
Expanding Opportunity Framework Racial Disparities Analysis

*Understanding Different Approaches for Addressing
Racial Disparities*

Section 8 State/National Legislation & Policy

A tool developed by:
The Community Advancement Network (CAN) - Austin, TX
Updated August 2026

Expanding Opportunity Framework Racial Disparities Analysis

A tool developed by the Community Advancement Network

Addressing
Concentrated
Wealth & Power

Safety &
Justice

State/National
Legislation &
Policy

Housing,
Health &
Human
Services

Social Capital
& Community
Leadership

Educational
& Economic
Opportunity

Expand
Opportunity
for Youth &
Adults

Workforce
Development

Section 8

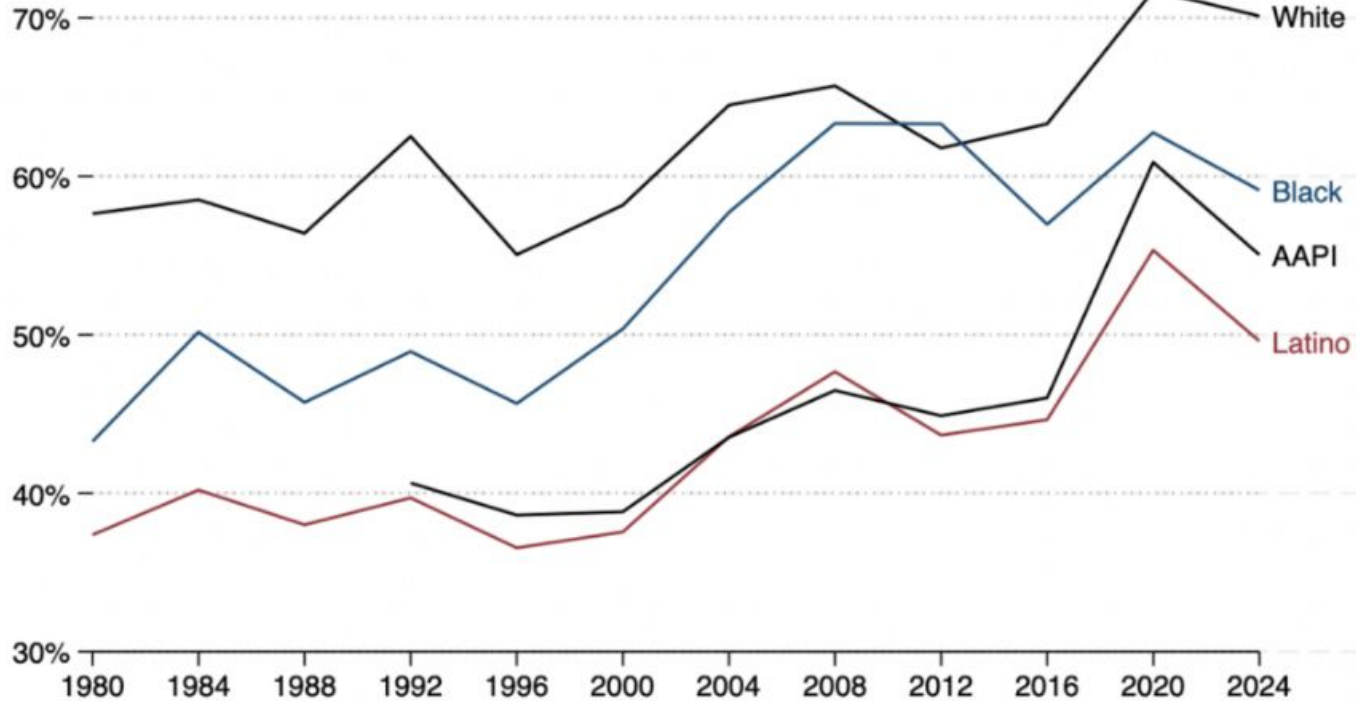
Introduction

This section focuses on the need to OPPOSE policy and legislative actions that limit the ability of individuals to expand the wealth and power they possess (e.g. voter suppression, defunding public education, defunding programs that provide basic needs support to families, impeding access to higher ed), and SUPPORT policy and legislative actions that support individuals in expanding the wealth and power they possess (for examples see expanding opportunity section).

VOTING

Racial gaps in turnout are increasing

Percent who reported voting in presidential elections



Source: 2024 brought high voter turnout – but a growing racial gap (Good Authority)

VOTING

This study by the Brennan Center for Justice examines how new laws disproportionately harm voters of color. For people of color. Promoting full participation, therefore, will require intentional public policy efforts to protect the right to vote for all Americans.

