



## Miami, Florida: the Little Haiti neighborhood

### ■ OVERVIEW

Little Haiti owes its name to the concentration of Haitian immigrants who settled in this Miami neighborhood in the 1970s and 1980s. For Haitians in South Florida and throughout the United States, the neighborhood maintains great historical, cultural, and social significance, since it represents the heart of Haitian migration to the U.S.<sup>1</sup> Little Haiti's history is the story

of the thousands of Haitian immigrants who have established new lives in Miami-Dade County, especially those who arrived after 1980.<sup>2</sup> While residents of Little Haiti represent only a small portion of the estimated 189,000 Haitians and Haitian Americans living in South Florida, the enclave contains one of the largest concentrations of these populations living at or below the poverty line.<sup>3</sup> And, unlike other ethnic communities that have achieved greater integration in South Florida,<sup>4</sup> Little Haiti has remained socially and economically isolated from Miami's greater metropolitan area.<sup>5</sup>

### ■ BACKGROUND

The city of Miami, with a population of approximately 330,000, was ranked the poorest large city in the United States following the 2000 census, with a poverty rate of 28 percent.<sup>6</sup> Haitians are among the poorest demographic groups in the region. The poverty rate for Haitians in Miami-Dade County (30 percent) is almost twice the overall poverty rate in the county (18 percent). One-third of all Haitian households in Miami-Dade County are considered low income.<sup>7</sup>

TABLE 1

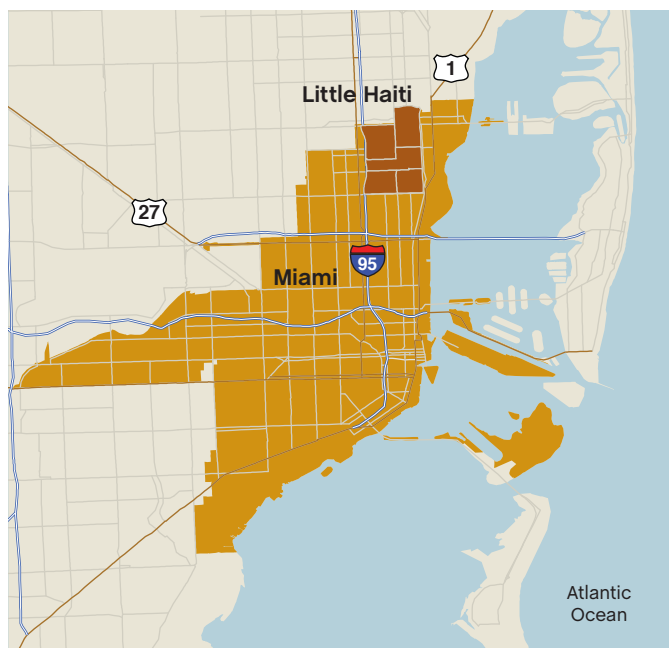
## Comparison Statistics

		Little Haiti	Miami MSA
<b>Poverty Rate</b>	Poverty rate 1970 <sup>a</sup>	23.6	13.3
	Poverty rate 2000 <sup>b</sup>	44.4	14.0
<b>Income</b>	Median household income <sup>c</sup>	\$15,277	\$40,320
<b>Demographics</b>	Population 2000 <sup>d</sup>	18,607	5,007,564
	% Population change, 1970 - 2000 <sup>e</sup>	8.4	123.9
	Racial/ethnic composition, 2000 <sup>f</sup>		
	% White	2.4	44.1
	% Hispanic/Latino	13.7	34.0
	% Black/African-American	62.6	18.1
	% Residents under age 18 <sup>g</sup>	31.2	23.6
	% Single-parent households <sup>h</sup>	35.1	9.5
	% Foreign born, 2000 <sup>i</sup>	47.1	35.0
	% Population in same house as five years ago <sup>j</sup>	53.9	49.1
<b>Education</b>	% Adults without a high school diploma, 2000 <sup>k</sup>	61.6	23.8
	% Adults with a college degree, 2000 <sup>l</sup>	3.8	24.1
	% Students proficient in reading, 2005 <sup>m</sup>	26.7	49.7
	% Students proficient in math, 2005 <sup>n</sup>	30.9	57.6
<b>Labor Market</b>	Unemployment rate, 2000 <sup>o</sup>	19.0	6.7
	% Adults in the labor force <sup>p</sup>	51.3	58.7
<b>Housing</b>	Homeownership rate, 2000 <sup>q</sup>	19.0	66.0
	% Renters with a housing cost burden <sup>r</sup>	56.8	48.5
	% Rental units that are HUD subsidized <sup>r</sup>	18.9	8.4
	Median value for owner-occupied units <sup>s</sup>	\$69,742	\$128,411
	Median year structure built <sup>t</sup>	1963	1977
<b>Access to Credit</b>	% Credit files that are thin, 2004 <sup>u</sup>	44.1	24.5
	% Credit files with high credit scores <sup>v</sup>	33.4	58.6
	% Mortgage originations that are high cost, 2005 <sup>w</sup>	64.4	40.8
	Mortgage denial rate, 2005 <sup>x</sup>	28.7	19.3

