Americans. The median income for families with at least one immigrant adult on Long Island was $97,000 in 2013. That is below the median for Long Island families in which all family members were born in the United States ($119,000). Yet the immigrant family income on Long Island is fully 50 percent higher than the overall family income for the United States.

Immigrants make an economic contribution to Long Island that is closely proportionate to their share of the population. Immigrants

In looking at the economic role of immigrants, it is very important to recognize how diverse the range of immigrants on Long Island is. Immigrants from different countries, for example, have widely varying experiences in the Long Island labor market—in part because of ethnic niches established in particular jobs, in part because of varying levels of educational attainment, and no doubt also in part because some groups contain larger numbers of undocumented immigrants.

Overall, the majority of immigrants on Long Island work in white-collar jobs. The balance—a little less than half—work in blue-collar jobs, generally low-wage service jobs or farming, fishing, and forestry jobs.

As Long Island's immigrant population has grown, so too has immigrants' contribution to the economy. In particular, the immigrant share of the working-age population (those 16 to 64 years old) runs in close parallel to the immigrant share of economic output.

## Immigrants Work in a Wide Range of Jobs

Immigrants who live on Long Island are working in a far wider range of jobs than is commonly recognized. Immigrants make up at least 10 percent of all occupations except uniformed services. Immigrants make up 23 percent of all jobholders living on Long Island (the "total" line in Figure 3), and they make up 18 percent of generally highly paid executive, administrative and managerial workers. Immigrants are slightly overrepresented among technicians, and are strongly represented among doctors, engineers, and other professional specialties (23 percent), and among registered nurses, pharmacists, and health therapists (23 percent).

Immigrants are significantly over-represented in some blue-collar and service jobs. Immigrants make up 58 percent of fabricators, 51 percent of mechanics and repairers, 43 percent of private households and personal services workers, 37 percent of gardening and farm workers, 33 percent of food preparation services workers, and 32 percent of construction laborers and other material handlers (jobs that require less skill and are less well paid than construction trades jobs). Immigrants are substantially under-represented in just one service category: the uniformed services, where just four percent of firefighters, police, and supervisors of protective services workers are foreign-born.

Yet, while slightly more than half (51 percent) of immigrants on Long Island work in white-collar jobs, the same is true for just five percent of immigrants from Honduras, 19 percent of immigrants from El Salvador (the group with the most immigrants on Long Island), and 36 percent of immigrants from the Dominican Republic, for example. More than half of immigrants from Haiti (53 percent) and Jamaica (51 percent) work in white-collar jobs, as do more than three quarters of those from Colombia (79 percent), India (82 percent), and Trinidad and Tobago (89 percent). As a point of comparison, about three quarters (71 percent) of U.S.-born workers on Long Island hold white-collar jobs, and just a little more than a quarter (29 percent) hold blue-collar, service or farming fishing and forestry jobs.

A similar pattern holds true for Nassau and Suffolk Counties. In Nassau, just over half (56 percent) of immigrants hold white-collar jobs, as do just under half (45 percent) of immigrants living in



that includes child care, and home health care. Some 6,000 work in "other services," which includes jobs in private households. And, 28 percent work in other industries besides these.

The data in the American Community Survey are not particularly well suited to account for farm workers, who are often seasonally employed. Using an approach based on the more appropriate Census of Agriculture, Max Pfeffer, professor of development sociology at Cornell University, has previously estimated that there are roughly 3,500 farmworkers in Suffolk County, and perhaps another 200 in Nassau County. Of these, roughly 1,500 are seasonal workers—some migrants, others finding local work in non-agricultural jobs during the off season. A high proportion of the migrant workers are estimated to be immigrants—perhaps 80 percent or more. Something on the order of two thirds of seasonal workers are estimated to be undocumented, as are some (but probably a smaller portion) of the year-round farm workers.[1]

On Long Island, a rather astonishing amount of attention has been given to the question of day laborers—people hired from shape-up sites. While there are reasonable concerns about these shape-up sites, it is important to note that immigrants hired in this way make up less than one percent of all half-million immigrants on Long Island, and are in fact a small share even of undocumented immigrants.

Indeed, of the 9,000 unauthorized immigrants working in construction on Long Island, only a portion are day laborers. In the entire New York City metro area, the most comprehensive academic study on the topic found in 2003 that there were roughly 6,000 to 8,000 day laborers hired through shape-up sites. There are, of course, also some U.S.-born workers hired at shape-up sites, though there is little doubt that the overwhelming majority of day laborers are immigrants and that a high proportion are undocumented.[2]

Unauthorized immigrants on Long Island are, as expected, generally in low-wage jobs. It is worth noting, however, that they work across a range of industries including food services, retail, child care and home health care, and in private households. Some small number of undocumented workers, mostly visa-overstayers, work in higher-wage technical and professional jobs.

