

Executive Summary





Introduction

Historical Overview

Twenty-five years ago the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation and Affiliated Trusts commissioned the first Hispanic Needs Assessment in Greater Kansas City. This 2013 Greater Kansas City Hispanic Needs Assessment builds on the foundation of the work done in 1988.

The Report on the *Greater Kansas City Hispanic Needs Assessment* in 1988 provided a brief historical overview chronicling the dramatic change for Hispanic populations in the U.S. and Greater Kansas City during the 20th Century.¹ The 1900 U.S. Census recorded 34 Mexican-born individuals residing in Wyandotte County (KS) and Jackson County (MO), compared to Latino populations of 31,820 in 1980 and 164,080 in 2010. The unprecedented growth in the Latino population, increased diversity based on country of origin, and expanded residence to all nine counties of Greater Kansas City set the stage for focused attention on assets that they bring and needs that they present. Simultaneously, rapid societal change occurred, affected by and affecting the Latino population in Greater Kansas City. Many of today's leading Hispanic organizations were newly established, were serving other populations, or were not yet formed in 1988. Today a host of nonprofit community organizations and Latino businesses address needs of the Latino population for education, health and mental health, housing, employment, and social services.

Commissioning of the Hispanic Needs Assessment

The Latino Civic Engagement Collaborative (LCEC) is a collaborative of nonprofit executives that speaks with a unified voice to bring about measurable improvements in the quality of life for Latinos in Kansas City. The LCEC functions as a supportive institution to bring about measurable improvements in Hispanics' quality of life by delivering education, physical and mental health, business development, housing, economic development, and social services. The LCEC envisions a Latino community that develops an empowered civic voice that will be recognized and appreciated by the broader community of Kansas City.

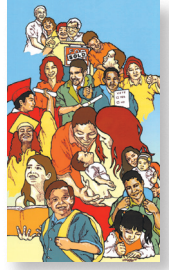
The LCEC established a goal to create and distribute a marketing product that describes the current conditions, assets, and needs of the Greater Kansas City Latino population. The collaborative identified the primary focus areas of economic, social, educational, health, and civic conditions. To this end, the LCEC commissioned the 2013 Hispanic Needs Assessment project, accessing funds from these generous supporters: Adelante Fund, Bank of America, the City Manager's Office of Kansas City MO, H&R Block Foundation, the Hall Family Foundation, and the Hispanic Development Fund. The LCEC anticipates that the findings will serve as one source of information for policy makers, community organizations, educators, Hispanic families, and students to enhance Greater Kansas City, particularly the lives of Latinos in the area.

The LCEC then contracted with the University of Missouri-Kansas City Institute for Human Development (UMKC-IHD) to conduct the assessment. Additionally, the LCEC formed the Greater Kansas City Hispanic Needs Assessment Advisory Committee to guide this work. This committee consisted of the organizations of the LCEC, as well as other nonprofit organizations and Latino constituent groups. The organizations and their representatives are presented in Chapter 1 of the full report.

¹ Ruiz, F. H., Hernández, A. N., & McKay, E. G. (1988). *Report on the Greater Kansas City Hispanic Needs Assessment*. Kansas City, MO: Greater Kansas City Community Foundation. (Contact the University of Missouri-Kansas City Institute for Human Development to access this report electronically.)

Approach

A number of faculty and personnel at UMKC-IHD participated in the assessment process, first led by Dr. Jana Peterson, who served until August, 2012, when she relocated to another community. Then Dr. Kathryn L. Fuger served as Project Director until the completion of the project. They were assisted by 10 key personnel at UMKC-IHD, 38 volunteers recruited through UMKC, and numerous staff members and volunteers from the Advisory Committee organizations and other invested community organizations.



This assessment project employed a **framework based on determinants of health**, with particular focus on socioeconomic conditions, access to health care services, availability of quality education, access to housing and other resources for community living, and discrimination.² Additional emphasis was placed on assessing **civic engagement** within the community. The Advisory Committee determined the nine-county Kansas City Metropolitan Area defined by the Mid-America Regional Council to be the catchment area of this project. This catchment area is referred to as “*Greater Kansas City*” (Cass, Clay, Jackson, Platte, and Ray Counties in Missouri, and Johnson, Leavenworth, Miami, and Wyandotte Counties in Kansas).

UMKC-IHD employed several strategies to collect data from multiple sources to determine the assets and needs of the Latino population in Greater Kansas City:

- **Existing data** describing the Latino population were analyzed (primarily the 2010 U.S. Census, the 2006-2010 *American Community Survey*, the 2011 *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey*, and Missouri and Kansas vital statistics).
- **Adult Latino community members**, sampled as proportionately as possible within the Greater Kansas City area, completed a paper or electronic version of a written survey in English or Spanish.
- **Greater Kansas City leaders engaged with the Latino population** completed an electronic survey in English, in which they considered issues from a systemic point of view.
- **Latino and non-Latino juniors and seniors** from six high schools with a high Latino enrollment completed paper or electronic surveys in English.³ The survey focused on civic engagement.
- Meeting documentation and written **reflections of Advisory Committee members** informed the concluding discussion and implications.

Through extensive publicity and engagement of community partners to collect surveys at various events, **1,240 Latino community members** completed surveys. Additionally, **44 leaders in the Latino community** completed key informant surveys. Six high schools with a high Latino enrollment participated in data collection; **766 students** completed the youth survey, including 427 Latino students.

Readers should not consider the findings definitive, but rather, suggestive of issues that may need further exploration, due to limitations of this study. Notably, a rigorous research design with randomized or stratified sampling and sufficient power was cost-prohibitive and not feasible. The sample size within individual communities was too small to make strong conclusions at the neighborhood level. Also, some respondents were challenged by the length, the grade level, or the translation of the survey. Nonetheless, a wealth of information was collected from diverse participants throughout Greater Kansas City. It is important that the findings be considered a springboard for dialogue to promote action toward improved policies, strengthened programs in local

² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2011). <http://healthypeople.gov/2020/about/tracking.aspx>.

³ The following schools agreed to participate: Alta Vista Charter School, Cristo Rey High School, East High School, J.C. Harmon High School, Northeast High School, and Wyandotte High School.



neighborhoods and schools, and processes for continued assessment and reflection on emergent conditions for Latinos in Greater Kansas City.

Latino Profile of Greater Kansas City

The nine-county bi-state Greater Kansas City area (Johnson, Leavenworth, Miami, and Wyandotte Counties in Kansas; and Cass, Clay, Jackson, Platte, and Ray Counties in Missouri) is home to a Latino population that is growing at an accelerated rate and becoming increasingly diverse. A limited number of characteristics compiled from population-based statistics and large-scale surveys serve as a point of reference for the survey data collected through the Hispanic Needs Assessment project.

Demographic Profile

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Latinos comprised 9% of the population of Greater Kansas City in 2010 (164,080 persons), which equated to a 78% growth rate over the past decade. Wyandotte County (KS) had the highest concentration of Latinos in 2010 (26%). The largest number of Latinos lived in Jackson County (MO), but this equated to only 8% of the population. People of Mexican origin comprise the largest percentage of Latinos in Greater Kansas City (78%), but the greatest increases were Guatemalan, Honduran, and Salvadoran origins. Statistics in Table E-1 describe other characteristics of the Latino population of Greater Kansas City, compared to the total population of the city.

