

# IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS

Creating Jobs and Strengthening the  
U.S. Economy in Growing Industries



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# About The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. (ILC) and The ILC Public Education Institute

The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. (ILC) of Malden, MA, is a not-for-profit organization that helps immigrants and refugees become successful workers, parents and community members through direct service programs and public education. Its direct service program has been providing free, year-round English classes to immigrant and refugee adults in Greater Boston since 1992. It serves more than 900 students each year with six levels of intensive English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes.

By improving their English skills, ILC students achieve goals such as finding a job, entering college, starting a business, becoming a U.S. citizen and more. To help students achieve their goals, The ILC also offers specialty classes such as citizenship exam preparation, computer literacy, pre-literacy, family literacy (parenting-related English lessons) and a theater class where students write and perform plays about their immigrant experiences.

The ILC further supports immigrants through its Public Education Institute, which informs Americans about the economic and social contributions of immigrants in our society. The Institute uses a research-based approach to create reports, articles, presentations and conferences for researchers, educators, policy makers, media and the general public. In 2010, it launched an Immigrant Research and Information website (<http://www.immigrationresearch-info.org>) to provide easy access to comprehensive research about U.S. immigrants.

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# IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS

## Creating Jobs and Strengthening the U.S. Economy in Growing Industries: Transportation, Food and Building Services

with a regional view of Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania  
and a focus on the green economy

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*Immigrant Entrepreneurs Creating Jobs and Strengthening the U.S. Economy in Growing Industries* is the third ILC-commissioned report on which Dr. Jennings has worked. He is the author of *Impact of Immigrant Entrepreneurs and Workers in Leisure and Hospitality Businesses: Massachusetts and New England* and co-author of *Immigrant Workers in the Massachusetts Health Care Industry*.

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The overview of immigrant small businesses in the United States was written by Michele Waslin, PhD, of the Immigration Policy Center and Marcia Drew Hohn, EdD, of The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc.

# Preface

In 2003, The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. (ILC) launched a public education initiative to raise the visibility of immigrants as assets to America. Spurred by anti-immigrant sentiment that was increasingly voiced after September 11, The ILC set forth to credibly document immigrants' economic and social contributions. Central to this effort are ILC-sponsored research studies about immigrants as entrepreneurs, workers and consumers.

To provide thoughtful and substantive evidence that immigrants are vital contributors to our nation, The ILC commissions teams of university researchers to examine immigrants' contributions as entrepreneurs, workers and consumers and to present those contributions within larger economic and social frameworks.

ILC studies such as *Massachusetts Immigrants by the Numbers* (2009 and 2012) and *Immigrant Workers in the Health Care Industry* have examined the demographic characteristics and economic footprint of immigrants overall and in particular fields in Massachusetts. The ILC has also developed a specialty in the study of immigrant entrepreneurship. These studies include:

- *Immigrant Entrepreneurs and Neighborhood Revitalization* (2005)
- *Immigrant Entrepreneurs in the Massachusetts Biotechnology Industry* (2007)
- *The Rise of Asian-Owned Businesses in Massachusetts* (2007)
- *Impact of Immigrant Entrepreneurs and Workers in Leisure and Hospitality Businesses: Massachusetts and New England* (2010)
- *Adult Children of Immigrant Entrepreneurs* (2011)

This study, *Immigrant Entrepreneurs Creating Jobs and Strengthening the U.S. Economy in Growing Industries*, illuminates a sector of immigrant entrepreneurship that has had scant attention but which has major and positive impacts on local economies. These businesses have grown “beyond the bodega” into a significant and intentional growth mode that creates jobs and strengthens local and regional economies. The report specifically examines the presence and experiences of immigrant businesses in the mid- to high-growth industries of transportation, food and building services in New York, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. The lens is also swiveled to examine engagement of these businesses with “going green.”

In providing these studies, The ILC Public Education Institute seeks to inform policy and promote thoughtful dialogue about the key roles played by immigrants. As America grapples with how to reform its immigration system, we hope these studies will help provide a rational basis for reform.

Diane Portnoy, Founder, President and CEO  
Marcia Drew Hohn, Director, The ILC Public Education Institute  
The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc.  
April 2013

## Methodology

The research team reviewed a range of national and state economic data as well as Census data to compile basic information about selected business sectors considered non-high-tech and where the presence of immigrant entrepreneurs was significant. The research team accessed and reviewed data from the American Community Survey/ Public Use Microdata Sample, the Bureau of Labor Statistics National Employment Matrix, the U.S. Census Bureau 2007 Economic Census and the U. S. Census Bureau County Business Patterns: 2009 to highlight the presence of immigrant entrepreneurs in some industry sectors and sub-sectors<sup>1</sup>.

State workforce and labor departments based in Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania were contacted for information specific to these states. The research team also conducted 35 interviews with individuals, mostly immigrant business owners, listed in Appendix C.

A detailed explanation of the methodology can be found in Appendix A.

## Terms

The terms foreign-born and immigrant are used interchangeably in this report. The terms entrepreneur and self-employed worker are also used interchangeably.

The term green economy as used in this report refers to any technology or technique that produces or uses cleaner energy as well as cleaner production processes and services that reduce environmental impact or improve natural resource use.

Definitions of each industry in this report can be found in its respective section.

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# Executive Summary

Immigrant entrepreneurs play an outsized role in the transportation, food-related and building services industries when compared to their population numbers. All of these industries are showing strong job growth except for certain food-related sub-sectors. Even within these sub-sectors, there is evidence that immigrants are encouraging growth through the increasing demand for ethnic foods.

Transportation	Revenue	\$368.2 billion
	Employment Growth	10 to 17%
Food-Related	Revenue	\$2.2 trillion
	Employment Growth	-1 to 12%
Building Services	Revenue	\$178.5 billion
	Employment Growth	18 to 25%

Immigrant businesses in these industries are most often in niches where there are underserved markets, and they expand the market rather than compete with native-owned businesses. There is a strong connection between the presence of immigrant workers and entrepreneurs in these industries.

The presence of immigrant entrepreneurs is particularly startling in some of the sub-sectors examined. Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania show equally robust immigrant contributions but have some variations related to their overall immigrant population numbers.

Industry Sub-Sector	Immigrant Share of Self-Employed
Taxi and Limousine Service	62.8%
Bus Service and Urban Transit	29.9%
Specialty Food Stores	34.5%
Restaurants and Other Food Services	37.7%
Services to Buildings and Dwellings	25.9%
Waste Management and Remediation	74.0%

The immigrant business owners interviewed in this report have significant plans to expand and have already begun to do so. Six key themes emerged from these interviews:

- Starting a business in market niches
- Tapping earlier experiences as a base for entrepreneurship
- Social commitment
- Lack of access to capital and government resources
- Lack of connection to chambers of commerce
- Relationship to the green economy

With respect to the last point, these businesses express awareness and desire to use environmentally friendly products and practices but have been largely excluded from planning for local and regional green economies. The final section of this report expands on the role that immigrant entrepreneurs in these industries play in the green economy.

# Introduction

## Immigrant Small Businesses in the United States

Immigrant entrepreneurs are helping to drive small business creation in the United States. These entrepreneurs are playing an expanding role in new business formation that is strengthening the economy and creating jobs in local communities. In 2012, the Fiscal Policy Institute found that 18 percent of small business owners in the U.S. were immigrants, which was higher than immigrants' 13 percent share of the overall population<sup>2</sup>. Between 1990 and 2010, the number of small business owners grew from 3.1 to 4.9 million, and immigrants accounted for 30 percent of that growth. There were 539,000 more immigrant small business owners in 2010 than in 1990. Further:

- Immigrant-owned small businesses are firms with at least one and fewer than 100 workers. They employed 4.7 million people in 2007 or 14 percent of all people employed by small business owners. These immigrant-owned firms generated an estimated \$776 billion in receipts in 2007.
- The largest number of immigrant small business owners are in the professional and business services sector (141,000 business owners) followed by retail (121,000), educational and social services (100,000), and leisure and hospitality (100,000).
- Small businesses most commonly owned by immigrants are restaurants, physicians' offices, real estate firms, grocery stores and truck transportation services. Immigrants make up 43 percent of hotel and motel owners and 37 percent of restaurant owners. Immigrant small business owners are also over-represented in taxi service firms, dry cleaning and laundry services, gas stations, and grocery stores.

Robert Fairlie's 2012 research for the Partnership for a New American Economy demonstrates the scale of the economic contributions made by immigrant small business owners. The report points out that, "in addition to creating jobs, the businesses that immigrants start also create revenue to boost our GDP, exports to alleviate our trade imbalance, taxes to fund our deficit and new consumption that fuels our economy." The report states:

- Immigrants started 28 percent of all new U.S. businesses in 2011 despite accounting for only 13 percent of the U.S. population. Just a decade and a half earlier, in 1996, only 15 percent of new U.S. businesses were founded by immigrants.
- The rate at which immigrants started new businesses grew by more than 50 percent between 1996 and 2011. In the same period, the business-formation rate for the native-born declined by 10 percent.
- Immigrants are more than twice as likely as the native-born to start a business. In 2011, the immigrant business-formation rate was 550 new businesses per month for every 100,000 immigrants, while the native-born rate was only 270 new businesses per month for every 100,000.
- Over the last decade, the income generated by native-owned businesses increased 14 percent and failed to keep pace with inflation. Meanwhile, income from immigrant-owned businesses increased by more than 60 percent.

## Immigrant Entrepreneurs and Business Growth

Some entrepreneurs start small businesses as a means to support their families with no plans to grow larger. They play an important role in local economies. Others start businesses with the intent to grow and become part of the regional, national or even international economy. This report tells the little-known but important story of immigrants' role as entrepreneurs in mid- to high-growth industries<sup>3</sup>. The focus is on transportation, food-related industries and building services. These industries contribute greatly to America's prosperity but don't get the attention given to other manufacturing or high-tech sectors.

The presence of immigrant workers and entrepreneurs in some of these industries was recently documented in a report by the Fiscal Policy Institute (FPI), *Immigrant Small Business Owners: A Significant and Growing Part of the Economy*. The FPI report noted a strong connection between the presence of immigrant workers and business owners. This study has a similar finding<sup>4</sup>.

The focus of this report evolved from a 2010 conference at Babson College on "Immigrant Entrepreneurship in Massachusetts" sponsored by The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. (ILC) from which two key ideas emerged. One is that there is an "immigrant entrepreneurship ecology" that includes immigrant neighborhood storefront businesses; immigrant high-tech and health science entrepreneurs; immigrant non-tech growth businesses; and immigrant transnational businesses. A second idea was that these growing, non-tech industries (including transportation, food and building services) have not attracted much attention. Interestingly, these sectors can be crucial to the expansion of the green economy. Within this context, The ILC decided to look at these three sectors in Massachusetts as well as in New York and Pennsylvania<sup>5</sup>.

Moreover, the report dramatically illustrates how immigrant entrepreneurs look for niches in underserved markets. For example, vans and other alternatives to mass transit serve unmet transportation needs in urban areas. Food intended to be a "taste of home" for compatriots in local restaurants and grocery stores becomes popular and influences the eating habits of other Americans. Workers who enter industries like landscaping or cleaning because they don't require much English gain experience and see opportunities to start their own companies. Businesses like these add value to American life by expanding the economy rather than taking away from native businesses.

Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania have large foreign-born populations and a significant presence of immigrant workers and entrepreneurs in the industries covered in this study. Although Pennsylvania's proportion of the foreign-born population is not as high as that of New York, Massachusetts and the nation, it grew 45.7 percent from 2000 to 2010. Pennsylvania now ranks 13th in the nation in terms of the size of its foreign-born population<sup>6</sup>.

In addition to Census and Bureau of Labor Statistics data, immigrant business owners and industry representatives were interviewed about reasons for starting and maintaining businesses in these areas as well as their green initiatives.

The industry sectors in this study, both at the national and state levels, reflect significant economic activity in terms of revenue and sales, annual payroll, total employment, and number and size of establishments. While the levels of economic activity in various industries in Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania are not uniform, generally the sectors represent a sizeable workforce including self-employed workers. Data is first organized into a national profile and then into state profiles.



## Definitions

**Truck Transportation** includes establishments that provide over-the-road transportation of cargo using motor vehicles such as trucks and tractor trailers.

**Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation** includes a variety of passenger transportation activities such as urban transit systems; chartered bus, school bus and inter-urban bus transportation; and taxis.

**Taxi and Limousine Service** is a sub-set of Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation.

**Support Activities for Transportation** includes an array of services from air traffic control to motor vehicle towing.

**Warehousing and Storage** includes establishments that operate warehousing and storage facilities for general merchandise, refrigerated goods and other warehouse products.

**Bus Service and Urban Transit** includes establishments that operate local and suburban passenger transit systems over regular routes with regular schedules.

Detailed descriptions with NAICS codes are available in Appendix B.

