The Asian & Pacific Islander Community in Multnomah County: An Unsettling Profile

Outline

- Introducing the Coalition of Communities of Color
- Introducing this research study
- The size of the API community
- Key findings on disparities
- Analysis
- Challenges with the data
- Additional key findings
- Community details and who struggles the most
- Recommendations
- Questions and Next Steps

Coalition of Communities of Color

The Coalition's mission is:

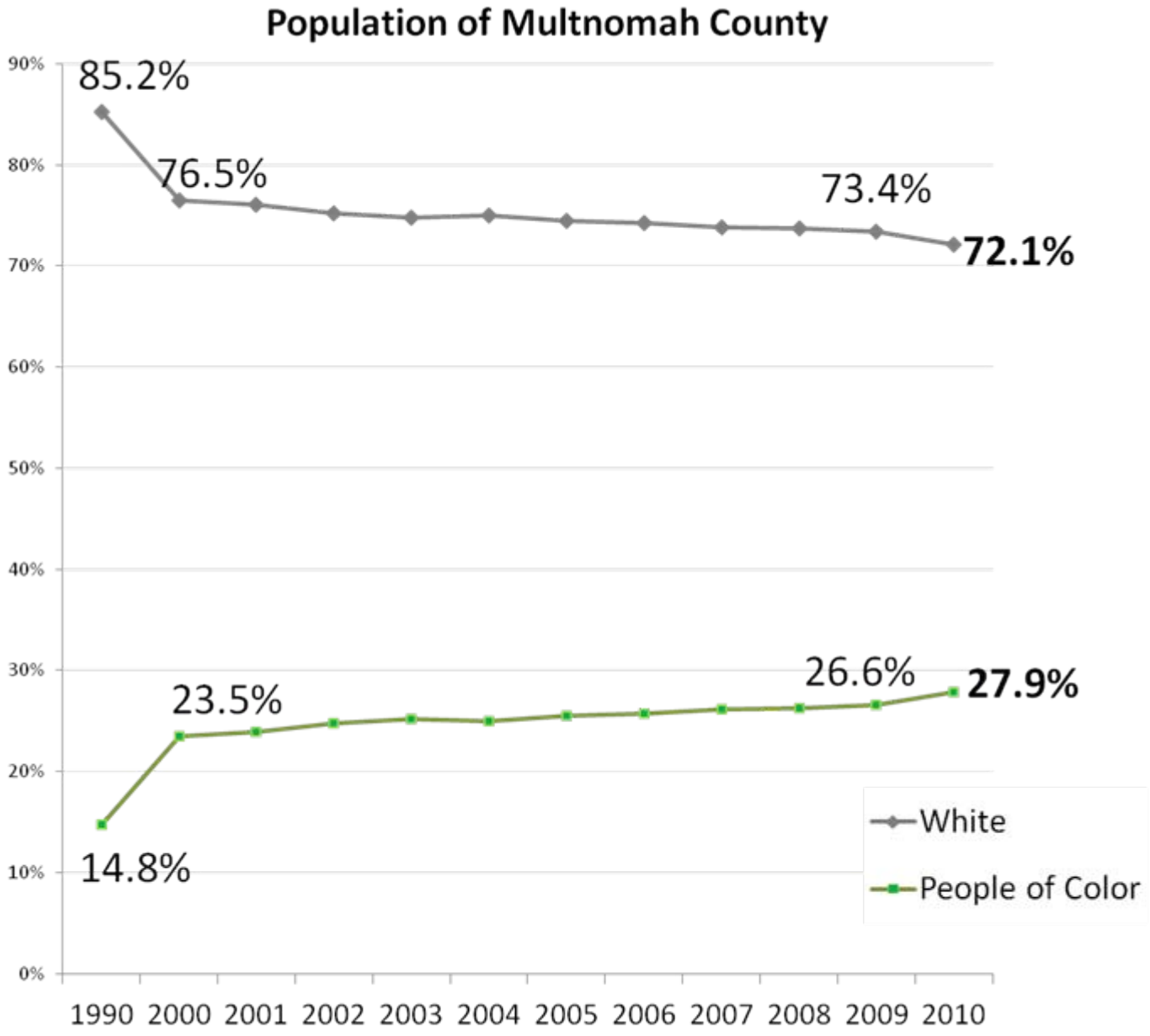
- To address the socioeconomic disparities, institutional racism, and inequity of services experienced by our families, children and communities
- To organize our communities for collective action resulting in social change to obtain self-determination, wellness, justice and prosperity

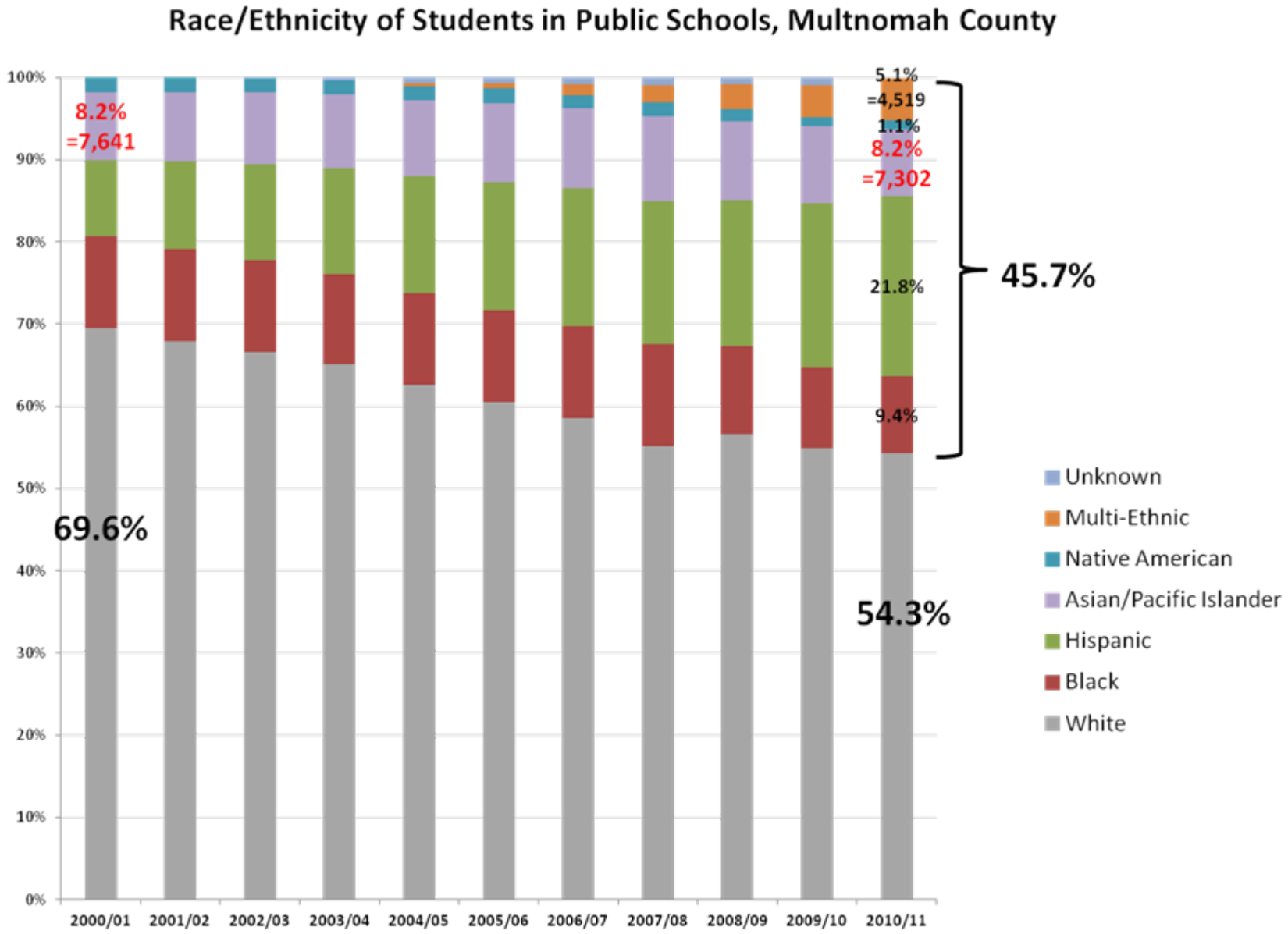
Research Project: Community-based Participatory Research (2008-2012)

- Partnership between PSU's School of Social Work & the Coalition of Communities of Color
- Funding from:
  - Multnomah County
  - City of Portland
  - Northwest Health Foundation
  - Kaiser Community Foundation
  - United Way of the Columbia-Willamette
  - Coalition of Communities of Color (In-kind contributions)
  - Portland State University
- Total funds = $550,000 over 5 years
- First report released in May 2010, and now six to profile each community in the Coalition

Communities of Color Growing Quickly

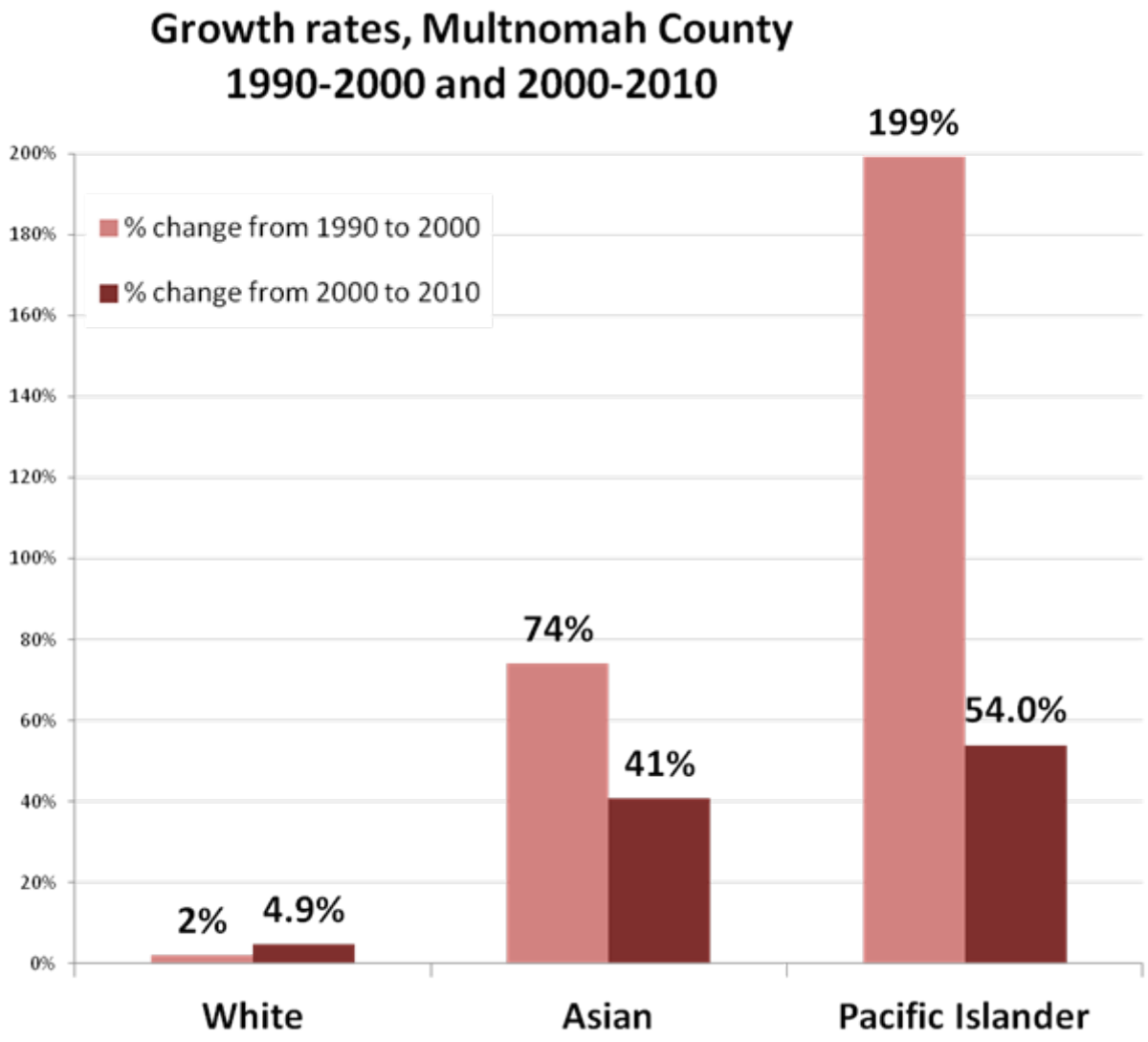
- Portion of the County = 27.9%
- Among school-aged children = 45%
- Asian & Pacific Islander community
  = 69,485 (conventional counts...9.45%)
  = 74,000 (alternative counts... 10.06%)

