



# COUNTING



COUNTING ON CHICAGO COALITION NEWSLETTER - WORKING TO ENSURE EQUITY THROUGH A COMPLETE CENSUS COUNT

## FROM THE DESK OF... DONALD J. DEW



**Technology and the  
Pandemic: When  
Traditional Outreach  
Was Prohibited,  
We Pivoted**

When our last edition of Counting was published, the state was a few weeks into the state-wide stay-at-home order issued by Governor Jay Pritzker. In the weeks that followed, the corona virus ravaging the globe highlighted in deadly detail how important the census is to the health and welfare of all Americans, but especially communities of color.

We learned that Black and Brown communities were being disproportionately represented among the diseases' death toll.

COVID-19 highlighted the disparities in healthcare, education, and employment that resulted in too many of our Black and Brown citizens working in essential jobs that put them on the frontline for infection.

But most importantly, COVID-19 spurred the Counting on Chicago Coalition to pivot our outreach models to make them work even harder to encourage residents in undercounted communities to complete the census.

And what an impact they made!

I am filled with gratitude, and terribly impressed, at the way coalition members turned a global pandemic that put restrictions on interpersonal interactions into virtual opportunities to communicate the message that completing the Census was more important than ever.

Making the pivot possible was their embrace of technology. Through applications such as Zoom and Microsoft Meetings, and astute use of digital and social media platforms, we continued to reach into the homes of our target communities. Coalition members hosted webinars and viewing parties, phone banks, and live-streamed PSAs and entertainment, all wrapped around messaging encouraging viewers to complete the census.

## BLACK CENSUS DAY

JOIN US FOR BLACK CENSUS DAY  
IN CELEBRATION OF JUNETEENTH



HOSTED BY DJ TONE KAPONE & DJ SEAN MAC

ON INSTAGRAM LIVE: @TONEKAPONE33 @SEAN\_MAC • FRI. 6.19 • 7:00 PM

An Instagram Live event was held on June 19th—Juneteenth—to promote Black Census Day. The event was designed to reach hard-to count communities on Chicago's South and West Sides, the southern suburbs, and the East St. Louis regional area.

Chicago music personalities Tone Kapone and Sean Mac of WGCI and IHeart Radio hosted the six-hour event. Governor JB Pritzker, Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton, members of the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus, Chicago-based rap artist Femdot, Rockie Fresh, and East St. Louis' DJ Word is Bond, and others participated in the event.

"There's a lot going on in the world, but the 2020 Census shouldn't be downplayed. In fact, it strikes at the very core of Black people being seen and represented in government," said Donald Dew, President and CEO of Habilitative Systems Inc. "Right now, Black communities are well behind the state's overall response rate. We need to do everything we can to fix that, so we strongly urge our community to participate and understand what's at stake – Protest with purpose and plan – Be Counted Now!"

"African Americans have been suffering social inequity and disparities for generations. Neighborhoods that had little now have even less," said Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton. "We have to get the resources we need to achieve genuine equality. We owe it to our ancestor's, who suffered for our freedom – and fought to be recognized as whole human beings – to stand up and be counted. Let's honor them and fill out the Census."

# Family Ancestry Challenge Connects Census Data's Importance to Family History Research for High School Students via-e-Learning

As part of the Counting on Chicago Coalition's (COCC) push to get more south and west side Chicagoans to complete the 2020 Census, the group of 30 organizations launched a project with students at two Chicago Public Schools and their families to research their family histories.

The Family Ancestry Challenge was an innovative, intergenerational virtual learning project that provided participants with genealogy worksheets, research indexes and expert guidance from genealogists through live virtual meetings. Tony Burroughs, noted genealogist and founder/CEO of the Center for Black Genealogy facilitated the meetings and served as the resident genealogical research resource for the participants.

"In addition to driving home the message of how important the Census is to determining how federal dollars are spent in our communities and representation in Congress, it's important that we highlight other important uses of the Census that impact communities that have been historically hard-to-count," said Donald Dew, president of the Habilitative Systems, Inc. – the lead agency with the Counting on Chicago Coalition.

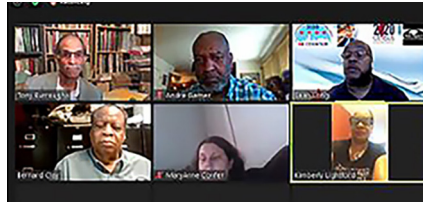
"The leadership at these high schools stepped-up and have worked with our coalition members to create a unique learning opportunity that integrated e-learning and the importance of family pride and history while raising awareness of practical uses of the Census."

