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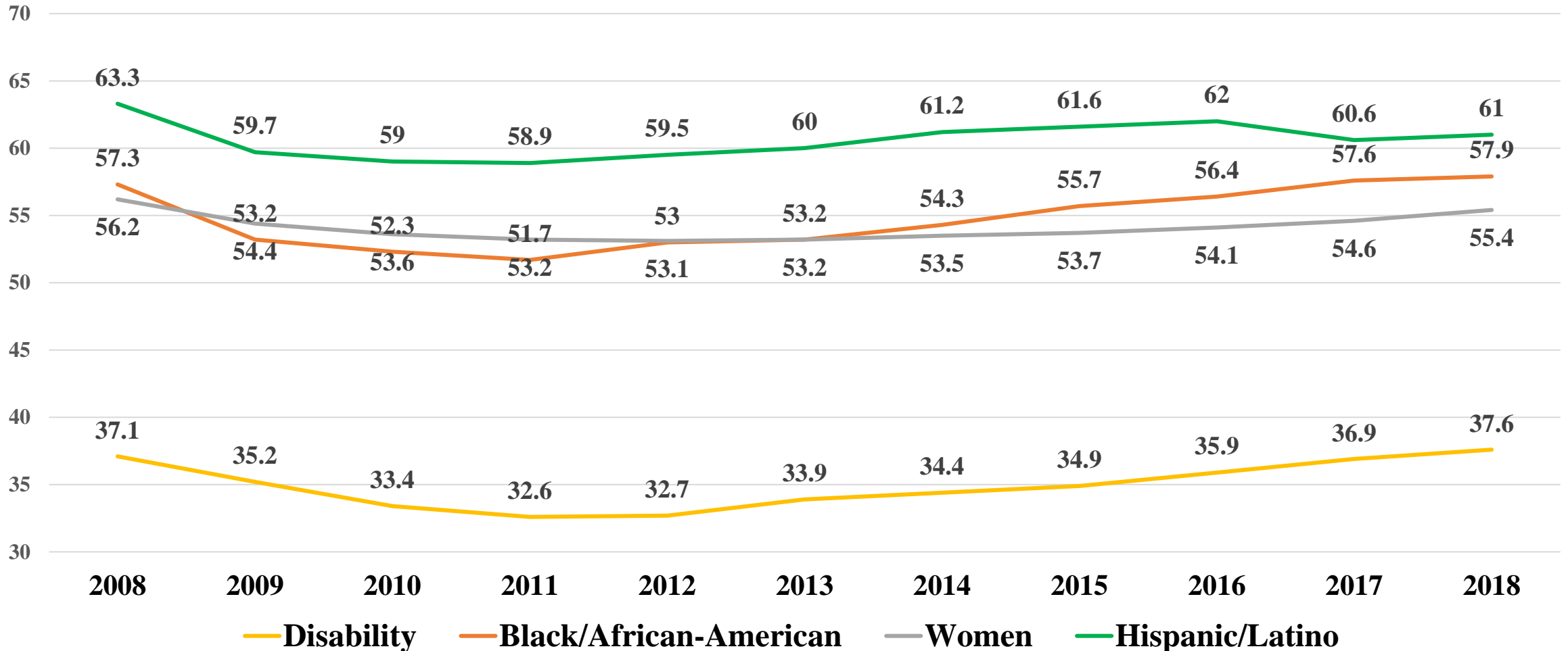
**UNDERSTANDING THE
EMPLOYMENT GAP AND
HIDDEN OPPORTUNITY**

**Philip Kahn-Pauli
Policy and Practices Director**

www.RespectAbility.org

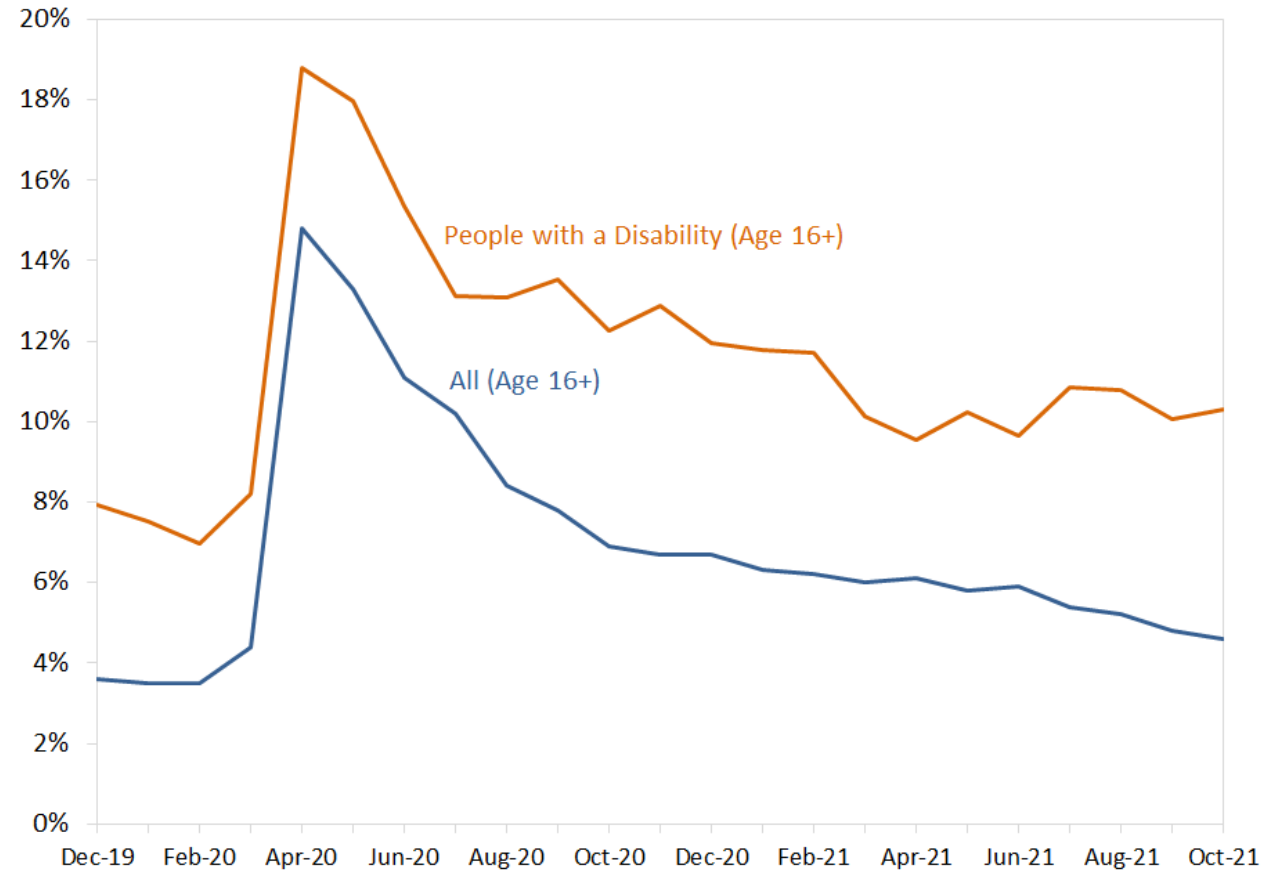
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Employment Rates of Minority Populations (Percentage of population) – 2008 to 2018



SOURCES: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/793961/employment-among-disabled-us-adults/>
<https://www.bls.gov/charts/employment-situation/employment-population-ratio.htm>

