



**YOUTH  
POLICY LAB**

A black and white photograph of a large, geometric wooden structure made of thick beams, resembling a stylized 'M' or a series of interconnected triangles. The structure is situated in front of a modern building with large glass windows. The ground is covered with fallen leaves, suggesting an autumn setting. A street lamp is visible in the background.

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

At the University of Michigan, we are surrounded by some of the nation's leading experts on nearly every social challenge and as a public institution, we are committed to applying that knowledge to the public good.

Dear partners,

This past year has been tumultuous to say the least. Not a single person on this planet was untouched by the coronavirus, including both our team and our partners. We have had our lives and work upended in 2020, and yet, in spite of all the challenges we've faced, we found creative ways to survive and thrive.

As many people around the world did, our team went fully remote in March and we've settled into our work-from-home existence. Our research and partnerships have continued as planned, albeit with more video calls than we could have ever imagined one year ago. We are so grateful to all of you for continuing to invest your time and energy in building evidence for what works and using data for good - strategies we need now more than ever.

Reflecting on our 2020 accomplishments, we are proud that our work has been useful to several state and local leaders who are making Michiganders' lives better each and every day. From using our data insights to develop comprehensive mental health supports in the Detroit Public School Community District (DPSCD) to helping the Michigan Office of Career & Technical Education (CTE) better understand and develop solutions to disparate CTE access for students of color & economically disadvantaged students, we know that our work is helping to make Michigan a better place for everyone.

We also know that none of this would have been possible without our tremendous staff who pivoted to a remote work environment overnight and never missed a beat. We are grateful for them and all their hard work this unprecedented year.

