



Stronger Together:

Immigrants, Refugees, and the Future of Texas



GRANTMAKERS CONCERNED WITH
IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES



Baptist Health Foundation
of San Antonio



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Introduction

Our nation is at a crossroads. Conflicting visions of who we are—and who we should be—are colliding. As concerns over terrorism rise and xenophobia and Islamophobia spread, some have called for walls to protect our borders, while others have welcomed newcomers to this nation of immigrants. Texas, whose Southern boundary accounts for two thirds of the U.S.-Mexico border, has long been a focal point for this debate. Yet many foundations are looking beyond the divisiveness and focusing on ways to address the challenges and reap the benefits of immigration. To aid philanthropy in this effort, “Stronger Together” provides a demographic and policy overview, explores the dynamic immigrant and refugee context in Texas, and highlights opportunities for philanthropy to support immigrant and refugee integration and promote prosperity for all Texans.

The Lone Star State’s immigrant and refugee population is growing—and it is increasingly diverse. The foreign-born population nearly doubled at the end of the last century, outpacing growth in the state’s U.S.-born population by nearly six to one.¹ Texas’ population of immigrants and refugees, once predominantly from Latin America and increasingly from Asia,² has risen at more than twice the rate of U.S.-born Texans.³ This trend has made Houston, the largest city in Texas, the nation’s most diverse metropolis.⁴ Houston has no ethnic or racial majority, and a quarter of its population is foreign born.⁵ Houston is the new face of Texas.

Texas’ policies towards immigrants and refugees reflect its conflicting desires to embrace and resist these demographic realities. Texas was the first state in the nation to offer in-state tuition to unauthorized immigrants,⁶ and over the last five years, it has resettled more refugees than any other state.⁷ The state has a uniquely interwoven tapestry of cultures, from the distinct flavors of Tex-Mex cuisine to the dozens of cultural celebrations inspired by its Latin American heritage and increasingly Asian makeup.⁸ Yet Texas is the lead plaintiff in a federal lawsuit to block an administrative

*Indian folk dance show
at the State Fair of Texas,
2013.*





initiative that would allow undocumented immigrants who are parents of U.S. citizens and green-card holders to secure temporary work authorization and protection from deportation.⁹ Most recently, its governor sued to block Syrian refugees from being resettled in the state,¹⁰ and public-opinion polls show a plurality of Texans in favor of barring all Muslim immigrants and refugees from entering the country.¹¹ This evolving and sometimes conflicting policy context parallels what is happening in states across the country, as well as in other parts of the world.

Yet the long-term vitality of Texas depends in large measure on how the state treats and integrates its newcomers. The future of immigrants and refugees is the state's future: One in three children in Texas has a foreign-born parent, and immigrants and refugees make up increasing shares of the state's workers and entrepreneurs, patients and caregivers, voters and taxpayers.¹² As with generations before them, today's immigrants have powered an economic boom from board rooms to factory floors.¹³ These immigration-driven demographic trends and socio-economic impacts create an imperative for foundations, regardless of their funding priorities, to integrate immigrants and refugees into their grantmaking. "Stronger Together" highlights the most critical issues facing newcomers and recommends ways for funders to learn about newcomer communities, meet basic needs, protect fundamental rights, strengthen economic integration, and enhance civic participation. Only through immigrant-inclusive grantmaking can funders fulfill their missions and ensure the vibrancy of our culture, democracy, and economy.

Glossary

Asylum seekers are persons who present themselves at a port of entry, declare a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, membership in a social group, political opinion, or national origin, but whose claims have not yet been decided. This group is included under the umbrella phrase **immigrants and refugees** and the umbrella term **newcomers**, both of which are used to refer to foreign-born individuals of any immigration status, although "newcomers" may include immigrants who are long-time residents.

Foreign-born refers to people residing in the United States who were not U.S. citizens at birth, including naturalized U.S. citizens, lawful permanent immigrants (or green-card holders), refugees and asylum seekers, certain legal nonimmigrants (including those on student, work, or some other temporary visas), and persons residing in the country without authorization. The umbrella phrase **immigrants and refugees** and the umbrella term **newcomers** are both used as shorthand to refer to this group, although "newcomers" may include immigrants who are long-time residents.

Immigrants are persons born abroad who have come to settle in the United States—regardless of their immigration status or whether they have become U.S. citizens. The word is *at times* used as an umbrella term to refer to foreign-born individuals of any immigration status.

Refugees are persons formally admitted to the United States due to persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, membership in a social group, political opinion, or national origin. The word is used as an umbrella term within the phrase **immigrants and refugees** to refer to a wide range of immigration statuses, but is otherwise only used to refer to "refugees" as defined here.

Unaccompanied children, as used in this report, refer to child asylum seekers and migrants who come to United States on their own, without a parent or legal guardian.

Understand Newcomer Communities

"I met a young girl from Burma, another girl from Vietnam, another girl from Syria, and another girl from Central America—all right here in Dallas, Texas. I was realizing that the 21st century, that is going to be the face of it. We've got to be a new America as we approach these issues..."

**Mike Rawlings,
Mayor of Dallas***

Having a solid understanding of demographic trends is critical to developing an effective funding strategy in any issue area, and this is particularly true in the dynamic and complex field of immigration. This demographic snapshot provides a statewide overview upon which funders could build and deepen their knowledge.

