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Latinos in Massachusetts Selected Areas New Bedford

by Phillip Granberry, PhD, Sarah Rustan, MA, and Faye Karp, MS

January, 2013

**THE MAURICIO GASTON INSTITUTE
FOR LATINO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
AND PUBLIC POLICY**



New Bedford

This report provides a descriptive snapshot of selected economic, social, educational, and demographic indicators pertaining to Latinos in New Bedford and surrounding towns. It reflects a commitment by UMass Boston's Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy to provide periodic updates on the growing Latino population in Massachusetts.

The report on the New Bedford area is part of a larger series that covers fourteen other cities, or clusters of cities, in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Each report analyzes data from the 2010 American Community Survey (ACS) conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. Data are analyzed by Public Use Microdata Area (PUMA), which consists of a minimum population of 100,000 and is the smallest geographic area publically available for individual-level analysis. In the PUMA for these cities, New Bedford accounted for 53.3% of the overall population in the 2010 Census. The great majority of the PUMA's Latino population (92.5%) lived in New Bedford. Thus, the Latino population in these cities will be referenced as New Bedford throughout this report, although the data referenced does include smaller Latino populations in other cities in the area.

Since ACS data is collected from a sample of the population, there is some variation associated with each population estimate. In the bar graphs in this report, the 'I' that accompanies each bar represents the confidence interval for that estimate; we expect that another sample would generate an estimate within this interval 95% of the time.

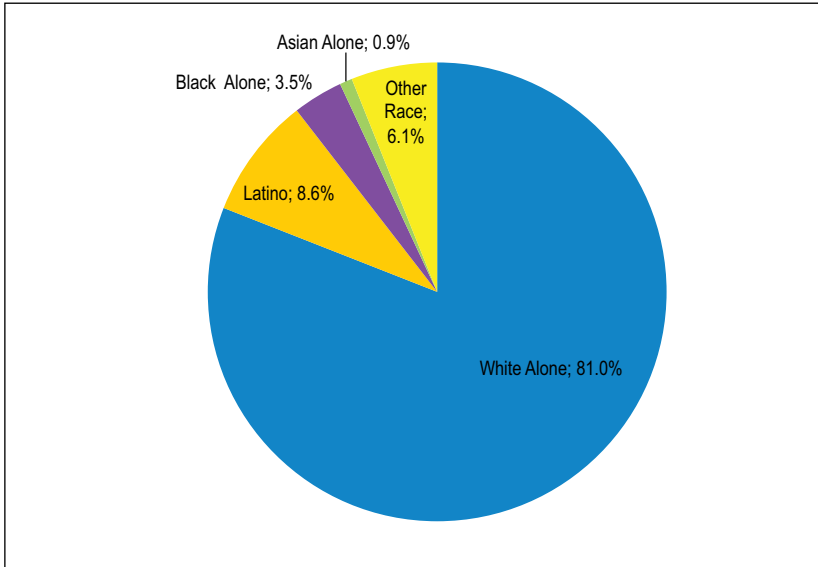
Notes

¹ This report uses the census designations of Hispanic or Latino origin and ancestry based on migration from Latin America to estimate the number of Latinos. Thus, Brazilians are included in the category "Latino," though most Brazilians self-report in the ACS using a racial category (e.g., white, black), rather than identifying with the term "Latino."

In this report, Latinos are compared to non-Latino whites, non-Latino blacks, and Asians for selected demographic, economic, and social characteristics. The number of ethno-racial groups included in a particular analysis may vary; each ethno-racial group is included in the analysis only when the observed sample size is large enough to produce reliable population estimates.