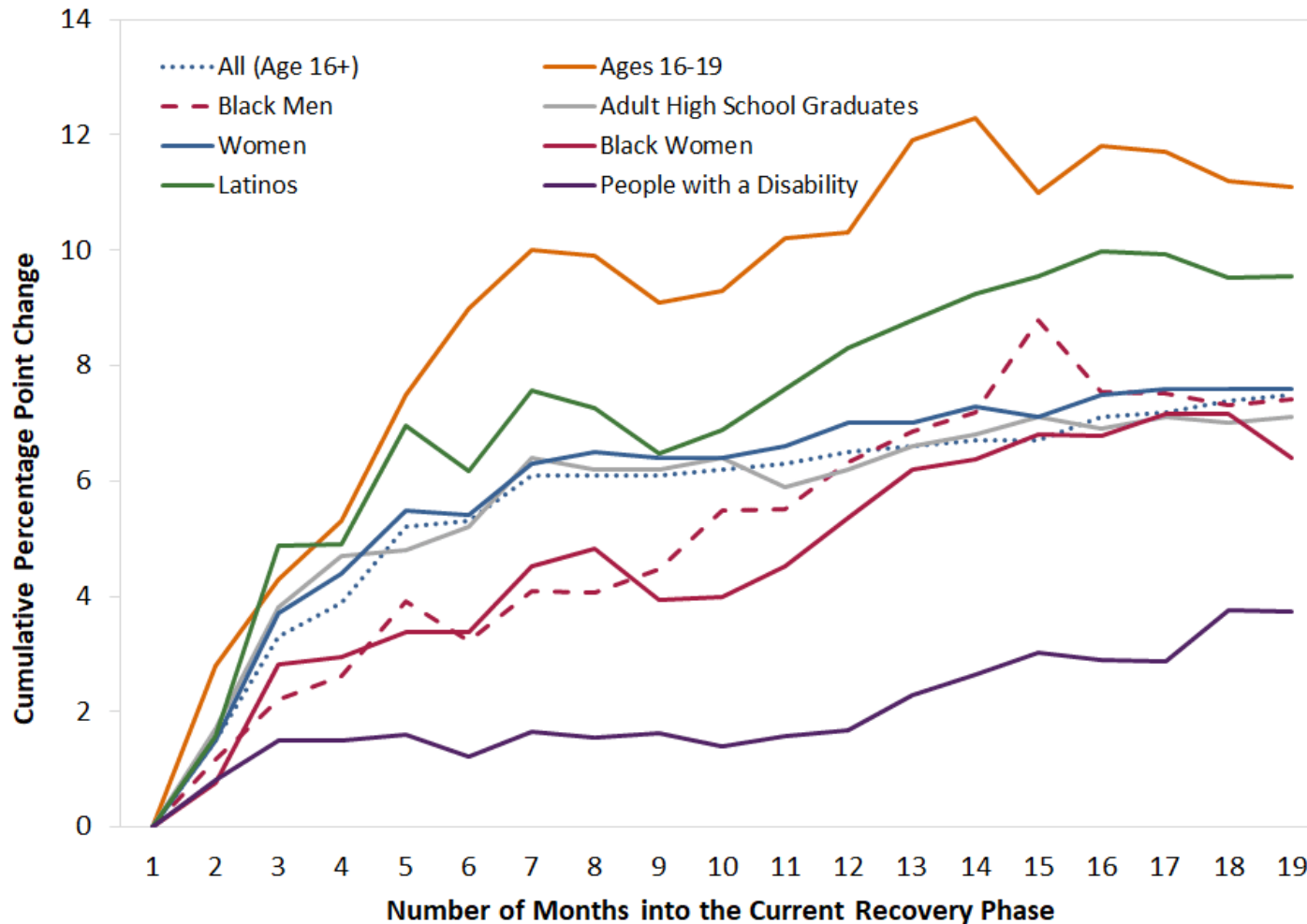
Unemployment Rates for PWDs in 2020



■ FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF ST. LOUIS

Source:
<https://www.stlouisfed.org/on-the-economy/2021/november/current-labor-market-workers-disability>

Rebound in the Employment-to-Pop Ratio for Vulnerable Groups during the Recovery



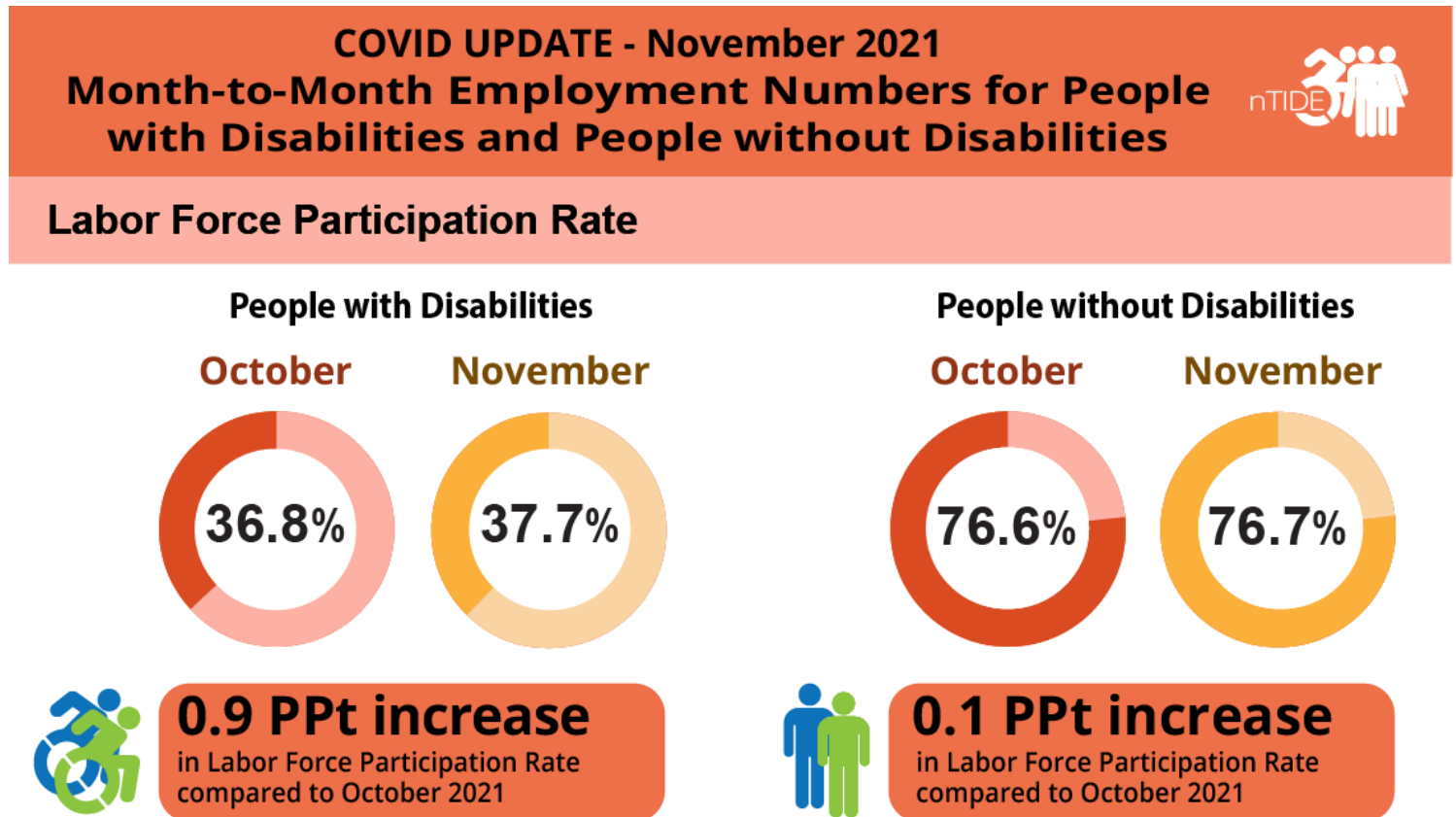
■ FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF ST. LOUIS

Source:

<https://www.stlouisfed.org/on-the-economy/2021/november/current-labor-market-workers-disability>

Labor Force Participation Rate in Nov 2021

- As [of Nov 2021](#), the labor force participation rate for working-age people with disabilities is now 2 full percentage points higher than it was before COVID-19.
- **This means that people with disabilities are engaging with the labor force in higher numbers than before the pandemic.**



Disability Statistics in California



Gov. Gavin Newsom with Philip Kahn-Pauli of RespectAbility

- There are Californians 4,409,276 with disabilities.
- There are 2,064,229 working-age Californians with disabilities. Out of that number, 754,024 working-age Californians with disabilities had jobs in 2020. California's disability employment rate was 36.5 percent.
- The employment rate for working-age Californians without disabilities was 72.3 percent in 2020.
- There was a 35.7 percentage point Gap in Labor Force Participation Rates between PWDs and non-PWDs.
- The poverty rate for working-age Californians with disabilities was 25.2 percent.

Source: Annual Disability Statistics Compendium: 2021, NH: Univ. of New Hampshire, Institute on Disability
<https://disabilitycompendium.org/>

Disability Statistics in Los Angeles



Mayor Eric Garcetti (D)

- In total, there are 992,719 Angelenos with disabilities living in L.A. County.
- There are 466,385 working-age Angelenos with disabilities living in L.A. County. Only 169,322 working-age Angelenos with disabilities had jobs. L.A. County's disability employment rate was only 36.3 percent in 2020.
- By contrast, the employment rate for Angelenos without disabilities was 74.7 percent.
- That means that there is a 38.4 percentage point gap in the labor force participation rates between Angelenos with and without disabilities.
- The poverty rate for L.A. County Residents with disabilities was 25 percent in 2020.

Source: Annual Disability Statistics Compendium: 2021, NH: Univ. of New Hampshire, Institute on Disability
<https://disabilitycompendium.org/>

Advancing Opportunities



- If California follows national trends, there are now at least **38,205 more jobseekers with disabilities** ready to fill labor shortages.
- There could be as many as 9,000 Angelenos with disabilities looking for new opportunities to earn an income and become independent.

