Governor's Office

MARYLAND

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

"reaching out to all of Maryland's communities"

Governor's Commission on African Affairs

2013 Annual Report

MISSION STATEMENT

The Governor's Commission on African Affairs serves as an advisory board to the Governor and agencies within the Executive Department on matters relating to the African Diaspora of Maryland, including matters relating to economic, workforce and business development.

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State of Maryland
Office of the Governor

A MESSAGE FROM GOVERNOR MARTIN O'MALLEY

Dear Friends,

For the past five years, the Governor's Commission on African Affairs has served the O'Malley/Brown Administration and advised on issues pertaining to the growing African Diaspora in our great state. The Commission members and staff have worked diligently to promote community, business and workforce development.

This year, the Commission focused on engaging the Diaspora in the Maryland legislative session. In addition to becoming more civically engaged I am pleased to share the partnership between the Governor's Commissions on African and Caribbean Affairs to help promote legislation which impacts both communities.

I encourage the Governor's Ethnic Commissions to work together for the betterment and advancement of our One Maryland. The Governor's Commission on African Affairs has demonstrated their commitment to these partnerships.

I am pleased to present you with the Commission's 2013 Annual Report.

Sincerely,

Martin O'Malley
Governor

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

The Governor's Office of Community Initiatives (GOCI) coordinates community and volunteer activities statewide and advises the Governor on policies to enhance and improve community programs. This Office also oversees the work of the Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism, Volunteer Maryland and community affairs services within the Executive Branch of Maryland government. Additionally, GOCI coordinates outreach to ethnic communities across Maryland, overseeing the Governor's Office and Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Affairs, the Governor's Commission on African Affairs, the Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs, the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs, and the Governor's Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs.

As a Governor's Coordinating Office, GOCI is able to engage the resources of multiple State agencies and coordinate policy and activities related to community initiatives. By creating the Governor's Commission on African Affairs, Governor O'Malley has affirmed his strong commitment to the African Diaspora.

Under the leadership of Chair Valentina Ukwuoma, Vice Chair Jewru Bandeh and Assistant Director Iman Awad, The Governor's Commission on African Affairs has already become an integral part of the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives. Together, we expect to make great strides toward ensuring greater access and opportunities for Africans living in Maryland. In order to achieve this goal, we will continue to reach out to the community, engage key stakeholders, and mobilize participation in support of community initiatives.

Israel C. "Izzy" Patoka, Executive Director
Governor's Office of Community Initiatives

MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSION CHAIR

It is my pleasure to present to you the Governor's Commission on African Affair's 2013 *Annual Report.* In an effort to continue moving our initiatives forward and expanding on the success of the previous years the Commission focused its efforts towards building a stronger and more dynamic work plan to better meet the needs and concerns of the Maryland African diaspora.

During 2013, the Commission was pleased to work with the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs, under the leadership of Chairman Ambassador Curtis Ward. The Commissions on African and Caribbean Affairs joined together to celebrate the 2013 Maryland Legislative Session. Our goal was to engage our community members on issues pertaining to legislation which would affect our communities. Sharing similar needs and concerns it was an opportunity to bridge the two commissions efforts together.

Following the legislative session, the Commission recognized the need to have a better and more detailed report on the diaspora here in Maryland. In this regard, the Commission spent much of its time working on compiling data using the U.S. Census Bureau to capture demographically information. This information can be found in at the end of the report. The information is also available on our website: www.african.maryland.gov.

The Commission is looking forward to continuing our work plan in 2014 and we want to express our appreciation for the consistent community support and look forward to further growing our relationships with our community and continuing our work in Maryland.

Best Wishes,

Valentina Ukwuoma
Chairwoman
Governor's Commission on African Affairs

COMMISSIONERS

Valentina Ukwuoma, Chair (Nigerian, Howard County)
- Head Bureau of Solid Waste, Department of Public Works, Baltimore City

Jewru Bandeh, Vice Chair (Gambian, Montgomery County)
- Operations Manager, CUPF/Silver Spring Civic Building and Veterans Plaza
- NAACP, Montgomery County
- Gambian American Association

Alex Agwuna (Nigerian, Howard County)
- Vice President, Meridian Management Group, Inc.
- Member, Board of Directors for Universal Surgical Associates
- Member, Board of Directors, Friendship Association Education Assistance, Inc.

