



# Factors Impacting the Economic Wellbeing of Asian Minnesotans



The Minnesota State Demographer's report, *The Economic Status of Minnesotans 2018*, highlights that data about the economic condition of Minnesotans are not always collected and presented in a way that helps policymakers and community leaders understand the key differences among Minnesota's diverse populations. This is problematic.

Because quantitative institutional data systems usually make the more than 40 different Asian Minnesotan cultural communities a homogenous group, it hides the economic insecurities experienced by ethnic groups. When more nuanced information does not appear in the data, communities run the risk of being excluded from federal, state, and local programs that can address their specific needs. Additionally, any community assets that might be built upon is ignored.

CAAL has proactively led a campaign urging our government and private institutions to collect and use disaggregated data that more accurately reflects Asian American experiences. This way, solutions crafted to achieve equitable social, economic, and health outcomes will be more responsive and relevant. We've seen some signs of progress, but more needs to be done. We present this snapshot of CAAL's ongoing efforts to dispel generalizations and stereotypes about Asian Minnesotans' economic situation, and to help re-center the narrative so that challenges around poverty and wealth building among Asian communities are visible to broader audiences working on economic justice. The infographics here present tabulated data on the economic indicators of Asian Minnesotans, primarily pulled from the U.S. Census Bureau 2011-2015 American Community Survey data. We believe having richer and more nuanced data will lead to a more comprehensive understanding of different Asian communities that will accelerate the work of advancing equity for all Asian Minnesotans.

This piece uses data and findings from *Invisibility Perpetuated: the Complex Economics of Asian Minnesotans* by Leoma Van Dort (2018). Find the report on the University of Minnesota Digital Conservancy, <http://hdl.handle.net/11299/208805>. The final report with qualitative data will be released Summer 2020.



Harnessing our collective power to improve the lives of community by connecting, learning, and acting together.

For more information, please contact CAAL at [info@caalmn.org](mailto:info@caalmn.org) or visit [www.caalmn.org](http://www.caalmn.org).

## MEDIAN AGE OF ASIAN ETHNIC GROUPS IN MINNESOTA

### OLDEST



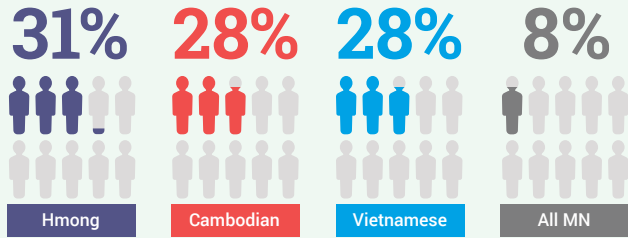
### YOUNGEST



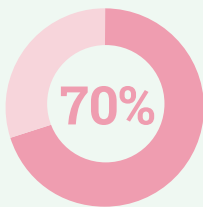
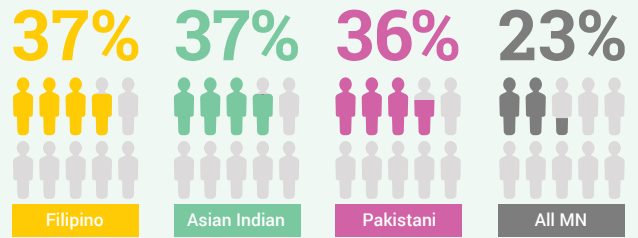
Even though the median age for all Asians is 28.8 years, data disaggregated by Asian ethnic groups shows a higher median age for some population groups, such as Japanese (46.5 years). This is the oldest population group with almost 20% of the population 65 years or above. The Burmese are the youngest Asian population group: 45% of the Burmese population is below 18 years.

