

904WARD

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# Duval County: Race in Retrospect

*Part 1 – Introduction*

February 2021



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**This report was made possible by:**



# A Letter From Our CEO

904WARD was born out of the need to provide a brave space for friends and colleagues to share their pain and anger at Black people's senseless deaths resulting from police and vigilante violence, but also the hope that we could make a difference. These conversations lead to the creation of The Race Cards and the Jacksonville Community Remembrance Project.

After five years of working within the community, engaging individuals in conversation about race, we participated in a strategic planning process to continue 904WARD's growth and good work, with a key goal of positively impacting Northeast Florida's communities. 904WARD's strategic plan is heavily focused on building a well-run, professional organization that offers high-quality, race-focused programs accessed by a broad range of community members. Critical to the success of the organization is building an evaluative foundation.

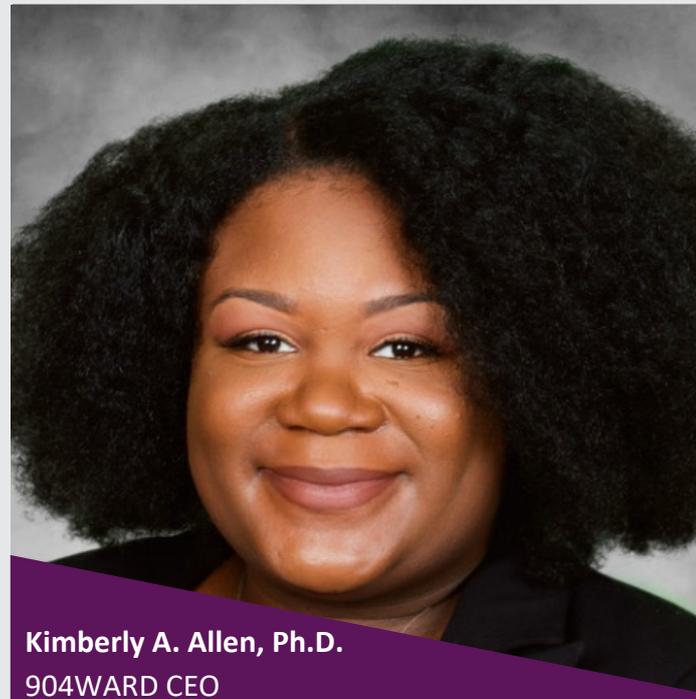
Monitoring success - 904WARD's, its partners', and our community's - in eliminating racism requires a framework for evaluating where we are and measuring our progress in the direction we want to go. Therefore, the strategic plan called for a community report by which to measure our collective progress.

We recognize that much research and reporting already has taken place. Rather than reinvent the wheel, we decided to lean into nearly a century of data and research about race relations in Jacksonville and identify the common themes and recommendations.

Following this introduction, we will release our analysis in a 7-part series, with each installment focusing on a specific domain: education; health; housing; justice & the legal system; employment; media; and politics & civic engagement. Where possible, we will contextualize the information using national and state data. We highlight the wins and the gains we've made

along the way, and we will point to the opportunities that remain for change.

We are committed to seeing the change through to the end. We will partner with the community to prioritize and co-create solutions, define success, identify willing and capable partners, and advocate for the success we all want to see. We have to be willing to try new things and pivot quickly away from options that do not work so that we can make progress. There will be friction. There will be challenges. However, we cannot afford to wait another 75 years for the quality of life for Black and Brown communities to improve. If we are willing to lean into the discomfort, have the courage to push past the trepidation, have pure intentions, and pursue change with the community, we are audacious enough to believe that we will triumph over racism.



**Kimberly A. Allen, Ph.D.**  
904WARD CEO

# We Don't Need Another Study

## Dear Stakeholders,

When 904WARD started on this path of conceptualizing a progress report about Race in Jacksonville, we kept coming back to the same point—we do not need another study. Our community has researched this subject for more than 70 years. We know what the gaps are. We know where the challenges exist. We know where there is opportunity. We have seen the reports, we have read the recommendations, yet we continue to come back to square one. Little has changed.

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Efforts advance, groups are formed, yet the outcome remains the same-- Jacksonville's Black and Brown people are consistently underrepresented in spheres of prosperity and overrepresented in spheres of struggle and risk. Let us be clear, being a Black or Brown person has not caused the circumstances we will discuss in this series. It is our belief, however, that racist motivations have caused the creation of structures, policies and other roadblocks that have led to the outcomes we will discuss.

