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DOMINICAN DIASPORA



Joseph Khrakshouri

Locals show their island pride at the Dominican Parade.

A proud people branch out beyond New York

By **MERCEDES SANCHEZ**

WITH over half a million *dominicanos* residing in the Big Apple, many islanders have come to see New York as DR's *segunda capital* (second capital), after Santo Domingo of course. Lately, however, the city seems to be only a pit stop for those in search of the American dream.

"In 1970, about 80% of the people who lived in the United States of Dominican ancestry were concentrated in New York City," says Ramona Hernandez, the Director of CUNY's Dominican Institute. "By 1990, that Dominican concentration reduced to about 70% and in 2000, there were 60% concentrated in New York City."

Hernandez conducted the study "Dominicans in the United States: A Socioeconomic Profile" in 2000 alongside Francisco L. Rivera-Batiz of Columbia University.

Driven by economics and a better lifestyle, second- and third-generation *quisqueyanos* are heading out in droves to the North, West and South — to New Jersey, Florida, Massachusetts and Rhode Island — according to Hernandez.

"As long as there are jobs and opportunities, second-generation [New York City] Dominicans are willing to relocate," Hernandez says.

And taking advantage of opportunities is what many of the sons and daughters of the immigrants — who first came to the City in the 1960's — are doing.

The same study found that second-generation Dominicans are excelling in education more than other Latino groups.

"No one believed it; we couldn't believe it [ourselves] when we did our study," recalls Hernandez with excitement. "Second-generation Dominicans, compared to Mexicans and Puerto Ricans, are doing better in terms of education and achievement."

The study — based on Latinos 25 years of age or older born in the U.S. — found that 21.9% of U.S. born-Dominicans have completed college versus 13.3% of Mexicans and 12.1% of Puerto Ricans. Cubans had the highest college completion rate of all Latinos at 36.2%.

"The sons and daughters of immigrants tend to advance through education," says Commissioner Guillermo Linares of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs.

"Their parents have been the icebreakers and work hard to ensure that their children will have a better quality of life here. So the second generation [often] has the basic tools, like English-language skills, to take its careers and community even further."

U.S. DOMINICAN POPULATION

- Alabama: 294
- Alaska: 877
- Arizona: 892
- Arkansas: 93
- California: 5,047
- Colorado: 573
- Connecticut: 9,546
- Delaware: 671
- District of Columbia: 1,496
- Florida: 70,968
- Georgia: 3,233
- Hawaii: 244
- Idaho: 47
- Illinois: 2,934
- Indiana: 645
- Iowa: 155
- Kansas: 202
- Kentucky: 310
- Louisiana: 940
- Maine: 214
- Maryland: 5,596
- Massachusetts: 49,913
- Michigan: 2,236
- Minnesota: 477
- Mississippi: 190
- Missouri: 542
- Montana: 46
- Nebraska: 129
- Nevada: 869
- New Hampshire: 1,480
- New Jersey: 102,630
- New Mexico: 147
- New York: 455,061
- North Carolina: 2,865
- North Dakota: 28
- Ohio: 1,968
- Oklahoma: 269
- Oregon: 178
- Pennsylvania: 12,186
- Rhode Island: 17,894
- South Carolina: 721
- South Dakota: 26
- Tennessee: 527
- Texas: 4,296
- Utah: 352
- Vermont: 87
- Virginia: 3,497
- Washington: 661
- West Virginia: 70
- Wisconsin: 612
- Wyoming: 11
- Puerto Rico: 56,146

SOURCE: According to the U.S. Census 2000

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