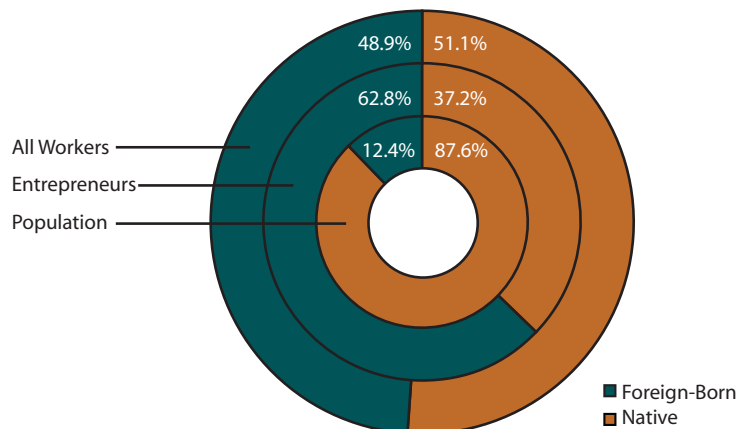
# Immigrant Entrepreneurs in Transportation

Transportation is not just a fast-growing industry. It is also crucial to the well-being of many other industries because it influences the flow of goods and services. It includes sub-sectors for the transportation of passengers and cargo, warehousing and storage of cargo, and support activities for various modes of transportation. Many of the establishments in this industry operate networks that include physical facilities, labor forces and equipment spread over an extensive geographic area. Warehousing is included as part of the transportation network and is separate from wholesaling, which involves the sale of goods.

All the transportation sub-sectors are projected to have employment growth ranging from Support Activities for Transportation with the highest projected employment growth of 17.4 percent to Taxi and Limousine Service with the lowest growth rate of 3.4 percent. Bus Service and Urban Transit is close to the highest with projected growth of 15.6 percent. **Table 1** (page 10) presents data on the economic characteristics of the selected transportation sub-sectors in the U.S.

**Graph 1**

**Presence of Immigrant Workers and Entrepreneurs in Taxi and Limousine Service, U.S.**



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample 2005-2009



## Charles Mwangi

Kenya

Founder and Owner,  
Comfort Care Resource Group  
Woburn, MA

Charles Mwangi found not only a niche market but also a niche labor pool to fuel his business, and both are testament to his belief in helping people in need.

Mwangi was born in Kenya and lives in Woburn, MA. He has worked in transportation all his adult life. Previously, he provided transportation staffing for local businesses. He was inspired to branch out on his own when he identified a gap in transportation services for an oft-neglected population: persons with disabilities. Mwangi did not stop there. The business model for Comfort Care Resource Group included both transportation services and job opportunities for disabled persons.

Founded in 2007, Comfort Care Resource Group is a transport service company specializing in medical, non-emergency transport. Mwangi obtained financing from his family to start the business and now owns a fleet of vehicles serving the Woburn area north of Boston. Recently, he expanded beyond Woburn and is developing plans to provide in-home personal services for clients with an eye to future development in ambulance services.



*Charles Mwangi, center, with two of his employees.*

In developing his business model, Mwangi decided job creation would be a key component, and he is committed to providing job opportunities to community members, particularly those with disabilities. Charitable activities are also a priority. His business provides free vouchers and fares, education support, and sponsorship of local food drives. Despite the growth of his business, Mwangi has experienced significant difficulty in accessing bank financing, which is tied to the permitting and licensing requirements for the business. Nonetheless, he is undeterred in his dedication to helping the community.

***Mwangi decided job creation would be a key component, and he is committed to providing job opportunities to community members, particularly those with disabilities.***



## Just the facts

**17.4%**

Projected national growth in Support Activities for Transportation from 2008-2018

**48.9%**

Share of foreign-born workers in Taxi and Limousine Service nationally

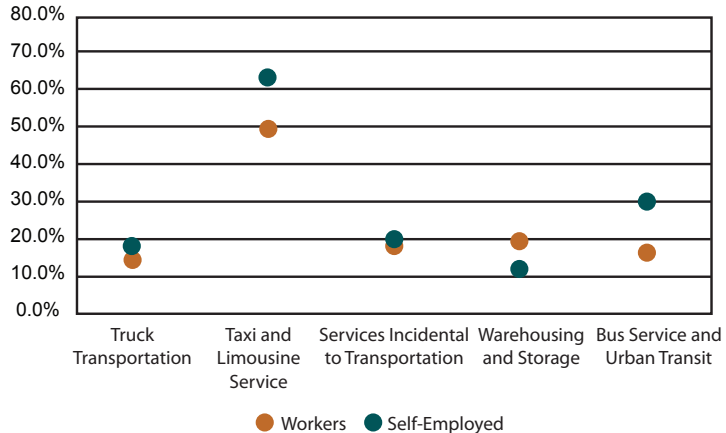
### Taxi and Limousine Service, and Bus Service and Urban Transit

The two transportation sub-sectors with the highest percentage of foreign-born entrepreneurs (62.8% and 29.9%, respectively)

There are significant numbers of foreign-born workers in transportation sub-sectors. The highest percentage of foreign-born workers in all the transportation sub-sectors is found in Taxi and Limousine Service where 128,912 of the 263,783 total workers or 48.9 percent are foreign-born (Graph 1, page 4).

**Graph 2**

**Foreign-Born Share of Select U.S. Transportation Industry Sub-Sectors as Workers and Entrepreneurs**

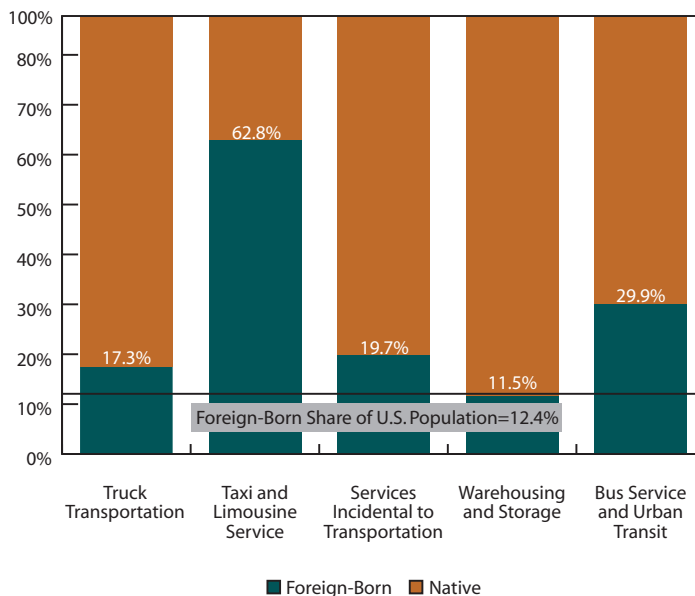


Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample 2005-2009

However, the distribution of foreign-born workers is not uniform. Truck Transportation has the lowest share of foreign-born workers with 12.7 percent, or 277,193 out of 2,188,956 workers. This is on par with immigrants' proportion of the total population, which is 12.4 percent (Graph 2).

**Graph 3**

**Share of Self-Employed in Select U.S. Transportation Industry Sub-Sectors: Foreign-Born and Native**



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample 2005-2009



## Larry Dossantos

Cape Verde

Owner,  
912 Auto Center and Car Rental  
Dorchester, MA



***As soon as he left high school, Dossantos set about making his dream a reality. When he opened 912 Auto Center in Dorchester, MA, he was only 17.***

When Larry Dossantos was nine, his father sat him and his seven brothers and sisters down at the kitchen table. He had moved with his family from Cape Verde to Boston in 1978 for a better life. Dossantos' father told them, "I brought you here, now you need to make the best of it." He then put two candies in front of the children, one sweet and one spicy, and asked them to choose one. Dossantos picked the sweet one. His father said, "Larry, your life will be sweet so long as you work hard to succeed."

Dossantos took that message to heart. He was determined to succeed. He was also determined to work for himself. He turned his love of cars into employment working in an auto body shop at the age of 12. He loved restoring cars and seeing them run.

As soon as he left high school, Dossantos set about making his dream a reality. When he opened 912 Auto Center in Dorchester, MA, he was only 17.

Dossantos hires residents to work in his shop providing them with not only steady income but also skill acquisition. Because Dossantos keeps up with contemporary trends in auto care, including eco-friendly paints and supplies, his employees emerge better skilled.

In fact, the environment has been of great concern to Dossantos who wants his children to grow up in a neighborhood more self-sufficient and less toxic. He gathered minority business owners to share their experiences and expertise not only in doing business but also in going green. He also started community gardens for young people. Closer to home, Dossantos systematically "greened" his business since auto care centers can be a major source of toxins. (See **Page 38**)

For such outstanding work, Dossantos was given the "Outstanding Neighborhood Business" award at The 2012 Immigrant Learning Center Immigrant Entrepreneur Awards.



### Just the facts

#### MA and NY

States with double-digit employment increases projected in Warehousing and Storage

**32.4%**

Share of foreign-born entrepreneurs in Truck Transportation in New York

**59.3%**

Share of foreign-born entrepreneurs in Taxi and Limousine Service in Massachusetts

The two transportation sub-sectors with the highest percentage of foreign-born entrepreneurs are Taxi and Limousine Service and Bus Service and Urban Transit (62.8 percent and 29.9 percent, respectively). **Table 2** (page 10) shows the total number of workers and the number of foreign-born workers and entrepreneurs within these sub-sectors. Their outsize share in almost all of the transportation sub-sectors can be seen in **Graph 3** (page 6).

The presence of immigrant entrepreneurs in transportation industries in Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania is high, and projections for these states suggest substantial growth. **Table 3** (page 11) indicates that the majority of transportation industry sub-sectors are projected to grow although at different rates than reported for the nation. Projections for Warehousing and Storage show double-digit employment increases in Massachusetts and New York and around five percent in Pennsylvania. While Truck Transportation in New York shows a decline in employment projections, Pennsylvania shows an increase of nearly nine percent.

**Table 4** (page 11) indicates the number of foreign-born workers and entrepreneurs in the selected industries in these three states. In some cases, the percent of entrepreneurs who are foreign-born surpasses the proportion of foreign-born workers. In New York, immigrants make up 24.5 percent of workers in Truck Transportation, and they comprise almost one third (32.4 percent) of that sub-sector's entrepreneurs. Immigrants also comprise 85.6 percent of entrepreneurs in Taxi and Limousine Service in that state. In Massachusetts, 38.4 percent of workers in Taxi and Limousine Service are immigrants, but they comprise nearly 60 percent of entrepreneurs.

The high numbers of immigrant workers and entrepreneurs in the transportation industry, particularly in the Taxi and Limousine Service and Bus Service and Urban Transit sub-sectors, illustrate a vital involvement in urban daily life.

Far from simply taking us from place to place, the profiles of entrepreneurs in this chapter indicate these workers and entrepreneurs fulfill unmet needs such as transporting persons with disabilities, incubating spin-off industries like mobile advertising and supporting a host of industries that depend on transport.

While many of us today take transportation for granted, external factors such as population growth, a burgeoning older age group, urban sprawl and environmental concerns are driving growth in transportation sub-sectors. In particular, 74 million baby boomers are now moving into a new phase of life and will be looking for transportation alternatives. Most baby boomers continue to live in the suburbs and want to remain mobile. However, as they age they are less likely to drive their own vehicles and more likely to look for new transportation options. This will create opportunities for all transportation entrepreneurs, especially immigrant workers and entrepreneurs who already have a large presence in personal transportation.





## Hector Ricketts

Jamaica

Community Transportation  
Systems, Inc.  
New York, NY

More than seven million commuters use New York City's subways and buses every day. But getting a subway seat during rush hour is difficult, and not all areas of New York City are equally served.

Hector Ricketts noticed this need and saw it as an opportunity to create a business. So in the early 1990s, Community Transportation Systems, Inc. was born.

More than 40,000 commuters use Ricketts' fleet of 30 vans to get to and from work in Queens and other boroughs. With a focus on areas underserved by public transportation, Community Transportation Systems offers an affordable and necessary alternative. The vans also serve community groups, Visiting Nurses Association staff accessing New York's most remote points, and employees and customers at local malls like Green Acres.

Employing 35 drivers, Community Transportation Systems has also created opportunities for other entrepreneurs and businesses. For instance, Yogi's Restaurant in Jamaica, NY, serves Caribbean fare to the drivers while they wait for vehicle inspections. Yogi's now delivers more

than 200 meals throughout Jamaica daily. Ricketts' former secretary started a business to help drivers deal with regulatory agencies. Two young entrepreneurs run Hybrid Media, which uses Ricketts' commuter vans as mobile billboards with which businesses can reach ethnic enclaves.

Ricketts sees the value of his small business in the larger scheme. "We are providing jobs," he said. "We are getting people in our community to connections that get them to work on time. We're buying vans from [American car company] Ford, which keeps other workers employed. We use local mechanics. We buy gas at local gas stations. The restaurants we go to help stabilize the community. We support the tire shops [and] the insurance companies."

"It's a good feeling to know that when I'm gone there will be people going to work taking people to work," he said.



