

# The Valley Now: A 2015 Snapshot

Ansonia  
Beacon Falls  
Derby  
Naugatuck  
Oxford  
Seymour  
Shelton

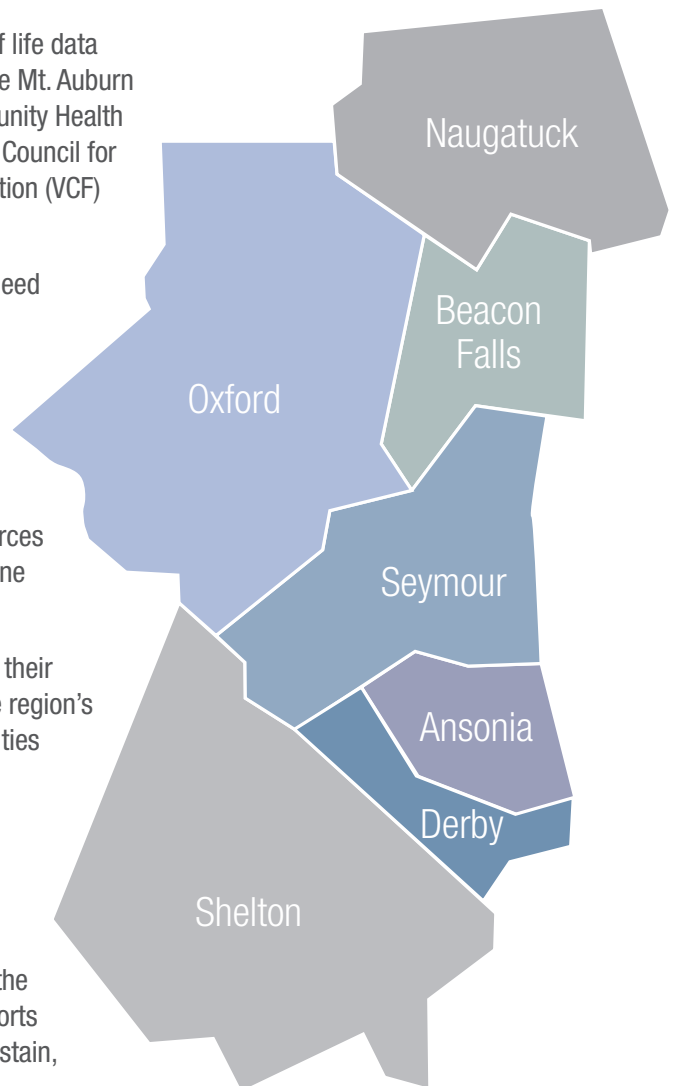
## About this Report

For nearly 20 years, the Valley has come together to collect quality of life data throughout the region including the Healthy Valley Report in 1996, the Mt. Auburn Report in 2001, the Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center's Community Health Profile and the Valley Cares Report in 2010. Early in 2014, the Valley Council for Health & Human Services approached the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) with a request to fund an update to the Valley Cares Report.

In mid 2014, VCF initiated community conversations to discuss the need for a common-source document which would expand the scope of the Valley Cares Report and provide a comprehensive review of demographic, economic, health and education issues shaping the Valley communities. An advisory committee was formed in the fall comprised of key stakeholders and nonprofit organizations to discuss critical focus areas affecting the Valley community and to define the scope of a baseline report. VCF committed financial resources to support the collection of the data and the production of this baseline indicators report as the first step in its strategic initiative work.

The towns of Beacon Falls and Naugatuck were added as a result of their interest in participating in this collaboration and their inclusion in the region's recognition for the All-American City Award in 2000. These communities were added to the five core Valley towns of Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour and Shelton.

This report represents the start of a multi-year process, which will culminate in 2016 with a comprehensive study on the demographic, economic, education, health and housing trends within the region. It is the goal of all organizations involved in producing this report that the data be used to convene community conversations; align current efforts and investments; and collaborate on strategic endeavors to build, sustain, and enhance the quality of life in the Valley region.



## Advisory Committee

BHcare

Center Stage Theatre

City of Derby, Bureau of Youth Services

Down To Earth Consulting Solutions

Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce

Griffin Hospital

Lower Naugatuck Valley Parent Child  
Resource Center

Naugatuck Valley Council of  
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Naugatuck Valley Health District

Shelton Economic Development  
Corporation

TEAM, Inc.

The Community Foundation *for*  
Greater New Haven

The WorkPlace, Inc.

Town of Seymour

Valley Community Foundation

Valley Regional Adult Education

Valley United Way

Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center

# Changing Demographics

## A Growing Population

From 2000 to 2012, the Valley population grew by 8,030 persons, or 6%, to a total population of 138,586 in 2012. During this period, the Valley grew slightly faster than Connecticut.<sup>i</sup>

