

Changes in Socioeconomic Status

City Variations among Latino New Yorkers, 2000-2005

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Between 2000 and 2005, all Latino groups increased in size within New York State, but did their socio-economic status also advance? This report surveys the changes in Latino life chances in the first five years of this decade by examining education, jobs, and income among Latinos, as well as unemployment and poverty for six locations of the state. Between 2000 and 2005:

- The high school graduation rate increased for Latinos in most New York cities, with little upstate-downstate difference in these rates, and the Latino-white gap in high school degrees decreased, but it is still quite large (64 versus 90 percent). These rates are higher than the national ones, which are only 60 percent and 86 percent, respectively, but the 26 percent racial-ethnic gap is the same.
- College graduation rates increased among New York's Latinos to 15.1 percent, but the non-Hispanic white rate increased faster and reached 35.5 percent, so the overall Latino-white BA gap increased and reached 20.4 percent. Non-Hispanic white men were 1 percent more likely than white women to achieve a college degree, but among Latinos, in almost all cities, women were more likely to hold a BA than men (16.2 versus 13.8 percent).
- Although Latino education rates have risen, the percentage of New York's Latinos holding managerial and professional jobs held steady, while non-Hispanic whites increased their hold on these occupations. The already large gap between Latinos and whites increased by two percent in that time period to reach a 21.8 percent difference (or 20.7 for Latinos versus 42.5 percent for whites).
- The median household income increased by \$2,460 among New York's Hispanics, reaching \$33,472, and increased by \$6,340 for non-Hispanic whites, reaching \$55,970. As a result of these differential increments, the ratio of Latino to white household income worsened, from 62.5 percent in 2000 to 59.8 percent in 2005.
- Latinos' individual earnings increased by \$2,160 to \$22,427, and non-Hispanic whites' income increased by \$3,760 to \$34,513. Similar to household income, the ratio of Latino to white individual earnings worsened, but only slightly from 65.9 percent in 2000 to 65.0 percent in 2005.
- The percentage of both non-Hispanic whites and of Latinos living below the poverty level in New York State increased only slightly, by .83 and .44 percent, respectively. While fully 25.3 percent of New York's Latinos lived below the poverty level in 2005, Latinos had dropped from 3.2 times to 2.9 times more likely to live in poverty than non-Hispanic whites. There was considerable variation across the state: Latino poverty rates sharply increased in Buffalo (from 29.4 to 43.4 percent, but decreased somewhat in Nassau County (from 12.8 to 10.3 percent).
- Increased poverty was partly due to the rise in unemployment over five years both among whites and Latinos of either sex and in all locations. Statewide, Latino unemployment rates increased from 7.9 to 10 percent, while non-Hispanic white unemployment increased from 4.0 to 5.4 percent. Thus Latinos were 1.8 times more likely to be unemployed than whites.
- In sum, while Hispanic New Yorkers have increased their education, at both the high school and college levels, as well as their household and individual earnings, large gaps in comparison to non-Hispanic white New Yorkers persist or have widened at the beginning of this century.



UNIVERSITY
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In recent years, we have seen increased geographic dispersion of Latinos throughout the Northeast region and more generally across the United States, spurring growth in newer communities and decline in older ones. For example, in New York City the Puerto Rican population dropped by 6.2 percent between 2000 and 2005 (from 839,073 to 787,046 people). Although this Latino dispersion is often motivated by the search for a better community, NYLARNet's report *City Variation in the Socioeconomic Status of Latinos in New York State* (Bose 2007) concluded that, at the opening of the twenty-first century in 2000, the geographic dispersion of Latinos across New York did not consistently result in the positive socioeconomic outcomes that many might have expected when they decided to live in smaller cities outside of New York City, such as Albany, Buffalo, Rochester or Syracuse. Of course, how Latinos actually judged their new residence would also be influenced by economic comparisons with the particular city which they had left, as well as by some non-economic factors, such as by the new city's crime or safety levels. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the report demonstrated that the highest incomes and lowest unemployment rates were found among Latinos in Nassau County, while their neighbors in New York City fared poorly. However, a less expected result was that residence in Albany was associated with having more education, a large managerial-professional work force, and among the highest incomes for Latinos in the state, in spite of high unemployment and state agencies that generally employed low rates of Latinos. In contrast to Albany, the residents of Western New York were not doing as well as those living elsewhere—but there was also tremendous variation among Buffalo, Syracuse, and Rochester and some Latino groups, such as Central and South Americans, seem to have found good economic niches in those cities.

This current report searches for any changes in Latino economic outcomes between 2000 and 2005 in these metropolitan areas. It uses the previous report's results as its baseline—those analyses were carried out

using 2000 Census data (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series or IPUMS)—and makes comparisons with the U.S. Census Bureau's 2005 American Community Survey data (<http://factfinder.census.gov>). The American Community Survey (ACS) is not as detailed as the decennial Census, but it provides comprehensive data for a mid-decade comparative study. Unfortunately, the ACS data often cannot be disaggregated for different Latino nationality groups, but it does contain information on most of the same cities. After data from the next national Census are collected in 2010, it will be possible to make more detailed long-term comparisons with 2000. In the meantime, to get the most accurate longitudinal comparisons between 2000 and 2005, this report compares the 2005 American Community Survey data with the 2000 American Community Survey for most of the indicators, as will be seen below.

The tables and figures in this report compare overall outcomes for non-Hispanic whites and Latinos living in New York State with those for specific cities including the downstate areas of New York City and Long Island (Nassau County) and the upstate cities of Albany, Syracuse, Rochester, and Buffalo. The 2005 ACS also disaggregates data for Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Cubans, Dominicans, and Central/South Americans for the overall population distributions. Since Census data undercount those Latino groups that have significant portions of undocumented individuals, such as Mexicans, it is possible that the overall Latino economic situation may appear better than it is in cities with high concentrations of undocumented people, since they often are the poorest Latinos and also those who remain uncoun- ted. Nonetheless, a comparison between 2000 and 2005 should not be affected by this problem if the Latino composition of a city was relatively stable over the time period: and, at least for 2000 when it was possible to compare the same Latino nationality groups' economic outcomes across various cities, there were some consistent positive effects for most groups living in Nassau County or in Albany rather than in New York City.

Migration and Geographic Dispersion: Small Increments in Latinos Everywhere

The best way to examine changes in geographic dispersion is to compare the detailed 2000 Census with the 2005 ACS because we can compare various Latino groups. In 2005, as in 2000, Puerto Ricans remain the numerically largest Latino group in New York State and also in most of the metropolitan areas under consideration, with the exception of Nassau County (Long Island), where Central and South

Americans still predominate (see Tables 1a & 1b). Overall, the numbers of Puerto Ricans and Cubans in New York State have increased modestly, but the Dominican and Mexican populations have grown by 32 and 33 percent, respectively, and Central and South Americans have increased fully 53 percent. Even if there is some measurement difference between the 2000 Census and the 2005 ACS, these are impressive increases.

TABLE 1A. EACH GROUP AS A PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS IN SELECTED NEW YORK STATE LOCATIONS, 2000 U.S. CENSUS

		NY State	NYC	Albany	Buffalo	Rochester	Syracuse	Nassau County
Puerto Rican	Proportion	5.53%	9.01%	1.52%	1.96%	2.92%	1.08%	1.76%
	Number	1,050,293	839,073	13,306	22,956	32,078	7,912	23,540
Mexicans	Proportion	1.37%	2.32%	0.26%	0.26%	0.35%	0.27%	0.49%
	Number	260,889	215,719	2,290	3,084	3,868	1,996	6,569
Cubans	Proportion	0.33%	0.50%	0.09%	0.06%	0.19%	0.12%	0.33%
	Number	62,590	46,712	781	756	2,128	876	4,458
Dominicans	Proportion	2.40%	4.56%	0.11%	0.07%	0.14%	0.07%	0.76%
	Number	455,061	424,847	961	774	1,518	539	10,132
Central-South American	Proportion	2.64%	4.07%	0.24%	0.13%	0.23%	0.17%	4.06%
	Number	500,262	379,196	2,080	1,549	2,508	1,248	54,168
non-Hispanic Whites	Proportion	67.95%	48.80%	89.42%	83.78%	83.97%	88.92%	79.30%
	Number	12,893,669	4,545,657	782,946	980,346	922,199	650,980	1,058,285

TABLE 1B. EACH GROUP AS A PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS IN SELECTED NEW YORK STATE LOCATIONS, 2005 ACS

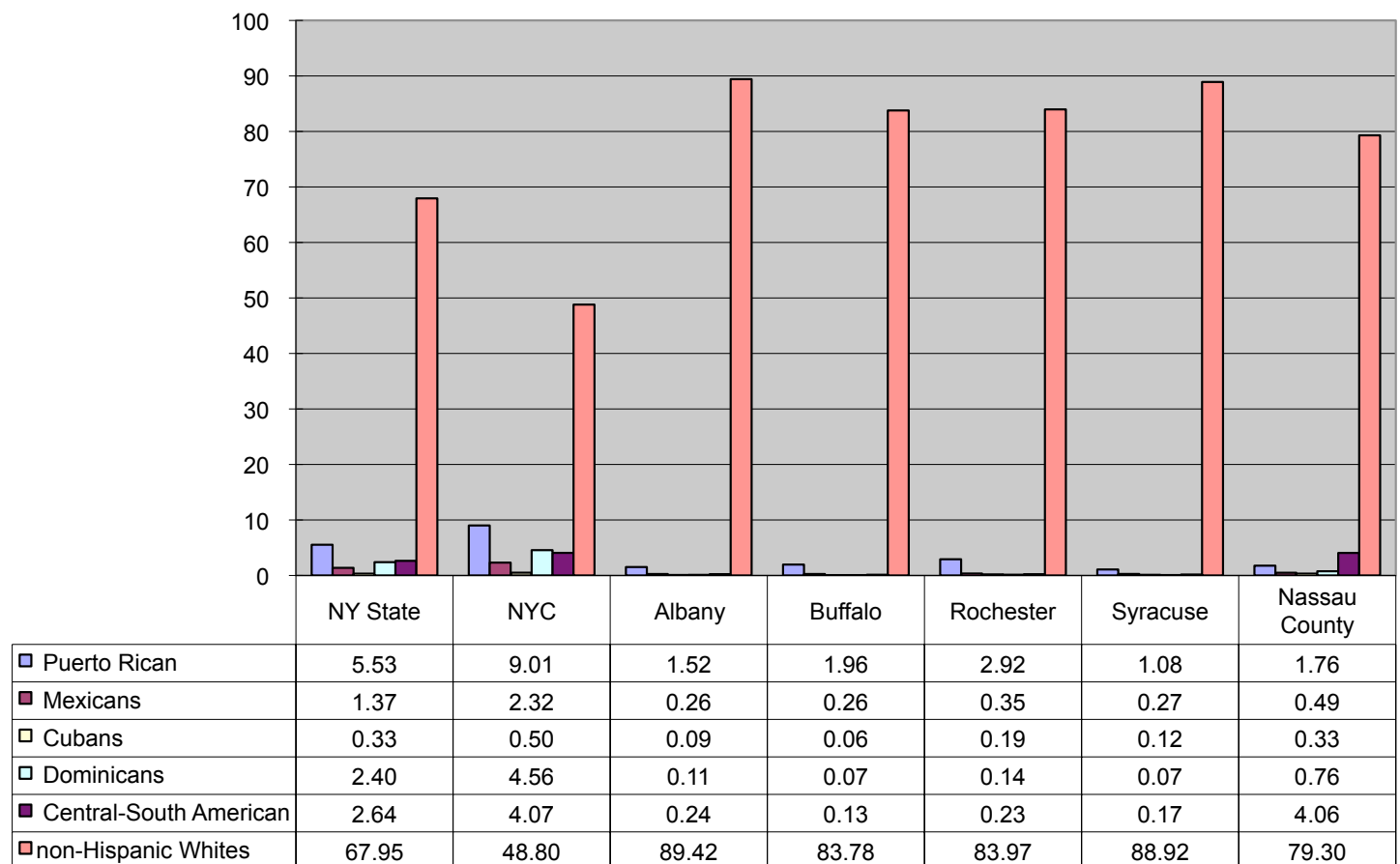
		NY State	NYC	Albany	Buffalo	Rochester	Syracuse	Nassau County
Puerto Rican	Proportion	5.67%	9.89%	.	6.47%	11.28%	2.93%	1.46%
	Number	1,057,423	787,046	.	16,603	21,361	3,881	19,104
Mexican	Proportion	1.86%	3.07%	.	0.37%	0.32%	1.45%	0.51%
	Number	346,783	244,411	.	946	606	1,917	6,693
Cuban	Proportion	0.36%	0.55%	.	0.11%	0.25%	0.56%	0.41%
	Number	66,687	43,460	.	274	476	739	5,422
Dominican	Proportion	3.23%	6.69%	.	0.14%	1.16%	0.40%	1.43%
	Number	602,285	532,620	.	366	2,187	528	18,736
Central-South American	Proportion	4.10%	6.14%	.	0.08%	0.18%	0.38%	6.63%
	Number	765,799	488,268	.	203	340	499	86,818
Hispanic origin all	Proportion	16.23%	27.93%	.	7.57%	13.72%	6.21%	11.74%
	Number	3,028,658	2,221,906	.	19,425	25,982	8,225	153,849
Non-Hispanic Whites	Proportion	60.66%	34.52%	.	47.75%	39.17%	57.23%	69.63%
	Number	11,315,746	2,746,422	45,537	122,466	74,153	75,825	912,163