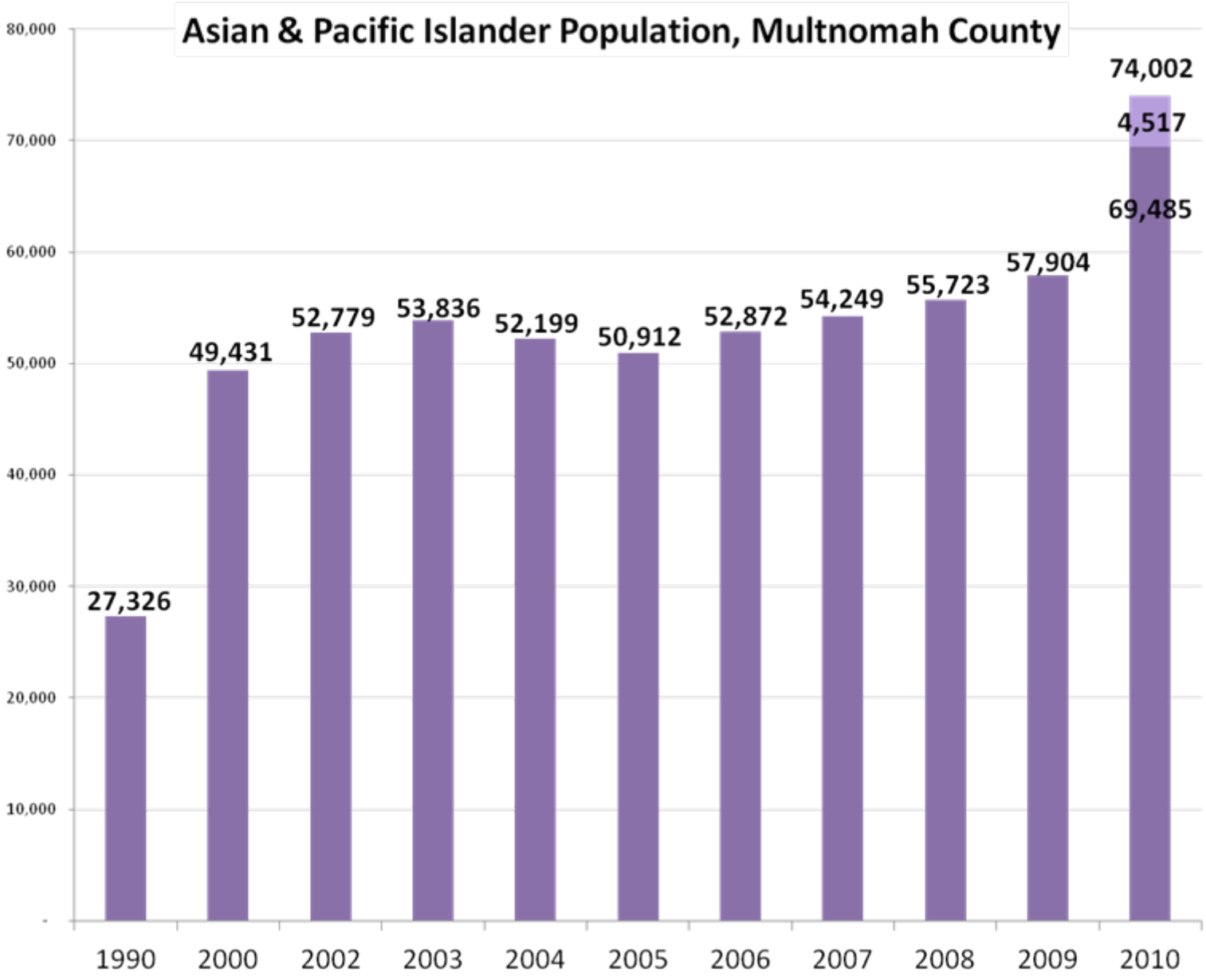

Population of Multnomah County
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
85.2%
76.5%
73.4%
72.1%
23.5%
26.6%
27.9%
14.8%
1990
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
White
People of Color



Across Oregon, the population of people of color is 21.5% yet 33% of Oregon's public school students.

Growing quickly…





Please note that the 2010 figure is "alone or in combination with other races" and is data previously unavailable for the API community.

Findings

- Significant disparities with Whites
  - Significant challenges in education
  - Unable to access better jobs in significant amounts
  - Can’t bring home enough money
  - Very high poverty rates
  - Low asset levels in housing values
- With the magnitude shown here…

2009		Multnomah County	
		Whites	Asian
Educational Attainment			
	Less than high school	6.3%	20.5%
	Bachelor's degree	25.8%	23.8%
	Graduate/professional degree	16.1%	12.5%
Occupations			
	Management & professions	44.7%	36.4%
	Service	14.3%	20.0%
Incomes			
	Family median	$71,296	$57,807
	Full time year-round workers	$44,262	$35,967
	Married couples raising kids	$81,636	$63,931
	Female raising kids	$37,485	$28,270
	Per capita	$32,740	$22,035
Poverty rate			
	All families raising children	7.3%	13.0%
	Married couple families	3.3%	9.9%
	Female single parents	22.9%	25.1%
Housing value (median)		$298,300	$260,300


Yearly Incomes for Whites & Asians, Multnomah County, 2009
$90,000
$80,000
$70,000
$60,000
$50,000
$40,000
$30,000
$20,000
$10,000
$0
White
Asian
$32,740
$22,035
$44,262
$35,967
$69,863
$57,927
$80,420
$60,891
$37,484
$34,107
$23,484
$26,760
Individuals - all
Full time, year round worker
Families - all
Married couples raising kids
Female single parent families
Retirement - all households

And yet, myth of parity exists

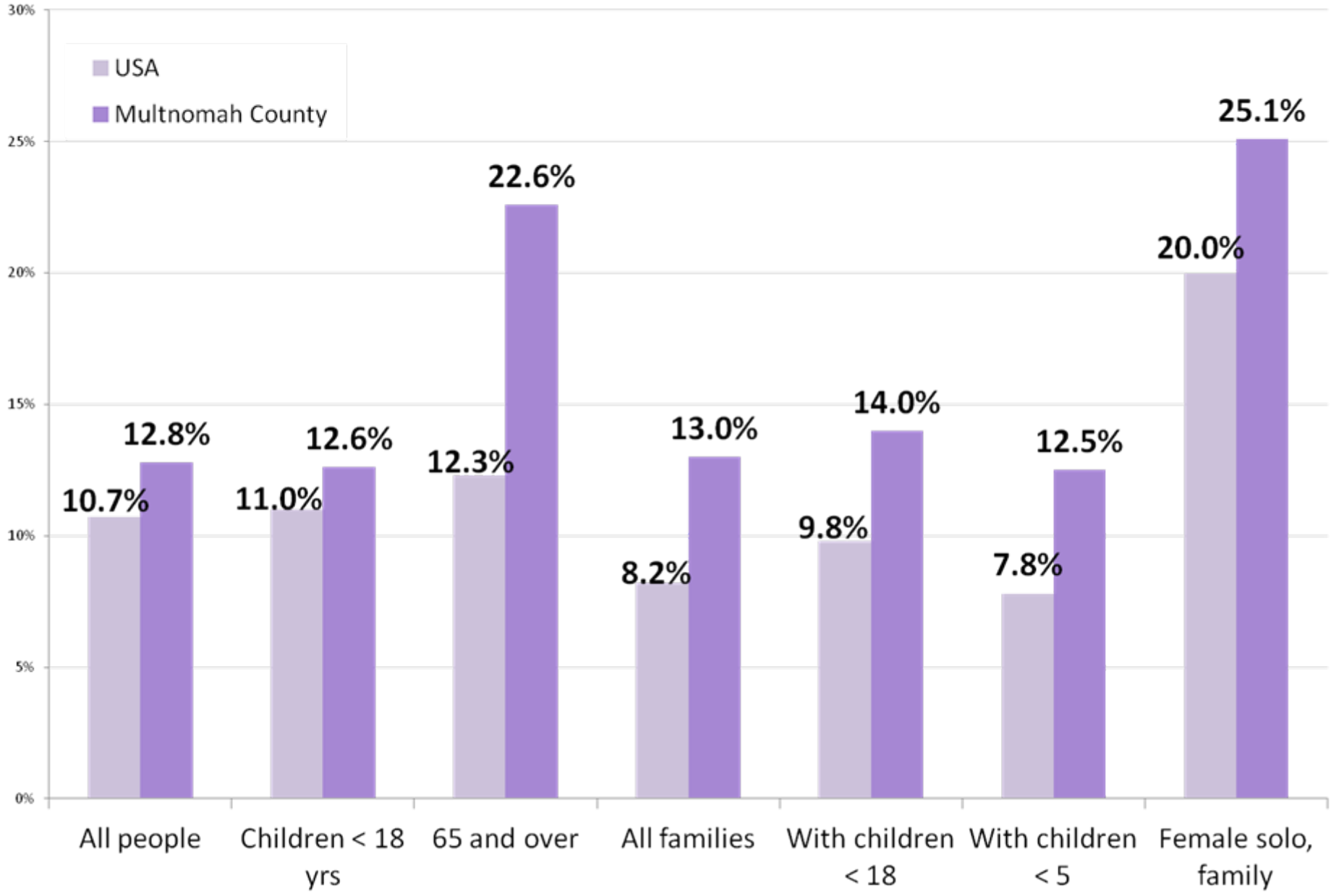
- Most believe that the Asian & Pacific Islander community has experiences that are equitable and even surpass Whites
- So too in the region as Portland Public Schools omits the API community from its Racial Equity Education Policy in 2011
- At the national level, parity in many areas has been reached…

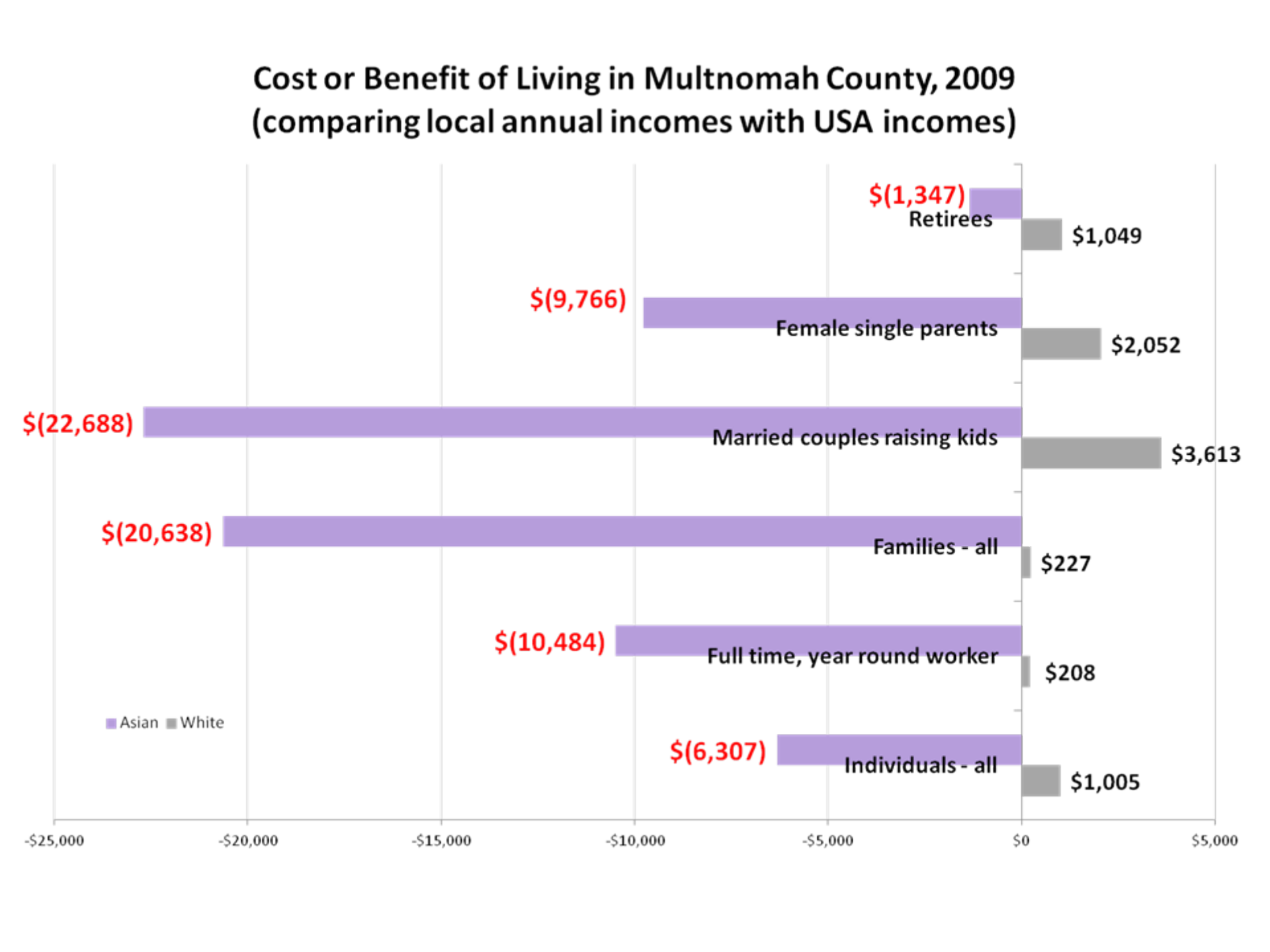
USA (2009)	White	Asian
Occupation: Management or professional employment	39.0%	47.1%
Income: Median annual income (Full time, year round workers)	$44,054	$46,451
Education: Holds a university degree	30.9%	48.8%
Income Support: Gets food stamps/SNAP	6.0%	5.1%
Unemployment Rate (from August 2011)	7.9%	7.1%

