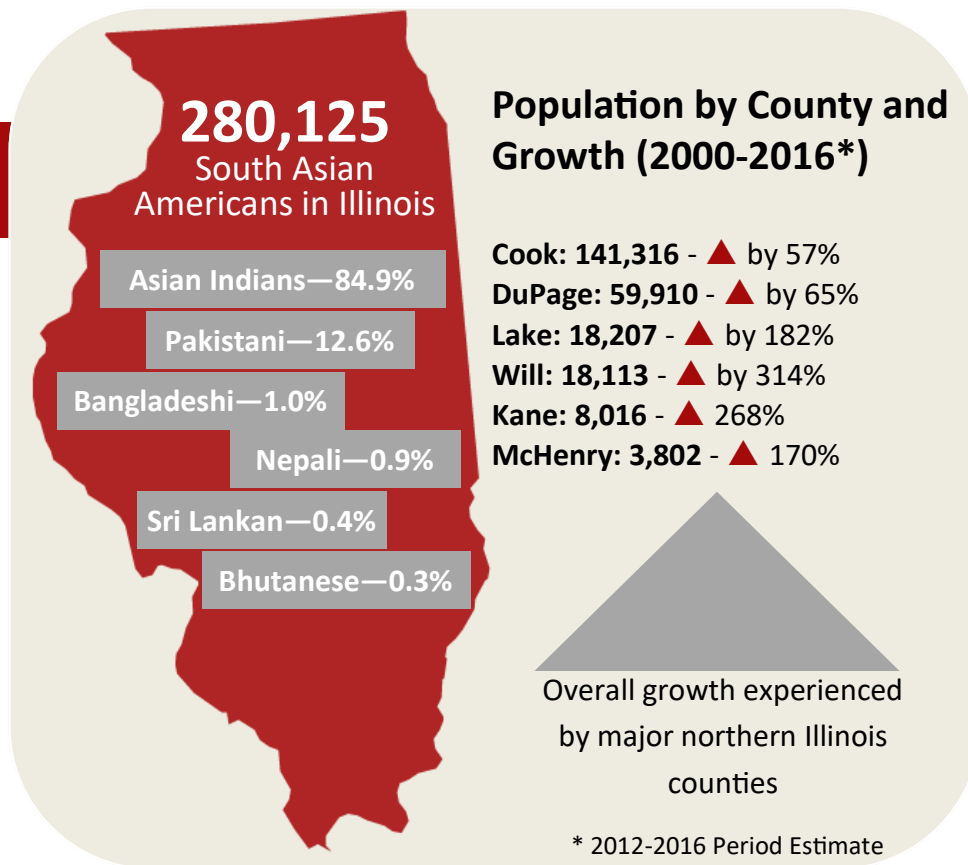
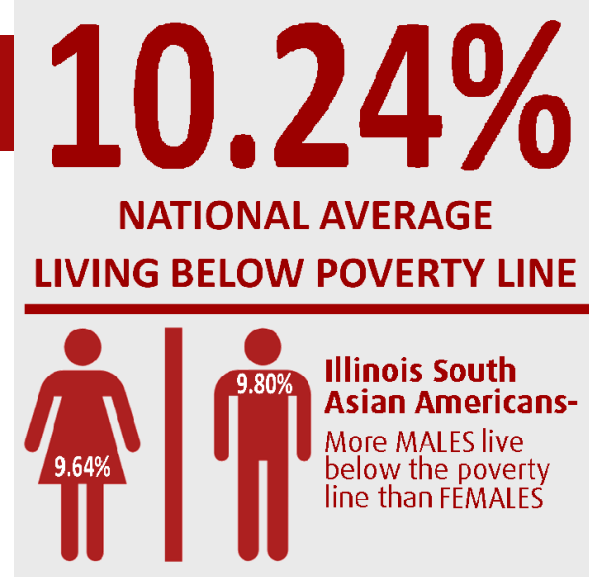
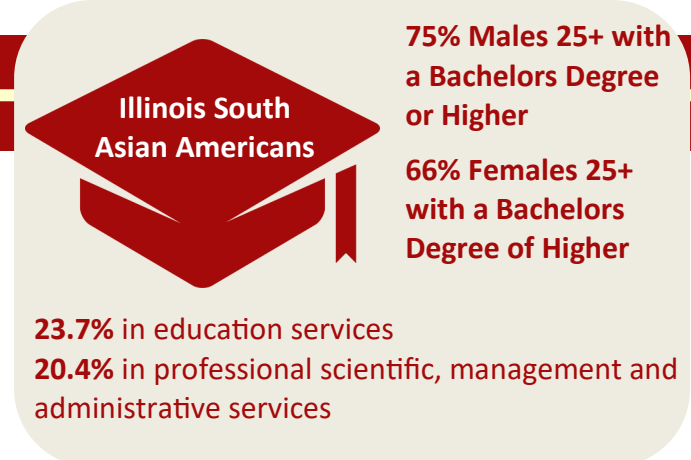


South Asian Americans occupy a unique position in American society. While they account for some of the highest income and highest educated ethnic groups in the country, they are also among the least represented in our participatory democracy, with lower voter registration and lower turnout rates than other ethnic groups. Despite the impressive growth in the **South Asian American** population throughout the nation, despite increased concentration in certain counties and districts providing greater opportunities for civic involvement, there has not been commensurate growth in civic participation or heightened awareness of the importance of political representation. Why this anomaly? What are the reasons for this lack of involvement in government and public life, and what will it take to engage South Asian Americans and unleash their full potential to improve and transform their own communities and the larger society?



