



I-NEWS

LOSING GROUND

The growing equality Colorado saw after the civil rights movement has eroded.

CAN IT BE SAVED?

LOSING GROUND

Losing Ground is the culmination of 18 months of investigative reporting done by a veteran team of award-winning journalists at the I-News Network, the public service journalism arm of Rocky Mountain PBS.



Laura Frank, founder and executive director, is a Denver native whose work has been recognized in both broadcast and print, including a Top 10 Pulitzer finalist and an Emmy award for public television documentary production. Her research-based reporting has helped change laws and lives.



Jim Trotter, program director, has edited Pulitzer Prize-winning articles and an Emmy-winning documentary. He's been a metro newspaper columnist and a public affairs TV show editorial director. He was senior editor for enterprise at the Rocky Mountain News, then oversaw enterprise reporting in 13 western states for The Associated Press.



Burt Hubbard, editorial director, is well-known in the editorial world for his data analysis skills. He is enshrined in the Scripps Howard Editorial Hall of Fame and has twice been a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize.



Kevin Vaughan, senior reporter, is known for his narrative storytelling skills. He has been a Pulitzer Prize finalist and reported many of Colorado's most important news stories during two decades as a reporter at four Colorado newspapers: The Fort Morgan Times, The Coloradoan in Fort Collins, the Rocky Mountain News and The Denver Post.



Joe Mahoney, multimedia director, is a two-time Pulitzer-winning photographer, Emmy-winning documentary producer and journalism trainer. He started his career at The Associated Press and spent a decade at the Rocky Mountain News.



Ann Carnahan Espinola, contributing reporter, was part of a Rocky Mountain News team whose coverage of a fatal wildfire was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. She has won numerous awards and was the first Rocky Mountain News reporter to be inducted into the Scripps Howard Editorial Hall of Fame.



“There is an opportunity for us all to take off the sunglasses and say this is an American problem. We can't leave anyone behind.”

Landri Taylor, President and CEO of the Denver Urban League

By some of the most important measures of social progress, black and Latino residents of Colorado have lost ground compared to white residents in the decades since the civil rights movement.

An I-News analysis of government data shows that minority gains made during the 1960s and 1970s have eroded in the decades since.

The analysis focused on family income, poverty rates, high school and college graduation, home ownership, health and justice.

The implications for the state are enormous, especially since nearly half of the state's under 1-year-old population is minority.

Within two generations, they are expected to be a majority of Colorado's workforce.

To read the full report, see the accompanying video and download the free e-book, go to www.iNewsNetwork.org/LosingGround. You'll also find an easy-to-use county-level chart of statistics specific to your community and an interactive timeline.

I-News is hosting a series of community discussions around the state related to the findings in this report. For information on an event near you, please go to www.iNewsNetwork.org/LosingGroundEvents. I-News encourages you to host a meeting of your own, too, at your place of worship or with your neighbors, co-workers or friends. You can find tips on how to lead such a discussion at www.iNewsNetwork.org/LosingGround.

MARTIN'S DREAM IS FOREVER

ABOUT I-NEWS NETWORK

The I-News Network is the public-service journalism arm of Rocky Mountain PBS.

I-News produces in-depth, research-based journalism that many newsrooms couldn't do alone. We collaborate with the most respected news outlets to deliver this journalism to millions of Coloradans.

Together with our media partners, we're filling a void in serious public-service journalism, bringing more in-depth news to the places you already look for your news: your newspaper, radio, television, computer and digital device.

We produce journalism that makes a difference. Here are some recent examples:

- More doctors now disclose payments from drug companies after I-News helped Colorado Public Radio report hidden funding, allowing patients to make better-informed decisions.
- Lawmakers changed tax law after I-News helped The Denver Post reveal that movie stars and developers got tax breaks meant for farmers and ranchers.

- Officials now do more to protect students after I-News helped its news media partners report that some schools withheld information about assaults on campus.
- A new law was passed to close legal loopholes after I-News uncovered dangerous and illegal treatment of hazardous electronic waste unknown even to state regulators.
- The Colorado State Board of Education toughened standards for online schools after I-News showed the schools get millions in tax money while half their students drop out.

Losing Ground is yet another example of how I-News reports on issues of statewide importance and local impact. Our specialty is turning complex information into compelling multimedia stories – so the public can make better-informed decisions.

You can join in, too. Share your insights, suggest a story or make a donation to sustain quality public-service journalism at www.inewsnetwork.org.

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LOSING GROUND

EQUALITY HAS ERODED IN COLORADO. CAN IT BE SAVED?



