

Welcome To Your New Home: International Migration And Hampton Roads



The bosom of America is open to receive not only the Opulent and respectable Stranger, but the oppressed and persecuted of all Nations and Religions; whom we shall welcome to a participation of all our rights and privileges, if by decency and propriety of conduct they appear to merit the enjoyment.
– George Washington, 1783

WELCOME TO YOUR NEW HOME: INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND HAMPTON ROADS

The United States, as the popular refrain goes, is a nation of immigrants. Immigrants are defined as people who reside in a country that are not citizens of the country by birth, regardless of their legal status.¹ In 2017, there were about 44 million immigrants in the United States, or 14 percent of the population. When their U.S.-born children are counted, all told, on the order of 87 million immigrants lived in the United States in 2017, accounting for 27 percent of the total population.

To paraphrase another refrain, immigration fuels the U.S. economy. Not only is our country a magnet for workers around the world, immigrants are more likely to start a new company than native-born Americans.² A short list of first-generation immigrant entrepreneurs includes such notable names as Sergey Brin (Google), Anne Elisabeth “Liz” Claiborne (Liz Claiborne), Elon Musk (currently of Tesla, SpaceX and the Boring Co.), Levi Strauss (Levi Strauss & Co.) and Alberto “Beto” Perez (Zumba), among many others. Second-generation immigrants include Jeff Bezos (Amazon), Estee Lauder (Estee Lauder Companies) and Steve Jobs (Apple). In 2017, 43 percent of American companies were founded or co-founded by an immigrant or the child of an immigrant. According to the National Foundation for American Policy, more than half of the current crop of U.S.-based startups, valued at \$1 billion or more, were founded by immigrants.³

An objective examination of empirical studies on the contribution of immigrant labor to the U.S. economy reveals that, even by the most conservative estimates, immigration is a net benefit to the economy. **George Borjas, one of the most prominent economists on the topic of immigration, found that the presence of all immigrant workers (legal and illegal) increased the size of the U.S. economy by \$1.6 trillion annually.**⁴ The recent slowdown in potential gross domestic product (GDP) – the amount the economy could possibly produce – is primarily due to slower workforce growth, a situation that could plausibly be addressed through immigration. States with higher concentrations of foreign-born workers experience faster productivity growth.⁵ A 2018 simulation of what would happen if foreign-born individuals stopped immigrating to the U.S. concluded that the economy would be 20 percent smaller by 2060 than it would otherwise be under normal immigration flows.⁶

¹ The population of immigrants includes naturalized citizens, lawful permanent residents, certain legal nonresidents, those admitted as refugees or claiming asylum and individuals illegally residing in the U.S.

² “The Economic Case for Welcoming Immigrant Entrepreneurs,” 2015, <https://www.kauffman.org/what-we-do/resources/entrepreneurship-policy-digest/the-economic-case-for-welcoming-immigrant-entrepreneurs>. Sari Pekkala Kerr and Stephen R. Kerr, “Immigrants Play a Disproportionate Role in American Entrepreneurship,” *Harvard Business Review* (Oct. 3, 2016).

³ “Immigrant Founders of the 2017 Fortune 500,” <http://startupsusa.org/fortune500/>. Note that the Center for American Entrepreneurship counted only founders whose country of origin it could independently verify.

⁴ George Borjas (2013), “Immigration and the American Worker,” <https://sites.hks.harvard.edu/fs/gborjas/publications/popular/CIS2013.pdf>.

⁵ “The Effect of Immigration On Productivity: Evidence From U.S. States,” G. Perri, 2012, https://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/abs/10.1162/REST_a_00137?journalCode=rest.

⁶ Jared Bernstein (2018), “The U.S. Immigration Debate: What’s the Shouting For?” and Frederick Treyz and Peter Evangelakis, “Immigration and United States Economic Growth” (2018).

While much of the empirical evidence is on the side of immigration, we would be remiss if we did not note that there is evidence that not all immigration is beneficial. Since a disproportionate share of today's immigrants to the United States possess lower-level skills, immigration and the resulting competition with native-born high school dropouts drives down earnings, on average, between \$800 and \$1,500 a year.⁷

Also, the current visa system can be exploited to displace skilled workers, leading to calls to restrict certain types of visas (H-1B visas, for example). On the other hand, while some argue that immigration leads to increased criminal activity, an analysis of urban crime rates from 1970 to 2010 found that immigration was consistently linked to decreases in violent and property crime.⁸

Hampton Roads, on the other hand, is not the United States. In many cases, foreign-born immigrants are more highly educated, gainfully employed and part of vibrant communities. Understanding how and where these individuals contribute to the economic and social fabric of Hampton Roads is the goal of this chapter.

This chapter examines the impact of international migration on Hampton Roads. We discuss where immigrants come from and take a look at the similarities to (and differences from) the native-born population. We introduce some leading members of the Hampton Roads community who are part of our immigrant population. Finally, we highlight how many immigrants play a vital role in the economic and social fabric of our region.

⁷ <http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/09/trump-clinton-immigration-economy-unemployment-jobs-214216>.

⁸ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15377938.2016.1261057>.
See also <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/aer.p20151041>.

Foreign Born: What Does It Mean?

Before we dive into the details about immigration, we need to clearly define nativity status – that is, whether someone is native born or foreign born. According to the U.S. Census, **“native born” is anyone who was a U.S. citizen at birth.** Native-born individuals were born in the United States, Puerto Rico, a U.S. island area (for example, Guam) or abroad of U.S. citizen parent(s). **“Foreign born” refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth.** Foreign-born residents include naturalized U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, temporary migrants (international students, for example), humanitarian migrants (refugees and asylees) and unauthorized migrants.

The U.S. Census currently asks three questions in the American Community Survey (ACS) regarding place of birth, citizenship and year of entry into the United States to estimate the native- and foreign-born segments of the population.⁹ Responses to these questions are confidential and cannot be shared, a prohibition that includes other federal agencies and law enforcement entities. A point of interest is that these questions are not new. The first decennial census inquiring about citizenship was in 1820, place of birth (1850) and year of entry (1890).

From 1960 to 2010, however, the decennial census has not included the citizenship question and data on citizenship come from the ACS, which covers approximately 2.6 percent of the population. There are plans to include the citizenship question in the 2020 Census, following the format of the ACS. Whether including the citizenship question in the decennial census will depress response is a matter of debate and beyond the scope of our discussion. We thus rely on the ACS data where possible in this chapter. Figure 1 illustrates the three questions as collected by the U.S. Census on the 2017 ACS.

⁹ <https://www.census.gov/acs/www/about/why-we-ask-each-question/citizenship>.

FIGURE 1
QUESTIONS ABOUT NATIVITY,
2017 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

Where was this person born?

