

Age of Immigrant Refugee Arrival and Career Mobility

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Abstract

We study the long-run career mobility of young immigrants, mostly refugees, from Vietnam who moved to the United States during 1989-1995. This third and final migration wave was sparked by unexpected events that culminated in the Amerasian Homecoming Act. Characteristics of the wave also minimized selection effects regard who migrated. Small differences in age of arrival, specifically being 14-17 years old on entry compared to 18-21, resulted in substantial differences in future economic outcomes. Using Census Bureau data, we characterize the different career profiles of young vs. older immigrants, and we quantify explanatory factors like education, language fluency, and persistence from initial employers.

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1 Introduction

The economic assimilation of immigrants into the labor markets of receiving countries is important for both the prosperity of the immigrants and their families and for the firms and communities that surround them. Language fluency, education/skill credentials, and cultural distance shape outcomes at the individual level (e.g., Ansala et al., 2020, 2022; Arendt et al., 2021). Immigrants may also face barriers like occupational licensing or, commonly in the case of refugees, wholesale restrictions on work authorizations (e.g., Chin and Cortes, 2015). The depth and traits of existing migrant co-national populations further influence job choices of new arrivals (e.g., Edin et al., 2003; Beaman, 2012).

This study quantifies the importance of age of arrival for long-run economic outcomes, contrasting immigrants arriving from Vietnam as young teens (14-17 years old) versus a bit older (18-21) during the 1989-1995 period. We build on prior seminal studies about age of moves and upward mobility, spanning the international work of Bleakly and Chin (2004, 2010) to the within-region moves of Chetty et al. (2016). Distinct from the prior studies, the age ranges we consider are older, and our sample consists of immigrants coming from challenging conditions in Vietnam. We provide novel evidence on the long-term economics consequences and career profiles linked to age of arrival, along with the explanatory power of factors like education attainment, language fluency, and initial conditions encountered.

The 1989-1995 period marked the third and final wave of mass immigration from Vietnam to America. It is a compelling research laboratory. The migration wave was due in large part to the Amerasian Homecoming Act (AHA), which followed rapidly from unlikely and unanticipated events. Features of the AHA minimize selection effects regarding migration choices, especially immigration for schooling. By fortuitous coincidence of timing, AHA-linked migration also occurred at the same time that the Longitudinal Employer Household Database (LEHD) commences. By linking these arrivals into the LEHD, we can observe decades of subsequent career history.

At the center of the third wave are Amerasians, defined to be those born in Vietnam to a mother from Vietnam and a US service member or civilian father stationed there during the Vietnam War. During the war and for years after, neither the United States nor Vietnam took responsibility for the well-being of Amerasians. Very few were able to migrate to America, as many fathers did not know of the children, nor claim them if they did. Amerasians

also frequently suffered from prejudice and poverty in Vietnam due to their partial American parentage, even being dismissed by some as “dust of life” (Bui Doi) or “children of the dust” (Lamb, 2009). A series of unlikely events following from a single photograph, however, culminated in the AHA legislation that facilitated the migration of more than 25,000 Amerasians and 70,000 accompanying relatives starting in late 1988 and being mostly complete by 1995 (Lee, 2015). Section 2 provides a detailed history of Amerasians and the AHA-linked immigration wave.

Our sample includes immigrants from Vietnam to America who arrived during the 1989-1995 period and with birth years consistent with the AHA requirements. These individuals are identified using information collected in the Decennial Censuses and the American Community Surveys. In addition to Amerasians, this sample captures siblings allowed to migrate with the Amerasian. It also includes similarly aged individuals being admitted from Vietnam during the wave under other visa categories, the majority of whom were admitted as refugees. The sample is further developed in Section 3, along with our relationship to other studies. For ease of reference, we label this 1989-1995 group hereafter as “AHA immigrants”.

Section 4 provides an analysis of career mobility and assimilation using the repeated cross-sections available with public data, a synthetic cohort technique launched by Cortes (2004). From comparable and very poor initial positions circa 1990, small differences in age upon arrival matter greatly for future economic outcomes. AHA immigrants arriving at ages 14-17 years old achieve the same college completion rates as US natives and mostly similar income levels over the next three decades, whereas those arriving at ages 18-21 have long-term gaps in language fluency, education, and incomes. Younger migrants are also more likely to marry a US-native and a college-educated spouse. Consistent with removing selection effects, these patterns are quite different than what one observes using raw contemporaneous migration from countries similar to Vietnam, where older arrivals tend to perform as well as or better than young arrivals.

In Section 5, we study the longitudinal career histories of AHA immigrants using the LEHD from the early 1990s through to 2014. We confirm the findings derived from the public data, and we verify they hold when isolating individuals observed in one of the cluster sites used to aid AHA settlement soon after arrival to the United States. We then develop a panel that characterizes the full employment history of AHA immigrants from 2000 to 2014. Younger

arrivals show stronger workforce attachment, more time in larger companies, and less time spent in firms owned by Vietnamese co-nationals or employing many Vietnamese workers. There is no difference in rates of entrepreneurship, and more of the cumulative wage differential follows from person-level upward mobility than establishment-level upward mobility. Stronger language fluency and education levels explain over half of the career variation between young and older arrivals, and traits of an individual’s first employer also matter, evidence of hysteresis. While local conditions matter for overall assimilation, they do not explain much of the age-related differential.

The last section concludes the paper. As we will further elaborate after reviewing the literature, our special setting allows us to isolate a large wave of migrants during their teen years, quantifying age of arrival effects during these critical years more closely than before. Additionally, studies using employer-employee data have begun documenting features like frequent hiring of co-nationals (e.g., Andersson et al., 2014; Åslund et al., 2014; Kerr and Kerr, 2021). Our setting provides a special laboratory for parsing how much of the future career profiles and upward mobility of immigrants arriving under difficult conditions depend upon their individual-level human capital attainment (language fluency, education level) vs. initial traits (e.g., type of first employer, location in a cluster site). Finally, and most simply, Vietnam was the largest source country of refugees to the United States during the final decades of the 20th century (Chin and Cortes, 2015). This study provides one of the first analyses of the labor market outcomes of this group, providing a useful case study for other cases of large-scale migration under dire circumstances, which unfortunately remain far too common and may even increase with looming challenges like climate change.

2 AHA and Immigration from Vietnam

This section provides a short description of the exceptional story of the AHA legislation and the third wave of immigration from Vietnam to America. Appendix A provides a detailed account and references.

The Vietnam War led to three large waves of migration to the United States. The first spike was in 1975 as the war ended, and the second surge came with the 1979 Orderly Departure Program. As relations between the United States and Vietnam further deteriorated during the 1980s, immigration declined substantially. A series of unlikely and unexpected events,

centering on Amerasians, sparked a final wave from 1989-1995. Panel A of Figure 1 shows these three waves as present in the 2015-2019 American Community Survey through years of arrival.

Following the war, Amerasians faced very rough conditions. They were often treated as outcasts in Vietnam, visible reminders of the war. Many Amerasians survived with their mothers on the fringes of Vietnam's conservative society; others were abandoned. The United States also turned its back on the Amerasians, in large part because few US fathers knew of and/or would claim them. Vietnam argued the children were American citizens, were not discriminated against, and should not be viewed as political refugees. For its part, the United States refused them citizenship (which, in contrast to Vietnam's patrilineal society, focuses more on the mother's citizenship) and erected barriers to prevent large-scale migration. The total immigration prior to the AHA is estimated at 6,000 Amerasians and 11,000 relatives (Esper, 1989).

Le Van Minh's photo, however, changed the lives of many. In October 1985, Audrey Tiernan photographed Le, an abandoned Amerasian stricken with polio, in Ho Chi Minh City. Appendix Figure 1 shows Tiernan's photo and later pictures of Minh. Upset, four students from Huntington High School in Long Island circulated a petition in 1986 to bring Minh to the United States for medical attention, collecting 27,000 signatures. The students asked their Democratic congressman, Representative Robert Mrazek, for help. In 1987, Mrazek flew to Ho Chi Minh City with the goal of helping Minh. Yet, Mrazek was overwhelmed once he saw how many Amerasians were experiencing similar hardships. Lamb (2009) noted: "Some called him "Daddy." They tugged at his hand to direct him to the shuttered church where they lived. Another 60 or 70 Amerasians were camped in the yard. The refrain Mrazek kept hearing was, "I want to go to the land of my father.""

Deeply moved, Mrazek worked with Republican Senator John McCain to introduce the bipartisan AHA legislation. With very limited legislative review¹, the AHA was passed by

¹Rep. Mrazek recounted in Thomas (2021): "I drafted the entire piece of legislation, which included a several hundred million dollar appropriation for the transition program in the Philippines, with just my personal staff and the assistance of the House Legislative Counsel. Before its passage in the continuing resolution of 1987, the bill received no public hearings or other serious consideration in the House or Senate. ... the Amerasian Homecoming Act was passed in spite of opposition by the State Department of the Reagan administration, the House Judiciary Committee (the committee responsible for immigration legislation), and the Senate Judiciary committee. However, it was reviewed by the many nongovernmental agencies that would have to play a role in finding landing spots in the United States for thousands of families, and they were enthusiastic."

Congress in 1987, took effect in March 1988, and was fully implemented by 1989. It allowed Amerasians born during 1962-1975 to migrate to America. The law initially was set to expire in two years, but it was later extended. The AHA led to a third migration wave, with one source at the time estimating 20,000 Amerasians and 50,000 family members resettled during 1989-1993 alone (Branigin, 1993). Panel B of Figure 1 shows official counts of Amerasian arrivals.

Critical changes embedded in the AHA unlocked the third wave. Whereas prior policies only allowed an Amerasian to migrate as an individual and required a US sponsor, the AHA allowed the full migration of the Amerasian's family and did not require a US sponsor. Additionally, the AHA dropped requirements of documentation to prove US parentage, with many cases being processed using physical facial features only. In early years of the program, an estimated 95% of applications were approved. While the law did not officially declare Amerasians to be refugees, it provided them similar types of assistance. This include upfront travel assistance provide by International Organization for Migration, eliminating financial barriers.

Most Amerasians applying under the AHA program were very poor, spoke little English, and had limited education. If accepted and lacking a US sponsor, as most migrants were, they were sent the Philippines Refugee Processing Center near Morong, Bataan, Philippines for a six-month program on the English language and "Cultural Orientation" program (GAO, 1992). Afterwards, the Amerasian and accompanying family members were sent to resettlement centers in one of 55 cluster site cities across the United States, where a resettlement agency assisted with short-term housing, administrative appointments with banks and government departments, school enrollment, and training and welfare assistance while adults searched for jobs.

Some reports suggest that all but approximately 400 Amerasians ultimately migrated to the United States (Isenberg, 2020). While this figure is impossible to know precisely, the consensus view is that the vast majority of Amerasians took advantage of the opportunity. The changing attitudes of America towards Vietnam with the AHA also provided for a final surge of refugee-based admissions. Rep. Mrazek phrased the period as a "mass exodus" (Thomas, 2021). After 1995, refugees admissions from Vietnam precipitously declined.

3 Sample Design and Literature Review

3.1 Sample Design

Our sample comes from the 1990 and 2000 Decennial Censuses and the 2005-2019 American Community Surveys (ACS) (Ruggles, 2021). We consider individuals born in Vietnam during AHA-eligible years who arrived during the 1989-1995 period. We further require immigrants be 14-21 years old at arrival. The youngest possible migrant with the AHA program would have been 14 years old, and we exclude those over age 21 at arrival to focus on youth making education and career choices. Our analyses compare “young arrivals” (14-17 years old) with “older arrivals” (18-21 years old).²

These samples encompass Amerasians, their accompanying siblings of similar ages, and other youth arrivals from Vietnam during the surge period. Using population weights, we follow approximately 60,000 immigrants from the surge, which is an expected size for the overall inflow in this age range. The data do not contain visa information to distinguish among these cases, and conditioning on a known US father would not be helpful as very few Amerasians were re-united. Regardless, the non-Amerasian youth from Vietnam faced quite similar conditions. Calculations using State Department arrivals data suggest that two-thirds of all immigration during 1989-1995 from Vietnam was Amerasian- or refugee-based, and this is likely a lower bound for 14-21 year olds given the AHA program’s structure.

This sample has two important properties. First, the unexpected nature of the third wave and the low barriers for Amerasians and their families minimize selection effects that are common when youth migrate. We are not aware of a similar recent episode that can be in turn linked to detailed employer-employee data for career outcomes. Upon arrival, these immigrants held many traits common with refugees, but they gained immediate and unrestricted access to US schools and the labor market. Second, as very few anticipated returning to Vietnam, they had strong incentive to assimilate into the US labor market.

3.2 Literature Review

Starting with Chiswick (1978), a vast literature considers the arrival and assimilation of immigrants and refugees into host countries and their workplaces. Our work most closely builds

²The future education attainment and income levels of immigrants arriving at age 22 and older during the 1989-1995 window are lower than the levels of those who migrated at age 21 or younger. While accompanying family members could be younger than 14, we do not analyze them in this paper.

upon studies examining the impact of age of arrival for migrant outcomes, the roles of language proficiency and education in achieving assimilation into the labor market, and the entry points and career paths of immigrants through firm-level data.

A first literature considers how the arrival ages of migrants shape outcomes in their host country. Immigrants arriving at younger ages typically achieve better later-life outcomes (Friedberg, 1992, 2000), including educational attainment, acculturation, and health. Studies find that younger arrivals become more proficient in the host country language, with subsequent implications for careers (e.g., Myers et al., 2009; Heath and Kilpi-Jakonen, 2012). Central to this literature, Bleakley and Chin (2004, 2010) find that for children who arrive to the United States at younger ages when English language acquisition is easier, there are higher rates of intermarriage and less ethnic enclave residence than children who arrive at older ages. Language proficiency has been in turn linked to the labor market success of migrants (e.g., Dustmann and Fabbri, 2003).

For refugees in particular, Chiswick et al. (2006) find that refugees have the lowest English language proficiency among immigrants. However, refugees often have greater incentive to learn English because they are unable to immediately return to their origin country (Chin and Cortes, 2015; Abramitzky et al., 2023). Arendt et al. (2021) and Foged et al. (2022) use discontinuities in programs available to refugees in Denmark for learning the Danish language to establish causally the beneficial impacts of language proficiency for immigrants and their children. Federman et al. (2006) measure that state-level English language proficiency requirements shape the degree to which Vietnamese refugee manicurists take up work.

A second, complementary channel links immigrant age of arrival to education outcomes. Böhlmark (2008) finds declines in Sweden for school performance begin after arrival ages of nine years old, and Ansala et al. (2020) use sibling comparisons among immigrants to Finland to establish a causal role for age of arrival. Evans and Fitzgerald (2017) find that refugee children who enter the United States before age 14 have similar educational outcomes as their native counterparts, while those entering age 18 and older have reduced outcomes. These studies consistently find weakening education outcomes with older age of arrival, especially after age ten or thereabouts, and particularly adverse effects for context- and language-specific studies.³

³Related studies for education include Friedberg (1992, 2000), Gonzalez (2003), Chiswick and DebBurman (2004), Cortes (2006), Ohinata and Ours (2012), and Hermansen (2017). See also Stiefel et al. (2010), Zhang

The importance of an individual’s age when moving for subsequent human capital development is also exhibited in two complementary research spaces. Abramitzky et al. (2021) find that the children of immigrants in the United States show stronger upward mobility than their native counterparts, suggesting children have more time to make their human capital transferable and undergo linguistic integration before entering the labor market. In the context of domestic mobility, Chetty et al. (2016) and Chetty and Hendren (2018) conclude that moving children from a high- to a low-poverty neighborhood before age 13 increases college attendance and earnings and reduces single parenthood rates. See also Chyn (2018) and Deutscher (2020).

