

ULGM Strategic Plan



Urban League of
Greater Madison
LIVE | LEARN | WORK

Best
Midwest

2011-12

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Executive Summary

On July 14, 2005, The Black Commentator, a respected national weekly Internet magazine that focuses on issues affecting African Americans rated Wisconsin #1 on its list of *Ten Worst Places to be Black in the United States*. Within weeks, news publications and policy makers across Wisconsin began to write about and wrestle with this distinction.¹

In May 2010, the Urban League of Greater Madison (ULGM) initiated a comprehensive strategic planning process to define its goals and strategies for leading a movement to establish Greater Madison as the **“Best [place] in the Midwest”** for African Americans and others to live, learn and work by 2020. As a result of the depth and breadth of its planning process, the ULGM will implement an aggressive and thoughtful plan to achieve this vision. The public should consider this strategic plan to be Phase One of the foundation that must be laid, the work that must be done and the progress that must be made in order to achieve our goals and realize our vision. In 2020, we want the national media to report that Madison, Wisconsin has indeed become “Best in the Midwest”.

This Strategic Plan covers a two-year period, from January 2011 through December 2012. The ULGM believes that a shorter time window will keep the organization focused on achieving a small number of high impact goals, and with the appropriate sense of urgency necessary to produce the results it seeks.

Background on the National Urban League

The National Urban League (NUL) was founded in 1910 by Ruth Standish Baldwin and George Edmund Haynes. The organization was originally named the Committee on Urban Conditions Among Negroes, and was formed as part of a merger between the Committee for the Improvement of Industrial Conditions Among Negroes in New York and the National League for the Protection of Colored Women. The NUL was founded to help African Americans who migrated in mass from the South to the North during the early part of the 20th Century – a period known as the Greater Black Migration – overcome discrimination as they pursued employment, education, and housing. The NUL’s dual focus on expanding equal opportunity and economic development among African Americans and dismantling structural inequality and racial discrimination for all citizens has remained central to the organization’s mission for 100 years.

The current mission of the National Urban League movement is to enable African Americans to secure economic self-reliance, parity, power and civil rights. There are more than 100 local affiliates in 36 states and the District of Columbia providing direct services that impact and improve the lives of more than 2 million people nationwide. While not deterring from its mission to move the African American community forward, NUL affiliates have embraced the need to set the example for championing diversity and addressing community needs more broadly. In 2010, NUL launched its “I am Empowered” national campaign, which includes four goals that all affiliates, members, and supporters have dedicated themselves to achieving by 2025:

1. Every American child is ready for college, work and life.
2. Every American has access to jobs with a living wage and good benefits.
3. Every American lives in safe, decent, affordable and energy efficient housing on fair terms.
4. Every American has access to quality and affordable health care solutions.

The National Urban League employs a five-point approach to provide economic empowerment, educational opportunities, and the guarantee of civil rights for African Americans.

- **Education and Youth Empowerment** ensures the education of all children by providing access to early childhood literacy, after-care programs and college scholarships.
- **Economic Empowerment** invests in the financial literacy and employability of adults through job training, homeownership and entrepreneurship.
- **Health and Quality of Life Empowerment** promotes community wellness through a focus on prevention, including fitness, healthy eating and access to affordable healthcare.
- **Civic Engagement and Leadership Empowerment** encourages all people to take an active role to improve quality of life through participation in community service projects and public policy initiatives.
- **Civil Rights and Racial Justice Empowerment** guarantees equal participation in all facets of American society through proactive public policies and community-based programs.

The Urban League of Greater Madison has been a chartered affiliate of the National Urban League since 1968.

The Urban League of Greater Madison

As we enter this new chapter of our work in the Greater Madison Community, we have looked back on our history to give context, meaning and insight to our mission and strategies going forward. The following appeared in a report documenting the history of the Urban League of Greater Madison entitled, “Forming the Struggle, 1963-1968.” This report recounts a study commissioned in the 1960’s by a group of local citizens who sought to identify the growth, trends, and needs of African Americans in Dane County.

“The Executive Committee of the Friends of the Urban League feels deeply that Madison will soon exercise a strong pull of disadvantaged people.... Negroes in great numbers are already on the periphery in Madison and the discontented will move on quickly. We believe that Madison ought to be ready to receive and absorb them as useful and constructive citizens of the community. This is what the Urban League is all about.”

More than four decades later, we acknowledge and celebrate the great progress we’ve made in opening doors for African Americans and others that we serve. At the same time, we recognize that we are far from accomplishing the goals and aspirations established by our founders.