Kwaku Agyemang-Duah (Ghanaian, Talbot County)
- Transportation Planner, Department of Transportation, City of Annapolis
- Member, American Planning Association

Ollie Anderson (Prince George's County)
- President and Founder, Anderson International, LLC
- Co-Founder and Chairman, Board of the New Initiatives Community Development Corporation
- Member, Prince George's Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors

Tebabu Assefa (Ethiopian, Montgomery County)
- Social Marketing and Media Consultant, Trees for the Future
- Member of the Montgomery County Executive's African Affairs Advisory Group
- Board Member, Takoma Foundation

Nicholas Azinge, M.D. (Nigerian, Prince George's County)
- Medical Director, Greenbelt Medical Associates

Mumin Barre (Somalian, Montgomery County)
- Litigation Case, The Travelers Property Casualty Insurance Company
- President, Somali Diaspora Network
- Co-Chair, Montgomery County Executives African Affairs Advisory Group

Sarian Bouma (Sierra Leonean, Anne Arundel County)
- CEO, Sianna Productions
- Board Member, African American Business Women's Association
- Co-Host, "Heart of a Winner" Radio Show

Watchen Harris Bruce (Liberian, Baltimore City)
- Vice President & Business Banker, PNC Bank
- Member, Maryland Liberia Sister City Committee

Sylvester Ezeani (Nigerian, Prince George's County)
- Senior Network Engineer, Government of the District of Columbia
- Member, National Certified Public Manager (CPM) Consortium
- Member, Board of Directors, Friendship Association Education Assistance, Inc.

Yonnas Kefle, Ph.D. (Ethiopian, Frederick County)
- Adjunct Professor of Economics, Frederick Community College
- Second Vice President, Literacy Council of Frederick County
- Economic Development Chair, Frederick County Branch of NAACP

Alfred Nkere (Congolese, Baltimore County)
- Managing Director, East International Holdings
- Member, Baltimore Chapter of African Chamber of Commerce

Joseph Offoha (Nigerian, Baltimore County)
- Nurse, St. Joseph Medical Center

Chukwuma Okeke, Pharm. D. (Nigerian, Baltimore County)
- Owner and Pharmacist, Broadway Pharmacy, LLC
- Treasurer, African Alliance Group
- Member, Ihitte-Uboma Association of Maryland

Anthony Okolo (Nigerian, Prince George's County)
- Program Manager, Prince George's County
- Department of Public Works and Transportation

Modupe Oladapo (Nigerian, Baltimore City)
- Student Services Representative, Community College of Baltimore County
- Member, WGTS 91.9 Radio Station Dream Team

Adetoun Olumide (Nigerian, Baltimore County)
- Legislative Aide, Delegate Shirley Nathan-Pulliam
- President, Nigerian Youth Association of Maryland
- Secretary, Baltimore Chapter of the African Chamber of Commerce

Eva Shaw-Taylor
- Contracts Specialist, Division of the Department of Homeland Security
- Senior Grants and Contracts Manager, University Research Company, LLC
- Vice President, American Association of Grant Professionals, National Chapter

Mamadou Sy (Mauritanian, Baltimore City)
- Baltimore Metro Area Program Coordinator, Lutheran Social Services of the National
- Capital Area

Paschal Udumukwu (Nigerian, Baltimore County)
- President and CEO, High Point Construction, LLC
- President and Founder, African Alliance Group

Staff

Iman Awad
Administrative Director

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Governor's Commission on African Affairs was signed into executive order by Governor Martin O'Malley on May 14, 2009. As charged by the order the 21-member appointed Commission serves a 4-year term at the pleasure of the Governor. In this regard, 2013 marked the first transition for the Commission. As the Commission served the first 4-year term, this past year of the Commission focused on rebuilding, restructuring and reassessing our work plan.

The work done by the Commission over the past 4-years has provided a basis on how to redirect our efforts to better and most efficiently address the community's needs and concerns. In addition, the Commission welcomed a new initiative in 2013 in partnership with the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs. The two Commissions hosted the first *African and Caribbean Legislative Night* in the House of Delegates located in Annapolis. Guests were given the opportunity to meet with elected officials and community leaders who attended the event, including Governor O'Malley.

