

The Net Worth of the 2011 Root Magazine's 100 Most Influential Young Black Americans, 2016 and 2024

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Abstract

This paper examines the 2016 and 2024 net worth of the 2011 Root Magazine's 100 most influential young Black Americans aged 25 to 45. In 2016, the net worth of 45 honorees was \$3.288 billion. On September 1, 2024, that figure increased by \$5.16 billion to \$8.448 billion. The net worth of 31 male honorees in 2016 was \$2.351 billion. In 2024, that figure for 33 of them increased to \$6.589 billion. The net worth of 14 female honorees in 2016 was \$937 million. In 2024, that figure for 15 of them increased to \$1.859 billion. In 2016, 8 honorees had a net worth of \$100 million or more (5 men and 3 women). In 2024, 12 honorees had a net worth of \$100 million or more (7 men and 5 women). None of the honorees was a billionaire when they were selected for the 2011 Root 100. In 2024, three of them are billionaires: Shawn Carter (Jay-Z), \$2.5 billion, Tyler Perry, \$1.4 billion, and LeBron James, \$1.2 billion. In 2016, Beyonce was worth \$450 million. On September 1, 2024, her net worth increased to \$760 million. Two important interrelated factors presented for this great achievement are a substantial increase in the Black American population, which stood at 50.1 million in 2022; and an increase in the higher education attainment of the Black population. Some interrelated implications presented for this great achievement are: an increase in charitable donations in the Black community, an increase in the number of college scholarships for young Black Americans, an increase in the political, economic, and social influence of Black Americans, and strong advocacy for Black Americans by honorees of the 2011 and other cohorts of the Root 100.

Keywords

Black Americans, Net Worth, Root Magazine, Educational Attainment, Billionaires, Millionaires, Activists, Young Leaders

1. Introduction/Background

One of the most unique characteristics of the United States as a society is that despite the difficult challenges that various groups such as women, racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious groups have experienced in its history, one can still provide tangible examples as to how they have for the most part overcome those challenges to make remarkable achievements. For example, it was not until the 1970s when females were allowed to enroll in many of the mainstream colleges and universities in the United States. In 2022, of the 130,709,000 women in the United States aged 18 and over, 29,782,000 (22.8%) had at least a bachelor's degree and 26,568,000 (21.3%) of 124,546,000 men had at least a bachelor's degree (United States Census Bureau, 2023). In 2022, there were 18,508 female United States citizens and permanent residents who earned their doctoral degrees (such as Ph.D. and Ed.D.) from colleges and universities in the United States (National Science Foundation, 2024b). In 2022, there were 16,798 male United States citizens and permanent residents who earned their doctoral degrees (such as Ph.D. and Ed.D.) from colleges and universities in the United States (National Science Foundation, 2024a; also see *Characteristics of Postsecondary Faculty, 2024: 1 & 3*; Finkelstein, 1984; Finkelstein et al., 1998).

This brings us to the Black American population, which now accounted for 50.1 million (15% of the total population) in 2022 (Kaba, 2024a: p. 69), which has made remarkable progress in the post World-War II era. In 2022, there were 5.547 million Blacks with at least a bachelor's degree in the United States (Kaba, 2024a: p. 69), and the net worth of the Black American population was \$5.05 trillion on December 31, 2023 (United States Federal Reserve System, 2024; also see Price, 1994). In social science research, one can study a sub-set of a group in order to understand the experiences of members of the larger group. Over the past dozen years, the Root Magazine, an influential Black American magazine has attempted to tell the remarkable story of the Black American population through the experiences of young Black Americans in its annual honor of young Blacks in their twenties to forties. The Root 100, as they are called, come from various professions, including academia, business, government/politics, sports, entertainment, and the non-profit sector. The 2011 Root Magazine's most influential young Black Americans is one of the most dynamic, talented, gifted, and prosperous groups of young Black people aged 25 to 45 put together as a proxy or stand-in to explain the experiences of Black Americans.

Kaba (2012a) examines the 2011 Root 100 from the concept of the "Talented Tenth." The variables examined are as follows: age; gender; profession, including job type; place of birth, including U.S. state and country; skin tone; and educational attainment, including level of earned degree, such as a high school diploma, bachelor's, master's, professional and doctoral degrees, institution where degrees are earned, U.S. state, region and country where degrees are earned. Kaba (2017a) examines the 2011 Root 100 from the concept of "Inheritance", focusing on the

net worth of 46 honorees (only available data) for the year 2016.

When they were selected for the Root 100 in 2011, Cory Booker was the mayor of the largest city in New Jersey, Newark, and Raphael G. Warnock was Senior Pastor, Ebenezer Church in Atlanta, Georgia, the same church where the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. served as pastor. In September 2024, Cory Booker is serving his second term in the United States Senate representing New Jersey, and Reverend Warnock is also serving a full six-year term in the United States Senate after being elected to that body two times, in 2021 and 2022. Both of them are the first Black Americans to represent their respective states in the United States Senate. When she was selected for the Root 100 in 2011, Ayanna Pressley was a Boston City Councilor at Large. In 2019, she was elected for the first time to the United States House of Representatives to represent the 7th congressional district of Massachusetts. As of September 2024, she is still representing that same district in the House of Representatives. When selected for the 2011 Root 100, André Carson was a member of the United States House of Representatives representing Indiana's 7th congressional district since 2008. He remains in that important position in 2024. After his selection in the 2011 Root 100, Steven Alexzander Horsford has been serving Nevada's 4th districts in the United States House of Representatives since 2019. When they were selected for the 2011 Root 100, Kasim Reed was already the mayor of Atlanta, the largest city in Georgia, where he served from 2010 to 2018; and Kevin Johnson was the mayor of Sacramento, the capital of the state of California, where he served from 2008 to 2016. When he was selected for the Root 100, LeBron James had not won an NBA championship. Since then, his teams have won four NBA world championships: 2012, 2013, 2016, and 2020. After she was selected for the 2011 Root 100, Serena Williams went on to win 10 Grand Slams professional tennis tournaments starting in 2012 to 2017 (Wilson, 2024), to become one of the greatest athletes ever. After her selection to the 2011 Root 100, the great Hollywood actress Viola Davis won an Academy Award (Oscar) in 2016 for best supporting actress in the movie *Fences*; and won a British Academy Film Award in 2016 for best actress in a supporting role. In 2022, Will Smith won his first Academy Award (Oscar) as the best actor in a leading role for his portrayal of Richard Williams, the father of a fellow 2011 Root 100 honoree Serena Williams and her sister Venus. After his selection to the 2011 Root 100, John Legend won the Best Original Song award at the 87th Academy Awards in 2015, for his song *Glory*.

