
Expanding Opportunity Framework Racial Disparities Analysis

*Understanding Different Approaches for Addressing
Racial Disparities*

Section 5 Workforce Development

A tool developed by:
The Community Advancement Network (CAN) - Austin, TX
Updated September 2025

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Addressing
Concentrated
Wealth & Power

Safety &
Justice

State/National
Legislation &
Policy

Housing,
Health &
Human
Services

Social Capital
& Community
Leadership

Educational
& Economic
Opportunity

Workforce
Development

Expand
Opportunity
for Youth &
Adults

Section 5

Introduction

Access to workforce development opportunities is a critical tool for removing barriers and creating paths for economic success and advancement. While there is a link between workforce opportunities and K-12 and adult education, we created a stand alone section for Workforce Development that focuses more specifically on industry-specific inequities.

There are many different industries where a more intentional focus on racial disparities is sorely needed. This section allows us to highlight industry-specific needs without requiring the user of the REAF to delve four or five levels deep into the tool to find that information. With Austin being a growing and vibrant tech hub, we thought a focus on STEM would be instructive.

STEM Labor Force by Race/Ethnicity

Distribution of select racial and ethnic groups in the workforce, by occupation group: 2021

(Percent)

Occupation group	White	Hispanic	Black or African American	Asian	American Indian or Alaska Native	Other race alone or in combination
All workers	59.8	18.2	11.0	6.3	0.4	4.3
STEM workers	62.9	14.8	8.2	9.5	0.3	4.3
S&E workers	60.9	9.5	6.8	18.0	0.2	4.6
S&E-related workers	65.3	10.6	9.6	9.9	0.3	4.3
STEM middle-skill workers	62.0	22.5	7.7	3.4	0.5	4.0
Non-STEM workers	58.8	19.3	11.9	5.2	0.4	4.4

S&E = science and engineering; STEM = science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Source: National Center for Science & Engineering Statics - The STEM Labor Force: Representation of Demographic Groups
<https://nces.nsf.gov/pubs/nsb20245/representation-of-demographic-groups-in-stem>

STEM Labor Force by Race/Ethnicity

Prevalence of STEM occupations among workers, by select race or ethnicity and field of highest degree: 2021

(Percent)

Race or ethnicity and field of highest degree	S&E occupations	S&E-related occupations	STEM middle-skill and non-STEM occupations
White workers; S&E degree field	35.1	14.9	50.0
Black or African American workers; S&E degree field	25.3	16.5	58.1
Asian workers; S&E degree field	52.2	15.6	32.1
Hispanic workers; S&E degree field	31.5	13.9	54.7
White workers; S&E-related degree field	4.9	71.7	23.5
Black or African American workers; S&E-related degree field	4.7	68.8	26.5
Asian workers; S&E-related degree field	9.9	71.2	18.8
Hispanic workers; S&E-related degree field	5.0	68.2	26.8

S&E = science and engineering; STEM = science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Source: National Center for Science & Engineering Statics - The STEM Labor Force: Representation of Demographic Groups
<https://nces.nsf.gov/pubs/nsb20245/representation-of-demographic-groups-in-stem>

HEALTHCARE INDUSTRIES EMPLOYMENT

Table 2. Workforce Estimates of Health Diagnosing and Treating Practitioners Based on 2019 American Community Survey Data

Practitioner	Race/ethnicity, % (SE) [95% CI]			
	White	Black	Native American	Hispanic
Advanced practice registered nurse	79.4 (1.10) [77.15-81.47]	7.3 (0.87) [5.80-9.22]	0.3 (0.16) [0.12-0.84]	5.5 (0.58) [4.45-6.74]
Dentist	68.7 (1.52) [65.60-71.56]	4.4 (0.88) [2.95-6.49]	0.1 (0.05) [0.01-0.29]	5.7 (0.72) [4.43-7.28]
Pharmacist	65.4 (1.09) [63.22-67.51]	7.5 (0.72) [6.23-9.07]	0.2 (0.08) [0.07-0.45]	3.7 (0.41) [2.99-4.63]
Physician	62.4 (0.65) [61.06-63.63]	5.2 (0.37) [4.50-5.96]	0.1 (0.05) [0.047-.26]	6.9 (0.35) [6.27-7.65]
Physician assistant	75.9 (1.46) [72.97-78.68]	4.5 (0.82) [3.11-6.39]	0.5 (0.24) [0.23-1.29]	7.3 (0.87) [5.77-9.21]
Occupational therapist	80.5 (1.42) [77.60-83.16]	6.1 (1.03) [4.35-8.45]	0.2 (0.17) [0.02-1.19]	5.2 (0.78) [3.90-7.0]
Physical therapist	76.7 (1.06) [74.54-78.71]	3.3 (0.48) [2.50-4.41]	0 (0.02) [0-0.16]	3.3 (0.42) [2.62-4.27]
Respiratory therapist	66.3 (2.03) [62.19-70.16]	11.4 (1.48) [8.81-14.66]	0.9 (0.56) [0.29-2.98]	10.8 (1.34) [8.45-13.73]
Speech-language pathologist	84.4 (1.15) [82.00-86.52]	4.7 (0.78) [3.37-6.47]	0.5 (0.28) [0.20-1.48]	6.4 (0.74) [5.10-8.03]
Registered nurse	68.9 (0.38) [68.17-69.64]	11.3 (0.29) [10.75-11.91]	0.4 (0.05) [0.29-0.47]	7.8 (0.22) [7.33-8.21]

Estimation and Comparison of Current and Future Racial/Ethnic Representation in the U.S. Health Care Workforce (2021)

JAMA Network, pg. 5

<https://canatx.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/JAMANetwork.pdf>

