



Knight Soul of the Community 2010

Why People Love Where They Live and Why It Matters: A Local Perspective

Florida
MIAMI

www.knightfoundation.org

KNIGHT Soul of the Community
A PROJECT OF JOHN S. AND JAMES L. KNIGHT FOUNDATION
in partnership with GALLUP



At the Knight Foundation, our mission is to create more informed and engaged communities. We emphasize transformational projects. The Soul of the Community project reflects this mission. This study offers leaders a radically new way to think about their community and invites creative approaches for improvement. The report, based on interviews with residents in 26 Knight communities, proves that a significant connection exists between residents' levels of emotional attachment to their community and its economic growth. It presents surprising and nearly universal findings about why people form lasting emotional bonds to where they live.

We hope these discoveries inspire renewed engagement in all residents and create lasting, positive change.

Paula Lynn Ellis, Vice President/Strategic Initiatives
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paula Lynn Ellis".

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Introduction

On behalf of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and Gallup, we are pleased to present the third annual Soul of the Community report. This study was conducted over three years in 26 cities across the United States where Knight Foundation is active. It was designed to find out what emotionally attaches people to a community — what makes them want to put down roots and build a life there.

In today's challenging economic climate, community leaders are seeking new ways to attract and retain people, develop prosperous economies, add intellectual capital, and create jobs. This report provides a fresh perspective about the current driving factors of passion and loyalty in a community. Most importantly, it represents the voice of the residents themselves. Gallup gathered insights from nearly 43,000 individuals, and the resulting picture will help community leaders to answer important questions such as: What makes residents love where they live? What draws people to a place and keeps them there?

The study provides empirical evidence that the drivers that create emotional bonds between people and their community are consistent in virtually every city and can be reduced to just a few categories. Interestingly, the usual suspects — jobs, the economy, and safety — are not among the top drivers. Rather, people consistently give higher ratings for elements that relate directly to their daily quality of life: an area's physical beauty, opportunities for socializing, and a community's openness to all people.

Remarkably, the study also showed that the communities with the highest levels of attachment had the highest rates of gross domestic product growth. Discoveries like these open numerous possibilities for leaders from all sectors to inform their decisions and policies with concrete data about what generates community *and* economic benefits.

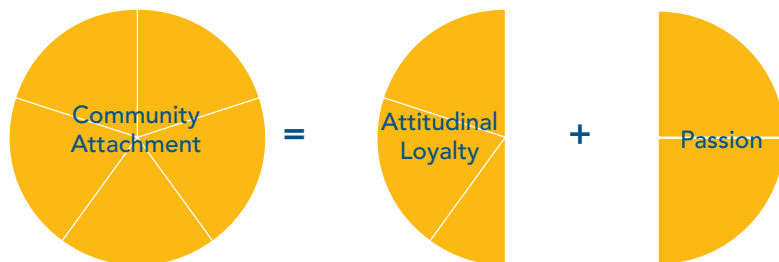
This report is not meant to be prescriptive, but rather to inform and engage leaders in new thinking and action. We hope you will read it, share it, and discuss with others what it might mean for the future of communities across our country. Our hope is that this leads to new conversations and partnerships, and new ways for all of us to work together to increase people's attachment, to strengthen our cities, and to ensure a brighter future for all people and communities.

COMMUNITY ATTACHMENT:

AN EMOTIONAL CONNECTION

Community attachment is an emotional connection to a place that transcends satisfaction, loyalty, and even passion. A community's most attached residents have strong pride in it, a positive outlook on the community's future, and a sense that it is the perfect place for them.

They are less likely to want to leave than residents without this emotional connection. They feel a bond to their community that is stronger than just being happy about where they live.

