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Latinos in Massachusetts Selected Areas

Pittsfield

**by Phillip Granberry, Sarah Rustan, Mayara Fontes
and Michael Berardino**

June, 2014

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

Pittsfield

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

The report on Pittsfield is part of a larger series that covers cities in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts with a significant population of Latinos. This report analyzes data from the 2008–2012 American Community Survey (ACS), conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. We obtained the data from the American Factfinder website in tabular form and transformed these data into the figures presented in this report. The snapshot of current educational outcomes in the city of Pittsfield is based on publicly available data from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MADESE).

Pittsfield is considered a Gateway City. A Gateway City is a mid-sized city (35,000–250,000 people) that was once an industrial center but did not transition economically as well as cities with high-tech industries. Gateway cities rank below the statewide average in regard to both household income and educational attainment.

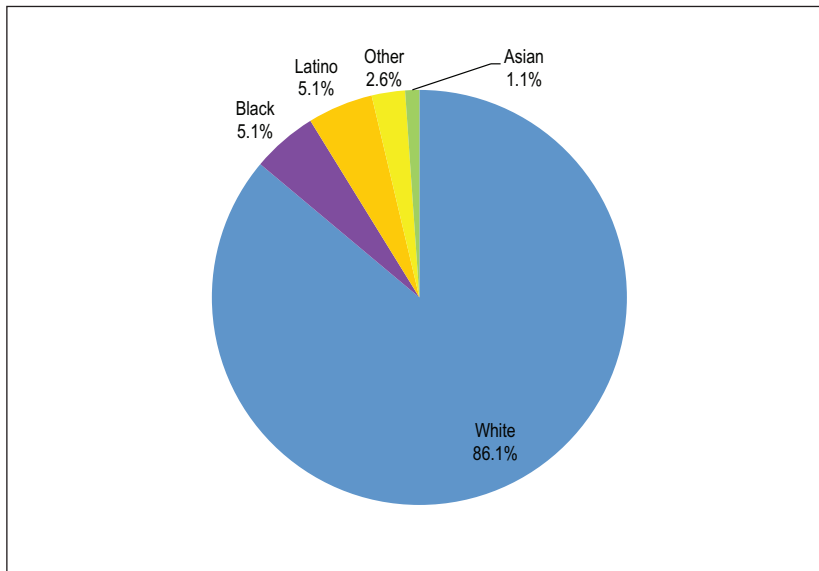
In this report Latinos are compared to non-Latino whites, blacks, and Asians, based on individuals' racial identification. Since ACS data is collected from a sample of the population, there is some variation associated with each population estimate. The number of ethno-racial groups included in a particular analysis may vary since each group is included in the analysis only when the observed sample size is large enough to produce reliable population estimates.

The Census Bureau identifies Latinos through a question that asks respondents to choose either "Hispanic or Latino" or "Not Hispanic or Latino." A separate question asks about race. This report uses the term "Latino" to include all those who selected "Hispanic or Latino" on the Census form, regardless of racial designation.

As the third largest city in western Massachusetts, Pittsfield is home to an estimated 2,250 Latinos. Latinos represent approximately one-twentieth (5.1%) of the city's population, approximately the same proportion of the population as blacks and greater than the proportion of Asians (Figure 1).

