MY MIAMI STORY 2018
Participant Perspectives on Community and How to Effect Change

Key findings from a survey among adults who participated in The Miami Foundation My Miami Story conversations, with support from The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, October/November 2018
Methodology

- The Miami Foundation estimates that approximately 4,200 adults participated in My Miami Story conversations on October 23, 2018.
- This report presents findings among 388 adults who participated in The Miami Foundation My Miami Story and completed the post-conversation online survey.
- Survey field period: October 23 to November 8, 2018.
- Notes:
  - Throughout this report, the term “participants” is used to refer to On the Table participants who completed the survey.
  - For each question, percentages are based on the total number of respondents who answered it.
  - “Whites” self-identify as non-Hispanic white adults.
  - “African Americans” self-identify as non-Hispanic African-American or black adults.
Methodology

South Dade County is defined by the following ZIP Codes:

- 33030
- 33031
- 33032
- 33033
- 33034
- 33035
- 33039
- 33143
- 33156
- 33157
- 33158
- 33170
- 33173
- 33176
- 33177
- 33178
- 33183
- 33186
- 33187
- 33189
- 33190
- 33193
- 33196
Profile of My Miami Story Participants Who Completed the Survey

GENDER
- Men 28%
- Women 71%
- Gender not listed 1%

EDUCATION
- HS grad/less: 6%
- Two-year college/voc ed: 11%
- Four-year college grad: 33%
- Post-grad educ: 50%

AGE
- 18 to 34: 33%
- 35 to 49: 31%
- 50/older: 36%

HISPANIC/LATINO BACKGROUND
- 36% Hispanic/Latino
- 64% Non-Hispanic/Latino

RACE
- 57% Whites
- 23% African Americans
- 2% Asians
- 8% Others
- 10% Biracial/multiracial

27% Parent of minor child
Profile of My Miami Story Participants Who Completed the Survey

**GEOGRAPHIC AREA**
- South Dade County: 18%

**PARTY IDENTIFICATION**
- Democrats: 69%
- Republicans: 7%
- Independents/other: 24%

18% PARTICIPATED in MMS last year
57% VOTE in every local election
Key Takeaways

• My Miami Story participants express a sense of optimism and positive community outlook and are much more likely to be hopeful than worried about what the future holds for their community.
  • Men, Millennials, and African-American participants have a hopeful outlook at higher rates, while white participants, those age 50 and older, and those from South Dade County express worry at higher rates than most.

• Significant majorities view their community as embodying several positive attributes, including changing for the better, having shared goals and priorities, possessing a strong sense of community, and providing opportunities for everyone.
  • Participants from South Dade, those age 50 and older, and Hispanic participants are even more likely to see their community as one that provides opportunities for all.

• While more My Miami Story participants see their community as united than divided, men and white participants are split on the question of unity.

• Housing issues, including homelessness and affordable housing, are the top priorities that Miami-area residents want to see addressed. This is true regardless of gender, age, education level, and where one lives. There is some variation in priorities between white, African-American, and Hispanic participants.
Key Takeaways (cont’d)

• By far, My Miami Story participants see nonprofits and community organizations as the entities that are having the greatest impact in making their community a better place to live. Second-tier perceived change-makers include community residents and local government.

• These participants are engaged and are optimistic that their efforts will have a positive impact on making their community a better place to live.
  • A large majority report that they are involved in community and neighborhood activities.
  • An even larger proportion (86%) report that they will take specific actions or steps on an issue they discussed at a My Miami Story event.

• Almost half of participants are motivated to engage and become involved by the desire to build a strong community for our youth and future generations.

• The My Miami Story experience had a significant impact. Participants report that it led to a greater sense of optimism that their community can work together to make positive change, new knowledge and understanding about challenges and how to address them and motivation to do so, and new connections with similarly determined community members.
COMMUNITY OUTLOOK
My Miami Story participants are much more hopeful than worried about what the future holds, although South Dade residents have a mixed outlook.

Looking ahead to the next five years or so, do you feel more hopeful or more worried about what the future holds for your community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hopeful</th>
<th>Worried</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 18 to 34</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 35 to 49</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 50/older</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Americans</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-year college/less</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four-year college grads</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgrad education</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Dade County</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participants see their community in a positive light along many dimensions.

