



*Deep Listening. Fostering Trust. Bridging Communities.*

## Clarke Square & Muskego Way Public Safety Listening Circles Report

Fall Series 2018-2019

### **Planning Committee members:**

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Thank you to Journey House and Christ-St. Peter Lutheran School for hosting these listening circles. We would also like to thank our partners: Safe and Sound, the Milwaukee Police Department, and the Regional Department of Corrections.

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*"I'm in an ongoing process of self-discovery. I appreciate people listening because we all have a story."*

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*"Another student from out of the country joined my class. He was also having a hard time with the language. I told him not to worry, I am in the same boat. Someone asked how I could help him when I can't speak English myself. I was hurt but it did not deter me from trying to help. He joined a gang and died a year later. I could not make decisions for him but I felt I did help in the moment."*

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*"At UWM in my anthropology class I shared that I wanted to be a cop. Someone did not agree with having female officers. They felt that females were not strong enough. I hadn't realized that people still felt that way."*

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*"He was at the computer asking my ethnicity. He said he would mark 'black' for me. I said no, black is a color. No one is that color. I never check a box for ethnicity. He asked me for my name tag and I threw it down and cried. I didn't know why he wanted me to leave."*

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## Glossary

**Listening Circles** – Listening Circles are composed of a structure part of experience sharing between participants, followed by an unstructured portion during which participants can exchange about what has been said and ask questions of curiosity. The goals of the listening circles are to foster communication and build bridges between communities, invite trust and facilitate relationship building between officers and residents.

**Go-Around or Round** – The structured part of a Listening Circle composed of one question that each participant answers with the same amount of time, with no interruptions, going clockwise. Listening Circles are usually composed of two or three go-arounds.

**Connected Conversation** – The unstructured part of a Listening Circle that takes place after all go-arounds are completed. Participants are asked to share airtime yet are not timed. It is the moment for participants to interacted with each other and react to what they have heard during the structured parts of the dialogue. Connected conversation questions are available as well if participants want to explore other topics with the help of a prompt.

## Executive Summary

The Frank Zeidler Center for Public Discussion (Zeidler Center) has facilitated dialogues between police and residents in the Clarke Square and Muskego Way community since 2016. This report details participant responses and feedback during and after our Fall 2018-2019 sessions (on Thursday, November 29, 2018 and Thursday, December 20, 2018). The executive summary (pages 8-12) identifies major themes of the listening circles, followed by a section offering an in-depth analysis of each dialogue.

### Program Description

The Frank Zeidler Center for Public Discussion believes that an important step in repairing relationships between law enforcement and communities of color in Milwaukee is to come together in unique spaces that provide the opportunity for facilitated, face-to-face communication to co-create resident-based solutions. The Zeidler Center's program, funded by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Racial Equity and Inclusion Grant and the Northwestern Mutual Foundation, involves circles that are professionally facilitated by Zeidler Center facilitators and co-designed by residents and police to fit the needs of each community it serves.

Participants experience both structured and unstructured portions of dialogue. Through timed facilitation, participants can respectfully share their personal perspectives and learn about the perspectives of others. The Zeidler Center listening circles create a platform for greater mutual trust and understanding, essential for establishing a constructive, collaborative environment for change. The Zeidler Center's community partners play an essential role in encouraging continued resident, youth, and officer engagement. Our partners in Clarke Square and Muskego Way include Safe & Sound, the Milwaukee Police Department, and the Milwaukee Regional Department of Corrections.

### Listening Circle 1 – Profiling and Stereotyping

The first Clarke Square/Muskego Way Public Safety Listening Circle was hosted at the Journey House in Milwaukee on November 29, 2018 and sponsored by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation and Northwestern Mutual Foundation. Participants included community members, police officers and police recruits, led by a trained facilitator from the Zeidler Center. During the facilitated dialogue, each participant was given the opportunity to respond to two rounds of questions, followed by a Connected Conversation dialogue.