In the study by Kaba (2017a) on the net worth of the 2011 Root 100, none of the honorees in the study was worth more than \$700 million (Jay-Z was worth \$700 million) in 2016. On September 1, 2024 (in this current study), three of them are in the Forbes Magazine's list of billionaires: Shawn Carter (Jay-Z), \$2.5 billion, Tyler Perry, \$1.4 billion, and LeBron James, \$1.2 billion. In 2016, Beyonce was worth \$450 million. On September 1, 2024, her net worth according to Forbes was \$760 million. There are tens of honorees in the study by Kaba (2017a) who have doubled or more than doubled their net worth from 2016 to 2024.

This paper examines the net worth of the 2011 Root Magazine's 100 most influential young Black Americans aged 25 to 45. The paper begins by presenting a methodology section. Next the paper presents data on the net worth of the 2011 Root 100 in 2024 and compares some parts of it to their 2016 net worth. Next the paper presents the factors responsible for the remarkable increase in their overall net worth in that 8-year period. Finally, the paper presents some implications of this phenomenon.

2. Methodology, Data Availability and Reliability, and Limitations of This Study

There continues to be a challenge for researchers interested in compiling net worth data for prominent individuals in the United States. By 2024, apart from Forbes Magazine, which is now well established in providing net worth data for mostly billionaires, the only other reliable entity that has established itself in the past decade as a source for net worth data for prominent individuals in the United States is Celebrity Net Worth (<https://www.celebritynetworth.com/>). Celebrity Net Worth is now widely used by various individuals or entities sharing net worth data on prominent individuals in the United States (Fyfe, 2022; Warner, 2019). Researchers for Celebrity Net Worth make an effort to investigate the wealth of prominent individuals before posting any net worth data about them. Kaba (2017a) quoted Celebrity Net Worth as saying that: "All of our figures and articles are thoroughly researched, scrutinized and fact checked by our team of writers and financial analysts. The figures are acquired from all publicly available information including salaries, real estate holdings, divorces, record sales, royalties and endorsements" (p. 147).

Of the 48 honorees in this current study with available 2024 net worth data, 43 (89.6%) are compiled from Celebrity Net Worth, and 4 (8.3%) are compiled from Forbes Magazine. The only honoree whose net worth data is not from Forbes Magazine and Celebrity Net worth is Sir David Adjaye. His net worth data is provided by ARCH20 in an article that highlighted architects from across the world entitled; "10 Renowned Architects From a Basic Architect Salary to the Richest in the World" (ARCH20, 2024, <https://www.arch2o.com/10-architects-from-a-basic-architect-salary-to-the-richest-in-the-world/>). Table 1(a) and Table 1(b) include the names of all 100 honorees, their rank, a broad category of their profession/job as presented by the Root Magazine, and gender breakdown. The link/url of the net worth figure for 2024 for each honoree is presented next to each figure in Tables 3-5. The 2024 available net worth data for the honorees are compiled on Sunday, September 1, 2024. If there is no available net worth data for a honoree, I entered "na" (not available). This is an important date because the Forbes billionaire figures are live and tend to fluctuate especially on normal business days (from Monday to Friday). The 2016 net worth data are compiled from Kaba (Kaba, 2017a: pp. 154-157), and includes 45 of the 46 honorees with net worth data listed. One male honoree from the study by Kaba (2017a) named Jamil Smith is

not included in this current study and in the net worth data for 2016 because I found out that the 2016 data used another Jamil Smith, called Jamil Walker Smith, who is a Black American movie star, but not included in the 2011 Root 100.

3. Data on the Net Worth of the 2011 Root Magazine's 100 Most Influential Young Black Americans

Table 1(a) and **Table 1(b)** present the list of the 2011 Root 100, their rankings by the Root Magazine, their broad professional/job categories, and a breakdown of their professional/job categories by gender. All 100 honorees are placed into eight professional job categories: Arts, Business, Entertainment/Media, Government/Politics, Sports, Healthcare, and Law. According to **Table 1(b)**, of the 100 honorees (66 men and 34 women), 46 are in Entertainment/Media (30 men and 16 women); 22 are in Government/Politics (17 men and 5 women); 16 are in Business (10 men and 6 women); 6 are categorized under Community (4 men and 2 women); 5 are in the Arts (3 women and 2 men); 2 are in Sports (1 male and 1 female); 2 are in Healthcare (1 male and 1 female); and 1 is in Law (a male).

Table 1. (a) List of the 2011 Root Magazine's 100 Most Influential Young Black Americans, by Rankings and Professions; (b) Breakdown of the 2011 Root 100 by Profession and Sex/Gender. (N = 100)

(a)		
Name	Rank	Profession
Cory Booker	1	Government/Politics
Tyler Perry	2	Entertainment/Media
John Legend	3	Entertainment/Media
Jay-Z	4	Entertainment/Media
Soledad O'Brien	5	Entertainment/Media
Don Lemon	6	Entertainment/Media
Will.i.am	7	Entertainment/Media
Shonda Rhimes	8	Entertainment/Media
Kevin Johnson	9	Government/Politics
Kasim Reed	10	Government/Politics
Charles M. Blow	11	Entertainment/Media
Kanye West	12	Entertainment/Media
Beyonce Knowles	13	Entertainment/Media
Tamron Hall	14	Entertainment/Media
Melissa Harris-Perry	15	Entertainment/Media
Marcus Samuelson	16	Business
Van Jones	17	Government/Politics
Suzanne Malveaux	18	Entertainment/Media
Kerry Washington	19	Entertainment/Media
Steve Perry	20	Community

Continued

Dambisa Moyo	21	Business
Tyra Banks	22	Business
Kevin Fenton	23	Health Care
Esperanza Spalding	24	Entertainment/Media
Benjamin T. Jealous	25	Government/Politics
Majora Carter	26	Business
Roland Martin	27	Government/Politics
Wyclef Jean	28	Entertainment/Media
Kendrick Meek	29	Government/Politics
Baratunde Thurston	30	Entertainment/Media
Drake	31	Entertainment/Media
Jason Moran	32	Entertainment/Media
Kevin Liles	33	Business
Colson Whitehead	34	Entertainment/Media
Kirk Franklin	35	Entertainment/Media
LeBron James	36	Sports
Ta-Nehisi Coates	37	Entertainment/Media
Alicia Keys	38	Entertainment/Media
Tristan Walker	39	Business
Mara Brock Akil	40	Entertainment/Media
Serena Williams	41	Sports
T.J. Holmes	42	Entertainment/Media
Christopher "Ludacris" Bridges	43	Entertainment/Media
David Adjaye	44	Arts
Anthony Mackie	45	Entertainment/Media
Steve Benjamin	46	Government/Politics
Janelle Monae	47	Entertainment/Media
Adam Serwer	48	Entertainment/Media
Steve Stoute	49	Business
Melody Hobson	50	Business
Trey Songz	51	Entertainment/Media
Harold Ford, Jr.	52	Business
Hill Harper	53	Entertainment/Media
Phaedra Ellis-Lamkin	54	Business
John Hope Bryant	55	Business
Michelle Alexander	56	Community
Toure	57	Entertainment/Media
Troy Carter	58	Entertainment/Media
Anthony McGill	59	Entertainment/Media
Jamil Smith	60	Entertainment/Media

