

# **Valley News Dispatch**

## **Poll seeks response from Valley**

By Stephanie Ritenbaugh  
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To participate in the Voice of the Region, sign up at [www.voiceoftheregion.com](http://www.voiceoftheregion.com) or call 412-471-8484, Ext. 409

The search is on for people interested in saying what they think about local issues.

Tribune-Review Publishing and Pittsburgh-based research firm Campos have teamed to form the Voice of the Region, which will use quarterly online surveys as its primary means of polling participants.

The goal is to get representation from each of the counties in the region, with at least 1 percent of each county's population participating, according to Yvonne Campos, president of the research firm.

It's an opportunity to let people voice their opinions on issues facing the region, Campos said.

"We talked with the Tribune-Review since its reach is much broader and covers the outlying counties in the region."

Campos proposed the idea to Tribune-Review Publishing officials, and it seemed like a good opportunity, said president Ed Harrell.

The publishing company owns the Tribune-Review in Greensburg, the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, the Valley News Dispatch, the Daily Courier in Connellsville, the Valley Independent in Monessen, the Kittanning Leader Times and the Gateway newspapers.

As the panel grows, Tribune newspapers can use the information for stories, Harrell said.

"We approached them because we needed their reach," Campos said. "I think it's a very community-oriented newspaper. It's something they're providing for readers. It's a good mechanism to hear from the region.

"If a hot issue comes up, we can take the temperature of the region.

Information on those who sign up is confidential.

"We don't sell the database," Campos said. "They will only participate in regional survey quarterly."

Past surveys have included topics such as the local economy, public education, health and fitness, and Pittsburgh's cultural district.

"We usually keep surveys short, about eight to 10 questions, so you can do them in about 2 minutes."

There are about 22,000 currently in the panel, but most are from Allegheny County, Campos said.

"We wanted to get representation from all the various counties in the area," Campos said. "We know the region is broader than Allegheny County."

Once there are enough people in the database, we can go back and say that Allegheny County thinks this way, but Westmoreland County thinks this way. To do that, we need enough representation in all the counties, Campos said.

Campos has been in business for about 18 years.

"I want people to see this as a community responsibility and get excited about getting asked about key issues," Campos said. "Not everything is a heavy issue. We ask about the arts, weight, health. It's not always heavy, but we're allowing people to give their opinions."

*Stephanie Ritenbaugh can be reached at [sritenbaugh@tribweb.com](mailto:sritenbaugh@tribweb.com) or 724-226-4702.*