering and Belonging Institute at the University of California at Berkeley, and the **Diversity Data Kids Index** created by the Institute for Child, Youth and Family Policy at Brandeis University. To learn about

school segregation in your region, the Century Foundation offers a **mapping tool**. Also, the **National Equity Atlas** offers measures of neighborhood and school poverty.

- **Telling segregation stories.** Both the **Othering and Belonging Institute** at the University of California at Berkeley and the **Redress Movement** provide compelling models of local segregation stories, which often are catalysts toward local action.



- **National hubs & academic partners.**

Connecting with national organizations and academic partners can provide direction, helpful models, technical assistance, and connections for local actors. [The National African American Reparations Commission](#) provides numerous resources from a national and international perspective. The [National Coalition on School Diversity, housed at the Poverty & Race Research Action Council](#) offers sample policy agendas, fact sheets, research, and community-based convenings for people working to reduce school segregation and create equitable diverse schools. The [Century Foundation’s Bridges Collaborative](#) seeks to “reignite” a movement for integrated schools and diverse neighborhoods, serving as a hub for practitioners from across the country.

[The Redress Movement](#) is creating “Redress Roundtables and Committees” across the United States that will “connect organizations and individuals to build a network of public will for direct action and policy recommendations to make tangible change.” The [Othring and Belonging Institute](#) offers numerous resources related to segregation and has worked with local communities to craft segregation histories and develop plans and strategies for repair. The [Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity at the University of Minnesota](#) partners with communities to help them understand segregation in their communities and combat it.

The [Poverty and Race Research Action Council’s Housing Mobility Initiative](#) brings together mobility counseling agencies, public housing agencies, and housing integration advocates to develop strategies to influence the direction of housing policy. The Initiative partners advocate for expansion of HUD’s housing mobility programs and removal of impediments to mobility in the Housing Choice Voucher Program (“Section 8”). [Mobility Works](#), based in Baltimore, is a national member organization that works with

local communities and agencies to expand and support housing choice for low-income families who want to move to communities with safe housing, high-performing schools, green space and more access to economic opportunity. In collaboration with the Poverty and Race Research Action Council, Mobility Works in 2022 published a [directory of existing Housing Mobility Programs](#). The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities offers a helpful overview of [Housing Mobility Programs in the United States](#).

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s [Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Initiative](#) has been a productive frame and activity for communities looking to address segregation. The organization [Policy Link](#) offers excellent explainers and other resources about AFFH. See, as well, the [“People’s Analysis of Impediments \(AI\) for New Orleans”](#) mentioned in this brief.

- **Housing, homeownership & wealth-building strategies.** This accessible series, [Racial Justice in Housing Finance](#), offers readers a wide range of plausible policy pathways to creating a racially just, equitable housing finance system. The report, [Disrupting the Reciprocal Relationship Between Housing and School Segregation](#), provides concrete recommendations and examples for breaking the link between segregated housing and segregated public schools. This [guide](#) from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and the Poverty and the Poverty and Race Research Action Council describes a key policy tool, Small Area Fair Market Rents, that local housing authorities can use to help reduce segregation and make it easier for people with low incomes to move to higher opportunity communities. [Homeownership, Racial Segregation, and Policy Solutions to Racial Wealth Equity](#), from the Brookings Institution, describes the roots of wealth inequality and solutions to reduce inequality.

- **Community land trusts.** The Grounded Solutions Network offers an online [Startup Community Land Trust Hub](#) to help communities “chart a course from idea to implementation.” The organization also offers a [technical manual](#) for the ongoing operation of land trusts.
- **Strategies related to segregation and health.** [Health and the Segregated City](#), a brief from New York University’s Furman Center, offers a succinct, accessible overview of a vast research base. The University of California at San Francisco’s Repair Project offers a comprehensive framework for [Medical Reparations](#), applicable to local efforts to redress segregation. “[Reparations as a Public Health Priority—A Strategy for Ending Black-White Health Disparities](#),” published in 2020 in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, offers concrete health-oriented solutions to repair harm linked to slavery, segregation, and other forms of discrimination. This is particularly useful for local practitioners.
- **Social mobility, integration and segregation.** The Poverty and Race Research Action Council’s Oct-Dec 2022 newsletter, “[Reflections on social capital, integration, and upward mobility](#),” offers a summary of the most rigorous and recent social mobility research, along with commentaries on its implications for housing practice, school integration, and other issues. The Brookings Institution breaks down [research on social mobility](#) in 14 helpful charts.
- **The link between segregation and educational outcomes.** The [National Coalition on School Diversity](#) offers research and information about people and organizations working to create and sustain diverse public schools. [Dividing Lines: Racially Unequal School Boundaries in US Public School Systems](#), an accessible study from the Urban Institute, is a cogent exploration of the link between segregation and inequality on a host of educational measures.

- **Monetary resources.** The \$1 billion [Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program](#) aims to reconnect communities that are “cut off from opportunity and burdened by past transportation infrastructure decisions.” In February 2023, U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg announced the first \$185 million in grant awards for 45 projects.

The [US Department of Education’s Magnet Schools Assistance Program](#) issues grants to local educational agencies to create and operate magnet schools that draw a diverse student body as part of a court-ordered or federally approved voluntary desegregation plan. The [Community Advantage Program](#), a collaborative effort of the Ford Foundation, Fannie Mae, and Self-Help Credit Union, used a \$50 million grant to enhance credit, leveraging \$4.7 billion in financing for low-interest rate low income homeowners across the United States.<sup>86</sup>

The philanthropic community has not been heavily invested in work to reduce or redress residential and school segregation, though some funding toward reparations for descendants of slavery has been accomplished in recent years. [Inside Philanthropy offers helpful articles about these trends](#), which may assist local practitioners seeking resources. Founded in 2020, [Liberation Ventures](#) is a Black-led nonprofit that makes grants for reparations efforts. Another fund, [Liberated Capital](#), which was created by Edgar Villanueva’s Decolonizing Wealth Project, made its second reparations-related grants in 2022.

Brandeis University’s Sillerman Center’s brief, “[Inhabiting Change](#),” describes roles the philanthropic community can play in reducing and redressing residential segregation. The Sillerman Center report, [Diverse Equitable and Inclusive K-12 Schools: A New Call for Philanthropic Support](#), offers numerous examples of roles for local funders and local and state-level efforts in progress to create integrated schools.

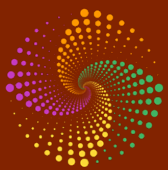


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