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# New Americans in Champaign County



Snapshot of the Demographic  
and Economic Contributions of  
Immigrants in the County

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## New American Welcome Center

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The New American Welcome Center at the University of Illinois helps immigrants fully integrate into American society and prepares receiving communities around Champaign County to be welcoming and inclusive.

By engaging local institutions and mobilizing community resources, we help make Champaign County a place where newcomers and immigrants can thrive and flourish.

### Overview

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The following is a customized, quantitative research report produced by data analysts at New American Economy and the New American Welcome Center. It sheds light on the contribution of immigrants to Champaign County's population, labor force, and economy. The message of this report can be encapsulated in one word: interdependence. Far from 'aliens', immigrants are our neighbors, colleagues, and friends, and as this report illustrates, what affects them will impact the entirety of our community—immigrant and U.S.-born.

Champaign County is home to one of the largest immigrant populations in Illinois outside of Chicagoland. In 2016, 1 in 10 county residents, 1 in 8 Champaign residents, and 1 in 5 Urbana residents were immigrants—joining our community from over 76 countries around the world. Our neighbors are from China and Mexico, Germany and India, Pakistan and the Philippines, Colombia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Champaign County was 1 of only 13 counties in Illinois with a growing population in 2016, in no small part thanks to immigrants.

Immigrants' growing numbers have provided support to several key sectors. In STEM and Education, over 1 in 5 workers are immigrants. In manufacturing,

hospitality, recreation, and healthcare, 1 in 10 workers are immigrants. In 2016 alone, local immigrants contributed 57 million dollars in local taxes, and injected hundreds of millions into our local economy. Immigrants fill needs at all levels of the county's workforce, including in high-skilled sectors given that local immigrants are over 50 percent more likely than U.S.-Born residents to hold a bachelor's degree or higher.

The majority of immigrants in our community have been residents for at least 7 years—a third are U.S. Citizens, a quarter are likely eligible for naturalization, and another third may be undocumented. Regardless of status, immigrants throughout Champaign County have established homes, contributed to our economy, and strengthened the social fabric of our community. The help or harm directed to the immigrant community ripples through its many families, the agencies that serve them, the industries that employ them, and the local governments and businesses that depend on their financial contributions.

We hope this report will catalyze greater awareness and collaboration, as we continue the work to make Champaign County an ever more welcoming and inclusive community.

### Keys to the Report

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#### **IMMIGRANT**

Anyone not born a U.S. Citizen, regardless of current status.

#### **NON-COLLEGE STUDENT IMMIGRANT**

Anyone not born a U.S. Citizen and not currently enrolled in a college or university.

#### **U.S.-BORN**

Anyone born a U.S. Citizen, regardless of place of birth.

# New Americans in Champaign County

A Snapshot of the Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants in the County<sup>1</sup>

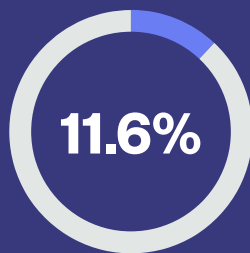


State & Local

## POPULATION

# 23,992

Number of immigrants living in Champaign County in 2016, making up **11.6%** of the total population.



This share was **8.0%** in 2000 and **11.6%** in 2011.<sup>2</sup>

**43.5%** of the immigrant population were **university students** in 2016.

This means that the rest—about **13,558** people—were more likely to be longer-term residents.

Between 2011 and 2016, the **U.S.-born population** grew by 3.2%.

3.2%

The non-college student **immigrant population\*** increased by 6.3%.<sup>3</sup>

6.3%

Among the non-college student immigrant population,\* the county has attracted immigrants from **over 76 countries**.

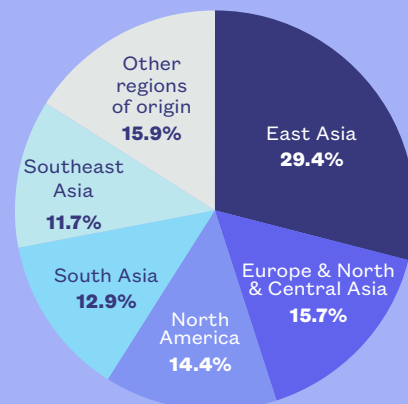
The fastest-growing regions of origin between 2011 and 2016 include Central Africa, East and Southern Africa, and Oceania.<sup>4</sup>

Share of total population growth in the county attributed to immigrants between 2011 and 2016.



