

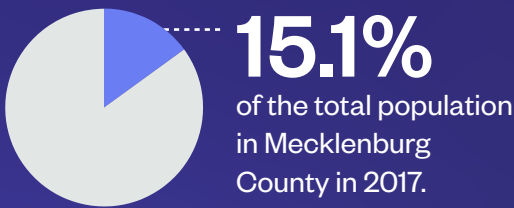
New Americans in Mecklenburg County

The Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants in the County¹



Population Growth

Immigrants made up



24.3%

of total population growth in the county was attributable to immigrants.

Between 2012 and 2017, the population in the county increased by

11.0%.

The immigrant population grew by

18.9%.

In 2017,

717,528

commuters worked in the county. Of these,

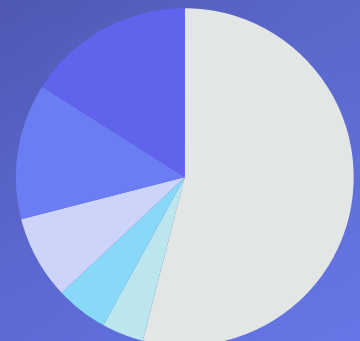
14.9%, or 107,071, were foreign born.



162,463

immigrants lived in the county in 2017. Their top five countries of origin were:

1. Mexico15.5%
2. India13.2%
3. Honduras 8.3%
4. El Salvador 4.6%
5. Colombia 4.0%

