

ATL Action for Racial Equity
Powered by the Metro Atlanta Chamber

MEDIA FACT SHEET

Metro Atlanta isn't perfect, but we are well-positioned to lead the nation in accelerating racial equity.

Systemic Inequity Nationwide

- By 2032, workers of color will constitute the majority of the American workforce¹.
- Wealth in the U.S. is unequally distributed by race—this is particularly pronounced between white and black households².
- Black families are more economically insecure and with far fewer opportunities for economic mobility².

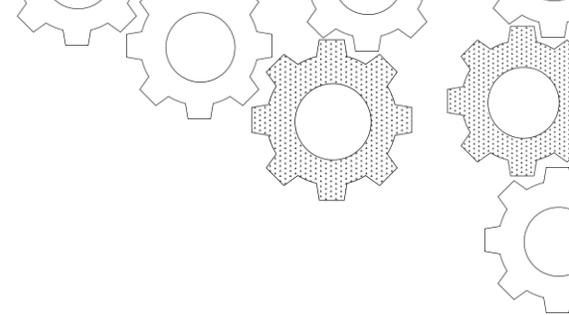
Systemic Inequity in Atlanta

- Researchers found that a child born poor in the Atlanta area is less likely to outgrow poverty than children in other big cities³.
- Nearly twice as many minority K-12 students in metro Atlanta have aptitudes for high-demand careers than have interest in these careers⁴.
- Thirty percent of Black students in metro Atlanta are at grade-level for eighth grade math compared to 72 percent of white students⁵.
- About 30 percent of Black adults in metro Atlanta have a bachelor's or graduate/professional degree, compared to 44 percent of white adults⁶.
- Atlanta has ranked as the most unequal large city in the United States as recently as 2018⁶.
 - The Black population's median household income in metro Atlanta is currently 67 percent of the white population's median household income⁶.
- The unemployment rate of the Black population (16+ years old) in metro Atlanta is 1.8 percent greater than that of the white population⁶.

Atlanta has a unique opportunity to lead the nation on racial equity and has built up notable recent momentum.

Diverse & Thriving Business Environment

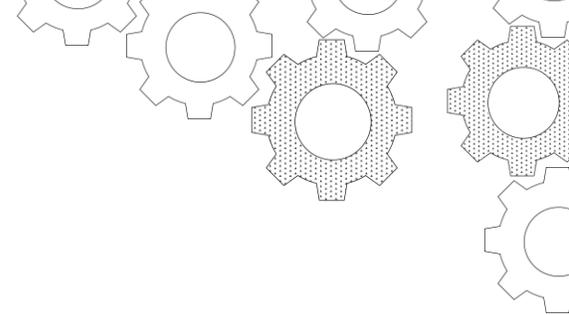
- Atlanta is No. 1 among large metros for share of Black or African American workers employed in management occupations⁷.
 - 2020: 91,536 – an increase of 15 percent vs. 2019⁷
- Of large metro areas, metro Atlanta ranks first with the greatest population share of Black residents⁷.



- 34.7 percent of the Atlanta MSA's population is Black or African American vs. 12.8 percent of the U.S. population.
- Thirty companies headquartered in metro Atlanta are among the 2020 Fortune 1000, of which 16 companies ranked in the elite Fortune 500. In fiscal year 2019, these 30 companies generated aggregate revenues of \$438 billion⁸.