Strict Voter ID Laws Disproportionately Impact Voters of Color
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21565503.2020.1773280>

Restrictions on Sunday Voting Would Fall Disproportionately on Voters of Color
<https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/georgias-proposed-voting-restrictions-will-harm-black-voters-most>

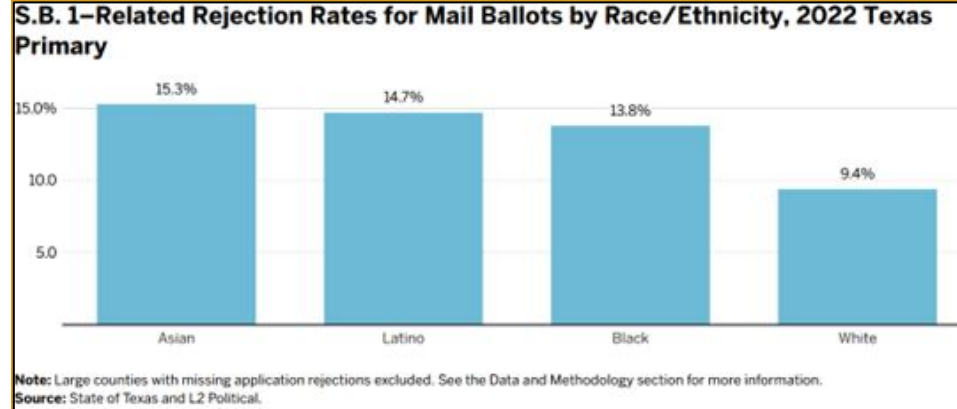
Voters of Color Face More Difficulties Voting By Mail
<https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/digging-georgia-primary>

Polling Place Consolidation is Harmful to the Turnout of Racial/Ethnic Minorities
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/10780874211005016>

Source: The Impact of Voter Suppression on Communities of Color (2022), Brennan Center for Justice

VOTING

This study by the Brennan Center for Justice finds that after laws enacted in 2021 aimed at making it harder to vote by mail, resulted in the rejection of thousands of mail ballot applications and mailed ballots, with a particularly harsh impact on voters of color.



Records Show Massive Disenfranchisement of and Racial Disparities in 2022 Texas Primary, Brennan Center for Justice

ORGANIZATIONS WORKING TO ADDRESS RACIAL DISPARITIES IN:

VOTING

League of Women Voters Austin Area
<https://lwvaustin.org/>

ACLU of Texas
<https://aclutx.org/>

Young Invincibles
<https://younginvincibles.org/>

NAACP*
<http://www.naacpaustin.com/>

*Denotes people of color-led organizations.
For a definition of “people of color-led organization,”
please see slide 3 of Navigation and Credits.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR PROTECTING VOTING RIGHTS

STATE

ACLU Texas
<https://www.aclutx.org/en/issues/voting-rights>

MOVE Texas
<https://movetexas.org/>

Disability Rights Texas
<https://www.disabilityrightstx.org/en/category/voting/>

Texas Voter Protection
<https://www.texasvoterprotection.org/>

Texas Civil Rights Project
<https://txcivilrights.org/>

Jolt Action
<https://jolttx.org/>

Texas Organizing Project
<https://organizetexas.org/campaigns/right2vote/>

Texas Rising
<https://txrising.org/>

NATIONAL

NAACP Legal Defense & Education Fund
<https://www.naacpldf.org/>

Mexican American Legal Defense & Education Fund
<https://www.maldef.org/>

Southern Poverty Law Center
<https://www.splcenter.org/our-issues/voting-rights>

League of United Latin American Citizens
<https://lulac.org/>

Fair County
<https://www.faircount.org/>

Princeton Gerrymandering Project
<https://gerrymander.princeton.edu/>

Protect the Vote
<https://protectthevote.net/>

TRENDS IN COLLEGE PRICING

Tuition and fees for all higher education have increased significantly from 2005–6 to 2020–21 when a modest decline. Since 2020–21, tuition and fees for public tuition have flattened. Tuitions and fees for private institutions began to increase almost immediately following the dip in 2020–21.

