THE STATE OF BLACK LONG BEACH

A CALL TO ACTION FOR A BLACK AGENDA

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ACKNOWLEDEGEMENTS

This report has its origin in the frustrations of the African American Convening Committee, which was brought into being by the California Endowment Building Healthy Communities Project (BHC) of Long Beach California. After an evening of struggling to map a strategy for engaging the Black community in the BHC initiative, the question was raised by Uduak Ntuk "What is the state of Black people in Long Beach?" And subsequent to that phrase, I was commissioned to write a report on The State of Black Long Beach, modeled somewhat on the National Urban League's State of Black America. This is an attempt to use that framework to develop a descriptive document on the quality of lives of the people, past and present, of Long Beach, California.

Central to this report is Lydia A. Hollie who shares authorship with me, for she did the "grunt work" in researching and providing me with the materials, offering her support at every step of the way, and serving as editor of the document. I also owe a great debt of gratitude to my colleagues at ReThinking Greater Long Beach, John W. (Jack) Humphrey and William J. (Bill) Crampon for their support in making maps, crunching numbers and building tables and charts. I especially leaned on Bill because of his ability to splice and dice data. A special thanks goes out to Jennifer Chheang who was kind enough to fine edit the document. Not last and certainly not least, I thank my wife Margie, for the countless hours that I took away from family time to complete the report before Thanksgiving, and for not reminding me that I am supposed to be retired.

In a small way, this report honors those trail blazers of the past, on whose shoulders we stand, because of their untiring efforts to make a better place for each of the generations that followed. It is they who have provided us with an opportunity to set an agenda for the ones that follow us. May we perform as capably as they performed.

Alex J. Norman
November 1, 2012

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THE STATE OF BLACK LONG BEACH: A CALL TO ACTION
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The impetus for this report emerged from a series of meetings held by the African American Convening Committee and its participation in the Building Healthy Communities Initiative, a ten-year effort by The California Endowment to improve the quality of health for the residents of Long Beach. As the second largest city in Los Angeles County, Long Beach has all of the same issues confronting most urban communities: budget deficits, under-performing schools, truancy and unacceptable drop-out rates, rising crime rates, environmental pollution, homelessness, poverty, and high unemployment. At the same time, Long Beach is recognized as a gateway to the Pacific Rim and home of one of the world's busiest ports, a coastline with sandy beaches, bike and walking trails, a thriving downtown with a modern convention center and a world-class Aquarium of the Pacific, among its many attractions. The city is also a mecca for tourists due to housing a major terminal for Carnival Cruise Lines, sweeping views of the Pacific Ocean and the offshore island of Santa Catalina, and a micro-climate similar to that of the Mediterranean.

The quality of life in Long Beach is enhanced by the location of a major state university and community college; an award-winning unified school district, a performing arts center that anchors the rich social life of the city, one with a median income of over $68,000 annually. With a beautiful bay and beach-side housing, it would seem that this is an ideal city in which to live, work, grow, and develop the "American Dream" that so many members of this ethnically diverse city consider their birthright to achieve.

Similar to Blacks in cities across the nation, for many Black residents in Long Beach, the "American Dream" is far from reality as they deal with the forces of social inequality which seem endemic to our social, economic, and political systems. Even prior to the financial melt-down of 2008, Black residents in Long Beach were struggling with high unemployment rates, substandard housing, high rates of poverty and incarceration rates, an ever alienated youth population, and single-parent families on the brink of homelessness. Within the city's boundaries, that devastating 2008 financial crisis illuminated the bright line of demarcation between two realities, one wealthy and one poor.

The *State of Black Long Beach Report* documents the historical development and the statistics that are a part of the daily lives of African American residents in Long Beach. The report does not develop objective measures of inequality, nor does it offer a scale for determining the quality of life; however, it addresses the use of data that is central to those measures. Here, the data are simply presented in the context of other ethnic groups as a means of informing the reader about the authors' observations and conclusions, leaving it up to the reader to determine appropriate strategies and actions, and thereby laying the foundation from which a more thorough, comprehensive treatment of the subject can be developed.

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FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The framework for the analysis of the data included in this report comes from two primary sources: *The Heritage of African Americans in Long Beach* authored by Aaron L. Day and the late Indira Hale Tucker, and *The Long Beach Community Database* by ReThinking Greater Long Beach, a community-based think tank. The former provided the historical context for understanding and appreciating the early and continuing challenges faced by the African American community, as well as the obstacles that were overcome in order to create a sense of community in Long Beach. The latter provided the data over an extended period of time from which to describe longitudinal trends in data and the critical factors that make up the quality of life for Black people in Long Beach. They are briefly described below:

- **Education**: An authentic education at the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary levels serve as the foundations for success in employment opportunities, career development, and community economic sustainability.
- **Employment**: Livable wage employment is the foundation for individual, family, and community self-esteem and stability, in addition to being a strong contributor to the tax base in a consumer economy.
- **Housing**: Affordable housing and quality rentals are indispensable to the establishment of more stable and deeply rooted communities, serving as protectors against the myriad of social problems attributed to overcrowded conditions.
- **Public Health**: A public health model that reduces risks factors associated with acute and chronic illnesses, as well as youth and gang violence, can be highly successful, particularly in an environment where protective factors are reinforced and healthy behaviors are supported by civic, educational, business, and industry policies.
- **Public Safety**: Neighborhoods and businesses thrive in an environment free from fear. When law enforcement and communities work in partnership with each other, communities are safer and have more social and economic stability.
- **Civic Engagement**: Community members must have confidence in their government's capacity and willingness to work on behalf of their welfare, without preference to ethnicity, neighborhood, or socio-economic class.

All of these factors are linked closely with each other to the extent that improvement in one area is often followed by progress in another and taken together, can influence the quality of life of a city as well. Therefore, it would be advantageous for the governmental sector to work in close partnership with the private and nonprofit sectors to improve the quality of life for all who live, work, play, and worship in the City of Long Beach.

SUMMARY FINDINGS

Historically, the progress and development of Black people in Long Beach has been resisted, first by White citizen groups, then by business and city government. Based on newspaper articles, collected works of historians, and written contributions of Long Beach's leading Black citizens, the history of Black people has been one of constantly fighting racism and rejection

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while simultaneously building a community of organizations, businesses, churches, and social associations. The Black Church has historically been the center of organization for the African American community and the source from which other organizations and institutions have developed. Yet, the Black community met considerable opposition in Long Beach.

- White citizens resisted the relocation of Second Baptist Church of Long Beach to a property secured by its membership.
- White citizens resisted the efforts of Black residents to secure rental and housing ownership in Long Beach.
- Open display of a racist game called "drowning the nigger" at the Pike was tolerated by the City Government.
- Public display of Ku Klux Klan initiations and recruitment meetings in public spaces were permitted. Blacks were prohibited from using public facilities, except on special occasions.
- Bans on Black home ownership were enacted and Whites resorted to fire bombings of properties bought by Black residents.

Black Progress persevered despite the numerous restrictions placed on residents, as a budding civil rights movement began with the establishment of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the advocacy of Joe Brooks for a State Assembly bill that would make housing discrimination unlawful. Housing restrictions were gradually eased and more areas were opened where Blacks could own and rent property, whereas previously Black people were limited to buying property in only two areas of the city. The resiliency of the African American community broke through long-established barriers in order to build and strengthen the foundation for advancing social, political, and economic progress.

- Blacks were admitted to the Long Beach Board of Realtors.
- Blacks began to establish businesses in real estate, restaurants, beauty shops, and night clubs.
- The Community Improvement League of Long Beach was organized. It remains the oldest (and the only) community organization infrastructure developed by Blacks, with the exception of the Black Church.
- Blacks were elected to the City Council for the first time and several times thereafter.
- The first African American judge was appointed to the Municipal Court.
- The first Black person was elected to the Board of Directors of the Long Beach Unified School District.
- Business and employment opportunities were opened for Black professionals and for Black city employees.
- The only weekly Black newspaper was published and now has a distribution that extends to Signal Hill, Carson, Compton, and the Watts area of Los Angeles.

Demographic Trends as recorded by the U.S. Census indicated that although the population of Long Beach increased by 735 from 2000 to 2010, the percentage share of African Americans

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dropped from 14% (68,643) to 13% (62,606). Even with the decrease in population, Long Beach still has the second largest Black population in Los Angeles County.

- Latinos had the largest increase from 36% (165,092) to 41% (188,412) and now are the dominant ethnic group in Long Beach.
- Asians increased slightly from 12% (55,591) to 13% (59,496) and are on track to replace Blacks as the third largest ethnic group.
- Whites also decreased from 33% (152,899) to 29% (135,698) and remain the second largest ethnic group in Long Beach.
- Fertility rates of Blacks and Whites have dramatically declined while fertility rates of Latinos and Asians have increased.
- Influx of Asians and Latinos has altered what were traditionally Black neighborhoods.
- With the exception of the east side, Latinos have the largest percentage of populations in all City Planning Districts.

Education Enrollment in the Long Beach Unified School District has declined from 97,560 in the school year 2003-04 to a low of 83,691 in 2011-12. Black students declined from 20% to 16%; White students from 18% to 15%; Asians from 15% to 11%. Latinos increased from 44% to 54%.

- Black students comprise the second highest percentage (69%) to qualify for the free lunch program, while Latinos have the highest (84%).
- Asian and White students consistently perform at higher academic levels in all subject and grade levels than Black and Latino students.
- Black students consistently perform at 25 to 30 percentage points lower than White students in Mathematics and English Language Arts, at all grade levels.
- Black student drop-out rates are higher and graduation rates lower than those of White students, and course completion rates for admission of Black students at the University of California or California State University systems are lower than White student rates.

Employment Estimates of the American Community Survey data for 2012 reported that between 14 and 17 percent of African Americans 25 years and older were unemployed in Los Angeles County. Estimates were doubled for men and women 24 years and younger.

- In Long Beach, the percentage of employment for Black men was lowest (11%), while Whites and Latinos had the highest percentages (42% and 35%, respectively).
- Black women represented only 17% of women working full time, second lowest to Asians (16%). White women (33%) and Latinas (31%) had the largest percentages.
- Black men had the second lowest median income and White men had the highest. The situation was the same for Black women as well. Latino men and women had the lowest median incomes of all ethnic groups.
- Blacks had the second highest percentage of incomes below the poverty level and the second lowest percentage of incomes above the poverty level.

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Family Living Situations reveal wide disparities in almost all areas between White and Black residents of Long Beach. Whereas the overall poverty rate for the city is 19%, poverty for African Americans is 20%, second only to Latinos who have the highest rate (26%). Whites have the lowest poverty rate (9%) and Asians have an 18% rate. Although Blacks have the second lowest family size of all ethnic groups (3.20), they have the largest percentage of families headed by females with no husband present (53%). Whites have the lowest family size (2.80) and the lowest percentage of female-headed families (18%).

- While Latinos had the highest poverty rate for children less than 18 years old (35%), Black children under 5 years were more likely to live below the poverty line than any other ethnic group.
- For individuals 65 years or older living in poverty, the percentages for Blacks, Latinos, and Asians were about the same (15%) compared to only 7% for White seniors.
- Only 5% of Black married families with a child under 18 live below the poverty line compared to 36% of Black female-headed families.
- Although only 5% of Black households have a grandparent living in them, they are responsible for the care of their grandchildren in 52% of those households.

Housing and Home Ownership among Blacks suffered as a result of the economic recession brought on by the collapse of the financial industry in 2008. That hardship was worsened by higher unemployment, extreme difficulty in obtaining reasonable home loans, and a slow recovery of the job market.

- In Long Beach, 73% of the Black population lives in rented housing compared to only 40% for Whites, 55% of Asians, and 65% of Latinos.
- Only 25% of Blacks had mortgages as homeowners compared to 40% for Asians, 32% for Latinos, and 48% for Whites.

Public Health data from 2004-2007 show that African Americans in Long Beach have the lowest life expectancy among all ethnic groups (75 years), compared to Asians who have the highest (89 years). Latinos have the next highest at 84 and Whites are next at 80 years. As might be expected, Blacks are at greater risks in other areas as well according to the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS). *The Longitudinal Body Mass Index Study (BMI) of Long Beach Unified School District's 5th, 7th and 9th Grade Students* by ReThinking Greater Long Beach reported a large percentage of Black students are at risk also.

- Despite reported physical activity and proper eating habits, an estimated 68% of Black children and adults were overweight and obese.
- Overweight distribution among ethnic groups is relatively even (17% low to 21% high), although all exceeded the percentage (10%) that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considers as normal in a healthy population.
- Although the largest percentage of students who were obese are Latinos (31%), Black students were next (28%). Asian students (17%) and White students (15%) had the smallest percentages.

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- The average Latino male BMI score was highest (36%), and the Black male score was next (26%). Asian (21%) and White (18%) male students had the lowest BMI scores.
- The average Black female BMI score was highest (31%), followed by Latino (27%), Asian, and White female students at (12%, each).

Major Causes of Death among all ethnic groups is cancer and diseases of the circulatory system. Blacks have the highest percentage of deaths due to endocrinal/nutritional diseases (5.7%),which are primarily diabetes related. Latinos are next (4.6%). An analysis of African American infant mortality rates is not available at this time; however, the Office of Minority Health (OMH) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services classifies the four leading causes of infant deaths as 1) Very Low Birth Weight (VLBW), 2) Congenital Malformations, 3) Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), and 4) Maternal Complications. According to 2006 data:

- Total rate of infant death for all major groups was 5 babies per 1000 births. For infants with VLBW rate, it was 1 baby per 100 live births.
- Black mothers gave birth to the largest number of infants with a VLBW at slightly more than 2 babies per 100 live births. Asian mothers were next with slightly more than 1 baby per 100 births, while the rate held constant for White and Latino mothers.
- Black mothers experienced the largest number of infant deaths (8.5 per 1000 live births). White mothers were slightly above 4 deaths per 1000, Asian mothers slightly below 4, and Latino mothers were lowest at slightly more than 3 deaths per 1000.

Public Safety data on disparities of Part I Violent Crime and Part II Property Crime are not available at this time. However, since 2002, Part I Violent Crime and Part II Property Crime have steady declined. Currently, we are in the process of analyzing the complex data set on suspects and victims. Upon completion of that analysis, it will be added to this report. However, an analysis of crime by City Geographic Planning Districts: North, West-Central and Southwest-Central, where there are large concentrations of Black and Latino residents, and East and Southeast Districts where there are high concentrations of White residents, revealed the findings below:

- Rates of reported violent crimes for 2011, per 10,000 persons, are highest in the Southwest Central District (82) compared to (60) in the North and (41) in the West Central. The East and Southeast have the lowest at (16) and (19), respectively.
- Southwest Central also has the highest rates for reported property crimes (305) with the East (257) and Southeast (251) following. The West Central (229) and North (207) had the lowest number, respectively.

Civic Engagement of Black people in Long Beach show a high level of participation despite the fact that the history has been one of a continuous struggle for equality against tremendous odds. Two factors could contribute mightily to this situation: 1) proficiency with the English language, a factor that correlates highly with success in America, and 2) the impact of the

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national and local civil rights movements, as well as the number of Black elected officials in nearby cities.

