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# Latinos in Massachusetts Selected Areas: New Bedford

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# Latinos in Massachusetts Selected Areas: New Bedford

by Phillip Granberry, PhD, and Trevor Mattos

October, 2018

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THE MAURICIO GASTÓN INSTITUTE FOR  
LATINO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
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## **Latinos in Massachusetts Selected Areas: New Bedford**

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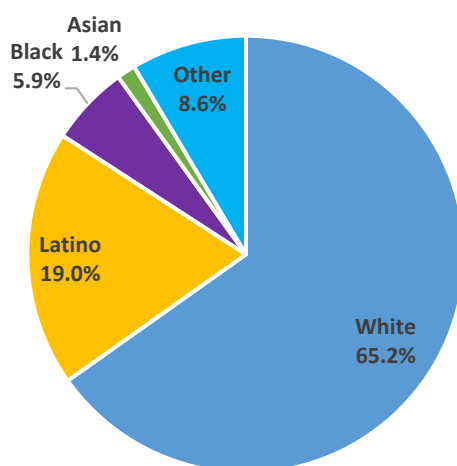
### New Bedford Overview

## Latino Population

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The city of New Bedford, Massachusetts is home to 94,988 residents, of whom 18,014 are Latino, according to the 2012-2016 American Community Survey. The city is majority non-Latino white (65%), though Latinos make up the second largest ethno-racial group (19%). This share of Latinos is higher than that of the statewide population, which is only 11%. Blacks make up 6% of the city's population (Figure 1). New Bedford is geographically located in the SouthCoast region, which has a relatively smaller share of Latinos (7%).

**Figure 1: Population Percentages by Ethno-Racial Group in New Bedford**

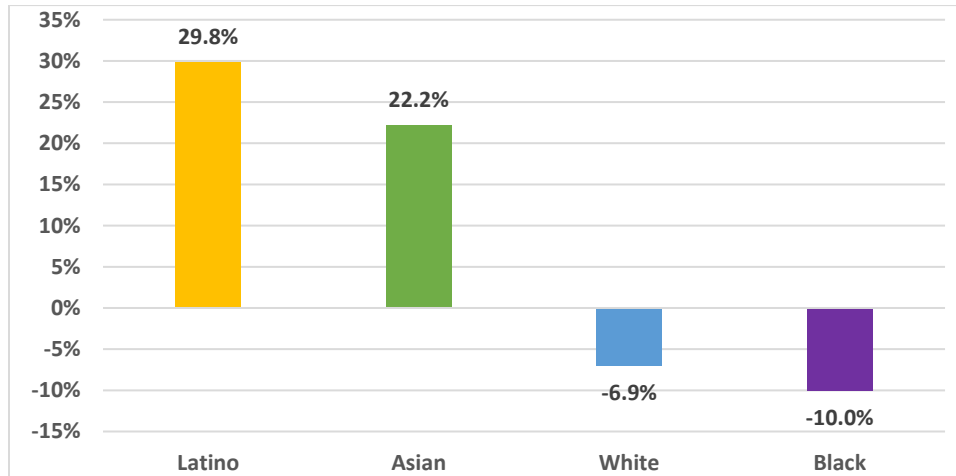


Source: 2012-2016 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates - B03002

Between 2010 and 2016, New Bedford saw an increase in the size of the Latino population, from 13,880 to 18,014, representing a 30% increase. Statewide, the Latino population grew by 25% during this same period. The Asian population of New Bedford also grew by 22%. The white population declined by 7% during this time, while the city's black population declined by 10% (Figure 2).

New Bedford has a larger share of its population that is foreign-born than does the Commonwealth overall. New Bedford is 20% foreign born, while Massachusetts is 16% 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 New Bedford.

