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Latinos in Massachusetts Selected Areas: Malden and Medford

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Recommended Citation

Granberry, Phillip and Rustan, Sarah, "Latinos in Massachusetts Selected Areas: Malden and Medford" (2010). *Gastón Institute Publications*. 45.

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The Mauricio Gastón Institute for
Latino Community Development
and Public Policy



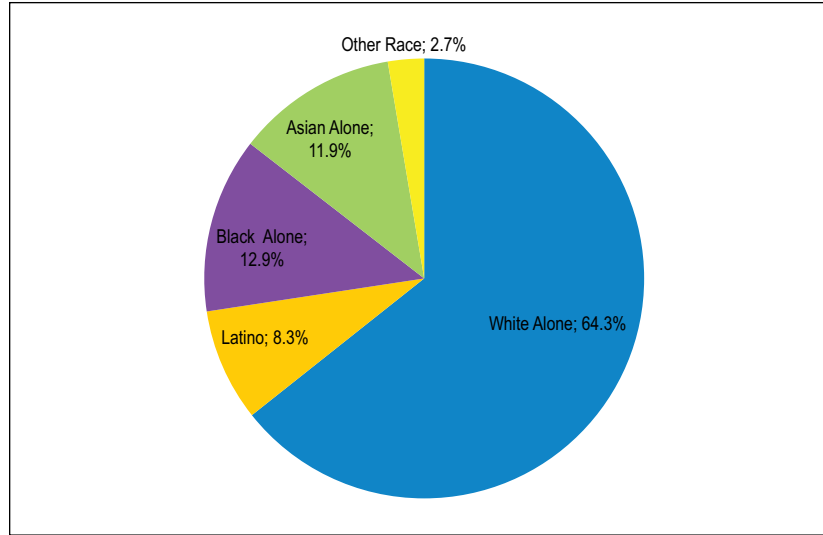
Latinos in Massachusetts Selected Areas Malden and Medford

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

INTRODUCTION

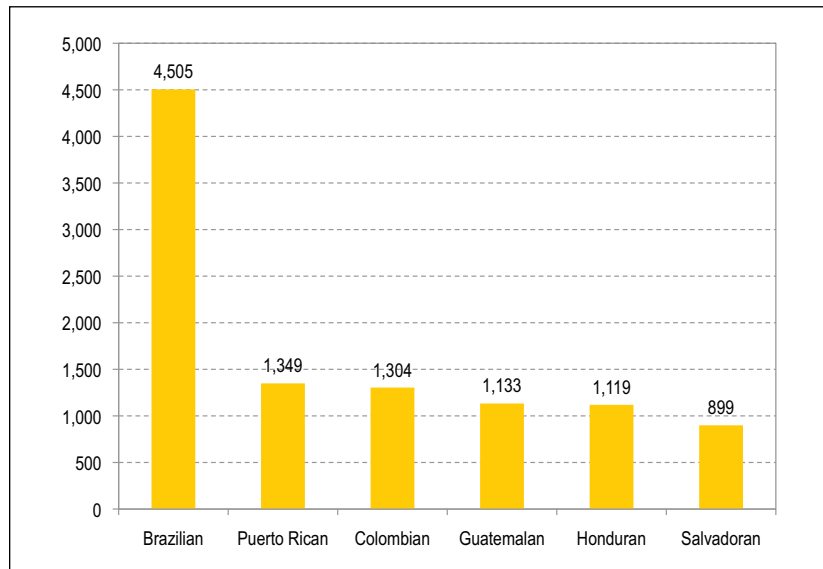
This report provides a descriptive snapshot of selected economic, social, educational, and demographic indicators pertaining to Latinos in the cities of Malden and Medford. This report is prepared for the 2010 Statewide Latino Public Policy Conference organized by UMass Boston's Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy. It is part of a 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 that combines these two similar sized cities, the majority of the Latino population (65.8%) lived in Malden in 2000, while 34.2% lived in Medford.

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



Malden and Medford are home to an estimated 9,055 Latinos, who make up 8.3% of the cities' population. Whites constitute the largest ethno-racial group (64.3%), while blacks account for 12.9% and Asians 11.9% (Figure 1).

