

An aerial photograph of Buffalo, New York, showing a dense urban landscape with various buildings, streets, and parking lots. The city extends to the waterfront where a large body of water is visible. A teal-colored overlay covers the bottom half of the image, containing text.

# OPENING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Around UB's Growing Downtown Presence

Report of the University at Buffalo and St. John Baptist Church Economic Opportunity Panel

## Our Commitment: From the Contract of Sale for McCarley Gardens

"To the extent permitted by law, Purchaser (UB Foundation) will use reasonable efforts to proactively provide services and support to encourage the participation of minorities, women and persons with disabilities in any construction and vendor opportunities that occur on the Property and Purchaser will use its best efforts to encourage the recruitment, training, development and retention of residents within the neighborhoods immediately surrounding the Property ("the Neighborhoods") for such employment that may become available on the property."

## Opening Economic Opportunity

As part of its *UB 2020* initiative and *Building UB: the Comprehensive Physical Plan* the University at Buffalo is implementing the historic re-establishment of its downtown Buffalo presence. This brings new strength to the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus as a center of learning, discovery, and economic growth in our region and as a generator of new opportunity for all the members of our community. It also opens an important new window for UB, working with its partner institutions on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, to develop new ways to open real economic opportunity to residents who have often lacked such opportunities.

St. John Baptist Church is transferring ownership of the property now occupied by McCarley Gardens to the University at Buffalo to advance that development and to support the church's own community development efforts. As part of that agreement, Pastor Michael Chapman for St. John and President Satish K. Tripathi for UB, appointed each of us to consider and recommend how the economic opportunities stemming from the transfer of this property as part of UB's growing downtown presence might be made more accessible to tenants of McCarley Gardens and residents of the surrounding community.

Already, UB meets or exceeds State mandated targets for minority and women employment and business participation on all of its Downtown capital construction projects and supports programs to promote access of minorities and women to construction trades employment – and will continue to do so.

## Who are the UB/St. John Economic Opportunity Panel?

We are academic, business, government, and community leaders in Buffalo who have worked our entire careers to make the city and region better and who believe that UB and its partners on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus can and should do more to make economic opportunities more accessible to those in our community who have had too few such opportunities.

In addition, we recommend that UB:

1. Illuminate paths to good permanent jobs at UB by strengthening connections between residents and systems of education, job training, recruitment and placement that already exist.
2. Help minority and women owned firms – especially those based in the immediate neighborhood – form, grow and develop their businesses by securing business opportunities with UB for a wide range of routinely purchased goods and services and other ways.
3. Engage residents of McCarley Gardens and adjacent communities in planning for UB's downtown expansion, especially to protect and enhance the values of their properties and neighborhood as UB continues to invest.
4. Expand two-way communications between university and community that will be timely, transparent, participatory, and operating at multiple levels.
5. Assign responsibility and create accountability for ongoing implementation of these recommendations to (1) a member of UB's senior leadership, and (2) to the UB 2020 Opportunities Advisory Council, or another appropriate entity with a charge to facilitate the role of UB and its medical campus partners in promoting economic development in the community.
6. Facilitate collaborations in the implementation of these recommendations with UB partner institutions, Kaleida Health and Roswell Park, as well as Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus Inc.

We believe these recommendations are practical and achievable. We also believe that doing these things will be in the best interests of both UB and our downtown neighbors. Details about how they will be accomplished, as well as how we arrived at the recommendations, are described below.

## A Shared Opportunity

The pending sale of the 15 acres on which McCarley Gardens sits provides the keys to historic opportunities for both the University at Buffalo and St. John Baptist Church.

For the university, acquisition of the McCarley Gardens site will provide land for the long-term realization of its strategic plan to integrate teaching in the health sciences with clinical health care, research and innovation in close collaboration and geographic connection with Kaleida Health, Roswell Park Cancer Institute, and other health care partners on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus.

For the church, the sale of McCarley Gardens will provide the capital needed to pursue new community and economic development initiatives including construction of new townhomes in the Fruit Belt neighborhood, other infill housing development, reestablishment of commercial activities on High Street, job training programs, and more.

Both sets of initiatives will generate new activity, investment, and jobs and provide benefits to campus, neighborhood, city, and region. But both UB and St. John also recognize that more needs to be done to ensure that the economic opportunities stemming from these new investments are more broadly shared with the community – especially to those who may not have had access to such opportunities in the past.

For decades, the Fruit Belt – the neighborhood immediately east of the medical campus<sup>1</sup> – has been a place of persistent poverty and ongoing disinvestment. Residents have moved away, landlords have abandoned their property, and hundreds of homes have been demolished or sit vacant. On many blocks there are more vacant lots than houses. High rates of unemployment are chronic. Indicators of poverty are persistent.

In more recent years, hundreds of millions of dollars have been invested by UB in its downtown campus (see sidebar on pg. 4). Even greater investments are anticipated over the long-term build-out of UB's comprehensive campus plan, which calls for all five of the university's health science schools eventually to be located together downtown. UB's partners have also invested heavily in the area. But, until this point, little of this investment has resulted in direct tangible benefits to residents in the Fruit Belt community.

UB's mission is to teach its students, create knowledge through research, and serve society. Where these activities can help address the needs in the Fruit Belt and elsewhere, it should do so. This is why the Economic Opportunity Panel was created – and it was why we agreed to serve.

