

NEWS FROM THE ULSTER COUNTY OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER

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Comptroller's Office Issues Ulster County Racial Equity Report

Kingston, NY (June 14, 2022)- Ulster County Comptroller March Gallagher released in advance of Juneteenth a Racial Equity Report detailing the disparate experience of Black and brown community members on a variety of health, economic, and quality of life indicators. The indicators selected for the inclusion were selected in consultation with an advisory board comprised primarily of Black and brown community members.

"Racial inequality is pervasive and impacts every aspect of the lives of African Americans in Ulster County, including our social mobility, health and quality of life," said Rashida Tyler, advisory board member and Founder of the Real Kingston Tenants Union. "These inequalities cannot only be resolved on an individual level, as a community we have to examine our institutions and social structures and make conscious efforts to eliminate them. It's going to be difficult in that it demands us to be transparent with ourselves and remain committed to racial equity. I'm reminded of the tireless work of the founders of Ulster County's NAACP and those who laid the foundation for generations to come - Everette Hodge, Vera Van Dyke and my Great Aunt Annie Jackson, among others. While progress has certainly been made there is still a very long way to go. I have complete faith that we can and will get there together."

"As we look at these statistics and reaffirm that racial inequity in Ulster County is a serious issue, yet underneath these numbers are the lived experiences of neighbors, friends, youth, local business owners, and local workers," said Ulster County Comptroller March Gallagher. "These inequities represent a daunting burden on individuals and families in Ulster County, constraining the potential of Black and brown communities, and harming our entire County. We created this report to inform our policy makers so that we may remedy these inequities and implement real, substantive change."

The report finds significant inequities in Ulster County on nearly every metric from education to wealth, similar to other parts of the country. Black and brown community members not only experience inequitable health outcomes, but also experience greater involvement with the criminal justice system, lower wages, and fewer opportunities to work remotely.

The single area of improvement was Ulster County's municipal workforce, which over the first year of the Ryan Administration increased the representation of Black and brown employees among its ranks.

Other data, particularly regarding the housing and generational wealth building showed significant disparities. Black homeowners experience lower appraisal values, more frequent mortgage rejections and, on average, pay more taxes based on the assessed values of their

properties. Of Black households in Ulster County, 63% of them are spending over 30% of their income on housing compared to 52% of Hispanic households and 36% of white households. Black and brown families are less likely to receive intergenerational inheritances, and in lower amounts, than white families, reinforcing continued generational inequity.

The full report is available at: <https://comptroller.ulstercountyny.gov/audit-reports/ulster-county-racial-equity-report>