

*A Report to Greater Lafayette Commerce
and the Diversity Roundtable*

ASPIRING A CULTURE THAT VALUES DIVERSITY



Executive Report

FEBRUARY 2010

A Report to the Diversity Roundtable: Aspiring a Culture that Values Diversity

February 2010

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- The City of West Lafayette, IN

Gregory Gibson and John Stahura set up and managed the telephone interviews. Jennifer Stephens and JoAnn Miller analyzed the data and prepared the report. They are all associated with the Department of Sociology, Purdue University.

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**An Abstract of the Greater Lafayette Community Diversity Survey, its Findings,
its Limitations and Suggestions for Additional Inquiry**

A Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) survey was conducted to measure perceptions of community diversity in the Greater Lafayette, IN area. The data were collected in the Fall of 2009. This report is delivered to Greater Lafayette Commerce and the Diversity Roundtable.

The CATI survey includes questionnaire items that measure the respondent's background characteristics, perceptions of changes in the community diversity climate, comfort with diversity, and perceptions of equal opportunity.

Overall, perceptions are favorable. Respondents from underrepresented minority groups, however, are much less likely to perceive equal opportunity compared to white respondents.

This report concludes with a summary of key findings and a summary of the survey's limitations. It makes suggestions for additional inquiry, especially interviews with members of underrepresented minority groups. It invites Greater Lafayette Commerce and the Diversity Roundtable to present and discuss findings with major stakeholders within the community.



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About the 2010 Survey

The Diversity Roundtable (DRT) grew from recommendations made in the “Vision 2020: A Plan for the Future” report. DRT’s vision is “A Community that Values Diversity.” *Leadership, Education, and Awareness* are its three action areas.

The Vision 2020 committee and the DRT held several meetings and sponsored activities over the recent decade. In 2009, Greater Lafayette Commerce and the Diversity Roundtable made a commitment to measure the diversity climate in the Greater Lafayette area. Financial contributions from Greater Lafayette Commerce, major corporations, a foundation, Purdue University, Ivy Tech University, and the three local governments – Lafayette, West Lafayette, and Tippecanoe County – made possible the collection of empirical data.

Households throughout Tippecanoe County were randomly selected to respond to phone interviews. The results of the survey are intended to be used as benchmarks against which progress in achieving a community culture that values diversity can be measured in future years.

All telephone sample survey methods have limitations and 2010 diversity survey is no exception. Three sample limitations are especially important to consider. First, households without telephones are not included in the sample of respondents. Thus, all segments of the general population that subscribe exclusively to cell phone service are likely to be under represented by this survey. Second, the sample’s educational attainment exceeds that of the general population. Most likely this reflects the notion that persons most interested in discussing diversity issues are well educated and therefore agreed to the phone interview.

The sample’s sociodemographic characteristics were compared to the county’s 2008 characteristics. With the exception of Hispanics or Latinos, the sample represents the race and ethnic composition of the Tippecanoe County population. Thus, the third major limitation of this diversity survey is the potential underrepresentation of Hispanics or Latinos. Because all respondents self-reported their race or ethnicity, and a known percentage reported bi- or multi- racial or ethnic backgrounds, it is possible, but not likely, that Latinos or Hispanics are represented in the sample proportionate to their distribution in the general population.

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The Purpose of the Survey was Threefold

1. To provide a concise view of Greater Lafayette's general population perceptions of diversity
2. To provide baseline data for future comparisons
3. To provide the Diversity Roundtable information to address diversity successes, challenges, and needs

A Sample Survey of the General Population

Five hundred adults in the general population of Tippecanoe County were surveyed by telephone in the Fall of 2009. For the purpose of representing Greater Lafayette women and men equally, a subsample of 366 adults, or 73 percent of the completed surveys, make up the sample used for data analysis.¹

The data analysis sample

183 men 183 women

A random digit dialing method was used in the Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) lab in the Department of Sociology at Purdue University to generate the sample of respondents and to obtain the data.²

With the permission of Alysa Rollock, Vice President for Ethics and Compliance, Purdue University, questionnaire items from the Purdue 2006 Diversity Assessment Study were used in this survey. The items are therefore reliable and can be used in future surveys to measure changes over time in achieving a culture that values diversity.

