# UPDATE

A bi-monthly newsletter of the Solano County Health & Social Services Department.

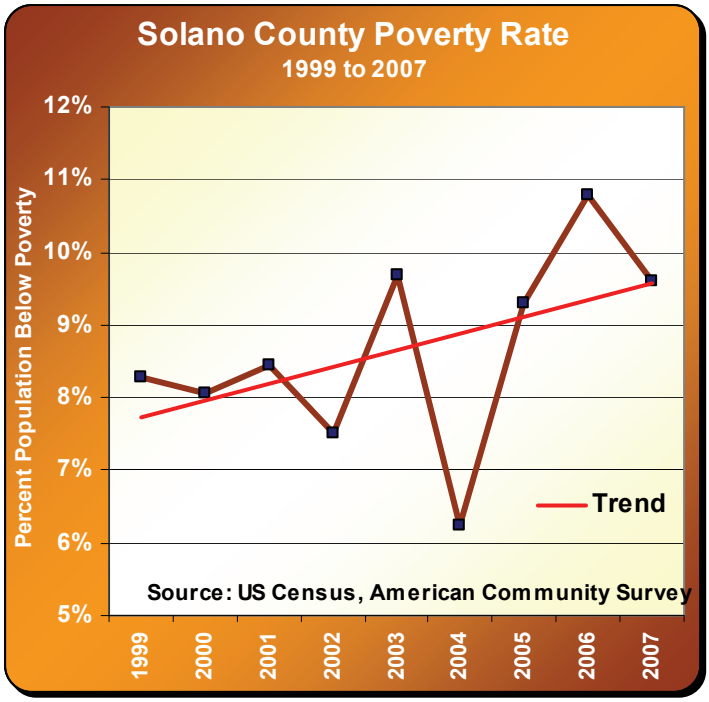
November 2008
Volume 5, Issue 6

## NEW DATA FROM THE US CENSUS

This issue of UPDATE looks at new demographic data released in recent weeks by the US Census. Until recently, communities had to wait for each new decade to get updated social, economic, and demographic information from the Census. Beginning after the 2000 census, the US Census Bureau began using the American Community Survey (ACS) — a nationwide survey designed to provide communities with up-to-date annual information about how they are changing. The ACS collects information from U.S. households similar to what was collected on the Census 2000 long form on an annual basis. Beginning with the release of data for 2005, the ACS now covers communities with populations of 65,000 and above. When fully implemented, data will be available for communities of 20,000 and greater population.

Many of the Department's programs focus on the County's low income population. This issue looks at the poverty and low-income population in Solano County. While the County's poverty rate fell in 2007, it is still higher than in 2000. For 2007, 9.6 percent of Solano County's residents lived below the poverty line compared to 8.1 percent in 2000. About one-fourth of the County's population falls into the low-income category (defined as income below twice the poverty guidelines). The current federal poverty guidelines are shown on Page 4.

Also in this issue are the H&SS Index (Page 2) and a profile of Natasha Hamilton, the new ODAS Administrator (Page 10).

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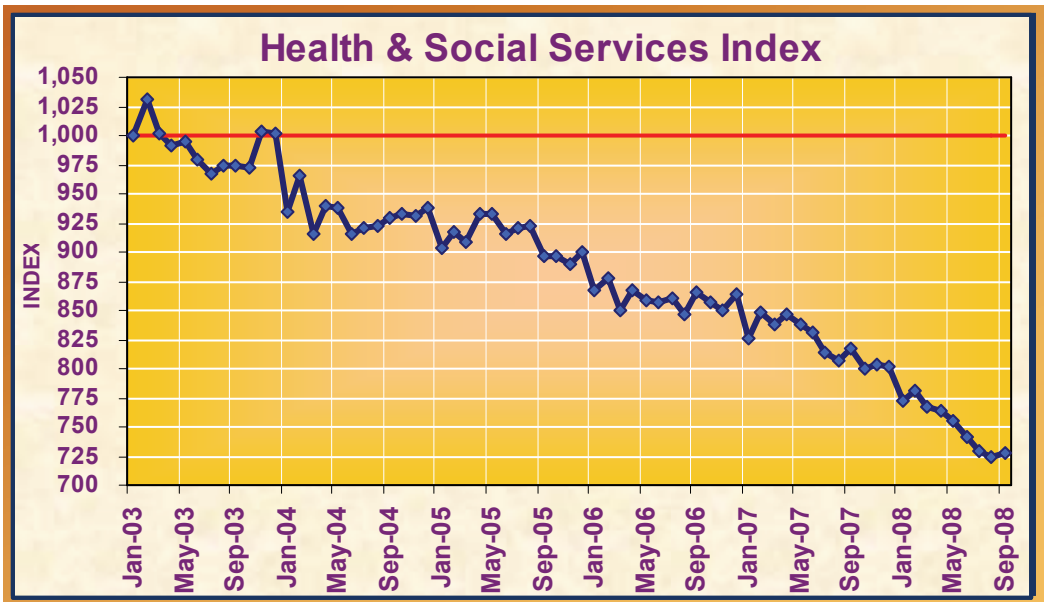



The Health & Social Services (H&SS) Index combines workload data from 15 key services provided by H&SS, along with data on unemployment in Solano County, to provide a monthly indicator of community demand for health and social services.

