

Legacy *Matters*



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Smart Investment Census 2020



VCF President & CEO, Sharon Closius, stands with Connoisseur Media's Director of Public Affairs, John Voket, and Census 2020 Complete Count Committee Chair, Allen Schwartz, before a radio interview.



Members of the Valley Regional Complete Count Committee have convened regularly to ensure all area residents are included in the census.

Beware of scams

The U.S. Census Bureau will never ask you for:

- Your Social Security number
- Money or donations
- Anything on behalf of a political party
- Your bank or credit card account numbers

If someone claiming to be from the Census Bureau contacts you and asks for one of these things, it's a scam, and you should not cooperate.

In the United States Constitution, the nation's founding fathers mandated a census be conducted every 10 years. The first census was completed in 1790 and counted a total of 3,893,635 people living in the 15 states that then made up the United States of America.

The 2010 Census recorded 308.7 million inhabitants, a 9.7 percent increase from the 2000 Census population of 281.4 million, demonstrating how much a population can change between counts.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, both George Washington and Thomas Jefferson expressed skepticism when looking at the 1790 Census results, fearing that not all people had been counted. This is a concern that is still true today and a priority for people like Allen Schwartz, who chair regional Complete Count Committees (CCC).

Schwartz said, "I was a local office manager during the 2010 census and, of all the jobs I've had, I enjoyed that one the most. I built a team that was committed to doing the best job it could and I had an opportunity to talk with community groups. It was heartwarming to meet those people and rewarding to know that what we were doing had value. Now, I can do it again in 2020 and it's just as worthwhile. I'm impressed with how knowledgeable those serving the Valley towns are and how willing they are to assist with our efforts."

The CCC is dedicated to educating the public about how census data is collected and utilized. These efforts are meant to encourage participation and demystify misconceptions. Members include representatives from schools, veterans' groups, senior centers, nonprofits, and many others. Schwartz added, "We share ideas about how to communicate the purpose of the census and how to ensure everyone participates."

The data is vital for countless reasons. Should the census results show a shift in population, some areas might gain or lose representation among elected officials in the House of Representatives, triggering a redistricting action. Funding from the government, at \$675 billion or \$2,900 per person, may be lost if people are not counted, impacting many essential programs.



This year, for the first time ever, the census can be completed online. Those without a computer or internet access can complete the census online at a local library, answer the questionnaire in-person with a U.S. Census Bureau representative, or mail in their responses.

Roberta Cook, President and CEO of BHcare, explained, "As health and human service providers, we will have to live with what happens in this census

Smart Investment *Census 2020*

for the next decade. Given that the census is used by state and federal governments to determine grant levels, it is critically important for programs like ours, which rely on that funding to service those with mental health or addiction issues, to know that we've taken an accurate count."

Rick Dunne, Executive Director for the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG), pointed to the competition between states as each vies for federal funding. "Those who do a better job of counting the people living in that area end up doing better in federal formula grants. Each town has a complete count committee because getting an accurate count is key. At the end of the day, a good count will result in a solid legislative representation, a better return on our investment of federal taxes, and a better community."

NVCOG's work as a Census Bureau contact for the region takes place every year, as opposed to the decennial census work. "Our job was to confirm local addresses. We found approximately 14,000 addresses that were either missing or part of new construction efforts since 2010 for our 19 towns. Without that verification, there would be no outreach to those folks and we would not count upwards of 50,000 people."

As a metropolitan planning organization, NVCOG relies on accurate census data to help define the community's dense infrastructure. "We help to update this data every year. For example, we work on the American Community Survey, which profiles a smaller population and asks more information during interim years," Dunne said. "We want to know where our people are and if our communities are growing or shrinking

because tools like this help us plan the dedication of resources, such as transportation."

He stressed the importance of census participation for business as well as municipal planning. For example, a big box store might avoid a community should it mistakenly think there are not enough customers due to an inaccurate count. "It can be easy to miss a lot of people in a small area when you're dealing with compact places like we have in New England."