The *Legislative Night* initiative has allowed for our community to become more civically engaged and to network with their elected officials. In this regard, we are hoping that on local levels our community can find their needs and concerns addressed quickly. Primarily the legislative focus in 2013 was for the Firearms Safety Act and Death Penalty Reversal. The Commission stood with the O'Malley/Brown Administration in protecting the dignity of every individual and supported the Administration's position for their legislative agenda.

Following the first legislative night the Commission worked in 2013 to collect better data on the demographic information of the Diaspora. Utilizing the U.S. Census Bureau the Commission was able to extract data which reflects population, housing, social and economic characteristics of the community, which is outlined at the end of the report.

Moving forward, the Commission will work closely with our community and the Governor's Office to restructure the appointments as the first term comes to a close. The Commission is committed to appointing an ethnically, gender, and county representation diverse Commission. In addition, with the lessons learned from the previous 4-year term and looking ahead in the O'Malley/Brown Administration the Commission will work towards tailoring a dynamic work plan to most efficiently address the African Diaspora needs and concerns.

COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

As charged by the Executive Order, the Governor's Commission on African Affairs serves a four year term. In 2013 as the Commission welcomed new Commissioners Chairwoman Valentina Ukwuoma and Vice Chairman Jewru Bandeh took the opportunity to lead the Commission into a new, dynamic work plan.

Education & Cultural Taskforce

Vision

This subcommittee taskforce will focus on:

- Collecting and evaluating resources and data available on African students in Maryland
- Identify successful programs and best practices in addressing African students needs
- Develop cultural programs to raise awareness on African history and culture
- Promote language access and literacy
- Introduce cultural educational programs in school and the workplace

Business & Community Empowerment Taskforce

This subcommittee taskforce will focus on:

- Identifying resources to help promote and grow African businesses
- Work with the Office on Minority Business Enterprise to proliferate African MBEs and also to graduate businesses to primary contractors
- Develop and conduct business workshops for the African business community

Legislative & Advisory Taskforce

This subcommittee taskforce will focus on:

- Identifying bills of interest during legislative session
- Educating the community on important bills and the Administrative plan
- Issuing legislative alerts
- Organizing an annual Legislative Night

Identifying any legislative proposals coming from the African community

Health & Quality of Life Taskforce

This subcommittee taskforce will focus on:

- Identify programs and policies to enhance the health and quality of life of the African community
- Working with state agencies to improve data collection and include immigrant Africans
- Ensuring access to health care and educating the community on programs to enhance health and quality of life
- Ensuring access to quality and culturally competent health care
- Conducting research on language access and identify needs in African Community

Outreach Committee

This subcommittee taskforce will focus on:

- Branding the Commission
- Marketing
- Education the Community on the work of the Commission

JOINT AFRICAN AND CARIBBEAN LEGISLATIVE NIGHT

The Governor's Ethnic Commissions in an effort to promote joint efforts brought together the Governor's Commission on African Affairs and the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs for their inaugural Legislative Night in Annapolis. Hosted by both Commissions at the Maryland House of Delegates the Legislative Night brought over 75 guests together to learn more about the 2013 Legislative Agenda.

In effort to engage the African community in Maryland's legislative affairs the Commission's inaugural event focused on the key legislative items which coincided with the Administration's agenda and areas which would impact the African Diaspora. Specifically, the areas which were focused on were:

- **Maryland Firearm Safety Act of 2013**

  This legislation focused on the banning on military-style assault weapons, a limit on the capacity of a magazine from 20 to 10 rounds and requires licensing, fingerprinting and safety training to purchase a handgun.

  The Commission strongly believes in the safety of all Marylanders and supported the O'Malley/ Brown Administration in their efforts to regulate the purchasing, licensing and use of guns in Maryland.

- **Enhanced School Security**

  As the African community in Maryland is heavily family oriented this legislation focusing on increasing safety at our children's school was very important. The bill proposed $24 million of school construction dollars to school security enhancements. Initiatives included cameras at entrances, automatic locking doors, shatterproof glass and buzzer entrance systems.