- Top 10 Cities w/ South Asian Pop. (2016*)**
- Chicago (49,953)
 - Naperville (16,152)
 - Schaumburg (10,238)
 - Aurora (10,045)
 - Hoffman Estates (8,039)
 - Skokie (7,090)
 - Glendale Heights (5,395)
 - Bloomington (4,965)
 - Des Plaines (4,751)
 - Bolingbrook (4,450)

- Top 10 Cities w/ Highest % of South Asian in Overall Pop. (2016*)**
- South Barrington: 1,237 (25.96%)
 - Lincolnwood: 2,893 (22.89%)
 - Old Mill Creek: 31 (17.22%)
 - Oak Brook: 1,313 (16.44%)
 - Glendale Heights: 5,395 (15.69%)
 - Hoffman Estates: 8,039 (15.54%)
 - Morton Grove: 3,475 (14.84%)
 - Schaumburg: 10,238 (13.77%)
 - Indian Creek Village: 104 (13.54%)
 - Burr Ridge: 1,363 (12.70%)



- Social Issues**
- Hate Crimes
 - Affordable Healthcare
 - Immigration
 - Voting Rights
 - Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
- Health Issues**
- Cancer
 - Diabetes
 - Heart Disease
 - Obesity

- Civic Engagement:** Over 200 organizations in Illinois serving the South Asian American community:
- 32% Student
 - 19% Faith-based
 - 12% Cultural
 - 12% Media
 - 10% Professional
 - 5% Advocacy
 - 4% Social Service
 - 4% Arts

Where are we with Civic Engagement?

70% Illinois South Asian Americans: 187,311 are US citizens (born or naturalized)

17% average of registered voters in districts with high South Asian population

-
- Voter Turnout Rates , Presidential Election Years (1996-2016):**
- Non-Hispanic White: on average 64.2%
 - Black: on average 60.0%
 - Hispanic: on average 47.0%
 - Asian: on average 46.1%
- Characteristically **lower voter turnout rates** even when compared to other ethnic groups

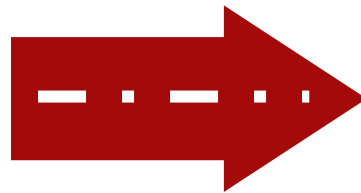
- Why?**
- Illinois Asian Americans:**
Reasons for why family & friends do no vote:
- Lack of citizenship status (36.8%)
 - Lack of interest (31.3%)
 - Not registered (22.5%)
 - Limited English ability (19.0%)
 - Lack of Transportation (4.0%)
 - Other (12.5%)

Where are we with Civic Engagement? (cont.)

Illinois South Asian American Representation in Government					
FEDERAL		ILLINOIS			
U.S. Senate	U.S. House	State Senate	State House	County	Townships, Cities, & Villages
0	1	1	0	2	8

Illinois Elected South Asian Americans	
IL 8th Congressional District - Raja Krishnamoorthi IL 8th Senate District—Ram Villivalam Judicial Cook County - Anjana Hansen Judicial Cook County - Pamela Leeming Chicago 47th Ward - Alderman Ameya Pawar Glenview - Trustee Karim Khoja	Lincolnwood - Trustee Jesal Patel Oakbrook - Village President Gopal Lalmalani Schaumburg Township - Trustee Nimish Jani Skokie - Village Clerk Pramod Shah South Barrington - Trustee Dr. Hina Patel West Deerfield Township- Trustee Paras Parekh

How do we build power?



- Educate-** Civic Education
- Engage-** Community-based Volunteering
- Empower-** Active Citizenship

SAAPRI recognizes that creating and sustaining healthy communities requires a high level of engagement by individuals and organizations. They can identify their own problems, create and fund their own programs, and solve their own problems by tapping into the energy and insight of their own communities. **SAAPRI** seeks to catalyze such efforts by setting out a roadmap that identifies some of the key factors affecting civic involvement. A profile of the community at the state and local level, drawn from census data and from **SAAPRI**'s original research on voter participation, throws light on where South Asian Americans enjoy strength in numbers, what resources exist within the community, and which areas need to be targeted for action. There is an abundance of technical prowess and social media expertise in the community which can help encourage on-line engagement, form advocacy groups and transform governance. Through individual volunteerism, organizational involvement and electoral participation, South Asian Americans can learn to speak with a powerful political voice. This roadmap provides a modest beginning and will hopefully inspire further efforts towards a full participation in our representative government.

Sources: • U.S. Census Bureau • SAAPRI, "Voter Registration, Activation, & Engagement in South Asian American Communities in Illinois" Engagement • SAAPRI, "The Asian American Community Engagement Project: Voting Trends and Access in 2012"



South Asian American Policy & Research Institute



**A Roadmap to Civic Engagement
for South Asian Americans
in Illinois**