Family Economic Characteristics

In Ward 7's Deanwood, Marshall Heights and

Ft. Dupont Park Neighborhoods

Prepared by Deborah Kaye, The Urban Institute

Neighborhood Fact Sheet **3 –February 2004**

Targeted Neighborhoods

Summary of Key Findings

- In the nine census tracts comprising the neighborhoods focused on in this report nearly 1 in 5 persons age 22-44 are unemployed.

- 1 in 3 households do not have a wage or salary income in these targeted neighborhoods.

- Median family income is 48 percent less in these neighborhoods than that for the District as a whole.

- The child poverty rate, 50 percent, is the highest among all age groups in these neighborhoods.

Inside—More Information on these Targeted Neighborhoods on:
- Employment Rates
- Employment Opportunities
- Earnings and Income
- Education

BACKGROUND

Over the past decade, the Washington region has experienced tremendous growth and economic stability. In 2000, metropolitan Washington's gross regional product was $233 billion, which was fourth in the nation[1]. However, not everyone has been fortunate enough to benefit from the success the strong economy has brought. In three Ward 7 neighborhoods, many individuals and families are struggling to survive and prosper. This issue brief uses Census Data from 1990 and 2000 to analyze the economic security of three Ward 7 neighborhoods: Deanwood, Marshall Heights and Ft. Dupont Park, while putting these focus neighborhoods into context with Ward 7, the region east of the Anacostia River, and the District of Columbia in its entirety.

The three focus neighborhoods in this report are defined by nine census tracts, according to the DC Office of Tax and Revenue. This area is bounded by Southern Avenue, north to Hayes Street, and from Eastern Avenue, west to Minnesota Avenue.
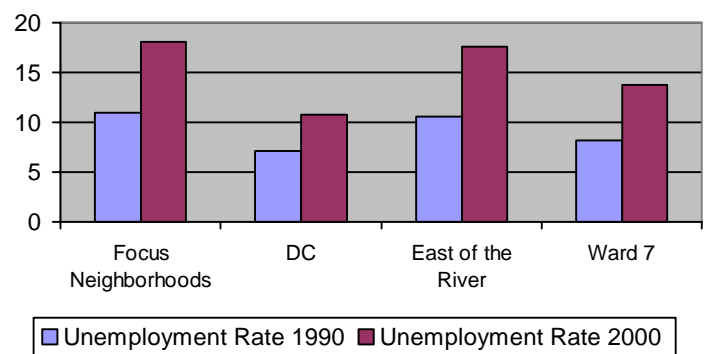
EMPLOYMENT

An individual's and household's ability to earn an income is a key factor for economic self-sufficiency. Employment rates are useful in analyzing the ability of a community to build and maintain an economic foundation. The unemployment rate in the focus neighborhoods is significantly higher than that of the District. According to Census 2000, the neighborhoods have an unemployment rate of 18%, where nearly 1 in 5 persons age 22-44 are unemployed. In contrast, the District's unemployment rate is only 11%, which is also lower than the rate in Ward 7 (14%) and east of the river (18%).

The female unemployment rate in the focus neighborhoods is slightly higher than the total unemployment rate (20% for females compared to 18% for the total population). For the total population in the neighborhoods, 42% of 16-21 year-olds are unemployed (the largest percentage of the age categories), while 22-29 year-olds have the second largest unemployment rate (20%), 30-44 year-olds, the third (19%) and 60-64 the smallest (5%). This trend for the percentage of unemployed persons for

the total population, by age, in the Ward 7 focus neighborhoods and in the District as a whole, mirrors the trend for unemployed women, by age, in the Casey targeted neighborhoods.

Not only is the unemployment rate higher in these neighborhoods, it has also increased at a faster rate than in the District as a whole. In the Ward 7 focus neighborhoods, the unemployment rate increased from 11% in 1990 to 18% in 2000; whereas the District's unemployment rate increased from 7% to 11% in the same period of time (See Figure 1).

Figure 1: Unemployment Rate for Deanwood, Marshall Heights and Ft. Dupont Park

Source: 1990, 2000 Census Data

REGION

Where are the jobs?

Many employed workers who live in Deanwood, Marshall Heights and Ft. Dupont Park work outside of the neighborhoods in which they live. The average worker in the targeted neighborhoods has a longer commute time than the average worker in the District. Only 36% of the working population in these neighborhoods have a commuting time of less than 30 minutes, as opposed to 52% for the rest of DC. Furthermore, over one-third of the working population in these neighborhoods has a commute of 45 minutes or more. This percentage is significantly higher than in the District as a whole, where only 19% have a commute time over 45 minutes, but similar to other workers east of the Anacostia River (34%) and in Ward 7 (34%).
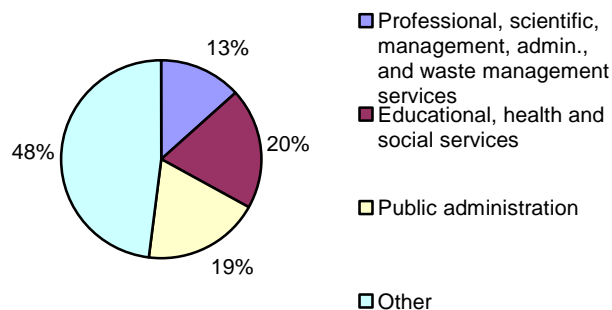
---

[1] Urban Institute. "Housing in the Nation's Capital." 2002. P.6.