A third literature considers the longitudinal career paths of refugees, along with other migrants, and the role of factors like initial location in shaping these trajectories (e.g., Chiswick et al., 2005; Capps et al., 2015). In the United States’ context, Cortes (2004) pioneered using synthetic cohorts across repeated cross-sections captured by household surveys to study refugee career profiles. Comparative and historical work includes Bevelander and Pendakur (2012), Abramitzky and Boustan (2017, 2022), and Ansala et al. (2022). Important reviews of this literature with respect to refugees include Chin and Cortes (2015), Brell et al. (2020), and Hatton (2020). As we are studying migrants who arrive at age 21 or younger and are provided complete work authorization, our setting will not consider important themes for adult assimilation like occupational downgrading, recognition of credentials, and visa restrictions.

This literature emphasizes the importance of social capital and access to networks. Edin et al. (2003) show that refugees in Sweden assigned to live in areas where their ethnic concentration is greater had higher earnings than refugees assigned in areas where their ethnic concentration is lower. Similar effects were noted for early Vietnamese refugees in the United States (e.g., Finnan, 1982; Starr and Roberts, 1982). In a later study, Beaman (2012) finds that there is lower occupational mobility and earnings potential when a high concentration of refugees in the same network are resettled in the same area at the same time due to higher competition. In contrast, there is higher occupational mobility and earning potential when a refugee is resettled in an area where there are more tenured members of their network already resettled there. Similarly, Dagnelie et al. (2019) measures that refugees found job quicker when they were settled into US locations where a large number of their compatriots are business owners rather than employees.⁴

and Ye (2017) and Alexander and Ward (2018).

⁴Studies of the implications of refugees for local labor markets include Del Carpio and Wagner (2015),

A young but rapidly growing literature uses firm-level data to consider first jobs and career trajectories over firms. This research finds high rates of immigrant workers matching into firms with other immigrants, but is inconclusive on whether this is beneficial in the long-run.⁵ In the United States, Garcia-Perez (2011) shows that small firms are especially likely to hire immigrants. Kerr and Kerr (2021) observe co-national hiring was highest at 45% among businesses with five or more employees that are led by Vietnamese immigrants. Ethnic communities and networks play an important role.⁶

Our work contributes to these many studies in several ways. First, while the important, causal links between age of arrival, language skills, and educational attainment have been established, the emphasis of the literature has been on younger ages than the critical teen years that we study. Selection on who migrates is particularly high during teen years, with many immigrants coming specifically for schooling. Our AHA-linked setting provides a special laboratory for disentangling these effects given the size of the migration wave and the extent to which the unexpected opportunity was almost universally taken. While all migration episodes like the AHA wave have unique circumstances, this episode provides valuable insight into how these teen years differ.

Second, the link of the synthetic cohorts into 20+ years data from the employer-employee records affords us much deeper insight into the career profiles that sit behind the earnings gaps measured in the household surveys. We are not aware of a study undertaking such a similar span. We can additionally measure the extent to which individual human capital (education, language proficiency) vs. other initial conditions (traits of first employer, being located in a cluster site) explain the career profiles and realized upward mobility. We believe this approach can be useful for studying other migration waves closely (e.g., former Yugoslavia, Iraq, Myanmar), as well as other purposes with data recorded in household surveys.

Tumen (2016), Clemens and Hunt (2019), Van Der Werf (2021), and Mayda et al. (2022). Hamalainen and Sarvimaki (2016) consider labor market policies and integration. We also relate to a vast literature on the economic opportunity associated with international migration (e.g., Borjas, 1994; Clemens, 2011; Docquier and Rapoport, 2012).

⁵For example, den Butter et al. (2007), Hellerstein and Neumark (2008), Andersson Joona and Wadensjo (2009), Garcia-Perez (2011), Hellerstein et al. (2011), Nicodemo and Nicolini (2012), Andersson et al. (2014), Åslund et al. (2014), Tomaskovic-Devey et al. (2015), Daunfeldt and Fergin-Wennberg (2018), Hammarstedt and Miao (2020), Ansala et al. (2020), Orefice and Peri (2020), Burstein et al. (2020), and Kerr and Kerr (2021).

⁶For example, Portes and Wilson (1980), Munshi (2003), Kalnins and Chung (2006), Fairlie et al. (2010), Patel and Vella (2013), and Kerr and Mandorff (2023).

4 Analysis of Censuses and American Community Surveys

4.1 Initial Conditions in 1990

The 1990 Census is early in the AHA immigration wave and measures initial conditions for AHA immigrants arriving in the United States from 1987-1990. (Unlike the ACS and 2000 Census where we can restrict to AHA immigrants arriving 1989 and later, the 1990 Census only recorded the range 1987-1990.) Table 1 shows panels for personal traits, family traits, and location traits. In Panel A, only half of the AHA immigrants speak English well, and the young AHA immigrants have fewer years of schooling. About 37.9% of older AHA immigrants have entered the labor force, with an effective unemployment rate above 15%, while only 6.9% of young AHA immigrants are seeking work.

Panel B presents the living conditions of the households, which in some cases contain more than one family unit. AHA immigrants are living in poor households. Households for young and older AHA average 49.8% and 61.9%, respectively, of the average household incomes of their metropolitan areas. Older AHA immigrants have higher household incomes and home values, although only the former is statistically significant. (Dollar values in this section and the next are converted in 2021 levels.) The share of households reporting welfare support in row 10 also suggests young AHA are living in tougher conditions. Young AHA immigrants are 4.5x more likely to be in households receiving welfare support than their surrounding cities, compared to 2x more likely for older AHA immigrants.

Rows 14-21 show that the households are of similar size and that the heads of households have similarly low levels of education, English fluency, and employment rates. The latter similarity is important for the analyses ahead, as it confirms the young AHA immigrants are not sorted into households with a stronger observable bent toward education. If anything, the families of young AHA exhibit less fluency and education attainment. No young AHA are declared heads of household in 1990 Census, while 4.3% of older AHA are.

With caution, rows 22-30 in Panel B provide traits on household structure. Census enumerators assign relationships within the family unit being surveyed and do not know biological relationships. Thus, a designated “mother” can be a biological mother, a stepmother via marriage, or an unmarried individual/partner who the enumerator assigns as a mother relationship for an individual. The same ambiguity is true for “father”, which is especially important in the AHA immigrant context. Stepfathers could migrate with an Amerasian stepchild. We do

not present these figures as representing biological relationships, only to observe whether the adult composition of the AHA households for young versus older immigrants shows significant differences.

Young AHA immigrants are 11% more likely to be living with a social or biological mother, while the presence of a father is 8% more likely. These differences are mostly explained by older AHA immigrants being 8% less likely to live in household where an adult over the age of 30 is present. Finally, only 1% of young and old AHA immigrants are living in a household with a father present who is a US-born native and Vietnam War veteran. These shares match the broad understanding that very few AHA immigrants joined a US-native father, suggesting their future assimilation is best thought of as assimilation of young immigrants from rather difficult circumstances than the reuniting of families.

Panel C presents traits of the locations where the family is living. 77.9% and 81.4% of young and older AHA immigrants, respectively, are living in cities with AHA cluster sites. There are practically no differences between the typical economic conditions surrounding young and older AHA immigrants. The in-marriage rates by Vietnamese immigrants to other Vietnamese are also the same. The last row shows the share of an MSA's Vietnamese living in that MSA's Public Use Micro Area (PUMA) with the largest percent of Vietnamese (restricted to MSAs with five or more identified PUMAs). The similarity suggests residential segregation is not different for young and older AHA immigrants. In short, young and older AHA immigrants appear almost randomly assigned over locations.

4.2 Language Fluency and Education Trajectories

We next analyze future outcomes evident in the 2000 Decennial Censuses and the 2005-2009, 2010-2014, and 2015-2019 ACS waves for young and older AHA immigrants. We run regressions with each dataset separately and then combine estimates into Figures 2a and 2b for a visual representation. Appendix Table 1 provides descriptive values for the results shown in this section, and Appendix Table 2a records the coefficients and standard errors of the values plotted in figures.

Our baseline regressions take the form for person i living in state s ,

$$Y_{i,s} = \eta_s + \beta X_i + \gamma_1(0,1)YoungAHA_i + \gamma_2(0,1)OlderAHA_i + \epsilon_{i,s} \quad (1)$$

where $YoungAHA_i$ is an indicator variable for AHA immigrant aged 14-17 at arrival and

$OlderAHA_i$ is an indicator variable for AHA immigrant aged 18-21 at arrival. The comparison group in these estimations includes native-born individuals of similar ages.

We include state fixed effects η_s in estimations to account for the greater representation of AHA immigrants in cluster receiving states, especially California. The X_i controls include a linear age term and an indicator variable for gender. We cluster standard errors by state.

Panel A of Figure 2a models as the outcome variable an indicator variable for speaking English well, which virtually all US-born natives do. Both young and older AHA immigrants begin with almost a 50% lower likelihood of speaking English well, as shown in Table 1. By 2000, when AHA immigrants are 25-32 years old, the language gaps for young and older AHA immigrants have diminished to about 20% and 33%, respectively. These gaps further shrink at a slow pace through the end of the sample, when most young AHA immigrants are in their mid 40s. For reference, ages of AHA immigrants in each time period are included in text below the horizontal axis in each panel.

Panel B considers reported years of schooling. The 1990 point is included for completeness, and we should explain its difference from Table 1, where young AHA immigrants have 1.2 years less schooling than older AHA immigrants. The difference comes from the inclusion of the linear age term in specification (1). Once adjusting for the fact that younger US natives also have obtained fewer years of schooling, as a natural consequence of just being younger, we estimate young AHA have modestly higher relative education than older AHA immigrants, with both groups falling below the US-born average. More interesting is the divergence that follows. Young AHA immigrants almost close the gap to US natives, hovering about 0.2 years less, whereas older AHA immigrants lose ground and typically show more than a year's gap.

Panels C and D of Figure 2a continue by showing the share who completed high school (Grade 12 of schooling) and those who completed college education (defined to be 4+ years of college education in our data).⁷ For high school completion, there is a 9% lower rate for young AHA immigrants and a 20% lower rate for older AHA immigrants in 2000. The differences between these groups and to similarly aged US natives is significant. For the AHA immigrants who do complete high school, more go on to complete college than among US natives. Thus, the college completion rate of young AHA immigrants is quite similar to US natives, while the older AHA group lags by about 14%.

⁷Beyond fluency and years of schooling, 1990 values are dummied out given that features like college completion rates or wage incomes have little meaning/comparability at that early point.

Before proceeding, we reflect upon these education results. IPUMS data do not measure the accumulated quality of education for an individual, just reported years of schooling. It is quite likely that 12 years of schooling for an AHA immigrant, being split across Vietnam and America, provided a lower skill base for the US labor market than 12 years of schooling by a typical US native. Consistent with this, the language proficiency gaps are larger than schooling gaps. We will also observe soon that wage gaps for AHA immigrants to US natives typically exceed what labor economists estimate as the return to an additional year of schooling. These interpretation questions only relate to comparability to US natives; the very sizable gaps that open up between young and older AHA immigrations are not affected.

4.3 Wage and Total Incomes

Figure 2b turns to wage incomes. In Panel A, we include all individuals with non-missing wage records and allow for zero wages. In Panel B, we consider log wages that are conditional on employment. Sizable gaps exist in 2000 for both immigrant groups relative to US natives. By 2005-2009, much of the gap has closed for young AHA immigrants, while the wage gap for older AHA immigrants widens. The young AHA immigrants are even measured to be at parity to US natives in a log specification given the reduced emphasis on very top incomes. Sampling may be somewhat over-stating the relative movement from 2000 to 2005-2009 in terms of young AHA immigrants' wages. Figure 2a shows that the highest relative education attainment for young AHA immigrants is in 2005-2009.

Post 2010, both AHA immigration groups lose ground to the incomes of US natives. Nominal wages for young and older AHA immigrants continue to rise during the 2010s, but they do not keep pace with the averages of US natives. In 2015-2019, young AHA immigrants earn about 11%-12% less than US natives and older AHA immigrants earn more than 22% less.

Panels C and D show similar patterns when looking at total incomes. To explore the full distribution, Figure 3 plots the share of young and older AHA individuals in 2015-2019 by the deciles of the US income distribution (natives included). Reflecting that these individuals still earn less than the US average, both distributions have excess mass at below-median incomes. The relative gains for young AHA immigrants compared to those entering just a few years older has come by shifting some of this below-median mass into the top three deciles. These distributions demonstrate that the gains experienced came through many young AHA being

able to achieve above-average outcomes, versus a small number of extremely high outcomes.

The results presented are robust to a variety of specification checks: using person weights from IPUMS, focusing just on arrivals by 1991, dropping controls, and similar.

4.4 Expanded Comparison Points

Figures 4a and 4b extend the analyses in Figures 2a and 2b, with Appendix Table 2b tabulating values. Our baseline specification (1) models effects relative to the average US native, which seems the most natural and policy-relevant baseline. In these expanded comparison figures, we modify the specification to introduce a third indicator variable for US-born minorities. The United States has long struggled with persistent racial education and income gaps, and so a comparison across white and non-white native groups provides further context.

We also expand the sample by including a comparison group of immigrants who are of the same birth years and time arrivals to America as the AHA immigrants, but who have entered through more typical channels (often in pursuit of high school or college educations). We consider immigrants from 30 countries with a non-English primary native language and with GDP per capita in 1988 that fell within 70% of Vietnam as measured by the World Bank. The countries are Albania, Benin, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, China, Egypt, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Kiribati, Lesotho, Madagascar, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Rwanda, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Togo, Uganda, and Zambia. We include a fourth indicator variable to measure their outcomes.

The future education and income levels achieved by non-Vietnamese immigrants contemporaneous to the AHA surge is comparable to and perhaps even exceeds the levels of white US natives. This is not too surprising given that many of these immigrants have self-selected to come to the United States for education and possible future employment. They frequently come from wealthier backgrounds in their home countries. Appendix Figures 3a and 3b further show that the outcomes of older arrivals within this peer country group are at or above the outcomes for young arrivals, the opposite of the pattern observed for AHA-linked inflows.

For the AHA-linked admissions, which came from poorer baseline conditions in Vietnam, the young AHA immigrant outcomes sit in between those of US-born whites and US-born minorities. The older AHA immigrants tend to have lower educational attainment than US

minorities, especially for finishing high school, but the income levels of the two groups ultimately track together closely.

4.5 Extensions and Social Outcomes

We close this section by reporting in Table 2 a set of coefficients from a simplified regression that compares young AHA immigrants to older ones,

$$Y_{i,s} = \eta_s + \beta X_i + \gamma(0,1)YoungAHA_i + \epsilon_{i,s}. \quad (2)$$

Each row in Column 1 reports the γ coefficient and standard error from a separate regression. The first four rows document English language fluency and education, rows 5-7 consider employment status, and rows 8-11 consider incomes. The table focuses on the 2015-2019 ACS dataset. These results are very similar to those shown in the earlier figures, with any small differences deriving from covariates like state fixed effects adjusting for the sample being restricted to AHA immigrants.

