

A Narrative Report of the Asian American Population and Asset-building Trends in **Texas**

Prepared for the Ford Foundation's
Building Economic Security Over a Lifetime Initiative



UCLA

Asian American
Studies Center

Bridging Research with Community



by Pamela Stephens
Chhandara Pech
Melany De La Cruz-Viesca
Paul M. Ong
Karna Wong
Christina Aujean Lee

© May 2013

Ford Foundation

The Ford Foundation supports visionary leaders and organizations on the frontlines of social change worldwide. Created with gifts and bequests by Edsel and Henry Ford, the foundation is an independent, nonprofit, nongovernmental organization, with its own board, and is entirely separate from the Ford Motor Company. The foundation is committed to serving the public welfare by strengthening democratic values, reducing poverty and injustice, promoting international cooperation and advancing human achievement. In the United States, the Ford Foundation's Building Economic Security over a Lifetime initiative promotes public support for policies that create universal and progressive savings accounts as well as Social Security and pension reforms that increase benefits for low-wage workers. For more information, please visit the Foundation's website at: <http://www.fordfoundation.org/issues/economic-fairness/building-economic-security-over-a-lifetime>

UCLA Asian American Studies Center

Established in August 1969, the UCLA Asian American Studies Center has become the foremost national research center on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. It has sought to bridge the educational, social, political, and cultural concerns of the AAPI community, with the overall mission of the University of California, through research and creative endeavors, curriculum development, publications, library and archival work, public educational activities and partnerships with local and national organizations. Please visit our website at: <http://www.aasc.ucla.edu>

Acknowledgements

This research was made possible by the generous contribution and support of the Ford Foundation's Building Economic Security over a Lifetime Initiative. We are particularly appreciative to Kilolo Kijakazi for her encouragement, leadership, and wisdom. Kilolo is the Program Officer at the Financial Assets Unit, one of the units in the Economic Opportunity and Assets Program. The authors commend them for their continued commitment to better understand asset-building opportunities and challenges facing Asian American communities. The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of the University of California, Los Angeles and the Ford Foundation.

Special thanks to Chhandara Pech and Jonathan Ong for training on data sets, generating maps, formatting tables, and technical assistance. Big thanks to Karna Wong for copyediting and Randy Mai for assisting with the layout of the report.

Cover and Report design: Mengning Li



A Narrative Report of the Asian American Population and Asset-building Trends in Texas

By Pamela Stephens, Chhandara Pech, Melany De La Cruz-Viesca,
Paul M. Ong, Karna Wong & Christina Aujean Lee

UCLA Asian American Studies Center

Table of Contents

Map of Texas, Asian Population.....	2
Background.....	3
Introduction.....	3
Population.....	4
Nativity.....	4
Language.....	4
Education.....	5
Economic Status.....	6
Housing Trends.....	8
Conclusion.....	9
References.....	12

The **Technical Report** with this demographic profile’s methodology, definitions, and detailed data charts and tables is available to download at: www.aasc.ucla.edu/besol.

Background

This Texas profile is part of a set of demographic profiles developed to generate critical socioeconomic quantitative information and statistics on Asian Americans for state and regional asset building coalitions that are part of the Ford Foundation's Building Economic Security over a Lifetime Initiative. The profiles provide data at the state level and the major Metropolitan Statistical Areas with significant Asian American populations in: California, Illinois, Texas, Oklahoma, and the Southeast Region (Louisiana, Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi), from the 2007-2009 3-Year American Community Survey (ACS) sample, 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census data sets (subject to the availability of data).¹

Moreover, a separate intensive case study report was produced on the East San Gabriel Valley, in Los Angeles County, a neighborhood that has a mix of large population concentrations of Asian Americans and Non-Hispanic Whites. The report examines the impact of the foreclosure crisis on Asian American asset building, in particular the gains and losses through homeownership. Similar to other racial groups, homeownership makes up a large share of assets, and any changes may indirectly help us understand overall declines in net worth for racial minorities. The East San Gabriel Valley case study analysis utilized data from Los Angeles County assessor's office (parcel data), American Community Survey (PUMS sample), DataQuick (purchases, defaults, and foreclosures), and Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (lending information).