**Employing 35 drivers, Community Transportation Systems has also created opportunities for other entrepreneurs and businesses.**



## Data Tables for Select Transportation Industry Sub-Sectors

**Table 1**

**Economic Characteristics of Select Transportation Industry Sub-Sectors, United States**

Industry	Percent Change in Employment 2008-2018 <sup>1</sup>	2007 Revenue/Sales <sup>2</sup> (\$1000)	2009 Total Establishments <sup>3</sup>	2009 Establishments w/ 5 or More Employees <sup>3</sup>	Total Annual Payroll (\$1000) <sup>3</sup>
Truck Transportation	10.3%	\$217,833,458	109,911	39,415	\$50,735,525
Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation	12.8%	\$26,464,611	18,030	9,313	\$10,118,499
Taxi and Limousine Service	3.4%	\$5,913,946	7,243	2,425	\$1,465,107
Support Activities for Transportation	17.4%	\$86,596,320	41,358	18,954	\$25,917,339
Warehousing and Storage	12.3%	\$21,920,686	14,424	9,940	\$24,910,716
Bus Service and Urban Transit	15.6% <sup>4</sup>	\$15,368,575	6,758	4,311	\$6,663,942

Source: 1. National Employment Matrix, Bureau of Labor Statistics, accessed July 2011; 2. 2007 Economic Census, U.S. Census Bureau, accessed August 2011; 3. County Business Patterns: 2009, U.S. Census Bureau, accessed July, 2011. 4. This sector includes NAICS Codes 4851, 4854, and 4855; however, the National Employment Matrix did not report data for Code 4851 for the 2008 - 2018 projection. These codes are all counted in the databases for revenue, total establishments and payroll.

**Table 2**

**Presence of Immigrant Workers and Entrepreneurs in Select Transportation Industry Sub-Sectors, United States**

Industry	All Workers				Self-Employed			
	All	Native	Foreign-Born		All	Native	Foreign-Born	
			Number	Share of Total			Number	Share of Total
Truck Transportation	2,188,956	1,911,763	277,193	12.7%	395,706	327,421	68,285	17.3%
Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Taxi and Limousine Service	263,783	134,871	128,912	48.9%	92,433	34,385	58,048	62.8%
Services Incidental to Transportation	878,426	726,003	152,423	17.4%	74,959	60,209	14,750	19.7%
Warehousing and Storage	464,740	377,675	87,065	18.7%	11,467	10,152	1,315	11.5%
Bus Service and Urban Transit	626,222	531,029	95,193	15.2%	13,556	9,508	4,048	29.9%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample 2005-2009; this survey does not report data for "Transit and Ground Transportation."



## Data Tables for Select Transportation Industry Sub-Sectors

**Table 3**

**Projected Employment Growth in Select Transportation Industry Sub-Sectors, Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania**

	Massachusetts <sup>1</sup>	New York <sup>2</sup>	Pennsylvania <sup>3</sup>
Industry	Percent Change 2008-2018	Percent Change 2008-2018	Percent Change 2008-2018
Truck Transportation	0.9%	-12.4%	8.7%
Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation	4.3%	12.5%	5.2%
Taxi and Limousine Service	N/A	N/A	3.7%
Support Activities for Transportation	10.4%	-11.2%	5.1%
Warehousing and Storage	10.1%	12.2%	4.7%
Bus Service and Urban Transit	N/A	N/A	5.4%

Source: 1. The Massachusetts Industry-Occupation Employment Matrix, 2008-2018, the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) Data and Statistics, accessed September 2012; 2. New York State Department of Labor, Division of Research and Statistics; 3. Long-Term Industry Employment Projections, Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, Center for Workforce Information & Analysis (CWIA).

**Table 4**

**Presence of Immigrant Workers and Entrepreneurs in Select Transportation Industry Sub-Sectors, Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania**

Industry	Massachusetts			New York			Pennsylvania		
	All	Foreign-Born		All	Foreign-Born		All	Foreign-Born	
		Number	Share of Total		Number	Share of Total		Number	Share of Total
Truck Transportation									
Workers	24,003	3,315	13.8%	72,956	17,849	24.5%	95,476	3,633	3.8%
Self-Employed	3,418	495	14.5%	12,293	3,979	32.4%	14,474	766	5.3%
Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation									
Workers	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Self-Employed	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Taxi and Limousine Service									
Workers	9,130	3,506	38.4%	67,094	49,843	74.3%	9,261	2,188	23.6%
Self-Employed	2,596	1,539	59.3%	27,450	23,503	85.6%	2,550	995	39.0%
Bus Service and Urban Transit									
Workers	19,582	2,623	13.4%	114,851	33,454	29.1%	43,663	1,216	2.8%
Self-Employed	313	84	26.8%	1,185	770	65.0%	1,247	52	4.2%
Support Activities for Transportation									
Workers	14,195	2,219	15.6%	56,702	18,799	33.2%	26,685	1,445	5.4%
Self-Employed	1,311	258	19.7%	3,790	1,530	40.4%	2,229	12	0.5%
Warehousing and Storage									
Workers	6,669	1,509	22.6%	15,758	4,240	26.9%	24,643	2,443	9.9%
Self-Employed	214	45	21.0%	231	34	14.7%	478	16	3.3%

Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample 2005-2009



## Definitions

**Food Manufacturing** includes establishments that transform livestock and agricultural products into products for intermediate or final consumption.

**Fruit and Vegetable Preserving and Specialty Food Manufacturing (also referred to as Specialty Foods)** is a sub-set of Food Manufacturing and includes establishments that preserve foods by freezing, pickling, canning or dehydrating.

**Seafood Product Preparation and Packaging** is a sub-set of Food Manufacturing and is experiencing particularly high growth.

**Food and Beverage Stores** includes Grocery Stores, which sell general food products, and Specialty Food Stores.

**Groceries and Related Products and Merchant Wholesalers (also referred to as Food Wholesalers)** serve as intermediaries between food manufacturers and retail distributors.

**Restaurants and Other Food Services** includes full-service restaurants, limited-service eating places, special food services such as food service contractors, caterers and mobile food services, and drinking places.

Detailed descriptions with NAICS codes are available in Appendix B.

## Immigrant Entrepreneurs in

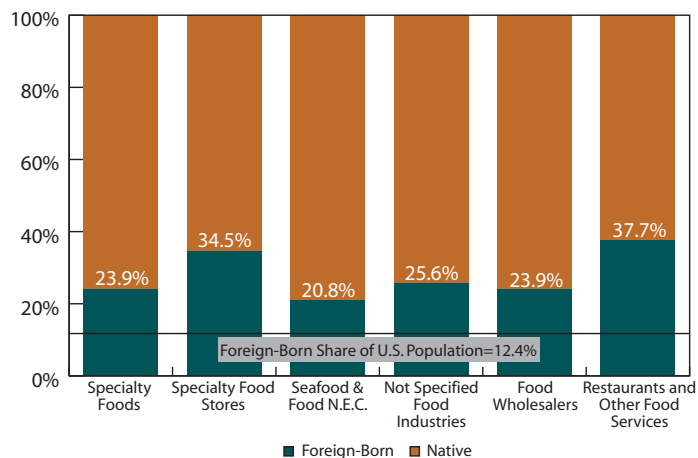
# Food-Related Industries

Food is one industry that touches every American. Trends in this industry impact Americans' health and quality of life. One area that has experienced significant growth is ethnic food (food that is typical of a style or region and characteristic of a particular culture). Ethnic food sales reached a record \$2.2 billion in 2009 and are projected to advance another 20 percent by 2014 according to Mintel industry research reports<sup>7</sup>. Growth of diverse populations, the reports state, has driven steady growth for ethnic foods since 2004. Mexican/Hispanic foods dominate, with a 62 percent share of ethnic food sales. The category's real growth-drivers are Asian and Indian foods, which grew 11 and 35 percent respectively between 2006 and 2008.

It is logical to assume that immigrants who bring knowledge of the foods of their native cultures are playing a large role in ethnic food businesses. Several studies and news reports suggest that food-related industries remain targets for immigrant entrepreneurs seeking to respond to emerging immigrant markets in the areas of production, distribution and retailing of ethnic or specialty foods. Unfortunately, ethnic food manufacturers and distributors are not identified in the data sources used in this report. They are embedded in larger sub-segments such as Food Manufacturing or Specialty Food Stores, which don't reflect the same impressive growth rates.

**Graph 4**

**Share of Self-Employed in Select U.S. Food-Related Industry Sub-Sectors: Foreign-Born and Native**



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample 2005-2009



## Klara Sotonova

Czechoslovakia

Founder,  
Klara's Gourmet Cookies  
Lee, MA

Klara Sotonova arrived from what was then Czechoslovakia in 1999 with the dream of opening an Eastern European restaurant in the Berkshires of Massachusetts where she settled. She did, indeed, open a business but it was far from her original plan. In fact, Klara's Gourmet Cookies happened quite by accident.

With a background in agriculture and accounting and a love of cooking, Sotonova often dreamed of running her own restaurant that served the foods of her homeland. One day, while baking traditional Czech vanilla walnut cookies for her husband, that dream changed. After eating an entire box her husband exclaimed, "These are the best cookies I've ever had. You should sell them!"

Sotonova and her husband started Klara's Gourmet Cookies, and the rich cookies were an easy sell. The start-up involved long days given that Sotonova could bake only two half-sheet trays at a time in the small oven she used in her home.

By 2009, demand for her cookies had grown by 20 percent, so Sotonova and her husband

bought an apartment building and remodeled the ground floor into a small factory. However, Sotonova was still only distributing in the Berkshires. Finding a food broker was the key.

Now in the second stage of development, although still self-financed, Klara's Gourmet Cookies are distributed to 120 specialty and high-end grocery stores across Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

"We are positioning the business to move into stage three: manufacturing and distribution, so we can have big, high-end chains such as Whole Foods and Roche Brothers carry our cookies," Sotonova said.

Although increased output would also mean enhancing the packaging, upping the shipping capacity and changing ingredients to boost shelf life, Sotonova is confident that the determination that brought the business to the threshold of high growth will see them through.



***Klara's Gourmet Cookies are distributed to 120 specialty and high-end grocery stores across Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia.***



## Just the facts

### \$2.2 trillion

Total revenues generated by food businesses in 2007

### Across all the food sub-sectors,

the percentage of foreign-born workers and entrepreneurs far surpasses immigrants' 12.4 percent of the total U.S. population.

### 31.4%

Share of foreign-born workers nationally in Specialty Foods

The industry taken as a whole is impressive. Together, these sub-sectors reported revenues totaling \$2.2 trillion in 2007, making this sector an important part of the American economy.

**Table 5** (page 18) shows the economic characteristics of selected food-related sub-sectors across the country. Specifically, it indicates the employment patterns for these sectors between 2008 and 2018, actual revenues in 2007, the total number of establishments in 2009 and those with five or more employees. From the table, significant growth is expected in Seafood Product Preparation and Packaging, Groceries and Related Products and Merchant Wholesalers, and Restaurants and Other Food Services, which collectively generated revenues of more than \$1.1 trillion in 2007.

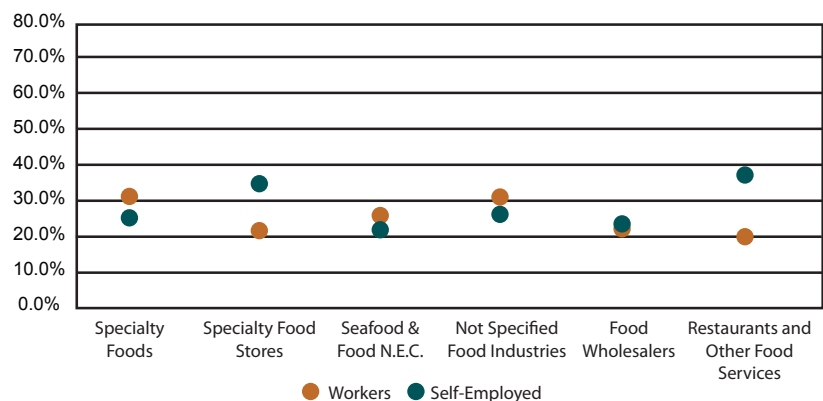
**Table 6** (page 18) shows the proportion of immigrant workers and entrepreneurs for sub-sectors in food-related industries. The Food Manufacturing sub-sectors and Food and Beverage Stores are the top two employers in the food-related sub-sectors. In addition, across all the sub-sectors, the percentage of foreign-born workers and entrepreneurs far surpasses immigrants' 12.4 percent of the total U.S. population (**Graph 4**, page 12).

**Graph 6** (page 16) shows that Specialty Foods Stores has 15,280 foreign-born entrepreneurs or 34.5 percent out of the 44,230 entrepreneurs in this sub-sector. Food Wholesalers as well as Specialty Food Stores have comparable percentages (22.7 percent and 22.2 percent respectively) of foreign-born workers in their workforces (**Graph 5**).

Although there is projected employment decline in some of the sub-sector industries in Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania, the Restaurants and Other Food Services sub-sector is expected to grow between 4.8 and 8.0 percent in these three states as **Table 7** (page 19) shows.

**Graph 5**

**Foreign-Born Share of Select U.S. Food-Related Industry Sub-Sectors as Workers and Entrepreneurs**





## Danilo Burgos

Dominican Republic

President, Owner and Operator,  
Grocery Store  
Philadelphia, PA

Small business owners can have a big impact. In the case of Danilo Burgos, the family-run grocery store he owns has served the Dominican community in Philadelphia, PA, for nearly a half-century. Burgos is a local leader among minority business owners in the city, helping them to grow and “green” their businesses.

Burgos began working in his parents’ grocery store at an early age like many other children of immigrant entrepreneurs. In so doing, he developed the business and social skills that enabled him to take over the business.

Since it opened its doors in 1967, the Burgos’ grocery store has helped remedy the shortage of food stores in its Philadelphia neighborhood where larger grocery chains refuse to locate. It provides what other local grocers and wholesalers do not: daily access to fresh produce and healthy, unprocessed foods. The Burgos’ store is part of a vanguard of small groceries and corner stores ably meeting the needs of local residents, which is why it has persevered for 45 years. More than just its produce, however, the Burgos’ grocery store provides residents with much-needed jobs. There is steady work available, and the prime, corner-store location is highly accessible.