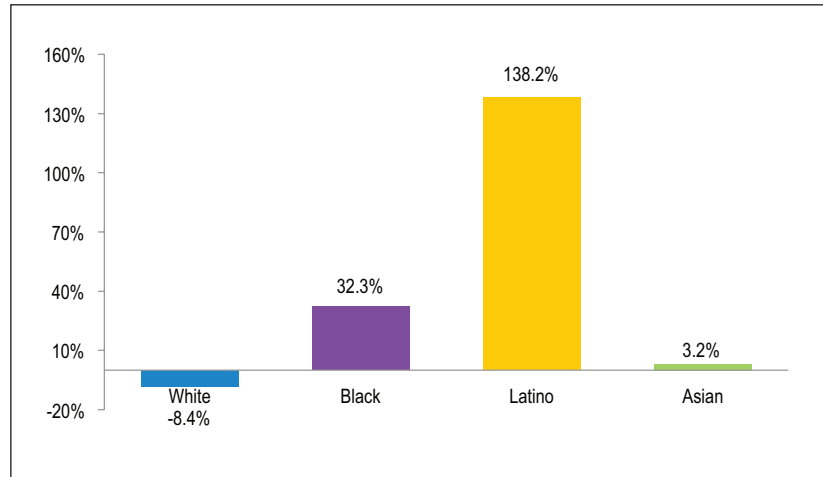
THE LATINO POPULATION

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



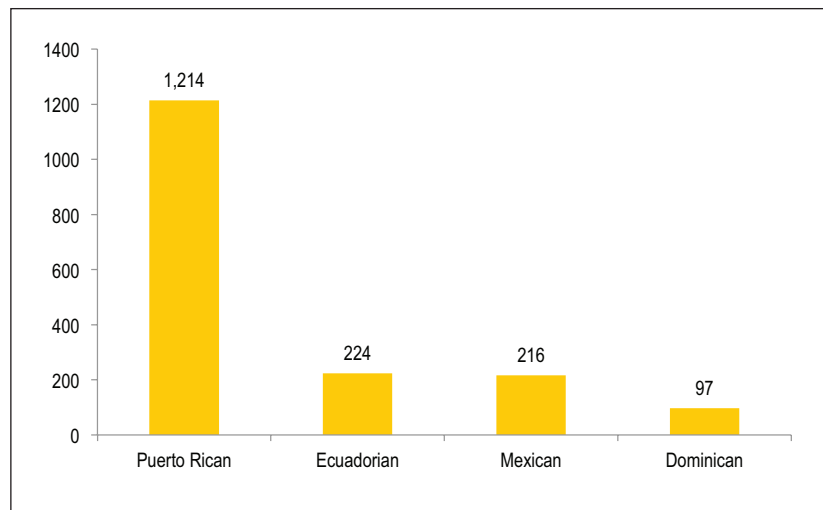
While the overall population of Pittsfield decreased slightly (2.4%) between 2000 and 2010, there were significant differences between ethno-racial groups, as shown in Figure 2. A striking feature of Pittsfield's population change is the growth in its Latino population, whose 138.2% increase in population was much greater than the 46.4% increase in the state's Latino population. In contrast, there was a small but significant (8.4%) decline in the number of whites, who remained the largest ethno-racial group.

Figure 2: Population Change by Ethno-Racial Group Since 2000



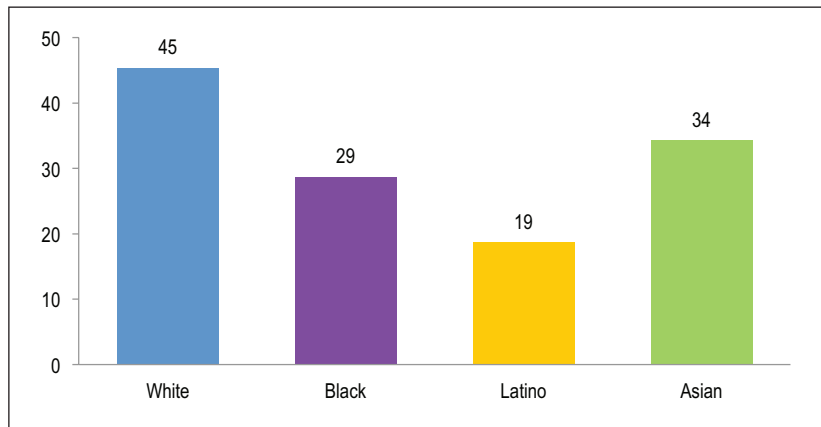
A slightly higher percentage of residents in Pittsfield are foreign-born (15.6%) than in the Commonwealth as a whole (14.8%). When examining the origin of Latinos in Pittsfield, it is important to note that Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens; they are not included in foreign-born estimates. Puerto Ricans constitute the largest Latino subpopulation in the city with a population of 1,214, followed by Ecuadorians (224), Mexicans (216), and Dominicans (97).

