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W E L C O M I N G
A M E R I C A

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↑ *Building a Nation of Neighbors*

Susan Downs-Karkos
April 3, 2013

Welcoming America

- National, grassroots-driven collaborative
- Goal: create a welcoming atmosphere that supports integration and shared prosperity.
- 22 affiliates spearhead local initiatives across the country
- Additional support to organizations and communities through Receiving Communities Initiative

A New Opportunity

Expanding focus beyond newcomers – seed vs. “fertile soil approach”



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Who is the Receiving Community?

- ❑ Long-time residents
- ❑ May be very diverse
- ❑ In some cases, can be foreign-born themselves
- ❑ May have conscious or unconscious fear or bias toward newcomers, or are simply ambivalent
- ❑ Those who don't live and breathe this work. Our neighbors and loved ones.

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Principles for Communications

- ❑ Localized, accurate, informative
- ❑ Use trusted, credible messengers
- ❑ Frame positively: speak to contributions, shared values, and mutual benefits
- ❑ Be focused and strategic
- ❑ Words matter, and so do conversations
- ❑ Important to involve immigrants

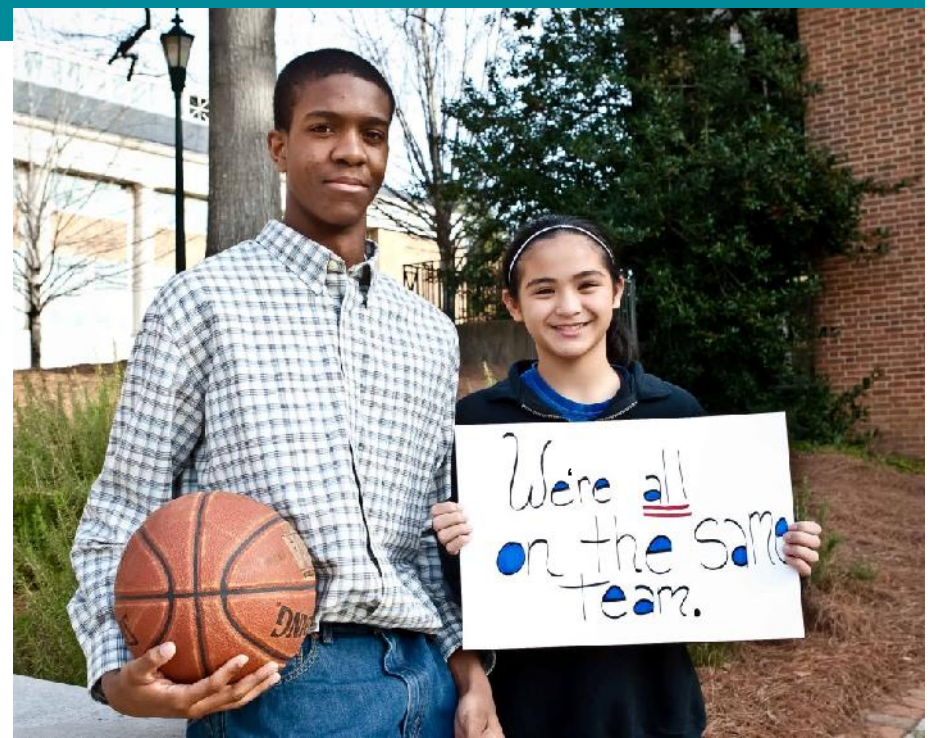


Photo credit: Hillary Andrews

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Unsure

The ambivalent
middle 60%

Untapped

Sympathetic,
would engage if
asked

Tapped

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Understanding the Unsure

- May be coping with process of change and adaption
- Can feel a sense of loss – that their culture or resources are being taken away
- May not have frequent contact with refugees and immigrants
- May be exposed to misinformation
- Respond on basis of values and emotions that we can tap into

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Issues to Consider When Speaking to the “Unsure”

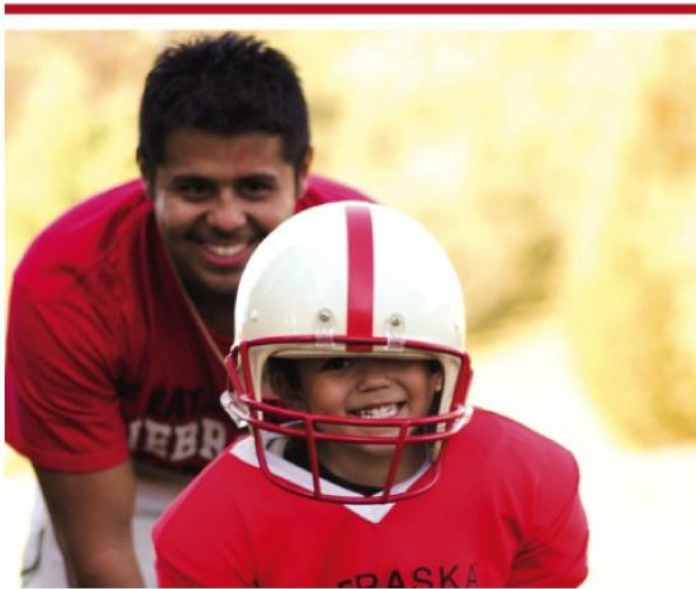
- ❑ Start with messages they relate to and that speak to their beliefs and shared, local values
- ❑ Communicate through spokespeople with greatest credibility
- ❑ Focus on how RC members benefit, vs. how they are obligated
- ❑ Avoid restating myths
- ❑ Consider this as a way to begin an ongoing conversation

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Nebraska is Home and Welcoming Colorado



JUST ANOTHER GREAT
NEBRASKA FAN.

