

**Michigan's Hispanics:  
A Socio-Economic Profile**

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Statistical Briefs of the Julian Samora Research Institute are designed to provide facts and figures on Latinos of the Midwest. The data presented are those of the author(s) and are intended for use in further public policy research.

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The **Julian Samora Research Institute** is the Midwest's premier policy research and outreach center to the Hispanic community. The Institute's mission includes:

*Generation of a program of research and evaluation to examine the social, economic, educational, and political condition of Latino communities.*

*Transmission of research findings to academic institutions, government officials, community leaders, and private sector executives through publications, public policy seminars, workshops, and private consultations.*

*Provision of technical expertise and support to Latino communities in an effort to develop policy responses to local problems.*

*Development of Hispanic human capital, including education, leadership development, and empowerment.*

# Michigan's Hispanics: A Socio-Economic Profile

The Hispanic or Latino population in Michigan is quickly becoming a more prominent member of the community. This is partly due to the group's increased population size, but it is also due to their impressive representation in the labor force, a representation among school-aged youth as well as their rapidly increasing presence in the business world. However, as subsequently shown, poverty and underrepresentation in high income jobs continue to be areas of needed attention for the advancement of Michigan's Latinos.

## Growing Presence

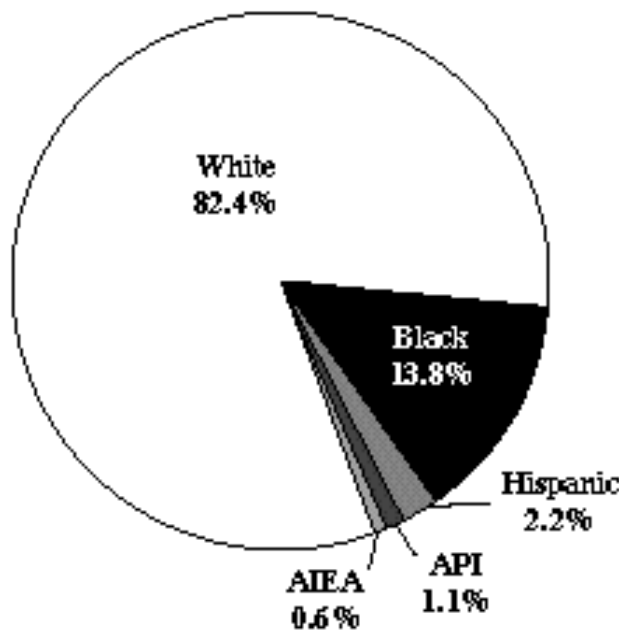
Between 1980 and 1990, the number of Latinos in Michigan showed modest growth but the relative impact of the growth was substantial due to modest or negative growth among non-Latinos. Specifically, Hispanics residing in Michigan increased by over 24%, from 162,440 to 201,596, thereby adding nearly 40,000 residents. During the same period, however, the non-Hispanic population actually declined by

nearly 6,000. This decline hides the fact that the number of Whites in the state actually dropped by about 116,000 while the number of Blacks increased by some 93,000 (nearly 8%), thereby minimizing the overall non-Hispanic loss.

## Role In the Midwest

Michigan currently holds the second highest number of Hispanics in the Midwest, after Illinois. While there are no places in the state that contain a majority or even sizable minority (greater than 25%) of the state's Latinos, nearly three-quarters of the state's Hispanics reside in the 10 most populous counties, all of which are in the lower portion of the lower peninsula (the so-called "downstate counties"). These counties contain the state's capitol and major cities; hence, Latinos' patterns of settlement, centering on key areas of the state's governance and commercial activities, also contribute to their increased prominence.

Figure 1. Michigan Population by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1990



Source: Table 1.

**Table 1. Michigan Population by Race: 1990**

RACE	POPULATION	PERCENT
White	7,649,951	82.4
Black	1,282,744	13.8
Hispanic	201,596	2.2
Am. Indian, Eskimo, Aleut	52,571	0.6
Asian and Pacific Islander	102,506	1.1
TOTAL	9,295,297	100.0

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population, "Social and Economic Characteristics" Michigan, 1990 CP-2-24.

