

***"Six Continents, One Hometown: Public Opinion On
Refugee Resettlement In Utica"***

**Multiphase Opinion Study for
the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees**

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Utica, NY, located in the scenic and historic Mohawk Valley, has a population of 62,235 (2010), nearly one in four of whom are refugees. Facilitated by the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees (MVRRCR), refugees from a wide variety of nations and cultures have found a new home in the city of Utica since 1976. Today, students who speak 43 different languages study in the Utica City School District. After four straight decades of dramatic population decline, Utica experienced its first population net increase between 2005 and 2010.

Utica as a “welcoming community” has received substantial publicity with favorable articles in the Wall Street Journal, the New York Times, Readers’ Digest, the United Nations, and a multi-part series on National Public Radio.

In September 2012, a Utica-based international polling and market research firm, Zogby Analytics, was commissioned by MVRRCR, to “conduct a comprehensive program of research aimed at understanding the characteristics of a welcoming community and ultimately to help improve and test the measures that have successfully aided in attracting, retaining, and integrating refugees and immigrants”.

Objectives

The objectives of the research were to provide data that:

- Engages local shareholders
- Scrutinizes promising practices
- Drives innovation and further improvements of best practices
- Provides persuasive and actionable results
- Helps to better understand the characteristics of a ‘welcoming community’
- Identifies concerns of the community
- Defines the community’s important assets, especially those which foster assimilation
- Helps develop an understanding of how to react to changing dynamics of the community
- Assists in building on the experience of MVRRCR as a leader in supporting others to foster a cohesive force in other multicultural communities.

Methodology

The methodology used is described in more detail in each section of this report, but briefly involved:

- Senior officials at Zogby Analytics interviewing 24 community leaders, who included agency leaders, service providers, educators, local government officials, religious leaders, public safety professionals, business leaders, and community activists
- A 45-question telephone survey among a random sampling of 300 adults in the Greater Utica area
- Compilation of statistics on housing sales, crime, and graduation rates
- Review of studies conducted among multicultural communities by Zogby Analytics in Hazleton (PA) and Houston (TX)
- Two community leader focus groups – involving 29 leaders --to discuss data and interim findings

Executive Analysis

Based on the data collected from all phases of this study, Zogby Analytics concludes that the Utica area possesses enough qualities to be labeled a “welcoming community”. While each is summarized in the following sections, here are the elements upon which we base our conclusions:

A Welcoming Tradition – from all phases of this study, Uticans appear to be very proud of their city’s tradition of welcoming immigrants. Anecdotally, many residents cite the more than century-long history of welcoming southern and eastern Europeans, Middle Easterners, and western Europeans to the community. Overall, 69% of all residents in the Greater Utica area agree that immigration has been a good thing, including 70% of those over 65 and 69% of residents who have lived here more than 10 years.

This sensibility includes a strong individual and collective memory of the immigrant experience and stories about the polyglot ethnic cultures, religious denominations, festivals, and families. There is a consensus that despite job experiences, testosterone-related incidents, legends and stereotypes about each other, that the community overall was hospitable to a wide variety of people and there were plenty of opportunities to intermingle and intermarry.

A Will for Community Population Growth – about a decade and a half ago, the Oneida County EDGE, the region’s main economic development agency, identified as one of its goals the need to grow the county’s population, especially in the hub, the city of Utica. In a State of the County Message delivered by County Executive Anthony Picente, the goal was still listed as a main focus:

“...a major goal as implementing policies and programs that can grow the county’s population and reverse the loss of young people ... (We need) new attitudes and efforts to transform Oneida County’s economy and its communities to better position Oneida County for long term economic and population growth.”

While the population of the county has declined and stagnated, the core city’s population has actually increased, an uncommon phenomenon for small Rust Belt cities. While there is little evidence that business development initiatives have caused real net population growth, the attitude of leadership at least establishes the prevailing atmosphere in the community. In the public survey, 68% said that recent immigration has enhanced the overall image of the Utica area, while only 27% disagreed. And by a factor of 48%-12%, local government was given positive marks for handling immigration (53%-14% among Utica residents alone). A majority of 51% to 16% rated local economic developments positively on immigration efforts.

But perhaps, of greatest significance, more people in the Utica area preferred a continued increase in immigrants in Utica (25%) to those who wanted a decrease (22%). The ratio was 33% increase to 18% decrease among city residents alone. Overall, adding in those who favored the immigration population staying the same (49% in the broader area, 47% in the city), a total of 74% in Greater Utica and 80% in the city of Utica wanted the immigrant population to either grow or stay the same.

A Sophisticated Network of Helping Agencies – this conclusion generated some disagreement among participants in our focus groups. There was more agreement with the phrase “sophisticated helping agencies, but not a network”. While the feeling within the two groups was that many agencies involved were doing an admirable job of handling the growing needs of refugees, they clearly felt that there was not sufficient collaboration and that too many people fell through the sieve because of referrals to the wrong agencies and a lack of coordination. Nonetheless, it is the conclusion of this independent report that this view is too critical, perhaps even myopic. To be sure, there needs to be more communication among helping agencies. The principal investigator of this project recalls in a similar study conducted in 1991 for the Greater Utica United Way that following a focus group among community agency leaders, that the

longtime heads of the YMCA and YMCA shook hands and said “Nice to finally meet you”. Helping agencies are always overwhelmed with growing needs and insufficient budgets and more work needs to be done. But it is our judgment that thus far, the levels of communication are robust – but obviously need improvement. The fact is that a myriad of agencies are handling a steady influx and wide variety of new refugee clients and referrals admirably. The Greater Utica United Way received a 55% positive rating to only a 4% negative rating on handling immigration.

Public/Private Cooperation – local governments and private agencies are financially strapped. Again there was some blowback in the focus groups about the inadequacy of government attention. However, respondents did not assess blame on any individual and were keenly aware of the combination of growing needs and finite (and shrinking) resources by all involved. As noted above, governments were given high grades – including Oneida County government (43% positive rating on handling immigrant to 14% negative, with 42% not familiar enough to make a judgment). In addition, the school districts were given a solid A grade on the issue: 57% to 14% positive overall and 59%-17% among just Utica residents. This includes a 65% to 11% rating among Greater Utica residents over 65.

Affordable Housing—the poll revealed that residents are very positive toward the impact of immigration on housing in the city of Utica (64% to 26% negative), with a thumbs up from city residents of 67%-28%). Data collected from and interviews conducted with officials from the city Assessor’s Office and the Municipal Housing Authority make clear that sales to immigrants have been a major factor in both housing sales and the stabilization of housing values in the city. Individual home sales have moved beyond East Utica into hard-pressed West Utica. Of 127 homes erected under the Housing and Urban Development Hope VI Project, approximately between 50 and 55 were sold to immigrants. And, in the words of a local housing official, “there is a huge number of immigrants” in public housing of the residents of subsidized public housing are immigrants.

Disorganized, Isolated Opposition – while both focus groups alluded to the matter in North Utica – several issues regarding neighborhood opposition to a Vietnamese Buddhist Temple statue being erected – this was the only incident of its kind that anyone recalled. Permission to build the statue went ahead as planned without incident. Racial epithets were used by some, but the main issue involved zoning rights and property values. The Temple functions normally. There does not appear to be in any way organizations, formal or informal, that are anti-immigrant. Anecdotally, most leaders and citizens point with pride to the transformation of the downtown Central Methodist Church into an Islamic Mosque. There were no protests and the

mainly Bosnian effort was done at the same time that an Islamic community center was fought vigorously in Manhattan.

One participant in the first focus group suggested that perhaps “Uticans are so positive about immigrants because the community has been down so long that “ the injection of a new element provides something new, almost a “Hail Mary Pass” instead of despair. While an intriguing idea, it runs counter to historical patterns that show that moments of nativism and xenophobia occur especially during hard times. Local residents appear capable of weighing and equivocating on the immigration. They see it as a positive boon to the overall local economy (73%-22%) and to local retail (76%-14%), they are less sanguine about a positive impact on “your local taxes” (34%-44%) and the jobs market (47%-42%). As one focus group participant put it: “On an overall view of the big picture, the impact looks good and improving, but immigration appears to threaten larger numbers on a personal basis”.

Regardless, there does not appear to be any single lightning rod of opposition and the community provides no real atmosphere or cushion for any organized opposition. There are misperceptions and myths about immigrant advantages: “\$40,000 cash upon entry”; “monthly subsidies that last forever”. These are urban legends and not true, but they do hang out there in the air. There are also reports of immigrant “clannishness”, but nothing out of the ordinary from the typical patterns among immigrants throughout American history. Some focus group participants noted that teenagers at Proctor High School self-segregate along ethnic lines, but then others reported things like the multi-ethnic soccer team, which is like “a United Nations”. In short, despite some misunderstandings, nothing appears to be troublesome or out of the ordinary.

Vision and Leadership from the Education Community – as noted above, the Utica City School District receives high marks from the community for its work with immigrants. The district is stretched beyond its capabilities financially. At this time, there have already been huge layoffs of teachers and support staff and another round of cuts are planned in the next proposed budget. All this is happening at a time when the numbers of non-English speaking refugees entering the Utica schools is growing. ESL classes are burgeoning, 43 languages are spoken, including unfamiliar Asian, African, and Middle Eastern dialects. But the school system continues to absorb dramatic increases in attendance and demand satisfactorily. The focus group participants pointed to the inadequacy of the Utica School District administration – “one and a half administrators to handle thousands of ESL students” and the sense that “ESL teachers are regarded as second class among fellow teachers”.

There are also reports of youth gangs and an uneasy path to assimilation by some Asian and African students. Despite the fact that Proctor High is over-capacity for its building plant and that at least one of the middle schools – Donovan – is also packed, there are few extraordinary incidents reported and things appear to be mainly under control.

The public, in particular, takes special pride in the local colleges which they also regard highly, for their capacity to handle immigration. Mohawk Valley Community College (68% positive, 3% negative), SUNY-IT (47%-5%), and Utica College (47% -5%) all receive high marks on immigration. Some participants pointed with pride that refugees are not only able to receive an affordable education and a path to success, but have also been among the highest performing students in the local colleges.

Immigrant Reputation and Will to Assimilate – as one focus group participant put it: “It depends on your attitude when you come here. If you are already somewhat educated and you want to blend in and succeed, it can still happen in this community.” That is the prevailing mood in the community. At the same time, there is also a sense that the refugees represent two distinct “camps”: in one camp – mainly composed of Bosnians, Russians, Vietnamese, and Dominicans – are those who bring a strong will to assimilate, succeed, start businesses, educate their children, and buy property. They have, in the words of many, the “right attitude” and, hence the numbers and the outward appearances of success. In the other camp are those from Burma, The Sudan, Somalia, and other parts of the Middle East, who are a deep chasm apart culturally; from non-industrial areas; have no experience with modern health care and sanitary habits; and are a greater challenge to the community.

Despite these distinct reputations, and the expenditure of scarce resources, the prevailing sense is that Utica welcomes those people who want a second chance, just like it welcomed immigrants fleeing Italian poverty, the occupation of Poland, and the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. There is enough visible evidence of immigration success – the downtown Mosque, the Buddhist Temples, the positive transformation of East Utica and Cornhill, the public school students at the top of their class, the response of employers, new opportunities for interpreters, etc. – that the people of the area are actually enjoying the dynamism. There are reports of gang activity among some young members of the Burmese, Sudanese and Somali communities. None of these seems out of the normal nor does any of it reach any point near a reign of terror.

Support from a Variety of Places of Worship – among Utica’s many churches, several stand out in offering strong corporal and spiritual support to refugees. Historic Old St. John’s Roman

Catholic Church and St. Joseph's-St. Patrick's are major forces in the downtown area. Tabernacle Baptist Church, also located in the heart of downtown, has especially reached out and provided both a home and services to the growing Burmese population. In return, hundreds of new Burmese have helped this downtown institution survive a previous decline in membership. Westminster Presbyterian Church is also the home to new waves of immigrants and offers direct services.

It is perhaps this overall support from the religious community that prompted a few focus group participants to remark that "you see many personal acts of kindness, even at garage sales when sponsors will lower prices and giveaways, drop-offs and pickups, and other friendly and helping gestures" to help immigrants." She concluded: "I think people around here want to see our new residents happy and successful."

The Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees – the impact of this institution cannot be overestimated. It is the port of entry, the housing broker, the employment agency, the trainer in language services, public safety, the interlocutor between refugees and the labyrinth of public and private agency services. Above all it is the source of the metaphorical sign that says "Welcome to Utica". This is vital and must be understood in proper context.

Stated simply: Utica is not Hazleton

Hazleton, PA is a city of 24,000 people in the northeastern anthracite coal region of Pennsylvania. After the coal mines were shuttered, the Greater Hazleton Area made a rebound with a very successful effort to build the first of three industrial parks in the late 1950s and 1960s. Strengthened by the federal Department of Transportation to construct the junction of two major interstate highways nearby – I-81 and I-80 – Hazleton became a significant manufacturing and shipping hub. Thousands of jobs were created and this was a genuine community effort involving merchants raising funds via canisters and residents pledging dimes for community growth.

