2020 IMPACT REPORT

We Count Oregon
# Table of Contents

- Executive Summary ......................................................... 2-6
- Education & Training ....................................................... 7-9
- Community Outreach ....................................................... 10-12
- Indigenize the Census ..................................................... 13-15
- Amplifying Impact .......................................................... 16-24
- Campaign Reflections ...................................................... 25-28
- Thank You Partners & Funders .......................................... 29-31
- Appendix ........................................................................... 32
Executive Summary

Mission

#WeCountOregon (WCO) was a statewide hard-to-count (HTC) community-led campaign focused on engaging Oregon’s HTC communities by disrupting outdated power structures ensuring all Oregonians were counted in the 2020 census.

Approach

WCO supported our communities by providing information and training to galvanize their civic agency. We forwarded a narrative designed to change behavior that enabled our communities to see that responding to the census is a way to directly engage in democracy.

Campaign Strategy

Educations & Training
Provide census training to community organizations, government agencies, businesses, elected officials, and community members.

Community Engagement & Field Activation
Contact 200k hard-to-count Oregonians by phone during a 100-day campaign.

Indigenize the Census
Coordinate with all nine Tribes through a trusted Native and Tribal ambassador to provide resources and support for Tribes to develop their census engagement strategies centered in culture.

Amplification & Communications
Develop customized persuasive messages in multiple languages, train spokespeople, implement digital, radio, TV campaigns, and host community-centered events.
We Count Oregon

The We Count Oregon (WCO) campaign was intentionally designed to center the communities that have historically and intentionally been left out of the census process. This campaign brought together people of color-led social justice organizations with deep roots in undercounted communities to develop and implement a culturally responsive, grassroots campaign that strengthened equity and removed barriers to census information and civic participation. Little did we know that We Count Oregon would be implementing this urgent work in what became one of the most challenging and politically fraught moments with the COVID-19 pandemic, national uprisings for the Black Lives Matter movement stemming from the murder of George Floyd, and unprecedented wildfires.

We Count Oregon was the first BIPOC-led campaign in the history of Oregon state-wide campaigns. The WCO campaign determined that addressing race head on was central to empowering HTC communities to participate. Through a multi-pronged strategy, in partnership with HTC-led organizations and community ambassadors, we made the connection between participating in the census and money, power, and representation.

This campaign was particularly unique due to the support of a coalition of public and private funders. The unprecedented accomplishments we achieved in spite of situational barriers was supported by the vision, political advocacy, and funding of the Census Equity Funders Committee of Oregon (CEFCO). This pooled fund of Oregon’s non-profit philanthropic leaders understands that hard-to-count communities are rightfully apathetic and skeptical of the government and can only be reached through trusted community ambassadors. Through a competitive RFP process, Dancing Hearts Consulting, a Black-woman led civic and political strategy consulting firm was hired to co-create and implement a campaign by and for Oregon’s hard-to-count communities.
Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) have been woefully undercounted in the United States' census counts. Historically, the intentional exclusion of these communities ensured that political power was concentrated among white Americans. The legacy and impact of the census' bias reinforced systemic oppression of communities of color, Native peoples, and rural populations. The legacy of these acts means the interests of white, wealthy, landowning people have historically been, and currently are, better represented in many facets of Oregon life.

Under-counting BIPOC and under-represented groups perpetuates a false narrative about population demographics that is codified in unjust political representation, policies, and federal budget resource allocation. The census' headcount impacts who has political power and who does not. When BIPOC communities are undercounted -- the result is an American culture and democracy that is inequitable.

Over the course of the 2020 Census process, exclusionary policies were repeatedly forwarded by the federal administration. For example, the White House’s July 21, 2020 memo attempting to exclude undocumented people, in spite of the constitutional mandate to count all people in the U.S.; not extending the date the census numbers are due to the president in spite of a global pandemic; ending the census count early; and the debate about including a citizenship question early on in the process. These tactics were designed to continue the legacy of inequality. Our communities know these tactics well. Our campaign was explicitly designed because of them. We did not let any of the barriers stop us from this critical work and we are proud of the impact of our campaign.