Row 12 shows that marriage is equally likely for young and older AHA immigrants by 2015-2019.⁸ Interestingly, aligned with their own higher education levels, we measure young AHA immigrants are 6.6% more likely to have married a college graduate. They are also 4.2% more likely to have married a non-Vietnamese spouse and 2.0% more likely to have married a US native. These latter two results are suggestive of young AHA immigrants integrating more in marriage outcomes, although we view them cautiously because values for periods before 2015-2019 are more volatile than our core findings using education and income measures.

Regressions 16-21 consider living conditions. While home ownership is equally likely, young AHA immigrants own higher valued properties. Among renters, it also appears young AHA might be occupying higher priced units. The final two rows suggest that despite these differences, young AHA immigrants are not disproportionately living outside the PUMA of their MSA which houses the most Vietnamese nor living in PUMAs with significantly different Vietnamese per capita. These latter estimations are again restricted to MSAs with five or more PUMAs.

Columns 4-6 next repeat specification (2) for rows 5-21 with added indicator variables for English language fluency, completing high school, and completing college. These estimations

⁸Marriage can be estimated in two ways in IPUMS. We use the spouse identifier for this purpose to align with the variations that follow. Results are similar however marriage is defined.

thus ask how much of the variation in incomes and other outcomes can be explained by differences in fluency and education. These controls can explain the majority of the young arrival mobility difference. The γ coefficients are often half or less of their values in Column 1, and the Adjusted R2 values rise significantly (on average, by 0.056). Most estimates are no longer statistically different from zero, although the larger sample in the next section using the LEHD will tighten standard errors.

In summary, this section has found that from comparable and difficult starting conditions, small differences in arrival age mattered for the ultimate education level attained and subsequent labor market earnings. In Table 1, the young AHA began in 1990 in households earning 49.8% of the local MSA average, compared to 61.9% for older AHA. In 2015-2019, the young AHA are in households earning 106.1% of their MSA's average, compared to 90.2% for older AHA. While both groups showed strong growth, the young AHA did materially better, in large part due to fluency and education differences.

Building on Table 2's framework, the next section explores confidential Census Bureau data to identify how these sizable gaps (\$6734 in wages and salary income at end of sample) developed in the labor market, the role of education/fluency in a larger sample, and the role of initial location and workplace conditions.

5 Analysis of Longitudinal Employer Household Database

5.1 Census Bureau Data

We utilize the confidential 2014 Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics (LEHD) database, which is constructed by the Census Bureau from state-level quarterly filings by employers for the administration of state unemployment insurance (UI) benefit programs. Records identify each paid employee at an establishment and the employee's quarterly compensation; employees with multiple jobs are recorded separately by each firm. The data longitudinally follow establishments and employees. We have access to the data for 23 states/DC for this project, including states like California and Texas that received many AHA immigrants.⁹ Our data extend through 2014, with start dates varying by state beginning in the early 1990s.

The person-level characteristics available in the LEHD include age, gender, race, place

⁹Covered states include Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and Washington, as well as Washington D.C.

of birth, and citizenship status. The employment history files provide job-level earnings of each worker within the covered states, and a national indicator file contains the quarterly employment status of individuals across all US states. We exclude job observations with less than \$250 in quarterly earnings. We also drop a small number of records of individuals who are 17 and younger at time of employment, beginning careers at age 18. Throughout this section, Census Bureau disclosure requires observation counts be rounded, and all reported numbers are likewise rounded to a maximum of four significant digits.

Using unique person identifiers, we merge the 2000 Decennial Census and the ACS into the LEHD. (Unfortunately, the 1990 Census cannot be linked.) This merger identifies the AHA immigrants among the LEHD records, and with this link established, we can follow them across their careers. For the LEHD work, we only compare young and older arrivals. Natives and other immigrants are used to calculate traits of establishments, but they do not feature in the regression sample. Our sample captures 110,000 person-year observations of AHA immigrants across the full span of the LEHD, and 8500 unique individuals when we focus on 2000-2014 career profiles.

5.2 Wage Incomes

Table 3 commences by quantifying annual wage income differentials between young and older AHA arrivals among those employed. While the specification is conceptually quite similar to that used in Section 4 with the public data, for disclosure reasons we report results developed with a stacked regression that groups all years together and interacts controls with indicators for time periods. The sample size is significantly larger in these estimations than in Section 4 because we can follow identified AHA individuals over time.

Columns 1 and 2 show that the older AHA immigrants initially earn more in wages in the 1990s, but that the young arrivals soon surpass them. The wage differentials emerge by the early 2000s and are relatively flat thereafter. These results allow for individuals to enter and leave the sample, and we find similar outcomes when restricting on those with work careers starting in the early 1990s. Some of the largest AHA immigrant receiving states have early start dates, making our analysis quite robust to these considerations.

Columns 3 and 4 take advantage of the LEHD's career histories to isolate immigrants who are most likely have been specifically under the AHA legislation (vs. other refugee categories)

by keeping immigrants who first appear in the LEHD in a cluster site and within three years of arrival to America. The latter condition limits likely internal mobility after arrival, but it also comes at a cost of excluding some individuals seeking higher education. About half of the sample meets these conditions, and we find quite similar wage trajectories when studying them. This comparability provides confidence in our overall estimation approach.

5.3 Career Histories

Tables 4 and 5 analyze the career histories of AHA immigrants across 2000-2014. Our goal is to concisely summarize a vast amount of information into digestible features of the AHA immigrant experience. We commence the characterization of careers in 2000 for two reasons. First, AHA immigrants in 2000 are 25-32 years old, resulting in most having completed schooling investments. Additionally, the records for LEHD states begin at different points, and the 2000 start date affords a full sample.

We use a specification of the form,

$$Y_i^{00-14} = \eta_s^{00} + \beta X_i + \gamma(0, 1)Y_{young}AHA_i + \epsilon_{i,s}. \quad (3)$$

Each row presents the γ coefficients from regressions with the indicated outcome variable Y_i^{00-14} . The base specification in Column 1 compares young arrivals to older ones, conditional on gender, a linear age term, and fixed effects for the state where we first observe an individual in the LEHD in 2000 or afterwards. The means of outcome variables for the two groups are displayed in the last two columns of the table.

The first row shows that young arrivals display 12% more quarters of employment during 2000-2014. Moreover, the next rows show that the composition of this employment is different. Young arrivals spend more of their careers in large firms and in firms with average wages higher than their state's median. By contrast, the older arrivals spend more of their time in small firms, firms with an immigrant from Vietnam as the top earner, or in firms in the nail care sector (where Vietnamese workers play a large role). There are no differences in the likelihood of young arrivals being the top earner in the establishment, a signal of likely entrepreneurship. These patterns capture that some of the differential between young and older arrivals comes through the former's higher likelihood of being employed in better establishments less connected to co-nationals.

The second grouping of rows provides further insight on conditions of the job using continuous variables. Row 10 confirms that when employed, the young arrivals have higher quarterly earnings. The quarterly estimate of \$2289 compares well to the 2015-19 annual difference of \$6734 measured in the ACS. The young arrivals tend to be 4.5% higher in the wage distribution of their establishment compared to older arrivals. Young arrivals also have a lower share of their co-workers being fellow immigrants from Vietnam.

In rows 16-22 we quantify dynamics of careers. Over the period, the young arrivals achieve their higher earnings mostly through steady incremental advancement. Young arrivals have modestly more years in which their wage income grows by 20% or more compared to prior years, but they have substantially fewer years where they experience sizable earnings declines or missing employment. Young arrivals shift over time to higher wage establishments, but this is growth is a tenth of the within-person earning growth. While we do not observe occupations, these patterns would be consistent, for example, with the young arrivals being more likely to become a supervisor at retail outlet or manufacturing plant compared to older arrivals.

As before, we next measure in Table 5 how much language fluency and education differentials can explain these career histories. Column 1 is a repeat of the base regression, and Column 4 incorporates controls. Typically, these controls account for half of the career variation between young and older arrivals; adjusted R2 values also rise by 0.046 on average. While we do not separate them in reported results, education explains more than fluency but both matter. Looking separately at education levels, the stronger careers of young arrivals are present within levels and tend to grow more sizable in comparison to older arrivals with higher education levels.

Column 7 finally adds controls for the initial conditions of individuals. We introduce an additional indicator variable for whether an individual was first observed in a city hosting a cluster site; we likewise control for whether an individual's first LEHD job (including those before 2000) was in a small firm (under 50 employees) that had a top earner from Vietnam, a small firm with a top earner not from Vietnam, a larger firm with a top earner from Vietnam, or otherwise. These controls explain a bit more of the variation (an average increment of 0.026 in adjusted R2 value), consistent with persistence of initial conditions. But the explanatory power is much less than education and fluency. This conclusion also holds if introducing the initial conditions without controlling for education and fluency.

6 Conclusions

The Amerasian Homecoming Act changed the lives of many. Most of the young individuals who migrated from Vietnam to America during the 1989-1995 left from and arrived into very poor conditions. The *Los Angeles Times* article in 1989 was poignantly headlined: “Most of them are unwanted, jobless and homeless, but children of U.S. servicemen still hope for a better life in the land of their fathers: Amerasians: Vietnam’s misbegotten legacy.” (Esper, 1989). Yet, with limited prospect (or desire) to return migrate, AHA arrivals had strong incentives to invest in their integration into the US labor market.

Decades later, in his foreword for Thomas (2021), the AHA’s architect Representative Robert Mrazek expressed surprised some surprise at what had transpired: “A year after passage of the Amerasian Homecoming Act, I began to receive annual reports from the State Department on the practical results of this mass exodus, and I came to wonder if my work to pass the legislation had made a meaningful difference in their lives. ... It was only in 2010, when a journalist named David Lamb contacted me to say that he was researching and writing a lengthy piece for Smithsonian magazine on the current status of Amerasians, that I learned of the many success stories, the thousands who had completed their education and gone on to have happy and productive lives.”

In his recollection, Rep. Mrazek also noted the heart of the issue investigated in this study. “When I first became aware of the issue in November 1986, the average age of the Amerasians in Vietnam was nearly seventeen. I felt strongly that if they weren’t able to come to the United States within a few years, they would reach adulthood and their chances of adapting to a new country would be significantly more difficult.” Our study quantifies just how much Rep. Mrazek’s intuition held true. In doing so, it also contributes to the existing economics literature on age of arrival effects by showing how the gradient for upward mobility persists into the teen years. While every mass migration wave carries its own unique features, recognition of this sensitive period can aid in policy design to provide additional supports for those arriving a bit older. We also hope further research continues to describe how immigrants achieve upward mobility through the firm structures of their new homes.

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Appendix A: The Amerasian Homecoming Act

The Vietnam War and its aftermath led to the displacement of millions within Vietnam and across Southeast Asia. Despite this refugee crisis, few Vietnamese were allowed to migrate to America. As Saigon fell to North Vietnamese forces in April 1975, the US government passed the Indochina Migration and Refugee Act, a two-year evacuation and resettlement program facilitating a first wave of 130,000 Southeast Asian refugees to America, of which approximately 120,000 were from Vietnam (Ong Hing, 1992). As that program ended and hundreds of thousands of “boat people” continued to seek escape from Vietnam by sea, with estimates suggesting 10%-50% of them perishing during the journey (Wain, 1981; Zhou and Bankston, 2000), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees worked with Vietnam’s government to develop the 1979 Orderly Departure Program (ODP). The ODP launched a second and larger wave of Vietnamese migration to America.

Within this humanitarian tragedy, the “Amerasians” held a contested and neglected place. Amerasians are the sons and daughters of US service members and civilian personnel in Southeast Asia during the war period.¹⁰ As the war drew on, many US service members formed relationships with Vietnamese women. Some of these relationships were loving and long-term; others were transactional. Many relationships resulted in children, some unknown to their fathers. Portraits of these relationships in popular US media ranged from the musical *Miss Saigon* to the Stanley Kubrick film *Full Metal Jacket*. See Doan (2017) for discussion of the portrayal of the Amerasian story.

From a young age, Amerasians and their mothers were often treated as outcasts in Vietnam. As Amerasians were mostly born to non-Asian white or black fathers, the “otherness” of Amerasian children was often visible to an ethnically homogeneous Vietnamese public. Some Amerasians were seen as visible reminders of their mothers’ lack of chastity, a value prized in Vietnamese society, and others as markers of relationships with the wartime enemy of North Vietnam. One Vietnamese saying proclaimed, “Children without a father are like a home without a roof” (Isenberg, 2020), and many sayings about the Amerasians were much worse.

¹⁰Excepting where otherwise noted, we use the term Amerasian just with respect to those from Vietnam. The official definition of Amerasian on the 2021 instructions form I-360 by the US Citizenship and Immigration Service is “born in Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea [Cambodia], or Thailand after December 31, 1950, and before October 22, 1982, and was fathered by a U.S. citizen.” (Source: <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/forms/i-360instr.pdf>). Others have also used the term to also include children of US service members in the Philippines and Japan.

Many Amerasians who lived with their mothers survived on the fringes of society; others were abandoned. Yet, few Amerasians made it to America during and immediately after the war, first and foremost because few US fathers knew of and/or would claim them.

Early interventions like 1975's "Operation Babylift" transported between 2,000 and 3,000 Amerasians out of Vietnam (Sachs, 2011), a tiny share of Amerasians born during the period of heavy US involvement in Vietnam. To a large degree, both Vietnam and the United States turned their back on the Amerasians in Vietnam except when using them for political negotiations.¹¹ Vietnam argued the children were American citizens, were not discriminated against, and should not be viewed as political refugees. The ODP only applied to refugees, and it did not initially include Amerasians as American family members or those with "close ties" to the United States. Amerasians were eventually included under the "close ties" category of the ODP, and Congress passed the Amerasian Immigration Act (AIA) in 1982 to grant immigration priority to the children of American fathers in Vietnam and four other Southeast Asian countries, but this too had limited impact (Robear, 1989).

One estimate placed the total immigration from ODP and the AIA at approximately 6,000 Amerasians and 11,000 relatives (Esper, 1989). Uptake was limited due to significant restrictions on accompanying relatives, with the AIA for example not permitting biological mothers to accompany admitted Amerasians, and the challenges of proving parenthood by a US service member. Many Amerasians did not know who their father was, and other families had destroyed evidence of their connection to US service members, including photographs and letters, as the Communists moved south and took power. Thomas (2019) further notes that many US veterans feared passage of the AIA and its potential implications for them. As relations between the United States and Vietnam further deteriorated during the 1980s, immigration hit new lows following the second wave and very little migration of Amerasians occurred (Robear, 1989; Thomas, 2021).

