



Urban League of  
Greater Madison

*Building the Road  
to Economic Success*

8/30

August 30, 2010

Dear Community Services Committee Members,

On behalf of the Urban League of Greater Madison, I would like to thank you for the longstanding investment that you have made in our efforts to **ensure that Madison is the best place in the Midwest for all of its citizens to live, learn, and work.** With regards to your preliminary recommendations for financial support in 2011, I would like to draw your attention to several key issues related to both our Adult Workforce Preparedness and Youth programming:

**Adults Workforce Preparedness:**

**1. Merged Programming:** In 2010, the City of Madison provided funding for two of our adult workforce preparedness programs. This included \$73,280 for our Job Services Network Program and \$5,276 for our Fatherhood Responsibility Program. Because these two programs have job training and job placement as their primary outcomes, we proposed combining these two programs in order to gain some operational efficiency. Unfortunately, the Conference Committee recommended \$73,280, which effectively amounted to a cut of more than 9% to our adult workforce preparedness programming.

**2. Sustaining Place-Based Service Model:** Currently, the Community Services Committee provides funding to the neighborhood-based component of our Job Services Network Program. This consists of services that are targeted via a place-based model that serves the Allied Drive Neighborhood. In 2010, the Urban League received a one-year grant from the Madison Community Foundation that will allow us to expand this component of our workforce programming to include Meadowood, Leopold, and other distressed neighborhoods in South and Southwest Madison. As part of this expansion, we will increase the allocation of our Program Coordinator/Employment Case Manager to 1.0 FTE and allocate additional Training Specialists to the project. Our 2011 request reflected a portion of the funding needed to sustain this expansion.

**3. Serving All City of Madison Residents:** In addition to the increased demand for its neighborhood-based employment services, the Urban League has experienced a dramatic increase in demand for its employment services from all parts of the City. In fact, an analysis of our service demographics thus far in 2010 shows that we have served individuals from virtually every zip code and every census tract within the City of Madison. For example, by the mid-point of 2010, we had already served over 87% of the number of individuals served during the entire 2009 calendar year. In fact, last month we were forced to close enrollment in the program to everyone except individuals from the South/Southwest Madison neighborhoods noted above. This was done to ensure that we had sufficient slots in the program to meet our City of Madison contractual requirements. Furthermore, based on conversations that we have had with the South Madison Public Library, we anticipate that their relocation later this year into our facility will further drive new traffic to our workforce preparedness programs. Our 2011 funding requested from the City of Madison will allow us to grow our response to this need by adding an additional Employment Case Manager and Employment Training Specialist to our team.

**4. Culturally Competent Infrastructure to Deliver:** We strongly support the Community Services Committee's decision to elevate the priority of adult workforce preparedness in its 2011 budget and to allocate additional financial resources to this urgent priority area. As the State of Black Madison report pointed out in 2008, Madison and Dane County show greater disparities than the nation as a whole in unemployment and

labor force participation for African Americans. However, we are concerned that rather than directing some of these additional resources to the Urban League – an organization with a proven track record and an infrastructure to deliver – you have reduced our funding by \$5,276 from the 2010 level. We believe that few, if any, other organizations in town are better positioned to help the Community Services Committee deliver on its commitment to expand the delivery of adult workforce preparedness services.

In late 2009, we opened our Center for Economic Development & Workforce Training, thus giving us the physical infrastructure to increase our workforce development programming. We currently employ a team of culturally competent workforce development professionals including a Director of Workforce Development, 5 Employment Case Managers/Trainers, a Customized Job Training Coordinator, a Job Development Specialist, and various interns. We have also increased our integration with key institutions such as the Dane County Job Center and the Workforce Development Board. For example, as part of our new partnership with the Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin (WDBSCW) the Urban League will serve as a WorkSmart Site as well as hosting a new Interactive Videocasting system tied into the region's workforce system.