Comparison between Asians locally & nationally is disparate

- Two examples
  - Poverty rates
  - Incomes

Poverty Among Asians:
Comparison of Local & National Levels, 2009



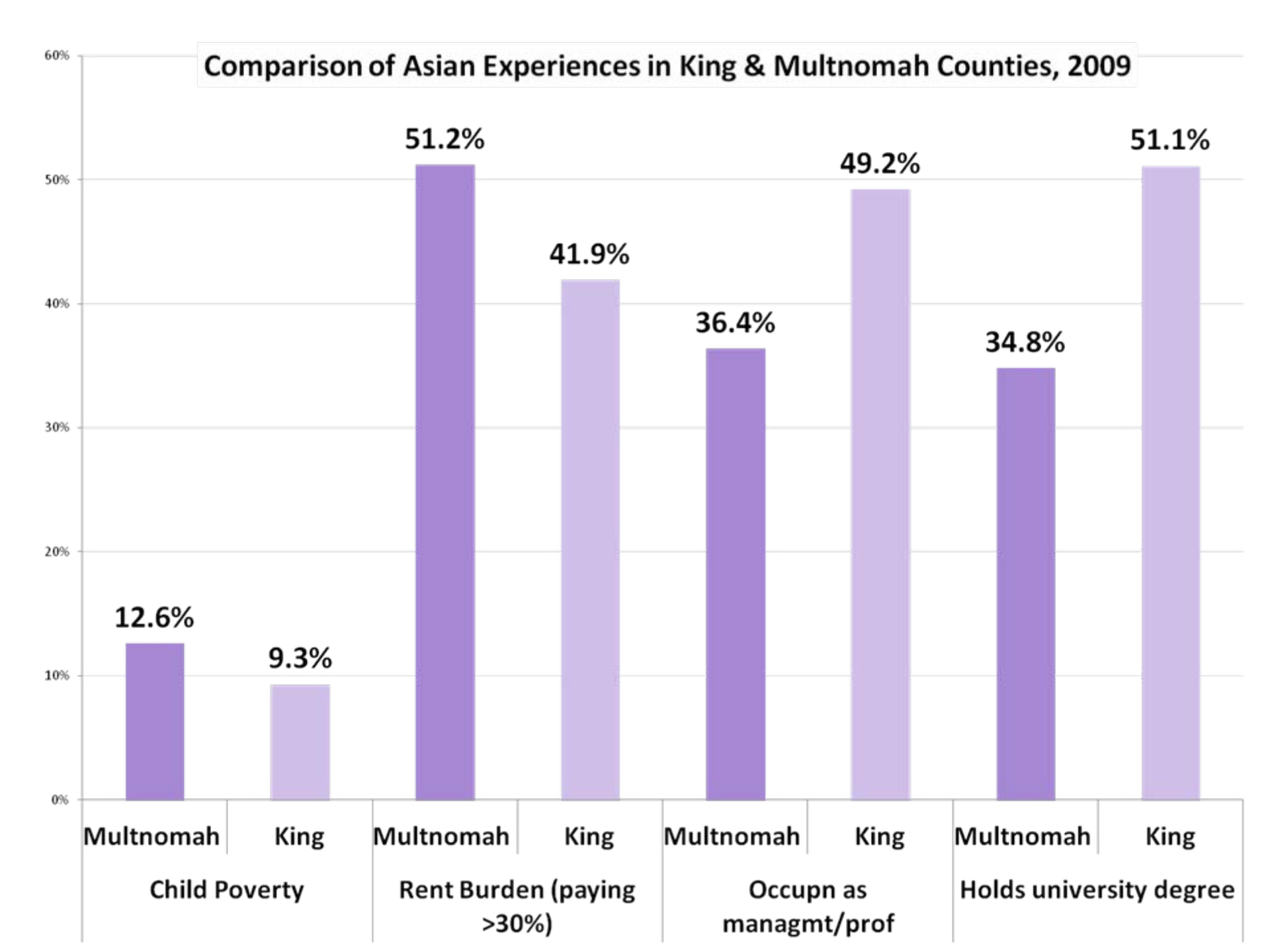

Cost or Benefit of Living in Multnomah County, 2009
(comparing local annual incomes with USA incomes)
$(1,347)
Retirees
$1,049
$(9,766)
Female single parents
$2,052
$(22,688)
Married couples raising kids
$3,613
$(20,638)
Families - all
$227
$(10,484)
Full time, year round worker
$208
$(6,307)
Individuals - all
$1,005
Asian
White
-$25,000
-$20,000
-$15,000
-$10,000
-$5,000
$0
$5,000

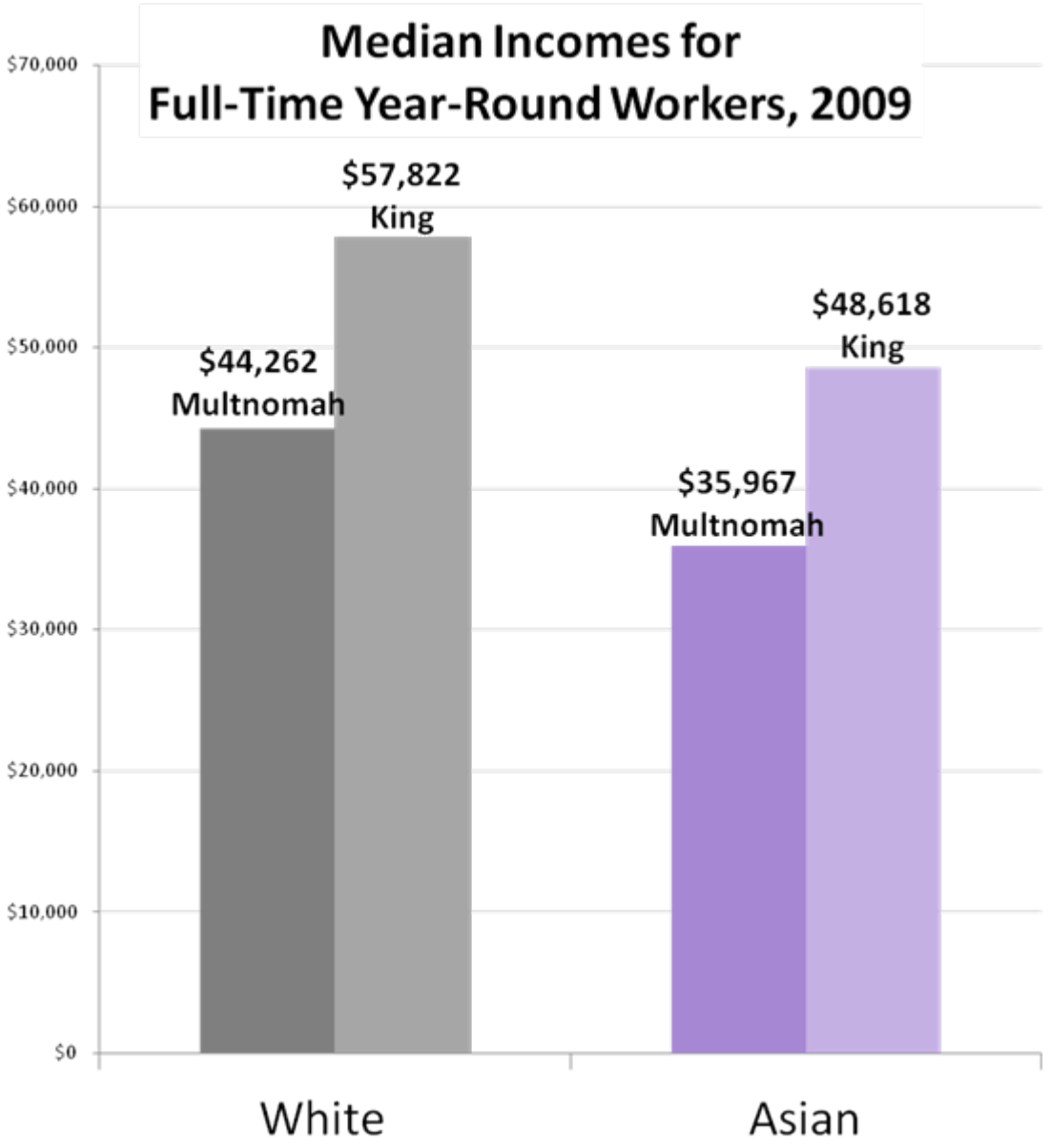
Why doesn't parity exist here?

- Here are the possible explanations
  - This is really a "West Coast" dynamic born of the immigration patterns or histories that make the West Coast worse for Asians than for Whites
  - This is an issue of the composition of the local API community that perhaps has more recent immigrants, or more refugees that might struggle with gaining economic success
  - This is an issue of language and more in the API community cannot communicate in English
  - This is an issue of historic and institutional racism that renders this community, like other communities of color, suffering in a wide array of experiences
- We will investigate each in turn

Is this a West Coast dynamic?

- We did a comparison with King County (home to Seattle)
  - On every measure, conditions facing our largest grouping of the community (Asians) fare much worse
    - Child poverty
    - Rent burden
    - Access to the best professions
    - University degree
    - Incomes


Comparison of Asian Experiences in King & Multnomah Counties, 2009
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
12.6%
9.3%
51.2%
41.9%
36.4%
49.2%
34.8%
51.1%
Multnomah
King
Multnomah
King
Multnomah
King
Multnomah
King
Child Poverty
Rent Burden (paying >30%)
Occupn as managmt/prof
Holds university degree


Median Incomes for
Full-Time Year-Round Workers, 2009
$70,000
$60,000
$50,000
$40,000
$30,000
$20,000
$10,000
$0
$57,822
King
$44,262
Multnomah
$48,618
King
$35,967
Multnomah
White
Asian

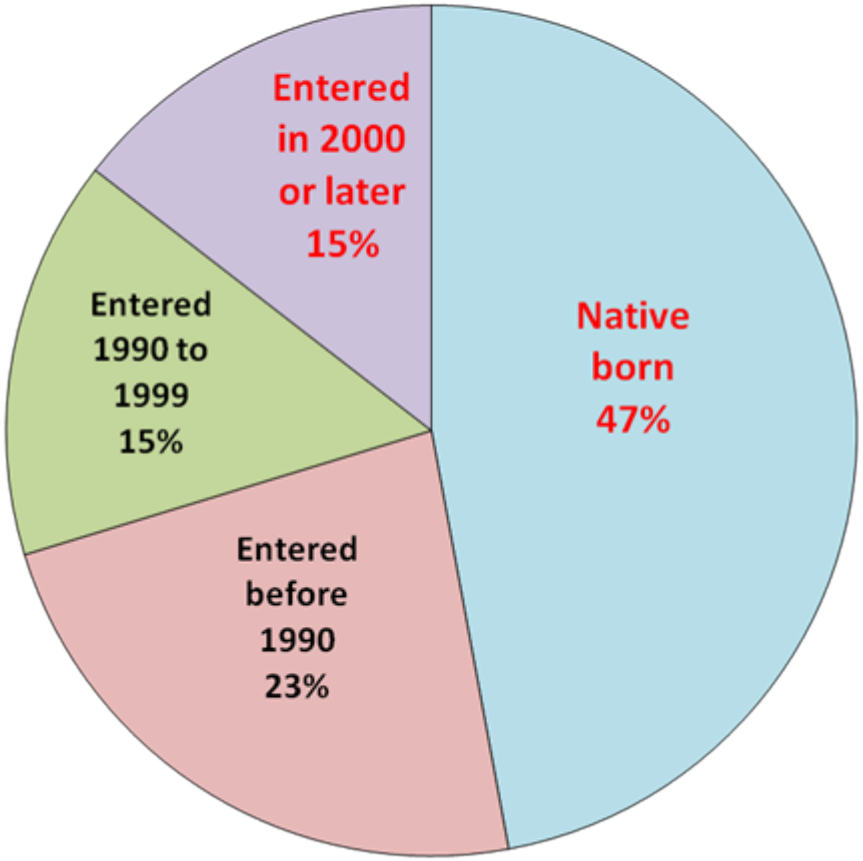
Thus not unique to West Coast

- If it was a West Coast dynamic, conditions would be equally bad for the API community in both areas

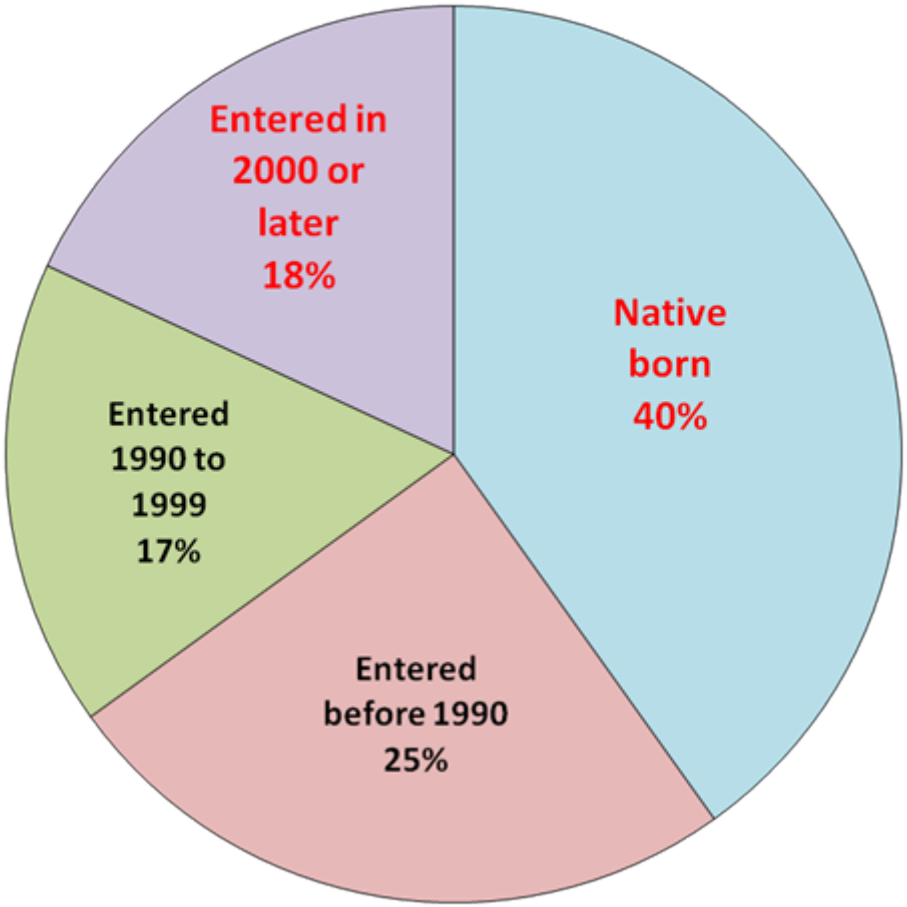
Looking at Composition

- Worse performance typically associated with
  - High number of new arrivals
  - Lower number of those born in the USA
- What happens here?
  - See the next slide…

Profile of Entry into the USA, Asians in Multnomah County, 2009



Profile of Entry into the USA, Asians in the USA, 2009



Alternate pattern than anticipated exists here

What can we interpret?

