I. PROLOGUE

“We envision a robust, equitable and diverse community within which all may live and thrive”

Louisville Urban League (LUL) consistently relies upon sound community research data generated by regional colleges and universities, local and state government and other non-profit organizations as well as LUL client feedback in building the agency’s strategic plan. This data includes population and geographic shifts, unemployment/employment statistics, education achievement by age, gender, race and area, poverty statistics, housing stock, and many more elements of community life. In preparation for the 2013 board retreat, LUL surveyed local government leadership, other non-profit executives, school officials, business leaders and community members to provide feedback in a SWOT analysis format. Feedback was tabulated and presented during the retreat and used by board members in identifying key objectives.

All LUL programs are evaluated based upon the impact they have on community improvement as indicated in the data noted above. Programs are revised and new programs and initiatives are developed as the needs of the community change as they relate to our mission. This approach to planning continues to serve LUL well.

II. A STRATEGIC DIRECTION IN AN ENVIRONMENT OF CHANGE

These are unprecedented times principally due to depressed economic circumstances that have led to loss of personal income, jobs, homes and wealth in households throughout the US. The pace of change has never been so rapid nor its effects so sweeping. Especially hit hard have been the African American and other minority communities where poverty, individual disenfranchisement and for some hopelessness remains ever present. While this most recent economic downturn is one which took a huge toll on our daily lives it is one of several similar conditions the LUL has weathered and even prospered over its 91 years of existence.

In light of this tenuous global economic environment and in particular with the recent announcement of the pending retirement plans of the President and CEO of LUL over the next three years, he has established an overarching theme of “Organizational Sustainability” to be embedded in this three year plan. Simply stated, “Organizational Sustainability” means maintaining and growing LUL in direct response to the community’s needs and in line with our stated goals and mission.

In light of the planned leadership transition over the next three years, one can quickly surmise the need for flexibility, creativity, agility in responsiveness, and reliance upon expanded collaboration. Therefore, these attributes will be seen in all strategic statements of this plan.

LUL has consistently remained at the forefront of community-based organizations where we have assisted thousands of African Americans, other minorities and the disadvantaged change their lives in significant ways through employment, housing and educational attainment. Through its mission and core services, LUL firmly promotes diversity and inclusion in all sectors of the community. LUL encourages business and industry to develop and implement strategies that produce a more diverse and inclusive work environment.

During the fiscal year of 2012 – 2013 the LUL generated a $32.7 million economic impact on the community serving well over 11,000 individuals on an annual budget of $3.3 million for an incredible Return On Investment (ROI) of 1043%. Economic impact is measured in the wages earned by clients placed in employment, the value of homes purchased or saved from foreclosure by clients, investment in education of youth, tax returns prepared for clients, utility assistance provided to families, and wages and payments to staff and vendors of the organization. LUL has consistently maintained better than adequate cash flow levels ensuring an uninterrupted flow of needed services. As a consequence of the above, the Louisville Urban League has received consistent high marks in fiscal management and internal control standards as noted in annual independent annual audits and meets all of the BBB Wise Giving Alliance’s Standards for Charity Accountability.

In short, the Louisville Urban League has maintained its reputation as a highly respected community organization known for its quality of service delivery, professional staff, community centered focus, Board oversight and involvement, fiscal competency and its long term organizational stability.
III. GOALS

The Louisville Urban League has historically focused its commitment on achieving outcomes related to three key goals for our clients and the community:

- Economically stable families
- Successful school age youth
- Educational attainment

IV. VISION

We envision a robust, equitable and diverse community within which all may live and thrive!

V. MISSION

As an active leader, partner and catalyst we assist African Americans, other minority groups and the disadvantaged attain social and economic equality and stability through direct services and advocacy.

We accomplish our mission by:

- Helping people to empower themselves.
- Creating a work place culture where employees learn, grow and are fulfilled in their work.
- Helping make the community a safer and more inclusive environment for all.
- Maximizing our economic impact on the community through prudent management of human and financial contributions of our donors and volunteers.

