

OVERLOOKED AND UNDERSERVED: PROBLEMATIZING THE API MODEL MINORITY MYTH

Facing the Facts about Asians and Pacific Islanders in Alameda County



BBU Sponsored by:
*The Community Assessment, Planning, and
Education/Evaluation (CAPE) Unit & Maternal, Paternal,
Child, and Adolescent Health (MPCAH) Program*

Brown Bag University - May 20, 2014

Acknowledgements



- Over 18 million APIs living in the US
- Rich Cultural Diversity of APIs
 - ▣ Over 50 ethnic groups and 100 languages

□ API History

- Bitter hardships and proud accomplishments





- API Contributions

- To the civil, cultural and economic fabric

- API Struggles

- Against ongoing discrimination and inequities in education, employment, housing, healthcare, and more

□ API Service Providers and Advocates



EAST BAY REFUGEE FORUM



Our Vision of Health Equity



ALAMEDA COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH
DEPARTMENT



Everyone in Alameda County –
no matter where you live,
how much money you make,
or the color of your skin –
has opportunities to lead
a healthy, fulfilling, and productive life.

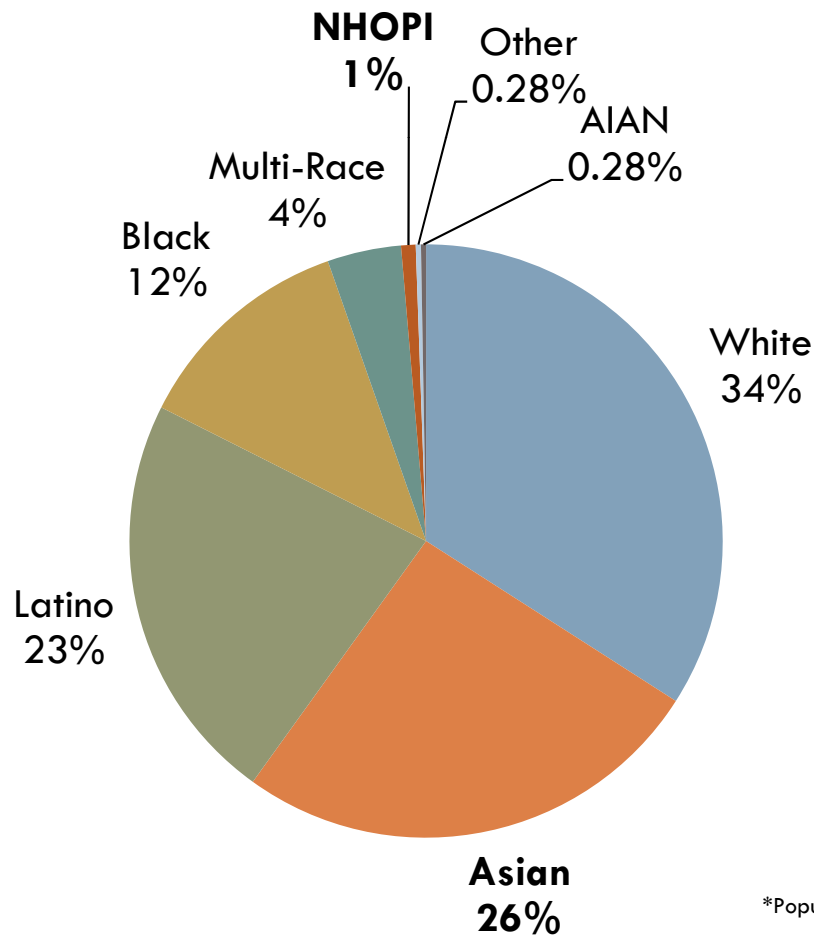
API “Model Minority” Myth

- The MYTH that all Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders:
 - Are healthy, wealthy, and highly educated
 - Face few barriers to good health, socioeconomic success, and academic achievement
 - Are not affected by racism and oppression



Who are APIs?

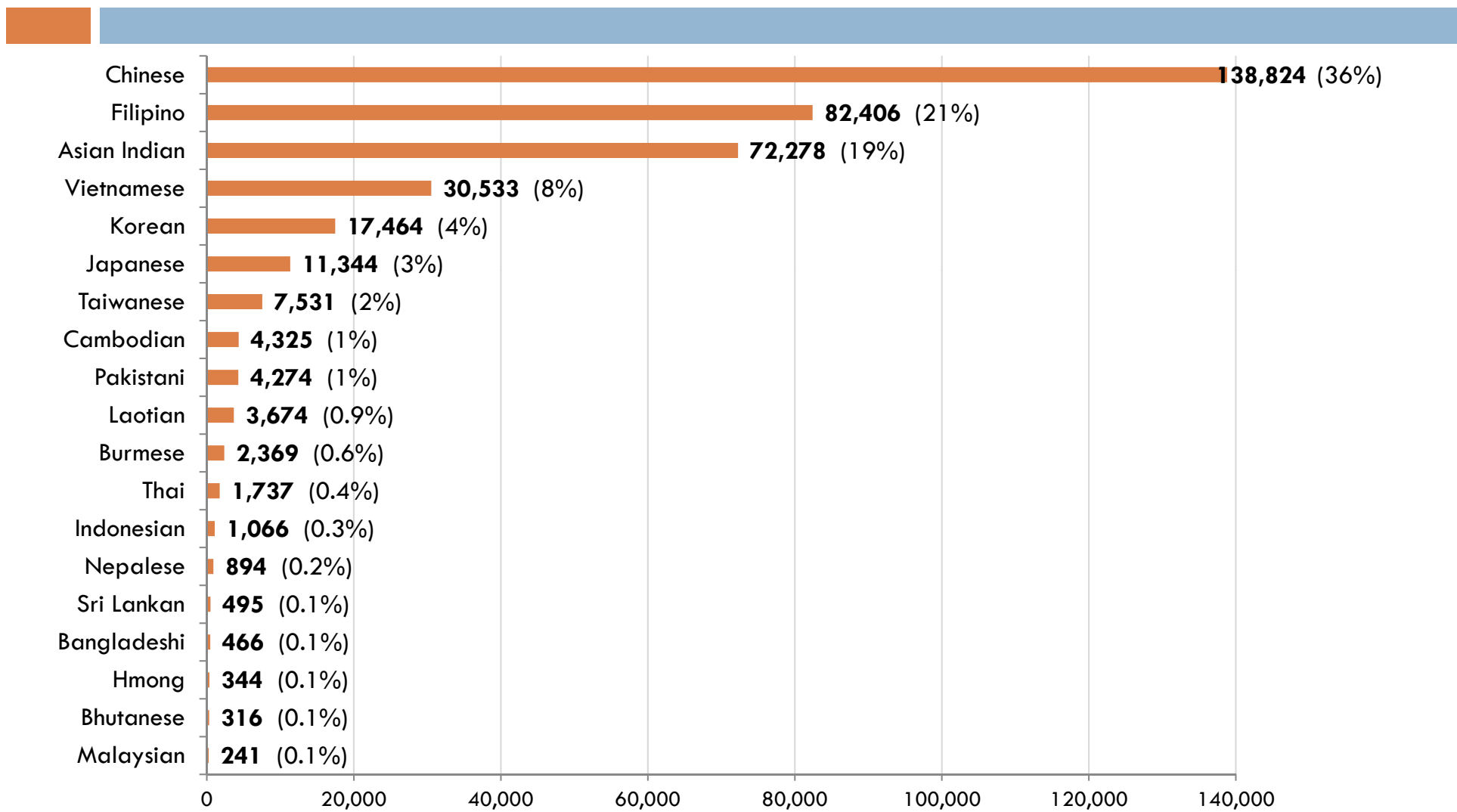
Racial/Ethnic Composition of Population in Alameda County*



Over 1 in 4 residents in Alameda County are Asian or Pacific Islander.