Burgos directly helps other entrepreneurs as a member of several business associations and as president of the Philadelphia Dominican Grocers Association (PDGA). This association is a community of groceries and merchant wholesalers that is also a member of the Greater Philadelphia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. As president, Burgos actively ensures safe and healthy communities for residents as well as a healthy business environment: providing information-sharing and networking opportunities for business owners to garner the knowledge they need to maintain and grow their businesses. The PDGA has also made the green economy a priority, connecting business owners with other members of the Green Economy Task Force.

***The Burgos’ grocery store has helped remedy the shortage of food stores in its Philadelphia neighborhood where larger grocery chains refuse to locate.***



## Just the facts

### 4.8 to 8.0%

Expected growth in Restaurants and Other Food Services sub-sector in NY, MA and PA

### 51.6%

Share of foreign-born entrepreneurs in Specialty Food Stores in New York

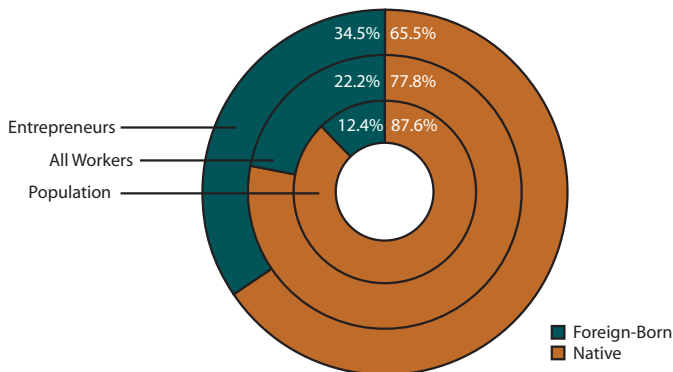
**Table 8** (page 19) shows that in Massachusetts one-third of all entrepreneurs in Specialty Food Stores are foreign-born. In fact, the share of immigrant workers and entrepreneurs in Massachusetts in most food sub-sectors exceeds their share of the population (**Graph 7**). This is surpassed in New York where 51.6 percent of all entrepreneurs in Specialty Food Stores are immigrants. Pennsylvania has a much lower immigrant entrepreneur rate in this sub-sector at 13.9 percent, which is still more than immigrants' share of the general population, and it has more enterprises in this category than Massachusetts.

The data show that this massive industry with more than \$2.2 trillion in 2007 revenue is powered in large part by immigrant workers and entrepreneurs. In fact, their outsized role relative to their share of population illustrates their importance in food-related industries from start to finish: food preservation to restaurant owners.

This outsized role underscores the fact that immigrant entrepreneurs in the food industry are leading the response to changing market demands, from ethnic foods to healthier fare. It is important to note too that they are leading the industry's job creation in areas like Restaurants and Other Food Services (New York) and Seafood and Other Miscellaneous Foods (Massachusetts and Pennsylvania), where their presence exceeds half of all those self-employed.

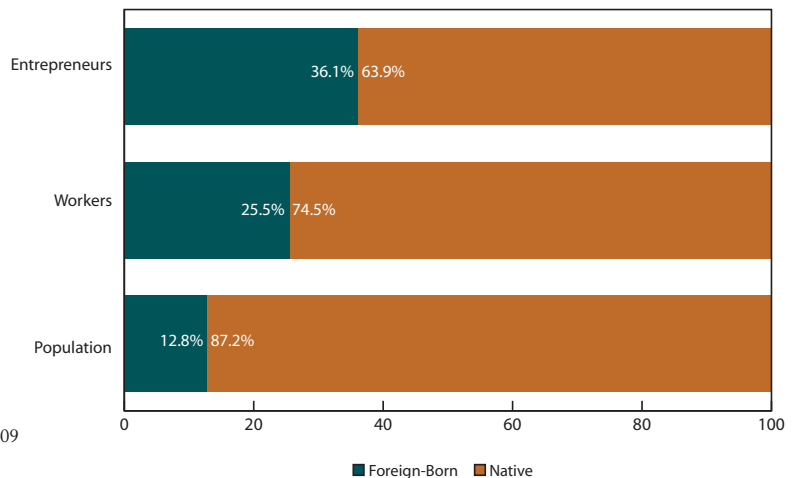
As job creators who respond quickly to market demands the data demonstrate that immigrant entrepreneurs in food-related industries are sustaining and diversifying a vital feature of American daily life.

**Graph 6**  
Presence of Immigrant Workers and Entrepreneurs in Specialty Food Stores, United States



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample 2005-2009

**Graph 7**  
Presence of Immigrant Workers and Entrepreneurs in Restaurants and Other Food Services, Massachusetts



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample 2005-2009





## Saul Ortez

El Salvador

Co-Founder and Owner,  
Pollo Royal  
Revere and Lynn, MA, and Charlotte, NC

Immigrant-owned businesses are very often a family affair.

Saul Ortez immigrated to Boston from El Salvador in 2002 with his wife and children and began working in an Italian restaurant like his brothers. Not long after, he, his brothers and cousins pooled their finances and started a corporation called Ortez Corp. to launch their own chain of restaurants.



From the beginning, they planned for growth. They tested recipes to find dishes that would be inexpensive and appeal to palates across the country.

In 2006, they opened the first Pollo Royal in Charlotte, NC, serving inexpensive chicken dishes. The first Massachusetts restaurant opened in Revere three years later. When they launched the Lynn, MA, location in 2012, they added “arroz and gandules” (rice and beans) to the menu to appeal to the local Dominican population. A second Charlotte restaurant also opened that year. Altogether, these four restaurants employ 45 people.

Focused on expansion, Ortez and his family launched a second corporation, International Solidarity Group, to buy wholesale foods more cheaply. The Group combines the

purchasing power of 30 food-related businesses across Massachusetts including businesses run by native-born Americans. According to Ortez, “Everyone is welcome to join us.”

This desire to reach out to others prompted Ortez to take English classes at The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. in Malden, MA, to more fully participate in his community. He attends local business association meetings and is involved with the Consulate of El Salvador in Boston to support his fellow Salvadorans.

Furthermore, Ortez sees his business as a service. He said, “Maybe we don’t make a lot of money, but we create jobs. I tell my children, ‘When you go to school, don’t take a job and work for someone else. Create your own and make jobs for other people.’”



***I tell my children, ‘When you go to school, don’t take a job and work for someone else. Create your own and make jobs for other people.’ ”***



## Data Tables for Select Food-Related Industry Sub-Sectors

**Table 5**

**Economic Characteristics of Select Food-Related Industry Sub-Sectors, United States**

Industry	Percent Change in Employment 2008-2018 <sup>1</sup>	2007 Revenue/Sales <sup>2</sup> (\$1000)	2009 Total Establishments <sup>3</sup>	2009 Establishments w/ 5 or More Employees <sup>3</sup>	Total Annual Payroll (\$1000) <sup>3</sup>
Food Manufacturing	-0.10%	\$589,725,614	24,731	16,658	\$52,897,633
Fruit and Vegetable Preserving and Specialty Food Manufacturing	-10.90%	\$60,704,784	1,629	1,277	\$6,563,169
Seafood Product Preparation and Packaging	10.10%	\$11,072,868	645	435	\$1,091,727
Food and Beverage Stores	-0.91%	\$539,207,574	145,229	69,852	\$58,295,500
Grocery Stores	0.50%	\$487,107,416	90,259	48,975	\$52,950,031
Specialty Food Stores	-17.20%	\$15,786,499	23,948	9,859	\$2,495,943
Groceries and Related Products and Merchant Wholesalers	11.8%	\$667,142,792	32,977	17,300	\$35,703,170
Restaurants and Other Food Services	7.7%	\$433,404,527	572,367	381,786	\$134,646,223

Source: 1. National Employment Matrix, Bureau of Labor Statistics, accessed July 2011; 2. 2007 Economic Census, U.S. Census Bureau, accessed August 2011; 3. County Business Patterns: 2009, U.S. Census Bureau, accessed July 2011.

**Table 6**

**Presence of Immigrant Workers and Entrepreneurs in Select Food-Related Industry Sub-Sectors, United States**

Industry	All Workers				Self-Employed			
	All	Native	Foreign-Born		All	Native	Foreign-Born	
			Number	Share of Total			Number	Share of Total
Food Manufacturing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Fruit and Vegetable Preserving and Specialty Foods	207,807	142,456	65,351	31.4%	2,321	1,767	554	23.9%
Seafood and Other Misc. Foods N.E.C.	237,605	175,590	62,015	26.1%	4,815	3,813	1,002	20.8%
Food and Beverage Stores	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Specialty Food Stores	327,452	254,747	72,705	22.2%	44,230	28,950	15,280	34.5%
Not Specified Food Industries	36,743	24,935	11,808	32.1%	849	632	217	25.6%
Groceries and Related Products and Merchant Wholesalers	1,037,992	802,079	235,913	22.7%	61,972	47,133	14,839	23.9%
Restaurants and Other Food Services	10,998,326	8,862,821	2,135,505	19.4%	471,309	293,580	177,729	37.7%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample 2005-2009



## Data Tables for Select Food-Related Industry Sub-Sectors

**Table 7**

**Projected Employment Growth in Select Food-Related Industry Sub-Sectors, Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania**

	Massachusetts <sup>1</sup>	New York <sup>2</sup>	Pennsylvania <sup>3</sup>
Industry	Percent Change 2008-2018	Percent Change 2008-2018	Percent Change 2008-2018
Food Manufacturing	-0.4%	-7.9%	-1.1%
Food and Beverage Stores	-2.1%	4.3%	-0.2%
Groceries and Related Products and Merchant Wholesalers	N/A	N/A	9.1%
Restaurants and Other Food Services	4.8%	8.0%	6.5%

Source: 1. The Massachusetts Industry-Occupation Employment Matrix, 2008-2018, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) Data and Statistics, accessed September 2012; 2. New York State Department of Labor, Division of Research and Statistics; 3. Long-Term Industry Employment Projections, Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, Center for Workforce Information & Analysis (CWIA).

**Table 8**

**Presence of Immigrant Workers and Entrepreneurs in Select Food-Related Industry Sub-Sectors, Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania**

Industry	Massachusetts			New York			Pennsylvania		
	All	Foreign-Born		All	Foreign-Born		All	Foreign-Born	
		Number	Share of Total		Number	Share of Total		Number	Share of Total
Fruit & Vegetable Preserving and Specialty Foods									
Workers	1,217	142	11.7%	8,648	1,671	19.3%	9,060	1,091	12.0%
Self-Employed	39	0	0.0%	102	0	0.0%	83	0	0.0%
Food and Beverage Stores									
Workers	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Self-Employed	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Specialty Food Stores									
Workers	8,331	1,812	21.8%	34,145	15,933	46.7%	17,208	1,773	10.3%
Self-Employed	687	229	33.3%	5,036	2,599	51.6%	2,223	309	13.9%
Seafood and Other Misc. Foods N.E.C.									
Workers	3,978	1,858	46.7%	6,870	310	4.5%	13,058	940	7.2%
Self-Employed	69	49	71.0%	1,951	50	2.6%	144	76	52.8%
Not Specified Food Industry									
Workers	611	287	47.0%	1,775	729	41.1%	1,638	181	11.1%
Self-Employed	12	0	0.0%	63	18	28.6%	32	0	0.0%
Groceries and Related Products and Merchant Wholesalers									
Workers	24,327	5,082	20.9%	62,010	18,379	29.6%	46,336	3,659	7.9%
Self-Employed	1,315	259	19.7%	6,220	2,308	37.1%	2,242	50	2.2%
Restaurants and Other Food Services									
Workers	231,725	58,985	25.5%	626,471	231,504	37.0%	440,559	36,029	8.2%
Self-Employed	11,874	4,286	36.1%	35,078	17,600	50.2%	20,489	5,064	24.7%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample 2005-2009



## Definitions

**Services to Buildings and Dwellings (Excluding Construction)** includes establishments in extermination and pest control services, janitorial services, landscaping services, carpet and upholstery cleaning services, and other services to buildings and dwellings such as building exterior cleaning services (except sandblasting), swimming pool cleaning and maintenance services, and drain and gutter cleaning services.

**Waste Management and Remediation Service** includes establishments engaged in local hauling of waste materials, operating materials recovery facilities, providing remediation services (cleaning up contaminated areas) and providing septic pumping and other miscellaneous waste management services.

Detailed descriptions with NAICS codes are available in Appendix B.

