

Engaging with Latinx Communities in California: Best Practices in Response to Wildfires and COVID-19



By Alma Bowen



Almost 18 years into my career as a 911 dispatcher, I worked the night of the

"We have to change how people prepare."

-Alma Bowen/ Nuestra Comunidad Founder and ED

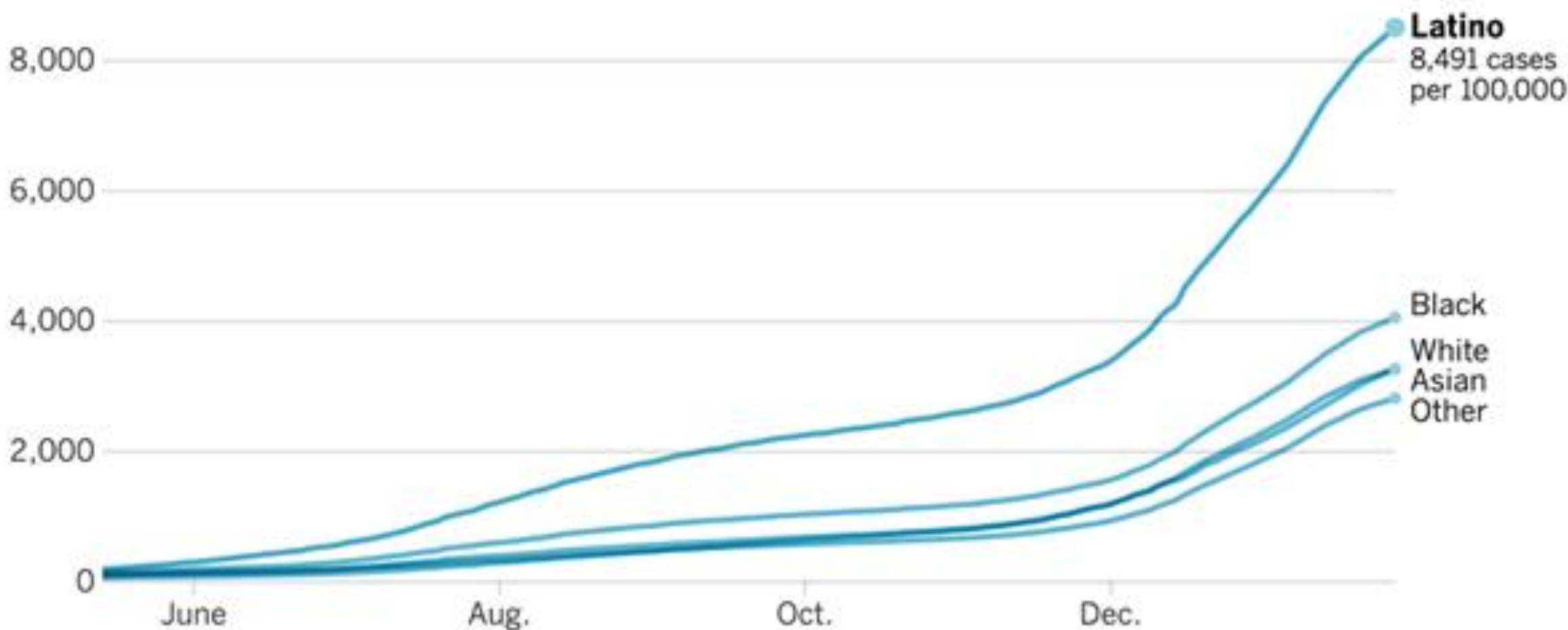


**Latinxs comprise 39%
of the California population**



Disproportionate Impacts of COVID-19 on Latinx Communities in California:

Cumulative cases by race per 100,000 people





43%

**of Bay Area
Latinxs cannot
afford a \$400
emergency**



communication


In the US, Latinxs comprise 63% of the limited English proficiency (LEP) population yet only 12% of the English proficient population.

A photograph of two farmworkers in a field, likely a vineyard, working with bare vines. The workers are wearing protective gear, including hats and gloves. The field is divided into rows by concrete posts and wire fencing. The ground is dry and brown. Overlaid on the image are three semi-transparent grey boxes containing white text. The text reads: "In California, 92% of farmworkers are Latinx".

In California,

92% of farmworkers

are Latinx

A group of farmworkers, including men and women, are working in a field. Some are wearing hats and work clothes. They are standing near a large piece of agricultural machinery, possibly a harrow or similar equipment. The background shows a vast field under a clear sky.

In Monterey County,
farmworkers have 3x the
COVID cases of non-
agricultural workers.