VI. VALUES

- **Accountability**: We believe in the integrity of a system that ensures the development, maintenance and delivery of high quality services that meet the needs of our constituents

- **Diversity**: We believe that by promoting greater appreciation for diversity and the practice of inclusivity at all levels and places will improve human relations within our community

- **Education**: We believe that education and training is essential for success and work to ensure their accessibility to all citizens

- **Equity**: We believe that vigilance and creativity are required to further equal opportunity, both economic and social, for African Americans, other minorities and the disadvantaged

- **Responsiveness**: We believe in the immediacy of actively identifying and responding to opportunities that enhance the quality of life

- **Self-sufficiency**: We believe that individual and family self-sufficiency is the ultimate goal of a strong, viable and growing community

- **Collaboration**: We believe in partnerships and work diligently with organizations that have roles to play in assisting all citizens to attain economic and social equality and stability

- **Responsibility**: We believe in being responsible stewards of all resources: human and financial

- **Quality of life**: We believe in work-life balance that encourages healthy individuals and a flourishing organization
VII. OBJECTIVES

The Louisville Urban League has established four objectives for the next three years:

A. **Enhance Organizational Sustainability (Financial and Human Resource)**
   1. Economic – maintain and grow current sources of financial support while building new and more diverse funding sources
   2. Marketing and Communication – communicate LUL’s ‘Value Proposition’ to the business community and community at-large
   3. Leadership – implement and manage the “Succession Plan”
   4. Continued Services - maintain relevant services offered that anticipate and meet community needs

B. **Opportunity to Earn (Jobs)**
   1. Every willing adult in our local community should have equitable access to a job that allows them to earn a wage and provide a reasonable standard of living for themselves and their families.
   2. Every adult in our local community should have equal access to the resources that enhance employability and job mobility, including postsecondary education and other investments in human capital.

C. **Opportunity to Own (Housing)**
   1. Every adult in our local community should have equitable access to the financial education allowing them to determine their economic well being. Owning a home often leads to financial security.
   2. Every adult in our local community should have equitable access to safe and decent housing that is affordable.

D. **Opportunity to Learn and Thrive (Children)**
   1. Every child in our local community should have the opportunity and access to improve their quality of living which includes safer neighborhoods, healthy lifestyle and should be empowered to lend their voice to social and policy change
   2. Every child in our local community should have access to a quality and equitable education that will prepare them to compete in an increasingly thriving workforce.

Our objectives have remained constant given the historic focus of the Louisville Urban League and are a relevant guide for now and into the future. LUL has incorporated locally championed initiatives and goals of our funders, partners, other community organizations, and clients in fashioning this plan.

VIII. STRATEGIES

A. **Enhance Organizational Sustainability (Financial and Human Resource)**

LUL seeks to increase its competency, funding and resources so that its capacity to provide services grows with constituent need.

1. **Economic** – maintain and grow current sources of financial support while building new and more diverse funding sources
   a. Re-design the Marketing and Fund Development department with a focus on development
   b. Utilize board member direct involvement in the fund development process
   c. Establish a variety of methods donors can utilize for increasing LUL funds (planned giving, etc.)
2. **Marketing and Communication** – communicate LUL’s “Value Proposition” to the business community and community at-large
   a. Establish a sales type culture within the LUL board and senior staff inclusive of development approaches, targeted prospects (individual and corporate) and metrics to measure and celebrate performance
   b. Inform and engage senior staff and board members through the introduction of LUL’s ‘Value Proposition’ with the intent of maintaining and expanding current funding sources
   c. Create a general communication plan using print and electronic media (social media) focused on businesses and the community

3. **Leadership** – implement and manage the “Succession Plan”
   a. Manage the established ‘Succession Plan’ that includes maintaining and attracting professional and ‘entrepreneurial’ staff leaders and team members

4. **Continued Services** - maintain relevant services that anticipate and meet community needs
   a. Conduct an annual evaluation of all services offered relative to intended purpose, efficiency of operation, effectiveness in results and cost of operation
   b. Develop annual departmental operational plans guided by the strategic plan
   c. Develop a standardized and comprehensive Intake System to better assess client needs
   d. Allocate resources for all staff to maintain and expand their skills, certification and professional credentials

**B. Opportunity to Earn (Jobs)**

LUL’s Center for Workforce Development (CWD) is a driving force in assisting economically disadvantaged people become employed with adequate income and benefits that enables self-sufficiency. The CWD will provide an array of workforce development services for individuals and employers that result in the placement of job ready clients. The CWD’s work supports businesses with their efforts to create greater diversity in their respective work teams.

1. **Every willing adult in our local community should have equitable access to a job that allows them to earn a decent wage and provide a reasonable standard of living for themselves and their families.**
   a. Fortify and expand the programs and services of the CWD to increase employability of the unemployed and under-employed residents of economically challenged neighborhoods.
      i. Increase the number of clients that engage and complete work readiness training by 20%, each year over the next three years.
      ii. Increase the number of clients that are placed into employment by 20% each year over the next three years.
   b. Establish an advisory employment council comprised of area businesses whose guidance will establish unique collaborations resulting in increased job placement by 12/31/14 (quarterly meetings)
   c. Utilize technology to reach clients and employers
      i. Integrate social media (i.e., LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) into CWD strategy to promote CWD programs, services, events, specialized recruitment for programs and/or Job Bank opportunities, and to reach employers by 6/30/14

