

MBK-Madison Quarterly Report (August – October 2016)

The Urban League of Greater Madison contracted with the City of Madison to develop a plan that manages and implements the Madison, Wisconsin My Brother's Keeper (hereinafter "MBK") challenge as identified by the My Brother's Keeper Madison Team. The MBK Madison Team challenge identified two goals:

- 1) Ensuring all boys and young men of color graduate from high school; and
- 2) Ensuring all boys and young men of color are safe from violent crime and receive second chances.

The main strategies in addressing the respective goals are community schools and restorative justice. In achieving the goals, this work cannot be done in a vacuum, because the entire community must be involved and own the plan in order to accomplish its goals and have a sustainable community. Working collaboratively with community organizations will do this. The overarching strategy of the project is to construct a comprehensive blueprint for allocating efforts and resources to create policies, practices, and programs designed to improve the life chances for boys and young men of color in the Greater Madison area. The plan will align resources, leverage additional commitments, encourage investment, and nurture partnerships to help the community reach and sustain My Brother's Keeper goals.

During this reporting period The Urban League of Greater Madison met with and had fruitful conversations with:

- Sandy Morales, Chief Executive Officer of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dane County whose mentoring program is research based and results in one-on-one pairings with 650 matches annually. The organization is in 11 elementary schools (seven of which are in the Madison Metropolitan School District.) They serve 40% African American, 20% Hispanic, 25% multi-racial, and 10% Caucasian children in this area. Big Brothers Big Sisters has offered to share their best practices and volunteered to share its research-based knowledge to train others on how to be effective as mentors.
- Madison Deputy Mayor for Administration and Finance, Enis Ragland, as well as the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety, Civil Rights and Community Services, Gloria Reyes, and provided a verbal update on the progress of the MBK-Madison Initiatives. In addition, discussed concepts for improving the MBK-Madison website so that it will be more visible and educational, as well as serving as a key portal for community resources, and user friendly. We also discussed the concept of a training program that will better equip advocates when advocating for youth and young adult males, especially males of color, when infractions of the law occur.

- Student Opportunities, Access and Readiness (SOAR) Project- had several meetings with Dr. Floyd Rose to discuss SOAR and its role in the My Brother's Keeper-Madison Challenge. Many of the children involved in Project SOAR/My Brother's Keeper, operated by the 100 Black Men of Madison are "virtually" raising themselves.
 - a) Their needs extend far beyond school based activities and outcomes.
 - b) The vast majority of Project SOAR/My Brother's Keeper students are from homes identified as at or below the poverty level, i.e. \$28,000 a year for a family of four.
 - c) Group activities and classes for those students have involved nutrition and financial literacy classes, exposure activities such as attendance at UW Football Games and Milwaukee Bucks games, shopping trips to reinforce healthy living, youth gang discussions and discussions about the value of education.
 - d) In addition, during the Fall 2016 rollout, Success Academy Classes were conducted at La Follette and Memorial High Schools, involving support for those who are endeavoring to pursue Advance Placement (AP) and Honors courses that provide academic rigor and post high school preparation.
 - e) Project SOAR/My Brother's Keeper volunteers have re-initiated tutoring sessions at Sennett Middle School following successful efforts of support during the 2015-2016 school. This will expand to four other Middle Schools in the next 60 days.
 - f) Spring Harbor Middle School will initiate a "boys" success academy before the end of November.
 - g) With the support of Judges Julie Genovese and Everett Mitchell, Career Academy Classes will be initiated with students involved in the juvenile justice system before the end of November. This activity will be a forerunner of accepting direct referrals from the Court for one to one mentoring. Members of the Madison Police Department will act as the initial mentors for these referrals.

Talked with various individuals regarding lending their knowledge and expertise to the MBK-Madison Initiative:

- a) **Dr. Jerlando F.L. Jackson**, a Vilas Distinguished Professor of Higher Education and the Director and Chief Research Scientist of Wisconsin's Equity and Inclusion Laboratory (Wei LAB) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- b) **Mr. Robert Wynn**, founder and president of Asset Builders of America Inc., which is a financial education and wealth building non-profit corporation that has developed a range of education and wealth building initiatives focusing on the challenging urban and youth populations. Wynn has been a prolific promoter of investment education and he is a national

leader in the financial services industry.

