November 2010

Race, Space and Youth Labor Market Opportunities in the Capital Region

Chris Benner, Ph.D.
Department of Human and Community Development

Gideon Mazinga, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral Scholar
Center for Regional Change

Ganlin Huang, Ph.D.
Center for Regional Change

Center for Regional Change
University of California, Davis
One Shields Ave, 1309 Hart Hall
Davis, CA 95616
530.751.8799
http://regionalchange.ucdavis.edu

HYHR2010-06

This Working Paper is a product of Healthy Youth/ Healthy Regions, a collaborative partnership of the UC Davis Center for Regional Change, Sierra Health Foundation and The California Endowment. Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions was commissioned and funded by Sierra Health Foundation with additional funding from The California Endowment to document the connections between youth well-being and regional prosperity in the nine-county Capital Region of Northern California.

Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions produced a series of twelve related Working Papers. These papers can be accessed via the Center for Regional Change website: http://regionalchange.ucdavis.edu/hyhr/main

Published By: Center for Regional Change
University of California, Davis
One Shields Ave, 1309 Hart Hall
Davis, CA 95616
530.751.8799

Citation Information:
Benner, Chris, Gideon Mazinga and Ganlin Huang. 2010. *Race, Space and Youth Labor Market Opportunities in the Capital Region.* Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions Working Paper. Center for Regional Change, UC Davis

Introduction

There are significant racial disparities in labor market experiences of youth and young adults in the Capital Region, with African-American and Hispanic young adults in particular having higher unemployment levels, and lower wages, than white and Asian youth. But are these disparities getting better or worse, and why? This paper tries to help answer this question, while also providing some recommendations on promising strategies to help address these disparities. The analysis of available data on labor market disparities in the region is focused on young adults, aged 20-24. This age group provides a good indication of the conditions of new entrants to the labor market, and how those conditions have changed over time.

The central focus of the analysis is to try to assess the extent to which structural characteristics of the Capital Region labor market can explain these disparate outcomes. Structural characteristics, as distinct from the individual characteristics of workers themselves, include such factors as changing sectoral employment, patterns of residential segregation, and locational characteristics of employment in the region. Questions about the role of residential segregation and job location in shaping persistent racial disparities in labor market outcomes have a long history in the analysis of U.S. labor markets. This analysis of 'spatial mismatch' and its relationship to job opportunities is particularly interesting in the city of Sacramento given the relatively high levels of diversity and integration in the region. The Harvard Civil Rights Project, at the request of Time Magazine, determined that the city of Sacramento was America's Most Diverse City in 2002. This was partly based on a broad representation of all major racial groups. In 2008, for example, the population of the city of Sacramento was 39% non-Hispanic white, 25% Hispanic, 19% Asian and Pacific Islander, 14% African-American, and 5% other or mixed. Furthermore, measures of residential segregation in the region are relatively low compared to many U.S. cities.[1] Thus, we might expect that spatial factors would have less of an impact in Sacramento than in many other cities in the U.S.. On a region-wide scale, however, patterns of residential segregation are more pronounced than at the scale of the city of Sacramento. In the region as a whole, the level of racial diversity is also somewhat less, though it is important to recognize that the 20-24 year old population is significantly more diverse than older workers in the region. In 2008, 48% of 20-24 year olds were non-white, compared to 41% of the 25-64 year old population. Hispanics constitute the racial group most represented in this younger workforce when compared to the older workforce, constituting 23% of all 20-24 year olds, and 18% of 25-64 year olds. (See Figure 1)

[1] See (London et al. 2010) for more background on the Capital Region.

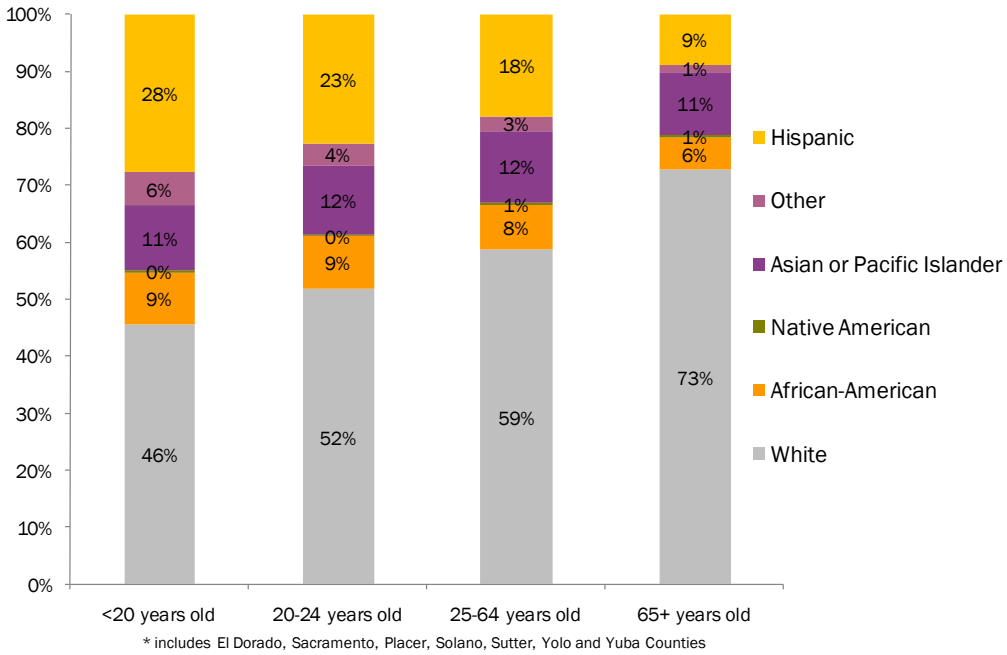


Figure 1. Population by Race and Age, HYHR Core Region, 2008.

The analysis that is detailed below leads to the following conclusions:

- First, patterns of youth disconnection (from both school and work) differ substantially by race, as well as by geography, with young adults living in certain unincorporated areas of the region seemingly facing disproportionately higher levels of disconnection.[2]

- Second, broad changes in the industrial structure of employment in the region over the past two decades have had substantially more negative consequences on African-American and Hispanic young adult employment than on white or Asian employment. African-American young adults were disproportionately hurt by military base closures and shrinking opportunities in public sector employment, while Hispanic young adults were particularly hurt by the decline in non-durable good manufacturing (mostly food processing) in the region. White and Asian young adults have disproportionately benefited from growth in the region's health and education sectors, while African-Americans and Hispanics have been disproportionately under-employed in these sectors.

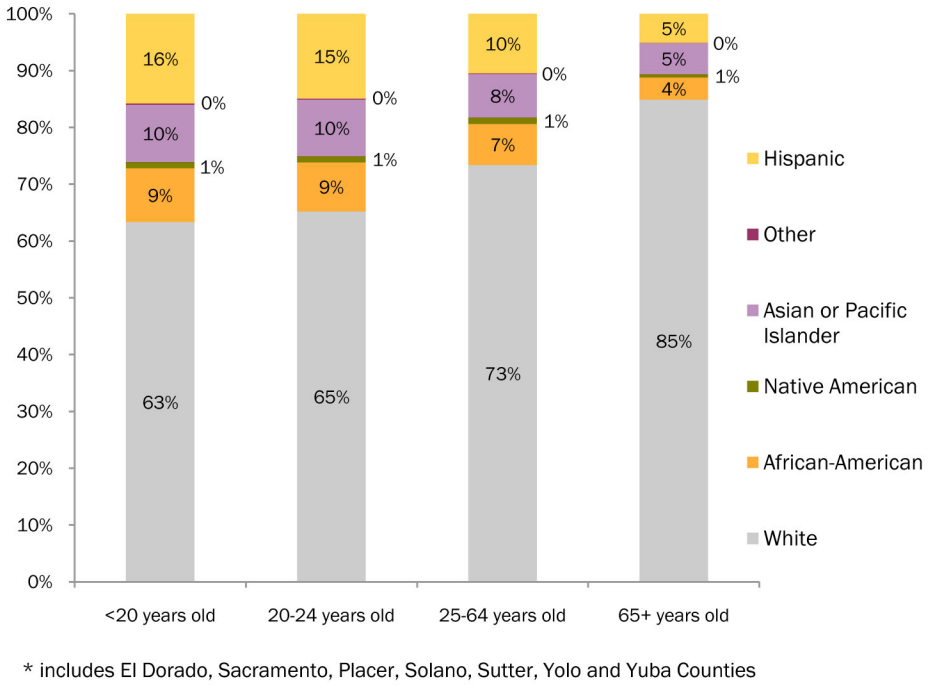
- Finally, spatial patterns of residence and work location suggest that African-American and Hispanic young adults have fewer employment options within close proximity to their place of residence than white young adults, but that job proximity beyond the immediate neighborhood (at least as measured by census tracts) actually provides more opportunities for African-American and Hispanic young adult, but such opportunities are only accessible through transit and automobile access, with African-Americans and Hispanic more dependent on transit than white.

The detailed analysis of available data follows.

[2] (Breslau, Rodriguez, Erbstein, Burciaga and Hatzog 2010 provides more details on processes of youth disconnection in the region).

The first level of analysis is to understand the patterns of who is connected to the labor market at all. In an analysis of all 20-24 years olds in the Capital Region, we divided the whole population into four different categories: 1) Not in school and not employed; 2) In school and not employed; 3) In school and employed; 4) Not in school and employed. The first category, those not in school and not employed, can be thought of as being 'disconnected'—from the labor market as well as from school.

Overall, 17% of 20-24 year olds in 2008 were out of school and not working, down from 20% in 1990. (See Figures 2 and 3) But the patterns by race showed substantial differences. The white and Asian population in the region consistently had lower levels of disconnection than the regional average. For whites, this was 14% in 2008, down from 17% in 1990. For Asians, the figure was 11%, down from 17% in 1990. The African-American population showed the most dramatic decline in disconnection over this period—declining from a high level of 35% in 1990 to 21% in 2008, still above the regional average of 17% but a substantial decline from 1990. Amongst Hispanic 20-24 year olds, however, a *higher* proportion in 2008 than in 1990 were both out of school and out of work—26% compared to 24%. By 2008, Hispanics had the highest proportion of 20-24 year olds who were both out of school and out of work.[3]



* includes El Dorado, Sacramento, Placer, Solano, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba Counties

Figure 2. Population by Race and Age, HYHR Core Region, 1990.

[3] Ibid. and (Romero, London, & Erbstein 2010) provide more analysis of the processes and experience of disengagement in the region.

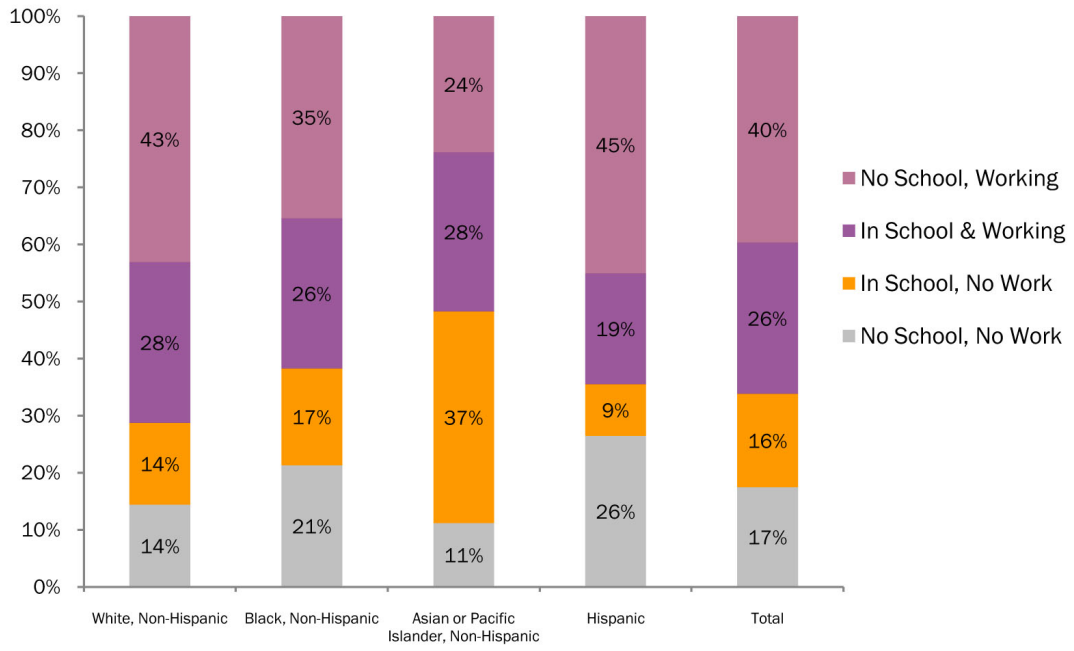


Figure 3. School and Work Status, 20-24 year olds, 2008.

Before turning to a fuller analysis of other demographic characteristics of the 'disconnected' population, it is worth looking at trends in the other categories. In 2008, a total of 42% of 20-24 year old in the region were in school, up slightly from 37% in 1990. Again, African-Americans saw the greatest increase, with school enrollment rising from 29% to 43% of 20-24 year olds—higher than the regional average. For whites in the region, 36% of 20-24 year olds were in school in 1990, rising to 42% in 2008. Asians had the highest enrollment levels, with a full 65% of Asian 20-24 year olds in school, up from 58% in 1990. For Hispanic 20-24 year olds, however, trends were less positive. In 2008, only 28% of Hispanic 20-24 year olds were in school, which actually represented a decline from 29% in 1990.

