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Building the Foundation for Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database: A Brief Study of the Communication and Collaboration among Rhode Island Social Service Agencies

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1

Contents

Abstract

In the state of Rhode Island, numerous non-profit organizations, businesses and state government departments provide a variety of services to the immigrant population. Among these agencies, each has different levels of communication, collaboration and knowledge of the other organizations operating in Rhode Island. Collaborating with the International Institute of Rhode Island, a non-profit immigration agency located in Providence, my initial goal was the creation of the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database (RIIAD), a simple and informative web page detailing the services, mission statement and address of the agencies that assist immigrants. Of the more than seventy organizations invited to the join the database, only fifteen elected to participate. The great majority elected to ignore the invitation or deny it. In this paper, I present my perceived barriers, successes and difficulties of the project and suggestions for my community partner for future efforts to attempt to create the database. In addition, I gathered information and statistics about the level of communication, collaboration, advocacy and exchange of information among certain social service providers in Rhode Island through an online survey, a formal interview, and informal conversations. Ultimately, I created the foundation for the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database and from my work; interns and full time employees can finish the project.

Introduction

Immigrants make up a significant minority of the population of the state of Rhode Island. According to a study released by the Immigration Policy Center, in 2008 there were 128,453 immigrants living in Rhode Island, which constituted 12.2% of the population (Immigration Policy Center, 2010). "New Americans", immigrants, and the children of immigrants, are 11.6% of the registered voters, 14.2% of the workforce, and make up a group with political and economic power within Rhode Island (Immigration Policy Center, 2010). These numbers represent a significant portion of the population, and the trend suggests it will grow even larger in the future. Population, percentage of the workforce, and economic purchasing power dictate the importance of further studying of the immigrant experience in Rhode Island.

In addition to a sizable minority of immigrants living in Rhode Island, numerous non-profits, businesses, and state government departments provide services to this population. Collaborating with the International Institute of Rhode Island, non-profit located in Providence, Rhode Island that provides educational, legal and social services to immigrants and refugees for over ninety years. My initial goal was to create a web page that lists as many of these organizations as possible in order to increase the communication, collaboration and exchange of information between the member agencies. Initially, I hoped my experience communicating with organizations in Rhode Island would help to start the web page by the end of the spring semester. In addition, I believed that more organizations would initially join the database. Eventually, I realized that creating the foundation for the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database would be a more realistic goal due to the limited timetable. Through analysis of my successes and difficulties in the early stages of creation of the website, several research questions emerged. How often do Rhode Island agencies communicate, collaborate, and/or exchange information with other businesses and organizations in the Rhode Island area? Are Rhode Island organizations, non-

profits, businesses satisfied with their current level of communication with other agencies? What kind of collaboration exists between the organizations, non-profits, and businesses that provide services for the immigrant community in Rhode Island? Why did certain types of organizations elected to participate in the database where others rejected the offer or did not respond? What barriers negatively influenced the success of my project?

In addition to analyzing the successes and struggles of the creation of the database, I will compare the RIIAD with a similar project I completed last summer for my community partner called the Community Resource Center. The project consisted of contacting social service agencies asking for brochures, pamphlets, and information about their organization in order to create a large collection that could benefit the clients of the International Institute of Rhode Island. Several variables helped analyze the decisions of agencies during both projects. These include the size of the organization, past collaboration or relationship with my community partner, type of service provided, and the time of year contacted, the task asked of the organization, and the name recognition of the email account used for communication. I argue that these variables did not all effect each project the same way and influenced the initial success or failure of each project.

The size of an organization, the type of services provided, past collaboration or relationship with my community partner, affected both projects equally. The task required of the invited organization, the time of year contacted, the name credibility and insider status attached to the initial email contact effected the Community Resource Center Project positively, and effected the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database negatively.

Literature Review

The topic of immigration is a major issue today at the state, national and international levels. The discussion of immigration policies is not simply an academic issue, it is also present in newspapers, television news programs, and talk radio shows. Immigration laws are an underlying theme of many of the most important issues facing governments at all levels such as security, economic policies, transportation, and the war on terror. For example, in state legislatures across the United States there has been a steep increase in the amount of bills relating to immigration introduced and enacted between 2005, with 300 bills introduced and 36 enacted, and 2009, with over 1,500 bills introduced and 222 enacted (Bailey and Fitzgerald, 2010). This shows a clear trend towards growth in the discussion in state legislatures of immigration-related issues such as employment verification, access to services, education, and enforcement of federal legislation, human trafficking, and naturalization (Broder, 2007). The immigration debate has many different aspects, two in particular, the segmented assimilation model and the self-identity of second generation are very important and provide a strong foundation for further study of all immigration related issues. They are two lenses to view the various aspects of the debate surrounding immigration. Looking at how immigrants assimilate into society and how these choose to identify themselves can help us analyze the policies in place on a state, local, and federal level. In addition, these two topics are important in looking at how our society views certain immigrant groups through the news, television, books and other cultural narratives. Yet another aspect is how our society accepts or rejects certain immigrant groups based on their skin color or similarity to a native minority-group.

Segmented Assimilation Model

One theory for analyzing the part of society that a specific immigrant group joins in the United

States is the segmented assimilation model. In the past, scholars viewed assimilation as upwards with the goal of joining the middle class, considered the straight-line assimilation model (Portes and Zhou, 1993; Portes and Rumbaut, 2001; Portes, Fernandez-Kelly & Haller, 2005). The segmented assimilation model proposes three different avenues which the authors argue better reflects the current situation in the United States. The three paths to assimilation are acculturation and parallel integration into the white middle class, permanent poverty and assimilation into the underclass, and rapid economic progress while purposely maintaining the values of the immigrant community and strong solidarity (Portes and Zhou 1993). This theory presents a very strong model for analyzing assimilation within the United States.

I argue that there is a fourth potential option that is a combination of the last two options. It constitutes minimal economic progress and assimilation while at the same time maintaining the values of their home culture and strong ties, within their own community. These groups have multiple reasons for not assimilating, such as disagreement with American values, strong peer pressure from within their community against assimilation, or the lack of desire to change. Such groups merely exist within society, contributing very little economically and unwilling to assimilate into the greater society. They exist on the fringes of society, are the focus of racism in the mainstream media, a higher than normal levels of organized crime and employment within the population. While this appears similar to the downward assimilation, it differs in that the immigrant group makes a conscious effort to maintain the culture of their homeland, and remain distinct from other similar ethnic native and non-native populations within the United States, even at the cost of economic progress.

One such example that exists within the United States is certain Native American tribes who live on reservations throughout the country (Eckholm, 2009). While they are not technically immigrants and their ancestors lived on our lands long before we came here, they have a culture that is distinct from the mainstream. Certain elements of their society, mainly youth, assimilate through

adopting many of the characteristics of urban gang culture found in cities across the United States. These Native American gangs choose to maintain certain values of their own culture, such as songs and the warrior culture of their tribe. A hybrid is created between Native American culture and the predominantly black criminal gangs such as the Crips (Grant, 2008). In some cases, the Native American gangs even have links to gangs of other races in cities located outside the reservations (Bell and Lin, 2005). Downward assimilation exists not just for the gang members but also the greater community. Drugs, violence, alcoholism and crime compound with high unemployment and a severe lack of opportunities to create a myriad of problems affecting many Native American reservations across the country (Bell and Lim, 2005). For example, the Ogala Sioux Tribe who live on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, where in 2009 there were approximately 39 gangs (Eckholm, 2009). The North Side Tre Tre Gangster Crips are a gang on the reservation and they draw much of their inspiration from a gang located in Denver. High levels of unemployment among youth, a police force that is losing patrol officers due to a lack of funding and increases in crime lead to a situation in which the entire community is suffering, not just the gang members (Eckholm, 2009). Rap music is popular among many gang members and one member's room is described as "decorated with movie posters of Al Pacino as the megalomaniacal drug dealer Tony Montana in 'Scarface'" (Eckholm, 2009). Another example, are black immigrants from an island in the Caribbean who choose to maintain as much of their native culture as possible instead of assimilating into the African-American population within the United States and adopting their values.