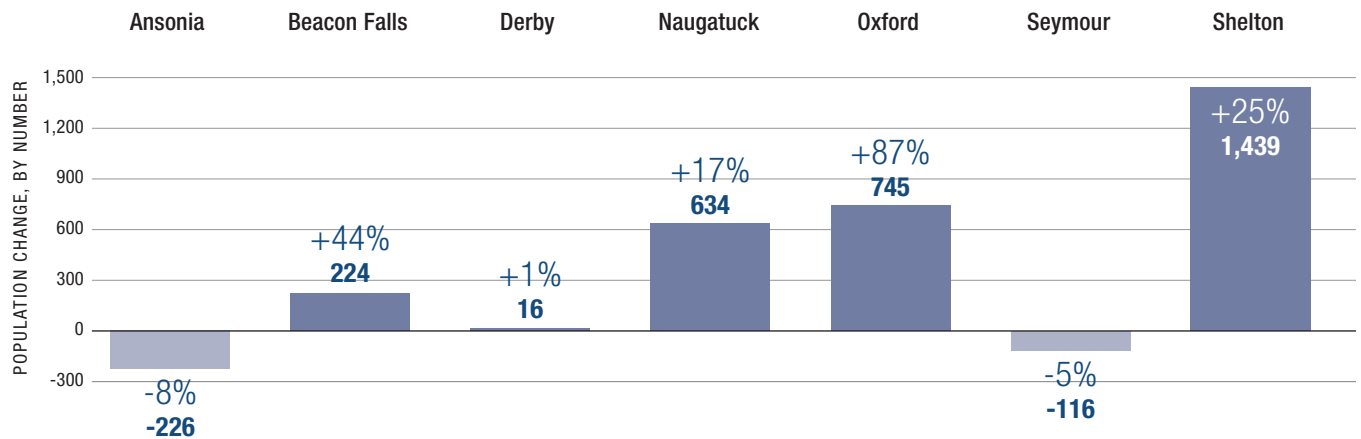
- Over the past decade, every town in the region experienced population increases.<sup>ii</sup>

## Seniors

From 2000 to 2012, the Valley’s senior population (65 years and over) grew by 2,700 persons, a 15% increase, to 20,535. This growth comprised 34% of the total net population increase in the Valley over the period.

- From 2000 to 2012, the senior populations in Beacon Falls, Naugatuck, Oxford, and Shelton grew rapidly while the number of seniors in the other towns remained relatively stable.
- By 2025, the senior population is projected to grow to 33,763, representing 23% of the Valley’s total population in 2025.<sup>iii</sup>
- From 2000 to 2012, the population of older seniors in the Valley (80 years and over) increased by 26%, faster than the group of early seniors (65 to 79 years), which grew by 10%.

Figure 1: **Seniors Population Change by Town, 2000 to 2012**



## Families with Children

In 2012, 43% of Valley families lived with children (0 to 17 years) at home, compared to 47% in 2000, indicating that the share of families with children is shrinking.

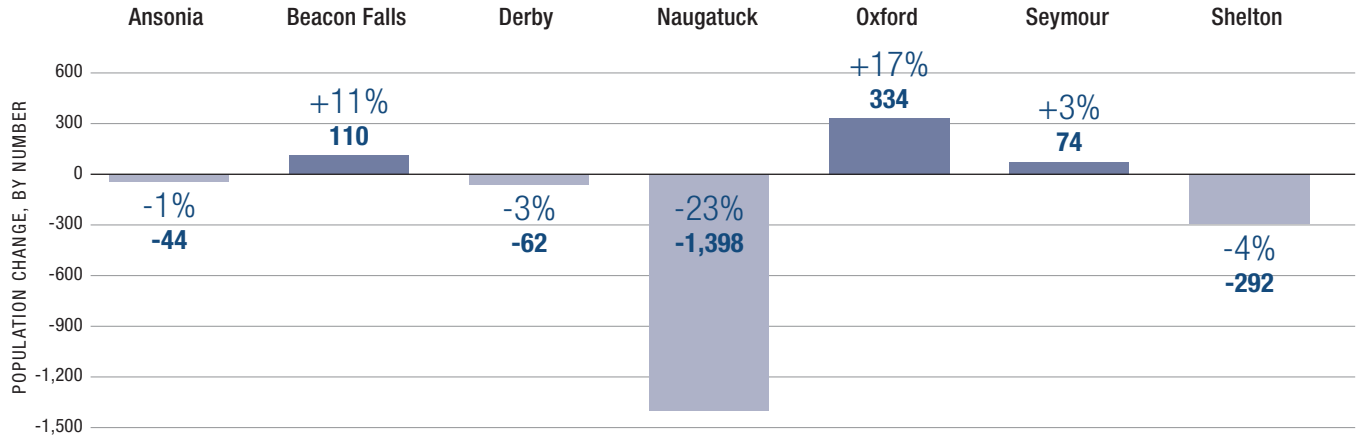
- From 2000 to 2012, the share of single-parent families rose 7%, to 29% of all families with children. Single-parent families are becoming more common across the state where, in 2012, 32% of families with children were headed by single parents compared to 26% in 2000.

## Children

From 2000 to 2012, the number of children (0 to 17 years) in the Valley declined by 6% to 30,192, while the populations of children in Ansonia and Derby remained relatively stable and the relative number of children living in Beacon Falls and Oxford increased.

