



TOMAHWARES



Address

P.O. Box 73204
Washington, DC 20056



Phone

P : 202.900.9450



Email

info@tomahwares.com

DOEE NRA MARKETING

Market Research Report



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Executive Summary

From March to May 2019, TomahWares conducted a web-based community survey (N=857), three focus groups, and three roundtables to support the DC Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) Natural Resources Administration. This research was conducted to support the agency's communication and outreach efforts to District residents, stakeholders, and business owners. This research was also conducted to ensure that DOEE's outreach efforts are inclusive of the District's historically underrepresented and underserved communities. TomahWares worked in close collaboration with agency staff on the surveys, focus groups, and roundtables.

The community survey was launched on March 1, 2019, and closed on May 15, 2019. It was distributed via email and social media. TomahWares worked in collaboration with the Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs, the Mayor's Office on African Affairs, the Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs, the Latin American Youth Center, and DC Public Schools (DCPS) to distribute the survey.

The survey was designed to allow the agency to gather enough information from participants to effectively assess their perceptions and experiences with DOEE's marketing but not too long to discourage completion. Respondents who identified themselves as educators were routed to a special section of the survey that was education-specific. Other parts of the survey were only presented to respondents who identified themselves as business owners, parents, or former or current DOEE program participants.

The focus groups were all held at the Yard office space in the Eastern Market Neighborhood. The groups were organized into three groups. Focus Group #1 was held on March 20 and was focused on community partners and their interactions with the agency. Focus Group #2 was held on March 27 and was focused on developers and business owners. Focus Group #3 was held on April 17 and was focused on agency stakeholders.

There were also three roundtables conducted with community representatives from the African, Latinx, and Asian and Pacific Islander communities.

The survey and focus groups revealed stark differences in the way that information is disseminated in different communities in the District. It also revealed that environmental concerns differed when segregated by demographics. Environmental safety issues like drinking water were bigger concerns for the Latinx and African American populations in the District. Notably, residents in Ward 7 & 8 had less exposure to DOEE and NRA programs and outreach efforts than their counterparts in other wards in the District.

Community leaders and activists representing majority historically underrepresented communities in the District consistently noted the need and desire for DOEE to partner with local organizations already active and credible in their communities in order to increase the effectiveness of their outreach efforts in those communities.

METHODOLOGY

The community survey was organized into six sections: 1) demographic questions, 2) household questions, 3) communication channels, 4) environmental concerns, 5) DOEE awareness, and 6) DOEE marketing. People who indicated that they worked in the education field were routed to a shortened survey that was targeted towards the education community and parents. Participants who identified as a business owner or past DOEE program participant were given additional questions unique to the response.

The survey was released to the general public with an emphasis of maximizing exposure to District residents. The surveys were delivered via email, through the agency's social media, and through paper copies distributed through community partners in the African and Latinx community.

Focus group participants were selected based on subject matter expertise and according to the theme of the focus group. Recruitment was conducted through direct outreach to potential participants.

The roundtable participants were chosen by their status and relationships with either the District's African or Latinx population. Participants were selected through direct outreach.

WHAT WE LEARNED: HIGH-LEVEL TAKEAWAYS

Below are the high-level takeaways from the research results from the surveys, focus groups, and roundtables. For more details, visit the *Survey section on page 11*, the *Focus Groups section on page 31*, and the *Affinity Roundtables section on page 39*.

Surveys

- The majority of respondents have had little to no interaction with DOEE marketing efforts with 76% of respondents answering that they saw DOEE advertisements no more than 2 times per month.
- African Americans had the least amount of exposure to DOEE Marketing (90% of respondents saw DOEE advertisements no more than 2 times per month) but were most reliant on direct agency outreach for program participation (42% of program participants who identified as African Americans heard about their programs through direct outreach from the agency).
- The agency has had some success with outreach to the Latinx community as 45% of respondents reported seeing agency advertisements more than 5 times per month and 79% of respondents were able to accurately pick out at least one function that the agency performs.

Focus Groups

- The complexity of DOEE marketing materials was repeatedly cited by community leaders from Wards 5 & 8 in Focus Group #1 and from nonprofit representatives in the stakeholder Focus Group #3.
- Business owners in Focus Group #2 noted that the agency often announces big initiatives such as cleaning out the Anacostia, but they never receive any updates about how those projects are progressing. They would like to stay informed about the agency's progress on environmental issues. Similarly, in Focus Group #3, a non-profit representative noted that the District is one of the most progressive cities in the country on environmental issues but none of this is ever communicated to the public. The focus groups suggested that DOEE needs to do a better job communicating its successes and informing the public about progress.
- Partnership was a reoccurring theme in the focus groups. Small business owners in Focus Group #2 indicated that they would like to be partners with the agency and have better access to senior level officials. In Focus Group #3, many of the non-profit organizations indicated that they would like to form partnerships with the agency to better serve their constituents. The Anacostia Coordinating Council representative noted that his organization wanted to form a stronger relationship with the agency to ensure their community was able to participate in DOEE programming.

WHAT WE LEARNED: HIGH-LEVEL TAKEAWAYS (CONT.)

Roundtables (Affinity Groups)

- Affinity group representatives suggested that DOEE partner with local organizations to improve marketing and communication efforts to historically underrepresented populations in the District. Representatives from the Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) suggested that the agency work with them in order to mitigate trust issues between the Latinx community and the government for outreach efforts. The Mayor’s Office of African Affairs also suggested that the agency work directly with them.
- In the Latinx roundtable, representatives from LAYC stated that their constituents were not as likely to be receptive to traditional marketing efforts but would respond better to direct outreach efforts via door-to-door or through engagement from schools. In order to effectively market to these communities, DOEE must use a multi-faceted approach to marketing including one-on-one meetings, text messages, and phone calls.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Below are our recommendations for how DOEE should approach marketing, design, and messaging for NRA programs, based on all of the information gathered throughout the survey, focus groups, and roundtables. For more details, visit the *Recommended Actions* section on page 46.

Marketing

- Establish Best Practices for All Programs Under NRA
 - Segment personas
 - Develop a content portal and mapping tool
 - Develop a case study/program success portfolio
 - Provide matrixed media buying solutions per program
 - Use strategy scorecard and metrics dashboard
 - Keep a SEO keyword database
- Develop a Marketing Strategy Specific to Each Program
- Leverage the community
 - Use existing community organizations to build trust
- Bring impact to the people
- Provide marketing training for each program

Messaging

- Start with “why”
- Tell a story
- Make the messaging personal
- Meet people where they are
- Speak their language
- Make it inclusive

Design

- Understand the “customer” journey

RECOMMENDATIONS (CONT.)

- Establish A Unified Look Across Programs
- Develop Co-Branding For Program Partnerships
- Update Design To Make More Modern And Professional
- Use More Inclusive Imagery
- Expand Color Palette And Make Vibrant
- Use Less Words And More Graphics And Illustrations
- Create A Mascot
- Make The Call-To-Action Clear
- Use A Professional Printer, When Possible

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to our recommendations for how DOEE should approach marketing, design, and messaging for NRA programs, we uncovered additional themes throughout the survey, focus groups, and roundtables that may not be directly related to the scope of this research, but may still impact the agency's marketing indirectly. These are additional considerations we recommend. For more details, visit the *Appendix A: Additional Considerations on page 52*.

- Address program silos
- Clarify the agency's role
- Add budget for marketing as a line item in grants
- Increase representation at program events
- Improve grant opportunities

The background is a solid teal color with a subtle, diagonal wood-grain texture. Three realistic water droplets are scattered across the surface, reflecting light and showing highlights. A solid black rectangular box is positioned in the center of the image, containing the text 'SWOT ANALYSIS' in white, bold, sans-serif font. The word 'SWOT' is on the top line and 'ANALYSIS' is on the bottom line.

**SWOT
ANALYSIS**

SWOT Analysis

Below is the analysis of the DOEE's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in its approach to marketing, design, and messaging for NRA programs, based on all of the information gathered throughout the survey, focus groups, and roundtables.



STRENGTHS: WHAT'S WORKING

Marketing

- According to Focus Group #2 and #3 participants, the agency's most prominent initiatives are visible and have strong name recognition. The majority of survey participants were familiar with the bag law (82%). Over 40% of female respondents between the ages 25-40 were familiar with the Foam Free initiative and Last Straw campaigns.
- Over 60% of survey respondents who have seen DOEE marketing campaigns noted that they felt the ads were targeted to them.
- During the stakeholder Focus Group #3, representatives from the non-profit sector noted that they do see correspondence and updates from the agency and that helps them stay up-to-date on agency progress.

Messaging

- The District is seen as a national leader on environmental issues. It was noted during the stakeholder Focus Group #3 by participants from the non-profit sector and other government agencies that the District is seen by many in the industry as a leader on environmental issues and is often cited as an example for best practices for other jurisdictions.
- Most survey participants were able to name at least one of the agency's core duties. The agency has been able to communicate to constituents what its responsibilities are.

Design

- During Focus Groups #2 and #3, participants recognized some of the marketing pieces immediately. The no-dumping poster was recognized by multiple participants in Focus Groups #1 and #3, including participants who identified themselves as East of the River residents.



WEAKNESSES: WHAT'S NOT WORKING

Marketing

- African-American survey respondents had less exposure to DOEE marketing efforts than their white counterparts (90%

WEAKNESSES: WHAT'S NOT WORKING (CONT.)