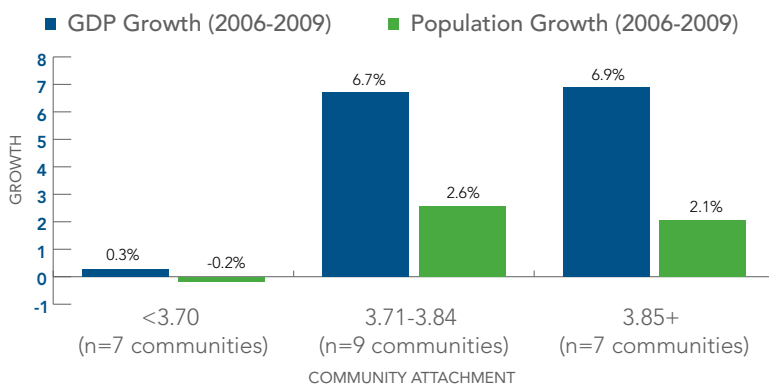


Why Attachment Matters

Over the past three years, the Soul of the Community study has found a positive correlation between community attachment and local GDP growth. Across the 26 Knight communities, those whose residents were more attached saw more local GDP growth. This is a key metric in assessing community success because local GDP growth not only measures a community's economic success, but also its ability to grow and meet residents' needs.

Local GDP Growth by Levels of Community Attachment

CA Correlation to GDP Growth=.411
CA Correlation to Population Growth=.374



GDP and population growth figures available for 23 of the 26 communities.

Gallup research proving the link between employee engagement in a workplace to business outcomes such as productivity, profitability, and employee retention helps to underscore why emotional attachment matters. Just as actively engaged employees are more productive and committed to the success of their organizations, highly attached residents are more likely to actively contribute to a community's growth.

The Relationship to Community Outcomes

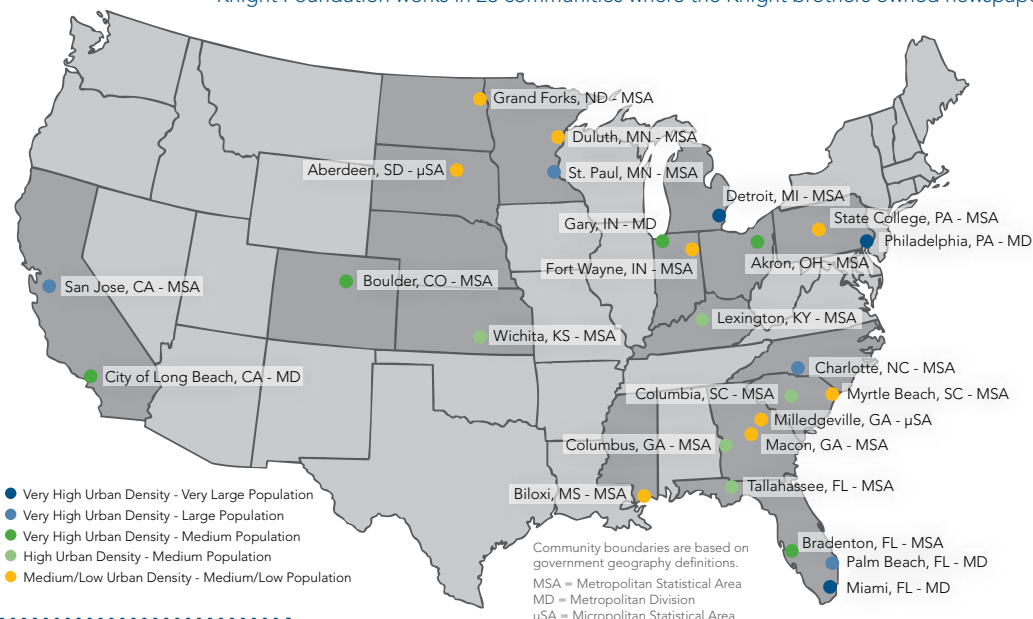
Precisely how community attachment affects community outcomes is at best a scientific guess at this point. However, the data make clear that highly attached residents are more likely to want to stay in their current communities. When this is true for college graduates and other productive residents, it increases the number of talented, highly educated workers striving to positively affect economic growth.



Highly attached residents are also more likely to see their communities as being open to many kinds of people, including talented, young college graduates and families with young children. Communities that are more open to diversity are better able to compete for talent.

Attachment is also higher when residents agree that their communities provide the social offerings and aesthetics they enjoy. When residents enjoy their community's offerings, they are more likely to spend their money on local activities and businesses, directly benefiting the local economy.

Knight Foundation works in 26 communities where the Knight brothers owned newspapers.



