



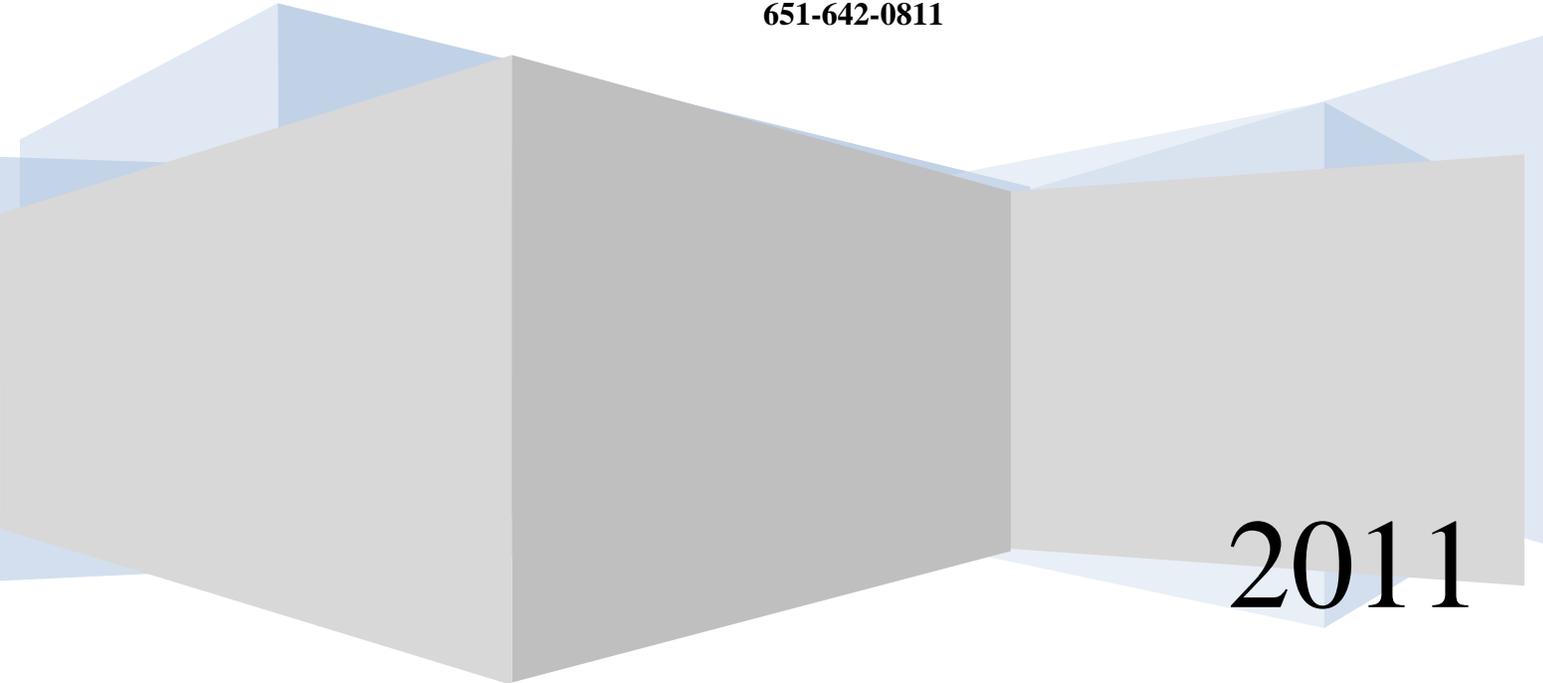
## **MN Sunset Commission Report**

(MN Statutes 2010, section 3.85)

December 11, 2011

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2011

**COUNCIL ON BLACK MINNESOTANS  
SUNSET COMMISSION REPORT**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Council on Black Minnesotans has been requested to provide the Sunset Advisory Commission with the following four types of Information:

- A. Information regarding the application to the COBM of the criteria in section 3D.10 (which are delineated below in section IA.
- B. A priority-based budget;
- C. An inventory of all boards, commissions, committees, and other entities related to the COBM ( In section IC)
- D. Any other information that the COBM considers appropriate or that is requested by the commission.

The commission and its staff shall consider the following twelve criteria in determining whether a public need exists for the continuation of the COBM or its advisory committees, or for the performance of the functions of the COBM or its advisory committees:

In addition to the four types of information requested the Commission provided review criteria for which the CBM should respond.

The following report is a reflection of the Commission's specifically requested tasks information in the order presented in the enabling legislation.

### **Executive Summary**

The Minnesota Legislature created the Council on Black Minnesotans in 1980 to ensure that people of African heritage fully and effectively participate in and equitably benefit from the political, social, and economic resources, policies and procedures of the State of Minnesota. The duties of the Council are specifically set forth in Minnesota Statute 3.9225. Generally, the Council is charged with the responsibility of:

- Advising the Governor and the Legislature on issues confronting Black people;
- Advising the Governor and the Legislature on statutes, rules and revisions to programs to ensure that Black people have access to benefits and services provided to people in Minnesota;
- Serving as a conduit to state government and agencies to Black people in the state;

- Serving as a liaison with the federal government, local government units and private organizations on matters relating to Black people in Minnesota;
- Implementing programs designed to solve problems of Black people when authorized by statute, rule or order; and
- Publicizing the accomplishments of Black people and their contributions to the state.

While the purview of the Council is broad, the resources of the Council are unfortunately limited. The Council in carrying out its mission collaborates with other state, county and local governmental agencies to compile information on expenditures, programs and policies that impact Blacks in Minnesota.

The Council has traditionally worked with organizations in the Black community, experts within the Black community and has used community forums to hear from its constituents on issues within the Council's scope. The Council also collaborates with several educational institutions of higher learning and social service organizations within the State of Minnesota, whose subject matter areas of interest, aligns with the interests of the constituents served by the Council. The Council expresses thanks to all individuals and groups that have worked with the Council during the reporting period.

### **Statutory Requirements**

**Criteria 1: The efficiency and effectiveness with which the COBM or its advisory Committees operate.**

#### **I. EFFICIENCY**

The extent to which the Council on Black Minnesotans has been efficient in the utilization of its resources can be seen when viewing the following matrix. It is important to note that every ten years the population of persons of African heritage have increased tremendously. At the same time, the Councils' budget level has not increased proportionately to this growth.

The salaries of the Council make up a significant portion of its budget. So, there are few, if any, discretionary choices to be pursued.

Below is an example of the extensive state and community partnerships that the Council on Black Minnesotans has been involved in building within this reporting cycle – 2003 - 2011:

#### **A. Cultural Partnership Organizations**

1. African American Leadership Council of Saint Paul
2. African, Hispanic, Asian & Native American Forum (AHANA)

3. African American Men's Project of Hennepin County
4. Black Minnesota Veterans – Dave Hall with Sam Grant
5. Chicano Latino Affairs Council - Ytmar Santiago/Hector Garcia
6. Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans – Ilean Her, Director -
7. Jewish Community Action - Vic Rosenthal, Director
8. Headwaters Foundation
9. League of Minnesota Cities
10. Martin Luther King/Hallie Q. Brown Center
11. Minneapolis African American Leadership Summit – Bill English,
12. African American Leadership Council
13. Minneapolis N.A.A.C.P.
14. Minneapolis Urban League – Minnesota Pipeline (Public Education Program)
15. Minnesota Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commission – Lester Collins
16. Councils of Color & American Indian Council Collaborative – Sen. Torres-Rey
17. Minnesota State Legislators of Color – Ad hoc Organization with no formal structure
18. Minneapolis Black Ministerial Alliance – Rev. Randy Staten -
19. National Black MBA Association - André Thomas
20. Organizing Apprenticeship Program – Legislative Report Card
21. Sabathani Community Center
22. Saint Paul N.A.A.C.P.

**B. African & Immigrant Partnerships**

1. Consortium of African Community Organizations (Co-sponsored Refugee Day at Capitol)
2. ISIAH & C-Pam (Collaboration of Pan Africans of Minnesota) underemployment issue community forum
3. Liberians in Minnesota
4. MIND – Minnesota Institute for Nigerian Development
5. New Americans Collaborative – Wilder Foundation,
6. Stand for African – Here and Abroad
7. SEIU (INS/Police Separation Ordinance Work Group) Amy Bodnar
8. Urban Coalition – Immigrant Task Force

**C. Education Partnerships**

1. Minnesota Department of Education
  - a. Governors Early Childhood Advisory Group, Accountability Committee
  - b. School District Revenue Initiative Advisory Committee
  - c. No Child Left Behind Committee
  - d. Dropouts & Graduation Rates Study Group
  - e. The Achievement Gap
2. Minnesota Higher Education Services
3. Minnesota Reparations Group
4. Minnesota State Colleges and Universities – MnSCU
5. Minnesota Private Colleges
6. Minnesota Minority Education Partnership
  - a. Research Committee
  - b. African American Males Project
7. St. Paul Collaborative on Black Education

8. St. Paul Library Board
9. St. Paul Public Schools
10. Synergy Academy – Minneapolis
11. Wilder Foundation – Compass Webpage

**D. Health Issues & Disparities Partnerships**

1. African American Diabetes Initiative – Stratis Health
2. African American Teen Pregnancy and STD Prevention Program (Collaborative)
3. African, African American Tobacco Education Network (Collaborative)
4. American Cancer Society
5. E- JAM -- Environmental Justice Advocates of Minnesota (Rep. Keith Ellison) with about 20 affiliated environmental organizations
6. Minneapolis Health Department
  - a. Minority and Multicultural Health Evaluation Committee
  - b. Minneapolis Eliminating Health Disparities Initiative
  - c. Racial Disparities Data Group
7. Minnesota Association of Black Psychologists
8. Minnesota Take Action Health Committee
9. Minnesota Office of Minority and Multicultural Health – Eliminating Health
10. Disparities Initiative Steering Committee and Evaluation Committee
11. Minnesota Partnership for Action Against Tobacco - “Quit”
12. Minnesota Public Health Association – Environmental Health & Racism/Social
13. Justice
14. University of Minnesota Medical School – Health 2010 Committee

**E. Children & Family Partnerships**

1. African American Adoption Agency
2. Alternative Options -Welfare Reform and Poverty
3. Boy Scouts of American – Indian Head Council
4. Children Defense Fund – CDF
5. Commission on Minnesota’s African American Children – COMAAC
6. Girl Scouts of America – Saint Paul
7. Hennepin County Department of Human Services –
8. Minnesota Council on Non-Profits
9. Minnesota Department of Human Services Racial Disparities Task Force – Dr. Bill Allen/Antonia Wilcoxon
10. Minnesota Department of Human Services Race/Ethnic Data Advisory Group
11. Ramsey County Department of Human Services
12. Ramsey County MFIP Task Force
13. Senior Federation of Minnesota
14. Weed and Seed -
15. Welfare Reform - Welfare Rights Committee

**F. Criminal and Juvenile Justice Partnerships**

1. Hennepin County Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative Advisory Group
2. Minnesota Juvenile Justice Coalition

**G. Racism & Cultural Competency/Responsibility**

1. Communities United Against Police Brutality
2. Institute on Race and Poverty

3. Mayor of Minneapolis Racial Profiling Research Advisory Group
4. Minnesota Courts Outreach Task Force
5. Minnesota Council on Crime and Justice - Institutional Review Board
6. Minnesota Department of Administration (Michael Watts Assistant
7. Commissioner for Diversity & Affirmative Action)
8. Minnesota Racial Profiling Advisory Group (Created through Racial Profiling Legislation)
9. Saint Paul Human Rights Coalition (Responding to Mayo Kelly's Proposed
10. Restructuring of Human Rights Dept.)
11. Y.W.C.A. of Minneapolis

#### **H. Community-based Organizations**

1. Community Stabilization Project
2. District 7 Planning Council
3. District 8 Planning Council
4. Men of March
5. Mentoring Young Adults

## **II. EFFECTIVENESS**

Overall, when considering the issues of racial disparities which in a negative sense permeate the performance of all state agencies and programs and many other public and non-profit agencies, it has become clear that the reduction of racial disparities has been slow and piecemeal. However, some progress has been made. Nevertheless, most research indicates that while the performance levels that signal a reduction in overall incidence of a problem is misleading, That is, while the overall incidence of an issue may be reduced, the incidence of racial disparities associated with this issue remains unchanged and even grows.

