

# New Americans in Contra Costa County

The Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants<sup>1</sup> in the County<sup>2</sup>

## POPULATION GROWTH

# 292,211

Immigrant population in 2017

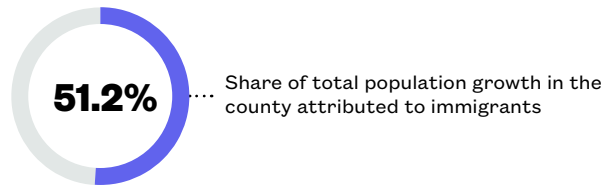
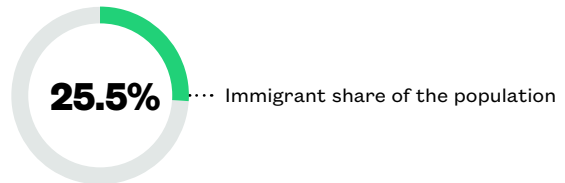
### Population growth

2012-2017

IMMIGRANT POPULATION - **13.5%**



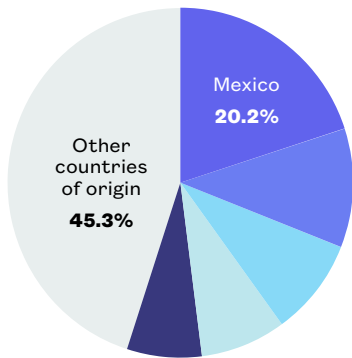
OVERALL POPULATION - **6.3%**



# 20 years

Median length of stay in the U.S.

### Top five countries of origin:



- 1 Mexico ..... 20.2%
- 2 Philippines ..... 11.1%
- 3 El Salvador ..... 9.1%
- 4 India ..... 7.5%
- 5 China ..... 6.8%

### Concentration of immigrants in Contra Costa County:

Region*	Share of total immigrants
<b>FAR SOUTHWEST</b> —Richmond (Southwest) & San Pablo Cities	<b>16.7%</b>
<b>FAR NORTHWEST</b> —Richmond (North), Hercules, & El Cerrito Cities	<b>14.6%</b>
<b>SOUTH</b> —San Ramon City & Danville Town	<b>13.8%</b>
<b>NORTH CENTRAL</b> —Pittsburg & Concord (North & East) Cities	<b>11.8%</b>
<b>NORTHWEST</b> —Concord (West), Martinez, & Pleasant Hill Cities	<b>10.6%</b>
<b>CENTRAL</b> —Concord (South), Walnut Creek (East), & Clayton Cities	<b>10.4%</b>
<b>NORTHEAST</b> —Antioch City	<b>9.0%</b>
<b>WEST</b> —Walnut Creek (West), Lafayette, Orinda Cities, & Moraga Town	<b>6.7%</b>
<b>EAST</b> —Brentwood & Oakley Cities	<b>6.6%</b>

\* These regions are defined by Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs), geographic units that contain at least 100,000 people in the U.S. Census.

## SPENDING POWER & TAX CONTRIBUTIONS

Given their income, immigrants contributed significantly to state and local taxes, including property, sales, and excise taxes levied by state and local governments.

**GDP contribution  
by immigrants:**  
**\$18.5B**

Amount earned  
by foreign-born  
households in 2017:  
**\$13.4B**

**\$2.8B** Went to  
federal taxes.<sup>3</sup>

**\$1.1B** went to state  
& local taxes.<sup>4</sup>

Leaving them with **\$9.5B** in spending power.

This means that foreign-born households held **27%** of all spending power in the county, more than their 25.5% share of the population.

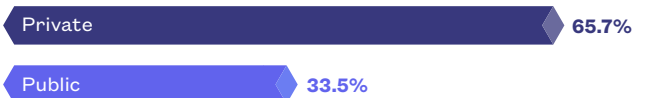
## Foreign-born residents in the county also supported federal social programs.

In 2017, they contributed **\$1.2B** to Social Security and **\$354.4M** to Medicare.

**33.2%** of immigrants in the county received Medicare or Medicaid, compared with **32.0%** of U.S.-born residents in 2017.