**Question Round One:** *“Describe a time when you felt like a part of your identity (your race, your job, etc.) was being profiled or stereotyped? What was the experience and how did it make you feel?”*

**Question Round Two:** *“What do you wish others would know about who you really are?”*

After the facilitated dialogue, participants were invited to speak in the Connected Conversation. This is an open conversation that encourages participants to follow up with each other by discussing what was heard during the facilitated dialogue. To initiate the discussion, participants were invited to respond to the following question:

*“What are the best practices for ensuring that others are treated fairly despite perceived differences?”*

During Question Round One, respondents shared a variety of personal experiences that involved profiling and stereotyping by; race/ethnicity/culture, gender/race, and of groups/individuals. Another experience involved how Americans are perceived outside of the United States. In addition, many participants discussed how these instances changed their own personal views or impacted their lives in other ways. Overall, most participants relayed the same sentiment, that judgements about a person or group are made without knowing who they are, leading to profiling and stereotyping.

During Question Round Two, participants had the opportunity to share how personal incidents of profiling and stereotyping impacted who they are as a person and how they would like to be viewed by others. Some respondents gave an example of a personality or character trait, while others drew off of Question Round One, describing how they do not want to misjudged by someone profiling or stereotyping them.

During the Connected Conversation, the direction of group discussions took many forms. Some participants stated a generic statement, citing examples of being respected and treated fairly by others, while other participants used cultural differences or police-related statements as examples of how they would like to be viewed by others on a personal level, instead of being stereotyped.

## Listening Circle 2 – Contacting Police with Issues

The second Clarke Square/Muskego Way Public Safety Listening Circle was hosted at the Christ-St. Peter Lutheran School in Milwaukee on December 20, 2018 and sponsored by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation and Northwestern Mutual Foundation. Participants included community members, police officers and police recruits, led by a trained facilitator from the Zeidler Center. During the facilitated dialogue, each participant was given the opportunity to respond to two rounds of questions, followed by a Connected Conversation dialogue.

**Question Round One:** *“How would you describe living in your neighborhood? What are some of the beautiful qualities your neighborhood has?”*

**Question Round Two:** *“If you could, what is one thing, you would do to increase the quality of life in the neighborhood?”*

After the facilitated dialogue, participants were invited to speak in the Connected Conversation. This is an open conversation that encourages participants to follow up with each other by discussing what was heard during the facilitated dialogue. To initiate the discussion, participants were invited to respond to the following question:

*“If you could ask the police one thing to help increase the value of life in your neighborhood, what would that be?”*

Notes were not taken during this event, and pre and post surveys were not distributed at this event.

Questions about this dialogue may be directed to:

Zeidler Center for Public Discussion

(414) 239-8555

office@zeidlercenter.org

## Listening Circle 1 – Profiling and Stereotyping - Analysis

**Question Round 1:** *“Describe a time when you felt like a part of your identity (your race, your job, etc.) was being profiled or stereotyped? What was the experience and how did it make you feel?”*

During Question Round One, respondents shared a variety of personal experiences that involved profiling and stereotyping by race/ethnicity/culture, gender/race, and of groups/individuals. Another experience involved how Americans are perceived outside of the United States. In addition, many participants discussed how these instances changed their own personal views or impacted their lives in other ways. Overall, participants relayed the same sentiment, that judgments about a person or group are made without knowing who they are, leading to profiling and stereotyping.

### 1.1 Profiling & Stereotyping by Race/Ethnicity/Culture

Respondents expressed how profiling and stereotyping have a deep impact in one’s life and are hurtful and wrong. It is a lose-lose situation, both for those who are doing the stereotyping and those who are the victims of it.

*“I went to the airport for orientation at Starbucks. The supervisor did not know any of us but I was the only African-American. I was clean but dressed more like a male. I felt he was picking on me. I was prepared, but he seemed to treat me like an outcast. He was at the computer asking my ethnicity. He said he would mark ‘black’ for me. I said no, black is a color. No one is that color. I never check a box for ethnicity. He asked me for my name tag and I threw it down and cried. I didn't know why he wanted me to leave.”*

*“Over 21 years ago there was an officer trying to defuse a situation and I went to help. Residents said that I had no business there. They dismissed me even though I was speaking Spanish. They said I ‘married into it.’ That was the first time in my career that my buttons were pushed. I said my father grew up in Mexico.”*

*“Another student from out of the country joined my class. He was also having a hard time with the language. I told him not to worry, I am in the same boat. Someone asked how I could help him when I can't speak English myself. I was hurt but it did not deter me from trying to help. He joined a gang and died a year later. I could not make decisions for him but I felt I did help in the moment.”*

A participant also shared a story of how Americans are perceived outside of the United States.

