

Worker Inequality in the Central Valley

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Introduction

- This presentation will provide social and economic data on the San Joaquin Valley region as a whole.
- Findings suggest dynamic changes in the region, including **population growth** in the region; a **shift in the demographics** of the population; and **high growth of low-wage** jobs.
- Findings suggest a need for equitable economic development initiatives to engage diverse populations (most notably the majority Latino population of the region) and organizations that represent low-wage workers.

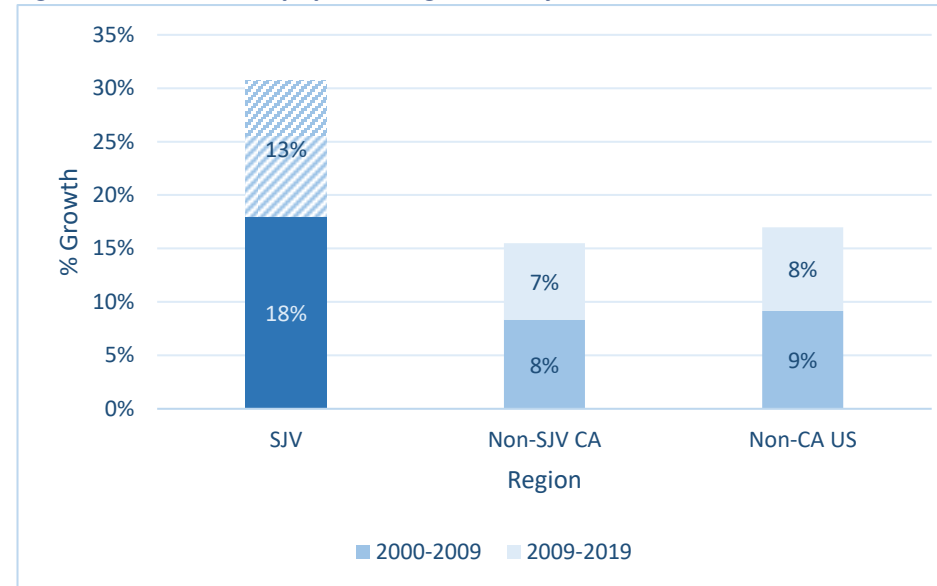
Data and Methods

- This presentation utilizes two sources of data from the US Census Bureau: Decennial Census data from 1980, 1990 and 2000, and American Community Survey data from 2009 and 2019.
- The data are drawn from a random, representative sample of 1 in 20 households from 1980-2000, and 1 in 100 households in 2009 and 2019.

Population

- Population growth has been high in the San Joaquin Valley region.
- Between 2000 and 2019, the San Joaquin Valley's population grew 31%.
- This was more than the rest of the State of California, and the rest of the US.

Figure 1.1 Household population growth, by area, between 2000-2019

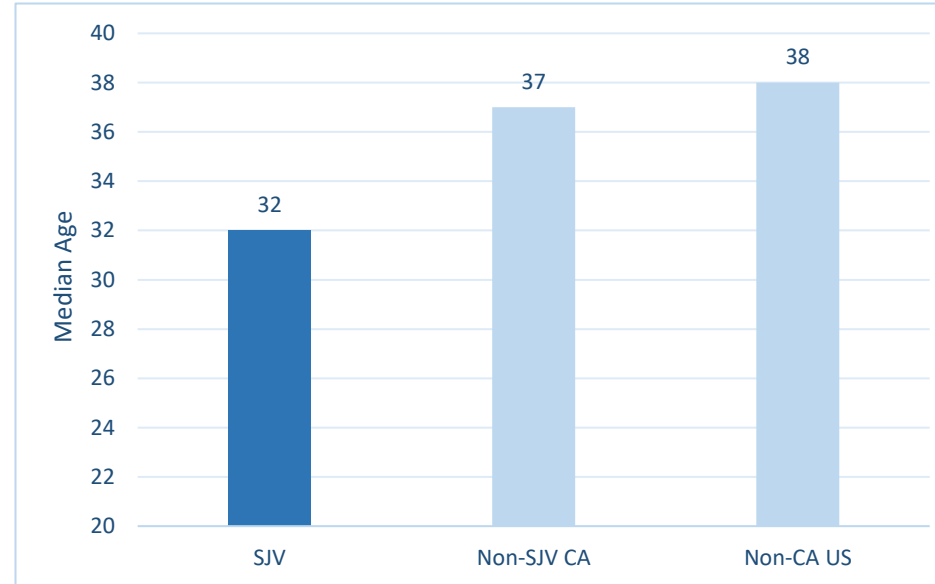


Source: UC Merced Community and Labor Center analysis of IPUMS-USA US Census Decennial 2000 5% file; IPUMS-USA American Community Survey, 2009 and 2019, 1-year Public Use Microdata Series

Population

- The San Joaquin Valley's median age is 32.
- This is a younger median age than the rest of the state and nation.