Figure 2: Ancestry of the Top Latino Groups in 2008



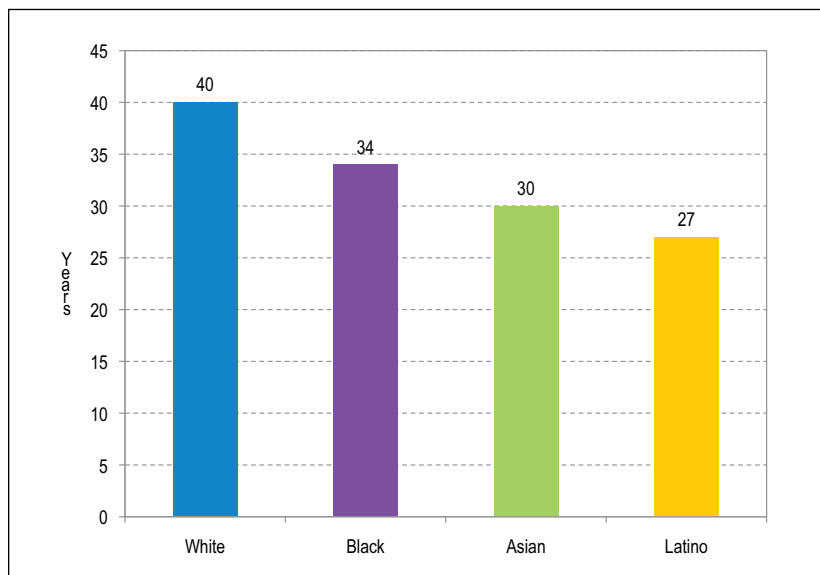
The Latino population in Malden and Medford is dominated by Brazilians, who number 4,505.¹ Puerto Ricans (1,349), Colombians (1,304), Guatemalans (1,133), Hondurans (1,119), and Salvadorans (899) are the other sizable Latino subpopulations. Latinos help give Malden and Medford a proportionately greater foreign-born population (32.2%) 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 Malden and Medford 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 Malden and Medford. Latinos' median age of 27 years is lower than that of other ethno-racial groups, especially the white majority (median age 40 years). This suggests that Latinos have more families with young children than whites 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 2008



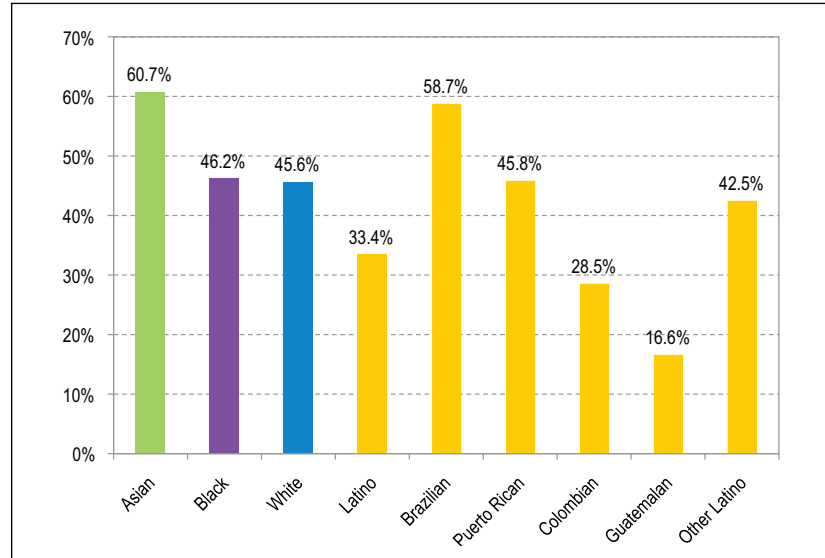
Notes

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 Malden and Medford, some demographic and labor force participation estimates have too large of a standard error and have been dropped from this analysis.

Figure 4 shows that the 33.4% marriage rate for Latinos (for persons age 16 and older) is less than all other ethno-racial groups. It is similar to the statewide Latino marriage rate of 33.6%. Latino subpopulations show wide variation in their marriage rates; a number of factors, including the differing ages of these populations, could be driving this variation.