- English is spoken in 95% of Black homes in Long Beach, compared to 24% for Asians, 19% for Latinos, and 92% for Whites.
- Another language is spoken in only 5% of Black homes compared to 76% for Asians, 81% for Latinos, and 8% for Whites.
- Since the first African American was elected to the City Council, there have been five others elected at different times. Currently, three of nine council seats are represented by African Americans.
- Since the first African American was appointed to the city's Harbor Commission, there has been one additional appointment who is currently serving.
- *The Long Beach Times* is the only Black-owned news source in the City, covering Black life in the Greater Long Beach area and the cities of Compton, Carson, and Paramount.

TOWARD A BLACK AGENDA FOR LONG BEACH

This first *State of Black Long Beach* Report shows disparities in almost every quality of life area (with the possible exception of Civic Engagement) that are critical, stark, and persistent over time. Education is probably the most critical area because of the gap in academic performance of Black students when compared to that of White and/or Asian students. Since education is the foundation for having a successful career that leads to an economically stable and high quality of life, and because there will be fewer opportunities in the future for people without trade experience or advanced degrees, it is essential that this issue be at the top of a Black agenda.

Another critical area is the economic status of the Black population, largely poor and working class, on whose shoulders economic hardships fall hardest. Given the fact that there is a lack of advocacy in the area of community economic development for the Black community from local government, it might be more prudent to think of a competent self-help or mutual aid initiative to develop viable community economic development enterprises.

One more crucial area is the health status of Black people in Long Beach, both youth and adults. On every scale, Blacks have the lowest life expectancy; coupled with high risk behaviors, which increase chances of incurring heart attacks, hypertension, and diabetes-related diseases, these often lead to premature death.

This is not to suggest that there are no other areas that demand attention, but these areas seem to be good starting points because of their interconnectedness. There have been and continue to be a myriad of important individual accomplishments since Black people first came to Long Beach in 1900, and though commendable, these achievements have not translated into an organizational infrastructure at the community level that can shield African Americans from

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the harshness of “benign neglect” policies that have been typical of the political and economic status quo.

Thus, this report is offered as a “Call to Action” by African Americans in leadership positions at all levels to come together in serious discussion, debate, and reflection, for the expressed purpose of devising a thoughtful, relevant, and sustainable agenda for addressing and solving the problems that restrain and hinder the progress of Black people in Long Beach. The question remains: Is it possible that an agenda could be developed as a blueprint for not only changing the narrative that is currently the status quo in Long Beach, but also serve as a blueprint for improving the quality of Black life as well?

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INTRODUCTION

The desire for a publication on "The State of Black Long Beach" emerged from a series of meetings of an African American Convening Committee (AACC) that was assembled as a result of The California Endowment's Building Healthy Communities (BHC) Initiative, a ten-year effort to improve the quality of life in Long Beach. Long Beach is the second largest city in Los Angeles County with a population of 462,735 and living in the shadow of her larger Sister City, Los Angeles. Given its size and location, Long Beach has all of the same issues confronting most urban communities; budget deficits, underperforming schools, truancy and unacceptable dropout rates, rising crime rates, environmental pollution, homelessness and high unemployment. At the same time Long Beach is recognized as a gateway to the Pacific Rim and home of one of the world's business ports, a coast line with sandy beaches, bike and walking trails, a thriving downtown with a modern convention center, and a world-class Aquarium of the Pacific, among its many attractions. The *USA Today's Diversity Index* hailed Long Beach as "America's most ethnically diverse large city in the United States in 2000," and the city is fondly referred to as "California's best-kept secret" because of its abundant resources and potential as an international city.

The City of Long Beach is a natural mecca for tourists due to housing a major terminal for Carnival Cruise Lines, sweeping views of the Pacific Ocean and the offshore Island of Catalina, and a micro-climate that is reminiscent, though milder than that of the Mediterranean. The quality of life in Long Beach, which boasts a median income of over $68,000 is embellished by the location of a major university and a community college, an award-winning unified school district, and a performing arts center that anchors the rich social life of the city. With a beautiful bay, marinas and beach-side housing, It would seem that this is an ideal city in which to live, work, grow, and develop the "American Dream" that so many members of this ethnically diverse city consider their birthright to achieve.

However, that "dream" is far from reality for a large segment of Black people who, like African Americans in cities all across America, must deal with the forces of social inequality that seem endemic to our social, economic, and political systems. Even before the shifts in the economic structure caused by the financial melt-down of 2008, Black people in Long Beach were struggling with high unemployment rates, substandard housing, high rates of incarceration, an ever alienated youth population, and single-parent families on the brink of homelessness. Within the city's boundaries, that devastating financial crisis illuminated the bright line of demarcation between two realities, one wealthy and one poor. This report will highlight those disparities. For ease of reference, the terms Black and African American will be used interchangeably throughout this report, and in some of the dated material Negro, Colored and Non-White also denotes Black heritage.

The inspiration for this document is derived from the National Urban League's *State of Black America Report*. Although our aim is to paint a word-picture much like that in the *State of Black Los Angeles (2005) Report*, it is not an exhaustive report of all of the lives of Black people in Long Beach. Rather, the primary objective of this commentary about African Americans in Long Beach is to lay a foundation from which a more thorough, comprehensive treatment of

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the subject can be developed. Although the African American Convening Committee is supported by funds from The California Endowment's Building Healthy Communities, this report is the sole production of Lydia A. Hollie and Alex J. Norman who take full responsibility for its contents, its analysis and its conclusions. This report provides a description of Black life in Long Beach within an ethnically diverse context. Although this report does not propose an objective tool to measure inequality or determine quality of life status, it addresses similar areas with available data. In addition, no ethnic group(s) is/are designated as a benchmark from which data regarding African Americans are measured as a standard, but data are simply presented in the context of other ethnic groups as a means of informing the reader about the authors' observations and conclusions.

DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

The framework for developing this report is limited by the availability of data to fit the contemporary scene. For example, certain data are not yet available from the U.S. Census Survey of 2010, so we might be forced to either use data from the 2000 U.S. Census or the American Community Surveys of 2007-10. Therefore, our main source of data is taken from the Long Beach Community Database (http://lbcdb.cgu.edu/), which was developed by ReThinking Greater Long Beach, a community-based think tank dedicated to providing information to the public as a service. The database contains six data sets and seven subsets:

- U.S. Census (2000, 2010);
- American Community Survey (2005-10);
- Long Beach Unified School District's K-12 Student Academic Performance (2002-03 to 2011-12);
- Part I & II Reported Crime Incidents for all of Long Beach (2002-2012);
- Public Health Cause of Death & Life Expectancy (2004-09);
- Childhood Obesity for 5^{th}, 7^{th} & 9^{th} graders (2002-11);
- Women Infant & Children Obesity for 2-5 year olds (2000-11); and
- More than 2200 Community Organizations serving Long Beach by type of service and contact person.

The following subsets of data are available to be collected in twelve geographic areas:

- Gender and Ethnicity
- Age
- Households and Families
- Housing
- Economic
- Education
- Language and Immigration

The geographic areas are:

- City of Long Beach Planning Districts

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- United States Postal Service 5-Digit Zip Codes
- Long Beach Police Department Patrol Districts
- Social-Economic Index
- Women and Children Index
- Long Beach Neighborhoods
- Connected Corridor
- Atlantic Avenue Corridor
- Santa Fe Corridor
- Pacific Coast Highway Corridor
- Building Healthy Communities

The Long Beach Community Database (LBCDB) has a User's Guide that helps one negotiate through an interactive menu.

QUALITY OF LIFE INDICATORS

The report recognizes that there are numerous interrelated factors that contribute to a community's well-being; we have selected certain factors as an indication, but not an exhaustive list, of a community's quality of life (QOL). We have sought to highlight these factors because we have longitudinal data that can uncover trends and thus, indicate whether progress has or has not occurred. We purposefully did not develop a Quality of Life Index, choosing rather to paint a picture of what Black life looks like, and allowing the reader to ascertain the value for him/herself.

Education

Education plays the most prominent role in addressing quality of life issues. An authentic education at elementary, secondary, and post-secondary levels serve as the foundations for success in marketable employment, entrepreneurial opportunities, relevant career development, and community economic sustainability.

Employment

Employment is another pivotal quality of life factor. Livable wage employment is the foundation for individual, family and community self-esteem, and stability. Furthermore, quality employment provides a foundation for a stronger tax base and strong consumerism, upon which our economy is based and government services are determined.

Housing

Affordable Housing as a quality of life issue is indispensable to establishing more stable and deeply-rooted communities. It serves as a protective factor against the myriad of social problems attributed to overcrowded conditions and the absence of housing that residents can afford. Quality rental units and home ownership enable residents to become important stakeholders, which can lead to safer, more connected neighborhoods.

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Public Health

Public Health continues to play a central role in the quality of life of a community. Constituents who engage in healthy lifestyles are more likely to be continuously employed. A public health model that reduces risk factors associated with youth and gang violence, and chronic illnesses, can be highly successful, particularly in an environment where healthy behaviors are supported by business and industry policies.

Public Safety

Public Safety is a dominant factor and underlies other quality of life characteristics. Neighborhoods and businesses thrive in an environment free from fear. When law enforcement and communities work in partnership with each other, communities are safer and more socially and economically stable.

Civic Engagement

Civic Engagement is garnering greater recognition as an important factor in urban life. Community members must have confidence in their government's capacity and willingness to work on behalf of their welfare, without regard to ethnicity, neighborhood or socio-economic class. Moreover, achieving a level of confidence and ability to speak freely on social, economic, and political issues is the basis for leadership development at the local level.

All of these quality of life issues are inextricably linked closely with each other, and improvement in one area is often followed by an improvement in another. For example, gainful employment enables a person to lift oneself out of poverty, or mentally and physically healthy employees reduce the number of absences from work. Taken together these factors can influence the health of the City as well. Therefore, it would be advantageous for the civic sector to work in partnership with the private and nonprofit sectors to improve the quality of life for all who work, live, worship, play, and visit in the City of Long Beach.

BLACK HERITAGE IN LONG BEACH

The heritage of Black People in Long Beach has been well-documented in a publication by editors Aaron L. Day and the late Indira Hale Tucker, in association with the African American Heritage Society of Long Beach. In their book, *The Heritage of African Americans in Long Beach, Volume I (2006)*, Day and Hale trace the history back to 1900, when the U.S. Census on Non-Whites listed 22 African Americans living in the City. What follows is a chronology of the events they discovered in their research of public records, books, newspaper articles, and documents, including their interviews with residents, and their personal knowledge of people, issues, and events.

NAME	SEX/STATUS	BIRTH (AGE)	ADDRESS
Jackson, Letishia	Fem/Wid	08/1844(56)	351 Chestnut Street
Kernes, Eliza	Fem/Sgl	06/1847(50)(sic)	59 Chestnut Street

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Shankle, John	Mle./Mar	05/1868(32)	Atlantic Avenue
Shankle, Ollie	Fem/Mar	02/1879(21)	Atlantic Avenue
Russel, Edward	Mle/Mar	07/1861(68)	Atlantic Avenue
Russel, Adelle	Fem/Mar/W	07/1841(58)	Atlantic Avenue
Russel, Carrie E.	Fem/Dau/W	11/1882(17)	Atlantic Avenue
Russel, Chancy S.	Mle/Son/W	08/1884(15)	Atlantic Avenue
Nahler?, Eva	Fem/Wid	08/1856(43)	444? American
Martin, Fannie	Fem/Div	07/1853(46)	444? American
Watkins, Matilda	Fem/Mar	12/1870(29)	Elm Avenue
Watkins, Fred	Mle/Mar/W	07/1863(36)	Elm Avenue
Estrada, Tomasa	Fem/Wid	08/1856(43)	Atlantic Avenue
Parker, Andrew	Mle/Mar	06/1853(46)	Elm Avenue
Parker, Eliza	Fem/Mar	12/1870/(36)	Elm Avenue
Parker, Myrtle	Fem/Dau	12/1893(6)	Elm Avenue
Long, Emma	Fem/Wid/Nlaw	02/1871(35)	Elm Avenue
Long, Vivian	Fem/Nie/Nlaw	04/1896/(4)	Elm Avenue
Lane, Elija B.	Mle/Mar	10/1853(46)	Locust Avenue
Lane, Mary	Fem/Mar	05/1853(47)	Locust Avenue
Edmunds, Ernest	Mle/Sgl	nd/nodt(15)	Live-in Servant
Palmer?, Lenarin?	Mle/Sgl	nd/nodt(39)	Live-in Servant
Sylver, John	Mle/Mar	08/1854(45)	Live-in Servant
Sylver, Juanica?	Fem/Mar	nd/1866(33)	Live-in Servant
Sylver, James	Mle/Son	02/1885(15)	Live-in Servant
Sylver, Virginia	Fem/Dau	nd/1886(14)	Live-in Servant

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF BLACK LONG BEACH HERITAGE

Based on selected newspaper articles from the *Evening Tribune*, the *Long Beach Press*, and the *Daily Telegram*, collected by historian Claudine Burnett and from written contributions of Long Beach's leading Black citizens, the history of Black people has been one of constantly fighting off racism and rejection, while at the same time building a community of organizations, churches, and civic associations.

1903- The Black Church, which has historically been the center of organization for the African American community, represented the first attempt at organization in Long Beach. The beginning of the first Black Church in Long Beach was established as a Colored Baptist Mission of the Second Baptist Church of Los Angeles, with services conducted by Reverend P. Roberson, on Tenth Street between Elm and Atlantic Avenues.

1904- Captain G.W.L. Hawkins, a Long Beach rancher and home owner, was elected vice-president of the California Afro-American League at its state-wide convention, and offered to pay the assessment fees for any ladies who wanted to participate in the proceedings of the Congress.

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1907- The Colored Baptist Mission officially became the Second Baptist Church of Long Beach when the membership purchased a property at 10th Street and Atlantic Avenue, with a $600 matching grant from the Second Baptist Church of Los Angeles.

1907- The next ten years would see the rise of White resistance to the efforts of Black residents to secure rental and housing ownership in Long Beach. From complaints that Whites who would rent or sell to Blacks were doing it "to get even with neighbors," to outright defiance and threats of force when the Second Baptist Church moved to the property it had purchased at 10th Street and Atlantic Avenue. Parents of White high school students were opposed to the move on the basis that their children would have to pass through a "colored settlement on their way to school." Meanwhile, White residents of Westside in Long Beach sought the approval of City Council to prevent W.E. Meyers from building a "Colored Coney Island" in an area that was annually leased to Blacks for picnics and outings.

1914- Dr. Booker T. Washington spoke at the Virginia Hotel to "…men of affairs, achievement and distinction…on "The Progress of the Negro in the South"." He cautioned them not to be too judgmental of Black people to measure up to the "high standards" set by White people, since "Every race, as does every individual, passes through a silly period". Negroes, he opined, were like teenagers passing through a silly period.

1918- Despite the efforts of Edward Smyth Jones, a poet and orator from Los Angeles, to educate the Veteran's Union and other White people on the critical role played by Black soldiers, of their patriotism in conflicts previous to World War I, and the high proportions of draftees who were more fit than their White cohorts, the next decade saw open, racist opposition to all Black progress.

1919- The most racist period in Long Beach began when, although Black people vehemently protested against the "drowning-the-nigger" game at the Pike, the City Attorney held that there was no legal method of prohibiting the game unless it could be shown that it was a health hazard. The matter was referred to a committee, and the game continued.

1920s- The Ku Klux Klan of Long Beach held its first public initiation among a crowd of 7,500 onlookers, which was described by the *Long Beach Press* as, "An air of the circus, the picnic, the homecoming day pervaded the mass of curious spectators while they awaited the start of the mystic rituals."

