



# THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY MODEL

Why it must be replicated nationally

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*The Wisconsin anti-poverty model is making a dramatic difference in the lives of residents in two of Wisconsin's largest cities. HUD now has the opportunity to pilot a model that has proven its ability to lift people out of poverty and to transform their lives.*

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# THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

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THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

A Housing Ministry of Hope and Opportunity



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**T**here is something incredible happening in low income housing communities in two of Wisconsin's largest cities-Milwaukee and Madison. Residents are transforming their lives through an anti-poverty model that gives them a direct stake in their community. The model has proven so successful that nearly 1 in 4 low income households have someone in college.

- Over 50 residents have obtained livable wage jobs right in their housing complexes
- The high school graduation rate in their communities approaches 100%
- 72% of high school graduates go on to higher education
- Their neighborhoods boast some of the lowest crime rates in their cities
- And much more!

In this report you will be introduced to the model and discover why it is so successful. You will read extraordinary stories describing how the model has changed the lives of residents and meet the visionary founder-Rev. Carmen Porco.

You will learn how the model creates an environment and provides access to resources so that residents may design and achieve their own destinies. Residents in these communities excel in every important social category ranging from better graduation rates to rising above their impoverished circumstances.

This powerful model has tremendous value for the nation and, in our opinion, should be replicated nationally. As you read more about the model in this report, and if you feel the same way, then we ask that you join us in our campaign to have the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) pilot the model in 5 cities across the U.S. in 2016.

There is also a 30-minute film that supplements this report. It tells a compelling story how the model operates and how it has significantly changed lives in Wisconsin. Information about the film can be found on page 20.

# THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

## INTRODUCTION

William Goldsmith and Edward Blakely argue in their book *Separate Societies: Poverty and Inequality in U.S. Cities* that the neglect of our urban poor carries an expensive price tag such as prison expansion, an unskilled labor force, an infrastructure of isolation and public schools that fail our youth. This toll they argue is paid by every one of us.

One of our greatest challenges as a nation is to genuinely help strengthen groups that are marginalized and easily forgotten. Too many people remain excluded from opportunity, relegated to dismal futures, trapped in ghettos and barrios despite fair housing legislation on the books in every state. These persisting urban problems cry out for a solution that is sustainable and benefits masses of people.

Too often we think the answers to intractable social problems like poverty lie out there somewhere and we spend years in search of the perfect solution when all we need to do is look in our own backyard. In Wisconsin we've looked inward and discovered the **Wisconsin Anti-Poverty Transformational Model** created and refined by Rev. Carmen Porco and his staff over a 40-year period. The model, described in this report, operates in Madison and Milwaukee in 805 low-income housing units serving several thousand people. It has impacted thousands more over the years and lifted many out of poverty. It has proven that the condition of the poor can be radically improved through local empowerment.

Former president Bill Clinton said, "One of the most effective ways to increase opportunity is to ensure that the poor are brought into the fabric of our communities." Porco's model does this and more. It doesn't treat poverty as personal pathology and as a result is able to offer a nurturing environment that respects people's dignity while helping them get the resources they need to become successful.

The model represents an effective alternative for HUD to seriously consider replicating nationally. The model has convincingly demonstrated that action to reduce poverty unleashes new human capacity and enables cities to think in new ways. HUD policies should be directed toward strengthening such possibilities.

As urban planning theorist Peter Marris wrote in *Community Planning and Conception of Change*, small changes in thinking sometimes lead to large changes in institutions. If federal efforts can support local innovations, there is enormous potential for effecting change in the housing system.

# THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

## ABOUT THE MODEL

The Wisconsin anti-poverty model is a holistic human development approach to empowering poor people who live in low-income housing complexes in Wisconsin. The model helps residents succeed by engaging them as capable, responsible individuals, worthy of dignity and respect and putting them in direct contact with a full range of resources and services. The model has been implemented in 805 units of Section 8 housing in Milwaukee and Madison. Although it is managed by the Housing Ministries of American Baptists in Wisconsin, residency is not based on religious affiliation nor does religion play any part in the delivery of services.

## UNIQUE ORIENTATION

The systems and processes that define the model begin the moment residents arrive to sign the rental lease. Rather than a simple lease signing, residents are given a comprehensive orientation and tour that explains the array of services and opportunities available in their complex. The Managers then refer residents to the onsite Program Coordinators so they may meet to get a more involved look at programs at the Community Learning Center. In addition, orientation enables residents to not only understand their responsibilities, but also the responsibilities the staff and management have to them and what recourse they have if needed. Orientation is unique because of the partnership that is created. From the very beginning residents co-own the model with staff and understand they have resources they can leverage to improve their lives.

## PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The programs and services have been built with the residents as the consultants in order to best meet the real needs of the community. There is something for everyone-year round. Examples of programs include: daycare and Head Start, afterschool programs, college prep programs, adult education and employment assistance. An active summer program offers field trips, arts & crafts and the opportunity to learn new skills like film making and science. Just outside their door, residents have access to a rich mix of programs and services that enable them to achieve educational goals, gain new skills and pursue their own destinies.

## HOW THE MODEL IS FUNDED

The model is self-sufficient and sustainable because it is funded from a portion of the rent profits that residents pay to live in the complex. A budgetary system has been designed that escrows monies into a permanent account to fund programs, services and staffing. In addition to independently funding its programs, staff and management, Rev. Porco has created a specific fund for educational scholarships for residents and internships. As a result the model has funded over 50 full and part-time jobs and awarded over \$625,000 in educational scholarships to more than 115 residents in Madison and Milwaukee, WI.

