

# **A GROWING ENERGY IN NORTHEAST WISCONSIN: LATINX/HISPANIC\* YOUTH ON THE HORIZON**

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September 1 2021

[\* In this article, we use the gender-neutral [Latinx](#) next to the term Hispanic to acknowledge the growing use of this term by younger, US-born, bilingual, or predominantly English-speaking Hispanics who are also likely to be more progressive and college-educated. *Latinx* has received criticisms from all sides of the political spectrum and is still used by only a small percentage of the Hispanic population. The more familiar names are either Hispanic, which typically includes Spaniards, as it is based on the Spanish language, and Latino, which typically refers to people from Latin America.]

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

In 2019, Fr. Paul Demuth suggested I attend Garry Golden’s Foresight Analysis workshop sponsored by the *Bay Area Community Council*. I had just agreed to serve as *Casa ALBA Melanie* Board president, and I was very excited about this opportunity.

Since my academic field is political science and international relations, I was already interested in how technological changes bring about changes in society locally and worldwide. I was intrigued by what I would learn in a Foresight Analysis workshop and incredibly excited to work with other community leaders. I was not disappointed! I thoroughly enjoyed Garry Golden’s workshop and the new vision for *Envision Greater Green Bay*. My experience convinced me that the long-term impact of Foresight Analysis can bring many benefits to our Northeast Wisconsin community.

## **II. SCOPING THE PROJECT**

In the fall of 2019, *Casa ALBA Melanie* had been in existence for 7.5 years, since February of 2012. Its mission is “to nurture the well-being and wholesome development of all the members of the Hispanic community living in the Greater Green Bay area.”

The organization had served primarily as a clearinghouse for multiple agencies that offered services to the Latinx/Hispanics of Northeast Wisconsin. Thanks to the tireless work of Executive Director Melanie Maczka and her numerous connections, *Casa ALBA Melanie* (which

bears the name of its beloved founder) developed a unique “Circle of Compassion” with over 85 partner organizations in our community. Through these partnerships, a five-member staff, and numerous volunteers, it offered (and continues to provide) various programs and services to the Latinx/Hispanics in Northeast Wisconsin.

This non-profit also partners with specific individuals to provide professional services. Examples include working with local attorneys to provide legal services, a long-time volunteer to provide financial assistance, educators and health professionals to provide educational and health programs, and more. *Casa ALBA Melanie* is determined not to duplicate programs offered by other organizations in the Greater Green Bay community.

*Casa ALBA Melanie* has also made strides to bring attention to critical issues of interest to our community’s Latinx/Hispanic population, including immigration policy and work permits and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). The staff of *Casa ALBA Melanie* has also made every effort to maintain positive relations with the Green Bay Police Department and the Bellevue Police Department to improve the quality of life of Latinx/Hispanics living in those communities.

In sum, in a very short time, this organization has been very strategic about leveraging multiple partnerships to improve the quality of life for Latinx/Hispanics in Northeast Wisconsin.

The Latinx/Hispanic population became the focal issue (the domain) of my training with Garry Golden. While several national and statewide organizations focused on Latinx/Hispanics have an impact in our community (*Forward Latino, Voces de la Frontera, League of United Latina American Citizens* (LULAC) of Wisconsin, to name a few) in 2019 *Casa ALBA Melanie* was the only local organization serving the Latinx/Hispanics of Northeast Wisconsin. Looking back in 2021, I realize that, because it was *the only* Latinx/Hispanic organization at the time, I naturally conflated the interests of *Casa ALBA Melanie* with the interests of Latinx/Hispanics. Therefore, during the Foresight workshop, I was explicitly interested in *scanning for signals* about Latinx/Hispanics both locally and nationwide. (I identify several [signals](#) which in Foresight Analysis refers to “small or local innovations or disruptions that have the potential to grow.”)

### III. HORIZON SCANNING, STEEP ANALYSIS, AND GETTING TO KNOW YOUR SUBJECT MATTER

As a faculty member at St. Norbert College, I often teach students basic ideas about the research process. I tell them that the best way to find a good research question is to look for puzzles in the issue area of their choice. However, they will see those “puzzles” only if they do enough reading about their subject matter. That is indeed what I did when I began the process of *horizon scanning* at the Foresight Workshop with Garry Golden. I read numerous articles about a variety of external factors that were likely to impact Latinx/Hispanics. The difference is that, instead of narrowing my focus, I expanded my focus to look at the status of the Latinx/Hispanic population from an interdisciplinary perspective. I promptly learned about the importance of *STEEP analysis*, identifying the *Social, Technological, Economic, Environmental, and Political factors* that were likely to impact Latinx/Hispanics, and I thoroughly enjoyed the process.

In the interest of space, I will focus primarily on *societal factors* and briefly touch on a few others for this article.

#### A. Who are we?

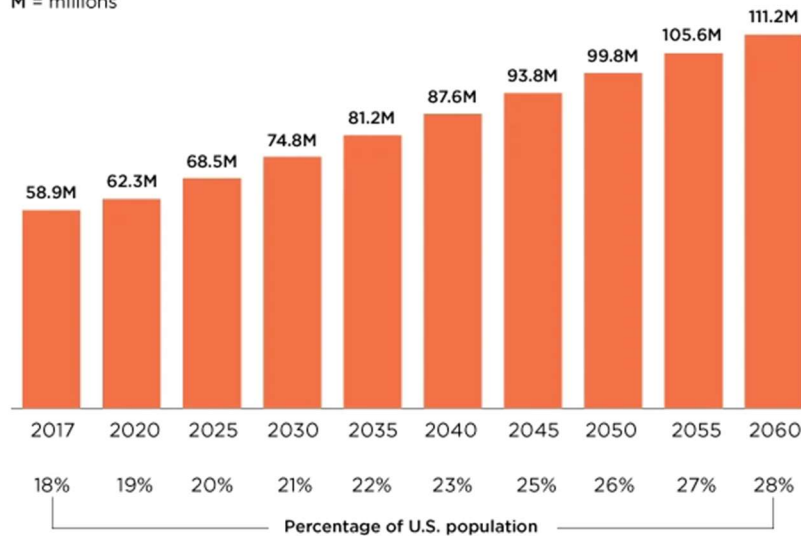
##### Signal #1: Latinx Youth on the Horizon