Discussions between UB and St. John about a possible sale began in 2006. Four years later, in April 2010, a contract was signed that laid out the path to an eventual transfer of the McCarley Gardens land from St. John to the University at Buffalo Foundation for future use by UB.

That contract acknowledged the need for a well-planned and orderly transition for residents of the McCarley Gardens rental units to other homes comparable to the ones in which they are now living. This transition must be conducted within the federal guidelines of US Department of Housing and Urban Development, which is mortgage holder on the property, and St. John has committed to obtain HUD approval for its relocation process.

The church is in the process of constructing 150 new townhomes in the Fruit Belt area as an option for McCarley residents. Once relocation is accomplished, the contract also calls for the church to demolish all buildings on the property prior to its transfer to the university.

The contract between UB and St. John also stipulated that together they create an Economic Opportunity Panel, with representatives from each entity, to examine and recommend how the transition could result in more widely available economic opportunity to the residents of McCarley Gardens and to others in the community.

President Tripathi and Pastor Chapman selected us for the panel because we brought experience relevant to the task at hand – in education, training, employment, entrepreneurship, human resources management, and more. We were given a mandate to reach out broadly across the community, workforce development system, the medical campus, and the university to understand how best to meet the panel's goal – and we believe we fulfilled it.

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<sup>1</sup> The adopted boundaries of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus are roughly Main Street on the west, North street to the North, Michigan Avenue to the east, and Goodell Street to the south – with extensions to include the Educational Opportunity Center and UB Gateway south of Goodell, Kaleida's High Pointe long term care facility east of Michigan, and the Buffalo Hearing and Speech Center north of North. You can see a map of the campus at <http://www.bnmc.org/wp-content/uploads/BNMC-2012.pdf>

## Members of the UB/St. John Economic Opportunity Panel

Dennis Black, UB Vice President for University Life and Services, is a community leader and the university executive responsible for a wide range of services that make life at the university possible, including housing, transportation, food services, security, and student affairs, as well as communications, sustainability, and equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Colleen W. Cummings, former Executive Director, Buffalo Employment and Training Center, dedicated her career to developing one-stop services for job-seekers including training, education, and job search assistance.

June W. Hoeflich, a member of the University at Buffalo Council, was recruited from retirement to serve as CEO of Sheehan Hospital. This followed a long and successful career as a senior executive with HSBC bank and affiliates. She remains active on several corporate boards and in a wide range of community and philanthropic endeavors.

Brenda W. McDuffie, President and CEO, Buffalo Urban League, Inc., has served in that position for the past 14 years working to ensure access to opportunities for minorities and other disadvantaged individuals. Before that she was Executive Director for the Buffalo and Erie County Private Industry Council, Inc., precursor to the Workforce Development Consortium.

Hon. James A. W. McLeod, Buffalo City Court Judge, has been a path-breaking African-American legal practitioner in Buffalo as law firm associate, clerk to NYS Supreme Court Justice Samuel L. Green, head of the Office of Public Defender, Assistant County Attorney, and elected to a seat on the Buffalo City Court.

Paul E. Tesluk, Ph.D., Donald S. Carmichael Pro-fessor of Organizational Behavior, UB School of Management, is a noted researcher on team and organizational effectiveness, leadership development, and organizational change and innovation. He has consulted with organizations in government, health care, and industry and is currently a participant in a UB-sponsored leadership development program for citizens in the Fruit Belt.

## Recent and Upcoming Medical Campus Investments

- New York State Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics and Life Sciences, Virginia and Ellicott Streets (UB + RCPI) – \$52 million (Open 2006).
- UB Gateway, Goodell and Ellicott Streets, (first occupant, 2009).
- Innovation Center, Ellicott Street, (BNMC) \$12 million (2010).
- Gates Vascular Institute and UB Clinical and Translational Research Center, Ellicott and Carlton Streets. (UB + Kaleida) – \$291 million (2012).
- Educational Opportunity Center, Ellicott Street near Goodell. (UB) \$26 million (Opening 2013).
- School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, Phase I, Main and High Streets. (UB) \$375 million (Opening 2016).
- Women and Children's Hospital of Buffalo, High and Ellicott Streets. (Kaleida) \$200 Million. (Opening 2016).
- Conventus Medical Office Building, Main and High Streets. (Ciminelli Development) \$98 Million (Opening 2016).

## Engaging UB's downtown neighbors

The work of the UB/SJBC EOP to reach out to a broad cross-section of community leaders and residents is the latest element in an ongoing effort to foster two-way multi-level communication between the university and the community. Other efforts include:

- The Four Neighborhoods, One Community plan process that engaged Allentown, Fruit Belt, Cold Spring, and Downtown representatives.
- Citizen participation in the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus Inc. (BNMC) master plan and recent plan update.
- Fruit Belt representation on the board of directors of the BNMC Inc.
- Public engagement in the creation of Building UB: the Comprehensive Physical Plan.
- Public workshops as part of the City of Buffalo "Green Code" rezoning effort.
- Ongoing community leadership development sponsored by the UB Office of Community Relations.

## A Continuing Consultation

We convened in late 2011. In our first meeting we agreed that our process should be deeply consultative and thoroughly transparent. We talked frankly among ourselves and then reached out to a complex community across university, health care institutions, workforce development agencies, and neighborhood residents. We strove to understand better what practical things UB could do to bring economic opportunity within closer reach of fellow members of our community.