Source: The College Board - Trends in College Pricing and Student Aid 2025

FIGURE CP-2 Average Published Tuition and Fees (Enrollment-Weighted) in 2025 Dollars by Sector, 1995-96 to 2025-26

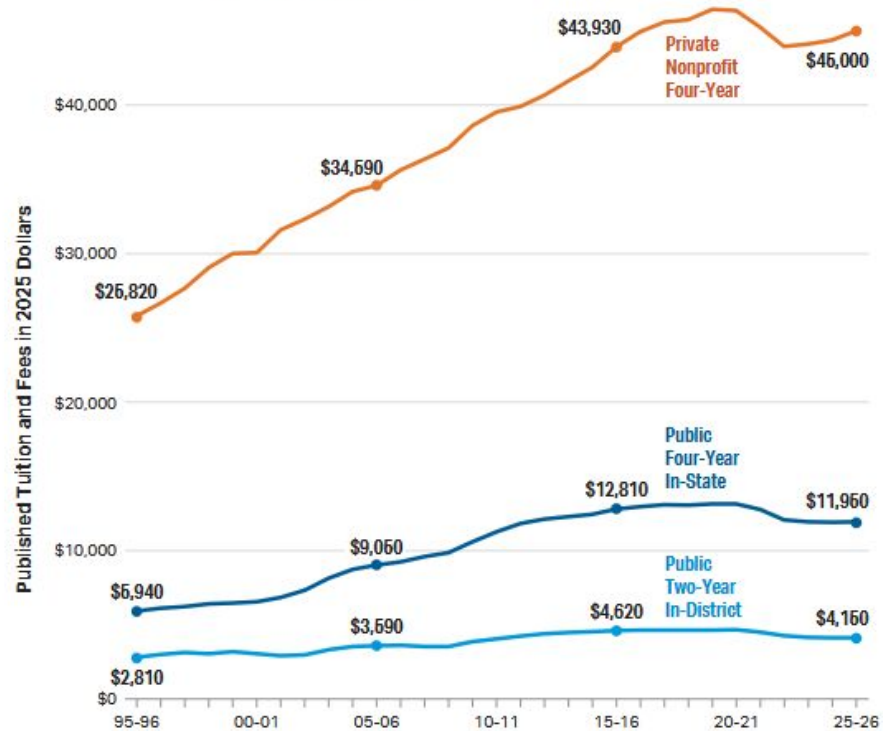
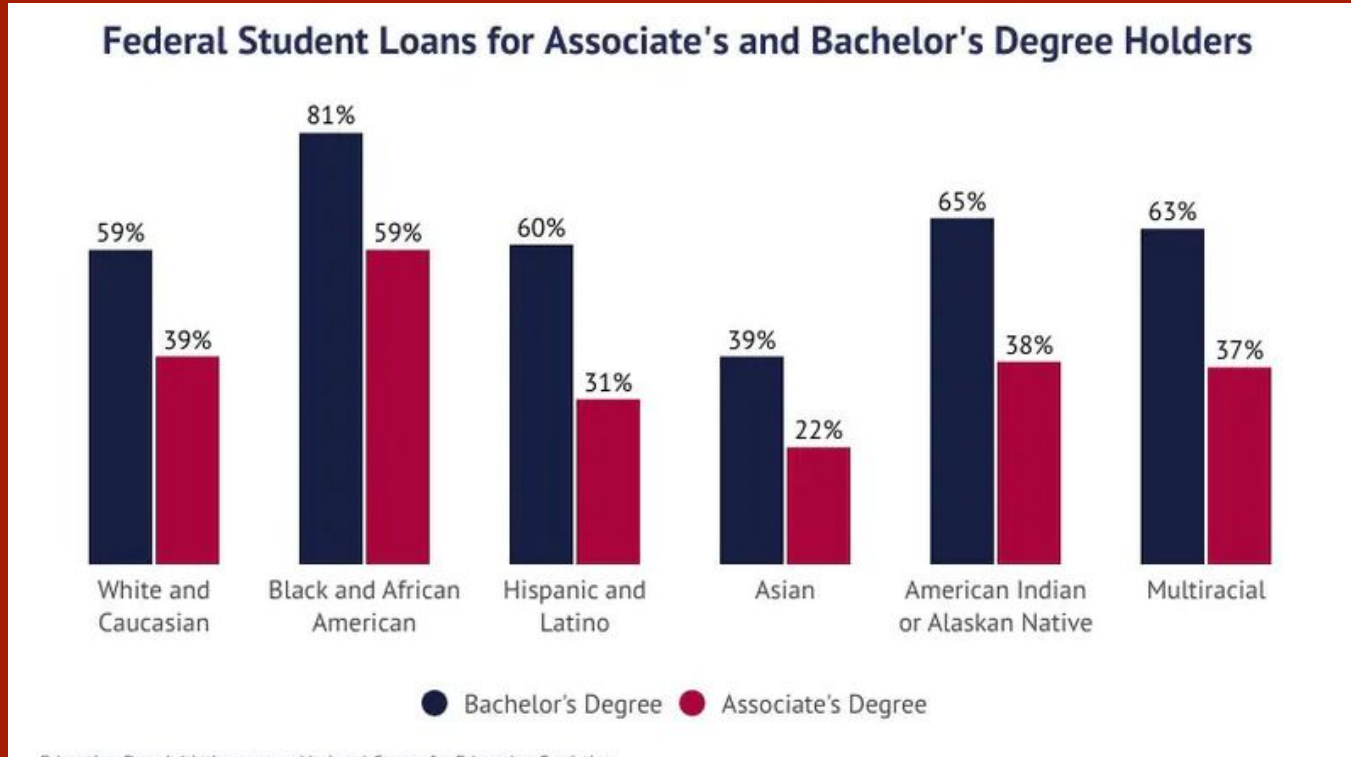