- **Death Penalty Repeal**

  In 2008, the Maryland Commission on Capital Punishment, led by former United States Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti, found that for every 8.7 Americans sent to death row, there has been one innocent person exonerated. It was near unanimous in reporting that "the administration of the death penalty clearly shows racial bias." It determined that no administrative fixes could end these disparities and that the cost to taxpayers of pursuing a capital case is three times as much as the costs of pursuing a non-death penalty homicide conviction, where a person receives a life sentence without parole. The data shows that the death penalty is expensive and does not work. This proposal would end this inefficient procedure, preserve the option of life without parole for the most serious offenders, and appropriate the savings to aid survivors of homicide victims.

- **Public-Private Partnership**

  This legislation will make the public-private partnership (P3) process in our state more predictable, streamlined, transparent, and attractive to private investment while ensuring strong workforce protections and maintaining control of State assets. Specifically, the bill amends the definition of a P3 and focuses on partnerships and the delivery of assets. The bill also creates processes for identifying P3 projects, evaluating P3 projects, and provides for legislative oversight of P3 projects. The bill is prospective and is revenue neutral. Initial estimates have found that additional P3s could contribute between six percent and ten percent of Maryland's $3.1 billion annual capital budget while creating as many as 4,000 jobs.

The Governor's Commission on African Affairs was honored to work in partnership with the Governor's Commission on Caribbean Affairs for the inaugural Legislative Night. The Commission is grateful to the leadership of Chairman Ambassador Curt Ward and looks forward to future mutually beneficial events.

AFRICAN COMMISSION MEETING MEET AND GREET

On August 3, 2013, the Governor's Commission on African Affairs hosted over 65 members of the African Maryland community attended in Silver Spring. The half day program provided an opportunity for the Commission to meet with various community organizations and leaders. In addition to meeting the community, the Commission hosted a program discussing issues of health, immigration and civic engagement.

Dr. Carlessia Hussein and Dr. David Mann provided an overview of the Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities specifically focusing on statistics of minority health. The power point presentation will be made available to attendees. In addition, Uma Alhuwalia went further into detail of the affordable care act. Information about the affordable care act will also be made available to attendees. Devang Shah, Attorney and fellow Commissioner serving on the Governor's Commission on South Asian Affairs discussed the impact of immigration reform. Specifically providing an overview of the barriers which are being addressed and how congress is attempting to streamline the road to citizenship. The Commission was also honored to host Congressman Jon Sarbanes and Montgomery County Executive Ike Leggett who also participated in the meeting.

The Commission is working towards hosting larger events to discuss issues and concerns of the African Diaspora in Maryland. Utilizing the program from 2013 the Commission with its newly appointed members is working to continue this dialog and host more events which bring our community and state agencies together.

AFRICAN YEARLY REVIEW

Death Penalty Repeal Signing

Cross River State Sister State

January 9, 2013
Africa Can Help Feed Africa: Removing Regional Barriers

In an effort to connect with the African Diaspora in Maryland and District of Columbia, the Governor's Commission on African Affairs participated in the charitable event discussing the issues and concerns of famine on the African continent. As many of the Commissioners serving the Governor represent various organizations reaching back to the African continent, the Commission leadership supports participations in dialog which would bring opportunities for a mutually beneficial relationship between Africa and Maryland.

January 19, 2013
Banneker Douglass Museum MLK Day Celebration

The Governor's Commission on African Affairs is fortunate to have a strong relationship with the Governor's Commission on African American History and Culture. Every year the Commission joins the Banneker Douglass Museum and the Governor's Commission on African American History and Culture for their annual MLK Day Celebration. The Commission was honored to join the two organizations in celebration of the late Martin Luther King, Jr. and looks forward to continuing a strong partnership in future initiatives.

January 30, 2013
Governor's State of the State Address

Every year the Governor's Ethnic Commission leadership and fellow agency representatives join Governor Martin O'Malley for his State of the State Address. By participating in Annapolis for the address the Commission is able to get a better sense of the direction of the Administration and can align their work to the goals for the year for the state.