This report begins with a state level analysis comparing the total population by major racial and ethnic groups: African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, and Non-Hispanic Whites (subject to data availability). A comparative analysis with American Indians/Alaskan Natives at the state level was only conducted for the Oklahoma demographic profile. The profiles then include a Metropolitan Statistical Area level analysis comparing demographic trends for the total population, total Asian population, and by Asian ethnic subgroups (subject to data availability).² The report provides detailed data on the following characteristics: Population, Nativity, Language, Education, Economic Status (income, poverty, and other public and private income sources), and Housing Trends (homeownership, housing burden, and home property values).

For more information on this demographic profile's methodology, definitions, and detailed data charts and tables, please see Technical Report at: www.aasc.ucla.edu/besol.

Introduction

The Asian American population is a diverse one, with many ethnic, cultural, language and religious subgroups, each with its unique history and experience. This report provides a snapshot of demographic and socioeconomic trends in Texas. In particular, this profile looks at the challenges, issues, and opportunities facing Asian Americans as they relate to higher education, homeownership, and asset building.

Data were analyzed for Asian subgroups in Texas and the following three Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs or metro areas): Austin, Dallas, and Houston. In Austin, the subgroup data were only available for Asian Indians.³ In Dallas, data were available for Asian Indians, Chinese (exclusive and inclusive of Taiwanese), Filipinos, Koreans, and Vietnamese. In Houston, there were data for Asian Indians, Chinese (exclusive and inclusive of Taiwanese), Filipinos, Pakistanis, and Vietnamese.

¹ The ACS 3-Year estimate provides detailed Asian ethnic subgroup data if the subgroup has an estimated population of 20,000 or more.

² For 2010 national demographic information, see the Asian American Center for Advancing Justice, "A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans in the United States 2011" at: http://www.advancingjustice.org/pdf/Community_of_Contrast.pdf For 2000 Census data with the most comprehensive look at the demographic and cultural changes sweeping the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, see the UCLA Asian American Studies Center, "New Face of Asian Pacific America" at: <http://www.aasc.ucla.edu/aascpress/tocs/newface.asp>

³ If the Metropolitan Statistical Area has only one Asian ethnic subgroup, this subgroup was compared to the Asian American population as a whole.

Population

The Asian American population was growing in Texas. The Asian subgroups that experienced the most population growth in the last decade were South Asians.

From 2000 and 2010, the Asian American population in Texas grew 73% from 658,000 to over 1.1 million. Among Asian ethnic subgroups, Bangladeshis (196%), Pakistanis (136%), and Hmong (118%) had the largest percent population growth.⁴ In 2010, the three largest subgroups were Asian Indians, Vietnamese, and Chinese.⁵

- >>> The Asian American population in **Austin** grew 93% from 52,000 in 2000 to over 100,000 in 2010. The three subgroups with the largest percent population growth were Hmong (860%), Bangladeshis (325%), and Pakistanis (185%). In 2010, the three largest subgroups were Asian Indians, Chinese, and Vietnamese.
- >>> In 2010, the Asian American population in **Dallas** was nearly 400,000, a 77% growth from 223,000 since 2000. Bangladeshis, Sri Lankans, and Pakistanis had the largest percent growth of all of the Asian American subgroups with 188%, 152%, and 146% growth respectively. The three largest subgroups were Asian Indians, Vietnamese, and Chinese in 2010.
- >>> In **Houston**, the Asian American population increased 71% from 258,000 in 2000 reaching over 400,000 in 2010. In 2010, the three subgroups that experienced the largest percent growth were Hmong (545%), Bangladeshis (202%), and Pakistanis (126%). By 2010, the three largest subgroups were Vietnamese, Asian Indians, and Chinese.

Nativity

The majority of Asians in Texas were foreign-born. Among subgroups, Asian Indians were more likely to be foreign-born and Filipinos were less likely to be foreign-born.

Nearly a quarter (70%) of the Asian population in Texas was foreign-born, higher than the proportion for all of the other major racial and ethnic subgroups. Only 16% of the total population in Texas was foreign-born. In comparison, one-third of Latinos were foreign-born. The trend was similar for the following three MSAs:

- >>> Over half of Asians (60%) in **Austin** were foreign-born compared to 14% for the total population. The rate was even higher for the Asian Indian subgroup (68%).
- >>> Nearly two-thirds of Asians were foreign-born compared to 18% for the total population in **Dallas**. Among subgroups, the foreign-born population ranged from 72% for Asian Indians to 54% for Filipinos.
- >>> Two-thirds of Asians were foreign-born compared to 21% for the total population in **Houston**. By subgroup, the range was as high as 72% for Asian Indians to as low as 63% for Filipinos.