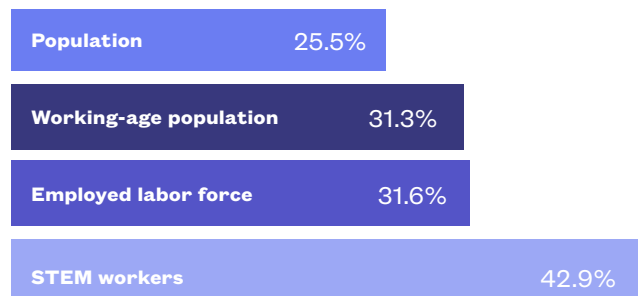
About **65.7%** of immigrants had private healthcare coverage, while **33.5%** had public healthcare coverage.



## LABOR FORCE

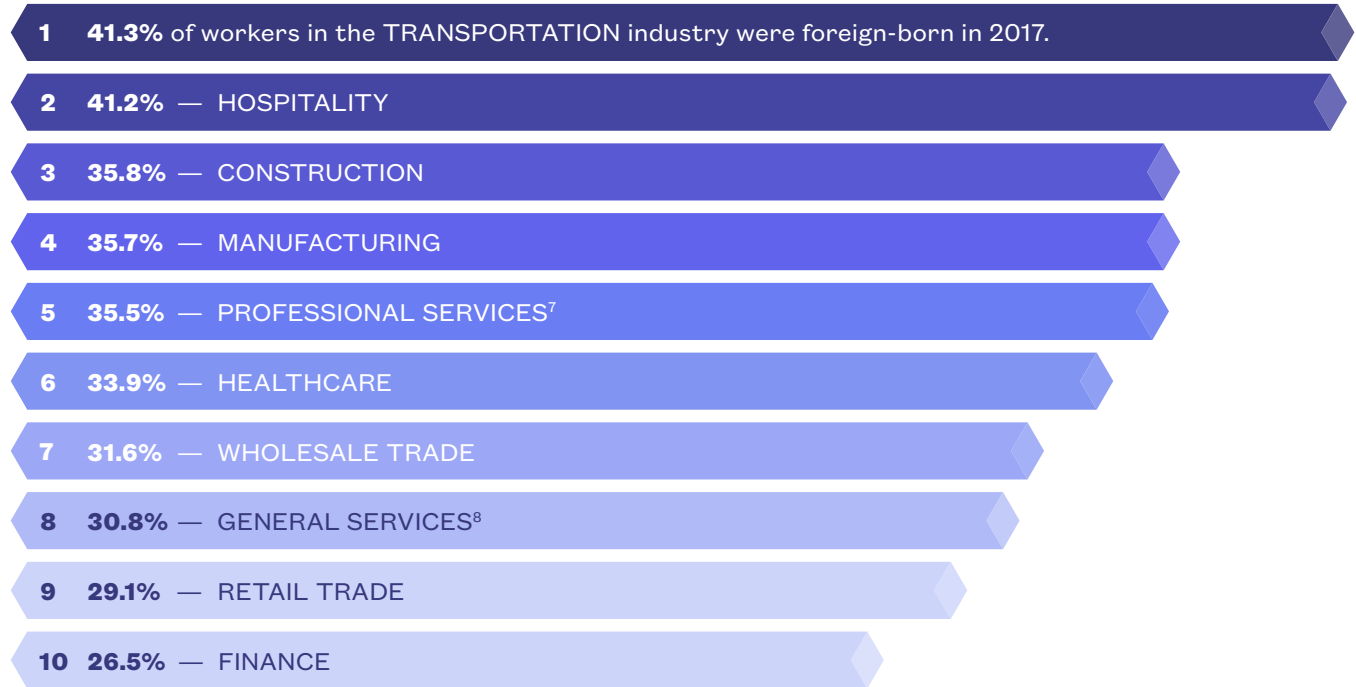
Although the foreign-born made up **25.5%** of the county's overall population, they represented **31.3%** of its working-age<sup>5</sup> population, **31.6%** of its employed labor force, and **42.9%** of its STEM<sup>6</sup> workers in 2016.

