



TRACKING OREGON'S PROGRESS



LATINOS IN OREGON: Trends and Opportunities in a Changing State

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In 2013, The Oregon Community Foundation (OCF) worked with Oregon State University (OSU) to create a set of indicators to track the economic, social and environmental progress of Oregon. These indicators were added to the existing Communities Reporter Tool website as a set of TOP (Tracking Oregon's Progress) indicators. OCF and OSU have published two reports using the TOP indicators. The first report describes the progress that Oregon has made over the past two decades, and the second focuses on income inequality across the state. In addition to updating the TOP indicators this year, OCF and OSU are highlighting available data about Latinos in Oregon. The data was used to produce this report, and a new collection with the data is available through the Communities Reporter Tool at <http://oregonexplorer.info/rural>.

For more information about this report and the Latinos in Oregon data collection, please contact:

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Welcome



Fellow Oregonians,

I am pleased to announce the release of OCF's third annual Tracking Oregon's Progress (TOP) indicators report, which this year is focused on Latinos in Oregon. Oregon's Latino population is diverse and growing, and this report highlights our important contributions as well as the continuing disparities our community faces.

As a Latina, I know from personal experience that education is a key that opens doors to opportunity and that many Latino Oregonians do not have access to the tools to succeed in our educational system. Yet I know that with the right access and support, success is possible. It is exciting to me to be part of a strong and growing group of Latino entrepreneurs who are contributing to Oregon's economy in so many ways today – and who are preparing others to be the state's leaders tomorrow.

Join me in celebrating the vibrancy of Oregon's Latinos and in sharing this important report about our community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sabrina Parsons', written in a cursive style.

Sabrina Parsons
Board Member
The Oregon Community Foundation
Chief Executive Officer
Palo Alto Software

Executive Summary

Latinos in Oregon explores the contributions that Latinos have made to the state and the disparities that still exist between Latino and white Oregonians by examining trends among a variety of indicators over the past five to 15 years.



Astoria



Population

Oregon's Latino population has grown 72% since 2000.

Oregon's Latino population is young, diverse and growing due to an increase in the number of U.S.-born Latino Oregonians.

Oregon's Latino population is growing at a rate faster than the national rate: 12 percent of the state's population is now Latino, representing 72 percent growth since 2000.

The number of U.S.-born Latino Oregonians has increased 21 percent, compared to 1 percent growth in the number of foreign-born Latino Oregonians. While most of Oregon's Latinos are U.S.-born (64 percent), a sizable minority were born elsewhere, including approximately 96,000 undocumented immigrants.

A majority of Oregon's Latinos are of Mexican descent, but the state boasts representation from multiple Central and South American countries as well.

The striking demographic difference between Oregon's Latino population and its white population is age: Oregon Latinos are significantly younger than white Oregonians. The median age for Latinos is 24 years, compared to 41 years for the white population.



Education

The Latino high school graduation rate increased by 15% between 2010 and 2014 but is still lower than the rate for white students.

While more Latino students are graduating, the achievement gap between Latino and white students starts early and persists.

Nearly 23 percent of K-12 students in Oregon are Latino.

Data from the recently implemented Oregon Kindergarten Assessment reveals that Latino kindergarten students score similarly to their white peers in terms of socio-emotional skills but lag behind in early math and literacy skills.

Similarly, while Latino third- and eighth-grade students have made some gains over time in reading and math scores, less than half are meeting or exceeding state standards, a rate significantly below that of their white peers.

In addition, the graduation rate for Latino students lags white students: 75 percent of Latino students graduated in 2014, compared to 84 percent of white students.

Even starker differences between Latino and white Oregonians exist in postsecondary attainment, with 41 percent of Latino Oregonians possessing less than a high school diploma and just 12 percent possessing a bachelor's degree or higher.

However, there are some positive indicators that may suggest future improvements in educational achievement: The majority of Latino students attend school regularly (and at a rate identical to that of their white peers), and the Latino graduation rate increased from 65 percent in 2000 to 75 percent in 2014, while the rate for white students has remained flat.



Employment and Income

72% of Latino Oregonians age 16 and older are in the workforce, but 28% of all Latinos live in poverty.

Latino Oregonians are essential to the state's economy but are still at an economic disadvantage compared to white Oregonians.

Oregon's Latino population makes vital contributions to the state's economy. Latinos are more likely to be part of the labor force than white Oregonians, and Latino business ownership has grown faster than the growth of the Latino population.

However, Latinos are more likely to be unemployed, and their incomes are substantially lower in comparison to white Oregonians. Indeed, median family income for Latino families is more than \$10,000 lower than for white families, and per capita income for Latinos is half the per capita income for white Oregonians, which, by some measures, is less than what is necessary to adequately meet living expenses.

Latino poverty rates are much higher than those of white Oregonians: Over one-quarter of Oregon's Latinos and over one-third of Oregon's Latino children live in poverty.



Health

29% of Latino Oregonians lack health insurance.

While Latino health status is improving in some areas, disparities still exist for health access and outcomes.

Access to health insurance and to prenatal care has increased and teen pregnancy rates have decreased dramatically.

However, nearly one-third of Oregon's Latinos still lack health insurance, fewer Latinas receive adequate prenatal care than white women, and the Latina teen pregnancy rate is double the rate for white teens.

While almost all Latino 11th graders consider themselves to be in good physical health or better, fewer Latino youth than their white peers rate their physical health as very good or excellent, and more rate their health as fair or poor.

Nearly one-half of Latino 11th graders are overweight or obese, compared to one-quarter of white 11th graders.

Over half of Latino 11th graders meet the state's positive youth development benchmark (which takes into consideration physical and mental health status, volunteerism, positive adult role models, self-confidence and problem-solving), but this rate is lower than the 63 percent of white 11th graders who meet this benchmark.

Ultimately, the report finds that as the Latino population continues to grow, it is increasingly important to ensure that all Latino Oregonians have access to the education, economic and health care opportunities they need to thrive.



Astoria

Introduction

Latinos have a long history of contributing to vibrant communities in Oregon, beginning in the early 1800s, when Mexicans came to Oregon to mine gold and tend to livestock as *vaqueros*, or cowboys. The 1900s brought several waves of Latino immigrants from Mexico and the American Southwest who came to work in agriculture and on the railroads. Eventually, many Latinos who had traveled through Oregon for work settled in communities across the state. In the 1980s, Latino immigrants from Central and South America escaping civil wars began to arrive in the state. Today, the Latino population in Oregon continues to grow and change, and this growth suggests that the future of the state will be influenced by their myriad contributions to Oregon's economic, creative and civic endeavors. In order to better understand the opportunities and challenges facing Latinos in Oregon, this report examines trends over the past five to 15 years in four areas:

1. Population, 2. Education, 3. Employment and income, and 4. Health

Each section also includes a profile of a community that exemplifies statewide trends and an organization that is working to improve outcomes for Latinos in that community.

The data in this report demonstrate that Latinos are making important contributions in the state but have faced myriad challenges related to institutionalized racism and are not faring as well as white Oregonians in many areas. Latino Oregonians do not exist in isolation but interact regularly with systems and institutions that can discriminate in sometimes-subtle ways. The future of Oregon depends on the contributions of all Oregonians, including the 473,729 Latinos in the state, and requires ensuring all residents have access to the opportunities they need to thrive.



Population

In addition to the number of Latinos in Oregon, several characteristics help further define the population. These include data about population growth, immigration, Hispanic origin, age and language spoken at home. Together the data suggest that Oregon’s Latino population is young and growing, and while Latino Oregonians come from a variety of backgrounds, most were born in the United States.

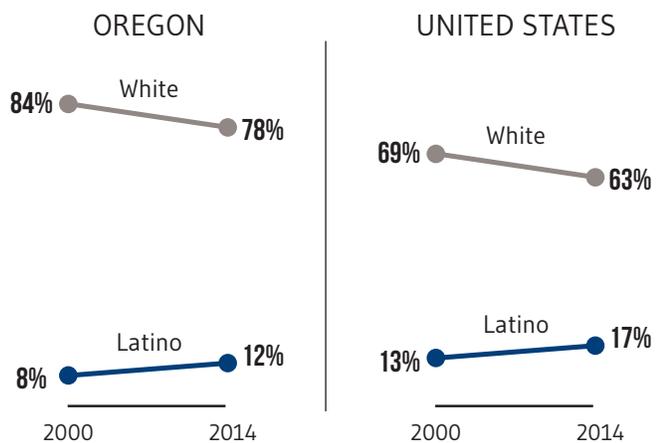
The Latino Population Is Growing in Oregon.

The Latino¹ population in Oregon is growing and reached a total of 473,729 people in 2014, according to five-year American Community Survey estimates. A record 12 percent of the state’s population is now Latino, compared to 8 percent in 2000 (see **Figure 1**). This number could be even higher because it is likely that some Latinos, especially immigrants, are missed by the U.S. Census Bureau (see page 7 for more details). The Latino population in Oregon is growing at a faster rate compared to the United States as a whole. Since 2000, the number of Latino Oregonians has grown by 72 percent. During that same time period, the number of Latinos in the United States has grown by 50 percent.

In the last decade, Latino population growth in Oregon has likely been driven by a rise in U.S.-born Latinos rather than immigration. The native Latino population has grown by 21 percent, compared to 1 percent growth in the foreign-born population (see **Figure 2**). During the same time period, there has been some fluctuation within the immigrant population. The number of foreign-born Latinos under the age of 18 has decreased by 24 percent while the adult population has increased by 4 percent.

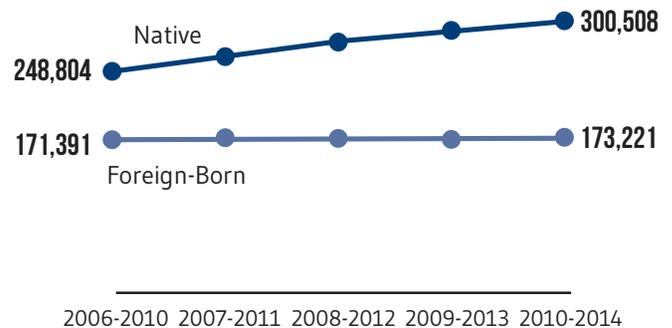
¹The term “Latino” is used throughout this report to refer to people who trace their heritage to Latin America or Spain. The U.S. federal government describes this population using both “Latino” and “Hispanic,” and many other organizations, like Pew Research Center’s Hispanic Trends Project, use the terms interchangeably.

Figure 1. While Latinos make up a larger percentage of the U.S. population, the population has grown at a higher rate in Oregon.



