



Massachusetts Census Equity Fund

2020 FINAL REPORT



masscensusequity | masscensusequity.org

The decennial census is a nonpartisan exercise and a cornerstone of our democracy. Every 10 years, the U.S. Constitution requires that all residents, including non-citizens and undocumented immigrants, be counted through a nationwide census. Collecting accurate census data is an essential part in determining a fair allocation of federal funds and political representation at the federal, state, and local levels. The 2020 Census has a wide-ranging and long-term impact on the future of our Commonwealth.

Every decennial census has unusual features, but the 2020 Census was unsurpassed for pressure: it was undertaken during the dual pressures of a politically-charged national environment and a global health crisis.

Knowing the traditional difficulties of getting an accurate census count, the Massachusetts Census Equity Fund (“MCEF”) began its journey in the summer of 2018, convening through 2020. The work included bringing together foundations, nonprofits, community leaders, U.S. Census representatives as well as local, state, and federal officials. MCEF’s goal was to allocate grants statewide to increase participation in the 2020 Census specifically in communities that were at significant risk of being undercounted.

Ensuring an accurate count through overwhelming adversity

MCEF's philanthropic partners, staff, technical consultants, and, most important of all, the 85 grantee organizations did a remarkable job of carrying on with census education and outreach through the realities of the pandemic and to the constantly shifting messages from Washington DC. Grantees conducted Census outreach in whatever ways they could, and many did so alongside addressing community emergency needs. They did this with imagination and truly inspiring dedication.



Collaboration and Partnership

By working together with Massachusetts Secretary of State's Complete Count Committee, MassCounts, the state's grassroots coalition of organizations, and the regional office of the US Census Bureau, MCEF stayed informed of all aspects of the census. Utilizing these relationships MCEF connected grantees to the most up to date resources that were available to them and all the changes/challenges that were occurring daily.

Grantee activities were the most important contributors to the MCEF initiative. MCEF's Consultant and partners were also key to the program's success. These participants were indispensable in countless ways. They secured the engagement of funders, selected grantees, shared vital information, and facilitated collaborations. They extended encouragement and understanding when there appeared to be no light at the end of the tunnel, and nudged along organizations when they were overwhelmed by the challenges.

It is important to note that the MCEF funders, under the leadership of Access Strategies Fund, played direct and active roles in guiding this initiative and were active in planning the gatherings. The funders'

group stayed distant from day-to-day management, but remained engaged in the achievements of the staff and grantees.

MCEF Grantees overwhelmingly shared that being a part of the MCEF circle helped their census work by providing multiple forms of support and resources. As grantees struggled to navigate operations during the pandemic, they relied on help that was professional, friendly, timely and flexible.

Notably, for many organizations the funds received from the MCEF were useful in helping them secure hard-to-raise additional resources. Only a few were able to access state funds through the Secretary of State's office. Over half of the MCEF grantees requested funds from the state, but only a few were able to secure that funding. The MCEF grantee groups advocated for the Secretary of State to spend all of the resources allocated to support the 2020 Census effort. These community groups and the MCEF steering committee offered support for allocating the resources, but the Secretary of State's office was not responsive.

Communications

The federal government created barriers and instituted limitations that made an accurate census count challenging. A few grantee organizations noted that the Census Bureau was difficult to coordinate efforts with and that their advertised resources were inadequate. Washington's messages were troubling and shifting, creating extra work in crafting clear local communication.

Communication and information sharing were essential to offering guidance to grantees and dealing with mountains of uncertainty. MCEF was attuned to what was going on at the local, state, and federal levels through their associations with groups and individuals

well-placed in these sectors. In a period of shifting information and continuing uncertainty, Massachusetts non-profits and their constituents were well-served by MCEF.

Grantees noted how they were grateful for the willingness of organizations like the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights to share knowledge. This sharing was a vital manifestation of the collaborative approach upon which the initiative was in part intentionally constructed.

Convenings

MCEF hosted two convenings in Framingham and a virtual gathering once pandemic restrictions began. These trainings received high praise from grantees who identified the value of the convenings in practical ways. They appreciated the sharing of information about the 2020 Census, website, evaluation, and introduction to fellow grantees, and valued opportunities to network and strategize with like-minded organizations. A sense of camaraderie and purpose was nurtured at these meetings which furthered the model of collaborative structures and joint action.