- From 2000 to 2012, the total population of school-age children (5 to 17 years) fell by 5% to 22,444, and over the same period, K-12 enrollment at Valley public schools fell by 8% to 19,696.<sup>iv</sup>

Figure 2: School-Age Children Population Change by Town, 2000 to 2012

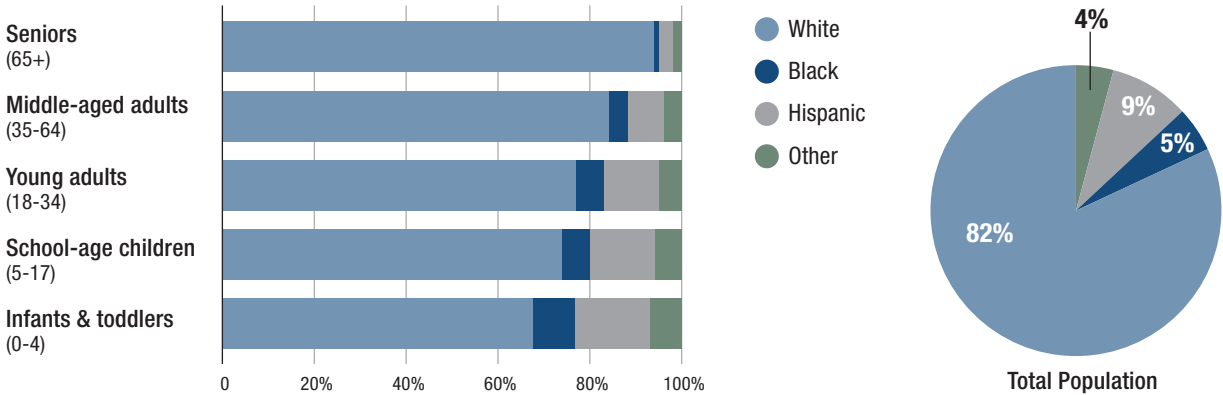


## Diversity

In 2012, 18% of all persons living in the Valley identified themselves as ethnic or racial minorities, compared to 10% in 2000. From 2000 to 2012, the Valley’s minority population grew by 85%, an increase of 11,500 people, and the size of the population identifying as white grew smaller.

- In 2012, 33% of all young children (0 to 5 years) in the Valley were minorities, and 51% of Ansonia and Derby elementary students were minorities.
- In 2012, 18% of Valley residents (5 years and over) spoke a language other than English at home, compared to 21% statewide.
- In 2013, 71 native languages, including English, were spoken by Valley public school students.

Figure 3: Valley Population by Race/Ethnicity and Age, 2012

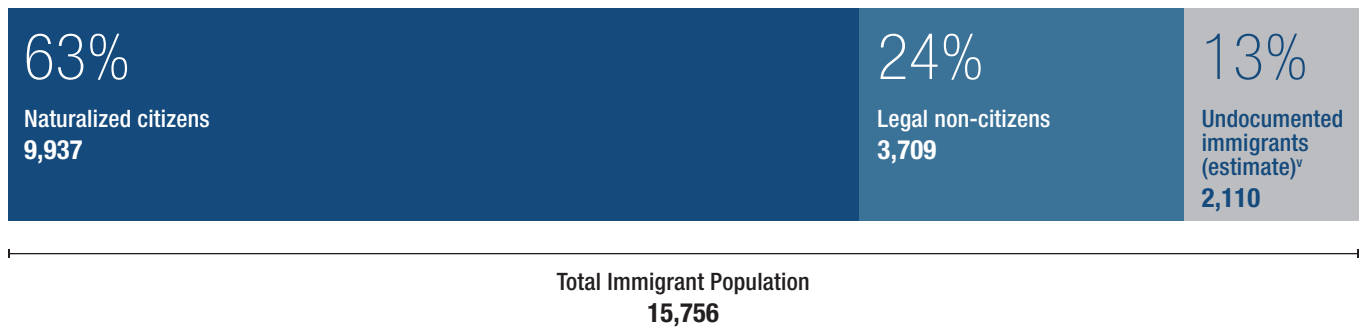


## Immigrants

From 2000 to 2012, the net increase of 2,925 foreign-born residents represented 36% of the region’s total net population growth.

- In 2012, there were 15,756 immigrants living in the Valley, or 11% of the total population.

Figure 4: **Valley Immigrants by Immigrant Status, 2012**



## Housing

Over the past decade, housing construction in the Valley has shifted to meet the changing needs of households.

- From 2005-06 to 2012-13, single-family unit production dropped by 75%, to 236 new single-family homes built over 2012-13.
- In 2012-13, new multi-family housing units were built, mostly in Shelton.<sup>vi</sup>
- In 2012, 72% of housing units in the Valley were owner-occupied, compared to 68% statewide. In Ansonia and Derby, 55% of housing units were owner-occupied.



New multi-family homes



New single-family homes

### CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS SUMMARY

Population growth in the Valley is attributable to increases in immigrants, minorities, seniors and singles, while the number of families with children at home and the under-18 population are both declining. Coupled with related economic factors, these changes will have major implications for the region’s housing, transportation and social service systems. For the Valley to remain a prosperous place and to preserve its strong traditions of civic engagement and inclusiveness, it is important to find new ways to involve its young adults, seniors, diverse populations and immigrants within the community.

# Health and Wellness



## 53%

adults report being  
in good health

## Adults

- In 2012, 53% of Valley adults (18 years and over) reported having excellent or very good health, compared to 57% statewide.<sup>vii</sup>
- In 2009, 41% of adults reported that they exercised for 30 minutes or more at least 3 days a week.
- In 2009, 38% of Valley adults were overweight and 21% were obese, and in 2012, 11% of adults had diabetes and 5% had heart disease. The rates for these health conditions and risk factors are slightly higher than state levels.
- In 2009, 19% of adults experienced mental health issues that affected their ability to function.
- In 2009, 3% of emergency room visits and 12% of inpatient hospitalizations at Griffin Hospital were related to substance abuse.<sup>viii</sup>

## Children

- In 2013, 50% of Valley public school students reached healthy standards on four physical fitness tests, which is similar to the state rate of 51%.
- In 2008, 89% of Valley two year olds had up-to-date immunizations, compared to 81% in the state.
- In 2009, 17% of Valley middle and high school students experienced sadness or hopelessness almost every day for two weeks over the year.



