

**KINGSTON LATINO
CULTURAL STUDY
PHASE I AND II**

arts
Mid-Hudson

INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2016 staff from Arts Mid-Hudson, including the folk arts program manager, met with members of the Reher Center for Immigrant Culture and History and the Kingston Arts Commission to discuss the Latino community in Kingston. During that meeting we identified a need for information about the Latino community in Kingston, NY for purposes of planning programming in arts and culture to include that community.

The initial committee received a Vision Grant from Humanities New York (HNY) in early 2017 to convene members of the Latino community and community arts members. During a day-long workshop, we envisioned how such a study might be conducted. A 2017 New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) Technical Assistance Grant enabled the committee to hire a contract folklorist with experience in surveying to aid in writing the survey instrument.

The first draft of the survey was deemed too academic. It took several meetings to rewrite the English version and several more to write the Spanish version. The committee paid close attention to the diversity of the Latino community and the different ways in which questions might be interpreted depending on how they were written and presented. We did not ask any questions related to documentation and providing names and contact information was optional.

In 2018 we received a second Vision Grant from HNY to conduct a pilot of the survey in English and Spanish. We quickly found out that the information was more complete when we conducted the survey individually and in person, rather than electronically. This also enabled us to pay survey takers and participants and to interact more intimately with the community.

We also received an anonymous donation to pay our survey takers and interviewers for the second stage. Some of those funds will also be used to conduct initial programming in the community guided by the results.

By the end of 2019, we finished conducting the survey and interviews with members of the community willing to sit down with our committee members.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Concepcion,
Community member

Eileen Mary Condon,
Contract folklorist

Elinor Levy,
*Folk Arts Program Manager,
Arts Mid-Hudson*

Geoffrey Miller,
*Committee Chair, Reher
Center for Immigrant
Culture and History, Ulster
County Historian and
ethnomusicologist*

Isabel Nazario,
*Retired Associate Vice
President for Strategic
Initiatives, Rutgers University
and founding director,
Rutgers Center for Latino Arts
and Culture (new Kingston
resident)*

Julio Nazario,
*Retired Dean, Honors
Program, Rutgers University
and photographer (new
Kingston resident)*

**Maria Elena
Ferrer-Harrington,**
*Executive Director,
Humanamente, Member,
Ulster County Human Rights
Commission, sculptor, and
animator.*

Susie Ximenez,
Founder, Latinx Project

Veronica Martinez-Cruz,
Community member

Ward Mintz,
*Former Chair, Kingston Arts
Commission, Reher Center
for Immigration Culture and
History Advisory Committee
member, and Executive
Director, Coby Foundation*

KINGSTON, NEW YORK

Kingston, NY, is home to a diverse Latino community, including long-time residents and newcomers. There are several long-standing Latino owned businesses in the city, many of which are located along the Broadway midtown corridor. With substantial numbers of Latino residents living to the north and south of this section of Broadway, it is a locus of Latino business and activity. Restaurants, bodegas, mechanics, other businesses and organizations both serve the community at large as well as becoming meeting places with other Latinos.

Kingston Latino residents are from Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Ecuador, Colombia, Costa Rica, Venezuela, and Belize, according to self-reporting in this survey. Within these country-based groups are populations from regional pockets bringing local dialects and traditions to the area. It is

vital to recognize that we cannot discuss the Latino community as a community with a single set of traditions or languages but must distinguish between, recognize, and collaborate with the many communities within their own practices, traditions, and dialects.

While awareness has grown, there is a lack of knowledge of the cultural demographics, artistic activities, and traditions of the individual Latino communities. We are especially interested as it pertains to potential humanities, arts, and cultural programming. At times it appears that the Latino communities are left out of planning and execution of community activities (cultural or not) or the activities take place at times and in locations that are not accessible to the community. The causes for the programming issues are speculative but not insurmountable. Efforts were made to reach out to the Latino community for events such as the annual Made In Kingston. The Latin jazz band “Sabor” performed at a Martin Luther King Day event. Within the Latino community, Latinx Project produced a mercadito in November 2019 at BSP.