The Respondents

Length of Residence:

- 62 % have lived in the area for 16 years or longer
- 34% have lived in the area between 2 and 15 years

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- Less than 5 % have lived in the area for less than 2 years

Tippecanoe County and the Greater Lafayette Community have a history of housing stability. For example, the U.S. Census Bureau reports that 38.3 percent of the population lived in the same homes between 1995 and 2000.

Race and Ethnicity:

- 89 % are White
- 3.3 % are African American or Black
- 3.9% are Hispanic or Latino
- 3.7 % are Asian, Asian American, biracial, or multiracial

The respondents closely represent the County's 2008 population,³ with the exception of Hispanics and Latinos, who are likely underrepresented in the survey. They make up 7.3 percent of the area's general population

Age and Family Status:

- Age
- 3 % are in the 18 – 22 year age range
- 8.4 % are in the 23 – 30 year age range
- 74 % are in the 31-61 year age range
- 14.6 % are 62 or older
- Family Status
- 61 % are married with children
- 12 % are married or live with a partner and do not have children
- 10 % are single parents
- 17 % are single with no children

Educational Attainment:

- 2 % completed some high school
- 22 % earned the high school diploma or GED

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- 22 % completed some college or the AA degree
- 54 % completed a 4-year college degree or an advanced degree

The respondents are more educated than the general population. Thirty-three percent of the general population in Tippecanoe County, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, has attained a college or advanced degree. The difference in educational attainment reported here is due to the random digit dialing and CATI methods for sampling and data collection. Those who answer the interviewer's call are likely to be more interested in diversity. The interviewer's introductory comment to each respondent is: "We are conducting a survey on diversity in the Greater Lafayette area ... Do you have time now to answer some questions?"

Employment:

- 65 % of respondents are employed⁴
- 75 % of respondents' partners or spouses are employed

Disabilities:

- 10 % report having a disability of some type
 - 7 % have disabilities that limit their physical abilities
 - 2.2 % have emotional or behavioral health disabilities

The percent of persons with a disability is close to what the U.S. Census Bureau reports for the Greater Lafayette area (12 percent).

In Summary: Respondents are ...

- Well educated
- Long-term residents of the Greater Lafayette area
- Representative of the General Population in Tippecanoe County with the possible exception of Latinos or Hispanics

The Survey: Community Diversity Climate

Respondents were asked five questions to summarize perceptions of the community's diversity climate. "Since the year 2000, how has the diversity climate changed?"

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1. ... for me personally
2. ... for me at work
3. ... for others at work
4. ... for women at work
5. ... for people of color

Answers were coded on a five point scale, ranging from code 1, “significantly more negative,” to code 5, “significantly more positive.” Three categories were made by collapsing the responses: (1) The climate is more positive now, (2) It stayed the same, and (3) The climate is more negative now.

About 50 percent of the respondents perceive that “for me personally,” “for me at work,” and “for others at work” the diversity climate is about the same now as it was in 2000. The majority of respondents, between 85 and 92 percent, perceive that the diversity climate has stayed the same or become more positive.

Since the year 2000, how has the climate changed if at all?	More Positive	Stayed the Same	More Negative
For me, personally	35.10 %	51.80 %	13.10 %
For me, personally, at work	33.60 %	54.40 %	12.00 %
For others at work	35.90 %	49.10 %	15.00 %
For women at work	44.80 %	47.70 %	7.40 %
For people of color	48.90 %	44.00 %	7.10 %

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These five single items or questions provide glimpses of how respondents perceive different elements of a diversity climate. The single items are not, however, as helpful as a factor or a scale that summarizes a complex concept such as diversity climate.

