Making Connections
Collective Efficacy
and
Community Engagement

Report to Rainier Beach Action Coalition
and
Rainier Beach: A Beautiful Safe Place for Youth Initiative
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REPORT AUTHORS (in alphabetical order)

Kalyah Bojang
Justace Buhl Brennan
Alysha Conner
Jeff Cornejo
Joy Hoang
Shilpa Santhosh
Michelle Zhang

INSTRUCTOR

ManChui R. Leung, MPH, Ph.D. Candidate

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

Rainier Beach is a diverse neighborhood with great potential and many needs. As such, Rainier Beach Action Coalition has been a leader in promoting resident engagement as the key to community change. Using data from a survey of 102 Rainier Beach residents, our motivations for this study were to examine factors that influence community engagement in Rainier Beach. We focused on examining the level of collective efficacy as measured by the extent of social ties among neighbors, the extent of shared prosocial norms, and if residents were aware of how neighborhood problems and solutions were connected. We found moderately high levels of collective efficacy among residents, but lower levels of community engagement such as attending community events and volunteering. We found collective efficacy had more of an effect on attending community events than volunteering. Interestingly, we found resident perceptions *of others* engaging in neighborhood activities were more correlated with community engagement, than perceptions of themselves. We recommend Rainier Beach Action Coalition and partners increase their visibility of past and future community events to promote programming, and celebrate organizational and individual resident accomplishments.

INTRODUCTION and PURPOSE

Positive changes in the Rainier Beach neighborhood are the result of purposeful collaborations among public and private community organizations, service providers, local government, and Rainier Beach residents. *What compels individuals to act; whether alone or collectively, for the betterment of their neighborhood?* Foster-Fishman et al.'s (2007) study suggested three distinct factors that lead to increased community engagement: 1) the neighborhood's capacity for change; 2) the neighborhood's readiness for change, and; 3) an awareness of the current state of neighborhood problems. This study found that residents who were most likely to get involved in neighborhood efforts for change "recognized the state of current problems, believed that neighborhood efforts could help alleviate these problems, and had ties in the local community" (Foster-Fishman et al. 2007: 102). With this in mind, our study aims to understand the current state of community engagement in Rainier Beach with a focus on how much, with whom, and around what issues do its residents connect. Do residents see a connection between problems in the area? In turn, do they see these problems being addressed in a connected way? Do Rainier Beach residents socialize with their neighbors? Do residents share social norms that promote community engagement? We went in search of answers for how Rainier Beach is connected and what factors contribute to collective efforts towards the achievement of common goals; or what we refer to as, *collective efᶠicacy* in Rainier Beach.

BACKGROUND

Located in southeast Seattle, Washington, Rainier Beach is home to a historically diverse population including immigrants and refugees from African, Asian, and Latin American countries. Racial restrictive covenants before the Housing Rights Act of 1968 (Silva 2009, Singler et al. 2012), among other factors, give a historical perspective for the neighborhood's demographic differences compared to Seattle's population overall. People of color make up the majority of the residential population of Rainier Beach. The community is comprised of 31% African-Americans, 30% Asians, 23% Whites, 11% Hispanics/Latinos, and 4% Mixed Race (Statistical Atlas 2015). The socioeconomic status of residents is lower than Seattle's average, with 21.8% of family households and 31.5% of non-family households living in poverty (RBAC 2015), and 78% of Rainier Beach students participating in the free and reduced lunch program (Rainier Beach High School 2012). In the past couple of decades there have been significant efforts across multiple sectors to

improve the quality of life in the neighborhood. Most recently, a community-wide initiative, A Beautiful Safe Place for Youth, has been implementing programs to increase public safety and provide more opportunities for young people. The programs have been targeting five hotspots with high crime rates, located in high traffic areas throughout the neighborhood (ABSPY 2015).

Despite the presence of crime in the area, the youth believe people care about Rainier Beach. According to recent surveys conducted in five hotspots with high crime among 36 youth, an average of 62% of those surveyed agreed that those who lived within the immediate community stated they cared for Rainier Beach. An average of 67% felt that business owners cared for the community, and an average of 61% felt similarly about property owners in the neighborhood. 57% of surveyed youth perceived that people in the community are willing to help each other out, but less youth (51%) did not believe that those around them could be trusted (George Mason University 2014; ABSPY Youth Focus Groups 2014). These findings suggest residents may care for one another, but there are less tangible opportunities to build trust and collaboration. This may prevent residents from fully understanding the relationship between neighborhood problems and the efforts to resolve them.

Rainier Beach Action Coalition

Rainier Beach Action Coalition (RBAC) formed from a merger of two leadership organizations, the *Rainier Beach Community Empowerment Coalition* and *Rainier Beach Moving Forward*. It is an alliance of Rainier Beach residents, community organizations, businesses, agencies, and institutions with the intent to improve the status and quality of life in Rainier Beach. RBAC's vision is for Rainier Beach to be a healthy, vibrant, diversity-rich, drug-free neighborhood. Their focus areas include youth development, housing, businesses and jobs, public safety and crime, environmental justice, education, and transportation. RBAC organizes regular community events such as Town Halls and the annual Back2School Bash. In collaboration with A Beautiful Safe Place for Youth, RBAC's most recent program, Corner Greeters, is a place-based intervention strategy encouraging prosocial activities within the five crime hotspots. The Corner Greeters focus on increasing neighborhood safety by fostering positive and informative interactions between youth and residents (RBAC 2015).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: COLLECTIVE EFFICACY

Collective Efficacy is the process of activating *social ties* among neighborhood residents in order to achieve *collective goals* (Sampson 1997). Neighborhoods with high collective efficacy are more likely to come together to address problems in their community, and are more likely to create and maintain a safe, orderly environment according to shared prosocial norms and values. Higher collective efficacy also leads to more residents engaged in community efforts and issues. In order to better understand what motivates people to get involved and connected in their neighborhood, we focus our study on three factors of collective efficacy that we hypothesize have an influence on community engagement.

Capacity for Change - Social Ties

Capacity for change is defined as having the social infrastructure, the social ties among residents, to generate change. The type and extent of social ties among residents, signifying the social connections between community members, affects their level of engagement and choice to participate in change making efforts (Sampson & Greif 2009). Strong ties develop trust and communication between residents. It is through their social ties that residents connect neighborhood issues and solutions (Foster-Fishman et al. 2007).

Readiness for Change - Prosocial Norms

Readiness for change is defined as the extent that the community believes change is possible, which can take the form of shared norms and feelings of hope. Prosocial norms increase community readiness for change by creating strong collective expectations for how people act and build community. They can take the form of shared beliefs, behaviors and identities that shape collaborative expectations among community members. A study of perceived neighborhood disorder and collective efficacy found that prosocial norms have a positive correlation with collective efficacy within communities (Kleinhans and Bolt 2013).

Spark for Change - Awareness of Current State of Problems & Solutions

Awareness of the current state of neighborhood problems affects the desire and willingness for residents to engage in creating solutions. The "awareness of negative physical and social conditions may result in fear of crime or retaliation, reducing citizen involvement, but such conditions can also provide the impetus to act" (Foster-Fishman et al. 2007: 95). The presence of neighborhood problems is a strong predictor of individual and collective action within a community. Awareness of how problems and solutions are connected, creates a bridge between *capacity* and *readiness*. For example, a community can have all of the necessary capacity, but without knowledge of the current state of the problem, those resources will not be leveraged to create change.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to increase community engagement in Rainier Beach, it is important to take account of the level of collective efficacy. If collective efficacy is a process for attaining a common goal by activating the social ties of residents who share a set of social norms and an awareness of neighborhood problems, then the degree these factors are present will influence the level of community engagement in Rainier Beach. Our study is guided by the following research questions:

1. Do Rainier Beach residents have strong social ties with each other?

2. Do residents share prosocial norms that promote community engagement?

3. Do residents see a connection between problems in the area? In turn, do they see these problems being addressed in a connected way?