The final category, those that are not in school but working, represents those 20-24 year olds fully in the labor market and employed. This represented 40% of all 20-24 year olds in 2008, or by race: 45% of Hispanics, 43% of whites, 35% of African-Americans and 24% of Asians. These figures were down for all racial groups and the overall population in 1990, when 44% of all 20-24 year olds, and 47% of Hispanics, 47% of whites, 36% of African-Americans and 25% of Asians, were out of school and working.

It is important to note that there is a spatial dimension of this 'disconnection' as well. Figures 4 through 7 show the percent of 20-24 year olds out of school and out of work for white, African-Americans, Asians and Hispanics. For the white population, the highest levels of disconnection are in South Sacramento, followed by the northern part of the region in Sutter and Yuba counties. For African-Americans, the highest levels of disconnection are both north and south of the City of Sacramento itself. It is interesting to note that large portions of these areas are actually unincorporated parts of Sacramento County, suggesting there is an important link between the

existence of municipal government and levels of connection for African-Americans. This pattern is also evident for Hispanics, where these same areas of north and southern Sacramento County have the highest levels of disconnected young adults. For Asians, the highest proportion of disconnected youth are in Sutter and Yuba Counties, undoubtedly focused on the concentration of South Asians living in and around Yuba City and to a lesser extent Marysville, since the Asian population living in more rural parts of these counties is small.

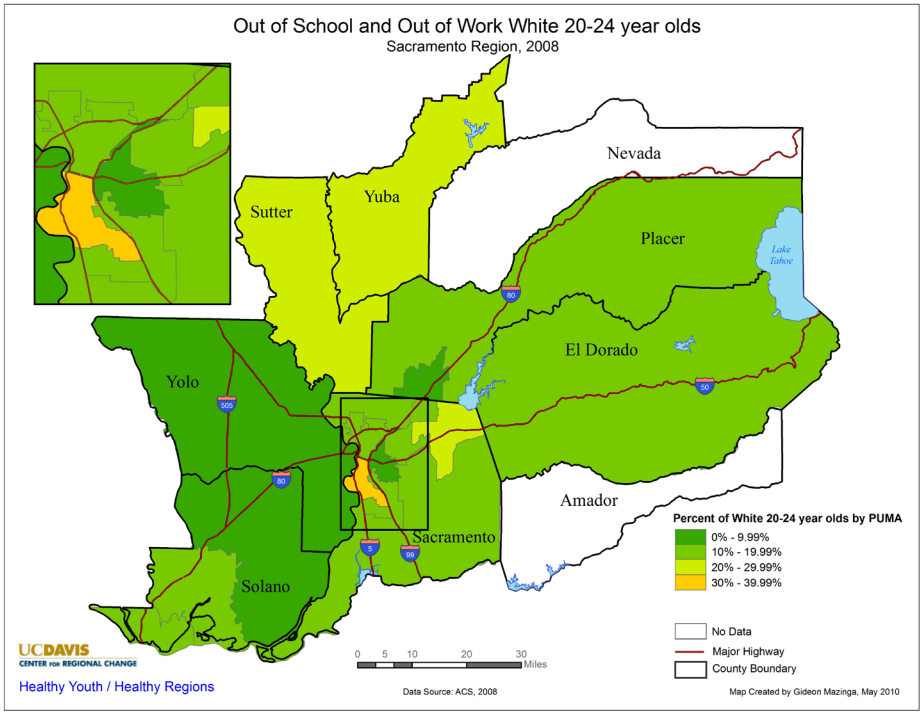


Figure 4. Out of School and Out of Work White 20-24 year olds, Capital Region, 2008

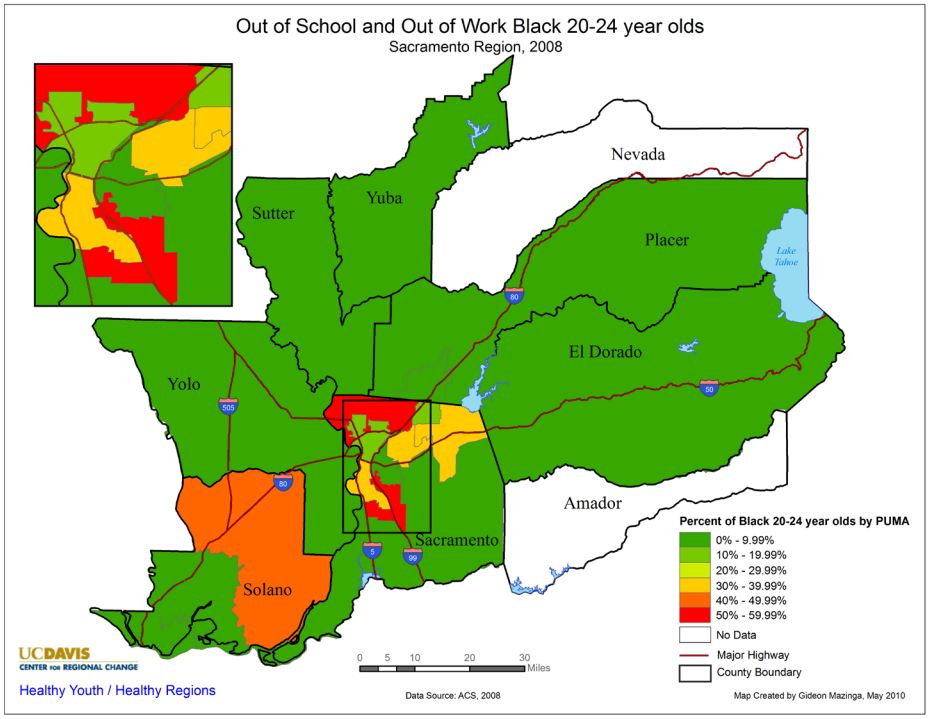


Figure 5. Out of School and Out of work Asian 20-24 year olds, Capital Region, 2008

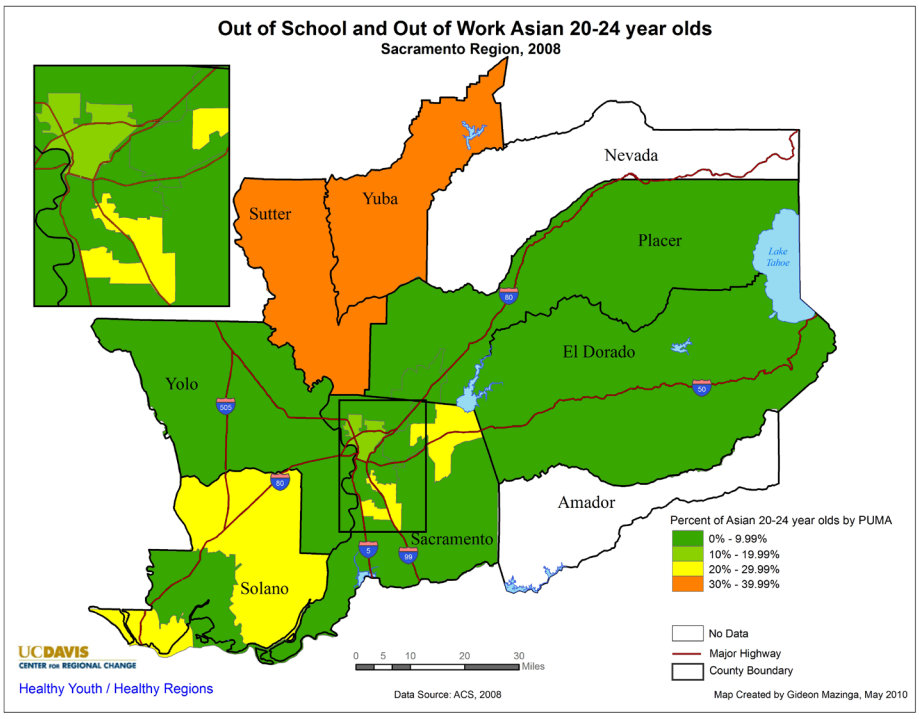


Figure 6. Out of School and Out of Work Asian 20-24 year olds, Capital Region, 2008

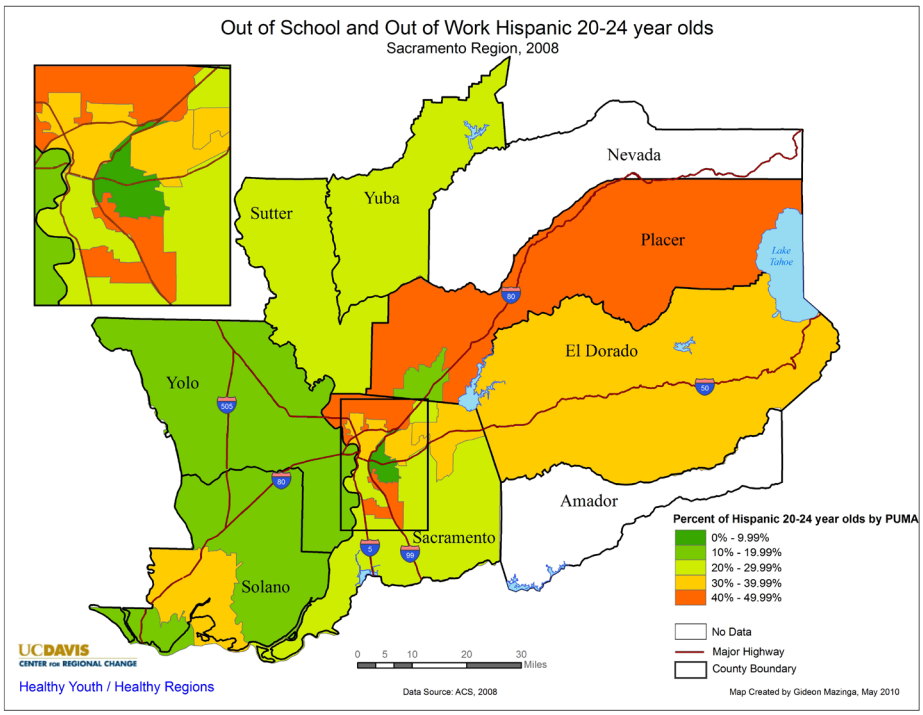


Figure 7. Out of School and Out of Work Hispanic 20-24 year olds, Capital Region, 2008

Reasons For 'Disconnection' Not Always Clear

A more in-depth examination of other demographic characteristics of these measures of 'disconnection' reinforces that the majority of those who are 'out of school and out of work' are likely to be dis-proportionately non-white, and more socio-economically disadvantaged than other populations.

The proportion of 'out of school and out of work' 20-24 year olds who are non-white is higher than any other category, with 57% of this population being non-white, compared to 48% of the total population (see Figure 8). The educational attainment of these 'disconnected' young adult was lower than any other category. In 2008, 34% of those not in school and not working hadn't completed a high school degree, and another 38% only had a high school degree (see Figure 9). Only 5% had completed an Associate's Degree or higher. Furthermore, a full 24% of those who are out of school and out of work are not U.S. citizens, compared to 14% overall.