- c) **Dr. Shawn Robinson** focuses on the intersection of race, giftedness and dyslexia, and brings a wealth of academic experience, training and knowledge about the psychological development of dyslexia. He is very passionate about this research as he first learned how to read at the age of 18 with an elementary reading level, and understands the hardships students face who have not tapped into their gifts because of their misdiagnosis and inability to read.
- Had several conversations with Ron Johnson, Coordinator Dane County Community Restorative Court (CRC), a restorative justice alternative for 17-25 year olds with misdemeanor violations. Reviewed and revised the CRC Pamphlet. Working with Mr. Johnson on strategies to make the program more visible and recruiting more community participants in the circle of justice. In addition, discussed a path for youth who have yet to be involved in a criminal justice system, but their parents/guardians see them heading in the wrong direction.
 - A meeting with Karen Menendez Coller, Executive Director, Centro Hispano has been scheduled during the week of November 14, 2016.

Brief summaries of the meetings with the community schools during this reporting period.

- Mendota Elementary: The community school team narrowed its focus to three priorities, but not in any particular order:
 - 1) Before school childcare and longer afterschool hours;
 - 2) Support for homeless and highly mobile families/ housing; and
 - 3) Job training opportunities for parents and working age students.

The Mendota team also identified current and potential school partners and assets. Other challenges identified by the Mendota Community School Team include academic support in Math and Literacy, with a focus on all students that are not achieving their full potential, with special focus on African American males. In addition, the goal is to encourage positive social, emotional and behavior support for African-American students.

Underemployment and unemployment are still huge issues on the northeast side of the city with limited public transportation services and employment options. To address this concern, we are exploring the concept of the school as an off-site service center (after school hours). The intent is to bring community based organizations that provide the necessary services such as jobs skills training, health and wellness courses, financial literacy classes, etc. to the residents of the northeast

side, using Mendota Community School as the hub. The school playground could also be used on weekends as a place for children to come for a safe place to play and where parents/guardians could become better acquainted with each other, thereby creating a greater sense of community. This concept also reduces the possibility of building damage or vandalism when school is open to the community on weekends and some days during the week.

- Leopold community school held a block party for its school community, which was a huge success. The community school team has been busy identifying its objectives which include:
 - 1) Increase opportunities for people of color to be in positions of power;
 - 2) Out of school time; and
 - 3) Academic support for African American and Latino/a students.

Create regular afterschool activities for all students. Also weekend activities and activities for students beyond elementary school. In addition, create programs over breaks and early release, as well as utilizing parents and considering objectives 1 and 3 (from above) while planning.

We have been in conversations with many community based organizations, phone conferences, and participated on webinars in reviewing other cities' MBK initiatives and common practices across the country such as: Boston, Massachusetts; Cleveland, Ohio; Chicago, Illinois; Dubuque, Iowa; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Green Bay, Wisconsin; the State of New York; and New York City.

Participated in two MBK Webinars: the first one was entitled: "Municipal Leadership Advancing Racial Equity to Improve the Outcomes for Boys and Young Men of Color", where Madison Mayor Paul Soglin and Deputy Mayor Gloria Reyes discussed the MBK- Madison Initiative. Others presenting were MBK representatives from Boston, Dubuque, and Palm Beach County. The second webinar was entitled: "MBK Municipal Leadership Implementing Your MBK Plan", where we heard from Michael Smith, Special Assistant to the President of the United States-MBK White House, discussing sustainability after January 20, 2017. In addition, the MBK initiatives from Louisville; Kentucky; Charlottesville, Virginia; and Albuquerque, New Mexico were shared.

In addition, revisited the "Race to Equity: A Baseline Report on the State of Racial Disparity in Dane County published by the Wisconsin Council on Children and Family as well as the "My Brother's Keeper Community Challenge Policy Review and Recommendation for Action the City of Madison, Wisconsin April 2015."

Finally, we are addressing identified goals and challenges while formulating recommendations to achieve the MBK-Madison Plan.