Le Van Minh's photo, however, would change the lives of many, sparking American support for Amerasian immigration. In October 1985, photographer Audrey Tiernan was working in Ho Chi Minh City for *Newsday*, a daily newspaper that mostly circulated in Long Island, NY. Tiernan felt a tug on her pant leg. "I thought it was a dog or a cat," she recalled. "I looked

¹¹ "The care and welfare of these unfortunate children ... has never been and is not now considered an area of government responsibility" – the U.S. Defense Department 1970. "Our society does not need these bad elements" – the Vietnamese director of social welfare in Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) a decade later. Source: Lamb (2009).

down and there was Minh. It broke my heart.”¹² Minh was one of many Amerasians living on the streets, ridiculed like other Amerasians for having different skin colors and American-looking features. He had been stricken by polio and abandoned by his mother at age 10. He spent days begging on the streets with a friend and nights sleeping in an alleyway. Minh reached out to Tiernan, selling a flower he had created from the wrappers of cigarette packs.¹³

Tiernan’s photo of Minh was printed in newspapers and broadcasted in TV specials about the plight of Amerasians. Appendix Figure 1 shows Tiernan’s photo and later pictures of Minh. As news and images of the condition of Amerasian children spread around the United States, Americans began agitating for support of these children, seen by some as having been abandoned by the United States upon its withdrawal from Vietnam. Motivated by Tiernan’s photo, four students from Huntington High School in Long Island began to circulate a petition in 1986 to bring Minh to the United States for medical attention. The students ultimately collected 27,000 signatures and asked their Democratic congressman, Representative Robert Mrazek, for help.

In 1987, Mrazek flew to Ho Chi Minh City with the goal of helping Minh come to the United States for medical care. Yet, Mrazek was overwhelmed once he saw how many Amerasians were experiencing similar hardships to those of Minh. Lamb (2009) noted: “Some called him “Daddy.” They tugged at his hand to direct him to the shuttered church where they lived. Another 60 or 70 Amerasians were camped in the yard. The refrain Mrazek kept hearing was, “I want to go to the land of my father.”” Mrazek was able to secure Minh’s migration to the United States, where he stayed with foster parents in Centerport, NY, and received medical treatment. Mrazek told the high school students who had created the petition that they were “bringing Le out of a life of misery to a new life in America” (Virag, 1987). As an adult, he moved to San Jose and worked as a newspaper distributor (Lamb, 2009).

Deeply moved by the experience, Mrazek worked with Republican Senator John McCain to introduce bipartisan legislation titled the Amerasian Homecoming Act (AHA). The AHA was passed by Congress in 1987, took effect in March 1988, and was fully implemented by 1989

¹²The next three paragraphs pull extensively from Lamb (2009) “Children of the Vietnam War”. Source: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/children-of-the-vietnam-war-131207347/>

¹³Minh was born in September 1971 in Cam Ranh, the site of a U.S. naval base. Minh’s American father “Joe” was a corporal in the US Army and spoke Vietnamese and his mother, Le Thi Ba, was a cook in the mess hall. According to Le Thi Ba, she dated Joe for over a year and he was present at Minh’s birth. They lost contact after the Viet Cong invaded the area and she fled to Saigon with Minh (Luo, 2000).

(Congress.gov). Despite its significant change in policy, the legislation received limited review (Thomas, 2021). The AHA allowed Amerasians fathered by US service members in Vietnam during the years 1962-1975 to migrate to America. Critically, the AHA also allowed the immigration of immediate relatives of the Amerasian and reduced documentation requirements, lowering the earlier barriers to mobility. While the law did not officially declare Amerasians to be refugees, it provided them similar types of assistance. This include upfront travel assistance provide by International Organization for Migration to eliminate financial barriers. The law initially was set to expire in two years, but it was later extended through Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Acts of 1990 and 1991.

The AHA led to a third surge of immigration from Vietnam, with one source at the time estimating 20,000 Amerasians and 50,000 family members resettled during 1989-1993 (Braning, 1993). The US State Department reported that over 10,000 Amerasian visas were issued in 1989 alone (US State Department Report, 2013), and another source placed the number at 19,000 Amerasian visas (Lakshmanan, 2003). While it was possible to migrate under AHA during 1988, the slower implementation meant only 364 admissions (inclusive of accompanying family members) occurred. The figures for 1989 and 1990 were 8721 and 13,307 respectively.

For this early period, it has been estimated that 95% of all Amerasian applicants and their relatives were granted admission, with a peak arrival year of 1992. Following Congressional concern that up to 17% of accompanying family members for the Amerasian were fraudulent (i.e., faking to be sister or mother of the Amerasian applicant), the GAO reported to Congress that the rejection rate of applicants rose from 20% in 1991 to 80% in 1992 (GAO, 1992).¹⁴

The count of AHA admissions would further reach about 25,000 Amerasians and about 60,000 relatives by 2009. Exact figures are not known due to limited data from the time period, but 21,000-30,000 Amerasians and 55,000-70,000 accompanying relatives appear to the authors to be close to the consensus.¹⁵ Over 93% of visas and admissions credited to AHA in government documents happen during 1989-1995 (Office of Refugee Resettlement reports, Secretary of State Refugee Admissions reports).

Most Amerasians applying under the AHA program were very poor, spoke little to no English, and had limited education. Chuong and Van (1994) surveyed 275 Amerasians who

¹⁴At a seminar presentation of this paper, an Amerasian provided an anecdote of some orphaned Amerasians being adopted for the purpose of gaining access to America as an accompanying family member.

¹⁵Sources include: <https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/visas/Statistics/AnnualReports/FY2013AnnualReport/FY13AnnualReportTableX.pdf>; <https://immigrationtounitedstates.org/337-amerasian-homecoming-act-of-1987.html>

had settled into California by 1991 about their backgrounds. Only seven of these migrants knew their father. Prior to departure for America, 59% indicated they did not know any English, and most of the rest had poor English language skills. More than 30% had three years or fewer of schooling, and 75% had eight years or less.

The AHA procedure included several resettlement steps. Amerasians and family members first applied in Vietnam. If accepted and lacking a US sponsor, as most migrants were, they were sent to the Philippines Refugee Processing Center near Morong, Bataan, Philippines for a six-month program on the English language and “Cultural Orientation” program (GAO, 1992). In cases where the migrant had an American sponsor and living arrangement established in the United States, they might have been able to go directly to their sponsored arrangement. Government reports differ on this detail, but, regardless, sponsored cases were rare.

Afterwards, the Amerasian and accompanying family members were sent to resettlement centers in one of 55 cluster site cities across the United States, where a resettlement agency assisted with the settling of Amerasian children and families through the provision of short-term housing, administrative appointments with banks and government departments, school enrollment, and training and welfare assistance while adults searched for jobs. Appendix Figure 2 shows a map of some of the resettlement centers that was included in a 1989 Department of State report. Some centers, including all the centers in California, are not shown.¹⁶

Life was not easy for Amerasians in the United States; seen as different from both Vietnamese and Americans, the discrimination experienced in Vietnam displayed in different ways in the United States (Mullan et al., 2002). This was evidenced even through the AHA, which deemed Amerasians not as citizens by birth as is typical for children born to Americans but as a separate category that was not given full rights. Ranard and Gilzow (1989) and Chuong and Van (1994) note the federal government provided resettlement centers with limited funds of \$35,000 each, but the centers had personnel experienced in resettling Amerasians.¹⁷ AHA

¹⁶An example of a 1991 article of about Brooklyn, New York, center: <https://www.nytimes.com/1991/04/18/garden/sheltering-children-of-the-vietnam-war.html>

¹⁷Tian and Hunthausen (1990) describe in detail a refugee resettlement center in Tacoma. Once Amerasians and their families arrived, they were taken to a house by the program’s office, where they could live for 2-4 weeks while long-term housing arrangements are made. In that 2-4 week period, they were further taken to: the bank to cash the reception and placement grant check they received; the social security office to get social security cards; the health department to get a health screening; the licensing department to get an alien identification card; an English as Second Language class to enroll adults for English classes; the school administration building to enroll students for public school; and the welfare office to apply for refugee assistance. The process was described as a “blur of forms” that produced information overload. Public assistance was available for 12 months only. A 1994 GAO report on Amerasian resettlement stated that around 65% of families had found work.

inflows had measurable but small relative sizes to the new host city, on the order of 0.05% of the city's population in the 2000 Census.

Some reports suggest that all but approximately 400 Amerasians ultimately migrated to the United States (Isenberg, 2020). While this is impossible to know precisely, the consensus is the vast majority of Amerasians took advantage of the opportunity. Some Amerasians who had successfully been processed for migration near the start of the AHA program reported in interviews that they knew of Amerasians who had not applied due to interference by Vietnamese officials and costs, including travelling to Ho Chi Minh City for interviews, getting government documents, and paying bribes (GAO, 1992). While most applicants lacked documentation that proved their American paternity, immigration officers often accepted applicants with physical features like hair, eye shape, and skin color that suggested they could be Amerasian (Thomas, 2021).

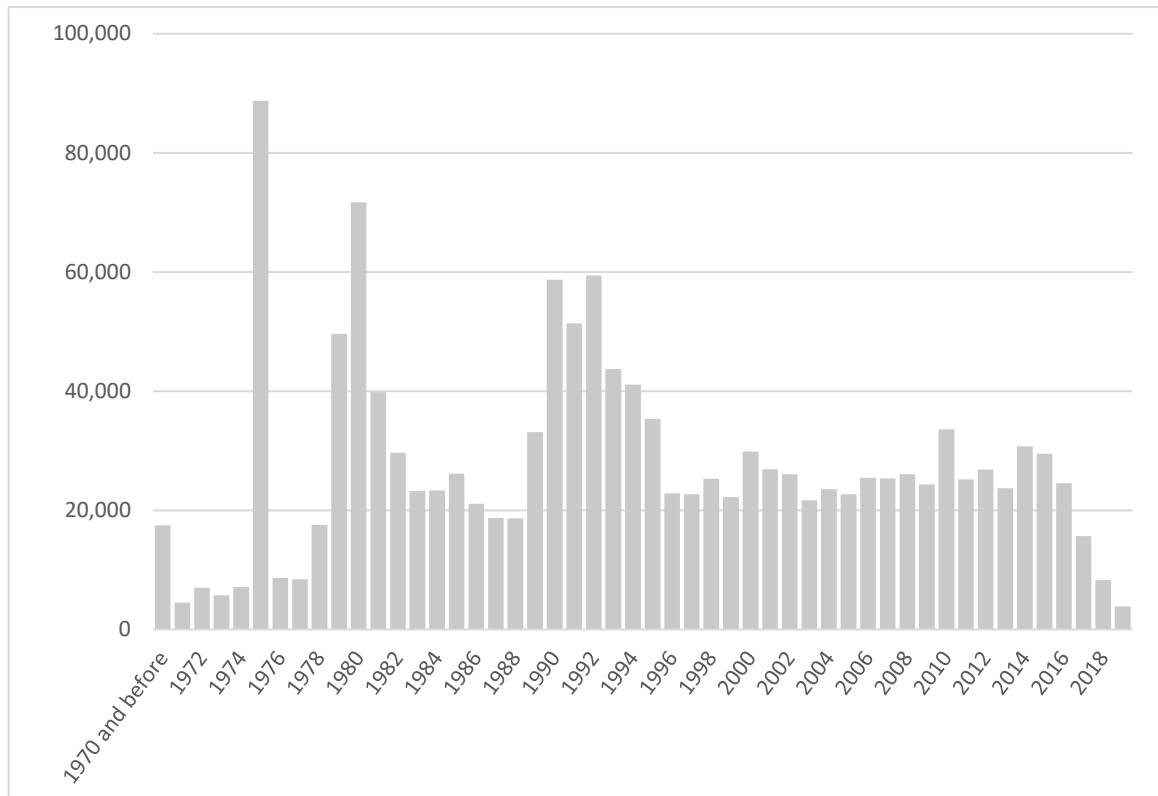
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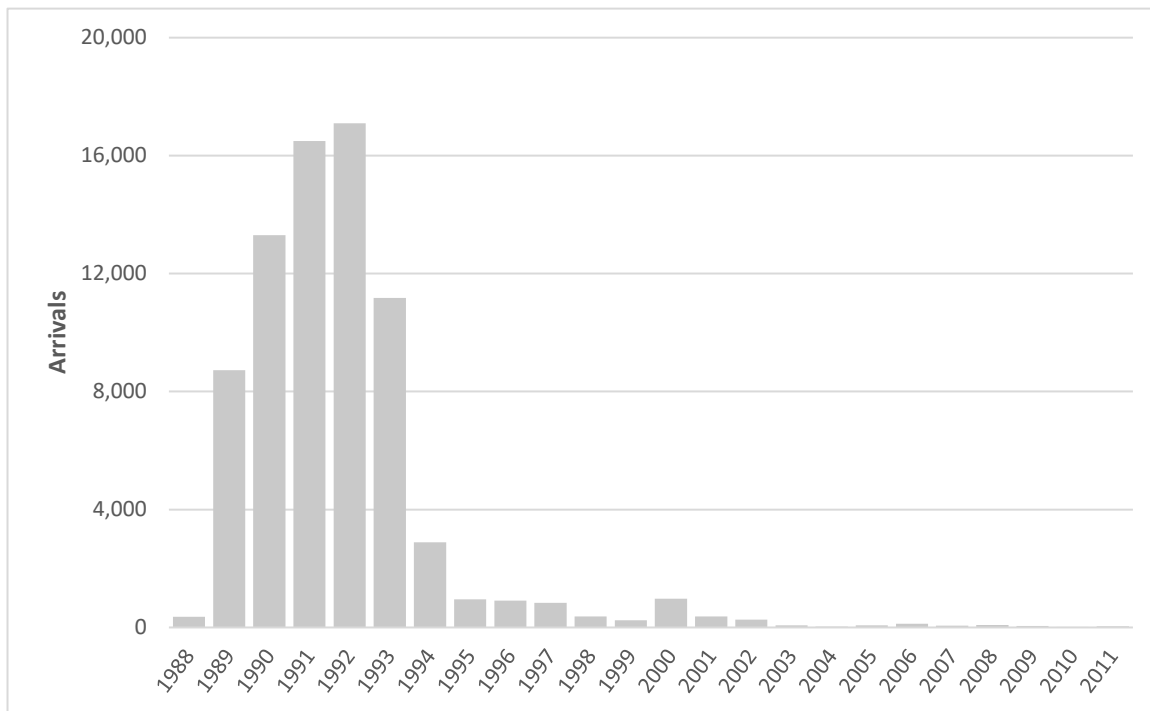
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Figure 1: Immigration from Vietnam to America

A. Arrival dates of immigrants from Vietnam as present in 2015-2019 ACS



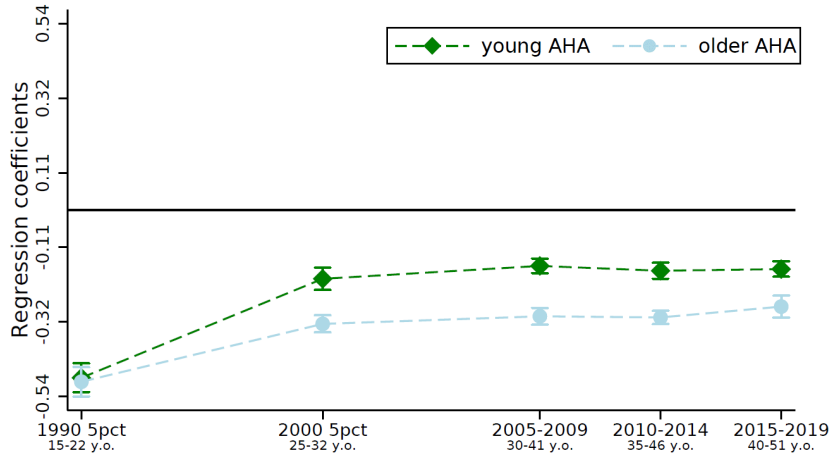
B. Official count of Amerasian arrivals



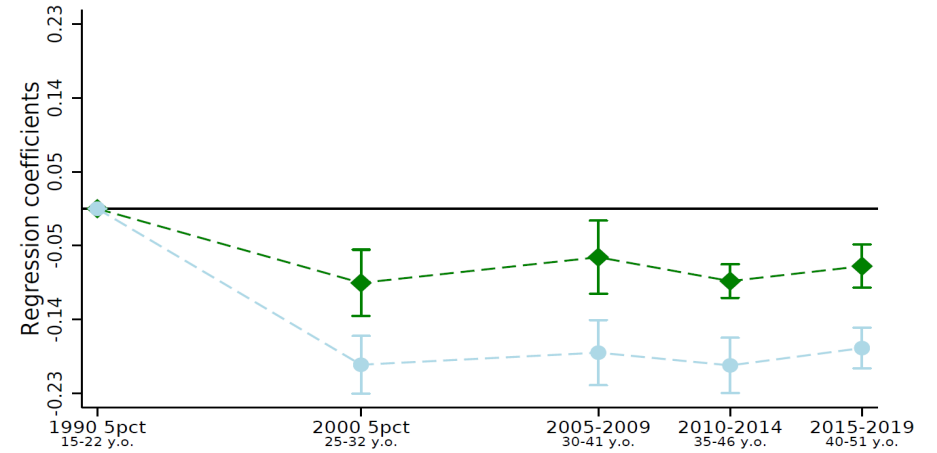
Notes: Panel A shows arrival years of immigrants from Vietnam surveyed in 2015-2019 ACS. Panel B shows assembled data on Amerasian arrivals as recorded in government documents from Office of Refugee Resettlement Reports and Secretary of State Refugee admissions reports.

