



PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2020

TEAMING-UP TO COUNT SOUTH BOSTON

Georgia Lowe • Massachusetts

South Boston En Acción, United Way of MA, and the Boston Housing Authority joined forces with elected officials to count residents of South Boston on the final day of self-response for the 2020 Census.

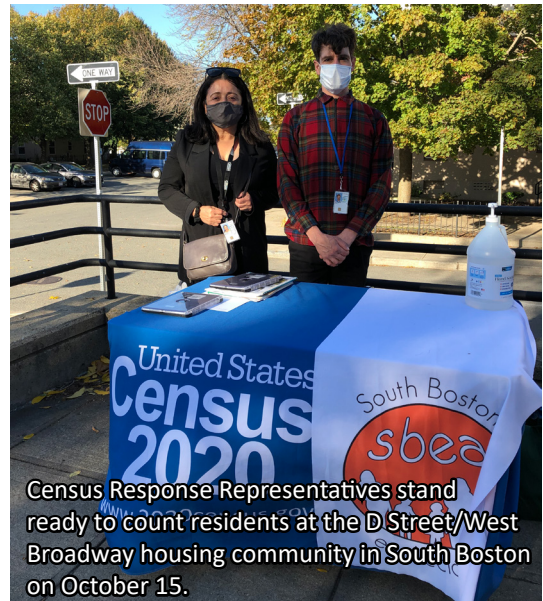
Held outdoors on a beautiful autumn afternoon at the D Street/West Broadway housing community, the October 15 event provided residents an opportunity to be counted in the 2020 Census, enjoy refreshments, interact with their elected officials, and enter to win raffle prizes. South Boston En Acción was also able to hand out 252 boxes of fresh food to families in need in collaboration with Massachusetts Fallen Heroes.

According to Executive Director Denise Molina Capers, Esq., “South Boston En Acción has been empowering community members in South Boston to create positive change for themselves and their community since 2008. It was a priority for us to organize days for the South Boston Community to register for the Census. By participating in



Community leaders and advocates gather at the D Street/West Broadway housing community in Boston on October 15 to encourage participation in the 2020 Census

the census, we stand up to be counted for the important federal funding our community needs.



Census Response Representatives stand ready to count residents at the D Street/West Broadway housing community in South Boston on October 15.

Everyone counts! The support we received from our elected officials and the census department allowed us to register many households. We are humbled to be able to serve the South Boston community.”

The community turned out. Census Response Representatives were available on site, with language skills including Spanish and Chinese, and assisted over forty residents in completing their census.

“Every ten years, the United States Census plays an integral role in determining representation and resources for our communities,” said Massachusetts State Representative David Biele. “I was proud to partner with colleagues in government, US Census officials and neighborhood advocates on outreach to raise awareness of the importance of the Census and efforts to increase participation in the Census to provide accurate counts for our community. I’m grateful for the dedication and efforts of Census workers and volunteers to provide a safe way for residents to participate and be counted, especially

given the challenges posed by the current COVID-19 public health pandemic.”

The event was sponsored by Congressman Stephen Lynch, State Senator Nick Collins, State Representative David Biele, Councilor-at-Large Michael Flaherty, Councilor Frank Baker, and Councilor Ed Flynn.

“It was great to join the Census Bureau, South Boston En Accion, the Boston Housing Authority, and the Boston Police Department recently for the 2020 Census outreach to residents of the West Broadway Housing Development,” said Flynn. “It is critical for all of our residents to be counted in the 2020 Census, especially our immigrant neighbors and communities of color, and this event provided a valuable opportunity for residents to fill out the Census. I want to thank the Census Bureau for all of their hard work in engaging our neighbors and helping to get them counted.” ■

STATE REPS MALINOWSKI AND SHERRIL DRIVE IMPRESSIVE SELF-RESPONSE RATES IN THEIR RESPECTIVE NJ DISTRICTS

Kevin Derricotte • New Jersey



New Jersey’s 7th Congressional District finished strong to lead the state and entire New York Region of the U.S. Census Bureau with a 61.5% self-response rate in the 2020 Census.

Prior to the October 15 deadline, State Representative Tom Malinowski participated in a virtual Town Hall to encourage residents to remain diligent about completing their 2020 Census

forms. He also thanked public officials and local organization for all the hard work they had done to that point. His district includes Hunterdon, Morris, and Somerset counties, all of which placed near the top of the region in self-response rates.

From the start of the 2020 Census in March, Malinowski was in a tight race with State Representative Mikie Sherril (NJ-11) for state

supremacy. In fact, they waged a friendly competition to see which district and counties would possibly lead the state and the region. It went down to the wire as the 11th District finished at 61.5%.

Malinowski worked closely with county Complete Count Committees (CCCs), elected officials, nonprofits, and other organizations to help drive census awareness. Early last month he was at Farmers Market in the hard to count town of North Plainfield during a Mobile Questionnaire Assistance event, along North Plainfield Mayor Michael Giordano, Jr., to encourage 2020 Census participation. He could also be seen helping Flemington Mayor Betsy Driver, Hunterdon County United Way CEO Maria Bonita (Bonnie) Duncan, and others, do the same thing at the Flemington Farmers Market. These events proved highly successful as they helped lead Hunterdon County to a top five regional self-response rate mark.

“We put our best foot forward for the State of New Jersey and I’m pleased with the self-response results that we had,” said Duncan, who was quick to pivot once the Covid-19 outbreak forced a change in plans. “We began leveraging and putting our efforts into social media campaigns and placing billboards, banners, and pop-up banners around the community. We didn’t stop. We were trying to pull out all the stops to count everyone.” Duncan credited Hunterdon County’s self-response rate success to being able to quickly shift strategies by targeting food pantries in the hardest to count populations.

Perhaps most impressive is that Duncan hopes to maintain a core group of those helpful individuals to meet periodically to discuss all things census. She said it will help so that when the 2030 Census comes around Hunterdon County will be in a better position to respond more quickly and create plans even sooner. ■

ONONDAGA VOTES WAS INTEGRAL TO AN ACCURATE SYRACUSE COUNT

Alexis Kirkland • New York

The City of Syracuse depends on census data to ensure it receives its share of resources and representation from the federal government. Onondaga Votes has been, and continues to be, an integral partner with the U.S. Census Bureau in the effort to count the nation’s population. During the month of October, Jacqueline Lasonde, coordinating director of Onondaga Votes, continued collaboration efforts with the U.S. Census Bureau to facilitate census response and completion events. These events took place every day from October 2-15 and aimed to target some of Onondaga County’s hard to count areas. The events also included a Voters Registration Drive and provided fresh food to local community members.

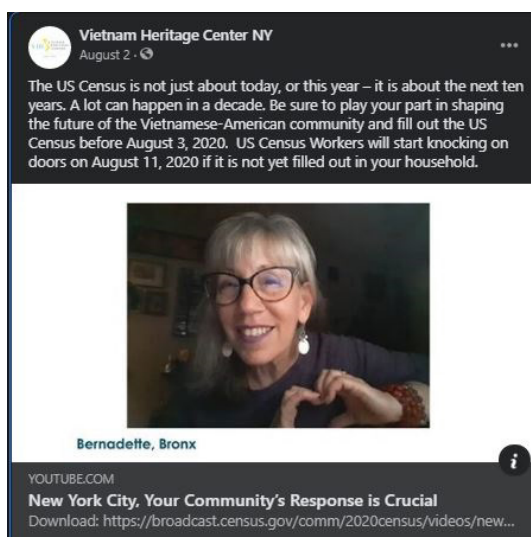
During these events, Onondaga Votes assisted hundreds of individuals to complete the 2020 Census via mail, phone, internet, or with onsite census response representatives. Lasonde understood the importance of a complete count for Onondaga County residents and helped to educate communities on how the 2020 Census is impacted by federal funding that supports local infrastructure, education, healthcare, economic development, and community services programs.

While hosting the census response and completion events, Census staff also provided materials on the privacy, safety, and ease of the 2020 Census. The members of Onondaga Votes made it their mission to continue to educate and assist the communities they serve to ensure a better future for the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County. ■

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNITY

Leo Ly • New York

The Vietnam Heritage Center played an important role in spreading the 2020 Census message throughout the Vietnamese community in New York City. Thuy Pham, executive director and founder of the nonprofit, is very active in the Vietnamese community, from organizing a New York Vietnamese meet-up group, to promoting Vietnamese language classes, to hosting many Vietnamese cultural events. She clearly understands the importance of the 2020 Census and how it can help shape the future of the Vietnamese community for the next ten years.



Thuy Pham, executive director of Vietnam Heritage Center and Leo Ly, partnership specialist from the U.S. Census Bureau, celebrate the Lunar New Year at the New York Historical Society in Brooklyn on February 2.

From the initial meeting with the U.S Census Bureau partnership team about 20 months ago, Thuy expressed interest in reaching the Vietnamese community to inform them about the importance, safety, and ease of completing the 2020 Census.

Thuy invited Census Bureau representatives to attend Vietnamese cultural events – Mid Autumn Moon Festival (September 2019) and Lunar New Year (February 2020) – to share information about the census. During the 2020 Census Digital Action Weekend (May 1-3), Thuy encouraged her Vietnamese community to complete the 2020 Census online. According to the Vietnam Heritage Center website, “With Federal, State and City monetary aid anticipated in the near future, it is extremely important that the Vietnamese community complete the U.S Census survey. The Vietnamese community should be accurately represented in the local geographic areas since monetary aid is generally distributed on a per capita basis. May 1-3 was the U.S Census digital weekend, so we sent people to my2020census.gov and fill in your basic information.”



Thuy cares deeply about the Vietnamese community. She was excited to be a part of a video montage for the New York Region during 2020 Census Push Week (July 27-August 2) to encourage the Vietnamese community to complete their census forms. She also shared information on the Vietnam Heritage Center's Facebook page to remind everyone about the importance of completing the Census.

The Vietnam Heritage Center has certainly helped to shape the future of the Vietnamese community! ■



Thuy – New York, NY

Shape the future of the Vietnamese community.



New York Region, Your Community's Response is Crucial

TAKING “MOBILE” QUESTIONNAIRE ASSISTANCE EVENTS TO A WHOLE NEW LEVEL IN MAINE

Nicole McKenzie • Maine

When original plans to host Mobile Questionnaire Assistance (MQA) events at large gatherings in Maine were cancelled due to the pandemic, partners worked closely with U.S. Census Bureau representatives to begin planning MQAs that would focus on “high mobility” – going into communities with the lowest Census response rates to encourage and assist people to respond to the 2020 Census.

