



Hispanic Impact Fund
AUSTIN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

2025
STATUS
REPORT

Advancing Latino Futures

BUILDING A THRIVING CENTRAL TEXAS

ABOUT

AUSTIN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Austin Community Foundation (ACF) mobilizes ideas and resources to strengthen Central Texas.

ACF focuses on closing the opportunity gap in Central Texas through advancing economic mobility and housing affordability. A variety of tools—data, convening, and philanthropic dollars—are used to implement this strategy. Since 1977, ACF has granted more than \$600 million to nonprofit organizations across the region.



OUR APPROACH

- / **Inform.** We commission research to understand the areas of greatest need and foster deep connections to the nonprofits that are best equipped to address Austin's challenges.
- / **Invite.** We bring together people, resources, and ideas to nurture our shared vision for Austin and Central Texas.
- / **Invest.** We make a collective impact through philanthropic investments that help shape Austin's future.



HISPANIC IMPACT FUND

The Hispanic Impact Fund is a signature program of Austin Community Foundation. Our focus is on bridging the racial wealth divide by advancing economic opportunity for Latino families in Central Texas. We do this as a collective of individual, foundation, and corporate philanthropy, supporting access to the Latino-serving nonprofits in our region working across four strategic impact areas: early childhood education, health & wellness, job skills & entrepreneurship, and leadership development.

Since 2017, the Hispanic Impact Fund has awarded 67 grants totaling over \$2 million to 52 Latino-led and Latino-serving nonprofits, working tirelessly to uplift and empower our Latino community.

KEY MILESTONES

- / **Reports and Education** - Including this publication, we've issued three informative reports and hosted numerous educational programs to promote understanding of the contributions Latinos make to our society and the challenges they face.
- / **Events and Celebrations** - We've celebrated the vibrancy of Latino culture through events like Somos Austin and Latino Monologues y Dialogues.
- / **COVID-19 Response** - The Hispanic Impact Fund awarded \$70,000 in rapid-response grants in 2020. The challenges brought on by the pandemic informed our future strategies, emphasizing the importance of unrestricted, multi-year grant funding and the involvement of nonprofit voices throughout our work.
- / **Community Engagement** - We are proud to have engaged nearly 200 community members in our community-led grants process. Their collective wisdom and diverse perspectives are essential in guiding equitable funding decisions that reflect the needs and aspirations of Latinos in Central Texas.

You can learn more about our collective impact at: austincf.org/hispanicimpactfund



Austin Achieve Public Schools, 2023 grant partner

METHODOLOGY

This report was developed in collaboration with the RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service CONNECT Fellows program, with support from Catalina Vasquez. The RGK Center is housed in the LBJ School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin. The data that appears in this report is publicly available through the United States Census Bureau, the American Community Survey, the Austin Area Sustainability Indicators (A2SI) Community Survey, Prosperity Now, government databases, Predictive DataLab, and other trusted research institutes.

A full list of sources is available at the end of this report on pages 16 and 17.

GEOGRAPHIC CONSIDERATIONS

Unless otherwise stated, the geographic area covered in this report includes the Central Texas region, which describes Bastrop, Burnet, Caldwell, Hays, Travis, and Williamson Counties. National and state-level data was included to provide comparative analysis; other geographic locations are specified as needed.

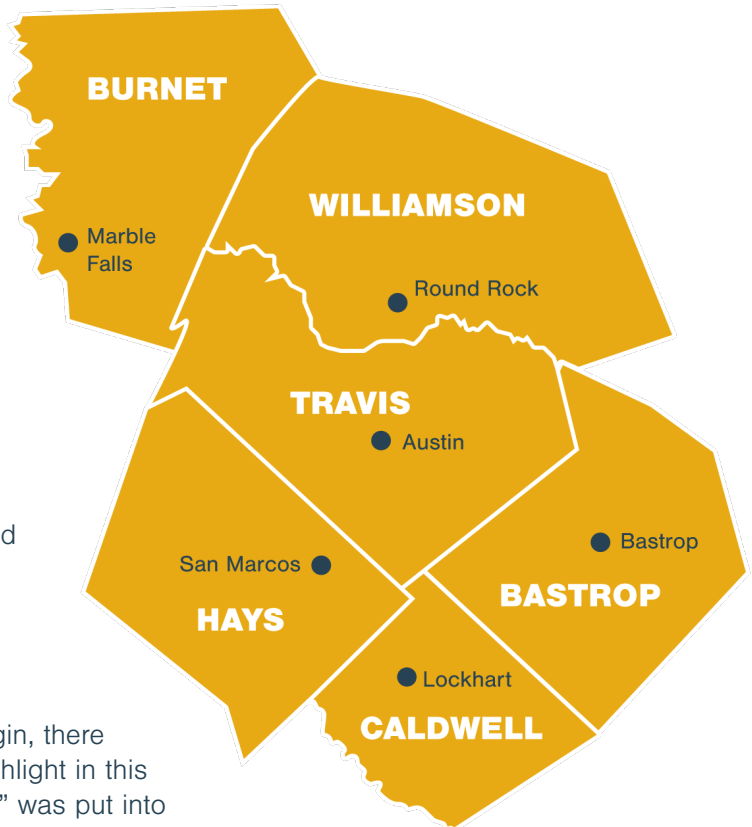
A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

In the United States, there is a complex discussion around the usage of the terms “Hispanic,” “Latino,” “Latinx,” and “Latine” for individuals of Latin American descent. Additionally, if you were born in Texas, there is another identifier: “Tejano.”