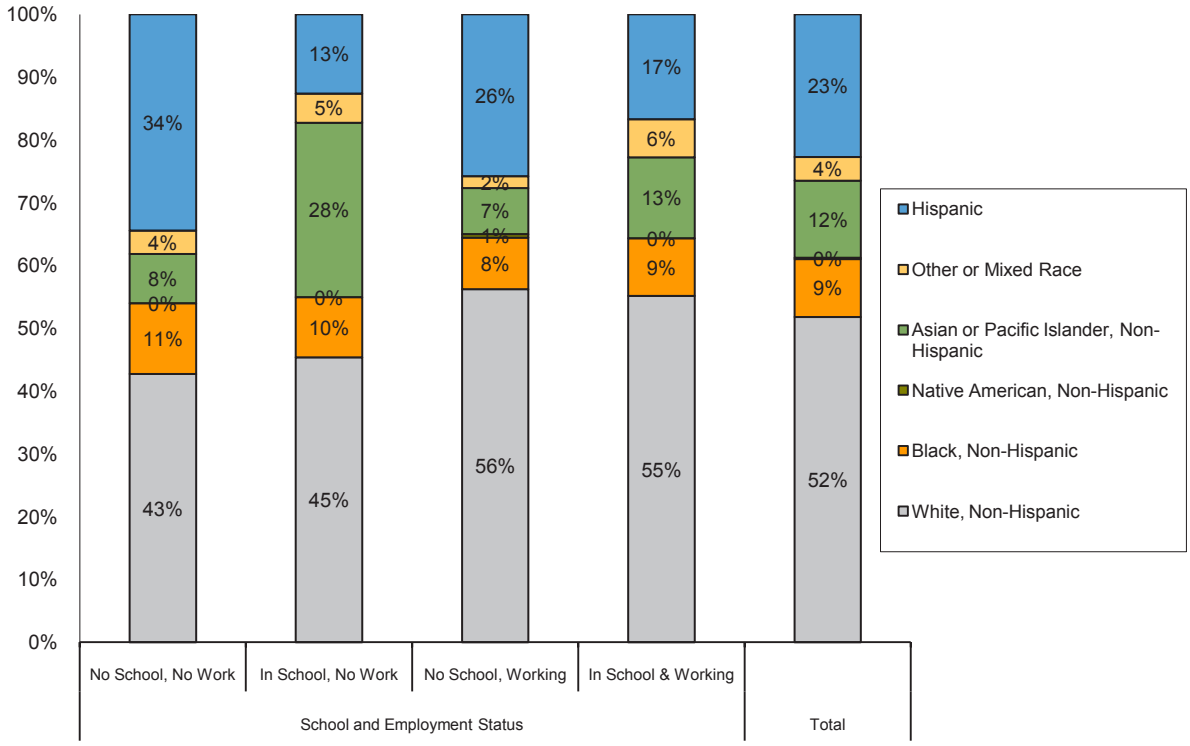


Figure 8. Race by School and Employment Status

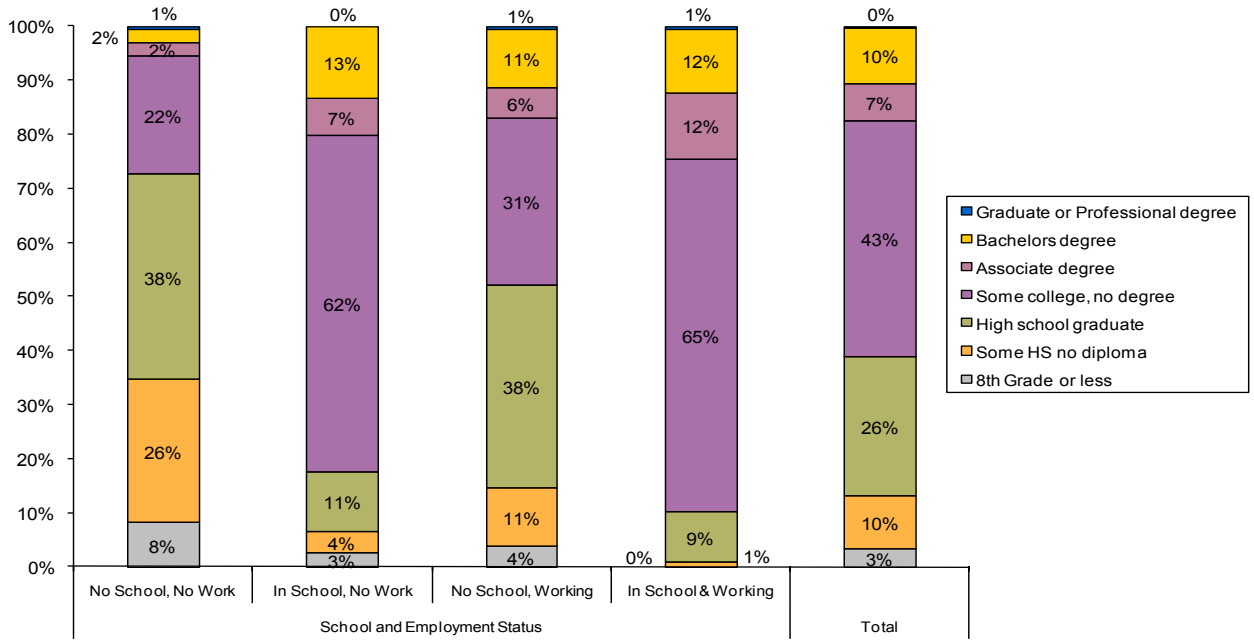


Figure 9. Educational Attainment by School and Employment Status, 20-24 year olds, 2008

Another important demographic characteristic linked with not being in school is marital status. While 86% of all 20-24 year olds in the region have never been married, those who are still in school are more likely to be not married (see figure 10). For those who are in school and not working, a full 95% are single, while 92% of those in school and working are single. For those who are out of school and out of work, 21% are either currently married or are divorced or separated. It is impossible to tell from these statistics the direction of causation or temporality—i.e. do people get married and then drop-out of school, or do people leave school and then decide to get married—but it is clear that being married is strongly linked with a lower school enrollment rate.

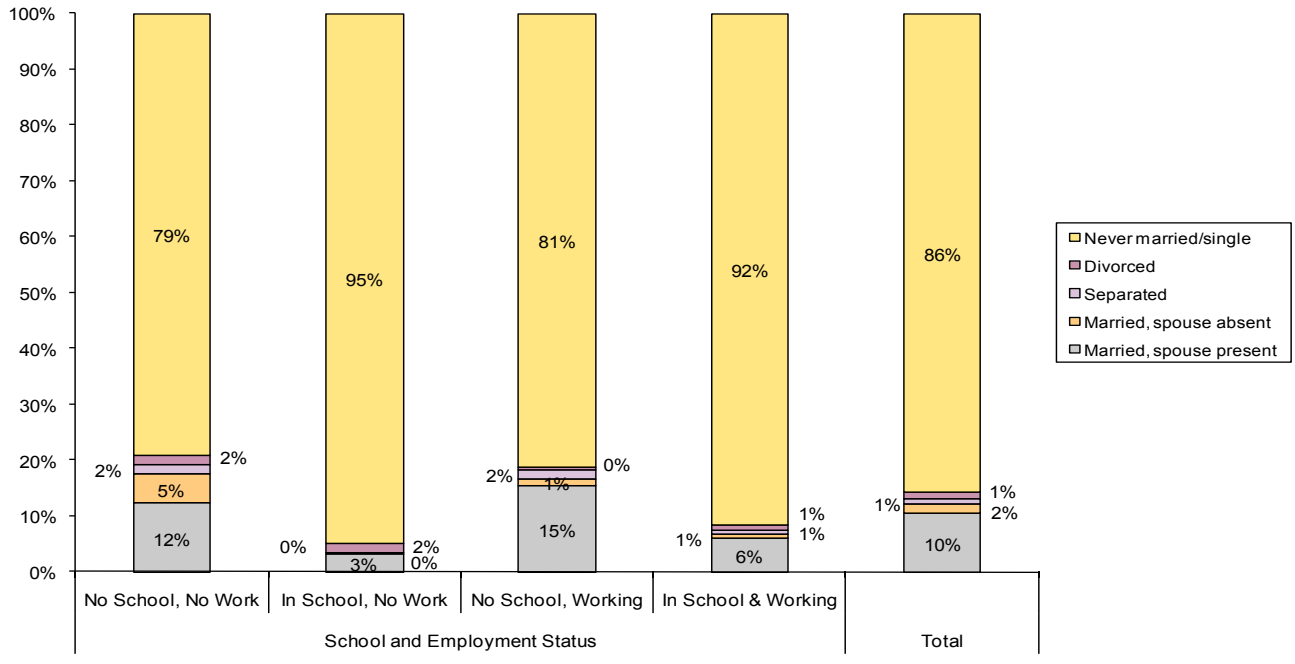


Figure 10. Marital Status by School and Employment Status, 20-24 year olds, 2008

Overall, then, this examination of patterns of labor market and education disconnection for young adults shows a number of interesting pattern and trends. First, there has been an overall decline between 1990 and 2008 in the proportion of young adults who are 'disconnected'. The most dramatic improvement has been for the African-American young adult population, with substantially higher proportions enrolled in school in 2008 than in 1990. At the same time, Hispanic young adults have actually fallen further behind in this time frame, and now represent the racial group with the highest proportion of disconnected young adults in the region.

Turning now from those 20-24 year olds who are out of school and out of work, what about those who are actually employed? What are patterns of disparity in employment opportunities for 20-24 year olds in the region? Before looking at specific employment patterns, it is important to recognize that disparities in educational attainment levels are an important part of different labor market experiences—many of the inequalities in the labor market are created prior to youth even entering work, driven by their different educational experiences. Figure 11 shows the educational attainment level of 20-24 year olds in the region in 1990 and 2008. It shows that on average 17% of 20-24 year olds in 2008 had an associate degree or higher, up slightly from 16% in 1990. Only 9% of African-American 20-24 year olds in the region in 2008, however, had an associate degree or higher, actually lower than the 12% in 1990. For Hispanics, 8% of 20-24 year olds had an associates degree or higher in 2008, down from 11% in 1990. It is important to note that there was a substantial expansion of African-American 20-24 year olds who had some college education but no degree, accounting for 52% of African-American 20-24 year olds in 2008, up from 30% in 1990. This suggests a positive trend of a higher proportion of African-Americans attending colleges, but also raises important questions about the extent to which there are substantial levels of African-Americans taking longer to complete college or dropping out from college.

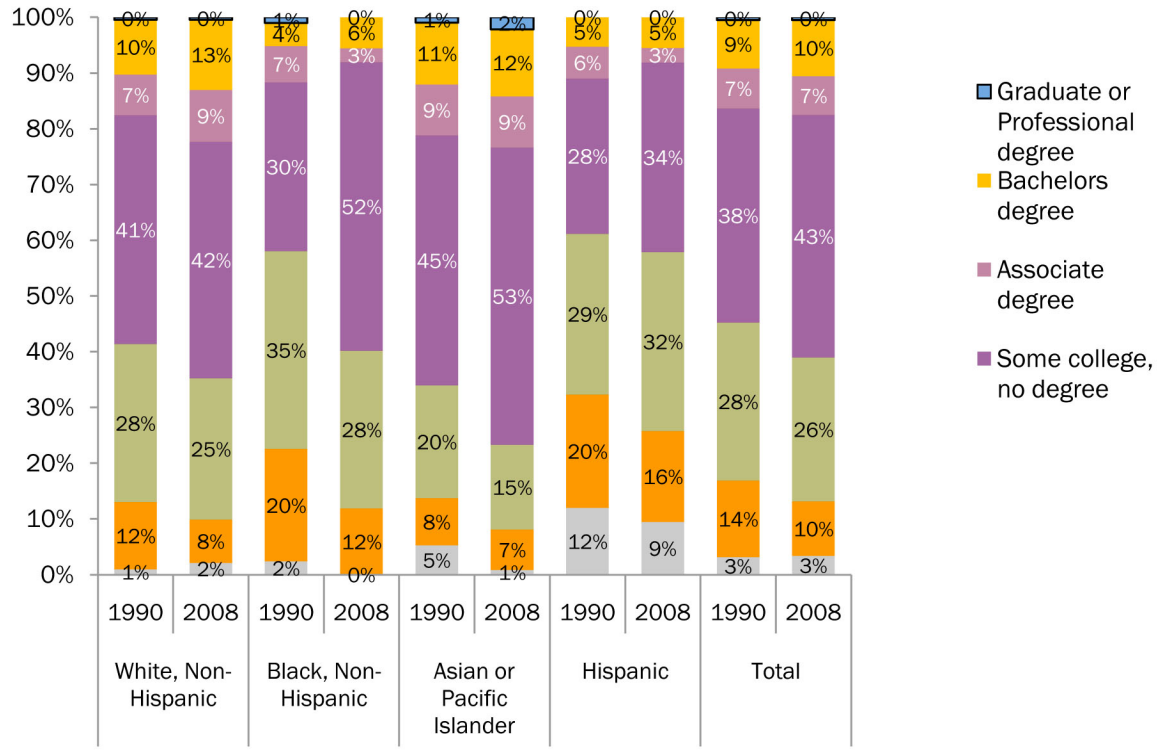


Figure 11. Educational Attainment by Race, 20-24 year olds 1990.

Before looking in detail at employment patterns for 20-24 year olds, it is important to have a picture of the overall labor market in the region. Overall in 2009, 28% of employment in the 9-county Capital Region was in government, with 14% in local government, another 12% in state government, and 2% in Federal government (see Figure 12). The next largest employment shares were education & health services (12%), Professional & Business Services (11%) Retail trade (11%), and Leisure & Hospitality (10%).