In the United States – *Print name of state.*

Outside the United States – *Print name of foreign country, or Puerto Rico, Guam, etc.*

Is this person a citizen of the United States?

Yes, born in the United States → *SKIP to question 10a*

Yes, born in Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, or Northern Marianas

Yes, born abroad of U.S. citizen parent or parents

Yes, U.S. citizen by naturalization – *Print year of naturalization* ↘

No, not a U.S. citizen

When did this person come to live in the United States? *If this person came to live in the United States more than once, print latest year.*

Year

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 American Community Survey

Coming To America: Different Roads, Same Destination

As more immigrants call Hampton Roads home, it is important to understand the differences among the classes of admission. To say that there is a wide number of classes would be an understatement. Some classes of admission include family-sponsored preferences, immediate relatives of U.S. citizens, employment-based preferences (includes priority workers, professionals with advanced degrees or aliens of exceptional ability, skilled workers, professionals, and unskilled workers, special immigrants and employment creation), diversity refugees, asylees, parolees, children born abroad to alien residents, special visas that include the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act and the Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act.

One of the more controversial methods of lawful entry and employment is through the H-1B visa program. H-1B visas allow highly skilled foreign workers in “specialty occupations” to live and work in the U.S. with an employer’s sponsorship for up to six years.¹⁰ The clear majority of all H-1B visas are issued in the IT sector, most often to citizens of India. Only 700 H-1B visas were issued for Hampton Roads in 2016, compared to 4,400 for Raleigh and 64,800 for Northern Virginia. The average salary of the H-1B visa holder topped \$73,000 and a majority of these workers held an advanced degree. Critics of the program point to displacement of U.S. workers and there are continued calls in some quarters to reform or eliminate the program entirely.¹¹

Many immigrants to the United States obtain lawful permanent resident status (or a “green card”) through familial relationships. In general, U.S. immigration law allows citizens to sponsor parents, spouses, minor unmarried children, married or adult children, and brothers and sisters. The immediate relative category for U.S. citizens, however, is limited to spouses, unmarried children

¹⁰ Government Accountability Office, H-1B Visa Program, “Reforms are Needed to Minimize the Risks and Costs of Current Program,” GAO-11-26, January 2011.
¹¹ Sam Trimbach, “Giving the Market a Microphone: Solutions to the Ongoing Displacement of U.S. Workers through the H1B Visa Program,” 37, *Northwestern Journal of International Law & Business*, 275 (2017).

under 21 years of age, and parents (if the U.S. citizen is 21 or older). Other relatives must apply though family-based preferences.

Depending on the type of familial relationship, the wait for a green card can range from months (for immediate relatives of U.S. citizens) to decades (for the lowest-preference applicants of lawful permanent residents).¹² **In 2016, of those obtaining green card status in the Commonwealth, 48 percent were immediate relatives (spouses, unmarried children and parents) of U.S. citizens.**

Naturalized citizens are foreign-born residents who have lived in the United States for at least five years, applied for naturalization and passed a citizenship test, in addition to other requirements. The Pew Research Center reports an upward trend in the number of naturalized citizens – from 14.4 million in 2005 to 19.8 million in 2015, a 37 percent increase.

In 2016, an estimated 1,031,169 immigrants called Virginia home, more than 50 percent of whom were naturalized citizens. Most immigrants in Virginia are not newcomers, with around 83 percent having been in the United States for more than five years. In fact, nearly 70 percent of Virginia’s immigrants have been in the country for more than 10 years.

MY LAN TRAN

For those who enter the country as refugees, permanent resident status is justified by humanitarian concerns or is otherwise deemed in the national interest. My Lan Tran, the current executive director of the Virginia Asian Chamber of Commerce and director of the Virginia Asian Foundation, arrived in the United States over 40 years ago. “As a Southern Vietnamese, I came to the U.S. on April 29, 1975, one day before the fall of Saigon. My father, who at the time played an important senior technical role in the engineering facilities at the U.S Embassy and military base in Saigon, was planning to take us to Australia to escape possible punishments. At the last minute, due to administrative reasons, the evacuation to Australia did not happen and we ended up in Massachusetts. We were political refugees.”