**We believe that your investment in the Urban League can ensure that the Community Services Committee realizes its goal of improving the delivery of adult workforce preparedness services in Madison. We ask that you restore the \$5,276 in funds from our Fatherhood Program and also fund, to the fullest extent possible, the requested expansion of our Job Services Network Program. The additional funding requested from the Community Services Committee, combined with our increased commitment to fundraising from additional sources, will allow us to provide job training to an additional 120 unemployed and underemployed adults next year with an additional 60 individuals securing employment. Based on our request for an additional \$60,000, that translates to just \$1,000 per successful job placement.**

#### **Youth – Middle School:**

Again, we appreciate the Committee's longstanding history of support and urge your full funding of the "B-List" recommendation for the Schools of Hope Middle School Program. In fact, given the alarming racial and socioeconomic achievement gaps that exist in Madison, the proposed 30% cut in funding to the Schools of Hope Middle School Program is of great concern.

As we shared with the Committee at an earlier meeting, the Schools of Hope Middle School Program has tripled in size over the 10 year period since the City of Madison Community Services Commission first approved the reallocation of funding from Project Jamaa to the Community & Volunteer Mobilization Initiative which two years later became the Schools of Hope Middle School Academic Tutoring Program. Yet, City of Madison funding for this and past Urban League academic tutoring programs have received little more than COLA increases almost since their inception in the mid 1980's. This has remained true for the most recent 10-year period, despite a rapidly growing population of low-income students and students of color in our community. In fact, since this shift almost ten years ago, the program has tripled in size from serving three MMSD school sites to serving nine MMSD school sites and from serving approximately 75 students each year with a pool of 40 to 50 academic tutors to serving 1,407 students last school year through a volunteer pool of 629 academic tutors. Moreover, through a strategic partnership with MMSD and MSCR, the Urban League has been at the center of a dramatic increase in the scope and scale of after school programming offered through school-based Youth Resource Centers. Our leadership in fostering collaboration among school-based after-school programs has helped transform the quality and reach of out-of-time school programming.

Your investment in the Urban League has a track record of yielding results. For example, on average between 80 and 90 percent of teachers report each year that students show an increase in grades, better attendance, and improved behavior when matched with a Schools of Hope Tutor. Likewise, our emphasis on math has been attributed in part to increases in the number of students of color and low income students who are completing algebra early in their high school career.

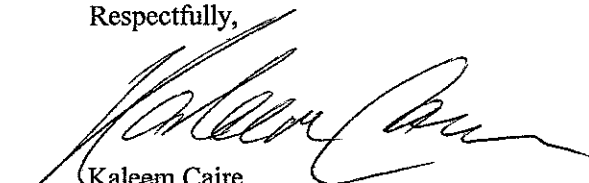
Unfortunately, the data compels us to do more. For example, a needs analysis conducted two years ago found that we were only able to respond to approximately one-half of the students identified as needing the additional support of an academic tutor. As we head into the start 2010-2011 school year, we are committed to multiple strategies that will expand and enhance our impact. For example, despite the dramatic increase in the number of volunteer tutors, the program has continued to operate with only a single full-time Volunteer Coordinator. This has both limited the number of students being served and also caused us to utilize more volunteers to work with small groups of students. Best practices, however, tell us that the most impactful tutor-tutee matches are those that are one-on-one. The proposed budget includes the addition of a second Volunteer Coordinator to increase our volunteer recruitment efforts, with one focused on campus outreach and a second focused on expanding volunteer recruitment from the broader community. This will allow us to further reach out into the community and increase the number of one-on-one tutoring matches while also broadening the diversity of our volunteer pool to better reflect the population of students being served.

Our 2011-2012 plans also include additional enhancements to the program including: Additional capacity to work with each program site to standardize best practices; Utilizing assessment tools that can pinpoint more precisely where individual students are academically deficient and thus better target our tutoring efforts and; Working with MMSD to authorize access to key student data and input our own data in ways that allow us to better target our tutoring supports as well as better evaluate program impact.

Our 2011 budget already reflects a 67% increase the Urban League's fundraising commitment to the program, along with additional financial support from United Way and a greatly increased in-kind and operational support to accomplishing these program expansions and enhancement in 2011. The proposed cut of 30% will greatly challenge our efforts to maintain the current level of service as well as potentially delay some of the much needed program enhancement. As such, we urge the Committee to support the "B-List" recommendation to restore the 30% cut and provide an additional \$10,000 to partially support the needed program expansion and enhancements.

Thank you so much for your timely attention to this request. If you have questions, please contact me at 608-729-1200 or [kcaire@ulgm.org](mailto:kcaire@ulgm.org).

Respectfully,



Kaleem Caire  
President & CEO