All of the monthly numbers — clients served, program caseloads, number of unemployed, referrals, etc. — are added together and then converted into an index score. The January 2003 total serves as the index bench line figure of 1,000. The index scores for subsequent months reflect change from the January level. Like the Dow Jones or NASDAQ, higher scores suggest positive developments — fewer people looking for work or requiring the services that H&SS provides, for example. Falling numbers suggest increasing need for H&SS's safety net services.

**Please note:** The index is not a direct measure of need. Many socioeconomic factors influence need. At the same time, various factors, such as eligibility guidelines and available revenues, influence the amount of service that H&SS can provide regardless of need or demand for service. (Some Medi-Cal enrollment figures for more recent months are estimates or projections based on historical trends. Some other December 2007 data is preliminary and may change.)

| INDICATOR | Jan-03 | Sep-03 | Jun-04 | Mar-05 | Dec-05 | Sep-06 | Jun-07 | Jan-08 | Apr-08 | Jul-08 | Sep-08 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number Unemployed | 13,800 | 12,100 | 12,800 | 12,000 | 9,800 | 9,500 | 11,200 | 13,400 | 12,800 | 15,700 | 15,600 |
| Number of I&R Calls | 2,772 | 3,029 | 2,317 | 1,973 | 2,179 | 2,326 | 1,598 | 1,081 | 1,091 | 1,208 | 1,099 |
| CalWORKs Cash Assistance Recipients | 9,405 | 9,968 | 11,077 | 11,120 | 12,048 | 12,437 | 12,653 | 13,523 | 13,737 | 13,930 | 13,976 |
| New CalWORKs Applications & Restoration Requests | 521 | 521 | 465 | 432 | 420 | 454 | 480 | 555 | 508 | 563 | 522 |
| Food Stamp Recipients | 11,515 | 13,106 | 15,586 | 16,207 | 18,460 | 20,130 | 21,111 | 22,612 | 23,663 | 24,672 | 25,544 |
| General Relief Recipients | 256 | 359 | 399 | 492 | 718 | 653 | 724 | 763 | 819 | 1,119 | 1,101 |
| Medi-Cal Enrollment* | 49,059 | 51,720 | 53,491 | 54,890 | 57,100 | 57,113 | 57,934 | 59,840 | 60,324 | 59,913 | 58,081 |
| Elder or Dependent Adult Abuse Referrals | 98 | 90 | 99 | 115 | 83 | 100 | 105 | 122 | 103 | 106 | 145 |
| Elder or Dependent Adult Abuse Confirmed | 40 | 31 | 31 | 31 | 22 | 34 | 47 | 24 | 32 | 40 | 36 |
| In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Authorized Cases | 2,254 | 2,278 | 2,329 | 2,461 | 2,534 | 2,608 | 2,616 | 2,733 | 2,762 | 2,800 | 2,826 |
| Child Abuse Referrals | 390 | 349 | 333 | 401 | 273 | 314 | 269 | 314 | 367 | 286 | 324 |
| Medical Clinic Visits | 2,595 | 2,721 | 2,822 | 2,916 | 1,964 | 2,612 | 2,726 | 3,353 | 3,662 | 3,492 | 3,311 |
| Dental Clinic Visits | 447 | 379 | 324 | 453 | 262 | 391 | 435 | 366 | 460 | 408 | 437 |
| Mental Health Clients | 2,701 | 2,785 | 2,670 | 2,652 | 2,525 | 2,496 | 2,721 | 3,078 | 2,761 | 2,679 | 2,754 |
| Substance Abuse Clients | 699 | 541 | 680 | 739 | 654 | 693 | 801 | 831 | 750 | 665 | 640 |

* Because actual Medi-Cal enrollment numbers alone would represent over one-half of the index, Medi-Cal enrollment has been adjusted (weighted) to 1/3 of the actual total.

# IS SOLANO COUNTY GROWING?

While there is no question that Solano County's population has increased since 2000, there are substantial differences in the estimates of the number of people living in the County. The California Department of Finance estimated the County's 2008 population at 426,757. The Census Bureau, on the other hand, estimated the County's 2007 population at 408,599. Based on the overall trend of the Census Bureau's estimates through 2007, the 2008 estimate would probably stay at around 409,000 — nearly 18,000 fewer residents than estimated by the Department of Finance. According to the Department of Finance, Solano County's population has increased 8.2 percent compared to the Census' estimate of 3.5 percent growth.