Many academics accept the segmented assimilation model as valid, but it is not without criticism (Vermeulen, 2009 and Pearlmann, 2005). One of the basic assumptions of Portes and other proponents of segmented assimilation is that the "old immigration" model from 1915 to 1965 was straight-line incorporation towards the middle class. Vermeulen (2009) challenges this assumption and cites the example of twentieth century Greek immigrants in cities such as Chicago and New York

8

where their assimilation was similar to the pluralistic integration option presented in the segmented assimilation model. Vermeulen (2009) argues that the "entrepreneurship, the social cohesion and the success in education" of the Greeks are all aspects of pluralistic integration. Therefore, pluralistic immigration existed both during the past and in our current society. Additional critiques relate to the concept of downward assimilation. He argues that the current research has not proved the existence of downward assimilation but that instead it merely suggests the risk of such movement (Vermeulen, 2009). Furthermore, he questions the permanency of such cultural movement due to the factors used to determine downward mobility; "There is little or no discussion of the possibility of change here. This is actually remarkable because the phenomena which are used as indicators of downward assimilation – such as unemployment, school dropout and criminality – may clearly be temporary" (Vermeulen, 2009, pg. 13). This appears to be a very valid criticism of the hypothesis presented by Portes and Zhou (1993). Based on the research of Vermeulen (2009), I raise the question about the importance of the word permanency in downward mobility theory. This hypothesis is pessimistic in the way it condemns certain immigrant groups to a downward cycle of poverty similar to the native urban poor.

Piedra and Engstrom (2009) use elements of the segmented assimilation model and combine it with the life model so that, "social workers can better understand the environmental stressors that increase the vulnerabilities of immigrants to the potentially harsh experience of adapting to a new country"[1]. "Modes of incorporation" is an important aspect of the segmented assimilation model. Portes and Rumbaut (2001) describe this as the three levels of reception for an immigrant group, which are societal, communal, and governmental. Governmental policies impact the resources and opportunities available to immigrants, "Government support is important because it gives newcomers access to an array of resources that do not exist for other immigrants" (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001, pg.

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[1] . For an explanation of the life model, See Germain, C. B., & Gitterman, A. (1996). *The life model of social work practice: Advances in theory and practice* (2nd ed.). New York: Columbia University Press.

47). The societal reception consists of the characteristics of an immigrant group such as race, language, religion and how those relate to the norms of mainstream society. Communal reception is the community that exists between immigrants of the same foreign national-origin group. Portes and Rumbaut (2001) conclude, that "These modes condition the extent to which immigrant human capital can be brought into play to promote successful economic and social adaption" (49). Both Piedra and Engstrom (2009) and Portes and Rumbaut (2001) agree that government policies have the ability to improve the economic success of a particular immigrant group through preferred access to certain services. This concept raises a potential flaw in any organization or political movement focused on the immigrant population. Is there a way to determine if the programs, services, government benefits are equally accessible to all immigrant groups? Is it possible that certain programs such as religious organizations and ethnic, racial groups would provide more effective and efficient assistance to members of their own group?

I conclude that the segmented assimilation model is the best available hypothesis for immigrant assimilation in the United States since 1965. Using the segmented assimilation model as a foundation, the next area of focus is the ethnic identity of second-generation immigrants within the United States.

Second-generation immigrant assimilation and ethnic identity

Second-generation immigrants are the main focus of the segmented assimilation model. Chacko (2003) not only studies the second-generation, but also include the "1.5 generation" which is defined as, "persons who immigrated with their parents to the United States when they were less than twelve years of age". Chacko (2003) further focuses her research on Ethiopian immigrants living within the Washington D.C metropolitan area. Waters (1994) and Chacko (2003) both write about the identification of black immigrants in major metropolitan areas in the United States. Waters (1994)

10

studies a different ethnic group, choosing instead West Indian and Haitian Americans.

Waters (1994) and Chacko (2003) investigate the words used by black immigrants to identify themselves within society. Other questions include how do the first and second-generation immigrants interact with the native black population? Do they view themselves as part of the native black community? Above it? Waters (1994) argues that first-generation immigrant blacks tend to view themselves as better than native blacks and will have a very strong immigrant identity. One way which the first-generation immigrants actively differentiate themselves from the native population is speaking with an accent. She performs a series of interviews with 83 second-generation immigrants and finds that 42 % of the people identify themselves as Black Americans. This stance differs from that of their parents and other first generation black immigrants who work to create distinctions between native blacks and themselves. A large minority, 30% of the second-generation chose to adopt similar ideas to their parents and continue to maintain a strong ethnic identity while distancing themselves from native blacks. The final 28% of respondents tended to be more recent immigrants and chose to maintain their native identity. This differs from the second option because they do not usually choose to distinguish themselves from the native black population. Chacko (2003) finds evidence suggesting there is a strong shift between ethnic identities between generations of immigrants. For example, every single person of the second-generation preferred the term "Ethiopian American" while 80% of the 1.5 generation preferred "Ethiopian". Chacko (2003) finds different results than Waters (1994) with regards to relationship between black immigrants and the native black community. She states that "all of the young Ethiopian immigrants with whom I spoke preferred to be Americanized into the mainstream society rather than into the native community" (15) and, "For the majority of 1.5 generation immigrants interviewed, the desire to have an identity separate from that of native Blacks was compounded by negative personal experiences with members of the group..." (9). Clearly, both authors agree there is a change between different generations of immigrants and their identity with America. Their research

suggests that the larger the generation, the more likely an immigrant will have American as part of their identity. One such example is found in Chacko (2003) with the shift from Ethiopian towards Ethiopian American between the 1.5 and second-generations.

When comparing the two articles, one must look at their similarities and differences in order to determine possible conclusions. First the similarities, both study the identity of second-generation black immigrants living in a major metropolitan area of the United States. Interviews make up the bulk of the original research from which the authors draw their conclusions. Second the differences, while both scholars interview black immigrants, one study focuses on a single country and a smaller interview sample (Chacko 2003), while the other focuses on a broader region and larger sample size (Waters 1994).

Portes and Rumbaut (2001) study many different areas of the lives of second-generation immigrants in the United States, including the ethnic identities of children of immigrants. Portes and Rumbaut (2001) draw their conclusions on the shifts in ethnic identity from two surveys conducted in 1992 and 1995-1996 of the same group of students. Completed in 1992, the first survey drew its data from eighth and ninth grade students. The second survey was conducted during the students' finals years of high school. The goal of the survey was to determine the ethnic self-identity and was an open-ended question. The study had four major categories from which the vast majority, ninety-five percent, of responses corresponded: a foreign national-origin identity (examples: Mexican, Guatemalan), pan ethnic minority-group identity (examples: Asian, Latino), a hyphenated American identity, with one specific nationality (example: Chinese-American), and a plain, American national identity, without a hyphen (Portes and Rumbaut, 2001, pg. 154). The data suggests a strong shift away from the hyphenated American and plain American identities towards the foreign national-origin identity and pan ethnic groups as the students grew older.