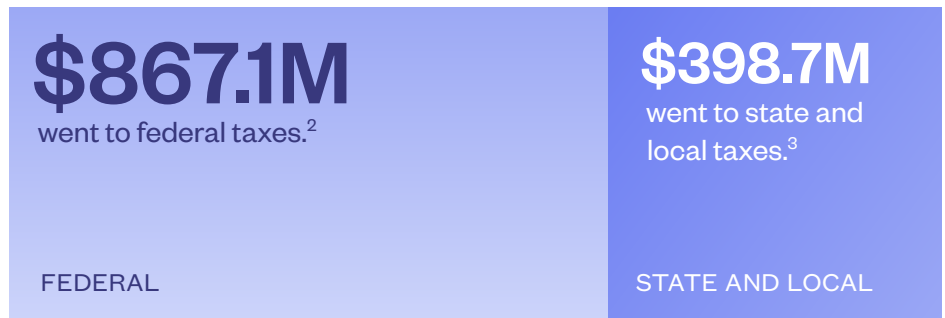


Spending Power & Tax Contributions

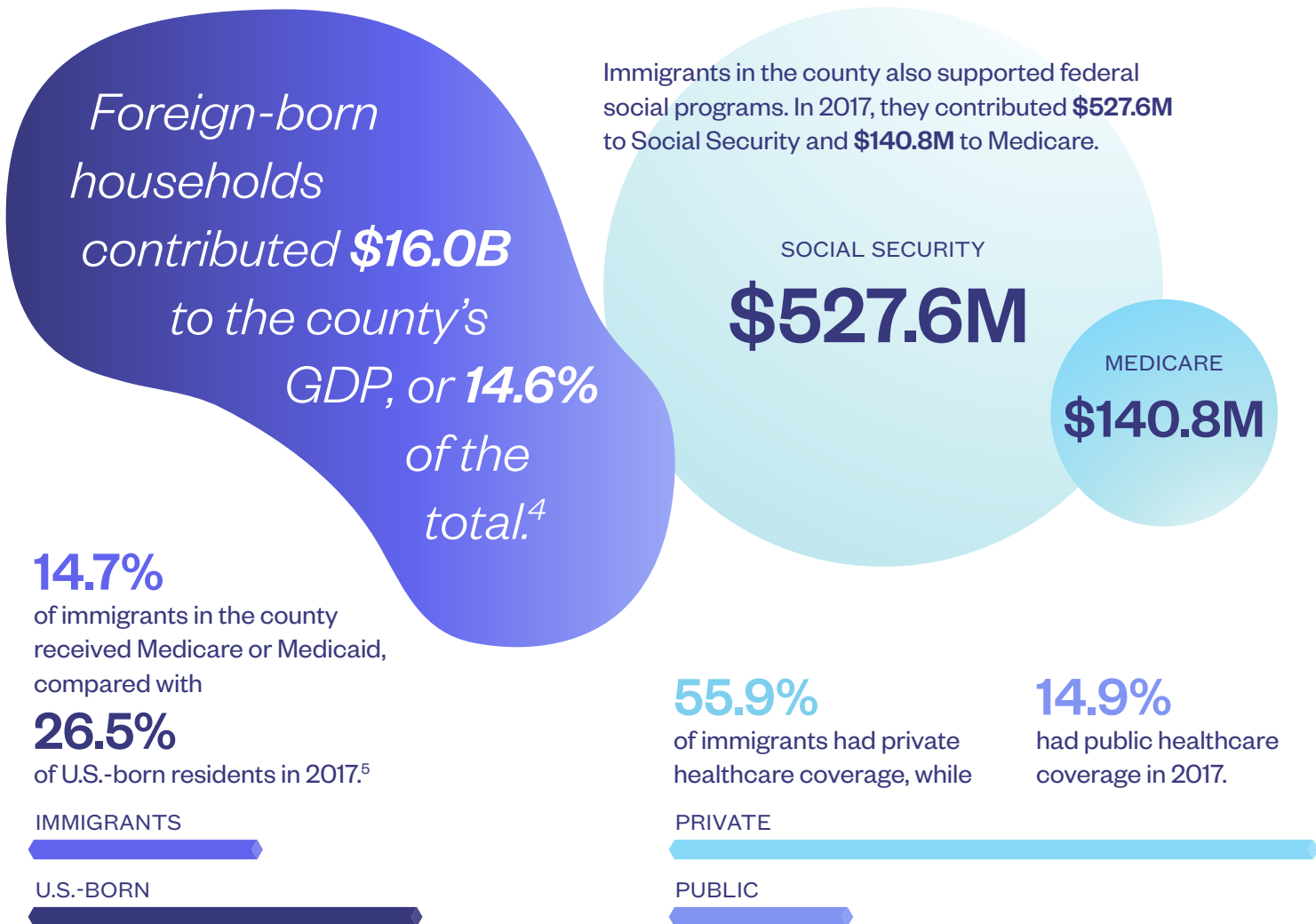
Given their income, immigrants contributed significantly to state and local taxes, including property, sales, and excise taxes levied by state and local governments.

Amount earned by immigrant households in 2017:

\$4.9B



Leaving them with **\$3.7B** in spending power.

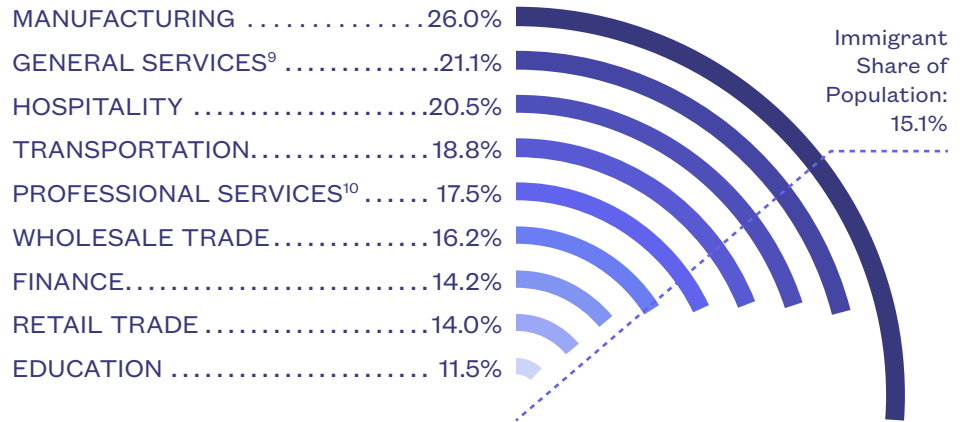
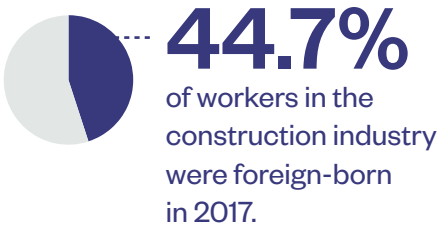


Workforce

Although the foreign-born made up **15.1%** of the county's overall population, they represented **18.6%** of its working-age⁶ population, **17.8%** of its employed labor force, and **25.0%** of its STEM⁷ workers in 2017.