Texas' foreign-born population comes from around the globe, but one region dominates: Latin America.¹⁴ More than two thirds of all new Texans hail from the region,¹⁵ with more than half from Mexico alone,¹⁶ making Spanish the most common language among foreign-born Texans. Yet the face of Texas' foreign-born population is diversifying. The state's Asian population grew nearly 20 percent between 2010 and 2014, compared to 5 percent for foreign-born Texans from Latin America.¹⁷ Today, India and Vietnam each account for 4 to 5 percent of Texas' newcomer population.¹⁸ The state has accepted more refugees annually than any other state in the nation every year since 2010, welcoming 5,500 to 8,000 refugees each year, including a substantial number of Burmese and Iraqi refugees.¹⁹ In the last two years, Texas also had more than 13,000 unaccompanied children placed with family members in the state.²⁰

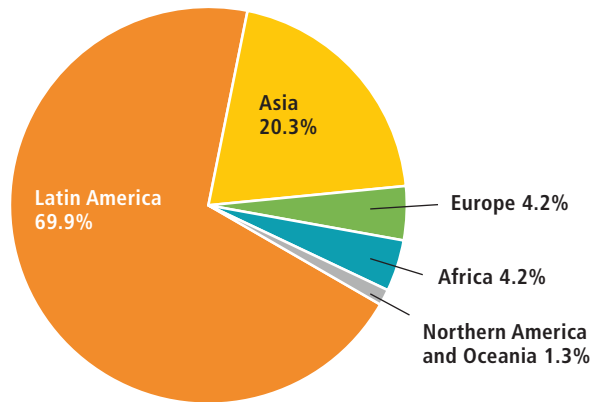
Overall, 69 percent of the total foreign-born population in Texas has lawful status.²¹ Regardless of their status, many immigrants have established strong ties to their communities; indeed, one third of children in Texas have at least one immigrant parent,²² and at least 80 percent of these children are U.S.-born citizens.²³

Most foreign-born Texans are of working age: 83 percent are between the ages of 18 and 64.²⁴ Of the remainder, 10 percent are 65 years old or older and 7 percent are 17 or younger.²⁵



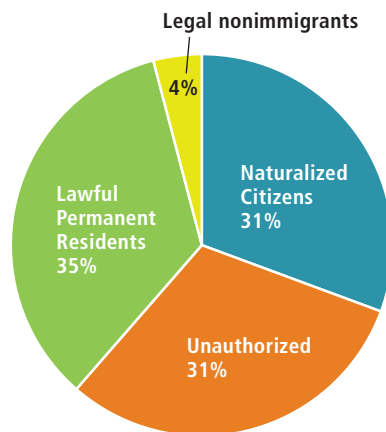
*WNYP. (2015, December). The Mayor of Dallas Welcomes Refugees. Retrieved from: <http://www.wnyc.org/story/mayor-dallas-welcomes-refugees-says-theyre-not-security-threat/>

Regions of Birth for Texas' Foreign-Born Population



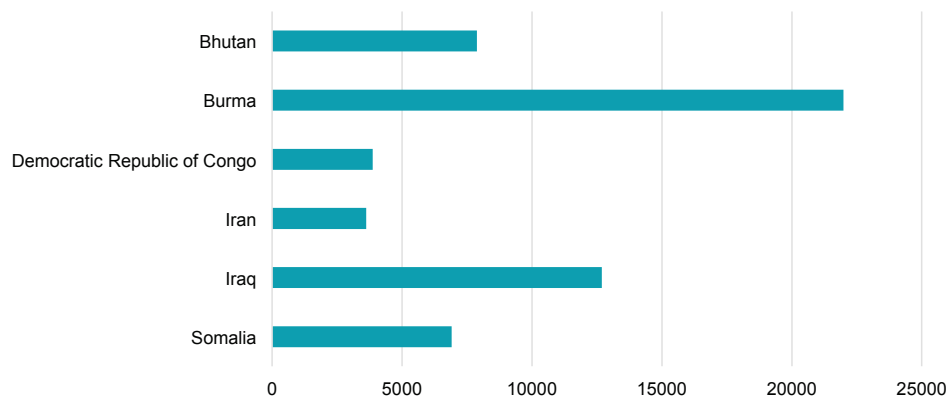
Source: Migration Policy Institute²⁶

Legal Status Breakdown of Texas' Foreign-Born Population



Source: Migration Policy Institute²⁷

Total Refugee Arrivals in Texas, 2002 to 2016*



* 2016 data runs through March 22, 2016

Source: Refugee Processing Center²⁸

Glossary

Lawful permanent residents (LPR) are persons legally admitted to reside and work permanently in the United States. LPRs are commonly known as "green card" holders.

Legal nonimmigrants are foreign-born persons who are present in the U.S. lawfully and temporarily on a visa for a specific and defined purpose.

Naturalized citizens have completed the process by which U.S. citizenship is granted to a foreign citizen or national after they fulfill the requirements established by Congress. In most cases these requirements include an English language and civics exam, five years of permanent residency (or three years if married to a U.S. citizen), and an oath of allegiance.

Unauthorized immigrants (this report also uses the phrase 'persons who lack legal status') are persons residing in the United States without legal immigration status; includes persons who entered without inspection and who overstayed a valid visa or otherwise have not complied with the terms of their admission. Some sources referenced in this report use the term "undocumented immigrants" to refer to this population.



