



**Knoxville Area  
Urban League**

*KAUL Strategic Plan for 2009 – 2014*





## **Introduction**

As the Knoxville Area Urban League (KAUL) celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, we look to the past with pride in what has been accomplished and to the future as we make plans for what will be. In that spirit, we have developed a Strategic Plan that will add to the KAUL's legacy of excellence in our service to the greater Knoxville community.

The Knoxville Area Urban League is an affiliate of the National Urban League (NUL), the nation's oldest (1910) and largest community-based movement devoted to empowering African Americans and other underserved individuals to enter the economic and social mainstream. We believe in and support the spirit of equal opportunity in every facet of our society. American life is built on the philosophy that every person can and should have an opportunity to rise to his or her own level of capability and interest.

Our purpose as an Urban League is summarized in our Opportunity Compact, a comprehensive set of principles and policy recommendations set forth by the National Urban League designed to empower all Americans to be full participants in the economic and social mainstream of the nation. In pursuit of this goal we offer programs in five areas: economic empowerment, education and youth services, workforce development, housing counseling and civic engagement.

Like the National Urban League, our efforts at the Knoxville Area Urban League are centered on four themes.

- Opportunity to Thrive- Improving the quality of life for young people
- Opportunity to Earn- Increasing skills and opportunities for employment
- Opportunity to Prosper- Increasing opportunities for entrepreneurship
- Opportunity to Own- Increasing home ownership

When we are successful in implementing our action plans in each of these themes, the Knoxville Area Urban League will provide the people we serve with expanded chances for success. We must also ensure that KAUL has the financial resources to support those efforts.

The Strategic Plan was developed by our Board of Directors, our staff and involved others. This plan represents the best of our thoughts on the programs and resources we need to continue to make a difference. We are confident that this plan will be supported by our community and that by working together, we will be successful in its implementation.

## Strategic Planning Process

The Knoxville Area Urban League (KAUL) initiated a process in May 2008 to develop a long range strategic plan for the organization. A Core Planning Team comprised of the KAUL CEO, Chair of the KAUL Board, Chairman of the Board Long Range Strategic Planning Committee and three additional members of the Board of Directors was established.

The team hired Knoxville consultant Dawn S. Ford of Consumer Awareness Management, Inc. to help design the planning process and facilitate sessions with stakeholders, employees and Board members. Four focus groups were conducted with staff and stakeholders to obtain opinions about the programs provided by KAUL to the community. Sessions were held with:

- KAUL staff;
- Representatives from the Urban League Young Professionals;
- Stakeholders participating in workforce development programs; and
- Stakeholders served by KAUL's housing programs.

Data from the focus groups was shared at a Board of Directors and Staff off-site planning retreat held June 27, 2008. The Core Planning Team was guided by the five strategic themes of the Opportunity Compact. Participants at the retreat were asked to brainstorm goals to support these themes taking the focus group data into consideration. The group also participated in a visioning exercise.

The Core Planning Team met after the retreat to analyze the data from the retreat and refine the goals. Staff writing teams were formed to write action plans to support the goals. It is critical in any long range planning process to include staff in the development of action plans as it is staff who must implement the final plan. The KAUL CEO and the consultant assisted the staff in developing action plans that were strategic. These were then shared with the Core Planning Team for final editing.

The Core Planning Team approved the KAUL Long Range Strategic Plan and presented it to the KAUL Board of Directors for approval on November 19, 2008.

## Executive Summary

All focus group participants unanimously agreed that the services of the League are its best **Strength**. Customers report that they receive a high quality of services delivered consistently. Leaders, Board and Young Professionals validate a community-wide perception of high quality services among people involved with the League. Other important strengths are the Executive Leadership and Staff, engaged Board of Directors, and the establishment of Young Professionals Auxiliary. The Urban League has developed a sound reputation as demonstrated by the positive community perception.

The most cited **Weakness** listed by board and staff was the facility. Focus group participants point to the need for better communications and marketing first to the community the League serves and, second to all those who can help with the League's mission. More people could be helped by the services offered if they knew of their availability. The limited number of staff and grant dependence negatively impact our ability to serve more clients and to continue successful programs.

