

# ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF IMMIGRANTS TO TETON COUNTY, WYOMING

June 2018

## I. INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

Over the past three decades, immigrants and their families have become increasingly important social and economic contributors to Teton County. In 1990, foreign-born members of the community made up 1.6 percent of Teton County's total population. By 2010 that number had grown to nearly 8.7 percent. While Teton County's total population nearly doubled between 1990 and 2010, the foreign-born population grew almost ten-fold. The growth of Teton's foreign-born population follows national trends, as immigrants have helped to grow communities across the country; between 1990 and 2010, the foreign-born share of the population nationwide grew from 7.9% to 12.9%.

A significant number of immigrants to Teton County originate from two towns in Mexico—Hueyotlipan and San Simeon—and by 2015 nearly 66 percent of the county's immigrants were Hispanic. At the end of 2017, Teton County's foreign-born population was officially 12 percent of the total population. In the town of Jackson, that figure was 25 percent. However, local authorities believe that official figures undercount the immigrant population, and that a more accurate estimate is that immigrants and their family members now make up almost one third of Jackson's population.<sup>1</sup>

Teton County officials, businesses, and immigrant advocates have developed initiatives to help immigrants in the community to integrate.<sup>2</sup> This report is intended to support those efforts in two ways. First, the report provides updated quantitative data about the economic contributions of immigrants to the community, including their level of participation in the workforce and involvement in key economic sectors. Second, the report draws on qualitative data—collected

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<sup>1</sup> See LATINO RESOURCE CENTER, *2015 Latino Community Assessment: Teton County, Wyoming* (December 2015) at p. 22, [http://eriksen-meierconsulting.com/2015\\_teton\\_county\\_latino\\_community\\_assessment\\_jan26.pdf](http://eriksen-meierconsulting.com/2015_teton_county_latino_community_assessment_jan26.pdf) (explaining reasons for Census undercounting).

<sup>2</sup> The term "integration" is used throughout. For the purposes of this report, integration means a process that maximizes both immigrants' access to the benefits of community membership, and immigrants' opportunities to contribute to community social and economic well-being.

through interviews with nearly two dozen residents of Teton County—as well as policies and initiatives in other communities, to offer recommendations about how Teton County might better help immigrants to thrive. While Teton County’s immigrant community is heterogeneous, and integration experiences and needs may differ among members, the report’s recommendations are generally directed toward assisting Spanish-speaking immigrants, who make up the majority of Teton County’s immigrant population. Additionally, some recommendations are aimed at supporting the needs of undocumented immigrants. Interspersed among the recommendations are statements from members of the community—immigrant and native-born—about life as an immigrant and the many contributions that immigrants make to Teton County.<sup>3</sup>

## II. CONTRIBUTIONS

Immigrants are making significant contributions to the U.S. workforce. As more Baby Boomers retire, younger immigrants are making up a larger share of the working-age population. According to New American Economy, in 2014, 72.4% of the U.S. foreign-born population fell within the prime working-age range (16-64), compared with just 49.5% of the U.S.-born population. Additionally, immigrants contribute more than \$320 billion in taxes each year, and hold close to \$1 trillion in spending power as consumers.<sup>4</sup>

In Teton County, immigrants include foreign-born business owners, service sector employees, and real estate investors. A 2009 University of Wyoming study estimated that immigrant workers held 14 percent of jobs in Teton County, including nearly 32 percent of jobs in administrative and waste services, and more than 23 percent of jobs in accommodation and food services.<sup>5</sup> Directly or secondarily, immigrant workers contributed \$355.5 million to the county’s total industry output,<sup>6</sup> and spent approximately 80 percent (\$92 million) of disposable income locally.<sup>7</sup> Estimates are that these figures have grown over the past decade as the county’s immigrant population has grown.

J-1 student visa holders have also increasingly helped fill critical labor gaps—particularly in the tourism sector—during the fall and spring seasons when U.S. citizen workers return to school. In 2017, Wyoming hosted 2,702 J-1 visa holders, 807 of whom resided in Teton County. Nationally, more than 1 in 5 tourism and hospitality workers are foreign-born.<sup>8</sup>

New American Economy has provided a snapshot of the demographic and economic contributions of immigrants to Teton County and surrounding areas.<sup>i</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> To maintain anonymity, some initials have been altered.

<sup>4</sup> New American Economy, *Taxes & Spending Power of Immigrants* (2014), <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/issues/taxes-&-spending-power/>

<sup>5</sup> UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING, COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE, *The Economic Impact of Immigrant Workers in Teton County, Wyoming* (April 2009) at pp. 9, 11 (Table 1). The full report is on file with CIHRLA. A slide presentation of the report’s key findings is available at: <http://archive.townofjackson.com/resources/files//Government/B. Mayor and Town Council/Community Integration/Econ Impact Powerpoint 2009.pdf>.

