

# District of Columbia State Data Center Monthly Brief

April 2007

## Asian-Americans

In 1978, a joint congressional resolution established Asian/Pacific American Heritage Week. The first 10 days of May were chosen to coincide with two important milestones in Asian/Pacific American history: the arrival in the United States of the first Japanese immigrants (May 7, 1843) and contributions of Chinese workers to the building of the transcontinental railroad, completed on May 10, 1869. In 1992, Congress expanded the 10-day observance to a month long celebration. Per a 1997 Office of Management and Budget directive, the Asian or Pacific Islander racial category was separated into two different categories: "Asian", and "Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander." This report focuses on the demographic characteristics of Asians in the United States (Asian-Americans) and in the District of Columbia, using data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS). Asians-Americans are defined as people who originate from places like India, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Philippines, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam.

### Asian-Americans Nationally

The Census Bureau estimated that there were 14.4 million people residing in the United States in July 2005 who said they were Asian, or Asian in combination with one or more other races. This group comprised 5 percent of the total population. The Asian population in the U.S. has grown 3 percent between 2004 and 2005, the highest growth rate of any group during that time period. Numerically, this increase totaled over 421,000 people. Chinese-Americans are the largest Asian group (3.3 million), followed by Filipinos (2.8 million), Asian Indians (2.5 million), Vietnamese (1.5 million), Koreans (1.4 million) and

Japanese (1.2 million). California had the largest Asian population (4.9 million).

According to the Census Bureau, the number of U.S. residents in 2050 who will identify themselves as Asians is projected at 33.4 million. They would comprise 8 percent of the total population by that year. This represents an increase of 213 percent between 2000 and 2050 in the population of people who identify themselves as Asian. This compares with a 49 percent increase in the population as a whole over the same period of time.

### Education

Forty-nine percent of Asians, age 25 and older, have a bachelor's degree or higher level of education. This compares to 27 percent for all people age 25 and older nationally. Asians have the highest proportion of college graduates of any race or ethnic group in the country. Eighty-six percent of Asians, age 25 and older, are high school graduates; 20 percent have an advanced degree (e.g., master's, Ph.D., M.D. or J.D.). The Asian population comprises many groups who differ in languages spoken, culture and length of residence in the United States. This is reflected in the demographic characteristics of these groups. For instance, 68 percent of Asian Indians, age 25 and older, had a bachelor's degree or more education and 36 percent had a graduate or professional degree; the corresponding numbers for Vietnamese-American were 26 percent and 7 percent, respectively.

### Income, Poverty and Health Insurance

The median household income for Asians in 2005 was \$61,094, the highest among all race groups. However, median household

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income differed greatly by Asian group. For example, while the median household income in 2005 for Asian Indians was \$73,575; for Vietnamese-Americans, it was \$50,925, an increase of 7 percent and 11 percent, respectively from 2004 to 2005.

The poverty rate for Asian in 2005 was 11.1 percent, up from 9.8 percent in 2004. Asian without health insurance coverage also increased from 2004 to 2005. While 16.5 percent of Asians were without health insurance coverage in 2004, this number increased to 17.9 percent in 2005.

**Businesses**

The number of businesses owned by Asian-Americans was 1.1 million in 2002, up 24 percent from 1997, according to the most current data available from the American Community Survey. Their receipts totaled over \$326 billion in 2002, up 8 percent from 1997. They employed 2.2 million people in 2002. An estimated 319,468 Asian-owned businesses had paid employees; and their receipts totaled \$291 billion. There were 49,636 Asian-owned firms with receipts of \$1 million or more. In 2002, one-third of Asian firms operated in professional, scientific, and technical services. One-third of Asian businesses were home-based. The highest numbers of Asian-owned firms are located in New York, Los Angeles, Honolulu and San Francisco.

**Jobs**

In 2005, 47 percent of civilian employed single-race Asians 16 and older worked in management, professional and related occupations. Additionally, 23 percent

worked in sales and office occupations, and 15 percent worked in services.