Improving Accessibility in L.A.'s AJCCs

- There are 5 key dimensions for maximizing the ability of AJCCs to serve jobseekers with disabilities. Those dimensions are:

- 1. Physical Accessibility**
- 2. Communications Accessibility**
- 3. Programmatic Accessibility**
- 4. Stakeholder Engagement**
- 5. Employer Education**

Context – WIOA Implementation and AJC Accessibility



- As WIOA was being implemented, the US Department of Labor's (DOL) Chief Evaluation Office (CEO) contracted with IMPAQ International and its partners, the Burton Blatt Institute (BBI) and Universal Designers and Consultants (UD&C), to measure the accessibility of American Job Centers (AJC) for people with disabilities.
- BBI and UD&C's research identified key areas of improvement and growth for AJCs to better supporting jobseekers with disabilities.
- Source: *Evaluating the Accessibility of American Job Centers for People with Disabilities: Final Report* <https://impaqint.com/work/project-reports/evaluating-accessibility-american-job-centers-people-disabilities-final-report>

Tip #1 – Physical Accessibility

- Most AJCCs are physically accessible, i.e. have wheelchair ramps, automatic doors, or have designated accessible bathrooms. That's great!
- However, nationwide, approximately 8% are not yet physically accessible.
- For AJCC staff and leaders:
 - *Make a plan to review your physical accessibility annually.*
 - *Review what counts as “Architectural Barriers” under the ADA:*
<https://www.ada.gov/reachingout/barrier.html#:~:text=Architectural%20Barriers&text=Architectural%20barriers%20are%20physical%20features,or%20services%20that%20are%20offered.>
 - *Connect with local experts on physical accessibility and ADA compliance:*
<https://disability.lacity.org/resources>

Tip # 2 – Communications Accessibility

- The ADA requires that title II entities (State and local governments) and communicate effectively with people who have communication disabilities. More details here: <https://www.ada.gov/effective-comm.htm>
- Most AJCs report “*limited budgets and limited staff training and knowledge as obstacles to providing key elements of communications accessibility.*”
- For AJCC staff and leaders:
 - *Consult and engage with your local disability community, for example: Directory of Centers for Independent Living and Associations <http://bit.ly/11CJWsE>*
 - *Identify community resources to provide ASL interpretation, CART services, or transcription services, for example: Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. <http://bit.ly/1O891n6>*
 - ***Practice Respectful, People-First Language.*** <https://askearn.org/page/people-first-language>
 - *Use Multimodal Communications, for example: have a plan about how to handle face-to-face communication, preparing written/print materials, and **make your website fully accessible!*** <https://www.ada.gov/websites2.htm>
- More ideas here: https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/HDfactsheet_accessiblecomms-Oct2016.pdf

Tip #3 – Programmatic Accessibility

- Per the DOL: “*Programmatic accessibility is the domain where the biggest changes are needed to improve accessibility of the workforce system.*” > Nationwide, “only 37%” of AJCs are programmatically accessible.
- For AJCC staff and leaders:
 - **Awareness and Training** – every staffer who has contact with customers must understand what it means to be “programmatically accessible” – Access training resources from organizations like RespectAbility <https://www.respectability.org/speakers-bureau/> and others.
 - **Staffing** – Identify a staff member or team leader with responsibility for learning about accessibility and hold them accountable for working on these issues. <https://www.peatworks.org/digital-accessibility-toolkits/staff-training-resources/accessibility-staff-training-for-specific-roles/>
 - **Benefit Counseling** – Access and understand how to help jobseekers with disabilities navigate benefits questions and available resources: <https://choosework.ssa.gov/library/fact-sheet-benefits-counseling-and-the-path-to-employment/> / <https://apse.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Benefits-Counseling-Guide-.pdf>
 - **Collaboration** – AJCCs that are working to improve their accessibility and services need to work together to share resources and solutions.

Tip #4 – Stakeholder Engagement

- At many AJCs, “staff reported that people with disabilities rarely contact the center” and “very few do targeted outreach to reach the disability community.”
- Per DOL: *“People with disabilities can bring valuable knowledge and first-hand experience to AJC’s efforts to maximize accessibility. Few AJCs make a point of actively involving people with disabilities in the ongoing work of making the AJCs more accessible.”*
- For AJCC staff and leaders:
 - *Make a plan to reach out and communicate with local disability community organizations, centers for independent living (CILs) or regional centers.*
 - *Consider budgeting stipends for self-advocates with disabilities to review accessibility issues at your AJCC.*
 - *Hold community stakeholder events to collaboratively develop solutions and plans of action.*

Tip #5 – Employer Engagement

- Much of the work that AJCs/AJCCs do is to understand the labor force needs of local employers and job sectors. This extends to supporting employers who
- For AJCC staff and leaders:
 - *Connect and collaborate with business engagement specialists from the California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR).*
 - *Review LMI and reach out to local employers about their priorities around Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI).*
 - *Ensure that employers that recruit and hire jobseekers with disabilities are connected to resources about accommodations and inclusive recruitment strategies.*

Benefits of Hiring People with Disabilities



- Followed 140 US companies from 2015-2018
- 45 Inclusion Champions, 95 peer companies

[Read the full study online!](#)

Over four years, the Champions who embraced the talent of workers with disabilities **vastly outperformed their peers**. They had:

- **2X higher income**
- **30% higher economic profit margin**
- **Up to 30% less staff turnover**

* Study completed by [Accenture](#), [Disability:IN](#) and the [American Association of People with Disabilities](#)

Accommodations Resources



[Job Accommodation Network: AskJAN.org](http://AskJAN.org)

- ❖ JAN is the leading source of free, expert and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues.
- ❖ Working toward practical solutions that benefit both employer and employee, JAN helps people with disabilities enhance their employability, and shows employers how to capitalize on the value and talent that people with disabilities add to the workplace.
- ❖ Recent JAN activities and areas of focus include:
 - ❖ [JAN Workplace Accommodation Toolkit](#)
 - ❖ [JAN Just-In-Time Training Modules](#)
 - ❖ [Workplace Accommodations: Low Cost, High Impact](#)

Employer Resources

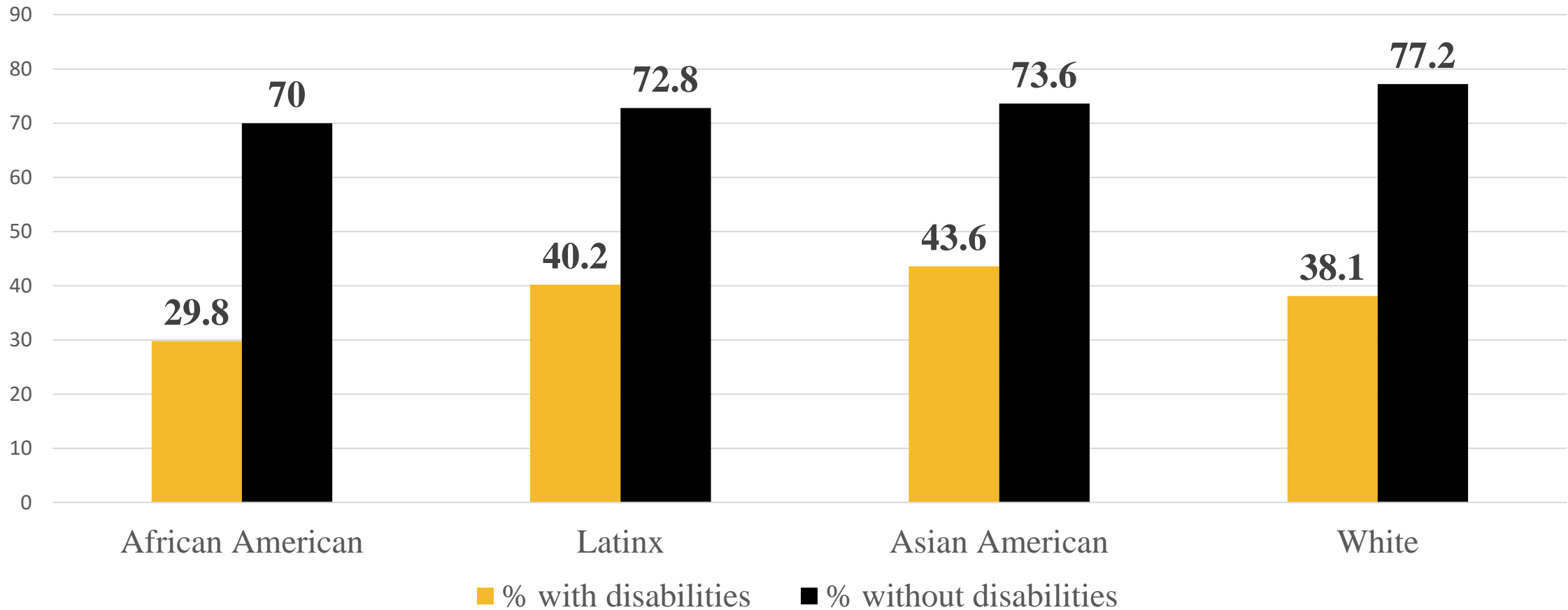


Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion (EARN)