- of African American respondents saw DOEE advertisements no more than 2 times per month, compared to 77% of white respondents).
- According to survey respondents, the agency is less effective at communicating with residents East of the River than other parts of the District (90% of Ward 7 residents and 92% of Ward 8 residents saw DOEE advertisements no more than 2 times per month compared to 85% of the general population).
- Overall, the agency's marketing efforts are failing to reach a large portion of the District as over 85% of survey respondents noted that they see ads less than two times a month.

Messaging

- As noted in Focus Groups #2 and #3 by a small business owner and nonprofit representatives, the agency is not pro-actively promoting their success stories and many people are unaware of the progress that the agency has made in key areas.
- The agency is not incorporating its community partners in historically underrepresented communities into its messaging strategy, therefore missing out on key opportunities to engage those communities. During the Latinx and African roundtables, participants expressed that the agency needed to engage community organizations in order to effectively communicate to their constituent groups. Participants in both roundtables noted that they felt the agency was not currently doing this.

Design

- In the focus groups, participants across the board expressed feelings that the designs, across the board, were inconsistent, including in agency materials.
- Two (2) Ward 7 community representatives noted in Focus Group #1 that the materials did not have a clear call-to-action and that people would not know what the next steps were after viewing a document.
- The agency's marketing and outreach materials were routinely described as too complex and were not written in plain, easy to understand language for the general public by participants in all of the focus groups and by representatives from LAYC in the Latinx roundtable.



OPPORTUNITIES: THINGS TO CONSIDER

Marketing

- DOEE has an opportunity to incorporate community influencers into its social and traditional media marketing efforts in order to increase the effectiveness and impact of those materials with target constituencies. In the affinity roundtables, representatives from LAYC and MOAA indicated that they would like to collaborate with agency on marketing to members of their constituencies.
- Nearly 40% of educators who were surveyed indicated that would like the agency to provide them with educational materials on the topics of climate change or litter prevention.

OPPORTUNITIES: THINGS TO CONSIDER (CONT.)

Messaging

- Over 50% of survey respondents noted that they are interested in being educated about DOEE programs and issues from DOEE marketing materials.

Design

- In the stakeholder Focus Group #3, participants noted that they would like the opportunity to develop collaborative marketing materials to better market their agency funded projects.



THREATS: CURRENT CHALLENGES

Marketing

- During Focus Group #3, program partners indicated that they were responsible for developing their own marketing materials for DOEE programs and many lacked expertise to produce high quality materials. This practice creates a risk that many programs are not being promoted adequately.

Messaging

- As noted during the Focus Groups #2 and #3 by business owners and nonprofit executives, the agency is not actively promoting its achievements and is not able to control the public narrative around the agency's activities. While the agency may be making progress on initiatives such as Anacostia River clean-up activities, the inability of the agency to educate the public about this progress impacts the ability of the agency to control its own narrative.
- A representative from the Anacostia Coordinating Council noted during Focus Group #3 that many of their constituents have felt ignored by the agency and are completely disengaged from the agency's programs. A former ANC commissioner from Ward 5 stated similar concerns during Focus Group #1.

Design

- As noted during Focus Groups #1 and #3 by community representatives, the lack of a call-to-action from DOEE materials leaves residents unsure of what actions they should take. As people have short attention spans in the social media age, this risks the agency losing out on its only opportunity to engage constituents whom they do reach via marketing.

A photograph of a person's hands holding a small plant in a field, overlaid with a teal tint. The person is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and dark pants. The plant has small, dark, round fruits. The background is a grassy field.

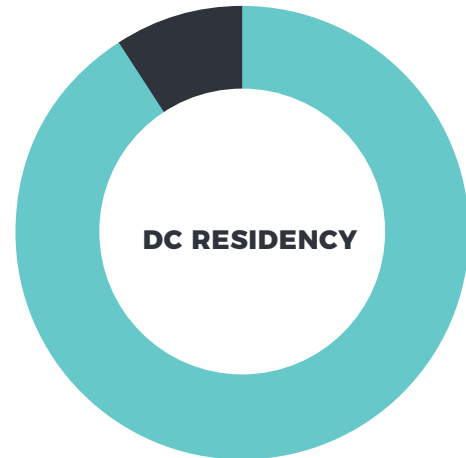
SURVEY RESULTS

Survey Results

DC RESIDENCY

Ninety-one percent of the respondents to this survey reside within the District of Columbia.

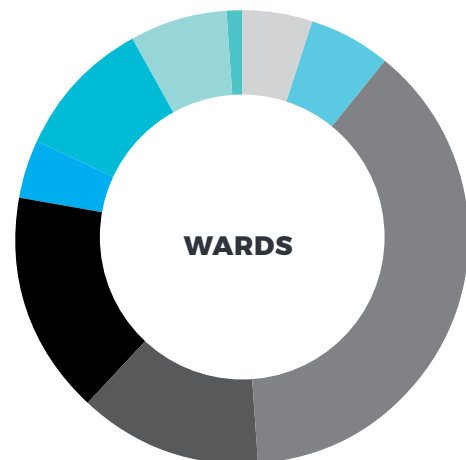
Are you a DC Resident?		(N = 857)
YES	784	91%
NO	73	9%



WARD REPRESENTATION

Nearly 40 percent of respondents were Ward 3 residents. As the population of the District by ward is nearly evenly distributed (12-13 percent population per ward), the Ward 3 participants represents an over representation in the results, and a possible source of demographic skew. Ward 4, Ward 5, and Ward 7 were represented more proportionately with their populations, while the remaining wards were underrepresented.

If so, what Ward do you live in?		(N = 780)
Ward 1	36	5%
Ward 2	49	6%
Ward 3	298	38%
Ward 4	98	13%
Ward 5	122	16%
Ward 6	30	4%
Ward 7	78	10%
Ward 8	5	7%
Unsure	10	1%



AGE AND GENDER

Respondents from age 25 to 40 were strongly represented in both male and female populations. Over 40 percent of women who responded to the community survey fell within this age range, while 29 percent of men respondents were within this range.



Outside of this common range, female respondents tended to be older, while younger male respondents were represented in greater numbers. Another 40 percent of women surveyed were aged 41 to 60, while 51 percent of male respondents were aged 16-24.

What is your age range?			What is your gender?		
(N = 857)			(N = 856)		
Under 16	2	0%	Male	361	42%
16-24	196	23%	Female	470	55%
25-40	314	37%	Transgender	12	1%
41-60	228	27%	Prefer not to say	3	0%
61+	115	14%	Other	10	1%

ETHNICITY

The community survey reached most respondents in proportion to their ethnic representation in the District. The outliers, in comparison with 2017 Census data, were:

- White respondents, who were overrepresented with respect to the population (53 percent vs. 45 percent);
- Black and African American respondents, who were underrepresented with respect to the population (30 percent vs. 47 percent); and
- American Indian or Alaska Native respondents, who were overrepresented with respect to the population (5 percent vs. 1 percent).

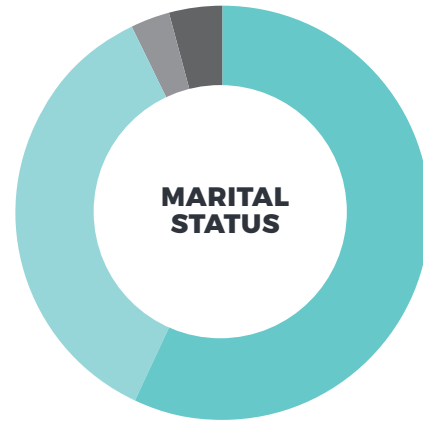
What is your ethnicity? (Check all that apply)	(N = 853)	
White	455	53%
Latinx or Spanish origin	71	8%
Black and African American	255	30%
Asian	28	3%
American Indian or Alaska Native	44	5%
Middle Eastern or North African	8	1%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	9	1%
Other	7	1%
Prefer not to say	22	3%

DOMESTIC PROFILES

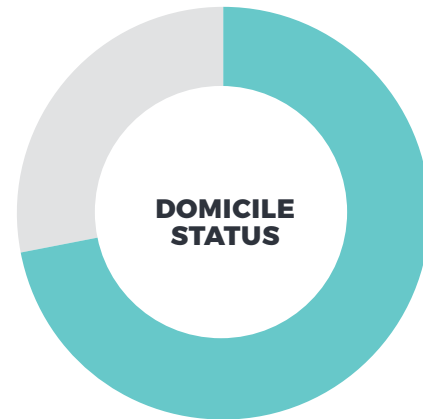
The most common domestic profile of a respondent to the community survey is the Married Homeowner, which represented 53 percent of those who indicated both marital status and whether they owned or rented their current residences. The next most popular profile was that of the Single Renter (21 percent), followed closely by the Single Homeowner (15 percent).

The survey also revealed that the most frequent household size was three people, representing 36 percent of community survey respondents. Sixty-seven percent of respondents live in households with three or fewer occupants.