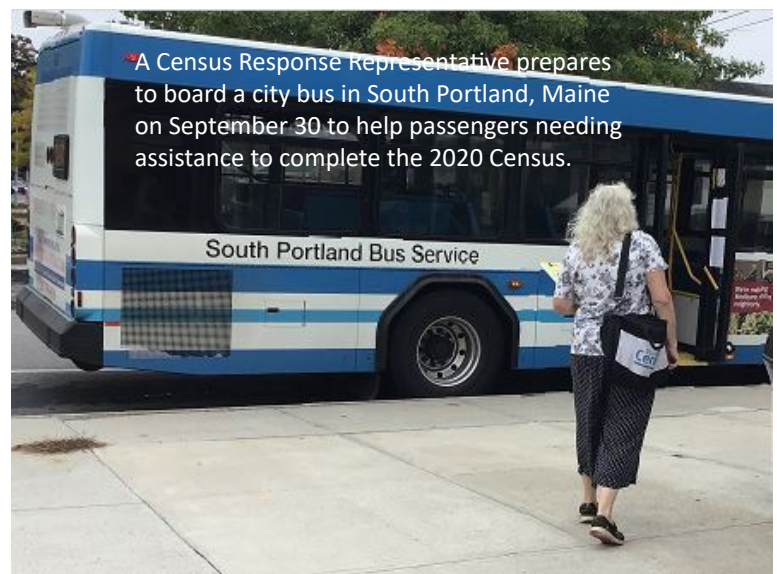
With the absence of large gatherings, Maine focused on areas where people would logically go, such as grocery stores, laundromats, churches, restaurants, and farmers markets. The owners and leaders of these establishments collaborated with the census to identify the most viable locations where Census Response Representatives (CRRs) could set up a tent with 2020 Census information, swag, and handheld devices. The goal of MQAs at mobile locations was to attract and encourage people who had not yet responded to do so immediately via a CRRs mobile device. All MQA events were completed while maintaining social distancing protocols and wearing personal

protective equipment such as masks and gloves.

One of Maine’s final MQA events took place on September 30 at the Wiscasset Farmers Market, which was located on the waterfront in beautiful Wiscasset. The market featured live music, food, and coffee samples. Vendors from mid coastal Maine offered a variety of locally produced food and products, and a 2020 Census Mobile Questionnaire tent! Farmers markets throughout the state hosted MQAs and were very instrumental in reaching rural populations.

CRRs provided more than 490 MQAs throughout the state, from mid-July through September 30. These locally hired 2020 Census employees stood outside in all kinds of weather to make sure their fellow Mainers were counted. One very enthusiastic CRR in Portland was even seen boarding public transit with her Census bag to offer questionnaire assistance on a moving bus – taking “mobile” questionnaire assistance to a whole new level in the state!

During the last week of outdoor MQAs, one event was held at Portland’s City Hall located in the busy downtown area. Once a MQA event is completed, CRRs record how many people they spoke with and how many surveys they completed at the event.



The Portland City Hall event resulted in Census Response Representatives speaking with 209 people and completing 20 surveys that day! The following quote is one provided by a CRR who worked this last event, which provides insight on what she experienced throughout her time as a CRR in Maine.

“I will forever be humbled by the stories I have heard during my months as a CRR out in my surrounding communities,” she said. “There have been some really exciting days when I knew that I had made a difference in a person’s understanding of this process and maybe afterward, they felt like they had just broken through another layer of feeling like they were now part of the America that they had dreamed of from far away. Even in the last days of September, people that we are interacting with are still thanking us for doing this job, despite having completed the census themselves in April. Never did I expect to hear so much genuine gratitude for working any type of job in my life.”

As they say, it takes a village. And in Maine, the camaraderie, strong work ethic, and Mainer spirit from all members of the community supported a successful count, and it showed. Maine was one of the very first states in the nation to reach 99.9% enumeration, while also beating its own 2010 self-response rate by .8% (from 57.4% to 58.2%).

To the state’s leadership and all of the partners who promoted and encouraged 2020 Census response, the thousands of Maine residents hired to work the 2020 Census, and to all Mainers who completed the 2020 Census... Thank you for your part in ensuring Maine counted! ■



THE QUEENS CCC WAS MAJOR REASON FOR 2020 CENSUS SUCCESS

Jamal Baksh • New York

In November of 2018, Queens Borough President Melinda Katz announced the formation of the Queens Complete Count Committee (QCCC). This move jump-started a critical, strategic, and comprehensive 2020 Census plan to ensure the residents of the Borough of Queens were accurately counted.

Early on, Susan Tanenbaum, director of Immigrant Affairs and Intercultural Affairs, and Timothy Chubinidze, special assistant for Immigrant and Intercultural Affairs, took the reins of this charge and collaborated with Shurn Anderson, director of Economic Development, to implement a successful 2020 Census Recruitment Drive in May of 2019, enrolling 300 applicants for census field operations and enumerator positions.

The QCCC met for the first time in February of 2019 and continued its work into the early days

of November 2020. These meetings focused on developing unique strategies and helped to plan and execute public outreach events that helped to increase response rates in historically hard-to-count communities throughout the borough of Queens. The committee was comprised of more than 140 individual members, most of whom had never met, representing a cross section of active organizations like immigrant services, community board chairs/ members, faith-based institutions, fraternities and sororities, nonprofit civic organizations, settlement house community based groups, and local businesses. The initial meeting of the QCCC identified unique challenges, including the need to conduct outreach for linguistically challenged diverse communities, and included members from around the globe.

Part of the QCCC's essential plan was to enlist and knit-together 2020 Census resources from



the U.S. Census Bureau, the New York City Census Office, ABNY, CBO's, NYC Census experts from the Department of City Planning, and other resources that centered around 2020 Census. The QCCC and its members and network executed a comprehensive strategy that utilized census staff and resources, along with community organizations to staff, educate, motivate, and ultimately enhance the self-response rate in the Borough of Queens. The QCCC's work has been extraordinary, given the massive challenges from Covid-19. QCCC members delivered better opportunities for their communities and their borough. The breadth and depth of their work in hard-to-count areas was remarkable. This group leveraged a broad range of opportunities in the community by using libraries, train and bus hubs, Farmers Markets, religious events, car caravans, food distribution centers, barber shops, zoom events, phone banks, and more.

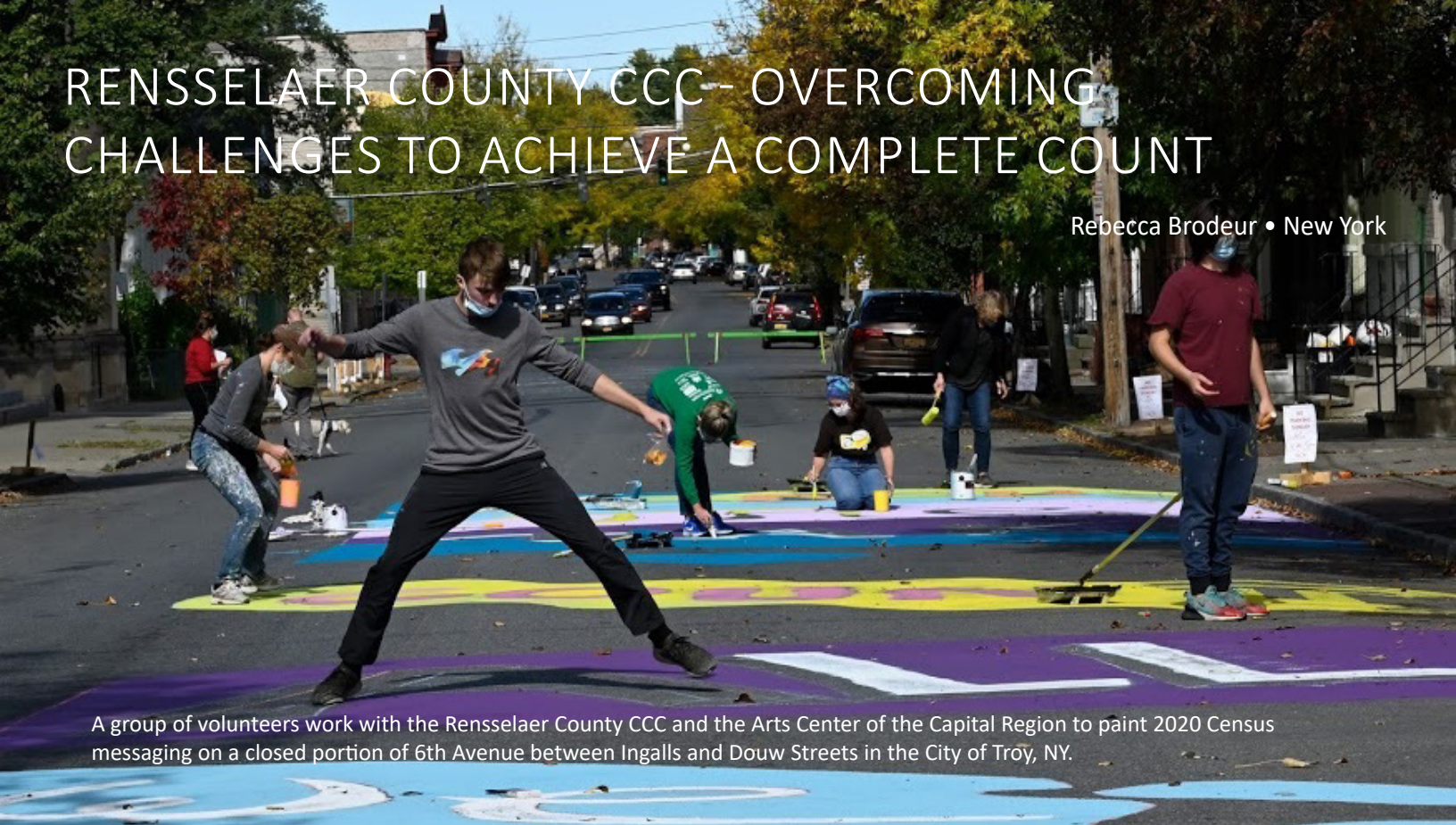
"The QCCC was a group of people that did not know each other when they got together but now are friends, and because of their work and success with the 2020 Census, they want to engage in future community activities," said Tanenbaum.

All this is testament to the success of the incredible work done by this group, which plans to work on a debriefing report to document the work it accomplished. The Queens Borough President's Office and the QCCC will be critical partners for all future Census Bureau efforts and, most importantly, the 2030 Census.



RENSSELAER COUNTY CCC-- OVERCOMING CHALLENGES TO ACHIEVE A COMPLETE COUNT

Rebecca Brodeur • New York



A group of volunteers work with the Rensselaer County CCC and the Arts Center of the Capital Region to paint 2020 Census messaging on a closed portion of 6th Avenue between Ingalls and Douw Streets in the City of Troy, NY.

The Decennial Census is the nation's largest peacetime operation and takes years of planning. Among the most crucial factors in achieving a successful count is providing the public with valuable information. From understanding Title 13 protections, to overcoming language barriers, to disseminating the information needed to complete the questionnaire, it is vital to have public involvement.