Table E-1 Demographic Characteristics of Latinos and Entire Population in Greater Kansas City

Characteristic	Latino Population of Greater Kansas City	Entire Population of Greater Kansas City
Gender	52% male, 48% female	49% male, 51% female
Age	50% under 24 years, 38% 25-49 years, 12% 50+ years	34% under 24 years, 35% 25-49 years, 31% 50+ years
Households	6% headed by Latinos	94% headed by non-Latinos
Family Households	77% family households, 23% non-family households	66% family households, 34% non-family households
Heads of Family Households	66% husband and wife, 13% male only, 22% female only	74% husband and wife, 7% male only, 19% female only
Multigenerational Households	7% of Latino households had 3 or more generations living together	3% of all households had 3 or more generations living together
Ownership of Housing Units	50% of Latino housing units owned by the occupants, 50% rented by the occupants	67% of all housing units owned by the occupants, 33% rented by the occupants

Socioeconomic Profile

The 2006-2010 *American Community Survey* (ACS) conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau utilizes survey data from a large sample collected over five years to estimate the responses of the entire population from a specified geographic area. Table E-2 provides estimates of socioeconomic occurrences for the Latino population and the total population of the most populous counties in Greater Kansas City. Labor force participation and the unemployment rate of Latinos were similar to the estimates for the entire population. However, estimated median household income was significantly lower and estimated poverty status was significantly higher for Latinos than for the entire population.

Table E-2 Socioeconomic Characteristics of Latinos and Entire Population in Greater Kansas City



Characteristic	Latino Population Estimates for Selected Counties	Entire Population Estimates for Selected Counties
Labor Force Participation (≥16 Years Old)	Johnson: 78.1% - 81.5% Wyandotte: 71.8% - 75.6% Clay: 74.8% - 80.6% Jackson: 69.7% - 73.5%	Johnson: 74.3% - 75.1% Wyandotte: 65.7% - 67.5% Clay: 71.2% - 72.4% Jackson: 67.8% - 68.6%
Unemployment Rate	Johnson: 5.1% - 8.5% Wyandotte: 8.4% - 12.4% Clay: 4.3% - 9.1% Jackson: 8.6% - 11.4%	Johnson: 4.4% - 4.8% Wyandotte: 11.4% - 13.0% Clay: 4.5% - 5.3% Jackson: 8.5% - 9.1%
Median Household Income	Johnson: \$45,647 - \$54,823 Wyandotte: \$65.7% - \$35,194 Clay: \$71.2% - \$63,440 Jackson: \$67.8% - \$35,271	Johnson: \$72,905 - \$74,561 Wyandotte: \$37,445 - \$39,561 Clay: \$57,290 - \$59,828 Jackson: \$45,656 - \$46,848
Poverty Status	Johnson: 13.7% - 20.3% Wyandotte: 26.2% - 33.2% Clay: 10.3% - 18.9% Jackson: 26.0% - 31.8%	Johnson: 5.1% - 5.9% Wyandotte: 20.1% - 22.5% Clay: 7.1% - 8.5% Jackson: 15.1% - 16.3%

—Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey

The 2006-2010 ACS also studied occupational groups of men and women in Greater Kansas City. These differences were seen between the Latino population and the entire population:

- Males:**
 Most Latino men worked in natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations (27%-30%); production, transportation, and material moving occupations (22%-25%); or service occupations (21%-25%). The majority of all employed males worked in management, business, science, and arts occupations (35%-36%); sales and office occupations (19%-20%); or production, transportation, and material moving occupations (17%).
- Females:**
 Most Latina women worked in service occupations (30%-35%); sales and office occupations (28%-32%); or management, business, science, and arts occupations (21%-25%). The majority of all women worked in the same occupational groups, but with different proportions: management, business, science, and arts occupations (41%-42%); sales and office occupations (34%-35%); or service occupations (17%-18%).

Education Profile

Educational Attainment

Estimates of educational attainment for Greater Kansas City could not be determined from the 2006-2010 ACS sample due to the lack of county-level margin of error estimates. The 2006-2010 ACS estimates for Kansas and Missouri, however, allowed these comparisons of Latina/o and non-Latina/o males and females:

- High School in Kansas:**
 An estimated 42%-45% of Latino men and 37%-40% of Latina women did not complete high school or an alternative, compared to 8% of non-Latino White males and 7%-8% of non-Latina White females.
- High School in Missouri:**
 An estimated 34%-38% of Latino men and 30%-32% of Latina women did not complete high school or an alternative, compared to 12%-13% of non-



Latino White males and 12%-13% of non-Latina White females.

- **College Graduation in Kansas:**

An estimated 10%-11% of Latino men and 11%-13% of Latina women received a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 32%-33% of non-Latino White men and 30%-31% of non-Latina White women.

- **College Graduation in Missouri:**

An estimated 15%-17% of Latino men and 17%-19% of Latina women had at least a bachelor's degree, compared to 26%-27% of non-Latino White men and 25%-26% of non-Latina White women.

English Language Fluency

The 2006-2010 ACS collected respondents' reports of the English language fluency of individuals ages 5 years and older in their households. This analysis defined English language fluency as any of the following: speaking only English, speaking Spanish and speaking English "very well," and speaking Spanish and speaking English "well." Based on survey responses, these percentages of Latinos are estimated to be fluent in the English language:

- 77% of Latinos in the U.S.;
- 79% of Latinos in Kansas and 83% of Latinos in Missouri;
- 68%, 79%, and 90% of Latinos in Kansas Counties of Wyandotte, Johnson, and Leavenworth, respectively; and
- 77%, 87%, 91%, 90%, and 100% of Latinos in Missouri Counties of Jackson, Clay, Platte, Cass, and Ray, respectively.

Health Profile

Birth Rates, Fertility Rates, and Infant Health Indicators

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services document all live births and infant health indicators in their respective states (combined with population datasets from the Census for computation of fertility rates). Following is a summary of these birth and health indicator data for Latino infants and other comparable populations in Greater Kansas City for 2010:

- **Births and Fertility Rates:**

The highest numbers of infants were born to non-Latino Whites in all counties of Greater Kansas City. Latino populations, however, had the highest fertility rate (number of live births divided by the number of females ages 15-44 years, then multiplied by 1,000) in Johnson, Leavenworth, Wyandotte, Cass, and Jackson Counties of Greater Kansas City, compared to non-Latino White and non-Latino Black populations.

- **Infant Mortality in 2010:**

Latino infant mortality rates (infant deaths before the first birthday per 1,000 live births) in Greater Kansas City counties grouped by state were 4.9 for the Kansas counties and 6.2 for the Missouri counties. These were similar to the rates in the same respective counties for non-Latino Whites (4.7 and 5.7) and lower than the rates for Blacks (7.9 and 8.8).

- **Preterm Births in 2006-2010:**

The rate of pre-term births (births at < 37 weeks gestation per 100 live births) was similar for Latino populations and non-Latino White populations in both Missouri and Kansas counties. Non-Latino Black rates of preterm birth were higher in all counties with adequate sample size.

