NET WEALTH

Median Wealth (assets minus debts) by Detailed Race and Ethnicity, 2014

ADDRESSING THE RACIAL WEALTH GAP

Growing income inequality has become a preeminent concern in America, and indeed there is a profound wealth gap in Metro Boston. Equitable wealth is an asset for the region’s economy, because wealth enables a family to withstand economic shocks and pass resources to the next generation. Yet, the wealth gap between White households and Black and Latino households is large and growing. In 2014, the median wealth of White households in Metro Boston was $235,500 to $247,500 greater than for Black and Latino households. Nationally, between 1984 and 2009, the wealth gap between Black and White families tripled.

Predictors of a household’s ability to build wealth include homeownership, educational attainment, employment, and income. All of these show stark disparities by race and ethnicity, and all have greater disparities in Metro Boston than in the nation overall. Factors contributing to wealth disparity include discriminatory housing practices, hiring bias, not keeping money in a checking or savings account, and, for many new immigrants, sending money to family outside the U.S.

MAPC’s State of Equity Policy Agenda identifies policies to help close the racial wealth gap and get Metro Boston on track for a more equitable and prosperous future. Learn more at mapc.org/equity-initiatives.