Perhaps the greatest strength of the survey is the thorough and detailed analysis of its results by

Portes and Rumbaut (2001). There are numerous charts and tables detailing the shifts in answers between the two surveys, the changes based on region and, in some cases, country of origin. These charts and tables are valuable for comparing the results with other articles that focused on a particular country or region of origin for second-generation immigrants in the United States such as Waters (1994) and Chacko (2003). It is particularly valuable to compare with Waters because her sample drew upon students from Haiti and the West Indies, which is a section listed in Table 7.2. More limited conclusions are possible with the Chaco's results because Ethiopia is lumped into the Middle East, Africa category which is very broad and covers an enormous amount of different immigrant groups. In addition, a large portion of her study details the uniqueness of Ethiopia in comparison with the rest of Africa because it remained independent from colonization (Chacko 2003). Table 7.2[2] showcases one difference between the immigrants from Canadian and European origin groups and other areas such as Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean. In the second survey, 57.8% of the European and Canadian national origin groups self-identified as "American". In addition, this group experienced a 15.8% increase from the first survey to the second survey. For the second group, all but one country have less than 6% of the people self-identifying as "American" and the vast majority are under 3%. The second group of national-origin groups all experienced a decrease in the percentage of children self-identifying as American. The results demonstrate one area of difference between European and Canadian national-origin groups and immigrants from other areas such as Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In addition, perhaps the European and Canadian national groups feel a much stronger connection to native born citizens as compared with immigrants from other regions. For example, race is one area that the Canadian and European national groups might feel a tie to the "American" culture if they identify as white, whereas immigrants from places like Africa, and some parts of Latin America might identify as a something different.

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[2]   Pages 162-163

13

Kasinitz et. al (2008) present an extensive study of the young adult children immigrants living in New York City. The authors address the ethnic identities of the second-generation immigrants. One concept presented by the authors is proximal hosts, which are defined as, "the American racial and ethnic grouping in which native born Americans would tend to place the new immigrant ethnic group" (Kasinitz et. al 2008, pg.76). This term captures the external struggle faced by many second-generation immigrants living within the United States with regards to their ethnic identity. In addition, this term is valuable for analyzing Waters (1994) and Chacko (2003) and the relationship between black immigrants and their proximal hosts, the African-American population. Kasinitz (2008) and the other scholars criticize the United States Census Bureau for their lack of recognition of Hispanic or Spanish as race categories. They argue that the answers of many immigrants who self-identify into these categories are not being properly classified by the Census. The 2010 Census changed the terminology for the "Hispanic question." Adding upon the 2000 Census, the Bureau included the word origin at the end of the question 5 and added a variety of examples for Hispanic origins (Dominican, Nicaraguan etc.) for the fill-in option[3]. The 2010 Census also noted that, "For this Census, Hispanic origins are not races".[4] Therefore, the criticisms raised by Kasinitz et. al (2008) remains in the 2010 census and Hispanic peoples still must write in their own race for question 6. For example, a mixed race person from a South American country who also has Indigenous blood could check as many as three different boxes: black, white, and American Indian. The solution appears rather simple for the 2020 Census; include Hispanic as a race category.

In Kasinitz et. al (2008), the chapter entitled *Ethnic Identities* provides strong insight on the self-identity of second-generation immigrants in their own lives and also on a government survey similar to the Census. The scholars reference a variety of literature from many different authors, which

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[3]   2000 Census Form: http://www.census.gov/dmd/www/pdf/d02p.pdf
[4]   2010 Census Form: http://www.census.gov/schools/pdf/2010form_info.pdf:

creates a strong foundation for their arguments. In addition, immigrants from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds and origins are surveyed including Russian Jews, Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, and Chinese. This provides credibility because their hypotheses apply to a wide variety of immigrants, not just one group. Kasinitz et. al (2008) artfully weave into their arguments a series of interviews with immigrants that add considerable strength to their position. They combine these anecdotes with statistics from a variety of sources, including their own research and numbers from the Census. Finally, the section on proximal hosts provided valuable insight for reading and understanding other articles relating to the self-identity of second-generation immigrants.

Kasinitz et. al (2008) reach several conclusions about 1.5 and second-generation immigrants living in New York City. First, they state that, "On the whole, second and 1.5 generation New Yorkers are already doing better than their immigrant parents. The Chinese and Russian Jews have demonstrated particularly rapid upward mobility" (Kasinitz et. al, 2008, 342). This is interesting because Russian Jews often have a skin color very close to native whites, perhaps making them similar to the immigrants of Canadian and European national origins. In addition, the authors find that religion can play an important part in upward mobility because Russian Jews had access to a large network of assistance through Jewish religious groups (Kasinitz et. al. 2008). Second-generation Chinese are also able to achieve rapid upward mobility while having the racial appearance of a minority. Second, when comparing second-generation groups with native-born groups, they found that the second-generation groups "earn as much or more than the comparable native-born group" (343). It is very interesting that the results demonstrate that see by the second-generation, salaries are already on par or better than native groups. While it may be tough for the first generation, in New York, the opportunities for equal or better pay are definitely present for the second generation. Third, they found that many second-generation immigrants are able to combine the best parts of their home culture and American culture, also known as selective acculturation (Kasinitz et. al 2008). This selective acculturation provides the

15

second-generation with an advantage if they are able to successfully combine the two cultures.

Self-identity of second-generation immigrants is an important indicator of their mode of assimilation into American society. Do they think of themselves first as a member of their home country (Chinese), as a hyphenated American (Chinese-American), as part of a larger pan ethnic group (Asian), or simply as American? This is important because it helps reveal what group in society to which immigrants identify with most. If large numbers of a certain group are not identifying as American, is that because they do not feel welcome in that group or because they prefer to identity with their home country or a larger pan ethnic group?

These two lenses, the segmented assimilation model and the self-identity of second-generation immigrants, provide valuable insight and serve as excellent tools to analyze many aspects of the immigration debate.

Conclusion and Further Research

Using the segmented assimilation model (Portes and Zhou, 1993, Portes and Rumbaut, 2001) and the second-generation immigrant ethnic identity (Chacko, 2003, Waters, 1994, and Kasinitz et. al, 2008) as the foundation the goal of my research is to create an easy to access, simple to read database of the programs, organizations, services available to immigrants in the state of Rhode Island. Ideally, immigrants in danger of falling into a permanent cycle of downward mobility would be able to find out about the programs available to them in Rhode Island to improve their standard of living. While the database directs itself toward immigrants, the information is available and can help all members of society. Programs like the Women, Infants, and Children Food and Nutrition Service (WIC), health care programs, job training provides benefits to all members of society.

There is a lack of an immigrant assistance database in the United States at the state level. My

hypothesis is the creation of the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database (RIIAD) would provide the immigrants and refugees of Rhode Island with a valuable service. I draw four questions about the database from the segmented assimilation model. First, would certain immigrant groups receive more benefit from the website than other groups? Second, within the immigrant family, would the first and second-generation receive different levels of satisfaction and assistance from the RIIAD? Third, what factors influence the answers to these two questions? Fourth, What obstacles will arise in the distribution and advertising of the RIIAD? With over one hundred thousand immigrants living in the state, this constitutes large amount of potential users for the Rhode Island-Immigrant Assistance Database. In addition, the services of the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database are in no way restricted to only immigrants, people from all segments of society and backgrounds will benefit from it through a greater knowledge of the programs. Through research on various topics such as state legislation and the segmented assimilation model, I conclude that there is a definite need in Rhode Island for an online database of services, programs, benefits and organizations available to assist the immigrant population.

An additional goal of my research is to critically analyze the positive and negative aspects of the laws, organizations, and programs related to immigration that are in place at the state level. Areas that I hope to investigate are what is the number of programs available that can benefit immigrants? What is the accessibility of these programs to the public? Are advertised programs available in more than one language? What is the cost of such services? What languages do the workers speak? Does the organization have a website? All of these questions help to shape the information available on the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database.

Moving forward into the next stages of this project, I will assemble a list of all the programs, organizations, branches of state government, and services available to immigrants. The next step is to continue communicating with my potential community partner and work on the creation of the online

database. Another aspect of this project is to interview employees within organizations that serve and work with the immigrant community to gain feedback about the current programs and services currently offered to the public. Ideally, this database will lead to more collaboration, communication and unity in the immigrants' rights movement in Rhode Island. It is important to have feedback from these organizations about their current interaction with other businesses, non-profits, religious groups that help immigrants. Therefore, the database will focus on the institutional level rather than trying to help individual immigrants.