While many Latinos identify based on their country of origin, there is a need to measure a shared experience, as we will highlight in this report. According to the Pew Research Center, “Hispanic” was put into use by the United States (U.S.) government in the 1970s after Mexican Americans and other Spanish-speaking organizing groups demanded the federal government officially collect data on Spanish-speaking populations. The term “Latino” was first used by the federal government in the 1990s when many Latino groups cited that the term “Hispanic” embraced the Spanish colonization of the Americas.

The terms “Latinx” and “Latine” have emerged as the newest pan-ethnic identifiers, gaining popularity since 2016, particularly among younger generations. These terms are valued for their gender neutrality and inclusivity.

All of these terms are valid because they represent real people and experiences across multiple generations. Each term is used by individuals and institutions alike to identify and collect data related to individuals across our community. **For the purposes of this report, the terms “Hispanic” and “Latino” are used interchangeably.**



INTRODUCTION

This report expands on Austin Community Foundation’s 2021 report, *Building a Thriving Central Texas: Advancing Latino Futures*, and provides a data-informed framework for the Foundation to understand the key tenets of building economic mobility,* specifically within the Latino population in Central Texas.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Hispanics became the largest demographic in Texas in 2022, making up 40.2% of the state’s population. As the fastest-growing demographic in Central Texas, Latinos are pivotal in shaping the region’s future. Ensuring economic mobility for the Latino community requires a holistic approach that integrates stable employment, quality education, and access to essential services. Although there have been improvements in high school graduation, employment, and homeownership rates among Latinos, significant challenges persist. These include the highest uninsured rates of any demographic, lower graduation rates at four-year institutions of higher education, and underrepresentation in positions of leadership, limiting economic opportunities in high-demand, high-wage careers.

This report underscores the need to address these challenges to fully harness the Latino community’s potential and foster inclusive economic growth. By prioritizing job creation in high-growth sectors, enhancing educational success, improving healthcare access, and ensuring affordable housing for Latinos, Central Texans can promote economic mobility and improve the quality of life for all residents.

The report examines the key indicators of economic mobility for Latinos in Central Texas through four critical areas:



**EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION**



**HEALTH &
WELLNESS**



**JOB SKILLS &
ENTREPRENEURSHIP**



**LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT**

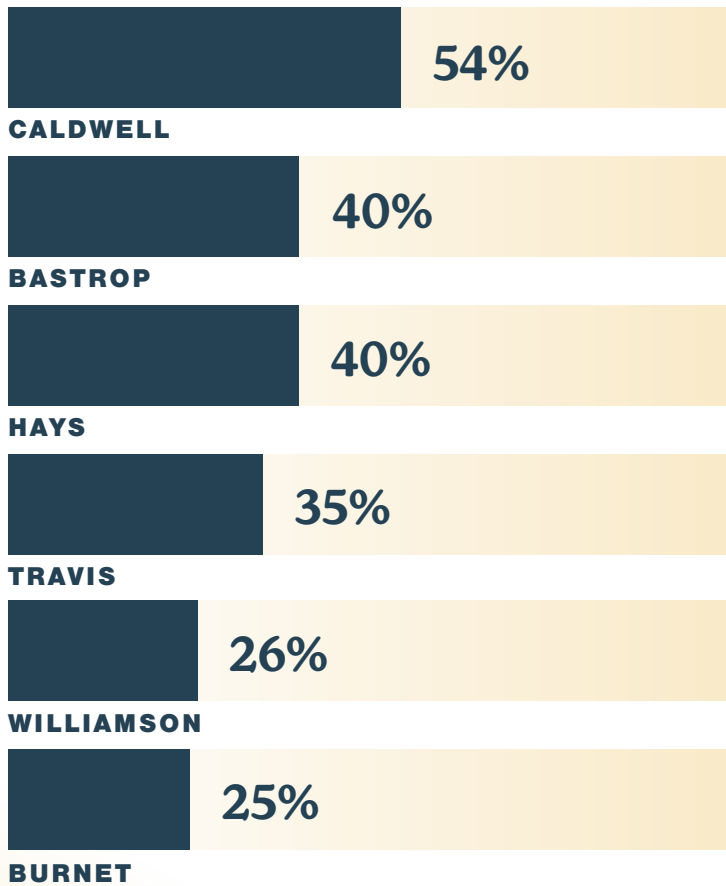
Please note that words and phrases marked with an asterisk () are defined in the glossary on page 15.*





DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT

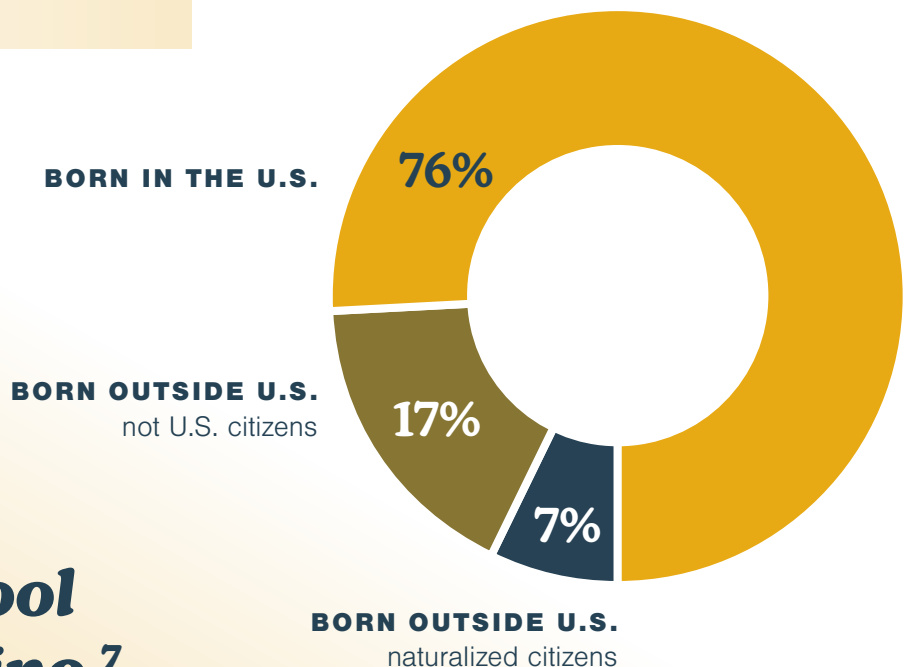
Hispanic Share of the Population in Central Texas Counties - 2022¹



The Latino population in Central Texas is not just growing, it is becoming an even more significant part of the overall demographic. Understanding the population of our region is a critical first step toward ensuring upward mobility for Latinos in Central Texas.

- / Latinos led population gains in the Central Texas region between 2012 and 2022, growing by nearly 79,100—an increase of more than 31%.²
- / As of 2022, Latinos are the largest demographic group in the state of Texas.³
- / It is expected that by 2040, Latinos will constitute the majority of our state’s population.⁴
- / Latinos make up 43% of the youth population in Central Texas.⁵

Place of Birth for Central Texas Latinos⁶



DID YOU KNOW?

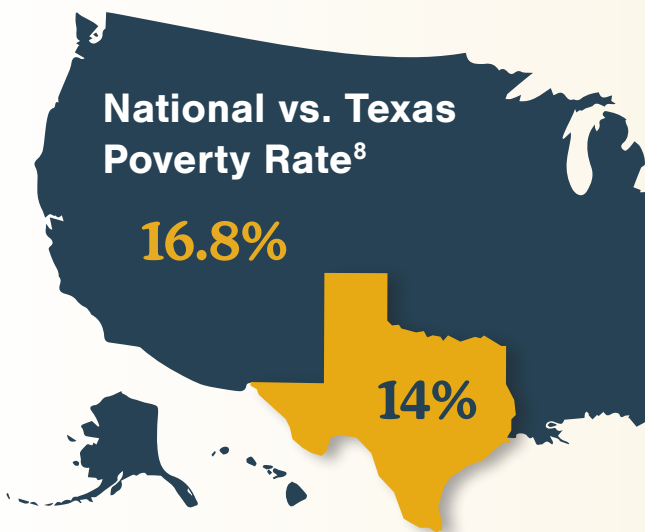
Nearly half of all Central Texas public school students are Latino.⁷

ECONOMIC MOBILITY

Economic mobility refers to a person's ability to improve their economic status over the course of their lifetime. The Hispanic Impact Fund's strategic focus areas—early childhood education, health & wellness, job skills & entrepreneurship, and leadership development—were carefully selected as key building blocks to advance the economic mobility of Latinos in Central Texas. Additionally, Austin Community Foundation is committed to advancing generational wealth building* and the mechanisms by which individuals, families, and communities gather the resources that will move them towards economic well-being, for now and for years to come. This section offers a snapshot of the present-day racial wealth divide* in Central Texas.