- Our arrival patterns should poise us to be better off than national averages
  - Thus not an issue related to longevity in the country
- Let's look at another dimension of composition… proportion of the community that are refugees

Are disparities the result of more refugees?

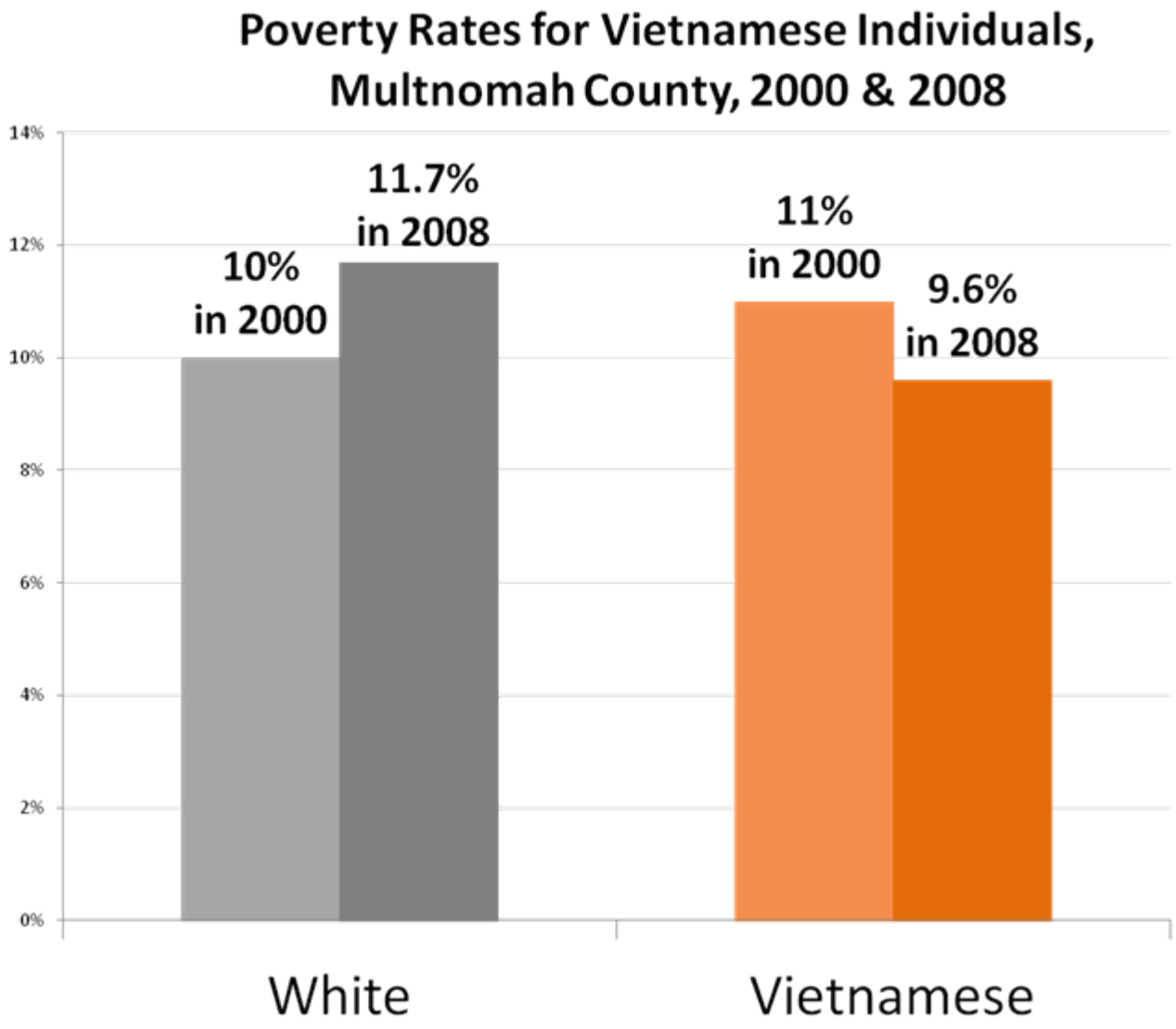
% of Asian community in USA & Multnomah County from Refugee-Generating Countries		
	USA	Multnomah County
Vietnamese	**11%**	**27%**
Cambodian	2%	3%
Hmong	1%	1%
Laotian	1%	7%
Sri Lankan	0%	0%
Burmese	0%	0%
Bangladeshi	1%	0%
Total	**16%**	**38%**

Biggest difference

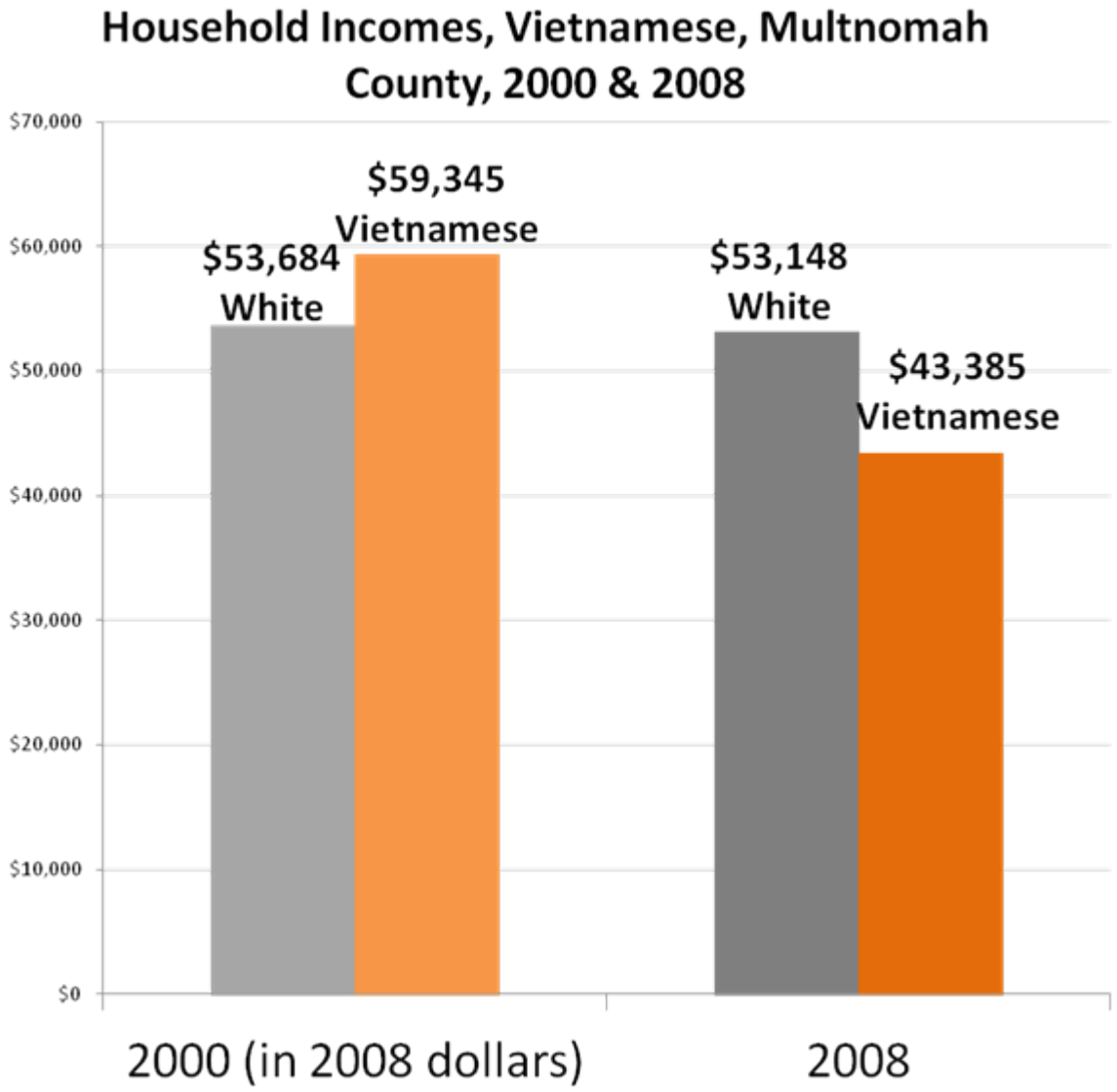
So, initially, this might explain the disparities

- Given that the Vietnamese population is the major cause of the different profile, let's look at…
  - How do the Vietnamese compare with Whites here?
  - How does the community fare with the Vietnamese across the USA?

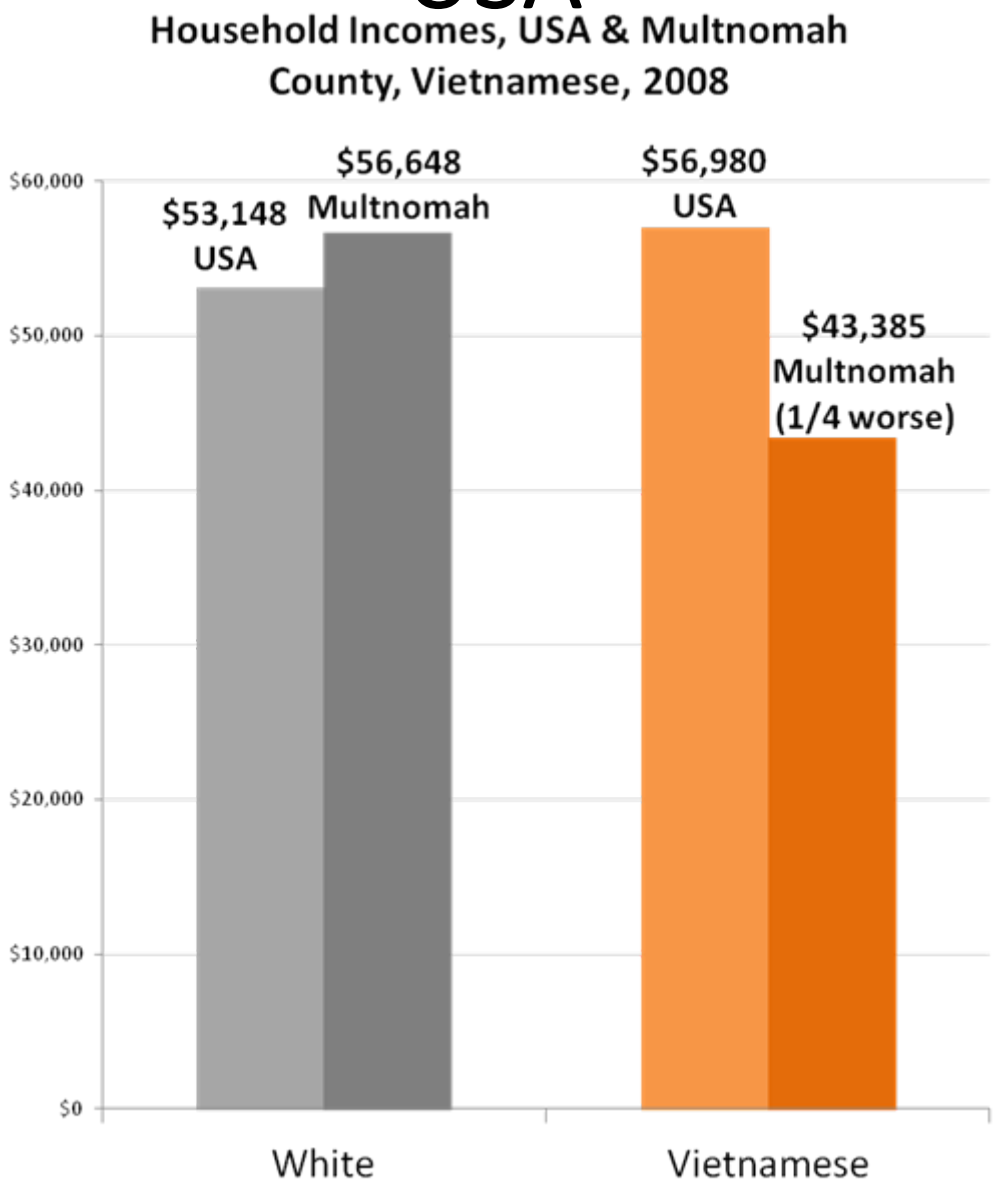
Good news…


Poverty Rates for Vietnamese Individuals, Multnomah County, 2000 & 2008
14%
12%
10%
8%
6%
4%
2%
0%
10% in 2000
11.7% in 2008
11% in 2000
9.6% in 2008
White
Vietnamese

