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Michigan Citizen Education Fund awarded grant for outreach efforts

Local Nonprofit teams up with Census

KALAMAZOO, Mich. – The Michigan Citizen Education Fund (MCEF) of Kalamazoo received a \$15,000 grant to support their efforts to increase participation in hard-to-count communities during the 2010 census.

The grant, awarded by the Nonprofits Count! in Michigan campaign, will support public education efforts to reach members of undercounted communities about the importance of a complete census count.

“Public education is essential for a complete count,” said Sam Singh, census consultant for Michigan Nonprofit Association (MNA). “Nonprofits are in a unique position to communicate with the people who go in and out of their doors everyday – historically undercounted residents. These grantees were selected as critical advocates to advance our community outreach activities for the 2010 census.”

MCEF educates the public, members of the legislature and members of their sister organization, Michigan Citizen Action (MCA) regarding issues that strengthen social, economic and health security for all Michigan citizens.

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Increasing the capacity of Michigan’s nonprofits to serve, strengthen and transform communities.

Michigan Nonprofit Association is affiliated with Michigan Campus Compact and Volunteer Centers of Michigan

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“Over the years, staff and volunteers have hit the streets of Michigan communities, going door to door talking to tens of thousands of residents about the economy and strengthening the middle class,” said Linda Teeter, executive director for MCEF. “We’ve found the best way to engage and mobilize the hard-to-count population is to build a compelling issue program that is based on the concerns they face each day, and share these issues through voter-to-voter interaction.”

MCEF will focus its efforts in precincts that have a higher propensity of hard-to-count residents, including areas that have a higher number of foreclosures, vacancy rates, percentage of renters and number of people living in a household.

MCEF’s public education campaign includes an active community outreach plan, with plans to partner with other nonprofit organizations, neighborhood groups, faith based organizations, social service agencies, drop-in clinics, family health centers, and businesses that typically serve the hard-to-count individuals.

“MCEF is poised to help increase the final mail response rate by engaging in systematic, direct, and personal contacts with residents, elected officials, and community organizations,” Teeter said. “These collaborative community partnerships will assist MCEF in educating residents about the importance of completing and mailing back their 2010 census form.”

In addition to door-to-door education activities, MCEF is planning to partner and/or sponsor educational events to promote participation in the census.

The results of the 2010 Census will affect the dispersion of federal funds, political representation, public infrastructure and private investment. For every 100 people not counted, a community risks losing an estimated \$1.2 million over the next decade for federally funded programs alone.

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About the Michigan Citizen Education Fund

The core purpose of Michigan Citizens Education Fund (MCEF) is to educate, mobilize, and support citizens of Michigan. MCEF's successful history is rooted in educating the public, members of the legislature and members of our sister organization, Michigan Citizen Action (MCA), regarding issues that strengthen social, and economic security of all Michigan citizens.

About Michigan Nonprofit Complete Count Committee

Nonprofits Count! is a campaign to mobilize nonprofits to get involved in making sure that every person is counted, with a special emphasis on hard-to-count communities. In Michigan, MNA has organized a statewide Nonprofit Complete Count Committee to guide its work with the 2010 Census initiative. For more information and to view a list of committee members, visit www.MNAonline.org/census.asp.

About Michigan Nonprofit Association

Michigan Nonprofit Association (MNA) increases the capacity of Michigan's nonprofits to serve, strengthen and transform communities. With nearly 1,200 members, MNA serves as a statewide network for the sector, a resource center on effective management practices, and as an advocate for the nonprofit community. For more information, visit www.MNAonline.org.

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