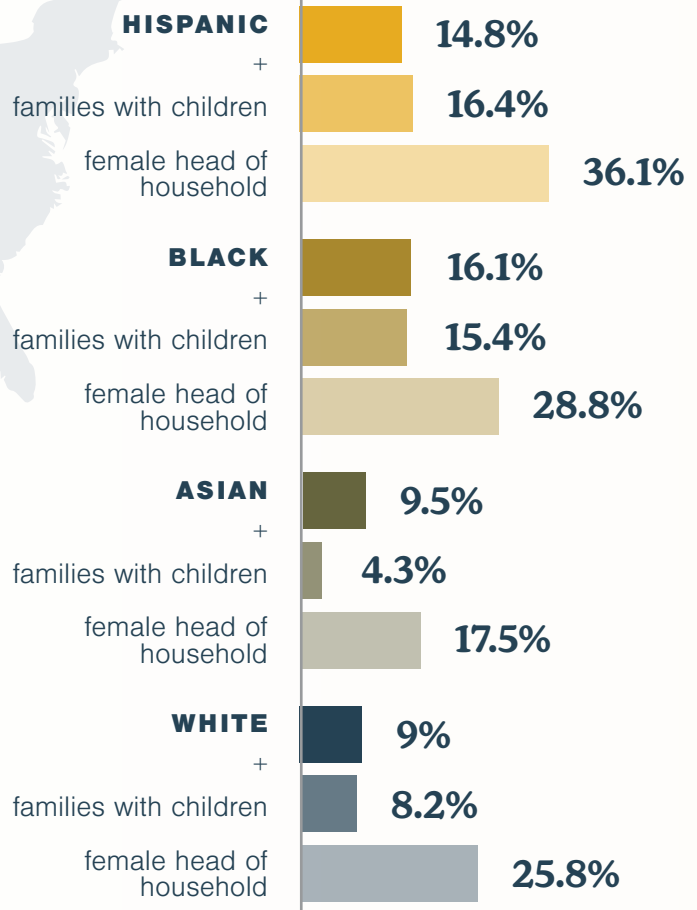
POVERTY RATE

The poverty rate* is a crucial indicator of economic mobility because it directly reflects the extent to which individuals and families can meet their basic needs and maintain a stable life. High poverty rates indicate that many people lack access to essential resources such as food, housing, healthcare, and education, which are fundamental for sustaining well-being and economic security.* Living in poverty can lead to poor health outcomes, reduced educational attainment, and limited job opportunities, perpetuating a cycle of economic hardship.



1 in 3
Hispanic families with a female head of household live below the federal poverty line.¹⁰

Central Texas Poverty Rate by Demographic⁹



IN THE CENTRAL TEXAS AREA...

- / The poverty rate for Latino youth is 19.4%—nearly twice the poverty rate for white youth in Central Texas.¹¹
- / The liquid asset poverty* rate for Latino households is nearly three times that of white households. A family lives in liquid asset poverty if they don't have enough money or assets to replace three months of basic living expenses in the event of a sudden job loss, medical emergency, or other financial hardship.¹²
- / 40% of the Central Texas Latino population is either unbanked* or underbanked,* leaving them vulnerable to hidden taxes, predatory lending, and cyclical poverty.¹³

Other Indicators of Racial Wealth Disparities¹⁴

Median Household Income

HISPANIC

\$68,258



BLACK

\$61,272



ASIAN

\$109,961



WHITE

\$89,886



Liquid Asset Poverty Rate

HISPANIC

47%

BLACK

44%

ASIAN

18%

WHITE

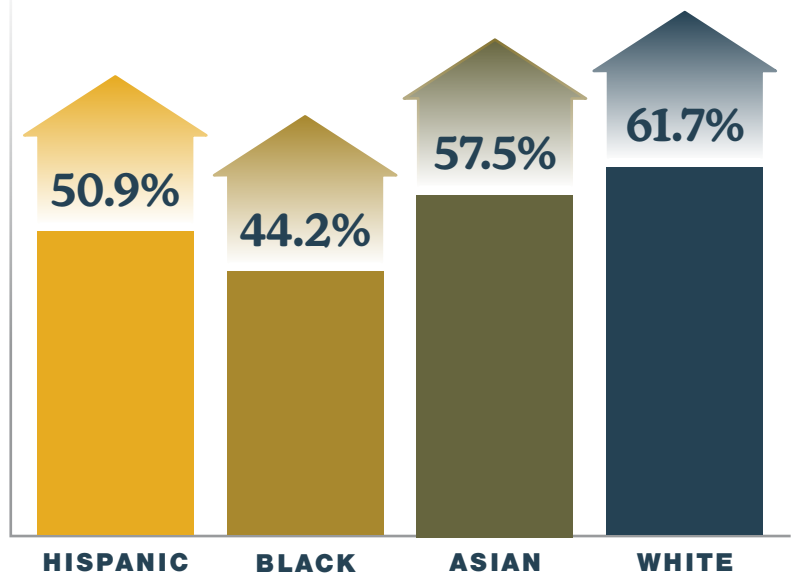
17%

HOMEOWNERSHIP

Homeownership rates* are a significant indicator of economic mobility for several reasons. Owning a home allows individuals and families to build wealth over time through the accumulation of home equity.* This equity can serve as a financial cushion in times of economic hardship and can be leveraged for other investments, such as education or business ventures.

Additionally, higher homeownership rates generally indicate a healthier, more stable economy where individuals have the means to invest in their future and contribute to community development. This link between homeownership and economic stability underscores the importance of policies that promote affordable homeownership opportunities.

