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# Documenting — in Bloomington-Normal: A Community Report on Intolerance, Segregation, Accessibility, Inclusion, and Progress, and Improvement

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# Documenting \_\_\_\_\_ in Bloomington-Normal

**A community report on intolerance, segregation,  
accessibility, inclusion, progress, and improvement**



DEPARTMENT OF  
**SOCIOLOGY AND  
ANTHROPOLOGY**  
*Illinois State University*



**STEVENSON CENTER**  
FOR COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
*Illinois State University*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Not In Our Town chapter in Bloomington-Normal, Illinois asked two classes of students at Illinois State University to document intolerance, discrimination, segregation, disparities of access, and disparities in the criminal justice system in the twin cities. In this report, using archival material, secondary data, and primary data, the students examine these issues from the mid-1990s to the present. Not In Our Town also wanted to understand their position in the community and some strategies for future success; we provide this through an analysis of other organizations in the country similar to Not In Our Town.

**Bloomington-Normal was and is intolerant; discrimination did and does take place in this community; we are segregated. The community is also less of these things than it used to be and is less of these things than other places—thanks in part to the efforts of Not In Our Town.**

Interviews and focus groups document difficulties, progress, and hope for the future among community leaders, social service agencies, elected bodies, advocates, and law enforcement. Residents discuss systemic issues and the role of Not In Our Town in addressing them. Residents shared experiences of discrimination and intolerance from police, employers, and other community members. Some of the quotes drawn from the conversations are powerful and are evidence of work yet to be done. Discrimination by law enforcement and a lack of access to quality food, health care, and employment are highlighted. Persons promoting racial equality, LGBTQ advocates, and residents provide ideas for future balance.

Data on traffic stops in eight Central Illinois cities and from the McLean County Detention Facility show inequities. Black-Americans are stopped more often and arrested more often than their share of the Bloomington-Normal population would predict.<sup>1</sup> Vehicles driven by Black-Americans are searched more often, yet drugs are more often found in vehicles of White drivers. Normal, IL police stop vehicles at a far higher rate than police in the larger cities of Springfield or Peoria; the pattern is quite stark. This was also discussed by interviewees. Without taking into account severity of charge, Black-Americans that are arrested spend more time in the jail.

Bloomington-Normal is segregated, but far less than other Central Illinois communities. The index of dissimilarity for Bloomington-Normal shows that approximately 40 percent of Black-American households need to change their residence in order to integrate each neighborhood to the same extent, across both cities. Since at least 1980, this number declined for Bloomington-Normal. Champaign, Decatur, Peoria, Rockford, Springfield, and Urbana experienced declines in their segregation too, but their values are still higher than Bloomington-Normal. We find that Springfield is the most segregated of these cities; the interaction index also shows Springfield to be the community where Black-Americans are least likely to interact with a White person and vice versa.

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<sup>1</sup> We use the phrase Black-American to refer to persons otherwise identified as Black or African-American. We use Hispanic and Latino interchangeably; our preference is for the latter but government data and some publications rely on “Hispanic.”

One team of students mapped diversity in Bloomington-Normal against locations of health care facilities, tobacco and liquor stores, groceries with fresh produce, predatory lending establishments, banks, schools, and transit routes. There are disparities in access to these community attributes and the disparities differ by diversity of the neighborhood. In all, West Bloomington suffers from a lack of access to health care and fresh produce. Diverse neighborhoods have more access to fast food and convenient stores than they do quality grocers. Transit routes connect patrons to health care offices/facilities, banking, schools/community college, etc., but the costs in time are high. Predatory lending establishments are located on the community's main routes, but proximate to economically disadvantaged populations.

The work of seven aspirational organizations from across the country is presented in the report. Based on the strengths of Not In Our Town, the Best Practices group identify characteristics of these model organizations that can further the local chapter's efforts. From bylaws to organizational structure and activities, recommendations are made to increase participation, capacity, and credibility. Therefore, this project can help Not In Our Town identify its next steps.

As community developers know, **there is much to learn when we speak to one another about the state of affairs in our communities; not only can we better understand the situations our neighbors are experiencing, we can gather in collective action to work toward improvement and progress.** This is the essence of Not In Our Town's work and dedication; it is the essence of what 27 students accomplished in one semester and to which the entire report can be reduced.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# ARCHIVAL ANALYSIS

Brittany Ashmore, Alyssa Cooper, Jake Fredericks, Diamond Frison, Megan Koch,  
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## Introduction

To tackle difficult social and economic issues affecting a community in the present, it is important that we take time to understand these issues within the context of the past. This was precisely the aim of the Archival Team in this research endeavor. Newspaper articles from the past help gauge what social issues were important at the time of their publication. We compiled a collection of articles from the Pantagraph and documents from the McLean County Museum of History and searched for patterns in coverage. We gained understanding of the social issues at the forefront of the past two decades in Bloomington-Normal. The articles and artifacts were organized into a scrapbook and divided into categories based on search terms. Brief summaries of the patterns are provided with each category subheading.

## Methods

The Archival Team, in conjunction with the Best Practices Team used the existing Not In Our Town scrapbook to determine pertinent themes going forward in our study. Additionally, we conducted a panel interview with Not In Our Town members to determine what issue areas they are facing the most currently, and what they would like to focus more on going forward (see Appendix I for questions asked). We analyzed trends in Bloomington-Normal's history with respect to several areas over the last 20-25 years. We use the last 20-25 years because the local chapter of Not In Our Town was formed in 1996, so we wanted to look at the community climate since the local chapter formed.

Using our key themes and taking into account the issue areas that Not In Our Town focuses on, we developed a list of research terms to use when looking through newspaper and museum archives. The research terms we used are as follows:

- Racism/racial profiling/racial bias/racial tension
- Discrimination (religion, race, gender, sexuality, etc.)
- Bigotry
- Police brutality/law enforcement
- Hate crimes (religion, race, gender, sexuality, etc.)
- Disability
- Injustice
- Integration
- Stereotyping
- LGBTQ Issues/Homophobia
- Diversity/unity/tolerance
- Protest/demonstration/rally/gathering
- Muslim/Islam
- Indian/South Asian
- Not In Our Town events/rallies, articles mentioning Not In Our Town

We searched through archives from the Pantagraph and collections held by the McLean County Museum of History with respect to all the research terms and found roughly 10 articles per term. We compiled an updated, comprehensive scrapbook for Not In Our Town so as to supplement their already existing scrapbook of articles. Each search term has a brief description discussing any highlights or patterns we find over the last 20 years of data.

## **Findings Based on Search Terms**

### **Injustice**

Several patterns emerge when looking at articles that describe/account for injustice in the Bloomington-Normal area. Many of the cases of injustice involve policies that disproportionately affect minorities. Several articles describe how the NAACP took action against unfair policies and practices; it appears that the local NAACP chapter is active within the Bloomington-Normal area. While instances of injustice are present, organizations like Black Lives Matter, NAACP, Not In Our Town, Illinois State University, and other community organizations raised awareness in the fight against injustice.

### **Integration**

Many articles about integration note the discrepancy between legislation designed to promote integration within society and reality. For example, fair housing laws are meant to stop residential discrimination; but according to views expressed in the articles, such discrimination still exists. Schools have been racially desegregated for decades. However, the articles and editorials claim that segregation is still present in the school systems. Also, the Americans with Disabilities Act was enacted 25 years ago; but, according to several editorials, people with disabilities do not always have equal access to public amenities.

### **Stereotyping**

This section of the scrapbook looks at how people are stereotyped and judged by their race, religion, sexual orientation, etc. The articles point out that these judgements are often guided by misinformation. Several editorials call for tolerance and mutual respect between groups by promoting dialogue and understanding. The editorials were aimed at a local audience and in response to events or views expressed by residents of Bloomington-Normal.

### **Racism**

The overall theme of this section of the scrapbook seems to be that racism is a difficult topic to discuss and it is universally hurtful to all parties who experience it. Most minorities experience some form of racism, whether it be verbal or physical. Racism is rooted throughout social media, politics, and culture. Over time, racism in Bloomington-Normal, like much of the country, seems to be less overt and public. However, this does not mean that racism is not still present beneath the surface.

## **Discrimination**

Discrimination is a highly-institutionalized thought process and behavior. The Bloomington-Normal community has been dealing with many discriminatory practices in its politics. In the articles residing within the scrapbook, we find that community and political leaders attempted to pass a law banning such practices and had difficulties getting a piece of legislation passed until recently. The difficulties lay in creating a law that encompasses all acts of discrimination such as workplace, political, housing, and many other processes and behaviors. Discrimination can be displayed in many forms and can be acted out by anyone. The articles and artifacts found show police, landlords, and politicians practicing discrimination.

## **Bigotry**

Although many rallies and demonstrations have been held in the community, bigotry is still a prominent issue facing the community, as well as the rest of the United States. The local community has held many rallies and discussed different ways local citizens could fight bigotry. Although the nation still faces such a large issue, the Bloomington-Normal community is actively trying to eliminate bigotry and unite its people to fight the intolerant mind-sets of the people who don't take other people into consideration. Overall, Bloomington-Normal is a great place to show how people come together in order to fight such large issues and to propose ideas on how to eliminate bigotry to the best of their abilities in this community; but there is always room for improvement.

## **LGBTQ Issues/Homophobia**

Many of the articles in this section are editorials in response to letters or cartoons published and even one about church signs. There are also articles that show clear support of the LGBTQ community. Some articles mention support groups, events, and other resources. Another interesting find is that these articles are written by different people in the community; their authors are priests, LGBTQ individuals, and straight allies in the community. This shows that Bloomington-Normal is mostly accepting of gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender people.

## **Diversity/Unity/Tolerance**

There was a mixture of different pieces about diversity, unity, and tolerance. Some focused specifically on race. Others were looking at acceptance of LGBTQ individuals, and other articles were looking at the main ideas of diversity, unity, and tolerance. There were several articles that admitted that there needs to be more diversity or unity in the community or in our schools. From the articles, it is clear there was an intention to improve diversity and unity in the community and schools. Also, it was interesting that many articles mentioned the importance of teaching children the meaning of diversity, unity, and tolerance.

## **Protest/Demonstration/Rally/Gathering**

There were a variety of different topics within this collection of articles. Some focused on tax increases; others focused on protests towards anti-gay actions and persons. There were also some protests about war and demonstrations. Interestingly, there were two articles that

talked about how to protest. One focused on not breaking laws when protesting and the other focused on finding more positive approaches to protesting. Over time, many different gatherings have taken place in the community for different racial injustices. We find that Bloomington-Normal is pretty active in its activism.

### **Muslim/Islam**

The articles in this section talk about individuals of the Islamic faith who are part of the community. We find that our Muslim community members experienced discrimination and stereotyping following the terrorist attacks in 2001. However, in the articles we also find that throughout the years, Muslim individuals made their presence within the community stronger. By opening stores and bringing their businesses to the community, this group of individuals had an impact and brought a diverse atmosphere to our town. There have also been a number of rallies and events held for the Muslim community.

### **Police Brutality/Police Profiling**

The articles collected in this section cover instances of police brutality, profiling, bias, and excessive force in the Bloomington-Normal area. Many of these articles outline increasingly common community conversations surrounding local police departments' use of force, profiling, and bias. This includes editorials written by local community members, statements by local police representatives, government representatives, student organizations, and others. These local conversations are often sparked by national conversations about policing that come from highly televised incidents, like the Rodney King beating in California. Notable local incidents involving police, use of force, and profiling include the Gabriella Calhoun Case, which is covered in the last three articles in this section of the scrapbook. These articles show that while there has been an effort to combat issues of police brutality, profiling, bias, and excessive force in the Bloomington-Normal area, the community is still far from perfect and there is still room for improvement in these matters.

### **Hate Crimes**

The articles that comprise this section of the scrapbook cover instances of hate crimes (sometimes referred to as bias-motivated crimes) in the Bloomington-Normal area. Some articles cover local statistics of these crimes over time, reporting patterns, as well as court trials of local residents who were accused of such crimes. The majority of the hate crimes discussed in this section deal with racially-motivated hate crimes, but sexuality-based crimes and xenophobic/anti-Islamic hate crimes are covered too. The section also includes reports of local anti-hate crime events and action by student organizations on the college campuses of Bloomington-Normal. Many of these stories coincided with events that induced national conversations about hate/bias-motivated crimes, like the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks (i.e., conversations about xenophobia and anti-Islamic hate crimes). These articles show that hate crimes/bias-motivated crimes have indeed occurred in the area, however there has also been community action in response to these unfortunate events as well.

### **Disability**

The articles in this section cover local issues and discussion relevant to disabled persons in the Bloomington-Normal area. Some of these discussions focus on the benefits of

community-based services for people with developmental disabilities, parking accessibility, use of appropriate language when referring to disabled individuals, opinions about how to best advocate for disabled residents, local resources for disabled residents, local organizations, etc. The most recent articles in this section discuss accessibility issues that have arisen from recent changes to Connect Transit bus routes, leading to community members urging their local representatives to dedicate state funding to the transit service. There has clearly been a long-running local discussion of issues relevant to disabled individuals in Bloomington-Normal and a push to advocate and improve access in the future.

### **Indian/South Asian**

The articles in this section discuss the increasing Indian population in Bloomington Normal; in recent years, the Indian population more than tripled in size. This has a lot to do with employment opportunities (i.e., State Farm). Many South Asian people are in the U.S. on temporary visas, so they can work for a period of time. The Indian community strives to maintain certain aspects of their culture and to inform others of their culture. Indian children meet every other Sunday to learn their customs and traditions. The McLean County India Association provides Indians with social and cultural activities that strengthen the Indian community. Their art has been featured in local museums and new ethnic stores provide the community with traditional Indian cuisine and dishes from other cultures.

### **Not In Our Town**

We also collected articles from the Pantagraph about the rallies and demonstrations that Not In Our Town: Bloomington-Normal have been part of in the last year (2016). The articles focus on rallies and meetings, showing support for inclusion and against intolerance. Recent rallies are a local response to issues that became important across the country (e.g., police violence and the Trump administration's travel ban).

## **Conclusion**

The Archival Team find a variety of patterns in the articles and artifacts gathered with our search terms. Many, but not all, articles tied to the following search terms focused on race: injustice, integration, police brutality/police profiling, and hate crimes. It is unfortunate, but true, that racism seems to be an issue that is deeply rooted in society. However, there were several search terms that had broader reach; these were: stereotyping, discrimination, diversity/unity/tolerance, and protest/rally/demonstration/gathering. Some of the articles in these sections of the scrapbook discussed the LGBTQ community, while others spoke on political matters, like tax increases. When we look at the articles on the topics of Muslim/Islam, LGBTQ issues/homophobia, disability, and Indian/South Asian, we find a supportive community for individuals in the Bloomington-Normal area. We find both positives and negatives through our research of the Pantagraph newspaper articles and McLean County Museum of History archives. Overall, discrimination lessened over the last 20 years, but there is still work to be done. We find that the community is fairly tightly-knit and we find positives in that the community is active in protesting and rallying for change.

# SEGREGATION ANALYSIS

Brittany Ashmore, Ryan Duncan, Mary Frey, Kathryn McGee, Jonathan Monsma,  
Rainee Sibley, Chaney Skadsen, Corinna Strawn

## Introduction

The segregation group measured residential segregation of Bloomington and Normal and compared the results with six other cities of similar size in Illinois: Champaign, Decatur, Peoria, Rockford, Springfield, and Urbana. We used common measures of segregation: 1) evenness, which uses the index of dissimilarity and 2) exposure; exposure is subdivided into the interaction and isolation indices. We used two sources of data for our analysis. One source was from the Spatial Structures in the Social Sciences research unit (S4) at Brown University. S4 offers data for our chosen cities, spanning thirty years, from 1980 to 2010. The American Community Survey (ACS) offers data for creating the index of dissimilarity and the exposure indices for the cities' respective counties. By analyzing the data for Bloomington-Normal and McLean County, and comparing it to the other cities and counties, we can determine how segregated Bloomington-Normal is, and in what ways.

## Literature Review

Residential segregation received the attention of many social scientists over the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This literature review will examine the existing measures of residential segregation that were developed over the past few decades. These measures can offer a more complete depiction of how different populations are dispersed within a city. We apply several of the measures of residential segregation to different cities within Central Illinois with an emphasis on how they compare to Bloomington-Normal.

Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton authored one of the most thorough and highly regarded studies of how residential segregation is measured by social scientists. In "The Dimensions of Residential Segregation," Massey and Denton (1988) identify five dimensions of segregation and how these dimensions have been measured in previous academic literature. These five dimensions are: evenness, exposure, concentration, centralization, and clustering. Several indices exist for measuring each of these five dimensions. The authors discuss which indices are the most common for measuring each dimension, along with the relative benefits of using each index.

Evenness refers to "the differential distribution of two social groups among areal units in a city" (Massey and Denton 1988:283). A minority group is considered segregated if it is unevenly distributed over an area. There are four ways to measure evenness: the index of dissimilarity, the Gini coefficient, the entropy index (also known as the information index), and the Atkinson index. The most frequently used method of measuring evenness is the index of dissimilarity. This is the index we will use for our analysis of evenness in eight Illinois cities. The index of dissimilarity can be interpreted as "the percentage of a group's



population that would have to change residence for each neighborhood to have the same percentage of that as the metropolitan area overall” (Iceland and Weinberg 2002:8). The calculation sums the absolute value of the difference in the proportion of each racial/ethnic category in each space—that is the proportion of Black-Americans compared to Whites or Hispanic persons compared to Whites in each census block group.

$$D = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^n \left| \frac{P_{1i}}{P_1} - \frac{P_{2i}}{P_2} \right|$$

Exposure refers to "the degree of probable contact or interaction between minorities and majorities within a specific geographic area" (Massey and Denton 1988:287). Exposure measures the experience of segregation. There are two measures of exposure; one measures the degree that minority group members (X) are exposed to majority group members (Y).

This is the interaction index. The second measure is the isolation index; it measures the degree that a minority group member is exposed to other members of that minority rather than to majority group members as in the interaction index. Each multiplies the proportion of one population in a census block group (compared to their population in the city) by the ratio of the comparison population to the aggregate population of the block group.

$${}_x P^*_y = \sum_{i=1}^n \left[ \frac{x_i}{X} \right] \left[ \frac{y_i}{T_i} \right]$$

Concentration is a dimension of residential segregation that refers to the relative amount of physical space that is occupied by a minority group in an urban environment (Massey and Denton 1988:289). When a minority group occupies a small share of the total area in a city, they are considered residentially concentrated. The less space a minority group occupies, the more concentrated they are. The more space they inhabit, the less residentially concentrated they are. This measure is important for research because residential discrimination has traditionally restricted minorities to a small number of neighborhoods, making up only a small portion of the urban environment. The main measure of residential concentration is "delta;" it calculates how many members of group "X" live in an area that has an average density of group "X".

According to Massey and Denton (1988:291), centralization refers to "the degree to which a group is spatially located near the center of an urban area." It is often strongly correlated with concentration, but not always. In the U.S. and most industrialized countries, minorities are often concentrated in declining areas of the city center. The most popular measure of centralization is the PCC (Proportion within City Center) because it is easy to calculate. As the name suggests, it is the proportion of a racial/ethnic group that lives within the boundaries of the city center measured as the ratio of those within the city center compared to the metro area as a whole. Other indices offer more insight into centralization, but they require more data and calculation.

Another element to measuring residential segregation is clustering. Clustering is defined as the "extent to which areal units inhabited by minority members adjoin one another, or cluster, in space" (Massey and Denton 1988:293). When a city has a high degree of clustering, this implies a highly segregated city and that large enclaves of minorities are present. Low degrees of clustering look like a checkered board with small evenly sized squares alternating back and forth between the categories.

Massey and Denton's study offers a thorough synthesis of previous literature on residential segregation. Most of the same indices are used to measure residential segregation almost thirty years after the publication of their study. However, some scholars have challenged these mechanisms and proposed additional formats for understanding the residential demography of a city.

Kyle Crowder and Maria Krysan (2016) challenge the way in which residential segregation has traditionally been studied. Their study demonstrates a divergence from the well-received work by Massey and Denton by articulating the need to examine elements of residential segregation that are more qualitative. Aspects of residential segregation that have yet to be included are: social networks, kin location, and connection to daily activities. The authors explain, “because of the dearth of suitable data, for example, we are unable to assess how experiences of discrimination might alter the ability to translate economic resources into residential attainment, or how socioeconomic status might moderate the influence of racial-residential preferences” (2016:21).

The manner in which data are collected for measuring residential segregation often ignore these prevalent features. The indices discussed earlier can quantify certain aspects of residential segregation, but by no means do they offer a complete picture. More complete measurement of residential segregation should take into account qualitative influences such as family ties, social networks, and how and where people choose to spend free time. These factors can have an impactful role on residential segregation. However, quantifying such data may not be feasible.

Ron Johnston, Michael Poulsen, and James Forrest (2007) examine census data for the years 1980-2000 in order to evaluate residential segregation in metropolitan areas. They were unable to find representations of all five dimensions of residential segregation proposed by Massey and Denton. Instead, Johnston et al. (2007) used separate analyses for the different ethnic groups. Within the ethnic groups, there were two super-dimensions: separation and location. In addition, they evaluated the ethnic and racial segregation with all but one of the twenty indices used for measuring segregation that were compiled by Massey and Denton. They found that clustering is very common among many different ethnic groups, Asians in particular. Centralization was also found to be common within ethnic groups, especially in high-density, inner-city areas. The high degree of centralization was especially pronounced within Latino clusters (Johnston et al. 2007).

Both the areal size of a city and the size of its population will affect how the indices for measuring segregation are interpreted. Measuring residential segregation should not be one-size-fits-all. There are some measures that work better for bigger cities that will not work as well for other areas. A city's size and culture are important to take into account when it comes to measuring residential segregation.

Much of the literature on segregation focuses on America's large metropolitan areas and has a dominating effect on which measurements are appropriate. Less attention has been given to rural areas and small towns. When Lichter et al. (2007) examine segregation for small towns and the rural U.S., they found that these areas share some similar trends with large

U.S. metropolises. Most notably, the authors discover that Black-White segregation fell significantly in rural and small-town America during their period of study from 1990-2000, just as it had in the major cities. The decline in African-American to White segregation in metropolitan areas from 1980-2000 has "...been attributed to upward socioeconomic mobility among minorities, the fall of barriers to racial integration (e.g. fair housing legislation), and declines in white intolerance toward minority groups" (Lichter et al. 2007). It is possible that the decline in African-American to White segregation in rural areas during the 1980s and 1990s resulted from similar factors.

Just like larger cities, African-Americans are the most segregated minority in rural areas and small towns according to segregation indices (around 30-40% higher than for rural Latinos or Native-Americans). Although African-American to White segregation decreased across the board in the 1990s, it decreased to a larger extent in rural areas (Lichter et al. 2007). Segregation between Whites and Latinos also decreased for both metropolises and rural areas during the 1990s, but the decrease was substantial for small-town, rural areas and only negligible for larger cities. The segregation indices of Native-Americans in non-metro areas decreased by only 1% in the 1990s which was the smallest change.

Daniel T. Lichter, Domenico Parisi, and Michael C. Taquino examined the patterns of Hispanic residential segregation in rural America. Many small towns have seen significant growth of the Hispanic population (Lichter, Parisi, and Taquino 2016), causing the population of some nonmetropolitan areas of America to grow. The influx of Latino people provided a demographic lifeline to small towns that decreased in population size overall (Lichter et al. 2016). Indeed, immigration of Hispanics into rural America led to Latino boomtowns and caused other concerns regarding how this minority would socially fit in. Residential segregation became a concern in some small towns because Latinos did not have the same interests as the people already living in these towns (Lichter et al. 2016).

Looking at Latino immigration into rural America, census tract data was used to make indices that measured segregation in rural towns. Measuring Latino-White segregation for metropolitan areas, the index of dissimilarity was around 61 percent in 2010; down from 71.9 percent in 1990 (Lichter et al. 2016). This is a marked decrease in segregation; however, places with index values above 60% are still considered "highly segregated." According to the data, Latinos were found to be clustered and concentrated in these small towns. Latino segregation was often high in small towns (Lichter et al. 2016). Latinos remain isolated from Whites in rural towns and this is an issue facing rural America today.

Index values for measuring residential segregation offer useful insight into the distribution of different populations within an area. These measures cannot portray all of the social and cultural segregation or bias that may exist, but they can show patterns of how different ethnic or racial groups settle within a city. For this Not In Our Town project we measure residential segregation in Bloomington-Normal by examining the dimensions of evenness and exposure within the city. Side-by-side comparisons of surrounding cities make the measurements relative to what is found elsewhere in Central Illinois.