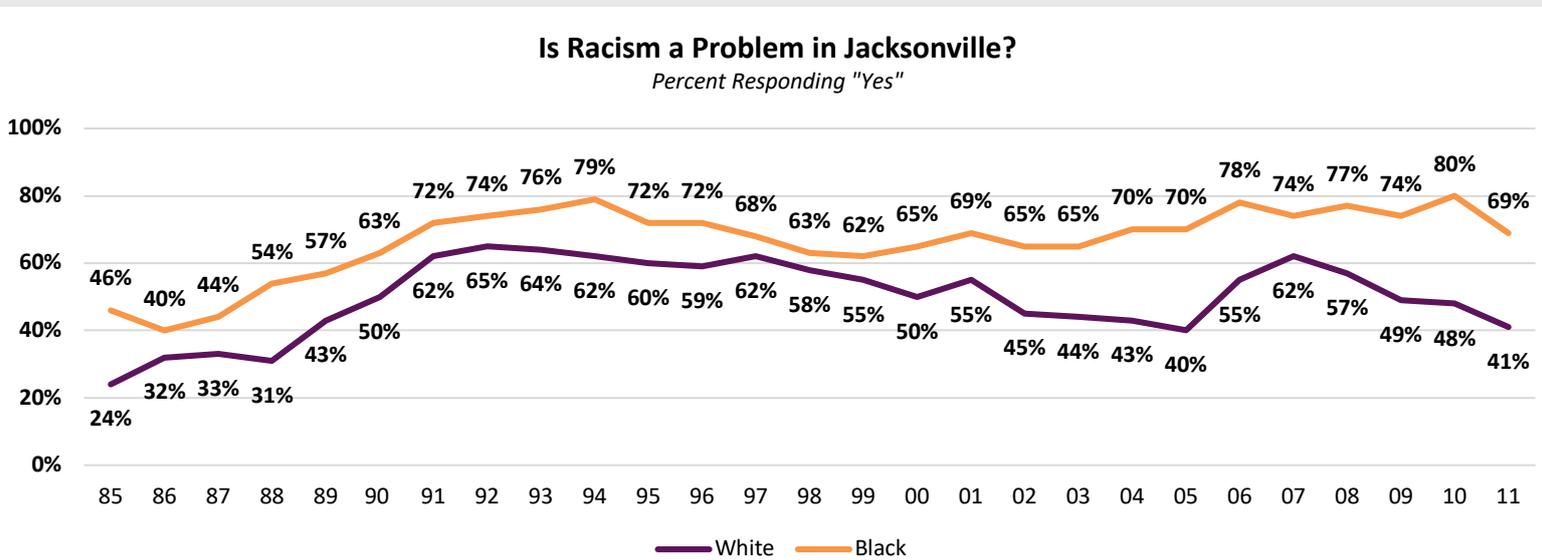
For decades, residents of Jacksonville have asked themselves about the state of the city's Black community. In 2008, Bobbie O'Connor, then Executive Director of OneJax, and Charlene Taylor Hill, then Director of the Jacksonville Human Rights Commission, reviewed nine different community reports addressing racial inequities, from 1946 to 2008, and compiled the race-related recommendations from each. The 62 recommendations addressed concerns in seven areas: Education, Health, Housing, Justice and the Legal System, Labor, Media, and Politics and Civic Engagement.

In 2020, The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida asked researcher Mary Kress Littlepage to assemble data that addressed community change -- or lack of -- in those seven areas.

The nine reports reviewed by O'Connor and Taylor Hill were compiled by an array of government, civic, nonprofit, and academic entities over 75 years, and all include data and recommendations that vary somewhat, but remain remarkably consistent over time. The first report examined was a 1944 study, Jacksonville Looks at Its Negro Community, conducted by the Council of Social Agencies, and its conclusions are not very different from conclusions we might draw today.

So we are not going to do another study. Instead, building on the work of The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida and Mary Kress Littlepage, we will take these 75 years of research reports and streamline their data and recommendations, which will provide a baseline for our understanding of racial inequity in Jacksonville, past and present.

