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Latinos in Massachusetts Selected Areas: Methuen

Phillip Granberry

University of Massachusetts Boston, phillip.granberry@umb.edu

Trevor Mattos

University of Massachusetts Boston, trevor.mattos001@umb.edu

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Latinos in Massachusetts Selected Areas: Methuen

by Phillip Granberry, PhD, and Trevor Mattos

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Phillip Granberry
University of Massachusetts Boston, phillip.granberry@umb.edu

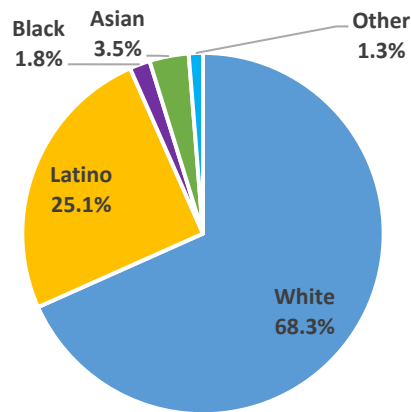
Trevor Mattos
University of Massachusetts Boston, trevor.mattos@umb.edu

Methuen Overview

The Latino Population

The city of Methuen, Massachusetts is composed of a population of 49,043 residents, of whom 12,290 are Latino, according to the 2012-2016 American Community Survey. The city is majority non-Latino white (68%), though Latinos make up the second largest ethno-racial group (25%). This share of Latinos is significantly higher than the statewide population, which is only 11% Latino. Black, Asian, and “other” populations collectively make up only 7% of the city’s population (Figure 1).

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

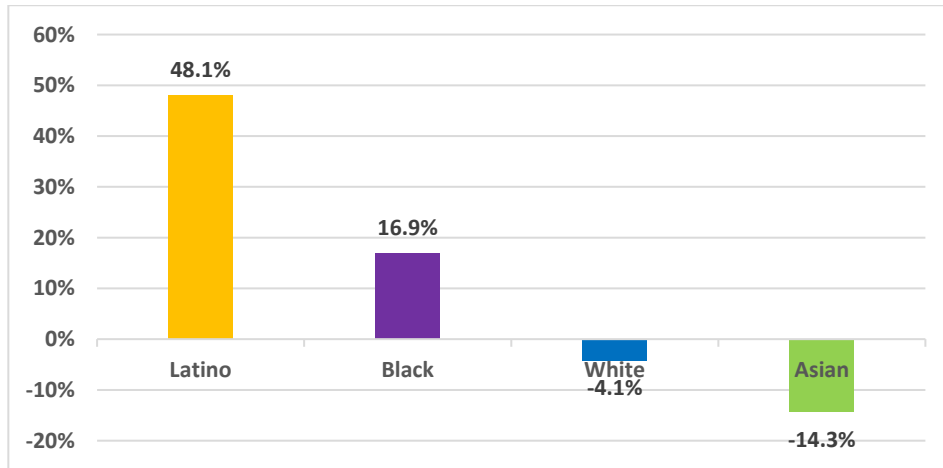


Source: 2012-2016, 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates - B03002

Between 2010 and 2016, Methuen saw a significant increase in the size of the Latino population, from 8,299 to 12,290, representing a 48% increase. Statewide, the Latino population grew by 25% during this same period. Methuen is geographically near to Lawrence, Massachusetts, which has a Latino population of more than 60,000, and the city appears to benefit from migration within Essex County. The black population of Methuen grew by 17%, while the city’s white and Asian populations declined (Figure 2).

Methuen has a larger share of its population that is foreign-born than does the Commonwealth, Methuen is 17.2% foreign born, while Massachusetts is 15.7% foreign born. Figure 3, which breaks down the Latino population into national origins subgroups, however, includes both native-born and foreign-born Latino residents of Methuen.

