



**Asian American Federation
of New York**

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**LOWER MANHATTAN IS POORER, LESS EDUCATED AND GROWING FASTER
THAN MANHATTAN AS A WHOLE, CENSUS PROFILE REVEALS**

***Asian American Federation's Census Information Center
Releases Second New York City Neighborhood Portrait***

Editor's Note: The Asian American Federation of New York will hold a community briefing on its Lower Manhattan and Chinatown census profiles Tuesday, Jan. 13, from 5 to 6 p.m. in the second-floor library of IS 131/Chinatown YMCA, 100 Hester St. in Chinatown. Media are welcome.]

NEW YORK – Lower Manhattan residents generally are poorer, less educated and less skilled in English than the overall Manhattan population, according to an analysis of 1990 and 2000 U.S. census data by the Asian American Federation of New York.

The examination of census information also shows that Lower Manhattan (Manhattan south of Houston Street) experienced greater population growth during the last decade and has larger percentages of immigrants and Asian Americans than Manhattan as a whole.

The Federation, a nonprofit leadership organization, issued the demographic portrait as the second in a series of neighborhood and population profiles prepared by its Census Information Center (CIC), a source of census data and analysis established in cooperation with the U.S. Census Bureau. The profile is available on the CIC's Web site at www.aafny.org/cic/.

Drawing on recently-released census information, the profile depicts Lower Manhattan as racially and ethnically diverse, with immigrants and Asian Americans comprising more than 40 percent of its people. As of the last census, 55 percent of Lower Manhattan residents lived in Chinatown.

"Our profile shows that Lower Manhattan is characterized by higher poverty rates, lower incomes, lower education levels, and higher incidences of 'Limited English Proficiency' than Manhattan as a whole," said Cao K. O, executive director of the Asian American Federation. "We also found higher poverty rates and language barriers for elderly Lower Manhattanites than for younger adults in the area."

O added, "Policy-makers and service providers need to take these disparities into account, particularly in light of the fact that Lower Manhattan's population grew nearly three times as fast as Manhattan's total population in the last decade."

Key socioeconomic findings (referring to Census 2000 data unless stated otherwise) include:

- Almost one-fourth (24 percent, or 36,142) of all Lower Manhattan residents lived below the poverty line, compared with 20 percent of all Manhattanites. At one-third (8,391), the child poverty rate in Lower Manhattan was the same as for Manhattan overall. However, Lower Manhattan's incidence of senior citizens living in poverty (29 percent, or 6,205) was much higher than Manhattan's overall elderly poverty rate (19 percent).
- Household incomes generally were lower in Lower Manhattan than in Manhattan overall. Slightly more than one-third (34 percent, or 21,680) of Lower Manhattan households earned \$20,000 or less a year, compared with 25 percent of all Manhattan households.

- More than 60 percent (13,544) of Lower Manhattan households earning less than \$20,000 annually were in Chinatown. (For more Chinatown population information, see the Federation CIC's profile of Chinatown, at <http://aafny.org/cic/briefs/Chinatownbrief.pdf>.)
- Lower Manhattan adults tended to have less formal schooling than the average Manhattan adult. At the lower end of the educational spectrum, 41 percent (45,222) of Lower Manhattan adults did not have a high school diploma – nearly twice the 21 percent rate for all Manhattan adults. Furthermore, 30 percent of Lower Manhattan adults had not completed ninth grade, compared with 13 percent of all Manhattan adults.
- More than one-fourth (27 percent, or 40,212) of adults in Lower Manhattan met the census definition of “Limited English Proficiency” (LEP), meaning they spoke English “not well” or “not at all.” This LEP rate was more than double the 12 percent frequency for all Manhattan adults. More than one-quarter (26 percent) of Lower Manhattan’s adults age 18 to 64 and almost half (46 percent) of the area’s elderly residents faced LEP. The vast majority (83 percent) of Lower Manhattan adults with limited English skills spoke Asian or Pacific Islander languages.

Among other demographic traits outlined in the profile (related to 2000 data unless noted):

- The population of Lower Manhattan increased by 8 percent, from 144,334 to 155,962, from 1990 to 2000 – compared with a 3 percent rise in Manhattan’s total population. Lower Manhattan’s recent growth was concentrated in Battery Park City and Chinatown. Within Lower Manhattan, the population of adults age 18 to 64 underwent the most growth (12 percent), followed by elderly residents (7 percent). Meanwhile, the number of children (younger than 18) in Lower Manhattan decreased by 4 percent.
- About 1 in 10 Manhattanites lived in Lower Manhattan in 2000.
- Lower Manhattan’s racial and ethnic composition differed sharply from that of Manhattan overall as of Census 2000. Lower Manhattan was 41 percent Asian, 32 percent non-Hispanic white, 19 percent Hispanic and 6 percent black. By contrast, Manhattan was 46 percent non-Hispanic white, 27 percent Hispanic, 15 percent black and 9 percent Asian.
- More than 2 out of 5 Lower Manhattan residents (43 percent, or 88,935) were immigrants, as opposed to 29 percent of Manhattan’s total population. Of Lower Manhattan residents born outside the United States, 45 percent (29,843) came to this country in the last decade, compared with 42 percent of all Manhattan immigrants. More than half (63 percent, or 41,765) of Lower Manhattan immigrants were from mainland China.

The Asian American Federation of New York is a nonprofit leadership organization that works collaboratively to meet the critical needs of Asian Americans in the New York metropolitan area. Operating since 1990, the Federation strengthens community-based health and social services capacity by supporting its 35 member agencies and other grassroots organizations; amplifies the Asian American civic voice by defining, analyzing, and advocating for policies to address key community issues; and encourages strategic, high-impact philanthropy within the Asian American community by increasing opportunities for connecting time, talent and financial resources with pressing community needs. For more information, visit www.aafny.org or call 212-344-5878.

The U.S. Census Bureau selected the Federation to operate the only Census Information Center (CIC) in the New York metropolitan area focused on serving the Asian American community. Established in 2000, the Federation’s CIC provides census information, conducts data and policy analysis, and encourages census participation. The CIC is publishing a series of neighborhood and Asian American population profiles to increase understanding of the rapidly growing and diverse Asian American community in New York City.

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