



# Building AAPI Power

A Profile of AAPI Communities in Greater Boston

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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This report was shaped by previous work on [Changing Faces of Greater Boston](#), written in partnership with UMass Boston's [Institute for Asian American Studies](#).

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## ABOUT BOSTON INDICATORS

Boston Indicators is the research center at the Boston Foundation, which works to advance a thriving Greater Boston for all residents across all neighborhoods. We do this by analyzing key indicators of well-being and by researching promising ideas for making our city more prosperous, equitable and just. To ensure that our work informs active efforts to improve our city, we work in deep partnership with community groups, civic leaders and Boston's civic data community to produce special reports and host public convenings.

## ABOUT THE BOSTON FOUNDATION

The Boston Foundation is one of the largest and oldest community foundations in America, with net assets of \$1.3 billion. The Foundation is a partner in philanthropy, with some 1,100 charitable funds established for the general benefit of the community or for special purposes. It also serves as a major civic leader, think tank and advocacy organization dedicated to bringing people together and advancing opportunity for everyone in Greater Boston.

## ABOUT THE ASIAN COMMUNITY FUND

The Asian Community Fund (ACF) at the Boston Foundation was established in 2019 as a permanent resource to develop, strengthen and support the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community in Massachusetts, to galvanize and unite the diverse ethnicities within this community and to build a stronger advocacy voice. The Fund seeks to unify and align the local Asian American community to advocate for equal access to all aspects of our society and collaborate with other communities of color and oppressed communities to build collective strengths to overcome injustice and racism.

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Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Asian Community Fund, I am deeply thankful for the partnership of Boston Indicators as we share a comprehensive current view of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities living in Greater Boston.

The release of this report coincides with a wave of new energy, attention, and resources supporting AAPI communities nationwide—unfortunately in response to an immense surge of anti-Asian hate, violence, and discrimination.

While moments of heightened attention serve as important opportunities for education and raised awareness, they also remind us of the underlying forces perpetuating harm and trauma: hate, racism, misogyny and other forms of discrimination. As we learn in the report, these forces have had a long-standing historical and ongoing impact on the AAPI community, from which we can clearly see persistent and exacerbated inequities through the present day.

This report also reflects the breadth of diversity across different AAPI communities, and the rich heritage, culture, and growing economic power each group brings to the Greater Boston region. With this appreciation is an acknowledgement and call to address disparities that exist between some AAPI communities.

Our challenges and the solutions they call for are shared by all: addressing income inequality, increasing language access, and empowering civic voice and political representation. Because of this, the Asian Community Fund works in solidarity and allyship with other social justice and equity initiatives at the Boston Foundation: Latino Equity Fund, Equality Fund, New Commonwealth Fund, and other efforts.

The Asian Community Fund is a permanent resource for the AAPI community, a convenor, an advocate, an incubator, and a hub to support thriving and empowered AAPI communities in the region far into the future. Let us find—through shared experience, connection, and knowledge—a path to a more equitable and just society for all.

Sincerely,

**Paul W. Lee**

*Chair, Asian Community Fund  
Board of Directors, The Boston Foundation  
Retired Partner, Goodwin Procter, LLP*



# We find ourselves in a moment that is long overdue:

Many Americans are finally waking up to the long history, impact and disgraceful persistence of racial injustice in America. Many others, of course, experienced these injustices firsthand and needed no awakening. But the elevation of racial justice to the top of the mainstream civic agenda provides a window of opportunity to organize for structural change. Today's efforts build on a long history of racial justice organizing in the United States, and we need to ensure that the needs of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) are included in this current phase of work. Too often AAPI communities get overlooked, driven by the [model minority myth](#) and data-driven work on racial disparities that often report broad averages that mask intra-group disparities. These data challenges are particularly relevant for Asian Americans, who have the largest intra-racial income inequality of any racial group. Unfortunately, these challenges are not new. Nearly 30 years after the Boston Foundation's Persistent Poverty Project (the precursor to Boston Indicators) published the landmark report *Recognizing Poverty in Boston's Asian American Community*, today's parallel stories and lack of progress are striking.

High-profile cases of anti-Asian violence during the pandemic have also thrust conversations about anti-Asian racism and hate to the forefront. While recent incidents have garnered much needed public attention, they are an unfortunate continuation of longstanding anti-Asian prejudice and not a new phenomenon. AAPI discrimination ranges across American history, from the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 to the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II to the ongoing [desecration of Native Hawaiian sacred sites](#).

Through a series of charts and graphs, this paper aims to provide a nuanced profile of AAPI communities in Greater Boston (sometimes across all of Massachusetts). The paper highlights not only the

diversity of experience and wide inequalities that exist within Asian American communities but also the shared experiences, from incidents of hate to a lack of representation in leadership positions. This refined understanding of AAPI communities is essential to strengthening AAPI organizing and building collective power to advance equity and justice for all communities. We offer this research as one contribution toward these efforts.

The paper is organized into three parts:

- 1) Demographic Overview;
- 2) Challenges Faced by AAPI Communities During the Pandemic;
- 3) Ongoing Challenges and Needs.

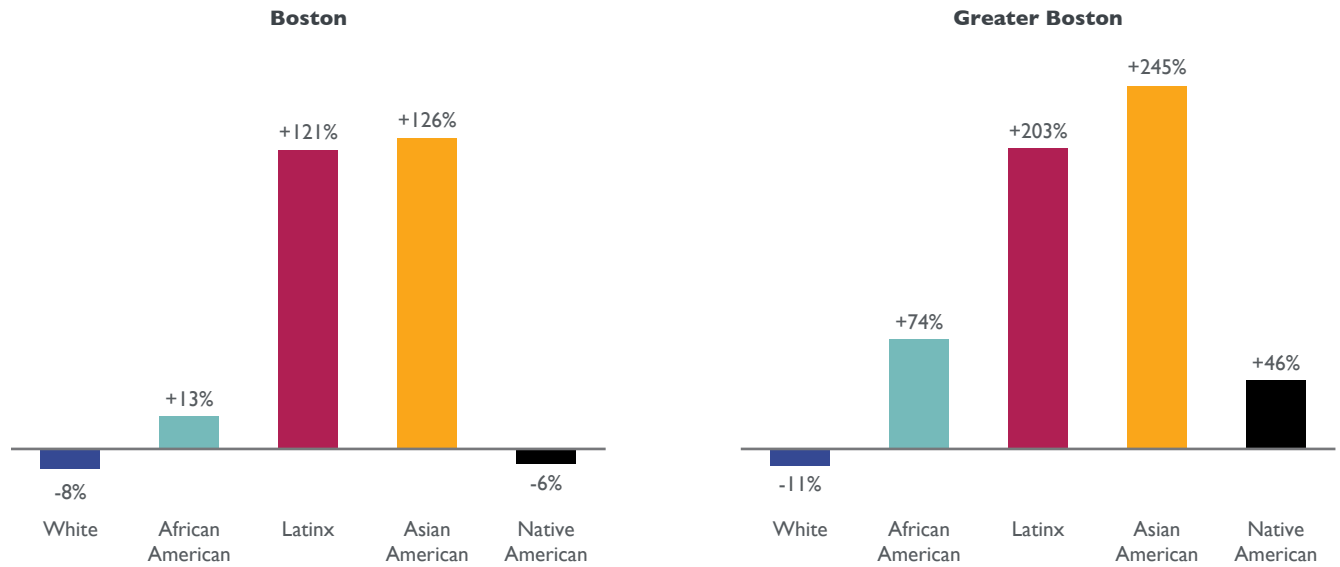
Throughout the report we highlight the following key themes and findings:

- AAPI communities in Massachusetts are fast growing and diverse.
- Recent anti-Asian discrimination and violence reflect existing trends and a history of scapegoating during crisis.
- AAPI workers and entrepreneurs have faced many COVID-related challenges.
- Aggregated data mask many disparities and community needs, including poverty and a need for improved language resources.
- AAPI residents are substantially underrepresented in the municipal workforce and state legislature.
- Mobilizing resources within AAPI communities is key to addressing longstanding needs and closing intragroup disparities.



**Figure 1: Asian Americans are the fastest growing single racial group in Greater Boston.**

Percent change, 1990 – 2019.

