



Connecting Youth and Strengthening Communities

The Data Behind Civic Engagement and Economic
Opportunity



Opportunity Nation and Measure of America
September 2014

Calls to Action



expansion of
cross-sector
initiatives

membership in
civic & service
organizations

volunteer
programs by
employers

use of the
Opportunity
Index

collection of
civic engage-
ment data

- We support the expansion of cross-sector initiatives that promote volunteering—and equal access to such opportunities—among all youth, particularly low-income teens and young adults who can most benefit from the personal and professional networks and skill-building such activities offer.
- We advocate increased membership in civic and service organizations for Americans of all ages, as such participation correlates with higher levels of economic opportunity for communities, among other benefits.
- We urge more business leaders and employers to launch and lead volunteer programs, civic projects and mentoring initiatives as a way to ensure that professionals are interacting face-to-face with youth. Not only will these investments help more young Americans build the skills, confidence and networks they need to succeed in today's workforce, but they will also support higher levels of opportunity at the community level.
- We encourage the widespread use of the Opportunity Index to help communities explore the conditions present in their county and state that are enhancing or restricting opportunity, including the percentage of disconnected youth, the percentage of adults who volunteer and the percentage of adults who are members of a group or organization.
- We strongly recommend the continued collection of detailed civic engagement data and the expansion and refinement of such information in the future, as it is critical to the field and to exploring forms of engagement not currently measured. Such data could yield useful information about additional ways to expand economic mobility.





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