Meet Your Instructor... Marilyn Stephens

Marilyn’s census career started in Chicago as a temporary community outreach staffer, more than twenty-four years ago, in the Chicago Region. During her tenure, she has received numerous honors from the Census Bureau including, two Bronze Medal Awards, Census Director’s Award for Innovation, and two nominations for Federal Employee of the Year.

She has completed more than 800 presentations and workshops to Fortune 500 companies, community organizations, local and state governments, and educational institutions. Moreover, she was a guest presenter for the Grant Writer’s Certification Course at Florida International University in Miami.

Prior to joining the Census Bureau, Marilyn was the executive director for a nonprofit organization, for nearly ten years. Seeking grants was among her primary responsibilities.
Today’s Objectives

✓ **Know** the differences between the 3 major census data source files
✓ **Review** some proposal basics
✓ **Understand** how to navigate data.census.gov for simple and complex data searches
✓ **Explore** how to paint a statistical picture of the target population
✓ **Discover** how to build a current data library
✓ **Learn** the language the census speaks to identify data tables
Census Data Drives Key Elements of a Grant Proposal

- **Helps** identify problem/need for project
- **Describes** target population and community
- **Aids** in substantiating problems facing target population & justifies need for project
- **Assists** in program planning & design
- **Establishes** a baseline
- **Critical** for measurable objectives:
  - Who, What, Where, When, & Why of proposed project
Grant Writing Basics 101

Rule 1. Funders will not make a grant to your organization
✓ You need money
✓ You have good intentions
✓ You want to provide service

Rule 2. A successful grant proposal is...
✓ Well organized
✓ Thoughtfully planned
✓ Concisely packaged
✓ Backed by supportive data
Rule 3.
Funders will make a grant because...

- Your problem is significant
- You have established your credibility as an organization
- You have a solid plan of action with realistic time-frames and expectations
- Your leadership has indicated a firm commitment to the project
Grant Writing Basics 101

Rule 4.
Plan Your Work & Work Your Plan

- Activity Plan and Timeline
- Budget Section
- References
- Needs Statement
- Goals and Objectives
- Project Description

Supportive Data
Rule 5. The Needs Statement Is a Powerful Component of the Grant Proposal

- **Describes** the population that will benefit or the target population to be served.
- **Defines** the community problem to be addressed.
- **Includes** both quantitative & qualitative supportive materials.
- **Details** the situation in factual terms.
Rule 6.
Create a Persuasive Needs Assessment

- **Use** data to show disparities in the documented norms and the actual facts of your target group
- **Match** the project target area with census data to make assembling data easier even if the census area does not perfectly match the area you want to serve
- **Compile** the data and only use what focuses on the project
- **Make** comparisons across geographies
The Census Bureau’s mission is to serve as the nation’s leading provider of quality data about its people and economy.

Comparability
Regularly Collected
Highly Recognized & Reliable
Availability & Accessibility
3 Primary Data Products

Decennial Censuses
- Occurs every 10 years. The census of population and housing, taken by the Census Bureau in years ending in 0 (zero). Article I of the Constitution requires that a census be taken every ten years for the purpose of reapportioning the U.S. House of Representatives. Title 13 of the U. S. Code provides the authorization for conducting the census in Puerto Rico and the Island Areas.

Population Estimates Program
- Annual estimates of the population for the United States, states, metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas, counties, cities, towns, as well as for Puerto Rico and its municipios.

American Community Survey
- The American Community Survey (ACS) helps local officials, community leaders, and businesses understand the changes taking place in their communities. It is the premier source for detailed population and housing information about our nation. It is a monthly survey of 250,000 households, 3.5 annually.
  - Ranking Tables
    - Ranks all states by various population characteristics
  - Data Profiles
    - 4 profiles that give a summary of the ACS subject areas
  - Subject Tables
    - Details about each subject area cross-referenced by selected characteristics such as, sex by age and race
ACS Subject Areas

Demographic Characteristics
- Age
- Sex
- Hispanic Origin
- Race
- Relationship to Householder (e.g., spouse)

Economic Characteristics
- Income
- Food Stamps Benefit
- Labor Force Status
- Industry, Occupation, and Class of Worker
- Place of Work and Journey to Work
- Work Status Last Year
- Vehicles Available
- Health Insurance Coverage

Social Characteristics
- Marital Status and Marital History
- Fertility
- Grandparents as Caregivers
- Ancestry
- Place of Birth, Citizenship, and Year of Entry
- Language Spoken at Home
- Educational Attainment and School Enrollment
- Residence One Year Ago
- Veteran Status, Period of Military Service, and VA Service-Connected Disability Rating
- Disability

Housing Characteristics
- Year Structure Built
- Units in Structure
- Year Moved Into Unit
- Rooms
- Bedrooms
- Kitchen Facilities
- Plumbing Facilities
- House Heating Fuel
- Telephone Service Available
- Farm Residence