*Population by race includes Non-Hispanic persons identifying as a single race only.
Source: Census, 2010

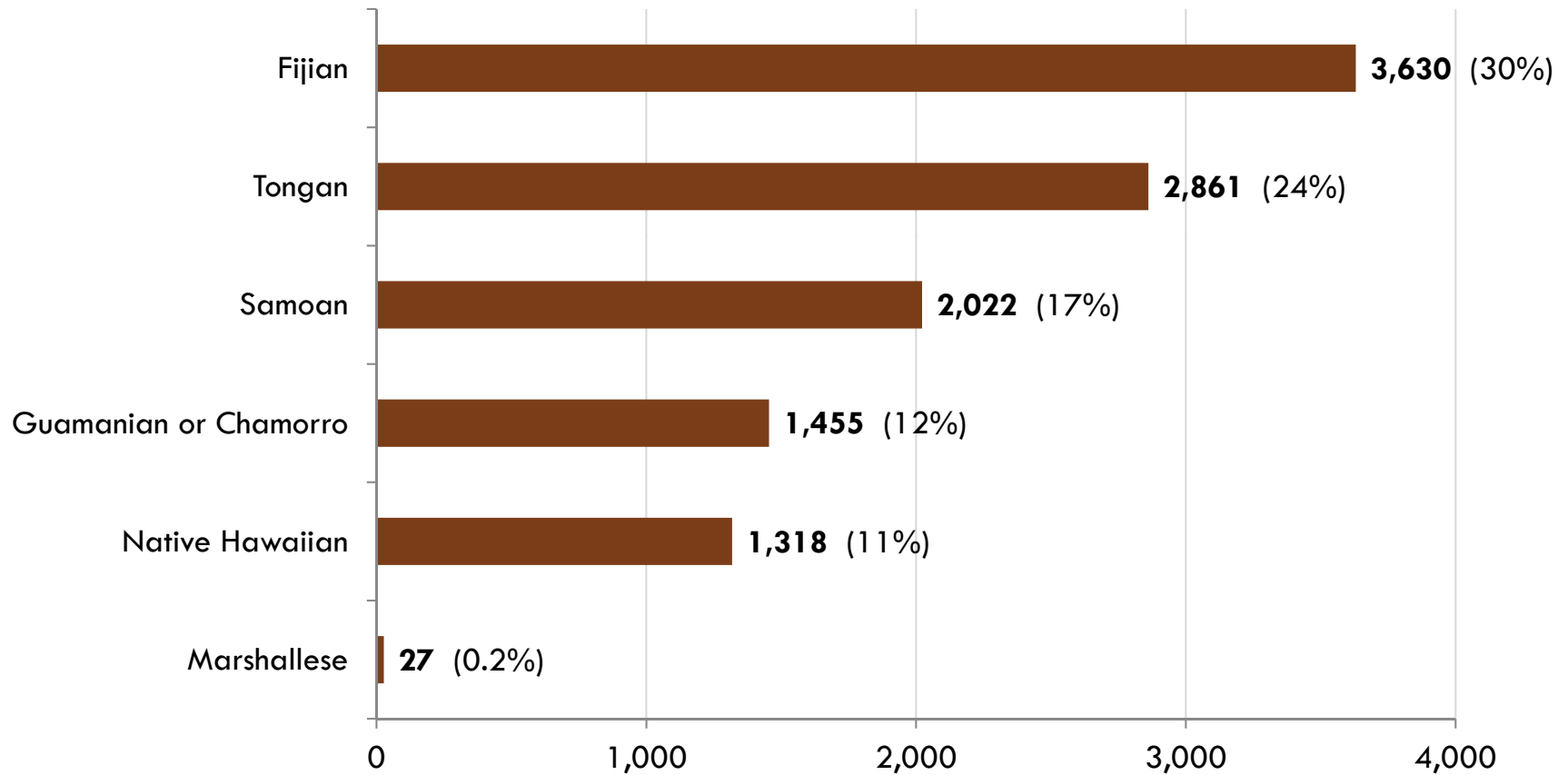
Asian Population Subgroups*, Alameda County



