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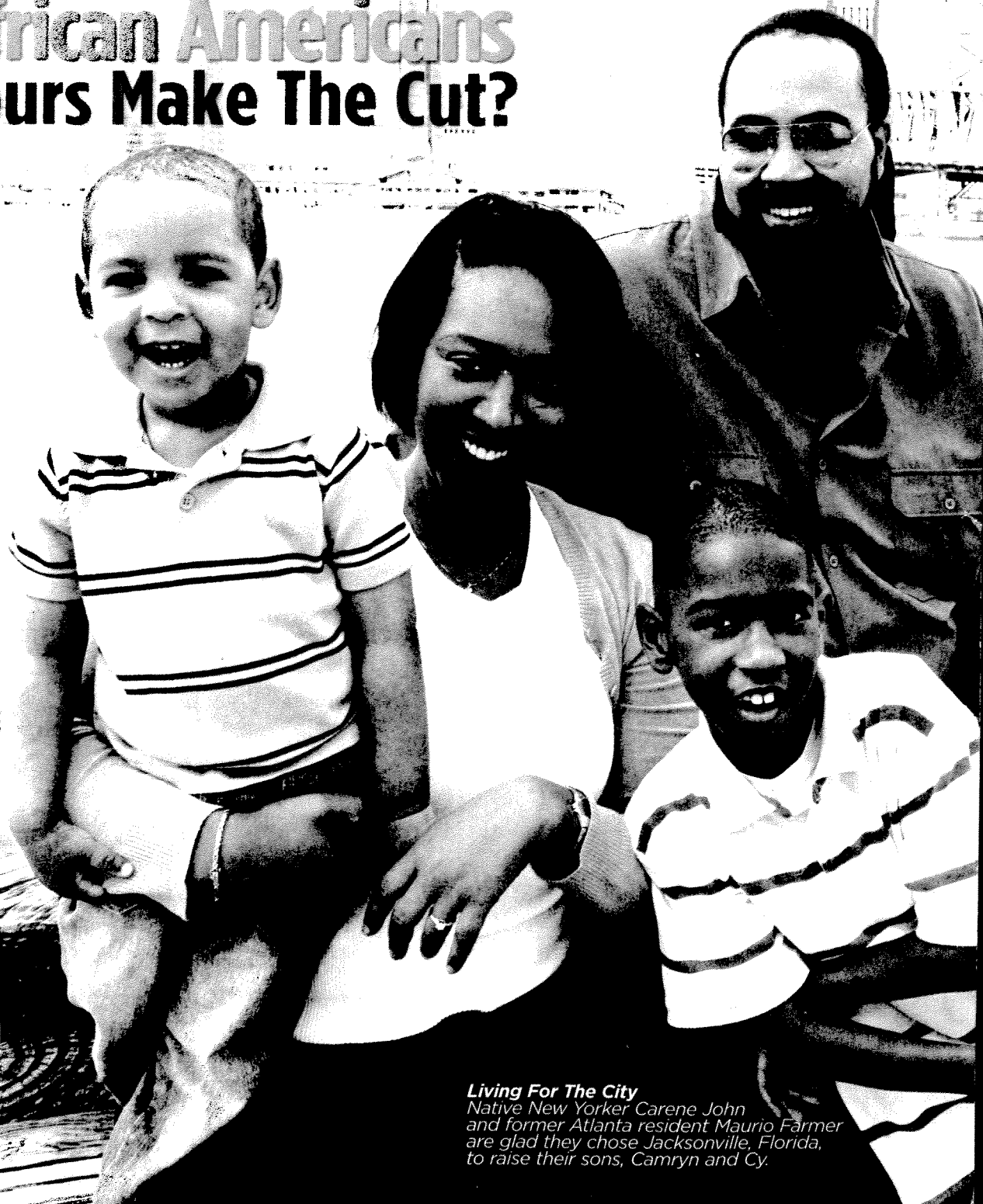
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MAY 2007

