



TOMPKINS COUNTY
CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE

Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey: *Project Background & Description*

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From Monday Night's Community Forum



many teachers at the high school were untrained in intercultural communication

the problem of racism is community-wide

black students in Ithaca High School still face institutional racism

Racism is alive and well and reigning in the school district

attention remains on the schools it's because that's where community members are focusing the conversation.

BACKGROUND



- ☑ **Tompkins County a very diverse community – class, ethnicity, race, age, demographics, religion...still evolving**

- ☑ **A history of numerous visible “community issues”**

- ☑ **Schools tend to be the leading edge of issues, but the issues are not “school issues” per se, but “community issues”**

- ☑ **Countless good ideas and action plans dating back decades, often recreated a few years later**

- ☑ **Implementation of the action plans has been seriously deficient, progress is at best sporadic**

THE CHALLENGE...



- ✓ **Tompkins County/Ithaca lacks the measurement tools or framework to better dimension the issues and to determine progress**

- ✓ **The *Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey* (from Harvard University, Kennedy School) provides such a tool**
- ✓ **Available are the interview templates and the basic analysis framework**
- ✓ **The community leaders have paused (about 2 years) in pursuing this for lack of sufficient resources to pursue**

This is an opportunity for a “hands-on” graduate project of critical value to the local community, with considerable room for creative analytical insights...leading to active discussion with community leaders of findings and implications.

THE SURVEY...



The Eleven Dimensions of Social Capital

- ✓ Giving & volunteering
- ✓ Membership in charities & other groups
- ✓ Civic leadership
- ✓ Religious leadership
- ✓ Social trust
- ✓ Trust between races
- ✓ Diversity of social networks
- ✓ Involvement in politics
- ✓ Participation in political protests
- ✓ Informal socializing
- ✓ Egalitarian civic participation