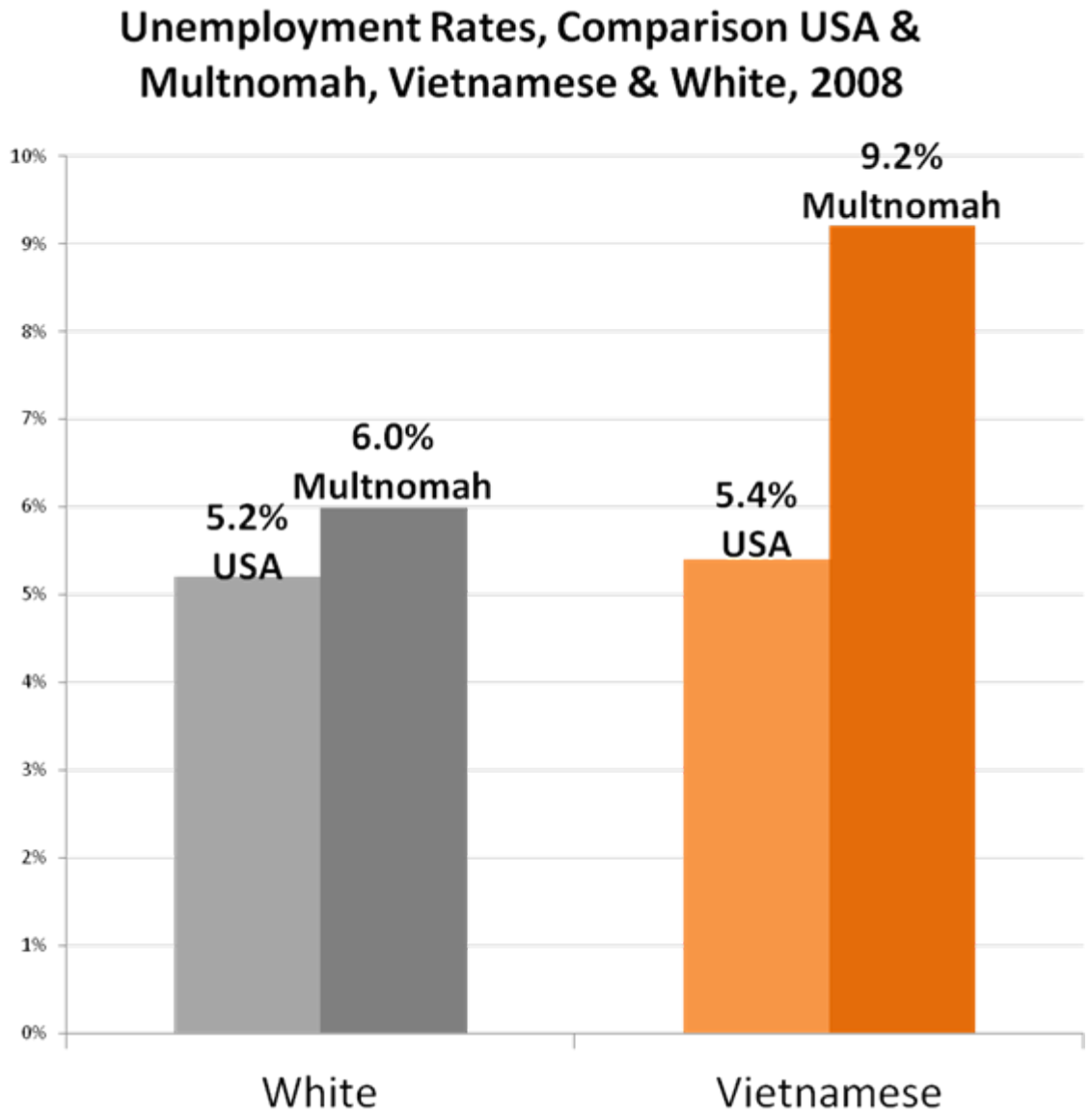
But… incomes are deteriorating

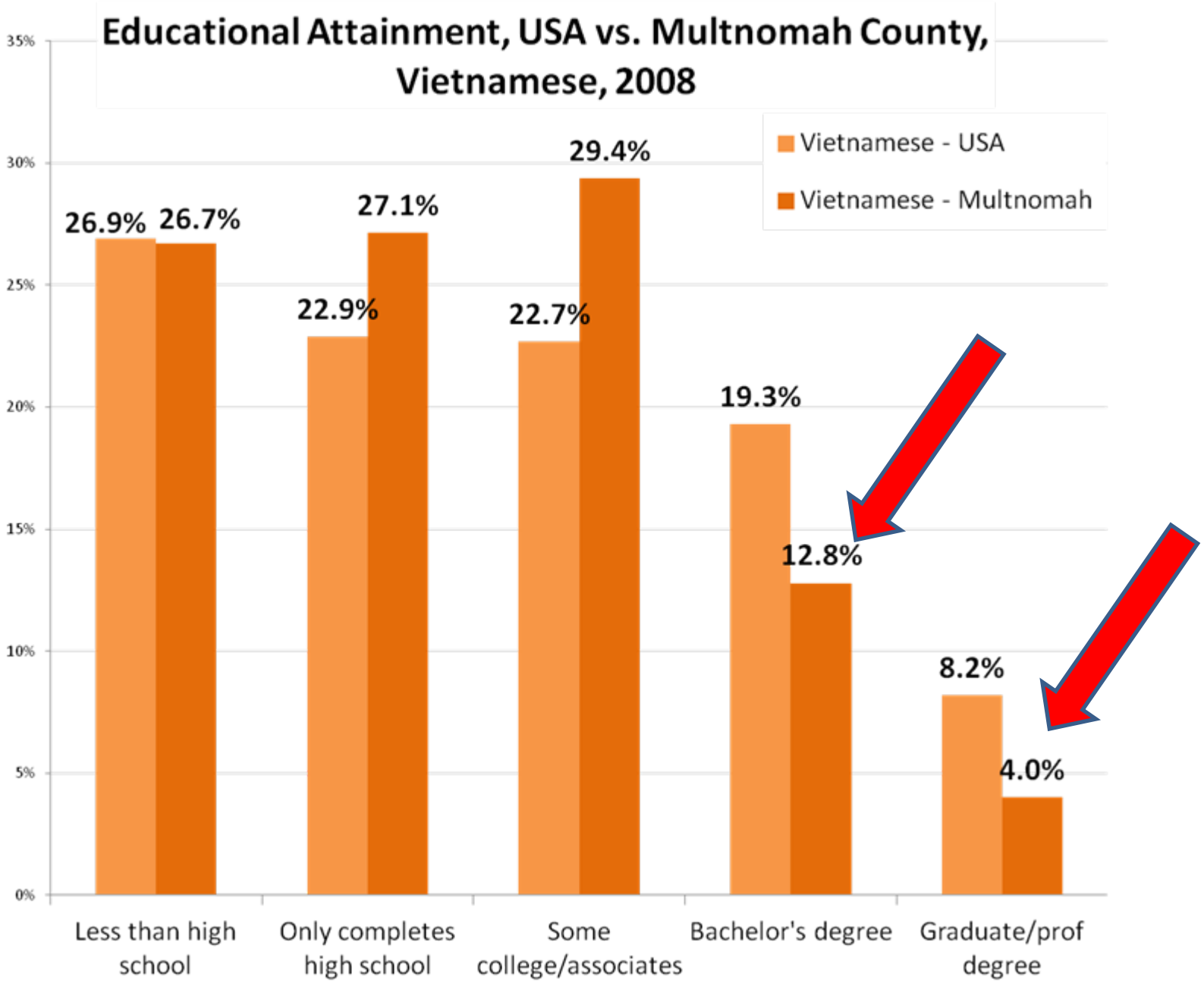


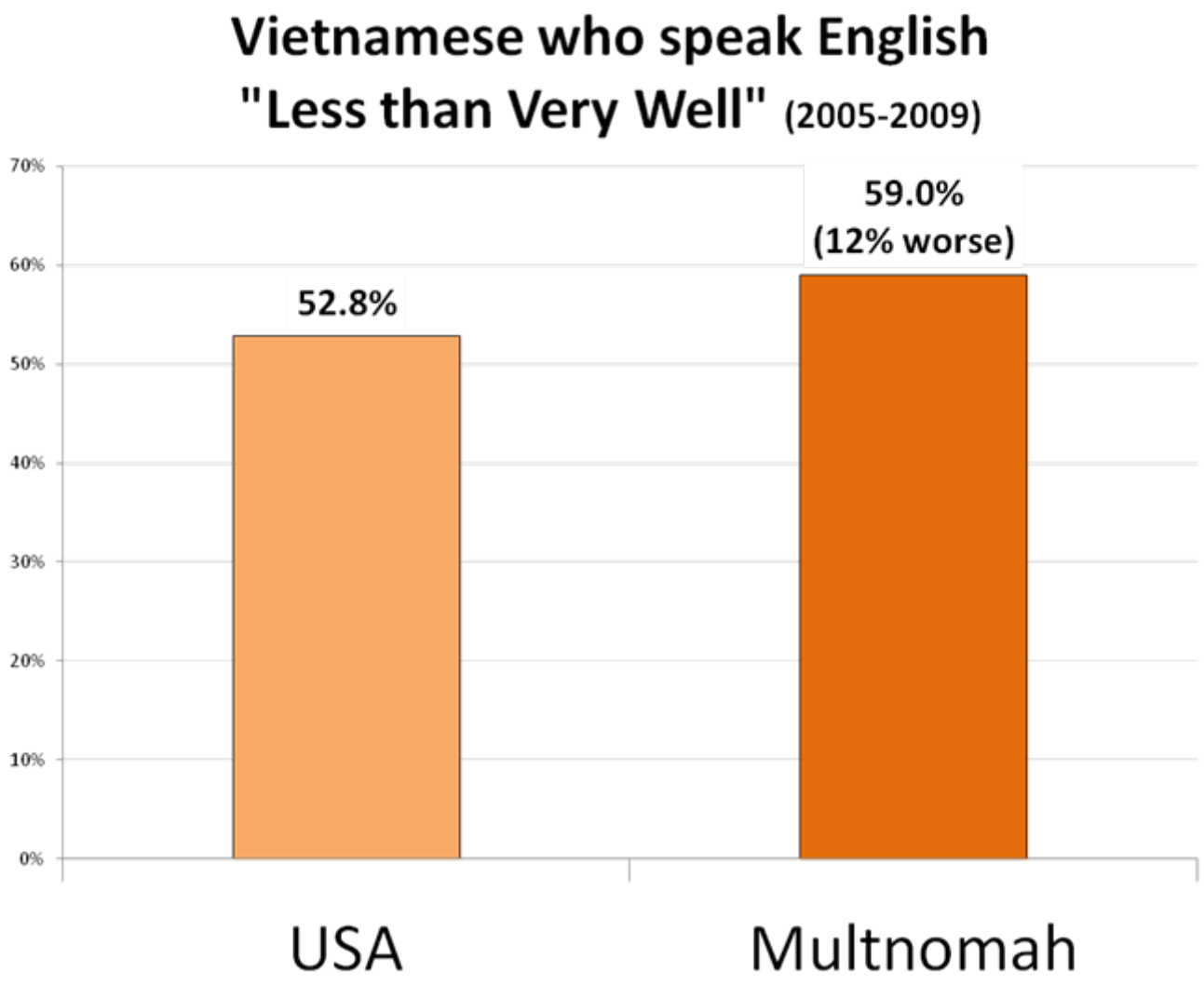
Most distressing is comparison with USA

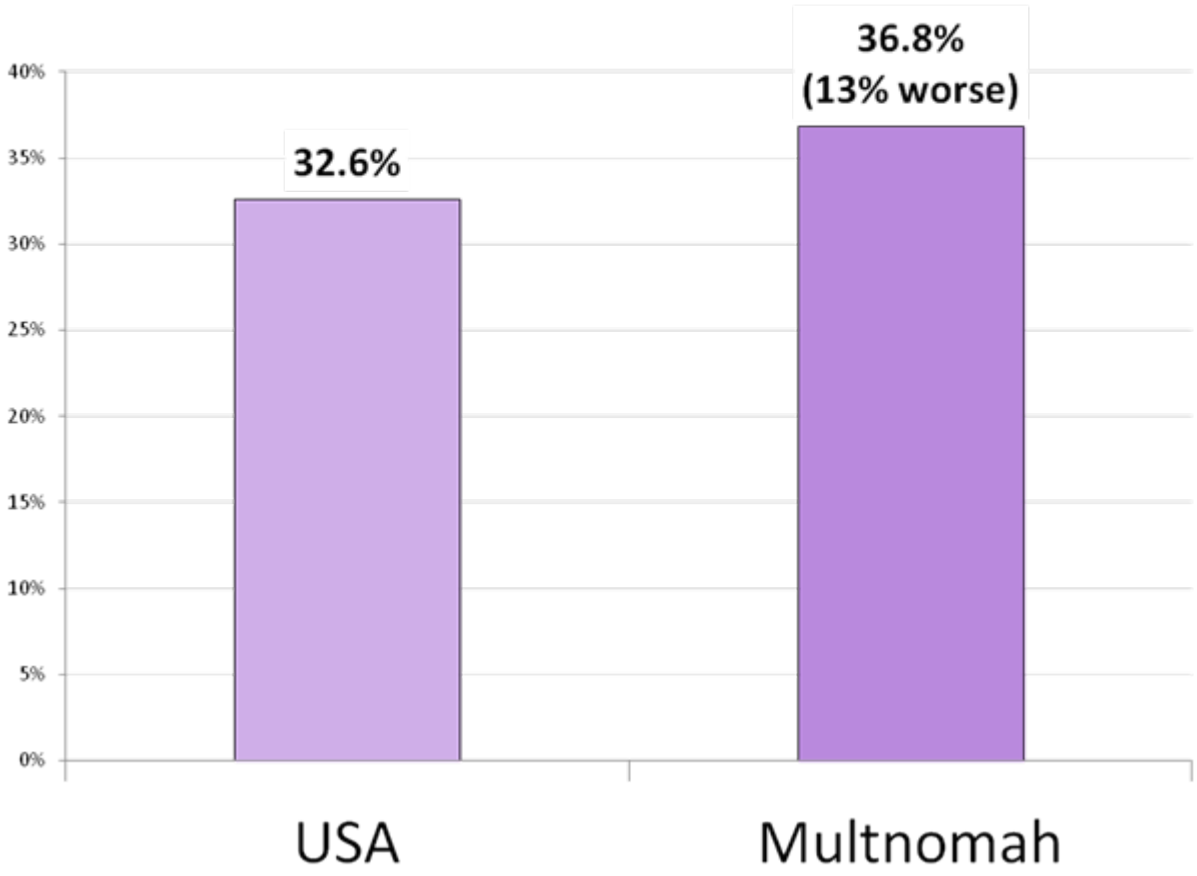


Again, distressing comparison with USA




Educational Attainment, USA vs. Multnomah County, Vietnamese, 2008
Vietnamese - USA
Vietnamese - Multnomah
35%
30%
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
26.9%
26.7%
22.9%
27.1%
22.7%
29.4%
19.3%
12.8%
8.2%
4.0%
Less than high school
Only completes high school
Some college/associates
Bachelor's degree
Graduate/prof degree


Vietnamese who speak English
"Less than Very Well" (2005-2009)
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
52.8%
59.0%
(12% worse)
USA
Multnomah


Asians who speak English "Less than Very Well" (2005-2009)
40%
35%
30%
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