2. **Every adult in our community should have equal access to the resources that enhance employability and job mobility, including postsecondary education and other investments in human capital.**
a. Enhance and grow the Urban Leadership Alliance Seminar (ULAS) enhancing and accelerating the career trajectory of high potential African American male leaders. (conduct at least one class of 15 participants annually for the next 3 years)

b. Enhance our outreach to clients who possess higher skills and education, to meet business and industry employment needs through use of social media strategies. (Increase service levels to clients with degrees by 10% by 6/30/15)

C. Opportunity to Own (Housing)

LUL’s Center for Housing and Financial Empowerment (CHFE) is a driving force in empowering people to attain sound financial health and that affords each the opportunity to have safe decent housing. CHFE will provide an array of counseling and education services that result in sound financial health.

1. Every adult in our local community should have equitable access to the financial education allowing them to determine their economic well being. Owning a home often leads to financial security.
   a. Become a voice for low-to-moderate-income (LMI) residents concerning their specific financial needs, circumstances and barriers with local, state and federal govt. agencies and corporations. (ongoing)
   b. Advocate for those who are underserved to foster equitable access. Expand and update curriculum to align with financial industry practices. (ongoing update of information i.e. credit score models, etc.)
   c. Expand outreach services of financial education to community partners, at their locations, through programs and workshops (increase by 10% annually for the next 3 years).

2. Every adult in our local community should have access to safe and decent housing that is affordable.
   a. Increase community partnerships to reach new prospects (add two (2) per year for the next 3 years).
   b. Create a marketing plan to expand educational services to reach non-traditional clients (LMI individuals returning to school including college graduates seeking more education) by 12/31/14.
   c. Expand homebuyer education classes to increase client comprehension (i.e. home buyer and post purchase protecting your investment by 6/30/14).
   d. Develop additional relationships with landlords/rental housing providers to service the needs of the rental clientele. (ongoing)
   e. Advocate with local financial institutions the need for mortgage products that enhance homeownership sustainability. (i.e. reducing PMI private mortgage insurance premiums and lowering down payment requirements ongoing)

D. Opportunity to Learn and Thrive (Children/Youth)

LUL’s Youth Development and Education (YDE) department’s core purpose is to provide robust out-of-school time programs that assist youth through knowledge, skills and the fostering of positive attitudes to be successful in school, in their communities and to increase post-secondary education success. The YDE provides an array of education and social development services for youth and parents/guardians.
1. Every youth in our local community should have the opportunity and access to improve their quality of living which includes safer neighborhoods, adequate nutrition and should be empowered to lend their voice to social and policy change.

   a. Increase awareness of healthy lifestyles (Get Fit)
      i. Integrate health and wellness activities in to youth development programs by 6/30/15.

   b. Empower youth to advocate for themselves, their peers and community to promote healthier living
      i. Integrate Walk to Defeat Childhood Obesity as youth community service project in to youth education programs 6/30/14.

2. Every youth in the local community should have access to quality and equitable education that will prepare them to compete in an increasingly thriving workforce.

   a. Increase the academic achievement of students actively engaged in Project Ready and the Street Academy programs with a focus on retention, graduation and college preparation (engage 250 students - increase 10% annually for the next 3 years).
      i. Promote a college going culture by exposing youth to college and career opportunities.
      ii. Incorporate financial literacy training into the curriculum for all participants.

   b. Provide leadership and social skill development for 500 youth participating in YDE programs (increase by 10% annually for the next 3 years).

   c. Partner with the public school system on 4 events/programs each year for the next 3 years to raise parental awareness and involvement, and to assist students academically.
      i. Encourage parent education and involvement in schools – enhance and expand the ‘Parent Leadership Academy’ philosophy in all YDE programs – ongoing)

   d. Engage 750 individuals through outreach programs and events such as Education Summit and Walk to Defeat Childhood Obesity. Increase the number of individuals engaged by 5% annually for the next 3 years.

IX. EPILOGUE

Since 1921, The Louisville Urban League has assisted disadvantaged people in attaining social and economic stability and prosperity. As the 21st century unfolds, LUL in partnership with other organizations will continue fostering better understanding of race relations, creating an environment of change committed to eliminating racial inequities, and instilling a message of hope in those it touches.

This strategic plan supports LUL in retaining its leadership role and increasing its capacity to remain a vital force of empowering individuals and families to achieve financial and social equity in an increasingly complex and interconnected world. Success in the global economy of the 21st century depends on educational attainment for both individuals and communities. LUL will remain a key partner in community initiatives including the multi-year project to add 15,000 college degrees by 2020 from the African American community and 55,000 college degrees from the community at-large.