## 44%

adults use parks or  
recreational resources

## Environment

- In 2009, 44% of adults reported often using parks, trails, and recreational resources in the Valley.
- In 2014, a remediation process to eliminate harmful pollutants and contaminants at 10 brownfield sites throughout the Valley was underway.<sup>ix</sup>

### HEALTH AND WELLNESS SUMMARY

The health and wellness of children and adults are critically important for the overall wellbeing of the Valley. These issues have been identified in a number of previous reports, including the Valley Cares Report, the Griffin Hospital Community Health Needs Assessment, and the Naugatuck Valley Community Health Improvement Plan. Additional health information will be collected through the 2015 Community Wellbeing Survey.

# Employment



Healthcare:  
2,000 jobs



Manufacturing:  
1,600 jobs

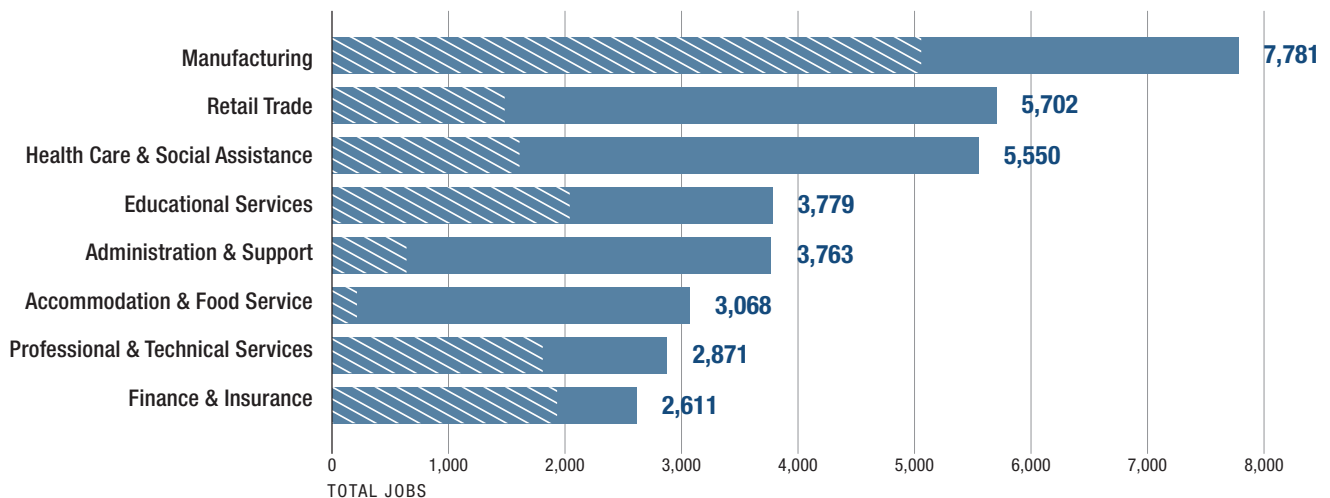
## Jobs located in the Valley

**From 2002 to 2012, the Valley added nearly 1,000 jobs, mostly located in Oxford and Shelton, at a rate that exceeded statewide job growth.**

- From 2002 to 2012, the health care sector added 2,000 jobs while 1,600 manufacturing jobs and 2,000 finance and insurance-related jobs were lost.
- From 2002 to 2012, the wages of Valley jobs increased by 9%, which exceeded state wage growth of 4%. In 2012, the average Valley wage was \$63,000; jobs in Oxford and Shelton typically paid wages double those of jobs in other Valley towns (\$82,881 and \$40,506 respectively).
- In 2011, of the 46,617 full and part-time jobs located in the Valley, 33% were held by residents. Many jobs located in the Valley were held by residents of Greater Bridgeport (17%), Greater New Haven (15%) and Greater Waterbury (12%). See page 7 for definitions of these areas.<sup>x</sup>
- In 2011, there were 21,443 jobs (46% of all jobs located in the Valley) that paid a living wage, or \$40,000 annually for a full-time worker.

Figure 5: **Jobs Located in the Valley with Living Wages, 2011**

Living Wage



## Workers living in the Valley

**In 2011, of the 66,541 full and part-time jobs held by Valley residents, only 23% were located within the Valley itself.**

- In 2011, 46% of Valley residents worked less than 10 miles from home.
- The 2014 Valley unemployment rate of 7.1% is similar to the statewide rate of 6.8%.<sup>xi</sup>