*"I travel a lot and feel profiled as an American. I have had people tell me they think Americans don't care about family and don't treat guests well. I have a friend from overseas who disappeared. He was the rock of the community. Someone said he went to visit his brother but he would not have gone without telling me. I found out from his relative in India that he had been arrested by ICE. Two years later our friends here hadn't told me about his arrest because I'm an American. I am the one who found a lawyer and has been visiting. I do have the privilege as a white American Christian to speak up for him. It was as though they thought I could not understand the complexity of the situation."*

## **1.2 Profiling & Stereotyping by Gender/Age**

Some participants shared instances of how they were profiled or stereotyped due to their gender or age.

*"When I first opened my store it was NOT common for women to own businesses, and male customers especially would be surprised that I was the owner! Some would even act like they knew more about the business because I was a woman."*

*"I had changed jobs because the warehouse was closing and went to work at another shop and felt I was discriminated against because I knew too much and had more experience. My new workers were much younger and inexperienced and I finally had to talk to the new warehouse supervisor about what was happening."*

## **1.3 Profiling & Stereotyping by Groups of Individuals**

The representative sample of community members and police officers/recruits as participants in this listening circle led to the discussion of another type of profiling and stereotyping: by your job or as a member of a group of individuals.

*"When I put on my uniform people's personal views about the police are transform onto me. That's why I don't wear it around my neighbors, so they can get to know me first and not judge me by my police uniform."*

*"When I first informed my close friends and peers that I was thinking about joining the police academy, some of them changed the way they acted towards me, kind of distanced themselves from me. I miss hanging out with my old high school friends."*

## Question Round Two: *“What do you wish others would know about who you really are?”*

During this round, participants had the opportunity to share how personal incidents of profiling and stereotyping impacted who they are as a person and how they would like to be viewed by others. Some respondents gave an example of a personality or character trait they would like to be defined by, while others drew off of question round one, using how they do not want their character misjudged by someone profiling or stereotyping them.

### **2.1 By Personality/Character Trait**

Almost half of the participants used a personality or character trait as an example of what they would like others to know about who they really are.

*“A lot of time it may seem that I am an introvert and being distant with people, but I am a bit shy and want to interact but don’t know how.”*

*“I do care, even though it may seem that I do not, it is that I am just carefully accessing the situation.”*

*“I am very interesting in my own way. You should not judge a book by its cover, people are all different and so am I.”*

### **2.2 Misjudged Character Due to Profiling & Stereotyping**

The other half of participants drew off the example they used of being profiled or stereotyped and what they wish others knew about them instead of being misjudged.

*“I don't see myself as white American female. I see myself as global. I am very open-minded and ready to listen to others.”*

*“Getting this job has opened many doors. At 19 something I have no voice or opinion. I am not a child. I am mature and I have potential. I had been in entertainment as a model. People would say oh, you're pretty but you don't know how to do anything. It took a lot for me to get as far as I have. When people say negative things, it pushes my motivation. I know commitment.”*

*“I'm a good supervisor. I am the same guy without the uniform. I like joking around, I love being with my kids, I'm a good father and I enjoy life. I wish people would not just look at the uniform but that they would see me as a person.”*

*“Even though I may be young and have a 2-year-old daughter, I have goals and want to finish school and become a nurse.”*

**Connected Conversation:** *“What are the best practices for ensuring that others are treated fairly despite perceived differences?”*

During the Connected Conversation, the direction of group discussions took many forms. Some participants stated a generic statement citing examples of being respected and treated fairly by others, while other participants used cultural differences or police-related statements as examples of how they would like to be viewed by others on a personal level, instead of being stereotyped.

*“Respect one another, people should agree to disagree without bullying or disrespecting others.”*

*“I can relate to your conversation about speaking Spanish and how hard that can be.”*

*“That is something I have experienced as a white American. There is sometimes resentment that I am speaking Spanish.”*

*“With law enforcement, how do you deal with people who have already decided they do not trust police when you meet them? Is it a tense or positive interaction?”*

# Listening Circle 1 - Feedback Forms

## Demographics

### Resident Participants

Gender:

Male: 40%

Female: 60%

Race/Ethnicity:

African-American/Black: 17%

Latinx/Hispanic: 50%

White/Caucasian: 33%

Zip Code:

53204: 100%

### Police Officer Participants

Gender:

Male: 83%

Female: 17%

Race/Ethnicity:

African-American: 14%

Latinx/Hispanic: 57%

White/Caucasian: 29%

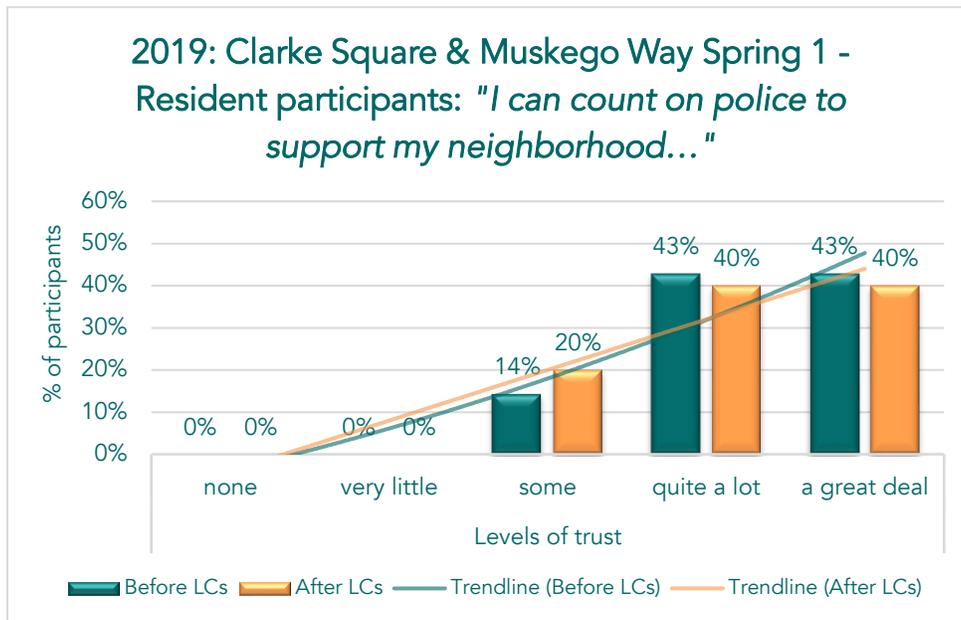
Zip Code:

53204: 57%

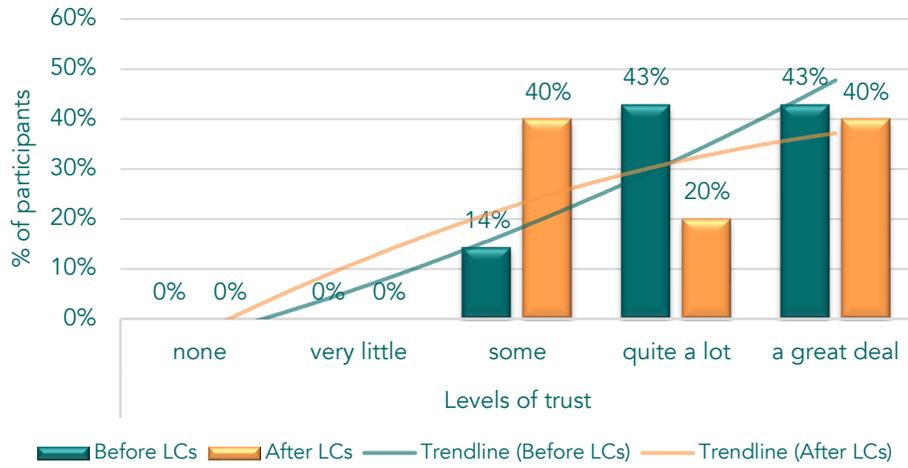
53207: 29%

53216: 14%

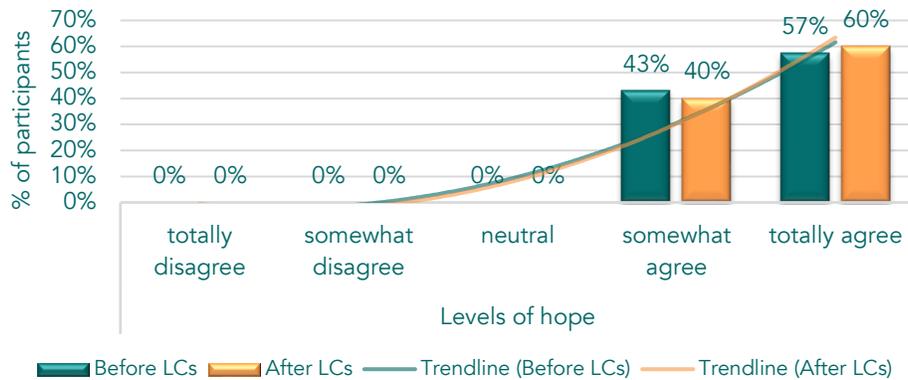
## Quantitative Data – Pre and Post Surveys