Hazleton also has a rich ethnic tradition involving immigrants from Ireland, Italy, Central and Eastern Europe. It also has a strong Catholic Church faith community and a solid network of helping agencies. However, there were no indigenous people of color. African Americans and Hispanics did not begin to find their way into Hazleton until the late 1960s and 1970s as a result of being placed from nearby Luzerne County seat Wilkes-Barre's administrators of Great Society Youth Corps and Jobs Corps. They were given work in the industrial parks.

In the past decade, Hazleton has become home to over 12,000 Hispanics – primarily Mexican and Central American – who have left the New York City area and settled into minimum wage

jobs and lower cost housing. Their presence has become unsettling to a community that has been traditionally white and local political leaders have stirred up passions among longtime residents with scares of higher crime rates and the degradation of the traditional community. The city council even passed two ordinances making English the “official language” of the city and prohibiting any employer or landlord from dealing with illegal aliens. (While the Pennsylvania Supreme Court immediately struck both ordinances down as unconstitutional, elements which are similar to an Arizona state law on immigration which have been upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court, give supporters in Hazleton some hope).

Of late, city officials were stunned to see that their projected population growth for the city and the Greater Hazleton Area had not materialized and that the overall population actually remained static. Hispanic growth has topped off due to an “unwelcome mat” and the non-Hispanic population had already been declining due to a lack of a solid economic base. What makes Utica and Hazleton so different? Primarily it is the source of the new immigration. In Hazleton, the primary source is low wage employers. In many ways, for those anxious to leave the expensive NYC area, Hazleton has become a haven – ready, low wage jobs and affordable living conditions. For employers, Hazleton has become a “China of the Northeast”. The overall community message has been not to welcome aliens. Zogby Analytics has conducted several surveys, including two lengthy studies, in Hazleton. While some efforts have been made by churches and agencies to administer to newcomers, the prevailing mood has been hostile and intimidating. The former mayor, who sponsored and campaigned for the ordinances, was re-elected with 94% of the vote and then has been successful in two campaigns for Congress. His main platform has been against illegal aliens. What makes Hazleton different from Utica is the Refugee Center as the source of refugee recruitment, settlement, and coordination. The Center has also provided a bridge to the community at large working in conjunction other major agencies and local government. It has made its presence felt.

The other difference is the pride Uticans appear to have in their welcoming tradition. By many accounts, Hazleton was a melting pot. Even high profile efforts to heal the Anglo-Latino divide by Joe Maddon, a Hazletonian by birth and now the coach of the Tampa Bay Rays are seen as coming too late in the game. Thus, on the surface, Hazleton has many of the same attributes as Utica and it has seen immigration actually shore up its economic base – there are an estimated 100 Hispanic-owned businesses in this little city. But the city hall has no bilingual employees and there are no bilingual police officers that provide targeted service to 37% of the city’s population (40%-50%, according to estimates by city officials and community leaders).

Utica is also not Houston's Fifth Ward

The Fifth Ward of Houston is rich in history and poor in resources. Located northeast of downtown, it was first settled by freed slaves in 1866. For most of its history it was nearly all African American, but it has seen an influx of Hispanics, Pakistanis, and Italians over the years. In the 1970s, it suffered (like Utica and Hazleton) a huge population decline and shuttering of many businesses. Between 1990 and 2000, the Hispanic population grew from 19% of the total to 31%. By 2011, approximately 40% of Fifth Ward residents were Hispanic.

Two of three residents are below poverty (compared with about one in four in the city of Utica) and 90% of school-age children qualified for free or reduced school lunches (80% in Utica). There are no commercial grocery stores, no big box store chains (like Wal-Mart or K-Mart), and no fast-food restaurants. There are also no new jobs, according to community activists. Today, the Fifth Ward of Houston is a community rich in tradition, yet mired in transition. There is a pride in and spirit of history that echoes through the community, particularly among long-term – and mainly African American – residents of the Ward. And there is a strong sense that people want to preserve what this community once was, even if that “once was” was a very long time ago. At the same time the face of the community is clearly shifting, and the Latino population is growing, moving in and becoming part and parcel of the neighborhoods.

Importantly, though there is a plea for basic needs like jobs, transportation, and affordably priced basics, there is a strong desire to strengthen the elements of community. While almost half of the residents told Zogby Analytics in a 2010 study for the United Way of Greater Houston that they would move out if given the chance, more than half wanted to stay where they have roots. This premise offered an important guide and framework for community leadership and citywide helping agencies: the need to focus on not simply providing funds to groups and services, but the need to shore up efforts that establish self-help, leadership potential, a path to productivity and success, and a support infrastructure that includes communications and awareness of centers of support.

Our multi-phase study found hope but very little optimism. In our report we stated:

This community feeling begs for emphasis on community development. While it is the role of government and quasi-government agencies to promote economic development, it is the proper function of non-governmental agencies to facilitate community-building efforts. The importance of this study is not simply in the content of the public opinion that has been generated but in the very process in which the study was carried out. We have identified real needs, but we have also identified people, resources, potential

leadership, and pockets of support required to carry the community-building process to the next levels.

There's a strong emphasis on community but not a lot of leadership. Leadership training must be a key component to helping the community take charge. Non-traditional leaders can be paired with local students to teach leadership training at the most fundamental levels in order to work within the community and re-design it from the inside out. Training in things such as how to serve on the board of your local church, how to serve on your school board or PTA, or how to serve on a small local non-profit, will provide a ripple effect of benefits felt long after the initial training has ended. Again the process of this study is as important as its content, what is vital is what exists after the training. A United Way-facilitated Fifth Ward Advisory Council that will survive and continue the training and offer a hand up to the next generation is vital. This empowers the seniors of the community, as well as leaders from outside who have perhaps moved beyond the community, to offer a helping hand to the younger members of the community. This provides a linear process, and a way for the system to propagate and extend into the future. Existing and new institutions and agencies must make room for a new generation of trained leaders.

A collaborative effort has been established called the Fifth Ward Community Redevelopment Corporation which has established a small fund for second mortgages and micro-loans, but its impact has been small to date.

Utica, in contrast, has a solid infrastructure of community leadership, a lead agency with a four-decade track record, a caring community, and a public spirit of optimism.

For Consideration

Zogby Analytics has provided in this report solid evidence that the Greater Utica community enjoys its reputation for welcoming new people, feels that the city and its leaders are doing a good job, and believe that immigration offers the city new hope for the future and a fresh image to the rest of the world. Residents also appear to be very proud of themselves: the story of America has always been from the outset underscoring the values of "opportunity" and a "second chance". Uticans seem to have internalized the sense that this community is responding in the best of both traditions.

MVRRCR, together with a wide variety of community leaders have done a remarkable job resettling and integrating refugees in large waves into the community. We offer the following for consideration:

Immigration 2.0 – the issue came up several times: refugees are provided for and nurtured for the first six months of their lives in Utica, what happens after that?

I don't disagree with all of the positive but immigrants are settled and move in. But then they are left on their own and they are stuck. They don't seem to move up. It is like there is a glass ceiling. How many really get beyond where they started?

There is no question that there is a finite amount of resources to deal with the rapidly growing (and needy) population, but there is a community consensus (or at least strong majorities) that the future of the city depends on the health, well-being, and prosperity of its new populations. And it is these peoples who are breathing hope, optimism and life into the city. With that said, we suggest:

- An extensive leadership training program – refugees (and their children) will be elected officials, bank and private agency board members, school principals and in other key posts very soon. There are plenty of training packages and plenty of potential NextGen leaders to match them. MVRRCR must work closely with local colleges, the United Way, successful civic leaders, and churches to implement a program to fast-track new leadership development
- Collaborative Task Force – to some degree the community, under the leadership of MVRRCR, already has a smooth-running network of public and private agencies. But there are some leaders, including those well within that network, who don't see it or feel it. This network must be tightened, structured, goal-oriented, and focused on ensuring that new immigrants are connected with the help they need and that people already successfully resettled are nurtured into the next phases of mobility and success.
- Employers Network – anyone who has been treated at a hospital, bought groceries, needed home repair, or been served at a range of food establishments has become aware of the changing face of Utica area employees. Strenuous efforts have been made to reach out the business community. Those efforts must be redoubled and developed into Priority One for business organizations. There are plenty of services for both employers and employees, but do enough people know about these?
- Entrepreneurship Development – there are already efforts at Mohawk Valley Community College to implement entrepreneurial skill development among the

immigrant community. There are also excellent private efforts like Upstate Venture Connect to foster mentoring programs and link budding start-ups with venture capital. These efforts will take time, but they need a concerted effort involving MVRCR and its constituency.

- Microloans -- a combination of United Way, the Community Foundation of Oneida and Herkimer Counties, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, should leverage with local banks to establish a microloan program for people in targeted Census tracts to apply for and receive revolving loans between \$5,000 and \$30,000 for business start up and second wave development. Applications can be approved and monitored by SUNY's Small Business Development Center.

Neutralizing Urban Legends – we have learned that negative sentiment does not involve a majority of residents. Nonetheless, there clearly are myths about refugees that exist and these must be dealt a heavy blow. Interestingly, it is among residents over 65 where feelings about refugees are the most positive. So a public and community relations program should be aimed at residents under 30 because this group has a great deal of contact with refugees through school and the workplace, and because this group is forming anti-government opinions in a time of fiscal crisis.

Zogby Analytics recommends a multimedia public and community relations program:

- *Video* – one that features the positive aspects of living in a multicultural community
- *Speakers Bureau* – representatives from MVRCR and various refugee leaders going out to meet, greet, share videos, and speaking to schools, churches, and community groups throughout the region.
- *Social Media* – rebranding Utica as “culturally cool”, with testimonials.
- *Communications/Community Relations Director* – a full-time staff member to coordinate a campaign, prepare materials, handle a speakers bureau, etc.

U.S. Conference of Mayors – Zogby Analytics has had a close working relationship with this vital Washington icon for six years. Frankly, they always ask why Utica is not represented. While the budget is impossibly tight, this is the best forum to hear and present ideas on innovation in America's cities. The contacts are vital; the information is always ahead of the curve; the value of the advocacy is priceless ; and today's mayors are tomorrow's governors, senators, CEOs, and corporate board members. Utica is missing an the opportunity to showcase itself as a model for immigration integration.

Part I. Community Leader Interviews

Q1. Can you identify any municipal activities, programs or services targeted directly to the immigrant community? Can you give some examples?

1. Translation services; tutoring for English language; and citizenship.
2. No
3. No
4. There are several interpreter programs/services in the community
5. I do know that the MV Refugee Center provides services for the immigrant population living in the community. I am not aware of the specifics to give adequate examples.
6. None are offered by Oneida County municipalities. Several are offered by private/non-profit organizations, but these are few and lack coordination of referral and language
7. The Refugee Center
8. Ethnic Heritage Foundation of Utica College. I am the founder. We commission histories of the Hispanic community. We haven't focused on any recent immigrant groups. We produced a book and study called "Ethnic Utica."
9. Proctor Park and the sports activities that go on there. Another example is the Utica School District. And the ESL programs they conduct. Neighborhood watch and workforce-companies that provide jobs
10. In 2008, I (Sgt. Uryniak) was a traffic sgt. and there was need to educate the refugee public about a car seat program. I set-up a class and they had to invent a word for car seat and seat belt because they did not exist. 1st day of class there was a bad accident and a car seat was involved and they needed an interpreter from class.
11. The MVLA serves the Latino population. I am very familiar with the President and some members of that group.
12. Seems that the city of Utica/Oneida county work with MVRRCR to resettle refugees, which have dominated this area's immigrant population—during the last decade, making up over 85% of immigrants, compared to most parts of the US where they are only a small fraction of immigrants. I am not aware of anything for non-refugee immigrants.
13. No
14. Compass Interpreters (MVRRCR)
15. Refugee center

16. No
17. None
18. MVRRCR Refugee center
19. Municipal housing
20. Not certain of any solely taught directly to the ref. center.
21. School System, ESL-help in educating children
22. International Day

Q2. Are you aware of an immigrant population living in this community? If yes can you identify the two largest foreign-born populations living in the community?

1. Thai/Cambodia; Karin.
2. #1 Burmese and #2 Bosnian. If not Bosnian, then Vietnamese
3. Bosnian, Sudanese
4. Bosnian
5. Korean and Bosnian
6. Hispanic and Eastern European
7. Bosnian; Vietnamese
8. Italians, Poles, Bosnians, Sudanese, Somali.
9. Karen Burmese of Myanmar; Somali, and Bosnian populations.
10. Bosnians, Karin, Sudanese.
11. There are a total of 62,500 people in Utica and 25% are refugees. They came here with nothing. They are diverse. Bosnian and Burmese and Somali who have to be taught a lot about safety and seat belts. It's tough with the Bantu and Burmese communities.
12. Unsure
13. Yes, of course, the Bosnians, who came in huge numbers between 1995-2005 or so. After that are Ukrainian and more recently Karen (Burmese) people, with other refugee populations including Russian and Somali. It is harder for me to figure out who the non-refugee populations are. In big cities where I have lived (San Francisco bay area, Chicago, Washington, DC, Minneapolis) you know that there are huge neighborhoods filled with immigrants-Chinese, Vietnamese, African, Mexican and other Latino, Lebanese or Afghani. Here the numbers are so small that immigrants seem almost invisible.