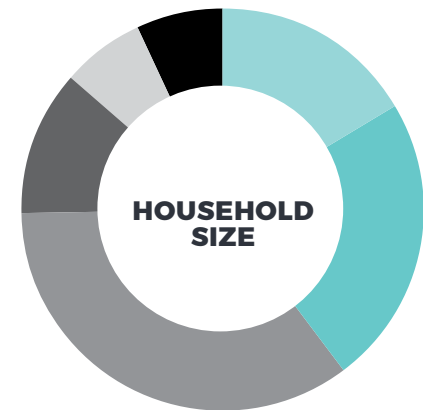
What is your marital status?		(N = 598)
Married	342	57%
Single	215	36%
Domestic Partnership	17	3%
Other	24	4%



Are you a Homeowner or a renter?		(N = 625)
Homeowner	449	72%
Renter	176	28%

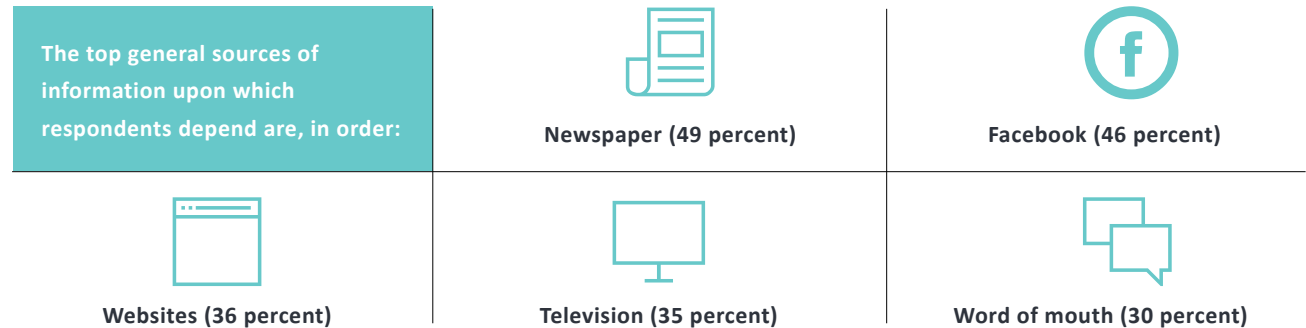


How many people currently live in your household?		(N = 642)
1	111	17%
2	152	24%
3	231	36%
4	78	12%
5	44	7%
6+	26	4%



DOMESTIC PROFILES (CONT.)

Information Consumption



Respondents largely indicated they default to these sources because they are the most convenient (over 50 percent). A smaller proportion (20 percent) of respondents said they primarily seek out trusted sources of information.

How do you get most of your information? (Choose 3)			Why do you choose to receive most of your information from the channel identified above? (#1 Preference)		
(N = 625)			(N = 626)		
Word of Mouth	186	30%	Convenience	332	53%
TV	219	35%	Trusted Voices	128	20%
Newspaper	305	49%	Familiarity	83	13%
Twitter	70	11%	Clear Communication	63	10%
Facebook	289	46%	Peer or Family choice	11	1%
Instagram	62	10%	Other (Please specify)	9	1%
Snapchat	130	21%			
Reddit	14	2%			
Nextdoor	46	7%			
Websites	222	36%			
Radio	99	16%			
Outdoor advertisements	15	2%			
Direct Mail	55	9%			
Other	77	12%			

ANACOSTIA RIVER POTENTIAL

Responses to the community survey regarding Anacostia River activities indicated great potential for citizen participation. Almost 40 percent indicated they already take advantage of recreational activities around the Anacostia River, and another 48 percent of respondents signalled interest in participating in such activities in the future.

Which of the following statements most accurately describes your attitude towards recreational activities in or around the Anacostia River? (i.e. fishing, swimming, walking, barbecuing canoeing, picnics)		(N = 575)
I currently do not participate in any recreational activities in or around the Anacostia river and would not be interested in doing so in the near future	73	13%
I currently do not participate in any recreational activities in or around the Anacostia river but may be interested in doing so in the near future	278	48%
I currently participate in recreational activities in or around the Anacostia River	224	39%

If you were to see or hear advertisements for DOEE programs, what would you expect from the advertising? (Check all that apply)		(N = 142)
To teach me something different about DOEE programs and local environmental issues	73	51%
To make me think differently about DOEE programs and local environmental issues	31	22%
To make me want to learn more about DOEE programs and local environmental issues	69	49%
To show me how DOEE programs are relevant to me, my household, or my community	94	66%
To make me take action on issues relevant to me, my household, or my community	63	44%
Other	4	3%

ANACOSTIA RIVER POTENTIAL (CONT.)

Do any of the following statements apply to you? (Check all that apply)		(N = 851)
I am a teacher or work at a school	167	20%
I am a business owner	262	31%
I have children or other relatives that are currently enrolled in a school in the District of Columbia	223	26%
I have participated in a District of Columbia Department of Energy and the Environment (DOEE) funded program	91	11%
None of the above	191	23%

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Overall, community survey respondents most often learned of the DOEE programs in which they participated via agency outreach. Thirty percent of respondent received their information from DOEE, followed by 23 percent of respondents receiving information via Listserv or email and 22 percent hearing of programs by word of mouth.

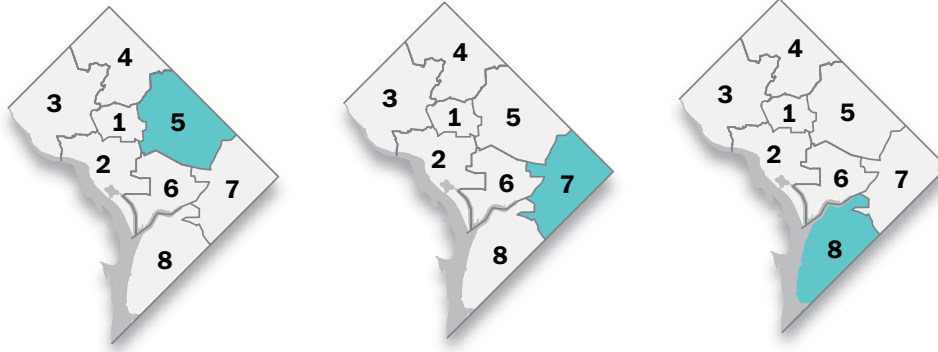
How did you hear about the program that you participated in?		(N = 86)
Listserv/Email	21	24%
Newspaper	2	2%
Social Media	7	8%
Word of Mouth	20	22%
Outreach from agency	27	30%
Other	14	16%

When considering target demographics for the community survey, we see that Black or African American respondents were even more reliant on DOEE outreach for notice of relevant programs, as 42% of the population received information in this way. This population also used Listserv/email sources at a higher rate than the total population (31 percent vs. 23 percent). Latinx and Latinx respondents received word-of-mouth information at a high rate (50%), but the results are not necessarily indicative because of the small sample size.

How did you hear about the program that you participated in?			
	African American pop. (N = 36)	Latinx pop. (N = 4)	Total pop. (N = 90)
Listserv/Email	31%	25%	23%
Newspaper	0%	0%	2%
Social Media	8%	0%	8%
Word of Mouth	19%	50%	22%
Outreach from agency	42%	25%	30%
Other	6%	0%	16%

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION (CONT.)

In our target wards, we again see agency outreach playing a major role in informing citizens of DOEE’s programmatic activities:



- Ward 5 (21 percent)
- Ward 7 (36 percent)
- Ward 8 (20 percent)

In Wards 5 and 8, however, outreach by DOEE was greatly eclipsed by word-of-mouth dissemination of activities. Ward 5 respondents cited word of mouth as their information source at 38 percent. In Ward 8, 40 percent of respondents relied on word of mouth, though small sample size may again lessen the impact of the observation. Listserv/email use was also common, and largely in line with usage in the complete survey population.

How did you hear about the program that you participated in?				
	Ward 5 (N = 24)	Ward 7 (N = 14)	Ward 8 (N = 5)	Total pop. (N = 90)
Listserv/Email	25%	21%	20%	23%
Newspaper	0%	0%	0%	2%
Social Media	8%	14%	20%	8%
Word of Mouth	38%	14%	40%	22%
Outreach from agency	21%	36%	20%	30%
Other	8%	14%	0%	16%

TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC PRIORITIES

African American and Latinx populations were far more likely to prioritize safe drinking water over other environmental concerns, relative to the overall sentiment of respondents. Respondents from the Latinx population indicated far less priority for clean air initiatives, with only three percent noting it as most important to them.

When it comes to the environment, what is most important to you?			
	African American pop. (N = 162)	Latinx pop. (N = 33)	Total pop. (N = 575)
Safe Drinking Water	59%	52%	35%
Clean Air	25%	7%	19%
Reduce Litter/Trash	13%	14%	26%
Protect the Animals/Insects	1%	16%	7%
Beautiful Spaces	1%	9%	4%
None of the Above	1%	0%	2%
Other	0%	0%	7%

In all target wards, the most important environmental concern was safe drinking water. This preference held by a significant margin in Ward 7 (60%) and Ward 8 (63%). It is also notable that preference for reducing litter and trash in Ward 8 (3%) was far below both the other target wards as well as the total population, which all fell between 17 and 27 percent.

How did you hear about the program that you participated in?				
	Ward 5 (N = 89)	Ward 7 (N = 48)	Ward 8 (N = 38)	Total pop. (N = 575)
Safe Drinking Water	42%	60%	63%	35%
Clean Air	22%	15%	26%	20%
Reduce Litter/Trash	22%	19%	3%	27%
Protect the Animals/Insects	10%	6%	3%	7%
Beautiful Spaces	1%	0%	3%	4%
None of the Above	1%	0%	0%	0%

TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC PRIORITIES (CONT.)