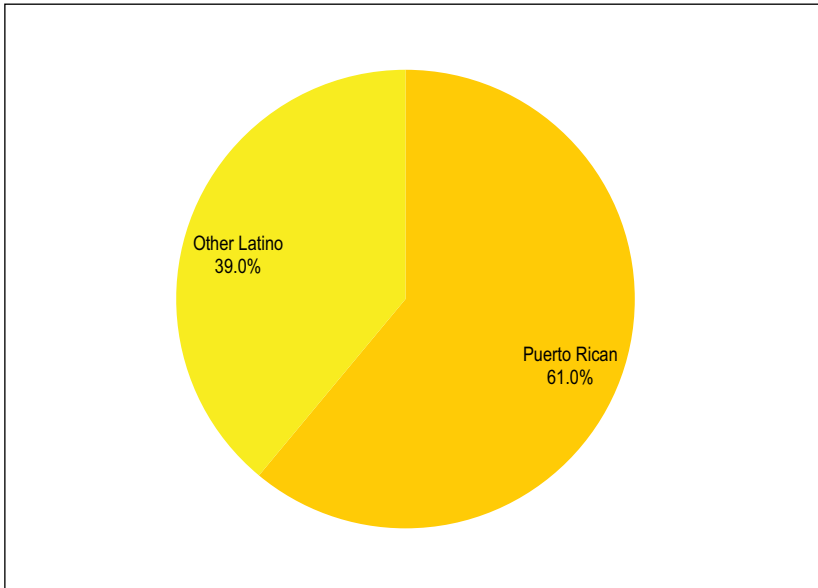
The New Bedford area is home to an estimated 15,208 Latinos, who make up 8.6% of the cities' population. Whites constitute the largest ethno-racial group in the area (81.0%), while blacks account for 3.5% and Asians 0.9% of the population (Figure 1). The New Bedford area has a sizeable Other Race category, composed mainly of individuals with Cape Verdean ancestry.

Figure 1: Population Percentages by Ethno-Racial Group in 2010



The New Bedford area's Latino population consists primarily of Puerto Ricans (Figure 2) who make up 61.0% of the Latino population. Because of the large concentration of Puerto Ricans, who are U.S. citizens, Latinos do not contribute to the foreign-born population in New Bedford as they do in other areas of the state. With 13.6% of the area's population being foreign-born, the New Bedford area has a slightly lower percentage than the state as a whole (14.9%).

Figure 2: Ancestry of the Top Latino Groups in 2010

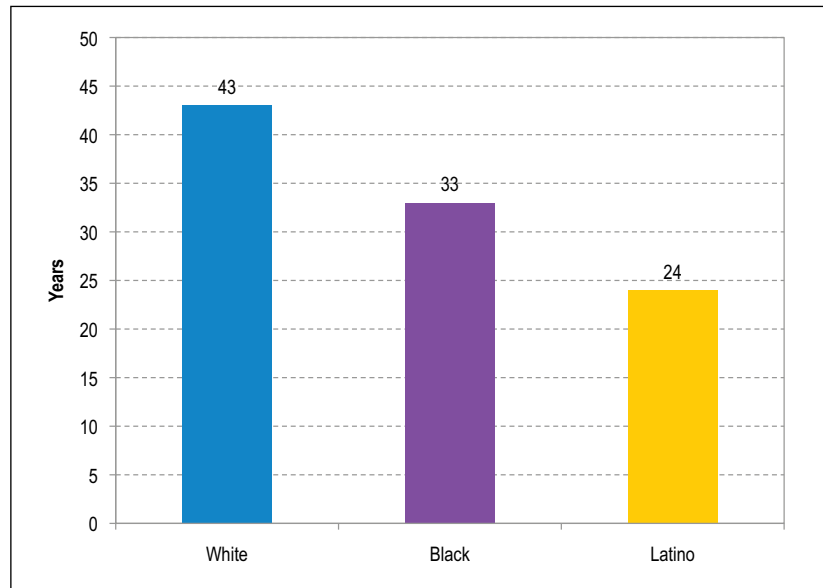


The rest of this report presents an overview that compares Latinos to whites, blacks, and Asians in this area for selected demographic, economic, and social characteristics.

MEDIAN AGE AND MARITAL STATUS

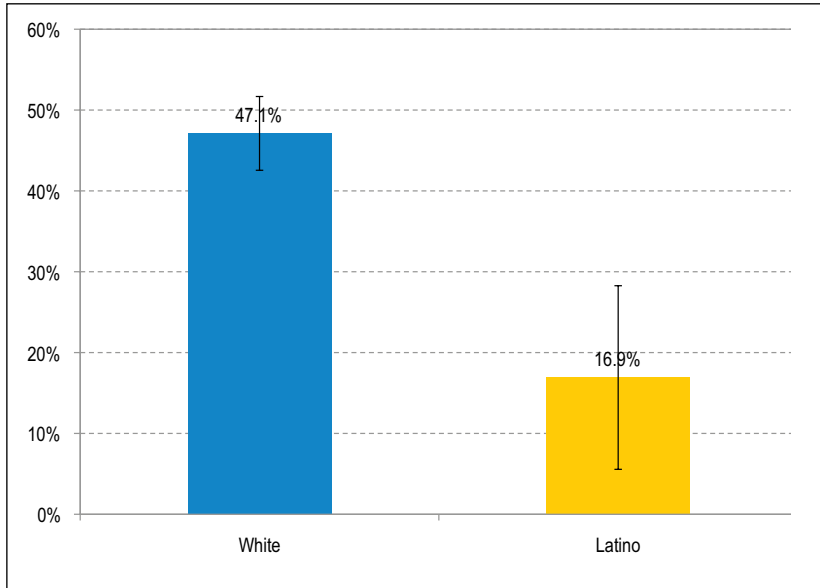
Figure 3 highlights differences in median age between ethno-racial groups, drawing attention to the importance of Latinos in New Bedford. Latinos' median age of 24 years is the youngest of any ethno-racial group, and younger than the statewide Latino median age of 27 years. This suggests that Latinos have more families with younger children than other ethno-racial groups 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 these cities' neighborhoods vibrant and maintain a productive workforce, and Latinos are poised to make this contribution.