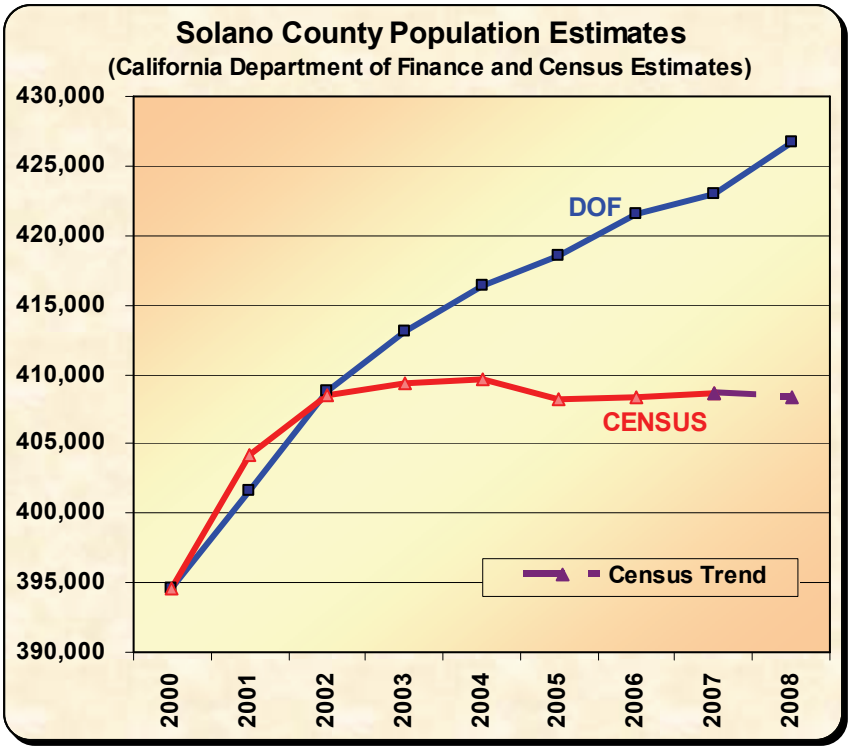
The Department of Finance has a long track record of estimating populations and is likely the more accurate current estimate. For most reports and projects, H&SS and the County use the DOF estimates.

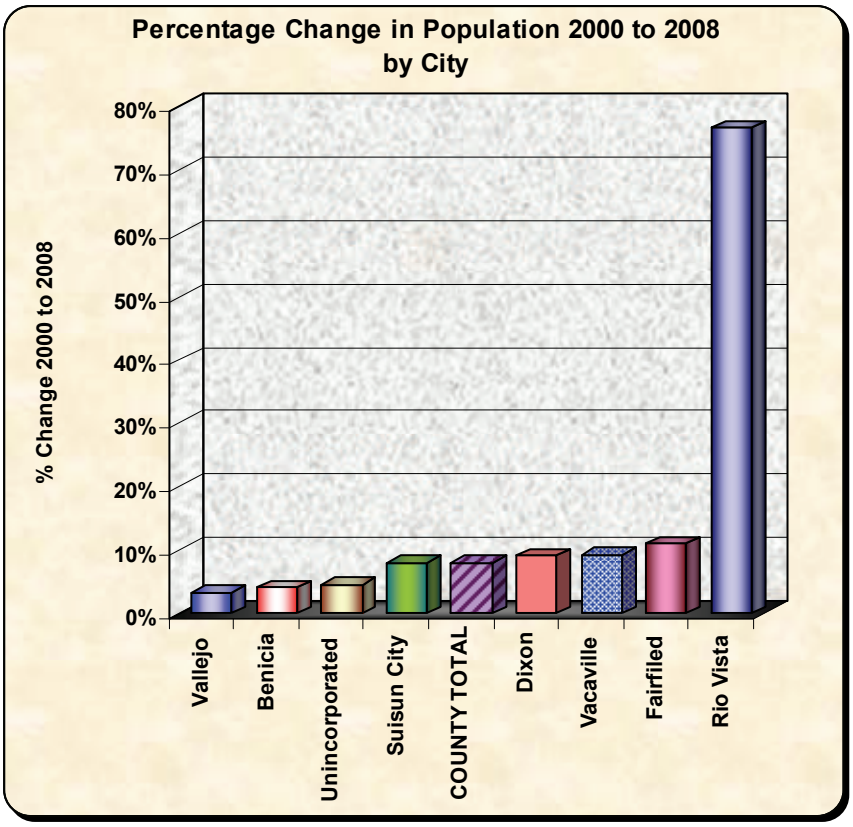
The fastest growing community in Solano County over the past eight years has been Rio Vista. According to the Department of Finance estimates, most of the rest of the County has seen modest population growth.