Language

Compared to the total population, Asian Americans were more likely to have Limited English Proficiency (LEP); albeit their rate was slightly less than for Latinos. Foreign-born Asians had a lower proportion of persons who reported that they did not speak English very well compared to the total foreign-born population. This may be because the total foreign-born population includes Latinos

⁴ Population data include 19 Asian ethnic subgroups (and Other Asian, specified and Other Asian, not specified). Other indicators have data available for a fewer number of subgroups. For ethnic subgroups with a small population in the base year, a small change in population absolute number can result in a large percentage change.

⁵ All population size figures for the Chinese subgroup exclude Taiwanese.

and Asians, two groups that have rapidly grown due to immigration and have high LEP rates. Native-born Asian Americans had a higher proportion of those who did not speak English very well compared to the total native-born population. Among the subgroups, Vietnamese had the highest rate of persons who did not speak English very well, while Filipinos and Asian Indians had the lowest rates.

The rate of LEP for Asian Americans in Texas was higher than that of the total population (35% versus 15%). Foreign-born Asians had a lower rate of persons who reported that they did not speak English very well (44%) than the total foreign-born population (62%). The native-born Asian American population had a higher rate of persons who did not speak English very well than the total native-born population (10% versus 5%). The rate of LEP for Latinos was slightly higher (36%) than Asian Americans. A large majority (73%) of foreign-born Latinos and 16% of native-born Latinos reported that they did not speak English very well, the highest of all of the major racial and ethnic groups.

The trend was similar for the three MSAs:

- >>> In **Austin**, 27% of Asian Americans had LEP compared to 11% for the total population. The rate was lower for the Asian Indian subgroup at 17%.
- >>> In **Dallas**, a third of Asian Americans had LEP compared to 14% for the total population. By subgroup, the range was as high as 48% for Vietnamese and as low as 13% for Filipinos.
- >>> In **Houston**, 36% of Asian Americans had LEP compared to 17% for the total population. Subgroups ranged from 52% for Vietnamese to as low as 19% for Filipinos.

Education

Asian Americans were more likely to have at least a high school diploma compared to the total population, but less likely compared to Non-Hispanic Whites. Among subgroups, Vietnamese tended to have a higher proportion with less than a high school diploma. Filipinos and Asian Indians tended to have a lower proportion.

Compared to the total population, Asian Americans over the age of 25 in Texas had a lower proportion of population with less than a high school diploma (13% versus 20% statewide), but higher than that of Non-Hispanic Whites (9%).

The trend held across all three MSAs:

- >>> In **Austin**, 9% of Asian Americans had less than a high school diploma, which was lower than 14% for the total population but higher than 4% for Non-Hispanic Whites. The proportion for Asian Indians (5%) with less than a high school diploma was lower than Asian Americans as a whole (9%).
- >>> Twelve percent of Asian Americans in **Dallas** had less than a high school diploma, lower than the total population (18%), but higher than that for Non-Hispanic Whites (7%). Among the subgroups, Vietnamese had the highest (26%) proportion of population with less than a high school diploma, while Filipinos had the lowest (5%).
- >>> In **Houston**, 14% of Asian Americans had less than a high school diploma, which was lower than the total population (20%), but higher than Non-Hispanic Whites (7%). A quarter of the Vietnamese population had less than a high school diploma, the highest of the subgroups. The subgroup with the lowest proportion was Filipinos (5%).

Asian Americans were more likely to earn a Bachelor's degree compared to all other major racial and ethnic groups. Among subgroups, Filipinos and Asian Indians tended to have higher proportions with a Bachelor's degree. Vietnamese tended to have a lower proportion.

Nearly a third of Asian Americans over the age of 25 in Texas had a Bachelor's degree, larger than the proportions for both the total population (17%) and Non-Hispanic Whites (23%).

