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## **New York State Census Equity Fund Awards \$1.4 Million to Community Organizations for 2020 Census Outreach**

*Second round of grants from a New York Community Trust funder collaboration focuses on organizations closest to hard-to-count communities across New York State*

**(December 5, 2019) NEW YORK, NY** – The New York State Census Equity Fund today announced its second round of grants, totaling \$1,437,000, to 56 organizations to support efforts across the state to reach hard-to-count communities in the 2020 Census.

Historically, some populations—including communities of color, low-income households, immigrants, rural households, and young children—have been undercounted in the census. And nonpartisan experts agree that getting an accurate count in 2020 will be especially difficult.

The Fund, which is housed at The New York Community Trust, brings together local, regional, and national foundations and individual donors to support a diverse array of projects that span from western New York to Long Island. Representatives from foundations across the state advise on the Fund’s grantmaking in their areas.

“We are only four months away from the April 1 start of the census count. This round of grants to organizations deeply embedded in their communities will go a long way to ensure every New York resident knows why responding to the census is critical to all New Yorkers. These groups will spread the word that participation is essential for effective distribution of resources and fair representation in government,” said **Patricia A. Swann**, senior program officer at The New York Community Trust.

For the first time, census data will be collected primarily online, which will help manage costs and make it easier for those with access to the internet to participate. But the new format also will make it harder for people without reliable internet access, most of whom live in areas that are already historically undercounted. There are also concerns that immigrants and their families will be afraid to participate in the census—the result of high-profile, aggressive efforts by the federal government to identify and deport undocumented immigrants.

Census experts agree that maximizing self-response rates before the period when federal enumerators go door-to-door seeking information is the best way to achieve an accurate count. With that in mind, this coalition of funders has joined forces with individual donors to help New York State address these looming challenges.

“Ensuring a complete count is important because it is the basis for the federal funding that will flow to New York State for the next 10 years,” said **Allie Urbanski**, program officer for the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, and a member of the steering committee for the Fund. A grant of \$27,500 is helping Jericho Road Community Health Center, which serves about 40,000 English language-learners a year, train their staff to promote census awareness and education and assist their clients in filling out their census forms.”

“We recognize that our refugee and immigrant community members have historically been undercounted in the census,” says **Randi Hewit** of the Community Foundation of Elmira-Corning and the Finger Lakes.

The New York State Census Equity Fund aims to build on what foundations and community organizations learned during the 2010 census, when concentrated outreach efforts made a big impact in census results. In 2010, for instance, the Long Island 2010 Census Initiative used \$340,000 to increase participation. Nineteen of the 23 census tracts on which the Initiative focused showed increased response rates, including a dramatic 21 percent increase in Central Islip.

“In every community on Long Island, children under five are among the most frequently undercounted,” says **Sol Marie Alfonso-Jones** of the Long Island Community Foundation, a division of The New York Community Trust. With strong connections to child care providers across the region, the Child Care Councils of Suffolk and Nassau will use \$40,000 to target outreach to communities with high rates of child poverty, communities with large numbers of young children of color and immigrant families, and families across the region with young children.

“The central region of New York State is vast, with several census tracts containing especially large numbers of hard-to-count populations,” said **Robyn L. Smith**, director of strategic initiatives at the Central New York Community Foundation. “We are happy that the Fund is able to make a \$20,000 grant to the City of Syracuse to create a strong local Complete Count Committee with other organizations in the region working toward full participation in Census 2020 and communicating with New York State government on this issue.”

“I am very proud that our regional team was able to recommend seven organizations in the Hudson Valley that will receive funding to engage in census work,” said **Jennifer Drake**, senior program officer for the Dyson Foundation. The Nobody Leaves Mid-Hudson Education Fund, a trusted social-justice and community organizing group, will use \$35,000 to converse in Spanish and English with tens of thousands of people from hard-to-count communities across three counties.

“In New York City, the five boroughs have about three quarters of the hundred most hard-to-count census tracts in the state, but we also have an impressive number of effective community-based organizations stepping up and getting involved in Census 2020,” said **Maria Mottola**, executive director of the New York Foundation and co-chair of the grant selection committee. “One great example is Neighbors Together, which will use \$27,000 to develop the leadership skills of very low-income people of color to lead their census outreach work.

In addition to grant funding to trusted local nonprofits, the Fund is helping coordinate census-related efforts with other foundations, with the business community, and with appropriate government entities.

