

FROM CIVIL RIGHTS TO HUMAN RIGHTS:



AFRICAN AMERICAN, & PUERTO RICAN, & WEST INDIAN HOUSING STRUGGLES IN HARTFORD COUNTY, CONNECTICUT

1940 - 2019



JOURNEYS

Suitcases. Boxes. Trunks. Have you ever had to move to a new town, a city, state, or a country? Did you need more than a moving van? Did you also need a passport, a visa, a work permit, or a particular color of your skin to make your journey possible?

Between 1940 and 2019, thousands of African Americans, West Indians, and Puerto Ricans made Connecticut their home. These migrations, epic and mundane, redrew the landscape of major urban centers, including Hartford. Some people came for a job, to follow a loved one, to pursue their dreams, or to escape natural disasters. The decisions of their potential neighbors, courts, banks, developers, municipal government, employers, and housing authorities shaped the places where they could live, work, and attend school.

Real estate agents lied about the availability of units for rent or sale. Developers accommodated racial norms in their blueprints. Banks denied credit and mortgages while insurance companies coded maps in red to delimit where ethnic and racial minorities could purchase homes. Public housing experiments chartered a middle ground by zoning units according to race and income. White neighbors harassed and terrorized aspirant homeowners, then fled as America's cities were engulfed by violence during the civil rights era.

Despite these hurdles, Hartford became a Puerto Rican majority city. West Indians developed high homeownership rates and African Americans made significant political strides in making housing a major arena for civil rights and human rights advocacy.

Join us on a tour through urban America in the post-World War II period as generations of US residents in Hartford County navigated public housing, civil rights, suburbanization, urban renewal, home ownership, gentrification, and educational inequities in one of the most residentially-segregated American cities in the 20th century.

TOBACCO GROWERS Urged To Utilize Jamaican Workers

Too Little, For 10 Puerto Rican Mig

Connecticut shade tobacco growers can be "confident" of sufficient 1944 crop if much use of

BY CRAIG M. PEARSON
The Puerto Rican has given Connecticut a new look at a seemingly bygone phase of history—the "melling pot." This is the second in a series of four articles on his problems and progress here—Editor.
"Yes, we found work in the fields at home," says one Puerto Rican newcomer to Hartford. "But for four months only out of the year. Then, for all anyone cared, we could go fly."
More than half a million Puerto Ricans have turned that figure into a new phase of history—arrivals of their for their of their panded years, s pressur jacketir little fe A Stev Teof four on th Rico: like farm

THE NEGRO ENIGMA

Quoted as Calling

HARTFORD'S NEGRO POPULATION TRIPLED IN EIGHTEEN MONTHS

icans have moved from their island World War II. Why our own state tells There are some 1 trial jobs unfilled in according to a recent help meet the grow for workers in An panding economy m 000 Puerto Ricans ha to the U.S. in each o years. Mostly they go to

Hartford Courant.
The pages of the **Hartford Courant** and the **Hartford Times** chronicled the demographic changes transforming Hartford into an African American, West Indian, and Puerto Rican city between 1940 and 2010. Both newspapers published stories detailing how the agricultural, manufacturing, and financial sectors drew new residents to the capital. They documented the systemic housing, education, and social remedies developed to address racial and economic inequities. They bore witness to and detailed the everyday acts of white cowardice, guile, mistrust, and racial hatred that conspired to keep minorities in their place. Sometimes with alarm and indignation, the pages of these newspapers bemoaned racial injustice and inequality. In other instances, they promoted declension narratives associated with the emergence of Hartford's new ethnic communities. At times the voice, eyes, and conscience of the city, the local press created a vast documentary record of people on the move and a city undergoing profound demographic and economic changes.

glass and empty projectiles. City an en in riot gear their cars gear ir shotguns resti s. one off the dark a shadowy ar a vacant hou leveled his teat launched a gas ploded, and the gloom. It rolled away. "You—" came a cry fi the building. "Come down h and say that," the called back

HARTFORD UNREST IS TIED TO A SLUR

POLISH PEOPLE MAKING PROGRESS: 120,000 OF THEM IN CONNECTICUT
The Hartford Courant (1887-1922); Sep 16, 1909; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Hartford Courant pg. 15

POLISH PEOPLE MAKING PROGRESS.

money in ready and llance has just bo appropriate building. T committee, one of and labor and the other of and colonization, are workd its line for the benefit of

HARTFORD, POVERTY & PLENTY:

1900 - 1950

“

I see one-third of a nation
ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished. ”

Franklin D. Roosevelt, Second Inaugural Address on January 20, 1937

The housing and economic crisis that riveted FDR's administration was part of a long boom and bust cycle that had transformed major American cities from the turn of the century until the Great Depression. Like many industrial cities in the Northeast, Hartford has been home to a succession of immigrant communities, in search of employment, asylum, and a better life. The city's population doubled between 1900 and 1930 from 79,860 to 164,072 as European immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe jostled alongside local-born residents to make a new life. They were joined by Africans Americans also making their way to manufacturing and agricultural centers that could offer better jobs than those found at home and seeking refuge from discriminatory laws and racial violence.

By 1940 the majority of Hartford's foreign-born population claimed Italian, Polish, Russian, and Irish ancestry while the Great Migration deposited a significant number of African Americans from Georgia. The city could boast of 45 insurance companies, a robust manufacturing sector, and a boutique shade tobacco industry competing for white collar and blue collar workers. Yet major segments of Hartford's population benefited unevenly from this cycle and these rapid population shifts created significant challenges in housing the steady stream of new residents. Hartford's tenement housing burst at the seams. Slum clearance, urban renewal, and public housing emerged as major policy interventions to save Hartford and many other industrial centers.

When West Indians, Puerto Ricans, and African Americans joined the labor stream, Connecticut had represented many things: a relocation to the mainland, to the North or to "foreign," as West Indian termed overseas territories. With new job opportunities came challenging neighborhoods with overcrowding, high rents, dilapidated houses, and absentee landlords.

Products Manufactured

Typewriters, precision machines, tools, brushes, revolvers, machine guns, dish washing machines, counting devices, power transmission chains, vacuum systems, chucks, castings, electrical equipment and supplies, turbine and marine engines, special machinery, auto-drop forgings, telephone equipment, horsenails, automotive radiators and parts, screws, electric refrigerating machines, porcelain, plumbing and heating supplies, sewing machines, gold beating, steam turbines.

Source: Greater Hartford Directory, 1940, 1950, Hartford History Center, Hartford Public Library



Three African American women (left) in front of east side tenements, Pearl Street, Hartford. To the right are two African American men standing in the same building. The men are holding brooms. A child can be seen in a third-story window to the left. Other buildings are visible in the background. Laundry and outbuildings, possibly privies, can be seen to the right, circa 1900-1920.

Courtesy of the Hartford History Center, Hartford Public Library.

HISTORIC FIRSTS:

**ELLA G.
BROWN**



**MARIA
COLÓN SÁNCHEZ**

Ella G. Brown: Connecticut's first African American police woman

Hartford was home for Ella G. Brown. She attended Hartford High School before moving to Virginia for college. As the primary caregiver for her father, Ella made the difficult choice to leave school to care for him when he became ill. She later finished her education at the University of Hartford. As a police woman, a career she pursued for 26 years, Brown worked in the Juvenile Division which handled cases on women and children.

Brown also made strides as an entrepreneur. She developed another career in the travel industry when she co-founded a company in 1963 that eventually operated out of the Sage-Allen Travel Center until 1976. From 1977 until her death in 1984, she led the North Hartford Senior center as the Executive Director.

She also served as the president of the Citizens' Committee of the North End (CCNE). The organization, whose members numbered 3000, worked on two important projects: one for the broader George A. Parker Memorial Community Center. The second project was a senior housing project: Brotherhood Homes for the Aged.



Maria Colón Sánchez: ardent advocate of Puerto Rican socio-economic and political development in Hartford



As a businesswoman, a political powerhouse, and a community organizer, Colón Sánchez dedicated her life to advocating for the rights of the many thousands, like herself, who had relocated to the mainland in search of a better life. Among her primary concerns were political enfranchisement, activism, and education advocacy, including the hiring of Spanish-speaking teachers and priests to cater to Hartford's growing Puerto Rican community. These early efforts would lead to the creation of a mandate for bilingual education in Hartford public schools in the 1970s.

Colón Sánchez worked diligently to open a convenience store, *Maria's News*, on Albany Avenue in Hartford's North End. The store provided the local Puerto Rican community an access point to a vocal and passionate supporter who could serve as an arbiter on a range of issues from housing struggles to police brutality. In 1973 Colón Sánchez campaigned for a seat on Hartford's Board of Education, a victory that made her the first Puerto Rican elected to public office in Hartford. She would take her tireless political campaign to Connecticut's General Assembly in 1988 as the first Hispanic woman to be elected. Colón Sánchez spent 35 years in Hartford stitching together a life deeply embedded in and committed to a community whose hopes and dreams reflected her own.

DONALD CRAFTON DORMAN

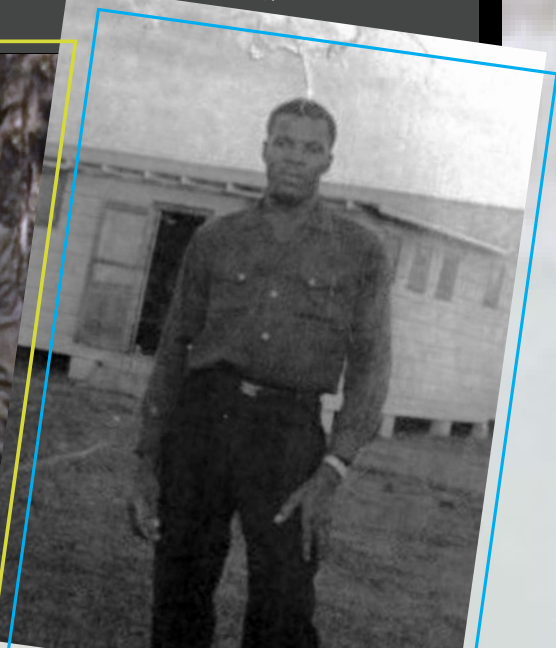
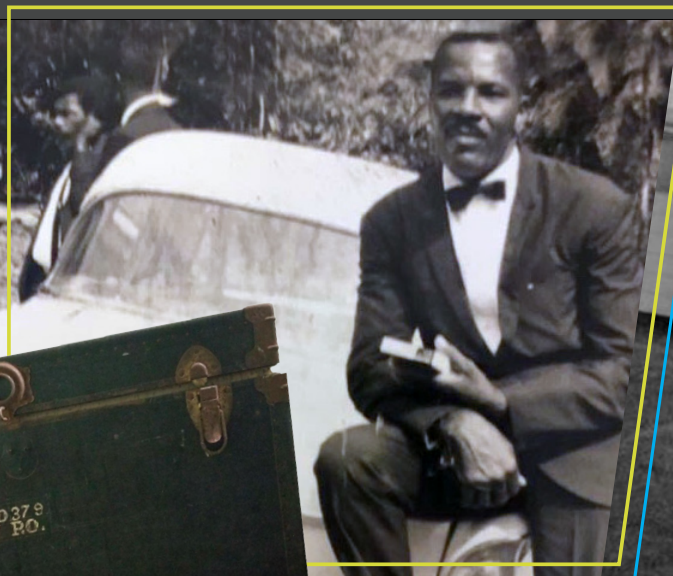


A savvy entrepreneur and family man

Mr. Donald Crafton Dorman came to the United States in the 1940s through the War Manpower Act that attempted to address labor shortages in American agriculture and industry. Like the many thousands of Jamaican immigrants, Mr. Dorman's work ethic led to assignments in Windsor, Connecticut. He returned to the United States in the 1950s including a posting in Louisiana. While others eventually settled down in the northeast, he had grand entrepreneurial visions back home in Jamaica. He leveraged his travels in the United States for business ventures such as farming and opening a shop. He and his wife, Icolene, knew each other well when they were growing up because she went to school in Maggoty District, St. Elizabeth. They kept in touch throughout his travels by mail and in 1961 he came to Kingston to take her on a memorable date, a black and white film about the Everly Brothers.