A tall, white, tapered lighthouse stands against a clear blue sky. The lighthouse has a black lantern room at the top and a small square window on its side. In the foreground, there are lush green bushes and several palm trees. The scene is bright and sunny, with a few wispy clouds visible in the distance.

Highly attached residents are more likely to see their communities as being open to many kinds of people.



How Gallup Found the Factors With the Strongest Links to Attachment

To find out what drives attachment, Gallup asked residents five questions examining their level of attachment to their community and then asked them to rate various aspects of the community such as basic services, the local economy, social offerings, and openness.

Gallup then analyzed the relationship between the overall level of community attachment and residents' perceptions of aspects of the community itself to reveal the strongest links. The greater the correlation between attachment and a given factor, the stronger the link. Using this analysis, Gallup ranked the aspects of communities that have the strongest links to attachment, understanding that even small differences can be very meaningful.

Community Attribute	Correlation to Attachment*		
	2008	2009	2010
Social Offerings	0.49	0.52	0.54
Openness	0.53	0.52	0.50
Aesthetics	0.51	0.50	0.49
Education	0.47	0.44	0.47
Basic Services	0.41	0.34	0.42
Leadership	0.41	0.40	0.39
Economy	0.41	0.39	0.36
Safety	0.22	0.19	0.23
Social Capital	0.14	0.16	0.15
Civic Involvement	0.06	0.04	0.04

*The higher the correlation, the more closely the attribute is related to attachment.

What Matters Most

What attaches residents to their communities doesn't change much from place to place. While one might expect the drivers of attachment would be different in Miami from those in Macon, Ga., in fact the main drivers of attachment differ little across communities. Whether you live in San Jose, Calif., or State College, Pa., the things that connect you to your community are generally the same.

When examining each factor in the study and its relationship to attachment, the same items rise to the top, year after year:

- **Social Offerings** — Places for people to meet each other and the feeling that people in the community care about each other
- **Openness** — How welcoming the community is to different types of people, including families with young children, minorities, and talented college graduates
- **Aesthetics** — The physical beauty of the community including the availability of parks and green spaces



Key Drivers of Attachment in 2010

Knight Community	Social Offerings	Openness	Aesthetics
	Attribute Rank in 2010		
Overall	1	2	3
Aberdeen, SD	1	3	2
Akron, OH	1	3	1
Biloxi, MS	1	3	2
Boulder, CO	1	3	1
Bradenton, FL	1	3	1
Charlotte, NC	1	3	1
Columbia, SC	1	2	2
Columbus, GA	1	2	2
Detroit, MI	1	2	4
Duluth, MN	1	3	2
Fort Wayne, IN	1	3	2
Gary, IN	1	3	1
Grand Forks, ND	1	3	2
Lexington, KY	1	2	2
City of Long Beach, CA	1	3	1
Macon, GA	1	3	2
Miami, FL	1	2	4
Milledgeville, GA	1	3	2
Myrtle Beach, SC	1	3	2
Palm Beach, FL	1	3	2
Philadelphia, PA	1	2	4
San Jose, CA	1	3	2
St. Paul, MN	1	3	2
State College, PA	1	3	2
Tallahassee, FL	1	2	2
Wichita, KS	1	2	2



Key Community Attributes

While the study also measures perceptions of the local economy and basic services, these three factors are always more important in terms of their relationship to community attachment. This is not to say that communities should focus on building parks when jobs aren't available. However, it does make it clear that these other factors, beyond basic needs, should be included when thinking about economic growth and development. These seemingly softer needs have an even larger effect than previously thought when it comes to residents' attachment to their communities.

Generally, demographics are not the strongest drivers of attachment. In almost every community Gallup studied, attachment is more strongly related to certain perceptions of the community than to residents' age, race, income, or other demographic characteristics. In other words, whether a resident is young or old, wealthy or poor, or black, white, or Hispanic matters less than his or her perceptions of the community. This reality gives community leaders a powerful tool to influence residents' attachment to the community, no matter who they are.