Continued

Hydeia Broadbent	61	Health Care
James Rucker	62	Government/Politics
Viola Davis	63	Entertainment/Media
Rashad Robinson	64	Entertainment/Media
Elie Mystal	65	Law
Jamal Simmons	66	Government/Politics
Robin Givhan	67	Entertainment/Media
Ava DuVernay	68	Entertainment/Media
Steven Horsford	69	Government/Politics
Ralph Gilles	70	Business
Marc Lamont Hill	71	Entertainment/Media
Beverly Bond	72	Entertainment/Media
Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie	73	Arts
Angela Benton	74	Business
Audie Cornish	75	Entertainment/Media
DeVon Franklin	76	Entertainment/Media
Andre Carson	77	Government/Politics
Roland Fryer, Jr.	78	Government/Politics
Joshua DuBois	79	Community
Jesse J. Holland	80	Entertainment/Media
Helene Cooper	81	Government/Politics
Erica Williams	82	Community
Denmark West	83	Business
Eddie S. Glaude	84	Community
Wyatt Cenac	86	Entertainment/Media
Paul Q. Judge	87	Business
Robert Battle	87	Arts
Edwidge Danticat	88	Arts
Thelma Golden	89	Arts
Raphael G. Warnock	90	Community
Will Smith	91	Entertainment/Media
Derek Douglas	92	Government/Politics
James H. Shelton III	93	Government/Politics
Ayanna Pressley	94	Government/Politics
Angela Rye	95	Government/Politics
Melanie N. Roussell	96	Government/Politics
Cornell Belcher	97	Government/Politics
Maya Rupert	98	Government/Politics
Michael Strautmanis	99	Government/Politics
Dean Garfield	100	Business

Source: Compiled from Kaba, 2012a: pp. 5-6.

(b)			
Profession	Men	Women	Total
Arts	2	3	5
Business	10	6	16
Community	4	2	6
Entertainment/Media	30	16	46
Government/Politics	17	5	22
Sports	1	1	2
Healthcare	1	1	2
Law	1	0	1
Total	66	34	100

Source: Compiled and computed from Kaba, 2012a: pp. 5-6.

Table 2 presents net worth data for the 2011 Root 100 for 2016 and 2024. The net worth data for 2016 are available for 45 of them (both sexes). The net worth data for 2024 are available for 48 of them (both sexes). The overall net worth ranking for each honoree is for the year 2024. According to **Table 2**, the net worth of the 45 honorees in 2016 was \$3,287,992,523. In 2024, the net worth of the 48 honorees was 8,447,500,000. This shows an increase of \$5,159,507,477 from 2016 to 2024. In 2016, no honoree had a net worth of over \$700 million (only Jay-Z had \$700 million). However, in 2024, three honorees were billionaires: Jay-Z, \$2.5 billion, Tyler Perry, \$1.4 billion, and LeBron James, \$1.2 billion. The only woman in the top 5, Beyonce Knowles, increased her net worth from \$450 million to \$760 million. In the top 10 in 2024, 4 of the honorees are women, Beyonce at #4, Serena Williams at #7, \$340 million, Shonda Rhimes at #9, \$240 million, and Alicia Keys at #10, \$150 million. Also at #11 is Melody Hobson, \$100 million, and at #13 is Tyra Banks, \$90 million, and at #14 is Ava DuVernay, \$60 million. There are 12 honorees with \$100 million or more in 2024, including Kanye West, \$400 million, Will Smith, \$350 million, Drake, \$250 million, and John Legend, \$100 million. There are 18 honorees with \$10 million or more in 2024, including: Kevin Liles, \$60 million, Steve Stoute, \$55 million, Troy Carter, Kerry Washington, and Will.i.am each with \$50 million, Christopher “Ludacris” Bridges, \$40 million, Viola Davis, \$25 million, Don Lemon, \$20 million, Hill Harper, Janelle Monae, Soledad O’Brien, and Trey Songz, each \$12 million, David Adjaye, Ralph Gilles, Wyclef Jean, and Kevin Johnson, each \$10 million. The following 15 honorees have net worth ranging from \$1 million to \$8.5 million in 2024: Kirk Franklin, \$8.5 million, Mara Brock Akil and Anthony Mackie, each \$8 million, Tamron Hall, \$7 million, DeVon Franklin, Van Jones, and Marcus Samuelsson, each \$5 million, T.J. Holmes, \$4 million, Cory Booker, Beverly Bond, Harold Ford, Jr., and Roland Martin, each \$3 million, Touré Neblett and Esperanza Spalding, each \$2 million, and Marc Lamont Hill, \$1 million. Finally, only three honorees had a net

worth of less than a million in 2024: Kasim Reed and Raphael Warnock, each \$800,000, and Wyatt Cenac, \$400,000 (Table 2).

Table 2. Rankings (2024) of the 2011 Root 100 Honorees by Net Worth and Both Sexes, 2016 and 2024. (n = 45 (2016): n = 48 (2024))

Name	2016	2024
	Net Worth (U.S. \$)	Net Worth (U.S. \$)
1. Jay-Z	700,000,000	2,500,000,000
2. Tyler Perry	450,000,000	1,400,000,000
3. LeBron James	340,000,000	1,200,000,000
4. Beyonce Knowles	450,000,000	760,000,000
5. Kanye West	145,000,000	400,000,000
6. Will Smith	260,000,000	350,000,000
7. Serena Williams	160,000,000	340,000,000
8. Drake	85,000,000	250,000,000
9. Shonda Rhimes	120,000,000	240,000,000
10. Alicia Keys	70,000,000	150,000,000
11. Melody Hobson	5,000,000	100,000,000
11. John Legend	40,000,000	100,000,000
13. Tyra Banks	90,000,000	90,000,000
14. Ava DuVernay	3,000,000	60,000,000
14. Kevin Liles	60,000,000	60,000,000
16. Steve Stoute	55,000,000	55,000,000
17. Troy Carter	30,000,000	50,000,000
17. Kerry Washington	12,000,000	50,000,000
17. Will.i.am	75,000,000	50,000,000
20. Christopher “Ludacris” Bridges	25,000,000	40,000,000
21. Viola Davis	3,000,000	25,000,000
22. Don Lemon	3,000,000	20,000,000
23. Hill Harper	1,500,000	12,000,000
23. Janelle Monae	4,000,000	12,000,000
23. Soledad O’Brien	5,000,000	12,000,000
23. Trey Songz	12,000,000	12,000,000
27. David Adjaye	na	10,000,000
27. Ralph Gilles	10,000,000	10,000,000
27. Wyclef Jean	10,000,000	10,000,000
27. Kevin Johnson	10,000,000	10,000,000
31. Kirk Franklin	8,500,000	8,500,000
32. Mara Brock Akil	8,000,000	8,000,000
32. Anthony Mackie	2,000,000	8,000,000