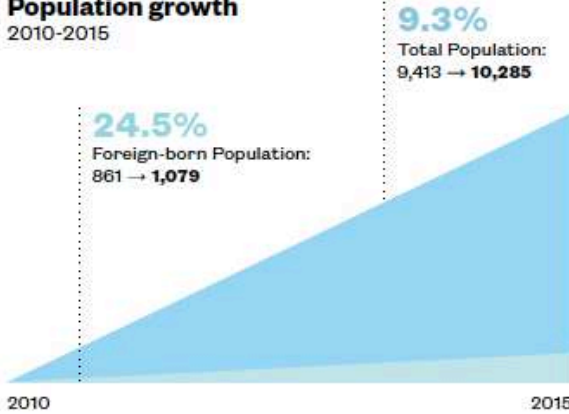
<sup>6</sup> *Id.* at p. 10.

<sup>7</sup> *Id.* at p. 9-10 (\$92 million was calculated by multiplying total immigrant labor earnings [\$130.7 million] by percentage of income that is disposable (88.1 percent) by percentage of disposable income spent locally [80 percent])

<sup>8</sup> New American Economy, *Hospitality & Tourism* (2014), <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/issues/hospitality-&-tourism/>

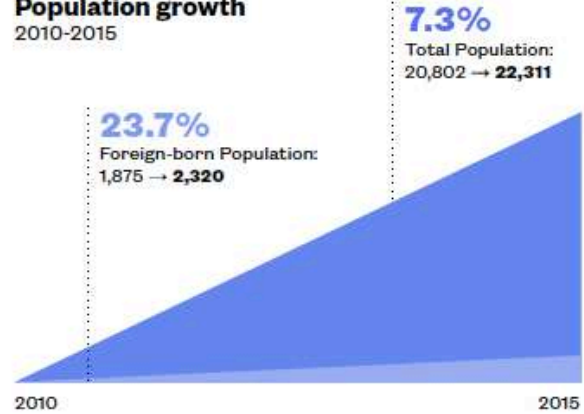
## TETON COUNTY, ID

### Population growth 2010-2015



## TETON COUNTY, WY

### Population growth 2010-2015

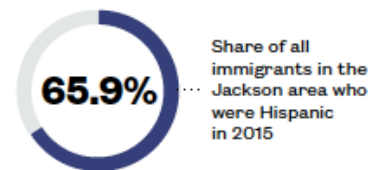


## ORIGINS

### JACKSON AREA

**4,588**  
Number of Hispanic  
residents in 2015

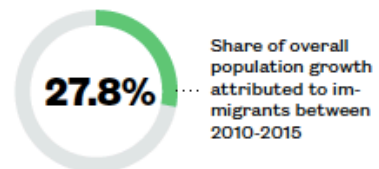
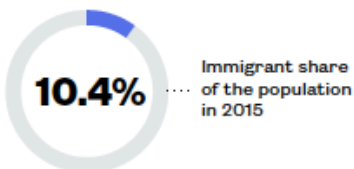
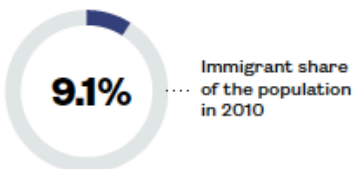
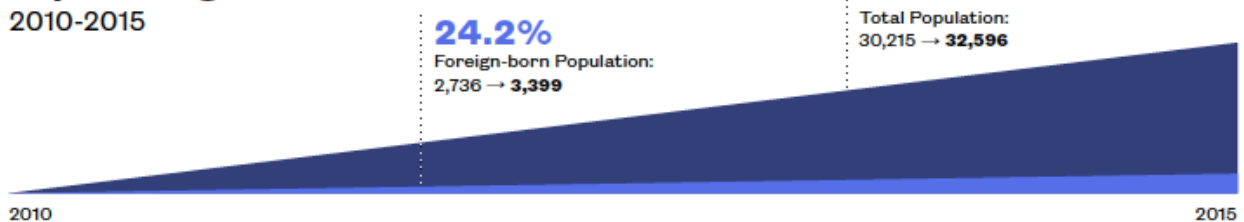
**48.8%**  
Share of Hispanic  
residents who were  
foreign-born