One of the most important effects of the Foresight Analysis work is that it made me understand the importance of long-term social trends for the Latinx/Hispanics in ways I had not thought about before. While I already was aware that the Latinx/Hispanics were growing both nationally and locally, *horizon scanning* allowed me to see various external factors that together gave us glimpses of significant trends in our communities. For example, many of us are not aware of how *fast* the Latinx/Hispanic population grows nationally and in our community. [In 2018, the U.S. Census Bureau](#) reported that Latinx/Hispanics would reach 111 million by 2060:

## Hispanic Population to Reach 111 Million by 2060

Projected Hispanic Population 2020 to 2060

M = millions



United States<sup>®</sup>  
Census  
Bureau

U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
census.gov

Source: 2017 National Population Projections and  
Vintage 2017 Population Estimates  
www.census.gov/popest and  
www.census.gov/programs-surveys/popproj.html

The 2020 Census, which [some have argued has undercounted Latinx/Hispanics](#), shows that the 2018 projections are on target. In 2020, 62.1 million people were/Latinx/Hispanics, equivalent to 18.7% of the total population. According to the Decennial Census, in Brown County the Latinx/Hispanic population grew by 45.8% from [7.3% in 2010 to 9.8% in 2020](#). In Green Bay, the population of Latinx/Hispanics increased by 38.3%, from [13.4% in 2010 to 17.9% in 2020](#).

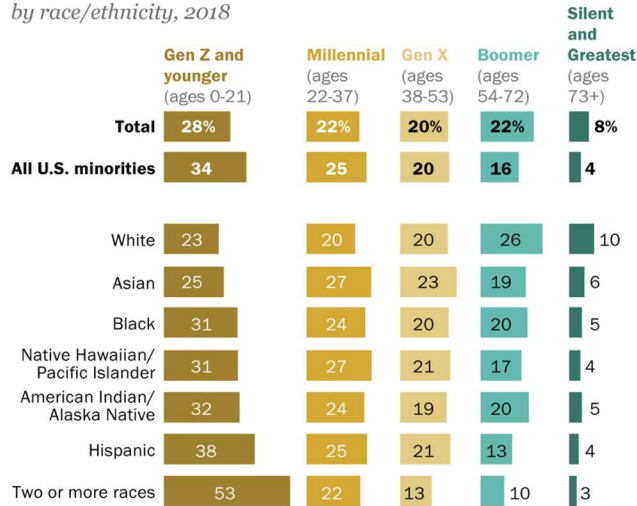
A review of different generations, however, shows what might happen with the Latinx/Hispanic population ten to 20 years from now: [In 2018, the PEW Research Center](#) reported that Gen Z and younger Latinx/Hispanics constituted [38.% of the total U.S. Hispanic population](#) compared to 23% of the U.S. Non-Hispanic White Population.

The 2020 census has also shown that, for the first time in history, non-Hispanic Whites experienced a decline and fell by 8.6% to 204.3 million from 223.5 million in 2010. However, Latinx/Hispanics grew by 23% to 62.1 million. As the graph below demonstrates, while the

minority population is growing, the share of Latinx/Hispanics is the largest among those 21 and younger, where they are already 38% of the population.

**Largest shares of U.S. minority groups are Millennials or younger**

*% of U.S. population belonging to each generation, by race/ethnicity, 2018*



Note: Whites are single-race, non-Hispanic; minorities include all racial and ethnic groups except single-race non-Hispanic whites. Hispanics are of any race. Source: U.S. Census Bureau population estimates as of July 1, 2018.

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According to David Wegge, SNC Professor Emeritus, in 2020 in “Trends Report: Workforce Availability,” the Green Bay Area Public Schools youth mirror much of what the census data had been predicting before 2020 and confirmed the 2020 census data. In the 2019-2020 school year, Brown County had 36.1% minority students and 63.9% non-Hispanic White students. However, the number was higher for the Green Bay Area School District, where 57% were minority students and 43% were non-Hispanic White students. The numbers are higher in the elementary grades.

There is no doubt that these numbers will impact our community in the years to come. Foresight Analysis allows us to prepare in a timely manner as a community for these significant changes.

**Signal #2: Hispanic Diversity: Who Benefits?**

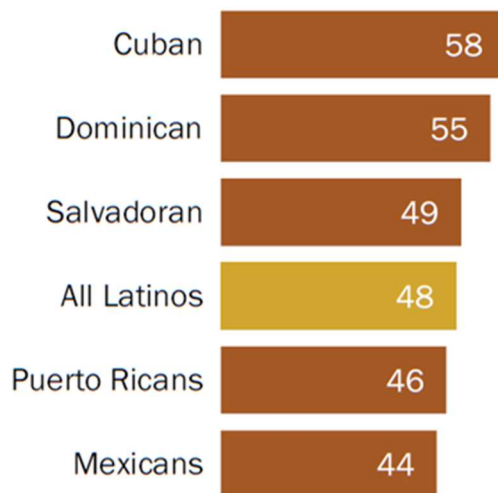
Another essential factor in understanding our future is that, while there is [much diversity in the Latinx/Hispanic population](#), most Latinx/Hispanics are of Mexican origin (62%), followed by

Puerto Ricans (9.6%). Together, these two Latinx/Hispanics groups constitute almost 72% of the country's total Latinx/Hispanics population. In comparison, Cuban Americans (3.9%), Salvadoran (3.8%), Dominican (3.4%), and Colombian (3.3%) constitute a much smaller proportion of the overall Latinx/Hispanics. Furthermore, Cuban Americans are more likely to have a [higher voter turnout and vote Republican](#).

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## Cuban voter turnout rate topped that of other Latino origin groups in 2016

*% of \_\_\_ Latino eligible voters who say they voted*



Note: Eligible voters are U.S. citizens ages 18 and older. Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the Current Population Survey, November Supplement for 2016.