Figure 3: Ancestry of the Top Latino Subpopulations



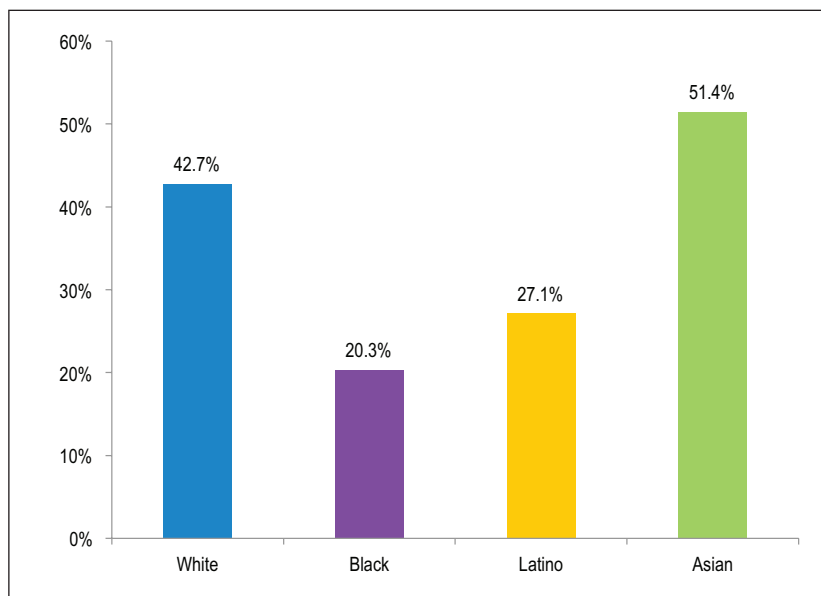
MEDIAN AGE AND MARITAL STATUS

Figure 4: Median Age by Ethno-Racial Group



Pittsfield's Latino population, with a median age of 19 years (see Figure 4), is even younger than the statewide Latino median age of 26. Latinos are young in comparison to the larger white population, which has a median age of 45 in Pittsfield and 43 years statewide. Figure 4 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 5: Marriage Rates by Ethno-Racial Group

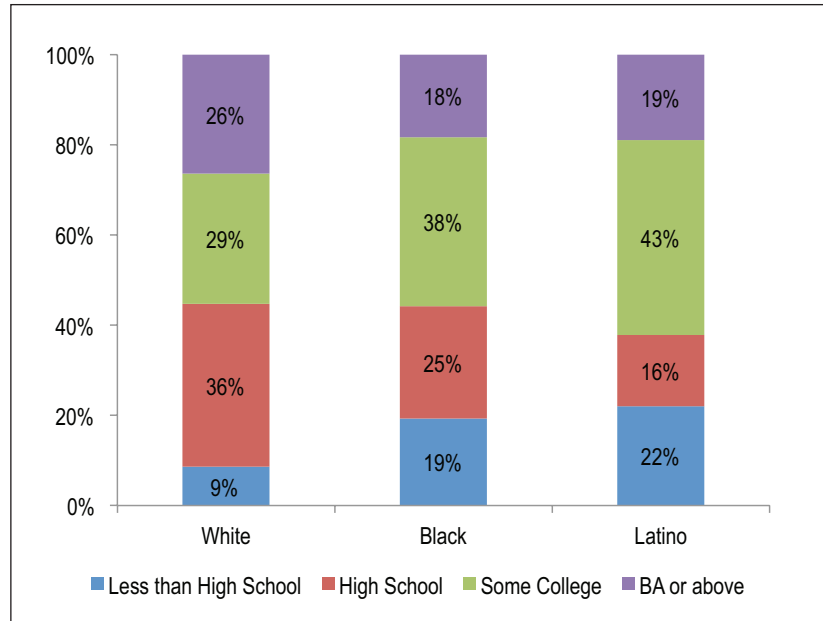


As might be predicted from the youthful Latino population of Pittsfield, the Latino marriage rate of 27.1% (for persons age 15 years and older) is lower than that of the white population (42.7%). This same lower marriage rate trend for Latinos exists statewide, with a marriage rate of only 32.7% for Latinos.