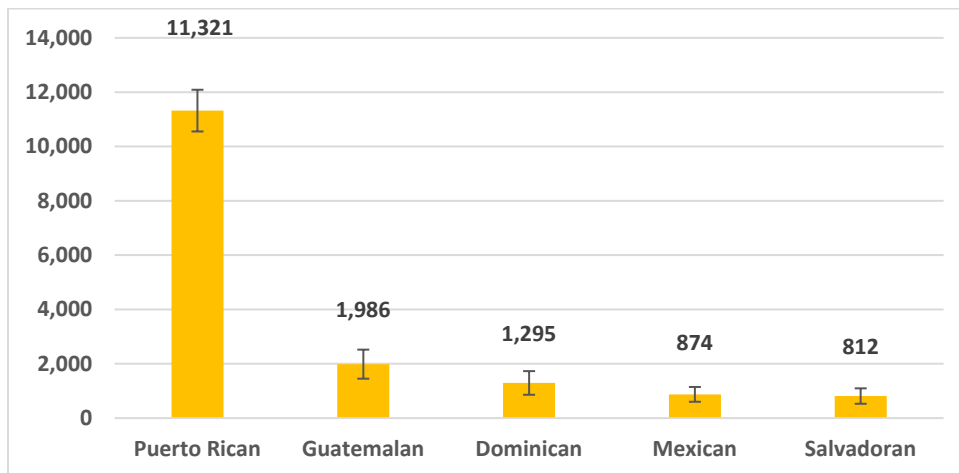
**Figure 2: Population Change by Ethno-Racial Group from 2010 to 2016**



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

New Bedford, like much of the SouthCoast region, has a larger Puerto Rican population. The Puerto Rican population numbers 11,321 (Figure 3). Guatemalans and Dominicans are the next largest Latino groups, each having over 1,000 residents. Mexicans and Salvadorans are the fourth and fifth largest Latino groups in New Bedford. Statewide, Puerto Ricans are the largest group, followed by Dominicans, Salvadorans, Mexicans, and Guatemalans.

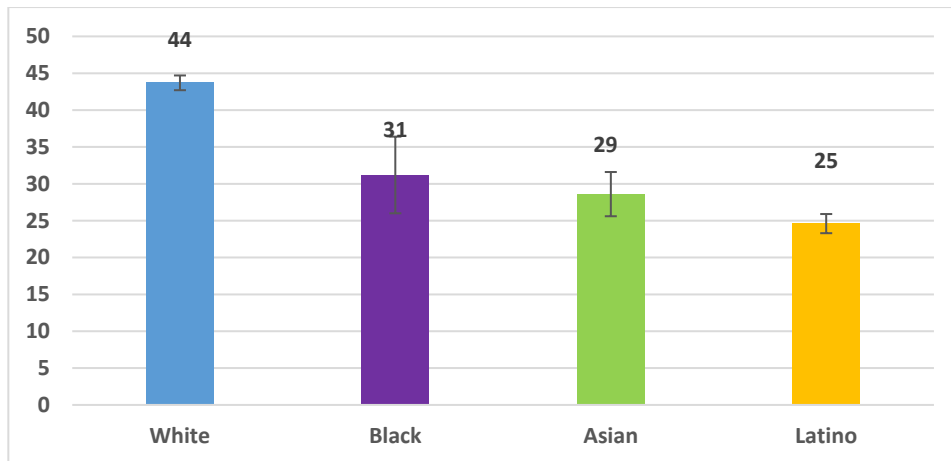
**Figure 3: Origin of the Top Latino or Latino Subpopulations**