*Counts represent persons identifying as a single Asian subgroup only

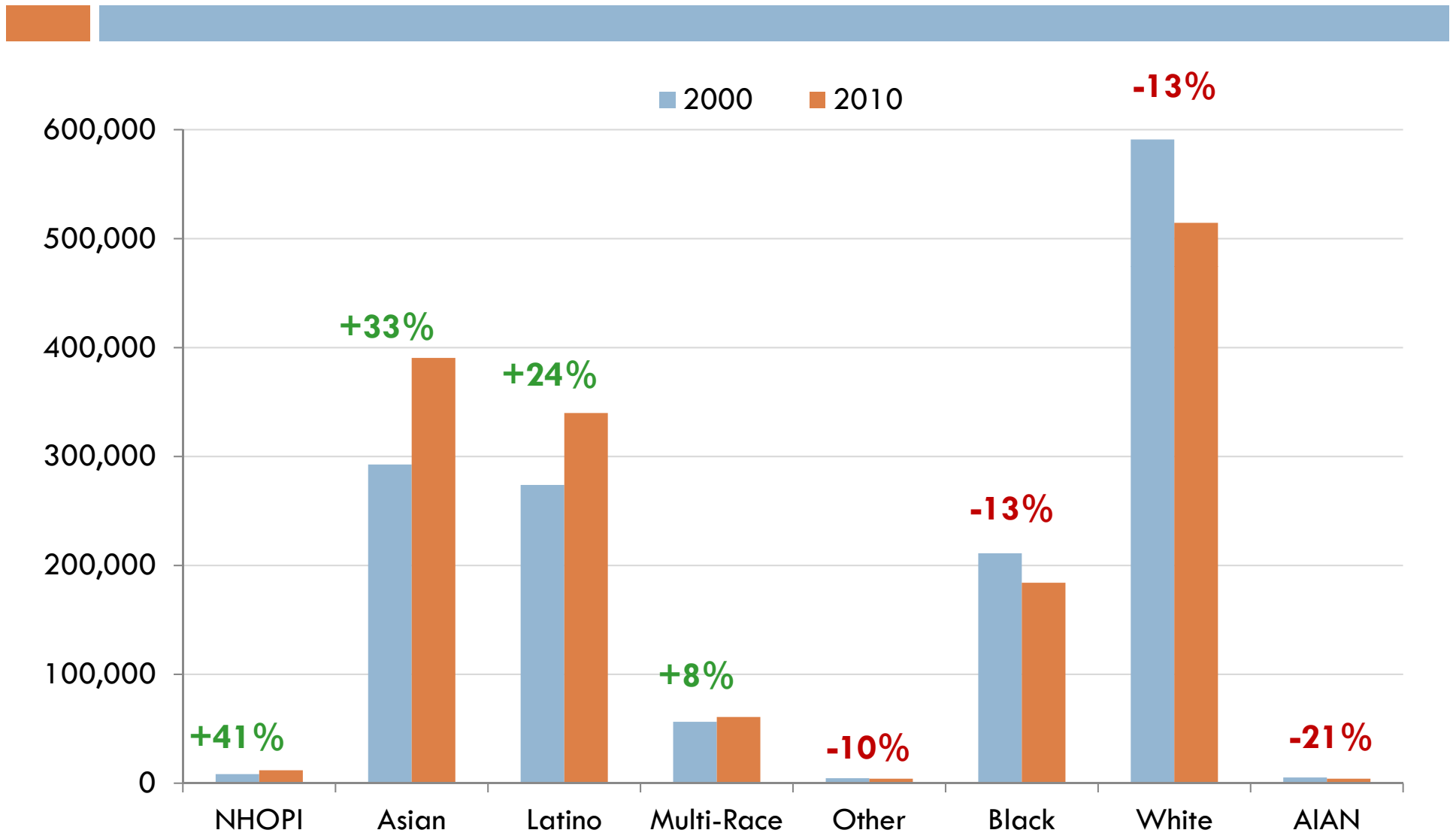
Source: Census, 2010

NHOPI Population Subgroups*, Alameda County



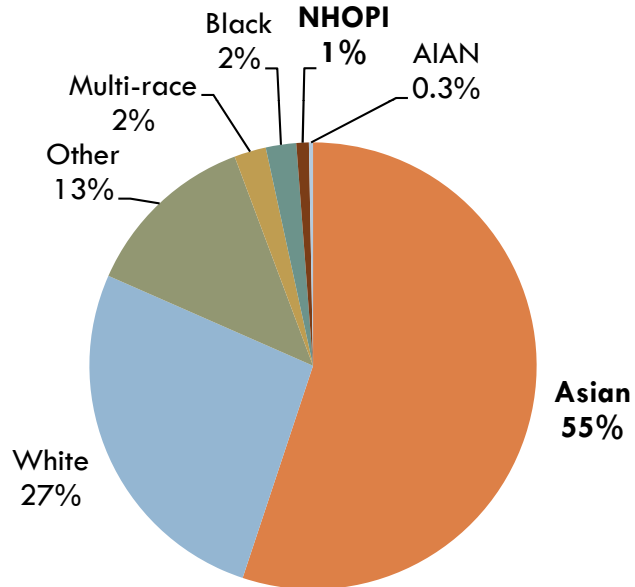
*Counts represent persons identifying as a single NHOPI subgroup only
Source: Census, 2010

2000-2010 Population Changes by Race/Ethnicity, Alameda County



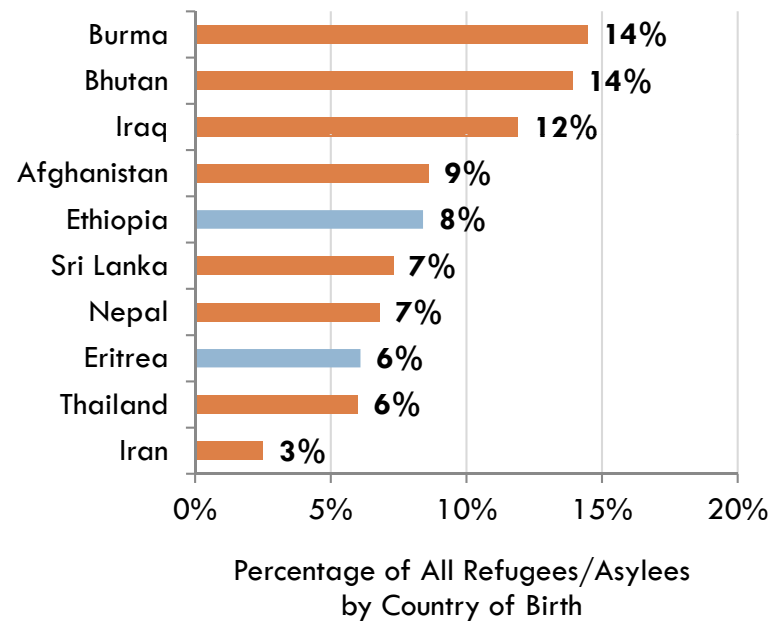
API Immigrant and Refugee Populations in Alameda County

2008-2012 Foreign-Born Population in Alameda County by Race



Over 1 in 2 immigrants in Alameda County are Asian or Pacific Islander.

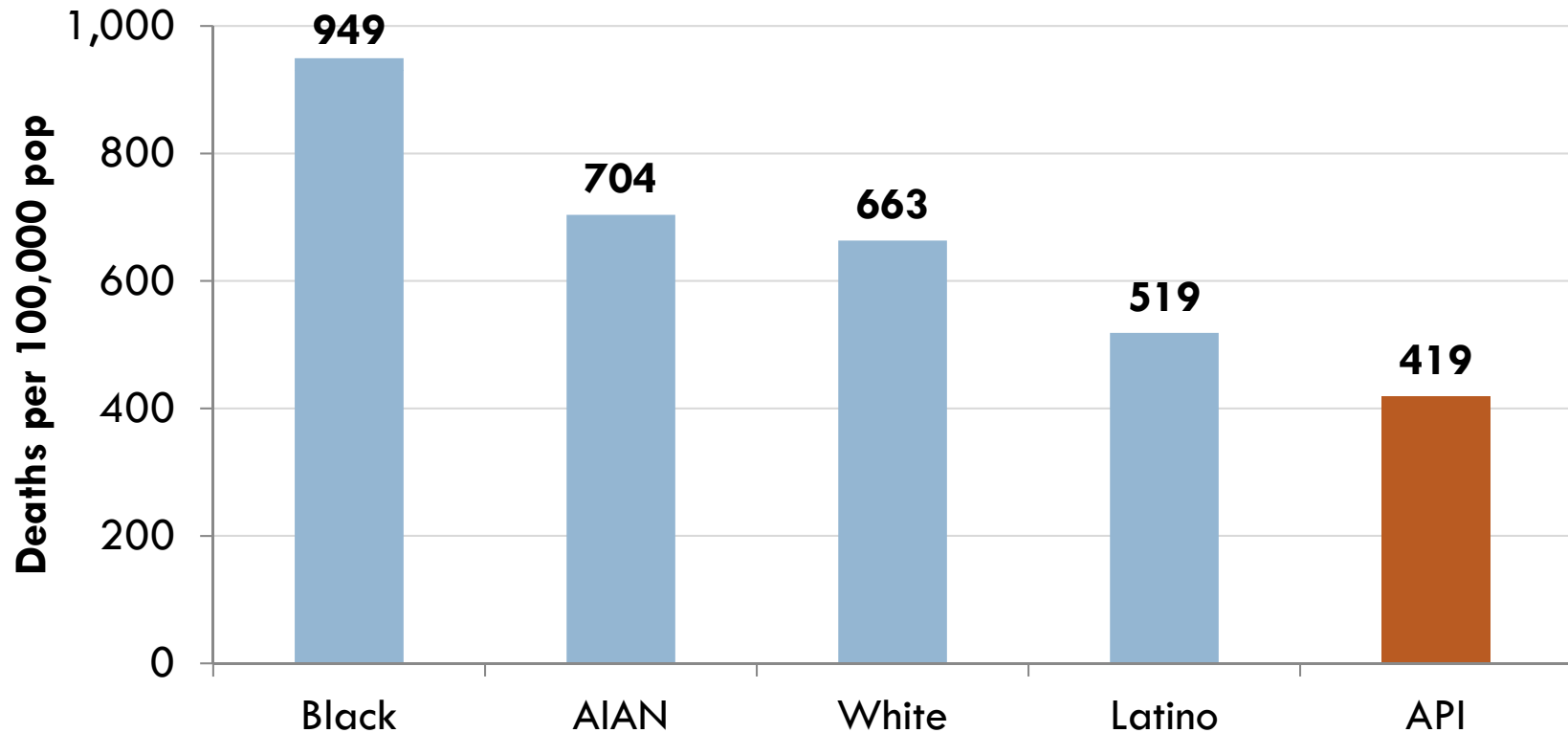
2010-2012 Top 10 Refugee/Asylee Groups Arriving in Alameda County



About 3 in 4 refugees/asylees coming to Alameda County are from Asian countries.

