



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
DISTRICT 5
File #: 20-586

Board Meeting Date: 8/4/2020

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors
From: Supervisor David J. Canepa, District 5
Supervisor Don Horsley, District 3
Subject: Census 2020 Volunteers Recognition

RECOMMENDATION:

Recognize all census volunteers who worked within their organizations, networks, and communities to educate and encourage census participation and commend:

- A) Student volunteers from the San Mateo Adult School (SMAS) who served as the first group of Census Ambassadors to pilot the training and outreach program: Edy Vasquez, Shereen Lata, Shelley Cheng, Marina Zabruskova, and Shirley Pinheiro; and
- B) The SMAS Coordinator who worked with the County Census Team to develop, pilot, and finalize the training program: Stephanie Kriebel.

BACKGROUND:

The County of San Mateo is working with diverse partners across sectors to help ensure a complete count. Immigrants have traditionally been one of the hardest to count groups and are expected to be even less likely to respond in the upcoming census.

Volunteers

The hardest to reach or count communities in San Mateo County listen to their trusted messengers for information about the 2020 census. Residents need to hear the messages multiple times, from multiple sources, for the information to resonate. Volunteers are an integral part of these outreach efforts.

Ambassador Program

Adult schools are a source of support and connection for new immigrants. Therefore, the San Mateo

County Census Team partnered with SMAS to pilot a training program to support English as a Second Language (ESL) students who want to volunteer as Census Ambassadors to educate fellow students and their broader networks about Census 2020.

The objectives of the pilot program were to:

- Get feedback on draft training curriculum
- Create and pilot tools for planning, conducting, and monitoring outreach
- Assess the type of support needed for successful outreach

In April 2019, the SMAS Programs Coordinator and County Census Team began working together to draft the training curriculum. In May 2019, ten student volunteers were recruited for the pilot program on internet and sufficient skills for English-language training. In June 2019, five student volunteers completed the 12-hour training, required homework, and field practice.

This included:

- Key Aspects of Census 2020
- How to educate and engage community members about Census 2020
- How to address questions, concerns, and misinformation
- Where to direct community members for more information
- How to plan and track outreach

In addition, this pilot group provided critical feedback to refine, expand, and improve the training curriculum and outreach tools. These materials were then used to train and support future Census Ambassadors, Community Action Teams, and our broader Census 2020 partners.

DISCUSSION:

Census Volunteers and Ambassadors play a critical role in making sure all community members understand what the census is, why it is important, and how they can participate. Ambassadors serve as volunteer leaders, sharing information with their personal, social, and professional networks to encourage census participation. This organic outreach approach complements the work of funded census partners across the county in ensuring a complete count for Census 2020.

Over 130 volunteers from 12 diverse community groups were trained as Census Ambassadors. By April 2020, they had reached over 24,000 residents in total through a range of outreach strategies.

Outreach Highlights

As the pilot group, the San Mateo Adult School ambassadors, led by Stephanie Kriebel, have been tabling and presenting to adult schools across the county as a team since Fall 2019, reaching over 800 students. Individually, they have reached more than 2,000 individuals through personal and social media outreach.

Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County ambassadors, led by Diane Leeds, reached out to 464 long-term care facilities and assisted living facilities across the county to prepare administrators, caregivers, and residents for Census 2020. They reached approximately 800 people face-to-face and

more broadly 10,000 residents and 2,000 long-term care staff through their outreach.

San Francisco Peninsula People Power ambassadors, led by Diane Leeds, reached over 320 individuals in person through tabling, and many more through social media.

League of Women Voters North & Central ambassadors, led by Ann Kuchins, reached over 180 individuals through membership outreach and events plus more through personal networks. They also supported TaxAid in their census outreach.

League of Women Voters South ambassadors, led by Geoff Ryder, reached 1,885 individuals through in person outreach, canvassing, online ads.

Sequoia High School Dream Club ambassadors, led by Jane Slater, highlighted Census 2020 at their annual conference as well as sharing census information with 2,100+ students at the high school through in-person, digital, and social outreach.

Congregation Beth Am ambassadors, led by Barbara Windham, engaged their 1,800+ member congregation in conversations about Census 2020 through events, sermons, and other communications. In addition, they reached out to community groups in East Palo Alto and East Menlo Park to spread the work, reaching hundreds more.

St. Veronica Parish ambassador Marilyn Espinoza shared census information with the parish as well as 600 families at the Sunshine Gardens elementary school in South San Francisco.

Mid Peninsula Boys and Girls Club youth ambassadors led by Karen Chin shared information with their families at the Sunshine Gardens elementary school in South San Francisco.

All of the Census Ambassador volunteers spent time to attend training, reach out to their networks to encourage participation, and report back on their efforts. They should be recognized for this work to support a complete count in Census 2020.

The San Mateo Adult School Census Ambassador Team dedicated many hours to successfully completing the pilot training, providing critical feedback to develop the County's outreach training materials, and making sure all the adult school students in the county were educated and encouraged to participate in the census. They deserve special commendation for their ongoing commitment to help ensure a complete count in Census 2020.

The Census Ambassador Program contributes to the Shared Vision 2025 outcome of a Collaborative Community by fostering meaningful partnerships and engaging residents to be civic leaders.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.