



# **Indiana Nonprofits:** Scope and Community Dimensions

**Personal Affiliation Survey**  
Key Findings



## Key Findings

Our survey asked Indiana residents whether during the past year they had attended religious services, attended events or meetings at other types of nonprofit organizations, performed various types of volunteer work for nonprofits, or had worked for a nonprofit as either a primary or second job

### Extensive Religious Involvement

Our survey asked respondents whether they had attended religious services during the past year (other than for weddings, funerals, and the like). The vast majority (86 percent) had attended at least once during the year.

### Active Involvement with Other Nonprofits

Our survey asked respondents whether they had attended any meetings or events during the past year at different types of Indiana nonprofits. We probed for 20 different types of associations, but also gave respondents a chance to mention groups we had not included in our list. More than two-thirds (67 percent) had attended at least one meeting or event during the past year, not counting their participation in religious services.

### Attendance Rates

For some of these types of organizations, the attendance rates are sufficiently high overall (5 percent or more), that we can also examine whether the percent attending varies significantly by characteristics of the respondents. We describe these results, starting with those organizations for which attendance was most widespread, but note only patterns that meet our statistical definition of significance [link to significance statement], assuring us that the differences are sufficiently pronounced to assume similar differences hold for all Indiana residents.

- **Professional, Trade or Business Associations:** In Indiana, the largest rate of attendance is for professional, business, or trade association meetings or events, with about one in seven adult resident (14 percent) attend at least once during the year. People who are of working age (ages 30 to 64), have a college education, and are registered to vote, are more likely to attend than others.
- **Health, Sports, Athletic, or County Clubs:** The second most popular group is health, sports, or other recreation clubs, with 14 percent of Indiana residents attending a during the year. The likelihood of attending such clubs generally increases with the level of education.
- **Fraternal Service Organizations:** More than 12 percent attended meetings or events at various types of fraternal service organizations, such as the Elks, Eastern Star, Lions, or Kiwanis. Attendance rates were highest for those above the age of 45 and those with a college degree.
- **School Support Organizations:** Some 12 percent of Indiana residents attended events or meetings for various PTA, PTO or other school support groups during the year. Rates of attendance were highest for women, those of middle-age, with at least some college education, or working part-time.



- **Labor Unions or Workers Associations:** About 10 percent of Indiana residents participate in labor union meetings during the year. The likelihood of attending is relatively high for those of middle-age, for high school graduates and those with some college or technical training, and for those who are employed full-time.
- **Health Issues or Disease Groups:** About 9 percent of Indiana residents attend meetings of a health issues or disease group during the year. Attendance is most widespread among those who are over the age of 65 and female.
- **Social Clubs or Greek-Letter Fraternity/Sorority Organizations:** About 8 percent of Indiana residents report attending a meeting or event at a social club or Greek letter fraternity or sorority organization. Those who are unmarried are significantly more likely to attend such events than those with other types of marital status.
- **Dance or Amateur Performance Groups:** About 8 percent of Indiana residents attended events or activities at a dance or amateur performance group, such as glee club, band, or orchestra. Attendance is particularly high among those with college education and those who have never been married.
- **Neighborhood or Homeowners Associations:** More than 7 percent attended a meeting or event at a neighborhood or homeowners association. The likelihood of attending is notably higher for people who are married and have a college degree.
- **Youth Organizations:** About 7 percent reported attending meetings or events at youth organizations, such as the Scouts or 4-H. Attendance rates are notably higher for people who are middle-age, married or separated, and employed.
- **Veterans' Organizations:** While 6 percent overall had attended meetings or events at one or more veterans' organizations during the past year, attendance was most extensive among those who are older, retired, and widowed.
- **Hobby Clubs:** About 5 percent of Indiana residents report attending a meeting or event at computer, gardening, craft, other hobby clubs. The rates of attendance are particularly high for those who are divorced or separated or who have lived in their communities for a substantial period of time.

## Less Pervasive Volunteer Involvement

Our survey also asked respondents whether they had performed volunteer work or in other ways helped a nonprofit organization during the past year. We probed for ten different types of volunteer work, but also gave respondents a chance to mention other volunteer activities not included in our list. More than two-fifth (43 percent) reported performing some type of volunteer work for at least one organization during the past year. This percentage is slightly lower than found for similar surveys of Indiana residents and may reflect respondent fatigue - since these questions came at the end of our survey.

For some of these activities, the rate of involvement is sufficiently high overall (5 percent or more), that we can also examine whether the rate varies significantly by characteristics of the respondents. We describe briefly our key findings, starting with the type of volunteer work that was most widespread among our respondents, but note only patterns that meet our statistical definition of significance, assuring us that the differences are sufficiently pronounced to allow us to assume that similar differences hold for all Indiana residents.



- **Raising Funds or Other Support:** More than one-quarter (28 percent) of all Indiana residents helped nonprofits raise funds or other support during the past year by helping with special events, asking others for support, participating in walk-a-thons or phone-a-thons, selling goods, writing grant requests etc. This type of volunteer work is most extensive among those who are well-educated, married or separated or divorced, or employed part-time.
- **Assisting with Religious Services:** The second most frequent type of volunteer work was assisting with religious services - about 14 percent reported engaging in this type of activity during the previous year. This type of volunteer work was most extensive for women, older people, those who are retired, or part-time workers.
- **Leading or Managing:** Almost one in eight (12 percent) reported playing a role in leading or managing nonprofit organizations, by serving on a board or committee, organizing events, or consulting without pay. Involvement in this type of volunteer work increases with the level of education of the respondent.
- **Providing Direct Services:** More than one in ten (12 percent) reported helping to provide a direct service, such as transportation, serving meals, caring for children, tutoring, health or rescue service, or counseling and other support. We found the highest involvement in this type of activity among those who have never married and those who have high levels of education.
- **Maintaining or Constructing Facilities:** About 7 percent reported helping nonprofits maintain or construct facilities, such as buildings, grounds or trails. Involvement in this type of volunteer work was most extensive for men and those with at least some college education.
- **Helping with Communication:** About 6 percent reported helping nonprofits with communication needs, such as writing or assisting with publications, making phone calls, or making presentations. This type of volunteer work is most extensive among people who are college educated or married.

## Notable Rates of Nonprofit Employment

Almost 11 percent of Indiana residents who work for an Indiana employer, are employed by nonprofit organizations. The percentage increases slightly if we include also second jobs people may have held during the year.

### What does it mean to have a statistically significant relationship?

Most researchers must describe social phenomena without having access to information on everyone involved. It is too expensive to collect data from every resident of an area or member of a group. Instead, researchers draw a sample from the larger population in such a way that every member has an equal chance of being selected - this is known as a random sample. In the case of the Personal Affiliation Survey, we randomly selected 526 Indiana residents and asked them about their involvement with nonprofit organizations.

While we wish to apply our findings from this survey to all Indiana residents, we cannot do so with complete confidence, since we don't know for sure that our particular sample accurately represents all residents of the state. For example, we may inadvertently have contacted too many people with certain characteristics or our questions may be interpreted differently by some



groups. Because we drew a random sample that meets certain statistical standards, we can, however, estimate how likely it is that any particular relationship we observe is sufficiently pronounced to allow us to assume that such a relationship holds for all Indiana residents - not just the 526 we talked to.

The statistical process of examining relationships in this manner is known as testing for significance. Highly significant patterns are those researchers are very confident exist in the full population. In the case of the graphs presented here, we place an asterisk by every category that shows a relationship for which we are at least 95 percent certain it is present in the real world, so that the likelihood of being in error is 5 percent or less ( $p < .05$ ).