

Pottawattamie County Latino Needs Assessment

Findings and Recommendations

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Context: Latinos in Pott County by the Numbers:

Based on ACS 2017 5 Year Averages
Latinos:

Are almost 8% of the population

MHI 25% less than county as a whole

Twice as many live below the poverty line

70% over age 16 are in the workforce

Methodology

- 56 one-on-one and small group interviews with members of the Latino community
- 37 non-profit and government agencies and employers interviewed
- Secondary data from US Census, Pott County Assessor, Iowa Sec. of State, and the Iowa Dept. of Education

Community Belonging: Challenges

- Lack of bilingual services
- Sense of isolation in rural communities
- Increased racist and xenophobic rhetoric

Paradox: Latinos are highly visible but highly marginalized in the affairs and decision-making of their communities

Housing: Challenges

- Latinos in Council Bluffs are over-represented in poorer census block groups
- Latino homeowners under-engaged in community revitalization
- Difficulty accessing mortgages
- Poor quality and unhealthy rentals for the most marginalized

Workforce Development and Entrepreneurship: Challenges

- Employee retention a challenge
- Few paths for advancement
- Pattern of leaving employment in order to recuperate
- Childcare challenges
- Financial and human capital barriers to entrepreneurship

Education: Challenges

- Need for districtwide services in Spanish
- Need for school building level liaisons who speak Spanish
- Racially and ethnically motivated bullying

Recommendations

- Centro Latino expansion to amplify the current work in building community
- Centro Latino as service navigator and advocate
- Centro Latino as builder of civic capacity



Thank You!

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