Concerning **Threats**, there was much concern reported by staff and board regarding the shift in United Way Funding, competitive grant funding with limited opportunities, and the general state of the Economy and its affect on program support and fund raising. The overarching perceived threat was regarding sustained funding.

Concerning **Opportunities**, many pointed to the leadership role the League plays in the community and the potential to leverage this leadership in addressing community issues especially in education. Other opportunities listed were to improve or purchase a building, do more community outreach regarding League programs to citizens outside of the East Knoxville community, expand micro-lending program, and explore feasibility of an Urban League charter school.



**Knoxville Area  
Urban League**

*Empowering Communities.  
Changing Lives.*

### **Our Vision**

Our vision is to be the recognized leader and premier non-profit organization in the greater Knoxville area promoting diversity, economic and social equity for all citizens.

### **Our Mission**

Our mission is to enable African Americans, other minority groups and the disadvantaged to secure economic self-reliance, parity, power and civil rights.

### **Our Core Values**

- **Diversity:** We respect all people and value their contributions. We will actively work to serve and engage individuals from various backgrounds, with different viewpoints, skills, and talents.
- **Integrity:** We employ the highest ethical standards, demonstrating honesty and fairness in every action that we take. We hold ourselves accountable by documenting and reporting our performance and outcomes.
- **Passion:** We show pride, enthusiasm and dedication in everything that we do.
- **Customer Service:** We are dedicated to satisfying customer needs and honoring commitments that we have made to them. We demonstrate a consistently caring and knowledgeable attitude to each individual.
- **Self Sufficiency:** We believe that individual and family self-sufficiency is the ultimate goal of a strong, viable and growing community
- **Empowerment:** We will empower our talented people to take the initiative and to do what's right.
- **Teamwork:** Our team is supportive of each other's efforts, loyal to one another, and care for each other both personally and professionally.
- **Collaboration:** We will work together, building relationships to create greater value and opportunities for the customers we serve and to make our community a better place to live, work and contribute.

### **Our Strategy**

The Knoxville Area Urban League employs a five point strategy to implement the mission of our movement.

**Education and Youth Empowerment:** Ensuring that all of our children are well educated and prepared for economic self-reliance in the 21st century through early childhood literacy, after school, leadership development and academic enhancement programs.

**Economic Empowerment:** Empowering all people in attaining economic self-sufficiency through job training, good jobs, homeownership, entrepreneurship and wealth accumulation.

**Health and Quality of Life Empowerment:** Working to build healthy and safe communities to eliminate health disparities through prevention as well as ensuring access to affordable healthcare for all people.

**Civic Engagement and Leadership Empowerment:** Empowering all people to take an active role in determining the direction, quality of life, public policy and leadership in their communities by full participation as citizens and voters, as well as through active community service and leadership development.

**Civil Rights and Racial Justice Empowerment:** Promoting and ensuring our civil rights by actively working to eradicate all barriers to equal participation in the all aspects of American society, whether political, economic, social, educational or cultural.

# **KNOXVILLE AREA URBAN LEAGUE STRATEGIC THEMES AND GOALS 2009-2014**

## **STRATEGIC THEME 1: Opportunity to Thrive — Improving Quality of Life for Young People**

### **GOALS**

- I. Increase the participation of families in the education process of their children
- II. Enhance Urban League work in addressing the health disparities in the African American community compared to other communities
- III. Establish a charter school
- IV. Decrease the achievement gap between African American students and other students

## **STRATEGIC THEME 2: Opportunity to Earn: Increasing Employment**

### **Goals:**

- I. Strengthen the employment placement program
- II. Improve the longevity of placements
- III. Focus on improving the employability of young adults
- IV. Ensure the level of technology needed to meet future needs

