



Greater Cincinnati | Northern Kentucky

# Diverse by Design: Meeting the Talent Challenge in a Global Economy

A 2012 Regional Indicators Report





# Calling the Question on Diversity and Inclusion

Agenda 360 and Vision 2015's first Regional Indicators Report in 2010 gave us a baseline from which to measure our progress on key aspects of economic vitality. This report sets the bar on the degree of diversity and inclusion in Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky and looks at the issues through a business lens.

We believe that the time is right for this conversation. While the demographics of our country are rapidly changing, it's clear that our region's diversity is not comparable to the country as a whole. We believe that regions that reflect the new demographics will be better prepared to grow and prosper.

Why does this matter? Because we should be moving where the country is going, not staying where it's been. Our top companies know that multicultural teams with diversity of thought and experience are better at developing new markets than homogeneous ones. Recruiters recognize that multicultural employees are more easily retained when they see evidence of opportunity all the way to the C-suite and when they have social and cultural connections outside of work. A growing body of research suggests that companies with more diversity and inclusion—including the boardroom—post better performance over time.

This report documents that even perceptions about diversity and inclusion in our region are a barrier to attracting top talent, particularly for young professionals for whom diversity is a "non-negotiable." Coupled with the more general perception of the Midwest as the vast, undifferentiated center of the country, we have work to do

in promoting our region as a place with a high quality of life and rich opportunities for personal and professional growth for all people.

This report isn't intended to indict our community for not measuring up; rather, its purpose is to inform a new conversation on how we will create a more attractive and welcoming place for all.

We're not alone in believing that the time is right. Fifth Third Bank and Procter & Gamble stepped up early in this project to support this report and an accompanying symposium. More than 25 companies and organizations in our region also saw the potential value and made investments. More than 1,600 people completed a lengthy survey or participated in a focus group to share their perceptions. Finally, more than a dozen diversity leaders in local companies provided expert commentary on the state of things on both sides of the river.

Encouragingly, most everyone we talked to believed that we have the capacity to change things for the better. And they expressed their willingness to roll up their sleeves and join us in changing the picture portrayed through this report. Will you join us too?

**Mary Stagaman**

Executive Director, Agenda 360

**Bill Scheyer**

President, Vision 2015

For a complete listing of investors, community partners, volunteer leadership, staff and current projects, please visit [agenda360.org](http://agenda360.org) or [vision2015.org](http://vision2015.org).

# What We Learned

The premise of this project is that diversity and inclusion are rapidly becoming business imperatives and central to the overall success of our global companies. Moreover, regions that embrace diversity and advance inclusion are better positioned to attract top talent for companies of all sizes.

From this perspective, we took a closer look at the amount of diversity and the degree of inclusion in Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. For this report, we borrowed definitions from Andrés Tapia, author of *The Inclusion Paradox*, “Diversity is the mix. Inclusion is making the mix work.”<sup>TM</sup> Our research confirmed two things: that our region is highly homogeneous and that we have work to do to be a truly inclusive, welcoming community.

The report starts with eight leading indicators of regional diversity. These indicators were chosen in part for their consistency across regions and allowed us to compare Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky with the 11 peer regions contained in other Regional Indicators reports.

To assess the degree of inclusion in our region, we tested perceptions about inclusion in three ways: one-on-one interviews with corporate leaders concerned with the attraction and retention of talent; focus groups with a diverse group of highly skilled, college educated employees from companies and organizations of all sizes; and an online survey completed by more than 1,500 respondents that affirmed and added statistical validity to what we heard in the focus groups.

## Key insights emerged from the research:

- Everyone expressed a desire to live in a community that is diverse *and* expressed a willingness to support efforts to make our community more diverse and inclusive. They were optimistic about our ability to change for the better.
- Company and context are different realms for international and diverse “transplants.” Respondents felt that outside the company confines, the community does not fully embrace them. A number of respondents characterized native-born Cincinnatians as “unfriendly” or “cliquish.” And then there was this insight from an international transplant: “I’d like to stop being treated as a ‘novelty’ at parties.”
- Non-Hispanic Whites, the majority population in our region, view the region as significantly more diverse than other populations. However the divide narrows when inclusion alone is considered.
- Diversity and inclusion aren’t the only factors that influence employee decisions. Our Midwest location

and perceptions about the overall vibrancy of the social environment in the region can be drawbacks. Some younger respondents, especially African Americans and LGBT\* persons felt social life was better in other nearby markets such as Columbus and Indianapolis. Older respondents with more time in the region focused more on the high quality of life and “family friendliness” as reasons to stay.