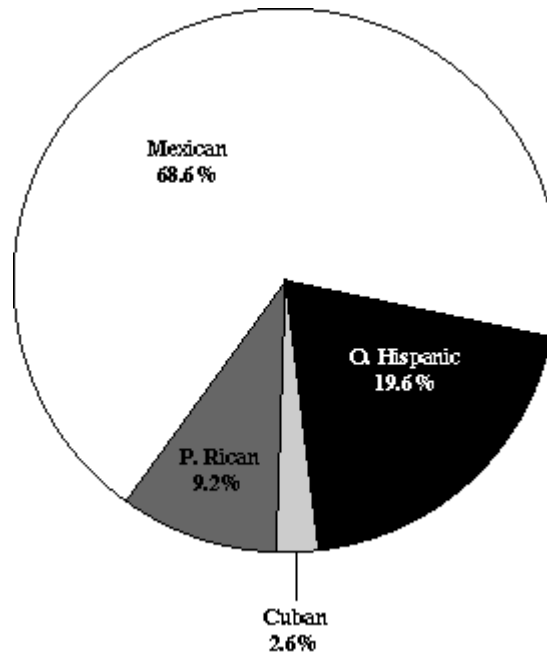
**Relatively Young**

The state’s Latinos are a relatively young population, as are the nation’s Latinos in general. The average age for the group in Michigan is about 23.1 years, as against an average of 32.6 for the state as a whole. In relative terms, Hispanics are overrepresented within the state’s population of school age children and young adults. Therefore, schooling and effective placement in the state’s labor market is a considerable concern of Latinos.

**Diverse Within**

“Hispanics” as a group are not entirely homogeneous within this categorization. They constitute a population of several different national-origin groups with specific unifying themes. One such characteristic is Spanish, often the first language spoken at home and among family and friends. Another is a proclivity towards special historic and culture events. The major groups, in terms of numeric strength in Michigan as well as the United States, are Mexican-origin Latinos, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans. The remaining groups, often categorized as “other Hispanics,” cover Latinos from South, Central America, and even Spain.

**Figure 2. Michigan Population by Hispanic Origin: 1990**



Source: Table 2.

**Table 2. Michigan Population by Hispanic Origin: 1990**

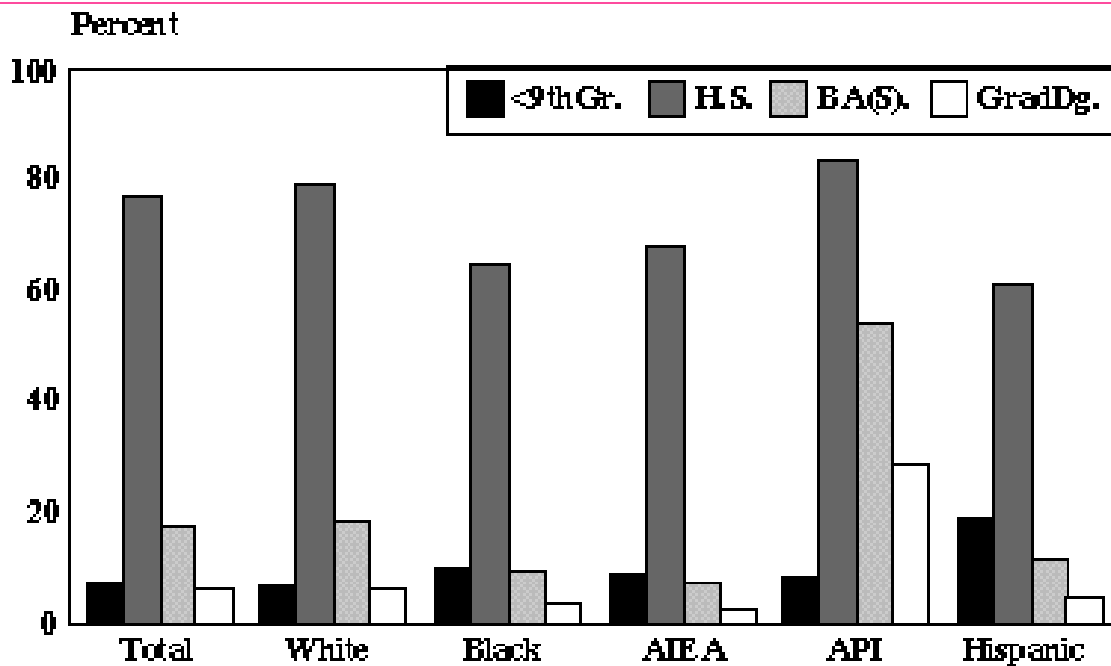
HISPANIC ORIGIN	POPULATION	PERCENT
Mexican	138,312	68.6
Puerto Rican	18,538	9.2
Cuban	5,157	2.6
Other Hispanic	39,589	19.6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>201,596</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1990 Census of Population*, "Social and Economic Characteristics" Michigan, 1990 CP-2-24.