The pattern was similar for the following three MSAs:

- >>> A third of Asian Americans in **Austin** had a Bachelor's degree, which was higher than the proportion for the total population (25%) and on par with the proportion for Non-Hispanic Whites. Similar to Asian Americans as a whole, 35% of Asian Indians had a Bachelor's degree.
- >>> In **Dallas**, 31% of Asian Americans had a Bachelor's degree, higher than the proportion for both total population (21%) and Non-Hispanic Whites (26%). Half of the Filipino population had a Bachelor's degree, the highest of the Asian American subgroups. Vietnamese had a proportion on par with the total population, but the lowest of the subgroups.
- >>> Thirty-one percent of Asian Americans in **Houston** had a Bachelor's degree, higher than the proportion for the total population (19%) and Non-Hispanic Whites (26%). Over half of the Filipino population had a Bachelor's degree, the highest of the Asian American subgroups. Vietnamese had the lowest proportion with a Bachelor's degree at 21%.

Asian Americans were more likely to earn a graduate or professional degree compared to all other major racial and ethnic groups. Among subgroups, Chinese and Asian Indians tended to have higher proportions with a graduate or professional degree. Vietnamese and Filipinos tended to have lower proportions.

In Texas, 23% of Asian Americans over the age of 25 had a graduate or professional degree, much higher than the proportions for the total population (8%) and Non-Hispanic Whites (11%).

A similar trend occurred in the three MSAs:

- >>> Nearly a third of Asian Americans in **Austin** had a graduate degree compared to 13% for the total population and 16% for Non-Hispanic Whites. Asian Indians had a higher proportion than Asian Americans as a whole at 46%.
- >>> A quarter of Asian Americans in **Dallas** had a graduate degree, higher than the proportions for both the total population (10%) and Non-Hispanic Whites (12%). Of the Asian American subgroups, Chinese (exclusive and inclusive of Taiwanese) and Asian Indians had the highest proportions at 41% and 40%, respectively. Seven percent of Vietnamese had a graduate degree, the lowest of the subgroups.
- >>> In **Houston**, 21% of Asian American had a graduate degree compared to just 10% for the total population and 13% for Non-Hispanic Whites. Among the subgroups, Chinese (including Taiwanese) and Asian Indians (33% each) had the highest proportion of persons with graduate degrees. Vietnamese and Filipinos (8% and 9%, respectively) had the lowest proportions for the subgroups.

Economic Status

In Texas, Asian Americans had higher median household incomes than all populations and Non-Hispanic Whites. Among subgroups, Asian Indians and Filipinos had the highest median income. Koreans and Pakistanis had the lowest median income. Per capita, Asian Americans generally earned less than Non-Hispanic Whites. This may be due to Asian Americans' larger average household sizes.⁶ Asian Indians earned the most per capita, and Vietnamese earned the least.

⁶Household size plays a significant factor in estimating wealth because household incomes are calculated by the income generated by all members of a household. If a household has multiple wage-earners contributing to the overall household income, the likelihood is greater for that household income to be larger. Analytically, per capita income is a more realistic measure of wealth than household income.

Asian Americans (\$64,000) in Texas had higher median household incomes than all other major racial and ethnic groups compared to \$49,000 for the total households and \$61,000 for Non-Hispanic Whites. Statewide, Asian Americans had a smaller proportion of Very Low-Income (VLI) households (18%) compared to 25% for total households and 23% for Non-Hispanic Whites. Per capita, Asian Americans (\$28,000) earned more than the total population (\$25,000), but less than Non-Hispanic Whites (\$34,000). The average household size for Asian Americans was 3.1 people compared to 2.8 people for total households, and 2.5 people for Non-Hispanic Whites.

>>> In **Austin**, the median household income for Asian Americans was \$71,000, which was higher than total households (\$58,000) and Non-Hispanic Whites (\$67,000). Asian Indians had even higher median household income (\$87,000) despite having similar average household size with Asian American as a whole (2.8 people). The average household size was 2.7 people for the total households and 2.4 people for Non-Hispanic Whites. Per capita, Asian Indians (\$38,000) still earned more than Asian Americans (\$31,000), total households (\$29,000), and Non-Hispanic Whites (\$38,000).

>>> The median household income for Asian Americans in **Dallas** was higher compared to the total households (\$67,000 versus \$55,000), but less than Non-Hispanic Whites (\$69,000). By subgroup, Asian Indians had the highest median household income (\$85,000) while Koreans had the lowest (\$48,000). Per capita, Asian Americans (\$27,000) had lower incomes than the total households (\$28,000) and Non-Hispanic Whites (\$34,000). By subgroup, Asian Indians (\$34,000) earned the most, but Vietnamese earned the least per capita (\$21,000). The average household size for Asian Americans was 3.1 people, total households size was 2.9 people, and Non-Hispanic Whites was 2.6 people. Among subgroups, Vietnamese had the largest average household size (3.5 people), while Chinese (including Taiwanese) had the smallest (2.7 people).