Source: 2012-2016 5-Year ACS Estimates – B03001

## Median Age and Marital Status

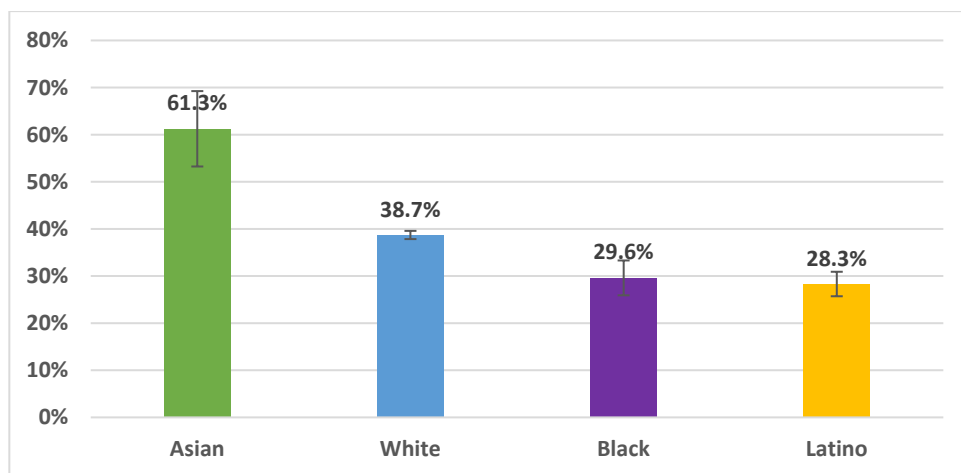
Figure 4: Median Age by Ethno-Racial Group



Source: 2012-2016 5-Year ACS Estimates – B01002

The age demographics vary significantly across these ethno-racial groups. Whites are the oldest population both statewide and in New Bedford. The median age for whites is 44 years, while that of Latinos, the youngest group, is 25 years. Across the state, the median age for Latinos is slightly higher than that of New Bedford, at 27 years. Blacks and Asians fall between the median ages of the whites and Latinos in New Bedford (Figure 4).

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



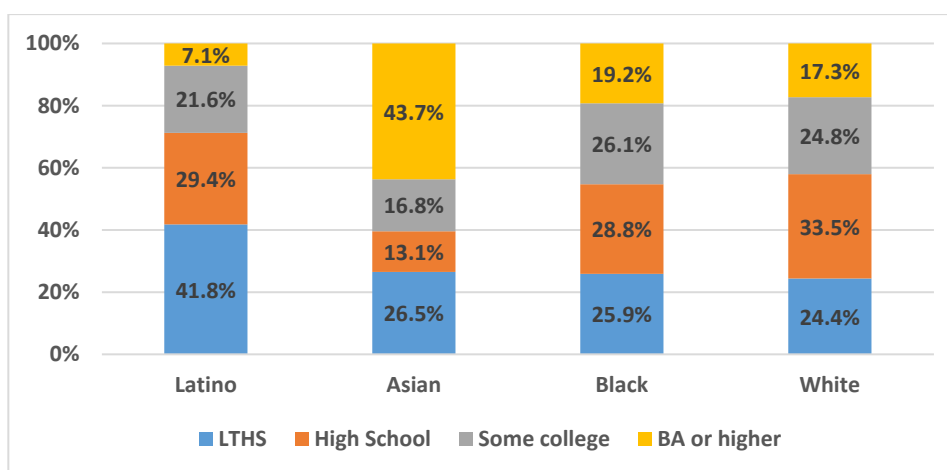
Source: 2012-2016 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates – B12002

Marriage rates are highest among Asians and lowest among Latinos in New Bedford. The marriage rate for Latinos is 28%, which is lower than their statewide Latino marriage rate of 32%. The marriage rates of only Asians are higher than the statewide marriage rate of 52% for Massachusetts (Figure 5).

## Education

Similar to other Latino populations across the Commonwealth, Latinos in New Bedford have lower levels of educational attainment than other ethno-racial groups. More than 40% of Latinos did not complete high school compared to 31% of Latinos statewide. On the opposite end of the spectrum, only 7% of Latinos have a Bachelor's degree or higher in New Bedford. Across the state, 18% of Latinos have this educational attainment. Alternatively, a relatively larger share of the Asian population has a Bachelor's degree or higher (44%). The respective shares of the white and black populations of New Bedford with a Bachelor's degree or higher are lower than they are statewide for these groups.

