



ENGAGE THE FUTURE

A LOOK AT THE GROWING DIVERSITY
IN NORTHWEST ARKANSAS

JULY 2022



ENGAGE **nwa**

nwa Northwest
Arkansas
Council



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NORTHWEST ARKANSAS

PRIORITIZING BELONGING

Over the last several decades, Northwest Arkansas' population has skyrocketed, and the region has become increasingly diverse. These trends are expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

The Northwest Arkansas Council, through its EngageNWA program, works with partners to foster belonging for everyone who calls the region home. Recognizing differences and striving for connectedness and understanding contributes to an environment where people feel included, and this encourages people to put down roots and give back to their communities in meaningful ways. In turn, this will build regional economic strength and cultural richness that benefits all.

Over the past few years, the Council's key efforts to foster belonging include the following: expanding access to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) training; uplifting the efforts of local organizations working for diverse communities; collecting and sharing data to raise awareness about the region's diverse communities; establishing the NWA Leadership Pledge to address systemic racism and create a more just, equitable and inclusive region; and providing more opportunities to strengthen connections across the region. The Council will build upon this foundation and expand its efforts internally to ensure that its community-focused workstreams, e.g., workforce housing, workforce development, health care and others, build equity and inclusion into their framework.

To that end, the Council commissioned a study to understand the impact of its work in the region, particularly in relation to DEI. That study has identified several components for improvement that the Council will adopt as part of a new DEI strategy to be released later this year, to include:

- **Increasing diversity within Northwest Arkansas Council membership.**
- **Promoting diverse representation at Council convenings.**
- **Providing DEI-focused training and learning opportunities internally and for the community.**
- **Establishing a DEI-focused advisory committee.**
- **Developing and implementing equitable hiring and retention policies.**
- **Promoting inclusive, equitable policies at the local, state and federal level.**

The Council remains committed to ongoing improvement and working to foster belonging so that growing prosperity and opportunity can be shared by all those who choose to call Northwest Arkansas home. This work will promote success for all residents and act as a magnet for recruitment and retention of talent, both at home and across the globe.



Nelson Peacock
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Northwest Arkansas Council



Margot Lemaster
Executive Director
EngageNWA

nwa Northwest
Arkansas
Council

ENGAGE nwa

POPULATION GROWTH

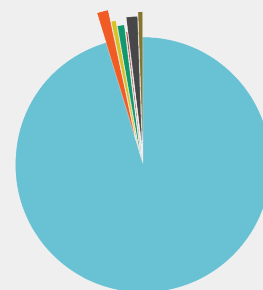
Northwest Arkansas' population has ballooned over the past decade, increasing by 20% since 2010. According to the 2020 census, the region experiences a net population gain of 30 people per day. By 2026, the population is expected to grow by an additional 10%.

Between 1990 and 2010, the region's racially and ethnically diverse populations increased from less than 5% in 1990 to nearly 24% in 2010. Since then, diversity has continued to increase. In 2021, the region was over 29% diverse and is expected to grow to over 32% by 2026. The region's Hispanic/Latino population saw the largest gains, accounting for over 17% of the population in 2021 and forecasted to grow to 19% by 2026.

School districts in Northwest Arkansas are also experiencing rapid enrollment growth. In many cases, the diversity in these school districts is growing faster than the diversity of the overall region's population. These numbers demonstrate that school districts in Northwest Arkansas, like those across the nation, are often on the frontline of demographic change. Rogers and Springdale school districts, for example, are both now majority students of color.

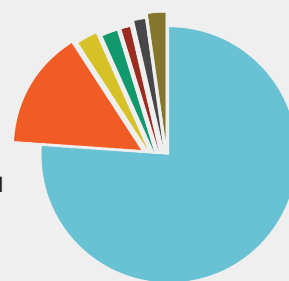
1990

Total Population: 239,464



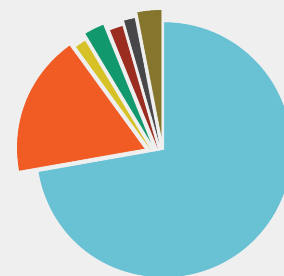
2010

Total Population: 463,204



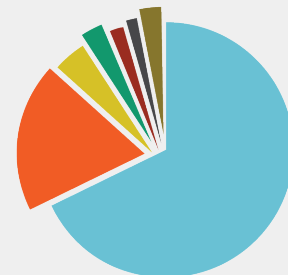
2021

Total Population: 555,481



2026

Total Population: 611,193



2021 NORTHWEST ARKANSAS POPULATION HIGHLIGHTS

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS
POPULATION INCREASED BY
20% SINCE 2010



NORTHWEST ARKANSAS
HAS A NET GAIN OF
30 PEOPLE PER DAY



DIVERSE POPULATIONS IN
NWA INCREASED FROM
LESS THAN



5%
IN 1990

TO
MORE
THAN



29%
IN 2021

HISPANICS/
LATINOS
IN NWA REPRESENT

17%
OF THE TOTAL POPULATION,
UP FROM 1% IN 1990

2 OF THE 5

LARGEST SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN NWA
ARE MAJORITY STUDENTS OF COLOR



BENTONVILLE'S POPULATION

GREW **53%** FROM
2010
TO 2020



BENTONVILLE'S INDIAN POPULATION
INCREASED 239% OVER A 7-YEAR PERIOD (2011-2018)

FAYETTEVILLE HAS THE LARGEST

BLACK/
AFRICAN
AMERICAN

POPULATION IN NWA AT
6.8%

AND ACCOUNTING
FOR OVER 10% OF
STUDENTS IN
FAYETTEVILLE
SCHOOL DISTRICT

SPRINGDALE IS THE
MOST DIVERSE CITY
IN NWA AT

53%

HISPANICS/LATINOS ACCOUNT
FOR 38% OF SPRINGDALE'S
POPULATION AND 48% OF
STUDENTS IN SPRINGDALE
SCHOOL DISTRICT

PACIFIC ISLANDERS, INCLUDING
MARSHALLESE, ACCOUNT FOR
8% OF SPRINGDALE'S
POPULATION AND 14% OF
STUDENTS AT SPRINGDALE
SCHOOLS

ROGERS IS

43% DIVERSE

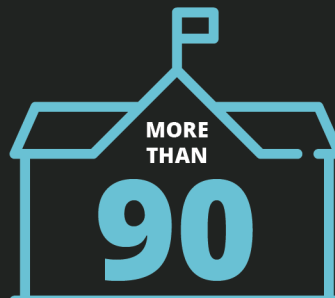
IN ROGERS SCHOOL DISTRICT, 57% ARE STUDENTS OF COLOR
WITH HISPANIC/LATINO STUDENTS ACCOUNTING FOR 48%

IN NORTHWEST ARKANSAS SCHOOLS,

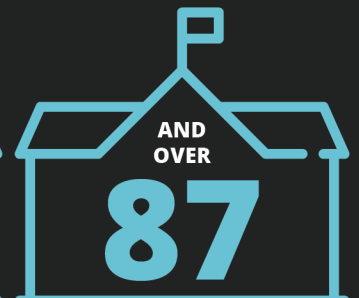
IN SILOAM SPRINGS,
HISPANICS/ LATINOS
ACCOUNT FOR

24%

OF THE POPULATION AND 33% OF
STUDENTS IN SILOAM SPRINGS
SCHOOL DISTRICT



MORE
THAN
90
COUNTRIES ARE
REPRESENTED



AND
OVER
87
LANGUAGES
ARE SPOKEN

HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

Businesses and organizations across the region are looking to become places where everyone can participate and contribute fully. The region's growing diversity is evident in every community, yet there is more work to be done to ensure that diversity is proportionately represented at all levels. This report was developed as a tool to help individuals and teams create change within their organizations. The data can inform organizational planning, decision making and metrics to track progress. Additional research is needed to track outcomes on shared prosperity and quality of life for the region as a whole.

