Introduction
Based on data from the 2000 and 1990 U.S. censuses, this profile describes traits and trends among Queens’ rapidly-growing Asian American population. It provides statistics on population size and growth, immigration, citizenship status, educational attainment, English ability, income, poverty, and housing. Comparisons with the total Queens population offer perspective.

The Asian population in Queens grew tremendously from 1990 to 2000. In addition, compared with Queens residents overall, in 2000, the borough’s Asians had higher median household income and were more apt to have post-secondary education. However, Asians in Queens also had lower per capita and median family incomes, as well as less English ability, than borough residents as a whole.

Queens Asian American Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asian Group</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asian Alone, one Asian Group</td>
<td>% Growth from 1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Indian</td>
<td>56,601</td>
<td>109,114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>2,567</td>
<td>12,786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodian</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese (w/o Taiwanese)</td>
<td>81,824</td>
<td>136,804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>22,324</td>
<td>30,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmong</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>987</td>
<td>1,682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>4,037</td>
<td>5,103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>49,088</td>
<td>62,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laotian</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysian</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>6,449</td>
<td>11,210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lankan</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwanese</td>
<td>5,061</td>
<td>3,016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thai</td>
<td>2,317</td>
<td>2,491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>2,419</td>
<td>3,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asian</td>
<td>2,972</td>
<td>11,692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>237,556</td>
<td>391,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2000, half of Asian New Yorkers lived in Queens, where Asians constituted 19 percent of the population.

The five largest Asian ethnic groups in Queens as of the last census were Chinese (143,126), Indians (129,715), Koreans (63,885), Filipinos (33,225) and Bangladeshis (18,310).

The Asian groups in Queens with the highest growth rates in the last decade were Bangladeshis (398.1 percent), Sri Lankans (225 percent), Malaysians (177 percent), Pakistanis (122 percent) and Indians (129 percent). From 1990 to 2000, Indians and Chinese experienced the greatest numerical increases, adding 73,114 and 61,302 people, respectively.

By age, 24 percent (102,345) of Queens’ Asian residents were children (age 17 and younger), 70 percent (305,808) were working-age adults (age 18 to 64), and 6 percent (27,805) were senior citizens (age 65 and older). The borough’s overall population breakdown was 23 percent children, 65 percent working-age adults and 13 percent senior citizens.
Nearly half of Asian Americans in Queens have limited English proficiency

Of Queens’ Asian immigrants counted in the 2000 census, 43 percent (146,112) were naturalized U.S. citizens, compared with 45 percent of all immigrants in the borough. However, 34 percent of foreign-born Asian Queensites became citizens within 20 years, slightly exceeding 32 percent of foreign-born residents borough-wide.

Educational Attainment

Education levels for Asians in 2000 were similar to or, particularly at the upper end of the academic ladder, greater than those for the general Queens population.

Among Asian adults in Queens, 25 percent (72,312) had not graduated from high school, compared with 26 percent of adults borough-wide. Also, 14 percent (41,992) of all Asians in Queens had less than a ninth-grade education, matching the percentage for all adults in the borough.

At the high end of the educational spectrum, 54 percent (157,062) of Asian adults in Queens had some form of post-secondary education, compared with 47 percent of all borough adults.

The vast majority of school-age Asian children in Queens (86 percent, or 72,872) were enrolled in the New York City public school system, surpassing 81 percent of all borough children.

English Proficiency

In 2000, Queens’ Asian residents were more likely than the borough’s general population to have Limited English Proficiency (LEP) – both overall and by age group.

Nearly half, or 47 percent (192,746), of the total Asian population in Queens spoke English “well,” “not well” or “not at all,” compared with 28 percent of all Queensites. In terms of age, the LEP classification applied to 50 percent (152,812) of Asian working-age adults and 71 percent (19,775) of elderly Asians, compared with 31 percent and 26 percent of corresponding borough-wide populations.

Immigration and Citizenship

More than three-quarters, or 78 percent (342,013), of Asian Queensites in 2000 were foreign-born, compared with 46 percent of all borough residents.

Most Asian immigrants in Queens in 2000 had come to the United States in the last 20 years, spurring recent population growth. Specifically, 48 percent (163,993) of foreign-born Asians in the borough immigrated from 1990 to March 2000; 35 percent (120,756) came to this country from 1980 to 1989; and 17 percent (57,264) arrived before 1980.

Income

2000 census information illustrates two contrasting income trends for Asians in Queens.

Asian median household income of $43,414 exceeded $42,439 borough-wide. However, Asian median family income ($45,960) and per capita income ($16,570) were lower than overall borough figures of $48,608 and $19,222, respectively.

Poverty

Poverty rates for Asians in relation to those for the total Queens population as of the 2000 census were similar overall and for children but higher for elderly residents.

