

# Researchers analyze political views and involvement of Latino immigrants

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Latino immigrants in the United States who are not yet citizens will not be voting in the 2016 presidential election, but history shows they are civically involved, says a Purdue University political science professor who followed Latino political engagement through the last presidential election.

"In many instances, the image of [immigrants](#) portrayed in the 2016 presidential primary debates was of people who are not really part of the United States, even though they reside in the United States," said James McCann, professor of political science. "But the perception that immigrants are not paying attention or are detached is inaccurate. They are customers, taxpayers, neighbors, co-workers and family members. Even for those who are not part of the electorate, they are a part of the public, and their civic involvement does have an effect. This can be by discussing politics with friends and family members or attending community events."

During the 2012 [presidential election](#), McCann and Cornell University government professor Michael Jones-Correa conducted a nationally representative survey of 1,304 foreign-born Latino adults, approximately 60 percent of whom were not naturalized U.S. citizens. The findings, analyzed by McCann and Jones-Correa as well as more than 20 other scholars, are published in a special issue, "[Immigrants Inside Politics/Outside Citizenship](#)" by the Russell Sage Foundation's Journal of the Social Sciences. McCann and Jones-Correa are the journal issue editors.

"There is a risk for any demographic group to be characterized two-dimensionally through social media and headlines," McCann said. "As researchers we believe we have an obligation to present a richer portrait, and get behind the headlines. By conducting these surveys, we were able to understand how immigrants become informed about politics, how they identify with political parties, where they stand on important policy issues, and how involved they are in everyday civic life."

The original data from the 2012 "Latino Immigrant National Election Study" will be archived and available for public use through the Purdue University Research Repository. The 2012 study was supported by the Russell Sage Foundation, the Carnegie Corp. of New York, Cornell University, the Purdue University Global Policy Research Institute, and the Office of the Executive Vice President for Research and Partnerships. This fall, McCann and Jones-Correa will be conducting a comparable national survey of Latino immigrants during the general election campaigns.

Provided by Purdue University

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