An aerial photograph of a large, multi-story stone building complex, likely a university or government facility. The building is surrounded by lush green lawns and mature trees with vibrant autumn foliage in shades of yellow, orange, and red. A wide, paved road curves around the building, and a small monument or statue is visible in the foreground. The overall scene is peaceful and well-maintained.

Multiculturalism and Integration in Lanham, Maryland

This paper explores the concepts of multiculturalism and multicultural integration in Lanham, Maryland, USA. It analyzes the implementation of these approaches and their impact on the community, examining cultural activities and addressing issues of cultural segregation and social participation. The study offers policy recommendations to promote multicultural integration and foster social harmony in this diverse community.

 **by Guofeng LI, LILI**

Theoretical Overview: Multiculturalism vs. Multicultural Integration

Multiculturalism

A social policy acknowledging and respecting cultural differences, promoting cultural preservation through policies, education, and festivals. May lead to cultural isolation.

Multicultural Integration

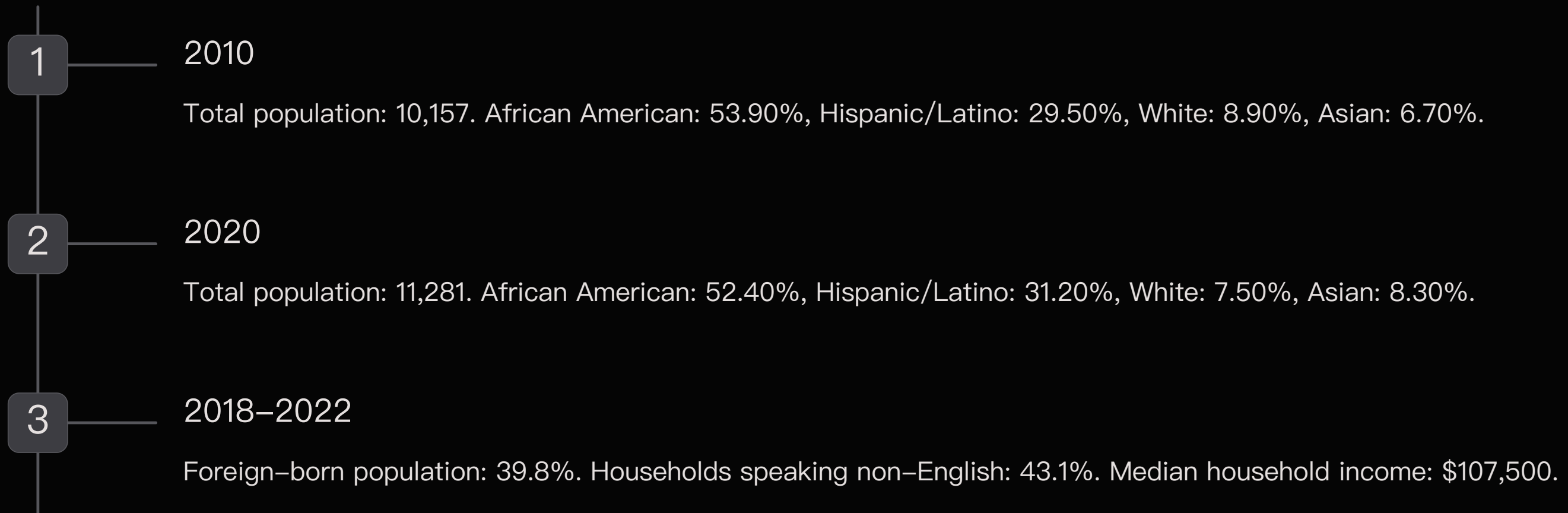
Emphasizes interaction and exchange among cultures, aiming for a closer-knit society while respecting differences. A two-way process of adaptation and evolution.