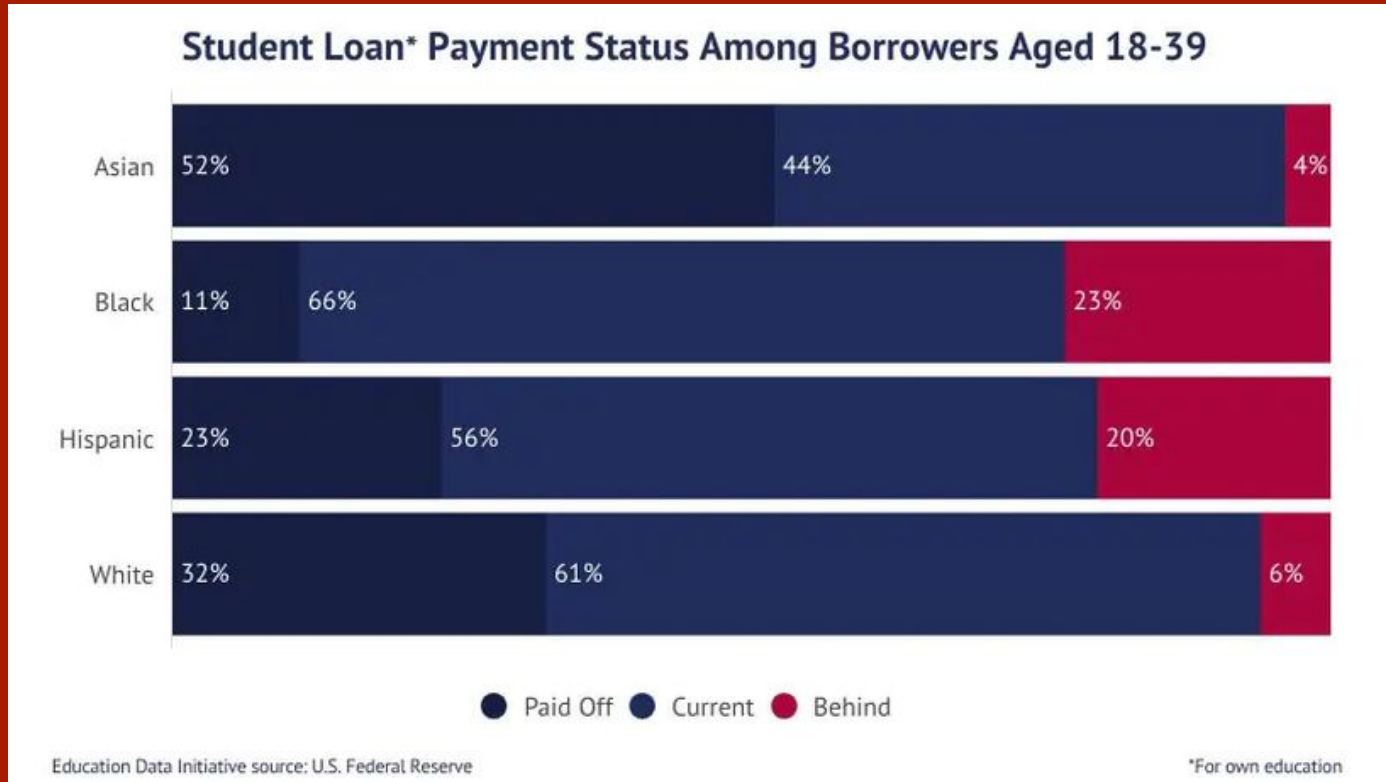
FIGURE CP-3 Inflation-Adjusted Published Tuition and Fees (Enrollment-Weighted) Relative to 1995-96, 1995-96 to 2025-26 (1995-96 = 1.0)