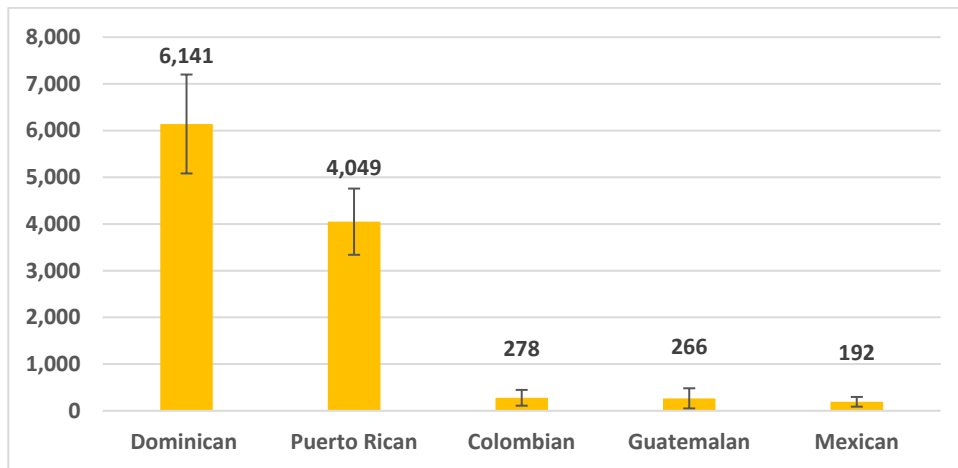
Figure 2: Population Change by Ethno-Racial Group from 2010 to 2016



Source: 2012-2016 & 2006-2010, 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates – B03002

The two largest Latino subpopulations in Methuen are Dominican and Puerto Rican, with more than 6,000 and 4,000 residents respectively. Colombians, Guatemalans, Mexicans are the next largest Latino groups, though each number fewer than 300 (Figure 3). Statewide, Puerto Ricans are the largest group, followed by Dominicans, Salvadorans, Mexicans, and Guatemalans.

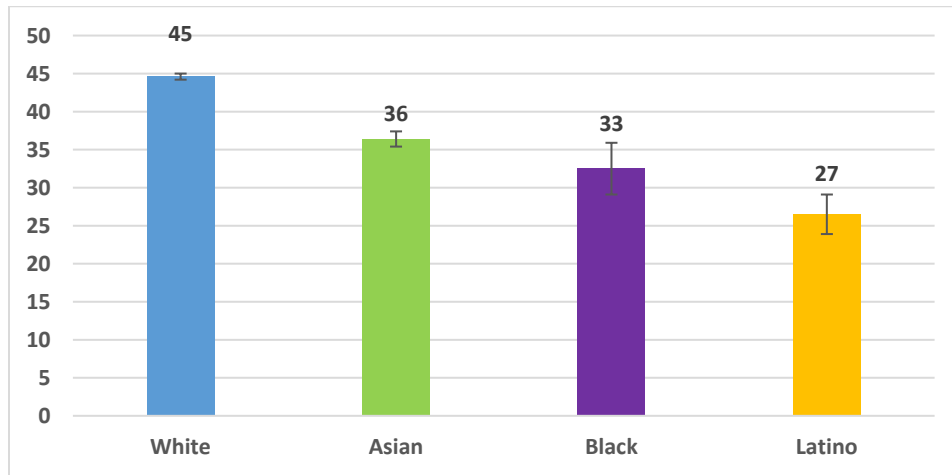
Figure 3: Origin of the Top Latino or Latino Subpopulations



Source: 2012-2016, 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates – B03001

Median Age and Marital Status

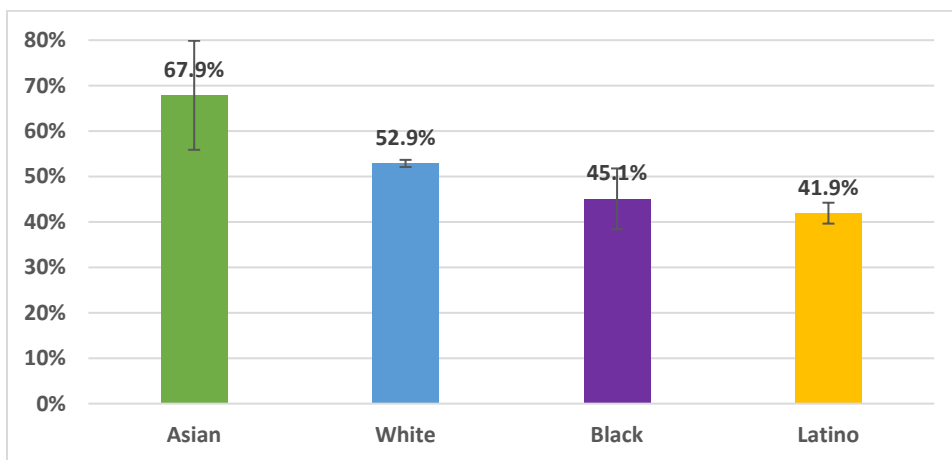
Figure 4: Median Age by Ethno-Racial Group