In 2016, the vast majority of the non-college student immigrant population\* came from:

<b>East Asia</b>	e.g., China, Korea, & Taiwan
<b>Europe &amp; North &amp; Central Asia</b>	e.g., United Kingdom & Germany
<b>North America</b>	e.g., Mexico & Canada
<b>South Asia</b>	e.g., India & Pakistan
<b>Southeast Asia</b>	e.g., Philippines & Vietnam



Additional regions and top countries include South America (Colombia); Central America and the Caribbean (Costa Rica, Belize); North Asia (Ukraine); Central Africa (Congo) Middle East and Asia Minor (Turkey, Saudi Arabia); North and West Africa (Egypt); East and Southern Africa (Kenya); and Oceania (Fiji).

\* Includes only immigrants not enrolled in a college or university.

## POPULATION CONT.

### CITY OF CHAMPAIGN

# 11,851

Number of immigrants living in the City of Champaign in 2016.

Between 2011 and 2016, the population in the area grew by **5.5%**.

The immigrant population increased by **15.2%**.

#### Total population

80,223 → **84,672**

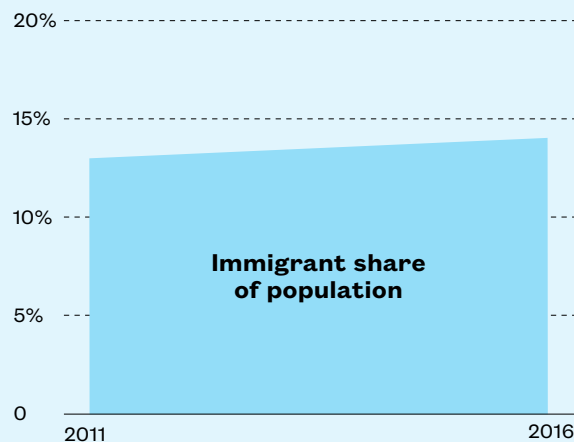
**5.5%**

#### Immigrant population

10,285 → **11,851**

**15.2%**

The immigrant share of the city's population increased from **12.8%** to **14.0%**.



### CITY OF URBANA

# 7,768

Number of immigrants living in the City of Urbana in 2016.

Between 2011 and 2016, the population in the area grew by **2.1%**.

The immigrant population decreased by **2.8%**.

#### Total population

41,089 → **41,941**

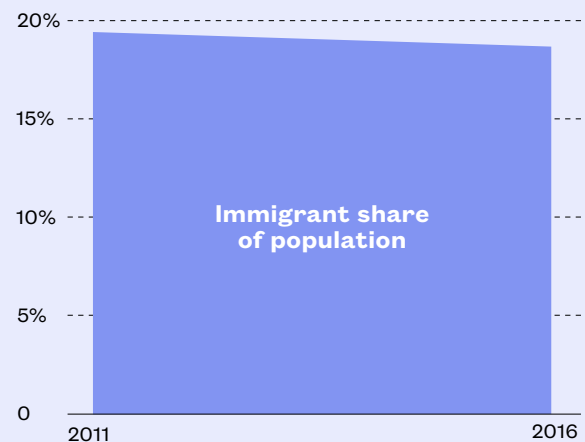
**2.1%**

#### Immigrant population

7,990 → **7,768**

**-2.8%**

The immigrant share of the city's population decreased from **19.4%** to **18.5%**.



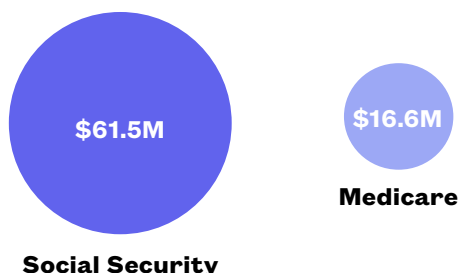
## ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS

In 2016, immigrant residents in Champaign County contributed **\$1.4B** to the area's GDP.<sup>4</sup>

Given their income, immigrants contributed significantly to state and local taxes, including property, sales, and excise taxes levied by state or municipal governments.



