

For Immediate Release

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Wind of the Spirit Census 2020 Morris County Stakeholder Meeting How Will We Get Out the Count?

**Please join us for this community resource education and organizing meeting
and learn how you can help**

Morristown NJ. Census 2020 is right around the corner and there is a lot at stake in New Jersey. Our roads, environment, healthcare, housing, food, schools, social services-- all depend on billions of federal dollars. In fiscal year 2016, New Jersey received more than \$22.7 billion. Our proposed budget is \$38.6 billion. Our communities may also be affected by cuts in political representation if everyone is not counted. If we all are not counted, the whole state will suffer.

Consider how you would like to participate in defining how our democracy works for all of us. How can you better understand what's happening? What can you do to get involved as a resident of a Morris County community?

Wind of the Spirit will host a Stakeholder Meeting on Wednesday, June 26, 2019 at 6:30 pm at the Morristown United Methodist Church-on-the-Green, 50 South Park Place. Please RSVP if you plan to join us at census@windofthespirit.net.

Melissa Elias, who is co-coordinating the Census 2020 effort for Wind of the Spirit said, "The New Jersey effort is led by the NJ State Complete Count Commission and the US Census Bureau. Wind of the Spirit, as a member the New Jersey Counts Coalition Steering Committee, is spearheading Morris County efforts. We have identified, prioritized and are formulating plans and preparing to take action to educate and engage each of our historically Hard to Count communities--our Black and African-American, Asian and Latino populations, children 0-5, renters, veterans, our seniors, immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers, non-English speakers. Wind of the Spirit is also coordinating with other outreach efforts around the state."

Brian Lozano, Lead Organizer for the Morristown based organization, added, "The 2020 Census comes with an additional set of potential challenges in collecting the data. It will be the first digital census that will use a system that is raising privacy, cyber security and access concerns. Depending on a Supreme Court decision expected this month, it may include a citizenship question that is expected to hinder participation in our immigrant communities."

Diana Mejia, co-founder of Wind of the Spirit, continued, saying, "We need your help in this important communication, education, awareness and partnership campaign. Municipalities, elected officials, social service and faith based organizations, libraries and others we have identified can all help us to get out the count of our hard to count populations. "

Melissa Elias added, “We must all work together to unite our communities and activate our best human potential and capacity for goodness and respect, and engender trust. Many among us are trusted entities with well-established relationships and frequent contact with residents of our Hard-to-Count communities and some who speak our communities’ languages. We all play a critical role that will help New Jersey to achieve a fair and accurate Census 2020 count. All are welcome.”

Brian Lozano noted that “Although there are bills that have been introduced in the New Jersey legislature to increase funding, as of today only \$500,000 has been set aside to support the 2020 Census. We all have great ideas and plans for how to reach, educate and engage with members of our hard to count communities about the importance of the Census, and we need financial support to sponsor this important work.”

Diana Mejia concluded, “If you would be able to make a donation, we would be most grateful. Please visit our website at <http://wotsnj.org/> and click on the Donate button, and note ‘Census’ in the description box. For more information or to learn more about what we are doing and get involved, you may call Brian Lozano at 973-295-7893 or Missy Elias at 201-220-4495, or email us at census@windofthespirit.net . With all of our best wishes, our thanks and appreciation of your generosity and caring about getting the Census 2020 Count right. We look forward to seeing you on June 26.”



Wind of the Spirit
Immigrant Resource Center, N.J.

At Wind of the Spirit, we aim to insure justice and inclusion for immigrant communities through community organizing and advocacy, legal services, and health and safety initiatives. These services are available to all who hope to further our cause.

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