

2021 SILICON VALLEY PAIN INDEX

Inequality Soars by Race and Class under COVID-19

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Introduction

The *Silicon Valley Pain Index* [SVPI] illustrates the *persistent racial discrimination and income/wealth inequality that continues to define our region*. The purpose of this yearly report is to provide a measure of structured inequalities to inform policy and practice in “Silicon Valley.”* Its inspiration can be found in Professor Bill Quigley's Katrina Pain Index following the devastating 2005 hurricane.

First produced in 2020, the *2021 SVPI* updates prior findings and illustrates a stunning increase in inequalities over the past year, as communities weathered a global rebellion against racist police violence, the global COVID-19 pandemic and vaccine rollout, and an economic downturn producing high unemployment rates in the face of still rising housing costs. While the *2020 SVPI* reported high levels of racial discrimination and wealth and income inequality, the *2021 SVPI* shows how the level of inequality during this pandemic has gone from bad to horrific.

By exposing these devastating levels of inequality, the [SJSU Human Rights Institute](#)'s hope is that City Councils, County Supervisors, State legislators, scholars, journalists, and community organizations will use the *2021 SVPI* to inform public policy and practice. As the annual pain index is released each June, it can be determined if the public policies produced over the previous year have led to any change in structured inequalities, help point to their causes, and inform their solutions. In addition,

* Silicon Valley and Santa Clara County are considered interchangeable throughout the *SVPI* except where it states in the report or footnote that another city or county has been included in the data. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of information in the *SVPI*. In addition, the most current research has been utilized. Any errors brought to the attention of the lead author or the SJSU Human Rights Institute will be researched, and if verified, will be corrected in future editions.

SVPI measures are meant to reflect fundamental International Human Rights standards ([IBHR \[pdf\]](#)) and to serve as a measure of Santa Clara County's performance as a "[human rights county](#)" since 2018. Other cities or counties interested in developing a "pain index" should please contact the lead author or the SJSU Human Rights Institute for information and potential support.

How to read the 2021 Silicon Valley Pain Index:

The *2021 Silicon Valley Pain Index* examines over 60 of the most recent studies and reports conducted on Silicon Valley, and is composed of over 80 statistics laid out from the number 0 to 2,000,000,000,000. The *SVPI* is designed to be read from start to finish, going from 0 to 2 trillion. There is a power in reading it this way, as the inequality is dramatized as the numbers increase.

As you read, please pay attention to how African American, Latinx, and various Asian American communities (e.g., Filipino, Vietnamese, and Pacific Islanders) continue to receive considerably less of the economic, political, education, and social rewards of Silicon Valley, and how this inequality has been exacerbated by and during the COVID-19 pandemic. As *2021 SVPI* shows, **most all of the "pain" indicators have worsened, as hunger, housing insecurity, homelessness, high school dropout rates, income inequality, and wealth inequality have all increased.** For example:

- Food insecurity increased 4-fold during the pandemic, with Second Harvest of Silicon Valley providing groceries to 500,000 clients each month.
- Households facing the risk of eviction or mortgage nonpayment increased to 197,050, up from an estimated 12,000 people who were housing insecure in 2018.
- The houseless population increased to 11,515, up 9% from the previous year.
- The number of houseless people who died on our streets was 197, up 22% in past year.
- High school dropout rates increased to 14% (i.e., 2,946 of the 21,398 students) from 8.9% the previous year, with the largest increases for houseless, ESL, and Latinx students.
- Since the publication of the *2020 SVPI*, the top 10 Silicon Valley moguls (all White men) have increased their net wealth to \$571 billion—an increase of 130%. Meanwhile African American incomes have decreased by 1% to \$40,381 and Latinx incomes have increased by 5.7% to \$30,618.
- Finally, all aspects of COVID-19 (i.e., reported cases, death rates, and vaccination rates) demonstrate how race and social class privilege White and/or wealthy communities and harm working class and/or people of color. For example, 93% of Los Altos residents, a predominantly White and wealthy community has been vaccinated for COVID-19, compared to 66% of residents from an East Side San Jose community—a predominantly Latinx and working-class community area that has had one of the highest death rates from COVID-19.

In addition, the long term-structural issues of racial discrimination that were highlighted in the 2020 *SVPI* continue to impact negatively the lives of people of color, and to privilege White people, in Silicon Valley. For example, the 2021 *SVPI* reports that:

- Silicon Valley Tech's executives and senior management are still dominated by White people, even after years of promises to change. The numbers are striking: 1 Black person is on Apple's executive and senior management, 2% of Google employees are Latinx women, 3.9% of Facebook employees are African American while 4 Native Americans are executives, vice-presidents, and managers (out of 4,217), and there are 5 Black executives at Cisco (out of 285).
- African American adults are 6.6 times more likely and Latinx adults are 2.2 times more likely to be given a local infraction by the San José Police Department as a result of a non-traffic stop (e.g., loitering, smoking in a park, shopping cart possession, and open bottle) than White adults.
- Over the past five years, no San José police officer has been prosecuted for killing someone despite 19 fatal encounters with the police (15 were people of color), ranking San José number 1 in the Bay Area for fatal encounters with the police.