Immigrants in Champaign County also support federal social programs. In 2016, they contributed **\$61.5M** to Social Security and **\$16.6M** to Medicare.



## SPOTLIGHT ON

# Mauricio Salinas

Entrepreneur, *Chicago MOR* and *El Oasis*

**M**auricio Salinas grew up poor in Puebla, Mexico. In 1986, as a 19-year-old fresh out of high school, he came to the United States looking for a better life. He worked in landscaping and as a food server, and managed to get an education at Parkland College in Champaign. Still, he struggled to find fulfilling employment. "When you're undocumented, you're afraid of looking for a job," he says. "I would just work wherever I could."

After five years without papers, Salinas fell in love with and married a U.S. citizen, and in 1991, he obtained a green card. "That was a big step for me," he says. "It made a huge difference in allowing me to achieve my ambitions."

As a documented immigrant, Salinas could apply for scholarships and grants to resume his education. In 2001, he received a bachelor's degree in finance from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and was quickly hired by Bank One as an assistant branch manager.

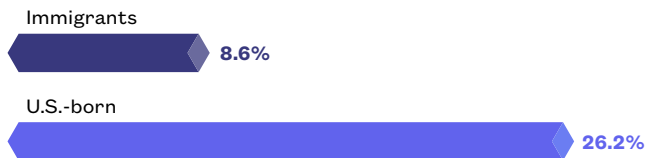
Three years later, Salinas took a risk and opened his own business: a tax-preparation and legal services company called Chicago MOR. Among other services, the company offers advice and support for would-be entrepreneurs. To date, he has helped dozens of clients, many of them immigrants, to open new businesses in Champaign County. "Nobody tells you how to accomplish your dreams or how to start a business," Salinas says. "That's one of the reasons why I'm now helping people understand the process."

A few years ago, Salinas opened El Oasis, a Mexican-style ice-cream parlor. "I'm an entrepreneur—I saw a niche, and I went for it," he says. He now employs eight people across his two businesses. He also serves on the boards of the Urbana Business Association, the Champaign County Health Care Consumers, and the New American Welcome Center.

Salinas says his goal is to help other immigrants to settle in and start businesses of their own. "I'm trying to help this community in general, and the immigrant community in particular," he says. "From manual workers to businesspeople, immigrants are an essential part of this community."

## ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS CONT.

**8.6%** of immigrants in the county received Medicare or Medicaid, compared with **26.2%** of the U.S.-born residents in 2016.



About **84.3%** of immigrants had private healthcare coverage, while **8.7%** had public healthcare coverage.

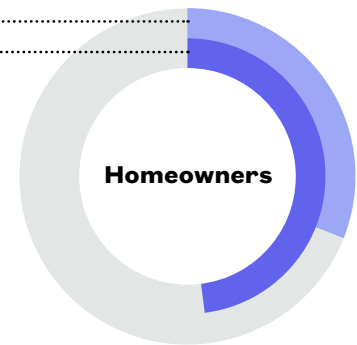


Share of households who were **homeowners** in Champaign County in 2016:

All immigrant homeowners held **\$746.7M** in property value, of which **\$727.1M** was held by non-college student immigrants.\*

**31.2%**  
Immigrants overall

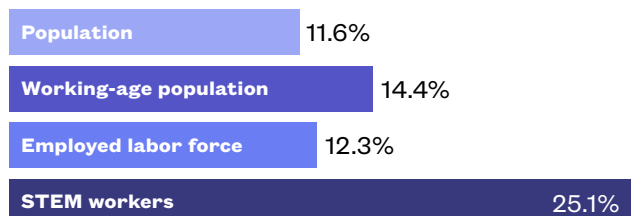
**48.1%**  
U.S.-born



## LABOR FORCE GROWTH

Although immigrants made up **11.6%** of the county's overall population, they represented **14.4%** of its working-age<sup>†</sup> population, **12.3%** of its employed labor force, and **25.1%** of STEM<sup>‡</sup> workers in 2016.

## Immigrant shares of the...



<sup>†</sup> Working-age refers to people ages 16-64 years old.

