

CENSUS BUREAU FACTS FOR FEATURES
BLACK HISTORY MONTH – FEBRUARY 2008

To commemorate and celebrate the contributions to our nation made by people of African descent, American historian Carter G. Woodson established Black History Week. The first celebration occurred on Feb. 12, 1926. For many years, the second week of February was set aside for this celebration to coincide with the birthdays of abolitionist/editor Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. In 1976, as part of the nation's bicentennial, the week was expanded into Black History Month. In 2000, President Clinton proclaimed February as National African American History Month.

Population Distribution

40.2 million

As of July 1, 2006, the estimated population of black residents in the United States, including those of more than one race. They made up 13.4 percent of the total U.S. population. This figure represents an increase of half a million residents from one year earlier.

Source: Population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/popest/estimates.php>>

61.4 million

The projected single-race black population of the United States for July 1, 2050. On that date, according to the projection, blacks would constitute 14.6 percent of the nation's total population.

Source: Population projections <http://www.census.gov/population/www/projections/popproj.html>>

18

Number of states with an estimated black population on July 1, 2006, of at least 1 million. New York, with 3.5 million blacks, led the way. The 17 other states on the list were Alabama, California, Florida, **Georgia**, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

Source: Population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/popest/estimates.php>>

37%

Percentage of Mississippi's population that is black, highest of any state. Blacks also make up more than a quarter of the population in Louisiana (32 percent), **Georgia (30 percent)**, Maryland (30 percent), South Carolina (29 percent) and Alabama (27 percent). They comprise 57 percent of the population in the District of Columbia.

Source: Population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/popest/estimates.php>>

135,000

The increase in Texas' black population between July 1, 2005, and July 1, 2006, which led all states. **Georgia (101,000)**, Florida (86,000) and North Carolina (41,000) also recorded large increases.

Source: Population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/popest/estimates.php>>

22

Number of states in which blacks are the largest minority group. These states are Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, **Georgia**, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin. (Note: Minorities are part of a group other than single-race non-Hispanic white.)

Source: Population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/popest/estimates.php>>

1.4 million

The number of blacks in Cook County, Ill., as of July 1, 2006. Cook led all the nation's counties in the number of people of this racial category. Los Angeles County, Calif., also topped the 1 million mark. Harris County, Texas, had the largest numerical increase in the black population between July 1, 2005, and July 1, 2006 (52,000), followed by East Baton Rouge Parish, La. (19,000).

Among counties with total populations of at least 10,000, all 50 with the highest percentage black population were in the South. Claiborne County, Miss., which was 85 percent black, led the country.

Source: Population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/010482.html>>

31%

The proportion of the black population younger than 18 as of July 1, 2006. At the other end of the spectrum, 8 percent of the black population was 65 and older.

Source: Population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/popest/estimates.php>>

Note: Unless otherwise noted, the estimates in this section refer to the population that is either single-race black or black in combination with one or more other races.

Serving Our Nation

2.4 million

Number of black military veterans in the United States in 2006. More military veterans are black than any other minority group.

Source: 2006 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>.

Note: Data pertain to single-race blacks.

Education

81%

Among blacks 25 and older, the proportion who had at least a high school diploma in 2006.

Source: Educational Attainment in the United States: 2006 <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/education/009749.html>>

18%

Percentage of blacks 25 and older who had a bachelor's degree or higher in 2006.

Source: Educational Attainment in the United States: 2006 <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/education/009749.html>>

1.3 million

Among blacks 25 and older, the number who had an advanced degree in 2006 (e.g., master's, doctorate, medical or law). In 1996, 683,000 blacks had this level of education.

Source: Educational Attainment in the United States: 2006 <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/education/009749.html>>

2.3 million

Number of black college students in fall 2005. This was an increase of roughly 1 million from 15 years earlier.

Source: School Enrollment – Social and Economic Characteristics of Students: October 2005 <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/education/007909.html>>

Note: 2005 and 2006 data in this section pertain to single-race blacks.

Businesses

\$88.6 billion

Revenues for black-owned businesses in 2002. The number of black-owned businesses totaled nearly 1.2 million in 2002. Black-owned firms accounted for 5 percent of all nonfarm businesses in the United States.

129,329

The number of black-owned firms in New York in 2002, which led all states. New York City alone had 98,080 such firms, which led all cities.

10,716

The number of black-owned firms operating in 2002 with receipts of \$1 million or more. These firms accounted for 1 percent of the total number of black-owned firms in 2002 and 55 percent of their total receipts, or \$49 billion.

969

The number of black-owned firms with 100 or more employees in 2002. Firms of this size accounted for 24 percent of the total revenue for black-owned employer firms in 2002, or \$16 billion.

Source: Black-Owned Firms: 2002 <<http://www.census.gov/prod/ec02/sb0200csblk.pdf>>

Income, Poverty and Health Insurance

\$31,969

The annual median income of single-race black households in 2006. In constant dollars, this is up from \$26,468 in 1986.

Source: Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2006 <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/010583.html>

\$34,770 & \$30,352

The 2006 median earnings of single-race black men and women, respectively, 15 and older who worked full time, year-round.

Source: Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2006 <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/010583.html>

24.3%

Poverty rate in 2006 for single-race blacks. This rate was down from 31.1 percent in 1986.

Source: Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2006 <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/010583.html>

20.5%

The percentage of single-race blacks lacking health insurance in 2006, up from 19 percent in 2005.

Source: Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2006 <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/010583.html>

Families and Children

Note: The first two statements in this section pertain to households with a householder who is single-race black.

64%

Percentage of black households that contained a family. There were 8.4 million black family households.

Source: 2006 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

45%

Nationally, the percentage of black families containing a married-couple family.

Source: 2006 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

1.2 million

Number of single-race black grandparents living with their own grandchildren younger than 18. Of this number, 51 percent were also responsible for their care.

Source: 2006 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

Homeownership – the American Dream

46%

Nationally, the percentage of black households that lived in owner-occupied homes. The rate was higher in certain states, such as Mississippi, where it reached 58 percent.

Source: 2006 American Community Survey <<http://factfinder.census.gov>>

Note: Data in this section pertain to households with a householder who is single-race black.

Jobs

26%

The percentage of single-race blacks 16 and older who work in management, professional and related occupations. There are 44,900 black physicians and surgeons, 80,000 postsecondary teachers, 48,300 lawyers, and 52,400 chief executives.

Sources: 2006 American Community Survey and Upcoming Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2008 <<http://factfinder.census.gov>> and <<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>>

Editor's note: The preceding data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. Facts for Features are customarily released about two months before an observance in order to accommodate magazine production timelines. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau's Public Information Office: telephone: 301-763-3030; fax: 301-763-3762; or e-mail: <pio@census.gov>.