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Latinos in Massachusetts Selected Areas: Lynn, Nahant, and Saugus

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The Mauricio Gastón Institute for
Latino Community Development
and Public Policy



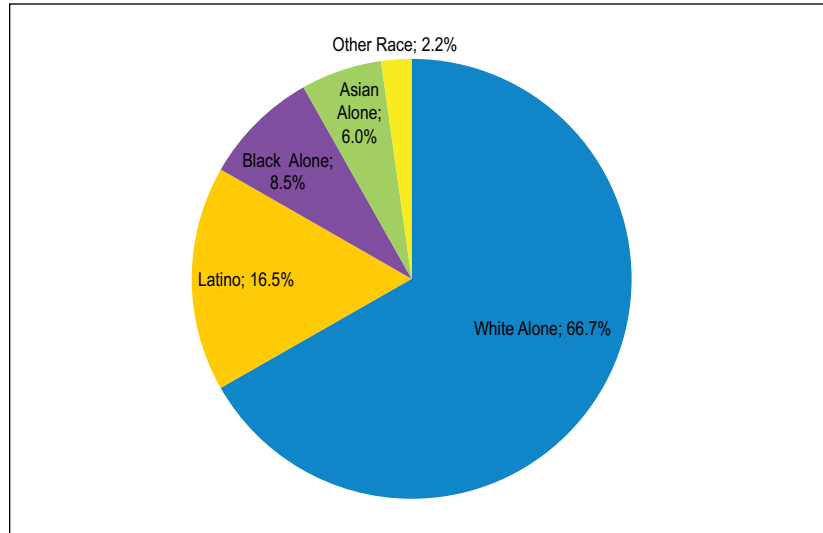
Latinos in Massachusetts Selected Areas Lynn, Nahant, and Saugus

by Phillip Granberry, PhD and Sarah Rustan | September 17, 2010

INTRODUCTION

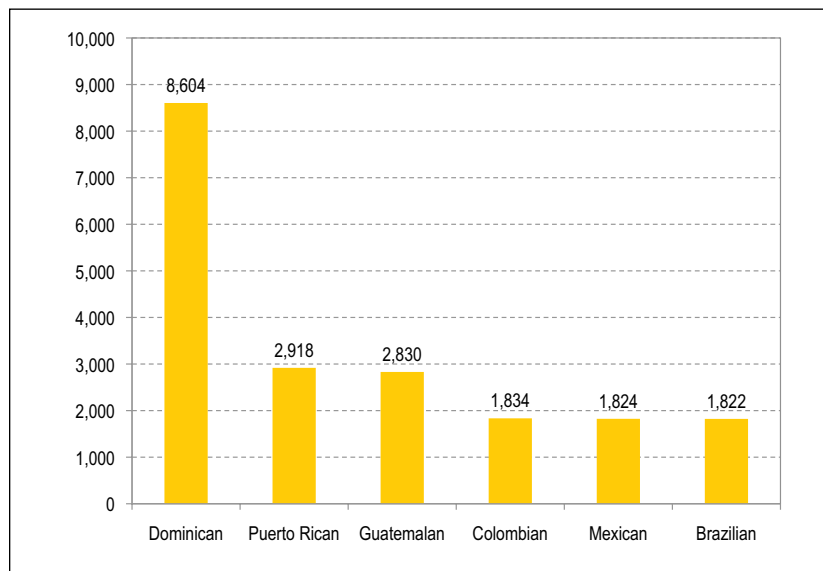
This report provides a descriptive snapshot of selected economic, social, educational, and demographic indicators pertaining to Latinos in the cities of Lynn, Nahant, and Saugus. This report is prepared for the 2010 Statewide Latino Public Policy Conference organized by UMass Boston's Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy. It is part of larger series that covers fourteen cities, or clusters of cities, in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Each report analyzes data from the 2008 American Community Survey (ACS) conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. The ACS's smallest geographic area is a Public Use Microdata Area (PUMA) consisting of a minimum census population of 100,000. In the PUMA for these cities, Lynn accounted for three-quarters of its population (75.0%) in the 2000 Census, while Nahant accounted for 3.1% and Saugus 22.0%. The great majority of the Latino population of this PUMA lived in Lynn in 2000 (98.7%), while 1.1% lived in Saugus and 0.2 % lived in Nahant. Thus, although the Latino population in the Lynn-Nahant-Saugus population will be attributed to Lynn throughout this report, the data referenced does include the smaller Latino populations in Nahant and Saugus as well.

Figure 1: Population Percentages by Ethno-Racial Group in 2008



Lynn, Nahant, and Saugus are home to an estimated 20,467 Latinos, who account for 16.5% of the area's population. Whites make up a larger percentage of the area's population (66.7%), while blacks represent 8.5% and Asians represent 6.0% (Figure 1).