In 1990, as shown in Figure 1, Hispanics accounted for only 2.2% of Michigan's total population. However, this proportion represents an increase from the 1980 proportion of only 1.8%. As noted in the figure, over 80% of the majority of the state's residents are White. Blacks, the largest racial minority, accounted for nearly 14% of the total, with Hispanics the second largest of the groups depicted in the figure. The remaining groups combined comprised less than 2% of the state's people.

Figure 2 shows the various nationalities that together comprise the Latino population. Mexicans, the dominant group, accounted for about 69% of the Hispanic population in Michigan, while Puerto Ricans, the second largest group, comprised just under 10%, with the remainder accounted for by Cubans (under 3%) and "other Hispanics." The latter account for nearly 20% of all Latinos in Michigan, which, according to most experts reflects more of a problem with the way Hispanics identify themselves. This proportional pattern has changed little since the last (1980) census.

**Figure 3. Education Attainment by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1990  
Persons 25 Years and Over**



Source: Table 3.

**Table 3. Educational Attainment by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1990.  
Persons 25 Years and Over.**

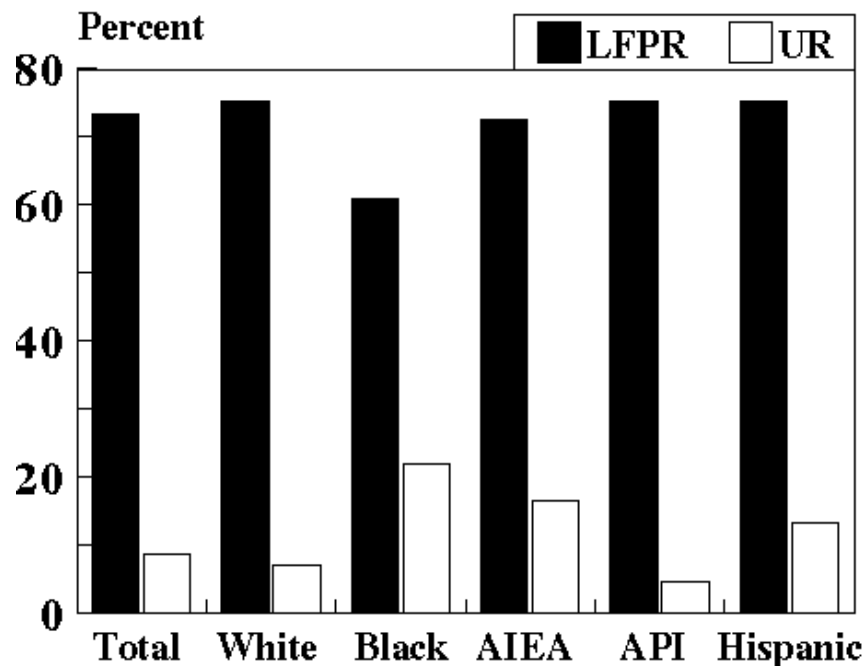
Race	<9th Gr. Percent	H.S. Percent	Bachelor Percent	Graduate Percent
ALL	7.75	76.78	17.36	6.43
White	7.20	78.64	18.13	6.61
Black	10.42	64.93	10.06	3.85
American Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut	9.52	67.81	7.61	2.73
Asian and Pacific Islander	8.89	83.29	54.10	28.39
Hispanic	19.83	60.95	11.63	4.82

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1990 Census of Population*, "Social and Economic Characteristics" Michigan, 1990 CP-2-24.

Figure 3 shows that the educational attainment of Latinos, though increasing, continues to lag that of non-Latinos. As of 1990, about 61% of Hispanics in the state over the age of 25 had completed high school, as against over three quarters of the state's adults as a whole. Furthermore, only about 12% of adult Latinos had completed at least four years of college, while some 18% of all the state's adults had done

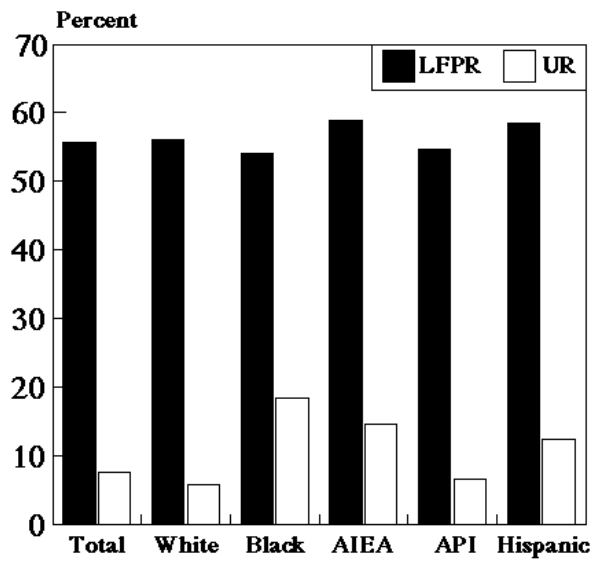
so. However, the various groups comprising the state's non-Hispanic population have not done equally well, as revealed in Figure 3. Thus, while Whites and Asian-Pacific Islanders show impressive levels of educational attainment, Blacks and American Indian-Eskimo/Aleuts show smaller proportions with college or advanced degrees than do Hispanics.

