



Indonesians IN PHILADELPHIA

The history of Indonesian immigrants in the US began as early as the mid-1950s. Early arrivals went to New York City or San Francisco, but Philadelphia eventually became home to one of the largest concentrations of Indonesian-born immigrants anywhere in the U.S.

THIS PAGE: A young Indonesian woman, from the Modero Dance Company of South Philadelphia, prepares for a traditional dance exhibition before a Philadelphia Phillies game spotlighting Southeast Asian communities in Philadelphia.

RIGHT, ABOVE: Friends meet at Café Pendawa on Morris Street in South Philly. These corner stores sell pre-cooked meals so that Indonesians working long hours or two jobs can still get traditional food for themselves and their families.



The first significant wave of Indonesian immigration to Philadelphia began in the late 1990s. This continues today, although the rate of newcomers has recently slowed due to new U.S. visa restrictions and an improving economy in Indonesia.

Indonesia was hit hard by the global financial crisis of the late 1990s, resulting in the departure of many Indonesians. Philadelphia was one of their primary destinations.

In May 1998, Kerusuhan Mei (the May Riots) occurred in Indonesia. This internal strife included mass violence, demonstrations and civil unrest throughout the country; in fact, then-President Suharto was forced to resign. Although there were many Javanese Indonesian casualties, the main targets of the violence were minority ethnic Chinese. Many Chinese Indonesians left for the U.S., including Philadelphia.

In general, Indonesians have entered the United States on tourist, business, student or spousal visas. There are currently about 10,000 Indonesians living in Philadelphia, mainly in South Philadelphia.

Indonesians hold jobs in both blue-collar and white-collar sectors. In South Philadelphia, there are at least 10 small cafes or restaurants owned by members of the Indonesian community. There are also over a dozen Indonesian churches, a mosque, and several nonprofits operating in the City.

Additional business support for the Indonesian community is provided by media companies like the Indonesian Lantern and Kabar Kilat. The Indonesian Diaspora Network of Greater Philadelphia is very active in organizing both cultural and social support events for the community, which includes many artists, painters, poets, writers, photographers, and dancers. Keeping Indonesian cultural traditions alive is a primary concern of organizations like The Modero Group, which provides traditional Indonesian dance instruction for all ages.



ABOVE: Sinta Penyami Storms is escorted down the aisle by her brother at her wedding. Indonesian events in Philadelphia generally include both American and Indonesian traditions.



ABOVE: Indonesian Muslims participating in a traditional hair cutting ceremony at the Masjid Al-Falah in South Philadelphia. The hair will be weighed and the equivalent of that weight in gold is then given to charity.



ABOVE: Betty Yu, owner of the Sky Café, started an Indonesian restaurant in South Philly that serves traditional dishes.

RIGHT: *Nasi Pandang*, a traditional Indonesian food, consisting of curry chicken, spicy shrimp, collard greens, *perkedel* (potato fritter) and green chilli sauce.







LEFT: Iwan Santosa, owner of the Pendawa Café and the Indonesian Restaurant in South Philly, provides traditional food as well as Indonesian newspapers, travel information and money transfers to family members back home.

RIGHT: A cone-shaped *Nasi Tumpeng* made of yellow rice symbolizes life related to the volcanic mountainous landscape of Indonesia.





ABOVE: This man's hat and shirt are emblazoned with Indonesia's national emblem, the Garuda. Garuda PA is an Indonesian cultural organization that helps keep Indonesian immigrants connected with their ancestral culture.

RIGHT: Frederick Soejanto enrolled in ROTC at his high school and after graduation joined the U.S. Army. First Lieutenant Soejanto is proud of his adopted country.







LEFT: Young Indonesians enjoy volunteering at a food table for the annual Indonesia Week street festival in South Philly.

ABOVE: Hani White, an Indonesian community advocate, and USEPA officials watch a “Feed The Barrel” tour in South Philly. This USEPA demonstration project was developed within the community to help families dispose of used cooking oils in an economical and environmentally friendly way.



ABOVE: St. Thomas Aquinas parish in South Philadelphia is home to Christians from several cultures, including Indonesians. Cultural and social events are held at St. Thomas, one of many religious institutions that serve their immigrant flocks by providing social support.

RIGHT: Pastor Benny Krisbianto holds a Christian service at the Nations Worship Center on Broad Street in South Philly.





LEFT: Young Indonesians smile for a photo at a Christian Christmas ceremony.

RIGHT: Pastor Thenny Landena holds his weekly service in the Indonesian Christian Church.





LEFT: Members of the Indonesian Al-Falah mosque in South Philadelphia greet one another as they gather to worship and to socialize.

RIGHT, ABOVE: While most Indonesians in Philadelphia are Christians, Indonesia is the largest Muslim-majority country in the world.

RIGHT, BELOW: Many gatherings for immigrant communities in the City include a table for the social support services available to its members.





Soccer is widely played in Indonesia, and the Indonesian community proudly entered a team in the 2016 Philadelphia International Unity Cup tournament.