Little Haiti is a rather well-delineated neighborhood of some 19,000 residents on the northern boundary of Miami. It is difficult to obtain a precise demographic and economic profile of Little Haiti and the greater Miami-Dade County, however, for several reasons. First, Miami is a gateway city with a large transient population that is often difficult to capture in official statistics. Immigrants—in particular those who are undocumented—have been historically underrepresented in census data. Second, there is a strong informal economy throughout Miami-Dade County that is predominantly cash driven and therefore hard to measure. Third, the Haitian population

is not statistically distinguished from the greater Black or African-American population in census figures, so many demographics concerning the Haitian population are based on estimates that vary in accuracy.<sup>8</sup> That said, estimates suggest that 45 percent of Little Haiti's population is Haitian or Haitian-American.<sup>9</sup>

Little Haiti is much poorer than Miami as a whole. According to the 2000 U.S. census, the poverty rate in Little Haiti was over 44 percent, more than three times that of the Miami-Fort Lauderdale Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) (14 percent). The median household income in Little Haiti (\$15,277) was less than half the median household income



in the Miami–Fort Lauderdale MSA (\$40,320). The unemployment rate in the community is 19 percent, compared with 7 percent in the MSA. Sixty-two percent of adults over 25 in Little Haiti do not have a high school diploma; only 4 percent have a bachelor's degree.<sup>10</sup>

Housing costs have had a significant impact on low-income residents in Miami, with almost half (48 percent) spending more than 30 percent of their household income on housing costs in 2000.<sup>11</sup> Since then, the housing cost burden has increased because of real-estate appreciation throughout South Florida over the past five years.<sup>12</sup> (See Figure 1) In Little Haiti, these trends have a greater effect on housing affordability for its low-income residents. The vast majority of residents in Little Haiti are renters, and 57 percent of renters spent more than 30 percent of their income on housing.<sup>13</sup> Housing quality in the community is poor, and most of the homes are small (less than 1,200 square feet). In addition, many have been illegally subdivided and have un-permitted structures on the property. Overcrowding is a serious problem, with families pooling funds or sharing units in order to afford housing.

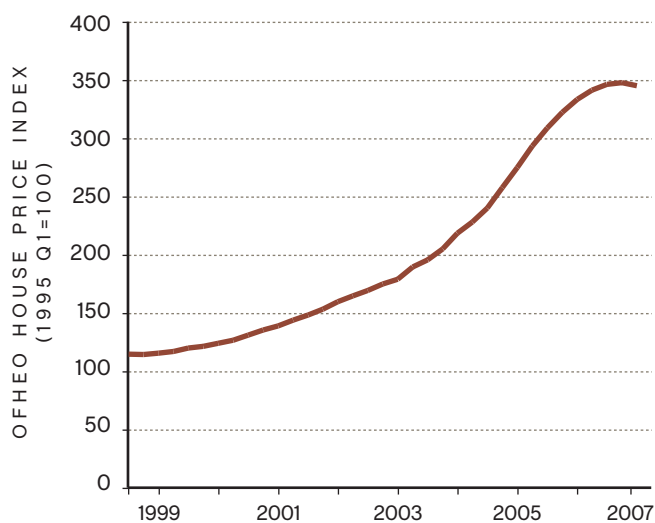
Housing affordability will likely worsen for Little Haiti's residents if gentrification pressures in the neighborhood intensify. Miami has been significantly transformed in the past five years by aggressive redevelopment of the city's urban neighborhoods. With very little undeveloped land remaining, developers are looking at older neighborhoods, such as Little Haiti, as new candidates for