They raised their family until he was tragically killed. While we do not get to know the end of Mr. Dorman's ambitious life, the possibilities were boundless for a man who had an expansive vision of the world and his place in it. Those who know him well recounted that he loved his children and cared for his growing family. He lived an exuberant, boundless, fearless life full of passion, a pattern — a *joie-de vivre*— his family tries to duplicate. His trunk represents an important artifact of his travel from what was then the British West Indies (BWI) to the United States.

As a farm worker in Windsor, CT



D. DORMAN, J. 570279
MAGGOTTY RD.
JA. BWI.

AFRICAN AMERICAN SETTLEMENT

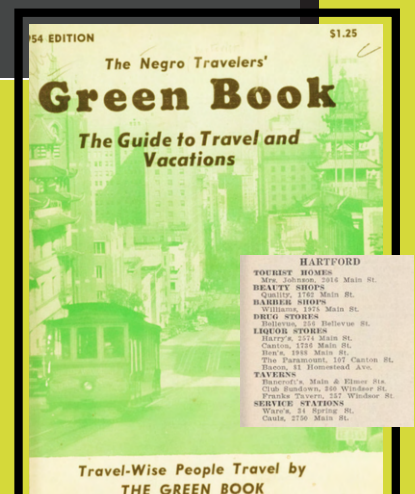
“ [I fear that] ten thousand recollections of the injustices African Americans suffered will lead to inevitable racial conflict. ”

Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785)

Thomas Jefferson was correct. White racism and the institution of slavery sparked everyday acts of resistance. Across the Atlantic world, the enslaved ran away and revolted. When those acts of resistance and the Civil War failed to deliver on their promises in the United States, people voted with their feet. In what journalist Isabel Wilkerson calls a “silent pilgrimage” and others harken to a Biblical exodus, African Americans left the South. By foot, train, cars, and buses, they said, “No” to violence and the stunted life chances they faced.

“Disfranchisement, peonage, the abuses of the chain-gang, the leasing of prisoners as laborers, the easy surrender of prisoners by sheriffs to the leaders of mobs, the lynchings without trial, the Jim Crow cars where the ordinary decencies of life are not respected:” These were among the litany of offenses that *The Crisis*, published by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) identified in its November 1923 issue as some of the push factors propelling African Americans to leave to the South. By 1970, six million African Americans had embarked on the Great Migration for new lives in Northeastern, Midwestern, and Western States.

Besides the trans-Atlantic slave trade, this was the largest mass movement of peoples of African descent. Like the centuries of involuntary migration that preceded it, the Great Migration would reshape American cities. By 1930, forty percent of the African American population in Hartford identified their original home as Georgia. Another 15 percent originated from the Carolinas and Virginia. Americus, Plains, Ellaville, and other Georgian locales kindled a long pattern of chain migration to Hartford that would register profoundly in the residential makeup of the North End of Hartford and especially in the public housing projects of the 1940s.



PUERTO RICAN SETTLEMENT

Between 1950 and 1960, 470,000 people, or approximately one-fifth of Puerto Rico's population, relocated to the United States.

New York attracted the vast majority of these sojourners who settled in manufacturing, service, maintenance, and domestic jobs. Like other ethnic groups before and in concert with them, Puerto Ricans sought better economic opportunities in their cities of first entry before moving out to nearby cities like Philadelphia, Chicago, Bridgeport and Hartford, to join family or pursue other opportunities.

The Jones Act of 1917 granted Puerto Ricans U.S. citizenship, making relocation to the mainland far easier in principle than other groups impacted by the restrictive immigration policies that closed US borders for the next four decades. Yet farm labor programs offering employment also played an important role in facilitating the initial transportation to the United States. These programs recruited 421,238 Puerto Ricans workers between 1948 and 1990, the second largest mobilization of seasonal labors after the Mexican Bracero program.

Connecticut's shade tobacco industry was one of the sectors that attracted Puerto Ricans to the Hartford area. Like other migrants however, seasonal work was a temporary strategy. Once settled in Hartford, the manufacturing and service sectors absorbed Puerto Rican workers. Despite U.S. citizenship, Puerto Ricans faced discrimination in housing, employment, and the provision of equal educational services. Whatever the actual level of English language proficiency, an accent—any accent—was an instant marker of outsider status and a sensitive filter for the daily interactions of new migrants. Social service agencies that could help them settle in the local area often had no bilingual service; Catholic Churches that served as an important spiritual home sometimes held services in the basement or did not offer mass in Spanish. Schools proved ill-equipped and sometimes neglectful in addressing the demographic changes unfolding their midst. Bilingual education became one of the touchstones of Puerto Rican civil rights activism in Hartford and across the United States.

Source: Hartford Courant 28 November 1955

Committee Considers Puerto Rican Problems

Housing, employment, recreation and language problems of Puerto Ricans who have settled in Hartford are being considered by a 12-member committee of the Greater Hartford Community Council.

Mrs. Carleton F. Sharpe, wife of the City Manager, heads the committee. It has started to hold monthly meetings. Mrs. Sharpe said that according to a recent estimate there are about 2,000 Puerto Ricans in the city. Her committee will try to find out

Women seated on a Puerto Rican parade float with a partially visible palm tree, Hartford. One woman holds a banner.



WEST INDIAN SETTLEMENT

The 1950 census identified about 245 West Indians in Connecticut, many of them men who had come to the United States in the 1940s to contribute to the war effort.

By 2010, West Indians surpassed all other ethnic groups to become the largest population of foreign-born immigrants in Connecticut. This demographic trend was seven decades in the making, with the original kernel of this population arriving as guest workers in the Hartford region in the 1940s through bilateral labor agreements between British West Indian colonies and the United States. The vast majority were Jamaicans, but there were also Trinidadians and Barbadians as well.

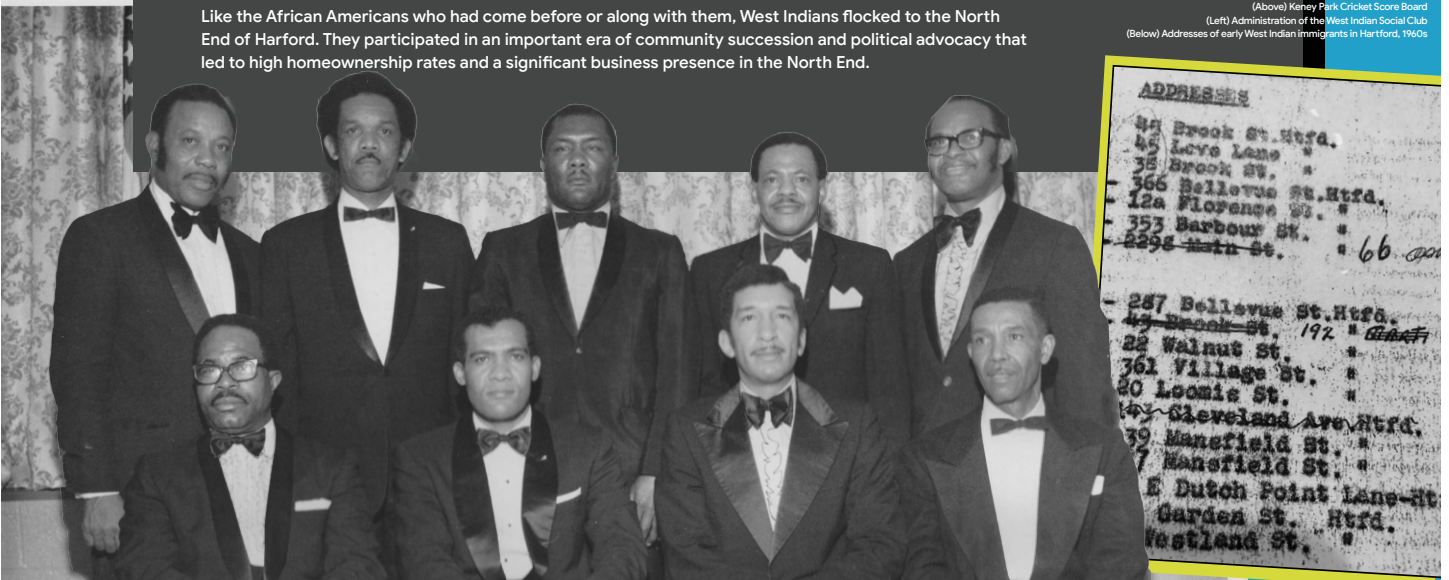
By the time these war-time labor opportunities appeared, a significant West Indian population had settled in New York, a population that had already reached 54,000 by the 1930s. In Connecticut, the draw was primarily the tobacco industry which benefited from the labor distributed through the industrial and agricultural concessions made for war-time. The diaspora of West Indian laborers established a post-emancipation labor tradition that created new spaces to recast and renegotiate the labor of black men and later, women.

Some of these guest workers married African-American women, forming a nascent West Indian community. They met these women in the tobacco fields, in churches, and local social organizations. Facing discrimination, they founded their own social, religious, and athletic organizations as autonomous cultural spaces and networks beginning with the West Indian Social Club in 1950, followed by the Caribbean American Society, the Barbados American Society, the Trinidad & Tobago American Society, the Jamaica Progressive League, the St. Lucia American Society, and the Cricket Hall of Fame among others.

KENEY PARK CRICKET		
BATSMAN NO.	TOTAL	OVERS
NO.	FOR WKTS	BOWLERS OVERS
LAST WKT OUT	HOME	NO.
LAST MAN	VISITORS	EXTRAS

Like the African Americans who had come before or along with them, West Indians flocked to the North End of Hartford. They participated in an important era of community succession and political advocacy that led to high homeownership rates and a significant business presence in the North End.

(Above) Keney Park Cricket Score Board
(Left) Administration of the West Indian Social Club
(Below) Addresses of early West Indian immigrants in Hartford, 1940s



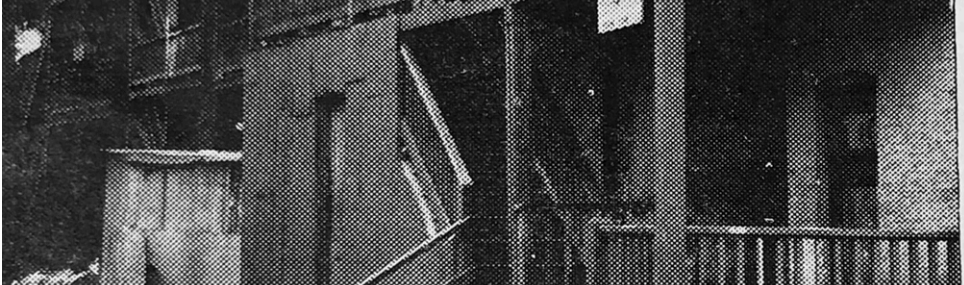
POST-WAR HOUSING CRISIS

World War II ushered in a period of intense demographic shifts that intersected with a housing crisis that was already half a century in the making. The nation's citizens deployed overseas to various theaters of war, leaving a gaping demand for industrial, manufacturing, and agricultural labor. The United States turned to its neighbors in the Caribbean to fill these temporary shortages and the boom economy spurred many people to move to major urban centers. Everyone was on the move—from white communities of various ethnic backgrounds to African Americans, West Indians, and Puerto Ricans. Following the war, the US owed a debt to veterans and the auxiliary civilian population that had contributed to the war effort. The war-time and post-war housing crisis led to policy interventions focused on slum clearance and the construction of public housing. The New England area needed 400,000 new homes with Connecticut facing a shortage of 80,000 new housing units.

Slum clearance impacted African Americans communities disproportionately.

They were concentrated in the very sub-standard housing targeted for removal. Yet the public housing designed to address some of these shortages fell significantly short of the actual need.