<sup>‡</sup> Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

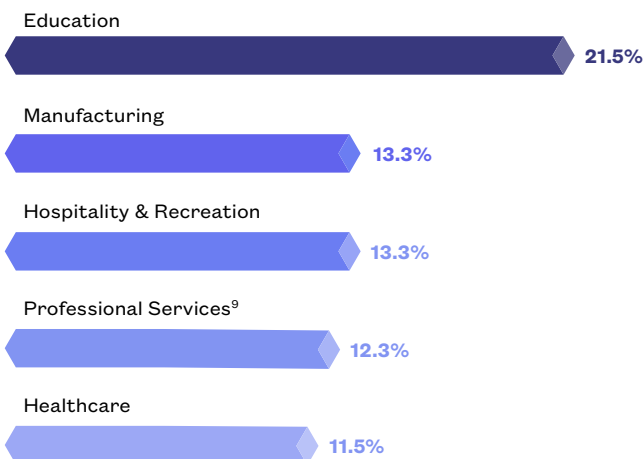
Because of the role immigrants play in the workforce helping companies keep jobs on U.S. soil, by 2016, immigrants living in the county helped create or preserve:

**1,104**  
**local manufacturing jobs**  
that would have otherwise  
vanished or moved elsewhere.<sup>8</sup>

\* Includes only immigrants not enrolled in a college or university.

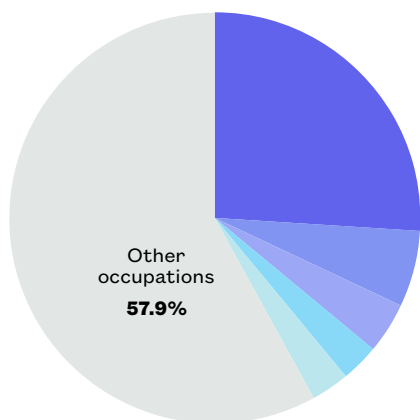
## LABOR FORCE GROWTH CONT.

**Immigrants** play a critical role in several key industries in the county, making up significant shares of the workforce in 2016:

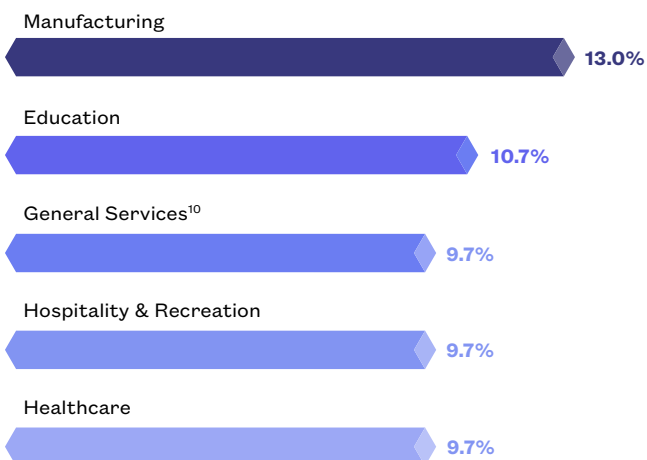


Immigrants tended to concentrate in these **occupations** in the county in 2016:

- 1 Postsecondary Teachers ..... 26.4%
- 2 Physical Scientists ..... 6.2%
- 3 Software Developers ..... 4.3%
- 4 Cooks ..... 2.7%
- 5 Scientific Technicians ..... 2.5%

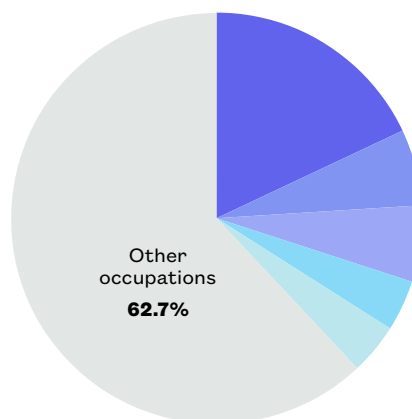


**Non-college student immigrants\*** play a critical role in several key industries in the county, making up significant shares of the workforce in 2016:



Non-college student immigrants\* tended to concentrate in these **occupations** in the county in 2016:

- 1 Postsecondary Teachers ..... 17.8%
- 2 Software Developers ..... 6.2%
- 3 Physical Scientists ..... 5.8%
- 4 Cooks ..... 4.0%
- 5 Production Workers ..... 3.5%