Figure 3: Median Age by Ethno-Racial Group in 2010



The youthfulness of the area's Latino population may influence its marital status. The marriage rates shown in Figure 4, covering all persons age 16 and older, are lower for Latinos than for whites and blacks in the New Bedford area. The Latino rate in this area (16.9%) is also much lower than the 35.4% statewide rate for Latinos.

Figure 4: Marriage Rates by Ethno-Racial Group in 2010



EDUCATION

Figure 5: Educational Attainment by Ethno-Racial Group in 2010 (Adults 25 Years and Older)

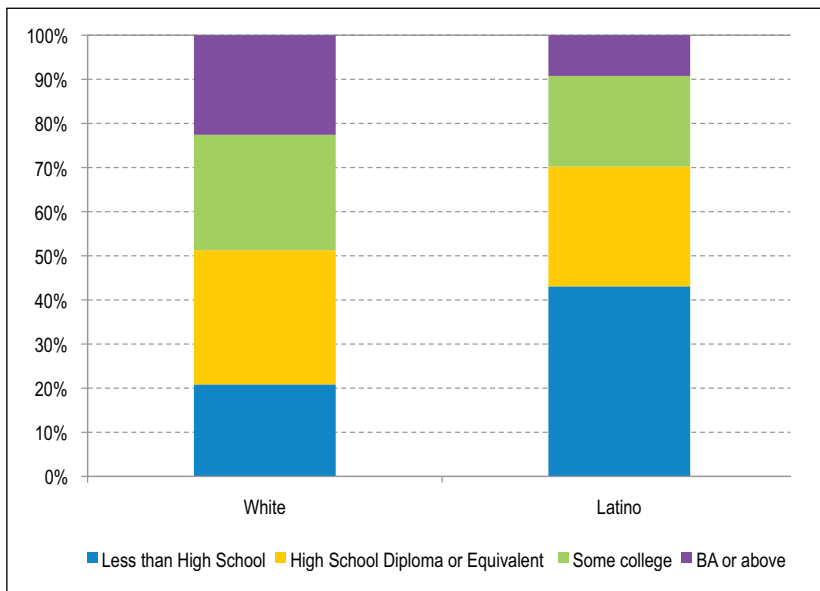
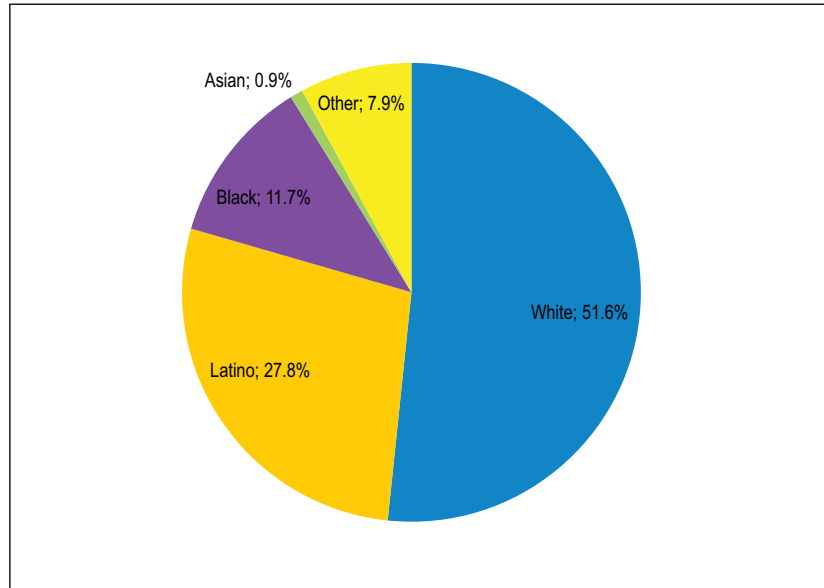