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY ASIAN ETHNIC GROUPS

THREE ASIAN ETHNIC GROUPS with the **HIGHEST PERCENTAGE** of **ADULTS WHO DON'T HAVE A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA**:



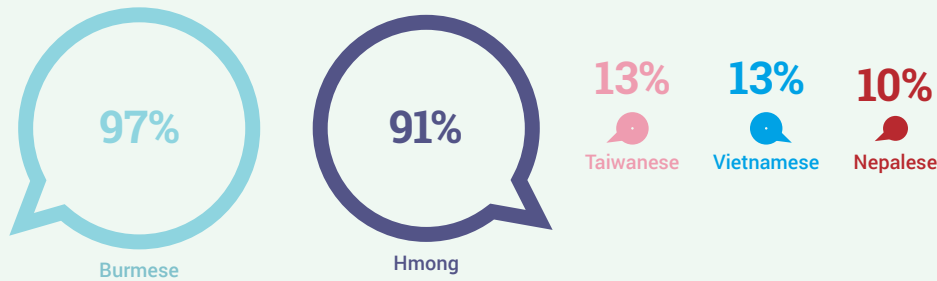
THREE ASIAN ETHNIC GROUPS with the **HIGHEST PERCENTAGE** of **ADULTS WHO HAVE A BACHELOR'S DEGREE**:



Taiwanese community has the largest percentage of adults with a graduate or professional degree

Education is one of the strongest predictors of economic status. A higher educational attainment can lead to higher earnings and better economic success. While a larger proportion of Asians age 25 and above (43%) have a bachelor's degree or graduate/professional degree compared to Whites (35%) and other minority populations, this high level of educational attainment masks disparities within the Asian population.

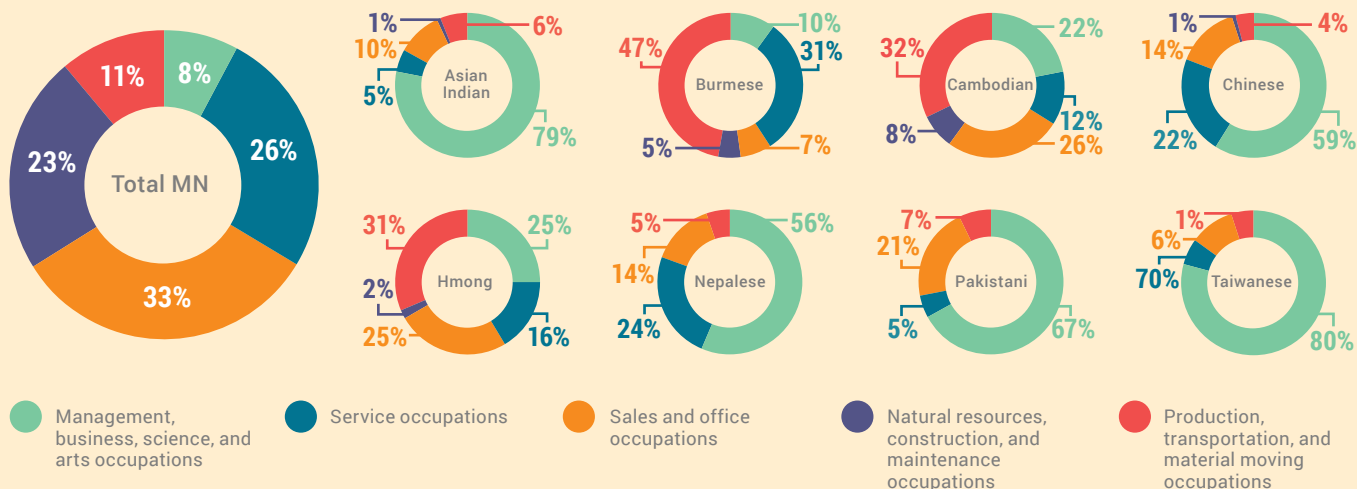
## LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH SPOKEN AT HOME: TOP 5 ETHNIC GROUPS



Many Asian groups come from a rich multilingual heritage and continue to speak their own languages. In Minnesota fewer Burmese (3%), Hmong (9%), and Nepalese (10%) indicate that they speak only English at home. In comparison, more than half of the Korean population (69%) indicate that they only speak English at home along with 48% of Japanese and 38% of Filipino. This tells us that we need to invest in both native language literacy as well as provide English interpretation to those who need it.