Funding Recommendations:

- Building on this statewide demographic profile, local and regional funders may wish to conduct further analysis to gain a more nuanced and deeper demographic understanding of the specific cities and counties in which they fund. They may also want to conduct a community assessment to identify the needs and assets of newcomers, perhaps focusing on specific subpopulations like children or refugees; map the organizations that serve them; determine existing service capacity; analyze language access; identify service and policy gaps; and develop their funding strategies. As a recent example, the Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative commissioned a demographic profile of the local foreign-born population and conducted an assessment of the immigration service capacity to inform their grantmaking.
- Engaging in coordinated planning and grantmaking can help funders understand and address the multifaceted nature of immigration. Consultation with a wide range of community stakeholders and coordination with colleagues in philanthropy allow funders to understand developments in the field and where their grant dollars can make a difference. Joint data collection, analysis, planning, strategy development, and allocation of funds can provide greater efficiency and economy of scale, yielding higher impact.

Meet Basic Needs, Protect Fundamental Rights

Responding to Immigration Enforcement and Hostile Environment

Immigration enforcement, including detention and deportation, casts a long shadow over the daily lives of unauthorized immigrants and their families. Children of immigrants, 80 percent of whom are U.S. citizens, are less likely to access vital services for which they are eligible due to their parents' unfamiliarity with eligibility criteria, limited English proficiency, and/or lack of legal status and fear of immigration enforcement. Fear that contacting the authorities—whether government officials, schoolteachers, or law enforcement—could lead to detention and deportation is a constant concern for many immigrant families. These fears among foreign-born Texans are not unfounded. Situated along two thirds of the U.S.-Mexico border, Texas has long been the focal point for immigration and border enforcement and home to the nation's largest detention facilities.²⁹ The high rates of deportations in recent years, compounded by growing anti-immigrant sentiments, have heightened fears, and recent state policy changes have given immigrants additional cause for concern. For example, in 2013 Texas ceased accepting the *matrícula consular*, the ID issued by Mexican consulates, as a valid identification for parents seeking birth certificates for their U.S.-born children.³⁰



The impact of immigration enforcement on the well-being of children in immigrant families is well documented. Enforcement actions can cause economic and social instability, psychological trauma and distress, and family dissolution,³¹ creating ripple effects through communities when children and their families are in crisis. When parents are detained or deported, children experience more severe mental health challenges and need culturally competent services.³²

Similarly, children and families who have fled violence and persecution in Central America have typically experienced multiple instances of trauma in their homelands, on their journey to the United States, and/or while detained in U.S. custody. Studies indicate that 60 to 80 percent of women and girls had been sexually abused or assaulted en route to the United States.³³

"In the span of eight years, our nation's decision to deport 3,165,426 unauthorized immigrants has affected about 1,582,711 citizen-children... [These] children are collateral damage."

**Luis Zayas,
Dean of the
University of Texas
at Austin School
of Social Work***

*Kang, Miliann. (2015, November 22). Record Deportations are Leaving Children Behind. *Newsweek*. Retrieved from: <http://www.newsweek.com/record-deportations-are-leaving-children-behind-396806>; Following a peak in 2010, deportations have dropped significantly.



Outside the immigration enforcement context, rising xenophobia, Islamophobia, and virulent anti-immigrant sentiments have created an unwelcoming environment for newcomers, whether they are immigrants from neighboring Mexico or refugees from the Middle East. Such hostility creates an additional layer of fear, compounds trauma, and undermines newcomers' ability to build a new life and contribute to their new community.

Funding Recommendations:

- Funders interested in protecting legal rights and due process can support efforts to monitor and document enforcement and detention practices; ensure fair and humane treatment of immigrants, particularly women and children, in detention; and provide assistance to immigrants in detention, such as psychosocial and visitation programs, as well as legal representation in deportation proceedings.
- Funders concerned about impact on children can fund mental health counseling, support services, and advocacy to ensure that school, social service, and child welfare systems meet the needs of affected children.
- Funders can support mental health and trauma services, psychosocial support, and legal services to help Central American children and women seeking asylum in the United States.
- To mitigate the impact of heightened enforcement and xenophobic sentiment, funders can support efforts to educate the broader society about immigrant and refugee contributions; address misinformation and misperceptions, particularly anti-Muslim sentiment; and put in place local and state policies that support long-term immigrant and refugee integration.

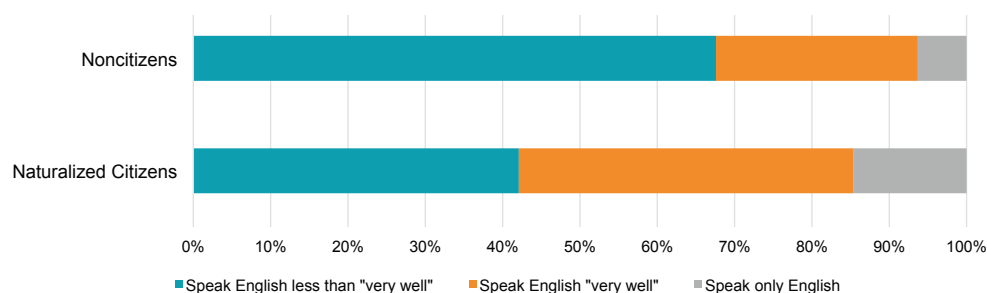
Improving English Proficiency

English proficiency is an ongoing challenge facing immigrants and refugees, whether in schools, workplaces, grocery stores, or government offices. Approximately 59 percent of foreign-born Texans speak English “less than very well.”³⁴ Proficiency is especially limited among unauthorized immigrants, more than half of whom speak English “not well” or “not at all.” English ability is central to earning potential, with pay rising not simply when English proficiency is achieved but with each step up the ladder towards total proficiency.³⁵

The lack of English proficiency among immigrants, especially the unauthorized, has a profound impact on children. Nearly half of all children of unauthorized immigrants in Texas live in households where no one over 13 speaks English “very well,” but that rate is twice as high in several Texas jurisdictions, including Harris and Fort Bend counties.³⁶ In linguistically isolated families, children not only lack exposure to English; they often must serve as translators for their parents, exposing them to adult worries and challenges at an early age.