Additionally, there are artists and folk artists within the community who have not been identified or given opportunities to exhibit or present their practices or traditions. We know there are cooks, bakers, seamstresses/tailors, embroiderers, and needleworkers that are not known to the community at large where there are opportunities to move their skills to a broader community or entrepreneurial context.

This study sought to address the lack of cultural information about the Kingston Latino community and to provide it to community organizations and government entities to use in relation to programming with and for the Latino communities. The lead organization for the project was the Folk Arts Program at Arts Mid-Hudson along with members of Latinx Project, Humanamente, the Reher Center for Immigrant Culture and History, and residents from the Kingston Latino community.



HISTORY OF LATINO PROGRAMMING IN KINGSTON AND THE HUDSON VALLEY

During the summer of 2019, Arts Mid-Hudson, The Reher Center, and Latinx along with the Hudson Valley LGBTQ Center and the city of Kingston presented a series of programs working with members of the Latino communities including Alex Pacheco, La Voz, Adelante Students and Peace Nation Cafe. There has been a Latino Festival at T.R. Gallo park but it was presented by a private outside entity. The annual Kingston Multicultural Festival presented by the Reher Center for Immigrant Culture and History has Latino crafts and often includes a Latino performance on the stage.

Throughout the years, Arts Mid-Hudson has worked with the Mexican folkloric dance companies in the Mid-Hudson Valley for festivals and events as well as sponsoring children's cultural days at libraries in the region, including Ellenville, 45 minutes from Kingston by car. For the past 11 years the Folk Arts Program works with the festival committee to produce La Guelaguetza, a Oaxacan dance festival in Poughkeepsie that brings more than 5,000 people to Waryas Park the first Sunday of August. These activities are split between presentations of Latino culture to the community at large and events for the Latino community itself. The Newburgh Armory often features concerts of Latino Artists and jaripeo, a style of rodeo found in Central and Southern Mexico. While these cultural events take place outside of the Kingston area, we sought vital information about the Kingston Latino communities that would inform future plans such as: programming of interest to the Latino communities, finding tradition-bearers within the community, aiding the community in upholding traditions and practices in the diaspora and programming that will bring communities together.

Churches, such as St. Mary's, Segunda Iglesia La Misión, and Santa Cruz/Holy Cross and local businesses, including Casa Villa Restaurant provide programs around holidays: for example Virgen de Guadalupe, posadas, and Cinco de Mayo. Several years ago, David Sosa-Michaca (Roca Floral) presented a Mexican Independence Day festival on Broadway. Many of these events are planned by members of the Kingston Latino community. However, these events are largely not known outside of the churches and other venues.

DATA ABOUT KINGSTON, NY AS OF 2017 ^{1,5}

Total Population: 23,169 ²

Latino/Hispanic: 3,705 (15%)^{3,4}

Grow Rate of total population: -.36% ²

Spanish is the dominant spoken foreign language ³

DATA ABOUT KINGSTON, NY AS OF 2021 ^{1,5}

Total Population: 22,479 ²

Latino/Hispanic: 3,370 (14.5%) ^{3,4}

Grow Rate of total population: -.69% ²

Spanish is the dominant spoken foreign language ³

¹ There is no indication of whether or not these numbers include citizens who are not documented.

² <http://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/kingston-ny-population/>

³ <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/kingston-ny/#demographics>

⁴ We calculated that approximately $\frac{2}{3}$ of the Latino/Hispanic population is under the age of 18.

⁵ The data about Kingston, NY is in line with the data used by the municipal government.