Disparities also exist among Asian ethnic groups in relation to how well they speak English. 85% of Burmese and 54% of Vietnamese reported that they speak English "less than very well" whereas only 9% of Pakistani and 14% of Asian Indians and Koreans are in this category. English language barrier is an issue that has to be addressed in some communities.

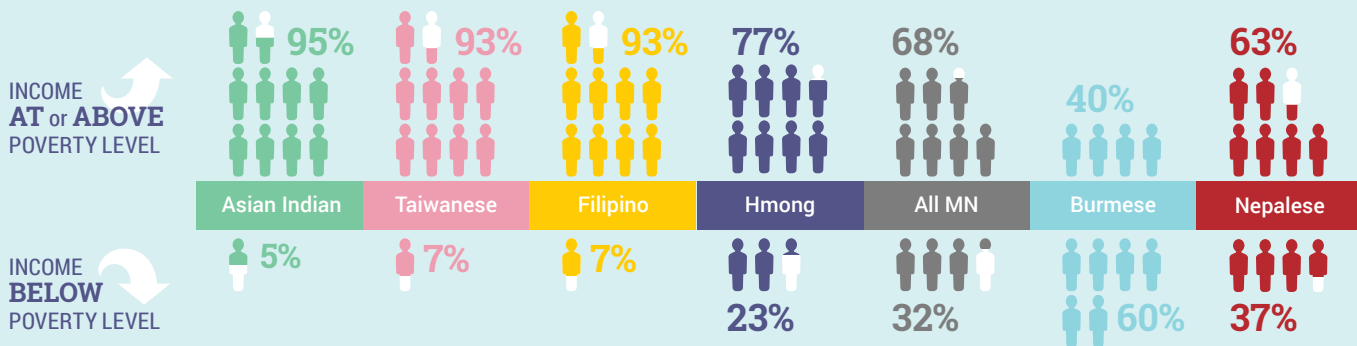
### OCCUPATIONS OF SELECTED ASIAN ETHNIC GROUPS



Some occupations have a higher average annual salary than others. Nearly half of the Asian Minnesotan population (43%) is employed in management, business, science, and arts occupations similar to Whites (41%). A closer look at the different Asian groups shows that higher paying management, business, science, and arts occupations are held mainly by people in some Asian groups, such as Taiwanese (80%), Asian Indian (79%), Pakistani (67%), Chinese (59%), and Nepalese (56%).

However, nearly half of the Burmese and Laotian populations are engaged in production, transportation, and material moving occupations. A larger proportion of Cambodian (32%) and Hmong (31%) residents are also in this category of occupations. The average annual salary for production, transportation, and material moving occupations is one of the lowest (\$37,224) (Data USA).

### POVERTY BY ASIAN ETHNIC GROUP



Even though aggregated data shows that only 16% of Asians have an income below the poverty level, some Asian groups have large percentages of people with incomes below the poverty level.

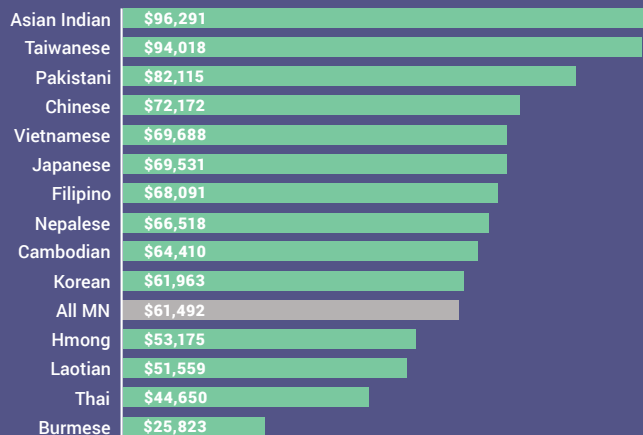
While 95% of Asian Indians have incomes at or above the poverty line, 60% of Burmese have incomes below the poverty level.