EDUCATION

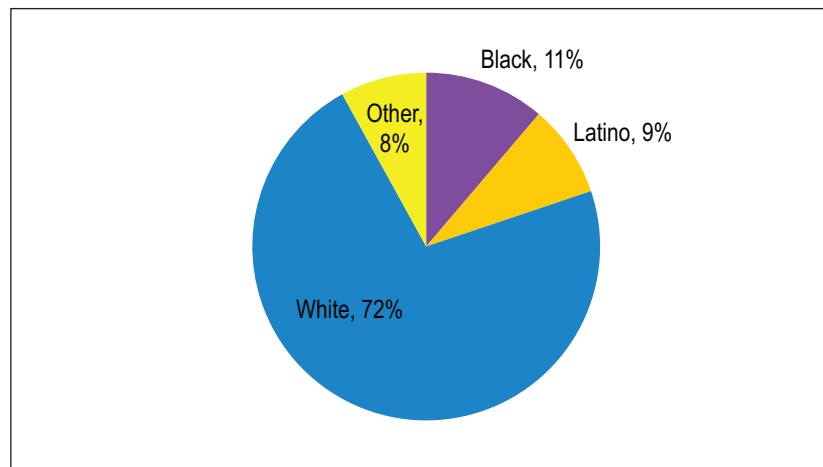
Educational attainment is low in New Bedford in comparison to the rest of Massachusetts: only 26% of Pittsfield residents age 25 or older have a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 39% statewide. Figure 6 shows that Latinos have the highest percentage of their adult population with some college but no degree (43%), compared to 38% for blacks and 29% for whites. At the other end of the educational scale, Latinos have the second lowest percentage of their population with at least a bachelor's degree: 19%, compared to 18% for blacks and 26% for whites.

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



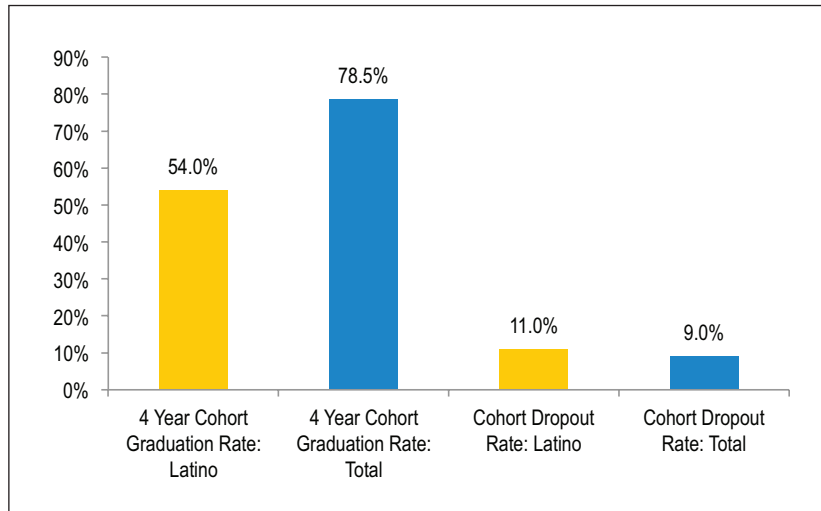
During the 2014 school year, Pittsfield public schools had an enrollment of 5,987 students. Latino students are the third largest ethno-racial group in the district, accounting for 9% of the student population (Figure 7). White students make up the largest segment of the student population at 72% followed by black students at 11%.