>>> In **Houston**, the median household income for Asian Americans was higher compared to the total households (\$68,000 versus \$55,000), but less than Non-Hispanic Whites (\$74,000). By subgroup, Filipino households earned the most (\$94,000) while Pakistanis earned the least (\$54,000). Per capita, Asian Americans earned similar with total households (\$28,000), but less than Non-Hispanic Whites \$41,000), with Asian Indians earning the most among the subgroups (\$33,000) and Vietnamese earning the least (\$21,000). The average household size for Asian Americans was 3.2 people, total households size was 2.9 people, and Non-Hispanic Whites was 2.5 people. Among subgroups, Pakistani had the largest average household size (4.2 people), while Chinese (including Taiwanese) had the smallest (2.8 people).

The poverty rate for Asian Americans was generally lower than the total population, but higher than Non-Hispanic Whites. Among the subgroups, Vietnamese and Pakistanis had higher poverty rates, while Asian Indians and Filipinos had lower rates. Vietnamese were more likely to receive cash public assistance.

With an 11% poverty rate, Asian Americans in Texas had a lower poverty rate compared to the total population (17%), but higher compared to Non-Hispanic Whites (9%). As such, Asian American and Non-Hispanic White households received slightly less cash public assistance (1%) than the total households (2%).

>>> The poverty rate for Asian Americans in **Austin** was 11%, slightly lower than that of the total population (13%), but higher than that of Non-Hispanic Whites (8%). Asian Indians, however, had a lower poverty rate at 6%. One percent of Asian Indians received cash public assistance, similar with that of total households, Non-Hispanic Whites and Asian Americans as a whole.

- >>> In **Dallas**, Asian Americans had a 10% poverty rate. This rate was lower compared to the total population (13%), but higher compared to Non-Hispanic Whites (7%). By subgroup, Vietnamese had the highest poverty rate at 14%. Filipinos had the lowest at 6%. Among the subgroups, Vietnamese households received the most cash public assistance (3%), while other subgroups had similar proportions at around 1%.
- >>> Asian Americans in **Houston** had a poverty rate (11%) lower than the total population (15%), but higher than Non-Hispanic Whites (7%). By subgroup, Pakistanis (14%) and Vietnamese (13%) had the highest poverty rates, while Filipinos had the lowest with 4%. Asian Americans had similar proportion of households receiving cash public assistance (2%) as total households and Non-Hispanic Whites. Vietnamese had the highest proportion of households with cash public assistance (3%), while other subgroups had similar low proportions at around 1%.

Compared to other racial and ethnic groups, fewer Asian American households had Social Security and retirement income. Among subgroups, Vietnamese and Chinese tended to have more Social Security income compared to Asian Americans as a whole. Asian Indians and Pakistanis had the least amount of Social Security income. Filipinos tended to have more retirement income, whereas Asian Indians and Pakistanis tended to have less.

Lower proportions of Asian American households in Texas had Social Security or retirement income (11% and 5%, respectively) in comparison to the households as a whole (23% and 14%, respectively) and Non-Hispanic Whites (28% and 18%, respectively).

- >>> In **Austin**, Asian American households (6%) and Asian Indian households (4%) had less Social Security income compared to total households (16%) and Non-Hispanic Whites (19%). Only 3% of both Asian Americans and Asian Indian households had retirement income compared to 12% of total households and 15% of Non-Hispanic Whites.
- >>> In **Dallas**, lower proportions of Asian American households had Social Security or retirement income (8% and 5%, respectively) compared to total households (19% and 12%) and Non-Hispanic Whites (24% and 15%). By subgroup, Vietnamese households had the largest proportion receiving Social Security income (12%). Filipinos had the largest proportion of households with retirement income (9%). Asian Indians had the smallest proportions in both categories (7% and 3%, respectively).
- >>> In **Houston**, lower proportions of Asian American households had Social Security or retirement income (12% and 5%, respectively) compared to total households (19% and 11%) and Non-Hispanic Whites (24% and 15%). Among the subgroups, Chinese (exclusive or inclusive of Taiwanese) and Vietnamese had the highest proportions of households with Social Security Income (15% each). Filipinos had the highest proportion of households with retirement income (10%). Pakistanis had the lowest proportions for both: 6% for Social Security Income and 1% for retirement income.