DEMOGRAPHICS

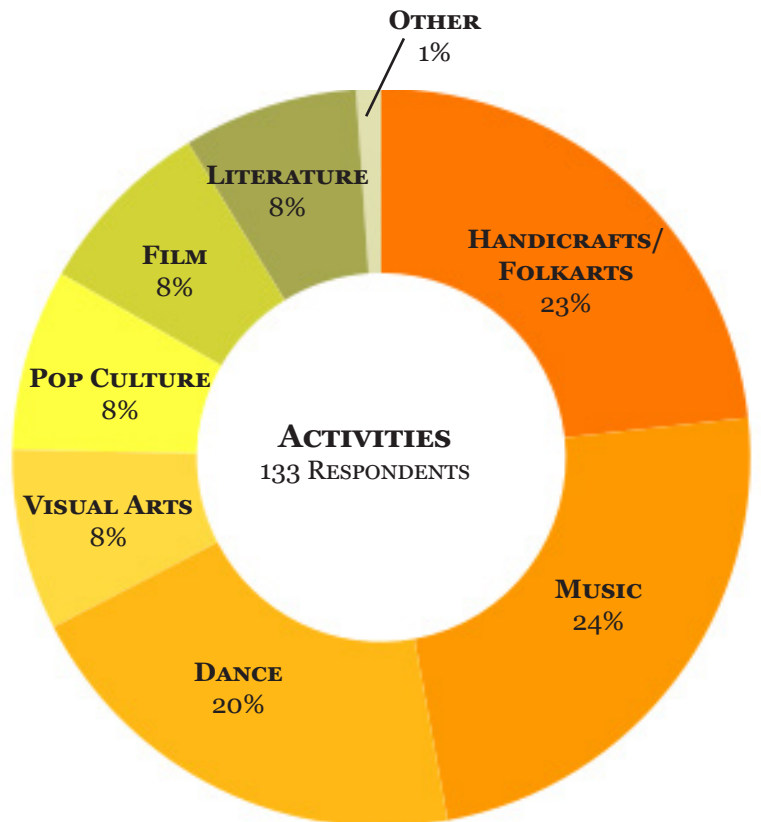
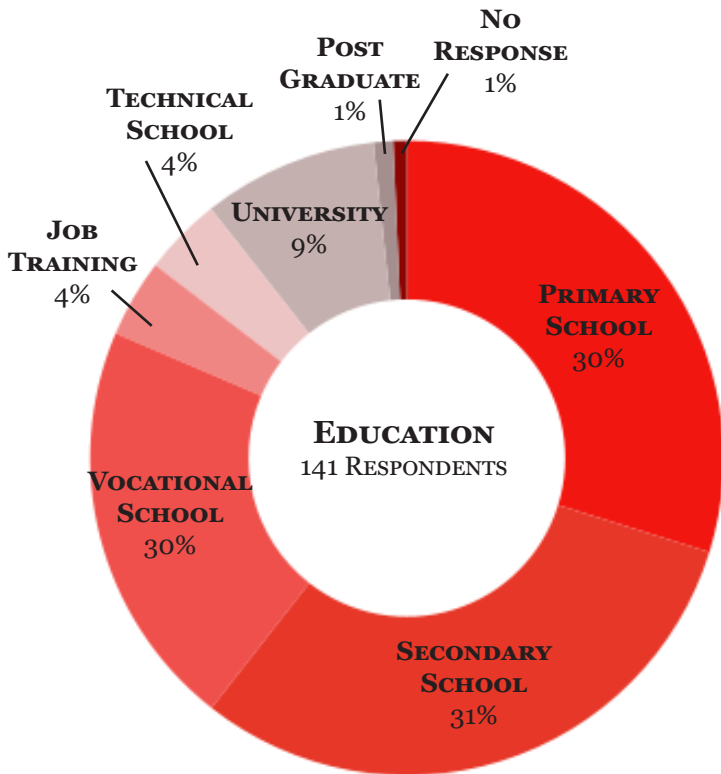
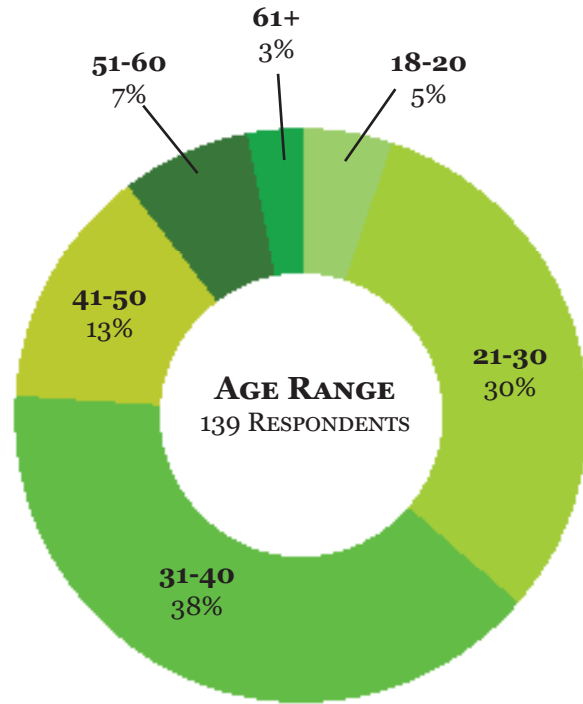
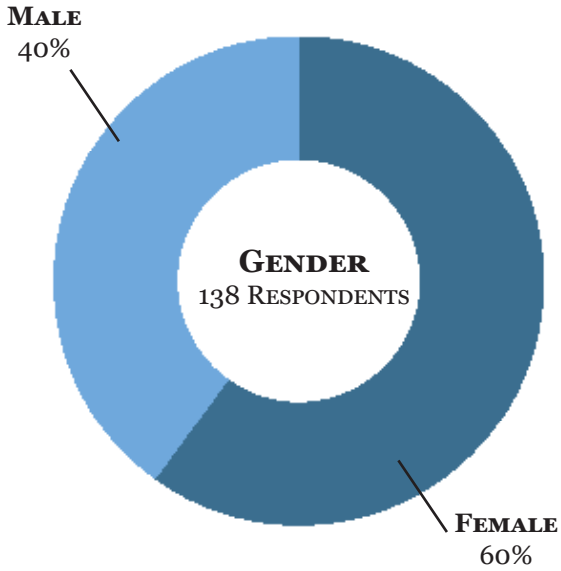
The demographic information contained in this report shows where members of the Latino communities are residing, recreating, and worshipping. This data created an overlay to a map of Kingston to help us to determine where programming will be most advantageous. We also wanted to know about the social and leisure time activities of the Kingston Latino community, and how those activities, such as the jaripeo, differ from our expectations or knowledge and how we can accommodate these communities. Who are the traditional bearers, the masters of art and craft in the community? How can we provide assistance in keeping these traditions alive? What are the barriers to participation? Transportation? Language? Desire? Immigration status? And recognition of the variety of Latino communities residing in Kingston and the particular practices and traditions within each community. This last piece is one of the most vital elements to keep in mind for future planning: the recognition that there are many different cultural practices and beliefs within the Latino community, it cannot be approached as one community.