## DEMOGRAPHICS

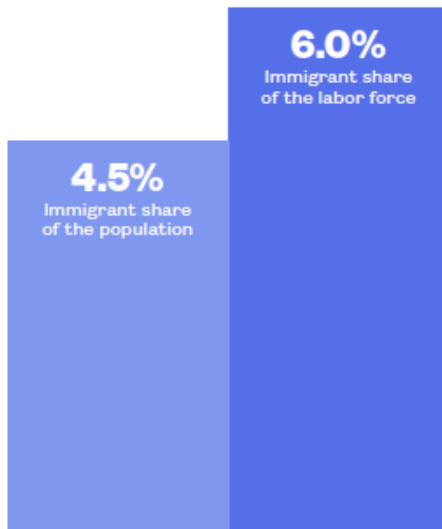
### JACKSON AREA

### Population growth 2010-2015



### GREATER JACKSON REGION

In the Greater Jackson region, foreign-born residents made up **4.5%** of the overall population. However, they made up a higher share of the labor force, at **6.0%**.



#### Labor force participation rate

Foreign-born 71.0%

U.S.-born 67.0%

#### Share of population that is working-age\*

Foreign-born 87.2%

U.S.-born 62.1%

\* Working-age refers to people ages 16-64 years old.

#### Employment rate

Foreign-born 94.0%

U.S.-born 94.0%

## INDUSTRIES

### GREATER JACKSON REGION

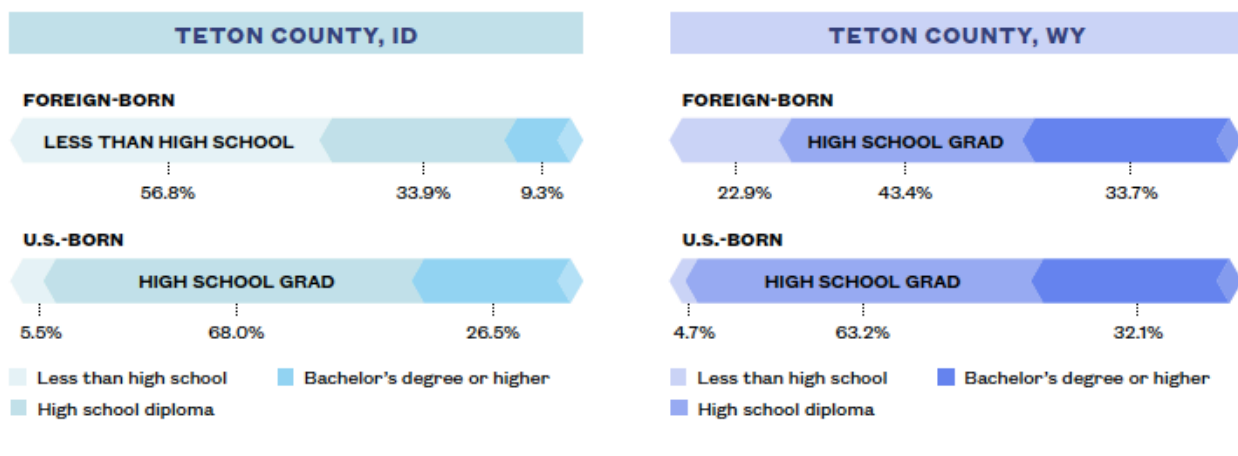
Immigrants play a critical role in several **key industries** in the Greater Jackson region. They make up significant shares of the workforce:



## EDUCATION

### GREATER JACKSON REGION

Among the overall population in the Greater Jackson region, those in Wyoming have **much higher levels of educational attainment** than those living in Idaho.



### III. CHALLENGES

While immigrants are important contributors to Teton County's economy, many members of the immigrant community face challenges to full social and economic participation, including inadequate access to low-cost legal assistance with immigration law matters, drivers' licenses or municipal identification cards, Spanish-language services, affordable housing, and educational support.

#### A. Legal Capacity and Low-cost Legal Aid

Immigrants in Teton County have a broad range of immigration-related legal needs. Many, for example, are eligible for lawful permanent residence (green cards) or citizenship, or are eligible to sponsor relatives for visas to the United States. There is also a rising need for legal representation in complex immigration proceedings. In recent years, a growing number of immigrants in the community have sought assistance with applications for U-visas and Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) visas. U-visas offer lawful immigration status to victims of crime who cooperate with law enforcement; VAWA visas allow certain victims of domestic violence to directly petition for immigration status. Additionally, a growing number of immigrants need legal representation in removal proceedings. Beginning in the summer of 2016, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) stepped up enforcement activities in Teton County. For a period in 2017, immigrant advocates observed that ICE officials made arrests almost every other week. Moreover, the Teton County detention facility routinely informs ICE about non-U.S. citizen detainees<sup>9</sup>—a practice not required by federal law. Once informed, ICE conducts phone interviews with detainees to determine their immigration status. Information provided in these interviews can have serious

<sup>9</sup> JACKSON POLICE DEPARTMENT, *Local Immigration Information FAQ* (April 2017), <https://townofjackson.com/files/9714/9435/2305/JPD-ImmigrationFAQ-en.pdf>

consequences, including the initiation of removal proceedings. Many immigrants in the community are not aware of their rights in immigration proceedings or when communicating with immigration officials, and many detainees do not have access to an immigration attorney before speaking with ICE.