Percentage of population by race and ethnicity, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 2. The number of native Latinos has grown much faster than the number of Latino immigrants in Oregon.



Hispanic or Latino nativity, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 3. **Between 2000 and 2014, Latino growth was widespread among Oregon's 36 counties.***

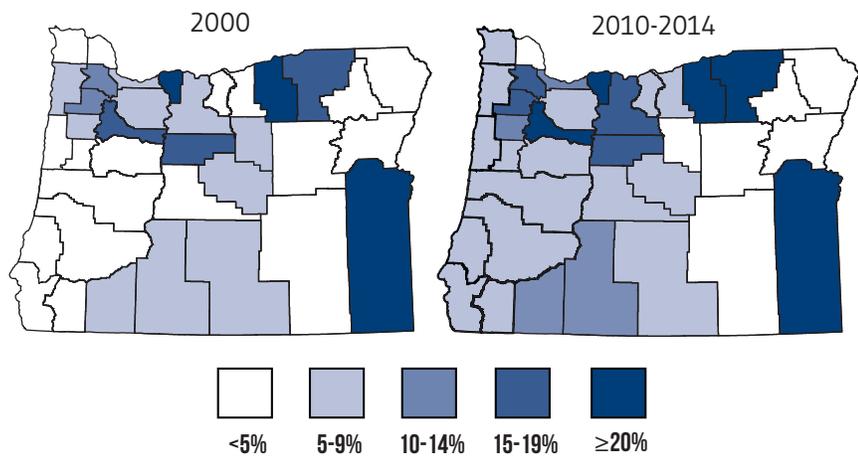
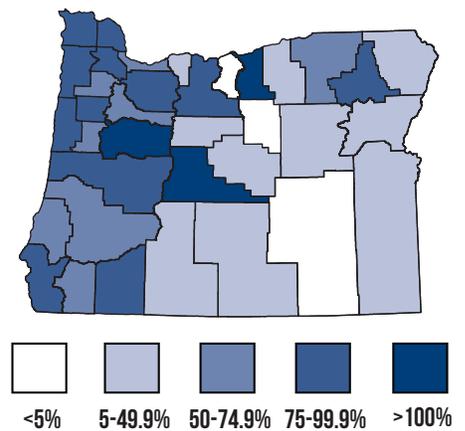


Figure 4. **Most growth in the Latino population has occurred in Oregon's western counties.***



Hispanic or Latino percentage of total population, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

*Note: 2010-2014 estimates for Sherman and Wheeler counties are unreliable and should be used with caution (see page 29 for more information).

Percent change in Latino population between 2000 and 2010-2014, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

Growth in the Latino population is also widespread among Oregon's 36 counties. As of the most recent American Community Survey estimates (2010-14), Latinos make up 5 percent or more of the population in most Oregon counties. Counties where Latinos have historically comprised a larger percentage of the population continue to have higher proportions of Latinos (see **Figure 3**). For example, Latinos in Morrow, Malheur and Hood River counties account for about one-third of the counties' populations, compared to one-quarter in 2000. At the same time, the population is also growing in counties that have had historically small numbers of Latinos. For example, the Latino populations in Deschutes and Linn counties have doubled and now represent 8 percent of the population in each county.

The western half of Oregon has experienced the most change in the Latino population (see **Figure 4**). Thirteen counties in that part of the state have seen an increase of 75 percent or more in the Latino population. The largest number of Latinos reside in Washington County, where the population has grown from around 50,000 in 2000 to almost 90,000 in 2014.

According to U.S. Census projections, the U.S. Latino population is expected to double by 2060, to an estimated 119 million. At the same time, the non-Latino population is estimated to grow by only 13 percent, to about 298 million. Moreover, if the projections hold, Latinos will represent nearly 30 percent of the U.S. population. While there are no publicly available projections for the Latino population in Oregon, the Office of Economic Analysis estimates that the total state population will increase by 40 percent by 2050. If recent trends continue, the Latino population could grow by even more than that.



Hillsboro

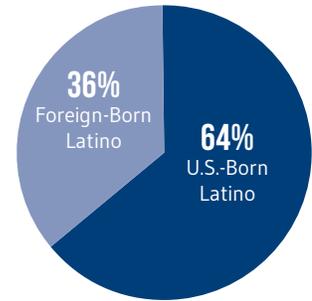
Most Latino Oregonians Were Born in the U.S.

Nearly two-thirds of Oregon Latinos were born in the United States (see **Figure 5**), and they comprise 9 percent of the U.S.-born population in the state. In contrast, almost half of the foreign-born population in Oregon is Latino, and around 20 percent of those immigrants are naturalized U.S. citizens.

For immigrants who are not U.S. citizens, the U.S. Census counts those with visas or green cards as well as those who are undocumented but does not directly ask about legal status. In addition, there is evidence that the Census misses some undocumented immigrants. For those reasons, organizations like the Migration Policy Institute develop their own estimates of the undocumented population. According to the most recent estimates from the Migration Policy Institute, there are 112,000 undocumented immigrants in Oregon, 86 percent of whom were born in Mexico or Central America (see **Figure 6**). In addition, Pew Research Center estimates that the number of undocumented immigrants in Oregon fell by around 20,000 between 2009 and 2012.¹ The decrease was due to a drop in the number of undocumented immigrants from Mexico.

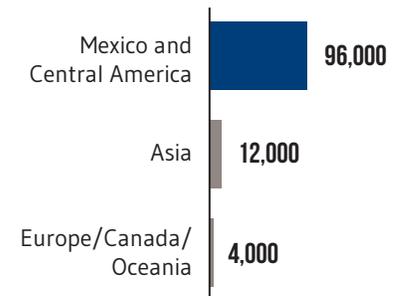
The Migration Policy Institute estimates that a little over half of all undocumented immigrants in Oregon have been in the United States for 10 years or more and around three-quarters are over the age of 25. Pew Research Center estimates that undocumented immigrants made up 4.6 percent of the labor force in Oregon in 2012 and that 7.5 percent of Oregon elementary and secondary students have at least one undocumented immigrant parent.

Figure 5. **Most Oregon Latinos were born in the United States.**



Percentage of Latino or Hispanic population by nativity, 2010-14, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 6. **Most undocumented immigrants in Oregon were born in Mexico and Central America.**



Undocumented immigrants by region of birth, 2013, Migration Policy Institute



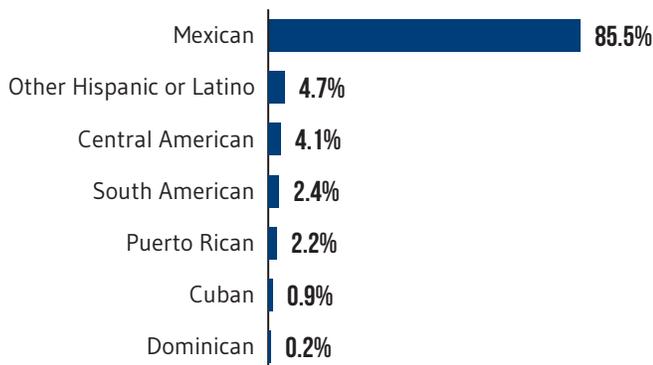
Madras

Oregon Latinos Are Diverse.

For many Latinos, race and ethnicity can be complex and multidimensional issues. According to a 2015 survey conducted by Pew Research Centerⁱⁱ, 67 percent of Latino adults say that being Hispanic or Latino is part of their racial identity, and 56 percent say that it is part of both their race and ethnic background. While some Latinos identify simply as Hispanic or Latino, others define their race and ethnicity by their family’s country of origin. Looking at the Hispanic origins reported by Oregon Latinos in 2014 demonstrates the diversity of the population in the state. Over 85 percent of Latino Oregonians identify as Mexican, but 5 percent, or around 20,000, are of Central American origin, and another 5 percent are of South American or Puerto Rican origin (see **Figure 7**). An additional 5 percent consider themselves to be Other Hispanic or Latino, meaning they could be Spanish or chose not to specify a country of origin (see the methodology section on page 29 for more information about how the U.S. Census asks about Hispanic or Latino heritage). With the exception of the category “Other Hispanic or Latino,” the American Community Survey estimates that populations from all origins have grown since 2000. For example, the number of Oregonians of Mexican origin is estimated to have grown by almost 90 percent, and populations from Central American, South American, Puerto Rican and Dominican heritages have all more than doubled.

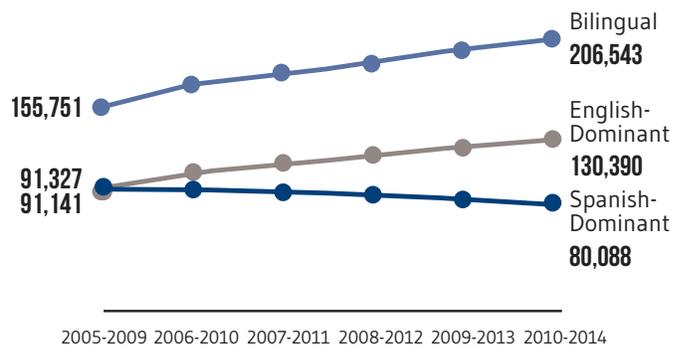
Latinos are also diverse in their language use. The majority of Oregon Latinos speak Spanish at home, but nearly half are bilingual and also speak English well or very well (see **Figure 8**). Almost one-third of Oregon Latinos are English-dominant and speak only English at home. In addition, the number of Spanish-dominant Latinos with limited English skills is declining. Bilingualism has a positive impact on lifetime educational attainment. Children in non-English-speaking homes who speak English well by the time they start school perform as well in reading as their peers from English-speaking homes.ⁱⁱⁱ On the other hand, children who enter school with limited English skills may be slower to achieve academically compared to their English-speaking peers. Later in life, limited English skills can be a barrier to accessing important services like health care and place adults at a disadvantage when looking for a job.

Figure 7. **While most Oregon Latinos are of Mexican descent, populations from other backgrounds have been growing.**



Percentage of Latinos by Hispanic origin, 2010-2014, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 8. **Nearly half of Oregon Latinos are bilingual.**



Language spoken at home by Latinos, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

Oregon Latinos Are Young.

On average, Oregon Latinos are younger than other Oregonians. The median age for Latinos is 24.3, compared to 41.1 for the white population (see **Figure 9**). This age difference is also apparent when comparing the shapes of the population pyramids for the Latino and white populations. A larger percentage of the Latino population falls between the ages of 0 and 35 and a smaller percentage is 45 years or older (see **Figure 10**).

