



**VOICES**  
from the **TABLES**

# on the table

2017 COMMUNITY REPORT



Greater Milwaukee  
**FOUNDATION**  
*greater together*

# Your voice matters.

On the Table MKE is an initiative led by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation that provides a unique opportunity for civil conversation among people interested in building new relationships, generating ideas and igniting action for the benefit of the community and its future.

In its pilot year, thousands of people across the four-county, metro Milwaukee region gathered in small groups on Oct. 17, 2017, to share a meal and discuss topics that matter as well as corresponding action – both individual and collective – that can improve quality of life in our community.

More than **150** discussion topics

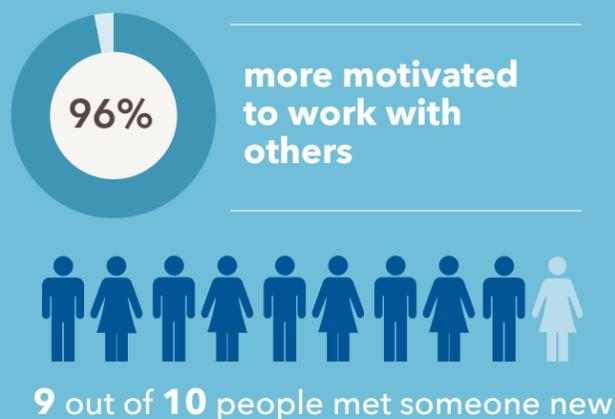
Arts education • Food security • Financial literacy • Community engagement • Immigration • Criminal justice reform • Workforce development • Volunteering • K-12 education • Social responsibility • Activism • Training and mentoring • Political engagement • International affairs • Environment and nature • Parks and public spaces • Ethics • Religion and faith • Poverty • Affordable housing • Community development • Economic opportunity • Sports and recreation • Racial disparities • Hope • Child care • Violence prevention • Healthy neighborhoods • College and vocational education • Employment • Talent recruitment and retention • Health care delivery • Personal commitment • Philanthropy • Segregation • Public transit • Cultural understanding • Human trafficking • News media • Storytelling • Diversity • Mental health • Milwaukee's strengths • STEM • Senior services • Leadership • Partnership • Peace • Homelessness • Policing practices • Gentrification • Quality of life • Technology • Equity and inclusion • National service • Art and artists • Public health • Entrepreneurship • Biomedical research • Youth engagement • Work-life balance • Urban agriculture • Caring and empathy • Millennials • Regional planning • Privilege • Changing perceptions • Disability and accessibility • Building relationships • Foster care

# RESOUNDING THEMES

The widespread adoption of On the Table across geography and affinity led to conversations encompassing more than 150 unique interest areas and priorities. Yet within that diversity, three prevailing themes permeated a significant number of table discussions.

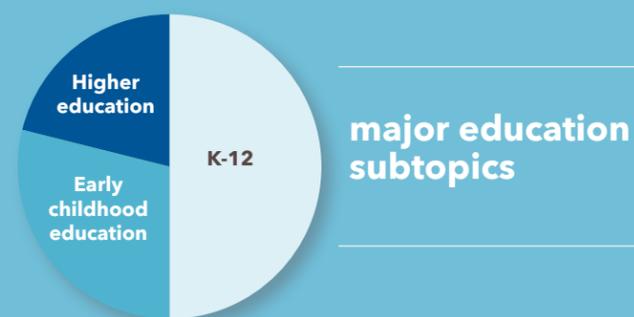
## 1. CONNECTING & COLLABORATING

The value and act of community engagement, collaboration and respectful dialogue were among the most frequently discussed table topics. Not only were the power of connecting and working together cited regularly as key factors in positive change, participants reported that On the Table itself helped them build new relationships and establish groundwork for future cooperation.



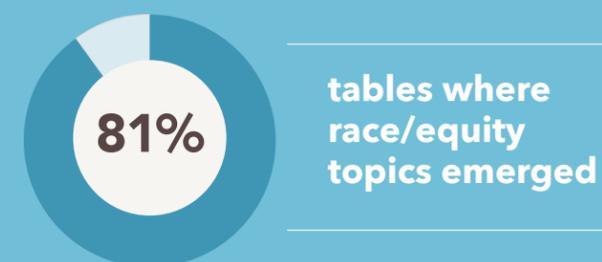
## 2. EDUCATION

Education was a theme woven through many conversations, manifested in a variety of contexts. Ensuring quality and access across the continuum of early childhood education, K-12 schools, higher education and workforce training was frequently noted, as was the impact of transportation, poverty and other systemic issues. Participants also often referenced the importance of being educated on community issues and history.