The Council on Black Minnesotans has demonstrated effectiveness in its efforts to directly influence the substance and direction of public policy. Examples of these efforts include contributions to the passage of the following legislative acts which were integral parts of the Council's priority process:

- The Family Heritage/Family Preservation Act, which attached cultural guidelines to out-of-home placement processes and procedures. An Act that established a policy regarding the placement of ethnic children within households of same ethnicity for the purpose of fostering cultural heritage.
- The Act that created the Office of Minority and Multicultural Health within the Minnesota Health Department; the disparity elimination initiative. A 2009 report of this unit indicated the following. “For African Americans disparities existed for 15 of 17 established indicators. These disparities ranged from 1, 4 (preterm births) to 42.6 (gonorrhea incidence) Efforts continue to be made to reduce health disparities; including teen births, diabetes, heart and cancer mortality.
- The Act which created the Ombudspersons for Families agency. Council staff attends agency board meetings of this body and collaborate on special initiatives such as the Commission on Minnesota’s Africa American Children. (COMAAC). The Council was incorporated in the initial legislation to provide a board member for the Agency.
- MN Department of Veteran Affairs, Minority Veterans Outreach Act. This act was passed under the leadership of Rep. Joe Mullery and Sen. Jane Ranum in an effort to increase outreach services to minority veterans. Thus far, this effort has been very successful; generating millions of dollars in new revenues for the state’s veteran population by assisting them in securing their entitled benefits.
- *The 2001 Racial Profiling Act*, which authorized the MN Racial Profiling Study and other provision; including development of a cultural competency curriculum and a 1-800 long distance number to facilitate state-wide reporting on racial profiling practices. These functions were respectively assigned to the POST Board and Office of the Attorney General. Unfortunately, reports by these agencies on the stated activities have not been submitted to the legislature.
- *The Juvenile Justice Data Act of 2008*, with the leadership of Senator Mee Moa, which established a study task force. The Council collaborated with this study group with the purpose to examining the feasibility of changing the manner in which ethnic and cultural demographic data was collected and reported.
- *The School District Integration Revenue Act* (and subsequent revisions) Since the State Auditor’s report on this program in 2005, the Council has been involved in an extensive monitoring process to correct the problems identified by the Minnesota Department of Education did not provide consistent or required oversight. Subsequently, the Council has had a membership in a collaborative effort on a statewide basis, to improve the effectiveness of this program.

Further, the Council has been effective in its efforts to influence administrative policies of state agencies and agencies of government at lower levels by

participating as working members of committees and initiatives or providing consultation. For example:

- The MN Department of Employment and Economic Development were prominently involved in the development and sponsorship of the Governor's Economic Development Community Forum on March 30, 2011 at UROC in North Minneapolis. This successful dialogue was followed by the "Black Legislative Day on the Hill," with over four hundred community participants. Governor Dayton has demonstrated continuing commitment to his pledge to partner with the community on action steps; e.g., planning a community forum to educate attendees regarding to the process that should be followed to ensure getting certified as a state contractor and the steps to ensure eligibility in competing for state contracts. The Council continues to engage in this process, and appreciated the opportunity to attend the Minnesota Trade Office's "Export 101" community forum held yesterday at UROC.
- The Governors' Work Force Development Council, Accountability Committee and Cultural Competency Committee. The results of these efforts found themselves incorporated into the final report to Governor Pawlenty. Governors' Early Childhood Education Initiative Accountability Committee. An important outcome of this effort was the issuance of a report on kindergarten readiness by the initiative's committee.
- The MN Department of Human Services. Racial Disparities Policy Committee and the Racial Disparities Data Committee. The first of these activities had a charge to review old departmental policy and develop policy recommendations.
- The MN Department of Health, Minority Health Advisory Group of the Office of Minority and Multicultural Health and the Eliminating Racial Disparities Initiative.
- Minnesota Senior Federation, Medicare Part D Project. This community education collaboration culminated with a Health Fair, as part of the Dr. Martin Luther King Statewide Celebration, was designed to educate the community regarding the pharmaceutical component of Medicare; Plan D. Over ten health providers and a thousand community residents participated at this event.
- University of Minnesota Medical School, Med 2010 Project. The University of Minnesota sought to develop more culturally competent health professionals as a part of its disparity reduction efforts. It was recommended that the University reduce its dependence efforts which were based on a silo model. It was also recommended that they use existing cultural resources in a more comprehensive manner; i.e., the ethnic studies programs at the university. It was observed that their approach to cultural competency should start at the undergraduate level, given the student responsibilities associated with being in medical school.

- In line with the Council’s Criminal Justice Issues priority, the Council has been deeply involved in the MN Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative Advisory Board (JDAI). This body has as its goal of expanding the JDAI model statewide.
- The Council has also been a participant in the Hennepin County Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiatives’ (JDAI). A significant outcome of the Council’s involvement is the funding of Family and Children Services to operate a Multi-systemic Therapy program for at risk children and their families The Council representative to this body was part of the proposal review and decision making processes. The program is designed to address mental health issues.
- The Council acted as an advisor to and collaborated with two webpage development projects: Wilder Foundation’s Compass (webpage) project and Minnesotan Private Colleges and Universities, Web page project.
- The Council was a part of a study group that examined how to improve the connection with Junior and Senior High students and Higher Education with the Citizen League and Saint Paul Public Schools. “High School Linkage with Higher Education” was the title of the submitted report by the study group.
- The Minneapolis North Side Partnership project that had as its collaborators the University of Minnesota, Hennepin County and North Side Residents Redevelopment Council. The end result of this partnership was the creation of the University Research and Outreach Center (UROC).
- City of Minneapolis Empowerment Zone Program, conducted information system audit of the program with the goal of determining the extent to which populations of color benefited from this program – which was marginally.
- MN Department of Veteran Affairs, Minority Veterans Outreach Act.

**Criteria 2: The Council’s Organizational Dynamics**

The Council should identify the mission, goals, and objectives intended for the agency or its advisory committee and the problems or need that the agency or its advisory committees intended to address and the extent to which the mission, goals and objectives have been achieved and the problem or need has been addressed.

**A. OBJECTIVES & GOALS (BY PRIORITY)**

The following will be a summary presentation of proposed/traditional objectives and goals by priority areas of the Council:

## **1. EDUCATION**

- Work to create a culturally appropriate system of public education in which all children, youth and adults achieve high academic performance levels, equitable economic opportunities and high civic engagement levels
- Continue to promote equal educational opportunities and improve achievement/opportunities outcomes with the goal of maximizing the skill levels of students of color and American Indian students
- Work to increase the accountability and transparency of policy makers, administrators and community residents and other stakeholders when addressing issues impacting Minnesotans of African heritage
- Collaborate with the Minnesota Minority Education Partnership (MMEP) to research and publish reports on educational issues impacting Black Minnesotans, e.g. State of Students of Color & American Indian Students Report
- Work with the MN Department of Education and selected school districts to increase graduation rates among students of color; particularly black students, with the goal of reducing glaring disparities. And, to reduce the disparities associated with school disciplinary practices.
- Work with the MN Legislature and MN Department of Education to modify and increase the transparency regarding the School District Integration Revenue Initiative and to implement changes recommended by the MN State Legislative Auditors Office.
- Work with the Governor's Early Childhood Education Initiative with the goal of promoting systemic accountability and equity, increased school preparedness among children of color and American Indian children and their families and communities.
- Increase the level of academic achievement among children/youth in out-of-home placements and reduce their disparate presence in juvenile and adult correctional facilities.
- Promote civic engagement and leadership development in policy making arenas among Black youth and adults.

## **2. JUVENILE JUSTICE ISSUES**

- Research often cites the need for greater family involvement in the juvenile justice system. Most parents care deeply about their children and are at a loss about what to do. They may be frightened, overwhelmed and

confused by the court language and procedure. They may feel blamed and shamed because their child is in trouble with the law. (Pacer Center, n.d.)

- African American youth are 4.5 times more likely...than white youths to be detained for the same crime. (Pacer Center, n.d.)
- When charges are filed, white youth are more likely to be placed on probation while black youth are detained. (And Justice For Some: Differential Treatment of Youth of Color in the Justice System; National Council on Crime and Delinquency 2007). African American offenders are incarcerated at double the rate of whites. (Pacer Center, n.d.)

To address these issues, the COBM has established a standing Juvenile Justice Committee. This Committee will:

- Research and develop a strategy to empower African and African American families to effectively advocate for their children.
- Develop a strategy to partner with existing juvenile justice advocacy agencies to bolster their efforts in ensuring that Africans and African Americans involved in the justice system are treated equitably.
- Analyze the laws governing the juvenile justice system and advise the Governor on needed reform to the juvenile justice system laws that are negatively impacting the African and African American juvenile population in state of Minnesota.
- Continuing to work on legislation that promotes juvenile justice reform and would reduce the level of youth of color and American Indian youth in detention facilities through the required use of a Risk Assessment Instrument. In short, to reduce the level of pre-adjudication detention and maintain public safety.
- Continuing to monitor and assess the impact of HF 1224/SF 1095 which has as its goal Eliminating Disproportionate Minority Contact in Juvenile Justice Correctional facilities;
- Create a research design structure to Assess and Expose Decision Making Points and their relationship with disparate contact and treatment. The study will collect data including the age, gender, race, ethnicity, criminal charge, county of offense, and county of residence; pursuant to HF 702/SF 561.
- Continue to examine the issue regarding the creation and use of juvenile arrest data by law enforcement agencies, private information gatherers and distributors.

*Expected Outcomes:*

- Demonstrated improvement in African and African American parents' ability to effectively advocate for their children who are involved in the juvenile justice system.
- A decrease in the number of Africans and African Americans juvenile incarcerations.
- Draft legislation and work with the Governor and the legislature to pass laws that will require culturally informed juvenile justice inventions to achieve equity in the juvenile justice system for African and African Americans.