Housing Trends

Asian Americans had a lower homeownership rate, but higher median home values. Asian American households had higher proportions of housing costs burdened compared to other major racial and ethnic groups.⁷ Among subgroups, Chinese and Filipinos had the highest homeownership rate, and

⁷ Homeowners paying 30% or more of household income on selected monthly housing costs are considered "cost burdened". Selected monthly owner costs are the sum of debt payments (e.g. mortgage or home equity loans), real estate taxes, insurance, utility, fuel, and condominium fees.

Asian Indians, Koreans, and Pakistanis had the lowest. Asian Indians had the highest median home value, while Koreans and Vietnamese had the lowest. Vietnamese and Pakistanis had the highest proportion of burdened homeowners, and Asian Indians and Filipinos had the lowest.

The homeownership rate for the Asian American homeowners in Texas was roughly on par with that of the total households at 63% compared to Non-Hispanic Whites at 72%. However, Asian American home values were higher, with a median of \$179,000 compared to total households (\$124,000) and Non-Hispanic Whites (\$145,000). Asian Americans' housing burden (39%) was higher than that of both the total homeowners (32%) and Non-Hispanic Whites (26%).

- >>> In **Austin**, Asian Indians had a lower homeownership rate than Asian Americans (49% versus 55%), lower than the rate for the total households (59%) and Non-Hispanic Whites (66%). The median home value for Asian Indians (\$276,000) was higher than that of Asian Americans as a whole (\$219,000), Non-Hispanic Whites (\$206,000) and the total households (\$184,000). A third of Asian American homeowners were housing burdened, roughly on par with the rate for the total homeowners (32%) compared to Non-Hispanic Whites (30%). Asian Indians had a lower rate at 28%.
- >>> The pattern for homeownership was similar in **Dallas** as for the state: 62% for Asian Americans, a rate on par with the total households and Non-Hispanic Whites (72%). Among subgroups, Chinese (exclusive or inclusive of Taiwanese) had the highest homeownership rate at 71% and Koreans had the lowest at 51%. Similar to the state trend, home values for Asian Americans (\$192,000) were higher than that of total households (\$148,000), and of Non-Hispanic Whites (\$164,000). Among subgroups, Asian Indians had the highest median home value at \$230,000 and Vietnamese had the lowest median home value at \$155,000. Asian Americans had higher proportion of housing burdened homeowners (39%) compared to total homeowners (32%) and Non-Hispanic Whites (27%). Vietnamese had the highest proportion of housing burdened homeowners among the subgroups (53%), while Filipinos had the lowest proportion of 26%.
- >>> Asian Americans in **Houston** had a higher rate of homeownership than the total households (67% versus 63%), but a lower rate compared to Non-Hispanic Whites (73%). By subgroup, Filipinos had the highest homeownership rate (76%). Asian Indians and Pakistanis had the lowest homeownership rate (61% each). Asian Americans (\$175,000) had higher median home values than the total population (\$139,000) and Non-Hispanic Whites (\$161,000). Among the subgroups, Asian Indians had the highest median value (\$213,000), while Vietnamese had the lowest (\$152,000). Asian Americans also had a larger proportion of housing burdened homeowners (39%) compared to total homeowners (32%) and Non-Hispanic Whites (25%). By subgroup, Pakistanis had the highest proportion of burdened homeowners (53%) and Filipinos had the lowest proportion (28%).

Conclusion

As pensions decline, health and educational costs rise, home values and savings accounts shrink, and benefits under Social Security continue to be severely threatened and limited, asset-building strategies are needed now more than ever to close the racial wealth gap. In the aftermath of the Great Recession and foreclosure crisis, the goal of this report was to provide critical socioeconomic quantitative information and statistics on Asian Americans that would be useful for the state and regional asset-building coalitions in: 1) Developing their policy agenda, 2) Assisting with outreach by identifying where Asian American populations are concentrated residentially and geographically, which can perhaps lead to the strengthening of coalition efforts, and 3) Understanding cultural and linguistic barriers unique to

Asian Americans, especially the Asian ethnic subgroups that are most in need. The quantitative data is meant to be used in relation with other sources of knowledge (qualitative, historical, voices from community leaders etc.) in order to offer fuller and more nuanced explanations. It is vital that we use multiple frameworks (research, organizing, advocacy, etc.) as we think about how to improve access and knowledge of asset-building programs and practices for underserved communities of color and end the widening racial wealth divide.