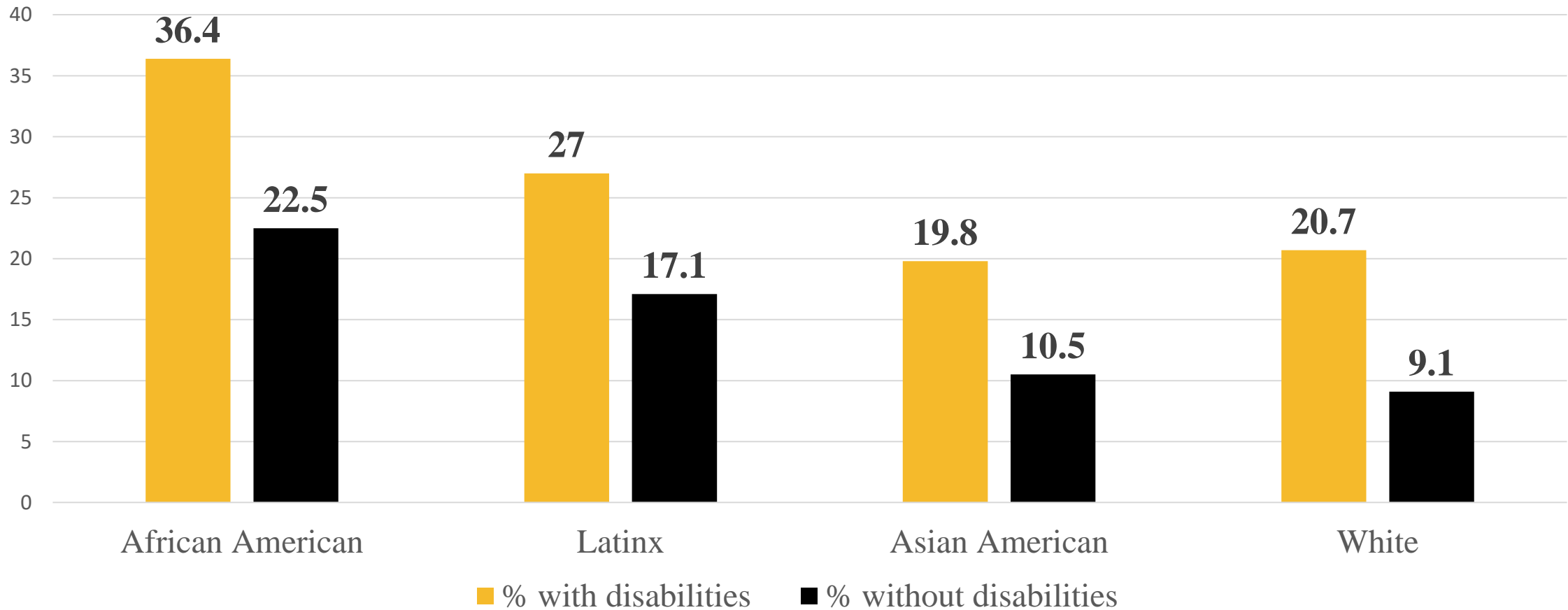
- ❖ (EARN) helps employers recruit, hire, retain and advance people with disabilities.
- ❖ EARN also maintains a website, AskEARN.org, which provides information on: recruiting and hiring; retention and advancement; laws and regulations; creating an accessible and welcoming workplace; and federal contractor requirements.
- ❖ Other Resources:
 - ❖ [Primer on Disability Inclusion](#)
 - ❖ [Business Strategies that Work: A Framework for Disability Inclusion](#)
 - ❖ [Small Business & Disability: Steps to Success](#)
 - ❖ [Fact Sheet on Self-Identification of Disability](#)

Appendix

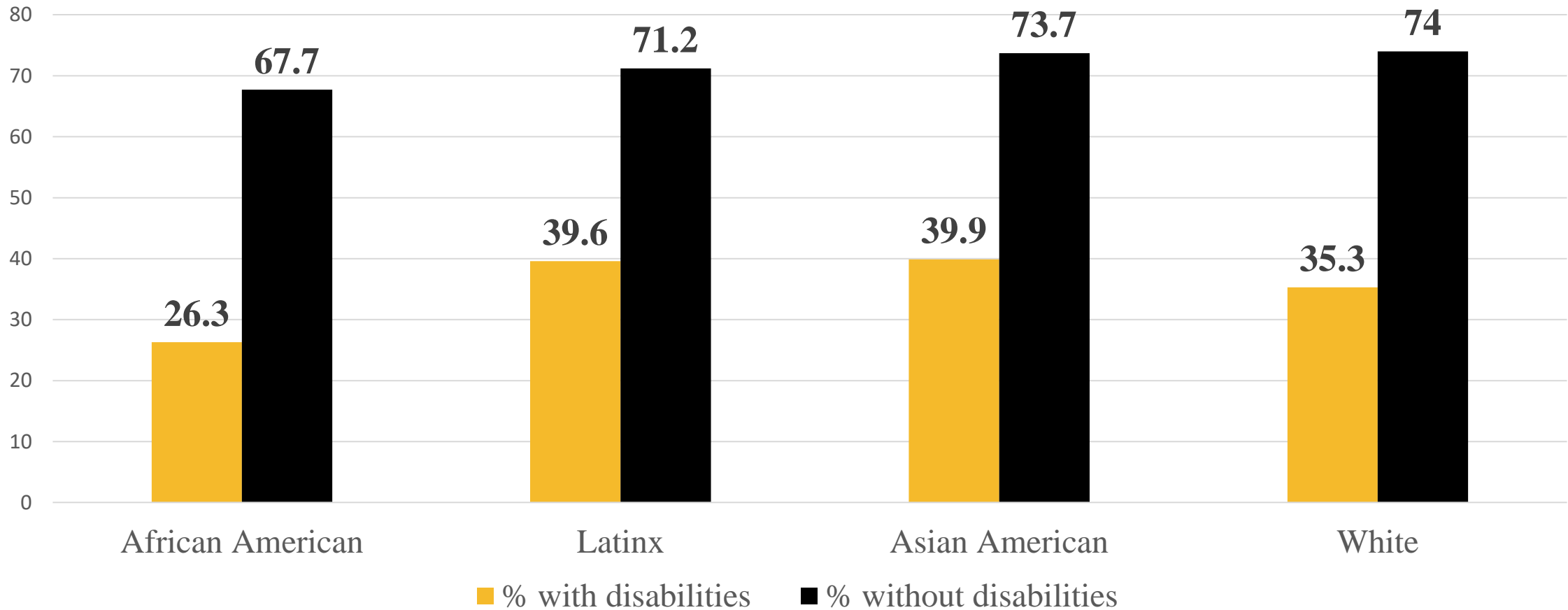
Employment Rates for Working-Age Americans w/ & w/o Disabilities, by Race – 2020



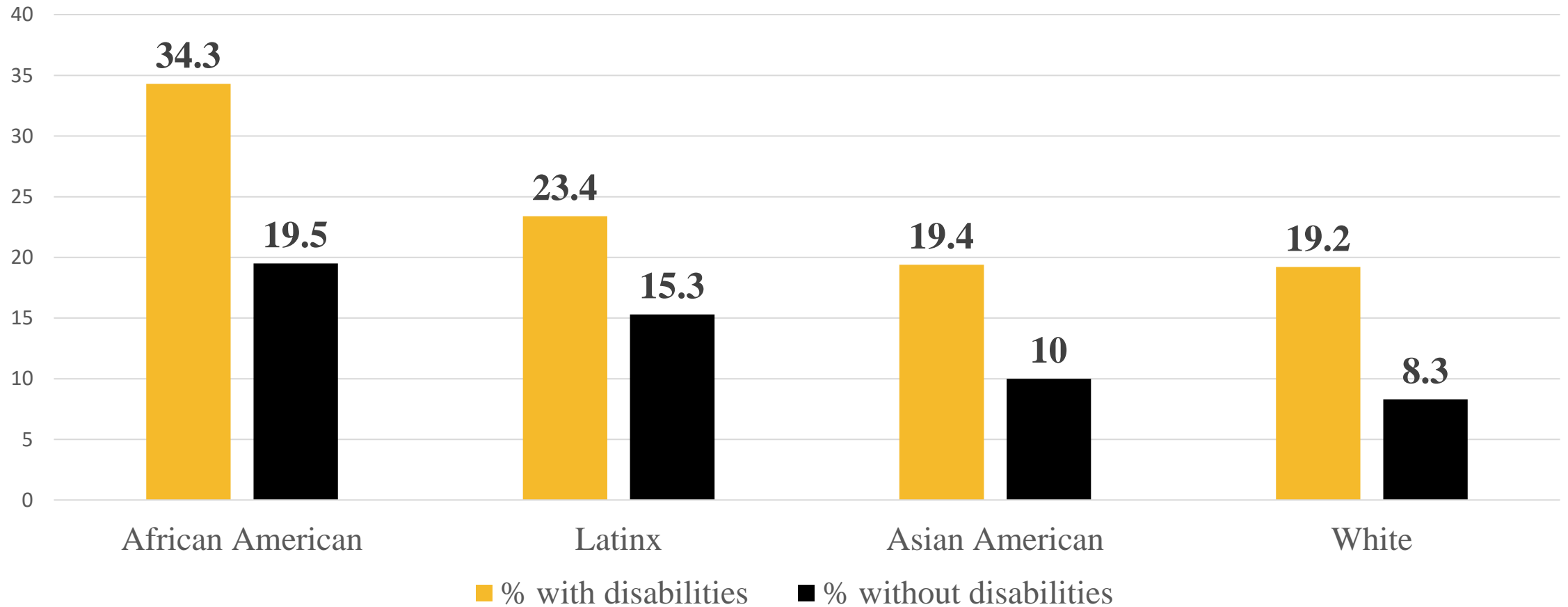
Poverty Rates for Working Age Americans w/ & w/o Disabilities, by Race – 2020