Implications of Population Trends

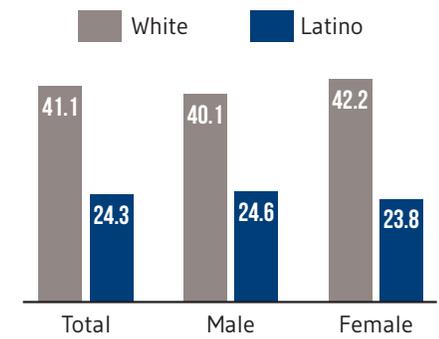
A young and growing Latino population means that an increasing number of Latino students will be enrolled in Oregon’s public schools and postsecondary institutions. Latinos’ experience in the education system will be critical as the population plays an increasingly important role in Oregon’s future.

Young Latinos also have the potential to make an impact in the next election. In Oregon, 187,000 of the 496,000 (37.7 percent) Latinos are eligible to vote, making Latinos 6.4 percent of eligible voters, according to Pew Research Center.^{iv} In addition, millennials, or those ages 18 to 33, represent 50.1 percent of the eligible Latino voter population. In comparison, Latino millennials nationwide represent 41.4 percent of the eligible Latino voter population and white millennials represent just 24.4 percent of the eligible white voter population in Oregon. The Latino vote in November could largely depend on the participation of Latino millennials.



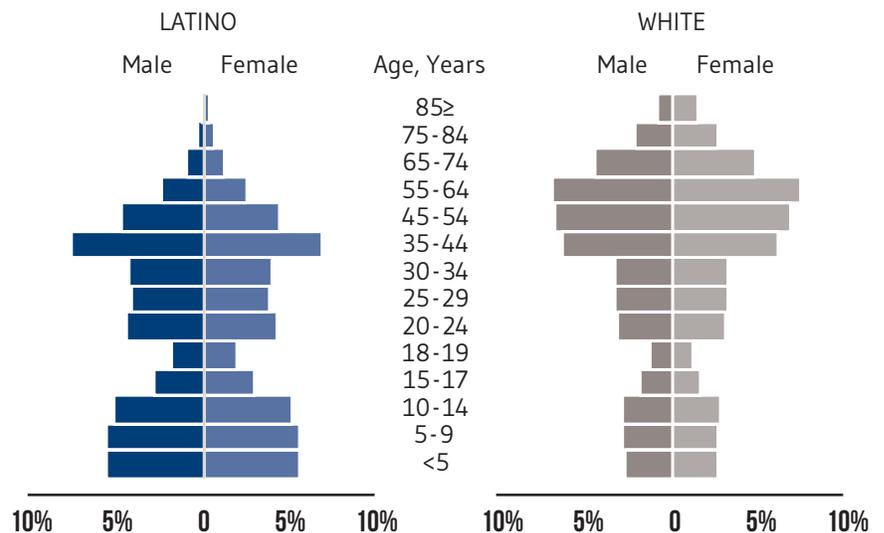
Keizer

Figure 9. **Oregon Latinos are younger on average.**



Median age by sex, 2010-2014, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 10. **More Latinos are under the age of 35, compared to the white population.**



Population by age and sex, 2010-2014, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau



Community Profile: Hermiston

Opportunities and Challenges for a Growing Latino Population



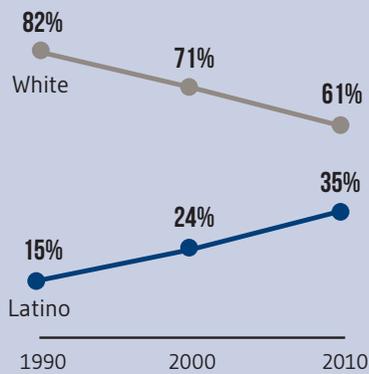
Hermiston

The Latino population in Hermiston mirrors statewide trends. Since the 2005-2009 population estimates, the Latino population has grown by 26 percent while the white population has grown by 12 percent. While 93 percent of Hermiston Latinos are of Mexican descent, other Latinos and indigenous people from places like Guatemala and El Salvador have made the city their home. In fact, over one-third of the population in Hermiston is Latino and, similar to Latinos statewide, Hermiston Latinos are younger on average than their white counterparts.

In response to the growing Latino population, George Anderson, a local attorney and former city councilor, approached the Hermiston City Council in 2012 with a proposal to bring the Latino and white communities together with a Cinco de Mayo celebration. That was the beginning of the Hispanic Advisory Committee (HAC), a group that connects the Latino community to the city and other institutions. According to Clara Beas de Fitzgerald, Hermiston city councilor and HAC member, the committee still plans an annual Cinco de Mayo celebration, and it also plays a larger role in Latino civic engagement. The committee discusses issues of immigration, drivers' cards and other topics that affect Latinos in the community. HAC also works closely with the local school board to help schools connect with Latino parents. For example, HAC informed parents of parent/teacher conferences over a local radio station in order to increase Latino parent attendance. The work HAC has done to connect the City of Hermiston to Latinos was recognized in 2013 by the National League of Cities when they awarded Hermiston the City Cultural Diversity Award.

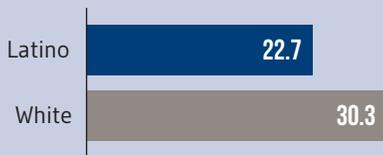
Despite the Hispanic Advisory Committee's efforts to increase Latino civic engagement, the city still faces challenges. Clara notes that many young Latinos in Hermiston have the opportunity to seek higher wages and better jobs, but face pressures to start working and making money to help their families before they finish high school. This results in many young people dropping out of high school and not pursuing postsecondary degrees. In addition, many of the parents working at the plants or in the fields did not complete high school themselves and are less likely to engage with their children's schools. Clara sees a role for HAC to use its relationship with the school board to help engage youth in their education and help parents feel welcome in the schools.

Latinos are a growing percentage of Hermiston's population.



Percentage of population, U.S. Census Bureau

Hermiston Latinos are younger than their white counterparts.



Median age, 2010-14, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau



Education

Academic success among Oregon Latinos can be measured in several ways. For the youngest students, school readiness can determine future achievement. For students in elementary, middle and high schools, test scores, attendance and credit accumulation can help predict whether Latinos graduate from high school. Finally, among adults, high school completion and further educational attainment play large roles in successful futures. While Latino students have made some gains in these areas, the achievement gap persists, starting in early childhood and culminating in fewer Latinos receiving postsecondary degrees.

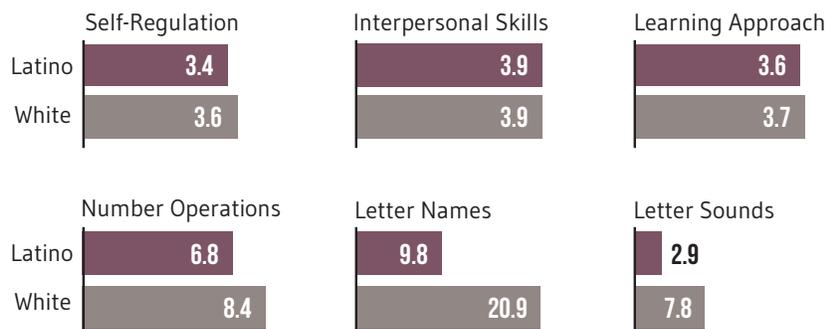
Latino Kindergarteners Are Less Prepared for School.

A young child’s school readiness upon entering kindergarten can be an important indicator of future academic success. The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) assesses school readiness through the Oregon Kindergarten Assessment (OKA), a suite of research-based methods that measure predictors of later academic success. According to the 2014-15 OKA scores, Latino children entering kindergarten have the same level of socio-emotional skills, such as self-regulation, as white children. However, they lag behind their white peers in the building blocks for math and reading (see **Figure 11**). Students cannot pass or fail the OKA, but ODE and their early learning partners do use the results to monitor opportunity gaps and better target classroom instruction and professional development opportunities.



Woodburn

Figure 11. **Latino kindergarteners exhibit socio-emotional skills on par with their white peers but lag behind in early math and literacy.**



Average scores, Oregon Kindergarten Assessment, 2014-15

Table 1. The 10 districts with the largest Latino populations account for about half of all enrolled Latino students.

| District | Latino Enrollment |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Salem-Keizer SD 24J | 15,273 |
| Beaverton SD 48J | 9,859 |
| Portland SD 1J | 7,640 |
| Hillsboro SD 1J | 7,584 |
| Reynolds SD 7 | 4,681 |
| Woodburn SD 103 | 4,584 |
| Medford SD 549C | 3,401 |
| Tigard-Tualatin SD 23J | 3,227 |
| Gresham-Barlow SD 10J | 3,207 |
| Forest Grove SD 15 | 3,128 |

Latino enrollment by district, 2015-16, Oregon Department of Education

Table 2. Latino students account for more than half of the student population in 10 districts.

| District | Percentage Latino |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Woodburn SD 103 | 80.2% |
| Malheur ESD Region 14 | 70.6% |
| Umatilla SD 6R | 68.1% |
| Gervais SD 1 | 67.8% |
| Nyssa SD 26 | 67.0% |
| Ontario SD 8C | 61.0% |
| Morrow SD 1 | 56.3% |
| Milton-Freewater Unified SD 7 | 56.2% |
| Mt. Angel SD 91 | 51.8% |
| Forest Grove SD 15 | 50.6% |

Latino enrollment by district, 2015-16, Oregon Department of Education

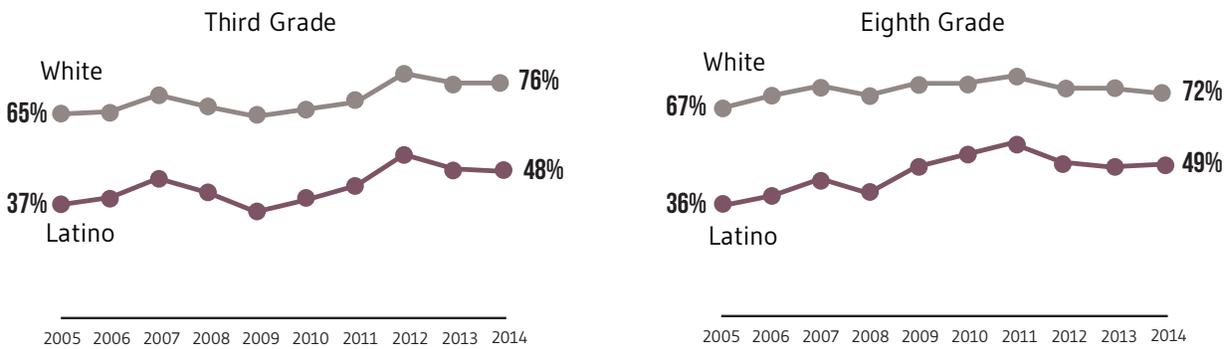
Within the first three weeks of kindergarten, students’ early math and literacy skills are assessed. The early math portion is untimed and is delivered in both English and Spanish. Students respond to 16 multiple choice items that cover counting, simple number operations and recognition of numeric patterns. The scores for the early math assessment range from 1 to 16 and reflect how many items the student answered correctly. Latino students answered 6.8 items correctly on average, 1.6 fewer than their white peers. The early literacy portion assesses both English letter names and English letter sounds. The score reflects how many letter names or sounds children can name in one minute. Latino kindergarteners can name 11 fewer English letters and five fewer letter sounds than their white peers. Last year, ODE also piloted a Spanish letter names assessment for English learners whose primary language is Spanish. On average, English learners could name more English letters than Spanish letters.