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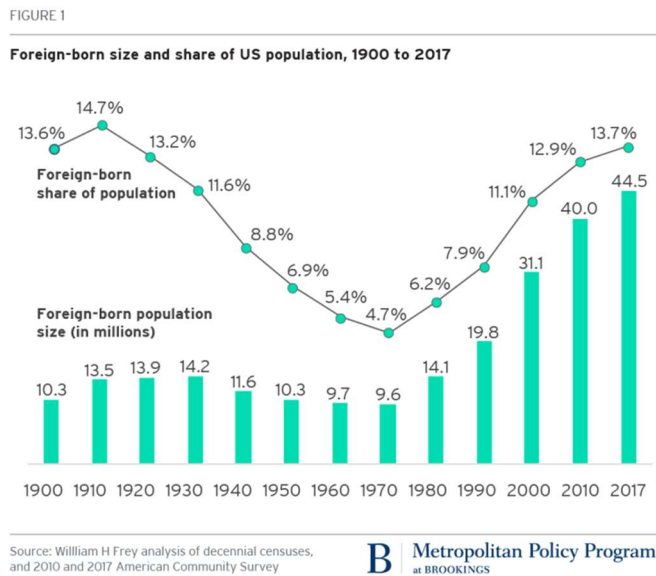
There are currently three Cuban-American Senators for 3.5% of the Cuban-American population and three Mexican-American Senators for 62% of the Mexican American population. Cuban-Americans [are likely to be more educated and wield more economic power](#). It is essential to

keep this signal in mind because it is not possible to address the needs of the growing Latinx/Hispanics population while ignoring these two groups.

In essence, understanding the diversity of the Latinx/Hispanic population is essential. It is also important to realize that, if we do not address the needs of the Mexican-American and the Puerto Ricans, we are only touching the surface of the challenges ahead.

### Signal #3: Immigrants no more

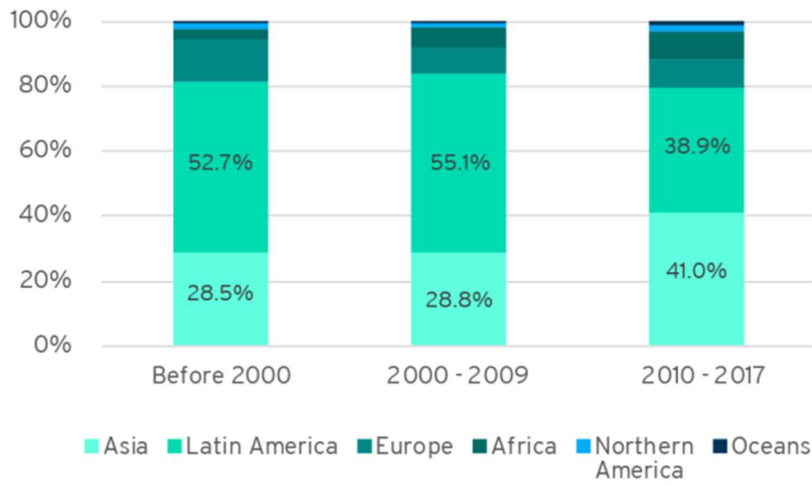
We often equate being Latinx/Hispanic with being an immigrant. While this is true for many Latinx/Hispanics, an important *signal* is that the Latinx/Hispanic immigrant (successfully wielded as a political scare tactic to rally people in favor of U.S. isolationism) is no longer valid. Latinx/Hispanics' share of immigrants declined from 37% in 2010 to 33% in 2017. Indeed, while [the number of “foreign-born” immigrants today is at a peak](#), they are not as likely to come from Latin America as they did before:



Today, immigrants are more likely to come from Asia than from Latin America. The majority of these new immigrants come from China, India, and the Philippines and are typically college-educated.

FIGURE 2

**National origin shares of 2017 foreign-born residents by year of arrival**



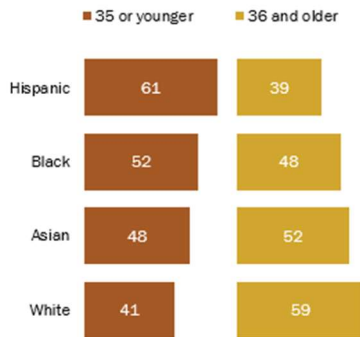
Source: William H Frey analysis of 2017 American Community Survey

**B** Metropolitan Policy Program  
at BROOKINGS

Many people do not realize that, not only are Latinx/Hispanics no longer the largest immigrant group to the United States, but also that [90% of Latinos under age 18 were born in the United States.](#)

**About six-in-ten Hispanics in the U.S. are 35 or younger**

*% in each age group, by race/ethnicity*



Note: Hispanics of any race. Black, Asian, and white are non-Hispanic, single race.  
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2016 American Community Survey (1% IPUMS).

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Therefore, it is essential to understand the nature of the composition of the Latinx/Hispanic population both nationally and locally.

#### Signal #4: Language and Identity

Most Latinx/Hispanics today believe that [keeping Spanish alive](#) is essential to their family and cultural values. However, there is [no guarantee that future generations of Latinx/Hispanics will agree](#). Over 14% of second-generation Latinx/Hispanics ages 18-35 do not identify as Latinx/Hispanics. The number goes up to 25% for third-generation Latinx/Hispanics and 56% for fourth-generation Latinx/Hispanics whose parents were born in the United States.

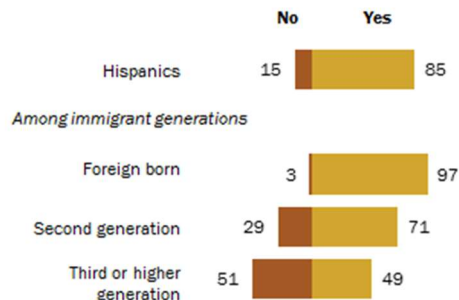
Since language is the predominant factor that unites Latinx/Hispanics, it is also essential to understand that Spanish is spoken by many Latinx/Hispanics. Still, one does not need to speak Spanish to identify. Furthermore, 90% of Latinx/Hispanics born in the U.S. are English proficient (compared to 35% of foreign-born Latinx/Hispanics), and the proportion of [Latinx/Hispanics who spoke Spanish](#) declined from 78% in 2006 to 73% in 2015.