Homeownership Rate¹⁵

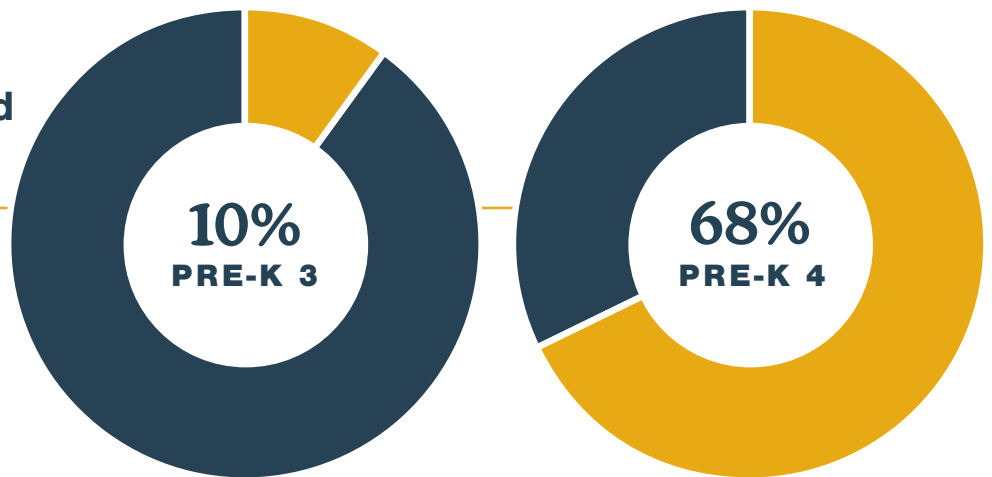


EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

A child prepared for kindergarten is four to five times more likely to pass Texas reading and math assessments by the 3rd grade.¹⁶ Focusing on the youngest children in our community can improve educational outcomes for years to come. Additionally, access to quality childcare and early education is critical for laying a solid foundation for future academic success. The Hispanic Impact Fund invests in organizations that provide access to affordable, high-quality pre-K and early childhood education starting at age 3, building the pipeline from cradle to career for Latino families.

Percentage of Eligible Latino Children Enrolled in Public Pre-K 3 & 4¹⁷

Pre-K attendance is an important determining factor for kindergarten readiness, as it helps children develop a breadth of skills that will prepare them for both school and life.



- / Students in Spanish-speaking families who are learning English in addition to developing their home language (emergent bilingual*) attend Pre-K 4 at higher rates than students who are not emergent bilingual.¹⁸
- / Emergent bilingual students that attend Pre-K 4 are twice as likely to be kindergarten ready as their peers that did not attend Pre-K. They are also more likely to be kindergarten ready than their non-emergent bilingual peers.¹⁹
- / Across a range of assessments, fewer than 40% of low-income Latino students are kindergarten ready. That percentage jumps to around 50% for non-low-income Hispanic students.²⁰





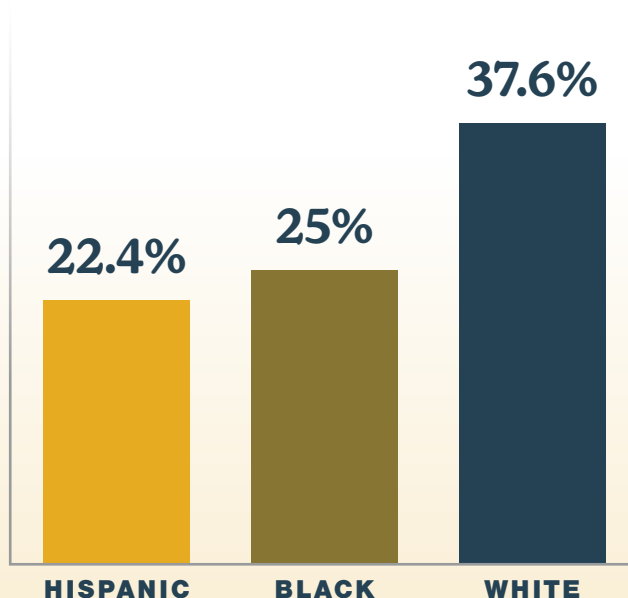
HEALTH & WELLNESS

Access to affordable, preventive healthcare is essential for helping Latino families avoid unexpected health crises and the financial ruin that can accompany them. Emphasizing preventive care, culturally competent health education, and access to quality mental and physical health services can significantly improve health outcomes and economic mobility for the Latino community.

- / 1 in 4 employed Hispanic Central Texans does not have health insurance coverage.²¹
- / 21.2% of Latinos of all ages are uninsured, which is about double the rate of other demographics—10.7% of white Central Texans and 12.2% of Black Central Texans.²²
- / In 2022, Hispanic adults in Texas were 76% more likely than non-Hispanic white adults to be diagnosed with diabetes.²³
- / Latinas experience a 35% teen birth rate,* compared to 8.9% for white teens and 39% for Black teens.²⁴

Half of unemployed Latinos lack health insurance coverage.²⁶

Adults Who Receive Treatment after Diagnosis with Mental Health or Substance Abuse Disorder²⁵



Barriers to Care for Latinos with Chronic Kidney Disease²⁷

In a study piloted by the University of Texas at Austin Dell Medical School, Central Texas Latinos with early kidney disease reported the following barriers to medical care:

- / Fear of rejection due to documentation status
- / Lack of knowledge around where to go or how to navigate the system
- / Getting an appointment is too difficult—not enough doctors or the waiting time is too long
- / Work schedules and fear of taking off work make it hard to engage in healthy behaviors or visit the doctor
- / Men may think there is a stigma associated with going to the doctor
- / Financial resource strain is high



JOB SKILLS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Regionally, Central Texas is experiencing robust economic growth and prosperity. However, many Latinos remain confined to minimal incomes, accelerating the racial wealth divide. The Central Texas labor force is growing rapidly to meet the demands of the significant expansion of our local economy. This synergy between labor force expansion and economic growth positions the region as a vibrant hub for job opportunities and economic activity. The Hispanic Impact Fund aims to ensure that working-age Latinos are equipped with the skills needed to obtain high-demand, high-wage jobs with opportunities for economic advancement. Additional focus is placed on supporting Latino entrepreneurs in gaining the knowledge and skills needed to expand their businesses.