Figure 2: Ancestry of the Top Latino Groups in 2008



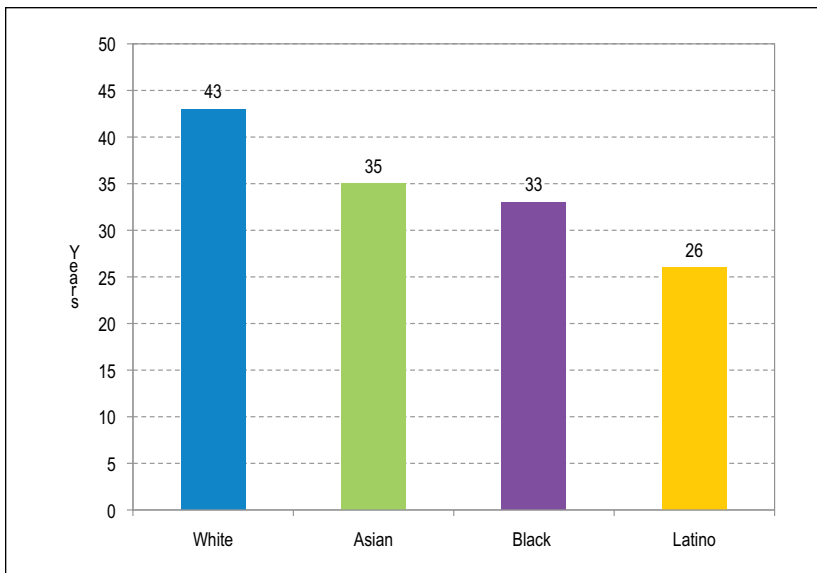
Lynn is home to a diverse Latino population. Dominicans (8,604) make up the largest Latino subpopulation in the area, followed by Puerto Ricans, Guatemalans, Colombians, Mexicans, and Brazilians¹ (Figure 2). This Latino presence is significantly shaped by international migration, and the Lynn area has a proportionately greater foreign-born population (22.1%) than the state as a whole (14.4%).

The remainder of this report presents an overview that compares Latinos and their top subpopulations to whites, blacks, and Asians in these cities for selected demographic, economic, and social characteristics².

MEDIAN AGE AND MARITAL STATUS

Figure 3 highlighting differences in median age draws attention to the importance of Latinos in Lynn. Latinos have a younger median age (26 years) than any other ethno-racial group. This suggests that they have more families with younger children and will require an investment in education of their youth; however, these younger Latinos will contribute economically, socially, and politically in later years as an older white population ages and retires. This older population will require younger residents to keep neighborhoods vibrant and maintain a productive workforce, and Latinos are poised to make this contribution.

Figure 3: Median Age by Ethno-Racial Group in 2008



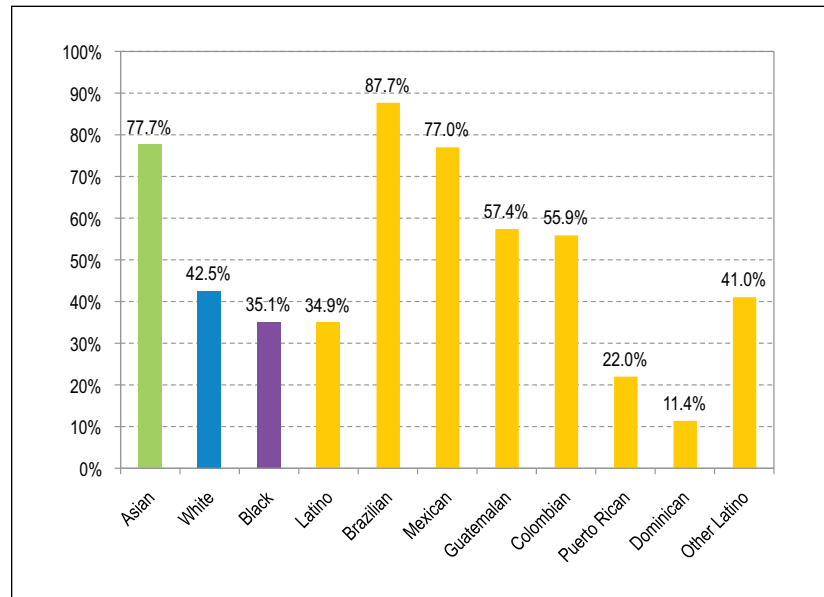
Notes

¹ Most Brazilians in the survey did not identify themselves as Latino. Whenever the category “Brazilian” appears in one of the figures, it includes all Brazilians, but the category “Latino” includes only those Brazilians who self-identified as Latino.

² Because of the smaller size of some ethno-racial groups and Latino subpopulations in the ACS data for Lynn, Nahant, and Saugus, some demographic and labor force participation estimates have too large of a standard error and have been dropped from this analysis.