## City-Level Analysis (1980-2010)

Our analysis of residential segregation started with data from the research organization, Spatial Structures in the Social Sciences (S4) at Brown University. This data spanned thirty years, 1980 to 2010. We focused on eight cities in Illinois: Bloomington, Champaign, Decatur, Normal, Peoria, Rockford, Springfield, and Urbana. We chose these cities because they're about the same size as Bloomington-Normal and in the same state. The two dimensions for measuring residential segregation we chose to calculate are evenness, with the index of dissimilarity, and exposure, with the interaction index and the isolation index. We find several different trends when comparing the indices by city. The population data contains racial and ethnic components for city and metropolitan regions. Corresponding charts illustrate the analysis.

### **Evenness: Index of Dissimilarity**

Our calculations for measuring how evenly distributed racial and ethnic groups are is the index of dissimilarity. The index of dissimilarity represents the percent of people that would have to relocate to achieve an even distribution of races/ethnicities. A value close to zero for a respective city indicates that few would need to relocate their residence to achieve an evenly distributed residential population. Adversely, if the index of dissimilarity is higher, more movement in that city would be required to create a more evenly distributed population. We would like to see the index of dissimilarity decrease with time; that means there is less segregation over time.

#### *Black to White/White to Black*

Between 1980 and 2010, the index of dissimilarity consistently decreased in Springfield, Urbana, Decatur, and Rockford. In Springfield, the index of dissimilarity decreased 18 points between 1980 and 2010. Urbana follows the same trend and decreased between 1980 and 2010 by approximately 17 points. Decatur's index of dissimilarity steadily declined by 14 points; in Rockford, it plummeted 28 points.

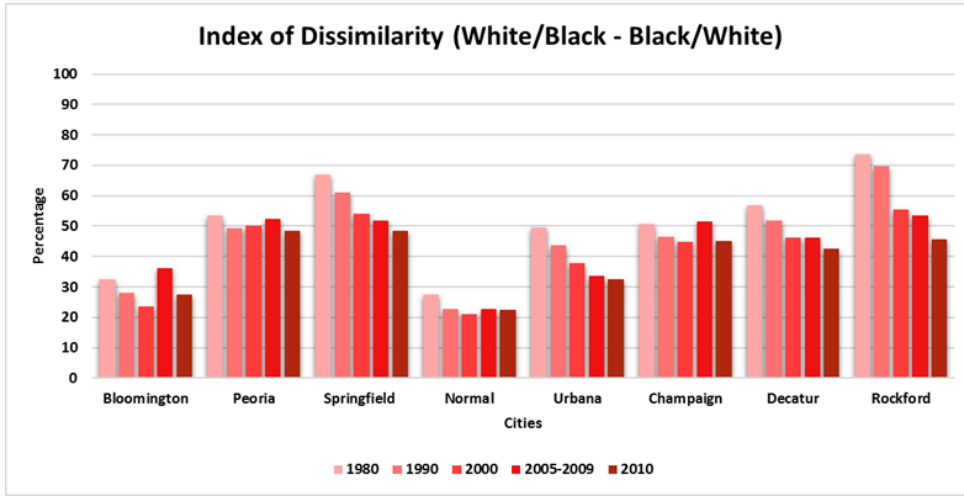
There were a few cities that had fluctuating indices of dissimilarity; our data did not point to any one cause for these fluctuations. In Bloomington, from 1980-2000 there was a decrease of 9 points. From 2000-2007<sup>2</sup> it increased 13 points; and finally it decreased again from 2007-2010 by 9 points. Normal experienced a 5 point decrease from 1980-1990 and it did not change much thereafter. The index of dissimilarity for Champaign decreased from 1980-2000 by approximately 6 points, went up approximately 5 points from 2000-2007, then back down approximately 5 points from ~2007-2010. In Peoria, there was also an overall decrease of approximately 5 points from 1980-2010.

Chart 1 displays these results. Overall, Bloomington and Normal have lower values than the other cities, so fewer people would need to move to have an even distribution of Black-Americans and Whites in our twin cities. Our Black-American to White segregation is lower than other Central Illinois cities.

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<sup>2</sup> The range of years is 2005-2009; 2007 is the mid-point.

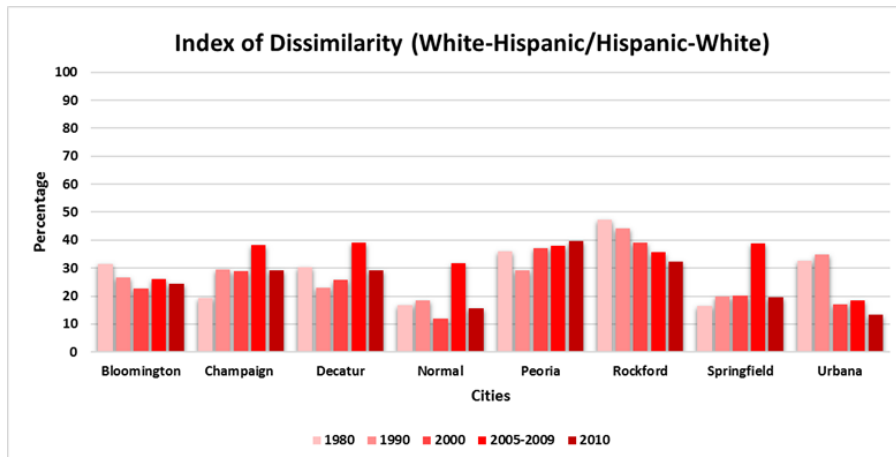
**Chart 1**



*White to Hispanic/Hispanic to White*

We continue our analysis by looking at the dissimilarity index, focusing on White and Hispanic individuals (see Chart 2). Overall, we find a slight decreasing trend among the eight cities, though not as large a decrease as Whites compared to Black-Americans. In 1980 Bloomington started with about 31 percent dissimilarity. This means 31 percent of the Latino population would have to relocate within the city to even the distribution of races across the city. In 2010 the index of dissimilarity was about 24 percent for Bloomington. This is a 7 point decrease. Champaign had a low index of dissimilarity in 1980 with 19.4 percent. However, across the next thirty years Champaign would see about a 10 point increase in dissimilarity between Whites and Latinos. In 1980 Decatur had about a 30 percent dissimilarity index for Whites and Latinos. In the next thirty years Decatur fluctuated and hit a high in ~2007 with 39 percent. Yet, five years later in 2010 the index decreased 10 points. So, from 1980 to 2010 Decatur saw a 1.1 point decrease overall. Decatur was not the only city that had a spike in dissimilarity in the latter 2000s. Springfield, Normal, Bloomington, Champaign, and Urbana all saw similar increases during this time.

**Chart 2**



Normal has the lowest dissimilarity between Whites and Latinos of all eight cities analyzed. It started in 1980 at 16.7 percent and by 2010 only fell 1.1 points to 15.6 percent for the year. Peoria had a 3.7 point increase in dissimilarity over this thirty year span. Rockford was the only city that had a steady decrease in the dissimilarity index; the overall decrease for Rockford was about 15 points. Similar to Normal and Peoria, Springfield had only a slight difference in dissimilarity between 1980 and 2010 – a 3.2 point increase. Lastly, Urbana had the largest decrease for the White to Latino index of dissimilarity compared to the other seven cities. Overall, Urbana had 19.4 percent White to Latino index of dissimilarity in 1980; it was 13 percent in 2010. In short, this means only 13 percent of the minority population would in Urbana need to relocate to achieve an even distribution of Latinos to Whites.

Note that these values start lower in Chart 2 compared to Chart 1 because the Central Illinois Latino population is more integrated with Whites compared to the Black population.

### **Exposure: Interaction Index**

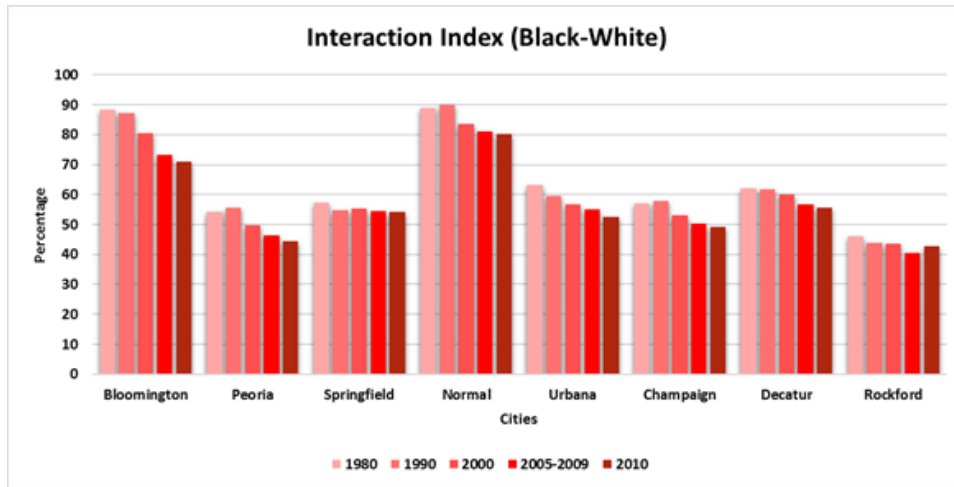
In measuring exposure, the calculations provide the estimated probability of a White individual interacting with a minority individual and vice versa. Our analysis of exposure compares interaction with isolation, where the latter is the likelihood of each racial or ethnic group interacting only with each other.

#### *Black to White*

In our analysis of exposure, we first looked at interaction. Though we would like to see an increase in interaction from 1980 to 2010, we find Black-American to White interaction decreased in all cities over those 30 years (Chart 3). Also, some cities have a more significant decrease than others. This means that Black-American's are experiencing interaction with White Americans less as time progresses. This is an outcome of an increase in the number of Black-American's remaining in predominately Black-American neighborhoods.

With respect to Black-White interaction, Springfield had the lowest amount of change of all eight cities in our data set (about 3 points). While researching the city of Rockford we find that interaction decreased from 1980 to 2007; however, in 2010 there was a small 2 point increase in Black to White interaction. We find Decatur was similar to Rockford in that they had a low level of change in interaction from 1980 to 2010; the interaction level decreased about 6.5 points during the 30 year time frame. Rockford was not the only city to see a slight increase in interaction. Between 1980 and 1990, Normal had a 2 point increase before falling 7 points in the next ten years. Champaign and Peoria had minor increases between 1980 and 1990. Similar to Bloomington, Normal has the highest exposure value with 80 percent; this means 80 of 100 African-American individuals are likely to interact with a White person. These are the high numbers we would like to see in each city.

Chart 3



Overall, Champaign showed the same decreasing trend found among the other cities. From 1990 to 2010 Champaign saw about an 8 point decrease in exposure. Urbana had an 11 point decrease from 1980 to 2010. Taking a deeper look in Peoria, in 1980, 54 of every 100 persons that an African-American person interacted with would have been White. In other words, 54 percent of Black people were likely to interact with a White individual. In 2010, the 54 percent decreased to 44 percent. This 10 point decrease is a part of our overall finding of decreased interaction over these thirty years. Bloomington had the largest decrease of all eight cities, 18 points between 1980 and 2010. In 1980, similar to Normal, 88 of every 100 African-American persons would have interacted with a White individual. Although Bloomington has the largest decrease, the city continues to have one of the highest interaction values in this data set.

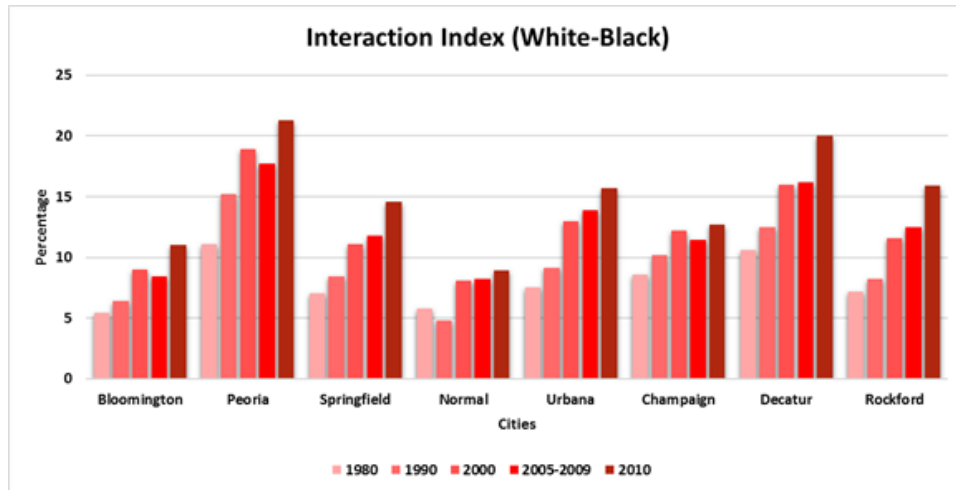
For this data set we also compare the isolation index to the interaction index. Ideally, we would like to see a decrease in both majority to majority and minority to minority isolation. The overall finding among these eight cities is that isolation among Whites decreased from 1980 to 2010 (results discussed here in text, not shown). We find that in Bloomington, Normal, Decatur, and Peoria, Black-American to Black-American isolation increased over the thirty years. In Rockford, Champaign, and Urbana Black-American to Black-American isolation decreased over the same period. Springfield, however, did not experience much of a change in Black to Black isolation between 1980 and 2010.

#### *White to Black*

We looked at interaction of White to Black individuals next. This measure differs from exposure of Black to White individuals, because White people are the majority, so it is less likely for White people to come in contact with Black people than it is for Black people to interact with White people; this explains the difference in the indices of Black-White exposure and White-Black exposure. When analyzing the data for White people being exposed to Black people, the numbers went up in all cities from 1980-2010 (see Chart 4). An increase in White people's interaction with Black people means the populations of White and

Black people are more equally distributed across the city. This also follows the decrease in segregation occurring within the cities.

**Chart 4**



The cities with the highest increase of all those we gathered data from are Decatur and Peoria. Both of these cities had a 10 point increase in the percentage of White people who are likely interacting with Black-Americans. In other words, for every 100 people a White person meets in Peoria, 10 more will be Black compared to 30 years ago. Rockford and Urbana both had an increase of 8 points in the likelihood of interaction between White and Black people; Springfield followed close behind with a 7 point increase. Bloomington had an increase of 6 points; Champaign had an increase of 4 points; and Normal trailed behind with only an increase of 3 points.

### *Hispanic to White*

We furthered our analysis of the interaction index by focusing on Hispanic and White individuals. This is the probability of a Hispanic individual interacting or being exposed to a White individual and vice versa.

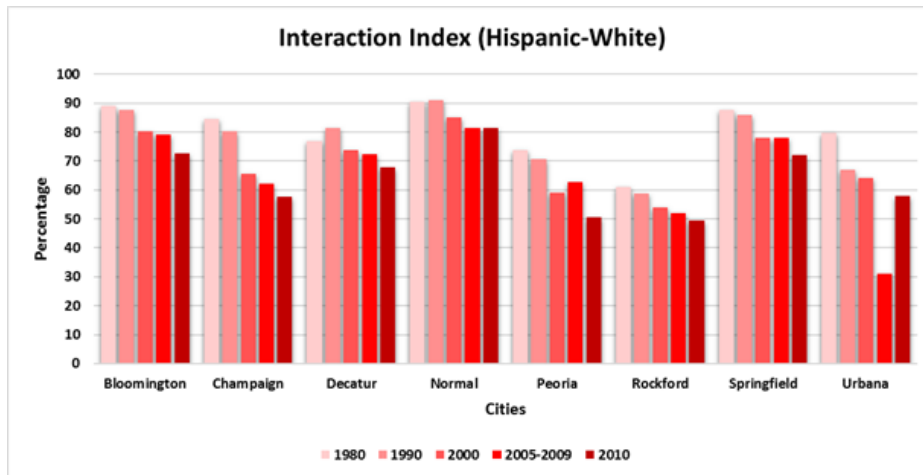
Chart 5 shows our findings for the interaction index of Hispanics to Whites. The values are much higher due to the low number of Latinos in each of the cities; this small population will have greater likelihood of interaction with the much larger population of White individuals.

The common trend we find is that over this thirty year span from 1980 to 2010 the likelihood of a Hispanic individual interacting with a White individual decreased. For Bloomington, the interaction index between Hispanics and Whites decreased 16.4 points from 1980 to 2010; Champaign had a 27 point decrease. Decatur saw a slight 5 point increase in interaction of Hispanic and White individuals between 1980 and 1990 but from 1990 to 2010 the likelihood of Hispanic to White interaction in Decatur decreased 13.7 points. Normal had about a 9 point decrease in interaction; it remained steady between ~2007 and 2010. Peoria's Hispanic to White interaction index continuously decreased from 1980 to 2000, increased in 2005 to



2009 then decreased again by 2010. Overall, Peoria had a 23.3 point decrease in interaction between Hispanics and Whites. Rockford had a decrease of 11.6 points in this thirty year span; Springfield saw decreased interaction of Hispanics to Whites of 16.5 points. Lastly, Urbana also had the same general decrease in such interaction (16 points) between 1980 and 2000. We cannot explain the anomalous drop in the 2005-2009 value for Urbana.

**Chart 5**

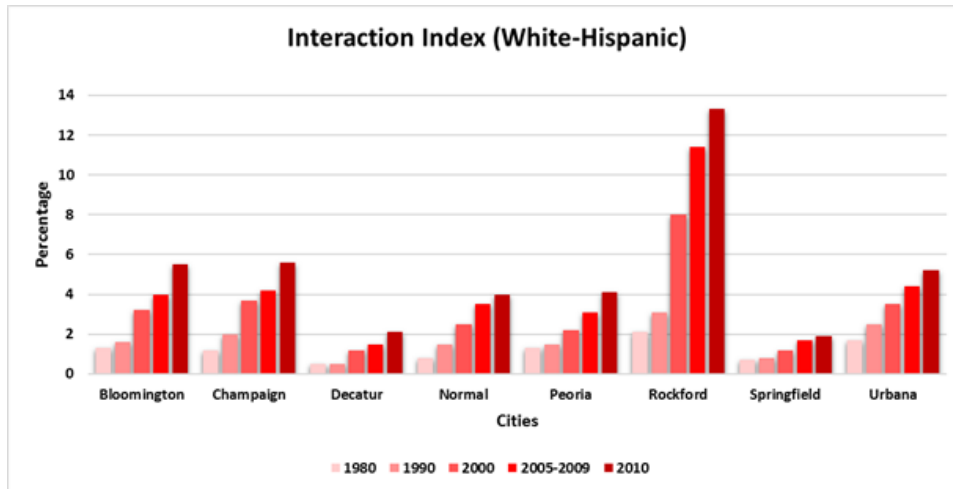


### *White to Hispanic*

Next we focused on the interaction index for Whites to Hispanic individuals. In Chart 6 the interaction index scores are very small. Once again this is due to the small population of Hispanic individuals.

The collective theme of Chart 6 is that interaction between Whites and Hispanic individuals increased from 1980 to 2010. Bloomington tripled its likelihood of White to Hispanic interaction with a 4.2 point increase. Similarly, Champaign had a 4.4 point increase—again tripling in 30 years. Decatur’s value did not change from 1980 to 1990; but it saw a 2.6 point increase in interaction overall. Normal’s interaction index steadily increased—3.2 points in thirty years. This slight increasing trend in interaction also unfolded in Peoria (2.8 points). Rockford had the largest gain in White to Hispanic interaction. Between 1980 and 1990 there was only a 1 point increase; yet, in 2000 the interaction index increased by about 5 points, more than doubling. From 2000-2007 the index jumped again, by 3.4 points. Overall, due to the large in-migration of Latinos to Rockford over the 30 year span, White to Latino interaction index increased 11.2 points. Springfield had the least amount of change in White to Hispanic interaction, an increase of only 1.2 points. Lastly, Urbana had an overall increase of White to Hispanic interaction of 3.5 points.

Chart 6



### County-Level Analysis (2015)

We now extend our research on residential segregation in Illinois to a more recent data set. The 2015 American Community Survey provided data from the 6 Central Illinois counties containing the 8 cities we studied. The 6 counties are: Champaign, Macon, McLean, Peoria, Sangamon, and Winnebago. The reason for switching to county-level data is to give a more recent comparison of segregation across Illinois. It is important to recognize that the geographic areas measured here are larger; this will affect the values but not the comparison.

#### Evenness

Measures of evenness/dissimilarity by county demonstrate that the counties in Central Illinois exhibit fairly similar trends (results discussed here in text, not shown). Sangamon County has the highest White to Black index of dissimilarity compared to the other counties at .6523. This means that 65.23 percent of the Black population in Sangamon County would need to change their residential location to achieve an even distribution of Whites and Black-Americans across the whole county.

In contrast, McLean County is the most evenly distributed of the 6. McLean County's index of dissimilarity is .5158, meaning that 51.58 percent of the Black-American population would need to change their residential location in order to achieve an evenly distributed county.

#### Exposure

We also calculated the exposure index by county. With respect to the probability of a White person interacting with a Black person, we find considerable variation between the counties. The lowest probability calculated was .077 in Sangamon County; the highest being .815 in Peoria County. This means that roughly 8 out of every 100 people a White person interacts with in Springfield will be Black, compared to 82 out of 100 in Peoria. Therefore, someone

who is White is ten times more likely to interact with a Black individual in Peoria County compared to Sangamon County. This disparity is surprising and telling.

Flipping the comparison, the variation in the likelihood of a Black person interacting with someone White is much smaller. For example, with an interaction index of 70 in McLean County, 70 out of every 100 people a Black person interacts with will be White. In Peoria County, only roughly 46 out of 100 people a Black person interacts with will be White.

When measuring exposure of Whites to Black-Americans and Black-Americans to Whites, and the evenness for these six counties, we find a lot of variation demonstrating high degrees of residential segregation. This is especially true of Sangamon County.

### **City and County Data Comparison**

By analyzing the data for both the cities' and the counties' indices of dissimilarity and exposure, we find some common themes. Both the data for Bloomington-Normal and McLean County show a racial distribution that is more even than the other counties and cities. This indicates that for both county data and city data, Bloomington-Normal is less residentially segregated than the cities of Champaign, Decatur, Peoria, Rockford, Springfield, and Urbana, or their respective counties.

Another common theme is that Springfield and Sangamon County have the most residential segregation. For the city data, Springfield had the lowest amount of change over the thirty years. Further, Sangamon County has the lowest probability of a White person interacting with a Black person. This demonstrates that Springfield, and its respective county, are the most residentially segregated city and county of those we examined in Illinois. The data also shows that the City of Peoria has the highest White to Black interaction, increasing 10 points from 1980-2010; and Peoria County has the highest White to Black interaction.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, Central Illinois has fairly high degrees of residential segregation. We draw these results from two standard dimensions of residential segregation for Bloomington, Champaign, Decatur, Normal, Peoria, Rockford, Springfield and Urbana. Although the evenness vs. exposure outcomes for Bloomington and Normal seem to contradict each other, it goes to show how complex residential segregation is. In some ways, for example evenness, Bloomington-Normal ranks fairly unsegregated in comparison to the other Central Illinois cities. Yet, when examining the exposure index Bloomington and Normal show room for improvement – especially for the Black-American to White and White to Latino exposure indices. We find it important to look at segregation over the past thirty plus years to highlight change, positively or negatively. We find in Bloomington-Normal, as well as other Central Illinois cities, that change is gradual. This information is important because it can help identify the social segregation problems within Bloomington and Normal and it provides a better understanding of how segregation can be measured.

# **DISPARITIES IN ACCESS**

Teddy Dondanville, Justin Estima, Doug Gass, Alesha Klein,  
Emily Spencer, Corinna Strawn

## **Introduction**

The Disparities in Access group used online mapping software to analyze the dispersion and concentration of race and ethnicity in Bloomington-Normal. We examined how these factors are geographically associated with food deserts, educational institutions, health care, transportation, financial institutions, and quality of life amenities. The group collectively mapped the location of all grocery and convenient stores, schools, doctor and dentist offices, clinics, banks and credit unions, hazard spaces, and bus routes in Bloomington-Normal. Once mapping was complete, already established layers visualizing diversity and income in Bloomington-Normal were imported to analyze their spatial relationship and correlation with these necessities and amenities.

## **Methods**

Six accessibility topics were chosen as the emphasis for this study: healthy food, transportation, health care, financial institutions, education, and the environment. The group initially researched literature related to these topics to develop familiarity and comfort with the subject matter. After developing that comfort, the group familiarized itself with ArcGIS online, the primary tool used for creating maps and identifying trends within Bloomington-Normal. The group then began marking the location of all amenities and businesses related to the six study topics in Bloomington-Normal, laying those points over mapped layers displaying demographic and economic patterns within Bloomington-Normal. This then allowed the group to analyze the location of amenities as compared to the location of high diversity/high minority neighborhoods and identify potential disparities in access.

