

# Executive Summary

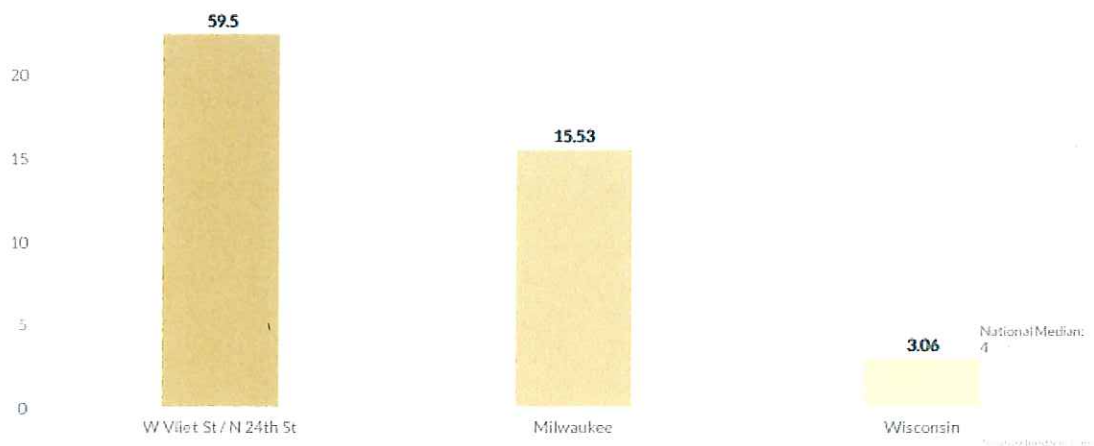
## Objective

To obtain a grant, and raise funds, to complete a renovation and construction on a non-profit community center, repurposing the old McKinley school building and grounds. The community center aims to provide resources to local minorities in mentorship, financial literacy, and economic relief, as well as providing access to a number of facilities necessary for a higher quality of life.

## Discussion

There are a multitude of different resources that are to be provided in the community center as the area directly adjacent to McKinley is populated by largely single mothers and the elderly. The area is made up of a strong minority presence with nearly 74% being Black or African-American. The neighborhood is also made up of nearly 40% single mothers, with a median household income of under \$17,000 (1). This is one of the largest concentration areas of single mothers in the entire country. This area is also one of the least safe areas in the country, with a violent crime rate of 59.5 per 1000 residents, compared to the Milwaukee average of 15.53 per 1000, and national median of 4 per 1000 (1). Both of these indicate that the area is in dire need of community support.

## VIOLENT CRIME COMPARISON (PER 1,000 RESIDENTS)



# MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



# SINGLE PARENT WITH CHILD

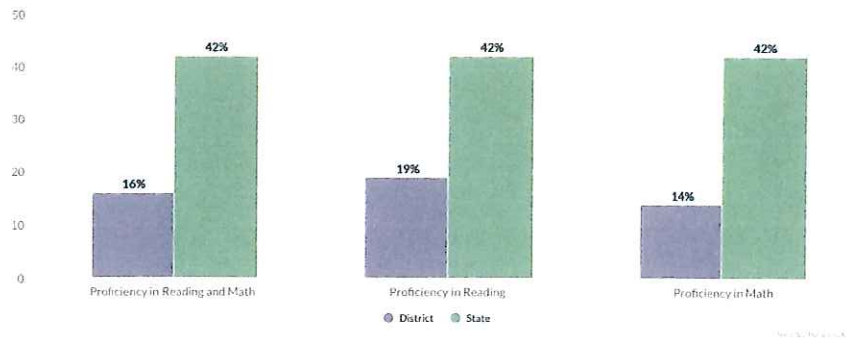


## MPAC

One aspect of the community center would be a Minority Performing Arts Center. This would provide education, mentorship, and support to children and teens in the surrounding area. Giving access to a wealth of career options in a welcoming and positive environment allows and expands the ways for the community to grow. With crime rates much higher compared to surrounding areas, providing access to mentorship programs which incorporate music, arts, and theater programs gives a creative outlet that can cut into crime. It has been shown that younger people that come from disadvantageous economic backgrounds who have high levels of arts involvement display greater civic engagement than others who had low levels of involvement in the arts (2). It has also been shown, in a study conducted in Rhode Island, that crime rates lowered by an average of 5.4% in lower income cities which incorporated youth after-school arts programs (2).