Immigrants played a critical role in several **key industries** in the county. This included:

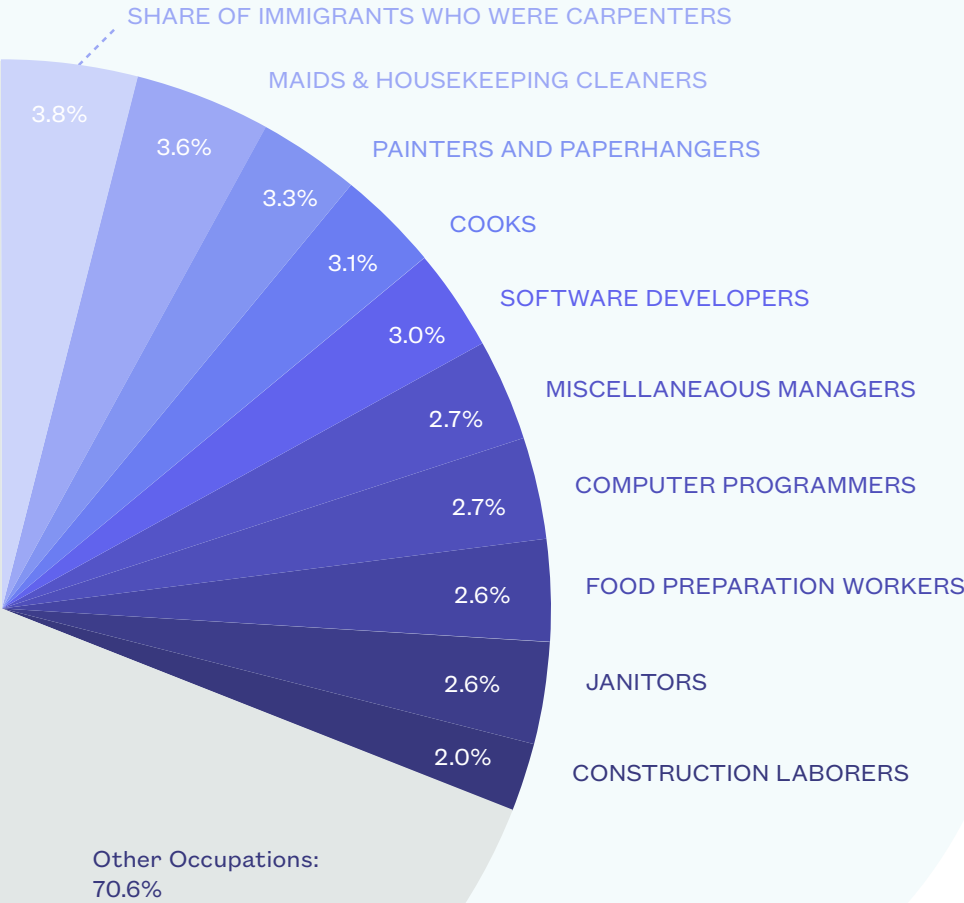


Because of the role immigrants play in the workforce helping companies keep jobs on U.S. soil, we estimate that:

*Immigrants living in the county had **helped create or preserve 7,473 local manufacturing jobs** that would have otherwise vanished or moved elsewhere by 2017.⁸*

Workforce (Continued)

Immigrants tended to work in these **occupations** in the county in 2017:



Entrepreneurship

Despite making up **15.1%** of the population, immigrants made up **16.4%** of the business owners in the county in 2017.

IMMIGRANT SHARE OF POPULATION IN THE COUNTY



IMMIGRANT SHARE OF ENTREPRENEURS IN THE COUNTY



8,326

immigrant entrepreneurs lived in Mecklenburg County in 2017.