An [April 2018 article by the Pew Research Center](#) confirmed that, while Hispanics/Latinx speak Spanish to their children, this trend declines with each generation:

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#### Share of Hispanic parents who speak Spanish to their children declines across immigrant generations

*Do you speak Spanish to your children, or not?  
% of parents saying ...*



Note: Although those born in Puerto Rico are U.S. citizens by birth, they are included among the foreign born in this analysis because they were born into a Spanish-dominant culture. Voluntary responses of "Don't know" and "Refused" not shown.  
Source: Pew Research Center 2015 National Survey of Latinos.

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This means that Latinx/Hispanics are less likely to identify as Latinx/Hispanic over time. Given the dramatic growth of the multiracial category in the 2020 census, we should consider how *future* generations will understand these categories.

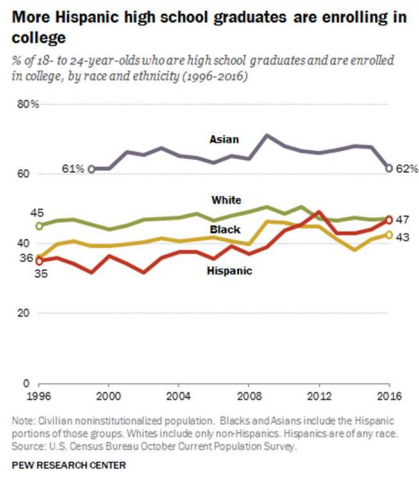
In conclusion, Latinx/Hispanics are growing in number both nationally and in our community. They are already almost 20% of the U.S. population and nearly 40% of the 18-and-younger population. The most significant percentage of Latinx/Hispanics (63%) are Mexican American. Their share of the immigrant population is declining, and in the next ten years, 90% of all Latinx/Hispanics under 30 will be U.S.-born and English proficient.

### B. Is the Sky the Limit?

While growth in numbers would indicate many positive trends for Latinx/Hispanics, this is not likely to materialize into the “American Dream” without clear vision and planning. As we will see in this section, nationwide and locally, Latinx/Hispanics are negatively impacted by various educational and economic factors, which became even more evident during the 2020 COVID-19 epidemic.

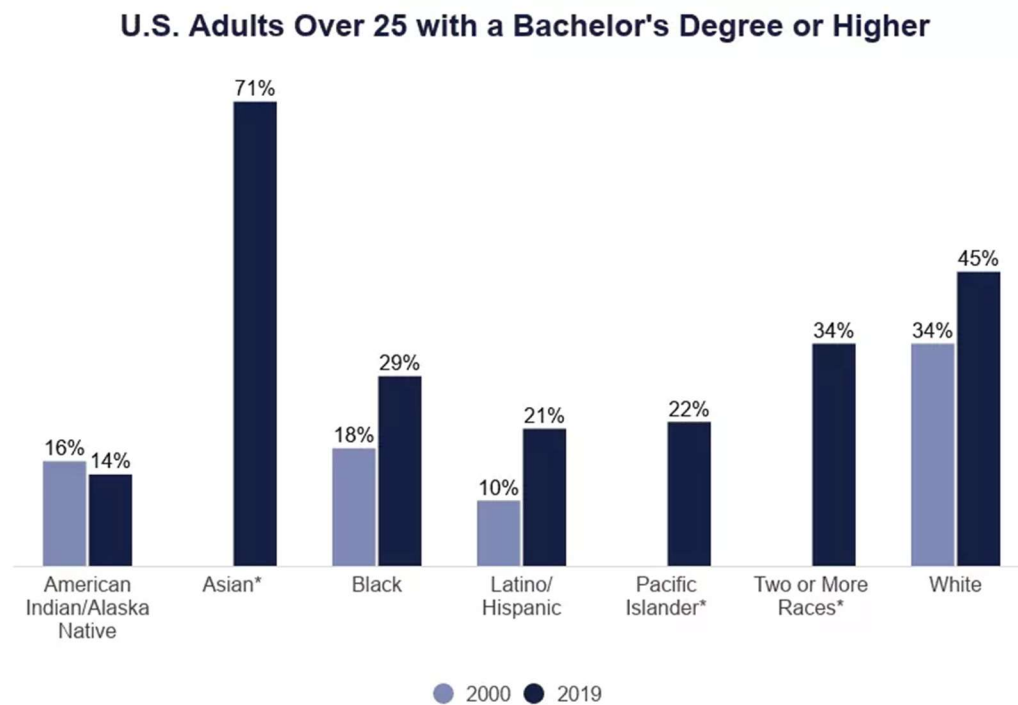
### Signal #1: Falling Short on Higher Educational Attainment

Our review of the higher educational attainment of Latinx/Hispanics paints a more mixed picture of the future. On the one hand, Latinx/Hispanics enrollment has been growing to the point that by 2019 one in five students enrolled in two- or four-year institutions was Latinx/Hispanic. College applications for Latinx/Hispanics went up from [4% in 1976 to 20% in 2017](#).



Latinx/Hispanics were the only group that showed growing college enrollment rates in 2019. However, the trend reversed in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic that profoundly impacted Latinx/Hispanic families. In the Fall of 2020, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* reported that there had been a [20% dip](#) in Latinx/Hispanic college enrollment. This illustrates how the financial vulnerability of their families strongly impacts the prospects for success of the next generation of Latinx/Hispanics.

Even with all the growth experienced until 2019, Latinx/Hispanics were outpaced by Blacks and non-Hispanic Whites regarding college enrollment and graduation. According to [a 2018 Hechinger report](#), 22.6% of Latin Americans ages 25 to 64 held a two-year college degree or higher in 2016 compared to 30% for Black students and 47.1% for non-Hispanic White students. The numbers are equally dismal when we look at [Bachelor's degrees](#) or higher, as Latinx/Hispanics lag behind Asians, non-Hispanic Whites, Blacks, Pacific Islanders, and Multiracial.



\*2003 was the first year Asian, Pacific Islander, and Two or More Races were recorded as individual statistical categories.