## Is Racism a Problem in Jacksonville?



**The answer was a resounding “yes” for nearly all Black people surveyed in the Jacksonville community and a hefty “yes” for most White people who were surveyed—so why are there still so many inequities?**

The answer to that question depends on whom you ask and how you ask it. As shown in the chart above, the percentage of survey respondents who thought racism was a problem increased steadily through the 1980s. While Black community members consistently responded in the affirmative more often than Whites, the gap between perceptions began to grow significantly in the 2000s.

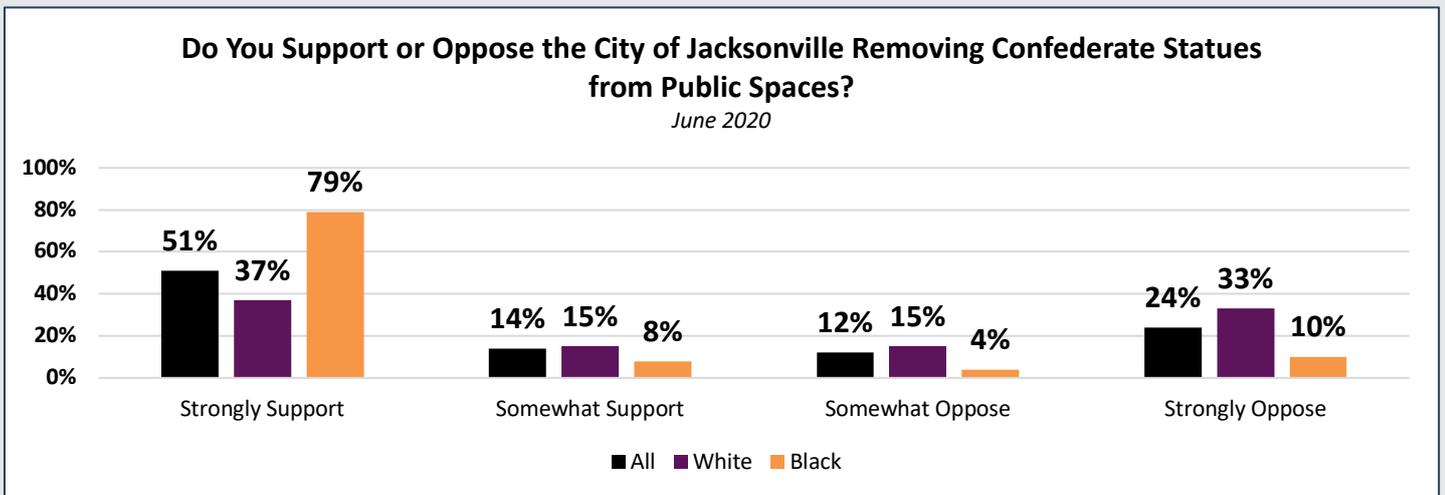
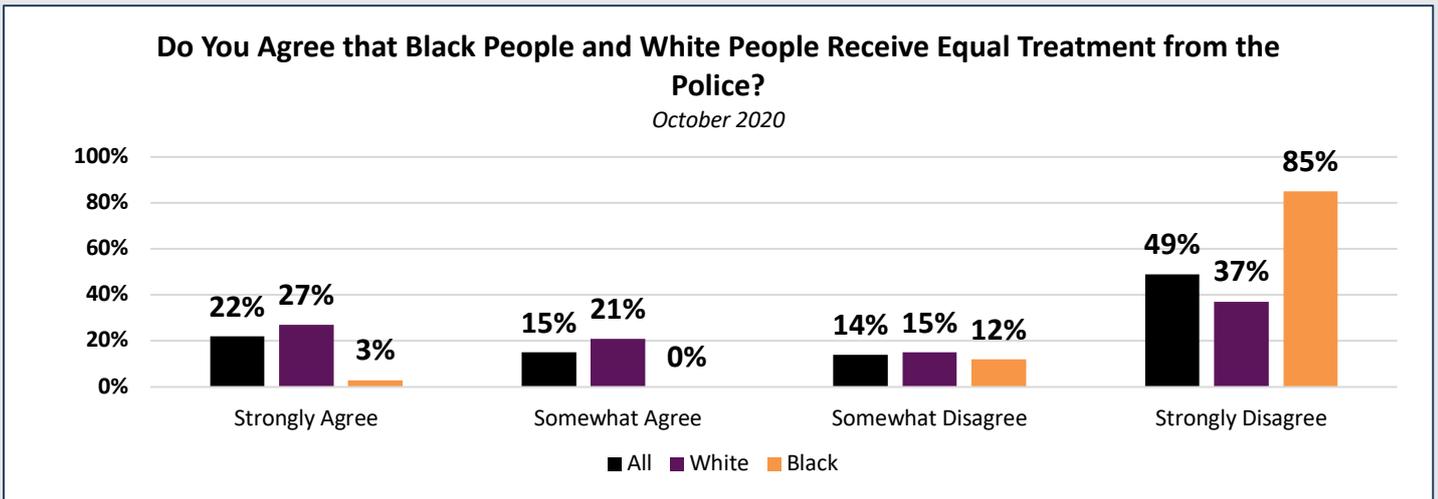
# Recent Perceptions of Racism