## **Literature Review**

The academic literature focusing on access is broad and encompassing; a common theme intersecting it all is social justice. Equal access to any resources, services, people, or information is considered socially just. Counter to this would then be the disparities in access that result in unjust situations, opportunities, and communities. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2017) has a similar notion of access: defined as “permission, liberty, or ability to enter, approach, or pass to and from a place or to approach or communicate with a person or thing.” For the purposes of this literature review, we employ this definition and examine how it relates to six topics: access to healthy lifestyles, educational institutions, financial institutions, environmental hazards and privileges, transportation, and healthcare services. Focusing on these topics, we provide a broad survey of the academic literature with the goal of building a ground-level analysis of the complexities embedded within the concept of access (or disparity in access).

### **Access to Healthy Lifestyles**

The disparities in access to healthy food correlates with many social factors. This includes race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and income level (D'Angelo et al. 2016; Larson, Story, and Nelson 2009). A diet of primarily unhealthy products—including junk food, tobacco and liquor products, and fast food—can cause cardiovascular disease, liver cirrhosis, obesity, and multiple forms of cancer (D'Angelo et al. 2016; Larson, Story, and Nelson 2009). Distance to, prevalence of, and accessibility of healthy food options are directly related to a person's overall health. Neighborhoods which lack these nutritious and affordable food options are called food deserts (Wright et al. 2016). While located in urban and rural settings, food deserts are found predominantly in low-income communities of color (Wright et al. 2016).

Individuals in these food deserts will face a higher density of tobacco stores and fast-food restaurants with few, if any, healthy food options (D'Angelo et al. 2016). When people and families have to expend more energy and resources to get fresher, healthier options than food found at convenience stores or fast-food restaurants, they will often choose to buy more readily available and less healthy food (Neckerman et al. 2009). Fast-food restaurants and tobacco companies target low-income and minority populations in their advertising—such as fast-food companies offering free prizes and more kids' meals in lower income neighborhoods than higher income communities (D'Angelo et al. 2016).

### **Access to Educational Institutions**

Middle school and high school students walking to school are confronted with many concealed dangers. On the way to and from school, students could pass by multiple fast food establishments as well as alcohol and tobacco stores. According to research, more than fifty percent of schools that are mostly minority have both fast food and tobacco stores in close proximity (D'Angelo et al. 2016). According to research, low-income and minority students have a greater chance of taking routes to and from school that can expose them to fast food, alcohol, and tobacco stores (D'Angelo et al. 2016). Research has shown that Latino students are more likely to go to schools that are in areas containing multiple alcohol, tobacco, and fast food establishments (Sturm 2007). Having these establishments near schools can increase the rates of obesity seen in school children as well as higher rates of teenage smoking (D'Angelo et al. 2016). Further research shows that children who pass these places everyday on their way to school are more likely to be offered alcohol, tobacco, or even other drugs (Milam et al. 2013). It is encouraged that students walk to school, but the dangers of kids passing these businesses can lead to unhealthy habits. Compared to middle schoolers, high schoolers have a higher chance of being affected by encountering these businesses daily (Sturm 2007).

In sum, the literature points to a clear association between socio-economic status and the chance of passing by these types of establishments.

### **Access to Financial Institutions**

According to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (2015), 7.0 percent of the U.S. population (9 million households) is unbanked and another 19.9 percent is underbanked (24.5 million households). The unbanked are those with no access to savings or checking accounts

through banks, credit unions, money markets, or other federally insured depository institutions. Those defined as underbanked have access to these accounts but have still sought out an alternative financial service (AFS). AFS institutions generally offer vehicle title loans, payday loans, check cashing, rent-to-own agreements, pawnshop loans, international remittances, and similar forms of short term lending. The issues of lack of access to traditional financial institutions is of special concern to minority communities. A total of 18.2 percent of the African-American population is unbanked and another 31.1 percent of African-Americans are underbanked (FDIC 2015). In the U.S. Hispanic community, 16.2 percent of the population is unbanked and another 29.3 percent are underbanked (FDIC 2015). This compares to 3.1 percent of the United States' White population being unbanked and 15.6 percent being underbanked (FDIC 2015).

According to Birkenmaier and Fu (2015), being unbanked and underbanked is positively related to reliance on AFS institutions. Because AFS customers have to physically cash their checks and keep their money on-hand, these types of institutions tend to charge much higher fees than banks and credit unions (Padua and Doran 2016) and provide less of a safety net to customers (Cheney and Rhine 2006). They also do not benefit from the federal deposit insurance that covers banks and credit unions. Research by the Pew Charitable Trust (2012) shows that a short-term borrower pays an average 391 percent annual interest rate on their AFS loans. Additionally, in 2009, 76 percent of payday loan borrowers had to seek a second loan within two weeks to cover additional expenses (Parrish and King 2009). In total, the average short term borrower paid \$2,412 in lending fees annually while their average income was \$25,500 (United States Postal Service 2014). This research shows, once again, that reliance on AFS institutions tends to disproportionately affect low-income and minority households who, on average, can spend nearly 10 percent of their annual income on lending fees alone. Those choosing AFS products also tend to be less financially literate and overconfident in their overall knowledge of finance (Robb et al. 2015).

The reasons households use AFS institutions instead of traditional banks and credit unions are diverse and not always related to physical access. The U.S. Federal Reserve's 2014 survey of unbanked and underbanked households showed that 25 percent of respondents did not use banks because they did not have enough money to maintain a bank account, 24 percent did not want or need an account, and 10 percent had credit history or ID issues preventing them from opening an account. Inconvenient hours and location was the least cited reason for not having a bank account, at 1 percent of respondents. The results were slightly higher in a 2015 FDIC survey, with 9 percent of respondents giving bank locations as a reason for not having an account and 2 percent of respondents rating location as their primary reason for not having an account. However, the 2014 Federal Reserve survey also showed that a significant proportion (19 percent) of those using AFS products said they did so because AFS products were more conveniently located than banks. Other factors influencing non-bank use were a lack of trust in banks, high/unpredictable bank fees, and a feeling that banks did not offer the desired services (Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System 2014; Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation 2016).

Overall, findings show that location is one of several factors that influence bank/credit union usage and reliance on AFS products. Other factors include: lack of cash, lack of trust, and

the perceived lesser value of a bank account. This would indicate that, in addition to making banks and credit unions more conveniently located, effort needs to be placed on financial education and providing more applicable services. Researchers have stressed the need for more gateway services (Goldstein and Rhine 2017), ‘second chance’ accounts, and general outreach (Padua and Doran 2016) to unbanked and underbanked populations.

### **Access to Environmental Hazards and Privileges**

Environmental injustice is defined by the disproportionate volume of environmental threats posed to marginalized communities (Park and Pellow 2011). Scholars have identified that communities of color and communities of low and working class background are more susceptible to pollution and industrial hazards (Bullard 2000; Park and Pellow 2011; Crowder and Downey 2010). These hazards might include (but are not limited to) municipal and hazardous waste incinerators, garbage dumps, and polluting manufacturing facilities. The disparities in the proximity to risks and pollution between poor communities of color and affluent White communities is what some scholars have coined ‘environmental racism.’

The inverse of environmental racism is environmental privilege. Environmental privilege in this context is exemplified by the power and social class standing to not only choose a community that is free of hazardous risks but also to actively expel dirty industries or practices from one’s neighborhood (Boone et al. 2009). Privilege in this context can also be synonymous with the access and ability to enjoy environmental amenities such as forests, parks and other open lands (Park and Pellow 2011). Parks and other green spaces have been directly linked to physical (Giles-Corti et al. 2005) and mental (Chiesura 2004; Maller et al. 2006) health benefits. Economically, it has been shown that even property values improve with proximity to parks and open spaces (Crompton 2001; Sherer 2006).

A relationship exists between social characteristics, such as race and socio-economic class, green space, environmental hazards, and environmental quality. It is at this intersection where scholars of environmental justice place their attention. As our societies continue to modernize and as our planet continues to digress in quality, the presence of both good and bad environmental phenomena in the lives of human populations will continue to be a major point of contention.

### **Access to Public Transportation**

Where people choose to live is not dictated solely by access to jobs and amenities (Tyndall 2017). Other issues such as culture, roots, and family play a significant role in where households locate. As a result, members of underserved populations with low vehicle access should not be expected to simply relocate for improved access to jobs and amenities in other parts of a town or city and the issue of public transportation access is increasingly important as jobs and amenities move away from urban centers and into the suburbs (Inwood, Alderman, and Williams 2015). The significance of public transportation may best be illustrated using two particular social justice issues: access to employment and access to healthy food.

Entry level and low skill employment options have been steadily decreasing in urban centers in favor of the suburbs (Gobillon, Selod, and Zenou 2007). In major American metro areas, only 21 percent of employment options are within three miles of downtown and up to 45 percent are more than 10 miles from downtown (Kneebone 2009); the low-income households working many of these jobs have significantly less access to personal vehicles (Murakami and Young 1997). Combined, these factors indicate that the presence of accessible and affordable public transportation serves an increasingly significant role for low-income urban households trying to get to work. The increasing decentralization of employment options means more travel for households with impaired access to personal vehicles.

Food access in urban centers is impaired as supermarkets increasingly locate to the edge of town with more parking lot space and convenient freeway access (Villianatos, Shaffer, and Gottlieb 2002). The issue of relocation of food centers and other amenities is severely affecting predominantly urban Black-American communities, with fewer and less diverse options available (Bellinger and Wang 2011). These factors, once again, indicate a scenario in which low-income households with low private vehicle access are becoming less and less able to find healthy food within a walkable distance. These trends are becoming prevalent in both large and small cities (Bellinger and Wang 2011) and, along with the migration of jobs out of city centers, make access to public transportation important. As Inwood, Alderman, and Williams (2015) state; "...access to public transportation is an important civil right in the United States and...public transportation continues to have a direct bearing on economic opportunities of poor people of color as well as their general right to the city and its many spaces and place-based resources" (417).

### **Access to Health Care Services**

Disparities in health care, such as insurance coverage, access, or quality of care, are some of the many factors creating inequalities in health status in the United States. Despite important developments in the diagnosis and treatment of many chronic diseases, there is evidence that racial and ethnic minorities tend to receive lower quality care and access than non-minorities (Smedley et al. 2003). Access to health services means the timely use of personal health services to achieve the best health outcomes (Millman 1994). It requires three significant steps: 1) gaining entry into the health care system; 2) accessing a health care location where needed services are provided; and 3) finding a health care provider with whom the patient can communicate and trust (Bierman et al. 1998). Disparities in access to health services affect individuals and society. Inadequate access to health care influences people's ability to reach their full potential, harmfully affecting their quality of life. Barriers to service include: lack of availability, high cost, and lack of insurance coverage (USDHHS 2011). These barriers to accessing health service form various negative outcomes such as unmet health needs, delays in receiving appropriate care, inability to get preventive services, and preventable hospitalizations (2011).

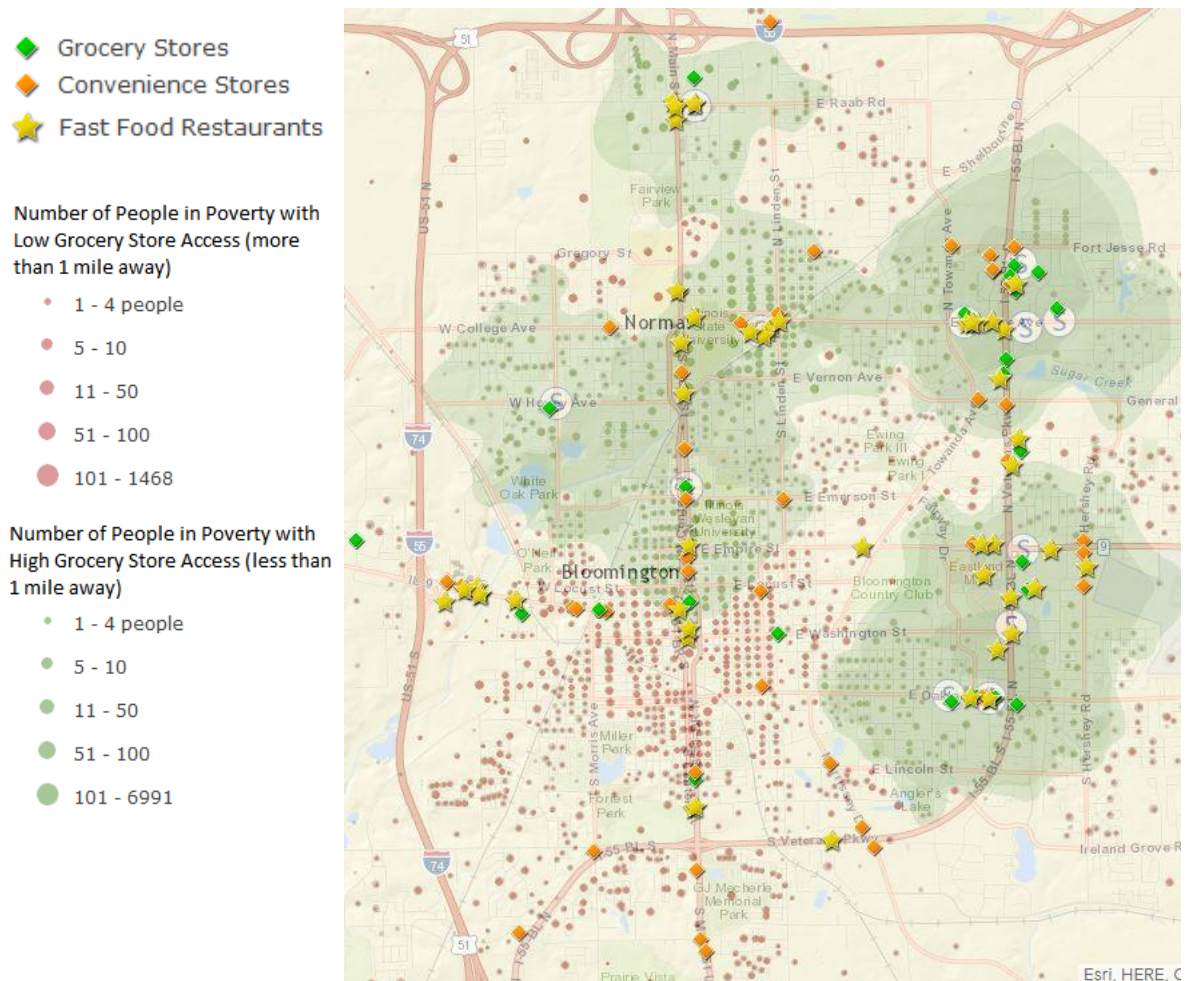


## Results

### Access to Healthy Lifestyles

Upon mapping data, it was immediately observed that Bloomington-Normal possesses many more convenience stores than grocery stores. Convenience stores stay open long hours, offering a small variety of household goods and unhealthy foods. With high convenience store accessibility and lower grocery store accessibility comes the tendency to rely on unhealthier convenience store options rather than the relatively healthier grocery store offerings. Relatedly, there are also far more fast-food restaurants than grocery stores in Bloomington-Normal. In all, unhealthy food options are more available than healthy ones.

**Map 1. Food Store Locations and Accessibility for Those in Poverty**



Map 1 shows that a majority of Bloomington-Normal's supermarkets and grocery stores are located along major roads, with Veterans Parkway, Market Street, and Main Street possessing the clear majority of store locations. The areas shaded green are within one mile of a grocery store; unshaded areas are more than one mile from a grocery. The green and red

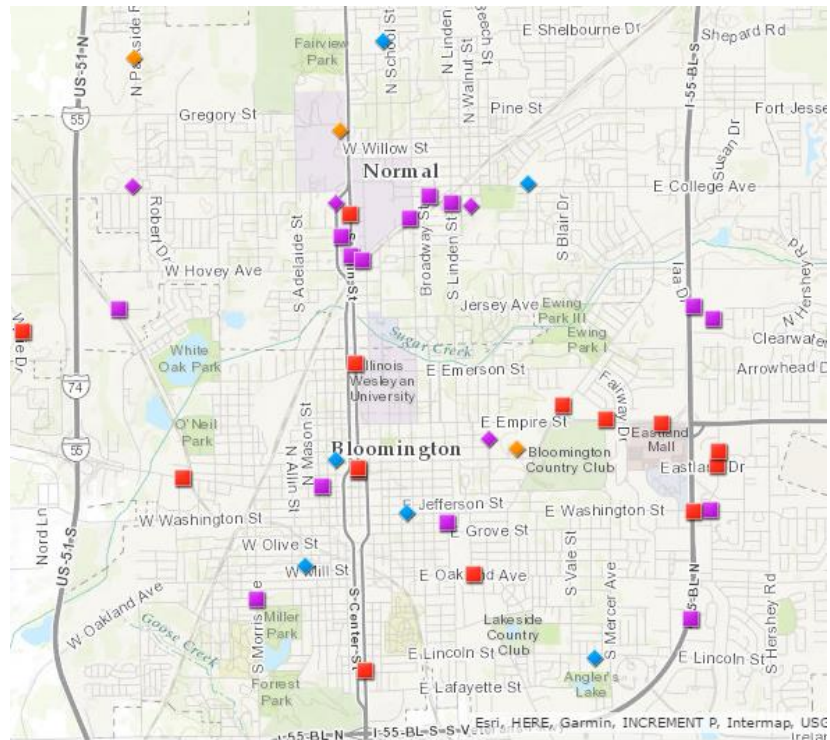
dots indicate disadvantaged persons. Additionally, layering the fast food/convenience store/grocery store locations over the U.S. Supermarket Accessibility layer shows reason for significant concern in West and Southwest Bloomington. There are quite a few red dots more than one mile from a grocery. This becomes more concerning when considering walkability. Most of the grocery stores are located along high traffic roads that are difficult for pedestrians to navigate while carrying groceries. So, efforts to improve food security in West and Southwest Bloomington may be beneficial to disadvantaged community members.

### Access to Educational Institutions

Bloomington-Normal's disparities in education can be observed through the location of schools in proximity to tobacco stores, liquor stores, and fast food establishments. Looking further into this relationship (Map 2), we find that many of the schools (private and public) are located near establishments selling junk food, tobacco, liquor, and many other unhealthy products. This can influence the students who walk by these places while traveling to and from school. There is a higher chance of high schoolers interacting with these establishments than those in middle and elementary schools, but seeing these places everyday could negatively affect younger students. This problem can lead to an increasing rate of smoking among teens as well as rising obesity rates in children.

**Map 2. School, Liquor Store, Tobacco Store Locations**

- ◆ Private Schools
- ◆ Public High Schools
- ◆ Public Jr. High Schools
- ◆ Elementary Schools
- Tobacco Stores
- Liquor Stores

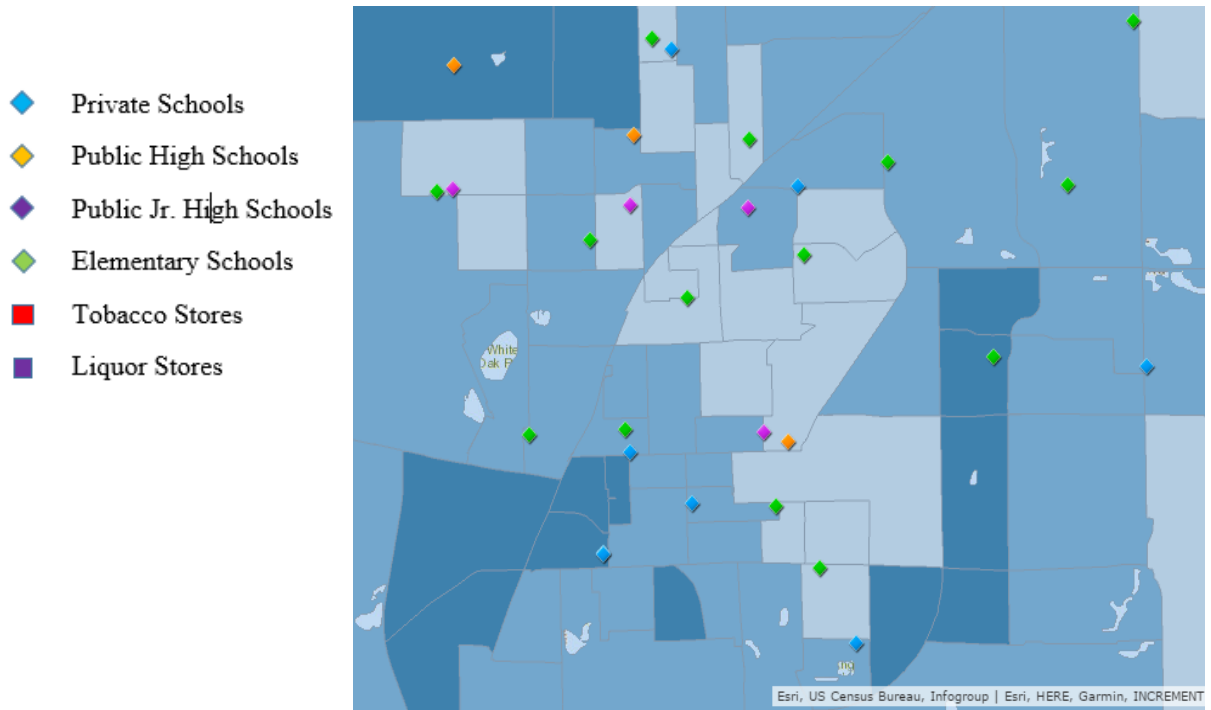


Additionally, schools are disproportionately located away from areas of high racial diversity. The lack of close access to schools in Bloomington-Normal is an issue that can have many negative effects on the students who live in these areas. Map 3 shows that the number of schools in Normal and East Bloomington far outweigh the number in West Bloomington. Two important public education institutions, Bloomington High School and Bloomington Junior High School, are located in East Bloomington. The students who live in West Bloomington and attend these schools are at a disadvantage compared to the students

who live in East Bloomington. Walking to school is not a suggested option and longer bus rides compared to those who live closer to the school could ultimately affect their experiences with extra-curricular activities and even the quality of education. These findings can be useful when planning changes to better the community through equal learning opportunities for students and safe environments around schools.

### Map 3. Schools in Areas of Racial Diversity

(darker regions possess higher racial diversity and higher minority populations)



### Access to Financial Institutions

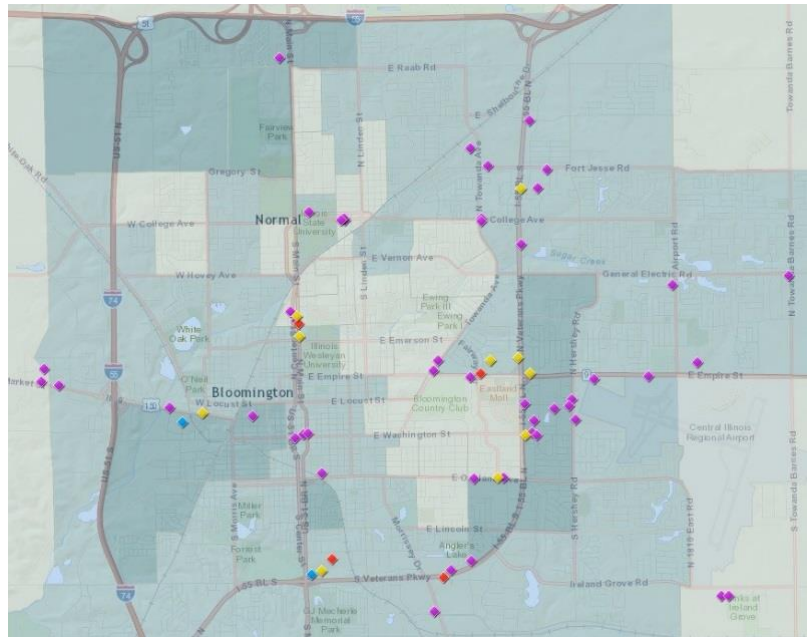
This report divides financial institutions into two primary categories. The first is traditional financial services, such as banks and credit unions, and the second is alternative financial services (AFS) such as short-term lenders, check cashing services, and rent-to-own businesses. For this report, the traditional financial services are considered the safer and less predatory of the two categories. AFS businesses tend to charge higher interest rates (Padua and Doran, 2016; Pew Charitable Trust 2012) and provide less of a safety net (Cheney and Rhine 2006) than traditional institutions. Limited access to traditional financial services is one factor in moving individuals towards the potentially more predatory alternative services.