10 Best Cities For African Americans Did Yours Make The Cut?

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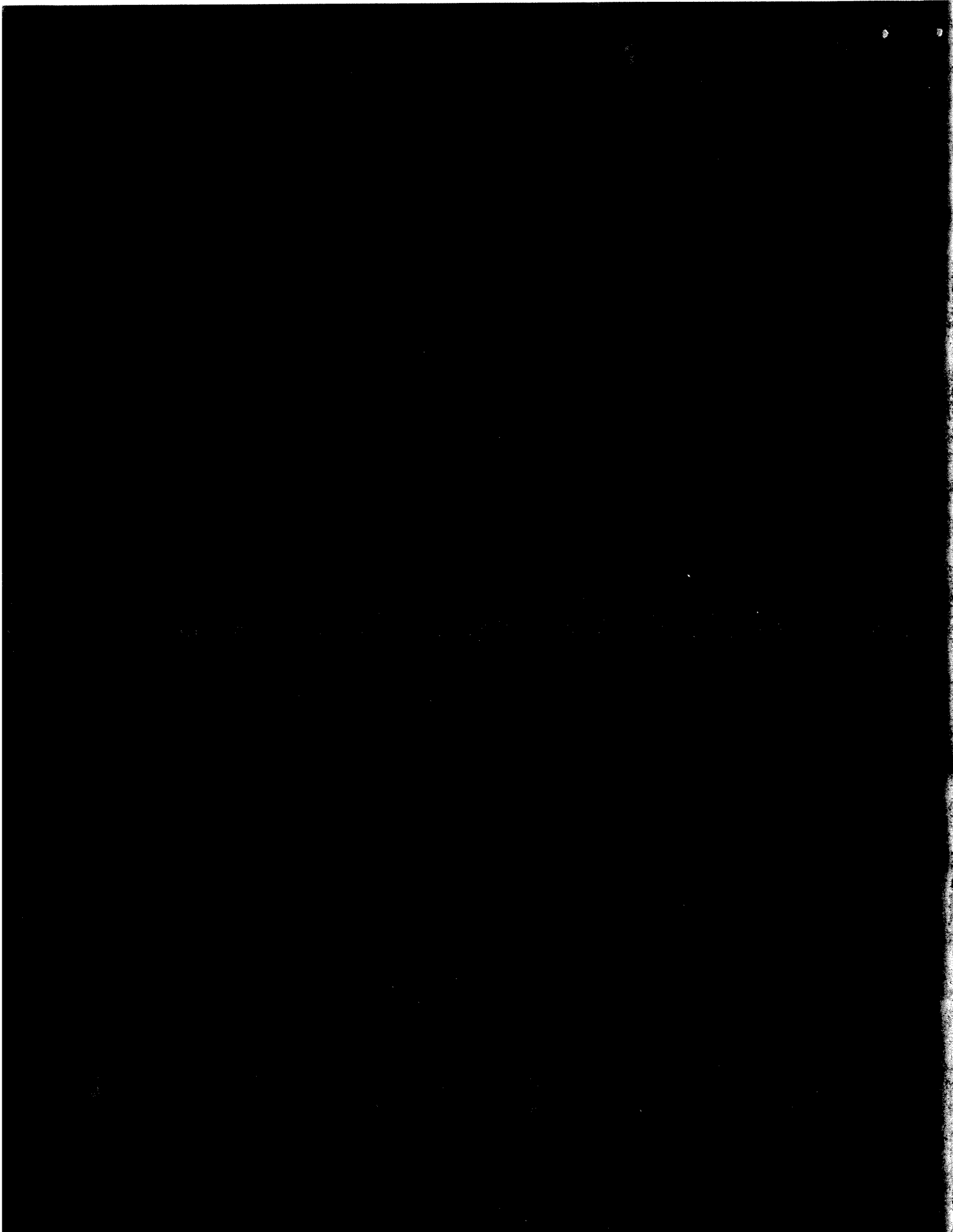
Native New Yorker Carene John and former Atlanta resident Maurio Farmer are glad they chose Jacksonville, Florida, to raise their sons, Camryn and Cy.

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TOP 10 CITIES FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS 2007

**OUR READERS AND
EDITORS SELECT
THE BEST PLACES
IN WHICH TO
LIVE, WORK,
AND PLAY**

*By Carolyn M. Brown
and David A. Padgett*

*—Additional reporting by
Tennille M. Robinson, Stephanie
Young, Sheiresa McRae,
and Nadirah Sabir*

FOR MOST, LIVING THE GOOD LIFE includes high-paying jobs, affordable homes, a vibrant social life, and short commutes. How can you achieve such a first-rate lifestyle?

Well, we identified 10 locales that promise a trove of business, professional, and personal opportunities: **BLACK ENTERPRISE's** Top 10 Cities for African Americans.

Our 2007 ranking offers some major changes and repositioning in comparison to our 2001 and 2004 lists. Five cities found on both lists remain: Atlanta; Charlotte, North Carolina; Dallas; Houston; and the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Nashville, Tennessee, and Columbus, Ohio, represent returnees from our 2004 roster. Three cities failed to make the cut this time around: Birmingham, Alabama, which received a low response from its residents, and Baltimore and Memphis, Tennessee, which were knocked out of contention because of residents' great dissatisfaction with several key living standards. Our newcomers to the list are Indianapolis; Jacksonville, Florida; and Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina.

For the third consecutive time, major metropolitan areas such as New York and Los Angeles didn't measure up. Chicago and Philadelphia, both included on our 2001 ranking, failed to return to their past glory. Residents of these urban hubs continue to be disenchanted with nagging social problems including the high cost of living, rising crime rates, and lackluster public schools.

Just as in 2004, the South continues to be the area of choice, with representation from eight metros—two from North Carolina; two from Texas; one each from Georgia, Florida, and Tennessee; and the Washington, D.C. Metro area. The career mobility, affordable housing, and overall quality of life found in Southern cities appeal to black families that live and flock there. For examples, look at the newbies: Jacksonville boasts a higher percentage of African American homeowners than any other city on the list, while robust job growth and a highly educated black population helped Raleigh-Durham make the grade this year. These Southern towns are no longer considered sleepy provincial locales; they now offer the same social amenities as cities traditionally considered more dynamic. Residents enjoy rich cultural environs complete with art galleries, concerts, professional sports, and night clubs.