**3. DISPARITIES IN HEALTHCARE ACCESS**

- Continue work, in collaboration with the Commissioner of the MN Department of Health, to maintain adequate funding and other resources for the Office of Minority and Multicultural Health (OMMH) and fully support its goal to eliminate racial/ethnic disparities in healthcare access and treatment. Continue Council's participation on the OMMH Advisory Group.
- Continue being a resource in the Health Care Reform discussion with the goal of promoting a health system that embraces equitable access, affordability, and equitable treatment of populations of color and American Indians.
- Continue working to develop and implement educational opportunities and trainings for healthcare professionals with the goal of meeting the needs of diverse patient groups and increasing cultural competence.

**4. COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH**

- According to the American Psychiatric Association (2011), "...only one out of three African Americans who need mental health care receives it. Compared to the general population, African Americans are more likely to stop treatment early and are less likely to receive follow-up care" (p. 1).
- Untreated depression, PTSD, and anxiety expressed as pain is common in African communities (Schuchman & McDonald, 2004).
- Culture biases against mental health professionals and health care professionals in general prevent many African Americans (and Africans) from accessing care due to prior experiences with historical misdiagnoses, inadequate treatment, and a lack of cultural understanding; only 2% of

psychiatrists, 2% of psychologists and 4% of social workers in the U.S. are African American (African American Community Mental Health Fact Sheet, 2004).

To address these issues, the COBM has established a standing Mental Health Committee. This Committee will:

- Analyze the laws governing the mental health system and advise the Governor on needed reform to the mental health laws that are negatively impacting the African and African American mentally-ill population and their families in the state of Minnesota.
- Research and develop a strategy to empower the African and African American mentally-ill population and their families to provide ongoing education to the COBM regarding their experiences with the mental health system in the state of Minnesota and to make suggestions for reform.
- Develop a strategy to partner with existing mental health advocacy agencies in the state of Minnesota to ensure that the African and African American mentally-ill population and their families are treated with dignity and respect.
- Advise the Governor on proposed legislation to increase the number of African and African American mental health professionals in the state of Minnesota.
- Advise the Governor on proposed legislation to provide funding to research and develop affordable, community-based, quality, effective and culturally-competent mental health treatment, aftercare programs and support services for the African and African American mentally-ill population and their families in the state of Minnesota.

***Expected Outcomes:***

- An increase in the number of Africans and African Americans mental health professionals.
- Increase in access to culturally competent, quality and effective community-based mental health care services.
- Reduction in the number of African and African Americans in long-term mental health care institutionalization.

## **B. STRUCTURE OF THE COUNCIL ON BLACK MINNESOTANS**

The Council is comprised of thirteen citizen-voting members. One citizen member must be a person of ethnic heritage from West Africa and another citizen member must be a person of ethnic heritage from East Africa. The Governor appoints all citizen-voting members of the Council. Additionally, the Minnesota Legislature appoints four legislative nonvoting members.

The membership of the current Board of Directors is dedicated to addressing and resolving those conditions and problems impacting Minnesotans of African Heritage. Its commitment is reflected in the special projects that it has become engaged. In example, the facilitation of community issues forums for the purpose of establishing Council priorities and committee structure. Another example of this work is the Council's intense involvement with the City of St. Cloud and Minnesota State University of St. Cloud regarding the issues of racial profiling, racial discrimination. Both are indicators of a strong commitment to civic engagement and equity and are a reflection of the time, energy and other resources they have used and dedicated to these tasks.

It must be stressed that this board is a working and constituency-based board. This means that in addition to its policy making function, it is expected that Council members actively perform in leadership functions within the organization's committee structure and act as liaisons to agency constituencies.

In general, the Board and staff functions can be divided along the following lines. The Council Board sets broad policy, identifies priorities, oversees staff, and engages in strategic planning. The Council staff implements and executes Council projects, pursues Council priorities and objectives, informs the Board of opportunities and problems of interest and concern to Black people, and handles the daily work of serving as a link between Black people and state and other policy processes.

The Council's committee structure is in the process of being modified and streamlined. The Council's newly established priorities will provide the rationale for its new organizational structure. For the purpose of this document, the main priorities used in the report to the legislature will be employed again. They are education, health, criminal justice and family and children issues.

The Council on Black Minnesotans, with a full complement of Board Members, has historically put into operations a four-point priorities process, and a corresponding substantive committee infrastructure. It is important to note that the selection of substantive committees and board priorities are a reflection of community input.

The Council has five top organizational priorities and working committees. They are listed below in alphabetical order:

- **Black Families and Children Issues** – This committee focuses on issues and policies at both ends of the age spectrum. This included out-of-home placement disparities, foster care and adoptions, and welfare reform issues. Collaborations occurred with, among others, Our Children Our Future, the State Ombudspersons

Office for Families and Children, and the Commission on Minnesota's African American Children (COMAAC).

- **Criminal Justice Issues** – Along with its primary focus on Racial Profiling and Police Misconduct policies, the Council has addressed the issues of disproportionate arrest and incarceration rates and equal treatment within the judicial system. Intense collaboration occurred with the Council on Crime and Justice, and the Hennepin, Dakota and Ramsey County Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiatives (JDAI).
- **Education Issues** – The Council monitors educational issues and conditions affecting Black students and their families and sponsored educational events, such as community forums. This includes the “Achievement Gap”, “No Child Left Behind” early childhood education, public education finance, the school district integration revenue initiative and graduation, drop-out and truancy rates events. Collaboration occurred with MN Department of Education, the Saint Paul Public Schools and African American Leadership Council, Parents United, and several state-level committees.
- **Health Access Issues** – Direct Council efforts involves focusing on teen pregnancy and AIDS/STD prevention, tobacco usage reduction and smoking prevention and environmental health issues. Indirect efforts involved working through the Office of Minority and Multicultural Health and other organizations to deal with a wide range of health disparities and serving on several task forces including the University's Med 2010 Project and the State's Transform 2020 Health Initiative for Seniors.
- **Community Issues in Mental Health** – In September 2011, the Council voted to add community mental health parity as an area of involvement. Committee Chair, Rosella Collins-Puoch has authored a position paper on behalf of the Council, and the Committee is in the process of information gathering to assess the needs of the community to address the access gaps and stigma surrounding mental healthcare.

### C. ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVES/GOALS

The philosophical basis for the Council's policy goals continues to be twofold:

First, there is a strong commitment to the principal of equity. That is, continued emphasis is being placed on the reduction and/or elimination of existing racial/ethnic disparities in selected substantive policy priority areas.

Second, there is a commitment to promote the accountability of policy makers, administrators and practitioners in carrying out their assigned functions. This includes the issues of transparency and inclusion of populations of color, American Indians and the poor in policy making, monitoring and evaluation processes.

Actions taken to address these issues and selected priority areas involved extensive collaboration with other state agencies and non-profit agencies. An emphasis is being placed on both administrative and legislative policy making at all levels.

Most of the specific goals of past biennium will continue to be addressed in the next biennium. Many of these aspirations are contained in Appendix A, the Council's Report to the Legislature for the 2007/2008 biennium; page 27 through page 29.

**Criteria 3: An identification of any activities of the COBM, in addition to those granted by statute and the authority for those activities and the extent to which those activities are needed.**

- ✓ The specific charges contained in the enabling legislation are broad in nature. Additionally, the agency is committed to using existing resources effectively and growing our capacity toward the ability to take on additional functions.

**Criteria 4: An assessment of authority of the agency relating to fees, inspections, enforcement and penalties.**

- ✓ This criterion does not apply to the Council of Black Minnesotans.

**Criteria 5: Whether less restrictive or alternative methods of performing any function which the agency performs could adequately protect or provide services to the public.**

- ✓ No. In that the methods used by the Council are culturally specific to the African and African American community.

**Criteria 6: The extent to which the jurisdiction of the agency and the programs administered by the agency overlap or duplicate those of other agencies, the extent to which the programs administered by the agency can be consolidated with the programs of other agencies.**

- ✓ The functions of the Council are primarily cultural specific. There are, however, state agencies that have recently begun to address existing racial disparities and institutional racism. The Council has collaborated with these efforts; by providing cultural awareness through knowledge, and competencies. The issues associated with racial disparities are so grave in Minnesota and the resources devoted to resolving these issues are so scant that there is no duplication.

**Criteria 7: The promptness and effectiveness with which the agency addresses complaints concerning entities or other persons affected by the agency, including an assessment of the agency's administrative hearing process.**

- ✓ While the Council has as its focus public policy and not direct services, referrals are made to service providers when the Council is approached. These efforts are later incorporated into the priority setting process. State policy and guidelines are followed relative to administrative hearings.

**Criteria 8: An assessment of the agency’s rulemaking process and the extent to which the agency has encouraged participation by the public and making its decisions and the extent to which the public participation has resulted in rules that benefit the public.**

- ✓ The Council does not have a rule making apparatus. It does, however, utilize Community Forums and other activities to promote civic engagement. But, the Council is very active in affecting rule changes of state agencies and local government entities.

**Criteria 9: The extent to which the agency complied with federal and state laws and applicable rules regarding equity and employment opportunity and the rights and privacy of individuals and state laws and the applicable rules of any state agency regarding purchasing guidelines and programs for historically underutilized businesses.**

- ✓ The Council on Black Minnesotans follows all state policy and guidelines relative to these issues.

**Criteria 10: The extent to which the agency issues and enforces rules relating to potential conflicts of interest of its employees.**

- ✓ The Council on Black Minnesotans follows all state policy and guidelines relative to these issues

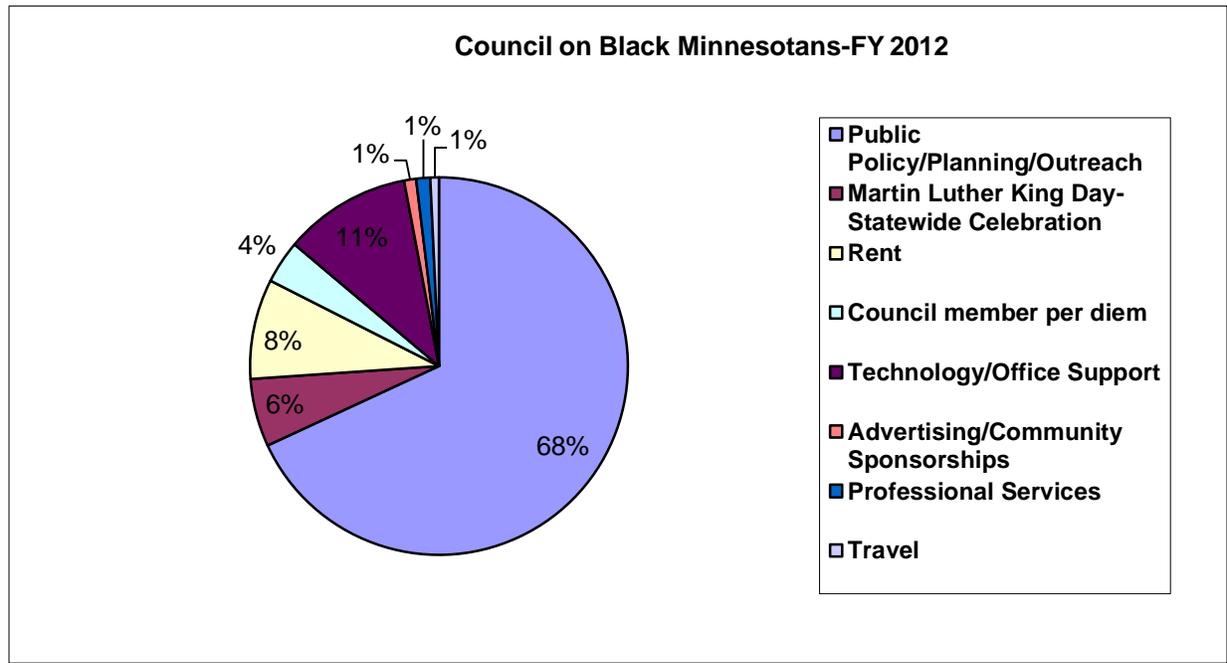
**Criteria 11: The extent to which the agency complies with Chapter 13 and follows records management practices that enable the agency to respond efficiently to requests for public information.**

- ✓ The Council on Black Minnesotans follows all state policy and guidelines relative to these issues. And, requests for public information are handled in efficient and effective manner

**Criteria 12: The effect of federal intervention or loss of federal funds if the agency is abolished.**

- ✓ The Council does not receive federal funds. But, agencies with which the Council collaborates do and the Councils are being called upon to take up the slack caused by reduced federal allocations to these collaborators.

