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Poverty In Trenton Brief

* African Americans in Trenton are suffering from high unemployment, illiteracy, teenage births, homicide and Infant mortality
* The decay of the city has been tracked with the number of unfilled pools as well as closed library’s and police stations.
* Conditions got worse after Mayer Tony F Mack took over.
* Two months later one of his judicial appointees quit over bad checks and unpaid debt.
* His business administrator quit after 9 months after being caught stealing from a congressional campaign.
* His half brother was indicted on charges of using city resources to do private work.
* His chief of staff resigned after being arrested near City Hall with Heroin.
* Trenton like many other former manufacturing cities has stopped thriving and suffers from economic regression.
* Tony Mack has since laid off 1/3 of the police force leading to even higher crime rates.
* The city council has been delayed in negotiating contracts recently causing logistical failures like municipal buildings running out of toilet paper.
* “No one denies Trenton had problems before Tony Mack. Once it was a center for the manufacturing of ceramics, rubber, steel and iron. The famous sign on one bridge still commemorates the city’s industrial past — “Trenton Makes, the World Takes” — but residents acknowledged there was some poetic truth when the lights in the letters began failing before recent repairs, leaving it “Trenton akes.”(2)
* Minimum wage was recently raised to $8.25/hr and there is talk of continual and annual increase of said wage but by the same token that causes problems for impoverished areas.
* Large corporations are already reluctant to hire in areas of poverty and low education due to the unreliability of the work force, when minimum wage is increased the number of jobs available decreases.
* Unemployment in NJ is at 8.5%
* The black jobless teen/ young adult rate in Trenton is 40%
* “The advocates in Trenton also point to a 1994 study by David Card and [Alan Krueger](http://topics.wsj.com/person/K/Alan-Krueger/6658) that found a minimum-wage increase in New Jersey boosted employment in fast-food restaurants relative to neighboring Pennsylvania where the minimum wage did not rise. But this was re-examined by University of California Irvine economist David Neumark, who used better data. He reported in a 2000 American Economic Review study that "the New Jersey minimum wage increase led to a 3.9 percent to 4.0 percent decrease in fast food employment in New Jersey" compared to Pennsylvania.A new study by the Employment Policies Institute examined the demographic profile of people who would be affected by the minimum-wage increase. Half are under the age of 25. Almost 54% are teens or adults who are not the primary earner living at home. The average family income with one or more minimum-wage worker is $53,554. That's not rich, but it sure isn't a family in poverty.”(3)
* In Trenton 31.4 % of residents are below the poverty level as apposed to a state wide average of 12.5%.
* 12.4% of Trenton residents live on half of what constitutes the poverty level as apposed to a 4.1% state wide sector.
* Of those families living in poverty, 20% are married couples, 17% are male run households while single mothers constitute 64% of impoverished head of households.
* 36.2% of children in Trenton are below poverty level as opposed to 13.2 % state
* Poverty level among single high school graduates in Trenton is 24.7% as opposed to 13.8 % statewide.
* Among those who did not finish high school the rates are 43.1% in Trenton vs 34.7% state wide (least discrepancy).
* Projects have cropped up all across the state and even in others like Pennsylvania to reduce poverty and starvation through early education and fundraising/ awareness programs.

Firsthand experience has been shown to be the most powerful motivator to make change, getting people involved in their communities.

1.)Laveist, Thomas. "Segregation, Poverty, and Empowerment." *JSTOR*. John Hopkins University, 1993. Web. 8 Sept. 2014.

2.)Zernike, Kate. "Woeful Trenton Sees Mayor Add Insult to Injury." *New York Times*. Ebsco, 21 July 2012. Web. 8 Sept. 2014.

3.)"Unemployed Jersey Boys." *The Wall Street Journal*. Dow Jones & Company, 28 Oct. 2013. Web. 08 Sept. 2014.

4.)"Trenton, New Jersey (NJ) Poverty Rate Data - Information about Poor and Low Income Residents." *Trenton, New Jersey (NJ) Poverty Rate Data*. N.p., n.d. Web. 09 Sept. 2014.

5.)Finding Solutions To Hunger Project (video) [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8WTy4umVaJE)