In conclusion, my research on the segmented assimilation model and the ethnic identity of immigrants provide a strong understanding of immigrant assimilation within the United States and knowledge of the different vocabulary used to describe the immigrant population.

Methodology

In order to create a list of agencies in Rhode Island I wanted to initially contact, I used a combination of searching online and resources with my community partner. For online research, I primarily used search engines such as Google to find out healthcare providers, ESL classes and public transportation, among other areas in Rhode Island. Furthermore, I consulted the websites of potential members in order to find their community partners and other organizations in Rhode Island that may be a good fit for the project. In addition, my community partner provided me with extensive literature about immigration in Rhode Island, including a list of her community contacts and a Yellow Pages Book in Spanish for Rhode Island.

Using this initial list, in total around 100 organizations, I gathered information including their website, a contact person within the organization with an email and phone number and the general services offered by the agency. With all of this information organized in a database document, I combined it with the membership invitation using mail merge in order to create a vast number of customized documents ready for email. In total, I contacted 70 organizations through my college email address.[5]

Attached to that email, was an Organizational Information Form, which is a blank form the organization fills in with information such as their location, hours, services offered, website, mission statement, contact info, proximity to public transportation, among other questions.[6]

In addition, the email invitation included an optional, confidential ten-question survey on the website Survey Monkey.[7] This included various questions about communication and collaboration among Rhode Island organizations. A few examples are; How often does your agency communicate,

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[5] See Appendices for the content of the email invitation to organizations.
[6] See Appendices for the blank Organizational Information Form.
[7] See Appendices for a complete list of the survey questions and answers.

collaborate, and/or exchange information with other businesses and organizations in the Rhode Island area? How often are you or your agency contacted by other businesses, organizations and government agencies that offer similar services to yours?

Finally, I interviewed Sofia, an employee of my community partner who contributed advice and help for my project. She is the Community Outreach Director at a non-profit based in Providence, Rhode Island and has extensive experience organizing and advocating for immigrants' rights. When I interned for my community partner, she directly supervised my work, created my projects and offered advice and help when needed. In addition, she co-taught my Global Studies Capstone and provided advice and answered questions about my project throughout the year.

In conclusion, my sample is the numerous organizations I contacted through email and telephone in relation to the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database. A small number of these organizations elected to join the database and of this number, around half completed the survey. My data comes from their responses to the emails, the survey results, an interview and my experience in organizing and communication with a large number of organizations in Rhode Island**.**

Analysis

Presently, not enough organizations joined the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database to justify the creation of the web page. Out of seventy invitations, fifteen agencies joined, three denied the invitation for various reasons, and a majority of the rest simply did not respond. A small minority of organizations responded with questions but then decided not to join. Therefore, the present members represent the foundation of the database and when more organizations join, the web page can be launched.
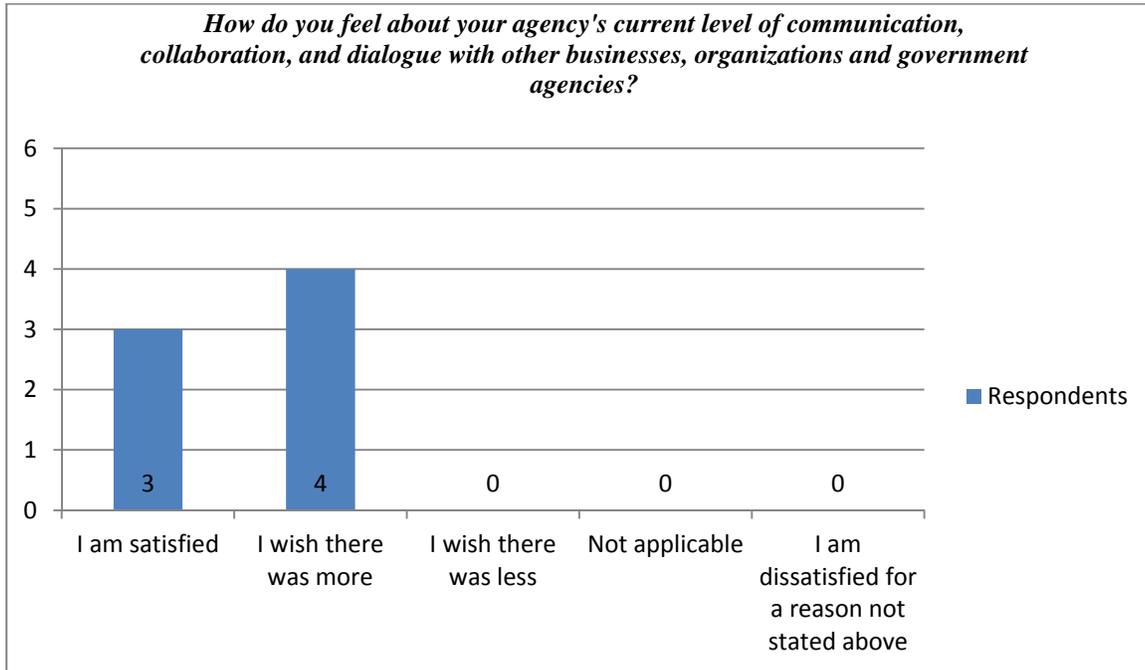
Overall, nearly all of the organizations I communicated with expressed positive thoughts and feelings towards the database and its mission. Many people stated they thought the advocacy for immigrants' rights is an extremely important issue and actions must be taken to protect their current rights and prevent further negative legislation from ratification. Just as immigration is an issue that is present in many different aspects of society, immigrants' rights issues are present in many similar categories such as human rights, education, discrimination, racial profiling and labor. One long-term goal of the database is to try to unite some of those advocacy groups into a larger movement against groups and organizations that promote hatred, discrimination, violence and racism.

Surveys

Attached to the initial email inviting organizations to join the database was a link to a survey on the website Survey Monkey. The survey was optional and completely confidential and the answers had no bearing upon the information on the database. The questions related to the collaboration, communication and exchange of information among Rhode Island organizations, their day-to-day work, involvement in advocacy and their opinion of the image of immigrants in the media. A little over half of the organizations who elected to join the database decided to complete the survey. From the

21

results, I reached several conclusions. First, there is a desire among some agencies in Rhode Island for greater communication and collaboration among the organizations in the state.[8] I argue that the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database, when completed, could serve as a platform to achieve these goals.

