GREAT LAKES BAY REGION

Census 2020 Impact Report
The Great Lakes Bay Regional Census Hub had a big goal: a fair, complete, and accurate count in the 2020 Census. More than this, we sought to make sure that populations that are usually undercounted in Census efforts were not only counted but driven the efforts locally.

The Great Lakes Bay Regional Census Hub put a special focus on working with, and giving a voice to, the hardest-to-count and most disenfranchised populations in the region, and the positive impact of our efforts will be felt for the next 10 years. Because of the tireless work of our local grantees and partners, the Great Lakes Bay Region assured funding for vital community programs as well as political voice in both Lansing and Washington, D.C.

I am so proud of the level of collaboration, teamwork and outreach that has been accomplished over the past two years of this project, with such a diverse group of nonprofits, local governments, businesses, schools and individuals not just being involved but leading the charge. My hope is that we set the standard for collaboration and community impact, and that this Census Hub model is replicated and utilized to create impact for many years.

A huge thank you goes out to everyone who contributed time toward our big goals, whether it was making sure their family members were counted, holding contests on Facebook, calling clients and residents to help them fill out the Census, hosting Census events, or running ads encouraging community participation. This work would not be possible without all of our amazing community partners! I am so proud of what we’ve accomplished together!

Sincerely,

Chloe Updegraff,
Great Lakes Bay Regional Census Hub Coordinator

When our community foundations were first approached about a nonprofit focus on the 2020 Census, we knew our leadership and involvement would be critical for the wellbeing of our communities. While the Census is a federal government endeavor, this Census had some particular challenges and barriers to success that made involvement from philanthropy all the more important.

For each person not counted, Michigan would lose out on $1,800 of annual federal funding each year. Without government funding, communities would turn to philanthropy and nonprofits to fill the void, and our local nonprofits do not have the capacity to fill funding gaps for large federal and state programs that community members depend on. While the primary purpose of the campaign was to mobilize nonprofits in support of a complete and accurate 2020 Census, the secondary purpose of the campaign was to build the capacity of nonprofits to address future threats to communities’ health and wellbeing. The campaign was very much in line with our efforts to bring positive change and transformation to our communities.

To engage our communities and work toward an accurate Census count, our community foundations worked with a diverse group of stakeholders to conduct outreach in each individual county as well as throughout the region. We awarded Census Hub grants to multiple community partners serving hard-to-count populations, and saw a high level of success in this collaborative effort. The regional approach we took as a Census Hub is something that we hope can be replicated with other endeavors in the Great Lakes Bay region. Working together toward a common goal and for the benefit of our local communities is the right thing to do, and the collaboration that was at the center of our efforts will lead to stronger communities for years to come.

Sincerely,

Renee Johnston
President and CEO, Saginaw Community Foundation

Diane Feng
President and CEO, Bay Area Community Foundation

Sharon Mortensen
President and CEO, Midland Area Community Foundation

Amanda Schafer
President and CEO, Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation
From March 2019 to October 2020, volunteers, partners, local government, nonprofit organizations and countless others helped ensure the region got an accurate count in the 2020 Census – and their efforts paid off. The initiative was driven by the Great Lakes Bay Regional Census Hub, and supported by the Midland, Saginaw, Bay and Mt. Pleasant Area community foundations. The Great Lakes Bay Regional Alliance, located in Freeland, housed the Census Hub.

**Great Lakes Bay Region**

- **Michigan**
  - Michigan ranked 8th in the nation for self-response rate
  - Michigan had a 71.3% self-response rate (compared to 67% national) – This accounted for 3.4 million households (an increase from 67.7% in 2010)

- **Great Lakes Bay Region**
  - was the top area for engagement in the state
  - Gained approximately $1,800 for every counted person per year
  - Hosted 169 Census events

- **Michigan**
  - 430,352 households given collateral materials
  - 35,159 people attended Census events
  - 169 Census events

**Michigan ranked 3rd best in the nation for largest gain in state-wide response from the 2010 Census (moved from 17th to 8th place)**

**Michigan had a 71.3% self-response rate (compared to 67% national)** – This accounted for 3.4 million households (an increase from 67.7% in 2010)

**MIDLAND COUNTY**

- 79.3% self-response (up from 75.9% in 2010)
- Invested $150,000 in Census efforts

**BAY COUNTY**

- 78.6% self-response (up from 76.2% in 2010)
- Invested $30,000 in Census efforts

**SAGINAW COUNTY**

- 74.2% self-response (up from 72.2% in 2010)
- Invested $150,000 in Census efforts

**ISABELLA COUNTY**

- 66.1% self-response
- Invested $15,000 in Census efforts

The self-response rate is the percentage of households that responded to the Census on their own. It does not equate to the total responses.
Saginaw Transit Authority and Regional Services (STARS) coordinated with the City of Saginaw to host three events in the fall where residents could take the Census, enjoy a live DJ and food from local food trucks and even register to vote. Before the events, 4,000 Saginaw County households hadn’t been counted. After, only 500 remained. STARS is a public transportation system that primarily serves people with mobility challenges, older adults and people with disabilities. Many STARS riders benefit from the programs that Census dollars fund, which is why STARS helped Saginaw households get counted.