**Figure 4A. Labor Force Characteristics by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1990.  
Males 16 Years and Over**



Source: Table 4.

**Figure 4B. Labor Force Characteristics by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1990  
Females 16 Years and Over**



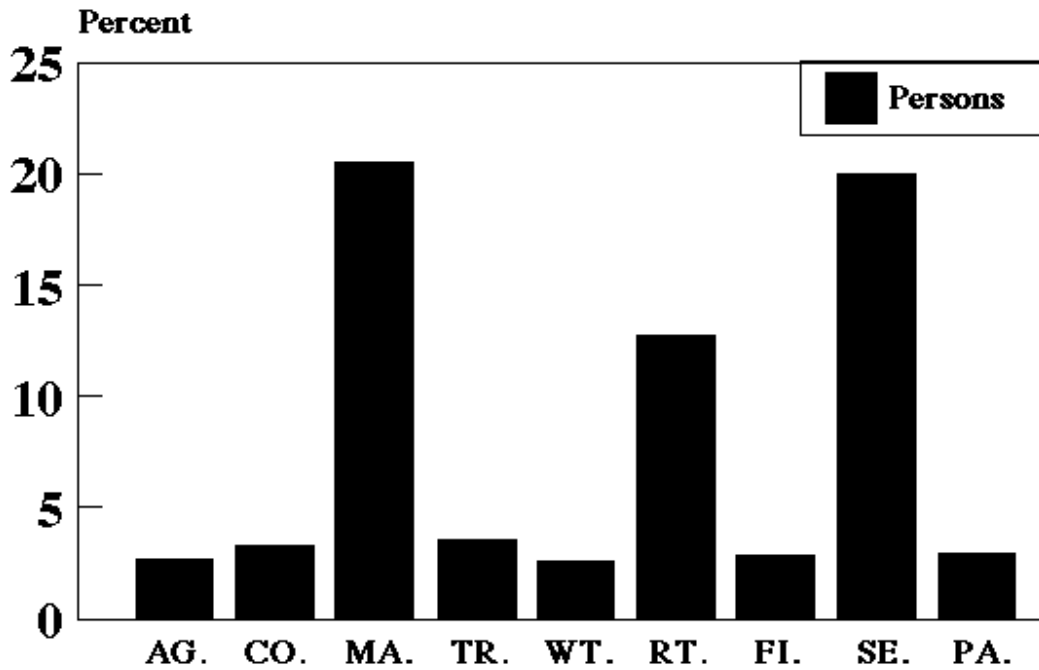
Source: Table 4.

**Table 4. Labor Force Characteristics by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1990  
Persons 16 Years and Over.**

Race	Labor Force Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate
ALL:		
Males	73.4	8.7
Females	55.7	7.7
White:		
Males	75.1	7.1
Females	56.0	5.9
Black:		
Males	60.8	22.1
Females	54.0	18.4
American Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut:		
Males	72.6	16.6
Females	58.9	14.7
Asian and Pacific Islander:		
Males	75.1	4.7
Females	54.7	6.7
Hispanic:		
Males	75.1	13.4
Females	58.4	12.4

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1990 Census of Population*, "Social and Economic Characteristics" Michigan, 1990 CP-2-24.

**Figure 5. Employed Persons of Hispanic Origin by Industry Division: 1990.  
Employed Persons 16 Years and Over**



Source: Table 5.

Figures 4A and 4B show the labor force participation rates (LFPR) and unemployment rates (UR) of Latinos and others in the state by gender. According to LFPR, Hispanics are more likely to be at work, or looking for work, than the non-Hispanic population as a whole, and this is true for men and women alike. The figures also indicate that White and Asian Pacific Islanders had very low unemployment rates among

men, between 5 and 7%, while Hispanic men confronted over 13% unemployment. Over one out of five Black males were unemployed, despite a participation rate over 10% lower than any of the other groups. A similar pattern obtains for the women, but at lower levels. Hispanic women show higher LFPR, but also higher unemployment, than Whites or Asian-Pacific Islanders.