Figure 5 highlights the fact that Latinos have a greater percentage of their adult population lacking a high school diploma: 43.1%, compared to 20.9% for whites. At the other end of the educational scale, Latinos in these cities have a lower percentage of their population with at least a bachelor's degree: 9.2%, compared to 22.6% for whites.

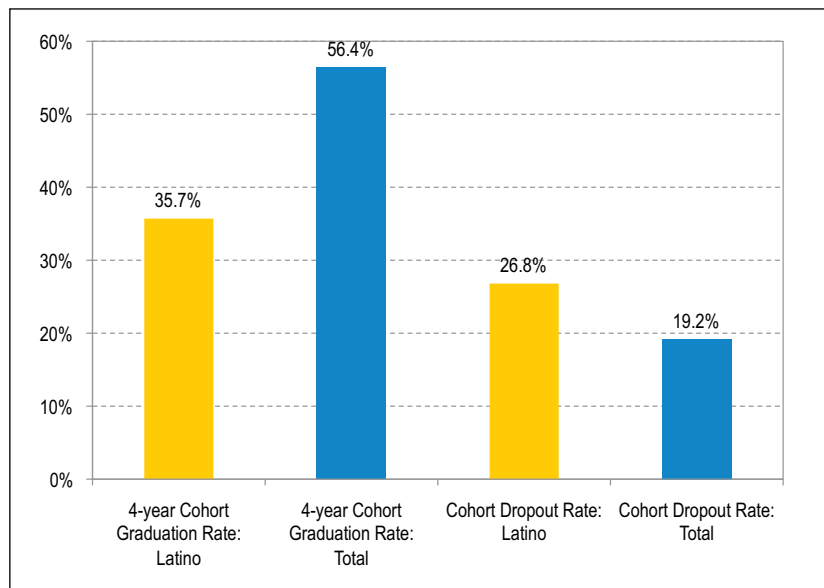
Figures 6A and 6B, unlike other figures in this report, pertain solely to the city of New Bedford. They provide information on Latinos in New Bedford Public Schools, using data from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Latinos represented 27.8% of total student enrollment in the 2010–2011 school year, up from 15.6% ten years earlier.

Figure 6A: Spotlight on New Bedford Public Schools by Ethno-Racial Group, School Year 2010–2011



This growing group of Latino students in New Bedford Public Schools lags behind the total population in academic success. While 56.4% of all students graduated from high school in four years, only 35.7% of Latino students graduated. Similarly, while 19.2% of all students who entered their freshman year in the 2006–2007 school year dropped out of high school and did not return or get a GED, this figure was substantially higher (26.8%) for the Latino students in this cohort.

Figure 6B: Spotlight on New Bedford Public Schools by Outcomes, School Year 2010–2011



LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

Figure 7 suggests that Latinos in New Bedford are struggling to participate in the labor market. Their labor force participation rate of 53.7% is lower than that of whites (64.6%) and also less than the statewide Latino average of 68.1%. The younger median age of Latinos shown by Figure 3 suggests they have more families with young children, which typically aligns with lower labor force participation rates due to caretaking needs