Another way to look at geographic dispersion is through the proportional representation of each Latino group in each city (Figures 1a & 1b). Over the last five years, most Latino nationality groups and Latinos as a whole have increased their percentage share of the population in all locations. Among the exceptions to this pattern are small declines in the percentage of Central or South Americans in Buffalo and Rochester, of Mexicans in Rochester, and of Puerto Ricans in Nassau County. If all Latino groups were evenly dispersed around the state, then their representation in each local area would be the same as their percentage statewide. As Figures 1a and 1b show,

despite significant migration outside of New York City, in both 2000 and 2005 every Latino group was over-represented in New York City, and Central/South Americans were over-represented in Nassau County as well. However, geographic dispersion over five years has tipped ethnic composition so that Puerto Ricans also are over-represented in Buffalo and Rochester, and Cubans are slightly over-represented in Syracuse and Nassau County.

This report takes two approaches to evaluating the effects of Latino geographic dispersion across New York State, between 2000 and 2005, on economic conditions. First, we consider the “upside” of dispersion

FIGURE 1A. EACH GROUP AS A PERCENTAGE OF OF LOCAL POPULATIONS OF NEW YORK STATE, 2000 CENSUS

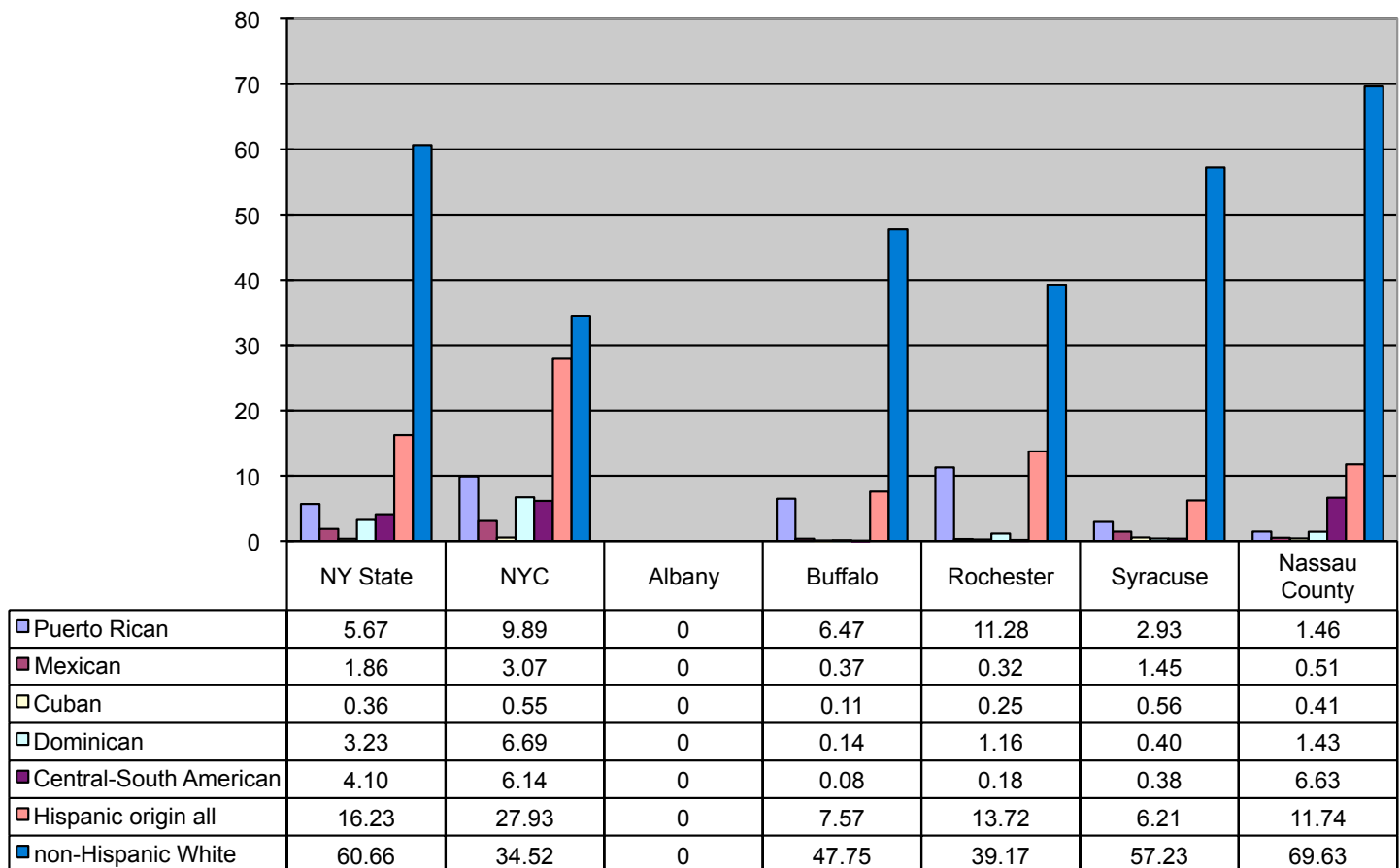


by using three indicators of achievement for Latinos in each metropolitan area, including education (measured as the percent that are high school graduates and college graduates), types of work (the percentage in managerial or professional jobs), and income (measured both as median household income and median individual earnings). Second, we examine the “downside” of geographic mobility using three measures of the economic challenges for Latinos in these metropolitan areas, including the percent unemployed, the percent living below the poverty level, and the percent of households that are women-headed (although the latter figures are only for 2005). Due to the data

limitations mentioned above, the charts used in these two sections illustrate the aggregate, or overall, picture for Latinos in each city, rather than outcomes for separate nationality groups. However, these tables do reveal the outcomes separately for men and women.

We begin on a positive note with the indicators of socioeconomic success and any advantages for Latinos who consider a move that would take them outside of New York City.

FIGURE 1B. EACH GROUP AS A PERCENT OF LOCAL POPULATIONS OF NEW YORK STATE, 2005 (ACS)



Indicators of Socioeconomic Success: Education, Good Jobs, and Income

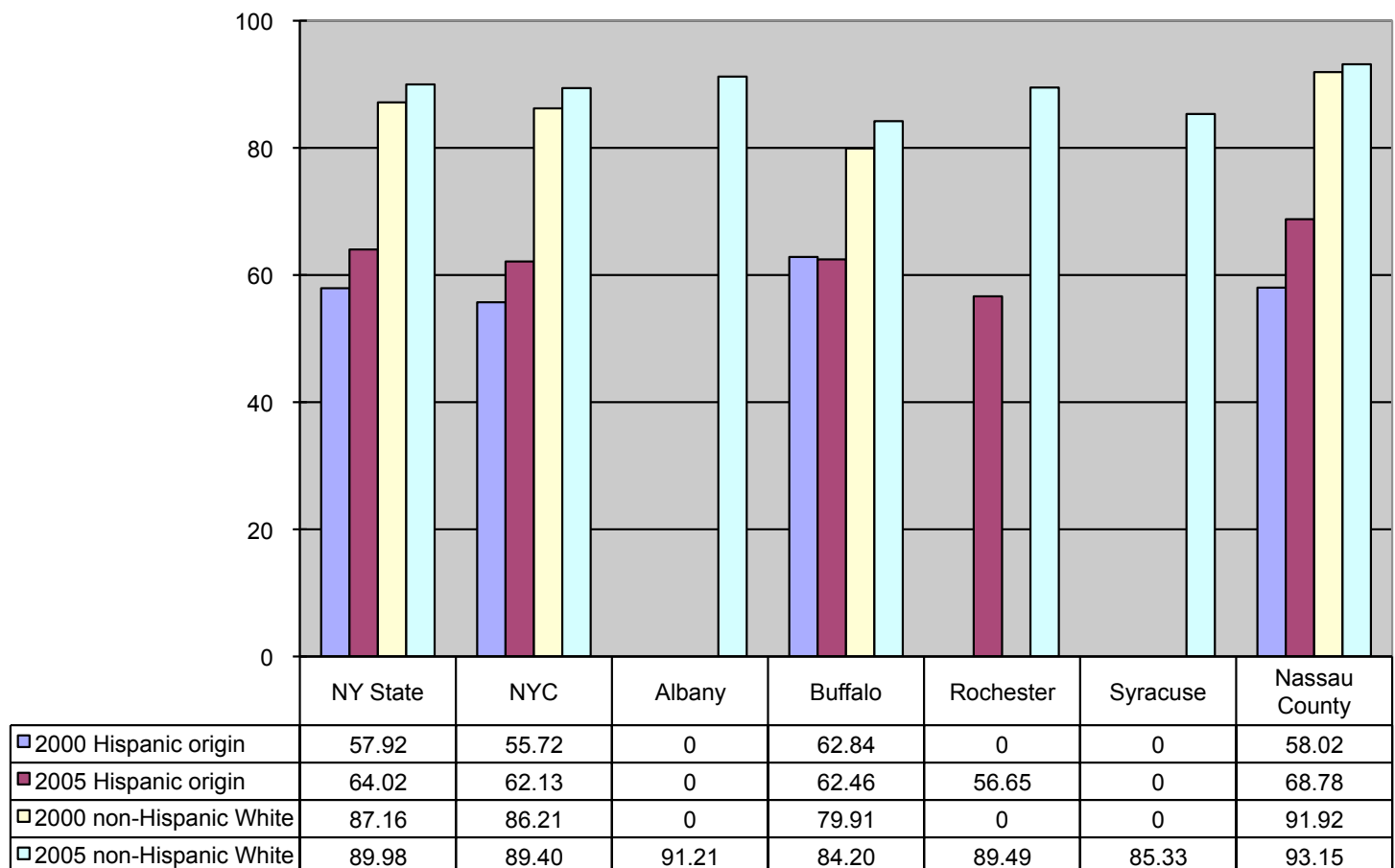
EDUCATION

Figures 2a & 2b present data on educational success in 2000 and 2005, measured as the percent high school graduates among Latinos and non-Hispanic whites (Figure 2a), and separately for men and women (Figure 2b), in each city. In general, the news is good: Latinos have increased their high school graduation rates in all cities (for which there is comparative data) except in Buffalo, where graduation rates are holding steady. Most of the cities are close to the 2005

statewide average of 64.0 percent of Latinos graduating from high school, and there is no clear upstate-downstate split. However, there is some variation, with rather low graduation rates in Rochester (56.7%) and relatively high ones in Nassau County (68.8%).