Figure 6: Where Valley Residents Worked, 2011

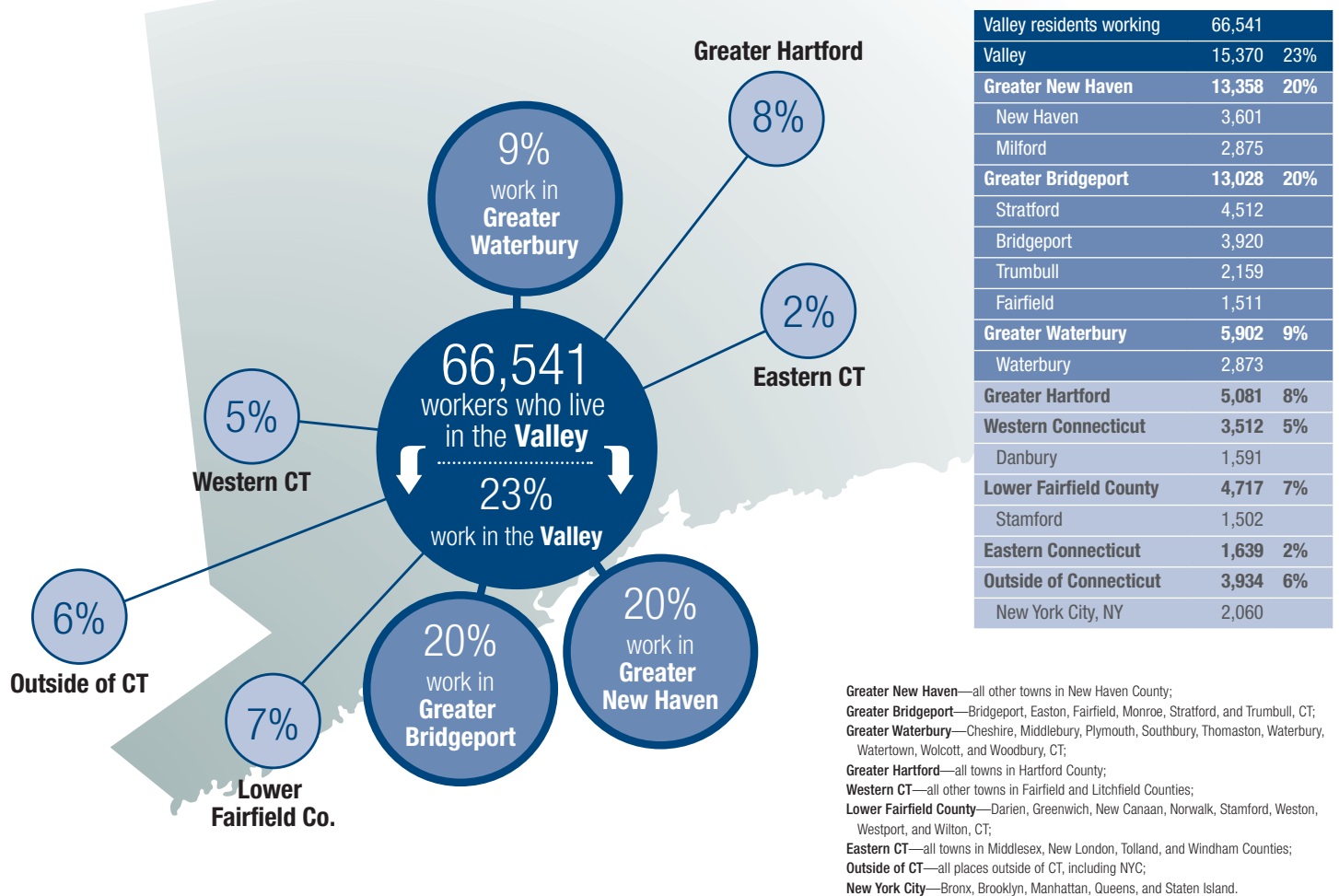
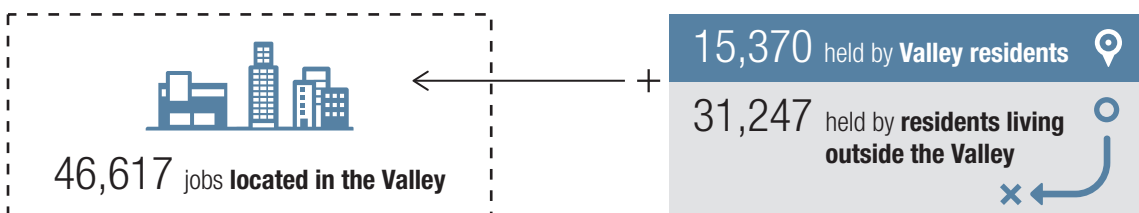


Figure 7: Jobs Located in the Valley, 2011



### EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY

The overall performance of the Valley’s economy is consistent with the rest of Connecticut; however, it depends heavily on surrounding communities along the Route 8 and Interstate 95 corridors, as this is where a majority of jobs is located. Continued investment in transportation and workforce development is critical to the region.

# Early Care and Education



56%

preschool enrollment

## Early Childhood

From 2000 to 2012, the percentage of young children (0 to 5 years) with working parents rose by 5% in the Valley, compared to 7% statewide, leading to greater demand for child care.

- From 2007 to 2012, the average annual cost for licensed, home-based childcare for a family with an infant and a toddler in Connecticut rose 14% to \$18,220. Accredited centers, which meet official standards of quality care, cost about 25% more than that annually.<sup>xii</sup>