Esperanza Tervalon-Garrett
We Count Oregon Campaign Manager
WCO Pandemic Pivot

After 18-months of planning a high-touch community engagement-based campaign with over 100 partners and 11K community ambassadors, COVID-19 made it impossible to execute our original strategy, which included numerous in-person events. The time-tested approach to build trust and spur action with HTC communities.

In just two weeks, WCO transformed our entire strategy. We canceled all in-person events, adapted our phone banking strategy, provided online training, and pivoted to an online Census Day celebration. We launched new creative methods such as community-centered digital events and HTC digital art challenges and invested heavily in social media.

The WCO teams and partners continuously adjusted for moving census deadlines -- including the 48-hour notice for the final deadline. Not only did our team need to pivot continually, but we also had to create space for the pain, confusion, and suffering that impacted our communities from the bombardment of health and race attacks and devastating wildfires. We had to address the digital divide and maintain the census’ relevance in the face of life and death struggles, which our team and partners were not immune to. We did this by connecting the dots between the census and the daily experience of our communities. We included health and justice information and never stopped driving an aspirational vision of a just Oregon that includes all of us.
Executive Summary Continued

Campaign Goals Surpassed!

- 11,939 Trained Org. Partners
- +6 Million reached via communications Census Assistance Centers in all 36 Districts
- 215K reach through phonebanking Parntered with all Oregon Tribes
- 3 Million Called
- 69.2% of Oregonians self-responded to the census
Education & Training

Each-One-Teach-One Program

The WCO theory of change for mobilizing hard-to-count (HTC) communities centered on developing culturally responsive census training materials and recruiting, training, and supporting ambassadors from HTC communities.

WCO localized and personalized each training to align with the community by addressing specific barriers to engagement. This community-based approach enabled us to provide relevant and nuanced tactics to HTC ambassadors.

Precious Edmonds, WCO’s Ashland-based community engagement and partnership coordinator, customized an each-one-teach-one approach to build and implement an extensive and successful ambassador program. Through our curriculum, WCO equipped ambassadors with the skills and tools they needed to facilitate training in their communities using WCO materials.

Through the campaign, WCO supported the leadership development of community members who were already trusted in their communities. This approach is paramount to engaging HTC communities -- given the history of exclusion and oppression. Our primary goal was to enable the ambassadors to clearly convey how responding to the census has the power to change the material circumstances of their communities.

*We equipped ambassadors with facts* and talking points that helped them educate their communities that the census provides an opportunity to change the narrative of who we are, and shape a true picture of the demographics of Oregon. The ambassador program enabled the participants to become fluid in centering the census and its outcome in a justice and race framework. *It was critical to the success of our campaign that HTC communities were not only included but led our campaign.*

Pro tip: Disseminating messages centered around how census data benefits that specific community and directly naming the specific barriers that community grapples with – is the only path to successful engagement with HTC communities.
Training Activities

**Designed**, wrote, and implemented WCO’s ambassador program utilizing the each-one-teach-one model (in person and online).

**Designed** and implemented a Census 101 Training (in person and online).

**Designed** and launched an immersive training institute called The Cascade Society for WCO’s 12 Census Equity partners.

**Organized** and hosted culturally relevant Census Summits for Latinx, Black, Native/Tribal, and Muslim communities.

**Organized** and hosted a Census Summit for elected officials in Salem.

**Facilitated** spokesperson training for partners, ambassadors, and community members. The training provided the information and skills needed to educate their communities and liaise with the press.

**Created** Regional Census Days driving location-specific participation.

**Trained** Census Assistance Center (CAC) staff on census compliance and helped facilitate the transition from in-person to virtual support due to COVID-19.

**Facilitated** community education sessions for partner organizations.

**Presented** at PSU Census Day.

Census Assistance Center Partnership

The 48 Census Assistance Centers (CACs), located in all 36 Oregon counties, partnered with WCO and received our Census 101, spokesperson, and ambassador training. The CAC’s received funding through a formal RFP process from United Way of Columbia-Willamette (UW CW) on behalf of CEFCO. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 the original vision of these walk-in centers for HTC communities including the unhoused, individuals with specific questions or language and ability needs - was severely impacted. The centers pivoted, like the rest of the campaign, to phone and digital.
We Count Oregon Goals Surpassed!

Our original goals were to train 10K individuals across Oregon and partner with 100 organizations. WCO surpassed our original goals by training 11,939 individuals reaching 119% of the original goal and 103 organizations 103%.