There were bans on Negroes owning homes in Long Beach's more desirable neighborhoods; allegations that wealthy Negroes desiring to purchase ocean front property had the financial backing of Wall Street; and a final reporting by a Councilmember that Negro residents in Long Beach had assured him they had nothing to do with such an effort and that they wanted to "…co-operate with the city to preserve the racial harmony which has always existed here."

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1940s- The next two decades saw Long Beach as a "Tale of Three Cities." On one hand, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), founded and organized by Ernest McBride, Nathan Holly, L. J. Jones, and Roscoe Hayes, initiated a nascent civil rights movement in Long Beach. Their first targets were discriminatory practices in employment and housing, targeting the Police Department, and restrictive covenants in Lakewood, Bixby Knolls and Los Altos.

World War II ushered in desegregation of formerly segregated fighting units, and soon all branches of the service would see progress of Blacks from menial and steward tasks, to professional and technical levels. With the opening up of the defense industry, and the G.I. Bill providing a new source of revenue, Blacks began climbing the economic ladder to the middle class through home ownership. Social clubs sprang up all across Long Beach in reaction to the lack of opportunity to join White social clubs. The Bulls, The Exclusive Twelve, Entre Nous, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) lit the social landscape as more politicized groups, such as, the Urban League and the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) began to mount campaigns for economic and political equality.

With this progress came the most violent of all reactions in the form of fire-bombing the homes of Blacks who had recently purchased residences in more desirable areas; vandalizing the properties of prominent professionals, and threatening other Blacks with bodily harm. *The Press-Telegram* noted that, "There are only two 'open' neighborhoods…north of 10th street and east of Atlantic Avenue…south of Willow Street and west of the Flood Control Channel…" where Blacks can live.

1947- Several Black businesses thrived during this period beginning with J.R. and Theodosia Barner's real estate, restaurant and beauty shop holdings, and the restaurants of Levi and Katherine Howard, a popular spot for celebrities like Louis Armstrong and Paul Roberson. Mary Lee Rose, the mother of Doris Topsy-Elvord, opened a jewelry store on Pine Avenue and married Jerry White, whose Royal Palm Café became a popular night spot. It was with the first Black establishment to have a liquor license and where was dancing permitted.

1960s- The next two decades saw the greatest change in the city due to the activist-mentality that seemed to accompany the period. Joseph Brooks, president of the NAACP and one of six Blacks living outside the two 'open areas', advocated for a State Assembly Bill that would "…make it unlawful to refuse to sell, rent or lease to a person because of his race, religion, color, or national origin."

1961- Charles Haynes became the first Black person admitted to the Long Beach Board of Realtors. He and his wife Ethel, who also taught in the Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD), opened and supported opportunities for many more Blacks in Long Beach by training and mentoring them. Charles distinguished himself by being elected as a representative to the International Real Estate Federation in Tel Aviv.

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1965- As *The Press-Telegram* headlined, "A small band of young American men and women have touched off an insurrection in Long Beach." Among them were Evelyn Knight, Earnest Preacely, Dale Clinton, Ron Lunceford, John Champion and others who wanted more understanding of their recreational and social problems. Together they formed the Civic Improvement League of Long Beach (CIL); it would become the City's oldest anti-poverty agency, and for over nearly decades has provided an outstanding array of services for low-income families in Long Beach.

1966- Dorothy I. Height, President of the National Council of Negro Women, was the keynote speaker at the installment of the Long Beach Chapter before an audience of more than 150 people at the Lafayette Hotel.

1967- Student unrest at Polytechnic High School, resulting from racial hostilities, led to the formation of an interracial group that laid the foundation for the eventual establishment of the Long Beach Human Relations Commission.

1970- James Harold "Jim" Wilson ran in a special election and was successful as the first Black City Councilmember, with four successive re-elections and two appointments as Vice Mayor. At his death in 1986, he was succeeded by Clarence Smith, who initiated the first Martin Luther King Jr. Unity Parade in 1988, which continues today.

1976- Marcus O. Tucker, husband of the late Indira Hale Tucker, was sworn in as the first African American judge in the history of the Long Beach Municipal Court, appointed by then-Governor Edmund G. "Pat" Brown. His creation of the Small Claims Court and transfer of truancy cases to his court, significantly reduced cases of truancy in Long Beach Unified School District.

1987- Richard A. Love, first published the *Long Beach Times Newspaper* as the City's only Black-owned weekly publication, with a distribution that now extends from greater Long Beach to Signal Hill, Carson, Compton, and the Watts area of Los Angeles.

1988- Bobbie J. Smith became the first African American member of the Board of Directors for Long Beach Unified School District, and was Board President for three terms.

1992- Doris Topsy-Elvord became the first Black female Council Member, who was re-elected and appointed Vice Mayor of the City Council, where she served two terms. Following her retirement, she became the first Black Harbor Commissioner, where she was elected president for 2005-06.

1995- Dr. Ebenezer B. Bush became the first African American dentist to practice in Long Beach. He overcame many hurdles to become a Master Dentist in the Academy of General Dentistry, which demands more than 500 hours of practice and publications.

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1996- The home of Ernest and Lillian McBride was designated as a Historical Site by the Long Beach City Council, based on a proposal by Council Member Doris Topsy-Elvord.

1997- The African American Heritage Society of Long Beach (AAHS-LB) was founded by Doris Topsy-Elvord, a Council Member, and Indira Hale Tucker, a community volunteer and wife of Judge Marcus O. Tucker. The Society's accomplishments have been many, including the creation of the Black Heritage Video Collection in 1999.

2000- The next decade would see the development of The African American Resource Area of Burnett Library, which contains more than 1000 items in five different collections.

2002- Aaron Day, Chairman of the newly created AAHS-LB Genealogy Council designed, produced, and led the first in a series of genealogy classes. Three more classes would be hosted through 2005 using Computer/Internet and geological research that was started by Claudine Burnett.

2007- AAHS-LB produced its first publication, *The Heritage of African Americans in Long Beach*, under the editorship of Aaron L. Day and Indira Hale Tucker, with a foreword by Claudine Burnett. The book was dedicated to the pioneers, builders and activists on whose shoulders succeeding generations stood.

2010 Forward- Today, there are three Black men on the Long Beach City Council: Dee Andrews of the Sixth District, Al Austin of the Eighth District, and Steven Neal of the Ninth District. This is the largest contingent of Black local legislators to serve at one time in the history of Long Beach.

This is not an exhaustive list of the accomplishments, but a selected chronology of some of the most important ones. For a complete history, *The Heritage of African-Americans in Long Beach, Volume I* (2006), by Day and Tucker, is a highly recommend resource. Unquestionably, these distinctions were accomplished against tremendous odds and are a testimony to the character and persistence of the Black people of Long Beach.

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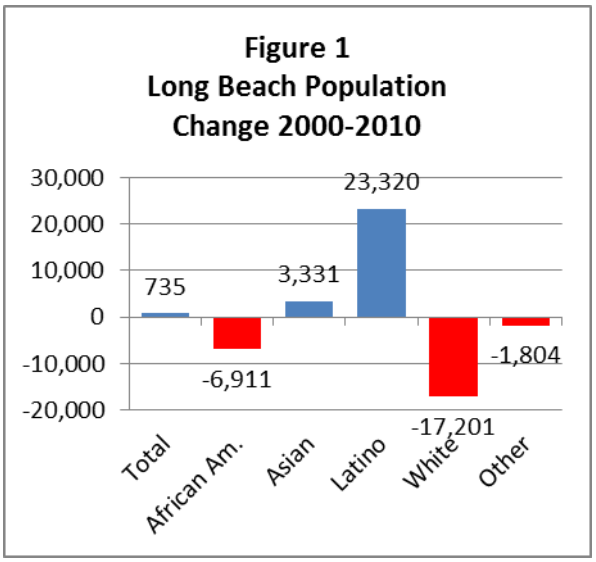
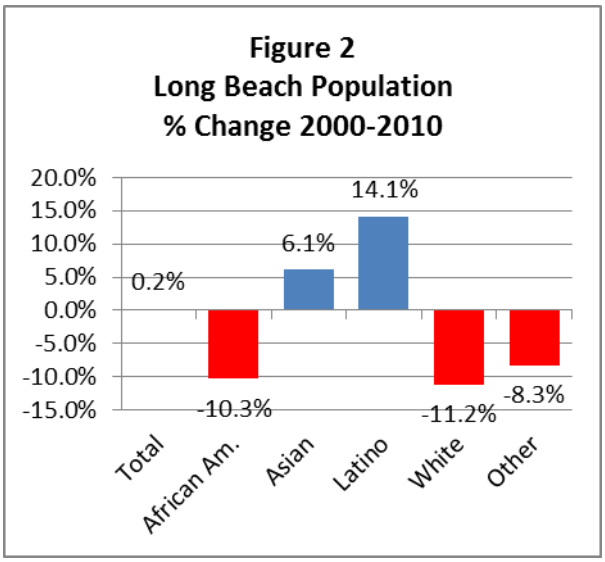
DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

The U.S. Census of 2000 recorded a population of 461,522 for Long Beach, of which African Americans totaled 68,643, or 14% of the population. At the time of the 2010 U.S. Census count, the Long Beach population had increased by 735 to 462,257, of which African Americans totaled 62,606 for a decrease of 6,037 and a reduction to 13% of the population. Similarly, the White population also decreased from 152,899 (33%) to 135,698 (29%). By contrast, over that same period of time, Latinos experienced major population increased from 165,092 (36%) to 188,412 (41%), while Asians grew from 55,591 (12%) to 59,496 (13%). Thus, the Black and White populations decreased significantly, while dramatic increases occurred in the Latino and Asian populations. Figures 1 and 2 below show the graphic changes in numbers and percentages during this ten-year period.





For the Black population, this is a serious reversal in an upward trend since 1980. Conventional wisdom (or at least the unverified reports) had expected that there would be an increase in the Black population (see Figure 3). Most speculation focused on how much the Latino population would increase, and whether such a change would be reflected in an increase in poverty related to increased immigration. The trend in Black population figures taken from the U.S. Census, is illustrated in the bar chart below, where one can see that the share of this percentage has regressed to the same percentage (13%) that Blacks represented in 1990.

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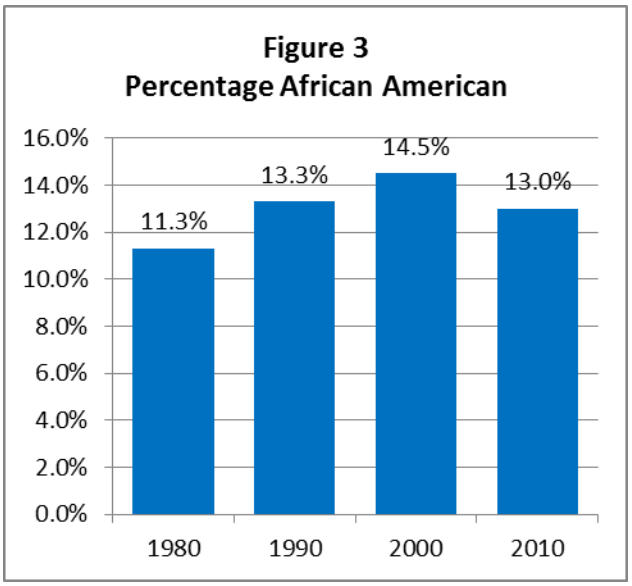

Ironically, the 1980 to 1990 increase in the share of the Black population was a trend that ran counter to Los Angeles County as a whole. While the share of the Black population declined in the county in 1990, the share of the Black population in Long Beach increased from 11% in 1980 to 13% in 1990 to a high of 14% in 2000. However, it would appear that the trend of the decreasing share of the Black population in Long Beach is now following the same trend as the County of Los Angeles.

Taking the long view of the trend in population growth by ethnicity since 1980, there has been a steady decrease of the White population from 65% to 25% of the population in 2012, and a steady increase in the Latino population from 12% to 44%, thereby replacing the White population as the City's dominant ethnic group. For example, with the exception of the White population, all other ethnic groups show a marked increase between 1980 and 1990, the same time period that the White population shows a marked decrease. The Asian population replaced the Black population as the third largest ethnic group, increasing from 4% to 14%, while Blacks decreased from a high of 14% in 2000 to 11% of the population in 2012. Figure 4, prepared by ReThinking Greater Long Beach (RTGLB), shows the gains and losses in population over time, using both Census data and the American Community Survey projections from 2012.

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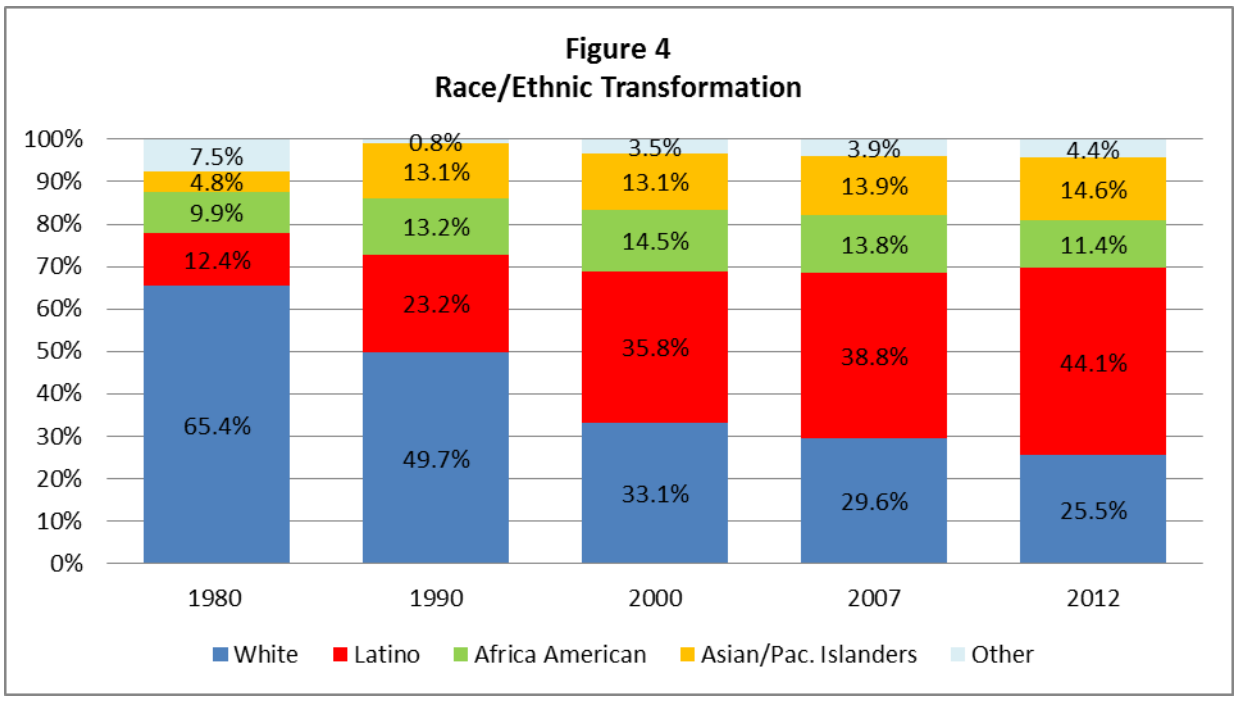

Even with the modest increase in total population, Long Beach remains the second largest city in Los Angeles County, and also has the second largest Black population of any city in Southern California.