Chart 1

How do you feel about your agency's current level of communication, collaboration, and dialogue with other businesses, organizations and government agencies?
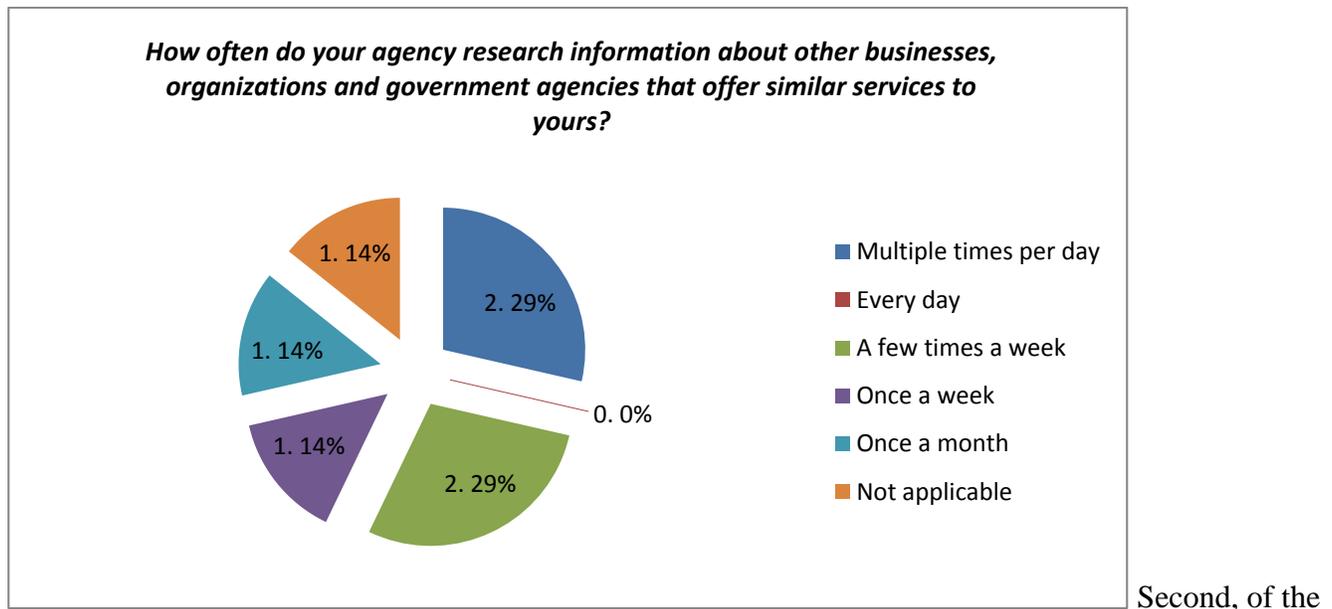
While the respondents expressed similar feelings towards their level of communication, either wanting more or satisfaction, the actual level of communication varied widely among respondents. Specifically, among the communication that occurs with organizations that offer similar services.[9]

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8   See Chart 1
9   See Chart 2

22

Chart 2:

How often do your agency research information about other businesses, organizations and government agencies that offer similar services to yours?

- Multiple times per day
- Every day
- A few times a week
- Once a week
- Once a month
- Not applicable

(pie chart segments: 2. 29%, 0. 0%, 2. 29%, 1. 14%, 1. 14%, 1. 14%, 1. 14%)

Second, of the organizations contacted, six out of seven respondents stated they themselves or their organization participates in advocacy movements.[10] The results indicate that of the organizations contacted, nearly all of them already participate in an advocacy movement. Furthermore, of these respondents, four indicated that their advocacy work related to immigrants' rights and/or immigration issues.

Are you or your organization participants in any advocacy movements?

- Yes
- No

(pie chart segments: 1. 14%, 6. 86%)

Chart 3:

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10   See Chart 3.

23

In addition, one question focused on the image of immigrants in the media.[11] Of the respondents, none indicated that in their opinion, the portrayal of immigrants in the media was positive. They all indicated the portrayal to be neutral, negative or overwhelmingly negative.
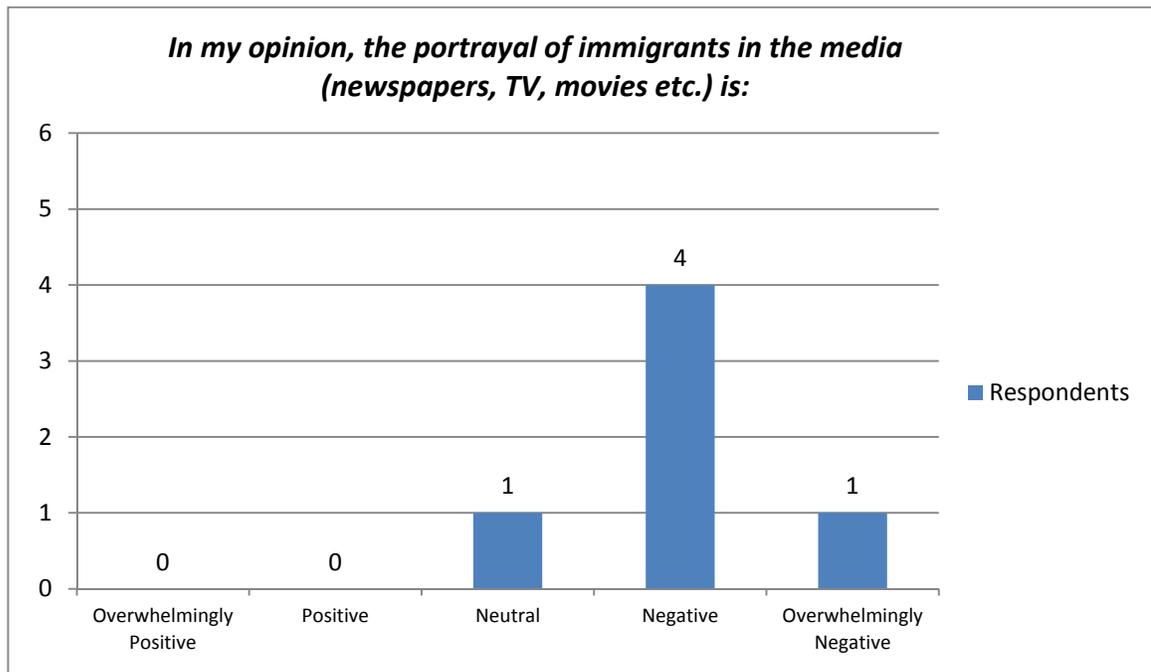
Chart 4:

In my opinion, the portrayal of immigrants in the media (newspapers, TV, movies etc.) is:

	Respondents
Overwhelmingly Positive	0
Positive	0
Neutral	1
Negative	4
Overwhelmingly Negative	1

Comparison of the creation of the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database with the creation of the Community Resource Center

Last summer, I worked for my community partner, the International Institute of Rhode Island, as an intern. For my main project, I contacted numerous different organizations in the Rhode Island area in order to solicit pamphlets, literature and information about their services in order to create a Community Resource Center for the community partners of International Institute of Rhode Island. I argue, the first project received a greater initial response from organizations and more agencies participated. While this project is similar to the creation of the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance

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[11]   See Chart 4.

Database, there are numerous differences.

First, for the Community Resource Center project, I contacted all of the organizations using my supervisors email account. Therefore, I attained instant credibility with the people I contacted and in many cases, these organizations worked with her in the past. For the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database, I contacted potential members through my Providence College email address. While this provided some credibility, I argue that an email address from within my community partner could solicit more positive responses from organizations. Communication for the first project started with a larger degree of insider status due to my supervisors email address and my own status as an intern for the International Institute of Rhode Island. For my own thesis project, I contacted people first as a student of Providence College and second as someone collaborating with my community partner. I argue, the first model is more successful and my own lack of insider status in the organization contributed in a negative way towards the amount of responses for the RIIAD.

Second, the goal of the Community Resource Center project was to collect pamphlets, brochures and other information from the organizations. Frequently, organizations expressed relief at possibility of removing such papers from their offices due to the large amount of space they occupied and the large amount of brochures and information printed each year. For example, a state government department contributed a very large box full of hundreds of sheets and small handbooks related to labor rights in the Rhode Island. In addition, rather than asking the organizations to join a database, which often required the approval of the executive director and the board of directors, sending out materials as advertising did not usually call for such bureaucratic channels. With the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database, respondents needed to send back their confirmation and complete the organizational information sheet, a one-page document with information about the services offered, mission statement and location.

Third, for the Community Resource Center project, nearly all of the organizations contacted

were part of a list provided by my supervisor of people, groups and agencies that she worked with in the past. Therefore, the initial emails contained a certain amount of instant name recognition and credibility, which I argue, led to a greater success rate. For the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database, I researched many of the initial organizations using internet search engines such as Google. After working on both projects, I conclude that personal relationships, such as those forged by my supervisor, provide an amount of credibility and success that technology such as internet searches and Google cannot yet match. While the internet is great for finding simple information such as addresses and phone numbers, a personal meeting contains an element of trust very difficult to attain through communication methods such as email or the telephone.