Approximately 800,000 Texas school children, 71 percent of whom are U.S. citizens,³⁷ participate in programs for English language learners (ELL).³⁸ Language difficulties are a major factor in dropouts: immigrants are 75 percent more likely to drop out of junior high and high school than the average student, and English language learners are 125 percent more likely.³⁹

English Proficiency



Source: Migration Policy Institute⁴⁰

Funding Recommendations:

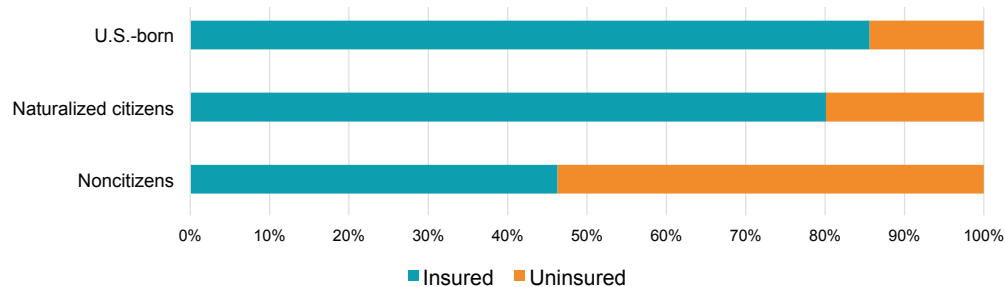
- Philanthropy can support programs to increase language access, English proficiency, and educational supports and opportunities designed with the particular needs of immigrant and refugee families in mind. These include quality early-learning programs; programs for dual language learners; and vocational English programs.
- Fund programs designed specifically to help children of immigrants complete high school, get a GED, and access further education and/or job training.



Increasing Health Access

Foreign-born Texans are three times more likely (42 percent) to lack health insurance than their U.S.-born counterparts (14 percent).⁴¹ The gap remains even for naturalized citizens, 20 percent of whom are uninsured—and widens further for non-citizens, half of whom lack health insurance.⁴² The primary reason for the discrepancy in coverage is that immigrants, despite their high rate of workforce participation, are less likely to have employer-sponsored health insurance.⁴³ Moreover, undocumented immigrants are not eligible for coverage under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Without health insurance, they can be forced out of work or schools due to untreated preventable conditions or, worse, suffer financial ruin if a family member is seriously injured or falls gravely ill.⁴⁴ This risk is amplified for the high portion of foreign-born immigrants who work in physically strenuous jobs or in industries that have high risk of workplace injuries.⁴⁵ The lack of health insurance also presents risks to asylum seekers, such as the thousands of unaccompanied children and families fleeing violence and persecution in Central America, many of whom battle anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, or other similar conditions.⁴⁶

Health Insurance Coverage Rates



Source: Migration Policy Institute⁴⁷

Funding Recommendations:

- Immigrants and refugees who are uninsured, do not qualify for coverage under the ACA, or otherwise have limited access to health care are extremely vulnerable. Funders can support safety-net providers such as federally qualified health centers, community clinics, and public hospitals to provide care to uninsured foreign-born Texans. They can also support multilingual, culturally competent community outreach, education, and assistance to encourage eligible immigrants to enroll for coverage through the ACA.

Supporting Refugee Resettlement

Texas leads the nation in the number of refugees resettled over the past five years. Once refugees arrive in the United States, federal funding supports time-limited services to help them transition, but beyond this period, refugees need a range of services to facilitate their long-term resettlement and integration. The particular needs of women and children, who represent the majority of refugee admissions, as well as people with disabilities and LGBT refugees, are critical priorities.

Funding Recommendations:

- To facilitate the successful integration of refugees, funders can support mental health services, employment training, English language classes, translation and interpretation services, and other programs.

Strengthen Economic Integration

"If suddenly all the undocumented workers [in the state] were simply to go back to their home of origin, it would be disastrous for the Texas economy."

**Bill Hammond,
president of the
Texas Association
of Business***

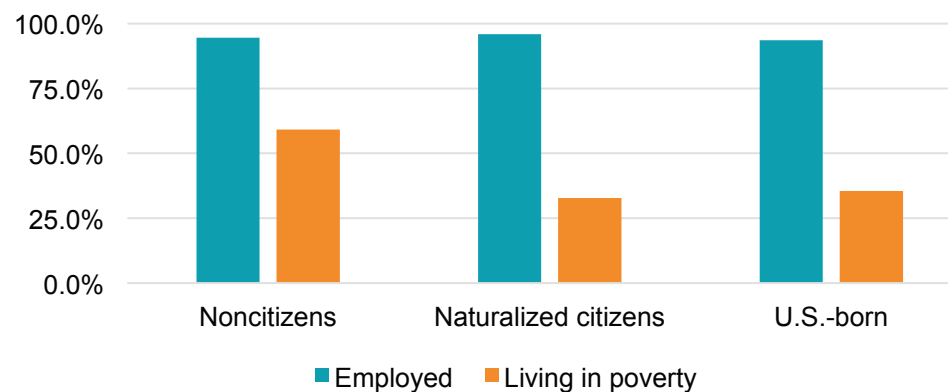
Profile of Immigrant and Refugee Economic Contributions