The pandemic magnified the challenges of census outreach. Grantees were also supported by MCEF in building their infrastructure for collaborations among grassroots organizations, and individual organizations themselves used the resources from MCEF and other partners in the ecosystem to build out their own infrastructure, training, staffing, and more. Grantees reported expanding their outreach areas, forming new networks and partnerships, and increasing their technological capacities. Many continue to use what was built from the Census work in additional civic engagement efforts, like redistricting.



Speaker at Spring 2019 Convening

Overview

The pandemic forced grantees to rapidly change their plans for census outreach and assistance. Overall, the grantees did a remarkable job of carrying on with outreach and adapted quickly to the realities of the pandemic. Most conducted Census-related activities in whatever ways they could, and many did so concurrently as they addressed clients' emergency needs.

The grantees were an extremely diverse group of 85 non-profit organizations around the state including direct service providers, organizations, community action agencies, community development corporations, advocacy groups, legal aid organizations,

regional planning agencies, and religious networking groups. They varied greatly in size, both in terms of staffing and constituents. They included local, regional and statewide organizations that served low-income people, immigrants, refugees, children, elderly, LGBTQ persons, disabled, homeless, English limited speakers, rural, and other hard-to-count populations. Grantees conducted outreach in numerous languages, including Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Khmer, Vietnamese, Russian, Arabic, Kiswahili, Haitian Creole, Cape Verdean Creole, and K'iche, and by a vast array of innovative and unforeseen methods.



Challenges & Responses

Overwhelmingly the biggest challenges were effects of the pandemic. Grantees had to restrict or abandon in-person outreach, which is always extremely important in reaching hard-to-count populations.

In addition, people were preoccupied with issues such as unemployment, paying for rent and food, and illness or death. Distrust of the federal government and of strangers were overarching themes as well. There was continuing confusion around the census including how to answer and what it is for.

The digital divide made it difficult to reach clients and for clients to use computers and/or navigate the internet to complete their census form.

Grantees often had to completely change their outreach plans due to the pandemic, particularly during the early months of spring 2020. The major switch was from in-person outreach to digital and social media, and phone. Non-English language proficient residents also required additional attention.

As a response, many of Census efforts were paired with pandemic related aid, usually at food distribution sites and or at COVID-19 testing sites. Grantees were able to help clients deal with immediate survival needs, and include a census message in addition. Although most organizations were able to succeed, a few experienced staff loss or health preoccupation, and had to curtail their census-related work.



Public Concerns

Grantees reported that the most common concerns raised by the public were about privacy issues. These included general concerns about confidentiality and how the information is utilized as well as specific concerns about risks for undocumented people and whether, for example, landlords could find out how many people were living in a household.

*“Without **people’s trust** we wouldn’t be able to **break myths** about Census data being used against people... **clients trusted us** to provide them with accurate and honest information.”*

Clearly given the climate of mistrust, trusted colleagues from community organizations played critical roles in attempting to calm nerves and reassure concerned residents.

The second most common concern were about the census itself including how to respond to the questionnaire, especially in the new online environment. There was also considerable confusion about the difference between the city and federal census.

Do you complete the Census?

Complete the Census to shape the future our community

Responses to the 2020 Census will shape hundreds of billions of dollars in federal funding are distributed to our community annually spent on local economic recovery, schools, hospitals, roads, public works, affordable housing, health care etc.

Responding to the Census

- Online: <https://my2020census.gov>
- By phone: 844-330-2020

If you have any questions, please contact

- Quincy Asian Resources 617-472-2200
- Asian Community Development Corporation 857-449-7131

The census enumerator will start to knock on your door on August 11th if you don't complete the census.

Quincy Asian Resources Inc + Asian Community Development Corporation

Meaningful collaborations and enhanced networks

What We Accomplished

Many grantees indicated that they were satisfied or pleased with their census outreach despite the challenges they faced. We applaud their pride in a job well-done and concur with their positive assessment.

“Because of our Census work [we] were able to formalize relationships with sister organizations in Chelsea and Everett. We anticipate maintaining these organizational relationships beyond the census.”

– Women Encouraging Empowerment and Revere Youth in Action, Revere



50%

Grantees formed new partnerships due to their Census work; half were able to strengthen existing partnerships.

The design of the collaborative framework for the MCEF had the objective in part of nurturing relationships among partners to further the census work and perhaps useful cooperation on other areas of mutual concern. Clearly this was an outcome that was achieved for many organizations involved in this initiative and with positive prospects for ongoing or future collaborations.