32.6%
36.8%
(13% worse)
USA
Multnomah

Conclusions in Vietnamese Community

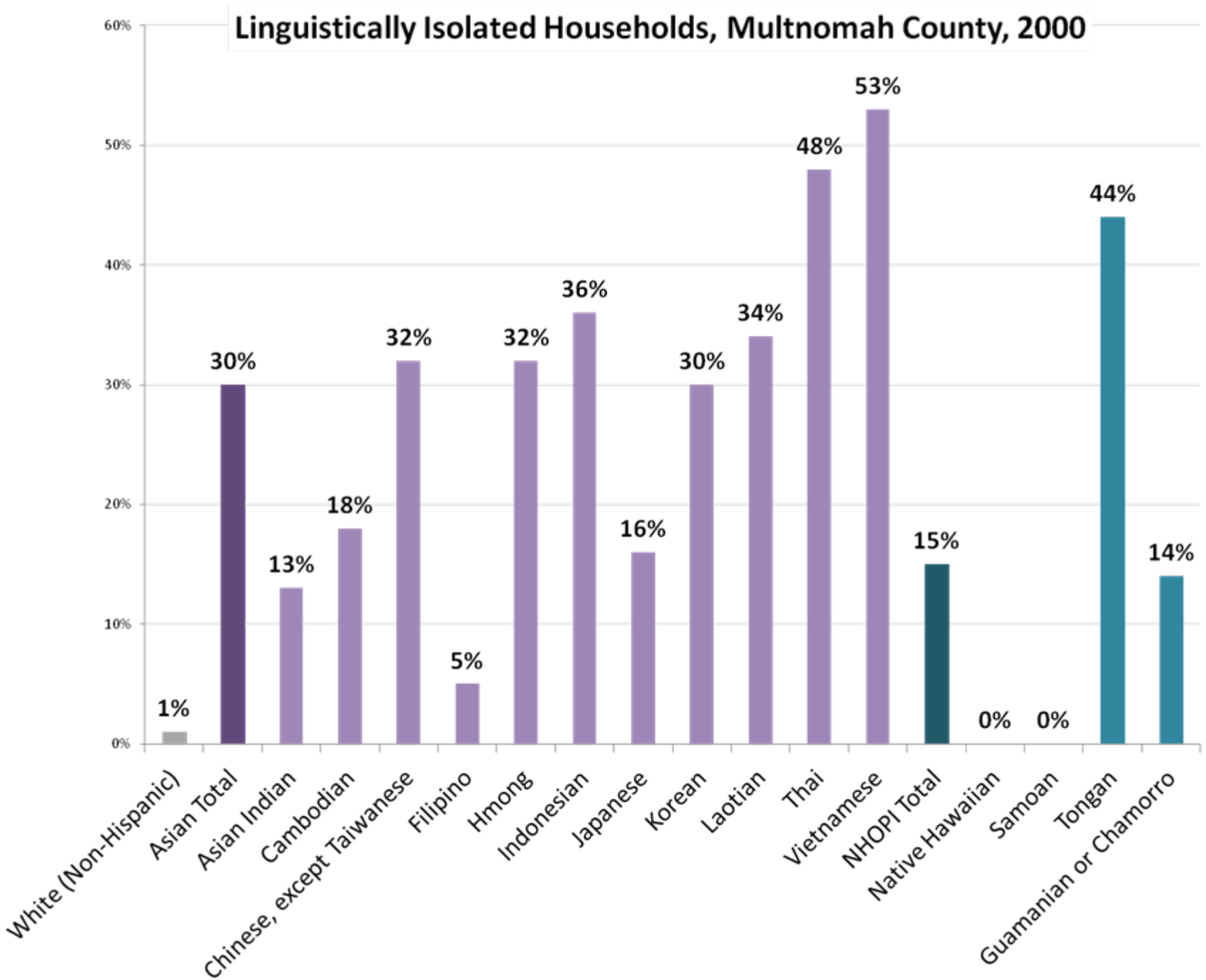
- If refugee composition explained for the disparities, we would not expect a difference between the USA and local Vietnamese
  - Rather we would have simply seen an equivalently distressed experience for the Vietnamese wherever one lived
- BUT we observed a much more distressed local experience
  - Suggests it is not the composition that is bringing disparities forward, but rather the local conditions facing both refugees and others in the API community
    - Language is anticipated to explain about 12% of this difference
  - And we see deteriorating in the local Vietnamese experience since 2000, even in comparison with USA averages
    - So again, something locally inequitable is occurring

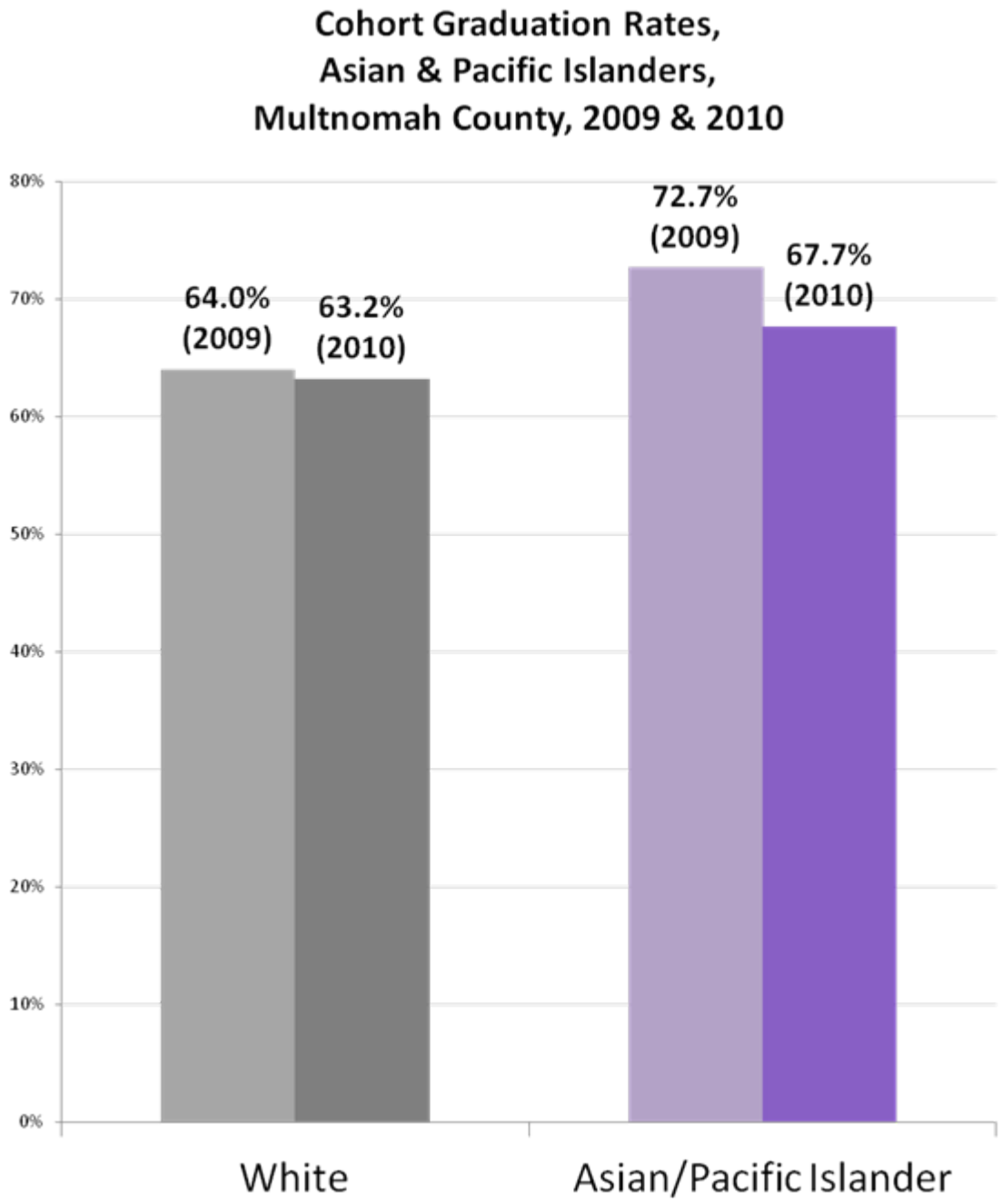
Our conclusion?