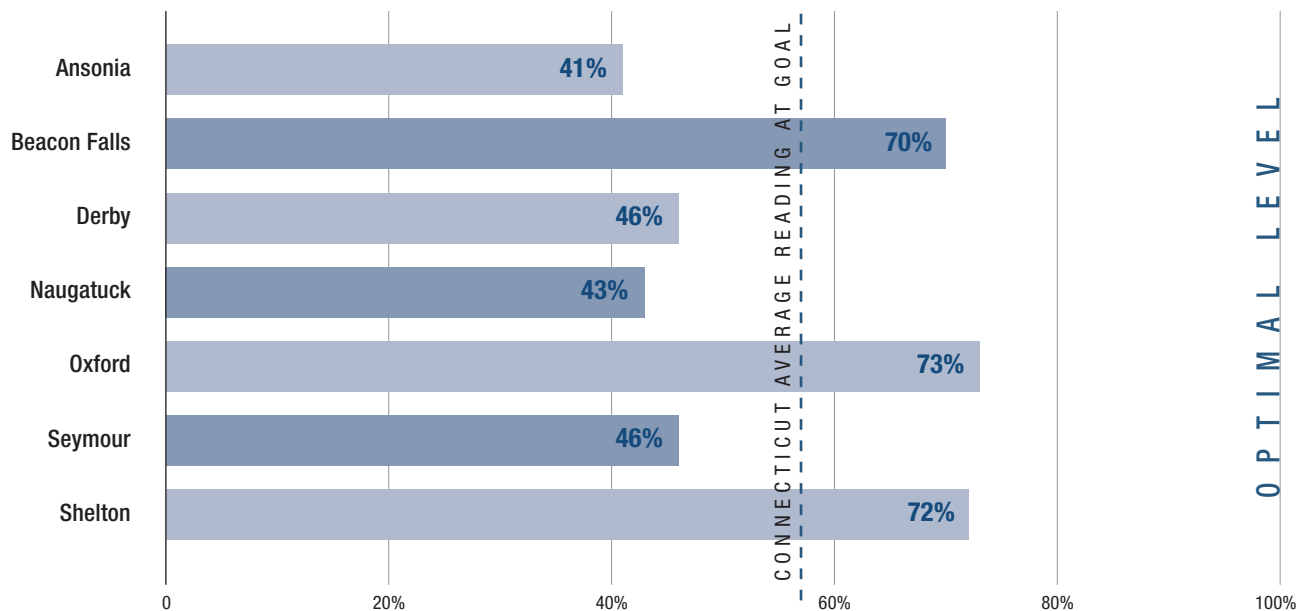
In 2012, 44% of preschool-aged children (3 and 4 years) were not enrolled in preschool, even as slots in Valley public schools increased by 66% since 2002 (to 429 in 2013).

- From 2000 to 2012, Valley preschool enrollment was stable at 56%, while state preschool enrollment increased from 61% to 64%.

## K-12 Education

In 2013, only 57% of all 3rd graders in Valley public schools (and statewide) were reading at goal or above, while the percentage of 3rd graders reading at goal or above in Ansonia, Derby, Naugatuck and Seymour ranged from 41% to 46%.

Figure 8: Grade 3, Reading at Goal or Above by Town, 2013





In 2013, 86% of all Valley public school 12th graders graduated high school in four years. From 2010 to 2013, the Valley four-year graduation rate did not improve, while the statewide rate rose, up 4% to 86% in 2013.

- In 2012, 10% of Valley residents 25 years and over did not have a high school diploma, GED, or alternative credential.



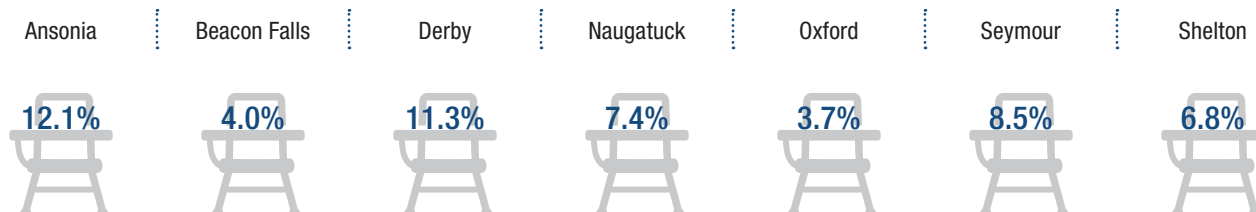
86%

four year graduation rate

**Special characteristics of the student population vary among Valley towns.**

- In 2012, 11% of Valley public school students (2,314 students) had physical, emotional or learning disabilities that qualified them for special education programs.
- In 2013, there were 668 English Language Learner students in Valley public schools.
- In 2013, 32% of Valley public school students qualified for free or reduced price meals, compared to 37% statewide. However Ansonia, Derby and Naugatuck had percentages of qualified students that surpassed the state’s average.
- In 2013, 8% of Valley public school Kindergarten through Grade 3 students were chronically absent (absent at least 10% of days enrolled in school), compared to 9% statewide.

Figure 9: **Grades K-3, Chronically Absent by Town, 2013**



Post-Secondary Education

**College degree attainment in the Valley as a region is similar to the national level but falls below the statewide average.**

- In 2012 of all Valley residents 25 years and over, 28% had at least a bachelors degree, compared to 36% statewide.
- In 2013, 85% of Valley public school graduates planned to attend college and 10% found jobs or joined the military.
- By 2013, 45% of people who graduated from Valley public high schools in 2007 had earned a 2-year or 4-year college degree.

**EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION SUMMARY**

A large percentage of Valley children under the age of five are not enrolled in early learning programs, and more than half of all third graders in Valley public schools (and statewide) do not read at goal. Overall, public school achievement differs widely among groups of students and between schools.