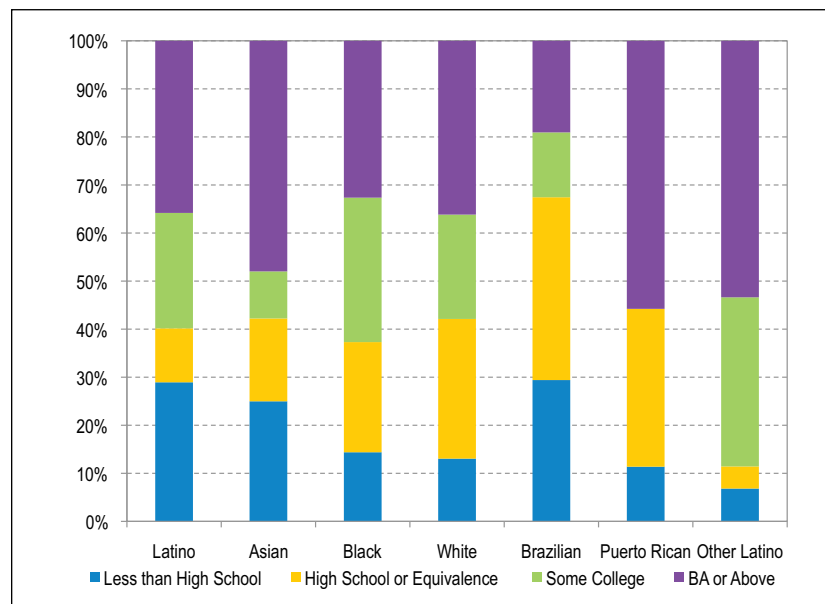
Figure 4: Marriage Rates by Ethno-Racial Group in 2008



EDUCATION

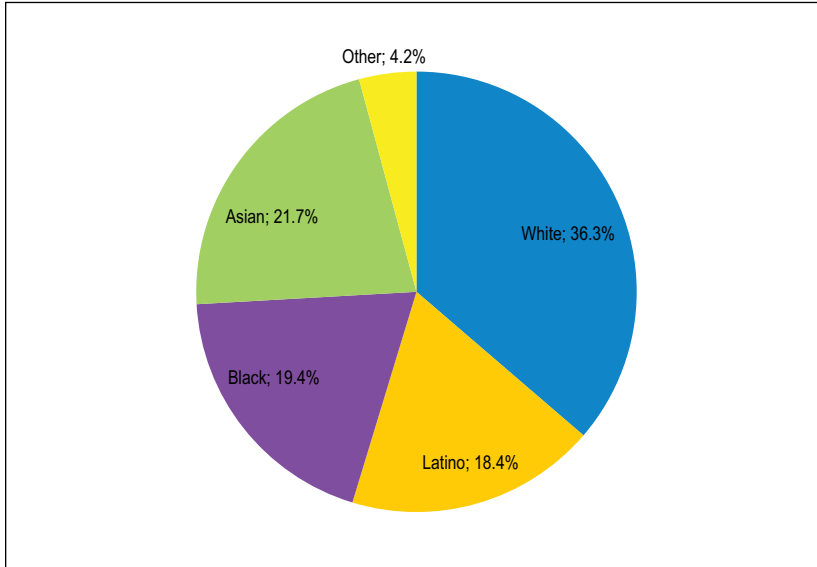
Figure 5 highlights the fact that Latinos have the highest percentage of their population who lack a high school diploma: 28.9%, compared to 25.0% for Asians, 14.4% for blacks, and 13.1% for whites. At the other end of the educational scale, Latinos (35.8%), blacks (32.6%), and whites (36.2%) in Malden and Medford have similar percentages of their population with at least a bachelor's degree, while Asians (48.0%) stand out.

