

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Urban League of Rochester Honors John Urban and Greater Rochester Health Foundation at Annual Luncheon

ROCHESTER, N.Y., March 29, 2016 – John Urban and the Greater Rochester Health Foundation were recognized and honored during the Urban League of Rochester’s annual luncheon earlier today.

Accepting this honor, John Urban was invited to address the luncheon’s crowd, which included, “I am deeply touched by this award. There is no organization that has meant more to me, from my time as a 14-year old boy working an Urban League summer camp in Buffalo, to my time on the Urban League of Rochester’s Board of Directors.

No friendship means more to me than that of Bill Clark and Essie Calhoun-McDavid, who have taught me, worked with me, and guided me. To them I owe a special thanks, and to staff.

I need not tell anyone today what a difficult time this is in our community – a failing education system, more than 50% of kids in the city living at or below the poverty line, housing that is old and in disrepair, shameful financial and sales practices that assure people of low income are effectively forced into specific neighborhoods, creating concentration of poverty.

Add a justice system labeling boys as felons, public transportation that requires hours to get from one side of town to the other, child care that is unaffordable, and jobs that don’t pay anything close to a living wage. It is a hard time, a time rooted in a 400-year old history of oppression.

When I was growing up, we did believe, many of us black and white, that we will overcome. We did believe that the color of a persons’ skin was not a sign of their heart that equal opportunity was more than an ideal or law – it was a fundamental, God-given right.

50 years later, I stand before you appalled at where we are, but even more committed to change. 50 years later, I understand the fact of white privilege is a shame that must be confronted and confronted by white folk. 50 years later, we know the price of racism is visible in peoples’ health, safety, education, and their very sense of themselves.

I am proud to be part of the struggle. And however small my contributions have been, they are what I have to offer. I am proud to be a member of the Urban League, and prouder still to stand with the league in the fight for what is right – a new city, a new state, a new country that will struggle, but ultimately find the path to a genuinely equal opportunity.”



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About Greater Rochester Health Foundation

The mission of Greater Rochester Health Foundation is to improve the health status of residents of the Greater Rochester community, including people whose unique health care needs have not been met because of race, ethnicity, or income. For more information, please visit www.thegrhf.org.

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