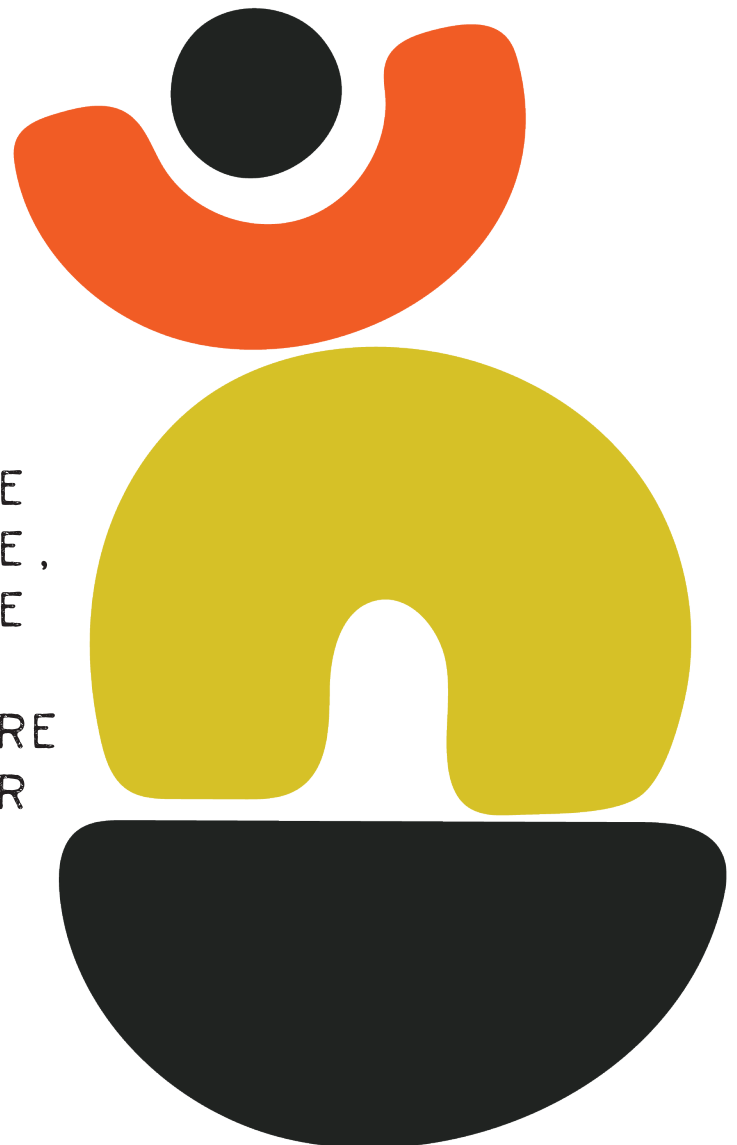
Although this report focuses on growth of racial and ethnic diversity, there is also significant growth in other diverse populations. A national report by the Human Rights Campaign analyzing results from the U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey indicates the LGBTQ+ community comprises nearly **8%** of the total U.S. adult population, a number that has doubled over the last decade. A Gallup poll released earlier this year shows the number at **7.1%**. The increase is in large part due to the number of Generation Z adults who identify as LGBTQ+, which is more than **1 in 5 (or 21%)**, though the LGBTQ+ community includes people of all ages.

Building an inclusive and equitable workplace means honoring and celebrating the myriad of differences beyond what is highlighted in this report. In addition to race, ethnicity and sexual orientation, those include characteristics such as age, gender, mental and physical abilities, nationality, education, religion, income, work experience, language skills, geographic location, family status, communication style, military experience, learning style, economic background and work style.

“ROOTED IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT WE ARE SO MUCH MORE, WHEN THE ‘WE’ IN ‘WE THE PEOPLE’ IS NOT SOME OF US, BUT ALL OF US. WE ARE GREATER THAN AND GREATER FOR THE SUM OF US.”

— HEATHER MCGHEE

The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together



PEER REGIONS

The Northwest Arkansas Council identified a select group of high-performing peer regions that were used as benchmarks in its regional strategy. Given the importance of diversity and inclusion to local economies, diversity growth is included from the following regions: Austin-Round Rock, Texas; Des Moines-West Des Moines, Iowa; Durham-Chapel Hill, N.C.; Madison, Wis.; Provo-Orem, Utah; and Raleigh, N.C.

AUSTIN/ROUND ROCK, TX

2021 TOTAL POPULATION: 2,356,867

RACE/ETHNICITY	2010	2021	2026 PROJECTION
White	54.7%	48.0%	44.9%
Hispanic/Latino	31.4%	34.6%	36.4%
Asian	4.7%	7.1%	7.9%
Black/African American	7.0%	7.5%	7.7%
Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
American Indian	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Other/Two or More Races	1.9%	2.5%	2.7%

MADISON, WI

2021 TOTAL POPULATION: 678,978

RACE/ETHNICITY	2010	2021	2026 PROJECTION
White	84.4%	80.9%	78.8%
Hispanic/Latino	5.2%	6.2%	6.9%
Asian	3.9%	5.5%	6.4%
Black/African American	4.2%	4.6%	4.8%
Pacific Islander	0.03%	0.04%	0.04%
American Indian	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Other/Two or More Races	1.9%	2.5%	2.8%

DES MOINES, IA

2021 TOTAL POPULATION: 718,482

RACE/ETHNICITY	2010	2021	2026 PROJECTION
White	83.6%	79.3%	76.7%
Hispanic/Latino	6.7%	7.9%	8.8%
Asian	3.0%	4.4%	5.1%
Black/African American	4.7%	5.8%	6.4%
Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
American Indian	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
Other/Two or More Races	1.8%	2.3%	2.7%