The economic contributions of immigrants have long been and continue to be essential to the Lone Star State's prosperity. Immigrant entrepreneurs' contribution to the state in the form of wages, salary, and business earnings was estimated at \$65 billion in 2011.⁴⁸ Each year, immigrant-owned businesses account for more than \$10 billion in income,⁴⁹ with small businesses alone contributing \$4.4 billion.⁵⁰ Immigrants account for only a sixth of the Texas population, but a quarter of all business owners.⁵¹ Texans without legal status also pay state and local taxes totaling an estimated \$1.5 billion annually,⁵² enough to pay the salaries for 25,500 police officers⁵³ or 39,400 schoolteachers.⁵⁴

From chemistry labs to construction sites, immigrants and refugees contribute mightily to Texas' economy. Immigrants account for a disproportionate share of both high-skilled workers—particularly in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, or "STEM," occupations—and workers in typically low-wage positions—such as gardeners, construction workers, housekeepers, hairdressers, and farm workers.⁵⁵ They are also an outsize presence in the overall labor force: Immigrants and refugees make up 17 percent of Texas' population but represent 22 percent of the workers in the state.⁵⁶ The number of foreign-born workers in Texas exceeds the population of Houston, the state's largest city.⁵⁷ And their presence is not new: three quarters of Texas' foreign-born workforce arrived in the state a decade ago or more.⁵⁸

Although immigrants (regardless of immigration status) are slightly more likely to hold a job than U.S.-born Texans, half of them are low-income compared to about a third of U.S.-born Texans.⁵⁹ In general, immigrant-headed households have lower median incomes (\$42,000) than those headed by U.S.-born residents (\$56,000).⁶⁰ This income gap reflects immigrants' generally lower educational attainment, insufficient command of English, and, in some cases, employer discrimination.⁶¹

Employment and Poverty Rates by Immigration Status

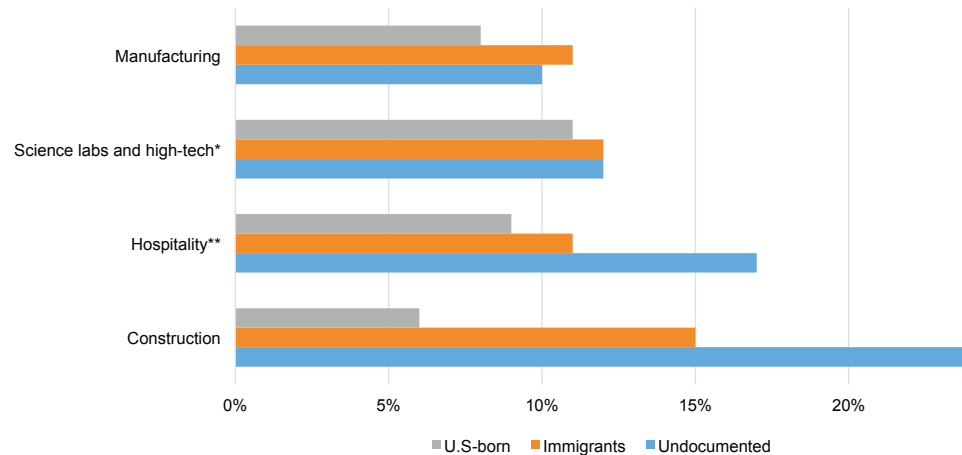


Source: Migration Policy Institute⁶²

Note: Poverty is defined as living at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty line for a family of four. Low income is defined as living at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty line.

*Goodwyn, Wade. (2011, March 29). Texas Republicans Take Harder Line on Immigration. NPR. Retrieved from: <http://www.npr.org/2011/03/29/134956690/texas-republicans-take-harder-line-on-immigration>

Texas Employment by Industry and Immigration Status



Source: Migration Policy Institute⁶³

* Represents the U.S. Census category "professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste-management services."

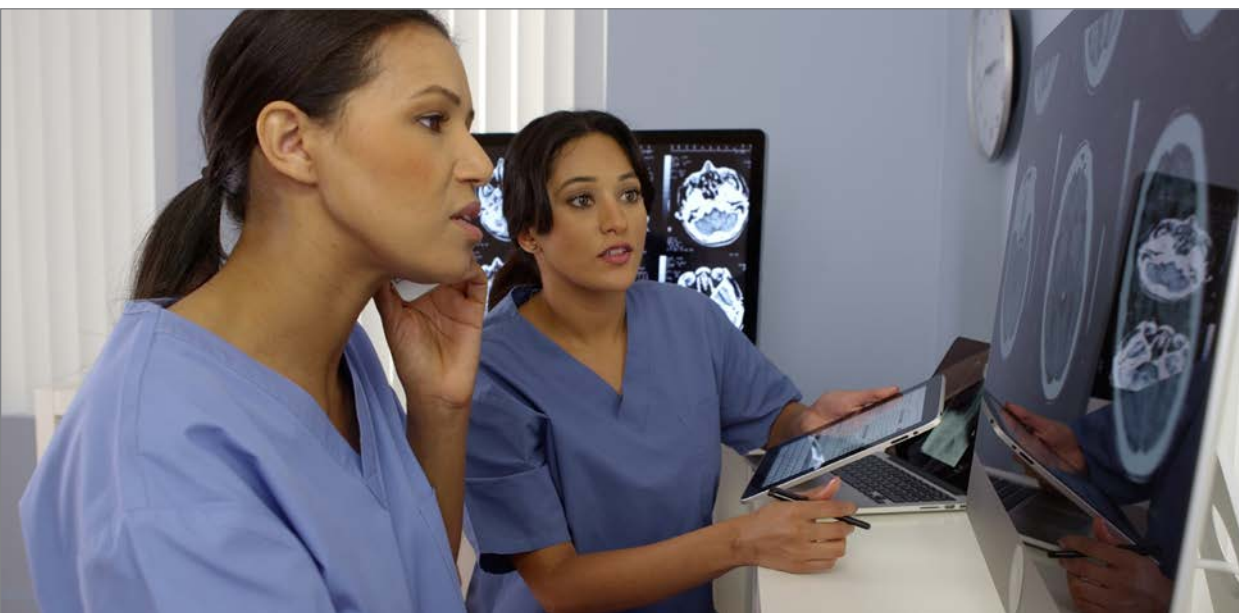
** Represents the U.S. Census category "arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services."