## **STRATEGIC THEME 3: Opportunity to Prosper—Increasing Opportunities for Entrepreneurship**

### **Goals:**

- I. Complete the disbursement of an additional \$1.5 million of EZ loans
- II. Establish additional funds available for micro lending
- III. Expand the marketing of Urban League loan programs beyond the empowerment zone
- IV. Develop a business center to support emerging and established small businesses
- V. Establish a private equity fund(s) to complement the loan pool to support small businesses

## **STRATEGIC THEME 4: Opportunity to Own: Increasing Home Ownership**

### **Goals:**

- I. Increase opportunities for people to buy affordable housing in Urban League community
- II. Expand services in the area of foreclosure counseling

## **STRATEGIC THEME 5: Development and Sustainability: Support programs to fulfill Mission and Vision**

### **Goals:**

- I. Conduct a major fundraising campaign to fund a new facility, meet the emerging technology needs and grow the endowment
- II. Develop a marketing plan
- III. Grow the endowment to \$3 M
- IV. Develop a succession plan
- V. Ensure retention of motivated and satisfied employees

## KNOXVILLE AREA URBAN LEAGUE STRATEGIC THEMES AND GOALS

### STRATEGIC THEME 1: Opportunity to Thrive — Improving Quality of Life for Young People GOALS

- I. Increase the participation of families in the education process of their children
- II. Enhance Urban League work in addressing the health disparities in the African American community compared to other communities
- III. Explore establishing a charter school
- IV. Decrease the achievement gap between African American students and other students

ACTION PLAN		LEAD STAFF	DATE TO COMPLETE	BUDGET IMPACT
<b>GOAL I</b>	<b>Increase the participation of families in the education process of their children</b>			
	1. Identify Urban League clients with school age children <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Develop a series of workshops designed to help parents navigate the school system and advocate for their child's academic success</li> </ol>	Worthy	June 09 Sept 10	
<b>GOAL II</b>	<b>Enhance Urban League work in addressing the health disparities in the African American community</b>			
	1. Provide monthly fitness tips on the Urban League web site		June09/ ongoing	
	2. Develop a working partnership with the County Health Department to provide materials that relate to the health concerns of African Americans		March 09	
	3. Partner with other community organizations to conduct health fairs		March 10	
<b>GOAL III</b>	<b>Explore establishing a charter school</b>			
	1. Join the Tennessee Association of Charter Schools and work with the Tennessee Association of Charter Schools to establish an affiliate in Knoxville <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Seeking funding for planning grant</li> <li>b. Establish a planning team and develop timeline</li> </ol>	Jones  CEO	Jan 09  April 09	
<b>GOAL IV</b>	<b>Decrease the achievement gap between African American students and other students</b>			
	1. Increase the participation of number of students in the Read & Rise program <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Add 2 additional reading circles</li> <li>b. Develop partnership with 3 preschool centers</li> </ol>	Worthy	Dec 09 Dec 10	
	2. Increase the number of middle school students served by the Digital Academy by 20% through new partnerships with three youth serving agencies		May 09	
	3. Increase the number of students recognized as National Achiever Scholars (NAS) to 200 students focusing on Urban League three-county service area		Sept 11	
	4. Establish a tracking system for National Achiever Scholar Inductees: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Track the number of NAS who maintain GPA from sophomore to senior year</li> <li>b. Track the number of NAS who enter college</li> <li>c. Track the number of NAS who graduate college</li> </ol>		Sept 10  2010 2011 2012	(\$10K)

**STRATEGIC THEME 2: Opportunity to Earn: Increasing Employment**

**Goals:**

- I. Strengthen the employment placement program
- II. Improve the longevity of placements
- III. Focus on improving the employability of young adults
- IV. Ensure the level of technology needed to meet future needs