To ensure we achieve the dream of equality, opportunity and access in our lifetime, the Board of Directors and staff of the Urban League of Greater Madison are setting a bold vision for our next 10 years. We will work to make Greater Madison the BEST PLACE for EVERYONE, especially African Americans, to live, learn, and work in the Midwest by the year 2020. To achieve our goals, we will have a laser focus on ensuring our young people are college and career ready, that adults are prepared for and working in career ladder jobs in stable and emerging industries and that diversity is reflected in workplaces and leadership across the community we serve.

To do so, we will continue in our efforts and assume the mantle of leadership and responsibility that has been passed on to us. We will do this by creating a climate that empowers individuals and institutions across Greater Madison to make a positive difference in our community. We look forward to working with our many partners to make our BEST IN THE MIDWEST vision a reality for all.

Current State of Affairs in Greater Madison

Two years ago, the State of Black Madison Coalition published a groundbreaking report titled, “The State of Black Madison 2008: Before the Tipping Point.” The report presented an “accurate picture of some of the significant challenges that African Americans face in the areas of employment, income, entrepreneurship, health, education, housing, criminal justice and political influence in Madison and Dane County.” The authors of the report highlighted several findings that were cause for concern:

- The unemployment rate for African American adults is 2.5 times that of the full community.
- 37% of African Americans in Dane County live in poverty compared to 11% of the community overall.
- 31% of African Americans ages 25-45 in metropolitan Madison are out of the labor force, compared with 13% of the community as a whole.
- African Americans own less than 1% of all businesses, though they make up 5% of the population.
- Only 74% of African American adults hold a high school diploma, compared with 93% of the community overall.
- 40% of African American students drop out before completing high school.
- Two in ten African American families own their homes, while the figure for the entire community six in ten.

As the nation and state’s economy has worsened since data for the State of Black Madison report was captured, it is believed that the situation has also gotten worse for African Americans in Dane County. In October 2010, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reported that since the recession began in 2008, Wisconsin has lost more than 180,000 jobs and has a \$3.3 million state budget deficit it must address. This will undoubtedly put a strain on the state’s investment in social supports and education, in particular.

Dane County is feeling the pinch of the economy as well. Although the county has maintained the strongest economy out of 72 counties in Wisconsin, unemployment increased 23% (from 4.9% to 6.3%) between January 2009 and January 2010. In Madison, unemployment increased 25% from 4.4% to 5.9% of citizens not working. Assuming the number of African Americans in Dane County who are not in the labor force has increased at a similar rate, it is possible that as many as 39% are without jobs.

Combing through other data highlighting the educational, economic, and social characteristics of the African American community in Greater Madison and the State of Wisconsin, we have learned that:

- Just 52% of African American males and 65% of African American females graduated from high school in 2009. These are the highest percentages in the last four academic years. Likewise, just 52% of Hispanic males and 72% of Hispanic females graduated from high school, compared to 88% of white males and 92% of white females.²

- Only 7% of African American and 18% of Hispanic seniors in the Madison Metropolitan School District who completed the ACT college entrance exam were “college ready” [according to the test maker]; 93% of African American and 82% of Hispanic seniors were identified as “not ready.”³
- The median hourly wage of an African American man in Wisconsin in 2005 was \$13.40, an amount that is \$3.79 less than his White counterpart. Correcting for inflation, African American women earn less today than they did in 1979. At a median hourly wage of \$10.89, African American women lag behind the median for White women by \$2.15.⁴
- In 2006, the median household income for African Americans in Wisconsin fell from \$26,318 to \$26,161 while the median income for White rose from \$49,244 to \$50,794.⁵
- In 2006, an estimated 32% of African American men ages 18-54 were under the supervision of the Wisconsin Department of Corrections, 10% were incarcerated and 22% were under community supervision. In the same year, an estimated 47% of Dane County’s African American men ages 25-29 were under supervision, 15% in prison and another 32% on probation or parole or extended supervision.⁶

Our Planning Process

The Urban League’s 2010 planning process consisted of four strategies: (1) internal assessment, (2) external assessment, (3) community engagement, and (4) literature review and research. These strategies enabled us to determine our internal needs and capabilities and led us in setting ambitious goals to drive change and achieve our desired objectives. They also helped us develop a clear and broad understanding of the obstacles and opportunities the organization will face as we act in pursuit of our mission.