Figure 1.2 Median age of population, by area, 2019

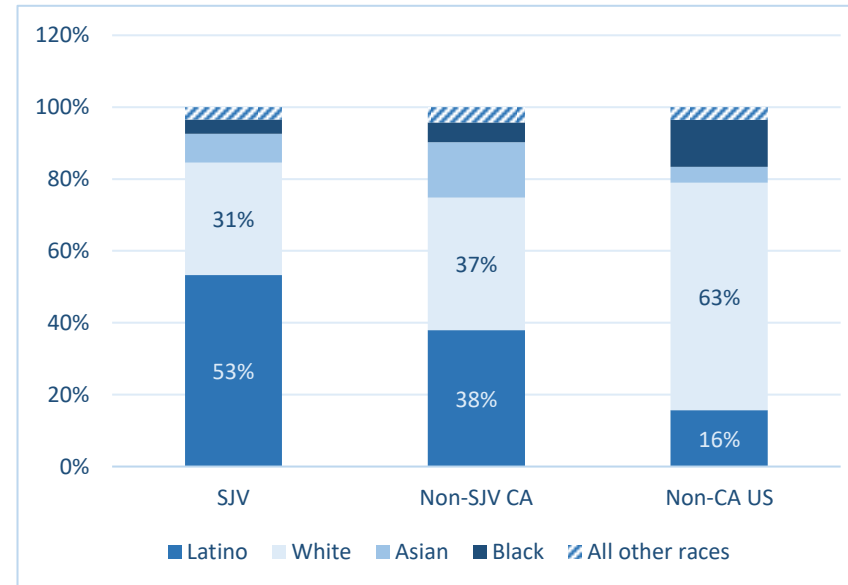


Source: UC Merced Community and Labor Center analysis of IPUMS-USA American Community Survey, 2019, 1-year Public Use Microdata Series

Population

- The San Joaquin Valley's population is majority Latino.
- Seven of eight counties in the region are majority Latino.
- In the rest of the state, only three counties are majority Latino.

Figure 2.2 Race distribution, by area, 2019

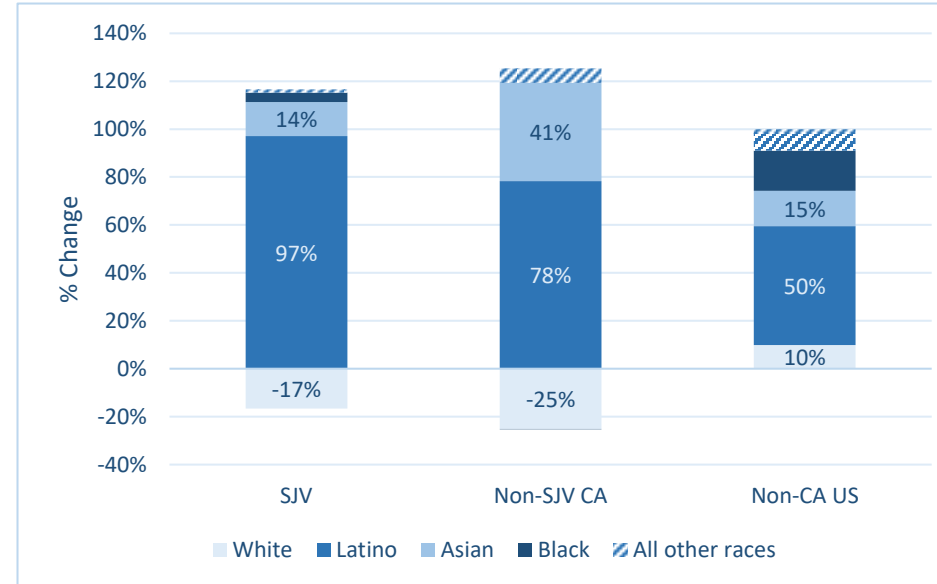


Source: UC Merced Community and Labor Center analysis of IPUMS-USA American Community Survey, 2019, 1-year Public Use Microdata Series

Population

- Virtually all (97%) of the San Joaquin Valley's population growth in the past twenty years can be attributed to Latinos.