- **My community is changing for the better**: 76% agree, 24% disagree.
  - Strongly agree: 17%
  - Somewhat agree: 59%
  - Agree: 20%
  - Disagree: 4%

- **Residents have shared goals/priorities for our community**: 72% agree, 28% disagree.
  - Agree: 21%
  - Disagree: 8%

- **The area where I live has a strong sense of community**: 66% agree, 34% disagree.
  - Agree: 19%
  - Disagree: 10%

- **My community provides opportunities for everyone**: 56% agree, 44% disagree.
  - Agree: 10%
  - Disagree: 13%
Older participants, Hispanics, and those from South Dade are more likely to see their community as providing equal opportunities.

My community provides opportunities for everyone:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All attendees</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 18 to 34</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 35 to 49</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 50/older</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Americans</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Dade County</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Male and white participants are more likely to be divided on the question of community unity.

**Do you think people in your community are more united or more divided when it comes to addressing important goals and challenges?**

My community is more UNITED:  
- Much more  
- Somewhat more  

My community is more DIVIDED:  
- Much more  
- Somewhat more

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>United Much More</th>
<th>United Somewhat More</th>
<th>Divided Much More</th>
<th>Divided Somewhat More</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All attendees</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<td>55%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COMMUNITY PRIORITIES
Housing issues top the list of community priorities that need to be addressed.

**THREE most important issues for my community to address:**

- **Housing (affordable, homelessness)**: 47%
- **Good jobs, economic development**: 35%
- **Environmental issues**: 34%
- **Public transportation**: 32%
- **Poverty, economic security**: 30%
- **Affordable healthcare**: 23%
- **Social justice (civil rights, police violence)**: 18%
- **Crime, violence, public safety**: 17%
- **Race relations, racism, discrimination**: 14%
- **Local public and charter schools**: 13%
- **Early childhood development**: 10%
- **Parks and recreational areas**: 9%
- **Treatment of immigrants**: 8%

Cited by less than 8%:
- **Hunger, food insecurity**: 6%
- **Drug, alcohol addiction**: 5%

**South Dade County**
- **Housing (affordable, homelessness)**: 45%
- **Good jobs, economic development**: 45%
- **Environmental issues**: 30%
- **Public transportation**: 42%
- **Poverty, economic security**: 23%
- **Affordable healthcare**: 32%
- **Social justice (civil rights, police violence)**: 13%
- **Crime, violence, public safety**: 13%
- **Race relations, racism, discrimination**: 12%
- **Local public and charter schools**: 12%
- **Early childhood development**: 10%
- **Parks and recreational areas**: 4%
- **Treatment of immigrants**: 6%
Housing issues are the most important across generations, but second-tier priorities vary.

**THREE most important issues for my community to address:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Age 18 to 34</th>
<th>Age 35 to 49</th>
<th>Age 50/older</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing issues</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good jobs, economic development</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty, economic security</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Priority issues to be addressed vary by race and ethnicity.

**THREE most important issues for my community to address:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whites</th>
<th>Hispanics</th>
<th>African Americans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Housing issues</td>
<td>Housing issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing issues</td>
<td>Good jobs, economic</td>
<td>Poverty, economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47%</td>
<td>development</td>
<td>security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Public transportation</td>
<td>Crime, violence,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transportation</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>public safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47%</td>
<td></td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EFFECTING CHANGE IN MY COMMUNITY
Nonprofits are seen as the change-makers that have the most impact, followed by community residents and local government.

TWO or THREE groups that have the greatest impact on making my community a better place to live:

- Nonprofits, community organizations: 71%
- Residents in community: 45%
- Local government: 38%
- School teachers and leaders: 31%
- Employers/business community: 28%
- Churches, synagogues, mosques, etc.: 24%
- Youth in community: 23%
- News media: 14%
A significant proportion of participants report that they are involved in their community and an even larger proportion believe they can have a positive impact.

**Involvement in my community and neighborhood activities:**

- Very/somewhat involved:
  - Age 18 to 34: 60%
  - Age 35 to 49: 71%
  - Age 50/older: 81%
  - Whites: 70%
  - Hispanics: 68%
  - African Americans: 75%
  - South Dade County: 77%

- Less/not involved: 29%

**Impact people like me can have in making my community a better place:**

- Big/moderate impact:
  - Age 18 to 34: 87%
  - Age 35 to 49: 97%
  - Age 50/older: 89%
  - Whites: 83%
  - Hispanics: 96%
  - African Americans: 95%
  - South Dade County: 81%

- Small/no impact: 9%
Building a strong community for future generations is the most powerful catalyst for engagement.

