2023

RMAPI

IMPACT REPORT

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SHIFT TO UPWARD MOBILITY

UPWARD MOBILITY

DIGNITY & BELONGING

POWER & AUTONOMY

ECONOMIC SUCCESS

RMAPI's **Unity Agenda** was established in 2023 as a roadmap for achieving upward mobility and poverty alleviation for members of the Monroe County community. The new strategic focus includes a detailed set of Guiding Principles: centering racial equity, acknowledging collective trauma, and revitalizing neighborhoods.

The Unity Agenda had been in development since Spring of 2022 through efforts by the RMAPI collective—which includes the RMAPI Community Advisory Council, RMAPI staff members, and a steering committee of 38 partner organizations. Through this detailed set of goals, actions, and indicators of success, the Unity Agenda will establish shared credibility, accountability, and responsibility in alleviating poverty.

In establishing the goals of dignity and belonging, power and autonomy, and economic success, the Unity Agenda moves conversations away from fighting poverty and reallocates efforts toward achieving upward mobility. Additionally, the Unity Agenda implements a Systems Change framework, which emphasizes that "poverty is a systemic problem that requires systemic solutions."

RMAPI'S UNITY AGENDA ENVISIONS A FUTURE WHERE EVERYONE...

Lives in a **safe, inclusive, and opportunity-rich** neighborhood.

Accesses **quality education** and skill-building that equips them for success.

Relies on equitable, accountable, and **responsive local government**, public safety and legal systems.

Engages in rewarding work that provides **dignity** and builds **financial security** and stability for their families.

Lives in **healthy environments** and gets access to quality, affordable health and social care.

Experiences **inclusion, dignity and belonging,** leading to greater well-being and increased participation in civic institutions and community life.

RMAPI SUMMIT 2: UPWARD MOBILITY AND BEYOND

JUNE 14, 2023 | 9AM-4PM
MCC DOWNTOWN CAMPUS

More than 80 RMAPI stakeholders and community members came together on June 14 to discuss priorities for our work and ways to best spread upward mobility to everyone in our community.
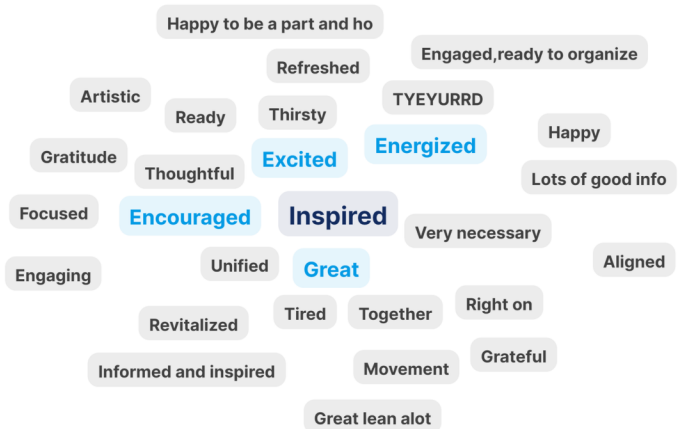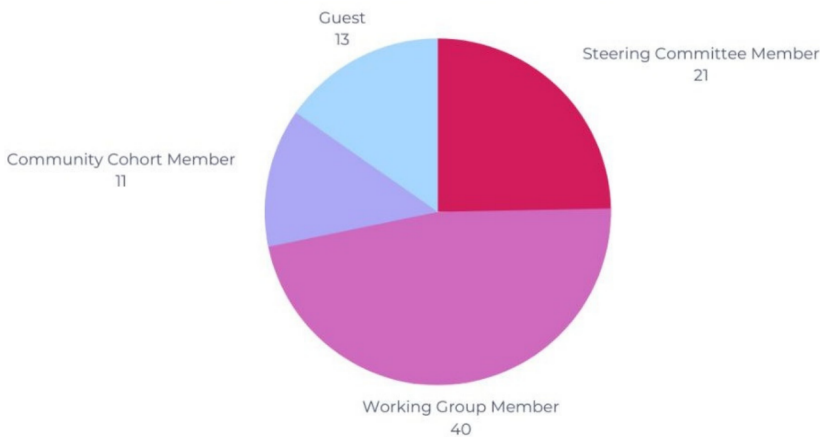
The summit gave us the chance for listening, learning and dialogue regarding upward mobility, with presentations from local experts and a keynote address from Rochester Mayor Malik Evans.