- **Low Birth Weight (LBW) and Very Low Birth Weight (VLBW) in 2006-2010:**

Latino and non-Latino White LBW rates (births at < 2,500 grams per 100 live births) and VLBW rates (births at < 1,500 grams per 100 live births) were comparable in all Greater Kansas City counties with a sample size suf-

ficient to warrant a comparison (county LBW rates of 5.7-8.1 for Latinos and 6.1-8.2 for non-Latino Whites, VLBW rates of 0.8-1.2 for Latinos and 0.9-1.4 for non-Latino Whites). County rates for non-Latino Black populations were higher (LBW rates of 8.8-13.1 and VLBW rates of 2.2-3.7).



- **Prenatal Care in 2006-2010:**

The highest numbers of pregnant women in the non-Latino White group accessed prenatal care in the first trimester. This group also had the highest rate of prevalence (number accessing prenatal care in first three months of pregnancy per 100 live births). The second highest rate was for Latinos in Leavenworth, Miami, Clay, and Jackson Counties. In the other counties, the second highest rate was for non-Latino Blacks.

Adult Health Indicators, Incidence of Disabilities, and Health Insurance Coverage

The 2011 *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey* (BRFSS) provides information about several adult health factors to estimate the incidence in Latino populations of Greater Kansas City. The 2011 data were aggregated for six Kansas counties and nine Missouri counties of the Kansas City Region: Douglas, Johnson, Leavenworth, Linn, Miami, and Wyandotte in Kansas; and Bates, Caldwell, Cass, Clay, Clinton, Jackson, Lafayette, Platte, and Ray in Missouri. While each state administered and analyzed the data differently, warranting caution in interpreting the findings, these basic trends were seen in 2011:

- **High Blood Pressure:**

High blood pressure was estimated to occur in less than 25% of the Latino population in the Kansas City metro region, which was lower than the incidence among White and Black populations.

- **Obesity:**

Approximately 25-30% of Latinos were obese. Obesity was similar for Latino and White populations and higher for Black populations.

- **Smoking:**

Between one-fourth and one-third of Latinos smoked. Cigarette use was similar for Latino and Black populations and lower for White populations, with higher usage in Kansas counties than Missouri counties for all racial/ethnic groups.

- **Self-Perceived Health Status:**

An estimated 20% of Latinos in Kansas counties and 28% of Latinos in Missouri counties of the Kansas City metro region consider their health status to be unsatisfactory. This is comparable to Black populations and higher than White populations for the same counties.

The more populous counties of Greater Kansas City first categorized disability and health insurance ACS data by race/ethnicity in 2008, with these results for the aggregated 3-year ACS dataset for 2008-2010:

- **Disability:**

Estimated prevalence of disability was lower for Latino populations (3%-10%) than White and Black populations in Johnson, Wyandotte, Clay, and Jackson Counties. The highest estimated prevalence was among non-Latinos in Wyandotte County (15-19% for both White and Black populations).

- **Health Insurance:**

Higher percentages of Latino populations than White or Black populations lacked health insurance coverage in Johnson and Jackson Counties. Approximately 30%-38% of Latinos in Johnson County and 36%-42% of Latinos in Jackson County lacked health insurance. In Johnson County, 6%-7% of Whites and 13%-18% of Blacks lacked coverage; in Jackson County, 11%-12% of Whites and 20%-23% of Blacks lacked coverage.



Community Survey Findings

Participants in the Community Survey

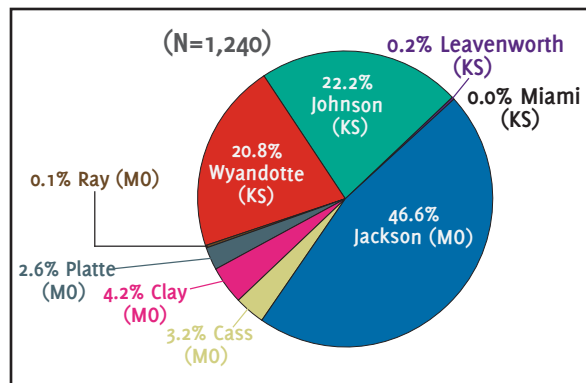
Survey Administration

Between August and December of 2012, 1,240 adult respondents residing in the 9-county Greater Kansas City area completed the *Community Survey* (See Appendix A). Fifty-five percent completed it in Spanish as a hard copy, 28% in English as a hard copy, 2% in Spanish online, and 15% in English online.⁴ Many volunteered in administering the surveys at various recruitment sites throughout Greater Kansas City: the Mexican Consulate, churches, soccer games, a bike rodeo, restaurants or businesses, the Expo Americas, Bi-National Health Week, several other local festivals, and Deferred Action information meetings, and college/university campuses. Media throughout the data collection phase assisted in building public awareness and participation. Utilizing numerous forms of publicity, engaging volunteers to distribute the survey in many diverse locations, and monitoring the demographics of the sample throughout the data collection period to determine whether it was representative of the Greater Kansas City area and consistent with the Census data enhanced the usefulness of this dataset.

Characteristics of Survey Participants

All respondents who identified their language preferences spoke English, Spanish, or both languages; the largest percentage considered themselves bilingual, with Spanish as the dominant language (35%). The sample was comprised of 60% women. Their ages ranged from 18 to 91 years (mean of 37.8 years). Figure E-1 displays the percentage of respondents from each of the nine counties of Greater Kansas City. Almost half (47%) had lived at their current address for five years or more; 43% were homeowners.

Figure E-1 County of Community Member Respondents



Most respondents (69%) had graduated from high school or earned a General Education Development (GED) certificate. Seventy-three percent reported being employed – 50% full-time, 16% part-time, and 7% self-employed. The majority of respondents (57%) claimed household income of less than \$25,000.

Seven hundred twenty-nine respondents reported that they themselves were born outside the U.S.; within this group, the majority (72%) had lived in the U.S. for ten or more years. Of the respondents who provided information about their family origins, 85% reported that at least one parent was born outside the U.S., and 94% reported that at least one grandparent was born outside the U.S.

Community Members' Identification of Assets and Challenges in Greater Kansas City

By completing two checklists, 974 respondents identified both assets and challenges that they believed pertained to the Latino community in Greater Kansas City. Additionally, they had the opportunity to add other features that they perceived were applicable to this community.

⁴ Throughout this summary, percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. Sample sizes may vary due to the voluntary nature of the survey and the option for respondents to omit selected items. Additionally, some items are only applicable when a particular response is given to a previous question.

Community Assets

Each of these three features was identified by over 40% of respondents to be descriptive of strengths of the Latino community in Greater Kansas City:

- Bilingual language skills,
- Participation in religious organizations,
- Strong family relationships
- Work ethic,
- Addition of cultural diversity to the community,
- Entrepreneurship, and
- A spirit of service.



Added comments focused on a sense of optimism and hope, a sense of community, and strong community programs.

Community Challenges

Each of the following issues was considered by at least 60% of the respondents to be a serious challenge affecting Latinos in Greater Kansas City:

- Gangs,
- Low high school graduation rates for Latino youth,
- Lack of opportunities and services for undocumented individuals,
- Low education levels of adults, and
- Unemployment for adults.

Additional comments focused on discrimination, the need for better communication and coordination among Latino-serving organizations, and the need for supportive services to achieve education and employment goals.

Need and Access to Services and Resources in Greater Kansas City

Safety

Respondents rated their perceptions of safety in their home and safety in their neighborhood at night, and they assessed the helpfulness of law enforcement.