The gap in early math and literacy skills could be due, in part, to the fact that 66 percent of Latino children ages 3 and 4 are not enrolled in nursery school or preschool in Oregon. In comparison, 58 percent of non-Hispanic white children are not enrolled in school.^v That means that fewer Latino students have early learning experiences that help them prepare for kindergarten. Latino children may also have fewer early learning supports at home. For example, white children are read to more days a week than their Latino peers. In Oregon, 30 percent of Latino children under age 6 are read to by a family member fewer than three days per week, compared to 6 percent of white children.^{vi} A survey of parents at 10 early learning sites across Oregon found that white families report having more books at home and white families are more confident in supporting reading at home as compared to families of color.^{vii} According to the National Center for Education Statistics, children who are read to frequently at home are more likely to recognize all letters of the alphabet and count to 20 or higher.^{viii} Lack of support for early literacy in Latino homes could stem from parents’ limited English skills or limited educational attainment. It could also stem from cultural views that the parents’ role is to teach children values like respect and the schools are responsible for teaching academic skills.

Latino Student Enrollment Is Growing, but the Achievement Gap Persists.

During the 2015-16 school year, 129,410 Latino students were enrolled in Oregon schools, accounting for nearly 23 percent of all K-12 students. Total enrollment among all races and ethnicities has grown by 3 percent since the 2009-10 academic year because of growth in Latino student enrollment. Since the 2009-10 academic year, Latino student enrollment has grown by 18 percent. During the same time period, white student enrollment has decreased by 4 percent. The 10 school districts in the state with the largest Latino populations are located in the Portland Metro region, with the exception of the Salem-Keizer and Medford school districts (see **Table 1**). These 10 districts account for nearly half of all enrolled Latino students. There are also 10 districts across the state where half or more of enrolled students are Latino (see **Table 2**). The largest of these is Woodburn School District, where 80 percent of the student population is Latino. Most of the other school districts with majority Latino populations are fairly small and scattered across Eastern Oregon.

Figure 12. **While Latino students have made gains in reading, the achievement gap persists.**



Percentage of students meeting or exceeding state standards in reading, Oregon Department of Education

Over the past decade, Latino students have made gains in reading, but the achievement gap persists (see **Figure 12**). Between 2005 and 2014, the percentage of Latino students meeting or exceeding the third-grade reading standards increased by 30 percent, compared to a 16 percent increase among white students. However, in 2014 only 48 percent of Latino students met or exceeded the reading standards, compared to 76 percent of white third-grade students. The gap is virtually the same for eighth-grade Latino students, with 49 percent meeting or exceeding reading standards in 2014, compared to 72 percent of white eighth graders.

Reading proficiency at an early age is important because gains are made more quickly when students are younger. In addition, starting in the third grade, students stop learning to read and start reading to learn other subjects, like science and history. If they do not have sufficient reading skills by third grade, they could start to fall behind in other academic areas. Studies have also found that third-grade reading is connected to later academic achievement. Students who are behind in third grade are more likely to still have insufficient reading skills by ninth grade. Third-grade reading proficiency can also be a predictor of whether a student will graduate from high school.^{ix}

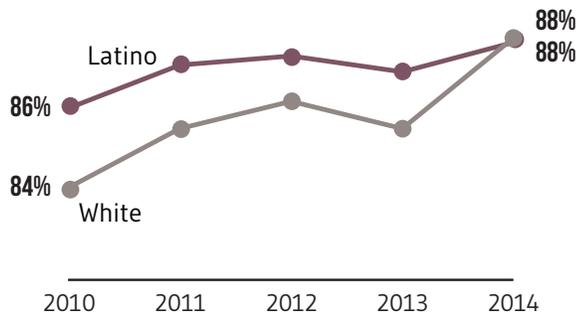
Similar to reading achievement results, during the 2013-14 academic year, only 41 percent of Latino third graders met or exceeded state standards for math, compared to 67 percent of their white peers. Among eighth-grade Latinos, 49 percent met or exceeded math standards, compared to 68 percent of white students.

According to ECONorthwest, the achievement gap is even wider for Latino students who are also English learners.^x While these students make gains over time, they are still likely to lag behind both white students and non-English learning Latinos. Other research has found that bilingual education can improve academic achievement for English learners and further develop proficiency in the students' native language.^{xi} Acknowledging the effectiveness of bilingual education, the Oregon Department of Education awarded nearly \$900,000 in grants in 2013 for dual-language programs in eight Oregon school districts and just awarded grants in January 2016 to six additional school districts and one charter school to support English learners.^{xii}



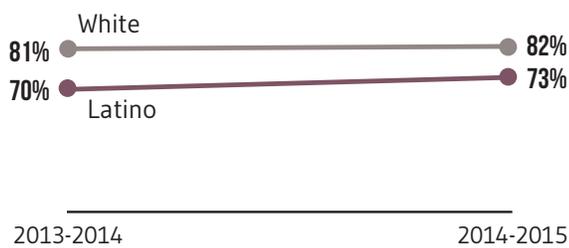
Portland

Figure 13. **The majority of Latino sixth graders attend school regularly.**



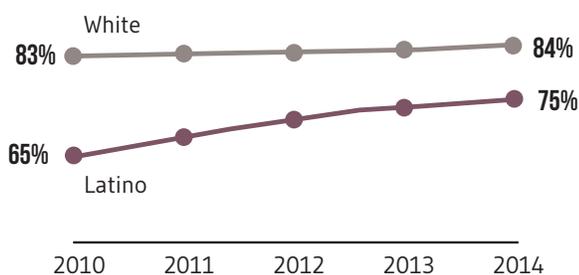
Percentage of sixth graders who were present at least 90 percent of enrolled school days, Oregon Department of Education

Figure 14. **Nearly three-quarters of Latino ninth graders are on track to graduate.**



The percentage of ninth graders who earn six or more credits toward graduation by the end of August following their ninth-grade year, Oregon Department of Education

Figure 15. **A growing percentage of Latino students are completing high school.**



5-year cohort completion rate, Oregon Department of Education



Portland

Despite the Achievement Gap, More Latino Students Are Graduating From High School.

Beyond test scores, Latino students are performing well on other measures linked to high school graduation. The majority of Latino sixth graders attend school regularly (see **Figure 13**), meaning they are present at least 90 percent of enrolled school days. In fact, prior to the 2013-14 school year, a higher percentage of Latino sixth graders had regular attendance compared to their white peers. According to Balfanz and Byrnes, middle school students who attend school regularly are more likely to graduate high school on time (2012). Students of color are also more likely to close achievement gaps if they attend school regularly.^{xiii} Additionally, a growing majority of ninth-grade Latino students are on track to graduate (see **Figure 14**). By the end of the 2014-15 school year, nearly three-quarters of Latino ninth graders had earned six or more credits toward graduation.

In addition to promising attendance rates and credit accumulation, a growing percentage of Latino students are completing high school (see **Figure 15**). In 2014, 75 percent of Latino students received a diploma or GED within five years of high school, a 15 percent increase over the 2010 rate of 65 percent. Though it is still higher at 84 percent as of 2014, the white five-year completion rate has remained flat since 2010.



Medford

Students who do not complete high school in five years may have continued to be enrolled the following year or they might have dropped out. In 2014, 5.3 percent of Latino students enrolled in high school dropped out, higher than the white student rate of 3.5 percent (see **Figure 16**). The number of Latino dropouts increased by 38 percent between 2009 and 2014, but this increase is roughly proportional to the 34 percent increase in the number of enrolled Latino students during the same time period.

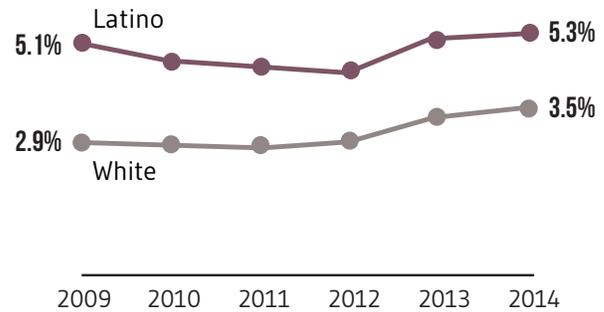
Less Than 40 Percent of Latino Adults Have a Postsecondary Education.

Despite recent gains in high school completion, Latinos in Oregon are much less likely to have postsecondary degrees than are their white counterparts (see **Figure 17**). Over 40 percent of Latino adults have less than a high school education, compared to less than 10 percent of white adults. In addition, only 12 percent of Latino adults have four-year degrees or more, compared to nearly one-third of white adults. Moreover, those rates have remained relatively flat between the 2005-09 and 2010-14 Census estimates.

Implications of Education Trends

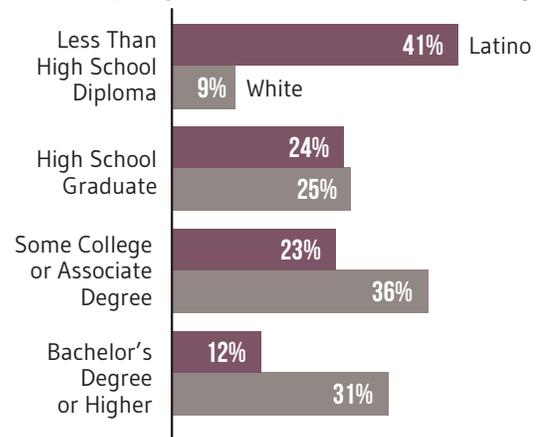
Growing Latino enrollment in Oregon schools has implications for the current diversity gap between teachers and students from communities of color, including Latinos. According to the Oregon Education Investment Board, Latinos represented 22.4 percent of enrolled K-12 students in the 2014-15 academic year, but only 3.9 percent of all teachers were Latino. The state has committed to increasing the percentage of diverse educators in order to better reflect culturally and linguistically diverse students. When teachers' backgrounds are similar to those of their students, they act as role models of academic achievement and career suc-

Figure 16. **The high school dropout rate has increased for both Latino and white students in recent years.**



Percentage of enrolled high school students who dropped out, Oregon Department of Education

Figure 17. **Latinos in Oregon are less likely to have postsecondary degrees than their white counterparts.**



Educational attainment for the population 25 years and over, 2010-14, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

cess and may positively impact test scores. When students can relate to teachers, they also become more engaged in school. As Latino student enrollment grows, it is increasingly important to cultivate, attract and retain Latino teachers.