The marriage rates shown in Figure 4, covering all persons age 16 and older, are higher for most ethno-racial groups in Lynn than for the same groups overall in Massachusetts (all except whites). Statewide, the Latino marriage rate is 33.6% in comparison to 34.9% in Lynn. Latino subpopulations show wide variation in their marriage rates with Brazilians, Mexicans, Guatemalans, and Colombians having marriage rates significantly higher than the statewide average. A number of factors, including different age profiles among subpopulations, could be driving this variation.

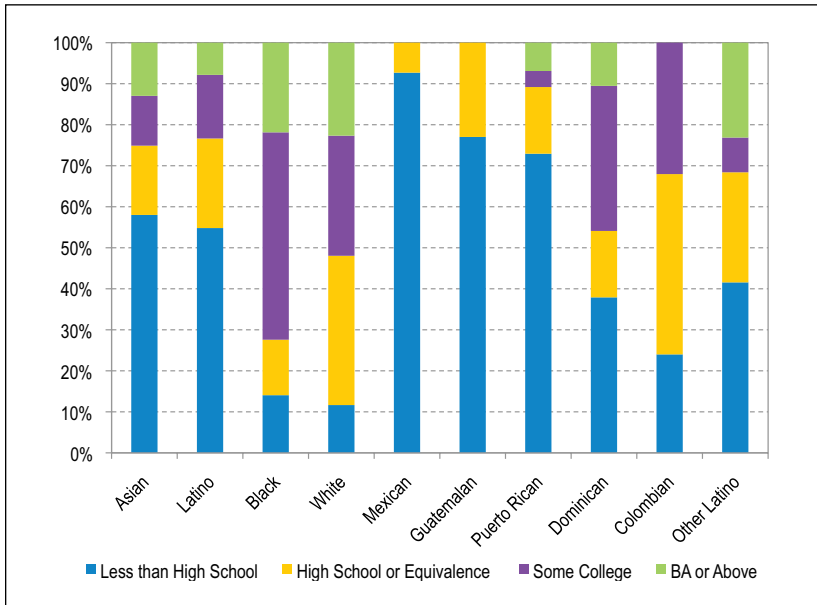
Figure 4: Marriage Rates by Ethno-Racial Group in 2008



EDUCATION

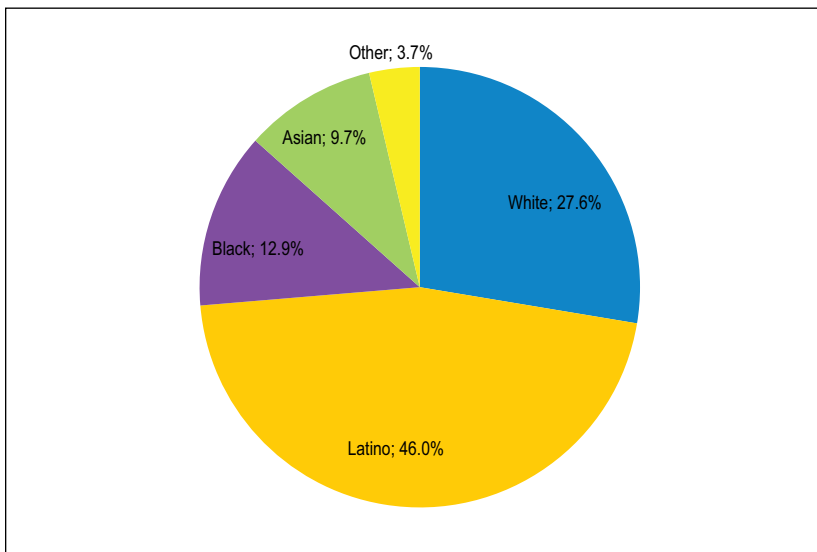
Figure 5 highlights the fact that Latinos have the second highest percentage of the population with less than a high school diploma: 54.8%, compared to 58.0% for Asians, 14.10% for blacks, and 11.7% for whites. At the other end of the educational scale, Latinos in Lynn have the lowest percentage of their population with at least a bachelor's degree: 7.8%, compared to 22.7% for whites, 21.9% for blacks, and 13.0% for Asians.