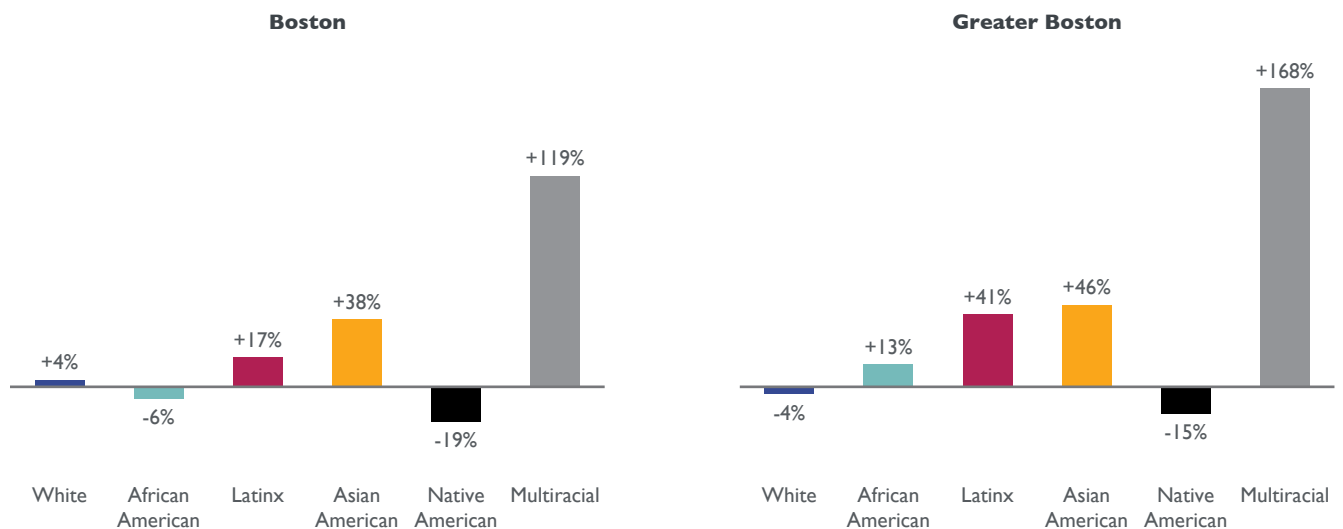


Source: 1990 Census; 2019 ACS 1-year Estimate

Note: White, African American, Asian American & Native American groups do not include individuals who identify as Latinx or multiracial. Latinx can be of any race.

**Figure 2: Asian American population continued to grow in the last decade.**

Percent change, 2010-2020.

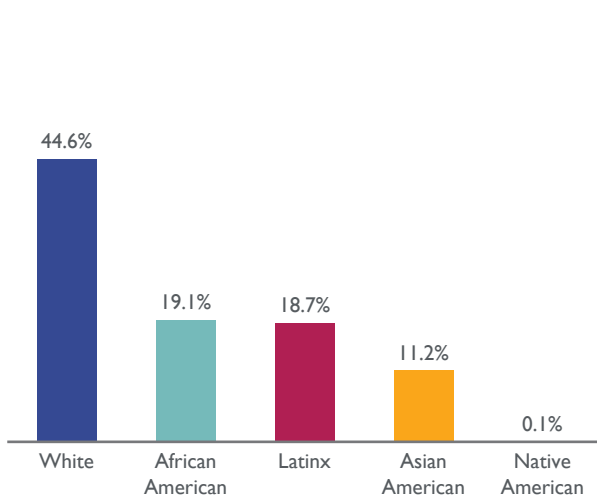


Source: 2010 Census; 2020 Census

Note: White, African American, Asian American & Native American groups do not include individuals who identify as Latinx or multiracial. Latinx can be of any race. Some of the multiracial increase comes from improved Census coding approaches for 2020 that better capture the true size of the multiracial population.

**Figure 3:**  
**One in 10 Bostonians are Asian American.**

Boston population share, 2020.

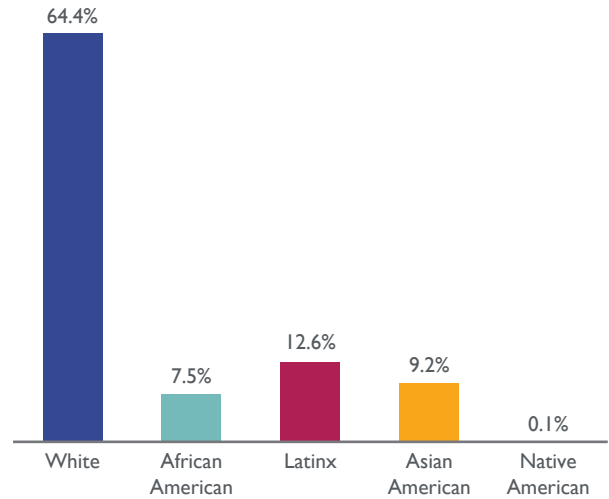


Source: 2020 Census

Note: White, African American, Asian American & Native American groups do not include individuals who identify as Latinx or multiracial. Latinx can be of any race.

**Asian population in Greater Boston is similar in size to African American and Latinx populations.**

Greater Boston population share, 2020.



**DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW**

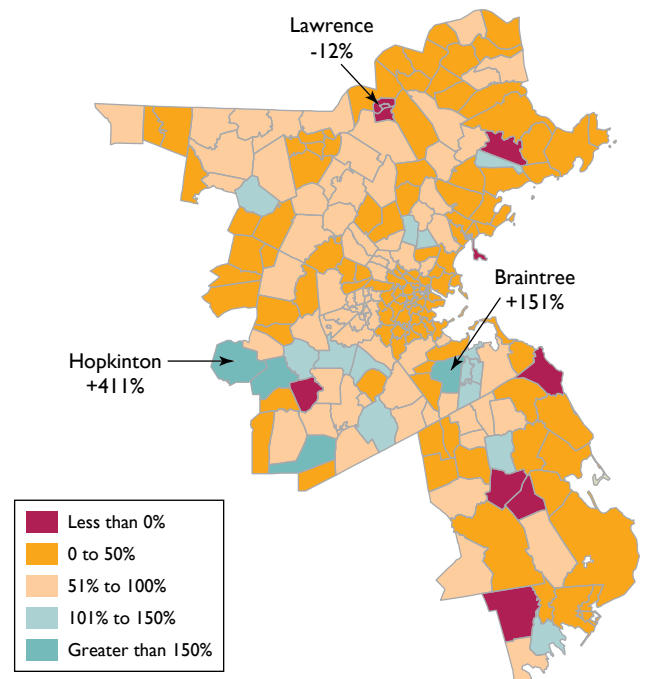
Greater Boston has long been a region of immigrants. While many of our region’s earlier immigrants were Europeans fleeing hardship from countries like Ireland and Italy, there was also a period of Chinese immigration to Massachusetts during the late 1800s. This largely ended with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and immigration from other Asian countries was similarly barred by subsequent federal action. After federal restrictions ended in the mid-1900s, we are now several decades into a new *global wave of immigration*, with higher total numbers of immigrants representing a broader spread across different regions of the world.

Today, the most common countries of origin for new immigrants in Greater Boston are in the Caribbean, Latin America, and Asia. In fact, because Asian population increases are building off a somewhat smaller base level in 1990, Asian American population growth even slightly outpaces growth of the Latinx population, both in Boston and across the broader region (see Figure 1). Between 1990 and 2019, Greater Boston added 276,252 Asian American residents, or an increase of 245 percent.

Figure 2 focuses on the more recent time period of 2010 to 2020, and shows the explosive growth of another group of individuals—those who identify as multiracial. Because respondents could not check more than one race box on the census until 2000, we can’t compare 2020 findings to earlier time periods. Between 2010 and 2020, the multiracial population in Boston more than doubled and in the region it nearly tripled. While we can’t tell exactly how many of those individuals identify as part Asian, earlier national data has found that those who report being White and Asian