Experts from the Urban Institute led participants in a discussion on case studies to see what is working in other communities. We discussed how to promote upward mobility by focusing on Economic Success, Power & Autonomy and Dignity & Belonging.

RMAPI stakeholders also collaborated to build around our Unity Agenda and determine how we will Act, Align and Assess the work in our community.

ATTENDANCE & REACTIONS

Guest 13
Steering Committee Member 21
Community Cohort Member 11
Working Group Member 40

Happy to be a part and ho
Engaged, ready to organize
Refreshed
Artistic
Ready
Thirsty
TYEYURRD
Happy
Gratitude
Excited
Energized
Thoughtful
Lots of good info
Focused
Encouraged
Inspired
Very necessary
Engaging
Unified
Great
Aligned
Revitalized
Tired
Together
Right on
Informed and inspired
Movement
Grateful
Great lean alot

RMAPI 2023 POLICY AGENDA

RMAPI published a list of policy priorities for 2023 with actions aimed at addressing the root causes of poverty and supporting upward economic mobility for individuals and families.

OUR PRIORITIES INCLUDED:

Raise Income through higher wages and equitable job access.

Invest in Families to create economic security across generations and strengthen the systems that support them.

Decriminalize Poverty by changing the criminal legal system and focusing on reinvestment in communities

Reform Housing by making housing more affordable and accessible through policy and practice changes at all levels of the housing system

HISTORIC MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE

Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature reached a historic agreement to raise minimum wage to $16-per-hour in New York City, Westchester, and Long Island, and $15-per-hour for the rest of the state starting on January 1, 2024. Minimum wage will increase by $0.50 in 2025 and 2026 and starting in 2027 will increase annually at a rate determined by the Consumer Price Index – the best regional measure of inflation.

RMAPI has long pushed for minimum wage increases, challenging our community to raise wages to $15/hour. More than 110 employers have made a commitment to wage enhancement through our Level Up Champions initiative, moving more than 12,000 positions to $15/hour or above years before the state's minimum wage increase went into effect.

A commitment to wage enhancement benefits the ENTIRE Rochester community.

For every extra $1 going into the pockets of high-wage workers, **$0.39** is added back into the economy.

For every extra $1 going into the pockets of low-wage workers, **$1.21** is added back into the economy.

CLEAN SLATE ACT SIGNED INTO LAW

Gov. Hochul signed the Clean Slate Act into law in 2023, automatically sealing certain criminal records to give more New Yorkers a second chance to contribute to their communities.

The Clean Slate Act will reduce systemic barriers to full participation in our communities and take a significant step toward RMAPI's Guiding Principle to center racial equity.

RMAPI worked closely with local and state partners to push for the passage of the Clean Slate Act, and joined Gov. Hochul in Brooklyn for its signing in November.

CLEAN SLATE IMPACT

Because of racism in policing and prosecution,

80%

of people in New York with conviction records are Black or Latinx and face far more discrimination because of old conviction records.

