



**We see possibilities.**

## ***News for our partners and friends***

**February 2010**

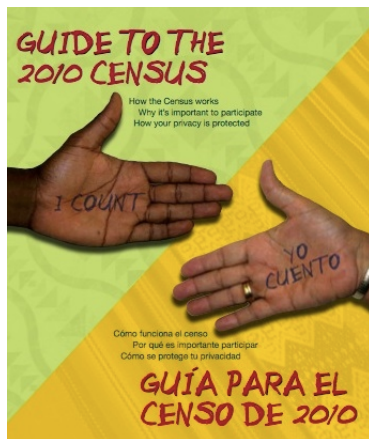
### ***What if . . . ?***

Maybe it's easier to think outside the box when you collaborate with so many other creative community organizations and funders. At Main Street Project, we're moving into 2010 with big expectations and the good fortune of having many outstanding partners in the work of helping all rural and urban residents participate fully in community life.

Here are the possibilities we're focused on, and a brief update on our progress.

### ***What if everyone was counted?***

The people we most often work with are the ones most likely to go uncounted in the upcoming U.S. Census. That's why we connected with other community organizations on issues and language that can get in the way of participation.



The four-language (Spanish, Somali, Hmong, English) [Community Census Guide](#) developed as a result, is being distributed all across the state as a tool organizers can use to help ensure a complete count.

We've received lots of positive feedback so far. Minneapolis Public Schools is interested in doing a broad distribution, and Judy Madigan at [Learning in Style](#) (immigrant and refugee education) told us the guide is "perfect for their adult students."

If you know of organizations that could put the free guides to work, [let us know as soon as possible](#).

We joined our partners in a Census train-the-trainer session last fall in Moorhead, and co-hosted a January 23 event in Minneapolis attended by nearly 100 representatives from communities of color. Between now and April 1, we're supporting multiple rural and urban Census events.

### ***What if the Internet worked for all of us?***

Main Street Project has joined [Twin Cities Community Voice Mail](#), [Minnesota Center for Neighborhood Organizing](#), and the [People Escaping Poverty Project](#) (PEPP) in forming the **Minnesota Digital**



**Justice Coalition.** Together, we're focused on influencing Internet/broadband policy and implementation decisions towards greater access and inclusivity.

In collaboration with rural broadband policy groups, we've submitted multiple recommendations to the FCC and other broadband decision makers. Last December, representatives from the FCC came to Minneapolis to meet with Coalition members, and hear first-hand stories of the challenges that immigrants, low-income and communities of color face in making the Internet work for them. Watch the video "[What's your Internet Story?](#)" to see for yourself.



As an anchor organization for the national [Media Action Grassroots Network](#), (MAG-Net), we're building media justice connections with community organizations across Minnesota and the U.S. Right now, we're asking friends and allies to take the Digital Inclusion Champion Pledge. [Join us!](#)

More than 100 people from foundations and community organizations have already participated in our Justice 2.0 trainings, learning podcasting and practicing digital storytelling which they can use in their organization's work. Many inspiring stories were created at last September's training through the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy - [check them out here](#). If your organization is interested in a future training, please [contact us](#).

*Photo: Marcus (Hope Community-SPEAC) shares his Internet story with FCC researcher.*

## ***What if aspiring Latino farmers had the tools to succeed?***



For a quick primer on the status of the Rural Enterprise Center's agripreneur training program, check out the Jan. 23 Minneapolis [Star Tribune article](#), entitled "Project Cluck." Or read the article about us from the winter issue of [Edible Twin Cities](#), highlighting farmer/mentor Todd Prink.

Or check out the recent [Agripreneurship Case Study](#), a thoughtful closeup of current opportunities and challenges, written by the [RUPRI Center for Rural Entrepreneurship](#) after interviewing program participants and Northfield area supporters.

We ended last year's production season with a successful [community poultry processing](#) effort. This winter, we're working to expand the economic potential for Latino agripreneurs in our growing area by piloting [winter poultry and egg production](#) with heritage breeds. Now we're looking ahead to spring and putting the farmland donated by generous Northfield supporter, Greg Carlson, to work - for both agripreneur training and community food shelves.

*Photo: One of the newly trained poultry processors (Photo by Andrew BoddySpargo)*

## ***The support we need to keep asking "What if?"***

Our Board of Directors helps set a creative and challenging course for Main Street Project. They are: Jim Blaha, Niel Ritchie, Amalia Deloney, Edyael Casaperalta and Leone Jose Bicchieri. ([Read their bios here.](#))

Our work is possible thanks to the generous support of these 2009-2010 philanthropic partners:

- Blandin Foundation
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota Foundation
- Center for Media Justice
- Headwaters Foundation for Justice
- Hispanics in Philanthropy (HIP)
- Hull Family Foundation
- Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund
- The Nathan Cummings Foundation
- Media Democracy Fund, a project of the Proteus Fund
- The Minneapolis Foundation
- Northfield Area United Way
- Northfield Community Action Center
- Northwest Area Foundation
- The Saint Paul Foundation's SpectrumTrust -- El Fondo de Nuestra Comunidad
- The Saint Paul Foundation's SpectrumTrust -- Multicultural Endowment
- Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation

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