Tying into this, would be a publicly donated library and tutoring center. This can be tied into Marquette's Service Learning program, in which students volunteer and provide support in different communities. With the close location to campus, creating and supporting a community center would allow Marquette to further promote its Jesuit Mission within the local community. Providing access to tutors, as well as being within walking distance of a public library for this area, would benefit and help to increase average test scores in the area. Higher involvement in arts programs also correlates to higher standardized test scores, as well as a greater involvement in community service (2). Giving the area this would also help ease the burden of providing quality education that single parents can struggle with.

## Public School Test Scores (No Child Left Behind) 4



One approach can be a two-generation approach, which has found success in Atlanta. This employs both a free pre schooling service for the children, with a career-development center for the parent. After only one year of the program, 55% of incoming kindergarten students were reading at or above their grade level, which was up from 6% in 2010 (3). This goes hand-in-hand with the benefits that parents will see. With under 7% of the immediate area having a college degree, providing a skills-development center for the area can greatly improve employment opportunities to bolster the surrounding economy (1). This has proven successful in this past case study in Atlanta as well, with it being a driving force in increasing the number of registrations for career training and counseling, totaling over 1800 job placements (3). This program also provides financial literacy services to the surrounding area. With a career center for adults, this community center can substantially increase the household income potential in the area. It can provide a literacy and support center, in which the community can learn about tax refunds and credits, childcare subsidies, and other benefits (3).

## EDUCATION

### PERCENT WITH COLLEGE DEGREE



### PERCENT WITH ADVANCE DEGREE



## McKinley School

Since McKinley is a large structure, small and businesses would be able to have property space for their services inside, with leases operating to pool funds back into the community. The further surrounding area sorely lacks many of the functional aspects of a thriving community. This can be seen through it being both a food desert for healthy options, having no grocery or market in walking distance, and having no real recreational areas that are safe.



One facility that can easily provide service is an exercise facility. The closest location for the area would be Marquette University's Recreation Center. Providing an exercise facility can help cut into the larger obesity rates of the area—currently at 36.2% (4)—while also providing an activity that low-income areas sorely lack. It has been found that black minority neighborhoods are 3.27 times less likely to have recreational facilities than others, with 4.5 times less facilities in low-income areas than high-income areas (5). The children in the area can have a safe place to play, and to participate in recreational activities and hobbies. The senior citizens in the area can also utilize this to receive tax credit. This can help incentive a healthy lifestyle and promote a better quality of life for the area. Only 42% of 6-11 year-olds, and 8% of 11-19 year-olds participate in the recommended 60 minutes of moderate exercise a day, with even less involvement from minorities and low-income areas (6). This can be a safe haven in the neighborhood in which children can come play, and having grounds for a small park is already in McKinley's structure. In conjunction with this, the cafeteria at McKinley would be converted into a mini market and coffee shop. Promoting local businesses inside the community center, with these recreational areas and a place to get groceries, allows economic growth and job opportunities in walking distance of the neighborhood. Giving the neighborhood a stronger sense of identity with a center that solely provides value, instead of further subsidized housing, can promote and foster long-term growth as a community. Already in the direct surrounding area, there is a real estate vacancy rate of 18%, higher than over 82% of U.S. neighborhoods (1). This displays, not a need for more apartments at McKinley, but a location which can provide enough economic support to greatly reduce that number. It can become a focal point, and a shining example of what can happen to a community with the right support in Milwaukee. With the per capita income here being lower than 98.9% of neighborhoods in the entire country, with just under 66% of children here living in poverty (compared to the national average of ~25%), this is one of the most-ready areas for community, non-profit aid (1), and is in one of the best urban areas to grow, with both Marquette nearby, as well as the finishing construction on the new Milwaukee Bucks stadium. Community outreach is a beautiful thing, and two of the forefront institutions of the city can be leaders in making, and being, the difference.



## References

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