Figure 5: Educational Attainment by Ethno-Racial Group in 2008 (Adults 25 Years and Older)



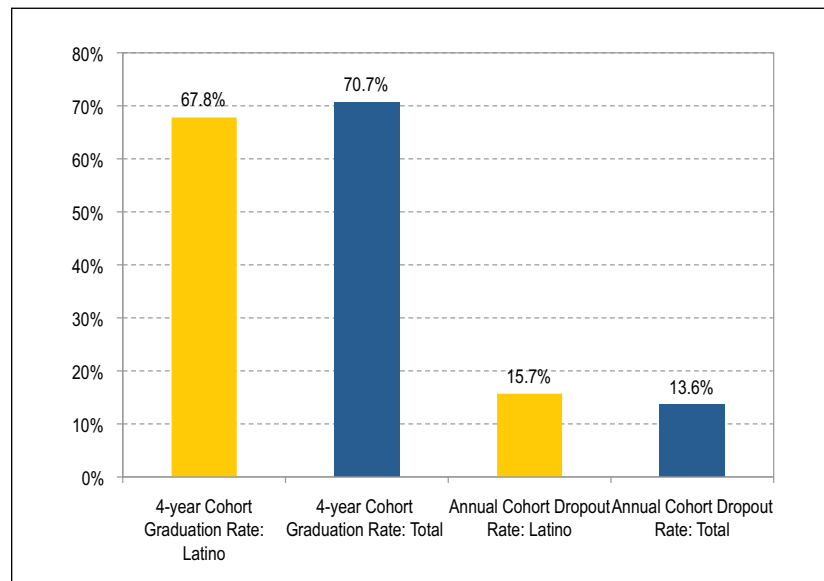
Figures 6A and 6B provide information regarding Latinos in the Lynn Public Schools and use Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education data. The Latino student population made up 46.0% of the student population in the 2008–2009 academic year, in comparison to 14.3% statewide.

Figure 6A: Spotlight on Lynn Public Schools by Ethno-Racial Group, Academic Year 2008–2009



Only 67.8% of Latino students graduate in four years and 15.7% drop out of school. The overall school population is slightly more successful, with 70.7% graduating in four years, and 13.6% dropping out of school.

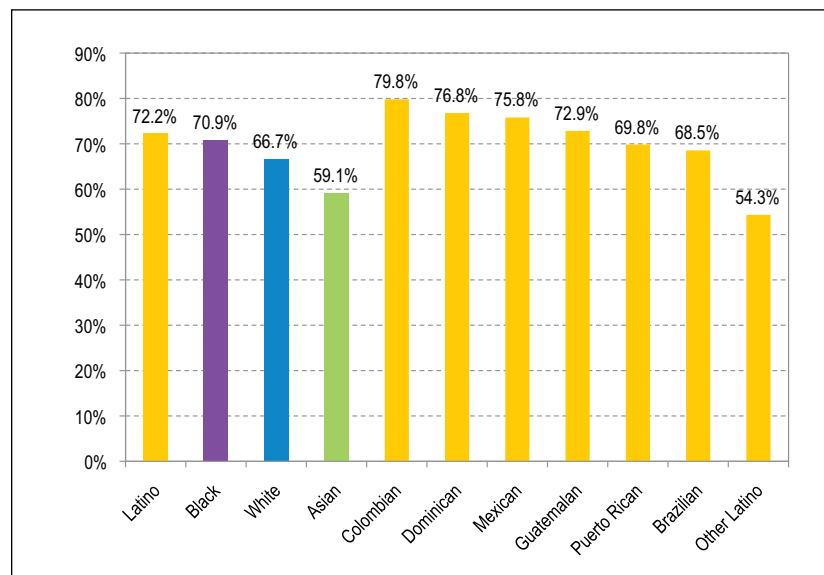
Figure 6B: Spotlight on Lynn Public Schools by Outcomes, Academic Year 2008-2009



LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

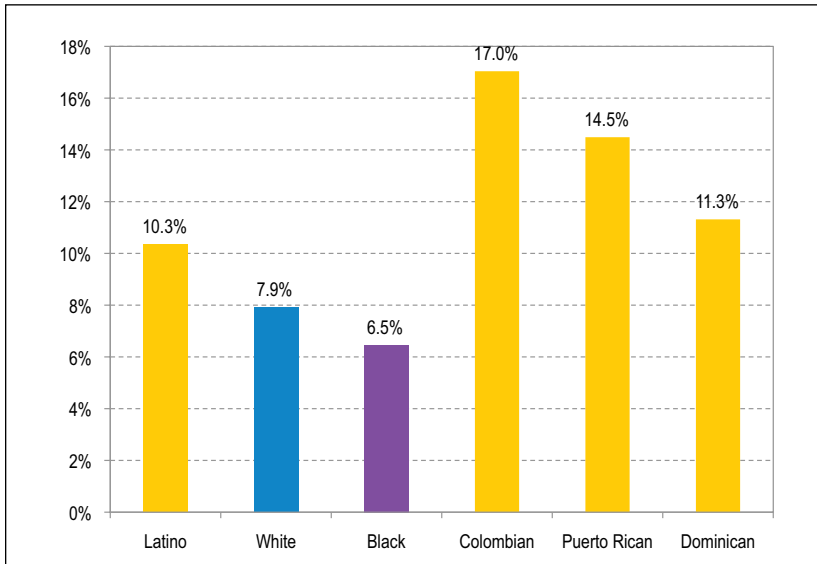
Again suggesting the importance of Latinos to the economic and social well-being of Lynn, Figure 7 shows that Latinos have the highest labor force participation rate (72.2%) in the area. This is despite the lower median age of Latinos shown by Figure 3, which suggests that they have more families with young children. Larger numbers of families with young children often result in lower labor force participation rates due to child care needs.