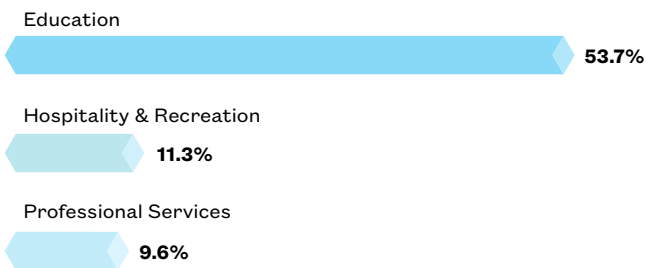


\* Includes only immigrants not enrolled in a college or university.

## LABOR FORCE GROWTH CONT.

### CITY OF CHAMPAIGN

These **industries** employed a significant number of the city's immigrants in 2016.



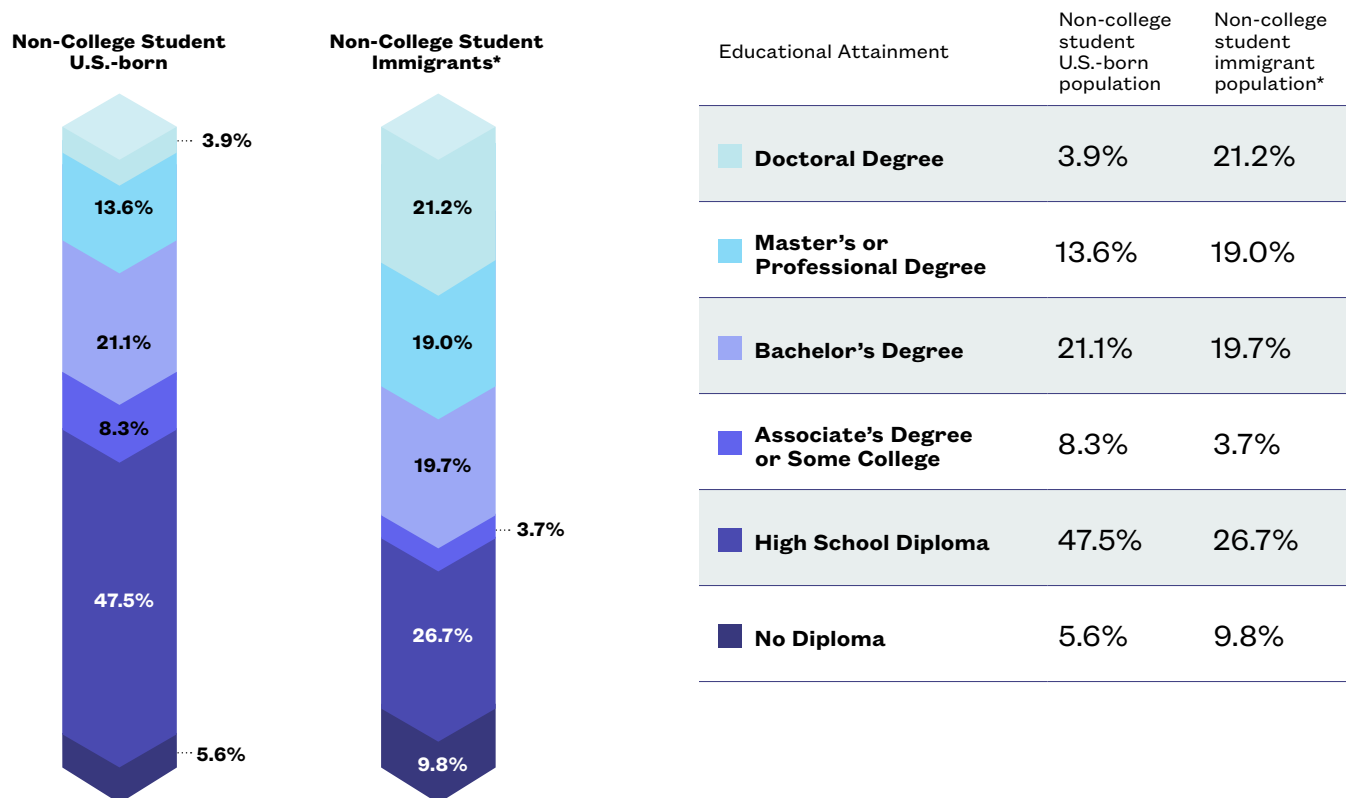
### CITY OF URBANA

These **industries** employed a significant number of the city's immigrants in 2016.