- Many diverse participants felt that diversity is concentrated in pockets around the region rather than diffused through it and that public places, such as restaurants, theaters and churches were still largely segregated. Members of minority populations, especially African Americans and Latinos, expressed more concern over this separation and the degree to which professional and personal achievement is recognized in their workplaces but not in the community. As one recent hire from Puerto Rico put it: “I left my home, came here and I was instantly just a minority.”
- Transplants noted that relocation specialists tended to recommend neighborhoods with high concentrations of people from the same company rather than offering a range of choices. Many respondents noted that the lack of a robust transit system limited mobility for everyone in the region.
- Some participants expressed a desire to see more diverse cultural and international flavor in the community. A number of respondents also suggested that more media coverage of the community’s diverse populations and more multicultural elected officials would be visible signs of change.
- Every population surveyed cited “conservative” as the number one word that comes to mind when describing our region. Non-Hispanic Whites and mature multicultural persons were more likely to interpret “conservative” positively. Young professionals, on the other hand, thought our conservative nature was holding us back.
- However, many respondents cited the revitalization of downtown and Over-the-Rhine, great cultural and recreational assets and increasing innovation as positive signs of progress.

There are more details from the research throughout this report which provide a valuable set of guideposts for developing action steps to make our region “Diverse by Design.”

*In this report, “region” and “Cincinnati” refer to the federally defined 15-county Cincinnati-Middletown OH-KY-IN Metropolitan Statistical Area.*

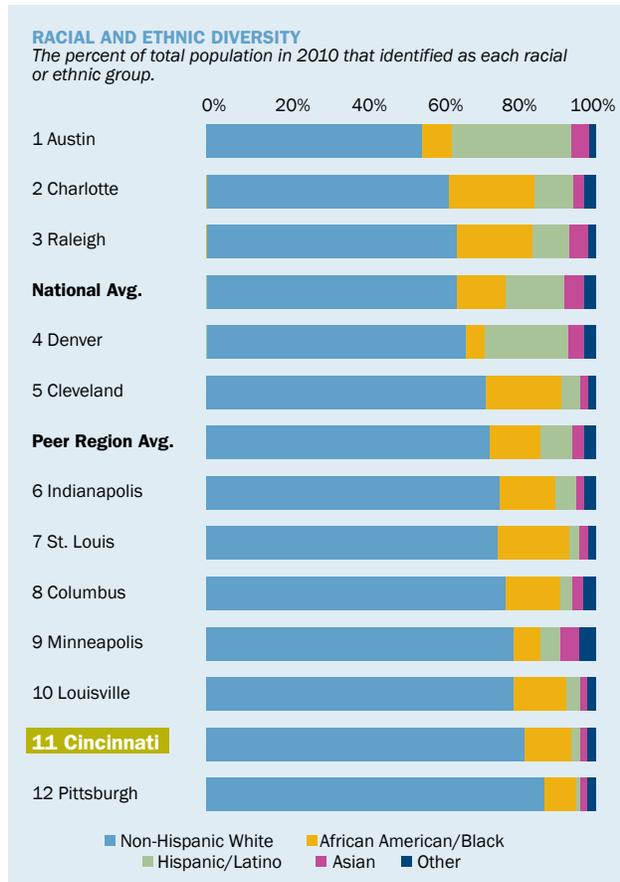
\*Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered.

# Comparing Across Regions

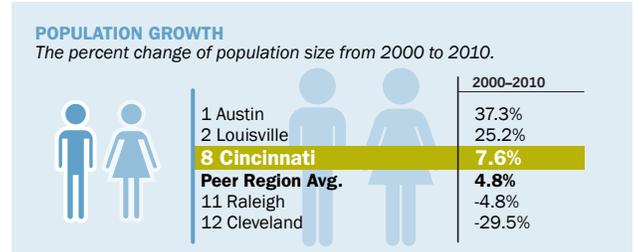
Just as in other Regional Indicator reports produced by Agenda 360 and Vision 2015, we have compared our region against 11 metropolitan regions we compete with for people and jobs: Austin, TX; Charlotte, NC; Cleveland, OH; Columbus, OH; Denver, CO; Indianapolis, IN; Louisville, KY; Minneapolis, MN; Pittsburgh, PA; Raleigh, NC; and St. Louis, MO. While this report focuses largely on the current state in our own region, we believe that the comparisons to peers are valuable in assessing our overall competitiveness.

After reviewing a wide range of potential indicators to assess the state of diversity in our region, the research team selected eight as representative of the total picture. These indicators come from reliable sources and are regularly updated (see page 6).

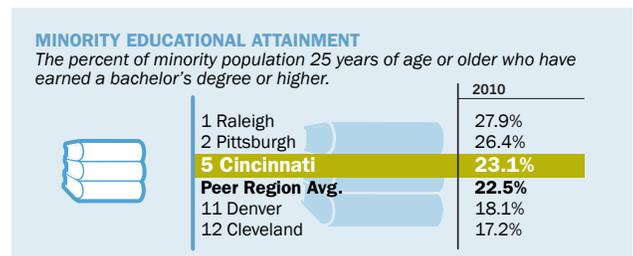
**Racial and Ethnic Diversity.** It is widely known that the demographics of the U.S. are changing and that after the 2040 Census, Non-Hispanic Whites will no longer constitute the majority of the population.\* This major shift is already changing the workplace and the marketplace, raising the question of whether regions lacking diversity can maintain a strong economy and attract talent. Compared to our peer regions, Cincinnati's population is highly homogeneous, with only 18 percent of the population identifying with a demographic other than Non-Hispanic White.



