



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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2-1-1 Helpline teams up with Census **Lansing nonprofit awarded grant for outreach efforts**

LANSING, Mich. – Michigan 2-1-1, a nonprofit organization based in Lansing, received a \$10,000 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 MNA Extension Partner grantees were selected as critical advocates to advance our community outreach activities for the 2010 census.”

Michigan 2-1-1, a health and human services equivalent of 9-1-1, serves more than 80 percent of the Michigan population by providing general support information for residents. Michigan 2-1-1 will be pairing with an 800 number to ensure residents not covered in the 2-1-1 network are able to receive information. In 2009 alone, 2-1-1 has received more than 600,000 calls.

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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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“2-1-1 serves as a number folks can call for information when they have questions about everything ranging from access to basic needs like food and shelter to information about availability of specific programs for young children,” said Sherry Miller, director of Michigan 2-1-1. “Because we so frequently hear from residents in hard-to-count areas, it seems natural to incorporate census education efforts into the 2-1-1 helpline.”

Certified specialists work from a comprehensive database of health and human services available and are able to direct callers to specific programs and services in their neighborhoods. Specialists will be trained to answer questions related to the 2010 census.

“With any public information campaign, remembering another number to call for information is hard, but remembering 2-1-1 is simple,” said Miller. “We want to make it easy for residents to get the information they need to participate in the census.”

Michigan 2-1-1 will provide callers with directions and locations of “Be Counted” and “Questionnaire Assistance Centers” as well as information about census related events in their communities.

“The vast majority of callers are low-income individuals and families with questions and concerns,” Miller said. “The 2-1-1 helpline offers an opportunity to have conversations and get answers about the census, what the data is used for, why it’s important, and what a complete count means to their community and the state of Michigan.”

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

About Michigan 2-1-1

Michigan 2-1-1 is a nonprofit organization established in 2005. Nationally, statewide and locally, there is a continuing close connection between United Way, nationally a source of ongoing funds for more call centers, and 2-1-1 Call Centers in Michigan. This commitment to 2-1-1 aligns with United Way’s focus on making systems change in community conditions to address social issues. For more information on 2-1-1 visit <http://uwmich.org/2-1-1>.

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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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