In more recent years, attention also was focused on the state of relations between the races in the community. Jacksonville Community Council Inc. (JCCI), through its annual Quality of Life studies, for many years asked survey respondents whether racism was a local problem. In 2012, JCCI reported that about 55% of both Blacks and Whites thought racism was a problem, a startling shift in a decades-long trend. By 2014, JCCI had stopped including this question in its published reports.

In 2020, the Public Opinion Research Laboratory at the

University of North Florida conducted several JaxSpeaks surveys addressing issues of local concern, some of which related to race relations, including how Blacks and Whites are treated by police and whether statues of Confederates should be removed. The results showed significant differences in the attitudes of Blacks and Whites.

Specifically, that Black people were more likely to perceive (a) unequal treatment by law enforcement, (b) systemic racism and (c) to be in favor of removing confederate statues from public places.



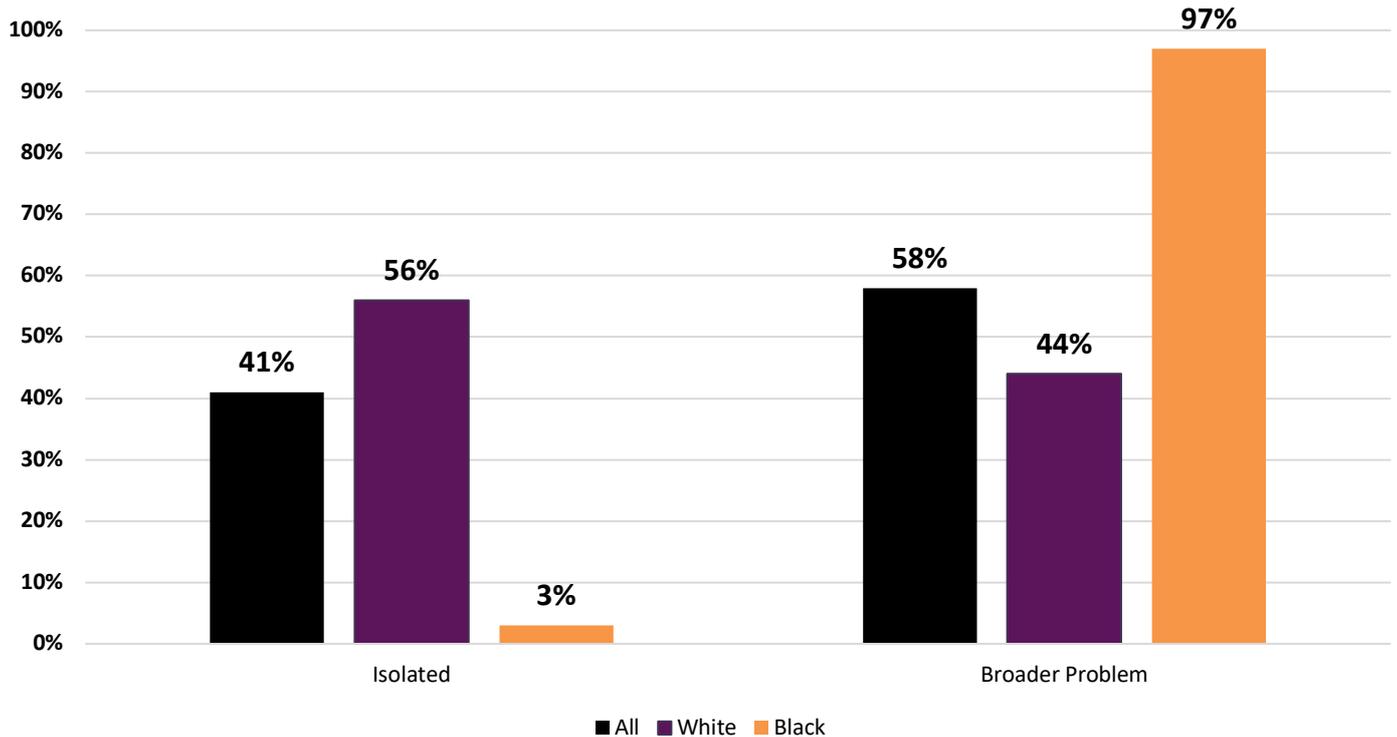
Although roughly half of the White respondents agreed with Black respondents, the response rates were drastically different. Where 97% of Black people somewhat or strongly disagreed that Black and White people received equal treatment from the police, only 63% of White people felt the same way. Similarly, 97% of Black people felt there was broader systemic racism present in the deaths by police compared to 58% of White people. Eighty-seven percent of Black people somewhat or strongly supported the removal