Fourth, the reception for each project was different. For example, the organizations who submitted brochures and pamphlets for the Community Resource Project expressed less enthusiasm than the organizations that joined the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database. One explanation for this difference in enthusiasm and excitement for each project is the type of goals for each. For example, the Community Resource Center is more short term; organize the pamphlets, brochures and information so they are accessible to the clients of the International Institute of Rhode Island. The benefits are more or less contained to the clients of my community partner and there is not the possible community wide collaboration, communication and exchange of information that could happen with the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database. The RIIAD seeks to work primarily at the organizational level. I argue it contains the potential to positively impact the immigrants' rights advocacy movement through greater communication, collaboration and exchange of information between the various organizations that provide services to immigrants in Rhode Island. Nearly all of the organizations I spoke with expressed excitement, hope and positive ideas when speaking about the potential of the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database and its mission to try to contribute in a positive way to the immigrants' rights movement. The lack of initial responses is not a major issue, this

26

was the first attempt and future stages of the project can improve upon my methods in order to add more members to the database. During many conservations and emails discussing the initial stages of the database creation, hope and excitement continually appeared and motivated me to continue working and create a strong foundation from which my community partner can complete the steps necessary to finish the database.

Fifth, the benefits of each project targeted a different group of people within society. The Community Resource Center primarily assists the clients of the International Institute of Rhode Island and creates awareness of the community partners and the services they provide. In addition, part of the information pertains to health care and workers' rights. Therefore, this project aimed to provide services at the individual level, in order to improve the lives of a single client at a time. At first for the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database, the individual immigrant once again was the main goal of the project. I wanted to create a web page that detailed many of the services and assistance available and useful to immigrants in Rhode Island. The initial goal concerned the assimilation of immigrants and the factors that influence how society receives them and how they view themselves as part of the United States. Readings on the segmented assimilation model and the second generation ethnic identity of immigrants further intensified my interest on this topic and my goal of aiming the database towards benefiting the individual immigrant.[12]

Eventually, the focus of the project shifted from the individual to the next level in society, the organization. Actions such as collaboration, communication and the exchange of information became the primary goals of the project, with providing information directly to the individual immigrants a secondary goal but still part of the database. I argue that there is better potential for positive change through work at the organizational level than projects done with an emphasis on the individual. Once

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[12] See Literature Review for an explanation of the segmented assimilation model and the second-generation ethnic identity of immigrants. Pages 5-18.

created, personal and organizational relationships can assist the relative ease of communication and collaboration through email, social media and telephones can create a movement united on two different levels: the personal and the technological. For example, during an interview, my supervisor at my community partner stated that often uses email for much of the communication that occurs on a daily basis with other organizations and partners in the immigrants' rights advocacy movement. With such easy means of communication available, one of the goals of the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database is to create a simple web page where organizations and individuals from different sectors of the community can find the contact information for agencies in order to initiate the first stages of communication, collaboration and information exchanges. For this project, I wanted to focus on the organizational level as a method to try and institute positive change for the immigrants' movement. The individual is a very important aspect of this change, because the individuals within an organization are very important and each has their own skills and abilities they can contribute towards the greater movement. I believe that the RIIAD can have the greatest effect if it works first at the organizational level, but driven by individuals within these organizations, and then moves down to the individual level and spreads among a greater portion of society.

Sixth, both projects began at different points during the year. The Community Resource Center project occurred during the summer of 2010. My work on the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database occurred mostly during the late winter and spring of 2011. Perhaps the time of year the project occurred had an impact on the success and feedback from the organizations contacted. I argue that the summer is an easier time to successfully complete a project due to greater availability of inexpensive labor, especially student interns. Completing the Organizational Information Form is the perfect task for an intern and during the summer for nonprofits, there is often a large pool of students looking to work at minimal cost to the company. During the school year, more tasks may fall upon the shoulders of full time employees and small, non-essential tasks such as joining the database might be

forgotten due to the increased workload.

Interview with Sofia

On April 27, 2011, I interviewed Sofia, my former supervisor, employee of my community partner and professor of my Global Studies Capstone Class. We discussed various topics including her responsibilities at the International Institute of Rhode Island, communication and collaboration with other organizations in Rhode Island, advocacy, and the immigrants' rights movement. For the last three years, Sofia worked as the Legal Education & Community Outreach Coordinator. On a daily basis, she communicates and collaborates with numerous agencies and organizations all of the state of Rhode Island and sometimes on a national level.

Most of the communication with national organizations is one-way, emails or newsletters sent out on a monthly or a weekly basis will provide updates on legislation or other issues. At the local level, she stated that it is more equal with regards to communication, her contacting organizations and organizations contacting her. In addition, collaboration occurs more often as the local level.

Relationships with other organizations in the Rhode Island community that lead to collaboration often start with a face to face meeting. These meetings usually consist of the exchange of information about each agency and their goals in order to find out the compatibility of the two organizations working together. One difficulty faced by Sofia and similar advocacy and outreach workers across the state is the budget cuts due to a lack of funding faced by many non-profit agencies. Therefore, budget cuts force non-profits to complete the same amount of tasks with fewer employees and certain programs, often those considered nonessential, face elimination or severe reductions. Perhaps budget cuts increased since last summer and negatively affected the response to the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database due to the increased workload of employees and a lack of time for non-essential

29

tasks such as joining the database. For example, not every organization employs a person dedicated to outreach and advocacy work, two aspects of Sofia's job that also includes education and supervising the interns.

Sofia faces similar difficulties at her job due to recent budget cuts. Social media is a popular method for organizations and businesses to promote their services and advertise in the community. She argues that with an ideal budget, one person could work solely on updating and maintaining social media outlets for the International Institute of Rhode Island. Unfortunately, this is simply not possible due to funding and the social media part of outreach falls partly under her job responsibilities. Her organization currently has a blog, a Facebook page, a website. This same theme appeared numerous times during conversations with potential members for the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database. Repeatedly, workers expressed their enormous workload and a lack of time to complete all of their essential tasks in order to keep the organization running, let alone extra projects such as completing the Organizational Information Sheet.

In conclusion, throughout our conversation, the themes of time, budget cuts, and overworking appeared numerous times. Many employees simply do not have enough time in the day to complete all of their responsibilities due to budgets and organizations forced to do more with less. Analyzing the difficulties I faced during the creation of the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database, such as a lack of response from organizations, makes more sense given the funding issues faced by many non-profit and for profit businesses. Perhaps in a healthier economy with greater funding available for positions such as outreach and advocacy workers, a greater response to the database invitations is possible.

Difficulties and Perceived Barriers to Success

Several barriers affected the success of the creation of the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database. First, my lack of a complete insider status limited my ability to communicate with potential member organizations as a member of the International Institute of Rhode Island; rather I first appeared as a student of Providence College. Perhaps this was my own fault and I should have highlighted the role of my community partner more on the initial invitation. In addition, using my own college email address likely had less name recognition than an address connected to my community partner such as my supervisor, another employee, or perhaps even my own.

Continuing with the theme of who my social location, I argue that my age and status as a current college student negatively affected how some organizations perceived me. During my interview with my supervisor, she stated that her age was a definite barrier when she started her job. She experienced difficulty working with some coworkers due to her skin tone and age. Likewise, my own age, statuses of privilege as a white, middle class male, born outside of Rhode Island and my enrollment as an undergraduate student at Providence College negatively affected my project. Perhaps, one or several of those factors influenced numerous agencies to simply ignore the invitation to the database.

A third barrier to the success is the relationship between my community partner, the International Institute of Rhode Island and the organizations invited to the database. Within Rhode Island, not every organization that provides services and assistance to immigrants has a desire to collaborate with my community partner and perhaps some even view them in a negative light. Therefore, for some organizations, collaborating with the International Institute of Rhode Island provided instant credibility and positively affected their response, while for others, it created a negative reaction and led to them denying the invitation or simply ignoring it. In addition, several of the current members of the database previously collaborated with my community partner on a variety of projects.