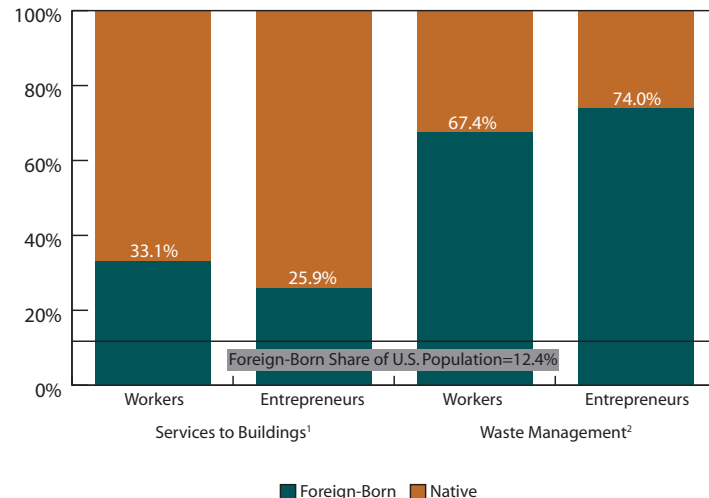
# Immigrant Entrepreneurs in Building Services

The building services industry is a good source of entry-level jobs for immigrants because they often do not require much English language skill. Many of these jobs are physically demanding or involve odd hours, overnight work and low pay. So, it is not surprising that many of these ambitious immigrants make the transition from worker to entrepreneur.

Across the U.S., Services to Buildings and Dwellings (Excluding Construction) and Waste Management and Remediation Service have significantly high projections for employment growth from 2008 to 2018 (18.2 percent and 25.2 percent respectively). **Table 9** (page 26) shows the economic characteristics of these sub-sectors. **Table 10** (page 26) and **Graph 8** show that the percentages of immigrants as workers and entrepreneurs far outweigh their 12.4 percent share of the total U.S. population. This is especially true of Waste Management and Remediation Service, where 67.4 percent of workers and 74.0 percent of entrepreneurs are foreign-born **Graph 9** (page 22).

**Graph 8**

**Share of Workers and Entrepreneurs in Select U.S. Building Services Industry Sub-Sectors: Foreign-Born and Native**



Source: 1. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample 2005-2009, 2. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample 2006-2010



## Albert Yousif

Iraq

Founder,  
A2Z Facility Maintenance, Inc.  
Detroit, MI

Albert Yousif's success as an entrepreneur is testament to his patient and diligent work ethic. An Iraqi refugee, Yousif started working for \$4.25 an hour and today runs his own million-dollar company.

"Whatever you want to do, learn all about it," Yousif said. "Start small and expand step by step. Keep yourself open to new opportunities. Educate yourself about the business environment around you and be patient."

Yousif began his life in America by working for Patterson Cleaning Company for \$4.25 an hour. Like many immigrants, he was willing to work hard and do well. His bosses noticed this and soon brought him into management to assist with the company's expansion. In 1995, Yousif bought the business for just \$8,500 when it was grossing only \$28,000 annually. By 2005, the company was renamed A2Z Facility Maintenance, had earned revenues of more than \$1 million and had grown from a staff of three to 35.

Yousif sought out new challenges and markets to expand his business. He began more complex cleaning services as well as minor repairs, snow plowing and landscaping.

With the expanded services came an expanded labor pool. A2Z Facility Maintenance provides work opportunities especially to immigrant newcomers who find a supportive environment to learn English, acquire skills and gain the confidence to live successfully in their new homeland.

The business' continued growth boosted Yousif's confidence, too. He bid for services with national retailers such as Bed Bath and Beyond, Petco and CVS/pharmacy through major nationwide contractors in Pennsylvania, New York, Florida and New Jersey.

These umbrella companies sub-contract with A2Z Facility Maintenance to provide particular services for national chains such as wood floor sanding, repair and installation across the Eastern Seaboard.

"This is a fast moving market," Yousif said. "It demands continuously assessing needs, expanding your services and getting known for excellent work."



***In 1995, Yousif bought the business for just \$8,500 when it was grossing only \$28,000 annually. By 2005, the company... earned revenues of more than \$1 million and had grown from a staff of three to 35.***



## Just the facts

### High job growth

is projected across the U.S. in Services to Buildings and Dwellings (Excluding Construction) and Waste Management and Remediation Service.

### 74.0% and 67.4%

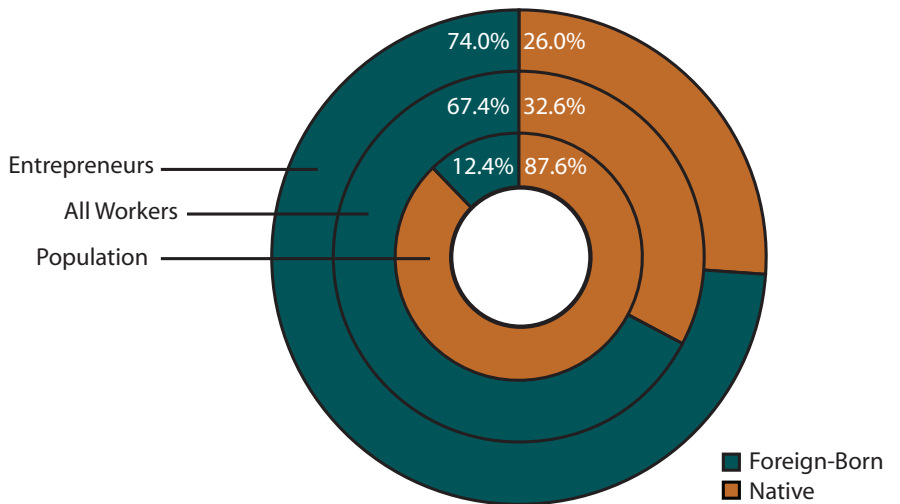
National share of immigrant entrepreneurs and workers, respectively, in Waste Management and Remediation Service

Establishments that provide services to buildings tend to serve either residential or commercial customers. Much of the growth in this sector comes from companies outsourcing building cleaning and maintenance to such establishments. Also, as the economy improves households are more likely to pay for residential cleaning and maintenance services.

Some of the growth in the Waste Management sub-sector is likewise driven by municipalities privatizing the collection and disposal of municipal waste, which continues to increase on a per capita basis. The scarcity of land for landfills and increasing environmental awareness fuel the need for existing companies to offer more services and new companies to form. No longer is waste merely dumped in landfills or incinerated. Additional services have emerged such as recycling, reclaiming, composting, waste-to-energy production and specialized services including hazardous waste, medical waste and e-waste handling. This sub-sector has perhaps the most direct involvement with the green economy.

Graph 9

Presence of Immigrant Workers and Entrepreneurs in Waste Management and Remediation Service, U.S.



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample 2006-2010



## Yadira Fragoso

Mexico

President,  
We Can Do It!  
Brooklyn, NY

Women who come to the U.S. with little education are often relegated to low-paying, demanding work. In order to have more control over their lives and to improve economically, these women strike out on their own as domestic workers doing cleaning or childcare.

One group of Latina immigrants in Brooklyn, NY, combined the independence of owning their own businesses with the strength of community. We Can Do It! is a cleaning cooperative founded in 2006 to create safe, living-wage jobs and educational opportunities for its members. There are 36 members and more waiting to join.

President Yadira Fragoso said, “It was a hard decision [to start my own business] because I was working as the manager of a restaurant. At first, cleaning did not seem like an improvement. But I was working 10 hours a day and had little time for my children. Now, as the owner of my own business, I make more money working fewer hours.”

Every member is the owner of her own business. Each pays a membership fee and receives 10 weeks of training, shared marketing services and standard contracts. Members vote on everything from pricing to advertising. As Fragoso explained, “It’s about a lot more than cleaning. I have learned how to manage a business, do publicity and how to make the business work.”

The cooperative benefits both the immigrant entrepreneurs and their clients. Having an up-front contract creates a standard of service and payment to which both parties agree. The clients also like that the entire fee goes directly to the women who perform the work.

From the beginning, We Can Do It! has been part of the green economy. To protect members from contact with toxic chemicals, they ask clients to provide only environmentally friendly products. Because the products are purchased and stored by clients, members are also educating the public about healthy alternatives. Plans are underway to develop their own non-toxic, all-purpose cleaner and wood polisher.



***We Can Do It!  
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There are 36  
members and  
more waiting to  
join.***



## Just the facts

### Immigrants

take on jobs in Building Services at three to five times their share of the U.S. population.

**44.8%**

Share of immigrant entrepreneurs in Services to Buildings and Dwellings in New York

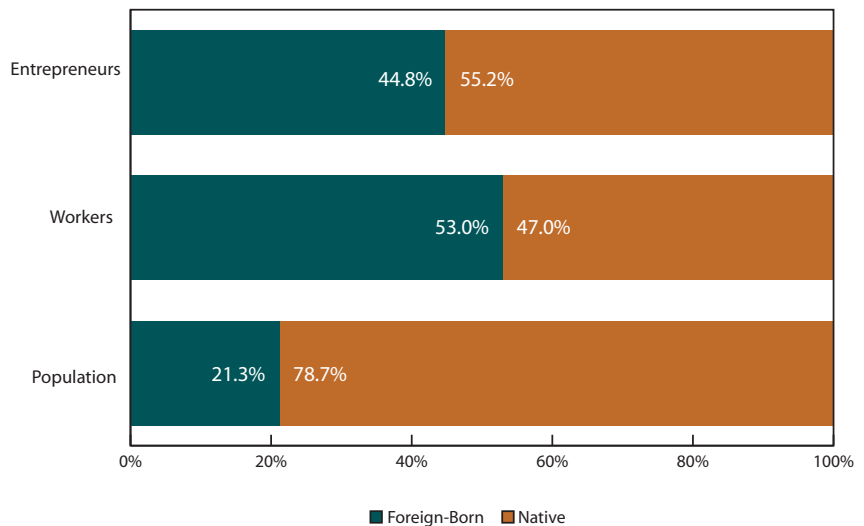
**Table 11** (page 27) shows anticipated employment growth for both sub-sectors in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. (Data for Services to Buildings and Dwellings in New York are not available.) Employment in Waste Management and Remediation Service in New York, like in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania, is projected to grow through 2018.

As seen in **Table 12** (page 27), almost half (46.3 percent) of all entrepreneurs in Services to Buildings and Dwellings in Massachusetts were foreign-born. This is similar to the 44.8 percent share of entrepreneurs in New York (**Graph 10**). Again, as in previous tables, the information in these tables shows a strong association between high proportions of foreign-born workers and immigrant entrepreneurs.

Much of the work done in the building services industry takes place behind the scenes and is often taken for granted. These workers would be sorely missed if they stopped as anyone who has experienced a garbage strike could attest. Immigrants make up a substantial portion of this workforce, taking on jobs that are often difficult and dangerous, at three to five times their share of the U.S. population. Also fueling this fast-growing industry as entrepreneurs, immigrants represent 25.9 percent in Services to Buildings and 74.0 percent in Waste Management.

**Graph 10**

**Presence of Immigrant Workers and Entrepreneurs in Services to Buildings and Dwellings, New York**



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample 2006-2010







## Data Tables for Select Building Services Industry Sub-Sectors

**Table 9**

**Economic Characteristics of Select Building Services Industry Sub-Sectors, United States**

Industry	Percent Change in Employment 2008-2018 <sup>1</sup>	2007 Revenue/Sales <sup>2</sup> (\$1000)	2009 Total Establishments <sup>3</sup>	2009 Establishments w/ 5 or More Employees <sup>3</sup>	Total Annual Payroll (\$1000) <sup>3</sup>
Services to Buildings and Dwellings (Excluding Construction)	18.2%	\$103,363,377	175,484	55,711	\$39,078,891
Waste Management and Remediation Service	25.2%	\$75,187,715	21,446	11,851	\$15,999,970

Source: 1. National Employment Matrix, Bureau of Labor Statistics, accessed July 2011; 2. 2007 Economic Census, U.S. Census Bureau, accessed August 2011; 3. County Business Patterns: 2009, U.S. Census Bureau, accessed July 2011.

**Table 10**

**Presence of Immigrant Workers and Entrepreneurs in Select Building Services Industry Sub-Sectors, United States**

Industry	All Workers				Self-Employed			
	All	Native	Foreign-Born		All	Native	Foreign-Born	
			Number	Share of Total			Number	Share of Total
Services to Buildings and Dwellings, Excluding Construction <sup>1</sup>	1,543,844	1,033,371	510,473	33.1%	389,862	288,948	100,914	25.9%
Waste Management and Remediation Service <sup>2</sup>	67,732	22,078	45,654	67.4%	4,129	1,073	3,056	74.0%

Source: 1. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample 2005-2009; 2. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample 2006-2010



## Data Tables for Select Building Services Industry Sub-Sectors

**Table 11**

**Projected Employment Growth in Select Building Services Industry Sub-Sectors, Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania**

	Massachusetts <sup>1</sup>	New York <sup>2</sup>	Pennsylvania <sup>3</sup>
Industry	Percent Change 2008-2018	Percent Change 2008-2018	Percent Change 2008-2018
Services to Buildings and Dwellings	11.0%	N/A	5.4%
Waste Management and Remediation Service	19.8%	11.7%	9.5%

Source: 1. The Massachusetts Industry-Occupation Employment Matrix, 2008-2018, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) Data and Statistics, accessed September 2012; 2. New York State Department of Labor, Division of Research and Statistics; 3. Long-Term Industry Employment Projections, Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, Center for Workforce Information & Analysis (CWIA).