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



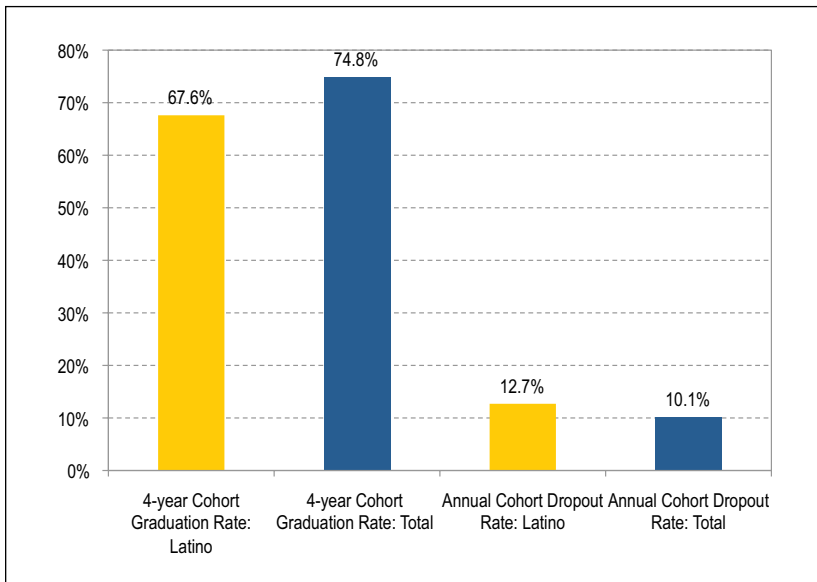
Figures 6A and 6B provide information regarding Latinos in the Malden Public Schools, based on data from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Even though Latinos experienced a 131% increase during the 2000s, they remain the smallest ethno-racial group and made up only 18.4% of the student population in the 2008–2009 academic year.

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



Latinos in Malden Public Schools lag slightly behind the total population in academic outcomes. About two thirds of Latino students (67.6%) graduate in four years compared to 74.8% for the total population. Similarly, 12.7% of Latinos drop out of school, compared to 10.1% for the total population.

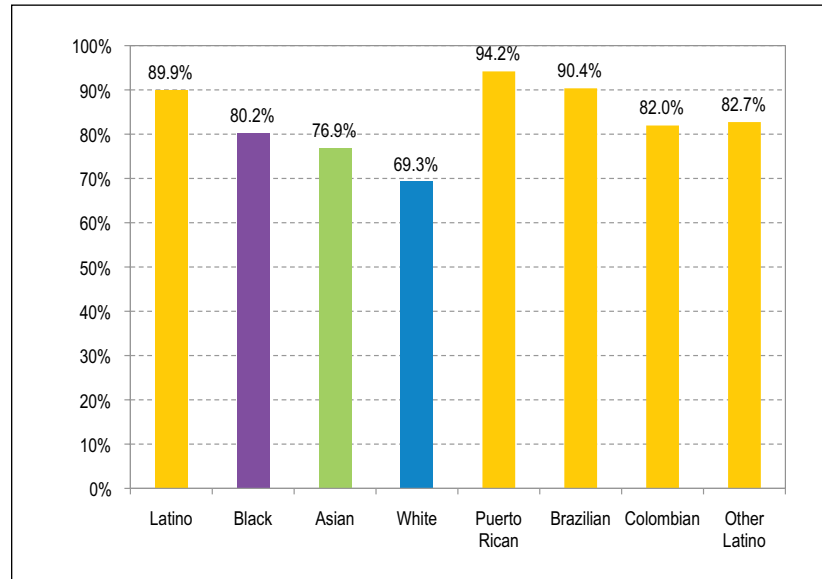
Figure 6B: Spotlight on Malden Public Schools by Outcomes, Academic Year 2008–2009



LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

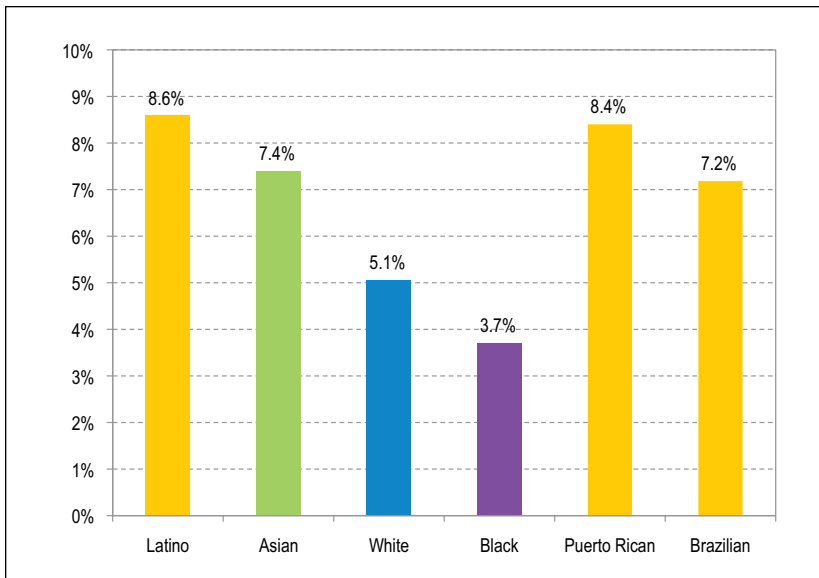
Figure 7 shows that Latinos have a labor force participation rate (89.9%) that is greater than for blacks (80.2%), Asians (76.9%), and whites (69.3%). The Latino labor force participation rate for Malden and Medford is significantly higher than among Latinos across the state, whose overall participation rate is 68.6%. This is despite the lower median age of Latinos shown by Figure 3, which suggests that they have more families than whites 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 Malden and Medford have a strong motivation 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 8.6%, which was higher than the 7.4% figure for Asians, 5.1% for whites, and 3.7% for blacks.

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



Figures 9A and 9B suggest that Latinos are competing more with other ethno-racial groups in the Malden and Medford area's labor market than elsewhere in Massachusetts because they have higher educational attainment. Similar percentages of Latinos are working in what are traditionally considered blue-collar jobs (farming, construction, production, and transportation) with whites and Asians (Figure 9B). Correspondingly as Figure 9A shows, even though Latinos are slightly under-represented in what are traditionally considered white-collar jobs (professional and managerial), one third are employed in these occupations.

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

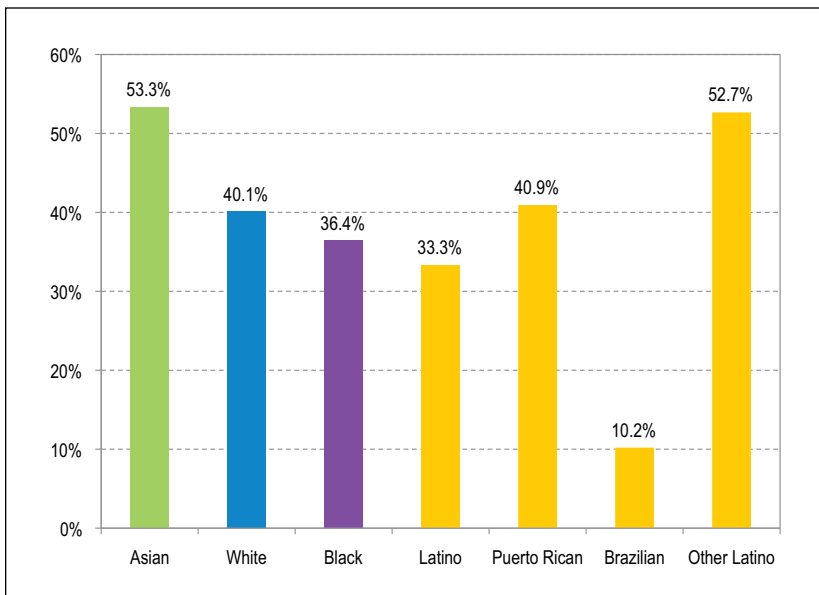
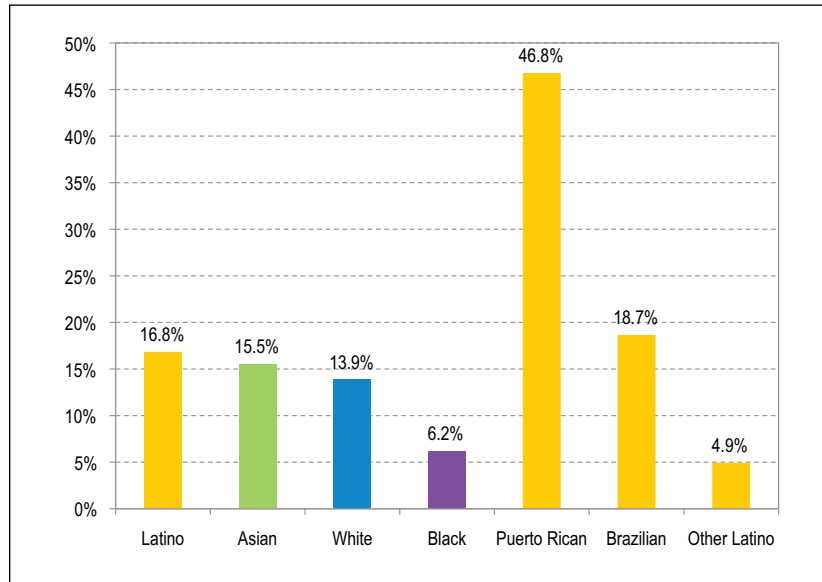


