

Chicago Latinos at Work (Images of America)

Wilfredo Cruz

The Latino community of Chicago is a rich ethnic tapestry, not a monolithic group. Latinos have had a presence in Chicago since the early 1900s and came seeking a better life for themselves and their children. As early as 1916, a sizable number of Mexicans settled in Chicago to plant roots and secure a foothold in the city's heavy industries. Puerto Ricans first came to the city in the late 1940s, their migration to the city peaking during the 1950s and 1960s. In subsequent decades, other Latino groups, like Cubans, Guatemalans, and Salvadorans, arrived and called Chicago their home. They too immigrated to Chicago seeking work. Since the 2000 U.S. census, there are now over one million Latinos in Chicago. Latinos undoubtedly shape the character of the city, including its politics, its neighborhoods, and its economy. *Chicago Latinos at Work* puts a face on the Latino worker in Chicago. It shows many of the jobs they have held in the past and continue to hold in the present.

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