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

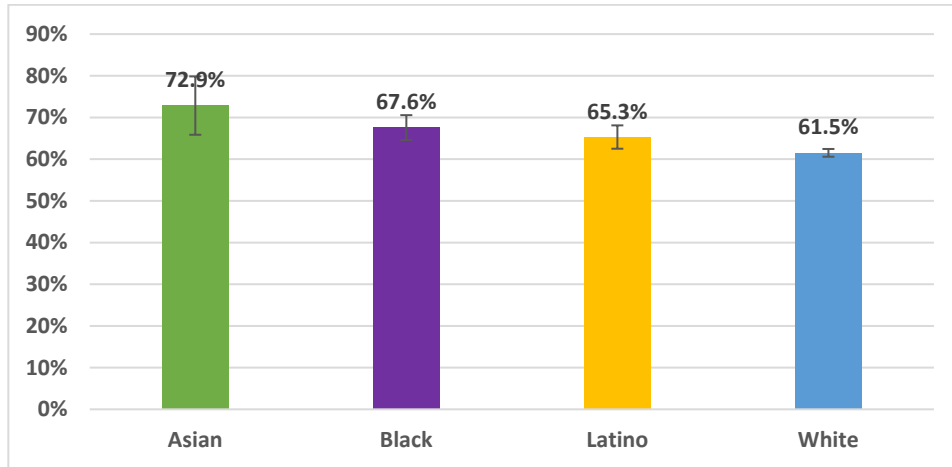


Source: 2012-2016 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates – C15002

## Labor Force Participation

Labor force participation in New Bedford is highest among Asians (73%) and lowest among whites (62%). The Latino labor force participation of 65% (Figure 7) is slightly lower in New Bedford than for Latinos statewide (67%).

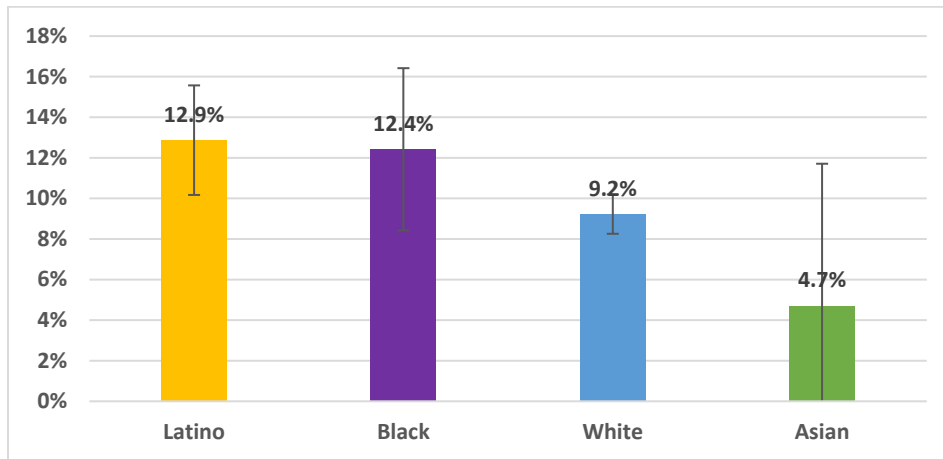
**Figure 7: Labor Force Participation among Individuals 16 Years and Older by Ethno-Racial Group**



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

New Bedford is a Gateway City that is noted for high unemployment, which was 10.3%. The unemployment rates in New Bedford, much as in other parts of Massachusetts, are higher for Latinos and blacks than for whites and Asians (Figure 8). Latinos and blacks have the highest unemployment rates (12.9% & 12.4%); while Asians and whites have the lowest unemployment rates (4.7% & 9.2%). The Latino unemployment rate in New Bedford is slightly above the statewide Latino unemployment rate of 11.5%. Statewide in Massachusetts during this period, unemployment was 6.8%.