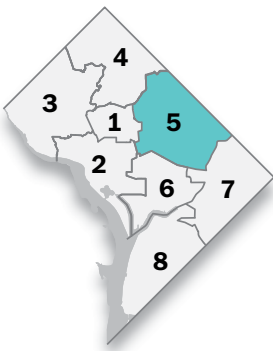
The target populations were less exposed to advertisements from DOEE for programmatic efforts. African American respondents indicated overwhelmingly that they never saw such advertisements (56 percent). Similarly, 40 percent of Latinx community survey respondent never saw DOEE advertisements. These figures are well above the 20 percent of responses for these two categories indicated by the total survey population.

Additionally, both target populations noted that, when they did see advertisements for DOEE programs, they didn't see themselves as the target demographic for such programs. Forty-four percent of both African American respondents and Latinx respondents said the advertisements they had seen did not feel relevant to them. In contrast, respondents overall indicated (at 48 percent) that they did feel DOEE advertisements were targeted to their needs and interests.

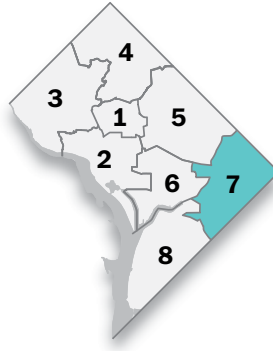
How often do you see advertisements for DOEE programs?			
	African American pop. (N = 73)	Latinx pop. (N = 20)	Total pop. (N = 569)
Never	56%	40%	20%
Rarely	0%	0%	29%
Infrequently, 1-2 times a month	34%	15%	37%
Somewhat frequently, 3-5 times a month	10%	0%	11%
Often, more than 5 times a month	0%	45%	4%

TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC PRIORITIES (CONT.)

In Wards 5, 7, and 8, we see that most respondents see DOEE advertisements on an infrequent basis at best. The following list shows the percentage of each target ward who selected “Never,” “Rarely,” or “Infrequently” to this question:



• Ward 5 (88 percent)



• Ward 7 (90 percent)



• Ward 8 (93 percent)

How often do you see advertisements for DOEE programs?				
	Ward 5 (N = 98)	Ward 7 (N = 52)	Ward 8 (N = 39)	Total pop. (N = 559)
Never	21%	17%	21%	20%
Rarely	30%	44%	57%	29%
Infrequently, 1-2 times a month	37%	29%	15%	37%
Somewhat frequently, 3-5 times a month	10%	10%	5%	11%
Often, more than 5 times a month	2%	0%	3%	4%

TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC PRIORITIES (CONT.)

In contrast with the total population, who largely feel that DOEE advertisements are targeted to them, respondents in our target ethnic demographics expressed that the ads they saw were less relevant to them. Over thirty percent of both African American and Latinx populations expressed that DOEE advertisements did not seem applicable to their lives.

If you have seen or heard advertisements for DOEE programs, do you feel that they were targeted toward you?			
	African American pop. (N = 156)	Latinx pop. (N = 34)	Total pop. (N = 557)
Yes	24%	40%	47%
No	44%	34%	27%
I have not seen any advertisements for DOEE Programs	32%	25%	26%

Ward 5 respondents largely felt that DOEE advertisements connected with their needs (42%), while respondents in Wards 7 and 8 expressed the opposite sentiment. In Ward 7, 45 percent of respondents felt that the advertisements were not targeted to them, and 49 percent of Ward 8 respondents agreed.

If you have seen or heard advertisements for DOEE programs, do you feel that they were targeted toward you?				
	Ward 5 (N = 97)	Ward 7 (N = 51)	Ward 8 (N = 38)	Total pop. (N = 557)
Yes	41%	24%	13%	47%
No	27%	45%	47%	27%
I have not seen any advertisements for DOEE Programs	32%	31%	39%	26%

TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC PRIORITIES (CONT.)

In the tables below, we again see the priority of water quality reflected in the responses to the question of the most extreme concerns regarding the environment in the District. African American respondents overwhelmingly indicated water as an extreme concern (93 percent). Latinx respondents closely followed, with 84 percent indicating the same concern for water quality and conservation. This priority also was reflected in the overall population, in a slightly lower proportion (71 percent).

Which of the following statements most accurately describes your attitude towards conserving, protecting, and improving the soil, water and wildlife of the District of Columbia? (check all that apply)			
<i>I am extremely concerned</i>	African American pop. (N = 134)	Latinx pop. (N = 25)	Total pop. (N = 483)
Soil	46%	48%	62%
Water	93%	84%	71%
Wildlife	16%	72%	43%
<i>I am very concerned</i>	(N = 99)	(N = 24)	(N = 379)
Soil	46%	63%	64%
Water	61%	54%	39%
Wildlife	63%	58%	34%
<i>I am somewhat concerned</i>	(N = 85)	(N = 15)	(N = 321)
Soil	54%	47%	34%
Water	26%	67%	50%
Wildlife	51%	40%	35%
<i>I am not at all concerned</i>	(N = 34)	(N = 11)	(N = 177)
Soil	59%	64%	25%
Water	24%	55%	72%
Wildlife	35%	36%	13%

TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC PRIORITIES (CONT.)

The same trends remain when considering our target wards, as water conservation and protection were of greatest concern by a large margin, and again far above the 72 percent expressed by the total population:



Which of the following statements most accurately describes your attitude towards conserving, protecting, and improving the soil, water and wildlife of the District of Columbia? (check all that apply)

<i>I am extremely concerned</i>	Ward 5 (N = 82)	Ward 7 (N = 46)	Ward 8 (N = 37)	Total pop. (N = 481)
Soil	55%	43%	38%	62%
Water	95%	96%	97%	72%
Wildlife	57%	57%	43%	43%
<i>I am very concerned</i>	(N = 53)	(N = 27)	(N = 27)	(N = 379)
Soil	49%	52%	30%	64%
Water	43%	33%	70%	39%
Wildlife	55%	44%	22%	34%
<i>I am somewhat concerned</i>	(N = 43)	(N = 21)	(N = 24)	(N = 321)
Soil	63%	67%	38%	34%
Water	16%	29%	25%	50%
Wildlife	42%	38%	46%	35%
<i>I am not at all concerned</i>	(N = 14)	(N = 7)	(N = 13)	(N = 171)
Soil	50%	43%	54%	25%
Water	43%	14%	15%	72%
Wildlife	21%	43%	38%	13%

EDUCATORS

What grade levels do you currently work with?		(N = 167)
Pre-K	23	14%
Kindergarten-3rd grade	19	11%
4th Grade-8th Grade	26	16%
9th-12th Grade	51	31%
Postsecondary	13	8%
Other	28	17%

In your opinion, which of the following does the DC Department of Energy and the Environment (DOEE) do? (Check all that apply)		(N = 167)
Get more people engaged with the Anacostia River	59	35%
Provide education about the environment and how to protect and engage with it	70	42%
Enforce the regulations required to restore and protect the environment	94	56%
Manage local parks	33	20%
Provides water for local residents and businesses	28	17%
None of the above	3	2%
I am not familiar with DOEE	26	16%

Does your school currently participate in any DOEE programs?		(N = 167)
Yes	65	39%
No	37	22%
I don't know	54	32%

EDUCATORS (CONT.)

Are you familiar with ANY of the following DOEE programs? (Check all that apply)		(N = 167)
Aquatic Resources Education Center	34	20%
Meaningful Watershed Educational	15	9%
Riversmart Schools	46	28%
Citizen Science	24	14%
Watershed Stewards Academy	28	17%
Green Zone Environmental Program	20	12%
Frog Watch	9	5%
Not familiar with any of these programs	58	35%

What environmental and energy instructional materials/resources do you find useful? (Check all that apply)		(N = 167)
Textbooks	51	31%
Other print material (supplemental texts, books, magazines):	61	37%
Videos/films:	128	77%
Websites:	106	63%
Community resources (community or school leaders, public agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses, individuals):	68	41%
Other:	1	1%

EDUCATORS (CONT.)

What environmental/energy-specific topics/issues would you like to or currently address with your students? (Check all that apply)	(N = 167)	
Air quality	48	29%
Alternative energy and fuels (hydro power, solar, wind, biodiesel, hybrid vehicles, etc.)	45	27%
Biodiversity (e.g. terrestrial/aquatic plants and animals)	45	27%
Climate change/global warming	65	39%
Ecological footprint	45	27%
Pollution	53	32%
Litter Prevention	59	35%
Ecology/ecosystems	43	26%
Energy conservation/efficiency	45	27%
Environmentally-related careers (resource management, green building, solar/wind installation)	42	25%
Habitat restoration (streams, lakes, wetlands, salmon)	31	19%
Ocean/marine resources	25	15%
Population growth	31	19%
Resource conservation (energy, water, recycling, soil)	51	31%
Sustainable agriculture (organic farming, biological pest/weed control)	43	26%
Sustainable forestry	19	11%
Water resources (quality, quantity, conservation)	38	23%
Other	2	1%

PARENTS

Number of children in DC schools		(N = 223)
1	83	37%
2	75	34%
3	21	9%
4	10	4%
5	1	0%
6+	5	2%

Are you familiar with ANY of the following DOEE programs? (Check all that apply)		(N = 223)
Aquatic Resources Education Center	68	30%
Meaningful Watershed Educational	29	13%
Riversmart Schools	67	30%
Citizen Science	52	23%
Watershed Stewards Academy	21	9%
Green Zone Environmental Program	24	11%
Frog Watch	14	6%

Children's participation in Anacostia River activities		(N = 223)
Yes	184	83%
No	15	7%