Over this same five-year period the non-Hispanic white high school graduate rate has increased, too, but not as quickly as among Latinos. As a result, the Latino-white gap in high school education has narrowed statewide, in New York City and especially in Nassau County, where the gap declined from 33.9 to 24.4 percent.

FIGURE 2A. PERCENT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE OR MORE FOR SPECIFIC SELECTED LOCATIONS OF NEW YORK STATE, 2000-05 (ACS)

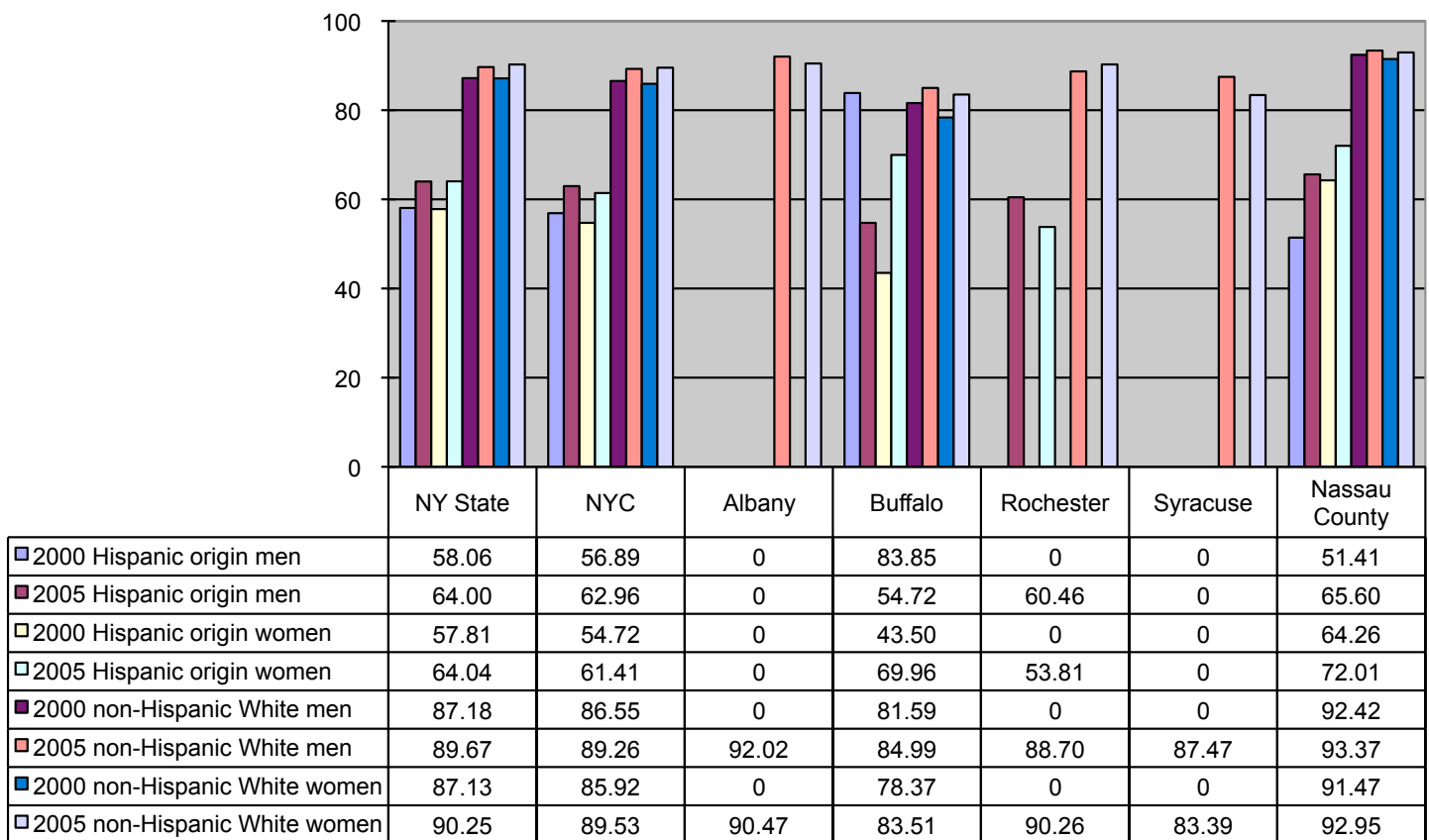


Nonetheless, on average in New York State, about 64 percent of Latinos versus 90 percent of non-Hispanic white students graduate from high school (or higher).

Statewide, there was relatively little difference in 2005 Latino high school graduation rates by sex (64 percent for both men and women), although men's rates are surprisingly higher in Rochester, and women's are significantly higher in Buffalo and Nassau County. These sex differences may be related to the sex-segregated job opportunities in each of these locations, at least for Latinos. Among non-Hispanic whites, there are also few statewide sex differences in

2005 high school graduate rates, except in Albany and Syracuse where only slightly more men than women have graduated from high school.

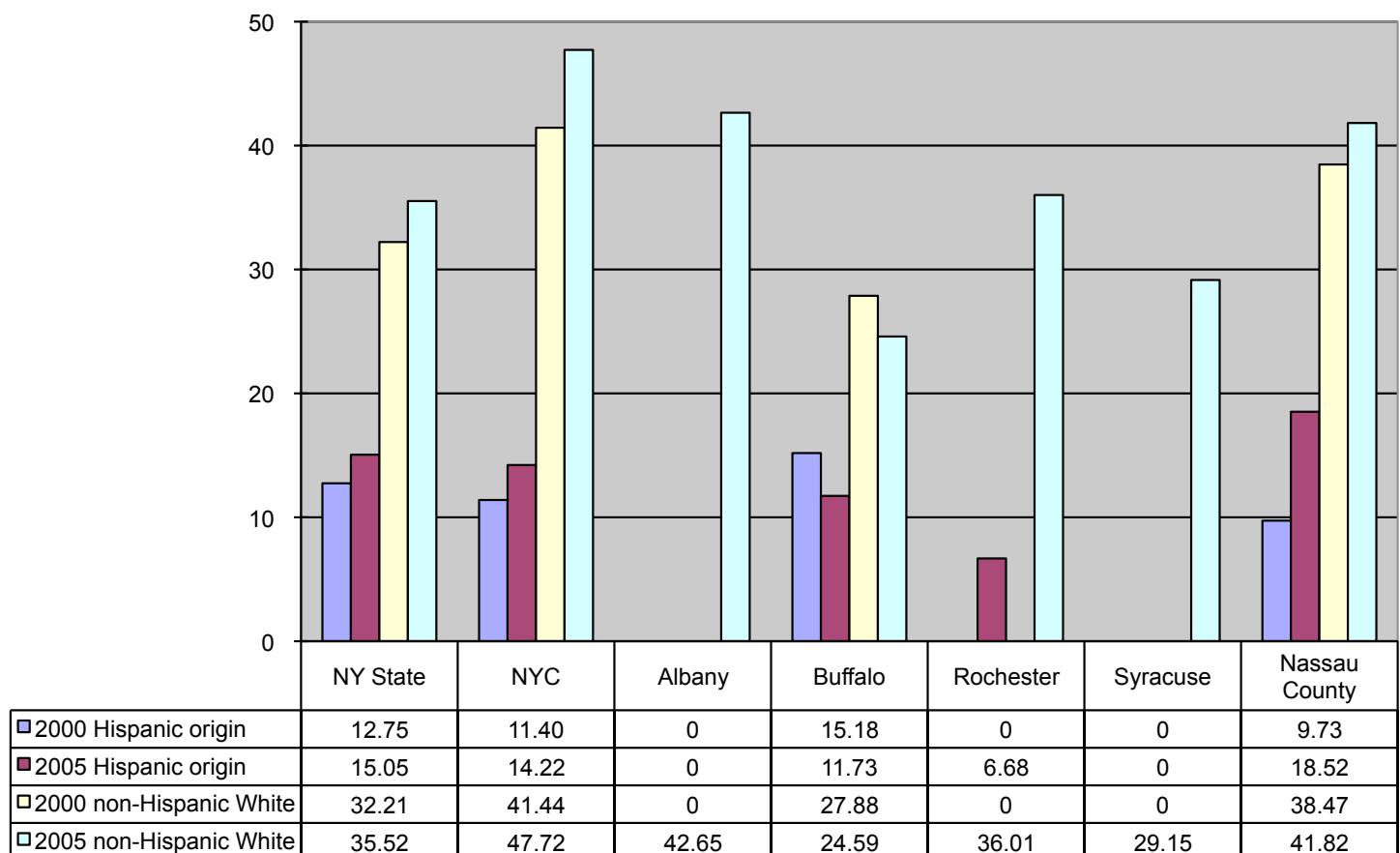
FIGURE 2B. PERCENT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE OR MORE FOR SELECTED LOCATIONS OF NEW YORK STATE, BY SEX, 2000-05 (ACS)



While high school graduation is needed for most jobs today, college education is often required for higher paying employment. Therefore, Figures 2c & 2d compare 2000 and 2005 college graduation rates, overall (Figure 2c) and by sex (Figure 2d). Importantly, education levels are higher in New York State than nationally: 15.1 percent of Latinos and 35.5 percent of non-Hispanic white New Yorkers held BA degrees in 2005 (Figure 2c), compared to 12.0 and 28.0 percent, respectively, at a national level (CPS 2005, Table 217). Similar to the trend for high school diplomas, rates of bachelor's degrees (BAs) for Latinos and non-Hispanic whites also have increased over the five year period, except in Buffalo where fewer of both groups are college graduates in 2005 than previously, suggesting that the college-educated are seeking jobs elsewhere.

Residence in different metropolitan areas affects the 2005 rates of Latino college-educated adults, whose state average is 15.1 percent. Rochester, with a low rate of only 6.7 percent, does not seem to attract Latino BAs, in contrast to Nassau County (18.5%) that does. For non-Hispanic whites the state average is 35.5 percent, with a wider spread from a low of 24.6 percent in Buffalo to a high of 47.7 percent in New York City. In spite of the increase in Latino college graduates, the gap in BA-holders between Latinos and whites has increased slightly statewide since 2000, and in New York City and Buffalo. Once again, Nassau County stands alone with a 5.4 percent decline in that gap (from 28.7 to 23.3 percent), caused by a greater increase in college graduates among Latinos there.