Source: 2012-2016, 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates – B01002

The age demographics vary significantly across these ethno-racial groups. Whites are the oldest population both statewide and in Methuen. The median age for whites in Methuen is 45 years, while that of Latinos, the youngest group, is 27 years. Across the state, the median age for Latinos is similar to Methuen, at 27 years. Asians and blacks fall between the median ages of the whites and Latinos (Figure 4).

Figure 5: Marriage Rates by Ethno-Racial Group (Ages 15 and older)



Source: 2012-2016, 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates – B12002

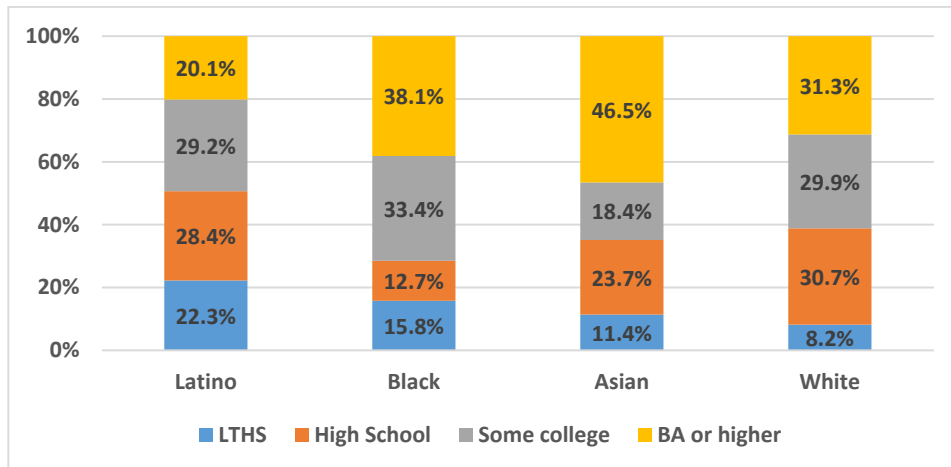
Marriage rates are highest among Asians and lowest among Latinos in Methuen. The marriage rate for Latinos is 42%, which is larger than their statewide marriage rate of 32%. Asians have the largest marriage rate of 68%, which is notably larger than the marriage rate of 52% for Massachusetts (Figure 5).

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Education

In Methuen, Latinos have the largest share of residents who did not complete high school (22%). Whites have the smallest non-high school educated share of 8%. Degree holders, on the opposite end of the spectrum, are most heavily concentrated in the Asian (47%) and white (38%) populations. Latinos with a bachelor's degree or higher account for 20% of Latinos 25 years and older in Methuen and 18% of Latinos across the state.

Figure 6: Educational Attainment by Ethno-Racial Group (Adults 25 Years and Older)