NeighborhoodInfo DC
a partnership of The Urban Institute and The Washington DC Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
www.neighborhoodinfodc.org

Page 2

Occupations and Industries

According to Census 2000, the largest percentage of persons in the focus neighborhoods work in sales and office occupations (32%), with service occupations (24%) being the second most common, and production, transportation, and moving occupations (11%) coming in third. Management occupations constitute the third-highest percentage of workers in the District, whereas management is only the sixth-most common occupation Deanwood, Marshall Heights and Ft. Dupont Park.

Individuals in these neighborhoods work in similar industries as those living within the rest of the District, east of the Anacostia River, and in Ward 7. For each of these areas, the top three industries are: educational, health, and social services; professional, scientific, management, and waste management services; and public administration (see Figure 2).[2]

Figure 2: Industry Composition for Deanwood, Marshall Heights and Ft. Dupont Park

- 13% ☐ Professional, scientific, management, admin., and waste management services
- 20% ■ Educational, health and social services
- 19% ☐ Public administration
- 48% ☐ Other

Source: 2000 Census Data

Government Employment

According to Census 2000, nearly 37% of employed persons sixteen years and older living in the focus neighborhoods work for the federal, state, or local government, with the majority working for the federal government (20%). This overall government figure is

a greater percentage of government workers than in the District as a whole (26%), but nearly equal to the percentage of workers employed by the government east of the Anacostia River and in Ward 7 (36% and 38%, respectively).

From 1990 to 2000, the percentage of persons working for the government decreased in the District, east of the Anacostia River, in Ward 7, and in the three neighborhoods focused on in this report. The region east of the Anacostia River experienced the largest decline in the percent of persons working for the government (45% to 36%) while the District experienced the smallest percent decline (32% to 26%).

EARNINGS AND INCOME

Employment is not the only relevant factor that determines an individual's or household's ability to form a sustainable economic base. Once an individual is employed, earnings play a significant role in a household's ability to achieve economic self-sufficiency. One in three households (33%) in the focus neighborhoods did not have a wage or salary income in 1999, according to the U.S. Census, an increase from 23% in 1989. The share of households in these neighborhoods without earnings is 10 percentage points higher than that in the District overall, where only 24% of households did not have a wage or salary income in 1999.

For those persons with full-time wage or salary income in 1999, median earnings for workers living in the these neighborhoods were about 20% less than median earnings for full-time workers living in the entire District ($29,070 vs. $37,017). Ward 7 median earnings for full-time workers were also higher than in the focus neighborhoods ($30,639). However, the median earnings for a full-time worker in the focus neighborhoods were slightly higher than the median earnings for a full-time worker east of the River ($28,038).

Those who do not have a wage or salary income must rely on an array of other sources to meet their economic needs; this includes public assistance income. In 1999, 14% of households in the Deanwood, Marshall Heights or Ft. Dupont Park were receiving public assistance income; this was slightly higher than the percentage of households east of the

---

[2] Industries in the "Other" category include: Agriculture; Construction; Manufacturing; Wholesale Trade; Retail trade; Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities; Information; Finance, insurance, real estate and rental and leasing; and Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services.

NeighborhoodInfo DC
a partnership of The Urban Institute and The Washington DC Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
www.neighborhoodinfodc.org

Page 3

river (13%); and drastically higher than the percent in the District (6%). In 2003, 40% of children in the these neighborhoods were receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), while only 29% of the District's children were receiving the same type of assistance.[3]

The median family income for households in the focus neighborhoods was 48% less than for families in the District ($26,843 compared to $55,737 in the District). Female-headed families were even worse off; with a median household income of $19,351. This was 41% less than the median income for female-headed households in the District ($32,961) and 40% less than the median income for male-headed families in the District ($31,989). In contrast to DC, east of the river, and Ward 7, the average female in the focus neighborhoods earned slightly more than the average male in their respective regions—$29,521 for females and $28,964 for males.

Poverty

The poverty rate in Deanwood, Marshall Heights and Ft. Dupont Park is high, and rising, as compared to the rest of the District. According to the U.S. Census, in 2000, the poverty rate in the focus neighborhoods was 34%. This rate is much higher than the poverty rate in the District (20%). When looking at disparities between genders, the female poverty rate is slightly above the male poverty rate in the focus neighborhoods.