\$1.5M

Raised

\$1M

Awarded to the community



Agencia Alpha

CENSUS 2020

Por Liliane Costa

A importância dos imigrantes responderem o CENSUS 2020

Em relação às escolas locais, o resultado do CENSUS também ajuda a determinar quanto de dinheiro será destinado para o Programa Americano de Saúde e Serviços Humanos - que prevê educação pré-escolar, saúde, nutrição e serviços para crianças e famílias de baixa renda. Além disso, determina o investimento financeiro para professores e para educação especial.

Os Estados Unidos contabilizam a população do país de 10 em 10 anos através do CENSUS. O resultado do CENSUS ajuda a determinar quantos bilhões de dólares em fundo de investimento serão remanejados para cada estado e comunidade a cada ano nos próximos 10 anos. O resultado tam-

ém determina quantas cadeiras no Congresso cada estado tem direito. O CENSUS influencia a comunidade em muitos aspectos. Alguns exemplos são os lanches escolares, os planos para obras em estradas, financiamento para ônibus e outros meios de transporte público, assistência médica e hospitalar, segurança, o suporte para os bombeiros e famílias em necessidade. O resultado do CENSUS afeta a comunidade que vivemos todos os dias.

Em relação às escolas locais, o resultado do CENSUS também ajuda a determinar quanto de dinheiro será destinado para o Programa Americano de Saúde e Serviços Humanos - que prevê educação pré-escolar, saúde, nutrição e serviços para crianças e famílias de baixa renda. Além disso, determina o investimento financeiro para professores e para educação especial.

A lista de benefícios continua, incluindo programas de suporte para áreas rurais, prevenção de abuso infantil e assistência à moradia para idosos.

O BRACE (Brazilian American Center) está trabalhando para

ter certeza que toda comunidade imigrante de Framingham e região possa ser contada no CENSUS 2020.

O trabalho mais difícil consiste em convencer as pessoas que elas precisam responder o CENSUS apesar do status migratório no país. Alguns dos imigrantes que ainda não têm sua situação regular no país ficam com medo de se expor. O BRACE está lutando ao lado do CENSUS para que os imigrantes possam ser contados em todas as cidades do estado.

O papel do BRACE é educar, informar e ajudar a comunidade imigrante a entender o que é o CENSUS, para que sirva e a importância de cada um responder às perguntas do CENSUS 2020.

Nós temos disponível uma pessoa treinada, com um computador disponível, para orientar os imigrantes nas mesas de março e abril para ajudar. Todos os que necessitam de auxílio para responder às questões do CENSUS poderão comparecer ao BRACE. Esperamos que todas as pessoas sejam contadas no CENSUS 2020, para que os recursos enviados para cada cidade sejam consistentes com o número de habitantes."

O

34 | Fevereiro de 2020

www.revistasesta.com

Brazilian American Center INC.

Programa Opinião de Mulher

Pela Rádio REDE ABR
650 AM
Participe pelo WhatsApp + 1 (508) 502 8399

Amanhã, 27/1:
DIREITO IMIGRATÓRIO com Advogada Dra. Rafaela Garreta
e
CENSO 2020 com a Diretora do BRACE Liliane Costa
11-12:00am

Bate-papo Inteligente e Informação

Aritude REDE ABR

Brazilian American Center INC.

IMPERDÍVEL
Bate-papo ao vivo

DRIVING FAMILIES FORWARD

United States Census 2020

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Diretora Executiva do Centro de Trabalhador Brasileiro e Presidente do Conselho

DAN SENA
Deputado Estadual do Distrito 37th Middlesex de Massachusetts e Representante