Most Common Job Sectors by Race/Ethnicity in 2021²⁸

	HISPANIC	BLACK	ASIAN	WHITE
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	33.1%	37.5%	71.1%	52.6%
Service occupations	20.5%	17.5%	9%	12.9%
Sales and office occupations	20.6%	25.2%	12.9%	21%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	13.7%	4.2%	1.2%	6.6%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	12.2%	15.6%	5.7%	6.9%



Latinitas, 2024 grant partner

- / Latinos comprise about a third of the paid workforce in Central Texas.²⁹
- / Nearly 75% of Latinos are in the paid labor force, compared to 70% of white Central Texans and 71% of Black Central Texans.³⁰
- / 4.3% of the private sector workforce in Central Texas is employed by Hispanic-owned firms, compared to 2.3% nationally.³¹
- / The average salary for employees of Latino-owned businesses in the Central Texas region is \$37,000 per year, compared to \$60,000 for employees of white-owned businesses.³²

Latinos make up 31% of Austin's labor force, while only 9.1% of employer firms* are owned by Latinos.³³



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Latino leadership matters. Although Latinos in Central Texas represent a third of the population, they are not proportionately reflected in key leadership positions across all sectors. Supporting the advancement of Latino leadership and creating pipelines of youth, emerging, and established Latino talent are critical to building a thriving Central Texas. While specific data on leadership in the Central Texas region is difficult to find, these national and state figures are worth considering as we attempt to move the needle in our local community.

CORPORATE SECTOR REPRESENTATION

- Over the past four years, Latino representation on corporate boards has increased by 1.85%, from 3.2% to 5.05%.³⁴ Despite these gains, Latinos remain the most underrepresented demographic in corporate boardrooms—a concerning gap, given their rapidly growing influence in the U.S. economy, with a total economic output of \$3.7 trillion.³⁵
- While Latinas hold 4.9% of entry-level corporate jobs, the number shrinks to 3.3% at the managerial level and 2% for senior leadership roles.³⁶



*Though progress has been made in the boardroom, Latinos make up only **2%** of corporate CEOs in the U.S.³⁷*

PUBLIC SECTOR REPRESENTATION

- In 2023, 24% of lawmakers in the Texas Legislature identified as Latino.³⁸ If the Texas Legislature proportionately reflected the population of Texas, 40% of legislators would identify as Latino.
- In 184 years, there have been two Latino mayors of Austin. Most recently, Gus Garcia served from 2001-2003.³⁹
- Out of ten total seats, three Latinos will serve on the 2025 Austin City Council.
- Of the ten largest school districts in Central Texas, two are led by Latino superintendents.

NONPROFIT SECTOR REPRESENTATION



Fewer than **15%** of Austin's largest 100 nonprofit organizations have CEOs who identify as Latino.⁴⁰