Figure 2a: Language proficiency and schooling of young vs. older arrivals relative to all US natives

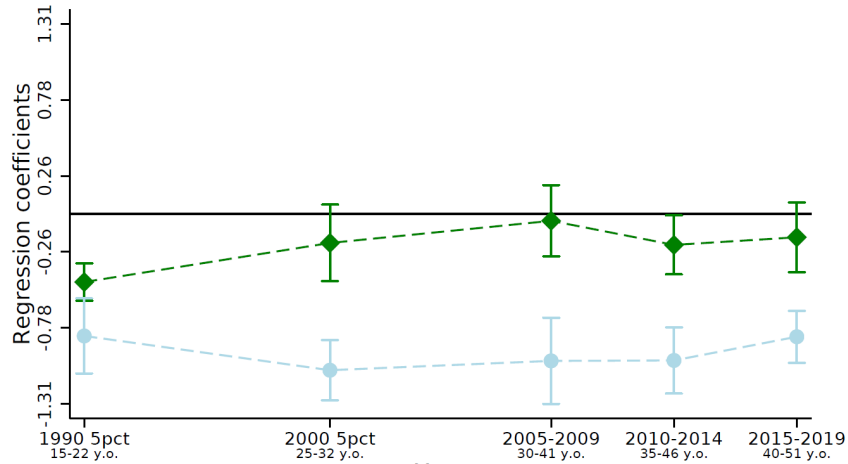
A. Share of group who speaks English well



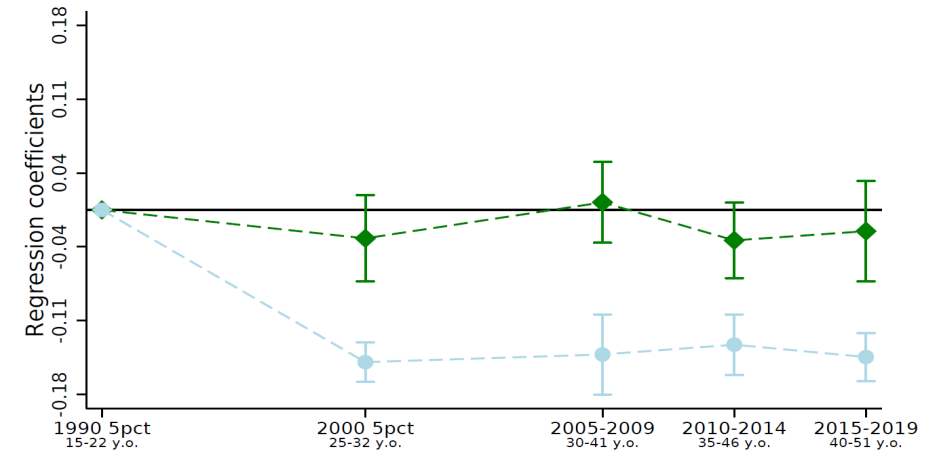
C. Share of group with completed high school education



B. Years of education

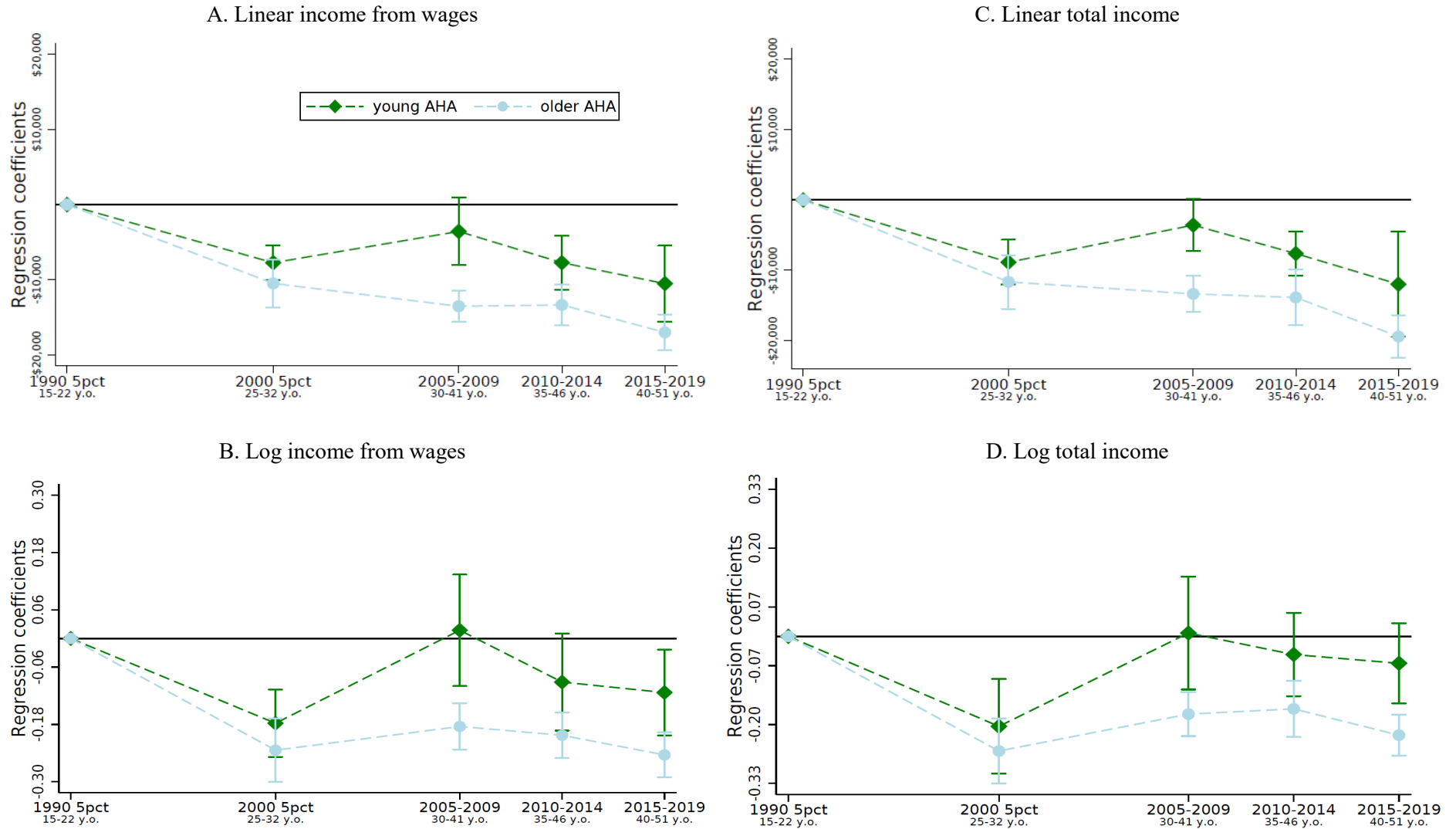


D. Share of group with completed college education



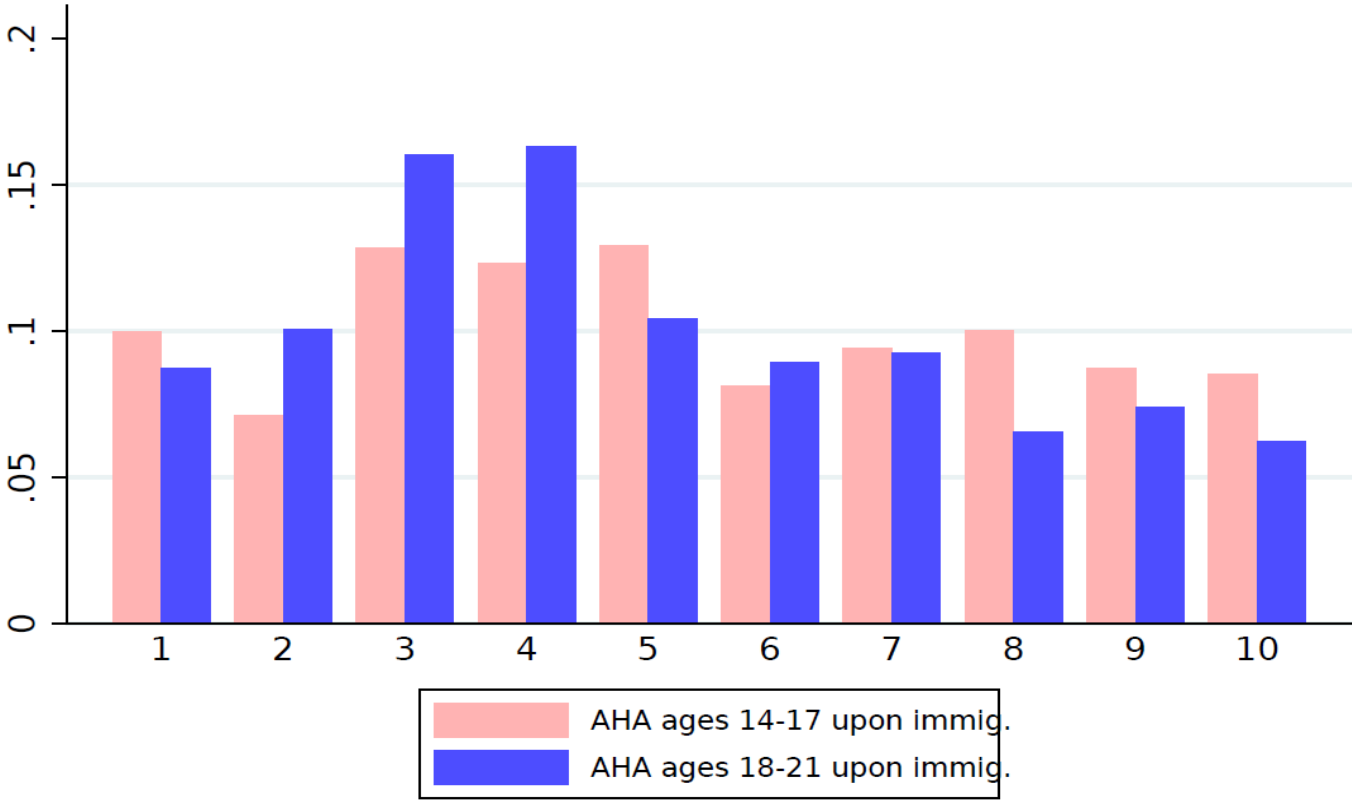
Notes: Data combines Decennial Censuses from 1990, 2000, and the 2005-2009, 2010-2014, and 2015-2019 American Community Surveys. Ages of group in each time period are included in text below x-axis. Coefficients are measured relative to US natives. Regression controls include gender control, a linear age term, and state fixed effects. Regressions are unweighted and report 95 percentile confidence intervals with standard errors clustered by state.

Figure 2b: Wages and income of young vs. older arrivals relative to all US natives



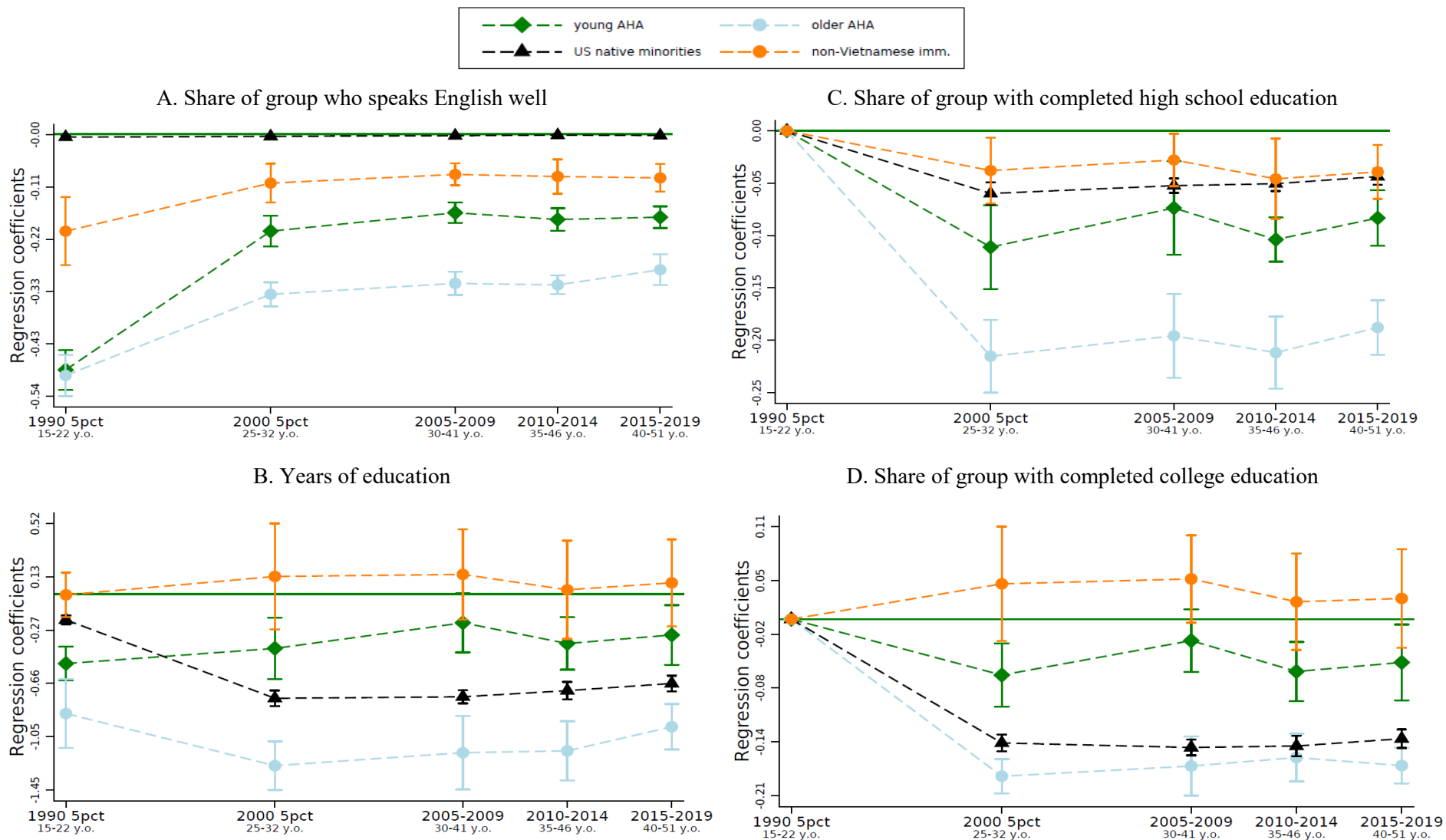
Notes: See Figure 2a.