Currently, ICE detains many immigrants from Teton County at a facility in Cheyenne, before transporting them to an immigration detention facility in Denver. However, a detention center is planned for Evanston, Wyoming—three hours from Jackson—where ICE may detain immigrants from Teton County if and when the center is constructed. Additionally, for detained immigrants eligible for release, ICE has reportedly been setting bond at \$3000 or more, and as high as \$18,000. Because few bail services assist with immigration bonds, many detainees must pay bonds in cash.

Legal representation can have a significant impact in removal proceedings. According to the American Immigration Council (AIC), detained immigrants in removal proceedings are ten and a half times more likely to avoid removal, and five and a half times more likely to be released from detention if represented by an attorney.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, non-detained immigrants in removal proceedings are three and a half times more likely to avoid removal if represented by an attorney. Attorneys can help identify legal pathways for immigrants to remain and thrive in the United States, options that many immigrants know nothing about.

Teton County has only two immigration attorneys who represent immigrants in removal proceedings, and in February 2018, they announced that they were nearing capacity.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, an immigrant legal services organization in Salt Lake City that has been assisting immigrants in Teton County is currently operating with one less attorney.

Additional attorneys able to offer services at reduced fees are necessary to meet the community's needs. Local non-profit organizations, individuals, and private donors have expressed interest in increasing legal capacity and low-cost legal aid services for immigrants; however, private initiatives have not yet proven successful.

## **B. Driver Authorization/Municipal IDs**

The 2005 federal REAL ID Act creates minimum standards that state-issued identification cards and drivers' licenses must meet in order to be used for

*Jackson would shut down without the immigrant population. Immigrants perform difficult and low-paying jobs such as housekeeping, cleaning, and cooking. I came to the United States by choice; however, many immigrants come to the United States—and to Jackson—because they have few opportunities elsewhere. Life here can nonetheless be a struggle because it can be hard to find a job and an affordable place to live. Much of the Jackson community is supportive of our immigrant community members, and many immigrants are working hard to integrate and to contribute.*

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<sup>10</sup> Ingrid Eagly and Steven Shafer, *Access to Counsel In Immigration Court*, AMERICAN IMMIGRATION COUNCIL (September 2016) at pp. 18 – 19, [https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/access\\_to\\_counsel\\_in\\_immigration\\_court.pdf](https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/access_to_counsel_in_immigration_court.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> Allie Gross and Emily Mieux, *Migrant legal aid in high demand*, JACKSON HOLE NEWS AND GUIDE (March 14, 2018), [http://www.jhnewsandguide.com/news/town\\_county/migrant-legal-aid-in-high-demand/](http://www.jhnewsandguide.com/news/town_county/migrant-legal-aid-in-high-demand/).

federal identification purposes. Among its provisions, the REAL ID Act requires that non-citizens provide proof of lawful immigration status. Since June 2011, Wyoming has issued drivers' licenses that comply with the REAL ID Act, and in 2014, a state legislative committee declined to draft a bill that would permit the state to also issue licenses that do not meet REAL ID requirements. An exception exists for beneficiaries of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, and since 2013, Wyoming has issued drivers' licenses to DACA recipients.

Like other residents of Teton County—including immigrants with lawful status who can obtain drivers' licenses—undocumented immigrants must drive on a regular basis: to work, to school, and for shopping. Because affordable housing is limited in the county, some undocumented immigrants drive long distances between work and home without licenses.

Twelve states currently provide authorization documents or licenses to undocumented immigrants, generally for public safety reasons.<sup>12</sup> Authorization documents or licenses provide undocumented immigrants with government-issued identification that holders and public officials—law enforcement officers in particular—can use to establish identity, residence and insurance status. Authorization documents or licenses also confirm that drivers have been tested and are qualified to drive, and enable drivers to purchase liability insurance and to register vehicles. As required by the REAL ID Act, authorization documents or licenses granted to undocumented immigrants indicate that they cannot be used for federal identification.