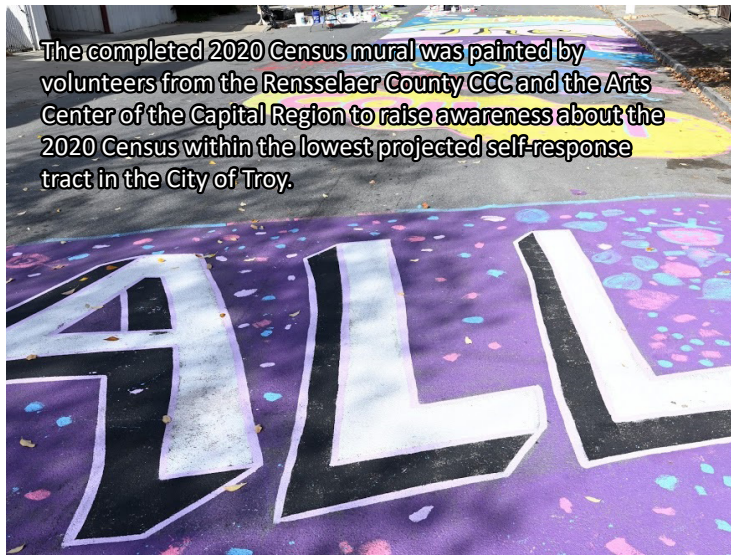
An overwhelming number of New Yorkers identified potential challenges to 2020 Census participation in their own communities. Consequently, these groups banded together to ensure that their communities were fully equipped to overcome these challenges. Organizations of all sizes and backgrounds opted to participate in the 2020 Census and many organized Complete Count Committees (CCCs) to engage their communities.

The Rensselaer County CCC, which formed in the fall of 2019, represented a wide array of people and

places. The county is located within the New York Capital Region and includes a diverse population spread over urban, suburban, and rural settings. It is home to more than 150,000 people residing across two cities, 14 towns, and six villages. The county, whose largest city of Troy has more than 50,000 residents, is home to a large senior population, community members spanning all income levels, as well as three colleges and 12 public school districts.

To tackle outreach over such a large county, it was clear that a CCC was essential. Consequently, the CCC was established by co-chairs Leslie Cheu, executive director of The Troy Savings Bank Charitable Foundation, Inc., and Katherine Maciol, president of Rensselaer County's Community Action Agency. The CCC was ultimately joined by more than 40 different organizations from across the county. When asked why the CCC was needed, Cheu said, "We understood that the Census was key to making sure that our schools, health care facilities, and nonprofit organizations were funded to meet

the growing needs in our communities. We were fortunate to have the school district, business, faith



community, city, county, and nonprofit leaders all step up to do this important work. It was a very committed group of people.”

The CCC worked with census representatives to identify which census tracts were most vulnerable to an undercount. The CCC also reviewed what programs and organizations in the area were recipients of federal funding tied to the 2010 Decennial Census count. The CCC found that, in the last decade, organizations and municipalities from across the county collectively received millions of federal dollars from several different Block Grants, Career and Technical Education Allocations, and Homeowner Investment Programs. Upon review of these funding streams, it was clear that many of the county’s urban tracts would be most negatively impacted by an undercount. However, various other organizations from across the county could also be impacted.

Upon its formation last fall, the CCC worked closely with its members to plan outreach activities. From scheduling events, to sending out 2020 Census information and recruiting tables, to preparing a host of paper, digital, and promotional outreach materials, the CCC was successfully reaching the

public.

Then, Covid-19 hit New York in a big way.

With the virus spreading, New York state locked down in March, which was the same time the 2020 Census count was beginning. This timeframe brought a host of unique challenges for communities who were now grappling with issues like job losses, food insecurity, the closure of community centers, businesses, town and government offices, and schools. Overcoming such challenges seemed insurmountable, but like thousands of New York-based census partners, the Rensselaer County CCC persevered.

“Our plans for in-person community get-togethers were put on hold,” said Cheu. “During the height of the pandemic, we instead launched a media plan that used social media videos, billboards, and yard signs featuring well-known community and faith leaders. These were very effective at building awareness of the Census.”

The CCC also worked with the local arts center, which helped to develop a highly successful teen video challenge during the lockdown. The winner, Nicholas Bufi of Troy, was featured in the Record Newspaper on August 10.

Once the region saw the initial wave of Covid-19 decrease, the CCC went out to work with the public, using updated safety measures. During the month of August, the CCC was able to hire Justin Relf as a volunteer census coordinator. He partnered with community organizations and churches to deliver 2020 Census swag (face masks, water bottles, and reusable grocery bags) to baseball fields, housing authority barbecues, and outdoor concerts.

The CCC also participated in the Mobile Questionnaire Assistance (MQA) program, which dispersed Census staff to enumerate at community events. “Our Census Bureau partners joined us at



RENSSELAER COUNTY NEEDS YOU

RENSSELAER COUNTY COUNTS CONTEST!

Teens from ages 13-19 are invited to submit a video to be broadcast by the Rensselaer County Complete Count Committee to promote awareness of, and participation in, the 2020 Census.

The contest winner will receive a \$1,000 cash prize. Five runners up will receive \$100 each.

many of these events and were able to get many more people to complete the 2020 Census on the spot,” said Cheu.

One of the final events held by the CCC was an amazing mural project. For this, the CCC identified a tract in the City of Troy that the Census had projected to have the lowest 2020 Census self-response rate for the city. Working with The Arts Center of the Capital Region, the CCC arranged to close a street and paint its 2020 Census message right on it! The mural project was a great success with many residents participating.

The efforts of census partners across New York State truly overcame unprecedented challenges. A sense of community that focused on meeting the needs of the whole motivated partners to get people counted. The Rensselaer County CCC was a phenomenal success. The co-chairs, who had never worked on a Decennial Census before, noted that this work was among their most meaningful community experiences. The Rensselaer County CCC served as an example of what CCCs and census partners could accomplish during what is being called the most challenging decennial count in history. They met the challenges and overcame them. And, for that, we offer thanks! ■

youcount!
i count!
we count!

RENSSELAER COUNTY
2020 CENSUS

AN INTERVIEW WITH NEWARK DEPUTY MAYOR QUILS: A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE ON THE 2020 CENSUS

Barbara Brown • New Jersey



About Deputy Mayor Quiles: As deputy mayor of Community Engagement, Jaqueline Quiles led the City of Newark's efforts in the 2020 Census.

About the City of Newark, NJ: The City of Newark is the most populous city in the State of New Jersey. As one of the nation's major air, shipping, and rail hubs, the city had a census-estimated population of 282,011 in 2019, making it the nation's 73rd most populous municipality. Settled in 1666 by Puritans from the New Haven Colony, Newark is one of the oldest cities in the United States. Newark reached its peak of 442,337 residents, according to the 1930 Census, and has experienced a steady decline as residents have moved to surrounding suburbs. Newark is the nation's second-most racially diverse city in New Jersey, behind only Jersey City. Led by Mayor Ras J. Baraka, the City of Newark is

experiencing a comeback of sorts. Mayor Baraka has emphasized cost savings, revenue creation, and innovation to create greater opportunities for all Newarkers. The Decennial Census plays a major role in this effort.

Interviewer: Thank you in advance for sharing the strategies and tactics that you relied upon to lead Newark through its 2020 Census. Tell us about the "view from the bridge" and how the City of Newark helped to reach its diverse population and secure a strong count in the Decennial Census.

Deputy Mayor Quiles: Newark began its efforts early with job recruiting and building awareness of the 2020 Census. The strategy to get everyone counted shifted once the Covid-19 pandemic hit. We focused outreach at socially distanced events

and compiled questionnaires by appointment only. The message to get counted was pushed out daily through many communications channels, and by many non-profit and industry partners. One tool that proved especially helpful was leveraging the Mayor's Covid-19 daily address to inform and educate the residents on the need to complete their census.



Interviewer: As the State's largest city, Newark had to reach many hard-to-count populations, including seniors, children, non-English speaking persons, disabled residents, and undocumented residents. The challenge of engaging these populations was compounded by the pandemic. How did you overcome this obstacle?

Deputy Mayor Quiles: Due to shutdowns and stay-at-home guidance related to Covid-10 we had to find new and innovative ways to engage all populations. One effective method was to reach the community through food drives, food deliveries and the distribution of gift cards and giveaways. We understood that people were hurting and needed help with basic needs, including groceries. We were able to provide essential financial and food assistance and these incentives drew the public to the Census outreach events and created a natural opportunity for people to learn about the Census.

Interviewer: The results of the Decennial Census are critical to the growth of the city, with an impact on planning and funding for healthcare, infrastructure, schools, and NJ SNAP benefits, to name a few. What tactics helped activate residents to complete their census?

Deputy Mayor Quiles: Newark relied upon a wide range of activities to motivate residents to complete the census. Personal incentives like partnering with the Census Bureau at food drives, food deliveries, gift card giveaways, and free Covid-10 testing drew the public into the census conversation. Robocalls from the mayor helped drive the message to each household. Zoom meetings reached opinion leaders in faith-based communities, neighborhoods, and schools. Ongoing communications like PSAs by the Mayor's Office, members of the Municipal Council, and the Housing Authority Director opened the door to enabling us to share why we count everyone every 10 years. The combination of outreach efforts helped motivate our residents to get counted.



Interviewer: What special events did Newark host?

Deputy Mayor Quiles: Newark hosted and participated in virtual or real-life events, with the goal of touching on all cultures, religions, and aspects of our residential life. We planned many

in-person events, but due to the pandemic, we pivoted to online and social media events, and events with social distancing like Census Caravans. Way back in October 2019, Newark Public Schools were able to participate in the World's First Fairy Trail Census in Essex County's South Mountain Reservation. That experience set the tone of excitement and interest for our school children in the 2020 Census. After the pandemic set in, we held "Newark Counts Census Day" in April as a virtual citywide effort to encourage residents to complete the U.S. Census form. Our community stakeholders helped to get people engaged as did some of our celebrity friends. We hosted the "Newark Selfie Challenge" with the chance to win \$1000 that engaged the youth. To participate, players had to fill out the census online and submit their confirmation of completion with a creative selfie and hashtag (#NewarkCounts) to our dedicated email at NewarkCounts@gmail.com. We had many fantastic entries! The goal of all these events was to drive excitement, build awareness and activate response.



Interviewer: You developed a Complete Count Committee with members from government, business, and nonprofit sectors, and created subcommittees to reach specific hard-to-count populations like seniors, non-English speaking persons, and children. Which type of partners were the most effective?

Deputy Mayor Quiles: Newark was thrilled to work with all types of groups, and we could not have achieved our goals without the help of every partner and every type of partner. Our street team was a success as they walked the streets and promoted the 2020 Census and Covid-19 testing at our pop-up sites. All our faith-based, nonprofits, government, school-based, and neighborhood partners were supportive and essential. Newark fostered great Census partnerships! Our "TEAMWORK" mantra came to life and our collegial and collaborative approach led us to success.

Interviewer: What changes would you like to see in 2030?

Deputy Mayor Quiles: Thanks to the pandemic – more than ever – our community needs extra resources, and it is vitally important that we get counted correctly. Moving forward, in 2030 we need more bilingual representation and translation, especially to reach our Spanish, Portuguese and Creole populations.

Interviewer: What was Newark's Census slogan?



Deputy Mayor Quiles: The official Census tagline, “Shape Your Future” was great! Newark created our own themes to complement the tagline and build our own feeling of community. We used “Newark Counts” and “Be Counted – Be Included – Be Heard” to let our folks know that getting counted

makes sure your voice gets heard.

Interviewer: How soon do you think Newark should begin outreach for the 2030 Census?

