

THE MEASURE OF AMERICA SERIES

A PORTRAIT OF MARIN 2012



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
January 18, 2012

Contact for American Human Development Project:
John Keaten, john@groupgordon.com, 212 784 5701

Contact for Marin Community Foundation:
Fred Silverman, fsilverman@marincf.org, 415 464 2527

A Portrait of Marin, First County-Level American Human Development Report in Measure of America Series, Reveals Striking Disparities in Well-Being

Commissioned by the Marin Community Foundation, Report Ranks Health, Education, and Earnings of Neighborhoods, Racial and Ethnic Groups, Men and Women in Marin County, California

Marin County, CA – The American Human Development Project released today *A Portrait of Marin*, the first county-level American Human Development Report in the *Measure of America* series. Commissioned by the Marin Community Foundation, *A Portrait of Marin* ranks the well-being of Marinites on a scale from 0 to 10 using the American Human Development (HD) Index, a composite measure of health, education, and living standards.

The analysis reveals that some Marinites are enjoying extraordinarily high levels of well-being and access to opportunity, while others are experiencing levels of health, education, and standard of living that prevailed in the nation three decades ago. At the top of the ranking is Ross (HD Index: 9.70) and at the bottom is the Canal area of San Rafael (HD Index: 3.18), whose score is below that of West Virginia, the lowest ranked state. Rankings are provided for major racial and ethnic groups, men and women, and the forty-eight Marin County census tracts for which there are reliable U.S Census Bureau data.

“The goal of *A Portrait of Marin* is to bring greater awareness and understanding of the complexities of such critical issues as health, education, and income across our county,” said Thomas Peters, President and CEO of the Marin Community Foundation. “It makes sense of data, brings clarity to numbers, and connects seemingly unrelated dots. We hope it will be used by concerned residents, business and nonprofit leaders, elected officials, educators, and others to look holistically at who we are as a community and to help facilitate discussions of ways to support all Marinites in realizing their full potential.”

“What we are seeing in Marin is a harbinger of what’s to come nationwide, with important implications for where to focus public and private resources in the years ahead,” said Sarah Burd-Sharps, co-director of American Human Development Project and co-author of *A Portrait of Marin*.

“The fastest-growing segment of the population in Marin—as in the country—is Latino. Today’s Latino children are a critical segment of the tax-paying workforce of tomorrow, yet Latinos lag on the American HD Index, especially in educational attainment and incomes. Improving American HD Index scores among Latinos is vital not only to their well-being and access to opportunity, but also to Marin’s and America’s long-term economic competitiveness and quality of life,” added Kristen Lewis, co-director of American Human Development Project and co-author of *A Portrait of Marin*.



www.measureofamerica.org/marin

CONTACT John Keaten

jkeaten@groupgordon.com | 212.784.5701



MARIN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

HOW CHANGE HAPPENS

AMONG THE KEY FINDINGS FROM *A PORTRAIT OF MARIN*:

Health:

- There is a 13-year gap in life span separating towns in Marin County. Residents of Ross have the longest lives (88 years), outliving residents of Hamilton in southern Novato (75.2 years) by 13 years.
- The average Ross resident lives nearly 8 years longer than the average Californian and an astonishing decade longer than the national average.
- All major racial and ethnic groups in Marin County live longer than their counterparts in the rest of California.
- African Americans lag behind other groups in longevity, though they live longer in Marin than elsewhere in California.

Education:

- While 88 percent of white children are enrolled in preschool, only 47 percent of Latino children are.
- While fewer than 30 percent of American adults have completed at least a four-year college degree, in Marin, over 50 percent have.
- Though Marin's overall high school dropout rate is very low at 7.3 percent, the rate has remained persistent, and the racial and ethnic gaps in dropout rates are not decreasing over time despite targeted in-school efforts.
- In Marin, as across the nation, the schools whose students have greater needs tend to get fewer public dollars.

Income:

- The typical female worker living in Marin earns nearly \$14,000 less per year than the typical male worker—a larger male-female earnings gap than California (\$10,217) and the nation as a whole (\$11,179).
- Though Marin's planners have targeted employment in areas such as biotechnology and software as a way to stimulate the recovery and the county's long-term growth, the job growth that has occurred over the last two decades in Marin is overwhelmingly at the other end of the scale: low-wage service employment.
- The distribution of income in Marin is exceedingly lopsided; the top fifth of Marin taxpayers take home about 71 percent of the county's total income. The bottom fifth earns 1.3 percent of the total income.

A Portrait of Marin highlights actions that Marinites can take to lock in human development successes today while setting the stage for significant budget savings and improved well-being tomorrow. These include creating an environment that reduces health risks; investing in preschool, and addressing the lower per-pupil spending in schools whose students have greatest needs; and expanding affordably priced housing to increase options for older adults and working families and to reduce Marin's car congestion and pollution.

Supporters of *A Portrait of Marin* include The Marin Community Foundation and the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. For additional information, including fact sheets on health, education and standard of living in Marin, and an interactive map program, visit: www.measureofamerica.org/marin.



www.measureofamerica.org/marin

CONTACT John Keaten

jkeaten@groupgordon.com | 212.784.5701



About the American Human Development Project

The **American Human Development Project** provides easy-to-use yet methodologically sound tools for understanding the distribution of well-being and opportunity in America and stimulating fact-based dialogue about issues we all care about: health, education, and living standards. The hallmark of this work is the **American Human Development Index**, an alternative to GDP and other money metrics that tells the story of how ordinary Americans are faring and empowers communities with a tool to track progress over time. The Index is comprised of health, education, and income indicators and allows for well-being rankings of the 50 states, 435 congressional districts, county groups within states, women and men, and racial and ethnic groups.

Through national and state reports, thematic briefs, and the project's interactive website, the American Human Development Project aims to breathe life into numbers, using data to create compelling narratives that foster greater understanding of our shared challenges and greater support for people-centered policies. The Project was founded in 2006, and became an initiative of the **Social Science Research Council (SSRC)** in 2008. The Project is made possible through the **Conrad N. Hilton Foundation's** matching grant, which will match every dollar you donate—effectively doubling your contribution.

About the Authors

Sarah Burd-Sharps and Kristen Lewis are co-directors of the American Human Development Project. Previously, Sarah worked with the United Nations for over two decades, most recently as Deputy Director of the Human Development Report Office of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Prior to this, she worked in China and in a number of African countries on gender issues and economic empowerment. Sarah holds an M.I.A. from Columbia University. Kristen also comes from an international development policy background, having worked primarily in the areas of gender equality, governance, environment, and water and sanitation. Kristen is co-author, under the leadership of Jeffrey Sachs' Millennium Project, of the 2005 book *Health, Dignity and Development: What Will It Take?* She worked at the United Nations for some ten years and has served as a consultant for many international development organizations. Kristen also holds an M.I.A. from Columbia University.

About the Marin Community Foundation

The Marin Community Foundation is the primary center for philanthropy in Marin County, CA and is one of the largest community foundations in the U.S. It manages the assets of the Leonard and Beryl H. Buck Trust and nearly 400 funds established by individuals, families, and businesses. The Foundation makes significant improvements in communities around the world in two ways: by spearheading initiatives for long-term, sustainable change in Marin, and by distributing grants from donor-advised funds locally, across the U.S., and around the world. Now in its 25th year, the Marin Community Foundation has assets of approximately \$1 billion, with annual grant distributions of approximately \$50 million.

###



www.measureofamerica.org/marin

CONTACT John Keaten

jkeaten@groupgordon.com | 212.784.5701



MARIN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

HOW CHANGE HAPPENS