A Study of Visitors in a Public Program: The Power of Chocolate Festival at the National Museum of the American Indian

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Abstract:

This study of the February, 2012 *The Power of Chocolate Festival*, conducted by the Office of Policy and Analysis (OP&A), is one of a series of studies funded by the Latino Initiatives Pool, sponsored by the Smithsonian Latino Center, held at the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI). The results are based on exit surveys of visitors at the festival. From a random sample of 607 intercepted visitors, 416 completed surveys were collected (84%). About one in ten visitors identified themselves as having a Hispanic or Latino origin. Similarly, about one in ten respondents spoke Spanish as their primary language; nearly all of the rest spoke English.

The study shows that the Latino respondents’ ratings for the festival were similar to the averages for Smithsonian exhibitions. Comparative data, unfortunately, is available only for exhibitions and museums and not programs such as festivals. The data presented in this report also show that the experiences of Latino and non-Latino visitors differed in some key ways – not only in what they would like to experience at NMAI, but also in the reasons they gave for going to NMAI. Overall, about half the visitors heard about the festival from the Museum website and/or social media and *Word of mouth.*