



▼ MARKETPLACE

[Cars](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Homes](#)
[Ads & Coupons](#)
[Business Directory](#)
[Classified](#)
[Special Ad Sections](#)

▼ NEWS

[Columnists](#)
[Connecticut](#)
[Education](#)
[Health](#)
[Lottery](#)
[Nation/World](#)
<http://www.ctnow.com/news/custom/newsat3/>
[Photo/Video Gallery](#)
[Politics](#)
[Special Reports](#)
[Towns](#)
[Traffic](#)
[Weather](#)

▼ BUSINESS

[Columnists](#)
[Real Estate](#)
[Technology](#)

CONNECTICUT

Census: Income Gap A Matter Of Degree
 ■ With Less Education, Minorities Lose Ground In Earnings

August 20, 2002

By MIKE SWIFT And ROBERT A. FRAHM, Courant Staff Writers

Mariely Cotto, 20, of Hartford, has her high school diploma, but she's far from satisfied with her paycheck.

"I'm trying to get a better job," the Dunkin' Donuts cashier said Monday. "I want something that pays me better than \$7 an hour. To get a better job, you have to go to college."

Jose A. Gonzalez, who lives in Windsor and owns Multi-Services International Inc., a financial and immigration services firm in Hartford, says the 1990s were pretty good times for him.

Gonzalez, a college graduate, said his income is roughly on a par with the median household income for Latinos in Windsor - about \$70,000.

Nevertheless, he was flabbergasted to learn that, according to the 2000 Census, Windsor is one of a few towns in the state where both blacks and Latinos have a higher median household income than whites.

"Windsor has a lot of professionals," said Gonzalez, struggling to explain the demographic curiosity. "It's a really middle-class town."

UTILITIES

[E-mail story](#)
[Printer-friendly version](#)

GRAPHICS

	2000 Cons. median household income	Change since 1990
White Non-Hispanic	\$58,564	Up 3%
Hispanic	32,075	Down 2%
Black	35,104	Down 3%
Asian	61,587	Down 2%
American Indian	37,078	Down 3%

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau

[Median Household Income](#)

RELATED

[Numbers Tell The Story](#)

CENSUS 2000 DATA

ADVERTISERS

APPLY FOR TONS OF

Customer Service
JOBS NOW

[Click Here](#)



[Advertise on ctnow](#)

▼SPORTS

- [Auto Racing](#)
- [Baseball](#)
- [Basketball](#)
- [College Sports](#)
- [Columnists](#)
- [Golf](#)
- [Football](#)
- [High School Sports](#)
- [Hockey](#)
- [Husky Hardcores](#)
- [Scores & Stats](#)

▼ENTERTAINMENT

- [Arts & Theater](#)
- [Attractions](#)
- [Columnists](#)
- [Dining](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Movies](#)
- [Music](#)
- [TV & Radio](#)
- [TV Listings](#)

▼LIFESTYLE

- [Books](#)
- [Columnists](#)
- [Food](#)
- [Northeast](#)
- [Style & Shopping](#)
- [Travel](#)

The divergent experiences of Cotto and Gonzalez, both born in Puerto Rico, represent a key demographic discovery in a mountain of new data from the 2000 Census being released today for Connecticut.

During the 1990s, a time of economic boom for much of the nation but earnings stagnation for much of Connecticut, blacks and Hispanics did not close the income gap with whites, according to the new data. In fact, the gap apparently widened - between 1989 and 1999, median household income was slightly up for non-Hispanic whites in Connecticut, and slightly down for blacks and Latinos, when adjusted for inflation.

Just as the paycheck gap widened between racial and ethnic groups, the diploma gap failed to narrow as well, and experts said there almost certainly is a connection. While a third of adult whites in Connecticut now hold at least a four-year college degree, only about one in 10 Hispanics and one in seven blacks have a bachelor's degree or higher, according to the new census.

As the nation has shifted away from a manufacturing economy, "the payoff for a college education has grown," said Jacqueline King, director of the Center for Policy Analysis at the American Council on Education in Washington. "There is growing value in a bachelor's degree and declining value in a high school diploma."

The Census Bureau recently reported that for all Americans, a bachelor's degree is worth roughly \$1 million in additional earnings over a person's career; a graduate degree is worth even more in additional earnings over a high school diploma.

In Connecticut, minority students enrolled in record numbers at state colleges throughout the '80s and '90s, accounting for 23 percent of all students in fall 2001 - up from 8 percent in 1984, when the state began an aggressive recruiting campaign. But too many minority students are dropping out before graduating, according to state reports.

To find data on your town, including the size of the hispanic population, enter a town below.