One of the most apparent outcomes from the survey was the desire for programming for the children in the community to pass on traditions. Additional information reveals that there is a need to provide Spanish language classes for second and third-generation Latino children and youth to prevent language loss. While their immigrant parents still speak the language, the American-born or early aged arrival immigrants do not speak Spanish at all or very little. We propose programming that combines the teaching of language and culture, possibly modeled on programs at the Hudson Valley Farm Hub for Spanish speakers, Vassar College's Adelante program and the FACTS (the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School) in Philadelphia. It is important to offer these classes within the context of Latino culture and separate from Spanish classes taught within the public education system, where the perception is if you are Latino you must already speak Spanish. By using a cultural framework we help to ensure that cultural practices and traditions are not lost.

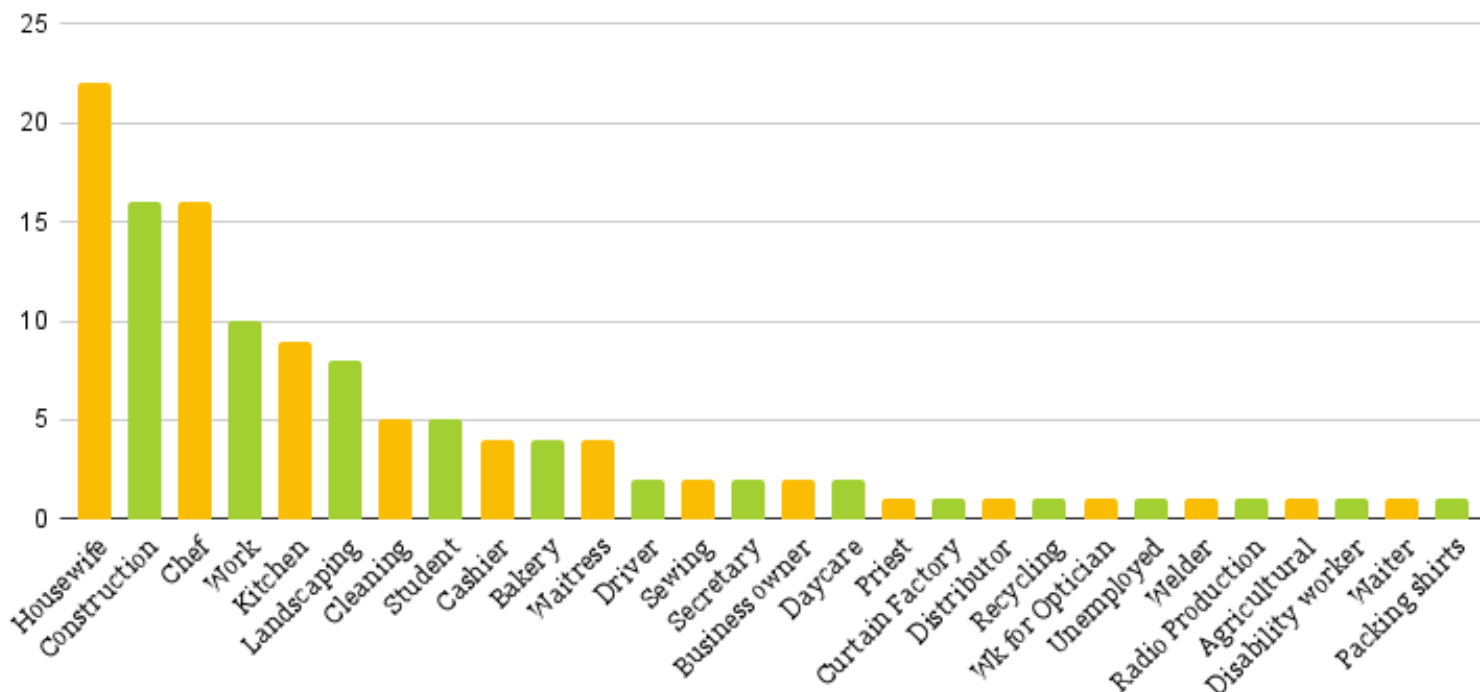
In a broader sense, the survey provides information for a variety of organizations to better understand and provide programs for and about the Latino communities in Kingston and the surrounding area. Collaborating organizations can build a long-lasting coalition for planning and implementing programming. Each organization has its strengths: Arts Mid-Hudson brings years of experience collaborating with Latino artists and organizations on the east side of the Hudson, the Kingston Arts Commission has access to city services and personnel, and the Reher Center featured a Guatemalan Worry Doll project at the 2021 Kingston Multicultural Festival in partnership with the Cornell Creative Arts Center titled "The Worry Doll Project/Muñeca Quitapenas Proyecto, a community craft project honoring the tradition of the Muñeca Quitapenas, Guatemalan Worry Dolls."



SURVEY RESULTS



OCCUPATION 138 RESPONDENTS



TRADITIONAL ACTIVITIES 122 RESPONDENTS

Foodways	Arts/Crafts	Music & Dance
Adobo	Carpentry	Dance of the Deer
Arepas	Embroidery	Dance of the Feathers
Baking	Handicrafts	Jarripeno
Barbacoa	Painting	
Caldo de pollo	Papel Mache	Other
Enchiladas	Papel Picado	Harvest
Habas con queso	Traditional Fabric	Healing practices
La lechona	Woodcarving	Jarripeno
Molé poblano		Language
Pepian		
Pozole		
Pupusas		
Tamales		
Tortilla		

WHAT TALENTS DO YOU HAVE? 82 RESPONDENTS

Art	Music
Bilingual leader	Music Teacher
Building Ofrendas	Painting
Construction	Poetry
Dance	Salsa
Drums	Sewing
Embroidery	Song
Event planning	Sports
Flowers	Storytelling
Food	Traditional Dance
Guitar	Video editing
Knitting	Woodcarving
Language	Woven Bags
Martial arts	Writing Poetry
Mechanics	
Mexican Baking	