4. How much are residents engaged in the community activities?

5. Are there demographic differences?

We hypothesize that high levels of collective efficacy as measured by Rainier Beach residents having strong social ties, sharing strong prosocial norms, and seeing a connection between neighborhood problems, are more likely to partake in community engagement activities such as attending community events and volunteering.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a quantitative survey with one open ended qualitative question. The survey consisted of 16 questions that measured social ties between residents in the neighborhood, types of prosocial norms, resident awareness of issues present in the neighborhood, and demographic differences. Quantitative questions were measured on a 1-4 Likert Scale, or by the frequency of responses to specific options in multiple choice questions. The survey was also translated into Spanish (See Appendix A: English Survey; Appendix B: Spanish Survey). Each survey took approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. Data collection was conducted between October 31, 2015 and November 22, 2015.

We employed a convenience sampling method for our study, collecting responses from residents found in the five hotspots and residents attending community events. Due to the convenience and non-randomized method of collecting responses, demographic data was used to direct the research team on which resident sub-groups to approach. We conducted fieldwork in Rainier Beach ten separate times, eight of those times focused on surveying the five hotspots and two focused on community events. The minimum duration of a fieldwork visit was 1 hour, but some lasted 2-3 hours so the research team could survey in multiple hotspots. The two community events we attended were the Boo Bash at Safeway on October 31, 2015 and the Corner Greeters event at the Light Rail on November 10, 2015. Table 1. shows that 15% of our surveys were collected during two community events and 85% were collected at the hotspots. Rainier & Henderson was visited three times and consisted of 33% of the total surveys. Lake Washington Apartments was visited four times and consisted of only 26% of responses. Rose Street was visited two times with 15% of the collected responses. Safeway was also visited twice with 4% of responses. Light Rail at MLK and Henderson was visited once with 7% of responses.

Table 1. Responses by Location

Location (# visits)	% responses
Community Event (2)	15%
Lake Washington Apt (4)	26%
Light Rail (1)	7%
Rainier & Henderson (3)	33%
Rose Street (2)	15%
Safeway (2)	4%
Total (14 visits)	**100%**

Field Protocols

We complied with a field protocol that guided us before, during, and after fieldwork. The protocol ensured we were prepared for multiple scenarios, maximized our learning, and that we were acting respectfully towards the Rainier Beach community. For example, fieldwork was always conducted with at least one other person. Our protocol covered how to approach community members, safety, and post-survey discussion with our field partners on our experiences. After field work, our protocols focused on ensuring reliable data. This was done by logging data directly after field work and keeping original documents. During data collection, we wrote reflections on our fieldwork and discussed our experiences in class. We made revisions to tools and field protocols as needed.

Measures

Collective Efficacy

Capacity for change was measured through questions about social ties in the neighborhood [Questions 1-3, 5]. Respondents were asked to rate their frequency on whether they socialized with people in the community, noticed other community members socializing with each other, and how they heard about community events. The survey also measured if a respondent's social ties were racially and ethnically homogeneous or diverse.

Readiness for change was measured through questions about prosocial community norms [Questions 6-8]. Respondents were asked how much of a responsibility they saw themselves having to Rainier Beach, if they thought community members come together when faced with a problem, and if they would volunteer given their efforts led to positive change. They were also asked about the reasons they did or did not volunteer.

Spark for change was measured by awareness of issues and solutions in the community [Questions 10-13]. Respondents were asked to identify key problems in Rainier Beach. The seven options were prioritized from RBAC's action areas. Respondents were asked about their perception of community efforts addressing neighborhood problems. They were also asked for examples of what respondents have seen or want to see from those addressing these issues. We measured how interconnected neighborhood problems and solutions appear to respondents and whether neighborhood efforts affect multiple problems in a connected way.

Community Engagement

We measured community engagement through questions about people's *actions* in the community. Question 4 asked how frequently respondents attended community events, while Question 9 asked if respondents volunteered. We conceptualized attending community events to be more reflective of social ties and neighborhood capacity for change because it involved engagement with more collective and public activities. Volunteering was conceptualized to be more reflective of prosocial norms and neighborhood readiness for change because it involved individual motivations for contributing to neighborhood betterment.

Demographics

Demographic data was gathered in order to assess if the sample was representative of the Rainier Beach population and to examine demographic differences and similarities. We collected demographic data on gender, age, nativity, race and ethnicity, highest level of education attained, and occupation. Age was recoded into 5 categories: less than 18 years of age, 18-25, 26-45, 46-65, 65+. Job type was recoded into 6 categories: service, entry level, professional, unemployed, student, and other.

Analysis Strategy

After collecting the surveys we used Microsoft Excel to analyze the data by first measuring the percentage of responses to each question addressing social ties, norms, awareness, and demographics. Different themes were used to analyze answers to the one qualitative question which asked for specific examples on what residents saw, or wanted to see from organizations addressing neighborhood problems. A small number of our sample had missing data (at random) due to a few incomplete surveys and skipped questions. We decided to keep all cases and use all available data. This meant that our sample varied from question to question. Second, we analyzed the data by measuring the percentage of responses to the community engagement questions (attending community events and volunteering) by demographics to allow us to examine the similarities and differences across gender, race and ethnicity, age, education level, immigrant status and job type. Because the purpose of this study was to uncover what factors motivated an individual to engage in community change efforts, our analysis focused on the frequency of attending community events and volunteering. Finally, we calculated the correlation between our collective efficacy questions (social ties, norms and awareness) and the two community engagement questions. All our findings were discussed and refined multiple times within small work groups and with the entire research team.

FINDINGS

SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS

Our survey sample consisted of 102 respondents, with 49% males and 51% females. The mean age of our sample was 32 years. The age distribution of our sample were less than 18 years of age (22%), ages 18-25 (13%), ages 26-45 (46%), and ages 46-65 (19%). We were unable to obtain surveys from residents over the age of 65. A majority of our sample were residents who were born in the U.S. (70%). The top four racial and ethnic groups surveyed were African-American (36%), African (19%), Asian and Pacific Islander (17%), and Latino/a (13%) (see Figure 1). The educational attainment of our sample included some High School (35%), High School Diploma/GED (28%), Some College (24%), Bachelors Degree (10%), and Masters/PhD (3%). Majority of our sample worked in Entry Level jobs (29%) or were Students (21%). The rest of our sample consisted of Professionals (11%) Service Workers (9%), Unemployed (16%) and Other (4%).