Much of the literature on poverty indicates that Southeast Asians (primarily Vietnamese, Lao, Hmong, and Cambodian immigrants) are amongst those that have the highest disparities in higher education, housing burden, and wealth in the United States. Under the Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1975, the majority of Southeast Asian refugees who fled their homelands in the aftermath of the U.S. invasion of Vietnam and Cambodia were placed in federal welfare programs as a temporary and “adaptive” measure. They are now entering a fourth consecutive decade of welfare dependency, contrary to government officials’ predictions of a seamless transition into American labor markets (Tang, 2000). Due to data limitations, this report only provides Asian ethnic subgroup data for the Austin, Dallas, and Houston Metropolitan Statistical Areas. In Austin, the subgroup data were only available for Asian Indians. In Dallas, data were available for Asian Indians, Chinese (exclusive and inclusive of Taiwanese), Filipinos, Koreans, and Vietnamese. In Houston, the subgroup data were available for Asian Indians, Chinese (exclusive and inclusive of Taiwanese), Filipinos, Pakistanis, and Vietnamese. However, data was readily available for Cambodians, Hmong, Thai and other disadvantaged Asian American subgroups in California.

Similar to American Indians, Blacks or African Americans, and Latinos, the majority of Asian Americans (especially the foreign-born) carry their net worth in their home equity, such that the loss of this asset is particularly devastating to their financial security. A study by the UCLA Asian American Studies Center revealed how Asian Americans made considerable economic progress with whites through the rapid appreciation of home values from 2000 to 2005 (Patraporn, Ong, and Houston, 2009). The average value of homes for Asian Americans increased by 73 percent, compared to only 60 percent for whites nationwide (Patraporn, Ong, and Houston, 2009). However, many of these gains were lost during the housing market meltdown. A Pew report indicated the net worth of Asian Americans is estimated to have fallen by 54 percent in the four year period from 2005 to 2009 (Kochhar, Fry, and Taylor, 2011). This massive decimation of wealth is largely due to Asian Americans residing in Arizona, California, Florida, and Nevada—four of the five states with the steepest declines in home prices in 2005 (Michigan is fifth). As communities of color have less wealth and home equity, it will be more difficult to afford a college education, which leads to better jobs that are needed to start saving and building wealth.

Currently, the majority of research articles and policy briefs on asset-building and wealth report aggregate socioeconomic data on Asian Americans, which often claim Asian Americans are doing well because of high educational attainment rates or high incomes. However, the lumping of all Asian American ethnic groups under the aggregate “Asian” category masks a high degree of variation in social and economic status across these subgroups. Thus, it is important to examine demographic trends below the surface, in order to serve real disadvantaged groups that are being completely neglected by mainstream asset-building and financial institutions. Although, Asian ethnic subgroup data was only available for the Austin, Dallas, and Houston metro areas, the report highlights the following key findings for Asian Americans:

Population Growth: South Asians and Southeast Asians were the fastest growing in Texas. The three largest groups in each metro area were: Austin—Hmong, Bangladeshi, and Pakistanis; Dallas—Bangladeshis, Sri Lankans, and Pakistanis; and Houston—Hmong, Bangladeshi, and Pakistanis.

Citizenship & Language: Overall, the majority of Asians were foreign-born (60% or more) across all three metro areas. Among subgroups, Asian Indians, Chinese, and Koreans were more likely to be foreign-born and Filipinos were less likely to be foreign-born. Asians also had higher rates of Limited English Proficiency than the total population. In Dallas, Vietnamese (48%) and Korean (44%) had the highest rates of persons, who did not speak English very well compared with the 14% of the total population. In Houston, Vietnamese (52%) and Chinese (43%) had the highest rates of persons, who did not speak English very well compared with the 17% of the total population.