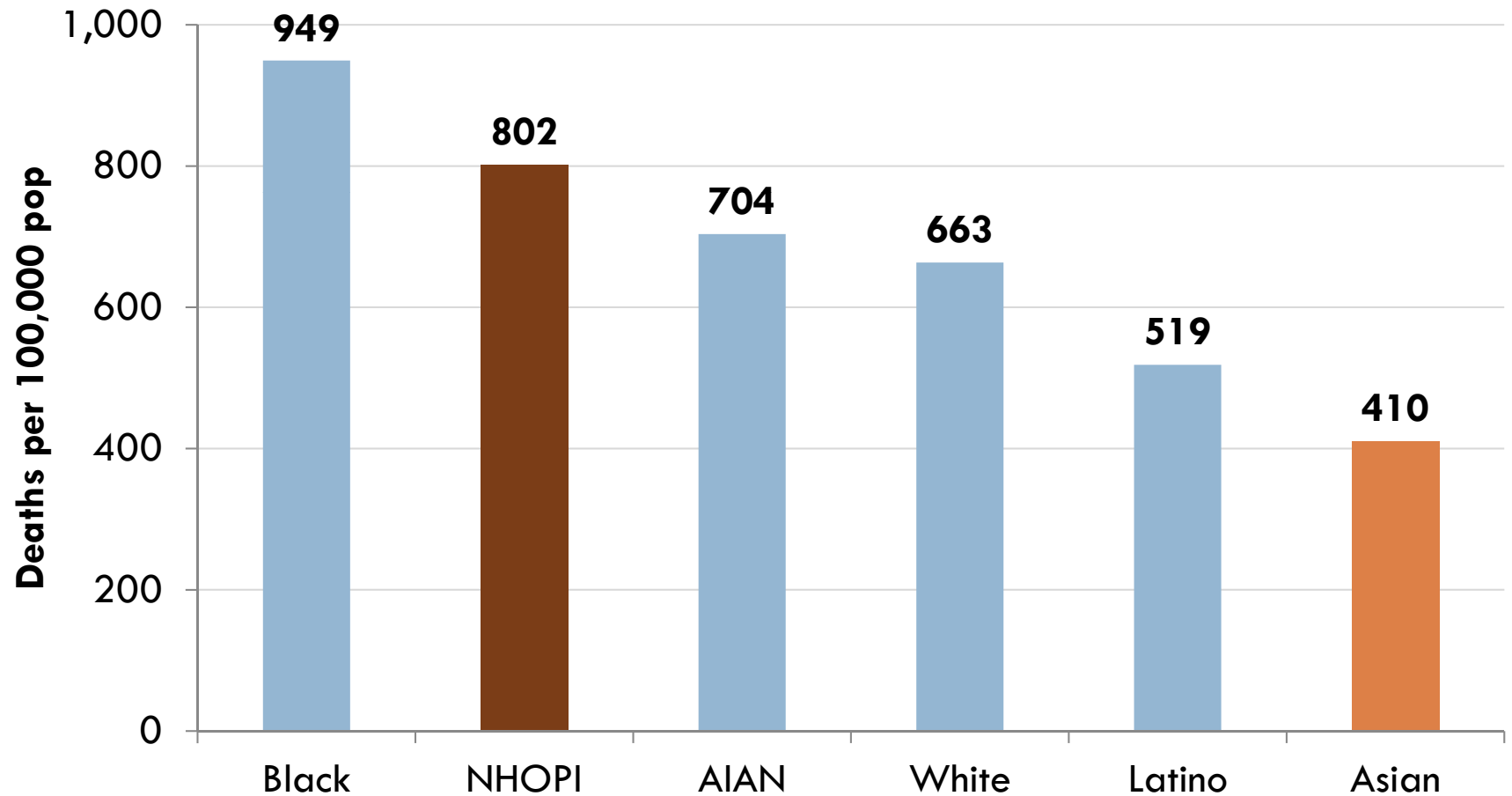
Are All APIs Healthy?

**All-Cause Mortality Rate, Major Racial/Ethnic Groups*
with API combined, Alameda County**



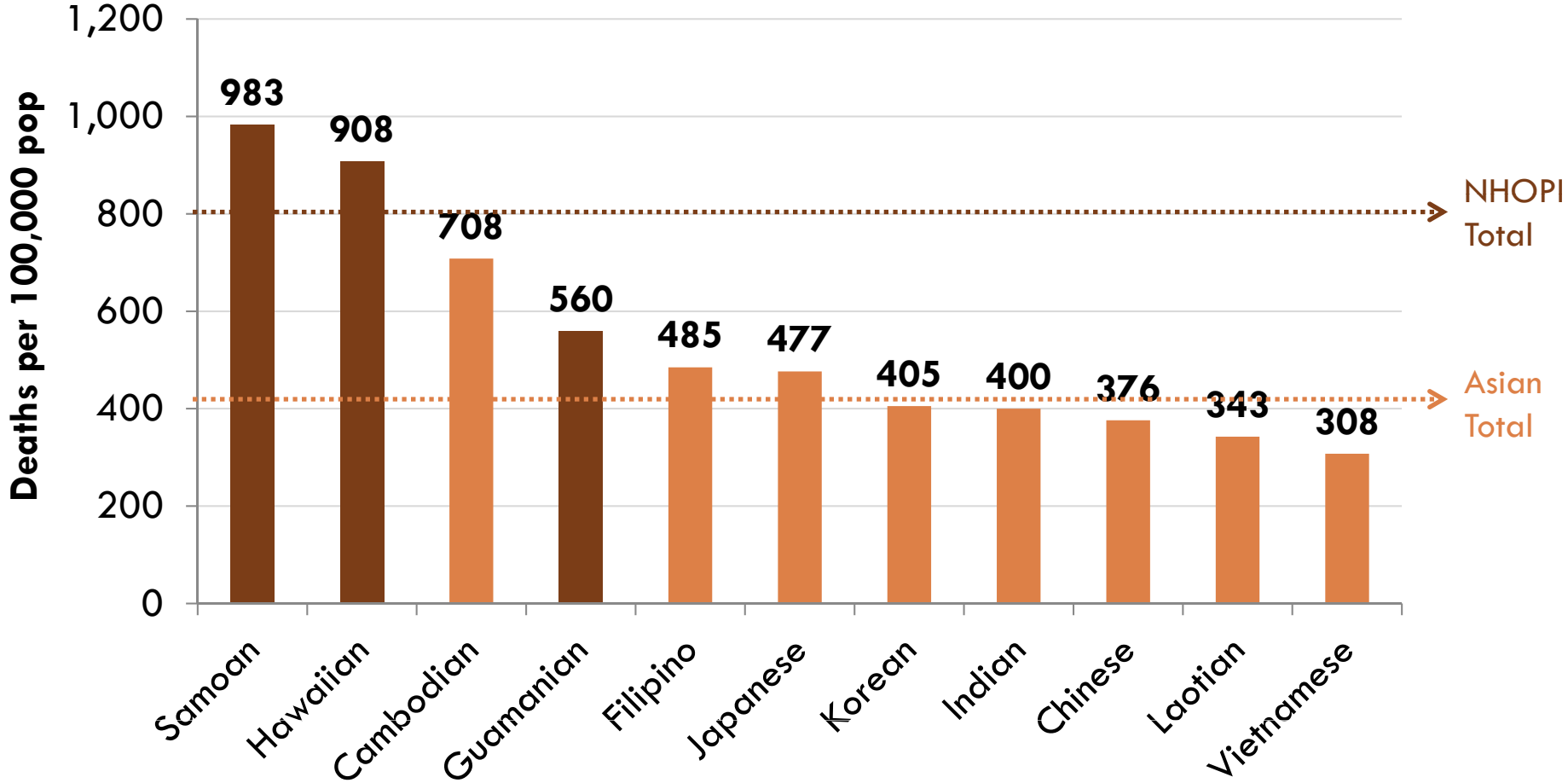
*Data by race includes non-Hispanic persons only
Source: Alameda County Vital Statistics, 2008-2012