## EDUCATION

The non-student immigrant population is highly educated, and in 2016 was over **50% more likely to hold a bachelor's degree or higher** than their U.S.-born counterparts.



\* Includes only immigrants not enrolled in a college or university.



## SPOTLIGHT ON

# César M'nyampara

Minister, *First Presbyterian Church of Champaign*

**C**ésar M'nyampara was a mining industry lawyer in the Democratic Republic of Congo, but when his father, a political activist, was murdered in 2003, he decided to find a safer place for his family.

In 2011, M'nyampara, his pregnant wife, and their four children came to Illinois on diversity visas. There, he found work as a packer at the Solo Cup plant. "I'd never worked this kind of job," M'nyampara says of the manual labor. "It was very hard, very painful."

Still, the family thrived, thanks to the warm welcome they received at the First Presbyterian Church of Champaign. Congregants took M'nyampara under their wing, taught him English, and helped him find his feet.

"They taught me how to live in this society, and the rules of the country, and how you can serve people in need," he says. "I'm a product of that church."

Inspired by their kindness, M'nyampara left the factory and became a full-time pastor. "Now I'm working for God," he says. "I count on God to provide."

M'nyampara ministers chiefly to Champaign County's booming immigrant population. First Presbyterian's congregation was almost entirely U.S.-born when M'nyampara arrived, but these days around 300 African immigrants attend bilingual weekly services. "God has sent me a lot of people to take care of," he says.

This has provided an influx of younger faces for First Presbyterian's previously aging congregation, M'nyampara says. "We brought a new life, a new energy, and a new style of worship," he says.

In addition to his flock's spiritual well-being, M'nyampara also helps congregants find work. Every Wednesday, he drives around Central Illinois, often as far afield as Danville or Gibson City, to meet factory foremen. Through that outreach, M'nyampara has secured manufacturing jobs for more than 200 newly arrived immigrants.

That's good news not just for the workers, but also for the companies, which M'nyampara says often struggle to find labor. "They always call me, and ask me if I have more people to send to their companies," he says. "It's good for the economy and for all the people here, immigrants and U.S.-born."

CITIZENSHIP<sup>11</sup>

Number of immigrants in the county who were naturalized citizens in 2016:

**7,998**

### Naturalized share of all immigrants

33.3%

Number of non-college student immigrants\* who were naturalized citizens in 2016:

**5,898**

### Naturalized share of non-college student immigrants\*

43.5%

Number among all non-citizens who were potentially eligible for naturalization in 2016:

**3,997**

### Share of non-citizens who were potentially eligible for naturalization

25.0%

**3.5%**

Share of immigrants in the county who were likely refugees<sup>12</sup>

Number of immigrants in the county who were likely undocumented in 2016:

**7,094**

### Share of all immigrants in the county who were likely undocumented

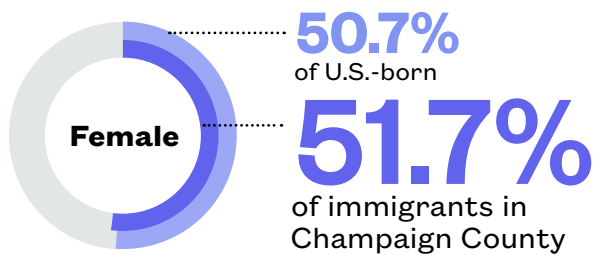
29.6%

\* Includes only immigrants not enrolled in a college or university.

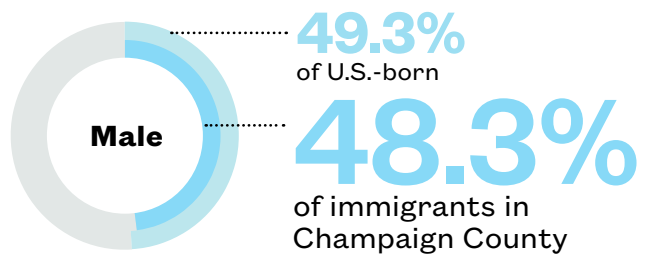
## GENDER, MARITAL STATUS, & AGE

Among the county's non-college student population,\* the U.S.-born and immigrant populations are **very similar in gender make-up**.

