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“A Black American Income Bulletin: An Updated Forecast”

In 2011, BlackEconomics.org analyzed and forecasted out to 2050 seven important Black American economic variables in a monograph entitled [53](#): Population, employment, income, entrepreneurship, educational attainment, criminal justice, and health. This bulletin follows up that analysis in consideration of Black America’s future.

The “Do Nothing” forecast from 53 for income was:¹

	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
Mean Black American Household Income (USD Thousands)	46.9	56.1	67.1	80.3	96.1

According to the US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, the 2020 mean household income for Black American alone households was USD 67.6 thousand.²

Clearly our forecasts for 2010-2020 were inaccurate, in part, because they were based on a forecast factor (average annual percentage change) from the 2000-2009 period. Of course, the 2000-2009 period suffered tremendously from the Great Recession, which suppressed household income growth. Therefore, going forward from 2020, we broaden the forecast factor derivation period to 40 years (1980-2020), which averages several complete business cycles. Mean and median household income forecasts for 2020-2050 are presented below.

	2020	2030	2040	2050
Mean Black American Household Income (USD Thousands)	67.6	100.2	148.7	220.5
Median Black American Household Income (USD Thousands)	45.9	65.9	94.7	136.0

Estimates of mean household income are influenced substantially by extreme values at both ends of the distribution, while median estimates are sounder measures of central tendency for our purposes. Therefore, going forward, we will emphasize median estimates of household income.

The just given 2050 forecasts of mean and median Black American household income are associated with mean (USD 305.1 thousand) and median (USD 184.2 thousand) forecasts for the nation (all races and ethnicities). Without intervention, the Black-to-national household income gap is expected to persist.

¹ The “Do Nothing” forecast assumed that Black Americans would not adopt any policies or actions to modify our 2010 modus operandi through 2050.

² Historical data on Black American mean and median household income are available at <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-income-households.html> (Ret. 120721).