

MEDIA ADVISORY JANUARY 22, 2010

Who: Main Street Project and Minnesota Center for Neighborhood Organizing, and 2010 Census outreach partners across Minnesota

What: 2010 Census Leadership Training and Conference

Where: CWA Hall, 3521 East Lake Street, Minneapolis, MN

When: 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Contact: Steven Renderos, Main Street Project, 952-594-9263

Training Focuses on Immigrants, Low-Income, Communities of Color

Community groups gather to ensure correct 2010 Census count

(MINNEAPOLIS, MN) – Nearly 100 people representing community groups throughout the Metro will gather for a training session on Saturday to ensure that all Minnesotans are counted in the 2010 Census. At stake are millions in federal funds and one of the state's congressional seats.

Significant undercounting of Minnesota's population occurred in the past two federal counts, which are constitutionally required every decade. In 1990 about 20,000 state residents were overlooked; 10 years later more than 14,000 were missed. In both cases people of color and those living in poverty were the most likely to go uncounted.

A four-language **Community Census Guide** (English, Spanish, Somali, Hmong) will be available Saturday. The guide describes the 2010 Census and addresses the concerns and fears that can get in the way of participation. It also can be downloaded from mainstreetproject.org.

Having a correct count is critical given all that rides on its outcome. The Census is used to distribute more than \$400 billion in federal funds for such things as schools, hospitals and transportation projects and determines the number of seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives. Minnesota has had eight congressional districts since 1960, but even an undercount of 1,400 could reduce that by one going forward.

"Minnesota communities lose around \$1,200 every year in federal funds for each person who goes uncounted," said Steven Renderos, media justice organizer with the Main Street Project. "Many of the people in these communities will be unlikely to participate unless organizations and leaders they know and trust address their concerns."

Between now and Census Day on April 1, Main Street Project will also work with community groups in outstate communities to reach out to immigrants, low-income and communities of color.

Main Street Project is a grassroots cultural organizing, media justice and economic development initiative working to help rural and urban communities face today's realities with hope. We provide creative and practical tools to give people of all ages, cultures, economic and immigration status the opportunity to more fully participate in all aspects of community life. Learn more at mainstreetproject.org