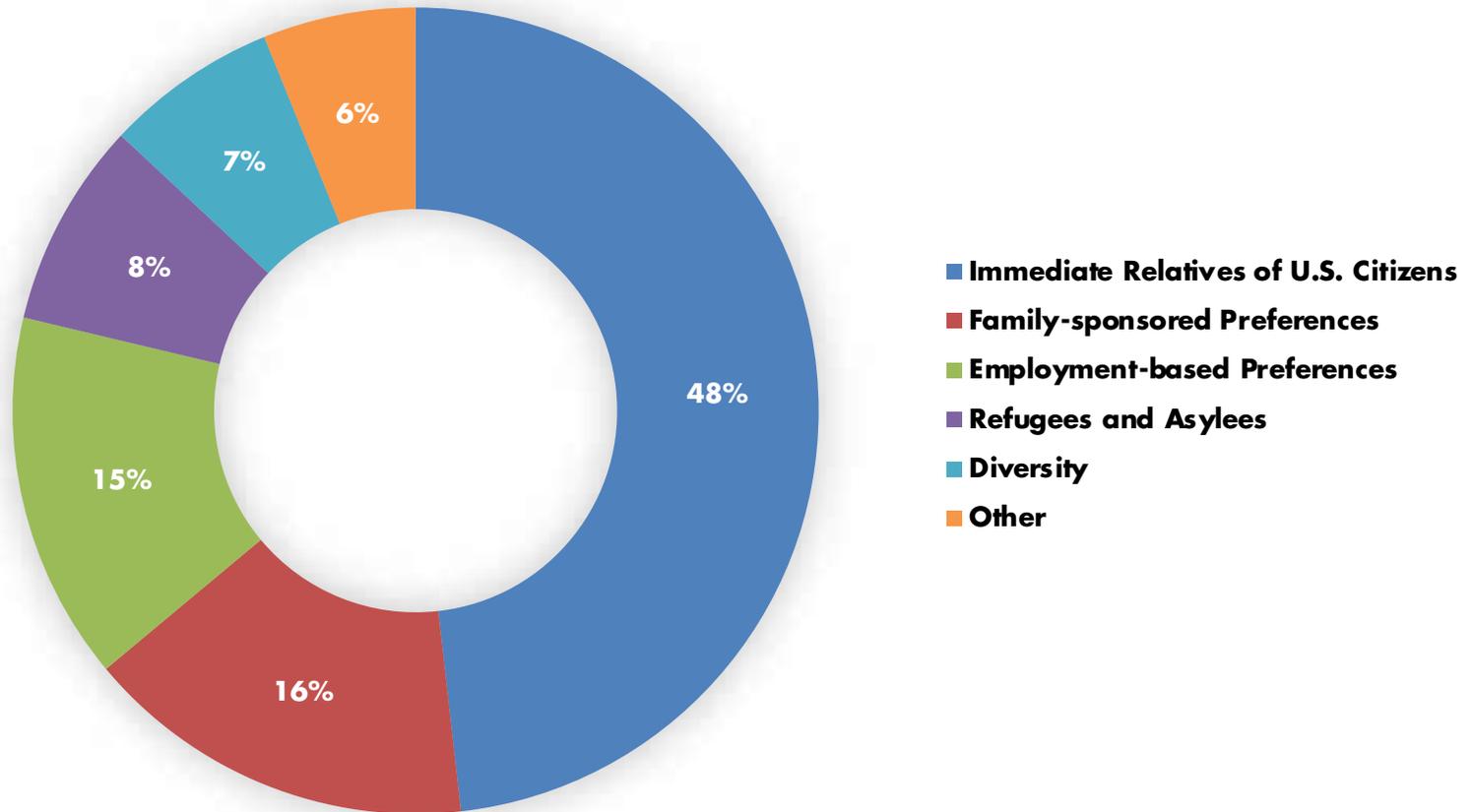


Naturalized in 1982, Tran has been a community leader and a fierce advocate for the Asian community in the United States. She has served as deputy director for the Massachusetts Department of Labor and Workforce Development, trade promotion manager for the Virginia Economic Development Partnership and senior program manager for the city of Richmond’s Office of Minority Business Development.

¹² <https://www.uscis.gov/greencard/eligibility-categories>.

GRAPH 1

**CLASS OF ADMISSION – PERSONS OBTAINING LAWFUL PERMANENT RESIDENT STATUS (GREEN CARD):
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA, FISCAL YEAR 2016**



Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2018

How Many Immigrants Are There?

Table 1 presents the share of the foreign-born population for the nation and the 15 states with the largest foreign-born populations. California not only had the largest economy in 2016, but also the highest foreign-born share (27 percent of the population). **Eleven of the 15 states with the largest shares of immigrants also had real (after inflation) GDP per capita higher than the U.S. average in 2016.**

TABLE 1

PERCENT FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION, 2016

State	Percent of Foreign Born	Real GDP (Millions)	Real GDP Per Capita
United States	13.5%	\$16,383,812	\$50,660
California	27.0%	\$2,317,466	\$59,974
New York	22.6%	\$1,279,883	\$64,522
New Jersey	21.8%	\$506,639	\$56,428
Florida	19.9%	\$818,162	\$39,608
Nevada	19.3%	\$129,746	\$44,142
Hawaii	17.9%	\$74,241	\$51,964
Texas	16.7%	\$1,481,866	\$53,104
Massachusetts	15.7%	\$444,685	\$65,168
Maryland	14.7%	\$336,094	\$55,786
Connecticut	14.0%	\$225,110	\$62,745
Illinois	13.9%	\$697,084	\$54,308
Rhode Island	13.5%	\$50,406	\$47,662
Washington	13.5%	\$420,809	\$57,796
Arizona	13.4%	\$269,024	\$38,940
Virginia	11.9%	\$432,862	\$51,443

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau and 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates and the Bureau of Economic Analysis. Real GDP is calculated with 2009 as the base year and is from the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

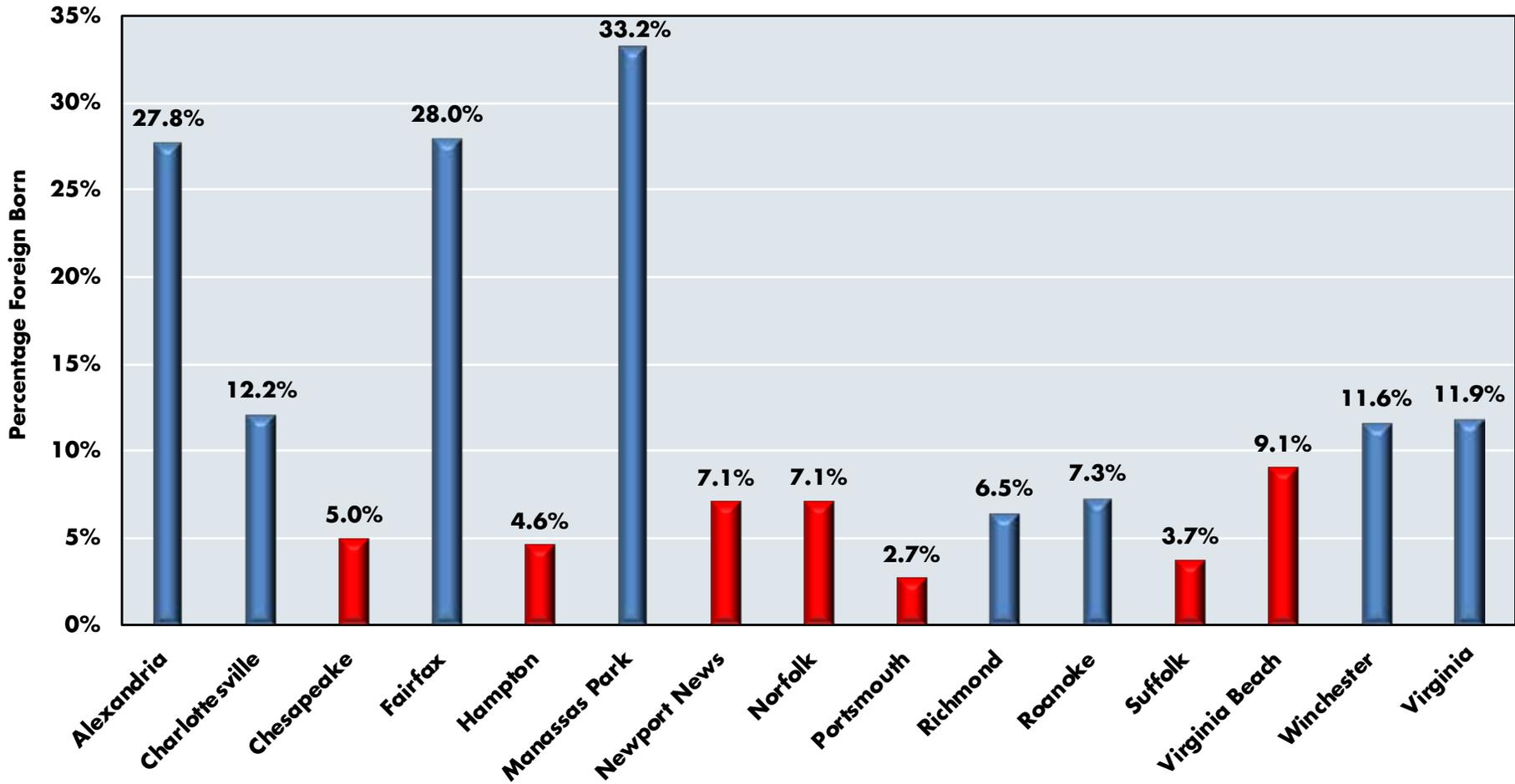
Graph 2 reports the percentage of foreign-born residents for selected cities in Hampton Roads and the Commonwealth. **The change in Virginia is stunning in a historical perspective. Fifty years ago, only 1 in 100 Virginians was foreign born; by 2016, the ratio was 1 out of 11.** In some cities, the percentage of foreign born exceeded 25 percent – 33.2 percent of the population was foreign born in Manassas Park in 2016, followed closely by Fairfax and Alexandria. Virginia Beach, with 9.1 percent, had the highest share of foreign-born residents in Hampton Roads, while Portsmouth had the lowest, at 2.7 percent.

