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Latinos in Massachusetts Selected Areas: Springfield

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Latinos in Massachusetts Selected Areas

Springfield

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

January, 2013

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



Springfield

This report provides a descriptive snapshot of selected economic, social, educational, and demographic indicators pertaining to Latinos in Springfield. 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 Springfield 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. Springfield is a large enough city that it constitutes a PUMA by itself. The ACS thereby enables us to arrive at a demographic and economic portrait of Springfield's Latino community.

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.

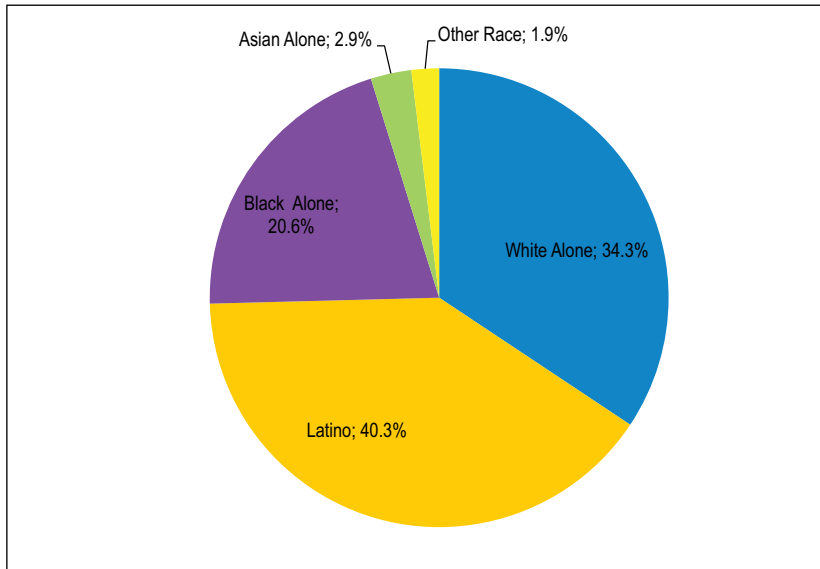
In this report, Latinos are compared to non-Latino whites, non-Latino blacks, and Asians for selected demographic, economic, and social characteristics. The number of ethno-racial groups included in a particular analysis may vary; each ethno-racial group is included in the analysis only when the observed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

Springfield, the third largest city in Massachusetts, is home to an estimated 61,586 Latinos, who make up 40.3% of the city's population. Whites constitute the second largest ethno-racial group (34.3%), while blacks (20.6%) and Asians (2.9%) are the other ethno-racial group with a sizable presence (Figure 1).

Notes

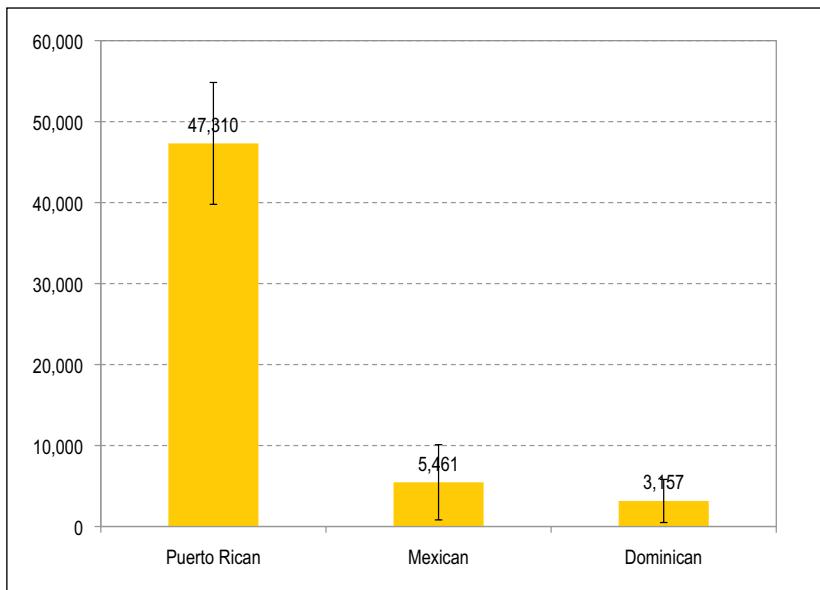
¹ This report uses the census designations of Hispanic or Latino origin and ancestry based on migration from Latin America to estimate the number of Latinos. Thus, Brazilians are included in the category "Latino," though most Brazilians self-report in the ACS using a racial category (e.g., white, black),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