SOCIAL OFFERINGS INCLUDES PERCEPTIONS OF:

- Vibrant nightlife
- Good place to meet people
- Other people care about each other
- Availability of arts and cultural opportunities*
- Availability of social community events*

OPENNESS INCLUDES PERCEPTIONS OF:

- Good place for older people
- Good place for racial and ethnic minorities
- Good place for families with young children
- Good place for gays and lesbians
- Good place for young, talented college graduates looking for work
- Good place for immigrants
- Good place for young adults without children*

AESTHETICS INCLUDES PERCEPTIONS OF:

- Availability of parks, playgrounds, and trails
- Beauty or physical setting

**New in 2010. Not included in overall attribute score to allow for trending to previous years.*

FINDINGS FOR MIAMI

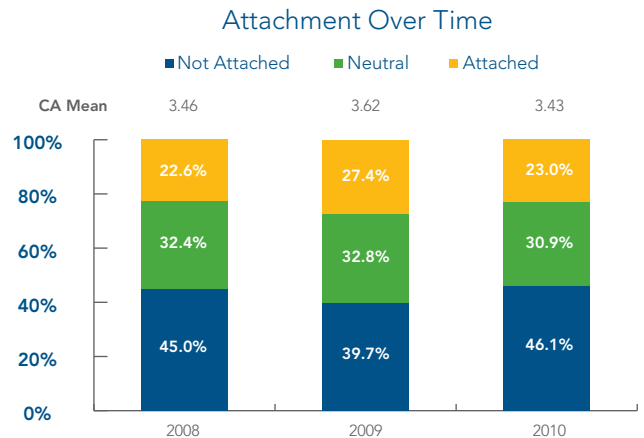
METROPOLITAN DIVISION

OVERALL ATTACHMENT

Residents in Miami express a lower level of overall attachment to their community in 2010 than they did in 2009 or 2008. The 2010 mean score of 3.43 out of a possible 5.00 compares with a score of 3.62 in 2009 and 3.46 in 2008. Results reflect surveys conducted in Miami-Dade County.

Miami's collective community attachment mean score significantly outpaces the overall score of its comparison group of similar communities of very high urban density and very large population (3.32), which includes Detroit (3.08) and Philadelphia (3.52). This has been the case in each year of the study.

Findings in this report represent the Miami MD unless otherwise noted.



Community Attachment in All Very Large Population — Very High Urban Density Communities

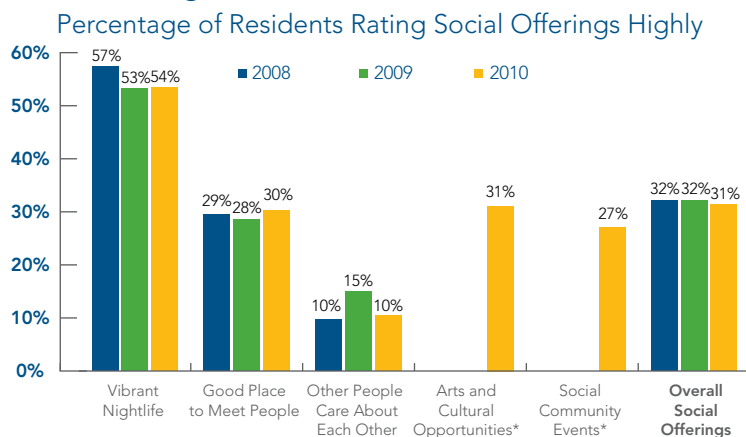
	2008	2009	2010
Detroit, MI	3.02	3.11	3.08
Miami, FL	3.46	3.62	3.43
Philadelphia, PA	3.54	3.52	3.52
Comparison Group Mean	3.31	3.37	3.32

KEY DRIVERS OF ATTACHMENT

Miami's social offerings, openness, education, and aesthetics are, in that order, most likely to influence residents' attachment to the community in 2010, as in 2009. Further, Miami outscores Detroit and Philadelphia on three of these four (social offerings, aesthetics, and openness).

- Social Offerings:** Miami is famous for South Beach and other entertainment hot spots, so it is not surprising that residents rate the community's vibrant nightlife highest among its social offerings. However, they are more negative than positive about the availability of social community events, whether Miami is a good place to meet people, and the availability of arts and cultural opportunities. The community still struggles to be a place where other people care about each other, with three out of four Miami residents saying it currently is not.