## **THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL**

### **LEARNING CENTERS**

The Community Learning Centers (CLCs) that have been built onsite have integrated programs and service based around education and employment and place-based those resources in the housing community. Upon visiting the Learning Centers, it is easy to understand why residents are thriving here. The Learning centers are equipped with the latest computer technology and create a culture and focus around learning and education. Through the CLCs, students have access to the internet, tutors and classes to help them succeed. Program coordinators work to develop strong relationships with the students and often act as representatives for them and their families within schools.

### **STAFF ARE RESIDENTS AND LIVE ON SITE**

Most of the staff who work on site also live on site. They get to know and understand the families and their needs in a very intimate way, often making for strong and trusting relationships. Staff serve as important role models, trusted advisors and proof that residents too can overcome obstacles. Staff offer a one-stop service for residents in terms of onsite programs and work hard to be connected with other groups and individuals in the larger community to help further serve the residents. Finally, the staff themselves engage in professional development opportunities as a way to upgrade their own skills and provide better service. The jobs created by the model have very low turnover. They have only lost one staff member in the past 15 years.

### **NURTURING ENVIRONMENT**

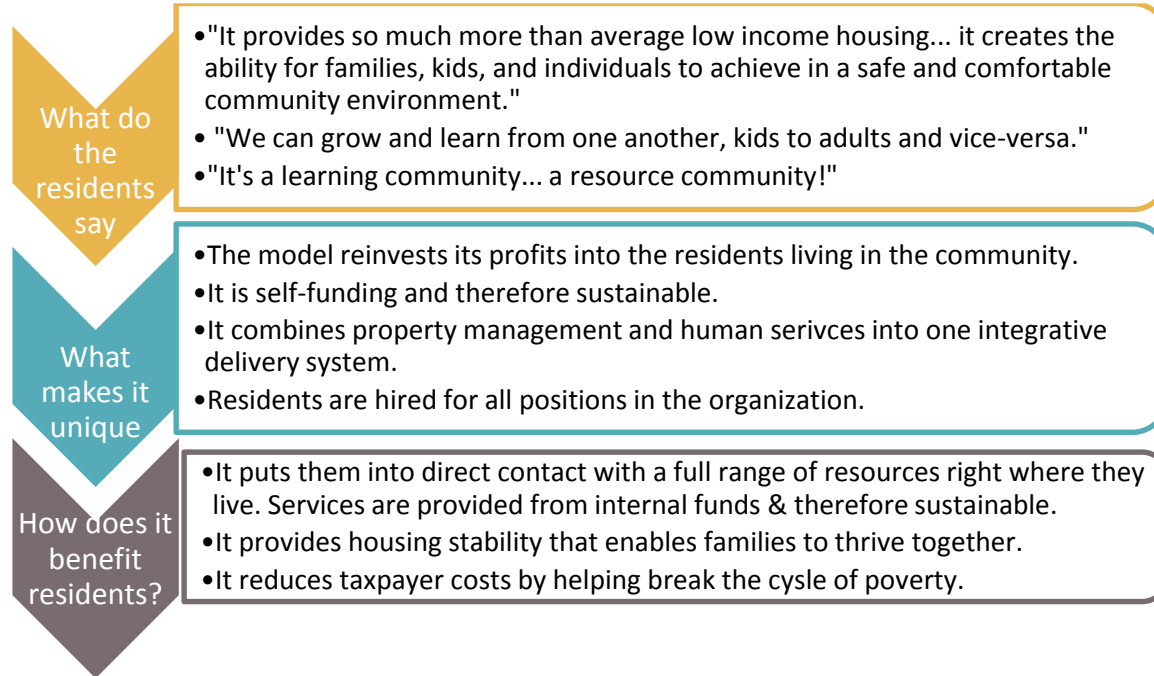
In addition to the unique incorporation of programs and services, the model has created a nurturing culture and environment that is pivotal to its success. The model includes systems and processes that create the necessary space for resident leadership to emerge. Due to the relationships that are formed, between staff and residents and between residents in the community, there is a culture of supporting one another's achievements. This helps explain why nearly 1 in 4 households have someone in college.

### **RESPONSIBLE TO EACH OTHER**

By providing genuine ownership through process and access to resources, the model provides individuals with a genuine stake in their community and its development. Residents are able to make long-term plans and then take leadership initiative to help others do the same. Residents value the community and one another and therefore, crime is not a problem the way one might think it would be in a low income housing complex. The true power of this is reflected in the resident statements and stories regarding their feelings of the community. When asked to describe the environment, residents chose words like community, opportunity, family, uncommon, independence, trust, success and other similar sentiments that reflect the idea that this model is a success, to the people that it is serving.

## THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

### The Model: **What makes it so successful?**



It gives both individuals and families a pathway out of poverty.

It engages the poor as capable, responsible individuals, worthy of dignity and respect and puts them into direct contact with a full range of resources and opportunities.

It does not rely on outside service providers but rather the skills, talents and collaboration of the residents and staff who live in the community.

It invests in people and helps them to believe in themselves and their capabilities.



## THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

### STORIES OF TRANSFORMATION

The success of the model can be judged best by the words of those it aims to serve. It would take a separate book to do justice to how the model has impacted literally thousands of lives over the years. The stories selected below are representative.