So how did we arrive at the top 10? Our selections were culled from more than 2,000 respondents who filled out an interactive survey posted on our Website (www.blackenterprise.com) over a nine-week period, between December 2006 and February 2007. Participants were asked to evaluate their cities based on their level of satisfaction with 24 quality of life factors (1, very dissatisfied, to 5, very satisfied). Although more than 300 cities were nominated, only those cities with more than 20 responses were given consideration. ▶

HOW THE CITIES WERE CHOSEN

IN ASSESSING THE LOCATIONS, WE ACTUALLY LOOKED at metropolitan areas—the core cities and surrounding suburbs as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. This year's survey showed respondents were satisfied overall with earnings potential, entrepreneurial opportunities, jobs, cost of living, affordable housing, higher education, access to technology, and medical care. In general, respondents were discontent with the quality of public schools, availability of daycare facilities, race relations, crime rates, and black political clout.

Our analysis did not stop there. Using a series of statistical data, the list was then narrowed to 13 metro areas. Heavier weighting was applied to seven of the 22 factors—"super factors"—that pertain specifically to African Americans:

- Black median household income compared with overall median household income
- Percent of black households earning greater than \$100,000 divided by the percent of all households earning greater than \$100,000 per year
- Black unemployment rate
- ✱ ■ Number of black-owned businesses per 1,000 black residents
- Percentage of black home loan rejections
- Percentage of black college graduates
- Black homeownership rate

By combining survey response scores with the quality of life scores, we arrived at a final ranking of the top 10 cities for African Americans.

Top 10 highlights reveal:

- All have a higher percentage of black high school graduates than the national average
- Nine have a higher percentage of black college graduates than the national average
- Nine have black unemployment rates below the national average
- Seven boast median black household incomes above the national average
- Eight reveal a cost of living index less than the national average
- Four out of 10 have a black mayor

On the following pages, find out why residents of these top 10 cities wouldn't want to live, work, and play anywhere else.

Jacksonville, she admits that "the first year was a bit of a culture shock." She made the move in 1998 for love, following then boyfriend Maurio L. Farmer, who had relocated from Atlanta. Eleven years later, the young couple, both 33, has comfortably settled into life in this small metropolis where nearly 25% of the population is African American.

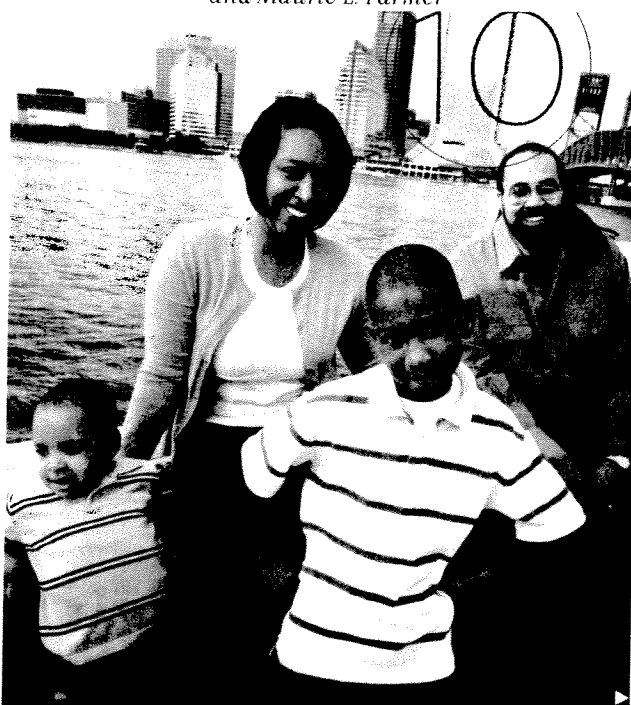
"Jacksonville is very family-oriented," says John, a medical services company supervisor. The mother of two, Cy, 7, and Camryn, 2, loves the Sunshine State's pleasing temperatures and stresses that the city has an abundance of parks and beaches. "It is important to us as parents to expose our children to new and exciting things," adds Farmer, who works for Merrill Lynch's mutual and money fund services team. The couple is also partial to the school system.

Jointly bringing in \$80,000 annually, the couple's earnings significantly exceed the city's median household income of \$47,323. Black residents in Jacksonville enjoy having a place they own: nearly 50% are homeowners. Farmer recently moved his family into a three bedroom, two-bath home complete with a backyard and two-car garage. The couple paid \$230,000 for their brand-new 2,000-square-foot development. This is somewhat higher than the average home in Jacksonville, valued at around \$162,000.

Another notable feature is Jacksonville's flourishing downtown area, where there is no shortage of art galleries, museums, theaters, restaurants, and bars or clubs. "They're building high-rises and condos, really making it a place where people can live and work," says John. "We just like the laid-back feel of it."

—Tennille M. Robinson

Jacksonville, FL
Camryn, Carene John, Cy,
and Maurio L. Farmer



congratulations
to two leaders

who have helped
pave the way for
thousands more.



