The City of Chicago faces an endless list of challenges, and 50% of the population lives in poverty, making upwards of 700,000 people Black. Our analysis revealed that the legacy of systemic racism has left Chicago’s residents incredibly disadvantaged and in most regards Black-majority, such as West Garfield Park. Since Garfield Park has a per-capita income of $18,184, approximately 35% less than Chicago’s median per-capita income of $28,405.

Our solution

Our research study aims at innovation in social policy, monetary, and psychological health by providing a guaranteed income of $500 USD per month for the next 18 months to 30 previously incarcerated individuals in West Garfield Park. There are no work requirements or restrictions on how the money can be spent. We only ask participants to provide regular self-reported updates on the variables we’re tracking.

We recognize that guaranteed income is not a universal remedy for centuries of oppression, criminalization, and neglect. Unconditional cash meets people’s most urgent needs, which isn’t always limited to economic needs and involves a range of health and wellbeing outcomes. Moreover, we have seen a guaranteed income can translate into reduced poverty, reduced incarceration, and ultimately build a stronger and safer community in Garfield Park.

What We’re Tracking

Our researchers will analyze the effects of guaranteed income on the following reported variables:
• Income volatility
• Recidivism
• Physical functioning
• Psychological wellbeing

Make less than $12,000 per year

How will we see the results?

Every month, participants will be required to participate in data collection surveys. Every other observation point, we will release a newsletter to our donors showcasing individual stories and updated findings from allocated throughout the program. Every other observation point, we will release a newsletter to our donors showcasing individual stories and updated findings from.

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How can anyone live off $500/month?

A guaranteed income of $500/month isn't going to make anyone rich, but it will provide a lifeline to someone on the verge of drowning. $500/month allows folks to support themselves post-release. 43% of formerly incarcerated people return to prison within three years, and 76% return within five years, costing taxpayers over $150,000 per individual each time.

The Problem

The city of Chicago experiences an array of social problems, all of which are interconnected. Poverty, recidivism, and neglect are just a few of the most pressing social issues that plague Chicago's residents. The Chicago Future Fund is a nonprofit organization that aims to address these issues by providing a guaranteed income of $500 USD per month for 18 months to 30 formerly incarcerated individuals in West Garfield Park. Our research study seeks to demonstrate the effectiveness of a guaranteed income in alleviating economic violence and dismantling anti-Black racism in Chicago's Black communities.

Eligibility Criteria

We seek to guarantee financial resources going to those most in need. To qualify for the Chicago Future Fund, all applicants must meet the following criteria:
• 18-25 years old
• Formerly incarcerated
• Make less than $12,000 per year

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