Figure 7: Labor Force Participation by Ethno-Racial Group in 2008



The previous labor force participation information suggests that Latinos in Lynn are motivated to participate in the area's economy. However, Figure 8 tells a different and slightly less positive story. The unemployment rate among Latinos in 2008 was 10.3%, which was higher than 7.9% for whites and 6.5% for blacks.

Figure 8: Unemployment Rates by Ethno-Racial Group in 2008



Figures 9A and 9B suggest that Latinos serve as complements to other ethno-racial groups in the area's labor market whose members have higher educational attainment. Latinos are overrepresented in what are traditionally considered blue-collar jobs (farming, construction, production, and transportation). Nearly a third of Latinos (28.6%) work in these blue-collar jobs (Figure 9B) and all Latino subpopulations except Colombians have higher percentages than the total population (25.7%) in these blue-collar jobs (Figure 9B). Correspondingly, as Figure 9A shows, Latinos are underrepresented in what are traditionally considered white-collar jobs (professional and managerial). However, Brazilians have a greater percentage of their population in these occupations than the total population (47.4% compared to 20.5%).

Figure 9A: Population Employed in Professional or Managerial Occupations by Ethno-Racial Group in 2008

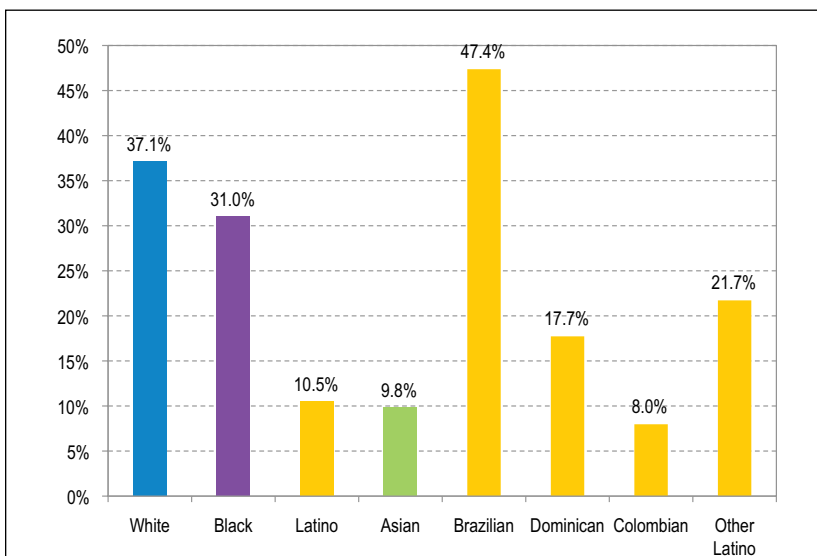
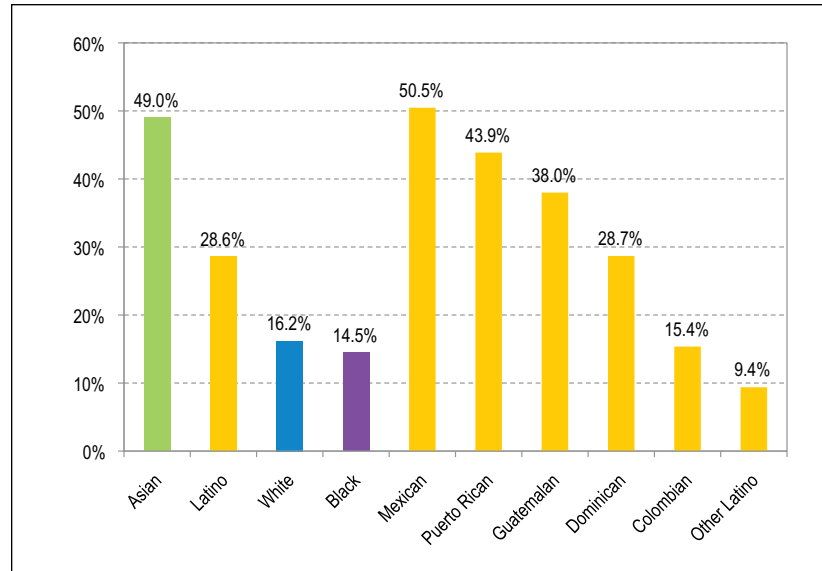


Figure 9B: Population Employed in Farming, Construction, Production, and Transportation Occupations by Ethno-Racial Group in 2008



EARNINGS

When examining the wage rates for these occupational categories, Latinos appear to be receiving wages below those of other ethno-racial groups. They earn less than all other ethno-racial groups in each of the three employment sectors (Figures 10A, 10B, and 10C).