Traditional financial services and AFS businesses have similar distribution patterns when looking at basic road maps (Map 4); both types are heavily concentrated along major roads. The clear majority of businesses are located along Main/Center Street, Veterans Parkway, Empire Street, Market Street, and College Avenue. All businesses are also skewed toward the Eastside of Bloomington-Normal. Only 7 of the 47 banks/credit unions and 2 of the 14 AFS businesses are located West of Main Street/Center Street. Further, nearly 2/3rds of the

banks and credit unions in Bloomington-Normal are located East of Towanda Avenue. These results indicate that, even though traditional financial services are primarily located along major roads, they are overrepresented in the Eastside of town and less accessible to those living on the Westside of Bloomington-Normal.

**Map 4. Financial Intuitions in Areas of High Racial Diversity**  
(darker shaded areas possess more racial diversity and higher minority populations)

- ◆ Banks and Credit Unions
- ◆ Title Lenders, Payday Lenders, and Check Cashers
- ◆ Rent-To-Own Businesses
- ◆ Pawn Shops



The distribution of traditional financial services and AFS businesses is correlated with diversity. Alternative services seemed to be more heavily concentrated in areas displaying more diversity and higher minority populations. Five of the ten short-term lenders/check cashers and two of the four pawn shops are clustered near higher diversity census tracts along Veterans Parkway. Another two short term lender/check cashing locations were near higher diversity census tracts on the Westside of Bloomington-Normal, along with the only 2 rent-to-own businesses and 1 pawn shop. AFS businesses may be more easily accessed in minority neighborhoods and easier access to AFS businesses is a significant factor in their usage over traditional financial institutions (Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System 2014).

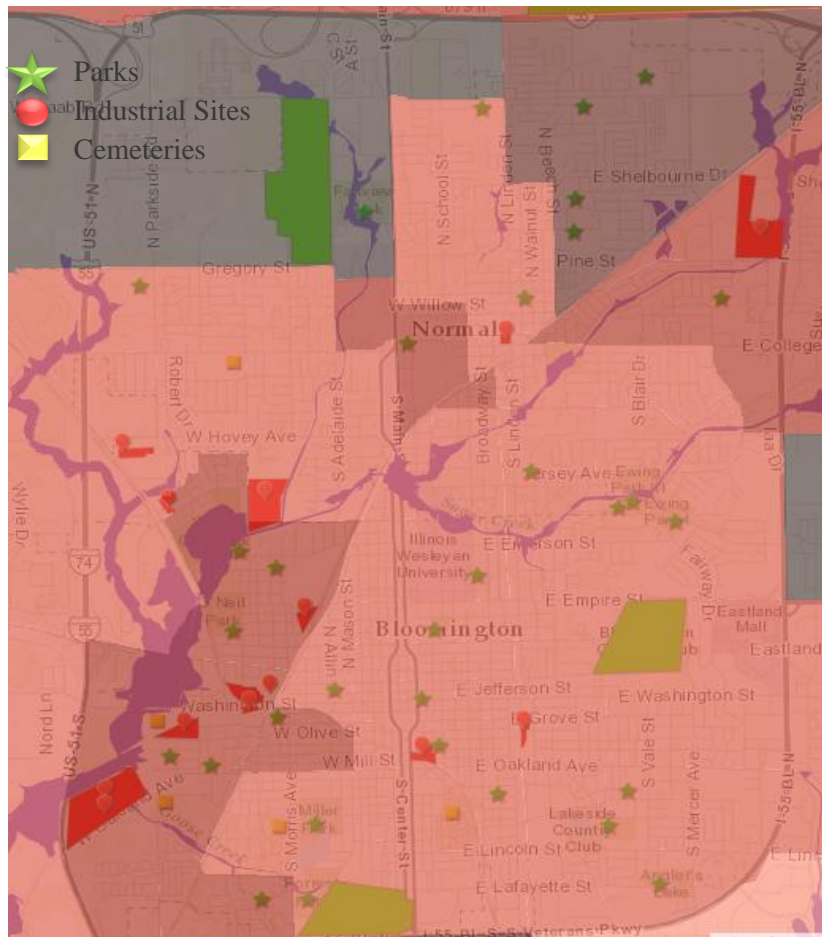
### Social Vulnerability

Social vulnerability refers to the weakened resilience of communities when confronted by external stresses on human health – stresses such as natural or human-caused disasters or disease outbreaks. Higher social vulnerability levels are often correlated with racial diversity, low SES, old age, limited transportation, low-quality housing, and population density.



As shown in Map 5, the most socially vulnerable areas in the Town of Normal are just South of I-55. The dark red on the map indicates these vulnerable areas. The most socially vulnerable areas in Bloomington are in South and West Bloomington; the map shows a darker shade of red indicating higher social vulnerability in both of these areas. Focusing on social vulnerability in West Bloomington, in conjunction with other points of environmental privilege and hazard, sheds light on more socio-environmental patterns.

**Figure 5. Industrial Sites, Parks, and Social Vulnerability in Bloomington-Normal**  
(darker shades of red represent higher social vulnerability)



The most socially vulnerable populations in West Bloomington are also more racially diverse. In fact, most of Bloomington’s Black-American population lives within the most vulnerable areas. Also found within these areas are many environmental hazards and sources of noise, smell, and air pollution, indicated by the red dots and red polygons. Many of the areas in West and Southwest Bloomington are at higher risk of flooding. The flood plains that run through these areas correlate with higher levels of social vulnerability; flood zones are shaded purple. A major railroad junction runs through West Bloomington; this is a safety hazard and a major noise polluter. The railroad tracks are highlighted in red. Surrounding this railroad junction are numerous industrial facilities. The Cargill plant in West

Bloomington is constantly emitting strong odors. The worst is at night because they try to hide it from local residents. There are also many raw material facilities in the area responsible for the creation of cement and asphalt. Just East of the railroad junction is Bloomington Public Works, a large industrial parking lot full of heavy machinery, storage facilities, and a city gas facility. The Town of Normal also has polluters (i.e. Bridgestone Tires) however they are not nearly as concentrated, nor do they overlap with racial diversity and social vulnerability.

Some census tracts in the Town of Normal and Bloomington are environmentally privileged. The least socially vulnerable areas in Normal are also the least racially diverse and the most economically privileged. Low social vulnerability is marked with lighter shades of red. Public parks and green space are considered privileges because they enhance the livelihood of local residents. Parks and green space are represented in the map with green stars and green polygons. There is a higher concentration of public spaces in Northeast Normal and Bloomington; and there are fewer sources of noise, smell and air pollution in these areas. Northeast Bloomington-Normal has no flood risk and does not have a centrally-located railroad junction. Interestingly, West Bloomington and West Normal are privileged regarding access to cemeteries; cemeteries are labeled with yellow squares.

### **Access to Public Transportation**

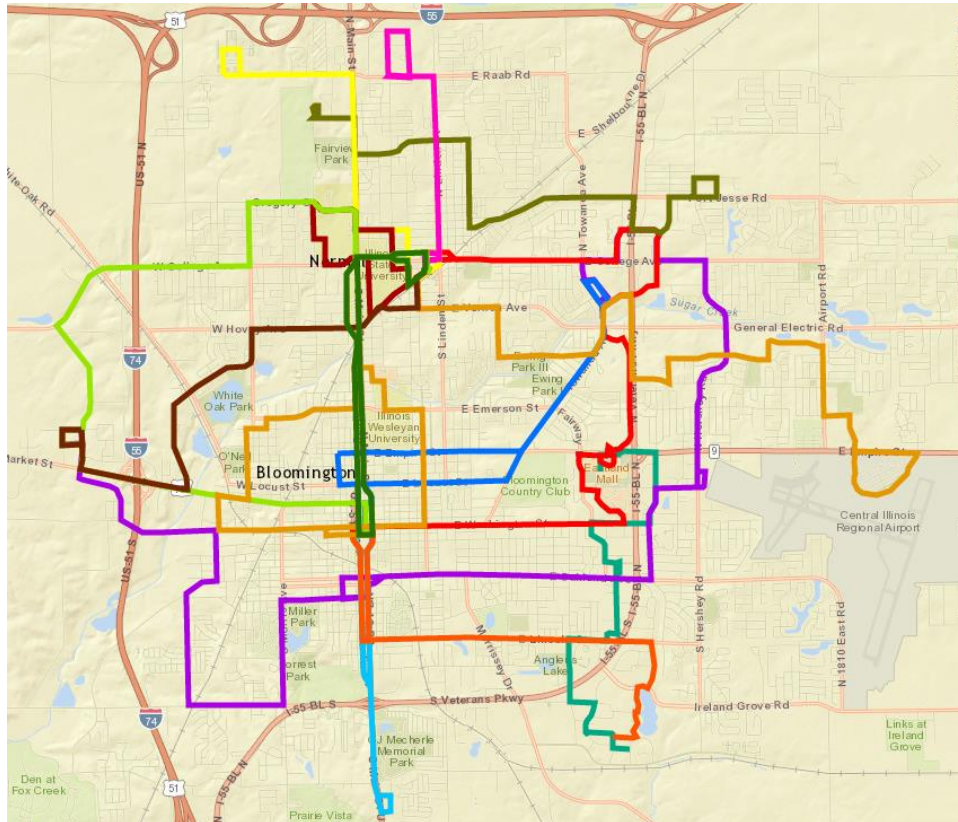
Residents of Bloomington-Normal have access to public bus routes through Connect Transit services crossing both towns. Even though many consider Bloomington-Normal to be affluent towns, large numbers of residents are still reliant on public transportation for travel to work and other essential activities. This is especially true in the previously discussed portions of West Bloomington, with higher rates of poverty and lower accessibility to reliable private vehicles. Shown in Map 6 are the bus routes offered by Connect Transit as of May 2017.

Connect Transit adult fares are \$1.00 per trip, with free transfer from route to route. Children under 5 years of age ride free, when accompanying a paying rider. Senior citizens also ride for free and disabled riders pay \$0.50 per trip. One day passes are provided for \$3.00 and 30 day passes are available for \$32.00. The earliest routes during the weekdays start at 06:05AM and end at 10:05PM. On Saturdays, the earliest bus is at 06:55AM and the last bus ends at 10:05PM. On Sundays, the buses run from 07:00AM to 07:00PM. Additional, non-bus and non-route based, services are freely available to senior citizens through Connect Transit.

Map 6 shows that Connect Transit bus routes cover nearly every portion of Bloomington-Normal. Comparing bus routes to locations of the amenities discussed in other sections of this report (financial, food, education, health care, and environmental services) shows that the bus routes provide physical access to the majority of services in Bloomington-Normal. Though looking deeper into the topic, some concerns arise. Even though buses cover most portions of town and most available services, it often takes one or more route transfers to reach a destination. Simple, one-way trips across town could take anywhere from 45 minutes to 1.5 hours. Also, as discussed, each adult trip on Connect Transit buses costs one dollar; this price is relatively low but can add up when taking multiple trips. A round trip will cost

\$2.00 and a trip with four to five stops will cost \$4.00 to \$5.00 without a one-day pass or \$3.00 with a one-day pass. This can be a substantial amount of money for those with limited financial security. Finally, bus services are closed on major holidays, limiting mobility for those who work or travel on holidays.

**Figure 6. Connect Transit Bus Routes in Bloomington-Normal**



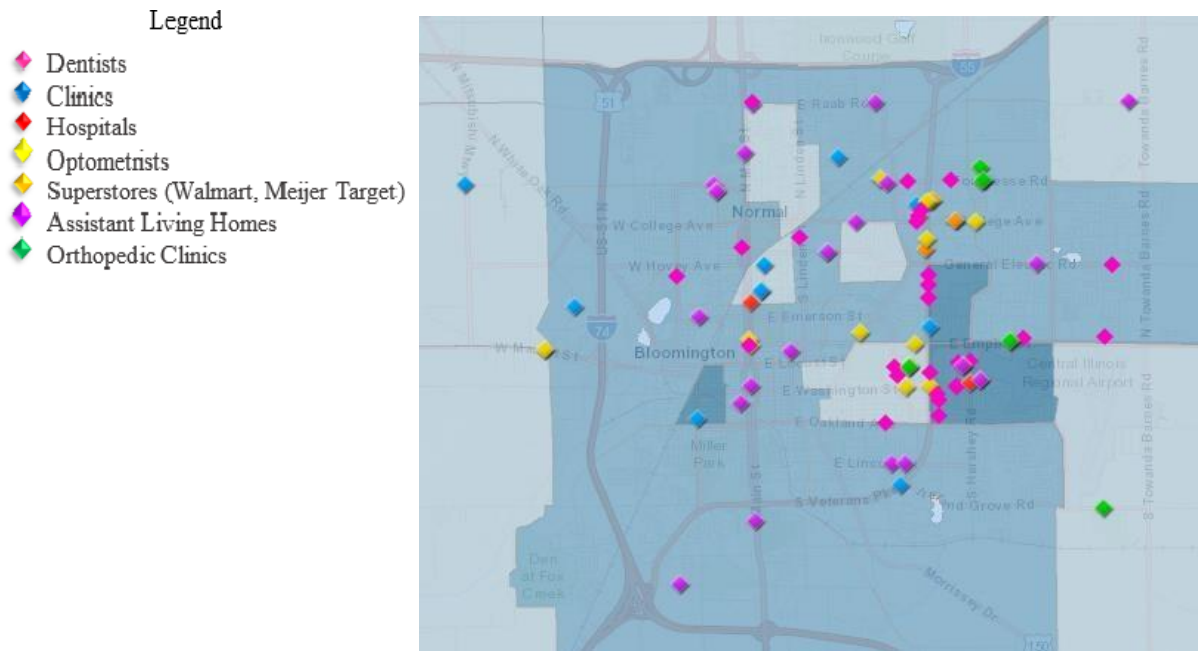
### **Access to Health Care Services**

Health Care Services in Bloomington-Normal are wide ranging, but that does not mean they are accessible to all Bloomington-Normal citizens. Health care services in Bloomington-Normal were classified as hospitals, clinics, minute/quick clinics, psychiatric hospitals, orthopedic doctors, optometrists, dental offices, physical therapy centers, cancer care centers, and assisted living (including nursing homes and hospice). This abundance of services is helpful for the Bloomington-Normal residents, but there is a clear disparity in access to these services for all citizens. As displayed in Map 7, most health care facilities are along the main roads. If one does not have a reliable form of transportation, they must rely on public transit – increasing costs of time. There is also a discrepancy between East and West Bloomington-Normal. The East, especially the Southeast side, has a lot more health services than the Westside of Bloomington-Normal. In particular, Southwest Bloomington has only one clinic: Immanuel Health Center on Morris Avenue. The biggest correlation with health care services in Bloomington-Normal is that in diverse communities there is less access. In Map 7, the various shades of blue show the levels of diversity within Bloomington-Normal from

the 2016 USA Diversity Index. The darker the blue the more diverse an area is. The darker areas on the map, in general, have fewer health care facilities with the exception of Veterans Parkway. Overall, Bloomington-Normal has access to health care services, but there is disparate access based on the physical location of one's residence.

### Map 7. Health Services in Areas of High Racial Diversity

(darker shaded areas possess higher racial diversity and higher minority populations)



### Conclusions

The two dominant patterns observed in this report are the overrepresentation of services on the Eastside of Bloomington-Normal and the clustering of services along Veterans Parkway, Main Street, and Market Street. People familiar with Bloomington-Normal may not be surprised by these findings, though they still represent significant challenges for community developers. Impaired access to services in the higher diversity and lower income areas of West Bloomington compound any existing development issues. Residents on the Westside are, in general, further removed from services than their Eastside counterparts and these services are generally located on roads not friendly to pedestrians. Public transportation can get residents to these services, though these trips often require multiple transfers and can represent an additional cost (especially in time) that some residents cannot afford. Finally, there is a higher prevalence of industrial sites and sources of pollution on the Westside of Bloomington-Normal.



# **DISPARITIES IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM**

Ryan Duncan, Diamond Frison, Mary Frey, Kathryn McGee, Rainee Sibley,  
Chaney Skadsen, Dani Stevens

## **Introduction**

We focus on disparities in traffic stops and incarceration in the McLean County Jail. After a literature review explaining why disparities might exist theoretically and in prior research, we turn to traffic data for 8 Central Illinois cities. We find that traffic stops in Normal, IL are far more common than any of the other communities. Normal had 19,637 traffic stops out of 72,836 for all 8 cities we examined. That's 27% of all stops examined and Normal is small compared to Springfield and Peoria.

We find that vehicles with Black-American drivers are far more likely to be searched, compared to those with White or Hispanic drivers. This is true in Bloomington, Normal, and the six other cities; however, Normal has a much smaller portion of vehicles searched relative to their large number of stops. Though searched more often, vehicles driven by Black-Americans are less likely to have drugs or drug paraphernalia. We find that Black-Americans spend more time in the jail than Whites or Hispanic individuals. We also find that men spend more time in the jail than women, regardless of whether the charge is a felony or a misdemeanor.

## **Literature Review**

Despite movements and laws aimed at mitigating racial discrimination in criminal justice, there is considerable debate regarding whether disparities exist in the United States' system. The American Sociological Association posits that for much of the 20th century, crime and punishment were some of the most powerful symbols for the racial divide in the U.S. Although overt discrimination has diminished in the criminal justice system over recent decades, we continue to deal with the perceptions and reality of unfairness in the system (Rosich 2007:4). To fully understand these racial disparities, it is important to consider the theoretical foundation regarding why they exist and past research on these issues.

### **Theoretical Foundation**

Social dominance theory focuses on the persistence of social hierarchies in society, and posits that:

...all human societies tend to be structured as systems of group-based social hierarchies. At the very minimum, this hierarchical structure consists of one or a small number of dominant and hegemonic groups at the top and one or a number of subordinate groups at the bottom. Among other things, the dominant group is characterized by its possession of a disproportionately larger share of positive social value, or all those material and symbolic things for which people strive (Sidanius and Pratto 2001:31).

While social hierarchies are typically structured around age and gender, they can occur based on other factors such as race, ethnicity, social caste, etc. (Romm 2013:112). Essentially, social dominance theory is the idea that society is inherently unequal, and that intergroup dominance is a consequence of human society. These hierarchies are exacerbated by “legitimizing myths” (Sidanius and Pratto 2001:31), which are “attitudes, values, beliefs, stereotypes, and ideologies that produce moral and intellectual justification for the social practices that distribute social value within the social system” (Sidanius and Pratto 2001:45). Therefore, belief systems perpetuate these naturally occurring hierarchies, subject certain groups to dominance, and exclude them from an equal share of positive social value. Like social hierarchies, there have been apparent and expressed concerns about observable minority differences in arrests, detention, conviction, and sentencing. Reasons for these disparities may be intentional or unintentional, and theories such as social dominance help explain these differences.

Social dominance theory has been observed in relations between majority and minority groups in the U.S. By investigating differences in social dominance orientation, Sidanius, Liu, Shaw, and Pratto compared hierarchy theory within the criminal justice system; their research validated their theoretical expectations (1994). They found that police officers arresting and/or processing Black-Americans and Latinos displayed more social dominance than they did with Whites. While judges and public defenders displayed less social dominance than police officers when prosecuting Black-Americans and Latinos, they displayed little social dominance at all when prosecuting Whites (Sidanius et al. 1994:9). The authors believe these discrepancies relate to social dominance theory, which plays a vital role in the criminal justice system – especially regarding the role race plays in social hierarchies (Sidanius et al. 1994:4). Disparities caused by social hierarchies can lead to differences in offending between racial and ethnic groups, and the criminal justice system amplifies these discrepancies (Mears, Cochran, and Lindsey 2016:4).

Racial discrimination occurs at all stages in the criminal justice process, and there is even a substantial body of research demonstrating significant racial discrepancies in the juvenile justice system; however, its manifestation appears to be indirect (Sampson and Lauritsen 1997:311). It derives from the cumulative amplification of disadvantages; over time, disadvantages accumulate and fester, leading to greater feelings of intergroup animosity. Social construction also plays a role in racial discrimination, which is based on the theory of “moral panic” and associated political responses. One specific example of discrimination is the war on drugs in the 1980s and 1990s, which largely targeted minorities (Sampson and Lauritsen 1997; Rosich 2007). Targeted populations in this war were largely young, minority males from inner cities, and this period saw a disproportionate number of Black-Americans in both state and federal prisons (Sampson and Lauritsen 1997:315). Black-Americans and to some extent Latinos are more likely to be victims of robbery and homicide than Whites; this indicates racial differences regarding general safety, in addition to discrepancies in the criminal justice system. This variation is attributed to social forces, environment, poverty, and other social dislocations related to race (Sampson and Lauritsen 1997:314); it illustrates theories of social dominance and the prevalence of myths that strengthen hierarchies. Additionally, social hierarchies can occur based on “colorism,”

which is the idea that people are judged based on the lightness or darkness of their skin tone; it can occur inter- or intraracially (Strmic-Pawl 2014). This argument posits there is a problem with being too Black, and status is essentially ranked by the blackness of one's skin (Strmic-Pawl 2014). Applying this theory helps explain why medium- and dark-skinned Black-Americans receive higher sentences than light-skinned Black-Americans and Whites, and provides context for any research that results in such findings.

## **Theoretical Application**

### *Disparities in Traffic Stops*

Since 1999, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (a branch of the U.S. Department of Justice) periodically conducts the Police-Public Contact Survey to determine the nature of this contact and discrepancies in race, gender, citations, use of force, etc. The Bureau distributes surveys to people aged 16 and older, and asks them to describe their most recent contact with law enforcement within the last 12 months (Eith and Durose 2011:1). There was a decline from 2002-2008 in the total number of persons who had contact with police (Eith and Durose 2011:1). However, for those who had contact with law enforcement there were still discrepancies between Whites, Black-Americans, and Latinos. The number of Latinos drivers stopped by police between 2002 and 2008 increased 28%, although there was no difference for White and Black-American drivers during the same period (Eith and Durose 2011:4). In 2008, Blacks were more likely to have contact with law enforcement than Whites, Asians, Native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders (Eith and Durose 2011). The survey also inquires whether those stopped by law enforcement felt the police behaved appropriately; Black-Americans and Latinos were less likely than Whites to feel this was true (Eith and Durose 2011:7). Similarly, Black-American drivers were less likely to feel there was a legitimate reason for police stopping them (Eith and Durose 2011:8). Black-Americans were significantly more likely to be searched during a traffic stop than Latino and White drivers, and police arrested Black-Americans at a higher rate than Whites during traffic stops (Eith and Durose 2011:10). Although there was no comparison made in percentage of searches that resulted in finding anything illegal, only one out of five people searched felt police had a legitimate reason to do so (this measure was not race specific) (Eith and Durose 2011:11). The Bureau also analyzed the use of force during traffic stops. Although in 2002 and 2005, Whites were less likely than Black-Americans and Latinos to experience the threat of force, the 2008 study indicated that only Black-Americans were more likely to experience force (Eith and Durose 2011:12). In addition to experiencing more frequent traffic stops, Black-Americans also experience more frisks and searches (Carroll and Gonzales 2014).

Additionally, the racial disparity is greater in frisks than searches; racial disparity frisks are contingent on a community's racial composition; and a driver's race does not correlate with the productivity of searches. Carroll and Gonzales used 2006 traffic stop data from Rhode Island to reach these conclusions (2014). Racial profiling in law enforcement is a problem due to racial stereotypes, reflecting the "legitimizing myths" that perpetuate social dominance and hierarchies (Sidanius and Pratto 2001:31). Social conditioning theory was used in this study to explain the unconscious application of racial profiling (Carroll and Gonzales 2014), which was expanded by Smith and Alpert. Officers were more likely to

stop someone depending on location (i.e., if an Black-American was in a predominately White area, or if a White person was in a predominately Black-American area). This illustrates that stereotypes apply to places as well as people (2014).

### *Disparities in Arrests, Sentencing, and Incarceration*

The War on Drugs has been a campaign since the mid-1980s, focusing on stopping drug use in the U.S. Since the outset, there have been strict laws in place to assist with reaching this goal. However, research shows that this effort disproportionately affects minorities because they are at greater risk of facing drug-related arrest charges than Whites (Mitchell and Caudy 2013:288). Empirical data shows that Black-Americans were arrested roughly six times more than Whites in the early 90s (Mitchell and Caudy 2013:291). These crime reports show that Black-Americans were arrested more over this period and faced higher charges as well. Statistics showed that Latinos are 54% more likely to face drug related charges compared to 22% for Whites (Mitchell and Caudy 2013:291). When compared to more recent data, these statistics demonstrate the persistent problem of racial disparities in the criminal justice system. The War on Drugs perpetuated racial stereotypes and allowed law enforcement to disproportionately focus on minorities.