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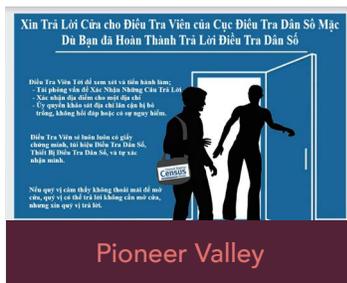
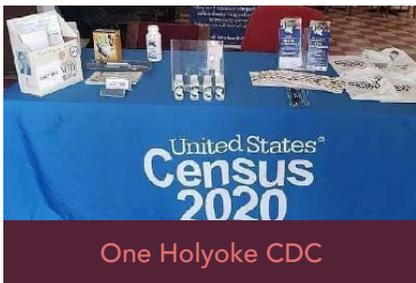
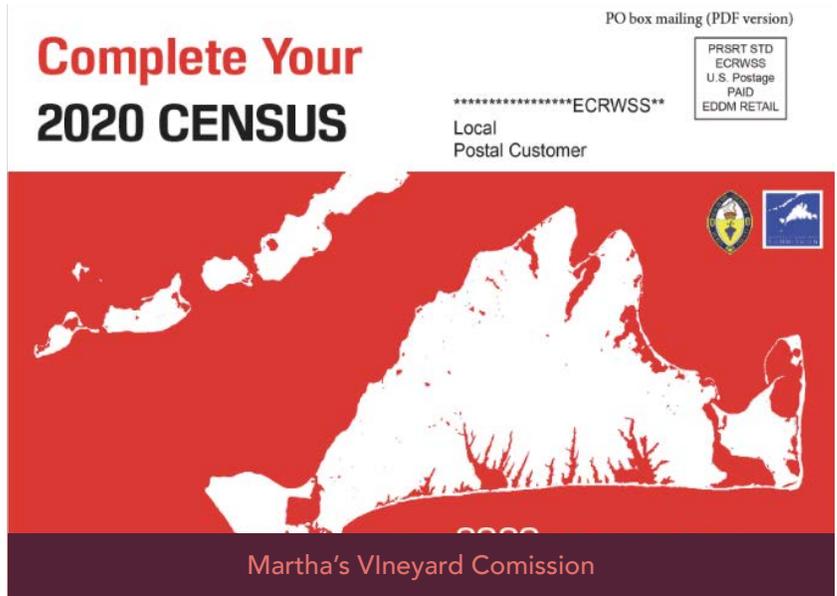
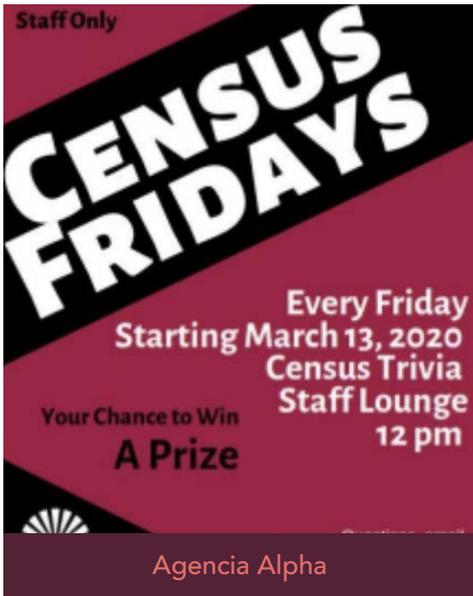
Brazilian Works Center



Castle Square Tenant Org.



Castle Square Tenant Org.