14. Yes, I believe most recently it has been the Bosnian community has been the largest refugee community in the area. I am not sure about the second largest group. I know of the former Soviet union as well as several African Counties and Burma.
15. Bosnian, Italian
16. Cambodians, Bosnians, Somali
17. Bosnian, Burmese (Karen, Burmese, Karen, Iraqi, Shan, Po'o), & people from the former USSR (mainly Belarusian, Russian & Ukrainian.)
18. Bosnians, Somalis
19. Bosnian, Hispanic
20. Bosnian, Karin Burmese, Russian.
21. A) Bosnian B) Russian and Burmese
22. Bosnian and Karin Burmese
23. Burmese and Bosnian
24. Bosnian and (Thai, Vietnamese, and Russian)

Q3. Are you aware of any partnerships with local community-based organizations that work with immigrants? If so can you name some?

1. Oneida County Health Dept.
2. MVRRCR
3. Refugee center
4. No
5. MVRRCR
6. None
7. Refugee center
8. Utica School District; Refugee Ct; There is not much coordination between institutions.
9. Baptist Tabernacle Church
10. Refugee Center, Neighborhood centers, and the school district.
11. Boy Scouts is about to launch a Scouting program for youth at the Latino Association.
12. Refugee center, neighborhood center
13. No
14. MVRRCR, Utica School district
15. Some of the immigrant groups have formed their own organizations (e.g., the Multi-Ethnic Association of Burma, the Somali Bantu Community Association, the Sudanese Friendship Association) and places of worship (e.g., Utica Karen Church, Slavic Pentecostal Church, Utica Masjid, Bosnian Islamic Association, the Cambodian Buddhist

temple on Steuben St, the Vietnamese Buddhist temple on Riverside Dr., and the Slavic Pentecostal Church). Several Utica churches are actively working with various immigrant groups, e.g., Redeemer Church, Calvary Gospel, Tabernacle Baptist, Trinity Lutheran).

16. MVCC, though Utica Housing Authority, YWCA, legal aid, and domestic violence organizations.
17. YWCA, Catholic Charities, and the Neighborhood Center
18. Ref. Ct., Utica School district, Utica Save school,, Hobart St. Church and Neighborhood Watch Center.
19. Rotary has tried something with ref groups. Committees have tried to reach out and bring together Sudanese and Somali groups together-this would also benefit jobs for children
20. The Community Gardens with For The Good, Inc.
The Study Buddy Club with For The Good, Inc.
School sports teams
Churches
21. Yes, none of top of my head

Q4. How well do you think the community understands and accepts the experiences of people with different identities, values, and worldviews?

1. Not very well; we need more positive communication; emphasize that they become very strong workers for our local community.
2. The community as a whole perhaps does not engage the refugee population, but I can't fault the community. There are language barriers and it can also be very difficult for first generation immigrants to be comfortable in US / Utican society. However their children adapt quickly and become part of the community quickly. An example is Cambodian or Vietnamese kids whose parents came from SE Asia, however they went to school in Utica and have friends of many different backgrounds. Another example are the Bosnian people- many Bosnians in their 20s are good friends with native Uticans. I do believe as each generation grows up, we become more sensitive and interested in other community's cultures.
3. Not very well at first language and cultural issues create misunderstanding. subsequent generations have an easier time.
4. I think in general this area is well informed of different cultures coming to the area. There are always those individuals who do not like the change the immigrants/refugees bring with them.

5. To be honest, I do not think that the community fully understands people with different identifies and world views. I feel that the community is at times resentful of different populations and feel they are getting a so-called "Free Ride". This is my opinion from various conversations I have heard. The reason for this is people don't understand others cultures, beliefs and what they might have been through or have experienced that have lead them into our community.
6. The community has a poor track record with cultural competency initiatives.
7. Pretty well. The region values the new arrivals, and the establishment of Moslem mosques without community resistance is evidence of that
8. Has done a great job assimilating people and various groups. Bosnians are wholehearted contributors to local community through acts of neighborhood beatification, employment, and they are hardworking.
9. The Court System is very receptive in regards to language and laws and he means that they understand and are lenient to the idea that refugees do not completely understand laws. Community does not understand traffic, DWI and other laws here; possibly things to do with women who are more subservient in other cultures and do have this background.
10. Pretty well and this is the consensus among a majority of people.
11. More accepting-Utica has a history of immigrants going back to the Irish, Polish, and Italians. Each had its own separate institutions but they integrated. The workforce unified them.
12. Not very well
13. Not well at all. I have never lived in a place so parochial in its outlook. People here generally don't want anything to do with anything they perceive as non-American and/or non-White. They are overtly racist and ethnocentric. They are explicitly uncurious, even avoidant, about other cultures, especially their food. The racial and ethnic diversity of the area is too concentrated in Utica, with most of the rest of the surrounding communities disconnected from that diversity. In Utica, many people accepted Bosnians, mostly because they were white European. But there is prejudice and even meanness toward the newer waves of refugees, and other immigrants who are Asian, African, or Spanish-speaking.
14. I think Utica is a welcoming community, and people make an effort to learn about different cultures. Our local newspaper publishes positive articles on the immigrants and focuses on the positive aspect the immigrant population brings to the greater community.
15. I believe there remains a lack of effort to learn about the experiences of people with different values and identities, despite many opportunities to do so in our community.

With a younger, more liberal generation, however, I believe this will continue to improve.

16. I am not certain how well the community understands, but there appears to be an acceptance, or at least, a tolerance
17. Mixed. Some have engaged with the immigrant community. Some are open, or maybe even curious, but perhaps don't have many opportunities to engage (and aren't sure how to create opportunities). Some hold negative viewpoints about immigration to the community.
18. Not well at all!! Ready people the community have negative feelings towards immigrants in particular this is because of the different religious aspects of the refugees. Many people not understand the benefits refugees get and why they get them. Even among some refugee groups they do not have respect for each other.
19. We do strive to be inclusive and accepting.
20. The community has general sympathy for different cultures. There is room for improvement.
21. On the whole the population does a remarkable job and provides place of welcome to different cultures and backgrounds. Utica is known for this. Mosque and Buddhist temple in the inner city is another example, he suggest the city is welcoming and people put their roots down.
22. Most people in Utica are parochial-during good times there isn't as much negativity toward refugees and poor people about free rides. Now there are more public forums fostering hate toward people who do not speak English-this could have something to do with community.
23. I think that Uticans in general do very well
24. Not as well as they could or should.

Q5. Can you speak to any constraints you believe exist to the areas' ability to provide programming for immigrants?

1. Limited budgets
2. Well things generally work via incentives, and there aren't necessarily many incentives for small business to provide programming for immigrants. That being said, many local businesses hire immigrants they are a very important part of the labor pool for the MV.
3. Better training for employers for the resource that is provided by immigrants. Government and development groups need to do a better job.
4. No, I think this area has done everything possible to make the transition easier for immigrants/refugees.

5. I am sure, like most organizations in the community, everyone currently is experiencing cuts to overall operating budgets. The constraint, I feel would be the need sufficient funding to provide programming for immigrants.
6. Lack of collaboration and funding, but more importantly a belief that these services are needed.
7. Only the struggling economy. But there is a good housing stock available, schools with ESL programs, etc.
8. Costs are burden to the city of Utica and Utica School System. But it's still impressive what the Utica School System and Refugee Center have done to utilize resources well.
9. Money and social services being reduced. Some went on to say that individual organizations, city and state programs provide services that alleviate problems-w/out money not there to support immigrant communities, there is not much that can be done to help get these people started in life and on a path to success. They create outreach to family, churches, people who live longer.
10. Economy and employment. If it were better.
11. Personal communication. Example is 911-a lot of people cannot understand the operator. Somalis brought culture and it conflicts
12. Language barriers, certainly. Misunderstanding of other people's culture. Economics. Time availability.
13. The closed-mindedness of area residents. The lack of interest in cultural diversity such as eating at ethnic restaurants. People will actually refuse to go to lunch with you if you want to eat Vietnamese or Indian food. If people refuse to try Indian food, how friendly a place would this be for Indian immigrants who might bring tremendous energy, ambition and technical/STEM educations to our region? There is also very little friendliness for Spanish speaking here. I almost never see signs in English and Spanish like you do in California or many parts of the rest of the country. Racism (A recent innovative research effort showed that after West Virginia/PA Appalachian region, upstate New York is the most racist place in the nation!!!) Since most new immigrants are going to be brown skinned, this does not bode well for our ability to attract and welcome them to our region...
14. I would believe that MONEY is a constraint

15. There remains a hesitance by some immigrant groups to ask for help or to reach outside of their primary support group for help. Mistrust remains strong amongst minority populations. Lack of interpreters
16. Long term brokering of services
17. Unsure
18. Lack of understanding why refugees came to Utica.
19. Budget, Funding and bottom Line
20. There needs to be more stakeholders to get funding. More partners to work effectively. Financial constraints but we need more buy-in from private sector. Feels Peter Vogelaar moved Ref. Ct. in different direction
21. We live in a time when gov't at all levels is cash strapped- a challenge to adding any new service and our existing services are underfunded and reviewed to see if cuts can be made. There is an economic downturn but there is a fair amount of goodwill.
22. Too fractured and fragmented- we do not have enough money and do not know how to use resources properly.
23. There is no community center where people can interact on a regular basis.
24. Can't think of any constraints, possibly funding to continue programs.

Q6. Does this community need additional assistance for developing strategies to serve immigrants living in the area? If so what in particular? E.g. need to understand local government services or understanding local property regulations/codes.

1. N/A
2. I believe immigrants here have done a great job of cleaning up some poorer neighborhoods, and immigrants in general are hard working and more willing than natives to take up “blue-collar” jobs. So it would be great to have institutions or organizations that help explain all services to immigrants. I do not know if organizations exist. One thing that comes to mind is teaching immigrants about financial products like banking and insurance, but if there is an organization that does that locally, I’m not aware of one.
3. Not sure anyone is doing this. Would be helpful if there was a group that assisted with the next phase for immigrants of integration. Nice job is done when they arrive. A year later what is happening. Wonder if immigrants understand banking and finance.
4. Understanding local government could use some improvement. Immigrants/refugees come from different backgrounds and different governmental set up, and of course it might be a little harder to understand how our local government functions.
5. The community does need additional assistance in developing strategies to serve immigrants living in the area, I am sure there is a large array of areas to address. Some are: understanding American culture, understanding basic human and civil rights that belong to everyone, policies & procedures to obtain proper services needed, how to access services needed, what skills are needed to obtain gainful employment, etc.
6. Community Leadership strategies are required that focus on our making “newcomers” feel welcomed and an essential factor to the success of our community.
7. I don’t think so
8. Utica School System very restraint and then followed that with a response of not sure.
9. Yes-need to have conversation with leaders of the community such as churches that have refugees so government can understand problems within immigrant communities. The better the refugees community can learn about living with locals and better understand state laws. It also prevents crimes such as citations for unkempt properties. If there are not translation services they (refugees) do not understand problems. Has had to keep explaining to friends and people who came to him with tickets.
10. Other than better economy.
11. Range of services do help most refugees such as education outreach and cross-cultural community services. They need to be tailored to be delivered and create business incubators. There has to be translators in community services because so many dialects.

12. I think we need to coordinate services where possible to streamline what we can do and not duplicate services. I believe that would help us serve the various ethnic groups better and more efficiently.
13. we need to do a lot more anti-racism education in churches, schools, colleges, workplaces, and civic organizations.
14. don't know
15. Our community would benefit from educating our youth about the importance of multicultural acceptance. For example, providing a space for facilitated conversations amongst high school Bosnian students and non-Bosnian students to help both sides understand identities, values, and experiences
16. Yes, some of the recent refugees appear to be experiencing a high degree of poverty. Assistance is needed in helping move to great self-sufficiency
17. Probably. It seems that their quality of life would be greatly improved by a better understanding our social, educational, legal & financial systems. Some program(s) could perhaps be devised to facilitate this. But it would seem that relationships--and genuine friendships--with native and/or established residents in the community would also be very effective.
18. Basic cultural education about the different refugee groups in Utica.
19. Get funding to provide programs, we have the people but we need the money
20. There needs to be an community wide conversation and the Ref. ct. has advocated this,
21. You can never have enough strategies but thinks there needs to be coordinated efforts. Past President Peter Vogelaar (MVRCR) worked hard to address needs. Chamber is slowly looking for small business from refugee community.
22. I am sure Utica could do better with a central location for diverse leadership to gather on a regular basis to interface on any issues that emerge in the community and head off problems before they become big issues.
23. Yes, everything, financial, health literacy. Where to access help.