**Table 12**

**Presence of Immigrant Workers and Entrepreneurs in Select Building Services Industry Sub-Sectors, Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania**

Industry	Massachusetts			New York			Pennsylvania		
	All	Foreign-Born		All	Foreign-Born		All	Foreign-Born	
		Number	Share of Total		Number	Share of Total		Number	Share of Total
Services to Buildings and Dwellings, Excl. Construction <sup>1</sup>									
Workers	33,781	17,832	52.8%	96,234	51,052	53.0%	54,799	6,030	11.0%
Self-Employed	8,081	3,744	46.3%	16,130	7,225	44.8%	10,973	1,143	10.4%
Waste Management and Remediation Service <sup>2</sup>	1,501	952	63.4%	4,923	3,163	64.2%	1,422	600	42.2%
Workers	1,450	932	64.3%	4,751	3,045	64.1%	1,416	600	42.4%
Self-Employed	51	20	39.2%	172	118	68.6%	6	0	0%

Source: 1. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample 2005-2009; 2. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample 2006-2010



## Voices from The Field

***The needs of the people in a community are a significant impetus for entrepreneurship. Businesses started by immigrant entrepreneurs respond to markets that have unmet consumer needs and demands.***

Five key themes emerged from interviews with immigrant entrepreneurs:

- Starting a business in select industries and market niches
- Tapping earlier experiences as a base for entrepreneurship
- Social commitment
- Access to capital and government resources
- Working with chambers of commerce

### **Starting a business in select industries**

The decision to start a business in a specific industry is generally the result of a professional or vocational interest. For example, several immigrant entrepreneurs interviewed for this study came from families with a penchant for cooking a particular cuisine, which was also in demand in their communities. For Jackie Gonzalez (La Lechonera Restaurant) and Jeanette Rodriguez (Las Delicias Restaurant) in Syracuse, NY, their culinary abilities and the readily available market prompted them to begin exploring the creation of formal establishments. Sayed Mohamed Nour moved to the United States out of necessity as a staff member of a wealthy political figurehead. Once here, he found a way to return to his roots as a farmer by starting a series of urban gardens in Charlestown, MA, thus filling an historical family niche as well as a community need.

The needs of the people in a community are a significant impetus for entrepreneurship. Businesses started by immigrant entrepreneurs respond to markets that have unmet consumer needs and demands. For example, restaurant owners provide food products, goods and services that meet the needs of specific ethnic groups. Two of the business owners interviewed are located in areas of Syracuse, NY, that were experiencing years of business flight and disinvestment. Jandi Restaurant and Mini-Market is one of the few “corner store” businesses serving a low-income, ethnic enclave. Businesses that are locally and independently owned, such as small immigrant-owned businesses, tend to be more responsive to the needs of the community



compared to larger chain stores. Perhaps most importantly, all of the businesses started by the immigrant entrepreneurs in this study hire local residents.

Immigrant entrepreneurs also appear ready to adapt to changing needs. Nilsa Gonzalez of Syracuse, NY, started a home-based sewing business and expanded to a dress shop in another building that she owned to cater to the changing needs of her clients. While operating the clothing store, the unmet needs of the residents in her neighborhood led her to shift the focus of the business from dress shop to mini-market. Over time, the growing demand for freshly prepared foods from the ingredients she sold in her mini-market prompted her again to expand her business, this time to include a restaurant called Jandi.

One crucial enabler of many of the immigrant-owned businesses interviewed is Goya Foods. Goya, which is also an immigrant-founded company, has been instrumental in helping immigrant-owned start-ups establish initial inventories and credit histories. It enters into agreements where business owners purchase Goya inventory on credit. When the account is paid, the business owners can continue purchasing additional inventory on credit. This type of business model seems effective especially with immigrant entrepreneurs interested in the restaurant and food service sectors.



### Tapping earlier experiences as a base for entrepreneurship

In a few cases, immigrant entrepreneurs were able to tap earlier business experiences and skills. Jeannette Rodriguez and her husband (Las Delicias Restaurant, Syracuse, NY), for example, had previously operated a mobile kiosk selling food to the public. Another interviewee operated a home-based business before opening several kinds of stores across the local region. Growing up in a family of caterers motivated Jackie Gonzalez (La Lechonera Restaurant, Syracuse, NY) to pursue opening a restaurant that served her culture's cuisine. Immigrant entrepreneurs in transportation tend to have been workers in this industry and thereby acquired the skills needed to start their own businesses. These kinds of earlier business experiences allowed the entrepreneurs to be confident in their success and to understand some of the basic requirements of starting and running a business.



***Comfort Care Resource Group provides free vouchers and fares, education support, and sponsorship of local food drives twice a year. These charitable activities are important to and a priority for the owner, Charles Mwangi.***

Experiences working with customers in different settings also represented a resource for immigrant entrepreneurs. Brian Salazar's particular work experience led to his establishing Entegra Development & Investment, LLC, in Andover, MA, a real estate company that helps other businesses to design green buildings and practices. Entegra provides technical assistance to engineers and architects working with building facilities.

A few immigrant entrepreneurs who were contacted had more formal education as the basis of establishing businesses. Sayed Mohamed Nour coupled the farming experience he garnered in his home country of Sudan with urban gardening classes he took in the U.S. to start food gardens in urban areas. This, however, was one of the few exceptions for the three industries examined in this report. According to Bahiya Cabral-Johnson, deputy director of the Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians in Philadelphia, some immigrants do not enter the workforce as employees because of the challenges they face finding a job in the U.S. (language and culture barriers, a lack of formal training or education, etc.). Instead, many choose to create their own businesses based on prior experience and avoid the potential barriers to success in the existing U.S. workforce.

#### **Social commitment**

There is a strong social commitment among the immigrant entrepreneurs in this study. For example, Comfort Care Resource Group, a medical transportation business in Woburn, MA, provides free vouchers and fares, education support, and sponsorship of local food drives twice a year. These charitable activities are important to and a priority for the owner, Charles Mwangi, who was born in Kenya. This sentiment was shared across the board with the business owners interviewed. Also responding to community needs, the food and restaurant businesses profiled in this study provide community members with easy access to ethnic foods. In the absence of some of these businesses, residents would have to travel a significant distance for a grocery store or restaurant that specializes in their cuisine.

A concern of some of the entrepreneurs is the disconnection between their roles as economic contributors to their neighborhoods and their lack of participation in policy or bigger government initiatives regarding community economic development. A number of them would like to play a more significant role in the neighborhood revitalization and economic development initiatives in their areas but are often not informed of meetings, public hearings or other events. They also expressed a desire to connect with residents and others through support of civic activities. The researchers discovered through the interviews that existing civic and business associations may not be encouraging participation of "newcomers" to their activities.



### Access to capital and government resources

Most of the immigrant entrepreneurs relied on personal savings or money from family and friends to fund their businesses. Only a few of them used banks or credit unions, and none relied on government resources or tapped federal or city business programs and loan funds. In the cases where immigrant entrepreneurs utilized a bank, it was more happenstance than not. Jackie Gonzalez of La Lechonera Restaurant in Syracuse, NY, used a local bank for financing in addition to personal savings because she had a prior financial relationship with that particular bank. The researchers talked to a number of business owners who were able to work with immigrant-entrepreneur-focused organizations to get discounts on products or micro-loans for equipment, such as Accion USA and Goya Foods.

Financial institutions might be more open to working with entrepreneurs after a business has been established and has been operating for a period of time, according to representatives from the immigrant organizations interviewed. In terms of start-up funding, however, it appears immigrant entrepreneurs in the selected industries are isolated from the banks. Obtaining outside capital was a problem for some entrepreneurs because lenders were unwilling to support them without a track record or collateral. However, there are a number of small, community banks that are beginning to move toward facilitation of start-up capital for immigrant entrepreneurs, particularly those in green industries. For example, Eastern Bank of Massachusetts recently opened a branch in Lawrence, MA, a city with a large immigrant population.

Without personal savings, many immigrant-owned small businesses could not have been started. Brian Salazar of the real estate company Entegra Development & Investment, LLC, in Andover, MA, was unable to obtain a small business loan so he started his business with \$20,000 of he and his partner's personal savings. In addition to a lack of access to small business loans, Salazar was also unable to apply for immigrant or minority-owned business status because his partner, who was not an immigrant, had the majority stake in the business. Pedro Arce, vice president of Eastern Bank's Business Banking Group, said available funding or resources are oriented toward bigger businesses versus the smaller ones immigrants tend to establish. It is partly for this reason that many family businesses are started by immigrants, according to several of the entrepreneurs interviewed. In addition to personal capital, many immigrant entrepreneurs count on their family networks to help finance their businesses.

In many cases, government resources are available to immigrant entrepreneurs, but they are not being utilized. One reason for this is a

***Obtaining outside capital was a problem for some entrepreneurs.... However, there are a number of small, community banks that are beginning to move toward facilitation of start-up capital for immigrant entrepreneurs, particularly those in green industries.***



lack of familiarity with existing business development, financing and/or technical assistance resources. Some government entities do not place much emphasis on funding outreach to immigrant communities or translation and interpretation services. Therefore, these entrepreneurs may not have benefited from any outreach initiatives on the part of government agencies and programs with business resources.

Arce, who grew up in Ecuador, mentioned that financial literacy is critical for immigrant entrepreneurs starting businesses in a new country. However, he also noted that many financial literacy and business assistance programs are not tailored to immigrants. This was echoed by representatives of workforce development organizations working with immigrant entrepreneurs. There is high demand for these programs, but the capacity is often limited as most of these agencies are small, not-for-profit development organizations or community development corporations.

### **Working with chambers of commerce**

While familiar with local chambers of commerce, only a few immigrant entrepreneurs interviewed are chamber members. Interviewees were concerned that their local chambers had not done enough to reach new business owners as potential members. Jackie Gonzalez who runs La Lechonera Restaurant in Syracuse, NY, recalled receiving a perfunctory “good luck” letter from the local chamber when she opened her business. It was the first and last chamber correspondence that she received. Others identified the high cost of membership as an obstacle to joining chambers of commerce. In many instances, there is a standard cost of joining the chamber regardless of business size, which is prohibitive for small and new businesses with few employees. For these reasons, some business owners are involved with ethnicity-based or neighborhood-based business associations and others with smaller, community-based local and independent business associations.

Entrepreneurs expressed a strong interest in working more closely with local chambers and becoming more aware of the resources and networks available. The few immigrant entrepreneurs who reported membership in local chambers of commerce voiced that networking opportunities are an incentive for membership. Some local chambers seem to be actively trying to reach out to immigrant entrepreneurs but simply do not know how.





***Immigrant-owned small businesses can play vital roles in larger systems of green practices. Simple habits like recycling grease and cooking oil can have implications for bigger businesses here and abroad.***

## Immigrant Entrepreneurs — in the — Green Economy

Many reports and studies acknowledge the growing presence and impact of immigrants in high-tech and energy industry sectors on the emerging green economy. One report concludes that “it should come as no surprise that immigrants will help drive the green revolution. America’s young scientists and engineers, especially the ones drawn to emerging industries like alternative energy, tend to speak with an accent. The 2000 Census found that immigrants, while accounting for 12 percent of the population, made up nearly half of the all scientists and engineers with doctorate degrees. Their importance will only grow. Nearly 70 percent of the men and women who entered the fields of science and engineering from 1995 to 2006 were immigrants.”<sup>8</sup>

While this is an important observation, it implies that the impact of immigrants on the green economy is limited to high-tech and solar energy industries. The combined effect of day-to-day business practices of small and growing businesses can be just as significant. Therefore, the term “green economy” as used in this report refers to any technology or technique that produces or uses cleaner energy as well as cleaner production processes and services that reduce environmental impact or improve natural resource use.

Using this definition, it appears that immigrant businesses are currently having some effect, and the potential exists for significant impact if they are brought into the conversation about green practices. This led to another line of inquiry in the research interviews focusing on information or knowledge about the green economy and particularly on the entrepreneurs’ understanding of this idea. Through interviews with immigrant business owners about their quests to go green, exemplary practices as well as hurdles were identified.

Interviews with immigrant business owners in the three non-tech industries covered in this report were guided by the following questions:

- Are immigrant business owners looking to the green economy as an opportunity and, if so, how?
- What kinds of obstacles need to be overcome, according to the interviewees, for growing their businesses into green businesses?



***These entrepreneurs firmly believe the kinds of businesses they have started can make significant contributions to growing local green economies through product recycling, food waste recycling, retrofitted lighting, waste management, upgraded heating and air conditioning systems, and better insulation.***

- Is there awareness about potential assistance government-based or otherwise in greening one's business?

### **Going green as a good business practice**

There were several instances where immigrant entrepreneurs have successfully embraced green practices as good business practices to help them be more efficient and save money. These entrepreneurs were aware that green business practices meant lower costs for conducting business-related operations. For example, all of the business owners interviewed in New York upgraded their lighting to energy-efficient light bulbs. Two of those business owners touted the social and economic importance of an energy audit. Some of the restaurant owners recycle cardboard boxes.

Most notably, a host of green initiatives adopted by the bakery swissbakers proved to be not only money savers but also exemplary practices. Thomas and Helene Stohr, who were born in Switzerland, were given a Green Business Award for their copious green initiatives by the Town of Reading, MA, where swissbakers is based. These included motion sensor LED lights in the bathrooms, printers with eco-friendly toner cartridges and high-mileage vehicles for delivery and transport. Swissbakers suspended all paper-based mailings and promotions with customers, investors and the public in favor of a strict electronic communication policy. It also adopted green sales incentives that proved to be popular with customers (see page 35).