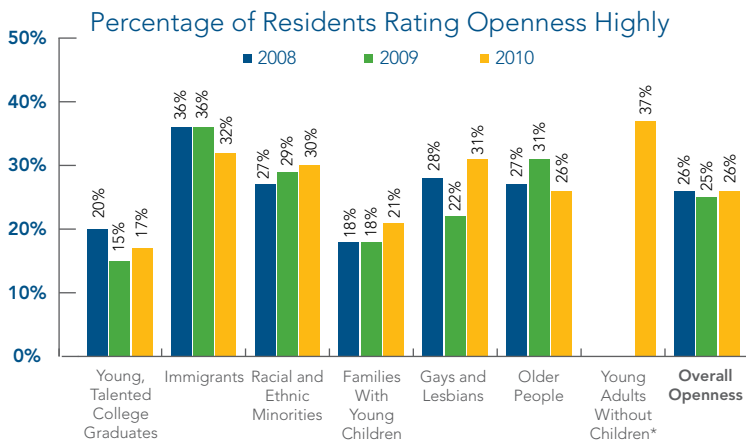
Social Offerings



*New in 2010. Not included in domain score to allow trending.

- Openness:** Miami residents' overall rating of the community's openness did not change in 2010 compared with 2008 and 2009. The community continues to significantly outperform the comparison group in six of the seven individual openness measures. About one-third or more say the community is a good place for racial and ethnic minorities, gays and lesbians, immigrants, and young adults without children. Residents are relatively more negative about whether Miami is a good place for older people and families with young children. They are most negative about whether Miami is a good place for talented college graduates looking for work, with almost two-thirds saying it is not.

Openness

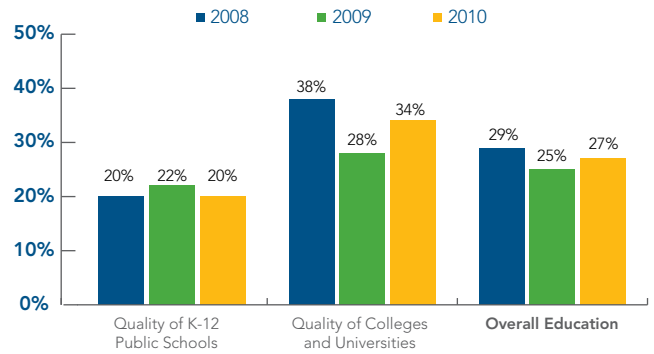


*New in 2010. Not included in domain score to allow trending.

- Education:** Education is one of Miami's key attachment drivers, but the community's ratings in this area are lower than those of Detroit and Philadelphia. Residents are more positive than negative about the quality of the community's colleges and universities but to a lesser degree than in the comparison communities. Further, more than half of residents rate the quality of the community's K-12 public schools as poor, hardly changed from 2009.

Education

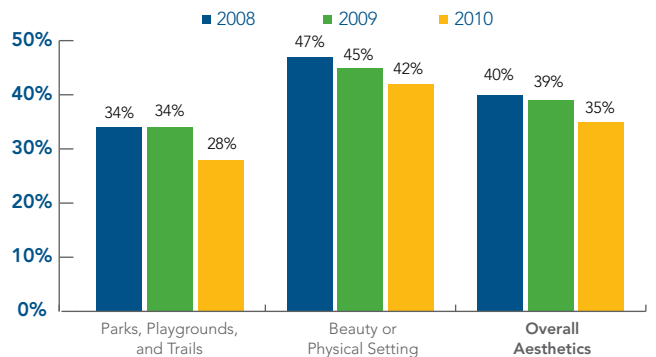
Percentage of Residents Rating Education Highly



- Aesthetics:** The community continues to trade on the beauty of its coastal location and tropical climate. More than 4 in 10 Miami residents rate the beauty or physical setting of the community positively, easily outpacing the mean scores of Detroit and Philadelphia. On the other hand, they are slightly less positive about the community's parks, playgrounds, and trails than are residents of the other two cities.