## 3. RACE, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Regardless of site or sector, issues of race arose at a majority of tables, painting a picture of the region's disparities, while also outlining the potential for growth and prosperity that greater equity and inclusion might bring. Race entered conversations in terms of segregation, equity and access, racism, the value of diversity, criminal and social justice, and community narratives.

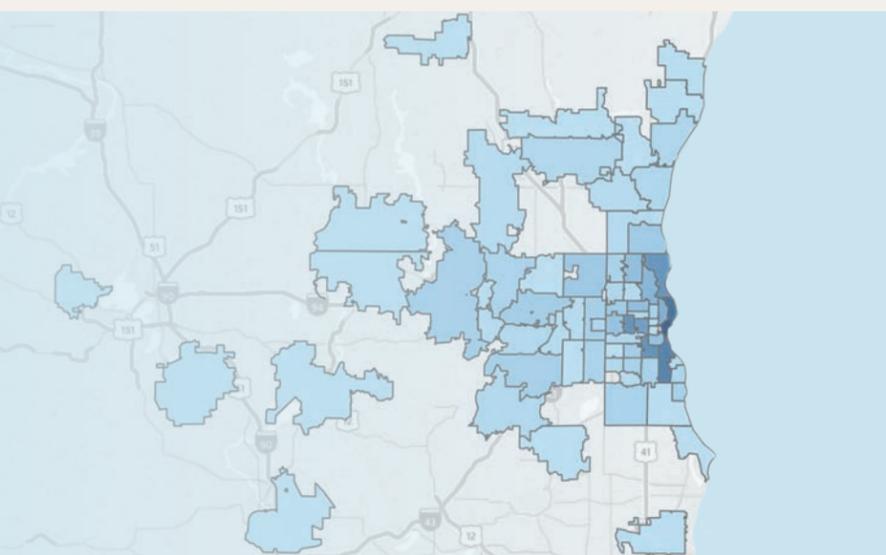


## WHO CAME TO THE TABLE?

More than 5,400 people engaged in face-to-face On the Table conversations at over 200 locations throughout Milwaukee, Waukesha, Washington and Ozaukee counties. People of all ages participated in conversations, and the race and ethnicity of respondents reflect the diversity of the regional population.

On the Table conversations spanned the region and involved community members from at least

**73** different ZIP codes.

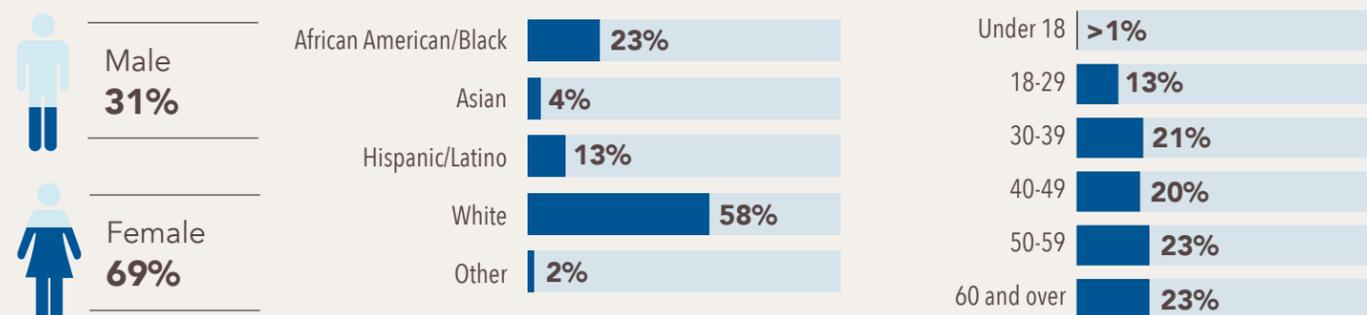


## SECTORS

Hosts and participants represented a wide cross section of the community and engaged with On the Table through a variety of affiliations, including:

- Nonprofits
- Fortune 500 companies
- Universities
- Hospitals
- Agencies
- Individual interest
- Museums
- Religious organizations
- Schools
- Professional associations
- Local government
- Police and fire personnel
- Neighborhood groups
- Other local businesses

## PEOPLE



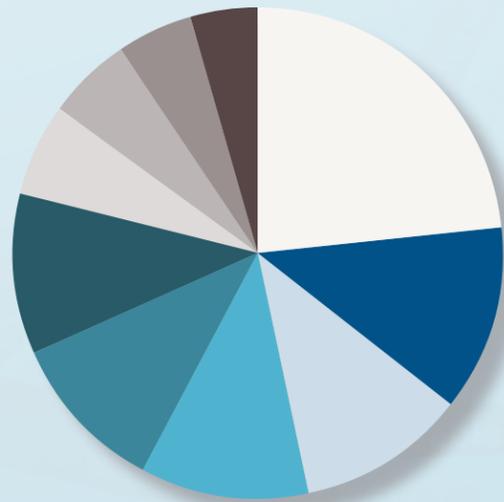
# OPPORTUNITY FOR POSITIVE IMPACT

The predominant discussion themes of connecting and collaborating; education; and race, equity and inclusion were also identified by survey respondents as the primary avenues for community change. Beyond these overarching concepts, a bevy of other opportunities surfaced as potential levers for positive impact.

1. CONNECTING & COLLABORATING

2. EDUCATION

3. RACE, EQUITY & INCLUSION



## 10 MORE FOCUS AREAS FOR CHANGE

- Mentoring and youth
- Personal efforts or mindset
- Health and well-being
- Media and community perception
- Economic opportunity
- Housing and homelessness
- Family focus and support
- Government & civic participation
- Philanthropy/Nonprofit sector
- Transportation

# INSPIRING ACTION

The community valued On the Table as an instrument for recognizing how best to personally make a difference and for demonstrating the benefit of joining in collective effort. Converting that energy into ownership, over half of respondents made specific plans to collaborate with at least one other person from their table.



**82%**  
better understand  
how to personally  
make a difference

Many groups who identified opportunities to further work together have either engaged in or are planning subsequent conversations, while some are taking individual action on ideas explored during On the Table. The Foundation welcomes open communication about community efforts.



**52%**  
made specific plans  
to work with someone  
from their table

# WHAT'S NEXT

In response to the community's enthusiastic turnout in October and continued desire to connect, the Foundation will build on the relationships and ideas generated through On the Table. The Foundation pledges to effectively partner with the community to ensure participation among residents most clearly impacted by racism and inequity over generations. Among next steps:

- The Foundation will invite all those who served as table hosts to convene in early 2018 to help potential partners connect with one another, align and expand their efforts.
- The dominant themes from On the Table affirm the urgency of the Foundation's focus and increased financial investment in cradle-to-career education, neighborhoods and economic opportunity, especially in areas where generational disinvestment has created racial disparities and inequity.
- On the Table MKE will return in 2018 with an eye to accessibility for youth and individual households. Details to come.



**97%**  
would participate in  
On the Table again





When you're the only person who looks like you around the table you carry the burden of perfection – you worry you won't set the bar where it needs to be, and that holds some people back from trying at all. This is why we need DIVERSITY in both gender and race around every table.  
~ Judge Nancy Joseph

What makes communities healthy? Hope.  
#onthetablemke  
~ Carie Hertzberg



Had such great conversations about the potential future of the city last night for #onthetablemke at @workshoPMKE  
~ Brianna Baurichter



I participated in #onthetableMKE today. Discussions occurred throughout #MKE. I hope the talk leads to bridging divides and positive changes.  
~ Clarene Mitchell



Words cannot express how fortunate and grateful I am to have been part of #onthetable with the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, hosted by NEWaukee at City Hall last night. This event brought difficult, but necessary, conversations on the table to continue the process of bettering our community for everyone. ~ DJ Shawna



By popular demand... On the Table MKE WILL RETURN in 2018



Your voice matters.

onthetableMKE.org | #onthetableMKE



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