TRENDS IN FEDERAL STUDENT LOAN DEBT



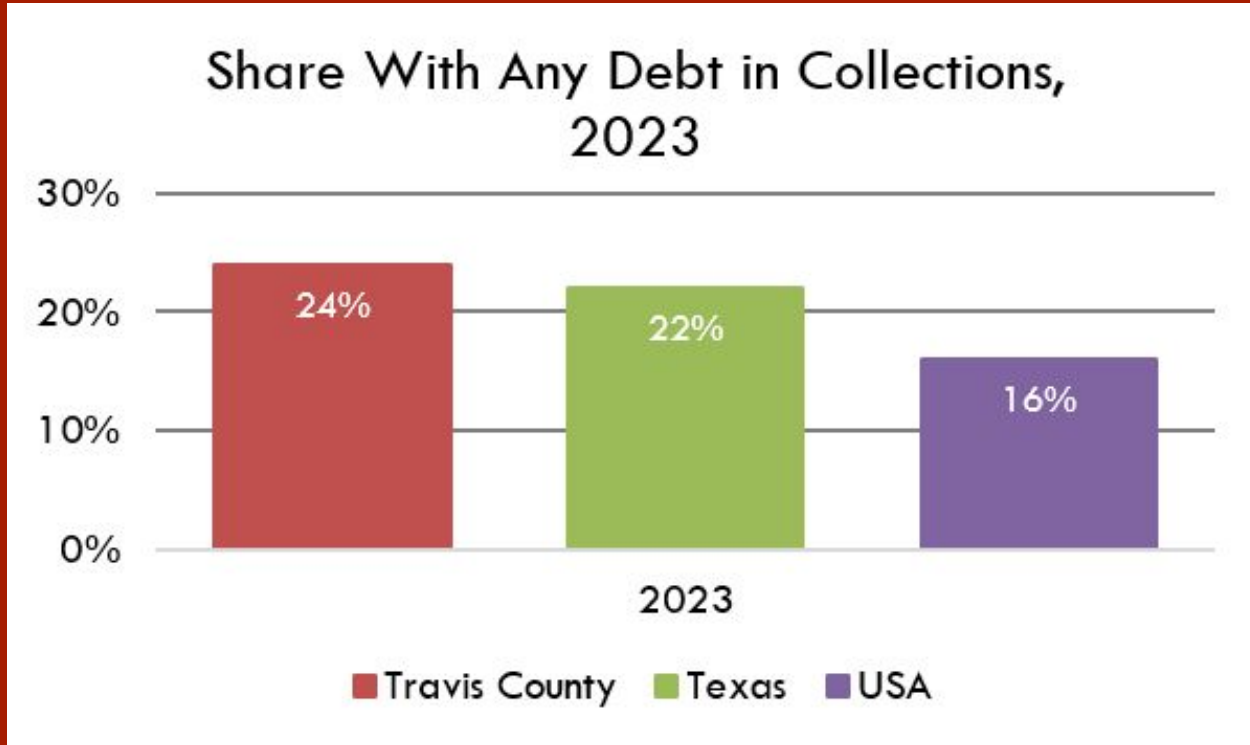
Source: Education Data Initiative, Student Loan Debt by Race, 2025