Robert Hurley, Governor of Connecticut (1941-1943), believed public housing represented the diagnosis and the cure public officials envisioned for these problems. Low and moderate income public housing units came online in the 1940s for the poor and some middle-class people. The government, meanwhile, implemented new policies that provided low interest mortgages, facilitating homeownership for whites and some veterans. Despite service to their nation, many African Americans continued to face discrimination when they tried to access mortgages and insurance. White communities could target embryonic suburban areas for settlement. Federal and state-sanctioned discrimination policies in the housing sector kept African Americans, West Indians, and Puerto Ricans in place in the 1950s. Hartford's population peaked at 177,391 in 1950s. White suburbanization was in its nascent stages.



CAN
PASS
AWAY

BELLEVUE SQUARE

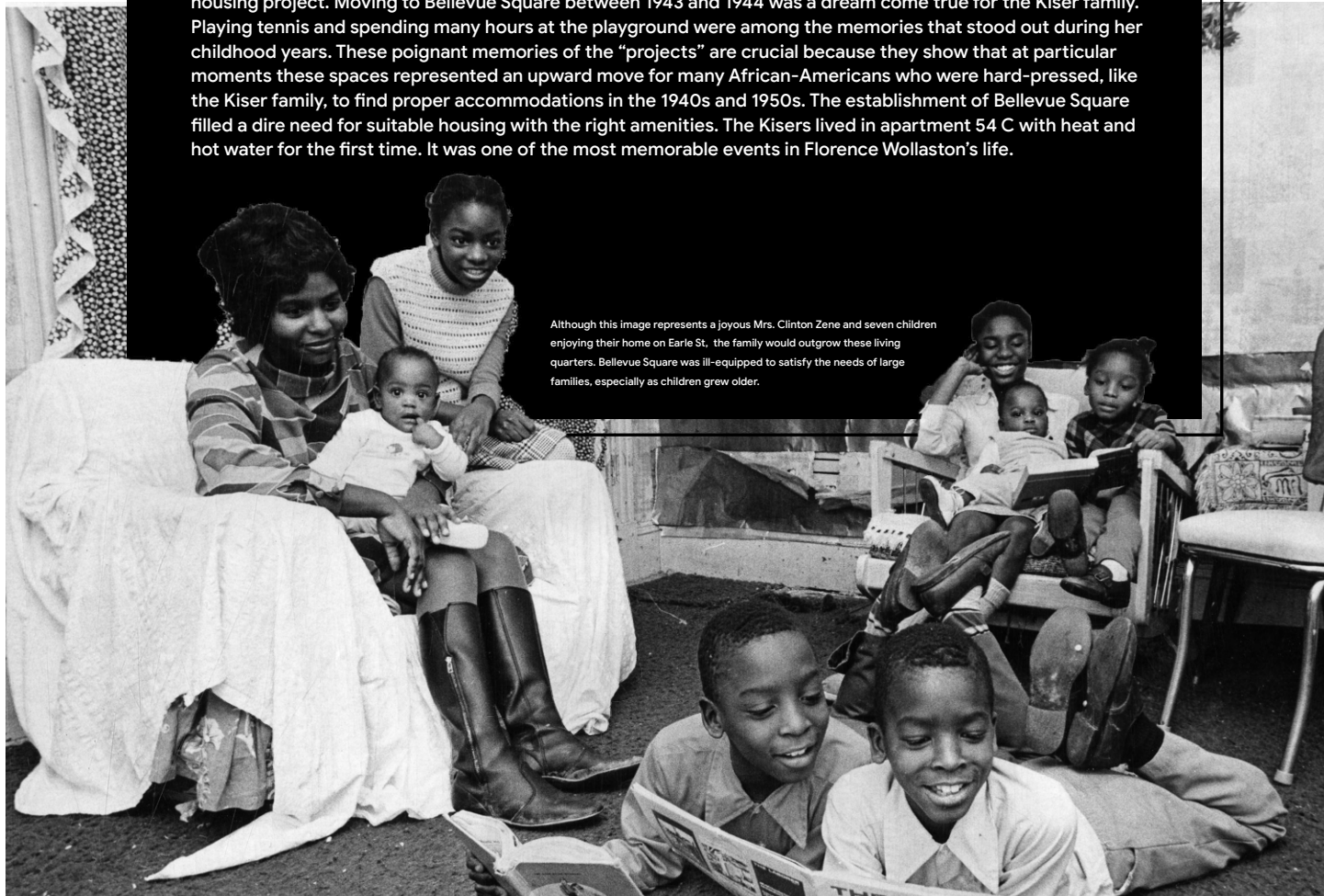


The scenes above show groundskeeping (left), the community building (center) and swimming lessons at Bellevue Square (right).
Source: HHA Annual Report 1963

For the African American families who turned to public housing to address the severe shortage of suitable accommodations in Hartford, the possibility of a better standard of living was a real promise. Not only was it difficult to find suitable places to live, even with high rents many accommodations had no heat and hot water; ice had to be bought from the trucks on the street and clothes had to be ironed with a heavy metal iron.

Florence Kiser Price Wollaston, who grew up at Bellevue Square, recalls how her parents moved around in the 1940s trying to find the right apartment in Hartford. The family moved up and down Canton Street in the 1940s, which would constantly flood at its intersection with Bellevue Street. Her father helped to build the dike to prevent these floods. Each move the Wollaston family made was in search of a better place to live.

She recalls the razing of homes on Pavillion, Canton, and Wooster Streets to make way for the Bellevue Square housing project. Moving to Bellevue Square between 1943 and 1944 was a dream come true for the Kiser family. Playing tennis and spending many hours at the playground were among the memories that stood out during her childhood years. These poignant memories of the "projects" are crucial because they show that at particular moments these spaces represented an upward move for many African-Americans who were hard-pressed, like the Kiser family, to find proper accommodations in the 1940s and 1950s. The establishment of Bellevue Square filled a dire need for suitable housing with the right amenities. The Kisers lived in apartment 54 C with heat and hot water for the first time. It was one of the most memorable events in Florence Wollaston's life.



Although this image represents a joyous Mrs. Clinton Zene and seven children enjoying their home on Earle St., the family would outgrow these living quarters. Bellevue Square was ill-equipped to satisfy the needs of large families, especially as children grew older.

POST-WAR HOUSING CRISIS

THERE IS A NEED FOR A HOUSING REFORM...

- ○ ○ which need cannot be fully answered until there is complete cooperation between our own city, our contractors, our building trades, and the individual citizen.

To solve the entire problem calls for not only the cooperation of all of us but a willingness upon each of us to make **some personal sacrifice** for the ultimate **good of the community.**

Sound economics cannot be abandoned in housing any more than any other enterprise. On the other hand, when there is a scarcity of rents such as now exist in our city and when the cost of those rents is prohibitive for the person of small income, the result is far-reaching and affects all of us.



THOMAS J. SPELLACY
MAYOR OF HARTFORD, **1935-1943**

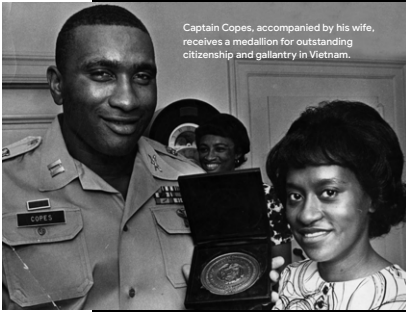
PUBLIC HOUSING IS NO LONGER AN EXPERIMENT

- ○ ○ Hundreds of our communities all over the country have seen fit to erect dwellings that have done much to beautify the surroundings besides giving to the underprivileged many of the living conditions that they were heretofore unable to receive. Another effect, and most important, is the clearance of slum districts and sub-standard dwellings. From a health, economic, and social viewpoint the benefits are immeasurable. Excessive fire and accident hazards, unsafe and unsanitary houses will be a thing of the past. Safe play for children, indoors and out, will be provided.

ROBERT A. HURLEY

GOVERNOR OF CONNECTICUT, 1941-1943

CHARTER OAK TERRACE



Captain Copes, accompanied by his wife, receives a medallion for outstanding citizenship and gallantry in Vietnam.

Hartford
Housing
Authority
Photograph
Collection

With 1000 units Charter Oak Terrace held the promise of addressing the severe shortage of affordable housing in Hartford. The unit located at Flatbush and Newfield Avenues, and Dart and Chandler Streets, had twice the occupancy of Bellevue Square and opened in 1941. Whereas Bellevue Square sat on 12.5 acres, Charter Oak Terrace covered 124 acres. The design, like other public housing units, encompassed recreational, educational, medical, and religious services. The Hartford Good Will Boys' Club hosted recreational activities and the Christian Activities Council of Hartford conducted Sunday School and Church Services. Children attended the local community school at **Mary Hooker School**, which like the housing complex, was new.

This planned community represented both an important policy intervention and a particular vision of urban planning. Children would have access to education, healthcare and religious services, and would be reared in a wholesome environment that promoted family values. Those who grew up at Charter Oak Terrace in its early years, like Vietnam Veteran Ron Copes, recall with pride the sense of the community and family. Whether they were going to the library, or the movies, playing basketball, stickball, or baseball, it was possible to have a good childhood. Many of the kids spent their summers at *Camp Courant* and for a moment, the goals of public housing seemed like they had been achieved.

1983 Mary Hooker School, 6th Grade, Mrs Sullivan's Classroom. Nelson Valentin (second row, second child from the left with big grin) and Marisol Sanjuán (first row from the top, first child on the left) spent much of their childhood and adolescence at Charter Oak Terrace.

I was born in Hartford, Hartford Hospital. My mom lived in Charter Oak at the time. We grew up there and lived on 81 Delta St. I went to Walburton Pre-k, Mary M. Hooker kindergarten thru 6th grade, Fox Elementary for 7th and 8th and Bulkeley for High school. I got my diploma through the adult education school on Washington St, though. Being a young mom (15 to be exact) and married at 16, I couldn't do full time school and work. I lived in Charter Oak Terrace on and off for 23 years.

Marisol Sanjuán



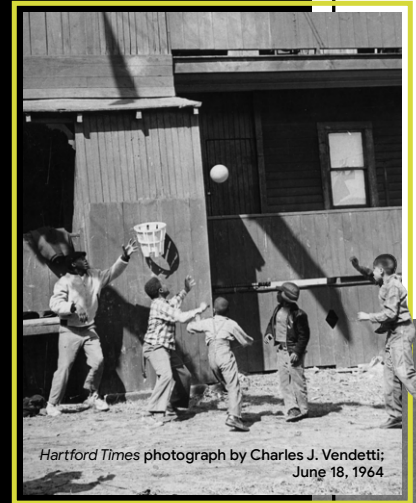
THE PROMISE OF RECREATION



“

The child population [in public housing] is greater than the entire population of such towns as Avon, Cromwell, Rocky Hill and Suffield. ”

By 1963, the Hartford Housing Authority supervised 8 projects providing homes for 8,507 children, which represented 59.2 percent of the overall population living in public housing. With so many of Hartford youth in public housing, recreational and leisure activities featured prominently in the kind of improvements public housing was meant to address. Playgrounds, community centers, basketball courts all replaced “dingy alleyways, litter-strewn vacant lots, and dangerous street play.”