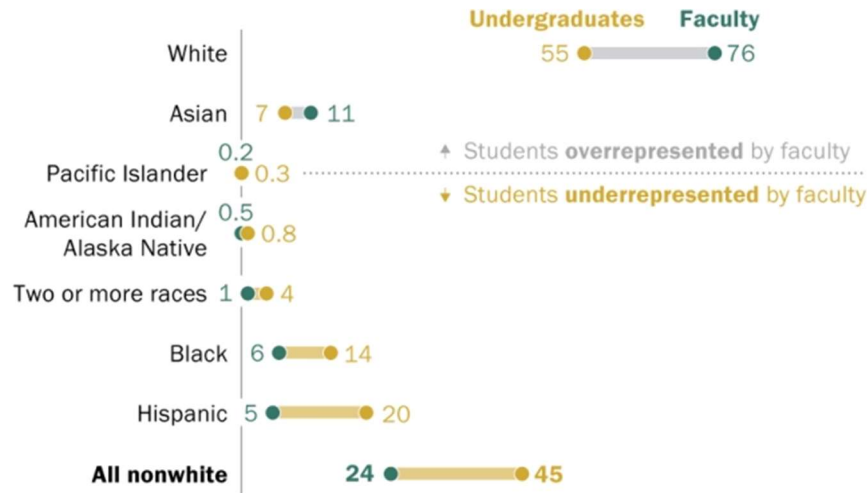
Latinx/Hispanics are more likely to go to [two-year institutions](#) than four-year institutions for various reasons: They are typically motivated by cost, location, and convenience.

Latinx/Hispanics prefer to stay in their local communities and stay close to their families. Many of them help their families financially, work in the family business, or serve as caregivers for their siblings or translators for their parents. For many Latinx/Hispanics who witness the economic vulnerability of their families, the cost of higher education takes precedence over prestige. Therefore, even students who are very highly qualified and have been accepted to four-year institutions will attend a two-year college.

Once enrolled in higher education, Latinx/Hispanics face a series of other challenges, from keeping up with the rising cost of tuition, to acquiring massive debt, attempting to finish degrees in underfunded and over-crowded institutions, limited curricular offerings, and the challenge of “whiteness” of their institutions. Latinx/Hispanics have very few role models in higher education. As we can see below, the number of [Hispanic faculty is highly underrepresented](#) in colleges and universities. There are only 4.7% Latinx/Hispanic faculty for 19.8% Latinx/Hispanic students compared to 73.2% non-Hispanic White faculty for 52% non-Hispanic White students. In general, Latinx/Hispanics lack role models among faculty, administrators, and staff members.

## U.S. college students are twice as likely as faculty to be black, four times as likely to be Hispanic

% of undergraduates and postsecondary faculty by race and ethnicity, fall 2017



Note: "Nonwhite" includes blacks, Hispanics, Asians, Pacific Islanders, American Indians or Alaska Natives, and those of two or more races. Those categorized as "non-resident alien" and "race/ethnicity unknown" are not included in this analysis, so shares may not total to 100%.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics.

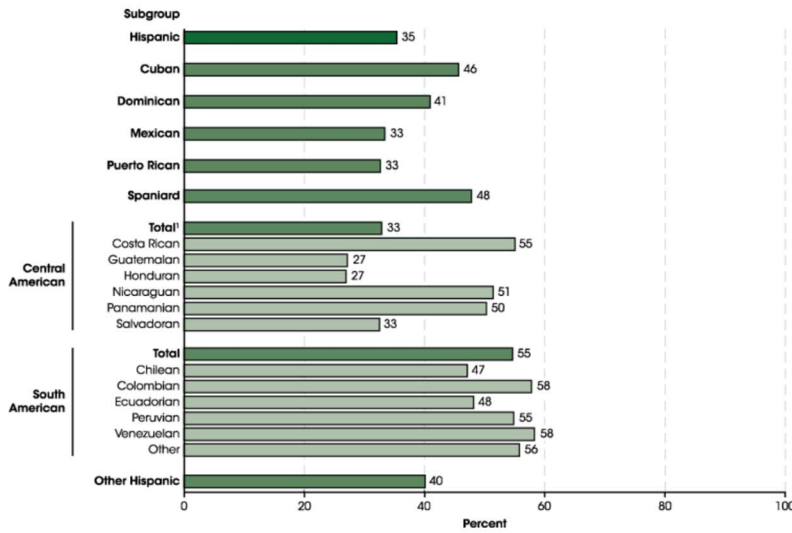
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Lack of educational attainment is perhaps one of the most important *change drivers* (a significant disruptive force) for the Latinx/Hispanic population.

### Signal #2: Educational Attainment and Nationality

[The January 2018 article by the American Council on Education points out that](#), while Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans constitute 72% of the entire U.S. Latinx/Hispanic population, only 33% of both groups enroll in colleges or universities. This is the lowest number of any nationality. In contrast, South Americans, Costa Ricans, and Panamanians are more likely to have enrollment rates of over 50%.

Figure 18.1a. Total college enrollment rates of 18- to 24-year-olds in 2- or 4-year colleges and universities, by selected Hispanic subgroups: 2014



<sup>1</sup> Includes other Central American subgroups not shown separately.  
 NOTE: Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figures are based on unrounded estimates.  
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), 2014. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2015*, table 302.62.

This *signal* is important because it shows how the largest percentage of Latinx/Hispanics is also the least educated. We have to dig deeper to see who is succeeding and why - when it comes to nationality - as social class can play a role.

### Signal #3: Latinx/Hispanics in Northeast Wisconsin: Success in All-non-Hispanic White Institutions?

These trends that we see nationally also play out in our community. While the number of non-Hispanic White students in the Green Bay Public schools is less than 50%, the number of non-Hispanic White students in our local institutions of higher education (NWTC, UWGB, and St. Norbert College) is overwhelming. Latinx/Hispanics encounter many challenges when they enroll in our local institutions of higher learning: they do not find faculty, staff, or high-level administrators that can mentor them or serve as role models; they are often forced to navigate a curriculum that does not speak to their culture and identity; and they continue to face financial challenges to stay in school.

Population	Green Bay Public Schools	NWTC	UWGB	Saint Norbert College
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<b>Non-Hispanic White Students</b>				
2019*	45.7%	90%	86%	87%
2021**	43.1%	<u>78%</u>	<u>80%</u>	<u>87%</u>
<b>Hispanic Students</b>				
2019*	27.9%	8%	5%	4%
2021**	29.7%	<u>9%</u>	<u>7%</u>	<u>5%</u>

\*Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) October of 2019

\*\*Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) August of 2021 (The numbers on the same website are updated annually.)