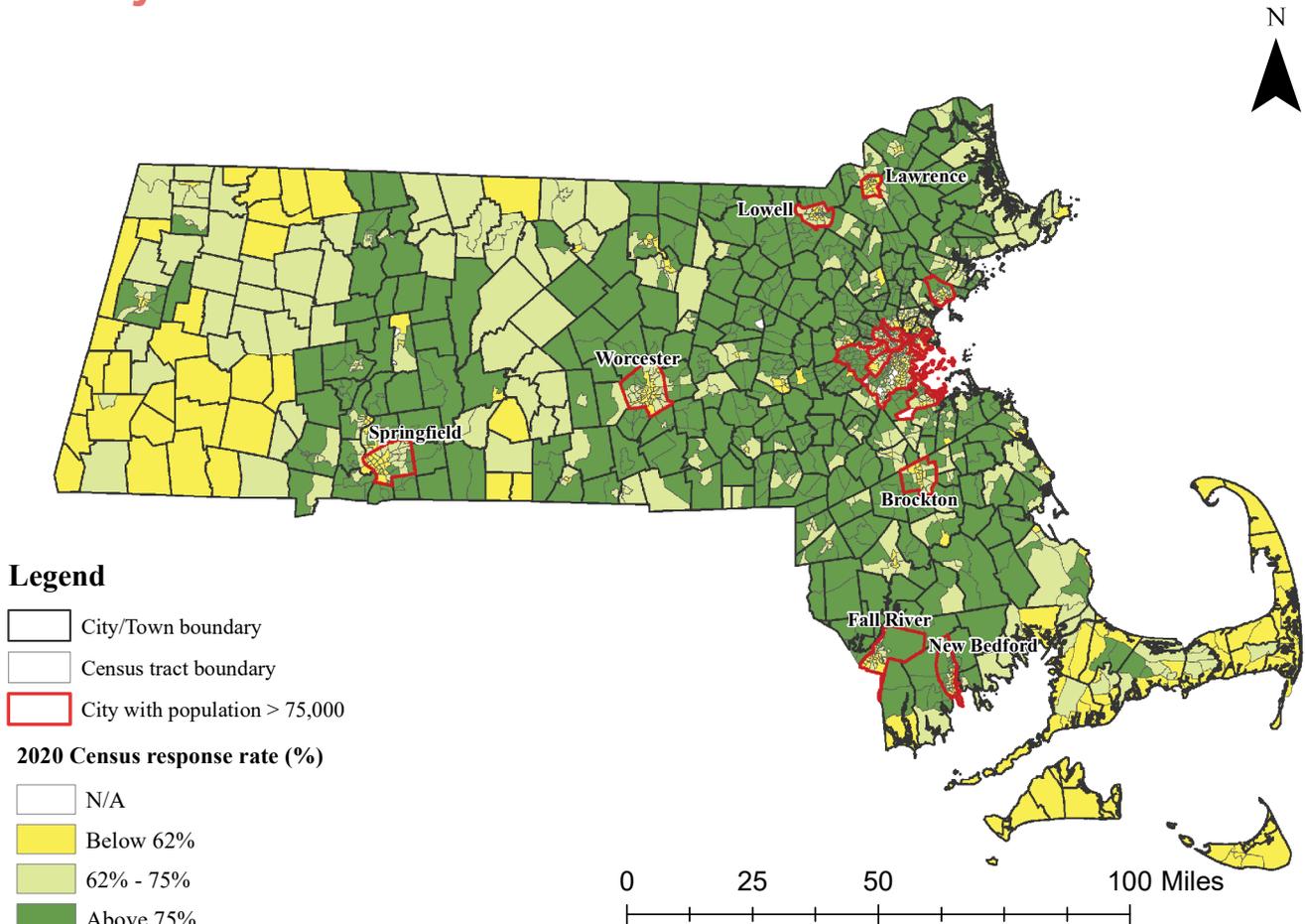
Self-Response Rates

The federal extension to respond to the census ended by October 16th, and the overall self-response rate for the U.S. slightly increased from 66.5% in 2010 to 67% in 2020.

The response rate for the state's seven largest cities, however, all declined, and the rates for the three largest cities, Boston, Worcester and Springfield all declined by more than 8%.

The change in response rates from 2010 to 2020 for municipalities as well as for census tracts varied widely. There are a myriad of factors to consider when comparing response rates from 2010 to 2020, including changing demographics, and effects of the pandemic that are beyond the scope of this report.

2020 U.S Census Self Response Rates by Tract for MA



* 21 census tracts have no census response rate.
Decimals rounded to the nearest digit.

Success in Quincy

Despite the substantial challenges confronting census enumeration for the 2020 Census, Quincy improved its overall census response rate by 2.1% from 68.1% in 2010 to 69.5% in 2020. Looking at the 23 Census tracts in Quincy, an impressive 17 increased their response rates, and 13 of those improved by 5% or more.

The MCEF grantees in Quincy included Quincy Asian Resources, Inc., Quincy Community Action Programs, Vietnamese American Initiative for Development, Inc., and Council on American-Islamic Relations. With their collaborative focus on improving the count among immigrants and communities of color, we believe that these populations will be well-represented in the final Census numbers.