PROVO-OREM, UT

2021 TOTAL POPULATION: 714,263

RACE/ETHNICITY	2010	2021	2026 PROJECTION
White	84.4%	77.9%	75.5%
Hispanic/Latino	10.7%	14.5%	16.2%
Asian	1.3%	2.2%	2.4%
Black/African American	0.5%	0.8%	0.9%
Pacific Islander	0.7%	1%	1.1%
American Indian	0.5%	0.6%	0.6%
Other/Two or More Races	2.0%	3.1%	3.4%

DURHAM-CHAPEL HILL, NC

2021 TOTAL POPULATION: 660,985

RACE/ETHNICITY	2010	2021	2026 PROJECTION
White	55.3%	54.9%	54.0%
Hispanic/Latino	11.3%	11.4%	12.2%
Asian	4.4%	5.2%	5.8%
Black/African American	26.7%	25.7%	24.9%
Pacific Islander	0.04%	0.03%	0.03%
American Indian	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Other/Two or More Races	2.0%	2.4%	2.7%

RALEIGH, NC

2021 TOTAL POPULATION: 1,438,110

RACE/ETHNICITY	2010	2021	2026 PROJECTION
White	63.4%	59.7%	57.5%
Hispanic/Latino	10.1%	11.2%	12.3%
Asian	4.4%	6.9%	7.6%
Black/African American	19.8%	19.4%	19.5%
Pacific Islander	0.03%	0.04%	0.05%
American Indian	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Other/Two or More Races	1.9%	2.5%	2.8%

BENTONVILLE

CITY POPULATION

2021 TOTAL POPULATION: 54,427

RACE/ETHNICITY	2010	2021	2026 PROJECTION
White	77.1%	69.3%	65.6%
Hispanic/Latino	8.7%	10.5%	11.6%
Asian	8.3%	11.7%	13.8%
Black/African American	2.4%	3.8%	4.1%
Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.6%	0.8%
American Indian	1.2%	1.1%	1.1%
Other/Two or More Races	2.2%	2.9%	3.1%

While Bentonville is the fourth largest Northwest Arkansas city, its growth rate is the most staggering. From 2010 to 2020, Bentonville grew by 53%. By 2026, the city is expected to have grown an additional 16%. Bentonville is becoming increasingly diverse. In 2021, the city was nearly 31% diverse — an increase of 8% since 2010. Bentonville is expected to grow to more than 34% diverse in 2026. Most notably, the Asian population has achieved significant growth since 2010 where it accounted for 8% of the population. In 2021, Asians accounted for nearly 12% of the population and are expected to account for 14% by 2026. Bentonville's Asian Indian population grew by 239% from 2011-2018. 17% of Bentonville's population is foreign born and 14.6% of families speak a language other than English at home.



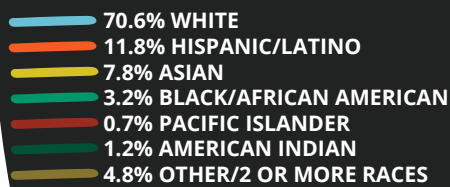
PHOTOS COURTESY OF DOWNTOWN BENTONVILLE INC.

BENTONVILLE

SCHOOL DISTRICT

2021 TOTAL ENROLLMENT: 18,536

RACE/ETHNICITY FOR 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR



The Bentonville School District is the region's second largest school district in terms of enrollment. The district has opened 11 new schools since 2010 to accommodate the rapidly-growing population. Diverse students account for over 29% of enrollment which matches the demographics of the city as a whole. Hispanic/Latino students account for nearly 12% of total enrollment. Asian students account for nearly 8% of total enrollment — the largest Asian population in any one school district in the region. Students in Bentonville speak 63 languages, including Spanish, Telegu, Tamil and Hindi.

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

NUMBER OF COUNTRIES
64

ENGLISH LEARNERS 4.7%

LANGUAGES SPOKEN 63

TOP LANGUAGES
Hindi, Malayalam, Spanish, Tamil, Telugu

TOP ORIGINS OF BIRTH
China, El Salvador, India, Mexico, Puerto Rico

FAYETTEVILLE

CITY POPULATION

2021 TOTAL POPULATION: 91,540

RACE/ETHNICITY	2010	2021	2026 PROJECTION
White	80.7%	76.0%	72.7%
Hispanic/Latino	6.4%	8.5%	10.2%
Asian	3.1%	3.7%	4.1%
Black/African American	5.9%	6.8%	7.5%
Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.3%	0.5%
American Indian	1.0%	1.1%	1.1%
Other/Two or More Races	2.7%	3.5%	3.9%

Fayetteville remains the largest Northwest Arkansas city, and is now the second largest city in the state. The population increased more than 24% from 2010 to 2021 and is expected to increase another 8.5% by 2026. Each of the city's diverse populations has seen steady growth since 2010 and is expected to continue that trajectory into 2026. Fayetteville's diverse populations account for 24% of the city's population. In 2026, they will account for over 27%. The percentage of foreign born residents in Fayetteville is 5.8%, and 8.4% of residents speak a language other than English at home.

Fayetteville has a 6.8% Black/African American population, which is the largest concentration of that group's population in Northwest Arkansas. The city continues to see the largest growth in diversity in the Black/African American population as well as those identifying as two or more races.



PHOTO COURTESY OF EXPERIENCE FAYETTEVILLE

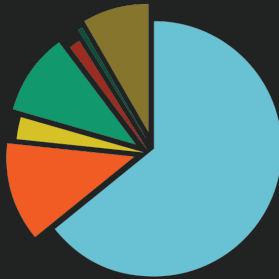
FAYETTEVILLE

SCHOOL DISTRICT

2021 TOTAL ENROLLMENT: 10,349

RACE/ETHNICITY FOR 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

- 64.4% WHITE
- 12.5% HISPANIC/LATINO
- 2.6% ASIAN
- 10.3% BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
- 1.5% PACIFIC ISLANDER
- 0.4% AMERICAN INDIAN
- 8.3% OTHER/2 OR MORE RACES



The Fayetteville School District is the region's fourth largest school district in terms of enrollment. The school district's diverse student enrollment percentage outpaces the city's diverse population percentage with 36% of students identified as diverse compared to the city's 24%. It's notable that students speak 55 languages in Fayetteville schools, including Spanish, Arabic, Marshallese, Chinese and Swahili. The children of University of Arkansas faculty and students contribute significantly to the diversity of the school district's population.

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

TOP LANGUAGES

Arabic, Chinese, Marshallese, Spanish, Swahili

TOP ORIGINS OF BIRTH

Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Russia*

NUMBER OF COUNTRIES

54*

ENGLISH LEARNERS

8.5%

LANGUAGES SPOKEN

55



*based on the last time the district collected the data in 2017

PHOTO COURTESY OF FAYETTEVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT

ROGERS

CITY POPULATION

2021 TOTAL POPULATION: 72,550

RACE/ETHNICITY	2010	2021	2026 PROJECTION
White	62.1%	57.3%	54.5%
Hispanic/Latino	31.4%	33.8%	35.4%
Asian	2.5%	3.6%	4.4%
Black/African American	1.3%	1.8%	2.0%
Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.7%	0.8%
American Indian	0.8%	0.8%	0.7%
Other/Two or More Races	1.6%	2.1%	2.1%

Rogers is the third largest city in Northwest Arkansas. Since 2010, Rogers has grown by nearly 28% and is expected to grow an additional 12% by 2026. 13.5% of residents in Rogers are foreign born, and 21.5% speak a language other than English at home.