Thus, responses to the five items were analyzed with factor analysis and with the creation of an additive scale. In this report, the additive scale is used.⁵ Interpreting the scale is straightforward because it is the sum of five responses. It is a highly reliable measure. The Chronbach's Alpha (a measure of reliability) is .81 on a scale of 0 – 1.0.

Community Diversity Climate Scale

The analysis of the diversity climate scale gives the Greater Lafayette Community relatively good news to celebrate. The average score on the diversity climate scale is 17, based on a 5 – 25 point scale. Many of the respondents' characteristics are associated with high diversity climate scale scores.

The youngest and the oldest age groups have higher scores than those in the 23-61 age group. Length of residency in the area shows an interesting pattern. Those who are newcomers – living in the area for less than two years – and those who have lived in the area for 16 years or longer have high scores on the diversity climate scale.

Community Diversity Climate Scale (5 – 25)	Average	Standard Deviation
Racial/Ethnic Group		
African American or Hispanic or Latino	18.14	3.44
White	16.70	3.10
Other	14.78	2.17
Age Group		
18-22	17.86	3.02
23-30	15.50	2.48
31-45	16.63	2.64
46-61	16.73	3.53
62 or over	17.88	2.87
Educational Attainment*		
No College Degree	16.11	3.51
College or Advanced Degree	17.12	2.77
Disability		
Has Disability	18.33	3.08
No Disability	16.66	3.12

*p < .01

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The Survey: Comfort with Diversity

Respondents answered 16 questions focused on how comfortable they are interacting with people who are different from themselves. All responses were coded on a 5 point scale, ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” The questions are divided into three groups.

1. How comfortable are you interacting with individuals ...
 - a. Of a different culture
 - b. Of a different religion
 - c. Of a different race or ethnicity
2. How comfortable are you interacting with a work supervisor ...
 - a. Of a different age
 - b. Who has a different disability status than mine
 - c. Of a different gender
 - d. Who has a different national origin than mine
 - e. With a different sexual orientation than mine
3. How comfortable are you interacting with a work colleague ...
 - a. Of a different age
 - b. With a different disability status than mine
 - c. Of a different gender
 - d. Of a different culture
 - e. Of a different national origin
 - f. Of a different religion
 - g. Of a different race or ethnicity
 - h. Of a different sexual orientation

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Responses to all 16 questions were equally weighted and combined to create an additive or summary scale that measures Comfort with Diversity. The scale is a highly reliable measure. The Chronbach's Alpha (a measure of reliability) is .96 on a scale of 0 – 1.0.

Comfort with Diversity Scale

Respondents in the Greater Lafayette Area are very comfortable interacting with individuals, work supervisors, and work colleagues who are somehow different than themselves. The average Comfort with Diversity scale for men and for women is 71 on a scale that ranges from 16 to 80 points. The only major difference is found across education levels. Women and men who have achieved a college or advanced degree are most comfortable.

Comfort with Diversity Scale (16-80)	Average	Standard Deviation
Racial/Ethnic Group		
African American or Hispanic or Latino	70.00	7.70
White	70.99	8.67
Other	72.86	10.06
Age Group		
18-22	67.83	13.36
23-30	72.75	7.55
31-45	70.83	8.06
46-61	71.20	8.08
62 or over	66.13	7.02
Educational Attainment*		
No College Degree	68.49	8.36
College or Advanced Degree	72.40	7.76
Disability		
Has Disability	68.57	10.83
No Disability	70.99	8.12

*p < .01

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The Survey: Equal Opportunity and Reverse Discrimination

A question in the survey asked respondents, “In Tippecanoe County, there is equal opportunity for each person to achieve his or her goals.” Answers were coded on a five point scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (coded 1) to “strongly agree” (coded 5) and collapsed into three categories “agree,” “neutral,” or “disagree.” The overall perception of equal opportunity is more positive for some groups than others. Eighty-three percent of white respondents perceive equal opportunity in the Greater Lafayette area. Yet only 59 percent of African American, Latino or Hispanic, or other ethnic groups perceive equal opportunity.