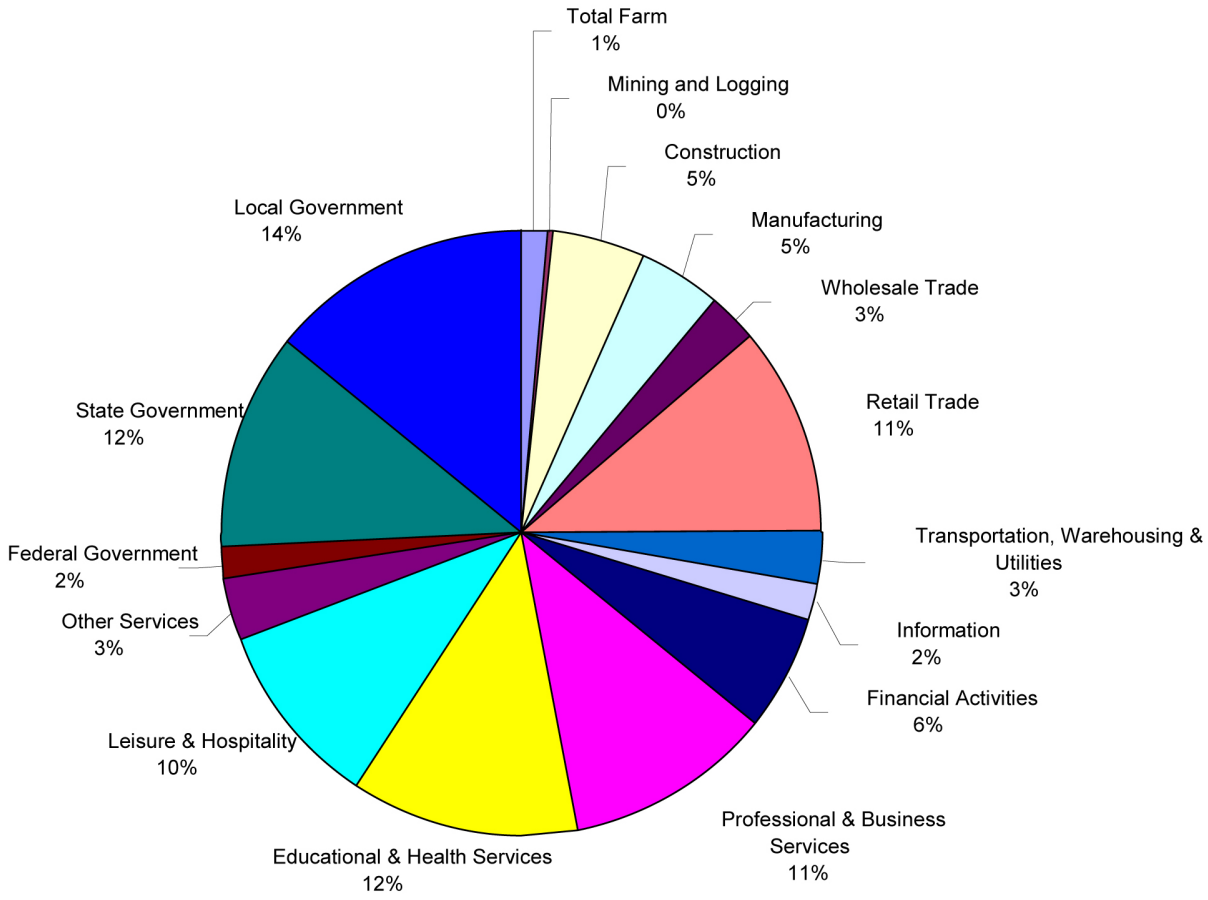


Figure 12. Industry of Employment in 2009, 9-County Capital Region.

Overall, since 1990, total employment in the region has grown by 32% (see figure 13). The industries that have seen the most dramatic growth over that 19 year period are Educational & Health Services (87% growth), Professional & Business services (85% growth), and Leisure and Hospitality industries (51% growth). The greatest decline in employment has been in the Federal Government, with a decline of 59%, mostly in the 1990s as a result of military base closures in the region. Manufacturing has also seen a decline in the region since 2000, with a cumulative decline since 1990 of 10%, with all net decline occurring in nondurable goods (durable good manufacturing overall was stable in the region, rising 3% in total employment from 1990 to 2009).

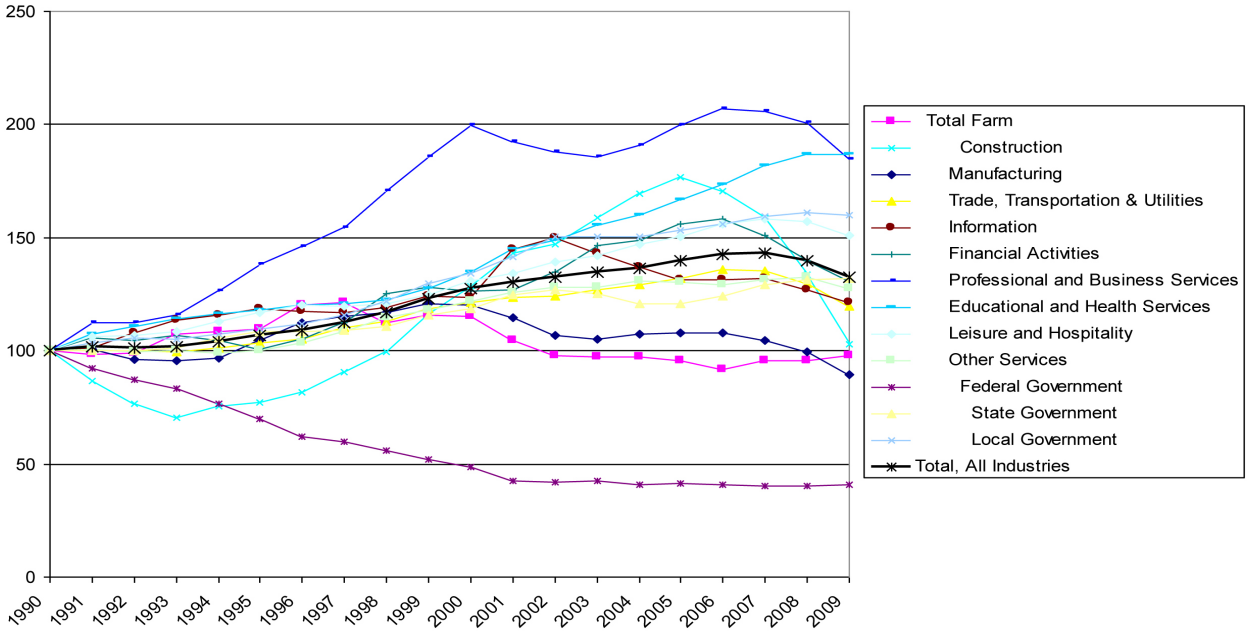


Figure 13. Index of Change, Total Employment by Industry, 9-County Capital Region

What are the employment opportunities for 20-24 year olds? There are substantial racial differences in employment opportunities for 20-24 year olds. In terms of income, while whites averaged $18,082 in income in the previous year in 2008 and Asians averaged $16,771, Hispanics averaged $15,902, and African-Americans averaged $13,932 (see Figure 14). Perhaps even more disturbing is that African-American and Hispanic young adults seem to be falling even farther behind their Anglo and Asian counterparts. When adjusted for inflation, the average income for whites rose by 3.5% and for Asians by 8.5% between 1990 and 2008, while the average income for Hispanics fell by 5.2% and for African Americans by a full 17.5%. In 1990, the average income for Hispanic 20-24 year olds was 96% of that of whites, while African-Americans earned on average 97% of Whites. By 2008, this had fallen for Hispanics to 88%, and for African Americans to 77%. Meanwhile, Asian 20-24 year olds saw a relative improvement, with the average income moving from 88% to 93% of average white income in that time.

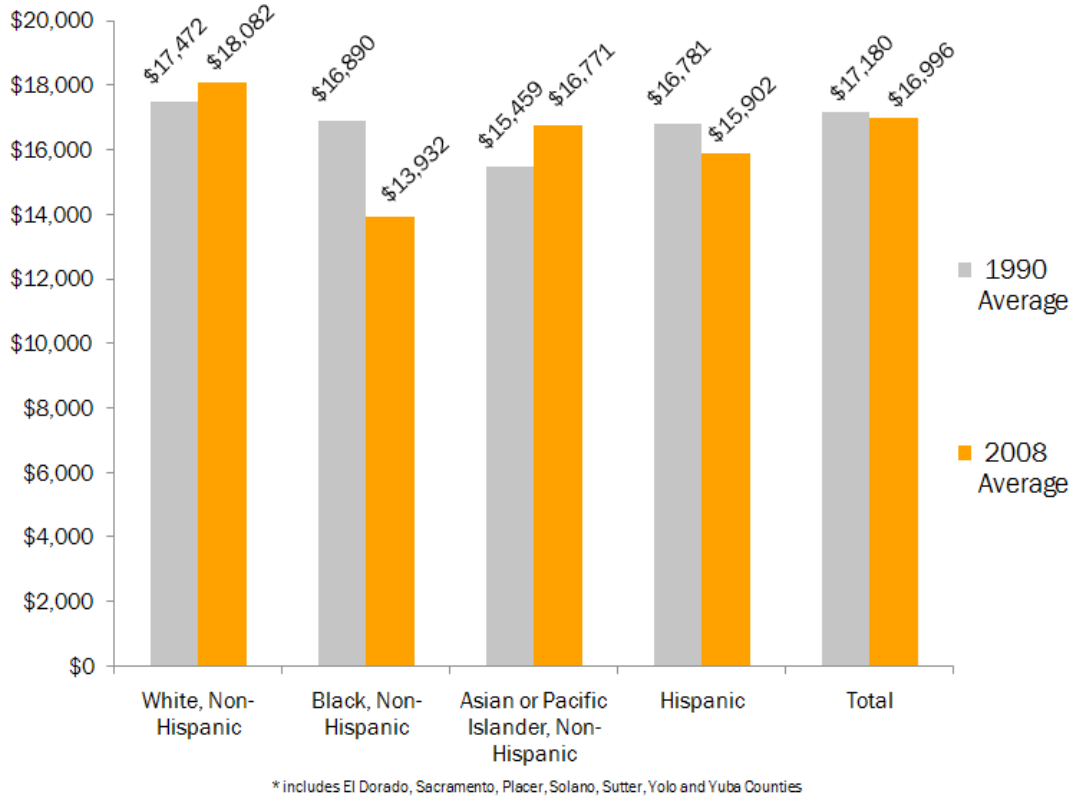


Figure 14. Average Wage/Salary Income for 20-24 year olds working, by race, 1990 and 2008, (in 2008$).

It is important to note that these trends for earnings of 20-24 year olds reflect similar patterns of racial opportunity in the broader labor market. Amongst 25-64 year olds who were working, the average annual income in 2008 was $54,534 for whites, up 23% from $44,487 in 1990 (see figure 15). For African-Americans, the average income in 2008 was $41,825, up 16% from $36,052 in 1990, but this represents falling behind in relative terms from 81% of the average white income in 1990 to only 77% in 2008. Income for Hispanics was even lower, with the average income in 2008 of $36,413, up only 8% from $33,652, and representing only 67% of average white income, down from 76% in 1990. The average income for Asian 25-64 year olds was $45,152 in 2008, up 19% from $37,979 in 1990, though this amount slipped to 83% of the white average, from 85% in 1990.

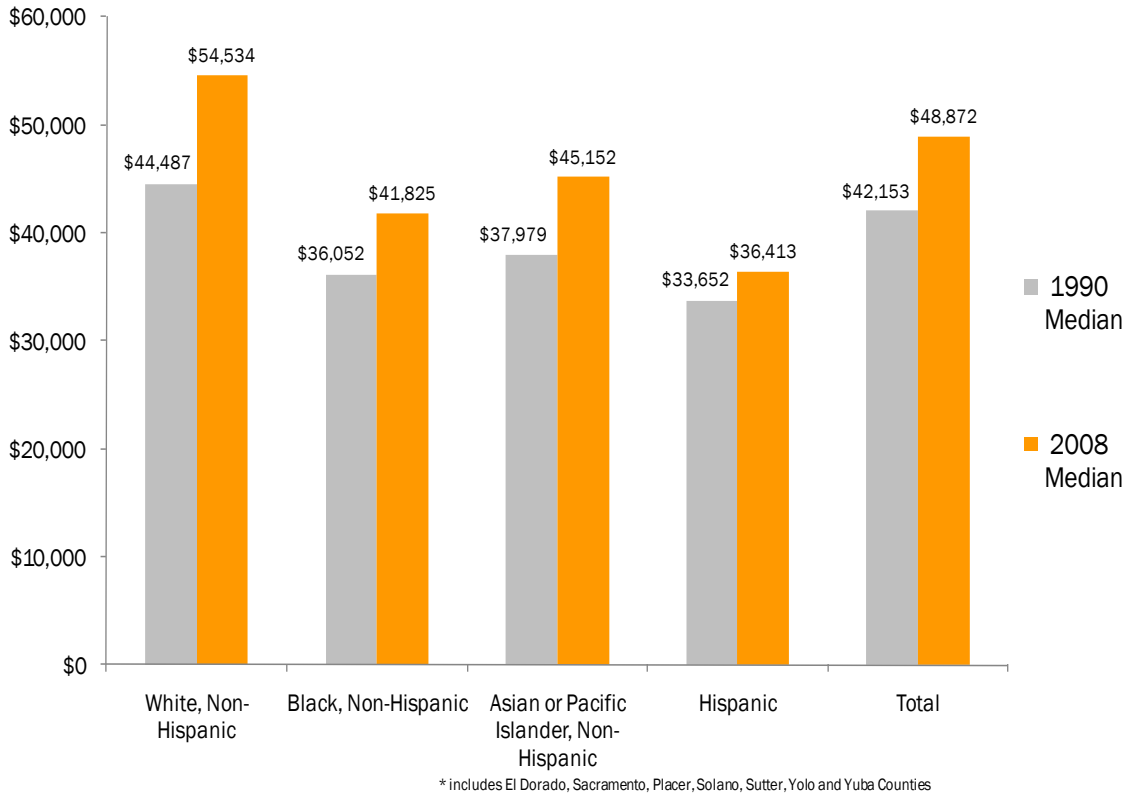


Figure 15. Median Wage/Salary income for 25-64 year olds working, by race, 1990 and 2008, (in 2008$).

Perhaps more importantly, however, the average earnings for 20-24 year olds across all racial groups has deteriorated compared to older workers. The average earnings in 2008 for white 20-24 year olds was only 33% of the average of white 25-64 year olds, down from 39% in 1990. Black young adults saw a particularly dramatic relative decline, moving from 47% of black adult workers in 1990 to only 33% in 2008. For Asians, the comparable figures are 41% in 1990 and 37% in 2008, while Hispanic young adults in 1990 earned 50% of the average for older Hispanic workers, which slipped to 44% in 2008.