In terms of diversity, Rogers grew from nearly 38% diverse in 2010 to 43% diverse in 2021. By 2026, the city is expected to be over 45% diverse. Hispanic/Latino residents account for over 33% of the Rogers' population and the figure should surpass 35% by 2026.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF VISIT ROGERS & ROGERS SCHOOL DISTRICT



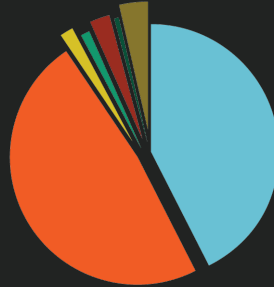
ROGERS

SCHOOL DISTRICT

2021 TOTAL ENROLLMENT: 15,603

RACE/ETHNICITY FOR 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

- 42.8% WHITE
- 47.8% HISPANIC/LATINO
- 1.6% ASIAN
- 1.3% BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
- 2.5% PACIFIC ISLANDER
- 0.6% AMERICAN INDIAN
- 3.4% OTHER/2 OR MORE RACES



The Rogers School District is the third largest school district in terms of enrollment. It's also a majority diverse district with students from diverse populations accounting for over 57% of enrollment. Of those diverse populations, 47.8% are of Hispanic/Latino origin and nearly 29% are English learners. Rogers students speak 55 languages, including Spanish, Marshallese, Vietnamese and Hmong.

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

TOP LANGUAGES

Hmong, Marshallese, Spanish, Vietnamese

TOP ORIGINS OF BIRTH

El Salvador, Guatemala, Marshall Islands, Mexico

NUMBER OF COUNTRIES

56

ENGLISH LEARNERS

28.9%

LANGUAGES SPOKEN

55



SILOAM SPRINGS

CITY POPULATION

2021 TOTAL POPULATION: 18,549

RACE/ETHNICITY	2010	2021	2026 PROJECTION
White	68.7%	63.8%	60.7%
Hispanic/Latino	20.7%	24.1%	26.6%
Asian	1.5%	1.9%	2.2%
Black/African American	0.8%	1.0%	1.1%
Pacific Islander	0.04%	0.1%	0.1%
American Indian	4.3%	3.9%	3.8%
Other/Two or More Races	4.0%	5.2%	5.5%

Siloam Springs has achieved significant population growth since 2010, increasing by more than 23%. The population is expected to grow by an additional 9% by 2026. It's notable that Siloam Springs has become increasingly diverse, accounting for 36.2% of the population in 2021 — a 4% increase from 2010. By 2026, the city is expected to be 39% diverse.

Although Siloam Springs is the seventh largest city in the region, it has the third largest proportion of Hispanic/Latino residents. Hispanic/Latino residents make up 24% of the city's population. 11% of residents in Siloam Springs are foreign born and 17.3% of residents speak a language other than English at home.



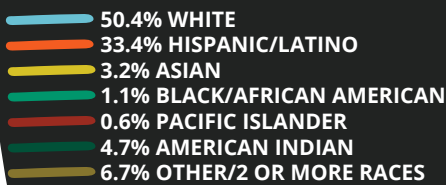
PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE CITY OF SILOAM SPRINGS, PHOTOGRAPHERS INCLUDE: ABBY TRINIDAD, WESLEY HITT AND HOLLY DANIELLE

SILOAM SPRINGS

SCHOOL DISTRICT

2021 TOTAL ENROLLMENT: 4,290

RACE/ETHNICITY FOR 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR



The Siloam Springs School District's diverse populations far outpace the city's diverse populations at 50%. Hispanics/Latinos account for over 33% of enrollment and nearly 5% of the enrollment consists of American Indians. 19% of Siloam Springs students are classified as English learners.

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

NUMBER OF COUNTRIES

10

TOP LANGUAGES

Arabic, Hmong, Marshallese, Spanish, Vietnamese

TOP ORIGINS OF BIRTH

El Salvador, Guatemala, Puerto Rico, Venezuela

ENGLISH LEARNERS

19%

LANGUAGES SPOKEN

28



SPRINGDALE

CITY POPULATION

2021 TOTAL POPULATION: 83,749

RACE/ETHNICITY	2010	2021	2026 PROJECTION
White	53.2%	46.6%	42.5%
Hispanic/Latino	35.0%	38.3%	40.9%
Asian	1.9%	2.2%	2.3%
Black/African American	1.6%	1.7%	1.8%
Pacific Islander	5.6%	8.3%	9.6%
American Indian	0.8%	0.8%	0.7%
Other/Two or More Races	1.9%	2.1%	2.1%

Springdale has the second largest population in Northwest Arkansas. The population increased by more than 20% from 2010 to 2021 and is expected to increase an additional 7% by 2026. Each of the city's diverse populations have grown steadily since 2010 and are all expected to continue similar growth into 2026. 23.4% of Springdale residents are foreign born and 40% of residents speak a language other than English at home.

Springdale's Hispanic/Latino population grew by more than 3% from 2010 to 2021 and is expected to grow by an additional 3% by 2026. Springdale also has the largest population of Pacific Islanders in Northwest Arkansas, which includes a large population of people from the Marshall Islands. Pacific Islanders accounted for over 8% of the population in 2021 and are expected to approach 10% in 2026.

DID YOU KNOW?

New legislative maps developed based on the 2020 U.S. census numbers show two new majority-minority districts in the Arkansas House, including the state's first predominantly Hispanic district in Northwest Arkansas. District 9 includes a large portion of east Springdale.



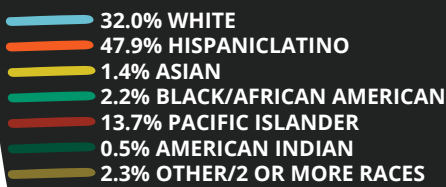
PHOTOS COURTESY OF DOWNTOWN SPRINGDALE ALLIANCE, PHOTOGRAPHERS INCLUDE: MEREDITH MASHBURN AND JILL DABBS

SPRINGDALE

SCHOOL DISTRICT

2021 TOTAL ENROLLMENT: 21,796

RACE/ETHNICITY FOR 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR



Springdale School District has the largest enrollment not only in Northwest Arkansas but also the entire state with nearly 22,000 students. It's also the most diverse school district in the region with students from diverse populations accounting for 68% of enrollment. Hispanic/Latino students account for 48% of enrollment with 35% of students classified as English learners. Springdale students speak 49 languages, with the majority of those speaking Spanish and Marshallese.