Q7. Is the community in your opinion able to go beyond stereotypes and see the rich complexity and humanity of a refugee group? If so can you describe why? If not, why not?

1. Not there yet; more communication necessary
2. Some in the community are and some are not. Some people, who have traveled appreciate the beauty and advantages of different ideas and cultures. Some who have not, perhaps do not care. However I believe stereotypes is not necessarily a bad thing- they often exist because of some underlying truths and to completely discount them may not be helpful.
3. Yes, For those individuals who appreciate their own history or have experienced other people through travel. For those that have not no.
4. Community as a whole is able to go beyond stereotypes in my opinion, but again there are those individuals who are not up to date as to what is going on in community and they have a hard time getting over the stereotypes.
5. I think that the community needs better education on the refugee groups in order to get past the stereotyping to feel comfortable and accept the refugee groups into the community. This is unfortunate as everyone should be treated equally.
6. Much work is required here, begin with eliminating the blame the newcomers receive for our community's ills by highlighting the strength our country's diverse heritage has made us the greatest country in the world
7. Refugees have earned a reputation for hard work. I never hear of negative stereotypes. The largest group, Bosnians, do not wear distinctive Moslem attire, like the Hijab, and so do not bring special attention to themselves, and therefore I do not encounter anti-Muslim stereotypes.
8. The city is at the and not sure how it happened but has done great with new refugee groups while this was not the case 50 years ago. He cited praise by New York Times. Gene gives the Refugee Center a lot of credit and Peter Vogelaar who headed the place in the past did a wonderful job.
9. Yes. It's hard for people to understand language barrier and looks but at least people can be curious find out due to computers, smart phones, Google. People seem less willing to do this. Most people are less willing to find out.
10. Yes, a majority of the population and cited the Mosque downtown
11. Yes. Good people overall (refugees) but there will have bad apples here and there. Recently there was a war criminal from Bosnian conflict-Suleiman Mujagic. Most share view that most refugees are good people
12. Not sure but suspect there is resistance to trying to engage with cultures unlike our own. This takes many of us out of our comfort zone.

13. I haven't seen much of that. MVCC has hundreds of Bosnian, Ukrainian and Russian students, a few even born here or came as small children. People still think of them as "Bosnians" and as refugees rather than just like anyone else
14. Yes , I think our community is definitely making an effort. The best example is the Soccer Teams at Proctor High School. It is absolutely fantastic to see the variety of kids that come together to pay soccer so successfully. My son goes to Proctor and he plays on the Soccer Team. Going to the games feels like watching a United Nations soccer team. It's awesome! Playing sports is a wonderful way to get to know each other. The Utica School District deserves to be acknowledged for all the work they do to integrate the immigrant/refugee children into the community. I am sure they could do even more if they had more monetary support.
15. With a younger generation pushing out more conservatives values our community will become increasingly accepting of the multicultural community
16. I believe that some in the community are able to do this. From the workforce, religious groups and other cultural connections.
17. yes –Legal Aide has a very specific program to assist with foreclosures
18. we need to use the rich culture of the different refugee groups as a way to welcome them to other parts of the community
19. We are very inclusive because we are only two generations removed from immigrants such as Lebanese, Italians, Polish who were immigrants not too long ago
20. Yes. People do however it doesn't back it up with analysis and program implementation. There needs to be an imaginative leap and people need to get their hands dirty.
21. Unique in Utica. It's a relatively small community given its size and population. It's difficult to escape- you go anywhere and you come into contact with ref. communities. He cited an example of how his daughters go to Proctor and study and are friends with people from all over the world-greater exposure breaks down stereotypes.
22. "I don't think so." Speaks from perspective of seniors. Not into younger mindset-things are happening but she is out of loop with younger people in refugee community. She is unsure of how Refugee Ct. reaches out to the community and how well it is projected. There have been film festivals about immigrant issues and community.
23. **A.** I don't know if I would describe it as seeing the 'rich complexity' but folks around here seem to be too horribly resentful. I have heard comments about supposed privileges/opportunities or being given jobs but this has not been the rule. I see there is more curiosity or indifference about the different cultures than antagonism.
B. Utica has a history of incorporating immigrants into the community and appears to be proud of that heritage. Churches throughout the community have welcomed numerous groups of various

24. Parts of the community are, and some cannot.

8. *What concerns or issues regarding immigration has the community overcome?*

1. Starting to realize that they are not a financial burden but are an addition to the local economy.
2. N/A
3. Acceptance in the work place
4. N/A
5. I believe that the community has accepted that the immigrants will be living in the community.
6. Not many, the only thing that comes to mind is the Citizenship ceremonies at the Federal Courthouse.
7. I think the establishment of mosques was a potential point of conflict, but the community actually welcomed it.
8. The federal government has created an environment to thrive. Gene says the Refugee Center is one of the best of its kind in the country and doesn't know how it happened but it has national respect.
9. Non US citizens commit crimes and Sam has done interpretation services for these criminals are better to deport. These are small numbers and most people Sam has talked to wants to become citizens but it's expensive and verbally challenging and many obstacles
10. Jan mentioned more interpreting services and more awareness of the need for services. Many refugees are hardworking and improve neighborhoods, they have jobs and pay taxes. (They refer to refugees) and talk very little of freebies.
11. There is a tolerance issue. Refugees do bring baggage. Some of the Arabs have different views about women believe they are subservient to them. Refugees need to understand American culture and laws better and vice versa. They are hard working. People who own plants in Iowa pick up Bosnians because they are very good labor.
12. Don't know
13. None that I can think of. The only reason people grudgingly accept anything good for having immigrants and refugees is that it has slowed the hemorrhaging population decline and brought some economic vitality to the region. But it is grudging, because in general, people here seem to oppose almost any change—economic, educational, cultural, social, religious, etc.
14. I think the city realized that for example the Bosnian community was almost a savor for the city. The population was declining drastically until the city had the influx of the

Bosnian refugees. They started to buying up homes and started businesses and are now a vital part of our community

15. It has become widely accepted that our community is rich in multicultural populations—our identity has reflected that. Acceptance is a significant barrier that we appear to have overcome.
16. Uncertain
17. I have not seen very many people genuinely antipathetic to the local immigrant population. Most people seem to accept that they are here.
18. Since the Bosnian refugees of better the community so they have been more accepted by the community. Also different neighborhoods there are pockets of refugee groups that have made the neighborhoods better.
19. The assumption they will be happy sitting on the dole but the reality is they work hard and contribute.
20. NS-since he has been here there has been a history and things have been established.
21. Bosnians have proven to be energetic with work ethic. When they get positions they do excellent job bringing recognition and reinvested in the community-example is how they saved E. Utica neighborhoods.
22. The gang issue was a problem for a period of time but I haven't heard anything lately. The Somali Bantu community had and continues to have some serious societal and adaption issues and remain the most problematic group to incorporate.
23. Gen pop has overcome increase in immigrant pop. Realization that immigrants bring a lot to community in terms of growth

Q9. What are the issues regarding immigration that this community still needs to still address?

1. Embracing their stories
2. believe there are some who believe immigrants are given things that natives are not, for example financial help with buying property. I do not know if they are, but believe not much is given.
3. The same issue that many natives experience not accepting that some can be provided with something for nothing
4. I think the issue that needs to be addressed is how to educate the people that are born here and are citizens of this community on services offered to immigrants/refugees. Especially those in more rural communities. Personally I have been in situations where people ask if we (immigrants/refugees) receive free everything. Their assumption is that we get everything from cars to houses to even not having to pay taxes for free. I think that

- educating the community on services provided to the immigrant population is the same for all citizens.
5. As stated before, individuals that have been living in the community for years need better education to understand the cultures of immigrants. I think more information on the positive would be beneficial.
 6. Focus on including our “new comers” into the community with an outreach program that incorporates, language educational services, and access to all the wonderful family services available in the community.
 7. Can’t think of any
 8. From his own experience the refugee center policies were not around. He feels the as far as immigrants, there needs to be more doctors, engineers, and the area need to open the door to other countries with skilled labor.
 9. The main stream population has very little understanding and there is a notion that immigrants are taking jobs and free houses. These amount to stereotypes. The Us government looks at depressed areas and brings refugees to areas to improve them. Sam then referenced a program in Providence Rhode Island that he was a part of . He says refugees take jobs no one will such as cleaning jobs, assembly line jobs, etc. There needs to be infrastructure (welfare system) needs to be in place to establish to integrate them into society. These people are productive and within a year most immigrants are working at companies and not relying on the system as a crutch; this factor is not always seen by the community. Many more houses on the tax role. Sam wanted many units for a year and are now buying up houses
 10. More demand from older generations.
 11. Sgt. answered murky and if resources are provided to refugees, they will ultimately serve the community.
 12. Understanding differences and finding a way to serve all groups. Housing. Employment opportunities.

13. At a meeting a few years ago someone from the Refugee Center came to talk to my organization about racism in the community. It was shocking and very disturbing. Children (I believe refugees from Burma and other Asian origins) were being attacked on the streets, in school, in buses. An African mother and her children were being stoned on the street by neighbors because of the crime of being non-white. I would urge any immigrant NOT ever to come to Utica or Rome because of this attitude. Go somewhere in this country where people have open hearts and minds and love diversity. Every other place I've ever lived would fit that bill.
14. There always could be more integration. I think it is important to find community leaders within these various immigration groups and have them involved in leadership programs. I think the ultimate goal should be making the immigrants vested in this community; First they can learn about how things work in this country and eventually can have the opportunity to hold positions in local government as well as public servants (such as Fire, Police & City Hall.)
15. To educate all members of our community on the values and identities of our multicultural neighbors. Many may not fully understand the significance—or lack thereof—of this coming holiday season.
16. Assistance is needed in helping move to great self-sufficiency
17. There are several myths about immigrants: “They are taking our jobs.” ... “They are tax exempt for 10 years.” “The government gives them all \$10,000 when they come here.” It might help to get their stories told
18. Racism
19. Cultural differences with regards to criminal justice, certain mores that are acceptable but not completely understood in the communities because they are not completely complicit with laws. Ex. You cannot marry a thirteen year old.
20. Community wide commitment to communicating that people provide services-clear communication across services network. Jobs training, remedial education, active participation in workforce, basic transportation, safe driving.
21. There are larger issues that are not unique to refugee community but impact them. His church is in a poor area, aging housing stock, schools underfunded, lead abatement, poverty.

22. Many refugees, especially older do not learn English language. If this occurs they will be assimilated more. She gave an example of when she was working at the ARC, there were 15 maintenance people who did not speak English and relied on one co-worker.
23. Female genital mutilation is a hidden problem that needs to be assured is discontinued as a practice. B. Male domination and polygamy are also problems
24. Immigrants had to leave their homes because of unsafe conditions. Community needs to understand why immigrants come here (not just for a job). What they left behind. What it means to be a refugee community and understand it.

Q10. Who in the community cares about refugee relocation and making it work? Are you able to tell who they might be? Why?

1. Refugee Center
2. None
3. Refugee center
4. Refugee Center, and people in their own community.
5. I feel that the MV Refugee Center cares about relocation and making it work. I am not sure how collaboration is currently being done to work with other local organizations to pool resources together to provide programming for the immigrant population in the community.
6. The MVRRCR and the Mohawk Valley Latino Association.
7. Certainly the Refugee Center. ESL programs, such as at Utica College
8. Refugee Center.
9. People from refugee community, family and friends help to move forward and within the faith based communities church members co-sponsor individuals. An example is the Tabernacle Baptist church. Karin have their own church on South St.
10. Refugee Center and employers who need labor-ConMed, Mele manufacturing, Turning Stone, and Presbyterian Home
11. Refugee Center and School System. They provide safety education and traffic education. Safer people equals reduced costs.
12. I am not very familiar with the Refugee Center but I would guess they are probably the leading advocates for refugees. Specific refugee groups most likely have their own internal support efforts but I am not familiar with these
13. Apart from people with direct connections to the Refugee Center, some churches that support the efforts of resettlement, I don't know.
14. Refugee Center. They receive federal monies to help settle refugees in our area

15. None
16. other than MVRRC, the department of social services, the workforce investment board, the Utica School system, to name a few
17. I have seen churches caring and engaging the most. That is due at least in part to my own involvement through my church and my connections with other involved churches. I am sure other groups must be involved as well. Christians are generally inspired to reach out and offer help, with no strings attached, because one of the main themes in the Bible is loving our neighbors, those in need, the foreigners, and the socially disadvantaged and disenfranchised.
18. MVRRCR. Utica east side mission is offering programs in small groups of refugees
19. Refugee Center-MVRRCR
20. Ref. Ct. at the top of the list. The ct. has done a good job. Colleges such as Colgate. Ref. Ct. has unique building relationships.
21. Strong support from churches-religious institutions have helped a great deal. Fraternal orgs have not helped as much. Congregations have also been very helpful
22. The Refugee Center, the Education system and the churches.

11. Can you describe the state of some relationships in the community, are they working or are they strained, e.g., school district, campus life, faith communities or organizations?