Continued

34. Tamron Hall	5,000,000	7,000,000
35. DeVon Franklin	10,000,000	5,000,000
35. Van Jones	1,100,000	5,000,000
35. Marcus Samuelsson	5,000,000	5,000,000
38. T.J. Holmes	3,000,000	4,000,000
39. Cory Booker	2,000,000	3,000,000
39. Beverly Bond	na	3,000,000
39. Harold Ford, Jr.	3,000,000	3,000,000
39. Roland Martin	3,000,000	3,000,000
43. Touré Neblett	na	2,000,000
43. Esperanza Spalding	2,000,000	2,000,000
45. Marc Lamont Hill	1,000,000	1,000,000
46. Kasim Reed	na	800,000
47. Raphael G. Warnock	na	800,000
48. Wyatt Cenac	400,000	400,000
Kendrick Meek	316,013	na
Steven Horsford	176,510	na
Total	3,287,992,523	8,447,500,000

Source: 2016 figures compiled and computed from Kaba, 2017a: pp. 154-157: for 2024 figures see methodology section above.

Table 3 presents net worth data for the 2011 Root 100 male honorees for 2016 and 2024. The rankings are for the year 2024. According to **Table 3**, their total net worth increased from \$2,350,992,523 (for 31 of them) in 2016 to \$6,588,500,000 (for 33 of them in 2024). This is an increase of \$4,237,507,477. All three billionaires are in this group: Jay-Z, \$2.5 billion, Tyler Perry, \$1.4 billion, and LeBron James, \$1.2 billion. There are 7 male honorees with a net worth of \$100 million or more in 2024, including Kanye West, \$400 million, Will Smith, \$350 million, Drake, \$250 million, and John Legend, \$100 million. There are 12 male honorees with net worths ranging from \$10 million to \$60 million in 2024, including: Kevin Liles, \$60 million, Steve Stoute, \$55 million, Troy Carter, and Will.i.am each \$50 million, Christopher ‘Ludacris’ Bridges, \$40 million, Don Lemon, \$20 million, Hill Harper and Trey Songz, each \$12 million, David Adjaye, Ralph Gilles, Wyclef Jean, and Kevin Johnson, each \$10 million. The following 11 male honorees have net worths ranging from \$1 million to \$8.5 million in 2024: Kirk Franklin, \$8.5 million, Anthony Mackie, \$8 million, DeVon Franklin, Van Jones, and Marcus Samuelsson, each \$5 million, T.J. Holmes, \$4 million, Cory Booker, Harold Ford, Jr., and Roland Martin, each \$3 million, Touré Neblett, \$2 million, and Marc Lamont Hill, \$1 million. Finally, only three male honorees had a net worth of less than a million in 2024: Kasim Reed and Raphael Warnock, each \$800,000, and Wyatt Cenac, \$400,000 (**Table 3**).

Table 3. Ranking (2024) of the 2011 Root 100 Male Honorees by Net Worth, 2016 and 2024. (n = 31 in 2016; and n = 33 in 2024)

Name	2016	2024	Link
	Net Worth (U.S. \$)	Net Worth (U.S. \$)	
1. Jay-Z	700,000,000	2,500,000,000	https://www.forbes.com/profile/jay-z/
2. Tyler Perry	450,000,000	1,400,000,000	https://www.forbes.com/profile/tyler-perry/
3. LeBron James	340,000,000	1,200,000,000	https://www.forbes.com/profile/lebron-james/
4. Kanye West	145,000,000	400,000,000	https://www.forbes.com/profile/kanye-west/
5. Will Smith	260,000,000	350,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/actors/will-smith-net-worth/
6. Drake	85,000,000	250,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/richest-rappers/drake-net-worth/
7. John Legend	40,000,000	100,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/singers/john-legend-net-worth/
8. Kevin Liles	60,000,000	60,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-businessmen/kevin-liles-net-worth/
9. Steve Stoute	55,000,000	55,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-businessmen/steve-stoute-net-worth/
10. Troy Carter	30,000,000	50,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-businessmen/ceos/troy-carter-net-worth/
10. will.i.am	75,000,000	50,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/richest-rappers/will-i-am-net-worth/
12. Christopher “Ludacris” Bridges	25,000,000	40,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/richest-rappers/ludacris-net-worth/
13. Don Lemon	3,000,000	20,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-businessmen/producers/don-lemon-net-worth/
14. Hill Harper	1,500,000	12,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/actors/hill-harper-net-worth/
14. Trey Songz	12,000,000	12,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/richest-rappers/trey-songz-net-worth/
16. David Adjaye	na	10,000,000	https://www.arch2o.com/10-architects-from-a-basic-architect-salary-to-the-richest-in-the-world/
16. Ralph Gilles	10,000,000	10,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-businessmen/richest-designers/ralph-gilles-net-worth/
16. Wyclef Jean	10,000,000	10,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/richest-rappers/wyclef-jean-net-worth/
16. Kevin Johnson	10,000,000	10,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-athletes/nba/kevin-johnson-net-worth/
20. Kirk Franklin	8,500,000	8,500,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/singers/kirk-franklin-net-worth/
21. Anthony Mackie	2,000,000	8,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/actors/anthony-mackie-net-worth/
22. DeVon Franklin	10,000,000	5,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-businessmen/producers/devon-franklin-net-worth/

Continued

22. Van Jones	1,100,000	5,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/authors/van-jones-net-worth/
22. Marcus Samuelsson	5,000,000	5,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/actors/marcus-samuelsson-net-worth/
25. T.J. Holmes	3,000,000	4,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/actors/t-j-holmes-net-worth/
26. Cory Booker	2,000,000	3,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-politicians/democrats/cory-booker-net-worth/
26. Harold Ford, Jr.	3,000,000	3,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-politicians/democrats/harold-ford-jr-net-worth/
26. Roland Martin	3,000,000	3,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/authors/roland-martin-net-worth/
29. Touré Neblett	na	2,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/authors/toure-net-worth/
30. Marc Lamont Hill	1,000,000	1,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/authors/marc-lamont-hill-net-worth/
31. Kasim Reed	na	800,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-politicians/democrats/kasim-reed-net-worth/
32. Raphael G. Warnock	na	800,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-politicians/democrats/raphael-warnock-net-worth/
33. Wyatt Cenac	400,000	400,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/richest-comedians/wyatt-cenac-net-worth/
Kendrick Meek	316,013	na	
Steven Horsford	176,510	na	
Total	2,350,992,523	6,588,500,000	

Source: 2016 figures compiled and computed from Kaba, 2017a: pp. 154-157; for 2024 figures see methodology section above. na = Not Available.