We began by defining a shared vision of a positive future for the neighborhood and campus. It is, we believe, a future in which a vibrant center of education, health care, discovery, and innovation is well-connected to a strong neighborhood of homes, shops, schools, and churches. Together, it is a place where current residents and newcomers live alongside each other, and where medical staff, students, patients, and residents find a close-by walkable neighborhood in which to live, work, and play. In short, we envisioned a campus and neighborhood that would be a model for such places across the nation, and where new investments make things better for nearby residents as much as for the people who work, study, or visit the medical campus every day.

We met early on with leaders of each of the sponsoring institutions, UB's President Tripathi and St. John's Rev. Chapman, to understand better their aspirations for the process. We toured the Fruit Belt on foot with leaders of the church and the neighborhood and we met with leaders of the McCarley Gardens tenants' council. Later, we met again in an open meeting with Fruit Belt leaders to understand their hopes and hear their concerns.

Along the way, we reached out to an expanding circle of experts in capital construction, procurement, small business development, workforce development, and real estate development, as well as elected officials and other community leaders, in an effort to understand better what UB and its partners can do to make construction jobs, permanent jobs, and small business opportunities more accessible to residents of the community.

A full list of the people we talked with is part of this report. In general, we interviewed key managers at UB responsible for procurement of goods and services, construction and maintenance of facilities and residence halls, staff hiring and human resources, and student services. We also spoke with UB faculty with expertise in community development, and executives of both the UB Educational Opportunity Center and the Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership.

We reached out extensively to UB's partners in Kaleida Health, Roswell Park Cancer Institute, and the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus Inc. in the same range of responsibilities: capital construction, facilities management, hiring and human resources, and procurement. All of these expressed eagerness to collaborate with UB, within the limits of their available resources, to expand access to the range of economic opportunities we focus on here.

We also spoke at length with representatives of the constellation of agencies whose responsibility it is to help job-seekers along the path of education, training, job search, and placement. These included the Buffalo and Erie County Workforce Investment Board, Buffalo and Erie County Workforce Development Consortium, Buffalo Employment and Training Center, Buffalo Urban League, and New York State Department of Labor.

Others we spoke with included Council Member Darius Pridgen; the City of Buffalo's Director of Strategic Planning, Brendan Mehaffy; and representatives of the development industry with interest in the medical campus (see listing on pgs. 9-11). All of these expanded our knowledge and understanding of the needs in the community and how they might be met.

## Panel Recommendations

We offer our recommendations in the context of on-going efforts to promote economic development of downtown Buffalo through UB and its partners' involvement in the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. Indeed, development of the medical campus is central to Buffalo Niagara's regional strategy for economic resurgence. And UB is committed to making sure that these economic impacts have benefit to the broadest cross-section of the community, including the residents of McCarley Gardens.

UB conducts an aggressive supplier diversity program, makes job opportunities broadly available on-line, conducts ongoing and thorough outreach and communications efforts in the community, and convenes the broad based UB 2020 Opportunities Advisory Council (OAC) to consider all of these issues on a regular basis.

Of course, there is much yet to be done to transform long-standing circumstances that inhibit the economic participation of minority populations at levels equal to the general population. UB can and should use its position of leadership in the region, its role as an educational institution, and other resources to improve the situation and set an example for other community institutions to emulate.

UB leaders express particular satisfaction in having met or exceeded state targets for participation by women and minorities in both the dollar value of contracts awarded and percentage of workforce employed. To continue that performance, UB will support courses for minority firm owners to better navigate the state contracting process and Minority and Women Business Enterprise (MWBE) certification. The university will also use its position of leadership to encourage area contracting firms, trades unions, and education and training organizations to continue to build the supply of well-trained minority construction workers – including workers from the immediate neighborhood. UB will also share best practices with its BNMC partners to continue to expand participation on all medical campus construction projects.

Of course, UB has already begun building its Downtown Campus – renovations to the UB Gateway, construction of a new Educational Opportunity Center on Ellicott Street, the new UB Clinical and Translational Research Center attached to the Gates Vascular Institute next door to Buffalo General Hospital, and next, the new School of Medicine phase one building at Main and High Streets. These investments are helping build the 21st Century economy of Buffalo Niagara in health care services, medical research and translation even as they change the face of the medical campus and the neighboring areas of the Fruit Belt, Allentown, Cold Springs, and Downtown.

This work is creating hundreds of good jobs in construction – many of which are going to minority firms and workers as documented by independent auditors. UB has met mandated targets even as they have been incrementally raised by the State University Construction Fund. When the minority workforce participation goal was 20 percent of employment, UB's contractors on the New York State Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics employed 26 percent minority workers – as confirmed by an independent monitoring firm. About \$85 million in current UB construction work is under contract to MWBE firms.<sup>2</sup> We were encouraged to know that UB has adopted higher standards in its construction programs for both minority business participation and workforce participation.

## The scope of our inquiry

The contract between UB and St. John did not specify what kinds of economic opportunities should be considered or who the beneficiaries should be. This was left to the panel to define. We identified three main areas to consider:

**Jobs.** There is no more fundamental economic opportunity than the chance to obtain a job with a sustainable wage and potential for advancement. UB's growth downtown will bring a wide range of jobs to the downtown campus. We asked how UB can help residents in the community can take advantage of these opportunities.