FRONTLINE INDUSTRIES EMPLOYMENT

Table 1
Characteristics of Workers in Frontline Industries

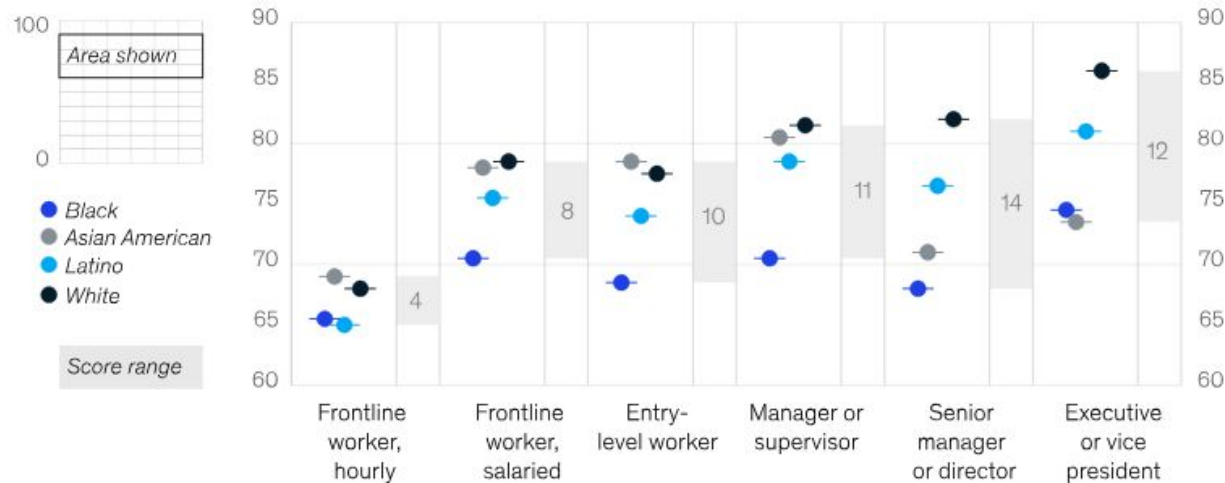
	All Workers	All Frontline Industries	Grocery, Convenience, and Drug Stores	Public Transit	Trucking, Warehouse, and Postal Service	Building Cleaning Services	Health Care	Child Care and Social Services
All Workers (16+)	152,600,169	31,673,098	6,817,890	804,495	3,128,922	1,484,993	16,103,877	3,332,921
Female	47.4%	64.4%	50.5%	29.1%	22.7%	53.2%	76.8%	85.2%
Full/Part-time								
Full-time	78.6%	75.3%	63.7%	81.0%	90.5%	62.6%	79.8%	67.4%
Part-time	21.4%	24.7%	36.3%	19.0%	9.5%	37.4%	20.2%	32.6%
Race/Ethnicity								
White	63.5%	58.8%	59.5%	54.7%	56.4%	43.4%	61.1%	55.8%
Black	11.9%	17.0%	14.2%	26.0%	18.2%	12.6%	17.5%	19.3%
Hispanic	16.8%	16.3%	18.5%	14.0%	20.0%	40.2%	12.1%	18.0%
AAPI	6.6%	6.7%	6.6%	4.1%	4.2%	2.4%	8.0%	5.3%
Other	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%	1.2%	1.1%	1.3%	1.2%	1.5%

A Basic Demographic Breakdown of Workers in Frontline Industries (2020) *Center for Economic and Policy Research*, pg. 7
<https://www.eeoc.gov/sites/default/files/2021-04/4-28-21%20Meeting%20-%2005%20Ramirez%20-%20Supporting%20Materials.pdf>

Workers of Color Less Included at Managerial/Senior Levels

Differences in inclusion are generally felt more strongly as US employees climb the corporate ladder, especially for Black employees.

US employee inclusion, by race and role, inclusion score (<50 = very low; ≥80 = very high)¹



McKinsey & Company (July 30, 2022), *Race in the workplace: The frontline experience*

<https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/race-in-the-workplace-the-frontline-experience>

ORGANIZATIONS WORKING TO ADDRESS RACIAL DISPARITIES IN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

People of Color-Led Organizations

Austin Area Urban League
<https://aaul.org/>

Universal Tech Movement
<https://www.joinutm.org/>

Latinas in Tech
<https://latinasintech.org/>

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS WORKING TO ADDRESS RACIAL DISPARITIES IN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Austin Community College
<https://www.austincc.edu/>

Skillpoint Alliance
<https://skillpointalliance.org/>

Capital IDEA
<https://www.capitalidea.org/>

Goodwill Central Texas
<https://www.goodwillcentraltexas.org/>

Workforce Solutions Capital Area
<https://www.wfscapitalarea.com/>

American Youthworks
<https://americanyouthworks.org>

Greater Austin STEM Ecosystem
<https://greateraustinstemecosystem.org>

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Undoing Racism

<https://undoingracismaustin.org/activities/register-for-future-undoing-racism-workshops-in-austin/>

Community Healing Circles

<https://students.austincc.edu/truth-racial-healing-and-transformation-center/racial-healing-circles/>

RESOURCE TO LEARN ABOUT ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

CAN "Get Engaged" Podcast

<https://canatx.org/podcasts/>

COALITIONS WORKING TO ADDRESS RACIAL DISPARITIES

Black Austin Coalition

<https://blackaustincoalition.com/>

Austin Justice Coalition

<https://austinjustice.org/>

Brave Communities

<https://bravecommunities.org/>

Communities of Color United

<https://www.atxccu.org/>

Community Resilience Trust

<https://communityresiliencetrust.org/>