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# Introduction and Definitions

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# *Coles County Poverty Data Project:* **COLES COUNTY COMPARISON DATA**

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# Introduction to the Project

- Community Indicators of Poverty and Welfare
- Purpose:
  - Descriptive Statistics of Community Indicators
    - Poverty Mapping
  - “Clearing the Fog”
    - Social, Economic, Political, Spatial Conditions Affecting Communities
  - Not Causal, but Illustrative and Educational
    - Engagement and Utilization
    - Empowerment → Action
    - Conditions of Existence → Constraints on Human , Social, and Community Capital
- Future Empirical/Academic Research Directions:
  - Segregation by Social Class
  - Changes over time as conditions change
  - Political Economy, Farm Bill, and Food Security

# Introduction to the Data

- U.S. Census Bureau
  - American Community Survey (ACS)
    - 5-Year Averages
      - Only estimates that include Census Tracts
      - More specific and reliable
      - Averaged over 2005-2009; 2006-2010; 2007-2011
    - Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE)
      - Administrative Records Combined with Census and ACS Estimates
      - Annual updated estimates of income and poverty statistics
        - Administration of federal programs
        - Allocation of federal funds to local jurisdictions
- County Comparisons for East Central Illinois
- Coles County Census Tract Comparisons

# Relative Levels of Poverty

- Poverty Level (100%; Federal Threshold)
  - Federal Income Guideline dependent on Family Size; Number of Children; and the Age of Householder
  - 50% of Poverty—One-half the Federal Guideline
    - “Extreme Poverty”
  - 185% of Poverty—1.85 times higher than Federal Threshold
    - “Food Insecurity”; at-risk of not knowing where their next meal will come from
      - Food Stamp Eligibility is 130% of Poverty
  - 200% of Poverty—Twice (2 times) the Federal Threshold
    - Considered by experts to be the level of income needed to meet the minimal cost of living
    - Poverty-risk

# Relative Levels of Poverty