Figure 2.3 Race groups as share of population growth, by area, 2009-2019

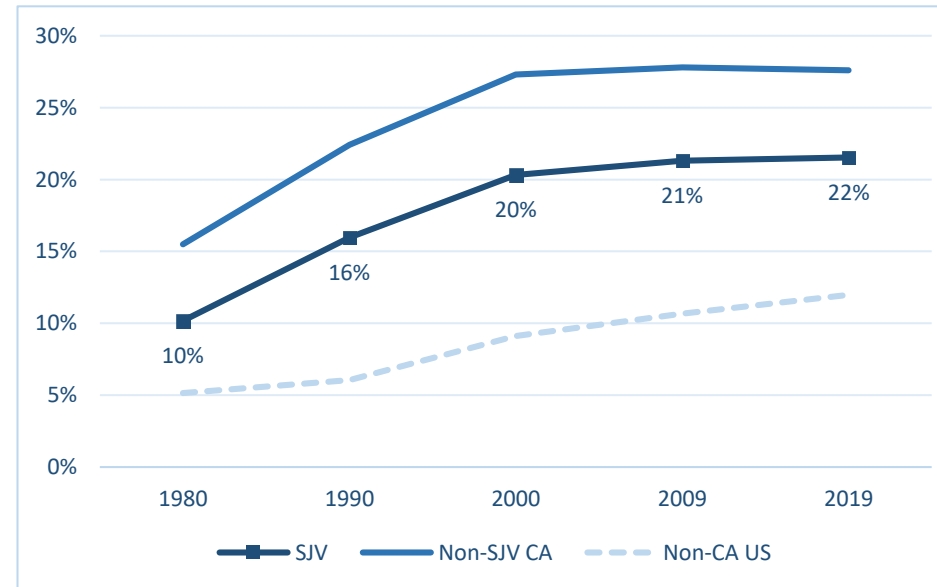


Source: UC Merced Community and Labor Center analysis of IPUMS-USA American Community Survey, 2009 and 2019, 1-year Public Use Microdata Series

Population

- However, immigrants' share of the population in the San Joaquin Valley has only increased from 20% to 22% from 2000 to 2019.
- The majority of the valley's population growth has been due to births.

Figure 3.1 Immigrants as percent of population, by area, 1980-2019

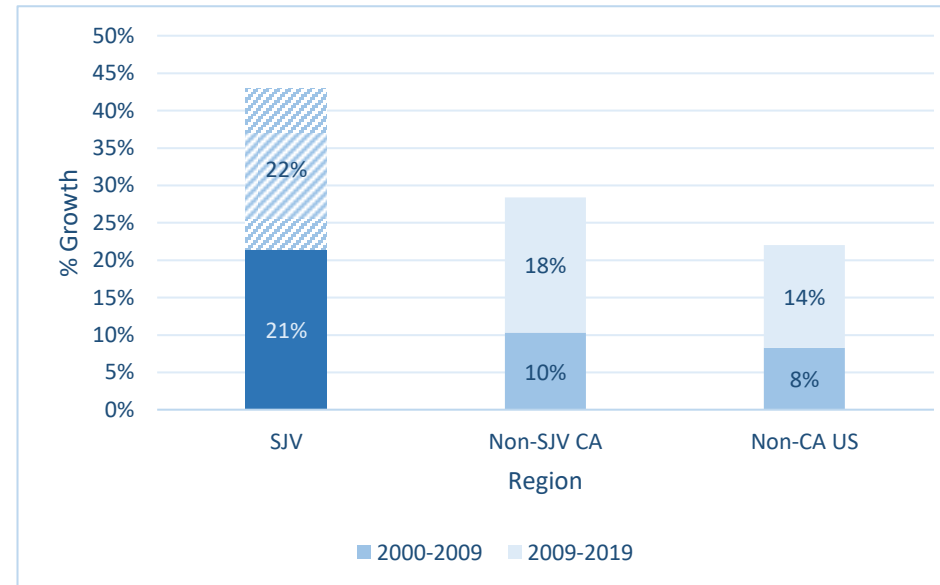


Source: UC Merced Community and Labor Center analysis of IPUMS-USA US Census Decennial 1980-2000 5% files; IPUMS-USA American Community Survey, 2009 and 2019, 1-year Public Use Microdata Series