With exemplary practices such as these, immigrant-owned small businesses can play vital roles in larger systems of green practices. Simple habits like recycling grease and cooking oil can have implications for bigger businesses here and abroad. Three of the restaurant owners in New York, Jeanette Rodriguez (Las Delicias Restaurant), Jackie Gonzalez (La Lechonera Restaurant) and Nilsa Gonzalez (Jandi Restaurant and Mini-Market), sell their used oil to Buffalo BioDiesel, Inc., which was locally owned and operated before being acquired by HydroGenetics in 2009. Buffalo BioDiesel sells used biodiesel and yellow grease for the production of recycled biodiesel to companies in the U.S. and abroad. This pipeline contribution from smaller, immigrant-owned businesses to much larger energy companies shows the important role these small businesses can play in the green economy. In another instance, the Philadelphia Dominican Grocery Association is a member of the Green Economy Task Force, which was convened by the Sustainable Business Network of Philadelphia in February 2008. The task force is a coalition of more than 300 groups including business, job training, organized labor, environmental policy, government and community groups. These 300 groups can potentially benefit from the green practices of the small Dominican groceries through their direct connection to them.



## Thomas and Helene Stohr

Switzerland

Founders,  
swissbakers,  
Reading, MA

“When you think of Switzerland, what comes to mind?” asked Thomas Stohr who, along with his wife Helene, founded swissbakers bakery.

“Banks, cheese, watches and chocolates. Switzerland is landlocked. We have no natural resources. So today we just do what we grew up doing. We’re used to being very frugal with resources.”

So goes the rationale behind the copious green business practices employed by swissbakers, a popular bakery in Reading, MA, that employs between 18 and 45 crew members depending on the season. These green initiatives had to pass a filter, according to Stohr, of whether they were “grandchild-sustainable.” They include LED lights throughout the building, motion sensors in the bathrooms, compostable utensils, recycled copy paper, eco-friendly toner cartridges, high-mileage vehicles and a strict electronic communication policy. Green sales incentives proved popular with swissbakers’ “guests” who get a free pastry when they bring in a reusable swissbakers shopping bag.

These grandchild-sustainable practices are even more important as swissbakers expands. Today, yearly growth is around 25 percent. When their new 14,000-square-foot outlet in Allston, MA, opened in February 2013, the Stohrs added 30 crew members and anticipated revenue growth of 200 percent.





***Knowing the environmental hazards inherent in auto repair and transport and concerned about the kind of environment in which his children and grandchildren would grow up, Dossantos instituted environmentally supportive changes to his business.***

### **Building the local economy**

Connections to surrounding businesses were also important for the interviewees, who made strong correlations between green business practices, such as recycling cooking oil and cardboard, and supporting the local economy. Many business owners associated their purchasing of materials and products from other locally and independently owned businesses as a green initiative that would help to build the local economy.

Cape Verde native Larry Dossantos, who runs 912 Auto Center and a car rental business in Dorchester, MA, also emphasizes green business practices that support his neighborhood in various ways. Knowing the environmental hazards inherent in auto repair and transport and concerned about the kind of environment in which his children and grandchildren would grow up, Dossantos instituted environmentally supportive changes to his business such as eco-friendly paints and a rooftop garden over his garage. He also leads green initiatives in his community. Dossantos built community gardens for young people to enjoy where they can get hands-on experience in building their own green economy.

### **High cost and lack of government assistance**

Ideas on going green and playing a role in sustaining the local economy like those above came from many of the non-tech immigrant business owners interviewed for this report. These entrepreneurs firmly believe the kinds of businesses they have started can make significant contributions to growing local green economies through product recycling, food waste recycling, retrofitted lighting, waste management, upgraded heating and air conditioning systems, and better insulation. However, the majority of interviewees, while brimming with ideas and the strong desire to pursue green business initiatives, found even the simplest practices like recycling could be cost-prohibitive. For instance, trash and recycling permits often cost the same for small businesses as for larger corporations within a municipality. The same is true for composting services, which could potentially be offset by local or state governments. Thus, some business owners offered specific ideas about how the government could play a more helpful role in growing and sustaining their businesses within a green economy context. Assistance with utility and recycling costs was a primary area of concern especially as states are considering and adopting regulations in these two areas.

### **Awareness of services**

The prohibitively high cost of going green is especially an issue if the business owners are not aware of efficient, low-cost greening techniques. Charles Mwangi, who is originally from Kenya and runs a transportation company in Woburn, MA, lamented that there was not enough information and technical assistance to immigrant entrepreneurs interested in green practices. Given



## Larry Dossantos

Cape Verde

Founder and owner,  
912 Auto Center,  
Dorchester, MA

Larry Dossantos loves his neighborhood as much as the cars he restores. Owner of 912 Auto Center and a car rental business in Dorchester, MA, Dossantos began to research the environmental impact of his business and realized the tremendous negative effect auto body shops have on the surroundings.

“I think of the kids,” he said. “I want a better future for them than what we have now. A healthier future. My kids motivate me to do all of the sustainability initiatives I do.”

These initiatives include using less toxic car paints, going paperless, using LED lights, recycling, improving the ventilation in his facility and designing a rooftop garden above his garage to better insulate the building and manage runoff.

Almost immediately, Dossantos noticed an improvement in the quality of the work environment for his employees. Customers were enthusiastic about the changes and appreciated his sustainable business.

“They’re thinking, ‘there is somebody in our community trying to do something better not just for themselves and their bottom line but for the neighborhood in general.’”

Dossantos did not stop there. In addition to making a better environment for the children, he started community gardens where the neighborhood children could learn about green practices for themselves.





***The majority of immigrant entrepreneurs interviewed are not part of networks involved in the development of green programs including outreach, education or policy-making.***

this void, one immigrant entrepreneur from Haiti, Journal Joseph, established Wattage Watchers and Energy Fit, a consulting firm to assist small businesses and micro-enterprises on saving energy and going green.

What is clear is that the majority of immigrant entrepreneurs interviewed are not part of networks involved in the development of green programs including outreach, education or policy-making. However, there are some emerging practices that can be replicated. For example, business owner Nilsa Gonzalez of New York stated that her business, Jandi Restaurant and Mini-Market, recycles cardboard and uses energy-efficient light bulbs. She pays a private company to recycle the cardboard. Through an agreement with Buffalo Biodiesel, the business recycles cooking oil. With this partnership, Jandi is paid a fixed fee for the used cooking oil that it provides to the biodiesel company. Typically, the cost savings are seen as “value-added” for these efforts. In another case, a successful model has been instituted in both the Greater Boston Area and Philadelphia with local Sustainable Business Networks (from which many of the immigrant entrepreneurs were identified for this study) to empower small, locally and independently owned businesses to green their business while saving much-needed capital for future growth of the businesses.

Yet, as Brianna Sandoval of The Food Trust in Philadelphia, PA, said, “The green economy has not touched small business yet.” While she believes that the green economy “means opportunities, including opportunities for jobs” and reducing energy costs, information is not available to small businesses on how to capture that opportunity. Furthermore, there may be up-front costs for small businesses to move toward more green practices.

As noted by Founder of Wattage Watchers and Energy Fit Journal Joseph, “Most energy efficiency programs appear too sophisticated for average citizens or neighborhood small business owners. The situation for senior citizens, immigrants and those in lower socioeconomic groups is even more problematic. With limited resources and less technological exposure and proficiency, these small businesses, micro enterprises and citizens in local communities have not been responsive and may have been overlooked as key components in all new, energy-based initiatives or efforts to reverse the trend of climate change or reduce energy consumption. As a result, many urban families and small businesses view energy efficiency as a slogan or perhaps as a luxury for those who have the resources and connections to make a difference.”

## Conclusion and Recommendations

This study documents the strong presence of immigrant entrepreneurs and workers in mid- to high-growth sectors of transportation, food-related industries and services to buildings. Immigrants are over-represented in these sectors in relation to their share of the total population.

The profiles suggest that immigrant entrepreneurs fill underserved niche markets. Rather than competing with native businesses, immigrant-owned businesses often expand the markets. In fact, they are “value added” in the array of products and services made available to Americans.

A related story is the importance of immigrant entrepreneurs in the development of the green economy. The immigrant entrepreneurs in the industry sub-sectors covered in this report can be key players in encouraging smaller businesses to assist in the expansion of the green economy.

These findings call for increased recognition of the vital economic and social contributions made by immigrant entrepreneurs and lead to recommendations aimed at expanding business opportunities for immigrant entrepreneurs in the selected sectors:

- Increase start-up and business operations capital for immigrant entrepreneurs in these areas. This may mean that local small business development centers, economic development agencies and Small Business Administration regional offices will need to develop outreach and marketing strategies to engage these entrepreneurs. Enhanced education and outreach is necessary to connect with entrepreneurs not commonly reached.
- Include more immigrant entrepreneurs in business associations and local chambers of commerce. These organizations could implement programs that recruit immigrant business owners. Working with the informal neighborhood associations mentioned in this report could prove beneficial.
- Develop strategies for building bridges between sustainable community organizations and immigrant small business owners.
- Inform and train immigrant entrepreneurs in greening their businesses. Organizations involved in promoting the green economy through education, mentoring, technical assistance and business advising must take the lead.

Further research can examine the economic importance of immigrant businesses in these growing industries especially in other states with significant immigrant populations.

The interviews with the immigrant entrepreneurs suggest that there are important social contributions being made that can be considered a level of social entrepreneurship. As Gross and Nelson (2012) say, when a local need is met it strengthens local capacity and generates social and community capital. This can lead to mixing commercial and social values, priorities, and organization frameworks of not-for-profit and for-profit enterprises. Further exploration of these concepts is needed. Such exploration can be supported by case studies of locales where deliberate strategies to support immigrant entrepreneurs have been undertaken such as New York City and Washington State.

This report and these recommendations are aimed at further understanding the contributions of immigrant entrepreneurs in the sectors examined. They also suggest strategies for taking advantage of these contributions, which benefits all Americans.

## Appendix A: Methodology

The research team reviewed a range of national and state economic data and Census data to compile basic information about selected business sectors considered non-high-tech and where the presence of immigrant entrepreneurs might be significant. The research team accessed and reviewed the American Community Survey (ACS)/Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) National Employment Matrix, the U.S. Census Bureau 2007 Economic Census and U.S. Census Bureau County Business Patterns: 2009 to highlight the presence of immigrant entrepreneurs in some industry sectors and sub-sectors.

The BLS National Employment Matrix was used to collect information about job projections for various years. Revenue and sales data are based on information reported in the 2007 Economic Census. The source for information and data about the number of employees paid in particular categories is based on the 2009 County Business Patterns and Statistics of U.S. Businesses (SUSB) 2008 annual data.

State workforce and labor departments based in Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania were contacted for information about these states. Data about the number and proportion of foreign-born workers in these industries as well as information about self-employed individuals are based on findings reported in the ACS/PUMS 2005-2009. Note that margins of error are not reported in this survey but are available for summarized tables generated by the U.S. Census Bureau and can be found at American FactFinder (<http://factfinder2.census.gov>).

Owing to the nature and limitations of surveys, including response rates, the ACS may truncate or combine some industry titles that can be slightly different than some titles used by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data collected from individuals, versus firms, may or may not generate enough data to merit reporting that specific sector. Therefore, a general category is used. For example, the ACS/PUMS 2005-2009 does not report data specifically for NAICS industry code 485 Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation (a sub-sector reported by other sources throughout the report). However, it does report code 485M Bus Service and Urban Transit, which encompasses data for code 485 among others. See ACS/PUMS 2005-2009 Data Dictionary's legend [http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/data\\_documentation/pums/DataDict/PUMSDict05\\_09.pdf](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/data_documentation/pums/DataDict/PUMSDict05_09.pdf)

The research team conducted 35 interviews with individuals, mostly immigrant business owners, listed in Appendix C. The selection process was informal and based on a reputational approach using representatives of industry sectors and associations. Individuals representing organizations such as the Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians, Entrepreneur Works, Accion USA and Eastern Bank were also interviewed. Immigrant entrepreneurs come from a range of countries including Italy, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Somalia, Peru, Ecuador, India, Kenya, Mexico, Cape Verde, Dominican Republic, Vietnam and Yemen. Interviewees were selected in three waves. First, in addition to literature reviews, members of the research team conducted a content analysis of news reports identifying and reporting information about immigrant entrepreneurs in the selected industry sectors for Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania. Review of deliberations at various public forums about immigration and immigrants' economic contributions were also utilized as sources for identification of potential interviewees. A second wave involved contacts with local chambers of commerce or business associations or community-based organizations to identify potential interviewees. The third wave involved early interviewees being asked to identify other immigrant entrepreneurs in the selected industry sectors. While not structured, interviews were in-



depth and conducted in person or by telephone between August 2011 and March 2012. The research team queried immigrant entrepreneurs about how they first became involved in their particular businesses and how their businesses have evolved through the different phases of business growth. They were asked about the kinds of experiences or skills that facilitated the establishment of their businesses. Interviewees were also asked about any contributions to local economies that they felt could be associated with their businesses. Another set of questions focused on immigrant entrepreneurs' familiarity with government programs or resources for assisting in the growth of their businesses. Along this line, researchers wanted to know if the business owners had access to capital resources and, if not, if the lack thereof represented an obstacle to growing their businesses.