- The majority of respondents indicated that they feel *somewhat* or very safe in these settings (79% in their home and 62% in their neighborhood at night). Conversely, these responses signify that approximately one-third do not feel very safe in their community, and some voiced concerns about police effectiveness and crime prevention.
- When asked to rate the helpfulness of the police in responding to their own or their family's concerns, however, 57% of respondents rated the police as *somewhat* or *very* helpful, and 22% did not know the helpfulness of police, which might imply their lack of personal interaction with them.

Specific Adult and Family Service Needs

Respondents indicated whether they or their families have needed specific community services. These percentages of respondents reported that they or their families have needed the following services: emergency shelter (7%); housing assistance (14%); utilities assistance (28%); employment training (18%); business assistance or loans (11%); supplementary food assistance (45%); bus service (41%); legal service (57%); translation services for the respondent only (41%); mental health care (33%); and English language classes (50%). They elaborated by providing this additional information about these areas of need:

- Eighty-four respondents reported experiencing homelessness at least once in the past year.
- No grocery store was within walking distance of 39% of respondents, but



47% with no nearby grocery store believed that having one nearby was *very important*.

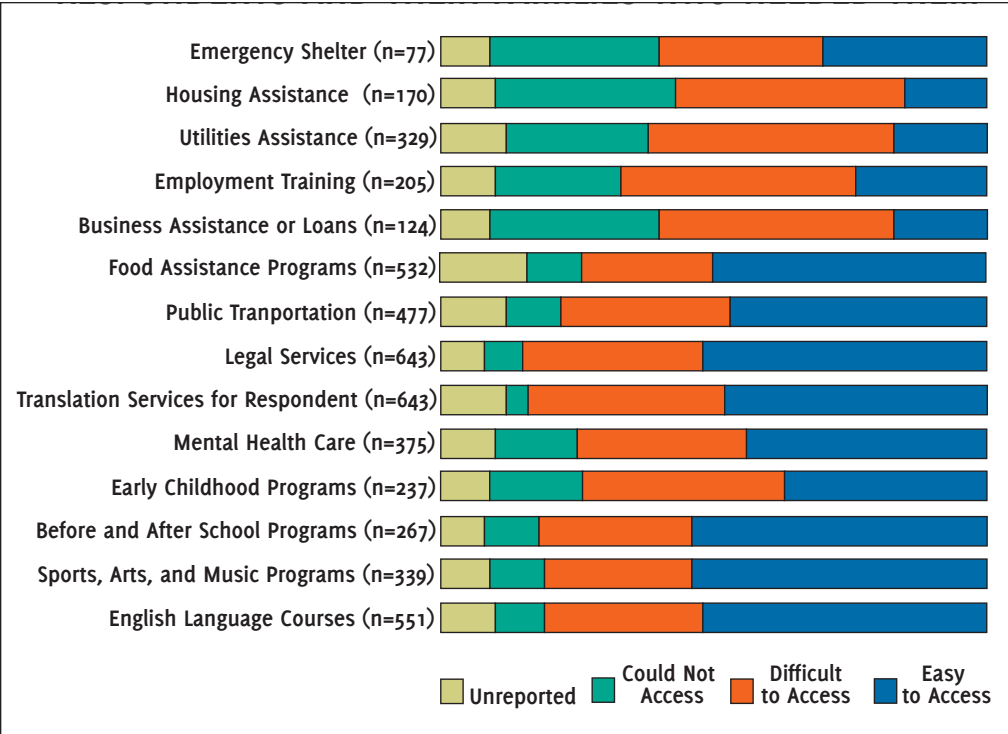
- At least once in the past year, 21% of respondents reported that they had run out of food and could not afford to buy more.
- While 92% of respondents had access to a car, 41% expressed additional needs for bus service.
- Respondents most frequently identified the need for translation/interpretation services in health care (79%), education (50%), and law enforcement/criminal justice (31%).
- Sometime during the past year, someone in 29% of respondents' families needed but could not access a doctor; someone in 38% of their families needed but could not access a dentist; and someone in 27% of their families could not get a needed prescription.

Educational Services for Children

Six hundred sixty-four participants responded as parents of children in grade 12 or younger, providing this information:

- Seventy-eight percent of parents rated their children's education as *good* or *excellent*.
- Most respondents with children (84%) reported having at least one child in a public school.
- These percentages of parents needed the following educational programs for children: early childhood programs (36%); before and after school programs (40%); and arts, sports, or music programs (51%).

Figure E-2 Availability of Community Services to Respondents and Their Families Who Needed Them



Availability of Services

If respondents or their families needed a particular service, they stated how easily this assistance could be accessed. Figure E-2 displays the number of people who expressed a need for each service and the accessibility of that service for those who needed it.⁵ Responses to additional questions related to these service sectors follow the figure.



Social and Civic Engagement

Respondents considered their experiences living in Greater Kansas City, assessing their satisfaction, perceptions of discrimination, governmental representation, and voting.

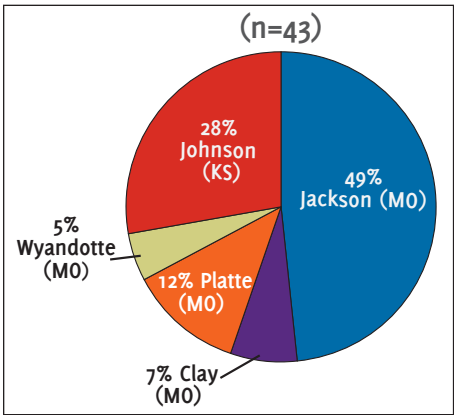
- Most (74%) expressed satisfaction with their overall experience living in Greater Kansas City.
- Half reported experiencing discrimination while living in Greater Kansas City, most frequently in employment or in law enforcement and criminal justice. Some described issues related to having an undocumented status, e.g., accessing medical and dental care, getting a driver’s license, and changing immigration status.
- Only 15% believed that their interests are represented by their local government.
- Almost two-thirds of respondents reported that they have never voted while living in Greater Kansas City, with the most common reason being the lack of U.S. citizenship.

Key Informant Survey Findings

The Key Informant Leaders

Between January and April of 2013, 44 leaders in the Latino community completed an online Key Informant Survey (See Appendix B). They were asked to provide broad perspectives of the needs and assets of Latinos in the nine counties of Greater Kansas City.

Figure E-3 County of Residence of Responding Leaders



Responding leaders held positions in nonprofit organizations, businesses, and government. Some exercised leadership in education, health, and the faith community. Many served on various boards and councils, and some focused primarily on policy and advocacy. Over 75% of the leaders worked in Kansas and Missouri of the metro area and considered themselves well-informed of the needs and the available services in both states. Most of the other respondents were more familiar with the needs and services in Missouri.

The majority of leaders (79%) identified themselves as Latino. Over half (56%) were bilingual, including 47% whose dominant

⁵ Persons identifying a specific service need selected one of these options concerning the service: “I could not get this service;” “It was difficult to get this service;” “It was easy to get this service;” and “Don’t know.” Missing responses and “Don’t know” responses among persons who reported this need were combined as an “unknown” category. For this item, access was unknown for 9% of persons who reported a need for emergency shelter. For all items except translation services, the respondent was asked to consider their own needs and the needs of their family members for this service.



language is English and 9% whose dominant language is Spanish; almost all other leaders spoke English only. Fifty-four percent of the leaders were male. The age of respondents ranged from 27 to 67 (mean and median of 48 years). Two-thirds of the leaders lived in Missouri. See Figure E-3 for their counties of residence.