Figure 10A: Hourly Wages in Professional or Managerial Occupations by Ethno-Racial Group in 2008

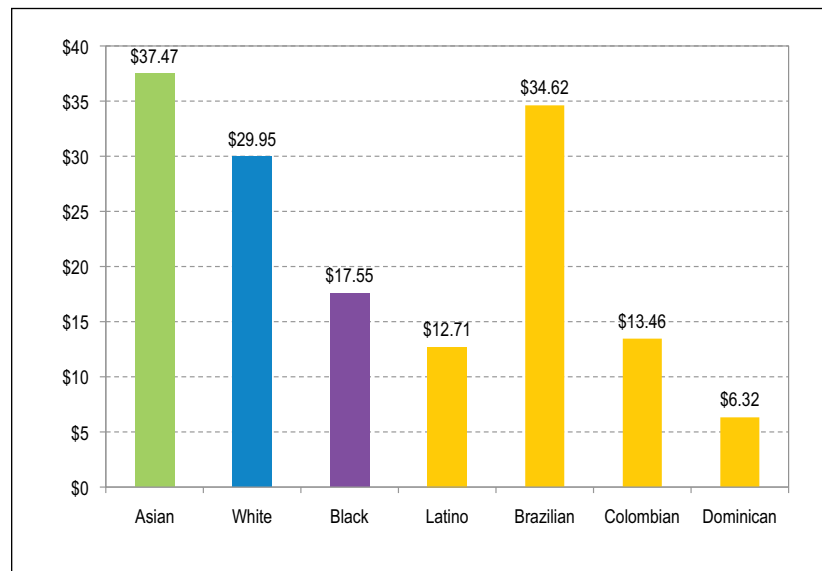


Figure 10B: Hourly Wages Occupations Sales and Service Occupations by Ethno-Racial Group in 2008

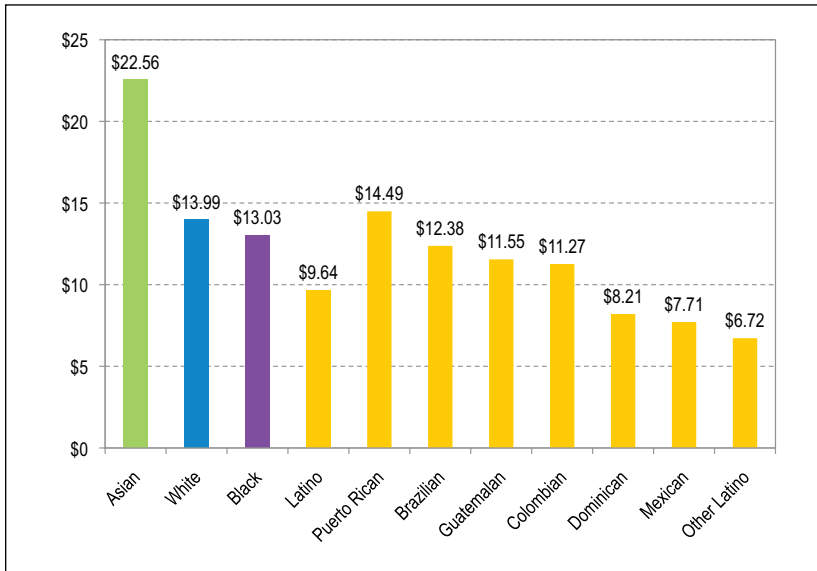
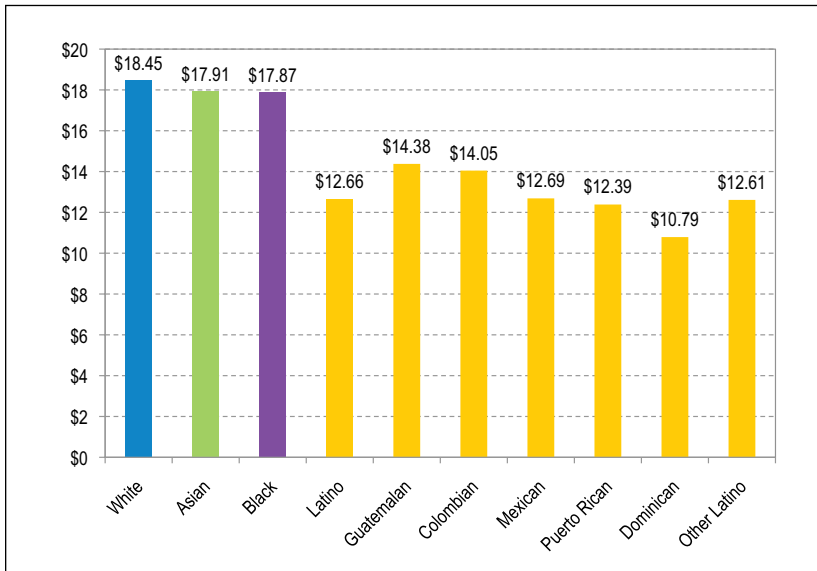