Approximately 50 Students at Michelle Clark Magnet High School in Chicago's Austin Community and Lindblom Math and Science Academy in the city's West Englewood Community along with their families were connected through video conferences to learn about the critical research questions to be answered in order to build and document a family history. Participants were introduced to historians, a genealogist, researchers and many of the tools and methods used by academics and professionals.

All of the video conferences included messaging on the importance of filling out the online Census questionnaire and instructions on how to do so.

In addition to the video conferences, families participating in the project were supported by teachers and administrators at each school who offered guidance and as they worked through their research.

"One of the common realities of genealogy is the never-ending nature of the research," Burroughs said. "Renowned researchers like Alex Haley and Henry Louis Gates spent years combing the annals of history and remarkably discovering truths about their own families and others, while untold volumes of work remain to be done. I hope this project builds pride, self-esteem, intellectual curiosity, analytical skills, critical thinking and investigative research skills, all beneficial to education."



## EDUCATION IS A BIG PART OF THE SOLUTION

*By Bernard Clay, Executive Director, Introspect Youth Services; Member, Counting on Chicago Coalition*

The pain of George Floyd's murder has sent shockwaves through our nation, including right here in Chicago. It was vicious and shocking but, sadly, not surprising.

We are right to worry that the events of the last week will too easily pigeonhole the sweeping tragedy of racism in America into merely a matter of police conduct, as critically important an issue that is. The murder of young black men at the hands of police is one of the many terrible consequences of systematic and non-systematic racism that exists in America. But police brutality is not the problem itself; it's a horrifying and agonizing symptom. We must all push back on any implication that if we were to somehow solve police misconduct that the issue of black disenfranchisement will be solved.

Black Lives Matter, absolutely. But Black Well-Being Matters too. Black Economic Enfranchisement Matters. Black Health Care Matters. Black Education Matters.

I've worked my whole life encouraging black youth on Chicago's Westside to pursue post-secondary education as the first step to claiming what is rightfully theirs: economic opportunity in this, the wealthiest nation on earth.

It is hard work. It starts by inspiring our youth to broaden their imagination of what their future can hold and setting aside their understandable intuition that the deck is stacked impossibly against them. It requires navigating a complicated testing, applications and admissions process. It requires swimming upstream against a post-secondary education landscape that favors the financially well-off.

But success is not only possible, we see it every day at Introspect Youth Services. We have placed more than 40,000 young people into colleges and professional training programs since 1977. We've done a lot but there is so much more we should do as a society.

This is an important moment in the long conversation over racial justice. We must use this energy and passion to address abject violence against African Americans. But, we also must use this moment to fortify our efforts to bring opportunity to black youth and to answer the call of the Counting on Chicago Coalition and complete the census, and, to ensure we get the funding we need for education in our communities.



# DEFINING OUR DECADE” DOCUMENTING CENSUS2020 OUTREACH FOR THE FUTURE

COCC Executive Director Donald Dew to Participate in Census 2020’s First Documentary Video

Donald Dew, Habilitative Systems, Inc. president & CEO, and executive director of the Counting on Chicago Coalition, has been invited to participate in the first of four documentary videos being produced by the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) 2020 Census office.

In his role as executive director of the COCC, Dew was one of 24 Regional Intermediaries across the state selected to appear in the documentary video. The invitation recognizes the creative work that COCC subrecipients are doing to promote interest in completing the census among the 13 traditionally hard-to-count communities it is responsible for on the city’s south and west sides.

There are 39 Regional Intermediaries statewide, each assigned to conduct census outreach and education in specific under-counted census tracts. All were invited to submit short video stories that illustrated the approaches they were using to promote engagement and completion. Participants in the first video were selected on the basis of their storytelling, unique and innovation methods used to motivate people to complete the census.