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

NUMBER OF COUNTRIES

53

ENGLISH LEARNERS
34.6%

LANGUAGES SPOKEN

54

TOP LANGUAGES

Laotian, Marshallese, Phonepeian, Spanish

TOP ORIGINS OF BIRTH

El Salvador, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Puerto Rico



OTHER DISTRICTS

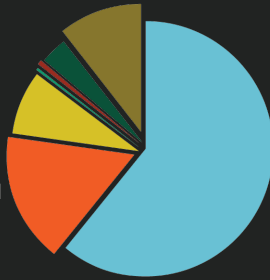
SCHOOL DISTRICT DATA

Northwest Arkansas is home to numerous high-performing, diverse school districts. In this report, we are including diversity enrollment data for each district in the region. Like the larger districts, diverse enrollment in these smaller districts has continued to grow.

GENTRY

RACE/ETHNICITY FOR
2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

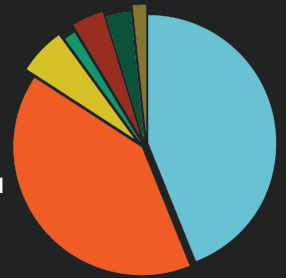
- 60.9% WHITE
- 16.6% HISPANIC/LATINO
- 8.0% ASIAN
- 0.3% BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
- 0.6% PACIFIC ISLANDER
- 3.3% AMERICAN INDIAN
- 10.4% OTHER/2 OR MORE RACES



DECATUR

RACE/ETHNICITY FOR
2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

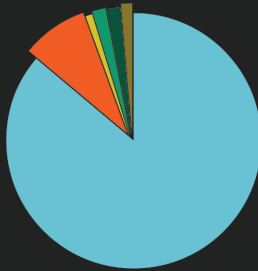
- 44.0% WHITE
- 40.2% HISPANIC/LATINO
- 6.0% ASIAN
- 1.4% BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
- 3.9% PACIFIC ISLANDER
- 3.0% AMERICAN INDIAN
- 1.6% OTHER/2 OR MORE RACES



PEA RIDGE

RACE/ETHNICITY FOR
2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

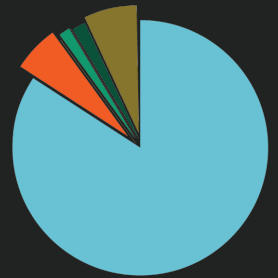
- 86.1% WHITE
- 8.4% HISPANIC/LATINO
- 0.9% ASIAN
- 1.4% BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
- 0.2% PACIFIC ISLANDER
- 1.6% AMERICAN INDIAN
- 1.2% OTHER/2 OR MORE RACES



ELKINS

RACE/ETHNICITY FOR
2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

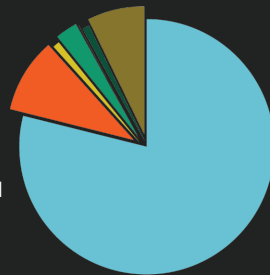
- 84.4% WHITE
- 5.7% HISPANIC/LATINO
- 0.2% ASIAN
- 1.2% BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
- 0.1% PACIFIC ISLANDER
- 1.6% AMERICAN INDIAN
- 6.9% OTHER/2 OR MORE RACES



FARMINGTON

RACE/ETHNICITY FOR
2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

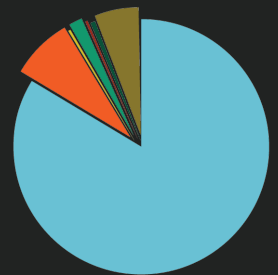
- 79.0% WHITE
- 9.6% HISPANIC/LATINO
- 0.6% ASIAN
- 2.8% BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
- 0.2% PACIFIC ISLANDER
- 0.7% AMERICAN INDIAN
- 7.1% OTHER/2 OR MORE RACES



GREENLAND

RACE/ETHNICITY FOR
2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

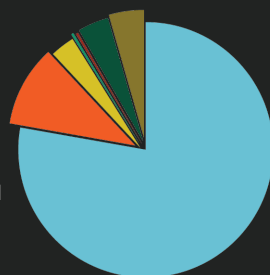
- 83.71% WHITE
- 7.9% HISPANIC/LATINO
- 0.3% ASIAN
- 1.7% BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
- 0.1% PACIFIC ISLANDER
- 0.6% AMERICAN INDIAN
- 5.8% OTHER/2 OR MORE RACES



LINCOLN

RACE/ETHNICITY FOR
2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

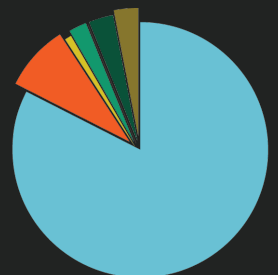
- 77.9% WHITE
- 9.6% HISPANIC/LATINO
- 0.6% ASIAN
- 2.8% BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
- 0.2% PACIFIC ISLANDER
- 0.7% AMERICAN INDIAN
- 7.1% OTHER/2 OR MORE RACES



PRAIRIE GROVE

RACE/ETHNICITY FOR
2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

- 82.7% WHITE
- 8.3% HISPANIC/LATINO
- 1.0% ASIAN
- 2.0% BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
- 0.2% PACIFIC ISLANDER
- 3.0% AMERICAN INDIAN
- 2.9% OTHER/2 OR MORE RACES



LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ENTREPRENEURSHIP



In 2020, nearly **25%** of angel and seed investment dollars went to companies founded by BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) in Arkansas (**3%** is the national average). Yet **100%** of venture capital invested went to companies founded by white men, indicating efforts focused on increasing equity continue to be important in our entrepreneurial ecosystem.



Fast Company named **NWA No. 2** in the top 10 metro areas for **minority entrepreneurs**.

Northwest Arkansas ranks **No. 2** in the U.S. when it comes to women's promotions into management roles in retail and consumer goods, according to LinkedIn News.

Entrepreneurship for All (EforAll) Northwest Arkansas is accelerating economic and social impact through inclusive entrepreneurship in Northwest Arkansas. EforAll offers free one-year business training programs to support under-represented entrepreneurs at every stage of their business lifecycle. EforAll's four cohorts consist of 97% women, 74% BIPOC, 6% LGBTQ+ and 44% immigrants.



Cureate is a for profit, woman-owned small business that is building an empowered food & beverage supply to meet a changing consumer demand. CEO Kim Bryden relocated Cureate to NWA from Washington, D.C. in 2021 as part of the Life Works Here program. Cureate's 2021 fall cohort included 60% womxn-owned businesses and 60% BIPOC-owned businesses. The spring 2022 cohort included 100% womxn-owned businesses and 25% BIPOC-owned businesses.

TALENT ATTRACTION

The **Life Works Here** relocation incentive program targets remote workers. The incentive campaign received nearly **66,000 applications** from across the world. Over 65% have no connection to Northwest Arkansas, and of the 87 recipients to date, over **38% represent BIPOC**.



LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

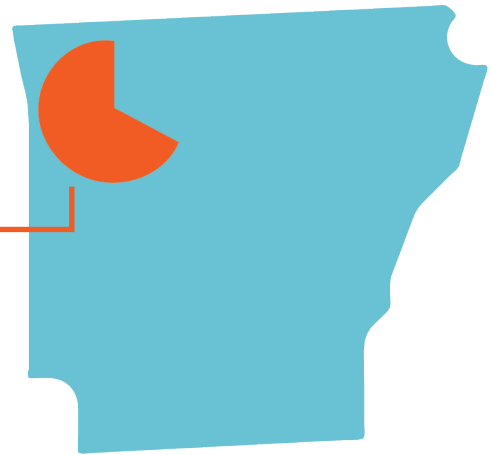
The availability of skilled talent (and the ability to attract more) is the top factor for businesses today as they determine where to invest. Developing talent starts early and involves collaboration with parents, educators, businesses, and community and state leaders. The Northwest Arkansas Council works to ensure that there are sufficient education and training opportunities available to support our workforce.

The LIFE (Learning, Improvement, Fun, and Empowerment) program at NorthWest Arkansas Community College connects and supports area high school students who may or may not be considering college after graduation. Their mission is to empower and create desire and access to quality higher educational opportunities for students, to promote student success during and after their enrollment in the LIFE program, and to create an atmosphere of acceptance and cultural celebration by linking all communities and peoples.

In Northwest Arkansas the number in new **foreign-born residents grew by nearly 33%** between 2010 and 2019, yet there has been a dramatic drop in foreign labor supply since the start of the pandemic, according to a 2021 report by Heartland Forward.

Northwest Arkansas has more than 10,000 open jobs seeking a wide range of skills.

It is often necessary for the local workforce to acquire new expertise to fill many of these jobs.



UPSKILL NWA

In 2021, **Carol Silva Moralez** was appointed **CEO of UpskillNWA**, an organization focused on connecting the region's untapped workforce to skilled positions in high-demand industries and addressing barriers to access. The first cohort of 100 participants is focused on the healthcare sector and launched in January 2022. UpskillNWA provides assistance with tuition and all academic fees, as well as connects participants to additional wraparound services (rental assistance, child care, transportation, etc.) that will allow regular class attendance. 24% of the 2022 cohort is Hispanic/Latino, 9% is Marshallese, 5% is Black/African American, 3% is Asian and 2% is American Indian.

LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

HOUSING

WORKFORCE HOUSING CENTER

The workforce housing center launched in 2021 and is focused on the emerging issue of housing affordability in Benton and Washington counties in Northwest Arkansas. The goal is to create a variety of well-designed housing options and mixed-income neighborhoods for the region's workers and their families.

The center will collaborate with community partners to develop a strategic plan specific to housing needs and priorities. It will promote housing development in proximity to employment centers, lifestyle amenities and essential services.

DID YOU KNOW?

A Zillow analysis of data from the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act revealed disproportionate denial rates of mortgage applicants in Arkansas:



Black homeowners had the lowest approval rate to refinance conventional loans by lenders nationwide in 2020, as well as the smallest number of applicants.

Banco Sí

As the newest brand of the **Signature Bank of Arkansas**, **Banco Sí** is Arkansas' first fully bilingual banking institution with every employee able to provide assistance to customers in both English and Spanish. The branch will be located in downtown Rogers and celebrate its grand opening in September 2022 as part of Hispanic Heritage Month. Signature has been providing a full line of financial services to Arkansas residents since 2005, and this latest endeavor strives to create an equitable experience for a historically underserved community.



LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

HEALTH CARE

The Northwest Arkansas Council's Health Care Transformation Division came together to address disparities related to COVID-19 with \$7 million in CARES Act funding through testing and contact tracing. During the summer of 2020, the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and the National Institutes of Health found that **the Marshallese population comprised 19% and the Latino population 45% of all COVID-19 infections in Northwest Arkansas.** The Marshallese community makes up less than 3% and the Latino community accounts for 17% of the total population.

The Marshallese also accounted for **14% of all COVID-19-related hospitalizations** in the area and **suffered 372.4 deaths per 100,000 people**, compared to the regional average of 5.10 per 100,000. Through the COVID CARES Act, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) worked with partners throughout the state to provide comprehensive education, contact tracing and resources to Marshallese and Hispanic communities, providing case navigation for more than 10,000 Marshallese and Hispanic residents.



OUR healthy ALLIANCE



The Northwest Arkansas Council is partnering with Benton County and UAMS on the Our Healthy Alliance program to focus on addressing health disparities in Latino and Marshallese populations in Benton and Washington counties.

The team is collaborating on developing and implementing a culturally and linguistically appropriate health information and education campaign that increases appropriate health literacy practices and intervention resources for the Latino and Marshallese communities.

A website is under development and a large-scale marketing effort will run over the next year to improve health literacy in Northwest Arkansas.

LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

EDUCATION



TEACHER WORKFORCE

The vast majority of teachers in Benton and Washington counties are **white (94%)** while a rapidly growing portion of students are **racially and ethnically diverse (42%)**.

Over the last few years, several of the region's school districts have taken action to increase the diversity of their staff.

The Springdale School District created a citywide advisory committee focused on increasing the diversity of certified staff members within the Springdale schools.

Bentonville School District created a diversity hiring committee to attract and hire qualified teacher candidates and administrators to Bentonville Public Schools. The district is also encouraging students of color to participate in teacher education tracks in the district, and actively educating students and teachers on being more culturally aware.



In an effort to increase the diversity of their teaching staff to better reflect the student body and community, the Fayetteville School District's strategic plan outlines goals of a **50% increase** in the number of minority teachers and **8.1% minority staff** by 2023. The district had already achieved **11% minority staff** in the 2020-2021 school year.



PROJECT REACH

Project REACH fosters teacher effectiveness and equity in meeting the need of a rapidly-growing English learner (EL) population in the Springdale School District (SSD) and targeted schools. In an effort to address the disparity in teacher-student diversity, a "Grow Your Own" initiative targets bilingual/bicultural paraprofessionals in the Springdale district to upgrade their qualifications and skills by earning an Associate of Art and/or Bachelor of Science in Education in elementary education with an ESL endorsement. These future teachers have EL insider's knowledge from multiple years of serving ELs and their families in the district and many reside in the community where they work.



ENGAGE nwa

EngageNWA continues to provide frequent training and learning opportunities to hundreds of community partners on topics ranging from historical systems and policies to the business case for DEI and taking action to address inequities in the workplace today. Some program highlights include: Racial Equity Institute's two-day racial equity training; six- and eight-week-long community learning cohorts in partnership with the UA Walton College of Business focused on gaining skills to talk about race and take action to address inequity in meaningful ways; a community conversation with author Richard Rothstein to discuss his book *The Color of Law*; trainings about the historical significance of the Tulsa Race Massacre and how it impacts us today; and additional learning opportunities focused on Juneteenth, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service and more.