We know the census is one step amongst many in the journey towards a just Oregon. The participants trained in our signature ambassador program are now equipped with the capacity and tools to organize their communities beyond the census. By facilitating relationship development between a wide-range of individual leaders and organizations, this campaign developed an HTC advocacy network across the state. This network, we hope, will remain active and vigilant in community.
Community Outreach & Field Activation

“I’m so proud of just how we were able to pivot our plans; the outreach we were able to do and the impact I felt I had when I finished training or presenting about the census. I am proud of the field team and that they felt activated in the work.”

-Marchel Hirschfield, APANO

The final statewide We Count Oregon (WCO) field coalition was composed of 12 Oregon-based equity partners including: Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO), Community Alliance of Tenants (CAT), Causa, Forward Together, East County Rising, Imagine Black, Latino Network, Oregon Futures Lab, Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA), Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN), Raíces, and Unite Oregon.

The coalition approach was critical to the overall HTC theory of change as each member of the coalition represented a critical HTC community and spanned across the state. This approach, like the training strategy, ensured our field leaders were trusted community ambassadors.

WCO pivoted our field tactics to phone banking and peer-to-peer texting in the wake of COVID-19. The 190-person field team started conducting phone outreach in late March 2020 concluding in July 2020.
Phone Banking Process

Phone Banking Scale
To reach our campaign goal, WCO field teams made more than 3 million calls, had over 308K conversations and persuaded over 215K people to take the census.

Geographical Data
The counties with the most contacts ranging from 6,848-26,302 were Multnomah, Lane, Clackamas, Jackson, Washington, Marion, Deschutes, Douglas, Josephine, and Linn counties.

Reach Low Income Residents
+80K contacts made - 50K annually
Nearly 21K made less -30K annually
1,289 contacts made - 20K annually
“I hosted a Census 101 in Spanish for a group of parents at Alder Elementary school. The moms were very engaged and asked a lot of questions. I was very comfortable talking with them and it truly felt like I was connecting with people from my community - Spanish-speaking, immigrant women from East Multnomah County. I ended up hiring a field organizer who is the daughter of one of the moms who attended my training session.”

Blanca Gaytan Farfan, East County Rising

As the loneliness, uncertainty, and job insecurity grew from COVID-19, and attacks on Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) escalated, WCO provided a space for the census team to share and receive information. Not only about the constantly shifting census milestones but also emerging health and justice issues pertinent to our communities. Our field team members found solace while following safety protocols and instituting universal remote work. Team members shared that they looked forward to their phone banking shifts to continue building the community.

The Census Equity Coordinators (CECs) and statewide team developed the capacity and skills to run a field education program, design and conduct training, community outreach, and in-person and online event facilitation. With coaching from the state-wide Campaign Manager, Esperanza Tervalon-Garrett, we witnessed CECs with little prior experience excel at managing, coaching, and being accountable for effective communication with the field team.
Indigenize The Census

Long before settlers took over Oregon, before the adoption of the US constitution, and before the first US census of 1790, there were Native peoples living in the territory now known as Oregon. Specific challenges face these communities, including broken treaty agreements, dis-enrollment, and unrecognized Tribes. It is not uncommon for Native peoples to resist participating in the census, given how they have been erased from contemporary culture and face consistent stereotyping as well as outdated and inaccurate portrayals in pop culture and education.

Given this history, We Count Oregon brought on established Tribal and Native leader Se-ah-dom Edmo as the campaign’s Tribal Community Coordinator. Se-ah-dom’s in-depth knowledge of and relationships with Tribes enabled the campaign to support and integrate the needs of Oregon’s nine recognized Tribes and urban Native peoples into our campaign.

To achieve our goal, WCO partnered with Oregon Complete Count Committee’s Indian Country Sub-Committee Co-Chairs, Tribal Census Liaison Committee, and Tribal community leaders to develop a Tribally grounded and responsive outreach and engagement plan tailored to each community with the goal of providing tools and resources to enable a complete census count in Oregon’s Indian country in 2020.

WCO facilitated development, planning, and implementation for activities alongside Tribal partners and other partner organizations to carry out effective strategies that amplified the voices of Native people in civic engagement and policy advocacy with urban, off, and on reservation Tribal communities across Oregon.
Native and Tribal Engagement Strategies

Held weekly meetings with Tribal partners including In-Lieu Fishing sites along the Columbia River.