### Criteria 13: FY 2012 Prioritized Budget



### Additional Considerations

The Council of Black Minnesotans was established to ensure that Minnesotans of African heritage fully and effectively participate in and equitably benefit from the political, social, and economic resources, policies and procedures of the State of Minnesota. These are not small goals and in years past, policymakers have partnered with the Council to meet the community in the intersections of this work – to the benefit of families statewide. Despite many policy advances, systemic disparities faced by Black Minnesotans in the critical areas we prioritize; educational achievement, healthcare access, juvenile justice systems, and culturally competent mental healthcare represent a threat to our prosperity and quality of life statewide. The Council stands ready to continue equity advocacy, strengthen the partnerships with the Legislature and Executive branch required for sound policy advancements.

Effective state policy organizations partner with the Executive Branch – to do so, the Council recommends strengthening the board appointment process in collaboration with the Governor’s office. Additionally, we recommend the designation of an existing Executive staff member to serve as a policy liaison. In our collaboration with other Councils, it is clear that we each serve diverse constituencies with distinctly different needs ; we also support one another in striving for the responsiveness and effective advocacy needed to better our state.

We thank the 2011 Sunset Commission, supportive community members, and the dedicated staff of the Legislative Coordinating Committee for your time and thoughtful consideration.

## **Appendix A**

### **STATE COUNCIL ON BLACK MINNESOTANS**

The Minnesota Legislature created the Council on Black Minnesotans in 1980 to ensure that people of African heritage fully and effectively participate in and equitably benefit from the political, social, and economic resources, policies and procedures of the State of Minnesota. This report reflects the policy priorities, functions and activity outcomes of the Council for the reporting period.

## **2008 BIENNIAL REPORT**

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### ***Public Members***

Brother Michael Collins, Chair, Saint Paul  
Martha Holton Dimick, Vice-Chair, Shorewood  
Donald Bellfield, Treasurer, Saint Paul  
Lissa Jones, Secretary, Minneapolis  
Ronald G. Brandon II, Golden Valley  
Maurice Davis, St. Peter  
Veronica Wirekeo-Fobena, Blaine  
Gloria Lamphear, St. Paul  
Charity McCoy, St. Paul  
Mohamud Noor, St. Paul  
George C. Ogbonna, Andover  
Lucky R. Rosenbloom, Minneapolis  
Adrianna Smith, Bloomington

## *State Legislative Members*

### **Senators**

David Hann, Eden Prairie  
Linda Scheid, Brooklyn Park

### **Representatives**

Carol McFarlane, White Bear Lake  
Joe Mullery, Minneapolis

## **Minnesota Department of Human Rights Liaisons**

Melanie Miles & Michael Browne

### **Staff**

**Executive Director** – Lester R. Collins

**Research Analyst Specialist** – Roger W. Banks

**Executive Director, Minnesota African, African American Tobacco  
Education Network-** Natalie Johnson Lee

**Senior Office & Administrative Specialist** – Rebecca S. Johnson

## **PART I: Organizational Dynamics**

### **Purpose of the Council on Black Minnesotans**

The Minnesota Legislature created the Council on Black Minnesotans (“Council”) in 1980 to ensure that people of African heritage fully and effectively participate in and equitably benefit from the political, social, and economic resources, policies and procedures of the State of Minnesota. The duties of the Council are specifically set forth in Minnesota Statute 3.9225; the statute is included as Appendix 1 to this Report. Generally, the Council is charged with the responsibility of:

- Advising the Governor and the Legislature on issues confronting Black people;
- Advising the Governor and the Legislature on statutes, rules and revisions to programs to ensure that Black people have access to benefits and services provided to people in Minnesota;
- Serving as a conduit to state government and agencies to Black people in the state;
- Serving as a liaison with the federal government, local government units and private organizations on matters relating to Black people in Minnesota;

- Implementing programs designed to solve problems of Black people when authorized by statute, rule or order; and
- Publicizing the accomplishments of Black people and their contributions to the state.

While the purview of the Council is broad, the resources of the Council are unfortunately limited. The Council in carrying out its mission collaborates with other state, county and local governmental agencies to compile information on expenditures, programs and policies that impact Blacks in Minnesota. The Council has traditionally worked with organizations in the Black community, experts within the Black community and has used community forums to hear from its constituents on issues within the Council's scope. The Council also collaborates with several educational institutions of higher learning and social service organizations within the State of Minnesota, whose subject matter areas of interest, aligns with the interests of the constituents served by the Council. The Council expresses its thanks to all individuals and groups that have worked with the Council during the Reporting Period.

The Council, pursuant to its obligations under Minnesota law, submits the 2008 Biennium Report as part of its responsibility to advise the Governor, the Legislature and all interested individuals concerning the activities of the Council, the status of Blacks in Minnesota, and the goals of the Council for the next Biennium Period.

### **Structure of the Council on Black Minnesotans**

The Council is comprised of thirteen citizen-voting members. One citizen member must be a person of ethnic heritage from West Africa and another citizen member must be a person of ethnic heritage from East Africa. The Governor appoints all citizen-voting members of the Council. Additionally, the Minnesota Legislature appoints four legislative nonvoting members.

The membership of the current Board of Directors is dedicated to addressing and resolving those conditions and problems impacting Minnesotans of African Heritage. Its commitment is reflected in the special projects that it has become engaged. For example, the facilitation of community listening and issues forums for the purpose of establishing the Council priorities and subsequent committee structure. And, the intense involvement with the City of Saint Cloud and Minnesota State University of St. Cloud regarding the issues of racial profiling, racial discrimination and equity is a reflection of the time, energy and other resources they have dedicated to these tasks.

In general, the Board and staff functions can be divided along the following lines. The Council Board sets broad policy, identifies priorities, oversees staff, and engages in strategic planning. The Council staff implements and executes Council projects, pursues Council priorities and objectives, informs the Board of opportunities and problems of interest and concern to Black people, and handles the daily work of serving as a link between Black people and state policy processes.

The Council's committee structure is in the process of being modified and streamlined. By January 2009, the Council's newly established priorities will provide the rationale for its new

organizational structure. For the purpose of this document, the main priorities used in the 2006 report to the legislature will be employed again. They are education, health, criminal justice and family and children issues.

The Council on Black Minnesotans, with a full complement of Board Members, has historically put into operations a four-point priorities process, and a corresponding substantive and operations committee infrastructure. The selection of Substantive Committees and Board Priorities reflect community input.

The Council has traditionally had four top organizational priorities and working committees. They are listed below in alphabetical order:

- 1. Black Families and Children Issues** – This committee focuses on issues and policies at both ends of the age spectrum. This includes out-of-home placement disparities, foster care and adoptions, and welfare reform issues. Collaborations occurred with, among others, Our Children Our Future, the State Ombudsperson’s Office for Families and Children, and the Commission on Minnesota’s African American Children (COMAAC).
- 2. Criminal Justice Issues** – Along with its primary focus on Racial Profiling and Police Misconduct policies, the Council addressed the issues of disproportionate arrest and incarceration rates and equal treatment within the judicial system. Intense collaboration occurred with the Council on Crime and Justice, and the Dakota and Ramsey County Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiatives (JDAI).
- 3. Education Issues** – The Council monitors educational issues and conditions affecting Black students and their families and sponsored educational events, such as community forums. This includes the “Achievement Gap”, “No Child Left Behind” early childhood education, public education finance, the school district integration revenue initiative and graduation, drop-out and truancy rates events. Collaboration occurred with MN Department of Education, the Saint Paul Public Schools and African American Leadership Council, Parents United, and several state-level committees.
- 4. Health Issues** – Direct Council efforts involves focusing on teen pregnancy and AIDS/STD prevention, tobacco usage reduction and smoking prevention and environmental health issues. Indirect efforts involved working through the Office of Minority and Multicultural Health and other organizations to deal with a wide range of health disparities and serving on several task forces including the University’s Med 2010 Project and the State’s Transform 2020 Health Initiative for Seniors.

## Executive Director's Comments: Lester R. Collins

The Council, pursuant to its obligations under Minnesota law, submits the 2008 Biennium report as part of its responsibility to advise the Governor, the Legislature and all interested individuals concerning the activities of the Council. The work and focus of the Council continues to be greatly influenced by its constituencies and mirrors their priorities as identified through *community forums research surveys* and other *partnership engagements*. Our primary focus in our previous Biennial report centered on:

- Education
- Health
- Criminal Justice
- Black families & Children Issues
- Housing

While these areas of focus remained relatively the same for the past two years, the Council has met the growing challenge of additional concerns to its constituents with a primary focus in **Education**; the Council has lent its efforts to addressing the growing rate of poverty among its constituents. The Issues of **Criminal and Juvenile Justice**, and **Housing** and **Economic Development**, and their impact on Black Minnesotans was and will continue to be a focus for the Council. A principal focus of the Council has been in advocating for change in the **Temporary Protective Status and Permanent Status policy** for immigrant African populations. With the impetus on **Local, State and Federal Immigration policies**. The continuing challenge of **Health Disparities**, **Transportation** and **Equal Access** remain as key areas of strategic involvement.

In addition, the Council's efforts have been collaborative in nature, working with metropolitan, county, municipal, state and federal units of government. The Council in an advisory capacity disseminates **Information, Educates** and **Communicates** those benefits and concerns to our Governor, constituents and the Legislature. The Council welcomes the involvement and support of our constituents; we continue to value the importance and requirement to be engaged and collaborative with (a) *policy makers*, (b) *community organizations*, (c) *individuals, locally and nationally*.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. stated that "Our hope for creative living in this world house that we have inherited lies in our ability to reestablish the moral ends of our lives in personal character and social justice." "One of the most basis weapons in the fight for social justice will be the cumulative political power of the Negro. I can foresee the Negro vote becoming consistently the decisive vote in national elections."

Our belief is "individually we can make a difference; collectively we can make a change."

**Council on Black Minnesotans 2008 Biennial Report**  
**Council Statutory Functions**

**Data Collection, Reporting and Utilization**

One of the major functions of the Council on Black Minnesotans is to advise the Governor, the Legislature and other policy makers on social, economic and political/policy issues impacting Minnesotans of African descent and populations in poverty.