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- 0 Number of Black executives on Cisco’s Executive Leadership Team (out of 13).ⁱ
- 0 Number of San José police officers prosecuted for killing someone since 2015, despite 19 fatal encounters with police (15 were people of color), ranking SJPD number 1 in the Bay Area departments with the most fatal encounters.ⁱⁱ
- 1 Number of Apple executives and senior management that are African American (out of 123).ⁱⁱⁱ
- 1.8 Percent of the tech sector’s overall job growth.^{iv}
- 2 Percent of Google employees that are Latinx women.^v
- 2.2 Number of times more likely that Latinx adults are be stopped by the San José Police Department and given a local infraction as a result of a non-traffic stop (e.g., loitering, smoking/vaping in a park, shopping cart possession, and open bottle) than White adults.^{vi}
- 3.9 Percent of Black employees at Facebook, up from 3.8% in 2019, with 1.5% Black employees in technical roles, up from 1.3% in past year.^{vii}
- 4 Number of Native American executives, senior and mid-officials, and managers at Facebook (out of 5,270).^{viii}
- 5.2 Degrees difference in Fahrenheit of the average temperature between the Rose Garden (predominantly White and wealthy) and the east side of San José (Alum Rock Avenue and N. King Road, which is predominantly working class and people of color) even though just 6 miles apart; the former has 3.5 times more tree covering and 27% less pavement.^{ix}
- 6.6 Number of times more likely that Black adults are be stopped by the San José Police Department and given a local infraction as a result of a non-traffic stop than White adults.^x
- 7 Number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births for African Americans in comparison to 3.6 for Latinx, 2.8 for Asian and Pacific Islander, and 2.3 for Whites.^{xi}
- 13 Dollar amount for minimum wage in Saratoga, Los Gatos, Los Altos Hills, Monte Sereno, and Campbell for businesses with 25 or less employees, ranking them at the bottom of the 15 cities in the county.^{xii}
- 13 Percent of jobs lost in 2020 with incomes over \$60,000.^{xiii}
- 13.6 Percent of residents who contracted COVID-19 cases who are White, even though 32% of the population.^{xiv}

- 14 Percent of students that dropped out of high school (i.e., 2,946 of the 21,398 high school students) up from 8.9% the previous year, with the increase being the greatest for houseless, ESL, and Latinx students; percent of dropouts by race: 52% Latinx, 20% Asian, 14% Black and 13% White).^{xv}
- 15.45 Dollar amount for minimum wage in San José, which ranks the city 7th among the 15 cities in the county, even though San José led the nation in raising the minimum wage in 2012.^{xvi}
- 16 Percent of households with a net worth of \$1 million and above; they have doubled in size in past five years to 148,000 households, and they control 81% of the net wealth.^{xvii}
- 16.30 Dollar amount for minimum wage in Sunnyvale and Mt. View, which ranks them at the top of the 15 cities in the county.^{xviii}
- 17 Percent of the houseless population that is African American, even though 2.5% of the total population.^{xix}
- 18 Percent of senior Korean Americans who are poor, ranking them 2nd among Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in senior poverty.^{xx}
- 19 Percent of senior Vietnamese Americans who are poor, ranking them the highest among Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in senior poverty; also, child poverty is highest at 14%.^{xxi}
- 21 Percent of households that are food insecure, which is almost 4 times the level before the pandemic.^{xxii}
- 21 Percent of Filipino Americans who contracted COVID-19 among Asian Americans, even though they make up 13% of the Asian American population.^{xxiii}
- 22 Dollar amount of the median hourly wage of people of color with some college education.^{xxiv}
- 23 Percent of employees that are Latinx, but hold only 5% of Silicon Valley Valley's tech jobs.^{xxv}
- 24 Number of hate crime charges filed by District Attorney's office in 2020 and first part of 2021.^{xxvi}
- 28 Percent of Vietnamese Americans who contracted COVID-19 among Asian Americans, even though they make up 19% of the Asian American population.^{xxvii}
- 29 Number of homes available for every 100 extremely low-income households.^{xxviii}
- 31 Percent of jobs lost in 2020 with incomes under \$60,000.^{xxix}
- 33 Dollar amount of the median hourly wage of White people with some college education.^{xxx}