ABOVE: The Indonesian team (in red) in action.

LEFT: Pausing for a moment of team bonding before a match.

RIGHT: Players and dancers in traditional costume display their team banner during the opening ceremony.

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LEFT, ABOVE: Donna Backues teaches a batik workshop, an event sponsored by the Indonesian Diaspora Network of Greater Philadelphia. Batik is a centuries-old technique of wax-dye painting on cloth.

LEFT, BELOW: Young Indonesian girls practice batik.

RIGHT: Second-generation Indonesian children can become Americanized very quickly, sometimes losing interest in Indonesian culture and traditions. Philadelphia immigrant communities work hard to accept the new but to never forget the old.







Liberians

IN PHILADELPHIA

Liberians have been in the United States since the mid-1800s and have been living and doing business in Philadelphia since the 1920s. The major influx of Liberian immigrants in Philadelphia happened as a result of a military coup in their homeland in the mid-1980s. The violence associated with the coup forced many to leave Liberia as refugees.

THIS PAGE: A young Liberian girl, dressed in traditional garb, waits her turn to perform a dance routine at a Bartram Gardens event in West Philly.

Liberian immigrants in Philadelphia started small businesses and carried on traditional cultural events; their tightly knit community bonds helped preserve Liberian ways in their new homeland.

Liberia has many ethnic groups. One of these is the Mandingo, who make up a large part of Philadelphia Liberians. Liberians in general value entrepreneurial skills, and many Liberian neighborhoods in the City have Mandingo-owned small businesses.

In the late 1990s, southwest Philadelphia in general and Woodland Avenue in particular were in decline. Moses Barquoi decided to take the risk and opened a small grocery store on Woodland Avenue. This was the first of what turned into a plethora of Liberian stores on this once-blighted street. In addition, Woodland Avenue has attracted businesses run by immigrants from other African countries, making it a recognized commercial corridor in the City for African-American business in general.

Woodland Avenue is convenient for Liberians and other African-Americans to shop and attracts them in large numbers, aided by the convenience of public transportation. The district also attracts many other Philadelphians, immigrants and non-immigrants, because of the rich shopping experience it offers, with African items that are interesting and desirable to all.

One of the greatest strengths of the Liberian business community is its diversity. Liberians own medicine, law and financial services businesses, located throughout the City and its suburbs. Their widespread influence makes a significant positive impact on Philadelphia's economy.



ABOVE: Voffee Javateh, President of the African Cultural Alliance of North America (ACANA) and Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell at the 2016 ACANA Festival at Penn's Landing. Councilwoman Blackwell is a committed supporter of immigrants in her district.

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ABOVE: Dr. Archiema Major is a Liberian immigrant who received her primary and medical education in the U.S. before opening her local optometry practice.

LEFT: G. Moses Barquoi was the first Liberian entrepreneur to open a shop on Woodland Avenue, now a vibrant African commercial corridor in Southwest Philly.



ABOVE: Many Liberians in Philadelphia send both money and materials to their family back home. Otis Kamara, a U.S. Marine, is using one of the Liberian shipping companies in West Philly to send two automobiles to his family in Liberia.



ABOVE: Siaka Alhaji at his auto dealership and repair shop in West Philly.





LEFT: Liberian children in West Philly.

RIGHT: Princess Fatu Gayflor and the Liberian Women's Chorus for Change perform at an event in West Philadelphia.





LEFT: Sheikh Mohammed Jomandy, of the AICC Masjid, leads a prayer service in West Philly.

RIGHT: Pastor Kau Dolopei leads a circle of prayer at the Church of the Living God Intersory Ministry in West Philadelphia.

BELOW: A Christian parishioner pauses for a time of reflection at a Christian church service in West Philadelphia.







ABOVE: A Liberian immigrant attends a prayer service at the Masjid al Sunnah wal Jammah in West Philly.

RIGHT: Liberian Muslims celebrate Eid-al-Adha, the end of Ramadan, at Connell Park in Southwest Philadelphia.







LEFT: Pastor Anthony Sengbe leads a Pentecostal Christian service at the Victory Harvest Fellowship International Church in Southwest Philly.

RIGHT: A Muslim worshipper, attired in traditional clothing, outside of the AICC Masjid in West Philly after a prayer service.





ABOVE: Voffee Jabeteh, the Executive Director, introduces Dr. Nettie Johnson. Dr. Johnson presented a workshop on the dangers of female genitalia mutilation at the African Cultural Alliance of North America's (ACANA) West Philadelphia offices. ACANA has been supporting important community programs and services for almost 20 years.



ABOVE: Portia Kamara (at left) is the Executive Director of Multicultural Community Family Services (MCFS) in Upper Darby. Here she looks on as one of the Liberian seniors displays a garment that she made in the Elders Circle sewing class. MCFS has been offering many important support services to a large range of immigrant communities in the City of Philadelphia as well as several neighboring boroughs.