TRENDS IN FEDERAL STUDENT LOAN DEBT



Source: Education Data Initiative, Student Loan Debt by Race, 2025

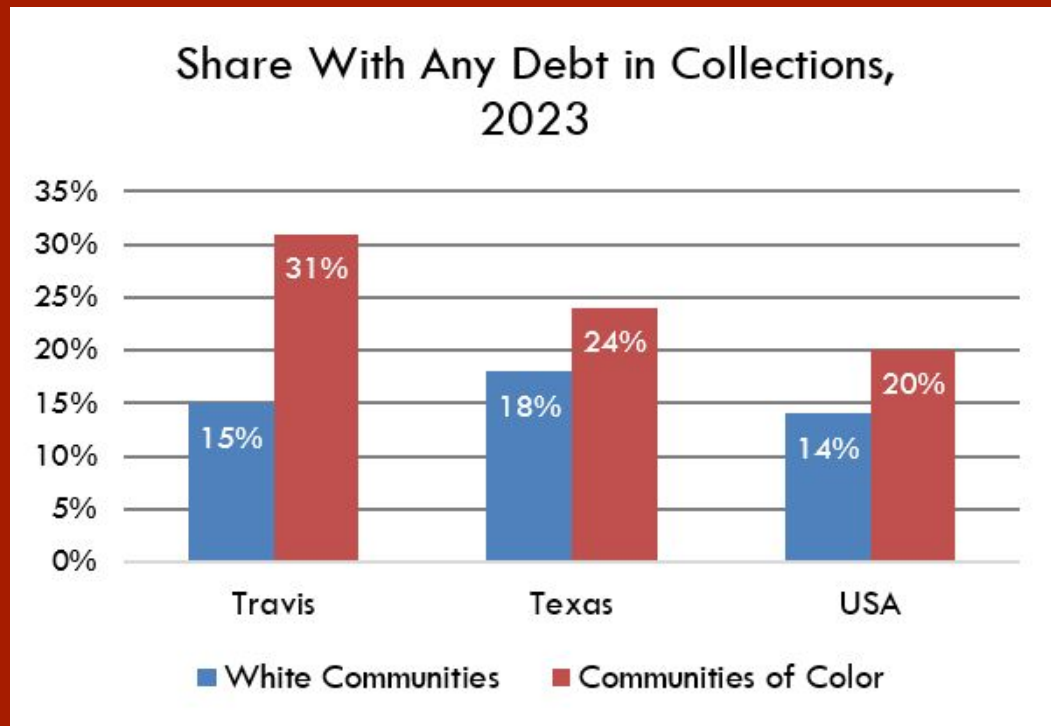
DEBT BY RACE



[2025 CAN Economic Mobility Report](#)

Source: The Urban Institute

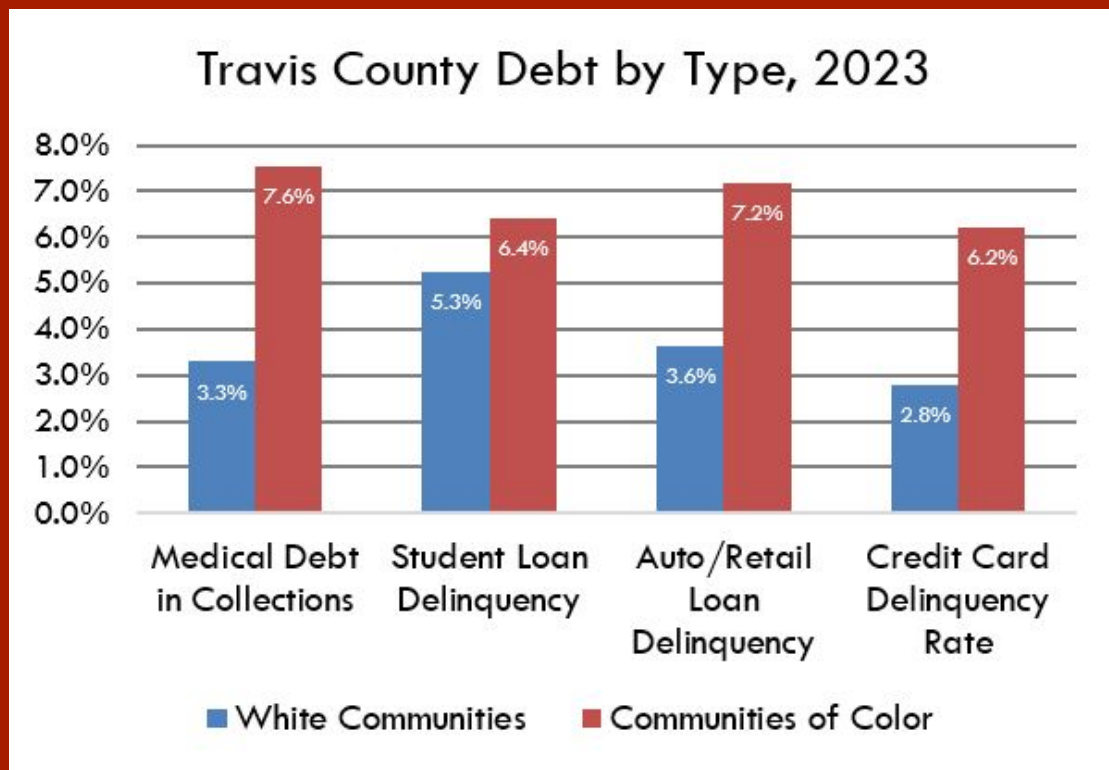
DEBT BY RACE



[2025 CAN Economic Mobility Report](#)

Source: The Urban Institute

DEBT STATUS BY RACE



[2025 CAN Economic Mobility Report](#)