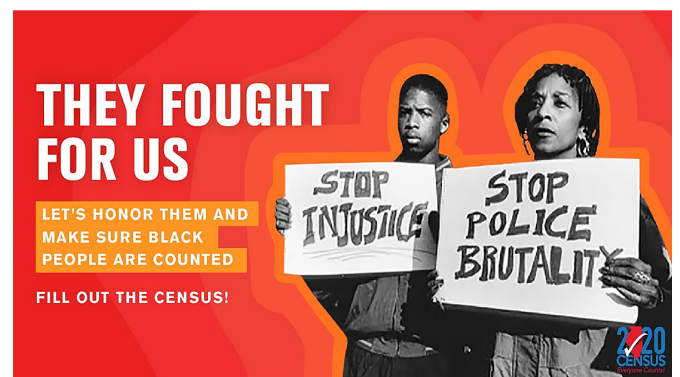
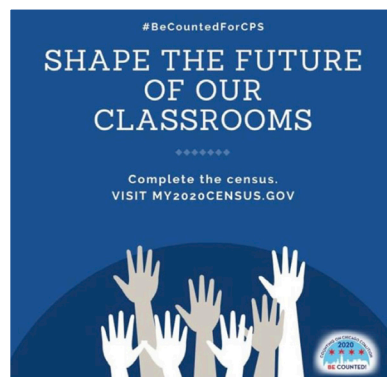
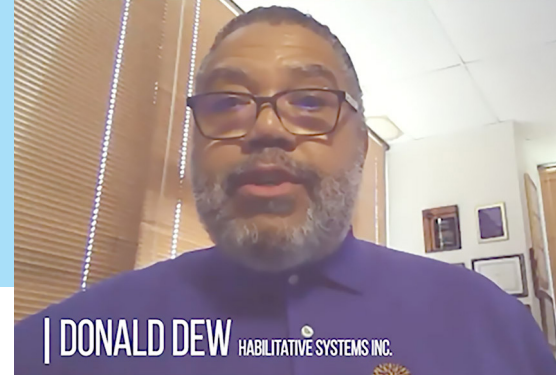
“We’ve submitted so many artifacts that [Dew] was invited to be included in the first video,” said Deborah Williams, HSI Community Outreach and Engagement Specialist. “IDHS is pulling together a lot of articles and materials to document what happened with the 2020 decennial census.” The videos and all the materials being submitted by the Regional Intermediaries will become part of an archived repository that will be shared across communities to promote greater engagement and a higher response rate.

This is the first time that IDHS has spearheaded the Illinois census effort. The state has budgeted an unprecedented \$29 million to support efforts to ensure that Illinois gets its fair share of federal dollars over the next decades. These are the federal resources that fund schools, hospitals, roads, human services including SNAP and Pell grants, as well as determine the number of congressional seats a state gets and how congressional districts are drawn.

In the 2010 census, Illinois’ self-response rate was 70.5%; geographic areas with rates below 73% are considered Hard to Count by the US Census Bureau. Hard to Count areas typically include communities of higher need and lower response and groups that include seniors, children younger than five, racial and ethnic minorities, foreign-born persons with limited English proficiency, persons living close to or below poverty, renters, people who are young and mobile, people experiencing homelessness, people who live in rural areas, people with disabilities, LGBTQ persons, migrant farm workers, opportunity youth (ages 18-24), and people who distrust the government.

To date, nationally the state ranks eighth highest overall with a self-response rate of 67.6 percent; as of the first week of July, the city of Chicago’s self-response rate was 53.8 percent.

What’s at stake in an undercount are billions in federal aid. In 2015, Illinois received \$19.7 billion dollars in federal support for 16 programs. Even a one percent undercount costs the state’s residents \$19.5 million per year in services.





# Congressman Danny Davis with COCC Partners Above & Beyond, Fathers Who Care & Haymarket Father's Day Event

For the past seven years Cong. Danny K. Davis and families have visited their loved ones in prison for Father's Day. That could not be done this year. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing, this year's Recognition and Reconnection was a multi-event weekend of recognition, education and resource sharing to reinforce the message that "Black Fathers Matter", promote the 2020 Census and voter registration.

Held over three days, the events featured a secured, closed circuit video meeting with panel of community leaders and inmates at

 **Congressman Danny K. Davis**  
**PRE – FATHER'S DAY, FAMILY RECONNECTION & COMMUNITY RECOGNITION**

**June 20, 2020  
10am-1pm**

**Don't Miss:**  
**Face Mask Giveaway**  
**Census Activity**  
**Fatherhood Awards**  
**Access Resources:**  
**Housing, Jobs and Training,**  
**Self Development**  
**Health and other Services**

**Car Route**  
**Start**  
Kedzie and Fifth Ave.  
**End**  
Mozart  
(east bound)

**Special Thanks to Our Fatherhood Partners:**  
Above and Beyond - Ashanti BHS, Inc. - Breakthrough Urban Ministries - Counting on Chicago Coalition  
Chance Ministries - Concerned Citizens/Mother's House - Dearborn WG (Madison Street) - IDOC  
Father's Who Care - G40 Recovery Services - Rehabilitation Systems Inc. - Haymarket Center  
Proviso Baptist Church/PLCA - Salter Foundation - West Section Club - Westside Health Authority  
Westside Ministers Coalition - World Vision Chicago

For more information contact Cherita Logan, District Director - 773-533-7520

Sheridan Correctional Center and a Father's Initiative Car Parade, where bags containing masks promoting the 2020 Census, hand sanitizer, and other items were distributed.

In addition, a video produced by COCC community partner George Salter from Above and Beyond was shown to 46,000 inmates at 25 Illinois Department of Corrections Adult facilities. The events wrapped with special recognition from Cong. Davis to a diverse group of 250 fathers nominated by community members, family members and friends.