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



The large Latino population is driven by the city's high concentration of Puerto Ricans, who are U.S. citizens and who number 47,310. As a result, Springfield has a lower percentage of foreign-born residents (12.4%) than the state as a whole (14.9%). Mexicans (5,461) and Dominicans (3,157) are the other two large Latino populations in Springfield; these three groups make up 90.8% of the city's Latino population.

Figure 2: Ancestry of the Top Latino Groups in 2010

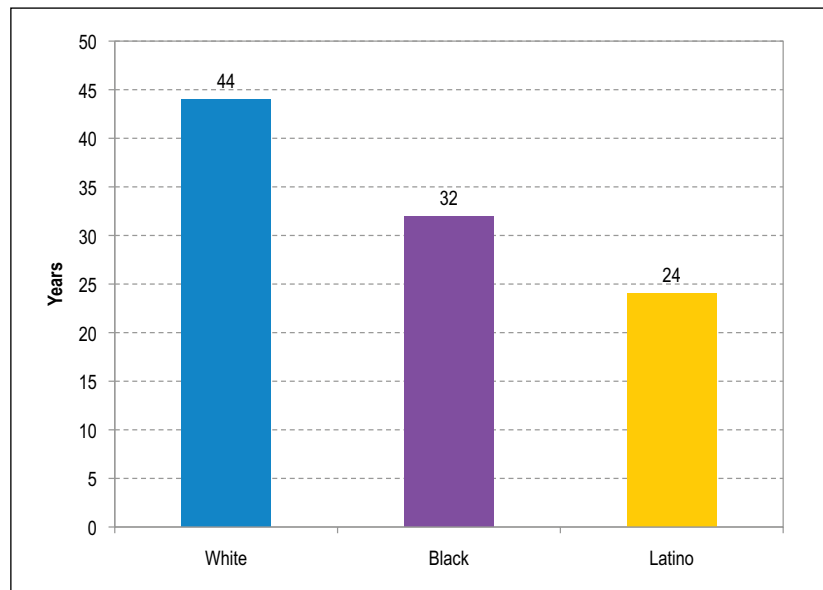


The rest of this report presents an overview that compares Latinos to whites, blacks, and Asians in this area for selected demographic, economic, and social characteristics.

MEDIAN AGE AND MARITAL STATUS

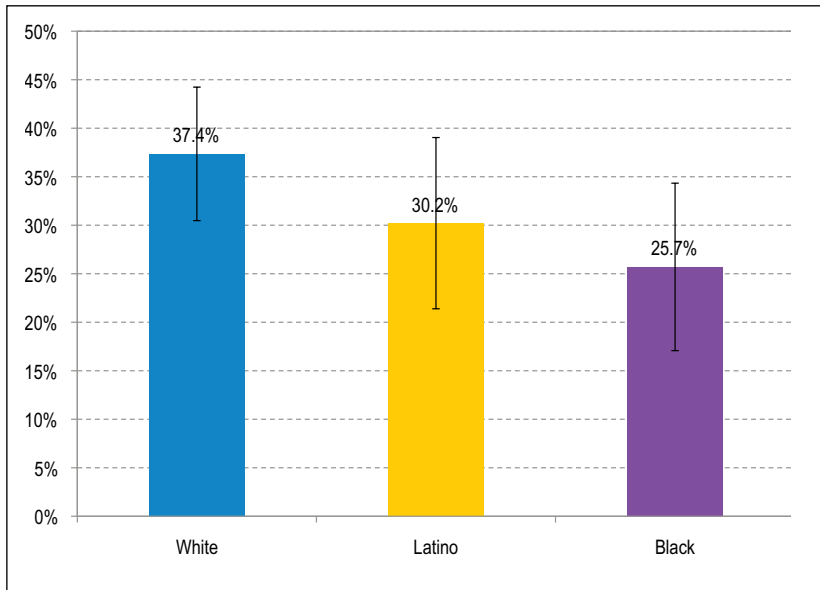
Figure 3 highlights differences in median age between populations, drawing attention to the importance of Latinos in Springfield. Latinos have a median age (24 years) that is younger than the statewide Latino average (27 years) and much younger than the median age of whites (44 years) and blacks (32 years) in Springfield. This suggests that Latinos have more families with young 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 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 Springfield's Latino population may influence its marital status. The Latino marriage rate shown in Figure 4, covering all persons age 16 and older, is higher than for blacks but markedly lower than for whites. Statewide, the Latino marriage rate is 35.4% in comparison to 30.2% in Springfield.