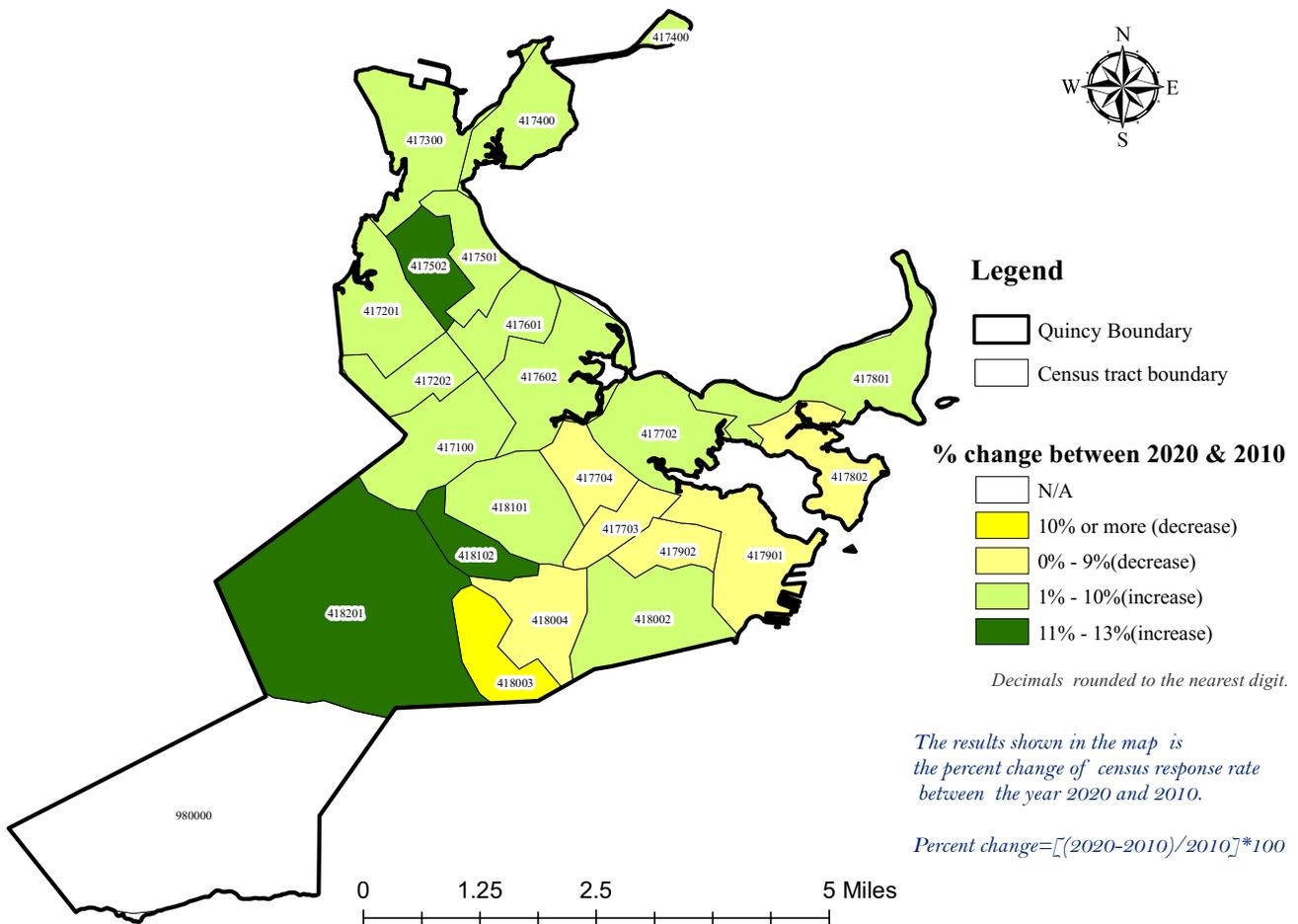
Did you complete the 2020 Census?

THE CENSUS TAKERS ARE COMING TO VISIT YOU



Federal Census Takers begin interviewing households that have yet to respond to the 2020 Census. They will fill out their questionnaires in person.

Flier created by our Quincy grantees



Created by Sajani Kandel; Phd Student, School for the Environment, UMass Boston.

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Recommendations & Learnings

MCEF proved to be an outstanding and effective mechanism to facilitate efforts to improve responses from hard to count constituents in Massachusetts. We learned the following:

1 The role of a statewide convener is critical. Through facilitation, networking, information and tool sharing, and team building convenings are necessary and widely popular.

2 Funding established organizations with grassroots constituencies whose Census work builds upon their other work is very effective. Successful outreach to hard to count communities relies heavily on trust and relationships. Organizations active with specific communities are the most trusted and qualified to conduct Census education and outreach.

3 Advocacy and Collaboration with government entities is important. Both the legislative and executive branches in state government need to be engaged in this process for education and to ensure resources are made available to communities. MCEF might carefully explore the possibility of including a representative from the legislature and/or the Secretary of State's office to the Working Group in 2030.

4 Establishing close working relationships with local Census personnel is important, for instance, Community Partnership Specialists.

