



For Immediate Release
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Aurora Public Library Awarded Census Grant

Aurora Public Library received a grant for \$10,000 from the Reaching Across Illinois Library System's (RAILS) Census 2020: It Counts! grant project. Aurora Public Library is a subrecipient of the funds awarded to RAILS from the Pritzker Administration and the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS).

In applying for the grant, the Aurora Public Library put forth a unique plan involving its community partners and demonstrated its commitment to ensuring a complete census count, explained how an accurate count can affect its community, and showed its specific areas of strength to ensure a successful count.

Ensuring an accurate census count is extremely important for our state. Census results are used to determine how many seats each state gets in the House of Representatives, and state officials redraw boundaries of legislative districts to account for population shifts. More than \$675 billion will be distributed to support state and county schools, hospitals, roads, public works, and other vital programs in our communities. Census results also help determine funding for libraries and library systems.

The group of 20 subgrantees made up of libraries, social service agencies, and county-level organizations will focus on six hard-to-count (HTC) populations as outlined by IDHS. The HTC populations consist of children younger than five years old, renters, people living close to or below the poverty line, older adults, people experiencing homelessness, and people who are young and mobile.

“As a trusted messenger in our community, it is our duty to educate the hard-to-count populations about the importance of completing the census and how a complete count can benefit those populations and our community as a whole.”

“Aurora Public Library plans to honor the commitments made in our grant application by providing better access to our community, developing awareness through our communication channels, center programs around the census, and more! We have a responsibility to use our unique position within our community to ensure a complete count and make sure our community gets what it deserves,” said Deputy Director, Tom Spicer.

The subrecipients, including the Aurora Public Library are safe places for anyone to receive assistance in completing the census questionnaire. This location has free internet access and can also assist with other methods of completing the census questionnaire. In addition, they can address fears someone may have about confidentiality of census data.

Funding provided by the Reaching Across Illinois Library System through a grant from Illinois Department of Human Services.

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