

July 12, 2022
[First name] [Last name]
[Company Name]
123 Street Name Suite #
City, State Zipcode

Dear [First Name].

We write to you today as leaders in Pittsburgh urging you to support the thousands of Black women we serve, care about, and see striving to call our region home. Many of these women are your employees, and yet, while many of them do comparable jobs with comparable or higher level of experience, their paychecks reflect only a fraction of what their White male and female colleagues earn. Black women and other women of color are disproportionately affected by the gender pay gap. By improving the situation for those most impacted, we can achieve gender pay equity for every woman.

It's time we Level Up. There is no excuse for why Black women still only make 63 cents on the dollar nationally compared to their White male counterparts. And it is even worse here in Pittsburgh - 54 cents on the dollar - in what has time and time again been named the country's "Most Livable City." This disparity is not just bad for our families and our communities, but it weakens our city's businesses as well. Above all, it undermines the very fabric of our region, whose reputation is based on hard work and building towards a collective future.

When a Black woman, who may be the head of the household, makes less money, it means she is often forced to work two jobs, sometimes more, to ensure basic necessities for her family, which deny her children - our future - the resources and attention they need to thrive.

When a Black woman, whose leadership is needed in her community, makes significantly less money and has to work longer hours to pay bills or student loans, it means her community suffers in her absence and cannot flourish.

When a Black woman, whose skills and talents are needed now more than ever to help fill our labor shortage, can only expect to be paid a fraction of what her labor is worth, it can have a profound impact on her self-esteem, result in anxiety and depression, and ultimately reduce work productivity. This is not good for her. **This is not good for business.**

It's time to level the playing field - by paying Black women as you would anyone else in your office. We ask you and your company to take the "Level Up" pledge - not just for the sake of your employees, but for the sake of Pittsburgh's future. Black women are a cornerstone of Pittsburgh's communities, and it's time to recognize them as such.

Attached is a copy of the pledge, which we encourage you to read and sign. For questions, comments, or concerns, please email Rochelle Jackson at rochelle@blackwomenspolicycenter.org.

Sincerely,


Executive Director
Black Women's Policy Center


CEO
Women and Girls Foundation


President & CEO
YWCA Greater Pittsburgh


President
Carlow University


Executive Director
Homeless Children's Education Fund


Executive Director
Catapult Greater Pittsburgh


Board Member
YWCA Greater Pittsburgh


President & CEO
Pittsburgh Business Group on Health


Vice President, Equity & Research
The Heinz Endowments