# Income and Basic Needs



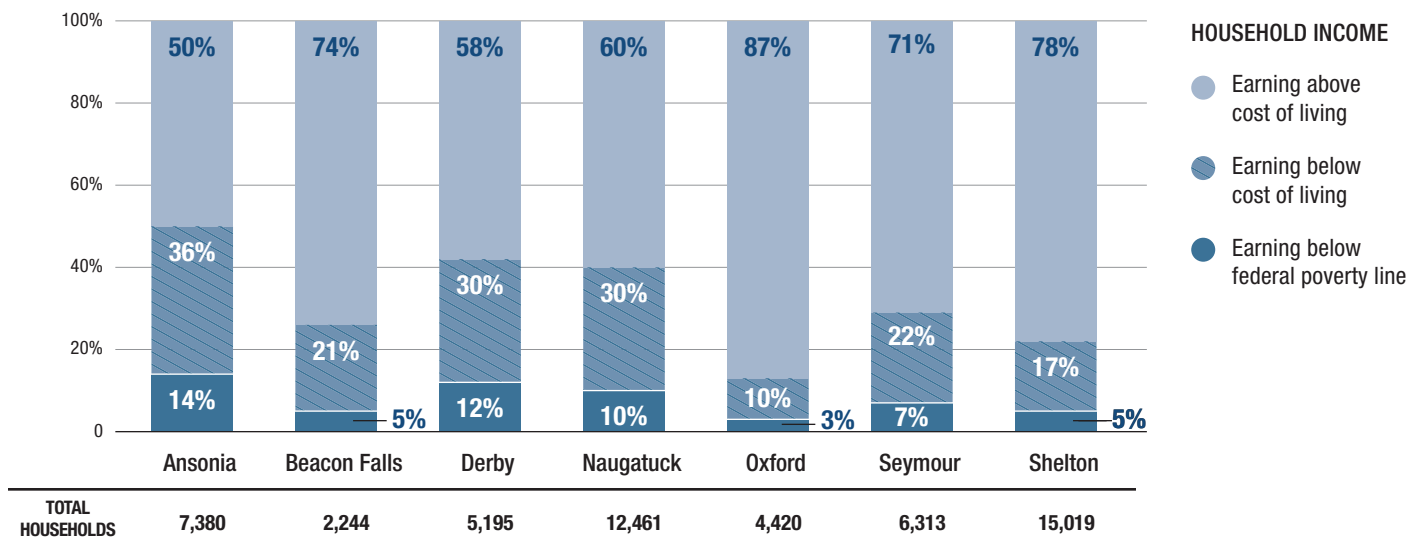
**1 in 3**  
households  
struggles to make  
ends meet

## Household Income

**In 2012, 1 in 3 Valley households struggled to make ends meet, earning annual incomes that were less than the basic cost of living. Economic hardship is distributed unevenly within the region.**

- In 2012, 8% of Valley households had annual incomes below the federal poverty line—\$23,050 for a family of four. An additional 24% of Valley households still earned less than the basic cost of living for New Haven County—\$66,899 for a family of four.<sup>xiii</sup>
- Meanwhile, in 2012, 22% of households in the Valley (compared to 23% statewide) earned over \$125,000—an income level that, for a family with two or three children, would allow at least moderate savings, entertainment, travel and consumer spending.<sup>xiv</sup>
- In 2012, children were far more likely to live below the federal poverty line than the Valley population as a whole. The child poverty rate was 13% in the Valley and 30% in Ansonia and Derby.

Figure 10: Share of Households within each Income Bracket by Town, 2012



Income Brackets based on 2012 ALICE study, annual income for a family of four: Cost of Living = \$66,899; Federal Poverty Line = \$23,050

## Housing Affordability

**In 2012, the minimal annual housing cost for two adults and two children was \$13,716, rising 13% since 2007.<sup>xv</sup>**

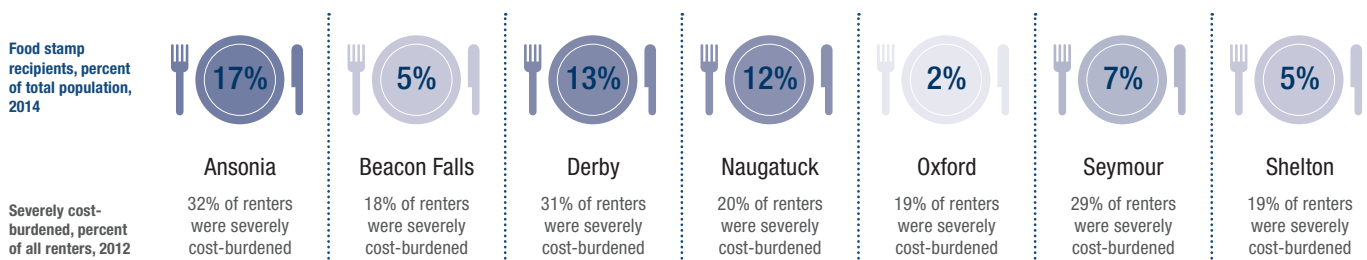
- In 2012, many households in the Valley paid a large share of their incomes toward housing. 25% of renters were considered severely cost-burdened, meaning they paid more than 50% of their income toward rent.
- From 2000 to 2012, housing prices in the Valley and surrounding region increased by 10%, slower than state averages which increased by 24% over the same period.<sup>xvi</sup>

## Food Security

In 2012, the minimal annual food budget for two adults and two children was \$7,104, rising 14% since 2007.

