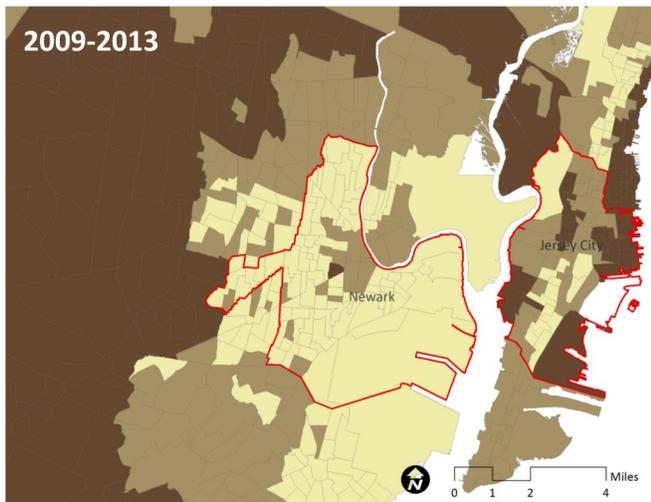


The Joseph C. Cornwall Center for Metropolitan Studies at Rutgers University-Newark is pleased to present "Map of the Week" — a weekly blog series designed to explore some of the community and economic development and social equity issues present in the Newark, New Jersey region through the use of maps and infographics. The Cornwall Center uses research and demonstration to address key urban and metropolitan problems in Newark and the surrounding region.

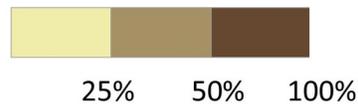
## Exploring Educational Attainment in the Newark Region

December 8, 2015:

Postsecondary Attainment is Growing, but Disparities Persist.



Percentage of Population 25 and Older with Associate Degrees or Higher



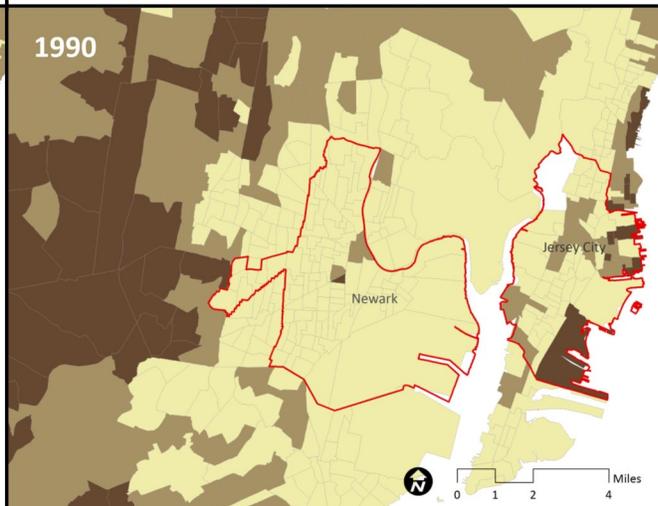
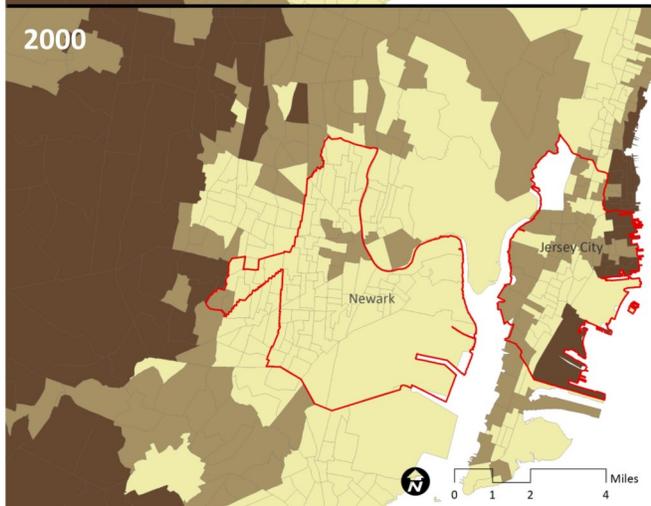
Cartography and analysis by:

Joseph C. Cornwall Center for Metropolitan Studies, Rutgers University-Newark

Data Sources:

U.S. Census Bureau 1990, 2000 Decennial Census; 2009-2013 5-year A.C.S.

Minnesota Population Center. *National Historical Geographic Information System: Version 2.0*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota 2011.

