

Westside Gazette

BROWARD COUNTY'S OLDEST AND LARGEST AFRICAN AMERICAN OWNED AND OPERATED NEWSPAPER

January 28 - February 3, 2010



The power of participation

“Census data opens the door to affordable housing in Broward County.”

Kevin Cregan, CEO

Broward County Housing Authority

Resident by resident, form by form, 2010 Census population counts are crucial to Broward County’s future.

The data collected is tied to billions in federal dollars Broward communities can receive during the next decade for schools, healthcare services, programs for the elderly, job training, housing assistance and much more.

Everyone left uncounted results in a loss of valuable funding and the vital services it makes possible.

For those who don’t understand how much census participation means to their community, Kevin Cregan has some firsthand insight as Chief Executive Officer of the Broward County Housing Authority.

The authority focuses on providing affordable housing through the ownership and management of properties, administration of rental subsidies, and counseling of homeowners and prospective owners. Cregan and his team create housing opportunities for nearly 12,000 county residents by utilizing public and private funding.

“There are many times when we apply for grants to provide housing services for low-income families, said Cregan. “In those situations, making the case for how many unserved families we have comes from census information. With the Section 8 Federal housing program that provides housing assistance to renters via low-income subsidies, an accurate count is essential to closing the gap between need and opportunity. To give you an idea of how wide a gap it is, all six housing authorities in Broward County combined serve approximately 14,000 low-income families. That represents only 10 percent of the eligible population.”

According to Cregan, the 2010 Census, and the data it generates, will be more important than ever in meeting the local challenges of the current housing market.

“There are several initiatives in the works within the federal budget that will result in funding for new affordable housing production,” Cregan said. “A significant factor in that funding for housing creation here in Broward is based on income information obtained in the census.”

From housing to highways to hospitals, if you’re a Broward County resident thinking of not answering your census form, consider all the benefits that hang in the balance. The census is important, easy and safe. The future is in your hands; participate and make Broward great.

For more information on the 2010 Census – and how your participation can make Broward County a better place to live – visit www.broward.org/census2010.