**Business.** UB routinely purchases significant value in goods and services from a wide range of vendors and contractors. Although complex state regulations govern these processes, the university retains some flexibility to provide preferences. We asked how these opportunities can be made more readily available – within the rules – to minority and women owned business enterprises.

**Place.** Over the course of the next several decades, UB will build as much as four million square feet of new teaching, research and support space on its downtown campus. How UB builds will have a big impact on nearby neighborhoods. We asked how we can make sure new investments add to neighborhood quality of life, create small business opportunities, and make the downtown campus a competitive asset for UB.

<sup>2</sup> University at Buffalo Office of Facilities Planning and Design

**The scope of our inquiry (cont.)**

Who should benefit from these efforts? We quickly realized that most of what UB can do for Fruit Belt residents in employment and small business opportunities it can also do for broader communities. The systems of contracting, procurement, education, training, and employment have much broader reach than any single neighborhood. However, UB can help make access to these systems easier for local residents.

The economic benefits of investments in place accrue to those within a much narrower area. Making sure that those residents benefit – and are not harmed – by medical campus investments will require continuing work through a separate process

**1**

**Illuminate paths to good permanent jobs and fulfilling careers at UB and its partner institutions by strengthening connections between residents and existing systems of education, training, recruitment and placement that already exist.**

A consistent theme emerging from discussions with community leaders and residents as well as leaders at UB and its partners in the BNMC was on the challenge of providing greater awareness of and opportunities to obtain training, education, and employment opportunities that are part of the growth of the BNMC. For residents of McCarley Gardens, the Fruit Belt, and neighboring communities, this means knowing what training, education, job and career opportunities exist and being able to take the specific steps necessary to pursue those opportunities that can lead to enhanced professional and personal success. For UB, its BNMC partners, and other downtown businesses, this means having access to a potential workforce has the requisite knowledge, skills, abilities and work motivation necessary to facilitate their growth and expansion.

All the institutions are ready to collaborate on making it easier for McCarley Gardens tenants, Fruit Belt residents, and residents of the wider community to find jobs at UB and with its medical campus partners, Kaleida Health, Roswell Park, and others. In this case “everyone” means leadership and staff at UB, their counterparts with Kaleida and Roswell, and leadership at the various agencies that constitute the workforce development system in Buffalo Niagara, including the New York State Department of Labor (DOL), the Workforce Development Consortium (WDC), the Buffalo and Erie County Workforce Investment Board (WIB), the Buffalo Employment and Training Center (BETC), the UB Educational Opportunity Center (EOC), the Buffalo Urban League and others. Surmounting this challenge will be a true “win-win” because of the shared goals of the community and UB, its BNMC partners, and other local organizations, but will require significant and sustained leadership from UB in order to manage the required collaboration to identify and implement specific solutions.

We recommend that UB, through the UB 2020 Opportunities Advisory Council, take the lead in convening these partners and neighborhood residents as a working group to help find ways to strengthen the connection between job-seekers in McCarley Gardens, the Fruit Belt, and elsewhere to systems of education, training, recruitment and placement. In meetings with HR leaders at UB and other BNMC institutions and other employment and workforce development experts, a number of potential solutions were suggested. For example, one way for UB to facilitate broader access to employment opportunities for Fruit Belt residents and others may be to create a staff position dedicated to helping those residents directly to learn about job opportunities, gain access to resources for education and training, and to navigate the often complex procedures for applying for employment at UB, its affiliates, and its medical campus partners.

Buffalo Niagara has an extensive workforce development system – but obtaining services may be daunting for some. The proposed staff position could be in the mold of an employment coordinator, providing a personal point of contact for neighborhood residents seeking employment. Other suggestions have included establishing an actual physical employment center that would serve as resource for area residents to be able to go to learn about education, training and employment opportunities at UB and the BNMC partners and would be conveniently located for easy access to neighborhood residents. Additionally, UB and its medical campus partners all maintain web based public employment “portals” – but they are not easy to navigate. Additional potential solutions, in addition to those listed above, are for making improvements on how these training, education and employment portals are linked, managed, maintained and designed to promote greater usability and access. Rather than jump prematurely to a solution, however, we suggest the working group consider the possibilities together and design an approach they deem most effective.

**NEIGHBORHOOD SNAPSHOT**

**Educational Attainment of Adults Age 25+**

	McCarley Gardens	Fruit Belt	City of Buffalo
Less than High School	10%	29%	20%
High School	87%	31%	31%
Some College/ Associate's Degree	3%	33%	28%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	0%	7%	22%

Source: 2005-9 American Community Survey

Our discussions with UB staff and community members further highlighted the complexity of applying for employment at UB. There are hundreds of position descriptions and multiple employers – New York State, the State University of New York Research Foundation, the UB Foundation, and UB-related organizations, which may each have differing requirements and standards. Not all of these organizations use the same process to seek applicants. And for some, the on-line application system used by UB is not easily navigated and can be intimidating for applicants. UB’s partner institutions on the medical campus face similar issues. The working group should design the appropriate approach to help neighborhood residents overcome such difficulties.

The workforce development system at the metropolitan scale, meanwhile, is the focus of concerted effort through the Regional Economic Development Council process and the “Buffalo Billion” to achieve better coordination among a network of agencies. Improvements there can be expected to filter down to the neighborhood level. But for the time being it makes sense for UB and its partners to focus on making the existing system more accessible. The capacity already exists to provide GED programs, job-specific training, job-readiness courses, job search assistance, access to computers and other job search tools, as well as access to information about available job openings and their requirements. We should help job seekers from the neighborhood obtain information on and access to this system to make full use of it.