Hampton Roads is no exception to national and state trends. **In 2006, 5.7 percent of the region’s population was foreign born; by 2016, this share was 6.5 percent. As illustrated in Table 2, foreign-born residents of Hampton Roads tend to be older. In 2016, the median age of the native-born population was 35, while the median age of naturalized citizens and non-U.S. citizens was 50.2 and 37.2, respectively. Immigrants are also more likely to be employed. For those 16 and older, about 72 percent of non-U.S. citizens were employed, compared to approximately 61 percent of naturalized citizens and 58 percent of U.S. citizens.**

For the population 25 years and older, educational attainment also varies. Thirty-eight percent of naturalized citizens hold a bachelor’s, graduate or professional degree, compared to 31 percent of U.S. citizens and 29 percent of non-U.S. citizens. At the other end of the educational spectrum, only 8.3 percent of native-born residents had less than a high school degree compared to 10.4 percent of naturalized citizens and 24.3 percent of non-U.S. citizens.

GRAPH 2

PERCENTAGE OF FOREIGN-BORN PERSONS IN THE POPULATION: SELECTED CITIES IN VIRGINIA, 2012-2016



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

TABLE 2**DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT OF HAMPTON ROADS: 2016 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 1-YEAR ESTIMATES**

	Total	Total Native	Total Foreign Born	Foreign Born; Naturalized Citizen	Foreign Born; Not a U.S. Citizen
TOTAL POPULATION	1,725,937	1,614,024	111,913	67,338	44,575
SEX AND AGE					
Male	49.2%	49.3%	47.3%	42.3%	55.0%
Female	50.8%	50.7%	52.7%	57.7%	45.0%
Under 5 years	6.2%	6.6%	0.5%	-	1.2%
5 to 17 years	16.0%	16.8%	4.6%	2.5%	7.9%
18 to 24 years	11.3%	11.4%	9.0%	6.3%	13.1%
25 to 44 years	27.2%	26.6%	37.0%	30.2%	47.2%
45 to 54 years	13.0%	12.5%	19.0%	21.0%	15.9%
55 to 64 years	12.5%	12.3%	14.8%	18.7%	9.0%
65 to 74 years	8.2%	8.1%	9.0%	12.9%	2.9%
75 to 84 years	4.1%	4.1%	4.7%	6.4%	2.2%
Median age (years)	35.9	35.0	44.4	50.2	37.2
MARITAL STATUS					
Population 15 years and over	1,406,228	1,299,061	107,167	66,043	41,124
Never married	35.0%	36.1%	22.6%	16.3%	32.8%
Now married, except separated	45.4%	44.2%	60.0%	63.9%	53.7%
Divorced or separated	14.1%	14.3%	11.8%	12.6%	10.7%
Widowed	5.4%	5.4%	5.6%	7.2%	2.9%

TABLE 2 CONTINUED

DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT OF HAMPTON ROADS: 2016 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 1-YEAR ESTIMATES

	Total	Total Native	Total Foreign Born	Foreign Born; Naturalized Citizen	Foreign Born; Not a U.S. Citizen
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT					
Population 25 years and over	1,147,651	1,051,564	96,087	61,419	34,668
Less than high school graduate	8.9%	8.3%	15.4%	10.4%	24.3%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	25.1%	25.4%	21.8%	19.6%	25.7%
Some college or associate degree	34.6%	35.3%	27.8%	31.9%	20.4%
Bachelor's degree	19.6%	19.5%	20.9%	23.8%	15.9%
Graduate or professional degree	11.8%	11.6%	14.1%	14.4%	13.6%
EMPLOYMENT STATUS					
Population 16 years and over	1,384,943	1,278,082	106,861	65,851	41,010
In labor force	67.4%	67.1%	71.0%	68.5%	74.9%
Civilian labor force	61.8%	61.4%	67.4%	63.1%	74.2%
Employed	58.3%	57.7%	65.3%	61.4%	71.6%
Unemployed	3.5%	3.6%	2.1%	1.7%	2.6%
Armed forces	5.5%	5.7%	3.6%	5.4%	0.7%
Not in labor force	32.6%	32.9%	29.0%	31.5%	25.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Population Estimates, 2017

Arrivals And Departures: Migration To And From Hampton Roads

People come, and people go. Where they come from and where they go is revealing, as we tend to “vote with our feet.” Whether it is for jobs, quality of life or affordability, migration implicitly reveals the attractiveness of a region. Whether net migration is a positive (reflecting more inflows than outflows) or negative is more than just an academic concern. A city, region or state with out-migration is losing people and, invariably, businesses.

From 2010 to 2017, the total population of Hampton Roads increased by 48,429. At first glance this appears to be good news in that we are not shrinking, like some cities in the Northeast. Births outnumbered deaths by 65,852 over this period, so the natural increase in the population was positive. Net migration, on the other hand, was negative, with domestic departures outnumbering international arrivals, lowering population growth.

Graph 3 illustrates the good news about international migration, the bad news about net migration and the ugly news about domestic migration. **Almost 52,000 people left Hampton Roads for other locations in the U.S. from 2010 to 2017. If not for the arrival of about 34,000 international migrants, the region would have barely increased in size. While net migration was slightly positive in 2010, 2012 and 2014, large outflows to other domestic destinations, especially in the last three years, overran these small gains.**

The cities and counties that comprise Hampton Roads have different stories to tell. As shown in Table 3, Chesapeake, James City County, Suffolk and Virginia Beach gained significant population, but for different reasons. Chesapeake not only saw a natural increase in population, but also the largest positive net migration flows in Hampton Roads. James City County, on the other hand, saw almost no change in its population due to births versus deaths but did experience a large inflow of domestic migrants. Suffolk’s population growth was almost evenly split between the natural increase and positive net