Employment Rates for Working-Age Californians w/ & w/o Disabilities, by Race – 2020



Poverty Rates for Californians w/ & w/o Disabilities, by Race – 2020



African Americans with Disabilities – 2020

- **As of 2020, there were 38,814,801 African Americans living in the United States.**
- **Out that number, there are 5,981,120 African Americans living with some form of disability.**
- There are 3,452,805 working-age African Americans with disabilities. Out of that number, only 1,027,436 or 29.8 percent, have jobs.
- By comparison, fully 70.0 percent of African Americans without disabilities have jobs.
- The employment gap between African Americans with and without disabilities is 40.3 percentage points.
- Fully 36.4 percent of African Americans with disabilities live in poverty compared to 22.5 percent of African Americans without disabilities.

SOURCES: <https://disabilitycompendium.org/compendium/2021-annual-disability-statistics-supplement>

Hispanic/LatinX People with Disabilities - 2020

- **As of 2020, there were 60,918,465 Hispanic/LatinX people living in the United States.**
- **Out of that number, there are 6,154,420 Hispanic/LatinX people living with some form of disability.**
- There are 3,420,356 working-age Hispanic/LatinX people with disabilities. Out of that number, fully 1,375,284 or 40.2 percent, have jobs.
- By comparison, fully 72.8 percent of Hispanic/LatinX people without disabilities have jobs.
- The employment gap between Hispanic/LatinX people with and without disabilities is 32.8 percentage points.
- Fully 27.0 percent of Hispanic/LatinX people with disabilities live in poverty, compared to only 17.1 of Latinx people without disabilities.

SOURCES: <https://disabilitycompendium.org/compendium/2021-annual-disability-statistics-supplement>

Asian Americans with Disabilities – 2020

- **As of 2020, there were 18,488,885 Asian Americans living in the United States.**
- **Out that number, there are 1,431,597 Asian Americans living with some form of disability.**
- There are 588,661 working-age Asian Americans with disabilities. Out of that number, only 256,504 or 43.6 percent, have jobs.
- By comparison, fully 73.6 percent of Asian Americans without disabilities have jobs.
- The employment gap between Asian Americans with and without disabilities is 30.0 percentage points.
- Fully 27 percent of Asian Americans with disabilities live in poverty compared to 17.1 percent of Asian Americans without disabilities

BIPOC Subtotal

- In total, there are 2,777,677 American Indian and Alaska Natives living in the United States. Out of that number, approximately 477,954 have disabilities.
- In total, there are 612,857 Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander living in the United States. Out of that number, approximately 64,782 have disabilities.
- **Subtotal: 16,521,290 Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) People with Disabilities**

Women with Disabilities – 2020

- **As of 2020, 167,074,896** there were **women living in the United States.**
- **Out that number, there are 22,753,369 women living with some form of disability.**
- There are 10,787,405 working-age women with disabilities. Out of that number, only 3,896,744 or 36.1 percent have jobs.
- By comparison, fully 71.3 percent of women without disabilities have jobs.
- The employment gap between women with and without disabilities is 36.1 percentage points.
- Fully 25.8 percent of women with disabilities live in poverty compared to 13.1 percent of women without disabilities.

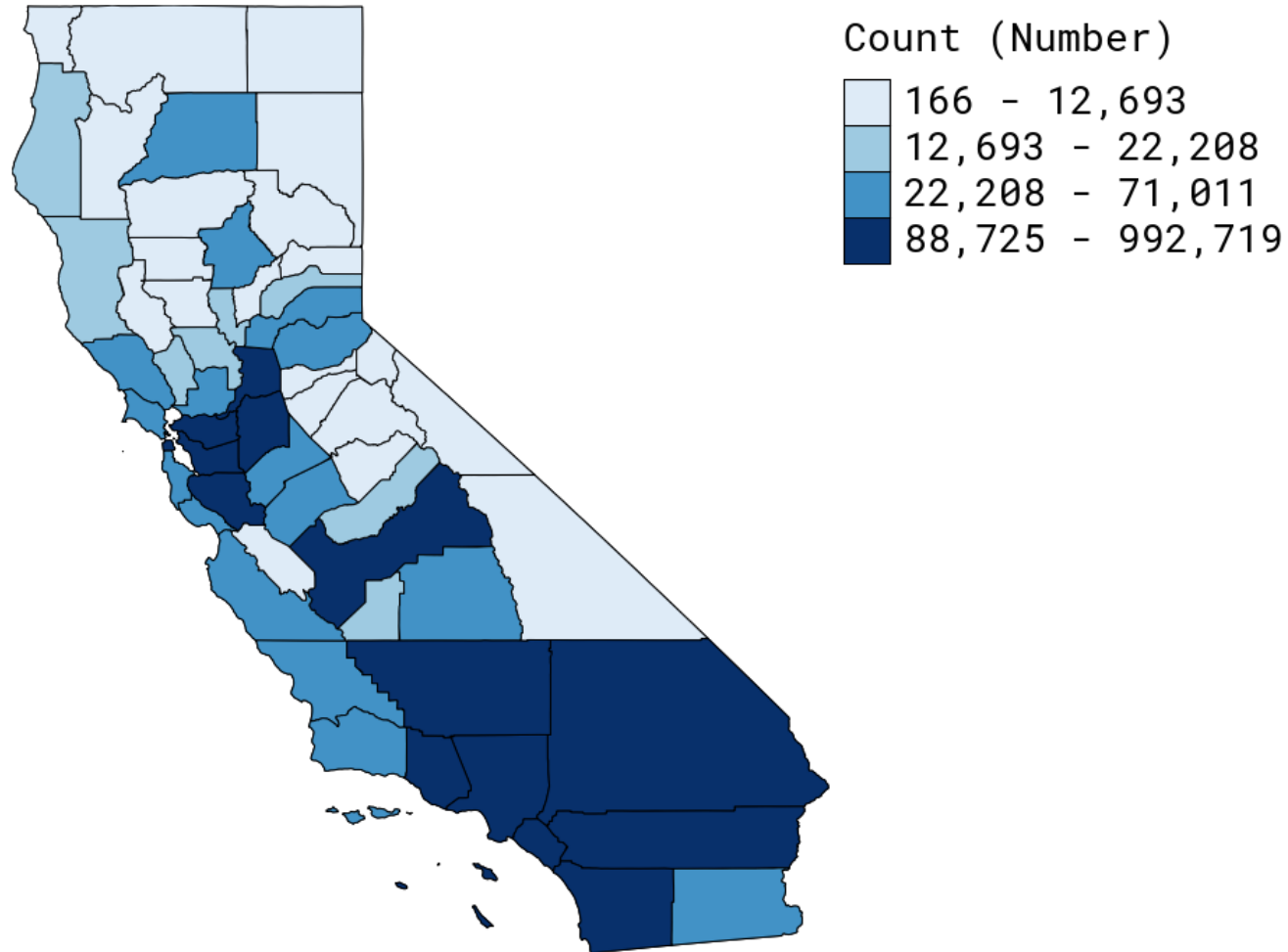
Students with Disabilities in K-12 Schools

- **Total Number of K-12 students with disabilities: 6,561,998**
 - 85,680 American Indian or Alaska Native students with disabilities
 - 165,353 Asian students with disabilities
 - 1,158,862 Black or African American students with disabilities
 - 1,826,344 Hispanic/LatinX students with disabilities
 - 23,809 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander students with disabilities
 - 283,819 Biracial students with disabilities
 - 3,018,131 White students with disabilities
 - **Subtotal of BIPOC Students with Disabilities: 3,543,867**