Deputy Mayor Quiles: It is important to start soon. We anticipate a full-court press in





January 2029 with Census Job Fairs. Planning should start much sooner.

Interviewer: What is your biggest takeaway for the 2030 Census?

Deputy Mayor Quiles: We are blown away by the help we received from city partners and volunteers. In particular, the Bloomberg Association made sure that Newark was counted. They helped us recruit new partners when we needed them most. Overall, the Census was a great experience for Newark, and it strengthened our city, ■



WHETHER SHOWING SUPPORT THROUGH MQA EVENTS OR THE BIRTH OF A CENSUS BABY, LINCOLN MEDICAL CENTER WAS A TRUE PARTNER

Linda Berk • New York

The U.S. Census Bureau relied on the support of local partners – trusted voices in the community – to help get the word out about the ease, importance, and safety of participating in the 2020 Census. The support received from the Health and Hospital's Lincoln Medical Center proved them to be a very critical partner in getting out the count in the South Bronx.

Lincoln's CEO Mr. Milton Nunez was excited to partner with the 2020 Census because he knew how important the census count is to the South Bronx. In 2019, NYC Health & Hospitals/Lincoln's staff created Lincounts Complete Count Committee (CCC), headed by Renelda Walker, Vicky Correa, and Marcelo Villagran. The efforts of Lincoln Medical Center were comprehensive, covering many segments of the community through various forms of activity. They connected the 2020 Census to their extensive network enabling outreach from new mothers and their babies, to the senior population of the community. Their support was far-reaching and included sponsoring community forums, providing space for recruiting and training, and hosting Mobile Questionnaire Assistance (MQA) events.

One of the more heartwarming experiences of the partnership was the birth of a baby boy born to Angelica Colon on March 31, at Lincoln Hospital. Colon participated in a "Census Day" event at the hospital along with baby Colon, who was wearing a 2020 Census blue baby hat symbolizing "Every Newborn Counts!" Counting children five years

and under is always a challenge and they are often undercounted, so the effort to promote the importance of counting newborns was very important.

While the pandemic changed the dynamics of many in-person events, once social distancing was allowed, Lincoln Hospital was eager to set up MQAs, knowing how important it was to ensure an accurate count in the South Bronx. From August 5-October 16, Lincoln Hospital held 66 MQAs, enabling the Census to count an average of 45 households at each event. Despite the social distancing restrictions, which sometimes tightened due to rising pandemic cases, Walker was determined to hold MQAs on every weekday.

"We know how important it is that the Bronx have a complete count and Lincoln is in a position to help see that we count everyone," said Walker. "We must hold these MQAs with every opportunity."

Lincoln Hospital not only made a big contribution by counting people in the South Bronx, but they also helped spread the 2020 Census message. The valuable assistance of the Lincoln Medical Center is a testament to the value of partners and how many ways they can assist in achieving a complete and accurate count. ■

BELLEVUE HOSPITAL PROVED TO BE A PERFECT 2020 CENSUS PARTNER

Joli Golden • New York

NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue in Manhattan is one of the largest hospitals in the United States by number of beds. The fact that Bellevue is a safety net hospital and will provide healthcare for individuals regardless of their insurance status or ability to pay, made it an extremely helpful destination for the 2020 Census to reach underserved populations. The U.S. Census Bureau was fortunate to find such a great partner and wonderful match for Mobile Questionnaire Assistance (MQA) events, which helped count more than 700 households across the five city boroughs from August 25 – October 15.

These sessions were successful for several reasons:

- Census tables were positioned in highly trafficked areas near the main entrance
- Census Response Representatives (CRRs) included Spanish and Chinese speakers who could effectively communicate with immigrant populations
- Census swag items attracted visitors to complete the questionnaire
- More than 5,000 staff members were directed to complete the 2020 Census form and encouraged to visit MQA representatives

The ability for CRRs to help individuals in their native language, combined with the fact that the hospital is perceived as a safe space, greatly



increased the likelihood that underserved families would complete their 2020 Census questionnaires. Given that the hospital handles more than 500,000 yearly visits, there was a steady stream of new faces who could be approached at every MQA. Families that may not have been inclined to visit MQA sites near a transit hub or outside of a building, felt comfortable in Bellevue's spacious lobby. Census swag items, like baby hats, attracted families with newborns to have a 2020 Census conversation and complete the form. The hospital's Covid-19 testing site and free flu shots also attracted hundreds of individuals to pass by the census table.

On August 25, the hospital raised awareness via a one-hour MQA pop-up event held in the lobby. "It was so fitting to have an MQA at Bellevue because the Census determines federal funding for our public hospitals, along with schools, roads, and other invaluable resources," said NYC Council



Member Carlina Rivera. “As the co-chair of the City Council’s Census Task Force and the Committee on Hospitals, I was especially committed to getting a complete count to ensure that our communities and our public hospitals receive the funding they need to recover from the COVID pandemic.”

In one of the most diverse cities in the world, partners like Bellevue hospital make the difference in ensuring a complete and accurate count.

“As a public institution, and one that is deeply committed to the community we serve, we were happy for the opportunity to collaborate and support the efforts of the U.S. Census Bureau,”

said William Hicks, CEO of NYC Health + Hospitals/ Bellevue. “Without accurate data that measures and defines our community characteristics, we could miss out on vital resources that support our population health efforts. Accurate census data drives the allocation of funding and our experience this year during the COVID-19 pandemic has reminded us of the importance of getting this right.”

The 2020 Census partnership with Bellevue Hospital will surely serve as a model of partner engagement for healthcare institutions for decades to come. ■

THE MUNICIPALITY OF HORMIGUEROS REGISTERS ONE OF THE HIGHEST 2020 CENSUS SELF-RESPONSE RATES IN WESTERN PUERTO RICO

Adelina I. Reynoso • Puerto Rico

The Municipality of Hormigueros achieved a self-response rate of 42.3 percent, which registered as one of the highest marks in Puerto Rico. The city is located in the western area and about 30 percent of its population consists of adults over the age of 60 who needed assistance when completing the 2020 Census questionnaire.

Mayor Pedro García shared his strategies used to promote participation in the 2020 Census and how the Complete Count Committee (CCC) of the Municipality was key to the success of achieving the highest self-response rate in the western area of Puerto Rico.

According to Sandra Rosas, leader CCC for the Municipality of Hormigueros, the promotional strategy involved school directors and teachers, and local government employees of the offices where there was a greater movement of the general public, such as the section 8 office, CRIM, federal programs, citizen services, and Transcita. The goal was to cover all the hard-to-count populations, such as low-income families, children, and the elderly. The initiative showed strong results by helping more than 400 households complete their 2020 Census questionnaires. Also, municipal employees did their part by communicating with their communities, guiding their neighbors, and explaining the safety, ease, and importance of completing the 2020 Census. They also invited local merchants to

hang 2020 Census promotional posters in their businesses and distribute thousands of 2020 Census flyers.



Sandra Rosas (left), CCC leader and director of the Department of Federal Programs, Municipality of Hormigueros, has worked closely with Adelina Reynoso, partnership specialist for the U.S. Census Bureau.

Rosas also said that one of the most effective strategies of the municipality was conducting personal follow-up phone calls to explain the importance of completing the questionnaire and verifying that households had completed their questionnaire. Many households were unaware of the importance of the decennial census and believed they would lose their current benefits by completing the questionnaire.

“This mistrust and lack of correct information led us to conduct personal calls to clarify doubts and, at the same time, make sure that everyone made themselves count,” said Rosas. “Even with all the obstacles and restrictions that we experienced during the census operations, we obtained good results promoting that the Census is easy, important and safe, through social networks and in different platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook

and Instagram. We participated in the different events promoted by the census office, such as the 10-10-10 in the months of July and October, where we invited people to take 10 minutes at 10 AM to confirm with their friends and family that they have responded to their 2020 Census.

“We promoted the different Mobile Questionnaire Assistance events that the census office organized in the city. And we also recognize the usefulness of the promotional material provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, as well as the promotional swag item incentives that were given to residents. Everyone loved the tote bags and water bottles.

“We at the Department of Federal Programs of Hormigueros use census data on a daily basis to plan services and request funds for special communities throughout the year. The 2020 Census was our only opportunity in the decade to ensure an accurate and complete count for our communities, for a better future.” ■

VERMONT LEADERSHIP ENCOURAGED CENSUS SELF-RESPONSE RIGHT DOWN TO THE WIRE

Nicole McKenzie • Vermont

On October 14, just shy of the one-year anniversary of his executive order signing to officially form the Vermont 2020 Complete Count Committee (CCC), Governor Phil Scott tweeted one last message to encourage anyone who had not yet responded to the 2020 Census, to please do so. His commitment and leadership to making sure Vermont counted

was on display throughout the state for several months. He urged all stakeholders to work hard and find creative ways to overcome any challenges.

The CCC, established last fall, kicked-off with its first meeting last December and was intent on helping the U.S. Census Bureau complete an accurate count. Governor Scott issued a press release at the time stating, “A complete count of our population is essential for the fair representation of Vermonters at all levels of government. The results of the Census inform important decisions of federal and state government, impacting our ability to grow the economy, make Vermont more affordable, and protect the most vulnerable in all 251 towns.”

The CCC consisted of leaders from Vermont state agencies, nonprofits, and representatives from senior, LGBTQ, and business communities, as well as census personnel. Jason Broughton, the secretary for Vermont State Libraries, chaired the committee, and Michael Moser, director of the Vermont State Data Center, was the U.S. Census Bureau liaison.

Strategies were executed early on to ensure populations historically undercounted in the Census, such as LGBTQ, elderly, minority,

immigrants, and homeless communities were counted in Vermont. The committee spent time identifying barriers to full participation and developed outreach strategies to overcome those barriers. The committee was on a solid path that was well thought out and planned, until March, when Covid-19 hit and the path to a full count needed to be re-routed. The committee rose to the challenge and found ways around barriers that emerged because of the pandemic. Members worked with private and public stakeholders across the state to get creative and find alternative ways to reach Vermonters and make sure the message got out. Strategies embraced included the use of social media messaging, zoom meetings, press releases, virtual events, and outdoor Mobile Questionnaire Assistance events.

As a result of Vermont's 2020 Census CCC's creativity and relentless drive, Vermont became one of the first states in the nation to reach 99.9% enumeration. Additionally, the state of Vermont's 2020 self-response rate came in at 60.5%, beating its 60.3% rate of the 2010 Census.

Well done, Vermont! ■

Governor Phil Scott ✓
@GovPhilScott
Official twitter account for Vermont Governor Phil Scott.
Vermont governor.vermont.gov Joined April 2012
486 Following 26.7K Followers

Tweets Tweets & replies Media Likes

 **Governor Phil Scott** ✓ @GovPhilScott · 19m
The U.S. Census count ends tomorrow, October 15th. A [#CompleteCount](#) ensures VT receives the right amount of federal funding for essential Vermont programs. Do your part today by taking 5 minutes to fill out your census at: my2020census.gov or by calling 844-330-2020.