NEW NEBRASKA FAMILIES MAKE US STRONGER.
Nebraska. A good life for everyone. NebraskaIsHome.org



**RUGGED
INDIVIDUALS
MADE HERE.**

IN COLORADO, WE GIVE
IMMIGRANTS A FAIR CHANCE.
WelcomingColorado.org

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COMMUNITY *We'll get there together.*



Paul Cuadros

Author, *A Home on the Field*

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A Welcoming Sign to Immigrants in the South

Posted: 12/20/11

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They say there is nothing like Southern hospitality in making folks feel welcomed and included. But lately for immigrants of all stripes, this hasn't been the general feeling from states like Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina. The sentiment towards immigrants and Latinos in general has been anything but Southern Comfort; despite the millions of dollars these groups contribute to the economies of these states. Now North Carolina is considering similar



WWW.UNITINGNC.ORG

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Why We Care



Why We Care



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Speaking to the Unsure in Tennessee



Like you, we are
a people of faith
and we want
a better future
for our children.

welcomingtn.org

We love America, and we're proud to call Shelbyville home.



Like you,
we work hard,
we pay taxes
and we are
people of faith.

welcomingtn.org

We love America, and we're proud to call Shelbyville home.

WELCOMING

Welcoming Michigan



Message

- What values do my audience and I share?
- What will you say to your audience to convince them to take the action you would like?

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Without the energy and intellect and innovation of our immigrant community, Montgomery County would, quite simply, be incomplete. “New Americans” are a critical piece in building a better future for all County residents.



- County Executive Ike Leggett
Montgomery County, Maryland

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I believe
in Equal
Opportunity





God's
Love is
Colorblind

Examples of Unifying Messaging

- “In the military, there is a saying that you never leave anyone behind on the battlefield. Indeed, in today’s military, those who are white, black and brown fight alongside each other and know that they need to have each other’s back. They know they can count on each other in good and tough times. We need to bring this spirit into civilian life. We all need each other in this country as we move forward into the future. We’ve all got to have each other’s backs.”

■ Drew Westen, *The Receiving Communities Toolkit*

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Engagement

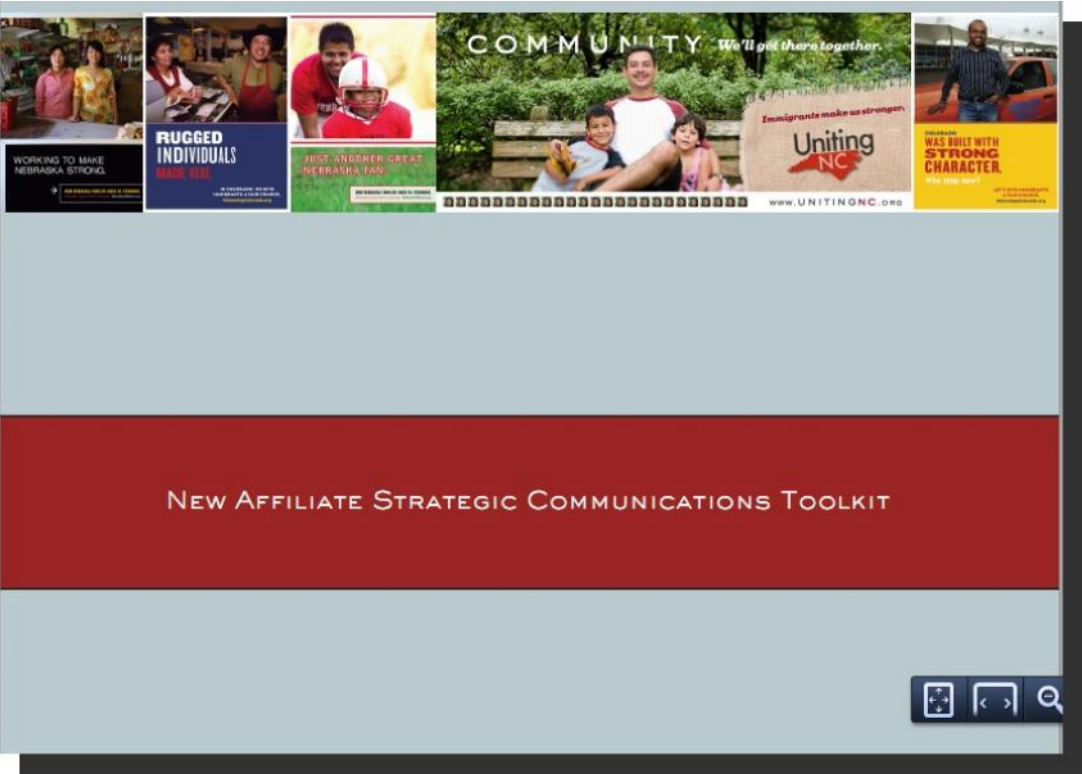
- How will you get your messages to your audience?

- What tactics will be most effective while using the least resources?
 - ▣ Personal outreach
 - ▣ Social media
 - ▣ Paid media
 - ▣ Earned media



Tools to Help

Welcoming America's Strategic Communications Toolkit





<http://vimeo.com/24030899#at=0>

Related Resources

- Welcoming America
www.welcomingamerica.org/resources/refugees
- SPIN Project www.spinproject.org
- Smart Chart www.smartchart.org
- Opportunity Agenda
opportunityagenda.org/immigrants_and_opportunity

Contact

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