



Rutgers Student Center

Date: Monday, November 26, 2018 from 10:30 am – 2:30 pm

Location: Rutgers University College Ave Student Center, New Brunswick, NJ

Rutgers POET Staff: Trish Sanchez, Miriam Salerno, Donna Iken, Anna Quan

EVENT SUMMARY

The outreach booth was stationed in the atrium hallway, between the cafeteria seating and a set of steps that led to the main doors of the Rutgers Student Center on College Avenue. Because the outreach booth was stationed in one of the two hallways that adjoined the cafeteria and steps, many students passed by the booth. Rutgers POET staff engaged with more than 75 students, an estimate based on the number of “like” comments (58), “change” comments (61), and demographic surveys (57). Feedback and demographic cards were not collected for all respondents. For the most part, POET staff engaged with students; university staff workers and visitors also approached the booth and provided some feedback.

SURVEY RESPONSES

Summary The categories that had the highest number of “like” comments were (1) Arts & Culture; (2) Transportation; and (3) Public Services & Facilities. The categories with the highest number of “change” comments were (1) Transportation; (2) Economic Opportunity; (3) Public Safety.

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

Arts & Culture (16 comments) Respondents are proud of the cultural, ethnic and economic

diversity present in Middlesex County and the friendly community.

- People
 - Easy to meet people
 - Friendliness (2)
 - A lot of people
- Diversity
 - Cultural and ethnic diversity (5)
 - Food diversity. Latin-American food in New Brunswick, Asian food in Edison.

Transportation (11 comments) Respondents enjoyed their proximity to nearby cities, such as New York and Philadelphia. They also appreciated how easily they can access local places and how walkable their communities are.

- Proximity to NYC and/or Philadelphia (4)
- Central location (2)
- Walkable access to local places (2)
- Access to local places (2)
- Easy commute from North Brunswick

Public Services & Facilities (11 comments) Participants like various aspects of Rutgers University, schools in the county, and other public services.

- Rutgers
 - Rutgers University (2)
 - Rutgers Gardens
 - Diversity in campus scenery
 - Energy of school and campus
 - Accessible bus system between campuses
- School System
 - Good school system
 - AC in schools
 - School system in Woodbridge Township
- Libraries
- Recycling trash bins

Parks & Open Space (6 comments) Respondents appreciated the parks and open space in Middlesex County, from the beauty of the scenery to the cleanliness of the parks and the amenities offered at the parks (i.e. tennis courts at Johnson Park).

- Outdoor activities
 - Enjoys Middlesex County parks – play tennis at Johnson Park
 - Fun atmosphere, great outdoor activities
 - There are hiking places but also walkable downtowns
- Scenic
 - Scenic environment
 - Pretty around here
 - Abundant open space in South River

Land Use & Development (4 comments)

- Great places



- Like Highland Park
- Lots to do in New Brunswick, it has changed significantly
- A lot of great restaurants
- Restaurants in New Brunswick / Easton Avenue

Environment (4 comments)

- Environment – balance in nature and infrastructure
- A lot of trees
- Trees and lakes (2)

Economic Opportunity (3 comments)

- Job opportunities (2)
- Lots of local businesses

Public Safety

- Safe environment

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

Transportation (26 comments) Respondents mentioned transportation issues that ranged from roadway conditions and traffic to public transportation, parking, and transportation to different counties.

- Public Transportation
 - Frequency (2)
 - Increase frequency and connections of NJ Transit buses
 - Increase frequency of bus lines 815 and 818.
 - Timely mass bus transit systems (2)
 - Bus system is late or doesn't arrive
 - NJ Transit train between Metuchen and New Brunswick and to New York is delayed,

- canceled, and have few options later at night.
- Cleaner train stations
- Improve and subsidize public transportation
- NJ Transit buses do not go directly to Rutgers campuses
- Better transportation to other counties (e.g. Somerset County)
- Roadway Conditions
 - Potholes / need to pave streets (4)
 - Prevent flooding on Route 1 and Route 27
 - Expand Route 18
- Parking
 - Better or more parking in New Brunswick (4)
 - Need more accessible parking around train station
 - Parking for family events indoors
- Traffic Congestion (6)
 - Route 18 (2)
 - Route 18, on Turnpike
 - Route 27
 - Route 1
 - Traffic
- Need more efficient transportation
- Rutgers Transportation
 - Improve bicycle paths at Rutgers – New Brunswick campuses
 - Safety on crosswalks by improving speed limits on campuses
 - Less Rutgers Parking Police influence
 - Parking on Rutgers campuses (2)
 - Free parking for commuters
 - Quicker buses
 - More Rutgers buses (2)
 - Unreliable bus service
 - Coordinate Rutgers buses. They are sometimes overcrowded or empty.
 - More frequent Rutgers weekend buses

Economic Opportunity (6 comments) A number of participants want to see lower taxes.

- Lower taxes (5)
- Lower property tax

Public Safety (5 comments) Participants desire a safer environment in the towns around Rutgers.

- Safer environment in New Brunswick (2)
- More safety in New Brunswick and Highland Park (robbers)
- More police presence, safer neighborhoods, lots of theft. Packages are stolen from doorsteps near Cook-Douglass campus.
- More lights at night

Housing (4 comments) Respondents addressed housing affordability issues in New Brunswick.