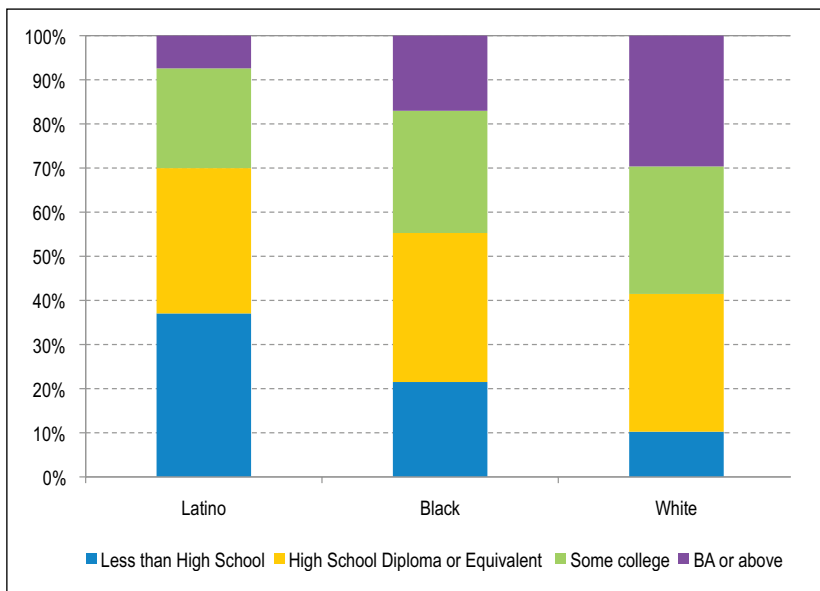
Figure 4: Marriage Rates by Ethno-Racial Group in 2010



EDUCATION

Figure 5 highlights the fact that Latinos have a high percentage of their adult population lacking a high school diploma: 37.0%, compared to 10.2% for whites and 21.5% for blacks. At the other end of the educational scale, Latinos have the lowest percentage of their population with at least a bachelor's degree: 7.4%, compared to 17.0% for blacks, and 29.6% for whites.

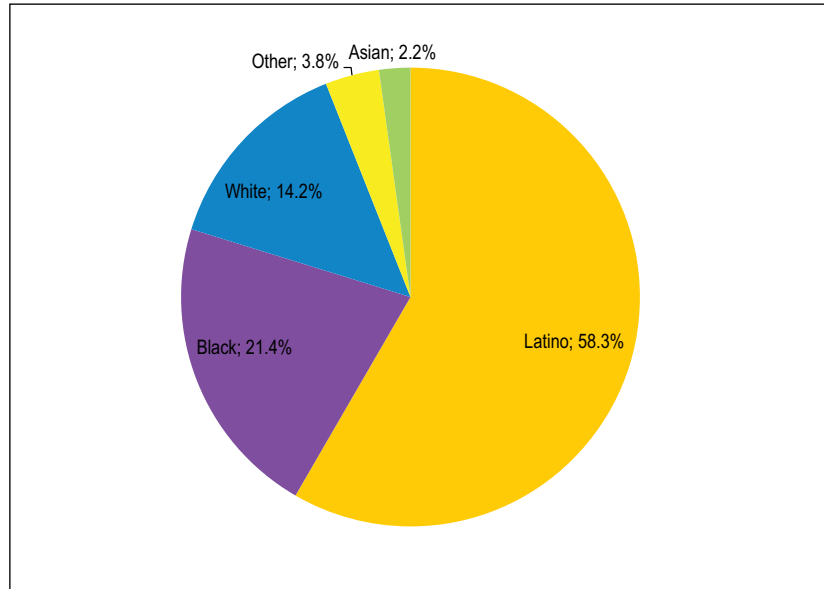
Figure 5: Educational Attainment by Ethno-Racial Group in 2010 (Adults 25 Years and Older)