Share of non-college students who are **female**:



Share of non-college students who are **male**:



Non-college student immigrants\* are **more likely to be married** than their U.S.-born counterparts.

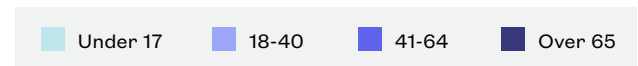
Shares of non-college student **immigrants\*** who are:



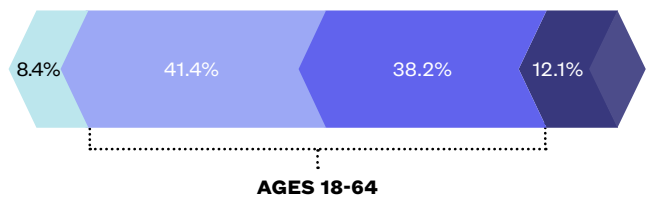
Shares of non-college student **U.S.-born** who are:



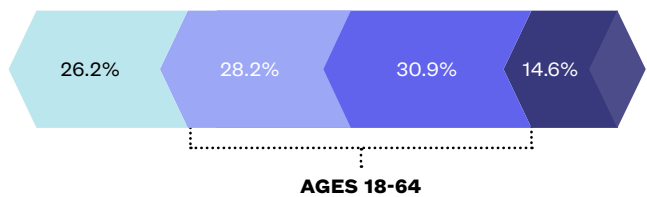
The non-college student immigrant population\* is **more likely to be between ages 18-64**.



**Immigrant** non-college students\*



**U.S.-born** non-college students



\* Includes only immigrants not enrolled in a college or university.

For more city, district, and state-level data,  
visit **MapTheImpact.org** and explore our interactive map.



- 1 Unless otherwise specified, data comes from 5-year samples of the American Community Survey from 2011 and 2016 and figures refer to Champaign County, Illinois. The term "immigrant" is defined as anyone born outside the U.S. to non-U.S. citizen parents who is living in the U.S. and counted by the census.
- 2 The 2000 estimates come from the American FactFinder, the U.S. Census Bureau.
- 3 We refer to the population of people not enrolled in colleges and universities as non-student population in the following references.
- 4 The sample size is below 15.
- 5 U.S. Congressional Budget Office. 2016. "The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2013."
- 6 Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. 2015. "Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States."
- 7 Estimates are based on federal tax rates from the U.S. Congressional Budget Office, and state and local tax rates are from the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy.
- 8 Vigdor, Jacob. 2013. "Immigration and the Revival of American Cities: From Preserving Manufacturing Jobs to Strengthening the Housing Market." New American Economy.
- 9 Professional services: Most of these industries include professions that require a degree or a license, such as legal services, accounting, scientific research, consulting services, etc.
- 10 General services include personal services (e.g. laundry services, barber shops, and repair and maintenance), religious organizations, social services, and labor unions.
- 11 Refer to New American Economy's [methodology page](http://www.newamericaneconomy.org/methodology) ([www.newamericaneconomy.org/methodology](http://www.newamericaneconomy.org/methodology)) for states and metro areas for additional information on how we calculated eligibility to naturalize and the undocumented and refugee populations.
- 12 New American Economy. 2017. "From Struggle to Resilience: The Economic Impact of Refugees in America."

As the local organizations that worked on this brief, we would like to acknowledge our local collaborating partners on the Gateways for Growth Initiative: City of Champaign, City of Urbana, Champaign County Economic Development Corporation and the University of Illinois Research Park. We also want to thank the following funders for their support of this initiative: University of Illinois, Community Foundation of East Central Illinois, United Way of Champaign County and Tony Khan.

# University YMCA New American Welcome Center Leadership

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**Scott Bennett**, State Senator, 52nd District  
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**Celeste Choate**, Executive Director, Urbana Free Library  
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**Sue Grey**, Executive Director, United Way of Champaign County  
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**Amanda Harris**, Program Manager, Project READ  
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**César M'nyampara**, Community Leader, Congolese Community  
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