

Contact: Brett Spielberg – Director of Public Information
Office: 516-571-3249 / Cell: 516-329-5171
Email – bspiegelberg@nassaucountyny.gov
For Immediate Release – February 24, 2020



Office of the Nassau County Comptroller
Jack Schnirman – Comptroller

*240 Old Country Road
Mineola, NY 11501
Tel: (516) 571-2386 / Fax: (516) 571-5900*

**Nassau County Comptroller Jack Schnirman Announces Release of
Black Economic Equity Report Update**

*Report Containing Updated Data on Several Racial Economic Gaps Released at
Comptroller's Annual Black History Month Event*

Mineola, NY – Nassau County Comptroller Jack Schnirman announced the release of an updated report on Black Economic Equity by the Policy and Research Unit of the Nassau County Comptroller's Office. Last year's original Black Economic Equity report highlighted several findings, including the stunning figure by Policy Link and Urban League of Long Island that in one year alone, Long Island's economy could have been nearly \$24 billion stronger if racial gaps in income did not exist.

This year's report further built upon that data to highlight several racial economic gaps — the wealth gap, the housing gap, and the education gap, among others — that Black Long Islanders face, as well as quantify the multi-billion dollar cost of institutional racism that impacts the regional economy. The updated report was released at the Comptroller's annual Black History Month Event, held this year at the Elmont Memorial Library, featuring a Community Resource Fair cosponsored by New York Senator Anna Kaplan, New York Assemblywoman Michaelle Solages, and Nassau County Legislator Carrié Solages.

"Black history is American history, and in addition to celebrating the achievements and contributions of Black Americans to American society, it's important to recognize that history is still being written," said **Nassau County Comptroller Jack Schnirman**. "We have an obligation to make sure that we live in a society that is just and equitable for all. By providing policymakers, community leaders, and the public with specific data about racial inequities and economic gaps, the Comptroller's Office is continuing to define the scope of the problem and bring together stakeholders to identify innovative solutions to level the playing field, strengthen our local economy, and ultimately lower the tax burden for all."

The racial economic gap is a threat to Nassau County's long-term financial success, as demographic trends show that Nassau County is becoming increasingly diverse.

“It is critical that the public be not only aware of but understand these numbers and their implications,” said **Margo K. Cargill, Vice President of the Nassau Council of Chambers of Commerce and member of the Comptroller’s MWBE Steering Committee**. “I applaud the Comptroller for continually releasing these data reports that help facilitate the difficult conversations surrounding racial disparity.”

“The report is evidence of the economic inequities facing communities of color in Nassau County and across Long Island,” said **Theresa Sanders, President and CEO of Urban League of Long Island**. “The report also provides hope because it makes a strong economic case for greater inclusion. I commend Nassau County Comptroller Jack Schnirman for raising awareness on such a critical issue.”

As of 2018, Nassau County is home to 158,708 Black residents, who make up 11.1 percent of the population, a number that continues to increase and drive the County’s population growth. The report shows that in 2019, the Black unemployment rate was 5.4 percent, nearly double the white unemployment rate of 3.0 percent; similarly, unemployment for Black teenage residents exceeded 18 percent, compared to 10.7 percent for white teenage residents.

Data also shows that educational achievement lacks equity across racial lines, with 5 percent more of the white population earning a high school diploma or equivalent than the Black population. On the issue of student debt, nationally, 77.7 percent of students of color carry the most student debt, significantly higher than the overall average of 60 percent.

“If these gaps were closed, aggregate Black income on Long Island would grow by \$4.5 billion. Not only would this close the income gap, the increased economic benefit would help keep taxes down,” said Schnirman. “Closing these gaps is not only the right or just thing to do, but it will level the playing field and ultimately help Long Island’s economy and all residents who pay taxes.”

The full report can be found online [here](#).

###