**Vicki, Jacki and Pat (left) - three residents whose lives have been forever changed as a result of Rev. Porco's innovative human development model. They've used their positions to breathe life into the mission and model.**

Vicki Davidson has been at Greentree (in Milwaukee) for over 17 years. When she arrived she was a single mother on welfare. She now holds a Master's degree and her son is also a college graduate. This was all made possible because of the model and Rev. Porco's decision to hire her. Vicki says, *"I try to help residents realize that they are capable of things that they might have never thought possible. I genuinely enjoy what I do and I try to make a difference in the lives of our residents. I'm so proud to see children graduate from grade school to middle school, middle school to high school and on to college. I live for those moments! I want to do it for as long as humanly possible."*

Jacki is the oldest of six children. Her father was a share crop farmer. She knew she was poor at the age of 7 when her mother said she couldn't bring friends home from school because their house wasn't very nice. As an adult, she remained poor, working in nursing homes and small magazines. Her husband and she had three children in four years. They were homeless when they arrived at Packers Townhouse, (one of the low-income complexes) in 1984. Packer allowed her family to gain stability and she was hired in 1994. Jacki says, *"This model not only impacted my personal life, it became the lens through which I view the world. I am convinced that the successes I have witnessed are primarily attributed to each individual's effort, integrity, and merit; but I recognize that it would have been nearly impossible without stable housing, a space where community can develop as a support system, and clear-eyed believers in the value of each individual."* Jacki's been employed for 21 years.

Pat says the model is about serving the people, investing in people, giving people opportunities, giving people chances, and allowing people to make their dreams come true. *"I am who I am today because of what I've learned from Carmen and his model. I believe in this model wholeheartedly. It made me see how people can actually develop if you believe in them and give them the resources they need."* Pat grew up in Sattahip, Thailand, the youngest of five kids. Growing up she never had a lot of things but felt what she had was always enough. With her sister's help her family moved to the U.S. in 1980 when Pat was 14 years old. When her first marriage ended, leaving her a single parent, raising two children on her own, she faced the hardest time in her life. She moved into Northport and was eventually hired by Carmen. Pat says, *"I love to see these kids grow up and make something out of themselves. This place makes me feel so proud of what we do, what we believe in...it keeps me going because there are hopes, opportunities and dreams. I will retire from here if they will have me that long."*

## THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

### OTHER STORIES



Omari Curry (student, 10 years old)—*“I get help with my homework and Ms. Vicki and Mr. Martinus visit my school and they know all my teachers, too! I have nice neighbors. The lady across the hall says if she plays the music too loud just knock on her door and she will turn it down. But it’s never too loud. No one smokes in our building and that’s good because my sister has asthma.”*



Kimber Thompson (staff/resident)—*“Convenient. Everything a resident needs is right here. All the resources are here where they live. They can even earn a Business degree right where they live.”*

Jessica Soto-Hernandez, a resident from the past. She moved in when she was 18 years old and lived at Northport for six years--*“As an 18 year old mother on my own, I found Northport Apartments vital to my independence today. I lived there for six years and felt a strong sense of community. I was there for the community learning center construction and watched my neighborhood developed into a family community. The staff of Northport Apartments played a vital role in the success of the residents. Computer classes, resume and job seeking assistance aided many people to obtain a better life. Thank you to the community I called home for six years.”*

Ashley Suarez, a past resident, grew up in Northport and lived there for fifteen years--*“Northport has helped my family in so many ways! I lived there for 15 years. I am so grateful for having the opportunity to live there. The learning center offered so many activities for us as kids growing up in the neighborhood. It really helped my mother, being a single parent, she had extra hands to help us. I wouldn’t change where I grew up. I learned so many things and I know Northport was always there for me and my family.”*

Kaneshia Wingo (staff/resident)—*“Living and working at Greentree has made me and my daughter feel safe, secure, valued--like family.”*

Charles Hardiman (staff/resident)--*“Greentree gives opportunity to everyone, no matter their circumstances. They can get a fresh start here.”*

There are many, many more inspiring stories!

## THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

### MEET THE FOUNDER

Rev. Carmen Porco is the Executive Director of Housing Ministries of American Baptists in WI, responsible for low income housing complexes in Milwaukee and Madison, Wisconsin. He earned his BA degree from Alderson-Broaddus College; his Master of Divinity degree from Andover Newton Theological School and was awarded an honorary doctorate degree from Central Baptist Theological School. It was his vision and leadership that created the transformational model.



Rev. Carmen Porco knows firsthand what it's like to be poor. His humble background in an impoverished community in West Virginia taught him to empathize with the poor and make their plight his lifelong mission. Graduating from College and then graduate school with a degree in theology with emphasis on clinical psychology, Mr. Porco navigated back to communities of poverty to develop an integrative housing and community services model.

Having experiences throughout the country in cities such as Boston, New York, Columbia, Maryland, Los Angeles, Madison and Milwaukee, WI gave him opportunities of fine tuning an approach that could make a real difference in communities of poverty. He always believed that if you treat people with dignity and believe in them they would achieve accordingly. He believes that we need to examine more critically the various institutional designs and philosophies that have been created to deal with poverty; that systemic injustice and challenging the exclusivity of the dominant power structure and culture is mandatory to achieve equality, justice and the establishment of the

“Beloved Community.” Creating this new combination of property management and integrative human services made it possible to show the reality of the oppressive nature of our governmental and private organizations dealing with communities and people of poverty.