### Immigrant shares of the...



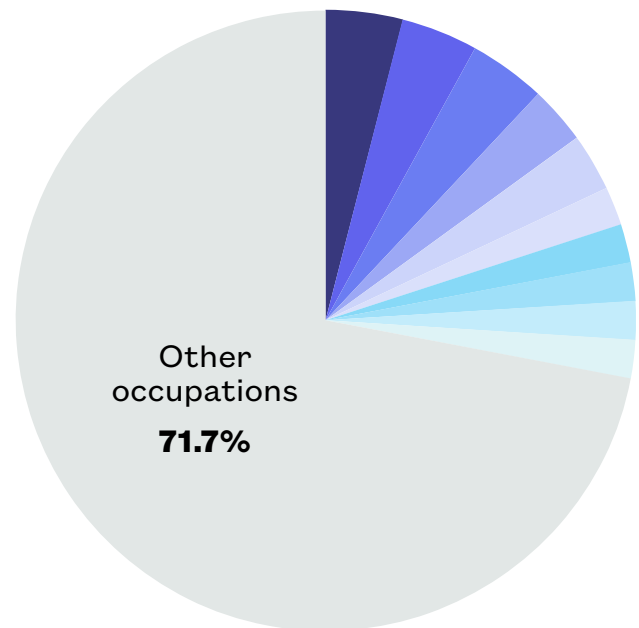
**LABOR FORCE CONT.**

**Immigrants played a critical role in several key industries in the county. This includes:**



**Immigrants tended to work in these occupations in the county in 2017:**

- 1 Software Developers . . . . . 4.3%
- 2 Maids & Housekeepers . . . . . 4.0%
- 3 Janitors . . . . . 3.7%
- 4 Miscellaneous Managers . . . . . 3.1%
- 5 Registered Nurses . . . . . 2.7%
- 6 Grounds Maintenance Workers . . . 2.2%
- 7 Construction Laborers . . . . . 2.2%
- 8 Cashiers . . . . . 2.2%
- 9 Personal Care Aides . . . . . 2.1%
- 10 Waiters & Waitresses . . . . . 1.8%



# Arturo Fernandez

SPOTLIGHT ON

Ph.D. Statistics Candidate, University of California, Berkeley

Arturo Fernandez's parents brought him to America from Mexico when he was three months old. He grew up undocumented, but thanks to the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program was able to graduate college, earn a PhD in statistics, and become a data scientist for Uber. "DACA was completely life-changing," he says. "It's given me opportunities I would never otherwise have had, and allowed me to give so much back, too."

Fernandez's parents came to America in search of a better life. His mother worked as a housekeeper, and his father became a farm laborer and then a landscaper. They eventually saved enough money for Fernandez's dad to buy a truck and start his own landscaping business. But they pushed Fernandez to put his studies first. "When I was a kid, my mom would say 'Put your education first, and everything else will fall into place,'" he says.

Fernandez excelled in school and was accepted to UC Berkeley for his bachelor's. It wasn't easy to cover the tuition, but DACA allowed Fernandez to legally support himself. Later, as a PhD candidate in statistics, he led a Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory team that developed a more accurate method of predicting tropical storms. "I love using mathematics to help people, and make a difference in the real world," he says.

Fernandez is also giving back as a community leader in Contra Costa. He founded East County For Immigrant Rights and Education (EC FIRE), which provides education and support for local immigrants, and runs free legal clinics attended by hundreds of people. He has provided his statistical expertise to companies like Target to Hewlett-Packard, and just accepted a job with Uber, where he'll use his talents to fine-tune the Uber Eats platform. "I want to see what I can learn from them," he says. "It's my next big adventure."

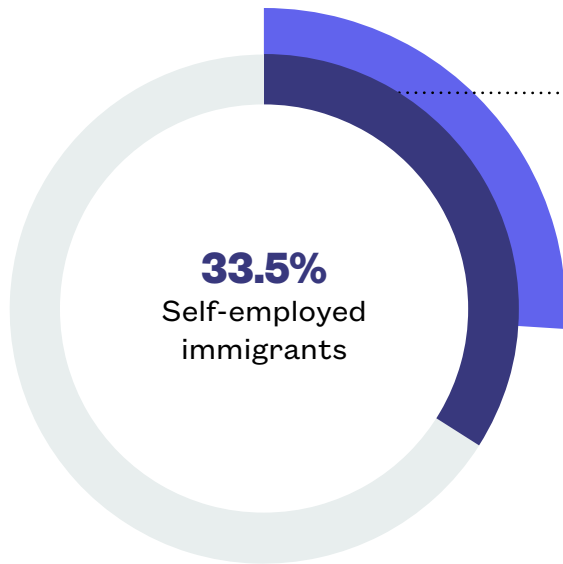
## LABOR FORCE CONT.

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Because of the role immigrants play in the workforce helping companies **keep jobs on U.S. soil**, we estimate that immigrants living in the county helped create or preserve

**13,442 local manufacturing jobs** that would have otherwise vanished or moved elsewhere.<sup>9</sup>

## ENTREPRENEURSHIP



In 2017, **33.5%**, or **19,764**, of entrepreneurs in the county were immigrants.