Latinx/Hispanic enrollment in these institutions does not always come from Northeast Wisconsin either. In some cases, our local institutions are recruiting from Milwaukee, Chicago, and other locations. In addition to attending predominantly non-Hispanic White institutions, Latinx/Hispanic students are not likely to find many high-ranking Latinx/Hispanic administrators, nor many Latinx/Hispanic staff, and especially tenured Latinx/Hispanic faculty.

These are significant challenges for Latinx/Hispanic students. In addition, our local schools have not yet developed robust academic bridge programs or Heritage Spanish programs.

Latinx students are often required to learn Castilian Spanish even though only 1.2% of the U.S Hispanic population is from Spain. Furthermore, over 90% of all Spanish speakers worldwide speak Latin American Spanish. (The equivalent would be to require non-Hispanic White students in United States institutions to learn British English.)

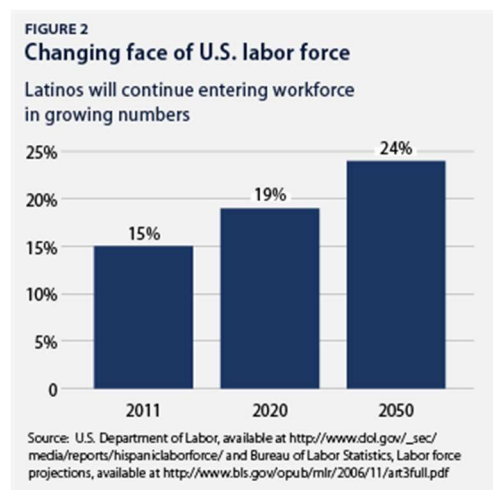
Creating environments that respect Latinx/Hispanic students' cultures and language could go a long way in improving college and university retention rates.

In summary, higher educational attainment is crucial for the success of Latinx/Hispanic youth. Growth in numbers alone does not translate into economic success or political empowerment. Without Foresight Analysis, our community would let these trends go on unaffected. Yet, there is so much we can do today to navigate to a preferred future.

### C. Essential Workers No More

#### Signal #1: Sectors are labor-intensive

As we have seen above, the growth of Latinx/Hispanics will also impact our future labor force. We will continue to see their percentage of the overall [workforce growth](#) in the years to come as Latinx/Hispanics are scheduled to become a quarter of the U.S. Labor Force by 2050.



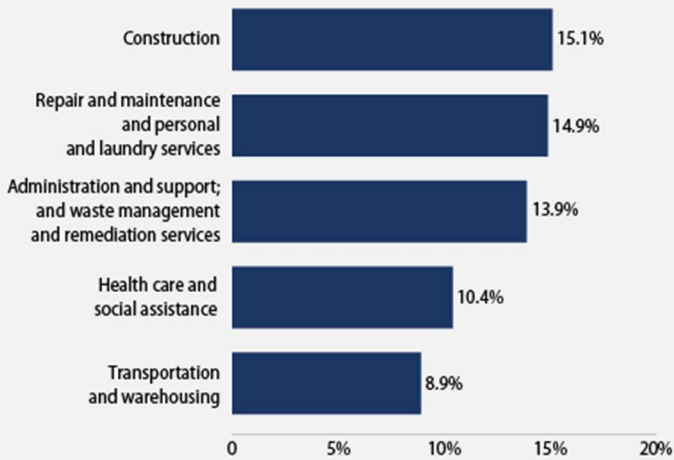
Latinx/Hispanics tend to be essential workers and are concentrated in very labor-intensive sectors: construction, repair and maintenance, personal, and laundry services. Traditional Latinx/Hispanic occupations are unlikely to change in the next 20+ years if higher educational attainment is not improved.



FIGURE 3

### Latino labor force deployment

Professions and trades employing the majority of Latino workers

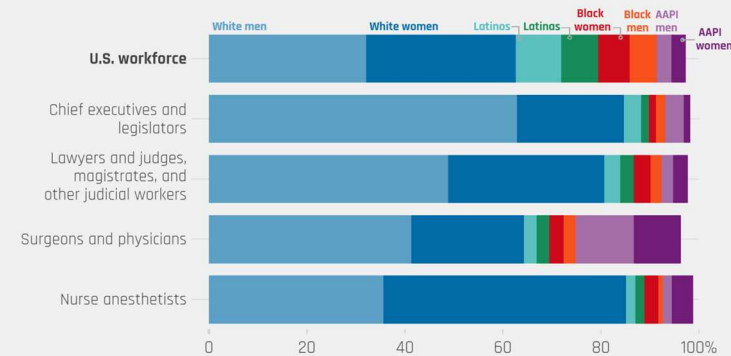


Source: <http://www.census.gov/econ/sbo/get07sdf.html?11>

As we can see below, Latinx/Hispanic workers are [not represented](#) in White-collar jobs:

### Black and Latinx workers are underrepresented in highest-paying occupations

Gender and racial/ethnic compositions of highest-paying U.S. occupations, 2015-2018