Designed and provided Compliance and Phone Banking Training for Tribal communities.

Pivoted our strategy providing increased communications and messaging support when COVID-19 began sweeping through Indian Country.

Redesigned the Tribal Grant Process with United Way to ground it further in Tribes as both Nations and community service providers and advocates.

Created a unique WCO logo with the weaving patterns of the nine Tribes to create a cohesive and culturally-reflective campaign feeling.

At WCO, we believe that keeping track of people is an act of sovereignty - one that should be grounded within the sovereign Tribal nations of Oregon. That’s why we encouraged Tribes to craft their incentives and budgets in-line with traditional values. As the COVID-19 pandemic spread, community public health became paramount. WCO encouraged traditionally significant items as census incentives i.e., traditional root gathering baskets, clam bags, wool blankets, and food. Cultural practices and traditions were central to WCO’s strategy. This approach was highly effective in Indian Country.

If movements don’t explicitly invest, trust, and engage Tribal communities as a part of campaign work - the work runs the risk of undermining Tribal sovereignty at best; in worst-case scenarios, it reinforces colonial settler values. The fact that we centered this work as a core function of our statewide strategy is significant.

Pro Tip: Cultural practices and traditions were central to We Count Oregon’s strategy. This approach proved to be effective in Indian Country.
WCO’s goal with Tribal communities was to support their outreach approach lifting up their strategies through events and digital activation. We assisted by developing training, messaging, and providing logistics support with census outreach events.

**Census + COVID 19 Tribal Outreach**

Led the virtual Census & Sovereignty event with 115 participants and 1,200 views across Oregon and the nation.

Supported Tribes planning over 30 virtual and drive-through events across the state.

With Tribal panthers, we developed drive-through Tribal census outreach, a COVID-safe model of census engagement centered in community engagement providing food, health, and safety support while advocating for the census.

Pivoted with the Tribes and provided both Census Compliance and Phone Banking training to all of the Tribes in Oregon. This enabled census leaders to safely facilitate outreach to all Tribal citizens.

**Impact & Scale**

Never in the history of the census has a state-wide campaign successfully worked with all nine Tribes.

Our strategy, in spite of all of the environmental and social upheaval, resulted in a Native and Tribal people self-response rate of 51.6% compared to 2010’s 41.4%.

*These numbers are based on the October 2020 self-response rate of Tribal members.*
Amplifying Impact

Communications and marketing were a central campaign strategy to ensure WCO reached our campaign goals, scaled our impact, and instigated behavior change among HTC communities. We developed persuasive customized messages grounded in community experience and delivered those messages with relatable imagery via community ambassadors.

We provided spokespeople training to trusted messengers and community leaders in HTC communities, translated materials into multiple HTC-relevant languages, invested in digital, radio, and television marketing, and designed a social media strategy that included art messages by and for HTC’s. WCO launched a public bus ad campaign, pitched press, launched SMS messaging, and invested in paid digital advertising.

**Tested** messages with our core HTC partners via focus groups.

**Worked** directly with individuals from the HTC community to design messages and art.

**Geo-targeted** HTC concentrated areas across Oregon with our messages.

**Designed** digital events in partnership with our communities.

**Partnered** with community-relevant radio stations on digital engagement to scale work and address the digital divide.

**Translated** the core pages of our website into relevant HTC languages.

**Partnered** with cultural media partners Univision Portland, Flossin Media, Radio Poder, DJ OG One from the Portland Trailblazers, etc.

**Partnered** with cultural influencers such as Alicia Garza, Dolores Huerta, musicians and artists from our communities, and known community leaders and government officials.

**Designed** and disseminated community-specific toolkits, messages, and graphics aligned with events and trending census issues.
Digital Event Strategy

As COVID-19 made in-person events impossible, WCO rapidly adjusted our campaign strategies to connect with our communities digitally. As part of this strategy update, we brought on seasoned communications and impact strategist, Charity Tooze and events coordinator Tatiana Bacchus. We hosted five community-centered events and up-leveled our social media strategy.