Overall, there are great resources for further collaboration. Human resources personnel at UB, Kaleida Health, and Roswell Park, as well as representatives of EOC, BETC/WDC/WIB, state Department of Labor, and others express eagerness to work together to improve the system – in general and with specific regard to the Fruit Belt. A particular resource in that effort can be the brand new EOC building, connected via atrium to the BETC, and located just two blocks from the Fruit Belt. Representatives of Roswell and Kaleida, especially, recognize the potential efficiencies in collaborative efforts to publicize job openings and assist job-seekers. UB should lead this partnership.

These recommendations can be taken immediately and can lead to short-term benefits. UB, its medical campus partners and workforce development leaders should also collaborate on long-range planning for future workforce needs. Those who provide job-specific training need significant lead time to plan and develop new training programs. The major employers can help inform this process by contributing to job-opening forecasts, thus ensuring an even deeper pool of applicants when those jobs are actually posted. UB staff, with oversight from the OAC, or another appropriate entity, should convene this partnership and lead this effort.

**2** Help minority and women owned firms – especially those based in the immediate neighborhood – form, grow and develop their businesses by securing business opportunities with UB for a wide range of routinely purchased goods and services and other ways.

UB and its affiliates should continue efforts to expand supplier diversity in the procurement of goods and services through greater use of minority and women owned small businesses in the Buffalo Niagara region. These efforts should include use of the educational resources and expertise of the University, such as the UB Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership (CEL) and the UB School of Management to help firms build capacity, obtain NYS certification and develop a greater understanding of the procurement process. These efforts will have a greater impact if conducted in collaboration with other major members of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. Moreover, the economic coordinator, suggested in the preceding recommendation, could also contribute to this work by assisting with outreach to vendors in the community.

As with construction work, New York State sets targets for MWBE vendor participation that UB is obliged to meet. Previously a combined 6 percent for minority- and women-owned firms, the target was recently raised to 20 percent. Efforts by the UB Office of Procurement

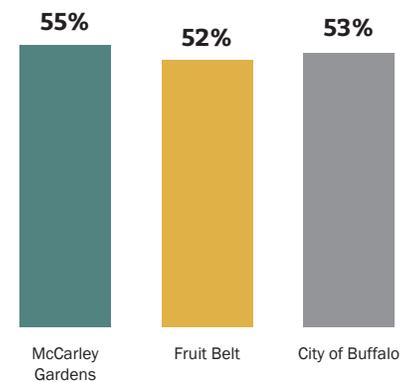
NEIGHBORHOOD SNAPSHOT

Households by Income Level

	McCarley Gardens	Fruit Belt	City of Buffalo
\$0 - \$25K	55%	65%	43%
\$25K - \$50K	46%	30%	31%
\$50K+	0%	22%	28%

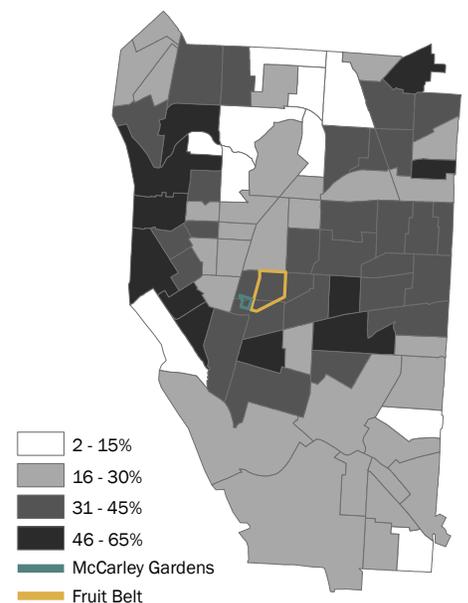
Source: 2005-9 American Community Survey

Households paying 30% or more of their monthly income on rent



Source: 2005-9 American Community Survey

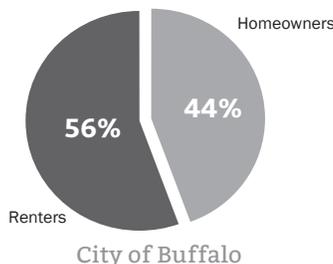
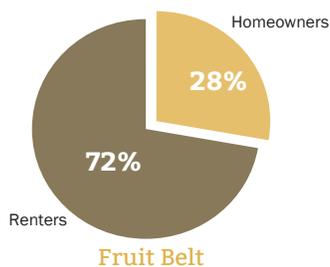
Population in or Near Poverty



Source: 2007-11 American Community Survey

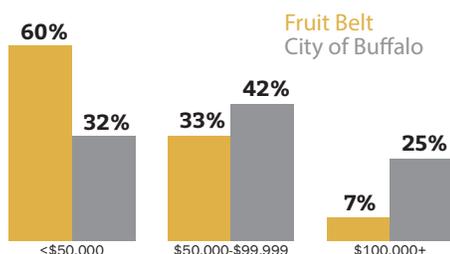
NEIGHBORHOOD SNAPSHOT

% Homeowners vs. Renters



Source: 2005-9 American Community Survey

% House Value For All Owner-Occupied Housing Units



Source: 2005-9 American Community Survey

What is the UB 2020 Opportunities Advisory Council?