2008 Population by City:

| | |
|---|---|
| Vallejo | 121,097 |
| Fairfield | 106,753 |
| Vacaville | 96,905 |
| Suisun City | 28,193 |
| Benicia | 27,978 |
| Dixon | 17,577 |
| Rio Vista | 8,071 |

*DOF estimates.*



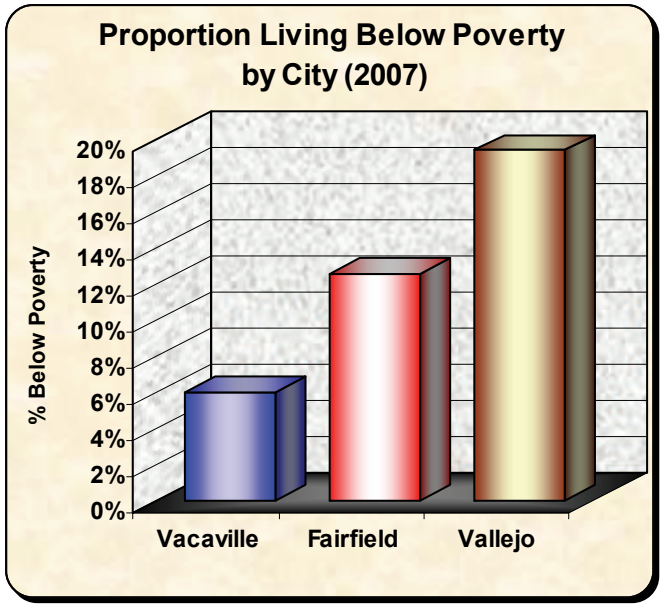



# POVERTY IN SOLANO COUNTY

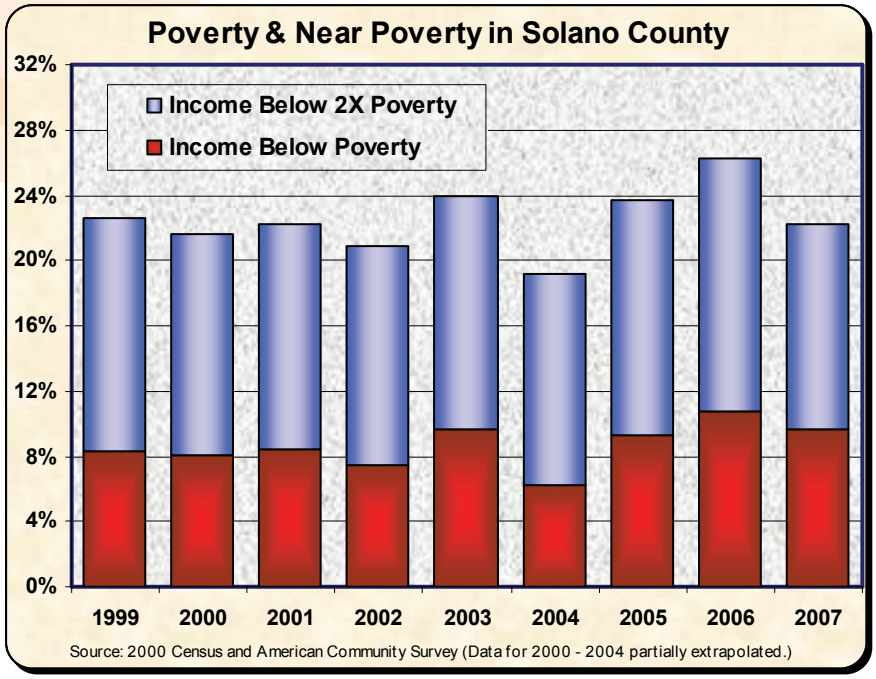
- Nearly 40,000 residents live below the poverty line in Solano County. Another 50,000 fall into the "low-income" category with incomes below twice the poverty level.
- Countywide, the percentage of residents living in poverty is 9.6 percent. However, rates vary throughout the County. Vallejo's poverty rate is twice the County average at 19.4 percent.
- The proportion of low income in Solano County has remained fairly constant over the past decade generally remaining at between 20 and 25 percent.

| Income | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Below Poverty | 37,888 | 9.6% |
| 2 X Poverty | 49,767 | 12.6% |
| 2 to 3 X Poverty | 61,920 | 15.7% |
| 3 to 4X Poverty | 56,168 | 14.2% |
| 4 to 5 X Poverty | 55,734 | 14.1% |
| Over 5 X Poverty | 133,534 | 33.8% |

*2007 US Census, American Community Survey*




| 2008 Federal Poverty Guidelines | | |
|---|---|---|
| Family Size | Poverty | 2X Poverty |
| 1 | $ 10,400 | $ 20,800 |
| 2 | $ 14,000 | $ 28,000 |
| 3 | $ 17,600 | $ 35,200 |
| 4 | $ 21,200 | $ 42,400 |
| 5 | $ 24,800 | $ 49,600 |