**FOCUS
GROUPS**

Focus Groups

On Wednesday, March 20, 2019, Wednesday, March 27, 2019, and Wednesday, April 17, 2019, TomahWares conducted three focus groups to hear from the District of Columbia's stakeholders on their receptivity of the DC Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) and the Natural Resources Administration (NRA) programming and marketing materials. This summary reflects the responses and recommendations of the focus groups to learn about:

- Challenges and barriers stakeholders face when receiving DOEE information, particularly through communication, marketing, and engagement methods
- Solutions and best practices that effectively reduced or eliminated barriers
- Ideas and methods to better communicate the benefits of DOEE programs and embed best practice strategies to effectively impact the individuals and neighborhoods of the District

TAKEAWAYS

Here are the takeaways from the three focus groups:

- Participants found DOEE marketing materials too complex
- Participants believed DOEE needed to improve its communication efforts
- Participants recommended that DOEE focus more on engaging community and building partnerships with community organizations already engaging with minorities and East of the River residents

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Participants were asked about their awareness and perceptions of the NRA programs in the following categories:

1. Knowledge-based questions
2. Brand audit (effectiveness of marketing campaigns)
3. Identifying most effective communication channels
4. Defining current community issues
5. Receiving recommendations

FOCUS GROUP #1

Summary

On Wednesday, March 20, 2019, the project team met with Focus Group #1. Overall, Focus Group #1 found DOEE marketing materials visually dense, complex in readability, disjointed, and unclear in messaging. Focus Group #1 believed DOEE needed to improve its communication by using relatable language and keywords for constituents by providing more clarifying background information on DOEE's goals. Most participants had only heard of DOEE programs through word of mouth, community interaction, and dialing 311.

Group Characteristics and Breakdown

Focus Group #1 was comprised of five participants, representing various Wards and organizations in the District.

FOCUS GROUP #1 (CONT.)

Their affiliations were:

- A Ward 5 ANC representative
- A Ward 6 ANC representative
- A Ward 5 resident
- A Ward 8 representative from the DC Federation of Civic Associations based in Washington, DC
- A vice president of a national coalition of housing and economic development organization based in Washington, DC

Key Findings

What are the things you care about that are related to the environment?

- Climate change
- Clean Anacostia/water
- Emissions
- Environmental racial disparities
- Air quality
- Recycling
- Breathing
- Vegetation state
- Renewable energy

Where do you often hear about information regarding DOEE programs?

- Never heard of DOEE programs (1 participant)
- Received emails from DOEE, although not often
- Word of mouth (2 participants)
- From civic organizations
- The Mayor's Executive Office weekly mail
- Solar efforts, anti-dumping, and bag law
- Most participants had only heard of programs through word of mouth, community interaction, and calling 311

How do you feel about the DOEE marketing materials? What jumps out at you?

- Colors
- Graphics
- Small print
- Slides had too many graphics and dates
- Images were not diverse enough to represent the different demographics of the District
- Overuse of the color green

What information did you receive?

- Content did not clearly communicate the program goals
- Content needed to be simplified
- Too much text on background information
- Not enough description of actions
- No connection between the background information and description of actions
- Content was unprofessional and monotonous
- People do not have the time to invest in a large amount of information

FOCUS GROUP #1 (CONT.)

What is the Call-to-action?

- Call-to-action was clear (2 out of 6 participants)
- Too much content and too much background information that overshadows the call-to-action (4 out of 6 participants)
- Call-to-action did not really portray the organization's care for the initiatives (1 participant)

What can be improved? What are your recommendations?

- Some participants clearly received the message pertaining to DOEE's goals
- Some stated that the goal is to "promote a healthy environment, help tourists/residents to understand our part in caring for the environment, and to educate city residents about special environmental initiatives"
- Messages were implicit in the information delivered; however, it was not 100% clear
- Keywords were more catered to inform environmental employees or certain demographics, but not constituents or partners
- Messages were too wordy
- Background information provided does not directly connect to the goals, making goals unclear

FOCUS GROUP #2

Summary

On Wednesday, March 27, 2019, the project team met with Focus Group #2. Overall, Focus Group #2 also found DOEE marketing materials visually dense, complex in readability, disjointed, and unclear in messaging. Focus Group #2 was not familiar with DOEE programming and recommended more ways for DOEE to leverage the natural environment and build relationships with businesses within the local community.

Group Characteristics and Breakdown

Focus Group #2 was comprised of seven participants, representing various Wards and organizations in the District.

Their affiliations were:

- 2 program managers from Women in Housing & Finance (WHF)
- A Ward 7 program coordinator from Dreaming Out Loud, non-profit
- A Ward 1 CEO and owner of Smith and Sons, construction company
- A Ward 6 representative from GRID Alternatives, non-profit
- A representative from ACE Hardware stores
- A Ward 8 program manager from Keystone DC, construction company

Key Findings

What are the things you care about that are related to the environment?

- Clean energy
- Building community
- Wealth
- Inclusion
- Sustainability
- Air quality/breathing

FOCUS GROUP #2 (CONT.)

- Drinking water/clean water (i.e. water pollution, the Potomac, river runoff; plastic bags and bottles)

Where do you often hear about information regarding DOEE programs?

- Never heard of any DOEE programs
- Identified initiatives, like the movement against plastic straws
- DOEE does not conduct any outreach
- Feels like the agency makes the assumption that people know how they work and rely too much on people going to them rather than they trying to successfully reach the public
- DOEE does an unsatisfactory job at communicating with businesses
- DOEE meetings do not cover the topics that are important and directly impact business owners
- Little knowledge on DOEE Green Incentive programs
- Being informed of DOEE through mail, word of mouth, bus ads, and stories on the Washington Post (Swimmable Anacostia 2023)

How do you feel about the DOEE marketing materials? What jumps out at you?

- Materials were too text heavy (dense)
- Font is too small
- Overall design and graphics were weak

What information did you receive?

- Information was too technical (too many abbreviations)
- Messaging was not clear
- Unsure who the target audience was
- Materials were more informational rather than for marketing purposes
- Recommended making content shorter and having more digestible and public-friendly text
- Recommended adding better graphics and charts to help the audience visualize the information
- Recommended bolder, memorable statements in the materials

What can be improved? What are your recommendations?

- Use social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram
- DOEE is good at telling stories but not promoting their programs and initiatives
- Hosting monthly meetings like DGS to better engage and demonstrate the commitment to contractors and stakeholders
- Information must be delivered in the right way, with the right narrative, not too dense text, and very target audience-oriented
- DOEE needs to mass advertise their initiative since people need to be touched seven times for the message to stick

FOCUS GROUP #3

Summary

On Wednesday, April 17, 2019, the project team met with Focus Group #3. Overall, Focus Group #3 acknowledged DOEE gradual improvement in the availability and accessibility from staff, as well as a greater social media presence and online outreach. Participants also highlighted the need for more inclusivity, particularly through culture, artistic opportunities, common language,

FOCUS GROUP #3 (CONT.)

and community partnerships. Focus Group #3 also found DOEE marketing materials visually dense, complex in readability, disjointed, and unclear in messaging and time consuming.

Group Characteristics and Breakdown

Focus Group #3 was comprised of 23 participants, representing various agencies, organizations, and businesses in the District. Their affiliations were:

- 2 representatives from The DC Department of Parks and Recreations
- 2 representatives from The Latin American Youth Center
- 2 local small-business owners
- A representative from Anacostia Riverkeeper
- A representative from Ocean Conservancy
- A representative from South Dakota Avenue/Riggs Road Main Street
- A representative from Living Classrooms Foundation
- A representative from City Wildlife
- A representative from Rock Creek Conservancy
- A representative from Anacostia Watershed Urban Waters Partnership
- A representative from Chesapeake Bay Landscaping Professional Certification
- A representative from The National Housing Trust
- A representative from The Anacostia Watershed Society
- A representative from The Department of General Services
- A representative from Marshall Heights Community Development Organization
- A representative from The Anacostia Coordinating Council
- A representative from (r)evolve
- A representative from The Restaurant Association Washington Metropolitan
- A representative from The Nature Conservancy
- A representative from George Washington University

Key Findings

What are the things you care about that are related to the environment?

- Greenspace
- Restoration and protection of the Anacostia, Rock Creek, and waterways
- Habitat preservation and restoration
- Clean water
- Urban wilderness
- Improving accessing to the Anacostia River
- Developing advocates for the parks and the environment
- Energy conservation
- Greenhouse immersions
- Stormwater management
- Climate change
- Wildlife
- Reduce waste
- Water safety

FOCUS GROUP #3 (CONT.)

- Water rates
- Environmental stability human health and wealth
- Food composting and decomposing of natural materials
- Local residents take stewardship of the environment; and environment serves as a platform for constituents

How effective do you feel DOEE is with communicating to the public and partners?

- DOEE is improving in marketing and communication through social media platforms, such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter
- Continual use of social media will help send information out more quickly and reach a wider audience
- DOEE needs more cultural inclusion, language access, and face-to-face interactions, particularly with Latinx families (2 participants)
- Suggested DOEE employ local artists to increase community engagement and involvement, as well as investing in the beautification of the District through unique, multipurpose, and sustainable art (1 participant)
- Suggested more visually stimulating website displays with simple jargon and easier navigation to DOEE resources
- Suggested a combined package of DOEE's resources and programs incorporating more common language for residents to understand
- Suggested regular and consistent DOEE programming, with a specific focus on collaboration with community organizations to build more trusting relationships between community members and the government
- Suggested shared branding between DOEE and grass roots organizations to serve as the most effective method of communication to the community
- Shared branding would also boost exposure for smaller organizations and businesses
- Suggested a DOEE grant budget line item for communications and marketing to better fund outreach efforts

How do you feel about the DOEE marketing materials? What jumps out at you?