As a supporter of the United Negro College Fund (UNCF) since its inception, ExxonMobil salutes Presidents **George H.W. Bush** and **William J. Clinton**, recipients of UNCF's prestigious Frederick D. Patterson Award. These two visionary leaders have earned UNCF's highest honor by supporting member colleges, as well as other Gulf Coast colleges and universities, in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. At ExxonMobil we are inspired by such leadership and actively support programs for schools and colleges affected by the hurricanes—in addition to our significant investment in math and science programs across the country, including the recently announced National Math and Science Initiative. By working together, we can all help lead the way for a new generation of brilliant thinkers.

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Columbus, OH
Bryan, Nichole, Thomas, and Anthony Redie

PHOTOGRAPH BY J. KEVIN FITZSIMONS
Columbus, Ohio's Mayor Michael B. Coleman, who is African American and serving in his second term. "City contracts with minority- and women-owned businesses have increased since his first term in office," says the founder and CEO of BARTAR Consultants, a process efficiency consulting firm. Anthony and Nichole, his wife of 16 years, have witnessed the city's revitalization since relocating in 1997.

Both Washington, D.C., metro area natives, the Redies were living in Maryland's Prince George's County, where Anthony worked for Defense Finance and Accounting Services. When the government agency had openings in Ohio, the Redies chose Columbus and have never looked back. "The city was in a building mode," he says. "It was good to be here and be a part of that growth."

There are no signs of a slowdown. Plans are underway to redevelop the land around Columbus Regional Airport to attract new businesses and create jobs. When Columbus debuted on *BE*'s list in 2004, it had the highest black unemployment rate at 13.4%. Today, unemployment is down to 9%. Some 14% of the city's 1.7 million residents are black.

The city has committed \$25 million over five years to put vacant neighborhood homes back into productive use. The Redies, who are among the 40% of African Americans in Columbus who own their own home, paid \$100,000 for their three-bedroom, bi-level with a huge backyard. This is the couple's first home, and they paid considerably less than the median home value of \$155,600. With the money Anthony generates from the business and what Nichole earns as director of after-school programming at Little Blessings Learning Center, the couple's annual household income is \$150,000.

A huge plus for the city is its access to technology. Downtown Columbus is Wi-Fi enabled as are area parks, recreational centers, and schools. Good news for the Redies, parents of 14-year-old Bryan and 13-year-old Thomas.

—Carolyn M. Brown

HOOSIERS GET TO ADD A SUPER BOWL CHAMPIONSHIP team to the roster of qualities that makes Indianapolis so great. The historic game pitted two black coaches against each other and ended with Tony Dungy leading the Indianapolis Colts to victory.

Michael Grady says Indy is a place where anyone can score a business or personal touchdown—especially young professionals. The 24-year-old college student has lived in the bustling Midwestern city since the age of 3 and believes Indianapolis offers unlimited opportunities. "I think it's up to individuals our age to stay in Indy to keep it going," says Grady, a year away from getting a degree in communications, African American studies, and sociology from Indiana University-Purdue University in Indianapolis.

Grady notes that the establishment of networking groups for young professionals and an active nightlife have helped the city retain its dynamism. The city's cost of living index is slightly below average, and survey respondents give high marks for quality of life, especially medical care, ease of commute, and affordable housing. With a median home value of \$136,500, Grady can afford to move forward with his plan to buy a home next year.

Grady's long-range goal is to teach African American studies at the college level, perhaps at his future alma mater. "There is a renewed focus on diversity on campus," he says. "I want to stay in the community and give back." The city has an educated black population, with 17.5% black college graduates, slightly above the national average.

—Stephanie Young

Indianapolis
Michael Grady





Charlotte, NC
Kim Michele Ratliff

THE ONLY TIME KIM MICHELE RATLIFF, 38, EVER LEFT Charlotte was to attend North Carolina Central University—just two hours away.

What has kept the native Southerner's allegiance to the "Queen City" is the area's phenomenal development. "Charlotte has been transformed," says Ratliff, a line translations specialist at BellSouth, now AT&T, who earns \$80,000 to \$90,000 annually. "The culture is so different now, and there are so many more things to do." Ratliff owns a home about 12 minutes from downtown Charlotte, where malls, condo developments, office buildings, restaurants, and a string of night spots help make it the quintessential one-stop shop.

The city continues to reign as one of the most hospitable places for African Americans to live. Today, blacks comprise 23% of the area's population. While the median income for black households is \$30,781, some 47% of black residents are homeowners in a market where the median home value is \$150,900. A number of four-year colleges and universities, including the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and Johnson C. Smith University, help convert students into future residents.

Charlotte is also the headquarters for two corporations that have appeared on **BE's** 40 Best Companies for Diversity: Bank of America and Wachovia, two of the largest bank holding companies in the nation. In 2009, Charlotte's skyline will welcome the NASCAR Hall of Fame. A trolley system rolls through Center City, giving locals greater access to a number of attractions including the area's two professional sports teams—the NFL's Carolina Panthers and the NBA's Charlotte Bobcats, the franchise owned by African American entrepreneur Robert L. Johnson.

For Ratliff, an abundance of social and cultural activities makes being single a non-issue. A vice president in her company's union and a legislative chairperson within local government, Ratliff says, "When you get off work, you might say [to a friend] 'Meet me in conference room R,' like we're having a meeting. But we're really going to hang out at a place whose name starts with that letter." There are several such meetings taking place throughout the city.