While minority arrest rates continued to increase, Mitchell and Caudy devised three explanations for racial disparities in drug arrests: 1) the extent of drug offending, 2) the nature of drug offending, and 3) conscious or subconscious racial bias (2013:292). Most minorities in the data originated from low socioeconomic areas and are more prone to drug trading than Whites. These minorities were from inner cities, where privacy is limited and drug trading more likely occurs in open, public areas. There is substantial evidence showing that minorities are more likely to be arrested on drug-related charges than Whites. Mitchell and Caudy indicated that racial bias may affect law enforcement's decisions when making drug-related arrests (2013:296). Stereotypes perpetuate the perception that minorities are drug dealers, which affect their arrest rates. However, disparities extend beyond the arrest.

Changes in sentencing standards influence the degree of judges' power when deciding terms for offenders. Sentencing guidelines used to be mandatory and judges had to assign sentences within those limits (Rhodes 2015:3). However, since 1987 there have been a series of cases that transformed judges' power and the level of discretion used in sentencing. The PROTECT act of 2003 reduced judicial freedom to depart from established guidelines, but in 2005 *Booker v. United States* deemed such criteria advisory rather than mandatory. Additionally, in 2007 *Gall v. United States* strengthened this precedent, which further allowed judges more discretion in sentencing; the lack of adherence to firmly established guidelines may cause the inclusion of bias in sentencing and may help explain racial disparities in sentencing.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics used data from 2005-2012 to analyze disparities in federal sentencing and found that, since *Booker v. United States*, longer sentencing was statistically significant for Black-American males compared to White males – essentially, Blacks received longer sentences than Whites (Rhodes 2015:41). Research analyzing sentencing for first-time offenders and repeat offenders shows that on average Blacks receive sentences that are 4.25 percent longer than Whites; this increased after controlling for legally relevant

factors such as type of crime. Burch also analyzed the skin color model to illustrate intra-racial differences in sentence length to support her racial hierarchy theory (2015). She concluded medium- and dark-skinned Black-Americans received a 4.8 percent higher sentence than lighter skinned Black-Americans and Whites (Burch 2015:20). This research corroborates theories of “colorism,” and demonstrates problems associated with discrimination in sentencing.

To address issues arising from judicial discretion in sentencing, the sentencing power of a judge was overturned with *Alleyne v. United States* (2013). This decision requires that any sentence exceeding the mandatory minimum must be submitted and approved by a jury, which significantly reduces judges’ sole authority in sentencing. Specifically in Illinois, in 2015 Governor Bruce Rauner created the Illinois State Commission on Criminal Justice and Sentencing Reform; this was an executive order to review the state’s “current criminal justice and sentencing structure, sentencing practices, community supervision, and the use of alternatives to incarceration,” and to “make recommendations for amendments to State law that will reduce the State’s current prison population by 25 percent by 2025.” (Executive Order 15-14 2015:2) The Illinois Commission on Criminal Justice and Sentencing Report (2015) demonstrates the necessity for this reform. The rate of incarceration in Illinois has increased more than 500 percent over the past 40 years, reflecting the country’s trend to disproportionately impact the poor, mostly minority, citizens (Heaton 2016:1). Additionally, in early 2015 half of all inmates in Illinois prisons were incarcerated for non-violent offenses (Heaton 2016:15). These are state and national problems and will help frame our research in McLean County.

### **Limitations of Previous Research**

Despite research indicating disparities in the criminal justice system, the validity of these disparities is subject to debate in the U.S.; but this controversy may be a consequence of studies that produced conflicting results about how much, if any, racial bias exists in the criminal justice system. Researchers argue that such inconsistencies are not surprising because the studies employed different designs, timeframes, and jurisdictions (Rosich 2007). Some uneven racial effects of recent criminal justice policies and practices – such as the “3-strikes” legislation, mandatory minimum sentencing, and sentencing guidelines – also contribute to the debate over whether these issues exist. Some argue that those measures reduce crime because they are incapacitating and deterring, while others argue that sentencing policies represent deliberate efforts to link crime to minority groups. There is strong evidence that racial discrimination exists at various points in the criminal justice system (Rosich 2007). Everett and Wojtkiewicz examine the degree to which race and ethnicity impact disparities in sentencing (2002). Their research focused on the application of guidelines for sentencing and jail time. They found that Black-Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans receive harsher sentences for the crimes they commit than Whites do (Everett and Wojtkiewicz 2002).

Similarly, there are inconsistent findings regarding the relationship between race and traffic stops/searches. Some of the literature reveals that White drivers were searched more frequently, while other studies found that Black drivers were disproportionately searched during traffic stops. Briggs and Crew (2015) explain these inconsistent findings in previous

research, proposing that different methods of identifying the study population were the cause. According to this claim, when discretionary searches are analyzed with respect to the total number of drivers stopped, the racial difference in likelihood of being searched differs compared to when discretionary searches are analyzed with respect to the total number of drivers searched. Briggs and Crew tested this claim with traffic stop and search data from the Minneapolis Police Department. They analyzed the data utilizing the two different population options (total number of drivers stopped vs. total number of drivers searched). Their study confirmed their prediction that “the stopped population produced findings showing that Black-American drivers had a higher likelihood of a discretionary search, whereas analysis using the searched population produced results showing that White drivers had a higher likelihood of a discretionary search” (Briggs and Crew 2013:146). These limitations are important to consider while researching data on McLean County.

Research clearly indicates the existence of racial disparities in traffic stops, arrests, sentencing, and incarceration. However, overall inconsistency in prior research demonstrates the need to consider external factors such as the study population. Despite these limitations, previous findings provide a solid foundation for analyzing disparities in McLean County, Illinois.

## **Research in the Bloomington-Normal Community**

### **Traffic Stop Disparities**

Using the 2015 Illinois Traffic Stop Data from the Illinois Department of Transportation, we investigate whether disparities in this portion of the criminal justice system, specifically for Bloomington-Normal exist. In addition, we include six Central Illinois cities around Bloomington-Normal to draw conclusions on possible disparities in the criminal justice system across city police departments. Not In Our Town wants to know how Bloomington and Normal compare. Through the use of the statistical package, SPSS we ran cross-tabulations and frequency tables to compare races, ethnicities, and cities. We demonstrate with charts and tables.

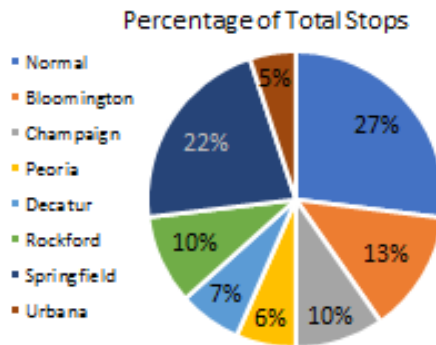
In order to have the best understanding and draw conclusions about Bloomington-Normal it is important to compare the findings with similar cities. The additional cities added to our investigation are close to Bloomington-Normal in distance and racial demography. These additional cities are Champaign, Decatur, Peoria, Rockford, Springfield, and Urbana.

To begin, we focus on the sheer number of traffic stops in Central Illinois to familiarize ourselves with how active the city police departments are in this region. For this section we only include the number of stops conducted by city police departments, excluding county sheriff departments, and college campus police. We find that out of all eight cities the Normal police department had the highest number of traffic stops, with 19,637 stops. The second highest number of traffic stops occurred in Springfield at 15,910. Bloomington police department records the third highest number of stops out of these cities with 9,740 stops. The remaining cities in order from most stops to least are Rockford with 7,095 stops,

Champaign with 7,029 stops; Decatur with 4,982 stops; Peoria with 4,784 stops; and finally the fewest number of stops was 3,659, in Urbana.

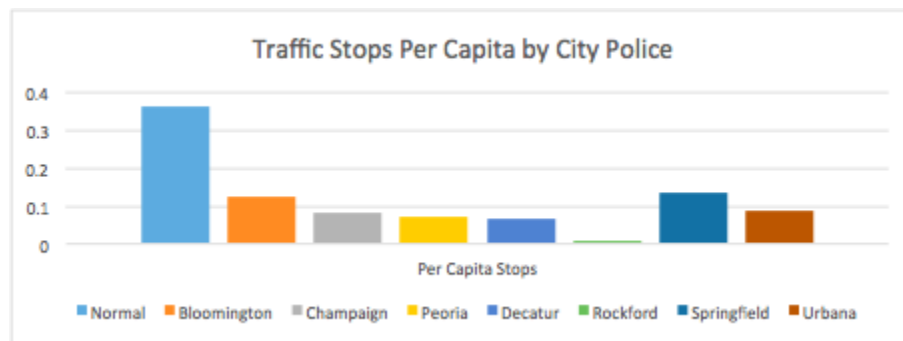
Bloomington and Normal police departments make up a large portion of total stops between these eight cities in 2015. Chart 7 provides a pie chart of the percentage of total stops conducted by each city. Over one quarter of the total stops from this sample occurred in Normal alone. When Bloomington and Normal are combined they make up 40 percent of all stops in these cities.

**Chart 7. Traffic Stops in 8 Central Illinois Cities, Percentages of All Stops by City.**



However, this data does not paint the clearest picture of how active Normal and Bloomington's police departments are because these observations do not account for differences in population. For example, one might expect Springfield to have a higher number of traffic stops due to being one of the larger cities out of the sample. Springfield and Normal had the most stops by far, but Springfield's population is almost twice the size of Normal. Therefore, we chose to standardize by population size in each city and calculate the per capita traffic stops. These results are displayed in Chart 8.

**Chart 8. Per Capita Traffic Stops in Central Illinois Cities**



After standardizing for the population size, the degree to which Normal ranked highest in traffic stops out of all cities is stronger. In Chart 7 Normal had slightly more stops than

Springfield, but after controlling for population there is a much larger difference between the two. The rate of stops in Normal, after accounting for population size is more than twice that of the other 7 Central Illinois cities.

To further our investigation on disparities in the criminal justice system the total number of stops is examined by race to determine if some races are stopped more than others. For this section the primary focus is on Bloomington and Normal. We first looked at the total number of stops by race in both cities and compare those percentages with the percentages of the total population of that race and ethnicity. Tables 1 and 2 provide data on Bloomington and Normal, respectively.

**Table 1. Traffic Stops in Bloomington by Race and Ethnicity**

Race	Percentage of Stops by Race	Percent Race
<b>White</b>	72.9	77.6
<b>Black</b>	20.9	11.1
<b>Latino</b>	6.1	5.7

**Table 2. Traffic Stops in Normal by Race and Ethnicity**

Race	Percentage of Stops by Race	Percent Race
<b>White</b>	77.7	83.9
<b>Black</b>	18.5	8.7
<b>Latino</b>	3.8	5.3

Both Bloomington and Normal follow a similar pattern: a disproportionate number stops for Black-Americans. That is, Black-Americans make up a greater percent of the traffic stops in Bloomington-Normal than one would expect given their share of the population. There is also a discrepancy when it comes to Latinos. In Bloomington, Latinos are disproportionately more likely to be stopped; whereas in Normal, Latinos are disproportionately less likely to be stopped, given their share of the population.

What happens after the car is stopped? We next examine whether there are disparities in searches by the race of the driver. To analyze this we compare the percentage of searches conducted to the total number of stops per race.

It is uncommon for officers to request searches in Bloomington or Normal and the likelihood of such requests does not vary by race or ethnicity. Of the requests for searches though, Black-American drivers are far more likely to decline the request. In the end, however, it is Black-American drivers who are most likely to have a search conducted. We find that in Bloomington, White drivers had a 5.6 percent chance of having a search conducted, Latino drivers had a 8.6 percent chance of having a search conducted, and Black-American drivers have a 13.0 percent chance of having a search conducted. So, in Bloomington, Black-Americans are over twice as likely to be searched compared to Whites. Latinos are less likely to be searched compared to Black-Americans, but are more likely to be searched compared to White drivers.

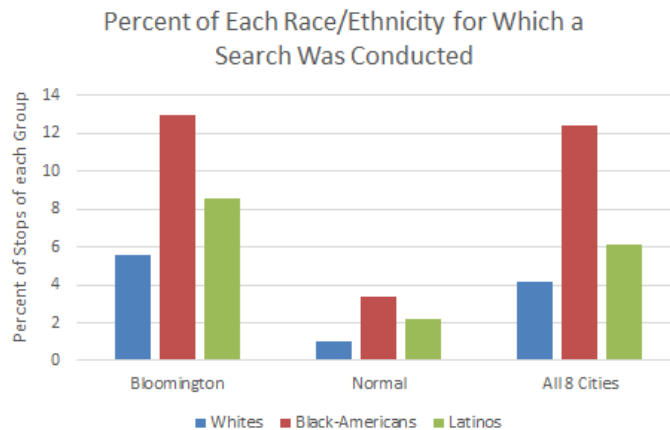


We see the same pattern in Normal. We find that White drivers had a 1.0 percent chance of having a search conducted, Latino drivers had a 2.2 percent chance of having a search conducted and Black drivers had a 3.4 percent chance of having a search conducted.

For all 8 cities combined, we find that White drivers had a 4.2 percent chance of being searched, Latino drivers had a 6.1 percent chance of being searched and Black drivers had a 12.4 percent of being searched.

So, no matter the city, we see a difference in searches conducted based on race, Whites are least likely to have a search conducted compared to Latinos and Black-Americans. These results show that, in comparison to other cities, Bloomington and Normal have the same pattern: Black-American drivers are most likely to be searched, then Latino drivers, and lastly White drivers. These patterns are shown in Chart 9. Lastly, although there is a higher chance of being pulled over in Normal, there is greater likelihood of being searched in Bloomington.

**Chart 9. Percent of Traffic Stops Leading to a Search Conducted by Race/Ethnicity, Comparing Bloomington, Normal, and All 8 Central Illinois Cities**



Although we find that Black-Americans are most likely to be searched, whether drugs were found in the car is another story. We analyzed which race is more likely to have drugs and drug paraphernalia found as the result of a search. This measure was used to see if finding drugs and paraphernalia varies by race which could lead to stereotypes and why more searches are performed on minorities. We focus on Bloomington and Normal. Tables 3 and 4 show the percent of searches resulting in drugs or paraphernalia by race and ethnicity.

For Bloomington, although White drivers have the lowest chance of their car being searched they have the highest percent of being in possession of drugs; again, this is of searches conducted. Black drivers are second highest in percent of drug possession, and the lowest are Latinos. For Normal, Black drivers have the highest percent of being in possession of drugs, then White drivers, and Latino drivers with the lowest percent of both cities.

**Table 3. Drugs and Paraphernalia Found during Traffic Stops in Bloomington by Race and Ethnicity**

	Percent of Searches (Drugs Found)	Percent of Searches (Paraphernalia Found)
<b>White</b>	54.8	39.1
<b>Black</b>	51.7	22.0
<b>Latino</b>	39.1	31.8

**Table 4. Drugs and Paraphernalia Found during Traffic Stops in Normal by Race and Ethnicity**

	Percent of Searches (Drugs Found)	Percent of Searches (Paraphernalia Found)
<b>White</b>	27.7	24.6
<b>Black</b>	35.8	15.6
<b>Latino</b>	7.1	21.4

We use the same approach to measure paraphernalia found by race and ethnicity. For both Bloomington and Normal we see White drivers have the highest percentage of possessing paraphernalia, followed by Black drivers, and finally Latino drivers. Again, this is despite the higher rate of searches on vehicles driven by Black-Americans.

**Incarceration Disparities**

We find it relevant to study what charges occurred most frequently, leading to incarceration. To obtain this information, we looked at patterns in the jail data files. Each booking had a code, frequency, and percentage. We noted each frequency that was higher than five thousand. This allowed us to narrow our investigation and sharpen our focus to the most frequent charges. We then researched each code to obtain the name of the charge (e.g., domestic battery, possession of drug paraphernalia, first time and previous DUI convictions, and traffic violations – including driving without a license and driving with an expired license).

Another topic we find applicable for this study is sex differences in the number of days spent in jail for both misdemeanors and felonies. However, we first researched all charges in our data set. Our data contain information regarding 82,747 bookings for men and women. Women comprised 19,196 of the total bookings, while men compiled 63,551 of the total number of bookings. On average women spent six days in jail; men spent an average of twelve days in jail.

**Table 5. Gender Differences in Number of Bookings and Length of Stay in the Jail (All Charges)**

Sex	Number of Bookings	Average Number of Days in Jail
<b>Women</b>	19,196	5.63
<b>Men</b>	63,551	11.73
<b>Total</b>	82,747	10.32

We then continued by selecting only felony charges. There were 22,157 persons in the jail on felony charges in our data set – both men and women. Men made up 17,481 of the felony charges; 4,676 felony charges were for women. Men spent an average of 35 days in jail for felony charges, while women spent half as many days in jail.

**Table 6. Gender Differences in Number of Bookings and Length of Stay in the Jail (Felonies)**

Sex	Number of Bookings	Average Number of Days in Jail
<b>Women</b>	4,676	17.73
<b>Men</b>	17,481	34.79
<b>Total</b>	22,157	31.19

The total number of misdemeanor charges was 28,678. Women comprised 6,782 of these bookings, while men made up 21,796. For these charges, there was not a significant disparity between the sexes regarding number of days spent in jail. Men spend several more days in jail than women for felonies, but the discrepancy for misdemeanors is minimal.

**Table 7. Gender Differences in Number of Bookings and Length of Stay in the Jail (Misdemeanors)**

Sex	Number of Bookings	Average Number of Days in Jail
<b>Women</b>	6,872	1.80
<b>Men</b>	21,796	3.33
<b>Total</b>	28,578	2.97

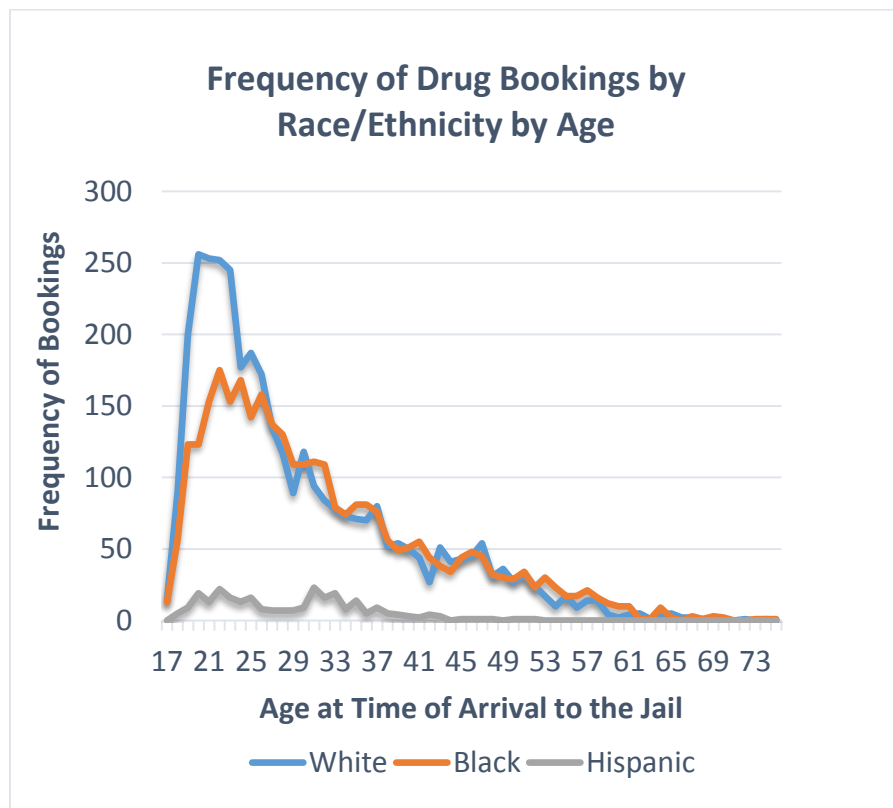
The research team also analyzed incarceration disparities between races and/or ethnicities. For overall convictions, Black-Americans and Latinos spend more time in jail than Whites. More specifically, Black-Americans spend almost twice as many days in jail than Whites, while Latinos fall between these two groups. It is important to note that these findings are for overall convictions, but the same pattern holds for felonies and misdemeanors separately. Future research can hold constant conviction status and charge severity to further determine where disparities are most pronounced.

**Table 8. Average Days Spent in the McLean County Jail by Race and Ethnicity**

Race	Average Number of Days in Jail
<b>Black-Americans</b>	14
<b>Latinos</b>	11
<b>Whites</b>	8

The research team also looked at whether there is a disparity in the frequency of each race being booked on a drug charge (Chart 10). There is a disparity between the races during the late teen years and early 20s; Whites are booked more frequently for drug charges. However, the frequencies for Whites and Black-Americans converge around age 27, which is extremely significant. Black-Americans comprise roughly eight percent of the total population in McLean County, and when the frequencies converge it does not mean the demographics are changing (i.e., Whites are not suddenly moving out of the area in droves). What is important to note here is that the disparity is widening between Black-Americans and Whites; around age 27, Black-Americans are booked on drug charges at a rate even more disproportional to the population.

**Chart 10. Number of Bookings with Drug-Related Offenses by Race, Ethnicity, and Age**



## Summary

When analyzing the data for Bloomington and Normal and other Illinois cities we look to show whether or not disparities in traffic stops occurred. We show that Normal has significantly more stops than even cities with larger populations. Next, we wanted to show racial disparities in traffic stops. We find that Whites in Bloomington and Normal are stopped more frequently, but that's because they comprise a larger percentage of the population. Black-Americans make up ~20 percent of all stops in Bloomington-Normal, but they are ~10 percent of the population. Thus, Black-Americans are twice as likely to be stopped compared to what the demographics of the community would predict.

We also examined patterns in searches. First, even though more likely to decline a requested search, minority drivers are more likely to have their vehicles searched. Second, although Black-American driver's vehicles are searched more, searches in Bloomington resulted in drugs and drug paraphernalia more often found in the vehicles of White driver's. In Normal, searches where drugs were found are highest among Black-Americans; but searches which resulted in discovery of paraphernalia were most common with White drivers.

On any given day, the McLean County jail population is majority White; however, it is also 32 percent Black-American, which is highly disproportional to the population. These research findings indicate that there is still work to be done to ensure that minorities are not wrongfully targeted and incarcerated. The results also corroborate the theoretical lenses used for this analysis. It is clear that social hierarchies exist in the Bloomington-Normal community, and that minorities are on the downside of the criminal justice system.

## **INSIGHT FROM COMMUNITY LEADERS: FOCUS GROUPS**

Molly Cook, Lindsey Earl, Jake Fredericks, Katy Jones, Jalesa Morrison, Renee Palecek,  
Vanessa Soto, Dani Stevens

Gathering qualitative data gives great depth to research regarding community standards of social injustice. Two qualitative methods were employed in this research process: focus groups and interviews. Community service providers were included in several focus groups while community members, such as a Bloomington-Normal citizen and an Illinois State University student, contributed their narratives in the form of interviews. Discussions ranged across a broad spectrum of topics: policing, food, health, education, law, and much more.

The unit of analysis in this research is the community of Bloomington-Normal, and through the combination of focus groups and interviews, community leaders and members were provided an opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns. These are necessary in creating a holistic framing of Bloomington-Normal. Through focus groups, information regarding resources and services in the community was gathered: who they serve, why they serve, and any gaps that are present in services. The role of Not In Our Town, was also measured in these discussions.

Although the collection of quantitative data can provide a comprehensive report of social injustices, such as disparities in policing, health care, and nutritious foods, qualitative data humanizes these figures, relating them back to community. There is much to learn when we speak to one another about the state of affairs in our communities. Not only can we better understand the situations our neighbors are experiencing, we can gather in collective action to work towards improvement and progress. This is the essence to which the entire report can be reduced.

### **How to Facilitate Focus Groups in an Inclusive Manner**

Focus groups create a participatory environment which is useful for diverse crowds to discuss important issues. This can relieve the stress placed on a single individual who would otherwise be interviewed alone (Ayón 2014). These groups can be around 7-12 people and last around an hour or two. When conducting a focus group, we must have an established timeframe the participants are aware of (Culturally Appropriate Focus Groups n.d.). The participants should also have a consent form filled out prior to the focus group or provided some sort of written consent to the people conducting the group (Culturally Appropriate Focus Groups n.d.). It is also good to inform the participants of the types of questions being asked, allowing them to come up with answers ahead of time (Ayón 2014).