Figure 7: Ethno-Racial Composition of Pittsfield Public Schools, SY2014



Latino students in Pittsfield have the lowest four-year cohort graduation rate and the highest four-year cohort dropout rate among all ethno-racial groups in Pittsfield (Figure 8). Only 54% of Latino students who started high school together graduated within the anticipated four years. This is 31 percentage points lower than the statewide four-year graduation rate of 85%. The Latino student population also demonstrates high dropout rates, with 11% of Latino students who started high school together dropping out within four years.

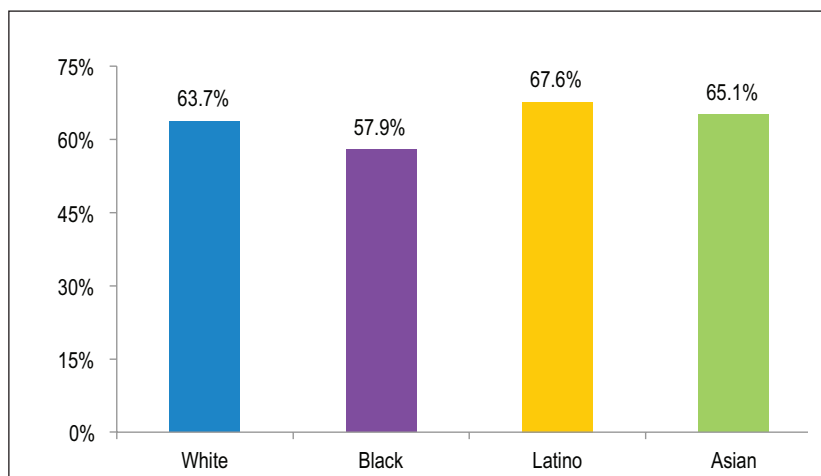
Figure 8: Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate and Dropout Rate by Ethno-Racial Category, SY2013



LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

Latinos in Pittsfield have a similar labor force participation rate to Latinos statewide (67.6% as compared to 66.5%). However, Latinos have higher labor force participation than any other ethno-racial group in the city.

Figure 9: Labor Force Participation among Individuals 16 to 64 Years of Age by Ethno-Racial Group



The overall unemployment rate in Pittsfield (Figure 10) during this period was high in comparison to the overall state unemployment rate (10.6% versus 5.7%). The high level of unemployment in the city is consistent with that of other Gateway Cities in the Commonwealth. In contrast, the 5.4% unemployment rate for Latinos in Pittsfield is not only lower than for whites (10.7%) and blacks (19%) in Pittsfield but also lower than for Latinos statewide (13.7%).

Figure 10: Unemployment Rates by Ethno-Racial Group

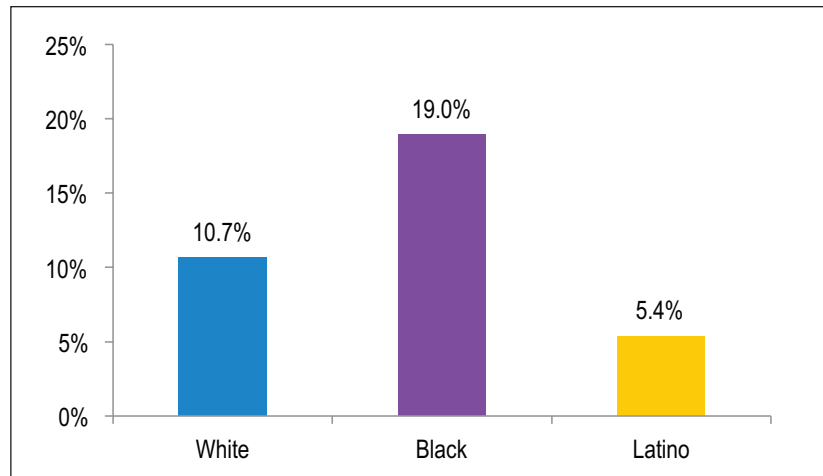
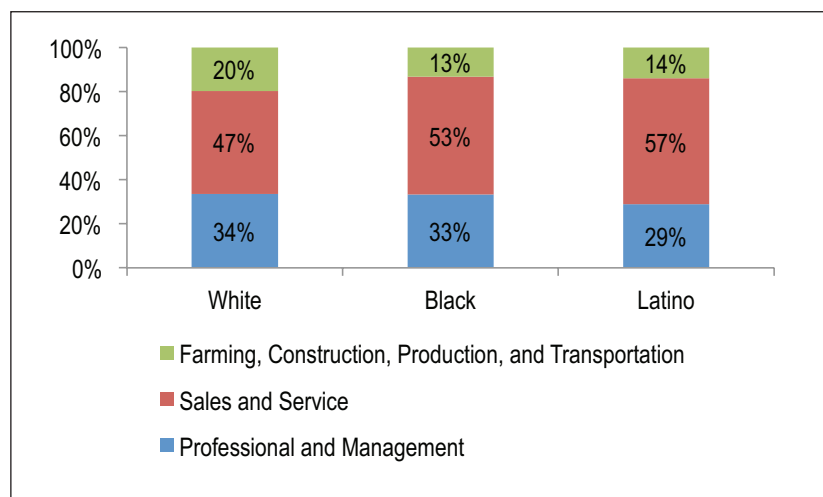