ABOVE: A Liberian grocery on Woodland Avenue where both African and American foods are sold.

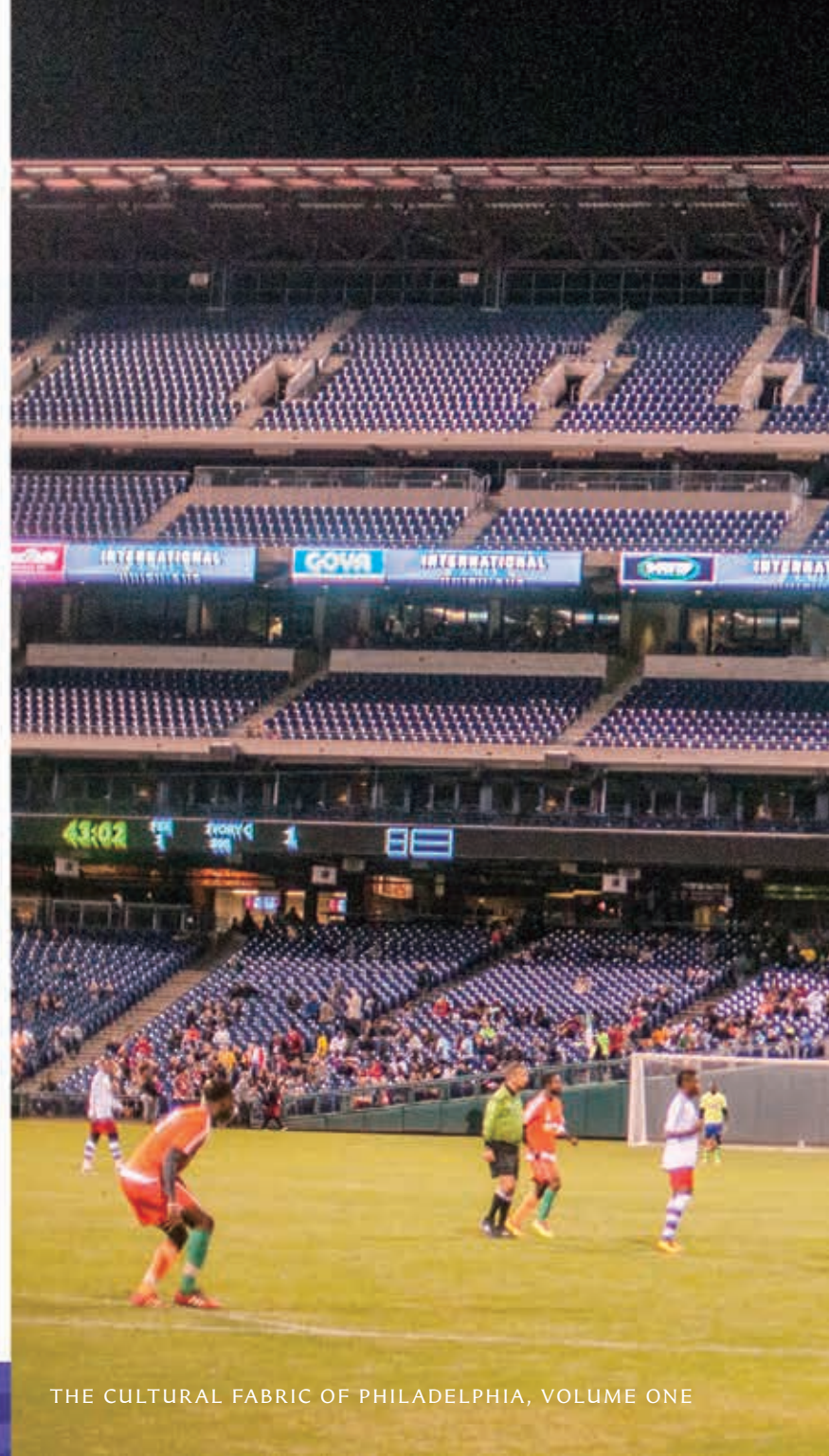
RIGHT: Emma, the owner of Emma's Liberian Kitchen at 72nd and Woodland Avenue in Southwest Philly, and other community cooks prepare traditional food for African immigrants in the neighborhood who prefer the taste and nutrition of fresh Liberian cuisine.





ABOVE: Wiltmont Kummy (left), former President of the Liberian Association of America and Christopher Slektor (right), President of the Liberian Association of America (2017). Liberian-Americans are supported by strong organizations, at both city and national levels.

RIGHT: Liberia and Ivory Coast play in the Championship Match of the 2016 City of Philadelphia Unity Soccer Tournament, held at Citizens Bank Park.





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LEFT: Discussing politics and drinking atai tea is a favored activity for Liberians, both here and abroad.

ABOVE: Many Liberian immigrants need to work long hours and even multiple jobs in order to survive in their new homeland. Deborah Timberlic immigrated in order to support her daughter by caring for her grandchildren. Once they are old enough to attend school, she will return to Liberia.

