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Brookings and NAACP announce new partnership that will measure the strength and vitality of Black Americans and Black-majority cities

Washington, D.C. — Two of the nation's most esteemed, policy-driven organizations, the public policy think tank, The Brookings Institution, and the civil rights organization, the NAACP, have announced a formal partnership that will focus on improving the wellness and stability of Black people and Black-majority cities.

Linking two organizations founded in the early 20th century, the partnership draws on Brookings Metro's and NAACP Empowerment Programs' renewed commitment to improve the lives of Black-majority cities and the people who inhabit them.

The partnership will be anchored and centered around the development of an annual, co-branded research report and publicly accessible dashboard, released annually at the NAACP national convention and produced by Brookings Metro Senior Fellow Andre Perry and his team. The *Black Assets Index* project will examine the assets and opportunities Black people have in critical quality of life areas—health, business, housing, employment, and education.

The research generated by this partnership seeks to highlight assets and strengths, rather than deficits, in Black communities that racism has devalued. To do so, the *Black Assets Index* project will utilize methodologies currently employed by Brookings Metro's Valuing Black Assets Initiative (VBAI). The collaboration will inform policy recommendations that restore value to the assets of Black-majority cities and neighborhoods through an annual benchmarking report and interactive data visualization tool to provide metropolitan-level data situated in the context of national trends and conversations.

"At a time when racialized misinformation campaigns have had significant policy implications for both America and the world, this historic partnership between two leading institutions is an important step in helping elevate more voices from our country's Black community, those who are so deeply essential to the success and long-term prosperity of our nation," said Brookings President John R. Allen.

"This partnership with the Brookings Institution provides an invaluable opportunity for us to address the deep-rooted ills that have plagued our nation for far too long," said NAACP President & CEO Derrick Johnson. "We have a chance to create a more inclusive pathway forward for our community, which has traditionally been left out of the promise of this nation."

"Truth is the twin sister of justice," said Brookings Metro Senior Fellow Andre M. Perry, who will lead research products produced by the partnership. "From issues of student debt cancelation and taxation, to healthcare and economic development, we will generate data that will inform important policy decisions."

"As the inaugural funding partner of the *Black Assets Index* project, the Zimmer Biomet Foundation recognizes the potential that the NAACP Empowerment Programs and Brookings Metro partnership offers to accelerate efforts to address health disparities and expand medical access to Black Americans and other minority communities within the United States," said Keri Mattox, Zimmer Biomet's Senior Vice President, Investor Relations and Chief

Communications Officer and Zimmer Biomet Foundation Board Member. “Partnerships such as these help advance Zimmer Biomet’s mission to improve the quality of life for people around the world and our commitment to supporting anti-racism and diversity, equity and inclusion efforts to drive positive change both inside Zimmer Biomet and around the globe.”

Brookings Metro’s and NAACP Empowerment Programs’ partnership will focus on several key tenets and outputs, including:

- **Serving as an invaluable resource** that community leaders, who are focused on eliminating barriers that cause stratification, can trust and call upon for research and policy analysis.

- **Elevating the national discourse** on improving upward economic mobility in America. While putting structural inequality and stratification in the forefront, the initiative will make facilitating mobility into the middle class, rather than simply protecting those already in it, a national priority.

- **Advancing policy ideas for adoption among federal, state, and local policymakers** to accelerate economic opportunity for individuals and communities. These efforts can build on existing Brookings and NAACP knowledge and ideas, as well as use the reports and summit series as a powerful platform to engage the next wave of federal, state and local policy leaders.

- **Creating a lasting hub for young and diverse experts** to exert positive influence on the future of public policy and life chances for low-income Americans.

- **Improving the impact and relevance of national policy institutions** by generating research and ideas that reflect the experience of low-income and marginalized communities.

Through this partnership, Brookings Metro, in collaboration with NAACP Empowerment Programs, will also create shorter, more accessible and digestible content for target audiences on a regular cadence, as well as in quick response to current events and developments in cities. Brookings Metro and NAACP Empowerment Programs will jointly host public events and convenings based on report releases and related topics.

On January 25, Brookings and the NAACP will co-host an event in Washington, D.C. announcing the partnership. Details are forthcoming.

About Brookings Metro

The Brookings Institution is committed to quality, independence, and impact. Brookings Metro collaborates with local leaders to transform original research insights into policy and practical solutions that scale nationally. To learn more, please visit brookings.edu/metro. Follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/brookingsmetro.

About NAACP Empowerment Programs

NAACP Empowerment Programs is the 501(c)(3) charitable entity of the NAACP with a primary focus on training, education, and advocacy. NAACP Empowerment Programs is working to build inclusive criminal justice policies, healthcare systems, economies, and classrooms in 2022 and beyond. To learn more, visit naacp.org/empowerment-programs.

About the Zimmer Biomet Foundation

The Zimmer Biomet Foundation is a philanthropic 501(c)(3) organization that further strengthens Zimmer Biomet's ongoing commitment to empowering diverse and underserved communities, supporting STEM education, enabling community health and providing disaster relief. For more information, visit the Zimmer Biomet Foundation.