PLACE OF BIRTH 138 RESPONDENTS

Belize	1
Colombia	2
Costa Rica	1
Ecuador	4
El Salvador	23
Guatemala	16
Honduras	4
Mexico, Guanajuato	1
Mexico, Guerrero	1
Mexico, Hidalgo	1
Mexico, Mexico City	4
Mexico, Morelos	2
Mexico, Oaxaca	15
Mexico, Puebla	36
Mexico, San Agustin	1
Mexico	13
Venezuela	1
?	13



SECOND + GENERATION 47 RESPONDENTS

There was confusion with this question and most answered with their place of birth rather than the first or second generation. Fifteen said first-generation and one said the second generation.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION 123 RESPONDENTS

In terms of personal information, we captured approximately 90% of the names of respondents but much less in terms of other information such as emails, phone numbers, and addresses.

PASSING DOWN TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS TO CHILDREN

132 RESPONDENTS

As with the question about traditional activities, the answers to the question of passing down traditions and customs to children cover a broad spectrum from music and dance to the celebration of holidays.

Arts	Culture
Embroidery	Altars for Saints
Music	Claritas altars
Painting	Colombian cultural traditions
Sewing	Dia de Los Muertos
Woodcarving	Food
Visual Arts	Handicrafts
	History
	La Guelaguetza
	Language
	Marimba
	Mexican cultural traditions
	Mexican Literature
	Multicultural Hispanic Customs
	Religious Celebrations
	Religious Dance
	Salsa
	Spanish customs and celebrations



HOLIDAYS AND TRADITIONAL CELEBRATIONS

122 RESPONDENTS

Ash Wednesday	La Guelaguetza
Candelaria	La Independencia
Día de las Madre	mass procession
Día del Nino	Mass Procession of San Jose
Día de Los Muertos	Mass Procession of San Jose Dance
Día de Mayo	Navidad
Día de Reyes	Posadas
Puebla wedding	Virgin of Guadalupe
Fiesta del Puebla	San Luis Obispo (Guatemala)
Fiesta de San Agustín	Semana Santa (Holy Week)
La Fiesta Patronal	Día de Septiembre (La Fiesta De San Miguel)
The Carnival of Barranquilla	

The list of folk arts and traditions was expansive ranging from folk arts such as knitting, cooking/baking, and dance to the celebration of particular holidays such as Dia de Los Muertos, Saints Days, celebrations around Christmas and Easter. The answers were as general as food and as specific as Baile del Venado - the dance of the deer.

IMPLEMENTING FINDINGS



The first cultural workshops related to the study took place in 2021 during May and July. In May, Marielena Ferrer led an intergenerational group of five in creating Venezuelan Máscaras de los Diablos Danzantes at the Department of Regional Art Workers, the D.R.A.W., in Kingston. After learning about the folklore and history of these máscaras, the participants created masks out of clay, paper, glue, and paint that were reminiscent of the traditional devil's masks while adding individual flair. The masks were displayed during the month of June 2021 in the windows at the D.R.A.W.



During the month of July, Concepción taught eighteen people the craft of Mexican embroidery in the gallery of the Kingston Arts Association, ASK. Concepción brought original Mexican embroidery garments and taught the group the basic stitches. The participants used the techniques to embroider their individually crafted designs with the bright colored thread traditional to Mexican embroidery.



The workshops laid the foundation for future activities in Kingston to highlight the distinct cultures, traditions, and experiences the people of Hispanic/Latino descent bring to this area.

SUMMARY

The information in Phase I of the Kingston Latino Cultural Study provides us with a broad picture of the community. While the largest numbers of the population are from Mexico, there is strong representation from El Salvador and Guatemala. The education level is high school/vocational school and below. We did not ask specifically about income, but we did ask about occupation, with the majority being housewife and kitchen work. We do not know who works several jobs, who supports a family in Kingston and in the country of origin, costs to earnings ratios, or disposable income so any analysis in that respect would be conjecture. Nor did we ask what occupation respondents may have held in their country of origin.