Census Day Event
April 1st, 2020

The event was emceed by Carlos Kareem Windham and Enrique Ruiz and began with a land acknowledgment by Se-ah-dom Edmo. Our campaign manager Esperanza Tervalon-Garrett outlined the critical impact of the census and led a lively discussion with Governor Kate Brown followed by a dynamic “Black Girl Magic” panel featuring headliner BLM leader Alicia Garza, Rep. Akasha Lawrence Spence, and State Voice’s Alexis Anderson-Reed. We featured a Spanish language panel unpacking myths about the citizenship question and race facilitated by Perla Alvarez and heard from Multnomah Commissioners Lori Stegmann, Jessica Vega Pederson, and Susheela Jaypal. Willa Powless from the Klamath Tribal Nation addressed the critical Native count, and Oregon Complete Count Committee’s (OCCC) Rep. Andrea Salinas, Chi Nguyen, Aldo Soldano addressed the census and the state budget. We ended with Nancy Haque and Abby Mulcahy addressing gender and the critical count of the LGBTQI community.

Impact & Reach

April 1st, Census Day, saw the highest self-response rate of any day of the 2020 campaign -- self-response was up 2.3% from the day before. We know the increase was due to the incredible lift our team, partners, and ambassadors made to get the word out to hard-to-count Oregonians.

494 Zoom attendees
5,799 Facebook Live views
18,384 interactions on Instagram
44K impressions!
Census & Sovereignty
June 9th 2020

Respected elder Delson Suppah, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Oregon, emceed the event, which opened with a traditional Native song led by Brian Krehbiel, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, RedSky Clawson, Jacob Holmes, Kaikanim Mercier, and family. Speakers included Willa Powless, Klamath Tribe Council, Rep.Tawna Sanchez, Jim Tucker, Vice-Chair of the National Advisory Committee to the Census Bureau, and featured an original skit by Ryan Redcorn, Osage Nation, from the irreverent and celebrated 1491’s comedy troupe. Asa Wright’s, Klamath/Modoc/Yahooskin, original artwork was featured, and two Eighth Generation blankets were given away in a census quiz to increase engagement. To ensure broader reach and address the issue of the digital divide, we partnered with Warm Springs, KWSO radio, and Klamath radio to broadcast the event.

Black Like Me Juneteenth
June 19th, 2020

Juneteenth is a celebration of Black freedom and particularly powerful as Black Lives Matter protests and racial justice were the national focus over the summer. The event featured BLM leader Alicia Garza, Rep. Akasha Lawrence Spence, NAACP Portland President E.D. Mondaine, NAACP Portland President, Anthony Deloney from Self-Enhancement Inc., Darren Harold Golden, from the Urban League, and Ray Mayer, from Imagine Black. Trailblazer’s D.J. O.G. One in partnership with XRAY.FM Dj’ed and broadcast the event. The event was centered in history led by Donna Maxey, Race Talks, and historian, and reporter Walidah Imarisha. Local youth vocalist Micheala Dean and celebrated west coast artist Alonzo Chadwick enlivened the event emceed by community activist Ray Mayer. The role the census plays in freedom and power in the Black community was the running theme of the event.

Impact & Reach

115 Zoom attendees
1.2K Facebook Live views
2,892 Facebook engagements
23K+ Community radio reach

Impact & Reach

482 Zoom attendees
2.1K Facebook Live viewers
4,165 Facebook engagements
900K XRAY radio reach
Nuestra Gente Presente
July 9th, 2020

This event was produced in Spanish and broadcast live on Radio Poder, Bustos Media, and Univision Portland’s Facebook Page. The headliner was legendary Dolores Huerta. DJ La Traviesa from Bustos Media, Enrique Ruiz from PCUN, and Nancy Ayala from Radio Poder emceed the event. We opened with a moment of silence for Black lives lost to state-sanctioned violence and a performance by Grupo Latitudes. Zaira Sanchez from Raíces facilitated a panel focused on personal security concerns and the census. Fabian Guerrero facilitated a talk with Pedro Sosa and Carmen Gonzalez about race and Indigenous people. Dolores Huerta provided a passionate plea for engagement and underscored the critical impact of an accurate Latinx count. The event ended with a discussion led by Enrique Ruiz about the importance of multi-generational engagement in the Latinx community. We had a five-minute dance-off and gave away gift certificates for local Latinx-owned businesses.