**Figure 4: Suburban towns saw the largest increase in Asian residents.**

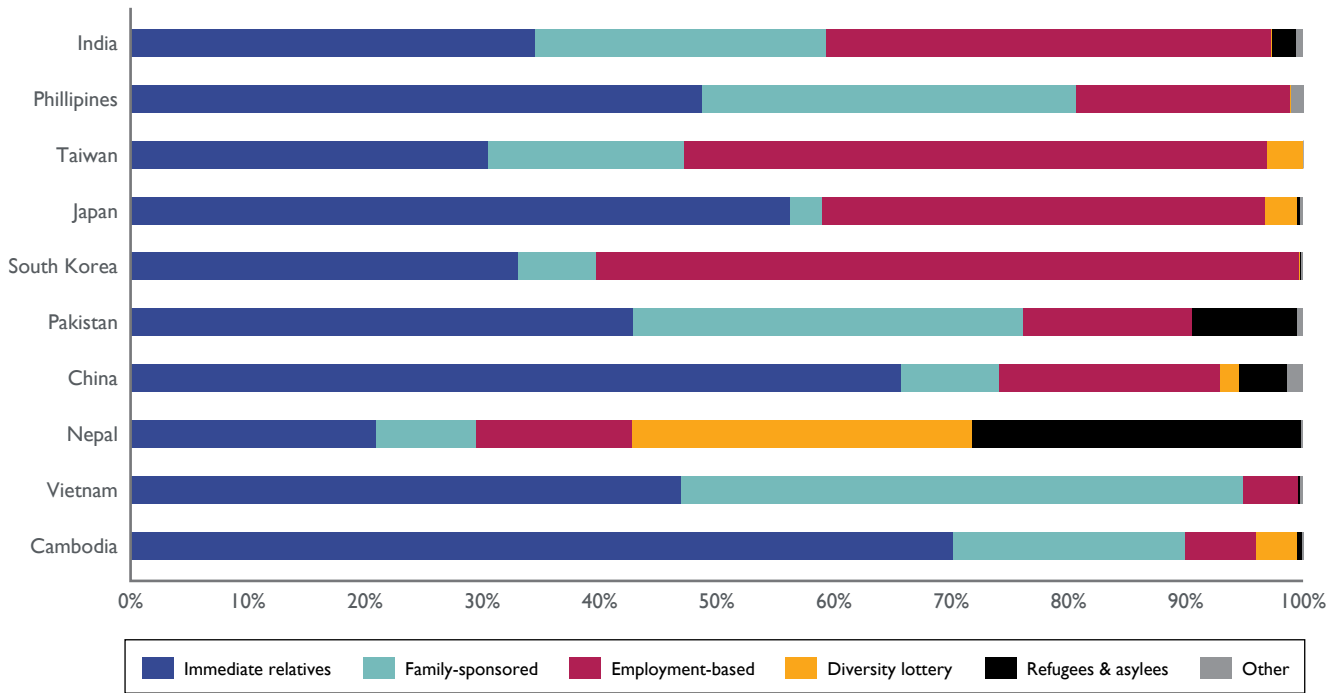
Percentage change, 2010 to 2020.



Source: 2010 Census, 2020 Census • Map data: MassGIS  
 • Created with Datawrapper

**Figure 5: Asian immigrants come to the U.S. through a wide range of channels.**

People obtaining lawful permanent resident. Sample Asian countries of origin, 2018.



Source: DHS 2018 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics.

are the second largest multiracial group in the country, accounting for roughly one-fifth of biracial adults and children.<sup>1</sup>

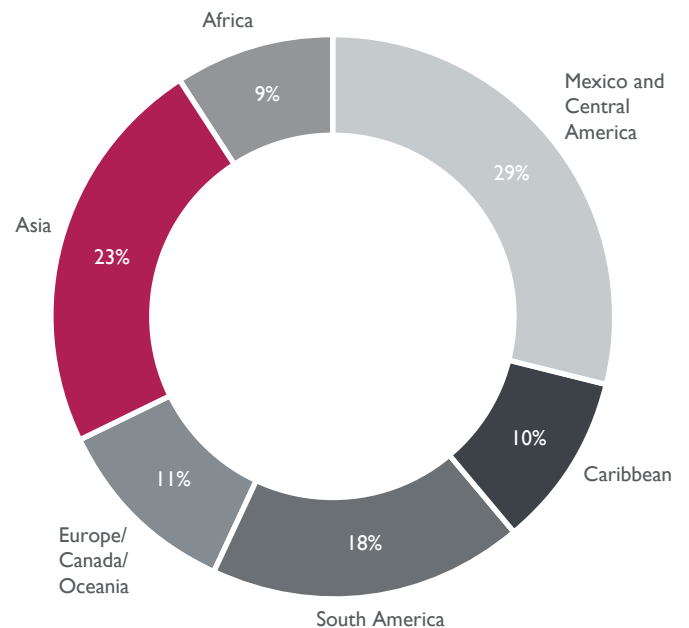
Figures 3 and 4 show similar data, but focus on current population share by race rather than percent change. Asian Americans now account for more than one in ten residents of Boston (11.2 percent), just a touch higher than their population share regionwide (9.2 percent). While still lower than the population share for Black and Latinx residents in Boston proper, the Asian American population share regionwide is quite similar to the Black and Latinx population shares.

Asian population change is not evenly distributed across the region. Between 2010 and 2020, many suburban towns saw the largest increase in Asian residents, while inner core areas and some Gateway Cities saw more moderate increases, or even a decrease, in Asian residents. The Asian community in Braintree, for example, tripled in the last decade, while the population in Lawrence decreased by 12 percent (see Figure 4).

Much of this growth has been fueled by new Asian immigrants coming here from abroad. In fact, more than two thirds of Asian Americans in Greater Boston were born outside of the United States, a higher share than for any other racial group in Massachusetts: 68 percent of Asian Americans in the region are foreign-born compared to 42 percent and 38 percent of Latinx and Black residents, respectively.

There's also tremendous diversity *within* the Asian immigrant experience, with people coming to the United States through a wide range of channels. For instance, 60 percent of South Korean immigrants to the U.S. obtained lawful permanent residency (a "green card") through employer-

**Figure 6: Almost 1/4 of unauthorized immigrants in Massachusetts are Asian.**



Source: Migration Policy Institute, Profile of Unauthorized Population: Massachusetts, 2019



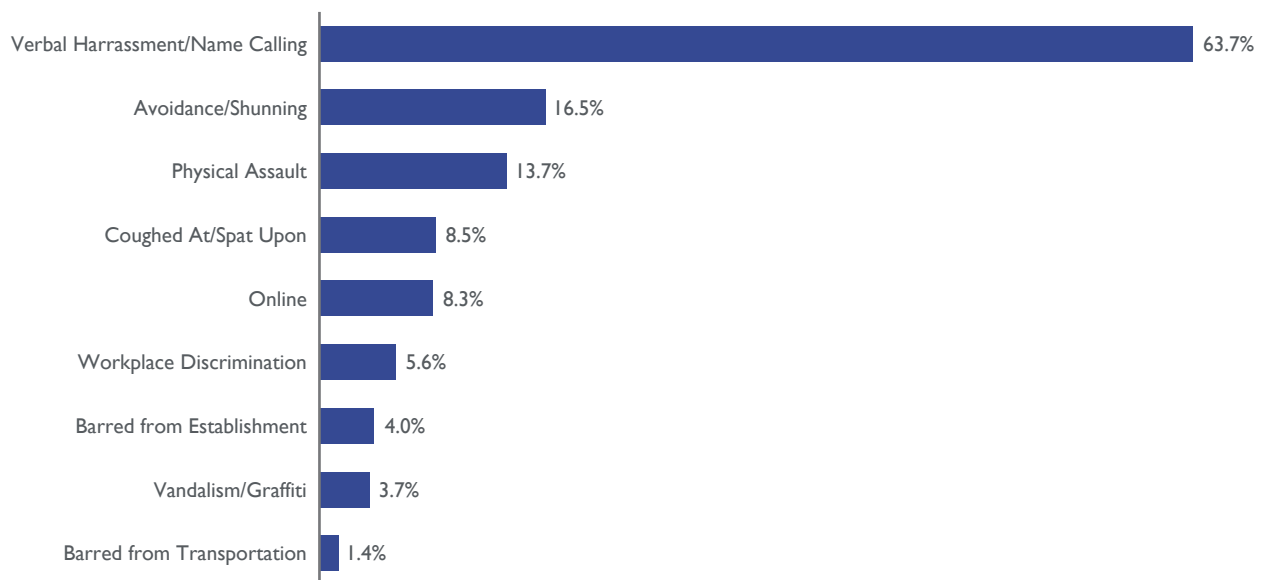
visas (see Figure 5). By contrast, nearly all Vietnamese permanent residents, 95 percent, received their green card through family-based channels and a much smaller share, 5 percent, arrived with employment-based backing. Meanwhile, 30 percent of Nepali immigrants arrived through the Diversity Immigrant Visa Program (often referred to as a “lottery”) that grants a small number of immigrant visas to immigrants from countries with historically low rates of immigration, and an additional 30 percent arrived due to refugee or asylee status. These different pathways to lawful permanent residency illustrate the diversity of need among Asian immigrants. Employer-sponsored visas typically require high levels of education and/or highly specialized skills while family, diversity, and refugee status-based visas do not have

similar requirements. The needs of a PhD-level scientist from South Korea are likely very different from the needs of a Nepali refugee.

Many Asian immigrants in Massachusetts aren’t even captured by the analysis above because they are living in the United States without legal documentation. In fact, Asian immigrants account for roughly one quarter of all undocumented immigrants in Massachusetts, amounting to an estimated 39,000 individuals (Figure 6). Many of these immigrants have great need and yet are ineligible for many federal safety net programs, notably unemployment insurance, [despite paying into those same systems](#).