Education: Asian Americans were more likely to have at least a high school diploma compared to the total population, but less likely compared to Non-Hispanic Whites. Vietnamese tended to have a higher proportion with less than a high school diploma and Filipinos largely held a Bachelor's degree. Asian Indians and Chinese tended to have a higher proportion of those with a Graduate or professional degree. In the existing Asian American Studies and Education literature, Southeast Asians have a high proportion of those with less than a high school diploma.

Income: Household size plays a significant factor in estimating wealth because household incomes are calculated by the income generated by all members of a household. If a household has multiple wage-earners contributing to the overall household income, the likelihood is greater for that household income to be larger. Analytically, per capita income is a more realistic measure of wealth than household income. Asian American households tended to have higher median household incomes than other major racial and ethnic groups. Asian Indians and Filipinos had the highest median incomes. Vietnamese and Koreans had the lowest median income. In contrast, Asian Americans generally earned less per capita income than Non-Hispanic Whites. Vietnamese, Pakistanis, and Filipinos earned the lowest per capita income.

Poverty: The poverty rate for Asian Americans was generally lower than the total population, but higher than Non-Hispanic Whites. Among the subgroups, Vietnamese and Pakistanis had higher poverty rates, while Asian Indians and Filipinos had lower rates. Vietnamese were more likely to receive cash public assistance. Otherwise, Asian Americans received cash assistance at the same rate as the total population.

Social Security and Retirement Income: Asian Americans had lower proportions of households with Social Security and retirement income compared to other major racial and ethnic groups. Among subgroups, Vietnamese and Koreans tended to have more Social Security income. Asian Indians and Pakistanis had the least amount of Social Security income. Filipinos tended to have more retirement income, whereas Asian Indians and Vietnamese tended to have less. This underutilization of Social Security and retirement programs may be due to language barriers and foreign-born status. As immigrants, there is a greater likelihood that they are unfamiliar, unaware or ineligible for Social Security and retirement programs because of cultural barriers. Many times, even if an Asian immigrant is deemed eligible for a benefit or service, being able to "navigate the system" is a huge hurdle for many in order to actually obtain the benefit or service.

Housing: Asian Americans generally had lower homeownership rates compared to Non-Hispanic Whites and the total population, but higher home values compared to other major racial and ethnic groups. Chinese and Filipinos had the highest homeownership rate, and Asian Indians, Koreans, and Pakistanis had the lowest. Asian Indians had the highest median home value, while Koreans and Vietnamese had the lowest. In addition, the majority of Asian Americans had higher housing costs burden than Non-Hispanic Whites and the total population. Vietnamese and Pakistanis had the highest proportion of burdened homeowners, and Asian Indians and Filipinos had the lowest. This may be due to the high self-employment rates of Asian Americans, which prevent them from accessing conventional mortgage lending products. As a result, they must often find non-traditional or alternative mortgage credit products with higher loan rates or amounts (Asian Real Estate Association of America, 2012).

In conclusion, in order to be effective in strengthening asset-building opportunities for communities of color, it is critical to provide cultural and linguistically appropriate materials, services, and education, in particular to underserved immigrant populations. Moreover, future research must collect data on smaller Asian ethnic group populations, in which no data is available because of data suppression practices associated with confidentiality requirements when the sample sizes are too small. A few foundations, such as the Ford Foundation, have responded to addressing these needs, but much more can be done in terms of technical assistance, outreach, advocacy, data collection, capturing voices and stories at the local level, in order to offer fuller and more nuanced explanations and close the racial wealth gap.

The **Technical Report** with this demographic profile's methodology, definitions, and detailed data charts and tables is available to download at: www.aasc.ucla.edu/besol.

References

- Asian Real Estate Association of America. (2012). "Five-Point Plan: The Path to Sustainable Homeownership within Asian American and Pacific Islander Communities." <<http://areaa.org/national/advocacy/2012fpp.pdf>> (accessed August 12, 2012).
- Kochhar, R., Fry, R. and Paul Taylor, P. (2011). *Wealth Gaps Rise to Record Highs Between Whites, Blacks and Latinos*, Pew Research Center.
- Patraporn, R., Ong P., and Houston, D. (2009). "Closing the Asian-White Wealth Gap?" *Asian American Policy Review*, 18:35-48.
- Tran, D., and Poon, O. (2011). "The State of Asian American Businesses." *Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders Nexus Journal: Policy, Practice, and Community*, 9:70-77.