In 2011, the Oregon State Legislature adopted Senate Bill 253, which established the 40-40-20 goal which states that by 2025 40 percent of Oregonians will have a baccalaureate degree or higher, 40 percent will have an associate degree or certificate, and the remaining 20 percent will have a high school diploma or the equivalent. As the young Latino population in Oregon continues to grow, the state's ability to achieve this goal depends largely on ensuring that Latino students receive the support they need starting in early childhood and continuing through their academic careers. Paving the way for postsecondary degree attainment will also broaden the economic opportunities available to Latino youth later in life.



Community Profile: Woodburn

Embracing Diversity and Believing in Latino Student Potential

The Latino population in Woodburn is a proud community of connected cultures. Certainly Woodburn’s high graduation rates are one source of that pride. The five-year cohort completion rate for Woodburn Latinos in the 2014-15 academic year was 91.7 percent, higher than the white rate of 86.8 percent. Chuck Ransom, Woodburn School District superintendent since 2013, says that the high Latino graduation rate is the result of nearly 25 years of work. Over that time, the district started shifting from a deficit mentality to one that recognized diversity in the student community as a strength. As part of that shift, the district developed a dual-language program that allows K-12 students to learn in their first language of Spanish or Russian in addition to English. To complement the new program, the district hired bilingual teachers and published materials in different languages. As a result of these efforts, the school became a community center where families are welcomed.

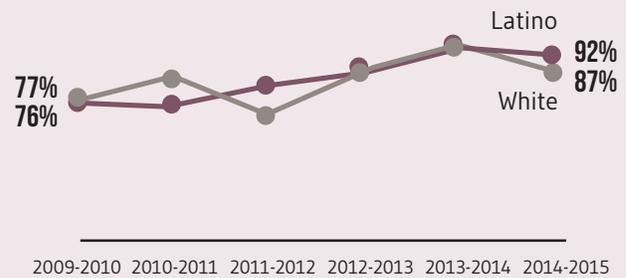
In the past 10 years, the district has focused on improving high school academic achievement by following the national small schools movement, which posits that high schools should be smaller and students should be given a choice of which they would like to attend. According to Chuck, the smaller size of the district’s four high schools allows for close, supportive relationships that drive improved achievement.

Although the district has put all of these programs and structures in place, Chuck says, “the real work is changing the attitudes of adults that all children can succeed.” The community needs to believe that Latino students are capable of achieving great outcomes. Chuck acknowledges that postsecondary educational attainment is the largest barrier facing Woodburn Latinos: Only 16 percent of adults age 25 and older have a college education. He suggests that the district expand its relationships with the business community in support of career and technical education. Additionally, the district should leverage its university partnerships and create a college-going culture that starts in kindergarten and continues through high school. According to Chuck, “We need to remember that children are not points in time but human beings in a trajectory of life.”



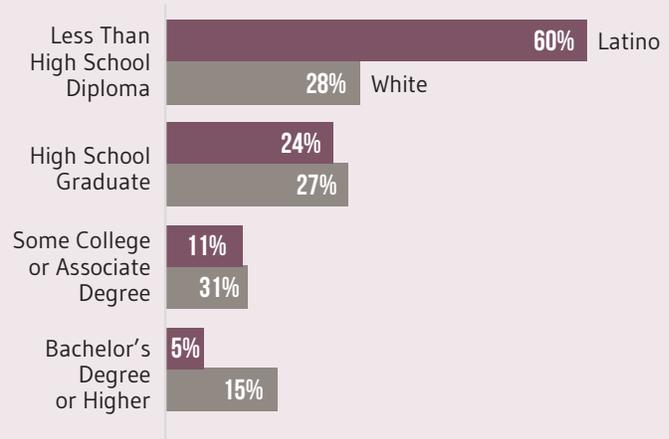
Woodburn

Latino graduation rates have risen by 20 percent since 2010 in the Woodburn School District.



5-year Cohort Graduation Rate, ODE

Only 16 percent of Latino adults in Woodburn have more than a high school education.



Educational Attainment for the Population 25 Years and Over, 2010-14, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

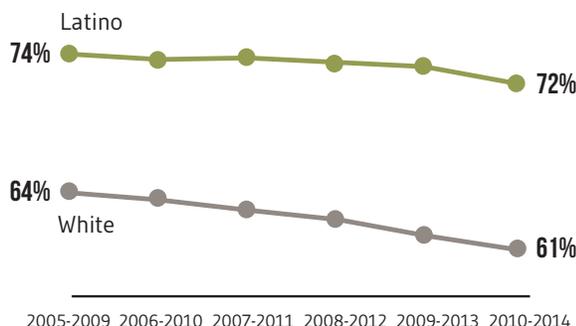
\$ Employment and Income

Latinos' participation in Oregon's workforce can be measured using several indicators, including the labor force participation rate, the unemployment rate and the number of Latino-owned small businesses. Latinos' economic well-being can be measured by median family income and median per capita income as well as through poverty rates. These indicators suggest that Latino Oregonians participate in the labor force at a higher rate than white Oregonians and that Latino business ownership has been growing more rapidly than the growth in Oregon's Latino population. However, Latino Oregonians' incomes are lower than white Oregonians' incomes, and the poverty and child poverty rates are higher for Latino Oregonians than for white Oregonians.

Latino Oregonians Participate in the Labor Force at a Higher Rate Than White Oregonians.

A higher proportion of Latinos participate in the labor force than white Oregonians (see **Figure 18**). The labor force participation rate is a measure of the number of people who have jobs or are looking for employment. While white labor force participation declined slightly between 2000 and 2008 and then more rapidly since then, Latino labor force participation rose steadily between 2000 and 2008 and then dropped somewhat during and after the recession. The declining white as compared to Latino labor force participation could be due to an aging white population and a relatively younger Latino population.

Figure 18. A large percentage of Latinos are in the workforce.



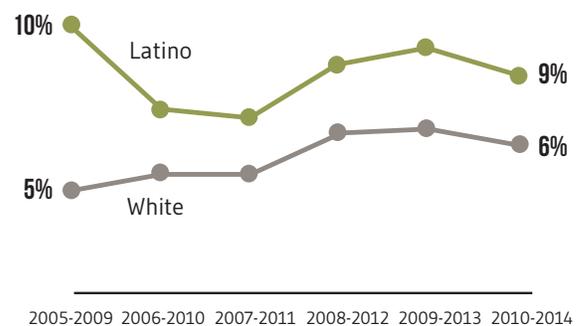
Labor force participation rates, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau



Astoria

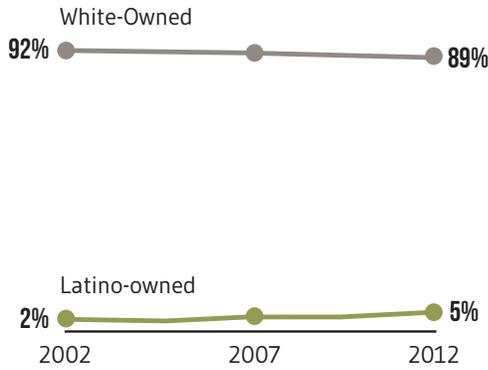
While Latino Oregonians participate in the labor force at a higher rate than white Oregonians, more Latino Oregonians are unemployed (see **Figure 19**). The labor force participation rate includes both individuals currently working and those looking for work. The unemployment rate focuses on those individuals seeking work who are unable to find it. As with the higher labor force participation rate, the higher Latino unemployment rate may be due in part to the fact that the Latino population is relatively younger than the white population, and older Oregonians are less likely to be in the workforce or seeking work than are younger individuals. The higher Latino unemployment rate may also be related to available job opportunities: Oregon's Latino population has lower educational attainment than does the white population and, as such, may have fewer job opportunities.

Figure 19. A higher percentage of Latinos are unemployed compared to their white counterparts.



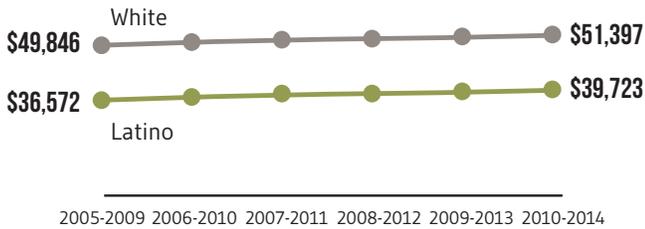
Unemployment rates, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 20. The number of Latino-owned businesses in Oregon is small but growing.



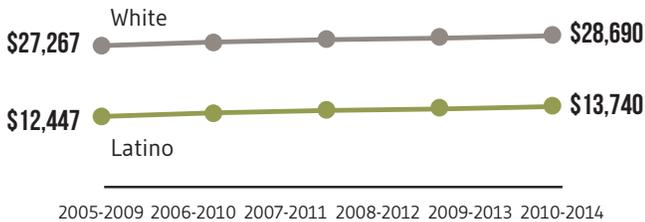
Percentage of businesses owned by white and Latino Oregonians, Survey of Business Owners, U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 21. Latino Oregonians have a lower median household income than do white Oregonians.