All-Cause Mortality Rate, Major Racial/Ethnic Groups*, Alameda County



*Data by race includes non-Hispanic persons only
Source: Alameda County Vital Statistics, 2008-2012

All-Cause Mortality Rate, Larger API Subgroups, Alameda County



Source: Alameda County Vital Statistics, 2008-2012; Census, 2010

Leading Causes of Death among Asians and Pacific Islanders, Alameda County

Asians

	% of All Deaths
1. Cancer	29%
2. Heart Disease	20%
3. Stroke	9%
4. Diabetes	4%
5. Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	3%

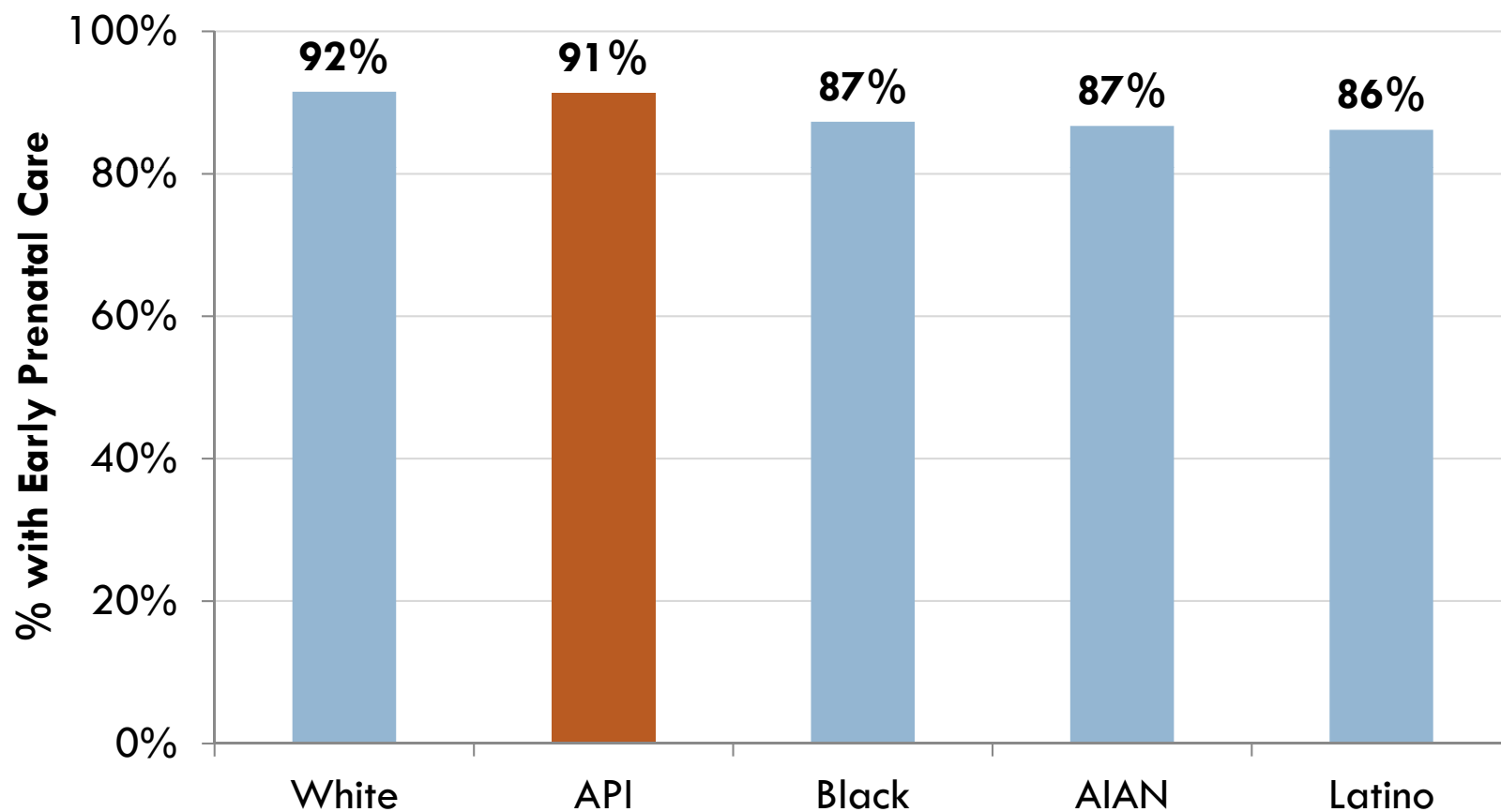
TOP 5 = 65% OF DEATHS

Pacific Islanders

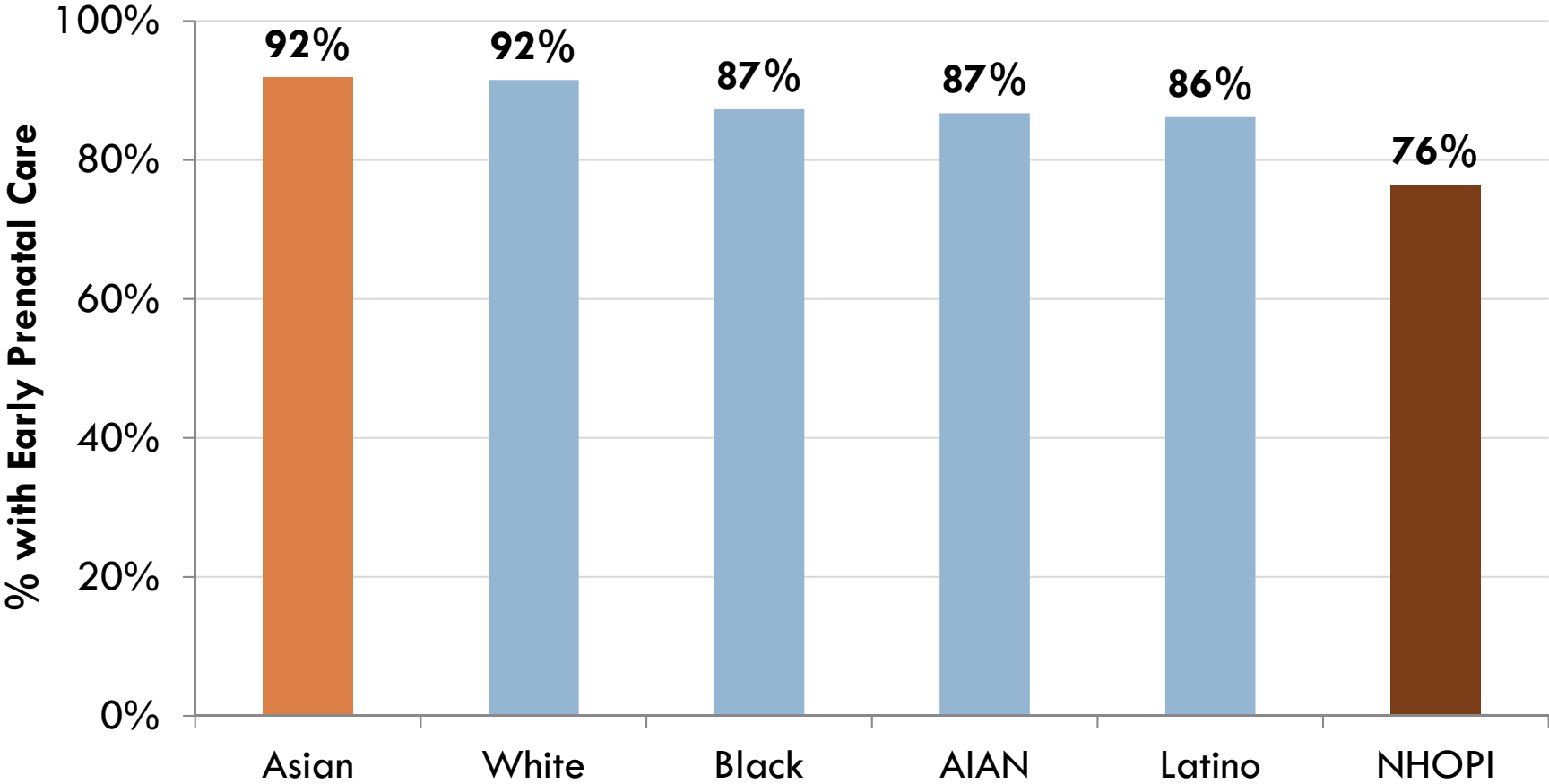
	% of All Deaths
1. Heart Disease	26%
2. Cancer	19%
3. Diabetes	8%
4. Stroke	8%
5. Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	6%