Figures 6A and 6B provide information on Latinos in Springfield Public Schools, using data from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Over half of all students (58.3%) enrolled in the district during

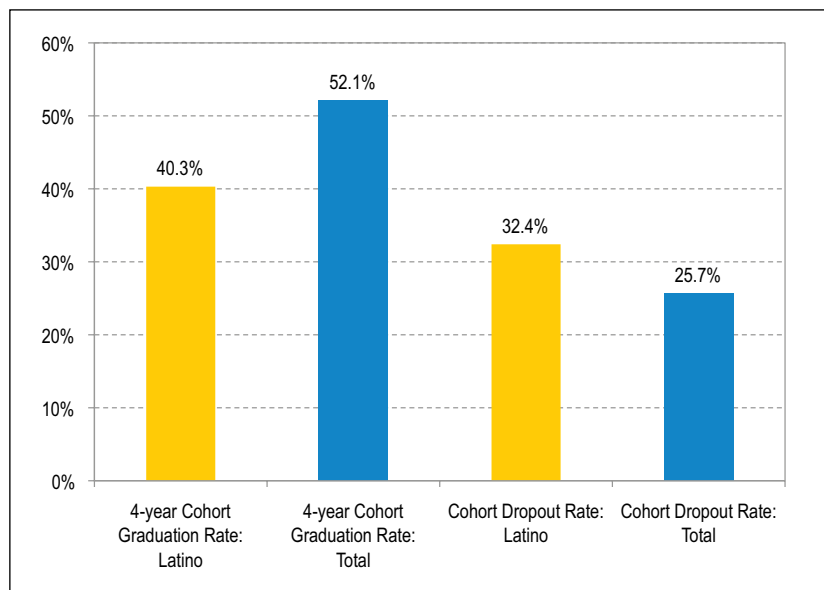
the 2010–2011 school year were Latino. Over the past decade, as total student enrollment has declined, the number of Latinos and their share of total student enrollment have increased.

Figure 6A: Snapshot of Springfield Public Schools by Ethno-Racial Group, Academic Year 2010–2011



In a district where all students struggle to complete high school, Latino students still lag behind the total population. Fewer than half of Latino students in Springfield Public Schools (40.3%) graduated from high school in four years compared to 52.1% for the total student population. Similarly, 32.4% of Latinos who entered their freshman year in the 2006–2007 school year dropped out of high school and did not return or get a GED, compared to 25.7% of the total population.

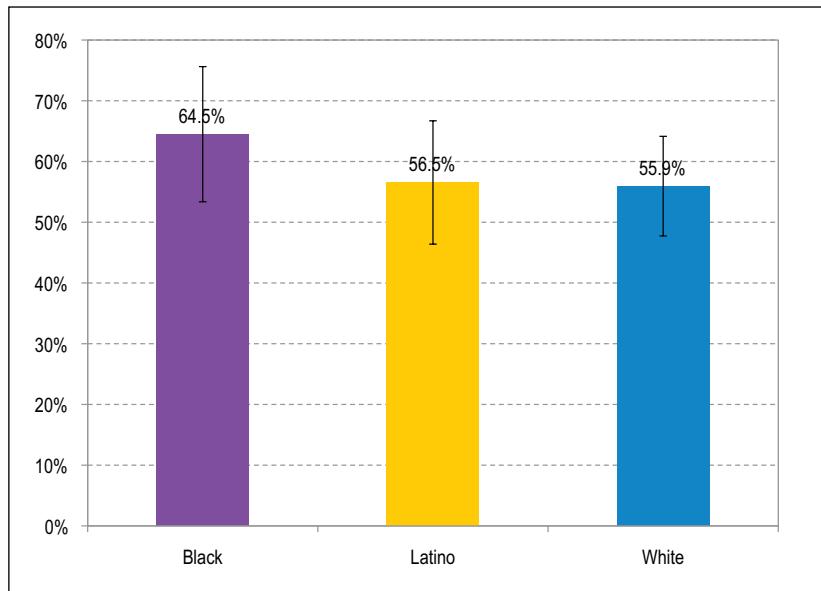
Figure 6B: Snapshot of Springfield Public Schools by Outcomes, Academic Year 2010–2011



LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

Figure 7 shows that Latinos have a lower labor force participation rate (56.5%) than blacks (64.5%) and about the same as whites (55.9%). This labor force participation rate is substantially lower than the statewide Latino average of 68.1%. This low participation in Springfield could be related to the lower median age of Latinos shown by Figure 3, suggesting 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



The previous labor force participation information suggests that Latinos in Springfield are struggling to participate in the city's economy. Figure 8 tells a similar and even less positive story for those Latinos who are in the work force. The unemployment rate among Latinos in 2010 was 25.2%, which was nearly double that of whites and significantly higher than the statewide Latino unemployment rate of 15.2%.

Figure 8: Unemployment Rates by Ethno-Racial Group in 2010

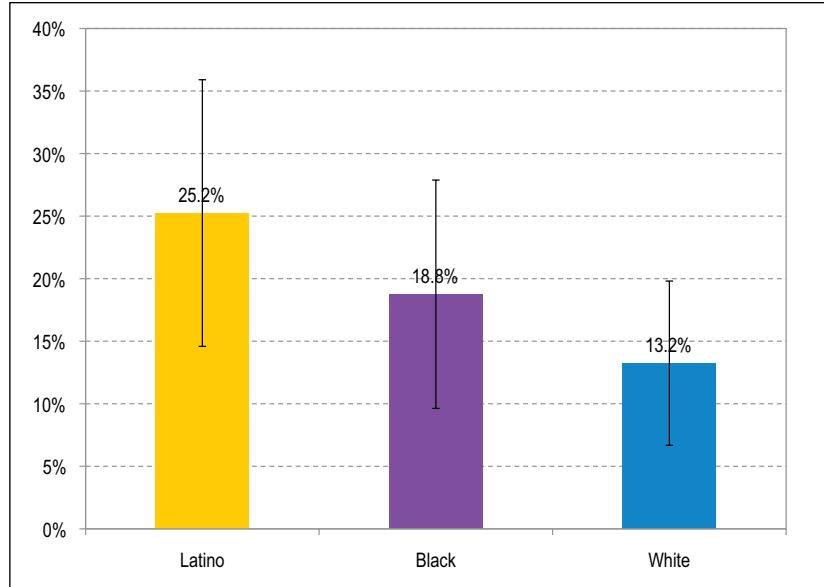
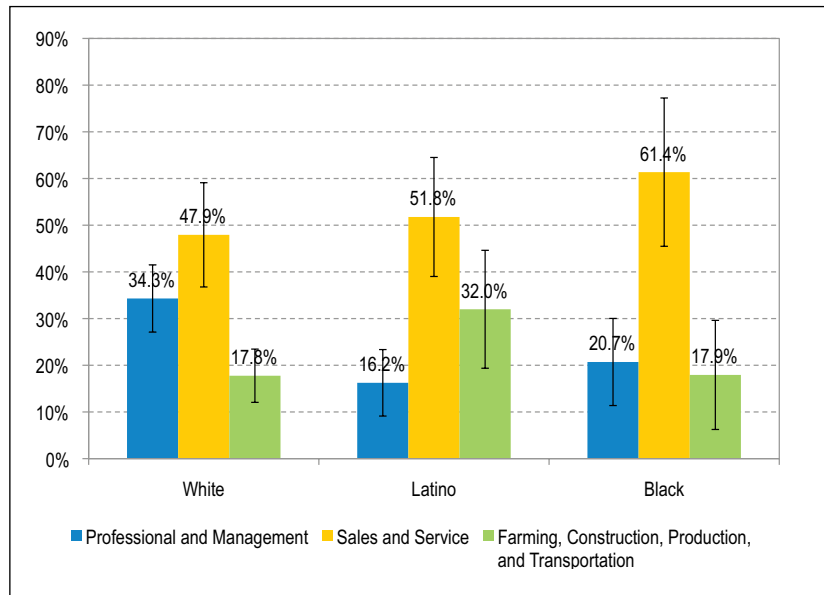


Figure 9 suggests that Latinos serve as complements to other ethno-racial groups in the Springfield labor market whose members have higher educational attainment. Latinos are overrepresented in what are traditionally considered blue-collar jobs (farming, construction, production, and transportation). Correspondingly, Latinos are underrepresented in what are traditionally considered white-collar jobs (professional and managerial).