One factor that is clearly related to these income patterns is the shifts that have occurred in the major industry of employment for 20-24 year olds, and how this has differed for different racial groups. In 1990, the differences in employment by industry for different racial groups were noticeable, but not particularly dramatic. As shown in Figure 16[4], non-Hispanic white 20-24 year olds had somewhat higher proportion of employment in construction and retail trade. African-Americans, in contrast, were notably under-represented in the construction industry, but substantially over-represented in active military duty and in public administration. Hispanic 20-24 year olds were noticeably over-represented in agriculture and manufacturing, while Asian 20-24 year olds were over-represented in professional and related services.

[4] Please note that these industry categories are based on the 1990 Census industry categories, while the industry data in the previous section are based on the 2007 NAICS classification scheme.

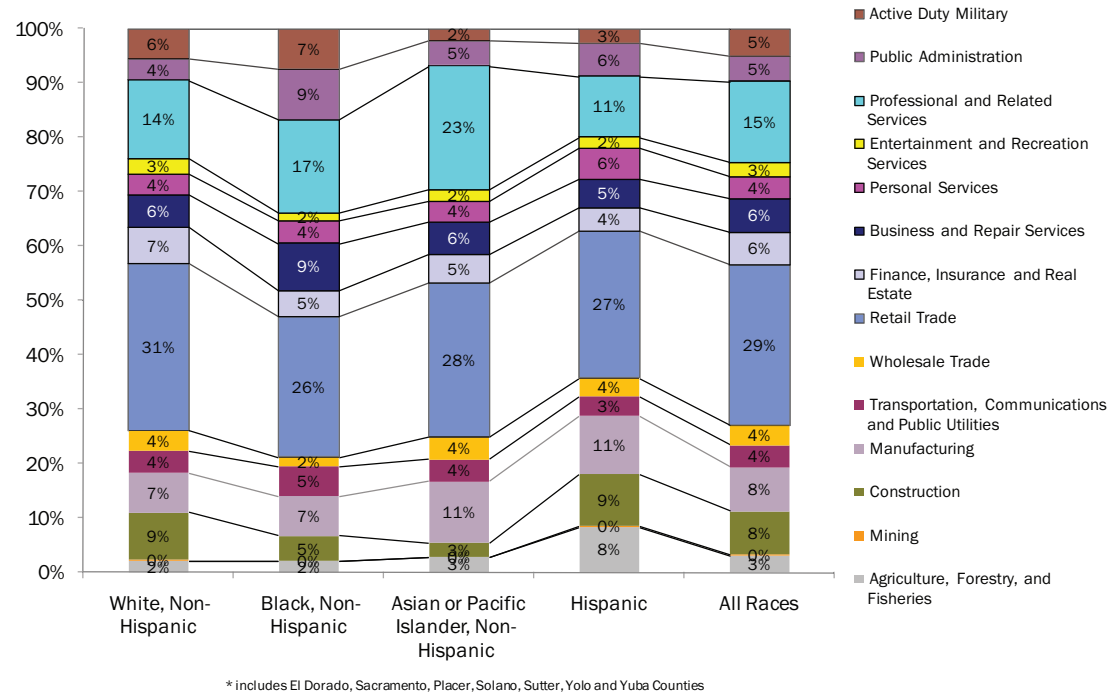


Figure 16. Employment by Industry and Race, 20-24 year olds, 1990.

By 2008, the racial differences in industry employment were dramatic. By 2008, only 5% of African-Americans were employed in active military duty or in public administration—down from 16% in 1990 (see Figure 17). Clearly African-American 20-24 year olds were most dramatically impacted by the military base closures in the region, and opportunities for public sector employment, at least for young African-American adults, have substantially shrunk.

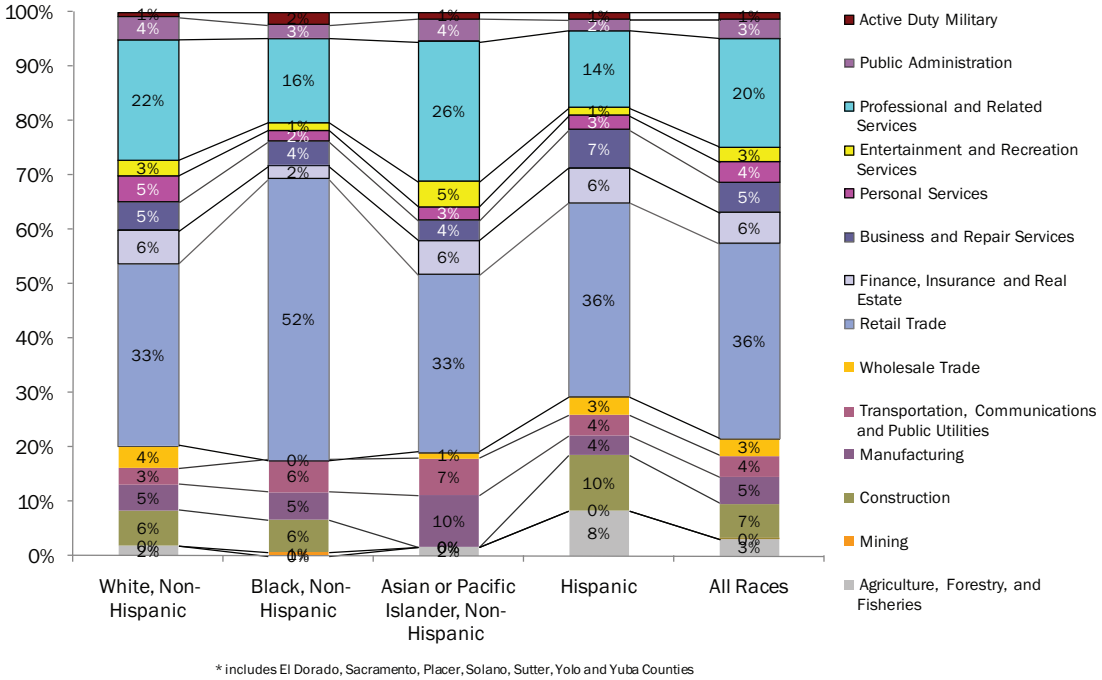


Figure 17. Employment by Industry and Race, 20-24 year olds, 2008.

Meanwhile, African-American 20-24 year olds have disproportionately found employment in low paying retail sales industries. In 2008, more than half of all African-American 20-24 year olds were employed in retail trade. The only bright spot in these figures is that by 2008, African-American young adults had similar levels of employment in construction in the region, an industry that had historically under-employed African-Americans. It is important to note also that in education and health care industries (which are captured under "professional and related services in the 1990s industry classification system used here), which were the most consistently growing industries in the region over this time period, African-Americans fell behind, with a decline from 17% to 16% employed in these industries between 1990 and 2008.

For Hispanics in the region, there was also a substantial increase in employment in retail sales, with an increase between 1990 and 2008 from 27% to 36% of all Hispanic young adults employed in retail trade. But this was only somewhat more substantial than the trend in all racial groups, in which retail trade increased its share as the largest employing industry in the region. For Hispanics, the most dramatic change was a decline in the proportion employed in manufacturing industries, which declined from 11% of all Hispanic 20-24 year olds in 1990 (above the all race average), to only 4% in 2008, below the average for all races in the region.

For non-Hispanic whites and Asians in the region, there was also an increase in employment in retail trade, but whites moved from being disproportionately employed in retail trade (31% compared to the regional average of 29%), to being under-represented in 2008 (33%, compared to the 36% regional average), while Asians were slightly under-represented in retail trade in both time periods. Whites benefitted disproportionately from the growth in education and health industries in the region. In 1990, 14% of white young adults were employed in professional and related services (including health and education), but by 2008 this had risen to 22%. Asians have consistently had a disproportionately high employment in professional and related services, which grew from 23% to 26% of all Asian 20-24 year olds between 1990 and 2008.

Given these different patterns of employment by industry, what kinds of impact have differences in residential and work location had on employment opportunities for young adults in the region? The main context for this analysis is an appreciation for the different racial residential patterns of young adults in the region. Figures 18, 19, 20 and 21 show the residential patterns of whites, African Americans, Asians and Hispanics aged 20-24 in the region. It shows that white young adults are disproportionately living in the eastern suburbs of Sacramento and in outlying rural areas. An analysis of residential change over the 1990-2008 shows that this pattern of 'hollowing' out of the white population from the urban core has been reinforced over this time period. The region certainly doesn't have the same levels of white flight and racial segregation that places like Detroit or Chicago have, but the same patterns of white flight are evident in our region as well. Meanwhile, African-American, Asian and Hispanic young adults are disproportionately concentrated in the neighborhoods of north and south Sacramento, with concentrations of Hispanic young adults in rural agricultural parts of in the eastern and northern parts of the region.