Figure 11 highlights that Latinos are underrepresented in what are traditionally considered white-collar jobs with only 29% working in these management, business, science, and arts occupations. Latinos are overrepresented in the sales and service sector, with 57% of Latinos working in these occupations, while 14% work in what are traditionally considered blue-collar jobs (natural resources, construction, maintenance, production, transportation, and material moving occupations).

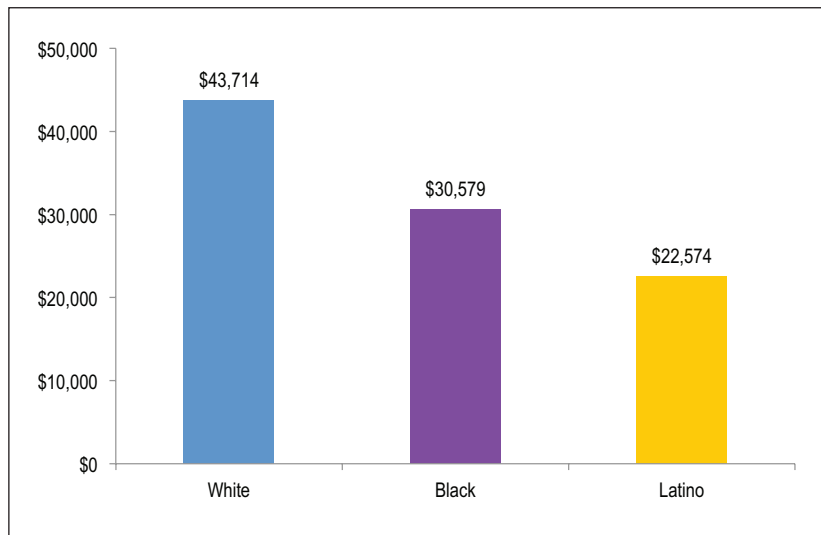
Figure 11: Population Employed by Occupational Category by Ethno-Racial Group



EARNINGS

The median income in Pittsfield is \$42,076, which is significantly lower than the statewide median income of \$66,658. This low median income reflects the economic problems that Pittsfield has experienced as a Gateway City in Massachusetts. Latinos have the lowest median income of any ethno-racial group at \$22,574 (Figure 12). This is much lower than the statewide Latino median income of \$34,089.