Also discussed was the perceived or actual accessibility by immigrant entrepreneurs to local business associations and if they interacted with local chambers of commerce or boards of trade. The researchers wanted to know about the kinds of resources that these organizations might be providing to business owners. Finally, another line of inquiry focused on information or knowledge about the green economy, in particular the entrepreneurs' understanding of this idea. Are they looking at the green economy as an opportunity and, if so, how? What kinds of obstacles need to be overcome for growing their businesses as green businesses? Lastly, is there awareness about any potential assistance government-based or otherwise in greening one's business?

## Appendix B: 2007 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), U.S. Census Bureau

The industry data presented in this report are segmented based on 2007 NAICS Codes. More recently (January 2012), 2012 NAICS Codes were released by the Bureau of the Census. The 2012 Codes list fewer industries due to title changes and collapsing some industry categories. See [www.census.gov/eos/www/naics](http://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics).

**Truck Transportation:** Industries in the Truck Transportation sub-sector provide over-the-road transportation of cargo using motor vehicles such as trucks and tractor trailers. The sub-sector is subdivided into general freight trucking and specialized freight trucking. This distinction reflects differences in equipment used, type of load carried, scheduling, terminal and other networking services. General freight transportation establishments handle a wide variety of general commodities, generally palletized and transported in a container or van trailer. Specialized freight transportation is the transportation of cargo that, because of size, weight, shape or other inherent characteristics, require specialized equipment for transportation.

Each of these industry groups is further subdivided based on distance traveled. Local trucking establishments primarily carry goods within a single metropolitan area and its adjacent non-urban areas. Long-distance trucking establishments carry goods between metropolitan areas. The Specialized Freight Trucking industry group includes a separate industry for Used Household and Office Goods Moving. The household and office goods movers are separated because of the substantial network of establishments that has developed to deal with local and long-distance moving and the associated storage. In this area, the same establishment provides both local and long-distance services, while other specialized freight establishments generally limit their services to either local or long-distance hauling. (NAICS Code: 484)

**Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation:** Industries in the Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation sub-sector include a variety of passenger transportation activities such as urban transit systems; chartered bus, school bus and interurban bus transportation; and taxis. These activities are distinguished based primarily on such production process factors as vehicle types, routes and schedules.

In this sub-sector, the principal splits identify scheduled transportation as separate from non-scheduled transportation. The scheduled transportation industry groups are Urban Transit Systems, Interurban and Rural Bus Transportation, and School and Employee Bus Transportation. The non-scheduled industry groups are the Charter Bus Industry and Taxi and Limousine Service. The Other Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation industry group includes both scheduled and non-scheduled transportation.

Scenic and sightseeing ground transportation services are not included in this sub-sector but are included in Sub-sector 487, Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation. Sightseeing does not usually involve place-to-place transportation; the passengers' trip starts and ends at the same location. (NAICS Code: 485)

**Taxi and Limousine Services:** This industry comprises establishments primarily engaged in providing passenger transportation by automobile or van, not operated over regular routes and on regular schedules. Establishments of taxicab owner/operators, taxicab fleet operators or taxicab

organizations are included in this industry. Limousine services comprise establishments primarily engaged in providing an array of specialty and luxury passenger transportation services via limousine or luxury sedans generally on a reserved basis. These establishments do not operate over regular routes and on regular schedules. (NAICS Code: 4853)

**Services Incidental to Transportation:** Industries in the Support Activities for Transportation sub-sector provide services which support transportation. These services may be provided to transportation carrier establishments or to the general public. This sub-sector includes air traffic control services, marine cargo handling and motor vehicle towing. The Support Activities for Transportation sub-sector includes services to transportation but is separated by type of mode serviced. The Support Activities for Rail Transportation industry includes services to the rail industry (e.g., railroad switching and terminal establishments). (NAICS Code: 488)

**Warehousing and Storage:** Industries in the Warehousing and Storage sub-sector are primarily engaged in operating warehousing and storage facilities for general merchandise, refrigerated goods and other warehouse products. These establishments provide facilities to store goods. They do not sell the goods they handle. These establishments take responsibility for storing the goods and keeping them secure. They may also provide a range of services, often referred to as logistics services, related to the distribution of goods. Logistics services can include labeling, breaking bulk, inventory control and management, light assembly, order entry and fulfillment, packaging, pick and pack, price marking and ticketing, and transportation arrangement. However, establishments in this industry group always provide warehousing or storage services in addition to any logistic services. Furthermore, the warehousing or storage of goods must be more than incidental to the performance of services, such as price marking. Bonded warehousing and storage services and warehouses located in free trade zones are included in the industries of this sub-sector. (NAICS Code: 493)

**Bus Service and Urban Transit Systems:** This industry group comprises establishments primarily engaged in operating local and suburban passenger transit systems over regular routes and on regular schedules within a metropolitan area and its adjacent non-urban areas. Such transportation systems involve the use of one or more modes of transport including light rail, commuter rail, subways and streetcars as well as buses and other motor vehicles; school and employee-based transportation; and the charter bus industry. (NAICS Codes: 4851, 4854, 4855)

**Food Manufacturing:** Industries in the Food Manufacturing sub-sector transform livestock and agricultural products into products for intermediate or final consumption. The industry groups are distinguished by the raw materials (generally of animal or vegetable origin) processed into food products. The food products manufactured in these establishments are typically sold to wholesalers or retailers for distribution to consumers. However, establishments primarily engaged in retailing bakery and candy products made on the premises not for immediate consumption are included. Establishments primarily engaged in manufacturing beverages are classified in Sub-sector 312, Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing. (NAICS 311)

**Fruit and Vegetable and Preserving and Specialty Foods Manufacturing:** This industry group includes (1) establishments that freeze food and (2) those that use preservation processes, such as pickling, canning and dehydrating. Both types begin their production process with inputs of vegetable or animal origin. (NAICS Code: 3114)

**Seafood and Other Miscellaneous Foods:** This industry sub-sector falls under the industry Food Manufacturing and comprises establishments primarily engaged in one or more of the following: (1) canning seafood (including soup); (2) smoking, salting and drying seafood; (3) eviscerating fresh fish by removing heads, fins, scales, bones and entrails; (4) shucking and packing fresh shellfish; (5) processing marine fats and oils; and (6) freezing seafood. Establishments known as “floating factory ships” that are engaged in the gathering and processing of seafood into canned seafood products are included in this industry. (NAICS Code: 3117)

**Food and Beverage Stores:** Industries in the Food and Beverage Stores sub-sector usually retail food and beverages merchandise from fixed point-of-sale locations. Establishments in this sub-sector have special equipment (e.g., freezers, refrigerated display cases, refrigerators) for displaying food and beverage goods. They have staff trained in the processing of food products to guarantee the proper storage and sanitary conditions required by regulatory authority. (NAICS Code: 445)

**Grocery Stores:** This industry group comprises establishments primarily engaged in retailing a general line of food products. (NAICS Code: 4451)

**Specialty Food Stores:** This industry group comprises establishments primarily engaged in retailing specialized lines of food. (NAICS Code: 4452)

**Groceries and Related Products Merchant Wholesalers:** This industry comprises establishments primarily engaged in the merchant wholesale distribution of groceries and related products (except a general line of groceries); packaged frozen food; dairy products (except dried and canned); poultry products (except canned); confectioneries; fish and seafood (except canned); meat products (except canned); and fresh fruits and vegetables. Included in this industry are establishments primarily engaged in the bottling and merchant wholesale distribution of spring and mineral waters processed by others. (NAICS Code: 4244)

**Restaurants and Other Food Services:** Industries in the Food Services and Drinking Places sub-sector prepare meals, snacks and beverages to customer order for immediate on-premises and off-premises consumption. There is a wide range of establishments in these industries. Some provide food and drink only while others provide various combinations of seating space, waiter/waitress services and incidental amenities such as limited entertainment. The industries in the sub-sector are grouped based on the type and level of services provided. The industry groups are full-service restaurants; limited-service eating places; special food services, such as food service contractors, caterers and mobile food services; and drinking places. (NAICS Code: 722)

**Services to Buildings and Dwellings:** This industry group comprises establishments primarily engaged in (1) offering exterminating and pest control services; (2) offering janitorial services; (3) offering landscaping services; (4) offering carpet and upholstery cleaning services; and (5) offering all other services to buildings and dwellings such as building exterior cleaning services (except sandblasting), swimming pool cleaning and maintenance services, and drain and gutter cleaning services. (NAICS Code: 5617)

**Waste Management and Remediation Services:** Industries in the Waste Management and Remediation Services sub-sector group establishments are engaged in the collection, treatment and disposal of waste materials. This includes establishments engaged in local hauling of waste materials;

operating materials recovery facilities (i.e., those that sort recyclable materials from the trash stream); providing remediation services (i.e., those that provide for the cleanup of contaminated buildings, mine sites, soil or ground water); and providing septic pumping and other miscellaneous waste management services. There are three industry groups within the sub-sector: waste collection; waste treatment and disposal; and remediation and other waste management.

Excluded from this sub-sector are establishments primarily engaged in collecting, treating and disposing waste through sewer systems or sewage treatment facilities that are classified in Industry 22132, Sewage Treatment Facilities, and establishments primarily engaged in long-distance hauling of waste materials that are classified in Industry 48423, Specialized Freight (except Used Goods) Trucking, Long-Distance. Also, there are some activities that appear to be related to waste management but that are not included in this sub-sector. For example, establishments primarily engaged in providing waste management consulting services are classified in Industry 54162, Environmental Consulting Services. (NAICS 562)

# Appendix C:

## Interviewees

### Massachusetts

Pedro Arce	Eastern Bank
Larry Dosantos	912 Auto Center
Paul Giudice	Next Street Financial, LLC
Journel Joseph	Wattage Watchers and Energy Fit
Renzo Mendoza-Castro	Accion USA
Sayed Mohamed Nour	NUBIA
Charles Mwangi	Comfort Care Resource Group
Saul Ortez	Pollo Royal
Brian Salazar	Entegra Development & Investment, LLC
Klara Sotonova	Klara's Gourmet Cookies
Thomas Stohr	swissbakers
Vidya Tikku	Boston Natural Area Network
Nam Van Pham	Vietnamese American Initiative for Development (Viet-AID)
Dinesh Wadhvani	ThinkLite LLC

### Michigan

Albert Yousif	A2Z Facility Maintenance, Inc.
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### New York

Ajamu Brown	New York City Housing Authority
Sam de la Cruz	Amigo Taxi
Yadira Fragoso	We Can Do It!
Jackie Gonzalez	La Lechonera Restaurant
Nilsa Gonzalez	Jandi Restaurant and Mini-market
Udoka Okalanwa	Auto Exchange
Lucy Perez	PMV Sales and Service
Hector Ricketts	Community Transportation Systems, Inc.
Jeanette Rodriguez	Las Delicias Restaurant
Yemeni business owner	Restaurant and other food services

### Pennsylvania

Danilo Burgos	Grocery store
Bahiya Cabral-Johnson	The Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians
Jun Calejesan	Filipino-American Association of Philadelphia
Bryan Fenstermaker	The Enterprise Center CDC
Stephen Horton	The Enterprise Center CDC
Kate Houstoun	Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia
Yocasta Lora	Greater Philadelphia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Diana Lu	Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation
Jorge Mosquero	Emiliano's Mexican Restaurant
Brianna Sandoval	The Food Trust

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## Endnotes

- 1 Various databases were utilized to compile economic data about industries described in this report. The Bureau of Labor Statistics National Employment Matrix was utilized for searching the industries for job projections. Revenue and sales information is based on the 2007 Economic Census data published by the U.S. Census Bureau. The 2009 County Business Patterns and Statistics of U.S. Businesses 2008 were utilized to capture information about the employment size of industries and the number of employees for businesses with one to four employees.
- 2 The study from the Fiscal Policy Institute uses data from the 2010 American Community Survey and estimates the immigrant share of U.S. population to be 12.9%. The self-employment data contained in this report comes from the American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample 2005-2009. The later source indicates the immigrant share of U.S. population to be 12.4%. Therefore, all immigrant population comparisons to the transportation, food and building services industries utilize 12.4%.
- 3 Based on information reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, mid- and high-growth industries are defined as those with employment projections of seven percent or more. See Occupational Handbook 2010-11 Edition, Bureau of Labor Statistics, US Department of Labor.
- 4 The Fiscal Policy Institute, “Immigrant Small Business Owners: A Significant and Growing Part of the Economy” Immigration Research Initiative (June 2013).
- 5 The selected transportation sectors in this study include truck transportation; transit and ground passenger transportation; taxi and limousine service; support activities for transportation; warehousing and storage; and bus service and urban transit. The food-related sectors include fruit and vegetable preserving and specialty foods; grocery and specialty food stores; groceries and related products merchant wholesalers; and restaurants and other food services. Building services includes pest control, landscaping, carpet and upholstery cleaning, interior cleaning services, exterior cleaning services, drain and gutter cleaning service, and also includes waste management and remediation services. See Appendix A for the NAICS description of industries used in this study.
- 6 See Migration Policy Institute, MPI Data Hub: Pennsylvania: Social and Demographic Characteristics, [www.migrationinformation.org](http://www.migrationinformation.org)
- 7 Mintel Oxygen Reports. (2009, October 15). “Americans dish on ethnic fare.” Retrieved from <http://www.mintel.com/press-centre/press-releases/408/americans-dish-on-ethnic-fare>
- 8 Herman, R.T. and Smith R.L. (2010, June). “Why Immigrants Can Drive the Green Economy.” Immigration Policy Center.

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