- Although Blacks live in sufficient numbers throughout the City, they have begun moving from their historical neighborhoods in the center of the City to the northern areas toward the Compton and Paramount border cities.
- Whites on the other hand, tend to live in the affluent areas on the eastside of the City, and in the westside area around the Virginia Country Club and Bixby Knolls. These are also the most affluent areas of the city.
- Latinos are represented in large numbers in all sectors of the city with the exception of the east and southeast areas, where their numbers are smaller. Even so they are beginning to make inroads in those areas as well.
- Asians and Pacific Islanders are rather evenly spread over the central, west and northern parts of the City, and tend to use the central part of the City as a transition area to other parts of the state and country.

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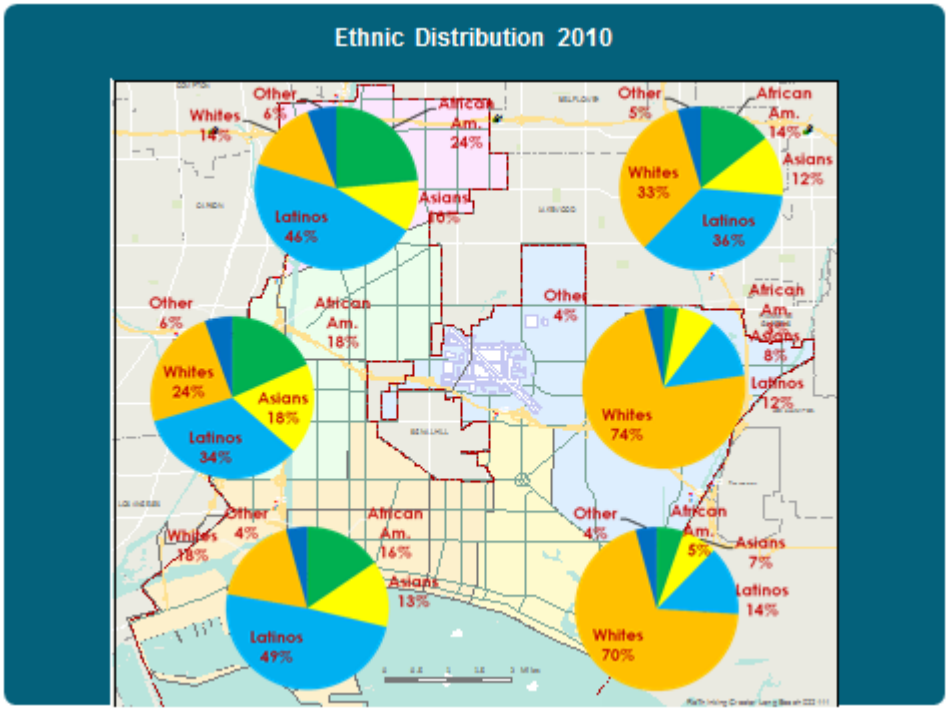
The following chart shows the ethnic distribution based on figures from the 2010 U.S. Census.



The combination of out-migration of Blacks and Whites and in-migration of Asians and Latinos, coupled with the fact that fertility rates for Blacks and Whites are below replacement rates, has resulted in a dramatic decline of births in both of those ethnic groups.

- In Long Beach, 26% of Blacks are under the age of 18 compared to 11% for Whites, 34% for Latinos, and 20% for Asian/Pacific Islanders. Latinos also had the highest percentage of children under 5 years (10%), followed by Blacks with 7%, Asians with 5%, and Whites with 3%.
- At the other end of the spectrum, 6% of Blacks are over the age of 65, compared to 17% of Whites, 4% of Latinos, and 10% of Asians. These two factors of very young and very old have policy implications in terms of education and social services.
- Long Beach has the second largest population of Black people, next to Los Angeles and ahead of Inglewood and Compton, two other population centers for Black persons.
- The influx of Asians and Latinos into the City has altered what were traditionally Black neighborhoods; they have moved in and become dominant residents as Blacks, have moved out of the central city to North Long Beach.

The chart on the next page illustrates the dramatic demographic shifts and how the once White majority has given way to a majority Latino population. These demographics reveal that Latinos are not dependent upon immigration in order to remain the largest of the four ethnic groups.

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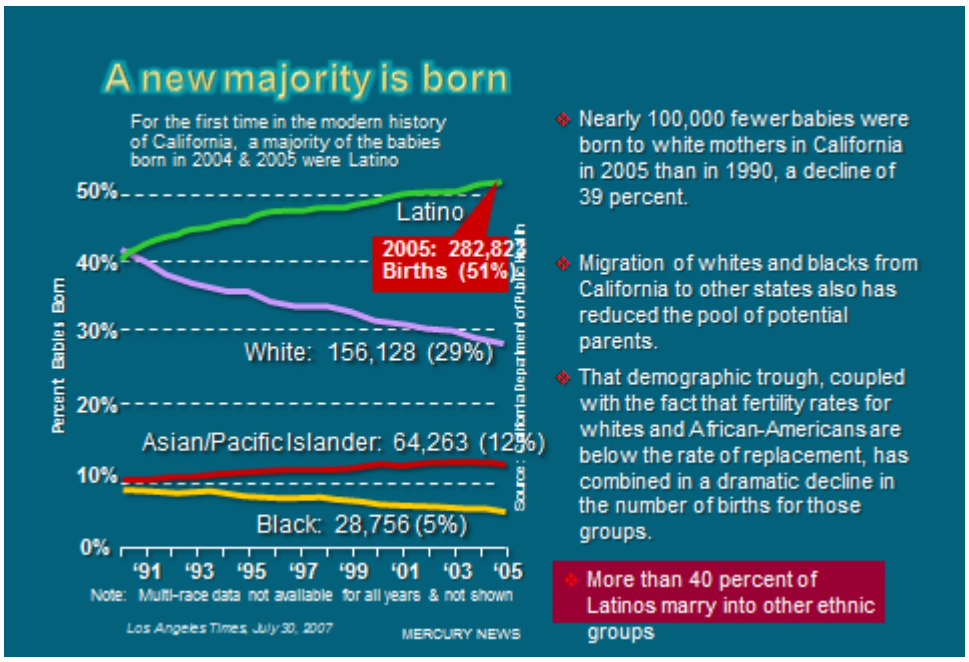
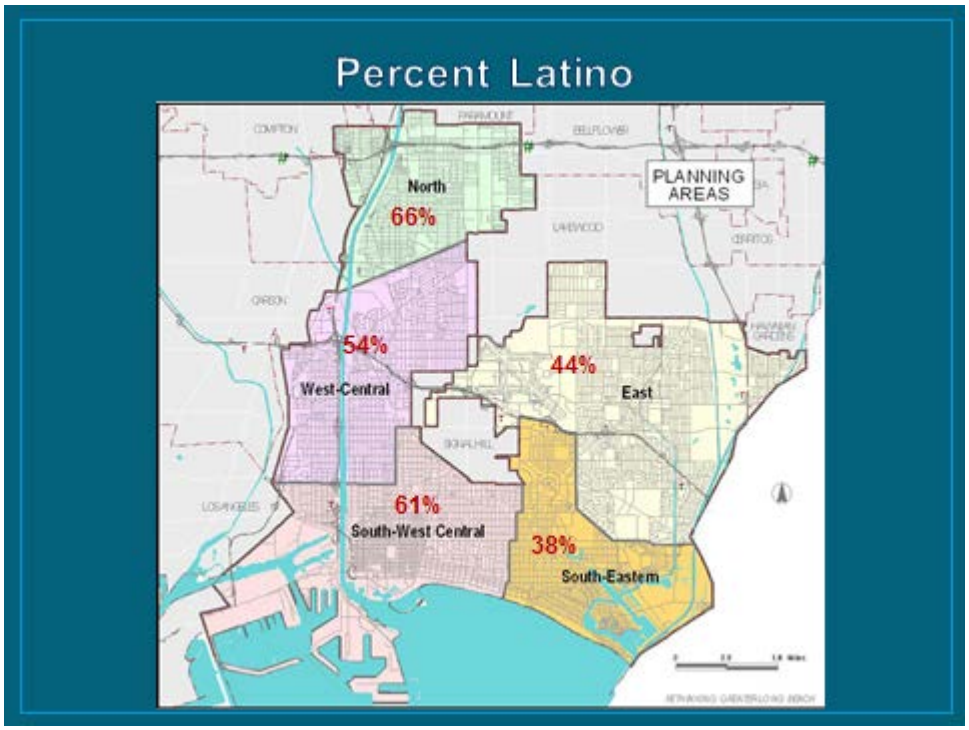


With the exception of the east side of Long Beach, Latinos now have the largest populations. And even in those east side communities, there are substantial percentages of Latinos living there. The map below, based on the Planning Districts of Long Beach, illustrate this point.



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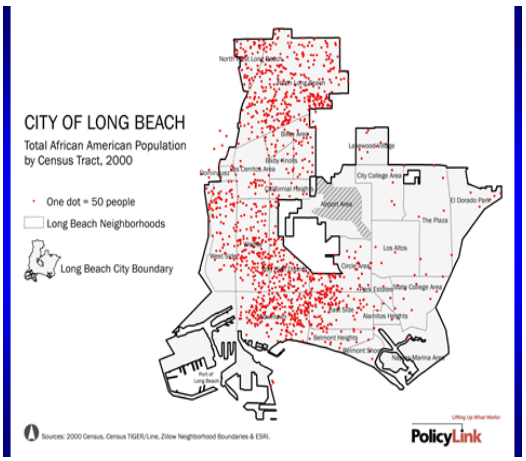
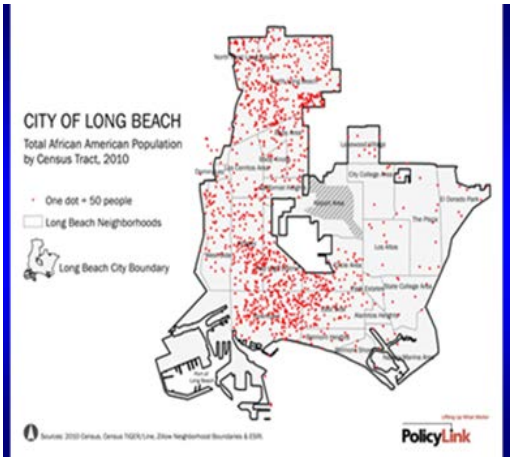
THE BLACK POPULATION IN LONG BEACH

As it is true with many cities across the nation, although racial segregation and racial covenants in housing have been outlawed, high concentrations of ethnic populations based on socio-economic factors, remain. With the influx and expansion of the Cambodian community and the continuing immigration of Latinos from Mexico, Central and South America, the community that was once historically African American has undergone rapid and lasting change. The two maps below chart the progression of the Black population based on the 2000 Census on the left, and the 2010 Census on the right, with each dot accounting for 50 people. The Black population is still concentrated in the historical neighborhoods in Central Long Beach and North Long Beach, but not in as significant numbers as was the case in the past.





- With a Black population of 63,593 Long Beach has the second largest Black community in Southern California.
- Almost all of the Black population in Long Beach (99%) is native-born, whereas for the city as a whole, it is 71%.
- The 2012 Census reported that the median age for Black males was 30 and for females, it was 32; for Whites males it was 44 and for females 45; for Asian males it was 32 and for females 36; and for Latinos males it was 25 and for females 26.

The data depicted in Figures 5 and 6 on the following page show that the Latino population is a younger population and the White population is an older one, with the median ages for Blacks and Asians being comparable. Social and public policy implications hinge on whether a younger, ethnic minority population will be educationally and financially prepared to contribute to a tax base that supports an aging White population.

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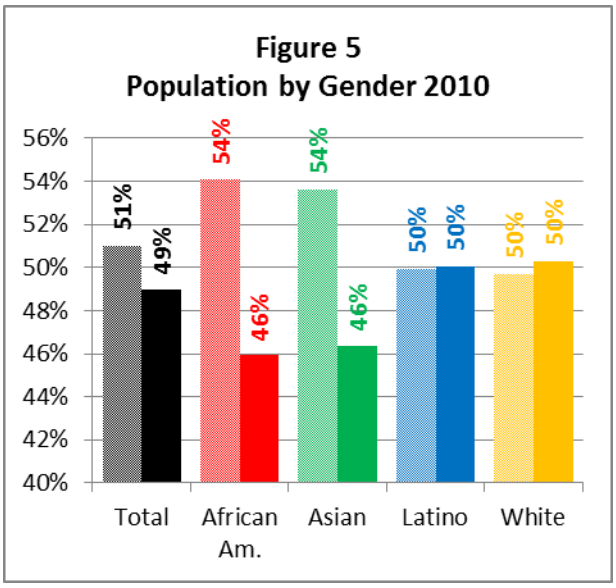
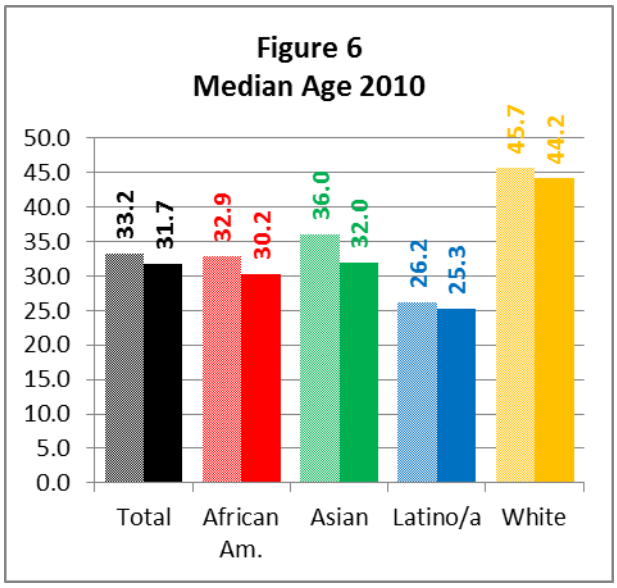
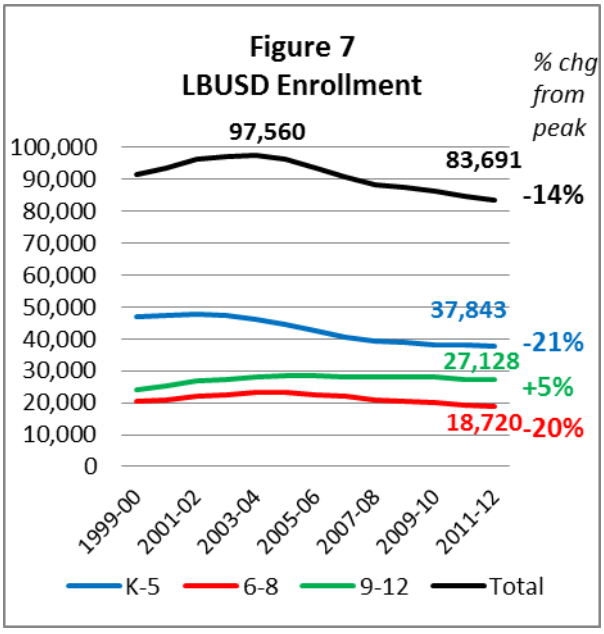
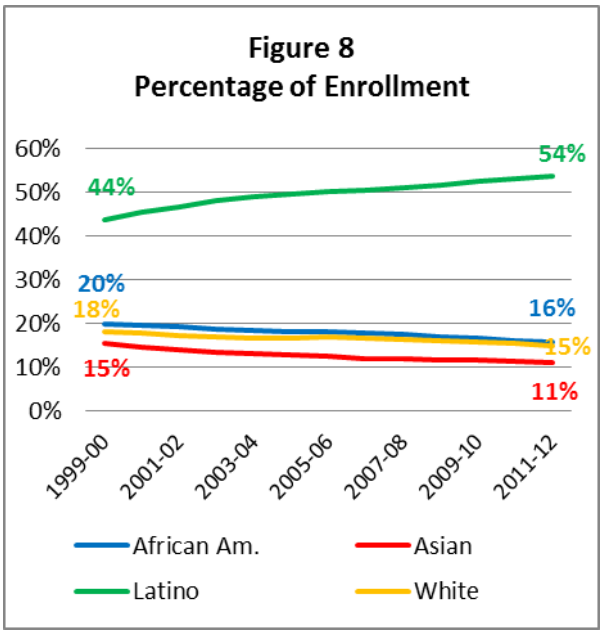




Education

The educational picture from the school years of 1999-2000 to the present school year in the Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) is one of a decline in enrollment from a high of 97,560 in the school year 2003-04 to a low of 83,691 in 2011-12 (reflected in Figure 7 and Figure 8).