Nationally, **78%** of nonprofit board members identify as white.⁴¹

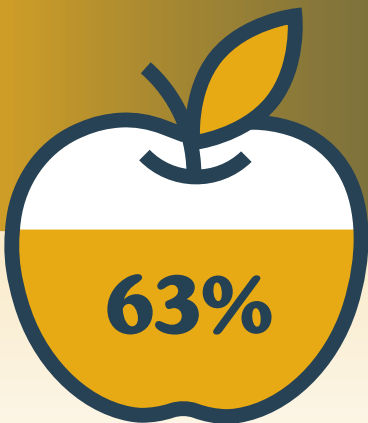
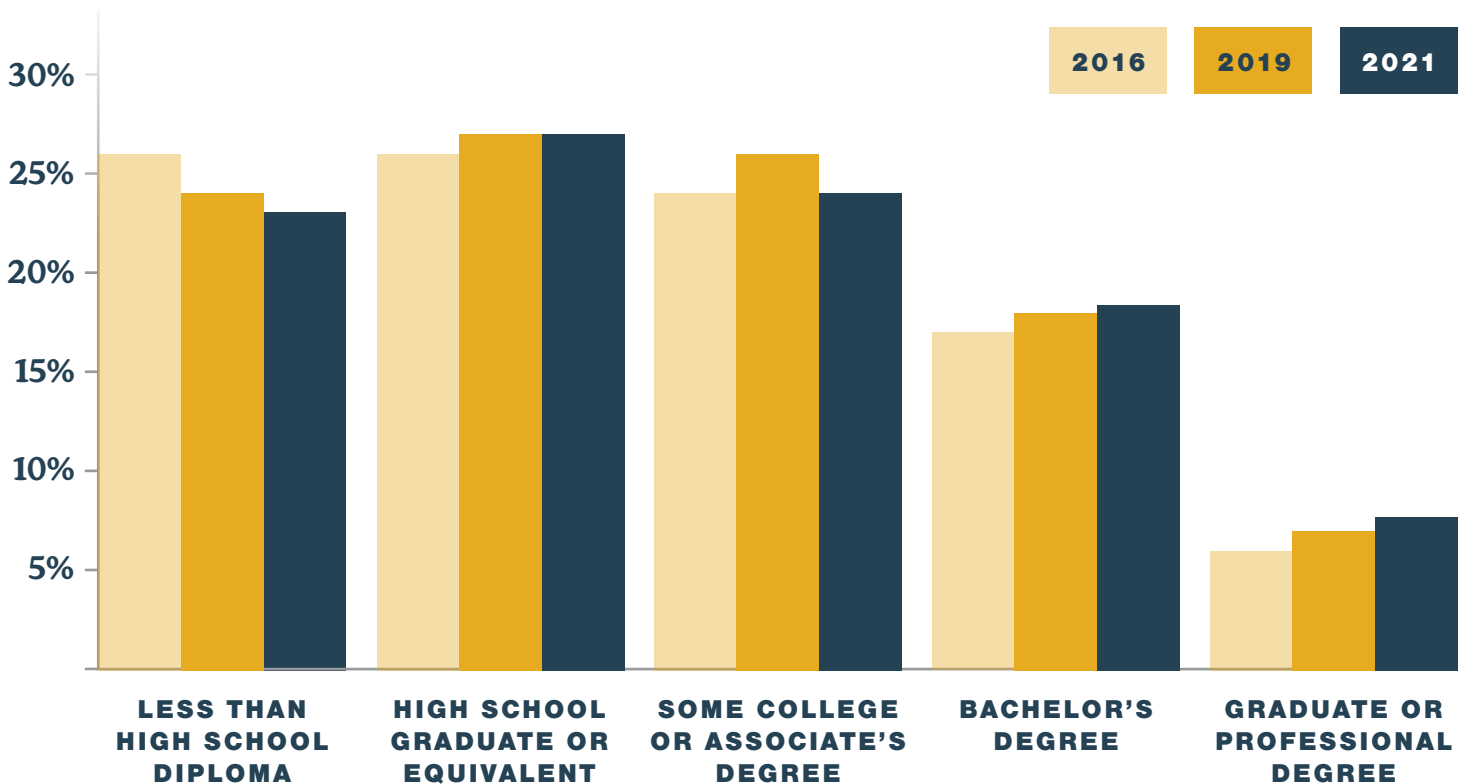


Across the U.S., **22%** of nonprofits report that they have zero people of color on their boards.⁴²

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Education plays a central role in equipping students with the skills and resources needed to compete in today's labor market. Research indicates that higher education significantly enhances social and economic mobility, demonstrating that college graduates are more likely to earn higher incomes, vote, volunteer, and lead healthier lives.

Trends in Educational Attainment for Latinos in Central Texas⁴³



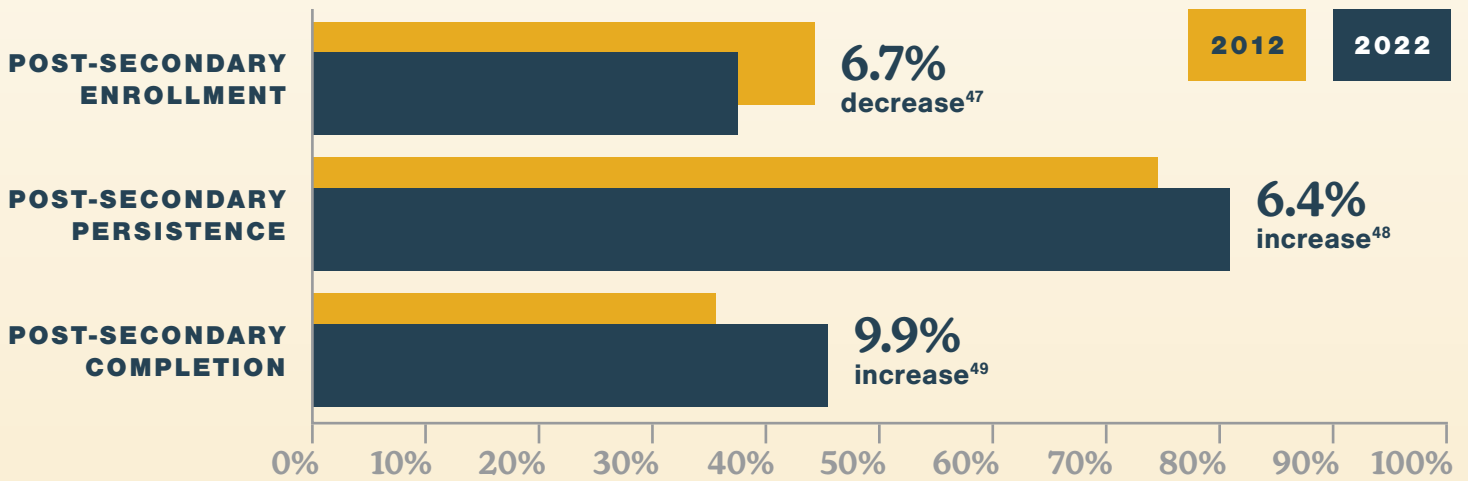
- / Emergent bilingual high school students are half as likely to enroll in post-secondary education, compared to students who only speak English.⁴⁴
- / Hispanic women are outpacing Hispanic men in post-secondary enrollment—37% to 25% for low-income students and 53% to 49% for non-low-income students.⁴⁵ This gap is maintained when considering post-secondary persistence* and completion rates.