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

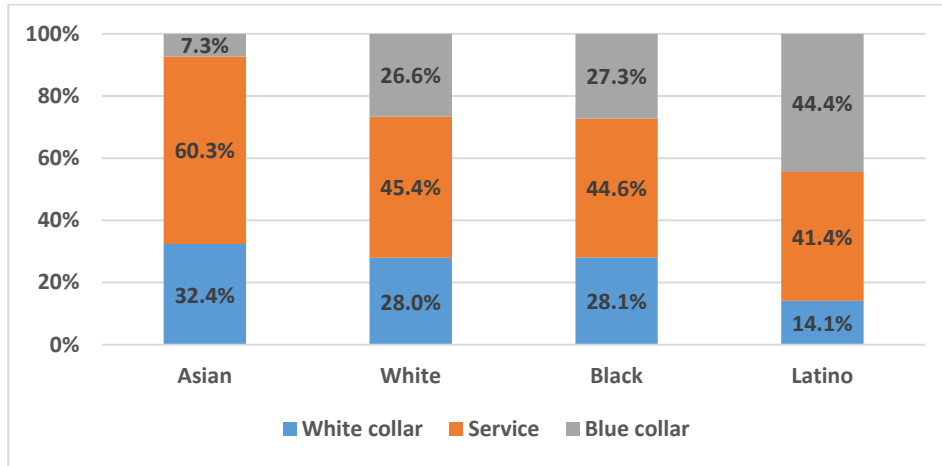


Source: 2012-2016 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates – C23002

Latino residents in New Bedford are more likely to work in blue-collar related occupations (44%), but also have quite a larger share of workers in service positions (41%). This distribution of the occupations among Latinos is substantially different from the statewide distribution, where 53% of Latinos work in service occupations and 23% work in blue-collar jobs.



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

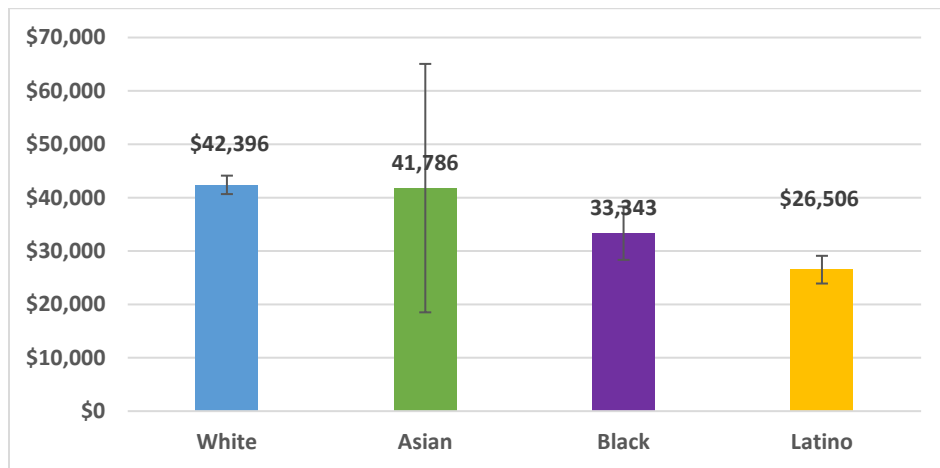


Source: 2012-2016 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates – C24010

## Income

The median household income in New Bedford is \$38,178, compared to the statewide median of \$70,954. In New Bedford, Latino households have the lowest income \$26,506 (Figure 10), while white households have the highest income (\$42,396). Latinos earn substantially less in New Bedford than they do statewide. For Massachusetts, their median household income is \$37,100.