“We must go into these communities and provide an institutional base that gives the jobs to the people, promotes educational achievement and influences social responsibility. Providing an organizational relationship that they are decision makers in and requesting that they are the ones that define the problems and create the solutions would give the larger community a more realistic understanding of the dignity of the poor and how they in fact make contributions in their immediate and larger communities,” says Mr. Porco. He believes that a great deal of our problems are a reflection of our inability and in cases unwillingness to trust the underclass with power and resources that allows them to make the boots that will prevent their souls from being crushed by the myriad of data collection that sustains bias.

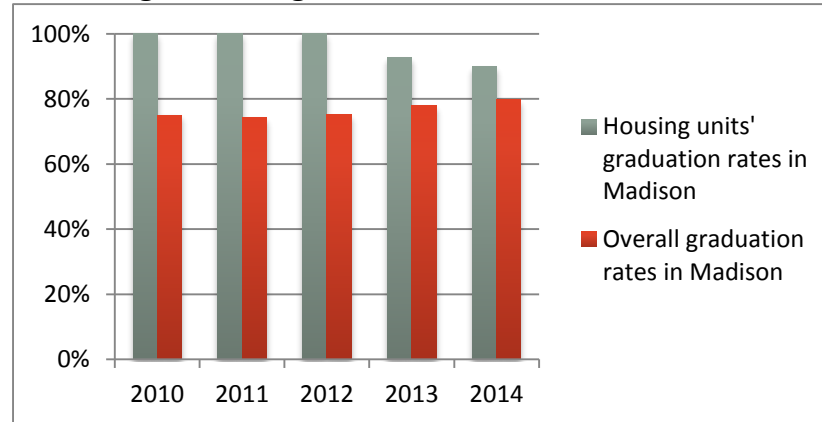
“Throughout our country there are thousands of low income privately owned housing developments that lack an integration of services that focus on the leadership capability of those living in the housing developments. If we can establish the integrative models of services that are holistic and provide the jobs to the residents, we can make a dramatic difference in the other main line institutions such as public schools, police departments, colleges and universities, the court systems and national and local governments. Unlocking the opportunity for this leadership and achievement is a must if we are to be a strong and competitive nation in a global community,” says Mr. Porco.

# THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

THE MODEL OUT PERFORMS IN EVERY IMPORTANT SOCIAL CATEGORY

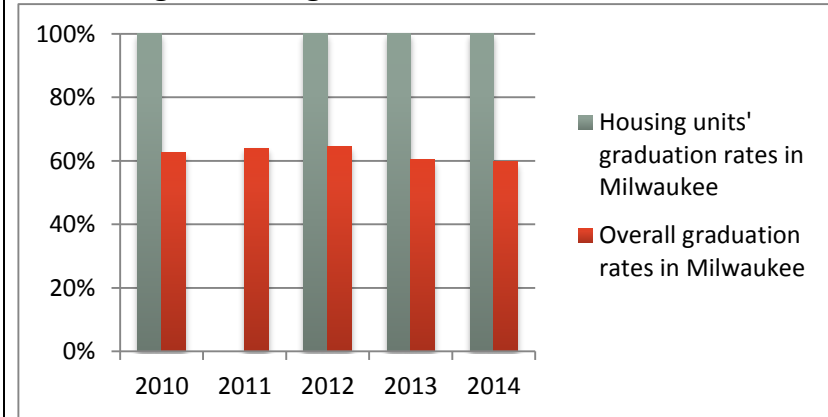
## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES BY CITY COMPARED TO THE ANTI-POVERTY MODEL'S RESULTS

Table 1- High school graduation rates in Madison



Source: <http://1.usa.gov/1lplgg>

Table 2- High school graduation rates in Milwaukee



Source: <http://1.usa.gov/1dPh7QB>

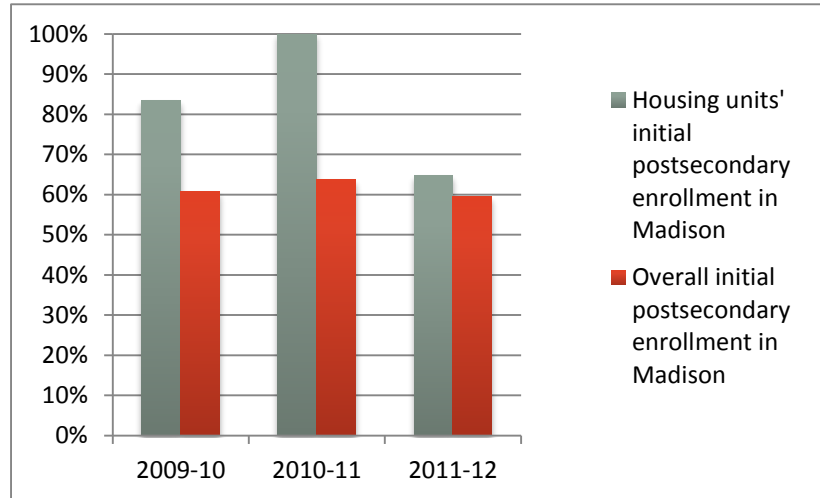
In 2011 there were no high school students in Milwaukee housing units who were scheduled to graduate that year.

As you can see from the Tables above the model has allowed students living in low-income housing units in Madison and Milwaukee to exceed their peers in graduating from high school in the public schools that they attend. This is a significant accomplishment and speaks to the strength of the model and its emphasis on education. The model has been so successful that there is no academic achievement gap in the complexes.

## THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

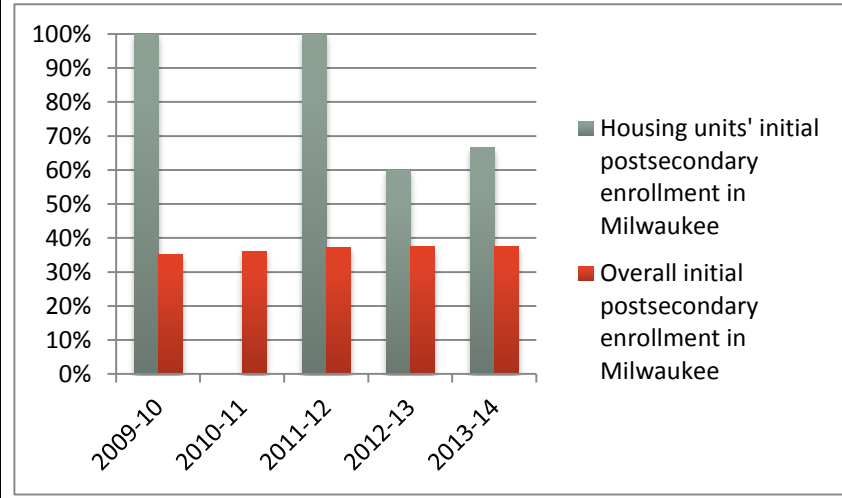
### PERCENTAGE OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES BY CITY THAT GO ON TO COLLEGE COMPARED TO THE ANTI-POVERTY MODEL'S RESULTS (first fall after high school completion)

Table 3 - Percentage of H.S. graduates that go on to college in Madison



Source: <http://1.usa.gov/1Fwel9K>

Table 4 - Percentage of H.S. graduates that go on to college in Milwaukee



Source: <http://1.usa.gov/1G9bSWs>

Note: there were no high school graduates in Milwaukee housing units in 2011

As the above Tables point out students living in the housing units also exceed their peers into going on to college after high school. It's important to grasp the impact of the model. Regardless of the environment, whether in Madison or Milwaukee, the effect of the model is consistent. Students living in low income housing units are enrolling in college at above average rates. That speaks volumes about the model.

## THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

### SCHOLARSHIPS

**\$625,000 in educational scholarships have been awarded to more than 115 residents in Madison & Milwaukee over the past decade. The mean grade point average was 3.3 (on a 4.0 scale) for scholarship recipients.**



The model operates on the philosophy that educational achievement is the key to breaking the generational cycles of poverty. The model has allowed residents to attend 2 and 4-year institutions throughout Wisconsin and the U.S.

Those who went on from high school attended places like: Madison College, UW-Madison, UW systems schools, North Carolina AT&T University, University of Iowa Dubuque, UW-Milwaukee, and Edgewood.

Other individuals receiving scholarships have attended a much larger array of schools including: Madison College, Edgewood, Marquette, Cardinal Stritch University, UW-Madison, Upper Iowa University, Central Baptist Seminary, Upper

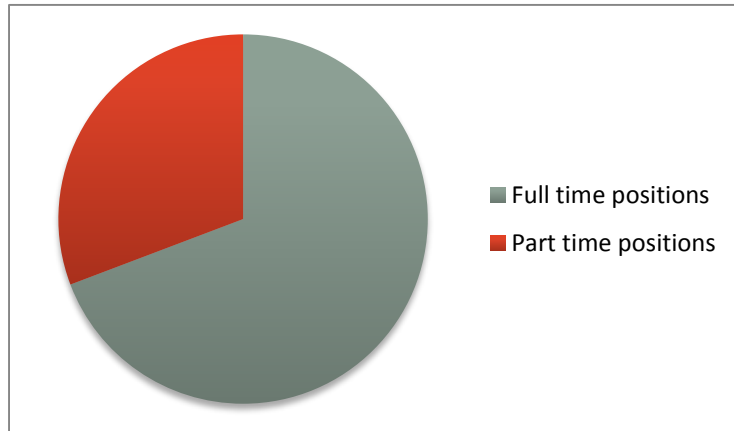
Iowa University, Alverno College, University of Phoenix, Herzing University, Mount Mary, Anthem College, University of Dubuque, UW- Oshkosh, Carroll University. Still others have been admitted into elite Ivy League schools such as Princeton.

Degrees for scholarship recipients include: International Studies, History & African-American Studies, Registered Nurse, Nurse Aid Program, Medical Billing and Coding, Nursing and Chemistry, Non-Profit Management, Cosmetology License, Graphic Arts, Business Administration, IT-Computer Systems Admin Specialist, Masters in Education, Spanish, Liberal Arts Transfer Program, Law School and Writing Workshops.

## THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

### EMPLOYMENT

#### Job Creation by the model



	Full Time	Part Time	Total
Madison	18	9	27
Milwaukee	18	7	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>52</b>

Source: HMABW Accounting Department, June 2015

In addition to livable wage jobs, residents are hired as interns. This provides invaluable work experience for young people while giving them important skills and knowledge.

Residents are hired for all positions in the organization from management to services to maintenance. The low turnover rate suggests a supportive work environment in which employees are valued and given opportunities to improve their skills. Equally important is the service that staff provide in helping residents find jobs. Residents are assisted with: resume writing; skill building in the learning centers; provided ESL instruction as needed; mock interviews are offered; and other assistance to get them "job-ready."

Additionally, job notices are posted on site; job fairs are offered periodically and residents are taught how to use resources on the Internet to search online for job openings. Staff have been very successful in helping residents find jobs. Over the years this assistance has resulted in residents leaving the complex and buying their own homes.

## THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

### POVERTY

Perhaps Jacki says it best: *“Poverty kicks the life out of people!”* What makes the model so effective is that it picks people up when they’re down. While employment rose modestly in Wisconsin, there was no reduction in poverty between 2012 and 2013 under both the official poverty measure and the Wisconsin Poverty Measure. In fact poverty rose from 10.2 to 10.9 percent during this period. Progress against poverty in Wisconsin is flattening out as the recovery remains fragile for low-income families. Milwaukee County has the highest poverty rate in the state with a rate of 18.2 while Dane County holds the 7<sup>th</sup> highest poverty rate of counties in Wisconsin.

When the poverty rate by race is considered, Wisconsin ranks last in the country in the overall well-being of African-American children based on an index of 12 measures that gauge a child's success from birth to adulthood, according to a report by the Wisconsin Council on Children & Families. Four out of every five African-American children in Wisconsin live in poor households, compared with roughly two out of three Latino children and three out of 10 white children. The gap between children of color and white children is significant.

### Consider these stats: Percent below Poverty Level, Age 0-17

	Madison city	Milwaukee city
White	10.0%	26.0%
Black	51.7%	54.6%
American Indian	28.8%	44.1%
Hispanic	33.9%	42.3%
Asian	26.9%	32.8%
Some Other Race	34.4%	44.8%
2 or More Races	27.2%	40.9%

Source: American Community Survey, 2009-2013

Wisconsin, along with the nation could benefit from a proven model to combat poverty. The **Wisconsin Anti-Poverty model** demonstrates that it thrives in poor neighborhoods similar to the Harlem Children’s Promise Zone in New York. One of the many ways the model helps to combat poverty is to provide housing stability for families. As you can see from the Table below the average residency rate is above the norm. It takes about five years for residents to get the full benefit of the model and it seems that currently most are gaining the benefits.

### Average Residency (In years)

	Northport	Packer	Greentree	Teutonia
Residency to Date for Current Residents	5.62	8.63	7.39	5.02
Average Years of Stay for Prior Residents	4.07	5.63	6.06	4.56

Source: One site Software system report, HMABW June, 2015

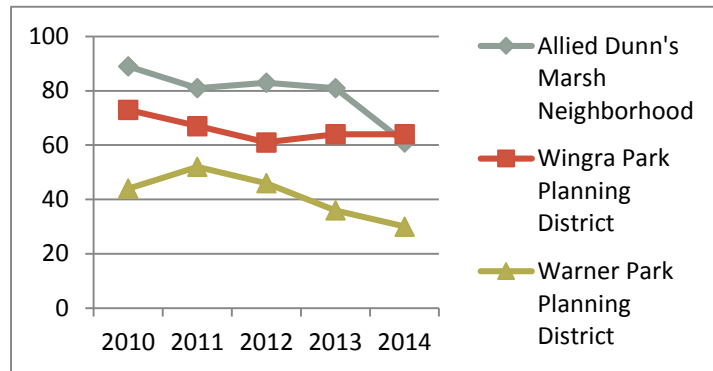


# THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

## CRIME

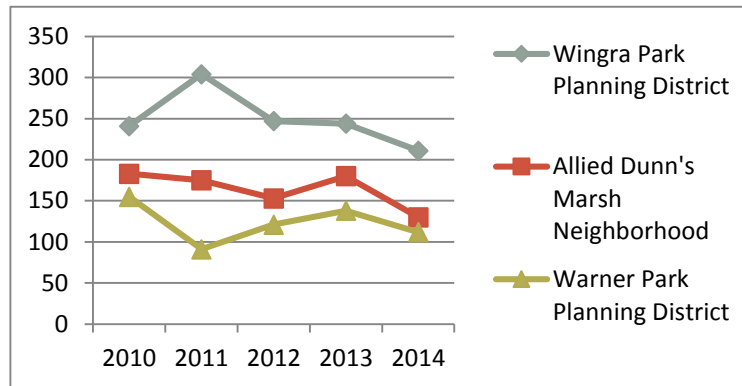
### LOW CRIME RATES

**Table 5 - Crimes against Persons**



**Note: We are only including statistics for one city, although Milwaukee's stats are equally as impressive.**

**Table 6 - Crimes against Property**



Source: <http://madison.apl.wisc.edu/index.php>

Low-income properties utilizing the model developed by Rev. Porco have some of the lowest crime rates of any neighborhood in Madison and Milwaukee. Too many people equate poverty and crime but it's probably more accurate to say that it is criminal for a society as rich as ours to allow the level of poverty that exists in the country. If you look at the Tables above you will see that it would be very difficult to link poverty and crime in the Warner Park Planning District, where two of the low-income housing units are located. This model demonstrates the value for the dignity of each individual and provides residents with a sense of security. This means that not only is there less crime, and less damage to the property itself, but also a sense of pride that leads residents to give back to their communities.

## THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

### WHY THE MODEL NEEDS TO BE REPLICATED

- Reason #1**
  - It's the real thing. It's now been in place long enough for the results to be verified. The statistics in this report speak for themselves and the hundreds of individual and family stories and testimonies speak volumes.
- Reason #2**
  - There are thousands of low income privately owned housing developments that lack an integration of services that focus on the leadership capability of those living in the housing developments. Porco's model could potentially help millions of people. They're just asking to pilot to 5.
- Reason #3**
  - The architect of the model Rev. Carmen Porco is available to consult nationally and explain how and why the model works. Porco is a man of vision and stands ready to serve the nation. HUD has a tremendous opportunity to use his intellect and talent to help communities across the land empower the poor.