Great Lakes Bay Hispanic Leadership Institute counted because everyone matters.

To say that the Great Lakes Bay Hispanic Leadership Institute in the Great Lakes Bay Region was busy during the Census is an understatement. Understanding the importance of getting the Hispanic population counted, representatives attended church fish fries and food distribution events and stood outside popular Latino stores educating people about the Census and providing iPads for people to take the Census right there. When the pandemic hit, they quickly pivoted to digital promotion with Facebook Live videos and chats, virtual townhalls, videos, an informational webpage, radio ads and online contests.

“Our collaborations with many local organizations made the outreach efforts possible. We are certain that if we hadn’t utilized the Census Hub resources, there would be a gap in the Hispanic count in our region,” said Monica Reyes, Executive Director, Great Lakes Bay Hispanic Leadership Institute.

The Hispanic Leadership Institute estimates that its efforts made more than 408,000 connections through in-person outreach, print publications and virtual content. It was also able to debunk myths surrounding the Census, which encouraged people to participate.

STARS counted because its riders matter.

The events motivated 3,500 households to take the Census (45 individuals even took the Census at the events!) - this equates to $10.5 million of investment in the community over the next 10 years! To top it off, dozens of citizens received absentee voter information, and a few even registered to vote so they could participate in the November elections.

*Estimates predict that in the City of Saginaw, each person who is counted results in approximately $3,000 in funding every year.*
In the past, children under the age of 5 have been the most undercounted age group in the Census in Michigan. When children aren't counted, it costs their communities. To share the importance of counting children, Bay-Arenac Great Start Collaborative, a coordinated system of community resources and support for families with young children, hosted a Family Winter Fun Fest/Census 2020 Our Kids Count! community outreach event. More than 500 families and 2,000 individuals participated in an afternoon of fun, food, entertainment and education thanks to participation from 42 local vendors.

The Bay County Department on Aging assisted its 60-year and better residents by utilizing three tablets with internet capabilities to complete the Census either at home, in the Department on Aging office or at its curbside meal pickup. They also reminded residents to take the Census using their website, newsletter and mailings.

“The Department on Aging is funded by a senior millage along with state and federal grants. Every person we were able to assist with completing the Census is a person who counts for us when funding is given out.” – Beth Eurich, Director, Bay County Department on Aging

Great Start Collaborative counted because community and economic development matters.

Bay County Department on Aging counted because older adults matter.

1 | The Count from Sesame Street was the star of Family Winter Fun Fest, taking pictures with kids and teaching them about the Census.

2 | While kids played in the bounce house or interacted with popular characters like Dory and a Minion at Family Winter Fun Fest, parents talked to local organizations and Census Hub partners about the importance of completing the Census.

1 | Employees at the Bay County Department on Aging reminded every person who called the office about the Census and answered questions.

2 | Three times per week, older adults can pick up a hot meal through the Department on Aging Curbside Take Out program. During the Census, food distributors reminded participants to take the Census and handed out educational materials with food.

IMPACT

By educating parents about counting their children in the Census, our communities will receive appropriate funding for programs that impact children’s lives like special education grants, Head Start, State Children’s Health Insurance Program, National School Lunch Program and Title 1 funds for local schools.
The Arc of Midland, which promotes the general welfare of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, helped Midland County households get counted by hosting a variety of pop-up events where they assisted individuals in completing the Census and answered questions.

Since education is possible because of the Census, Midland County ESA made Census education a top priority. Before the pandemic, ESA delivered promotional Census materials like posters and flyers to schools in the county. Additional virtual Census marketing efforts like website and social media posts extended ESA’s reach to make sure all families were counted. They also sent directions on how to take the Census to staff members.

“I don’t think the magnitude of how much the Census matters would have been apparent to me and ESA without the diligence of the marketing and messaging provided by the Regional Census Hub.” – Michelle Bahr, Director of Special Education, Midland County Educational Service Agency

The Arc of Midland counted because people with disabilities matter.

Midland County Educational Service Agency counted because education matters.

The Arc of Midland helped 86 households complete the census. This equates to approximately $394,000 in governmental funding per year! The Arc of Midland also worked with local provider agencies to answer questions about the Census.

When ESA learned that access to technology could impede Census results, it donated 60 Chromebooks to the Regional Census Hub to use. This donation saved the Census Hub approximately $11,000, which allowed it to grant more funds to additional organizations.

The Census count impacts things like classroom size, number of teachers, funding for students with disabilities, Title 1 and resources for classrooms.

1 | It’s important that people with disabilities are counted in the Census so they can receive necessary support and services that are funded by the Census like special education grants, Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

2 | The Arc of Midland reached over 3,200 individuals through its email and social media Census campaign efforts.

1 | The Arc of Midland counted because people with disabilities matter.