June 6, 2013
Memorandum of Understanding – Nigerian Sister State

Governor Martin O'Malley along with the Governor of Ondo State, Nigeria met in Annapolis to finalize and legitimize the Sister State relationship between Maryland and Ondo State. Participating in the program was Secretary of State, John P. McDonough and Commission Chair Valentina Ukwuoma. Maryland already has a relationship to Bong State, Liberia and the Commission is supportive of all future beneficial programs to link Maryland to Africa.

June 21, 2013
Commission Tour of the Baltimore International Resettlement Center

In an effort to familiarize the Commission with various resources around the state, the Commission

Ondo Sister State

met with and toured the Baltimore International Resettlement Center. Every year, thousands of refugees are invited by the U.S. government and Baltimore is one of the first stops for many of those seeking refuge. The Center offers programs to assist newly arrived refugees with housing, access to health care, education and also job placement and recruitment assistance.

September 20, 2013
Africa Brain Trust Event

The Governor's Commission on African Affairs participated in the Africa Brain Trust event hosted by Representative Karen Bass. The full day event discussed topics ranging from civic engagement, business resources and means to expand policy to Africa. The Commission was thrilled to see former Commissioner, Mr. Tebabu Assefa, as a member of one of the event panels. Specifically he discussed the initiatives in Takoma Park which are creating mutually beneficial programs between the municipality and Ethiopia.

November 25, 2013
African Symposium with Mayor Vincent Gray

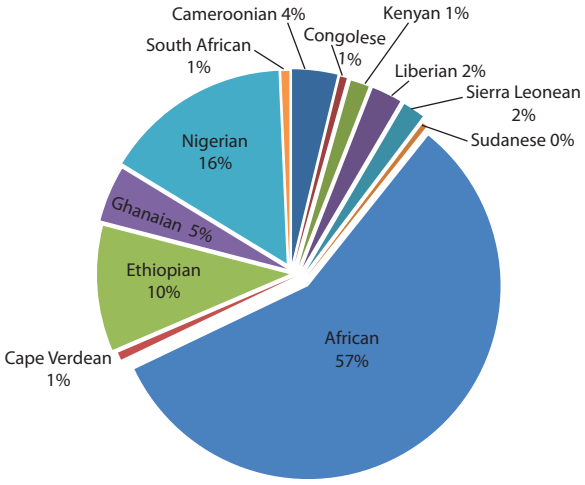
As part of 2013's initiatives to connect with various African organizations the Commission developed a strong partnership with the Office of African Affairs in Washington, DC. In an effort to build on the relationship the Commission participated in their all day symposium which discussed the role of the Office of African Affairs along with resources made available to the Diaspora in the City. The Commission hopes to continue with this partnership and to host a symposium in Maryland which can also address the needs and concerns of the Diaspora in the district.

MARYLAND DEMOGRAPHICS

As an effort to get a better snap shot of the African Diaspora in Maryland the Commission has pulled data from the American Community Survey to better understand the community. The following graphs depict the information from the American Community Survey. But, the Commission would like to emphasize that these are merely estimates. There is an initiative to include the Immigrant African community as a separate subgroup in the U.S. Census to get a better count, but in the mean time this is the closest data for the use of the Commission:

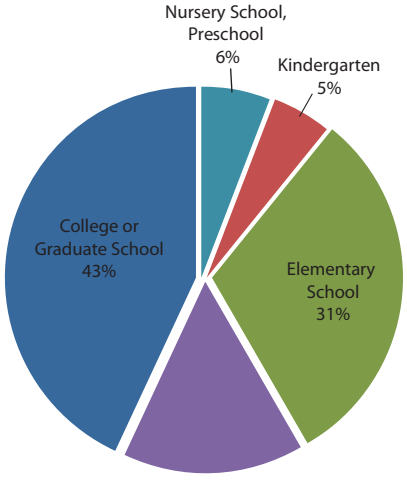
Total Population

Kenyan	2,458
Liberian	4,007
Sierra Leonean	2,915
Sudanese	661
African	90,411
Cape Verdean	1,022
Ethiopian	16,574
Ghanaian	7,373
Nigerian	24,687
South African	1,076
Total Population	166,883