Figure 7: Labor Force Participation by Ethno-Racial Group in 2010

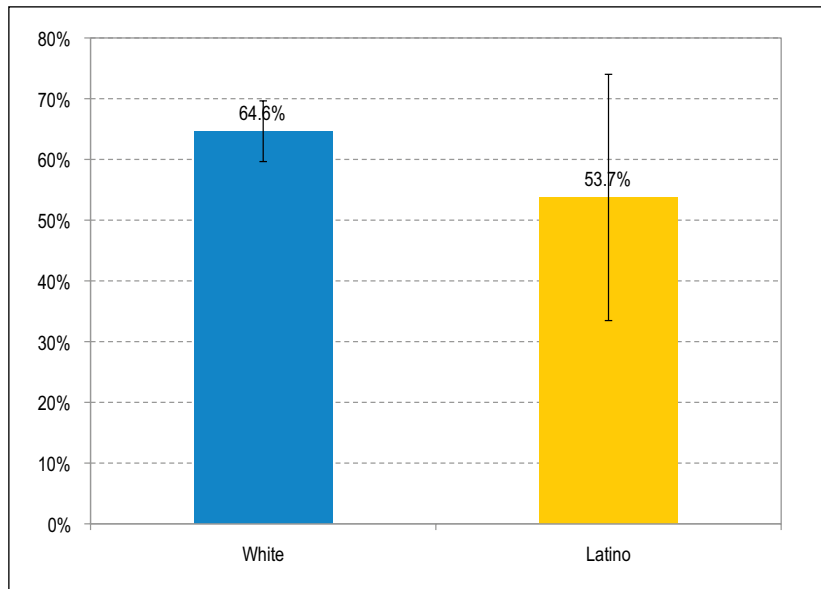
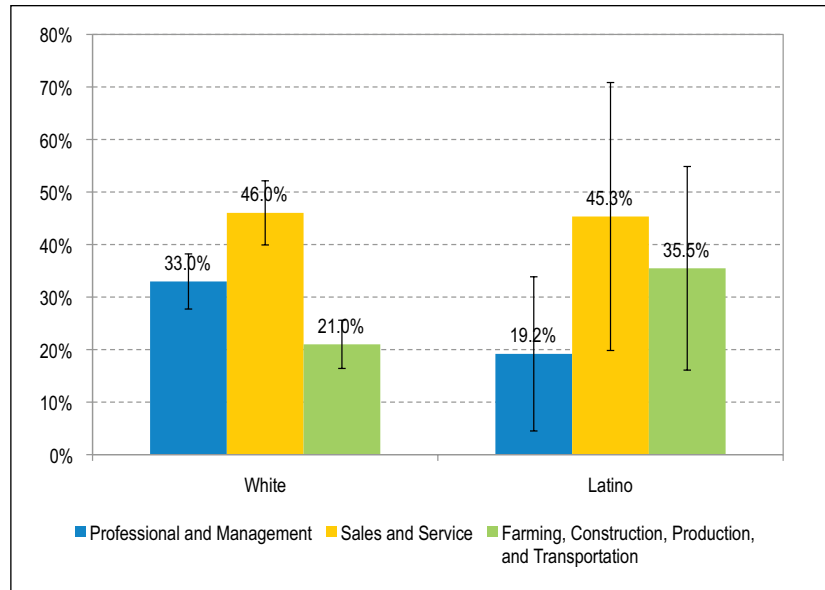


Figure 8 suggests that Latinos serve as complements to other ethno-racial groups in the area's labor market whose members have higher educational attainment. Latinos are overrepresented in what are traditionally considered blue-collar jobs (farming, construction, production, and transportation). Correspondingly, as Figure 8 shows, Latinos are underrepresented in what are traditionally considered white-collar jobs (professional and managerial).

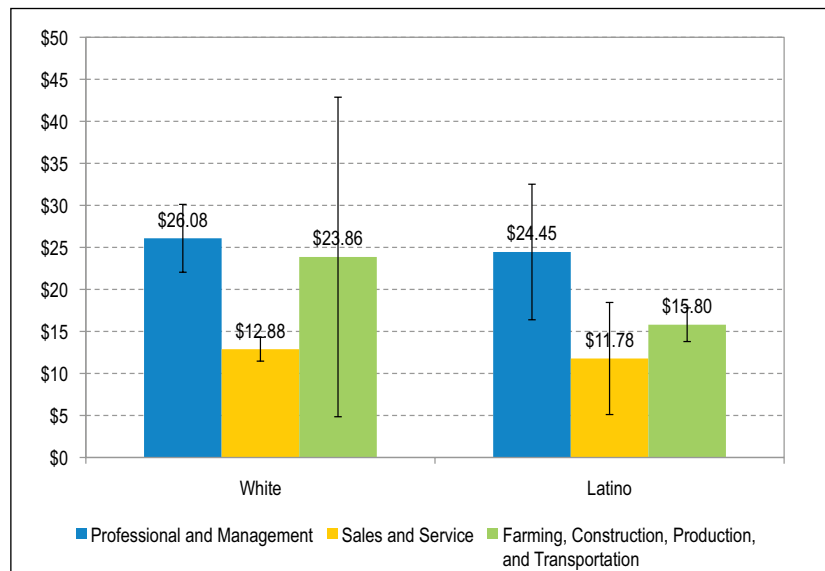
Figure 8: Population Employed by Occupational Category by Ethno-Racial Group in 2010