development.<sup>14</sup> Interviewees expressed concerns about the displacement of Little Haiti's residents; according to Rasha Soray-Cameau, administrator for the City of Miami's Little Haiti Neighborhood Enhancement Team Office, residents who are pushed out of Little Haiti will find it very difficult to locate alternative housing.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, for Haitians dependent on the Creole-speaking services accessible only in Little Haiti, displacement from the neighborhood could have deeper consequences for their well-being.<sup>16</sup>

Addressing the issues facing Little Haiti is particularly challenging because of Haitians' unique perspective on poverty. Despite living close to or below the poverty line in South Florida, many Haitian immigrants do not consider themselves poor. Comparatively, many are better off in the United States than in their homeland, which has suffered decades of political and economic instability; Haiti is currently the poorest nation in the Western hemisphere. However, perhaps as a result of this more positive perception of their situations, Haitians are slow to seek services aimed at improving their social and economic standing. In a study of Haitian immigrants in Miami–Dade, a survey found that no more than 5 percent of the individuals surveyed applied for benefits, even though 80 percent of them were eligible.<sup>17</sup> Noted Jacques St. Louis, a homeownership counselor at the Little Haiti Housing Association, "They see that they are making \$12,000 a year, and they think that's good money."<sup>18</sup> In addition,

FIGURE 1

### House price appreciation in the Miami–Miami Beach–Kendall metropolitan area



SOURCE: OFHEO/Haver Analytics

Haitian immigrants are reluctant to accept charity unless their situation is dire.<sup>19</sup> According to Francoise Penha at the Human Services Coalition, accepting any form of assistance—especially services and programs aimed at helping the neediest, such as food stamps—is a cause for personal shame among the Haitian poor.<sup>20</sup>

## ■ ISSUES TO CONSIDER

A number of significant issues emerge when looking at poverty in Little Haiti. Chief among them are residents' isolation due to immigration policy, language, and culture; lack of jobs and economic development; low levels of civic engagement; poor financial management skills and knowledge; and concerns about youth, education, and health.

### Isolation Due to Immigration Policy, Language, and Culture

Barriers in the immigration process have made it harder for Haitian immigrants to establish themselves in the United States. U.S. immigration policy toward Haitian nationals has been more restrictive than policy toward the majority of other Caribbean immigrants.<sup>21</sup> Haitians are often challenged on their requests for residency and tend to remain undocumented, hiding from detection by immigration enforcement agencies.<sup>22</sup> Because of a heightened fear of deportation in the Haitian community, Little Haiti's immigrant residents are unlikely to seek assistance from outside organizations for fear of drawing attention to the immigration status either of themselves or family members living with them.<sup>23</sup> In addition, many Haitians eligible for public assistance will not apply because they fear that the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services will label them a "public charge" and, as such, they will be denied a future request for residency or citizenship.<sup>24</sup>

Language skills are another significant challenge both for Haitian immigrants and the organizations that serve them. Most community and social services agencies in the Miami area have bilingual staff fluent in Spanish and English, which greatly helps Spanish-speaking immigrants seeking assistance. Haitians' native language, however, is Creole, which is the only language many immigrants from Haiti speak when they arrive in the United States.<sup>25</sup> This creates a major barrier both for Haitians struggling to access services and find jobs and for non-Haitians seeking to help or employ them. Compounding the problem, low-income Haitian immigrants are frequently not literate in Creole, so English classes