Sincerely,



Brian Jacob  
Co-director



Robin Jacob  
Co-director



Andrea Plevak  
Executive Director

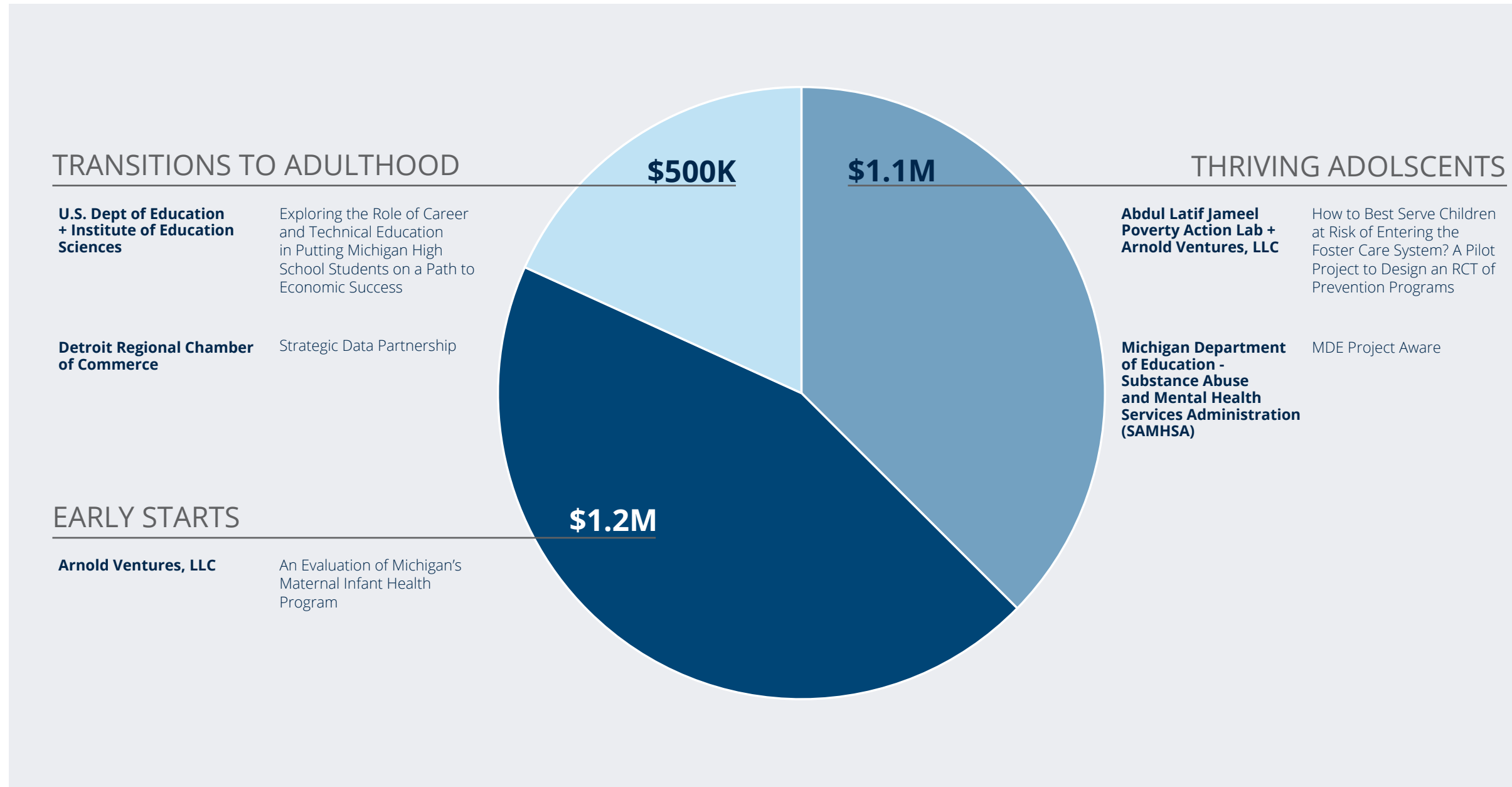


# OUR RESEARCH AT A GLANCE

## FUNDED PROJECTS

**The Lab received \$2.8 million in new funding in 2020.**

The highest funded research areas were in maternal and infant health, substance abuse and mental health services, career and technical education, the foster care system, and within a strategic data partnership in Detroit.



# WORK THAT IMPACTS MICHIGANDERS

## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

In 2020, the Lab published six policy briefs, eight resource publications on recommendations for COVID-19 related barriers for businesses in our local communities, and continued research on upwards of 20 evaluations for our partners. Our findings will aide in strengthening programs that impact the future's of youth in Michigan.



### Improving Michigan's Maternal + Infant Health

Principal Investigator: Robin Jacob

YPL secured **\$1.2 million in funding** from Arnold Ventures to launch a five-year statewide impact evaluation of the Maternal Infant Health Program (MIHP). In this project, YPL will work with 11 MIHP providers across the state of Michigan to test whether or not intensive recruitment strategies are successful in getting more individuals to enroll in the program, and study impacts of MIHP on key maternal and infant outcomes.



### Lack of Awareness Leads to Low Enrollment in Pre and Postnatal Care

Principal Investigator: Robin Jacob

Findings show that only 30% of eligible families enroll in MIHP and the biggest barrier to enrollment is lack of awareness; **70% of MIHP-eligible Medicaid beneficiaries said no one told them about the program during their last pregnancy.** Based on these findings, YPL recommended that the State of Michigan promote the entire continuum of home visiting programs in the state so that families can better understand and access services available in their area.

Findings from this brief were accepted for presentation at the 2021 National Home Visiting Summit.



### Access to and Participation in Career and Technical Education in Michigan

Principal Investigator: Brian Jacob

YPL found that students of color and economically disadvantaged students are less likely to participate in CTE when we compare all students throughout the state. Those gaps nearly disappear when we only compare students who attend the same school. This suggests schools that serve more students of color provide less opportunity to participate in CTE.



### Findings from a One-Year Evaluation of a Kindergarten Math Enrichment Program

Authors: Robin Jacob, Anna Erickson and Shira Mattera

**Evaluating the Impact of Small Group Supplemental Math Enrichment in Kindergarten** was published in Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness. This article reports findings from a one-year evaluation of a kindergarten math enrichment program. A randomized design was used to assess the impact of High 5s on children's math skills, attitudes towards math, language ability, and executive function for a sample of kindergarten students in New York City. A version of High 5s is now being piloted in Taylor, Michigan.



### Addressing the Youth Mental Health Crisis in Detroit

Principal Investigator: Robin Jacob

Working with the TRAILS program at the UM Depression Center, YPL published a comprehensive needs assessment of mental health in Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD). Compared to national averages, **a higher share of DPSCD students have experienced trauma, are managing symptoms of depression and anxiety, and have had suicidal ideation over the past year.** Findings are being used to develop a multi-tiered system of comprehensive mental health supports for DPSCD.