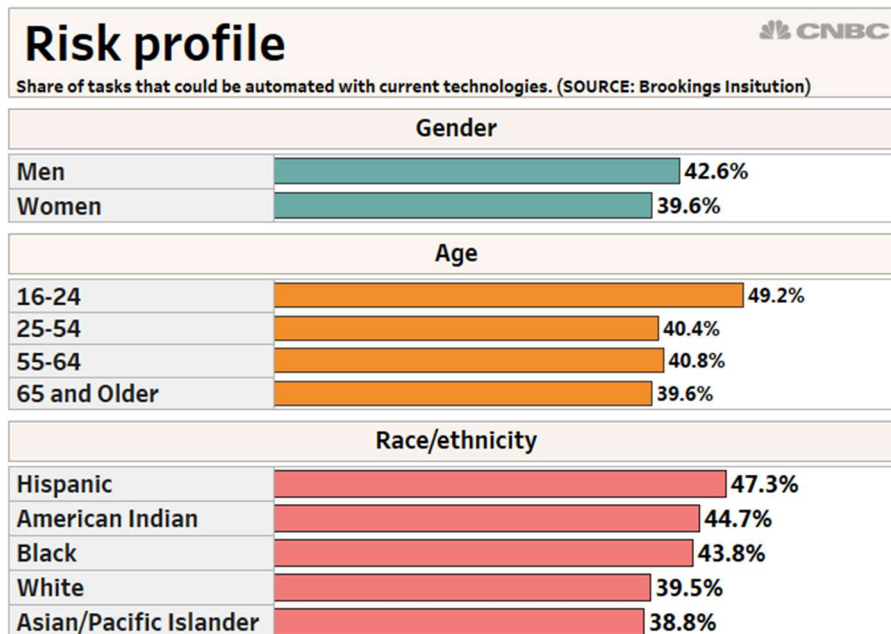
Source: Author's calculations using American Community Survey data, 2014-2018 5-year estimates.

Equitable Growth

Without improved higher educational attainment, Latinx/Hispanic workers are destined to navigate a world of vulnerable job options, low wages, and, as we will see below, gloomy prospects about employment sustainability.

## Signal #2: Hit by automation

Because the sectors in which Latinx/Hispanics work are manual and labor-intensive, they are the most likely to be [impacted by automation](#). Over 60% of Hispanic jobs are likely to be replaced by robots and drones, compared to 50% for Blacks, 40% for Asians, and 25% for non-Hispanic Whites. In 2019, the Brookings Institute determined that [Latinx/Hispanics](#), as well as 16-24-year-olds, would be the groups most likely hit by automation:



Wegge's recent signals team study about the labor force in Brown County explains that, given the concentration of Latinx/Hispanics in (1) production, food preparation and serving and transport and material moving, they are more likely to be displaced by automation. According to Wegge, the labor market will grow in areas typically considered White-collar jobs, where Latinx/Hispanics cannot compete, given their levels of higher educational attainment.

## Signal #3: COVID-19 and the aftermath

As we concluded the Fall 2019 Foresight Analysis workshop with Garry Golden, we had no idea that we would be engulfed by the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic a few months later. This critical

development demonstrated just how vulnerable and resilient the Latinx/Hispanic population could be.

We are just beginning to understand the magnitude of the impact that the COVID -19 pandemic had on the Latinx/Hispanic community. The effect [on their health was devastating](#).

Latinx/Hispanics were 1.7 times more likely to contract COVID-19 than non-Hispanic Whites. They were 4.1 times more likely to be hospitalized and 2.8 times more likely to die from the virus.

Latinx/Hispanics' unemployment rate was 8.6% compared to 5.7% for non-Hispanic Whites. Latinx/Hispanic employment is 7% below its pre-pandemic mark compared to 5.2% for non-Hispanic Whites.

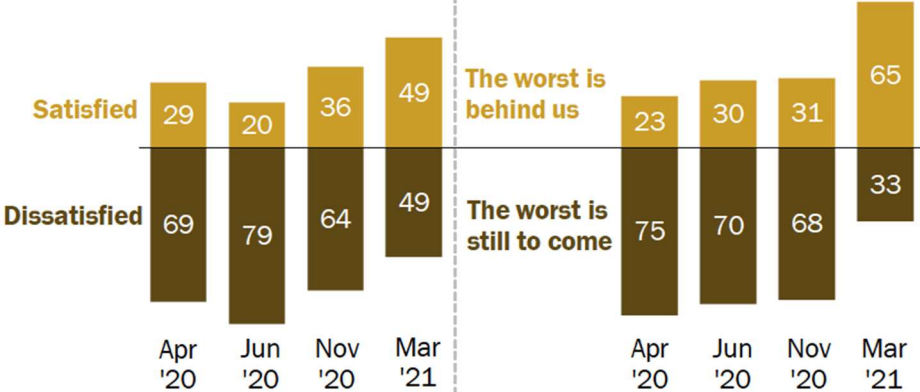
[Other factors](#) compound the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Latinx Hispanics worked in sectors that were most heavily affected by the pandemic. Still, they are also less likely to hold managerial jobs, so they work for low wages, have fewer benefits, and experience more job instability.

Despite these challenges, [Latinx Hispanics remain optimistic](#) about the future. As of March 2021, nearly 50% of Latinx/Hispanics were “satisfied” with the way things were going in the country today, and 65% believed that “the worst is behind us” when it comes to the impact of COVID-19.

**Latinos have become more optimistic about the direction of the country and the coronavirus outbreak**

% of Latino adults saying they are \_\_\_ with the way things are going in this country today

% of Latino adults saying \_\_\_ when it comes to the problems the country is facing from COVID-19



Note: Share of respondents who did not offer an answer not shown.  
 Source: National Survey of Latinos conducted March 15-28, 2021.  
 “For U.S. Latinos, COVID-19 Has Taken a Personal and Financial Toll”

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**V. DRIVERS AND INFLUENTIAL CHANGE**

After completing the *horizon scanning* in Golden’s 2019 course, it was evident to me that there were essential change drivers that could be included in Casa ALBA Melanie’s vision for the future:

- a) The number of Latinx/Hispanics is growing more than their non-Hispanic White counterparts.
- b) Latinx/Hispanics are likely to be young, U.S. born, and English-proficient.
- c) Latinx/Hispanic workers are more vulnerable to automation than non-Hispanic Whites.
- d) Despite increasing their college enrollment rate, Latinx/Hispanics are less likely to graduate than Blacks, Asians, or non-Hispanic Whites.
- e) All of these national trends were also playing out in our local Northeast Wisconsin community.

Without proper futuring and planning, it was unlikely that we would go in the right direction.

A significant change driver that was not included in the 2019 analysis was the powerful impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Hispanic population.

## **VI. FORECASTING AND ALTERNATIVE FUTURES**

### **A. Future #1: The Baseline: Everything Stays as Is**

In 2019, *Casa ALBA Melanie* was doing an excellent job of serving the needs of the immigrant population through its multiple programs and partnerships. However, I concluded that it was essential to pay more attention also to demographic signals and the changing nature of the Latinx/Hispanic population. Revisiting who Latinx/Hispanics are was necessary so that the services of Casa ALBA Melanie would continue to meet the needs of our Latinx/Hispanics in our community.