Figure 3: Distribution by US income deciles in 2015-2019



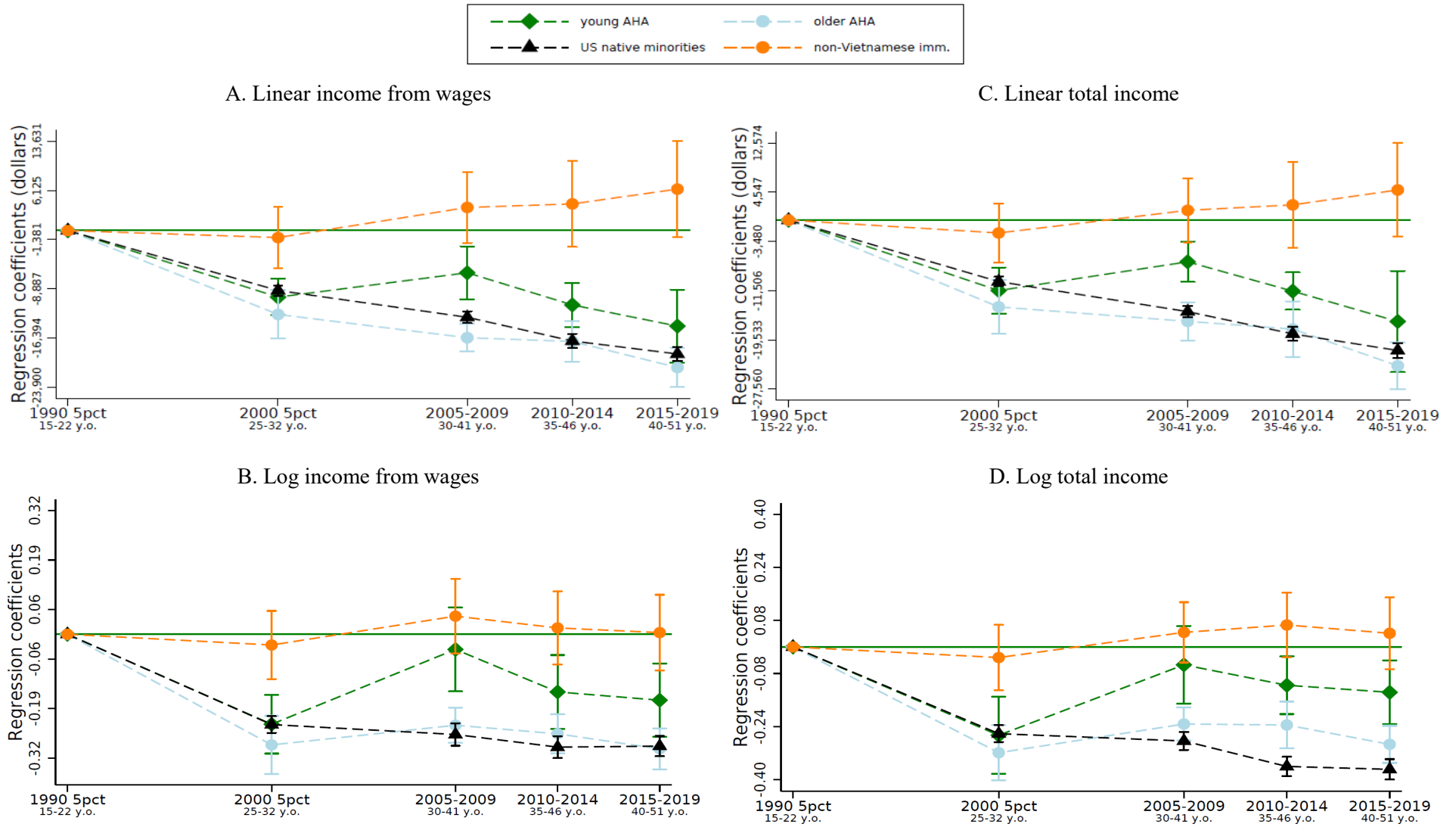
Notes: Data plots distribution of young and older arrivals by income decile in 2015-2019 American Community Survey.

Figure 4a: Extended analysis of language proficiency and schooling relative to white US natives



Notes: See Figure 2a. The reference group in these graphs is white US natives of similar ages as AHA immigrants. The non-Vietnamese immigrant comparison group includes immigrants to the United States at the same time and age range as the Vietnamese migrant from 30 countries of similar 1988 GDP per capita to Vietnam and having a non-English native language.

Figure 4b: Extended analysis of wages and income relative to white US natives



Notes: See Figure 4a.

Table 1: Comparison of young and older immigrants in 1990

		Young	Older	p-value
		(1)	(2)	(3)
A. Personal traits				
1	Share who speak English well	50.28%	49.35%	0.785
2	Years of education	9.60	10.84	0.000
3	Share employed	4.75%	31.47%	0.000
4	Share unemployed	2.23%	5.59%	0.015
5	Share not in labor force	93.02%	62.94%	0.000
B. Family traits				
6	Average total household income (2021\$)	\$47,646	\$59,944	0.001
7	...relative to MSA average shown in Panel C	49.75%	61.85%	
8	Average home value	\$272,409	\$303,944	0.195
9	...relative to MSA average shown in Panel C	73.17%	79.61%	
10	Average welfare support	\$955	\$463	0.008
11	...relative to MSA average shown in Panel C	239.78%	118.45%	
12	Share obtaining welfare support	13.69%	6.70%	0.000
13	...relative to MSA average shown in Panel C	450.61%	220.72%	
14	Avg. number of people in family unit	5.34	5.26	0.643
15	Share group quarters	1.68%	2.79%	0.280
16	Share head of households in family with trait:			
17	...less than high-school education	39.39%	33.52%	0.073
18	...high-school / some college	46.93%	50.65%	0.275
19	...college degree	12.01%	13.04%	0.652
20	...speaks English well	44.41%	51.21%	0.029
21	...in labor force and employed	58.10%	60.71%	0.437
22	Share of households with the trait:			
23	...Mother is present (social or biological)	63.69%	52.33%	0.001
24	...Father is present (social or biological)	57.54%	49.35%	0.016
25	...Own siblings are present (social or biological)	63.69%	54.75%	0.008
26	...US-born native as head or spouse of head	7.26%	4.66%	0.100
27	...Father is US-born native and Vietnam War	1.12%	0.93%	0.785
28	...Adult over age 30 is present	91.62%	83.61%	0.001
29	Father's age range	[22,71]	[22,72]	
30	Mother's age range	[24,66]	[28,68]	
C. Location traits of MSA				
31	Population	4,972,999	5,041,632	0.828
32	Share in AHA cluster site	77.93%	81.38%	0.207
33	Avg. household income	\$95,774	\$96,922	0.199
34	Avg. wage earnings	\$33,924	\$34,381	0.193
35	Avg. home value	\$372,303	\$381,797	0.375
36	Avg. welfare support	\$398	\$391	0.536
37	Share obtaining welfare support	3.04%	3.04%	0.586
38	Share of age 21+ who are college educated	24.09%	24.57%	0.210
39	Share in California	47.77%	47.86%	0.978
40	Share of VNM immig. married to VNM	85.75%	85.45%	0.729
41	Resides in PUMA with most Vietnamese	22.68%	21.30%	0.668

Notes: Table compares traits of 358 young immigrants (representing 7300 immigrants using person weights) in 1990 who arrived to the United States at 14-17 years old compared to 537 older immigrants (representing 10,851 immigrants using person weights) who arrived at 18-21 years old. Tabulated values are unweighted. Dollar values have been converted into 2021 equivalent figures.

Table 2: Comparison of young versus older immigrants in 2015-2019 American Community Survey

		Regressions with base controls			Regressions adding controls for education and fluency			n	Mean values	
		Coeff.	SE	Adj R2	Coeff.	SE	Adj R2		Young	Older
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)		(7)	(8)
1	(0,1) Speaks English well	0.092	(0.018) +++	0.020	n.a.			2924	83.15%	72.13%
2	Years of education	0.611	(0.096) +++	0.052	n.a.			2661	13.68	13.07
3	(0,1) High school completion	0.086	(0.013) +++	0.025	n.a.			2924	86.24%	77.35%
4	(0,1) College completion	0.097	(0.023) +++	0.046	n.a.			2924	35.75%	23.57%
5	(0,1) Employed	-0.006	(0.024)	0.018	-0.016	(0.027)	0.028	2924	83.97%	84.80%
6	(0,1) Unemployed	-0.008	(0.004) +	-0.004	-0.007	(0.005)	-0.004	2924	1.33%	2.87%
7	(0,1) Not in labor force	0.014	(0.022)	0.029	0.023	(0.025)	0.039	2924	14.70%	12.33%
8	Total personal income (2021\$)	\$7322.8	(2908) ++	0.046	\$2126.1	(3536.9)	0.210	2924	\$51,978	\$45,662
9	Log total personal income	0.131	(0.041) +++	0.039	0.019	(0.049)	0.187	2652	10.6	10.4
10	Wage and salary income	\$6734.0	(2108) +++	0.048	\$1531.7	(2194.5)	0.221	2924	\$46,866	\$40,742
11	Log wage and salary income	0.115	(0.040) +++	0.047	-0.003	(0.053)	0.227	2251	10.6	10.5
12	(0,1) Married	0.019	(0.018)	0.005	0.007	(0.017)	0.014	2924	75.28%	73.18%
13	...To college educated spouse	0.066	(0.022) +++	0.016	0.021	(0.029)	0.185	2924	27.39%	21.00%
15	...To non Vietnamese spouse	0.042	(0.012) +++	0.007	0.033	(0.013) ++	0.018	2924	10.91%	8.11%
14	...To US native spouse	0.020	(0.010) +	0.016	0.014	(0.010)	0.026	2924	4.90%	3.59%
16	(0,1) Home ownership	0.005	(0.025)	0.022	-0.015	(0.031)	0.063	2875	80.40%	80.32%
17	Home value	\$69,617	(17741) +++	0.246	\$49,634	(14176) +++	0.286	2400	\$416,375	\$397,878
18	Log home value	0.095	(0.033) +++	0.276	0.045	(0.032)	0.317	2400	12.7	12.6
19	Monthly gross rent paid	\$70.0	(38.5) +	0.107	\$72.6	(40.2) +	0.120	439	\$1,536	\$1,466
20	Resides in PUMA with most Vietnamese	-0.028	(0.029)	0.024	-0.024	(0.028)	0.028	2645	16.35%	17.79%
21	Per capita share of Vietnamese in PUMA	-0.001	(0.002)	0.525	-0.001	(0.001)	0.525	2645	0.114	0.103

Notes: Table reports regression results using the 2015-2019 ACS files. The coefficients, standard errors, and adjusted R-squared values are from an indicator variable for a young AHA immigrant arrival in 1989-1995 of 14-17 years old compared to the reference category of those arriving at 18-21 years old. Base controls include state fixed effects, gender, and a linear term in age. Education controls include indicator variables for completing high school and college. Fluency control is an indicator variable for speaking English well. Regression are unweighted and report standard errors clustered by state. +++ = 1%, ++ = 5%, and + = 10% statistical significance.

Table 3: Dynamic wage analysis in LEHD

	Full sample regression with basic controls	Column 1 with education x year and language fluency x year controls	Sample with LEHD start ≤ 3 years of arrival to US and first located in cluster city	Column 3 with education x year and language fluency x year controls
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
A. Log quarterly earnings among employed				
(0,1) Young arrival x				
1993-1994	-0.215 (0.091) ++	-0.152 (0.100)	-0.129 (0.125)	-0.070 (0.131)
1995-1999	-0.046 (0.027) +	-0.024 (0.029)	-0.030 (0.031)	0.018 (0.026)
2000-2004	0.191 (0.036) +++	0.101 (0.025) +++	0.316 (0.062) +++	0.236 (0.051) +++
2005-2009	0.175 (0.029) +++	0.061 (0.023) +++	0.256 (0.057) +++	0.125 (0.043) +++
2010-2014	0.152 (0.025) +++	0.025 (0.017)	0.207 (0.074) +++	0.067 (0.062)
Adjusted R2	0.297	0.366	0.344	0.400
B. Raw quarterly earnings among employed in constant 2014 dollars				
(0,1) Young arrival x				
1993-1994	-\$817 (301) +++	-\$455 (345)	\$33 (289)	\$107 (322)
1995-1999	\$366 (322)	\$208 (401)	\$860 (256) +++	\$764 (280) +++
2000-2004	\$5,183 (537) +++	\$2,602 (298) +++	\$5,666 (1253) +++	\$5,216 (1132) +++
2005-2009	\$6,881 (599) +++	\$2,483 (370) +++	\$5,389 (1708) +++	\$4,630 (1592) +++
2010-2014	\$6,795 (829) +++	\$928 (467) ++	\$2,874 (2683)	\$1,978 (2570)
Adjusted R2	0.270	0.436	0.444	0.458

Notes: Data combines LEHD files from 1993-2014. The sample is limited to immigrants arriving at ages 14-21, living in an LEHD state where data is available no later than 1993, and currently earning at least \$250 per quarter in their main job. Coefficients for young arrivals (interacted with year dummies) are measured relative to older arrivals. Regression controls include gender (interacted with year dummies), a linear age term (interacted with year dummies), and state x year fixed effects. Regressions are unweighted and cluster standard errors by state. In Columns 2 and 4, education (high school and college dummies) and language fluency are measured only at the time of an individual's response in Census or ACS. Columns 1 and 2 contain 110,000 observations; Columns 3 and 4 contain 50,500 observations (rounded per Census Bureau disclosure requirements). In Panel B, values above the 99th percentile are top coded to the percentile value.