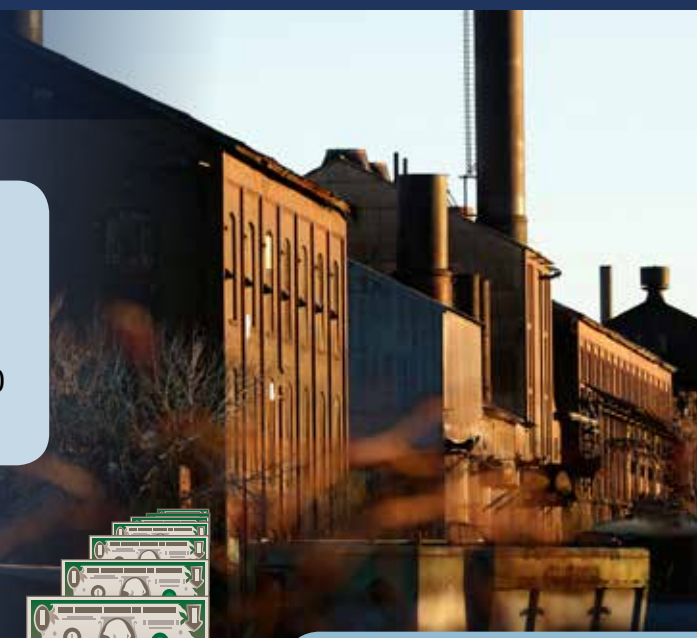
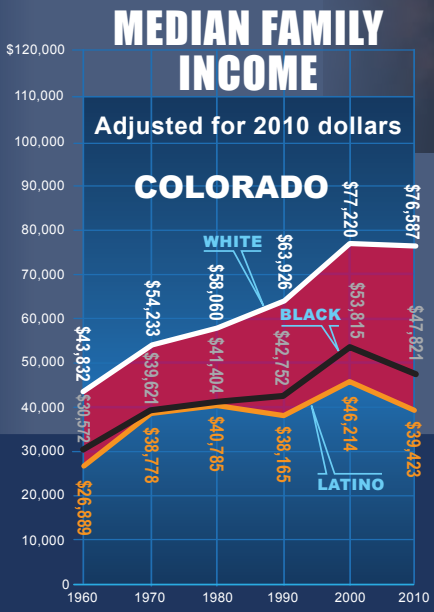
I-News analysis shows growing gaps in income, poverty, home ownership, education and health.

Colorado has a rich history when it comes to civil rights. Major civil rights efforts for women, African Americans, Native Americans, Latinos and people with disabilities have occurred here.

After the civil rights movements of the 1960s, Colorado was one of the more equitable places in the nation for minorities. That began to change, however, in the 1980s and 1990s. To understand where Colorado is headed in the future, it's important to understand both the past and the present.

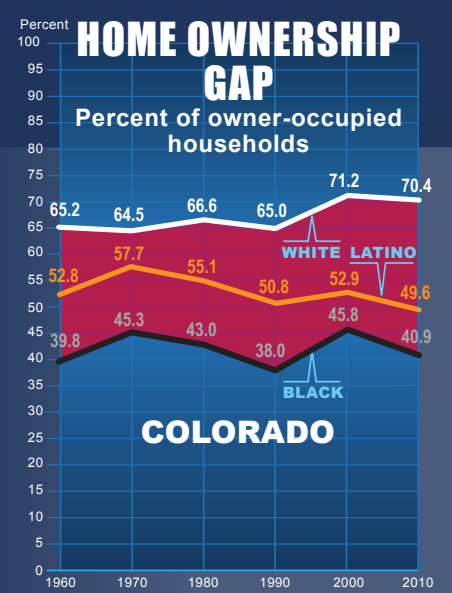
INCOME

In 1970, African American families earned 73 percent of white family incomes and Latino families earned 72 percent. By 2010, those numbers had fallen to about 60 percent and 50 percent, respectively.



Almost 60 percent of Latino households were owner-occupied in 1970; now it's just beneath 50 percent, compared to 70 percent for white households. Home ownership among blacks has stayed at about 40 percent.

HOME OWNERSHIP

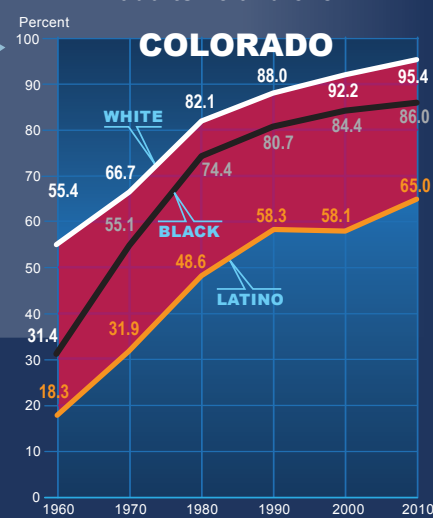


HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

Among more positive trends, 86 percent of black adults had graduated from high school in 2010, up from 31 percent in 1960. Latinos also have improved high school graduation rates through the decades, but in 2010 still lagged significantly at 65 percent, compared to 95 percent for whites.