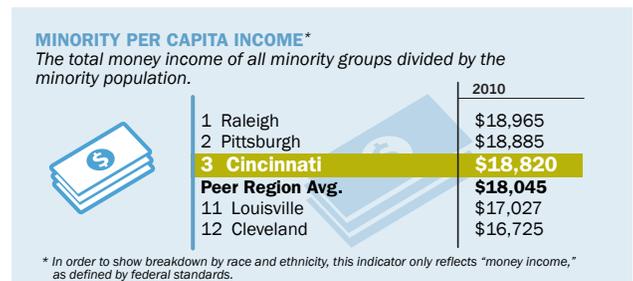
**Population Growth.** While our regional population has grown in the last 10 years, the rate of growth is slower than many of our peer regions. Austin is particularly attractive to young professionals, and the Louisville region's land area nearly doubled from 2000 to 2010, increasing its population count. However, slower population growth—or decline—is generally consistent across Midwest regions. This reinforces an issue for these regions: outside of the Midwest, there is little understanding of what assets or opportunities may exist in a region such as Cincinnati.



**Educational Attainment.** A diverse, highly skilled workforce would have a high percentage of minorities who have attained a bachelor's degree or higher. Our regional labor force ranks above the peer region average, but significant disparities exist within specific minority populations. To gain an economic advantage, we need to continue growing the percentage of our minority labor force with degrees.



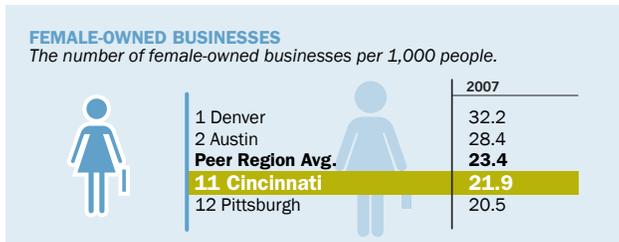
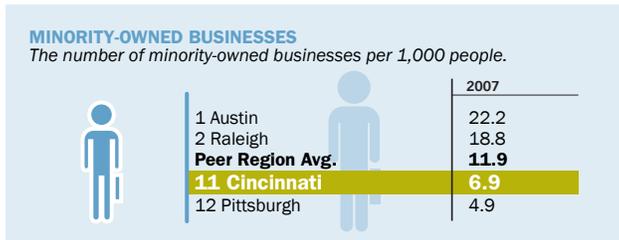
**Minority Per Capita Income.** Our region ranks third on this indicator, which shows that minorities earn, on average, a higher income in our region than in many of our peer regions. However, low minority per capita income across all of the peer regions serves as a reminder that ranking high is only half of the story. Clear disparities exist between the per capita income of minorities and Non-Hispanic Whites, whose current per capita income is \$29,355.



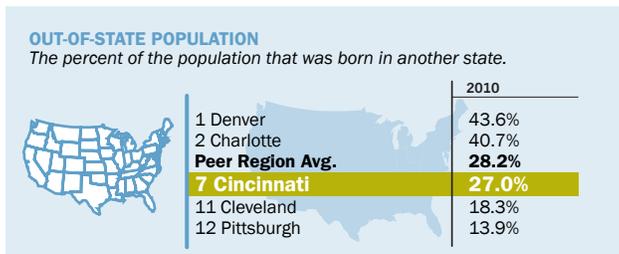
\* United States Census Bureau, Income, Poverty and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2009

## Minority and Female-Owned Businesses.

Cincinnati ranks low on the ratio of minority and women-owned businesses to population size. The lack of visible minority entrepreneurs may discourage others considering starting a new business. Access to capital, increased spend rates with minority businesses and support for minority entrepreneurs could grow wealth and economic opportunity for minorities. Encouraging female entrepreneurship can help to close income and unemployment gaps between men and women in our region.



**Out-of-State Population.** A diverse workforce includes diversity of thought and experience in addition to diversity of race, ethnicity and other demographic features. Regions that have high rates of in-migration from other states may benefit from fresh perspectives. Primary research described elsewhere in this report confirms perceptions of our region overall as highly “conservative” at a time when we seek to increase innovation. While non-natives aren’t the sole source of new ideas, they can contribute to a change in our collective mindset.



“ Our compilation shows that immigrants significantly benefit the U.S. economy by creating new jobs, and complementing the skills of the U.S. native workforce, with a net positive impact on wage rates overall. ”

**Randel K. Johnson**  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

**Foreign-Born Population.** The allure of a city can be measured in part by how people of the world vote with their feet. International talent attraction can be a significant asset for a region, but we rank low when it comes to our foreign-born population. Immigrants are disproportionately entrepreneurial—over 24 percent of engineering and technology companies founded in our country over the last six years had at least one foreign-born founder.\*\* Other regions have adopted “global” and immigrant attraction strategies to leverage this advantage for regional growth.



**H-1B Visa Requests.** H-1B visas are granted to foreign workers in specialty occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise in specialized fields. While several other external factors affect actual issuance, examining H-1B requests offers insight on the demand of worldwide talent applying for work in a region. This is a highly-skilled talent pool that adds significant expertise to a region and helps our businesses continue to compete globally. Our region ranks low on this indicator, a sign that we can do a better job attracting international talent.



Indicator sources appear at the bottom of page 6. A complete list of rankings is available at [regional-indicators.org](http://regional-indicators.org).

\*\* Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, American’s New Immigrant Entrepreneurs: Then and Now, October 2012

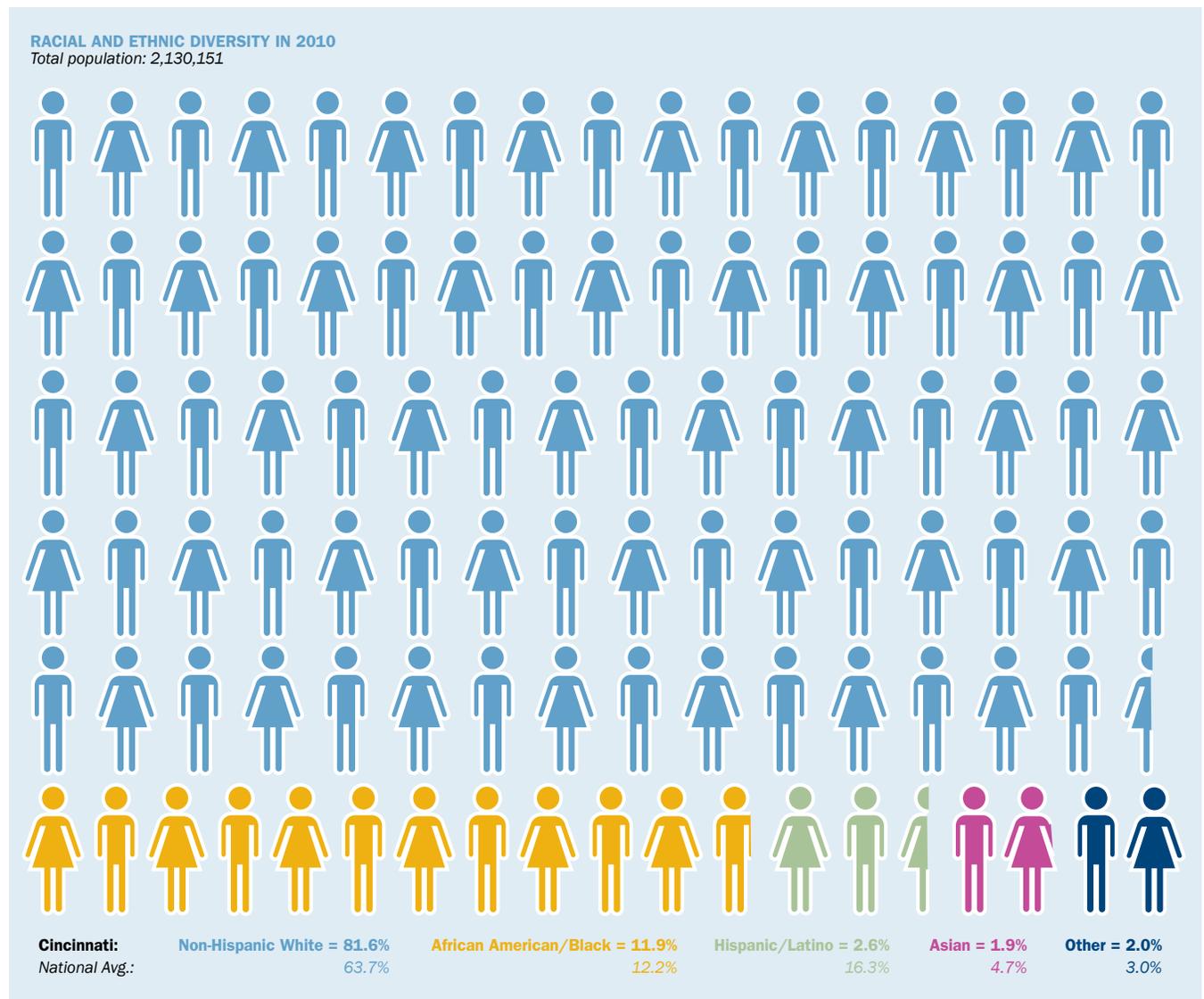
# A Closer Look at Greater Cincinnati

**Racial and Ethnic Diversity.** While the comparative data on the previous pages is informative, full understanding requires a deeper look at the Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky region.

“ I'm the only African American in my department. You don't see African Americans in high positions—doctors, surgeons, registered nurses. It sounds really bad, but the people you see that look like you aren't in leadership positions. They are in housekeeping, in the cafeteria, and they are patient care assistants. ”

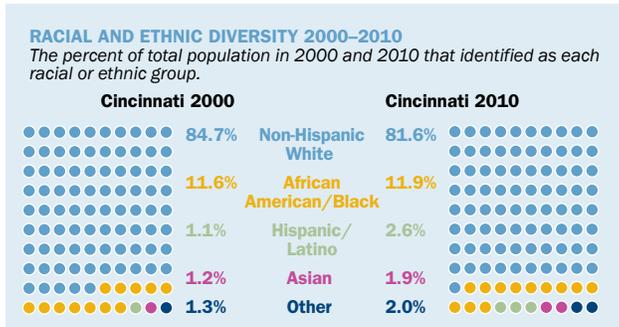
In our research, perceptions on the overall diversity of our region varied by respondent. Generally, Non-Hispanic Whites see the region as more diverse than multicultural populations do. People living within the City of Cincinnati may also perceive the region as more diverse, because the city's population is almost equally divided between Non-Hispanic Whites and African Americans. But as told by data rather than perceptions, the region as a whole is a different story.

As the chart below indicates, our regional population at present is not highly diverse. Asians and Hispanics/Latinos, the fastest growing populations in the country, account for very small percentages of our population—small enough to be invisible to many.

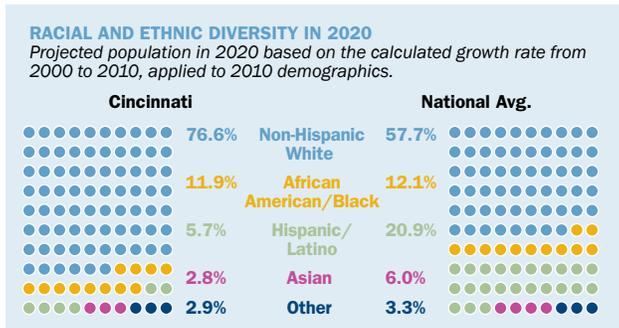


**Indicator Sources.** Racial Diversity: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey; Population Growth: United States Census Bureau, Decennial Census; Educational Attainment: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey; Per Capita Income Index: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey; Minority-Owned Businesses: United States Department of Commerce, Economic Census; Female-Owned Businesses: United States Department of Commerce, Economic Census; Foreign-Born Population: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey; Out-of-State Population: United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey; H-1B Visa Requests: Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, The Search for Skills: Demand for H-1B Immigrant Workers in U.S. Metropolitan Areas

**Racial and Ethnic Diversity 2000–2010.** Unlike some other Midwestern regions, our region experienced an increase in population over the last 10 years. Minority populations also increased between 2000 and 2010, but the low baseline numbers mean that the overall percentages in our population are still small. While it's unrealistic to project that we could achieve the diversity of the coasts, for instance, it may be possible to achieve more of a "critical mass" of minorities required to retain diverse talent in our region.



**Racial and Ethnic Diversity in 2020.** Using a simple projection formula recommended by the U.S. Census Bureau, we projected the possible population distribution at the time of the next decennial census in 2020. Following national trends, the percent of Non-Hispanic Whites will decline as the multicultural population grows. But the overall percentages of ethnic and racial minorities will still lag behind national growth, again raising the question of whether diverse talent in our region will be able to make the cultural connections important to talent attraction and retention.



*"In my office, there are people from all over. You hear different languages all day and feel that it's very diverse and inclusive. But once I leave that bubble, it's a completely different story."*

*"Don't forget that there's diversity within diversity. An immigrant from Somalia has a different story and needs than an African American from Cincinnati."*

**Degree Attainment.** Educational attainment, as measured by the percent of population with bachelor's degrees and higher, is a critical indicator of economic prosperity. Our regional attainment as a whole stands at about 30 percent\*\*\* and needs improvement. Among African Americans, however, only 16 percent of the population has a bachelor's degree or higher. On a more positive note, 64 percent of Asians and 25 percent of Hispanics/Latinos in the region have a bachelor's degree or higher (beating the national average of around 15 percent for Hispanics/Latinos).

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**

The percent of each racial or ethnic group 25 years of age or older who have earned a bachelor's degree or higher.



**Per Capita Income.** We rank third among our peers on per capita income, but with a closer look, we see income disparities between minority groups. These numbers reflect differences in educational attainment and job types; they are not position-for-position comparisons. Strengthening the talent pipeline, from early childhood education to skills training, will help address disparities in per capita income and build local talent. Hiring and promotion practices that ensure pay parity across populations can also reduce disparities over time.

**PER CAPITA INCOME\***

The total money income within each racial or ethnic group divided by the group population.



\* In order to show breakdown by race and ethnicity, this indicator only reflects "money income," as defined by federal standards.

\*\*\* Regional Indicators Report 2012: Measuring Our Economic Progress, October 2012

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

# Insights on Diversity and Inclusion

The primary research completed for this report included a dozen interviews with Chief Diversity Officers and other top executives at large and small companies and organizations, 10 focus groups with diverse populations of white collar professionals currently in our regional workforce, and an online survey targeted to professionals with college degrees that yielded more than 1,500 responses.

When combined, the research results present an informative picture of the current state of diversity and inclusion in our region and suggest opportunities for making the region more attractive to top talent.

## Interviews with Experts: Chief Diversity Officers Speak.

One-on-one interviews were conducted with company and organizational leaders who have considerable knowledge about their workforce and challenges in recruitment and retention. Respondents were specifically asked about the degree to which diversity and inclusion are viewed as important to their overall business success. In addition, they offered reflections on how the community—the regional “context” in which their employees live—contributes to how effectively an employee is embedded in the company and the community.

**Importance of Diversity and Inclusion to Company Performance.** The larger companies interviewed can make the business case for increased diversity within their workforce and believe that diversity is important for global competitiveness.

In smaller and mid-size companies, upper management support and leadership for increasing diversity and inclusion is not at parity with the larger firms. These companies see the value of a diverse workforce, but diversity is not tied to a business case with a compelling argument or a desire to change course. Even so, many of these companies say that for them increasing diversity is just “the right thing to do.”

The companies understand that in order to win with consumers they need to reach deeper into emerging markets, which requires a diverse team and designing products, services and marketing approaches that are sensitive to cultural differences.

“It has to be part of our DNA, not just a single event.”

**Diversity and Inclusion Effects on Regional Competitiveness.** Companies that recruit nationally and internationally face challenges in attracting talent to Cincinnati over regions that are perceived as more metropolitan and vibrant. The diversity leaders interviewed

felt that our concentration of Fortune 500 companies can be leveraged to promote the region as the “top-talent destination” in the Midwest. Diversity leaders would like to see civic leaders and local government take the lead in “telling the story” of our region.

**Attracting and Retaining Top Talent.** Respondents agreed that the region is at a disadvantage in recruiting minority populations because of our homogeneity and the perception of the region as non-inclusive.

Diversity leaders believe that their companies provide a diverse and inclusive atmosphere internally, but once a multicultural employee steps outside the company’s walls, the larger community is not welcoming to most. A community that is not diverse has a particular disadvantage in recruiting young professionals—the Millennial generation—who want to live in a highly diverse community.

“Getting people here is half the issue—the other half is creating a community they want to stay and live in.”

**Best Practices in Diversity and Inclusion.** Top management involvement is the key to success. There are specific structures in place at most larger companies to measure, implement and reward diversity strategies and programs that fit specific business units.

Employee resource groups for multicultural populations serve as retention vehicles and provide opportunities for community involvement, creating social ties. These groups could partner between companies to share ideas, increase support for multicultural hires and develop more social contacts beyond a specific company.

Diversity leaders noted that expanded partner benefits and visible support for the LGBT community translate into perceptions of inclusiveness for this population.

**Key Contributors.** Agenda 360 and Vision 2015 thank all the companies and organizations who contributed to this report by participating in one-on-one interviews, inviting employees to participate in focus groups, or distributing the online survey. Just a sampling of those companies and organizations includes Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center, Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber, Cintas, Deloitte LLP, Ethicon Endo-Surgery, Fifth Third Bancorp, General Electric, The Kroger Co., Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, Pomeroy, Procter & Gamble, The E.W. Scripps Company, Thompson Hine LLP, Toyota Motor Co. and the University of Cincinnati.

## Hearing from Our Workforce: The Online Survey.

More than 1,500 individuals, most of whom were white collar professionals, completed an online survey on their perceptions of diversity and inclusion in the region.

When asked to assess the overall diversity of our region, Non-Hispanic Whites ranked the region as being more diverse than minority respondents. However, the degree of separation between populations narrowed significantly when the topic was the overall inclusiveness of the region. Nearly all respondents indicated that there is room for improvement on inclusion.

Specific measures of diversity and inclusiveness in the workplace and in the community had been identified by focus group participants. The relative importance of these measures was tested in the survey.

**Workplace Factors.** Respondents were asked to rank the following elements in order of their importance to an inclusive workplace. While many respondents indicated that their companies and peers have embraced diversity as a shared value, they also shared that there is plenty of room for improvement. For example, increasing the diversity of leadership teams and the overall workforce were considered important to achieving full inclusion and would reflect the transition from shared values to practice.