PLEASE HELP VERMONT BY RESPONDING TO THE

2020 CENSUS

MY2020CENSUS.GOV



UNITED NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE'S GET-OUT- THE-COUNT CAMPAIGN WORKED ITS WAY ACROSS NEW YORK CITY

Sarah Malaika • New York

Throughout the 2020 Census campaign, United Neighborhood Houses (UNH) was a leader in promoting 2020 Census education and outreach and advocated at both the city and state levels to dedicate funding towards census efforts. UNH, a policy and social change organization representing 44 neighborhood settlement houses that serve about 765,000 New Yorkers from all walks of life, partnered with its settlement house members to take a neighborhood-based, multi-service approach

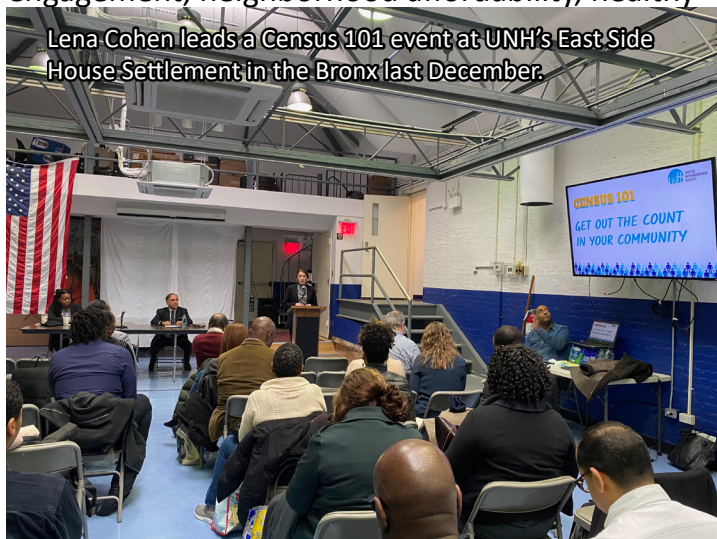
to “Get-Out-The-Count” (GOTC) for New York City’s most hard to count communities across the five boroughs.

Now in its 100th year, UNH is stewarding a new era for New York’s settlement house movement. They mobilize members and their communities to advocate for good public policies and promote strong organizations and practices that keep neighborhoods resilient and thriving for all New Yorkers. For the 2020 Census, UNH supported

settlement houses leading this work in their communities, which led to significant achievements in community outreach. Across the UNH network, settlement houses collectively held over 241 census events, trained 472 Settlement House staff members, collected 20,187 census commitment cards, and reached 239,854 community members during their campaign.

Even when it's not a census campaign year, UNH is committed to raising the voices of more New Yorkers to participate in government and voting, and partner with their members on a broad range of issues, including civic and community engagement, neighborhood affordability, healthy

Lena Cohen leads a Census 101 event at UNH's East Side House Settlement in the Bronx last December.



aging, early childhood education, adult literacy, and youth development. They also provide customized professional development and peer learning to build the skills and leadership capabilities of settlement house staff at all levels. As trusted local institutions embedded within their communities, settlement houses are the ideal places to provide pathways to civic and community engagement and their citywide infrastructure and programs that reach so many New Yorkers.

For these reasons, UNH was selected by the New York City Council to support the Mayor's "NYC Census 2020" office as one of 17 organizations that formed the core group supporting citywide

efforts to mobilize community participation in the 2020 Census through culturally appropriate education, outreach, and technical support. Led by Policy Analyst Lena Cohen, UNH's GOTC efforts relied on the importance of settlement houses as neighborhood hubs for promoting civic engagement. As trusted community organizations, settlement houses are already embedded in hard-to-count communities and were best-suited to dispel fears around the proposed citizenship question, mitigate concerns that the federal government could compromise census data, and encourage every New Yorker to self-respond to the census.

UNH was aware the 2020 Census count would impact their communities for the next decade. Settlement houses in UNH's network operate in some of the most underserved and lowest income communities in New York City, where residents are typically underrepresented in government, leading to low civic participation and a lack of accountability between constituents and elected officials. Therefore, the neighborhoods in which settlement houses provide programs and services typically have some of the lowest engagement rates in various civic processes across the city, including past decennial enumerations. So, over the past three years UNH expanded opportunities to train settlement houses to promote the civic engagement of their staff and communities as part of their everyday work. These efforts have helped build capacity among UNH's members for non-partisan voter registration and turnout efforts and paved the way for the GOTC census efforts that took place between in 2019 and 2020.

UNH launched its GOTC campaign in July 2019 with 17 UNH Settlement House members, providing them with training, materials, and funding to support community outreach aimed at improving census response rates. Each of these settlement houses received a mini grant of \$2,000 in recognition of the time staff dedicated to training

and their commitment to incorporating census education and motivation strategies into their programs and organizational communications.

Across the network, UNH and settlement houses succeeded in keeping UNH members updated on changes to the U.S. Census Bureau's timeline for census self-response, Non-Response Follow-Up operations, Group Quarters enumeration, as well as employment updates. And they helped settlement houses embed 2020 Census messaging in programs like adult literacy classes, childcare, and after-school programs, as well as organizational processes like intake, community events, and orientations. UNH's campaign included developing locally relevant and translated educational resources customized to reflect the importance of the 2020 Census, Census 101 presentations, and census-themed activities. They also participated in New York City Council and Mayor's Office Citywide Census Partners (CWP) meetings to stay connected with other umbrella organizations leading similar work, and supported the NYC Census 2020 office to provide direct training support to front-line staff that are well-positioned to help community members respond to the Census, but who also need coaching and technical assistance to utilize virtual engagement tools.

In the spring, COVID-19 dramatically impacted and upturned many of UNH's planned 2020 Census field tactics. However, in the period of adjustment following the pandemic and economic crisis, UNH continued to promote the 2020 Census by helping settlement houses work with its members. It used the collective power of New York City's settlement house network to ensure that plans to promote Census self-response could adapt and move forward, particularly in historically undercounted communities. UNH convened a peer learning group via video conferencing to continue connecting settlement house staff members who are leading city efforts. These meetings provided an opportunity to share tips and strategies for

transitioning to remote-based Census engagement, identified specific challenges that settlement houses, operating on government-funded contracts, faced in the curtailment of in-person activities.

Settlement houses shifted outreach techniques away from in-person events to virtual platforms, including social media, online pledge cards, emails, video streams, text-banks, and phone-banks. They organized GOTC events for the UNH network to use the peer-to-peer texting tool, Hustle. This tool allowed them to reach hundreds of New Yorkers within minutes, providing an encouraging message and link to complete the 2020 Census. UNH provided training and technical assistance to anyone that registered for their events and provided contact lists with accompanying phone scripts. These activities not only promoted the 2020 Census but served to reach community members and ensure people stayed socially connected during a time where following social distancing guidelines was imminent.

Diana Rodriguez, director of Government Relations at the East Side House Settlement, described how working on the census campaign deepened civic engagement efforts for the communities she serves in the Mott Haven neighborhood of the Bronx. "Despite the ending of our formal recording efforts of our census events and reporting outcomes, we pledged to continue outreach as we returned to our sites with more experience in virtual engagement to continue in that direction," she said. "This summer, we hosted a young adult workforce development program for teens at our Patterson Community Center. This area includes a census tract, where we are encouraging our community teens to spread the word on Census in addition to hosting numerous trainings on community organizing and community givebacks. As part of the program, the youth also participated in work at our food distribution sites and partner organizations' neighborhood gardens to directly engage and raise awareness among community members for sustainable food

practices.”

It is quite apparent that UNH’s community engagement efforts will continue long after the census operations have concluded.

For the past six months, UNH continued to meet the needs of the people providing essential frontline services. Their work included virtually convening settlement house staff at all levels to share stories of tragedy and of impact, brainstorm strategies for helping those suffering the most, and work toward solutions to improve government policies during a crisis. They convened more than 180 peer learning groups (including several specifically on the 2020 Census) and trainings since March, bringing their members together to share updates and regularly connect colleagues to each other for advice and support. Settlement houses were a key part of New York City’s success in achieving higher community participation in the 2020 Census by engaging staff, program participants, and community members in GOTC activities.

“Staten Island holds the highest census self-response rate in NYC. This is due, in part, to the efforts of Project Hospitality’s census outreach team working in coordination with other Staten Island organizations’ census outreach teams,” said Karen Jackson, director of Recovery and Community Initiatives at Staten Island’s Project Hospitality. “Early in the process, we formed a coalition called Staten Island Counts in which all CBOs doing census outreach on Staten Island met weekly, along with representatives of the Census Bureau and the city’s census outreach campaign.

“This coordination ensured that we had an outreach team covering each neighborhood in the borough, without duplicating efforts. After the pause on the city, our outreach team began using digital outreach strategies to help community members complete the Census. This included texting and calling all clients in Project Hospitality’s central database. In addition to helping our neighbors complete the Census, these phone calls also served as ‘wellness checks’ during the COVID-19 crisis. The census outreach workers connected people to Project Hospitality’s continuum of care: our food pantry, entitlements help, free tax prep, legal services, mental health support, health insurance navigation, and more.” ■



Lena Cohen joins Bronx Borough President Ruben Díaz Jr. last November at Community Board 12’s town hall meeting on the 2020 Census.

GIVING THANKS TO FARMERS MARKETS FOR PROVIDING MORE THAN FRUITS AND VEGETABLES TO NH RESIDENTS DURING THE PANDEMIC

Nicole McKenzie • New Hampshire

New Hampshire leaves of color are beginning to separate from their branches and fall to the ground, and what was recently the morning dew has now become the morning frost, signs leading to the realization that winter will soon be upon us. November is a transitional month and the month in which we celebrate the tradition of Thanksgiving so we can give thanks by devouring an overabundance of flavorful cuisine!

Likewise, November is a month of transition for the 2020 Census as counting is now complete and data preparation to inform funding decisions and representation over the next decade is underway. With thoughts of Thanksgiving and food on the forefront of thought, a group of partners quickly come to mind that made a significant impact on how New Hampshire overcame the challenges of encouraging people to respond amidst a pandemic. These partners comprise a hearty group of vendors who came together weekly across the state, in an outdoor setting, to sell their goods at local farmers markets. The majority of farmers and vendors at the markets were locals, who were also trusted voices within their communities. Census staff members were extremely thankful for the opportunity to join New Hampshire's farmers markets, where in addition to picking out the ripest tomatoes, sweetest local jams, and freshest stone oven baked breads, and community members could also respond to the 2020 Census.



Farmers markets have a long-standing tradition in America, dating back to the 1600s, when the first one opened in Boston, MA in 1634. They quickly became a popular way for farmers to sell fruit, vegetables, and dairy products directly to consumers. As grocery stores gained popularity during the 1800s and 1900s, interest in farmers markets declined. However, when people became more health conscious and were looking for options to acquire fresh local products in the early 1970s, farmers markets made a strong comeback. More than 40 New Hampshire towns and cities host farmers markets throughout the summer and into

the fall on a weekly basis.