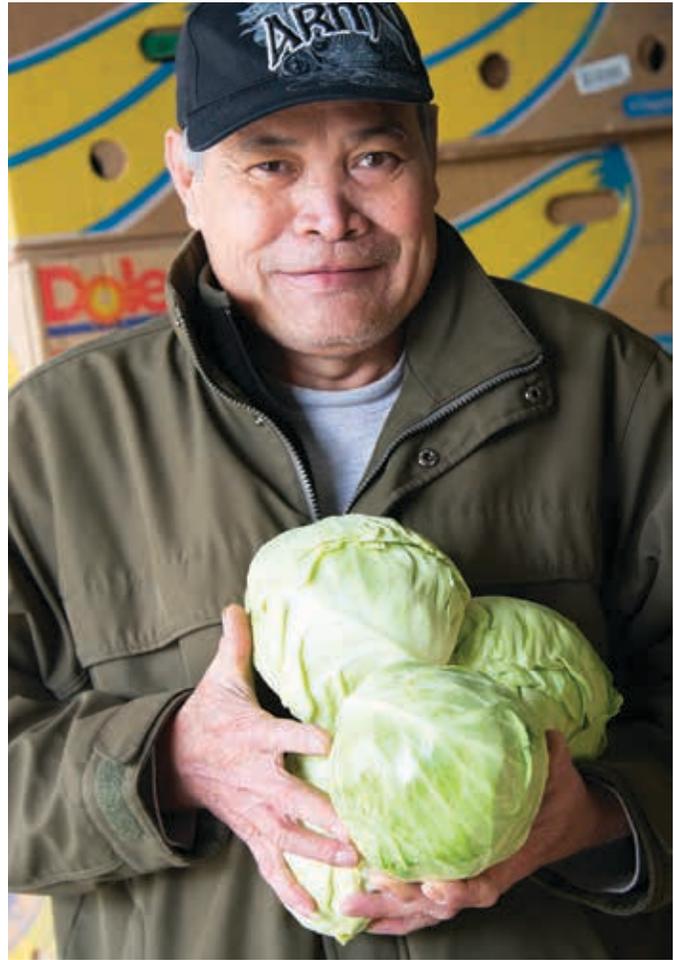
Median household income, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 22. Latino Oregonians have a lower per capita income than do white Oregonians.



Per capita income, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

The number of Latino-owned businesses in Oregon is small relative to the Latino population (5 percent of businesses are owned by Latinos, though Latinos make up 12 percent of the Oregon population), but the number more than doubled, from just over 6,000 in 2002 to almost 15,500 in 2012. Indeed, this growth in Latino businesses outpaced the growth in the Latino population: While the number of Latino businesses increased by 250 percent, the Latino population increased by 72 percent (see **Figure 20**).



Eugene

Latino Oregonians Have Lower Incomes Than White Oregonians.

Latino Oregonians are participating in the labor force at higher rates than are their white counterparts, but stark discrepancies exist in income and poverty between the two groups. In 2014, according to American Community Survey five-year estimates, white Oregonians have a median household income of \$51,397 and Latino Oregonians have a median household income of \$39,723 (see **Figure 21**). The discrepancy is even starker when focusing on per capita income, white Oregonians' per capita income of \$28,690 is more than double Latino Oregonians' per capita income of \$13,740 (see **Figure 22**). The Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Department of Urban Studies and Planning has created a Living Wage Calculation for states and localities.^{xiv} MIT researchers have determined that a single Oregonian needs to make at least \$10.68 per hour (equivalent to \$22,214 per year) to adequately meet basic living expenses. This living wage estimate is nearly double Latino Oregonians' per capita income.

The larger discrepancy in per capita income could be due to larger family sizes for the Latino population, which means that household income supports more family members, resulting in a lower per capita income. According to the 2010 Census, the average Latino household has 3.68 people, compared to 2.34 people in the average white household.

Educational attainment influences earnings. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes data that illustrates median earnings by educational attainment level and ethnicity. Not surprisingly, individuals with higher educational attainment earn higher wages. However, white Americans earn more than do Latino Americans across all education levels.

A similar discrepancy exists between Latino and white Oregonians in terms of poverty. While Latino Oregonians make up 12 percent of Oregon’s population, they make up 17 percent of Oregonians in poverty. In 2014, according to American Community Survey five-year estimates, the percentage of Latino Oregonians living in poverty (28 percent) is nearly double the percentage of white Oregonians living in poverty (15 percent) (see **Figure 23**). After a decline in the poverty rate between 1990 and 2008 for Latinos, the rate has climbed since then and is now comparable to the 1990 rate.

The child poverty rate is even higher than the overall poverty rate, and the same discrepancy between Latino and white Oregonians holds: 35 percent of Latino children live in poverty, compared to 17 percent of white children (see **Figure 24**).

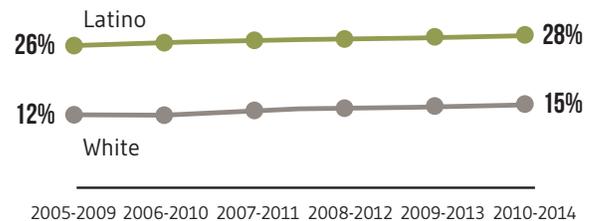
Implications of Economic Trends

Oregon’s Latinos make strong contributions to the state’s economy. Latino participation in the labor force is higher than white participation, and the number of Latino-owned businesses is increasing rapidly. Despite these contributions, however, Latinos have a higher unemployment rate, lower income, and higher poverty and child poverty rates than do their white counterparts. Institutionalized racism in the form of limited opportunities and unfair labor practices has contributed to intergenerational poverty and economic insecurity, which, in turn, have implications across multiple domains, including educational outcomes as well as health and well-being. As Oregon’s Latino population continues to grow, access to jobs and livable wages will become increasingly vital in order for the state to thrive.



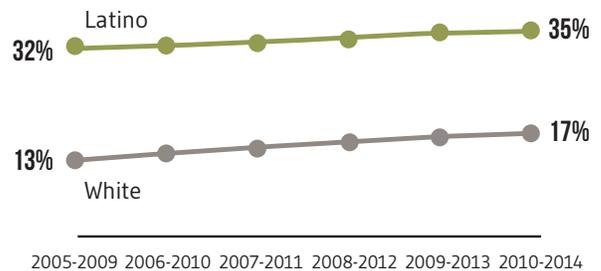
Redmond

Figure 23. The poverty rate among Latino Oregonians is nearly double the rate for white Oregonians.



Poverty rates, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 24. Over one-third of Latino children live in poverty.



Child poverty rates, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau



Community Profile: Hood River

Latino Contributions to a Community's Economic Vitality



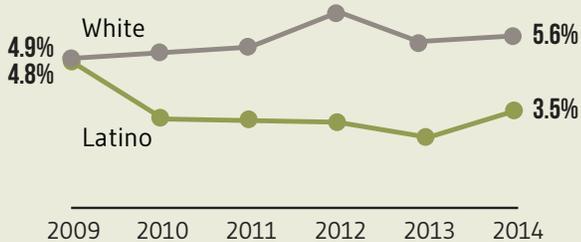
Hood River

The Latino community in Hood River can be characterized by its work ethic, desire to prosper despite challenging circumstances, and willingness to learn and adapt. A majority of the community's Latinos are employed in agriculture and related industries, and many start small businesses initially as a part-time source of income to afford housing and other necessities. If these businesses are successful, the owners will then leave agriculture work. More Latinos in Hood River are in the labor force (81 percent) compared to white Hood River residents (68 percent), mirroring statewide trends. However, in contrast to statewide trends, incomes are higher and the poverty rate is lower for Latinos in Hood River compared to Latinos statewide. Despite these positive economic indicators, Latinos in Hood River have lower median family incomes and higher poverty rates than do their white counterparts.

The Next Door Inc. (TNDI), a multi-service agency in Hood River, operates several programs within its Economic Development Services to assist Latinos with business development. Its *Programa Promoviendo Prosperidad* (Promoting Prosperity Program) provides bilingual, bicultural technical assistance to Latino business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs. Gabriel Muro, TNDI's business services coordinator, explains that the primary focus is to help entrepreneurs legitimize their business by assisting with all aspects of establishing a business. The program also provides financial literacy training and assistance, including access to capital, credit building and Individual Development Accounts. Gabriel adds that the program also has created a lending circle for Latino business owners. In addition to *Programa Promoviendo Prosperidad*, TNDI operates the Raices program, a community greenhouse-farm project with joint goals of improving health and providing an opportunity to develop income and business skills.

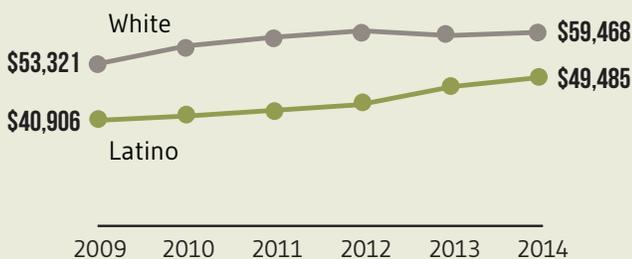
Yolanda Gandara Ortiz participated in *Programa Promoviendo Prosperidad* to receive help with marketing and business registration, among other assistance. In addition, Yolanda has participated in two cycles of the lending circle. Yolanda owns Gandara Alterations, a sewing and repair business with clients throughout the Mid-Columbia Gorge region. Through the assistance she has received from TNDI, she has been able to expand her business into technical repairs for windsurfing, skiing and snowboarding equipment.

The unemployment rate for Latinos in Hood River is lower than the rate for white residents, in contrast to statewide trends.



Unemployment rate by race/ethnicity, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

Latinos in Hood River have lower median family incomes than white residents, though incomes are growing.



Median family income by race/ethnicity, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau



Information about Latinos' health status can be measured using a variety of indicators, including access to health insurance, access to prenatal care, teen pregnancy rates, and self-reported indicators of youth physical and mental health. There are disparities in health access and health outcomes for Oregon's Latino population: Almost one-third lack health insurance, more of Oregon's Latinas receive inadequate prenatal care and have a teen pregnancy than white women, and more of Oregon's Latino youth are obese and fewer meet the state's positive youth development benchmark than white youth.

Nearly One-Third of Oregon Latinos Lack Health Insurance.

In 2014, according to American Community Survey five-year estimates, over one-quarter of Latino Oregonians were uninsured, compared to 13 percent of white Oregonians (see **Figure 25**). A robust body of research points to a link between lack of health insurance and a variety of health issues, including stroke, cancer, heart disease and diabetes, among others.^{xv} The high rate of uninsured Latinos, coupled with the growing Latino population, points to potential future health problems and related costs as well as adverse impacts on community vitality.

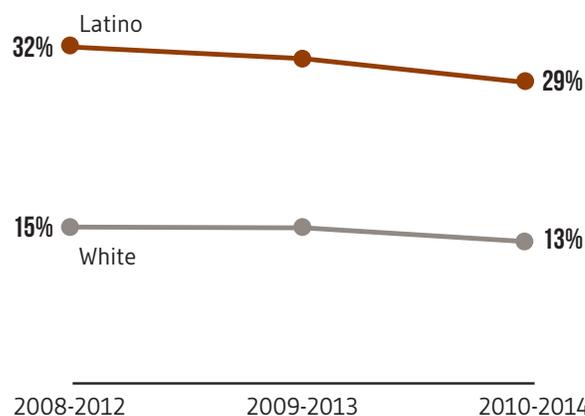
Fewer Latinas Receive Adequate Prenatal Care.