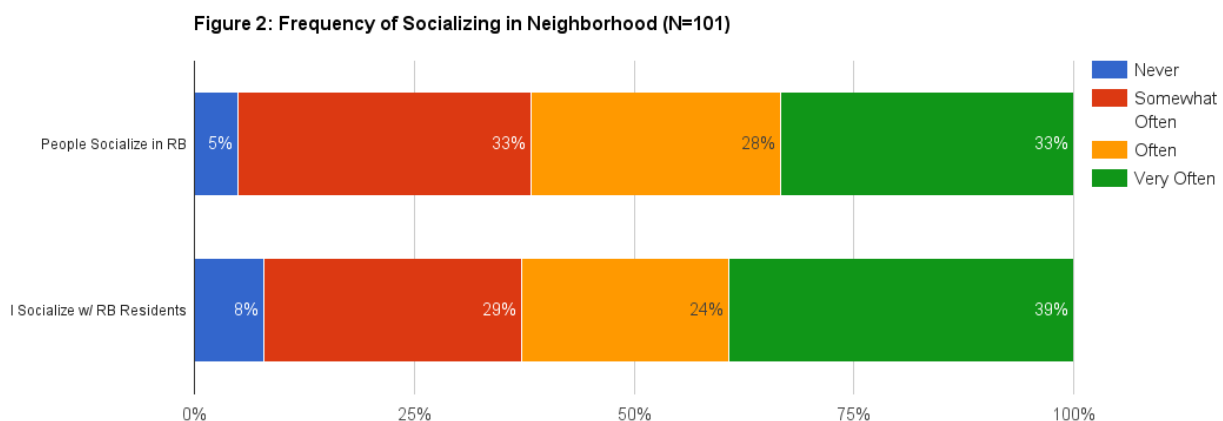
Figure 1: Race and Ethnicity (N=102)
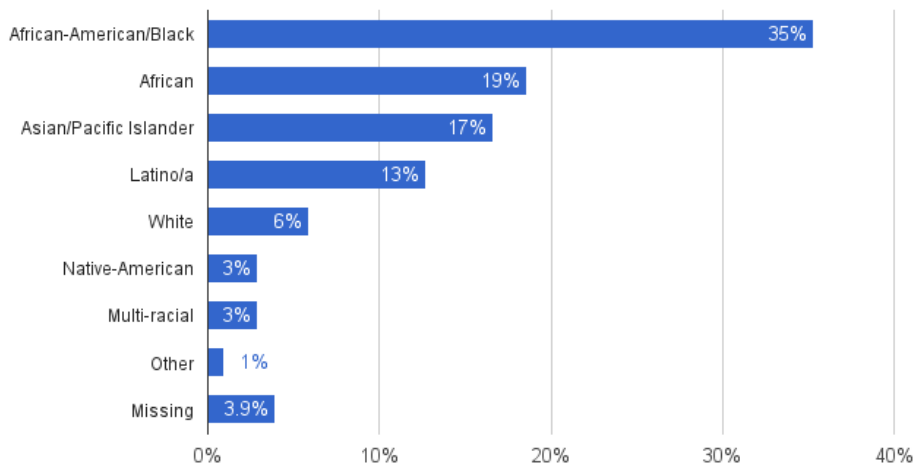
COLLECTIVE EFFICACY and COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The following section shows the results to our questions on social ties, prosocial norms, awareness, and community engagement. Each figure represents the percentage of each response.

Capacity for Change: Social Ties

To measure Rainier Beach's capacity for change, we asked questions on the extent of socialization among neighbors. Figure 2. shows the results for two questions regarding if residents socialize with their neighbors and how social they viewed their neighborhood. The data shows a promising trend, for over 60% reporting they "often" or "very often" socialize in their neighborhoods, and seeing people socializing in their neighborhood.

We also measured how people heard about community events to gauge if people relied on one another for "neighborhood news and gatherings" or on social or paper media. We found a majority of people (68%) relied on others to hear about community events with friends and family making up a larger percentage (44%) followed by neighbors (24%). Online and paper media only comprised 18% of responses. Other (14%) venues included the community center, schools, associations, and being out in the neighborhood.

Figure 2: Frequency of Socializing in Neighborhood (N=101)

People Socialize in RB: Never 5%, Somewhat Often 33%, Often 28%, Very Often 33%

I Socialize w/ RB Residents: Never 8%, Somewhat Often 29%, Often 24%, Very Often 39%
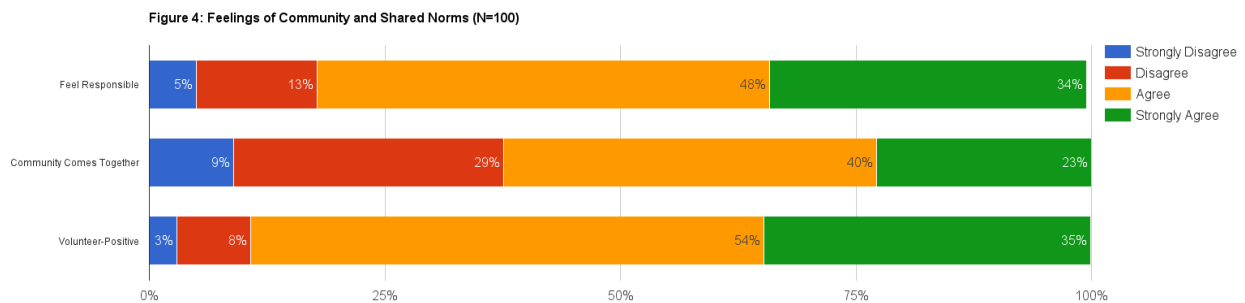
In addition to measuring the extent that Rainier Beach residents socialize with each other, we also measured whether residents socialize more with those of a similar race or ethnic background to them. In general, people tend to socialize with those similar to them, even in diverse settings. We would expect that it would be difficult for individuals to socialize with people of a different cultural and ethnic background, even though they may have more exposure to people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds. This may especially be the case with immigrants. Socializing with others of a similar race or ethnic background may allow for an easier transition into the area. According to Figure 3., 54% of those surveyed "agree or "strongly agree" to socializing with those of a similar race or ethnic background to them, while 46% "disagree" or "strongly disagree." While this finding did not fit our assumptions, the evidence of social ties across race and ethnicity is promising because in a diverse neighborhood without strong social ties, the opposite can easily happen, leading to racial and ethnic groups isolated or segregated from each other. These findings show a promising trend of strong and diverse social ties among neighbors who rely on family, friends and neighbors to hear about community events.

Figure 3: Social Ties and Race/Ethnicity (N=102)
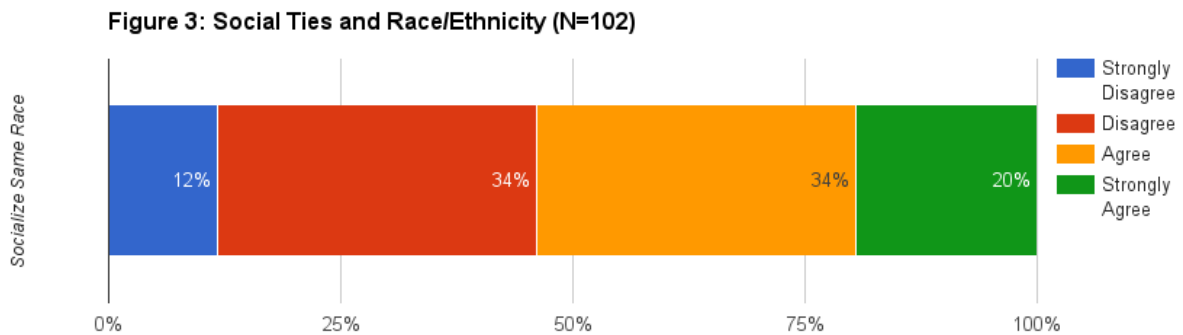
Readiness for Change: Prosocial Norms

To measure Rainier Beach's readiness for change, we asked questions on the extent that residents shared social norms around neighborhood guardianship and engagement. Figure 4. shows results for three questions regarding feeling responsible for the neighborhood; the neighborhood's ability to come together; and whether acts of community engagement, like volunteering, would have positive effects. Overall, the data shows that the majority of respondents feel a sense of responsibility to the Rainier Beach community (82% agree or strongly agree) and would volunteer if they knew their efforts would lead to positive change (89% agree or strongly agree). However, fewer respondents (63%) "agree" or "strongly agree" with the statement that the community comes together to address neighborhood problems. This data shows that Rainier Beach residents share prosocial norms, however there is less confidence in the neighborhood's collective ability to harness its resources for change.