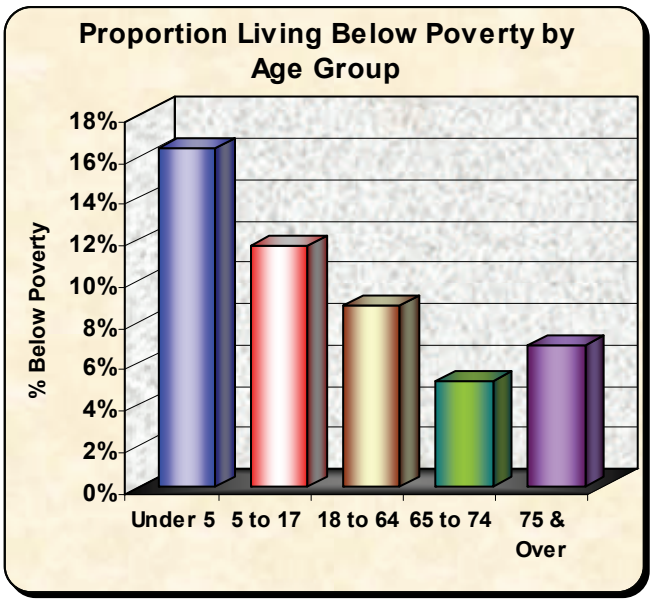
- Children are the group most affected by poverty. Children are more than twice as likely to live in poverty than adults. Children comprise 26 percent of the County's population but account for 35 percent of all Solano County residents living in poverty.

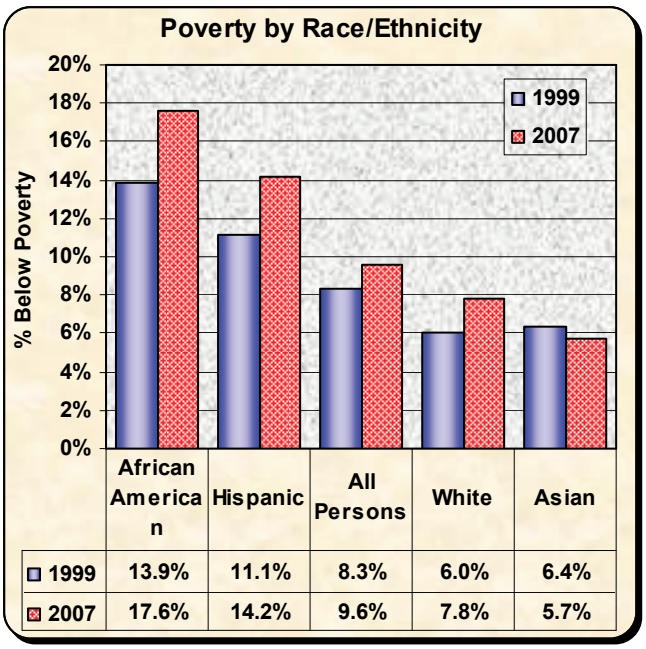
- Seniors are the group least impacted by poverty. However, poverty rates begin to increase among the very old (75 and over).

- While the proportion of the elderly living below poverty is low compared to other age groups, the proportion with incomes just above poverty is generally high.

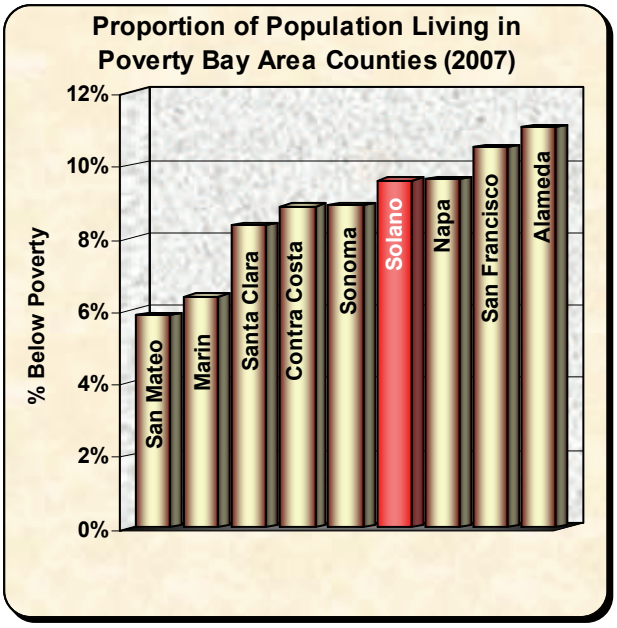
- Poverty also varies among racial and ethnic groups. Poverty rates increased among all groups except Asians between 1999 and 2007.

