

The Black Population in the United States

Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson, distinguished author, editor, publisher, and historian, also known as the "Father of Black History", first established Black History Week in February 1926. His message was that Blacks should be proud of their heritage and that other Americans should also understand it. For many years, the second week of February was set aside for this celebration to coincide with the birthday of Black abolitionist Frederick Douglass. In 1976, as part of the nation's bicentennial, the week was extended to what is now called African American or Black History Month. African American History Month is observed in February each year to recall and celebrate the positive contributions to our nation made by people of African descent. This report presents data on Blacks in the United States as a whole, as there are no new data on Blacks in the District of Columbia beyond those published in our February 2006 report on 'Blacks in the Nation's Capital'. The data presented were obtained from the US Census Bureau and highlights facts on Black population distribution, education, businesses, income, and poverty.

Population

- **39.7 million**

As of July 1, 2005, the estimated population of black residents in the United States, including those of more than one race was 39.7 million. They made up 13.4 percent of the total U.S. population. This figure represents an increase of half a million residents from one year earlier.

- **61.4 million**

The single-race black population of the United States is projected to reach 61.4 million as of July 1, 2050. On that date, according to the projection, blacks would constitute 15 percent of the nation's total population.

- **18**

There are 18 states with an estimated black population on July 1, 2005 of at least 1 million. New York, with 3.5 million blacks, led the way. The 17 other states on the list were: Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

- **1.4 million**

The number of blacks in Cook County, Ill., as of July 1, 2005 was 1.4 million. Cook led all the nation's counties in the number of people of this racial category. Los Angeles County, Calif., also topped the 1 million mark.

- **31%**

The proportion of the black population under 18 as of July 1, 2005 was 31 percent. At the other end of the spectrum, 8 percent of the black population was 65 or older.

- **44%**

Nationally, 44 percent of black families were married-couple family in 2005.

by
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• 46%

Nationally, 46 percent of black households lived in owner-occupied homes in 2005. The rate was higher in certain states, such as Mississippi, where it reached 56 percent.

• 26%

In 2005, 26 percent of blacks age 16 and older worked in management, professional and related occupations. There were 44,000 black physicians and surgeons, 79,400 postsecondary teachers, 45,200 lawyers, and 49,300 chief executives.

Educational Attainment

• 80%

Among blacks age 25 and older, 80 percent had at least a high school diploma in 2005. In states such as Colorado, the proportion was even higher at 90 percent.

• 17%

Seventeen percent of blacks age 25 and older had a bachelor's degree or more in 2005. In many states, the rate was higher. For instance, 26 percent of blacks this age in Colorado, had this level of education.

• 1.1 million

Among blacks age 25 and older, the number who had an advanced degree in 2005 (e.g., master's, Ph.D., M.D. or J.D.) was 1.1 million. Ten years earlier — in 1995 — only 677,000 blacks had this level of education.

• 2.3 million

There were 2.3 million black college students in fall 2004. This was an increase of roughly 1 million from 15 years earlier.

Businesses

• \$88.6 billion

Revenues for black-owned businesses totaled \$88.6 billion in 2002, up 24 percent from 1997. The number of black-owned businesses totaled 1.2 million in 2002, up by 45 percent since 1997. Black-owned firms accounted for 5 percent of all nonfarm businesses in the United States.

• 129,329

There were 129,329 black-owned firms in New York in 2002, the highest number among all states. New York City alone had 98,080 such firms, which led all cities.

• 10,716

There were 10,716 black-owned firms operating in 2002 with receipts of \$1 million or more. These firms accounted for 1 percent of the total number of black-owned firms in 2002 and 55 percent of their total receipts, or \$49 billion.

• 969

There were 969 black-owned firms with 100 or more employees in 2002. Firms of this size accounted for 24 percent of the total revenue for black-owned employer firms in 2002, or \$16 billion.

an earnings of \$29,672 for corresponding black women.

24.9%

The poverty rate was 24.9 percent in 2005 for those reporting black as their only race. This rate was down from 31.3 percent in 1985.

19.6%

In 2005, 19.6 percent of blacks (who reported no other race) lacked health insurance. The rate was unchanged from 2004.

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Income and Poverty

• \$30,858

The annual median income of black households in 2005 was \$30,858. In constant dollars, this is up from \$25,642 in 1985.

• \$33,077

The 2005 median earnings of black men 15 years old and over who worked full time, year-round was \$33,077. This compares to the medi-