Figure 9B: Population Employed in Farming, Construction, Production, and Transportation Occupations by Ethno-Racial Group in 2008



EARNINGS

When examining the wage rates for these occupational categories, Latinos appear to be receiving lower wages for some occupational categories. They earn lower wages for their white-collar and blue-collar employment than any other ethno-racial group (Figures 10A & 10C). However, they earn higher wages for their service-sector employment than any other ethno-racial group (Figure 10B).

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

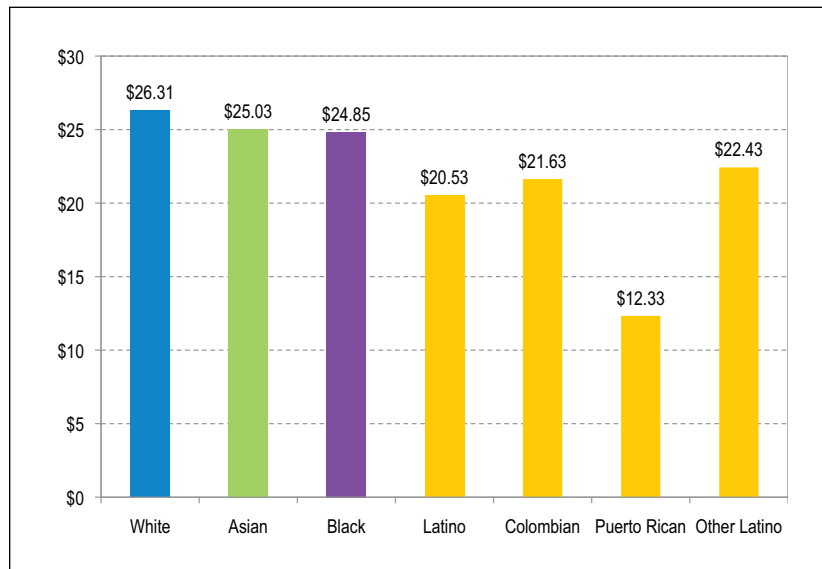


Figure 10B: Hourly Wages in Sales and Service Occupations by Ethno-Racial Group in 2008