of confederate statues in monuments compared to 65% of White people.

In sum, the question of whether racism was a problem was answered with a resounding “yes” for nearly all Black people surveyed in the Jacksonville community and a hefty “yes” for most White people who were surveyed—so why are there still so many inequities? This is a question we will attempt to address throughout this series.

### Do You Think that Deaths of Black People During Encounters with the Police Are Isolated Incidents or Signs of a Broader Problem of Systemic Racism?

October 2020



# Duval County Demographics

This seven-part series poses a question at the heart of 904WARD's mission and our community's attempts to achieve racial equity: does racism in Jacksonville impede on one's ability to be successful here? This section on demographics will begin to scratch the surface of this probing question. We will continue to wrestle with this question throughout this series, in each of the seven domains, but we begin our analysis here.

A baseline understanding of our demographic trends will shed light how racism affects the ability of People of Color to be successful in our community. For purposes of our analysis, we have defined success as having a median household income at or above the city's average and living above poverty. In 2018, the Federal Poverty level for a family of four was \$25,100. In 2020, that figure was \$21,720. In 2019, the median household income in Jacksonville was \$55,807.

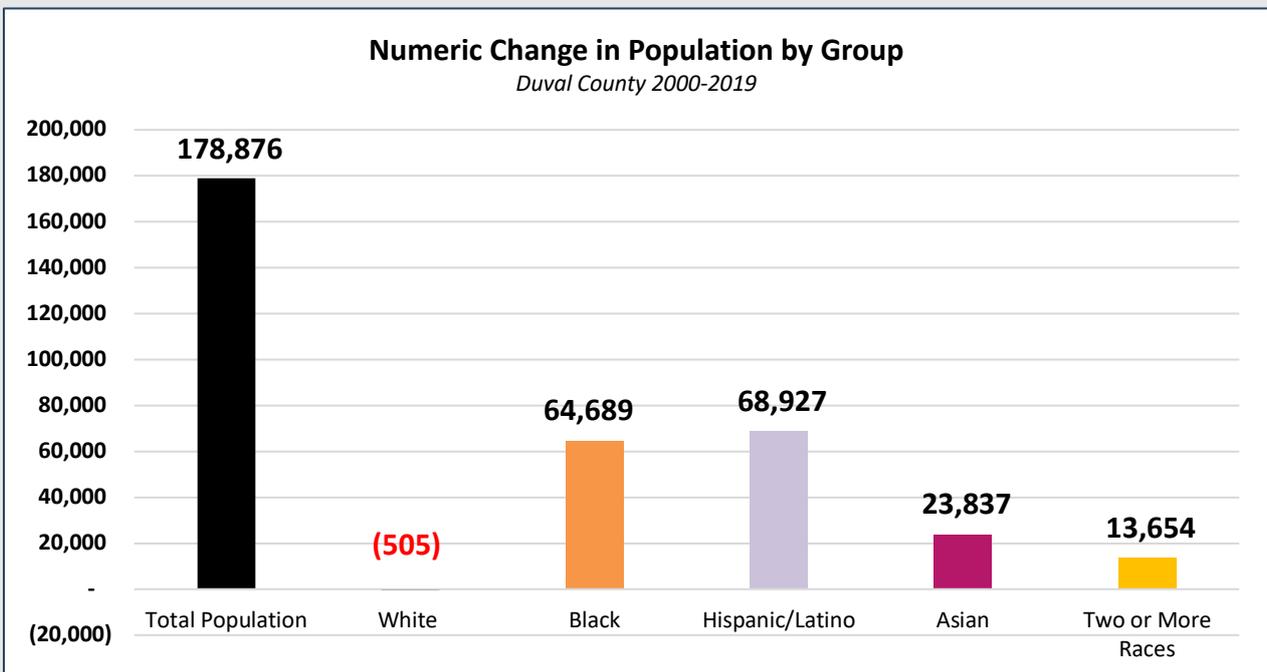
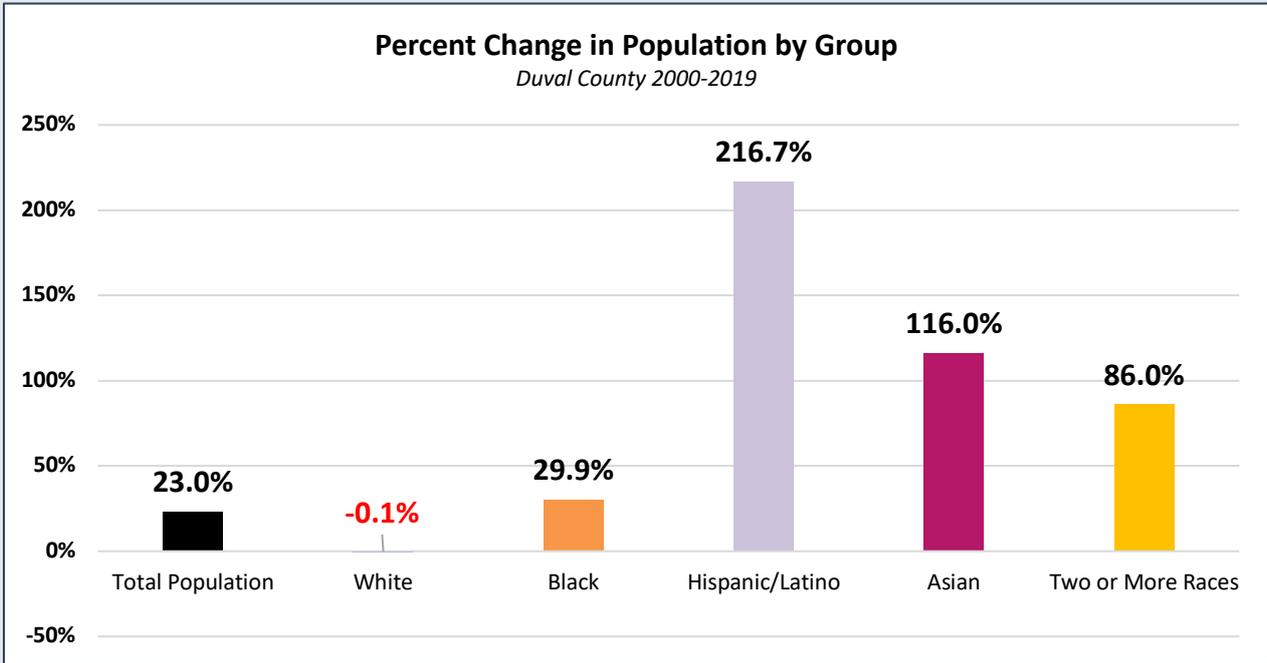
## Population

From 2000 to 2019, the total population of Duval County increased by 23%. However, the city saw dramatic increases among Hispanic/Latinx, Asian and multiracial

people. Nationally, the Hispanic/Latinx population had grown by 19% in this same time span and 26% in the southern regions of the country. In Jacksonville, however, we see that the population for Hispanic/Latinx people has more than tripled (216% growth) in that time span, moving from 4% to 11% of the Jacksonville population. Our Asian population has gone from 3% to 5% (116% growth). The Black population has grown at roughly the same pace as the city overall and remains nearly 30% of Jacksonville's population. However, the White population basically remained the same (a very slight decline) over the 20 years. If trends continue, Jacksonville is a city rapidly becoming more diverse and well on its way to becoming evenly split between White Residents and Residents of Color or even becoming a city where most of its residents are People of Color.

