

# Adolescent Neighborhood Context & Young Adult Econ Outcomes for Low-Income Minority Youth

**Prof. George Galster**

Wayne State University  
Detroit, MI

**Prof. Anna Santiago**

Case Western Reserve University  
Cleveland, OH

Federal Reserve Community Development  
Conference, Washington DC

April 3, 2015

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**Support from:**

**National Institute of Child Health and Human  
Development (NIH)**

**W. K. Kellogg Foundation**

**John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur  
Foundation**

**U.S. Dept. Housing & Urban Development**

**Annie E. Casey Foundation**

# POLICY CONTEXT: NEIGHBORHOOD EFFECTS AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Does growing up amid a concentration of disadvantage make it significantly more likely that children will end up disadvantaged adults?



If so, is US subsidized housing policy working to concentrate or deconcentrate disadvantage?

# OVERVIEW OF STUDY: DENVER NATURAL EXPERIMENT “TREATMENT – RESPONSE”

Denver Housing Authority (DHA) quasi-randomly offers “treatments” to low-income Latino & African American families = bundle of neighborhood attributes. Our study uses:

offered neighborhood attributes as IVs for adolescent context experienced

control function logistic analyses to discern “responses” as young adults to the treatment attributes received during adolescence

→ allows causal inferences of neigh’d effects

## OUR RESEARCH QUESTION

*Are the odds of low-income Latino and African American young adults:*

*-- obtaining post-secondary education (13%)*

*-- receiving public assistance (14%)*

*-- being idle (neither primarily working nor attending school) (17%)*

*Affected by neighborhood context they experienced as adolescents?*

# OVERVIEW OF KEY FINDING #1

Neighborhood occupational prestige lowers odds of young adults (especially Blacks) receiving public assistance and idleness (neither working nor attending school).



## OVERVIEW OF KEY FINDING #2

Neighborhood social vulnerability increases odds of young Latino adults receiving public assistance.



# VALID CAUSAL INFERENCES VIA NATURAL EXPERIMENT IN DENVER

Denver Housing Authority (DHA) Operated scattered-site public housing since 1968; now over 1,500 units in most neighborhoods across Denver County

Quasi-random assignment for thousands of dwelling allocations (both conventional & scattered) in WIDE variety of neighborhoods since 1987

→ Overcomes geographic selection bias challenge

# OUR HOUSEHOLD SURVEY IN DENVER

**Sampling Frame: African American or Latino, current + former DHA residents w/:** (1) children in home ages 0 - 18 when moved into DHA; (2) in DHA housing 2+ years; and (3) first entered DHA in 1987+

**90-minute phone interviews: residential / family / child retrospective histories;**

**April '06 – Feb '08**

**N = 710 families (360 children age 18+)**

**Geo-coded address history merged w/ Census tract neighborhood indicators**

# ADOLESCENT NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT VARIABLES

census tract (4,000 population):

% Poverty

% Female Household Heads

% Dwellings Renter-Occupied

% Unemployed

→ SOCIAL VULNERABILITY INDEX

% Black

% Foreign Born

Occupational Prestige Scale

# RESULTS: STANDARD DEVIATION DIFFERENCE IN NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXTS

**LOWER Occupational Prestige →**

**↑ odds public assistance 96% (147% BI)**

**↑ odds idleness 51%**

**HIGHER Social Vulnerability →**

**↑ odds public assistance 145% (Latinos)**

# IMPLICATIONS FOR URBAN HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT POLICY

*Goal should be enhancement of low-income minority adolescents' neigh'd SES diversity. Policy should:*

(1) Improve economic diversity in neighborhoods where poor minorities now live and / or

(2) Expand opportunities for poor minorities to move to higher-quality neighborhoods via subsidized housing

THANK YOU! YOUR QUESTIONS WELCOMED



WAYNE STATE  
UNIVERSITY