The projects included low-income, federally assisted housing and moderate income, state-assisted housing. Hartford residents who lived in these communities recall the opportunity to play tennis, basketball, table tennis, to learn how to swim, to attend concerts and cookouts. Local area business and social clubs sponsored cooking and sewing demonstrations as well as summer activities. Both parents and officials were optimistic that indoor and outdoor recreation could curb the tide of juvenile delinquency and provide **safe, wholesome environments for local youth.**

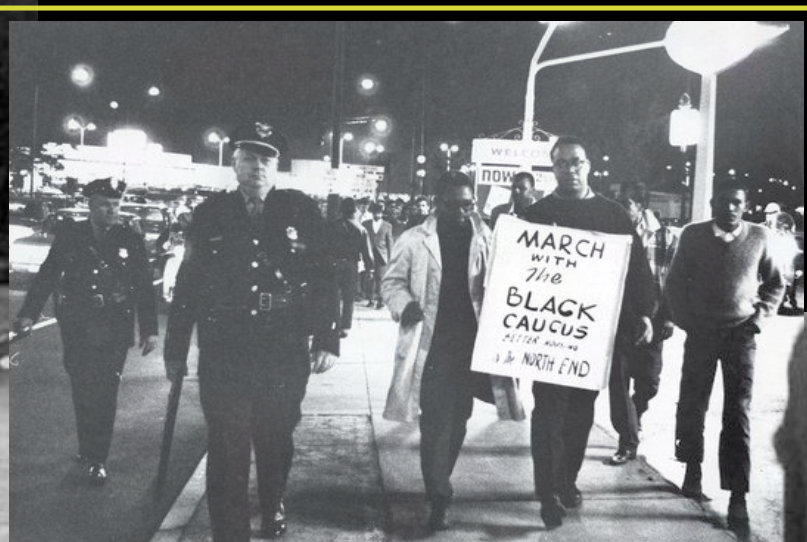
Source: HHA Annual Report 1963



CIVIL RIGHTS & CIVIL UNREST

**BEATINGS
SHOOTINGS
POLICE BRUTALITY
CURFEWS
ARSON**

Civil unrest gripped America's major urban centers in the 1960s and Hartford was no different. Unemployment accompanied the city's demographic shift to an enclave of Puerto Rican, West Indian, and African American majorities. Police brutality and the indignities of racial discrimination pervaded daily life. The North End reflected a toxic soup of high rents, inconsiderate slum lords, and limited opportunities to own a home, move into the suburban areas, or receive a quality education. In despair and frustration, some protesters in Hartford, including many youth, used violence to make their voices heard. Some of their peers tried to stop them. While civil rights leaders debated the efficacy of violence or passive resistance, few major cities were left unscathed by the scale of civil unrest unfolding across the United States. President Johnson called on the American conscience to help make sense of the conflict.



Marchers for better North End (Hartford) housing, West Hartford, 1967
African American men march with signs on a street in an area identified as West Hartford. Police can be seen alongside to the left and in the background.
Written on back: "10/13/67 West Htd." Sign carried by a man at the front of the marchers says "March with The Black Caucus, Better Housing, North End"



THE ONLY GENUINE, LONG-RANGE SOLUTION FOR WHAT HAS HAPPENED LIES IN AN ATTACK...



Images showing civil unrest on Barbour St in the North End of Hartford, the Black Caucus March and a Bus Departing Hartford for the March on Washington and Puerto Ricans on the steps of City Hall.

○ ○ ○ mounted at every level—upon the conditions that breed despair and violence. All of us know what those conditions are: ignorance, discrimination, slums, poverty, disease, not enough jobs. We should attack these conditions—not because we are frightened by conflict, but because we are fired by conscience. We should attack them because there is simply no other way to achieve a decent and orderly society in America.

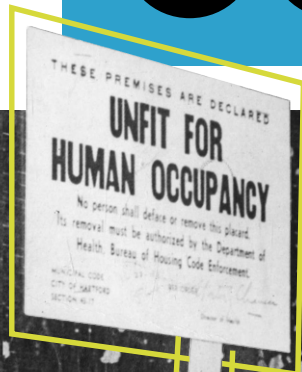
LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE NATION, 27 JUNE 1967

REPORT OF THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMISSION ON CIVIL DISORDERS



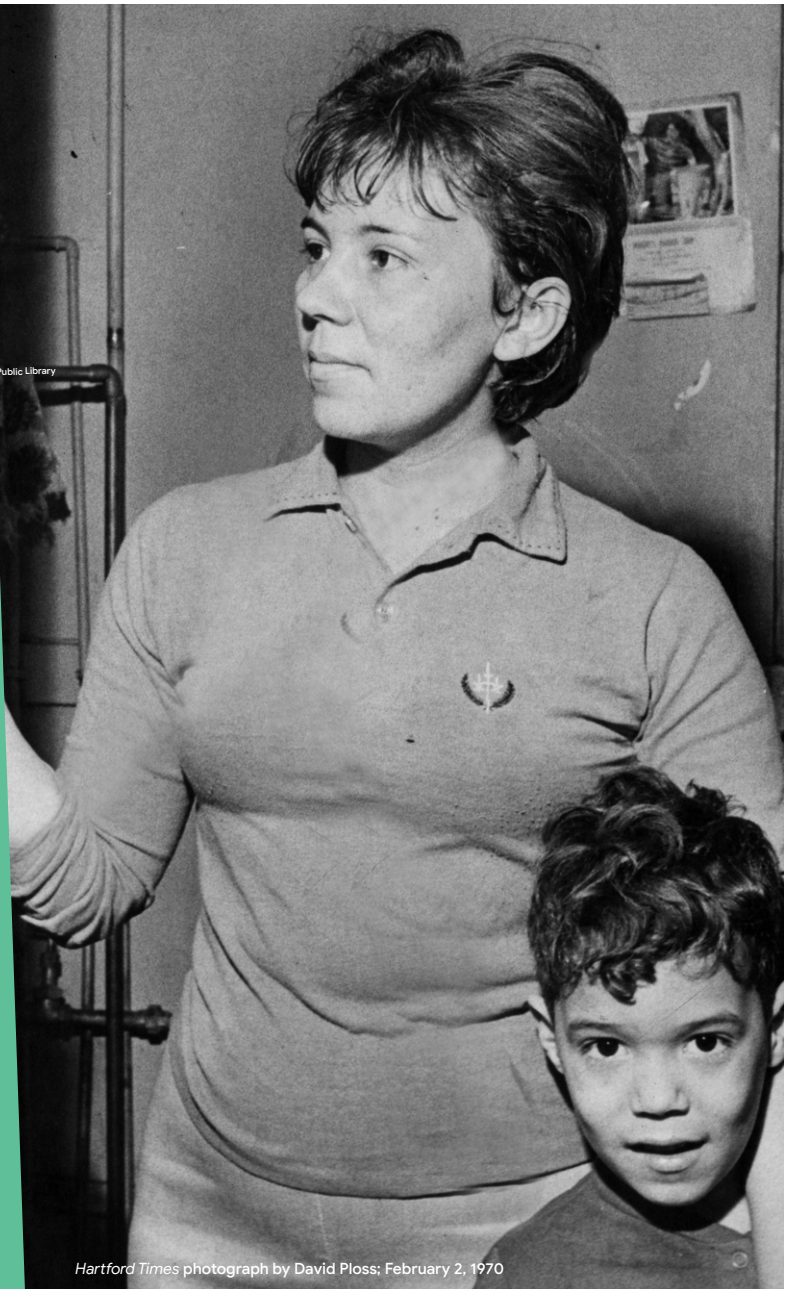
UNFIT FOR HUMAN OCCUPANCY



Source: Images courtesy of the Hartford History Center, Hartford Public Library

SLUMLORDS THEN... SLUMLORDS NOW.

Slumlords. Urban blight. Black mold. Rodent infestations and numerous other housing code violations. Recent *Hartford Courant* headlines continue to document the enduring legacies of segregated housing and poverty in Hartford. "Hartford has the Highest Rate of Urban Dwellers Living in Economically Troubled Neighborhoods," a June 2018 *Courant* headline reads. These headlines are disturbingly timeless for many of the ethnic and racial minorities who call the city their home. They could have described any decade between the 1930s and 2010s as poverty limited housing options and poor housing created or exacerbated poverty. Even middle income families facing poor housing choices can have their health and job prospects ruined when they have to spend emotional and financial capital addressing horrendous living conditions. Hartford again made headlines when the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) terminated the contract of New York's infamous landlord, Emmanuel Ku. After years of inadequate maintenance and deplorable living conditions that posed a risk to his tenants' health and safety, tenants and community activists finally won their bid to oust Ku. An organized group of tenants demonstrated that ordinary people could win against a wealthy, unscrupulous landlord. HUD's regime of inspections continues to fail many of the clients who rely on the agency to certify that housing units are suitable for occupancy.



Hartford Times photograph by David Ploss; February 2, 1970

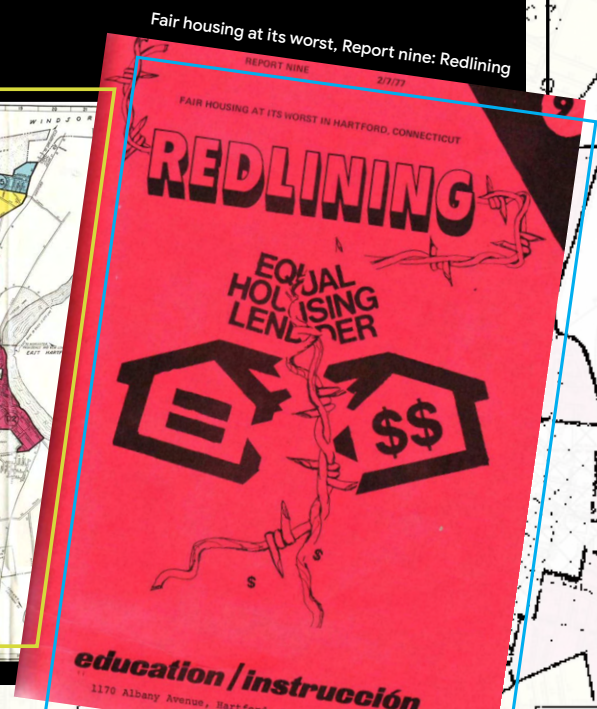
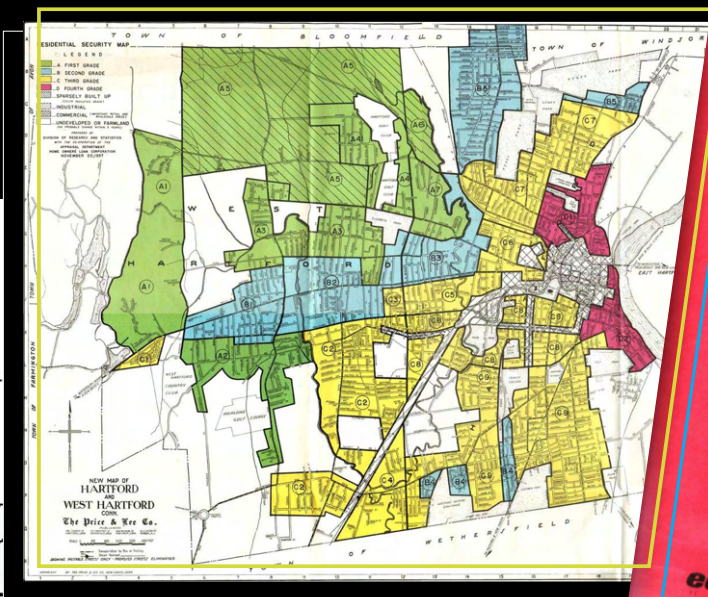
A tenant examines the distressing notification that her building was "unfit for human occupancy," 2 February 1970. The building was owned by Jerome Diamond, who was cited for numerous housing code violations and issued warrants to appear in housing court.

REDLINING IN HARTFORD & WEST HARTFORD



The Great Depression devastated families across the United States, unleashed a wave of foreclosures, and spawned a major crisis in the housing sector. The federal government created a new infrastructure to facilitate home ownership by changing the way people financed and insured their homes. The National Housing Act of 1934 established the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation. This framework, which gave us our current system of 30-year mortgages, laid the foundation for racial discrimination in the housing market. Using the language of risk management, the FHA supported the classification of neighborhoods according to their demographic profile. The process known as redlining coded maps according to the desirability and viability of loans in particular communities. Many of Hartford's ethnic and racial minorities lived in neighborhood branded Grades C or D, the two lowest categories, making them ineligible for federally-backed loans. Even veterans in these neighborhoods faced difficulties accessing these loans.