1. Strained
2. I don't have a clear understanding however I believe things in the public school system may be ok. And I have to believe that life in college campuses must be more cosmopolitan and so easier for immigrants to adjust to. I also think that immigrants often stick to their own religious services.
3. School system
4. None
5. None
6. The lack of collaboration and unbiased leadership are the true "culprits here.
7. Happily, there is a great diversity of religions here, so there is a culture of tolerance.
8. The school district is doing a fine job. Most Bosnians are hardworking and moving-up. He is not aware of equal push among other groups.
9. For the most part the relationship is working. School District helps by exposing culture; neighborhoods helping breaking down stereotypes and they are more understanding.
10. By and large It has worked. Schools have had issues, getting along with natives.
11. Some are working and some are strained. There are communication issues and mental health issues. Within the court system there are things interpreters cannot

communicate because their words and laws not understood because certain languages do not understand them. Complicates legal process. They need a fair shot.

12. None
13. School districts seemed strained. I heard just yesterday that the Utica city schools refused to participate in an educational program related to a Common Core book (a slave narrative) because they were scared to expose children to issues of race and racism within the American historical context. I find that many people in Utica are like that—they don't want to talk about the existence of racism let alone the hard work of dismantling racism. So that denies the reality of the lives of people of color in our community and our country. I live in Clinton, and there we have discussions about race and racism—but perhaps because of the more open-mindedness of the college community
14. I believe the school district is making a good effort in that respect. I KNOW they need more money though. Often times the children are the translators for families because the parents do not speak English. The School District is a catch all for many social services necessary
15. None
16. None
17. There seems to be a lot of pressure on the school system caused by the sheer numbers of immigrants in the school, the challenge of communicating with parents, and the requirements to produce standard student performance results.
18. Utica school district is now more aware of the needs of the refugees. A lot still needs to be done of the schools. I also have concerns about safety in many of the different neighborhoods.
19. My own experience. We are learning to get along, learning experience.
20. Generally, see a lot of good will from the school system, non profits and social services. Some are strained in meeting day to day needs but by and large all are responsible and help.
21. They different ref. groups do not interact with each other. The groups are separate and the school district is very involved but as an example, Columbus school ref. parents do not get involved in PTA.
22. Generally non confrontational
23. Some are working and some are strained. Strained because pops are competing with one another. Working relationship with refugee center. School district and immigration unknown.

Q12. Are you aware if there are leaders or any other individuals in the community who are especially trusted by refugees who are most concerned or fearful?

1. None
2. None
3. None
4. None
5. I would assume that the immigrant population trust the staff and leaders at the MV Refugee Center. I do not have any other information to answer this question.
6. None
7. None
8. Sonya Martinez-represents Hispanic Groups; Juan Thomas at UC writing local histories-specializes in writing about older immigrant groups. Owner of the Bosnian Newspaper; Amy's grocery on South St. and he is the leader of the mosque in downtown Utica.
9. Informal-no specific position in community but they are always involved in some aspect of advice being expressed to refugees. Bwe Htoo mentor individuals, sometimes he can get things done that the ref ct. can't. It gets frustrating but he get them done. There are formal leaders such as pastors. He named Mark at the Tabernacle Church-Karin look to him because they are Christian and Pastor Daniel Tu at the Tabernacle.
10. Would think they trust the Refugee Center. Multi Cultural interpreters.
11. Claire Sole, Refugee center-looks after people.
12. None
13. None
14. None
15. None
16. None
17. Unaware of anyone who is of particular concern to the refugee community.
 - ✓ Trusted people, Leaders:
 - ✓ Russ Schmitt of Oriskany Garage & Tire
 - ✓ Matt Nimey of Nimey's The Next Generation
 - ✓ Trevisani & LaPorte
 - ✓ Pastor Mark Caruana, Tabernacle Baptist (Burmese community)
 - ✓ Pastor George Dodd, Calvary Gospel (Belarusian, Russian, Ukrainian community)
 - ✓ Pastor Rich Mokry, Trinity Lutheran (African Community)
 - ✓ Beth Martine, Redeemer Church (Nepali community)
 - ✓ I have met some people who seem to have a certain amount of trust and leadership within their own immigrant communities.

18. Polish: Artur Pyrda, the proprietor of the Polish Community Center
- ✓ Liberian: John Tamba
 - ✓ Sudanese: Japhas “Guma” Kafi, Gabriel Akol, Moses Agapito, George Bakura
 - ✓ Somali Bantu: Abdelshakur Khamis, Mohammed Hussein, Abdi Ibrahim (goes by a new name now, I think)
 - ✓ Iraqi: Zaid Abbas
 - ✓ Bosnian: Dzevad Racic, Senad Sabic, Samir Merdanovic, Mirsen Durmisevic, Sead Durmisevic.
 - ✓ Salvadoran: Raul Mendez
 - ✓ Bhutanese Nepali: Dhanapati Acharya, Sancha Rai, Gangaram Rijal
 - ✓ Burmese: Kaw Soe Win, Saw Lay Kler, Kler Eh Soe, Zaw Win, Paw Baund
19. None
20. None
21. Faith based and Refugee center
22. From Burma-the refugee center. Baptist Christians turn to the church. Africans turn to the church, teachers, ESL program. There are trusted advisors. He also mentioned they Navy ROTC program.
23. Not sure. Peter Vogelaar
- ✓ Within any community there are individuals who are feared and others who are trusted. Sometimes the cultural realities of these groups speaks to an innate fear or predation. Some of the African cultures, with an emphasis on male domination or an unquestionable patriarchy, would without a doubt establish fear for women and girls if challenged.
 - ✓ Other populations, like the Bosnians, from a culture of war, may harbor members who carry with them a significant threat of violence they may have been a part of. Recently a war criminal from Bosnia was arrested. There is an aide to former Mayor Roefaro who was said to have been an assassin in the old country. I understand that there were Bosnians who hated/feared this man.
 - ✓ On the other hand, individuals and elders from immigrant groups who speak English, such as the Burmese, have appeared to be relied upon and respected by their non-English speaking peers. I am sure this is the case in other cultures.
24. Unknown. Assuming leaders at refugee center are trusted. Soyna Martinez trusted in Spanish community,.

Q13. Are there “bridge” people who are trusted by a wide range of refugees?

1. Do not know

2. Do not know
3. Do not know
4. Faith leaders
5. Do not know
6. Do not know
7. Do not know
8. Father Buehler does a Vietnamese mass; there is a Spanish mass at St. John's and many other churches offer similar types of services. St. Mary's is subsidized. He also mentioned Tabernacle Church and the Buddhist Temple in Cornhill
9. Pastors, churches
10. Refugee Center and Neighborhood Watch Center.
11. Daniel Lay-interprets for the police and courts; her risen to occasion and was not appointed.
12. Do not know
13. Do not know
14. Do not know
15. Do not know
16. Do not know
17. Do not know
18. Grace Church
19. Cornelia Brown, Tony Colon and Leeann Devine
20. Refugee center fits that bill. ESL and Boces
21. From his experience, Burmese find people of influence and authority and act as brokers, this is a cultural trait of Karin. There refs. In their 20's and 40's have made transition and speak on behalf of Sr. leaders. Some at Tabernacle come to mark.
22. Not Sure. Alice Sevino
23. The Refugee Center, English Language teachers and clergy would be among the trusted.

Q14. Are particular institutions or organizations broadly respected—or not?

1. Refugee center
2. None
3. None

4. None
5. I do not know how the overall community feels about the MV Refugee Center.
6. Portions of the of the newcomer community respect the MVRRCR and the MVLA.
7. refugee center
8. Utica School System. He also said refugees are thankful to Proctor for the services and programs-ESL they provide. He also named ConMed as an example; they employ many refugees
9. Refugee center and Church
10. Social Services, Workforce Solutions, ConMed, Mele Manufacturing, Refugee Center, Turning Stone and Presbyterian Church.
11. Refugee center
12. None
13. None
14. Refugee Center, Neighborhood Center
15. None
16. None
17. None
18. None
19. None
20. Tabernacle- education is respected, leaders and teachers have respect. Church and leaders are afforded more respect. Burmese are used to paying bribes.
21. Naturalization process and courses given for citizenship. Boces Classes.
22. Schools, churches, government can be admires and feared depending on the origin of the immigrant group
23. Unknown

Q15. Are you aware of and can you describe employment and workforce services for refugees?

1. Refugee center
2. I believe MVRRCR works with a workplace placement company (Staffworks?). I also notice there are refugees working in many local businesses.
3. ConMed

4. Refugee Center helps out with employment for new refugees. Working Solutions is a great place to start looking for a job, although, I think they could use a couple of interpreters at their workplace.
5. I am aware that the MV Refugee Center assists individuals in obtaining information on employment opportunities and workforce services. My next guess would be the Workforce Investment Board and local county & government entities have information to assist the immigrant population.
6. None
7. None
8. state unemployment office, BOCES, County welfare agency
9. None
10. Labor Department, state government agencies, DMV-traffic safety for licenses and School System.
11. None
12. MVCC does a great job of providing educational program starting with ESL if needed.
13. None
14. None
15. MVRRCR, the WIB (Onestop), RCIL and Columbia Place Associates
16. MVRRCR
17. MVCC is doing the most to help the refugees with employment.
18. None
19. work force development
20. Tabernacle most ref come through ref ct...there are also informal networks of friends and relatives.
21. Not for profits try to employ people who come to them-many shine and work very hard-many have excellent work habits. When she was an employer she hired refugees but many did not have the work ethic the Bosnians did.
22. The Refugee Center is the center for that activity as far as I know.
23. They do exist. BOCES. Places that refugee established, CONMED. Chobani has refugees working there (came from Staffworks).

Q16. Do youth leadership, education, and career development programs exist? Can you identify them?

1. Training at Proctor School; soccer training for students
2. None

3. None
4. BOCES
5. The Workforce Investment Board assists in career development, displaced workforce and employment funding opportunities for individuals in the community.
6. Only aware of the character development/leadership programs offered by the local Boy Scouts of America Council.
7. Utica College's Young Scholars Program targets at-risk youth
8. Proctor has programs such as the NROTC and they are doing lovely work. He could not think of any individuals but cited an example of the community rehabilitating the Bagg Square building.
9. there are youth mentoring programs at the Tabernacle Church that work with at risk youth.
10. None
11. Police Dept. deliver strong anti-gang program. Also Boy Scouts; Churches especially big among Burmese because they are Christian
12. None
13. None
14. None
15. None
16. None
17. None
18. None
19. MVRCA-DA's office lectured interpreters on how justice and legal system work so they communicate things properly to communities (immigrants)
20. None
21. Not for profits try to employ people who come to them-many shine and work very hard-many have excellent work habits. When she was an employer she hired refugees but many did not have the work ethic the Bosnians did.
22. Maybe-work with youth employment services in Oneida County. Summer youth programs such as parks and recreation and mowing grass. These are run by Dave Massif and Alice Sevino. They approve federal dollars for these programs.
23. The Study Buddy Club
24. Yes. Can't identify off head.

Q17. Do housing counseling programs exist? Are there programs to assist with foreclosure if it becomes necessary?

1. Don't know
2. Don't know
3. Don't know
4. Legal Aid Society is the only place I know that might be able to assist with this type of concern.
5. Mohawk Valley Community Action may provide guidance on housing and foreclosure matters.
6. Don't know
7. Don't know
8. assumes someone like Taras Herbowy and the Municipal Housing Authority or HUD has dealings with refugees
9. a homeownership program at a building near Genesee and Grant St
10. a homeownership program
11. Refugee Center arranges housing and finds them a place to stay.
12. Don't know
13. Don't know
14. Don't know
15. Don't know
16. Legal Aide has a very specific program to assist with foreclosures
17. Neighborhood Homeownership Center and the services that they provide to the broader community. Not sure how many from the immigrant community are aware of or take advantage of these services.
18. Utica Housing Authority
19. None
20. Home ownership center
21. Ref. Ct. does this. Tabernacle members have bought homes. There is the neighborhood ct. and the tabernacle does house counseling and first time home buyers classes.
22. Neighborhood Ct., Housing Center on Genesee, Municipal Housing Authority.
23. Neighborhood Housing Service, MHA
24. MHA does. UNHS. Does.

Q18. Are home savings programs, financial education or income support programs available?

1. Don't know
2. Don't know
3. Don't know
4. Yes, however I am not sure the refugee population knows or understands that these services exist
5. The Home Ownership program provides educational programs on how to obtain a home.
6. Don't know
7. Don't know
8. Don't know
9. Don't know
10. Family Nurturing Center at the old deSales
11. No. Refugees do not understand concept of insurance
12. Don't know
13. Don't know
14. Don't know
15. Don't know
16. Don't know
17. Neighborhood Homeownership Center and the services that they provide to the broader community. Not sure how many from the immigrant community are aware of or take advantage of these services.
18. Don't know
19. Don't know
20. Neighborhood ct.-first time home buyers
21. No, maybe some scholarship dollars and organizations.
22. Neighborhood Housing Service
23. Yes, UNHS and NBT bank.