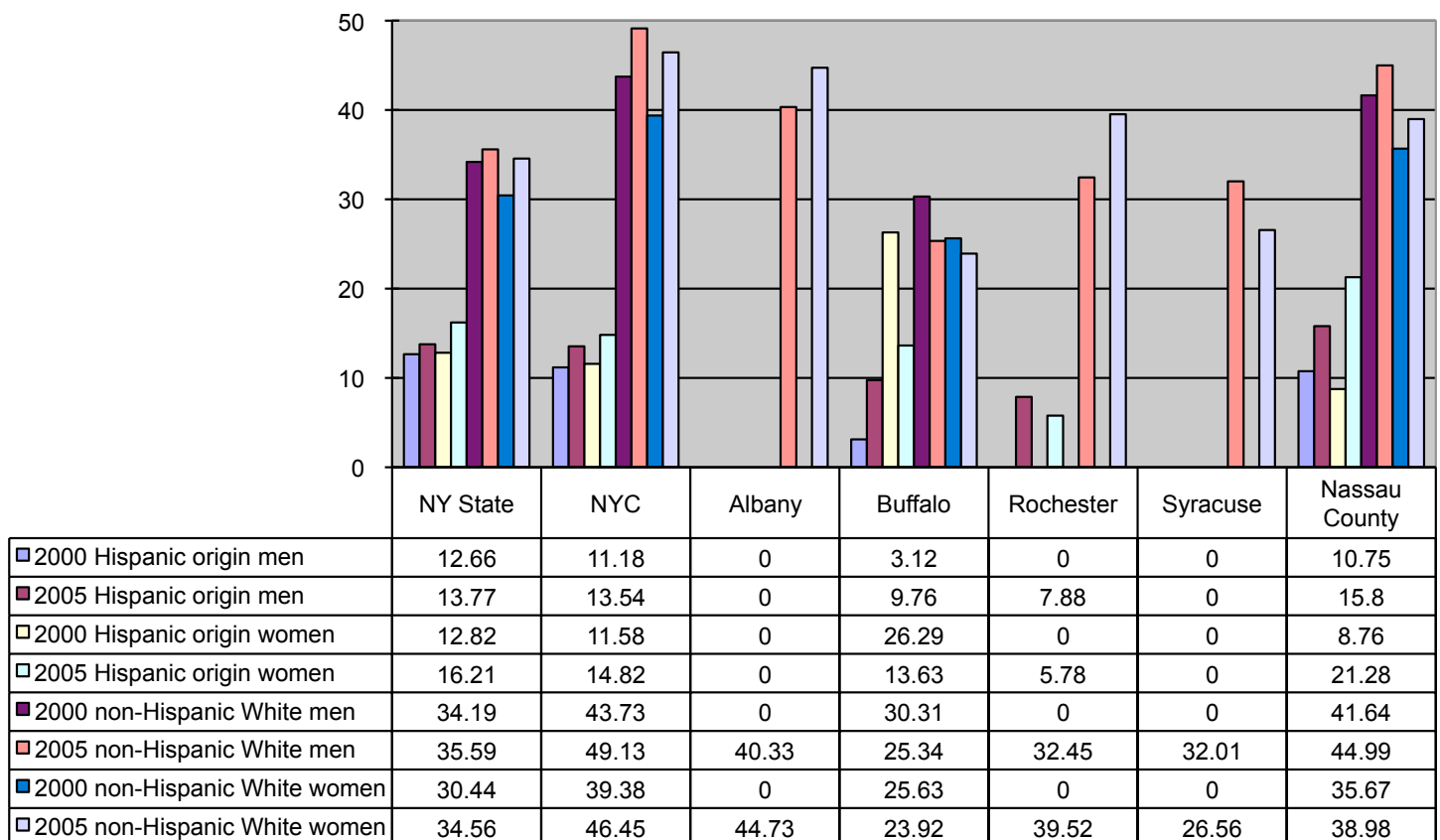
FIGURE 2C. PERCENT COLLEGE GRADUATES FOR SELECTED LOCATIONS OF NEW YORK STATE, 2000-05 (ACS)



Sex differences in Latino college graduation rates are greater than those for high school diplomas. Statewide, in 2005, 16.2 percent of Latinas, but only 13.8 percent of Latinos, held a bachelor's degree. Looking at specific locations, Latinas are also more likely to hold BAs in New York City, Buffalo, and Nassau County—probably due to the job markets in those cities. In Rochester, Latinos hold more BAs than Latinas, but their degree rate is a very low 7.9 percent. New York State Latinas' educational achievements are not a surprise because, nationally, Latinas (12.1%) also are more likely than Latino men (11.8%) to hold BAs (CPS 2005, Table 218). Furthermore, this replicates a common pattern found in the Caribbean where women also are more likely than men to hold bachelor's degrees and work in white-collar jobs.

Statewide, among non-Hispanic whites, women are only slightly less likely than men (34.6 versus 35.6 percent) to hold BAs, but differences within particular metropolitan areas are greater than that. Non-Hispanic white men are between 1.4 and 6 percent more likely to hold BAs than women in New York City, Buffalo, Syracuse, and Nassau County, but non-Hispanic white women are more likely than men (by 4.4 to 7.1 percent) to hold BAs in Albany and Rochester. In spite of these sex differences, non-Hispanic white women and men in New York State are consistently more likely to hold college degrees than Hispanic women and men, as they are nationally (26.8% for white women and 29.4 percent for white men, CPS 2005, Table 218).

FIGURE 2D. PERCENT COLLEGE GRADUATES FOR SELECTED LOCATIONS OF NEW YORK STATE, BY SEX, 2000-05 (ACS)



GOOD JOBS

The next measure of success is employment in managerial and professional (M-P) work. Figure 3a shows that the statewide percentage of Latinos in these jobs remained fairly stable between 2000 and 2005 at about 20.7 percent, while non-Hispanic whites increased their hold on these jobs by about 2 percent to reach 42.5 percent employment in managerial or professional work. Because of this pattern, the statewide gap between Latinos and whites in these jobs is large and has increased by 2 percent.

Nonetheless, place does have some impact on the percentage of workers who hold these desirable jobs.

In 2005, Latinos did slightly better than the statewide average when living in New York City (20.9%), but worse than average in Nassau County (17.3%) although the range between these two locations is small, especially because of missing data for other locations. On the other hand, there was considerable variation among locations for non-Hispanic whites' employment in managerial-professional work during 2005, ranging from lows in Buffalo and Syracuse of 33 and 36.8 percent, respectively, to a high in New York City of 53.2 percent, with Albany, Rochester, and Nassau County falling in between, suggesting that for whites the difference is not merely an upstate-downstate split.

FIGURE 3A. PERCENT IN MANAGERIAL-PROFESSIONAL JOBS FOR SELECTED LOCATIONS OF NEW YORK, 2000-05 (ACS)

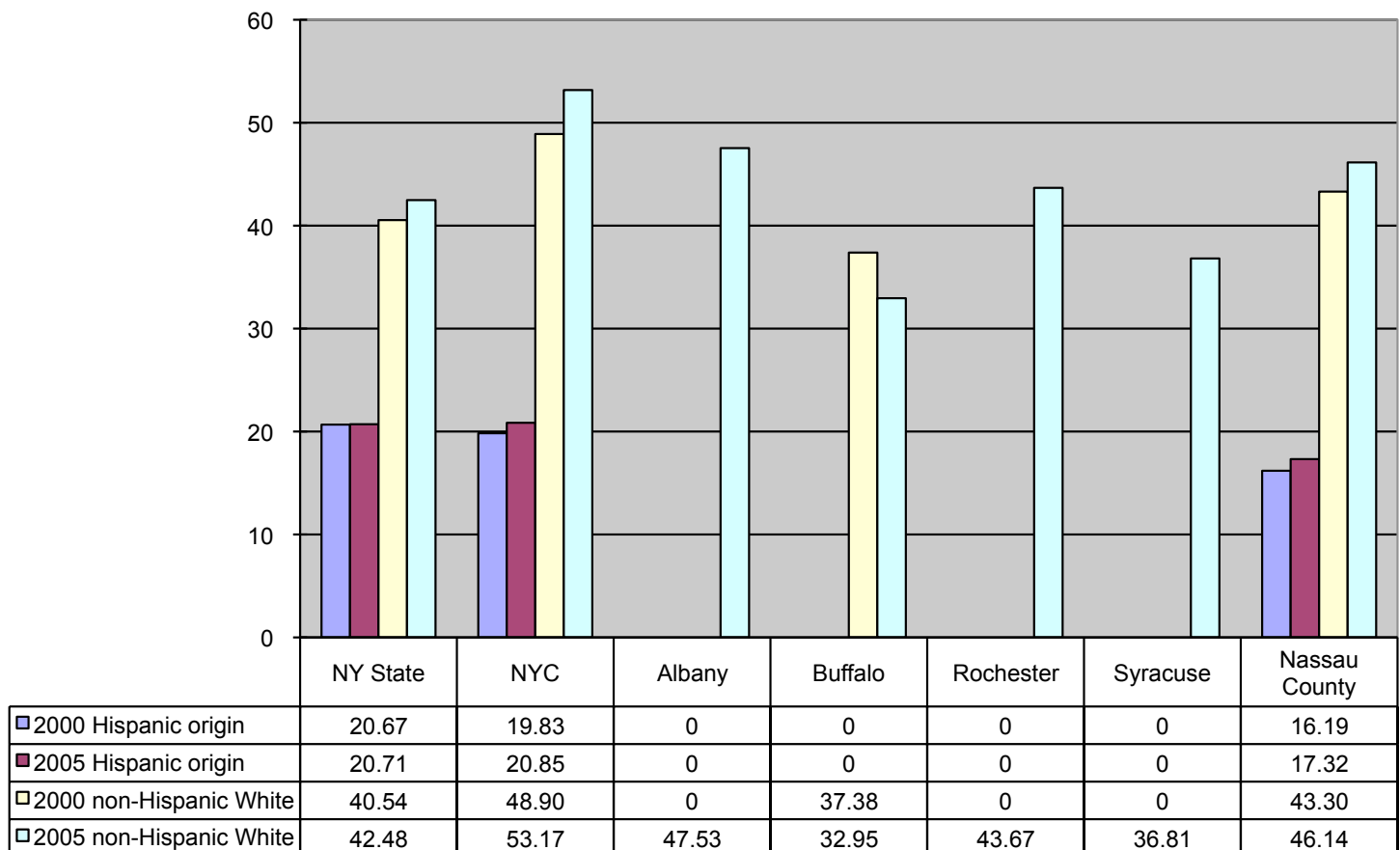
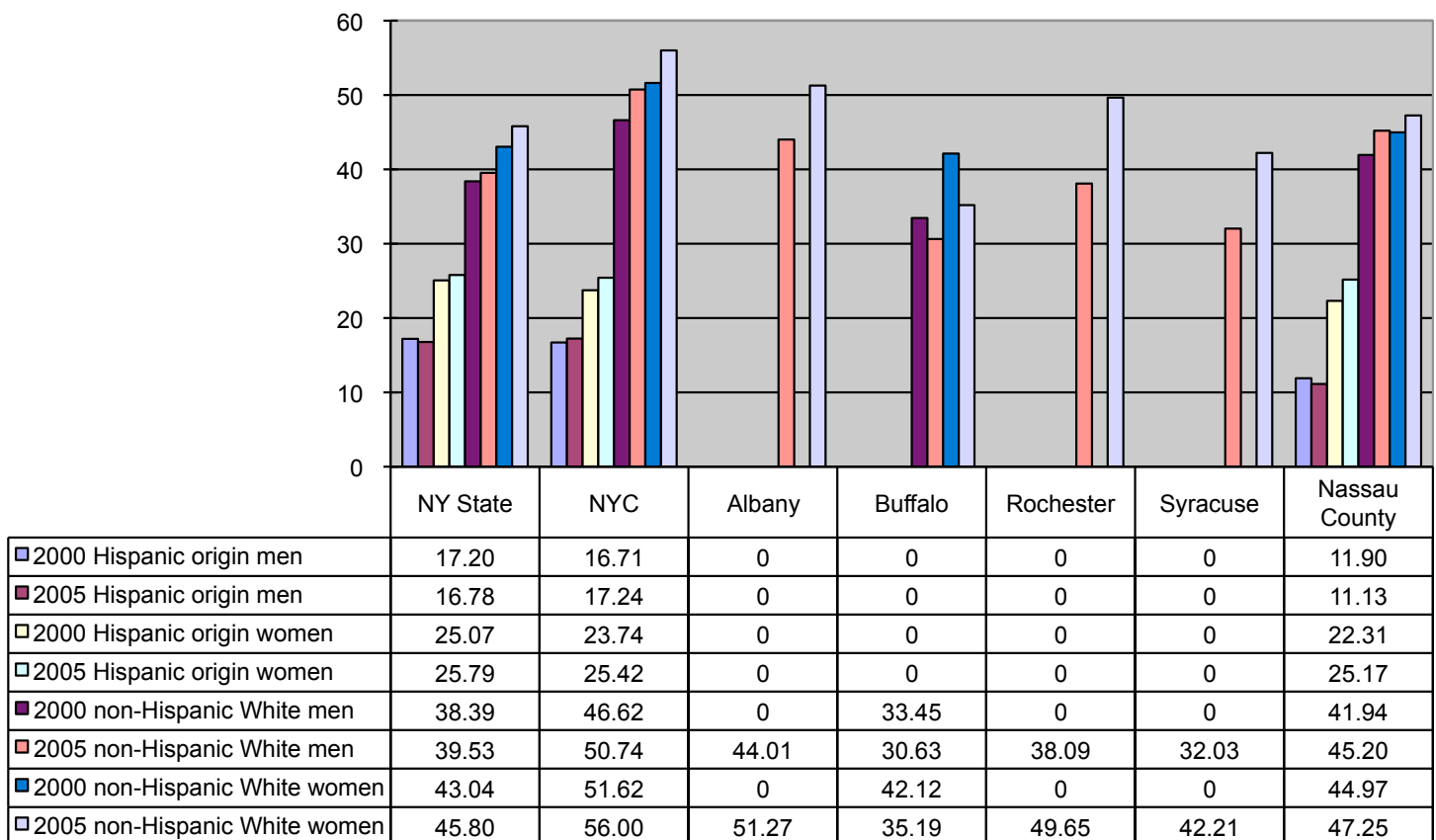