- Percent of total enrollment by ethnicity shows Black students declined from 20% to 16%, White students declined from 18% to 15% and Asian students declined from 15% to 11%. Only Latino students increased from 44% to 54% of the total student population.

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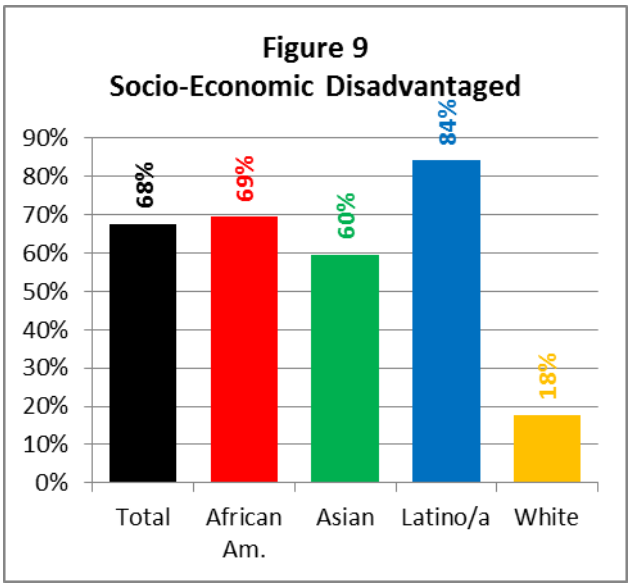
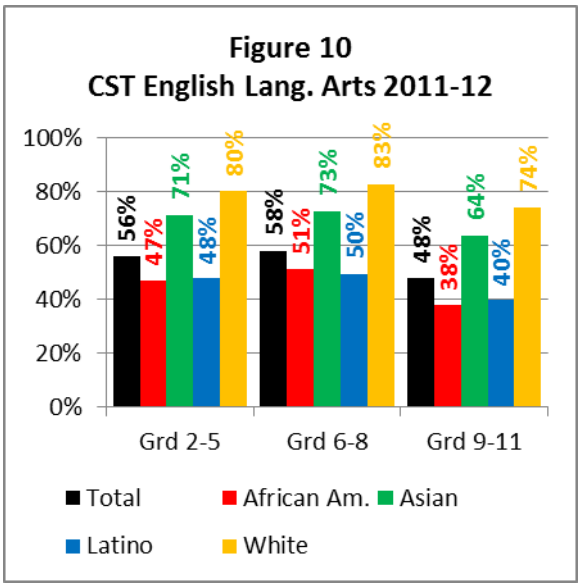
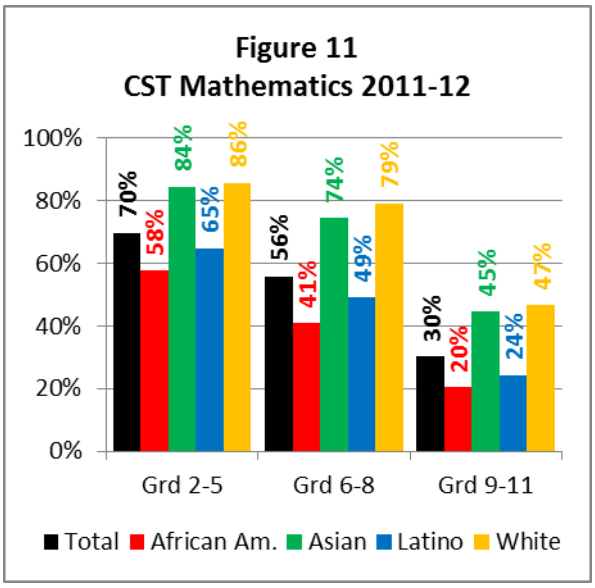


- Black students represent the second-highest percentage to qualify for the free-lunch program (69%), as determined by the percentage living below the poverty level or whose parents do not have a high school education (see Figure 9). Latinos at 84% are largest, next are Asians at 60%, and Whites at 18%.
- Asian and White students consistently perform at higher academic levels in all subject and grades levels than Black and Latino students on the California Standards Test (CST) (see Figures 10 and 11).





- The performance of all elementary age students has significantly improved since the California Standard Tests were first given in 2002-03.

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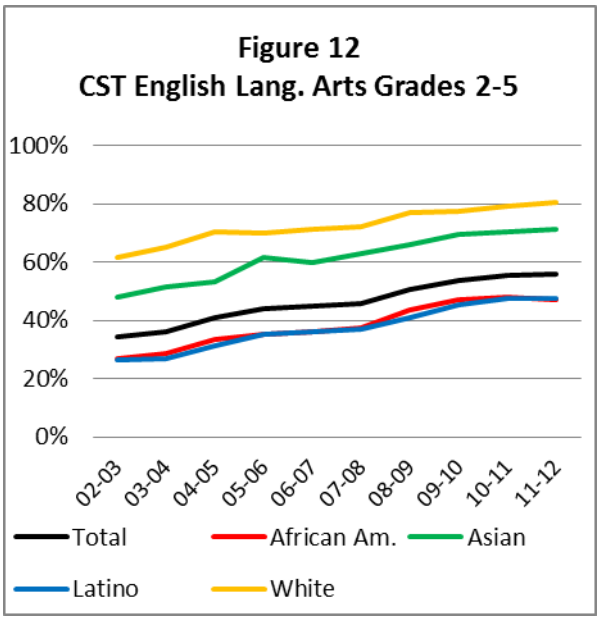
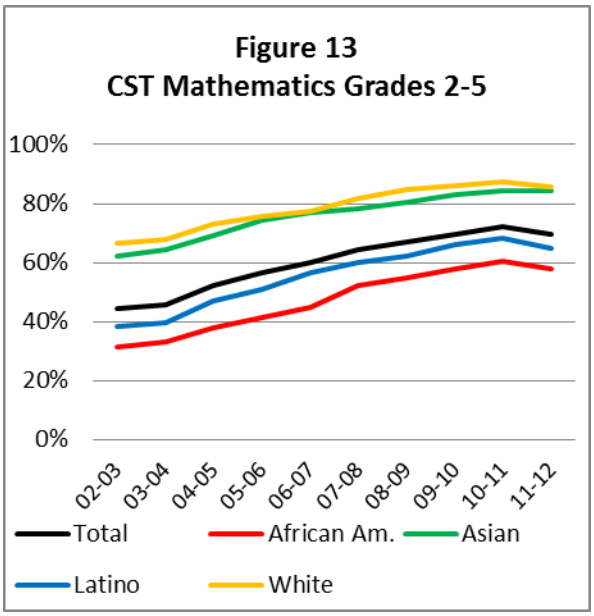
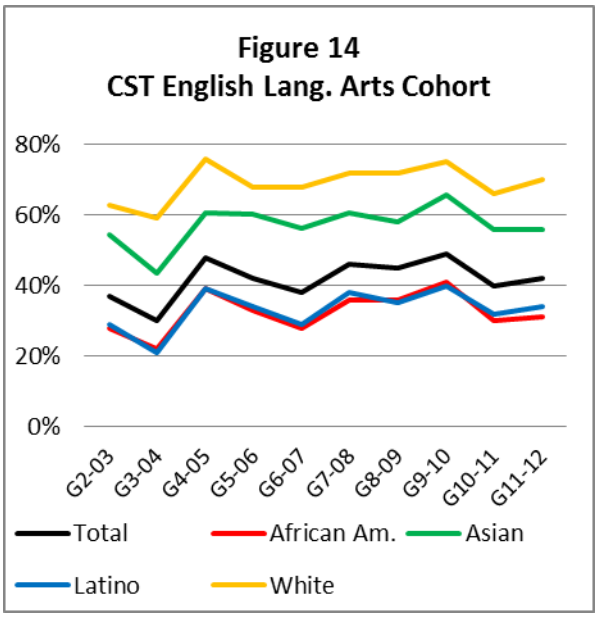
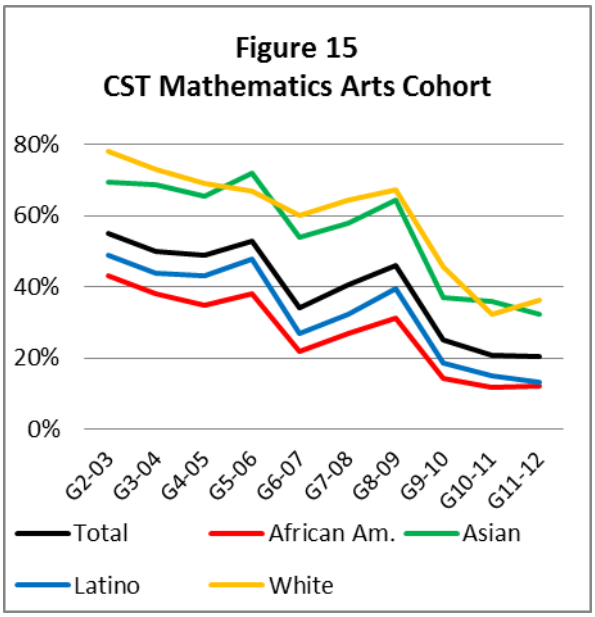
- A performance gap between Whites and Blacks, of over 30 percentage points in English Language Arts and over 25 percentage points in Mathematics, continues to the present time.





Another way to look at this performance gap is to follow the students enrolled in Grade 2 in 2002-03 through Grade 11 in 2011-12. Figures 14 and 15 show little overall improvement in the percentage of student performance at the Advanced or Proficient level in English Language Arts and a general decline in the percentage of student performance in Mathematics.





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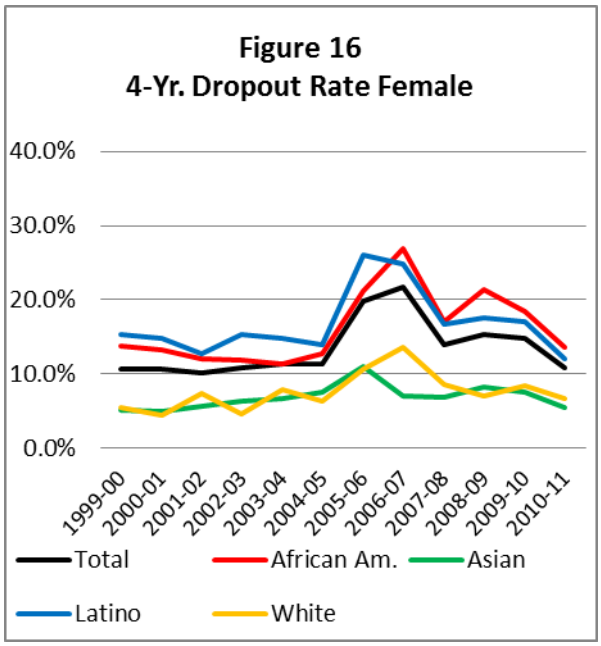
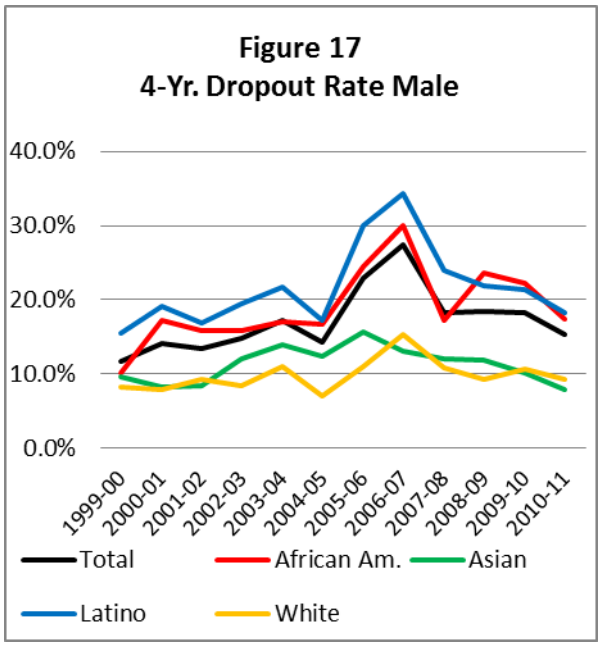
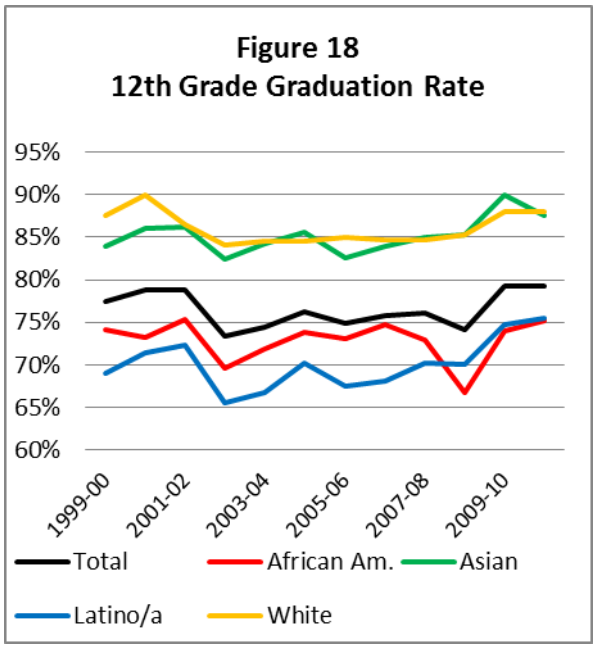
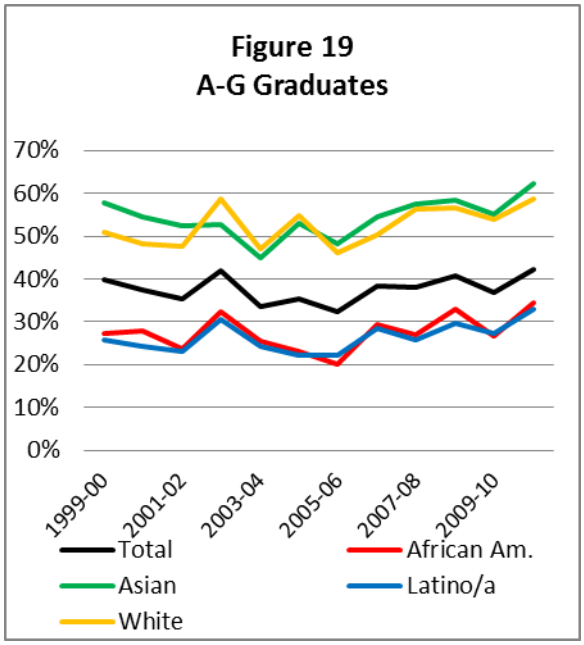
- High school dropout rates in have decreased significantly from 25% in 2006-07 to 13%, but there remains a high disparity between White and Asian students and Black and Latino students, for both males and females (see Figure 16 and 17).





