

NYS Public Hearing May 18, 2020

Purpose: Exploring solutions to the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on minority communities.

Topic: Greater Buffalo Racial Equity Roundtable: Social Determinants of Health

Presenter: Hon. Rose Sconiers, Chair

The current COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare long-standing inequities in Greater Buffalo's communities of color which have resulted from centuries of institutional oppression. The Greater Buffalo Racial Equity Roundtable, convened in 2015 by the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo represents an unprecedented cross-sector partnership of over 250 organizations representing government, business, faith and nonprofit leaders which have joined forces to achieve an expanded, and inclusive economy. The following esteemed members of the NYS Assembly and Senate are members of the Roundtable:

The Honorable Crystal Peoples-Stokes, Majority Leader – NYS Assembly

The Honorable Timothy Kennedy – NYS Senator, 63rd District

The Honorable Chris Jacobs – NYS Senator, 60th District

The Roundtable's work is rooted in data and focused on systems change. The Roundtable respectfully puts forth an agenda focused on removing systemic barriers and providing coordinated supports to advance equitable life outcomes for people of color.

The attached diagram reveals the established components of the social determinants of health. The diagram demonstrates that;

40% of the social determinants of health are related to economic status.

30% of the determinants are related to health behaviors such as tobacco use, diet and exercise, alcohol and drug use and sexual activity.

20% are attributed to access to and quality of care and

10% to physical environment: Air and Water quality and Housing and Transit

The Greater Buffalo Racial Equity Roundtable is advancing ten initiatives which are captured primarily within the 40% of the social determinants of health related to social and economic factors. These factors include:

- Education- Increasing post-secondary completion for Buffalo youth through the Say Yes Buffalo Partnership with a focus on MBK programming for young men of color.
- Employment and Income- Engaging employers in inclusive workplace practices including strategies to support economic mobility through

career ladders. And creating multiple on-ramps to economic opportunity for in- school and out of school youth.

- Family and Social Supports – collaboratively working with Social Service Agencies and Family Court to engage the community in creating solutions to remove barriers to achievement and economic stability, as well as address the disproportionate numbers of black and brown people in the foster care and welfare system through racial healing.
- Community Safety - reduce contact with and improve outcomes resulting from youth involvement with the juvenile justice system, and improve outcomes for reentering citizens.

Additional strategies of the Roundtable focus on creating the conditions for systems change, with Narrative Change and Racial Healing as threads which runs through all the Roundtable initiatives.

- Narrative Change – achieves an accurate, authentic, and just narrative about communities of color.
- Racial Equity Impact Analysis Training teaches decision-makers how to insert a racial equity lens into their decision-making processes for policies practices and procedures. This training offers executives (1) a shared understanding of the history of communities of color and how

policy has shaped them; (2) a shared language on racial equity, and (3) a shared tool for decision making that results in equitable outcomes

- Racial Healing – expands and deepens connections across racial groups

In closing, the Greater Buffalo Racial Equity Roundtable is a collective impact initiative. We understand the importance of community partnerships for removing barriers and addressing the social determinants of health. The Roundtable is committed to partnering to coordinate and complement efforts addressing the other social determinants of health for the betterment of our community. Economic mobility is clearly a powerful lever to advancing social determinants of health and the Roundtable will continue to facilitate this extensive cross-sector partnership to lead on this front.

Thank you.