Sample Census 2020 Questions:

- How many people were living or staying in this house, apartment, or mobile home on April 1, 2020?
- Were there any additional people staying here on April 1, 2020 that you did not include in Question 1?
- Is this house, apartment, or mobile home?
- What is your telephone number?
- Please provide information for each person living here: sex, age, race, and ethnicity.

To help ensure that this doesn't happen, the CCC is generating ideas that will make it easier for everyone to participate in the census, such as leveraging the power of local libraries, where questions can be addressed.

A commonly voiced concern is security and Schwartz noted, "People are sometimes unwilling to share their information for fear of falling victim to a scam. As important as it is to get this right, it's just as important for everyone to know that no personal information is collected in this process. Census data cannot be used for law enforcement purposes and confidentiality is strictly maintained. The raw census data, such as names and addresses, remains confidential for 72 years."

Schwartz said, "This census in particular is historic because, for the first time ever, people can complete the questionnaire online as well as by mail, phone, or in person with a door-to-door census representative. April 1, 2020 is Census Day and you'll get something in the mail before then, describing the process, which is to answer a list of brief questions, including name, age, and gender."

He added, "For example, some people may wonder if their children are too young to be counted in the census. The fact of the matter is a newborn baby will be impacted by this census data for the first decade of his or her life before the next count occurs in 10 years. If you, your children, or anyone in your household is a resident in this state on April 1, then you should participate in the census here."

Schwartz concluded, "The census impacts so many aspects of our life that simply could not be effective without accurate data. A successful 2020 Census will be an accurate census. Everyone should be counted because every single person matters. It's quite an undertaking but it's really good work that needs to be done."

Featured Fund

Raymond F. Mackowski Fund

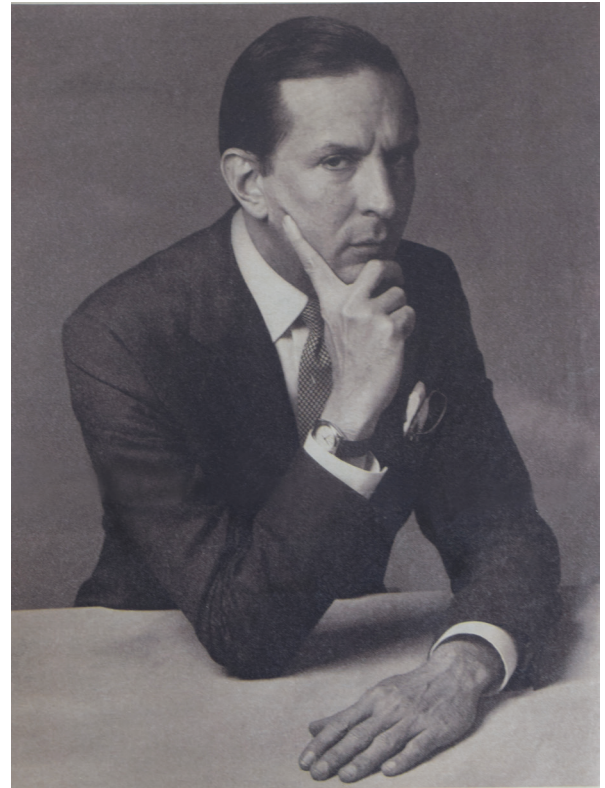
Many donors are inspired to create a fund with the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) with a specific idea in mind – to establish a scholarship at a former high school, to benefit a long-supported nonprofit, or perhaps even to designate funds for a specific preference or based on past charitable endeavors. Once a fund is endowed, donor intent becomes so much more than a set of written instructions. Instead, it perpetuates the values of an individual or family, enriches the community, and honors those who loved the Valley.

