

Beginning the Journey

Our population is changing and growing. The people that live within our community help to drive business success, whether it be a client, employee, or employer; these individuals are what comprise Broome County. The Chamber recognized a gap in some of the challenges that businesses faced with workforce development and retention and connecting them to the diverse talent in our area. The Chamber will be the first to share that we are not experts in the field of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and needed assistance to learn what we did not know. In March of 2021 we pulled together a DEI Committee combining the area's top Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion officers and change-makers to better inform us. Shortly after first meeting, the committee challenged us to a few things:

1. Create a mission statement to solidify our role in implementing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives.
2. Form sub-committees to best delve into the broad work that needed our focus.

We emerged with 3 subcommittees: Data, Resources, and Conference. Together we have been able to begin the path to helping the Greater Binghamton area become more diverse, equitable and inclusive. To show that the Chamber was committed to DEI and to going on this journey alongside the business community, we determined our mission:

“Truly inclusive economic development begins with a commitment to supporting all voices. The Leadership Alliance between The Agency and the Greater Binghamton Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to cultivating an economic climate that is welcoming, supportive, and empowering. We will do this by providing equitable services and programming to the businesses and residents we serve, regardless of race, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion, ability status, immigration, and socioeconomic status.”

With this statement and strong sub-committees, we have begun to build programming, share resources, and research data to support this mission.

What Does Broome County Look Like Today?

We dove into the makeup of our population so that we could observe the needs for our businesses in the areas of recruitment and retention strategies to match the demographics of the population. This is a high-level snapshot of our community, and we are looking for ways to add a deeper analysis of this data.

Race/Ethnicity Category	2010 Census	Percent	2020 Census	Percent	Change
White	173806	87.8%	158674	79.9%	-7.9%
Black or African American	9993	5.0%	12684	6.4%	1.3%
American Indian or Alaska Native	451	0.2%	556	0.3%	0.1%
Asian	7242	3.7%	9372	4.7%	1.1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	182	0.1%	84	0.0%	0.0%
Other Race	79	0.0%	3975	2.0%	2.0%
Two or more Races	4267	2.2%	13338	6.7%	4.6%
Total	198060		198,683		-623

Source: U.S Census Bureau, Census 2010, Census 2020

According to the U.S Census Bureau, the population has decreased by 623 people in Broome County between 2010 and 2020. The percentage of individuals who identify as White has decreased by 7.9 %, while individuals who identify as either Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Other Race, or Two or more Races have increased by 8.9%. This was a significant change in just 10 years and demonstrated that the population would continue to shift, and the business community should rise to the challenge to meet it to address the concerns of a decreasing workforce.

The Data Committee observed that while we have a diversely growing population, it did not match the demographics of the workforce in our area’s industries. JobsEQ Data provides a snapshot of the workforce, including occupation demographics. As of October 2021, the Education and Training workforce was 88.7% White, 4.1% Black, .1% American Indian, 4.8% Asian and 2.3% Two or More Races. 2.3% identify as Hispanic or Latino and 97.7% identify as Non-Hispanic/Latino. The Health Sciences workforce was 84.0% White, 7.1% Black, .1% American Indian, 6.7% Asian and 2.0% Two or More Races. 2.4% identify as Hispanic or Latino and 97.6% identify as Non-Hispanic/Latino. According to the 2020 Census, the Broome County population is more diverse than reflected in these industries. Compared to other top employment industries, Education and Training and Health Science are more reflective of the community. We were beginning to see the larger picture of our diverse workforce.

Next, we observed additional members of our community that needed to be included in the discussion of an increased workforce. According to the American Community Survey (ACS), in 2019 15.5% of individuals in Broome County identify as disabled, while only 5.8 % of individuals were unemployed and 3.7 % of individuals not in the labor force identify as disabled. 13.2% of the employed population identify as disabled. This data demonstrates that individuals with disabilities are employed at rates which nearly reflect their representation in the community.

Another demographic we wanted to learn more about is our LGBTQIA+ community. In looking into the data, the information on these members of our community does not exist in any meaningful form as no entity collects the information at this point in time. Given the increased visibility and vocality of the LGBTQIA+ population across the country and in NY state, it makes sense that our LGBTQIA+ population has similar needs to those expressed nationally.

Disability Type	Percentage
Hearing difficulty	4.0%
Vision difficulty	2.4%
Cognitive difficulty	6.6%
Ambulatory difficulty	7.8%
Self-care difficulty	2.9%
Independent living difficulty	6.9%
Disabled Population in Binghamton, New York	15.5%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

EMPLOYMENT STATUS BY DISABILITY STATUS AND TYPE Broome County, Employed		
Disability Type	2010	2019
Hearing difficulty	1,530	709
Vision difficulty	1,050	983
Cognitive difficulty	1,534	2,256
Ambulatory difficulty	1,306	1,747
Self-care difficulty	265	9
Independent living difficulty	1,063	983
Total	83,807	77,483
Total with disability	4,866	5,869
Percent with disability	17.2%	13.2%

Type of Firms	2012	Percentage
Men-owned firms	7,929	58%
Women-owned firms	4,461	33%
Minority-owned firms	1,271	9%
Nonminority-owned firms	11,856	87%
Veteran-owned firms	1,285	9%
Nonveteran-owned firms	11,561	85%
Total Firms	13,671	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Economic Census: Survey of Business Owners.

Another important point of our focus was to see who represented the communities living in poverty. According to ACS, 18.8% of individuals in Broome County live in poverty. Of the individuals who identify as Asian 47% and 46.6% of individuals who identify as Black or African American are living below poverty levels. By ethnicity, of individuals who identify as Hispanic or Latino 34.1% of those are living below poverty levels. This data demonstrates that underrepresented minority groups experience higher rates of poverty.

Broome County is slowly emerging with more Minority and Women Owned Business enterprises to diversify the leadership of our community. For the first time the Division of Minority and is providing a regional breakdown of MWBE certification and expenditure by region. This data will serve as benchmark data for future review. Without additional data such as population and business total in these regions, it is difficult to make comparisons between regions.

POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, BROOME COUNTY		
Demographics	Total	Below Poverty Level
Age		
Age: Under 18	35561	10086
Age: 18-64	109483	20382
Age: 65+	35790	3535
Race		
Race: White	153612	23889
Race: Black or African American	8640	4029
Race: Asian	8,381	3,935
Race: Two or more races	7,940	1,564
Ethnicity		
Ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino	6,964	2,378
Ethnicity: not Hispanic or Latino	150,230	22,658
Total	180,834	34,003

2019: ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject

Increased talent and an improved workforce was one of many reasons we recognized the need for DEI Initiatives in our business community. We observed the benefits of business profits with a more inclusive and equitable workforce and leadership. A recent Boston Consulting Group study of more than 1,700 companies in 8 countries suggests that increasing the diversity of leadership teams leads to more and better innovation and improved financial performance. Another article from McKinsey & Company shows that companies in the top quartile for gender diversity on their executive teams were 21% more likely to outperform their peers on profitability. Companies with the most ethnically diverse executive teams are 33% more likely to benefit than their peers. A more inclusive workplace fosters a more profitable business.

As we can see, the DEI journey covers the entirety of our population which will forever shift and change. We are beginning to scratch the surface of understanding and analyzing the data to support this journey. We look forward to continually adjusting to the needs of our population to improve upon our success as a community.