Q19. Do family strengthening and support services exist and if so what are they?

1. Education regarding domestic violence

2. N/A
3. N/A
4. N/A
5. N/A
6. N/A
7. N/A
8. N/A
9. N/A
10. Refugee Center, Working Solutions, Neighborhood Interpreters and Thea Bowman House.
11. Some are within refugee communities such NEAP and Karen Burmese.
12. N/A
13. N/A
14. N/A
15. The Samaritan Counseling Center of the Mohawk Valley
16. N/A
17. N/A
18. N/A
19. N/A
20. YWCA, has done some work with issues of domestic violence and preventative care
21. YWCA did have these programs and they have been decimated by lack of dollars.
Religious entities.
22. Family Nurturing Services, Center for Family Life and Recovery, Catholic Charities
23. Social services agencies

Q20. What are the refugee communities that exist in the community?

1. N/A
2. Vietnamese, Russian, Cambodian, Bosnian, Burmese, Sudanese, other smaller groups
3. Vietnamese, Bosnian, Sudanese
4. N/A
5. Korean, Bosnian, Japanese, Vietnamese, Russian, Ukrainian and Jamaican
6. Several African, Asian and Latino/Hispanic communities exist in the area.
7. Bosnians, Vietnamese, Sudanese, Russians/Ukrainians, Nepalese, Cambodians
8. Bosnians, Somalis, Vietnamese, Burmese. The Russian evangelicals keep the lowest profile and attend church at the Redeemer on Herkimer Road.
9. N/A

10. N/A
11. Russians, Laos, Cambodian and Serbs and Albanians
12. Bosnian
13. Bosnian, Ukrainian, Russian, Karen, Somali, Sudanese, and other much smaller groups
14. Bosnian community. They brought their soccer skills to the community and we all benefit greatly from it. They created a soccer club ([Krajsnik Sc Utica](#) NY) which they opened up to the community
15. Bosnian, Somali, Iraqi
16. N/A
17. Bosnian, Burmese (Karen, Burman, Karreni, Arrakanese, Shan, Po’o), Somali Bantu (Maay Maay, Kizigua), people from the former USSR (Belarusian, Russian , Ukrainian, Moldavian), Sudanese, Liberian, Iraqi, Afghani, Meskhetian Turks, Palestinian, Yemeni, Moroccan, Polish, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Thai. There are also many other recent immigrant groups that I don’t think are refugees: Lebanese, Syrian, Chinese, Guatemalan, Salvadoran, Dominican, Cuban, Mexican.
18. Bosnians and Somalis
19. Bosnian and Hispanic
20. Cambodian, Nepalese, Spanish, Arab, African-Sudan
21. Burmese, Iraqis, Sudanese, Congolese, Liberia, Somalis
22. Chinese and Thai
23. Bosnian, Burmese, Cambodian, Russian, Vietnamese, Iraqi, Bhutanese, among others.
24. Buddhist (Myanmar) , Sudanese, Ghana

Q21. What kinds of services exist for refugees in the community?

1. Interpretative Services; Medical; Transportation; job training
2. work placement
3. Social Services and work placement.
4. N/A
5. The Refugee Center provides services to refugees in the community, I do not know all of the specific kinds of services that are provided.
6. I believe the MVRCCR offers some programs
7. Refugee center
8. Housing, English language (ESL), clothing, Shelter and the ability to place refugees in schools
9. employment and social services. also a jobs based tool to find work. There needs to be training for skilled labor.

10. Mariah Presbyterian Church-members volunteering.
11. Traffic Safety Education,, School System and Refugee Center.
12. N/A
13. There are probably better services for refugees in this community than for the non-refugee immigrant population
14. N/A
15. N/A
16. All existing generic services should be available
17. MVRRCR
18. Interpretive, ESL, JOB prep, resettlement. Job preparation not really good and needs strengthening, GED's
19. Ref. Ct. does resettlement, connect social services, health networks, and education school district
20. Education, ESL, Medical interpreters, Resource Ct. for Independent Living, Arc.
21. Interpretation service, Health care services, education

Q22. Are you aware if is there access to interpretation services at the Police/Fire departments?

1. No
2. Police department uses interpreting services; I am not sure about the Fire department.
3. By law the Police/Fire Departments would need to provide access to interpretation services when needed, even upon emergency.
4. Yes
5. Don't know
6. The Refugee Center are the main suppliers. Not aware of any interpretative services at the police and fire departments.
7. No. The Hospital and County do.
8. Yes-the community has a lot of strengths, it located near Thruway and Rail. Cost of living and doing business is cheap. It has access to water and near the Adirondacks
9. Yes
10. No
11. I believe the police offer interpreters.
12. No
13. don't know
14. police - yes, Fire- no
15. There are Bosnian police officers.

16. Limited, especially at prisons and parole boards. Using bilingual or family friends not good enough.
17. Not sure
18. Not aware

Q23. Is there an informal network of services being provided by members of the community and not by service organizations, if so can you tell us about them?

1. Many Volunteers at the Refugee Center
2. N/A
3. N/A
4. N/A
5. N/A
6. Very sporadic and inconclusive.
7. N/A
8. Muslim Mosque and their informal services. The Vietnamese have their own national network that helps with life and getting settled. You can see by the very few who stick in one place. They move around a lot to where ever they know people and can have opportunities
9. Churches and family based organizations.
10. Economics-there is still a "good ole boys network of people with businesses that get taken care of first. New people will change this.
11. Immigrants gravitate towards individuals who have knowledge, family, liaisons and Church
12. N/A
13. N/A
14. N/A
15. N/A
16. some groups have formed their own "affiliations" to serve and advocate.
17. There are several or many people in the community who have befriended refugees and immigrants and do a great deal to assist them in their practical needs.
18. N/A
19. Family
20. NEAP-Burma and different communities have separate ones. Karin rely on Tabernacle Church. Bosnian have radio station and mosque, Salvation Army and Rescue Mission

21. Ref ct. and Tabernacle-people who are part of the church and have retired have continued relationships with church members (refugees) and act as surrogate grandparents. Through church relationships have been established and these members help refugees and act as cultural brokers
22. There were good networks-United Way-but not sure if they exist anymore that coordinated among not for profits. Today everything goes through the Refugee Ct. and they help people get settled but not sure it forms the same alliances as in the past.
23. Not aware
24. Latinos has a network of services. Russia and Bosnian community are very well organized.

Q24. Are you optimistic about the area's future? Can you describe with reasons for your optimism?

1. Yes-very optimistic and feel that refugees are a wonderful strength for our community
2. Yes. We have an infrastructure built for a city twice as large. I believe the area bottomed out in the 90s and leveled off in the 2000s. There are many people here who want the area to improve and people's attitudes are generally better than they were a decade or 2 ago. As we strive to make improvements, I believe some companies will continue to grow and am hopeful some companies will move into the area. Also the prospect of global warming may help areas like Utica.
3. Yes. We experienced our hurt long ago there is only one way and that is up
4. I am not very optimistic about the area's future.
5. I am optimistic and always have hope that the area will have a better future. My hopes would be that the economy and current environment would come around again to start thriving to in-turn increase funds in general for everyone to be able to get what they need to be successful. I feel that people will come together with strong bonds to make change.
6. Great community when true leadership takes charge and gathers consensus. Many examples of the community's "spirit" rising to challenging opportunities!
7. Optimistic, because the refugees have become increasingly integrated in to the community, with community acceptance. There are new refugee—group businesses. Refugees are buying homes, their children are thriving in our schools.
8. Most think the influx of refugees and immigrants are a blessing. An example if the beautification that has occurred in E. Utica. Others wish for more professionals. The Russian Evangelicals have not moved up as well. He can also not think the refugee

center will process less and less people-slow down and there will be not much of a difference.

9. yes I am and in the past eight years since I moved, there has been a growth in the refugee population.” There is improvement to the city. When immigrant families are established financially will have identity commence. There are restaurants, grocery stores. He then cited the fact that eight years there was no Asian food outside of Chinese places. He is now the proud owner of A Cambodian and Thai place. He feels the city needs to make it a friendly place to do business regardless of color. In the past the mentality was to knock down houses and board them up. They could offer these dilapidated structures to refugees to them into storefronts-businesses.
10. social services, Medical centers and interpretation services.
11. Optimistic. Refugees bring core value and will do well if more are predisposed.
12. Yes, I am. I see the potential in the area and think there is no place to go but up. I am very new to the area but am told that this community is generous and giving and that is a good start. I have gotten to know a lot of leaders in the community and see the goodness in them
13. I am not. This is a Podunk place and the attitude I hear even among young people is that it is better to die out than to change—that change of any kind is bad. They don’t want to have better lives, and lack ambition. So if the only way to have a successful career in a given field is to leave here, then mostly they won’t even consider doing it, because they value being near family more than anything else. To me they are shockingly lacking in ambition and they are content with the status quo. A typical student in India, Korea, or Singapore would wipe the floor with the typical Utica 19 year old of Italian (third generation) descent.
14. Very optimistic. It's all in the attitude. Interestingly enough, it's the local people who are often times having a bad "attitude" about this area. As a "new" person you see the possibilities. This is a great area to raise a family and have a very good quality of life with low cost housing and not a lot of traffic. Politicians have to help to attract new businesses to the area, so that we can attract and keep the young people in the area. Looking at "climate change" and the effect that it has on the severe weather patterns, it looks like our area so far has been doing pretty well when it comes to floods, fire or drought. Some people might notice soon. We need to find a way to foster a diversified economy with good paying jobs.
15. Our community recognizes challenges and comes together to implement change. Again, as new generations become leaders (assuming they stay here!) acceptance will grow.
16. I think that there is potential, but the lack of strong leadership is very problematic

17. Yes. We have an amazing amount of natural resources and rich human resources. Great things can happen.
18. With so many different refugee groups coming to Utica, there are opportunities for growth in different neighborhoods that were in decline
19. We have an understanding of how to be inclusive and no fear of immigration in the area. People want to learn about other people. No people striking at each other.
20. Yes-there has been corruption under the table. Refugee community offer economic and cultural opportunities, colleges are helping, newspaper want to make a difference.
21. Yes- if you look at history Utica is a city of immigrants. This is the engine that drives it. Tabernacle people are hard working and are citizens and live freely as compared with before, this how communities renew themselves; there is a great strength from diversity. If it works in Utica, it's a model.
22. Only if we change education services-need serious revamping. She said she was not sure if the Common Council is up to the challenge. More young and need to get involved in the community-they just live their lives and do not get involved enough,
23. Yes, because good will ultimately overcome evil.
24. Optimistic. Very large number of people who want to see community succeed and would invest time and money to make it happen.

Q25. Are you concerned about the area's future? Can you please tell me why?

1. Would like to see more attention given to the positive aspects of refugees
2. Yes, if none of the above happen, and companies continue to move out, there will not be much left in Utica.
3. Yes and no we have a solid base but if the economic downturn continues we ultimately lose out to bigger communities.
4. Jobs are leaving this area and not coming back. People cannot live and raise their families in an area where there are less and less jobs.
5. I remain hopeful and also am concerned about the area's future, as I am raising two young boys and wonder what opportunities they will have once they are old enough to live on their own. I feel that the future is uncertain, the questions I hope there will be more jobs available, enough housing, affordable housing, healthcare, etc.
6. Yes, lack of leaders and true statesmanship.
7. Not concerned. Diverse economy, good medical and educational facilities, a strong sense of civic participation (Boilermaker, Heart Run/Walk, etc)
8. I feel there is no trouble brewing. The refugee center has done a good job preparing citizens for life here in the Mohawk Valley

9. Yes-there is a gang issue and a truancy issue. Pre-teens are susceptible to negative factors and there is a need for afterschool programs such as sports. Especially issues in the Karin, Sudanese, and Somali populations.
10. Working, owning houses fixing things up and being a part of the community
11. No. Refugees are good addition of people.
12. Yes, until our economy is in better shape, we have more jobs and less unemployed, and refugee groups are able to be productive citizens, there is work to be done.
13. I am concerned. For the reasons stated above. The young people in this area who ARE ambitious generally see this area for what it is—backwards looking and economically dead—and they leave. (I think of the top students in area high schools). So we have a brain drain. And the way we've stemmed that is through refugees. But refugees have to come here. If that tide slowed, we're need to rely on economic immigrants, and why would they come here?
14. Not really, as I said, it's all in the attitude. People have to stand up for what they want and have to help it make happen.
15. N/A
16. The lack of strong leadership is very problematic
17. New York's high taxes and tight regulation hinder growth, restrict development, and drive business to other states.
18. I am afraid we cannot get out of the economic slump we are and in without new manufacturing opportunities for the different groups of people the community.
19. There are people on both sides who feel threatened. There are refugees who don't want to be here-some have been forced to Utica by war
20. Need more business research infrastructure and make economy strong. There needs to be an increase in advance degrees and increase in the patronage of the arts. Great potential partnerships with Munson Williams.
21. From Upstate-remembers when NY was the Empire state. It's not like the past and NY is still in the process of re-invention and it will be interesting.
22. There is a lot of hatred toward poor people and people with disabilities. Not sure if anything is being done to offset this. It starts in the schools and there is a lack of job security.
23. No. Can only go up from here
24. A little. Money is key factor, loss of employers. Utica is in financial dire straits with rising costs.