Aesthetics

Percentage of Residents Rating Aesthetics Highly



Summary Table of Strengths and Opportunities



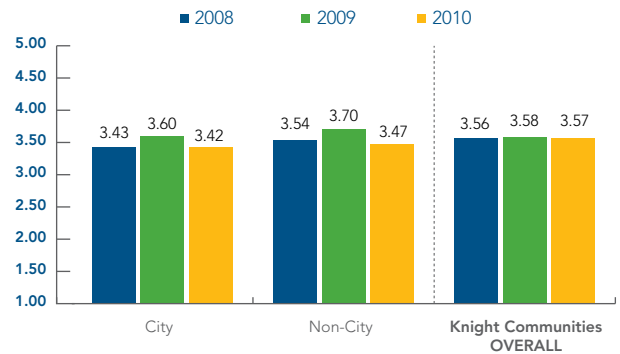
Drivers positioned farther up are more influential in causing emotional attachment. Drivers positioned farther to the right are rated by respondents as being better performing in a community. A driver that is both influential in causing emotional attachment and not rated as well performing (i.e., one that is positioned in the top left quadrant) represents an area of opportunity as an improvement in performance will have a particularly high impact on improving emotional attachment.

WHO IS MOST ATTACHED IN MIAMI

While demographic characteristics do not have as much effect on attachment as residents' perceptions of their communities, patterns do emerge among various groups.

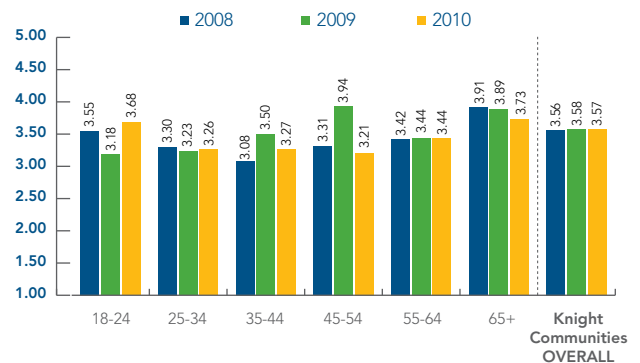
- Geography:** Community attachment among residents who live in Miami, the primary city surveyed, is on par with those who live outside the city limits.

Community Attachment by Geography



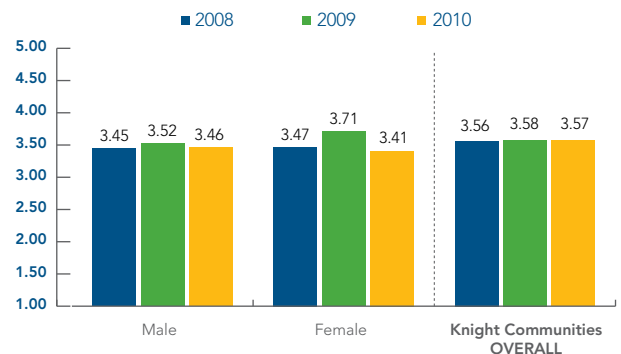
- Age:** Miami's oldest and youngest adults have the highest community attachment mean scores. Those aged 18 to 24 have a higher attachment score than those aged 25 to 34. And while those aged 55 to 64 give a higher score than 35- to 54-year-olds, those aged 65 and older have the highest attachment score of all.

Community Attachment by Age



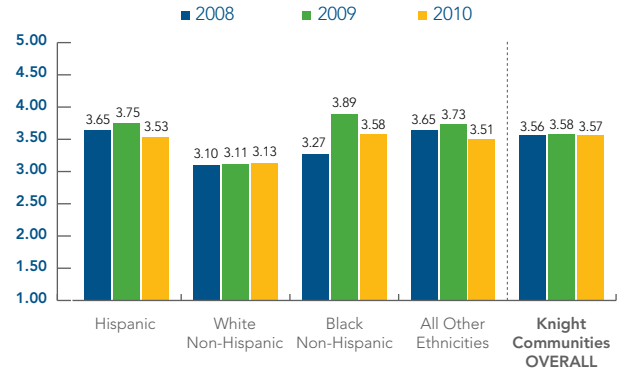
- Gender:** Men and women in Miami share similar levels of attachment with their community in 2010, marking a shift from 2009, when women's attachment was higher than men's. Attachment among both genders is down slightly.