Almost 30% of Burmese children under 18 years old live in poverty, followed by 11.5% of Hmong children and 10.9% of Nepalese children.

Among adults age 65 and older, the largest percentage of people living below the poverty line can be seen among the Vietnamese (2.6%). This percentage is higher than the state percentage of older adults living in poverty (1.1%).



### MEDIAN\* HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY ASIAN ETHNIC GROUPS

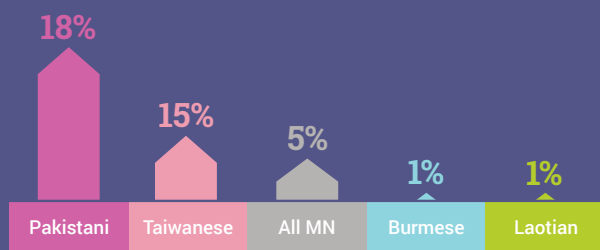


\*The median household income for a group is found by lining up all of the households in that group in order of lowest to highest income, and then taking the income of the middle household.

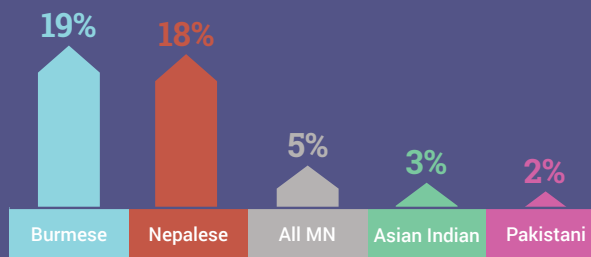
Income is a key indicator of socioeconomic status. The median household income divides the income distribution of households into two equal parts, one-half falling below and one-half falling above the median household income (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018).

In Minnesota, Asian households have the highest median income (\$66,780), however, it is important to consider the income inequality within Asian Minnesotan households. The Burmese have the lowest median household income (\$25,823) which is nearly four times lower than the highest median household income for Asian Indians (\$96,291). Household income includes the income of the head of the household and all other people in the household over 15 years old (Guzman, 2019).

### HOUSEHOLDS IN THE HIGHEST AND LOWEST INCOME BRACKETS



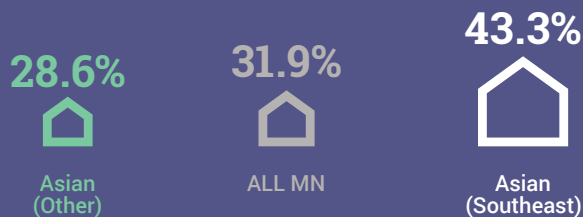
\$200,000 or MORE



\$10,000 or LESS

According to the data disaggregated by Asian ethnic groups, Pakistani (18%) and Taiwanese (15%) populations have the largest share of households with incomes in the highest income bracket (\$200,000 or more). In contrast, 19% of Burmese earn less than \$10,000 per year, which is the largest share of households in the lowest income bracket, followed by Nepalese (18%).

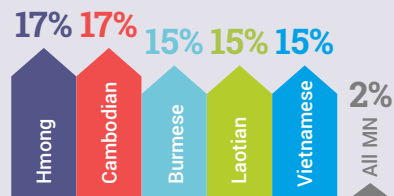
### COST-BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS



A household is considered cost-burdened when 30 percent or more of its monthly gross income is dedicated to housing (Minnesota Compass, 2015).