TOP 5 = 67% OF DEATHS

Early Entry into Prenatal Care, Major Racial/Ethnic Groups with API combined, Alameda County

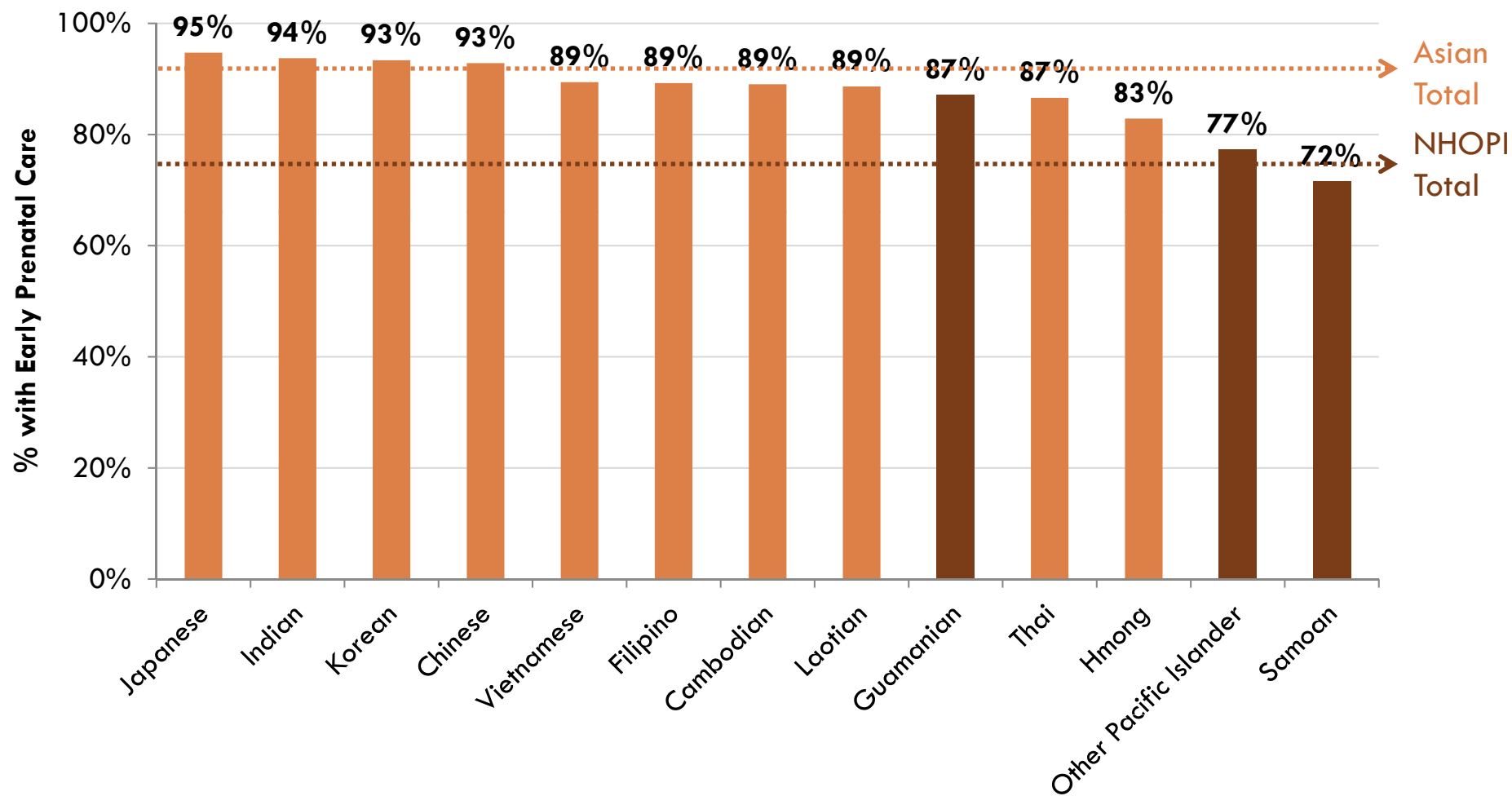


Early Entry into Prenatal Care, Major Racial/Ethnic Groups, Alameda County



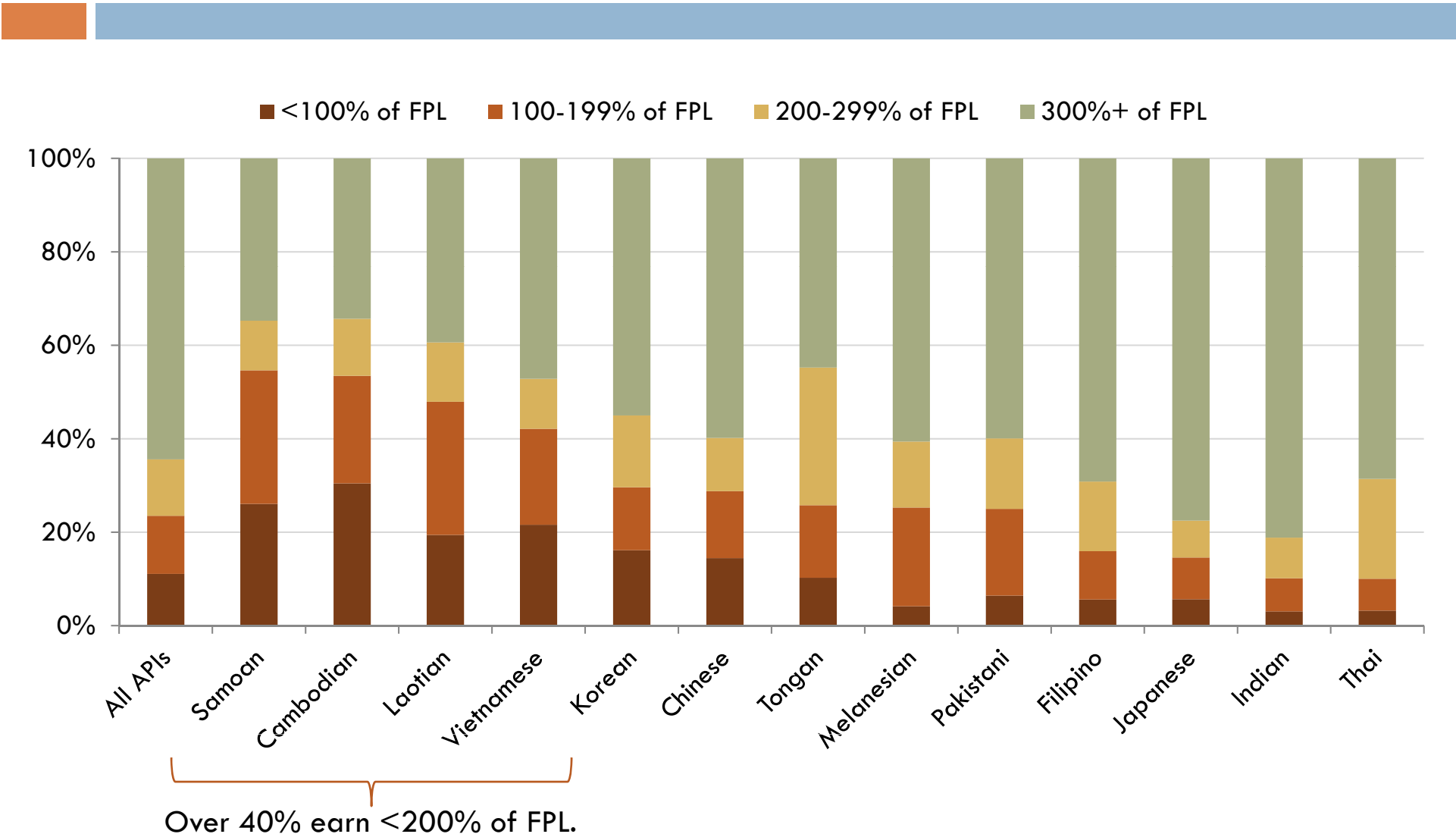
Source: Alameda County Vital Statistics, 2010-2012

