



Newark selected as a ‘Model Community’

It’s one of four U.S. cities chosen by the Obama Foundation’s My Brother’s Keeper Alliance for positively shifting outcomes for its residents.

Last week, Prudential’s headquarters city was selected as one of four model communities in the U.S. that have an evidence-based track record of success in positively shifting outcomes for boys and young men of color.

Newark, New Jersey, was recognized by the My Brother’s Keeper Alliance, a program of the Obama Foundation that is focused on building safe and supportive communities for boys and young men of color where they feel valued and have clear pathways to opportunity. With the recognition, MBK Newark will receive an \$800,000 grant, direct coaching, evaluation support and peer-to-peer learning to continue affecting change across [MBK’s six key milestones](#), which research shows are predictive of later success, and where interventions can have the greatest impact.

The other three cities named as model communities are Tulsa, Oklahoma; Omaha, Nebraska; and Yonkers, New York.

Prudential has supported the My Brother’s Keeper Alliance since its inception in 2014 and helped create the MBK Newark Community in partnership with Mayor Ras Baraka. Among the group’s key initiatives:

- Advocating for policies that contribute to positive outcomes for boys and young men of color
- Developing mentorship programs that allow Newarkers to give back
- Creating new pathways for continuing education, job training and employment

The acknowledgment reaffirms the importance of Prudential’s role as an anchor institution in Newark and its commitment to helping the city and its residents thrive, says Lata Reddy, senior vice president, Inclusive Solutions and chair of The Prudential Foundation, and an advisory council member of the My Brother’s

Keeper Alliance.

“Prudential is proud that our hometown of Newark has been recognized for the impact it is having by improving outcomes for boys and young men of color,” Reddy says. “MBK Newark has led an effort to combine proven solutions with strategies that directly involve the community, leading to tangible changes including a safer environment for our young men. The leadership of the Mayor’s Office, along with the engagement of local stakeholders across the city, is testament to the power of collaboration to solve the complex challenges facing our communities.”

According to Reddy, by focusing on strengthening the local ecosystem of community partners, Prudential has helped to drive positive change for boys and young men of color in the city. Over the past decade, the company has invested \$1 billion in Newark to create inclusive pathways of opportunity across the community.

Newark was singled out for its commitment to helping young people remain safe from violent crime. Homicides in the city are at [a 60-year low](#). Last year’s data indicate homicides were down 55% compared to 2013, and shootings decreased 35% in just the past year.

At an MBK Impact in Action event announcing the model communities on May 10 in Chicago, former President Barack Obama reiterated the significance of Newark’s recognition.

“In 2014, in the wake of Trayvon Martin’s death, I challenged every community in the country to implement strategies to help boys and young men of color,” said President Obama. “Today, I’m proud to see the incredible impact My Brother’s Keeper Alliance communities are having — helping hundreds of community leaders across the country solve problems for the next generation. Thanks to the tireless efforts of My Brother’s Keeper communities, cities like Newark have changed the odds –creating opportunities for our young people to achieve their full potential.”

“I am incredibly proud that Newark has been named an MBK Model Community,” said Mayor Baraka. “It is invigorating and uplifting to see the spread of this holistic collaboration to treat the national epidemic of violence as a public health crisis. Newark is eager to share our success in reducing violence with other communities, and we look forward to learning from other communities who have achieved other key milestones.”

The Newark Opportunity Youth Network (NOYN) will lead the Model Communities initiative for MBK Newark. MBK Newark will build upon the work to reduce violence in Newark with the goal of achieving the other five key life milestones that will help create equitable outcomes boys and young men of color: entering school ready to learn, reading at grade level by 3rd grade, graduating from high school, completing post-secondary education or training and successful employment.

Over the next five years, MBK Newark will start building the infrastructure toward implementing a comprehensive plan to achieve the remaining MBK Milestones. The Obama Foundation’s MBK Alliance will provide MBK Newark with the necessary support to continue implementing systems-level change in these areas and to grow their impact in other areas within their municipal infrastructure, including building systems of support, closing the opportunity gap for young men of color, and creating new pathways for continuing education, job training and employment.