- Materials are outdated
- Suggested vibrant colors (group majority)
- Suggested big pictures (group majority)
- Suggested fewer words (group majority)
- Suggested simple definitions (group majority)
- Suggested acronym breakdowns (group majority)
- Suggested modern design (group majority)
- Suggested materials that were engaging and fun (group majority)
- Raised the idea for DOEE to hire local artists to rebrand the materials and develop new community relationships (1 participant)

What information did you receive?

- Information was too dense (group majority)
- Unidentifiable mission and audience
- Difficult to understand
- Filled with complex jargon and acronyms
- Gravitated to the Greenwrench materials (#1) (group majority)
- Suggested a flowing document to identify the program's target audience, mission, vision, and values (group majority)
- Suggested 1-2 sentences of key areas (group majority)
- Suggested simpler language to absorb the information (group majority)

FOCUS GROUP #3 (CONT.)

What is the Call-to-Action?

- Call-to-action is not clear
- Too much information on display that neither reflects direct issues to the community nor connects overall action items
- Lack of connection between information and call-to-action
- Information is relatively good for stakeholders but not for the general public
- Messages need to be audience-oriented (message needs to be personal)
- Audience needs to be able to connect/relate to the issues on the display and feel the need to take action

A young boy and girl are smiling and holding a small tree sapling together in a grassy field. The image is overlaid with a teal color filter. The boy is on the left, and the girl is on the right. They are both looking at the sapling with joy. The background shows more trees and a bright sky.

**AFFINITY
ROUNDTABLES**

Affinity Roundtables

The Affinity Roundtables were utilized to provide informal reflections on how various hard-to-reach communities interact with DOEE. The total number of member roundtable participants touched by outreach to these individuals was (30) thirty. In addition, an outreach street team collected (10) ten surveys responses within the April 22, 2019 – May 17, 2019, time period. Concurrently to this effort, approximately 4,000 members of the Asian community were informed about the online survey through the Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs monthly newsletter, and approximately 12,000 members of the African community were informed about the online survey through the Office on African Affairs biweekly newsletter.

LATINX ROUNDTABLE

Summary

Based on key findings, the Latinx Roundtable had little to no knowledge of DOEE programming and would need greater outreach methods to trust government agencies. It was recommended that DOEE engage with the Latinx population in a relational, community-focused way, partnering with schools, nonprofit organizations, and local businesses.

Group Characteristics and Breakdown

Latinx Roundtable was comprised of three participants, representing various Wards and organizations in the District. Their affiliations were:

- 2 representatives from Latin American Youth Center
- A Latinx construction/developer stakeholder

Key Findings

On Wednesday, April 17, 2019, the project team met with two representatives from the Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) to get recommendations on the how the agency could better communicate with the District's Latinx population. The LAYC representatives noted the following key findings:

Communication Channel Recommendations

- Materials from the government are often seen as too technical
- The District's adult Latinx residents need materials written at an 8th grade reading level or below

Marketing and Engagement Recommendations

- Suggested that the agency partner with community organizations to conduct outreach to overcome trust issues between the Latinx community and government
- Most effective way to target parents is to partner with schools and send information home via their children
- Information coming from a school would provide legitimacy and importance to the distributed information
- Work with case managers at non-profits who have direct relationships with the community
- Emphasizing DOEE's free programs when promoting participation in the community
- Have the agency set up tables at community events and provide souvenirs and swag items to promote their programs

On Wednesday, May 8, 2019, the project team met with a Ward 8 Latinx construction stakeholder from Green Construction Services Group to receive recommendations on how the agency could best communicate with Latinx developers and construction workers.

LATINX ROUNDTABLE (CONT.)

The stakeholder noted the following key findings:

Have you worked with DOEE programs?

- Worked with DOEE as a subcontractor

Have you heard of the Stormwater Retention Program?

- Never heard of the Stormwater Retention Program but wants to learn more

Do you feel you get adequate notice of regulatory changes?

- Did not feel like he had received adequate notice of regulatory changes

Overall, how do you feel the agency does communicating with your sector?

- Did not feel like he knew the agency well
- Does not receive any information within the sector
- Interested in learning more about all the environmental programs facilitated by DOEE

What's the best communication for you?

- Would like to receive information via email
- Email is the best method of information because it allows him to easily send it to his colleagues and administrative staff for review

AFRICAN ROUNDTABLE

Summary

Based on key findings, the African Roundtable highlighted inclusivity, meeting the community members where they are, and addressing the issues that affect them personally. In particular, the African Roundtable emphasized greater efforts from DOEE to communicate through in-person exchanges and to use interpreters and favored ethnic media outlets. The African Roundtable also recommended marketing and outreach methods that involve churches, schools, small business events, Independence Day events, and the Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC).

Group Characteristics and Breakdown

African Roundtable was comprised of fifteen participants, representing various Wards and organizations in the District.

Their affiliations were:

- 2 representatives from the Mayor's Office of African Affairs
- A representative from The Ethiopian Community Center
- 10 representatives from the Advocacy Network of Africa
- An African-American construction/developer stakeholder
- A representative, Director of Constituent Services, from Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie's Office

Key Findings

On Monday, April 22, 2019, the project team met with two representatives from the Mayor's Office on African Affairs (OAA) to get recommendations on how the agency could best communicate with the District's African population. The OAA representatives noted the following key findings:

Communication Channel Recommendations

- African residents need marketing materials to be translated into French for greater understanding by West African populations and Amharic for greater understanding by East African populations

AFRICAN ROUNDTABLE (CONT.)

Marketing and Engagement Recommendations

- Suggested connecting with a community outreach specialist as a resource to assist in the display of the marketing materials
- Suggested mimicking environmental programs from Silver Spring, such as a trash initiative labelling trash cans in Amharic for better understanding and usage
- DOEE should address the African community's concerns on the installation of solar panels as a priority issue
- Suggested working with the Language Access Program coordinator Gelilia Getameh from the Office of African Affairs to help resolve language barrier issues

On Wednesday, May 8, 2019, the project team met with a representative from the Ethiopian Community Center (ECC) to get recommendations on how the agency could best communicate with the District's African community. The representative noted the following key findings:

Past Participation with DOEE

- Awarded a grant from DOEE to provide lead education to families and encourage them to get their children tested for lead exposure, specifically in Wards 1, 4, and 5; will receive this award again this year

Current Communication Channels

- Through partnership with the Department of Social Services, the ECC receives assistance from a representative once a week who helps stakeholders with processing forms which creates greater accessibility
- Due to barriers around language, culture, and comprehension, the ECC has a partnership with DOEE educating workers where they have an interpreter who assists with language barriers

Communication Channel Recommendations

- What works:
 - Phone calls
 - Texts
 - In-person, one-on-one engagement
 - Mail (infrequently), email (infrequently)
 - Persistent follow-up
 - Interpreters
- What does not work:
 - Newsletters
 - Surveys (unless there is a direct interest)

General Perceptions on the Environment

- African community members would be interested in the energy saving program for homes and residential programs
- Environment is not at the forefront
- Discuss education, culture, and politics more

Topics within the African Community that can be Supplemental to the Conversation around Environment

- Parallel issues
 - Education
 - Housing (particularly low-income housing)
 - Social services

AFRICAN ROUNDTABLE (CONT.)

- Safety
- LED lighting programs for small businesses
- Green spaces
- Energy saving programs
- Lead safety and concerns is an important issue, especially when low-income housing is not up to code
- Large number of small businesses within the African community that could use more small business support from DOEE

Marketing and Engagement Recommendations

- Identify communities with large concentrations of African residents and African children in schools, such as Ward 4
- Outreach to places of work, homes, and short workshops after church services
- Meet stakeholders outside organization meetings and schools with significant African populations
- Use smaller groups to collect information
- Community is more of a verbal culture than a written one
- Promoting agency programs via ethnic media, local newspapers, and local radio stations
- Encourage outreach managers to speak the languages of community members
- Create engagement through conversations
- Generalizations and assumptions create a missed opportunity to reach the community and communicate with its members

On Tuesday, May 7, 2019, the project team met with ten representatives from the Advocacy Network of Africa (ADNA) to get recommendations on how the agency could best communicate with the District's African population. The ADNA representatives noted the following key findings:

Communication Channel Recommendations

Best methods of disseminating information:

- Facebook; specifically, DMV pages dedicated to individual countries
- Outreach should be done during African countries' Independence Day celebrations (Example: April 18 – Zimbabwe; April 24 – Tanzania)
- Send information to organizations, including faith-based entities within the African community who have good relationships with various groups (businesses, schools, residents, etc.)

Marketing and Engagement Recommendations

- DOEE needs to have ongoing partnerships within the community
- Facilitate one-on-one meetings and use a translator
- Get a listing of upcoming outreach events/conferences and plan to provide presentations to explain DOEE programs at these events

On Wednesday, May 15, 2019, the project team met with a construction stakeholder to receive recommendations on how the agency could best communicate with African/African-American developers and construction workers. The stakeholder noted the following key findings:

AFRICAN ROUNDTABLE (CONT.)

Have you worked with DOEE programs?

- No
- Any connection to DOEE is through his adherence to the different environmental codes and recommendations

Have you heard of the Stormwater Retention Program?

- Never heard of the Stormwater Retention Program
- Native Washingtonian and has not heard of any of the DOEE programs

Do you feel you get adequate notice of regulatory changes?