Comparison

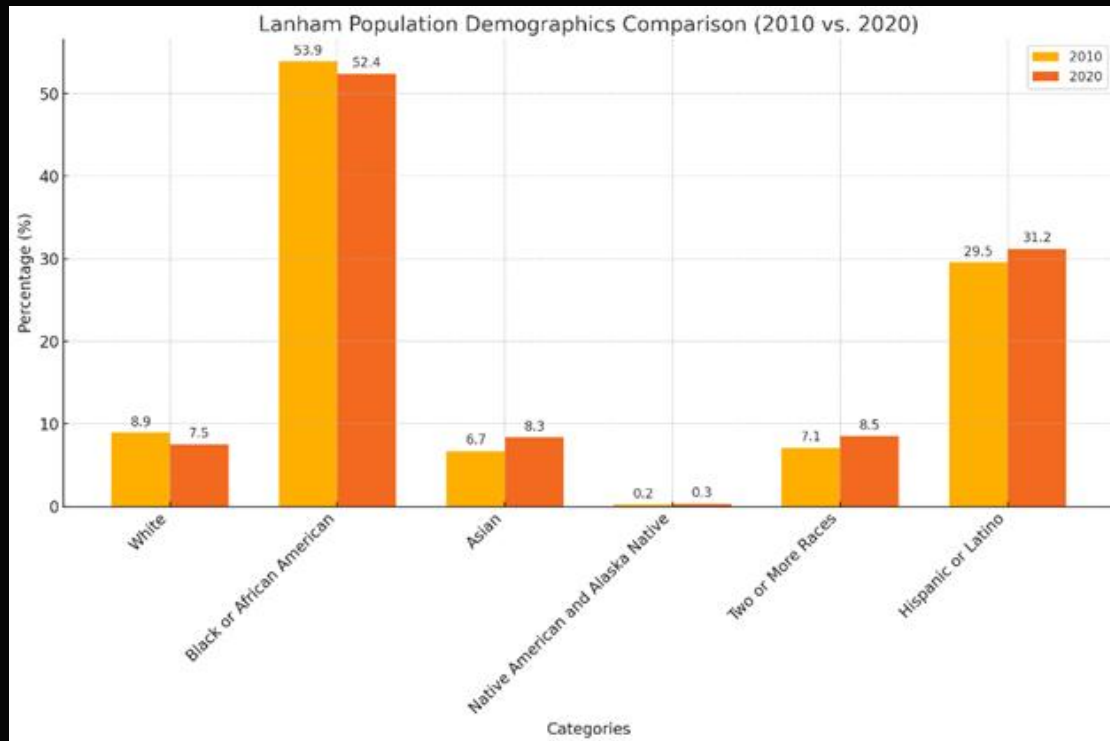
Multiculturalism focuses on preserving diversity, while multicultural integration seeks common ground and promotes cultural blending for a more cohesive social environment.

Lanham's Multicultural Background

Lanham, Maryland, is a highly diverse community in the eastern United States. Its population structure, language, religion, and culture make it a typical example of multicultural integration in the U.S. The community has seen growth in total population, with notable increases in Hispanic/Latino and Asian populations between 2010 and 2020. African Americans remain the predominant group, while the proportion of White residents has decreased.



Lanham's Multicultural Background



This bar chart clearly illustrates the changes in population, racial composition, housing, and income trends in Lanham from 2010 to 2020. Notably, the increase in Hispanic/Latino and Asian populations, as well as the rise in the proportion of multiracial residents, suggests that the diversity and inclusiveness of the community are on the rise. Meanwhile, housing costs and household income have also increased, though the poverty rate has seen a slight decline.

At the same time, the decrease in the proportion of White and African American residents reflects demographic adjustments in the community. These data suggest that Lanham is becoming a more diverse and integrated community.



Challenges in Lanham's Multicultural Community

1 Cultural Segregation

Isolation between cultural groups due to language, customs, religion, or economic status, leading to limited communication and interaction.

2 Low Social Participation

Language barriers, cultural differences, economic pressures, and lack of social networks hinder full participation in community activities and local governance.

3 Cultural Conflicts

Misunderstandings and clashes arising from differences in values, customs, religion, and lifestyle between cultural groups.

Multicultural Activities in Lanham: Fostering Community Harmony

As Lanham becomes increasingly diverse, promoting social harmony and inclusiveness is crucial. Multicultural activities play a central role in Lanham's cultural integration efforts, encouraging understanding and interaction among community members.



Role of Multicultural Activities

Multicultural activities in Lanham highlight the richness of various cultures and create opportunities for community members to learn about and interact with each other. Events like cultural festivals, concerts, language classes, and art exhibitions help residents experience and appreciate each other's backgrounds, reducing cultural gaps and enhancing community harmony.

1 Cultural Festivals

Events like cultural festivals bring together elements from different cultures, celebrating traditions through performances, art displays, and food.

2 Concerts and Performances

Concerts and performances showcase the music and dance of various cultures, providing a platform for cultural exchange and understanding.

3 Language Classes

Language classes offer opportunities for residents to learn about other languages and cultures, fostering communication and understanding.

4 Art Exhibitions

Art exhibitions showcase the artistic expressions of different cultures, providing insights into their values and perspectives.