Prenatal care can help women have healthy pregnancies and babies. Pregnant women receive health, nutrition and safety information along with screenings and monitoring. Adequate prenatal care tailored to the needs of each pregnant woman has been shown to decrease the risk of low birthweight babies.^{xvi} The Oregon Health Authority defines inadequate prenatal care as having fewer than five visits to an obstetrician or starting prenatal care in the third trimester. The percentage of Latinas receiving inadequate prenatal care has decreased since 2000, but fewer Latinas receive adequate prenatal care than do white women (see **Figure 26**).



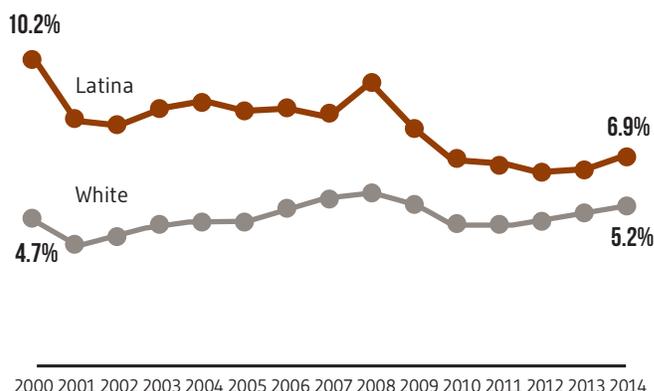
Medford

Figure 25. **While more Latinos are accessing health insurance, over one-quarter still lack it.**



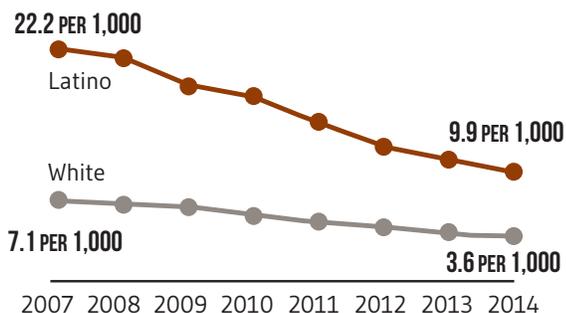
Percentage of residents without health insurance, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 26. **Fewer Latinas receive prenatal care, but the gap between white women and Latinas is decreasing.**



Percentage of women receiving inadequate prenatal care, Oregon Health Authority

Figure 27. **The teen pregnancy rate among Latinas has decreased more than the rate among white teens, but the rate among Latinas is still more than double the rate for white teens.**



Pregnancy rates among 10-to-17-year-olds, Oregon Health Authority

Teen Pregnancy Rates Have Dropped, but Latinas Have Higher Rates.

The Oregon Health Authority, through its Vital Statistics Division, collects data about teen pregnancies. Teen pregnancy rates have decreased for both Latinas and whites between 2007 and 2014. However, even with a larger decrease among Latinas than whites, the teen pregnancy rate for Latinas remains much higher than the rate for whites (see **Figure 27**).

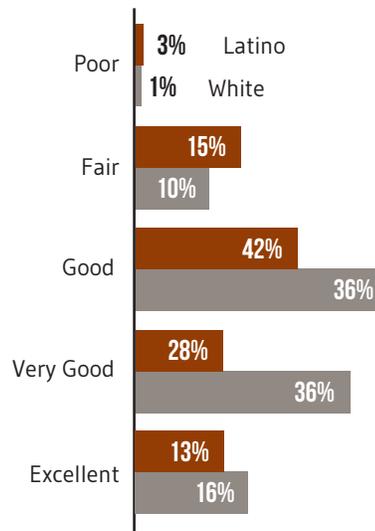
Most Latino Youth Describe Their Health as Good, but Over One-Third Are Overweight.

The Healthy Teens Survey, a statewide survey of 8th and 11th graders conducted by the state of Oregon, collects a variety of information from Oregon’s youth about their health, well-being and risk behaviors.

The Healthy Teens Survey data suggest differences between Latino and white youth in terms of physical health. Most Latino 11th graders who completed the survey self-report their physical health as good, very good or excellent. However, more Latino youth than white youth self-report their physical health as poor or fair (see **Figure 28**).

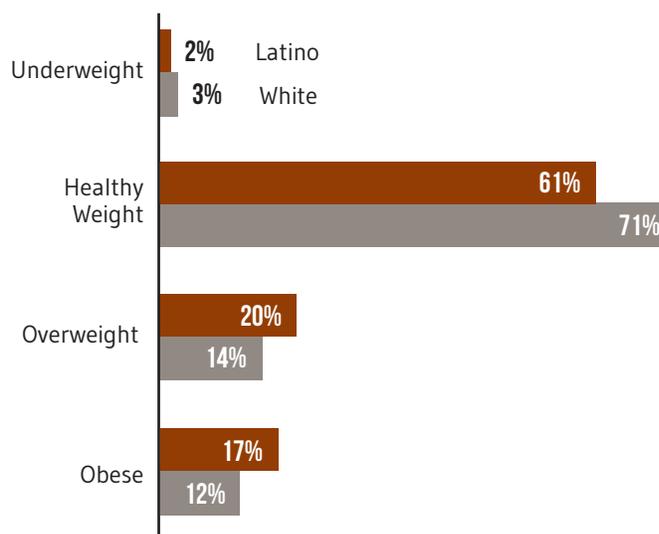
The Oregon Healthy Teens Survey collects information about body mass index. Nearly half of Latino 11th graders are overweight or obese, while approximately one-quarter of white 11th graders are overweight or obese (see **Figure 29**). The higher prevalence of overweight and obesity among Latino youth may be due in part to higher poverty rates among Latinos; research has documented that lower-in-

Figure 28. **Almost all Latino youth consider themselves to be in good or better physical health.**



Self-described physical health of 11th graders, 2015 Oregon Healthy Teens Survey

Figure 29. **Over one-third of Latino youth are overweight or obese.**



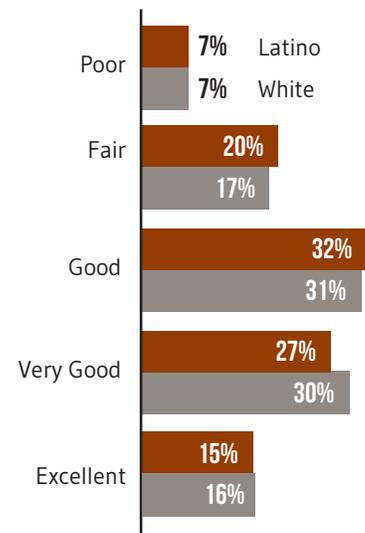
Body Mass Index of 11th Graders, 2015 Oregon Healthy Teens Survey

come individuals are more likely to be overweight or obese than are higher income individuals (see, for example, Kim & Leigh, 2010).^{xvii} However, the relationship between obesity and income is complex: It has been decreasing over time, and is strongest for women and white individuals. Therefore, poverty alone is likely not the sole determining factor of Latino youths’ higher obesity rates.



Medford

Figure 30. Ratings of emotional health are similar between Latino and white youth.



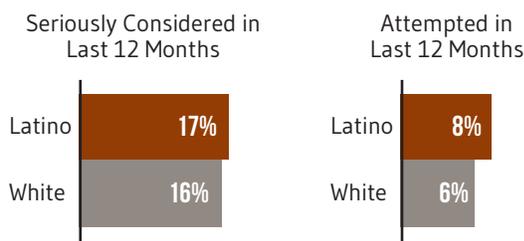
Self-described emotional health of 11th graders, 2015 Oregon Healthy Teens Survey

There Are Few Differences in Emotional Health Between Latino and White Youth.

The Oregon Healthy Teen Survey also includes questions about youths' mental health. Fewer differences are apparent between Latino and white youth on these questions of mental health as compared to physical health. Latino and white youth have similar self-reports of their emotional health (see **Figure 30**) and similar reports of suicidal thoughts and attempts (see **Figure 31**), though Latino youth are somewhat more likely to have reported suicide attempts than are white youth.

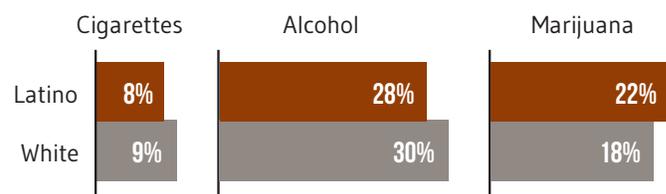
Self-reported rates of cigarette and alcohol use are similar between Latino and white 11th graders, but slightly more Latino youth reported using marijuana in the past 30 days compared to white youth (see **Figure 32**). Cognitive research suggests that alcohol or marijuana use during adolescence can lead to harmful neurological changes that affect cognitive functioning.^{xvii-xix}

Figure 31. Slightly more Latino youth report suicide attempts than do white youth.



Self-reported suicidality among 11th graders, 2015 Oregon Healthy Teens Survey

Figure 32. While Latino youth are slightly less likely than are their white peers to use cigarettes or alcohol, they are more likely to use marijuana.



Self-reported substance use in past 30 days for 11th graders, 2015 Oregon Healthy Teens Survey



Lincoln City

Figure 33. **About half of Latino youth meet the positive youth development benchmark.**



Positive youth development benchmark for 11th graders, 2015 Oregon Healthy Teens Survey

Fewer Latino Youth Meet the Positive Youth Development Benchmark.

The survey data also is used to create a positive youth development benchmark score based on responses to six survey questions on physical health status, mental health status, volunteerism, the presence of a supportive adult, self-confidence and problem-solving. Data suggest that just over half of Latino 11th graders meet the positive youth development benchmark, while nearly two-thirds of white 11th graders meet this benchmark (see **Figure 33**).

Implications of Health Trends

Ensuring the positive health and development of Oregon’s large and growing Latino population is vitally important as Oregon’s Latino youth become tomorrow’s workforce, community members and leaders. While there have been some gains in Latino health in recent years, there remain large disparities between Latino and white Oregonians on many health indicators. A lack of health care access and a shortage of culturally appropriate services and providers have contributed to crucial health disparities. The percentage of uninsured Latinos has dropped slightly, access to prenatal care has increased and teen pregnancy rates have dropped substantially. On all of these indicators, however, Latino Oregonians lag significantly behind their white peers. In addition, while self-reported indicators of emotional well-being are roughly equivalent for Latino and white youth, more Latino youth are obese, and Latino youths’ self-reported physical health and the percentage meeting the positive youth development benchmark are lower than those of white youth.



