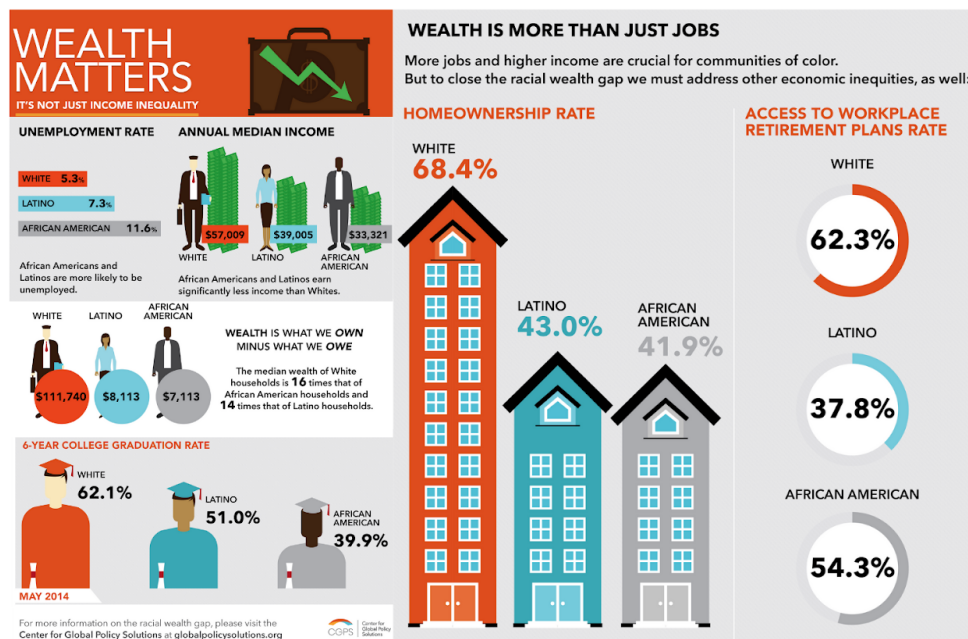


# DAY 15: The Racial Wealth Gap

*“Wealth is where past injustices breed present sufferings.” -- Mehrsa Baradaran, Law Professor and Scholar on the Racial Wealth Gap*

The racial wealth gap is the disparity in median wealth between different racial groups in the United States. Ann Arbor is reported to be [the most educated city](#) in the country, but this accolade does not tell the real story of what it is like to live in our County. Residents are leading very different lives: Washtenaw ranks [81<sup>st</sup> of 83 Michigan counties](#) in terms of income inequality, with significant disparities between the top and bottom quintiles of incomes. [Median income](#) for Black households is \$36K compared to \$45K for Hispanic and \$68K for White households. As [the racial wealth gap continues to grow in America](#), working households are struggling to meet their daily needs and find it difficult to build wealth through savings, investments, or home ownership.



**Did You Know?** Michigan payday lenders disproportionately place their businesses in communities of color, rural areas, and low-income areas? A [2018 report from the Center for Responsible Lending](#) looks into how these businesses are targeting vulnerable customers.

## Today's Challenge:

**Option 1:** Explore the [Debt in America](#) map to visualize differences in the weight of debt across geographies and between white and non-white residents.

**Option 2:** [Watch "The Financial Well-Being of Detroit residents"](#): a conversation between our partner, United Way for Southeastern Michigan, and the University of Michigan Poverty Solutions.

**Option 3:** Listen to this [30-minute interview with Dr. Donna Beegle](#) on how she broke the cycle of generational poverty in her family and is now working to help others do the same through the consulting firm she founded.

**Option 4:** [Contact your elected representatives](#) and urge them to extend the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit (CTC) expansion —two important tools in helping to close the racial wealth gap. The extension of these tax credits will allow the parents of 27 million children to receive the credit for the first time and are estimated to reduce child poverty in America by one half.

**Option 5:** Journal on your and your families experiences of work and money. What career do you have? What did your parents have? What was the source of their financial stability-- earned income, inherited resources (e.g. a home passed down)? How did that affect your family's earning power?

**Don't forget to** [RSVP to one or more lunch hour discussion groups](#) hosted by [Nonprofit Enterprise at Work](#) and UWWC to connect with others and reflect on our shared experiences.