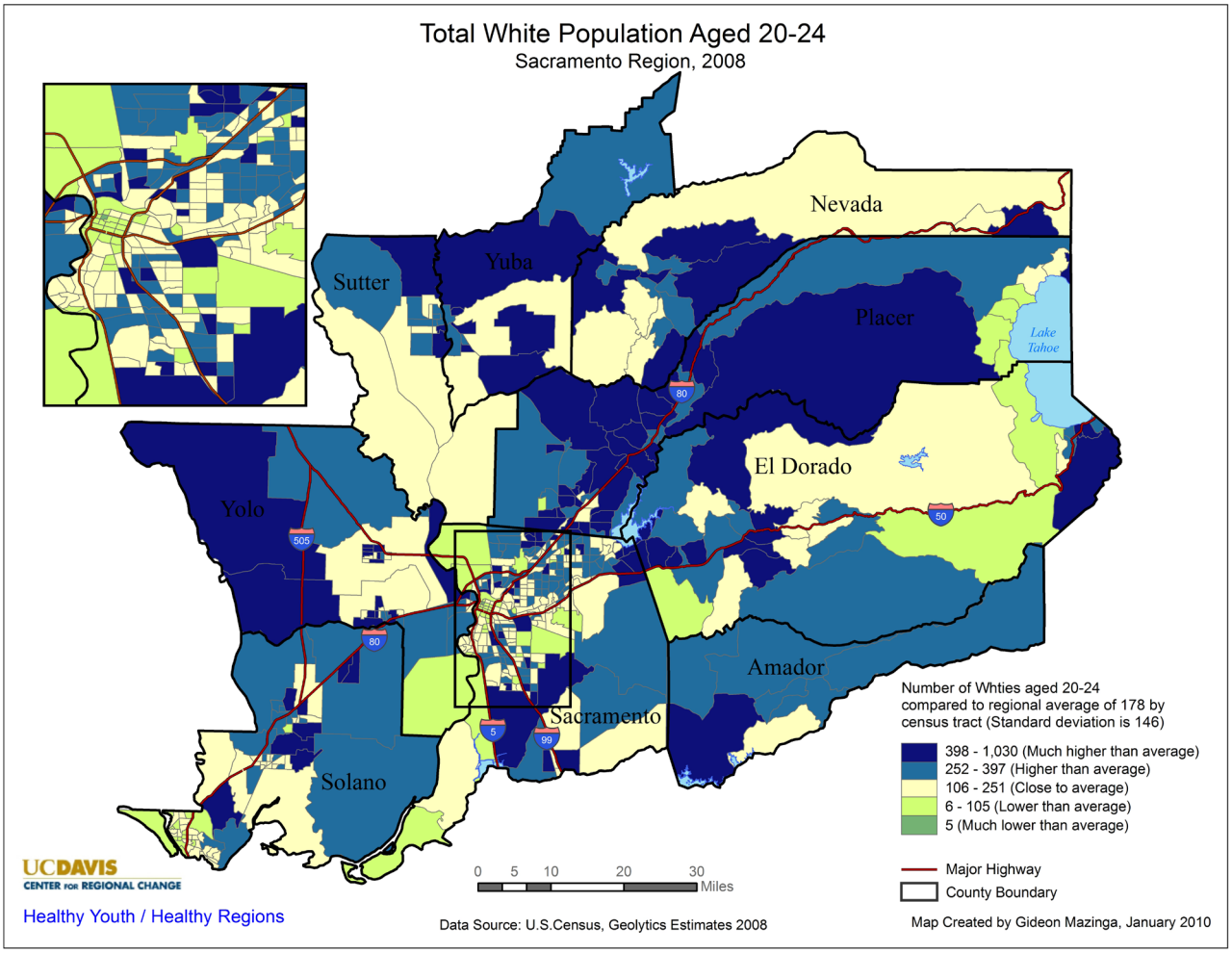


Figure 18. Total White Population Aged 20-24, 9 County Capital Region, 2008

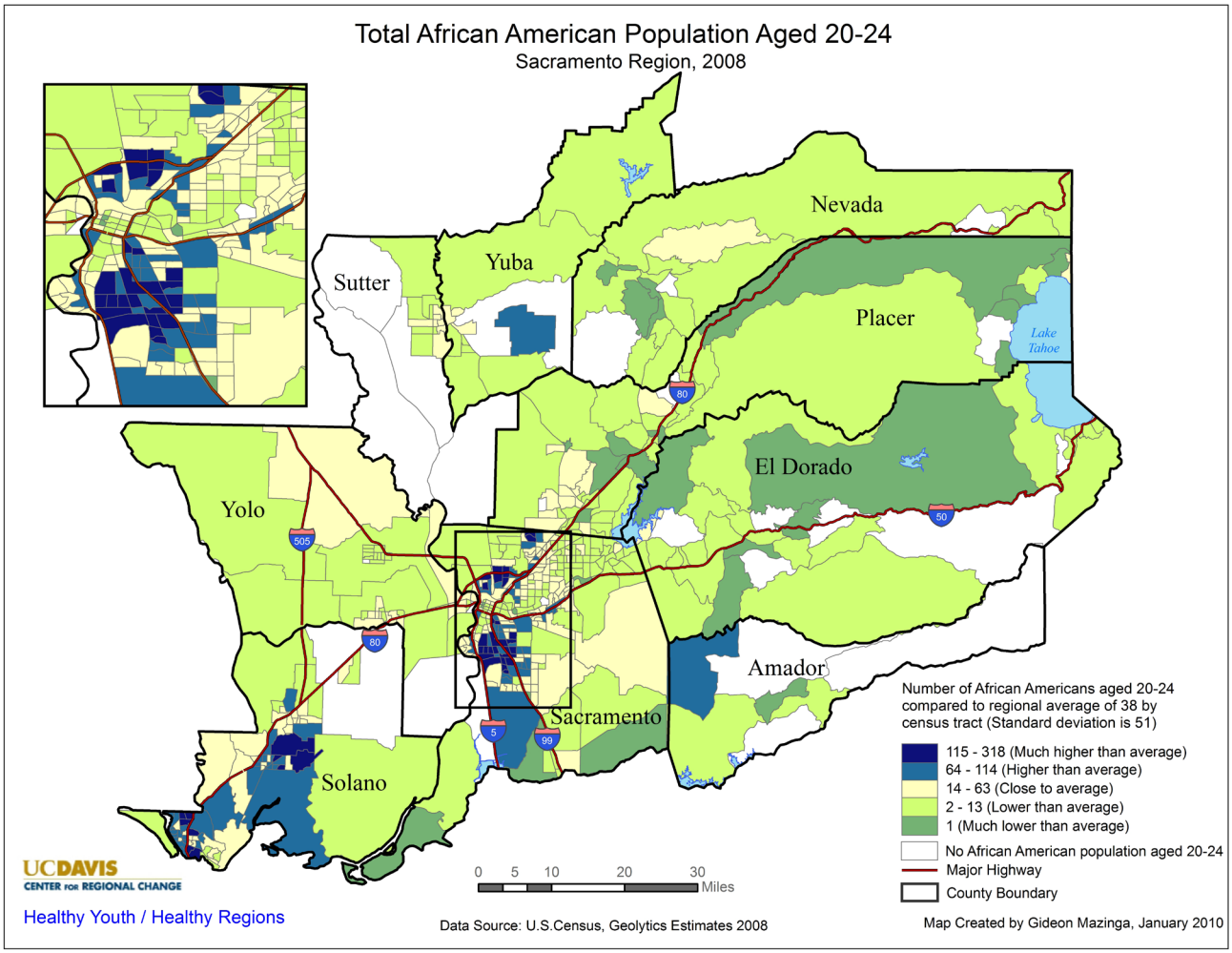


Figure 19. Total African American Population Aged 20-24, 9 County Capital Region, 2008

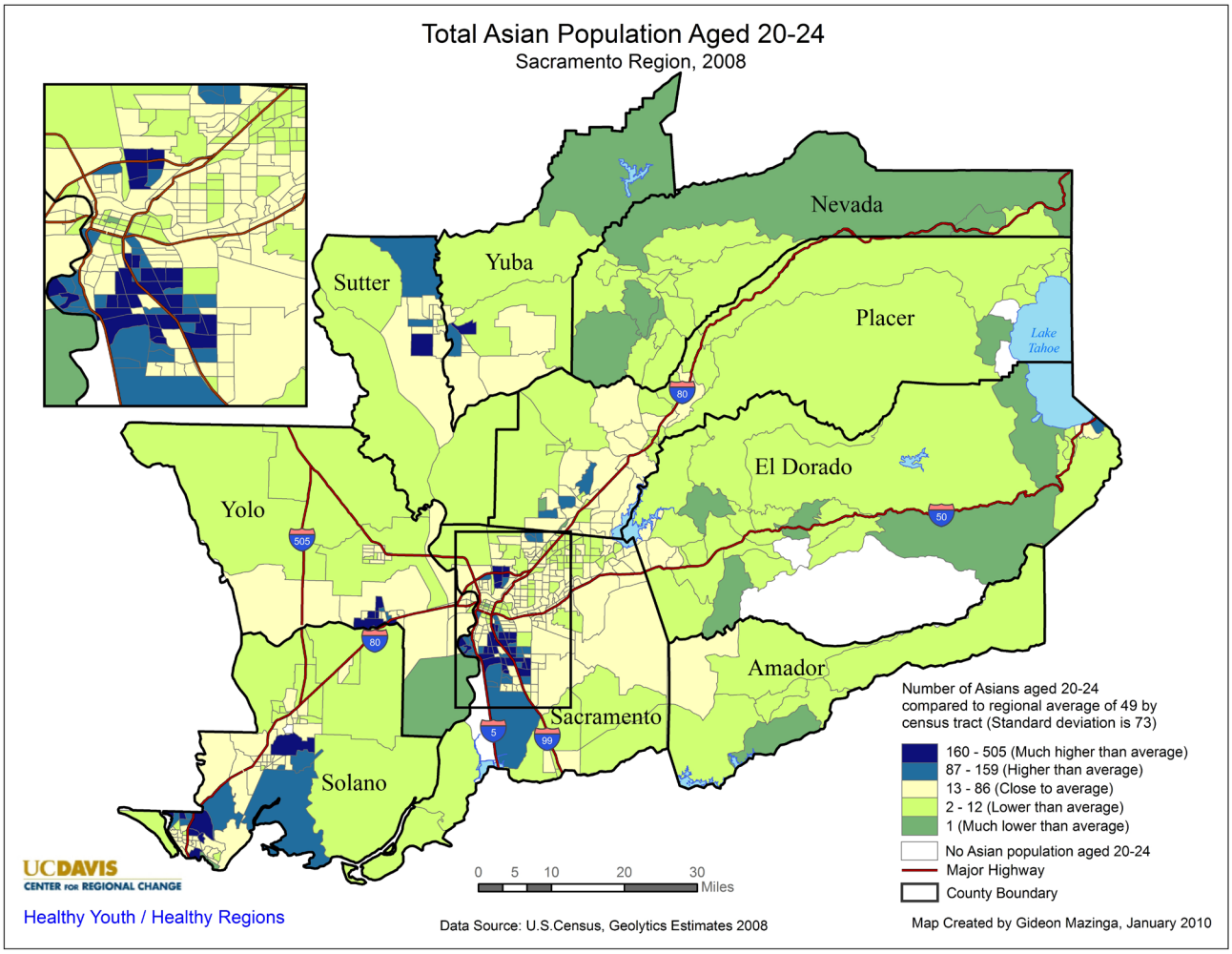


Figure 20. Total Asian Population, Aged 20-24, 9 County Capital Region, 2008

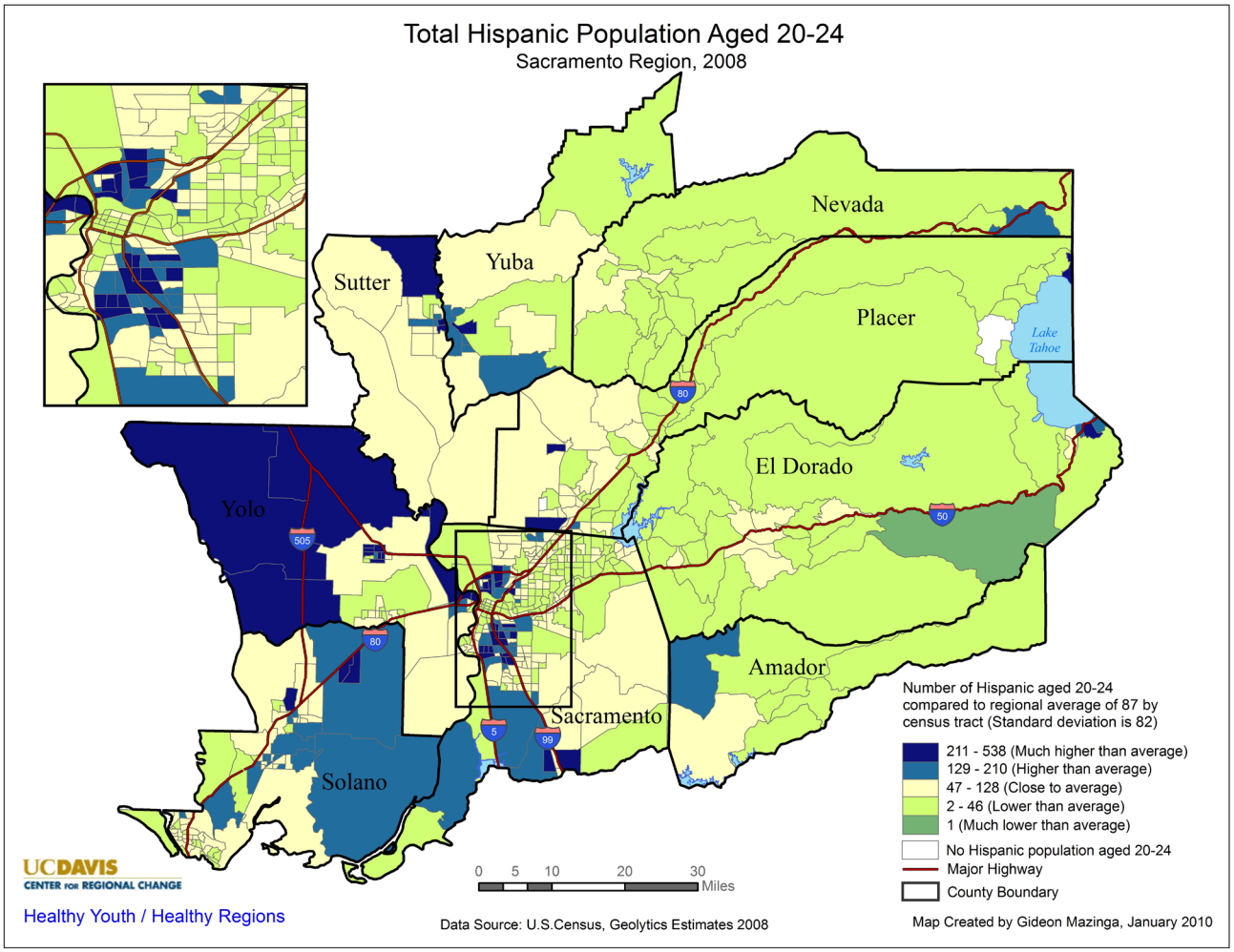


Figure 21. Total Hispanic Population, Aged 20-24, 9 County Capital Region, 2008

Jobs within the Capital Region are also not spread evenly, but are concentrated in particular areas. Figure 22 shows the number of jobs in individual census tracts in 2008, using data from the National Establishment Time-Series database, which captures all employers with a DNS number, nearly 100% of all private sector employment in the region, along with some portion of public employment as well. The map shows that there are essentially three employment centers in the region. One is in the downtown Sacramento Area, encompassing the capitol and surrounding business. A second concentration occurs directly east of Sacramento, stretching from Granite Park (near the Power Inn Rd. and Jackson Road intersection) to Rancho Cordova, mostly lying south of Highway 50. A third concentration is northeast of Sacramento along Highway 80, in the Roseville-Rocklin area.