# “IN THE SPIRIT OF KING”

## Westside Peace March Galvanizes Action Against Systemic Racism

On June 11, more than 1,000 people took the first steps toward reclaiming their political power when they stepped off from I-290 and Independence Boulevard to begin a Westside Peace March organized in the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who lived for a short time in North Lawndale.

The march was the inspiration of Pastor Michael R. Eaddy, executive director of the People's Community Development Association of Chicago and a member of the Counting on Chicago Coalition (COCC). Lead by HSI CEO and President Donald Dew, the Coalition is an innovative partnership of social service, economic development, faith-based, healthcare, and educational organizations working to increase the census response rate in traditionally undercounted Black communities on Chicago's west and south sides.

“Part of the message has always got to be that you do, in fact, count,” Dew said. “It is absolutely imperative that we maintain and focus on civic engagement, uplift for the community, and making sure that everybody has an opportunity to be a part of this society.”

A convergence of extraordinary circumstances was the catalyst for the march which was supported by more than 45 churches, COCC partner organizations, and local, state and federal elected officials. It was the community's response to a decennial census being conducted during a global coronavirus pandemic that disproportionately affects and kills African Americans, and the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and all the others killed by “people who are paid to serve and protect,” noted co-organizer Carol R. Washington.

The West Side Peace March was organized around the overarching issue of systemic racism, which was put on horrific display when a police officer held his knee on George Floyd's neck for nearly nine minutes. Drilling down from this “umbrella issue” were five action issues the organizers identified as focus areas:

- Disinvestment in the Black community
- Healthcare disparities
- Educational disparities
- Criminal justice and police reforms
- Economic development

The manifestations of systemic racism all demand that we stand up and be counted. “We are participating in our own bondage when we don't respond to the census,” Eaddy added.

Each issue became one of the five stops along the march's route, which was launched with a “State of the Westside” address delivered from the faith leadership and millennial perspectives of the Rev. Ira Acree, pastor of Greater St. John Bible Church, and Marshall Hatch Jr., executive director of the Maafa Redemption Project respectively.



The march route included places where Dr. King was known to have been while leading the 1965 Chicago Freedom Movement. Rep. Danny K. Davis raised the issue of eradicating systemic racism at the first stop—Stone Temple Baptist Church, where Dr. King once preached a sermon. The Rev. Jesse Louis Jackson raised the issue of economic disinvestment in the Black the community at 1550 S. Hamlin Avenue, the march's final stop and the address where Dr. King and his family lived during the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's Chicago campaign. The address is now the site of the Dr. King Legacy Apartments.

At every stop, onlookers were invited to get involved by texting their interest to the hashtag #POPWest—Peace Organizing Progress, Westside. Sixty-one people responded.

That was the first step. But the real challenge was turning that momentum into action. “Marching is good,” Washington noted, “but what's next?”

After the march, 22 individuals who have been working in Chicago's Black communities on a variety of social service, economic development and education issues convened to develop recommendations around the five action issues. The group meets every Tuesday, their charge to create a set of community improvement recommendations that will be presented to local, state, and federal elected officials. And although initially “a Westside thing,” the group has expanded its attention include Chicago's entire Black community.

“It started out as the census being the end all be all. But now we also want to know specifically where the money is going,” Washington said. “Overall, I think that working with the Coalition the past six months has been a powerful wakeup moment. The pandemic, the riots, the looting, the killings... we have worked through all of that [and] it has raised the importance of being counted. We are waking up and making sure our voices are heard. It's phenomenal what we've been able to accomplish, educating people.”

It is the COCC partners' long records of community activism that distinguish Habilitative Systems Inc. from the state's 38 other Regional Intermediaries working to increase the census response rate. They didn't just start raising their voices when COVID-19 began its rampage through the Black community, or after George Floyd was killed—they have been working in the trenches for decades, meeting people wherever they are, advocating on their behalf, delivering services, or comfort, as needed.

# Why the Counting On Chicago Coalition Exists

Census statistics are used to determine the number of seats each state holds in the U.S. House of Representatives and to inform how billions of dollars in federal funds will be allocated by state, local and federal lawmakers. Illinois loses \$35 million for every 1% of residents not counted in the U.S. Census. These funds help support hospitals, schools, libraries, roads, public housing and transportation.



The 30 human services organizations that comprise the Counting On Chicago Coalition provide needed services that benefit directly from Census-determined funding. They have joined forces to leverage their deep channels and connections to hard-to-reach populations to make sure they are counted in the 2020 Census. Working under a grant awarded by the State of Illinois' 2020 Census Grant program, the coalition's purpose is to make sure that traditionally under-represented and undercounted populations in Chicago are represented appropriately in the 2020 federal census. The grant represents the largest effort in the history of the U.S. Census to reach the traditionally hard-to-count population in Chicago.