Enhancing Educational Achievement

Texas was the first state to grant in-state tuition to unauthorized immigrants, but post-secondary education remains out of reach for the vast majority of these students. Many high-school counselors and college financial aid officers are either unaware of in-state tuition policies or misinformed about them.⁶⁴ And despite lower in-state tuition, the overall cost of higher education, compounded by associated fees and expenses, remains prohibitive to many unauthorized immigrants who live on the economic margins.⁶⁵ Consequently, such students account for only 2 percent of all college students in Texas, and nearly three quarters of them are in community colleges.⁶⁶ For unauthorized immigrants fortunate enough to access college, their graduation rates compared to their U.S.-born counterparts are usually lower due to financial hardship, challenges of working and studying simultaneously, and the lack of support in the college environment.⁶⁷

"Texas farmers, builders and many other industries rely on immigrant labor and their purchasing power. Our economy would take a serious blow if we were to prioritize arresting and deporting the hardworking immigrants of this state."

Sylvia Garcia,
Texas State Senator*



*Reeves, Kimberly. (2015, March). Texas Senator Slams Bill to Prohibit Sanctuary Cities. *Austin Business Journal*. Retrieved from: <http://www.bizjournals.com/austin/blog/abj-at-the-capitol/2015/03/texas-senator-slams-bill-to-prohibit-sanctuary.html>

For children of immigrants, 80 percent of whom are U.S. citizens, completing high school and accessing college can also be a challenge. Children from low-income immigrant families face similar obstacles to low-income children of U.S.-born parents.⁶⁸ And the wide diversity of immigrant children means that educational outcomes vary, depending on characteristics such as country of origin, race or ethnicity, parental socioeconomic status, neighborhoods, and schools.⁶⁹ For example, children from immigrant families from Latin America, Laos, and Cambodia face more obstacles in reaching college than children from other regions.⁷⁰ There are also significant differences based on whether the children from immigrant families are first or second generation.⁷¹

Funding Recommendations:

- Underwrite efforts to increase awareness among immigrant parents and students in immigrant families about higher-education opportunities and options, the admissions process, and the resources and assistance available to help facilitate college access and success.
- Support training of high-school counselors, college financial-aid officers, educators, and administrators on the challenges facing students from immigrant families, particularly the unauthorized, and resources available to assist them.
- Fund programs that promote college success for students from immigrant families, particularly those in low-income households. These include scholarship and loan funds, especially for unauthorized immigrants; programs that create a welcoming campus environment and provide social support; and mentorship and other academic support efforts.
- Support programs that improve outcomes for children of immigrants and refugees who are at heightened risk of foregoing higher-education opportunities. Children in communities facing higher levels of ethnic discrimination and language proficiency challenges warrant special attention.



Improving Employment Outcomes

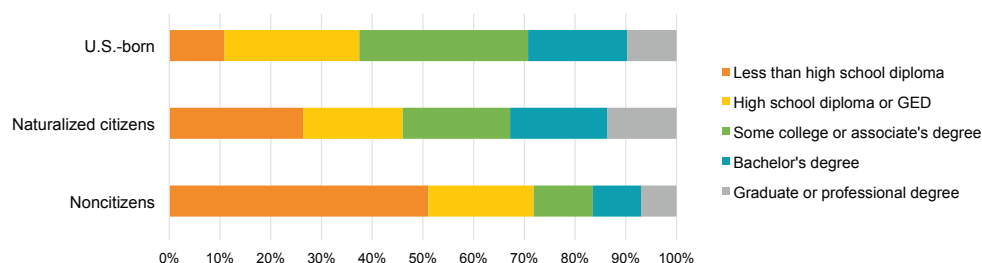
Immigrants in Texas, as elsewhere in the nation, are overrepresented on both ends of the educational spectrum. Foreign-born Texans are roughly four times more likely to lack a high school diploma than U.S.-born Texans.⁷² The gap widens for Texans without legal status, who are almost six times more likely to lack this credential.⁷³

At the high end of the educational spectrum, however, immigrants and refugees are just as likely to earn a professional degree as the U.S.-born population, with one in ten members of each group earning either a Ph.D., master's degrees, or similar credentials.⁷⁴ Among naturalized citizens, higher education is even more common, with 14 percent earning advanced degrees.⁷⁵

While many foreign-born Texans are highly educated, and on average they are more likely than U.S.-born Texans to be employed, they are also more likely to be underemployed.⁷⁶ About one in five college-educated working immigrants and refugees is employed in unskilled jobs versus one in six U.S.-born residents.⁷⁷ Known as “brain waste,” this situation is particularly common for foreign-born Texans who earned their bachelor's degrees abroad.⁷⁸ Gaining recognition for foreign credentials is complicated and expensive as no single government entity oversees the professional certification process.⁷⁹

In addition to foreign credentials, the high number of skilled immigrants in low-wage jobs can be attributed to limited English proficiency, lack of legal status, differences in education and training, employer discrimination, as well as worker exploitation including wage theft, intimidation, and unsafe workplace conditions.⁸⁰

Education Levels



Source: Migration Policy Institute⁸¹

Funding Recommendations:

- Funders can support a range of efforts to improve employment outcomes for immigrant and refugee workers who play a central role in the Texan economy. Programs that improve English language and vocational skills are essential to helping immigrants and refugees improve their employment outcomes. The Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) offers eligible newcomers access to federally funded workforce development programs, as well as adult education and English literacy, but advocacy is needed to ensure that immigrants not only have access but that programs are designed to meet their specific needs.