\$184.6M

in business income was generated for the county by immigrant entrepreneurs that year.

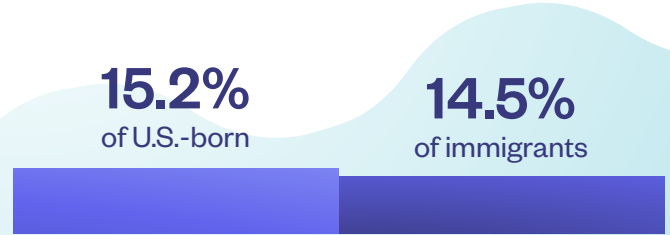
Businesses in the Region, 2012	Sales Revenue	Number of Jobs
AFRICAN AMERICAN-OWNED	\$1.5B	9,280
ASIAN-OWNED	\$2.5B	10,273
HISPANIC-OWNED ¹¹	\$960.3M	5,214

Education

Share of the county's population aged 25 or above that held a **bachelor's degree or higher** in 2017:



Share of the county's population aged 25 or above that held an **advanced degree** in 2017:



3,298

students who were enrolled in colleges and universities in the county during the fall of 2015 were temporary residents.¹²

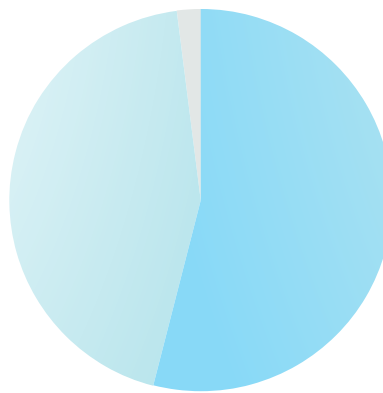
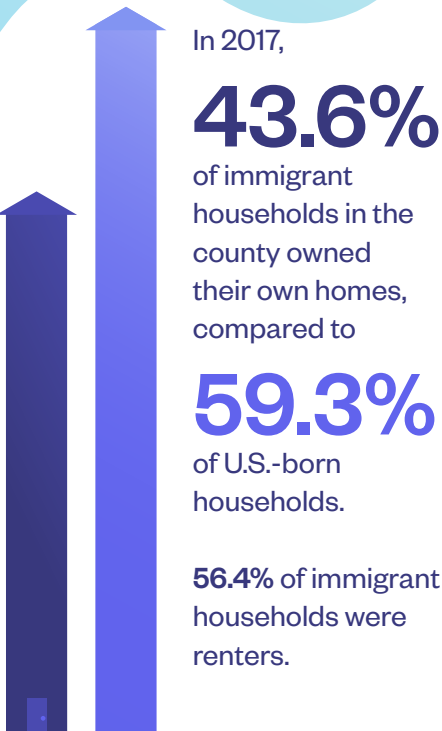
807

local jobs were supported by international students.

\$72.1M

was spent by international students in the 2017-18 academic year.¹³

Housing Wealth



IMMIGRANT HOUSEHOLDS

- 54.3% Lived in Houses
- 43.7% Lived in Apartments
- 2.0% Lived in Other Types of Housing

Total property value of immigrant households:

\$7.8B

Their total annual rent paid:

\$416.8M

SPOTLIGHT ON

Ngoie Joel Nshisso

FOUNDER, CONGOLESE PATRIOT

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ngoie Joel Nshisso served as deputy secretary general of the United Bible Societies, a global network that translates and distributes the Bible. It was a respected position in his homeland. As such, Nshisso says he could not remain silent in the face of widespread human rights violations committed by his government. Under President Laurent-Desire Kabila (1997 to 2001), political opponents, journalists, leaders of civil society, and others were imprisoned, tortured, disappeared, and killed.

“As a high profile Christian, you have to say something,” Nshisso says. Doing so, however, made him and his family targets. To survive, Nshisso applied for political asylum in the United States, and moved to Charlotte in 2001, where he had a brother and found people welcoming. His wife and seven children, who had fled to Zambia, were able, under U.S. immigration rules, to join him two years later.

