



LATINO COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT STUDY

Reflect, Respect, Reengage

2018–2019



About the Project



Since 1964, Latin Americans United for Progress (LAUP) has served the Latino community of the greater Holland/Zeeland area. As the population of this area of Michigan has changed, LAUP sees that we must adapt to better meet the needs of the people we serve.

The Latino Community Engagement Study project began in the spring of 2017 when the LAUP Board of Directors called together community leaders for a dinner conversation about: (1) the top issues facing the Latino community, (2) those involved in the LAUP network, and (3) how LAUP was being seen within the community at that time.

From this study, it was clear that there are many barriers to the Latino population in the greater Holland/Zeeland area becoming more involved, feeling like important members of the community, and achieving what they see as success. These results led then Executive Director, Roberto Jara, to seek funding for a research project where we would ask members of the Latino community to discover the reasons for this.

LAUP received a grant from The Community Foundation of the Holland/Zeeland Area to help Latino residents identify, prioritize, and create strategies to address the obstacles that impede their efforts to achieve success for themselves and their families.

In November 2017, a Project Team and an Advisory Team of Latino community members convened. The Advisory Team helped determine how best to capture the voice of the Latino community.

The resulting Community Outreach Model guided outreach to people both in person and online. We contacted people through the LAUP website, Facebook, and scheduled events such as the LAUP Leadership Conference and Fiesta, as well as through churches, schools, and employers. Over 280 LAUP Community Engagement Surveys were collected, and four Focus Groups were held.

We have compiled the data from responses to the Community Engagement Survey and have discovered some common themes, which we want to share with you in this study.

But first, let's talk a little more in detail about our goals for this project, how we set it up, and what our next steps are.

Our Goal

Our goal is that Latino residents would be able to succeed in their working and personal lives, and assume leadership as integrated members in the greater Holland/Zeeland community.

Our Community

Our community is all persons identifying as Latino/a and their allies within the greater Holland/Zeeland community.

How We Conducted the Study

We actively reached out to the Latino community to better understand *their* definition of — and vision for — success, as well as the obstacles that stand in the way of their hopes and dreams.

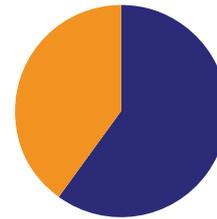
What's Next?

Though we've come away with some important information, we don't want it to stop there. In 2019, our plan is to hold workshops to brainstorm specific ways to help the Latino community engage in and feel a part of the Holland/Zeeland community. These workshops will involve Latino community members telling their stories, as well as local businesses, organizations, and community members listening to these important stories first-hand.



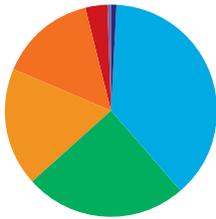
Survey Demographics

GENDER GÉNERO



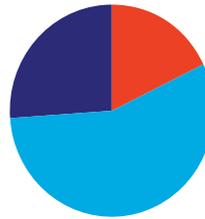
Male (Másculino) 40%
Female (Femenino) 60%

AGE EDAD



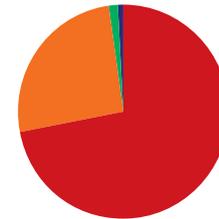
13 - 17	1%	51 - 65	14%
18 - 30	38%	66 - 80	3%
31 - 40	25%	81+	1%
41 - 50	18%		

LANGUAGE IDIOMA



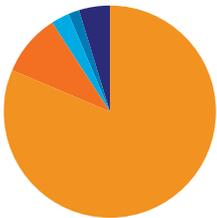
English (Inglés) 18%
Spanish (Español) 56%
Both (Ambios) 26%

MARITAL STATUS ESTADO CIVIL



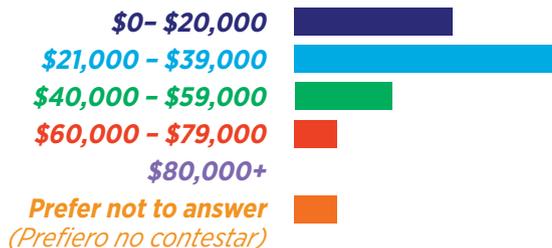
Married (Casado) 72%
Single (Soltero) 25%
Divorced (Divorciado) 2%
Widowed (Viudo) 1%

EMPLOYMENT STATUS ESTADO DE EMPLEO

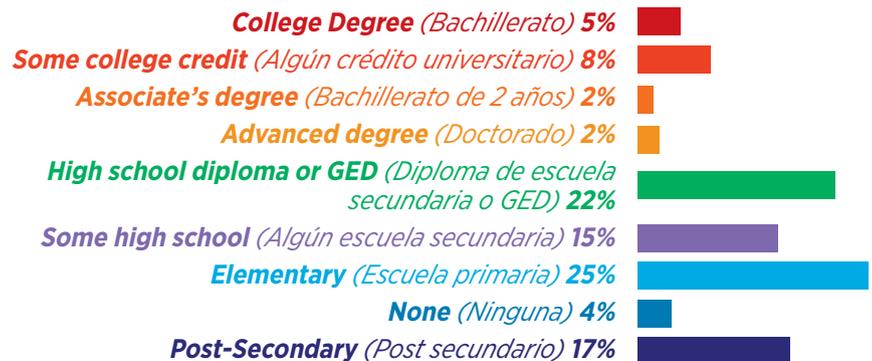


Employed (Empleado) 82%
Un-Employed (Desempleado) 9%
Self-employed (Trabajo por mi propia cuenta) 3%
Student (Estudiante) 2%
Retired (Retirado) 4%