- Gentrification in New Brunswick

- More affordable housing for non-students in New Brunswick
- More housing help for homeless individuals. Men's shelter is booked (Person had a job but couldn't afford housing)
- Increase affordable housing

Environment

- Cleaner Raritan River
- Too industrial looking, want a more eco-friendly look
- Less pollution

Public Services & Facilities

- More garbage pickup.
- Better handling of public services (roads, traffic, safety, school closures) during inclement weather

Arts & Culture

- More inclusive spaces (2)

Land Use & Development

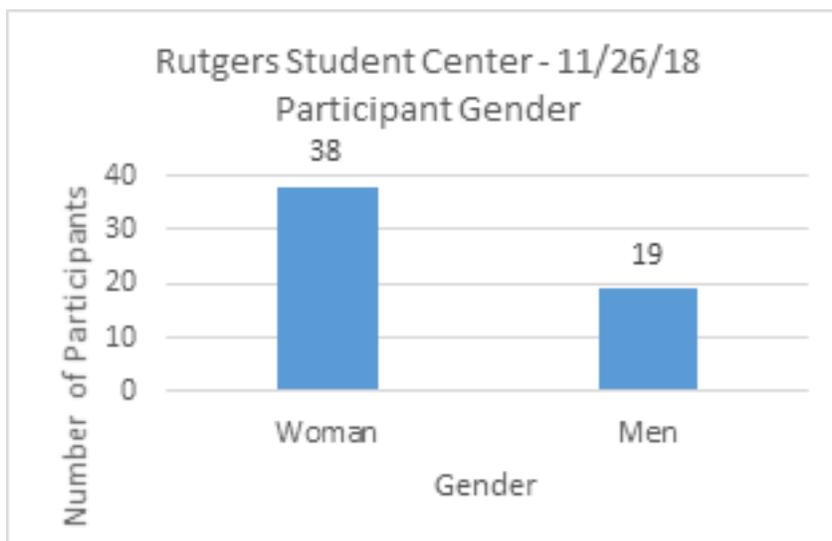
- More efficient development – it takes too long to commute.

Public Health

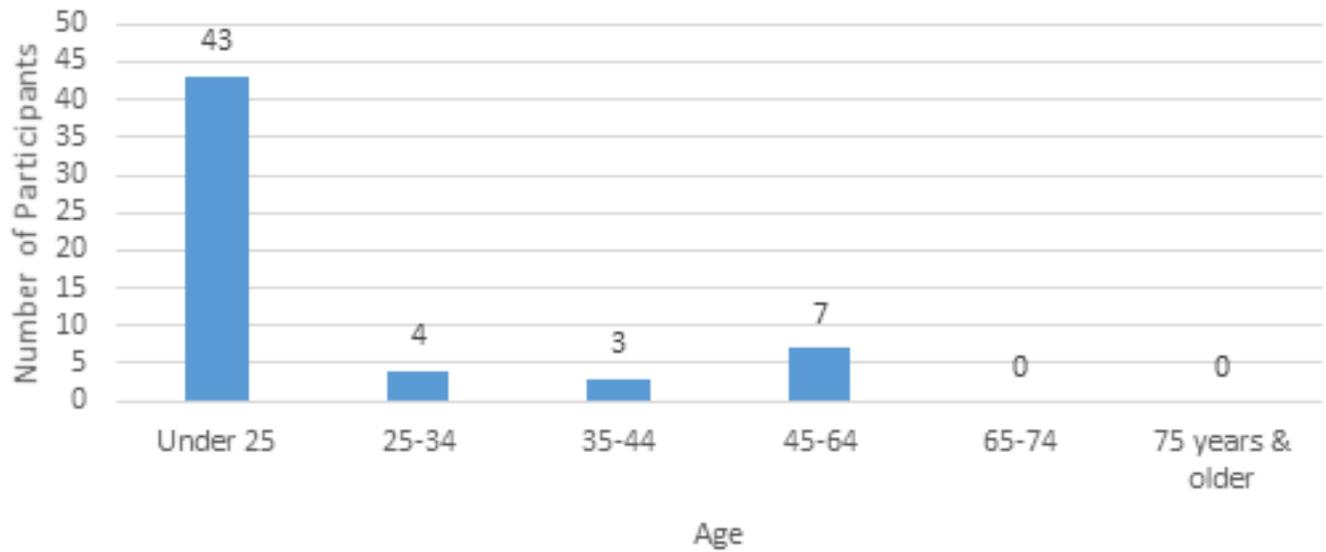
- Increased funding for skilled nursing facilities

DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

Women participated at twice the rate of men. The majority of respondents were under the age of 25, as undergraduate students frequent the college center. There are also a few people from the age categories of 25-34, 35-44, and 45-54; they included university staff and visitors. The pool of participants was racially and ethnically diverse, showing higher counts of people who identified as White, not Hispanic and Asian; some Black, not Hispanic and people who identified as More than One Race; and a few people who identified as White, Hispanic or Other race or chose to not disclose their racial/ethnic identity.



Rutgers Student Center - 11/26/18 Participant Age



Rutgers Student Center - 11/26/18 Participant Race/Ethnicity