5 YEARS

after benefitting from records clearance, individuals were less likely than members of the general public to be convicted of a crime

$7.1 BILLION

estimated annual earnings boost to the state through increased earnings

$484,400

is the average lifetime earnings lost by people who have been to prison

RMAPI POLICY ADVOCACY

RMAPI joined Senator Jeremy Cooney to call for increased state funding to **fight child poverty.**
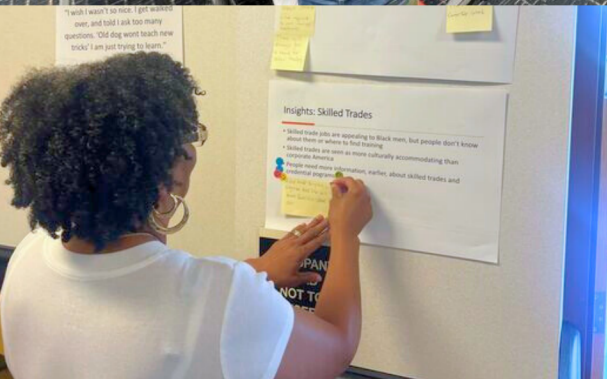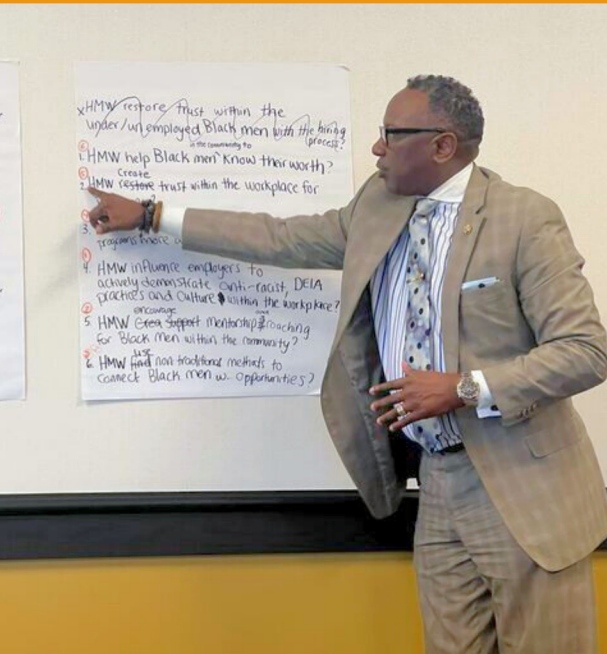
Rmapi supported Monroe County's sales **tax exemption on clothing and footwear.**

RMAPI hosted local members of our state delegation for a legislative breakfast in February to discuss **policy priorities.**

ADDRESSING HOUSING CRISIS, UNEMEMPLOYMENT

RMAPI is undertaking a pair of **human-centered design** projects to address poverty and upward mobility in Rochester.

Human-Centered Design is a unique approach to problem-solving that starts with people who are directly affected by the problem and then developing new solutions that are intentionally designed to suit their needs.

Starting in 2023, RMAPI's Housing Working Group has been working on a human-centered design project to answer the question: **How might we make it easier for households with a Section 8 voucher to find quality rental housing?**

RMAPI's Employment Working Group has also been working on a human-centered design to answer the question: **How might we employ 100 Black men into family sustaining jobs?**

In 2023, these working groups gathered input from a diverse array of community members using various methods, involving them in decision-making and testing as we continue to develop solutions that serve them best. As these project continues to develop in 2024, we will work on solutions that make rental housing more accessible and increases employment for Black men.

ROCHESTER'S HOUSEHOLDS STRUGGLE TO AFFORD RENT

PERCENTAGE OF RENT BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME, 2019

% of Rent Burdened Households

83% — Less than $20,000
73% — $20,000-$34,999
33% — $35,000-$49,999
7% — $50,000-$74,999
3% — $75,000+
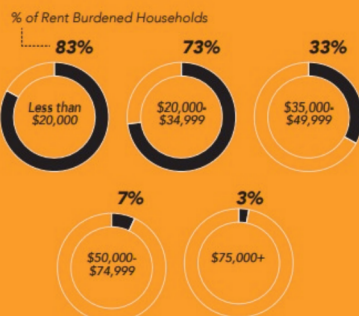
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey Five Year Estimates

LABOR WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION
MONROE COUNTY, NY - POPULATION, 14-64 YEARS OLD

Race/Ethnicity	Labor Force Participation Rate, Male
White Alone (Not Hispanic or Latino)	81.0%
Black or African American Alone	66.6%
Hispanic or Latino	71.3%