often must begin with teaching Haitians how to read and write in their native language.<sup>26</sup> While much of everyday life in Little Haiti is transacted in Creole, outside Little Haiti and other communities with high Haitian concentrations there are very few businesses, service agencies, or healthcare providers with Creole-speaking staff. As a result, the majority of Haitian immigrants stay within Haitian social and economic circles in order to transact their daily business, a situation that restricts options for housing, employment, and transportation. In interviews, Little Haiti residents pointed to a perceived lack of information reaching residents about resources that exist outside of the community's boundaries. Likewise, those outside the Haitian community may not fully understand the needs of low- and moderate-income residents of the immigrant enclave and the challenges they face in accessing established assistance programs.

To aid with the language barrier, many Haitian adults rely on their children as translators when seeking assistance. However, children are not always knowledgeable enough to make the interpretation accurate or effective. Tessa Painson of Catholic Charities' Toussaint L'Ouverture Community Center observed that relying on interpreters to communicate personal information with service agencies is a significant barrier to assistance for Haitian immigrants. There is great potential for miscommunication between the agencies seeking to help Haitian immigrants and the individuals in need of such assistance.<sup>27</sup>

Poor language skills also restrict the opportunity for Haitian immigrants to earn a living and provide for their families. Studies show that immigrants who do not master the new language are perceived as less educated and intelligent and are therefore offered less favorable employment opportunities.<sup>28</sup> These findings are echoed by Leoni Hermantin, a representative of Sant La Haitian Neighborhood Center, who reported that Haitian applicants are often offered lower salaries and less opportunity for advancement because of this bias.<sup>29</sup>

In addition to language barriers, the Haitian immigrant community has cultural traits that contribute to its social isolation. Representatives from several community-based and social services organizations noted that many Haitians do not readily trust agencies or individuals providing assistance, and that, despite strong family networks, Haitians keep personal information very closely guarded, even from family and close friends.<sup>30</sup> Thus, Haitian immigrants are not likely to ask for assistance, even if they are eligible for it.<sup>31</sup>

Organizations that have had success reaching the Haitian community have used creative outreach strategies. One organization working to address domestic violence issues, for instance, used brochures and posters designed by a Haitian artist, as well as a color scheme and an art style that are distinctly Haitian, to educate the community.<sup>32</sup>

### Jobs and Economic Development

While the reported 2000 unemployment rate in Little Haiti was 19 percent,<sup>33</sup> the majority of the community agencies interviewed for this case study emphasized the additional underemployment in the area.<sup>34</sup> Many people, these individuals noted, work in very low-paying jobs, sometimes on a part-time or temporary basis, and are forced to work two or three jobs to manage the cost of living in Miami. Furthermore, many Haitian immigrants are employed in tourism-dependent industries, such as hotels and restaurants, that customarily lay off workers during slow business periods or seasons.<sup>35</sup> Thus, many of those living in poverty in Little Haiti are working poor. Budgeting, saving, and investing are far-off considerations for these individuals and families existing on a fraction of what is needed to live comfortably in the Miami-Dade area.

While focus-group participants identified access to jobs as a top priority,<sup>36</sup> significant barriers exist to adequate employment in the community, including limited English language skills, insufficient access to education and vocational training, and uncertainty over immigration status. Employees without documentation have found themselves taken advantage of by employers who demand unreasonable hours or maintain poor work conditions.<sup>37</sup> Finally, Haitian immigrants are frequently unfamiliar with U.S. labor laws and their rights as workers.<sup>38</sup>

One important avenue for creating jobs in Little Haiti is business growth within the community. Haitian immigrants have shown a strong entrepreneurial spirit, launching numerous businesses in Little Haiti. There is opportunity both to expand existing businesses in the community and to assist the many other immigrants who have expressed an interest in starting their own businesses. Because of a strong preference in Little Haiti for culturally oriented businesses, existing business owners believe that they can better meet the cultural and language needs of local consumers while also providing affordable goods and services for the community.<sup>39</sup> “Haitian businesses are closely held,” observed François Guillaume, director of the Haitian

American Chamber of Commerce, “so they can adapt and benefit from a cultural advantage that will allow them to respond quickly to developing market opportunities and offer niche services.”<sup>40</sup>

While opportunities to expand local business exist, there is also a significant need to educate and counsel entrepreneurs. According to Rasha Soray-Cameau, the lack of knowledge of U.S. business practices, including required financial reporting, tax payments, licenses, and permits, prevents Haitian immigrants from accessing needed credit as well as grants to start or expand their businesses.<sup>41</sup> The rising rents triggered by gentrification will also be an obstacle for new and existing businesses in Little Haiti.