Economics

- In the next few slides we will examine some data related workers in the San Joaquin Valley.
- The San Joaquin Valley's worker population has grown 43% between 2000 and 2019—more than the rest of the state and nation.

Figure 4.1 Number of wage earners, by area, 2000-2019



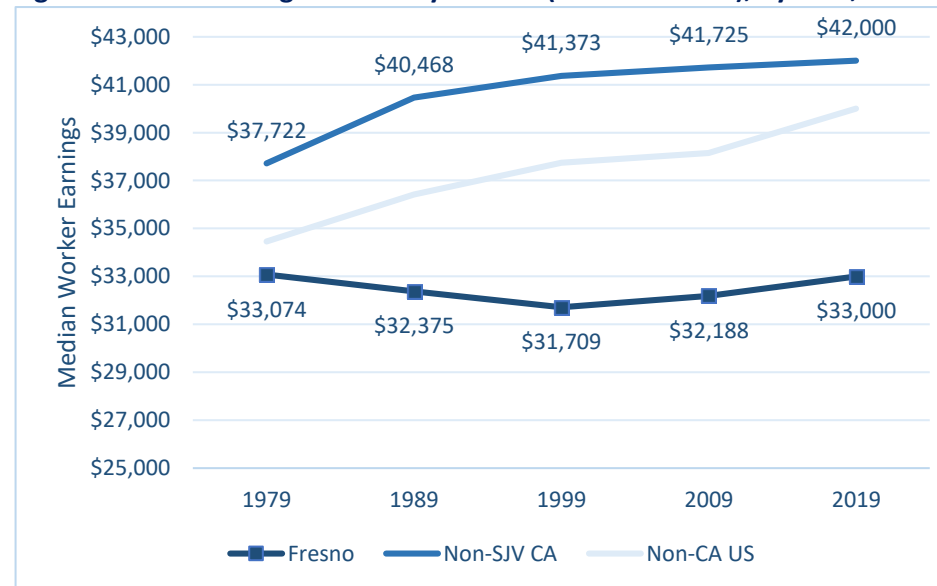
Source: UC Merced Community and Labor Center analysis of IPUMS-USA US Census Decennial 1980-2000 5% files; IPUMS-USA American Community Survey, 2009 and 2019, 1-year Public Use Microdata Series

Economics

- The San Joaquin Valley's median wage and salary income has not risen since 1979, adjusted for inflation.
- Worker wages have since gone up in the rest of the state and nation.

- Note: The graph to the right has a typo: "Fresno" should say "San Joaquin Valley." It represents the eight-county valley region.

Figure 4.2 Median wage and salary income (in 2019 dollars), by area, 1979-2019



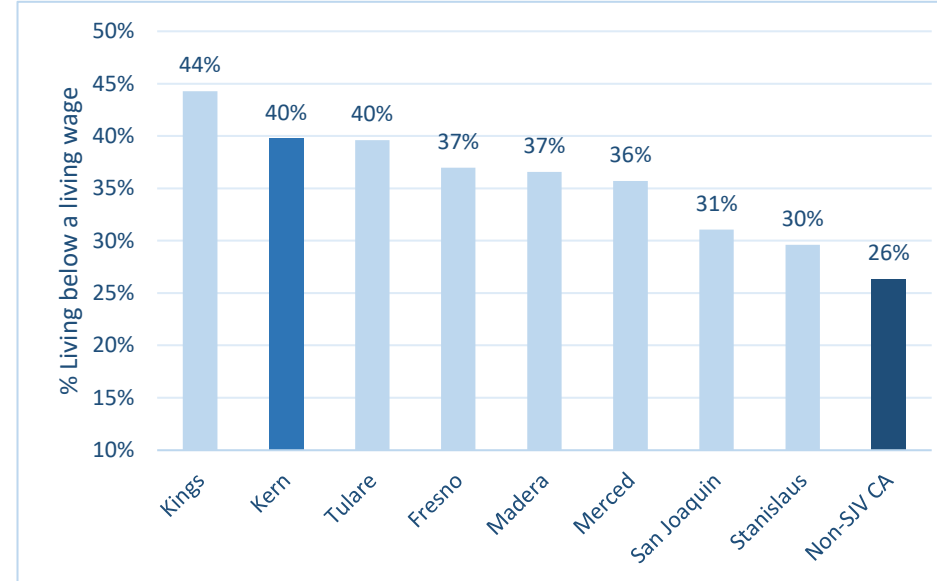
Source: UC Merced Community and Labor Center analysis of IPUMS-USA US Census Decennial 1980-2000 5% files; IPUMS-USA American Community Survey, 2009 and 2019, 1-year Public Use Microdata Series