—Tennille M. Robinson

SHAWNA WILSON, 40, HAS LIVED IN SEVERAL CITIES, including San Francisco, Chicago, and Detroit, but none match the Southern charm of "Big D." She says: "What makes this city different is the friendliness. People who didn't even know me welcomed me to the city. It has been, by far, the easiest place to relocate."

Wilson moved to Dallas in 2000 after receiving a job offer from Frito-Lay North America, where she currently serves as regional vice president of finance. "Employment opportunities are phenomenal. Dallas has a diverse base of corporations, from a manufacturing standpoint as well as the service industry," she says.

Dallas has realized job growth of 2.3% in recent years. And this city of the 10-gallon hat has 27,514 black-owned businesses, several of which can be found among the **BE 100s**. In fact, Kneeland Youngblood, CEO of Pharos Capital Group L.L.C. (No. 2 on the **BE PRIVATE EQUITY FIRMS** list with \$500 million in capital under management), and John Ware of the 21st Century Group L.L.C., a private equity group with more than \$80 million of institutional capital under management, rank among **BE's** 75 Most Powerful Blacks on Wall Street.

Overall, Dallas received a lot of praise from survey respondents. One of its greatest attributes is its low cost of living, which is 8.2 percentage points below the national average. "It's affordable, so someone who is single could buy a home," says Wilson, who purchased her first home for \$311,000. Dallas has one of the lowest average home values (\$133,900) of **BE's** top 10 cities, and 43% of black residents are homeowners. Property taxes, however, are among the highest of our cities, second only to Houston. According to the Website Sperling's Best Places, residents shell out an average of \$23.73 per \$1,000 of their home's value in taxes.

Considered a family-oriented town, about 45% of Dallas' residents are married. As a single person, Wilson still can choose from a variety of social activities, all with the Southern charm that has made Dallas so endearing.

—Sheiresa McRae

Dallas
Shawna Wilson





Nashville, TN
Allison Hatcher

"MUSIC CITY U.S.A." LIVES UP TO ITS NAME, BUT COUNTRY music is not the only sound dominating the area's airwaves and concert halls. Nashville is quickly becoming one of the capitals for gospel music, maintains Allison Hatcher, anchorwoman at WKRN-TV, a local television station. The 22nd Annual Stellar Gospel Music Awards, considered one of the industry's biggest events, brought thousands of attendees to the Grand Ole Opry House.

Hatcher, 30, grew up in Nashville listening to music. Her mother sings, her father plays bass, and Hatcher plays piano. At one time she envisioned a musical career for herself, but shifted gears in college and found that "being on television is like performing." She has worked as an associate producer and reporter in a myriad of places, including Indiana, where she was crowned Miss Indiana and participated in the 2001 Miss America pageant. But by 2002, she came back home.

As much as she loved her experience as a Hoosier, Hatcher, a wife and mother, found herself drawn back to Nashville. The city's cost of living, higher education, healthcare, access to technology, and housing scored big with our survey respondents. Nashville's median home is valued at \$148,500, and residents pay less in property taxes here than in any other city on our list except Washington, D.C. But of **BE's** top 10 cities, Nashville's black residents earn the least: The median household income is \$27,153.

"There is a lot of growth going on," says Hatcher. "We've had large companies moving in and offering jobs and other business opportunities. For example, Nissan just moved its North American headquarters to a suburb of Nashville. And new subdivisions and homes are being built here."

—Carolyn M. Brown

country's undiscovered gems. Although she spent her college years in Abilene, Texas, at Abilene Christian University, Hamilton never thought she would call Texas home. After having lived in New York, Los Angeles, and Miami, Hamilton settled in Houston two years ago. "They're great cities, but [people there] have an appearance of wealth, not an attainment of wealth," says the 36-year-old professional who works in business development at a local nonprofit. "I really wanted to focus on attainment."

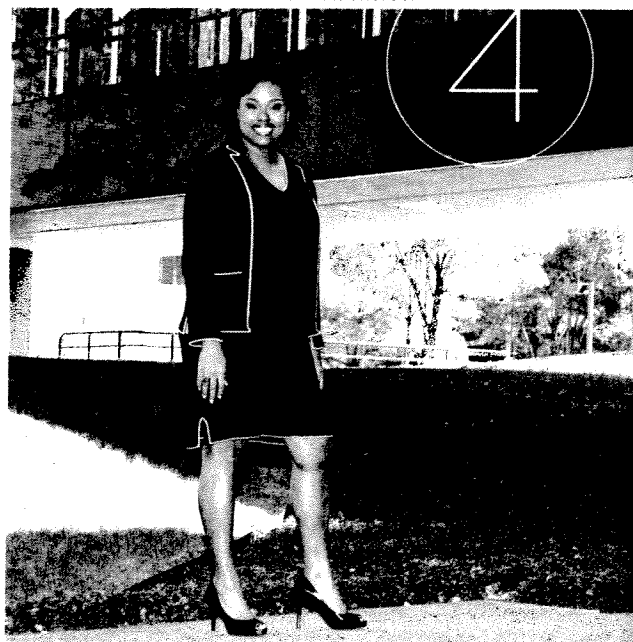
Nearly half of Houston's black residents own homes. Hamilton achieved her goal of homeownership last year when she purchased a three-bedroom, two-and-a-half-bathroom house for roughly \$135,000, slightly above the city's median home value of \$123,400. Houston is also more affordable to live in than most places. It wasn't a surprise to find that our survey respondents awarded Houston high marks for its quality of life and cost of living. Houston's cost of living index is well below the national average and the best among our top 10 cities. The cost of living is an important factor for this mother of a 13-year-old daughter, Javan. The additional discretionary income in Hamilton's paycheck allows her to save for Javan's college education and her own retirement.