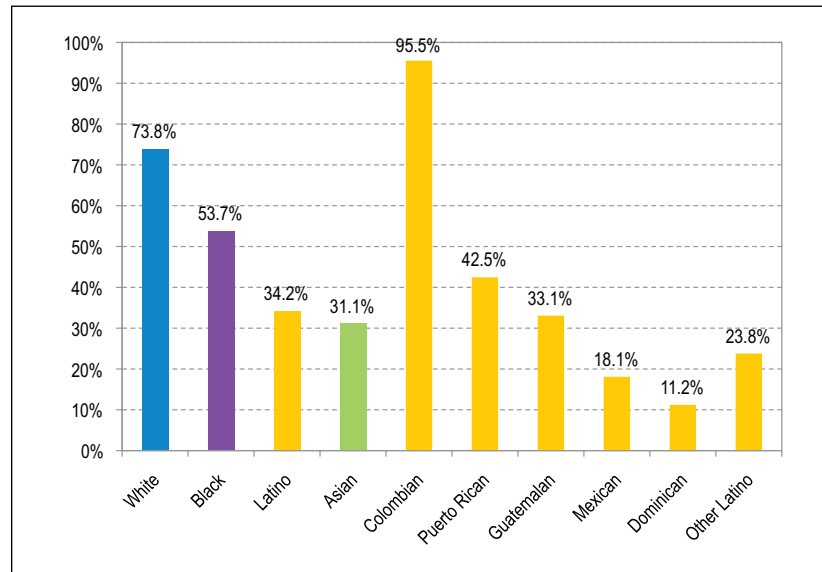
Figure 10C: Hourly Wages in Farming, Construction, Production, and Transportation Occupations by Ethno-Racial Group in 2008



HOUSING STATUS AND MEDICAL INSURANCE

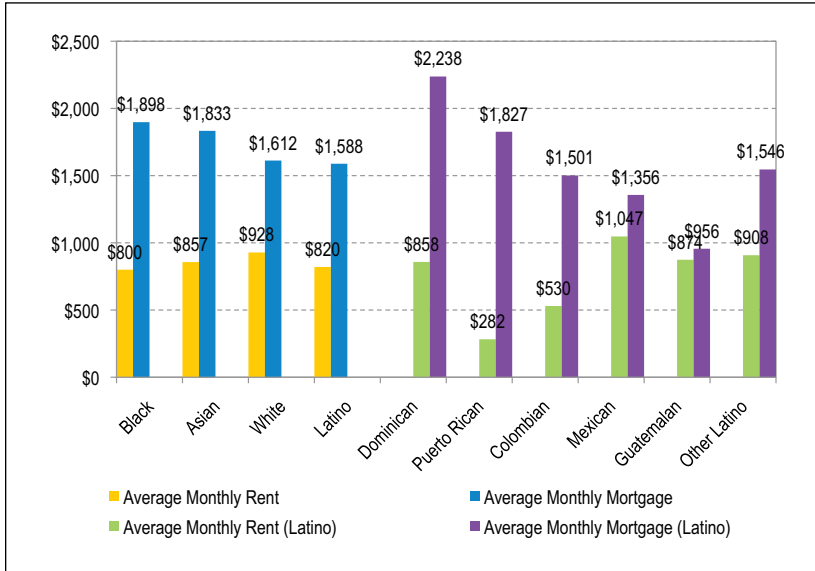
The final measures of Latino participation in Lynn are intended to identify how well Latinos in the area are being rewarded for their economic, social, and political participation. Latinos traditionally have low homeownership rates across the country. Figure 11 shows that this trend holds true in Lynn, as Latinos have the second lowest homeownership level by ethno-racial group: 34.2%, which is slightly higher than the state's Latino average of 32.9%. As a complement to these percentages in Figure 11, it is evident that 65.8% of Latinos in the area are renters.