Impact & Reach

237  Zoom attendees
18,747  Facebook Live views
4601  Facebook engagements
21  PSA’s on Radio Poder reaching
300K  Spanish speaking households
59  PSA’s aired on 94.3FM reaching
90K  households
8,734  Univision Portland Facebook Live View
18  Univision Portland PSA’s reaching
102K  Spanish speaking households
API Census Day Potluck

Co-hosted with APANO
August 6th, 2020

Featuring DJ Simeon and emceed by Marchel Hirschfield from APANO, the potluck themed event featured Karthick Ramakrishnan, Founder of AAPI Data and Center for Social Innovation, Bessie Chan-Smitham, Director of Community Engagement with AAJC, Jackie Leung, Salem City Councilor, and Makerusa Porotesano Coordinator of the Sylvanian Multicultural Center. A Hula dance performance by Halau Ka Lei Hali’ a O ka Lokelani and Wailua Shave Ice demonstration provided a nod to the Pacific Islander community in Oregon. This event highlighted the large, and growing, diverse API community underscoring the role API’s have played in Oregon’s history and the role these communities will play in the future.

Impact & Scale

67 Registered Zoom Attendees
916 Facebook Live viewers
30 Facebook Engagements

Digital Event Scale & Reach

+360,700 individuals

Pro-Tip: Utilizing multiple radio and digital platforms exponentially increased the reach and impact of our digital events.
Social Media Strategy

We increased our operational capacity by bringing on Oregon-based social media manager and artist Jenay Elder. WCO’s updated strategy included:

- Increased social posts to 3-5 daily.
- Increased Facebook and Instagram boosting.
- Commissioned and invited HTC artists to takeover WCO social channels with authentic community-based art and messages.
- Increased newsletter outputs to share critical updates and event information.

Scale & Reach

- **80k** Reached via FB Boosting Strategy
- **3k** FB, IG, TW Followers
- **22,764** Engagements on FB, TW, IG

July 3rd, 2020 Boosted FB Post

- **8k** Reached
- **436** Engagements

July 6th, 2020 Boosted FB Post

- **6k** Reached
- **296** Engagements
Earned Media & Paid Partnerships

As part of our strategy to reach communities, not with one message but multiple, we engaged in traditional public relations to generate earned media, and formed partnerships with media companies. Through this process, WCO staff and partners were used as a source, central story-focus, or quoted in 23 articles. Our partnership with Comcast Universal, Univision Portland, and Flossin Media resulted in another 10 articles, podcasts, and new mentions.

Univision Portland Partnership

- **553** TV ads ran
- **467K** Digital banner impressions
- **25K** reached through email blasts with **+81K** impressions
- Facebook posts reached **+30K**
- Facebook Live events reached **+12K**
- **102K** Spanish speaking households reached through 5 television census stories

Comcast Universal Commercials

The We Count Oregon census spots that Comcast produced and aired pro bono ran a total of **2,414** times throughout Comcast’s footprint in Portland, Eugene, Salem and, Corvallis. The commercials ran an average of **344** times per zone over a three week period in March and April 2020. This community investment by Comcast was valued at over $54K. **Thank you, Comcast, for your generous contribution and commitment to all of Oregon’s communities!**
Amplifying Impact Continued

Digital Advertising

+2M impressions and 9K clicks to the census form
+1M impressions via LatinX and Black media partnerships

Radio Partnerships

+2M radio PSAs reached 2M people 7.9X
14M impressions via 7 FM radio stations
+1M additional impressions via community radio partnerships

Scale & Reach

Utilizing a multi-pronged communication and amplification strategy enabled WCO to reach millions of Oregonians multiple times on different channels. This type of approach is often referred to as surround sound. The goal is that with multiple touch-points of authentic communication, HTC communities would trust the census, understand what was at stake for them, and feel accurately represented. COVID-19 required WCO to rely on digital, radio, and television engagement - the reach of this strategy can’t be underestimated.

+6 Mil Reached!
Campaign Reflections

Due to the deep mistrust in HTC communities of the government, WCO successfully positioned the campaign as a trusted advocate for our communities by featuring culturally relevant inclusive messaging that was visually engaging, accessible, and rooted in race and culture. Our decision to acknowledge the impact of government-sanctioned white supremacy, xenophobia, anti-Black racism, and Indigenous erasure resonated with HTC communities, activists, and leaders -- resulting in a trust that inspired census engagement by folks who would normally opt-out.