Table 4: Career histories across 2000-2014 LEHD

	Regressions with base controls			Mean values	
	Coeff.	SE	Adj R2	Young	Older
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1 Share of quarters employed in LEHD	0.1229	(0.010) +++	0.223	68.6%	66.5%
2 ... in SEINs of 0-20 employees	-0.0269	(0.011) ++	0.030	23.6%	27.7%
3 ... in SEINs of 21-1000 employees	-0.0407	(0.011) +++	0.021	42.7%	45.6%
4 ... in SEINs of 1001+ employees	0.0676	(0.010) +++	0.021	33.7%	26.8%
5 ... in SEINs that are high-tech NAICS (NSF definition)	-0.0084	(0.008)	0.042	23.3%	23.0%
6 ... in SEINs in NAICS 812113 (nail care)	-0.0174	(0.004) +++	0.033	5.3%	8.1%
7 ... in SEINs that have mean wages higher than state median	0.0626	(0.016) +++	0.060	79.2%	72.3%
8 ... in SEINs where focal individual is top earner	0.0012	(0.007)	0.024	6.0%	7.4%
9 ... in SEINs where a co-ethnic individual is top earner	-0.0242	(0.012) ++	0.038	17.4%	20.9%
10 Average quarterly earnings when employed	\$2,289	(243) +++	0.055	\$10,170	\$8,722
11 ... Log average quarterly earnings when employed	0.2662	(0.036) +++	0.078	8.79	8.64
12 ... Average percentile of individual in SEIN wage distribution	4.492	(0.331) +++	0.053	49.35	47.59
13 Average share of employees who are co-ethnic	-0.0521	(0.012) +++	0.053	19.3%	24.4%
14 Total number of SEINs worked for during period	0.2503	(0.090) +++	0.035	3.17	3.02
15 ... Average quarterly duration of employment at SEIN	1.561	(0.290) +++	0.032	15.69	15.92
16 Percentage change in earnings for 2012-14 vs. 2000-02	0.493	(0.044) +++	0.015	1.262	0.9373
17 Share of times when annual earnings change is					
18 ... below -20%	-0.0279	(0.004) +++	0.053	13.3%	13.9%
19 ... above +20%	0.0254	(0.004) +++	0.028	21.4%	20.3%
20 ... between -20% and +20%	0.0576	(0.004) +++	0.062	43.1%	41.7%
21 ... missing because gap between spells > 1 year	-0.0550	(0.005) +++	0.064	22.2%	24.1%
22 Percentage change in SEIN wage for 2012-12 vs. 2000-02	0.0697	(0.010) +++	0.007	19.8%	15.5%

Notes: Table reports regression results that aggregate 2000-2014 LEHD files. Estimations contain 8500 observations (rounded per Census Bureau disclosure requirements). The coefficients, standard errors and adjusted R2 values are from an indicator variable for a young arrival in 1989-1995 of 14-17 years old, compared to the reference category of those arriving at 18-21 years old. Base controls include state fixed effects of the first LEHD state observed for an individual at or after 2000, gender, and a linear term in age. Regressions are unweighted and report standard errors clustered by state. Included establishment-worker observations must exceed \$250 in quarterly earnings and be the primary job of the individual. The 2012-14 vs. 2000-02 changes are top coded at the 99th percentile.

Table 5: Explanatory power of education, fluency, and initial conditions for career histories across 2000-2014 LEHD

	Regressions with base controls			Regressions adding controls for education and fluency			Regressions adding controls for education, fluency, initial city being cluster site, and traits of initial employer		
	Coeff.	SE	Adj R2	Coeff.	SE	Adj R2	Coeff.	SE	Adj R2
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
1 Share of quarters employed in LEHD	0.1229	(0.010) +++	0.223	0.0982	(0.007) +++	0.257	0.0960	(0.006) +++	0.266
2 ... in SEINs of 0-20 employees	-0.0269	(0.011) ++	0.030	0.0039	(0.007)	0.077	0.0119	(0.006) ++	0.170
3 ... in SEINs of 21-1000 employees	-0.0407	(0.011) +++	0.021	-0.0329	(0.008) +++	0.023	-0.0359	(0.008) +++	0.046
4 ... in SEINs of 1001+ employees	0.0676	(0.010) +++	0.021	0.0289	(0.008) +++	0.090	0.0240	(0.010) ++	0.116
5 ... in SEINs that are high-tech NAICS (NSF definition)	-0.0084	(0.008)	0.042	-0.0298	(0.008) +++	0.073	-0.0321	(0.008) +++	0.070
6 ... in SEINs in NAICS 812113 (nail care)	-0.0174	(0.004) +++	0.033	-0.0012	(0.005)	0.059	0.0012	(0.006)	0.115
7 ... in SEINs that have mean wages higher than state median	0.0626	(0.016) +++	0.060	0.0193	(0.011) +	0.144	0.0136	(0.008) +	0.193
8 ... in SEINs where focal individual is top earner	0.0012	(0.007)	0.024	0.0085	(0.005) +	0.037	0.0105	(0.004) ++	0.072
9 ... in SEINs where a co-ethnic individual is top earner	-0.0242	(0.012) ++	0.038	0.0090	(0.007)	0.098	0.0154	(0.004) +++	0.205
10 Average quarterly earnings when employed	\$2,289	(243) +++	0.055	\$1,008	(119) +++	0.239	\$949	(113) +++	0.249
11 ... Log average quarterly earnings when employed	0.2662	(0.036) +++	0.078	0.1287	(0.018) +++	0.243	0.1204	(0.014) +++	0.261
12 ... Average percentile of individual in SEIN wage distr.	4.492	(0.331) +++	0.053	3.284	(0.235) +++	0.077	3.251	(0.239) +++	0.078
13 Average share of employees who are co-ethnic	-0.0521	(0.012) +++	0.053	-0.0158	(0.006) ++	0.158	-0.0106	(0.003) +++	0.249
14 Total number of SEINs worked for during period	0.2503	(0.090) +++	0.035	0.1889	(0.103) +	0.042	0.1828	(0.102) +	0.046
15 ... Average quarterly duration of employment at SEIN	1.561	(0.290) +++	0.032	1.182	(0.396) +++	0.036	1.136	(0.439) +++	0.039
16 Percentage change in earnings for 2012-14 vs. 2000-02	0.493	(0.044) +++	0.015	0.3377	(0.041) +++	0.042	0.3332	(0.041) +++	0.043
17 Share of times when annual earnings change is									
18 ... below -20%	-0.0279	(0.004) +++	0.053	-0.0219	(0.004) +++	0.066	-0.0218	(0.004) +++	0.066
19 ... above +20%	0.0254	(0.004) +++	0.028	0.0247	(0.005) +++	0.028	0.0248	(0.005) +++	0.028
20 ... between -20% and +20%	0.0576	(0.004) +++	0.062	0.0371	(0.005) +++	0.098	0.0350	(0.005) +++	0.107
21 ... missing because gap between spells > 1 year	-0.0550	(0.005) +++	0.064	-0.0398	(0.006) +++	0.086	-0.0380	(0.005) +++	0.096
22 Percentage change in SEIN wage for 2012-12 vs. 2000-02	0.0697	(0.010) +++	0.007	0.0411	(0.011) +++	0.017	0.0420	(0.012) +++	0.017

Notes: See Table 4. Education controls include indicator variables for completing high school and college. Fluency control is an indicator variable for speaking English well. The control for initial city being cluster site is measured through the LEHD. Controls for traits of initial employer include indicator variables for small Vietnamese-led firm, large Vietnamese-led firm, and small non-Vietnamese-led firm (with large non-Vietnamese-led firm being omitted category).

Appendix Figure 1: Photos of Le Van Minh



Audrey Tiernan's *Newsday* photo, 1985



Le Van Minh as an adult living in San Jose, CA

Le Van Minh with Rep. Bob Mrazek upon arrival in Long Island, NY

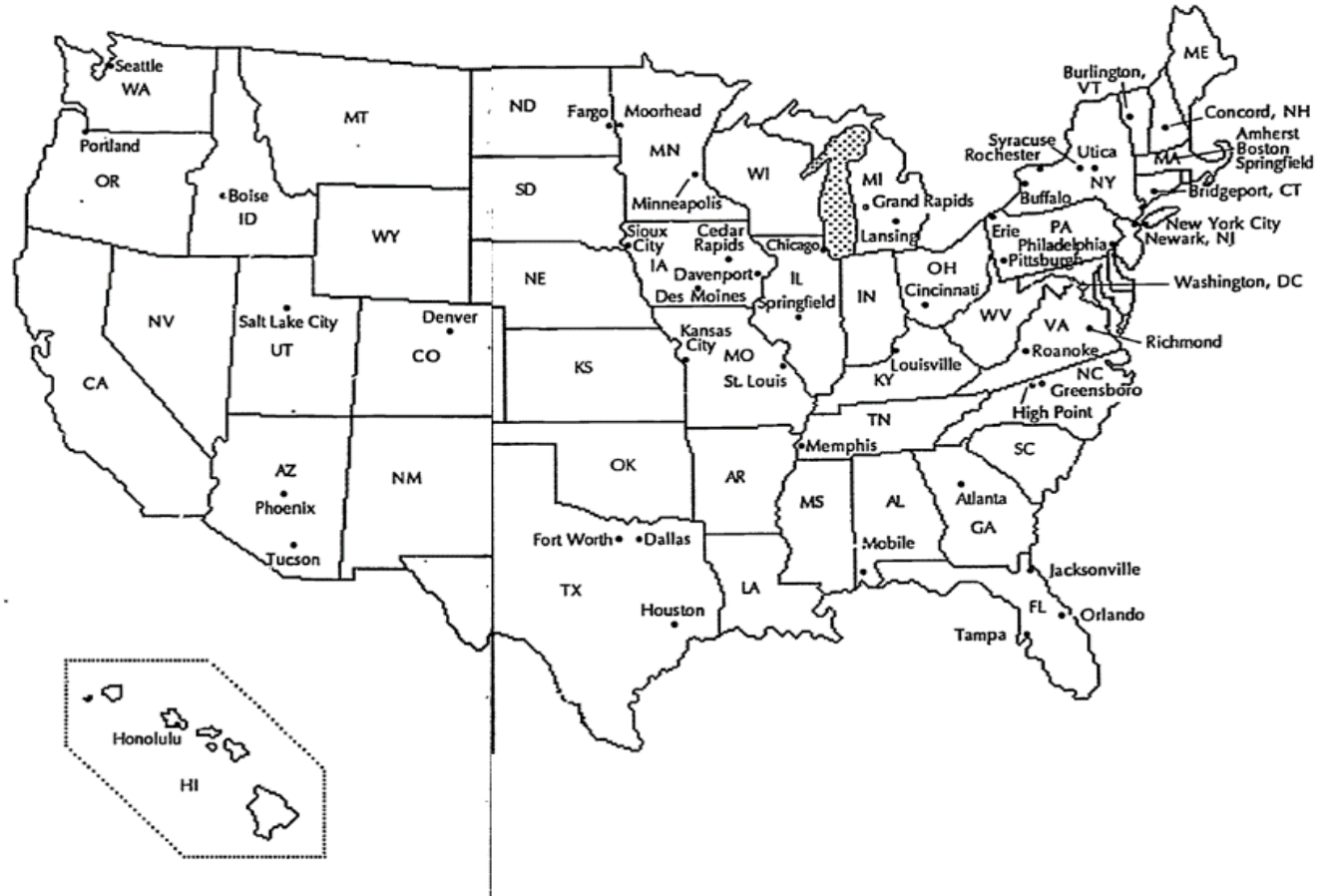


Sources: Photos by Catherine Karnow (bottom right) and Audrey Tiernan (other three). Photos included in *Newsday* (1986), *Virag* (1987) and *Lamb* (2009).

Appendix Figure 2: 1989 map of Amerasian cluster sites

Amerasian Cluster Sites in the U.S., by State

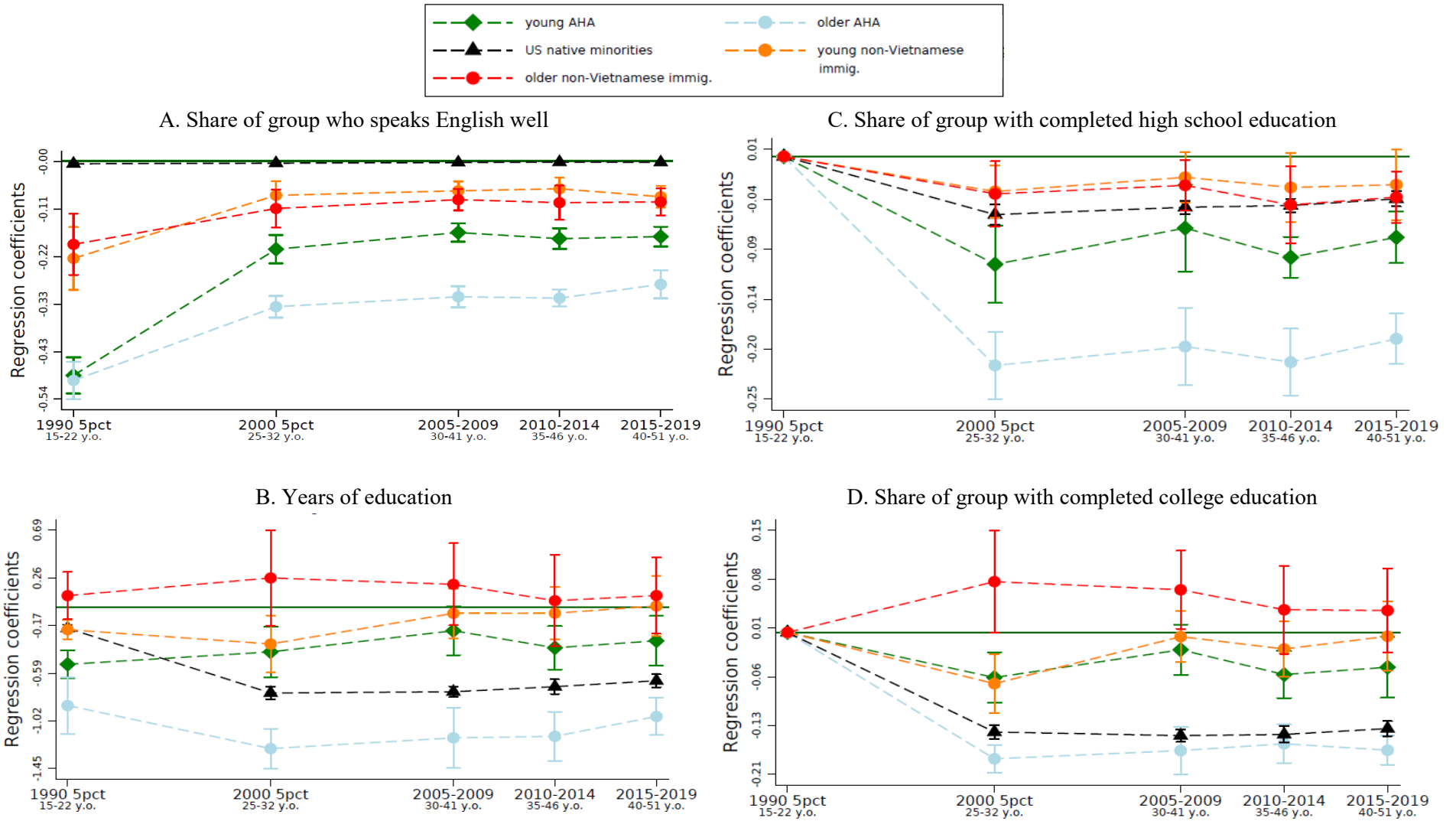
- Alabama: Mobile
- Arizona: Phoenix, Tucson
- Colorado: Denver
- Connecticut: Bridgeport
- Florida: Jacksonville, Orlando, Tampa
- Georgia: Atlanta
- Hawaii: Honolulu
- Idaho: Boise
- Iowa: Cedar Rapids, Davenport, Des Moines, Sioux City
- Illinois: Chicago, Springfield
- Kentucky: Louisville
- Massachusetts: Amherst, Boston, Springfield
- Michigan: Grand Rapids, Lansing
- Minnesota: Minneapolis, Moorhead
- Missouri: St. Louis, Kansas City
- New Hampshire: Concord
- New Jersey: Newark
- New York: Buffalo, New York City, Rochester, Syracuse, Utica
- North Carolina: Greensboro, High Point
- North Dakota: Fargo
- Ohio: Cincinnati
- Oregon: Portland
- Pennsylvania: Erie, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh
- Tennessee: Memphis
- Texas: Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston
- Utah: Salt Lake City
- Virginia: Richmond, Roanoke
- Vermont: Burlington
- Washington: Seattle
- Washington, D.C. area