- That pronounced disparities in this region are primarily the result of local conditions related to institutional racism and the corollary of White privilege
- We have ruled out other plausible explanations thus defer to the remaining explanation
  - This has been a repeated experience across other communities of color
  - It is highly unlikely the API community is protected from this harmful dynamic

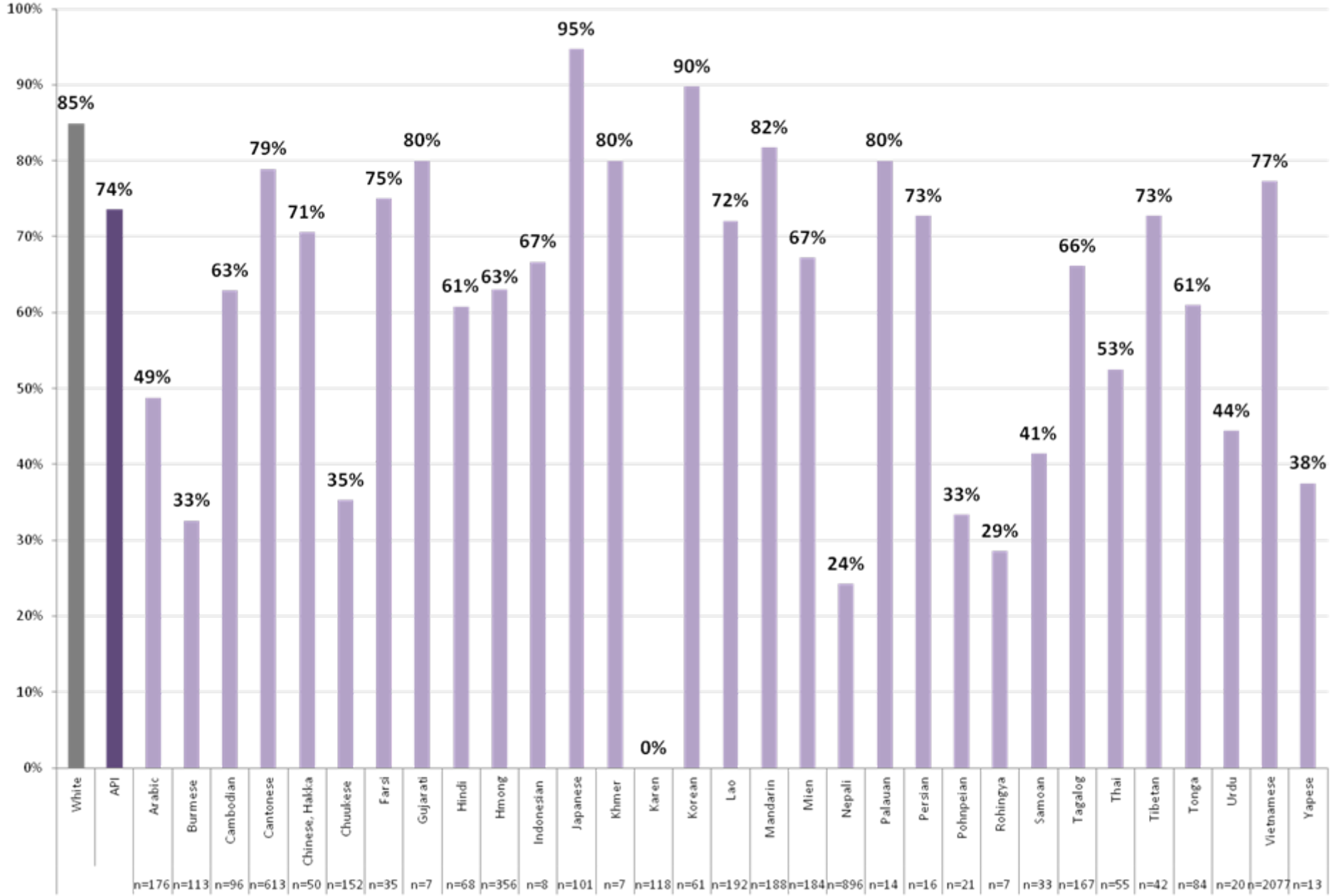
Challenges with the Data

- Most experiences not available by community
  - Census Bureau dropped the long form for Census 2010
    - Means the 2000 data that was available won't be available again
  - Seeking to "oversample" in American Community Survey so that we can disaggregate API community
- Racial Identification
  - Only Asian or Pacific Islander is asked
    - Data not disaggregated by community
- Refugee identification – not asked
- Service-level data
  - Need to disaggregate
    - At the very least by API identity
    - Ideally, by all community identities
- Pronounced undercounts
- Growing "multiracial" identifier used
  - Please encourage an API identifier to be used

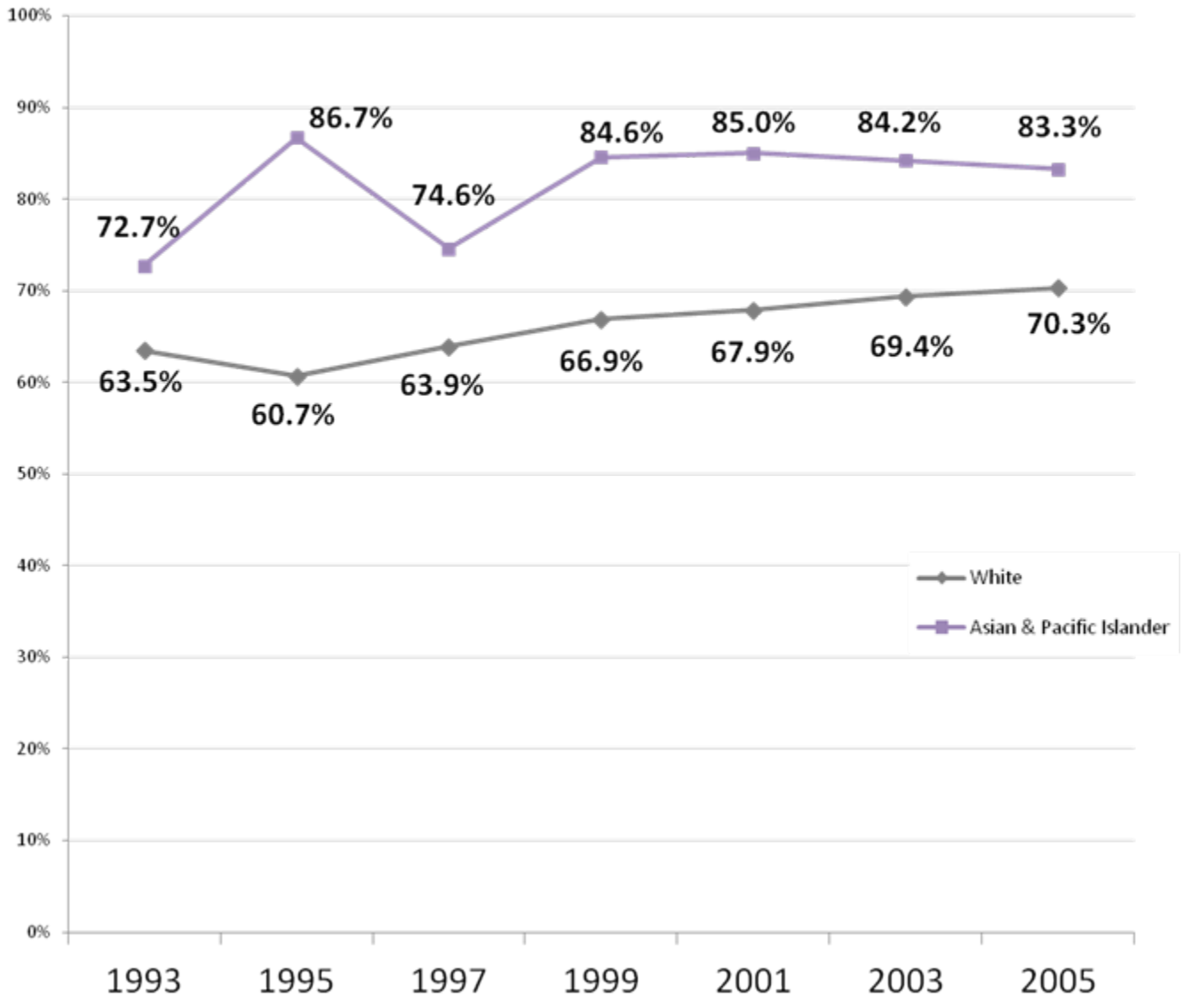

Linguistically Isolated Households, Multnomah County, 2000
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
1%
30%
13%
18%
32%
5%
32%
36%
16%
30%
34%
48%
53%
15%
0%
0%
44%
14%
White (Non-Hispanic)
Asian Total
Asian Indian
Cambodian
Chinese, except Taiwanese
Filipino
Hmong
Indonesian
Japanese
Korean
Laotian
Thai
Vietnamese
NHOPI Total
Native Hawaiian
Samoan
Tongan
Guamanian or Chamorro


Cohort Graduation Rates,
Asian & Pacific Islanders,
Multnomah County, 2009 & 2010
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
64.0% (2009)
63.2% (2010)
72.7% (2009)
67.7% (2010)
White
Asian/Pacific Islander

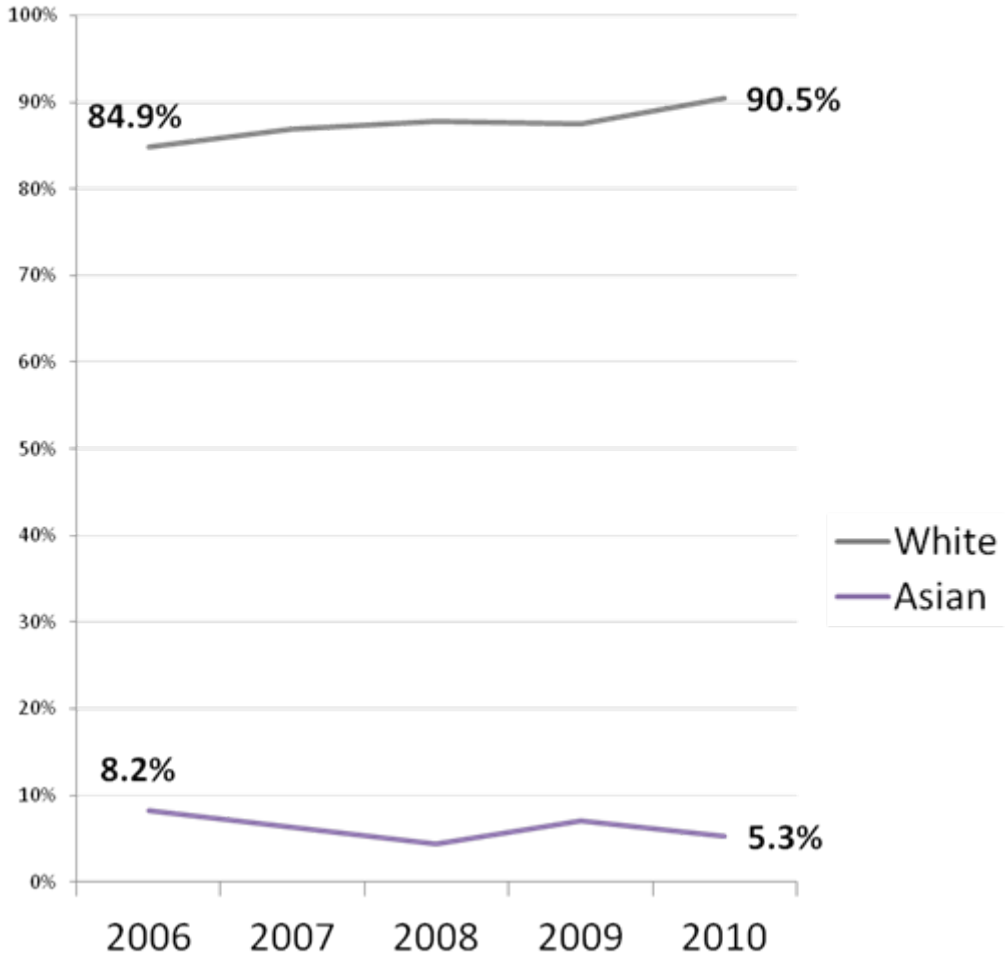
Academic Achievement, Reading & Literature, API Community by Language, Multnomah County, 2011 (as measured by those students who meet or exceed benchmarks)



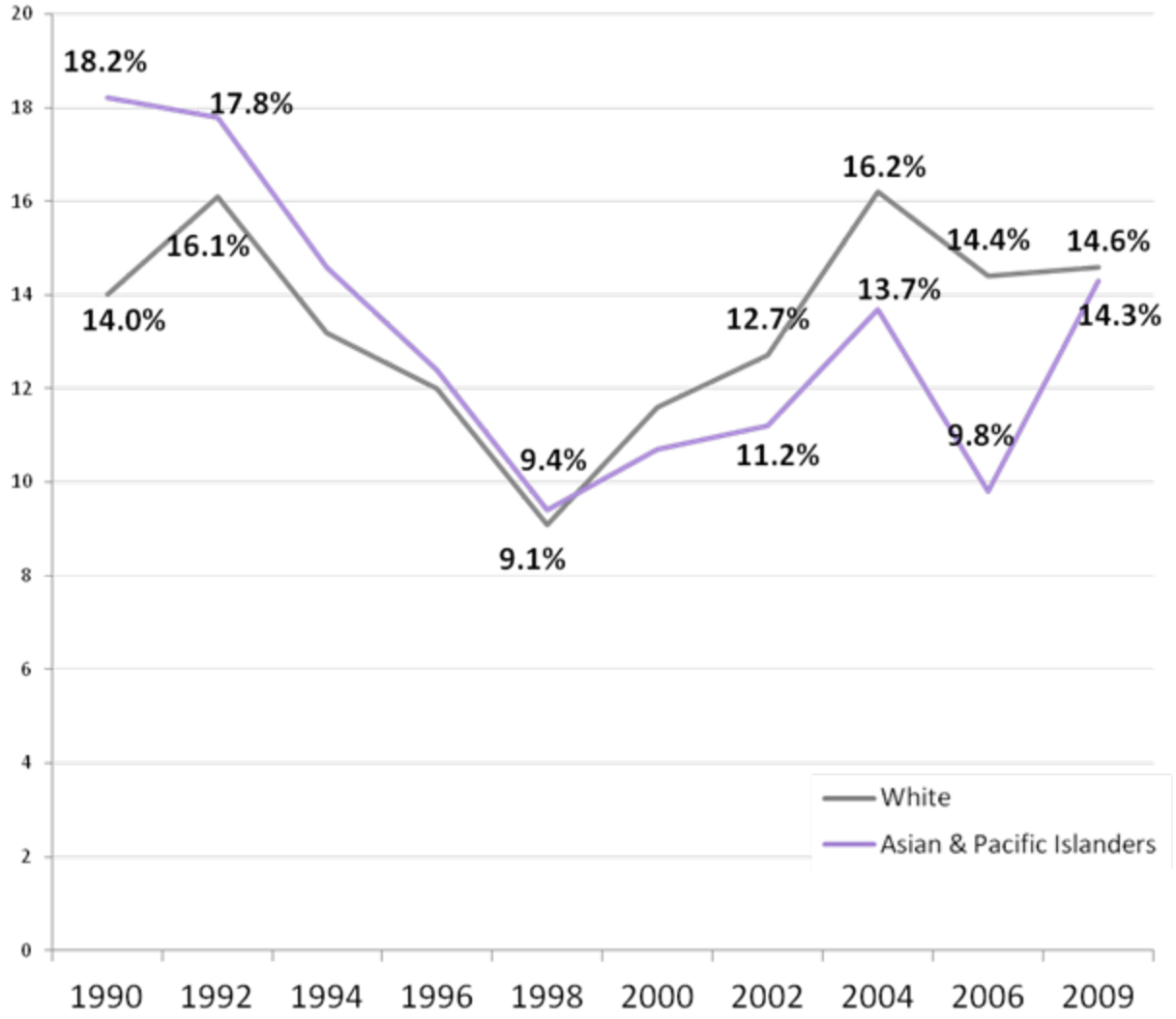
High School Graduates Entering College, Oregon