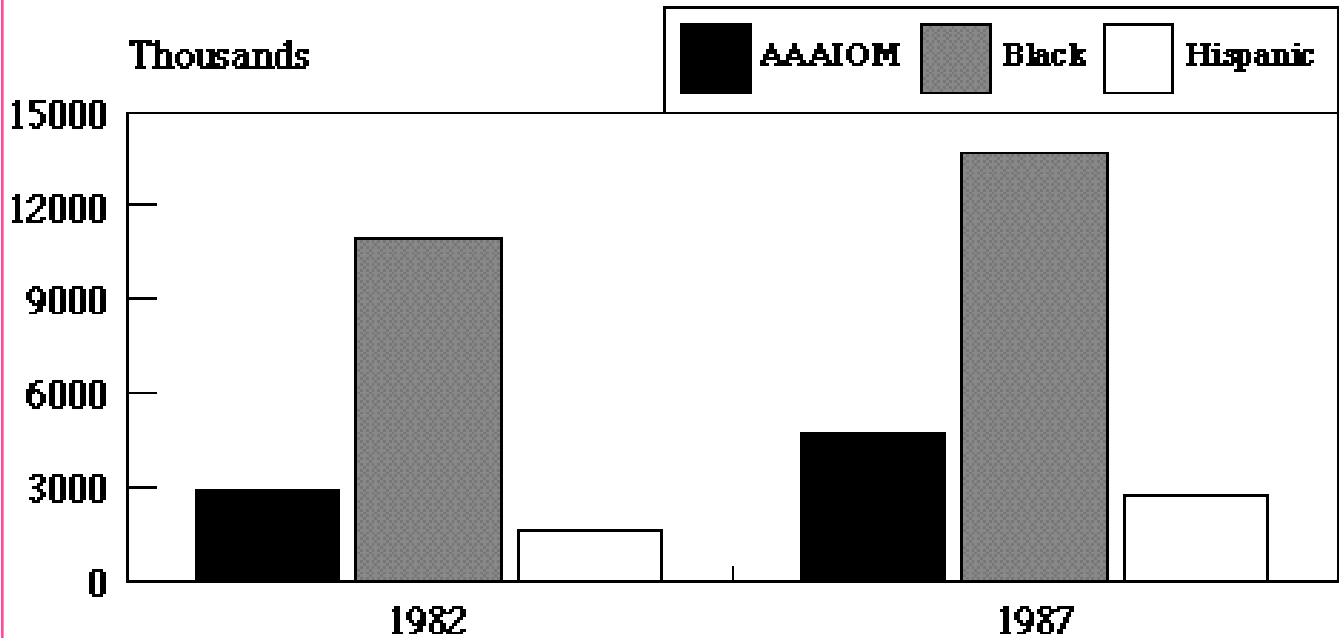
**Table 5. Employed Persons of Hispanic Origin by Industry Division: 1990**

Industry Division	Persons
Agriculture	2,720
Construction	3,293
Manufacturing	20,486
Transportation, Communication, and O.P. Utilities	3,583
Wholesale Trade	2,583
Retail Trade	12,736
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	2,794
Services	20,002
Public Administration	2,920

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1990 Census of Population*, "Social and Economic Characteristics" Michigan, 1990 CP-2-24.



**Figure 6. Number of Minority-Owned Firms in Michigan: 1982-1987**



Source: Table 6.

AAAIOM = Asian American, American Indian and Other Minorities

Figure 5 shows the relative representation of Latino workers within the standard industry categories (agriculture; construction; manufacturing; transportation, communication and public utilities; wholesale trade; finance insurance and real estate; services; and public administration). Latinos are mainly concentrated in manufacturing (20%), services (20%), and retail trade (13%). Agricultural workers are shown to account for only 3% of Latino workers; however, if migrant workers were included (many are not because they are not present in Michigan at the time of the census), that proportion would surely rise.