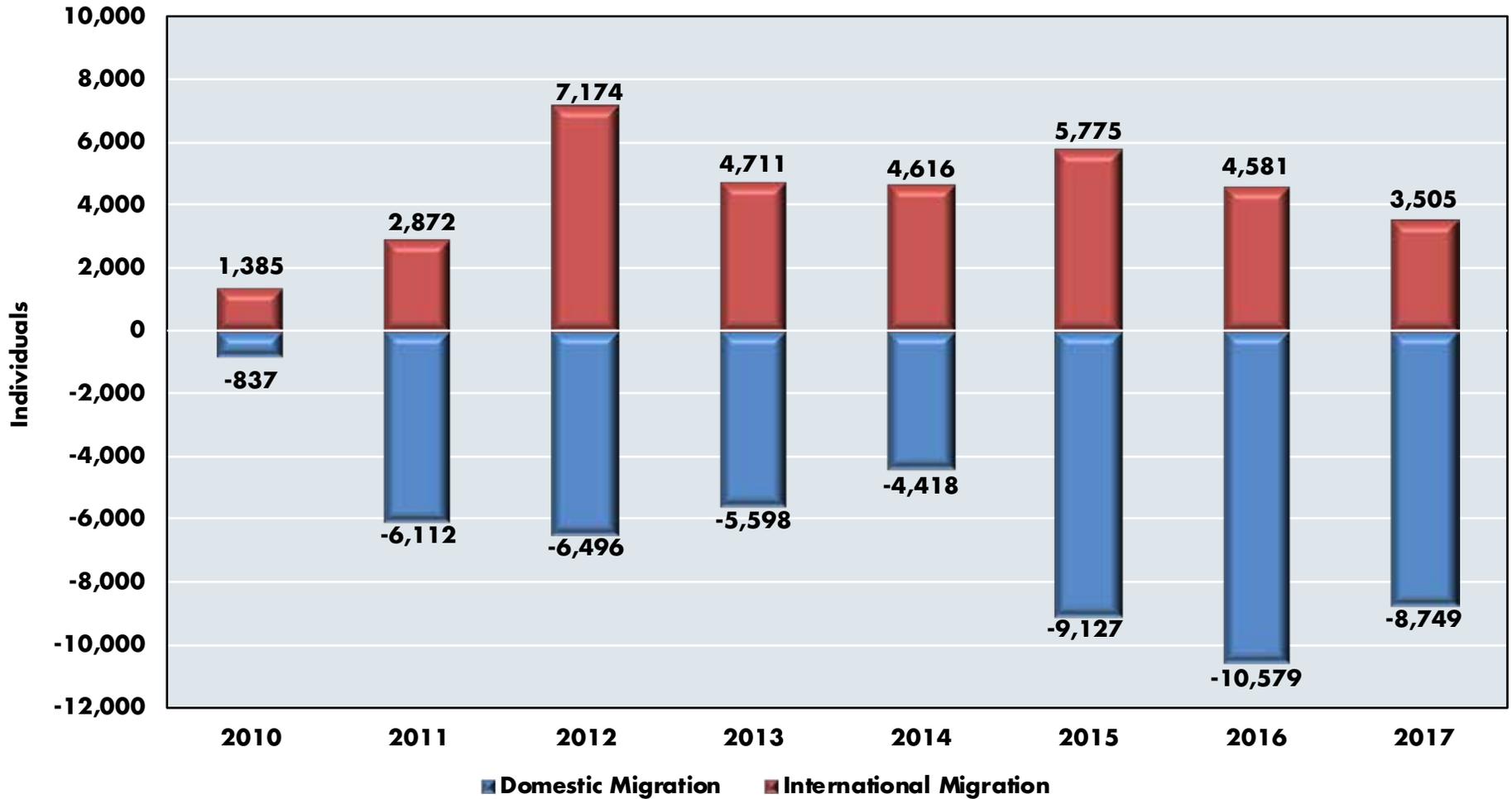
migration. Lastly, Virginia Beach’s overall population increased, not because of migration, but due to a large natural increase in the population.

Other cities in Hampton Roads fared poorly from 2010 to 2017 with regard to net migration. Hampton, Newport News and Norfolk each experienced negative net migration, as domestic outflows outpaced international inflows. In some cases (Gates County, Hampton, Newport News, Portsmouth), negative net migration exacerbated or led to an overall loss in population. Without international migration, in each of these cases the decline in population would have been worse.



GRAPH 3

DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION: HAMPTON ROADS, APRIL 1, 2010 – JULY 1, 2017



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Estimates of the Components of the Resident Population Change, Annual Estimates, 2018. Migration data include the movement of members of the armed services.

TABLE 3**CUMULATIVE POPULATION CHANGE IN HAMPTON ROADS, APRIL 1, 2010 – JULY 1, 2017**

	Total Population Change	Natural Increase	Vital Events		Net Migration		
			Births	Deaths	Total	International	Domestic
Chesapeake	18,091	8,716	20,967	12,251	9,441	3,115	6,326
Currituck County	2,784	224	1,796	1,572	2,543	5	2,538
Gates County	-642	-63	771	834	-583	43	-626
Gloucester County	434	1	2,635	2,634	455	134	321
Hampton	-2,715	4,141	12,874	8,733	-6,881	2,311	-9,192
Isle of Wight County	1,279	-6	2,493	2,499	1,306	231	1,075
James City County	8,141	109	4,871	4,762	7,993	832	7,161
Mathews County	-197	-407	438	845	218	71	147
Newport News	-1,575	9,854	20,452	10,598	-11,537	4,537	-16,074
Norfolk	1,880	12,736	26,819	14,083	-10,781	7,893	-18,674
Portsmouth	-955	3,560	11,092	7,532	-4,490	1,084	-5,574
Suffolk	5,667	2,974	8,337	5,363	2,707	784	1,923
Virginia Beach	12,528	22,467	44,188	21,721	-9,824	11,125	-20,949
Williamsburg	1,713	743	2,689	1,946	965	847	118
York County	2,476	1,602	4,640	3,038	861	1,525	-664

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Estimates of the Components of Resident Population Change, April 1, 2010, to July 1, 2017. Net international migration for the United States includes the international migration of both native- and foreign-born populations. It includes the net international migration of the foreign born, the net migration between the United States and Puerto Rico, the net migration of natives to and from the United States, and the net movement of the armed forces population between the United States and overseas.

Who Is Coming To Hampton Roads?

Every home is unique, and Hampton Roads is no different. The characteristics of the population in our region differ from those of Richmond, Northern Virginia and other regions. Part of this is due to how immigrant communities form. Throughout U.S. history, whether it was the arrival of Irish and German immigrants in the 1800s or immigrants from the Philippines and Mexico today, the first stop is often a community with other people of similar origins who can offer support and guidance. **In 2016, the Philippines, Mexico, China, the United Kingdom and Vietnam were the top five countries of origin for the foreign-born population in Hampton Roads.** Table 4 lists the top 12 countries of origin for Hampton Roads.