華盛頓新年音樂會

Washington New Year's Concert



Bard East/West Ensemble
The Bard College Conservatory of Music



Hoff Theater | Saturday
University of Maryland | Dec. 16, 2023 / 7:30pm

Host

Maryland Chinese Language Institute
Potomac Institute
Adli Enterprises LLC

Organizer

Washington New Year's Concert Foundation

Scan for tickets



Impact of Multicultural Activities in Lanham

Multicultural activities play a crucial role in promoting understanding and interaction among community members in Lanham. These events showcase the richness of different cultures and provide opportunities for residents to appreciate each other's backgrounds. The Washington Area Chinese Song Contest, held since 2011, is an example of a long-standing event that highlights Chinese culture while facilitating cross-cultural interactions.

Chinese Cultural Events Overview at Lanham in 2023		
Event	Date	<u>Number of Participants</u>
"Spring Festival" Painting Contest	Oct 2022 - Jan 2023	<u>175</u>
"International Chinese Language Day" Event	Apr 22 - Apr 24	<u>200</u>
Artistic Performance "Colorful Yunnan"	May 7	<u>750</u>
Washington Area Chinese Song Contest	May 20	<u>100</u>
"Tea for Harmony" Chinese Cultural Exhibition	May 21	<u>300</u>
Chinese Language Experience Open Day	Jul 27	<u>150</u>
Chinese Kung Fu Summer Camp	Aug 6 - Aug 12	<u>30</u>
Summer Chinese Language Camp (free for the community)	Aug 14 - Aug 25	<u>40</u>
Washington New Year's Concert	Dec 16	<u>500</u>

Reducing Cultural Conflict and Misunderstanding

By facilitating dialogue and cultural exchange, multicultural activities help diminish cultural misunderstandings and conflicts. Events like cultural festivals and art exhibitions allow residents to break down barriers and build mutual understanding.

1

Cultural Festivals

Cultural festivals provide a platform for cultural interaction, promoting harmonious coexistence among different cultural groups.

2

Art Exhibitions

Art exhibitions showcase the artistic expressions of different cultures, providing insights into their values and perspectives.

3

Commonalities

By participating in these activities, community residents can discover commonalities between different cultures, thereby reducing the potential for cultural conflicts.



Enhancing Community Cohesion and Belonging

Multicultural activities encourage shared participation among different groups, strengthening community bonds and fostering a sense of belonging. They provide a chance for residents to not only celebrate their own cultures but also find common ground with others, enhancing community cohesion.

Cultural Integration

Through multicultural activities such as festivals, art exhibitions, and concerts, residents have the opportunity not only to showcase their own cultures but also to find shared identity within other cultures.