TOWN

| RELATED



[CENSUS 2000](#)

| Census 2000 Lifestyle

 [Census 2000 Lifestyle](#)

| ON THE WEB

**United States
Census
2000**

[U.S. Census Bureau](#)

▼ **OPINION**

- [Columnists](#)
- [Commentary](#)
- [Editorials](#)
- [Letters](#)
- [Other Opinion](#)

▼ **SERVICES**

- [Business Directory](#)
- [Find a Person](#)
- [Search By Phone #](#)
- [Courant Archives](#)
- [Courant Photo Reprints](#)
- [Courant Permissions](#)
- [Internet Directory](#)
- [Maps/Directions](#)
- [Newsletters](#)
- [Obituaries](#)
- [Site Map](#)

▶ **AFFILIATES**

Minority students also are disproportionately concentrated at lower-level programs, including two-year colleges, the state Department of Higher Education said earlier this year in its most recent annual report on the racial makeup of the state's public and private campuses.

Changes in the way the government classifies race between the 1990 and 2000 censuses, and the relatively poor quality of the data collection in 1990 in Connecticut, also may account for part of the apparent persistence of the income gap between whites and minorities in the state, experts said.

And the news was not all bad for minorities: poverty rates declined somewhat for both blacks and Hispanics during the decade.

Educational attainment is not the only reason for the continued income disparity.





In part, the income gap grew because an older, mostly white, well-to-do population was able to expand its wealth rapidly during the stock market boom of the '90s while lower-income groups had less money to invest, said Arthur Poole, who tracks minority enrollments for the state higher education department.

"The rich have gotten richer," said Poole, director of the department's Office of Educational Opportunity.

And in a slow economy, which central Connecticut suffered through during much of the past decade, "it's probably fair to say that the lower-income groups will bear a disproportionate share of the pain," said Michael P. Meotti, president of the Connecticut Policy and Economic Council.

Meotti said CPEC's ongoing research on census data back to 1960 suggests that like an aging slugger who can no longer get around on a fastball, metropolitan Hartford may be losing the education -and therefore the

MORE HEADLINES

-  [Farmers Taking Stalk](#)
-  [Energy Co-Op Pulls Plug](#)
-  [Jail For Sale: Needs Rehab](#)
-  [Study: Many Teachers Untrained In Class Subject](#)

pay -edge it has enjoyed for decades over places like Raleigh, N.C.

"Other regions have really closed the gap with Greater Hartford," Meotti said. "By the next census, if Raleigh doesn't have a higher median family income than Greater Hartford, I'll be surprised."

The new census data reflect a vast storehouse of demographic information about income, poverty, commuting, housing, taxes and education that will help define Connecticut's image over the next decade. Businesses use census data to decide where to locate and how to sell their products. Social scientists will scrutinize it for much of the coming decade.

Even in a first glance at the information made available today, Meotti and other experts said there were some intriguing hints at significant demographic shifts in the state.

New London County, for example, was the only county in Connecticut in which median income for blacks, Hispanics and whites all grew substantially in the 1990s, the new census data show.

"There is one thing going on in that part of the state that is not going on elsewhere in the state that probably drives this, and that is the huge workforce needs of the two Indian casinos," Meotti said.

And while a big paycheck doesn't come with many casino jobs, Meotti said, large casino organizations may offer chances for advancement and the construction boom that came with building the casinos during the 1990s may have given minorities and whites more opportunities to bolster their income.

Windsor was notable in the new census data as the only town in the state with a large black and Hispanic population where both groups earn more than white households.

"Windsor is doing something that is rare in Connecticut and probably rare in the country," Meotti said. "It is growing more diverse while maintaining solid middle-class economics."

But across Greater Hartford, the new census also carries some problematic findings for minorities: Blacks and Latinos who have seen their paychecks grow are not moving into neighborhoods comparable in affluence to whites who have the same income, according to an analysis by the Lewis Mumford Center for Comparative Urban and Regional Research at the State University of New York at Albany.

"It seems like there's a kind of a ceiling effect on the kind of neighborhood they have access to," said John R. Logan, director of the center and a sociologist who has long studied segregation.

"It's hard to prove anything with census data," Logan said Monday. "But the pattern that we find is much more consistent with the continuation of discrimination in housing than with the idea that people live where they do because of their income or because of their preferences."

Courant Staff Writer Nicole Neroulias contributed to this story.

[HOME](#) | [NEWS](#) | [BUSINESS](#) | [SPORTS](#) | [ENTERTAINMENT](#) | [CARS](#) | [JOBS](#) |

[HOMES](#)

[Contact Us](#) | [Advertise Online](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Service](#)

ctnow.com is Copyright © 2002 by The Hartford Courant
Powered by [Genuity](#)