Figure 11: Homeownership Rates by Ethno-Racial Group in 2008



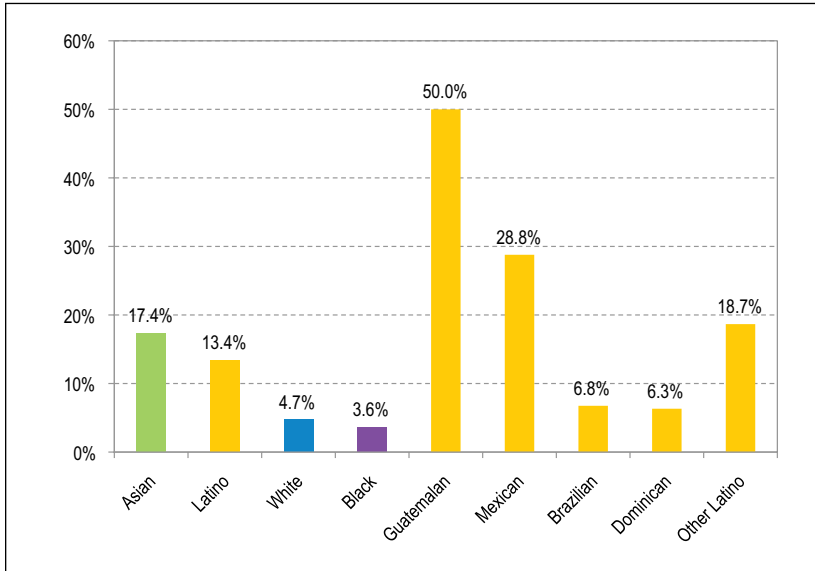
Homeownership is seen in a different light when its cost is analyzed. Having largely become homeowners during the housing bubble of the last decade, Latinos on average pay \$1,588 monthly mortgages – nearly twice as much as the average monthly rent of \$820. The combination of high mortgage payments and low rents underlines the fact that Latino homebuyers were disadvantaged by the earlier housing bubble.

Figure 12: Housing Costs by Ethno-Racial Group in 2008



The percentage of Latinos in this area who lack medical insurance (13.4%) is higher than the statewide average for Latinos (9.2%). Latinos have higher rates of uninsurance than both blacks and whites, although lower rates than Asians. Guatemalans, who are a newly arriving subpopulation, have the highest rate of uninsurance (50.0%).

Figure 13: Medical Uninsurance Rates by Ethno-Racial Group in 2008





The Mauricio Gastón Institute for
Latino Community Development
and Public Policy

The Mauricio Gastón Institute of the University of Massachusetts Boston conducts research on and for the Latino population in New England. Our goal is to generate the information

and analysis necessary to develop more inclusive public policy, and to improve Latino participation in the policy making process. In an effort to present vital information about Latinos to diverse audiences, the Gastón Institute has produced this series of demographic profiles for Massachusetts and selected areas based on an analysis of 2008 American Community Survey data.

The 2008 American Community Survey allowed people to choose their ethnicity and race. Ethnicity identifies a person as Latino or Hispanic. We use the term “Latino” for all of those who self-identify as Latino in response to the ethnicity question. The racial categories are assigned to those who do not identify as Latino. Technically, their designation is non-Latino white, non-Latino black, and non-Latino Asian, though they are often referenced as white, black, and Asian in these profiles.

About the Authors

Phillip Granberry is a social demographer who specializes in unauthorized migrants in the United States. He worked with various community based organizations assisting recently arrived U.S. migrants before earning a PhD in Public Policy from the University of Massachusetts Boston in 2007. His past research has focused on Latinos in the United States. One part of this research has addressed the formation and use of social capital among Mexican migrants in Los Angeles County, and another part of this research has addressed demographic trends of Latinos in New England. His current research focuses on Brazilian and Dominican migrants in the Metropolitan Boston area. He currently teaches in the Economics Department and is a research associate of the Gastón Institute.

Our descriptive analysis uses both household- and individual-level ACS data to estimate population size and percentages, to compare Latinos to other ethno-racial groups (e.g., whites, blacks, and Asians), and to compare the top ten Latino subpopulations in Massachusetts by ancestry. These are Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Brazilians, Salvadorans, Mexicans, Guatemalans, Colombians, Hondurans, Peruvians, and Cubans. We use ancestry, based on migration from Latin America, rather than language: a self-identified Latino born in Massachusetts may have ancestors from a Latin American country but speak only English only. Whenever the category “Brazilian” appears in one of the figures, it includes all Brazilians, but the category “Latino” includes only those Brazilians who self-identified as Latino.

After the dissemination of the 2010 United States Census, the Gastón Institute will be updating these demographic profiles. These updates will allow for a better analysis of the Massachusetts Latino populations. We also plan to expand this series by adding analyses of the other New England states and by covering more cities.

Sarah Rustan is a PhD candidate in Law, Policy, and Society at Northeastern University with degrees in cultural management and architecture. Her professional background includes broad experiences in the nonprofit sector, including research as well as nonprofit and cultural management. Her past research has examined diverse topics ranging from charitable giving to women in the workforce. At present she is working on a dissertation exploring the role that nonprofit organizations play in promoting the development of social capital. She currently serves as a Research Associate and Data Analyst for the Gastón Institute and as a Doctoral Fellow at Northeastern University. Sarah’s research interests include demography, community change, and public policy.

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