Four Mountain West states issue some type of driver authorization document to undocumented immigrants. New Mexico began issuing driver authorization cards in 2003, and from 2002 to 2011, the state's uninsured rate fell from 33 percent to 9.1 percent. In 2005, Utah began issuing Driving Privilege Cards (DPC), and by 2011, 75 percent of DPC holders had insurance coverage, and Utah's uninsured motorist rate had dropped from 28 percent to 8 percent.<sup>13</sup> Despite assurances, immigration advocates have expressed concern that ICE has accessed Utah's DPC records to

*I am from Mexico. People assume that immigrants come to the United States for "a better life." What many do not realize is that our lives are not always better. Working three jobs is not a better life when you never see your family. Some immigrants work from 6am until 2am and never see their children. Then, on days off, they have to take care of household business. Children need quality time that immigrant parents cannot always give. Children watch their parents work multiple jobs and think they also have to work like that to support the family, so they don't go to college. I have four children. I have tried to instill in them the importance of education. I want them all to go to college; I want them to have better lives. - JR*

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<sup>12</sup> See Silva Mathema, *Providing Identification to Unauthorized Immigrants*, CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS (November 2015), <https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/23120804/ProvidingIDs-summary.pdf>.

<sup>13</sup> Thamanna Vasan, *The Impact of Allowing All Immigrants Access to Driver's Licenses*, COLORADO FISCAL INSTITUTE (February 2017), [http://www.coloradofiscal.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Drivers-Licenses-for-Unauthorized-Immigrants\\_2017-update-FINAL.pdf](http://www.coloradofiscal.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Drivers-Licenses-for-Unauthorized-Immigrants_2017-update-FINAL.pdf).



identify undocumented immigrants.<sup>14</sup> In 2013, Nevada also began issuing driver authorization cards. To encourage undocumented immigrants to obtain authorization cards, Nevada law prohibits the Department of Motor Vehicles to release any information about immigration status to any government agency for any purpose related to enforcing immigration laws.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, in 2014, Colorado began issuing drivers' licenses and non-driver identification cards to undocumented immigrants.<sup>16</sup>

The Jackson Police Department and Teton County Sheriff's Office have expressed support for driver authorization cards for public safety reasons and efficiency—authorization cards could save law enforcement officers time and resources during encounters where they need to establish identity. In the fall of 2017, Jackson and Teton County law enforcement officials conducted an informal straw poll of law enforcement officials from around the state about providing driver authorization cards, and found that knowledge of the issue was limited.

Many cities and towns across the country also issue municipal identification cards to immigrants in their communities.<sup>17</sup> Like drivers' licenses, municipal IDs serve a public safety function by enabling ID holders and public officials to establish identity and residence. Moreover, municipal IDs allow immigrants without other forms of identification to open bank accounts, cash checks, obtain library cards, enroll their children in schools, and access other municipal services.<sup>18</sup> Advocates explain that IDs allow immigrants greater economic participation and integration in the communities in which they live.<sup>19</sup>

*Immigrants make up about 30 percent of Jackson's population and are important contributors to our community's social fabric and economic well-being. I manage a hotel and bar; around 35 percent of our employees are immigrants, some of whom have been with us for more than a decade. To recognize immigrant contributions and to help immigrants to integrate within the community, I have worked with immigrants and immigrant advocates to support a multitude of immigrant community initiatives including an annual community Mexican Independence Day celebration, a Wyoming Humanities Council initiative, Diversity & Community Engagement, Teton Literacy Center ESL programs, a recreational soccer league team and many more important immigrant initiatives. Immigrant integration and support is at the core of our company's organizational culture.*  
- JW

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<sup>14</sup> Christopher Smart, *Feds may be using Utah database to round up undocumented workers*, THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE (September 5, 2017), <https://www.sltrib.com/news/2017/09/05/feds-maybe-using-utah-database-to-round-up-undocumented-workers/>.

<sup>15</sup> NRS 481.063(10), <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/nrs/NRS-481.html>.

<sup>16</sup> Jesse Paul, *Colorado's driver's license program for immigrants already has problems, and they're about to get worse*, DENVER POST (July 10, 2017), <https://www.denverpost.com/2017/07/10/colorados-drivers-license-program-undocumented-immigrants/>.

<sup>17</sup> POLICY LINK, *Municipal ID Cards Help Undocumented Residents, Boost Local Economies (blog)*, <http://www.policylink.org/blog/municipal-id-cards>.

<sup>18</sup> THE CENTER FOR POPULAR DEMOCRACY, *Who We Are: Municipal ID cards as a local strategy to promote belonging and shared community identity* (December 2013), [https://populardemocracy.org/sites/default/files/municipal\\_id\\_report\\_0.pdf](https://populardemocracy.org/sites/default/files/municipal_id_report_0.pdf).

