

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bensenville Community Public Library Awarded Census Grant

The Bensenville Community Public Library received a subgrant for \$10,000 from the Reaching Across Illinois Library System's (RAILS) Census 2020: It Counts! grant project. The Bensenville Community Public Library is a subrecipient of the funds awarded to RAILS from the Pritzker Administration and the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS).

In applying for the grant, the Bensenville Community Public Library put forth a unique plan involving its community partners and demonstrated its commitment to ensuring a complete census count, explained how an accurate count can affect its community, and showed its specific areas of strength to ensure a successful count.

Ensuring an accurate census count is extremely important for our state. Census results are used to determine how many seats each state gets in the House of Representatives, and state officials redraw boundaries of legislative districts to account for population shifts. More than \$675 billion will be distributed to support state and county schools, hospitals, roads, public works, and other vital programs in our communities. Census results also help determine funding for libraries and library systems.

The group of 20 subgrantees made up of libraries, social service agencies, and county-level organizations will focus on six hard-to-count (HTC) populations as outlined by IDHS. The HTC populations consist of children younger than five years old, renters, people living close to or below the poverty line, older adults, people experiencing homelessness, and people who are young and mobile.

"As a trusted messenger in our community, it is the Library's duty to educate the hard-to-count populations about the importance of completing the census and how a complete count can benefit our community as a whole."

"We plan to use these awarded grant funds to maintain a sustained presence in our community at key events and to promote the importance of the upcoming Census. We are partnering with the Village of Bensenville on a variety of endeavors, including our April 1st, 2020 Census Day event in which we will have computers to access the census questionnaire, giveaways, food, kids crafts, and a variety of opportunities for residents to learn more about the Census and the importance it has in providing valuable funding to the community of Bensenville. We have a responsibility to use our unique position within our community to ensure a complete count and make sure our community gets what it deserves," said David Sieffert, Library Director.

The subrecipients, including the Bensenville Community Public Library, are safe places for anyone to receive assistance in completing the census questionnaire. This location has free internet access and can also assist with other methods of completing the census questionnaire. In addition, they can address fears someone may have about confidentiality of census data.

Funding provided by the Reaching Across Illinois Library System through a grant from Illinois Department of Human Services.

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