In the meantime, Nshisso got to work starting over. Because his business degree from the Congo was not recognized in the United States and his English was poor, he secured a job at a gas station/convenience store, often working the 5 a.m. or midnight shift. At home he’d had a personal driver. Now he was cleaning gas pumps. “But I didn’t complain,” he says. “Because I understood: If those who are born here, the kids of this country, can do it, why should I not do it, too?”

“This is where I learned that Americans can give a good example to others: You just endure it and then work your way up.”

His way up was through education. Nshisso improved his English, secured work at a bank, earned an MBA and a Phd, and co-opened an import/export business. Five of his children have finished college; three have master’s degrees. Nshisso is now focused on his nonprofit, Congolese Patriot, which is working with the Charlotte International Cabinet on economic development. “My objective is to help immigrants learn as much as possible about the country we are living in,” he says. “To know you have a right, but you also have an obligation.”

SPOTLIGHT ON

Hasta Pradhan

FOUNDER, BHUTANESE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF CHARLOTTE

When Hasta Pradhan’s family fled violent political oppression in Southern Bhutan and made their way to a refugee camp in Nepal in 1992, they were told they would be there four or five months. But bilateral talks on refugee repatriations broke down. They were there for 17 years.

“For only one or two families it would be a severe blow,” Pradhan says. “But when everybody around you faces the same problem, that becomes the normal life.”

The camp swelled to 21,000. Pradhan, 23 when he arrived, married, had children, and missed the most productive work years of his life. At least, he says, he’d attended some high school. “Others were from remote villages where they didn’t have schools, or dropped out due to political instability,” he says.

“We who were fortunate enough to get an education, we made a decision that we had to start a sort of school.” He, along with others with a high school education, rounded up a few books from refugees, and each sat a group of students under a tree and read aloud, orally quizzing the boys and girls afterward. By 1995, an aid agency had started providing money — \$5 per person per month — which Pradhan used to buy school supplies. With what remained, he bought bus tickets to India to take his own annual college exams, for which he studied remotely. Trip by trip, he earned a bachelor’s degree and was starting a master’s in education when the family received approval to move to the United States in 2009.

They were resettled in Charlotte. “We didn’t have any work history, so it was not easy to get jobs,” says Pradhan. He got some manual labor work — for a moving company, a warehouse, a pizza delivery — and a part-time translator job for Catholic Charities of Charlotte. His wife is a hotel housekeeper. He is now studying Information Technology.

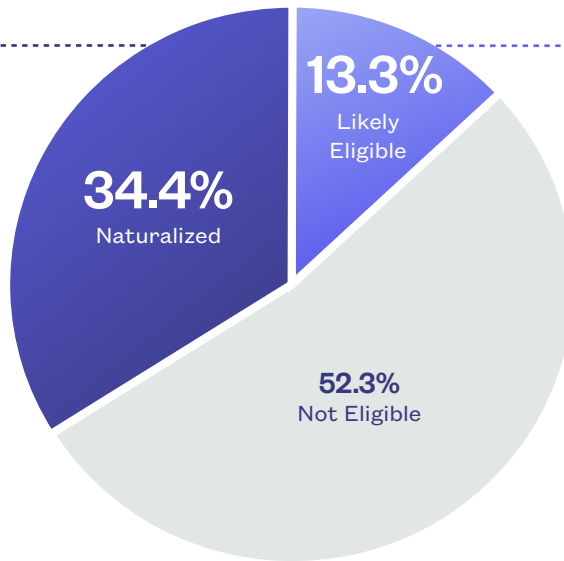
Mostly he is volunteering to help Charlotte’s Bhutanese community. His nonprofit, the Bhutanese Community Association of Charlotte, takes high school groups on college tours, organizes socials and outings for seniors, and pairs immigrants with opportunities to serve the broader community. “I think our people feel more responsibility to give back,” he says, “because we were in refugee camps and taken care of for so long.”

Naturalization

Share of immigrants in the county who were naturalized U.S. citizens. This represents a total of

55,919
immigrants.

Nationally, **49.4%** of all immigrants are naturalized.