### Civic Engagement

With its tradition of strong families, the Haitian community provides an important safety net for residents of Little Haiti. However, Haitians are also known for their reluctance to work together as a larger community.<sup>42</sup> Community service agencies cited this lack of community cohesiveness as an obstacle to their efforts to advocate collaboratively for resources and policy change to help improve the neighborhood.<sup>43</sup>

The organization that brings the community together most effectively is the Catholic Church, which provides many services to the Haitian community.<sup>44</sup> For example, the Catholic Charities branch of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Miami operates a day-care and pre-school center that serves more than 500 children. The old school building that houses this center also houses the Toussaint L’Ouverture Community Center, which provides a variety of social services and English language instruction to residents of Little Haiti.

Notre Dame d’Haiti Catholic Church, located adjacent to the old school building, is the heart of the South Florida Haitian Catholic community. According to Father Reginald Jean-Mary, the pastor of Notre Dame d’Haiti, weekend church services bring close to 4,000 congregants to Little Haiti from across South Florida, illustrating that multigenerational Haitian families still identify with the Little Haiti community.<sup>45</sup> Together, Notre Dame d’Haiti and the Toussaint L’Ouverture Center conduct outreach and offer programs that provide information, education, counseling, and other services to promote the social and economic well-being of individuals and families in the community. Father Jean-Mary pointed out

that, while more could be done by working with additional partners to attract resources to Little Haiti, the community is wary of outside organizations that do not understand it and may not act in its best interest. Consequently, he is very careful in choosing partners. “I guard the integrity of the church and the trust that our parishioners have in the church very carefully,” he said.<sup>46</sup>

### Managing Money and Credit

Although residents in Little Haiti value banking services, they feel they do not have access to or would not benefit from having a personal bank account. Residents appear to view bank accounts as a means of keeping their money, rather than managing it; in either case, their belief that substantial assets are needed to benefit from an account precludes many from even considering opening one. As one Haitian focus-group participant pointed out when asked about access to banking services, “Why does one need a bank account if one doesn’t have a job?” Most Haitian immigrants did not have access to banking in Haiti; thus, the use of banking services is not a part of family or community culture. Also, the structured banking system within the United States and the types of products and services offered by banks and credit unions are often viewed as complicated and cumbersome. The banking services Haitian immigrants reported needing most—remittances, for example—either aren’t provided by the local banks or can be procured more conveniently at local money transfer service outlets. Finally, there are very few Creole-speaking bank employees in Little Haiti.<sup>47</sup> Community residents expressed disappointment that a Bank of America branch in Little Haiti that had Creole-speaking staff has not reopened since being damaged in a 2005 hurricane.

While not all residents of Little Haiti make use of mainstream financial services, those interviewed for this case study report all agreed on the importance of savings and expressed an interest in a variety of investment goals, including homeownership, business start-up, and higher education.<sup>48</sup> Consumer Credit Counseling Services (CCCS) has partnered with Catholic Charities to offer budgeting and credit counseling in the Toussaint L’Ouverture Community Center. However, despite marketing efforts in Little Haiti, residents are still largely unaware that CCCS offers services in Creole, reported Carmel Mortimer of CCCS.<sup>49</sup>

Many Haitians also look outside formal financial institutions for access to credit. They regularly borrow

small amounts of money from family and friends, a credit activity that functions effectively because of Haitians’ strong commitment to family and the high value placed on personal honor. One community credit structure used by Haitian immigrants is a rotating savings pool called an *Eso*, a longstanding cultural practice that many Haitians consider sacred. In an *Eso*, a group of friends or family members in the community contributes a certain amount into a savings pool each week. Each member of the group then receives the entire amount in the pool in turn. Members can use the pool to make a down payment on a house, pay for a trip, or cover other expenses.<sup>50</sup>