New Hampshire 2020 Census representatives set up Mobile Questionnaire Assistance (MQA) tents at many of them and became regular attendees at farmers markets located in the communities of Wentworth, Lancaster, Tamworth, Wolfeboro, Littleton, Colebrook, Gorham, Canaan, Bedford, Exeter, Barnstead, and Rochester. Staffing over 40 events, 2020 Census Response Representatives (CRRs) provided information to thousands of market-goers and helped Granite Stater's complete their census forms onsite from the market if they chose to do so.

Some farmers markets were bigger than others, so CRRs needed to use creative tricks to gain attention. Gerry, a local CRR, set up under a bright pink tent and displayed 2020 Census swag and a bowl of candy to grab the attention of shoppers. Gerry's tent became a very popular spot with the young market attendees as he provided 2020 Census coloring books and an opportunity to have a piece of candy (with a parent's permission, of course)! At one farmers market, a young boy spotted Gerry's tent and quickly returned with his parents and four siblings – who had not completed the 2020 Census but did so on the spot!

Many of the farmers markets in New Hampshire are in rural communities where the state also has many second homes, seasonal properties, and camps. It was common to see seasonal homeowners at the markets who were unaware they needed to respond to the 2020 Census for their second property. Many voiced appreciation for the information and completed the Census for their second home – which took about two minutes to complete – while at the market.

As we head into Thanksgiving week, the 2020 Census team sincerely thanks all the farmers markets in New Hampshire for letting us join their community, and we also thank them for sharing many delicious products that will be shared around our festive tables! ■



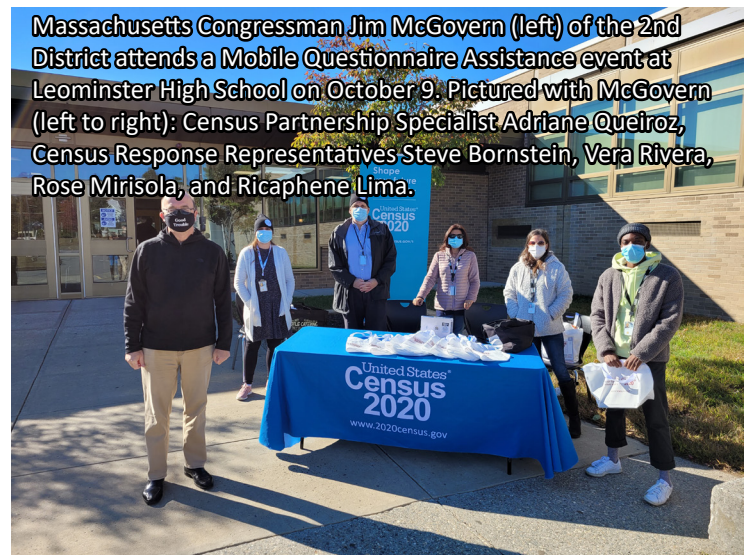
A HEARTFELT THANKS TO CENSUS PARTNERS IN WORCESTER COUNTY

Adriane Queiroz • Massachusetts

A decennial count in the middle of a pandemic certainly wasn't what anyone would expect. How do you count the population in the middle of a health crisis? Despite the challenges, partners have shown a tremendous amount of commitment, creativity, and resilience working the frontlines in the fight against COVID-19 and making sure everyone is counted in the 2020 Census.

During the month of October, partners in Worcester County, MA provided their last efforts to inform and educate residents about the importance of the Census and how it impacts their community over the next decade. As the Census Bureau announced the end of the count in mid October, the outreach efforts were amplified to have everyone counted without delay. Many Mobile Questionnaire Assistance (MQA) events were scheduled in an effort to count the most vulnerable and hardest populations. Partners reached out to farmers markets, grocery stores, businesses, and places with the highest traffic to inform and enumerate people. Census Response Representatives (CRRs) worked diligently to enumerate as many people as possible to boost self-response rates in the area. It was worth all the efforts.

As cities and towns were assisting people at food banks, CRRs were on-hand to inform and enumerate. Many partners, such as The Friendly House and the Office of Congressman Jim McGovern in Worcester, coordinated events to count people at these food bank distribution sites. "We have no minute to spare, we need everyone counted in the Worcester county," said



Massachusetts Congressman Jim McGovern (left) of the 2nd District attends a Mobile Questionnaire Assistance event at Leominster High School on October 9. Pictured with McGovern (left to right): Census Partnership Specialist Adriane Queiroz, Census Response Representatives Steve Bornstein, Vera Rivera, Rose Mirisola, and Ricaphene Lima.

Congressman Jim McGovern, who was also on the frontline, giving out food packages to the population in Leominster and asking people if they had completed their census forms. Two MQA events were scheduled with his office on the same day but at different times – one at the Leominster High School and the other at Doyle Field Park. CRRs were able to talk to lots of residents and distribute census swag bags as a token of appreciation, as more than 100 cars lined up to collect their food packages. Some were able to park their cars on the side as CRRs collected their census information while following social distancing guidelines.

What a smart and convenient idea! It was more proof that census partners provided an endless supply of support and dedication. ■

RISCCC AND AWARD GRANTEES PIVOT TO SPREAD CENSUS MESSAGE

Debborah Smith • Rhode Island

The Rhode Island State Complete Count Committee (RISCCC) has been a tremendous 2020 Census partner throughout the past couple of years. Members have proved to be extremely engaged and focused on achieving an accurate count of the Ocean State. However, even the best laid plans can go awry when a worldwide pandemic halts life as we know it.

“The uncertainty of the global health pandemic caused this entire partnership to have to reassess plans and strategies,” said Jordan Hevenor, RISCCC field manager. “As a result, the field team and grantees worked to create more cross collaborations and space to share best practices. As a result of this, work was shifted to follow individual movement patterns, through outreach at food distribution sites, phone calls, mailings, and social media. The foundation of being able to constantly pivot with health changes and deadline changes was made possible by working with a group of organizations that were engaged and committed to getting everyone counted.”

The RISCCC awarded grants to 63 organizations

to support 2020 Census outreach. There was a competitive application process from November 2019 - January 2020. All applicants submitted elaborate plans focused on the hard-to-count communities they served. Many of those applicants received iPads and other resources that would have been used to promote the 2020 Census at daycare centers, community centers, festivals, schools, and more. However, COVID-19 prohibited all those plans from being implemented.

So, the shift was on!

The RISCCC immediately rallied and setup weekly Census Chat, Coffee Hour and Social Media virtual meetings. The partners rallied together to create robust social media plans, phone banks, mailings, and opportunities for face-to-face outreach. The pandemic opened greater outreach via foodbanks, local pantries, summer school lunch programs, and more.

“By providing food items, for example, and a bag to put it in, and other items of interest to those hard to count communities, the field team was able to encourage, obtain or persuade many of those seeking these amenities to fulfill their obligation to do the Census,” said Luis Estrada, RISCCC campaign manager.

The committee then pushed Mobile Questionnaire Assistance (MQA) events. The 63 grantees, along





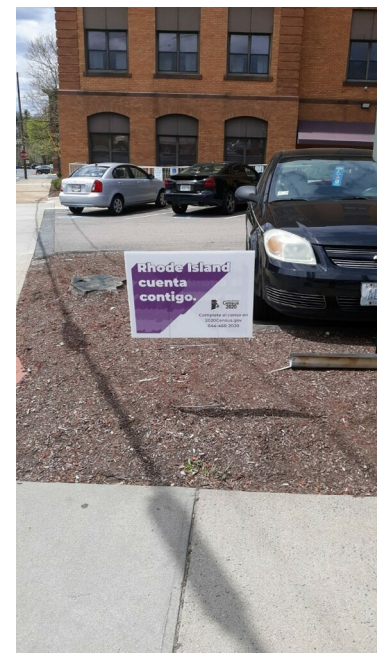
with other community partners, were instrumental in the completion of 605 MQAs in the hardest-to-count communities across the state from July 13 - October 15. Those events were successful in capturing census information from tens of thousands of minority residents during that timeframe.

“Whenever I talk about the Census, I always start by talking about the inequity at its roots. When the Census was (originally) conceived, enslaved Black and Indigenous people were not counted, or were counted as less than a person,” said Galen Auer, RISCC outreach coordinator from Common Cause Rhode Island. “While that is no longer the case, inequity persists in how people of color and other marginalized communities are counted and represented in the Census.

“What strikes me most about the outreach effort in Rhode Island is the incredible labor and resilience of those very communities in rising to the challenge. Even in the middle of a global pandemic that forced constant changes to our strategy, our timeline, and even our priorities, the grantees and partner organizations went above and beyond what we'd expected to reach the hardest-to-count people

where they were, in their own languages, and in their own neighborhoods. The work on the ground in this campaign was carried by leaders of color. I am humbled and inspired by all that they achieved. There is no doubt in my mind that without their leadership, Rhode Island would face far lower prospects for an accurate population count.”

The RISCCC boots on the ground approach to the 2020 Census ensured success in getting everyone counted in 2020! ■



ANGEL OF EDGEWOOD: FEEDING THOSE IN NEED

Rashida Cundiff • Connecticut

The United States Census Bureau Partnership Program was designed so that trusted community voices – elected officials, nonprofit organizations, churches, healthcare agencies, and service-based organizations – could help spread the message that the 2020 Census is safe, easy, and important. In Connecticut’s capitol city of Hartford, those partners worked tirelessly to help the Census achieve a complete and accurate count.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, food insecurity has become a major problem in many areas of the country. Much like the virus, hunger has spread to many areas of the country. The impact was certainly felt in Hartford, where local partner Jendayi Scott-Miller rose to the challenge to serve her community. Food insecurities in her neighborhood inspired her to start cooking meals for the elderly. What started as a small operation, quickly evolved into a popular food distribution site.



Miller and her team cooked and prepared the food in the kitchen of her Edgewood Street home. The drive-up food pantry is located on her street and hundreds of cars drove through weekly to pick up food. The Hartford police department supported the food pantry by directing traffic and ensuring safety throughout the event.

Miller invited Census Response Representatives to conduct Mobile Questionnaire Assistance events at the food pantry so they could encourage members of the public to respond online. Census staff completed questionnaires and communicated the importance of the decennial count.

Hartford is a diverse community of multicultural families with a shared priority of being counted and was represented with pride by its community leaders. And sometimes, an angel appears to help those in need. ■

A PROFILE IN 2020 CENSUS LEADERSHIP: CONNECTICUT LT. GOVERNOR SUSAN BYSIEWICZ

Eva M Bunnell • Connecticut

At the conclusion of the successful collection of household responses for the 2020 Census, and as we enter into the data processing and dissemination phase, it seems like a good time to look back and reflect on the work of our partners here in Connecticut. These partners helped us ensure each person was counted “once, only once, and in the right place.” While that 2020 Census mantra contained at the end of the last sentence is often repeated, it is what happened to make it a reality that has become a story in 2020 Census leadership.

Obtaining an accurate count was indeed our mission in working together throughout every state in the nation. What has allowed for this decennial to meet that mission involved a tremendous amount of time, talent, and resourcefulness on the part of 2020 Census partners. Each one possessed key ingredients that added up to a successful count. Most importantly, it was what these key ingredients looked like in action throughout the days, weeks, and months leading up to the conclusion of the 2020 Census response data collection that truly had a positive impact.