In 2010-11, only 75% of the Black seniors graduated compared to 88% of the White seniors (Figure 18).





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- Only 42% of graduating seniors completed the minimum course requirements necessary to apply directly for admission to the University of California or California State University systems (A-G requirements). Figure 19 shows that completion rates for Blacks (34%) has consistently been much lower than White graduates (59%).

The current scenario presented by the data, of an aging population and a growing youth population, clearly demonstrates that the future of Long Beach is tied to the successful matriculation and graduation of minority students. The need for educated and skilled workers will continue to increase as workforce requirements demand workers with deeper and multiple skill sets. Youth will need to graduate from high school and either attend college or prepare for a trade for the 21st century workplace in order to contribute to tax revenues to support an aging population and maintain vital health and social services.

Employment

Although 2012 U.S. Census data on employment are yet to be released, speculation is that between 14 and 17 percent of Blacks ages 25 and older are unemployed in Los Angeles County. The estimates are often doubled for those 24 and younger, especially among men. Also, Black women suffer from high unemployment rates with numbers between 12-15%. Thus, the rates for Black unemployment are almost double that of the country as a whole. American Community Survey Estimates for 2012 can be useful in describing work and income patterns.

- A total of 354,518 Long Beach residents were employed full time during the past 12 months, of which 172,730 were men, all of whom had earnings, and 181,788 were women, 17 of whom had no earnings.
- The percentage of employment for Black men was lowest at 11%, compared to Asians at 12%. Latinos and Whites had the highest at 42% and 35%, respectively.
- Black women represented 17% of those working full time, Asians were employed at a slightly lower rate (16%), and Latinos were employed at a rate of 31%. White women had the largest percentage (33%) [that group included all of the 17 women who did not receive a salary].

Family Living Situations

- Average family size for Blacks is second lowest in the city at 3.20 compared to Asians at 3.80 and Latinos at 4.16. Whites have the lowest family size at 2.80 (see Figure 20).
- Blacks have the largest percentage of families headed by females with no husband present (53%), and the lowest percentage where husband and wife are present (35%); Asians (24%) and Latinos (25%) female-headed families, respectively; and Asians (66%) and Latinos (62%) with husband and wife present. Whites had the lowest female-headed families (18%) and the highest (75%) where husband and wife were present (Figure 21).

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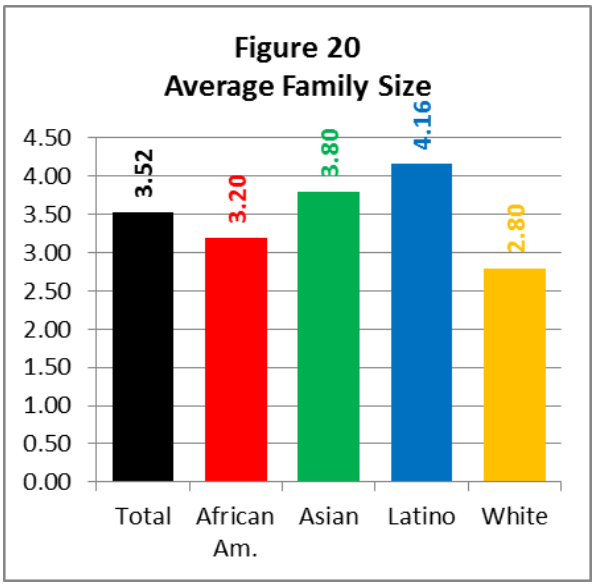
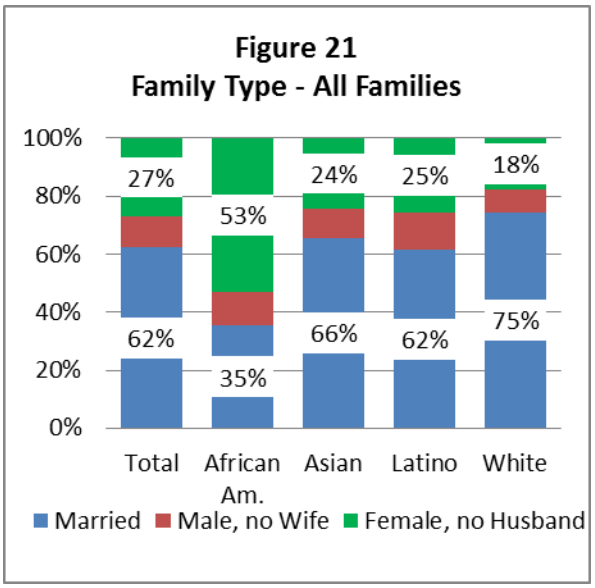
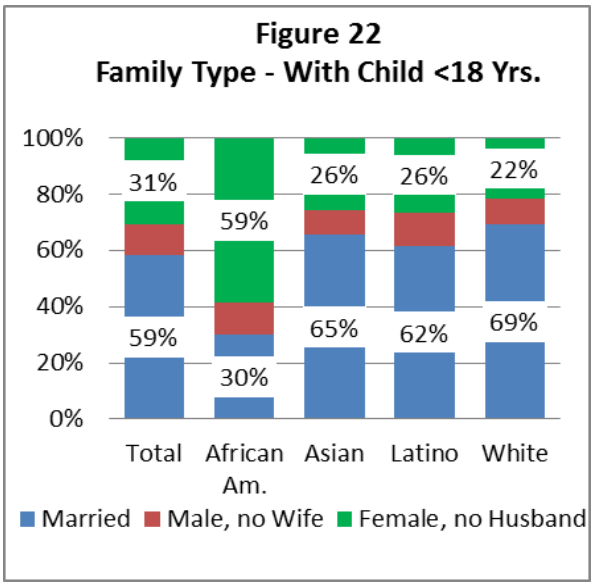
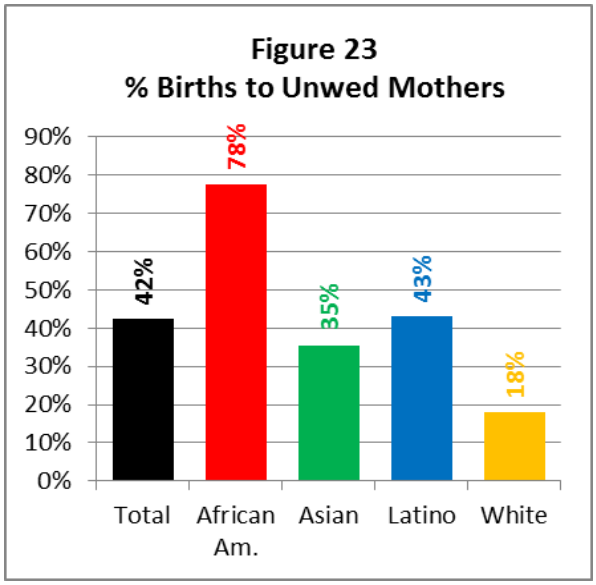
- If one looks only at families with a child under the age of 18 years, 59% of the Black families are female households with no husband present compared to 26% or less for the other ethnic groups (Figure 22).









- In addition to the high percentage of family households with a child under the age of 18 years, according to the 2010 Five-year American Community Survey, the birth data for 2005 to 2010 in Long Beach show that 78% of the births for Black women were to unwed mothers compared to only 42% for the total population and 18% for the White mothers (see Figure 23).

- Although only 5% of the Black households in Long Beach have a grandparent living in those homes, the grandparent is responsible for the care of grandchildren in 52% of the

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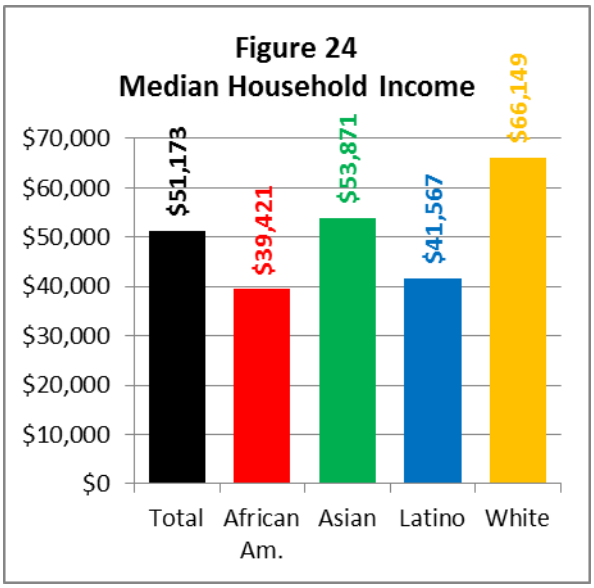
cases. This compares to only 1% of White households with a child under the age of 18 years having a grandparent present and only 32% of these having the grandparent responsible for the care of the grandchildren.

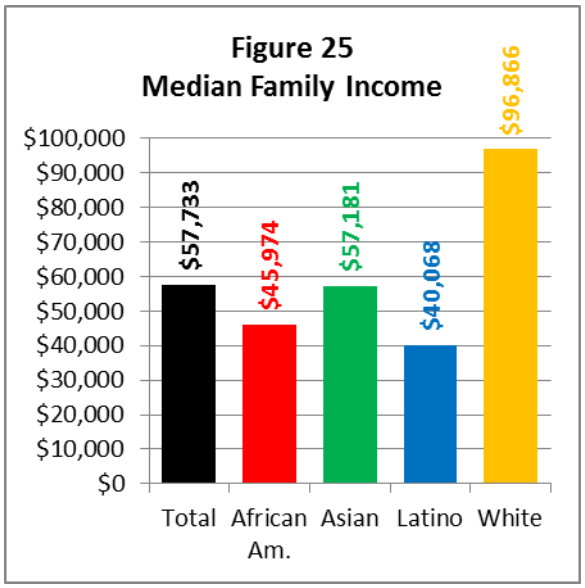
Household Income

Based on the 2012 American Community Survey, the past 12 months serve as a barometer for measuring the worth and income of households in Long Beach.

- Median income for Black men who worked full-time, year-round in the past 12 months was $40,604 and for Black women, $37,454; for Asian men, the median was $43,157 and for Asian women, $38,597; for Latino men the median was $30,520 and for Latina women, $27,649; for White men, the median was $70,313 and for White women, $53,690. Thus, the income disparity was based on race and gender.
- Of the share of households that supplemented their incomes with food stamps, Blacks represented 24%, Asians 14.5%, Latinos 48%, and Whites 12.5%.

The charts below show median household incomes (Figure 20) and median family incomes (Figure 21) by ethnicity. They show that Blacks have the lowest in household and second lowest in median family income.





- In the past 12 months, 20% of Blacks in Long Beach had incomes below the poverty level, 18% for Asians, 26% for Latinos, 9% for Whites, and 21% for other racial/ethnic groups. This is a partial reason for the low median income level of Blacks.
- During that same period, 38% of Blacks had incomes above the poverty level, compared to 38% for Asians, 39% for Latinos, 46% for Whites, and 36% for other racial/ethnic groups.

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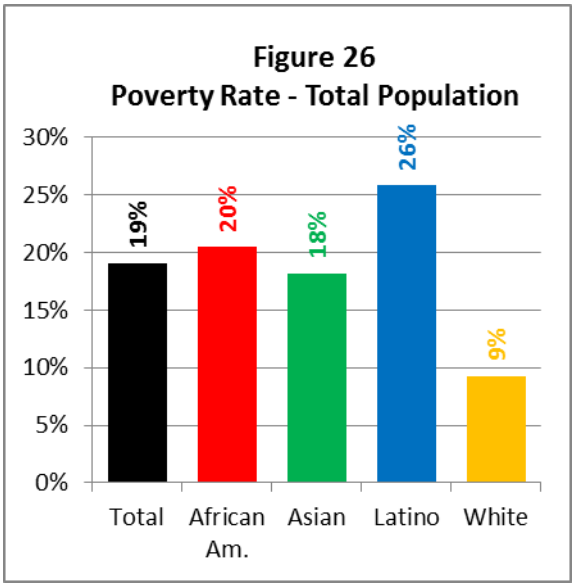
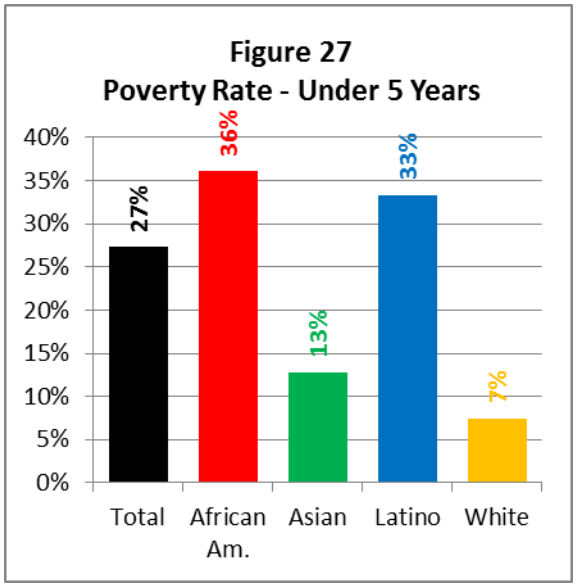
Poverty

The 2010 Five-Year American Community Survey estimated that the overall poverty rate for Long Beach was 19%, with the poverty rate for Blacks being 20% compared to only 9% for Whites (Figure 26). The five charts following show detailed disparities in almost all areas between Whites and Blacks.

- Black children under 5 years of age are more likely than any other ethnic group to live below the poverty line (36%). Latinos (33%), Asians (13%), and Whites (7%) followed in descending order (Figure 27).
- For children under 18 years of age, the highest poverty rate was for Latinos at 35% compared to 27% for the Blacks and 8% for the Whites (Figure 28).
- For individual 65 years or older, the poverty rate was about 15% for the Blacks, Latinos, and Asians compared to only 7% for the Whites (Figure 29).