Not all funds, however, have a specified purpose. Unrestricted funds entrust VCF with the flexibility and responsibility of continuously distributing grants to address the changing needs of the community both now and for years to come.

Raymond Mackowski established a substantial unrestricted fund at VCF through his estate, which was created after his passing in 2016. Every year, a distributable amount of approximately \$60,000 is generated from the fund and is invested based on careful consideration of the current state of the Valley to create a better region. Raymond's gift will always be up to date with emerging issues due to the flexibility this type of endowment provides.

When administering an unrestricted fund, VCF evaluates all aspects of community well-being: arts and culture, economic development, education, environment, health and human services, neighborhood revitalization, and more. Because of Raymond's generous contribution, VCF's professional staff is able to grant funds to ensure critical work can progress. This makes the Valley stronger with each passing year by supporting long-term solutions, responding to emergencies, and meeting social, cultural, educational, or environmental crises that inevitably occur.

Raymond spent his life in service to his hometown of Ansonia. Among his many pursuits was to serve as a dedicated volunteer at Yale-New Haven Hospital for more than 30 years. Raymond was also a member of both the American Legion and the Knights of Columbus. His bequest was made in memory of his parents, John and Amelia Mackowski. Thanks to Raymond's legacy, future generations will remember the man and his intent to make his home and his Valley a better place for everyone.



Raymond F. Mackowski

Raymond's nephew, Richard Mackowski, explained, "He was ready to help anyone in the community. He gave so much of his time and talent to helping others. He was just a good man. That's really the best way to put it."

VCF President and CEO Sharon Closius said, "Unrestricted funds enable VCF to support emerging issues and the most pressing needs in the Valley. As stewards for the Valley's philanthropic endowments, we look forward to honoring Raymond's intent throughout our community for many years to come."



Planned Giving

VCF welcomes Richard Knoll to the Gates Society, the Foundation's planned giving community.

Your planned gift will impact the charities you're passionate about forever, regardless of the amount. Call us at 203-751-9162 or learn more at valleyfoundation.org

Community Investment

Supporting Local Census Efforts

The Valley Community Foundation (VCF) is committed to serving its role in the region to ensure the success of Census 2020. One of the many ways VCF supports the Valley is through its grant making programs. Having correct census data is an important key to effectively directing revenue to nonprofit organizations where it can have the greatest impact.

"We are very familiar with who is doing what in the Valley and can convene people together to ensure everyone knows what the census is and the importance of completing it," said VCF President & CEO Sharon Closius. "Our goal is to have a complete census count in the Valley that will result in accurate data for so many groups to use throughout the next decade."

"Census data is one of several sources VCF uses to compile the Valley Community Index every three years," Sharon added. "Efforts like the Index, which take a deeper dive into the characteristics of our community, hinge on that 10-year snapshot gathered by the U.S. Census Bureau."

Knowing how residents care deeply about the Valley community, Sharon recognized the importance to create a grassroots effort to educate, inform, and reach those in the region. "Unlike a generation ago, or even a decade ago, channels in which news is consumed have changed dramatically, making it critical to reach people where they are."

VCF has taken an active role in supporting the Complete Count Committee to ensure that schools, businesses, religious groups, and others receive census assistance from committee members.

"This is a great way to spread the word and bolster engagement because we can reach spheres of people and address challenges such as limited resources," Sharon said. "There are key individuals who might be stretched too thin if they didn't have this committee and other peers to share what they can do on a regional level."

Fear and apathy, however, represent challenging barriers in obtaining an

accurate, complete count of the region. Some local residents are disinclined to participate in the census and may not be aware of how the data impacts and supports their daily lives, such as through legislative representation or federal funding for municipal infrastructure. Others may fear legal repercussions if they are working to become citizens and exist in a limbo-like state. More still may not understand the survey form simply because English is a second language.



Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz is spearheading the state-wide Connecticut Complete Count Committee for the upcoming 2020 Census. She is pictured above with fellow elected officials, VCF President & CEO Sharon Closius, U.S. Census Bureau staff, and members of the Valley Region's Complete Count Committee after a presentation at the Derby Public Library.

"How do we best include these populations and reach them? Who needs to be at the table to address these concerns and, more importantly, act on them?" Sharon asked. "VCF is there to help people so they know about the range of resources that are in place, such as the option to call in and complete the census survey questions by speaking with someone on the phone, which is an available option in multiple languages."

"Our job is always to assess the Valley Region and make sure resources are strategically put to the most effective use," she added. "VCF was a very young organization when the 2010 Census took place but, today, we are equipped and have the capacity to ensure efforts are undertaken to obtain a complete count of our region."

Sponsored Events

The following events were supported with unrestricted funds by VCF this season:

February

Derby Historical Society

To sponsor the 2020 Cultural Lecture Series beginning on February 29th with a presentation on Native American Maple Sugaring.

New Haven Symphony Orchestra

To sponsor the Vision 2020 and Beyond Gala February 15th.

March

Ansonia School Readiness

To sponsor Bowl-2-Benefit the Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services on March 7th.

Seymour Historical Society

To sponsor the 2020 Educational Speaker Series, beginning on March 22nd with a presentation on Clara Barton.

The Great Give® 2020 dates announced!

The annual 36-hour online giving event will be taking place May 5-6. Visit www.thegreatgive.org for details.

You're Invited!

Join us on the evening of **Tuesday, May 12, 2020** at Race Brook Country Club for the Valley Community Foundation's **16th Annual Reception**. Register at valleyfoundation.org or call our office at 203-751-9162.

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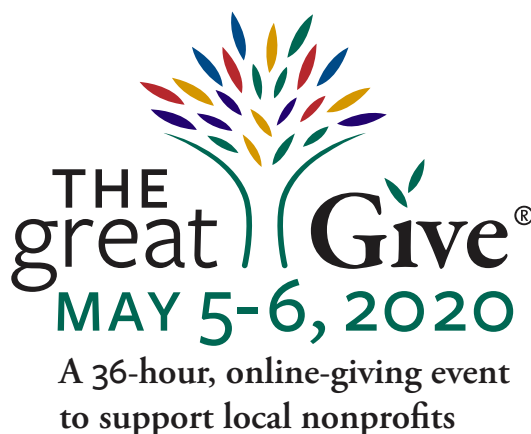
Good News About the Valley

The Great Give® 2020 is Coming!

Last year, during an exciting 36-hour period, our community united as one to achieve the same goal: strengthen local nonprofit organizations and the services they provide. More than \$1.8 million was raised as a result of approximately 12,000 donors giving 17,000+ gifts for the benefit of nearly 400 participating nonprofits serving Greater New Haven and the Lower Naugatuck Valley. On May 5-6, 2020, our community will come together again for the common good during The Great Give®.

What You Can Do:

Ask your employer if the company would consider being a sponsor of the event. Contact our office at 203-751-9162 for details. Own your own business? Consider creating a special named prize that benefits select nonprofits serving the Valley or that provide similar services. Help your favorite local nonprofit by becoming a Peer2Peer fundraiser and networking with your friends to help the nonprofit win prize money.



Make sure your favorite nonprofit is registered to participate. Approximately \$175,000 is up for grabs in matching funds and prizes, but eligible nonprofits must register in advance. There is no cost to participate and there are plenty of free trainings available to help nonprofits succeed.

If you are a VCF donor advised fund holder, be sure to take advantage of special giving incentives through your fund.

Details will be announced in the coming weeks.

If you're active on social media, please share our event announcements with your friends using #TheGreatGive and be on the lookout for the return of #gGTheAcorn.

The Great Give® was created by our partner in philanthropy The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven and has been sponsored by the Valley Community Foundation since its inception. It's a fun way to support local nonprofits doing work that is important to you. Get ready to Get Your Give On!