- High-skilled immigrant workers need assistance to gain accreditation for their foreign credentials, secure relevant work experience, and obtain further education to facilitate integration into the U.S. job market.
- Outreach, education, and organizing efforts can empower low-wage immigrant workers, particularly those who lack legal status, to assert their workplace rights and partner with their U.S.-born counterparts to improve working conditions, fight against wage theft, and enhance earnings and benefits for all low-wage workers.

Integration into the Financial Mainstream

Many immigrants and refugees, in Texas and nationwide, rely on predatory and payday lenders. Some do so in the absence of trusted financial institutions near their homes, while others do not interact with mainstream institutions because they lack English language skills and/or awareness of these services. Access to car, student, business, and other loans—as well as to credit cards and savings products—can offer immigrants and refugees a wide range of benefits. In addition to establishing a credit history and savings, newcomers can expand their use of asset-building strategies, such as home and business ownership.

Funding Recommendations:

- Funders can support financial education and literacy programs to increase newcomers' knowledge and understanding of mainstream financial services; efforts to create and expand access to affordable financial products and services that immigrants and refugees need, including low-cost loans for DACA and naturalization application fees; and programs that help immigrants save for homeownership and build wealth.



Enhance Civic Participation

Promoting Citizenship

Texas is home to an estimated 930,000 naturalization-eligible immigrants,⁸² a population that exceeds that of its capital, Austin.⁸³ Interest in attaining citizenship has long been on the rise among foreign-born Texans, with naturalizations increasing 49 percent between 2005 and 2012.⁸⁴ Historically, the largest populations of potential citizens have lived in Harris and Dallas counties, with smaller but still sizable concentrations in El Paso, Tarrant, Hidalgo, and Travis counties.⁸⁵

Naturalization⁸⁶ reaps both civic and economic benefits for immigrants and refugees as well as their families and communities. Naturalized citizens gain the right to vote and serve on juries. Studies have shown that naturalized citizens earn 8 to 11 percent more than noncitizens, even after adjusting for differences in education, language ability, and work experience.⁸⁷ Immigrants see their earnings rise within two years of acquiring U.S. citizenship, and their wages rise faster in subsequent years.⁸⁸ Naturalization has also been shown to lead to immediate increases in immigrants' representation in white-collar jobs and can qualify them for certain government positions.⁸⁹

Beyond naturalization, helping immigrants and refugees of all statuses build leadership, project their own voices, and engage in civic life and policy debates is an important philanthropic goal that can reap significant benefits for our larger society. Having undocumented parents volunteer in schools and participate actively in their local Parent Teacher Association can help improve educational outcomes. Engaging children of immigrants in neighborhood projects from community gardens to drug awareness campaigns can lay the groundwork for their long-term civic participation.

Funding Recommendations:

- The benefits of U.S. citizenship are compelling, and philanthropy can play a pivotal role in increasing access for eligible foreign-born Texans. Foundations can support outreach and education to help immigrants understand the benefits of citizenship; English and civics classes to help prepare for the citizenship exam; legal services and other assistance to navigate the complex application process; and financial assistance to defray the application and documentation fees. In many locations across the country, funders have formed regional citizenship funding collaboratives that provide valuable lessons, best practices, and models that can be adapted for other regions (see sidebar on The New Americans Campaign).
- The broader civic participation arena is rich with funding opportunities. To cite a few examples, foundations can support parent leadership development programs; youth organizing to combat gang violence and ethnic and racial profiling; and efforts to educate and mobilize newcomers on a range of policy issues affecting their communities from affordable housing to public transportation. Initiatives that engage both immigrants and U.S.-born residents have the added benefit of increasing the cohesiveness of communities.

The New Americans Campaign

Launched in 2011, **The New Americans Campaign (NAC)** is a national network of more than 120 partners including legal-service organizations, faith-based groups, businesses, foundations, and others committed to helping eligible immigrants become U.S. citizens. NAC operates in the metropolitan areas of Charlotte, Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, the San Francisco Bay Area, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, Napa Valley, New York, Orange County, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose and the Silicon Valley, Seattle, and the Washington DC Metro Area. It also has affiliates in Akron/Cleveland, Baltimore/the State of Maryland, Boston/the State of Massachusetts, and additional states where the National Partnership for New Americans coalitions provide services.

As of February 2016, its 18 sites across the country have organized nearly 3,200 citizenship events, completed 193,000 applications, and saved low-income immigrants \$172 million in legal services and application fees. NAC has deployed a range of high-impact strategies from large-scale application workshops to innovative technology platforms to partnerships with employers. NAC funders, both local and national, can share effective models and serve as a resource to those contemplating citizenship as part of their grantmaking strategy. For more information, visit www.newamericanscampaign.org.

