Demographic Perspectives, LLC

Demographic Perspectives, LLC, is a consulting firm that provides custom demographic, survey, and market research services for the higher education, nonprofit, and business communities, for real estate development, and for public agencies. For over fifteen years, we have provided data and analysis that is tailored to the strategic, programmatic, physical, assessment, and community planning initiatives of each client. We have been involved at every stage of project development, from goals and visioning, to data collection and analysis, to project communication and public outreach, and to evaluation. Our key focus is the data-driven aspects of decision-making and communication.

The methodologies we employ include surveys; stakeholder interviews; focus groups; town meetings; design charrettes; quantitative and qualitative benchmarking; population modeling, mapping, and projections. We are experts at data analysis and the visual display of information.

We also help organizations effectively utilize data that they routinely gather on individuals in their community (e.g., students, employees, donors, members, residents). This includes activity data (event attendance or donor data), personal data (demographic information), and feedback comments.

Our clients are universities, K-12 independent schools, architects, planners and engineers, real estate consultants, developers, nonprofits, businesses, and public agencies.

Surveys and focus groups have a power that is underutilized. Their obvious use is to collect data, but they also communicate key messages of the project, and can serve to gather participants into the stakeholder community.

--Rena Cheskis-Gold
Rena Cheskis-Gold,
Principal

Rena is the founding principal researcher at Demographic Perspectives, LLC. With over twenty-five years as a researcher and evaluator, speaker and author, Rena is an expert in providing custom data and analysis for strategy, assessment, communications, and for managing change. Formerly with Yale University’s Office of Institutional Research, Rena has conducted research to inform decision-making at over 40 colleges and universities, nonprofits, and businesses. She also conducts public outreach for planning processes.

One of Rena’s specialties is designing surveys, focus groups, and other analytic tools to guide student, participant, donor and customer recruitment, retention, program planning, career services, alumni engagement, and for project evaluation.

She also specializes in working with universities to develop strategic material such as demand studies that are necessary for programming and planning community common spaces and student and faculty housing. Her research has been used in the development of many student housing plans, including the Harvard Graduate Commons residential life program, 1,000 new graduate beds in Harvard’s Riverside and Trilogy housing, the renovation plan for Princeton’s Hibben-Magee housing, and Washington University in St. Louis’ neighborhood plan for north of Delmar Avenue.
Rena teaches, speaks, and writes regularly on incorporating data and research into planning efforts. Most recently, she taught a webinar on “Data-Driven Decision-Making for Nonprofits,” participated in a SCUP online conversation on campus housing, spoke on housing trends at the Northeast ACUHO conference, and was keynote speaker at the 2011 East Coast Conference on Faculty Housing. She has been a regular guest speaker on utilizing survey research for customer insight and strategy at both the Harvard Business School and the Yale School of Management. Her customer-oriented approach to survey research is featured in a Harvard Business School case study on survey research.

Rena holds a B.A. with distinction in Demography from the University of Illinois, an M.A. in Demography and Population Studies from Brown University, and has completed doctoral preparation at the same Brown program.

Alexandra Delaney Danahy
Senior Associate

With a background in urban planning and management consulting, Alexandra has strong research, analysis and writing skills as well as significant knowledge of physical planning. She has managed physical planning projects both for a Boston non-profit, A Better City (ABC), and at Harvard University, where she served as a Harvard Presidential Fellow for the Allston Development Group (formerly Harvard Planning and Allston Initiative). At ABC, Alexandra managed the stakeholder process with businesses and

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institutions for the Boston Crossroads Initiative. At Harvard, Alexandra managed the stakeholder process for Undergraduate House Renewal and the Faculty Housing Taskforce, as well as feasibility studies for re-use of buildings, and demand modeling for housing in Harvard’s new Allston campus.

With Demographic Perspectives, Alexandra designed and analyzed surveys, led focus groups, and conducted benchmarking for strategic housing initiatives at Princeton and Yale Universities, Harvard Law School, the University of Chicago, Washington University in St. Louis, and Wellesley College. She was the lead in the development of the university housing benchmarking tool for Sightlines, LLC.

Alexandra holds an M.A. in Urban Planning from Harvard University and a B.A. from Harvard College.

**Michael Ben-Avie**
**Senior Evaluator**

Michael Ben-Avie, Ph.D. is an academic psychologist with postdoctoral work at the Yale Child Study Center.

He is a nationally-recognized expert on education as co-editor of six books on educational change and youth development with James. P. Comer, M.D., Associate Dean of the Yale School of Medicine. As an Associate Research Scientist at the Yale School Development Program, he conducted national, large-scale assessment activities, including the design of...
As Principal Investigator and co-P.I., he conducts outcome evaluations for federal grants, including grants from the U.S. Department of Education, and a collaboration among the U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Justice.

Dr. Ben-Avie serves as an academic advisor and consultant to many philanthropic organizations. He has conducted numerous research studies with colleagues in the Jewish community, including the Educators in Jewish Schools Study, a national study of educators in congregational and day schools. He was a co-investigator of a study on the childhood roots of Jewish adults’ quality of life (which studied day and congregational schools, camps, and youth groups). His most recent research in the Jewish community is the outcome evaluation of the Rose Community Foundation’s MazelTot initiative.

In 2005, Michael was accepted for inclusion in the U.S. Department of Education, Institute for Education Sciences’ What Works Clearinghouse Registry of Evaluation Researchers.

**Lynn Saltz, Principal**
**Business Innovative Strategies International**

As a partner to Demographic Perspectives, and as a principal in her own firm, Business Innovative Strategies International, Lynn specializes in customized strategic public relations plans incorporating the nuts and bolts of internal and external communications tactics. Lynn
capitalizes on her skills as a highly organized, self-directed, results-driven individual to focus on problem solving, and on effective and actionable results.