In relation to the broad categories of arts and culture, interests were significantly higher in handicrafts, music, and dance, with a lesser interest in literature, film, popular culture and modern art. Turning to the questions regarding the respondent's personal interests and what they wanted to pass on to their children, we found some intersections. One of the most common themes is the desire for events around holidays such as Christmas, Easter, and saints days. Parents would like their children to learn the traditions and traditional arts, especially music, dance, and food.

Respondents have a wide variety of talents from needle arts to culinary arts. There were quite a few people who noted sewing and other needlecrafts. We are considering a sewing pop up storefront to see if such a place could work on a more full-time basis and how it could be operated. Several respondents are involved in the upcoming "Sewing in Kingston" exhibition at the Reher Center for Immigrant Culture and History.

We were able to conduct about 8 interviews with respondents to dive a little deeper into what kinds of programming was desired and what talents they could offer. We need to do more interviewing and conduct some focus groups to identify more artists and community stakeholders for future programming. In the next phase, we need to gently delve a little deeper into the occupational and economic status of the interview subjects, to locate issues of leisure time and expendable income. How much of a barrier is time (working one or more jobs) or money to participate in cultural events? This next phase can be conducted in collaboration with other Kingston organizations who already work with the Latino community in non-arts capacities.

After speaking with Maria-Elena Ferrer-Harrington and Susie Ximenez about the summary and the cultural study in general, it is felt that another layer needs to be added: a needs assessment of the community beyond the arts. We realize that this is beyond the scope of the Kingston Latino Cultural Survey mandate, but such an assessment would add value to what has already been accomplished. It is suggested that we contact other organizations that work with the Kingston Latino population that would have a stake in the information gathered such as People's Place, Catholic Charities, the Family Institute, George Washington School, Ulster Immigration Defense Network, Family of Woodstock, and the City of Kingston.

One way that Arts Mid-Hudson and the Kingston community can help is through co-sponsoring events and locating event space to serve dance and music groups, and spaces to share traditional crafts such as the above-mentioned sewing center or exhibition spaces.

This survey marks the beginning of a long-term project to create a more inclusive community in Kingston through a variety of venues.

ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

Arts Mid-Hudson

Arts Mid-Hudson, the preeminent nonprofit arts service organization serving Dutchess, Ulster, and Orange Counties invites you to join us! Arts Mid-Hudson's initiatives engage and promote the arts across the Mid-Hudson region, benefiting our artists, arts organizations and communities.



together we create



Humanamente

Plans, oversees and provides psychosocial services for Hispanic immigrants, their families and agencies that work with them to help the immigrants overcome challenges so they can fully contribute to the betterment of their lives, those of their families and the broader community.

Kingston Arts Commission

The purpose of the Kingston Arts Commission is to strengthen the local economy by attracting and promoting artists, arts venues, and arts entrepreneurs; encouraging cultural tourism; creating opportunities for training and employment in a range of creative fields; and enhancing the quality of life amenities that will make Kingston a more attractive city in which to live. By doing so, the City of Kingston will gain greater regional and national recognition.



Latinx Project

Latinx Project seeks to promote Latinx art and culture in the Hudson Valley. We invest in creative work that highlights the complexity, nuance, and beauty of communities who are often rendered criminal or invisible. Art has the power to move audiences in ways that movement messaging can't—through new narratives that relate to and transform their own experiences.

The Reher Center for Immigrant Culture and History

The mission of the Reher Center for Immigrant Culture and History is to preserve and present stories with universal appeal about immigration, community, work, and bread. It uses its historic bakery building in Kingston's Rondout neighborhood to forge emotional connections among all people through tours and programs.



THE FUTURE



Alianza Cultural
de Kingston

The committee that implemented the study transitioned to Alianza Cultural de Kingston, an advisory board for the promotion, connection and celebration of the arts and cultures of these diverse communities in Kingston.

APPENDIX

SURVEY QUESTIONS

¿Cuáles programas o expresiones culturales le interesan?

El Estudio Cultural Hispano/Latino de Kingston está interesado en saber qué tipo de programas culturales le interesan a los residentes hispanos en nuestra ciudad.

Usted puede participar de forma anónima si así lo desea. Pero si decide darnos sus datos personales, sepa que su información no será compartida en ningún reporte ni con ninguna otra entidad.