### Youth, Education, and Health

A close family structure provides a solid safety net for Haitian youth. The stability of Haitian families is threatened, however, by the multigenerational process of adapting to a new culture and society. While foreign-born immigrants tend to hold on to their culture, their first-generation offspring acclimate quickly to American culture, largely in order to adapt during the school years.<sup>51</sup> Another threat to family stability is the growth of Haitian youth gangs, which form to protect members from non-Haitian youth.<sup>52</sup>

Education poses another challenge. Edison High School, the high school serving Little Haiti, has the worst graduation rate and performance record in the county.<sup>53</sup> A desire for better education leads many Haitian families to either leave Little Haiti or place their children in private schools. The Catholic Church provides access to private schools, often at reduced tuition or via scholarships to those less able to afford such an education. The church and other organizations in Little Haiti also offer after-school programs, youth groups, and volunteer activities.

The Miami-Dade public school system has made significant efforts to reach out to the Haitian community. The school system recently launched a community outreach initiative called the Parent Academy that provides information and workshops on a variety of family enrichment subjects designed to help struggling families and to improve the quality of life within the home. Many of these classes, as well as attendant informational materials, are offered in Creole. A goal of this initiative is to increase parental involvement in the schools, which is particularly important in an isolated community like Little Haiti. Schools with Haitian-American students now employ Creole-speaking teachers and are incorporating Haitian culture into lesson planning.

Health care is another particular concern among Haitian immigrants. Many lower-income individuals arrive in the United States with existing medical problems or without standard U.S. immunizations and preventive healthcare histories. Poverty also increases health risks triggered by overcrowded housing, unsanitary conditions in dilapidated homes or workplaces, poor nutrition, and lack of preventive health care. Moreover, a number of significant barriers thwart low-income individuals from accessing needed health care, including a lack of health insurance, documentation requirements, and high fees for healthcare services.<sup>54</sup>

## ■ CONCLUSION

Little Haiti is a microcosm of the Haitian immigrant experience in South Florida. The enclave provides a supportive environment for Haitian immigrants as they make their transition to the United States. While the neighborhood is closely aligned with the social and cultural preferences of its Haitian residents, this cultural supportiveness may also contribute to the economic isolation of these individuals, who find it easier to remain within the community than to learn to maneuver within the larger world. Programs and services aimed at helping Haitian immigrants increase their English language proficiency, improve their educational attainment, job skills, and employment opportunities, and strengthen their financial position will allow Little Haiti's residents to better acculturate and assimilate into the greater Miami economic and social community. The need for this assistance is even more critical as gentrification pressure on Little Haiti grows.

*This case study was prepared by Ana Cruz-Taura, senior project and communication supervisor, and Jessica LeVeon Farr, regional community development manager, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta.*

## Endnotes

1 South Florida includes Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties.

2 The 1980s exodus from Haiti coincided with the Mariel Boatlift from Cuba, when many Haitians tried to take advantage of the U.S. policy at the time, particularly in Miami, to blend in with the Cuban immigrants in camps set up to process families arriving by the thousands. This latest wave of immigrants from Haiti, like many since then, included Haiti's poorest, those unable to leave the island in previous years and desperate to escape the conditions they were living in. Shortly after Mariel, the political situation in

Haiti worsened, and boats full of Haitians kept arriving in Miami, the closest established enclave to the country. Hence, the study of Haitian enclaves in Miami begins, for the most part, with the 1980s.

3 Research Institute on Social and Economic Policy (RISEP).

4 For example, Little Havana, a neighborhood in West Miami established by Cuban immigrants to the United States.

5 Philip Kretsedemas, "Language Barriers and Perceptions of Bias: Ethnic Differences in Immigrant Encounters with the Welfare System," *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare* 32(4) (2005): 109-23. Rebecca Sohmer, "The Haitian Community in Miami-Dade: A Growing the Middle Class Supplement" (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2005).