**Figure 10: Median Household Income by Ethno-Racial Group**

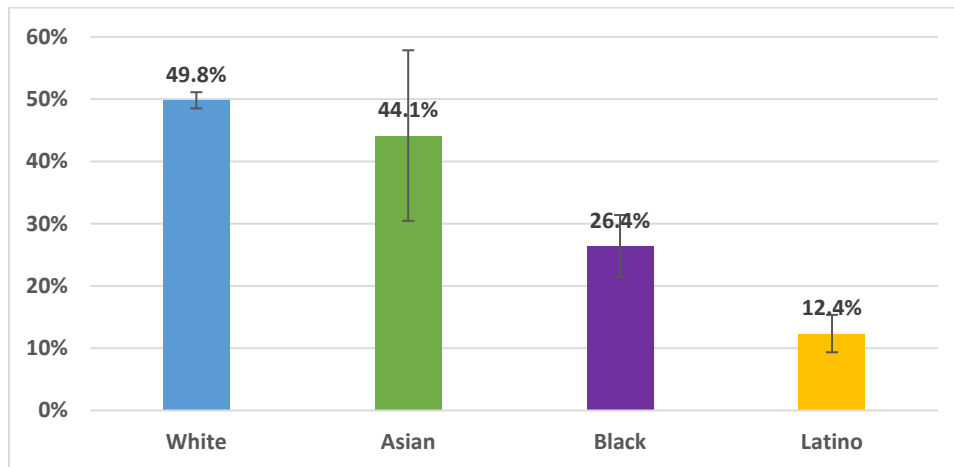


Source: 2012-2016 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates – S1903

## Housing Status and Medical Uninsurance

Homeownership varies dramatically in New Bedford, where whites have the highest share (50%) of homeowners. In contrast, Latinos have the lowest homeownership share, 12%, or nearly one fourth that of whites. This very likely relates to the particularly low median household income among Latinos in New Bedford. Across the state, the Latino homeownership share is 25%. Thus, the Latino population appears less economically integrated in New Bedford, according to both income and homeownership measures.

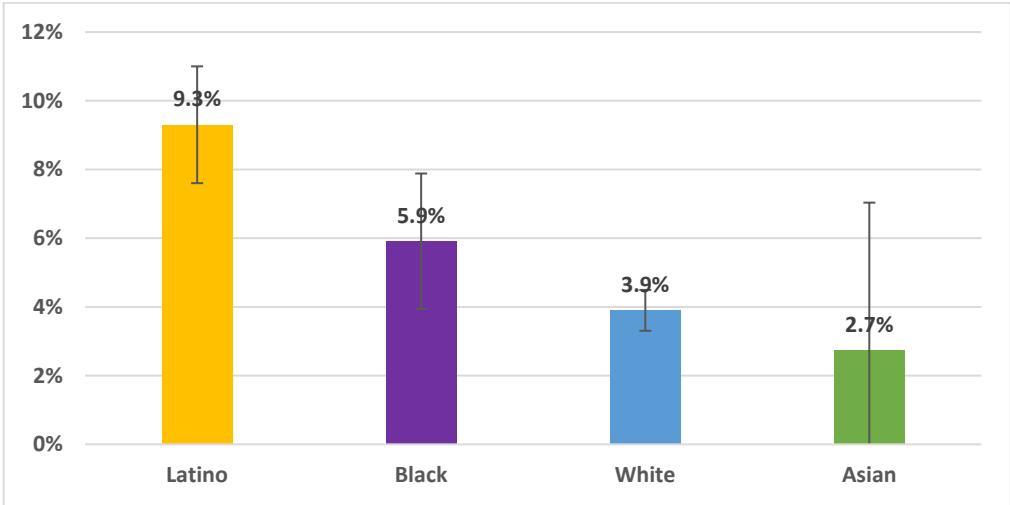
**Figure 11: Homeownership Rates by Ethno-Racial Group**



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

Similar to household income and homeownership, noteworthy disparities also exist in health insurance coverage between New Bedford's major ethno-racial subpopulations. The share of Latinos without health coverage is 9.3%, which is notably higher than the statewide Latino uninsurance share (6.3%). While black residents have an uninsurance share of 6%, white and Asian groups have the lowest uninsurance share, of 3.9% and 2.7%, respectively. This lack of coverage among Latinos is somewhat surprising because Puerto Ricans should have access to public health insurance programs, and the 6,700 non-Puerto Ricans who compose this population could have a high level of uninsurance. These Latinos could be non-citizens, and their immigration status might influence their MassHealth eligibility.

**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.