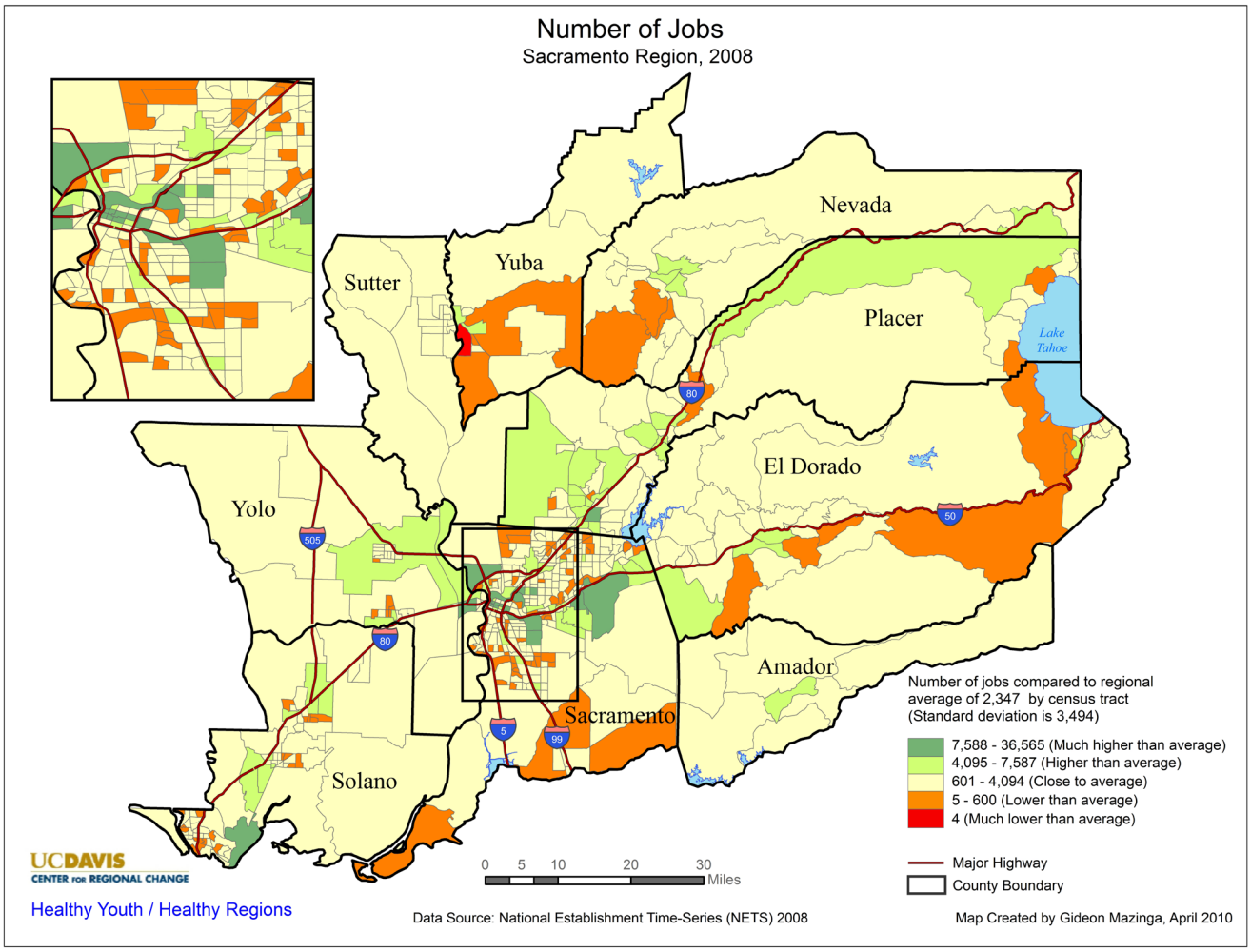


Figure 22. Number of jobs in the Capital Region, 2008.

Figure 23 shows the change in the total number of jobs by census tract between 1990 and 2008. It shows that while the two eastern job centers have experienced substantial growth in nearly all of the census tracts, the experience in the downtown job center is somewhat more spotty, with certain census tracts experiencing substantial growth, while other areas actually experienced decline in this time period.

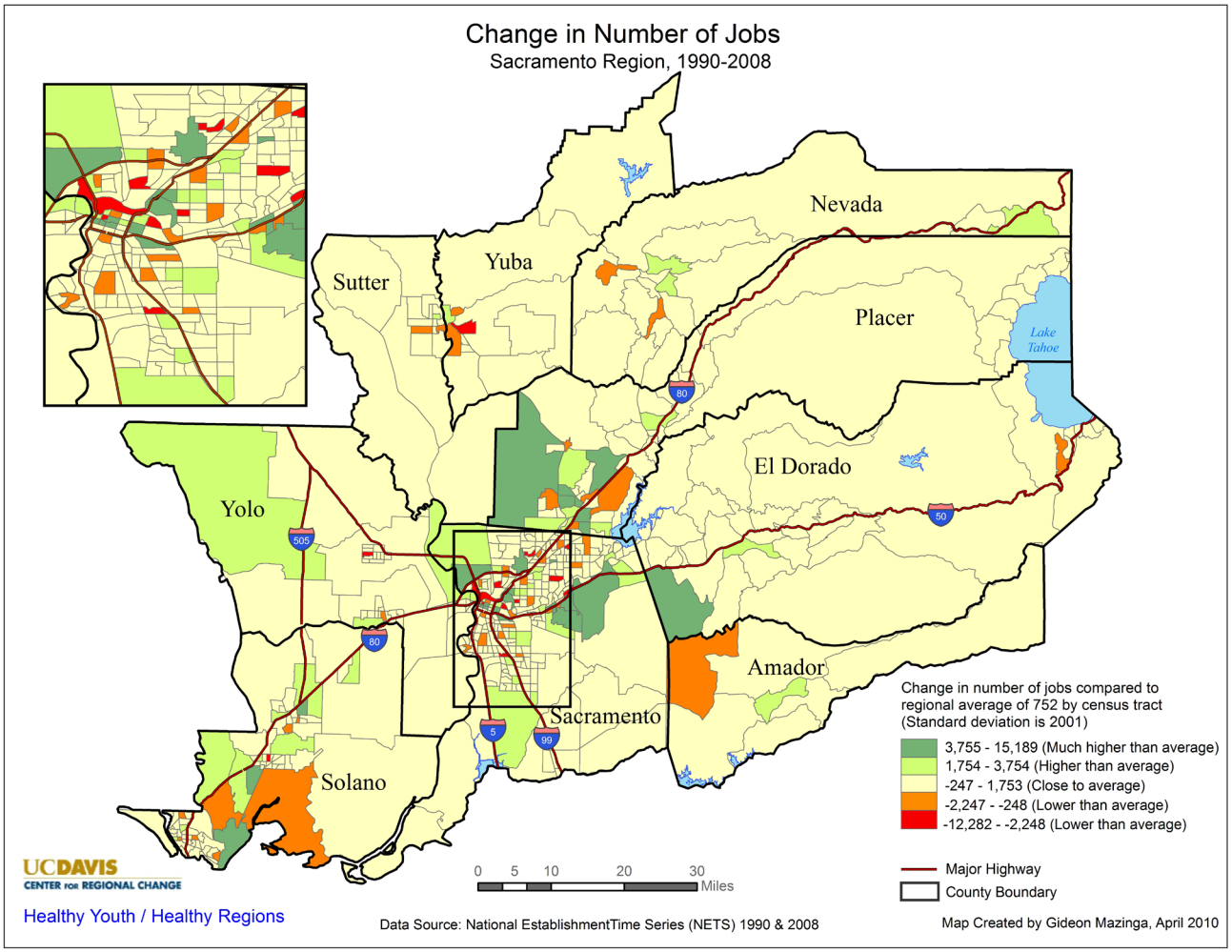


Figure 23. Change in Number of Jobs, Capital Region, 1990-2008.

But how do these patterns of residential and job location affect job access for different groups of young adults? To what extent can the poorer employment conditions of African-American and Hispanic young adults be explained by 'spatial mismatch', that is being less close to employment opportunities than their white counterparts? Are white young adults closer to a larger number of jobs than their blacks and Hispanics in the region? The simplest way to look at this is to see the average number of jobs in the census tract of residence of these different racial groups. Figure 24 shows these figures for 1990, 2000 and 2008. In 1990, white 20-24 year olds on average lived in a census tract that contained 1,843 jobs, compared to 1,521 for African-American young adults and 1,744 for Hispanics. Or put differently, African-Americans had, on average, only 83% as many jobs

in close proximity to where they lived in 1990 as whites, and Hispanics had only 95% as many. By 2008, the numbers for all racial groups had grown. For whites, on average there were 2,229 jobs in their census tract of residence, compared to 1,857 (83%) for African-Americans and 2,146 (96%) for Hispanic young adults. Thus, it is clear that white young adults are living in close proximity to a larger number of jobs than either African-Americans or Hispanic young adults, giving them more options for employment opportunities.

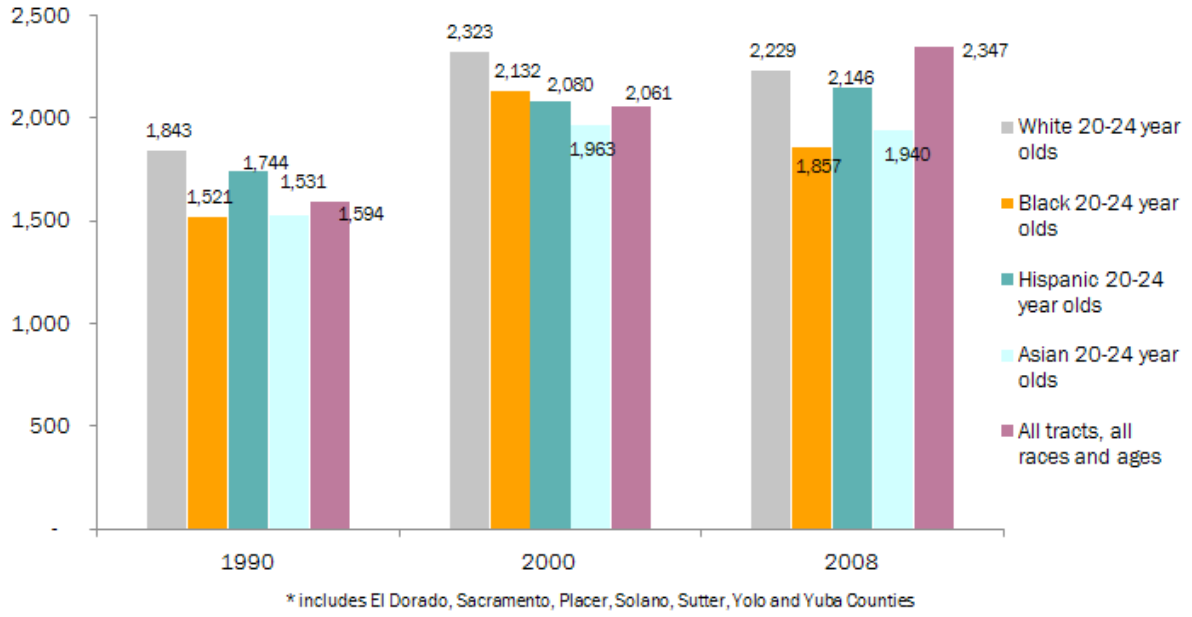


Figure 24. Average Number of Jobs in Census Tract of Residence by Race, 1990-2008.

Of course this measurement is simply for jobs in the same census tract. But many people, including young adults, travel substantially longer distances to go to work than the distance of a single census tract. Thus, following (Joassart-Marcelli, 2009), for every census tract in the region we calculated a job proximity index based on using a distance decay function that counts jobs in all census tracts in the region but assigns a lower weight to those jobs located in tracts at a greater distance.[5]

Figure 25 shows the results of this analysis for 1990 and 2008. In 1990, Hispanics had the lowest job proximity index of all 20-24 year olds, but this was only 4% less than for whites. By 2008, African Americans actually had the highest job proximity index of all racial groups—more than 14% higher than whites.

[5] The formula for this calculation is the following:

$$A_i = \sum_{j=1}^{n} J_j\left(e^{-\lambda d_{ij}}\right)$$

where Ai is the job accessibility of each individual tract i, as measured from its centroid, Jj is the number of jobs in tract j, dij is the distance between tract i and all of the other tracts j in the region, and λ is the estimated parameter of the distance decay function. Following (Joassart-Marcelli, 2009) and (Parks, 2004), we estimated λ to be 0.055, which implies that a job located 5 miles from a tracts centroid gets a weight of 0.76, one at 10 miles gets a weight of 0.58, one at 20 miles gets 0.33, and one at 30 miles gets 0.19.

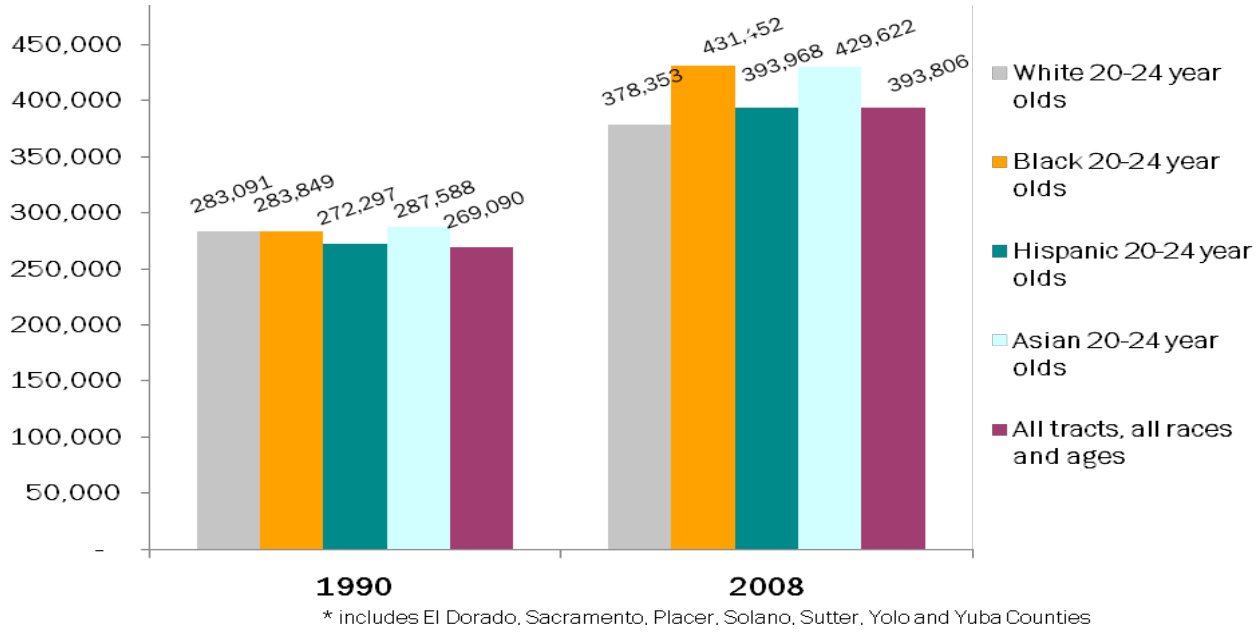


Figure 25. Average Job Proximity Index in Census Tract of Residence by Race, 1990 and 2008.