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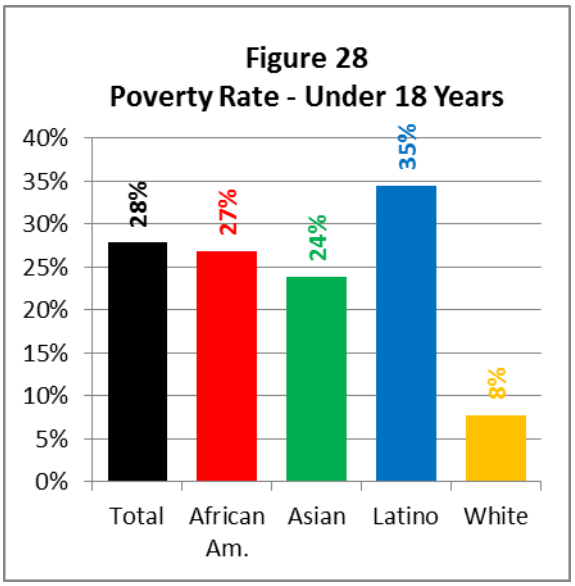
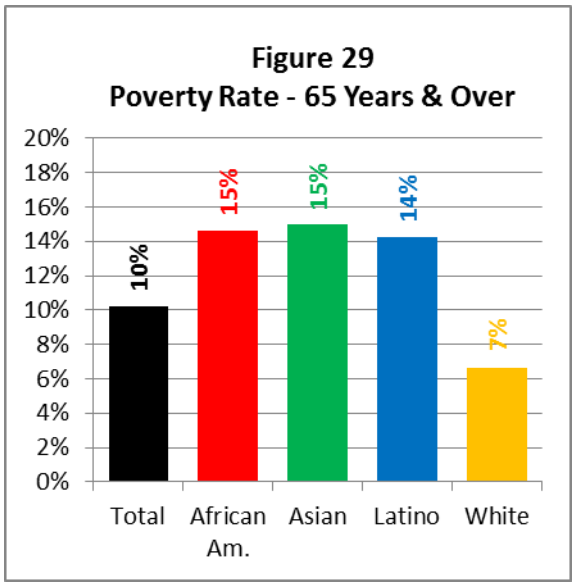
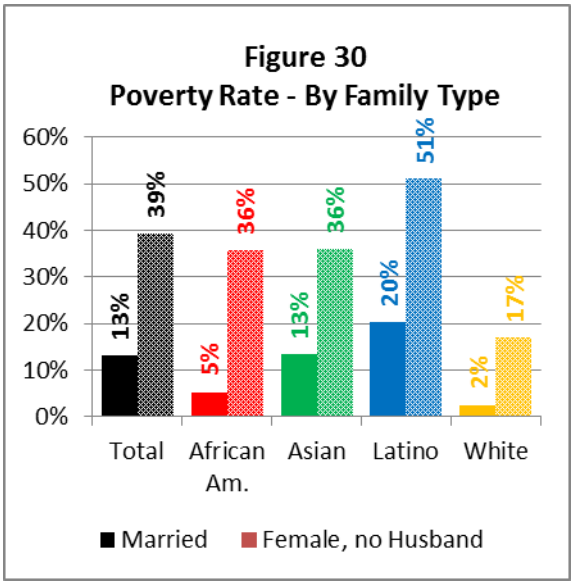




- In Long Beach, 13% of married families with a child less than 18 years of age live below the poverty line, and 39% of female families where no husband is present with a child under 18 live below the poverty line (Figure 30).

- For Black families, 5% of the married families with a child under 18 years live below the poverty line compared to 36% of the Black female families with a child under 18.



Housing and Home Ownership

During the economic recession brought on by the collapse of the financial industry, Black home ownership suffered as a result of higher unemployment, difficulty in obtaining reasonable home loans and a slow recovery of the job market. The *U.S. Census Report* painted

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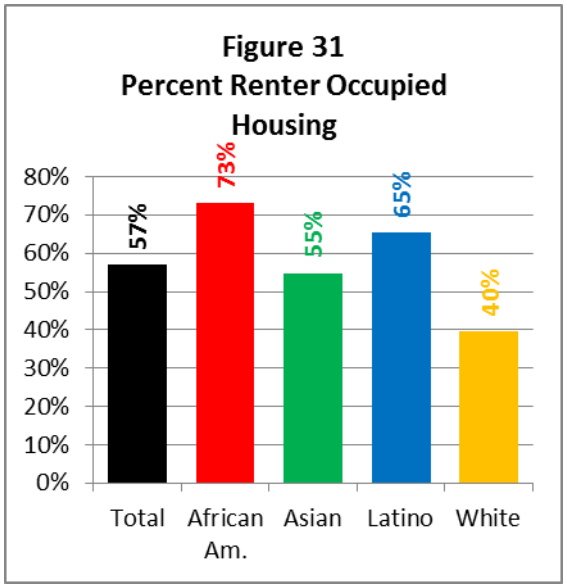
a bleak picture for Black home ownership. While only 40% of the White population live in renter occupied housing, 73% of the Black population live in rented housing (Figure 31).



- In Long Beach, only 25% of Blacks have mortgages as homeowners, compared to 40% for Asians, 32% for Latinos, and 48% for Whites. Only 2% of Blacks owned their homes free and clear of mortgage compared to 5% of Asians, 3% of Latinos and 12% of Whites.
- The largest percentage of Blacks live in renter-occupied dwellings (73%) compared to 55% of Asians, 65% of Latinos, and 40% of Whites.
- According to the U.S. Census, a low density owner-occupied and renter-occupied household is 1.5 persons per room, not counting the kitchen or dining areas. Blacks were less likely to live in overcrowded conditions (2.74 owners and 2.43 renters, respectively) than either Asians (3.53 and 2.97) or Latinos (4.10 and 3.56). However, Whites were the least likely to live in overcrowded conditions (2.25 owners and 1.86 renters persons per room).

Public Health

The California Endowment's Building Healthy Communities has selected Long Beach as one of 14 cities in the State to demonstrate how healthy behaviors can influence and improve the quality of life for residents by having a positive impact in changing policies and systems that affect our lives. Dr. Robert K. Ross is quoted as having said the following:

> **"One in every three black (sic) babies born today is destined to become a diabetic. Obesity and diabetes have to do with the fitness and nutrition, pathways on a much broader range of issues."** (State of Black Los Angeles, 2007).

This section will begin its focus then with life expectancy data from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), followed by a longitudinal study of 5th, 7th and 9th graders

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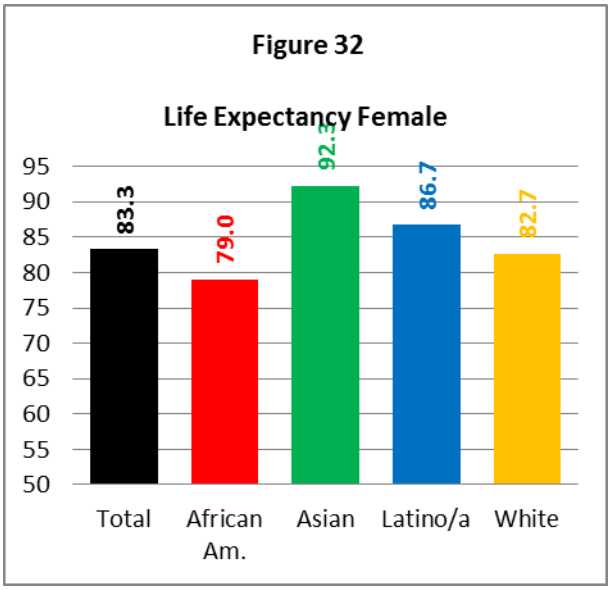
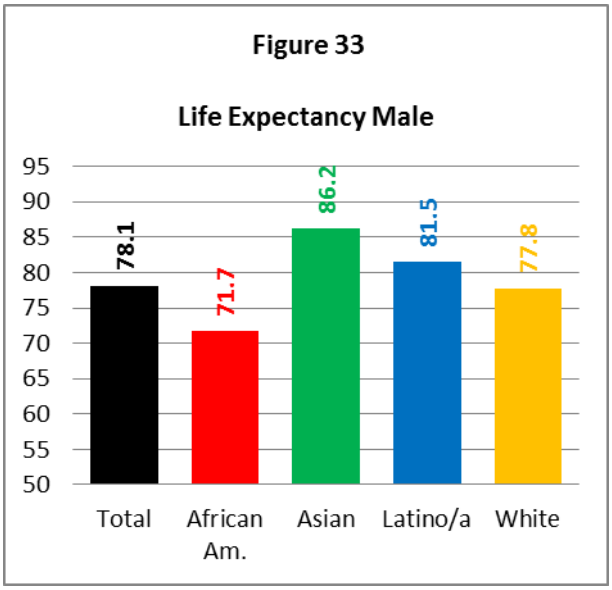
of the Long Beach Unified District by ReThinking Greater Long Beach (RTGLB). The DHHS data cover the years from 2004-2007 with more recent data of 2009 pending. The RTGLB data cover the academic school years of 2003-04 to 2009-10.

- During their first year of life, Blacks have the lowest life expectancy among all ethnic groups in the City at 75 years compared to Asians, who have the highest at 89 years. Latinos have the next highest life expectancy at 84 years and Whites are next at 80 years.
- The life expectancy for Black males and females follow the same pattern with Blacks showing a life expectancy of 71 and 79 years, respectively; Asians with 86 and 92, respectively; Latinos with 81 and 86, respectively; and Whites with 77 and 82, respectively (Figures 32 and 33).

The two charts on the following page show the age discrepancy between life expectancy for the major ethnic groups in Long Beach.





- In Long Beach, Asian women and men have the longest life expectancy at 92 and 86 years, respectively.

Overweightness and Obesity in Long Beach Unified School District

Three major initiatives have been launched in Long Beach all with components aimed at improving the health conditions of children and youth, and for providing safe environments for learning. The aforementioned Building Healthy Communities Initiative is one; another is the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) Pioneering Healthy Communities Initiative; and the third is First 5 LA's Best Start.

Yet another source of the health and welfare of Long Beach is the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS), the nation's largest state health survey. In 2010, more than 500

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households were interviewed by using random digit dialing to select the sample. The survey included adults who were parents of children under 18 years old, or an adult between the ages of 18 and 40. The interviews were conducted with adults most knowledgeable about the children and with teenagers who were interviewed after gaining permission from their parents. The concluded results were within a 95% confidence interval, the highest among surveys.

- The survey estimated that 68% of children and adults were overweight and obese.
- Among 5-7 year olds, 75% reported that they had been physically active for at least 60 minutes per day during the previous week, and 86% claimed they had walked or biked to school at least once in the last week.
- Of the 2 to 17 year olds, 77% reported that they had eaten fruits and vegetables the previous day and 59% had drunk a soda.
- Only 9% reported that they ate fast foods three or more times a week.

With such confounding results from a sample that was so physically active, we sought to study a representative sample of youth over an extended period of time, since one would expect that a group so physically active would have lower overweight and obese percentages.

As part of the California State Physical Fitness Program, Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) measures the Body Mass Index (BMI) of 5th, 7th and 9th grade students each year. The LBUSD provided ReThinking Greater Long Beach (RTGLB) with the raw student scores, along with demographic information and academic performance data for each student. The raw BMI scores were converted into four categories, which followed the classifications used by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 2011.

- **Obese**: Equal to or greater than 95% of the population (95th percentile or above).
- **Overweight**: Equal to or greater than 85th percentile and less than the 95th percentile.
- **Healthy or Normal Weight**: Greater than or equal to the 5th percentile and less than the 85th percentile.
- **Underweight**: Less than the 5th percentile.

After converting the BMI scores into the classifications, the data file was converted to a longitudinal file that tracked the individual student from the 5th through 9th grades, and only included those students who lived in Long Beach or a sample of 5,573. The BMI Table 1 below reports the demographics of the students and the education of their parents.

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Body Mass Index Longitudinal Sample (N=5,573)
Student Demographics

Table 1

Gender		**Language Fluency**	
• Female	51%	• English Only	44%
• Male	49%	• Fluent English Proficient	31%
		• English Learner	25%
		• Missing	0%
Ethnicity		**Parent Education**	
• African American	13%	• Less than High School	14%
• Asian	9%	• High School Graduate	22%
• Latino	55%	• Some College	19%
• White	5%	• College Degree	43%
• Other	5%	• Missing	1%

The charts on the next page (Figures 34 and 35) show the distribution of those students who were classified as Underweight (blue), Normal (green), Overweight (orange) and Obese (red) based on an analysis using their BMI scores. Note that the percentage of students classified as Overweight remained constant through all three grades while those classified as Normal increased. The percentage of students who were classified as Obese declined significantly while those who were classified as Underweight declined only slightly. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), in a healthy population only 5% of the students should be classified as Obese, 10% as Overweight, 70% as Normal, and 15% as Underweight.

The largest percentage of students who were Obese was Latinos at 31%. Black students were next at 28%, and Asians and Whites had the lowest percentages at 17% and 15%, respectively.

- Black students at 20% were only slightly less likely to be classified as Overweight than Latinos, who had 21% of their students in that classification. Again, Asians and Whites had the lowest percentages with 17% each.
- Latinos had slightly fewer students in the Normal or Healthy classification (47%) than Blacks (50%). Asians (64%) and Whites (67%) had the largest percentages in this classification.

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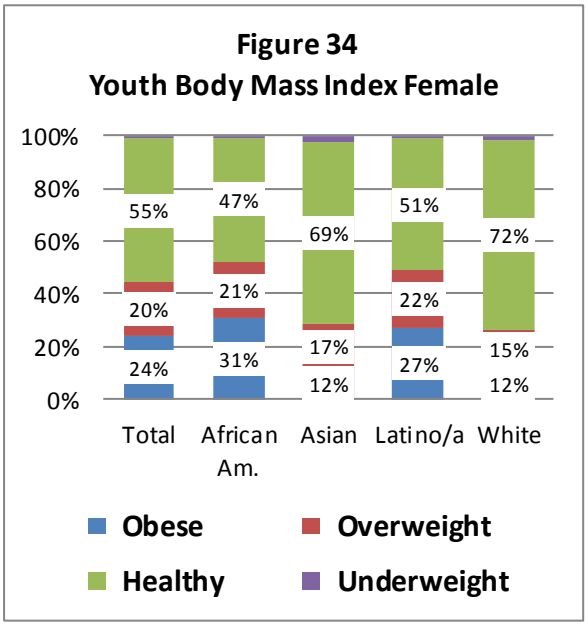

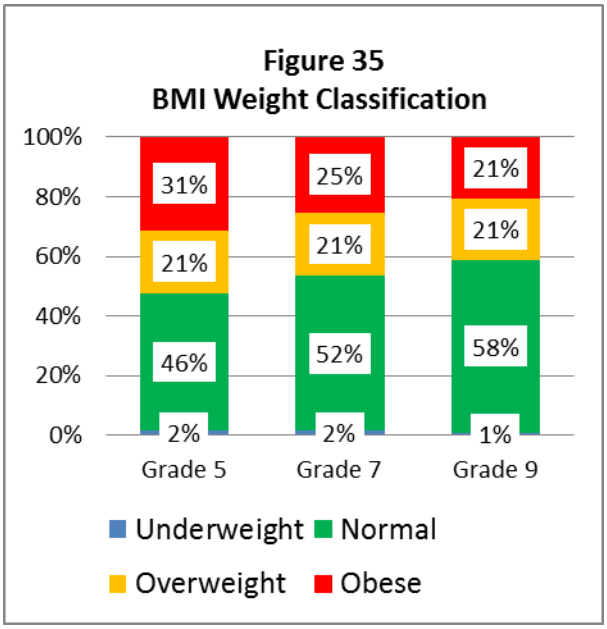

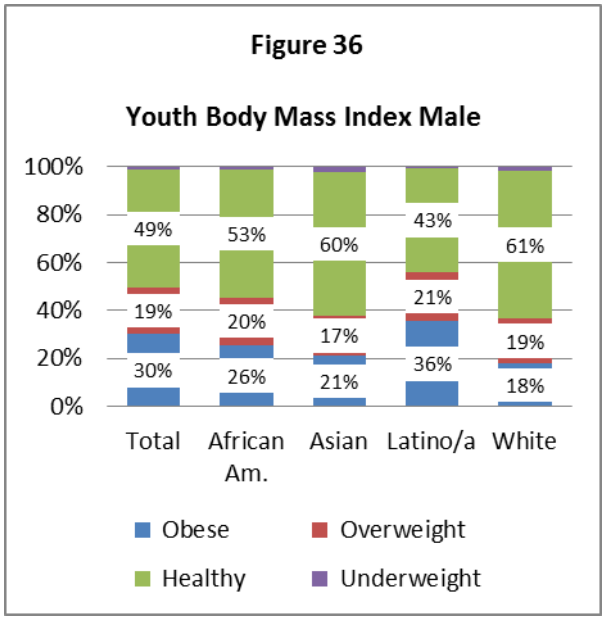

- Black females have the largest percentage in the Obese classification (31%), followed by Latinos (27%), and Asians and Whites at 12%, respectively.
- Overweight distribution among females is fairly even in the 20% range, except for White females at 15%.
- White females at 72% had the largest percentage in the Healthy classification followed closely by Asians at 69%. Blacks (47%) and Latinos (51%) had the lowest percentages.
- Latino males had the highest (36%) BMI scores in the Obese classification, with Blacks (26%), Asians (21%), and Whites (18%) following.