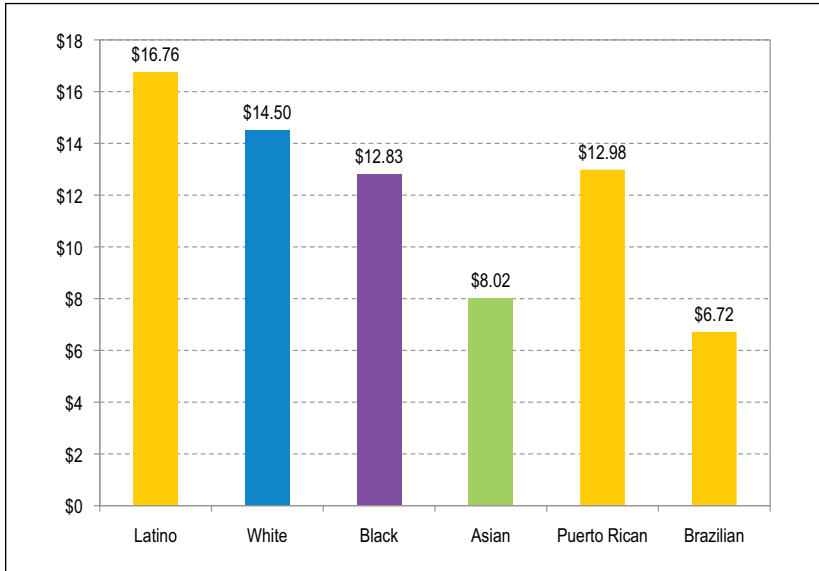
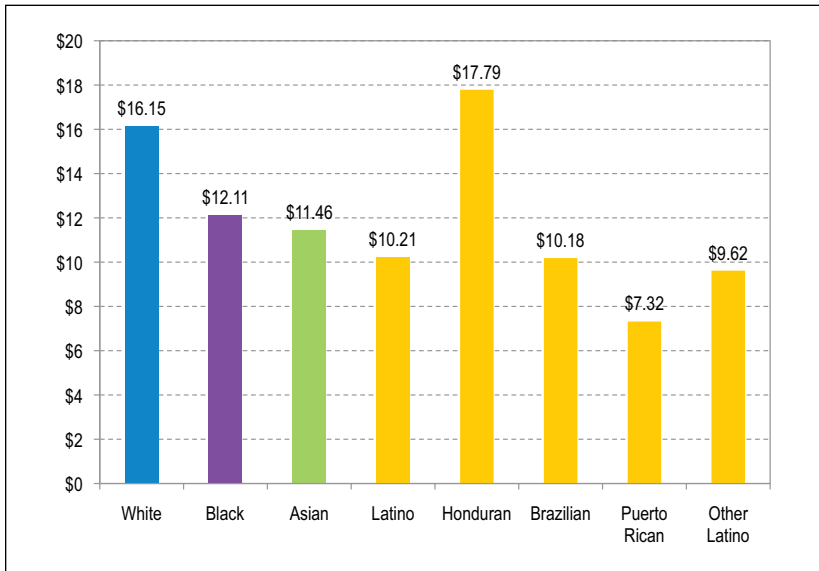


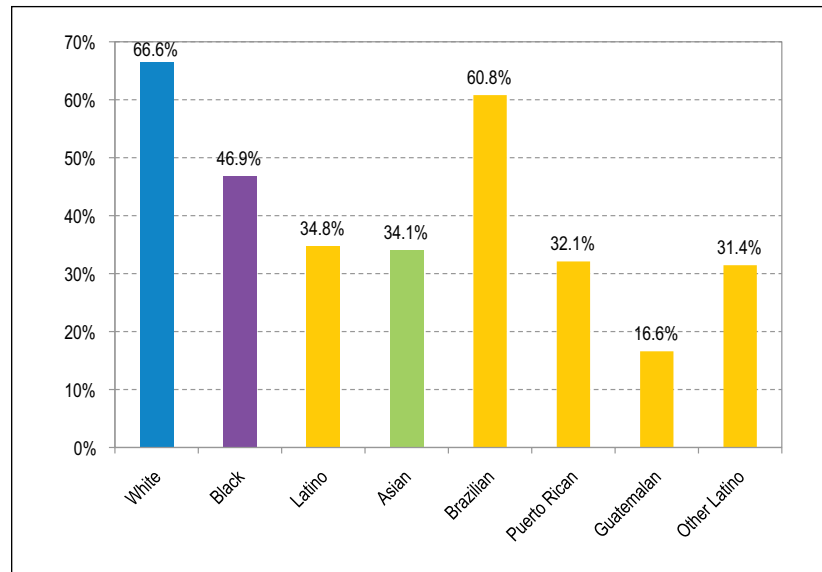
Figure 10C: Hourly Wages in Farming, Construction, Production, and Transportation Occupations by Ethno-Racial Group in 2008