Table 5 presents the characteristics of the foreign-born population in Hampton Roads in 2016. More than 39 percent of the foreign-born population classified themselves as Asian, followed by about 33 percent as white, almost 22 percent as Hispanic and 15 percent as black or African-American. Immigrants to Hampton Roads are not a homogeneous group. Their individuality, perspectives and experiences add to the tapestry of life in our region.

Let's take a look at the Asian, Hispanic and Indian communities in Hampton Roads.

TABLE 4
TOP 12 ORIGIN COUNTRIES FOR THE FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION: VIRGINIA PORTION OF HAMPTON ROADS, 2016

Origin Country	Population
Philippines	20,871
Mexico	7,097
China, excluding Hong Kong and Taiwan	4,611
United Kingdom (includes crown dependencies)	4,122
Vietnam	4,052
Germany	3,998
India	3,981
South Korea	3,918
Jamaica	3,417
Honduras	2,871
El Salvador	2,713
Canada	2,462

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2012-2016 5-Year Estimates, and the Dragas Center for Economic Analysis and Policy, Old Dominion University

TABLE 5			
FOREIGN-BORN RACE AND HISPANIC-ORIGIN ESTIMATES: VIRGINIA PORTION OF HAMPTON ROADS, 2016			
	Total Foreign Born	Foreign Born; Naturalized Citizen	Foreign Born; Not a U.S. Citizen
POPULATION ESTIMATES	111,913	67,338	44,575
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN			
White	32.7%	30.8%	35.5%
Black or African-American	15.0%	15.8%	13.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%
Asian	39.2%	46.1%	28.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.1%	0.3%
Some Other Race	9.9%	3.3%	19.9%
Two or More Races	2.9%	3.7%	1.8%
Hispanic or Latino Origin (of Any Race)	21.5%	13.9%	32.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey Population Estimates, 2018

The Asian Communities Of Hampton Roads: Diverse, Influential And Impactful

Fifty years ago, less than 1 percent of the U.S. population was born in Asia; today it is nearly 6 percent. The largest percentage of foreign-born residents of Virginia in 2016 was born in Asia. Of the 112,000 foreign-born residents of Hampton Roads, almost 48,000 were born in Asia, making Asia the largest geographical departure point for our region.

Table 6 shows that there is not one Asian community in Hampton Roads but a collection of communities from different countries in Asia. Immigrants to Hampton Roads span the Asian continent, with the largest populations coming from the Philippines, China, Vietnam, India and South Korea. There are also immigrants here from 28 other Asian countries, including the Western Asian countries of Iraq, Turkey and Lebanon.

TABLE 6**ASIAN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN FOR THE
FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION: VIRGINIA PORTION
OF HAMPTON ROADS, 2016**

Asia:	47,994
Eastern Asia:	11,339
China:	5,572
China, excluding Hong Kong and Taiwan	4,611
Hong Kong	264
Taiwan	697
Japan	1,848
South Korea	3,918
Other Eastern Asia	1
South Central Asia:	6,803
Afghanistan	423
Bangladesh	135
India	3,981
Iran	800
Kazakhstan	125
Nepal	239
Pakistan	546
Sri Lanka	205
Uzbekistan	87
Other South Central Asia	262
South Eastern Asia:	27,087
Cambodia	730
Indonesia	277
Laos	105
Malaysia	125

TABLE 6 CONTINUED**ASIAN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN FOR THE
FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION: VIRGINIA PORTION
OF HAMPTON ROADS, 2016**

Burma	255
Philippines	20,871
Singapore	23
Thailand	649
Vietnam	4,052
Western Asia:	2,742
Iraq	566
Israel	276
Jordan	53
Kuwait	30
Lebanon	293
Saudi Arabia	374
Syria	166
Yemen	14
Turkey	586
Armenia	42
Other Western Asia	342
Asia (not elsewhere classified)	23

Source: American Community Survey, 2012-2016 5-Year Estimates

The Filipino-American Community In Virginia Beach



Of the 53,284 residents born in the Philippines and now residing in Virginia, 20,871 call Hampton Roads home. Natives of the Philippines comprise the largest Asian population in Hampton Roads, with Virginia Beach alone having the highest concentration of Filipino residents in the Commonwealth. After serving as a critical theater of battle during World War II, the Philippines became one of America's most dependable military allies following independence in 1946. Over time, many Filipinos gained access to American citizenship through service in the U.S. Navy and settled in Hampton Roads.

The official language of the Philippines is Filipino, and the language is based on Tagalog. According to the U.S. Census, there are over 1.6 million Tagalog speakers in the United States; California is the largest state, with more than 760,000 speakers. Virginia Beach is among the top 25 largest cities in the number of Tagalog speakers and is the largest in the Commonwealth, pushing Virginia onto the top 10 list of states with individuals reporting speaking Tagalog, at nearly 44,000 speakers.

In 2009, Virginia Beach's Ron Villanueva became the first Filipino-American ever to be elected to Virginia state government as a member of the Virginia House of Delegates. He was re-elected to four consecutive terms before losing his bid for a fifth term, and his representation marked an important milestone for the Filipino-American community.

In 2010, the Council of United Filipino Organizations of Tidewater (CUFOT) established the Philippine Cultural Center in Virginia Beach to preserve and promote Philippine and Filipino-American history and culture, particularly in Hampton Roads. **This is the only such center in the country that is completely owned by the Filipino-American community. The enterprise involved no assistance from external sources, such as federal, state and city governments, or private foundations.**

Thirty-two dedicated families, known as the board of trustees, financially backed the initial \$988,500 construction loan, which was paid in 14 years through collaborative efforts within the community. Dr. Cynthia Romero, CUFOT chairman, oversees the operation and maintenance of the center. She is the current director of the M. Foscue Brock Institute for Community and Global Health at Eastern Virginia Medical School. Previously, she served as the Virginia state health commissioner. She is the daughter of Philippine natives and center board of trustees members Deacon Cris Romero, past CUFOT chairman, and Dr. Aleli Romero, a well-known physician in the region.



The Indian-American Community In Hampton Roads

Educational, economic and professional opportunities offered by the United States have been highly attractive to Asian Indians. Hampton Roads is home to a substantial Asian Indian community that is the third largest in the Commonwealth of Virginia, behind Northern Virginia and Richmond. Virginia residents of Asian Indian descent are younger and more likely to live in a married-couple household with children than Virginia's population at large. Nearly 78 percent of Virginia's Asian Indians over the age of 25 possess a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to nearly 34 percent of the general population in the same age group. More than half of Virginia's Asian Indian households earn \$100,000 or more per year, compared to nearly 28 percent of all Virginia households. The members of Hampton Roads' Asian Indian community reflect the diversity of India itself, which consists of 28 different states and seven union territories.