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Table 2 lists all the categories for causes of death in Long Beach for the years 2004 through 2007. A glitch in the transmission of data at the State level prevented our presenting more current 2010 data.

Causes of Death

Table 2

	Total	Afr. Am.	Asian	Latino	White
All Causes of Deaths (2004-2007)	3,029	440	279	461	1,805
• Infectious & Parasitic Diseases	2.2%	3.4%	1.8%	2.8%	1.8%
• Cancer (Neoplasm)	24.0%	26.4%	26.5%	21.7%	23.6%
• Endocrine/Nutritional/Metabolic	3.4%	5.7%	3.2%	4.6%	2.4%
• Mental Disorders	2.7%	2.0%	1.1%	2.0%	3.3%
• Nervous System	5.4%	3.6%	2.2%	3.7%	6.8%
• Circulatory System	36.4%	35.2%	36.6%	30.2%	38.3%
• Respiratory System	10.6%	6.8%	12.5%	8.9%	11.7%
• External Causes	6.1%	8.0%	6.8%	10.4%	4.4%
• Other Causes of Death	4.7%	4.8%	5.0%	9.3%	3.4%

- The major causes of death among all ethnic groups are cancer and diseases of the circulatory system, the latter of which includes hypertensive-related heart attacks and strokes.
- Blacks have the highest percentage of deaths due to endocrinal/nutritional diseases (5.7%), primarily diabetes, the latter of which is related to overweightness and obesity. Latinos are next at 4.6%, while Asians (3.2%) and Whites (2.4%) have the lowest.

Any discussion regarding the life expectancy or longevity of Black people necessitates an examination of the plight of Black infants and causes of death for male youth between ages of 15-24 years. The Office of Minority Heath (OMH) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services classifies the four leading causes of infant deaths as 1) Very Low Birth Weight (VLBW), 2) Congenital Malformations, 3) Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), and 4) Maternal Complications. An analysis of African American infant mortality rate in Long Beach is not available at this time; however, 2006 data attribute the leading causes of death across all major ethnic groups to Very Low Birth Weight and Perinatal Complications.

- Total rate of infant death for all major groups was 5 babies per 1000 live births. For infants with VLBW, the rate was slightly more than 1 baby per 100 live births.
- Black mothers gave birth to the largest number of infants with VLBW at slightly more than 2 babies per 100 live births. Asian mothers were next with slightly more than 1 baby per 1000, while the rate held constant for Latino and White mothers.
- Black mothers experienced the largest number of infant deaths at an approximate rate of 8.5 per 1000 live births. White mothers rate was slightly above 4 deaths per 1000 live

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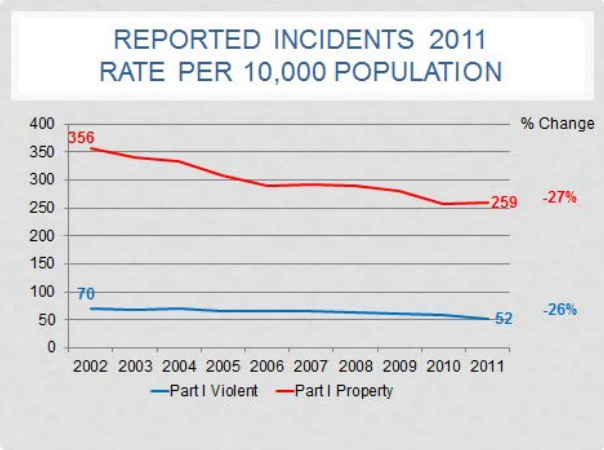
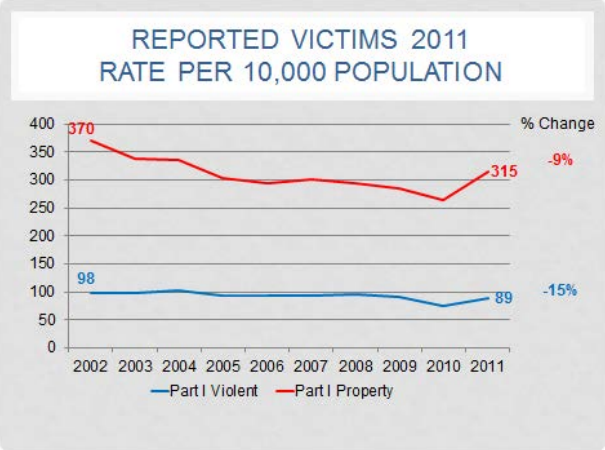
births, and Asian mothers were next with just below 4 deaths per 1000 births. Latino mothers had the lowest rate at slightly more than 3 deaths per 1000 births.

PUBLIC SAFETY

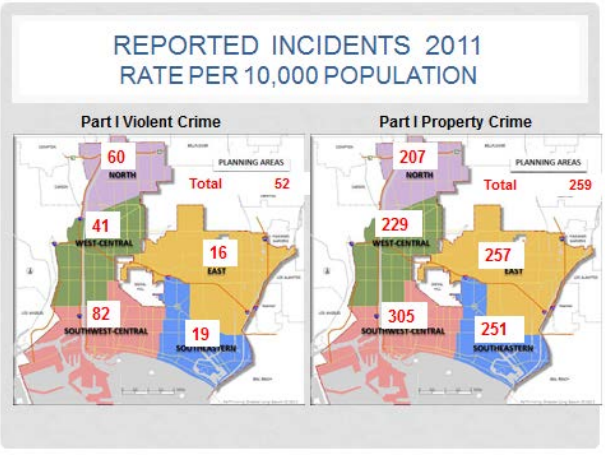
Since 2002, when the current data collection and reporting system was developed, Part I Violent Crime (e.g., assault, homicide, rape, robbery) and Part II Property Crime (e.g., burglary, theft, grand theft auto) have steady declined. We are in the process of data-mining Part I and II crimes so that they can be presented showing ethnic disparities for suspects and victims. The following charts show reported crime incidents and reported victims from 2002 to 2011 per 10,000 persons in the population.





- The decline in both violent crime and property crime persists despite increases and fluctuations in the population. There are current reports which would indicate that crime has begun to increase, beginning in 2010.

The next chart shows reported incidents for violent crime and property crime by the five City Geographic Planning Districts: North, West-Central, and Southwest-Central Districts, where there are large concentrations of African Americans and Latinos; and East and Southeastern Districts, where there are high concentrations of Whites.



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- Rates of violent crimes are highest in the Southwest-Central District at 82 reported incidents compared to 60 in the North and 41 in the West-Central District. The East and Southeastern Districts are lowest at 16 and 19, respectively.
- Southwest-Central also had the highest rates for reported property crimes at 305 per 10,000 persons, followed by the East and Southeastern Districts at 257 and 251, respectively. The West-Central and North Districts were lowest at 229 and 207, respectively.

Although we are unable to analyze the districts by ethnic groups because the data are not yet available to us, based on long-standing social and economic adverse conditions, one can reasonably presume that since the western districts are largely populated by African Americans and Latinos, these two groups will be heavily involved in the crimes as victims and suspects. When these data are made available, we will add that analysis as an addendum to this report. Since Long Beach and Los Angeles share common characteristics as major urban centers in Los Angeles County, it is foreseeable that the leading cause of premature death for African Americans in Long Beach would be homicide (*State of Black Los Angeles Report, 2005*).

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CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Although the history of Black people in Long Beach has been one of continuous struggle to achieve equality against tremendous odds, in spite of the absence of a strong Black organizational infrastructure with the exception of Black Churches, Blacks do have interactions with long-standing institutions and occupy positions of influence. Perhaps two factors, more than any others, are keys to these accomplishments: one is the proficiency with the English language, a factor that correlates highly with success in America; the other is the national civil rights movement and the impact of high civic engagement and the Black elected officials of our big Sister City Los Angeles, the smaller communities of Compton and Inglewood, and the State of California.

- For Blacks who are 18 years or older, 95% are U. S. citizens and 3% are not citizens. These figures compare to Whites with 92% U.S. citizens and 3% not citizens; Latinos with 57% U.S. citizens and 43% not citizens; and Asians with 73% U.S. citizens and 27% not citizens.
- English is spoken in the homes of 95% of Blacks in Long Beach, compared to 24% for Asians, 19% of Latinos, and 92% of Whites.
- Another language is spoken in the home for only 5% of Blacks, compared to 76% for Asians, 81% for Latinos, and 8% for Whites.

Elected Officials

The Long Beach City Council is made up of nine Council Districts, all of whom are elected by their District constituents, and a Mayor who is elected citywide.

- James Wilson was the first Black man to be elected to the City Council (four terms, two terms as Vice Mayor), and upon his death Clarence Smith, another African American, was elected to fill his seat.
- Doris Topsy-Elvord was the first Black woman to be elected to the City Council (two terms, one term as Vice-Mayor) and later became the first Black person to be appointed to the Harbor Commission.
- Three of the nine council seats are represented by African American men, Dee Andrews (Sixth District), Al Austin (Eighth District) and Steven Neal (Ninth District). The remaining seats are held by one Latino man, one Indian woman, one White woman and three White men. This marks an historical first that three Blacks have served at the same time.

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Community and Human Relations

While there have been no opinion surveys on the matter of race relations in Long Beach, a recent *Associated Press* poll conducted by researchers from the Universities of Stanford, Michigan, and Chicago reported that a slight majority of Americans openly harbor anti-Black attitudes. In all, the report stated that 51% of Americans surveyed expressed explicit anti-Black attitudes and when measured by an implicit racial attitudes test, jumped to 56%. These figures compare to 48% and 49%, respectively, four years ago in 2008.

In a similar study conducted by the *Associated Press* in 2011, 52% of Americans surveyed also expressed anti-Hispanic sentiments, and that figure rose to 57% in the implicit test. There were no past comparative data on Hispanics.

Although there is an active National Association of Colored Peoples (NAACP) here in Long Beach, as well as other organizations that focus on race and human relations, the likelihood that these figures would be representative of attitudes here should come as no surprise. As noted in the historical chronology of Blacks in Long Beach, racial prejudice and discrimination have played a central role in relations between Whites and Blacks.

African American Media

The *Long Beach Times Newspaper* is the only Black-owned news source in the City. It was founded and is edited by Richard A. Love. It is a weekly newspaper with online capabilities for subscription and is focused on covering Black life in the Greater Long Beach area, as well as the cities of Compton, Carson, and Paramount.

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TOWARD A BLACK AGENDA FOR LONG BEACH

This first *State of Black Long Beach Report* shows that the disparities in almost every quality of life area (with the possible exception of Civic Engagement) are critical, stark, and persistent over time. Education is probably the most critical area because of the gap in academic performance of Black students when compared to that of White and/or Asian students. The disturbing fact is that despite the best efforts of the Long Beach Unified School District to close that gap through a variety of educational programs and strategies, the gap remains persistent over time. Perhaps it is time to move the discussion and search for solutions beyond the usual realm of teachers or parents to the broader community. Since education is a foundation for having a successful career, and because there will be fewer opportunities in the future for people without trade experience or advanced degrees, it is essential that this issue be at the top of a Black agenda.

Another critical area is the economic status of the Black population, largely poor and working class on whose shoulders economic hardships fall hardest. There is a paucity of community economic development corporations or Black business organizations to cushion the fall of those who are struggling for economic security. Given the fact that the City of Long Beach has not made Black economic issues a priority, and in light of the history of an open disregard for the welfare of the community, it might be more prudent to think of a self-help or mutual aid initiative to develop community economic development enterprises. This is not a new challenge for Blacks because, historically, self-help and mutual aid have been the survival mechanisms by which Black people have developed institutions and forged ahead against great odds. These initiatives are the reason for the existence of Historically Black Colleges and Universities, financial institutions, and civil rights organizations.

Still another critical area is the health status of Black people in Long Beach, both youth and adults. On every scale, Blacks have the lowest life expectancy coupled with high risk causes for death. In addition, our overweight and obese children and adults put us at greater risk of heart, respiratory and circulatory diseases, thereby endangering or shortening our work lives. It has long been known that heart attacks, hypertension, and stroke are common causes of death among Black men. If that cycle is to be broken, then we must work with both youth and adults to improve the health status of our community.

We are not suggesting that other quality of life areas do not demand attention. However, the interconnectedness of education, economics, and health serve as a focal point. We are not suggesting that it has been a “gloom-and-doom” existence for Black people in Long Beach. To the contrary, there have been and continue to be numerous individual and organizational accomplishments since the early 1900s. Though commendable, these achievements have not yielded the infrastructure necessary to reverse the trends according to the data in this report, nor mitigate against the harshness of the “benign neglect” that characterizes the current atmosphere. Nevertheless, for over 100 years, the Black Church has consistently helped to alleviate the myriad of challenges encountered by the Black community. Outside of the Black Church, The Community Improvement League of Long Beach is the oldest

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sustainable Black infrastructure, and has served as a beacon in the Black community for over 45 years.

This report is a timely analysis that has been prepared to serve as a foundation for developing a framework for public policy change. Moreover, this analysis can be utilized by Black leadership to draft a relevant and sustainable agenda to achieve innovative approaches and solutions that result in an improvement in the quality of lives of the people behind these statistics. Five years after the *State of Black Los Angeles (2005) Report*, the data published by the Urban League showed that the quality of life for Black Los Angelenos has improved despite the downturn in the economy. Would such a call to action in Long Beach have similar fruits to offer the Black community? Is it possible that an agenda could be developed as a blueprint if the leadership in various sectors of the Black community come together in serious discussion and reflection? Would such as a blueprint change the narrative that is currently the status quo and change the quality of Black life? Or do we, the Black community, believe that society is at best indifferent, and at worst, hostile to the very existence of Black life?

Respectfully submitted,

Alex J. Norman, D.S.W.
Lydia A. Hollie, J.D.

November 1, 2012

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APPENDIX

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Charts, Figures, Maps, and Tables

The Charts, Figures, Maps, and Tables are listed in the following order of appearance in report.

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ReThinking Greater Long Beach. (2012). Long Beach Population Change 2000-2010. [*Figure 1*]. Long Beach, CA: ReThinking Greater Long Beach.

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ReThinking Greater Long Beach. (2012). Percentage African American. [*Figure 3*]. Long Beach, CA: ReThinking Greater Long Beach.

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ReThinking Greater Long Beach. (2012). CST Mathematics Grades 2-5. [*Figure 13*].
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ReThinking Greater Long Beach. (2012). CST English Lang. Arts Cohort. [*Figure 14*].
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OVERWEIGHTNESS AND OBESITY IN THE LONG BEACH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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