While the full implications of the spatial patterns of residence and job locations remains for more in-depth analysis, there are two broad conclusions that can be drawn from the analysis to date. First, white young adults in the region, on average, have access to a greater number of jobs *in their immediate neighborhood*, (at least as measured by census tracts), than their African-American and Hispanic counterparts. Second, however, as indicated by a broader analysis of the proximity of jobs beyond the immediate neighborhood, the simply physical distance away from jobs does not provide a clear explanation of disparate employment outcomes for young adults in the region. This should not lead to the conclusion, however, that space doesn't matter. These simple measures of spatial proximity don't take into account actual road distance, or patterns of transit access.[6]

[6] These issues are discussed in more depth in (Rios, Campbell, & Romero 2010) and (Erbstein, Burciaga, & Rodriguez, 2010).

While the main focus in this paper is on documenting and analyzing the quantitative dimensions of space in explaining racial disparities in labor market outcomes, it is also to recognize that there is a wide range of processes related to space and the labor market that are best investigated through more qualitative methods. Social networks, motivations, mentors and role models, subtle and not-so subtle discriminatory hiring practices, and complex skills and knowledge that are poorly captured in simple educational attainment measures are just a few of the factors that are difficult to capture using quantitative metrics. While a systematic analysis of this type of evidence in our qualitative data is beyond the scope of this paper, it is valuable to at least provide some indication of our evidence of how space might affect racial patterns of job access in the labor market. These processes can be understood in three broad categories. First, the factors that help people be prepared for work, including the quality of education and other forms of human capital, motivation, and the role models that help shape people's aspirations (or lack of aspirations) for work. Second, the factors that actually shape finding jobs and getting to work, including the awareness of what types of jobs are available (heavily shaped by social networks), and how individuals actually get to work. Third, issues of retention and advancement, including factors that help people stay in work and advance over time, either internal to a firm or across firm boundaries, to improve employment circumstances over time.

Prepared for work

The most basic level of preparation for work is educational attainment. The analysis by Breslau et al. of the disparities in high school drop-out levels, high school graduation, and the patterns of opportunities for going on to higher education clearly show substantial spatial variation in educational opportunities (Breslau et al. 2010). Funding for K-12 education in California is relatively equal across school districts, at least when compared to states where dramatic differences in resources per child are driven by local property taxes being the primary source of revenue for schools. Nonetheless, there are substantial variations in the amount of resources available across jurisdictions which affect not just school quality, but the broader set of resources available to help prepare youth. The following quotes from our qualitative interviews reflect this perspective:

> *It's like which schools have money, what neighborhood gets the grocery stores, what neighborhood have sidewalks and parks for kids to play on that the distribution of resources at the regional level is huge. I mean you look at the way governments are funded, there's property taxes and sales tax dollars and you have a place like Roseville. Roseville gets approximately 10 times more money in sales tax revenue per person than the city of Sacramento does. I mean that has a huge impact upon the sort of infrastructure and access to resources at the local level that impacts the youths a lot even the lives of youth in those different places.*

> *There are not a lot of community centers, not a lot of areas for youth to congregate… So it's very isolated…Some of the programs that you would see here in Sacramento… You see all these great centers for youth to participate in a variety of activities, a place for them to congregate…[with] a multitude of wraparound services that are provided that don't exist in areas when you get out to like Woodland, Esparto.*

There really are no places for youth here…..There's no designated spot where they can go and be youth. [T]he library is situated for example…in a strip mall. It's really really small. Now they are building a new one but it's further south into the county so it's not going to be as accessible but as opposed to in Natomas where you have the community center and the library situated in such a way that it's a more comfortable environment for people to go and naturally migrate to. There just is nothing like that here. There's no community center…. So that begs the question then, what do they do? If they're left to wander the streets literally because all there is to do is wander the streets, somebody eventually is going to break a window or jump a fence. So that's what happens, I think.

These quotes point to multi-dimensional spatial processes that result in differing jurisdictional sources of revenue, differential funding for youth programs, differing physical infrastructure, library resources and youth gathering places, and so on. These processes all work to shape the resources youth have available to them in preparing for future work, and perhaps more importantly, shapes the role models they come into contact with, and the types of aspirations for work they are exposed to.

Finding and getting to work

In our interviews with youth allies, and our work with youth themselves, improvements in transportation emerged as one of the highest priority issues for youth in the region.[7] The quotes below provide an indication of the importance of this issue.

Of course the biggest thing with all youth is transportation…
I think transportation is massive, a huge reason as to why kids are not getting services here….
Everywhere I've ever worked, every county, transportation has always been an issue.

Actually there were two buses but they cancelled one. So, the bus from Knights Landing comes into town and they have to get off at Woodland High School and then walk down a way and then they catch another bus that comes out here. So, they have to make a transition and then there's another bus that just goes through town. It picks up all the Cache Creek students and brings them here. Because we have a later start, we start at 8:50 and everybody else starts at 8:00.

In the past we worked with youth on a campaign to reduce bus fares because they were finding that families had to make choices between food or sending their kid to school because the bus fairs were so expensive.

A detailed analysis of transportation spending and transit access in the region was beyond the scope of this paper. Nonetheless, a preliminary analysis at the broadest level provides an indication that inequities in transportation and transportation spending exist in the region. Overall, according to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2035, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) envisions spending $14.3 billion or 34% of total funds between 2008 and 2035 on transit, which is admirably high by U.S. standards, but reaching this target will be impossible without passage of an

[7] See (Kuhns, 2010).

envisioned additional ¼% sales tax in Sacramento County and expanded state support for transit. However, our analysis of all funding for projects actively programmed in the region's current Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) found that overall, only 20% of regional funding was earmarked for transit, compared to 78% for roads and 2% specifically for bikes and pedestrians.[8] While Sacramento County garners the majority of total funds—an estimated $6 billion for currently active projects, over half of the total $11.5 billion allocated—when adjusted for population, Sacramento County actually has the lowest per capita total of all counties in the region, and only slightly over half of what is spent per capita in Placer County (see Table 1 below)

Table 1: Funding Allocated in SACOG's Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Plan 2009/12

	Total (in millions)				Per Capita			
	ROADS	TRANSIT	BIKE/PED	TOTAL	ROADS	TRANSIT	BIKE/PED	Total
El Dorado	$ 771.5	$ 6.7	$ 13.5	$ 791.7	$ 4,399	$ 38	$ 77	$ 4,514
Placer	$2,547.2	$ 65.1	$ 20.6	$ 2,632.9	$ 7,658	$ 196	$ 62	$ 7,916
Sacramento	$3,959.5	$ 1,856.9	$ 173.6	$ 5,990.0	$ 2,868	$ 1,345	$ 126	$ 4,338
Sutter	$ 579.3	$ 1.8	$ 0.6	$ 581.7	$ 6,353	$ 20	$ 6	$ 6,379
Yolo	$ 627.2	$ 363.1	$ 24.9	$ 1,015.2	$ 3,234	$ 1,872	$ 128	$ 5,234
Yuba	$ 438.7	$ 2.3	$ 1.4	$ 442.4	$ 6,127	$ 32	$ 19	$ 6,178
Multiple Counties	$ 423.3	$ 54.4	$ 0.6	$ 478.3				
Total	$8,923.4	$ 2,296.0	$ 234.5	$ 11,454.0	$ 3,974	$ 1,022	$ 104	$ 5,101

Source: Author's analysis of SACOG MTIP 09-12

Despite some impressively broad public decision making processes surrounding regional transportation planning processes, the formal decision-making structures of SACOG remain skewed towards small, predominantly white suburban and rural jurisdictions in the region. A Brookings Institution study of 50 large MPOs in the country found that SACOG had among the highest discrepancy between population weighted versus un-weighted jurisdiction-based representation, essentially a measure of over-representation of suburban rather than urban population (Sanchez 2005). SACOG does have a formal voting structure that requires that all votes be approved through a population-weighted voting process, as well as jurisdiction-based voting processes, but this doesn't affect who is actually represented on the Board itself. Similarly, while SACOG doesn't keep official records of the race of their board members, a review of Board member photos, surnames, and available on-line biographies in 2010 suggests that perhaps 5 out of the 33 board members were not non-Hispanic white. Thus, non-Hispanic whites constitute perhaps 85% of the SACOG Board, compared to only 59% of the population in the region.

Youth and young adults are disproportionately dependent on public transportation, since they are less likely to own or have access to their own vehicle. Thus, these geographic patterns of inequality in transportation spending and decision making are likely to have a substantial effect on youth labor market opportunities. Clearly a full equity analysis of transportation available in the region is especially important for understanding youth and young adults access to work opportunities in the region.[9]

[8] The MTIP covers the fiscal years of 07-08 to 11-12, but some of the funds allocated to these projects were actually spent prior to 2007, or are expected to be spent after 2012. Thanks to Bryan Pon, UC Davis Geography Ph.D. student for processing these statistics.

[9] The importance of further analysis of transportation inequities is reinforced by our findings in work directly with youth and interviews with youth allies. See (Kuhns, 2010).

Keeping work and career advancement

Finally, a full analysis of opportunities in the labor market needs to not just take into account preparation for work and access to work, but also the processes by which people keep their jobs and move up over time. In the past, when successful careers tended to evolve more frequently within the boundaries of a single firm, workforce development analysts and practitioners spoke primarily about career ladders. With the restructuring of firms and labor markets in our contemporary economy, however, workers much more frequently need to move from firm to firm, often multiple times, in order to move up. Workforce development analysts and professionals increasing are talking about the need to create institutional support for career 'staircases', or even career 'lattices' that can help unemployed job seekers and incumbent workers move more easily top better jobs if they are stuck in a dead-end position. Since our work in this project was primarily focused on youth and their entry into the labor force, this issue of career staircases or lattices was not a focus of inquiry, but it is an essential component of a successful labor market for disadvantaged workers and the importance of workforce preparation was a constant theme throughout much of our research throughout the project.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This paper has hopefully made clear that there are significant racial disparities in the labor market outcomes for young adults in the region. These disparities exist in looking at disconnected populations, in examining levels of pay for employed young adults, in the industries that young adults are employed in, and the impact that space and proximity to jobs has on job availability.

There are a number of key insights and recommendations that emerge from this analysis.

First, in efforts to keep youth in school and to encourage them to attend college, it is not enough simply to try to get them into college or stay in school. They also need the resources to stay in school. A substantial portion of young adults enrolled in school in the region are also working while going to school, which can hinder progress. A full 43% of all 20-24 year olds, including 31% of those who are working and not going to school, have some college education but have yet to complete a college degree. The figure is particularly alarming for African-Americans in the region, where by age 25 (in 2007), 50% of African-American 25 year olds had some college education but no degree. Providing resources for youth to stay in school is critical. This is likely to be especially important for young adults with children.

Second, there are clearly differing racial hiring patterns in different industries. African-American and Hispanic young adults in the region are substantially under-represented in the most consistently growing industries in the region, education and health care. Targeted workforce development programs focused on increasing African-American and Hispanic access to these valuable jobs is a high priority.

Finally, while the distance between place of residence and work is important, particularly as it relates to jobs in the immediate neighborhood, the issue is not so much about the absolute distance to jobs, but the accessibility of jobs, particularly as it relates to transit access.

References

Breslau, J., Rodriguez, G.M., Erbstein, N., Burciaga, R. & Hartzog, C. (2010). *Educating for Equity: An Analysis of the Capitol Region Educational Pipeline*. Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions Working Paper, Center for Regional Change, UC Davis.

Erbstein, N., Burciaga, R. & Rodriguez,G.M. (2010). *Regional Matters: Through Young People's Eyes*. Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions Working Paper, Center for Regional Change, UC Davis.

Joassart-Marcelli, P. (2009). The Spatial Determinants Of Wage Inequality: Evidence From Recent Latina Immigrants In Southern California. *Feminist Economics* 15:33-72.

Kuhns, M. (2010). "Transportation and Youth: Themes from HYHR Qualitative Interviews and PAR." Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions Research Memo, Center for Regional Change, UC Davis.

London, J.K., Campbell, D. & Kuhns, M. (2010). *California's Capital Region: A Place in Progress*. Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions Working Paper, Center for Regional Change, UC Davis.

Parks, V. (2004). Access to work: The effects of spatial and social accessibility on unemployment for native-born black and immigrant women in Los Angeles. *Economic Geography* 80:141-172.

Rios, M., Campbell, D. & Romero, M.S. (2010). *Imagining the Spaces of Regional Action: Framing Youth Problems and Solutions*. Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions Working Paper, Center for Regional Change, UC Davis.

Romero, M.S., London, J. K., & Erbstein. N. (2010). *Opportunities and Challenges for Youth Civic Engagement*. Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions Working Paper, Center for Regional Change, UC Davis.

Sanchez, T. (2005). "Patterns of MPO Representation and Board Structure in Relation to Transportation Planning and Decision Making." Washington DC: Brookings Institution.