There is a large and statistically significant race and ethnicity difference in perceptions of equal opportunity. Additional inquiry is necessary to understand perceptions of equal opportunity. Are perceptions based on experiences in the workplace? Are they based on housing or educational opportunities? What actions should be taken to increase perceptions of equal opportunity across all segments of the general population?

There is Equal Opportunity for Each Person to Achieve His or Her Goals			
Race or Ethnicity	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
White	83.1 %	4.80 %	12.10 %
African American / Latino or Hispanic / Other	59.5 %	8.1 %	32.40 %

*p < .01

Respondents were asked to react to the statement “‘Reverse discrimination’ plays a role in decisions made in Tippecanoe County.” Although there are differences across the race and ethnicity groups, they are not statistically significant. Education significantly

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affects perceptions. Those with college or advanced degree are likely to disagree with a reverse discrimination claim.

"Reverse Discrimination" Plays a Role in Decisions in the County		<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
Gender				
	Female	44.10 %	10.50 %	45.40 %
	Male	46.40 %	10.60 %	43.00 %
Race / Ethnicity				
	White	44.80 %	10.40 %	44.80 %
	African American or Latino or Hispanic or Other	47.10 %	11.80 %	41.20 %
Education*				
	No College Degree	55.60 %	4.90 %	39.40 %
	College or Advanced Degree	36.00 %	15.50 %	48.40 %

*p < .05

The Survey: Talking about and Working on Creating an Inclusive Work or Leisure Environment

Respondents were asked to respond to two questions, using “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree” answers.

- a. I generally feel comfortable talking with my family and friends about diversity issues.
- b. I am interested in learning how to create a more inclusive work or leisure environment.

Ninety-five percent of all respondents agree or strongly agree with the notion that they are comfortable talking about diversity and 66 percent would like to work on learning how to create a more inclusive work or leisure environment. There are no significant differences in responses that are based on gender, race, or educational attainment.

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A Summary of Key Findings

- *The respondents who participated in the Greater Lafayette Community Diversity survey represent the general population, with the possible exception of Latino and Hispanic persons.*
- *Race and ethnic groups express large and significant differences in perceptions of equal opportunities.*
- *The overall diversity climate in the Greater Lafayette area is relatively positive.*
- *The general population perceives that the diversity climate has improved or stayed the same over the last decade for women at work and people of color.*
- *The Greater Lafayette community thinks diversity is important and the population is eager to learn how to increase the value of diversity at work and in leisure activities.*
- *The general population expresses comfort with people unlike themselves as work supervisors and work colleagues. Women and those with high levels of educational attainment are most comfortable.*
- *Two-thirds of all respondents would like to learn how to create a more inclusive work or leisure environment.*

A Summary of the Survey's Limitations and Proposals for Additional Inquiry

- *All minority groups are likely underrepresented by this community diversity telephone survey.*
- *No telephone survey can capture the experiences and perceptions of being an underrepresented minority group member in the community.*
- *Underrepresented minority group members need to be interviewed with a focus group format or face-to-face interviews for the purpose of understanding perceptions and experiences. Only then can suggestions for actions be taken to improve circumstances and therefore perceptions of equal opportunity in the Greater Lafayette area.*

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- *The community diversity survey is a beginning and not a conclusion. It is an invitation for the Diversity Roundtable and Greater Lafayette Commerce to consider its key findings and draft action plans that can be presented to all the major stakeholders in the community.*



End Notes

¹ All of the 183 men surveyed are included. Of the 317 women interviewed, 183 were matched by age and race to the men and included in the sample of respondents that is analyzed for the survey. JoAnn Miller requested an oversampling of underrepresented minority groups. However, the persons responsible for the CATI survey did not oversample such groups.

² Gregory Gibson programmed the CATI survey, with items provided by JoAnn Miller, and John Stahura managed the sampling and data collection. All are associated with the Department of Sociology, Purdue University.

³ State & County QuickFacts, U.S. Census Bureau, 2008 estimates

⁴ Others are students and not employed, at-home parents, unemployed, or retired.

⁵ Additive scales are used throughout this report.