Compared to...

■ **25.5%** Immigrant share of population

That year, they generated **\$589.2M** in business income.

# 11.2%

Share of foreign-born residents who worked for their own businesses, compared with

# 10.3%

of U.S.-born residents in 2017.



This made immigrants in the county **9%** more likely to be entrepreneurs than their U.S.-born counterparts.

### Immigrant entrepreneurs tended to start businesses in these key industries:



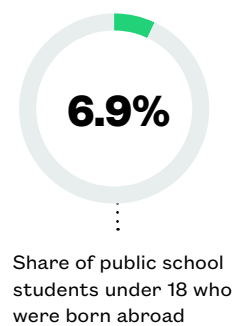
## EDUCATION

Share of the county’s population aged 25 or older that held **a bachelor’s degree or higher** in 2017:



Share of the county’s population aged 25 or older that held **an advanced degree** in 2017:

<p><b>1,896</b></p> <p>students who were enrolled in colleges and universities in the county during the fall of 2015 were temporary residents.<sup>10</sup></p>	<p><b>314</b></p> <p>local jobs were supported by international students.</p>	<p><b>\$53.0M</b></p> <p>was spent by international students in the 2017-18 academic year.<sup>11</sup></p>
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# Menbe Aklilu

SPOTLIGHT ON

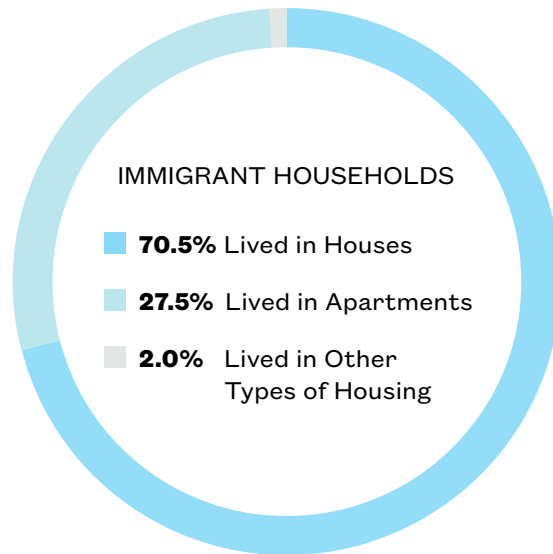
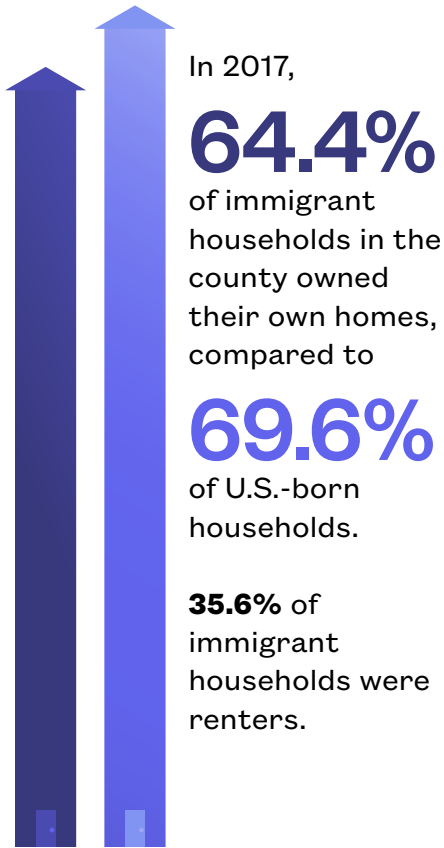
## Philanthropist

Menbere “Menbe” Aklilu, who the East Bay Express named “Best Do Gooder Business Owner” in 2018, is the definition of resilience. In her native Gojjam Ethiopia, Aklilu saw her mother shot to death and became an orphan at 10. She later survived sexual assault and an abusive husband. And she gave birth to her son in an Italian homeless shelter. After all of this, Aklilu immigrated to Oakland in 1995 and became a hostess at the Italian restaurant Salute e Vita. She worked her way up to general manager, then bought the restaurant, hiring dozens of new employees.