Figure 4: Feelings of Community and Shared Norms (N=100)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Feel Responsible	5%	13%	48%	34%
Community Comes Together	9%	29%	40%	23%
Volunteer-Positive	3%	8%	54%	35%

To further examine the extent of prosocial norms that motivate community engagement, we asked residents for reasons they did or did not volunteer. For those who volunteered, a majority of residents stated they volunteered because they felt there was a need for improvements (33%) and felt volunteering made Rainier Beach better (29%). For those who did not volunteer, 52% reported scheduling conflicts and 21% were not aware of the need for volunteers. Only 7% thought that volunteering would not improve the neighborhood and 10% thought others were taking care of issues (Figures 5. and 6.). These responses support the previous findings on strong prosocial norms among Rainier Beach residents, and underscore that the lack of community engagement efforts, such as volunteering, were due more to logistical and awareness barriers.

Figure 5: Reasons For Volunteering (Responses=78)

- Improvements — 33%
- I know other volunteers — 15%
- Making RB better — 29%
- Works with my sched… — 15%
- Other — 6%

Percent of Responses
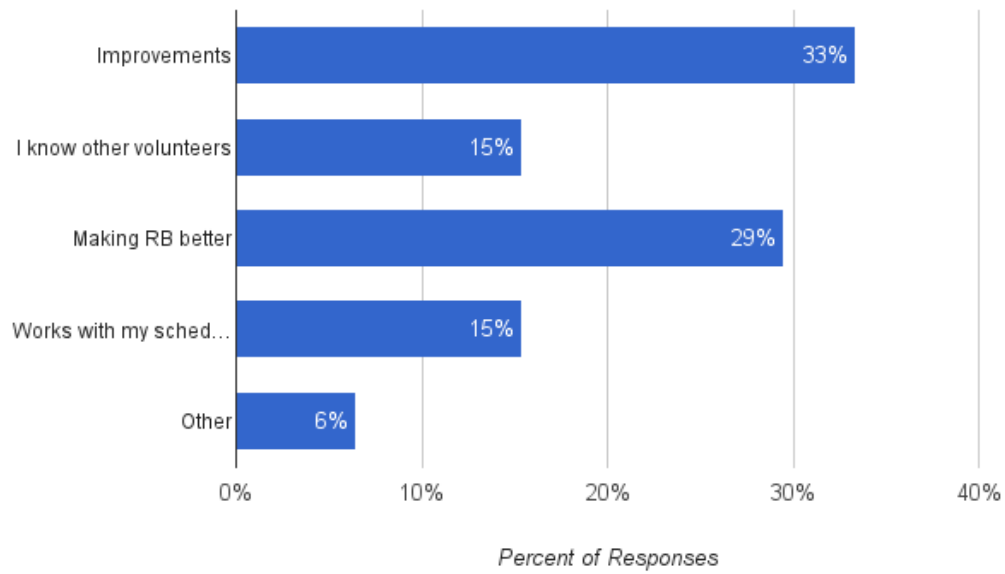
Figure 6: Reasons For Not Volunteering (Responses=61)

- Others are taking care — 10%
- Unaware of a need — 21%
- Won't Improve RB for better — 7%
- Doesn't work in my schedule — 52%
- Other — 10%

Percent of Responses
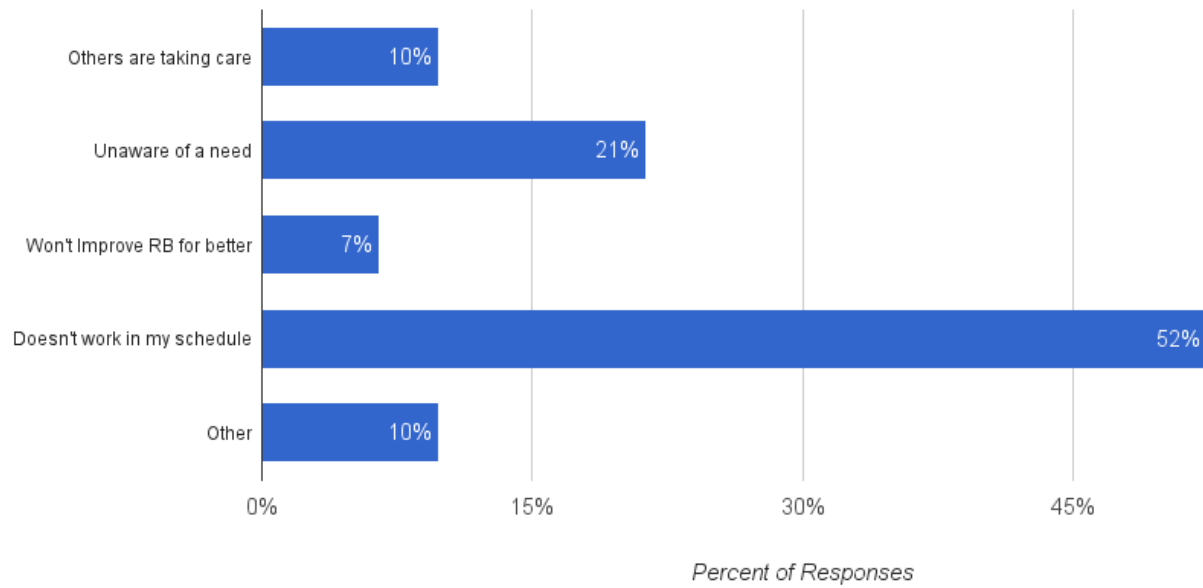
Spark for Change: Awareness of Problems and Solutions

When presented with a list of neighborhood issues and asked which ones needed to be addressed in Rainier Beach, public safety and crime received the highest number of responses (21%), followed by education (15%), transportation (13%), youth development (13%), businesses and jobs (12%), health and environment (12%) and housing (12%). Almost all respondents identified two or more issues.

To measure Rainier Beach's spark for change, we asked questions on the extent that residents were aware of neighborhood problems and if they viewed current solutions being implemented in a comprehensive and connected way. Figure 7. shows results for three questions regarding whether or not they are seeing issues addressed by people or organizations in the neighborhood; if the addressing of an issue leads to the addressing of more issues (domino effect); and if they are aware of any events that are addressing multiple issues in a connected manner. We expected that if people are aware of the problems in the Rainier Beach community, they will notice more being done, which in turn will lead to them believing that there is a domino effect in solving community issues. The results show an interesting pattern. A large majority (80%) believe one issue being addressed will create a domino effect to solve other issues, and a strong majority (69%) have seen events addressing multiple connected issues, but fewer of our survey respondents (56%) see people and groups addressing issues in the Rainier Beach community.