ANNUAL INCOME INGRESO ANUAL



EDUCATION EDUCACIÓN



What We Asked: Survey



We asked the 280+ people who took the survey a variety of questions related to how they view success, and these are some of the most common responses.

Please rank these factors of success in order of importance to you (*Por favor clasifique estos factores en orden de importancia para usted*):

- 1. Having a fulfilling job** (*Tener un trabajo que disfrute*)
- 2. Speaking English fluently** (*Hablar inglés con fluidez*)
- 3. Financial Security** (*Ser financieramente estable*)
- 4. Having strong family connections** (*Tener fuertes conexiones familiares.*)
- 5. Home Ownership** (*Ser propietario de una casa*)
- 6. Having enough time and money to enjoy time outside of work** (*Tener tiempo para disfrutar de las cosas fuera del trabajo*)
- 7. Having money to send my children to college** (*Tener dinero para que mis niños puedan asistir a la universidad*)
- 8. Access to health care/health insurance** (*Tener acceso a servicios de atención médica accesibles*)
- 9. Seeing Latinos in positions of leadership in government, business, community** (*Que los Latinos ocupan puestos de autoridad en el gobierno local, estatal, nacional*)
- 10. Having enough money to start a business** (*Tener suficiente dinero para empezar un negocio*)

In your opinion, List up to three obstacles keeping Latinos from being successful in our community (*En su opinión, enumere tres impedimentos que a los Latinos les evita que tenga éxito en nuestra comunidad*):

- 1. Language** (*idioma*): **“We need more availability and access to free or low-cost ESL classes.”** (*“Necesitamos más disponibilidad y acceso a clases de ESL gratuitas o de bajo costo.”*)
- 2. Immigration issues** (*inmigración*): **“Family separations are extremely traumatic and make life very difficult.”** (*“La separación de familias es extremadamente traumática y hace la vida muy difícil.”*)
- 3. Racism/discrimination** (*el racismo/discriminación*): **“There are many misconceptions about Latinos. We are proud of who we are.”** (*“Hay muchos conceptos erróneos acerca de los latinos. Estamos orgullosos de quienes somos.”*)

What We Heard: Focus Groups



We also had in-person discussions with four different focus groups in the Holland/Zeeland area this spring. The following are some of the most common topics discussed.



The language barrier is difficult to overcome. There should be more availability of ESL classes.

La barrera lingüística es difícil superar. Debería haber más clases de ESL.



There are closed-minded citizens and discrimination in our community.

Hay ciudadanos de mente cerrada y discriminación en nuestra comunidad.



We need more effective communication from organizations providing resources. "I would take advantage of the services available to me, but I honestly didn't know they existed."

Necesitamos comunicación más efectiva de las organizaciones que proveen recursos. "Aprovecharía los servicios disponibles, pero honestamente no sabía que existían."



There is a strong sense of pride in the Latino community and work ethic. "We are excellent and honest employees."

Hay un fuerte sentido de orgullo en la comunidad latina y la ética de trabajo. "Somos empleados excelentes y honestos."



We need to empower children and teens, and teach them to value education over a job after high school.

Necesitamos capacitar a los niños y adolescentes, y enseñarles a valorar la educación en un trabajo después de la escuela secundaria.



We don't feel included as part of the downtown community. "There are no Latino businesses downtown, and you never see any Latino families there."

No nos sentimos incluidos como parte de la comunidad del centro. "No hay negocios latinos en el centro de la ciudad, y nunca se ve familias latinas allí."

What's Next?



Now that we have this important information from many of our Latino community members, we plan to work together to come up with specific ways to help the Latino community engage in and feel a part of the Holland/Zeeland community.

LAUP Community Voice & Vision Conversation

In the spring of 2019, we plan to hold an event, or series of events, to give Latino residents the opportunity to share their concerns, their stories, and how they define success. Agencies and organizations in our community will also be invited to attend and hear these responses first-hand.

Our hope is to come together as a community to mutually determine current issues with the most impact on community success for the Latino population in the greater Holland/Zeeland area. There will also be opportunity to learn, to interact with each other, and network.

How can you help?

We'd love for you to get involved with LAUP if you're passionate about making positive changes in our community! There are a variety of ways for you to stay updated:



laup.org

sign up for our email newsletter | *donate*

We want to say a special thank-you to the following people for their work on this project:

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