



Mental Health Association of Northern Kentucky

A LEADER IN PROVIDING ADVOCACY, EDUCATION, AND SERVICES THAT PROMOTE MENTAL WELLNESS

EDUCATION AND SCREENING OUTREACH PARTNER FOR THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND
NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

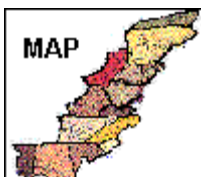
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Appalachian Culture

Hundreds of thousands of Appalachian migrants and their descendants have established themselves in the Greater Cincinnati area and are part of the social and economic life of the community. Although they are making a positive contribution to the area through their work, culture, and community service, there is still a disproportionately high number of Urban Appalachians who are struggling with issues of poverty and discrimination.

The Urban Appalachian Council was incorporated in 1974 to "*promote a decent quality of life for Appalachian citizens of Greater Cincinnati.*" For nearly 25 years, UAC has accomplished its mission by concentrating on the issues and concerns of Urban Appalachians and by becoming a fellowship of persons that will act on those issues and concerns, thus improving the quality of life for the entire community.

Approximately 34% of Greater Cincinnati is of Appalachian descent. Your family may have been among the three million people to leave the Appalachian region following World War II to seek economic security through factory and other work in the industrial Midwest. The Appalachian mountain range runs through 13 states from Mississippi to New York. In Cincinnati, most Urban Appalachians have roots in Kentucky, Tennessee, Eastern Ohio, Virginia and West Virginia.



We are your neighbors, co-workers, friends, professionals, service providers, and artists (to name a few). With more than 213,000 first and second generation white and black Appalachians in Hamilton County, you're bound to know one of us. We helped build this community of life in all shapes, sizes, and religions. We are an important part of Cincinnati's history- and its future.

Barriers and Poverty Issues Within the Urban Appalachian Community

One of the biggest contributors to the chronic poverty in some Cincinnati neighborhoods is the unusually high number of high school dropouts. The high numbers of dropouts directly ties to the unemployment of the individuals who live in these communities. According to the census data from 1990, five of the ten census tracts with the highest number of adults without high school diplomas were predominately Appalachian neighborhoods.

In 1990, there were eleven communities with unemployment rates double the city average. Appalachian and African American neighborhoods made up almost all those with those high unemployment rates. According to data collected by the Census Bureau in 1990, 66 percent of residents in Over-the-Rhine and 34 percent of East Price Hill fell under the category of jobless. These figures are a combination of those who are unemployed and those "under 65 not in the civilian labor force."

According to figures published by the Cincinnati Enquirer in January 1996, the Cincinnati district's drop out rate was reported at a record 54.2 percent. The third edition of the *Social Areas of Cincinnati* report, by Michael E. Maloney and Janet R. Buelow, reported specific data about education in Appalachian neighborhoods. "If the city wide rate is now over 50 percent, we believe that the rates in some Appalachian areas must be approaching 100 percent. Even in 1990, an analysis of block group data (unpublished) showed that there were nine block groups with 100 percent drop out rates. Seven were Appalachian areas or Appalachian pockets in white areas."

Census data collected in 1990 reflected that thousands of families, living in Over-the-Rhine and East Price Hill, are living below the poverty level. The data also revealed a majority of these families are "female head of household". Single parent families are faced with challenges above and beyond monetary setbacks. They face issues of inadequate or incomplete education and lack of quality, affordable childcare. They need better knowledge of life skills, such as nutrition and time-management, which would allow them to find balance between careers and parenthood. With the list of disadvantages that many of UAC's students face, poverty is left to being just one more barrier to education and employment.

Information taken from the UAC's Website at www.uacvoice.org