Financial Characteristics
- Tenure (Owner/Renter)
- Housing Value
- Rent
- Selected Monthly Owner Costs

Note: I will LIVE demo how to access the 4 Data Profiles. The links to these 4 profiles will be in the CHAT.
Practical Application of ACS Data

Grant STEPs Consulting Group Uses ACS Data to Help Nonprofits Win Grants

SEPTEMBER 23, 2021

Michael Webb, Grant STEPs Consulting Group, LLC

Data Story
Making a case for "community need" is essential for nonprofit organizations and their grant writers. Funders award grants through a highly competitive process based on how well applicants can document the unmet need for services in their community and how much impact the funder's money will create, often using an estimate of the number of persons to be served by the program. Grant STEPs Consulting Group, LLC (Grant STEPs), a team of nonprofit professionals, use the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) to help small Kansas nonprofits develop their grant proposals. Grant applications often ask questions about the breakdown of community characteristics, such as household by type, poverty status, and language spoken at home, and how these data reflect disparities with state- or national-level data. The ACS is often the only source of this information at the local level, and it is the definitive data source recognized by private foundations and government agencies for their grant making.

Outcome
By using ACS data, Grant STEPs have won more than $240,000 thus far in 2021 for eight nonprofits that serve low-income families, families who live in food deserts,
Practical Application of ACS Data

The St. Joseph Community Health Foundation Uses ACS Data to Identify Populations in Need

JULY 31, 2020
Rachel Blakeman and Mark Cullinan, Purdue University Fort Wayne’s Community Research Institute

Data Story
The St. Joseph Community Health Foundation (The St. Joe Foundation) serves the poor in body, mind, and spirit to achieve quality health and wellness for underserved populations in Northeast Indiana. The foundation’s recent efforts focus on social determinants of health, such as access to healthcare services, and addressing the unique needs of immigrant and refugee populations, as well as new mothers and infants. With this focus in mind, The St. Joe Foundation wanted to target its grant funding in the local community.

The St. Joe Foundation commissioned Purdue University Fort Wayne’s Community Research Institute (CRI) to evaluate Allen County, Indiana in order to identify geographic concentrations of vulnerable populations to help the foundation use place-based philanthropy. CRI created the Vulnerable Populations Study using 2012-2016 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year data at the ZIP Code Tabulation Area (ZCTA) geographic level for all 30+ ZIP codes within Allen County. These data were then compared to county-level ACS data for Allen County to locate areas of vulnerable populations with the funding priorities of the foundation in mind.

The ACS is the only publicly available dataset providing social, economic, housing, and demographic data for small geographies. The ACS provides data related to many social determinants of health, such as English-language proficiency, health insurance coverage, plus race and ethnicity, to provide a clear picture of vulnerable populations at the local level.
What is the target area?
How many people live in the target area?
How has the number of people (target group) changed?
How old or young are the people?
What race and ethnicity are they?
What is the educational attainment of the group?
What languages do they speak?
How many single parents?
How many households are low-income?
Tells a story—more than just a series of numbers

Census data is key...

- To build your data library
- To define your service area
- To pinpoint your target group
- To build a narrative based on population characteristics of the target group
Census data is key...

What Makes Your Target Area Different?

- Low income families
- Older population
- Working mothers
- Overcrowded housing
- High unemployment
- Low educational attainment
- Disabled population
- School age population
The Helping Hands Mission community organization has been providing services to single mothers in the Mission community of Anytown, USA. Presently, the number of single mothers that need help from us has increased exponentially. We are a full-service organization, easily accessible, and work to provide at least one service to those seeking our assistance. However, due to the overwhelming increase in those needing our assistance, we have created a waiting list, especially grandmothers raising grandchildren. Without these services traditional single mothers, grandmothers, and minor children could lose the gains they are making.

A Case Study
Need 1:
Single mothers with minor children need assistance in a number of areas:
- Job training
- Child care
- Housing assistance
- Homework assistance
- Education assistance for adults
- Other services

Need 2:
Many grandmothers that have primary responsibility for their grandchildren are seeking services like traditional single mothers.
Let’s go to census.gov

Nation Continues to Age as It Becomes More Diverse

Since 2000, the national median age has increased by 3.4 years, bringing it to 38.8 years, according to newly released 2021 Population Estimates.
Data Dissemination and Training

- Bring our data experts to you. Request a free data training for your organization.

- Receive our Data Gems. These short “how-to” videos are an easy and quick way to increase your knowledge of Census data. Get them in your inbox!

- Get access to our Courses. You will learn-at-your-own-pace with these video-tutorials designed for different skill levels.

- Interact with our instructors via Webinars. Learn about our data releases and tools while attending these live virtual classes.

Contact us:
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Share your ideas and feedback at census.academy@census.gov
THANK YOU