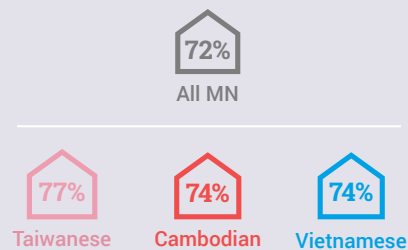
- In Minnesota, a larger share of Southeast Asian households are cost-burdened (43.3%) compared to other Asian households that are cost-burdened (28.6%).
- The share of cost-burdened households in all of Minnesota (31.9%) and among White households (29.8%) is much lower than the proportion of Southeast Asian households that are cost-burdened.\*Households who pay more than 30% of their income for all of the housing costs.

### TOP FIVE ASIAN ETHNIC GROUPS WITH THREE OR MORE GENERATIONS LIVING IN ONE HOUSEHOLD

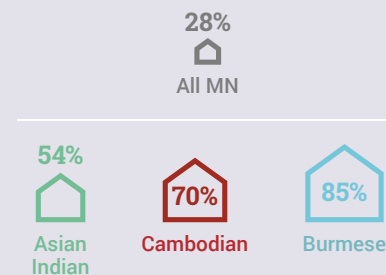


### HOME OWNERSHIP AND RENTING

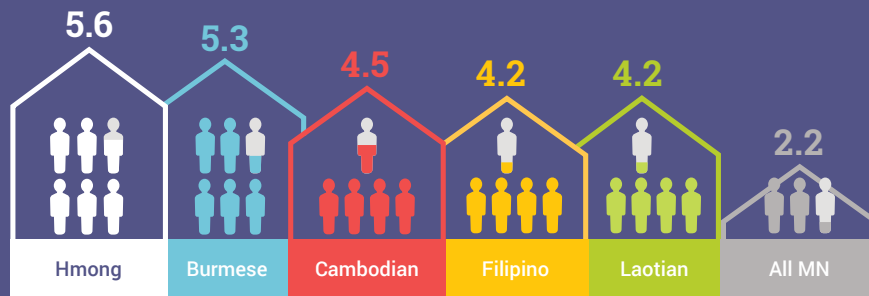
#### TOP THREE ASIAN ETHNIC GROUPS WHO OWN THEIR HOME



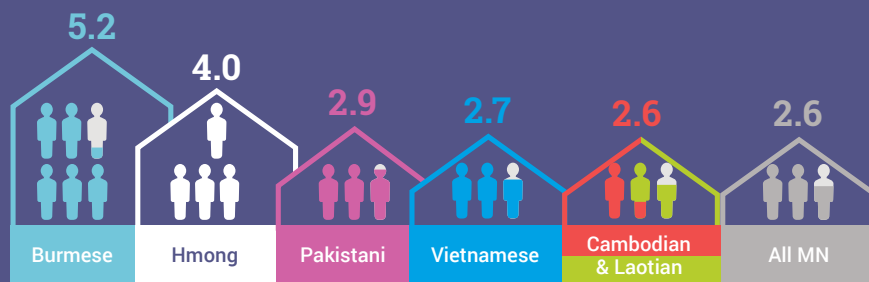
#### TOP THREE ASIAN ETHNIC GROUPS WHO RENT THEIR HOME



### ASIAN ETHNIC GROUPS WITH THE LARGEST HOUSEHOLD SIZES FOR RENTER-OCCUPIED UNITS



### ASIAN ETHNIC GROUPS WITH THE LARGEST HOUSEHOLD SIZES FOR OWNER-OCCUPIED UNITS



Multigenerational households include at least two adult generations or grandparents and grandchildren younger than 25 years (Cohn & Passel, 2018).

The size of the household is an important factor in understanding how household income is distributed. Asians have the second highest average household size of all racial and ethnic groups in Minnesota: 4.0 for owner-occupied units and 3.0 for renter-occupied units.

Overall, 72% of Minnesotan households own the home they live in. The highest share of Asian Minnesotan homeowners is seen among Taiwanese (77%), Cambodian (74.4%), and Vietnamese (74%) populations. Even though only 45% of Asians in Minnesota are renters, 85% of Burmese and 70% of Nepalese are renters.