Internal Stakeholder Assessment: We enlisted the services of Organizational Skills Associates (OSA) of Madison to conduct an internal assessment of our staff and board regarding their feelings about the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of our existing programs, operational structures, leadership, partnerships and Board of Directors. Our CEO also spent several days evaluating the effectiveness and development needs and interests of key ULGM personnel. He also completed a performance audit of the Board, with the Board’s support. In addition, the Director of Economic & Workforce Development formed an internal team and conducted a thorough operational audit of ULGM, pinpointing areas where systems and processes needed to be upgraded, implemented, or eliminated in order to improve efficiencies, outcomes and program execution, and take on new responsibilities.

External Stakeholder Assessment: OSA also led the external assessment of ULGM, collecting input and feedback from our key external stakeholders about our organization, our leadership and our programs and services. In addition, our CEO hosted three strategy meetings with small groups of ULGM contributors and conducted more than 30 one-on-ones with key financial and program partners.

Community Engagement Campaign (CEC): In June 2010, we launched a community engagement campaign (CEC) to develop a deeper understanding of the needs and aspirations of the Greater Madison community. Through the CEC, we recruited volunteers and partner agencies to walk neighborhoods and business districts with us. We engaged in a door-to-door canvassing effort to learn from a large and diverse sampling

of residents what the ULGM, our partner agencies and local leaders can do to make Greater Madison the best place to live, work and learn in the Midwest for EVERYONE.

The CEC gave us an important opportunity to get out, meet, and listen to a community which is not always reached by mail, pollsters or formal community awareness-building events. The campaign lasted from June 2010 through November 2010, and will pick back up again in spring 2011. This year, we visited every house in Bram's Addition, Burr Oaks, Leopold, and Maple Bluff neighborhoods. We left behind literature at all 1,706 houses and rental properties we visited, and conducted 225 personal interviews.

In addition to the CEC, we convened a forum to understand the needs and concerns of Greater Madison's African American community, hosted the Young Professionals Leadership Summit and Betty Lou Cruises on Madison's beautiful Lake Monona to engage young professionals and leaders in conversations about Greater Madison's present and future, hosted the Madison Mayor's 2010 Budget Hearing and a 2010 School Board Candidate Forum, and facilitated or participated in several other activities to inform our strategic agenda. In total, ULGM engaged more than 2,500 people in the development of this Strategic Plan.

Literature Review: To further inform our 2011-12 Strategic Plan, we reviewed historic reports and literature on Greater Madison and its African American community, and engaged in significant outreach efforts in 2010. The following reports, along with several others, have helped us understand the pattern of ideas, behaviors, actions and decision-making strategies that our organization and others have used to address the needs and aspirations of the African American community:

- Madison's Economy through Depression and War by City of Madison, City Plan Commission, 1951
- Triangle Urban Renewal Project: Relocation Report by Redevelopment Authority of the City of Madison, October 1963
- Enlarging Equal Opportunity in Madison, Report to Mayor Otto Festge by the Community Relations Service, U.S. Conference of Mayors, 1965
- Madison's Negro Population by Naomi Lede, The Community Welfare Council and National Urban League, April 1966
- The Negro Community of South Madison by Charles O'Reilly, UW-Madison School of Social Work, October 1966
- Madison's Black Community: 1970 Population and Housing Report by City of Madison Equal Opportunities Commission, January 1971
- 1979 -80 Biennial Report of the City of Madison Equal Opportunities Commission
- Blacks in Wisconsin: A 1980 Chartbook, December 1988
- Young Minority Men in Madison by the Madison Urban League, United Refugee Service of Wisconsin, and Centro Hispano, March 1992
- Dual Education in the Madison Metropolitan School District by the Wisconsin Policy Research Institute, February 1994
- Report to the Madison Community Foundation: Changing Demographics and the African American Experience in Dane County, May 15, 1995
- Madison: A History of the Formative Years (Second Edition) by David Mollenhoff, 2003

Our Mission

The mission of the Urban League of Greater Madison is to eliminate social and economic barriers for African Americans, other people of color and the economically disadvantaged in Dane County by transforming our community into a place of opportunity, personal and professional growth, prosperity and success for everyone.

Our Vision

To make Greater Madison the “Best [place] in the Midwest” for everyone to live, learn, and work by 2020.

Our Agenda

ULGM will realize its vision through a comprehensive strategic empowerment agenda that includes the deployment and expansion of programs and services, advocacy, partnerships, and coalition building within the following three *Strands of Empowerment*. Through these strands, we build a stronger bridge between education and work; provide more pathways for young people and adults to secure a quality education, employment and grow professionally; and help transform Greater Madison into a place where everyone can succeed, thrive, and enjoy raising their families.

