



DATE: March 29, 2020

RE: Equity Bill Hearing.

FROM: Ujamaa Place

Ujamaa Place respectfully requests \$1.2M to expand, enhance and solidify its current programming and curriculum serving African American men, ages 18 through 30, experiencing inequity at the intersection of race and poverty. Ujamaa Place curriculum for job training, employment preparation, internships, education, training in the construction trades, housing, and organizational capacity prepares Ujamaa for sustainable growth. The young African American citizens served achieve brotherhood, stability, and personal success. Ujamaa Place requests your support as we attempt to expand our reach to young African American men, empowering them to transition out of involvement with criminal justice systems, homelessness, unemployment, and poverty. This investment strengthens our state, communities and families.

Ujamaa Place was created to empower a population that is surrounded with racial inequities. Ujamaa Place's infrastructure is built around the sophisticated ***Theory of Transformation*** logic model, which serves as the foundation for the implementation of Ujamaa's teaching and goal setting Individual Transformation Plan (ITP). Programs include housing, education, employment, behavior health and wellness, cultural services, criminal justice advocacy, and support services (i.e., bus tokens, legal assistance, laundry, transportation, scholarships, stipends, etc.).

The ***Ujamaa Place Theory of Transformation*** continues to prove its sustainability to transform the lives of the most marginalized population in society, African American men, through its proven empowerment methodology backed by research and 11 years of performance data. Ujamaa Place data has proven that transformation most effectively happens with a marginalized population of African American men in a cultural environment, where holistic wrap-around transformation services are used to stabilize Ujamaa men, with critical support high-context coaching. Since inception, 4,200 men have been served; in 2022 300 men will be enrolled. Most men need housing, education, mental/chemical health support and employment training. Many strive to become not only employed but also gainful and sustainable entrepreneurs. And due to Ujamaa's unique wraparound services most every man reaches his own personal goal.

However, serving 300 young African American men is not enough. We can no longer wait for those needing Ujamaa Place to "walk through our doors". We must expand our ability and capacity to reach more young Black Men and meet them where they are. Ujamaa Place must create an "**Ujamaa On the Go**" which will allow us to increase hours of outreach and coaching.

Minnesota Equity Bill Funding in 2022 will allow Ujamaa Place the capacity to go to the men; in homeless shelters, on the streets, in dysfunctional living arrangements, at the doorways of foster care, in school districts where young Black Boys are struggling, in workplace situations hoping to hire young Black employees and at the same time trying to overcome racial injustices in the workplace, and in places of worship where families are hoping for solutions for their struggling young Men. Funding will enhance an Ujamaa facility that compliments this unique approach.

There is no doubt that Equity funding in 2022 will be an extraordinary investment in Ujamaa Place's Workforce Training and an Entrepreneurship Investment not only intended but definitely helping to close Minnesota's opportunity gap for its young citizens of color.