Along the way, Aklilu won recognition for her charitable spirit. Over 15 years as owner of Salute e Vita, she donated 30,000 meals to needy community members and created the Menbe’s Way Fund to grant scholarships to underprivileged girls in the East Bay. She won the Contra Costa Business Woman of the Year Award in 2009, serves on the board of the Richmond Community Foundation, and regularly gives commencement speeches. She was also granted an honorary doctorate from Oakland’s Holy Names University.

After closing her business last summer, Aklilu started a memoir and turned to fulltime philanthropy. Last year, her Thanksgiving celebration at the Richmond Memorial Auditorium served over 1,000 homeless people. She is also working with the Help A Life Foundation to open a school for 80 girls in her home village in Ethiopia, and has opened her home to an Ethiopian refugee blinded in an acid attack. Having experienced so much hardship, Aklilu says she’s determined to keep helping others. “I am absolutely blessed and fortunate,” she says. “In America, it doesn’t matter who you are or where you came from. It matters where you are going.”

## HOUSING WEALTH



The total property value of immigrant households:

**\$50.9B**

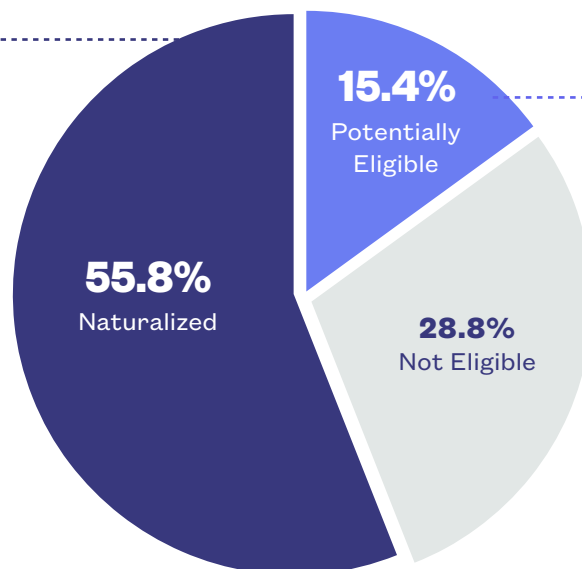
Their total annual rent paid:

**\$733.4M**

## NATURALIZATION

Share of immigrants in the county who were naturalized U.S. citizens. This represents a total of **162,954** immigrants.

Nationally, **49.4%** of all immigrants are naturalized.

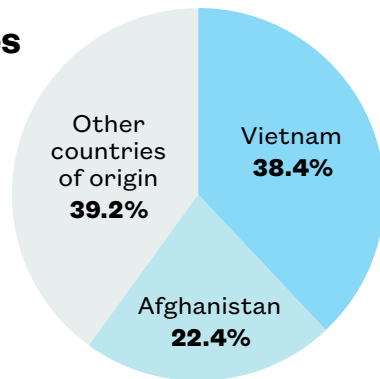


Share of immigrants in the county who were likely eligible to naturalize. This represents a total of **45,042** immigrants.

## REFUGEES

In 2017, **19,298 people**, or **6.6%** of the immigrant population in the county, were likely refugees.<sup>12</sup>

### Top countries of origin for refugees:



**39.5%**

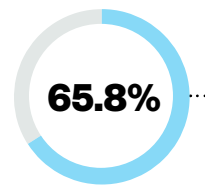
Share of refugees aged 25 or older that held a **bachelor's degree or higher** in 2017

**13.6%**

Share of refugees aged 25 or older that held an **advanced degree** in 2017

**\$90,000**

Median annual household income of refugees

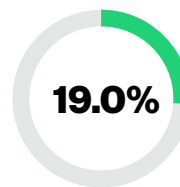


Share of refugees who were naturalized U.S. citizens. This represents a total of **12,700** refugees.

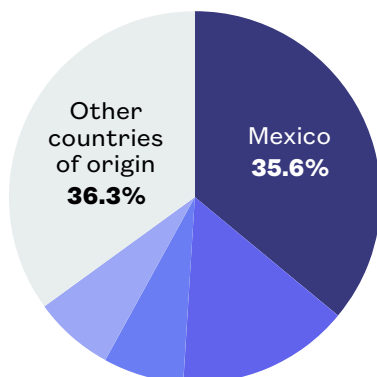
## UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS

**55,499**

Undocumented immigrants in 2017



Share of immigrants who were undocumented



### Top countries of origin for undocumented immigrants:

- 1 Mexico .....35.6%
- 2 El Salvador .....14.5%
- 3 China .....6.9%
- 4 Philippines .....6.7%