<sup>19</sup> Chris Bragg, *Municipal ID cards could boost immigrant business*, CRAIN'S NEW YORK BUSINESS (July 8, 2014), <http://www.crainsnewyork.com/article/20140708/SMALLBIZ/307069984/city-municipal-id-cards-could-boost-immigrant-business>.



### C. Language Access

In 2015, 65.8 percent of immigrants in Teton County were from Latin America, and roughly 23 percent of the county's total population was Spanish-speaking. Recognizing that a significant number of Spanish-speakers have limited English proficiency, local officials have taken steps to increase access to information and services in Spanish. The Town of Jackson provides bonuses to employees with Spanish-language reading and writing proficiency, and in February 2018, Jackson's mayor ordered a review of operations to "to determine how to offer more translated documents as well as to improve and expand outreach to Spanish-speaking community members."<sup>20</sup> Additionally, as part of the Engage 2017 long-range planning process, town and county officials have held Spanish-language community meetings to discuss access to housing and other issues.

One22, a non-profit organization, currently offers 24-hour interpretation services for health and human services providers; however, capacity is limited. Some healthcare providers are also using virtual interpretation services, but immigrant advocates have explained that virtual interpretation services might not be appropriate in high-stress situations like hospital visits or emergency medical care. Increasingly, businesses including pharmacies, banks, and grocery stores are hiring bilingual staff.

### D. Housing

Because only three percent of Teton County's land area is privately owned, development is limited and affordable housing is in short supply. In 2017, the median home value in Teton County was \$720,000; and the median monthly rent was \$1,187.<sup>21</sup> Only 58% of the local workforce lives within the county.

Local officials and community members are working to create more access to affordable housing through initiatives like the Housing Mitigation Plan.<sup>22</sup> The Town of Jackson and Teton County officials also recently removed immigration status as a qualification for affordable rental housing and have begun providing tenant-landlord and fair housing resources in English and Spanish. Moreover, in March 2018, a developer was selected to build 23 one- and two-bedroom

*I have lived in the United States for nearly 50 years. In my 20s, I met my husband, a US citizen, in Mexico. He had gone to Mexico on vacation and overstayed his visa. When we met, he was working illegally.*

*I work for a nonprofit organization in Jackson that supports the immigrant community. Many, if not most, of our immigrant families consider Jackson to be home. They work hard to be valuable members of the community and help to make Jackson a more diverse and interesting place. Much of the larger Jackson community recognizes their contributions, but more could be done to show immigrants that they are valued.*

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<sup>20</sup> John Spina, Town pushes Latino engagement, JACKSON HOLE NEWS AND GUIDE (February 8, 2018), [http://www.jhnewsandguide.com/jackson\\_hole\\_daily/local/town-pushes-latino-engagement/](http://www.jhnewsandguide.com/jackson_hole_daily/local/town-pushes-latino-engagement/).

<sup>21</sup> Teton County, Wyoming – Housing Data, TOWN CHARTS (presenting data from 2017 American Community Survey), <http://www.towncharts.com/Wyoming/Housing/Teton-County-WY-Housing-data.html>.

<sup>22</sup> HOUSING MITIGATION PLAN, Teton County, Wyoming, <http://www.tetonwyo.org/885/Housing-Mitigation-Plan>.

rental units for community members who make roughly \$50,000 per year (or less than 45 percent of the area media income [AMI]).<sup>23</sup>

Availability notwithstanding, Latino members of the community have expressed concerns about housing discrimination.<sup>24</sup> The federal Fair Housing Act (FCA) prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, financing, or other housing-related transactions on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or disability.<sup>25</sup> These prohibitions apply regardless of a tenant or prospective tenant's immigration status. While the FCA does not prohibit discrimination on the basis of immigration status, it does prohibit landlords from treating tenants or prospective tenants differently on the basis of their race, color, or national origin. For example, a landlord violates the FCA if he/she requests proof of immigration status only from Latino applicants. It is also illegal for a landlord to threaten to report a victim of discrimination to ICE or other authorities.

Neither county nor town law prohibits discrimination on the basis of immigration status. In March 2018, Jackson Town Council members discussed including immigration status in a proposed nondiscrimination ordinance, but no decision was reached.<sup>26</sup>

However, local officials are taking positive steps to address landlord-tenant disputes. Jackson is considering hiring an ombudsman to provide legal information or to mediate disputes, and has earmarked money next year for Teton County Access to Justice to conduct a needs assessment.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, in February 2018, Jackson passed an ordinance requiring landlords to provide at least 30-days notice before terminating a lease. While Wyoming law does not require 30-days notice, it is common practice nationwide; 40 states obligate landlords to give at least 30-days notice.