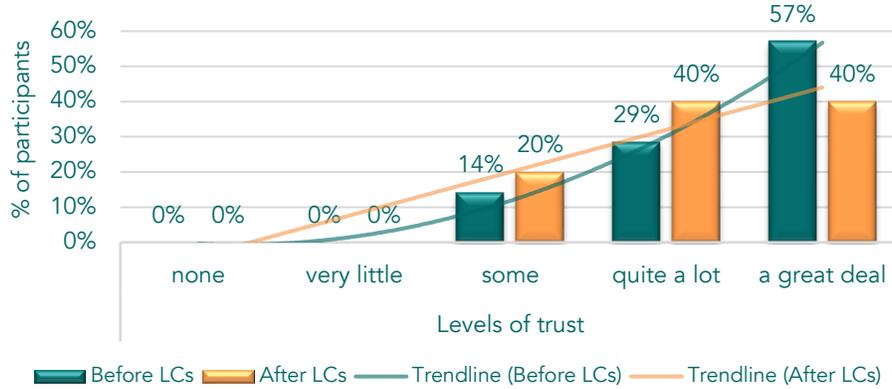
2019: Clarke Square & Muskego Way Spring 1 - Resident participants: "I trust the police..."



2019: Clarke Square & Muskego Way Spring 1 - Resident participants: "I believe community and police relations will improve..."

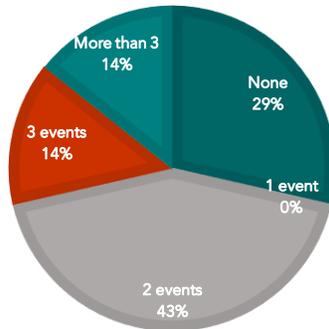


2019: Clarke Square & Muskego Way Spring 1 - Resident participants: "I believe listening circles build trust between police and residents..."

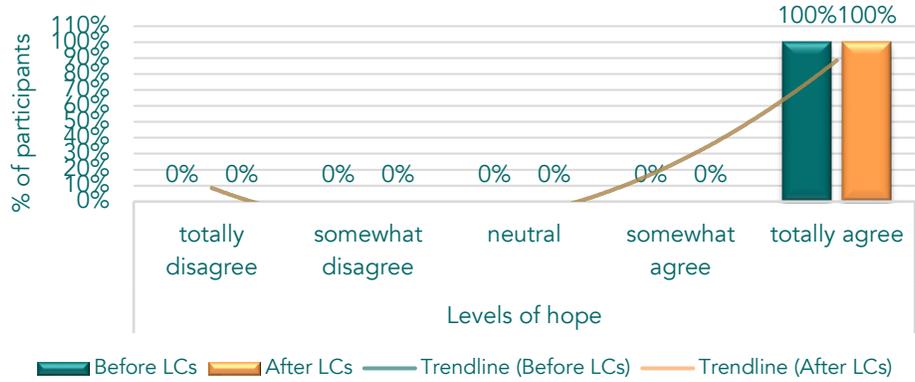


2019: Clarke Square & Muskego Way Spring 1 - Resident participants: Attendance of P&R Listening Circles

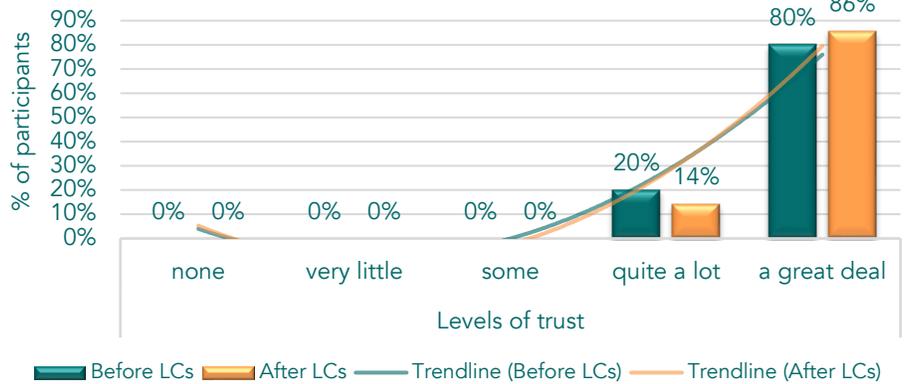
■ None ■ 1 event ■ 2 events ■ 3 events ■ More than 3



2019: Clarke Square & Muskego Way Spring 1 -  
 PO participants: "I believe community and police  
 relations will improve..."