**Figure 8: Nationally, over 9,000 reports of anti-Asian hate have been reported during the pandemic.**

National incidents reported to Stop AAPI Hate. March 2021 – June 2021.



**Figure 8.1: 8 out of 10 Asian Americans say that violence against them is increasing.**

Survey of US adults conducted April 5-11, 2021, by Pew Research Center.



# CHALLENGES FACED BY AAPI COMMUNITIES DURING THE PANDEMIC

As the demographic overview earlier suggests, AAPI in Greater Boston make up a fast-growing population with a wide range of needs. Many of these needs have been exacerbated over the past year and so in this section we detail some ways that AAPI have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and economic recession.

## Discrimination, Hate and Scapegoating

From Japanese American internment to the murder of Vincent Chin to the rise in hate crimes against South Asian and Arab Americans after 9/11, Asian Americans have a long history of being scapegoated during moments of collective crisis. The COVID-19 crisis has been no different. Stop AAPI Hate, a reporting center started by San Francisco State University, the Asian Pacific Planning and Policy Council, and Chinese for Affirmative Action, received more than 9,000 reports of incidents of hate between

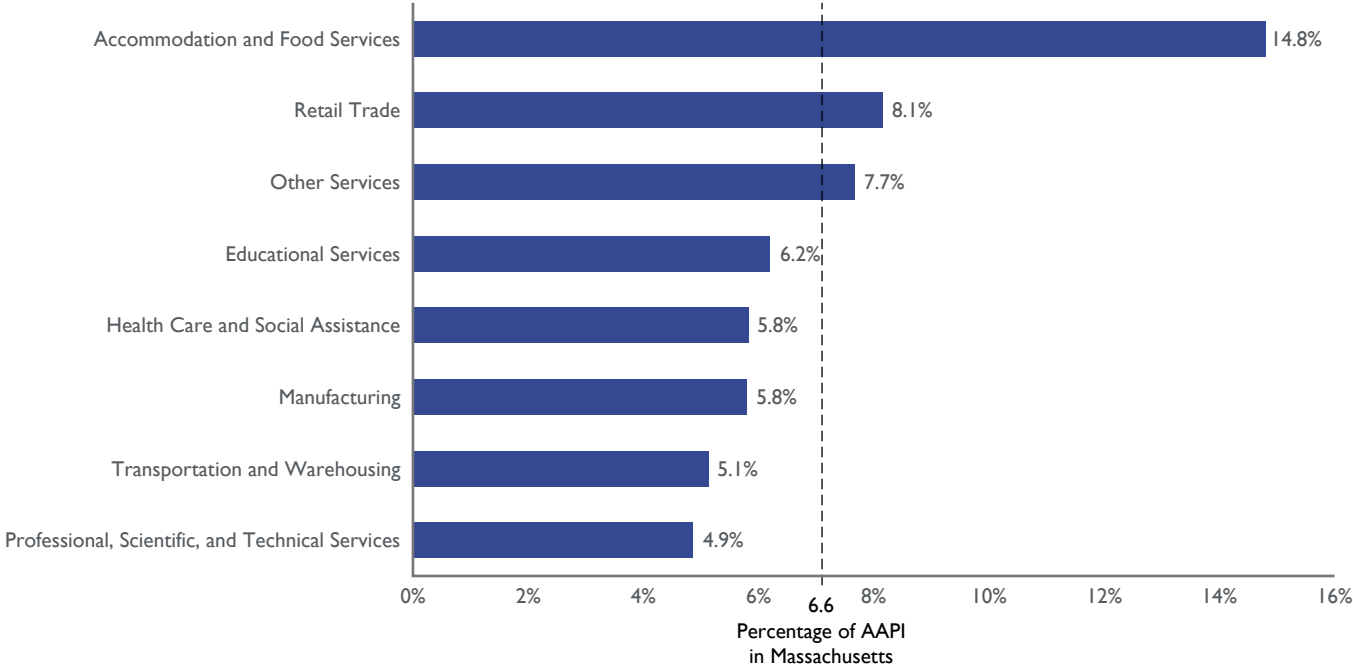
March 2020 and June 2021.<sup>2</sup> As seen in Figure 8, while most incidents come in the form of verbal harassment or name calling, nearly one in seven involve physical violence. The Center also received so many reports of being coughed at or spat upon that staffers had to create a new category on the incident form.

The Pew Research Center found that 45 percent of Asian Americans reported at least one incident of hate because of their racial or ethnic background since the pandemic began. Discrimination against Asian Americans is not new—a majority of Asian American adults reported experiencing discrimination even before the pandemic—but is finally gaining widespread attention as it gets worse.<sup>3</sup> An overwhelming majority—81 percent—of Asian Americans surveyed said that violence against them is increasing. Notably, the Pew survey was only conducted in English and we thus expect that its findings actually *understate* the reality of anti-AAPI hate.

Experiences of hate and discrimination have very real consequences on well-being and mental health. Stop AAPI Hate found that one fifth of its respondents show signs of racial trauma, characterized by depression, avoidance and hyper vigilance. Similarly, the national Asian American & Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander COVID-19 Needs Assessment Project found that Asian Americans who faced anti-Asian discrimination were 2.2 times as

**Figure 9: Asian entrepreneurs are more likely to be in hard-hit industries that have closed at high rates.**

Share of MA entrepreneurs that are AAPI by sector, 2019.



Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample

[likely to report current depression or anxiety symptoms](#). The results were even higher for Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NH/PIs) who were more than three times as likely to report depression or anxiety after facing discrimination. This is particularly concerning when coupled with the trouble that AAPI experience accessing mental health services—62 percent of Asian Americans and 41 percent of NH/PIs with current diagnosed mental health conditions need help accessing mental health services.

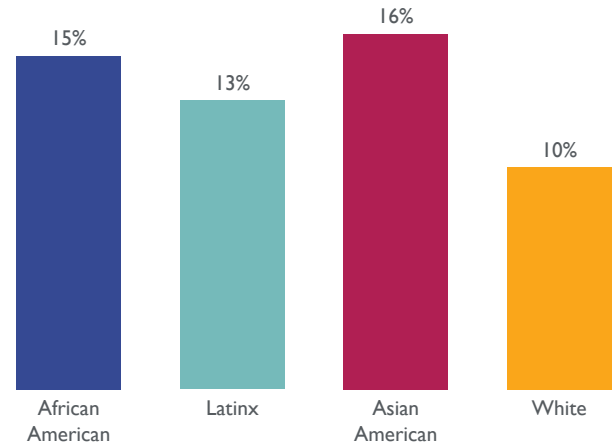
### Economic Impacts of the Pandemic

While the economic crisis of the past year has been hard for everyone, there’s reason to believe it’s been especially hard on AAPI workers and entrepreneurs who either work or own businesses in hard-hit sectors. Starting with business owners, while AAPI account for 6.6 percent of the state population, they represent 7.7 percent of the entrepreneurs in “Other Services” (including nail salons, laundry services), 8 percent of entrepreneurs in “Retail Trade,” and 15 percent of entrepreneurs in “Accommodation and Food Services” (see Figure 9).

The “Accommodation and Food Services” sector has suffered particularly heavy losses—the number of Massachusetts small businesses in the sector [declined by 60 percent in the past year](#), compared to 40 percent of all small businesses.<sup>4</sup>