An additional failure was the methods I used to initially research and find new organizations.

31

For example, using internet searches yielded a large amount of individual organizations with little or no relationship or theme between them. In addition, it is possible they had no relationship or history of collaboration with my community partner. In the future, I suggest that a person picks a core group of ten to fifteen organizations the International Institute of Rhode Island works with on a regular basis and contact them first. Next, I would investigate their websites looking for their own community partners and contact them as the second batch of invitations. Therefore, the organizations invited all have an indirect tie to the relationship and are not simply the results for the search "health care services Rhode Island" on an internet search engine. I argue that contacting and researching organizations through the partnership method could provide more positive responses and a more cohesive overall database, starting with the International Institute of Rhode Island and working outwards to create a web.

Perceived Successes

While I did not complete the database, faced several barriers and experienced failures, I argue that I did succeed in some areas. First, I created the foundation for the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database, which the International Institute of Rhode Island can use in the future in order to complete the project. I contacted over seventy different organizations in Rhode Island and initiated a conversation about membership with roughly twenty agencies. Fifteen organizations elected to join the database.[13] From these fifteen organizations websites, I suggest that in future interns and employees find their community partners and contact them. This foundation consists of the organizations that already submitted their information, various documents including the intern description, organizational consent sheet, and the information form.[14]

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[13] See Chart 5 on next page.
[14]　See Appendices for these documents.

32

In addition, this foundation includes the initiation of a discussion about the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database both inside my community partner and within the organizations invited to the participate, even those who did not elect to join. I argue such discussion among agencies in Rhode Island can lead to more organizations finding out about the database and could eventually lead to word of mouth advertising. For example, conversations among individuals from different organizations about the database and one person suggesting to another that they should join the database. Perhaps, this is one area future invitations to organizations can expand, including a provision about welcoming member organizations to promote and discuss the database among other organizations. Based off my interview with Sofia and experience working with the immigrants' rights advocacy movement, this type of networking and introductions occurs fairly often amongst nonprofit employees, professors and other individuals interested in contributing their time or money.

Chart 5:

Response to Invitation to Join Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database
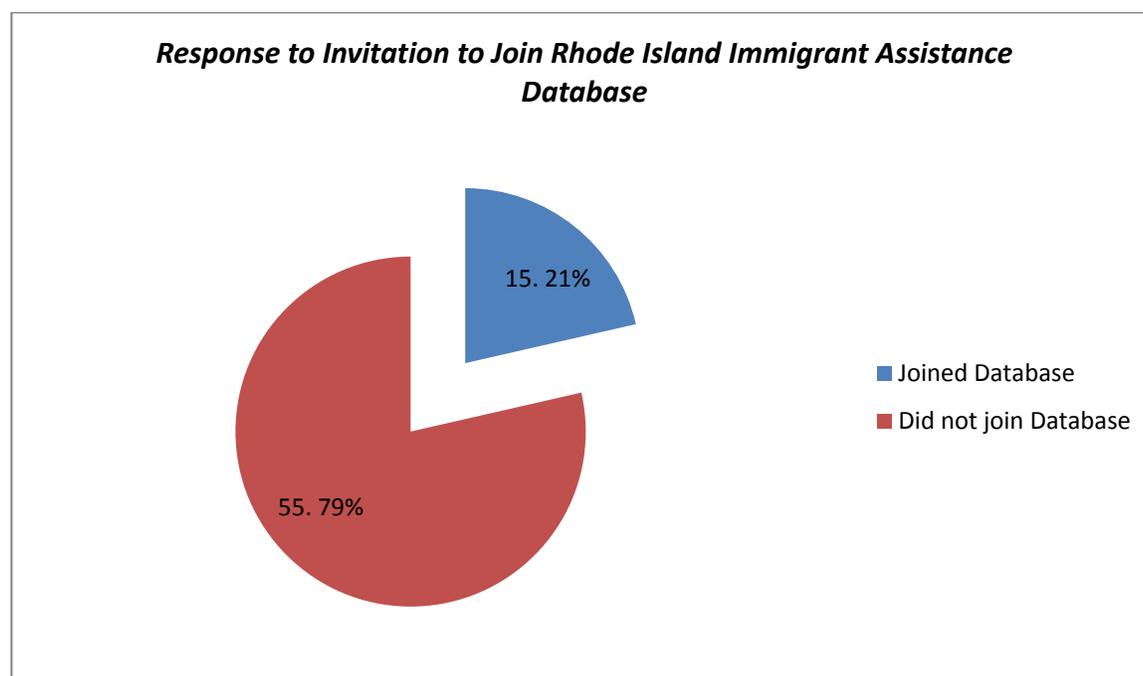
- 15. 21% Joined Database
- 55. 79% Did not join Database

Overall, fifteen different organizations submitted the Organizational Information Sheet and join the database. Many of these agencies collaborated with the International Institute in the past or currently work together. For example, the Capital Good Fund, a micro finance non-profit located in Providence, lists the International Institute of Rhode Island on their website in the partners section. Currently, these two organizations work together in order to provide citizenship applicants with the financial support, paperwork and representation needed to complete the application. In addition, the section on their website lists eighteen different partners, of these three joined the database.[15]

Another organization which has a direct relationship with my community partner The Women's and Family Van, is a mobile health services organization that provides screenings for the uninsured and the under insured.[16] I argue that these direct relationships with my community partner positively influenced these organizations decisions to join the database. In addition, I suggest that in the future, the first organizations contacted should be those which currently collaborate with the International Institute of Rhode Island because they will likely lead to a positive response.

Common advocacy work was another area in which member organizations created a relationship with my community partner. For example, one person who represented two different member organizations, one a citizenship and immigration services and a Hispanic cultural group. She collaborated with employees of the International Institute of Rhode Island multiple times on projects relating to immigrants' rights and in-state college tuition for undocumented immigrant students.

The two other organizations that provide immigration and citizenship services in Rhode Island

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[15] http://www.capitalgoodfund.org/aboutus/partners
[16] http://www.iiri.org/minorityhealth.htm

34

joined the database. These two agencies are the only other organizations in the state that provide similar services to the citizenship and immigration services provided by the International Institute of Rhode Island.

Overall, all of the organizations that joined the database in some way provide services that relate to immigration, ranging some citizenship services, ESL classes, medical services, financial services for individuals and businesses looking to relocate or start in Rhode Island. With many of the organizations that joined, a direct collaboration or personal relationship tied them to my community partner. Two such examples are the participation in the same advocacy movements as employees of the International Institute of Rhode Island or a business partnership for immigration and citizenship services.

Conclusion

While the database does not yet have enough members for its creation, there exists a strong foundation for my community partner to move forward with the project in the future. I created the initial contact method, a list of possible organizations, and a small group of organizations that already expressed an interest and desire to join.[17] In the future, I believe that a combination of interns and full time employees of my community partner can work together in order to contact more organizations from an insider's perspective and eventually create a web page with many of the services useful and available to immigrants in the state of Rhode Island.[18] Ideally, my research, with all of its successes and failures, can serve as a starting point from which they can improve and use to guide their own work. I argue that with my community partner creating the web page in the future, it will be easier to update and maintain in the future because they will be more familiar with the organizations listed and the methods used to contact them.

I used several variables to compare the two projects and reached several conclusions. I argue that the size of an organization, the type of services provided, past collaboration or relationship with my community partner, affected both projects equally. The task required of the invited organization, the time of year contacted, the name credibility and insider status attached to the initial email contact effected the Community Resource Center Project positively, and effected the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database negatively.