“Advising the Governor, his administration, and the Legislature on issues confronting Black people ...and on statutes, rules and revisions to programs to ensure that Black people have access to benefits and services provided to people in Minnesota.”

The Council has also been charged with performing or contracting for the performance of:

“studies designed to suggest solutions to problems of Black people in the areas of education, employment, human rights, health, housing, social welfare, and other related areas.”

Underlying these charges is the need to conduct research on issues affecting Black Minnesotans. In compliance, the Council has been involved in three (3) types of research efforts:

The first involves the duty and responsibility of the Council to conduct primary and secondary research on substantive issues and conditions impacting these populations.

Second, the Council has been involved in a “participatory” research process, which entails being active participants on policy making and policy recommendation generating bodies that have potential for influencing public policies. An example, of this type of activity is the “Legislative Report Card” sponsored by the Organizing Apprenticeship Project. In conjunction with these efforts, CBM staff acted as a facilitator at the “Leave No Legislator Behind” conference at Neighborhood House.

Supportive research assistance represents the third and final research activity in which the Council has been engaged. These efforts have involved, for example Northway Community Trust of Minneapolis and its Research and Evaluation committees, the Wilder Foundation Compass Project and the Saint Paul Ramsey County Children and Family Initiative’s Technical Team.

The goal of these efforts is to promote organizational and community capacity development and cultural competency among governmental and community-based organizations through the provision of technical assistance in the areas of information gathering, data analysis, evaluation, community mobilization and advocacy.

Council Board and Staff began and concluded the past Biennium Period by examining the status of research and its relationship to its organizational priorities. The principal questions entertained focused on “How can the Council do a better job? And, what are the major barriers we face when attempting to address, reduce and/or eliminate racial/ethnic disparities and disproportionalities in selected substantive issue areas?”

One of the major barriers to achieving effective and equitable public policy for populations of color and American Indians in the state of Minnesota is the manner in which data is collected, reported and utilized. The traditional nature of researching racial/ethnic disparities and disproportionalities by state and local governmental and non-governmental entities is also a critical issue.

**The issue of “Research: Data Collection, Reporting and Utilization” provides the central theme for this Biennial Report.** It begins by examining some of the realities associated with the status of research and its relationship to racial and ethnic disparities and disproportionalities. Subsequently, this report delineates the nature and dynamics of the Council’s involvement with selected substantive priority areas; and their relationship to the status of research.

## **Research**

Research has been conducted in communities of color and American Indian communities with considerable arrogance and with significant cultural and community insensitivity. An example of this condition is a research project lead by the University of Minnesota which involved the assessment of sexual behavior and attitudes among students at Nellie Stone Johnson Elementary School in Minneapolis. There was considerable community concern regarding the age appropriateness of some of the survey questions. However, from a technical research, procedural perspective, a lot of concern focused on the fact that this research project was not approved by the University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). Nor was it approved by the Minneapolis Public School’s own IRB. Yet, the project proceeded.

Within Black communities it has been asserted that “Research has been conducted about us and not for us!” In an effort to more effectively address the issues associated with institutional and systemic racism, a greater focus should be placed on research, policy development and implementation that has an institutional and policy/program evaluation perspective.

It is interesting to note that some of the research that purports to document best practices is often flawed, particularly regarding sampling methodologies used. This information has often been used to justify generic (one size fits all) solutions. A lot of information can be lost when only aggregated data is used.

Future research projects of the Council include a survey of minority involvement and participation on State decision-making bodies: e.g. Boards, Commissions, Councils, Committees and Initiatives. This research project is discussed under the Civic Engagement component of this report. The Council also plans to conduct a compliance review of grant applications during the next biennium. According to the Council’s statutory charge, **all applications by a state**

**department or agency for the receipt of federal funds which will have their primary effect on Black Minnesotans, shall be submitted to the Council for review and recommendation at least 30 days before submission to a federal agency**

### **Data Collection**

The focus of research on disparities and disproportionalities has relied, to a great extent, on conducting specific studies. These studies have specific time parameters and limitations; having the ability to provide only a glimpse of disparity reality. Data collection, as it relates to assessing racial disparities and cultural categorical over-representations, has not been done in a systematic manner, nor has it been integrated. Little emphasis has been placed on the development of information systems that could be tapped and assessed in an on-going fashion. And, even less has been done to develop systems that would allow for differentiating between populations; particularly between African and African Americans.

Research has generally been performed from a silo perspective, rather than being integrated and having the ability to be used in an interactive manner. For example, just about every major state agency collects data and is attempting to address the issues associated with racial/ethnic disparities. However, each governmental and non-governmental unit clearly collects this type of data in a different manner. More specifically, when such data is collected, the categories of information, across state departments that make critical decisions for populations of color, American Indians and the poor (e.g., the Departments of Education, Health, Public Safety and Corrections and the Departments of Health and Human Services and Employment and Economic Development) are seldom the same. And, as a result, the data has limited utility. A contributing factor to this condition is that the collection and reporting of racial/ethnic data has not been uniform and made a mandated function for all major state agencies and departments. Given the complexities and interrelatedness of the issues associated with racial/ethnic disparities and poverty, this situation does not make much sense.

Current information systems operating in Minnesota lack a common and uniform process for collecting data on race, ethnicity and other demographic variables. While the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has provided funds to Minnesota Community Measurements to develop a categorical construct for the uniform collection of data on race/ethnicity, this process continues to be characterized as being silo driven; as it is only applicable to the collection of data by health service agencies.

There is a deficiency of data on the level and quality of treatment received by participants throughout a program's lifetime. For example, when collecting data on the efficacy of the employment process, data collected and reported should be continuum-based and focus on the key points that are located along the employment continuum – the application process, the interview/screening process, the employment hiring process and the employment treatment process. Documenting and specifically evaluating how populations of color and American Indians are treated within and between programs is critical. Historically, headcount data dominates the nature of data collected that is associated with racial/ethnic employment status. And, the extent to which specific ethnic populations have benefited or been negatively impacted is seldom addressed.

## **Data Reporting**

The reporting of research results on racial/ethnic disparity topics, for the most part, has not been honest nor comprehensive. It has essentially been done in a “Minnesota nice” manner. This has the impact of minimizing and marginalizing disparate conditions and disproportionalities experienced by communities of color and American Indians. This is particularly true when a 2007 Report to the Legislature is examined. This report, developed by the Minnesota Department of Education, supposedly delineated the impact that the policies and practices associated suspensions and disciplinary actions taken in all Minnesota school districts had on all students. The report, however, glossed over the racial disparities that were easily discernible.

This condition impedes and impairs the ability of the state’s Councils of Color and the American Indian Affairs Council to effectively accomplish their principal charge, which is to educate policy makers and advocate on behalf of their constituencies in an effort to address and resolve conditions and issues affecting these Minnesota residents.

But, just as importantly, this condition impedes and impairs the ability of policy makers and administrators to craft and operationalize solutions that recognize and effectively address the disparities and disproportionalities experienced by these populations.

By not reporting research results in a realistic fashion has caused policy makers to lack information that should influence and direct their decisions. This method of operation does not promote greater equity and accountability among policy makers.

## **Utilization of Research**

Effective education and advocacy efforts depend on the availability and reporting of accurate and objective information in a fashion where all major stakeholders have access to the same information; this includes community members. Data collection and reporting systems, in the future, should have greater transparency and equitable access. It is critical that the utility of research conducted be increased for the benefit of community residents. More specifically, research results should be translated into community languages and not presented solely in the esoteric language of empiricists.

It has been observed that while being used as a repository for research, communities of color and American Indian communities have not benefited greatly from the research that has been conducted. As a result, in some communities, there has been a clamor for the creation of Community Research Review Boards to assist in the development and implementation of research being conducted in their communities. There has also been a clamor for increased utilization of the Community-based Participatory Research model.

At the same time, communities have been advocating for the use of the Community Benefits Agreement approach. A Community Benefits Agreement or “CBA” is a legally enforceable contract signed by project stakeholder groups, setting forth a range of community benefits that each stakeholder agrees to provide, and is accountable for, as part of the project. It

is a mechanism that promotes accountability and comprehensive involvement of the entire set of stakeholders; the “substantive village” or community.

Historically, conducting and implementing research and operationalizing its outcomes has taken the form of promoting generic policy/programs. In terms of policy/program effectiveness, there is a clear need to begin the development and implementation of ethnic specific programming. We feel that it would certainly be a more prudent and effective investment strategy. Given the impact of both individual and institutional racism, it is clear that relying on generic policies and programs has led to the creation, maintenance and perpetuation of racial/ethnic disparities.

It is also clear that there is a large need for across-the-board baseline data that accurately captures the status of racial/ethnic/cultural disparities and disproportionalities. Currently, however, there is little agreement regarding the form and substance that demographic data should take; particularly in regards to ethnic/cultural data. Without such agreement, and the development of appropriate/universal constructs, there is little hope that successful efforts to address racial disparities and disproportionalities can be realized.

Without an accurate and legitimate information baseline for racial/ethnic data, the major stake holders and policy makers involved in an issue area will continue to mimic the past and make decisions based on their predilections. A utilitarian categorical construct for collecting and reporting data on racial, ethnic, and cultural factors is essential. Researchers in all aspects of public service (e.g., education, health, public welfare and economic security) are currently researching and addressing the issue of racial disparities – but not together. And, even when they are in the same room, their focus has been on the current status of data collection regarding disparities; which they themselves will acknowledge is neither comprehensive, systematic or effective. It should be noted that, given the complexities of the issues facing populations of color and American Indians, a silo approach to these issues will continue to be unsatisfactory.

The element of trust between African and African communities and researchers is also a key variable. Trust would be greatly enhanced if a mechanism would be developed and used that would bring greater benefits, parity and legitimacy to research efforts conducted in communities of color and American Indian communities.

### **Collaboration and Cooperation**

The fourth statutory function delineated in this section of the biennial report - **“Serving as a conduit/liason to federal, state and local governmental units, agencies and private organizations on matters relating to Black people in Minnesota.”** – has been addressed through the practice of collaboration and cooperation.

The Council has essentially been involved in two types of collaboration. Performing the first type, Council staff engaged in providing supportive action on issues that were held in common with selected governmental and non-governmental entities. Hundreds of meetings were attended by Council Staff in an effort affect needed change through the promotion of meaningful collaboration.

**The Memorandum of Collaboration between the Minnesota State Legislature, the Councils of Color and the Ombudspersons for Family and Children** represent a significant effort to formalize relationships between the parties to the agreement and to maximize the utilization of these entities as resources in the legislative and public policy making processes.

In short, a collaborative process was used as a means to promote and formalize collaboration between ethnic/racial groups and policy makers. A formal declaration of cooperation was created for the purpose of institutionalizing a commitment to promote collaboration. This successful effort was guided by Senator Patricia Torres-Ray. Another successful effort was the Council's Legislative Day on the Hill. The Council sought to increase its utilization as policy making resource by sponsoring a Black Resource Fair for members of the State Legislature.