Q26. Are you aware if is there access to interpretation services at other municipal departments?

1. Not aware
2. Not sure
3. I believe that an interpreter can be accessed at any time either by phone or in person.
4. Yes
5. Not sure
6. Not aware
7. No, county needs one
8. Social services, medical services and language services.
9. Not aware
10. Not sure
11. Not sure
12. Not sure
13. N/A
14. Not sure
15. Not sure
16. None
17. Courts-yes. The court system has to use certified interpreters and it's a hard test and some interpreters who are certified must come from other states or by way of closed circuit TV
18. In the jails, city, and county there is a lack of services. City does not have money nor use of interpreters. Need more first time home buyers.
19. There are people who are utilized on a contract basis. He also knows of refugees and friends will network with cases of people who are not good with language.
20. She imagined so but did not name any departments
21. No

Q27. What do you consider to be the most important indicator(s) of integration of refugees in the community?

1. Businesses that are opened by refugees
2. I guess seeing refugees "around town".
3. Movement into local government positions
4. Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees.
5. I believe that education is the most important indicator of integration of refugees in the community. If people are kept aware of what is happening and understand cultures, I believe things will be better.

6. Elected officials chosen from the minority/refugee community.
7. Establishment of mosques
8. Achievement in high school; also structure in the home and family. Structure in both of these examples mean higher likelihood that kids of refugee community go to college.
9. Finance, once people can afford to live, cars, bills, house start their own business. This creates a sense of financial stability. Having a job is important in the refugee community. They want autonomy, it's a status symbol.
10. Working, owning houses, fixing up house and being part of the community-these are all important for immigrants to achieve.
11. DMV and Courts, Fire and Police.
12. Less violence among gangs.
13. That refugees are hired to do a wide range of jobs in organizations and businesses in the community. At my employer, however, I am amazed at how few refugees are hired to any positions, even in the case of Bosnians who've been here so long. And surely Utica had Vietnamese or Cambodian refugees in the early eighties—and yet I don't see them or their children working as staff and faculty at MVCC either.
14. Have community leader of each immigration group; these leaders then should get involved in local government and schools and all aspects of a community. Have community events that celebrate the diversity of the community.
15. N/A
16. Employment and leadership in the general community
17. Relationships with native born Americans, Independence, Homeownership
18. We are seeing different refugee groups moving into the suburbs and out of the city of Utica.
19. Bosnian Police officers taking leadership role in the community as a whole.
20. Advanced degrees, voting among refugees and businesses
21. Home owners, students completing high school, college, technical trade
22. Good relations in proctor high school and lessening of gangs
23. Multicultural participation in games, churches, voting and community gatherings
24. Visibility. Any place that has refugee working or owning. Proctor park soccer games.

Q28. Additional Comments

1. None
2. None
3. None
4. None

5. None
6. Let me know how I can be a part of the solutions
7. None
8. None
9. None
10. None
11. Would like to see Karen Burmese policeman someday. There are Bosnian police officers, which helps.
12. Being the executive director of the Boy Scouts, I want to play a prominent role in improving the lives of all our youth and their families, refugee groups included.
13. None
14. None
15. None
16. None
17. Of course there is a certain number of people who dislike the level of immigration our community has had. Those people would probably be disinclined to connect relationally with immigrants. I would think, though, that the great majority of people either have little opportunity to connect with immigrants (because they might seldom be in close proximity), or feel nervous or unsure of themselves because of the language and culture gap. Perhaps opportunities could be created to get people together.
18. So much still need to be done and it looks to be left to one group, the MVRCR.
19. None
20. When Cornelia learned there might be a grant involved in this study she became very frustrated and emotional-she said this is a perfect example of part of the problem-lack of communication and one entity ruling things. She said the federal government needs to understand what's going on locally and one group cannot control the whole pot of money. She said no one told her about a grant and involved her in this study and was incensed about that. She said she did not also want to be part of an ad campaign. Later she did email me and apologize about her emotion and said that it was just her frustrations and I told he that her answers are helpful-we need to know what works and what doesn't
21. None
22. None
23. None
24. None.

29-43. What areas do you feel are being adequately met or not adequately being met?

Table 1. Community Leaders' Ranking of Services

Area of Concern	Adequate	Not adequate	Not sure
39. Naturalization programs?	67	8	25
34. Availability and ease of use for ESL programs?	63	21	17
33. Adequate and various transportation assistance services?	50	25	25
43. Access to and ease of use of health care institutions?	42	38	21
32. Tax Preparation services?	38	33	29
36. Employment services training?	38	38	25
35. Community centers?	33	46	21
41. Volunteer groups supporting immigrant communities?	29	46	25
29. Crime prevention programs within the refugee community?	25	46	29
31. Packets or services information available in various languages?	21	54	25
42. Health and healthy living programs?	21	46	33
30. Cultural awareness programs or diversity groups?	17	58	25
37. Interaction between local government departments to immigrant communities?	17	58	25
38. Community Integration programs for immigrants?	17	58	25
40. Relationship building between native-born and immigrant communities?	17	63	21

A majority of community leaders feel that naturalization programs, the availability and ease of use for ESL programs, and various transportation assistance services are being met adequately for the immigrant community.

Community leaders are divided on a number of measures, with about two in five saying these concerns are being met adequately and another two in five saying they are not being met. These services include access to and ease of use of health care institutions, tax preparation services, and employment services training.

A plurality or majority of respondents say needs are not being met for most of the areas tested, including about three in five who say the community is falling short on cultural awareness programs, interaction between local government departments to immigrant communities; community integration programs for immigrants, and the relationship building between native-born and immigrant communities.

Part II. Community Survey

Community Survey Methodology

Zogby Analytics was commissioned by the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees to conduct a live operator telephone survey of 300 adults in the Utica NY and its immediate suburbs. All calls were made from January 31 through February 5, 2013.

Samples are randomly drawn from purchased landline and mobile telephone lists. Up to four calls are made to reach a sampled phone number. Cooperation rates are calculated using one of AAPOR's approved methodologies.

Using information based on census data, voter registration figures, CIA fact books and exit polls, we use complex weighting techniques to best represent the demographics of the population being surveyed. Weighted variables may include age, race, gender, region, party, education, and religion.

Based on a confidence interval of 95%, the margin of error for [300] is +/- [5.8] percentage points. This means that all other things being equal, the identical survey repeated will have results within the margin of error 95 times out of 100.

Subsets of the data have a larger margin of error than the whole data set. As a rule we do not rely on the validity of very small subsets of the data especially sets smaller than 50-75 respondents. At that subset we can make estimations based on the data, but in these cases the data is more qualitative than quantitative.

Additional factors can create error, such as question wording and question order.

##

About Zogby Analytics:

For three decades, the Zogby companies have produced polls with an unparalleled record of accuracy and reliability. Zogby telephone and interactive surveys have generally been the most accurate in U.S. Presidential elections since 1996.

Zogby Analytics is composed entirely of senior level executives from Zogby International. Zogby Analytics, along with renowned pollster John Zogby, have continued in the tradition of

conducting telephone and interactive surveys, while keeping an eye on the future by incorporating social media tracking and analysis into our work.

Zogby Analytics conducts a wide variety of surveys internationally and nationally in industries, including banking, IT, medical devices, government agencies, colleges and universities, non-profits, automotive, insurance and NGOs.

Narrative Summary

1. Overall, would you say that things in the Utica area are headed in the right direction or are they off on the wrong track?

Right direction	40%
Wrong track	45
Not sure	15

Respondents are closely divided with 40% saying that things in the Utica area are headed in the right direction and 45% saying things are off on the wrong track. About one in seven say they are not sure.

2. How would you rate the quality of life in the Utica area?

Excellent	7%	Positive	49%
Good	42	Negative	50
Fair	39		
Poor	10		
Not sure	1		

Again, respondents are evenly divided with just under half (49%) saying the quality of life in the area is excellent or good and half (50%) saying it is fair or poor. Most respondents say the quality of life in the Utica area is good (42%) or fair (39%). Just 1% are not sure.

3. In terms of your personal finances, would you say that you are better off, worse off, or about the same as you were 4 years ago?

Better off	30%
Worse off	27
About the same	42
Not sure	<1

A plurality (42%) say that their personal finances are about the same as four years ago, while 30% say they are better off and 27% say they are worse off. Less than 1% are not sure.

4. Overall, when you are with someone who is from another state, are you proud or ashamed to tell people that you are from the Utica area?

Proud 64%
Ashamed 15
Not sure 21

The overwhelming majority (64%) of those living in the Utica area say they would be proud to tell someone from another state that they are from the Utica area, while 15% say they would be ashamed to let someone know this. One in five (21%) are not sure how they would feel.

5-15. For the following, please indicate your overall view of each – very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, very unfavorable – or you are not familiar enough to form an opinion.

Table 2. Favorable/Unfavorable Ratings

	Favorable			Unfavorable			Not familiar	Not sure
	Overall	Very	Smwht	Overall	Very	Smwht		
Utica College	81	53	29	3	--	3	16	<1
Mohawk Valley Community College	81	53	29	3	1	2	15	1
Your school district	73	39	34	17	7	10	10	<1
SUNY IT	71	49	22	3	2	1	26	--
United Way of Greater Utica	67	35	32	12	4	8	20	1
Oneida County government	63	14	49	27	9	18	9	1
Bank involvement in the community	62	20	42	14	9	5	23	1
Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees	59	32	27	10	7	4	30	<1
Local economic development efforts	43	5	38	43	15	28	13	1
Small business opportunities	41	7	34	42	21	22	16	1

Most of the entities tested generate and overall favorable opinions among respondents. Just over four in five (81%) say they have an overall favorable opinion of Utica College and Mohawk Valley Community College, including more than half in each case who say their opinion is very favorable.

More than seven in ten have an overall favorable opinion of their school district and SUNY Institute of Technology. Just under seven in ten (67%) have a favorable opinion of the United Way of Greater Utica. More than six in ten have a favorable view of Oneida County government and banking involvement in the community and just under six in ten (59%) have a favorable view of the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees. Only local economic development (43%) and small business opportunities (41%) fall below majority favorability.

The Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees generates the highest level of unfamiliarity with about one in three (30%) say they do not have enough information to form an opinion about the organization.

The highest negative ratings are saved for local business development and small business opportunities with 43% and 42%, respectively, saying they have an unfavorable opinion of these efforts.

16. Would you say that you are optimistic or pessimistic about the future of the local economy?

Optimistic	62%
Pessimistic	35
Not sure	3

By nearly two to one (62% vs. 35%), respondents say they are optimistic about the future of the local economy. Just 3% are not sure.

17. Overall, would you agree or disagree that recent immigration into the Utica area has been a good thing?

Strongly agree	29%		
Somewhat agree	39	Agree	69%
Somewhat disagree	17		
Strongly disagree	9	Disagree	26
Not sure	5		

The overwhelming majority (69%) of respondents agree that recent immigration into the Utica area has been a good thing, while one in four (26%) disagree. Five percent are not sure.

18-24. Please tell me if you think that recent immigrants had a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative, or very negative effect on each of the following.

Table 3. Positive/Negative

	Positive			Negative			Not sure
	Overall	Very	Smwht	Overall	Very	Smwht	
Local retail stores	76	26	50	14	6	8	11
The local economy	73	22	51	22	8	15	5
Image of the Utica area	68	25	43	27	20	7	5
Housing in the city of Utica	64	25	38	26	12	14	10
Utica schools	55	22	33	27	7	20	18
The jobs market	47	11	36	42	16	27	10
Your taxes	34	9	26	44	15	29	21

Overall, the impact of immigrants on the area is deemed positive by respondents.

Three in four say that recent immigrants have a positive impact on local retail stores (76%) and on the local economy overall (73%). Just under seven in ten (68%) say that immigrants have a positive impact on the Utica area image. More than three in five (64%) and more than half (55%) say that immigrants have a positive impact on housing in the Utica area and on Utica schools, respectively.

Just under half (47%) say their impact on the job market has been positive, but a plurality (44%) say the impact on taxes has been negative.

25-35. What is your impression as to how you believe each of the following is handling immigration and new immigrants to the community.

Table 4. Impression of Handling Immigration/New Immigrants

	Positive			Negative			Not familiar	Not sure
	Overall	Very	Smwht	Overall	Very	Smwht		
Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees	68	42	26	6	3	3	26	1
Mohawk Valley Community College	64	28	36	3	2	1	31	2
Your school district	57	25	32	14	4	10	28	1
Small business opportunities	55	14	41	21	5	16	23	1
United Way of Greater Utica	55	22	33	4	2	3	37	4
Local economic development efforts	51	9	42	16	5	11	29	3
Your city or town government	48	12	36	12	5	7	39	2
Utica College	48	22	26	5	1	4	44	4
SUNY IT	46	22	24	5	1	4	45	4
Oneida County government	43	9	34	12	3	9	42	2
Bank involvement in the community	36	8	27	11	3	8	47	6

A comfortable majority say that the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees (68%) and Mohawk Valley Community College (64%) have handled immigration in a positive manner. More than half say that their school district (57%), small business opportunities and the United

Way (55% each), and local economic development efforts (51%) have handled recent immigration and immigrants positively.