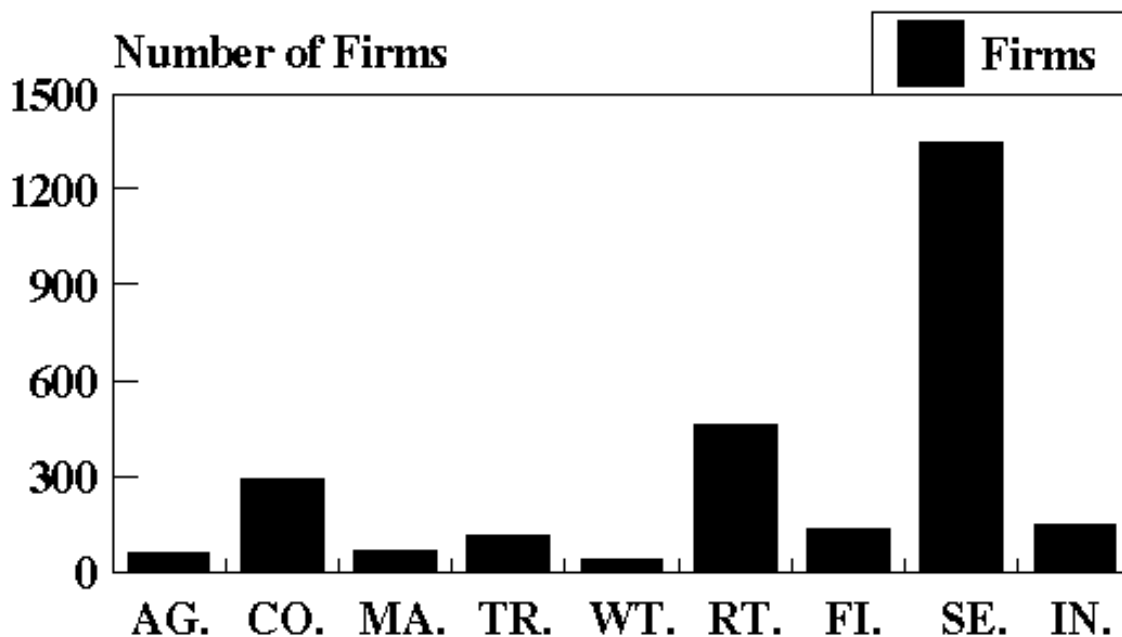
Figure 6 shows a phenomenal rise in Latino entrepreneurship in Michigan in recent years (1982-1987). The number of Hispanic-owned firms grew from about 1,600 in 1982 to nearly 2,700 in 1987, according to data from the U.S. Economic Census Reports, based on surveys of these years. The 1992 figures, unfortunately, have not yet been released. Figure 7 reveals the industry types of Latino-owned firms. In contrast to the employment figures, in which three industry types roughly captured the bulk of the workers, Hispanic businesses are overwhelmingly situated in the “services” industrial category. Retail trade, with about a third as many businesses as services, holds the second most Latino enterprises.

**Table 6. Number of Minority-Owned Firms in Michigan: 1982-1987**

Year	AAAIOM	Black	Hispanic
1982	2,864	10,947	1,616
1987	4,729	13,708	2,654

Source: “Chartbook of Minority and Women-Owned Businesses in Michigan Based on Statistics from the 1987 Economic Census Reports,” Rene P. Rosenbaum, Marcelo E. Siles, *Julian Samora Research Institute Research Paper No. 7*, February 1994.

**Figure 7. Number of Hispanic-Owned Firms in Michigan by Industry Division: 1987**



Source: Table 7.

AG=Agriculture, CO=Construction, MA=Manufacturing, TR=Transportation, WT=Wholesale Trade, RT=Retail Trade, FI=Finance and Insurance, SE=Services, IN=Industries NC.

Figures 8A and 8B depict the median household income of Hispanics and others, for 1979 and 1989, with the latter data shown in constant dollar amounts. All groups have experienced rising incomes in nominal (unadjusted) dollars, but all groups are shown to have