All WCO colleagues have gone on to secure positions on other civic campaigns or with BIPOC-led Oregon-based organizations. We know the census, or any other campaign, is one point on a very large wheel of change. Dancing Hearts Consulting’s approach is to always engage BIPOC communities, all year, all the time. Through WCO we have helped stock Oregon with community-based organizers and leaders who will drive critical change for years to come and illustrated how a campaign led by and for HTC communities is the right approach to this work.

Training Insights

WCO created events that spoke to specific community groups by acknowledging the barriers to participation for that community. This is not a uniform approach. Each community requires unique messaging and engagement strategies. A one-size-fits-all approach would not have been effective. We instigated relevant conversations via regional and cultural events.

Native & Tribal Lessons Learned

We had two major challenges to the campaign in relation to working with Tribal communities:

**Time:** Our Indian Country Sub-Committee Co-Chairs and Tribal Census Liaison Committee were not able to engage in the work to fully support the campaign until October 20. The plan to have a Tribal Community Coordinator come on board in February 2020 did not provide much time to develop a thoughtful and engaged sovereignty & community grounded approach. In response, the campaign re-directed travel and swag budgets to a Tribal Communications Specialist - with decades of experience working with Tribes.

**COVID-19:** Tribal communities come alive with cultural community events in the Spring and Summer months. When COVID-19 hit, because of decades of chronic under-funding of Indian Health Services on top of centuries of wealth and income inequality -- these communities were heavily impacted by the pandemic -- it was difficult to focus on anything else.
Text and Bus Strategy Reflection

WCO implemented a text-to-count (TTC) strategy to assess if SMS texting could capture HTC communities’ not connected to a partner organization. The strategy included a "text-to-count" call to action at meetings, transit advertising, and digital ads. Given the inexpensive nature of TTC, we aimed high, hoping that 50K people would self-select. Almost immediately, we found that there were real challenges. The language options were limited, making it difficult to capture and communicate with non-English speakers. Ultimately, the biggest push for TTC was centered around the transportation ads.

Text “Oregon” to 33339

The transit strategy included ads in bus shelters, bus benches, banners on and inside buses. All of which launched as the shelter in place orders went into affect in Oregon. Given the shelter in place restrictions, we can’t adequately measure the transit strategy’s overall impact and believe it negatively impacted the TTC engagement. We likely overestimated the goal for TTC. In the future, with additional innovations, different text-in numbers for different languages, paid ads in culturally specific locations, etc., headway could be made using this strategy. Ultimately, only 1,744 people opted-in to receive texts.
2030 Campaign Recommendations

**Center Race & Culture:** Race needs to be the starting place for census work.

**HTC Lead:** HTC community leaders, consultants, and organizations are best positioned to develop strategies for connecting with HTC communities.

**Stay Open:** 90 percent of HTC outreach will be innovative. Therefore funders and partners need to be open to new ideas and strategies.

**Start Earlier:** This will enable enough runway for for impact. Census education, and planning should begin in 2027.

Fund the Campaign, Trust the Campaign: It is important for public and private partners to invest in the campaign and remain supportively engaged.

Invest More: To generate a truly complete count and ensure that Oregon receives the federal dollars it deserves, Oregon needs to be prepared to make a significant investment. $20M for 2020 would have been appropriate sans COVID-19.

• Additional dollars could have gone towards sending mail to P.O. Boxes to ensure residents were aware that census forms would not come to their homes but that they could take the census online.

• For $1-3M, WCO could have conducted massive statewide, and HTC-targeted mailing in relevant languages to rural communities about the census process and timeline.

Support the Campaign: Make way for campaign leaders to do the important work. Set clear reporting and success metrics early so that staff and organizations can focus on implementation and outreach to the community once the campaign strategy has been agreed upon.

Training Recommendations

The each-one-teach-one model is replicable and is the most effective way to scale the campaign via trusted messengers.

Organizations who source community ambassadors should manage those relationships instead of a campaign staffer. Maintaining relationships with ambassadors serves the long-term capacity of the recruiting organizations.

Community engagement should be centered in culture.