The second type of collaboration involved direct project/program activity by staff and their working on committees or initiatives. These actions generally result in specific products such as reports and recommendations to the Governor, Legislature or general public. An example of such a product, and its associated recommendations, is the 2008 report on the Educational Status of Minority Students in Minnesota, developed by the Minnesota Minority Education Project. Other examples include the report and recommendations contained in "Preparing Minnesota's Workforce for Tomorrow's Economy", prepared by the Governors Workforce Development Council (GWDC). Council on Black Minnesotan's staff served on two of the GWDC's subcommittees. And, they also participated in the development of the Minnesota Department of Education's report on "Dropout Prevention, Retention and Graduation Initiative".

### **Civic Engagement**

The Council has multiple constituencies. First, it has a target population constituency comprised of African Americans, Africans and the impoverished. According to the 2005 American Community Survey, the Council's client constituency, primarily persons of African heritage, are disproportionately impoverished. More specifically, the Twin Cities metropolitan area, where an estimated 92 % of the state's 218,445 Blacks live, are now (by income) residents of the nation's second most segregated metropolitan area. Poverty, therefore, is a critical issue for the Council to address. Second, there is a "public policy makers and administrators" constituency. And, third, there is an institutional constituency of health and human service and research organizations with similar functions, values, concerns, target populations, and objectives. When collaborating with each of these sectors, the Council has had the promotion of civic engagement as one of its principal objectives. More specifically, the Council has the responsibility to engage in work that reduces disparities in access, participation and or outcomes. And, civic engagement is an instrument it uses to achieve this goal.

These and other community-based constituents have been involved with the Council in providing educational programming and training services that range from one-on-one meetings to community education forums and dialogues. This includes voter registration activities and conducting, and often facilitating, community forums for candidates running for political office.

The goal of these activities is to promote civic engagement and equip constituencies with the knowledge of community processes and opportunities that affect their existence. For example, the Council was greatly involved in the 2008 get out the vote effort through a host of individuals and non-partisan organizations that collaborated around this activity. Staff also participated on the Help America to Vote (HAVA) Reform Committee of the Secretary of State. However, voter registration and mobilization is only one aspect of civic engagement.

Participating in, and contributing to, the decision-making processes around issues that impact their lives is another aspect of civic engagement. It has been determined that there is scant representation among populations of color and American Indians on decision-making entities that make policy that affect their lives. This condition led the Council to explore the level of involvement by populations of color and American Indians on state boards, committees, councils, commissions and initiatives.

In respect to these efforts, it was determined that the Secretary of State's report (based on the participation of about 200 state agencies, departments and programs) has serious limitations. Entitled "Fiscal Year 2007 Annual Compilation and Statistical Report of Multi-Member Agencies", this report had the following deficits.

First, because collecting racial/ethnic data is not mandatory, very few of the participating state entities reported on the racial/ethnic composition of their decision making bodies in a systematic manner, if at all.

The second major limitation is the number of decision or recommendation making bodies represented in the Secretary of State's report (200) as compared to total number of entities that really exist to make decision or recommendations at the state level. Each state entity has its own "working units." For example, the Governor's Workforce Development Council consists of at least four working committees. And, these units were not surveyed for their racial/ethnic composition.

To correct this type of condition, the Council proposes to conduct a comprehensive survey of those state agencies and their programs that significantly impact populations of color and American Indians. This includes the departments of Health, Education, Corrections and Public Safety and the Department of Human Services. The Council has as its goal identifying participation opportunities and assisting in the filling of these positions.

A third type of civic engagement project involves planning for the 2010 U. S. Census. The Council is a member of the 2010 Census Roundtable and hosts the Complete Count Census Committee for African and African American communities. The goal is to maximize the participation of persons of African Heritage in the 2010 Census process.

Emphasis has also been placed on promoting civic engagement by creating an infrastructure to facilitate the involvement, mobilization and cooperation between Africans/African Americans and other populations of color in civic and public policy issues and activities. The context of these efforts has been human and civil rights. Collaborative efforts were promoted between the Council, Liberians in Minnesota, ISIAAH, Jewish Community

Action and the Alliance for Fair Immigration Reform in Minnesota (AFFIRM) and the Minneapolis Urban League. The focus of these efforts has been the Temporary and Permanent Protective Status of refugees and immigrants

### **Council Activities during the 2006-2007 Biennium by Substantive Issue Areas**

During the 2006/2007 biennium, the Council on Black Minnesotans was involved in a wide range of substantive issue areas. Most of its efforts focused on areas that have traditionally been among the Council's top four priorities: 1) Education, 2) Health, 3) Family and Children's, and 4) Criminal Justice Issues. Each of these substantive areas is fraught with research issues and limitations. Other areas on which the Council focused includes Specific Populations; Black Seniors and African Refugee/Immigrant Relations and Issues. Economic Development, Transportation and Housing issues were also addressed during this biennium by the Council.

The following pages provide an example of the nature and intensity of this involvement. More specifically, this report will provide a comprehensive account of Council actions relative to the issue area of education. It will also provide summary accounts of Council's involvement with the issues areas of Criminal Justice, Health and Black Families and Children.

### **Council Educational Activities**

Issues associated with Education have been among the Council of Black Minnesotan's top four priority areas for the past several biennia. And, the CBM has addressed these issues from a wide range of perspectives: participatory, geographic, legislative, and collaborative.

### **Council Participation in Educational Events**

Participation in educational conferences, symposia, and forums are among the Councils most important roles. Such participation provides exposure to the most recent evidence and research in the field of education and demonstrates the Council's support for events sponsored by collaborative partners and others.

Most participation revolved around the issues of racial disparities and discrimination. For example, one conference focused on "Working to Create Equitable Schools" which examined the issue of disparities in Pau educational outcomes. Another, the 6<sup>th</sup> annual presentation of this event, celebrated "Successes in Educating African American Children." Council staff was also involved in the "Multicultural Conference on Educational Disparities" at Roseville Area High School and the forum on the "Early Childhood Education of Low-income Youth in Urban Neighborhoods" at Wilder Center.

The issue of educational opportunities for students of African Heritage is an important concern of the Council. Participating in the community forum on "The Importance of A College Education" at the Minneapolis Urban League's college fair and the conference on immigrant and refugee education, "African Refugee Students and Educational Achievement" are example of this concern and involvement.

Community education efforts provide an opportunity for staff to share its knowledge regarding specific issues. Two forums on the “Current Political and Public Policy Relevance of the Writings of James Baldwin and the forum that examined “The Black Quest for the American Presidency: A Comparison of the Chisholm and Obama Campaigns” are examples of these efforts. Each of these events was held at Metropolitan State University. And at Mankato State University, Council Staff has consistently, for several years, provided presentations at the Pan African Student Leadership Conference.

### **The Geographic Scope of Council’s Educational Activity**

#### **✓ State-wide Educational Involvement**

State-wide educational activities are a significant part of the Council’s role. For the past several years the topic of the Governor’s Commission for the State-wide Celebration of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday has had “education” as its focus.

The Council’s Board of Directors played a very active role in addressing the issues of racial discrimination, racial profiling and racial equity on the campus of Saint Cloud State University and surrounding community. Members of the Council’s committee traveled to Saint Cloud and met on several occasions with University President, Dr. Earl H. Potter, to address this issue. Meetings have also been held with Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Chancellor, James H. McCormack, and his staff to discuss racial conditions experienced by African and African American staff and students.

#### **✓ Local School District and University of Minnesota Involvement**

Educational Issues, particularly those dealing with academic achievement, cultural competence, and racial/ethnic composition and abilities of the workforce have been addressed primarily at the local school district level of Minneapolis and Saint Paul and with the University of Minnesota.

In Minneapolis, the Council worked with a number of concerned community organizations and individuals, especially the group - African American Mobilization for Education. The goal of these entities was to develop and implement an “Educational Covenant” (a partnership) with the Minneapolis School Board as a means for addressing and reducing educational disparities. The use of the Community Benefits Agreement Model was promoted in this effort.

Once the new superintendent of Saint Paul Public Schools was hired, a process in which Council staff was involved as a community representative, the African American Leadership Council of Saint Paul (AALC) made arrangements to hold a retreat on educational issues impacting the Black community. Prior to the retreat, members of the AALC held a series of community forums designed to identify the most critical educational issues facing Black residents of Saint Paul. These efforts led to a planning process and the creation of the “Transition Initiative” as a means for addressing identified issues. The use of the Community Benefit

Agreement Model was part of the AALC's education reform proposal to Meria Carstaphen, the new superintendent.

The Council's involvement with the University of Minnesota has been as varied as it has been extensive. For example:

As part of the Northside Partnership effort in Minneapolis involving the Northside Residents Redevelopment Council, Hennepin County and the University, Council staff facilitated a series of community meetings to educate community-based organizations regarding the use of the Community Benefits Agreement Model. These meetings were held at the McKnight Foundation headquarters. Other meetings were held to explore the prospects of creating a Community-based Institutional Review Board (to provide research oversight and guidance on behalf of the community) and promoting the use of Community-based Participatory Research.

The Northside Partnership Project also involved the development of a mental health facility in the community. Community residents were fearful and concerned regarding the nature of the research that would be conducted at this facility. This led to several community meetings and protests. Subsequently, two meetings were hosted by the Council's Board of Directors. The first was held to get the perspective of the community and its representatives. The second was held to get the perspective of the university and its staff. The goal of these encounters was to get a comprehensive and accurate picture of what was being proposed for the North Minneapolis community.

As a result of participating on the Med 2010 Initiative of the U of M Medical School, which focused on cultural competence, Council staff recommended that the use of cultural resources of the university be maximized. Greater use of teaching units, such as the African and African American Studies Department was encouraged. This would go a long way toward reducing the impact of problem solving through the silo approach, where the Medical School attempts to address and resolve these issues on its own. It was also suggested that the school's cultural competence curriculum be restructured to expose aspiring medical professionals to this subject at an earlier point in their educational process; preferably at the undergraduate level.

At a conference sponsored by the College of Education and Human Development which focused on Educational Research and Practice, Council staff made a presentation on the status of educational research and practices and the issue of racial disparities.

The Council, on several occasions, has been called upon by various university entities to provide its perceptions on selected policy issues and their impact on communities of color. For example, former State Senator Steve Kelly, now associated with the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute, invited staff to examine and discuss considered options in the control of cable television – from local control to state level control.

✓ The Minnesota Department of Education

Council staff participated as a member of the Dropout Prevention, Retention and Graduation Initiative. Its recommendations are currently being reviewed by Commissioner Alice Seagren. As part of this role, staff reviewed the 2007 Report to the Legislature submitted by the Department of Education. This report delineated the status of disciplinary action taken against students by Minnesota School Districts . In making this report, conditions associated with racial disparities and disproportionalities were marginalized and minimum-ized.

**The Council's Legislative Involvement**

✓ School District Integration Revenue Initiative

Rather than improving, educational outcomes for students of African heritage have worsened over the past decade. Racial attitudes and behaviors have hardened and these conditions are reflected in both state and local current public policies. For example, the high school attendance areas for the municipalities of Osseo and Bloomington have become more segregated as a result of the actions of community adults, parents and members of school boards. As a result, African and African American students continue to experience both a substantial achievement and “opportunities gap” and discrimination. This condition points out the need to consider community adults and parents as target populations for this initiative. It has become clear that the populations to which state funding has been directed (which are the students) needs to be expanded to include adult populations of European Descent. In most instances, students have yet to develop racial bias or practice racial discrimination. It seems as if it has been the adults, parents and school board members that have contributed most to the maintenance and perpetuation of segregation values. These actions have had the impact of furthering racial segregation and discrimination in public educational facilities. This is one of the most critical educational issues to face the State of Minnesota and Council and it has not really been addressed.