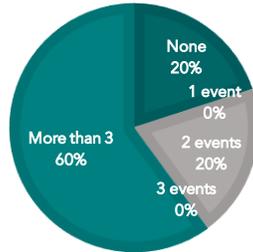


2019: Clarke Square & Muskego Way Spring 1 -  
 PO participants: "I believe listening circles build  
 trust between police and residents..."

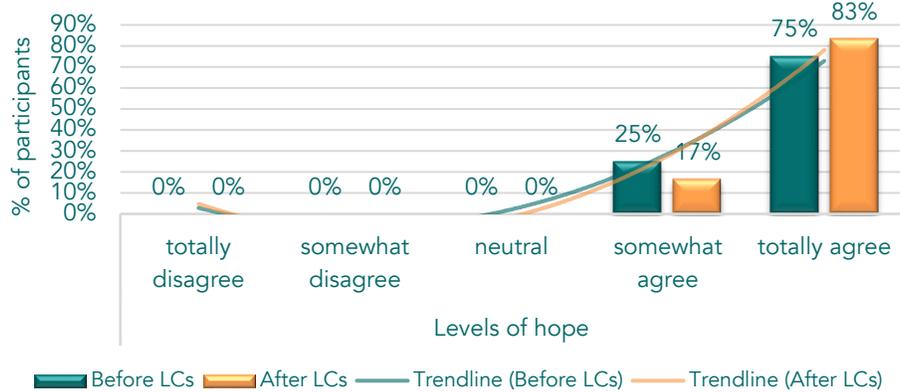


## 2019: Clarke Square & Muskego Way Spring 1 - PO participants: Attendance of P&R Listening Circles

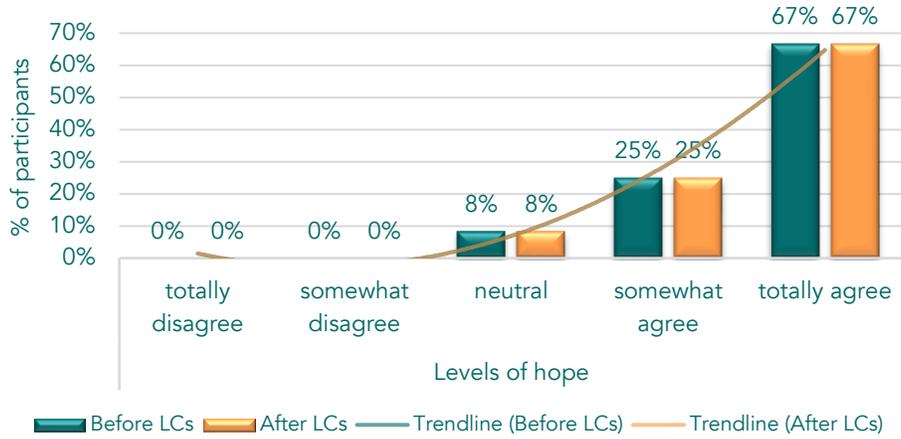
■ None ■ 1 event ■ 2 events ■ 3 events ■ More than 3



## 2019: Clarke Square & Muskego Way Spring 1 - All participants: "I believe community and police relations will improve..."

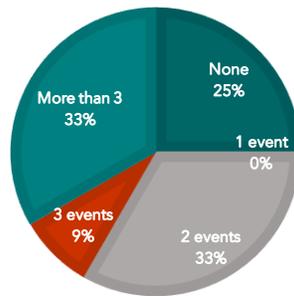


2019: Clarke Square & Muskego Way Spring 1 -  
 All participants: "I believe listening circles build  
 trust between police and residents..."



2019: Clarke Square & Muskego Way Spring  
 1- All participants: Attendance of P&R  
 Listening Circles

Legend: None (teal), 1 event (orange), 2 events (grey), 3 events (red), More than 3 (dark teal)



Qualitative Data

## Listening Circle 1 - Annexes

**Question Round One:** “Describe a time when you felt like a part of your identity (your race, your job, etc.) was being profiled or stereotyped? What was the experience and how did it make you feel?”