	DUVAL COUNTY POPULATION							
	2000		2010		2019		Change 2000-2019	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total Population</b>	778,879		865,876		957,755		+178,876	+23%
<b>White, not Hispanic/Latino</b>	495,011	64%	488,701	56%	494,506	52%	-505	-0.1%
<b>Black, not Hispanic/Latino</b>	216,517	28%	252,972	29%	281,206	29%	+64,689	+30%
<b>Hispanic/Latino</b>	31,809	4%	65,900	8%	100,736	11%	+68,927	+217%
<b>Asian, not Hispanic/Latino</b>	20,554	3%	34,426	4%	44,391	5%	+23,837	+116%
<b>Two or more races</b>	15,870	2%	20,229	2%	29,524	3%	+13,654	+86%

Source, U.S. Census and PolicyMap

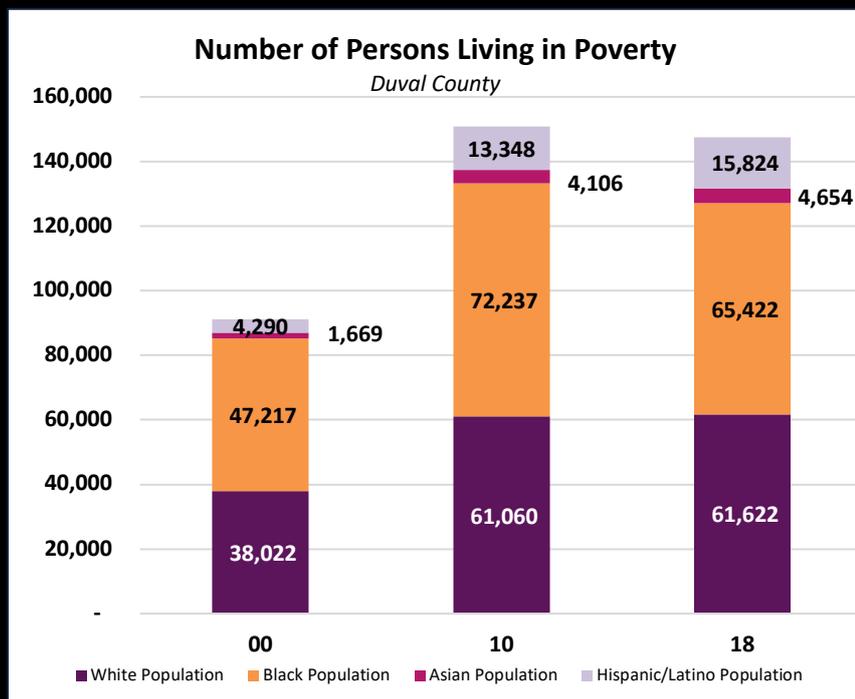
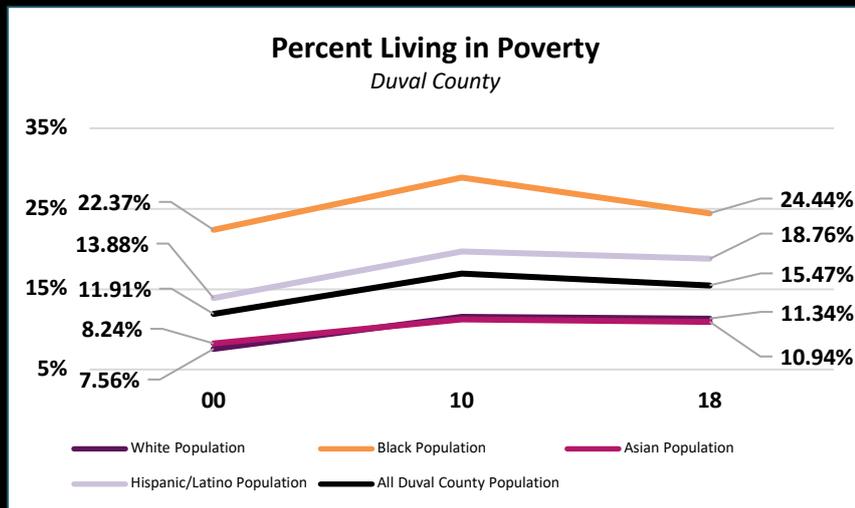
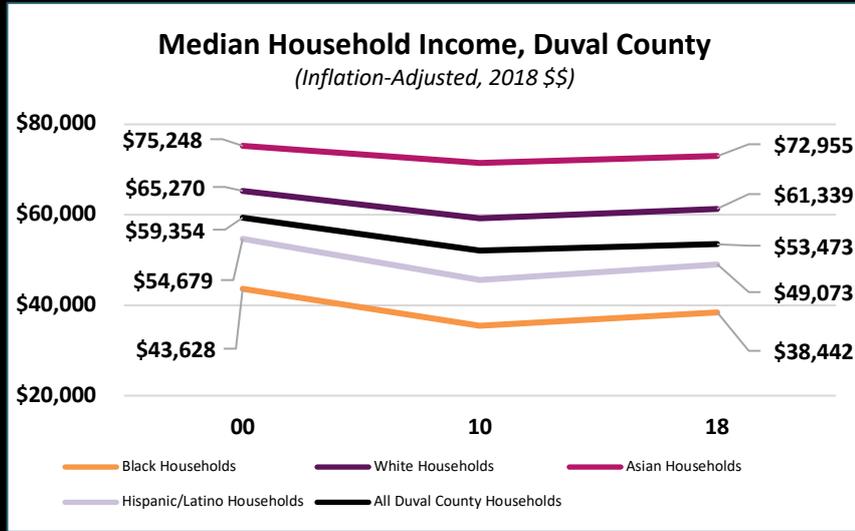