While there's still some debate over Houston's public school system, following media reports and claims by some educators that school officials falsified dropout rates, its adult population seems to be well-educated. The city's percentage of black high school graduates is currently reported at 84.1%, and the percentage of black college graduates stands at 21.1%, both above the national average.

Hamilton also enjoys the same entertainment found in other major metropolitan cities. "Last night I saw Sidney Poitier. Last year I saw John Legend and Maya Angelou," she recounts. "The same things that I could do in New York [can be found] in Houston, but I can actually afford them here."

—Stephanie Young

Houston
Denise Hamilton





Raleigh-Durham, NC
Dwan, Ashé, and Richard Kelsey

WHAT INITIALLY DREW RICHARD MONDIBO KELSEY TO Raleigh-Durham in 1992 to study at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine was its quality of life and access to a low-cost education. "A lot of my colleagues from college were here attending graduate and professional school," says Kelsey, speaking of his fellow Morehouse alums. Over the years, however, he's discovered other reasons to embrace the region.

The 38-year-old professional has since transitioned out of medicine and into corporate America. Now, he's employed as a senior account manager for Boston Scientific. However, his wife, Dwan, 36, took advantage of a robust healthcare industry. The Duke University graduate, who received her master's degree in nursing, is an adult nurse-practitioner for long-term care facilities.

For the Kelseys and other residents, opportunities abound. For one, Raleigh-Durham is located in an area known as Research Triangle, considered the nation's largest research park and home to more than 150 corporate, academic, and government agencies. Recent job growth is up 3.4%, the highest of all the cities on **BE's** list.

A big draw is a highly educated population. Of **BE's** Top Cities, Raleigh-Durham boasts the second highest percentage of black college graduates at 26.8%. Duke, UNC, and North Carolina Central University, a historically black college, are included on **BE's** 50 Top Colleges for African Americans. Higher education, technology, and healthcare received some of the highest satisfaction ratings from survey respondents. While the Kelseys' daughter, Ashé, is only 3, the couple thinks highly of the area's public school systems.

Another plus is that the cost of operating a business in the region is 12% below the national average. Some 40.5 out of every 1,000 black residents are entrepreneurs. The Kelseys, who own a primary residence and rental property, are among the 48.6% of the area's black homeowners. It may not be well known but "Raleigh has a large number of black business owners and black millionaires," says Richard.

—Carolyn M. Brown

"HOTLANTA" HAS COOLED OFF A BIT SINCE **BE's** 2004 ranking, slipping from the top spot to No. 2. That's not to say that the metro didn't have an impressive showing: It remains a major hub for the African Americans who make up 30.8% of its population. Residents enjoy the second-highest median annual household income on our list; only those residing in the Washington, D.C. metro area earn more.

The reason for Atlanta's slide from the top spot can be found in the area's black homeownership and foreclosure rates. For every 100 African Americans who live in Atlanta, 48 of them own a home, a decline from 55 in 2004. And at 4.4%, Atlanta's foreclosure rate is one of the highest in the country.

But newlyweds Shana and Michael Davis have found Atlanta to be their haven. The couple recently bought a five-bedroom home on a 1.5-acre lot for \$439,600—higher than the city's median home value of \$177,200—in the same Cascade neighborhood where U.S. Rep. John Lewis resides. At \$225,000, the Davis' household income tops the median as well. Aside from being a vice president of communications for financial services monolith Citigroup, Shana, 31, is a marketing and event consultant who also dabbles in real estate. Michael, 41, serves as the client director for computer giant Hewlett-Packard's Latin American division. "The cost of living is great," says Shana. "This is a town where entrepreneurs, young or old, can start and grow businesses because of the resources here, in comparison to other cities."

Our survey respondents agree with Davis, noting a high level of satisfaction with entrepreneurial opportunities in the city. Atlanta is home to 64,000 black-owned businesses, from mom-and-pop stores to **BE 100s** companies, including H.J. Russell & Co. (No. 16 on the **BE INDUSTRIAL/SERVICE 100** list with \$316.9 million in sales).

The city also holds a large concentration of major corporations. As a result, the area leads the nation in attracting young, highly-educated black professionals, according to a recent Atlanta Chamber of Commerce study.

—Nadira Sabir

Atlanta

Michael and Shana Davis



Washington, D.C. Metro

WHAT MAKES THE WASHINGTON, D.C., Metro area a great place for couples like Hank and Vicki Williams? The lure of good jobs and getting paid top dollar. "I've been in this area more than 20 years," says Hank, 52, a native of Pittsburgh who now resides in Beltsville, Maryland, in Prince George's County. "I moved because of the opportunities that the metro area offers—from jobs to cultural activities to networking with other African Americans and professionals."