When it comes to recruiting diverse individuals for focus groups, barriers include lack of transportation and lack of time. Despite these barriers, recruiting participants that are representative of the population being studied is important (Hinojosa et al. 2014). Hosting focus groups at community centers or other areas where participants feel comfortable and are accessible by public transportation can help with recruitment (Hinojosa et al. 2014; Madriz

1998). Further, when recruiting participants from minority groups, face-to-face invitations help (Madriz 1998). Introductory letters, as well as follow-up phone calls and focus group reminder calls the night before improve participation rates (Czaja, Blair, and Blair 2014; Hinojosa et al. 2014). The individuals conducting outreach to recruit participants should be able to speak the language of participants and be welcoming, understanding, and clear.

There are three types of focus group questions: engagement, exploration, and exit questions. Engagement questions introduce the participants to the discussion topic. Exploration questions get to the meat of the discussion, gaining insightful information. Exit questions check to see if anything was absent from the discussion. Focus group members should try to limit the number of questions they develop. Twelve is the maximum number of questions, while eight is the ideal number. It is wise to start with open-end questions; they allow the participants to share ideas and opinions. Lastly, facilitators of focus groups develop brief questions that get right to the point (Elliot and Associates 2005).

After reviewing the literature on culturally appropriate ways to conduct focus groups, recruit participants, and analyze findings, we drafted a schedule of questions. They were organized into categories including opinions and familiarities with social problems in the community; previous partnerships with non-profit agencies, government agencies, and Not In Our Town; and advice and improvements for Not In Our Town. The process for determining these questions was that each group member (seven members) determined questions based on previous research and the goals of this research project. Team members then met to identify overlapping questions; consolidate questions; and create clear, consistent and unbiased wording. To ensure validity and reliability of the questions, group members held pre-test focus groups with class members. Participants then suggested alternative wording to questions and proposed additional questions. See Appendix II for the focus group questions.

Group members decided on the logistics of focus group facilitation and participant recruitment. Previous research indicated that recruiting a representative sample of participants is important (Hinojosa et al. 2014). Therefore, group members compiled a list of over 60 community leaders, non-profit administrators, government officials, school officials, community activists, and citizens representing a diverse number of social interests to recruit for participation. Participants were recruited from churches; social service agencies working with homeless populations, children, youth, and LGBTQ populations; older adult services; health and wellness agencies and facilities; and activist groups. Best practices also suggest that recruitment letters and follow-up phone calls increase participation rates (Czaja, Blair, and Blair 2014; Hinojosa et al. 2014). Therefore, a recruitment letter was sent to participants via email (see Appendix III). Participants could sign up for one of three focus groups lasting no more than two hours on a Saturday morning or Wednesday afternoon. Each focus group could accommodate up to eight participants.

Each focus group had two to three group members present with three to eight participants and lasted one to two hours. One team member facilitated the focus group, one member took notes, and the other kept track of common themes that were mentioned via a frequencies sheet (see Appendix IV). Focus groups were also audio recorded. In keeping with best practices, prior to the start of the focus groups, participants signed an informed consent

document indicating that they understood the voluntary nature of the research, potential risks, and guarantee of confidentiality, (see Appendix V) (Ayon 2014). Participants were also provided with a placemat with potential talking points at the focus group (Appendix VI). Group members practiced facilitating, note taking, and frequency note taking at the pre-test focus group.

Following the completion of the focus groups, which took place at First Christian Church of Bloomington, IL on April 8 and Normal Public Library on April 12, the SOA 477/300 group met to determine key themes and findings using direct quotations and frequencies. There were ten total focus group participants representing youth and adult homeless services, a public high school, LGBTQ health advocates, local government officials, a mental health prevention agency, and an emergency needs social service agency.

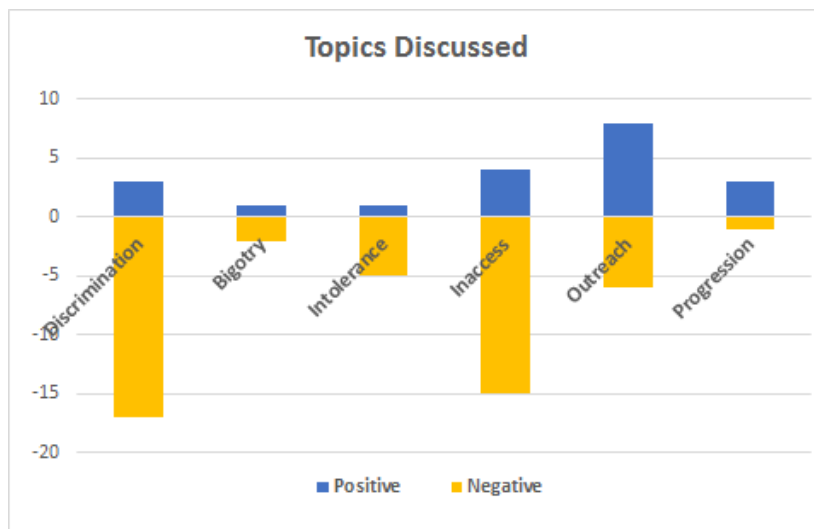
While participants were recruited from a diverse number of agencies and social interests, there are limitations to this research. First, due to unforeseen conflicts, participation in each focus group was lower than the eight participants we had hoped for. Second, because each participant had a focused interest, such as LGBTQ health or government policy, answers were focused around the issue participants were passionate about.

### Patterns in Narratives

#### Community Issues

Community leaders discussed issues and improvements in Bloomington-Normal. Conversations covered many topics, but were arranged into three broad categories: geography, discrimination, and capacity.

Chart 11.

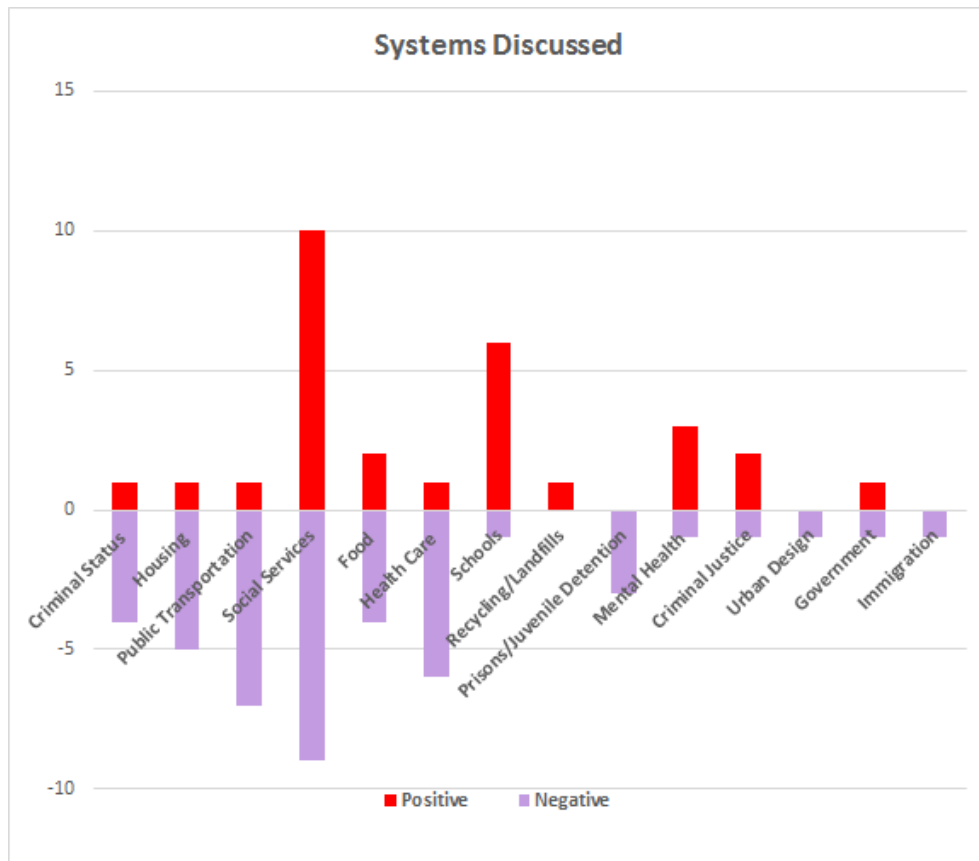


A huge part of the conversation focused on geographic disparities in Bloomington-Normal. Community leaders initiated conversation regarding access to resources on fifteen occasions



during conversations (Chart 12). They mentioned public transportation, housing, and health disparities based on East or Westside residence. On public transportation, participants said, "Roads aren't necessarily bike friendly," and "The bus is the only option for some people." Another person said, "Transit wanted to exclude the Westside from buses," *exemplifying* the geographic disparity. Many noted that residents in West Bloomington have fewer options for a healthy lifestyle, such as grocery stores with fresh produce. One participant said, "My neighborhood is a food desert," but noted that the situation is improving. Additionally, they detailed disparities between residents in the urban center, versus those who live on the rural periphery.

**Chart 12.**

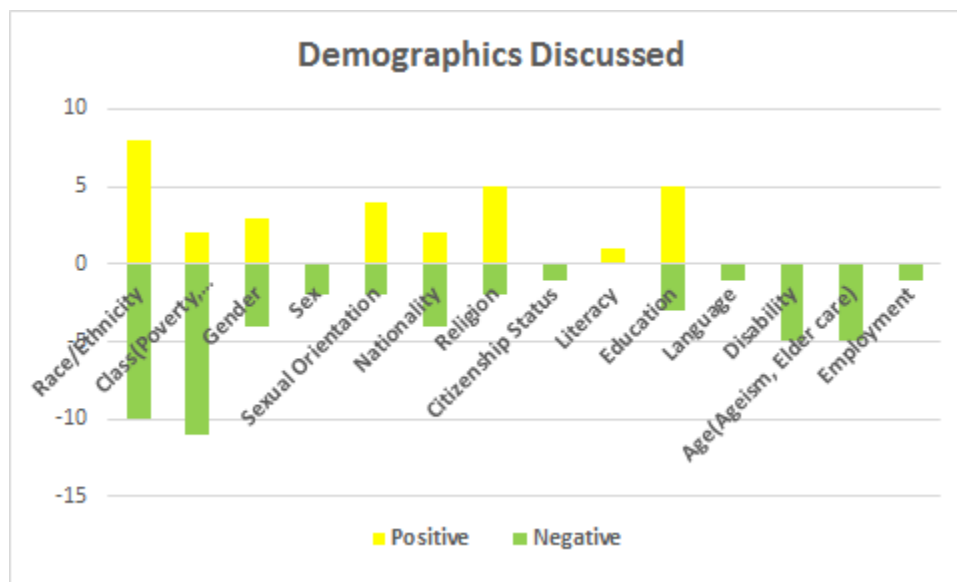


Another topic of discussion was discrimination. In fact, community leaders discussed the negative impact of discrimination seventeen times in conversation (Chart 11). As one participant claimed, "Some voices have been silenced." They relayed that discrimination in Bloomington-Normal is largely based on race/ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status, age, religion, and/or LGBTQ identity. Frequencies show community leaders brought up race/ethnicity (eighteen times) and socioeconomic status (twelves times). Community leaders said this discrimination plays out in health care, housing, employment, and policing. One participant explained, "Microaggressions affect people in the workplace and [their] overall happiness." Pertaining to housing, another said, "There are issues with housing/landlords, a lot of it can be discrimination based on economic [status], color, or

orientation." One participant even said, "[Discrimination] makes [residents] hesitant to report in the hospital." Other specific topics included trans healthcare, law enforcement discrimination, and discrimination causing Muslims to go into hiding.

Community leaders also discussed the lack of capacity in social services. Perhaps since many focus group participants hold public service professions, social services were mentioned the most of any system – nineteen times (Chart 12). They disclosed to the research team that agencies face inadequate infrastructure, funding, and staffing necessary to serve the community. One participant said, "[Agencies] have to be very selective with the cases they take on... because they receive so many requests, and have limited staff." They went on to say, "Many [organizations] are volunteer driven, or on shoe-string budgets." Since social services do not have enough capacity, there is an impact on the marginalized residents of Bloomington-Normal.

**Chart 13.**



### Progress

While some of the topics discussed in the focus groups were surrounded by a negative response, there were some areas that have experienced progress in Bloomington-Normal. The areas that were spoken of in a positive light were representation and advocacy. Within two of the three focus groups, there was a mention of the recently elected Black-American woman as a significant indicator of the progress being made in local government. Chemberly Cummings and Arlene Hosea became the first Black-American women to get elected to Normal Town Council and their election wins were recognized by the community leaders present in the focus groups. This was acknowledged as a step in the right direction but not enough to mark the end of the challenges that the towns face. In fact, in one of the groups there was a sentiment of shock that these two women were elected this late in Normal’s history. While it has been a long time since the establishment of the Town of

Normal, the focus groups noted that this change to the Council was a signifier of progress for the community and its responsibility to underrepresented minority groups.

In addition to the representation of Black-Americans in local government, there was mention of a school board member being elected and representing a minority group. The LGBTQ sector of the population is also gaining representation as more time passes, as one group pointed out. Between the three focus groups, progress was recognized and, with increased efforts from all parties, participants were hopeful that more will result.

Apart from the increase in diversity of representation, there is the topic of advocacy that also arose in the focus groups. Especially when it came to a discussion of Not In Our Town, community leaders were able to note that while some issues are yet to be resolved, Not In Our Town can be counted on for giving a voice to the voiceless. As one participant said, “But I know members are always advocating – like the discussion of what are we going to do about [the] food desert, or the thing with transit.” Through the efforts of organizations such as Not In Our Town, hosting rallies and their presence at key city meetings, the minority groups that may be facing intolerance have a chance to be heard.

### **Role of Not In Our Town**

Community leaders provided insight into the role they believe Not In Our Town should play in the community. Overall, they felt that Not In Our Town should be a connective agency rather than one that offers specific services. A common thread in the focus groups was that while there are services available for people, they are not necessarily knowledgeable of what is available outside their own agencies; this inhibits their ability to provide wraparound service provision. There was emphasis on not reinventing the wheel, and that Not In Our Town should join the conversation to determine how they can help organizations better serve the community. Underlying this is that Not In Our Town should not be reactionary, but should instead be a proactive agency that is consistently visible in Bloomington-Normal. Some of the roles community leaders suggest Not In Our Town takes – in addition to being a connective resource – are as a liaison, conflict mediator, and educator. Regarding the last role, community leaders believe that people need more education regarding services available and how to access them. There was also discussion about the advantages of Not In Our Town having a voice in city planning, considering its in-depth knowledge of the community.

### **Conclusion**

We began researching articles that would explain several ways of conducting a focus group. The articles gave us insight into the size of groups we should have, the length of time each group should be held, and the types of questions that should be asked. The articles we found mentioned the focus groups should last anywhere from one hour to two hours. This gives each participant an adequate amount of time to answer each question that was asked and allow everyone to provide their own personal input. We found in our research that there were three types of questions each focus group should include: engagement, exploration, and exit. These help extract substantive information from the participants. The literature also discussed how the recruitment of people can be a challenging barrier that can be overcome

by hosting focus groups at local community centers. This will help draw a diverse crowd and allow access for recruiting informed participants.

We identified a large group of community leaders and sent them an invitation e-mail that asked them to help strengthen our community by participating in the focus groups and providing insight into the community. We hosted three different focus groups at varying locations and times to get the largest amount of people to attend. We had anywhere from 3-8 participants at each focus group. As a group, we comprised a list of questions that would help spark conversation between participants along with providing them a placemat with key terms and words that each individual could use to guide their conversations. There were three group members at each focus group which had a different and unique task. One facilitated the questions, one person took notes, and one tracked the frequencies of each key term discussed. After the focus groups were conducted, we transcribed the notes and frequencies and discussed as a group what our overall findings were.

We find that our community leaders mentioned the large problem of lack of access for Bloomington-Normal residents. We find that there were many people who lacked access to good health or medical care due to the geography of where they lived. Food deserts were mentioned by some of our participants as areas located primarily on the Westside of Bloomington; there are a lack of healthy food options for many people living there. Participants also mentioned the lack of transportation opportunities such as the bus system not reaching certain residents, along with the buses shutting down too early. This makes it very difficult for people to get to and from work shifts that run into the evening hours. Another topic that was mentioned often was discrimination. Community leaders said discrimination plays out in health care, housing, employment, and policing. We find that many people have trouble locating housing that will lease or sell to them. Many landlords treat their tenants differently depending on their social background, socioeconomic status, or race and ethnicity. We also find that there is a lack of responsiveness by community officials because there is a lack of funding. There are many issues brought to community leaders attention that cannot be addressed because of a lack of resources.

Although there were many topics discussed negatively, there were a few important things that were discussed positively. The integration of minorities into the political system in Bloomington-Normal is a large milestone for the community. The community representatives who attended our focus group meetings discussed how the first Black women were recently elected and how a representative from the LGBTQ community was elected into a school board position. Those changes are indicative of vast improvement over time in the Bloomington-Normal area and how, with organizations such as Not In Our Town, things are improving for minority groups.

## INSIGHT FROM COMMUNITY MEMBERS: INTERVIEWS

Teddy Dondanville, Lindsey Earl, Doug Gass, Myer Hursey, Katy Jones, Alesha Klein, Megan Koch, Jake Murray, Renee Palecek, Vanessa Soto

Multiple interviews provide accounts of lived experiences of discrimination, lack of access, bigotry, and great hope for the future.

Conducting an interview has many benefits. Interviews allow researchers to acquire data that can unveil unprecedented and surprising findings, and to find answers outside of numerical measurement that help to create further details in findings (McAloon, Robinson, and Labinowicz 1987). In-depth interviews allow researchers “to explore in detail people’s subjective experiences, meaning-making, accounting processes, and unspoken assumptions about life and the social world in general” (Healey-Etten and Sharp 2017).

When conducting an interview, it is recommended that the researchers create an open environment or atmosphere for the participants. This facilitates more detailed and honest responses from the interviewees, which makes for improved findings (McAloon, Robinson, and Labinowicz 1987). It is also important to keep the interview structure fluid or open; questions should be open-ended and require further explanation in relevant answers. This allows the participants to give detailed explanations about personal feelings and experiences (Healey-Etten and Sharp 2017). It is also important to note the types of questions that really have an impact on the interview. “For example, the most important question in an in-depth interview is the, ‘probe,’ a question asked to follow-up and explore issues brought up by the interviewee” (Healey-Etten and Sharp 2017). This type of question can be referred to as “productive questioning” (McAloon, Robinson, and Labinowicz 1987). It is also suggested that leading questions be avoided as well as terms not used in common conversation (Healey and Etten 2017).

Data yielded from interviews requires rigorous analysis. Since data are in the form of words rather than numbers, analysis comes from extrapolating meaning from the participants’ words. Similar to quantitative methods, analysis of qualitative interviews requires specific knowledge of the participants. Information needed includes gender/sex, age, as well as when and where the interview was conducted (Ecker 2017). Interview data are collected in words, and therefore must be transcribed and subsequently coded. This is typically done in cycles to extrapolate as much meaning as possible (Ecker 2017). Often occurring in the first cycle is open coding where preliminary codes are created. What is called “in vivo coding,” which is “in the words” of the participants, is most frequently utilized during open coding (Ecker 2017); it is used to display and represent meaning directly from the world of the interviewee.

After this initial cycle of coding, more categorical coding begins. During this second coding cycle, previous preliminary codes are synthesized into more meaningful categories and subcategories defined by the researcher (Ecker 2017). Typically, in interview analysis, the preliminary codes are transformed into theoretical concepts, or secondary codes, which are explained in reference to bodies of literature to increase validity and plausibility of the research findings (Baxter and Eyles 1997). Referral to previous bodies of research is a key

component in qualitative data analysis. Consistent reviewing and comparison of one's own analysis to previous, relevant research is called "Negative case analysis" (Baxter and Eyles 1997). A researcher may use the negative case analysis process to explore multiple dimensions of a theme so as to increase validity and robustness of interpretation (Baxter and Eyles 1997). Another way to increase validity and greater interpretation in data analysis is through the process of peer debriefing (Baxter and Eyles 1997; Ecker 2017). Through this process, one may ask a respected colleague to review an analysis for possible points of misinterpretation, or even the suppression of participant voices (Baxter and Eyles 1997). It is clear, then, to see that depth of analysis in qualitative interviews is valued above breadth of number of interviews conducted. Between multiple cycles of coding (Ecker 2017) and constant referral to other bodies of research (Baxter and Eyles 1997), analyzing interview data calls for a time-consuming and rigorous process. This process, however, yields detailed, lived experiences that can shed light on social problems in contemporary social science research.

## **Methods**

The interview group relied on qualitative interview and analysis methodology to garner the perspective of Bloomington-Normal community members. Prior to interviewing we conducted a literature review of recent academic work on qualitative interviewing. Through our literature review, we collected best practices, refined our interview strategies and compiled a methodological basis for our interviewing.

The group gained access to participants through convenience sampling techniques. Interviewees were identified at community events, on campus, and through referrals (see Appendix VII for the invitation letter). We then relied on a snowball sampling method to increase our sample size; however, due to sparse referrals, each member of the group recruited at least one interviewee to participate. A total sample size of ten respondents was attained, with each interview running approximately 20-45 minutes.

The group employed a semi-structured interview schedule that was collaboratively written beforehand. The outline of the interview contained five major themes: icebreaker introduction, community issues, subjective experiences, resources and services, and hopes for the future. The semi-structured interview questions are included in Appendix VIII below.

A minimum of two group members were present at each interview; one serving as interviewer and the other serving as note taker. Each interview was also audio recorded with the permission of the respondent. Each respondent was briefed on the topic of the interview and asked to indicate their understanding of the project by signing an informed consent document (Appendix IX). To preserve confidentiality of our interviewees, each audio recording was transcribed and password protected.

Analysis of the transcriptions followed each interview. Discourse analysis techniques pulled out salient topics from the interview transcriptions. These themes were then compiled and coded into four categories with sub-topics: disparities and community issues focusing on employment; available and missing community resources and services; various forms of

discrimination such as ableism, racism and homophobia/transphobia; and community progress and improvement. A word map was also constructed to visually represent the common words spoken in the interviews.

## **Patterns in Narratives**

### **Policing**

Of the key findings in interviews, policing came up in a variety of contexts. The overt presence of police in the community of Bloomington-Normal is noted as a strong one, with emphasis on the fact that, for the most part, tensions are not improving. Across six of the ten interviews, quotes were obtained with respect to the policing that takes place. The situations commented on varied, including arrests, “stop and frisk,” patrolling, and communication.

Two interviewees chose to speak of specific arrests in which the situations was either unjust or someone was wrongfully treated. One of the interviewees described a situation in which their son was arrested for a minor offense and then sentenced severely. The account was the following: “I think it’s really unfair that, if you read the paper, Black kids are getting higher sentences, there are bigger fines. My son was recently arrested, like I told you briefly at the meeting, for walking in the street. He was commanded to stop, and did not and that is considered arresting, oh um, resisting. They want 100 days in jail for that. If you were a White kid, that would not have even been a process.”

Another interviewee chose to discuss the arrest of a twelve-year-old for appearing like a criminal. The interviewee points out that the biggest similarity was the race and it was incomprehensible that the minor was arrested at such a youthful age when the criminal he resembled was much older. The telling of the situation was as follows: “Police mistreatment of black people in Bloomington. Handcuff a 12-year-old because he fit the description of somebody that had committed a crime – he was black, even though he was 12, yet the criminal was not.”

In the cases of “stop and frisk,” there was negativity surrounding the topic. One interviewee believed there was a bias when it came to the work that police do to target some groups over others. Another interviewee labeled the issue more specifically by calling the issue “racial profiling.” A third interviewee was quoted as being dissatisfied with the actions of police by saying the following: “We have stop and frisk in Bloomington-Normal. If people are allowed to be pulled over and stopped while walking for looking suspicious, that’s stop and frisk even if we don’t call it that.” The discontent by several interviewees went beyond the actions given here, and included lack of effective communication.<sup>3</sup>

References to the lack of trust were mentioned for both Bloomington and Normal. For one interviewee, the distrust could be boiled down to a specific situation: the town hall meeting involving the Chief of Police and the attendance of Black Lives Matters activists. “He said

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<sup>3</sup> The Chief of Police for the City of Bloomington publicly stated that there is no stop and frisk policy in Bloomington.

he would never do it again because he felt very cornered...They are not giving people an opportunity to express their concerns. These are the issues being presented by the community and you have to consider policies in that way. People feel like they don't have a voice when you say, 'I'm never doing that again.' It's not a good message to the community if you're not giving them a voice." Additionally, another interviewee brought up the use of foul language on the part of police officers as an abuse of power and perceived as "authoritative."

On a positive note, one interviewee did feel comfortable with steps taken to increase the response rate of the police by incorporating a community house in their neighborhood. With the presence of the police, they predict that the crime rate will decrease in their community, which the interviewee was in favor of. "I know that NIOT is against the substation that will be put in a few blocks away. I am all for it. I live in this neighborhood and I see the crime that is here. I see the problems that this neighborhood faces. If the police can get here in a quicker manner than what they can now, then I am all for it. I want my residents to feel safe. I know my residents are for it too."

Overall, the interviewees made comments that showed displeasure in policing in Bloomington-Normal in recent years. From two interviewees' perspectives, the situation has been exacerbated by the lack of communication or transparency. Increased sensitivity to the community that the police serve could potentially solidify the trust that has weakened in recent times.

### **Disparities and Community Issues**

Many Bloomington-Normal residents and students discussed our communities' issues and disparities. Residents discussed issues they felt needed to be brought to light and addressed. Some of the main issues discussed were jobs, opportunities of advancement and betterment within the community, and racism.

On the topic of jobs in Bloomington-Normal, one interviewee focused on the job opportunities presented to kids on the lower level of the financial spectrum. This interviewee was quoted as saying, "I would like to see more opportunities for the kids we have out there that are below the poverty level. Cause you know, they're working for minimum wage and they can't even get a job here. You need a good job so you can pay the rent, pay the bills." Another interviewee discussed the issues with jobs in our community focusing more so on the fact that many of their neighbors and people in the, "hood," as the interviewee stated, work very hard trying to better themselves.

Many of the interviewees discussed in length or at the very minimum mentioned the issues within Bloomington-Normal regarding opportunities of advancement and betterment of individuals. One interviewee wanted to discuss issues with the current educational opportunities for residents in Bloomington-Normal. They state, "I think they need more opportunities for GED classes. They got Heartland [Community College] but they need more for special students that may have a disability. They got one place. But I can see them doing more. Because to get out to Heartland is a drive. I mean they have a bus going out there but not everybody can afford the bus either, so in town, if there was a place - a community center - that would be great if they could provide more assistance."



Another interviewee discussed a significant lack of, or difference in, healthcare within and across the twin cities of Bloomington-Normal. "In my community, I would say there is a lack of healthcare options. [...] There aren't really any good healthcare options. And I've noticed that people stereotype based on location of things. Like BroMenn's a great hospital, my girlfriend works there; and because it's centered where it is, people attach that to negativity because of the Westside of Bloomington. Which I don't really get because it's a healthcare facility. In comparison to St. Joe's in Normal." The negative connotation attached to the Westside of Bloomington has proven to be a recurring theme within almost all the interviews.

In addition to discussing the issues with employment as well as the lack of opportunities for advancement and betterment within the Bloomington-Normal community, some interviewees discussed the topic of racism. One interviewee stated, "From my perspective, racism [is the most prominent community issue]. Institutional racism is widespread. We can't afford to keep missing out on the gifts of people of color in the community." Another interviewee was quoted saying, "First African-American elected to Bloomington council. It's 2017! How is that not a blatant representation of how racist this community is!"

### **Resources and Services**

While discussing resources and services in Bloomington-Normal, interviewees made many positive statements. The presence of LGBT support services and the role of local universities in encouraging diversity were both discussed as advantages in the community, as was the presence of a number of domestic abuse, housing, and job coaching organizations such as Mid Central Community Action, YWCA, and the Housing Authority of the City of Bloomington. However, heavy emphasis was also placed on what additional resources and services are needed in Bloomington-Normal. This discussion included recent losses in services due to funding issues. Common resource and service related themes discussed in the interviews were LGBT issues, mental health, and citizenship.

As mentioned, multiple interviewees spoke positively about the support services available to the LGBT community. Organizations such as Equality Illinois and the Prairie Pride Coalition are present in Bloomington-Normal and are actively supporting LGBT causes. There are also safe spaces on the campus of Illinois State University; and the Bistro, a nightclub in Bloomington, was identified as an LGBT friendly space within the community. One interviewee stated, "I wish we had more LGBT friendly spaces that were explicitly for us...It would be nice if we had a book store...or something that isn't a bar." This interviewee also stated that most LGBT spaces and services are heavily congregated around Illinois State University. Furthermore, one interviewee stated that the transgender community is having a more challenging time finding services than the LGB community as a whole. Outside Planned Parenthood's efforts to expand services to transgender individuals, little was discussed about services specifically available to the transgender community in Bloomington-Normal.

Multiple interviewees recognized the need for improved mental health support services in Bloomington-Normal, as accentuated by one interviewee: "Mental health services are

extremely lacking in this town. Whole mental health agencies have closed that provided people with care. The only places still open are extremely limited. In the past 8 years, the agencies started to get shutdown/closed. There is a dramatic decrease in services because of the lack of funding.” Policing of individuals with mental health issues was also a concern, with one interviewee stating there is not enough emphasis on housing and counseling people with mental health issues who have been arrested and jailed. Overall, multiple interviewees felt the diminishing number of services available to people with mental health issues was a concern within the community and within the criminal justice system.

One interviewee highlighted the need for improved services for undocumented individuals in Bloomington-Normal. The interviewee acknowledged that the Immigration Project is able to assist some community members in acquiring citizenship, but also stated that the Immigration Project can only help those with a path to citizenship. Additionally, the interviewee felt that most immigration attorneys in the area were non-Spanish-speaking, which limited their ability to communicate with Spanish-speaking individuals seeking their assistance, leaving undocumented community members with limited legal and citizenship services in Bloomington-Normal.

Several other issues related to resources and services were discussed by interviewees in less depth. Multiple interviewees commented positively on the effects of Black Lives Matter, praising their efforts to encourage a wider conversation on racial discrimination in Bloomington-Normal. One interviewee commented on the lack of services for Native Americans, specifically the lack of Indian Health Services facilities, stating, "There's no Indian Healthcare Service here...the closest one is in Iowa and that's about 6 or 7 hours away." Finally, multiple interviewees referenced Illinois State University and Illinois Wesleyan University as positive influences promoting diversity in Bloomington-Normal. One interviewee said, “If it were not for the schools I don’t think [Bloomington would be a welcoming place] - the schools bring the diversity.”

### **Community Progress and Improvements**

During our interviews, Bloomington/Normal residents discussed positive changes in the community as well as things they would like to see changed. Residents talked about progress being made in the community by mentioning Not In Our Town's initiatives to bring social awareness to the forefront, and many of them specifically mentioned increased considerations of race. In addition, Not In Our Town tapped into local K-12 education through their affiliated organization Not In Our School.

However, enthusiasm about education was also rife with recommendations. One resident spoke about the disparities in education, specifically the difference between education in Bloomington and Normal; Normal was mentioned as having better resources and institutions than Bloomington. Concern about education was not limited to academia though, as gaps in education within social services were mentioned as well, such as lack of information about local resources and a shortage of programs offering skill attainment (e.g. resume writing workshops, job attainment workshops). One of the key themes about education was the need for individuals to be educated about societal differences within the community (e.g., differences in race, gender, class, sexual orientation, ableism, etc.).

Further, residents voiced their concern about the lack of representation in leadership roles in Bloomington/Normal. In accordance, concerns about resident participation in decision-making processes were raised. Per one resident, encouraging and/or allowing individuals to be involved in decision-making processes in the city could facilitate empowerment, and thus provided a motivation for productivity. Some of the empowerment inducing activities mentioned were: resident review boards (representative of community), participatory budget recommendations, and having access to who is hired on the police force and how policing is carried out. Citizens also stated that they would like to see individuals in authoritative positions (government officials, law enforcement) be held accountable for their actions.

Next, residents also stated their desire to see further representation of diversity in the community. One resident mentioned multicultural events: "If you made sure [the multicultural event] included all the different races or cultures, where you got the cultural dances, the cultural foods, or some kind of event, that would be a cultural event- a multicultural event-with all cultures so that people can learn what the cultures are. Because if there's no exposure you can't change the attitudes."

Additionally, residents stated they would like to see more representation for individuals with disabilities and mental illness. Residents stated that lack of resources, lack of access, and discrimination against individuals with disabilities and mental hardships has caused gaps in their well-being. For instance, individuals with disabilities not only have severe lack of representation within the community, but also have issues with job attainment and self-sustaining resources. Regarding individuals with mental illness, some residents stated they're underrepresented but also voiced their concern about the imprisonment of individuals with mental illness, rather than enrollment in productive forms of rehabilitation (e.g. counseling, rehab programs, health care). Furthermore, homelessness was also a consistent topic among residents:

There is a dramatic decrease in services because of the lack of funding. Not just for those with disabilities but also homeless people too.

With the state budget being cut, homeless shelters are not being funded. The mental health budget was very strongly cut by Gov. Rauner and all these social services being cut and how locally we can address these issues and how ignoring it isn't really going to help the community.

Moreover, some residents discussed their desire to see more representation for the LGBT community, not only within ISU's institution, but for the Bloomington/Normal community as a whole:

Something I envision: ISU has a great support; the rest of the community can mirror those same services. The one thing that is missing is an LGBT community center. While a LGBT community is present within the campus environment, it would be beneficial for those who are not enrolled at ISU, who live in the region, to have an

outlet for security, comfort, and representation as an individual who identifies with the LGBT community.

Finally, some residents indicated they would like to see Not In Our Town initiate an action plan. An initiative that communicates a clear mission and goal that confronts, and potentially begins to eradicate community issues.

### **Conclusion**

Qualitative interviews and analysis provided community leaders and members with an opportunity to voice their opinions by discussing topics like policing, food, health, education, and law. The interview group gained access to participants through convenience and snowball sampling techniques. Interviews contained five major themes: icebreaker introduction, community issues, individual experiences, resources and services, and hopes for the future. Two interviewees chose to speak on specific unjust situations or wrongful treatment by the police. One interviewee felt comfortable with steps to increase the response rate of the police by incorporating a community house in their neighborhood. Reference to a lack of trust was mentioned for both Bloomington and Normal. Residents discussed and spoke toward problems they felt needed to be addressed, such as opportunities for advancement and betterment within the community. LGBT issues, mental health, and citizenship were the common resource and service-related themes discussed by the interviewees. The presence of LGBT support services and the role of local universities in encouraging diversity were both discussed as advantages in the community. However, heavy emphasis was placed on what additional resources and services are needed in Bloomington-Normal.

## **STEPS NOT IN OUR TOWN SHOULD CONSIDER: BEST PRACTICES**

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### **Introduction**

To begin this project, our group analyzed and determined themes and historical trends throughout the history of Not In Our Town from the Not In Our Town scrapbook. We then developed interview questions (Appendix I) to ask Not In Our Town regarding their past and future plans, successes and struggles, goals, and best practices. After interviewing Not In Our Town using the interview guide, we then determined key themes about the past and future of Not In Our Town and used these themes to guide our case studies of model organizations.

The selected model organizations were determined in steps. The first step for each group member was to identify three locally-oriented organizations that focused on fighting racism and bigotry. Next, based on mission statements similar to Not In Our Town, we looked at the list of organizations, and narrowed it down to fifteen. We then sent the list to Not In Our Town leadership; they indicated to us which organizations would be best to focus on for case studies. Each group member then went into depth researching one of Not In Our Town's indicated organizations. We looked at social media; strategic plans; activities; participation; leadership; funding; and, in some cases, conducted interviews. Specifically, based on Not In Our Town's indicated goals for the future, key themes were deduced from the case studies, including best practices for increasing organization participation, capacity, and credibility in the community.

### **Current State of Not in Our Town**

A panel discussion was held with some leaders of Not In Our Town on February 13, 2017. Below are the key findings from the panel discussion based on the interview guide.

#### **Potential Findings and Areas of Focus**

One of the most (if not the most) important notion shared by the Not In Our Town leadership was their concern with the perception that residents of Bloomington/Normal have of Not In Our Town. The representatives wanted to know if the residents see their organization as a prominent resource in their community. More importantly, they wanted to know if the residents think about Not In Our Town as a resource at all.

In addition, Not In Our Town leadership also wanted to know what the experiences of Bloomington/Normal residents are. They would like insight as to what individual's experiences are in regard to their daily lives, questions or concerns about their community,

issues they have witnessed or faced, and whatever else the individuals and groups of Bloomington/Normal see as important to their community.

Another key point that the Not In Our Town panel discussed is their mission to strengthen the sense of togetherness with and of the community. It is Not In Our Town's intent to reinforce feelings of togetherness regardless of the different values residents hold. It is because of residents' different (sometimes conflicting) values, identities, and cultures that the Not In Our Town representatives saw facilitating a sense of togetherness as a challenge. In response, the Not In Our Town representatives emphasized attempting to build 'bridges' between the various groups within Bloomington/Normal.

The representatives also touched on their interest in statistical data that the student researchers find during the study. The Not In Our Town panel hoped to use that data to see patterns within the community that are of concern, as well as use it as evidence on behalf of the community. Similarly, the Not In Our Town panel discussed their anticipation of potential evidence of systemic racism/discrimination in Bloomington/Normal. They hope the research can document the historic and contemporary presence of racism and discrimination within the community's various social institutions.

Next, in light of the attendance of Not in Our School representatives, the panel also discussed further concentration on social issues in schools and with youth. The Not In Our School alliance is continually increasing its presence amongst schools (Elementary, Jr. High, and High School) within the Bloomington/Normal region and even conducts monthly meetings that bring together local schools to discuss current social issues and patterns within their own schools.

Further, as the Trump administration continues to implement executive orders and policies regarding immigration, there is a growing need for community outlets and solidarity. The Not In Our Town representatives spoke of continuing their assurance with the community that the organization can be an outlet for individuals and groups who feel that their well-being is directly at risk. Not In Our Town will continue to hold events that challenge the current Trump administration's policies on immigration, with the intent of subduing the fear that the administration is trying to impose on individuals, and again, creating solidarity with the various groups of Bloomington/Normal.

The Not In Our Town panel discussed many areas of interest that they hope the student researchers can bring to light and focus on when investigating with their groups. The Not In Our Town representatives expect to hear of new or more concentrated areas of focus from the class findings. In addition, they are also hoping the class findings can cement them as a legitimized organization and outlet within Bloomington/Normal. Ultimately, Not In Our Town wants to know where they stand with the community. Are they an organization that Bloomington/Normal community members can become a part of in efforts to create cohesion within their town? Or is Not In Our Town a convener, an entity that can facilitate reciprocity between various groups by hosting gatherings that invite all those interested in unity and equality?

## **Future**

During the interview with the panel, each of the members discussed plans and goals for the future in terms of the organization and the Bloomington-Normal community. All of the panel participants indicated that they hoped to increase participation in the future. Mary indicated that it is difficult for six people to carry the group, and people in the community look to Not In Our Town to respond quickly to issues that come up, but it is hard with only six active leaders in the organization. Further, Dontae indicated that in the future, Not In Our Town hopes to learn how to create "a more active Not In Our Town." This could be through leadership, an increase in the capacity of Not in Our School, or through community events. Additionally, Not In Our Town has stated that they hope to carry more credibility in the community and they hope to be more trusted. They would also like to be more representative of the community's demographics. All panel participants indicated that they would like to increase volunteering as well.

## **Successes**

Not In Our Town has seen many accomplishments since coming to Bloomington-Normal in 1995. Not In Our Town has become a well-known "brand" and a bridge for many organizations. A major success has been Not In Our School. This off-shoot of the organization succeeded by starting groups in multiple high schools in the area. Not In Our School allowed students to feel more open to talking to other peers who could be facing the same challenges. There have been a growing number of students who have been participating in meetings which is seen as a huge success. BCAI School of Arts has been successful because the organization has allowed multiple groups to interact and it is also a great way for members to express themselves in a safe and open setting. BCAI School of Arts focuses on using arts to communicate. Many Not In Our Town partners successfully held meetings and events that positively impact the community.

## **Struggles**

It is difficult for Not In Our School to break away and begin their own chapter. It is also difficult for Not In Our School to get larger numbers of participants in the organization. Since some high school students don't feel the need to communicate their problems with the faculty and staff, if Not In Our School gets more students to become leaders, it will make it easier for those students to open up with anything that's going on. Not In Our Town struggles with creating and executing a formal structure for the organization to be able to better serve the community. Not In Our Town also struggles with coming to a common consensus as to what the actual mission of the organization is. BCAI School of Arts and Not In Our Town struggle with getting the community to understand the intensity and true purpose of the organizations. There is often a misunderstanding in what they stand for. The common struggle with each of these community development organizations is recruitment. Each of the community leaders stressed the difficulty in recruiting members for their groups.

We now turn our attention to a set of organizations, similar to the Bloomington-Normal Not In Our Town chapter—organizations employing practices that might help the local chapter address struggles, enhance success, and grow a sustainable, inclusive future for Bloomington-Normal. The selected model organizations were determined in steps. Our first

step was to each find three organizations that focused on fighting racism and bigotry. Next, based on missions similar to Not In Our Town, we looked at our list of organizations and narrowed it down to fifteen. We then sent the list to Not In Our Town leadership; they indicated to us which organizations would be best to focus on for case studies. Each group member then went into depth researching one of Not In Our Town's indicated organizations using the attached guide sheet (Appendix X). We examined social media; strategic plans; activities; participation; leadership; funding; and in some cases, conducted interviews. Specifically, based on Not In Our Town's indicated goals for the future, key themes were deduced from the case studies, including best practices for increasing organization participation, increasing capacity, and increasing credibility in the community.

### **Case Study Organizations**

#### **Multicultural/Multiracial Community Council – Farmington, Michigan**

The Multicultural/Multiracial Community Council of the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills (outside Detroit, Michigan) is a city-funded council that seeks to make people feel safe and included where they live, in their schools, and in their work places. Central to the mission of the Community Council is to promote "community awareness and acceptance of diversity amongst its citizens" (City of Farmington 2017). The group advocates for appreciation of various cultures, especially for cultures other than one's own. There are 35 members of the council, which consists of "citizens, students, government and school officials, and clergy" (City of Farmington 2017). Activities sponsored by the council include youth programs, speakers, and community forum discussions.



There are six guiding principles the Council follows. They are:

1. Racial, religious, cultural and ethnic diversity in our community will be respected, nurtured and celebrated.
2. We believe that healthy communities maintain a comprehensive and balanced program of services which are open and accessible to all citizens.
3. We believe in equal education opportunities.
4. We believe in equal employment opportunities.
5. We believe in equal access to housing.
6. We believe in equally safe neighborhoods (City of Farmington 2017).



While not exact images of each other, Farmington/Farmington Hills and Bloomington/Normal share similar demographics.

	Combined Population	Percent White	Percent Black	Percent Asian	Percent Latino <sup>a</sup>
Farmington	10,509	67	14	15	2
Farmington Hills	80,971	66	19	11	3
Bloomington	78,206	78	11	8	6
Normal	54,488	84	9	4	5

Source: US Bureau of the Census (ACS 2015)

<sup>a</sup>Latino persons can be of any race.

The combined population of Farmington/Farmington Hills is 91,480 people, while Bloomington/Normal's combined population is 132,694 (ACS 2015). Bloomington's population is 78 percent White, 11 percent Black, 8 percent Asian, and 6 percent Latino. Farmington Hills' population is 66 percent White, 19 percent Black, 3 percent Asian, and 11 percent Latino (ACS 2015). Additionally, Normal's population is 84 percent White, 9 percent Black, 4 percent Asian, and 5 percent Latino. Farmington's population is 67 percent White, 14 percent Black, 15 percent Asian, and 2 percent Latino (United States Bureau of the Census 2015).

### **Common Ground – Southeastern, Wisconsin**

Launched in 2008, Common Ground is a regional community organization in Southeast Wisconsin. They cover four counties, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington, and Waukesha – with an emphasis in Milwaukee. They are made up of more than 40,000 individuals across 40+ member organizations from their respective counties.



Common Ground has four paid professional organizers who overlook a Strategy Team, Issue Team, and Core Team – all of which are elected by member organizations. Common Ground's goal is to identify specific (measurable, life changing, and winnable) community issues and create a strategy (using a group of strategy specialists) to move toward positive change and build on empowerment within the community. Common Ground's mission is to place the power into the community member's hands; in other words, Common Ground promises to allow community members to identify issues; create resolutions; and act on them, rather than allowing those already in power to make decisions for them. They execute what they call Issue Campaigns, which they describe as:

Simply put, Issue Campaigns are the work we do. Members of Common Ground identify problems and concerns in our communities. Through research, relationships and action these problems and concerns become our Issue Campaigns. We usually

have more than one active campaign at any given time. The more Issue Campaigns we win — the stronger we get.

Further, Common Ground requires that individuals and member organizations pay dues; they also receive funding through donations and activism, voicing out to public officials and corporate leaders. CG holds assemblies (400-500 attendees) multiple times a year, which are only held when CG is executing a specific Issue Campaign; but they also host meetings bi-monthly to stay up to date on issues and build an efficient organization. Recent issues addressed by Common Ground, include quality education for all children, parent-school relations, public service advocating, voting importance advocating, gun control, and housing rehabilitation (Common Ground 2017).

### **Many Voices, One Community – Lynchburg, Virginia**

Many Voices One Community is an organization focused on racial justice and brought together by education, engagement and advocacy. Their vision is to create a racially equitable community



where race and/or ethnicity are not predictors of success in any aspect of life and where public policies, institutional practices, and social structures no longer favor one group of people over another. In 2007, the city manager and the mayor proposed that the community should begin to come together and discuss racial issues in the community. As they started up community discussions, attendance was greater than expected. After the first year, 1,300 people took part in an event. Since then, the community has been working together to keep the area safe.

One event found on the website was the 4th annual race, poverty, and social justice conference. On November 5, 2017, the public can attend the conference with different speakers and discuss topics like restorative justice, dialect diversity, and school violence (Many Voices One Community 2017).

### **CommunityNashville – Nashville, Tennessee**

CommunityNashville is an organization dedicated to advocating for and raising awareness of issues of bias, bigotry, racism, and threats to human rights in



religion. Since their founding in 1972, CommunityNashville has worked hard to create a presence within their community and help those in need. Based on the different strengths of this organization the Best Practices group felt that this was a model organization to help guide Not In Our Town to maintain their success, but also give another perspective on how to organize.

Every organization has strengths and weaknesses, and CommunityNashville has experienced these. Some of the strengths they have as an organization is their Building Bridges program that works with youth. Through this program, CommunityNashville helps youth face their feelings, learn about the causes of prejudice, and become more aware and understanding of respect of others. This has been one of their primary focuses as a whole, and this program is nationally recognized. Through the Building Bridges program, CommunityNashville reached

out and worked with a number of different organizations. Along with this, *CommunityNashville* received a number of different sponsorships to help the organization flourish. There were 18 different sponsorships for 2016, some of those were Saint Thomas Health, Creative Communications LLC, and Belmont University. There are 4 different brackets of sponsorships to choose from, so there are options for a wide variety of individuals to help. Sponsorships are really the primary way the organization survives, along with help and volunteering of the community.

Volunteering is extremely important for this organization to be successful. There are a number of volunteers that help out currently, but the organization could always use more help. This could be viewed as a struggle that has been faced, but overall this organization is very successful in the community.

*CommunityNashville* hosts a number of events throughout the year, but one of the main events is the Human Relations Awards Dinner. At this dinner, those that sponsor *CommunityNashville* are in attendance along with those nominated for awards that year. This event allows different members of the community to come together and see the impact they have. Through the Building Bridges Program, there are events through AnyTown, MiniTown, UniTown, and the Youth Advisory Council (YAC). These promote the importance of individuals being true to themselves and respectful of others feelings. These programs are really geared toward the youth community and have been successful. Through advocacy, volunteering, sponsorships, and partnerships, *CommunityNashville* created a large presence in Nashville, and is viewed as extremely successful (*CommunityNashville* 2017).

### **Rid Racism – Milwaukee, Wisconsin**

In 1997, Rid Racism started out as the Public Issues Intergenerational Consortium (PIIC). PIIC was a nonprofit social service agency that provided services across the generational spectrum. In 1999, PIIC was introduced to Dr. James Gambone, who created a process for addressing community problems and issues, which involved all generations. In 2004 PIIC became Milwaukee Intergenerational/Intercultural Community Connection (MIICC). MIICC's mission was "to work in partnership with community stakeholders to create intergenerational/intercultural communities in the Milwaukee area." In 2009, Southeast Wisconsin Intergenerational/Interracial Community Connection was created and its mission was "To address racism in Southeast Wisconsin, SEWIICC believed that all races and generations needed to be involved in dialogue and action." From these beginnings, in 2014, Rid was established.



Rid Racism helps all races, ethnicities, faiths, generations, etc. They are successful at collaborating with other organizations that are also committed to achieving racial equity. The areas that they focus on are their events: film screenings, cultural concerts, open streets (where a local street will be transformed with food, trucks, and visioning opportunities), etc. The goal of Rid is to "Build Allies and Change Agents to dismantle all forms of racism and racial inequities through education, dialogue, and action." Rid works with 80 other organizations. They accept donations and fundraise for their activities. Their core values are:

- Respect: inclusiveness, valuing others, respecting differences, tolerance
- Communication: listening, sharing information, engaging in dialogue
- Diversity: inclusive of all races, ethnicities, faiths, generations etc.
- Equality: equal opportunity, rights and fairness without discrimination
- Social Justice: accepting our mutual responsibility that all have an equal opportunity to succeed
- Peace: a culture of dialogue promoting peacemaking that results in healing, connection, and respect

### **Kids4Peace – Boston, Massachusetts**

Kids4Peace Boston (K4PB) is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that educates, trains, and inspires Christian, Jewish, and Muslim youth from diverse backgrounds to become interfaith peace leaders. The organization was founded in 2010, when interfaith youth from Palestine and Israel, together with their peers from Boston hosted a 2 week peace-building camp. Since then, the organization has grown into providing year-round peace-keeping programs for youth ages 12-18, especially activities and camps which build participants' knowledge and skills to promote understanding, advocate for social change, and take action to promote peace throughout Boston.



Kids4Peace Boston collaborates with many community partners such as Jerusalem Peacebuilders; the American Youth Foundation; and many local churches, mosques, and temples.

The organization is headed by a Board of Directors, which has 12 members. Their strategic plan outlines the goals of their programs as:

- Impact-driven
- Growth-oriented
- Engaging
- Oriented to both Israel/Palestine and U.S. Interfaith Work
- Relationship, friendship, and skills-based
- Balanced
- Experiential learning and action-oriented
- Responsive to the respective interests of participating youth and their families

Additionally, they strive to build relationships with at least 6 new organizations each year. Their outlined goals in a strategic plan are to increase funding, be more active on social media, grow its volunteer base, and create an evaluation framework to measure their impact in the community (Kids4Peace 2017).

## **We Are Many - United Against Hate**

We Are Many- United Against Hate is a collective of common people that are united against hate and want protection for all from racism and bigotry. Their goal is to come together as an anti-hate community in order to



help further a country where every life matters. We Are Many believes that what makes the United States of America special is that the country is full of people from different ethnicities and cultures. The organization believes this is the country's strength and has been ignored. We Are Many believes that by coming together from all ethnicities and backgrounds, we as people can fight against hateful speech, actions, and ideals. They believe in the power of numbers and the effectiveness of fighting hate together rather than individually. This organization looks to help all populations, including but not limited to: White, Black, Brown, Hispanic, Muslim, Jewish, LGBTQ, and other groups. We Are Many reaches populations through social media outlets; on their Facebook page they share videos that educate people on varying cultures and ways of life. The organization also posts events such as rallies, protests, and galleries that their active members are planning to attend in order to get the community together and unite people against hate. We Are Many does not host many events, but they do attend events hosted by other organizations. We Are Many is overseen by an advisory board made up of community leaders from all walks of life (We Are Many – United Against Hate 2017).

## **Key Themes for Not In Our Town Moving Forward**

### **Increasing organizational participation**

Moving forward, Not In Our Town is hoping to increase its organizational participation through volunteer mobilization and recruiting more active members. In order to do this, we recommend that Not In Our Town work toward not only recruiting volunteers but also keeping their volunteers engaged and active so they keep coming back.

To recruit volunteers, Multicultural Multiracial of Farmington, MI draws from local schools, citizens, and local government (MCMRCC 2017). They try to get equal representation from all of their sources. Many Voices, One Community uses their partner organizations to help recruit a broad and diverse pool of volunteers from throughout the community (Many Voices One Community 2017). Not In Our Town has several partner organizations and could draw from members of those organizations for Not In Our Town membership.

In order to keep members and volunteers engaged, we suggest that Not In Our Town hold more regular meetings, say bi-monthly, or monthly, to stay up-to-date and maintain organizational efficiency. Regular meetings can serve as a tool to promote regular attendance. These meetings can be used to discuss current issues and news, plan organization events and rallies, and discuss next steps for the organization. Perhaps the meetings can be used not just for business purposes, but as a welcome social environment for people of all backgrounds, as a reminder that they are more than welcome in the Bloomington-Normal Community. Most importantly when thinking about organizational volunteers, Not In Our Town should remember to keep volunteering and membership fun and

meaningful; one key strategy is for members to have tasks to do between meetings. We believe that these are the key components to keeping a robust volunteer base. Last but not least, Not In Our Town should remember to engage in volunteer and member recognition, so everyone involved in Not In Our Town is aware that their contributions to the organization are truly meaningful.

### **Increasing organizational capacity**

As described by Not In Our Town leadership during their panel discussion with our research team, they frequently host inclusive public events in the Bloomington/Normal area addressing current local and nationwide social issues. Some core issues are: discrimination against race, religion, and sexual orientation; raising awareness of issues revolving around immigration; and bringing to light community relations with law enforcement. Additionally, Not In Our Town has gained strong relationships with other organizations by building ties with resident religious congregations, the YWCA, Laborers International, and Not In Our Town affiliates (e.g. Not In Our School). Thus, Not In Our Town has already begun taking steps toward increasing their capacity in the areas of activities and networking.

Yet, Not In Our Town can improve their capacity by continuing to expand their inter-organizational ties and employing new ways to achieve funding. As we found in our research with the organization *CommunityNashville*, reaching out for sponsorship from other organizations plays a big role in increasing their funding and social capital. Further, *Rid Racism of Milwaukee* utilizes fundraisers and donations to help fund their community activities and events. In another case, *Common Ground of Southeastern Wisconsin* pursues funding through membership dues, donations from the public, and petitioning for funds from public officials and corporate leaders. Moreover, *Multicultural Multiracial of Farmington, MI* is fortunate enough to receive funding through the city; although, funding is only distributed to supply resources for events and activities pertaining to concentrated social issues. This was also true in *Common Ground's* case, as funding for events and activities are only deployed by city and corporate sponsors if their current campaign had a clear and comprehensive social issue.

Collectively, many of the organizations our research team studied utilized vast inter-organizational ties; nonprofit and government organization, city, and corporate sponsors; outreach to the community for donations, fundraisers, member's monetary contributions; and concentrated campaign operations. Accordingly, it will be up to Not In Our Town to generate creative and attractive ways to use these social, economic, and cultural capital-gaining initiatives. It will also be up to Not In Our Town to decide what kind of community organization they want to be. Not all of these initiatives will reflect the values that Not In Our Town holds; therefore, they must choose initiatives that suit them best. With that in mind, it is highly recommended that Not In Our Town continually strive toward increasing their inter-organizational ties. This not only increases the amount of social capital their organization embodies, but it will also drastically increase the amount of resources (e.g. volunteers, donations, exposure, information, etc.), both directly and indirectly, they have access to. If Not In Our Town wants to increase their capacity in regard to activities and funding, they need determination to seek out supplemental forms of capital, utilizing carefully considered ideas and executing them in influential ways.

### **Increase organization's credibility in the community**

Not In Our Town should find a way to gain credibility within the community by partnering with more organizations and sponsors. Not In Our Town could also find ways to measure their impact in the community.

*CommunityNashville* works with a number of sponsorships within their community to boost their credibility and impact the community. Just in 2016 *CommunityNashville* worked with as many as 18 sponsors. Along with the sponsorships, *CommunityNashville* hosts different events to recognize their volunteers and members in the community that contribute to their success (*CommunityNashville* 2017).

Not In Our Town could measure their impact in the community by hosting a certain number of events per year, setting a performance measure. Some examples of performance measures could be setting a certain number of volunteers to recruit each year, along with hosting a certain number of events each month to involve the community.

Additionally, Not In Our Town could build their repertoire by updating or creating both a strategic plan and bylaws. Most organizations have established bylaws. We have found that organizations are usually willing to share their bylaws for other organizations to reference. For example, Kids4Peace Boston provided us with a copy of both their bylaws and strategic plan. The former designate leadership roles and election processes and a few other organizational details. The strategic plan is easy-to-read with clear goals outlined for their future, as well as restating the mission and goals so the organization stays on track.

In conclusion, overall Not In Our Town is doing a great job engaging in rallies and events in the community. By building a stronger network of members, volunteers, and partner organizations, they should be able to accomplish even more in the future by increasing their funding and backing. Maintaining a more regular schedule of events as well as creating bylaws and a strategic plan will help the organization stay focused and work efficiently going forward. More regular events and having a plan for member and volunteer recognition should keep members involved in the organization.

## **Appendix I: Not In Our Town Panel Interview Questions**

1. Background information on Not In Our Town members we are talking with...how did you end up with the organization?
2. How was Not In Our Town founded? Why was it founded? How did you get to Bloomington-Normal?
3. What are some successes your organization is proud of?
4. What are some struggles your organization has faced?
5. What do you expect our findings to be? Any preconceived notions?
6. Do you feel that your organization's members are representative of the community? Leaders?
7. What areas have you been focusing on the most recently?
8. Where do you see Not In Our Town in the future?
9. What are the goals of your organization?
10. What is your organizational structure?
11. Are there any aspects of your organization's vision that you are having problems pursuing?
12. Frank said that activity/inactivity has fluctuated over time, what are the causes of periods of high activity/inactivity you have experienced?
13. Who are your community partners? What is your relationship like with your partners?
14. Do you have a strategic plan? If so, could you tell us more about it?
15. How will you be using the report?
16. What is Not In Our Town's contribution to the community? How do you measure your organization's contribution?



## **Appendix II: Focus Group Questions**

### **OPINIONS AND FAMILIARITY WITH SOCIAL PROBLEMS**

- \* Are you Familiar with the local chapter of Not in Our Town?
  - o Can you tell us what you know about Not In Our Town?
- \* Are there key social injustices in Bloomington-Normal?
  - o Relative to other communities such as Decatur, Peoria, or Urbana-Champaign, how large are these injustices [segregation, discrimination, lack of access, bigotry] for the community of Bloomington-Normal?
- \* Do community members have equal access to resources in Bloomington- Normal (i.e. religious institutions, affordable health services, healthy and nutritious food, and educational resources)?
- \* Have your organizations dealt with encounters of segregation, discrimination, intolerance or other acts of bigotry?
- \* Historically, how have these injustices evolved in the Bloomington-Normal area?
- \* Do members of marginalized populations have a voice in local government?
  - o What does Not In Our Town do for these populations?
- \* What resources are available in Bloomington-Normal?
  - o What are the gaps in recourses?

### **PREVIOUS PARTNERS**

- \* In cases of discrimination, intolerance or bigotry, where do individuals turn for assistance?
- \* Where would you send someone for help?
- \* Has your organization encountered/ worked with Not In Our Town?
- \* What makes an organization helpful?
  - o Would you consider Not In Our Town as a helpful resource?
- \* As community leaders, how have you worked with politicians and other leaders in Bloomington-Normal?

## **ADVICE/IMPROVEMENTS**

- \* How can Not In Our Town become more involved in the community?
- \* Look at your placement; in the systems section, what areas could be improved?
  - o How could they be improved?
- \* Look at your placement; are there other events or matters in this community that you feel are important to discuss? Maybe topics we did not cover today.

Referral: As we moved through this discussion, you likely remembered a person you interacted with who experienced some intolerance, discrimination or in-access (or the opposite) in Bloomington-Normal. Please take a moment to think about whether that person previously shared their experience with others. Do you think they would welcome the chance to do so again? In a few days, we will reach out to you for referrals to 1-2 such persons. Please also think about the most unobtrusive way to contact them. We will be respectful of them and hope this approach for contacting them will lead to empowerment, rather than victimization. We will use the same informed consent procedure for them.

## Appendix III: Recruitment Letter for Focus Groups

[Date]

[Recipient name]

[Recipient address]

Dear [insert name]:

We are contacting you regarding an important project currently in progress in the Bloomington-Normal community. The Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development at Illinois State University is partnering with Not In Our Town, an organization dedicated to stopping hate in communities across the country. They asked us to conduct a project documenting intolerance in Bloomington-Normal. In doing so, our goal is to collect valuable experiences of community members.

As a community leader, documenting your knowledge is imperative to assessing patterns of intolerance in Bloomington-Normal. This project will culminate in a comprehensive report for Not In Our Town that they will use to further understand and address related problems in this community. Your participation will help us document the most accurate and comprehensive account possible.

We invite you to participate in a focus group, which we will facilitate. There will be 6-8 community leaders present and 3-4 students conducting the focus groups. This is an opportunity for us to learn the perspectives of you and your colleagues regarding Bloomington-Normal; it will also provide a space for you to share your experiences and those you work with. Should you be unavailable, please pass this request to another person within your organization that can provide insight on these issues.

The focus group will last no longer than two hours. Participation is completely voluntary and confidential. You can opt out of participation at any time. Refreshments will be provided. If you have any questions about the purpose of this project, please contact Dr. Frank Beck at [309-438-7770](tel:309-438-7770) or [fdbeck@ilstu.edu](mailto:fdbeck@ilstu.edu).

To schedule your attendance or that of a delegate, submit your RSVP via this electronic form [https://forms.illinoisstate.edu/forms/focus\\_group\\_meeting\\_times](https://forms.illinoisstate.edu/forms/focus_group_meeting_times).

We look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

Research Team  
Not In Our Town, Sociology 477, and Sociology 300  
Illinois State University

## **Appendix IV: Frequencies Sheet**

Placemat Focus Groups:

Not In Our Town

Please note, the information below is not an exhaustive list. The purpose is to jog participant's memories.

### **Topics:**

- \* Discrimination
- \* Bigotry
- \* Intolerance
- \* In-access
- \* Outreach

### **Demographic Categories:**

- \* Race/ethnicity
- \* Class (poverty, homelessness)
- \* Gender
- \* Sex
- \* Sexual Orientation
- \* Nationality
- \* Religion
- \* Citizenship status
- \* Literacy
- \* Education
- \* Divorce/single parent
- \* Language

- \* Disability
- \* Age (ageism, elder care)
- \* Criminal status (felony, misdemeanor, sex offender)

**Systems:**

- \* Housing (affordable?)
- \* Public transportation (bus system)
- \* Social services (emergency shelters, food pantries, SNAP benefits, policing)
- \* Healthy food (food deserts/swamps?)
- \* Health care (insurance, transgender inclusive?)
- \* Schools (public, private, higher education)
- \* Recycling/landfills (environment racism?)
- \* Prisons/juvenile detention
- \* Mental health (affordable counselling, prescriptions, in/outpatient centers?)

## Appendix V: Informed Consent for Focus Groups

Dear Focus Group Participant

This research study is being conducted by Frank Beck and the Stevenson Center at Illinois State University for the local Not in Our Town chapter. We are documenting some specific community characteristics related to intolerance, in-access, and discrimination in Bloomington-Normal over the last three years. The undergraduate and graduate students conducting the focus groups are enrolled in Sociology 300 (Senior Experience in Sociology) and SOC 477 (Community Project Design and Management) this semester.

You must be over 18 years of age to participate. This letter explains the risks and benefits of participation.

If you choose to take part in this research you will be asked to participate in a focus group with 6-8 participants. The focus group will take up to two hours of your time, but no longer. We will record audio and video of the interactions; this is done to make sure we accurately interpret comments, statements, and responses. The risks associated with this research are no greater than those encountered in everyday life. There are no direct benefits to participants; however, your participation will provide knowledge useful for the local Not in Our Town chapter.

All information will remain confidential; identifying connections between expressed opinions, name, position, and organizational affiliation will be avoided. Participating in this study is voluntary. Declining to participate will not negatively affect you; there is no penalty or loss of benefits. Even if the focus group discussion is underway, you may choose to discontinue your participation without penalty or loss of benefit; you can also remain part of the focus group and not respond to the questions. There is no external funding for this research and, therefore, no conflict of interest on the part of the Principal Investigator. The audio/video recording and any notes from this focus group will be destroyed when the project is over.

For questions about this research, please contact Frank Beck at 438-7770 or [fdbeck@illinoisstate.edu](mailto:fdbeck@illinoisstate.edu).

If you wish to continue participating in this focus group, please sign two originals of this form. One is for you and one is for our records; the latter will be destroyed when the project is complete.

I consent to participating in the above study.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

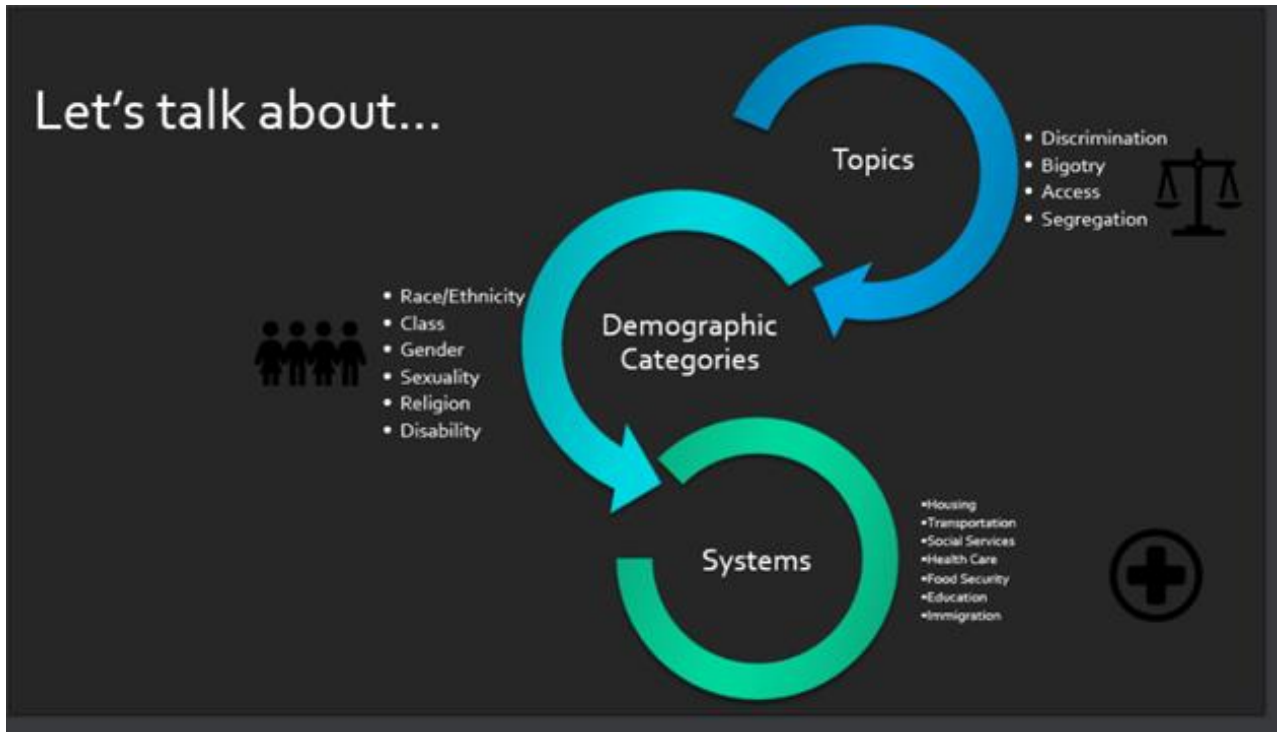
Date \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that comments made during this focus group are being recorded. These files will be destroyed when the study is complete.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix VI: Placemat



## Appendix VII: Interview Invitation

[Date]

[Recipient name]

[Recipient address]

Dear [insert name]:

We are contacting you regarding an important student project currently in progress in the Bloomington-Normal community. The Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development at Illinois State University is partnering with Not In Our Town, an organization dedicated to stopping hate in communities across the country. They asked us to conduct a project documenting social injustice in Bloomington-Normal. In doing so, our goal is to collect valuable experiences of community members.

Your experiences as a resident in this community are imperative to assessing these injustices. This project will culminate in a comprehensive report for Not In Our Town that will be utilized to further understand and address injustice in this community. We need your participation and cooperation so that we can document the most accurate and comprehensive account possible.

We invite you to participate in an interview, which we will conduct. This interview will be an opportunity for us to learn about your perspectives regarding social injustices in Bloomington-Normal; it will also provide a space for you to share your experiences.

The interview will be approximately forty-five minutes. Participation in our interview is completely voluntary and confidential. You can opt out of participation at any time. Refreshments will be provided. If you have any questions about the purpose of this project, please contact Dr. Frank Beck at [fdbeck@ilstu.edu](mailto:fdbeck@ilstu.edu).

For scheduling an interview, please reach out to X.

We look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

Research Team  
Sociology 477 & 300  
Illinois State University

Frank D. Beck, Ph.D.  
Project Director  
Department of Sociology  
Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development



## **Appendix VIII: Interview Question Guide**

### **ICEBREAKER INTRODUCTION**

- o How long have you lived in Bloomington-Normal?
- o Can you talk about what you do for a living?
- o Are you happy in Bloomington/Normal? Why or why not?
- o Do you feel that Bloomington/Normal is a place where all are welcome?

### **COMMUNITY ISSUES**

- o Where would you like to live versus where would you not like to live?
- o What is your perception of the community? Are there large issues of bigotry, discrimination, intolerance, or segregation (etc.) in any way?
- o Do you see problems of injustice as ongoing in this community?
- o What are the most prominent issues that residents face?
- o (For example, social, economic, and political?)
- o (Wording by Frank: for example, jobs, poor relations with neighbors, lack of activities with teens, discrimination by police, discrimination with others)
- o Are there things you wish you could change about your community? If so, what? (transition to future plans questions)
- o What is the relationship the between the community members and law enforcement?
- o Do you feel like you have a voice in your community? If so, how? (If we have time)

### **PERSONAL EXPERIENCE**

- o In the last three years, have you ever been a witness to an act of discrimination, bigotry, prejudice, or segregation?
- o In the last three years, what are your experiences with intolerance, bigotry, and discrimination in Bloomington-Normal?

## **RESOURCES/SERVICES**

- o What services did you know of? What services did you turn to after that experience? (in regard to racism, bigotry, discrimination, intolerance)
- o What services do you feel are missing?
- o Are you familiar with Not In Our Town or any other local organizations addressing discrimination?
- o Do they help?

## **HOPES FOR THE FUTURE**

- o How would you like to see your community improve?
- o What steps would you like to see occur in order to improve the community?
- o What actions should Not In Our Town of Bloomington-Normal take to build a better community?
- o Is there anything we haven't covered that you feel could be useful for us to include

## Appendix IX. Interview Informed Consent

Dear Interviewee:

This research study is being conducted by Frank Beck and the Stevenson Center at Illinois State University, for the local Not in Our Town chapter. We are documenting some specific community characteristics related to intolerance, lack of access, and discrimination in Bloomington-Normal over the last three years. The undergraduate and graduate students conducting the interviews are enrolled in Sociology 300 (Senior Experience in Sociology) and SOC 477 (Community Project Design and Management). You must be over 18 years of age to participate. This letter explains the risks and benefits of participation.

If you choose to take part in this research you will be asked to participate in a face-to-face interview with 2-3 members of the research team. The interview will take up to one hour of your time. We will record audio of the interview; this is done to make sure we accurately interpret comments, statements, and responses. The risks associated with this research are no greater than those encountered in everyday life; however you may become uncomfortable relaying your experiences. It is also possible that relaying the experiences is personally empowering. There are no other direct benefits to participants; however, your participation will help obtain knowledge useful for the local Not in Our Town chapter.

All information provided will remain confidential and will be reported with no personally identifying information. Even your participation in the interview is confidential; others will not know if you participated, including those who referred you to us. So, participating in this study is completely voluntary. Declining to participate will not negatively affect you; there is no associated penalty or loss of personal benefit, even if you end the interview early. The audio recording and any notes from this interview will be destroyed on or before May 31, 2017.

For questions about this research, please contact Frank Beck at 438-7770 or [fdbeck@illinoisstate.edu](mailto:fdbeck@illinoisstate.edu).

If you wish to continue participating in this interview, please sign two originals of this form. One is for you and one is for our records; the latter will be destroyed when the project is complete.

I consent to participating in the above study.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that comments made during this focus group are being recorded. These files will be destroyed when the study is complete.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix X: Criteria for Researching Best Practice Organizations**

1. Which populations do you service/help? What exactly does it mean to be a peace leader?
2. How/When was your organization founded?
3. What are successes/struggles of your organization?
4. What areas have you been focusing on most recently?
5. What are the goals of your organization?
6. What is your organizational structure?
7. What other organizations do you work with?
8. Do you have a strategic plan? Available on website/send to me?
9. How do you measure your impact in the community?
10. What are your funding sources?
11. What kind of activities does your organization host? How many times a month?
12. How many people attend? Is the community receptive to your events?
13. How do you conduct community outreach?
14. Do you have a constitution/by-laws/mission statement/values?

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