Just under half say the same for their city or town government, Utica College, SUNY IT and the county government. Banks receive the lowest positive rating with just one in three (36%) saying they have handled immigration to the area positively.

36. In your own view, would you like to see the numbers of immigrants to the Utica area. . .

Greatly increase	8%		
Somewhat increase	17	Increase	25%
Somewhat decrease	11		
Greatly decrease	11	Decrease	22
Stay about the same	49		
Not sure	4		

Respondents are again closely divided in their opinion with 25% saying that immigration to the area should increase and 22% saying it should decrease. However, nearly half (49%) say that the level of immigration to the Utica area should stay about the same. Four percent are not sure.

37. How well informed are you about the services offered to immigrants in the area?

Very well informed	10%
Somewhat well informed	48
Not very well informed	22
Not informed at all	20

Just under half (48%) say they are somewhat well informed about organizations in the area that offer services to immigrants; one in ten say they are very well informed. One in five (22%) say they are not well informed and not informed at all (20%).

38. Overall, how would you rate the people in this area on their ability to welcome new people from foreign countries?

Excellent	12%		
Good	45	Positive	56%
Fair	32		
Poor	9	Negative	41
Not sure	3		

More than half (56%) give the people in the Utica area a positive rating on their ability to welcome new people from foreign countries into the area, while 41% rate people in this area negatively on that score.

39. Would you like to see more programs bringing immigrants and longtime residents together to learn more about each other?

Yes	85%
No	14
Not sure	2

The overwhelming majority of respondents say they would like to see more programs bringing immigrants and longtime residents together to learn more about each other. Fourteen percent do not care about seeing an increase in such programs and 2% are not sure how they feel.

Part III. Community Leader Focus Groups

Summary

Two focus groups were conducted by John Zogby on March 13 and 14, 2013 at the headquarters of Zogby Analytics, 901 Broad Street, Utica.

Participants were recruited and scheduled via email and telephone from a compilation of lists of non-profit agencies, local government departments, advocacy organizations, and referential chain.

Nine people participated on March 13 and 21 people participated on March 14. The same scripts were used in both groups. The responses to each question from both groups have been merged into one summary.

Q. Using one word only, what best describes for you a “welcoming community”. (The number in parentheses following a response indicates the number of times that response was offered by different participants.)

- Accessibility
- Adaptive
- Communication
- Compassion
- Culturally accepting
- Engaging
- Inclusive (2)
- Informed
- Integration
- Tolerant
- Knowledge sharing
- Love
- Open-minded
- Opportunity (2)
- Resources
- Smile
- Support
- Tolerance

Q. Is Utica a “welcoming community”?

YES

- I am new here and everyone I have met has been welcoming to me.
- In light of immigration and refugee settlement here, we’ve developed a tradition and reputation. This is surprising for a rural area in Upstate New York.
- I think we have softened up because we need people.
- People have become refugees and we’ve welcomed them at the airport, housed them, helped them to survive and educate them right through college.
- We have Buddhist temples and Islamic mosques. The Refugee Center has about a 90% track record placing people in jobs.
- There has been wonderful support from support services.
- Hospitals serve and do translations.
- There is beautiful diversity.
- We (Utica) could have gone in the opposite direction but we have demonstrated the ability to go beyond generalizations.
- From the educational side, immigration works at Proctor High; lots of ESL and the school district makes a strong effort to integrate them.
- I teach college and the children of immigrants and they mix right in; students are not forming enclaves. They adjust and integrate.
- I moved here in 1986 from New York and we felt welcomed. We had the right attitude and the community gave us time to do it.
- It depends on where you live in the city and who you work with. I live in Cornhill and expect new people in Utica. We have a tradition of that.
- In general, Utica has been most welcoming of all communities I’ve been to – especially to me and my family.
- I am impressed at immigrants. Informally, even at garage sales, people are generous and welcoming and want to help. They will lower prices, toss in free items.
- I am very impressed that there was no fuss over the Mosque that was built downtown. It is accepted and positive.
- The newspaper did a three-part series on Islam. I was very impressed.
- Immigrants come here via a well-established refugee center who are very supportive.
- Living in Utica is different. It has a great personality. Everyone was helpful and has offered assistance in hiring, giving, furniture.

- There is a lot of generosity in fundraising for immigrant-related activity. I have been involved in a number fundraising initiative and donors seem to be very committed to immigration and its benefits.
- Utica has affordable housing and refugees get work at Turning Stone, Con Med, Chobani, Wal-Mart Distribution Center, Sturges Manufacturing. I actually think that our abundance of refugees has kept some employers here.
- But, on the whole, Utica is pretty good. Tolerance, helpfulness (especially donations of computers, tutoring English, rides to the doctor, and job interviews.
- There has been a friendship outreach.
- The Observer Dispatch has been very positive. It has helped set the tone.

MAYBE

- We have infrastructure in place to do the best within the community. But not the same welcome holds for some people already here. Some people feel there is unfair advantage to refugees and that the refugees pose a threat to their income. So we are not so welcoming.
- Some residents don't share the same cultural competency. I don't see employers making the same necessary accommodations.
- The economy doesn't support the numbers of refugees coming in. There are not enough economic resources to support the sheer numbers of people – even for non-refugees.
- There is a cultural disconnect, especially in the suburbs where they do not experience the refugees and cultural dynamic.
- There has always been a small group of professionals who get it. But I saw the erection of the Buddhist temple in North Utica and I saw the worst in some longtime residents. There would not have been any problem at all if this issue involved the Catholic church.
- Proctor High School has everyone all under one roof, but there is still isolation and little mixing.
- The more diverse a community is the more segregated it is.
- I am an immigrant and I am involved at the Refugee Center. I see the institutional side and I see the people. I don't see a lot of tolerance among the people. They are not on board with immigration. I hear things like "these people" and "they require too much of our resources."
- As a person who moved here, I did well. I was certainly welcomed. But it depends on who you are. There are people who are not welcoming.
- A lot of misunderstanding about people who are in need in this community.

- We are not done educating people on how to understand.
- Bosnians have saved the city's housing stock and yet their neighbors do not understand.
- It is a double-edged sword when new people move in. Longer term residents are resentful toward groups who have come in to succeed.
- Bosnians and Burmese have different needs. Bosnians assimilated easily, were already more educated and middle class – but now the Burmese and Africans are seen as a drain on the community.
- There is a perception that people are leaching off the system.
- But at the Red Cross we see the opposite. The newer refugees are more self-reliant, take as little as possible and don't want to over-rely on the system.
- Ten percent of the housing stock in Utica has been purchased by immigrants in the last nine years. And they are not only Bosnian. This also includes Vietnamese and Russians.
- Some people are resentful and have misperceptions about refugees. There is some ignorance.
- I don't disagree with all of the positive but immigrants are settled and move in. But then they are left on their own and they are stuck. They don't seem to move up. It is like there is a glass ceiling. How many really get beyond where they started?
- This community is not afraid of diversity but it all depends on what resources the immigrants themselves bring to the city. If you come in without resources, talents and are older, it is harder for you to move in and to integrate.
- It is very hard for those who have experienced a lot of trauma.
- We are welcoming except if you place an extra stress on our resources.
- Utica can be judgmental. Depends on which immigrant group you are.
- For Bosnians it is easy to find low-level jobs. But if you are educated and older, you can't always utilize your skills.
- The Somali Bantu are not from an industrial or modern culture and they don't have modern health or sanitary standards. It is harder for them to mix in.
- Depends on how closely Uticans can relate to your culture.
- To be fair, there is a lot of self-imposed segregation, but that happens everywhere.
- It all depends on what the immigrant brings to the table and their own expectations. If you want higher, you can possibly obtain it here. It can still happen.
- Our kids are not so welcome to newcomers. Maybe they are spoiled. Teens don't want to dress like immigrants.
- We all have our own experience and these have been very positive. But perhaps not so positive for the community at large.
- We don't have enough opportunities to meet and exchange.

- The community lacks the opportunity to meet.
- The Refugee Center is great but what happens later on down the road? We need corporate partners to build bridges.
- Is Utica integrated? No. MVRRCR is great for the first six months. But integration is not happening.
- The community is definitely lacking in the coordination of resources. We don't collaborate enough and we need to distribute what we have in a better way. MVRRCR can (and must) be the coordinator.
- It is a welcoming community. But we have different experiences depending on race. For people of color, it is a very racist community.
- New African immigrants say they have a different experience than whites, even at MVRRCR.
- Most African Americans are having a difficult time here. We have a potential to address this.
- There is a complete disconnect between black and white communities.
- Perhaps our problem is more classism than racism.
- African Americans resent opportunities for refugees especially regarding housing and jobs.
- Among Latinos there are even internal resentments, including between long-term residents and short-term residents, between countries of origin, local born vs. not local.

Q. Community Survey Results Shared

- ✓ Future of the economy: 62% optimistic, 35% pessimistic
- ✓ Overall view of recent immigration a good thing: 68% agree, 26% disagree
- ✓ Impact of recent immigration on:
 - Local economy: 73% positive, 22% negative
 - Your taxes: 34% positive, 44% negative
 - Local retail stores: 76% positive, 14% negative
 - Jobs market: 47% positive, 43% negative
 - Housing in Utica: 64% positive, 26% negative
 - Utica schools: 55% positive, 27% negative
- ✓ Overall image of Utica area: 68% positive, 27% negative
- These are just politically correct answers. I don't believe them.
- I can understand this. The city just looks better.

- These are true. The city may be better but it is not helping homeowners if property taxes are being used to support immigrants in schools.
- Outside Utica, this is a reaction to Medicaid increases.
- The overall economy is getting better because of immigrants.
- If you look at these results, you realize that excepting jobs and taxes, which are personally threatening, there is a generalized sense that things are better.
- There is clearly a shortage of jobs in the area and no new jobs are being created. The pie is shrinking and it appears to many that refugees are getting an advantage.
- Let's remember that studies do show that refugees are paid less.
- I'm not surprised that a majority say that the image of Utica is better because the prevailing image is such a negative one.
- Are people really this positive? Is there a difference between the general view and the personal sensitivity?
- In one very important case, Tabernacle Baptist Church was losing members but they are growing because of the Burmese population. Ask the Burmese and they will say that the church and the community have been very welcoming.
- These numbers make sense. Refugees may be seen as a drain on taxes and competing for jobs in a tight market – but still a force for growth.
- There is a legend out there that refugees get \$40,000 and are subsidized for life. The reality is that it is only for six months and there is no lump sum of \$40,000.
- There is also a feeling that immigrants are taking away jobs.
- But even with that the message seems to be: "you are taking jobs away but we still want you to come". I think the poll numbers reflect that.
- The overall image is noticeably better. People can see changes, houses rehabilitated, the employment base growing. People see it. We are building up our neighborhoods.
- Immigrants come from such a different perspective. They see an older house and say "I can fix it", while longer term residents see the neighborhood and say "I don't want to live there".
- There is a prevailing respect that Utica was built on immigrants. The polling numbers reflect that.

Q. General Comments

- There is a lot of pride among older Uticans because of how their parents and grandparents were helped in the community.
- Are we welcoming because of despair? Because there is a void? Because of fear of losing more ground? Would we be so welcoming in good economic times?
- I guess we are humbled by our decline. If things were the way they used to be, we wouldn't have been so willing to try this (i.e. refugees).
- When it comes to housing there is some resentment toward the fact that non-profit organizations have taken over so many, thus no taxes.
- There is affordable housing but a housing shortage.
- There is certainly personal resentment but it is not organized. There was some organized opposition to the Buddhist temple in North Utica but it was mainly over neighbors fearing a decline in their property values.
- There is a diversity of opinion. The future looks good for Latinos – 70 Latino small business have formed and most are growing. Diversity is seen as positive.
- I would say that Utica has “sophisticated helping organizations” but **not** a “sophisticated network of helping organizations.”
- There are silos of services but very little cross-pollination.
- There is a disconnect as to organizations. What happens is that people then get referred to the wrong agencies.
- There is not sufficient collaboration.
- Public schools are doing a good job with what they have, but still not enough. K-12 still needs improvement.
- Public schools have cut back on English as a Second Language (ESL). There are 43 languages spoken in the district but only one and a half administrators who can interpret.
- Utica has a disproportionate need but not sufficient resources.
- ESL teachers have second-class status among fellow teachers.
- Insufficient bridges built between school system and people of color. Utica has a well-meaning school district but this is really lacking.
- A lot of good things going on but a long way to go.
- Young Scholars serves a total of 325 students. It is 20 years old. We serve a lot of immigrant children