CAAL

[caalmn.org](http://caalmn.org)

cura

Center for Urban  
& Regional Affairs

[www.cura.umn.edu](http://www.cura.umn.edu)

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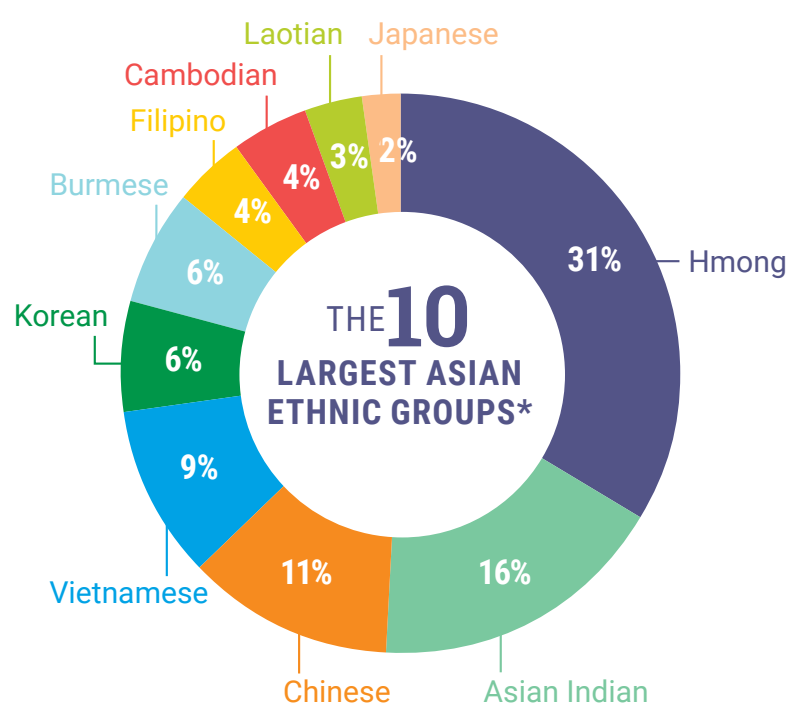
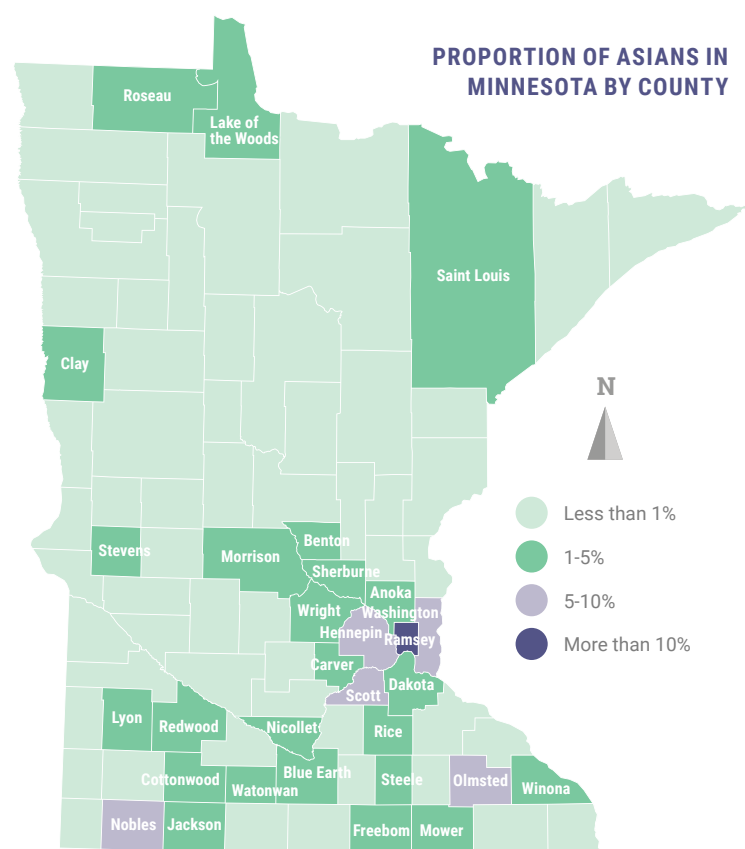


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In 2017, there were **273,194 Asians in Minnesota**, that is, nearly **5 percent** of the total population in Minnesota.