### Workplace Factors Ranked by Importance

- ✓ Diversity of overall workforce
- ✓ Diversity of leadership team
- ✓ Company embraces diversity as a shared value
- ✓ Equal advancement opportunities to top positions
- ✓ Peers embrace inclusion as a shared value
- ✓ Intercultural competency of employee population
- ✓ Effectiveness of affinity groups/multi-cultural groups

**Community Factors.** While workplace measures focused more on upward mobility and shared values, community measures focused largely on social opportunities.

Respondents cited diverse cultural events and ethnic restaurants as regional assets, but also indicated that a greater variety of cultural events and more diverse participation in them would be visible signs of an inclusive region. Expanded media coverage of diverse populations and events was also cited as an important step for creating a diverse and inclusive region. Basic needs also made the list of important factors, such as increased access to health care resources.

“ People in our region need to better understand what it means to be inclusive. Until residents understand how to include newcomers, people who didn't grow up here or don't have family here will not stay long in our region. ”

### Community Factors Ranked by Importance

- ✓ Availability of diverse cultural events
- ✓ Equal access to health care resources
- ✓ Media coverage of diverse cultures
- ✓ Availability of information about diverse cultures
- ✓ Diversity of population attending cultural festivals
- ✓ Showcase of music and arts of different cultures
- ✓ Availability of diverse restaurants

**Cincinnati in Three Words.** Despite differences in perceptions of diversity between Non-Hispanic Whites and minority groups, all survey respondents described Cincinnati as “conservative.” When this response was probed in the focus groups, the connotations varied. For some, “conservative” translated to family friendly and safe; for others, it meant risk adverse or closed-minded. Most groups mentioned “family” among the three words and in the survey, many respondents—including non-natives—cited family ties as a reason to stay in Cincinnati. But persistent perceptions among some African Americans that the region is still largely “segregated” requires closer examination, as it could reduce retention of this population in our workforce.

**Non-Hispanic White:** *Conservative*, Family, Diverse

**African American/Black:** *Conservative*, Segregated, Family

**Hispanic/Latino:** *Conservative*, Family, Slow

**Asian:** *Conservative*, Family, Diverse

**LGBT:** *Conservative*, Growing, Traditional

“ Celebrate the uniqueness of our region. Look for solutions that make the most sense for us—not just because it worked well in another city. This is a long-term problem that will not go away overnight. ”

The online survey collected 1,505 responses, providing a 95% confidence level with a confidence interval of +/-3. The survey targeted currently employed professionals with a college degree, with 84 percent of respondents meeting that profile. About half of all respondents worked for larger firms, with the remainder split equally between small- to mid-sized companies.

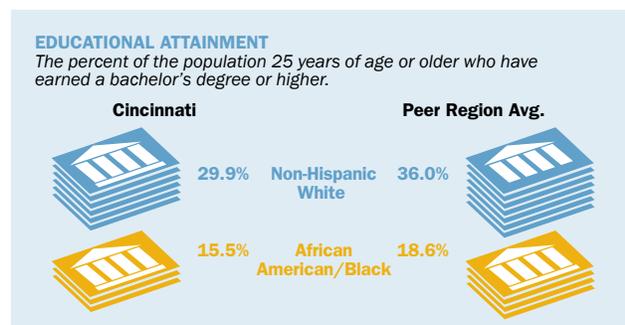
# The Potential Within

The core assumption that drove the research behind this report is strikingly simple: a lack of diversity and inclusion in our region is an economic disadvantage that reduces our overall competitiveness.

What is not so simple are the steps we need to take to create a more diverse and inclusive community. However, we believe there is a significant untapped pool of talent *already in our market* that represents one solution to the inclusion question. We could accelerate the pace of change in our region if we develop this untapped pool in parallel with efforts to attract and retain talent from elsewhere.

**Closing the Gap for African Americans.** The scores of community organizations working to increase educational attainment in our region already know there is an achievement gap between white and black students. While their efforts are narrowing the gap, there is still much work to do and the consequences of delay are undeniable. Students who are not reading at grade level by the end of the third grade are four times less likely to graduate from high school. When those students are living in poverty, they are 13 times less likely to graduate.

In our region, the consequences of the gap are demonstrated in the disparity in college attainment between Non-Hispanic Whites and African Americans. Only 15.5 percent of African Americans in the region have bachelor's degrees, as compared to nearly 30 percent college attainment in Non-Hispanic Whites. Moreover, in our region African Americans also lag behind Asians (63.6 percent) and Latinos (24.9 percent) in bachelor's degrees earned.



For companies that have jobs to fill today, stepping back and investing in the development of future workers requires foresight. But today's third graders will be tomorrow's workforce, ready or not. Ultimately, prevention is less costly and more effective than remediation. We need to support all our children, but we need also to recognize that some children have a higher hill to climb on the path to success and will need more help.

