

Health Disparities Educational Tour of St. Louis Metropolitan

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CREATING DISCUSSIONS

- Billions of dollars are spent on healthcare each year, yet health disparities remain a prevalent problem throughout communities
- With inadequate access to quality health care, viable resources and information, chronic diseases and minor ailments will continue to have a disastrous effect on minorities, especially Black, communities
- Health disparities are prevalent in all areas of the US, but they are intensified in St. Louis due to ongoing de-facto segregation
- Providing future healthcare providers with adequate information and inclusive history about healthcare in the St. Louis region can increase awareness of health disparities and can be a step forward in addressing the poorer outcomes associated with community wide health inequities
- By understanding a population's demographics, we are better able to identify and address areas of need with targeted interventions

MAINTAINING AWARENESS

- Increasing awareness of a systemic problem in healthcare can lead to better understanding of patient populations and aid communities in achieving better health outcomes.
- A list of physical places that can be visited by future health professionals was compiled to help increase understanding of a large patient population in the St. Louis area, where many future health providers attend secondary education.
- The St. Louis Health Department kept separate statistics on the health outcomes of white and Black people throughout the entire Twentieth Century – these statistics revealed disparities in overall health due to loving conditions, segregation, and differences in treatment based upon race.
- Allowing students to see, first-hand, what many of them will never experience can increase provider understanding, empathy, and enhance the importance of patient- and community-centered care.
- More discussions on the impact of existing racial and socioeconomic separation of the city need to occur for changes to be initiated.



The Michael Brown Memorial Plaque: The plaque on a sidewalk along Canfield drive in Ferguson, MO was placed to celebrate the life of Michael Brown Jr, an African American man who was fatally shot by a police officer on August 9, 2014.



Griot Museum of Black History and Culture: The museum formerly known as The Black World History Wax Museum opened in 1997 and is the first cultural institution in St. Louis dedicated to highlighting Black heritage, culture, and history.



George B Vashon Museum: This museum was named after American scholar and abolitionist George B Vashon. The mansion located at 2223 St. Louis Avenue houses artifacts of African American history collected over a span of 200 years.



Old Courthouse at the Gateway Arch National Park: The Dred and Harriet Scott lawsuits for freedom and that of over 300 more African Americans' important civil rights cases were heard inside this courthouse.



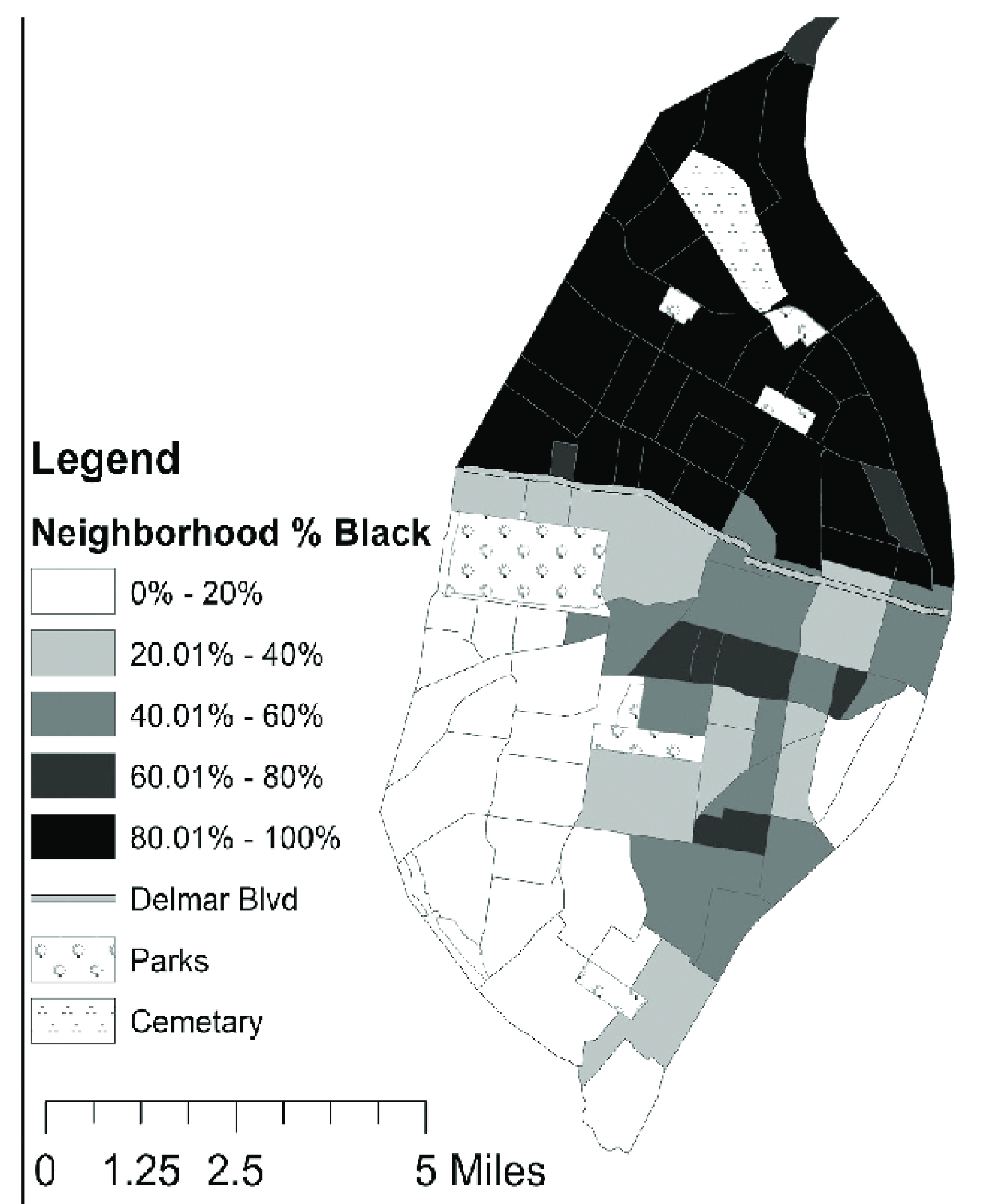
Ivory Perry Park: This park was named after Ivory Perry, a Black activist who sought to draw attention to the link between social justice and human health issues.