Leaders' Perceptions of Assets and Challenges for Latinos in Greater Kansas City

Thirty-four of the leaders completed two checklists similar to those completed by the community members. They identified both assets found in the Latino community of Greater Kansas City and issues that are problems for them. The leaders were also given to the opportunity to expand the list of assets and challenges, based on their knowledge and experience.

Community Assets

These ranked characteristics were identified by over 60% of the leaders as positive features of the Latino community in Greater Kansas City:

- Entrepreneurship,
- Work ethic,
- Strong family relationships,
- Addition of cultural diversity to the city, and
- Participation in religious organizations.

Other comments focused on individual strengths (*the "celebration of life – daily"*), community strengths (*"the Hispanic Chamber, Mattie Rhodes, and similar organizations..."*), and diversity within the Latino population (*"different subsets – fourth generation vs. newcomer...how much education they have, whether or not they are English speaking..."*).

Community Challenges

Each of the following ranked challenges was identified by at least 60% of the leaders as a serious issue that affects Latinos in Greater Kansas City:

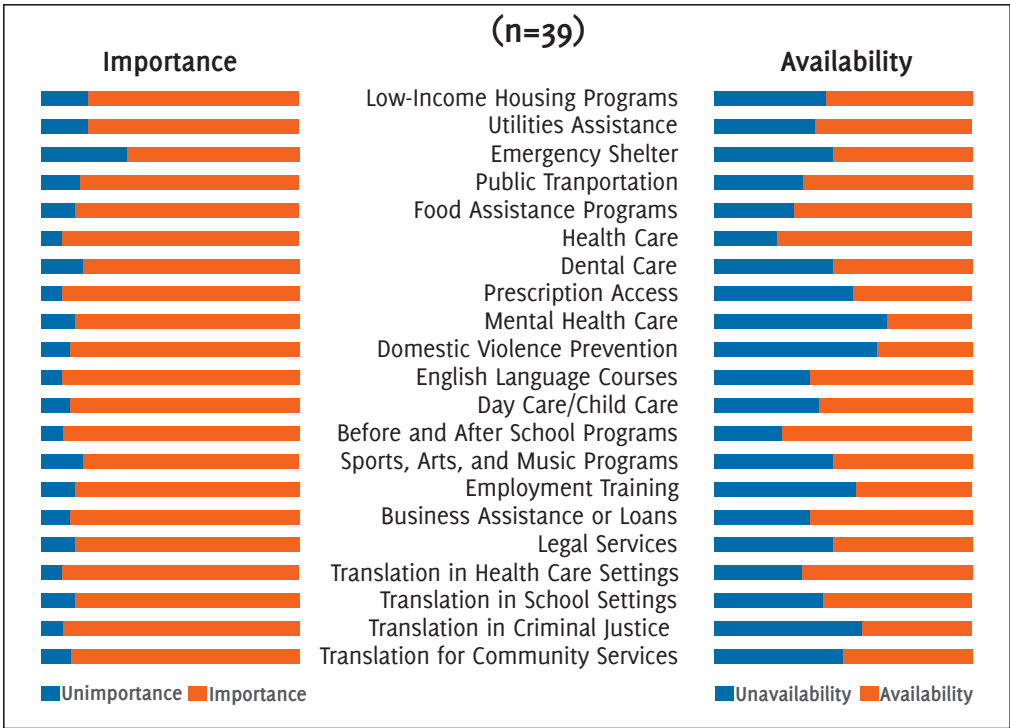
- Low high school graduation rates for Latino youth,
- Low education levels of adults, and
- Unemployment for adults. In addition, each of these issues was considered a challenge by over 60% of the leaders:
- Lack of Latinos in community leadership roles,
- Lack of opportunities and services for undocumented individuals,
- Crime in neighborhoods,
- Unemployment for youth,
- Lack of permanent residency options for working adults, and
- Gangs.

Additional comments focused on discrimination, the need for better coordination among Latino-serving organizations, and the need for supportive services to achieve education and employment goals.

Importance and Availability of Specified Services in Greater Kansas City

The leaders considered the importance and availability of the following services in Greater Kansas City to address needs of Latinos: housing, basic services, health care, education programs, professional services, and translation services. Figure E-4 presents a comparison of the leaders' perceptions of both the importance and the availability of specific services to Latinos. They perceived that the level of importance of all services was greater than the degree to which the services were available to Latinos.

Figure E-4 Importance and Availability of Community Services



Civic Issues

The leaders responded to survey items focused on several aspects of civic life.

- Eighty percent of responding leaders considered opportunities for citizenship and residency to be very important, but 73% considered these opportunities to be *very* or *somewhat* unavailable.
- Eighty-seven percent of 30 leaders asserted that community members experienced discrimination because of their Latino ethnicity, with the highest percentages citing this treatment in employment (96%), law enforcement or criminal justice (81%), housing (73%), and schools (58%).
- Most (71%), however, perceived the police to be very or *somewhat* helpful when addressing community problems, a perceived asset to address issues of crime, gangs, and domestic violence.
- The leaders expressed strong views about lack of governmental support in representing the best interests of Latino residents and need for more Latino candidates for public office. Few agreed and none strongly agreed that *"The best interests of Latino residents are represented..."* by these branches of government: City government of Kansas City, MO (20%); other city governments in Greater Kansas City (7%); Missouri State government (4%); and Kansas State government (17%).
- Over half (55%) believed that there were not an adequate number of Latino cultural events.
- While 83% of the leaders rated community engagement of Latino residents as important, only 50% perceived that Latino residents were very engaged in their communities.
- Some noted the variation from community to community, e.g., *"It is hard to answer about a single Hispanic community since there are a wide variety of communities around the region..."*



- Others spoke of the importance of voting, e.g., *“It isn’t enough to register Latinos...to vote – they have to actually vote...on a regular basis, be seen at candidate forums, donate...”*

Prioritization of Unmet Needs

Ranked Unmet Needs

Leaders selected from a list of 19 types of services those that are not fully meeting the needs of Latinos in Greater Kansas City. The respondents ranked the five highest priorities for community response. They identified these five service sectors as the areas of highest priority (followed by the percentage of respondents ranking this service as one of the five highest priorities):

- Health care (58%),
- Before and after school programs (44%),
- Low-income housing (44%),
- Employment training (42%), and
- Public transportation (42%).

Broader Concerns

Leaders also identified several concerns beyond single service sectors. They cited the need coordination across services, the prerequisite of enhanced child and adult education for other opportunities, the importance of cultivating Latino leaders, and the acknowledgment of great diversity among Latinos, which results in major differences in their needs for support and assistance.

Youth and Civic Engagement in Kansas City Survey Findings

Introduction

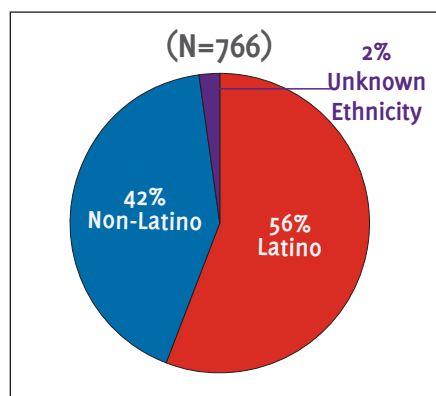
Survey Administration

Six Greater Kansas City high schools with a large enrollment of Latino students allowed UMKC-IHD to administer the *Youth and Civic Engagement in Kansas City Survey* to junior and seniors in February and March of 2013 (See Appendix C). These public high schools in Kansas City, KS participated: J.C. Harmon High School and Wyandotte High School. These high schools from Kansas City, MO participated: Alta Vista Charter School (charter school), Cristo Rey High School (parochial school), East High School (public school), and Northeast High School (public school). Each school chose a paper or electronic version of the survey in English.