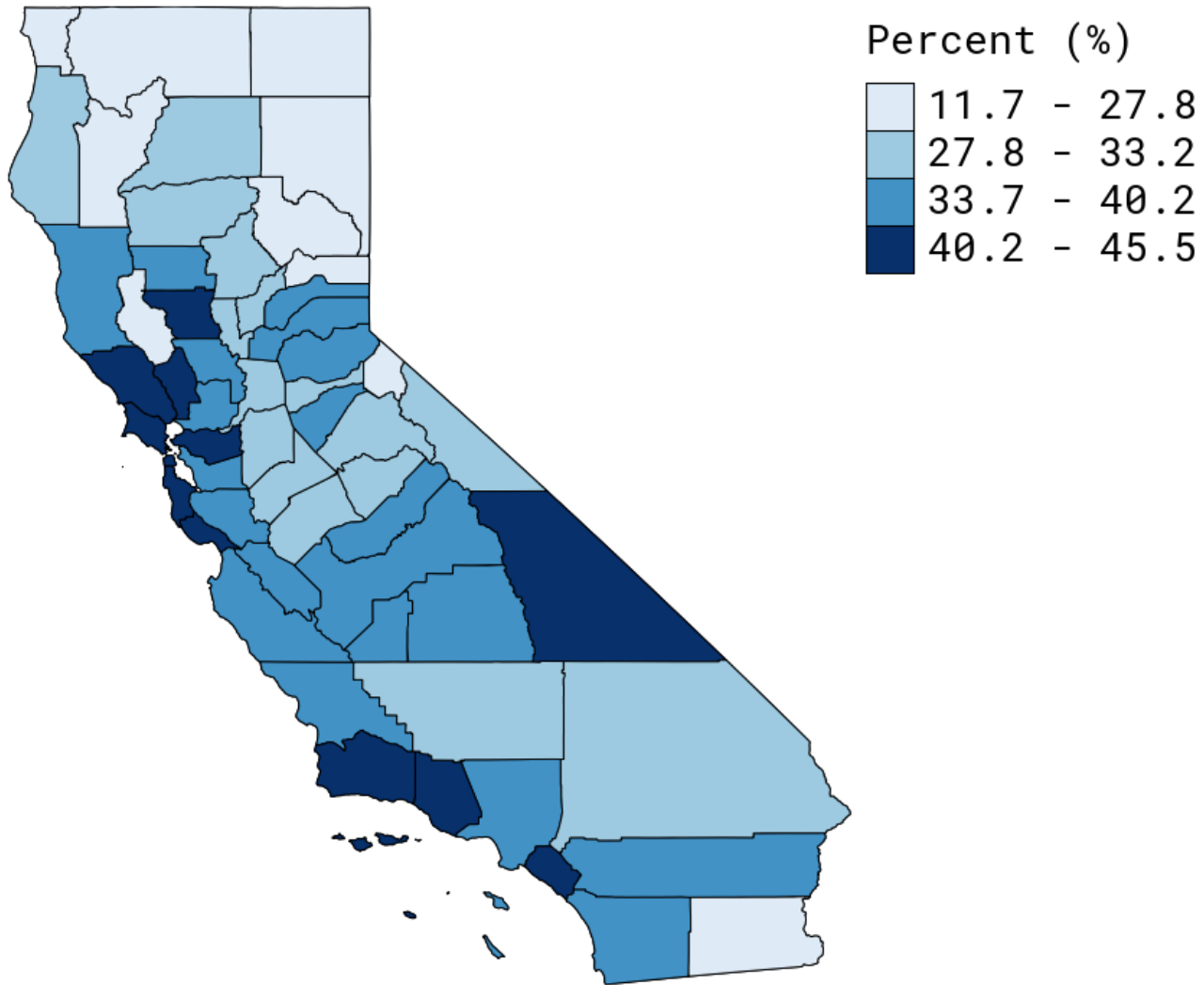
Source: IDEA Section 618 Data Products: Static Table -

<https://www2.ed.gov/programs/osepidea/618-data/static-tables/index.html>

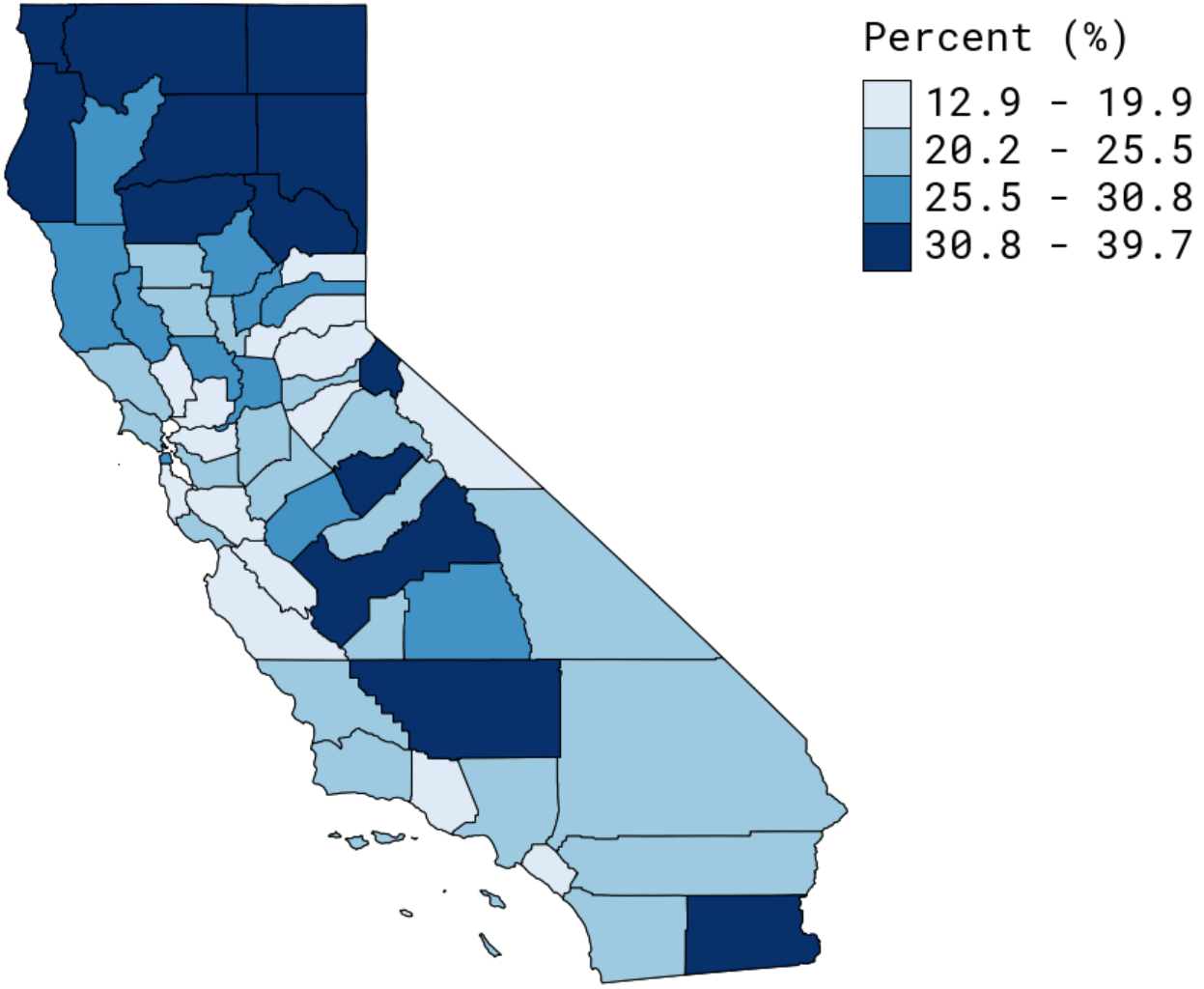
Count of People with Disabilities for California, by County: 2019



Employment Rate for PWDs Ages 18 to 64 Years Living in the Community for CA, by County: 2019



Poverty Rate for PWDs Ages 18 to 64 Years Living in the Community for CA, by County: 2019



Racial Disparities for People with Disabilities in California – 2020

- 184,661 working-age **African Americans** with disabilities
 - 48,543 or 26.3 percent had jobs in 2020.
 - 34.3 percent of African Americans with disabilities live in poverty
 - 19.5 percent of African Americans without disabilities.
- 784,036 working-age **Latinx** people with disabilities.
 - 310,781 or 39.6 percent had jobs in 2020.
 - 23.4 percent of Latinx people with disabilities live in poverty
 - 15.3 of Latinx people without disabilities.
- 191,260 working-age **Asian Americans** with disabilities.
 - 74,413 or 38.9 percent have jobs in 2020.
 - 19.4 percent of Asian Americans with disabilities live in poverty
 - 10 percent of Asian Americans without disabilities.