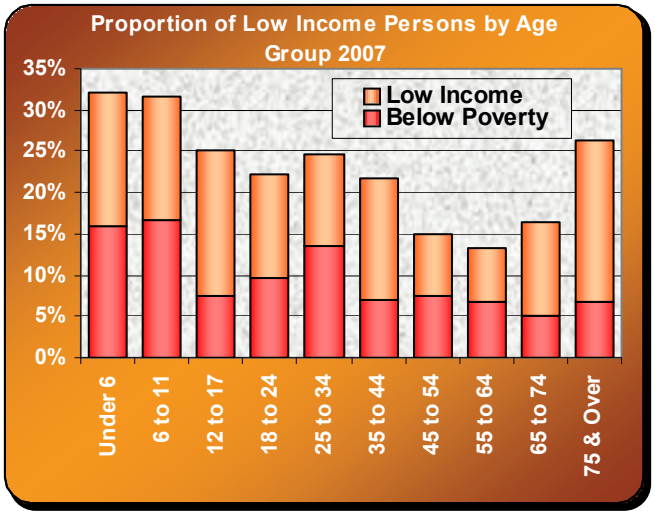
- Solano County ranks fourth highest among the nine Bay Area counties in proportion of residents living below the poverty line.



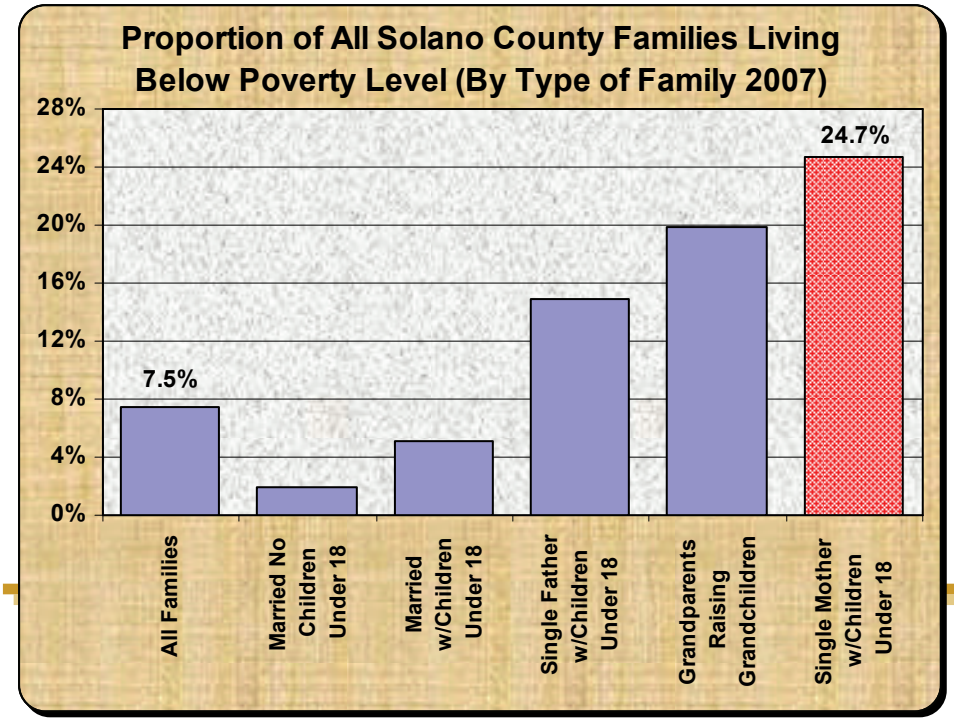

| | African American | Hispanic | All Persons | White | Asian |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1999 | 13.9% | 11.1% | 8.3% | 6.0% | 6.4% |
| 2007 | 17.6% | 14.2% | 9.6% | 7.8% | 5.7% |



# POVERTY BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE

| PROFILE OF POVERTY IN SOLANO COUNTY 2007 | TOTAL | Below Poverty | % Below Poverty |
|---|---|---|---|
| All Individuals | 395,011 | 37,888 | 9.6% |
| Children Under 18 | 103,080 | 13,384 | 13.0% |
| Adults 18 to 64 | 248,536 | 21,944 | 8.8% |
| Senior Adults Over 65 | 43,395 | 2,560 | 5.9% |
| All Families | 97,471 | 7,323 | 7.5% |
| Married No Children Under 18 | 38,153 | 708 | 1.9% |
| Married w/Children Under 18 | 32,289 | 1,647 | 5.1% |
| Grandparents Raising Grandchildren | 4,728 | 940 | 19.9% |
| Single Father w/ Children Under 18 | 4,383 | 655 | 14.9% |
| Single Mother w/ Children Under 18 | 12,244 | 3,030 | 24.7% |