The passage of the Fair Housing Act in 1968 banned racially discriminatory practices in the housing market. The federal government could play an important role in ending de jure racial discrimination because it had played such an outsized role in legalizing discrimination in the first place. The laws could not change hearts and minds, however. Bankers and real estate agents continued practices that resulted in de facto discrimination. When the wrong kinds of people moved into certain neighborhoods, whites fled to the suburbs. The money followed them out of the city as well.



EDUCATION: I AM NOT MY ZIP CODE.



Something is dramatically wrong in a state with all this affluence to have districts with 80 to 90% minority students . . .

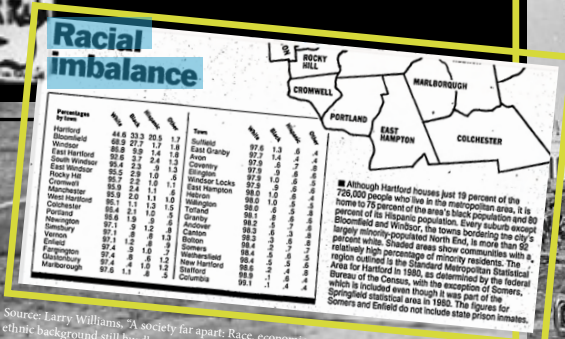
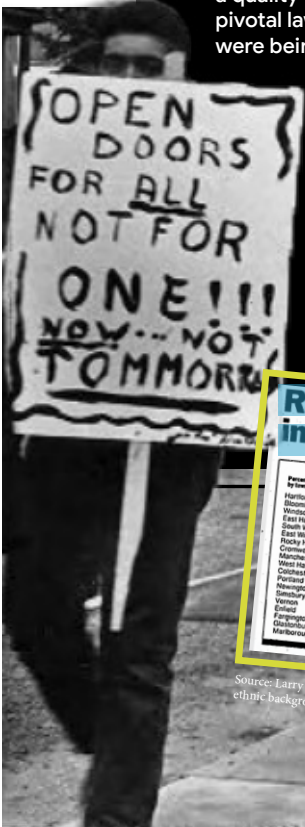


It is morally wrong, socially wrong, educationally wrong. 55

Gerald N. Tirozzi, Commissioner of Education, 1987

Once one of America's wealthiest and progressive cities, Hartford boasted similar accolades in the realm of education. You could get a quality education in the city. That was a late nineteenth and early twentieth-century story. Post-industrial decline, urban disinvestment, and deep patterns of residential segregation have conspired to create enduring patterns of education inequities that make Hartford stand out in the national and local press. African American, West Indian, and Puerto Rican students in Hartford were on the frontlines of white suburban flight, watching as their parents struggled to provide a quality education and to push for integrated schools. Seven years passed between the launching of the pivotal lawsuit, *Sheff v. O'Neill* in July 1989 and the final ruling that the constitutional rights of children were being violated.

Despite the implementation of inter-district magnet schools and school choice programs, inequality and segregation have burrowed into the infrastructure of the city and many of its schools. Voluntary busing and lotteries have created long waiting lists and frustration among Hartford's parents. Pockets of success overlook the need for and the needs of neighborhood schools. Beneath the surface of these broader problems lurk further issues of uneven access to support services for children with disabilities and English language learners. Many children have beaten the odds. Yet Hartford remains perversely segregated. The crisis in public education and housing is creating adverse outcomes for generations of children whose zip codes are shaping their destiny.



Referred to Committee on

Human Rights & Opp.

LCO No. 3

Introduced by SEN. SMITH- 2nd DIST.

General Assembly,

January Session, A.D., 197



AN
BY

RESURGENCE

OF

TENANT

ACTIVISM

AND

ORGANIZING

IN

HARTFORD

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in

General Assembly

Section 1.

any aid or assistance representing payment for or toward the rental of any

housing assistance or public assistance which exists

any violation of any provision of chapter 352 of the general statutes, as amended, or of any health ordinances with

respect to the building of accommodations which is dangerous, hazardous or detrimental to the life or health.

Sec. 2. The well-being of the people of the State and the health and safety of the people of the State require that the State should

cooperate with the Federal Government in the development and

of this act, may enter into agreements or arrangements

the release of any part of aid or assistance withheld

on 1 and the elimination of such violation or

It shall be a valid defense in any action against an assistance recipient alleging nonpayment of rent to show



THE CHRISTIAN ACTIVITIES COUNCIL, NOW RENAMED



CENTER for
LEADERSHIP
& JUSTICE

CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP & JUSTICE

BREAKING BARRIERS . . . BUILDING COMMUNITIES

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CORI MACKEY

Home to a robust tradition of social justice, Hartford has served as the crucible of every campaign from abolition and civil rights to the struggle for affordable housing and equitable educational opportunities. Hartford's non-profit organizations work to alleviate poverty, mitigate racial intolerance, and support local communities through a host of social and economic challenges. The Christian Activities Council, now renamed The Center for Leadership and Justice (CLJ), was founded in 1850 with a mission to address "the plight of the poor and new immigrants in Hartford." Many different generations of immigrants have made Hartford home since then, and internal migration has brought many citizens from other American states and other cities to Hartford. The North End neighborhoods encompassing some of the scope of the CLJ's work is now African American and Latino.

The CLJ has worked on diverse issues from access to early education and healthcare to elder and affordable housing and community organizing. The philosophy of the organization emphasizes self-help and empowerment; rather than speaking for any particular group, the CLJ trains, organizes, and empowers those who can leverage its resources to advocate for themselves. One of the most successful examples of this approach is the collaboration with resident-leaders of the Clay Arsenal Renaissance Apartments (CARA), home to 150 families. The resident leaders launched an epic battle against notorious New York slumlord, Emmanuel Ku, to address deleterious code violations plaguing the public housing complex.

In addition to its projects in Hartford and its work on social justice regionally, the CLJ is also launching a new initiative to help spearhead the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA). The GHIAA will pursue a common platform of social justice in partnership with a wide range of faith-based organization from churches and synagogues to mosques and meeting houses. The GHIAA launched on 28 October 2019 at Central Connecticut State University. The GHIAA initiative reaffirms the strong tradition of the CLJ adjusting its mission, vision, and partnerships to address emergent and relevant needs.



SPARKING A MOVEMENT

Throughout the United States, the 2008 economic downturn hit hard in urban areas like Hartford. Real estate developers and landlords received tax abatements and incentives to take over foreclosed properties. In this way, Emmanuel Ku, notorious New York slumlord, set his sights on the Clay Arsenal neighborhood in Hartford's North End. According to tenants, routine maintenance became a thing of the past. Small problems left untended grew into health hazards. Vermin infested many units and limited the remedies any individual tenant could take. The media carried a story of a baby who was bitten by mice and hospitalized. The revelations did not stop there. Children at Milner Elementary School had such high rates of respiratory illnesses that the school nurse had to get creative by using a shoe organizer to hold all of the asthma inhalers that accompanied each child to school. With a large number of children from marginalized families, Milner became the bellwether for what was wrong across Hartford's public housing sector. Rather than making value judgments about whether parents were committed to their children's education, the health crises at Milner shone a spotlight on the underlying causes of chronic absenteeism. Public housing is deeply implicated in the pervasive and poor health conditions that undermine the social and emotional health of children, their ability to learn, and their long term educational outcomes.

These conclusions astounded no one who has had an experience of living in public housing or encountering unresponsive landlords. What made this campaign against this slumlord distinct, was the work of the tenant leaders who were willing to sacrifice, train, take a stand, and do the exhausting and exhaustive work of taking on powerful, wealthy slumlords. This organizing philosophy would seem very familiar to a previous generation of organizers in Hartford who engaged in rent strikes and pushed for warrants to be issued against unsavory landlords. It would seem familiar to coalitions and organizations once called the "anti-poverty platoon:" The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), The Community Renewal Team (CRT), and the Urban League of Greater Hartford.



MILAGROS ORTIZ, JR



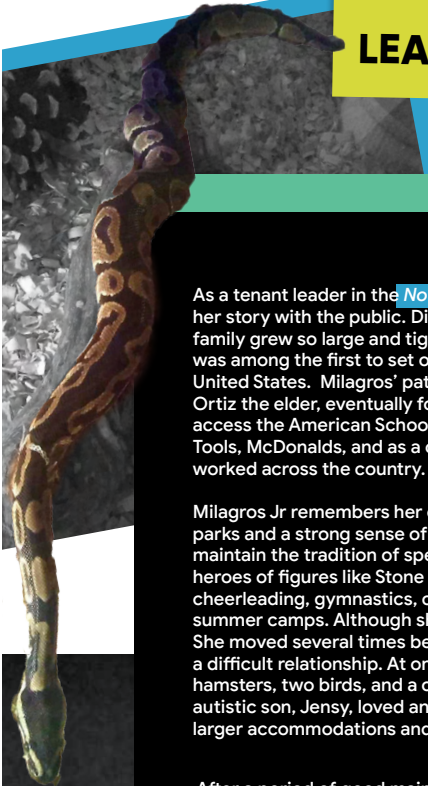
LEADER. MOTHER. INDOMITABLE SPIRIT, ANIMAL LOVER

As a tenant leader in the [No More Slum Lords Movement](#), Milagros Ortiz has become accustomed to sharing her story with the public. Dig a little further and you will be in Campanilla, Toa Baja, Puerto Rico. Here, her family grew so large and tight-knit that they started to move to houses on the same street. Her grandmother was among the first to set off for New York, one of the prime destinations for Puerto Ricans sojourners to the United States. Milagros' paternal family and some of her maternal relatives settled in The Bronx. Milagros Ortiz the elder, eventually for Connecticut in part to get away from the fast-paced life of New York and to access the American School for the Deaf. The family settled in New Britain. She worked various jobs at CW Tools, McDonalds, and as a cleaning lady to support her family. Her father, Ramon Ortiz was a landscaper and worked across the country.

Milagros Jr remembers her childhood in New Britain being enjoyable, filled with lots of open space and parks and a strong sense of community. They held big family parties and celebrations that helped to maintain the tradition of spending time with your family. Milagros aspired to be a wrestler, making heroes of figures like Stone Cold and Steve Austin. She was active in softball, wrestling, basketball, cheerleading, gymnastics, chorus, and played numerous instruments and attended many summer camps. Although she hoped to enlist in the military, a pregnancy foiled those plans. She moved several times between New Britain and East Hartford, including to deal with a difficult relationship. At one time she had several dogs, three snakes, two geckos, two hamsters, two birds, and a cat, a scorpion, amongst many other animals because her autistic son, Jency, loved animals. She eventually relocated Hartford to Clay Arsenal for larger accommodations and to be closer to family in Hartford.

After a period of good maintenance and property upkeep when she first moved to Hartford, the arrival of a new owner brought disorganization and chaos. Many tenants experienced issues with the management losing important paperwork, receipts, and work orders. Milagros personally experienced issues with rats. She met Pastor Johnson during a meeting between tenants and the project manager, where the landlord was a no-show. Tenants agreed to meet at a later time to discuss actionable steps moving forward, which sparked what became known as the *No More Slumlords Movement*.

It may take a while for Ortiz to tell you that her housing struggles were deadly for her pets, that the comfort Jency took in these animals was one of the sacrifices she was forced to make. She continues to rebuilt that support network.



TERI MORRISON

FROM TENANT TO ORGANIZER

Teri moved to Garden street with her children and resided there for about 24 years. Mold started seeping through her walls, closets, and furniture and began impacting her children's health. She moved several times, eventually ending up on Albany Avenue. This time it was mice that enraged her. Everyone knows her home, and especially her kitchen, as especially meticulous. She loves to cook but mice have a way of sapping the inspiration in even the most committed person. Having moved to address the code violations in her previous home, for which she filed an official complaint, she now had to contend with vermin. She began communicating with her neighbors and discovered that they had also been experiencing similar problems. She teamed up with Pastor AJ Johnson and became an active member of the *No Slumlords Movement* in Hartford. She began using her voice to organize a powerful movement against housing conditions in the city. The main focus of organizing has been holding landlords accountable for the upkeep and maintenance of their apartments. Education has also featured prominently, as Teri and other leaders uncovered the murky and subtle ways that the municipal housing code and the inspection system encouraged negligence rather than compliance.