## E. Education

Wyoming is committed to quality education for all residents regardless of immigration status. Any

*My family has lived in the Jackson area for generations. We operate a resort and employ many J-1 visa holders. U.S. citizen students can only work in the summers, and because the tourist season is year-round, we depend on J-1 workers. Our business is expanding, and approximately 20-25% of our staff is foreign nationals. They are hard working and an integral part of our community. Our resort could not easily operate without them. If we could not hire J-1 visa holders, we would be required to spend a great deal more money searching for interested and available U.S. citizen workers.*

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<sup>23</sup> John Spina, *Council chooses developer for new affordable housing project*, JACKSON HOLE NEWS AND GUIDE (March 13, 2017), [http://www.jhnewsandguide.com/this\\_just\\_in/council-chooses-developer-for-new-affordable-housing-project/](http://www.jhnewsandguide.com/this_just_in/council-chooses-developer-for-new-affordable-housing-project/).

<sup>24</sup> Allie Gross, *Latinos weigh in on affordable housing regs*, JACKSON HOLE NEWS AND GUIDE (October 4, 2017), [http://www.jhnewsandguide.com/news/town\\_county/latinos-weigh-in-on-affordable-housing-regs/](http://www.jhnewsandguide.com/news/town_county/latinos-weigh-in-on-affordable-housing-regs/).

<sup>25</sup> The FHA includes exemptions for religious organizations and private clubs [§807(a)], single family homes sold or rented without the use of a broker (if the owner does not own more than three such houses at one time)[§803(b)(1)], and owner-occupied dwelling with no more than four units [§803(b)(2)].

<sup>26</sup> *Jackson leaders continue to push for nondiscrimination law*, BUCKRAIL (March 22, 2018), <https://buckrail.com/jackson-leaders-continue-to-push-for-nondiscrimination-law/>

<sup>27</sup> John Spina, *Town: Ombudsman could mediate housing disputes*, JACKSON HOLE GUIDE AND NEWS (March 23, 2018), [http://www.jhnewsandguide.com/jackson\\_hole\\_daily/local/town-ombudsman-could-mediate-housing-disputes/](http://www.jhnewsandguide.com/jackson_hole_daily/local/town-ombudsman-could-mediate-housing-disputes/).

graduate of a Wyoming high school receives in-state tuition at Wyoming's public colleges and university. However, foreign-born students—particularly undocumented immigrants—are not eligible for certain forms of financial aid. For example, Wyoming's Hathaway scholarship program is only open to U.S. citizens and permanent residents.<sup>28</sup>

Teton County also recognizes the importance of enabling immigrants and their families to access education. At the end of the 2015-2016 school year, more than 95 percent of children in the Early Head Start program belonged to native Spanish-speaking families.<sup>29</sup> Additionally, the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) program for grades K through 9, in place since 2009, continues to grow in popularity—enrollment is expected to increase from 669 in 2017 to 737 in 2018.

Access to education notwithstanding, undocumented students and students with undocumented family members face unique challenges related to immigration status. A report released by One22 in January 2018 details the stress and anxiety experienced by undocumented students and students with undocumented family members in Teton County.<sup>30</sup> Students shared fears about deportation, the cancellation of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (DACA), and the inability to access higher education. One student also expressed concern about a lack of empathy in the community.

Research has documented serious mental health issues related to immigration status among undocumented immigrants and their close family members.<sup>31</sup> Detention or deportation of family members can cause depression, severe anxiety, separation disorder, or post-traumatic stress disorder.<sup>32</sup> Threat of deportation alone can damage mental health.<sup>33</sup>

*I am a DACA recipient and am currently studying at university. I came to the United States when I was four-years-old. I grew up in Jackson; it is the only home I know. Life for immigrant youth without legal status can be very difficult. I think many feel isolated and even worthless, and some turn to drugs and alcohol to deal with these feelings. I feel fortunate to live in Wyoming and to be in school, but I have also had to work very hard. In Wyoming, there is little financial support for DACA students who want to pursue a college degree. To support ourselves, we work multiple jobs. I am optimistic about the future but am also eager for the federal government to create long-term protections for DACA recipients and our families.*

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<sup>28</sup> UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING, *Hathaway Scholarships: Qualifying and Eligibility*, <http://www.uwyo.edu/admissions/scholarships/hathaway/qualifying-and-eligibility.html>.