*Porco's housing units are places where it is possible to find someone to believe in you for the long haul; some of our best success stories are those that came after multiple trials; this is a very good place to find yourself if you are feeling alone in school or the larger world- We provide a clearing house for information, a network of personal introductions to outside resources, and best of all a review system taking into account the past experiences of others with outside agencies-Jacki, HMABW Staff.*

## THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

### POLICY CHANGES NEEDED

There are several challenges that must be addressed to convince HUD to support a pilot of the model.

1. Historically HUD's main concern was that their mortgage be paid off on time and less emphasis placed on the human element. It's important to remind them that such a narrow view of property management doesn't serve the needs of the poor community very well. There is no specific HUD policy stating how money can be used once the mortgage is paid off. However, the need for the programs and services is present prior to the mortgage being paid off and that's where permission to use funds for the model is needed. It would be significant if HUD encouraged property managers to set up accounts for programming and services at the beginning of their contracts.
2. HUD thinks key services should be brought into low income housing units from outside sources. This tends to prevent any kind of program longevity or sustainability. Nor does it meet the needs of the low income community. Outside vendors, no matter how committed, make little investment into low income communities. Too often they are in the poverty (profit) business and that's quite different from partnering with the poor.
3. Federal agencies still operate in silos, which often prevents an integrated approach that is so badly needed in HUD housing units. The model has the potential to show why and how an integrated approach is better.
4. HUD could make sure that properties with a nonprofit status are getting the correct tax exemptions so they may have that extra money to put towards programs. This only requires an educational campaign and providing easily accessible information.
5. HUD could create a Human Capital allocation account similar to what they have in place for physical restoration of the properties. Mandating or allowing such accounts would encourage property managers to consider adopting the model outlined in this report.
6. Training and leadership in low income property management is needed to help property managers rethink how their policies and practices can support human motivation and become *people-first* focused. This is something that Rev. Porco could assist HUD in establishing.

A pilot will allow each of the above challenges to be addressed and perhaps change policies that are currently working against the types of initiatives that are needed to impact poverty in substantive ways. Ideally this pilot could be conducted in conjunction with HUD's Office of University Partnerships that focuses on research and connecting the academic world with housing. This would be an objective way to show how the Wisconsin Anti-Poverty model is sustainable, enhances community development and enriches people's lives by providing a holistic framework of programs that are sustainable by the internal financing of the housing rents. It could also be the arm within HUD that studies the necessity for changing the narrow confines of Housing Management with services dependent on outside entities coming in, instead of developing the full integration of services within the legal structure of the housing entity.

## THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

### HOW THE MODEL DIFFERS FROM HUD'S NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORKS

HUD demonstrated leadership and vision when it launched its Neighborhood Networks initiative in 1995. Neighborhood Networks was one of the first federal initiatives aimed at promoting self-sufficiency and providing technology access to residents living in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Federal Housing Administration (FHA)-insured and -assisted communities. By encouraging property owners and managers to open onsite, multiservice technology centers, HUD hoped the community-based Initiative would have a profound effect on the lives of residents and it has. (Source: <http://1.usa.gov/1FdAZSW>)

If HUD already sponsors an initiative (NN) that supports self-sufficiency and empowerment of low income residents why should they be interested in piloting the Wisconsin Anti-Poverty (WAP) model? Perhaps the reasons listed below help answer that question:

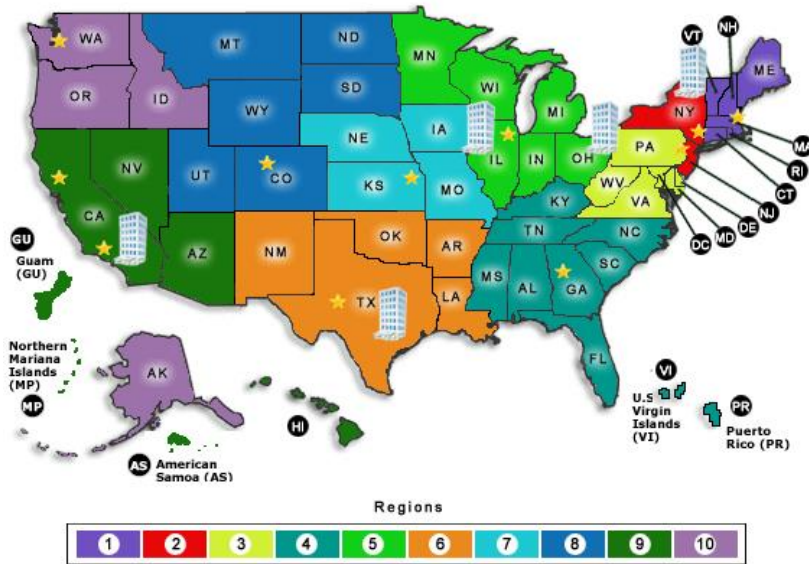
- NN is not fully funded the way WAP is; therefore it's not sustainable.
- NN is not integrated into the structure and legality of the management of the property.
- NN is dependent on external voluntary groups for staffing and funding, thereby lacking sustainability.
- NN in very few cases hired the residents or developed programs based on the residents defined needs and solutions.
- HUD funded a third party contractor to provide expertise and training to NN across the country. This contractor service lasted close to 15 years and ended with little success.
- Too often NN funding is start-up monies which mean the grantee has to find funding each year to maintain the program.
- None of the NN assisted housing developments offer scholarships of a significant amount nor do they have a paid intern program.