The Council provided testimony before the School District Integration Revenue Initiative subcommittee hearings that were chaired by Representative Willie Dominguez. And for the second time, assistance was offered to both the legislature and Department of Education to work toward the development of an effective program. Very little happened at either level.

This is a complex issue. And, it might benefit the reader to have a historical perspective and know that in 1997, the “School District Integration Revenue Initiative” was implemented throughout the state to address a plethora of issues associated with multiculturalism, integration, academic performance and cultural competency. During 2005, nearly \$79 million dollars was allocated by the Department of Education to 80 school districts throughout the state, we thought, to promote and affect integration, cultural diversity and cultural competency. Instead, the allocations distributed by this program appear to have been used by school districts to supplant lost revenue from other sources. This program has been funded at a similar annual level for the past eleven years and was evaluated in 2005 by the Office of the Legislative Auditor and found wanting.

The Office of the Legislative Auditor determined that: (A) From a legislative perspective, “The purpose of the Integration Revenue program is not clear. (B) Neither the state nor school districts have adequately assessed the results of the Integration Revenue program.” In fact, the vast majority of funded “programs have yet to develop and implement program evaluation processes.” (C) “The Minnesota Department of Education has not provided consistent or required oversight of the program....”

It should be noted that three state-wide School District Integration Revenue Initiative conferences have been sponsored by the Minnesota Department of Education since the audit. And, none of the major issues raised in the auditors report, to our knowledge, have ever been addressed at any of the conferences or by either the Legislature or Department of Education.

As indicated previously, the Council communicated with the Office of the Legislative Auditor and offered its assistance to Department of Education Commissioner Alice Seagram in an effort to resolve these issues and others cited in the auditor’s report. The Council was informed by the Commissioner’s office that the Council would be invited to participate on a committee to review the School District Integration Revenue Initiative program once the committee has been established. Unfortunately, this never happened.

When addressing policy areas that would have a direct impact on the Councils of Color and the American Indian Affairs Council and their constituents, it is important that greater use of these agencies as administrative and legislative policy making resources should be made a high priority of the Minnesota Legislature and Administrative Departments..

And, it is critical that an evaluation process be implemented for each funded program. It is also imperative that this be a two-tiered information system that is continuum-based, and monitors and measures the extent to which both state and program objectives have been realized along the educational continuum.

#### ✓ The Achievement Gap

The Council has had considerable concern and involvement with this issue. Testimony was provided by staff to the Senate Achievement Gap Subcommittee chaired by Senator Patricia Torres-Ray. Rather than delineating specific educational conditions experienced by students of African descent and reciting interesting statistics, the Council focused on solutions; tools and strategies that could be used to resolve this issue. In line with its goals for the current biennium, the Council promoted the use of the Community Benefits Agreement Model. This model has the potential to reduce the impact of a silo-based education, health and human service delivery systems, and provide clarity regarding the appropriate roles of major community stakeholders. This process also promotes the means for assessing the extent to which stakeholder identified outcomes have been realized and by promoting accountability.

The Council continues to suggest that the state consider using the Community Benefits Agreement Model to deal with substantive issues. For the most part, however, the Council was more intensely engaged with academic performance and achievement gap issues at the local

school district level; particularly in Minneapolis and Saint Paul. All of these actions were collaborative in nature.

✓ Council's Involvement in Collaborative Efforts in Education

As indicated in the "Collaboration and Cooperation" and other sections of this report, concerted and systematic joint actions are among the principal methods used by the Council to achieve its statutory and community identified charges.

Central to this issue is the promotion and use of the Community Benefits Agreement process. As part of the Council's strategic approach, this process will allow the Council, governmental and non-governmental systems to more effectively address its substantive priorities during the next Biennium.

### **Council's Criminal & Juvenile Justice Activities**

The Council on Black Minnesotans has taken a very active role in addressing criminal and juvenile justice issues. First, it has assembled a subcommittee on racial profiling and racial discrimination which shaped the nature and substance of council operations in this area. As a result, a combined board and community forum meeting was held at Saint Cloud State University to get input on these issues from students, faculty and community members. The Council's focus was on both on-campus and off-campus concerns. Based on the testimony of participants, subcommittee members submitted questions to, and requested responses from University President, Earl H. Potter, Police Chief Dennis Ballantine and to Baba Odukale, principal staff for the city's Human Rights Council. Subsequent meetings in Saint Cloud and elsewhere were also held. For example, President Potter held a "Hate Crimes on Campus" forum to specify how the university had begun to address some of the student raised issues. In short, the university has generated new energies toward the resolution of racial equity and discrimination issues.

Numerous community events have been held that had "justice" as a focus. One of the largest events was the conference entitled "Connecting Youth to Success: Doing Juveniles Justice in Minnesota. A forum and community discussion was also held to examine a report issued by the Children's Defense Fund entitled "America's Cradle to Grave Pipeline."

The issue of racial profiling and criminal justice has been addressed by the Council and other community-based organizations. For instance, the African American Leadership Council of St. Paul sponsored a community forum on Black Youth and Gang Activity and a community meeting on racial profiling was held to get responses from St. Paul's Police Chief John Harrington.

The Council was also active at the State Legislature on these issues. The planning and implementation of "Second Chance Day on The Hill" was a major production which focused on demonstrating the need for the enactment of transitional service legislation for former felons. Other criminal justice issues examined include the restoration of voting rights issues and the expungement process.

As part of its research efforts, a Community Listening Forum on Criminal and Juvenile Justice issues was sponsored by the Council and the following eight issue categories were identified, ranked and prioritized by forum participants as having a significant impact in Black communities in Minnesota.

- Transitional services needed for former felons (21.5%)
- Criminal conditions in the neighborhoods (15.7%)
- The provision of alternative services and strategies for juveniles (14.7%)
- Inequitable treatment – Unequal justice (12.7%)
- The need to examine/consider social and economic determinants (11.7%)
- Unrestrained institutional behavior/racial profiling and the lack of accountability (8.8%)
- Funding issues -Lack of resources (7.8%)
- Legal representation and structural issues (6.8%)

Issue identification occurred after a panel presentation was made by three area Police Chiefs: John Laux of Bloomington, Timothy Dolan of Minneapolis and John Harrington of St. Paul. These panelists provided their perceptions of criminal and juvenile justice issues. Three to four additional forums will be sponsored within the next six months with the goal of providing the basis for the Council’s list of priority issue areas for the next biennium and future years.

### **Council’s Health Disparities and Health Issues Activities**

Health disparities and health conditions are among the most important issues facing Black Minnesotans. As a result, the Council has been heavily involved in this area. A representative of the Council on Black Minnesotans sits on the Office of Minority and Multicultural Health Advisory Board, as part of this body’s authorizing legislation. The Council is also represented on this agency’s Legislative and Policy Committee and has had extensive involvement in its Eliminating Health Disparities Initiative. The goal of this activity is to “close the gap in the health status of African Americans/Africans, American Indians, Asian Americans, and Hispanic/Latinos in Minnesota compared with whites in the following priority health areas: breast and cervical cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections, healthy youth development, and violence and unintentional injuries, and by 2010, decrease by 50 percent the disparities in infant mortality rates and adult and child immunization.” The Council is a collaborative partner in this effort.

There has been considerable discussion surrounding the issue of “universal health care.” The principal concern that the Council has relative to this policy issue is the extent to which this

effort, regardless of the form that it takes, will address and reduce current health disparities and promote equitable, accountable and effective health care for all Minnesotans.

One of the major barriers to securing equitable and effective health service delivery for members of the Council's African constituency is the availability and quality of health translation services. In an attempt to address this issue, the Council participated with the Interpreter Services Workgroup which made a series of recommendations to the Minnesota Department of Health for its consideration.

Another major health activity of the Council involves the Minnesotan African, African American Tobacco Education Network (MAAATEN). The Council is the fiscal agent for this entity. Initial funding for this effort came from Clearway Minnesota and its predecessor, the Minnesota Partnership for Action Against Tobacco (MPAAT). It is currently being funded by Blue Cross and Blue Shield.

This activity has been central to the council's involvement in health issues through its participation and sponsorship of the Minnesota African American Tobacco Education Network. This program has as its goal, smoking prevention and cessation within the Black community of Minnesota. Tobacco usage is a principal cause of many of the chronic health conditions experience by African Americans: heart disease, cancer, lung disease and others. And, African American youth have been the target of much of the advertisements produced by the tobacco industry. The Council on Black Minnesotans was the fiscal and supervising agent for this program.

The Minnesota African, African American Tobacco Education Network works to achieve a healthier, smoke-free community by engaging adults in developing and implementing evidence-based tobacco control interventions. It also develops partnerships and mobilizes targeted communities through-out the state. Conducting educational programs and conducting research around tobacco use and attitudes are among MAAATEN's areas of emphasis.

Participation in a multitude of health events took place during this reporting period by Council representatives. Activities range from community health resource fairs, a conference on "Mobilizing Communities of Color to Promote Health", to a Public Health Society event which focused on the politics of disparities and was entitled "Science versus Ideology." The presenter at this event was Dr. Michael Trujillo, former Director, Indian Health Service, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. He clearly delineated the questionable role the Federal Government played in controlling the publishing of research results on health disparities. Staff also attended the University of Minnesota's Summer Institute on Health Disparities.

Participation also took the form of being a member of a "Chemical Health Proposal Review Team" for the MN Department of Health and Human Services. And, staff participated as a member of a "senior" focused health effort, the MN Department of Human Services "Transform 2010 Project." This was a partnership with the MN Department of Health, MN Board on Aging and other state agencies.

Current research efforts associated health disparities has numerous flaws and limitations. The greatest flaw concerns the collection of data and was highlighted at a symposium sponsored by Health Partners. The conference revisited the issue of “disparities and research” and concluded that a restructured data collection process was necessary. To this end, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is supporting a project that had as one of its components the development of a categorical, uniform and systematic construct for the collection and reporting of ethnic and racial data; one which allows, for example, for the differentiation between populations and their experiences – particularly between African and African Americans.

### **Council’s Families and Children Issues Activities**

A momentous event occurred during this reporting period. An Agreement of Collaboration and Cooperation was entered into by the “Councils of Color” the Ombudspersons for Families and Children, and the State Legislature. The purpose of this agreement was to formalize and systematically increase mutual support among the principals and to encourage their use as resources by policy makers and incorporate them into decision-making processes that impact their constituents.

The issues of child protection, out of home placement, adoptions and associated policies; including the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), welfare reform and children’s mental health issues continue to be among the main concerns of the council.

While there appears to have been a decrease in the overall level of out of home placements, the issue of racial/ethnic disparities continues to be a problem. Regardless of existing levels of disparities, however, there continues to be a problem with the level of cultural competence possessed and conveyed by foster parents to their wards of color. The absence of this characteristic has a tendency to impact the self-image and mental health of those in placement. It must be emphasized that the extent to which students of color and American Indian students in placement have high truancy rates, drop out of school and fail to graduate are indicators of institutional neglect.