EARNINGS

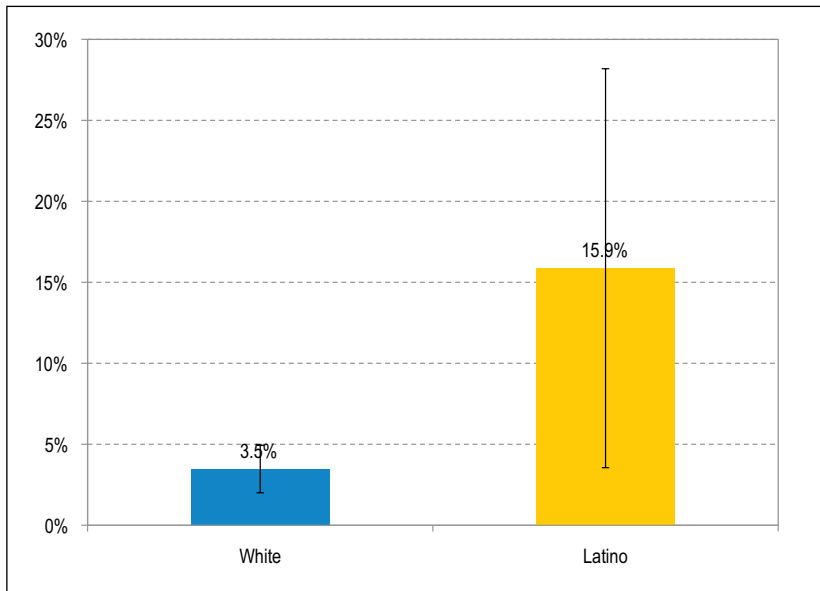
When examining the wage rates for these occupational categories, we see that Latinos earn lower wages than whites in all occupational categories (Figure 9). The wage discrepancy is particularly significant in blue-collar occupations, where Latinos earn only \$15.80 on average in comparison to \$23.86 for whites.

Figure 9: Hourly Wages by Occupational Category by Ethno-Racial Group in 2010



The percentage of Latinos in this area who lack medical insurance (15.9%) is considerably higher than the uninsurance rate for whites (3.5%). The statewide Latino uninsurance rate is 11.6%.

Figure 10: Medical Uninsurance Rates by Ethno-Racial Group in 2010



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 has produced this series of demographic profiles for selected Massachusetts areas based on an analysis of 2010 American Community Survey (ACS) data.

Our descriptive analysis uses both household- and individual-level ACS data to estimate population size and characteristics in order to compare Latinos to other ethno-racial groups. Technically, these groups are designated as non-Latino whites, non-Latino blacks, and non-Latino Asians though they are often referenced simply as “white,” “black,” and

“Asian” in these profiles. Although many Brazilians do not self-identify as Latino or Hispanic, the ‘Latino’ category does include the Brazilian population in this report series.

The Gastón Institute plans to update this series of demographic profiles for selected Massachusetts areas every five years upon release of American Community Survey data. A similar report series examining Latino populations at the city level is planned for the 2015 Gastón Institute public policy conference. In addition, demographic profiles highlighting Latino sub-groups will be produced on an ongoing basis.

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 who specializes in immigrants in the US. He worked with various community-based organizations assisting recently arrived U.S. immigrants before earning a PhD in Public Policy from the University of Massachusetts Boston. He has published several articles on the accumulation and use of social capital among Mexican migrants and the impact of welfare and immigration policy reform on Latinos in Massachusetts. Currently a Research Associate for the Gastón Institute, he also teaches courses on international migration and urban affairs for the UMass Boston Economics Department.

Faye Karp specializes in conducting research that helps organizations improve programs serving low-income, Latino, and English Language Learner youth. She holds an MS in Public Policy from the University of Massachusetts Boston. As a Research Associate and Project Manager at the Gastón Institute, she worked with the Boston Public Schools Office of English Language Learners to develop policy guidelines for the district’s Two-Way Bilingual programs.

Sarah Rustan is a PhD candidate in Law and Public Policy at Northeastern University, with previous degrees in architecture (BA) and cultural management (MA). Her professional background includes broad experience in the nonprofit sector including research, development, and management, and her dissertation explores the role that nonprofit arts organizations play in community development and social organization. She currently serves as a Research Associate and Data Analyst for the Gastón Institute.

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