Demographic Information

The sample was comprised of 766 youth, 53% female and 47% male. Age ranged from 15 to 19 years, with a median age of 17 years. As shown in Figure E-5, over half of the respondents identified themselves as Latino. While 66% of Latinos and 77% of non-Latinos were born in the U.S., over 80% of parents and grandparents of Latinos were born outside the U.S., compared to 25%-35% of parents and grandparents of non-Latinos. Seventy percent of non-Latino students reported that English is the only language spoken in the home, compared to 8% of Latino students.

Figure E-5 Ethnicity of Youth Respondents

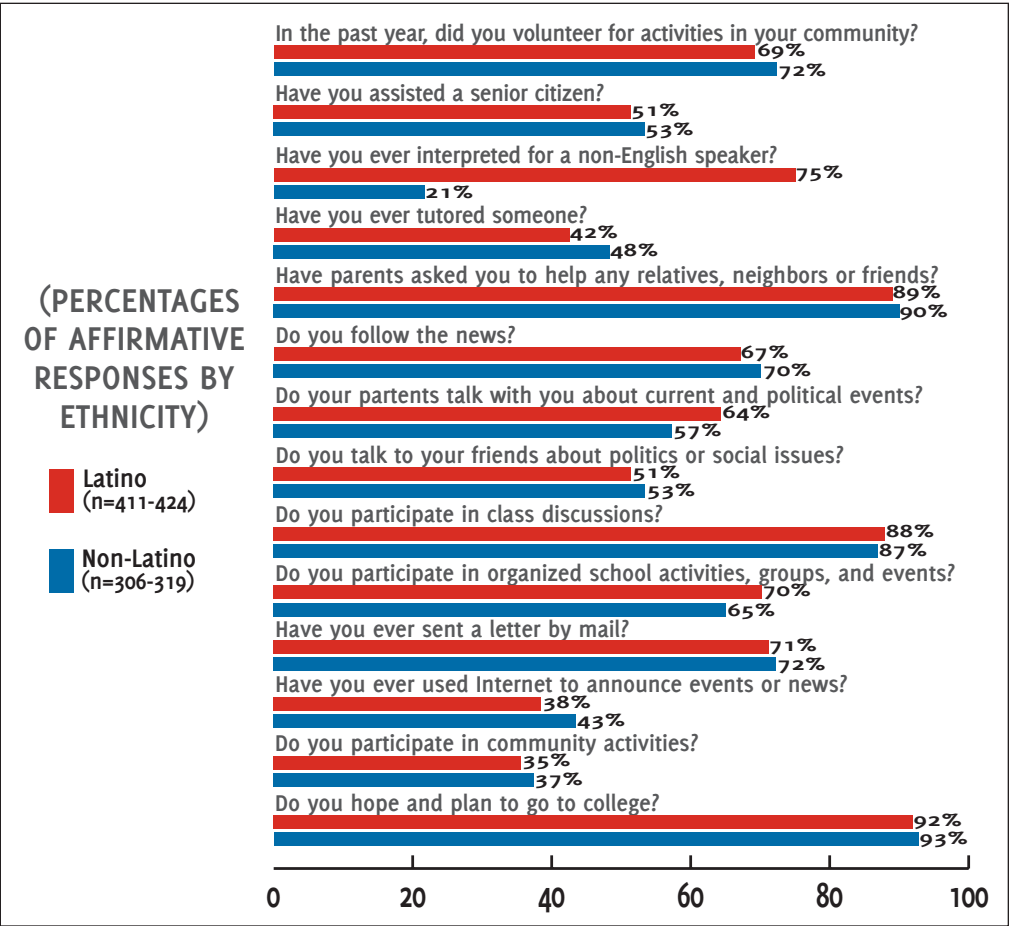


Spheres of Youth Engagement

Most Latino and non-Latino students reported a civic social network that extends from their home to their school and community. Figure E-6 presents the types of civic engagement activities that the highest percentages of respondents reported they did.



Figure E-6 Self-Reported Civic Engagement of Youth Respondents



Conversely, these types of activities involved the participation of only small percentages of students:

- Donating blood,
- Signing an email petition,
- Participating in a public demonstration,
- Belonging to a community organization,
- Serving as an officer of a church or student organization,
- Writing a column for a school newspaper,
- Contacting a legislator,
- Participating in an activity focused on your ethnicity,
- Registering to vote,
- Wearing a button or t-shirt with a political message, and
- Displaying symbols of political or social opinions.

Youth Perceptions of Greater Kansas City

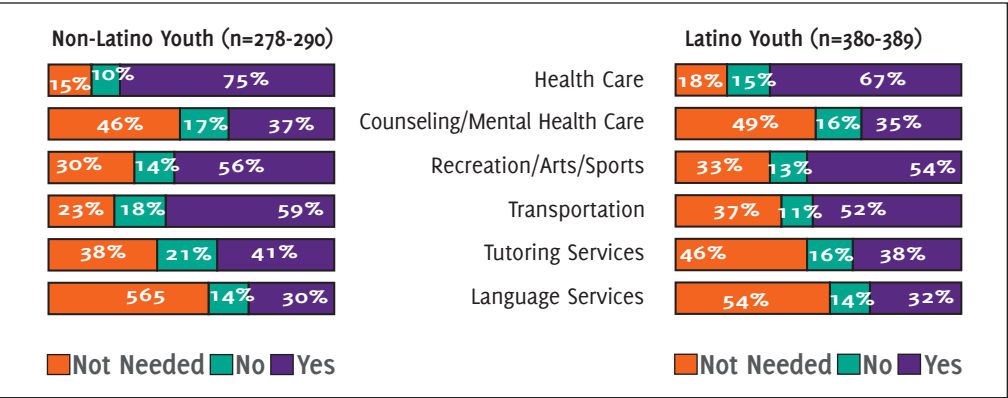
Access to Services and Resources

The youth survey asked the students, “Have you been able to get the kinds of help or services that you need in Kansas City?” They were instructed to check one of these three responses: Check yes if you can get this kind of help that you need; check



no if you cannot get the help that you need; or check not needed if you do not need this kind of help. As documented in Figure E-7, the non-Latino (left) and Latino (right) respondents expressed similar need and access to mental health, recreation, tutoring, and language services. A slightly higher percentage of Latino youth needed health care that they could not access. Approximately half of both groups indicated that they needed mental health care, but one-third of those who needed it could get it. A higher percentage of non-Latino youth reported a need for transportation, including higher percentages of both those who could and those who could not access it.