Teri will be the first one to tell you that organizing people is difficult work, that sometimes its only five or six people who do the work that impacts thousands of residents. She will also be the first one to remind us that both tenants and landlords need to uphold their responsibilities to the property and be accountable. She is a model to so many people in her stalwart commitment to making the North End livable, safe, and community-oriented.





TERI MORRISON

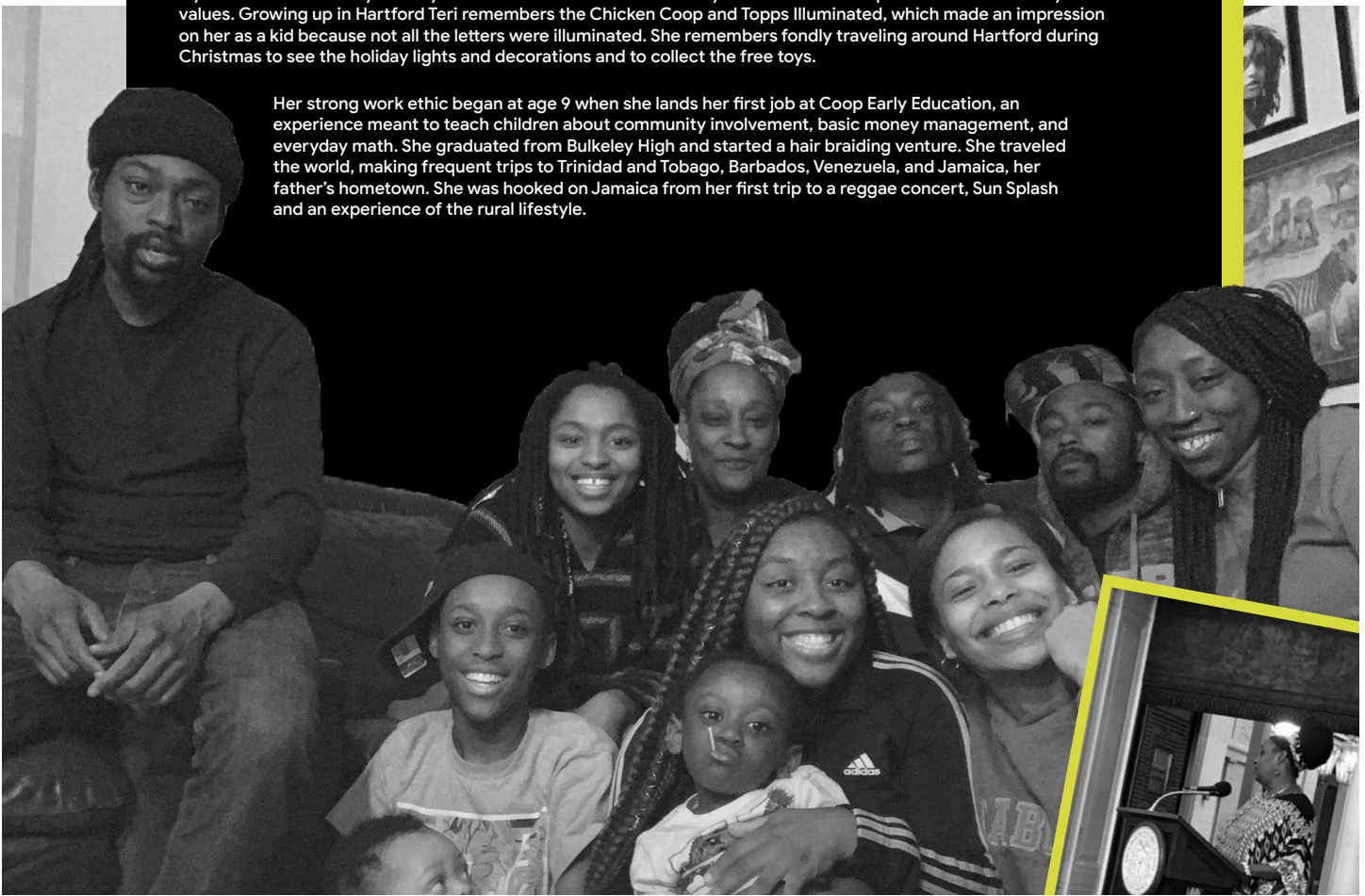
CRUSADER. MOTHER. TEACHER. LEADER. ARTIST.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZER.

You can always see Teri Morrison coming from far away. Before her face comes into view, her signature head wraps announce a majestic presence. She plays so many roles in the Hartford community: school teacher, artist, and a community organizer for the Christian Activities Council (now the Center for Leadership and Justice) and one of the leading organizers of the *No More Slumlords Movement*. Her family's roots are deeply connected to the patterns of the Great Migration that brought African Americans north, sometimes as sojourners, sometimes as exiles, sometimes as economic, political, and social refugees. Her grandmother migrated from North Carolina to New York. In many instances, these first forays were reconnaissance trips to investigate opportunities before the rest of the family would follow. With nine children, relocating required careful planning. Teri's aunts and uncles would later join her grandmother and eventually, the family relocated to Hartford where they had an aunt who had already settled there. The family lived on Vine Street and from there the connections to the North End of Hartford grew deeper. Hartford provided a welcoming environment, a smaller city with a country feel. Vine Street cultivated a deep sense of community that she maintains today.

Coming of age in Hartford, Teri did not venture far from the North End. She has lived on Garden Street and on Albany Avenue, as well as Bowles Park. She maintained her love of the city that has been home to three generations of her family. Her family's stories are interlaced with the broad narratives of American history as well as the ones of Hartford lore. Four of her uncles served in Vietnam and returned home. Her mother served in the US Air Force for 8 years and the US Army for 24 years and worked for Aetna. Military structure and discipline infused the family's values. Growing up in Hartford Teri remembers the Chicken Coop and Topps Illuminated, which made an impression on her as a kid because not all the letters were illuminated. She remembers fondly traveling around Hartford during Christmas to see the holiday lights and decorations and to collect the free toys.

Her strong work ethic began at age 9 when she lands her first job at Coop Early Education, an experience meant to teach children about community involvement, basic money management, and everyday math. She graduated from Bulkeley High and started a hair braiding venture. She traveled the world, making frequent trips to Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Venezuela, and Jamaica, her father's hometown. She was hooked on Jamaica from her first trip to a reggae concert, Sun Splash and an experience of the rural lifestyle.

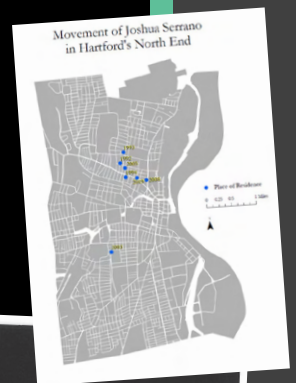


JOSHUA JESUS SERRANO



FATHER. SON. COMMUNITY ORGANIZER. CITIZEN.

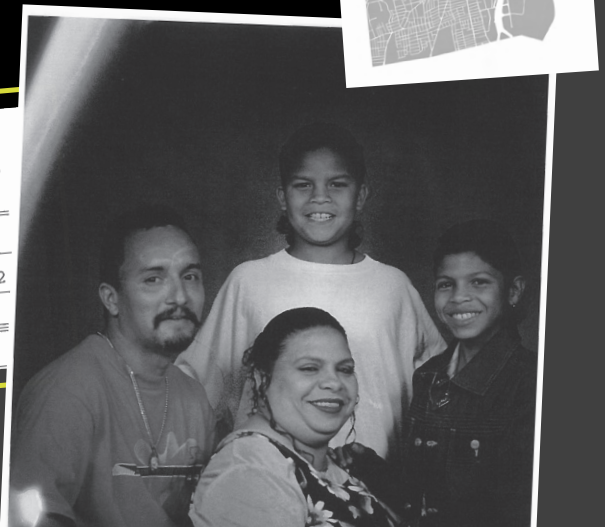
The roots of Josh Serrano’s journey into community activism can be traced to his family’s history in Hartford. His mother, at around age 16, Luz Belinda Estremera moved to Hartford from Ponce, Puerto Rico along with his maternal Aunt Edith. It was a journey undertaken by several generations of Puerto Ricans before them. Luz would settle and move around in the north and south end while Edith settled permanently at Bellevue Square. She would marry Jesus Serrano and Josh was born on Enfield St, Hartford. Spurred by the opportunity to pursue a better life for her children, Luz worked in Head Start and Community Renewal Team (CRT); her husband worked as a window washer and eventually became the building superintendent where he lived. The family moved between the north and south end of Hartford, sometimes driven by hardship, in other instances moving to better accommodations. These journeys would take them to Zion, Magnolia, Garden, and Bedford Streets. Along the way, they adopted a cat, Kitty who accompanied them on their journeys. The family moved finally to the Clay Arsenal Renaissance Apartments (CARA) when Josh was about 13 years old. Ms. Estremera eventually passed down the residency to Joshua who then became the head of household and she moved to the Blue Hills area.



CERTIFICATE OF LIVE BIRTH
VS-2 REV 06/07

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
150 Washington Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106

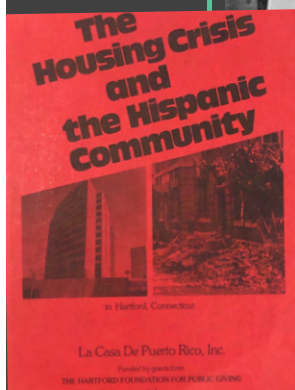
THIS CHILD	1a. CHILD'S NAME (First) JOSHUA	1b. (Middle) JESUS	1c. (Last) SERRANO	5. DATE OF BIRTH FEBRUARY 19, 1992
	2. WEIGHT 3600 Grams	3. SEX MALE	4. HOUR OF BIRTH 2137	7. IF NOT SINGLE, THIS CHILD BORN <input type="checkbox"/> 1ST <input type="checkbox"/> 2ND <input type="checkbox"/> 3RD <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER
PLACE OF BIRTH	6. PLURALITY OF BIRTH <input type="checkbox"/> SINGLE <input type="checkbox"/> TWIN <input type="checkbox"/> TRIPLET <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER SINGLE		8a. TOWN HARTFORD	8b. COUNTY HARTFORD
			9. HOSPITAL NAME HARTFORD HOSPITAL	



SERRANO'S HARTFORD

Joshua Serrano's Hartford was a multi-cultural one, with Puerto Ricans and African Americans jostling alongside each other, forming bonds of trust, friendship, and mutual reliance. The adults looked out for each other; parents checked on everyone's children. Kids played tag, kick the bottle, and cops and robbers. As the second generation to live in public housing, Serrano could compare the challenges his mother faced when she wanted to address complaints to her landlord to his own struggles.

Second-generation public housing residency also meant, however, that some people could get used to conditions they may have experienced their entire childhood and adolescence. Puerto Ricans and African-Americans also shared this experience and with it, the steady deterioration in the quality of life as their public housing units faced limited responses to requests for routine maintenance; ineffective, cosmetic approaches to address mice infestations; leaky pipes and poor ventilation that made children more susceptible to respiratory illnesses. These were more than violations of the municipal housing code: these were serious conditions that threatened the health and well-being of the families who called these residences home. Although taking on a slumlord required a massive effort in organizing, Joshua Serrano was ready for the challenge when he met AJ Johnson of the Christian Activities Council, now the Center for Leadership and Justice.



ASHLEY "AJ" JOHNSON

SENIOR PASTOR. URBAN HOPE REFUGEE CHURCH. HARTFORD LEAD COMMUNITY ORGANIZER. CHRISTIAN ACTIVITIES COUNCIL.