Early Entry into Prenatal Care, API Subgroups, Alameda County



Are All APIs Wealthy?

Individual Poverty Levels, Larger API Subgroups, Alameda County



Source: American Community Survey, PUMS data, 2009-2011

Conditions of Neighborhood Poverty among APIs, Alameda County

In Alameda County, almost **1 in 4 NHOPI** residents (23%) live in high-poverty neighborhoods.



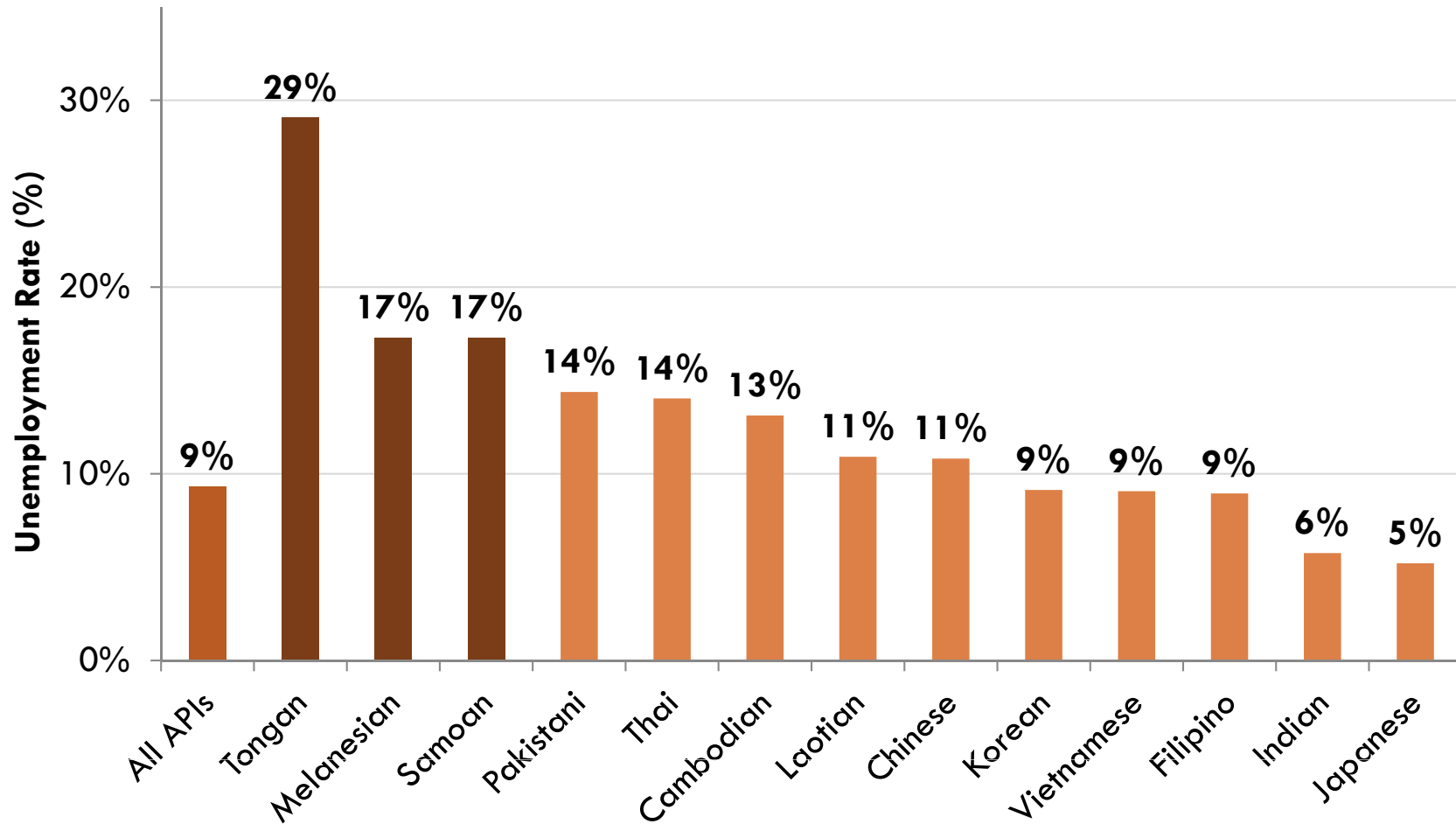
And **1 in 9 Asians** (11%) live in high-poverty neighborhoods.



Compared to **1 in 15 Whites** (7%).