Figure E-7 Access to Resources for Youth



Youth Perceptions of the “Best Things” about Greater Kansas City

Youth voiced their opinions about two of the best things about Greater Kansas City. Five hundred fifty-five students generated 1,062 positive statements about Greater Kansas City. Their statements focused on these areas:

- The people – including their family and friends, people in the city whom they perceived to be helpful and friendly, and the opportunity to experience diversity in Greater Kansas City;
- The city – including their close communities, the “atmosphere” of Kansas City, the home town feeling of Kansas City, the size of the city and close proximity to the features they need, the varieties of culture represented, and the location and climate;
- Activities and attractions – including entertainment (e.g., Worlds of Fun and Oceans of Fun and the Sprint Center), retail (e.g., the Legends, the Plaza, and malls), participatory and spectator sports, and restaurants (e.g., barbecue); and
- Opportunities – including employment, low cost of living, a good education (noted by 70 students), health care, and health insurance. This is consistent with the aspirations of 92% of respondents who hope and plan to go to college.

Some students recognized Kansas City as a place of opportunity and freedom. Throughout this section, little difference was seen between Latino and non-Latino student comments.

Youth Perceptions of the “Biggest Problems” in Greater Kansas City

Youth also shared their opinions about what they considered to be the two biggest challenges in Greater Kansas City, with 581 students making 1,074 statements. Approximately 44% of the comments pertained to these two primary challenges that reportedly affect people in Greater Kansas City as a whole and its communities, its schools, and its services:

- First, students expressed concern for their **safety** in 471 comments that reference fears and threats of danger, gangs, violence, fear of guns and shoot-

ing, killing, crime, drugs and alcohol, and need for protection. Comments related to issues of danger constitute roughly 44% of the students' comments about perceived challenges in Greater Kansas City.

- Second, youth described the effects of **poverty** on life in Greater Kansas City. Poverty is potentially an impetus for and a result of economic issues, employment issues, homelessness, and the need for improved infrastructure. Interaction between danger and poverty further compounds the issues.



Youth also made 64 references to problematic issues in the **educational system and schools**. They described poor quality of education and identified issues related to cleanliness, maintenance, and resources. Some referred specifically to public school districts and their management, but only one student identified teachers as an issue. These perceptions are consistent with the responses of 22% of students who stated that they had seriously considered dropping out of school.

Sixty responses suggested that there are not enough **youth-focused activities and places to go** in Greater Kansas City. They described the city as boring, with insufficient entertainment and activity in both the city at large and the local community. They mentioned the importance of safe places for youth to have fun.

Other Perceptions of Greater Kansas City

Over half of both Latino and non-Latino students (54% and 56%, respectively) did not know whether city government does what is best for the people in their neighborhood; most of the remaining students perceived that they did not. Additionally, over one-third of Latino and non-Latino students (39% and 34%, respectively) stated that they have experienced racial/ethnic discrimination. The most prevalent area of perceived discrimination among Latino youth was in the police or criminal justice system (44%), compared to the perception among non-Latino youth that discrimination was most frequently in the school system (52%). Despite these perceptions, most Latino and non-Latino youth were *somewhat to very* satisfied living in Greater Kansas City (66% of Latinos and 60% of non-Latinos).

Discussion and Implications

Discussion

Comparison of Needs Assessment Findings: 1988 and 2013

Consistency was seen between 1988 and 2013 in the perceived importance of education, health care, and employment training by both leaders and community members, with health care considered even more important in 2013. Both needs assessments documented challenges associated with low graduation rate, teen pregnancy, limited employment, and legal status. While most challenges reported in 1988 and 2013 were similar, 2013 respondents also accentuated issues related to crime, gangs, and violence.

Comparison of 2010 Census Population and 2013 Needs Assessment Sample

Most 2010 U.S. Census information suggests that this sample was relatively representative of Greater Kansas City Latinos in age, gender, country of origin, education, and employment. The income of the adult survey respondents, however, was lower than the estimated median income of the general Latino population, i.e., adults of middle to upper income were underrepresented. While all of the geographic areas with a high concentration of Latinos were represented in the surveys, Latinos from Kansas were also underrepresented in the sample. The findings were not weighted to adjust for these differences.

Comparison of Responses of Community Members, Leaders, and Youth

Adult community members and high school youth completed surveys focused on their own life experiences and services in Greater Kansas City. By comparison, community leaders completed surveys focused more broadly on the life experiences and services available to Latinos throughout the city. Their responses were quite consistent.

- Roughly half of community members and one-third of Latino youth stated



that they had experienced discrimination, consistent with the perception by over half of the leaders that Latinos face discrimination associated with their ethnicity.

- Both community members and leaders perceived that Latinos did not have sufficient governmental representation, and most youth were unaware of their representation.
- Community members and leaders identified significant unmet service needs in health care (including dental care, mental health care, and medications), education (including before/after school and early childhood programs), adult education and employment supports (including English language classes and employment training), and housing (low-income housing, utility assistance, and emergency shelter). Community members also accentuated the unmet needs of some Latinos for legal services, translation/interpretation services, and food resources.

All survey respondents had the opportunity to identify both assets and challenges for Latinos in Greater Kansas City (adults through checklists and youth through short answer questions).

- Among the strengths identified frequently by both community members and leaders are bilingual language skills, religious participation, strong family relationships, work ethic, cultural diversity, and entrepreneurship. Youth also emphasized the importance of relationships with family and friends and their appreciation of diversity.
- The majority of both community members and leaders cited these challenges for Latinos: low graduation rates, gangs, lack of opportunities and services for undocumented individuals, low adult education level, adult unemployment, teen pregnancy, lack of permanent residency options for working adults and for youth, lack of Latinos in community leadership roles, crime, and family/domestic violence. Youth confirmed challenges related to gangs, crime, and the need for improvement in neighborhoods and schools.

Comparison of Latino and Non-Latino Youth Assessed in 2013

Latino and non-Latino youth reported very similar experiences and perspectives in every section of the survey. The primary demographic distinctions for Latinos were (a) birth of their parents and grandparents outside the U.S. and (b) Spanish being spoken in the home.

Implications

Suggested Next Steps

The following processes and activities are recommended to build on the foundation of the Greater Kansas City Needs Assessment project. The leadership of the LCEC and Greater Kansas City Hispanic Needs Assessment Advisory Committee, the community involvement with UMKC-IHD in the assessment process, and the resulting findings inform the next steps in Greater Kansas City.

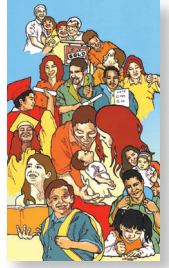
1. Disseminate Information

It is important to build momentum from the support that led to the commissioning of the Hispanic Needs Assessment. The following audiences are proposed as primary recipients of the information: participants in the assessment (staff from participating organizations, volunteers, and respondents), policy makers, potential sponsors and funding sources, leaders and practitioners in all human service sectors, community members (through Latino advocacy groups, neighborhood associations, websites of UMKC-IHD and LCEC and Advisory Committee member organizations, public access through libraries, and communication through the media that assisted in recruitment), and faculty and students.

2. Establish a Coordinated City-Wide Initiative

Both the complex issues that respondents conveyed in the Hispanic Needs Assessment and the types of strategies appropriate to address these issues suggest the merits of considering an integrated collective impact approach. Kania and Kramer offer this depiction of collective impact in their seminal work:

*Collective Impact Initiatives are long-term commitments by a group of important actors from different sectors to a **common agenda** for solving a specific social problem. Their actions are supported by a **shared measurement system, mutually reinforcing activities, and ongoing communication**, and are staffed by an independent **backbone organization** (2011, p. 39).⁶*



The LCEC and other key partners, in fact, demonstrated the long-term commitment of a collective impact approach when they commissioned the needs assessment. Its findings will contribute to a **common agenda** and shared vision that have the potential to enlist champions, sponsors, participants, and allies. Coordination of the initiative can be accomplished through a “**backbone**” or **intermediary organization** that facilitates communication and planning, handles administrative issues and technological needs, documents activities across the initiative, and helps stakeholders see opportunities for positive change facing challenges.