Table 4 presents net worth data for the 2011 Root 100 female honorees for 2016 and 2024. The rankings are for the year 2024. According to **Table 4**, their total net worth increased from \$937,000,000 in 2016 (for 14 of them) to \$1,859,000,000 (for 15 of them). This is a difference of \$922,000,000. There are 5 female honorees with a net worth of \$100 million or more in 2024, including Beyonce Knowles, \$760 million, Serena Williams, \$340 million, Shonda Rhimes, \$240 million, Alicia Keys, \$150 million, and Melody Hobson, \$100 million. There are 6 female honorees with net worth ranging from \$12 million to \$90 million in 2024, including: Tyra Banks, \$90 million, Ava DuVernay, \$60 million, Kerry Washington, \$50 million, Viola Davis, \$25 million, Janelle Monae and Soledad O'Brien, each \$12 million. The following 4 female honorees have net worth ranging from \$2 million to \$8 million in 2024: Mara Brock Akil, \$8 million, Tamron Hall, \$7 million, Beverly Bond, \$3 million, and Esperanza Spalding, \$2 million (**Table 4**; also see Kaba, 2017b, 2018, 2020a).

Table 4. Ranking (2024) of the 2011 Root 100 Female Honorees by Net Worth, 2016 and 2024. (n = 14 (net worth for 2016); and n = 15 (net worth for 2024))

Name	2016	2024	Link
	Net Worth (U.S. \$)	Net Worth (U.S. \$)	
1. Beyonce Knowles	450,000,000	760,000,000	https://www.forbes.com/profile/beyonce-knowles/
2. Serena Williams	160,000,000	340,000,000	https://www.forbes.com/profile/serena-williams/
3. Shonda Rhimes	120,000,000	240,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-businessmen/producers/shonda-rhimes-net-worth/
4. Alicia Keys	70,000,000	150,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/singers/alicia-keys-net-worth/
5. Melody Hobson	5,000,000	100,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-businessmen/business-executives/melody-hobson-net-worth/
6. Tyra Banks	90,000,000	90,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/models/tyra-banks-net-worth/
7. Ava DuVernay	3,000,000	60,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/directors/ava-duvernay-net-worth/
8. Kerry Washington	12,000,000	50,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/actors/kerry-washington-net-worth/
9. Viola Davis	3,000,000	25,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/actors/viola-davis-net-worth/
10. Janelle Monae	4,000,000	12,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/singers/janelle-monae-net-worth/
10. Soledad O'Brien	5,000,000	12,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/authors/soledad-obrien-net-worth/
12. Mara Brock Akil	8,000,000	8,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-businessmen/mara-brock-akil-net-worth/
13. Tamron Hall	5,000,000	7,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/authors/tamron-hall-net-worth/
14. Beverly Bond	na	3,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/models/beverly-bond-net-worth/
15. Esperanza Spalding	2,000,000	2,000,000	https://www.celebritynetworth.com/richest-celebrities/rock-stars/esperanza-spalding-net-worth/
Total	937,000,000	1,859,000,000	

Source: 2016 figures compiled and computed from Kaba, 2017a: pp. 154-157; for 2024 figures see methodology section above. na = Not Available.

Table 5 presents a breakdown of the net worth of the 2011 Root 100 in 2016. **Table 5** shows that of the 45 honorees, men accounted for 31 (68.9%) and women accounted for 14 (31.1%). Of the total net worth of \$3,287,992,523 in 2016, men accounted for \$2,350,992,523 (71.5%) and women accounted for \$937,000,000 (28.5%) (**Table 5**).

Table 5. Breakdown of the 2011 Root 100 Honorees by Net Worth and Sex, 2016.

Group	Number	% of Total	Net Worth U.S. \$	% of Total
Men	31	68.9	2,350,992,523	71.5
Women	14	31.1	937,000,000	28.5
Both Sexes	45	100	3,287,992,523	100

Source: Compiled and computed from **Table 3** and **Table 4** above.

Table 6 presents a breakdown of the net worth of the 2011 Root 100 in 2024. **Table 6** shows that of the 48 honorees, men accounted for 33 (68.8%) and women accounted for 15 (31.2%). Of the total net worth of \$8,447,500,000 in 2024, men accounted for \$6,588,500,000 (78%) and women accounted for \$1,859,000,000 (22%) (**Table 6**).

Table 6. Breakdown of the 2011 Root 100 Male Honorees by Net Worth, by Sex, 2016.

Group	Number	% of Total	Net Worth U.S. \$	% of Total
Men	33	68.8	6,588,500,000	78
Women	15	31.2	1,859,000,000	22
Both Sexes	48	100	8,447,500,000	100

Source: Compiled and computed from **Table 3** and **Table 4** above.

4. Factors Responsible for This Phenomenon

One can point to several interrelated factors that have contributed to the massive increase in the net worth of the 2011 Root 100 from 2016 to 2024. One important factor is educational attainment, especially a bachelor's degree or more, which is also related to population increase. Many in the 2011 Root 100, like many of their compatriots in the United States, have earned at least a bachelor's degree. In the United States, there is an association between educational attainment and household income.

There were 29,680,000 Blacks (16,327,000 women and 13,353,000 men) in the United States aged 18 and older in 2012. Of that total, 3,668,000 (12.4%) had bachelor's degrees; 1,416,000 (4.8%) had master's degrees; 226,000 (0.76) had professional degrees; and 229,000 (0.77%) had doctoral degrees (Compiled and computed from [United States Census Bureau, 2021](#)). There were 34,785,000 Black Americans (18,798,000 women and 15,987,000 men) in the United States aged 18 and older with at least a bachelor's degree in 2022. Of that total, 5,547,000 (15.9%) had bachelor's degrees; 2,453,000 (7.1%) had master's degrees; 286,000 (0.82%) had professional degrees; and 442,000 (1.3%) had doctoral degrees (Compiled and computed from [United States Census Bureau, 2023](#); also see [Kaba, 2013a, 2017c](#)). [Kaba \(2017a\)](#) finds that of all 2011 Root 100 honorees, educational attainment data were available for 70 (70%) of them, who earned no less than “72 bachelor's degrees; 35 had earned at least a master's degree; 13 had earned a Juris Doctor degree; and 10 had earned a doctoral degree” (pp. 160-161).