<sup>29</sup> CHILDREN'S LEARNING CENTER, *Head Start Annual Report 2016*, <http://childrenlearn.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/CLC-Annual-Report-2016-f-pages-1.pdf>.

<sup>30</sup> Carmen Bonilla, et al., *Teton County Youth Needs Analysis*, ONE22 pp. 11-12 (January 30, 2018), <https://static1.squarespace.com/Community+Youth+Needs+Analysis.docx-7.pdf>.

<sup>31</sup> E.g. Lisseth Rojas et al., *Trauma and psychological distress in Latino citizen children following parental detention and deportation*, PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA: THEORY, RESEARCH, PRACTICE, AND POLICY, 9(3), 352-361 (2017), <http://psycnet.apa.org/record/2016-37283-001?doi=1>; Samantha Artiga and Petry Ubri, *Living in an Immigrant Family in America: How Fear and Toxic Stress are Affecting Daily Life, Well-being, & Health*, THE HENRY J. KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION (December 2017), <http://www.immigrationresearch-info.org/system/files/Issue-Brief-Living-in-an-Immigrant-Family-in-America.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> Lisseth Rojas et al., at 358-359.

## IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

### Legal Aid

1. Establish low-cost, bilingual legal aid services for immigration law-related matters, particularly detention and removal proceedings.
2. Expand relationships with immigration legal service providers outside of Teton County, particularly in the Salt Lake City area, to help meet current legal needs in Teton County and in anticipation of the opening of an immigration detention center in Evanston.
3. Collaborate with the local bar council to ensure criminal lawyers are knowledgeable about the immigration consequences of criminal convictions.

### Identification/Authorization

4. Consider providing undocumented immigrants in Teton County with county-issued municipal IDs.

### Language Access

5. Create language access policies to ensure a broader range of public and private services—particularly health, housing, public safety, and emergency services—are available from bilingual staff.
6. Promote regular training in cultural competence for public safety officials, and continue to hire those with Spanish-language skills. Ensure victims have Spanish-language options for reporting crimes, including domestic violence.
7. Collaborate to recruit and train bilingual members of the community to act as volunteer or low-cost community interpreters.
8. Encourage health care providers, including pharmacies, clinics, and hospitals to offer Spanish language interpretation and translation, including in-person interpretation during risky or high-stress procedures.
9. Encourage banks to hire bilingual tellers and loan officers, specializing in the needs of small business owners and offering a full range of services in Spanish.

### Housing

10. Eliminate immigration status in applications for affordable housing, and advertise available affordable housing in English and Spanish.
11. Create a county ordinance preventing discrimination in any housing-related transaction on the basis of immigration status.

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<sup>33</sup> See James S. Gordon, *Living in fear of deportation is terrible for your health*, THE WASHINGTON POST (February 10, 2017), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2017/02/10/living-in-fear-as-a-refugee-in-the-u-s-is-terrible-for-your-health/>

## Education

12. Create referral networks with local mental health professionals, and provide immigrant students and students with immigrant family members access to culturally competent psychological and social counselors.
13. Train school officials, teachers, and extra-curricular activities staff and volunteers to be aware of mental health issues related to immigration status; to recognize emotional and behavioral signs of heightened stress, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder; and to refer children and youth in need to mental health professionals, e.g. to St. John's Medical Center Mental Health Resource Line.
14. Advocate with Wyoming's congressional delegation to support long-term legal status for DACA-eligible immigrants and their families and to guarantee that the J-1 visa program is working effectively and complements, rather than displaces, the H2B visa program.
15. Make Hathaway scholarships available to DACA students who have graduated from Wyoming high schools.

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<sup>i i</sup> "Jackson Area" refers to Teton County, WY and Teton County, ID. The "Greater Jackson Region" refers to both Teton counties in Wyoming and Idaho, as well as Sheridan, Park, Lincoln, and Big Horn counties in Wyoming; and Madison, Jefferson, and Fremont counties, as well as parts of Bingham county in Idaho. All data come from 5-year samples of the American Community Survey (ACS) from 2010 and 2015. Data for the Jackson Area come from official U.S. Census Estimates available from the 5-year ACS through U.S. Census FactFinder. Data for the "Greater Jackson Region" come from analysis of publically available microdata. For one year of the multiyear sample, 2011, the statistical areas available for analysis were slightly different than the other years of data. For 2011, data for Sublette, Sweetwater, and Uinta counties in Wyoming are included, while data for Sheridan and Big Horn are excluded. Similarly, in Idaho, data from Lemhi, Custer, Clark, Butte, and Bonneville counties are included, while data from Big Horn are excluded.