Community Profile: Jackson County

Seeking Equity in Health and Health Care Access

The Latino community in Southern Oregon is a close-knit network that comes together in the face of challenges to get things done. This sense of solidarity is welcoming to newly arriving community members and fosters a proactive, rather than victim, mentality. One area of challenge for the community is health care equity, with nearly a third of Jackson County’s Latino population lacking health insurance.

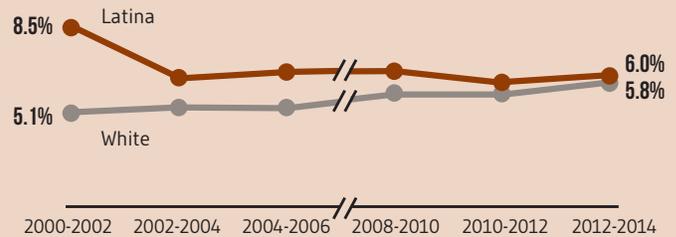
The Health Care Coalition of Southern Oregon (HCCSO) focuses on improving systems of health care and improving health outcomes for all. Its SO Health-E Coalition launched in 2014 with funding from the Oregon Health Authority’s Office of Equity and Inclusion. Maria Underwood, HCCSO board chair, explains that SO Health-E has three goals: (1) identify the gaps and health disparities for underserved communities; (2) create awareness by facilitating cultural agility training; and (3) partner with others on advocacy and policy change. Maria explains that the Coalition is bringing together different sectors, such as health care, education and housing, to talk about and address the social determinants of health. The Coalition includes La Clinica, a long-time health care provider to the Latino community, along with other representatives of the health care system, and is building off of the ongoing work of these organizations. The long-standing work of these partners has resulted in a higher awareness of the service needs for underrepresented groups and in the use of data to inform provider decision-making about program delivery. One particularly successful example of the Coalition’s expansion of previous work is the use of storytelling within the cultural agility trainings for health care providers to learn about the experiences of underrepresented groups with the health care system.

SO Health-E is using data to identify needs and raising awareness and agility among providers, which is much-needed work to address the continuing health challenges faced by Southern Oregon’s Latino population. Maria notes that access to culturally appropriate health care continues to be a challenge. Further, Maria sees continued opportunity for disease prevention and health promotion in areas such as smoking, obesity and diabetes. Community members need to be provided with education, tools and opportunities to make healthy choices.



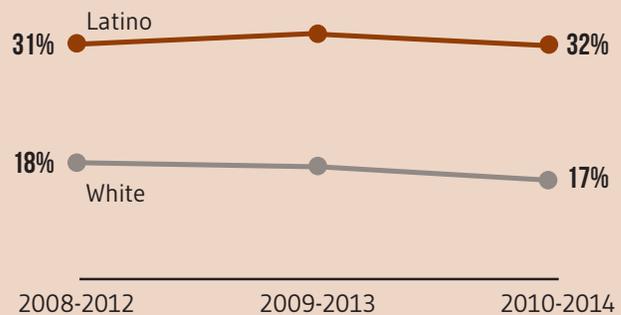
Medford

White and Latina women are equally likely to have inadequate prenatal care.



Lack of adequate prenatal care by race/ethnicity, Oregon Health Authority

Nearly a third of Jackson County’s Latino population lacks health insurance.



Percent lacking health insurance by race/ethnicity, American Community Survey, U.S. Census

Conclusion



Medford

Oregon's Latino population is growing at a rate faster than the national rate: 12 percent of the state's population is now Latino, representing 72 percent growth since 2000. A majority of Oregon's Latinos are of Mexican descent, but the state boasts representation from multiple Central and South American countries as well. While most of Oregon's Latinos are U.S.-born, a sizable minority were born elsewhere. The striking demographic difference between Oregon's Latino population and its white population is age: Oregon Latinos are significantly younger than are white Oregonians.

Not surprisingly, given this difference in ages, nearly one-quarter of K-12 students in Oregon are Latino. Increased attention to demographic shifts in Oregon's students has resulted in some improvements in educational achievement, but alarming achievement gaps still exist. For example, Latino kindergarten students score similarly to their white peers in terms of socio-emotional skills, but lag behind in early math and literacy skills. Similarly, while Latino third- and eighth-grade students have made some gains over time in reading and math scores, less than half are meeting or exceeding state standards, a rate significantly below that of their white peers. In addition, the graduation rate for Latino students lags white students. Even starker differences between Latino and white Oregonians exist in postsecondary attainment, with almost half of Latino Oregonians possessing less than a high school diploma. However, there are some positive indicators that may suggest future improvements in educational achievement: The majority of Latino students attend school regularly (and at a rate identical to that of their white peers), and the Latino graduation rate has increased over the past 15 years.



Yamhill

Oregon's Latino population makes vital contributions to the state's economy. Latinos are more likely to be part of the labor force than are white Oregonians, and Latino business ownership has grown faster than the growth of the Latino population. However, Latinos are more likely to be unemployed, incomes are significantly lower for Latino families and poverty rates are significantly higher in comparison to white Oregonians.

Disparities also exist in terms of health and health care, despite some progress. Access to health insurance and to prenatal care has increased and teen pregnancy rates have decreased dramatically. However, one in three of Oregon's Latinos still lacks health insurance, fewer Latinas than white women receive adequate prenatal care, and the Latina teen pregnancy rate is double the rate for white teens.

A young and growing Latino population means that Latinos play an increasingly important role in Oregon's future. Most immediately, they have the potential to make an impact on the next presidential election, and more long term, today's Latino youth are tomorrow's community members, workers and leaders. As the young population in Oregon continues to grow, the state's ability to achieve its 40-40-20 education goal will depend largely on ensuring Latino students are ready to learn when they enter school, have the supports they need to succeed throughout their academic careers, and live in economically secure and healthy families and communities. The future health of Oregon will be determined in no small part by the contributions and achievements of its Latino population.

OCF's Latino Partnership Program: Moving Forward



Dear Reader,

It has been our hope and intention that the users of the Latinos in Oregon report – nonprofit leaders, funders, policymakers, philanthropists and interested community members – will connect the dots between education, jobs and employment, and health and how opportunities (or lack thereof) in each area impact not just the Latino population but the state, now and in the future.

As you have read in this report, Latinos represent a growing percentage of Oregon's population. We need to move from discussing demographic shifts to discussing the implications of this change for our work.

At OCF we have long recognized that there is not one Latino population but rather people and communities with their own stories, experiences and aspirations. It is not our intent to reduce Oregon Latinos to statistics and trends, for in each statistic there is a real story for a child, a parent, a young Latino and a community. For OCF and its Latino Partnership Program, the path for action is laid out in four strategic and interconnected goals:

- Include the voice and interest of Latino communities in all of OCF's major programs and operations.
- Work with Latino leaders and organizations to support the academic achievement of Latino students.
- Strengthen Latino engagement in, and influence on, social and economic issues by helping increase Latino leadership and representation.
- Forge ties between Oregon Latinos and their communities by promoting cross-cultural experiences and conversations.

We look forward to continuing to work with our national and local funding partners, nonprofit program providers and advocates, policymakers and community leaders, and the OCF family of donors to connect the dots and help improve lives for Oregon Latinos and for all Oregonians.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roberto Franco". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Roberto Franco
Latino Partnership Program Director
The Oregon Community Foundation

Methodology Notes

Five-Year American Community Survey Estimates

Data from the U.S. Census Bureau is used throughout this report. In addition to conducting a full census every 10 years, the Bureau also conducts a survey of a small percentage of the population each month called the American Community Survey (ACS). Results from the survey are available as one-, three- and five-year estimates. This report uses the five-year estimates because they are the most reliable, especially for smaller communities. However, the survey data is collected from only a sample of the total population, meaning that measures still have a margin of error and may be higher or lower than reported. The only measures in this report determined to be unreliable because they have too much potential variation can be found in **Figures 3 and 4**.

Five-year estimates also pose challenges when interpreting change over time. Currently, only two time periods that do not overlap are available from the ACS: 2005 to 2009 and 2010 to 2014. Although data for the intermediate years is presented in this report, exercise caution when interpreting changes between estimates with overlapping years.

While not the main focus of this report, enough data was available from the U.S. Census Bureau to conduct some significance testing. For more information, please contact the authors of this report.

How Race and Ethnicity Are Determined

The U.S. Census Bureau asks two separate questions about race and ethnicity in its surveys. First, the surveys ask if the person is of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin and then ask the person's race. In this report, the race and ethnicity data is used in two different ways. For total population numbers from the U.S. Census (see pages 5-6), "Latino" includes anyone who marked yes on the survey, regardless of race, and "white" includes only those who only marked "white" on the survey. For example, if someone answered that they are of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin in the first question and marked "white" as their race in the second question, they are reflected in the Latino total for population. For all other measures, "Latino" includes anyone who marked yes on

the survey, regardless of race, and "white" includes anyone who marked "white" on the survey, regardless of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin. According to the most recent five-year estimates, less than 9 percent of white Oregonians also indicated that they are Latino. While that means that there is some overlap in the data, most ACS data presented in this report is not available for the category "white, non-Latino."

Similar to the U.S. Census Bureau, the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) is required by the federal government to identify students' race and ethnicity using a two-part question that first asks about ethnicity and then asks about race. If parents do not respond to both questions, students are asked. If neither responds, local staff observe and record the students' race and ethnicity. In the ODE data, "Latino" includes all students who were identified as Hispanic or Latino by one of the methods above, regardless of race, and "white" includes students who were identified as white but not Hispanic or Latino.

Rather than asking two separate questions, statutes governing the Oregon Health Authority require that several Hispanic or Latino categories be included alongside other demographic data categories with the label "Racial or ethnic identity" on forms collecting data. Individuals may choose more than one category.

How Communities Were Identified for Profiles

While Latinos are making important contributions in many places throughout Oregon, this report highlights four communities that were identified through the following process as exemplifying statewide trends. First, counties in which over 20 percent of the population is Latino or where Latinos have experienced at least 75 percent population growth were identified. Within those counties, the Latino population was mapped by Census tract to see if it was concentrated in a particular city or town. Nine communities were identified through that process and data was gathered for each across several indicators representing the four sections of this report. The OCF team and the advisory group reviewed these indicators and identified communities that stood out in each of the four report sections. Final community determinations were made with statewide representation in mind.

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Bend

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Oregon Flower Harvest, Betty LaDuke



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