ACTION PLAN		LEAD STAFF	DATE TO COMPLETE	BUDGET IMPACT
<b>GOAL I</b>	<b>Strengthen the employment placement program</b>			
	1. Market the services of the Workforce Development Center <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Target computer classes to employed individuals who want to improve their computer skills</li> <li>b. Develop and conduct customer service and office skills training program</li> <li>c. Establish a placement fee program to employers</li> </ul>	Cannon	Feb 09 Sept 09 Jan 10	
	2. Develop a curriculum that meets the current and emerging workforce needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Offer advanced computer skills – Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, Access</li> </ul>		April 09	
	3. Improve placement opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Update curriculum of the Workforce Readiness Program</li> <li>b. Partner with other agencies and organizations to conduct Urban League sponsored job fairs twice a year</li> <li>c. Improve job posting system</li> <li>d. Revise process for working with professional job applicants</li> <li>e. Obtain client management system software</li> </ul>		Feb 09 Jan 10 May 09 June 09 July 09	(\$12k)
<b>GOAL II</b>	<b>Improve the longevity of placements</b>			
	1. Administer career assessments, as appropriate, to match clients to careers/occupations		Feb 09	
	2. Offer workshops on workplace issues		Jan 09	
	3. Follow up with employers and newly placed employees for six months		Jan 2010	
<b>GOAL III</b>	<b>Focus on improving the employability of young adults</b>			
	1. Institutionalize the process to help workers obtain GED, HS diploma or skills training		March 09	
	2. Establish a minimum of two additional apprenticeship programs		July 10	
	3. Match mentors with young adult when appropriate		Jan 09 ongoing	
	4. Develop a job shadowing component		June 09	
<b>GOAL IV</b>	<b>Ensure technology meets future needs</b>			
	1. Evaluate current technology in relation to its effectiveness in implementation of services	CEO	May 09	
	2. Write and adopt a development plan for technology	Consultant	June 09	
	3. Develop a capital plan for technology to meet future needs	CEO	TBD	

**STRATEGIC THEME 3: Opportunity to Prosper—Increasing Opportunities for Entrepreneurship**

**Goals:**

- I. Complete the disbursement of an additional \$1.5 million of EZ loans
- II. Establish additional funds available for micro lending
- III. Expand the marketing of Urban League loan programs beyond the empowerment zone
- IV. Develop a business center to support emerging and established small businesses
- V. Establish a private equity fund(s) to complement the loan pool to support small businesses

ACTION PLAN		LEAD STAFF	DATE TO COMPLETE	BUDGET IMPACT
<b>GOAL I</b>	<b>Complete the disbursement of an additional \$1.5 million of EZ loans</b>			
	1. Submit and gain city approval of renewal of management contract	CEO	Jan 09	\$250k
	2. Approve and close eight additional loans	Harris	Dec 08	
	3. Close 15 additional loans		Dec 09	
<b>GOAL II</b>	<b>Establish additional funds available for micro lending</b>			
	1. Submit a proposal to participate in the micro lending program for non profit organizations of the Small Business Administration	Jones	April 11	
	2. Submit a proposal to participate in the US Treasury Department's Community Development Financial Institutions Fund		April 10	
	3. Begin a loan pool for individuals to invest in new and emerging small businesses through the Urban League		April 12	
<b>GOAL III</b>	<b>Expand the marketing of Urban League loan programs beyond the empowerment zone</b>			
	1. Develop new message	Jones	Feb 09	
	2. Modify EZ marketing plan to deliver new message to broader audience		June 09	
	3. Update marketing materials to include new message		Jan 10	
<b>GOAL IV</b>	<b>Develop a fee-for-service center to support administrative needs of small businesses</b>			<b>\$10K</b>
	1. Survey area businesses to determine needs	Harris	March 09	
	2. Develop list of services and fees		June 09	
	3. Advertise services to area businesses		July 09	
<b>GOAL V</b>	<b>Establish a private equity fund(s) to complement the loan pool to support small businesses</b>			
	1. Research other private equity funds to determine how they operate, especially non profit equity funds	Jones	2011	
	2. Write a prospectus		2012	
	3. Solicit investors for the fund		2014	

**STRATEGIC THEME 4: Opportunity to Own: Increasing Home Ownership**

**Goals:**

- I. Increase opportunities for people to buy affordable housing in Urban League community
- II. Expand services in the area of foreclosure counseling