3. Foster Meaningful Ongoing Communication

Coordination of stakeholders’ efforts within and across groups is essential to achieve maximum impact for the Latino population. Involving primary stakeholders (e.g., families, neighborhood members, and front-line employees) will benefit the initiative by keeping decisions and actions grounded in their experiences. In addition to collaborative work at the city-wide level, the following types of groups are projected to fill significant roles in this initiative: geographically defined groups (e.g., separate groups of Greater Kansas City stakeholders from Kansas, Missouri, individual counties, and smaller neighborhood or community catchment areas); groups addressing a specific content area, service sector, or population (e.g., a task force focused on civic engagement, health care, or youth); and individual organizations aligned with the common agenda to address collective issues.

4. Develop and Implement an Overall Plan of Synchronized Activities

It is important to integrate the various activities into one overall plan. Following are some supports to achieve this: the backbone organization (that maintains and distributes updated group plans and overall plan, facilitates communication across groups, and shares resources); the shared measurement system (that facilitates usage of the same instruments, electronic data submission, and real-time data availability for planning); key stakeholders at the city-wide level (who maintain focus on the overall plan, publicize the collective impacts, and give acknowledgment to contributors); and funders (who provide financial support, give public support for the common agenda, and acknowledge successful activities).

5. Integrate Measurement and Evaluation into the Action Plan

Participation of evaluators with stakeholder groups strengthens their capacity to establish measurable goals, collect and analyze data, report findings for informed decision-making, and determine collective impact. Such partnerships assist in creating and documenting sustainable, replicable approaches that address the priorities at each level. Following are additional types of support that researchers and evaluators can contribute to various aspects of the initiative: (a) Conduct implementation research to build strong, sustainable, evidence-based responses to the issues; (b) Measure fidelity to action plans by monitoring processes and outcomes, by using data for continued decision-making, and by measuring indicators of the collective impact across multiple collaborators; (c) Collect additional assess-

⁶ Kania, J., & Kramer, M. (2011, Winter). Collective impact. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, pp. 36-41.



ment data focused on a specified population, issue, or service; (d) Involve students and faculty in further analysis of the archival datasets to extract data relevant to action plans of the various groups; and (e) Assist stakeholder groups in review of up-to-date literature to inform their decisions.

Suggested Priorities

The results of the Hispanic Needs Assessment include multiple perspectives of the assets exhibited by the Latino population, the challenges present in Greater Kansas City, the unmet needs for services experienced by Latinos, and the major priority areas for action.

1. Assets as a Foundation

Respondents ascribed a number of strengths to Latinos in Greater Kansas City: bilingual skills, participation in religious organizations, strong family relationships, work ethic, contributions to cultural diversity, and entrepreneurship. Accentuating these qualities in the community at large, continuing to nourish these qualities among Latinos, and building these qualities into strategies to address challenges is strongly encouraged.

2. Challenges in Greater Kansas City

Community members and leaders concurred that complex social issues as associated with education, safety, legal status, employment, health, leadership, housing, discrimination, and governmental representation affect many Latinos in Greater Kansas City.

3. Unmet Service Needs of Latinos

Both the reported personal experiences of Latinos in Greater Kansas City and the perceptions of leaders indicated the importance of the following services and the difficulties that many experienced in accessing them: health care (including dental health care, mental health care, and medications), extended learning programs (including before/after school programs and early childhood programs), housing (including low-income housing, utility assistance, and emergency shelter), employment training and English language classes, translation and interpretation services, legal services, public transportation (in some areas), and food resources.

4. Major Priority Areas for Action

Informants to the 2013 Hispanic Needs Assessment recommended focused attention on health, education, safety, legal status, employment, and housing and neighborhood development. They desired the following responses in these areas:

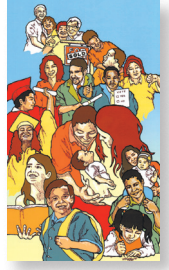
• Health:

- Increase access to affordable health care, dental care, mental health care, and medications.
- Reduce discrimination in health care services.
- Enhance translation and interpretation services in health care.
- Improve physical health of adults.
- Reduce teen pregnancy.
- Address needs related to domestic violence and substance abuse.

• Education:

- Improve high school graduation rates.
- Enhance the quality of schools and invest in additional resources for them.
- Increase youth participation in leadership roles in schools.
- Increase access to high quality before/after school and early childhood programs.
- Increase availability of adult classes and supports to improve English language fluency.
- Improve adult literacy and education.
- Enhance translation and interpretation services in education.

- **Safety:**
 - Improve safety in neighborhoods.
 - Address issues related to gangs, violence, and crime in neighborhoods.
 - Strengthen relationships with law enforcement.
 - Reduce discrimination in law enforcement and criminal justice systems.
 - Enhance translation and interpretation services in law enforcement and criminal justice systems.
 - Decrease incidence of domestic and family violence.
- **Legal Status:**
 - Strengthen relationships with governmental entities to improve quality of life in Greater Kansas City.
 - Improve opportunities and services for undocumented individuals.
 - Develop permanent residency options for working adults and youth.
 - Increase availability of legal assistance.
 - Enhance civic awareness and civic engagement of youth.
- **Employment:**
 - Reduce discrimination in employment.
 - Increase wages for employed adults.
 - Enhance employment opportunities for adults and youth.
 - Increase access to employment training.
- **Housing and Neighborhood Development:**
 - Increase availability of adequate, affordable housing.
 - Improve access to basic services for persons with limited resources, including utility assistance, emergency food, and emergency shelter.
 - Enhance food resources in neighborhoods.
 - Improve neighborhood infrastructure, including street maintenance, lighting, and building maintenance.



The 1988 Hispanic Needs Assessment asked for more Latino organizations to assist with the many needs of the low income Latino people, and as we look around the Greater KC metro, that has certainly been achieved. From the Hispanic Chamber to Samuel Rogers or Mattie Rhodes to HEDC. The dollars of investment for the Latino people are being spent, but the population is growing faster than we can implement [in our] organizations. The Latino leadership needs the established organizations, as well as the Young Latino Professionals and Latinos of Tomorrow. And if all the organization can work together, that will bring a louder united voice to Latino issues. All Latino organizations need to leverage resources and opportunities. We need to...[encourage] city government to employ a staff that is representative of the people it serves. When we have policy makers that care about Latino issues, Latino education, and Latino opportunities, we will see results that reflect the resources applied.

—Gloria Ortiz-Fisher, Executive Director,
Westside Housing Organization

Many organizations and individuals in Greater Kansas City have prioritized these objectives for a long time. While substantial improvements have been made, many Latinos still experience severe challenges in these areas. Furthermore, the issues are interrelated and complex.

Respondents' desired improvements assist in prioritizing the areas of need. They do not, however, articulate the road map for improvement. Innovative, collaborative, integrated, systemic strategies are needed at multiple levels in numerous sectors. The strengths of the Latino population will contribute to the potential for creative solutions and positive impact in these areas as the call for action is embraced.