Drawing upon her significant established local media networks and relationships, Lynn has planned and executed successful public relations and communications strategies for many nonprofit organizations in the greater Stamford area. These include the Norwalk Connecticut Symphony Orchestra, the Stamford Downtown Special Services District, the Connecticut Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities, Play With Your Food, an innovative Fairfield County performance program, and the Jewish Family Service of Stamford. As an outside consultant for the Stamford Downtown Special Services District, Ms. Saltz developed a communications strategy to educate the retail community on the desirability of operating a business in downtown Stamford.

Other Connecticut-based clients include Gilbertie’s Herb Gardens, Edelman Leather, Cucina Casalinga, and Haverson Architecture and Design.

As an over thirty-year resident of Fairfield County, Connecticut, Lynn has an in-depth understanding of the constituencies in the geographic area and of course, how to effectively speak to each of them. She is a graduate of Cornell University, and received her MBA in Marketing Management at St. John’s University.
**Selected Methodologies**
Survey; stakeholder interviews; focus groups; town meetings; design charrettes; quantitative and qualitative benchmarking; population modeling, mapping and projections; data analysis and visual display of information;

**Selected Processes**
Demand studies; feasibility and programming studies; post-occupancy evaluation. Public outreach. Studies of participant and donor recruitment, satisfaction, engagement, and career path. Program and grant evaluation. Data and analysis to support strategic planning and communications, and organizational analysis. Institutional and organizational research.

**The Student Experience**
- Harvard University
- University of Pennsylvania
- Yale University
- Princeton University
- University of Chicago
- Washington University in St. Louis
- Johns Hopkins University
- Columbia University
- Wesleyan University
- Tufts University
- Harvard Divinity School
- Harvard Law School
- Yale School of Public Health
- Bryn Mawr Graduate School
- Academy for Jewish Religion
- Northwood School
- Amherst College
- Bates College
- Bowdoin College
- Bryn Mawr College
- Colby College
- Connecticut College
- Hamilton College
- Middlebury College
- Mt. Holyoke College
- Pomona College
- Swarthmore College
- Trinity College
- Williams College
- University of New Haven
- Jewish Day School Consortium of Southern New England

**Parent Surveys**
- University of Chicago
- Columbia University
- Yale University
- Swarthmore College
- Bryn Mawr College
- Amherst College
- Northwood School
- Manhattan Country School
- The Epstein School (Atlanta)
- Solomon Schechter Day School of Greater Boston

www.demographicperspectives.com
334 McKinley Ave  New Haven, Connecticut 06515  (203) 397-1612
**Undergraduate and Graduate Student Housing and Dining**

Princeton University  
Yale University  
University of Chicago  
Harvard University  
Harvard Law School  
Harvard Divinity School  
Brown University  
Washington University in St. Louis  

Columbia University Medical Center  
University of Michigan  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Northeastern University  
Wellesley College  
Babson College  
Sightlines, LLC

**Donor and Alumni Surveys**

University of Chicago  
Princeton University  
Harvard Divinity School  
Yale University  
Yale School of Management  
Yale Law School  
Columbia University  
Bryn Mawr Graduate School  
Wesleyan University  
Amherst College  
Bryn Mawr College  
Swarthmore College  
Academy for Jewish Religion  
Northwood School  
Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven  
Camp Ramah  
North American Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY)

**Faculty Issues: Housing, Quality of Life, Library, Demographics**

Harvard University  
Princeton University  
Yale University  
Columbia University Medical Center  
Columbia University  
Johns Hopkins University  
New York University
Assessment Projects
(Program evaluation; post-occupancy assessment)

Harvard Real Estate Services
Manhattan Country School
Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA)
National Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY)
Camp Ramah
Steinhardt Foundation
Rose Community Foundation
Merrill Lynch & Co., Inc. and National Urban League (Scholarship Builder Program)

Organizational Analysis and Institutional Research
(Review of methods and systems for gathering and organizing data for strategic decision-support; developing an internal research function or office)

Yale University
University of Chicago
Harvard Divinity School
Wesleyan University
Princeton Office of Housing
Harvard Divinity School
Johns Hopkins University
Yale School of Public Health
Swarthmore College
Bryn Mawr College
Pomona College
Berklee School of Music
University of New Haven
Behrman House Publishing

Partners
K. Backus & Associates, Inc.
Perkins + Will Architects
Austin Architects
Newman Architects
The Georgetown Company
Sightlines, LLC
Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven
Business Innovative Strategies International (BISI) Public Relations
Providya Web Survey Group

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Recent Guest Lectures, Webinars, Conference Presentations, and Publications

Guest Lectures, Webinars, and Conference Presentations by Rena Cheskis-Gold
Lecture on Survey Research for Understanding Customers class, Harvard Business School
Lecture on Survey Research for Listening to Customers class, Yale School of Management
“Trends in Student Housing: Process and Product,” Northeast Association for College and University Housing Officers (ACUHO), with Susan Keller, Harvard Real Estate Services, and Merle Bicknell, Harvard College
“Data-Driven Decision-Making for Nonprofits,” Nonprofit Webinars.com
“Understanding Your Faculty,” East Coast Conference on Faculty Housing
“Providing Data for Career Services,” Career Services Group at Yale

“Everything You Need to Know About Focus Groups,” upcoming webinar
“International Graduate Students on our Campuses: Numbers and Needs in Cultural Context,” upcoming conference presentation, Northeast Society for College and University Planning (SCUP)
“Smart Analytics for Career Services,” upcoming conference presentation, Eastern Association of Career Services (EACE), with Felicia Spencer, Yale School of Public Health

Selected Publications