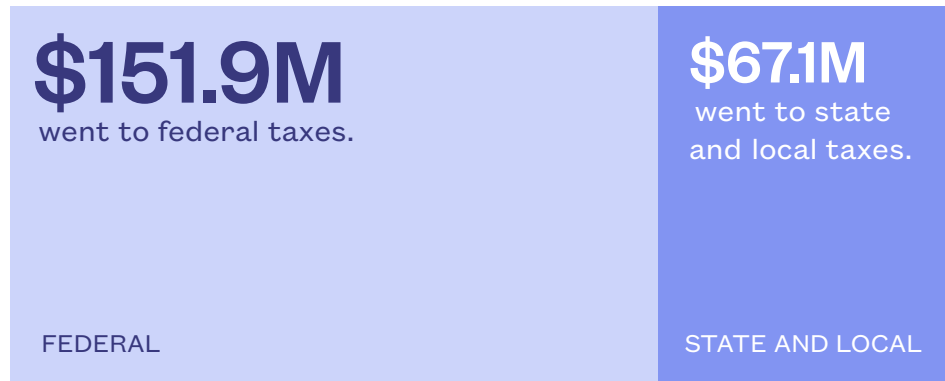


## UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS CONT.

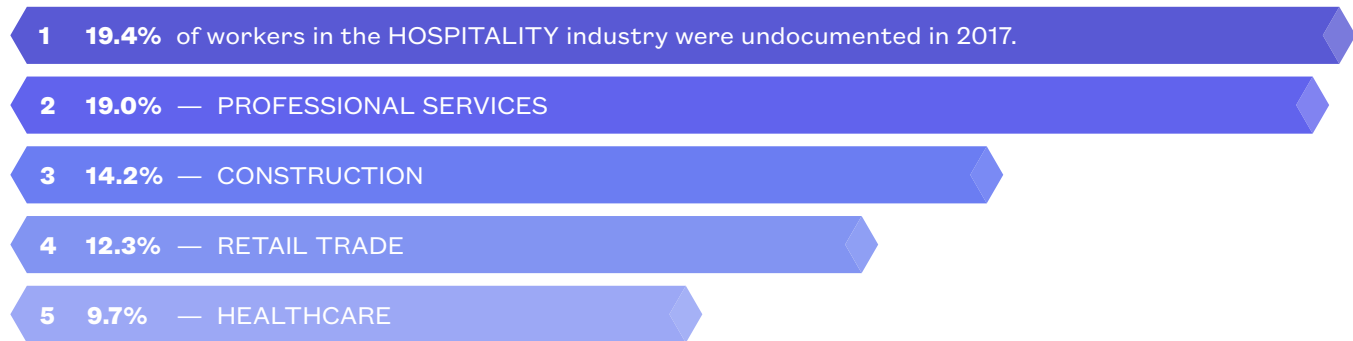
Amount earned by undocumented immigrant households in 2017:

**\$1.6B**

After taxes, this leaves them with **\$1.4B** in spending power.



### Undocumented immigrants tended to work in these key industries:



For more city, district, and state-level data, visit [MapTheImpact.org](http://MapTheImpact.org) and explore our interactive map.



- 1 We define an immigrant and foreign-born as anyone born outside the country to non-U.S. citizen parents who is a resident in the United States. This includes naturalized citizens, green card holders, temporary visa holders, refugees, asylees, and undocumented immigrants, among others.
- 2 Unless otherwise specified, data comes from 1-year samples of the American Community Survey from 2012 and 2017 and figures refer to Contra Costa County, California.
- 3 U.S. Congressional Budget Office. 2018. "The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2015."
- 4 Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. 2015. "Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States."
- 5 We define working age as 16-64 years of age.
- 6 Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math
- 7 Professional services: Most of these industries include professions that require a degree or a license, such as legal services, accounting, scientific research, consulting services, etc.
- 8 General services include personal services (e.g. laundry services, barber shops, and repair and maintenance), religious organizations, social services, and labor unions.
- 9 Vigdor, Jacob. 2013. "Immigration and the Revival of American Cities: From Preserving Manufacturing Jobs to Strengthening the Housing Market." New American Economy.
- 10 Data on total student enrollment in the county is derived from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics. Temporary residents refer to people who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents.
- 11 Economic data is derived from the International Student Economic Value Tool maintained by NAFSA, the association of international educators.
- 12 New American Economy. 2017. "From Struggle to Resilience: The Economic Impact of Refugees in America."