Figure 7: Awareness of Problems and Solutions (N=96)
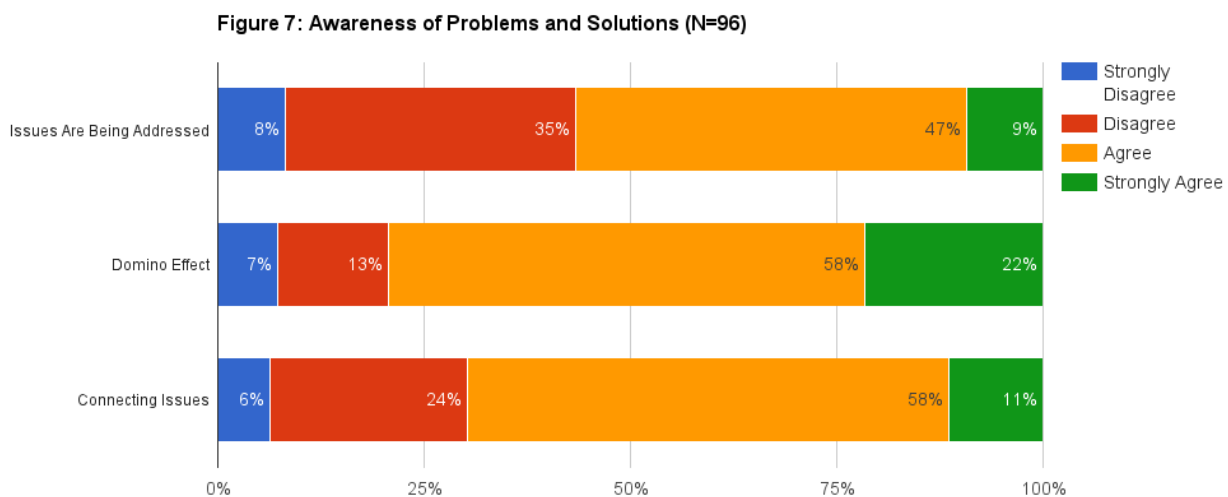
When asked further for examples of people and groups addressing issues in the neighborhood, responses fell into three broad categories: neighborhood activism (47%) such as corner greeters and A Beautiful Safe Place for Youth programs; community events (38%) such as Town Halls; and increased police or security presence (15%). Only a few respondents who "disagreed" or "strongly disagreed" to seeing people and organizations addressing issues gave examples of what they would like to see. A couple of responses highlighted issues of trash pick-up and traffic problems.

These findings show that people are aware of the neighborhood problems but may be less aware of how current solutions are addressing these problems in a comprehensive and connected manner. However, for those respondents who have seen people and organizations in the neighborhood addressing issues, they identified many different forms of neighborhood activism and community events as indicators of change.

Community Engagement: Attending Community Events & Volunteering

We measured community engagement with two action-oriented variables: attending community events and volunteering. Figure 8. shows that despite high levels of social ties, prosocial norms and awareness, only 44% of respondents stated that they attended community events "often" or "very often". We also found similar lower rates of volunteering. Less than half (46%) of the survey respondents volunteered, even though most respondents said they would volunteer if they knew their efforts would lead to positive change. These two measures of community engagement were lower than collective efficacy measures of social ties, prosocial norms and awareness.

Overall, these findings show that Rainier Beach residents had a moderately-high levels of collective efficacy as measured by social ties, prosocial norms and awareness. While there was evidence of moderately high capacity for change, readiness for change and spark for change, we found lower measures of community engagement such as attending community events and volunteering.

Figure 8: Attending Community Events

Never — Somewhat Often — Often — Very Often

24% | 33% | 26% | 18%
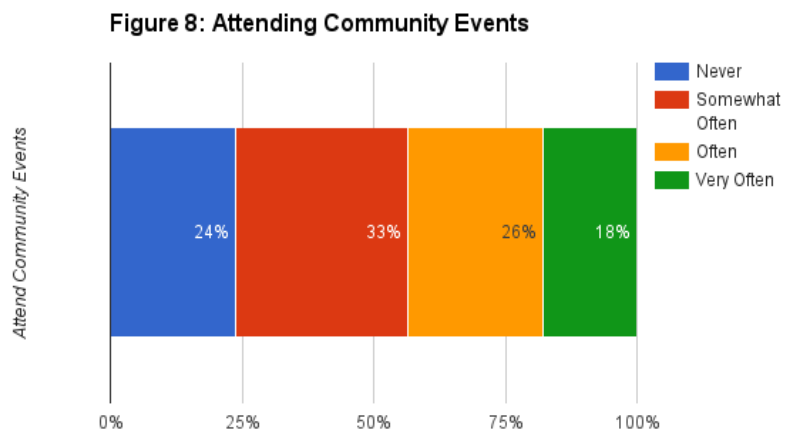
DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES in COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The following section addresses our research question regarding demographic differences and similarities. We focus our analysis on two community engagement variables: attending community events and volunteering. While we found some demographic variation across our social ties, prosocial norms and variables, there were very few significant differences in race and ethnicity, immigrant status, gender, age, education level and job type. In other words, there were many more demographic similarities than differences in our measures of collective efficacy. Below is analysis of some demographic similarities and differences in our community engagement variables.

Attending Community Events

When analyzing the relationship between community events and the Rainier Beach community demographics, no significant differences were found between event attendance and a community member's gender, age, education, or job type. However, significant differences were found between immigrants and respondents born in the United States, as well as variation across race and ethnicity. Figure 9. shows that immigrants were more likely to attend community events (55%) as indicated by "often or very often" in comparison to those who were born in the U.S. (39%). When we analyzed the relationship between race and ethnicity and community event attendance, we found that those who attended community events the most were African (53%), African-American (43%) and Latino/a (46%) (see Figure 10).
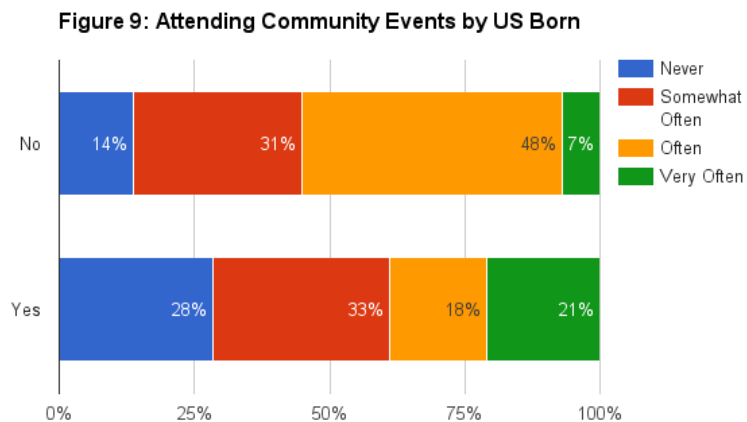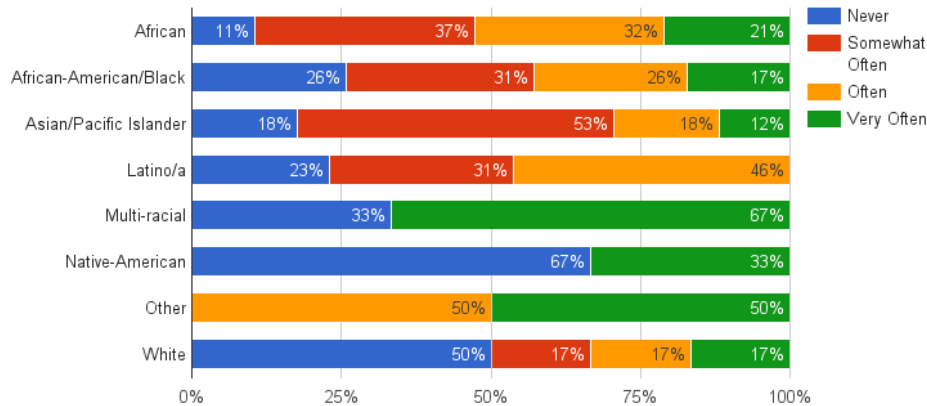

Figure 9: Attending Community Events by US Born

Figure 10: Attending Community Events by Race/Ethnicity

Volunteering

There were no significant differences between volunteering and gender, age, education level, or whether they had been born in the United States. However, significant differences were found when comparing volunteering to race and ethnicity and job type. Comparison between race and ethnicity and volunteering involvement revealed that those who volunteered the most were Asians/Pacific Islanders (59%), African Americans/ Blacks (47%), Latinos (42%) and Africans (42%) (see Figure 11.). Furthermore, amongst job types, Figure 12. shows those who held jobs as service workers (75%) and students (58%) volunteered the most. These