**Languages**

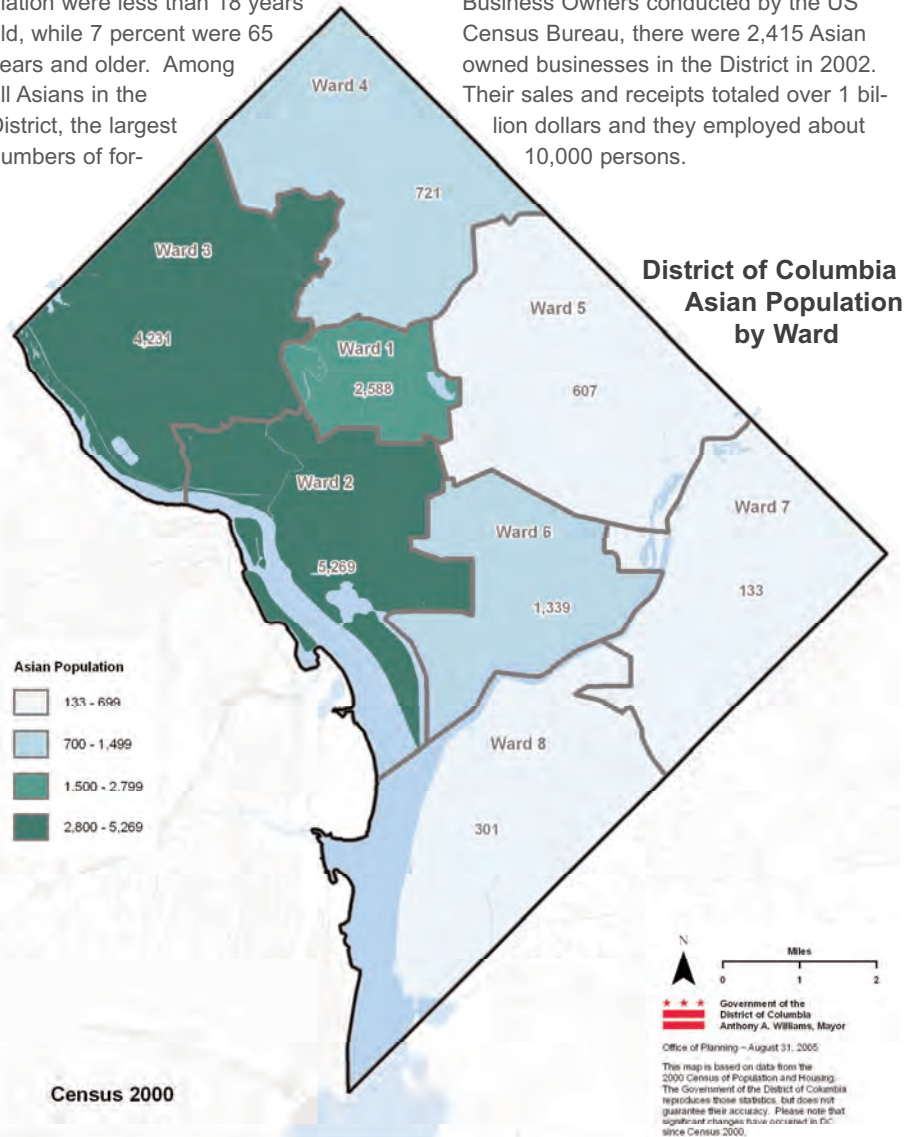
There were 2.3 million people age 5 and older who speak Chinese at home in 2005. After Spanish, Chinese is the most widely spoken non-English language in the country. Tagalog and Vietnamese also have more than 1 million speakers each.

**Asians in the District of Columbia**

In Census 2000, there were 15,189 persons living in the District of Columbia that listed their race as Asian alone, thereby comprising 2.7 percent of the District's population. Of this number, 6,691 (44 percent) were male and 8,498 (56 percent) were female. Fourteen percent of the Asian population were less than 18 years old, while 7 percent were 65 years and older. Among all Asians in the District, the largest numbers of for-

eign born are from China (2,650), and most live in the Chinatown area. The second largest group is from Vietnam (1,557), and they mainly reside in the Mt. Pleasant/Columbia Heights area. Immigrants from India (1,382) and Korea (817) comprise the next highest ranked Asian groups. The 2004 American Community Survey (ACS) showed the Asian population at 15,244 (group quarters are not included in this survey). Most Asians in the District resides in Wards 1, 2 and 3 as shown on the map.

In terms of social characteristics, 82 percent of Asians 25 years and over were high school graduates or higher, and 58 percent had a bachelor degree or higher. Their median household income for 2000 was \$36,031. Individuals below poverty numbered 3,098. According to the Survey of Business Owners conducted by the US Census Bureau, there were 2,415 Asian owned businesses in the District in 2002. Their sales and receipts totaled over 1 billion dollars and they employed about 10,000 persons.



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