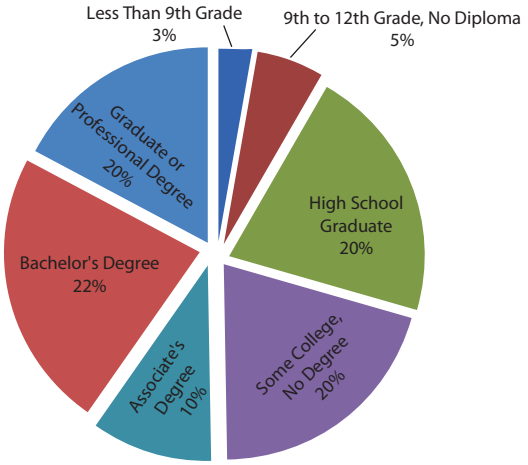
School Enrollment

Population 3 Years and Over	58,269
Nursery School, Preschool	3550
Kindergarten	2,883
Elementary School	17,933
High School	8,824
College or graduate school	25,079



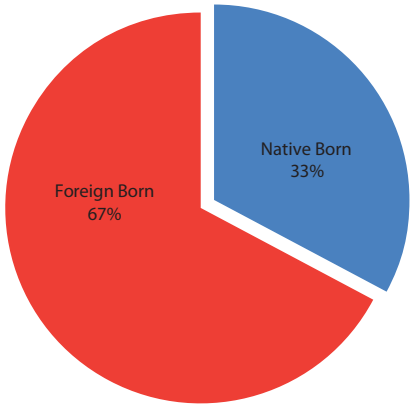
Educational Attainment

Less Than 9th Grade	2,806
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	5,665
High School Graduate	20,705
Some College, No Degree	20,023
Associate's Degree	9,747
Bachelor's Degree	22,754
Graduate or Professional Degree	16,891



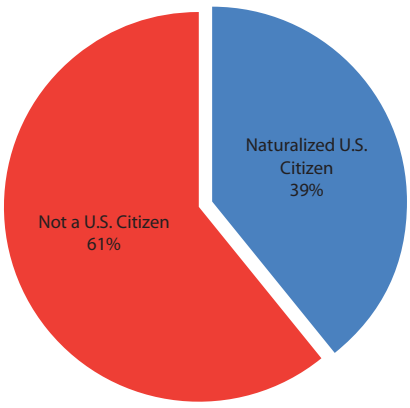
Place of Birth

Native Born	45,067
Foreign Born	91,816



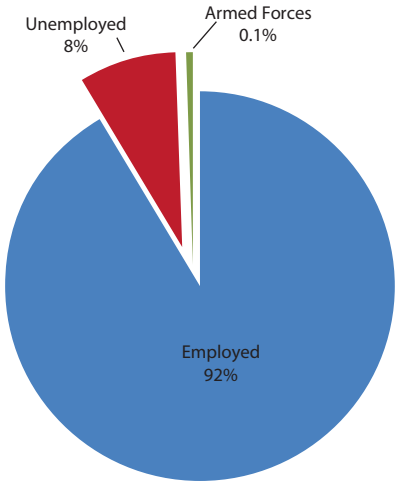
U.S. Citizenship

Naturalized U.S. Citizen	33,478
Not a U.S. Citizen	51,406



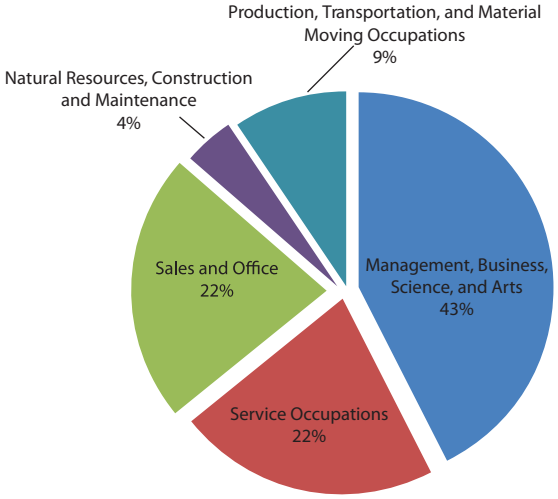
Employment

Employed	83501
Unemployed	7372
Armed Forces	303



Occupation

Management, Business, Science, and Arts	35499
Sales and Office	18252
Service Occupations	18583
Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance	3433
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving	7734



Governor's Commission on African Affairs

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