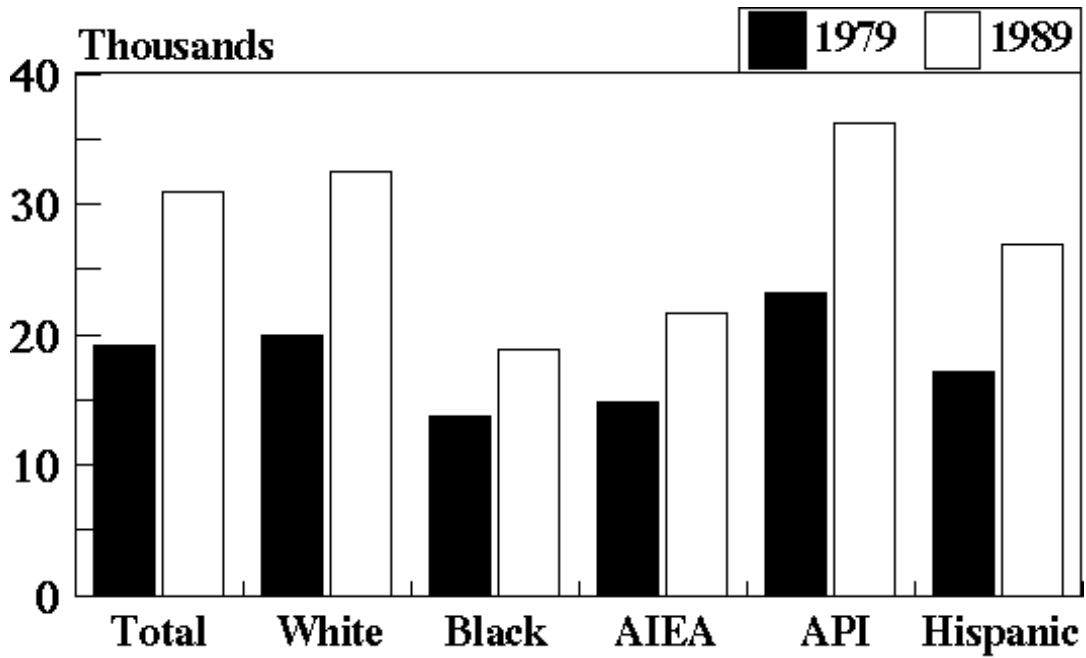
experienced shrinking incomes in constant (adjusted) dollars. Hispanic median income is shown to register at about \$27,000 in 1989, in-between the moderately higher figures for whites and Asians/Pacific Islanders, and the substantially lower figures of others.

**Table 7. Number of Hispanic-Owned Firms in Michigan by Industry Division: 1987.**

Industry Division	Number of Firms
Agriculture	61
Construction	289
Manufacturing	65
Transportation	111
Wholesale Trade	37
Retail Trade	461
Finance and Insurance	135
Services	1,345
Industries, NC	150

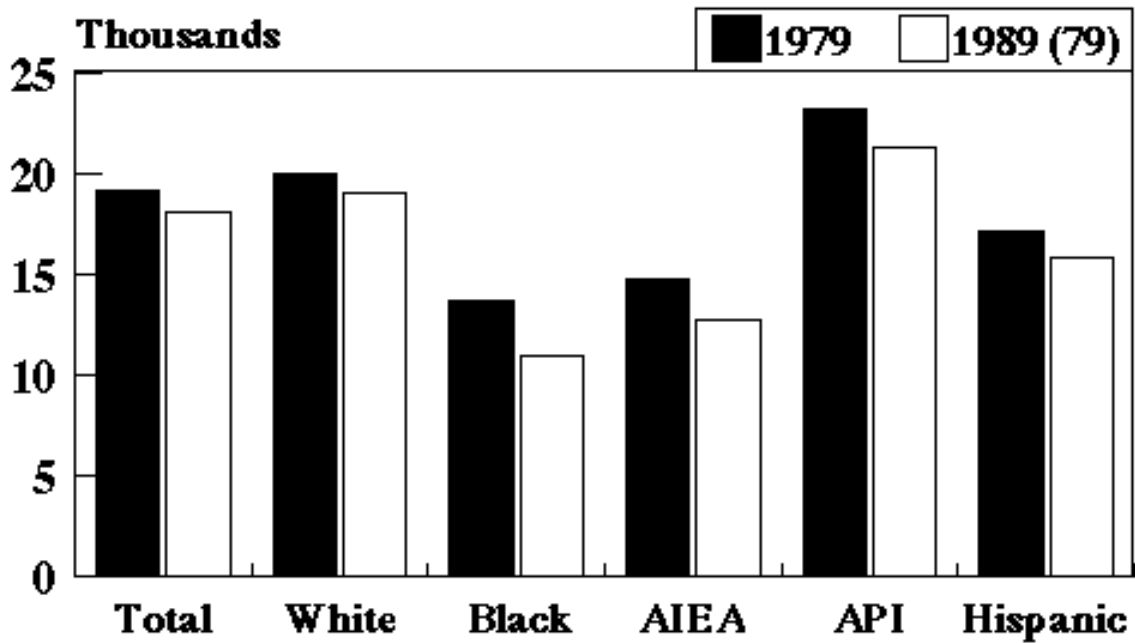
Source: "Chartbook of Minority and Women-Owned Businesses in Michigan Based on Statistics from the 1987 Economic Census Reports," Rene P. Rosenbaum, Marcelo E. Siles, *Julian Samora Research Institute Research Paper No. 7*, February 1994.