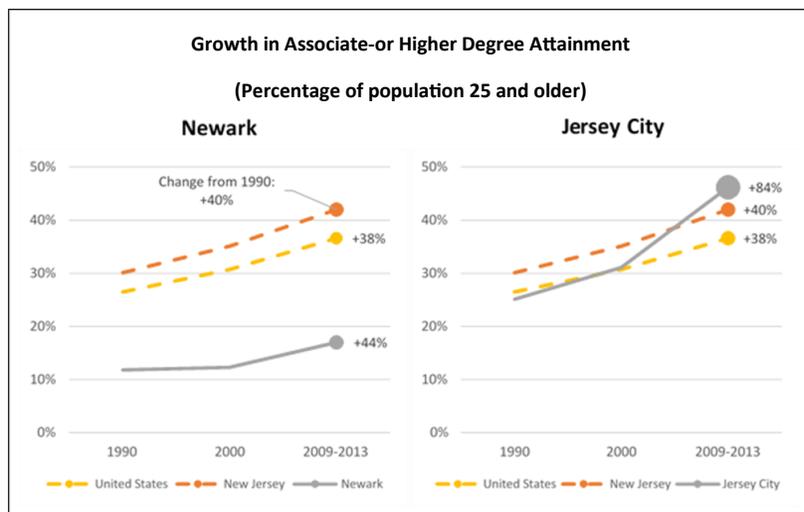


In this series of posts, we will explore a few different methods to understand the landscape of educational attainment in Newark and the surrounding region. Educational attainment is important at both the individual and the citywide or regional level. At the individual level, obtaining postsecondary education is critically important for competing in today’s knowledge-based economy. Postsecondary education is also a critical vehicle that enables residents to escape from poverty, earn higher incomes, and build wealth. At the citywide or regional level, an educated population reduces the prevalence of poverty, attracts high-skill and high-paying jobs, and increases income within communities, some of which is transferred to municipal coffers via local taxes. Due to these reasons, increasing the prevalence of postsecondary education in Newark is an issue that currently garners much attention from civic leaders and stakeholders. It is therefore important to have an understanding of how educational attainment is changing in the Newark region.

In this post, we will examine attainment of Associate Degrees or higher and explore how the prevalence of postsecondary attainment has grown in the region over the past two decades.

The maps above show the percentage of residents in each neighborhood (census tract) that have attained at least an Associate Degree, with darker shades indicating a higher percentage of residents. Immediately noticeable in this series of maps is the stark difference between the prevalence of postsecondary attainment found in Newark neighborhoods and that found in neighborhoods in surrounding towns and cities. Also of note are the locations of the neighborhoods that have experienced growth of postsecondary degree attainment in the past two decades, and, conversely, neighborhoods that have not experienced such growth. In 1990, there were only three (3) neighborhoods in Newark where at least 25% of residents 25 years of age and older had earned at least an Associate Degree. These neighborhoods were located in Newark’s Central Ward—near the Downtown and University Heights areas. In the 2009-2013 map in this series, we can see that some Newark neighborhoods have changed to a darker shade, thus indicating that postsecondary degree attainment has become more prevalent throughout more parts of the city.

While this change is certainly a positive outcome for Newark, the maps also show that many more neighborhoods in towns and cities immediately surrounding Newark increased their rate of postsecondary degree attainment compared to Newark neighborhoods. A prime example of this is Newark’s neighbor to the east, Jersey City, where many neighborhoods have grown darker in shade over the years while most Newark neighborhoods have remained the lightest shade. What is not possible to see in the maps is the rate at which postsecondary attainment has grown over the years. The chart to the right shows this, while reinforcing the disparity found in the region.



The chart shows that Associate-or-higher degree attainment in Newark actually slightly outpaced the growth experienced in New Jersey and the U.S. as a whole from 1990 to 2009-2013. This is also a positive outcome, and one that may even be surprising. Despite this slight outpacing, however, Newark's rate of postsecondary attainment remains well below that of New Jersey and the United States. Jersey City, whose rate of postsecondary degree attainment fell below both the U.S. and New Jersey in 1990, experienced an 84% increase in its rate of attainment over this same period, far outpacing the U.S., the State of New Jersey, and Newark. Jersey City's growth in postsecondary degree attainment was so extreme that its citywide rate of attainment is now above the U.S. and New Jersey.

The positive take-away from the maps and chart shown here is the increase in the rate of postsecondary degree attainment seen in Newark over the latter part of this two-decade period. We can see this in the maps, where more neighborhoods are shaded darker in the most recent period, and in the chart, where Newark exhibits a slightly steeper rate of growth in its degree attainment rate.

Although postsecondary attainment is a useful barometer to gauge the relative educational health of a community, we can dive deeper for a more comprehensive view of attainment dynamics across our region. We will do this in our next post by exploring the most common level of education attained in our region's neighborhoods.

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