LEGACY. SON. FATHER. HUSBAND.

VISIONARY. LEADER. PASTOR.

When he was a young boy, Ashley "AJ" Johnson saw a diagram in his father's office that molded his views of the role of the church. In this diagram, the church was central, a hub from which social, economic, and political activities emanated. It was a model of community engagement his father adopted with the Urban Hope Refugee Church and a legacy AJ implements in his own ministry. The history of the Johnson family is deeply intertwined with patterns of the Great Migration of African Americans to the north as well as the evolution of the African American community in the North End of Hartford. Bishop Dr. William M. Johnson and Dr. Celeste Johnson, both originally from North Carolina, resettled in New York like 6 million other African Americans who made a similar exodus from the South. They worked in the ministry between The Bronx, Harlem, and Hartford. AJ teases that he was a "95 North baby" because his parents split so much of their time between New York and Connecticut. The Johnson family, William and Celeste and their sons, Mylious and Ashley, split their time between New York and Hartford. Dr. William Johnson had a background in urban planning while Dr. Celeste Johnson has a background in education.

Neither their degrees nor their status in the community shielded them from discrimination. The refuge they sought in Rocky Hill proved to be a journey into eviction before the family would settle down in Manchester. AJ's path took him to South Carolina, in some ways a refuge from some of the challenges of home. There, the community of black people was an inspiration and he tried to identify where his passion and future lay. Would he get involved in politics? Would he be called to the ministry? He ran unsuccessfully for a seat on Hartford's Court of Common Council and emerged from that experience with a keen understanding of politics as a tool. Since then, AJ Johnson has found his calling in both of his roles as Lead Community Organizer for the Christian Activities Council (now the Center for Leadership and Justice) and as Senior Pastor of the Urban Hope Refugee Church in Hartford. In these dual roles, Johnson sustains the legacy of civil rights and human rights pioneers like the Rev. Richard Battles of the Mt. Olive Baptist Church, William Brown, Executive Director of the Urban League of Greater Hartford and of his father Bishop Johnson. The passion he brings to the No More Slumlords movement is duplicated in his support of entrepreneurship in the local community and his backing of a \$15 minimum wage.



MANUFACTURING POVERTY:

THE EVIDENCE OF EXPERIENCE

Pastor AJ Johnson was pivotal in helping tenants spearhead the *No More Slumlords movement*, whose name was inspired by a similar social movement that emerged in San Francisco, California. When a parent at Milner Elementary School approached him about the horrendous mice infestation the led to her baby's hospitalization, Johnson's activism would take a dramatic turn. He was already involved with Milner Elementary School parents, working with the PTO to propose and implement speed bumps in the school zone. However, the wrenching case of an infant bitten by mice was a call to arms. Parents understood the power of numbers. At house meetings, Johnson listened and strategized. To be effective, tenants would have to mobilize and develop a keen understanding of the nuts and bolts of housing policies.

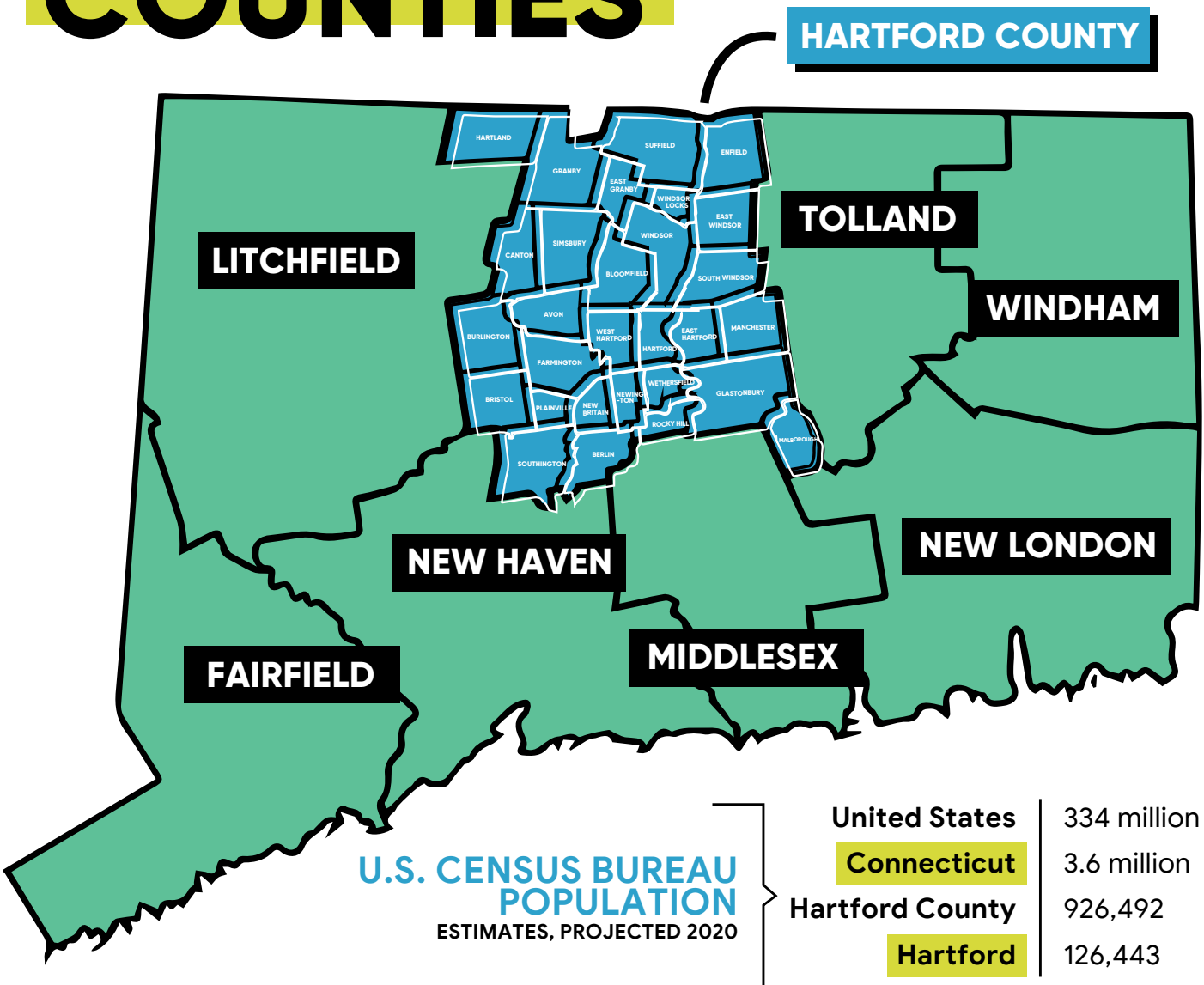
Slumlords across the United States rely on their tenants' exhaustion with fighting an inscrutable system and the sense of resignation when they wage individual battles that fail. The lack of transparent information and intentional efforts to use misleading inspection protocols also stymied many tenants. Johnson used this opportunity to help tenant leaders mobilize:

- to use the Freedom of Information Act to identify property owners*
- to understand the code switching that needed to happen when they presented to different audiences*
- to script their narratives into clear succinct talking points*
- to use the media to reach a broad audience*
- to make the municipal government's tax abatement authority a cudgel in their war*
- to leverage the authority and expertise of their own experiences to rise up against injustice*

Through his assistance, residents explored how their particular life stories fit into the national narrative of structural racism. Poverty was manufactured. Poverty was a profitable business.



CONNECTICUT COUNTIES



NEGRO POVERTY IS NOT WHITE POVERTY.

MANY OF ITS CAUSES AND MANY OF ITS CURES ARE THE SAME. BUT THERE ARE DIFFERENCES—DEEP, CORROSIVE, OBSTINATE DIFFERENCES—RADIATING PAINFUL ROOTS INTO THE COMMUNITY, AND INTO THE FAMILY, AND THE NATURE OF THE INDIVIDUAL. THE DIFFERENCES ARE NOT RACIAL DIFFERENCES. THEY ARE SOLELY AND SIMPLY THE CONSEQUENCE OF ANCIENT BRUTALITY, PAST INJUSTICE, AND PRESENT PREJUDICE. . . . FOR THE NEGRO THEY ARE A CONSTANT REMINDER OF OPPRESSION. FOR THE WHITE THEY ARE A CONSTANT REMINDER OF GUILT.

**PRESIDENT LYNDON JOHNSON,
HOWARD UNIVERSITY**

COMMENCEMENT SPEECH, 4 JUNE 1965

ANYONE WHO HAS
EVER STRUGGLED
WITH POVERTY KNOWS HOW

EXTREMELY EXPENSIVE IT IS TO BE POOR;

AND IF ONE IS A MEMBER OF A CAPTIVE POPULATION, ECONOMICALLY SPEAKING, ONE'S FEET HAVE SIMPLY BEEN PLACED ON THE TREADMILL FOREVER.

JAMES BALDWIN

"FIFTH AVENUE, UPTOWN: A LETTER FROM HARLEM"
ESQUIRE JULY, 1960

FEWER AND FEWER FAMILIES CAN AFFORD A ROOF OVER THEIR HEAD. THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST URGENT AND PRESSING ISSUES FACING AMERICA TODAY, AND ACKNOWLEDGING THE BREADTH AND DEPTH OF THE PROBLEM CHANGES THE WAY WE LOOK AT POVERTY. FOR DECADES, WE'VE FOCUSED MAINLY ON JOBS, PUBLIC ASSISTANCE, PARENTING, AND MASS INCARCERATION. NO ONE CAN DENY THE IMPORTANCE OF THESE ISSUES, BUT SOMETHING FUNDAMENTAL IS MISSING.

WE HAVE FAILED TO FULLY APPRECIATE HOW DEEPLY HOUSING IS IMPLICATED IN THE CREATION OF POVERTY.

MATTHEW DESMOND

EVICTED: POVERTY AND PROFIT IN THE AMERICAN CITY (2016), 5.

HARTFORD AT A GLANCE

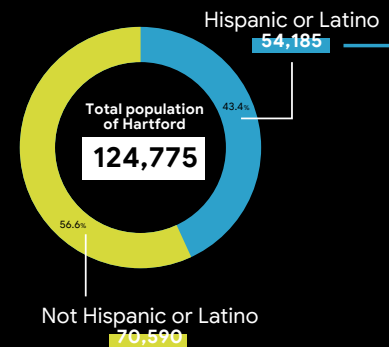
RACE / ETHNICITY

RACE / ETHNICITY (2013 - 2017)	HARTFORD (CITY)	PERCENTAGE	CONNECTICUT (STATE)
White	41,124	33.1%	2,464,450
Black or African American	47,124	37.9%	372,696
American Indian and Alaska Native	418	0.3%	152,782
Asian	3,686	3.0%	9,399
Other/Multi-Race	24,406	19.6%	284,582
Two or more races	7,645	6.1%	537,728

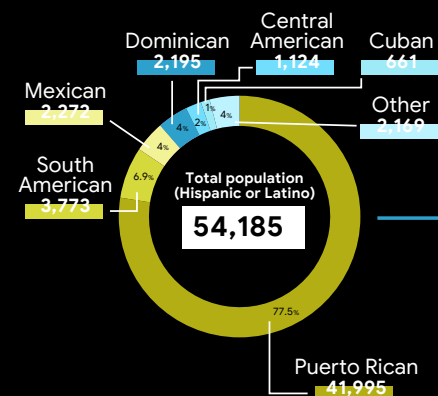
HOUSING / REAL ESTATE

HOUSING STOCK (2012-2016)	HARTFORD (CITY)	HARTFORD COUNTY	CONNECTICUT (STATE)
Total units	53,297	374,672	1,493,798
% Single Unit (2012-2016)	14.7%	55.1%	59.1%
New Permits Auth (2017)	5	957	4,547
As % Existing Units	0.0%	.03%	0.3%
Demolitions (2017)	447	509	1,403
Home Sales (2013)	240	6,413	26,310
Median Price	\$159,100	\$234,900	\$269,300
Built Pre-1950 share	50.4%	28.6%	29.7%
Owner Occupied Dwellings	10,877	222,638	900,223
As % Total Dwellings	23.7%	64.1%	66.5%
Subsidized Housing (2017)	19,875	52,270	168,576