Community concern and commitment to addressing the out of home placement issue continues to be high. Economic and social determinants and their relationship to this issue are being acknowledged. For example, a forum was held on this issue at the State Office Building. It was entitled “A Minnesota Without Poverty: The State’s Role in Foster Care and Protective Services.”

### **Council’s Involvement in Other Issues & Activities**

The council has continued its involvement with the Legislative Commission to End Poverty by 2020. This activity has reached the recommendation phase. However, after a brief review of a draft of developed recommendations, it becomes apparent that the content and focus of these recommendations is a clear reflection of the interest and program activities of those organizations and agencies that made the recommendations. Multiple silos were obvious and little attention was paid to the complex interrelationship of issues, in aggregate, that cause and affect poverty. The interest of those persons with the least access to opportunity and having the greatest need seem to have been, pretty much, left out of the solution equation.

Council's involvement in the issue area of Poverty includes being a presenter at the Northwest Area Foundation's Anti-Poverty Conference. A major community education effort of the Council has focused on promoting the use of the Community Benefits Agreement process in a wide range of settings. Staff collaborated with the Alliance for Metropolitan stability to make a presentation on the Community Benefits Agreement Model.

Council has had staff representation on the Data and Information Systems Work Group and the Diversity Action Committee of the Governor's Workforce Development Council (GWDC). The recommendations of this committee are contained in the GWDC's report recently published by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED).

### **Goals of the Council for the 2009 – 2010 Biennium**

The magnitude of the social, political and economic problems experienced by Black Minnesotans have changed very little over the past decade. And, the Council continues to be faced with the ominous presence of racial and ethnic disparities; conditions caused, to a great extent, by individual and institutional racism. In fact, present housing and economic conditions have further acerbated conditions for this population by perpetuating and increasing competition for resources.

The Council does not envision substantial change in future plans and goals. Little change in the priority areas and goals of the Council will occur. However, a more systematic and research based commitment to effectively addressing and resolving the social, political and economic conditions experience by Black Minnesotans will be promoted. Underlying these objectives is the task of providing greater assistance to policy makers and holding them accountable.

The eventual ordering of the council's priorities will be a function of the community issue identification process initiated during the latter stages of the 2007 and 2008 biennium. Since July, three community listening forums have been held. The results of the first forum were contained in the Criminal Justice section of this report.

For the next biennium, the Council will focus on the issues of accountability and equity. The council's statutory charge to **“recommend to the governor and the legislature any revisions in the state's affirmative action program and other steps that are necessary to eliminate underutilization of Blacks in the state's work force”** and policy making arenas will be pursued in earnest. Efforts to reform the information system's processes will be a major goal of the council.

To accomplish this task, the council will conduct a systematic inventory to determine the ethnic and racial composition of state committees, councils, boards, commissions and initiatives. This includes an assessment of selected departmental working committees (e.g. groups from corrections, health, education, public safety, health and human services, and employment and economic development) that have the potential for impacting existing racial disparities. The dynamics and functions of these bodies will also be delineated in an effort to promote choice and

volunteerism. The ultimate goal is to increase the knowledge level of populations of color and American Indians and promote civic engagement opportunities for these populations.

The council proposed to conduct a survey to discern the extent to which selected state governmental departments (e.g. corrections, health, education, public safety, health and human services, and employment and economic development) apply for federal funding and the outcomes for this process. The council will also have the task of establishing a proposal review schedule and work plan.

The above effort is mandated by the statutory charge associated with reviewing grant applications. **“All applications by a state department or agency for the receipt of federal funds which will have their primary effect on Black Minnesotans shall be submitted to the council for review and recommendation at least 30 days before submission to a federal agency.”**

A committee of the Board has determined that a Commission on African American Youth should be established. The goals of this effort include a resource survey to determine the level and quality of programs that are offered to these constituents; which have had to experience systematic disinvestment in opportunities over the past decade. One of the major functions of such a body will be to promote civic engagement and increased knowledge levels regarding issues impacting Black Youth. In terms of intergroup relations, this committee will continue to support the efforts of the “Pan African Summit.”

The Council will continue its focus on civic engagement activities. It will continue to make efforts to increase opportunities for individuals and groups to become more engaged in the political and policymaking processes; become more knowledgeable of candidates and processes, hold decision-makers more accountable, and be more involved in addressing public policy issues that affect them. The council will continue to host the Black Complete Count for the 2010 U.S. Census and will collaboratively participate as a member of the 2010 Census Roundtable.

Council will continue its efforts with the Ombudsman for Corrections Working Group. This is a legislatively mandated working group that works with the Commissioner of the Department of Human Rights. The goal of this effort is to reinstitute the office and functions of the Ombudsman for Corrections. A preliminary report was submitted to the legislatures in January 2008.

And, the Council will continue to explore methods to promote economic development within the Black Community. Special emphasis will be placed on assessing and monitoring the racial equity impact of the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Neighborhood Stabilization Program and other efforts.

In terms of promoting change in the area of research, the council will continue its efforts to assess the effectiveness of current methodologies that are associated with the issues of racial disproportionalities and disparities.

Promoting the creation of a more systematic, relevant and integrated information gathering, reporting and utilization process are among the objectives of these efforts. Such activity will

include the involvement of data specialists from the following departments; Education, Health, Public Safety, Corrections (including the Juvenile Justice Alternative Initiative.

Each of the above mentioned items will be addressed by the Council on Black Minnesotans during the next biennium.

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## MINNESOTA STATUTES SECTION 3.9225

### **Subdivision 1. Creation.**

A state Council on Black Minnesotans consists of 13 members appointed by the governor. The members of the council must be broadly representative of the Black community of the state and include at least five males and at least five females. One member of the council must be a person whose ethnic heritage is from West Africa, and one member of the council must be a person whose ethnic heritage is from East Africa. Membership terms, compensation, removal of members, and filling of vacancies for non-legislative members are as provided in section 15.0575. Because the council performs functions that are not purely advisory, the council is not subject to the expiration date in section 15.059. Two members of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker and two members of the senate appointed by the Subcommittee on Committees of the Committee on Rules and Administration shall serve as nonvoting members of the council. The council shall annually elect from its membership a chair and other officers it deems necessary.

### **Subd.2. Definitions.**

For the purpose of this section:

- (1) "Black" describes persons who consider themselves as having origin in any of the Black racial groups of Africa;
- (2) "East Africa" means the eastern region of the continent of Africa, comprising areas occupied by the countries of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, and Somalia; and
- (3) "West Africa" means the western region of the continent of Africa comprising areas occupied by the countries of Mauritania, Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, and those parts of Mali and Niger south of the Sahara.

### **Subd. 3. Duties.** The council shall:

- (a) advise the governor and the legislature on the nature of the issues confronting Black people in this state;
- (b) advise the governor and the legislature on statutes or rules necessary to ensure that Black people have access to benefits and services provided to people in this state;
- (c) recommend to the governor and the legislature any revisions in the state's affirmative action program and other steps that are necessary to eliminate underutilization of Blacks in the state's work force;

- (d) recommend to the governor and the legislature legislation to improve the economic and social condition of Black people in this state;
- (e) serve as a conduit to state government for organizations of Black people in the state;
- (f) serve as a referral agency to assist Black people to secure access to state agencies and programs;
- (g) serve as a liaison with the federal government, local government units, and private organizations on matters relating to the Black people of this state;
- (h) perform or contract for the performance of studies designed to suggest solutions to problems of Black people in the areas of education, employment, human rights, health, housing, social welfare, and other related areas;
- (i) implement programs designed to solve problems of Black people when authorized by other statute, rule, or order;
- (j) review data provided by the commissioner of human services under section 260C.215, subdivision 5, and present recommendations on the out-of-home placement of Black children. Recommendations must be presented to the commissioner and the legislature by February 1, 1990; November 1, 1990; and November 1 of each year thereafter; and
- (k) publicize the accomplishments of Black people and their contributions to this state.

**Subd. 4. Review of grant applications.** All applications by a state department or agency for the receipt of federal funds which will have their primary effect on Black Minnesotans shall be submitted to the council for review and recommendation at least 30 days before submission to a federal agency.

**Subd. 5. Powers.** The council may contract in its own name, but no money shall be accepted or received as a loan nor indebtedness incurred except as otherwise provided by law. Contracts shall be approved by a majority of the members of the council and executed by the chair and the executive director. The council may apply for, receive, and expend in its own name grants and gifts of money consistent with the power and duties specified in subdivisions 1 to 7.

The council shall appoint an executive director who is experienced in administrative activities and familiar with the problems and needs of Black people. The council may delegate to the executive director powers and duties under subdivisions 1 to 7 which do not require council approval. The executive director serves in the unclassified service and may be removed at any time by the council. The executive director shall recommend to the council, and the council may appoint the appropriate staff necessary to carry out its duties. Staff members serve in the unclassified service. The commissioner of administration shall provide the council with necessary administrative services.

**Subd. 6. State agency assistance.** Other state agencies shall supply the council upon request with advisory staff services on matters relating to the jurisdiction of the council. The council shall cooperate and coordinate its activities with other state agencies to the highest possible degree.

**Subd. 7. Report.** The council shall prepare and distribute a report to the governor and legislature by November 15<sup>th</sup> of each even-numbered year. The report shall summarize the activities of the council since its last report, list receipts and expenditures, identify the major problems and issues confronting Black people, and list the specific objectives which the council seeks to attain during the next biennium.

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**APPENDIX B  
COUNCIL ON BLACK MINNESOTANS' EXPENDITURES FOR  
FY 2007-2008**

REVENUE

GENERAL FUND	\$614,293
MLK GIFT FUND	18,202
BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD GRANT	92,060
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$724,555</b>

EXPENDITURES

General Fund

Salaries & Benefits	\$420,405
Other Benefits	13,171
Rent, Maintenance, Utilities	50,385
Printing/Advertising	9,706
Computer and Systems Service	2,410
Communications	13,905
Travel & Substance – In-State	5,808
Supplies	28,382
Equipment	6,395
Employee Development	6,754
Other Operating Costs	16,797
	<b><u>\$574,118</u></b>

**DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CELEBRATION**

Rent, Maintenance, Utilities	\$2,667
Printing/Advertising	7,820
Professional/Technical Services	8,400
Communications	1,026
Travel & Substance – In-state	98
Supplies	4,001
Equipment	2,861
Other Operating Costs	9,905
Statewide Agency Reimbursement	-60
	<b><u>\$36,718</u></b>

## MLK GIFT ACCOUNTS

Space Rental, Maintenance, Utilities	\$420
Professional & Technical Services	10,900
Equipment	4,372
Other Operating Costs	1,436
Walmart Poetry Account	<u>1,075</u>
	<b>\$18,203</b>

## BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD GRANT

Salaries and benefits	\$79,967
Rent, Maintenance, Utilities	820
Printing/Advertising	750
Communications	694
Travel & Substance – Out-State	431
Supplies	4,439
Equipment	40
Employee Development	955
Other Operating Costs	<u>3,964</u>
	<b>\$92,060</b>

**TOTAL EXPENDITURES FOR FY 2007 & 2008** **\$721,099**

Note: The receipts and expenditure data for the 2007-2008 Biennium in Appendices 2 are based on unaudited figures received from the Office of Fiscal Services of the Department of Administration, which provides administrative services to the Council as provided under Minn. Stats. Section 3.9225, subd. 5.

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