

BLACK, WHITE & BEYOND

An Interactive History

AKRON'S
MULTICULTURAL
HISTORY

CLINTON
THE PRESIDENT'S
INITIATIVE ON RACE

COMING
TOGETHER
PROJECT

HOME

AKRON & MULTICULTURAL HISTORY SINCE 1965

In 1965, Congress repealed the National Origins (Quota) Act established in 1924. As instability and war affected various regions around the world, this had the effect of opening immigration to regions outside Europe. Consequently, the United States and northeast Ohio have witnessed increased immigration from Asia and Latin America. However, compared with other parts of the United States, Ohio has seen a smaller share of immigration.

Akron's population, according to the 2000 US Census, is comprised of 67.2% white, 28.5% African American, 1.5% Asian, and 1.2% Latino. While these percentages of recent immigrants may be small, Akron's multicultural past continues to be vibrant in the present. For example, many immigrants from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos have settled in South Akron near Brown Street, adding a new chapter in an area that has a rich immigrant and working class history. In the North Hill section of the city, where Italian and Polish immigrants made their homes in the early part of the twentieth century, new immigrants continue to arrive. The International Institute in the area continues to serve recent arrivals from across the globe, including recent arrivals from Burma. The Institute grew out of the need to assist recent immigrants, mainly Europeans, during the early twentieth century as they arrived to find jobs in the booming rubber industry.

Akron still faces issues of discrimination and misunderstanding among various ethnic and racial groups; however efforts are being made to overcome these divisions. One of these is the Coming Together Project, discussed in a separate section of this website. The hope is that this website and continued efforts like the Coming Together project and the work of the International Institute can build a positive future for all of Akron's people.

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