Share of immigrants who were not citizens but likely eligible for naturalization. This represents a total of

21,659
immigrants.

Refugees

17,495

immigrants were likely refugees in 2017.¹⁴

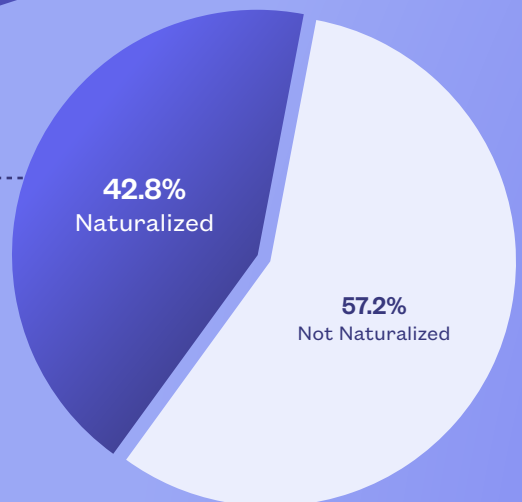
10.8%

of the foreign-born population were likely refugees.

42.8%

of refugees in the county were naturalized U.S. citizens. This represents a total of

7,495
immigrants.



Undocumented Immigrants

Amount earned by undocumented immigrant households in 2017:

\$1.2B

After taxes, this left them with **\$1.1B** in spending power.

\$80.1M

went to federal taxes.

FEDERAL

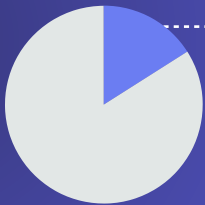
\$51.3M

went to state and local taxes.

STATE AND LOCAL

Population Growth in the City of Charlotte

Immigrants made up



16.1%

of the total population in the City of Charlotte in 2017.

29.6%

of total population growth in the city was attributable to immigrants.

Between 2012 and 2017, the population in the city increased by

10.8%.

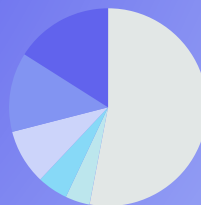
The immigrant population grew by

21.7%.

138,731

immigrants lived in the city in 2017. Their top five countries of origin were:

1. Mexico16.3%
2. India12.7%
3. Honduras9.0%
4. El Salvador5.1%
5. Vietnam4.1%



Spending Power & Tax Contributions in the City of Charlotte

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

Amount earned by immigrant households in 2017:

\$4.0B

\$681.9M

went to federal taxes.

FEDERAL

\$324.7M

went to state and local taxes.

STATE AND LOCAL

Leaving them with **\$3.0B** in spending power.

- 1 Unless otherwise specified, data comes from 1-year samples of the American Community Survey from 2012 and 2017 and figures refer to Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.
- 2 U.S. Congressional Budget Office. 2018. "The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2015."
- 3 Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. 2015. "Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States."
- 4 These figures derive from our calculations based on immigrants' share of wage income and self-employment income in the 1-year ACS sample from 2017 and the statistics of GDP from the National Association of Counties.
- 5 To be eligible for Medicare and Medicaid one must be a U.S. citizen or a permanent legal resident who has lived in the United States for at least five years; and, in general, must have worked or have a spouse that has worked long enough to be eligible for Social Security.
- 6 We define working age as 16-64 years of age.
- 7 Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math
- 8 Vigdor, Jacob. 2013. "Immigration and the Revival of American Cities: From Preserving Manufacturing Jobs to Strengthening the Housing Market." New American Economy.
- 9 General services include personal services (e.g. laundry services, barber shops, and repair and maintenance), religious organizations, social services, and labor unions.
- 10 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.
- 11 2012 Survey of Business Owners, U.S. Census Bureau. This data includes both people born in the United States and people born abroad.
- 12 Data on total student enrollment in the county is derived from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics. Temporary residents refer to people who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents.
- 13 Economic data is derived from the International Student Economic Value Tool maintained by NAFSA, the association of international educators.
- 14 New American Economy. 2017. "From Struggle to Resilience: The Economic Impact of Refugees in America."