National Leader in Inclusive Economic Development

- Atlanta is the No. 3 metro for Black-owned employer firms⁹.
 - 6,695 firms
- Atlanta is the No. 2 metro for share of Black-owned employer firms^{9*}.
 - 6.2 percent of all employer firms in metro Atlanta are Black-owned (vs. across U.S., 2.1 percent)
- Black entrepreneurs have broken ground and continue to thrive in Atlanta:
 - **Herman J. Russell** was a barrier-breaker as a Black entrepreneur in Atlanta, who founded the H.J. Russell Plastering Company in 1952 and grew it into one of the largest construction & property management firms in the Southeast – with a major hand in the formation of today's Atlanta skyline.
 - Former Atlanta Mayor **Maynard H. Jackson** was a pioneer of inclusive economic development, who fearlessly advocated for supply chain diversity and is known for reserving 25 percent of work contracts used to expand Atlanta's airport for minority-owned businesses.
 - **Calendly**, founded by **Tope Awotona**, was recently valued at more than \$3 billion¹⁰.
 - **LeaseQuery**, maker of cloud-based accounting compliance software, was founded by **George Azih** and achieved profitability and grew to more than 100 employees before ever seeking venture capital funding.
 - **Partpic**, founded by **Jewel Burks Solomon**, was sold to Amazon (2016)
 - Burks Solomon also led Google for Startups' work to create Atlanta Founders Academy 2020.
 - **Paul Judge** – serial tech entrepreneur, investor and creator of Atlanta-based TechSquare. He is also a named inventor on more than two dozen patented computer security technologies.
 - **Ryan Wilson** – Marietta native, co-founder and CEO of private membership club **The Gathering Spot**; described as “redefining networking”¹¹.
 - **Russell Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship (RCIE)** – launched in 2019, RCIE will be the largest innovation center devoted to empowering African American entrepreneurs and small business owners in the country. The center has a track record of supporting and nurturing ideas from Black entrepreneurs into viable, growing businesses¹².
 - **Joey Womack** created non-profit **Goodie Nation** to eliminate the relationship gap between women entrepreneurs, entrepreneurs of color and those not located in coastal financial centers. Goodie Nation was instrumental in the creation of

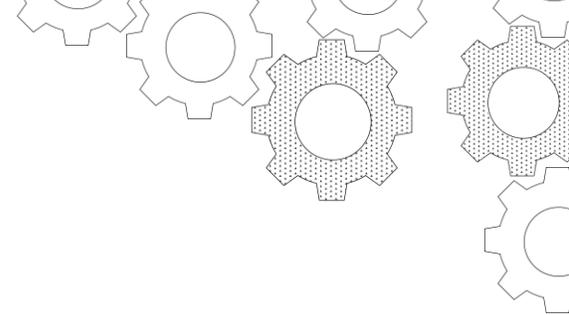


Google's Black Founders Fund, which has furnished over \$5 million in non-dilutive capital across more than 75 Black-led tech startups¹³.

- **Tristan Walker** relocated his personal care brands under the Walker & Co. label to Atlanta following a major acquisition by Proctor & Gamble. At the time, Walker explained the move to [*Fast Company*](#):
 - “When I think about my consumers, they are in the southeast, they are in Atlanta. When I consider things like how my son is raised, I want him to be around a supporting network of aspiring, forward-looking Black folks.”

Significant Strengths in Education and Workforce Development

- Metro Atlanta has the second largest Black population with a bachelor's degree or higher¹⁴.
- Atlanta is home to the nation's top ranked HBCU (Spelman College)¹⁵.
- Home to the oldest and largest contiguous consortium of African American higher education institutions, the Atlanta University Center Consortium¹⁶.
 - AUC's combined student population: 8,883 students.
- Georgia State University confers more bachelor's degrees to Black students than any other public or non-profit university in the U.S.¹⁷
- Georgia Institute of Technology graduates the second-most Black engineers of any public or nonprofit university in the nation¹⁷.



Sources

- ¹[Economic Policy Institute](#), 2016
 - ²[Center for American Progress](#), 2018
 - ³[Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#), 2014
 - ⁴Metro Atlanta Talent Pipeline Report, 2019
 - ⁵Learn4Life Annual Report, 2020
 - ⁶[Bloomberg](#), 2018
 - ⁷Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019
 - ⁸Fortune Magazine, 2020
 - ⁹U.S. Census Bureau, Annual Business Survey, 2018
 - ¹⁰[TechCrunch](#), 2021
 - ¹¹Atlanta Journal-Constitution, 2019
 - ¹²[RCIE website](#), 2021
 - ¹³[Goodie Nation](#), 2020
 - ¹⁴U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019
 - ¹⁵U.S. News, 2021
 - ¹⁶IPEDS, Fall 2019
 - ¹⁷Diverse Issues in Higher Education, 2020
- *Among large metro areas

+++