### Figure 10: Asian-owned businesses saw steep revenue declines during the pandemic.

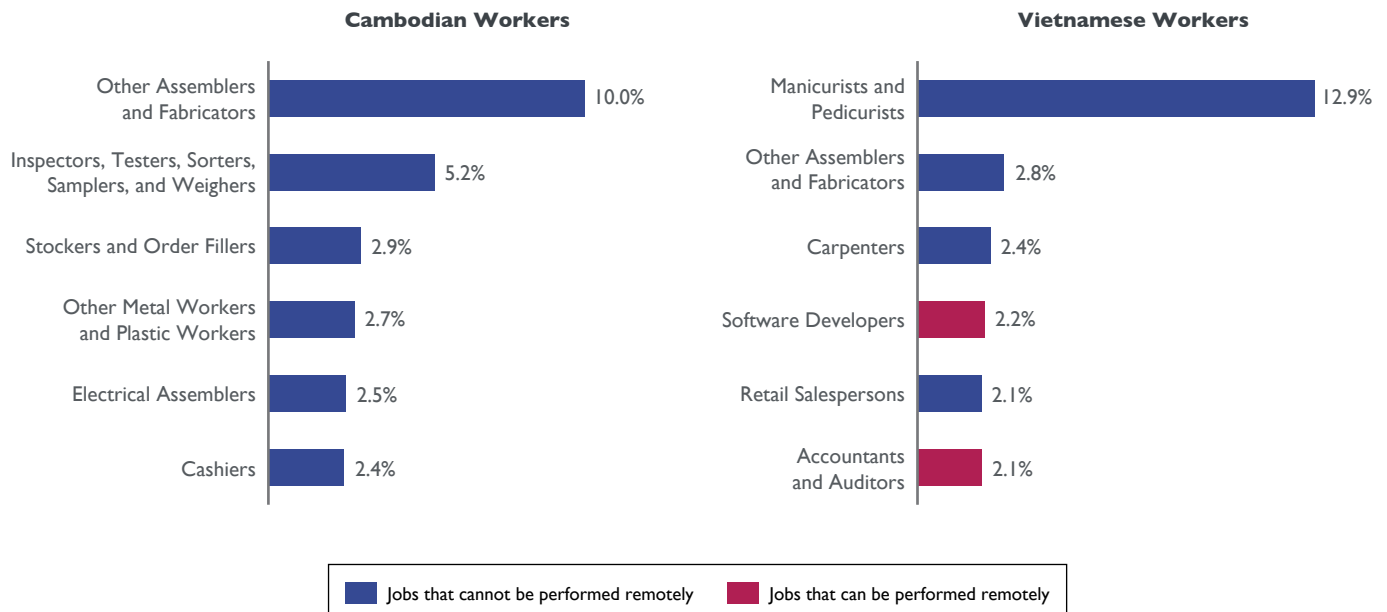
Small businesses that experienced severe revenue declines (>75%). National. 2019 vs. 2020.



Source Economic impact of pandemic on 8,328 US small businesses; Reimagine Main Street & Public Private Strategies’ Business Owners of Color COVID-19 Survey

### Figure 11: AAPI work in a range of occupations, many of which cannot be performed from home.

Occupational make-up of workers by ancestry. MA. 2019.



Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample



## ONGOING CHALLENGES FACING AAPI COMMUNITIES

Because Asian entrepreneurs are clustered in some of the most devastated industries, a higher share of AAPI small business owners reported severe revenue loss than did their peers in other racial groups. Nationally, 16 percent of Asian-owned small businesses lost more than 75 percent of their revenue, compared to just 10 percent of White-owned small businesses (Figure 10).<sup>5</sup>

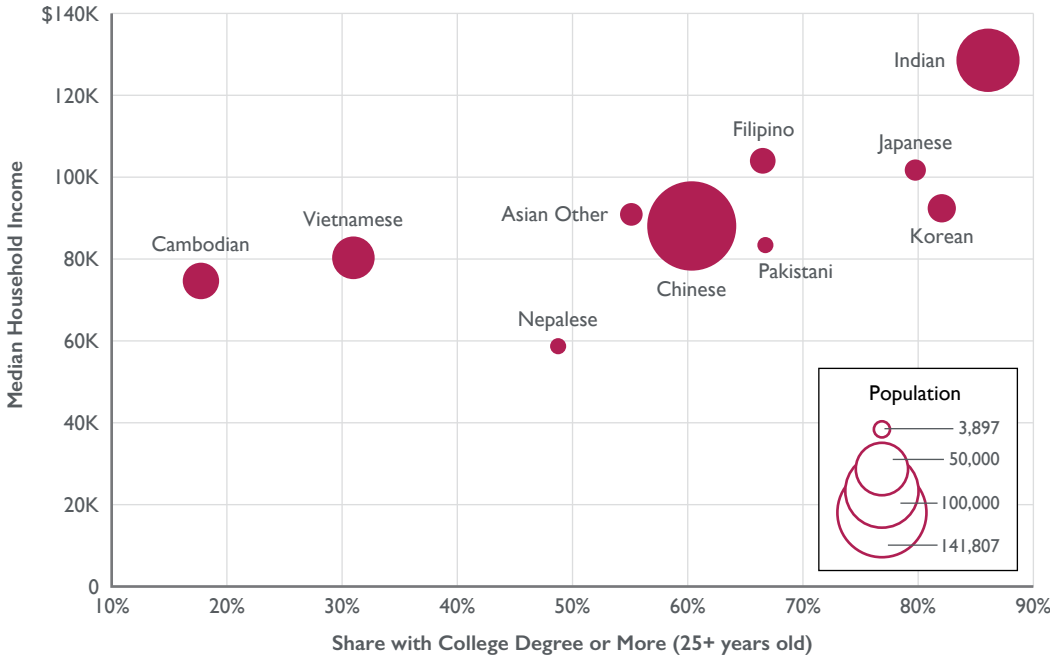
While these revenue losses have been hard on AAPI business owners, the vast majority of people in the workforce are employees of larger firms, rather than business owners themselves, and many AAPI workers are also in sectors that were hard hit by pandemic-related business closures. As shown in Figure 11, this is particularly true for Cambodian and Vietnamese residents, who make up two of the largest AAPI communities in Massachusetts. Cambodian workers are clustered in manufacturing and production jobs that cannot be performed remotely. Over 12 percent of Vietnamese workers are employed in nail salons that were forced to close for several months and have experienced significant revenue decline since reopening. In addition to the economic hardship of layoffs and underemployment, manicurists and pedicurists were also at high risk of COVID exposure when they returned to work.

Even before the pandemic, Asian American and Pacific Islander communities faced many challenges that were often masked by aggregate numbers and pervasive stereotypes of Asian Americans as the “model minority.” While the challenges outlined here in no way represent an exhaustive list of community needs, they highlight some key barriers to ensuring that our economic recovery is inclusive of all AAPI communities and to building AAPI civic voice for a more equitable future.

### Income Inequality and Poverty

Significant socioeconomic diversity among Asian American and Pacific Islander communities in Greater Boston is often obscured by aggregate numbers. While more than 80 percent of Indian adults have a college degree or higher, only 18 percent of Cambodian adults have a college degree or higher (Figure 12). Median incomes also vary widely, from \$58,705 for

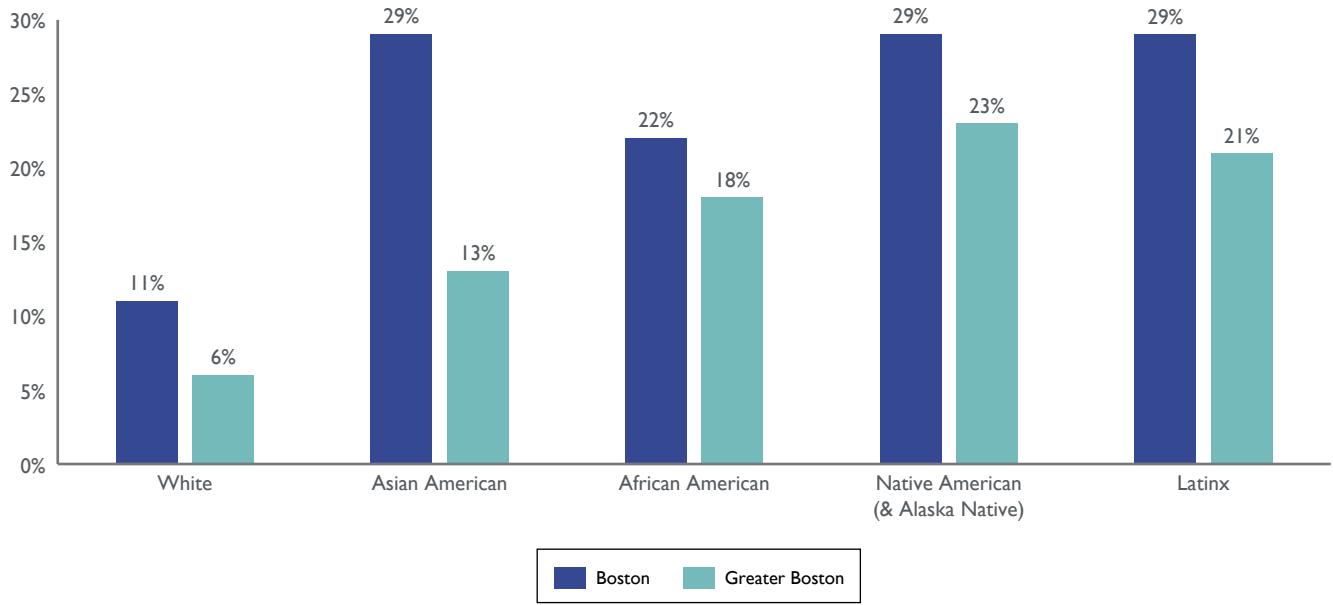
**Figure 12: Income and educational attainment vary greatly across AAPI communities.**  
Top 10 countries of ancestry for Asian Americans in Greater Boston, 2018.



Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey  
Note: Bubble sizes represent population count.

**Figure 13: Asian poverty is 2x White poverty in Greater Boston and 3x White poverty in Boston.**

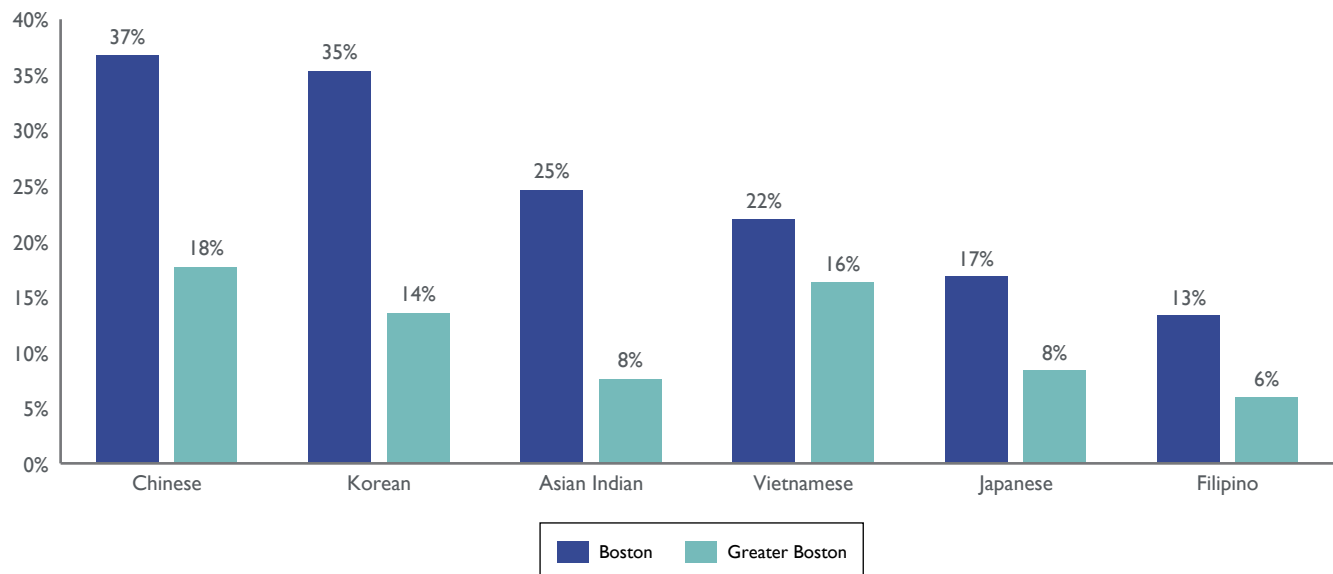
Poverty rates by race/ethnicity: Boston vs. Greater Boston. 2019.



Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates.  
 Note: All racial groups do not include individuals who identify as Latinx or multiracial. Latinx can be of any race.

**Figure 14: Asian poverty varies greatly by nationality.**

Poverty rates by nationality: Boston vs. Greater Boston. 2019.



Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates.

Nepali residents to \$128,552 for Indian residents. The median income for AAPI in Greater Boston in aggregate, \$102,785 in 2018, skews high because of the relative size of different ethnic groups thus masking some smaller groups' substantially lower incomes. Nationally, Asian Americans have the *largest intra-group income inequality* of any racial group—the income of the top 10 percent of Asian American earners is 10.7 times larger than the income of the bottom 10 percent of earners.<sup>6</sup>

The high median income reported when all AAPI are aggregated also obscures high levels of Asian American poverty. For example, while median household income in Greater Boston is roughly similar for Asian American and White households, the Asian American poverty rate is actually double that of White households (Figure 13). And within the city of Boston, Asian poverty is three times higher. In Boston, approximately one third of Asians live in poverty—a share on par with Latinx and Native American Bostonians.

Aggregated poverty data also obscure large variation in poverty rates between Asian communities, both in the region and Boston itself. In Boston, for instance, more than one third of Chinese and Korean residents live in poverty, compared to just 17 percent of Japanese and 13 percent of Filipino residents (Figure 14). Some of the elevated poverty rates in Boston may be the result of international students showing up as technically in poverty because they don't earn much income while students, but that's certainly only one factor.

Regionwide, poverty rates drop but the variation persists. For instance, 16 percent of Vietnamese residents in Greater Boston live in poverty, compared to just 8 percent of Indian residents.

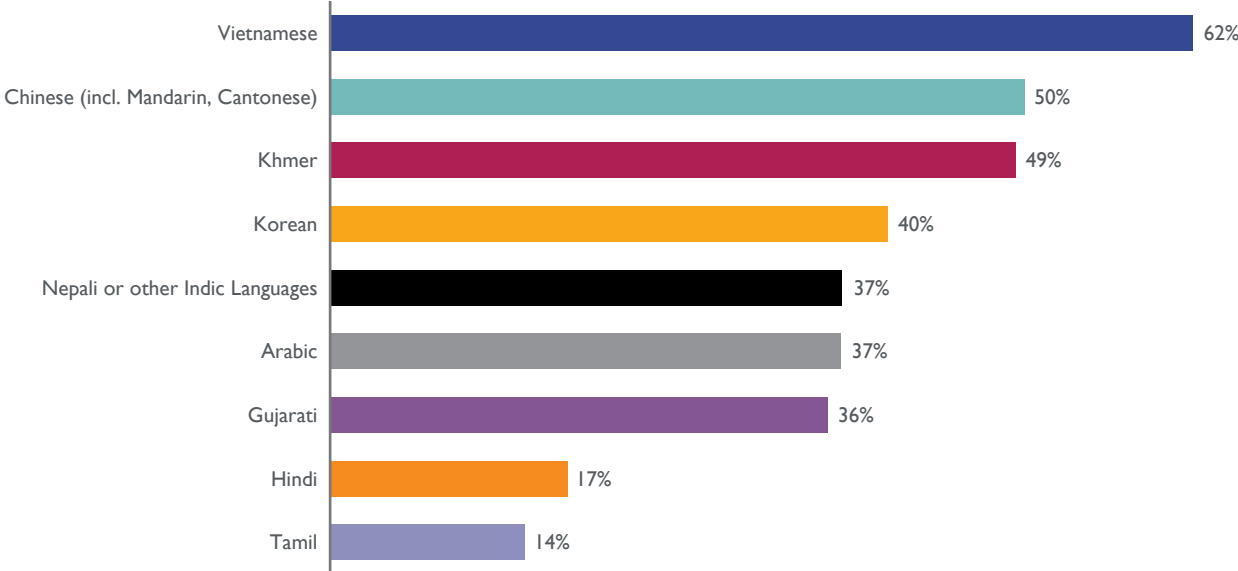
**Language Access**

Low-income Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have a real need for services but one barrier to accessing those services, and even to measuring community need adequately, can be language. Like median income and educational attainment, language proficiency varies greatly across AAPI groups. As Figure 15 shows, around 60 percent of Vietnamese speakers and half of Chinese language (including Mandarin and Cantonese) and Khmer speakers speak English less than “very well,” compared to 14 percent of Tamil speakers and 17 percent of Hindi speakers. Limited English proficiency can present barriers to navigating complicated bureaucracies surrounding social services, such as unemployment insurance or food assistance programs, when sufficient translation services are not provided.

Linguistic diversity and the range of English proficiency among AAPI also make it difficult to capture data about AAPI populations. Many surveys are only offered in English, or English and a limited number of highly spoken Asian languages, and thus *fail to represent smaller communities that have lower levels of English proficiency*. Because of this, many data are biased away from capturing AAPI poverty or other challenges.

**Figure 15: English proficiency varies widely across Asian communities.**

Percent of speakers that speak English “less than very well,” Asian languages spoken at home with 7,500+ speakers in MA.