Economics

- While the valley has a reputation of being an affordable place to live, the reverse is the true.
- More than one in three San Joaquin Valley worker households (32.5%) are living under a “living wage,” the amount needed to avoid chronic and severe housing and food insecurity--the highest rate among California’s ten regions.¹

¹See UC Merced Community and Labor Center. 2020. How Fresno’s Economic Inequalities Exacerbated the COVID-19 Pandemic. Fact Sheet. August. Merced, CA: University of California Merced.

Figure 4.3 Percent of wage earners living under a living wage, by county, 2019

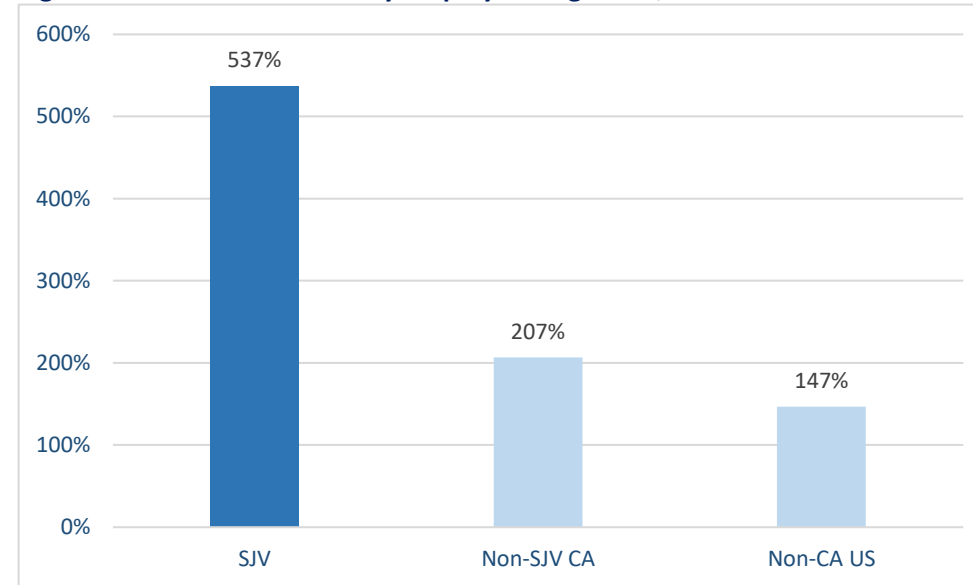


Source: UC Merced Community and Labor Center analysis of IPUMS-USA American Community Survey, 2019, 1-year Public Use Microdata Series

Economics

- Some industries are growing at an extremely fast rate.
- The warehouse industry has experienced the most rapid growth in the region in the past ten years.
- Warehouse industry employment grew 537% from 2009 to 2019.

Figure 5.3 Warehouse industry employment growth, 2009-2019



Source: UC Merced Community and Labor Center analysis of IPUMS-USA American Community Survey, 2009 and 2019, 1-year Public Use Microdata Series



Conclusion

- In summary, the San Joaquin Valley has experienced **dynamic changes** in the past four decades, including immigration, population growth, and a **shift** from a majority white and immigrant population, towards a **majority native-born Latino population**.



Conclusion

- There has also been extremely **high growth** in the number of **wage workers** in the region. However, most of those jobs have been in **low-wage work**.
- There is a need for an approach to economic development that will create jobs and **raise job standards, engage communities of color** (especially Latinos), and address increasing **environmental challenges**.