

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

“securing economic self reliance, social equality and civil rights...”

The Urban League empowers African Americans and others to achieve economic self-sufficiency and wealth accrual by prioritizing “ladders out of poverty” programming.

- The African American poverty rate nationally is approximately 25%. In St. Louis, nearly 30% of African American adults and 40% of children live in poverty.
- Locally, more than 25% of the working class live below the poverty line.
- The unemployment rate for African Americans is twice that of the white community.
- The “Digital Divide” is significant and growing. If not addressed, low income families will be unable to compete for jobs utilizing computer technology by 2015.
- St. Louis is ranked #1 in housing discrimination in the nation. There are twice as many low-income families seeking residency in St. Louis then there are homes available.
- Less than 50% of black families own their homes, compared to 70% of white families, and black families experience mortgage denials twice as often as their white peers.

Employment — The Urban League provides resume writing, interviewing, job prospecting classes and job placement. In 2007, direct employment services were provided for nearly 1,750 job-seeking clients.

Business Training Center — In 2007, the Urban League helped over 280 clients to develop or refresh existing computer skills and to become knowledgeable about new technologies needed to compete in today’s job market.

Homeownership — The Urban League educates and empowers African Americans and others to achieve economic self-sufficiency by promoting homeownership as means of accruing wealth. The League provided HUD-certified housing counseling to 466 families in 2007.

Weatherization — The Urban League provides weatherization services to reduce ongoing utility costs; paying licensed contractors to install wall and ceiling insulation, caulking, weather stripping, glazed and repaired windows and doors, minor duct repair and complete furnace repair or tune-ups. In 2007, the League provided weatherization services to 423 families.

Workforce Investment — The Urban League provided career counseling and employment opportunities to over 1,900 St. Louis youth ages 14 to 21 in 2007.

Jobs for Missouri Graduates (JMG) — Through JMG, a nationally-recognized youth employment and development training program for high school students, the Urban League provided additional services to over 430 students in eight school districts and community sites across St. Louis.

Financial Literacy Training. — Through money management education and increased banking/loan opportunities, the Urban League assisted 89 low-income clientele to more effectively manage their finances and helps to increase the number of growth opportunities among minority businesses in 2007. The League also offered summer financial literacy camp to 54 youth ages 12 to 18.

Urban Youth Empowerment Program (UYEP) — The Urban League provides both education and work experience to out of school and/or adjudicated youth ages 18-21 in St. Clair County, Illinois. The League ensured self-sufficiency through community service, continued education and unsubsidized employment to nearly 60 St. Clair County youth in 2007.

5,483 Direct Clients served in 2007 through the Urban League’s Economic Empowerment Programs.