The advisory council was created in 2010 to help UB's new Office of Economic Engagement identify and create ways to ensure that local residents are equipped with skills matched to current and future jobs created through UB 2020 initiatives and the region's emerging job market. It includes representatives from UB, its medical campus partner institutions, and members of the broader community. The council also supports initiatives to increase the number of minority- and women-owned enterprises doing business with UB. It is uniquely situated to carry on the work of the Economic Opportunity Panel.

Services have ramped up performance in this regard from 8.1 percent of discretionary state dollars in 2009-2010 to 17 percent in 2011-2012 to more than 26 percent for the current fiscal year. In the first three quarters of 2012-2013 UB has spent \$7.5 million in state funds with certified minority- or women-owned businesses.

UB's Supplier Diversity Program, however, goes beyond what is required, setting and hitting targets for spending from all funding sources and for all minority and women-owned firms – whether they are certified or not. When certified and non-certified minority firms are taken into account and spending by Research Foundation and University at Buffalo Foundation entities is included, the total spent so far this year was \$13.7 million.<sup>3</sup>

Our discussions with leadership of UB Office of Procurement Services and Facilities Operations show that both have taken the goal to increase opportunities for small businesses as a personal as well as business responsibility. However, they face considerable obstacles based on state regulations, established practices and the availability of MWBE firms with the capacity to meet the needs of a large institution such as UB. In many cases to hire such a firm, UB staff has needed to take on a time-consuming mentorship role to enable these local firms to learn how to do business at UB.

UB has promoted MWBE participation and has assisted MWBE companies through dedicated programs such as its MWBE Leaders program offered through CEL. However, challenges remain. New York State requires minority- and women-owned firms to register as such through a certification process. While UB can and does employ firms that are not NYS certified, such firms will not be recognized by NYS in calculating participation figures. Barriers of time and capacity inhibit many small firms from obtaining NYS certification. However, we encourage UB to work with available programs, such as one provided by the Division of Minority and Women's Business Development of Empire State Development Corporation.

Recent efforts by UB staff to seek out and engage MWBE companies and help build the capabilities of MWBE firms are to be commended and should be continued. We urge that UB leadership establish and communicate the institutional commitment to state goals for MWBE participation and to better support the staff efforts to improve results. We were encouraged to learn that other BNMC partners were willing to join in an effort to improve results at all of the institutions and initial steps have been taken during the panel process to share best practices. Indeed, the panel process provided the opportunity for UB procurement officers and their counterparts and partner institutions to meet on these topics and better understand potential areas for collaboration and action.

These initial steps need to be formalized and endorsed by institutional leadership to become part of standard practices. Such efforts can and should be broadened to include other area schools such as Buffalo State and ECC as part of ongoing SUNY-sponsored collaboration process. We recommend that UB leadership request its staff in the relevant areas convene meetings with counterpart staff to develop ways to share information on MWBE firms that could provide services and goods to partner institutions. Further UB should consider a way for UB CEL to provide additional support and mentorship, as needed, for minority contractors doing business with UB. For example, MBA students in the UB School of Management might be paired with MWBE owners to help them build capacity – for example, achieving certification or creating a business plan. This can be especially valuable for entrepreneurs who can't afford to take time out from running a business to take formal coursework.

<sup>3</sup> UB Office of Procurement Services.

**3** Engage residents of adjacent communities in planning for UB's downtown expansion, especially to protect and enhance the values of their properties and neighborhood as UB continues to invest.

UB and its affiliates should endeavor to develop and construct its downtown campus in a manner that benefits current and future residents of the adjacent neighborhood as well as the students, faculty, researchers and visitors to its campus. The incorporation of the McCarley Gardens property into a new university medical-educational campus provides a one-time opportunity for UB create a national level model for university-community engagement. UB will require close collaboration with its BNMC partners, the City of Buffalo,

St. John Baptist Church, and especially the residents of McCarley Gardens and the Fruit Belt to achieve this goal. UB will provide support for leadership by BNMC Inc., as the planning and management entity for the overall campus, and engage the community on its own account when that is also appropriate.

We recognize that UB cannot be the solution to every challenge in the community, especially in an area that has experienced decades of disinvestment, such as the Fruit Belt. However, its actions in developing a downtown campus can have a positive impact on the near surrounding area. Residents of those areas must be engaged in relevant planning processes in meaningful and timely ways.

Much of the good news is that the existing base of planning in and around the medical campus is consistent with the aspirations of St. John Baptist Church and, to the extent that we understand them, the aspirations of the nearby residents. Both the BNMC Inc. master plan and *Building UB*, the University's campus master plan, call for development that will help integrate the campus, physically and operationally, with adjacent neighborhoods such as the Fruit Belt and Allentown. Both plans include provision for new campus open spaces that can benefit residents as well as campus visitors.

Of particular importance is UB's preferred strategy for providing food service, retail, residential and other support needs for its faculty, staff, and students on the downtown campus. Rather than provide all of these services "in house" as is typical on UB's two other campuses, the university will allow private entrepreneurs to meet these needs – on campus and adjacent to it. We endorse this approach.

The City of Buffalo's soon-to-be-completed zoning ordinance rewrite – expected sometime in 2013 – will also clarify and simplify the process for redevelopment in neighborhoods like the Fruit Belt. This is intended to make investment more likely. Just as important, the zoning is based on an analysis of place types so that the new rules will allow the redevelopment of the Fruit Belt and other neighborhoods consistent with how they have long existed. As the new "Green Code" is put into effect and as BNMC and UB plans are implemented, additional work with campus and neighborhood stakeholders will be necessary to further guide redevelopment efforts in a manner consistent with resident aspirations.