Roughly equal numbers of unauthorized immigrants work in construction and in the industry that contains food services and accommodation (this industry also includes arts, entertainment, and recreation)—in each case, about 9,000 unauthorized immigrants, or 17 percent of the total. Another 7,000 work in retail trade, and 7,000 in the educational health and social services sector

## Most Immigrant Families Make Over $80,000/year

Sixty-one percent of immigrants on Long Island live in families with incomes of over $80,000 per year – 47 percent in families making between $80,000 and $199,999, and another 14 percent making $200,000 or more. Among U.S.-born Long Islanders, the comparable figures are higher, but not dramatically so: 52 percent live in families making $80,000 to $199,999, and 20 percent in families making $200,000 or more. Immigrant families are defined here as those with at least one immigrant adult.

At the lower end of the income ladder, 16 of immigrants live in families making less than $40,000, compared to 10 percent for U.S.-born Long Island residents.

The picture is similar in both Nassau and Suffolk Counties, with the majority of immigrants living in families making at least $80,000 per year, in both cases less than the U.S.-born share, but not as dramatically as might be expected. In Nassau, 15 percent of immigrants live in families with incomes of less than $40,000 a year, and in Suffolk 16 percent.

## Nearly Half of Immigrants are College-Educated

The total number of workers with high school or less is shrinking, with immigrants filling in as more U.S.-born workers attend college. Immigrants are on average less likely than U.S.-born workers to have experience in college. Among Long Islanders 25 years and older, about half of immigrants (47 percent) have some college or more, compared to 68 percent of U.S.-born residents.

## Immigrant Small Business Ownership

Immigrants are not just employees; they are also small business owners. Of the 62,000 small businesses located on Long Island, 14,000—23 percent—are owned by immigrants, generating earnings of $1.06 billion, or 18 percent of all small business owners' earnings. Small business is here defined as people who are self-employed, and whose full-time job is to run their own incorporated business. The data refer to the years 2009-13 combined, to give a big enough sample to look at detailed industries of businesses (Figure 11a).

In Nassau, immigrants own 28 percent of all small businesses located in the county, generating total earnings for business owners of $651 million, or 22 percent of all small business owners' earnings. In Suffolk immigrants own 18 percent of the county's small businesses, generating total earnings of $409 million, or 14 percent of the earnings of small business owners.

Immigrant small businesses tend to be somewhat smaller than those of U.S.-born owners, so immigrant owners' share of small business earnings is not as high as the immigrant share of small business owners.

Immigrant-owned small businesses on Long Island have been growing as immigration has grown: immigrants made up 18 percent of all business owners on Long Island in 2000 and 23 percent by 2013, growing from 11,000 to 14,000 small businesses.

What kinds of businesses do immigrants own? On Long Island, the biggest numbers are in professional and business services. Immigrants make up 18 percent of small professional and business services business owners. Immigrants make up 28 percent of all retail store owners and 23 percent of small business owners in educational, health and social services. Immigrants make up a third (32 percent) of small business owners in arts, entertairll pro1o1o1ota

Figure 2. Growing share of working age population and of economic output FPI analysis of 2000 Census and 2009 and 2013 ACS.

Figure 3. Immigrants make up a substantial share of all occupations but uniformed services. FPI analysis of 2013 ACS, based on occupational categories defined in Immigrants and the Economy (Fiscal Policy Institute 2009). Universe: Long Island residents 16 years of age and older employed in the civilian labor force.

Figures 4a, 4b, and 4c. Half of immigrants work in white-collar jobs, with wide variation within group. FPI analysis of 2013 ACS 5-year data. Figure 3 indicates jobs in "white-collar" and "other" occupations; for detailed explanation of occupational categories see Immigrants in the Economy, Fiscal Policy Institute, 2009. Universe: Long Island residents 16 years of age and older

Figure 6. The large majority of immigrants live in families earning over $80,000 per year. FPI analysis of 2013 ACS. Universe: Primary families with at least two related members in a household. Foreign-born families are families with at least one foreign-born member who is 18 years of age or older. Incomes are in 2009 dollars.

Figure 7. Immigrant workers often earn 1/4 to 1/3 less than U.S.-born. FPI analysis of 2013 ACS. Universe: Long Island residents, age 25 and older who are employed full-time (at least 35 hours per week) and year-round (at least 50 weeks per year) in the civilian labor force. Incomes are in 2013 dollars.

Figure 8. Immigrant families have more working adults. FPI analysis of 2013 ACS. Universe: Primary families with at least two related members in a household. Foreign-born families are families with at least one foreign-born member who is 18 years of age or older.

Figure 9. Race and ethnicity can make as much difference as nativity. FPI analysis of 2013 ACS. Universe: Long Island residents, age 16 and older, who are employed full-time (at least 35 hours per week) and year-round (at least 50 weeks per year) in the civilian labor force. Incomes are in 2013 dollars.

Figure 10. About half of 2.4(b)-1122.6(134.1(0)1i)-11/5 Favit0 0i(a)a56501 375lTm [ 3 EMC .(3 d)-.9(e)501 9i