THE HINDU TEMPLE AND COMMUNITY CENTER OF HAMPTON ROADS



The Hindu Temple and Community Center complex features a 24,000-square-foot facility on about 20 acres of land in Chesapeake. It was completed in 1997 at a cost of about \$1.7 million. The Hindu community in Hampton Roads, representing fewer than 800 families, raised all the money for the complex and it has been debt-free since 2000. The Hindu Temple and Community Center provides a focal point for both the religious and cultural activities of Hampton Roads' Hindu community.

DILIP DESAI

Virginia Beach resident Dilip Desai recalled that when he first came to the area in 1974, there were few Asian Indian families and he didn't know if he would even stay in the United States. However, he soon became impressed by the number of entrepreneurial opportunities available to anyone who was willing to work hard. After serving as internal auditor at Norfolk State University for several years, Desai co-founded LTD Management Co., LLC (predecessor to LTD Hospitality Group) in 1983. For more than three decades as a naturalized citizen, he has developed, owned, managed and sold more than 40 hotels across the mid-Atlantic region. Headquartered in Chesapeake, LTD Hospitality Group currently manages over \$500 million worth of premium-branded hotel assets and employs more than 800 people. In the community service arena, Desai served as a board member as well as treasurer of Cape Henry Collegiate School's board of trustees. Former Virginia Gov. Mark Warner appointed him as a member of the Commonwealth's Budget Advisory Board, which advises the governor on all matters related to hospitality. Desai's children manage successful careers in Virginia as well.



PRATIK KOTHARI

Many Asian Indians come to the United States to pursue graduate study and often bring along spouses, children and other family members. Pratik Kothari first arrived in the U.S. from Mumbai, India, in 2003 and moved to Hampton Roads in 2004 to earn a master's degree in computer science. Although he worked for reQUIRE LLC (from 2004 to 2014), Pratik had bigger plans. With his wife, Jinal Kothari, the two dreamt of starting a business that they would name TechArk. Pratik is the "Tech" and Jinal, an architect, is the "Ark." Kothari left reQUIRE in 2014 and committed himself full time to running TechArk. Six



years in the making, with clients across Europe, Canada and North America, the business currently operates internationally and has 14 employees. Headquartered in Norfolk, TechArk Solutions provides custom web and mobile programming services, digital marketing and website design services. Kothari, who became a U.S. citizen in 2017, is happy to call Hampton Roads home and the place where he is raising his children. "My family and I feel blessed to live in Hampton Roads. There are so many great things that work together to make this region truly attractive – comfortable lifestyle, safe communities, great schools and, above all, the people. We have been fortunate to make wonderful friends for life."

Hispanic Communities In Hampton Roads: Stories To Tell

The Hispanic share of the U.S. population has been growing steadily for the last 50 years, rising from 3.5 percent of the overall population in 1960 to 17.3 percent of the population in 2017. Hispanics accounted for 13 percent of the native population and 45.5 percent of the foreign-born population. Despite some claims that immigration is driving up the share of the Hispanic population, the foreign-born share of the adult Hispanic population has been declining since 2007.¹³ We must take care to note that, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, Hispanic origin can be viewed as the heritage, nationality, lineage or country of birth of the person or the person's parents or ancestors before arriving in the United States. People who identify as Hispanic, Latino or Spanish may be of any race.



According to the U.S. Census, of Virginia's 8,310,301 residents in 2016, almost 725,000 identified as Hispanic or Latino. Of Hampton Roads' almost 110,000 foreign-born residents in 2016, 22.1 percent identified as Hispanic or Latino.

As indicated in Table 7, more than 20 Spanish-speaking countries represent over 24,000 Hispanic foreign-born natives in Hampton Roads. Individuals from Mexico comprise the second-largest foreign-born population, with Honduras, El Salvador and Colombia also well represented in the area. Virginia Beach, Norfolk and Newport News have some of the largest populations in the state that identify as Hispanic.

Spanish is the official language in 20 countries around the world. There are more than 400 million native speakers of Spanish, making it second only to Chinese in terms of the most-spoken languages in the world. According to the U.S. Census, over 70 percent of Hispanics age 5 and older spoke Spanish at home in 2016. Additionally, the United States is home to nearly 12 million bilingual Spanish speakers, which makes us the second-largest Spanish-speaking country in the world – after Mexico. In Hampton Roads, Spanish is the "second" language of our region, with over 62,000 individuals reporting that they speak Spanish at home. Hampton Roads' first Spanish-language radio station began broadcasting in 2005; in 2017, WVXX (La Selecta), 1050 AM, expanded with the addition of 103.3 FM.

In 2018, the Hampton Roads Hispanic Chamber of Commerce celebrated 15 years as the leading advocate for the Hispanic business community. A new governing board also introduced a different name and logo for the organization as it sets its eyes on the future. Now known as the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Coastal Virginia (*Camara de Comercio Hispana de la Costa de Virginia*), it hopes to reinvigorate its efforts to provide support to the Hispanic community not only on the Southside and Peninsula, but also throughout Coastal Virginia.

¹³ <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2017/09/18/facts-on-u-s-latinos/#share-foreign-born>.

TABLE 7

SPANISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN OF THE FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION: VIRGINIA PORTION OF HAMPTON ROADS, 2016

Argentina	386
Belize	196
Bolivia	364
Brazil	582
Chile	65
Colombia	1,773
Costa Rica	209
Cuba	1,405
Dominican Republic	922
Ecuador	238
El Salvador	2,713
Guatemala	1,200
Guyana	981
Honduras	2,871
Mexico	7,097
Nicaragua	283
Other South America	29
Panama	1,629
Peru	1,467
Spain	588
Uruguay	163
Venezuela	354

Sources: Dragas Center for Economic Analysis and Policy, Old Dominion University, and 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

JULIAN BAENA

Julian Baena, membership director for the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Coastal Virginia, stated, “There are pockets of communities in Hampton Roads and we want to bring them all together. The chamber is more dedicated than ever to helping our diverse community.” He hopes that by developing new initiatives for members as well as focusing on long-standing traditions – such as supporting the Hispanic Scholarship Fund and promoting major events like Nuestra Feria, the Virginia Beach Latin Festival and the Norfolk Latin Festival – the chamber will be the leading resource for Hispanics from the region as well as those coming into Hampton Roads for the first time from countries throughout North and Latin America.