In conclusion, at the very least I would like to leave my community partner with the idea that greater collaboration, communication, and exchange of information is possible among the organizations that provide services and assistance to immigrants, and that the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database is one possible avenue for such progression to occur.

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[17] See Appendices for the Modified Organizational Consent Form for more information.
[18] See Appendices for the Intern Description for more information

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Appendices

Original Organizational Consent Form

Dear *Insert name*,

My name is Matt Friedman and I am a Senior, Global Studies Major at *Providence College*. For my Senior Thesis Project, partnering with the *Community Partner*, my goal is to assemble a website called the Rhode Island-Immigrant Assistance Database. The content will consist of all the programs, organizations, services, and institutions that are available and helpful to the immigrant population in Rhode Island. In addition, many of these services are valuable for the non-immigrant community. Members will be invited to join and come from a variety of different sectors including, but not limited to, immigration and citizenship services, community organizations, healthcare, bilingual charter schools, public libraries, advocacy groups, job training, financial services, religious groups, ESL classes, media, arts and culture, labor/unions, homeless services, state government programs, multicultural student groups, and public transportation.

The main goal of this database is to create one simple and informative website where non-profits, organizations, immigrants and refugees, businesses, scholars, politicians, and volunteers can look and find the contact information and a brief summary of the services and resources offered to the immigrant and refugee community in Rhode Island. The information will consist of the contact information for the organizations and a brief description, including their mission statement and services offered. Additional goals of this project are to help create a welcoming environment for the immigrant and refugees living in Rhode Island, increase the communication, collaboration, and dialogue between the organizations and groups that serve the immigrant population. Therefore, this database seeks to work at both the individual and organizational level.

On behalf on my community partner, the *Community Partner*, we would like to invite you to join the database as a member. There is no membership fee associated with this service and there are numerous benefits for *Your Organization*:

- Free advertising for *Your Organization*
- Association with the other premiere service providers and businesses for the immigrant community in Rhode Island
- An increase in traffic to your website due to its placement on the RIIAD.
- Participating in a movement that could help improve the Rhode Island immigrant experience

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this letter and I look forward to hearing from you in the near future. We would be honored if *Your Organization* elects to join the database. If so, please fill out the Member Organization Information Sheet. You can either submit your answers in the text of an email or complete the document and attach it to an email. In addition, an optional, confidential questionnaire that is attached and will be used as research for my thesis project. Here is the link: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/YL6ZWBL.

If you have any questions about the Database you can contact me, *Contact at community partner* or *Contact at community partner*

Sincerely,

Matt Friedman

Modified Organizational Consent Form For Intern

Dear (insert organization name here),

My name is _____ and I am an intern at the International Institute of Rhode Island. Our goal is to assemble a web page called the Rhode Island-Immigrant Assistance Database. The content will consist of all the programs, organizations, services, and institutions that are available and helpful to the immigrant population in Rhode Island. In addition, many of these services are valuable for the non-immigrant community. Members will be invited to join and come from a variety of different sectors including, but not limited to, immigration and citizenship services, community organizations, healthcare, bilingual charter schools, public libraries, advocacy groups, job training, financial services, religious groups, ESL classes, media, arts and culture, labor/unions, homeless services, state government programs, multicultural student groups, and public transportation.

The main goal of this database is to create one simple and informative website where non-profits, organizations, immigrants and refugees, businesses, scholars, politicians, and volunteers can look and find the contact information and a brief summary of the services and resources offered to the immigrant and refugee community in Rhode Island. The information will consist of the contact information for the organizations and a brief description, including their mission statement and services offered. Additional goals of this project are to help create a welcoming environment for the immigrant and refugees living in Rhode Island, increase the communication, collaboration, and dialogue between the organizations and groups that serve the immigrant population. Therefore, this database seeks to work at both the individual and organizational level.

On behalf of the International Institute of Rhode Island, we would like to invite you to join the database as a member. There is no membership fee associated with this service and there are numerous benefits for (organization name) :

- Free advertising for (organization name)
- Association with the other premiere service providers and businesses for the immigrant community in Rhode Island
- An increase in traffic to your website due to its placement on the RIIAD.
- Participating in a movement that could help improve the Rhode Island immigrant experience

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this letter and I look forward to hearing from you in the near future. We would be honored if (organization name) elects to join the database. If so, please fill out the Member Organization Information Sheet. You can either submit your answers in the text of an email or complete the document and attach it to an email.

Sincerely,
(your name and contact info here)

Intern Description

The International Institute of Rhode Island is looking for interns to complete a project called the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database.

Responsibilities
- Assist in the creation of the Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database, a web page which will contain a list of many of the programs, organizations, services, and institutions that are available and helpful to the immigrant population in Rhode Island. In addition, many of these services are valuable for the non-immigrant community.
- Expand upon the initial foundation of the project and help work towards its completion
- Contact social service providers, businesses, non-profits, community groups and other organizations in order to invite and inform them to the database.
- Organize information received from member organizations
- Communicate with other staff members and inform them of your progress

Desired Qualities
- Flexible schedule (approximately 15-25 hours a week),
- Strong communication and writing skills
- Commitment to work at least a summer or a semester's length of time. The internship may be extended.
- Ability to complete a project without direct supervision the entire time
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office
- Training with website creation a plus
- Bi/multi-lingual a plus
- Passion for immigration a plus
- College students of any level are a perfect fit for the position. Majors which would best fit the internship include: Global Studies, Communication, Marketing, Public Relations, Social Work, but anyone with an interest in non-profit work or immigration is welcome to apply.

The internship is un-paid; however there are many opportunities to receive excellent practical experience and networking among a wide variety of different for profit and nonprofit organizations in the Rhode Island Area.

Survey Questions

1. How often does your agency communicate, collaborate, and/or exchange information with other businesses and organizations in the Rhode Island area?

Multiple times per day
Every day
A few times a week
Once a week
Once a month
Not applicable

2. How do you feel about your agency's current level of communication, collaboration, and dialogue with other businesses, organizations and government agencies?

I am satisfied.
I wish there was more communication and collaboration.
I wish there was less communication and collaboration.
I am dissatisfied for a reason not stated above (fill in)
Not applicable.

3. How often do your agency research information about other businesses, organizations and government agencies that offer similar services to yours?

Multiple times per day
Every day
A few times a week
Once a week
Once a month
Not applicable

4. Does your agency have a website?

Yes
No

5. How often are you or your agency contacted by other businesses, organizations and government agencies that offer similar services to yours?

Multiple times per day
Every day
A few times a week
Once a week
Once a month
Not applicable

6. Are you or your organization participants in any advocacy movements?

Yes.
No.

7. If you answered yes to the previous question, is this advocacy related to immigrants' rights and/or immigration issues, including but not limited to humans rights, minority rights and civil liberties?

Yes
No
Not applicable

8. If you do not currently participate in the immigrants' rights advocacy movement, are you interested in joining?

Yes
No
Not applicable

9. If you answered no to the previous question, which of the following reasons influenced your decision? Check as many as necessary.

Not interested
Do not have enough time
Unsure about who to contact to join the advocacy movement
Joining would interfere with my current work
Other reason (fill in)
Not applicable

10. In my opinion, the portrayal of immigrants in the media (newspapers, tv, movies etc.) is:

Overwhelmingly positive
Positive
Neutral
Negative
Overwhelmingly negative

Thank you for your time, your responses are extremely valuable.

Blank Member Organization Information Form

Rhode Island Immigrant Assistance Database
Member Organization Information Sheet

Please fill in all the information that applies to you organization.

Organization Name

Address –

City, State, Zip Code –

Phone Number -

Website –

Hours of Operation –

Public Transportation Nearby? -

Languages Spoken –

Brief Description of Organization -

Mission Statement -

Services Offered –

Fees for Services -

Locations Served -

Clients/Groups Most frequently Served –

Additional Contact Info -

Additional Information -