- In 2013, 9% of Valley residents were recipients of food stamps, compared to 11% statewide.<sup>xvii</sup>
- In 2014, about 7% of Valley households did not have a vehicle. Lack of transportation is a major barrier to employment, and may prevent some households from accessing grocery stores and food banks.<sup>xviii</sup>

Figure 11: Access to Basic Needs by town, 2012-14



### INCOME AND BASIC NEEDS SUMMARY

Although the Valley has a strong middle class, a third of Valley residents struggle to afford basic needs such as housing and food, whose costs are rising faster than wages. Residents that receive state and federal assistance are distributed unevenly within the region.

## Endnotes

- i Unless noted, all 2012 data are DataHaven analyses of US Census data. See US Census Bureau. (2012). American Community Survey 2008-12. Accessed 11.1.14 at <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>.
- ii Unless noted, all 2000 data are DataHaven analyses of US Census data. See US Census Bureau. (2000). Decennial Census 2000. Accessed 11.1.14 at <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>.
- iii DataHaven analysis of CT State Data Center. See CT State Data Center. (2012). 2015-2025 Population Projections for CT. UConn. Accessed 12.1.14 at [http://ctcdc.uconn.edu/2015\\_2025\\_projections/](http://ctcdc.uconn.edu/2015_2025_projections/)
- iv Residents of Beacon Falls attend Regional School District #16, which also serves students from Prospect, CT. All data on Valley public schools are DataHaven analyses of CT State Department of Education data. See CTSDE. (2014). CT Education Data and Research. Accessed 11.14.14 at [http://sdeportal.ct.gov/Cedar/WEB/ct\\_report/CedarHome.aspx](http://sdeportal.ct.gov/Cedar/WEB/ct_report/CedarHome.aspx)
- v DataHaven estimate on undocumented immigrant population based on Greater New Haven data. See Buchanan, Mary and Mark Abraham. Understanding the Impact of Immigration in Greater New Haven. New Haven: The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, 2015
- vi DataHaven analysis of Department of Economic and Community Development data. See DECD. (2013). CT Housing Information. Accessed 12.8.14 at <http://www.ct.gov/ecd/cwp/view.asp?a=1106&q=250640>
- vii Naugatuck Valley Health District includes all Valley towns except Oxford. Naugatuck Valley Health District. (2012). BRFSS Survey Results. Accessed 2.27.15 at <http://www.nvhd.org/admin/resources/behavior-health-risks-nvhd-2012.pdf>
- viii The Valley Cares report includes all Valley towns except Naugatuck. Valley Council. (2010). "Valley Cares Quality of Life Report." Accessed 2.25.15 at <http://www.valleycouncil.org/2011/ValleyCARESFULLREPORT.pdf>
- ix Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments. (2014). "Brownfields." Accessed 3.5.15 at <http://nvcogct.org/content/brownfields>.
- x DataHaven analyses of US Census data. See US Census Bureau. (2011). LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics. Accessed 1.5.15 at <http://lehd.ces.census.gov/>
- xi DataHaven analyses of CT Department of Labor data. See CT DOL. (2014). Labor Market Information. Accessed 12.1.14 at <http://www1.ctdol.state.ct.us/lmi/ces/default.asp>
- xii The monthly cost of licensed child care for an infant was \$777 and \$1,038 for licensed and accredited child care. For a four-year old, monthly licensed care was \$741 and licensed, accredited care was \$855 per month. All 2012 data related to cost of living and income are from the ALICE Connecticut study. See United Way. (2014) ALICE Connecticut: Study of Financial Hardships. Accessed 12.15.14 at [http://alice.ctunitedway.org/files/2014/11/14UW-ALICE-Report\\_CT.pdf](http://alice.ctunitedway.org/files/2014/11/14UW-ALICE-Report_CT.pdf)
- xiii US Department of Health & Human Services. (2012). 2012 HHS Poverty Guidelines. Accessed 12.15.14 at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/12poverty.shtml>
- xiv In Connecticut in 2012, an annual household income of \$111,632 for a family of four and \$30,118 for a single adult provides for "stability," or spending above the bare minimum to get by. Such expenditures include savings, consumer spending, travel, and leisure.
- xv Costs are based on a two-bedroom apartment with utilities but no telephone service or security deposit.
- xvi The Bridgeport Labor Market Area (LMA) includes all Valley towns except Naugatuck, and Bridgeport, Fairfield, Milford, Monroe, Stratford, Trumbull, and Easton. See Center for Real Estate and Urban Economic Studies. (2013). Single Family Indices. Storrs, CT: UConn. Accessed 12.8.15 at <http://realestate.business.uconn.edu/research/ct-dataindices/>
- xvii Connecticut State Department of Social Services. (2014). Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Recipients. Accessed 11.25.14 at [www.ctdata.org](http://www.ctdata.org)
- xviii Valley United Way. (2015). Valley Hunger Study. Accessed 3.25.15 at <http://www.valleyunitedway.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/HungerStudy.pdf>



## Life in the Valley

What this baseline report does not include are indicators of the thriving community engagement and civic vitality that exists in the Valley. From festivals, celebrations, arts and culture to community leadership, a shifting demographic of Valley residents is engaged in a multitude of pursuits, working towards the collective improvement of the region.

Look for the 2016 report, which will use the Community Wellbeing Survey to capture the spirit of the Valley: its people, economic opportunities, community needs and vibrant civic life.

An electronic copy of this report is available at [www.valleyfoundation.org](http://www.valleyfoundation.org).



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