Delivering on the Dream

Formed in 2012 to support DACA implementation, **Delivering on the Dream (DOTD)** includes 15 regional and statewide funding collaboratives in 12 states: Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Texas. Of the more than 100 funders involved, two thirds are new to immigrant-related grantmaking. The funding collaboratives typically support community outreach and education, eligibility screening, legal assistance, and other services to help eligible immigrants secure DACA status. As of December 2015, DOTD collaboratives' 140 grantee organizations have trained close to 8,400 legal and lay volunteers, reached more than 265,000 immigrants, and completed nearly 30,000 applications.*

Funders interested in exploring opportunities in this arena should contact GCIR. As DOTD's national coordinating entity, GCIR provides technical assistance, informs partners of the latest developments, organizes planning and strategy meetings, and manages a repository of resources including lessons and best practices from experienced funders, sample RFPs, and monitoring and evaluation tools.

*These figures exclude three new sites that joined DOTD in 2016—Connecticut, Missouri, and Pennsylvania—and includes limited outcomes from Colorado and Orange County, California which joined DOTD in mid-2015.

Supporting Access to Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

Announced in 2012, DACA is a federal administrative action that grants two-year, renewable work permits and protection from deportation to eligible unauthorized immigrant youth and young adults, commonly known as “DREAMers.” DACA beneficiaries have access to important benefits including social security numbers and, depending on their state of residence, drivers' licenses and other benefits.

According to 2013 estimates, 154,000 Texans were immediately eligible; 60,000 were eligible but for the educational requirements; and 67,000 were expected to gain eligibility as they meet the age requirements.⁹⁰ From the program's launch through December 2015,⁹¹ nearly 132,000 immigrants in Texas submitted an initial application, and 87 percent received approval.⁹² Two counties account for the bulk of potential DACA applicants in Texas: Harris County and Dallas County.⁹³ Other major counties include Hidalgo, Tarrant, Travis, and Bexar.⁹⁴ The nearly 115,000 immigrants approved for DACA could include those who were immediately eligible, those who may have returned to school or entered other qualifying adult education programs, or those who have aged into eligibility since 2013. This points to the ongoing need for outreach, legal services, high-school completion programs, and qualifying adult education programs.⁹⁵

Studies have documented the socio-economic benefits of DACA: Many DACA recipients secure better jobs, earn higher wages, access internships for valuable career opportunities, open bank accounts, continue their education, access driver's licenses, and increase their access to health coverage.⁹⁶ In addition, an estimated 14 percent of those screened for DACA were found to be eligible for other forms of relief that could lead to lawful permanent residency and citizenship.⁹⁷ DACA recipients still face many challenges, including covering the application fees, accessing further education, developing skills and work experience to qualify for better job opportunities, and concern over family members who are still at risk of deportation.⁹⁸

In late 2014, President Obama announced an additional administrative program, Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA), granting temporary work permits and relief from deportation to unauthorized immigrant parents of U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents; the President also expanded eligibility for DACA in his executive section. While the legal battle over that effort remains unresolved at the time of this report's publication, executive-level action on immigration will likely continue to be a factor in the immigration policy debate, whether the current executive actions are upheld by the courts or a future administration takes additional action.



Immigration reform activists protest on May 1, 2010 at the White House.

Funding Recommendations:

- Funding for outreach, legal services, application assistance, and low-cost loan programs can help both renewing and first-time applicants access DACA's substantial benefits. A significant infusion of funding will be needed should the DAPA and expanded DACA programs go forward.
- Education funders can support efforts that help otherwise-eligible immigrants meet the educational requirements and provide outreach, information, and application assistance to immigrants aging into the program.
- Funding DACA eligibility screenings not only helps more eligible immigrants enroll in DACA, but it can also identify other forms of immigration relief that can assist undocumented immigrants in securing legal status and, in some cases, put them on a path to U.S. citizenship.

Conclusion

In these dynamic times, Texas faces many challenges and opportunities. The state's newcomers have long enriched the state's social, economic, and civic fabric, yet Texas has also experienced the challenges of integrating immigrants and refugees. Addressing the needs of the increasingly diverse foreign-born populations and helping them reach their full potential are critical to Texas' long-term vitality. In both arenas, philanthropy has a crucial role to play and, by including newcomers as part of their grantmaking strategy, can maximize the collective benefits for all Texans. Whatever their funding priorities, foundations can improve the well-being of immigrants and refugees through their existing grantmaking programs, launching special initiatives, and/or joining forces with funding colleagues to increase impact. Doing so will support the successful integration of immigrant and refugees—and go a long way in enhancing the future cultural, democratic, and economic vibrancy of the Lone Star State.



Endnotes

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About GCIR

Since 1990, GCIR has worked to influence philanthropy to advance the contributions and address the needs of the country's growing and increasingly diverse immigrant and refugee populations. In so doing, we seek to promote effective grantmaking that not only improves the lives of newcomers but also strengthens communities.

GCIR partners with our member foundations, as well as the greater philanthropic community, on a wide range of immigration and immigrant integration issues, including education, health, employment, civic participation, racial and economic justice, and other concerns affecting immigrant children, youth, and families. Some of our members have longstanding immigrant-specific funding initiatives, but most address immigrant and refugee issues within their core grantmaking programs. The majority of our members fund locally, regionally, or nationally in the United States, and a handful make migration-related grants internationally.

For more information about GCIR and our various programs and resources, visit www.gcir.org or email info@gcir.org.

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Daranee Petsod
President

Cresa Pugh
Project Coordinator

Camellia Rodríguez-SackByrne
Program and Membership Manager

Aryah Somers Landsberger
Director of Programs



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