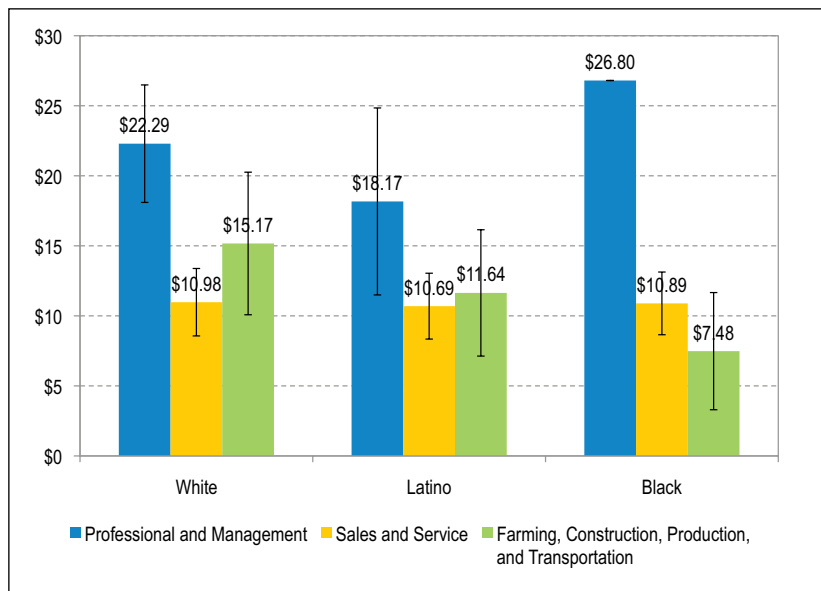
Figure 9: Population Employed by Occupational Category by Ethno-Racial Group in 2010



EARNINGS

When examining the wage rates for these occupational categories, we see that Latinos in Springfield appear to be receiving lower wages than other ethno-racial groups (Figure 10). They earn less than all other ethno-racial groups except Asians for their white-collar but earn approximately the same wages for service sector employment. They earn less than whites but more than blacks for their blue-collar employment.

Figure 10: Hourly Wages by Occupational Category by Ethno-Racial Group in 2010



HOUSING STATUS AND MEDICAL INSURANCE

The final measures of Latino participation in Springfield are intended to identify how well Latinos are being rewarded for their economic, social, and political participation. Latinos traditionally have low homeownership rates across the country. Figure 13 shows that this trend holds true for Springfield, where Latinos have a low homeownership level (27.1%) compared to other ethno-racial groups in the city, although it is higher than the statewide Latino rate of 25.7%. As a complement to these percentages in Figure 11, it is evident that 72.9% of Latinos in Springfield are renters.