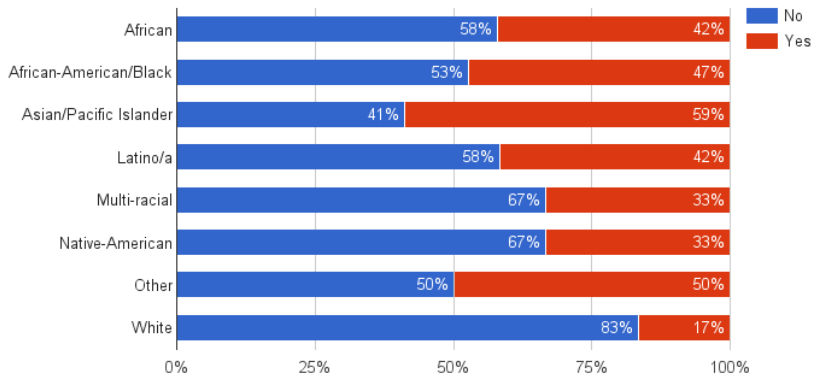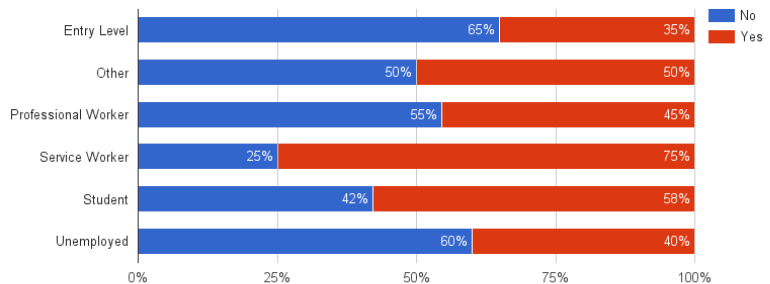Figure 11: Volunteering by Race/Ethnicity

Figure 12: Volunteering by Job Type

findings point to some selectivity and confounding variables. Service workers are more selective for volunteering are already involved in working for the community, allowing them to have a strong connection to the community and a higher willingness to become involved. Since volunteer hours are a part of the high school's graduation requirements, it is not only necessary for students to volunteer, but it is more feasible with their more flexible schedule. The higher percentage of Asian/Pacific Islanders who volunteer was partially driven by this racial and ethnic group having a higher proportion of students and service workers in our sample.

HOW MUCH DOES COLLECTIVE EFFICACY EFFECT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT?

In order to determine the type of relationship between collective efficacy and community engagement, we examined the strength of the correlation between social ties, norms, and awareness, and attending community events and volunteering. For example, if we found that the correlation between responses to a social tie question, "*I socialize with people in my neighborhood*" and respondents who volunteer equaled 1, then these two measures are positively and perfectly correlated. The opposite would be true for a correlation of -1. We conducted correlation models to determine the relationship collective efficacy questions and our two community engagement variables: attending community events and volunteering.

Tables 2. and 3. show that all our correlations were positive which means that as collective efficacy increased, community engagement increased. The correlation coefficients allowed us to determine the strength of this positive relationship. We found moderate correlations between respondents who attend community events with at least one of each of our collective efficacy measures, but mostly weak correlations between respondents who volunteer and our collective efficacy measures. Responses to Questio*n 3, "I know that when there's a problem facing Rainier Beach, the community comes together to address it"* was the only question that was moderately correlated to both volunteering and attending community events. For awareness questions that emphasize the connection

Table 2. Attending Community Events

Collective Efficacy Measures	Correlation Coefficient	Rating
Social Ties - Q1	0.32	Moderate
Social Ties - Q2	0.24	Weak
Social Ties - Q4	0.04	Weak
Norms - Q6	0.23	Weak
Norms - Q7	0.45	Moderate
Norms - Q8	0.28	Weak
Awareness - Q11	0.38	Moderate
Awareness - Q12	0.19	Weak
Awareness - Q13	0.32	Moderate
Rating: <0.3 Weak, 0.3-0.7 Moderate, >0.7 Strong		

Table 3. Volunteering

Collective Efficacy Measures	Correlation Coefficient	Rating
Social Ties - Q1	0.16	Weak
Social Ties - Q2	0.15	Weak
Social Ties - Q4	0.01	Weak
Norms - Q6	0.2	Weak
Norms - Q7	0.35	Moderate
Norms - Q8	0.25	Weak
Awareness - Q11	0.26	Weak
Awareness - Q12	0.12	Weak
Awareness - Q13	0.22	Weak
Rating: <0.3 Weak, 0.3-0.7 Moderate, >0.7 Strong		

among problems and solutions, we found weak correlations with community engagement. For example, Question 12, *If one problem in the neighborhood is solved, it can create a domino effect to solve other problems* was weakly correlated to both volunteering and attending community events, and Question 13, *In the past year, I see neighborhood events addressing multiple issues in a connected way"* was moderately correlated with attending community events and weakly correlated with volunteering.

Interestingly, there was an overall pattern among resident perceptions of what *others* in the community are doing (Questions 1, 7, 11, 13) being moderately correlated with attending community events, while resident's self-perceptions (Questions 2, 3, 6 and 8) were weakly correlated with attending community events. There was no similar pattern with volunteering.

We hypothesized that Rainier Beach residents who report having strong social ties, share prosocial norms, and see a connection between neighborhood problems are more likely to partake in community engagement activities. While we did find some evidence of this relationship, our findings suggest that resident perceptions of *others engaging in neighborhood activities* are more likely to result in their own participation in community engagement activities, rather than how residents view themselves.

CONCLUSION and DISCUSSION

We hypothesized that high levels of collective efficacy as measured by residents having strong social ties, sharing strong prosocial norms, and seeing a strong connection between neighborhood problems are more likely to be engaged in community activities such as attending community events and volunteering. Our survey questions focused on measuring three components of collective efficacy in Rainier Beach; capacity for change (social ties), readiness for change (prosocial norms), and spark of change (awareness of community issues and solutions). Our findings showed that Rainier Beach residents had a moderate level of collective efficacy. Evidence showed that Rainier Beach residents shared strong social ties and prosocial norms, however residents were less likely to attend community events and volunteer. In addition, residents were aware of the current issues in Rainier Beach and how they were connected with community events, however, residents were less likely to visibly see others actively engaging in community events and addressing community problems. This is where we see a gap between *having* the components of high collective efficacy and fully *activating* these components to achieve collective goals.

Collective efficacy is the process of activating social ties among neighborhood residents in order to achieve collective goals (Sampson 1997). Although residents shared strong social ties, we found they were not fully activating these ties in the form of attending community events or volunteering. Although residents shared strong prosocial norms, they were not as aware of the collective goals that had been achieved in the neighborhood. Based on our data, we discovered two barriers that may prevent residents from activating and achieving these common goals of improving the Rainier Beach neighborhood. Firstly, Rainier Beach residents shared social ties and prosocial norms, however there is less confidence in the neighborhood's ability to activate and achieve change. In addition, residents were less likely to participate in community activities due to logistical barriers such as time schedule and not knowing there is a need for volunteers. This brings us to our last finding, which is residents were more likely to activate and be part of Rainier Beach's potential for change when they perceived others engaged in social

and neighborhood activities. This means residents have positive feelings for the community, but are less likely to see Rainier Beach's potential and progress for change when they do not witness others in the community directly and visibly addressing neighborhood problems.