Figure 3b shows the gender gaps in managerial-professional employment, and its change over five years. As is true nationwide, a greater percentage of Latinas (25.8%) than Latinos (16.8%), and a greater percentage of white women (45.8%) than of white men (39.5%) hold managerial and professional jobs in New York State. Once again, there is variation by location, with the Latino male-female gap being the largest in Nassau County (11.1 vs. 25.2 percent)—due to the under-representation of men in these jobs, rather than an over-representation of women in managerial and professional jobs there. Meanwhile, the non-Hispanic white male-female gap was unusually large in

Rochester (38.1 versus 49.7 percent) and Syracuse (32.0 versus 42.2 percent)—but in Rochester this is due to high rates of white women’s managerial-professional employment, and in Syracuse it is due to low men’s rates. While these are both “upstate” cities, there appear to be M-P employment opportunities for white women in Rochester.

FIGURE 3B. PERCENT IN MANAGERIAL-PROFESSIONAL JOBS FOR SELECTED LOCATIONS OF NEW YORK, BY SEX, 2000-05 (ACS)

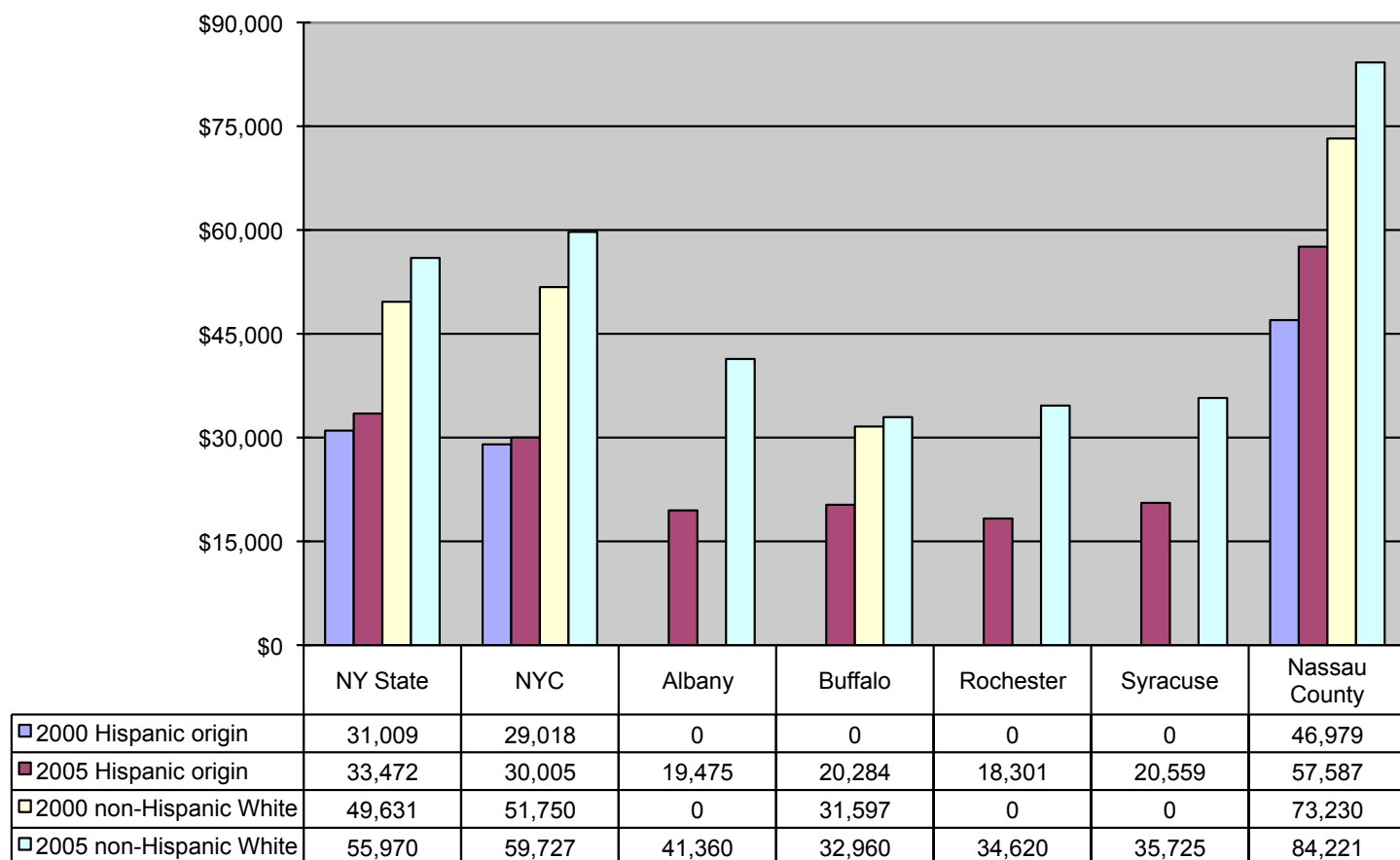


INCOME

In which cities do Latino New Yorkers earn the most money and have there been any changes? This question is answered here in two ways: first, by looking at median household income and, second, by examining median individual earnings. Figure 4 depicts the median income for entire households in 2000 and 2005. The good news is that, statewide, Latino household incomes have increased over five years in all the locations for which there are comparable measures, and the Latino household average is \$33,472. Indeed, in

Nassau County, with a strong economy, an educated population, and a unique mixture of Hispanic national origin groups, the Latino median household income reaches \$57,587. Unfortunately, Latinos do not achieve this average in most of the locations in this study. In Albany, Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse, Latinos have much lower household incomes, ranging from \$18,301 to \$20,559, reflecting both job opportunities in upstate economies and fewer highly educated Latinos. These figures are near or below the 2005 national poverty level of \$19,971 for a family of four.

FIGURE 4. MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME FOR SELECTED LOCATIONS OF NEW YORK STATE, 2000-05 (ACS)

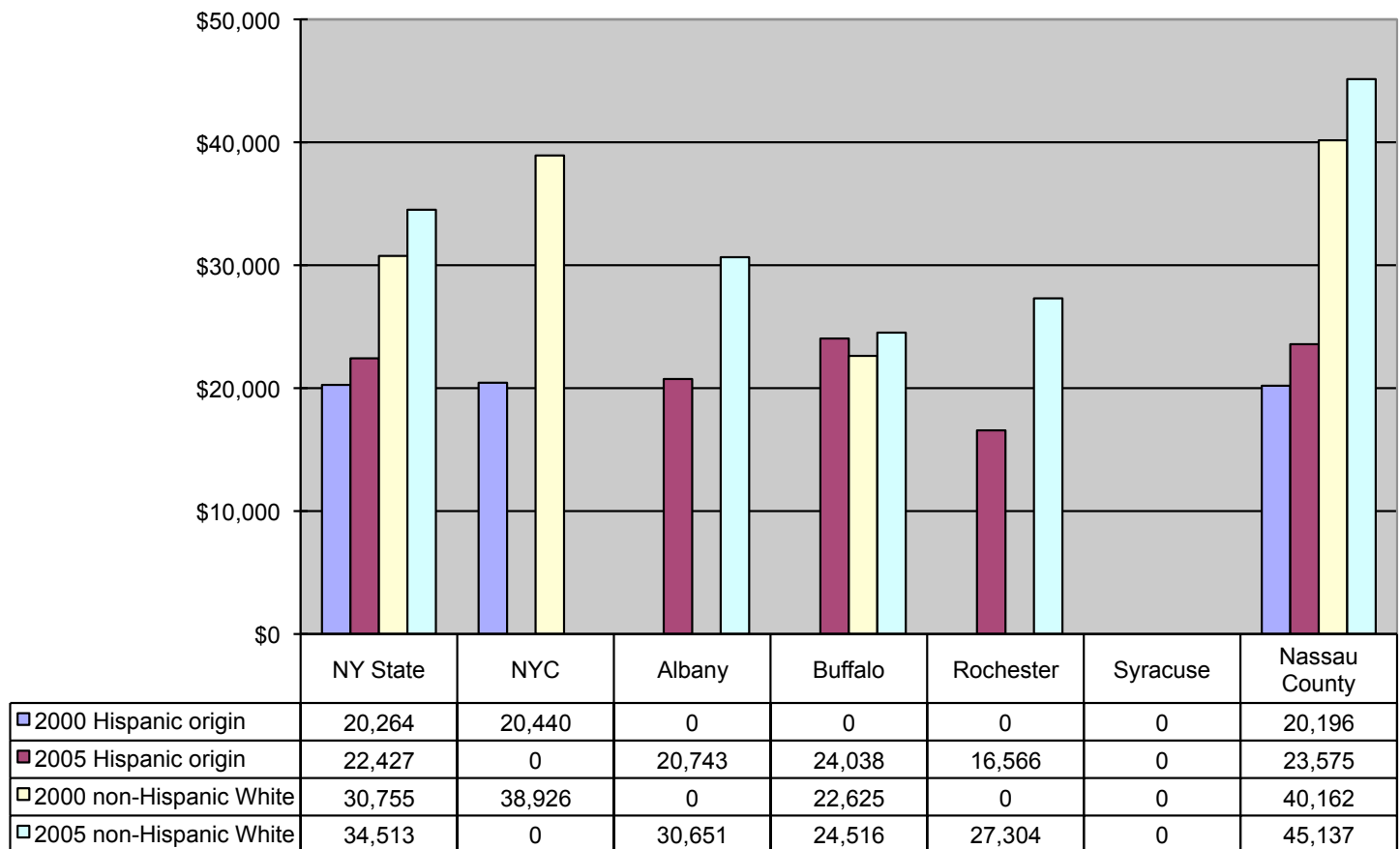


How does this compare with non-Hispanic white households? In general, white households have a median income of \$55,970, which is \$22,500 higher than Latino incomes. But this relatively large race-nationality gap also changes depending upon the local economy. Indeed, non-Hispanic whites and Latinos who live upstate both have lower incomes than the statewide average for their groups; and, as a result, the white-Latino household income gap is smaller (between \$12,600 and \$15,100) for Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse than it is statewide. Only in the downstate

locations of Nassau County and New York City is the gap larger than average, although both groups have especially high earnings in Nassau County.