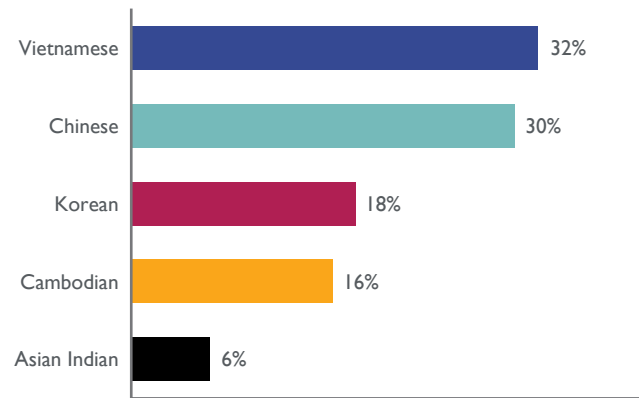
Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates; Table B16001



Limited English proficiency at a household scale can be seen in the share of households that are linguistically isolated, or households where no member over the age of 14 speaks English exclusively or “very well.” Linguistic isolation can make it even harder to access services and other resources. It can also shift translation responsibilities to children who may learn English in schools, while adults may not have access to, or the time to complete, English instruction. One third of Chinese language and Vietnamese speaking households are linguistically isolated in Massachusetts (see Figure 16).

**Figure 16: Many AAPI households are linguistically isolated, particularly Vietnamese and Chinese households.**

Percent of speakers that are linguistically isolated (no one in household over the age of 14 speaks English exclusively or “very well). MA 2019.



Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, IPUMS USA

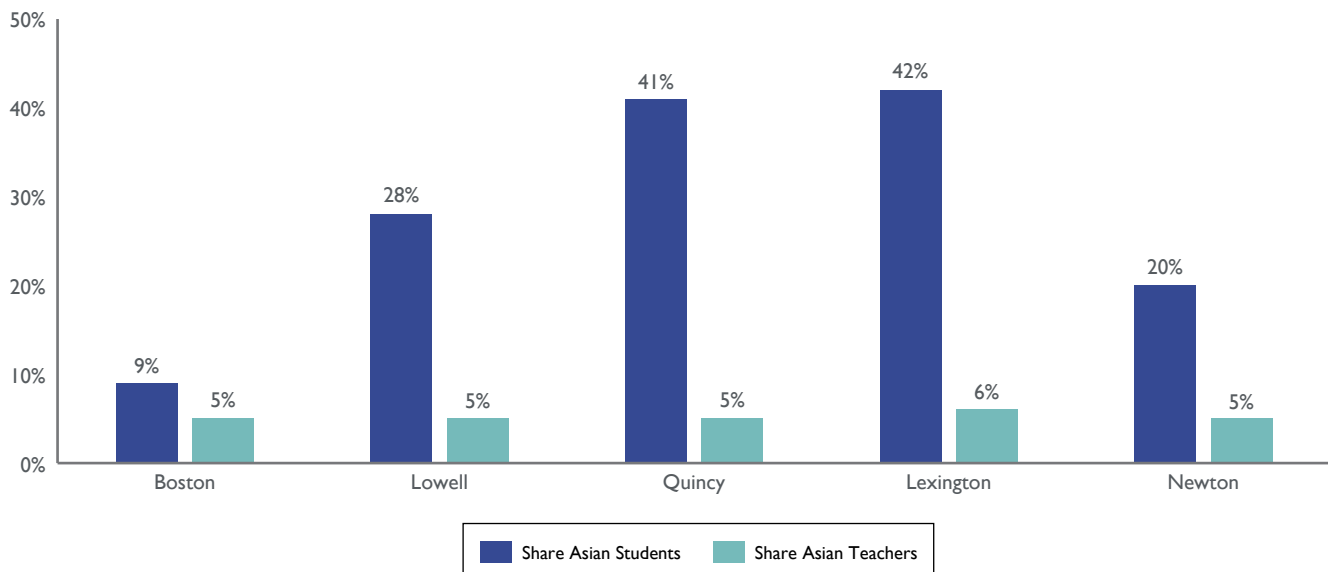
### Representation, Civic Voice and Political Power

Local government and municipal workforces have not kept up with the rapidly growing AAPI population, leading to dramatic underrepresentation of AAPI in schools, municipal government, and the state legislature. The lack of representation can further marginalize AAPI communities and their needs.

In school districts with a large share of AAPI students, teachers are often not representative of those students. As seen in Figure 17, all of the five school districts with the highest number of AAPI students statewide had a significant gap between the share of Asian students and the share of Asian teachers. Boston Public Schools comes closest, with a teaching force that is 5 percent Asian compared to a student body that is 9 percent Asian. However, in Quincy and Lexington public schools—both of which have student bodies that are over 40 percent Asian—only 5 and 6 percent, respectively, of their teachers are Asian. Statewide, the share of teachers that are Asian is just 1.8 percent.

**Figure 17: Many teaching forces are not representative of their AAPI students.**

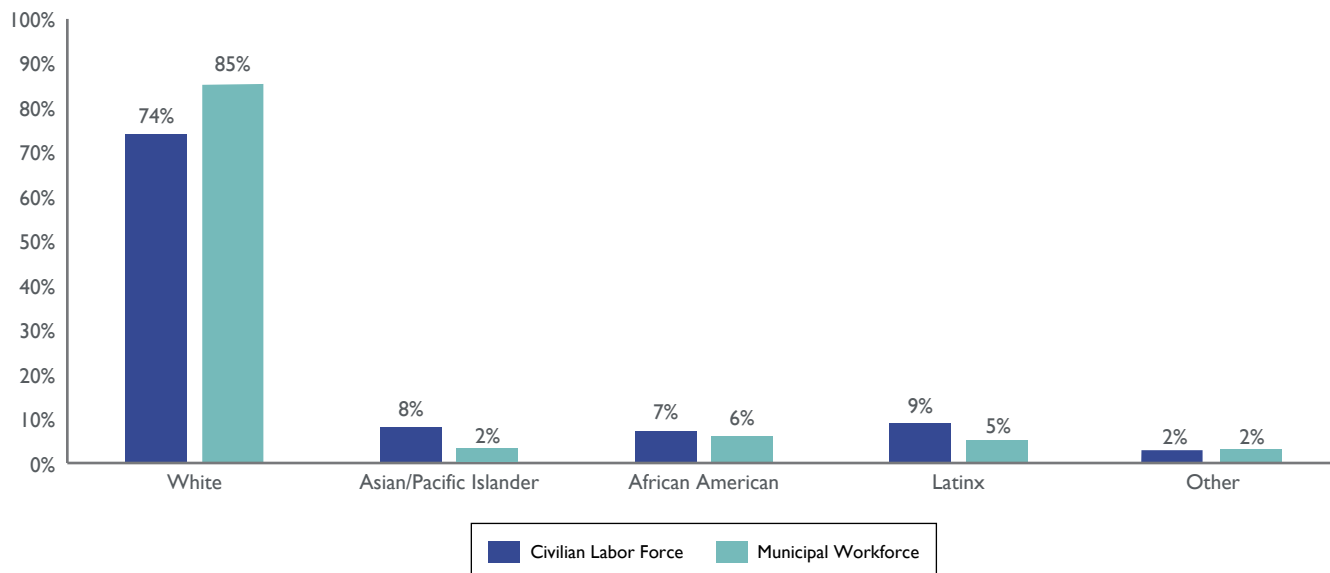
Student and full-time equivalent teacher shares, MA schools with largest number of AAPI student. SY 2020.



Source: MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

**Figure 18: Asian and Pacific Islanders are underrepresented in municipal government.**

MAPC analysis of Metro Boston civilian labor force and municipal employees by race/ethnicity. 2016.



Source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample

Note: White, Asian/Pacific Islander, African American and Other racial groups do not include individuals who identify as Latinx. Latinx can be of any race.

This disparity between the demographics of the population and of public employees continues when looking at the municipal workforce more broadly. These are the employees responsible for allocating and distributing municipal resources and without AAPI representation it is possible that community needs will go unseen and unaddressed. A recent Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) report found that while 8 percent of the civilian labor force in Greater Boston is AAPI, *just 2 percent of the municipal workforce is AAPI* (Figure 18). When looking at municipal employees in managerial positions, the discrepancy is even more stark—less than 1 percent of municipal managers are Asian American or Pacific Islander. Representation in the municipal workforce is critical. Without AAPI present at the decision-making table, it is easy for AAPI community needs, such as translated materials, to be overlooked.