SOURCE: Annual Disability Statistics Supplement: 2021. Univ. of New Hampshire, Institute on Disability.

<https://disabilitycompendium.org/compendium/2020-annual-disability-statistics-supplement>

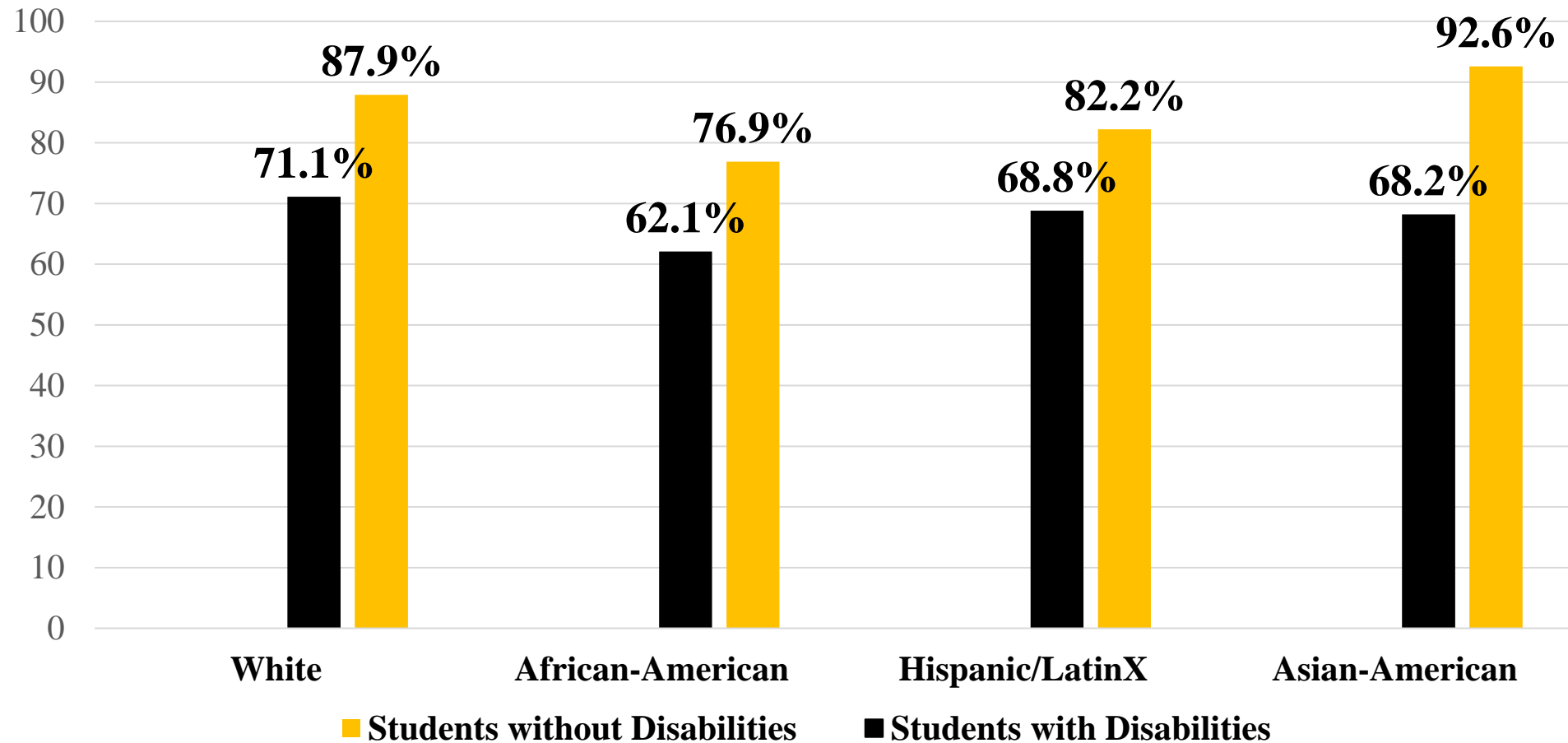
Disability by Type – SWDs in LA Unified and CA overall;

	Intellectual Disability	Hard of Hearing	Deaf	Speech or Language Disability	Visual Disability	Emotional Disturbance	Orthopedic Disability	Other health conditions	Specific Learning Disability	Deaf-Blindness	Multiple Disability	Autism	Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
Number of SWDs with that Disability in LAUSD	9,655	2,825	695	34,621	843	4,999	3,020	24,472	74,623	25	1,118	33,834	289
Number of SWDs with that Disability in California	43,770	10,657	3,223	164,698	3,405	25,233	9,916	104,792	300,295	114	7,308	120,095	1,541

In total, there are 191,019 students with disabilities in LAUSD and 65,628 students with disabilities in SDUSD. There are 795,047 students with disabilities in CA's K-12 schools.

Source: Special Education Enrollment by Ethnicity and Disability - <https://bit.ly/3fCEAaD>

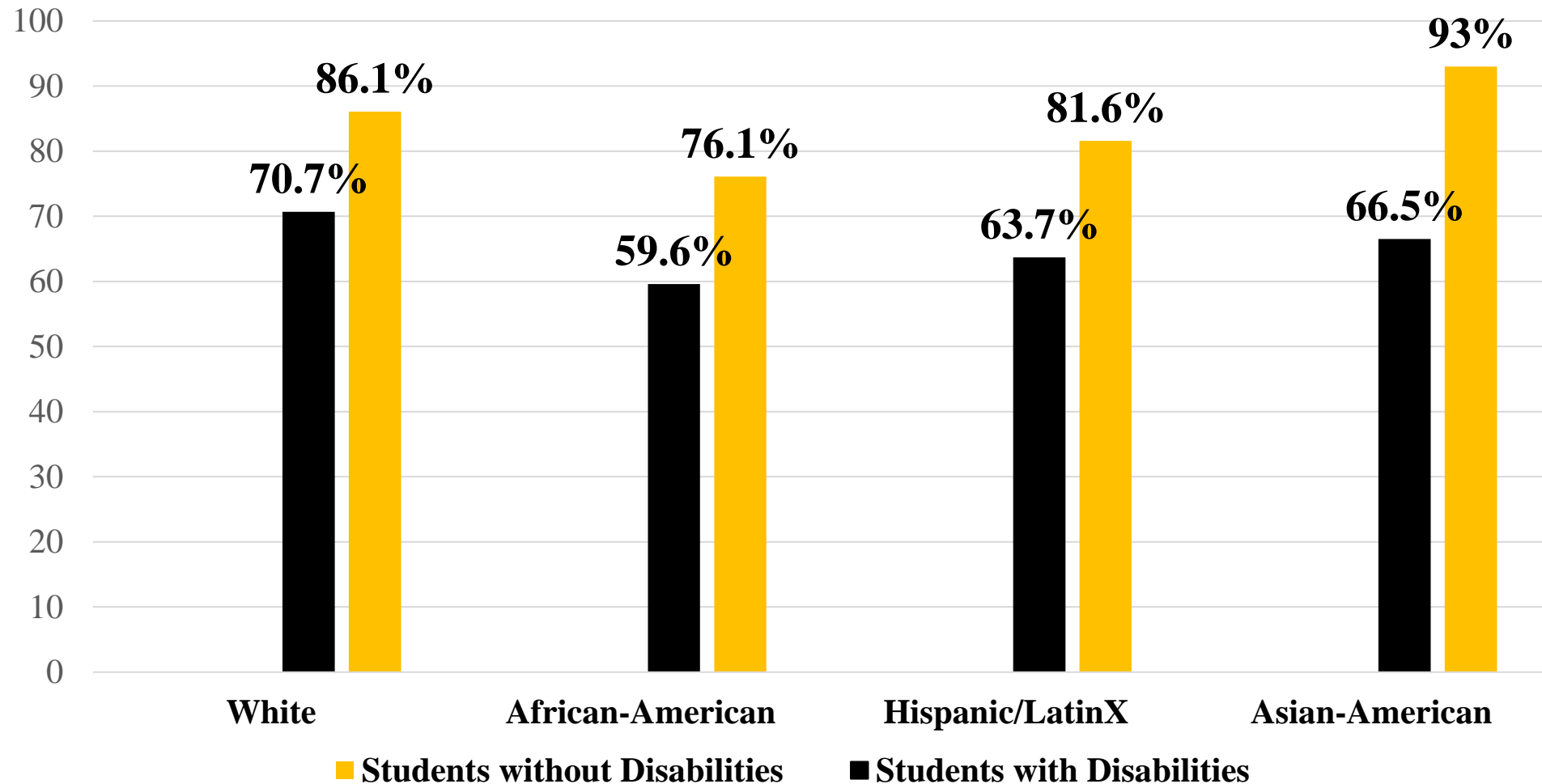
California High School Grad Rates for Students w/ & w/o Disabilities, by Race – Class of 2020