St. Louis Observation Wheel at Union Station: Mill Creek Valley was torn down to build an addition to Saint Louis University, Highway 40, LaCledde Town, and Grand Towers in 1959. Some of the cleared land can still be spotted today on the Observation Wheel.



Pruitt-Igoe Public Housing Project's Remains: The 11-story high rise buildings were occupied almost exclusively by Black people. 20 years after they were built, they were demolished; the socioeconomic impact remains felt today.



The Delmar Divide on Delmar Boulevard: The Delmar Divide is a historical symbol of socioeconomic and racial divide in St. Louis. The formation of the divide was facilitated by a history of segregation and, more recently, economic stratification.



George Washington Carver at the Missouri Botanical Gardens: The George Washington Carver Garden opened in 2005 in reverence of Dr. Carver for his influence on 19th and 20th century agriculture and education.

According to the *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities*, in comparison with whites, Black Americans have a **44% greater chance of dying from stroke**, are **20% more likely to have asthma**, **25% more likely to have heart disease**, **72% more likely to have diabetes**, and **23% more likely to be obese**.

REFLECTION TEMPLATE

1. In your own words, what are health disparities? _____
2. Have you visited any of these locations before taking the tour?
YES or NO
3. What was your favorite site visited on the tour? _____
Why? _____
Your least favorite site visited? _____
Why? _____
4. Will you re-visit any of these locations?
YES or NO
5. Do you think you learned information that will be valuable to your future as a health care provider from taking this tour?
YES or NO
6. Did your experience on the tour help you understand the presence of health disparities in STL?
YES or NO
7. Do you think this tour should be continued/expanded to other classes?
YES or NO
8. Would you recommend this tour to people you know?
YES or NO
9. What can we do to improve this tour for future students?

DISCUSSION

- The role of social determinants of health on outcomes, and the possible role these determinants play in disparities have largely been ignored.
- The racial differences in the clinical outcomes for diabetes, blood pressure, stroke, and asthma continue to persist, and unsafe neighborhood factors have been associated with poorer health outcomes.
- This project should elicit a positive impact on patient-centered care offered by students who take the time to learn about health disparities in their region.
- All health care students should understand that each patient's situation is unique and consider their social determinants of health when providing care.
- Facilitating discussion of racial health disparities in the St. Louis region is imperative for understanding the poor health outcomes associated with Black communities.



The site of the old Homer G. Phillips Hospital: The Homer G. Phillips Hospital, located in the Ville, was a physical representation of the long fight Black Americans had to fight to receive quality medical care and training.