

Middlesex County College

Date: Tuesday, November 27, 2018, 12pm–4pm

Location: Middlesex County College, Edison, NJ

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EVENT SUMMARY

The outreach booth was stationed in a busy hallway in the student center on the Middlesex County College campus, between the cafeteria and student lounge area. Other campus organizations also had booths set up in the hallway, attracting even more students to the area. Rutgers POET staff engaged with at least 45 people, based on the number of demographic survey cards collected; many were county college students. Demographic survey cards were not collected from all participants, and approximately 80-100 people participated in the outreach in total.

SURVEY RESPONSES

Summary Respondents largely liked aspects of the county related to the following themes, ranked in order of number of comments: (1) Arts & Culture; (2) Public Services & Facilities. Respondents' comments regarding changes they would make in the county mainly touched on the themes of: (1) Transportation; (2) Land Use & Development; (3) Parks & Open Space.

Question #1 Responses *What do you like about living/working in Middlesex County?*

Arts & Culture (18 comments) Many participants appreciate the cultural and ethnic diversity in the county, as well as the variety of restaurants available. Other participants like living in a

close-knit, welcoming, and pleasant community. One participant likes the county fair, and another was enthusiastic about a mural found on the county college campus.

- Diversity
 - Diverse mix of cultures and ethnicities (8 comments)
 - Diversity of culture, food, and people
 - Ethnic restaurants (3 comments)
- Community
 - Close knit community
 - Welcoming people
 - Edison is very pleasant & calm, close to college, like Highland Park
- Arts & Activities
 - Lots to do
 - County fair
 - Wall of artwork in the MCC academic advising building

Public Services & Facilities (11 comments) Many students talked about their positive experiences at Middlesex County College. They especially like the college's faculty and cost of attendance. Respondents also appreciated the quality of education in the county more broadly. One student liked the programs that are provided to inmates of the county jail.

- Middlesex County College
 - Student-teacher engagement at MCC (2 comments)
 - The education and lessons gained from professors at MCC
 - Students are energetic and MCC staff actually care about us
 - MCC is flexible and affordable for students
 - MCC is cheap
 - MCC is a good start.
- Education
 - County cares about children's education, care about attendance
 - East Brunswick schools
 - Great schools, great communities
- County jail
 - County prison system because they give you programs

Miscellaneous Several respondents like the accessibility of many desirable amenities due to the county's proximity to major cities, major highways, entertainment venues, the shore, and other destinations.

- Has everything—ocean, parks, malls, major highways, close to NYC
- Close to NYC, close to Philly, Great location!
- Central NJ, close to PNC Art Center, like State Theater, entertainment, like MCC

Land Use & Development

- Playa Bowl near Middlesex County College
- Chick-Fil-A in Menlo, Woodbridge Mall
- Easy access to services, police, fire, gas stations

Economic Opportunity

- Not too expensive compared to other counties
- Opportunities better than Hudson County



Parks & Open Space

- Wildlife areas - Johnson Park, Colonial Park, take pictures
- Greenway

Public Safety

- Like the fact that Sayreville is safe

Transportation

- Accessibility to public transit
- Not that much traffic

Question #2 Responses *What would you change about Middlesex County?*

Transportation (23 comments) Many respondents are concerned about pot holes, traffic and public transit.

- Potholes
 - Potholes (6 comments)
 - Potholes on Metlars Ln. Piscataway
 - New Brunswick roads have a lot of potholes, some roads don't need to be fixed and get fixed but other roads don't get fixed
- Traffic
 - Less traffic on Rt. 287 and Rt. 18
 - So much traffic because of construction on Ryders Lane in East Brunswick
 - Construction in winter and increase in traffic
- Public transportation
 - Infrequency of public transportation
 - More public transportation in Piscataway

- Better bus transportation - takes 3 buses to get from North Edison to Middlesex County College, don't know where buses go
- More parking
 - More parking lots for MCC (2 comments)
 - More parking in New Brunswick
- Safety
 - Safety of streets
 - Woodbridge Ave. is dangerous near MCC
- Costs
 - High gas prices
 - High-priced monthly bus tickets
- Pedestrian issues
 - Want easier way to walk to places
 - Highland Park-New Brunswick bridge & pedestrian way floods

Land Use & Development (6 comments) Two respondents do not like the amount of development occurring. Others want to see more food options, recreation centers, and things to do.

- Too much development
 - Too much building in North Brunswick
 - Excess of construction, worse places, worse times
- More amenities
 - Better food options, more parking at MCC
 - Want more vegetarian and vegan options/restaurants
 - More recreation centers
 - Not a lot to do around here (exception: a lot of food places), grew up in Edison

Parks & Open Space (5 comments) Respondents would like to see more parks and greenways, and they would like the parks to have cleaner and more natural environments. One person wants more activities for children, and another wants parks to stay open later.