Source: the U.S. Department of Labor.
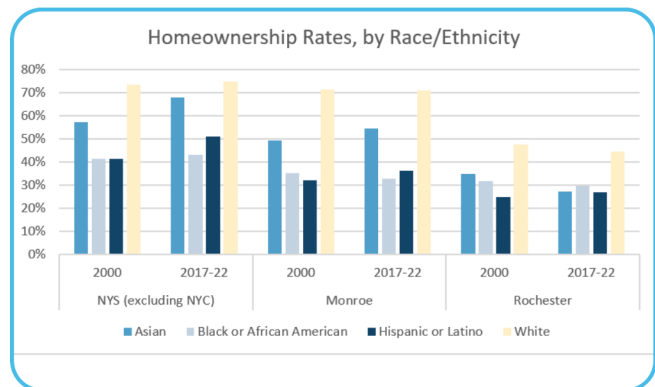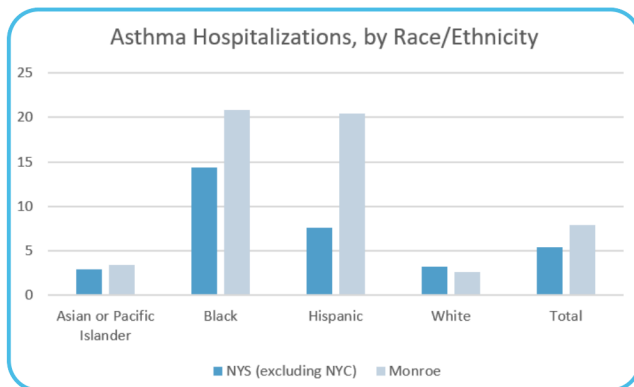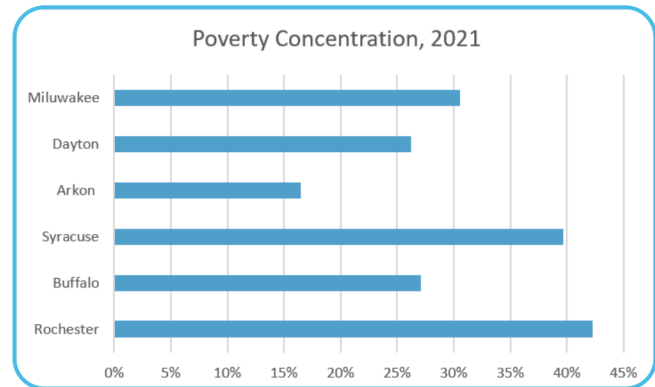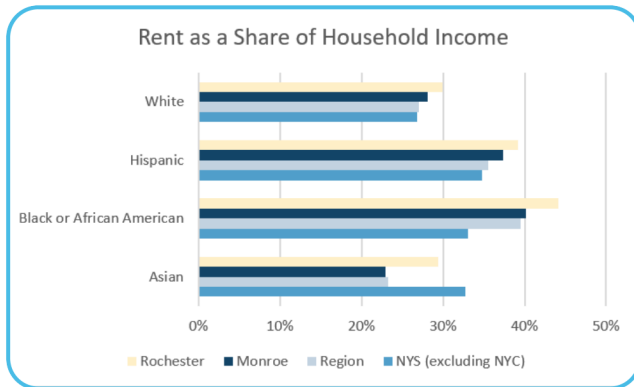
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MEASURING OUR WORK

RMAPI's work focuses on improving our community's (or population's) well-being, which will create pathways to upward mobility from poverty. Together, RMAPI is working to make improvements for everyone, but our decisions and actions will center on those who have been historically disadvantaged by racism, trauma, and community disinvestment. Our six Theory of Change Pillars define the conditions we want everyone in our community to experience.