HISPANIC OR LATINO DATA

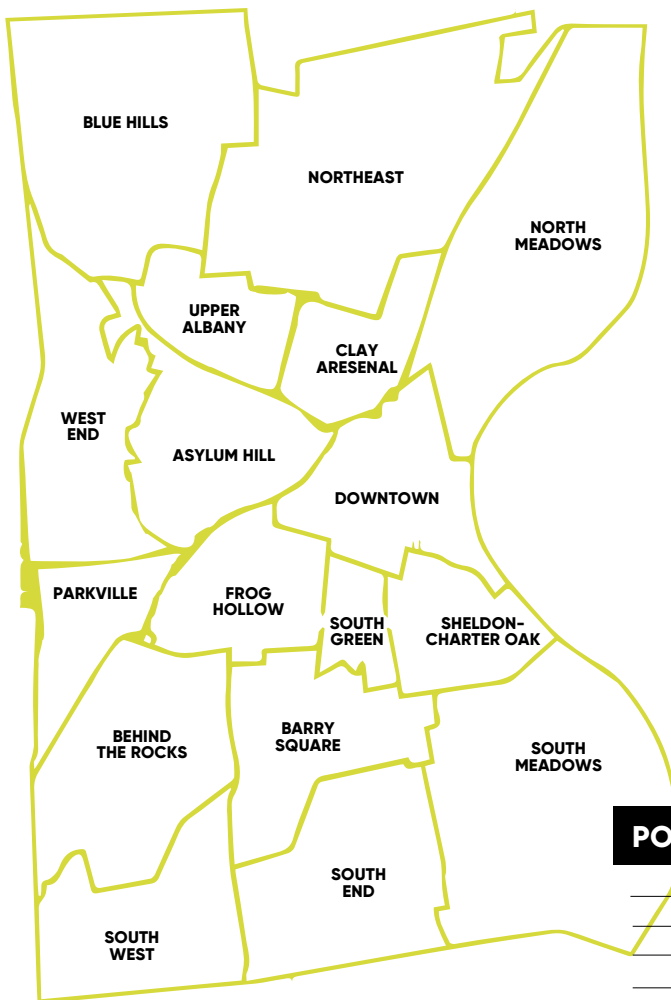


The vast majority of Hartford's Latino or Hispanic population is Puerto Rican. The census identifies Hispanic ancestry separately from race. Hartford has elected two mayors of Puerto Rican ancestry: Eddie Perez and Pedro Segarra. New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Springfield (MA) have the 4th largest population of Puerto Ricans followed by Hartford, while Bridgeport is 7th.



The Hispanic or Latino (of any race) for Hartford was 54,185 (43.4% of the total population).

HARTFORD AT A GLANCE



The categories and methodologies for each census vary widely from one decade to the next. The most dramatic shift in racial classification came in the 1930 census which dropped the term mulatto as its own category and adopted the one-drop rule for those with one black and one white parent or one black and one Native American parent. Designation by a white or native community could overrule the automatic designation of mixed race. The census perpetuated a system of erasing the presence of many Native Americans by subsuming their identities into other groups.

The US census separates the concepts of race, Hispanic origin, and ancestry in its methodologies and relies on the self-identification of individuals filling out the census forms. Data for Hispanic origins are tabulated separately from race, since Hispanics can be of any racial group. Therefore, the census defines "Hispanic or Latino" as a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race. Between 1970 and 2000 the US Census Bureau experimented with uneven approaches to capture information about Hispanic origins with questions about race, color, and birth country of parents. Between 1970 and 2000, various dropdown menu options or write in options were offered and in 2010 the Latino category was added. As a research tool, census categories have to be contextualized like any other source.

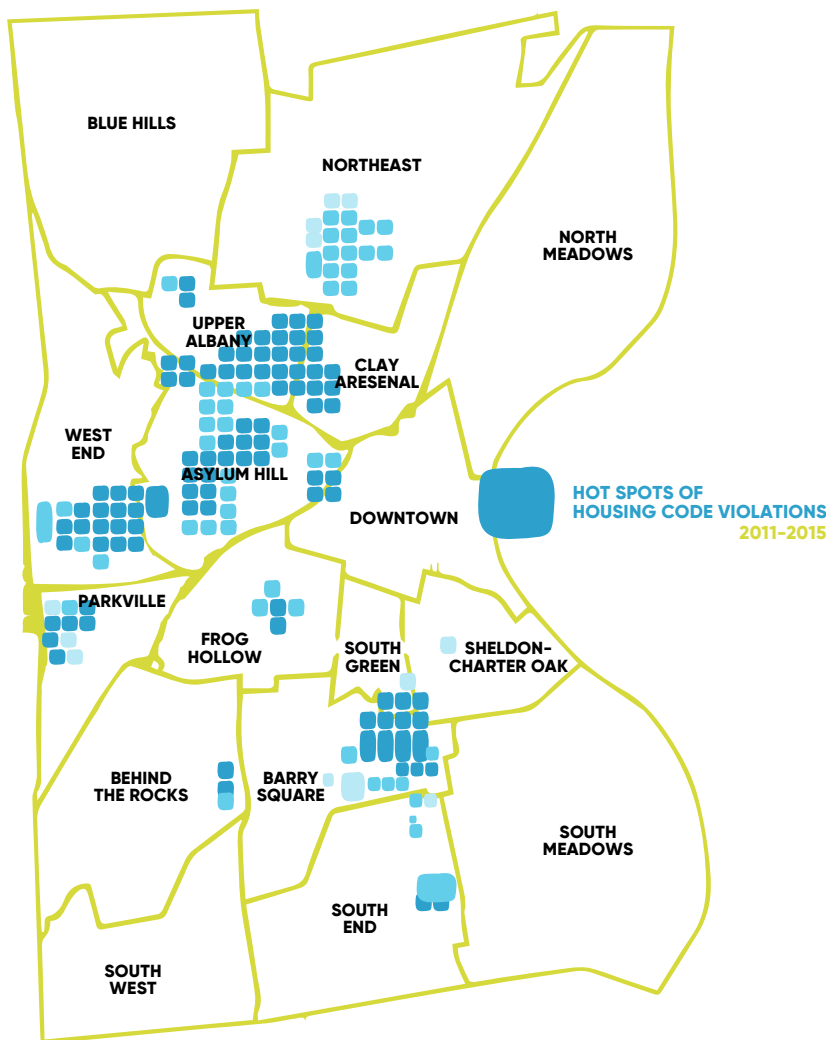
In the second set of data on race and ethnicity, the numbers will not add up the total population because people were asked to indicated all of the ways in which they identified. People could be represented in multiple categories and could be counted two or three times. You could identify yourself in a dizzying number of categories: *White alone, Black alone, Asian, Other, Multi-Race two or more races*. As a result, you had more people identifying Hispanic heritage more than any other group and more people espousing a Native American heritage.

POPULATION

POPULATION (2000 - 2016)	HARTFORD (CITY)	HARTFORD COUNTY	CONNECTICUT (STATE)
2000	121,578	857,183	3,405,565
2010	124,775	894,014	3,574,097
2013-2017	122,587	895,699	3,542,665
2020	126,443	925,492	3,604,591
'16 - '20 Growth / Yr	0.4%	.08%	.01%

Source: US Census Bureau: American Community Survey (2013-2017), American Factfinder, <https://www.census.gov/history/>

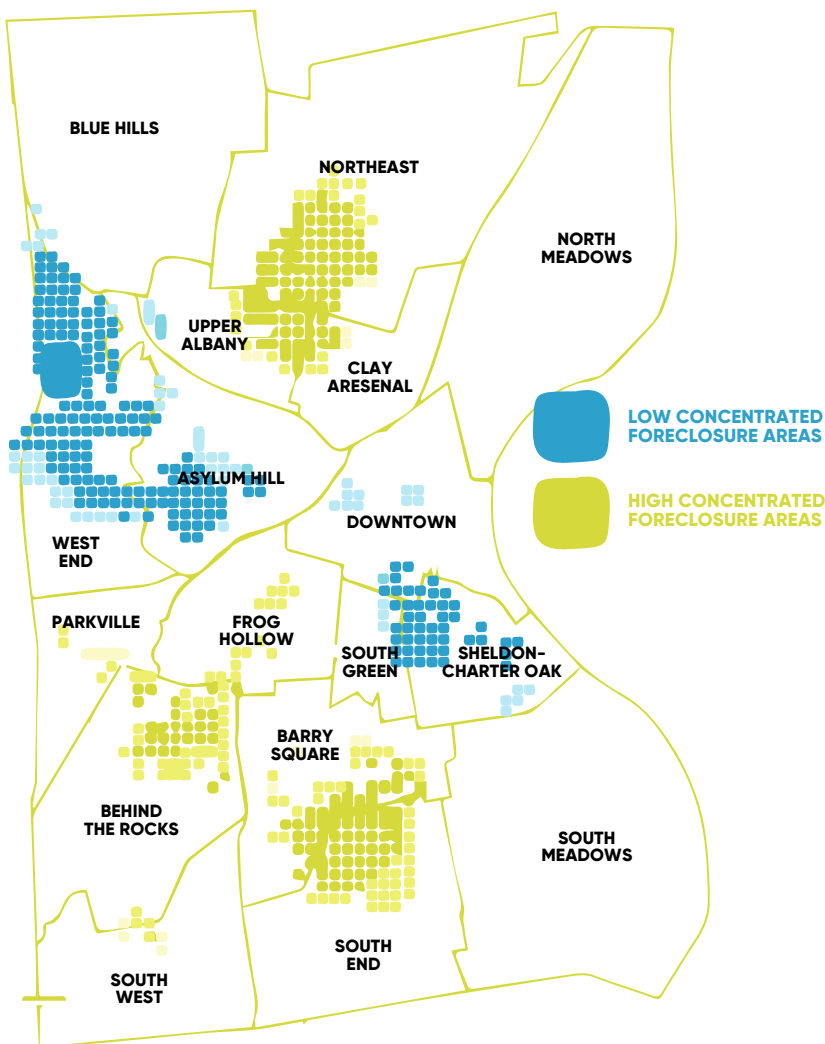
HOUSING CODE VIOLATIONS



Housing code violations involve breaches that encompass public health, safety, and welfare, in addition to the presence of vermin like bed bugs, cockroaches, and rodents. Other violations include the absence of certificates of occupancy that ensure that a building or home is in compliance with the local government agency or building department's codes and other relevant state statutes and municipal ordinances *before* occupation. Units that fall under this kind of surveillance include three family dwellings, mixed-used residential/commercial structures, and one and two-family dwellings that are not occupied by the property owners.

Other violations include: allowing the use of space that is not designated for living, such as cellars; and failure to perform routine, basic maintenance in relation to lighting, ventilation, plumbing, supply and wastes lines, sanitation, and mold abatement. Disruption or lack of essential services like heat and water feature prominently in the code violations that plague the Upper Albany, Clay Arsenal, and Frog Hollow

FORECLOSURES IN HARTFORD



Hartford's North End, Park Street, Frog Hollow, and Parkville neighborhoods experienced higher foreclosure rates in relation to the rest of Hartford. These areas represented some of the Latinx, Latino, African American, and West Indian residents who had been able to acquire and rent property after civil disturbances, urban renewal, and white flight had led to significant waves of community succession. These neighborhoods also represented a high proportion of landlords who faced significant crises in the aftermath of the 2008 economic downturn creating a new cycle of vulnerability for the tenants occupying their properties. Unstable landlords made many communities even more susceptible to

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