Key for Williams was potential earnings. The couple bring home more than \$400,000 a year: He's a senior regional sales manager for a pharmaceutical company; his wife, Vicki, 47, works for the American Speech Language and Hearing Association as a chief staff officer for multicultural affairs. They're among the 20% of black households within the metro area earning annual incomes that top \$100,000—the highest percentage on our list. For residents, bringing home a big paycheck helps since it's more expensive to live in Washington than any other top 10 city, with a cost of living nearly 40 points higher than the national average. However, the area has the lowest black unemployment rate—6.2%—and our survey respondents considered the robust job market a big part of the region's appeal.

NASA Chief Financial Officer Gwendolyn Sykes relocated from Alaska to attend The Catholic University of America. She stayed because of the employment prospects. "Job opportunities are excellent due to the tri-state metropolitan area. You have Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia that offer political, business, and technology opportunities for developing a career," says Sykes, an Arlington, Virginia, resident and one of **BE's** 50 Most Powerful Black Women in Business.

Washington's diversity and bountiful local attractions make it ideal for raising a family, say D.C. residents LaVaughn, 32, and Keisha Turner, 29. "It's infinite in terms of activities we can do as a family," say the Turners, who have three children ages 6, 5, and 11 months.

"JOB OPPORTUNITIES ARE EXCELLENT DUE TO THE TRI-STATE METROPOLITAN AREA. YOU HAVE WASHINGTON, D.C., MARYLAND, AND VIRGINIA THAT OFFER POLITICAL, BUSINESS, AND TECHNOLOGY OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPING A CAREER."
—GWENDOLYN SYKES

The city's infamous crime rate has dropped too. Homicides decreased from 301 in 1997 to 169 in 2006. "The perception of the city has changed. There is a lot more business development," says D.C. Mayor Adrian M. Fenty. On the flip side, this development has made some neighborhoods unaffordable, pricing out middle-class African Americans. The once "Chocolate City" has yielded to gentrification as the population of Caucasians, Asians, and Hispanics has increased. At \$404,900, D.C. has the highest median home value of all the cities on **BE's** list. The Turners purchased their four-bedroom home in 2000 for \$140,000; it is now worth about \$400,000. To remedy the housing situation,

organizations like the Washington Area Housing Partnership and Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments have launched affordable housing campaigns. Other positive factors: D.C. has the lowest foreclosure rate (0.3%), property taxes, and sales tax (5.75%) among the top 10.

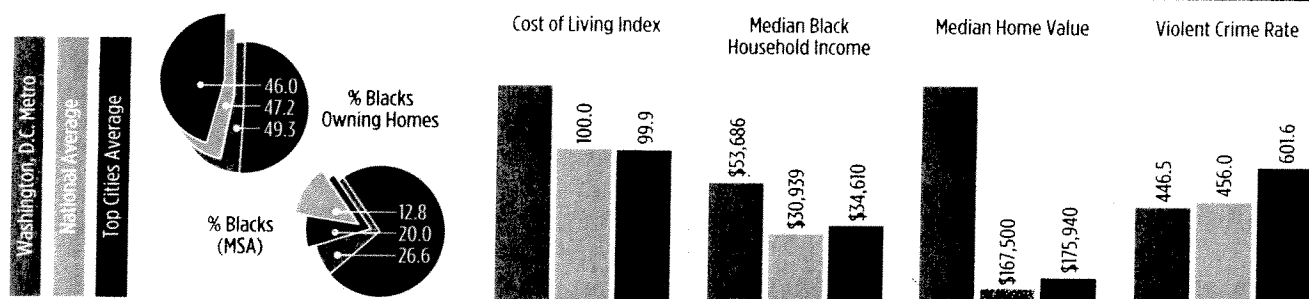
Survey respondents are very dissatisfied with the quality of education, however, stating that the public schools are in desperate need of repair. The Williams pulled their daughter Lana, 18, out of public school after the third grade because it was overcrowded and needed capital improvements. Their youngest, 14-year-old Mia, has attended private schools since kindergarten.


Robert Bobb, president of the D.C. Board of Education, admits there are myriad challenges within the district. However, he asserts that the public schools within the metro area are doing well, particularly in Fairfax and Montgomery counties, and D.C. is not far behind. "There is a plan to improve student achievement in D.C.'s schools," says Bobb. "There's a major reform agenda in Prince George's County, where there's a new superintendent." Ironically, the D.C. metro area has the best-educated black population of the top 10, boasting the highest percentage of black high school and college graduates.

For many residents like the Williams and Turner families, the overall quality of life is good and they plan to retire in D.C.'s metro area.

—Sheiresa McRae

WASHINGTON, D.C. METRO BY THE NUMBERS





THE WILLIAMS FAMILY—
HANK, VICKI, MIA,
AND LANA—ENJOY WHAT
THE WASHINGTON, D.C.
METRO AREA HAS
TO OFFER.