Many of those partners were quick to act when a lead voice provided guidance and a footprint to success. Here in Connecticut, we were fortunate to have Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz as that voice and leader.

In the late days of 2018, after Governor Ned Lamont asked her to take the lead on the 2020 Census, the Lt. Governor began building the membership of the Connecticut State Complete Count Committee (SCCC). She asked Connecticut’s Secretary of the State, Denise Merrill, and State Representatives Patricia Wilson Pheanious (23rd district) and Christopher Rosario (128th district) to serve with her as SCCC Co-Chairs. From there, she and her staff began scheduling meetings and press conferences with local elected officials and other trusted voices in cities and towns across the state, asking each to form their own CCC to begin the process of engaging others to increase community awareness. The Lt. Governor’s immediate action allowed Connecticut to realize a statewide total of 149 CCCs – containing highly respected and trusted community voices in their memberships.

Bysiewicz recorded multiple 2020 Census Public Service Announcements (PSAs) with scores of different partners, including government officials, while encouraging local CCCs to do the same. In addition, the Lt. Governor brought trusted voices from around the state to participate in a Census Open Innovation Lab (COIL) she co-hosted last November with the Mohegan Tribe at Mohegan Sun, which is situated on the tribe's reservation in Uncasville. The collaborative creative work conducted during the daylong COIL produced an array of impressive content, such as memes, PSAs, and Grand Prize winning 2020 Census billboard. The work was shared by the COIL team on its website for use by other partners across the country.

When the Census went live in March, amid chaos of the COVID-19 outbreak, the Lt. Governor hosted 2020 Census zoom events with state, local elected officials, and CCC members. She initiated a Connecticut 2020 Census Week of Action with a different theme for each day of the week that also included a car parade throughout the state with parade routes through Hartford, Bridgeport, and Waterbury.

After the suspension of census field operations was lifted, she donned a mask and followed all necessary social distancing restrictions while crisscrossing the state, knocking on doors in low-responding neighborhoods with other local elected leaders, providing residents with vital facts and cool swag before asking them to complete their 2020 Census form. She worked with census partnership to arrange Mobile Questionnaire Assistance events throughout the state – wherever people gathered – particularly in cities that were a part of the Census Bureau's mayoral initiative.

In reflecting on her work here in Connecticut, the Lt. Governor left no stone unturned in doing all that was necessary to realize a complete count. Through her leadership, every trusted voice in our state



Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz speaks to local media members during a press conference on the topic of Census Data & Civil Rights at the Connecticut State Capitol on June 9. From left to right, State Representatives Edwin Vargas (6th District) and Geraldo Reyes (75th District) watch from a safe distance

was highlighted and supported in their efforts to motivate all residents to respond. Census partners across the state worked with Bysiewicz to help drive the Constitution State to a 70.8% response rate, surpassing its 2010 mark while also leading all other states in the New York Region.

It started with a defined goal and popular census mantra, but without the direction and trusted voice provided by Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz, the 2020 Census message may never have reached residents tucked away in every corner of this great state. ■

PARENT CHILD RELATIONSHIP ASSOCIATION SHOWS ENTHUSIASM IN SPREADING THE CENSUS MESSAGE

Tianqi Robyn Yang • New York

It is one of the hardest-to-count neighborhoods in New York City – the predominantly Fuzhou-speaking Chinese community near 8th Ave Station in Sunset Park, Brooklyn – but Parent Child Relationship Association (PCR) took the challenge with enthusiasm and made census promotion part of their daily routine.

Nicole Huang, the executive director of PCR and an immigrant from Fuzhou, knows the pain of this community. She hears people in this neighborhood complaining about lack of funding for infrastructure and overcrowded classrooms every day but regrets to see most are unaware that funding is largely determined by census data. She said she was one of the undercounted populations in the 2010 Census, years before she became a social activist and founded PCR, simply because no one told her what it was, and she does not want this to happen to anyone this year.



PCR Executive Director Nicole Huang speaks through a bullhorn to remind people about the importance of completing the 2020 Census.

“The decennial census is crucial to our democracy and fair representation in Congress,” said Huang. “PCR needs everyone to understand and know the importance of the Census and why we should all be counted. We are from the community and we are not leaving anything blank in the 2020 Census!”

Through intensive community engagement with Fuzhou-, Cantonese- and Mandarin-speaking volunteers, PCR made a huge difference this year amid the pandemic.

Ever since the Mobile Questionnaire Assistance (MQA) operation started, PCR has worked with the U.S. Census Bureau and hosted MQA events and inquiry tables every week on the busy sidewalk of 8th Avenue. Through a four-month voluntary work assignment, they helped more than 5000 households complete their census.

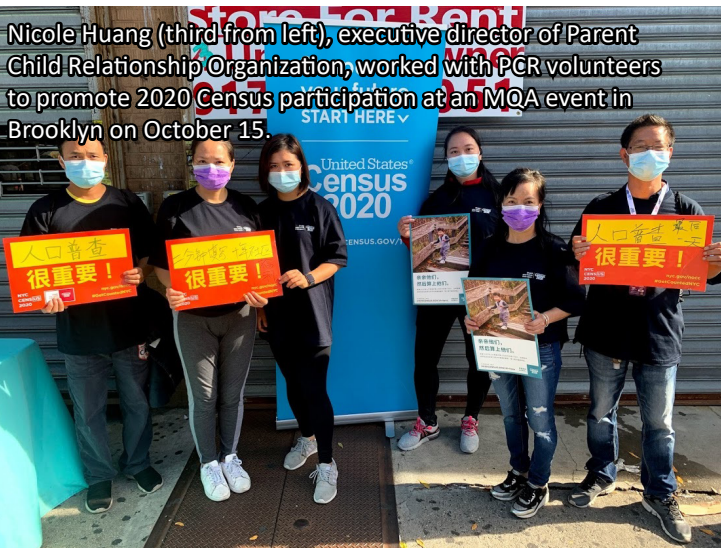


Winning artwork from a Parent Child Relationship Association contest earlier this year.



PCR worked closely with NYC Census 2020 and various Brooklyn organizations to co-host events promoting the message that Brooklyn residents need to complete the census.

The most remarkable event was the last day of census enumeration, where the bullhorn-carrying PCR volunteers actively engaged the public and collected more than 240 census forms within a few hours. Through their diligent and restless work, the self-response rate of Census Tract 106.01, in which



Nicole Huang (third from left), executive director of Parent Child Relationship Organization, worked with PCR volunteers to promote 2020 Census participation at an MQA event in Brooklyn on October 15.

the PCR table is stationed, increased from 27.7% in early July to 40.1% when census enumeration officially concluded.

Apart from hosting MQAs, PCR was also an excellent recruiting partner. Nicole, the director herself, also became a sworn-in census taker, among hundreds of others who applied through PCR's promotion. They held a Census-themed drawing contest in early April and co-hosted a caravan with other Chinese organizations in Brooklyn. They have also persuaded many small business owners to display 2020 Census posters and flyers in their store fronts. ■



Fuzhou, Cantonese, and Mandarin-speaking PRC volunteers distributed flyers and posters along 8th Avenue in Brooklyn.

SOMETIMES WORD OF MOUTH TRULY IS THE BEST FORM OF ADVERTISING

Nicole Yearwood • New York



Congressman Adriano Espaillat (speaking), District Leader Keith Lily (middle), Councilman Bill Perkins, and his wife, Korey Wise (behind the table) of the Exonerated 5, prepare for an MQA event with help from workers representing nonprofit organization Friends of Public School Harlem.

During the coronavirus pandemic, partners were concerned about conducting in-person outreach of any kind. There were a few who were determined to meet the needs of the community in a safe manner because communities needed resources now more than ever.

Friends of nonprofit Public School Harlem began hosting grocery and school supply giveaways in Central and East Harlem. Members of their team drove by a Census Mobile Questionnaire Assistance (MQA) event in August and suggested the Census Bureau create a similar one at their next school supply giveaway.

From that point forward, whether they were distributing food or bookbags, this partner welcomed Census Response Representatives (CRRs) to nine pop-up events – all located in low response census tracts. Many were held in and around New York City Housing Authority developments in partnership with local elected officials and Korey Wise of the Exonerated 5. Events were held outdoors and all safety protocols were followed.

The partner always announced the presence of census representatives and talked about the importance of completing the 2020 Census questionnaire. These events allowed the Census Bureau to maintain a constant presence in a historically hard-to-count community. ■



AN INTERVIEW WITH MAYOR SAYEGH: HOW THE CITY OF PATERSON LEVERAGED INCLUSIVE STRATEGIES DURING THE 2020 CENSUS

Barbara Brown • New Jersey

About Mayor Sayegh: Mayor Andre Sayegh assumed the office of Mayor of Paterson on July 1, 2018. One month later he established the State of New Jersey's first Complete Count Committee, comprised of more than 75 organizations. He is a census champion, who campaigned on the importance of counting every resident in Paterson. Mayor Sayegh focused his administration on

stabilizing property taxes, improving public safety, and driving economic development. He is determined to inspire a renaissance in the third largest city in New Jersey, driven in part through tourism and economic development around the Paterson Great Falls National Historic Park.

About the City of Paterson, NJ: The 2010 Census

counted 146,199 people; 44,329 households; and 32,715 families in Paterson. “The Silk City” is New Jersey’s third-largest city in the Garden State and possesses the third-highest population density in the United States, eclipsed only by New York City and San Francisco. The population is young and growing with 27.9% under the age of 18. Paterson is a richly diverse community with 52 distinct ethnic groups. Most prominent in the city are Hispanic or Latinos at 57%, including Puerto Rican (14%), Dominican (10%), Peruvian (5%), and Colombian (3%); 32% Black or African American; 35% White; 24% from other races, 5% from two or more races, including 3% Asian; 1% Native American; and .04% Pacific Islanders.

Interviewer: Thank you for sharing your high points and insights on what strategies helped Paterson complete its 2020 Census and what changes you would like to see in 2030...

Mayor Sayegh: The census count is critical to Paterson’s success. Whether people know it or not, this once-in-a-decade count impacts funding for education, healthcare, roads, and social programs. I ran on the importance of the Census. We knew that our community would need education about what the Census does. Through our partners, we were able to convey the importance of the Census to our people. The Decennial Census drives federal funding and therefore is a cornerstone to Paterson’s health, wealth, and happiness.

Interviewer: We know Paterson is incredibly diverse. What changes would you like to see in 2030?

Mayor Sayegh: Paterson is a community with many diverse people, cultures and needs. Paterson is widely considered the capital of the Peruvian diaspora in the U.S., and “Little Lima”, a Peruvian enclave in Downtown Paterson, the largest Peruvian enclave outside of South American home to approximately 10,000 Peruvian immigrants.