- Did not feel like he had received adequate notice of regulatory changes

Overall, how do you feel the agency does communicating with your sector?

- Not well

What's the best communication for you?

- Prefers his information be sent direct mail rather than email; email inbox gets filled quickly with information
- Radio is important; uses computer infrequently (identified as age 60+ demographic)
- Least likely to fill out a physical or digital survey
- Prefer one-on-one conversations
- Suggested DOEE attend local business events where he receives information

On Friday, May 3, 2019, the project team met with the Director of Constituent Services from Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie's Office to receive recommendations on how the agency could best communicate with African constituents. The director noted the following key findings:

Communication Channel Recommendations

- Has limited engagement with the African community
- Information is periodically sent out through Councilmember's McDuffie's newsletter

Marketing and Engagement Recommendations

- Strategize with the faith community to perform greater outreach
- Partner with the Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) and attend civic association meetings

ASIAN ROUNDTABLE

Summary

Based on key findings, the Asian Roundtable had little knowledge of DOEE programming. The Asian Roundtable advised DOEE to use marketing and outreach opportunities through the Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (MOAPIA) events, business events, and Asian Heritage Month events. Cultural sensitivity was strongly advised.

Group Characteristics and breakdown

Asian Roundtable was comprised of 12 participants, representing various Wards and organizations in the District. Their affiliations were:

- 2 representatives from the Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs
- 2 representatives from Ward 8's Congress Heights Community Development Corporation Corridor Walk

ASIAN ROUNDTABLE (CONT.)

- 6 representatives, Eastern Market Main Street businesses
- 2 representative, Ward 8 Asian businesses

Key Findings

On Monday, April 22, 2019, the project team met with two public information officers from the Mayor's Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (MOAPIA) to get recommendations on how the agency could best communicate with the District's Asian population. The officers noted the following key findings:

Communication Channel Recommendations

- Recommended that DOEE should funnel information through MOAPIA
- Suggested that DOEE should create a flyer specifically for the business community to elicit a wider response; otherwise, it is unlikely that DOEE will receive any feedback or engagement from the District's Asian community

Marketing and Engagement Recommendations

- DOEE should provide marketing materials for MOAPIA representatives to distribute at events
- DOEE should engage at Asian History Month events which are in May
- DOEE should address the Asian community's concerns regarding the LED lights and the rebate program as priority issues

On Tuesday, May 7, 2019, the project team met with two representatives from the Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development (CNHED) and Congress Heights Community and Training Development Corporation (CHCTDC) and two representatives from King Discount General Store to get recommendations on how the agency could best communicate with the District's Asian population in Ward 8. The representatives noted the following key findings:

Familiarity with DOEE Programs

- High level of familiarity with DOEE's environmental programs
- Particularly interested in the LED lighting program

Marketing and Engagement Recommendations

- A challenge was revealed when the representatives from King Discount, a general merchandising store and Asian business, expressed great resistance to government programs after encountering a representative from the DC Sustainable and Energy Utility (DCSEU) who visited their establishment and insulted their accents. They decided not to work with government programs after experiencing this cultural offense.

Communication Channel Recommendations

- For best practices, representatives suggested using Congress Heights Community Training Development Corporation's Manager, Ebony Kirby, share information with Ward 8

On Monday, May 6, 2019, the project team met with six representatives from Eastern Market Main Street (Prego Deli, Paik Produce, Aatish on the Hill, Sanphan Thai Cuisine, Eastern Market Nails and Port City Java) to get recommendations on how the agency could best communicate with the District's Asian population in Ward 6. The representatives noted the following key findings:

Familiarity with DOEE Programs

- Unfamiliar with DOEE programs except for the bag law

Communication Channel Recommendations

- Older representatives preferred direct mail (identified as age 60+ demographic)
- Younger representatives preferred social media outlets to receive information (Identified as ages 25-40)



**RECOMMENDED
ACTIONS**



Recommended Actions

Below are our recommendations for how DOEE should approach marketing, design, and messaging for NRA programs, based on all of the information gathered throughout the survey, focus groups, and roundtable research.

MARKETING

- **Establish Best Practices for All Programs Under NRA.** Based on the findings from the comprehensive research effort, we recommend equipping DOEE with marketing and media tool kits. The customized resources will provide easily accessible segment-based insight and communications outreach recommendations for intended messages and audiences. The interactive templates, tools, segment profiles, and a how-to guide for all DOEE marketing and media assets are to speak specifically to individual DOEE programs and serve as a tested formula for engaging District residents, educators, business constituents, school-aged children, and other defined populations.
 - **Segment Personas:** The combined research approach revealed that environmental concerns in the District vary across demographics. It was also found that knowledge gaps and responses to DOEE outreach (or lack thereof) exist, partially, because information is not consistently distributed across communities. Based on these findings, we recommend developing a series of snapshots of each target audience, based on focus group and survey research, current DOEE engager insight, and program goals/guidelines. The profiles will map the most effective communication approach for relevant DOEE initiatives and outreach, including partnership development and vendor opportunities.
 - **Content Portal and Mapping Tool:** To address the varying degrees of environmental concern and media exposure made visible during the research, we propose a visual and interactive tool that houses content to be released during predetermined points of progression in the outreach process. DOEE is to include in the portal: social media content, seasonal communication per audience, public relations and outreach tools, crisis communication plan and responses, congressional/political reporting tool, government-approved messages, outreach and event strategy, and an event attendance calendar. This will ensure consistent messaging that is timely, demographic specific, and presented in the most effective media format.
 - **Case Study/Program Success Portfolio:** According to the key findings, RiverSmart and other DOEE programs that target school-aged children have had the most success. Developers, business owners, agency representatives, and stakeholders surveyed during the study identified corporate partnerships as a viable opportunity for growth and an increase in DOEE's brand awareness. Thus, a library of featured programs, such as RiverSmart and Frogwatch, is proposed as an additional communications and marketing asset. The portfolio will highlight communal, environmental, and cost benefits – and serve as the foundation for partnership packages.
 - **Matrixed Media Buying Solutions per Program:** Provide customized multi-program and multi-media campaign strategies that are audience-specific. The best practice solutions will consider media platforms noted as most effective during the focus group and survey cycles. While media consumption varied across demographics, digital/web strategies, social media, local government outreach, mobile engagement, civic outreach, community partnerships, and affiliate/partnership marketing were all found to be effective sources of communication. Specific media approaches should be identified according to campaign goals and target audience.
 - **Strategy Scorecard and Metrics Dashboard:** While trusted voices in the form of environmental change agents, business owners, and community representatives provided a glimpse into the ability of DOEE programs and

MARKETING (CONT.)

branding materials to engage audiences, we encourage the introduction of a real-time tool that measure DOEE's success by tracking the effectiveness of campaign and media strategies. Campaign progression will be scored against identified goals, key metrics, or performance indicators.

- **Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Keyword Database:** Safe drinking water, as found in the study, is more of a source of concern for Latinx and African-American residents than other groups. Leveraging environmental and program-specific keywords that are most pressing to DOEE stakeholders and District residents will increase the knowledge surrounding each audience segment. Thereby, increasing the likelihood of engagement and participation.
- **Develop a Marketing Strategy Specific to Each Program.** The goal of this research was to create an overarching marketing strategy for the programs under NRA. However during the research, we discovered that some programs had specific marketing needs that could not be addressed adequately with an overarching marketing strategy. In order to address the needs of programs like the RiverSmart (Communities, Rebates, Rooftops, Schools), Community StormWater Solutions, RiverCorps, Watershed Stewards Academy, Green Wrench, Stormwater Retention Credit Trading, we recommend doing targeted research for those programs to address their specific marketing needs.
- **Leverage the Community.** We recommend that the agency should consider using influencers in DOEE marketing materials to increase the effectiveness and impact of those materials with target constituencies. During the focus groups and roundtables, it was noted that often those community figures are the voices of authority in the community and the agency would benefit from including their likeness in marketing materials.
 - Use existing local community organizations in marketing efforts to engage historically underrepresented communities in the District
 - To increase the diversity of its programs, the agency must work collaboratively with existing organizations that have built trust and strong working relationships in those communities and partner with the District's 16 Main Street organizations to engage businesses East of the River and across the District.
 - Include African organizations such as Watch Democracy Grow and the Africa Faith & Justice Center in future marketing efforts
- **Bring the Impact to the People.** Place marketing materials in the places where the item of discussion is happening; for example, right next to a water fountain, put up a flyer with a catchy title and a QR code that takes the reader to an article about how drinking out of a water fountain instead of a plastic bottle is helping save the environment and how this is tied to DOEE's sustainability plan. It was also suggested that DOEE put up signs along the Anacostia River, in places with a lot of foot traffic, to highlight the progress of river clean-up efforts.
- **Provide Marketing Training for Each Program Manager.** Since each program is responsible for handling its marketing in conjunction with the communication team, it's important that the program managers are trained on the best practices and the things they can do to better market their programs.