**Figure 8A. Median Household Income by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1979-1989  
In Current Dollars (Not Adjusted)**



Source: Table 8.

**Figure 8B. Median Household Income by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1979-1989  
In Constant Dollars (1979)**



Source: Table 8.

**Table 8. Median Household Income by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1979-1989**

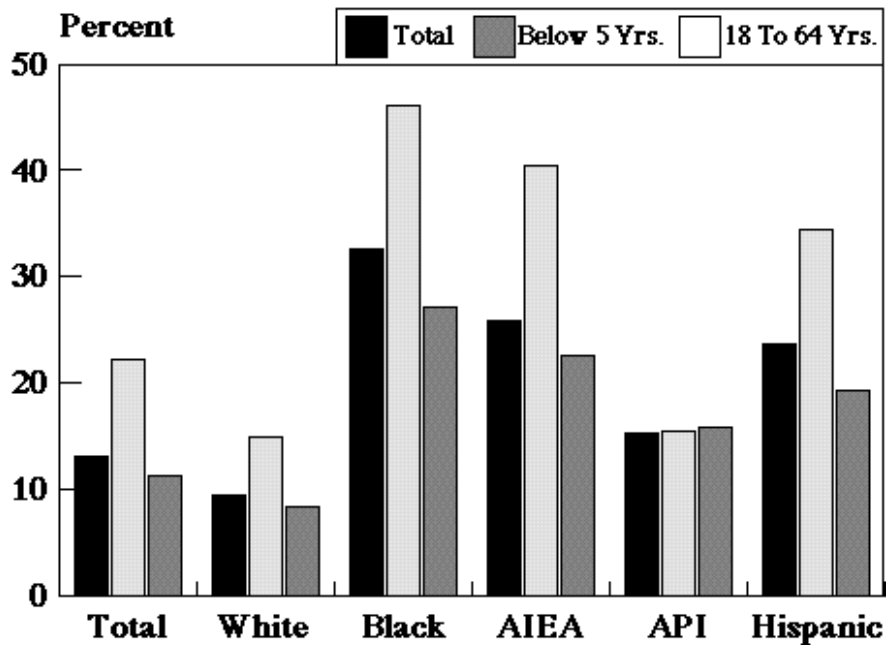
Race	1979	1989	1989 CTE-79	Decline Percent
TOTAL	19,223	31,020	18,161	5.52
White	19,996	32,465	19,008	4.94
Black	13,715	18,851	11,037	19.53
American Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut	14,803	21,735	12,725	14.04
Asian and Pacific Islander	23,214	36,327	21,269	8.38
Hispanic	17,120	26,939	15,772	7.87

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1990 Census of Population*, "Social and Economic Characteristics" Michigan, 1990 CP-2-24. *1980 Census of Population*, "General Social and Economic Characteristics," Michigan, PC80-1-C24.

Figure 9 depicts poverty counts for Hispanics and others in Michigan. The poverty figures for the state's Latinos are cause for concern. Some 24% of Hispanics were poor in 1989, while the state average was only about 13%, and that for Whites a mere 9%, after rounding. Again, however, both Blacks and American Indian-Eskimo/Aleuts showed even greater hardship

on this measure than Latinos, while Asian-Pacific Islanders appear almost as well off as Whites. Thus, despite the high rates of labor force participation and the growth in Hispanic businesses noted above, the economic conditions that many Latinos endure are anything but positive.

**Figure 9. Percent of Persons Below Poverty Level by Age and Race: 1990**



Source: Table 9.

**Table 9. Persons Below Poverty Level by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1990.**

<b>Race</b>	<b>Less Than 5 Years Percent</b>	<b>18 To 64 Years Percent</b>	<b>ALL Percent</b>
TOTAL	22.1	11.2	13.1
White	14.8	8.3	9.4
Black	46.0	27.1	32.6
American Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut	40.5	22.6	25.8
Asian and Pacific Islander	15.4	15.8	15.3
Hispanic	34.4	19.3	23.6

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1990 Census of Population*, "Social and Economic Characteristics" Michigan, 1990 CP-2-24.

## Summary

This Statistical Brief paints just a part of a picture of Michigan's Hispanics. The profile shown is that of a unique population, growing at a time when non-Latino Whites are shrinking in number. The youthfulness of Latinos and their proclivity for labor force participation also point out that jobs and education are relevant policy concerns. So too is the spectre of poverty, which is extremely high in Michigan. For the gap in income to close between Latinos, non-Latino Whites, and Asian and Pacific Islanders, much more research and policy analysis will be urgently needed in the coming years.