Community Attachment by Gender



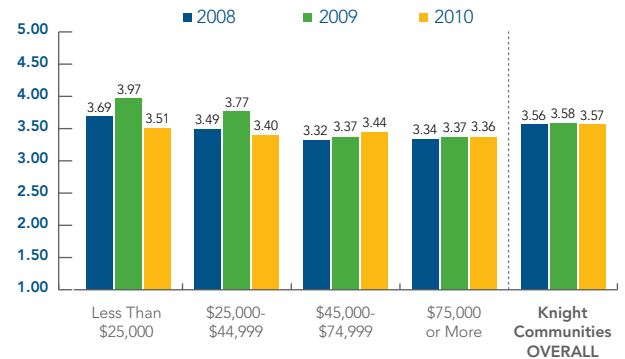
- Race and Ethnicity:** Miami maintains a large population of Hispanic residents, and this demographic group's community attachment mean score far surpasses that of non-Hispanic whites in the community. Miami's black residents also post a higher attachment mean score than whites. However, attachment mean scores among Miami's Hispanic and black residents are lower in 2010 than in 2009.

Community Attachment by Race and Ethnicity



- Income:** According to Miami residents' mean scores, money may not buy attachment to their community. Those with a household income of less than \$25,000 per year are the most attached, while those with an annual income of \$75,000 or more are the least attached.

Community Attachment by Annual Household Income



IMPLICATIONS FOR MIAMI

For more detailed recommendations please go to www.soulofthecommunity.org/miami

STRENGTHS TO LEVERAGE

Social offerings is a key driver of community attachment among Miami residents. The international perception of the community as a place to have fun and enjoy life is worth cultivating further, given residents' positive rankings of the community's vibrant nightlife.

The community should also continue to bring attention to Miami's **physical beauty**. Since **aesthetics** are a key driver of attachment in the community, leaders should do more to help residents enjoy their surroundings by investing in the community's parks, playgrounds, and trails.

Miami residents give high ratings for the quality of the community's **colleges and universities**. The community should continue to promote its higher education offerings among a broader audience, and perhaps use these positive perceptions to improve education at the elementary and secondary levels.

OPPORTUNITIES TO PRIORITIZE

While Miami outperforms other comparable cities in terms of **openness** to various groups, leaders should do more to increase this key driver to community attachment. Cultural learning events and festivals that promote a diversity of lifestyles and backgrounds may go a long way toward increasing the perception that the **community is open to racial and ethnic minorities, immigrants, young adults without children, and gays and lesbians**. Leaders should also actively cultivate and promote offerings that appeal to young, talented **college graduates seeking jobs** and **families with young children**, as attracting and retaining these groups will be critical to the community's long-term growth.

Since Miami also struggles with the perception that **people in the community do not care about each other**, events that bring people together to foster more interaction and understanding are likely to have a compounding effect on community attachment.

Leaders also have much to gain by improving perceptions of the quality of **K-12 education** in the community. Not only will this increase attachment overall, but a more positive view of public schools can also help to increase the perception that the community is a good place for families with young children, for gains on two critical dimensions.

METHODOLOGY

The Gallup study is a 15-minute phone survey conducted in the 26 communities the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation serves, including Miami. The survey is available in English and Spanish, and landlines and cell phones are called.

Each year, a random sample of at least 400 residents, aged 18 and older, is interviewed in each community, with additional interviews conducted in selected resident communities. In 2010, 15,200 interviews were conducted, with 1,000 conducted in eight resident communities, including Miami. The 2010 study also included 200 interviews among residents aged 18 to 34 in the resident communities to give Gallup more information about that age group. Overall data were adjusted to ensure an accurate representation of the real demographic makeup of each community based on U.S. Census Bureau data.

Gallup also used U.S. Census classifications to choose the geographical area included in each community. For the most part, Gallup used the Metropolitan Statistical Area. However, in a few cases, Gallup used other accepted definitions of the community area. These census definitions allow Gallup to compare other information such as local GDP and population growth so that Gallup can more closely examine community attachment and key community outcomes.

In Miami, Gallup interviewed residents in Miami-Dade County.



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About the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation advances journalism in the digital age and invests in the vitality of communities where the Knight brothers owned newspapers. Knight Foundation focuses on projects that promote informed and engaged communities and lead to transformational change. For more, visit www.knightfoundation.org

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