Live: *Ensuring that citizens reside in healthy and safe communities that provide equal opportunities for social engagement, cultural expression, and healthy living.* Currently, we operate an award-winning housing program that helps low and moderate income families become first-time home owners. In 2011, we will launch the African American Welcoming Committee, which will work with area employers and members of the Madison community to recruit and welcome newly arriving African Americans and their families to Greater Madison. We are also moving out of housing and will not take on any new properties in 2011, but will continue to service families who are currently in our homes while we explore partnerships with other agencies who can take on our home ownership program.

Learn: *Building a pipeline of high quality cradle-to-career educational services that impact the entire family, eliminate the achievement and education gaps, move all children towards high performance, and prepare youth and adults for career success.* Presently, the Urban League of Greater Madison is one of Dane County’s largest providers of programs aimed at increasing student achievement in core academic areas and preparing them to realize their college and career dreams. ULGM accomplishes this through school-based academic tutoring, college and career exposure and planning programs, youth leadership skill development activities, and much more.

Work: *Making Greater Madison the best place for African Americans and others to work in the Midwest.* The ULGM is already one of Greater Madison’s premiere providers of career development training and job placement assistance for unemployed and underemployed adults. We will work to expand our employment training options and business partnerships to serve more of this population. Additionally, we will address the needs for career advancement, professional development and employment opportunities among diverse management and executive level talent in the region.

Our Priorities

We will focus on four priorities within the context of our Best in the Midwest Agenda over the next 24 months:

1. Community Engagement
2. Education
3. Economic and Workforce Development
4. Resource Development

Our Tactics

The Urban League of Greater Madison will achieve its Best in the Midwest 2020 vision through the following vehicles:

- Programs & Services
- Partnerships
- Advocacy
- Coalition Building

Our Goals and Strategies

Goal 1: Community Engagement – To ensure the Greater Madison community is sufficiently engaged in the Urban League’s programs and that the Urban League is regularly informed about and addressing the community’s needs, aspirations, and changes.

Objective 1.1: To ensure that 75% of African Americans surveyed will report that Greater Madison is a great place to live, learn, and work by 2020.

Objective 1.2: To ensure that 75% of African Americans feel welcomed in workplaces, neighborhoods and social settings in Greater Madison by 2020.

Objective 1.3: To ensure that the Urban League’s advocacy, services and programs are informed by the Greater Madison community and the populations it serves, and that 50% of the Greater Madison area is familiar with our organization by the end of 2012.

Strategy A: Launch the *African American Welcoming Committee*, which will provide diverse leaders and area businesses a means to recruit, engage with, and support African Americans who have recently relocated to the Greater Madison area, or are in the process of doing so.

Strategy B: Utilize mass media, social media, and special events to inform the Greater Madison community of the Urban League’s programs, community concerns and opportunities and to recruit partners and financial supporters to the League’s efforts.

Strategy C: Offer and support programs and initiatives that engage the community in the mission of the Urban League or in activities that are relevant to the League's mission.

Goal 2: Education – To ensure children and adults in the Greater Madison area secure the education necessary to thrive in a technology-driven knowledge economy defined by creativity, service and innovation.

Objective 2.1: To advocate for and operate programs and initiatives that ensure ALL children are receiving a high quality 6 – 12 education that prepares them to succeed in college, careers, and life after high school.

Objective 2.2: To actively lead and participate in efforts that increase the African American high school graduation rate from 52% for males and 64% for females enrolled in the Madison Metropolitan School District in 2009-10 to 90% for both genders by 2019-20.

Objective 2.3: To actively lead and participate in efforts that ensure 85% of African American adults complete their high school education or equivalency, and that 45% are enrolled in or have completed a two or four year college program, or technical/professional certification by 2020.

Strategy A: Expand high quality *academic tutoring, college preparation, and career readiness programs* in area public schools for children enrolled in grades 6 – 12 and implement a companion *Destination Planning* program for parents of students participating in ULGM and Partner-sponsored programs.

Strategy B: Establish a *Charter School* that serves the educational needs of young men and women in grades 6 – 12 who reside in our service area.

Strategy C: Provide educational assessment, career coaching, and support services for children and adults who desire to complete their high school education and beyond.

Goal 3: Economic & Workforce Development – To ensure that African Americans and others of working age are able to identify, train for and secure employment in stable and emerging industries.

Objective 3.1: To actively lead and participate in efforts to reduce the African American unemployment rate from 32% to 10% by 2020.

Objective 3.2: To expand our basic and customized career training, increasing the number of adults we train from 340 to 700 annually by December 2012 while ensuring 50% secure and retain employment.

Objective 3.3: To partner with and provide services to employers in the Greater Madison area that support and increase racial and ethnic diversity among their employees.

Strategy A: Expand our basic *Foundations workforce program* to serve more adults.

Strategy B: Establish a *Customer Service Academy* and other customized training solutions that support the human capital and talent development needs of area employers operating in stable and emerging industries.

Strategy C: Expand our *partnerships with area employers* by marketing our workforce training programs and implementing a business membership fee.

Strategy D: Launch an annual *Employer Diversity Awards* event in conjunction with the organization's *Young Professionals Leadership Summit* that recognizes area employers for their commitment to hiring, developing, retaining and promoting employees of color in the Greater Madison area.

Goal 4: Resource Development – To ensure that the Urban League has the financial resources to accomplish its mission, and to ensure that those resources are managed and used with the greatest of integrity and timeliness.

Objective 4.1: Increase the percentage of Urban League's individual donor base by 25% annually.

Objective 4.2: Ensure the Urban League's visibility and reputation continues to grow and remain strong in the Greater Madison community.

Objective 4.3: Prepare annual fund development and marketing plans by December of each year that address the organization's funding needs.

Strategy A: Develop *Investment Funds* through which contributors to the Urban League can regularly invest their dollars in the organization's programs and activities, and receive quarterly and annual reports on the performance and impact of their investments.

Strategy B: Launch a *marketing and advertising campaign* that shares the work of the Urban League and engages the public in its mission and vision.

Strategy C: Establish a *Fundraising Bullpen* among key staff and expand the Board of Directors' fundraising and marketing teams to include individuals who can help the organization achieve its resource development needs and goals.

Strategy D: Hire an experienced and effective *Director of Finance* to manage the organization's finances.

Collaborations and Partnerships

The Urban League of Greater Madison cannot accomplish the goals and objectives that it has set forth on its own. It will take the support of the Greater Madison community and our organizational partners to achieve success. Presently, every program the ULGM operates has multiple partners. The following is a partial list of current program partners that the ULGM intends to work with to accomplish its 2011-12 goals and objectives.

- 100 Black Men of Madison
- Alliant Energy
- African American Coordination & Collaboration Council
- African American Council of Churches
- ARC Community Services
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Dane County
- Cardinal Stritch University
- Centro Hispano
- Cintas
- City of Madison
- City of Madison Police Department
- Club TNT – Today Not Tomorrow
- Commonwealth Development
- Community Action Coalition
- Construction Trades, Inc. – START Program
- CUNA Mutual Foundation
- Dane County Human Services
- Dane County Youth Resource Network
- Dean Health Systems
- Edgewood College
- Edgewood High School
- Ferris Center/Huber Program
- Fountain of Life Church
- Employment & Training Association/ Children First Program
- First Baptist Church
- Forward Community Investments
- Greater Lakes Higher Education Corporation
- Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce
- Group Health Cooperative
- Habitat for Humanity
- Joining Forces for Families
- Junior Achievement
- Kennedy Heights Community Center
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Coalition
- Literacy Network
- Madison-area Urban Ministry
- Madison College
- Madison Community Foundation
- Madison Metropolitan School District
- Madison Network of Black Professionals
- Madison Public Library
- MAP Training Program
- Meriter Hospital
- Madison Gas & Electric
- Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District
- Madison School Community Recreation
- Mount Zion Baptist Church
- Oregon Area School District
- Park Street Partners
- Partners for After School Success (PASS)
- Physicians Plus
- Project Home
- Public Health-Madison/Dane County
- St. Mary's Hospital
- RSVP of Dane County
- Sun Prairie Area School District
- United Way of Dane County
- US Bank
- UW Alumni Association
- UW Credit Union
- UW Health
- UW Hospitals and Clinics
- UW Medical Foundation
- University of Wisconsin-Madison
- UW-Madison Morgridge Center for Public Service
- U.S. Cellular
- Voices Beyond Bars
- WEA Trust
- Wisconsin Affordable Housing Corporation
- Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin
- YMCA of Dane County
- YWCA of Dane County
- And many others!

¹ Wisconsin: Worst Place to be Black. Channel 3000, www.channel3000.com, July 26, 2005 and Number One in the Worst Way, Dane101, www.dane101.com.

² High School Graduation Rates for 2006-2009, Madison Metropolitan School District, September 2010.

³ Madison Metropolitan School District Graduating Class of 2010 – ACT Profile Report

⁴ Center on Wisconsin Strategy. Report - Black Wisconsinites and Economic Opportunity.

⁵ Wisconsin Council on Children and Families. Report - Poverty Rates Rise Substantially in Wisconsin. August 28, 2007.

⁶ [*Racial Disparities in Criminal Justice*](#), Pamela Oliver, University of Wisconsin School of Sociology, 2009