### **B. Future #2: Focus on Formal Education**

My “preferred future” at the time was that *Casa ALBA Melanie* focuses more specifically on the formal education of Latinx/Hispanics. Based on the horizon scanning, this appeared to be the best way to address the needs of a rapidly growing, English-speaking, Latinx/Hispanic youth that often found themselves lost between two worlds. Furthermore, the rapid growth of the Latinx/Hispanic population was (and is) also tied to the future of Northeast Wisconsin.

## **VI. TAKE-TWO: THE 2021 RETROSPECTIVE**

### **Casa ALBA Melanie and the COVID-19 Pandemic**

In collaboration with Paul Demuth (who served on both the Boards of *Casa ALBA Melanie* and Envision Greater Green Bay), I presented my findings to Ken DeGroot and Melanie Maczka on January 13, 2020, and, at Sr. Melanie’s recommendation, to the *Latino Leadership Circle* on Wednesday, January 15, 2020. We were planning to do a lot more with this when the COVID pandemic hit, and several plans to share the findings with the Board were put on hold.

The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic would have a profound impact on the operations of Casa ALBA Melanie. It demonstrated just how vital the infrastructure this non-profit had built over time could be in times of crisis. Latinx/Hispanics were heavily hit by the pandemic, facing a [disproportionate amount of the economic impact](#). According to a July 2021 PEW Report,

[Latinx/Hispanics had a more challenging time affording food, housing, and basic medical services.](#) As essential frontline workers, Latinx/Hispanics were also more vulnerable to [contracting COVID-19, being hospitalized, and dying of the virus.](#) All of this was true in Northeast Wisconsin, and *Casa ALBA Melanie* played a significant role during the pandemic. The Circle of Compassion (Casa ALBA Melanie's 85 community partners) mobilized resources to help the Hispanic population. Casa *ALBA Melanie* opened its facilities to allow the Wisconsin National Guard to administer COVID-19 testing in the early stages of the pandemic. As the pandemic progressed, local governments, businesses, and non-profit organizations contacted Casa *ALBA Melanie* to funnel direct financial aid to a very vulnerable Latinx/Hispanic population. For the first time since its inception, Casa *ALBA Melanie* began providing financial assistance to Latinx/Hispanic families and individuals. (The phone at Casa *ALBA Melanie* has not stopped ringing!)

Casa ALBA Melanie's ability to effectively address the needs of the Latinx/Hispanic community during the pandemic is commendable and merits an additional review of its vital role. Casa *ALBA Melanie*'s Board of directors recently agreed to work with David Wegge and Randall Lawton from *Envision Greater Green Bay*, both who were recently certified in Strategic Foresight by the University of Houston's *Future Studies* program. Their charge is to continue this Foresight work and to train members of the Casa *ALBA Melanie* Board.

### **Latinx/Hispanic organizations led by Latinx/Hispanics**

Our Northeast Wisconsin community is now witnessing the impact of the new Latinx/Hispanic youthful energy at work. The last year saw the emergence of two very important organizations founded by Latinx Hispanics. The first one was *Northeast Wisconsin Latinx Rising* that focuses on the education of Latinx/Hispanic students. The second organization is *Northeast Wisconsin Latino Professional*. This organization includes four members of the *Latino Leadership Circle* as founders. These organizations are the first of several likely to emerge in the years to come to serve the needs of the Latinx/Hispanic population in Northeast Wisconsin.

## VII. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the broader purpose of this report was to use Foresight Analysis to identify signals that would allow us to see challenges and opportunities that are likely to impact the Latinx/Hispanic population in the years to come. The more specific purpose was to use Foresight Analysis to acquire the tools needed to train the Board of Directors of Casa ALBA Melanie, the Hispanic Resource Center of the Greater Green Bay Area, so that together we could define alternative futures for the organization, develop steps to walk towards the preferred future, and acquire the ability to continuously reassess our pathways.

By using the training and tools learned in the 2019 Foresight Analysis Workshop sponsored by the Bay Area Community Council (Envision Greater Green Bay) I was able to identify various signals that provide a glimpse of alternative futures in our community. One of the most important signals (a change driver) is that Northeast Wisconsin has experienced and will continue to experience profound changes due to rapid growth of the local Latinx/Hispanic population (currently at 17.9% in Green Bay and 9.8% in Brown County). Indeed, the *rate* of growth of Latinx/Hispanics is more important than the growth itself.

In order to properly understand these trends, however, it is important to recognize the broad diversity among Latinx/Hispanics. Different groups will require different strategies. However, given that the Latinx/Hispanic population in the United States (and Northeast Wisconsin) is primarily composed of Mexican-Americans (62%) and Puerto Ricans (9.6%), these two sectors can't be ignored in planning for the future if we really want to be successful in creating a harmonious and integrated community.

It is also important to understand that changing societal factors of the Latinx/Hispanic population (place of birth, language, age clusters, etc.), play an important role in planning for the future. Latinx/Hispanics are no longer the primary immigrant group in the United States. In the next ten years **over 90% of Hispanics under age 30 will be born in the United States will be English proficient.**

The impact of COVID-19 in the last two years has demonstrated in no uncertain terms that current employment sectors of Latinx/Hispanics make them particularly vulnerable to all the negative consequences of global pandemics. They are also more vulnerable than other groups to the impact of automation. **Without higher educational attainment, not only will it be very difficult for a majority of Latinx/Hispanics to improve their quality of life, but foresight signals indicate that they will actually be worse off if everything stays the same.**

The vulnerable nature of this population requires the commitment of multiple organizations (both non-Latinx/Hispanic and Latinx Hispanic) in Northeast Wisconsin.

Despite many challenges, the resilience and work ethic and positive nature of the Latinx/Hispanics bode well for Northeast Wisconsin. As our communities become majority/minority communities, the success of Latinx/Hispanics is tied to the success of Northeast Wisconsin. It is really the role of multiple local organizations (both non-Hispanic White and Latinx Hispanic) to understand these important changes and properly plan for the future.