Figure 3

Median Family Income Deanwood, Marshall Heights and Ft. Dupont Park 2000			
	Total	Married HH	Male HH	Female HH
	2000	2000	2000	2000
District of Columbia	55,737	69,170	38,104	32,961
East of the River	29,224	46,360	31,194	22,074
Ward 7	36,035	54,966	35,563	27,214
Focus Neighborhoods	26,843	48,098	31,989	19,351
Source: 2000 US Census Data			

Children living in the targeted neighborhoods face the greatest rate of poverty (50%). This rate is higher than the child poverty rates east of the Anacostia River (43%) and in Ward 7 (37%), and significantly higher than the child poverty rate in DC (32%). Child poverty rates in the focus neighborhoods are also drastically higher than both the adult and elderly poverty rates in the same region (28% and 21%, respectively).
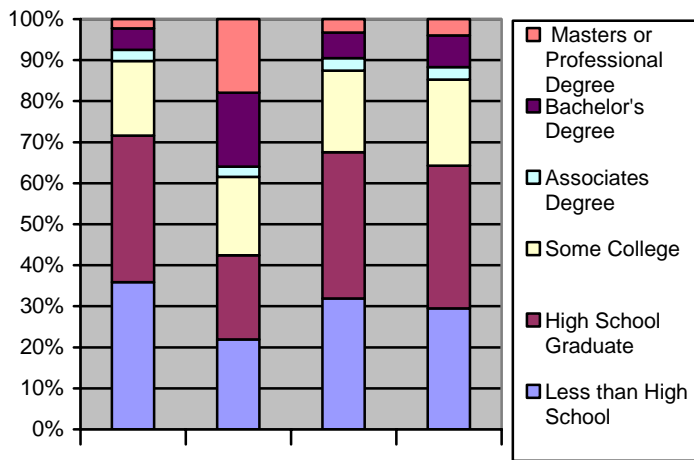
Education

Opportunities for higher earnings are generally available for persons with higher levels of skills and training. Therefore, increasing educational attainment is a key component of a strategy to build long-term economic success. While the District boasts a very well-educated population, educational attainment is much lower for the focus neighborhoods than in the District as a whole. Over 36% of persons age 18 years and older living in the target neighborhoods have not graduated from high school. The percentage without a high school diploma is higher than in Ward 7 (29%) and east of the Anacostia River (32%), and is much higher than in the District overall (22%). Furthermore, a significantly smaller percentage of persons in these neighborhoods have attained a higher educational degree—only 10% in the focus neighborhoods, as opposed to 38% in the District (See Figure 4). Female education attainment rates for the focus neighborhoods mirror those of the males.

Although the levels of educational attainment are lower in Deanwood, Marshall Heights and Ft. Dupont Park than in the District as a whole, over the past decade the percent of persons with a high school diploma or higher in the neighborhoods has increased at a slightly faster rate than in the entire city. In the neighborhoods, the percentage of persons with a high school diploma or higher degree increased from 58% in 1990 to 64% in 2000, compared to the District, which saw an increase from 74% to 78%. The percentage of persons earning a college or graduate degree also increased in the focus neighborhoods—from 9% to 10%.

---

[3] These percentages are estimated as the number of children receiving TANF in 2003 over the child population in 2000.

NeighborhoodInfo DC
a partnership of The Urban Institute and The Washington DC Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
www.neighborhoodinfodc.org

Page 4

Figure 4: Educational Attainment

Legend:
- Masters or Professional Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Associates Degree
- Some College
- High School Graduate
- Less than High School

Source: 2000 Census Data

CONCLUSION

Compared to many in the District, individuals and households in Deanwood, Marshall Heights and Ft. Dupont Park are struggling to achieve economic success. In these neighborhoods, as compared to the city as a whole, unemployment rates are high and on the rise, earnings are significantly lower, poverty rates are higher, and a smaller percentage of persons have a high school diploma or a college degree.

Furthermore, those who do work face longer commuting times, and thus have higher transportation costs and face greater challenges finding suitable child care and other services that would allow them to keep a steady job. These conditions present a great challenge to those interested in bringing economic success to these neighborhoods. To achieve greater individual and household self-sufficiency and a more stable economic base, it is necessary to improve job access, employment training, and educational achievement in these neighborhoods.

This brief explores the economic characteristics of families in the target neighborhood. An understanding of the challenges for families described in this brief can be enhanced by looking at the availability and access to services in the neighborhood, especially child care and other services that target female headed households.

SO WHAT?

We believe that information can and should be used to inform and mobilize stakeholders. We will work with community groups to understand what this data means for their efforts to improve conditions in their neighborhoods. Discussions will include questions concerning: *what might be a possible explanation for what the data show; how can we use the data to hold all of us accountable for our respective roles; what actions can be taken to improve these neighbor-hoods; and, what other indicators should we be tracking?*

NeighborhoodInfo DC
a partnership of The Urban Institute and The Washington DC Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
www.neighborhoodinfodc.org

Page 5