**TWO most motivating reasons for me to be involved and engaged in my community:**

- Want community to be strong for youth/future generations: 46%
- Excited about potential I see for community, want to be part of shaping it: 37%
- Moral responsibility: 35%
- Concerned about community’s direction, want to be part of addressing those concerns: 35%
- Specific issues interest me, motivate me to get involved: 34%
- Another reason not listed: 3%
Participants express interest in a variety of different ways to get involved in their community.

In which **THREE** of these ways would you be most interested in getting involved in your community?

- Join small group that meets regularly to discuss important issues: 44%
- Participate in a volunteer service day: 38%
- Mentor someone in my community: 37%
- Volunteer with others from different parts of Miami area to address important issues: 36%
- Volunteer with school, community, or faith-based group: 35%
- Write letters to elected officials/newspaper on important issue: 21%
- Participate in walk/run to raise awareness, benefit cause: 18%
- Attend rally on important issue: 17%
- Help canvas community to raise awareness, educate on important issues: 16%
- Donate money to help address important issue: 15%
- Not interested in getting involved in any of these ways: 3%
Participation in My Miami Story 2017 led to building new relationships and many different kinds of community engagement.

Which of these have you done in the past year, specifically as a result of your participation in a My Miami Story conversation last year?*

- Attended community meetings/events about important issues: 49%
- Built relationships with new people I didn't know before My Miami Story: 40%
- Worked to raise awareness, educate others about important issues: 34%
- Donated money to a cause or organization: 33%
- Became more politically involved: 33%
- Got involved, worked with others on important issues: 29%
- Volunteered in community: 26%
- Did not do any of these things: 11%

* Asked only of 2017 My Miami Story participants
Lack of time is the biggest obstacle to community engagement, but lack of awareness about how to be involved is a factor too.

Which of these, if any, prevent you from getting more involved in addressing issues affecting your community?

- Want to be more involved, but don't have enough time: 42%
- Not sure what I can do that would be helpful: 21%
- Unsure how to get involved, where to find out about opportunities: 20%
- Can't find opportunities near where I live or work: 11%
- Used to be involved: wasn't positive or fulfilling experience: 6%
- Not interested in getting involved: 1%
- Nothing: as involved as I want to be: 32%

Millennials are more likely than others to express uncertainty about how to be helpful.
E-mail is the best way to share opportunities with participants; other methods vary somewhat generationally.

The Miami Foundation wants to do more to inform community members about opportunities to get involved in addressing issues and challenges facing our community. Which of these are the best ways for the Foundation to share information about opportunities with you?
Majorities of My Miami Story participants connected with someone new and learned about important issues and how to take action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I spoke with at least one person that I did not already know</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learned about important issues in my community</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The conversation helped me better understand how I can take action to help address issues and challenges in my community</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I exchanged contact information with at least one person that I did not already know</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which of these apply to you related to your My Miami Story experience?
My Miami Story led to new knowledge and understanding, increased optimism, and new connections among participants.

*What impact did your recent My Miami Story conversation have on this for you personally?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Big Impact</th>
<th>Moderate Impact</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My optimism that community can work together for positive change</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My understanding challenges faced by others across Greater Miami</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My feeling connected to larger Greater Miami community</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivate me to get involved in addressing community issues</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My awareness of organizations I could work with on community issues</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deepen my understanding of specific actions I can take on community issues</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The overwhelming majority of participants say it’s likely they will take specific actions to address an issue discussed at My Miami Story.

How likely are you to take specific actions or next steps regarding an issue or solution discussed at your My Miami Story conversation?

86% say they are very or somewhat likely to take part in a My Miami Story conversation next year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VERY likely to take action</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>52%</th>
<th>Two-year college/less</th>
<th>56%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very likely</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>Four-year college grads</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age 18 to 34</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Postgrad education</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age 35 to 49</td>
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<td>South Dade County</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age 50/older</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>Parents</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>African Americans</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

96% say they are very or somewhat likely to take part in a My Miami Story conversation next year.
Actions Participants Will Take as a Result of *My Miami Story* Conversations

*What specific actions do you plan to take as a result of your conversation?*

- Be environmentally conscious
- Follow-up meeting
- Attend community events
- Minimize cultural gap
- Speak up
- Volunteer
- Develop affordable housing
- Support non-profits
- Engage with youth
- Responsible media coverage
- Support immigrants
- Participate in local government
- Converse with neighbors, connect with others
- Donate
- Become more informed
- Be more involved
- Increase awareness of resources
- Improve transportation
- Vote
- Partner with the arts
- Create school garden
- Be civil