Paterson is also home to the third-largest Dominican American Community in the U.S., after New York City and Lawrence, Massachusetts. Remarkably, Paterson is home to the largest Turkish-American immigrant community in the U.S., with Turkish-American household centered in “Little Istanbul” – the second-largest Arab-American immigrant community after Dearborn, Michigan. Paterson has been nicknamed “Little Ramallah” with a neighborhood of the same name called home to 20,000 Arab-Americans also serving as the center of Paterson’s growing Palestinian population. Paterson is home to the largest Circassian immigrant community in the USA. The rapidly growing Bangladeshi American community is estimated to number 15,000 and is the largest outside of New York City. Between now and 2030, we need to see more multi-lingual outreach and more multi-lingual communications.

Interviewer: Which types of partners were the best for reaching people where they live and activating them to complete their Census. Faith-based? Non-Profits? Government? Neighborhood groups? Other?

Mayor Sayegh: All the above. The importance of the Census, and its extraordinary impact on Paterson’s ability to gain its fair share of federal funding, voter representation and voter redistricting shaped the early decision to form a CCC. Paterson and its host of government agencies, nonprofits and business leaders began the 2020 Census push with outreach to schools, libraries, healthcare entities, philanthropic partners, and storefronts, and ever-increasing home-based businesses.

Interviewer: The Decennial Census is always an extraordinarily undertaking, with a lot at stake: federal funding, voter representation, and voter redistricting. How did you communicate the importance to such a diverse population?

Mayor Sayegh: We built a census platform based

on fun, enthusiasm, and empowerment. We began with pep rallies for K-12 students, videos created in community to promote Paterson Counts and provide free giveaways, including t-shirts, wristbands, and more to remind residents about the 2020 Census. We reinforced the importance of completing the Census through outreach events tailored to each population. Paterson hosted Census Sundays with religious leaders to leverage trusted voices across the city, and to educate, inform and motivate Patersonians to self-respond. Paterson was one of the entrants to the Census Video Challenge, and it featured residents from multi-cultural backgrounds. We also featured our multi-culturalism in numerous parades and Census caravans throughout the city.

Interviewer: How did you like the Census tagline Shape Your Future? Did Paterson have its own messaging?

Mayor Sayegh: Our slogan is Paterson Counts. Thinking back, some of the simplest things were the most impactful. We began by uniting the community with free wristbands that said Paterson Counts. We also used The 10s: The Census takes less than 10 minutes; has fewer than 10 questions; and impacts 10 years of resources. When the pandemic came, we shifted and gave out complimentary face masks that said Paterson Counts. People love free stuff, but in the case of masks, it was also an expression of care from the City to the people. It said, "You are important. Every mask told the story: get counted, Paterson!"

Interviewer: What central issues/themes activated people to complete the Census the most?

Mayor Sayegh: We ran commercials in Spanish and English from January 2020 through to the last day of the Census on October 15. We were relentless with our full-court media blitz. The central theme to count every person was repeated in print, radio, television, and social media advertising.

"Paterson is very diverse. We have 145,000 persons, comprised of dozens of ethnicities, first-languages, and religions. We found it important and effective to adjust the message to each audience to motivate Patersonians to complete their census. The Census, like voting, is accomplished one-by-one. We focused on new school facilities when we spoke to parents, and on infrastructure needs when we spoke to taxpayers. For government audiences, we emphasized the impact on voter redistricting and the impact the census has on House of Representatives. In the past few Census's, New Jersey has lost representation. We want to stem that tide and turn it around, so every voice gets heard. We didn't try to push every message on every person; we framed the message based on that constituent's interests."

Interviewer: How important was multi-lingual outreach?

Mayor Sayegh: Reaching non-English speakers was also a strategic pillar. Paterson regularly ran print advertisements and articles – primarily in Spanish-language papers – and pushed census messages out on its own and its partners' social media platforms daily. Multi-language outreach made a difference. People only feel really comfortable in their first language. And people need to feel safe to complete the Census. Fears of deportation due to undocumented status impacted response. One way we pushed back against that fear was through inclusion. Our own Palestinian American Community Center advocated to include a box for Palestinian American on the 2030 Census. This is a growing population in Paterson, and that sense of advocacy helped to set the conversation to encourage Palestinian Americans to complete the 2020 Census this time.

Interviewer: What strategies worked best to reach hard-to-count populations?

Mayor Sayegh: The Paterson CCC kicked off its

efforts in 2019 with a focus on the hardest-to-count group of children under the age of five. One key strategy was to create a children's book. The book was funded by TAUB, a philanthropic nonprofit that also funds The Paterson Alliance. Relationships with nonprofits like TAUB helped to keep the census message fresh and exciting. It was printed prior to the pandemic in multiple languages including Arabic, Bangala, Turkish, Spanish, and English. Free books in first languages encourage children's reading while informing and educating the whole family. Our children's book was originally distributed through schools and as a free giveaway to library patrons.

Interviewer: How did Paterson pivot to deal with the pandemic?

Mayor Sayegh: Beginning in March, with the onset the pandemic, Paterson CCC infused every message to Patersonians with a call to complete the Census. I put out regular – even daily – robo calls to the public on the status of COVID-19 infections in the community. I punctuated every pandemic update call with the same call to action, saying, “Be safe, be strong, and be counted – please fill out your census form.” This constant commitment to complete the Census infiltrated everything we did at the city. We reached out to schools, houses of worship, workplaces and government agencies and activated the response to the 2020 Census through a comprehensive, relentless strategy of inclusion and outreach.”

Interviewer: How did the Census campaign shift as Covid-19 restricts limited public activity?

Mayor Sayegh: During the pandemic, our trusted partners were nimble and responsive. When the pandemic hit and statewide shutdowns ensued, we modified our outreach and shifted to social media. For example, we reimagined how to distribute our children's book, and quickly decided to give away free copies in heavily trafficked places and at small,

socially distanced gatherings. We placed free copies in places with heavy foot traffic, like City Hall, public-facing offices of tax and water departments, and Houses of Worship.

Interviewer: Besides the pandemic, what were the biggest challenges or obstacles to getting out the count in Paterson?

Mayor Sayegh: Besides the pandemic, which was enormously disruptive, the biggest challenge to getting out the count was apathy. Since the Decennial Census is only conducted every 10 years, the hurdle of building awareness and respect for the Census is steep. People are not accustomed to being counted and do not distinguish the Census from other government requests for information or understand its vital role in day-to-day life in Paterson.

Interviewer: What key points do you advise for the 2030 Census?

Mayor Sayegh: One of the biggest takeaways for the City of Paterson is to raise awareness even earlier. This is very important. Many communities began the Census push one year out. We, in Paterson, began two years earlier. It would not be unreasonable to begin the Census push five years ahead, or for that matter, to offer continuous learning as an incorporated part of Paterson's public and private school curriculum. Census education could be and should be ongoing.”

Interviewer: During the Census, you met with a lot of people. This must have helped to foster conversation, to open doors to aiding people in need, and to shine a light on organizations in Paterson that are doing great work. What was the best thing to come out of the Census 2020 outreach?

Mayor Sayegh: The dawning awareness that irrespective of ethnic background or racial makeup

– the Decennial Census affects all of us equally. We all must be counted. I saw the impact on communities through the work with the Palestinian American Organization, the NAACP, Spanish nonprofits and our many Houses of Worship. We need to make the Census something easy to rally around, and we need to focus on the next generation. I think about children who are in kindergarten today, and know that by the next Census, they will be in high school. What kind of resources will they receive? The answer is that we all must think about the future. The Paterson Complete Count Committee includes 75 partners in sports and recreation, from ethnic, religious, social, and academic institutions. We need to keep that passion alive and growing in Paterson and nurture these organizations as they continue the amazing work that they do in our city.”

Interviewer: What is one thing you would do differently in the next Census?

Mayor Sayegh: No pandemic! ■

DR. CHARLET LEADS HOLISTIC MINISTRY, PREACHES SOCIAL JUSTICE

Abdalla F. Hassan • New York

Dr. Marlvig P. Charlet, senior pastor at Shiloh Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, now enjoying his 24th year in ministry, has always felt that ministry was his calling.

Coming from humble beginnings, Dr. Charlet spent his childhood in Brooklyn and Long Island before earning a bachelor’s degree in theology at Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama. He returned to pastor at churches in Brooklyn and Long Island but left again to continue his education at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, where he earned a master’s degree in divinity, prior to achieving a doctorate in leadership and preaching from the United Methodist Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio.



Dr. Marlvig P. Charlet (second from right), senior pastor at Shiloh Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, stands with Census Response Representatives (from left to right) May Joseph, Mislande Saint Louis II, and Eliezer Clairvil, and Census Senior Partnership Specialist Abdalla Hassan during a recent Mobile Questionnaire Assistance event.

Although he was a happy person, something was missing from his theological training. “To connect with people, I needed a social upgrade,” Dr. Charlet believed. So, he went back to school for a second master’s degree in clinical social work from Hunter College’s Silberman School of Social Work.

“As you work with people, it’s really about being sociable, understanding their needs, and being able to connect with them,” he said. “Social justice is so important to me. It is good to preach to people but you’ve got to understand them and help them in

their situation. That has taken me into social work. I've merged social work with religion and brought the two together because you really cannot connect with people unless you understand their spiritual connection."

It is what Dr. Charlet calls his holistic approach to faith and ministry.

"Ministry for me is irrelevant unless you're dealing with the issues that the people are going through," he said. "That's social rights, civil rights, and social justice."

Alongside his wife, Fayola Charlet, an attorney, he is an advocate for those rights. The couple is committed to aiding those who are marginalized.

"It is social, spiritual, emotional. It's more than praying, it's also doing," he added.

The Shiloh Seventh-Day Adventist Church hosts a food pantry every Thursday, ensuring that community members have the food security they need to thrive. Census Response Representatives assisted households in completing the 2020 Census during food distributions and a back-to-school giveaway.

A champion of the 2020 Census, Dr. Charlet invited a census representative to speak to his congregation during morning and evening worship services held via video conferencing.

"The church was the voice of the nation during the civil rights movement," says Dr. Charlet. "That's where people came together. They organized, they strategized, they mobilized. I see the church as the voice of the people to the community."

Dr. Charlet invites elected officials and community leaders to come on his platform, the Pastor's Hour, and connects parishioners with services. "I say to community members that you cannot be part of the

solution if you don't have a seat around the table. If you really want to change the system you've got to be part of the conversation and being part of the conversation is being involved."

And that includes participation in the 2020 Census.

"Sometimes people can be afraid," he said. "They can feel like they've done this over and over again and nothing has happened. But it is the importance of letting them know your voice does count."

Still, Dr. Charlet sees that faith leaders have more to do in mobilizing and energizing communities.

"We could do a bit more work on partnering with the different houses of worship," said Dr. Chalet. "One of the ways that helped us to really push the Census was that I have members of my church who sit on an interfaith advisory board."

It was during one of those meetings that the topic of the 2020 Census came up.

"This is something that is fundamentally important in North Crown Heights. We want to partner and be part of the solution," he said.

The challenges of this year's Census are not lost on Dr. Charlet.

"Brooklyn is known as the borough of churches. In every neighborhood, on every block there is a church. I know that most of my colleagues are very much involved in ministry and civically engaged in community activism."

And how about the pandemic? Was it a speedbump to census progress?

"If you are not focused, the Census could be drowned out," said Dr. Charlet. "Keep your eyes on the prize." ■

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