El Estudio Cultural Hispano/Latino de Kingston es parte de un proyecto comunitario de la Comisión de las Artes de la Ciudad de Kingston y Arts MidHudson.

Agradecemos mucho su participación.

¿Podría decirnos su sexo?

Su edad: 18-20 21-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 61 or older

3. Nivel educativo:

Escuela primaria Escuela secundaria Preparatortia o vocacional Capacitación laboral
Escuela técnica Universidad Post grado Prefiere no responder

Otras. Especifique:

4. ¿A qué se dedica? Por favor describa su trabajo u ocupación. Indique si es estudiante, jubilado, trabajo no remunerado.

5. Si se identifica como inmigrante, ¿podría decirnos donde nació? Por favor especifique, ciudad, pueblo, provincia, estado y país. Si no sabe, siga con la siguiente pregunta.

6. Si es segunda generación, ¿podría decirnos dónde nacieron sus padres? Por ejemplo especifique ciudad, pueblo, provincia, estado y país. Si no sabe, siga con la siguiente pregunta.

7. Por favor, indique las actividades culturales que le interesan:

Artesanías Música Danza Literatura Artes plásticas Cultura popular
Cine Otras. Especifique:

8. Por favor, describa alguna/s de las tradiciones culturales o artísticas que han sido preservadas y transmitidas en su familia o comunidad (tales como música, baile, artes visuales como pintura, tejido tradicional, bordado, joyería, gastronomía, cuentos, carpintería y tallado de madera, prácticas de curandería, religión o cualquier otra tradición). Díganos de otras tradiciones o costumbres culturales o artísticas de su pueblo, familia o país.

9. ¿Qué tradiciones o costumbres le gustaría que aprendieran su hijos?

10. ¿Podría decirnos cuáles talentos tiene usted? ¿Cuáles habilidades culturales o artísticas ha desarrollado a lo largo de su vida?

Comentario

11. Gracias por su participación. El Estudio Cultural Hispano/Latino de Kingston aprecia su contribución y le ofrece un regalo si desea continuar participando en nuestro estudio. Para mayor información o si desea participar en futuros programas, por favor díganos su información de contacto.

Nombre Correo electrónico Número de teléfono Dirección

No deseo participar más, pero por fines de investigación, mi código postal es

What programs or cultural expressions interest you?

The Kingston Hispanic/Latino Cultural Study wants to learn about the cultural interests of the Hispanic/Latino residents in our city. You can participate anonymously if you wish. But if you decide to give us your data personal information, know that your information will not be shared in any report or with any other entity. The Kingston Hispanic/Latino Cultural Study is part of a community project of the Commission of the Arts of the City of Kingston and Arts Mid-Hudson.

We appreciate your participation.

1. What is your gender?

2. Age: 18-20 21-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 61 or older

3. Education level:

Primary School Secondary School Preparatory or vocational Job Training
Technical school University Post graduate Prefer not to respond
Other (please specify)

4. What is your occupation? Please describe. Indicate if you are a student, retired or work unpaid.

5. If you identify yourself as an immigrant, could you tell us where you were born? Please specify, city, town, province, state, and country. If you do not know, continue with the next question.

6. If you are second generation, could you tell us where your parents were born? For example, specify the city, town, province, state, and country. If you do not know, continue with the next question.

Other. Specify:

7. Please indicate the cultural activities that interest you:

Arts Music Dance Literature Fine Arts Popular Culture
Film Other. Specify:

8. Please describe any of the cultural or artistic traditions that have been preserved and transmitted in your family or community (such as music, dance, visual arts such as painting, weaving traditional, embroidery, jewelry, gastronomy, stories, carpentry and wood carving, health practices, religion or any other tradition). Tell us about other traditions or cultural customs or artistic of your town, family or country.

9. What traditions or customs would you like your children to learn?

10. What are your talents? What cultural or artistic skills do you practice?

11. Thanks for your participation. The Kingston Hispanic/Latino Cultural Study appreciates your contribution and offers you a gift if you wish to continue participating in our study. For more information or if you want to participate in future programs, please tell us your contact information.

Name Email Telephone number Address

I do not want to participate anymore, but for the purposes of research, my zip code is