MESSAGING

- **Start with Why.** In the focus groups, participants advised that DOEE needed to do a better job explaining how their work impacts residents. Also in the survey, participants indicated that they would prefer to have DOEE advertising show them how DOEE programs are relevant to them, their household, or their community. DOEE needs to give constituents a reason to pay attention. Therefore, we recommend that when DOEE begins the marketing for a specific program, the agency should first start by evaluating the following questions from the perspective of the audience: Why this (program)? Why me (community and stakeholders)? Why now?
- **Tell a Story.** It was uncovered in our research that many community members and stakeholders are unaware of the progress DOEE has made in various areas of the environment. Therefore, we recommend that DOEE should ensure that they are highlighting the successes, achievements, and impact of their story for each of its initiatives and how they feed back into one cohesive story. For example, focus group participants are interested in hearing about how initiatives such as the Anacostia River clean-up are progressing.
- **Make the Messaging Personal.** Our research uncovered that many residents cared about the environment only in relation of their own personal needs. We recommend that DOEE's messaging must emphasize a central message confirming all individuals' aspirations to be safe and to prosper. This is not to the exclusion of the animals, the plants, and the river, but the messaging must focus (center) on residents' lives and needs. For each individual program under NRA, the agency should work with community partners such as the Latin America Youth Center to develop messaging that is effective with historically underrepresented constituency groups, like the Latinx community.
- **Meet People Where They Are.** In the African and Latinx roundtables, representatives from those communities repeatedly emphasized that direct, word-of-mouth outreach was important in those communities. In the Latinx roundtable, it was suggested that the agency work with schools to distribute information through students to reach their parents. It is recommended that the agency should segment communication efforts across the mediums which the various constituent groups use most. We recommend that in order to ensure equitable outreach and communication efforts, the agency must be purposeful with the way that it disseminates information.
- **Speak Their Language.** In the roundtables, it was a reoccurring theme that simply translating materials was not enough. Participants encouraged DOEE to make sure that all its marketing materials are written at an 8th grade reading level or below. We recommend that DOEE must ensure that it communicates with constituents in language and terminology that they can understand. This is particularly important for outreach to historically underrepresented groups in the District.
 - One way to do that is by adopting the federal government's **Plain Language Guidelines** for all marketing and outreach materials. To more effectively communicate with constituents, the agency must ensure that all its materials are easy to read and understand. Adopting the federal Plain Language Guidelines will allow the agency to create a consistent standard for all materials. Participants suggested using more relatable language for populations that are not exposed to technical terminology.
 - Another way to do that is by simplifying jargon so that it is easy to understand and less scientific, when possible. During focus #1, participants provided some suggestions for renaming certain terminology used by DOEE:
 - **Stormwater** should be referred to as **Flooding** when applicable
 - **Impervious Surfaces** should be referred to as **Hard Surfaces**

MESSAGING (CONT.)

- **Bioretention** should be referred to as **Natural Filter**
 - **Green Infrastructure** should be referred to as **Nature**
- **Make it Inclusive.** During the focus groups, community partners and stakeholders consistently expressed the desire to be seen as partners by the agency and incorporating this into the agency messaging strategy would help DOEE more effectively engage these constituencies. DOEE should implement a collaborative messaging strategy with community partners to more effectively engage historically underrepresented residents. We recommend that DOEE should also emphasize the term “partnership” in messaging around grant programs and community initiatives.

DESIGN

- **Understand the “Customer” Journey.** Based on the findings from the comprehensive research effort, many participants in the focus groups were confused about the use case for each piece of collateral presented. We recommend when creating marketing materials that DOEE take into consideration the “customer journey” of their audience in or order to make sure the content is relevant and engaging. Content for each piece of marketing collateral, such as those for awareness, informational, and call-to-action purposes, should vary greatly. This will help to avoid the need to pile all information about a program into one document, which makes the collateral overwhelming wordy and less engaging.
- **Develop a Style Guide to Establish a Unified look across NRA Programs.** Our research uncovered that DOEE as an agency has a strong brand recognition; however, many of the programs within NRA do not. We recommend, that in order to help the agency strengthen the brand awareness for the NRA programs and initiatives, the agency must create a unified look across the NRA programs and ensure that all marketing materials incorporate key design elements. These elements should be included as part of the agency’s branding guidelines. DOEE should develop or revise the existing brand style guide for NRA to ensure design consistency for all marketing materials.
- **Develop Co-branding for Program Partnerships.** During our discovery sessions with agency program managers, DOEE staff members expressed frustration that many residents participate in DOEE funded programs, such as the Anacostia River Explorer Program, without understanding that the programs are funded by the agency. During our focus group sessions with stakeholders and agency partners, they expressed the same frustration. We recommend that DOEE implements a co-branding standard for DOEE grant-funded activities. The agency will then be able to ensure it receives appropriate credit for its programming while allowing its partners to build name recognition simultaneously.
- **Update Design to Make More Modern and Professional.** During focus group sessions, many participants noted that the DOEE marketing materials designs were “dated.” They also noted that many materials did not look professionally done. This impacts the credibility of these materials with the audience. We recommend that DOEE use professional designers, whenever possible, to create standard marketing materials that are geared towards the public.
- **Use More Inclusive Imagery.** Feedback from minorities from the focus groups and roundtables stated that they did not see themselves in the marketing materials and therefore do not feel like the programs are geared towards them. Therefore, we recommend that whenever the agency uses stock imagery, that the imagery is diverse, inclusive, and representative

DESIGN (CONT.)

of the community. In addition, we recommend that the agency hire a professional photographer to capture images during events that show the diversity of the people engaged in the activities.

- **Expand Color Palette and Make Vibrant.** Overall feedback about the marketing materials during the focus groups stated that the current color palette is dominated by the use of the color dark green. In isolation, this color is fine. But, with all of the materials viewed side-by-side, this color became overwhelming. A participant in Focus Group #1 and #2 stated that the environment is considered vibrant, but the use of the dark green is not. Therefore, we recommend the expansion of the color palette to include a more robust, colorful, vibrant, and energetic color selection.
- **Use Less Words, More Graphics & Illustrations.** Focus group participants complained that much of the collateral they received had too much text and suggested that the agency incorporate more illustrations into their materials to make them easier to understand. People have short attention spans and materials must catch their attention and make their selling points in a succinct manner. Therefore, we recommend using less words and more graphics and illustrations/ infographics to explain complex content simplistically.
- **Create a Mascot.** It was suggested in the focus groups that the agency needs a mascot that is easily identifiable. We recommend incorporating a mascot in order to help the agency engage young residents and families as well.
- **Make the Call-to-Action Clear.** Our research uncovered that current DOEE marketing materials lack a consistent call -to-action. During our focus group, participants were not sure what the materials are asking them to do. We recommend that future designs should make a clear and concise call for action so that residents know what the next steps are.
- **Use a Professional Printer, when Possible.** The quality of printed marketing materials that we reviewed during the discovery process varied significantly. This can have negative impacts on the effectiveness of these materials with the public. Participants during the focus groups commented on the lack of professionalism the marketing materials had which impacted their opinions, impressions, and perceptions about the seriousness of the programs marketed. We recommend that the agency use professional printing services whenever possible for marketing materials to ensure that the quality of those materials is consistent.



APPENDIX A
ADD'L CONSIDERATIONS

Appendix A:

Additional Considerations

In addition to our recommendations for how DOEE should approach marketing, design, and messaging for NRA programs, we uncovered additional themes during the survey, focus groups, and roundtables that may not be directly related to the scope of this research, but may still impact the agency's marketing indirectly. These are additional considerations we recommend.

- **Address Program Silos.** As uncovered in our discovery sessions, program managers do not believe there is adequate interagency collaboration between the various divisions of the NRA initiatives. Our findings indicated that there are many opportunities for program managers to collaborate and cross-promote each other's initiatives. We recommend that DOEE address these divisions by creating more opportunities for program managers to share what they are working on. This can take place as bi-weekly NRA meetings. We believe that this will help the agency operate and market their programs more effectively.
- **Clarify the Agency's Role.** When it comes to some agency programs, our findings show that DOEE plays a dual role as program manager, program funder, and program sponsor. This can cause confusion between the roles of DOEE staff, the grantee, and the public. Our research has indicated that the lack of consistency in how certain programs are managed and marketed is causing many program partners to express frustration with DOEE. We recommend that DOEE review each of its programs and determine if there is a way to streamline how programs are managed in order to create consistency, whenever possible.
- **Add a Budget for Marketing as a Line Item in Grants.** During our stakeholder research, many grantees noted that they would like to be able to use a portion of their budget towards marketing but were not allowed to and had to settle for substandard marketing materials and efforts. We understand that some grants that DOEE provides -- specifically federal ones -- already have a line item for grants. However, we recommend adding marketing as a line item in those grants that do not currently request it to ensure there's a budget allotted for proper marketing for each program. The standard rule of thumb is that 13% to 25% of the total operating budget should go to marketing.
- **Increase Representation at Program Events.** During our research, members of the affinity groups expressed the importance of representation at program events. For them, inclusion does not stop with the use of diverse imagery on marketing materials. Stakeholders from the Latin American Youth Center stated not only the importance of engaging the Latinx community through outreach and the translation of materials, but also the importance that once members of that community show up to an event that there are people there who "look like them and talk like them" to interact, communicate, and engage with.
- **Improve Grant Opportunities.** During Focus Groups #2 and #3, stakeholders, business owners and local community groups expressed frustrations with the agency's process for awarding grants. Participants recommended the following:
 - DOEE should connect with stakeholders and create community partnerships
 - DOEE should streamline more grants for small non-profit and for-profit organizations, in addition to creating a special process for smaller businesses and organizations to handle cost reimbursement
 - DOEE should consider more multi-year grant awards for program sustainability and a provision of cost-effective grant amounts
 - DOEE should use more practical language in the Request for Funding Applications (RFAs)
 - Participants also expressed dissatisfaction for the lack of outreach and education strategies