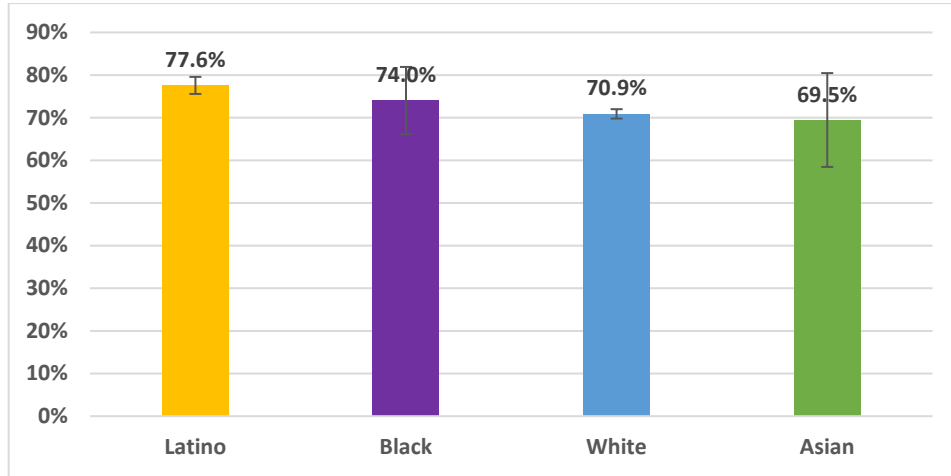


Source: 2012-2016, 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates – C15002

Labor Force Participation

Labor force participation in Methuen is highest among Latinos (78%), and lowest among Asians (69%). Black and white labor force participation rates are quite comparable, at 74% and 71%, respectively (Figure 7). Latino labor force participation at the state level, at 67%, is lower than in Methuen.

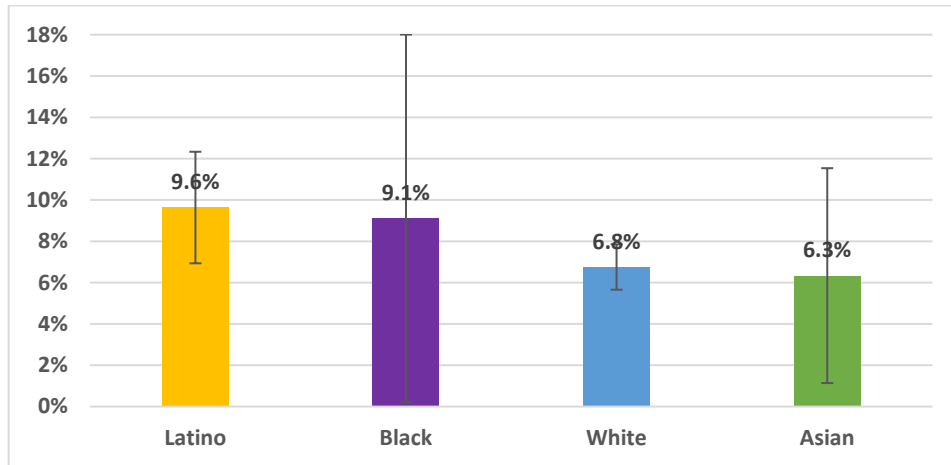
Figure 7: Labor Force Participation among Individuals 16 Years and Older by Ethno-Racial Group



Source: 2012-2016, 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates – C23002

Unemployment rates in Methuen, much as in other parts of Massachusetts, are higher for Latinos and blacks than for whites and Asians. Latinos have the highest unemployment rate in Methuen (9.6%), while Asians have the lowest (6.3%). The Latino unemployment rate in Methuen is below the statewide Latino rate of 11.5%. Statewide in Massachusetts during this period, unemployment was 6.8% (Figure 8).

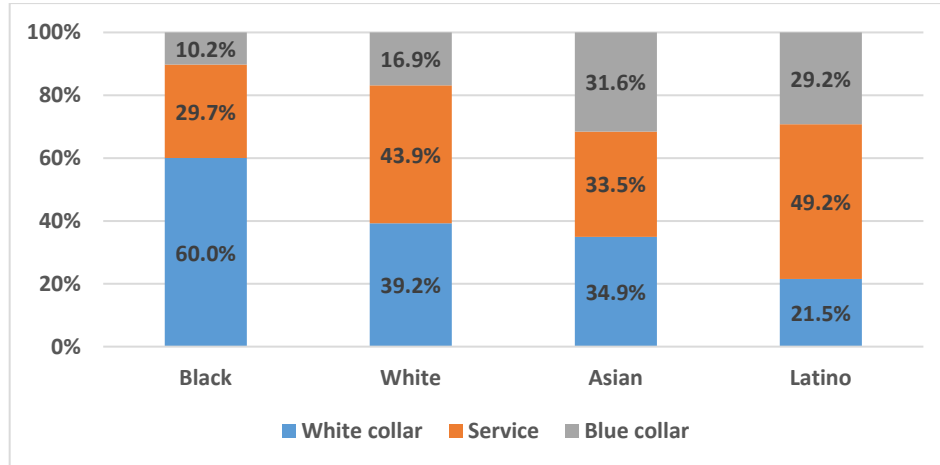
Figure 8: Unemployment Rates by Ethno-Racial Group (ages 16+)