The university has often expressed how its ultimate success in attracting top students, faculty, and researchers depends in large part on the success of the host region where it is located. As an "anchor institution," UB is an active participant in regional economic planning and related activities. We recommend that no less attention be given to the "micro-region" of the Fruit Belt and the planned UB campus. The success of UB's downtown campus and BNMC rests on the integration of the institutional and commercial investments spawning business and residential investment. Without strong and safe neighborhoods surrounding the campus, the economic impact of these investments will be diminished along with the opportunity to raise the quality of life in a once attractive but now distressed area. The blend of campus and neighborhood should develop into a long term and beneficial partnership for others to emulate.

## 4

Expand two-way communications between university and community that will be timely, transparent, participatory, and operating at multiple levels.

UB currently maintains communication with neighborhoods adjacent to all three of its campuses, including residents of the Fruit Belt. The university publishes a regular newsletter distributed to households around the campus. It recently conducted a leadership development program aimed at building capacity among citizen leaders in the Fruit Belt.

However, more can be done to enable two-way, multi-level communication to provide reliable and accessible information about the university's plans, projects, and opportunities, as well as to develop and maintain a better understanding of residents' views, concerns, and needs.

The ongoing neighborhood leadership development program (known as Active Conscious Communities Training or AC<sup>2</sup>T and sponsored by UB) has already proven its value in

## We learned by listening

### St. John Baptist Church:

- Rev. Michael Chapman

### McCarley Gardens Tenant Council Leaders:

- Lorraine Chambley
- Gwen Walker

### Participants in Walking Tour of Fruit Belt:

- Zaid B. Islam – resident of Fruit Belt
- Benjamin Cashaw - President, Fruit Belt Coalition
- Schuyler Banks – resident of Fruit Belt
- Edward Gayles – resident of Fruit Belt
- Frank Robinson – resident of Fruit Belt
- Reverend Herman Alston – community member
- Ronnie Speed – resident of Fruit Belt

### Attendees at Community Meeting (Dec. 13, 2012)

- Alex Wright, Urban Christian Ministries
- Anthony Chestnut, Neighborhood Resident
- Benjamin Cashaw, Fruit Belt Coalition
- Carmen Evans
- Eddie Mae Harris
- Elverna Gidney, Fruit Belt Home Owner & Tenants Association
- Freida Joyce, Business Owner
- Gabriella Harris
- Harvil Hill, Homeowner/Investor
- Liz Van Verth, Coordinator, Locust Street Art
- Marvis Robinson
- Megan Evans
- Orlando Boykin, Homeowner/Investor
- Veronica Hemphill-Nichols, Grape St. Block Club
- George K. Arthur, former Buffalo Council President
- Buck Quigley, ArtVoice

### Other Community Leaders:

- Brendan Mehaffy, City of Buffalo, Director, Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning
- Rev. Darius Pridgen, Buffalo Common Council Member, Pastor True Bethel Baptist Church
- Rev. Michael Badger, Pastor, Bethesda World Harvest Church

## We learned by listening

### Workforce system:

- Heather Okoro – Exec. Dir., Buffalo and Erie County Workforce Investment Board, Inc.
- Eugene Bagen – Director of Business Services, Buffalo and Erie County Workforce Development Consortium, Inc.
- Colleen Cummings – former Executive Director, Buffalo Employment and Training Center
- Carolyn Bright, Senior Counseling Consultant, New York State Department of Labor
- Grace Tate, Buffalo Urban League
- Antoine Thompson, Buffalo Employment and Training Center.

### Roswell Park Cancer Institute:

- Michael Sexton, Chief Counsel and Chief Institute Operations Officer
- Steven G. Wright, VP Facilities Management
- Vicki Garcia, VP-Human Resources – Roswell Cancer Research Institute
- David Scott, Director of Diversity

### Kaleida Health:

- Robert Bragg, VP- Decision Support and Campus Development
- Mary Lou Klee, Director of Employment
- Rick Tresmond, Sr. Director–Supply Chain Management
- Michelle Fiebelkorn, Director of Purchasing

### Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus:

- Matt Enstice – Executive Director
- Mike Ball – former planner

### BNMC JARC Survey Team:

- Holly Hutchinson, “Street Team Leader.”
- Ekua Mends-Adoo, BNMC community relations
- Jamie Hamann, BNMC planner

### Local Developer Panel:

- Benjamin Oblatz, President and CEO, First Amherst Development Corp
- Dennis Penman, Executive VP, Ciminelli Development Corp.
- Peter Krog, President and CEO, Krog Development Corp.
- Thomas Kucharski, President and CEO, Buffalo Niagara Enterprise

promoting more effective community organizations by development more effective community leaders. The first class of community leaders has already graduated. We recommend that the program be continued to build on these early successes.

The suggested employment coordinator (see first recommendation) can be expected to contribute to this process of two-way multi-level communication, as well. Other mechanisms such as a regular campus-neighborhood “town hall meeting” or perhaps a continuing forum to connect neighborhood representatives with UB and its medical campus partners should also be considered as well. The UB 2020 Opportunities Advisory Council, or other appropriate entity, should work with the UB Office of Community Relations to spearhead these efforts on behalf of the university.