Many of the 2011 Root 100 honorees earned their bachelor's degrees from some of the most selective institutions in the United States and abroad. Kaba (2012a) points out that 52 (94.5%) of the 55 higher education institutions that conferred 72 bachelor's degrees to the 70 honorees are based in the United States (p. 18). Of the 72 bachelor's degrees earned by the 2011 Root 100: 6 (8.3%) earned them from Harvard University; 5 (6.9%) from Morehouse College; 3 (4.2%) from the University of Pennsylvania; 2 each (2.8%) from Columbia University, Princeton University, Florida A & M University, Julliard, Stanford University, and Temple University; and 1 each (1.4%) from the American Intercontinental University, American University, Brooklyn College, Brown University, Boston University, California State University, Northridge, College of Creative Studies, Concordia University, Dartmouth College, Eastern Connecticut State University, George Washington University, Grambling University, Manhattan School of Music, Marymount University, Middlebury College, North Carolina School of Arts, Northwestern University, Rhode Island College, Smith College, Stony Brook University, Texas A & M University, University of Arkansas, University of California, Berkeley, University of California, Los Angeles, University of California, Santa Barbara, University of Illinois, University of Maryland, College Park, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, University of Michigan, University of Mississippi, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, University of Rhode Island, University of Southern California, University of South Carolina, University of Tennessee, Martin, University of Texas Arlington, University of Washington, Vanderbilt University, Vassar College, Wake Forest University, and Wesleyan University. The three bachelor's degrees earned outside of the United States were from the London South Bank University, Oxford University and the University of the West Indies (Kaba, 2012a: p. 18; also see Elu et al., 2019; Kaba, 2009a, 2010a, 2011a, 2012b, 2013a, 2013b, 2014a, 2015, 2016a; Price, 1998; Price & Viceisza, 2023). Family background or parental influence have been cited as a contributing factor to educational attainment (Buchmann & DiPrete, 2006; Joe & Davis, 2009; Lauderdale & Heckman, 2017).

In addition, a 2013 report of Black millionaires showed that 69% of them had earned a college degree and they claimed, "that the—[most] important public policy issue facing Black American is—economic development and education" (Kaba, 2017a: p. 161). Black Americans, like the American population, have accumulated a substantial amount of wealth in the past decade. In a November 8, 2023 report on Black American billionaires on the Forbes Magazine list of billionaires, it is noted that there were 9 total of them in 2023 with a total net worth of \$25.4 billion, including all three billionaires in this current study: Robert Smith, \$8 billion, David Stewart, \$6 billion, Shawn Carter (Jay Z), \$2.5 billion, Oprah Winfrey, \$2.5 billion, Michael Jordan, \$2 billion, Alex Karp, \$1.3 billion, Tiger Woods, \$1.1 billion, LeBron James, \$1 billion, and Tyler Perry, \$1 billion (Asante-Muhammad & Gray, 2023). There were 35,000 Black millionaires, with a net worth of \$1 million or more in 2009 (Kaba, 2017a: pp. 152-153). It is reported that in 2022, there were 1.79 million Black millionaires in the United States (Hale, 2022). It is also

reported that 5.3% of Black households in the United States had a net worth of \$1 million or more in 2011 (Sullivan et al., 2024). On December 31, 2011, the total net worth of the Black population in the United States was \$2.65 trillion, accounting for 4.2% of the \$63.39 trillion total net worth of the total population. On December 31, 2023, that figure increased to \$5.05 trillion, accounting for 3.44% of the \$146.69 trillion total net worth of the total population of the United States (United States Federal Reserve System, 2024). The 2011 and 2023 net worth data for the Black population and the total population of the United States show that while the net worth for the Black population increased by \$2.4 trillion from 2011 to 2023, its proportion of the total net worth declined substantially from 4.2% to 3.44%, a difference of 0.76 percent.

5. Implications of This Phenomenon

There are many interrelated implications because of the substantial increase in the net worth of the 2011 Root 100. All of these implications can be categorized as the improvement in the lives of Black people in the Black World, including the United States. In the United States, the tax system is set up in a way that a wealthy taxpayer can create a non-profit organization or foundation and spend the funds in the organization instead of giving that money to the federal government in the form of taxes. In addition, research shows that Black people in general including those in the United States, tend to provide significant financial and related support to their relatives and members in their community because they themselves might have received similar support from relatives or members in their community (Alexander, 2021, Ashley & James, 2018, Boatwright & Salinas Jr., 2023; Chen, 2023; Cho, 2021; Fullwood & Thomas Jr., 2011; Kaba, 2017a; Kaba, 2024a: pp. 163-164; McGee, 2024).

Boatwright and Salinas Jr. (2023) point out that: "...Black Americans give a more significant percentage of their disposable income to non-profits than any other racial group" (p. 2). McGee (2024) points out that: "Black celebrities everywhere are doing what they can to give back to the community. Whether they are actors, businessmen, athletes, or singers, these beloved Black celebs have always been very philanthropic." Chen (2023): "... identifies three major motivations of donors of color including "selfhelp" through which donors use philanthropy as an economic weapon against racial oppression, investing in future generations to level the playing field, and "reciprocity" through which donors give back to their ethnic communities" (pp. 36-37). Chen (2023) points out that:

"...Black college alumni tend to donate back to their alma maters, especially those who received scholarships when they were students. Their goal of donating back to the schools is to secure the future existence of Black colleges. In so doing, later generations of Black students will be able to attend colleges and achieve their own social economic mobility... It is conscious behavior to raise the status of the group, also known as "racial uplift" that helps to level the playing field for subsequent generations of students" (p. 37).

Chen (2023) points out that:

“...wealthier and poorer Blacks’ lives are intertwined within Black communities, and those who succeeded in their own lives tend to give back to those who sacrificed or suffered in their communities. Compared to middle-class Whites who may hold a more individualistic view of giving, African Americans are more likely to embrace collectivism and to give back to their ethnic groups because of their shared history of economic discrimination... This is also one of the reasons why Black students who benefited from prior voluntary support such as scholarships are more likely to give back to their colleges... In a lab-in-the-field experiment with 95% Black participants and 5% Hispanic participants, researchers found that lower-income minority donors tend to give to those who have more children, are disabled, or are lower-income minorities” (p. 38).

According to Ashley and James (2018):

“From a sociocultural standpoint, high-net-worth black families are reportedly more likely to have family traditions around giving than their white counterparts. They also report more fulfillment from their charitable giving. These factors likely contribute to a lasting social commitment to give, even as income and wealth fluctuate. From a historical and institutional perspective, black communities have robust networks and organizations that support and facilitate charitable giving and help maintain high levels of charitable participation.”

