

Advancing a Community-Based Participatory Research Model for Metropolitan Regional Immigrant Integration and Receptivity through the One Region Initiative

Atlanta Global Research and Education Collaborative
(AGREC)

FALL 2021 Project Presentation

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11AM - 12PM EST

Welcoming America, a nonprofit organization based in metropolitan Atlanta, has grown a membership network throughout the U.S. of nonprofit organizations and local governments that present their communities as “welcoming cities” for immigrants. In January 2018, Welcoming America launched the “One Region Initiative” to cultivate a concept of “welcoming region” to transcend municipal boundaries. The pilot initiative took place in the Atlanta metropolitan area, a major emerging immigrant gateway, and involved community listening sessions and a 56-member steering committee, representing the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. The One Region Initiative disseminated recommendations to the public in a regional strategic welcoming plan in August 2018. The purpose of this paper is to examine One Region member municipalities’ implementation of the recommendations between 2019 and 2021 amid the broader multi-scalar context of changing geographies of immigrant settlement and immigration policy. We do so from a community-based participatory research framework, through participant observation as One Region steering committee members, and applied researchers who have been engaged in immigrant integration work in the Atlanta metro area and throughout the country for over a decade.

Launched in 2020 and housed within the Atlanta Global Studies Center (AGSC), AGREC is currently comprised of six universities:

AGSC, a partnership of Georgia Tech and Georgia State University

Emory University’s Office of Global Strategy and Initiatives (GSI)

Agnes Scott College’s SUMMIT Center for Global Learning and Leadership Development

Spelman College’s Gordon Zeto Center for Global Education

Kennesaw State University’s Division of Global Affairs

AGREC seeks to build and strengthen collaborative networks of multi-institutional scholars and practitioners to support global research and education initiatives in the Greater Atlanta region.

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