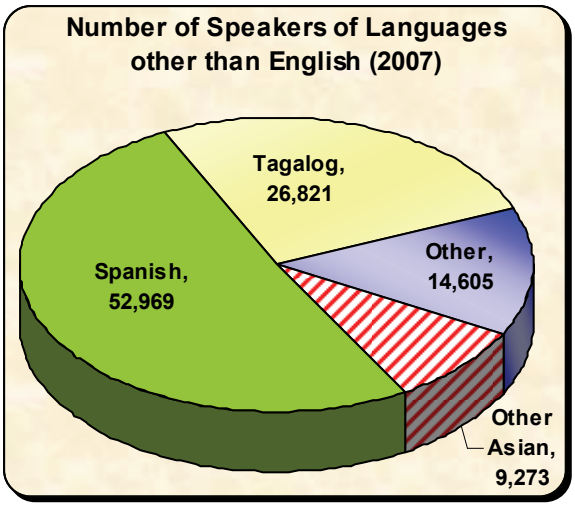

- Women are more likely to live in poverty than men. For 2007, 10 percent of women lived in poverty compared to 9.1 percent of men The gap was greatest among the elderly. For those over 65, 7.6 percent of women lived in poverty compared to 3.5 percent of men.
- The most typical low-income household is comprised of a single mother with children. 40 percent of all families with incomes below poverty are headed by a single mother.
- One of every four households headed by a single mother has an income below poverty.
- One of every five households where grandparents are raising grandchildren have incomes below poverty.

# LANGUAGE IN SOLANO COUNTY

- Over one fourth of Solano County's residents (over 100,000 residents over the age of 5) speak a language other than English at home. Of these, about half speak Spanish, a quarter speak Tagalog and another one-fourth use other languages.

- About 46 percent of Spanish speakers do not speak English well. For Asian and Pacific Islander language speakers, 40 percent cannot speak English well.

- When combined, the percentage of the population who are either native English speakers or who speak another language but can speak English well is 88.5 percent — down slightly from 90.1 percent in 2000.



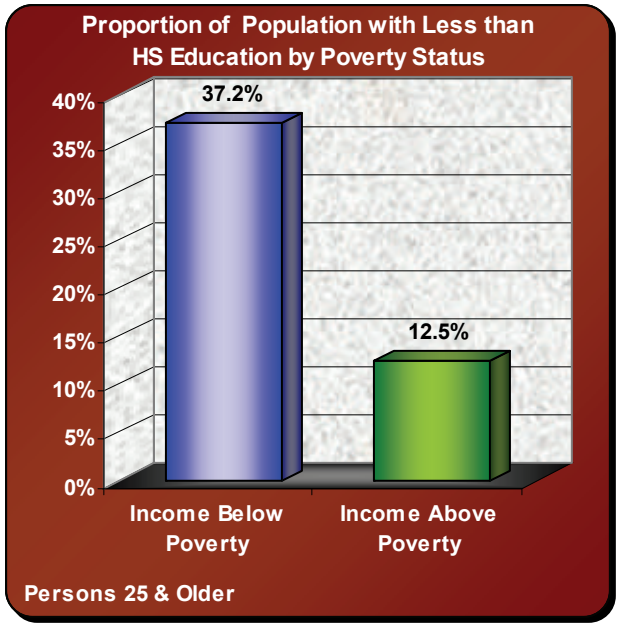

## LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME

| | 2000 | 2007 | 2000 | 2007 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Population 5 years and over | 366,302 | 380,560 | % of Total | |
| English only | 276,347 | 276,892 | 75.4% | 72.8% |
| Language other than English | 89,955 | 103,668 | 24.6% | 27.2% |
| Speak English less than "very well" | 36,154 | 43,625 | 9.9% | 11.5% |
| Spanish | 44,187 | 52,969 | 12.1% | 13.9% |
| Speak English less than "very well" | 20,721 | 24,259 | 5.7% | 6.4% |
| Asian and Pacific Islander languages | 33,918 | 36,094 | 9.3% | 9.5% |
| Speak English less than "very well" | 12,295 | 14,632 | 3.4% | 3.8% |
| Other languages | 11,850 | 14,605 | 3.2% | 3.8% |
| Speak English less than "very well" | 3,138 | 4,734 | 0.9% | 1.2% |
| | | | | |
| Percentage of Spanish speakers who speak English less than well: | | | 46.9% | 45.8% |
| Percentage of Asian/PI language speakers who speak English less than well: | | | 36.2% | 40.5% |
| Percentage of other language speakers who speak English less than well: | | | 26.5% | 32.4% |
| Percentage of Total Population who are native English speakers or speak English well: | | | 90.1% | 88.5% |

# EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

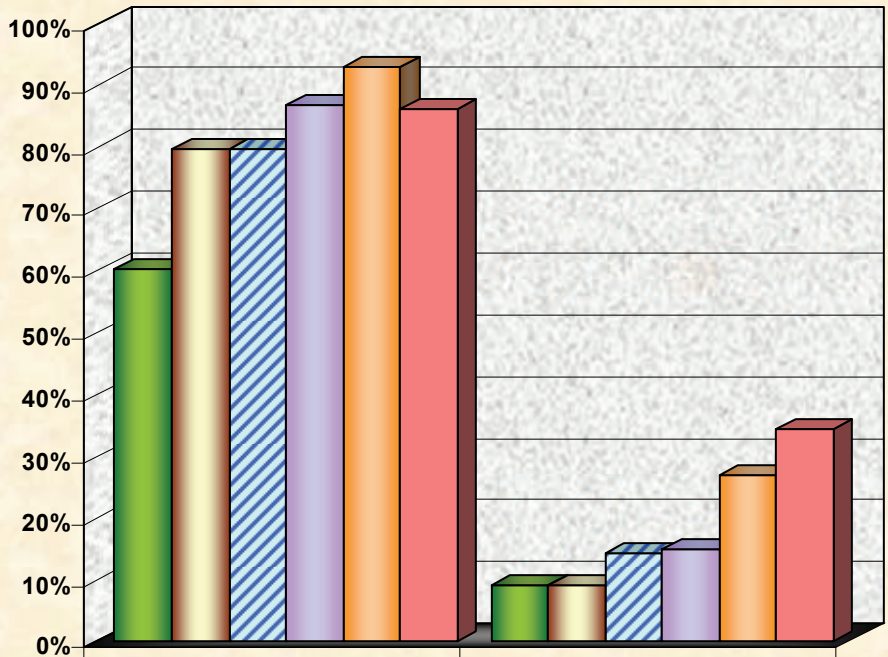
| EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Solano County | | California |
| | 2000 | 2007 | 2007 |
| No High School | 16.2% | 15.4% | 19.8% |
| High School or Equivalency | 83.8% | 84.6% | 80.2% |
| Bachelor's Degree | 15.1% | 22.4% | 29.5% |
| Master's, Professional, or Doctorate | 6.3% | 6.2% | 10.5% |

For persons 25 years of age and older. (HS includes all persons w/HS degree or greater education.)




- Educational attainment has improved in Solano County but, while the County has a higher proportion of high school graduates than the state as whole, Solano County lags behind California in the percentage of college graduates.
- Those with incomes below the poverty line are 3 times more likely to have not graduated high school than those with incomes above poverty.
- African Americans graduate from high school at rates comparable to Asians and whites but are less likely to have college degrees.
- Hispanics — many of whom grew up outside of the US — are the least likely to have graduated high school and college.

## Educational Attainment by Race/Ethnicity (2007)




| | HS Grad | College Grad |
|---|---|---|
| Hispanic | 60.1% | 9.0% |
| Native American | 79.6% | 9.1% |
| Pacific Islander | 79.8% | 14.2% |
| African American | 86.8% | 14.7% |
| White | 93.1% | 26.8% |
| Asian | 86.1% | 34.4% |

# CITIZENSHIP

| CITIZENSHIP STATUS OF RESIDENTS | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | SOLANO | | CALIFORNIA | | US | |
| | 2000 | 2005 | 2000 | 2005 | 2000 | 2005 |
| Citizen by Birth | 83.1% | 80.7% | 73.8% | 72.6% | 88.9% | 87.4% |
| Naturalized Citizen | 8.9% | 10.0% | 10.3% | 12.0% | 4.5% | 5.4% |
| Not a Citizen | 7.9% | 9.3% | 15.9% | 15.5% | 6.6% | 7.3% |

- The proportion of residents who are not citizens has increased in Solano County since 2000 but, while Solano County has a higher proportion of residents who are not citizens than the nation as a whole, the percentage is much lower than for the State.

MEET

# NATASHA HAMILTON
## ODAS ADMINISTRATOR

**Natasha Hamilton** is the new administrator in Older and Disabled Adult Services (ODAS) in the Health and Social Services Department. She comes to us from the City and County of San Francisco where she was a program director in the Department of Public Health, Mental Health Division. She was responsible for directing, managing and leading a multi-disciplinary team that provided intensive case management with wrap around services for the chronically homeless, severely mentally ill population. Prior to that she was a social work supervisor with San Francisco's Family and Children's Services. There she supervised a team of 19 social workers in the Child Protection Center. She has also worked in eligibility with Cal Works and as a health worker.

Natasha's first day of work in Solano County was on August 18th, three days after the fire at Casa de Vallejo. She was immediately deployed to managing the ODAS disaster response efforts. There were 117 people displaced by the Casa de Vallejo fire. Some were recipients of In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) and others were clients of the Public Guardian's Office. The ODAS team included social workers, public health nurses, social services workers, a mental health clinician and staff from the Public Guardian's Office. For five fairly intensive weeks, ODAS staff worked with the Red Cross and Vallejo Housing Authority as well as about 40 community partners to assist the Casa de Vallejo victims. ODAS staff provided services to a majority of the victims not just ODAS recipients/clients.

This was not Natasha's first experience with disaster response. When Katrina occurred, public health departments were asked to respond. Natasha volunteered because she has family in Louisiana and she was sent as part of a team from San Francisco that was in Louisiana for five days. She primarily worked with the Red Cross and FEMA assisting victims with phone calls to family and friends, getting money to leave and helping find hotel rooms. She says, "It was difficult to see the devastation and how it had destroyed families."

Later Natasha was involved with several families and individuals displaced by Katrina who were re-located to San Francisco. In San Francisco Natasha and her staff helped to provide mental health, medical and housing services. She says, "Many of the families have remained in San Francisco and other Bay Area cities."