HOUSING STATUS AND MEDICAL INSURANCE

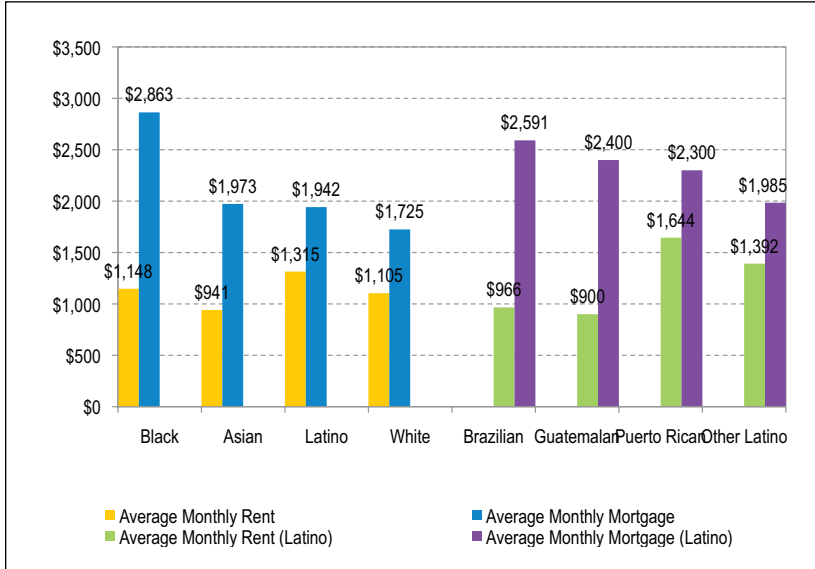
The final measures of Latino participation in Malden and Medford are intended to identify how well Latinos are being rewarded for their economic, social, and political participation. Latinos traditionally have low homeownership rates across the country. Figure 11 shows that this trend holds true in these cities: the 34.8% Latino homeownership rate is lower than for all other ethno-racial groups except blacks. As a complement to these percentages in Figure 11, it is evident that 65.2% of Latinos in Malden and Medford are renters.

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



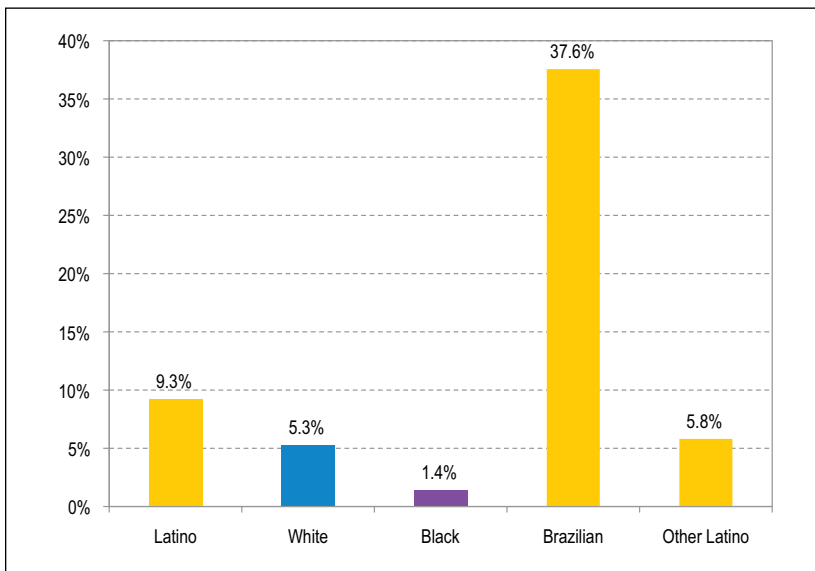
Latinos living in Malden and Medford face high housing costs. Having largely become homeowners during the housing bubble of the last decade, Latinos in Figure 12 on average pay \$1,942 monthly mortgages – greater than whites, comparable to Asians, but less than blacks. At the same time at \$1,315, Latino renters on the average pay higher monthly rents than other ethno-racial groups.

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



The percentage of Latinos who lack medical insurance (9.3%) is greater than for any other ethno-racial group in Malden and Medford but is similar to the state-wide Latino average of 9.2%. Brazilians, who are a newly arriving subpopulation, have the highest uninsurance rate at 37.6%, even higher than their statewide rate of 31.2%.

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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