

IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR



Closing the Skills Gap at Gap Inc.

Gap, Inc. relies on the Opportunity Index to inform decisions about future locations for “This Way Ahead,” a nine-month job training and leadership development program serving youth ages 16–21 in four cities. Since 2007, 1,325 teens and young adults have participated.

“To help us pick cities, the Index gives us the data we need about youth and their needs.”



*Gail Gershon, Executive Director,
Community Leadership, Gap, Inc.*

Impact: Driving Informed Youth Training Program Site Selection

Index data informed Gap Inc.’s decision to expand its youth training program to Boston in 2013, Houston in 2014 and a fifth program site in 2015.

IN THE CLASSROOM



“Students appreciate the value of data and realize that good statistics, combined with personal stories of opportunity, help build a strong case for action.”

Jim Scheibel, Former Mayor of St. Paul, MN

Educating Students on the Power of Opportunity at Hamline

Jim Scheibel, Former Mayor of St. Paul, Minnesota and Honorary Professor of Practice at Hamline University, uses the Opportunity Index as a research tool in his graduate-level policy classes. Professor Scheibel also plans to incorporate the Index into a new course on service and volunteerism.

Impact: Making Opportunity Lessons Real for Tomorrow’s Policy Leaders

Index helps students explore key educational, economic and civic factors that influence opportunity and prepares future leaders for transformative cross-sector collaboration.

IN RESEARCH



Enhancing Policy Research and Analysis in Kentucky

The Opportunity Index was cited in “Advancing Manufacturing in Kentucky: Moving Forward,” targeted to employers. The report used county Opportunity Grades to analyze the supply of manufacturing jobs and access to educational and economic opportunity throughout the state.

“We used the Index to show where there is more manufacturing, there is more opportunity...If we can expand manufacturing, we can expand opportunity in Kentucky.”

*Advancing Manufacturing in Kentucky,
Summer 2013*

Impact: Enriched Analysis of Statewide Manufacturing Jobs and Economic Mobility

Index data bolstered the argument that Kentucky needs to build a stronger talent pipeline and expand advanced manufacturing to strengthen the state’s economy.

IN THE LEGISLATURE



Informing Economic Policy in Washington State

Washington State's Budget and Policy Center used the Opportunity Index to identify strategies for increasing economic mobility across the state in its report designed to inform legislators, "In Pursuit of Prosperity: Eight Strategies to Rebuild Washington State's Economy."

“According to the Opportunity Index...no county in Washington State gets a grade of ‘A’ for comprehensive access to high quality education, adequate health care, affordable housing and safe communities.”

In Pursuit of Prosperity: Eight Strategies to Rebuild Washington State's Economy, 2012

Impact: Targeted Recommendations Based on County-Level Variation in Opportunity

Index data informed recommendations for expanding opportunity to build thriving communities in Washington

IN THE COMMUNITY



“The Index brought all these different people who don't normally interact into the same room, and accelerated our ability to work together to expand opportunity. ...[it] has really given our local efforts a stronger platform.”

Melissa Horr Pond, Assistant City Planner, Quincy, MA

Driving Local Collaboration

The Department of Planning and Community Development in Quincy, Massachusetts discovered the power of the Index as a convening tool when it brought together a diverse group of government, business, education and community leaders to explore opportunities for collaboration to increase economic mobility.

Impact: Enabling a High-Momentum Cross-Sector Collaborative

Index-centered event resulted in launch of Opportunity Quincy, a robust cross-sector collaborative in Greater Quincy, Massachusetts.

IN PHILANTHROPY



Guiding Strategic Grantmaking Decisions

The Jessie Ball duPont Fund is a private foundation based in Jacksonville, FL that gives out \$10 million in grants per year. They have been using the Index with their board to drive conversations about the impact of their investments across indicators and geographies.

“We use the Index data annually at our trustee retreat to look at trends in our core communities. And, we are already using the Historical Report of Opportunity to look even deeper at those same communities.”

Mark Walker, Knowledge Management and Technology Officer, Jessie Ball duPont Fund

Impact: Inspiring Philanthropic Philosophy

Index data inspired more substantive conversations at the foundation's board-level around the systems and collaboration required to make change.