According to Ashley and James (2018), in 2010, 2013, and 2016, the charitable giving of Blacks in the United States as a share of median family wealth was 6%, 11%, and 8%, respectively; 2%, 2%, and 2%, respectively for Whites; 5%, 7%, and 5%, respectively for Hispanics; and 4%, 5%, and 4%, respectively for a group categorized as “other.” Chen (2023) points out that:

“...in the Black community, church is the most important place to give followed by giving to their family members... Historically, Black churches have played a racial uplift role, which is a big motivation for Blacks to give back to churches... A recent philanthropy report shows that 75% of Black respondents have given to their places of worship...which shows that religious organizations are popular amongst Black donors. Interestingly, research also finds that higher educated Blacks are more likely to give more to Black churches, and their giving can thus influence other church members’ giving patterns” (p. 40).

During its 100-year anniversary in 2009, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) received a \$1 million gift from Tyler Perry. Tyler Perry is also reported to have “...a history of covering the expenses for rent, funerals and college education for those in need, particularly in his Atlanta community” (Cho, 2021).

It is reported that LeBron James purchased an entertainment and events center in Akron, Ohio, called Tangier for \$2.875 million and renamed the center House 330. He made House 330 a multi-use center to benefit families in the community (Alexander, 2021). It is reported that Beyonce and Jay-Z promised a \$2 million donation “to internship and scholarship programs for students attending historically Black colleges and universities” (Alexander, 2021). According to Cho (2021) Beyonce’s non-profit organization called BeyGOOD is a major supporter of minority communities: “...helping Black-owned small businesses secure funding throughout 2020 and assisting organizations across the country that were providing communities with basic needs, like food, water, household supplies, mental health support and COVID testing.” She produced a song called Black Parade and the proceeds used to support her organization administered by the NAACP is called the Black Business Impact Fund (Cho, 2021).

Another important implication of this phenomenon is that it has increase the number of Black Americans with college education and more. The increase in college degree data showed above is a result of college scholarships and other relevant grants, and wealthy Blacks paying for the college education of family members or young people in their community (Chen, 2023).

The philanthropy in the Black community of the 2011 Root 100 and well-off Blacks in general might have contributed to marriage rates not to decline too much and for the Black American poverty rate not to be too high. For example, according to Shrider and Creamer (2023), the poverty rate in the United States in 2023 was 11.1%; 17.9% for Blacks; and 7.7% for Whites (p. 5). According to Mouzon et al. (2020): “Overall, Black Americans have experienced a dramatic decrease in marriage rates over time, from 64% of Black men and 62% of Black women being married in 1950 to 38% of Black men and 33% of Black women being married in 2019..., whereby there are roughly 79.0 Black men for every 100 Black women in 2019, compared to 91.8 White men for every 100 White women in 2019” (p. 3; also see Kaba, 2011b, 2012c). This means that if the level of support to the Black community by these honorees and other prominent Blacks had not been at this current level, the marriage and poverty rates in the Black population would have been worse.

Another important implication of this phenomenon is that it has increased the political influence of Black people in the United States as many of the 2011 Root 100 are influential members in federal and state politics. The political influence of Black Americans in the past 10 years contributed to Kamala Harris being elected vice president of the United States; and also contributed to Kamala Harris becoming the candidate for the Democratic Party in the November 5, 2024, United States presidential election.

Almost all of the 2011 Root 100 have inherited the legacy of activism from leaders and others in the Civil Rights Movement. In fact, this is one of the major criteria, which is connected to their social media influence, used to select members of the Root 100. “Nominators submitting the names of potential candidates are

asked to provide twitter websites and other online websites that show some form of activism” (Kaba, 2017a: p. 163). Williams (2001) writes of the civic activism of Black women “...as an outgrowth of the Civil Rights–Black Power Movement, helps to explain their relative success?” (p. 314; also see Kaba, 2010b, 2011c, 2012d, 2017d). In his study of Black American millionaires, Kimbro (2013) notes that they define success as their “Ability to effect change” (p. 42). Chen (2023) points out that: “Black donors are about twice as likely to give to anti-racism groups. Put differently, their intention is to use philanthropy as an effective channel to address social needs and correct social ills” (p. 37).

Most of the honorees in the 2011 Root 100 have been very brave to stand up to those who treat Black people in a demeaning manner or abuse the constitutional rights of Black people, including former United States president Donald Trump. Again, this is part of the reason that they are selected as honorees. For example, LeBron James, who is known as “one of the most vocal proponents of social issues throughout his time in the NBA”, has been recognized for his steadfast “...activism, which includes spearheading the creation of More Than a Vote, a nonprofit aimed at thwarting voter suppression and motivating Black voters to make their voices heard at the polls” (Cho, 2021). LeBron James stood up for Black people by refusing to stay in a Trump hotel in December 2016 when his professional basketball team was scheduled to play a game in the city. His decision was to protest the demeaning manner in which Donald Trump talks about and treat Black people. He did so without any fear of losing his vast investments and holdings (Kaba, 2017a: p. 163).

According to Cho (2021), Kerry Washington has been recognized nationally in the United States for supporting fellow actors and actresses. The NAACP honored her in 2013 “for her commitment to public service and civil rights”. She was selected by President Barack Obama in 2009 to the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, because of being a strong supporter of civil rights and public service (Cho, 2021). John Legend, who established the Show Me organization that works to solve the problem of poverty in the United States, has partnered with and donated to several organizations, including the Ronald McDonald House Charities to provide resources to “families with sick and injured children to help them remain together (Cho, 2021). When he was honored during the 2021 Oscars with the Humanitarian Award, Tyler Perry urged people to “refuse hate.” He donated \$100,000 “to the legal defense fund for Breonna Taylor’s boyfriend, Kenneth Walker.” Breonna Taylor was a 26-year-old Black American medical worker who was killed in her home by the police (Alexander, 2021). These examples show that the Root 100 honorees and the talented tenth of Black America are aware of the suffering and sacrifices that their ancestors made and that whatever they possess today is inherited from those ancestors (Ford et al., 2018; Kaba, 2007a, 2007b, 2011d, 2011e, 2011f; Kaba, 2024a: pp. 74-80; Price & Whatley, 2021).