### HOW DOES THE MODEL DEMONSTRATE COST EFFECTIVENESS

- By ensuring that people have the jobs and design their destiny, the community becomes a safety net for human development.
- Reduced police calls of serious nature.
- Reduced fire and ambulance calls.
- Young people and adults entering the education system instead of the prison system.
- Low residency turnover; when most residents leave they're moving upward.
- Organizational staff turnover of all positions is extremely rare.
- Routine maintenance cost due to vandalism is very low.
- The model exists under the street rent caps that HUD applies to all low income housing developments in the metropolitan area. This means that while Porco's model provides extensive services and has a full staff on site, they are still below or at the other assisted rental units' rent levels; despite these other units not supplying the level of service or investment that Porco provides.

## THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

### START WITH A PILOT



Source: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/localoffices/regions>

### SELECT FIVE LOW INCOME HOUSING PROJECTS

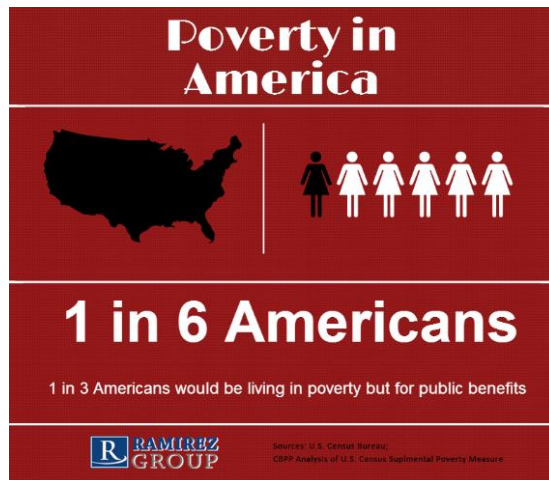
1. Select one in the west
2. Select one in the east
3. Select one in the south
4. Select two in the Midwest
5. Commit to these pilots for a minimum of 5-years
6. Bring the directors together annually and have them communicate with each other monthly

We are proposing that 5 low income housing developments under contract or soon to be under contract with HUD be selected in 2016 to pilot the Wisconsin Anti-Poverty Model. Rev. Porco would be contracted to provide the technical assistance needed. We are proposing that these pilots be offered for 5 years since that is the time it takes for the model to be owned by the residents and receive the greatest benefits.

We are also recommending that the property owners of these pilot sites work together and share successes and challenges and meet at least annually with Rev. Porco to assess the progress and lessons learned. The pilots would be evaluated annually, and the results made public and then HUD would have the data it needs to consider rolling out the model nationally.

## THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

### SUMMARY



The Table on the left that says 1 in 6 Americans live in poverty should concern all of us. We are told daily by our media that we live in the richest country on the planet. Yet, poverty is on the rise and there are few signs that fighting poverty is of national import. That is why local initiatives are so important. It may take local innovation to affect national change.

HUD has a great opportunity to share a local model that continues to inspire politicians, social workers, educators but more importantly the families it serves in Wisconsin. The model helps young residents out perform their peers in high school and attend college at higher rates. It provides a nurturing environment for families that allows them to flourish. It provides for safe communities which reduces personal stress and allows people to be thoughtful about their future.

The model's intangibles are equally important- helping people believe in themselves and their potential. Mr. Julian Castro, Secretary of HUD needs to be informed about the Wisconsin Anti-Poverty Model that continues to transform thousands of lives in Wisconsin by helping lift families out of poverty. Rev. Porco's residents have both hope and opportunity and that is worth replicating!

There is something special about this model and the lives it is changing in Madison, Milwaukee and beyond. They have built an institution that provides the poor community with jobs and education and as a result are able to strengthen families while reducing poverty. Can you imagine the impact if all HUD facilities adopted the model outlined in this report?

Why should we care? Perhaps Rev. Porco says it best: *"The poor are increasingly becoming us and not them"*

## THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

### CALL TO ACTION

If you believe this model can help to transform the lives of countless people living in poverty we urge you to join us in appealing to HUD to pilot it nationally. You can write to HUD directly or send us a letter of support that we can submit with our appeal.

With your help we will place this model in poor communities throughout the nation and give individuals and families the assistance and resources they need to get out of poverty. Now is the time to act. We're grateful for your support!

**STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE:** Jacqueline Dewalt, Corkey Custer, Akbar Ally, Paul Vanderbloemen, Carmen Porco, Margaret Porco, and Chuck Taylor.

### FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Contact Margaret Porco, Housing Ministries of American Baptists in Wisconsin  
7 North Pinckney Street, Suite 120 Madison, WI 53703 or [mdporco@gmail.com](mailto:mdporco@gmail.com)

### Film



A 30-minute film that will be released in September, 2015 visually tells the story of the Wisconsin Anti-Poverty Transformational Model. It shows how the model operates and shares stories from the many lives the model has touched. The film is inspirational and makes a powerful case why the model should be replicated.

If you still believe in hope and the power of redemption then you must see this film. You'll discover the great work that is occurring in Wisconsin's low income housing communities and meet the visionary leader whose commitment to helping others will inspire you. Please contact Margaret Porco to order a DVD of the film!

## THE WISCONSIN ANTI-POVERTY TRANSFORMATIONAL MODEL

### REFERENCES

- All data used to compare the Model's results in Tables 1, 2, 3 & 4 were provided by Housing Ministries of American Baptists in Wisconsin (HMABW) staff and verified by Margaret Porco.
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- Table 4-Constructed from: <http://1.usa.gov/1G9bSWs>
- Table 5-Constructed from: <http://madison.apl.wisc.edu/index.php>
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