Source: 2012-2016, 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates – C23002

Latino residents in Methuen are more likely to work in service-related occupations and less likely to work in white collar, managerial and professional, positions than other ethno-racial groups (Figure 9). This is similar to the statewide distribution in which 52% of Latinos work in service occupations and 23% of Latinos work in white-collar positions. Only Asians have a greater share of their population than Latinos working in blue-collar occupations.

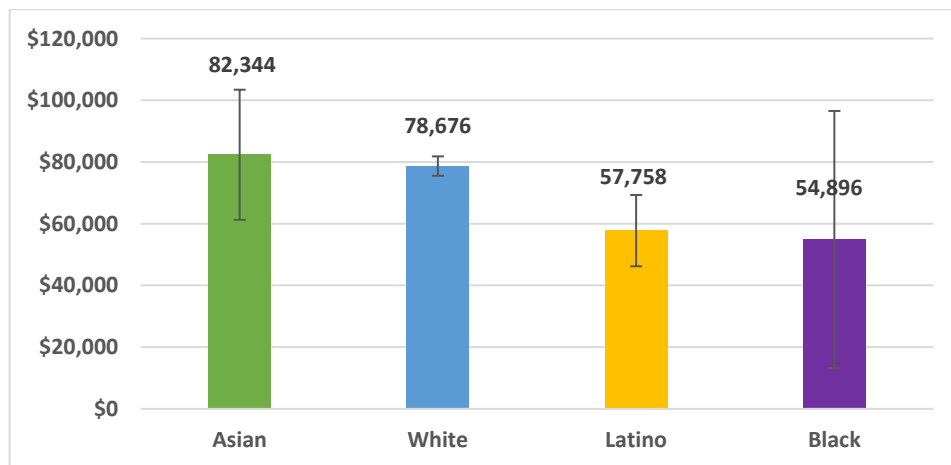
Figure 9: Population Employed by Occupational Category by Ethno-Racial Group



Source: 2012-2016, 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates – C24010

Income

Figure 10: Median Household Income by Ethno-Racial Group



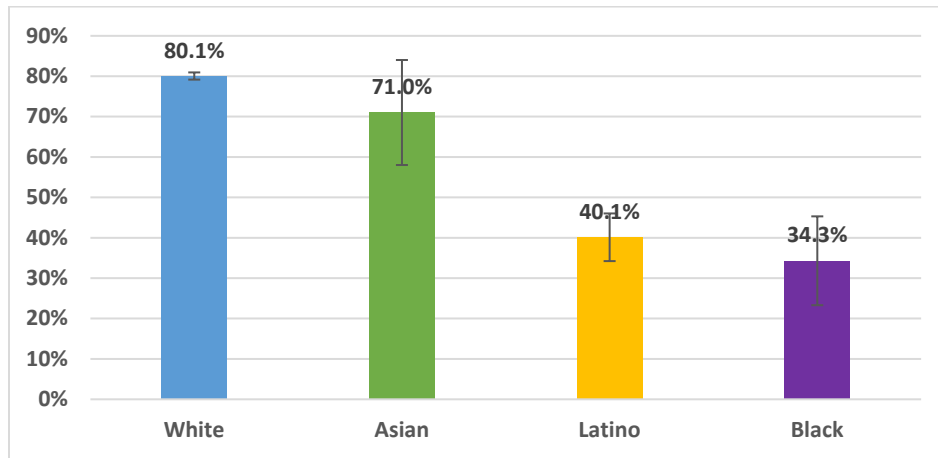
Source: 2012-2016 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates – S1903

The median household income in Methuen is \$72,631, compared to the statewide median of \$70,945. In Methuen, Latino households earn \$57,758. Asian households have the highest income (\$82,344), while black households have the lowest incomes (\$54,896). However, Latinos earn much more in Methuen than they do statewide. For Massachusetts, Latinos' household income is \$37,100 (Figure 10).

