

Focus: HOPE

EQUITABLE ECONOMY

Quality of life disparities across communities are the result of wealth barriers rooted in American slavery, gender discrimination, and other forms of worker exploitation. The under- or un-compensated labor and expertise of Blacks, women, and other US workers over centuries are largely responsible for today's financial hardships. Pay equity, low-interest loans and grants, aggressive support of Black- and women-owned businesses, as well as reparations, are critical for leveling the playing field for those kept out of the mainstream economy.

Black American slavery and worker exploitation built US and global wealth while underpaid women, Blacks and other workers continue subsidizing it. The \$14 trillion total estates of enslaved peoples between 1805 and 1860 alone represent 77% of today's GDP, with a conservatively estimated \$1.4 trillion wage loss to those enslaved. Women are currently paid only 78% of what men earn in a year, with Black women earning just 62%. All in all, 90% of all US workers bring in only about 60% of the country's total income. These economic injustices promulgate disparate conditions for single-woman households, Black America, and much of the remaining working class.

Focus: HOPE advances equitable economics in its capacity as a Financial Opportunity Center. In partnership with the State of Michigan, City of Detroit, United Way for Southeastern Michigan, LISC, and several corporations such as Meritor and Ford, we offer three strands of service assisting communities in building wealth.

These include:

- Workforce training, placement and retention services;
- Credit and budget coaching;
- Supplemental income and other cost-reducing supports.

Serving almost exclusively those with no higher education, we have trained some of the country's most capable engineers, machinist and computer professionals, placing women, Blacks and others on trajectories previously inaccessible to them. Our programs have graduated thousands of workforce candidates, helping families exceed \$1 billion in total income. In 2020 so far, we have trained over 100 workers despite the pandemic, and have distributed more than half a million dollars in direct cash payments to workers attempting to make ends meet or achieve financial leaps as they strive toward brighter futures in the middle of a pandemic within a system rigged against them from the start.

Here's What You Can Do!

- **Support** higher wages in industries dominated by women, especially Black women. [Contact your U.S. Senator](#) and ask them to support the Paycheck Fairness Act.
- **Give** back by aggressively [patronizing Black- and women-owned businesses](#), and challenge your friends to do the same.
- **Advocate** by [contacting your local leaders](#), urging them to introduce or support legislation providing reparations to Black American communities.