Community Belonging

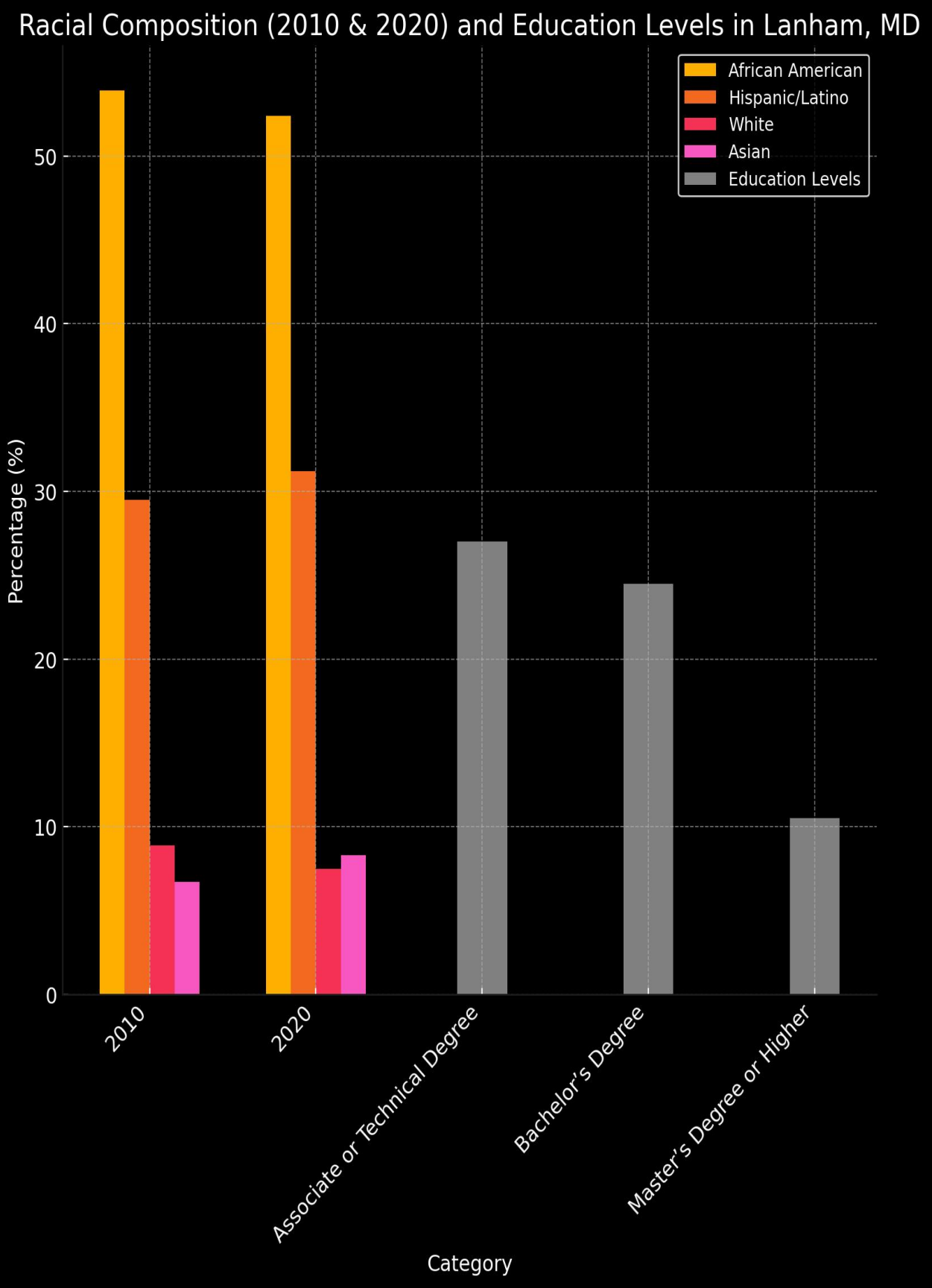
This interaction strengthens community cohesion and reduces barriers caused by cultural differences.



Survey Results and Analysis of Multicultural Activities in Lanham

A survey was conducted to analyze the impact of multicultural activities on Lanham's community development. It focused on residents' ethnic and cultural backgrounds, education levels, participation in activities, cultural interaction experiences, and suggestions for future events.

Community Demographics	African American: 53.5%	Hispanic/Latino: 25.6%	White (non-Hispanic): 9.8%	Asian: 7.4%	Mixed-race: 3.7%
Education Levels	Associate or Technical Degree: 27%	Bachelor's Degree: 24.5%	Master's Degree or Higher: 10.5%		



Survey Results: Impact of Multicultural Activities

A survey was conducted to analyze the impact of multicultural activities on Lanham's community development. Key findings include:



Community Diversity

53.5% African American, 25.6% Hispanic/Latino, 9.8% White, 7.4% Asian, 3.7% mixed ethnic backgrounds.



Social Cohesion

74% believed multicultural activities promoted understanding and inclusion, 67% reported enhanced sense of belonging.



Participation

71% participated in multicultural activities, with 16.5% attending monthly and 26.8% attending quarterly.



Conclusion: Balancing Preservation and Integration

Lanham's multicultural characteristics provide a strong cultural foundation for community development. However, challenges such as cultural isolation and low social participation persist. By applying both multiculturalism and multicultural integration strategies, the region can effectively promote cultural preservation while encouraging interaction. Lanham's experience serves as a valuable reference for other multicultural communities, demonstrating that respecting cultural diversity while fostering cross-cultural interaction is key to achieving a harmonious society.

Respect Diversity

Acknowledge and preserve unique cultural identities within the community.

Encourage Interaction

Promote cross-cultural events and activities to foster understanding and integration.

Continuous Adaptation

Regularly evaluate and adjust policies to address evolving community needs.

Community Engagement

Involve all cultural groups in decision-making processes and community initiatives.

Solutions and Policy Recommendations

1

Policy Evaluation and Adjustment

Focus on promoting equal participation of all cultural groups. Establish community committees with diverse cultural representation.

2

Language and Cultural Training

Provide free language and cultural training programs to help immigrants overcome barriers and adapt to local culture.

3

Promoting Multicultural Interaction

Organize more cross-cultural events, such as sports competitions and joint celebrations, to strengthen connections between different cultural groups.

