Our April focus: Join us on April 10, 2023, for a hybrid event on how investments in children at the neighborhood level can improve health outcomes. Learn More

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HOUSEHOLD FINANCIAL WELL-BEING: Recent research from the Minneapolis Fed found that borrowers with lower credit scores used less of their credit card limits during the COVID-19 pandemic.

While that improvement began to reverse in 2022, those with lower credit scores continued to have lower total credit card balances in December 2022 than they did in February 2020, the researchers found.

Actions: A café in New York's West Village called Banter moved 10% of its ownership to employees earlier this year, Time Out New York reported. Employees will share in the business's profit, with the goal of expanding employee ownership as the business grows, the piece notes. Such arrangements are rare in the competitive food services world, where wages are notoriously low.

Ideas: The Federal Communications Commission's Affordable Connectivity Program is the primary subsidy for broadband subscription costs for low-income households, but only one in four eligible households has enrolled since it launched in 2021, Pew reported. One reason for the low participation: Enrolling is up to applicants, the piece notes, and takes at least 30 to 45 minutes of work – if everything goes right.

CLIMATE: A new program will provide up to $1.1 million in emergency spending to low- and moderate- income households after floods.

The program, launched by the nonprofits Center for NYC Neighborhoods and the Environmental Defense Fund, will be available to flooded homeowners in a one-to-four-unit home and with a household income no more than 165% of the city's area median income, CNBC reported.

Ideas: Under Local Law 97, the 50,000 largest buildings in New York City must drastically cut their carbon emissions. But the expensive upgrades buildings need to do so are out of reach for many apartment buildings, co-ops, and condos, the New York Times reported. "I want to be zero carbon, zero penalties and zero debt," Craig Hart, a condo board president who studied ways to prevent climate change at M.I.T., told the Times. "But it's not going to be an easy road."

HEALTH: More than 8,000 doctors have stopped practicing in Puerto Rico in the past thirteen years, the Center for A New Economy reported.

That means the Island has lost about 46% of its doctors in a little more than one decade, the piece notes. According to the Financial Oversight and Management Board for Puerto Rico (FOMB), Puerto Rico currently has 72 medical areas "unattended," with a scarcity of professionals in areas as diverse as primary medicine, mental health, or specialists. The piece asks whether, in the face of this exodus, the organization of the Island's healthcare system needs to be rethought.

Actions: New York City's public hospital system plans to build 650 units of affordable housing on land it owns. About 43,500, or 6% of total patients the system served last year, were single adults experiencing homelessness, Affordable Housing Finance reported. "Redeveloping our underutilized publicly owned land adjacent to our health care facilities creates a true nexus between health and housing," said Leora Jontef, head of housing for the health system.

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