

CSA #15 – Heights Area Executive Summary

Demographics:

The Heights area CSA is a predominantly Hispanic area located northwest of downtown Houston. Hispanics make up about 53% of the population, Anglos make up about 36%, and about 7% are African-American. Both the median household income and median home value are slightly less than that of Greater Houston. The area is also slightly less educated than Houston as a whole. About 35% of adults do not have a high school diploma, and only about 25% of adults have a college degree. Most households consist of married couples with children; however, about 13% of families with children are headed by single mothers.

Satisfaction levels:

Compared to the rest of Houston, the residents of the Heights area reported relatively higher levels of satisfaction with their lives. 47% of residents reported a great deal of satisfaction with their neighborhoods (lowest in the city), 74% reported high levels of satisfaction with their families, and 76% reported high levels of satisfaction with their friends. 37% of adults successfully manage the demands of their careers and families, and 51% of residents reported being happy with their lives as a whole.

Spiritual Condition:

However, residents of the Heights area are much less spiritually aware than other CSAs in the survey. 31% of residents attend church weekly, and 21% of residents never attend church (second most in city). When having problems, 30% would be likely to see a religious counselor, and 29% would seek help in a place of worship. However, the community is more spiritually aware than these statistics might indicate. 64% of residents are likely to read the Bible or other inspired literature when they have problems. Likewise, 82% of residents pray when they have problems, an interesting statistic considering that only 66% of residents have no doubts about the existence of God.

Interviews with Key Leaders in the Heights Area CSA:

Key leaders pointed to the economic growth, rich history, sense of community commitment, and eclectic diversity of residents as the best attributes of the community. Most of the problems that interviewees spoke of were related to gentrification of the community: rising property values that lead to increased speculation, an overall shift in the population demographic, and a failing infrastructure were among the issues discussed. Leaders lauded the Church for offering ministry to the indigent and the marginalized, such as economic assistance and some social services. However, interviewees were critical of congregations that have left the area or closed their doors, churches that have not adapted to the changing community dynamic, and for being inwardly focused. Leaders commented that congregations could help to solve problems by becoming more visible within their communities and spreading the word about their own programs that they already offer. Programs that help keep youth off of the street seem to be the most desired.

