



## Feel welcomed. Feel respected. Feel valued.

### You can make an impact here.

African Americans represent 20% of the population of Grand Rapids – but the community’s influence extends far beyond its size. From politics to religion to business to entertainment, African Americans make their voices heard. Their contributions create a richer experience for residents and visitors alike.

Choosing Grand Rapids will not only ensure a successful event for your organization – it will help reinforce and solidify the social and economic power of our African-American population.

### A vibrant community.

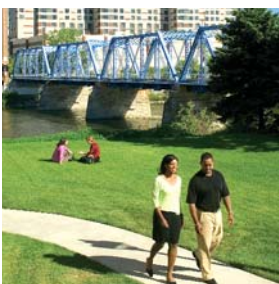
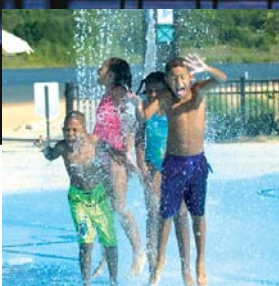
- An estimated 1,227 African Americans own their own business in West Michigan.
- Local restaurants specializing in African-American cuisine include Sandman’s, Jamaican Dave’s, Wings Heaven, and Louis Benton Steakhouse.

- Grand Rapids boasts two local newspapers and two radio stations targeted to the African-American community.
- Grand Rapids is a city of deep and abiding religious faith, and religion plays a prominent role in the daily lives of many African-American residents. Churches – both multiracial and primarily African American – serve as hubs of social and civic engagement.
- Faith helps drive philanthropy: 71% of the area’s African-American residents contributed money, property or both to a charity or nonprofit organization in 2005; 83% of these donations were to religious organizations and faith-based causes.
- Zondervan, a locally based religious media company, publishes dozens of titles for African-American audiences – including The Bible Experience, an audio recording of the New Testament featuring a cast of more than 250 African-American celebrities.

Grand Rapids ...  
you’ll get hooked!

MeetGrandRapids.com





- The Grand Rapids African-American Health Institute occupies space in the city's "Medical Mile," symbolizing the prominence of its mission to promote healthcare parity.
- Michigan Black Expo, Inc. (MBEI) was founded here in 1994 to help ensure that West Michigan enjoys the same rich multicultural quality of life as other world-class cities.
- The Woodrick Institute for the Study of Racism & Diversity, founded here in 1999, has earned national recognition for helping area businesses and residents discover and confront the reality of racism.
- The Racial Justice Institute of the Grand Rapids Area Center for Ecumenism (GRACE) responds to issues of racial justice and invites the larger community to join in the effort to eliminate racism.
- Community-wide celebrations include an African-American Cultural Festival and African-American Film Festival.
- The city's popular downtown ice skating park is named after civil rights pioneer Rosa Parks.



- Past/current residents of note include soul singer Al Green, gospel singer Marvin Sapp, recording artists the DeBarge family, boxer Floyd Mayweather, Jr., painter Paul Collins, and Lyman Parks, who was elected Grand Rapids' first African-American Mayor in 1971.

**We'll roll out the red carpet for you.**

Our Grand Response™ team is devoted to providing top-flight service ... for groups of any size. We can help you find the perfect venue and plan the perfect event.

*"Attendees ... were pleasantly surprised (by the city's) very contemporary feel. From a meeting planner's perspective, Grand Rapids is a great place to meet."*

Dr. Robert Brumfield, Pastor  
Oak Grove African Methodist Episcopal Church, Detroit

**Look who's already chosen Grand Rapids!**

- African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church
- Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity
- Michigan International Free & Accepted Modern Masons/Order of Eastern Star
- Prince Hall Grand Chapter – Order of the Easter Star – PHA
- United Conference for Women



**Grand Rapids**  
Michigan's West Coast

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