6 U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

7 Sohmer, "The Haitian Community in Miami-Dade: A Growing the Middle Class Supplement." Low-income refers to households earning less than \$18,000.

8 Leonie Hermantin, Director of Research and Strategic Planning, Sant La Haitian Neighborhood Center. Personal interview in Miami, March 1, 2007. Census information is problematic to use in determining accurate assessments of Haitian populations as there is no separate category for Haitians; they are typically categorized with African Americans.

9 Haitian American refers to second-generation individuals of Haitian descent born in the United States.

10 U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

11 Ibid.

12 "According to the National Association of Realtors, some areas in South Florida have seen 46 percent price appreciation in the past year, compared with a national price appreciation of 9 percent for the same period. The average house price in the second quarter of 2005 in Miami was \$315,700, up 28 percent from a year prior," from John Bibish IV and Jesse M. Keenan, "Real Estate Market Fundamentals in South Florida," *Wharton Real Estate Review*, Fall 2005, available at <http://www.ruden.com/assets/attachments/44.pdf> (accessed June 2007).

13 U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

14 *BusinessWeek* recently identified Little River, part of the Little Haiti neighborhood, as one of the top 10 "Most Up & Coming Neighborhoods" in the 10 biggest cities nationwide. *BusinessWeek* identified neighborhoods that had seen the most median house-value appreciation in the past five years to find the neighborhoods that are still affordable but have a recent history of significant appreciation. According to *BusinessWeek*, the Little Haiti neighborhood saw a five-year price change of 244 percent and, because of its proximity to the Design District and downtown Miami, is ripe for gentrification. Maya Roney, "America's Next Hot Neighborhoods," *BusinessWeek*, March 6, 2007, available at <http://www.businessweek.com> (accessed June 2007).

15 Rasha Soray-Cameau, Administrator, City of Miami Little Haiti Neighborhood Enhancement Team Office. Personal interview in Miami, April 19, 2007.

16 The majority of Haitians in Little Haiti speak Haitian Creole, which is a French-based dialect used by the majority of the island nation's population.

