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“A PORTRAIT OF NEW YORK CITY” LOOKS AT HUMAN WELL-BEING IN THE CITY AND REGION

New Yorkers Do Better Than Most Americans, Yet Gaping Disparities Persist

BROOKLYN, NY, (June 21, 2018) -- New Yorkers on average are faring better than Americans as a whole on key barometers of human well-being, yet deep and persistent disparities divide the city's diverse population. This is among the key findings of *A Portrait of New York City 2018*, a new, comprehensive report from Measure of America (MOA), a program of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC).

The report presents the American Human Development Index, which combines health, education, and earnings data from the U.S. Census Bureau and state and city health departments into a single well-being score. This approach to analyzing human well-being goes beyond economic data, encompassing life expectancy, living standards, overall health, education levels, access to knowledge, and more.

“A Portrait of New York City was created to inform the public debate and the decisions and policies of civic leaders, policymakers, scholars, and community members across the metro area,” said Sarah Burd-Sharps, co-author of the report and co-director of Measure of America. *“Last fall we published a similar report, A Portrait of Los Angeles County, and have seen the important contribution its findings are making towards greater equity and more evidence-based policymaking in the LA area. Likewise, our goal is to have a significant impact here in the city in which we live and work.”*

The report offers Index scores for tri-state area cities and towns and for NYC neighborhood clusters, as well as by race and ethnicity, gender, and nativity, enabling side-by-side comparisons of the advantages and challenges facing residents of the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut metro area.

“The analysis offers a new approach to understanding what neighborhoods, towns, and cities separated by distance share in common in terms of well-being, assets, opportunities, and challenges as well as highlighting stunning disparities between neighborhoods just blocks apart,” said co-author and Measure of America co-director Kristen Lewis. *“Overall, New Yorkers are doing better than most of their countrymen and women, but yawning gaps between places and racial and ethnic groups persist.”*

A Portrait of New York City is funded by The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust with inputs from over 70 leaders and stakeholders in government and the nonprofit, philanthropic, academic, and business communities.

“A Portrait of New York reinforces what we already know about New York City: your zip code has significant impact on your overall well-being,” said Helmsley Charitable Trust CEO Stephanie Cuskley. *“With better data comes the opportunity to identify more targeted solutions to reduce disparities. Helmsley is committed to working closely with key partners to help New Yorkers live healthier lives.”*

The report sets forth ambitious goals to narrow the gaps in health, education, and income and increase well-being for all city residents.

“This report, rooted in rigorous research, credible data, and thoughtful analysis, manifests the value of social science research and the knowledge it can lend to informing policies for the public good,” said Alondra Nelson, president of the SSRC. *“A Portrait of New York City* is also exhibit A for the work the SSRC has been doing for nearly a century, and will continue to do, in New York and around the world.”

Preliminary discussions on the report prior to its publication have already drawn the attention of the city's elected leaders.

“A Portrait of New York City is exactly the type of local data-driven research that policy-makers and community board members need in order to make sense of complex demographic trends and make informed decisions to improve the life prospects of all New York City residents,” said Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer. *“Consistent with this report’s goal, my office is committed to raising well-being levels across the city by 2025 through policies, programs, and practices that uplift the most vulnerable among us. A Portrait of New York City serves as a roadmap to direct our attention to the places and people needlessly experiencing the bottom rungs of well-being and opportunity, thus empowering us to act strategically and invest surgically in the areas where we can make the most difference.”*

A Portrait of New York City has also been met with praise by leaders of social service organizations.

“This report from Measure of America brilliantly articulates the stark, profound, and disparate realities faced by New Yorkers depending on race, ethnicity, and neighborhood,” said Sheena Wright, president & CEO of United Way of New York City. *“The report also helps us understand that in order to have a New York City we can all be proud of, we must work strategically and collectively to solve our most urgent problems.”*

“A Portrait of New York City paints a rich portrait of a greater metropolis that is, on the whole, thriving, diverse, and befitting of its title as a global city,” said Dalton Conley, the Henry Putnam University Professor in Sociology at Princeton University. *“At the same time, the report reveals differences in human development by micro-location that sometimes rival those between nation-states. Luckily, it also offers a plan of action to improve the outcomes of all New Yorkers while reducing disparities.”*

About Measure of America

Measure of America is a nonpartisan project of the nonprofit Social Science Research Council. It creates easy-to-use yet methodologically sound tools for understanding well-being and opportunity in America and stimulates fact-based dialogue about these issues. Through hard copy and online reports, interactive maps, and custom-built dashboards, Measure of America works closely with partners to breathe life into numbers, using data to identify areas of need, pinpoint levers for change, and track progress over time.

About the Social Science Research Council

The Social Science Research Council (SSRC) is an independent, international non-profit with the mission of mobilizing social science for the public good. Founded in 1923, the SSRC fosters research innovation, nurtures new generations of researchers, deepens inquiry within and across disciplines and sectors, and mobilizes necessary knowledge on important public issues. Based in Brooklyn, NY, the SSRC currently administers 22 programs in the U.S. and around the world. For more information on the SSRC and its programs, please visit www.ssrc.org.

About the Helmsley Charitable Trust

The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust aspires to improve lives by supporting exceptional efforts in the U.S. and around the world in health and select place-based initiatives. Since beginning its active grantmaking in 2008, Helmsley has committed more than \$2 billion for a wide range of charitable purposes. Helmsley’s New York City Program funds efforts to improve the health and well-being of high-need New Yorkers. For more information, please visit helmsleytrust.org.

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