Trainers and training resources must be available in multiple languages, e.g., not only English and Spanish.
Field Recommendations

HTC-FOCUSED CAMPAIGN INSIGHTS

**Remain** flexible in your field tactics and approach and use campaign data to inform shifts.

**Phone banking** was effective due to poor Internet accessibility in rural Oregon.

**Person-to-person** engagement is the most effective way to motivate people to take the census.

**Building** relationships takes time - make sure the team allocates enough time to do the deep relationship work needed to engage HTCs.

**Conduct** outreach in multiple languages. Use consistent definitions, compatible systems, and training to ensure quality control of data collection.

**Conduct** a statewide census education campaign for all Oregonians.

**Coordinate** census education campaigns through all government agencies.

**Coordinate** with Census Bureau staff early to develop a strategy for ensuring that mailings go to all P.O. Boxes.

Native and Tribal Recommendations

Engage earlier! We recommend beginning to liaise with Tribes 1.5-2 years prior to the census deadline. This will enable the team to develop strategies and messages that are uniquely grounded in Tribal and Native traditions and cultural events. Allowing traditional artisans and culture keepers to engage in creating incentives for the campaign.

Develop an editorial calendar of significant Tribal events where census engagement and the Tribal staff can align on planning.

Assist Tribes in developing the training needed to support outreach.
Thank You Core Partners

Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO)
Community Alliance of Tenants (CAT)
Causa
Forward Together
East County Rising
Imagine Black (PAALF)
Latino Network
Oregon Futures Lab
Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA)
Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste
Raíces
Unite Oregon

Thank You Community Partners

Adelante Mujeres
African Youth and Community Organization
API Census Coalition
Ashland School District
Asian Health & Services Center
Beyond Black
Beyond Toxics
Black Parent Initiative
Central Oregon Disability Support Network
Central Oregon Veterans outreach
Centro Cultural
Centro de Servicios Para Campesino
Centro Latino Americano
Children First for Oregon
Children's Institute
City of Fairview
City of Grants Pass
City of Hillsboro
City of Ontario
City of Portland
City of Tigard
City of Wood Village
College Dreams
Community Action Program of East Central Oregon
Community Connection NE Oregon, inc.
Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians - Eugene
Corvallis Multicultural Literacy Center
Democratic Party of Oregon
Division Midway Alliance
Doulas Latinas
Euvalcree
Farmworker Housing Development Corporation
Flossin Media
Hacienda CDC
Healthy Beginnings + Healthy Communities
Homeless Leadership Coalition
Independence Public Library
Iraqi School
IRCO
Jackson County Democrats
Jackson County Library Services
Lake County Library District
Lane Community College
Lane Council of Government
Latino Community Association
League of Oregon Cities
League of Women Voters of Oregon
Listo
Lower Columbia Hispanic Council
Mano a Mano
Micronesian Islander Community
Momentum Alliance
Mountain Star
Thank You Tribal Partnerships

Burns Paiute Tribe
Confederated Tribes of the Coos
Lower Umpqua
Siuslaw Indians
Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde
Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians
Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs
Coquille Indian Tribe
Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians
Klamath Tribes
Klamath County Library Service District
Klamath Tribal Administration
Nch’i Wana Housing (In-Lieu Treaty Fishing communities)
Native American Rights Fund
Appendix: WCO In The News


COVID 19 Complicates Tribes Efforts to Complete Census Count, Oregonian, Sept. 5

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Every Oregonian Counts, My Oregon News, August 13th, 2020

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Census Pushes On For Full Count of Indigenous Americans, NPR, July 28, 2020

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We Count Oregon Hosts July Census Events, My Oregon News, July 7, 2020

Juneteenth and the Census, My Oregon News, June 17, 2020

Juneteenth Live Streaming to Boost Census Count, Portland Tribune, June 17, 2020

Pandemic Adds Urgency to Census Effort, OPB, June 18th, 2020

POC lead census campaign, Ground Zero for the Census, Mail Tribune, February 15th, 2020


Women of color, Making Sure that Every Oregonian Gets Counted, PDX, Jan 21st , 2020

Esperanza and Mar, APANO Interview, OPB, Jan 22nd, 2020

Dancing Hearts Consulting, Hard-to-count effort, Governor’s Website, Dec 26, 2019

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