Improving Communication to Latinx Communities

Translation

- Translation is key, especially during emergencies
- Not all Latinxs speak Spanish
- Wide range of reading levels



Audiovisual Methods

- More engaging
- Reduce the burden of large amounts of text
- Can accommodate a range of languages and reading levels





Puente de la Costa Sur (PUENTE)

September 8 at 9:04 AM · 🌐

Bienvenidos a nuestro tiempo de cuentos en Español. La historia de hoy se llama "La Araña Muy Ocupada" Por Eric Carle

1:00



👍❤️ 10



Somos Mayfair

September 16 at 12:48 PM · 🌐

Call to action! Join our EMPUJE team tonight for a community forum on Prop 15 #SchoolsAndCommunitiesFirst! Whether you are young or old, an educator or parent or concerned citizen, eligible to vote or not.....you can play a role in passing this initiative.

More info and RSVP here:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/3483059529924497>
active_tabvabout

SCHOOLS & COMMUNITIES FIRST



TONIGHT!
¡ESTA NOCHE!

Join community as we learn together and reclaim our power! (Únase a la comunidad mientras aprendemos juntos y retomando nuestro poder!)

6PM - 8PM
RSVP ON ZOOM



👍❤️ 20

31 Shares

👍 Like

💬 Comment

🔗 Share



NC707 "PrepCulture" Nuestra Comunidad



👍 Like

💬 Comment

🔗 Share



NC707 "PrepCulture" Nuestra Comunidad



👍 Like

💬 Comment

🔗 Share



Digital Divide

- 10% of immigrant Latinxs have no internet access, and 40% have mobile-only access.
- 37% of immigrant Latinx parents report not having a desktop or laptop computer, compared to 20% of Whites, Blacks, and U.S.-born Latinxs.
- Solutions:
 - Drop-off and snail-mail options to turn in applications
 - Corporate and gov-sponsored subsidies for devices and connectivity



Digital and In-Person Communication

- Latinx immigrant families are the most digitally underconnected
- Access to transportation is variable, especially for farmworkers who often live in remote areas
- During the pandemic, in-person contact is best at locations where people are already gathered



Multi-Pronged Approach to Information Dissemination

- multiple languages
- digital and in-person communication mechanisms
- information at various places, at various times of day



"I think the short story is that you need a variety of tools because the Latinx community is so diverse, with varying access to technology. A rural setting adds even more need to rely on personal relationships."

- RITA MANCERA



**Reaching Latinx
Communities Through
Trusted Sources**

Addressing fear of government

- Fear of gov and "public charge" means many Latinxs don't use critical services such as hospitals and 911.
- Delivering information and services through trusted sources is key: these include community stakeholders, CBOs, *promotores*, and churches
- Government officials can build trust with community members over time, as residents see these officials working together with people from the community who they know and trust



"Simply stated: fears of deportation in particular are high among Latinx communities - including among immigrants vulnerable to deportation and US citizens immune to it. But fears are not universal. Fears can be overcome at the local level by enlisting trusted community-based organizations to engage Latinx immigrants and their families into larger political battles."

- ASAD L. ASAD

Stanford | Sociology



The Promotores Model

- Reaching community members through other community members
- *Promotora*: "community health worker" – now expanded beyond health



Community-based organizations (CBOs)

- Trusted in the community, understand the community's needs
- While governments and national nonprofits are critical resources during times of crisis, they may need to relinquish some visibility in Latinx communities during emergencies, to create space for trusted CBOs and community stakeholders to be highly visible on the front lines.



Coordination and Collaboration

"Layering" relevant services

- Identifying vulnerable populations who could benefit from multiple resources
- Providing various resources at once: for instance passing out masks and emergency guides at a food distribution site, or pairing COVID testing with a household cleaning supplies giveaway



Including Community Stakeholders in the Design of Government Programming

- Two way street between government and CBOs/community leaders: during meetings, both can submit items to the agenda
- Government bodies should consult with community stakeholders throughout the development of a program, rather than only as a final stamp of approval



Building Cross-Sector Coalitions

- Coalitions are most successful when built on a foundation of prior collaboration and reciprocity
- Coalitions reduce duplicated efforts – member organizations and agencies can share knowledge and resources, form contingency plans, and stay in contact with one another during a crisis
- Government agencies gain access to the cultural competency and on-the-ground expertise of community-based organizations.



THANK
YOU!



Questions?



Contact me

with any questions

Email

Alma@nc707.org

Mobile

707.608.9882



Website

www.nc707.org