Housing Status and Medical Uninsurance

Homeownership varies dramatically in Methuen, where whites have the highest share (80%) who are homeowners, and black residents have the lowest share (34%). The Latino homeownership share is 40%. Across the state, the Latino homeownership share is 25%, indicating that Latinos in Methuen are faring better. Overall, disparities in homeownership imply substantial economic inequality among ethno-racial communities in Methuen.

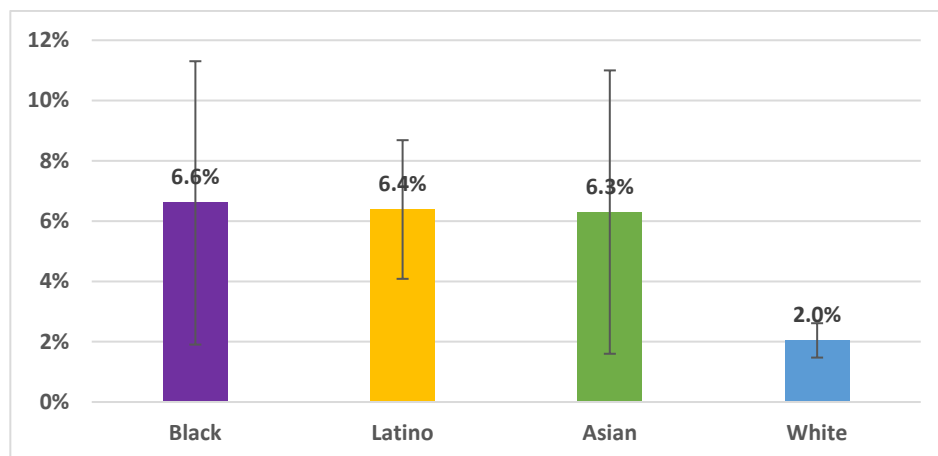
Figure 11: Homeownership Rates by Ethno-Racial Group



Source: 2012-2016, 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates - B25003

Differences across groups are much smaller with respect to health insurance coverage than in many other cities. While lack of coverage is more of a problem for Methuen's minority communities, the share of uninsured are relatively low across the board. Blacks have the highest uninsurance share (6.6%), while whites have the lowest uninsured share (2.0%). The uninsurance share for Latinos is 6.4%, almost the same as the statewide Latino rate (6.3%).

Figure 12: Medical Uninsurance by Ethno-Racial Group



Source: 2012-2016, 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates - C27001

The Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy at 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 produces demographic profiles and analysis for Latino communities throughout the Commonwealth.

Our descriptive analysis uses ACS data to estimate population size and characteristics in order to compare Latinos to other ethnoracial groups. Technically, these categories are non-Latino white, Black or African American alone,

and Asian alone, though they are identified as “white,” “black”, and “Asian” in these profiles. Because these estimates contain a “margin of error,” they may vary from one year’s report to another but still fall within this “margin of error.” Only when another estimate is outside of this margin of error can we identify a population change over time. Even with the limitation of this “margin of error,” these reports use the best demographic data of Latinos in the city and towns of Massachusetts.

One of the goals of the Gastón Institute is to be responsive to the needs of the Latino and policy communities through the research we undertake. Please feel free to contact us with suggestions or requests for specific information.

About the Authors

Phillip Granberry is a social demographer. He worked with various community-based organizations assisting recently arrived U.S. immigrants before earning a Ph.D. in Public Policy from the University of Massachusetts Boston. He has published several articles on the accumulation and use of social capital among Latinos and the sexual health communication of Puerto Rican mothers with their children. In addition to his research and teaching in the Gastón Institute and Economics Department at UMass Boston, he is Senior Researcher in demography for the Boston Planning and Development Agency.

Trevor Mattos holds a master of arts (M.A.) in applied economics from the University of Massachusetts Boston and a master of public policy (MPP) from the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. Trevor applies quantitative and qualitative research methodologies to a variety of economic and social policy issues. His current research focuses on the earnings of Latina immigrants in the United States, as well as other topics related to the economic conditions in Latinx communities.