DISCUSSION - Barriers to Action

Through the data collected, it is evident that people in the Rainier Beach community share strong social ties, share strong prosocial norms and are aware of the current problems and solutions in the neighborhood. Yet, despite this positive trend in collective efficacy, we see that this does not carry over to similar levels of community event attendance or volunteering. This reveals a gap, or possibly a barrier, between collective efficacy and community engagement. What is preventing the Rainier Beach residents from *activating their social ties, prosocial norms, and awareness in order to achieve individual or collective acts of community engagement?*

Collective efficacy develops more easily in some types of communities than in others. Looking into the demography of Rainier Beach, there has been constant change in neighborhood demographics that may strain the establishment of collective resources that motivate people to action. Historically, people who moved to Rainier Beach have been low income immigrants to the U.S. or migrants from other parts of the state or country. While some stay in Rainier Beach for many years and generations, there are also many residents who have moved up in social or economic mobility and then move out of the neighborhood. Only recently, has Rainier Beach experienced more affluent incoming residents. Since developing mutual trust and cooperation among neighbors requires time and consistency, neighborhoods where individuals are more likely to move out tend to have lower levels of collective efficacy. While there have been consistently moderately high levels of collective efficacy in Rainier Beach across multiple studies and reports (George Mason University ABSPY Youth Focus Groups 2014; UW Safe Passage Study

2015), it may be about what level of collective efficacy is enough to activate the Rainier Beach community. In other words, it may be that Rainier Beach needs even higher levels of socialization, prosocial norms and awareness to motivate high levels of community engagement.

In addition to demographic changes, resources are another factor that influences the development of collective efficacy. Neighborhoods with residents with less socioeconomic resources may be more limited in sharing of collective resources and individuals have less time and skills to consistently contribute to neighborhood activities. The establishment of neighborhood institutions like cultural centers, churches/temples, mutual aid societies, schools, and locally-owned businesses mitigate the lack of individual resources by providing residents with a common space to gather, receive services, access resources, and foster a shared identity. Interestingly, our data revealed immigrants are more likely to attend community events. This may be due to immigrant and culturally oriented institutions like the Ethiopian Community Center on Rose Street being established. It will be interesting to examine if immigrants tend to attend community event within their own cultural or religious communities or if they are just as likely to attend events that serve a broader Rainier Beach constituency such as RBAC events. The further socialization across race, ethnicity, culture and religion may result in a higher capacity for change and therefore more community engagement.

Finally, our study focused on specific variables of collective efficacy that we thought had not been examined in previous Rainier Beach studies and reports. Other studies on collective efficacy and community engagement had identified additional factors such as leadership, trust, identity, and solidarity. It may be that some select factors have more influence over community engagement than others.

LIMITATIONS and STRENGTHS

As we conducted our research project, we did face limitations. Because this project is conducted through a class taught at the University of Washington, we were given a limited time frame of eleven weeks to conduct our research. Our time constraints prevented us from conducting a random sampling method that would allow our findings to be generalizable to the entire Rainier Beach population. Because we used a convenience sample method, we introduced some bias into our data because we could not control for third party variables such as choosing who to approach based on comfort level. To minimize bias, we attempted to survey at the five hotspots at different times of the day to reach different types of people. However, due to schedule availability, we were only able to collect surveys at certain times and days, primarily Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday around 2:30pm to 5:30pm. This gives us an underrepresented group of individuals who were not at the hotspots during our fieldwork.

There is also an underrepresentation of specific demographic groups such as people over the age of 65, Whites, Native Americans, and Multi-Racial groups. Due to factors such as time and schedule constraints, we did not gather a large enough sample of residents to represent the three racial and ethnic groups listed above. Out of our total sample of 102 respondents, 7% were White, 3% were Native American, and 3% were Multiracial. This limits our analysis because we cannot generalize our findings to the Rainier Beach population and small sample size of these racial and ethnic groups make it difficult to analyze and answer our research questions.

While we conducted our surveys in the neighborhood, we came across a few limitations as well. Because a few of the individuals surveyed were on their way to their homes or other destinations, the surveys conducted were incomplete. Others, when given the survey, did not want to answer the question or gave answers that did not answer the question that was being asked. These responses were recorded as incomplete, but we were able to use the data of the questions that were completed in our analysis. Over the course of time that fieldwork was conducted, the survey questions had been rewritten and tweaked in order to ensure a better understanding of the questions and proper retrieval of all necessary data. The lack of consistency in how questions were worded and asked

may influence the results shown. Furthermore, we experienced difficulty communicating with those who were non-native English speakers, specifically Spanish speakers. We addressed this barrier by translating our survey into Spanish to facilitate communication.

Although our group struggled with limitations, there are strengths to highlight. Majority of the students were unaware of the Rainier Beach community. Few of us had heard or visited the Rainier Beach community, which allowed us to incorporate a new and fresh perspective for Rainier Beach. In addition, we were able to visit and conduct fieldwork at least twice for four out of the five hotspots. We also had a group of diverse student surveyors who could speak multiple languages fluently, which enabled us to communicate more efficiently with residents who struggled with English. Our diverse language speakers among our research team broke the communication barriers between the interviewer and interviewee and enabled us to collect results among different demographics more easily. We also translated the surveys into Spanish. This allowed us to get more accurate responses because Spanish speakers can better comprehend the question and give a more accurate answer.

Lastly, our survey process and survey questions allowed us to develop a better understanding of how residents felt about Rainier Beach. We were able to get a lot more insight and perspective on residents' views of Rainier Beach through the survey process because we can directly communicate with residents. During the surveys, we could explain questions, clear up misunderstandings, and discuss specific topics in further detail with residents. Many times, residents felt more comfortable discussing their concerns and opinions through a conversation than just filling out a survey.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Highlight past community events to celebrate community achievements by:**

   a. **Promoting successes and positive changes (e.g. overall decrease in crime, increase in youth leadership) with neighborhood signage and media (online and paper)**

   b. **Acknowledging resident and volunteer achievements**

Although residents felt responsible for Rainier Beach and agreed that problems and solutions were connected, they were less aware of problems being addressed in the community. Promoting past and recent successes to the entire neighborhood would raise general awareness, even among residents who have been less actively involved.

2. **Manage perceptions through increased visibility of community events by:**

   a. **Increasing incentives for residents to share information or bring their family, friends, and neighbors to community events**

   b. **Increasing paper signage, flyers and banners at community centers, businesses, schools, sidewalks, and bus stops**

   c. **Improving online and paper versions of the neighborhood/RBAC community event calendar by highlighting events open to public participation**

   d. **Increasing frequency of use of online tools like Facebook Events so residents can see who is attending in their social network**

   e. **Increasing frequency and presence on social media to better target youth**

Residents mostly heard about community events from family, friends and neighbors, and when they saw others engage in the neighborhood, they were more likely to attend community events. Prioritizing person-to-person sharing of neighborhood information or having incentives for people to bring new people to events would increase the attendance of events and increase general awareness of the current state of problems and solutions.

In our fieldwork, we noticed that flyers, banners and calendars for community events were lacking and many adult respondents told us that they do not have regular access to the internet. More local and paper based promotion of events would complement person-to-person outreach strategies. For younger residents, who get more information online, increasing social media presence would also be advantageous, especially when utilizing tools that let people know who and how many other people are attending events.

3. Enhance community engagement strategies by:

a. **Promoting volunteer opportunities and a range of volunteer options**

b. **Increasing outreach to immigrant communities for volunteering**

c. **Having a consistent presence in specific locations to increase resident familiarity with RBAC programs**

d. **Including more interactive activities at tabling or Corner Greeter events such as displays, trivia/games, and surveys**

e. **Increasing local signage (sandwich boards, banners) near events to attract people**

We found the primary reasons for not volunteering was due to schedule conflicts and lack of awareness of volunteer opportunities. Promoting a range of volunteer opportunities with differing time commitments may increase volunteering demand for RBAC. Furthermore, immigrants were more likely to volunteer, so increased outreach to immigrants may bring more successful community engagement outcomes. RBAC has increased neighborhood visibility by tabling in the streets and at community events. Having consistent presence in the streets is very promising to increase awareness and changing perceptions. Additional improvements could be made to attract more residents to stop by and see what is going on such as adding more interactive activities, utilizing more fun and creative ways to present their information, and increasing signage directing people to tables/Corner Greeters.