2 | Midland County Educational Service Agency counted because education matters.

IMPACT

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IMPACT

“I don’t think the magnitude of how much the Census matters would have been apparent to me and ESA without the diligence of the marketing and messaging provided by the Regional Census Hub.” – Michelle Bahr, Director of Special Education, Midland County Educational Service Agency
The Care Store located in Mt. Pleasant provides personal and household care items not eligible for retail purchase with a Bridge Card. It’s only fitting that to promote the Census, The Care Store offered Census t-shirts to individuals who attended donation drive-through events. The t-shirt presented an opportunity to educate people about the Census and remind them of its importance.

"The Census is important because every single person in our community matters. So many people in our county need various support systems which receive funding based on the Census count. The Care Store was happy to be a part of the effort to get everyone counted."

– Kim McBryde, Executive Director, The Care Store

The Care Store handed out Census t-shirts to people who attended its donation drive-throughs to remind them to take the Census.

“Through the Census t-shirt giveaway, The Care Store reminded many people in Isabella County to take the Census.”

In October 2019, the Great Lakes Bay Regional Census Hub, coordinated by the four community foundations, held a successful summit at The Great Hall in Midland. More than 120 participants from nonprofit organizations, local government and educational institutions participated along with community leaders, which laid the groundwork for a collaborative Census initiative.

Participants received resources to aid them in encouraging their stakeholders to participate in the Census. This ensured that a unified message and communications were spread across the entire region.

1 | A Communications Toolkit provided communications and strategic guidance to help people understand the purpose, content and process of the Census. The toolkit materials were customizable so organizations could tailor the messaging for their stakeholders.

2 | Much of the Census Hub efforts focused on hard-to-count populations including young children, racial and ethnic minorities, older adults, rural populations, low-income people, those experiencing homelessness, people with disabilities and immigrants and undocumented individuals.
The Great Lakes Bay Regional Census Hub was made possible through funding from the Michigan Nonprofit Association Complete Count Campaign, the State of Michigan and various local and state foundations.

Dozens of community partners, organizations and volunteers contributed to the success of the Census in the Great Lakes Bay Region. Thank you!

**Bay County**
- Bay Area Community Foundation
- Bay Arenac Behavioral Health
- Bay Arenac ISD
- Bay County Health Department
- Bay County
- Bay County Branch NAACP
- Bay County Department on Aging
- Bay County Library System
- City of Auburn
- City of Bay City
- Disability Network
- Do-All, Inc.
- Great Lakes Bay Health Centers*
- Good Samaritan Rescue Mission
- Mid Michigan Community Action*
- United Way of Bay County

**Isabella County**
- Central Michigan University
- Chippewa River District Library
- City of Mt. Pleasant
- Clothing INC
- Community Compassion Network
- Isabella Citizens for Health
- Isabella Community Soup Kitchen
- Isabella County
- Isabella County Commission on Aging
- Isabella County Restoration House
- Isabella County VA
- League of Women Voters
- MAC TV Network
- Mid Michigan College
- Mt. Pleasant Area Chamber of Commerce
- Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation
- Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe
- The Care Store
- Union Township

**Midland County**
- 2-1-1 of Northeast Michigan*
- Bullock Creek Schools
- City of Midland
- Coleman Schools
- Community Mental Health for Central Michigan*
- Family & Children’s Services of Mid-Michigan
- Grace A. Dow Memorial Library
- Greater Midland Community Centers
- Meridian Public Schools
- Midland Area Community Foundation
- Midland County Council on Aging - Senior Services
- Midland County Emergency Food Pantry Network
- Midland County ESA
- Midland County GIS
- Midland County Health Department
- Midland Department of Health and Human Services
- Mid Michigan Community Action*
- MidMichigan Health
- Northwood University
- Rural Community Health Worker Network
- The Arc of Midland
- The Arnold Center
- The Legacy Center
- United Way of Midland County
- West Midland Family Center

**Saginaw County**
- Bridgeport Township
- Buena Vista Charter Township
- Castle Museum of Saginaw County History
- City of Saginaw
- Delta College*
- Eastern Michigan Council of Governments
- Ezekiel Project
- Great Lakes Bay Health Centers*
- Great Lakes Bay Hispanic Leadership Institute*
- Houghton-Jones Neighborhood Association
- I am Community Foundation Inc.
- Isabella Bank
- Michigan House of Representatives Partnership Specialist, U.S. Census
- Saginaw Branch NAACP
- Saginaw Community Foundation
- Saginaw County
- Saginaw County Commission on Aging
- Saginaw County Community Action Committee
- Saginaw County Youth Protection Council
- Saginaw Intermediate School District
- Saginaw Transit Authority Regional Services
- Saginaw Valley State University
- Samaritans Community Center
- United Way of Saginaw County
- Victorious Believers Ministries

*Regional organizations did outreach in all four counties.*
Thank you to everyone who helped ensure the Great Lakes Bay Region had strong participation in the 2020 Census. Together, we created a bright future for our families and communities.