



## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

December 14, 2018

Contact: John Keaten, JKeaten@GroupGordon.com, 212-784-5701

### **Latina women and Latino men experience biggest jumps in American Human Development Index scores over the last decade by huge margin**

*Latest update to the Index explores ten-year trends in health, education and income by race and ethnicity, place, and gender, revealing an uneven recovery from the Great Recession, reduced real earnings and decreased overall well-being for Native American men*

NEW YORK — “[Measuring America: 10 Years and Counting](#),” the latest update to the American Human Development Index by [Measure of America](#) (MOA) of the Social Science Research Council, reveals that Latina women and Latino men experienced the greatest well-being gains over the last decade by a huge margin. Though still below the national average, their American Human Development Index scores each increased by more than 22 percent—more than three times the national rate of change.

Seeking to move beyond an overreliance on GDP as the primary measure of human progress and well-being in the United States, MOA introduced the American Human Development Index in 2008, using official government data to create a composite rating of overall well-being based on health, education, and income, which enables comparisons over time and across race and ethnicity, place and gender. “Measuring America: 10 Years and Counting” explores trends in American Human Development Index Scores over the past decade, by race and ethnicity, gender, and U.S. state, revealing the uneven nature of America’s rebound from the 2007 financial crisis. Among the key findings:

#### **OVERALL** (Well-being generally increasing)

- The American Human Development Index for the United States as a whole is now 5.21, an increase of 6.4 percent over its score of 4.89, when it was first calculated in 2008.
- Women edge out men slightly, scoring 5.23 to men’s 5.20; women have better health and educational outcomes, but men earn more. When the Index was first calculated, men had a higher score than women.

#### **BY RACE/ETHNICITY** (Native American men struggling, Latinos soaring, strong gains among black women, small improvement for white men)

- Asian residents have the highest score, followed by whites, Latinos, blacks, and Native Americans. In 2005, black residents had the lowest score; today, Native Americans do.
  - 1) Asians, the top-scoring group a decade ago, also have the highest well-being score today, 7.69.
    - Asian men top the chart with a score of 7.82, followed by Asian women, with a score of 7.31.

- 2) Whites have the second-highest score, 5.63. Whites also had the second-highest score in 2005.
  - White men score 5.67, white women, 5.58. Although white men still outscore their female counterparts due to the former's much higher wages, white women's well-being has improved at a quicker clip over the past decade.
  - White women's score improved by 10.5 percent, but **white men's score improved by just 3.27 percent—the smallest improvement of any group except for Native American men, whose score actually decreased.** So while white men still rank third on the well-being chart—after Asian men and Asian women—the gap between them and white women, black men, black women, Latino men, Latina women, and Native American women has narrowed since 2005.
- 3) Latinos rank third overall, with a score of 4.59. Latinas have a higher score than their male counterparts, 4.65 compared to 4.37.
- 4) Blacks rank fourth on the national list with a score of 4.02. The well-being **scores of black women and men diverge more than those of any other racial and ethnic group;** black women score 4.49 and black men score 3.57.
  - **Black women have seen some of the largest well-being gains over the past decade.** Their score has increased by 17.5 percent since 2005; only Latinos made faster progress. Black men's score has also improved, but by much less, 7.1 percent.
- 5) Native Americans have the lowest score of the country's major racial and ethnic groups, 3.69. As with black residents, Native Americans see a sharp gender divide. Native American women score 4.00, Native American men, 3.29.
  - While women's score has increased by 9.5 percent over the last decade, outpacing national improvements, **Native American men's score declined by 7.9 percent since 2005. They are the only group whose well-being score fell over the last decade.**
  - Native American men (3.29) and black men (3.57) have well-being scores similar to those that prevailed in the U.S. in the late 1960s.

#### **HEALTH** (18-year life expectancy gap between Asian baby girls and black boys)

- Life expectancy in the U.S. is now 79.4 years, an increase of 1.6 years since 2005.
- American women outlive American men by five years—81.9 as compared to 76.8.
- Asian women enjoy the longest lives by a huge margin; their life expectancy is an astonishing 90.5 years.
  - **An Asian baby girl born in the United States today can expect to live 17.8 years longer than a black baby boy born in the United States today, the largest life expectancy gap by race/ethnicity and gender.**
- White men (76.6), Native American men (73.4), and black men (72.7 years) have the shortest lives.

#### **EDUCATION** (Strong gains among women, Latinos)

- For the nation, the Education Index score increased over half a point, from 4.70 in 2005 to 5.24 in 2016, an 11.6 percent increase.
- Both women's and men's scores improved over the past decade, but women's scores increased twice as fast.