### Disrupting the School-to-Prison Pipeline

Principal Investigators: Brian Jacob + Joseph Ryan

The Youth Policy Lab and the Child and Adolescent Data Lab hosted a virtual agenda setting event in November '20 with 40+ key stakeholders to begin developing the trajectory of our work in ending the school-to-prison pipeline.



### Poverty is Linked to Lower Early Intervention Enrollment Rates

Authors: Anna Erickson, Robin Jacob, and Katja Robinson

A literature review and preliminary analyses were conducted and presented to Washtenaw Intermediate School District's (WISD), which analyzed their referral and enrollment data and found lower early intervention enrollment rates for zip codes in Washtenaw County with high rates of poverty. This suggests that some of the children who would benefit the most from early intervention are not receiving it.

The literature review will be publicly available in early 2021.



### COVID-19 Consulting Corps

Project Manager: Jeremy Guardiola

YPL, co-founded the COVID-19 Consulting Corps (CCC) a summer internship program that matched Ford affiliated students with government agencies and nonprofits. Interns provided support on COVID-19 response projects including policy research, resource development, survey distribution, and more.

# COVID-19 CONSULTING CORPS

## Washtenaw County's Office of Community and Economic Development

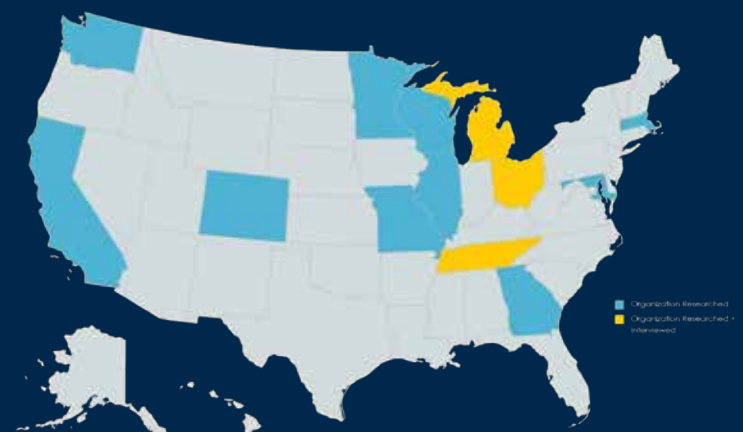
**[ THE NEED ]**  
The CCC was engaged by Washtenaw County's Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED) to find examples of U.S. regions and cities engaged in economic justice work. In particular, OCED sought other well-developed U.S. city and regional economic development strategies that worked toward racial justice, including anti-displacement or anti-gentrification goals. The goal was to find specific economic justice programs from which OCED could model its own programming.

## [ THE RESEARCH ]

**16**  
U.S. CITY + REGIONAL STRATEGIES SUMMARIZED

**15+**  
GOALS + RECOMMENDATIONS MADE

**3**  
INTERVIEWS WITH MODEL ORGANIZATIONS



## [ THE RESULTS ]

**"** We're so grateful to have support of such talented and resourceful grad students who are bringing their research and analysis skills to bear in supporting our work here at the County. In particular, they've been able to commit focused time and energy to researching comparable programs and equity approaches to economic development that will help inform our process here locally."

Teresa M. Gillotti  
Community + Economic Development  
Washtenaw County, Michigan

## Youth Policy Lab

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Support the Youth Policy Lab's efforts to use data for good.

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The University of Michigan Youth Policy Lab helps community and government agencies make better decisions by measuring what really works. We're data experts who believe that government can and must do better for the people of Michigan. We're also parents and community members who dream of a brighter future for all of our children. At the Youth Policy Lab, we're working to make that dream a reality by strengthening programs that address some of our most pressing social challenges.

We recognize that the wellbeing of youth is intricately linked to the wellbeing of families and communities, so we engage in work that impacts all age ranges. Using rigorous evaluation design and data analysis, we're working closely with our partners to build a future where public investments are based on strong evidence, so all Michiganders have a pathway to prosperity.