Among all Asians in Queens, 16 percent (69,420) lived below the poverty line, compared with an overall borough poverty rate of 15 percent. Moreover, 18 percent (18,685) of the borough’s Asian children and 19 percent of all Queens children lived in poverty. (Some 81 percent, or 15,125, of the borough’s Asian children in poverty lived in two-parent families, compared with 47 percent of all Queens children in poverty.)

On the other hand, 20 percent (5,372) of Asian senior citizens lived in poverty, surpassing the 13 percent borough-wide poverty rate for seniors.

Housing

In 2000, Asian households in Queens had an average of 3.36 people, far exceeding the average household size for the entire borough population (2.81). This difference helps explain Asians’ higher household income but lower per capita income in relation to borough-wide statistics. Higher occupancy of Asian homes also suggests the necessity-based existence of
Distribution of the Asian American Population in Queens

Produced by the Asian American Federation of New York.
Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau Summary File One.
"Single Race Alone or in Combination" Category.
multiple rent-payers in a housing unit – a factor that could inflate household income falsely and signify overcrowding.

More than half, or 57 percent, of Asians in Queens lived in rented homes while 43 percent owned their homes in 2000. The same percentages applied for the overall borough population.

Asian seniors were more likely to live in poverty than seniors borough-wide.

Footnotes
1 All numbers are from the Summary Files (SF) One, Two, Three and Four of the U.S. census. However, SF One and SF Two refer to information collected from a 100 percent U.S. population survey whereas SF Three and Four data represent results from a sample survey of 1 in 6 Americans.
2 Rates and percentages for each data section are derived from the data universe related to the topic at hand. Therefore, population tallies for one particular topic will not necessarily correspond with those for another topic.
3 When compared with the “Asian Alone” category for the 1990 census, the Asian population in Queens increased by 65 percent, from 237,556 to 391,500.
4 In 2000, Chinese population numbers did not include the Taiwanese population.
5 The U.S. Census Bureau uses “Asian Indian” to mean people indicating their race as Asian Indian, Bengalese, Bharat, Dravidian, East Indian or Goanese. This profile uses “Indian” for this population group, based on the population’s preference.
6 Based on “Asian Alone” categories, the five largest Asian groups in Queens in 2000 were Chinese (136,804), Indians (109,114), Koreans (62,130), Filipinos (30,520) and Bangladeshis (12,786).
7 For education tabulations, adults were defined as individuals age 25 and older.
8 Limited English Proficiency in this profile refers to individuals speaking English “well,” “not well” or “not at all.”
9 Household income refers to the income of all occupants of a housing unit. Family income refers to the earnings of a group of two or more people (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage or adoption and residing together.
10 In the 2000 census, families and individuals were classified as below the poverty line if their total family income or unrelated individual income was less than the poverty threshold specified for the applicable family size, age of householder, and number of related children younger than 18 present in 1999. For these thresholds, please see http://www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/threshld/thresh99.html.

Technical Note
Race Categories
The 2000 census was the first decennial census in which respondents were allowed to mark more than one race. As a consequence, Census 2000 race information is far more complicated than such data from previous censuses. For example, 2000 data include results for single-race as well as multiple-race responses. “Asian Alone” corresponds to the respondents who reported exactly one Asian group and no other race category. “Alone” should be considered the minimum population size in any analysis that uses Census 2000 data. To be as inclusive as possible, this profile uses “Asian Alone or in Any Combination” numbers.

“Alone or in Any Combination” corresponds to the responses (not respondents) that included the selected Asian group, either alone or in any combination with other Asian groups or other race categories. If a respondent selected an Asian group and another racial group (e.g., Korean and black), that individual, while excluded from the “Asian Alone” count, was tallied in the “Alone or in Any Combination” count for the Asian group and the other racial group. Hence, some overlap in the “In Combination” numbers occurred. “Alone or in Any Combination” should be considered the maximum population size in any analysis that uses Census 2000 data.

About This Profile
This is one of a series of population profiles prepared by the Asian American Federation of New York Census Information Center (CIC) to increase understanding of the rapidly-growing and diverse Asian American population in the New York metropolitan area.

The Asian American Federation of New York, a nonprofit leadership organization that works to advance the civic voice and quality of life of Asian Americans in the New York metropolitan area, was selected by the U.S. Census Bureau to operate the only Asian American-focused CIC in the Northeast. Established in 2000, the center provides census information, conducts data and policy analysis, and encourages census participation. Data citations from this profile should include the following acknowledgment: “Data derived from analysis by the Asian American Federation Census Information Center.”

For More Information
For more information regarding this profile, please contact the data manager, Asian American Federation of New York Census Information Center, at (212) 344-5878, ext. 19 or cic@aafny.org, or visit www.aafny.org/cic/.

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