- Women ages 25 and up have become slightly more likely than their male counterparts to have graduated high school and earned bachelor's and graduate degrees. **Girls and young women are now also slightly more likely to be enrolled in school than boys and young men.**
- Among racial and ethnic groups, Asians have the highest Education Index score overall, 7.33. This represents an increase from their 2005 score of 6.72. Asian men outperform Asian women in education, scoring 7.62 as compared to 7.10. Asians are the only group in which men have higher education scores than women. More than half of Asian adults have at least a four-year bachelor's degree.
- Although Latinos still have the lowest education scores among the major racial and ethnic groups they have made astonishing progress over the last decade. The increase in their Education Index score, 45.4 percent, is four times the national average.

#### **INCOME** (Only component of the Index to decrease; white women experience biggest gain)

- Median personal earnings is the **only component of the Index to have decreased nationwide** over the last ten years.
  - U.S. median earnings were \$33,288 in 2005 (converted to 2016 dollars) and \$32,024 in 2016.
  - In every racial and ethnic group, men earn more than women, though the size of the gap varies.
- **White women saw an earnings gain of \$2,042, the largest boost of any race-gender combination.**
- Asian men's earnings increased by \$1,784, Latina women's by \$1,016, and Latino men by \$620.
- Black women saw their wages decline by \$364, and white men saw theirs drop by \$1,544.
- **The greatest wage declines, more than \$3,300, were experienced by Native American and black men.**

#### **BY STATE**

- Today, the highest American HD Index scores are found in Washington, DC (6.92), Massachusetts (6.36), and Connecticut (6.31).
- The lowest scores are found in Arkansas (4.17), Mississippi (4.05), and West Virginia (3.94).
- **The greatest increases in American HD Index scores occurred in Washington, DC, Wyoming, South Dakota, Louisiana, and Mississippi. Curiously, this list includes both Washington, DC, which ranks first in the country, and Mississippi, which ranked last a decade ago and ranks fiftieth today.**
- Generally speaking, states in the Northeast are faring the best, while Southern states are struggling.
- Most states are better off today than they were a decade ago; Washington, DC, and 44 states saw increases in their Index scores.
- Six states saw no significant change in their Index scores: Michigan, Alaska, West Virginia, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Rhode Island.

“The decade following the Great Recession was the LatinX decade, with American Human Development Index gains among Latinas and Latinos outpacing all others,” said Kristen Lewis, director of Measure of America. “‘Measuring America: 10 Years and Counting’ reveals that certain groups and places are surging ahead in terms of health, education, and income, the building blocks of a freely chosen life of opportunity and well-being, while others are treading water or falling further behind. These growing gaps in well-being are extremely costly to the U.S. as a whole, hurting our global economic

competitiveness and cutting off opportunities for people to develop the capabilities they need to seize opportunities and that we will need as a country to meet the challenges of the global information economy.”

“The American Human Development Index enables businesses, government, philanthropy and scholars to track inequality by gender, race, ethnicity, or zip code, illuminating areas for intervention and areas of improvement, analytic insights that can help everyone prosper,” said Alondra Nelson, president of the Social Science Research Council. “Measuring America: 10 Years and Counting” mobilizes social science for the public good, which is the mission of the Council.”

“SSRC’s 10th anniversary ‘Measuring America’ report reveals both the need and power of intersectional analyses. We can no longer simply talk in blanket terms about race, ethnicity, class, gender and region since the American Human Index informs us that overall well-being varies at the intersections of multiple identities,” said Dr. Prudence Carter, Dean of the Graduate School of Education at UC Berkeley. “The good news is that on average, some people’s lives are improving significantly. The regrettable news is that circumstances are still quite challenging for many others. Our society has much work to do to improve the welfare of its entire populace still; and this informative report provides some direction and necessary considerations.”

Measuring America: 10 Years and Counting was made possible by the generous support of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation.

#### **About Measure of America**

An initiative of the **Social Science Research Council**, [Measure of America](#) provides easy-to-use yet methodologically sound tools for understanding the distribution of well-being and opportunity in America and stimulating fact-based dialogue about issues we all care about: health, education, and living standards.

#### **About the Social Science Research Council**

The Social Science Research Council, an independent, international nonprofit, mobilizes necessary knowledge for the public good by supporting scholars worldwide, generating new research across disciplines, and linking researchers with policymakers and citizens.

###