Another way to consider income is to see how much each employed person earns, as shown in Figure 4a. Because these are individual incomes, rather than household ones, the numbers are lower than in Figure 4. Nonetheless, earnings increased by about \$2,200 among Latinos and by about \$3,800 for whites in New York between 2000 and 2005.

FIGURE 4A. MEDIAN EARNINGS FOR SELECTED LOCATIONS OF NEW YORK STATE, 2000-05 (ACS)

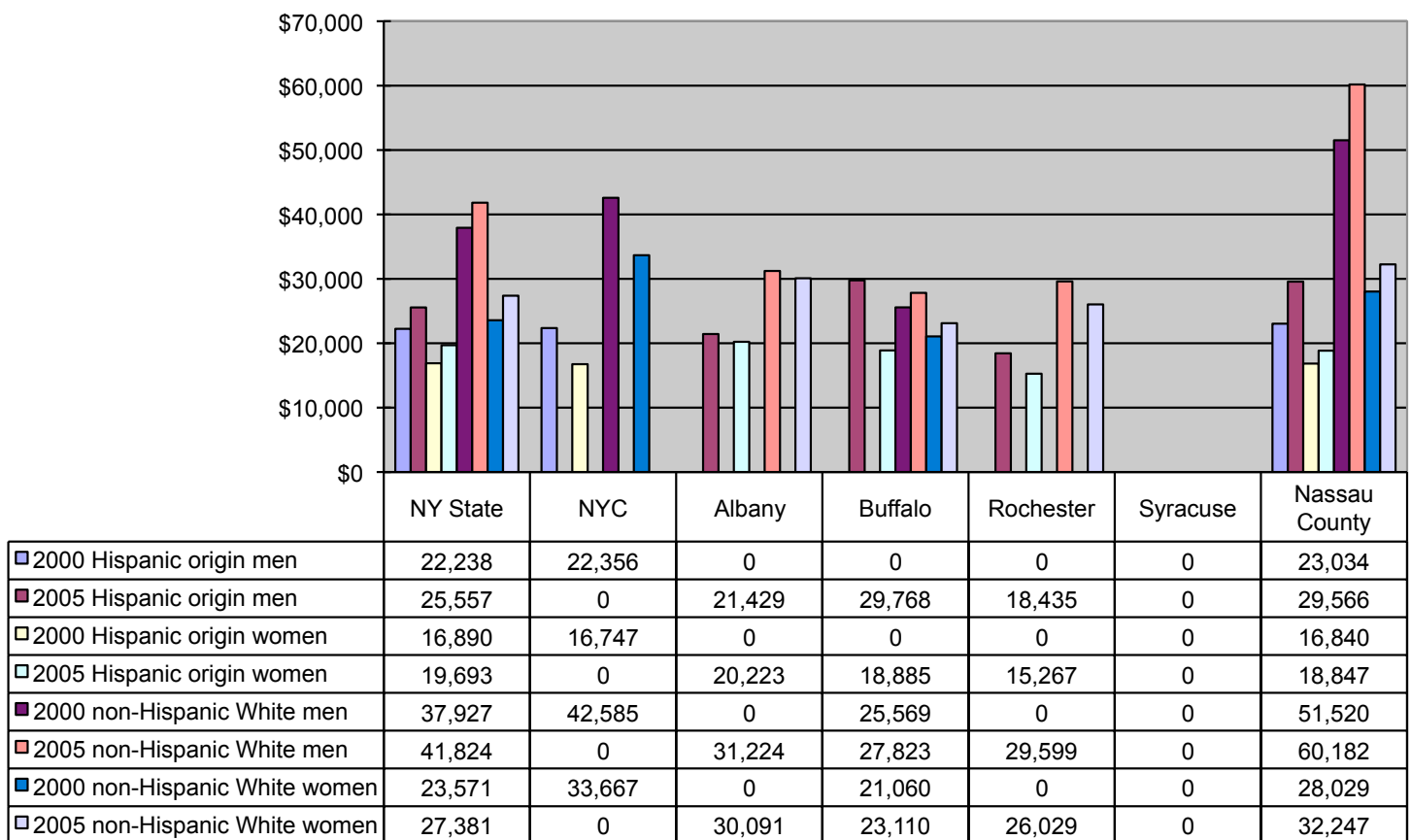


Both sex and race/ethnicity shape earnings, as shown in Figure 4b. On average, Latino men and non-Latino white men have higher earnings than women of the same group. Statewide, in 2005, Latinas took home 77 percent of Latino men's earnings, but white women garnered only 65 percent of white men's earnings. Nonetheless, white women earned more dollars than Latinas (\$27,381 vs. \$19,693), and white men earned more than Latino men (\$41,824 vs. \$25,557). So, why do Latinas take home fully 77 percent of Latino men's income, and white women make just 65 percent? First, since Latinas are more likely than Latinos to have a BA degree, they are more likely to have jobs comparable to non-Hispanic whites of the same gender. Thus, Latino men make a lot less (61.1%) than white men, while Latinas' income is closer to that of white

women (71.9%). Nonetheless, because of occupational segregation, women's professions tend not to pay either Latinas or non-Hispanic white women as well as men's professions can. This type of income disparity probably is best addressed with comparable worth policies.

As for many other indicators, income is shaped by the economy of the specific location. For example, Albany has considerable gender equity, with Latinas and white women earning 94 and 96 percent, respectively, of what Latinos and white men earn, perhaps due to state employment regulations and compressed pay scales. However, in Nassau County, Latino men were striding ahead, while Latinas seemed caught in lower paying jobs. In 2000, the gender pay gap there was 73 percent among Latinos and 54 percent among non-Hispanic whites—but by

FIGURE 4B. MEDIAN EARNINGS FOR SELECTED LOCATIONS OF NEW YORK STATE, BY SEX, 2000-05 (ACS)



2005, these figures were 64 and 54 percent, respectively. This represents a steady situation for white women, although non-Hispanic whites of both genders earned their highest 2005 incomes in Nassau County. But for Latinas, this was a decline. Latino men did equally well both in Nassau County and Buffalo; but Latinas earned their highest average incomes in Albany.

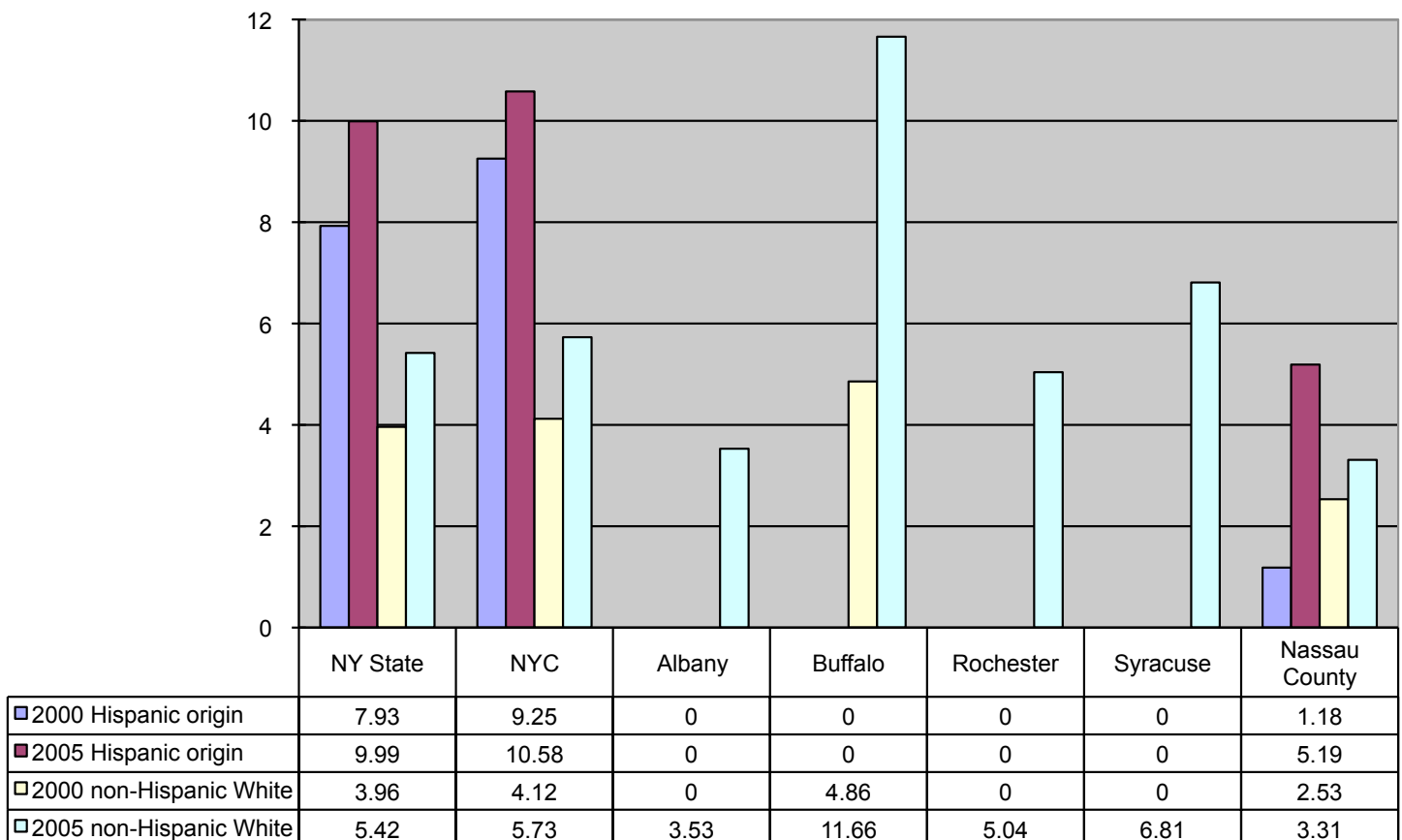
Indicators of Socioeconomic Barriers

Another way to observe the effects of geographic dispersion is to focus on socioeconomic barriers, such as unemployment, poverty, and women-headed households.

UNEMPLOYMENT

As shown in the aggregate statistics of Figure 5a, unemployment rates increased between 2000 and 2005 for both Hispanics and non-Hispanic whites. In 2005, unemployment rates were higher than average for both Latinos and whites who lived in New York City, but lower for both groups in Nassau County. The picture in upstate New York is clouded by a lack of comparative data, but the 2005 unemployment rates for non-Hispanic whites were lower in Albany (3.5%) than their state-wide average (5.4%), and higher than that average in Syracuse (6.8%) and, especially, in Buffalo (11.7%). Thus economic opportunities have declined everywhere, but especially in western New York State.