One way or another, it is crucial that residents of the immediate neighborhood have a direct point of contact with UB in the form of person they can identify by name and speak with directly when there is a question or concern to raise with the university.

# 5

Assign responsibility and create accountability for ongoing implementation of these recommendations to (1) a member of UB’s senior leadership, and (2) to the UB 2020 Opportunities Advisory Council, or another appropriate entity with a charge to facilitate the role of UB and its medical campus partners in promoting economic development in Buffalo Niagara.

UB should commit itself to a strong program of ongoing implementation, monitoring, communication, and deliberation in pursuit of the preceding recommendations. Fortunately, an appropriate vehicle for this work – the UB 2020 Opportunities Advisory Council – is already in existence. We recommend that the UB OAC – or other appropriate entity – be tasked with carrying these recommendations forward.

The Economic Opportunity Panel was constituted as a bi-lateral advisory body to the university and the church respectively. We were fully equipped to make recommendations. We are not capable of putting those recommendations into action. Indeed, we are scheduled to disband with the submission of this report. The UB 2020 Opportunities Advisory Council, on the other hand, has been in operation since 2010, was created to advance the same goals as this panel was, albeit on a regional scale, and already has representation from UB’s most important partners, Kaleida Health and Roswell Park, as well as from members of the local community. The OAC is well-situated to serve as a venue for partnership-building and problem-solving over all issues of economic opportunity.

Assigning responsibility and creating accountability for the implementation of these recommendations further requires a secure connection of the ongoing effort to the permanent administrative structure of the university. We recommend that the President assign an appropriate member of UB senior leadership to oversee implementation, coordinate with the OAC, or other appropriate entity, and report to the President on a regular basis.

# 6

Facilitate collaborations in the implementation of these recommendations with UB partner institutions, Kaleida Health and Roswell Park, as well as Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus Inc.

It should go without saying that UB, Kaleida, and Roswell should work together as closely as possible on any and all of the foregoing initiatives they believe can be collectively and individually advantageous. In most cases, the three institutions working together can accomplish “more with less” through collaboration. Specific ways this can happen are referenced throughout our preceding recommendations. Where it is appropriate that BNMC Inc. take the lead, they should do so. But UB should also be ready to lead initiatives where its interests and resources indicate it is the appropriate institution to do so. The panel recommends that the OAC, or other appropriate entity, initiate discussions with BNMC and

partner institutions to clearly identify appropriate leadership roles and responsibilities and a process for effective collaboration in implementing these recommendations.

The good news is that on many counts all three of the major medical campus partners have expressed a strong willingness to work with the others to accomplish these and many other tasks. We are eager to see them carry through on that inclination.

This should not be the limit of such collaboration. UB should also work closely with the constellation of workforce development entities with an interest in this community. UB can also partner with other State University of New York units as part of ongoing shared services initiatives promoted by SUNY and with other health care organizations such as the Erie County Medical Center.

## Towards A Shared Future

The initial motivation to create this Economic Opportunity Panel was to put into practice the simple idea that if UB and its medical campus partners were going to create new economic opportunities through their investments downtown the residents of the surrounding community – and especially those that might need to relocate to make room for those regionally-significant investments – should share in the benefit.

It is our hope that the recommendations contained in this report will advance the university and its partners on the road to fulfilling that simple idea. We know this is just one series of steps along that path. It is not the beginning, because much has already been accomplished. But we know we are also a fair distance from fully realizing that goal. As such, it seems imperative that UB begin the implementation of these recommendations immediately, not at the time of closing on the sale of McCarley Gardens to St. John, or at some other subsequent time.

As we have pursued this assignment, however, we have also imagined a more ambitious vision, one well beyond the specific focus of the charge we were given. From the very beginning of our work we imagined a campus and a neighborhood that were firmly connected, where health care workers, researchers, students, and patients lived and worked side by side with the long-term residents of the neighborhood, and where all shared in the benefits of the common enterprise. Or, to put it another way, we imagined a campus and a neighborhood that would be a model for other cities of what such a district can be and how to create it.

It has been a privilege for each of us to contribute to the work of this panel. We hope our efforts have helped move us all closer to that vision.

## We Learned by listening

UB Personnel:

- Dr. Satish Tripathi, President
- Dan Vivian, Assistant Vice President for Procurement Services
- Helen Gaiter, M/WBE representative, Procurement Services
- Kevin Thompson, Director, Facilities Planning & Design Department
- Susan Krzystofiak, AVP, Human Resources
- Jerry Linder, UB Human Resources
- Louis Schmitt - Director, Facilities Operations Department
- Dean Robert Shibley – UB School of Architecture and Planning
- Dr. Henry Taylor - UB Center for Urban Studies
- Thomas Ulbrich - Executive Director – UB Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership
- Alex Cleary – UB Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership
- Dean Nancy Smyth – UB School of Social Work
- Dr. Diane Elze – UB School of Social Work
- Dr. Julius Adams – Executive Director, Educational Opportunity Center
- Dr. Danis Gehl – Deputy Director, Educational Opportunity Center
- Dr. Marnie LaVigne – Associate VP, Economic Development/member of the WNY WIB

## Staff support for the Economic Opportunity Panel was provided by:

- Marsha S. Henderson, former UB Vice President for External Affairs.
- Bradshaw Hovey, Senior Fellow, UB Regional Institute/ Urban Design Project.