ACTION PLAN		LEAD STAFF	DATE TO COMPLETE	BUDGET IMPACT
<b>GOAL I</b>	Increase opportunities for people to buy affordable housing in Urban League community			
1.	Increase enrollment in home buyer education classes and budget and credit classes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Increase number of agencies contacted that may refer clients</li> <li>b. Enroll at least 10% more students in these classes</li> </ol>	Kyle	Sept 09 Sept 09	
2.	Form a partnership with the Federation of Appalachian Housing Enterprises and banks participating in FHA Secure programs to provide information to clients on FHA and other flexible loans	Jones	April 09	
3.	Recruit three additional partner institutions and solicit volunteers from each partner to teach classes	CEO	Jan 10	
4.	Conduct classes in different areas of community	Kyle	May 09	
5.	Obtain information on current legislation, housing market trends or economic conditions that affect homeownership to share with clients		Jan 09 ongoing	
<b>GOAL II</b>	Expand services in the area of foreclosure counseling			
1.	Expand Urban League marketing efforts to make clients aware of foreclosure options		June 09	
2.	Add a post foreclosure counseling segment to program		April 10	

**STRATEGIC THEME 5: Development and Sustainability: Support programs to fulfill Mission and Vision**

**Goals:**

- I. Conduct a major fundraising campaign to fund a new facility, meet the emerging technology needs and grow the endowment
- II. Develop comprehensive PR/marketing plan
- III. Grow the endowment to \$3 M
- IV. Develop a succession plan
- V. Ensure retention of motivated and satisfied employees

ACTION PLAN		LEAD STAFF	DATE TO COMPLETE	BUDGET IMPACT
<b>GOAL I</b>	Conduct a major fundraising campaign to fund a new facility, meet the emerging technology needs and grow the endowment			
1.	Form a Board task force to select a fundraising consultant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Obtain recommendations from other Urban League affiliates and local non-profits</li> <li>b. Determine selection criteria</li> <li>c. Conduct interviews</li> <li>d. Determine Urban League source of funding</li> <li>e. Present recommendation to the Board</li> </ul>	BD Chair	March 09	
2.	Hire consultant to perform a feasibility study to determine campaign goals and likely supporters	CEO		
3.	Determine the amount of money that can be raised in a campaign	Consultant		
4.	Establish a leadership structure for the campaign	Board		
5.	Conduct silent portion of campaign			
6.	Kick off public portion of campaign			
<b>GOAL II</b>	Develop a comprehensive PR/marketing plan			
1.	Select a marketing company to write plan	CEO		
2.	Develop plan			
3.	Determine marketing budget			
4.	Begin implementation of plan			
<b>GOAL III</b>	Grow the endowment to three million dollars		<b>2014</b>	
1.	Establish a Board Development Committee	Board Chair		
2.	Visit 12 new trust officers and attorneys each year to share Urban League planned giving opportunities	CEO/VP	Dec 10	
3.	Develop a constituent relationship management program utilizing Blackbaud Donor system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify list of key volunteers and donors</li> <li>b. Establish a system of communication that includes at least 5 contacts annually with every donor and potential donor</li> </ul>	VP	March 09  Dec 09 ongoing	
4.	Increase new donations and new members by 20% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Initiate an annual giving campaign</li> </ul>	CEO/VP Board	Dec 10 May 09	

ACTION PLAN		LEAD STAFF	DATE TO COMPLETE	BUDGET IMPACT
5. Increase grant applications by 30%		VP	2012	\$250K
a. Utilize Metasoft Online Foundation Search				
b. Seek grant funding through National Urban League		CEO	ongoing	
<b>GOAL IV</b>	Develop a succession plan			
1. Establish Board task force to develop succession plan for chief executive officer		BD Chair	June 09	
2. Write a plan utilizing material from Board Source			Jan 10	
<b>GOAL V</b>	Ensure retention of motivated and satisfied employees			
1. Identify opportunities and funding for additional staff development		CEO	June 09 ongoing	
2. Conduct an evaluation of future staffing needs, competitive compensation and fringe benefits			Jan 10	
3. Design and conduct an employee recognition event to be held with the Board of Directors			Dec 09 on going	