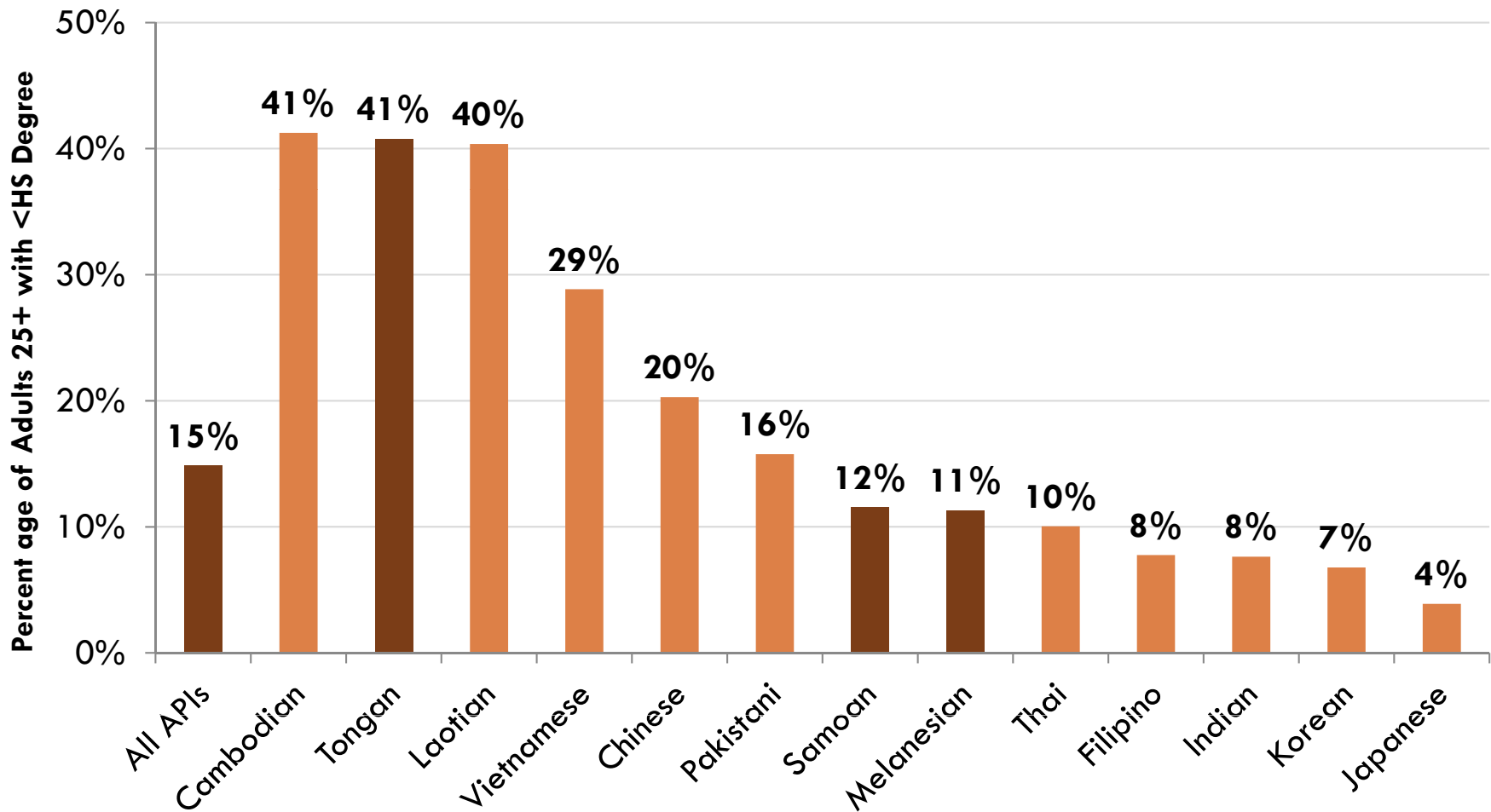


Unemployment Rate among APIs, Alameda County

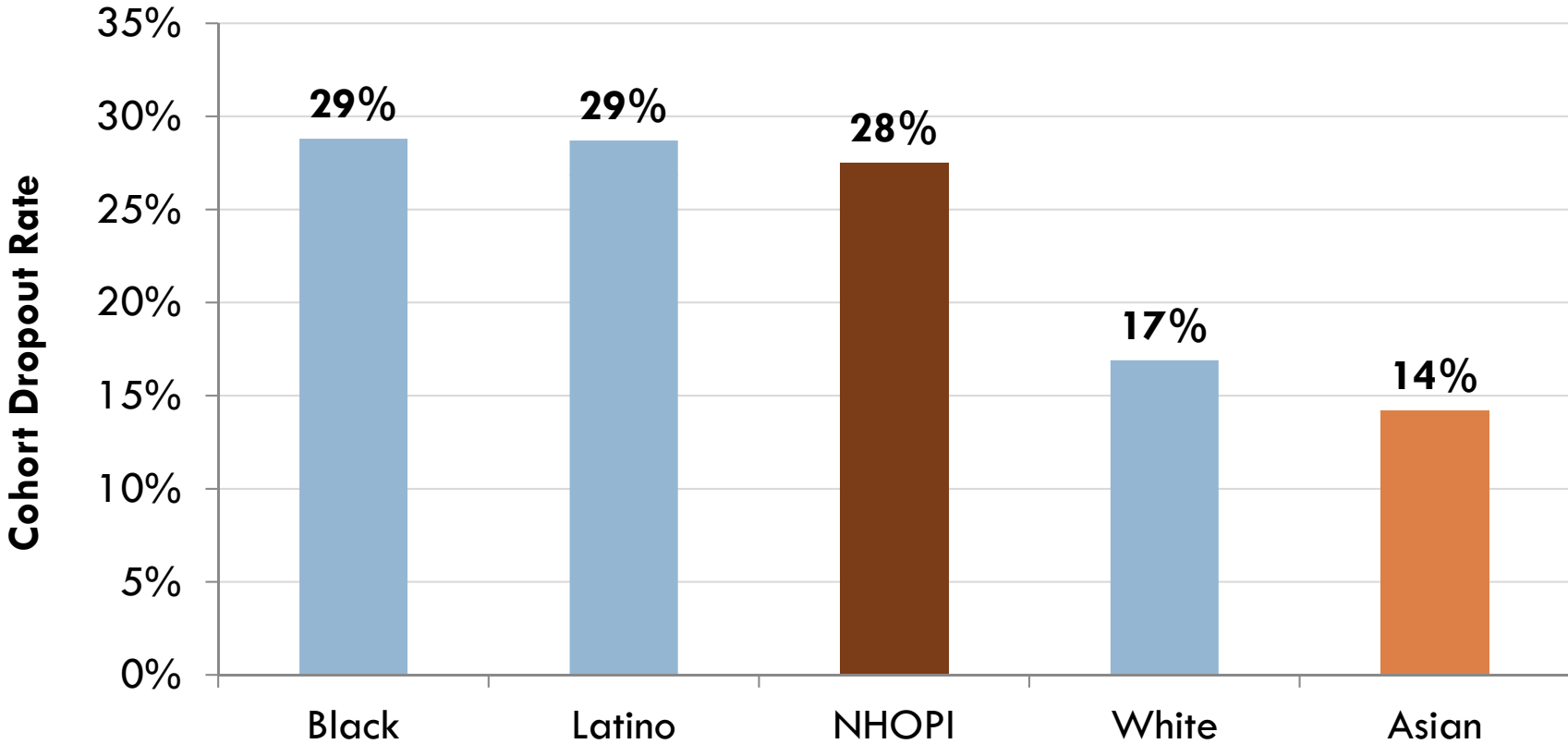


Are All APIs Highly Educated?

Educational Attainment among APIs, Alameda County



Drop-out Rates among Major Racial/Ethnic Groups, Oakland Unified School District



Source: Dataquest, 2011-2012

Why We Must Problematize the API “Model Minority” Myth

- The API “Model Minority” myth is problematic because:
 - ▣ APIs are a very ethnically and socioeconomically diverse group
 - ▣ Many API communities face unjust socio-economic and health barriers and are underserved
 - ▣ The myth ignores the oppressions that APIs share with other communities of color
 - ▣ The myth pits APIs, as the “model minority”, against other people of color who are seen as “problem minorities”
 - ▣ The myth induces inadequacy among APIs who supposedly can’t measure up to idealized standards

Inequities Impact APIs

HEALTH RISKS

MCH

Cancer

Hepatitis B

Tuberculosis

Diabetes

Obesity

Hypertension

Mental Health

HEALTHCARE BARRIERS

Language & cultural barriers

Healthcare discrimination

Lack of insurance

No medical home

Lower rates of screening

Immigration status

Disease stigma

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS

Poverty

**Unemployment &
low wage work**

**Educational barriers
& school drop-out**

Linguistic isolation

INSTITUTIONAL AND SOCIETAL CONTEXT

**History of anti-Asian treatment
& labor exploitation**

**Ongoing discrimination
& institutional racism**

**Marginalization
as “foreigners”**

Anti-immigrant policies

API “model minority” myth