Other Communities And Organizations Of Interest

Our previous discussion only highlights a few of the communities that contribute to the fabric of Hampton Roads. To say that there is a large organized and diverse set of organizations that support immigrant communities in Hampton Roads would be an understatement (see Table 8). Each of these organizations welcomes the participation of their specific community and the broader Hampton Roads community. **The innate desire to break bread together builds fellowship not only within these communities but, more importantly, across them. Together, as it is commonly said, we are stronger.**

TABLE 8

ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING HAMPTON ROADS' LARGEST IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES

NAME	DESCRIPTION	WEBSITE/CONTACT INFORMATION
Asian Indians of Hampton Roads	Facilitates the involvement of people of Asian Indian origin in Hampton Roads in the mainstream of American social fabric and promotes events such as India Fest	http://www.aihr.org/ http://www.aihr.org/IndiaFest/
Asian Pacific American Heritage Organization	Celebrates and raises public awareness of the many important contributions made by Pacific Americans; sponsors the yearly Asian Fest event	https://www.apaho.org/
Association of American Physicians of Indian Origin Hampton Roads	Represents physicians, dentists and other medical scientists of Indian heritage in Hampton Roads; raises funds to support local free clinics, as well as organizes a free health camp each year	http://www.aapihr.org/
Caritas Felices de Hampton Roads	Promotes the well-being of children and youth with special needs in the Hispanic community through information and advocacy, with family support in Spanish	http://www.cfelices.org/
Chua Giac Hoa	First Buddhist place of worship in Hampton Roads	2019 Cora St., Chesapeake, Virginia Phone: 757-286-5998
Hampton Roads Refugee Action Group	Provides refugees with donations, English assistance and employment services	http://hrefugeeactiongroup.wixsite.com/hrag
Hindu Temple and Community Center of Hampton Roads	Supports an extensive calendar of religious and cultural activities and events, including the Cricket Club, and its annual Taste of India event, held at Old Dominion University's Ted Constant Center every April	http://www.hindutemplehr.org/ https://cricclubs.com/HRCO https://toihr.com/
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Coastal Virginia (Camara de Comercio Hispana de la Costa de Virginia)	Serves as principal resource and advocate for the joint promotion of Hispanic businesses, consumers and organizations, as well as supports the Hispanic Scholarship Fund, Nuestra Feria, the Virginia Beach Latin Festival and the Norfolk Latin Festival	www.linkedin.com/company/hampton-roads-hispanic-chamber-of-commerce/

TABLE 8

ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING HAMPTON ROADS' LARGEST IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES

NAME	DESCRIPTION	WEBSITE/CONTACT INFORMATION
Philippine Cultural Center of Virginia	Serves as the center of social celebration, civic and religious functions, and community meeting space for Filipinos of Hampton Roads	http://philippineculturalcenter.com/
St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church	Provides weekly mass in Spanish; also, a Filipino-American ministry meets every month	http://stgregoryvabeach.org/index.php/ministerio-hispano http://stgregoryvabeach.org/index.php/ministries/filipino-american-ministry
Hispanic Leadership Forum of Hampton Roads Inc.	Develops leaders within the Hispanic community through education, the arts and cultural engagement	https://hispanicleaderhr.com/
Virginia Asian Chamber of Commerce	Promotes and facilitates the success of its members, Asian American and Pacific American businesses, other diverse businesses and the communities they serve through networking, outreach, advocacy and education	http://aabac.org/
Virginia Asian Foundation	Offers students an invaluable internship experience with the Virginia Asian Chamber of Commerce in its community outreach and education programs (for students majoring in public relations, arts and communications)	http://aabac.org/va-asian-foundation/
Virginia Coalition of Latino Organizations	Coalition of nonprofit organizations serves and supports the Latino/Hispanic immigrant communities in Virginia and advocates for the rights of Latino immigrants in the Commonwealth	http://vacolao.org/

Source: Dragas Center for Economic Analysis and Policy, Old Dominion University

Final Thoughts

The history of the United States is marked by cycles of immigration. As the preferences of the citizenry have changed, immigration policy in the U.S. has vacillated between welcoming immigrants and swinging the door shut. Whether it was the Irish and Germans of the 1800s, Eastern and Southern Europeans of the late 1800s and early 1900s, or the advent of Hispanic immigration in the mid-1900s, each immigration wave has been followed by a rise in anti-immigration sentiment. The economic contributions of many of these immigrants, however, cannot be obscured.

The majority (if not overwhelming) amount of empirical evidence points to the conclusion that immigration leads to increased innovation, a better-educated workforce, greater occupational specialization and higher economic productivity.¹⁴ In 2014, immigrants started 28.5 percent of all new businesses in the United States. While native-born citizens have seen rates of new businesses decline by 10 percent, immigrants have seen their rates increase by more than 50 percent. An immigrant is now more than twice as likely to start a business as a native-born citizen.¹⁵

We would be naïve to suggest that unfettered immigration is the solution to the long-term decline in the labor force participation rate of native-born Americans. Whether the current familial-based system of legal immigration is best suited for the workforce needs of America is a debate worth having, subject to the caveat that we can empirically and objectively examine whether a merit- or familial-based system is better for economic growth in the U.S. Focusing on policies that reward entrepreneurship and innovation without creating incentives to displace existing U.S. workers would be a wise course of action.

With few exceptions, Hampton Roads' net migration numbers have been lackluster in recent years. Without international migration, however, the story would have a dismal ending. Hampton Roads may not be keeping residents from voting with their feet to other locations in the U.S., but we are succeeding

in being an attractive destination for migrants from other countries. Building upon the success of attracting international migrants is a sound policy prescription.

How can Hampton Roads address the outflow of residents and create conditions to sustain international migration? Regardless of one's political philosophy, improving the economic attractiveness of Hampton Roads would facilitate achieving both goals. Continuing to improve economic development efforts across the region, increasing access to capital and mentorship for entrepreneurs, providing immigration and transition services, and fostering leadership among different groups could all benefit Hampton Roads. These are "long-haul" efforts that will bear fruit at different times in the coming years, but if we don't start now, we risk experiencing negative migration in the next economic downturn.

What, then, is to be done? We need to take a long-term view. Reducing regulatory and legal barriers to economic activity and improving collaboration across cities and counties continues to be a step in the right direction. Reducing administrative bloat and consolidating public services not only frees up resources for productive infrastructure and education, but also signals the wise use of public resources. **We should avoid "giving away the farm" to attract firms and make Hampton Roads a place where you want to go – not just a place where you are from.**

In the end, having the discussion of how to reduce domestic out-migration and sustain international migration is a conversation worth having. International migration has not been the panacea for all our ills, but it has alleviated some of the worst of our economic malaise. As difficult as it may be to set aside partisan differences, we should be able to agree that making investments in infrastructure and education and lowering artificial barriers to competitive activity is a wise path to tread.

¹⁴ The Effects of Immigration on the United States' Economy," <http://budgetmodel.wharton.upenn.edu/issues/2016/1/27/the-effects-of-immigration-on-the-united-states-economy>.

¹⁵ Sari Pekkala Kerr and Stephen R. Kerr, "Immigrants Play a Disproportionate Role in American Entrepreneurship," *Harvard Business Review* (Oct. 3, 2016).