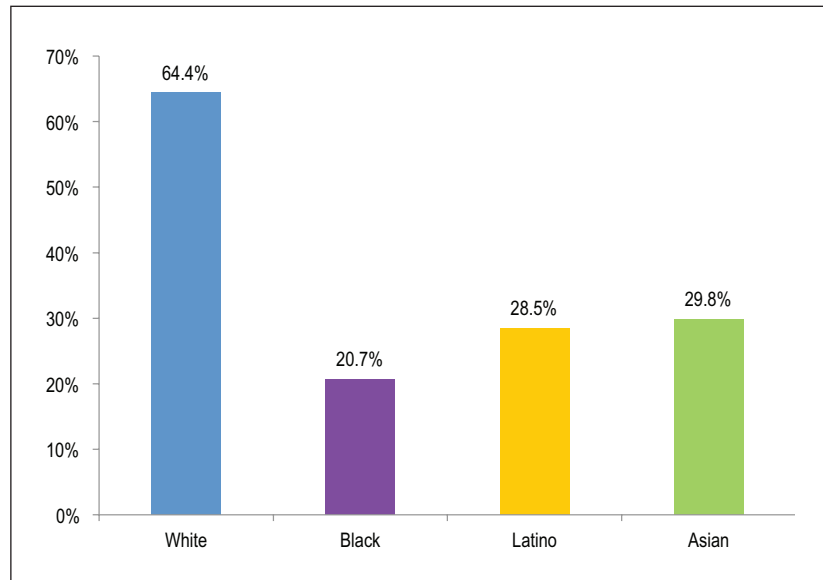
Figure 12: Median Income by Ethno-Racial Group



HOUSING STATUS AND MEDICAL UNINSURANCE

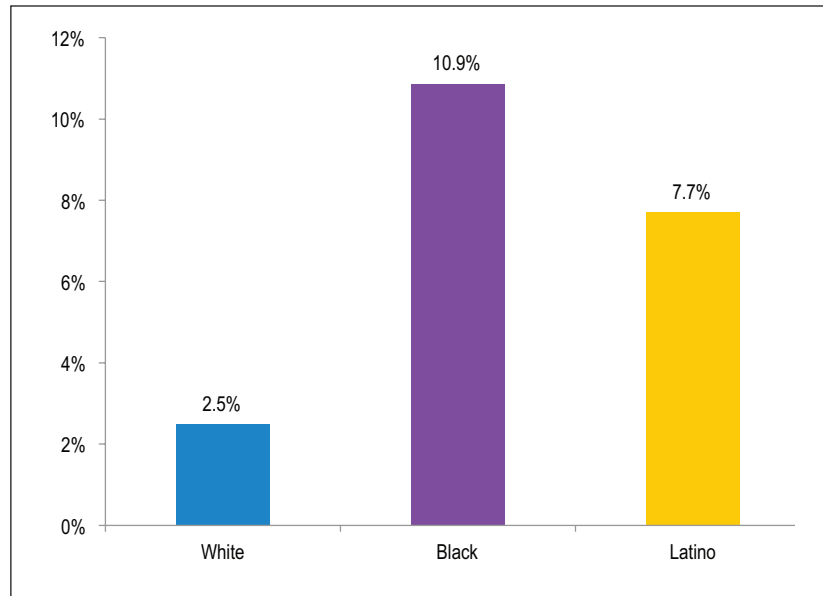
The final measures of Latino participation in Pittsfield are intended to identify how well Latinos are being rewarded for their economic, social, and political participation. Pittsfield has slightly lower homeownership rates (61%) than the state as a whole (63%). Latinos have the second lowest homeownership level of the ethno-racial groups in the city at 28% (Figure 13). In comparison to the lower overall homeownership in Pittsfield, Latinos in Pittsfield are actually more likely to be homeowners than Latinos statewide (28% versus 26%). Nonetheless, the majority (72%) of Latinos in Pittsfield are renters.

Figure 13: Homeownership Rates by Ethno-Racial Group



Pittsfield has lower rates of medical uninsurance (3%) than the statewide average of 4%. And the rate of medical uninsurance for Latinos in Pittsfield, though high (7.7%) is lower than for Latinos statewide (8.6%).

Figure 14: Medical Uninsurance by Ethno-Racial Group



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.

The descriptive analyses in this report use both household- and individual-level American Community Survey 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.

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.

Sarah Rustan holds a PhD in Law and Public Policy from 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 explored the role that nonprofit arts organizations play in community development and social organization. Sarah's research interests include community development, racial and

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