### 1.1 Profiling & Stereotyping by Race/Ethnicity/Culture

- The first time I felt profiled or challenged because of my race was when I noticed a language barrier. I speak Spanish. I had a hard time learning the English language so I didn't speak to anyone for a year and a half. Another student from out of the country joined my class. He was also having a hard time with the language. I told him not to worry, I am in the same boat. Someone asked how I could help him when I can't speak English myself. I was hurt but it did not deter me from trying to help. He joined a gang and died a year later. I could not make decisions for him but I felt I did help in the moment.
- I'm from a very white, very Christian part of Michigan. I didn't know it until high school. My father was an engineer and taught English as a second language. So, I grew up not thinking about differences – but people around me did. People sometimes think of me differently because I am a Marquette student and it's very white. I'm still learning about many diversities.
- I work in the 5th District at Fourth and Locust. There are Russian and Puerto Rican residents on Hubbard. Over 21 years ago there was an officer trying to defuse a situation and I went to help. Residents said that I had no business there. They dismissed me even though I was speaking Spanish. They said I “married into it.” That was the first time in my career that my buttons were pushed. I said my father grew up in Mexico.
- Two and a half hours ago I was at Popeye’s on 35th and Capitol. A guy said, “Why are you here white boy?” I wasn't scared. I'm usually comfortable, but when someone approaches me in that manner.... The exchange made me uncomfortable.
- I travel a lot and feel profiled as an American. I have had people tell me they think Americans don't care about family and don't treat guests well. I have a friend from overseas who disappeared. He was the rock of the community. Someone said he went to visit his brother but he would not have gone without telling me. I found out from his relative in India that he had been arrested by ICE. Two years later our friends here hadn't told me about his arrest because I'm an American. I am the one who found a lawyer and has been visiting. I do have the privilege as a white American Christian to

speaking up for him. It was as though they thought I could not understand the complexity of the situation.

- In middle school, I got kicked out because of a disagreement with the white classmate. Word spread that because I am Puerto Rican, I have a bad attitude and bad language. I got transferred to a school with all Mexican students. I was raised to love everyone as brothers and sisters the way God loves the world. But I had the same experience because of the language difference. I was an outcast for that year and a half. Administrators could do nothing because classes were filled. My life was changing but it did not change me.
- I went to the airport for orientation at Starbucks. The supervisor did not know any of us but I was the only African-American. I was clean but dressed more like a male. I felt he was picking on me. I was prepared but he seemed to treat me like an outcast. He was at the computer asking my ethnicity. He said he would mark "black" for me. I said no, black is a color. No one is that color. I never check a box for ethnicity. He asked me for my name tag and I threw it down and cried. I didn't know why he wanted me to leave.
- Sometimes I feel uncomfortable and it's difficult because people can't understand what I'm trying to say because of my accent.

## 1.2 Profiling & Stereotyping by Gender/Age

- At UWM in my anthropology class I shared that I wanted to be a cop. Someone did not agree with having female officers. They felt that females were not strong enough. I hadn't realized that people still felt that way.
- I had changed jobs because the warehouse was closing and went to work at another shop and felt I was discriminated against because I knew too much and had more experience. My new workers were much younger and inexperienced and I finally had to talk to the new warehouse supervisor about what was happening.
- When I first opened my store it was NOT common for women to own businesses and male customers especially, would be surprised that I was the owner! Some would even act like they knew more about the business because I was a woman.

## 1.3 Profiling & Stereotyping by Groups of Individuals

- While watching the film tonight I saw a woman from a listening circle. She very strongly said that she did not like police. I asked her not to judge all officers. As she listened to me talk about the human side of officers she began to quiet. After the circle she came up and said that her mind had been opened. There have been times when I was uncomfortable with the way people treated me as an officer, saying F-police and making jokes. Some of the same people when they're by themselves

change their tone saying they were just trying to get a laugh and that they didn't really mean it.