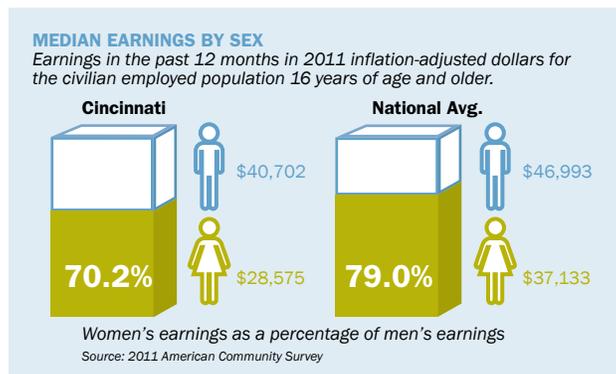
**Achieving Parity for Women in Our Workforce.** One of the key insights that emerged from the research for this report was only evident as verbatim comments from the focus groups and the survey were reviewed.

Gender "parity" was seldom mentioned as an important component of inclusion, yet discrepancies still exist between men and women in the workforce.

**“** Women now constitute a substantial portion of highly talented labor. They have caught up to and surpassed men in college attendance and attainment of bachelor's and master's degrees. Companies that fail to fully utilize this labor talent will limit their own growth and opportunities for economic gain. **”**

**Committee for Economic Development**  
Washington D.C. non-partisan policy center

Women move less easily up the career ladder because of barriers such as the "care economy" (women bearing a greater burden of caring for children and the elderly), and "full inclusion" (the lack of women in the highest-paying roles). Moreover, while women have surpassed men in degree attainment, they are not earning equal numbers of degrees in higher-paying fields such as information technology, engineering and mathematics. These differences contribute to an income differential for women. Interventions that increase opportunities for women across all fields could positively affect the overall size of our talent pool available to fill high demand jobs in the future.



**Looking Ahead: A Footnote.** The Regional Indicators Report series is intended to inform readers and prompt action by presenting credible data and thoughtful analysis about our regional economy. This report addressed the size and composition of our workforce as an important driver of economic vitality. Still, some readers may wonder why other aspects of diversity and inclusion in our workforce are not addressed. For example, why didn't we consider age, or disabilities, or income in greater depth? We see this report as a starting point and intend to address additional topics and issues in future Regional Indicators reports.

## Beyond the Census: The LGBT Population.

One aspect of diversity not fully addressed in census data is the number of people in the U.S. who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered (LGBT). Yet diversity thought leaders cite openness to these populations as a leading indicator of a company's—and by association, a region's—ability to attract and retain a diverse workforce inclusive of all populations. In the research for this report, for example, many respondents cited Columbus, OH, as more attractive than Cincinnati specifically because of perceived openness to the LGBT population.

There are concrete ways to measure the accuracy of these perceptions within a company. The Human Rights Campaign Foundation's Corporate Equality Index is the leading indicator of corporate policies and practices related to the LGBT community. The CEI rates corporate inclusion of LGBT employees through policies and practices such as domestic partner health benefits, transgender health care, discrimination policy, organizational LGBT competency, employer-supported affinity groups and a public commitment to the LGBT community. Companies participate in the index voluntarily.

Over the past 11 years, the number of companies across the country scoring a perfect CEI score of 100 has increased from 13 to 252, earning the distinction of "Best Places to Work for LGBT Equality." In the Cincinnati region, 13 employers\* scored 85 or higher on the 2013 CEI.

Duke Energy Corp.  
Ernst & Young\*\*  
Fifth Third Bancorp  
Frost Brown Todd LLC  
KeyCorp  
The Kroger Co.  
Macy's, Inc.  
The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc.\*\*  
Procter & Gamble Co.  
Squire Sanders LLP\*\*  
Target Corp.\*\*  
Thompson Hine LLP\*\*  
U.S. Bancorp\*\*

Six employers (noted by\*\* above) in the Cincinnati region earned scores of 100 on the 2013 CEI. These local leaders could pave the way for other companies in our region to use the CEI as a tool for improving inclusion in their workplace.

\* Employers with a large presence or headquarters in the Cincinnati region and participated in the 2013 CEI



“ In my work as a diversity practitioner and as president of Diversity Best Practices, I've seen companies pay a heavy productivity cost due to [LGBT] disengagement. Non-inclusive work environments . . . not only drag down workers' spirits, but they hinder companies' productivity . . . [Employees who are not out] are 73 percent more likely to leave their companies within the next three years. ”

**Andrés Tapia**  
Diversity Best Practices

Agenda 360 and Vision 2015 extend their appreciation to all of the companies and organizations that invested in and supported the creation of this report.

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Robert Reakirt Foundation  
PNC Bank, Trustee



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