Cities Ranked and Rated by Bert Sperling (John Wiley & Sons; \$24.99) and Sperling's Best Places (www.bestplaces.net)

Federal Bureau of Investigation (www.fbi.gov)

Diversitydata.org by Harvard University (<http://diversitydata.sph.harvard.edu>)

American Communities Project (www.s4.brown.edu/cen2000/data.html)

Freddie Mac (www.freddiemac.com)

6 of the Top Cities have a black mortgage rejection rate lower than the national average

Almost of every African Americans in the Washington D.C. Metro area own a business

Houston has the lowest cost of living at

90.0

(National average=100)

Public & Private Services

TOP CITIES 2007	DOLLARS PER PUPIL	PUPIL/TEACHER RATIO	% BLACK COLLEGE GRADS
Washington, D.C. Metro	7,203	15.7	28.6
Atlanta, GA	5,795	16.2	25.1
Raleigh-Durham, NC	5,390	15.5	26.8
Houston, TX	5,210	16.8	21.1
Nashville, TN	5,306	15.1	18.0
Dallas, TX	5,162	15.2	19.7
Charlotte, NC	5,252	16.6	19.2
Indianapolis, IN	6,249	18.0	17.5
Columbus, OH	6,272	17.6	19.1
Jacksonville, FL	4,985	19.2	16.6
B.E. Cities Average	5,682	16.6	21.2
National Average	5,894	16.7	17.3

Business & Career Opportunities

TOP CITIES 2007	BLACK-OWNED BUSINESSES	RECENT JOB GROWTH (%)	BLACK UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (%)
Washington, D.C. Metro	67,213	2.2	6.2
Atlanta, GA	63,940	2.0	8.6
Raleigh-Durham, NC	12,144	3.4	7.7
Houston, TX	35,846	3.1	9.7
Nashville, TN	5,970	2.3	7.5
Dallas, TX	27,514	2.3	9.4
Charlotte, NC	12,937	1.8	9.9
Indianapolis, IN	6,453	0.7	10.4
Columbus, OH	8,771	0.4	9.0
Jacksonville, FL	6,799	2.1	7.7
B.E. Cities Average	24,759	2.0	8.6
National Average	3,263	N/A	10.2

Violent Crime Rate

Crimes per 100,000 residents

Nashville	554.9	Charlotte
Jacksonville	533.3	Houston
Dallas	521.9	Indianapolis
Atlanta	456.0	Average
National	446.5	Washington, D.C. Metro
Columbus	444.4	Raleigh-Durham
	424.6	

HOW THEY STACK UP

Data for the tabulations in our survey were taken from the following sources:

U.S. Bureau of the Census (www.census.gov)

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov)

The Milken Institute (www.milkeninstitute.org)

Council for Community and Economic Research
(www.c2er.org)

Association of Community Organizations for Reform
Now (www.acorn.org)

Final Tally

TOP CITIES 2007	SURVEY RANKING 2007	B.E. RANKING 2004	B.E. RANKING 2001	TOTAL POPULATION (MSA)	BLACK POPULATION (MSA)	% BLACK POPULATION (MSA)
Washington, D.C. Metro	99.73	2	2	5,214,666	1,388,533	26.6
Atlanta, GA	95.88	1	3	4,917,717	1,515,508	30.8
Raleigh-Durham, NC	93.77	NR	NR	1,405,868	300,095	21.3
Houston, TX	91.18	5	1	5,280,077	889,236	16.8
Nashville, TN	87.79	4	NR	1,422,544	217,446	15.3
Dallas, TX	80.82	3	8	5,819,475	828,613	14.2
Charlotte, NC	80.54	6	4	1,521,278	356,479	23.4
Indianapolis, IN	78.21	NR	NR	1,640,591	239,673	14.6
Columbus, OH	74.67	9	NR	1,708,625	240,620	14.1
Jacksonville, FL	74.49	NR	NR	1,248,371	280,577	22.5
B.E. Cities Average	85.71	—	—	3,017,921	625,678	20.0

Money, Finance & Business

TOP CITIES 2007	COST OF LIVING INDEX	MEDIAN HOME VALUE (\$)	BLACKS OWNING HOMES	BLACK MORTGAGE REJECTION (%)	MEDIAN BLACK HOUSEHOLD INCOME (\$)	% BLACK HOUSEHOLDS EARNING \$100K+
Washington, D.C. Metro	138.8	404,900	49.3	16.2	53,686	15.2
Atlanta, GA	95.6	177,200	48.6	23.5	39,516	14.5
Raleigh-Durham, NC	94.8	166,500	48.6	25.5	34,301	6.7
Houston, TX	90.0	123,400	45.5	29.6	31,809	7.1
Nashville, TN	90.9	148,500	44.1	27.8	27,153	4.0
Dallas, TX	91.8	133,900	42.5	29.4	34,388	5.3
Charlotte, NC	92.7	150,900	47.0	26.4	30,781	6.7
Indianapolis, IN	97.6	136,500	44.7	24.1	29,877	6.1
Columbus, OH	100.1	155,600	40.3	23.0	32,347	5.4
Jacksonville, FL	97.7	162,000	49.6	30.2	32,246	7.5
B.E. Cities Average	99.0	175,940	46.0	25.6	34,610	7.9
National Average	100.0	167,500	47.2	27.6	30,939	5.4