A veteran community organizer described MCEF as "the best funders' collaborative" she has ever worked with. Another well regarded observer considered MCEF to be "a national model."

5 Recognize that one cannot begin preparation for the next decennial Census too soon. This applies to all endeavors critical to success of initiatives – planning, advocacy, training, education, fundraising, etc.

6 Facilitate shared drive usage for census information and grantee products, particularly materials in non-English languages.

7 The MCEF experience demonstrates that hiring a staff person dedicated to coordinating and implementing the Census work is essential. The coordinator must minimally be assisted by technical assistants hired in needed domains such as outreach, education, trainings advocacy, etc. Support staff should be added when a particular need may arise, for example, a specialist in internet technology.

A special thank you to all who made
this a successful initiative.

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The Klarman Family Foundation

The Barr Foundation

The Beveridge Foundation

MetroWest Health Foundation

Foundation for MetroWest

The Sudbury Foundation

Solidago Foundation

Community Foundation of
Western Massachusetts

Schott Foundation/
Opportunity Action

The Parker Foundation

Frank Reed & Margaret Jane Peters
Memorial Fund

Eastern Bank

Blue Cross Blue Shield

Grantees

African Television Network
of New England
Boston

Agencia Alpha
Boston

Asian Community
Development Corporation
Boston and Malden

BayPath Elder Services
Marlborough

Berkshire Immigrant Center
Pittsfield

Boston Alliance of LGBTQ+ Youth
Boston and Statewide

Boston Senior Home Care
Boston

Brazilian American Center
Framingham

Brazilian Women's Group
Brighton

Brazilian Worker Center
Boston

Brockton Interfaith Council
Brockton

Cambodian American
Rescue Organization
Fall River

Cambodian Mutual
Assistance Association
Lowell

Cape Verdean Association
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Assistance Center
Brockton

Cape Verdean Community UNIDO
Dorchester

Castle Square Tenants Organization
Boston

Center for New Americans
Northampton

Central Mass Agency on Aging
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Centro Comunitario
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New Bedford

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Worcester

Chelsea Collaborative
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Chinese Progressive Association
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City Life/Vida Urbana
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City Mission
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Coalition for a Better Acre
Lowell

Coalition for Social Justice
Boston and Statewide

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Nantucket

Council on American-Islamic
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Dorchester Bay Economic
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Dudley Street
Neighborhood Initiative
Roxbury

East Boston Ecumenical
Community Council
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Edwards Church, United
Church of Christ
Framingham

Elder Services of the
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Lawrence

Fenway Community Health Center
Boston

Friendly House, Inc.
Worcester

Groundwork Lawrence
Lawrence

Harvard Street
Neighborhood Health Center
Dorchester

Immigrants' Assistance Center
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Jamaica Plain Neighborhood
Development Corporation
Jamaica Plain

La Comunidad
Everett

Lawrence CommunityWorks, Inc.
Lawrence

Lawyers for Civil Rights
Boston

Lowell Association for the Blind
Lowell

Lowell Community Health Center
Lowell

Lynn Economic Opportunity, Inc.
Lynn

Madison Park Development Corp.
Roxbury

Martha's Vineyard
Planning Commission
Martha's Vineyard

Massachusetts Alliance of
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Cambridge

Massachusetts Coalition
for the Homeless
Boston

Massachusetts Council
of Churches
Boston

Massachusetts Housing
and Shelter Alliance
Boston

Massachusetts Immigrant &
Refugee Advocacy Coalition
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Metropolitan Area Planning Council
Brockton

Metrowest Legal Services
Framingham

Neighbor to Neighbor
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Neighbors United for a
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New England United 4 Justice
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New North Citizens' Council, Inc.
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North American Indian
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Jamaica Plain

North Shore Community
Development Corporation
Salem

OneHolyoke Community
Development Corporation
Holyoke

Our Space Our Place
Boston

People Acting in
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Pioneer Valley Regional
Ventures Center
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Roxbury

South Middlesex
Opportunity Council, Inc.
Framingham

Southeast Asian Coalition
of Massachusetts
Leominster

Spanish American Center
Boston

Stavros Center for
Independent Living
Amherst

United Way of North
Central Massachusetts
Fitchburg

Valley Opportunity Council
Holyoke and Chicopee

Vietnamese American Initiative
for Development, Inc.
Dorchester

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Worcester Interfaith
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Special thanks for data reporting, content editing, and design:

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