- From the time I first started the police academy process, my friends would say things like...*don't shoot nobody!* Instead of telling me to be safe or glad about my decision to become a cop.
  - I was dating one girl at the time and a lotta people in her family were anti-police and wrote off the relationship before they even gave us a chance or get to know me.
  - At dinner, I was stereotyped by my friends for my agreement with an officer-involved incident. That's all I want to say about that.
  - When I put on my uniform people's personal views about the police are transform onto me. That's why I don't wear it around my neighbors, so they can get to know me first and not judge me by my police uniform.
  - When I first informed my close friends and peers that I was thinking about joining the police academy, some of them changed the way they acted towards me, kind of distanced themselves from me. I miss hanging out with my old high school friends.
- 

**Question Round Two:** *"What do you wish others would know about who you really are?"*

### **2.1 By Personality/Character Trait**

- I am not as strong as I would like to be in faith, in my weight, in peer support, with my family and in my career. It's work every day.
- Outside of the people here I don't think there is anything that I want people to know that they don't already. I love to worship and I love music. I am who I present.
- I'm a lot of things. I'm in an ongoing process of self-discovery. I appreciate people listening because we all have a story. In my childhood I moved around a lot and lived in different households which was a challenge because I never really had a stable home. I want to continue to explore who I am. I want to challenge what is normalized to make things better for all.
- A lot of time it may seem that I am an introvert and being distant with people, but I am a bit shy and want to interact but don't know how?
- I do care, even though it may seem that I do not, it is that I am just carefully accessing the situation.
- I am very interesting in my own way. You should not judge a book by its cover, people are all different and so am I.
- People need someone to talk too, especially this time of year and I can be trusted. My close friends know then can talk to me.

- I had to take a lot of things growing up, so I had to learn to GROW UP and not let things bother me.

## 2.2 Misjudged Character Due to Profiling & Stereotyping

- I don't see myself as white American female. I see myself as global. I am very open-minded and ready to listen to others.
- Getting this job has opened many doors. At 19 something I have no voice or opinion. I am not a child. I am mature and I have potential. I had been in entertainment as a model. People would say oh, you're pretty but you don't know how to do anything. It took a lot for me to get as far as I have. When people say negative things, it pushes my motivation. I know commitment.
- I am open-minded and excited to start my career. I want to do good for the community.
- I have a good heart. I come across as sarcastic and a not-so-nice person. I'm a recruit in school. I get along with some better than others but I am ready to take the hit for all.
- I'm a good supervisor. I am the same guy without the uniform. I like joking around, I love being with my kids, I'm a good father and I enjoy life. I wish people would not just look at the uniform but that they would see me as a person.
- People I've met who are older and educated perceive me as, 'Don't F with me.' The walls I build are for my protection but they are not for your fear.
- I have walls and defense mechanisms because of who I grew up around. When I moved here, I had a hard time letting people in. For those who were patient with me letting them in I really appreciate them. My major was Spanish and I have been trying to be fluent. I found it hard for people to accept me because of how I looked: white.
- Family is everything, and I like to draw a lot and especially silly pictures for my little 3-year-old daughter and I enjoy being creative.
- I may seem quiet at first and withdrawn or shy, but I'm an outgoing person with vast interests in a lot of things. Many people think I have big money because I own my own shop, but I worked for it.
- Even though I may be young and have a 2-year-old daughter, I have goals and want to finish school and become a nurse.

**Connected Conversation:** *“What are the best practices for ensuring that others are treated fairly despite perceived differences?”*

- Respect one another: people should agree to disagree without bullying or disrespecting others.
  - It is a challenge – people surround themselves with folks like them. It’s hard to think out of the box, and love your neighbor and treat people with kindness, the world is messed up.
  - Some people close themselves off and do not want change.
  - I actually had an opportunity to be part of a community walk in the park this summer and engage business and residents.
  - Milwaukee is making progress in some areas and in some there is still a lot of segregation.
  - It's more their problem than yours.
  - In the end, it is your perseverance.
  - I can relate to your conversation about speaking Spanish and how hard that can be.
  - I would encourage you to continue to try doing presentations in Spanish.
  - That is something I have experienced as a white American. There is sometimes resentment that I am speaking Spanish.
  - With law enforcement, how do you deal with people who have already decided they do not trust police when you meet them? Is it a tense or positive interaction?
  - I often have to work with people who have disdain for officers. I wish they understood that I was that person at one time. I learn to manage it and it has become easier and easier. I am law enforcement, but I'm also serving. It's all about mindset.
  - Our precinct captain recently brought back beat patrols and bicycle patrols which the residents seem to like. I get a lot of thumbs up and positive responses.
- 

### **Parting Words**

- Communication
- Connection
- Encouraging
- Inspirational
- Listen
- Open
- Satisfying
- Trust