**Income**

When adjusted for inflation, median household incomes for all groups declined between 2000 and 2018, reflecting the devastating effects of the Great Recession and the slow economic recovery. Throughout that period, median household income for Black households has been the lowest of all groups, followed by Hispanic/Latinx households. In 2018, Asian households made \$34,513 more than Black households. White households made \$22,897 more than Black households. Although the median household income for Black households is technically above the poverty threshold for a family of four, this figure is still well below the city’s average and signals a need to acknowledge that although a family may not technically be in poverty, they may still have far fewer means than necessary to take care of their family’s basic needs yet may not qualify for assistance to help get them on their feet.

**Poverty**

Where there is low income, there is high poverty. Poverty is viewed two ways – as a percentage and as the number of people. The percentage represents the proportion of that group’s population (all ages) living in poverty. In other words, in 2018, nearly a quarter of all the Black people living in Jacksonville lived in poverty, which translates to more than 65,000 Black men, women and children living in poverty. Despite People of Color making up less than 50% of the Jacksonville population in 2018, they represent nearly 60% of people living in poverty—most of whom are Black.



## Next Steps

Over this series, we will cover seven domains: education; health; housing; justice & the legal system; employment; media; and politics & civic engagement. We will demonstrate the trends, show the victories, present the challenges and share the recommendations that have already been represented.

We are committed to advocating for systemic changes. We will ask the question, “why” until we arrive at the root of what has driven the outcomes we have seen for all these years.

We are committed to reaching out to community members, stakeholders and anyone who wants to see long-lasting systemic change. This will require us to work differently together, challenge ourselves to think differently and act differently. Our community will be better for it and we will make Jacksonville one of the best places to live and a place where everyone thrives!

### About 904WARD

904WARD began in 2015 with a small group of friends who came together to talk openly, challenge each other, support each other, and take action together to build a more inclusive Jacksonville. We are mostly a volunteer group made up of people from Jacksonville’s private, public, and nonprofit sectors committed to creating a community of inclusion for all of Jacksonville’s residents. 904WARD creates racial healing and equity through deep conversations and learning, trusting relationships, and collective action. Our vision is an end to racism in Jacksonville so all people thrive. To learn more and sign up to get involved, visit [904WARD.org](http://904WARD.org).

### About The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida

The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida, Florida’s oldest and largest community foundation, works to stimulate philanthropy to build a better community. The Foundation helps donors invest their philanthropic gifts wisely, helps nonprofits serve the region effectively, and helps people come together to make the community a better place. Now in its 57<sup>th</sup> year, the Foundation has assets of more than \$540 million and has made nearly \$600 million in grants since 1964. For more information: [www.jaxcf.org](http://www.jaxcf.org).

### About Mary Kress Littlepage

Mary Kress Littlepage is a journalist, researcher and communications expert who has lived in Jacksonville since 1977. For the last two decades, her company, KBT & Associates, has worked with the community’s leading philanthropic organizations to enhance understanding of critical community issues.

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