- Need more recreational parks in city areas (New Brunswick, Perth Amboy, Woodbridge), things for children to do
- Cleaner park areas, picnic areas, overall park
- Want to expand Middlesex County Greenway to Perth Amboy and Piscataway
- Want more trees and wildlife in parks
- Don't like that parks close early, police yelled at her for being in Kennedy Park at 10 pm.

Environment (4 comments) Respondents offered suggestions on ways that the county environment could be improved, such as cleaning the Raritan Bay and using solar panels.

- Raritan Bay could be cleaned and used more efficiently (e.g. go fishing)
- Lawrence Harbor in Old Bridge superfund site is close to a playground
- Middlesex County going green, e.g. solar panels, save energy from solar panels privately, in batteries
- Trash on roadways

Public Services & Facilities (4 comments) Students talked about changes they would like to see at Middlesex County College.

- Middlesex County College
 - Bigger Middlesex County College venue at the New Brunswick location
 - Quality control of educators
 - Need accurate academic advice
- Maintenance
 - Clean up the roads and debris, cut the grass on highways, clean up poop under New Brunswick overpass

Arts & Culture (4 comments)

- More racial and ethnic integration
- Allow MCC theatre clubs to use the theatre
- More community events
- Want more diversity in restaurants (Caribbean)

Public Safety

- Reform law enforcement
- Should not get arrested for 2 grams of weed. The court system should not have prolonged cases, marijuana cases

Economic Opportunity

- Too high prices for food and gas

Housing

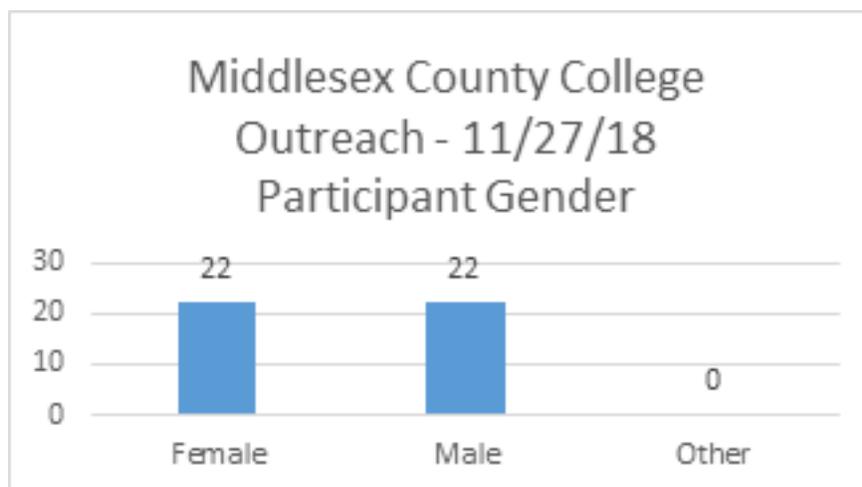
- Not enough affordable housing - especially new construction

Miscellaneous

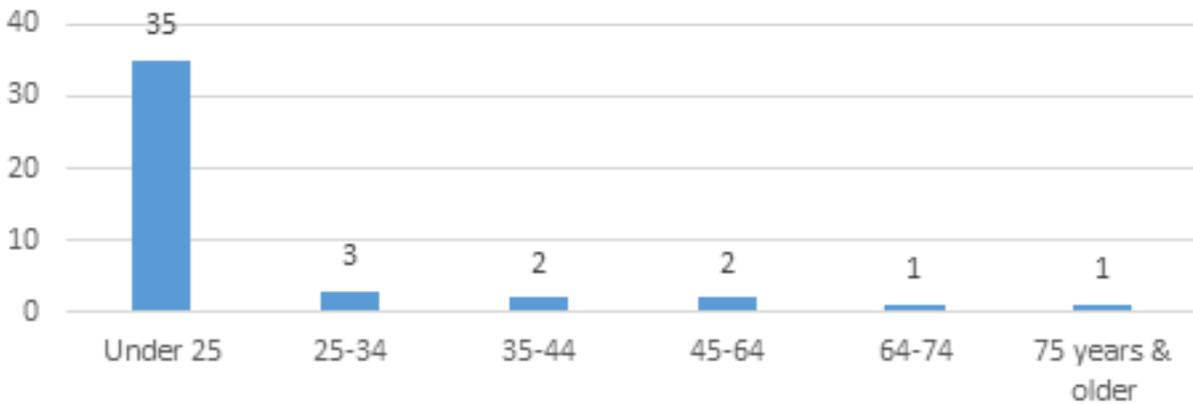
- Pizza Friday!! At every firehouse!

Demographic Summary

Males and females participated in equal numbers. Participation was racially and ethnically diverse, including black, white, Asian American, and Hispanic participants. The vast majority of participants were under 25 years old.



Middlesex County College Outreach - 11/27/18 Participant Age



Middlesex County College Outreach - 11/27/18 Participant Race/Ethnicity