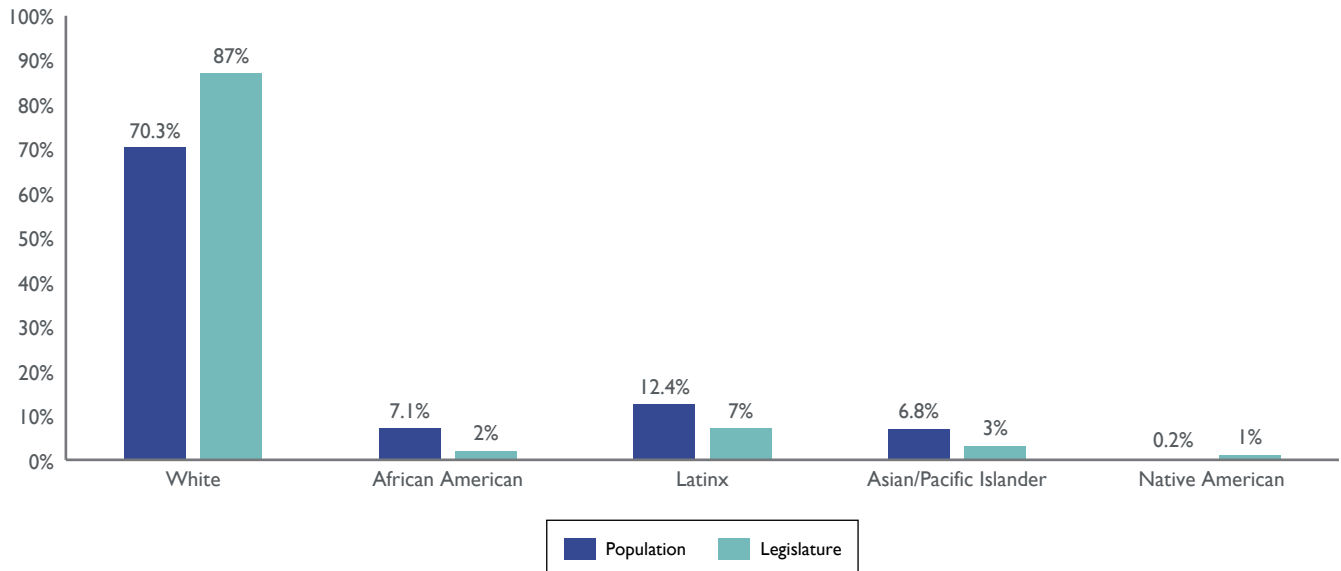
Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are also underrepresented in the Massachusetts State Legislature. Despite accounting for roughly 7 percent of the population, just 3 percent of Massachusetts’ legislators identify as AAPI (Figure 19). Out of its combined 200 members, this amounts to seven members of the House of Representatives and just one State Senator, Senator Sonia Chang-Díaz, that are AAPI. AAPI are not alone in their underrepresentation and a state house reflective of all Massachusetts residents is essential to ensuring that all voices are included in state-level decision-making.

As Asian American and Pacific Islander communities continue to grow, so do their political power and voice. AAPI voter turnout has steadily grown

since 2010 and reached new heights in 2020 (see Figure 20). However, the AAPI voter turnout rate remains below the voter turnout for White residents (81 percent) and the state average (76 percent).<sup>7</sup> Mobilizing the AAPI vote and AAPI political power will be key to increasing representation in all levels of government.

**Figure 19: Asian and Pacific Islanders are underrepresented in the MA state legislature.**

2019 MA population by race compared to 2020 state legislator demographics.



Source: 2019 American Community Survey 1-year Estimate; National Conference of State Legislators

## CONCLUSION

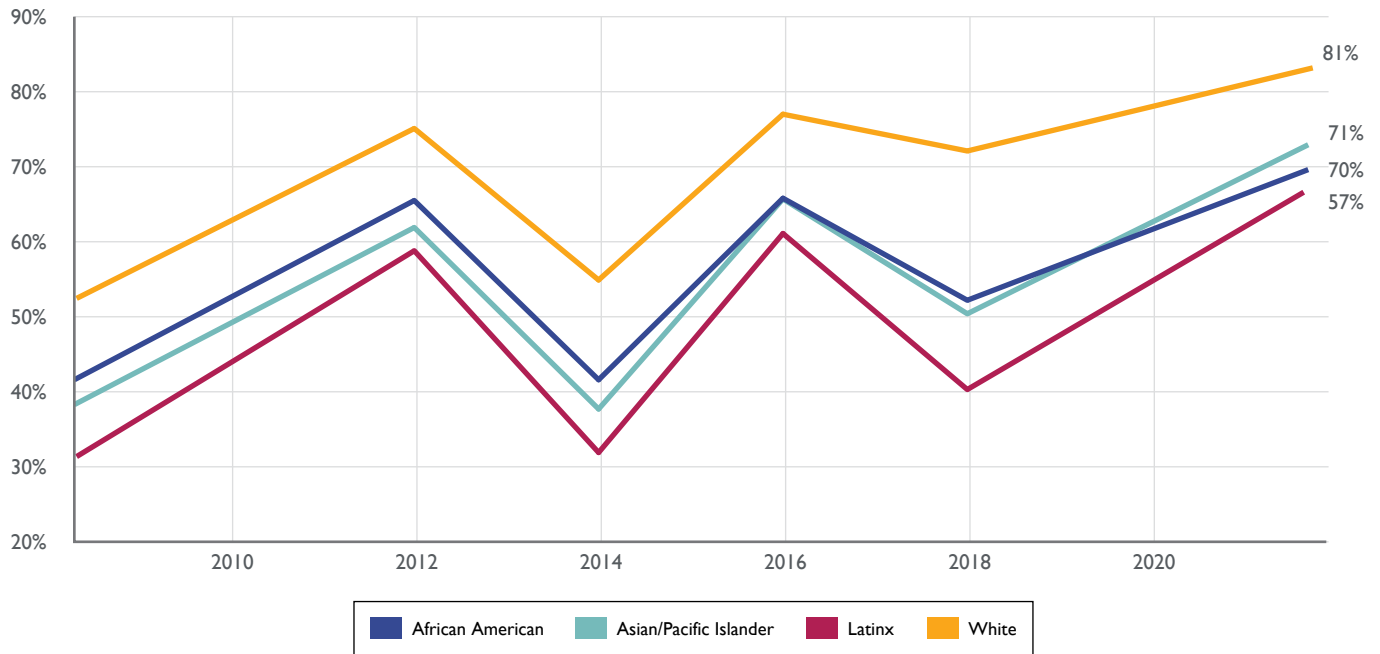
The COVID-19 pandemic has shone a bright light on long histories of discrimination, exclusion and inequality that have impacted AAPI communities. While just a starting point, we see several key facts to take away from this report:

- AAPI communities in Massachusetts are fast growing and diverse.
- Recent anti-Asian discrimination and violence reflect existing trends and a history of scapegoating during crisis.
- AAPI workers and entrepreneurs have faced many COVID-related challenges.
- Aggregated data mask many disparities and community needs, including poverty and a need for improved language resources.
- AAPI residents are substantially underrepresented in the municipal workforce and state legislature.

There are tremendous resources within Asian American and Pacific Islander communities in our region, and collective organizing and power building is critical to ensuring that all AAPI needs are heard and addressed. The Asian Community Fund is one example of organizations seeking to do just that. By mobilizing AAPI economic assets, voting power, and people power, the Asian Community Fund seeks to tackle longstanding needs within AAPI communities and build solidarity both among AAPI and with other marginalized groups. We hope that this paper will serve as one educational tool for helping support these efforts to create a more just and equitable region.

### Figure 20: Asian American voter turnout has steadily increased in MA and there’s room to grow.

Percent of eligible voters that voted. MA VoterTable.



Source: MA VoterTable analysis of voter file data from Catalist.

## ENDNOTES

1 Parker, K., Horowitz, Juliana. *Multiracial in America: Proud, Diverse and Growing in Numbers*, Pg. 29, Pew Research Center. June 2015. [https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2015/06/2015-06-11-multiracial-in-america\\_final-updated.pdf](https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2015/06/2015-06-11-multiracial-in-america_final-updated.pdf)

2 Yellow Horse, A., Jeung, R. *Stop AAPI Hate National Report*, Pg. 3, August 12, 2021, Stop AAPI Hate. <https://stopaapihate.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Stop-AAPI-Hate-Report-National-v2-210830.pdf>

3 Ruiz, Neil G. “Between the Data: The Unseen Stories of Asian Americans.” April 29, 2021. Vimeo, 4:53. [https://vimeo.com/536782052/2c9f5b9257?utm\\_content=buffer85ecf&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=twitter.com&utm\\_campaign=buffer](https://vimeo.com/536782052/2c9f5b9257?utm_content=buffer85ecf&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer)

4 Data from Opportunity Insights Economic Tracker accessed in May 2021.

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6 *COVID 19 and Advancing Asian American Recovery*, Pg. 5, McKinsey & Company, August 2020. <https://www.mckinsey.com/-/media/mckinsey/industries/public%20and%20social%20sector/our%20insights/covid%2019%20and%20advancing%20asian%20american%20recovery/covid-19-and-advancing-asian-american-recovery-v3.pdf>

7 Data provided by Massachusetts Voter Table.

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