Earlier this year, the Fund distributed grants totaling more than \$600,000 for organizing and education activities in specific regions or with specific kinds of organizations. Those included grants to the New York Immigration Coalition, Partnership for the Public Good, Health and Welfare Council of Long Island, Asian American Federation, New York Civic Engagement Table, Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism CUNY Foundation, and The New School's Digital Equity Lab.

**This round of grants includes:**

Western NY

Buffalo & Erie County Public Library	\$40,000
Journey's End Refugee Services	\$17,450
Pro Action of Steuben and Yates	\$40,000
The Rural Outreach Center	\$13,800
CEO Cattaraugus Community Action	\$29,250
Arab American Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS) of WNY	\$30,000
Jericho Road Community Health Center	\$27,500
The International Institute of Buffalo	\$32,500
Refugees Helping Refugees	\$29,500
Open Buffalo	\$40,000
<b>Western NY Total</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>

Central Region

City of Syracuse	\$20,000
Elder Life, Inc. d/b/a Parkway Center	\$7,500
Living Independently is for Everyone at RCIL, Inc.	\$12,500
Mid York Library System	\$9,000
Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees	\$11,500
Opportunities for Otsego	\$17,000
Hopeprint Inc.	\$20,000
Catholic Charities Tomkins/Tioga	\$15,000
Community Action Partnership	\$17,500
<b>Central Region Total</b>	<b>\$130,000</b>

Hudson Valley

Catholic Charities of Orange, Sullivan and Ulster	\$30,000
Community Resource Center	\$25,000
Mid-Hudson Library System	\$20,000
Neighbors Link	\$25,000
Nobody Leaves Mid-Hudson Education Fund	\$35,000
Westchester Library System	\$25,000
WestCOP	\$5,000
<b>Hudson Valley Total</b>	<b>\$165,000</b>

New York City

Bangladeshi American Community Development and Youth Services	\$40,000
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Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York	\$40,000
Staten Island Community Job Center (d.b.a. La Colmena)	\$40,000
Mekong NYC	\$40,000
Neighbors Together	\$27,000
Ocean Bay Community Development Corp	\$40,000
Urban Justice Center - Street Vendor Project	\$17,000
Yemeni American Merchants Association	\$25,000
Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice	\$40,000
United Community Centers	\$35,000
	<b>New York City Total</b>
	<b>\$344,000</b>
<u>Long Island</u>	
Child Care Council of Suffolk	\$40,000
Community Action Southold Town	\$15,000
Elmont Cultural Center	\$9,000
Family Community Life Center	\$30,000
Hempstead Hispanic Civic Association	\$11,000
Haitian American Family, Inc.	\$11,000
Hispanic Brotherhood, Inc.	\$11,000
LGBT Network	\$17,000
Long Beach Latino Civic Association	\$11,000
New Hour for Women and Children - Long Island	\$10,000
Sisters of St. Dominic of Amityville NY - North Fork Spanish Apostolate	\$15,000
OLA of Eastern Long Island	\$25,000
SEPA Mujer, Inc.	\$20,000
Stony Brook University School of Social Welfare	\$20,000
Urban League of Long Island	\$20,000
Yam Community Resource	\$10,000
	<b>Long Island Total</b>
	<b>\$275,000</b>
<u>Cross-Regional</u>	
Community Voices Heard	\$40,000
Jewish Community Relations Council of New York	\$50,000
Rural & Migrant Ministry, Inc.	\$90,000
Voices of Community Activists & Leaders - Vocal NY	\$40,000
	<b>Cross-Regional Total</b>
	<b>\$220,000</b>

### **About The New York State Census Equity Fund**

The New York State Census Equity Fund (NYSCEF) was established in 2018 in The New York Community Trust to ensure coverage of the State's hard-to-count communities in the 2020 Census. So far, the Fund has raised over \$3 million from more than 30 foundations, as well as multiple individual donors.

The Fund is led by a steering committee comprised of nine foundations and one funder coalition from across the state, including:

- Brooklyn Community Foundation
- Central New York Community Foundation
- Charles H. Revson Foundation
- Community Foundation of Elmira-Corning and the Finger Lakes
- Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo
- Dyson Foundation
- Engage New York
- Long Island Community Foundation
- The New York Community Trust
- New York Foundation

**About The New York Community Trust**

The New York Community Trust connects past, present, and future generous New Yorkers with vital nonprofits working to make a healthy, equitable, and thriving community for all. We are a public grantmaking foundation dedicated to improving the lives of residents of New York City, Westchester, and Long Island. For more information, visit us at [nycommunitytrust.org](https://nycommunitytrust.org).

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