Source: Bureau for Refugee Programs, U.S. Dept. of State, 6/2/89

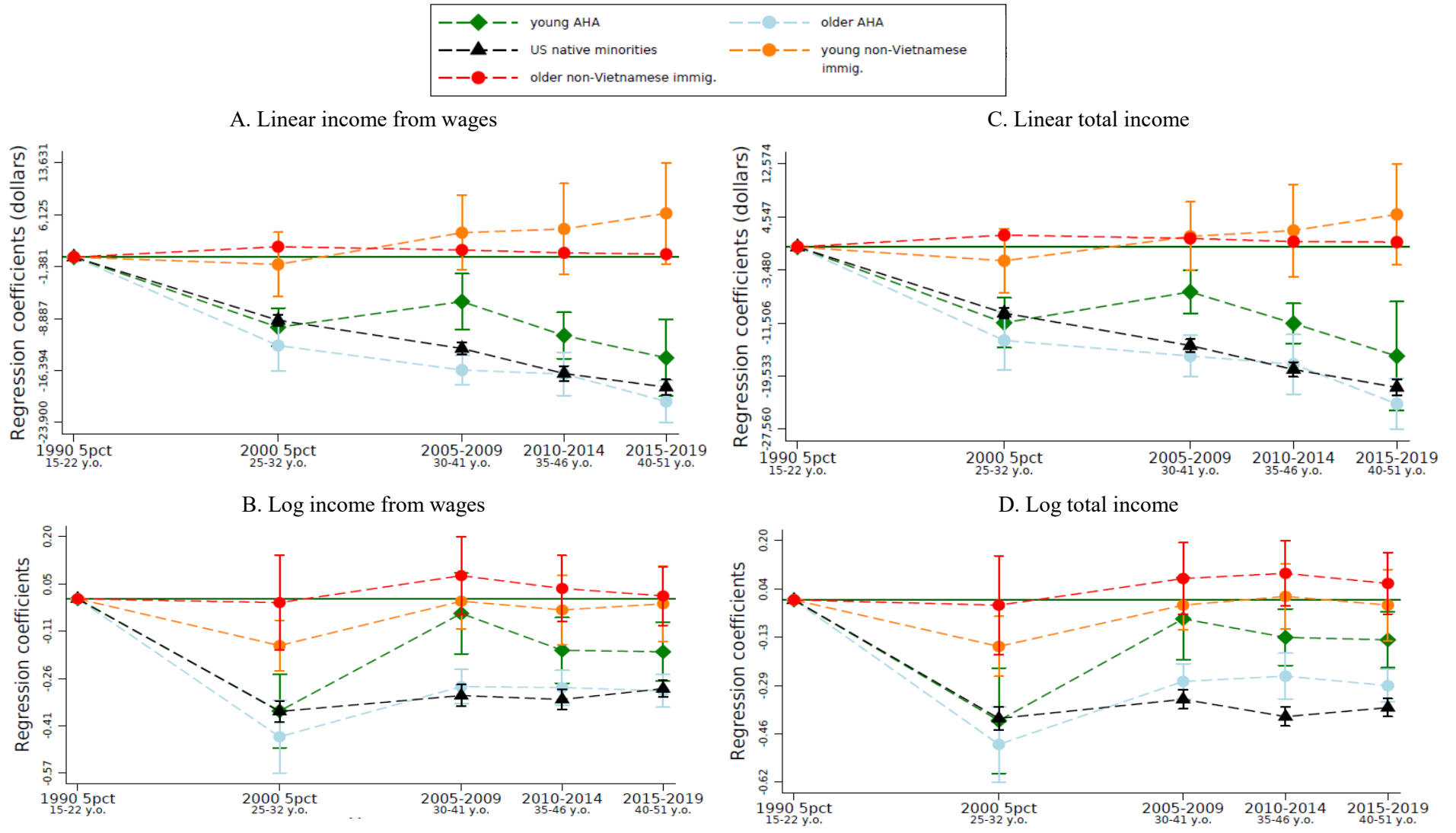
Notes: Map taken from Bureau of Refugee Programs, U.S. Department of State 1989. Some cluster sites, including all sites in California, are not included.

Appendix Figure 3a: Figure 4a with age of arrival split for non-Vietnamese immigrant comparison group



Notes: See Figure 4a. This analysis divides the non-Vietnamese immigrant comparison group into young (immigrated at ages 14-17) and older (immigrated at ages 18-21) arrivals.

Appendix Figure 3b: Figure 4b with age of arrival split for non-Vietnamese immigrant comparison group



Notes: See Figure 4b. This analysis divides the non-Vietnamese immigrant comparison group into young (immigrated at ages 14-17) and older (immigrated at ages 18-21) arrivals.

Appendix Table 1: Descriptive values on key variables

	Young AHA	Older AHA	US Natives	U.S. White Natives	U.S. Minority Natives	30 Country Comparison
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
A. Speaks English well						
1990	50.41%	50.50%	99.20%	99.33%	98.68%	79.58%
2000	79.29%	66.11%	99.44%	99.55%	99.05%	89.61%
2005-9	83.08%	67.94%	99.61%	99.68%	99.31%	90.73%
2010-4	82.74%	68.00%	99.70%	99.74%	99.52%	90.86%
2015-9	83.15%	72.13%	99.68%	99.73%	99.47%	90.79%
B. Years of education						
1990	9.64	10.87	11.28	11.34	11.05	11.31
2000	13.05	12.23	13.27	13.44	12.65	13.69
2005-9	13.54	12.57	13.51	13.66	12.95	13.96
2010-4	13.56	12.70	13.71	13.83	13.24	14.02
2015-9	13.68	13.07	13.83	13.94	13.38	14.19
C. High school completion						
1990	3.07%	41.50%	54.38%	55.69%	49.30%	54.90%
2000	82.61%	71.88%	91.72%	93.02%	87.04%	89.93%
2005-9	88.11%	75.32%	93.07%	94.06%	89.29%	92.85%
2010-4	84.92%	73.63%	93.65%	94.42%	90.63%	90.87%
2015-9	86.24%	77.35%	94.21%	94.87%	91.56%	91.84%
D. College completion						
1990	0.00%	0.00%	1.94%	2.21%	0.92%	3.21%
2000	24.51%	14.00%	28.34%	31.58%	16.71%	37.51%
2005-9	34.99%	20.64%	32.27%	35.22%	20.95%	42.73%
2010-4	32.47%	21.61%	33.24%	35.84%	22.98%	41.42%
2015-9	35.75%	23.57%	35.55%	38.01%	25.72%	44.15%
E. Wage and salary income						
1990	\$247	\$3,455	\$8,925	\$9,504	\$6,651	\$5,416
2000	\$26,939	\$26,544	\$37,362	\$39,489	\$29,721	\$39,203
2005-9	\$41,169	\$34,008	\$45,369	\$47,985	\$35,357	\$53,791
2010-4	\$41,902	\$37,312	\$47,741	\$50,629	\$36,328	\$58,321
2015-9	\$46,866	\$40,742	\$53,180	\$56,473	\$40,016	\$65,951
F. Log wage and salary income for employed						
1990	13.46	16.70	16.89	16.95	16.60	16.83
2000	15.04	15.02	15.44	15.52	15.12	15.51
2005-9	12.43	12.31	12.44	12.50	12.18	12.64
2010-4	11.59	11.47	11.65	11.71	11.42	11.82
2015-9	10.63	10.50	10.70	10.75	10.49	10.81
G. Share receiving welfare support						
1990	14.58%	6.49%	2.58%	1.80%	5.61%	0.73%
2000	2.41%	3.71%	2.73%	1.89%	5.73%	1.37%
2005-9	1.25%	1.90%	1.86%	1.39%	3.65%	0.73%
2010-4	2.12%	1.46%	2.01%	1.64%	3.50%	0.82%
2015-9	0.97%	1.33%	1.51%	1.25%	2.55%	0.91%

Notes: Calculated from IPUMS data.

Appendix Table 2a: Coefficients for Figures 2a-2b

	Young AHA	Older AHA
	(1)	(2)
A. Speaks English well		
1990	-0.485 (0.021)	-0.497 (0.021)
2000	-0.199 (0.016)	-0.329 (0.012)
2005-9	-0.162 (0.010)	-0.308 (0.012)
2010-4	-0.176 (0.012)	-0.311 (0.010)
2015-9	-0.171 (0.011)	-0.279 (0.016)
B. Years of education		
1990	-0.469 (0.064)	-0.840 (0.128)
2000	-0.200 (0.131)	-1.076 (0.103)
2005-9	-0.048 (0.122)	-1.012 (0.148)
2010-4	-0.213 (0.101)	-1.009 (0.114)
2015-9	-0.161 (0.119)	-0.846 (0.089)
C. High school completion		
2000	-0.094 (0.021)	-0.197 (0.018)
2005-9	-0.061 (0.023)	-0.182 (0.021)
2010-4	-0.091 (0.011)	-0.198 (0.017)
2015-9	-0.073 (0.014)	-0.176 (0.013)
D. College completion		
2000	-0.028 (0.021)	-0.147 (0.010)
2005-9	0.007 (0.020)	-0.140 (0.019)
2010-4	-0.030 (0.018)	-0.130 (0.015)
2015-9	-0.021 (0.024)	-0.142 (0.012)
E. Wage and salary income		
2000	-\$7,752 (1142)	-\$10,502 (1597)
2005-9	-\$3,575 (2237)	-\$13,548 (1022)
2010-4	-\$7,742 (1803)	-\$13,369 (1354)
2015-9	-\$10,530 (2522)	-\$17,027 (1196)
F. Log wage and salary income for employed		
2000	-0.274 (0.054)	-0.361 (0.051)
2005-9	0.021 (0.070)	-0.220 (0.029)
2010-4	-0.101 (0.056)	-0.224 (0.026)
2015-9	-0.113 (0.044)	-0.243 (0.023)
G. Total income		
2000	-\$8,854 (1584)	-\$11,644 (1904)
2005-9	-\$3,575 (1846)	-\$13,361 (1278)
2010-4	-\$7,618 (1577)	-\$13,859 (1977)
2015-9	-\$11,975 (3736)	-\$19,406 (1513)
H. Log total income		
2000	-0.311 (0.081)	-0.396 (0.056)
2005-9	0.009 (0.075)	-0.208 (0.029)
2010-4	-0.045 (0.051)	-0.179 (0.035)
2015-9	-0.060 (0.044)	-0.220 (0.023)

Notes: See Figures 2a-2b.

Appendix Table 2b: Coefficients for Figures 4a-4b

	Young AHA	Older AHA	U.S. Minorities	Comp. Group
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
A. Speaks English well				
1990	-0.487 (0.021)	-0.498 (0.021)	-0.006 (0.001)	-0.201 (0.035)
2000	-0.200 (0.016)	-0.331 (0.012)	-0.005 (0.001)	-0.101 (0.020)
2005-9	-0.163 (0.010)	-0.308 (0.012)	-0.003 (0.000)	-0.084 (0.011)
2010-4	-0.176 (0.012)	-0.311 (0.010)	-0.002 (0.001)	-0.088 (0.018)
2015-9	-0.172 (0.011)	-0.280 (0.016)	-0.003 (0.001)	-0.091 (0.014)
B. Years of education				
1990	-0.514 (0.062)	-0.883 (0.126)	-0.191 (0.016)	-0.006 (0.082)
2000	-0.402 (0.113)	-1.268 (0.089)	-0.770 (0.029)	0.130 (0.195)
2005-9	-0.212 (0.109)	-1.172 (0.135)	-0.759 (0.024)	0.145 (0.166)
2010-4	-0.365 (0.097)	-1.158 (0.109)	-0.714 (0.032)	0.031 (0.180)
2015-9	-0.303 (0.110)	-0.980 (0.084)	-0.661 (0.029)	0.083 (0.160)
C. High school completion				
2000	-0.109 (0.020)	-0.212 (0.017)	-0.059 (0.005)	-0.037 (0.015)
2005-9	-0.073 (0.022)	-0.193 (0.020)	-0.052 (0.003)	-0.028 (0.012)
2010-4	-0.102 (0.010)	-0.209 (0.017)	-0.050 (0.003)	-0.045 (0.019)
2015-9	-0.082 (0.013)	-0.185 (0.013)	-0.043 (0.004)	-0.039 (0.013)
D. College completion				
2000	-0.065 (0.018)	-0.183 (0.010)	-0.144 (0.005)	0.041 (0.033)
2005-9	-0.025 (0.018)	-0.171 (0.017)	-0.150 (0.005)	0.047 (0.025)
2010-4	-0.061 (0.017)	-0.161 (0.014)	-0.148 (0.006)	0.020 (0.028)
2015-9	-0.050 (0.022)	-0.171 (0.010)	-0.139 (0.005)	0.024 (0.029)
E. Wage and salary income				
2000	-\$10,145 (1,380)	-\$12,788 (1,841)	-\$9,136 (391)	-\$1,061 (2,315)
2005-9	-\$6,432 (2,009)	-\$16,337 (1,060)	-\$13,219 (445)	\$3,531 (2,684)
2010-4	-\$11,338 (1,677)	-\$16,910 (1,555)	-\$16,835 (541)	\$4,069 (3,264)
2015-9	-\$14,567 (2,769)	-\$20,880 (1,503)	-\$18,813 (547)	\$6,326 (3,637)
F. Log wage and salary income for employed				
2000	-0.365 (0.059)	-0.449 (0.059)	-0.366 (0.017)	-0.044 (0.069)
2005-9	-0.048 (0.066)	-0.285 (0.028)	-0.315 (0.018)	0.057 (0.058)
2010-4	-0.167 (0.053)	-0.289 (0.028)	-0.327 (0.016)	0.018 (0.053)
2015-9	-0.172 (0.048)	-0.299 (0.027)	-0.292 (0.013)	0.004 (0.049)
G. Total income				
2000	-\$11,477 (1,881)	-\$14,148 (2,191)	-\$10,015 (391)	-\$2,093 (2,401)
2005-9	-\$6,796 (1,641)	-\$16,502 (1,544)	-\$14,917 (471)	\$1,598 (2,587)
2010-4	-\$11,574 (1,518)	-\$17,755 (2,248)	-\$18,544 (565)	\$2,489 (3,485)
2015-9	-\$16,521 (4,098)	-\$23,744 (1,900)	-\$21,252 (590)	\$4,921 (3,810)
H. Log total income				
2000	-0.412 (0.090)	-0.494 (0.064)	-0.405 (0.020)	-0.050 (0.076)
2005-9	-0.065 (0.070)	-0.278 (0.030)	-0.340 (0.016)	0.053 (0.054)
2010-4	-0.128 (0.048)	-0.260 (0.039)	-0.399 (0.016)	0.073 (0.054)
2015-9	-0.136 (0.048)	-0.293 (0.028)	-0.368 (0.015)	0.041 (0.054)

Notes: See Appendix Figures 4a-4b.