HIGH SCHOOL GAP

Graduation rates for adults 25 and over

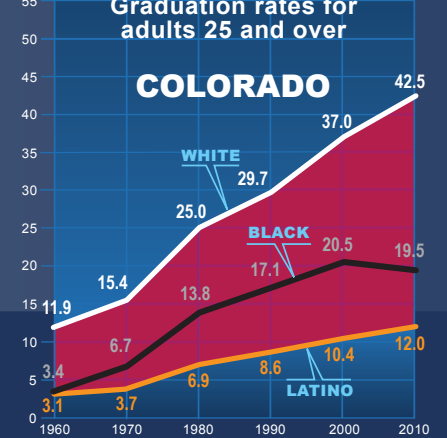


COLLEGE EDUCATION

The gaps among adults with college degrees have steadily widened since 1960, with the percent of whites with college degrees three times higher than the Latino rate and double the black rate. Those disparities are the worst in the nation for both Latinos and blacks.

COLLEGE GAP

Graduation rates for adults 25 and over

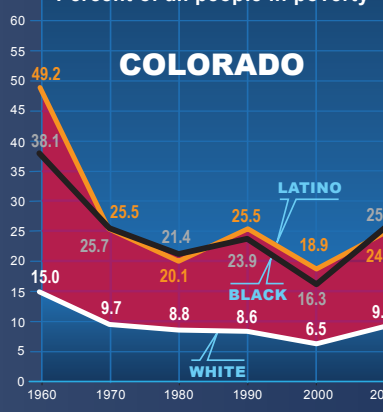


POVERTY GAP



POVERTY GAP

Percent of all people in poverty

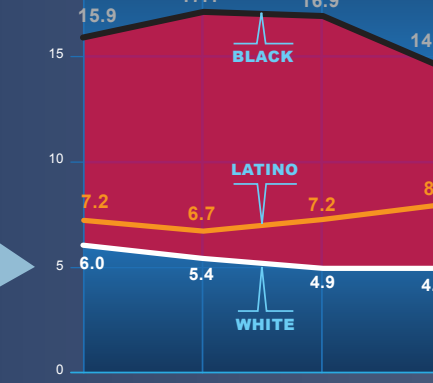


INFANT MORTALITY



INFANT MORTALITY

Deaths per 1,000 births in Colorado



LIFE EXPECTANCY

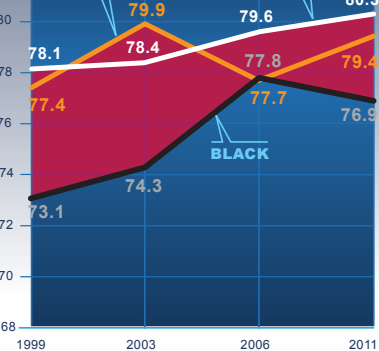
Whites, on average, now live nearly a year longer than Latinos in Colorado and three years longer than African Americans. In 2011, the life expectancy for a Caucasian in Colorado was 80 years, compared to 79 for a Latino and 77 for an African American.

Blacks and Latinos are both significantly more likely to die from diabetes than whites. Whites experience a diabetes death rate of 14 per 100,000 residents, while it was 36 for both blacks and Latinos.



LIFE EXPECTANCY

In Colorado



A black baby born in Colorado is three times as likely to die in the first year of life than a white baby. And a Latino baby is 63 percent more likely to die in the first year of life than a white baby.

Whites in Colorado experience an infant mortality rate of 5 deaths per 1,000 live births – lower than the national average for whites. The infant mortality rate for blacks at 15 deaths per 1,000 live births and for Latinos at 8 deaths per 1,000 live births are both higher than the national average for those groups.

Photos: Joe Mahoney/I-News
Illustrations: Michael Hall/I-News

WHAT'S BEHIND THESE CONCERNING GAPS?

Community leaders, lawmakers and researchers cited complex, often interrelated local and national reasons, including:

State and local support for K-12 and college education has diminished, with Colorado ranking near the bottom in both areas.

The percentage of single-parent families and the number of births to single mothers has soared among black households, exacerbating the gaps. Immigration and teen-age births in the Latino population also have led to widening disparities.

About one in every 20 black men in Colorado state prisons, compared to one in every 50 Latino men and one in every 150 white men. The state's black and Latino incarceration rates are higher than the national averages, where disparities also exist.

Many thousands of Colorado's well-paying, blue-collar manufacturing jobs have disappeared, hurting minority families disproportionately. Pueblo's CF&I Steel, Denver's Gates Rubber Co. and Montbello's Samsonite Corp. are just a few examples.



Read the full story, see the video and get the free e-book at iNewsNetwork.org/LosingGround.