Source: The Urban Institute

**ORGANIZATIONS WORKING TO
ADDRESS RACIAL DISPARITIES
IN:**

BARRIERS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Project MALES*

<https://diversity.utexas.edu/projectmales/>

E3 Alliance

<https://e3alliance.org>

Breakthrough Central Texas

<https://breakthroughctx.org>

College Possible

<https://collegepossible.org/>

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR ADDRESSING BARRIERS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

STATE

Texas Star Alliance
<https://www.texasstaralliance.com/public-highereducationadvocacy>

Raise Your Hand Texas
<https://www.raiseyourhandtexas.org/>

Young Invincibles - Texas
<https://younginvincibles.org/location/texas/>

NATIONAL

Committee for Education Funding
<https://cef.org/>

U.S. PIRG
<https://uspirg.org/issues/usp/make-higher-education-affordable>

The Education Trust
<https://edtrust.org/issue/affordability-financial-aid/>

National Education Association
<https://www.nea.org/your-rights-workplace/fair-pay-benefits/student-debt-support>

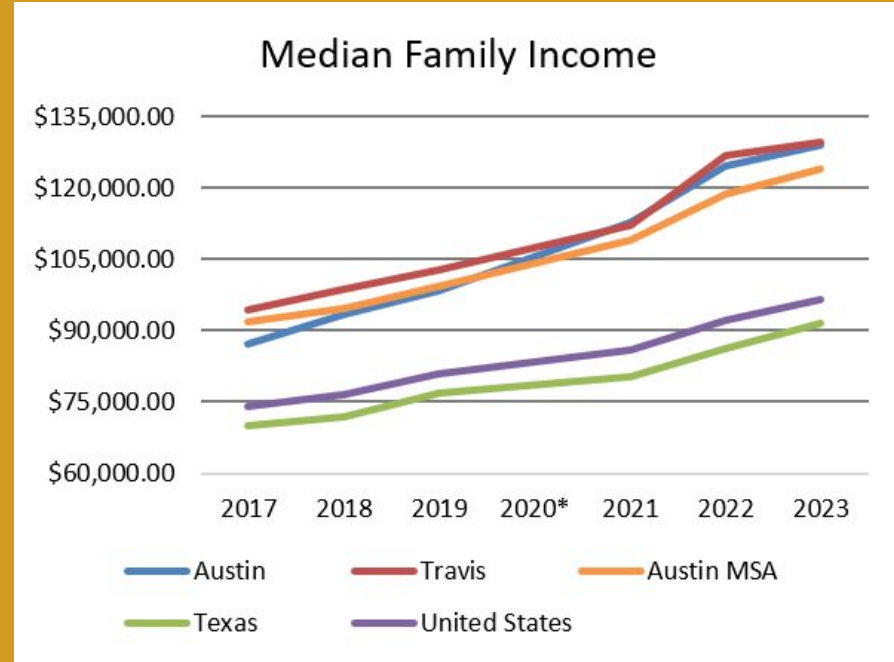
The Institute for College Access and Success
<https://ticas.org/our-work/student-debt/>

Student Borrower Protection Center
<https://protectborrowers.org/>

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

The median income for Austin, Travis County and the Austin MSA are significantly higher than the median income for Texas and the U.S., about a \$40,000 difference.

Median Household Income



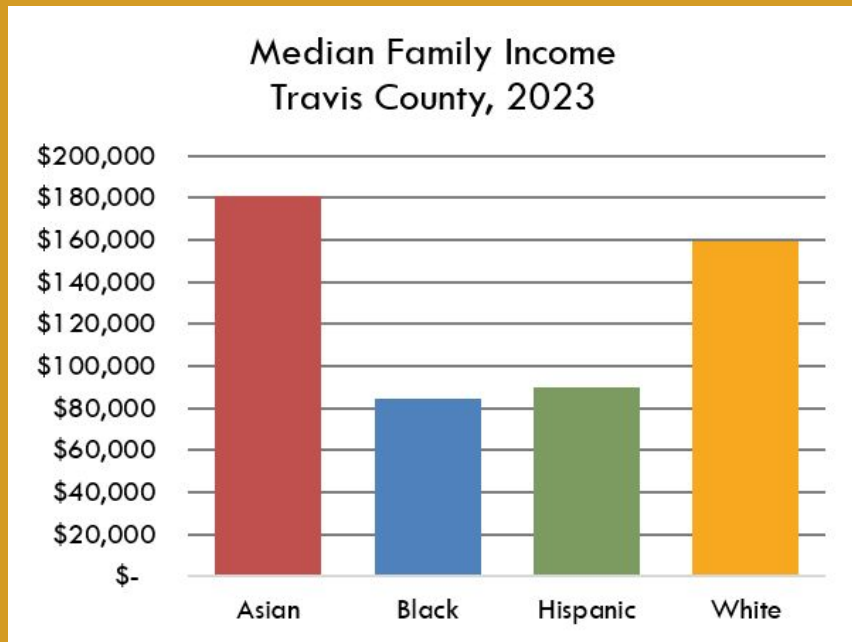
[2025 CAN Economic Mobility Report](#)

Source: Table B19113, American Community Survey
1-Year Estimates

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

The median household income was the highest for Asian households at \$112,800 and the least for Native Americans (\$57,270) and African Americans (\$56,490).