NORTHWEST ARKANSAS LEADERSHIP PLEDGE

Diversity and inclusion are vital to the well-being and success of our employees, communities, and businesses. We stand committed to fostering and expanding a more just, equitable and inclusive region for all by purposefully addressing systemic racism in the communities in which we operate.

In pursuit of the objective of a diverse and inclusive community, we are committed to the following guiding principles:



Education and Training

Supporting educational initiatives designed to provide a deeper understanding of the historical underpinnings of systemic racism and help identify and eliminate unconscious bias. We will continue to make our workplaces safe environments for such education by fostering open, frank and respectful discussions about these complex issues.



Community and Workplace

Working to ensure that our workplace environments are free of discrimination and that we advance the hiring, development, retention and promotion of diverse talent and invest in initiatives designed to reduce the effects of prejudices in our communities at the local, regional and national level.



Public Policy

Supporting administrative and legislative measures that advance equality and justice and further the acceptance and advancement of all individuals, regardless of personal demographics including race, gender, sexual orientation or religious beliefs.



Continuous Improvement

Engaging thoughtfully on the issues by listening to and learning from each other, by promoting transparency through sharing practices that have worked and have failed, and by helping to keep each other accountable by encouraging the continued enhancement and evolution of policies and strategies to help overcome challenges and improve well-being for all.

Here is a list of the 226 organizations that have signed the pledge to date:

Aelous Real Estate and Property Management
 Affirma
 Aha! Interpreting Solutions
 All Saints' / Todos Los Santos Episcopal Church
 Angel Pet Sitters
 Arisa Health, Inc.
 Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families
 Arkansas Air and Military Museum
 Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield
 Arkansas Children's, Inc.
 Arkansas Justice Reform Coalition
 Arkansas Public Theatre
 Art Bridges
 Art Ventures NW Arkansas
 Arvest Bank
 Athletes Advantage Financial
 Beaver Water District
 Beer & Hymns Inc.
 Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate Journey
 BFFoundation / Bentonville Film Festival
 Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwest Arkansas
 BikeNWA
 Bittle Armstrong Insurance
 Black Action Collective
 Black Community Development and Chamber of Commerce of Arkansas
 Black Hills Energy
 Blue Crane
 Blue Star Business Services
 BNSF Logistics
 Boys & Girls Club of Benton County
 Brya Architecture Inc.
 Burrell Behavioral Health
 C Three Advisors
 C&C Services, LLC
 Caisson Capital Partners
 Cantrell Griffin Business Brokers
 CASA of Northwest Arkansas
 Cascade Law Group
 Chambers Bank
 Cignus Real Estate
 City of Fayetteville
 City of Springdale
 Clark Law Firm PLLC
 Clothes To Children
 Clarar Energy, Inc.
 Community Clinic
 Courage! Communication 4 Change, LLC
 Cox Communications
 Crisis Brewing
 Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art
 Cushman & Wakefield/Sage Partners
 Drew Griffin (D/G)
 Dolores Castillo Chapter of Sociedad Honoraria Hispánica
 Downtown Bentonville Inc.
 Downtown Rogers Inc.
 Downtown Springdale
 easybins.com
 Elevate Performance, LLC
 Endeavor Northwest Arkansas
 Entrepreneurship for All (EforAll)
 eSCO Processing and Recycling
 Eureka Springs Arts Council
 Excellerate Foundation
 Fathom Realty
 Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce
 Fayetteville Housing Authority
 Fayetteville Psychiatry
 Flintco, LLC
 Fortune Horse Studio
 Fresh Harvest Tasting Room
 Generations Bank
 George's, Inc.
 Girl Scouts - Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas
 Gotahold Brewing
 Greater Bentonville Area Chamber of Commerce
 Greenwood Gearhart
 Havenwood, Inc.
 Heartland Forward
 Highlands Oncology Group
 How Eventful
 Iberia Bank
 Illinois River Watershed Partnership
 Inmar Intelligence
 Inseitz Group
 Insite Construction, Inc
 JAWAHAR NAVODAYA VIDYALAYA KHAMMAM
 JB Hunt
 John Sells NWA Real Estate
 Jon B. Comstock, PLC
 Josh Moody for Washington County Judge
 Kelamis Plastic Surgery
 KFSM-TV
 Kids2
 Kind Creative Co.
 Kitestring Technical Services
 KUAF 91.3 FM NPR
 Kutak Rock LLP
 L. David Stubbs Law Firm
 Leafscape
 Learning Oasis and Toy Zone
 Legal Aid of Arkansas
 Life Styles, Inc.
 Likewise
 Lineus Medical
 Luncher
 Mako Business Development
 Marshallese Educational Initiative
 McGraw Realtors
 Mercy
 Midwest Skywarn
 Milk & Sugar Bath Co.
 Mitchell Communications Group
 modus studio
 Mount Sequoyah Center
 Movista
 Museum of Native History
 MY-T-BY-DESIGN Therapeutic Art Studio
 Newell Development
 NICE LLC
 Nilfisk, Inc
 Northwest Arkansas Food Bank
 NorthWest Arkansas Community College
 Northwest Arkansas Conservatory of Classical Ballet
 Northwest Arkansas Continuum of Care
 Northwest Arkansas Film & Entertainment Commission
 Northwest Health
 Numb Notes, LLC
 NWA Ballet Theatre
 NWA Gives
 NWA NAACP
 Oculogx
 Omni Center for Peace, Justice & Ecology
 OneStone Solutions
 OurPharma LLC
 Ozark Ballet Theater
 Ozark Green Roofs
 Ozark Literacy Council
 Ozark Natural Science Center
 P&G
 PADI
 Paradox
 Partners for Better Housing
 People to Elect Daisy Bonilla
 Perry Publishing & Broadcasting
 Pillar Clinical Research
 Pinnacle Car Services
 Pinnacle Media dba Univision Arkansas
 Plug and Play Technology Center
 Prose Creative
 Pure Charity
 Ra-Ve Cultural Foundation Inc.
 Reeves Medical Associates
 Resplendent Hospitality
 RevUnit
 Rockin' Baker
 Rogers Activity Center
 Rogers Downtown Partners
 Rogers Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce
 Ropeswing Hospitality Group
 Rose Law Firm
 Royalties Entertainment
 Runway Group
 RZC Investments
 Salon Venues
 Salsa for Change
 Sam's Club
 Savant Development
 Scott Family Amazeum
 SERVE2PERFORM
 Shiloh Museum of Ozark History
 Siloam Springs Chamber of Commerce
 Simmons Foods
 Single Parent Scholarship Fund of NWA
 Smith Hurst, PLC
 Specialized Real Estate Group
 SpoonMoon
 Springdale Chamber of Commerce
 Startup Junkie Foundation
 STOPWATCH
 Talk Bravely Podcast
 Teach Plus
 Thaden School
 The Gents Place
 The Jones Trust
 The Joys Of Swimming
 The Micah 6:8 Initiative
 the Momentary
 The Music Education Initiative
 The Nature Conservancy in Arkansas
 The New School
 The Pack Shack
 The Participation Agency
 The Razorback Foundation, Inc.
 The Twiggs Group
 TheatreSquared
 Tontitown Winery
 Suzannastyles.com
 Tricycle Theatre for Youth
 Trike Theatre
 Trucks and Tiaras Learning Center
 Turner Financial
 Tyson Family Foundation
 Tyson Foods
 UAMS Northwest
 Uniform Your Bias
 United Way of Northwest Arkansas
 University of Arkansas
 University of Arkansas Razorback Athletics
 Upskill NWA
 Urban Land Institute, Northwest Arkansas
 USA Truck
 Vendium Global
 Veterans Healthcare System of the Ozarks
 Visit Bentonville
 Wags to Riches NWA
 Walmart
 Walnut Farm Montessori School
 Walton Arts Center
 Walton Family Foundation
 Waste Management
 Wesche Company
 Wheelhouse Real Estate Management
 Whole Health Institute
 Wright, Lindsey, Jennings
 Yarb Apothecary
 Yuuma