Source: 2019-20 Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate Statewide Report

<https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dqcensus/CohRate.aspx?cde=00&agglvl=state&year=2019-20>

LAUSD High School Grad Rates for Students w/ & w/o Disabilities, by Race – Class of 2020



Source: 2019-20 Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate Los Angeles County Report

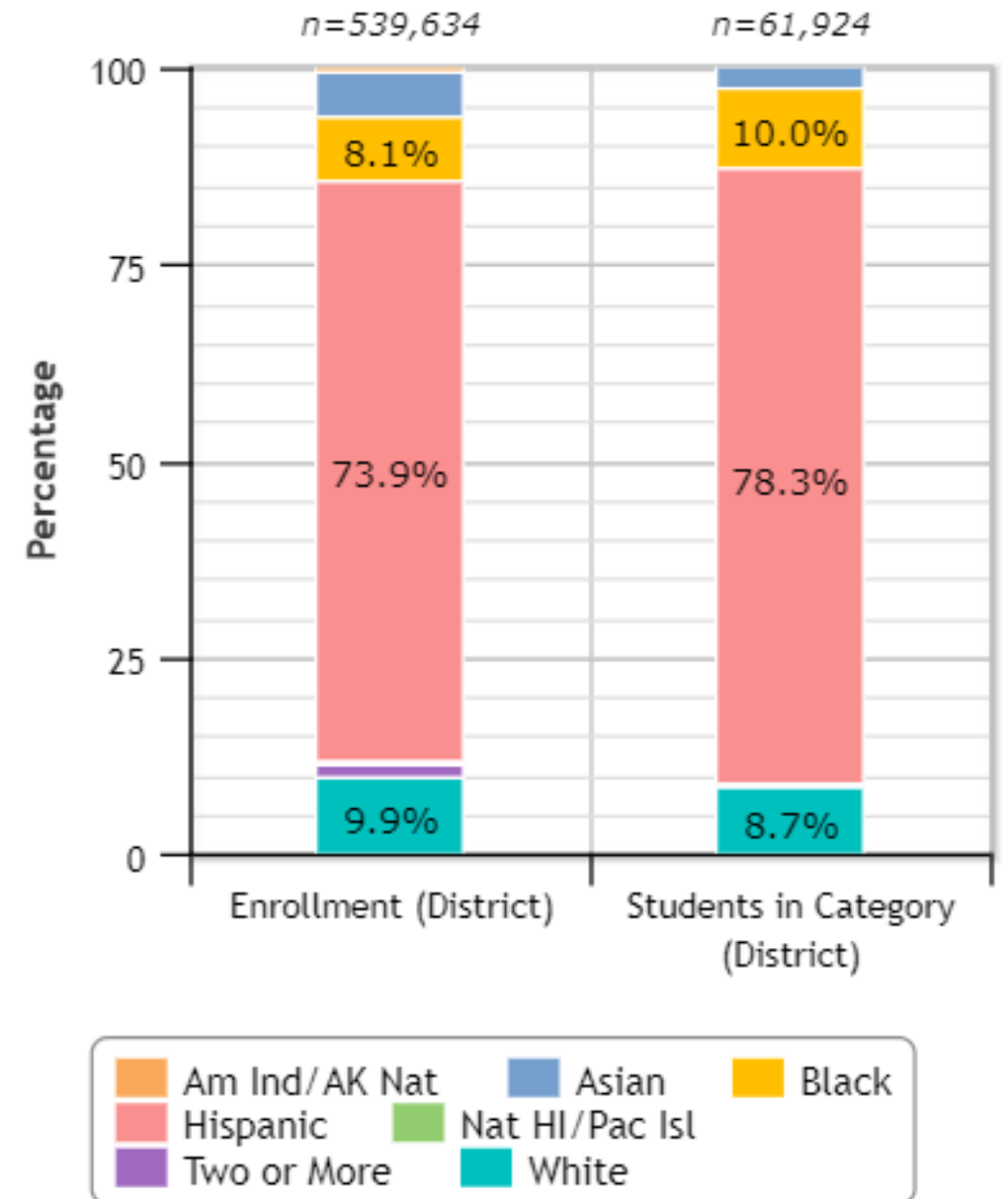
<https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dqcensus/CohRate.aspx?cds=19&agglevel=county&year=2019-20&initrow=&ro=y>

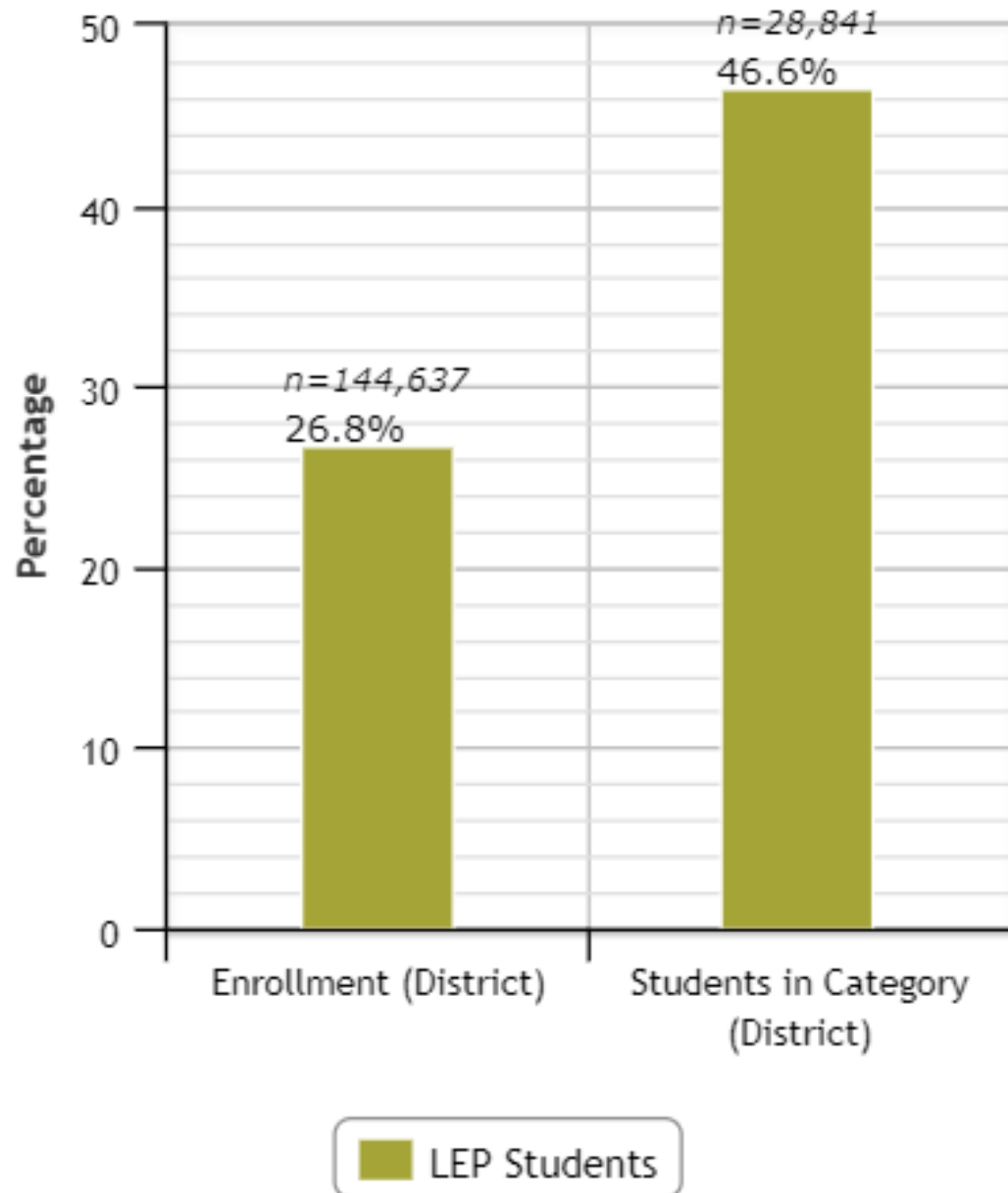
LA Unified & Students with Disabilities

- **78.3 percent of LAUSD's students with disabilities are Hispanic**
- 10 percent of LAUSD's students with disabilities are African-American
- 8.7 percent of LAUSD's students with disabilities are White
- **Overall, 11.5 percent of LAUSD students are students with disabilities.**

Source: Civil Rights Data Collection:

<https://ocrdata.ed.gov/Page?t=d&eid=30388&syk=8&pid=2396>





LA Unified & Students with Disabilities – LEP

- Overall, 26.8 percent of LAUSD students have Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
- 46.6 percent of LAUSD's students with disabilities have Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Source: Civil Rights Data Collection:

<https://ocrdata.ed.gov/Page?t=d&eid=30388&syk=8&pid=2396>