Median Household Income



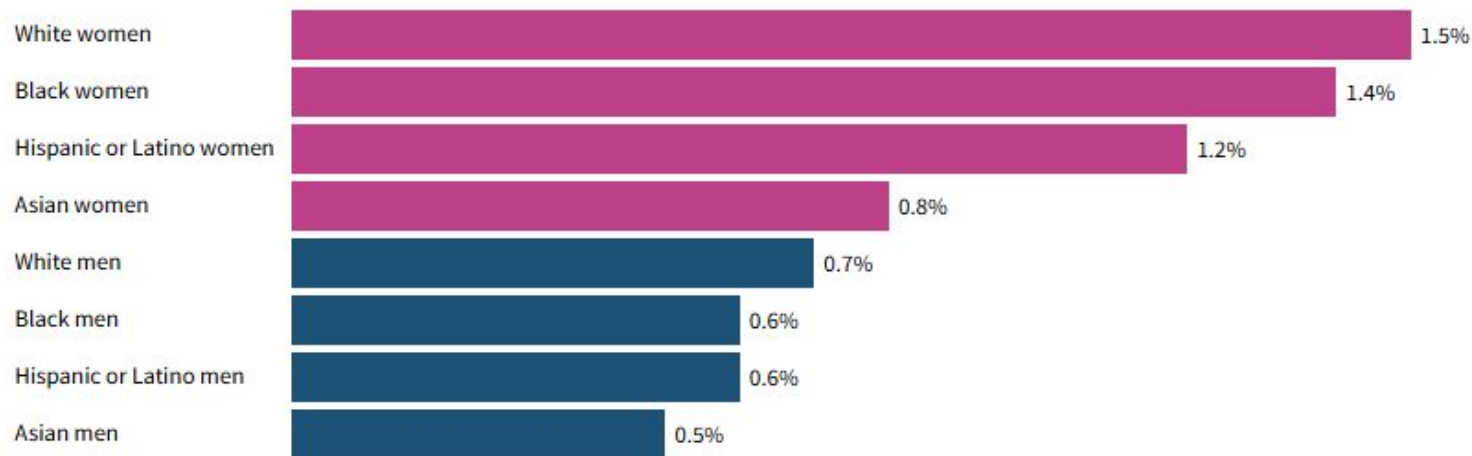
[2025 CAN Economic Mobility Report](#)

Source: Table B19113, American Community Survey
1-Year Estimates

MINIMUM WAGE

White women and Black women are most likely to earn minimum wage.

Percent of hourly workers earning at or below minimum wage by race, 2023



Data is limited and are not presented for all races. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Data exclude all self-employed persons whether or not their businesses are incorporated.

SOURCE: USA Facts (2025) *Minimum wage in America: How many people are earning \$7.25 an hour?*
<https://usafacts.org/articles/minimum-wage-america-how-many-people-are-earning-725-hour/>

ORGANIZATIONS WORKING TO ADDRESS RACIAL DISPARITIES IN:

WAGE INEQUALITY

AFSCME Local 1624

<https://www.afscme1624.org>

Education Austin

<https://educationaustin.org>

Central Texas Interfaith

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

Workers Defense Project*

<https://workersdefense.org/en/>

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR ADDRESSING WAGE INEQUALITY

State / National Resources

Economic Policy Institute

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

One Fair Wage Emergency Fund

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

National Employment Project's Raise
the Minimum Wage

<https://raisetheminimumwage.com/>

United For a Fair Economy - Living
Wage Network

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

Fight for \$15

<https://fightfor15.org/>

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Undoing White Supremacy Austin - Unlearning Circles

<https://undoingwhitesupremacy.org/unlearning-circles/>

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" Community Calendar

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1FUkB R8pDw7Pb4HNIoT1dBn09UXnuVvOa1HP9KMF3aMo/edit?gid=1003257320#gid=1003257320>

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.facebook.com/CCUCoalition/>

Community Resilience Trust

<https://communityresiliencetrust.org/>