Letter from the Executive Director

Dear St. Louis Region Readers,

In this issue of Regional Benchmarks, we present the results of our citizen poll on perceptions of race relations in the St. Louis Region. The data suggest that for the majority of individuals living here, personal visions of an inclusive society are not reflected in the reality of everyday life. In fact, 70% of the people surveyed in the region, including both black and white, gave race relations a grade of “C” or lower.

While a “C” or “D” might seem distressing, the positive aspect of this grade is that the majority of citizens understand that when it comes to race relations, all is not right with the world. By and large we agree that there is a great need for improving race relations and that there are great opportunities for taking meaningful steps to bring reality in line with aspirations.

The next step, therefore, is to translate individual visions of inclusion into a shared vision that is strong enough to shape and guide public policy. For this effort to be successful, every citizen’s input is critical.

With Warm Regards,

Barbara Grothe
Executive Director, RegionWise

The RegionWise Regional Benchmark Report

- Social Justice and Racial Equity

- Citizens have equal access to opportunity and justice.

- Citizens Rate Race Relations in the St. Louis Region

Race relations received the lowest grade of all the areas surveyed in the poll. The good news is that perceptions of race relations in residents’ local communities fare somewhat better (14% A, 40% B, 31% C, 10% D, and 6% F) than for the twelve-county region as a whole (4% A, 27% B, 45% C, 17% D, and 7% F). However, there is a strong relationship between how people assess this issue locally and regionally. Only 5% of those who grade the region as A or B think their local community is D or F. Just 13% of those who think their community is A or B considers the region to be D or F.
Local versus Regional is again an important factor when looking at the differences between how Whites and African Americans perceive race relations. Regionally, Whites have a more positive view of race relations (32% A/B, 22% D/F) than do African Americans (21% A/B, 40% D/F). Interestingly, the differences between the two groups is smaller at the local level where 14% of the White respondents and 24% percent of the African American respondents rate local community race relations a D or F.

Education plays a major role in the perceptions of African Americans regarding race relations. The more education an African American respondent has, the lower the grade he or she assigns for the region. Fifty-nine percent of African American college graduates assign a D or F while only 9% assign an A or B. The gap also exists, although on a lesser scale, in assessing race relations within local communities. Twenty-seven percent of African American college graduates rated their local communities race relations an A or B while 39% rated race relations a D or F.

In the St. Louis Region, Do You Feel that African Americans Have More Opportunity, Less Opportunity, or About the Same Opportunity to Live a Middle Class Life as Whites?

Fifty-nine percent of the people in the region think each race has about the same
level of opportunity, 25% think African Americans have less opportunities, and 17% think African Americans have greater opportunities than do Whites.

Perceptions of equal opportunity are strongly influenced by race, age and educational attainment. Among African Americans, 49% say the same level of opportunities are open to both races while 42% think African Americans have less opportunity. Just 10% of African Americans believe that they have greater opportunities than Whites. Among Whites, 61% say both races enjoy equal opportunities, 22% think African Americans’ opportunities are more limited, and 18% think African Americans’ opportunities are greater.

Age and educational attainment directly impact the views of both races. African Americans 25 years and older are more likely to think African Americans have less of a chance (46%) than are those 18 to 24 (28%). The more education African Americans have, the more likely they are to see inequity. Fifty-two percent of African American college graduates believe that there are few opportunities compared to 45% of those with some college, and 35% of those with a high school degree or less. Among Whites, 30% of college graduates think African Americans have less of a chance contrasted with 19% of those with some college, and 13% of those with a high school education or less.

**Do You Feel That You Personally Have Ever Been Denied a Job or Promotion**
**Because of Your Race?**

Again, age and education play a significant factor in how respondents answer this question. Forty-one percent of African Americans and just 9% of Whites report being denied a job or promotion because of race. African Americans most likely to report this experience are those 35 and older (47%), some college education (54%), and men (51%).

**Do You Think the Police in Your Local Community, the Area Where You Live, Treat All Races Fairly or Do They Tend to Treat One or More of These Groups Unfairly?**

Seventy percent think that the police in their local community treat all races fairly, while 30% say the police tend to treat one or more groups unfairly. The citizens most inclined to conclude that police treatment is not equitable are young people, aged 18 to 24 (39%), African Americans (51%), and Hispanics (54%).

**During the Past Twelve Months, Have You Personally Been Treated unfairly by the Police or by a Police Officer Anywhere in the St. Louis Region?**

Just over 10% report they have personally been treated unfairly by a police officer somewhere in the St. Louis region during the past twelve months. The percentage is highest among those 18 to 24 (25%), those with less than a high school education (13%), African Americans (17%), and Hispanics (29%).

**How Worried Are You Personally About Being the Victim of a Hate Crime?**

A hate crime is defined as “those crimes committed because the criminal hates the group of people to which the victim belongs.” Only 4% of respondents are very worried about being the victim of a hate crime, while another 17% are somewhat worried this will happen to them. The combined very/somewhat worried incidence (21% overall) is highest among African Americans (41%) and Hispanics (37%).

![How worried are you about being the victim of a hate crime?](chart)

**Demographic Profile of the St. Louis Region**

For the first time in American history, the 2000 Census gave people the option of describing themselves using multiple race categories. This option has yielded much useful data. In addition to selecting race categories, citizens were asked to identify
themselves as Hispanics or non-Hispanics, an ethnic classification that is not a race.

Over the past decade, the region has grown by 4.5%, reaching 2,603,607 residents in 2000. There has been a marginal shift in the racial composition of the region. For example, white residents (including those that selected white and another race) represent 78.3% to 79.3% of the region’s population in 2000 and 81.5% of the population in 1990; African American residents (including those that selected African American and another race) represent 18.3% to 18.8% in 2000 and 17.1% in 1990.

The tables on the following page illustrate the region’s population, county by county, according to the distribution of population by race and Hispanic origin and then compares these statistics to the rest of the nation. As you can see, a smaller share of the region reported themselves as multiracial than the nation as a whole (1.2% versus 2.4%). Regionally, a smaller share of individuals described themselves as American Indians, Asians, Pacific Islanders and other races than nationally (2.1% versus 4.6%). While 18.3% of the region’s population described themselves as black or African American, only 12.3% of the nation describes themselves as the same racial category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Missouri Counties</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>American Indian and Alaska Native</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander</th>
<th>Other Race</th>
<th>Two or More Races</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Franklin</td>
<td>93,807</td>
<td>97.5%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson</td>
<td>190,999</td>
<td>97.6%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>38,944</td>
<td>96.1%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Charles</td>
<td>283,883</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>1,016,315</td>
<td>76.8%</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren</td>
<td>24,525</td>
<td>95.9%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis City</td>
<td>348,189</td>
<td>43.6%</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinton</td>
<td>35,535</td>
<td>94.2%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jersey</td>
<td>21,668</td>
<td>98.1%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madison</td>
<td>258,941</td>
<td>90.2%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monroe</td>
<td>27,619</td>
<td>98.6%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Clair</td>
<td>256,087</td>
<td>67.9%</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis Region</td>
<td>2,564,663</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>281,421,906</td>
<td>75.1%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An inclusive society...

- Meets the highest legal and moral obligations to achieve full access, equality, and respect for all people
- Works consistently to dismantle discriminatory barriers
- Engages all citizens as partners for change
- Uses an inclusive decision-making process
- Values diversity rather than feels threatened by it
- Remains alert and responds quickly to racist incidents

From Steps Toward An Inclusive Community, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, 2001. Written by Maggie Potapchuk, formerly with the St. Louis office of the National Conference for Community and Justice.

INDICATORS:
This section presents two measures of housing opportunity and one measure of employment opportunity. The trend information for the St. Louis Region and comparisons with the nation complement the poll results, confirming the need for improvement.
Housing Discrimination Complaints

Statistics collected by the Metropolitan St. Louis Equal Housing Opportunity Council (EHOC) show a decline in the overall number of complaints of housing discrimination. However, while reported complaints to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) declined in 2000, the number of complaints to the EHOC increased between 1999 and 2000. The complaint statistics presented here are for four counties in Missouri (St. Louis City, and Jefferson, St. Charles and St. Louis Counties) and Madison and St. Clair Counties in Illinois. The complaints are for both rental and for-sale housing complaints.

![Complaints of Housing Discrimination in the Metro St. Louis Area 1995-2000](chart)

**Housing Discrimination Complaints Received in 2000 in the St. Louis Metropolitan Area**
The EHOC reports that racial discrimination complaints made up 59% of their caseload in 2000 and was also the largest share of HUD and Missouri Commission on Human Rights cases. More complaint statistics and information about the Metropolitan St. Louis Equal Housing Opportunity Council can be found at [http://stlouis.missouri.org/501c/ehoc/](http://stlouis.missouri.org/501c/ehoc/).
Conventional mortgage denial rates for African Americans are lower in the St. Louis Region than they are nationally. However, the 1999 gap between denial rates for
White and African Americans in St. Louis is 14 percentage points, the widest gap posted over the 1996 to 1999 period.

**Unemployment Rates**

In 1998, the unemployment rate for Whites in the St. Louis region was 3.4% compared to 11.9% for African Americans, a difference of 8.5 percentage points.

RegionWise is a collaborative effort of the United Way of Greater St. Louis and the Danforth Foundation.