Another important implication is that these honorees inspire young people. It is easier for a young Black girl or boy to aspire to be a member of Congress because

Ayana Pressley, Andre Carson, and Steven Horsford are elected members of the United States House of Representatives, just as it is easier to inspire a young Black boy or girl to be a United States senator because Cory Booker and Raphael Warnock are elected members to the United States Senate. It is important that these 2011 Root 100 honorees serve as role models to young Black boys and girls. Young Black boys and girls face many challenges including paying for their college education, increasing cost of housing, increasing health care costs, increasing cost of food, and the negative impact of social media. As Kaba (2017a) concludes: "It is always important if a young person wants to make a particular achievement that he or she sees someone who looks just like them who has made such an achievement. This is especially the case since the honorees in this study are self-made men and women" (p. 164). As study of Kimbro (2013) of Black American millionaires illustrates, the mean income of their parents was only \$10,000 to \$20,000 annually (p. 41).

Finally, there is an overall positive relation between the African Union and the United States federal government, and these 2011 Root 100 honoree are among those carrying that positive legacy either inside the national United States government (federal and state governments) or through Black American organizations and entities. The positive relations between the United States and the African Union and individual African nations have contributed to the gradual economic, political, and social advancements in Africa in the past two decades, and managing the continent's environmental challenges (Elu, 2000; Elu & Price, 2010; Folarin & Raifu, 2022; Kaba, 2004, 2005, 2006a, 2006b, 2009b, 2014b, 2016b, 2019, 2020b, 2024c, 2024d; Kaba & Kaba, 2020; Mazrui & Kaba, 2016; M'Cormack-Hale and Kaba, 2015; Price & Elu, 2017; Sackeyfio & Kaba, 2022). In fact, the study by Kaba (2012a) finds available data for place of birth for 97 of the 2011 Root 100 honorees. Of the 97 honorees, 87 (89.7%) were born in the United States. Of the 87 honorees born in the United States, "32 (36.8%, but 33% of 97 total) were born in the Southern United States; 22 (25.3%, but 22.7% of 97 total) were born in the Northeast; 19 (21.8%, but 19.6% of 97) were born in the Midwest; and 14 (16.1%, but 14.4% of 97) were born in the West." Ten (10.3%) honorees were born outside the United States; 5 (5.1%) were born in Africa (1 male honoree born in Ethiopia, 1 female born in Liberia, 1 female born in Nigeria, 1 male born in Tanzania, and 1 female born in Zambia); 3 (3.1%) were born in the Caribbean (2 honorees born in Haiti and 1 born in Jamaica); and one each was born in Europe (Scotland, UK) and Northern America (Canada) (pp. 11-12).

Today, these honorees are not only advocating or investing in the Black population in the United States but also in the Black World, including Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America, and elsewhere. It is now common to see members of the 2011 Root 100 and other honorees from other years visit Africa for business/investment purposes or to reconnect with their Black African heritage (Cho, 2021; Kaba, 2024a: pp. 74-80, Kaba, 2024b: pp. 356-359). Alicia Keys, a co-founder of the organization called Keep A Child Alive, which supports young people,

including children “with the necessary resources to live healthier, happier lives.” Keep A Child Alive has provided financial and other necessary “support to nine community organizations in Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda and India, and serves over 150,000 people each year” (Cho, 2021). One of the top medical facilities in Ghana, LuccaHealth Medical Specialty Center, is established by Black American entrepreneurs. On its website LuccaHealth Medical Specialty Center claims that it is located in Accra, Ghana and it claims to operate: “...with U.S. standards of safety, patient care and doctor-patient confidentiality, LuccaHealth Medical Specialty Center provides specialty and same-day surgical care. Using the latest innovations in medical interventions and leveraging our telemedicine partnership with New York University School of Medicine, the physicians and nurses at LuccaHealth Medical Specialty Center provide patient-centric care in moments that matter for our patients” (LuccaHealth, 2024).

The Black American population has contributed to the relative peace in Africa, especially when compared to the world wars going on in Europe and Asia. Africa is relatively calm (Kaba, 2024a: pp. 70-71). Most of the Black Americans visiting or relocating to Africa are Christians and Christians are now the majority in Africa. Someone like Senator Raphael Warnock who is a pastor at the late Dr. Martin Luther King’s church in Atlanta, Georgia, is better placed to play an important role in religious ecumenism (Kaba, 2008: pp. 79-87; Kaba, 2009c, 2022; Sutherland et al., 2023). Of the 1.282 billion people in Africa in 2020, 657.3 (51.3%) million were Christians, 553 (43.1%) million were Muslims, and 34.5 (2.7%) million continued to practice indigenous African religions (p. 29). Mohamed et al. (2021) reported for the Pew Research Center that 66% of the Black population in the United States is “Protestant, 6% are Catholic and 3% identify with other Christian faiths – mostly Jehovah’s Witnesses. Another 3% belong to non-Christian faiths, the most common of which is Islam.” The remaining 21% of the Black population is “not affiliated with any religion and instead identify as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular,” (p. 9).

6. Conclusion

Building on the studies by Kaba (2012a, 2017a) of the 2011 Root Magazine’s 100 Most Influential Young Black Americans, this paper began by discussing the uniqueness of this particular group of honorees. After their selection in 2011 to the Root 100, four of them were elected to the United States Congress: Cory Booker from New Jersey and Raphael Warnock from Georgia, were elected to the United States Senate, each two times; and Ayanna Pressley from Massachusetts and Steven Horsford from Nevada were elected several times to the United States House of Representatives. Viola Davis and Will Smith each won an Oscar after their selection to the 2011 Root 100. Serena Williams went on to win 10 Grand Slams professional tennis tournaments after her selection in the 2011 Root 100, from 2012 to 2017. None of the honorees was a billionaire when they were selected for the 2011 Root 100. In 2024, three of them are billionaires: Shawn Carter (Jay-

Z), \$2.5 billion, Tyler Perry, \$1.4 billion, and LeBron James, \$1.2 billion. In 2016, Beyonce was worth \$450 million. On September 1, 2024, her net worth increased to \$760 million.

In 2016, the net worth of 45 honorees was \$3.288 billion. On September 1, 2024, that figure increased to \$8.448 billion. The net worth of 31 male honorees in 2016 was \$2.351 billion. In 2024, that figure for 33 of them increased to \$6.589 billion. The net worth of 14 female honorees in 2016 was \$937 million. In 2024, that figure for 15 of them increased to \$1.859 billion. In 2016, 8 honorees had a net worth of \$100 million or more (5 men and 3 women). In 2024, 12 honorees had a net worth of \$100 million or more (7 men and 5 women).

Among the interrelated factors presented for this great achievement are: an increase in higher education attainment, an increase in the Black American population, and an increase in the number of Black American millionaires and billionaires. Among the interrelated implications presented for this great achievement are: an increase in charitable donations in the Black community, or an increase in Black American philanthropy, an increase in the number of college scholarships for young Black Americans, an increase in the political, economic, and social influence of Black Americans, and strong advocacy for Black Americans by members of the 2011 and other cohorts of the Root 100.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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