...of non-low-income Latinas are completing post secondary opportunities. This is a higher rate than both low-income Latinas and Hispanic men overall.⁴⁶



Literacy Coalition, 2024 grant partner

Studies show that Latino students who enroll in post-secondary education are now more likely to stay and graduate.



LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME⁵⁰



21% report speaking English less than “very well.”

COMPUTERS & INTERNET USE⁵¹

Increasingly, daily tasks necessary to meet requirements for work, school, benefit enrollment, and other basic functions require access to computers and internet connection. This became evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. **In Central Texas...**

HOME LIFE



95% of Latino households have a computer.



87% of Latino households have a broadband internet subscription.

PROGRESS & OPPORTUNITIES

PROGRESS

- / Emergent bilingual children are more likely to be kindergarten ready than children who only speak English, demonstrating the incredible potential of Spanish-speaking youth. Attention should be paid to these students as they progress through the K-12 pipeline, where they historically have fallen behind.
- / Latina youth are demonstrating great progress in the educational attainment sphere: high school graduation, college persistence, and college completion.
- / There has been a steady increase in the attainment of bachelor's and master's degrees for Latinos over the last ten years.
- / Since our last report in 2021, Latinos have experienced a decrease in liquid asset poverty rates and an increase in homeownership—signs of wealth-building progress.
- / The percentage of Latino households with zero net worth in Central Texas has dropped from 27% to 18% over the last four years, another positive indicator of economic advancement.⁵²



OPPORTUNITIES

- / Latinas, in particular, are facing staggering economic barriers. While they outpace Latinos in post-secondary enrollment, persistence, and completion, they still earn 52 cents for every dollar earned by non-Hispanic white men and miss out on nearly \$1.2 million in lifetime earnings.⁵³
- / Local data in several domains remains limited. Additional research on Latino-owned businesses, local Latino representation in positions of leadership, and representation in high-wage industries like technology and healthcare would strengthen the overall picture of Latino success in our region.
- / Latinos in Central Texas have \$12.4 billion in spending power,⁵⁴ making them a significant part of our local economy.
- / The percentage of Latinos that are uninsured remains high, indicating a significant opportunity to increase healthcare enrollment efforts.
- / Growing populations of Latinos across the six-county Central Texas region require additional attention and infrastructure.
- / Latino youth are lagging behind their Latina peers in educational outcomes. Specific investment in this demographic should be considered.



GLOSSARY

- / **Economic mobility** - a person's ability to improve their economic status over their lifetime
- / **Economic security** - the ability of individuals, households, and communities to meet their basic and essential needs sustainably
- / **Emergent bilingual** - a descriptor for youth who are continuing to develop their home language while also learning an additional language
- / **Employer firm** - a business that employs at least one person in addition to the owner
- / **Home equity** - the difference between the current market value of a home and the amount owed on the mortgage or other liens attached to the property—the portion of the home that the homeowner owns outright
- / **Homeownership rate** - the percentage of households that are owner-occupied
- / **Liquid asset poverty** - a household's inability to access wealth resources that are sufficient to provide for basic needs for a period of three months if their income stops
- / **Post-secondary persistence** - a measure of how many students continue their education at any institution the following year
- / **Poverty rate** - the percentage of a population with incomes below the federal poverty line—in 2024, the federal poverty line for a family of four was an income of \$31,200 per year
- / **Racial wealth divide** - the disparity in wealth between white households and communities of color
- / **Teen birth rate** - the number of live births to youths aged 15-19 per 1,000 in that age group
- / **Unbanked** - households with neither a checking nor savings account
- / **Underbanked** - households that have a checking and/or a savings account and have used non-bank money orders, non-bank check-cashing services, non-bank remittances, payday loans, rent-to-own services, pawn shops or refund anticipation loans in the past 12 months
- / **Wealth building** - how individuals, families, and communities gather the resources that will move them towards economic well-being, for now and for years to come

JOIN US

Data can paint a powerful picture of the diverse experiences and overall well-being of people in a particular region. However, this picture is incomplete without engaging directly with community members with lived experience to better understand the opportunities and barriers to economic mobility. The Hispanic Impact Fund at Austin Community Foundation is proud to employ a data-informed, community-led approach to its strategic grantmaking and engagement.

Learn more and join us at:
austincf.org/hispanicimpactfund



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