It's pivotal to measure whether our actions are helping to improve the community's well-being. We have agreed on measures called **mobility metrics** that we will regularly monitor to see if things are improving. Together we have identified 39 mobility metrics, with a few of them shared below.

SOME OF THESE METRICS INCLUDE:

Rent as a Share of Household Income

Legend: Rochester, Monroe, Region, NYS (excluding NYC)

Poverty Concentration, 2021

Asthma Hospitalizations, by Race/Ethnicity

Legend: NYS (excluding NYC), Monroe

Homeownership Rates, by Race/Ethnicity

Legend: Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, White

REACHING THE COMMUNITY

RMAPI is a community-driven process where those with lived and are living the experiences of poverty have voice and choice to equitably and actively participate in RMAPI collective decision making so that our community has less people living in poverty and more people living self-determined lives.

In order to promote upward mobility in Rochester, we need active community engagement from both **Content Experts** and **Context Experts**.

Content Experts refers to the community of professionals, staff in organizations, service providers, and leaders with formal power who have knowledge, tools, and resources to address the issue. Context Experts are community members with the lived experience of poverty. They are the people who experientially know about the issues RMAPI is working to solve.

Child Poverty Town Hall, October 2023

"Through the Night" Documentary Screening, May 2023

Throughout 2023, context experts played an important role in RMAPI's decision-making processes and took the lead in communicating our important work to the broader community.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPACT

475
total hours that our 24 context experts participated in RMAPI meetings

160+
people attended RMAPI's Human-Centered design prototyping sessions for our employment and housing projects

161
people completed RMAPI's policy survey to determine our priorities for 2024

![RMAPI logo]

STEERING COMMITTEE

Corinda Reaves, RMAPI Chair
Chief Customer and Community Experience Officer, RTS

Simeon Banister, RMAPI Vice Chair
President and CEO, Rochester Area Community Foundation

1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East
7th Judicial District, New York State
Action for a Better Community, Inc
Assemblymember Harry Bronson, NYS Assembly District 138
Center for Governmental Research
City of Rochester, Mayor Malik Evans
Common Ground Health
Connected Communities
East High Educational Partnership Organization
Empire State Development
ESL Federal Credit Union
Finger Lakes Performing Provider System
Goodwill of the Finger Lakes
Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce
Greater Rochester Health Foundation
Ibero American Action League
Max and Marian Farash Charitable Foundation
Monroe Community College
Monroe County, County Executive Adam Bello
NYS Assembly District 138
Rep. Joseph Morelle, NY 25th Congressional District
ROC The Future Alliance
Rochester Area College Presidents
Rochester Area Community Foundation
Rochester City School District
Rochester Educational Opportunity Center
Rochester Housing Authority
Rochester Regional Health System
Rochester Works!
RTS
The Children's Agenda
TogetherNow
United Way of Greater Rochester and the Finger Lakes
University of Rochester
Urban League of Rochester
US Ceiling Corp

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

These values establish a framework for how we'll work together and make decisions as we implement the Unity Agenda.

CENTER RACIAL EQUITY

In our community, the racial disparities are stark and pervasive. RMAPI's work centers racial equity by declaring that racial equity is achieved when race is no longer a determinant of life outcomes. This will mean measuring and evaluating the outcomes of our work with a racialized lens. We will disaggregate data to understand the racial disparities and target strategies that address and redress the inequities.

ADDRESS COLLECTIVE TRAUMA

Community trauma, also referred to as collective trauma, means that traumatic events affecting communities may impact a few people but have structural and social traumatic consequences. This type of systems trauma, just like individual trauma, affects cognitive decision-making and can lead to reduced civic engagement, weakened social networks, and lower social cohesion. To foster inclusion and belonging, we must acknowledge this community trauma and take intentional steps to heal and repair historical and ongoing hurt.

REVITALIZE NEIGHBORHOODS

RMAPI seeks to transform communities at scale through systems-change work. We will continue to advocate for equity in allocating resources and opportunities to neighborhoods that have been disinvested and underserved for decades.