WELCOMING WEEK NWA

PRESENTED BY ENGAGE

Welcoming Week NWA is an annual event that brings together NWA Leadership Pledge supporters and the broader community to build strong connections and affirm the importance of welcoming and inclusive places in achieving collective prosperity. Welcoming Week NWA is an opportunity for organizations and individuals to build connections and strengthen relationships across our diverse communities and take other welcoming actions with the goal of fostering and expanding a more just, equitable, and inclusive Northwest Arkansas. While the event is only a week long, the goals are long-term. Welcoming Week NWA serves as an impetus to drive action all year long.

TRU Powered by IDEALS

In December of 2021, TRU Powered by IDEALS launched the second phase of TRUE Northwest Arkansas, a community-based initiative that began in 2018 to advance diversity, equity and inclusion in Benton and Washington counties. With funding from the Walmart Foundation and the Walton Family Foundation, the IDEALS Institute at the University of Arkansas has reimagined the program as TRU Powered by IDEALS and is providing 100 regional nonprofit organizations with resources to become more diverse, equitable and inclusive. The program includes three distinct cohorts: TRAIN is for nonprofits new to DEI work, RECHARGE will support the ongoing efforts of nonprofits already invested in DEI work, and UPLIFT will build the organizational capacity of nonprofits led by and for minoritized communities. UPLIFT organizations will receive funds for technical assistance from Arkansas Community Foundation to support their participation during a two-year process.

RESOURCES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For purposes of this report, all references to Northwest Arkansas refer to the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers Metropolitan Statistical Area. This area encompasses Benton, Washington and Madison counties in Arkansas and includes the cities and towns of Avoca, Bella Vista, Bentonville, Bethel Heights, Cave Springs, Centerton, Decatur, Elkins, Elm Springs, Farmington, Fayetteville, Garfield, Gateway, Gentry, Goshen, Gravette, Greenland, Highfill, Hindsville, Huntsville, Johnson, Lincoln, Little Flock, Lowell, Pea Ridge, Prairie Grove, Rogers, Siloam Springs, Springdale, Springtown, St. Paul, Sulphur Springs, Tontitown, West Fork and Winslow.

McDonald County, Missouri was removed from the region's MSA in 2018 by the federal Office of Management and Budget and is therefore not included in this report. Primary information used in this report comes from the United States census and Environmental Systems Research Institute (Esri), an international supplier of information about community economies, populations, demographics and jobs.

According to a survey from the U.S. Census Bureau, Blacks/African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos and Native Americans were undercounted in the 2020 census while overcounting non-Hispanic white Americans. Latinos were omitted from the 2020 census at a rate more than three times higher than in the 2010 census, at nearly 5% versus 1.5%. Blacks/African Americans were undercounted at a rate of 3.3% in the 2020 census, compared to 2.1% in 2010. For Native Americans living on reservations, the 2020 census presented an undercount of 5.6% compared to 4.9% in 2010. People who identified as white but not Hispanic were overcounted at nearly double the 2010 rate, increasing from 0.8% to 1.6%. Overall, the estimated number of people not counted is 2.8 million higher than in 2010.

The Marshallese community in Northwest Arkansas has historically been undercounted. Census numbers indicate the number of Pacific Islanders living in the region is fewer than 10,000, while Eldon Alik, consul general for the Marshallese Consulate in Springdale, estimates the number is 15,000 to 20,000.

References in this report to "diversity" or "diverse populations" includes racially and ethnically diverse individuals also known as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color). In addition, for purposes of this report, individuals of Hispanic plus Latino origin, including both white and non-white Hispanics, are included within the definition of diverse populations.

Information about enrollment and diversity of the student populations in Northwest Arkansas school districts was collected in May 2022 from the districts and the Arkansas Department of Education. The following school districts are represented: Bentonville, Decatur, Elkins, Farmington, Fayetteville, Gentry, Gravette, Greenland, Lincoln, Pea Ridge, Prairie Grove, Rogers, Siloam Springs, Springdale and West Fork.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Arkansas Department of Education](#)
- [DiversityNWA](#)
- [EngageNWA](#)
- [National Equity Atlas](#)
- [Arkansas Capital Scan report](#)
- [We Are Here: Understanding the Size of the LGBTQ+ Community](#)
- [LGBT Identification in U.S. Ticks Up to 7.1%](#)
- [National Census Coverage Estimates for People in the United States by Demographic Characteristics](#)
- [The State of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Northwest Arkansas: A TRUE Report](#)
- [Use of Community-Based Participatory Research Partnerships to Reduce COVID-19 Disparities Among Marshallese Pacific Islander and Latino Communities – Benton and Washington Counties, Arkansas, April-December 2020](#)
- [Fayetteville School District's strategic plan](#)
- [Decline in Immigration Threatens Growth of Regions on the Rise, New York Times](#)

For purposes of this report, "English learners" are defined as students from a linguistic background other than English who are learning English and academic content in English simultaneously.

"Languages spoken" refers to primary languages spoken in the students' home. "Origins of birth" indicates the country in which the student was born.

Special thanks to the Bentonville, Fayetteville, Rogers, Siloam Springs and Springdale school districts and Downtown Springdale Alliance, Visit Rogers, Downtown Bentonville Inc., City of Siloam Springs, Visit Bentonville and CACHE for participating and providing photography for this report.

The Northwest Arkansas Council is thankful to the Walmart Foundation, Walmart and Walton Family Foundation for their generous support of EngageNWA and dedication to advancing diversity, equity and inclusion in Northwest Arkansas.



ENGAGE THE FUTURE

nwa Northwest
Arkansas
Council

ENGAGE **nwa**