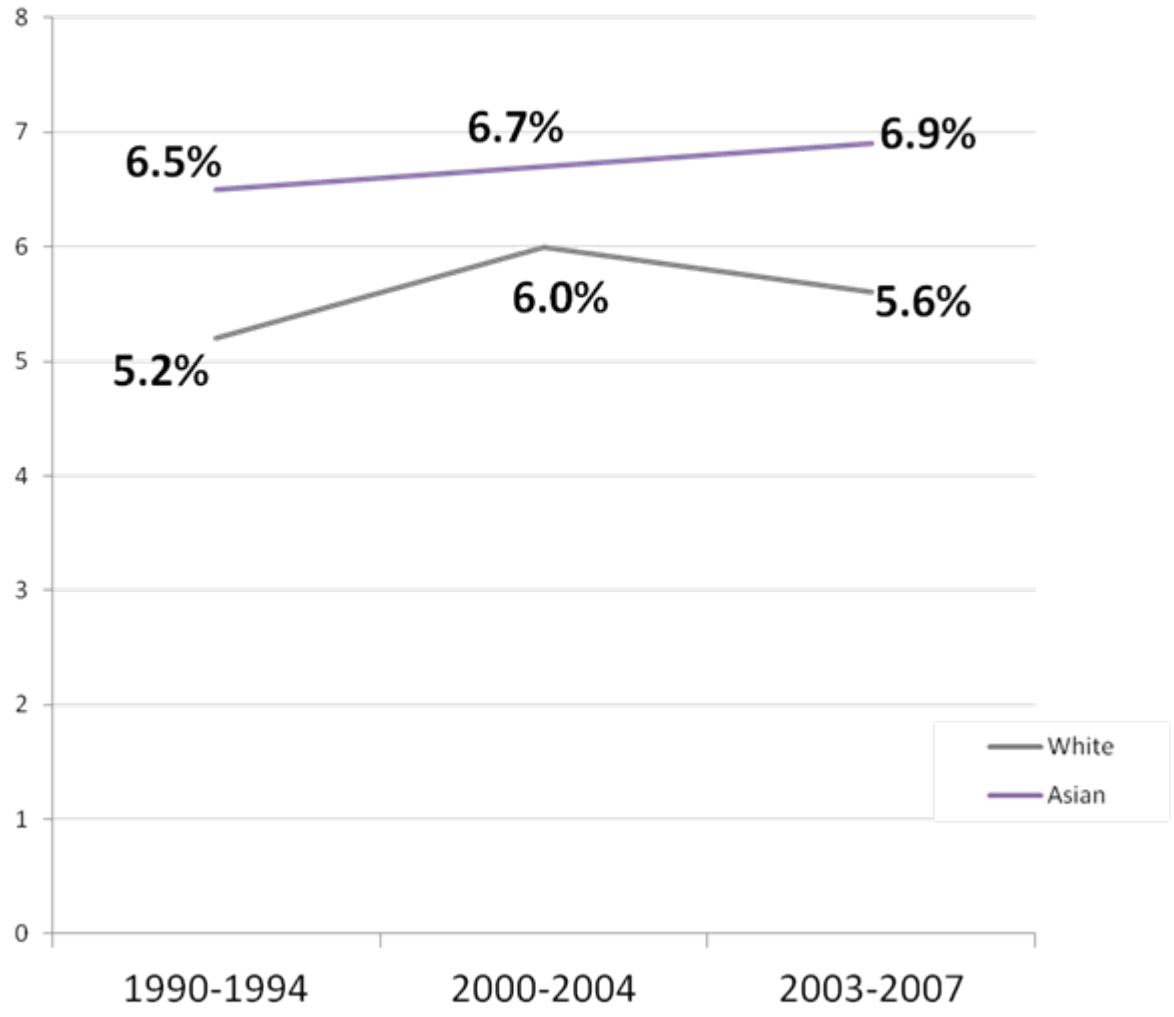
Career Technical Degrees Awarded by Mount Hood Community College



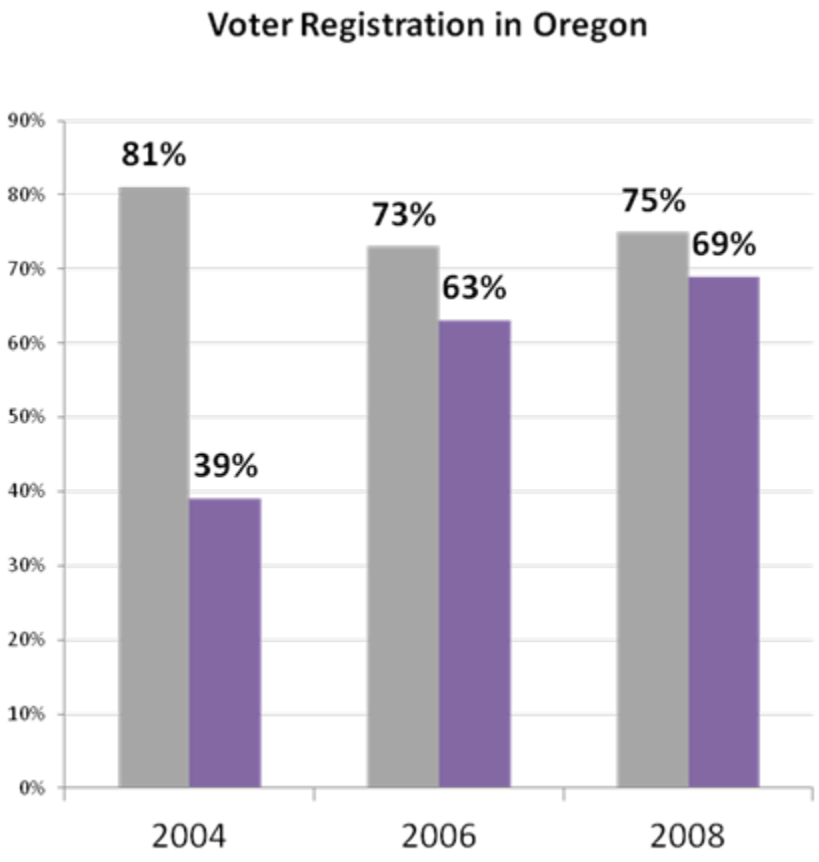
Oregonians Without Health Insurance, Asians & Pacific Islanders

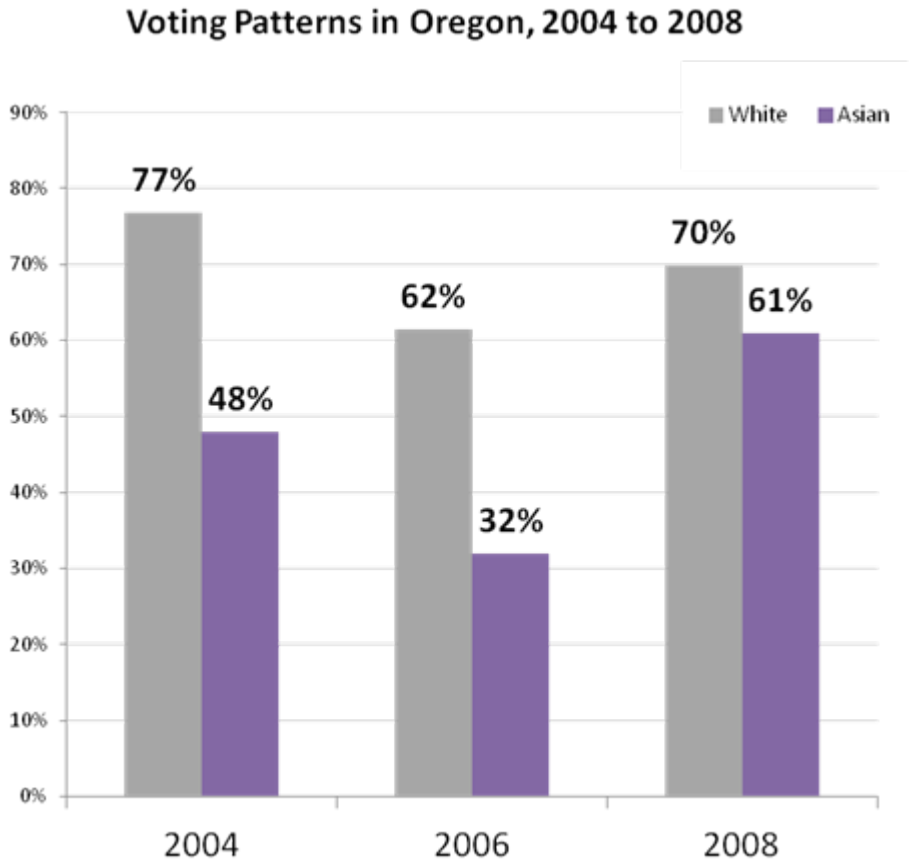


Low Birth Weight Babies, Asian & Pacific Islanders
Multnomah County



Civic Engagement Steadily Improving





Inequity in Access to Resources from Foundations

2008, Oregon	Size of Population	Amount of Foundation Funding
Whites	80.4%	90.4%
Asian & Pacific Islanders	4.9%	0.1%

Establishing Priority Communities

- Six measures were used to determine these priority communities
  - Limited English, low income, size of community with less than high school, today's education level of not meeting standards and home ownership
- 14 priority communities have been identified through this research
  - Pacific Islander communities
    - Chuukese, Pohnpeian, Samoan and Tongan
  - Small & new refugee-based communities
    - Hmong, Karen, Rohingyan, Burmese & Nepali Bhutanese
  - Older refugee-based communities
    - Cambodian and Laotian
  - More established immigrant communities
    - Asian Indian, Thai and Korean

	Speak English Less than Very Well	Poverty	Low Income	Education - less than high school	Education today: Does not meet standards	Does not own home
White	3%	12%	25% (2000)	7%	28%	38%
Asian Indian (n=3,509)	23%	12%	30%	30%	mean = 52%	44%
Burmese (n=792)					69%	
Cambodian (n=1,248)	47%	24%	48%	44%	43%	63%
Chuukese (n=152 children)					72%	
Hmong (n=1,674)	56%	3%	48%	46%	44%	59%
Karen (n=300 approx)					95%	
Korean (n=4,090)	33%	17%	30%	17%	11%	67%
Laotian (n=3,392)	53%	9%	34%	48%	40%	36%
Nepali (n=896 children)					75%	
Pohnpeian (n=21 children)					83%	
Rohingya (n=7 children)					71%	
Samoan (n=683)	15%	13%	35%	32%	68%	59%
Thai (n=1,110)	54%	35%	49%	14%	46%	77%
Tongan (n=551)	37%	14%	62%	10%	46%	72%

Recommendations

Have Culturally-Appropriate Data & Research Practices

- Allow for self-designation of identify
- Require compliance and report on performance measurement and in all contracts/grants
- Availability of disaggregated data to the community
- Whenever possible, data collection administered by those who share same race/language

Expand funding to cultural specific services

- Current County policy: “Cultural specific services are not only the preferred service provider for many people of color and immigrants, in many cases they may be the only provider in which individuals and families will feel comfortable asking for and receiving appropriate services.”
- Examine budget/funding by department/program


Support Community Development and Engagement

- Invest and support community development (CCC leadership development initiative; City's Diversity & Civil Leadership Program model)
- Community engagement policy

Acknowledge foreign credentials & work experience

- Hiring practices to recognize foreign credentials and work experience
- County staff should reflect the communities they serve

Education Equity

- Maintain support for Cradle-to-Career (C2C) initiative
- Support implementation of C2C Action Plans

Racial Equity Commitment

- Implementation of the racial equity lens
- Public commitments to racial equity
- Multi-jurisdictional equity work

Thank you!

- The entire report is available for free to download from
  - www.coalitioncommunitiescolor.org
- Julia Meier, Director, Coalition of Communities of Color
  - juliam@nayapdx.org
- Lee Po Cha, Director, Asian Family Center, program of IRCO
  - leec@mail.irco.org
- June Schumann, Board Co-Chair, APANO
  - jaschumann@earthlink.net
- Pei-ru Wang, Manager, Asian Family Center, program of IRCO
  - peiruw@mail.irco.org
- Ann Curry-Stevens, Associate Professor, PSU
  - currya@pdx.edu