- 17 Philip Kretsedemas and Ana Aparicio, "Introduction," in *Immigrants, Welfare Reform, and the Poverty of Policy*, Philip Kretsedemas and Ana Aparicio, eds. (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004).
- 18 Jacques St. Louis, Homeownership Counselor and Loan Administrator, Little Haiti Housing Association. Personal interview in Miami, May 7, 2007.
- 19 2005 per capita income in Haiti (\$1,680) is the lowest in the Western hemisphere, and 59.5 percent of the adult population has no formal education. Income Data: Population Reference Bureau, "World Population Sheet," available at [http://www.prb.org/pdf05/05WorldDataSheet\\_Eng.pdf](http://www.prb.org/pdf05/05WorldDataSheet_Eng.pdf). Education Data: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, available at <http://www.uis.unesco.org>.
- 20 Françoise Penha, Human Services Coalition. Personal interview in Miami, December 11, 2006.
- 21 According to Alex Stepick, Professor of Anthropology, Florida International University, the Cuban and Haitian experiences, overall, have been very different.
- 22 Alex Stepick, Carol Dutton Stepick, and Philip Kretsedemas, "Civic Engagement of Haitian Immigrants and Haitian Americans in Miami-Dade County" (Florida International University, 2001). Available at <http://www.wkkf.org/pubs/Devolution/Pub3670.pdf> (accessed February 2007).
- 23 The *Miami Herald* recently ran a series of articles focused on the increase in Haitian immigrant deportations and the impact of the sudden loss of family members on the children, spouses, and extended family that remain in Miami. "Haitian Activist Presses for Legal Remedy," *Miami Herald*, May 23, 2007, 1A. Additionally, Reverend Reginald Jean-Mary, pastor of the Notre Dame d'Haiti Catholic Church, says that his congregation makes regular collections to help support the children and families where a principal wage-earner or care-giver is hastily deported. Reginald Jean-Mary, Pastor, Notre Dame d'Haiti Catholic Church. Personal interview in Miami, March 14, 2007.
- 24 When residency and citizen applications are reviewed by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, an applicant's dependence on certain subsidies and benefits may result in the applicant's being labeled a "public charge" and receiving less favorable consideration.
- 25 Haitian Creole is a French-based dialect used by the majority of the island nation's population.
- 26 Tessa Painsón, Program Administrator, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami, Inc. Personal interview in Miami, April 9, 2007.
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 Alex Stepick, *Pride Against Prejudice: Haitians in the United States* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1998). Available at <http://www.worldlanguage.com/Articles/60.htm>.
- 29 Leonie Hermantín, Director of Research and Strategic Planning, Sant La. Personal interview in Miami, March 1, 2007. Sant La is one of the many Haitian-American community organizations in South Florida that provide assistance to the Haitian immigrant community.
- 30 Community stakeholder interviews conducted in Miami, December 11, 2006.
- 31 In a study of Haitian immigrants in Miami-Dade, a survey found that no more than 5 percent of the individuals surveyed applied for benefits, even though 80 percent of the survey respondents were eligible. Kretsedemas and Aparicio, "Introduction."
- 32 Michel Sainvil, Executive Director, Center of Information and Orientation, Inc. Personal interview in Miami, May 7, 2007.
- 33 U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.
- 34 Interviews with several community agencies conducted at Human Services Coalition of Dade County, Inc. offices December 11, 2006.
- 35 Stepick, *Pride Against Prejudice: Haitians in the United States*.
- 36 Focus group meeting conducted April 17, 2007 at Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami, Inc., Pierre Toussaint Center.
- 37 Stepick, Dutton Stepick, and Kretsedemas, "Civic Engagement of Haitian Immigrants and Haitian Americans in Miami-Dade County."
- 38 Paola Pierre, Director of Administration, Human Services Coalition of Dade County, Inc. Personal interview in Miami, May 17, 2007.
- 39 Interviews with Little Haiti business owners on NE 2 Avenue in Little Haiti conducted during the week of February 19, 2007.
- 40 François Guillaume, Director, Haitian American Chamber of Commerce. Personal interview in Miami, May 29, 2007.
- 41 Rasha Soray-Cameau, Administrator, City of Miami Little Haiti Neighborhood Enhancement Team Office. Personal interview in Miami, April 19, 2007.
- 42 Stepick, Dutton Stepick, and Kretsedemas, "Civic Engagement of Haitian Immigrants and Haitian Americans in Miami-Dade County."
- 43 Tessa Painsón, Program Administrator, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami, Inc. Personal Interview in Miami, April 16, 2007. Alex Stepick, Professor, Florida International University. Personal interview in Miami, February 14, 2007.
- 44 Stepick, Dutton Stepick, and Kretsedemas, "Civic Engagement of Haitian Immigrants and Haitian Americans in Miami-Dade County."
- 45 Reginald Jean-Mary, Pastor, Notre Dame d'Haiti Catholic Church. Personal interview in Miami, March 14, 2007.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 Focus group meeting conducted April 17, 2007, at Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami, Inc., Pierre Toussaint Center.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 Carmel Mortimer, Credit Counselor, Consumer Credit Counseling Services. Personal Interview, May 10, 2007.
- 50 Harriet Johnson Brackey, "Esos Based on Trust Benefit the Community," *Miami Herald*, May 1, 2005, E1.
- 51 Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou, "The New Second Generation: Segmented Assimilation and its Variants," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 530(1) (1993): 74-96.
- 52 Officer Nerrin, Little Haiti Neighborhood Enhancement Team. Personal interview in Miami, April 20, 2007.
- 53 Only 5.4 percent of the students at Miami Edison Senior High are considered proficient in reading, and only 24.6 percent are proficient in math. This is significantly lower than the statewide reading

proficiency rates for 10th graders (32 percent) and statewide math proficiency rate for 10th graders (65 percent). Source: School Matters, available at <http://www.schoolmatters.com>.

<sup>54</sup> Miami-Dade County Immigrant Access Task Force, May 2002.