Figure 11: Homeownership Rates by Ethno-Racial Group in 2010

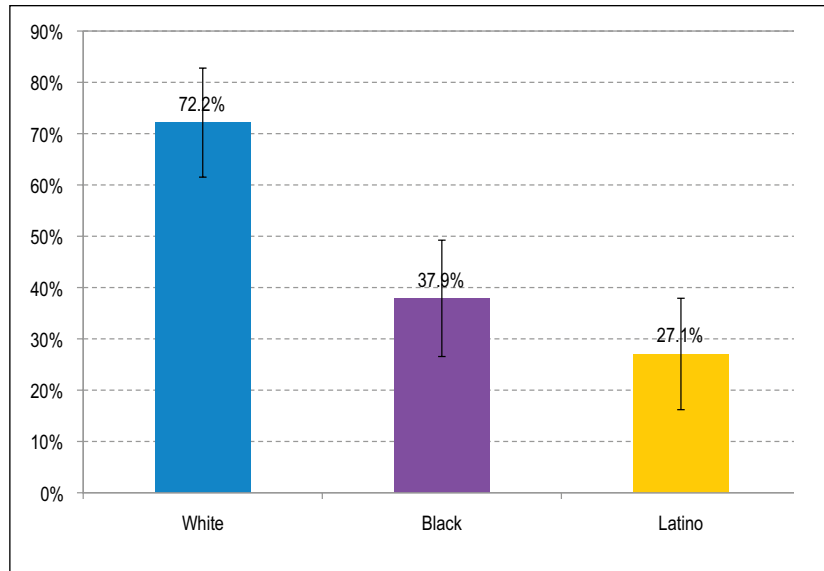
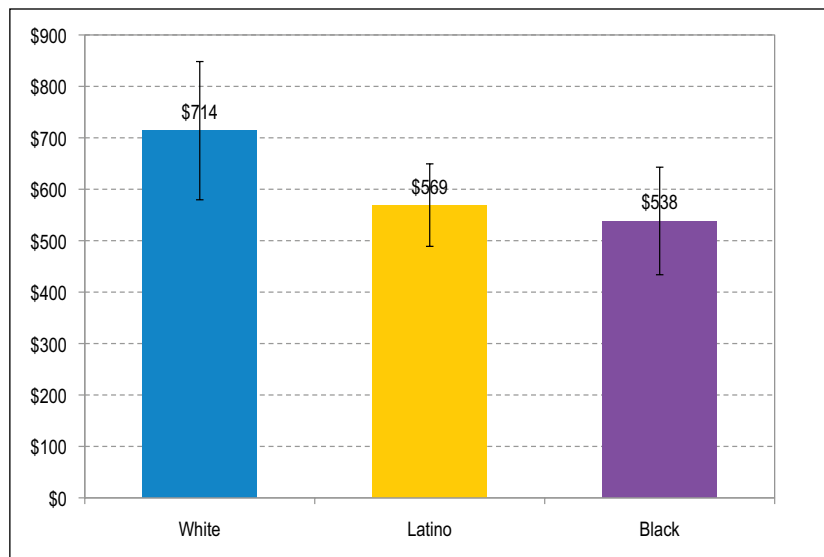


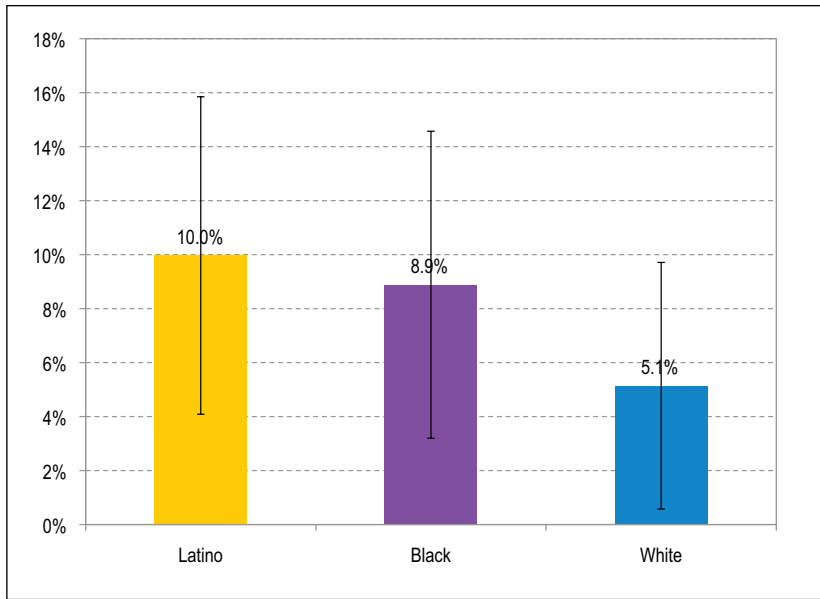
Figure 12: Rental Costs by Ethno-Racial Group in 2010



With low levels of homeownership, Latinos in Springfield are more dependent on the local rental market. Monthly rents paid by Latino renters (\$569) are higher than those of black (\$538) but lower than for whites (\$714).

The percentage of Latinos in Springfield who lack medical insurance (10.0%) is higher than the rates for blacks (8.9%) and whites (5.1%), but it is lower than the statewide Latino uninsurance rate of 11.6%. The greater percentages of Latinos in Springfield who are Puerto Rican and have access to public health insurance plans due to their citizenship may account for lower uninsurance rates in comparison to statewide.

Figure 13: Medical Uninsurance 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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