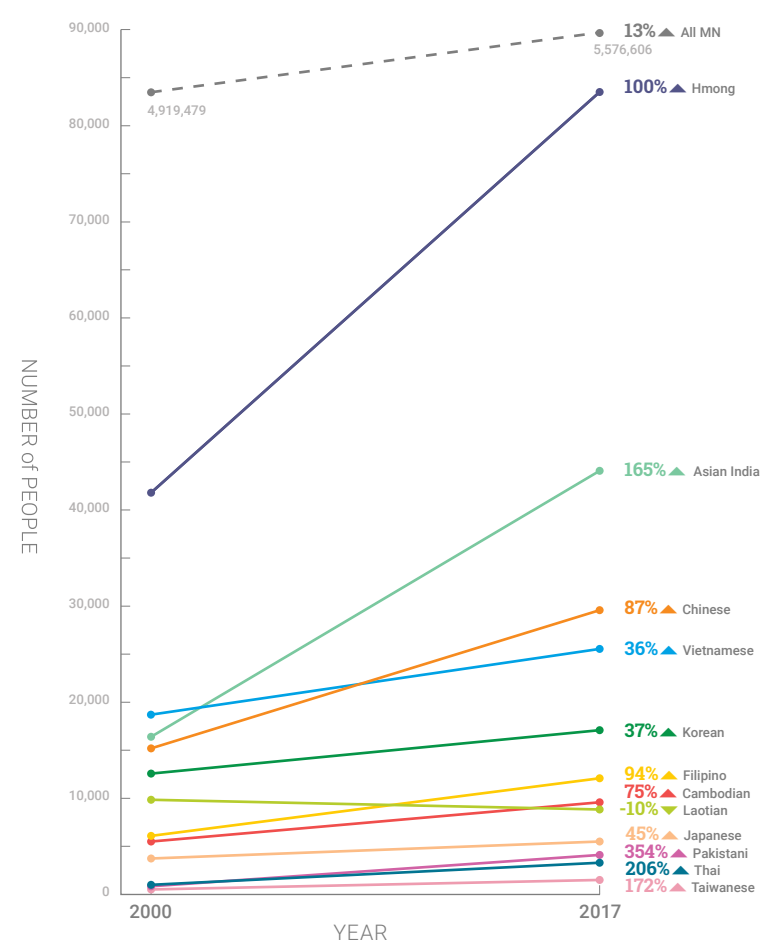


\*In Minnesota, in 2017, as a percentage of the total Asian Minnesota population

TEN MINNESOTA CITIES WITH THE LARGEST PROPORTIONS OF ASIANS (KOLMAR, 2018)

RANK	CITY (COUNTY)	PERCENT of ASIANS
1	St. Paul (Ramsey)	17.9%
2	Brooklyn Park (Hennepin)	17.3%
3	Brooklyn Center (Hennepin)	16.8%
4	Little Canada (Ramsey)	16.1%
5	Maplewood (Ramsey)	14.9%
6	Falcon Heights (Ramsey)	14.4%
7	Eden Prairie (Hennepin)	10.0%
8	Shakopee (Scott)	10.0%
9	Worthington (Nobles)	9.9%
10	Hopkins (Hennepin)	9.74%

POPULATION GROWTH OF ASIAN ETHNIC GROUPS IN MINNESOTA FROM 2000-2017



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates