What is our role in creating a just and equitable census?

This session took place at the Fairhaven Public Library. Participants heard from a panel of speakers before breaking into small dialogue groups. These groups expanded upon understandings of what it looks like to create a just and equitable census, and further considered what the panelists shared. The dialogue centered on action strategies, centered on how anyone can get involved.

- The current political climate and history of oppression affects the level of trust people have in the census.
- The census has a tremendous impact on federal allocation of resources, which can result in $2,300 lost for every uncounted person.
- Technology gaps, misinformation, budgeting, and security are common issues, and could affect the upcoming 2020 census.
- Certain groups, known as "hard to count" go miscounted due to lack of on-the ground resources, causing a loss of funding and representation in congress.
- The census is complex, with marketing and information often unclear to the general public.

Panel:

Rosalinda Guillen
Farm worker rights activist and member of the Community 2 Community Justice leadership team

Rob Lopresti
Author of the book, "When Women Didn't Count," former faculty of Western Libraries

Sara Bernardy
Member of the County Census Work Group, former U.S. Census Bureau employee

Key Points

- Research the census questions in order to understand what you are being asked, and to clear up misinformation.
- Protect yourself from census-imitations by educating yourself on what the census looks like.
- Familiarize yourself with resources available to your community, and encourage community members to get involved.
- Use face-to-face education in order to explain the impact of the census to those who are unaware.
- Listen to underrepresented communities with an intent to understand.
- Advocate and volunteer for the census.
- Be aware of the impacts that the census has on your community, as well as communities other than your own.