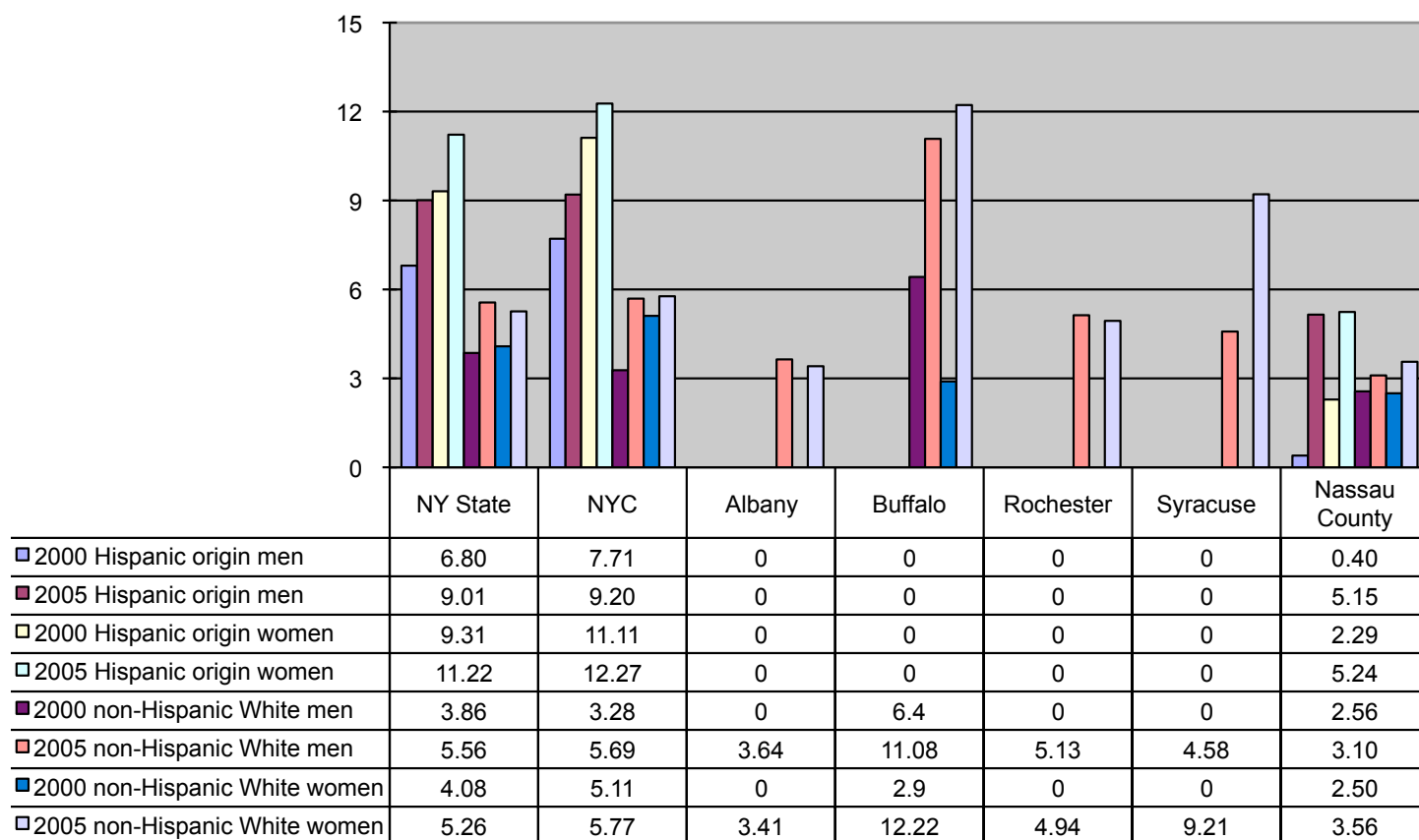
FIGURE 5A. AVERAGE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR SELECTED LOCATIONS OF NEW YORK STATE, 2000-05 (ACS)



Unemployment can also vary according to gender and location, as shown in Figure 5b. On the one hand, in 2005 non-Hispanic white men tended to have similar statewide unemployment levels as white women (5.6 versus 5.3 percent). This was also true in most cities—even in Buffalo, where both white women and men had high unemployment rates. It is only in Syracuse that white women experienced unemployment at double the rate of white men (9.2 versus 4.6 percent). On the other hand, among Hispanics, Latinas had higher unemployment rates in 2005 than Latinos, both statewide (11.2 versus 9.0 percent) and in New York City (12.3 versus 9.2 percent). Latinas might have higher unemployment

rates because they are more persistent in looking for work, remaining in the “unemployed” category instead of retreating to the home, while white women may stop looking for work more easily, thus technically dropping out of the labor force and becoming “discouraged workers” who are not considered unemployed. As with many of the previous trends, Nassau County (and Albany) have some of the most encouraging data, with men and women of each racial-ethnic group having relatively low and similar rates of unemployment.

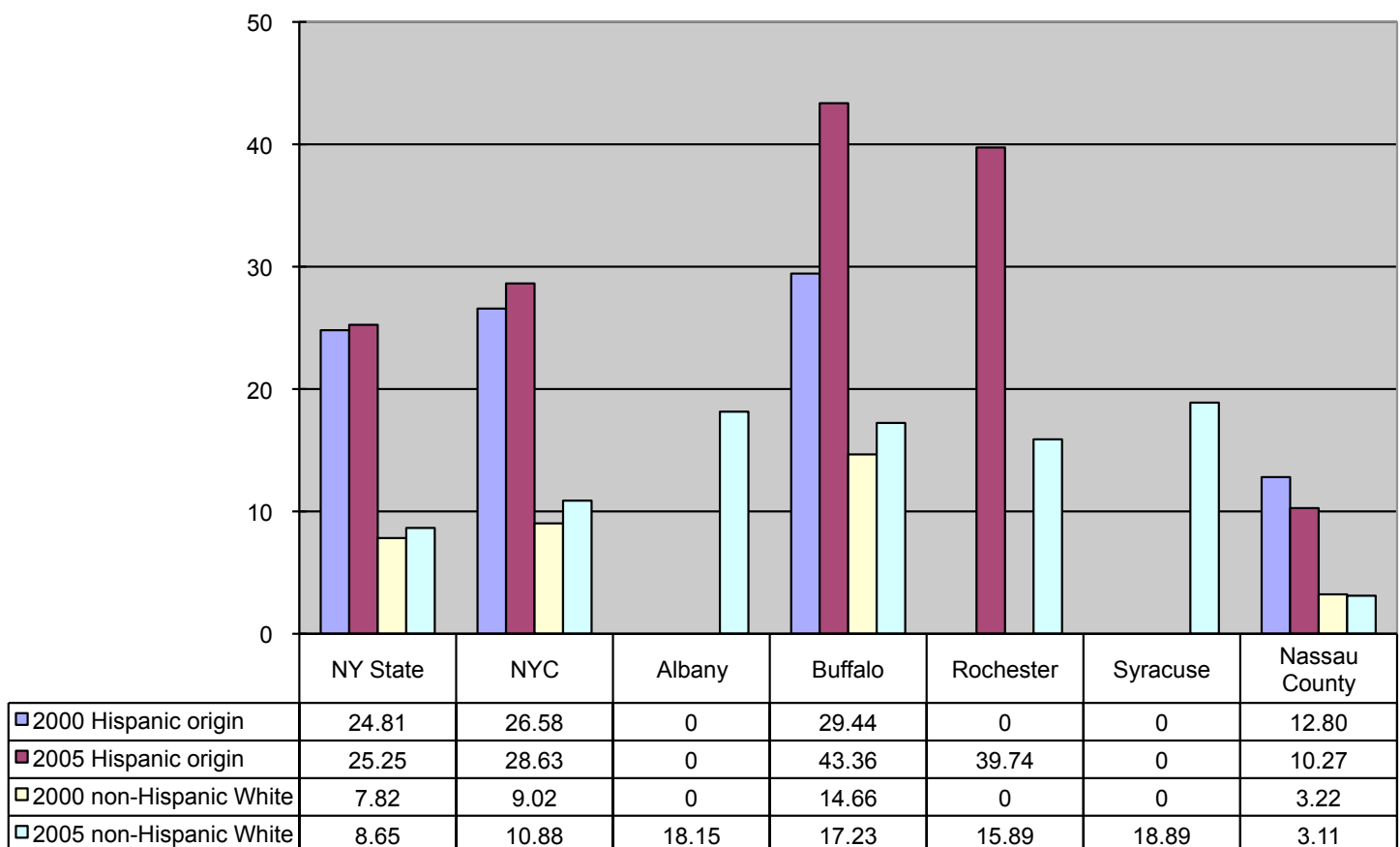
FIGURE 5B. AVERAGE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR SELECTED LOCATIONS OF NEW YORK STATE, BY SEX, 2000-05 (ACS)



POVERTY

In 2005, the national poverty threshold was \$10,160 for an individual (under 65 years old), \$12,755 for two persons, and \$19,971 for a family of four. In New York State, the 2005 poverty levels averaged 25.3 percent among Latinos and 8.7 percent among non-Hispanic whites (see Figure 6a). This represents a huge gap in life changes between the two groups, although it represents less than one percent increase in poverty since 2000 for each group. Looking downstate, for both groups, poverty rates were only 2 to 3 percent higher in New

York City than for the state, and they were less than half the statewide levels within Nassau County, reaching their lowest levels there. In contrast, the highest rates of poverty were found in upstate New York. In 2005, non-Hispanic white poverty ranged from 15.9 percent (Rochester) to 18.9 percent (Syracuse). Among Latinos, those rates reached up to 43.4 percent in Buffalo and 39.7 percent in Rochester. It seems that geographic dispersion away from the metropolitan center does not always result in improved income opportunities.

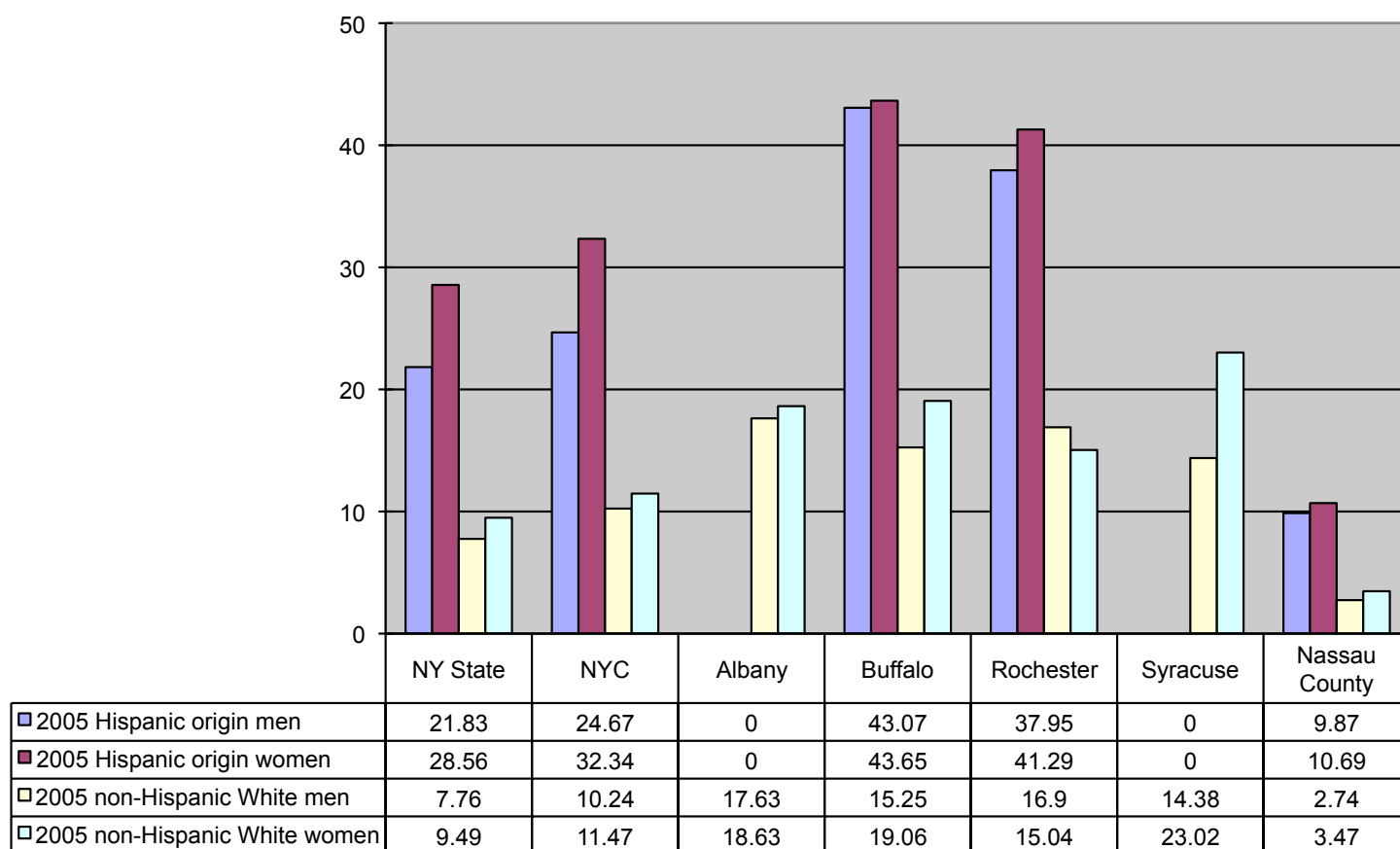
FIGURE 6A. PERCENT BELOW THE POVERTY LEVEL FOR SELECTED LOCATIONS OF NEW YORK STATE, 2000-05 (ACS)

Furthermore, in 2005, all women were more likely to live in poverty than men, except among non-Hispanic whites in Rochester (Figure 6b), generally putting the lives of children in female-headed families in additional jeopardy of poverty.