4. Brand RBAC as a leading organization for change by:

a. **Using RBAC (and partners such as ABSPY) logos, taglines and hashtags with promotions and communications to complement local place-based activities**

Since RBAC is newly formed from a merger of two established neighborhood organizations, it is an important time for RBAC to increase the branding and recognition as local leadership focused on the improvement of Rainier Beach. Increased visibility in logos, taglines, and hashtags would complement the increased grassroots visibility and awareness in the streets.

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APPENDIX

A. English Survey

B. Spanish Survey

NAME: _____ PARTNER:_____ DATE: _____TIME:_____

EVENT/HOTSPOT: _____ WEATHER:_____

Are you a resident of Rainier Beach? Yes   No   If no, what connection to you have to RB?_____

1. People in my neighborhood socialize with each other:

Never	Somewhat Often	Often	Very Often
1	2	3	4

2. I socialize with people in my neighborhood:

Never	Somewhat Often	Often	Very Often
1	2	3	4

3. The people I socialize with are a similar race or ethnic background to me:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4

4. I attend community events within the neighborhood:

Never	Somewhat Often	Often	Very Often
1	2	3	4

5. I hear about community events from:
- ❏ Friends/Family
- ❏ Neighbors
- ❏ Online/Paper Media
- ❏ Other: _____

6. I see myself as having a responsibility to the Rainier Beach neighborhood and its residents:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4

7. I know that when there's a problem facing Rainier Beach, the community comes together to address it:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4

8. I would volunteer if I knew my efforts would lead to positive change in Rainier Beach:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4

9. Do you volunteer?   Yes   No

If Yes: go to question A   **If No**: go to question B

9A) I volunteer because: (check all that apply)**:**   **9B) I don't volunteer because:** (check all that apply):
- ❏ I feel there's a need for improvements
- ❏ I know other volunteers
- ❏ It's making Rainier Beach better
- ❏ It works with my schedule
- ❏ Other:_____

- ❏ Others are already taking care of things
- ❏ I am not aware of a need for volunteers
- ❏ It would not change RB for the better
- ❏ It doesn't work with my schedule
- ❏ Other:_____

10. I feel these issues need to be addressed in Rainier Beach: (check all that apply)

- ❏ Transportation
- ❏ Education
- ❏ Health and Environment
- ❏ Public Safety/ Crime

- ❏ Businesses and Jobs
- ❏ Housing
- ❏ Youth Development
- ❏ Other_____

11. I see that people and organizations in the neighborhood are addressing these issues:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4

11A. If you agree/strongly agree, describe what you see with examples. If you disagree/strongly disagree, what would you like to see?

_____

12. If one problem in the neighborhood is solved, it can create a domino effect to solve other problems:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4

13. In the past year, I see neighborhood events addressing multiple issues in a connected way;
For example: corner greeters, safe passage, town halls

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4

Background questions:

Gender: Male   Female   Other: _____

Age: _____

Race/Ethnicity:

A. African   B. Native-American   C. Asian   D. African-American

E. White   F. Latino/a   G. Pacific Islander   Other: _____

Were you born in the U.S.?   Yes   No

What's the highest level of education you've attained?

A. Some High School   B. High School Diploma/GED   C. Some College

D. Associate's Degree   E. Bachelor's Degree   F. Masters/PhD

What is your current or most recent job?_____

NOTES:

Rainier Beach "Hacer Conexiones / Making Connections" Study

¿Es residente del barrio de Rainier Beach? Sí o No   Si no, ¿Que es su relación a Rainier Beach?_____

1. La gente en mi barrio pasan el tiempo juntos:

Nunca	A veces	Frecuentemente	Muy frecuentemente
1	2	3	4

2. Yo paso el tiempo con la gente de mi barrio:

Nunca	A veces	Frecuentemente	Muy frecuentemente
1	2	3	4

3. La gente con quien yo paso el tiempo son de mi misma raza o etnicidad

Nunca	A veces	Mucho	Muy frecuentemente
1	2	3	4

4. Yo voy a eventos en el barrio:

Nunca	A veces	Mucho	Muy frecuentemente
1	2	3	4

5. Yo me entero de eventos del barrio por midio de:
- ❏ Amigos/Familia
- ❏ Vecinos
- ❏ Periodico/ La Internet
- ❏ Otro: _____

6. Yo siento una responsabilidad al barrio de Rainier Beach y sus residentes:

Nunca	Poco	Mucho	Muchisimo
1	2	3	4

7. Se que cuando hay un problema en Rainier Beach, la comunidad se reúne para resolverlo:

Muy en desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	De acuerdo	Muy de acuerdo
1	2	3	4

8. Yo sería voluntario si supiera que mis esfuerzos mejoraran a Rainier Beach:

Muy en desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	De acuerdo	Muy de acuerdo
1	2	3	4

9. Eres voluntario? Sí o   No
Si sí: vea la pregunta A   Si no: vea la pregunta B

A) Soy voluntario porque: (marque todo lo que corresponda)**:**
- ❏ Siento que hay una necesidad para reforma
- ❏ Conozco a otros voluntarios
- ❏ Está haciendo mejor Rainier Beach
- ❏ Funciona con mi horario
- ❏ Otro:_____

B) No Soy voluntario porque: (marque todo lo que corresponda):
- ❏ Otros están tomando el cuidado del cosas
- ❏ No soy consciente de la necesidad de voluntarios
- ❏ No cambiaría Rainier Beach para mejor
- ❏ No funciona con mi horario
- ❏ Otro:_____

10. Siento que estos problemas necesitan ser tratados en Rainier Beach: (Marque todo lo que corresponda)

- ❏ Transportación
- ❏ Educcación
- ❏ Salud y Medio Ambiente
- ❏ Seguridad Pública / Crimen

- ❏ Empresas y Empleo
- ❏ Entorno
- ❏ Desarrollo juvenil
- ❏ Otro:_____

11. Veo que las personas y organizaciones en el barrio están abordando estos temas:

Muy en desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	De acuerdo	Muy de acuerdo
1	2	3	4

11.A. Si está de acuerdo / muy de acuerdo, describa como lo hacen, use ejemplos (lo que se ve con ejemplos).

_____

12.Si hay un problema en el barrio se resuelve, se puede crear un efecto dominó para resolver otros problemas:

Muy en desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	De acuerdo	Muy de acuerdo
1	2	3	4

13. Durante el transcurso del año, visto eventos en el vecindario que lo hacen ver mas unido:
Por ejemplo *corner greeters,* monitores de peatones (safe passage), reuniones en el ayuntamiento (town halls)

Muy en desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	De acuerdo	Muy de acuerdo
1	2	3	4

Preguntas demográficas:

Género   Masculino   Femenino   Otro: _____

Edad: _____

Raza / Ethnicidad:

A. Africano   B. Nativo -Americano   C. Asiático   D. Africano - Americano

E. Caucásico (Blanco)   F. Latino/a   G. Islas del Pacífico   Otro: _____

¿Nació usted en los EE.UU.?   Sí   No

¿Cuál es el nivel más alto de educación que hemos alcanzado?

A. Unos anos de secundaria
Some High School

B. Diploma de escuela secundaria?GED
 High School Diploma/GED

C. Educación superior
Some College

D.Grado Asociado
 Associate's Degree

E. Licenciatura

F. Dominar La licenciatura/PHD
Maestria/PhD

¿Cuál es tu trabajo actual o más reciente?_____