WOMEN-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

Some portion of Latino poverty can be attributed to living in female-headed households, however such living arrangements were not equally common across the state. If we take the 2005 statewide figure for Latinos (27.9 percent) as the “average” rate, then there was a cross-state range starting at a low point of 17.3 percent in Nassau County and 20.8 percent in Albany,

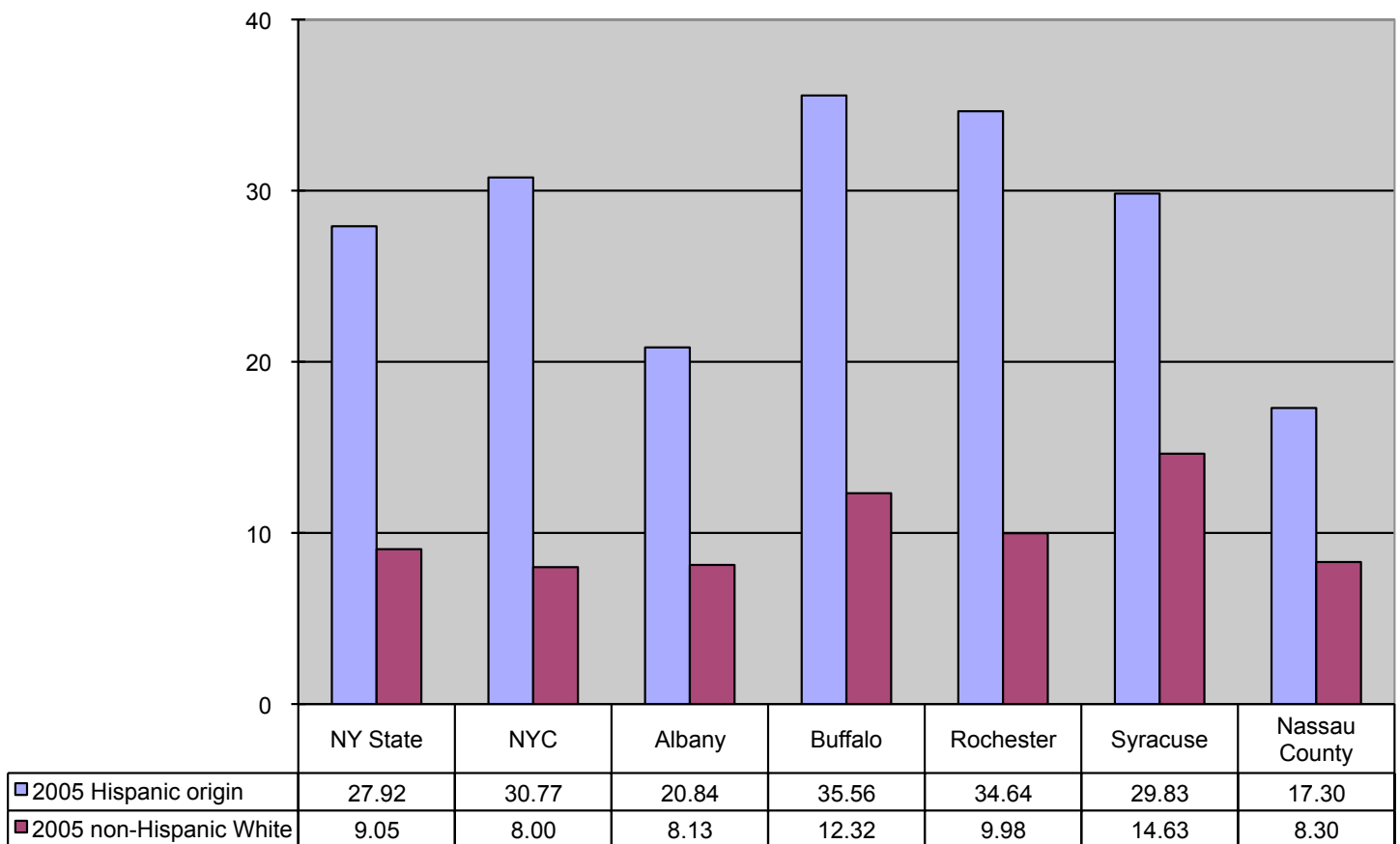
FIGURE 6B. PERCENT BELOW THE POVERTY LEVEL FOR SELECTED LOCATIONS OF NEW YORK STATE, BY SEX, 2005 (ACS)



up to a high of 35 percent female-headed Latino households in Buffalo and Rochester (see Figure 7). Non-Hispanic white households were less likely to be female-headed, averaging 9 percent statewide. They reached their lowest rates in New York City and Albany (8.0 and 8.1 percent, respectively) and their highest ones upstate, especially in Syracuse (14.6 percent). Evidently, there is no consistency in which

locale tended to have the most women-headed households, although all groups seem to have low rates in Albany and Nassau County and high rates in various upstate cities, especially in Buffalo.

FIGURE 7. PERCENT WOMEN-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS FOR SELECTED LOCATIONS OF NEW YORK STATE, 2005 (ACS)



Cross-Time and Cross-City Comparisons

Each Latino group grew in size between 2000 and 2005 within New York State. Growth was slow for Puerto Ricans and Cubans, about 1 and 7 percent, respectively, but there were substantial increases for Mexicans (33 percent), Dominicans (32 percent), and Central or South Americans (53 percent). Puerto Ricans remained the largest Latino group in New York and, proportionate to their statewide presence, they were over-represented during 2005 in Buffalo and Rochester, as well as in their more traditional location of New York City.

During the first five years of this decade there also were changes in the socio-economic indicators and life chances of New York's Latinos. Importantly, the Latino high school graduation rate increased in most cities, with little upstate-downstate difference in these rates, and the Latino-white gap in high school degrees decreased, but was still quite large (64 versus 90 percent). These rates were higher than the national ones, which were only 60 percent and 86 percent, respectively, but the 26 percent racial-ethnic gap was the same.

College graduation rates increased among New York's Latinos to 15.1 percent, but the non-Hispanic white rate increased faster and reached 35.5 percent, so the overall Latino-white BA gap increased and reached 20.4 percent. Non-Hispanic white men were 1 percent more likely than white women to achieve a college degree (35.6 versus 34.6 percent), but among Latinos, in almost all cities, women were more likely to hold a BA than men (16.2 versus 13.8 percent). There was more city variation among Latinos in their BA achievement rates than in their high school graduation rates.

Although Latino education rates have increased, the percentage of New York's Latinos holding managerial and professional jobs held steady between 2000 and 2005, while non-Hispanic whites increased their hold on these occupations. The already large gap between Latinos and whites increased by two percent in that time period to reach a 21.8 percent difference (or 20.7

for Latinos versus 42.5 percent for Whites), probably because of inadequate minority recruitment practices. But, as in the past, women (both non-Hispanic whites and Latinas) held these jobs more frequently than men. There is insufficient data on Latinos to say much about local variation, but non-Hispanic whites had their highest rates of managerial-professional employment in New York City, Albany, and Nassau County.

Between 2000 and 2005, the median household income increased by \$2,460 among New York's Hispanics, reaching \$33,472, and increased by \$6,340 for non-Hispanic whites, reaching \$55,970. As a result of these differential increments, the ratio of Latino to white household income worsened, from 62.5 percent in 2000 to 59.8 percent in 2005. Latino households only surpassed their 2005 average NY State income of \$33,472 in Nassau County, while white households surpassed their average income of \$55,970 when living in both Nassau County and New York City. Perhaps not surprisingly, both groups made less than average when living upstate, but as a result the Latino-white household income gap was smaller there.

In this same five-year period, New York's Latinos' individual earnings increased by about \$2,160 to \$22,427, and non-Hispanic white income increased by \$3,760 to \$34,513. Similar to household income, the ratio of Latino to white individual earnings worsened, but only slightly from 65.9 percent in 2000 to 65.0 percent in 2005. Overall, there was considerably more variation across the locales in the absolute levels of white income than Latino income. But women's median income varies a little differently from men's and, as a result, in 2005 Albany had the most gender equity (or the smallest gender pay gap) for both Latinos and non-Hispanic whites, other upstate cities were not as equitable, and the largest gender income gaps were found for both racial-ethnic groups in Nassau County.

Of course, the flip side of income is poverty. The percentage of both non-Hispanic whites and of Latinos living below the poverty level in New York State increased only slightly, by .83 and .44 percent, respectively over five years. While fully 25.3 percent of New York's Latinos lived below the poverty level in 2005, Latinos dropped from 3.2 times to 2.9 times more likely to live in poverty than non-Hispanic whites. There was considerable variation across the state: Latino poverty rates sharply increased in Buffalo (from 29.4 to 43.4 percent, but decreased somewhat in Nassau County (from 12.8 to 10.3 percent). In almost all settings, both non-Hispanic white women and Latinas were more likely to be poor than their respective men, in part due to women's lower wages combined with the effects of female-headed households.

Part of the increased poverty is due to the concomitant increase in unemployment over five years among both whites and Latinos of both sexes and in all locations. Statewide, Latino unemployment rates increased from 7.9 to 10 percent, while non-Hispanic white unemployment increased from 4.0 to 5.4 percent. Thus Latinos were 1.8 times more likely to be unemployed than whites. Nonetheless, there were more gender differences in unemployment among Hispanics than among whites—with Latinas experiencing relatively higher unemployment than Latinos.

In sum, while Latino New Yorkers have had modest increases in their education, at both the high school and college levels, as well as in their household and individual earnings, large gaps persist and some gaps have widened between Hispanic and non-Hispanic white New Yorkers since the beginning of the twenty-first century. Furthermore, the increase in Latino education is not translating into increased access to managerial and professional jobs. In addition, persistent western New York problems with high unemployment and poverty seem to require economic development policies there.

With the national and New York State economic crises that began in mid-2008, and continue through 2009, there is the possibility of a significant reversion in those positive 2000-2005 trends, and only new data from the American Community Survey (ACS) and the 2010 Census will provide a more accurate picture as to whether the gains made in the 2000-2005 period will be sustained over the decade or if we will see a major setback in Latino efforts for socio-economic equity. Therefore, it is critical that policymakers who implement measures to deal with the challenging state and national budgetary crises pay attention to the potential impact of budgetary cuts on the minority workforce, develop measures that could protect the modest progress that has been made, and assess any setbacks that might result from this process.

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