- 35 Percent of job loss in leisure and hospitality by end of December 2020 from the previous year as a result of the pandemic.^{xxxix}
- 37 Percent of African Americans who have college degrees in San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara (i.e., 9,905 people), which is the highest share of college graduates of any region out of the largest 144 regions in the USA.^{xxxix}
- 39 Percent of job loss in accommodation and food services by end of December 2020 from the previous year as a result of the pandemic.^{xxxix}
- 40 Number of Black youth detained in juvenile hall for every 1,000 young African Americans, in comparison to 10 for Latinx youth, 2 for White youth, and 1 for Asian/Pacific Islander.^{xxxix}
- 42 Percent of Latinx households that face high risk of eviction.^{xxxix}
- 43 Dollar amount of median wages for Asian American and Pacific Islanders, with Indian, Chinese, and Koreans at \$50 or more, and Vietnamese and Filipinos at \$25 and \$26 an hour respectively.^{xxxix}
- 44 Percent of houseless population that is Latinx, even though 26% of the population.^{xxxix}
- 50 Percent of Black households that face high risk of eviction.^{xxxix}
- 50.3 Percent of residents who contracted COVID-19 cases are Latinx, even though 26% of the population.^{xxxix}
- 53 Percent of households (i.e., the majority of population), but owns 2% of the net wealth.^{xl}
- 56 Percent of Latinx community that are vaccinated for COVID-19.^{xli}
- 58 Percent of the Black community that are vaccinated for COVID-19.^{xlii}
- 62 Percent of elected officials who are White, in comparison to 21% Asian and Pacific Islander, 14% Latinx, and 5% African American.^{xliii}
- 65 Percent of the White community that are vaccinated for COVID-19.^{xliv}
- 66 Percent of East Side San Jose residents (Zip code 95116), a predominantly Latinx and working-class community that has been vaccinated for COVID-19; this area has had one of the highest rates of death with 113 people dying from COVID-19.^{xlv}
- 74 Percent of extremely low-income (ELI) households that spent more than half of their income on housing.^{xlvi}
- 83 Percent of Tesla employees in leadership positions that are men, with 59% being White.^{xlvii}

- 84 Percent of Asian students who meet UC/CSU requirements, compared to 70% of Whites, 59% Filipino, with Native American, Black, Latinx, and Pacific Islanders in the low 40s.
- 87 Percent of today’s gentrifying areas in San José which previously had been rated as “hazardous” or “definitely declining” by the federal government because residents were people of color or poor.^{xlvi}
- 87.50 Dollar amount charged by San José’s towing providers for daily storage fee of a towed car, which is the highest rate among 15 California cities.^{xlix}
- 93 Percent of Los Altos residents (Zip code 94024), a predominantly wealthy and White community, that has been vaccinated for COVID-19, and where 23 people have died from COVID-19.¹
- 94 Percent of San José’s residential land zoned for single-family housing.^{li}
- 197 Number of people who died on the streets in 2020, up 22% in past year.^{lii}
- 425 Dollar amount charged for your car if towed in San José, which includes towing service fee, impound release fee, and one day storage fee; for every additional day, add \$87.50.^{liii}
- 427 Number of affordable housing units completed since the Mayor and City Council established the 2018 goal of building 10,000 new affordable units by 2022.^{liv}
- 2,175 Total number of COVID-19 deaths.^{lv}
- 2,459 Average median monthly housing costs in the San José metro area, which ranks 1st in the nation.^{lvi}
- 3,104 Average rent in dollars for an apartment in the San José metro area, which ranks 2nd in the nation.^{lvii}
- 4,409 Number of homeless students enrolled in K-12 schools, with 74% being Latinx.^{lviii}
- 5,730 Number of jobs lost in the retail sector by December 2020 as a result of the pandemic.^{lix}
- 7,200 Number of households with more than \$10 million in investable assets; they represent .8% of the total number of households and control 11% of the net wealth.^{lx}
- 11,515 Number of people who are houseless on any given night, up 9% from previous year.^{lxi}
- 23,000 Number of estimated Dreamers (i.e., DACA eligible).^{lxii}
- 25,000 Number of jobs lost in the hospitality sector.^{lxiii}

- 25,856 Number of reported wage theft cases across all industries affecting 32,826 employees, and amounting to a loss of almost \$129 million (about \$4,000 per employee).^{lxxiv}
- 30,618 Average per capita income in dollars for Latinx (+5.4% from previous year, +23% over last 10 years).^{lxxv}
- 40,055 Number of new homes needed to be built in order to provide housing for its extremely low-income residents.^{lxxvi}
- 40,381 Average per capita income in dollars for African Americans (-1% from previous year, +5% over last 10 years).^{lxxvii}
- 63,000 Number of women who are experiencing “period poverty” (i.e., cannot afford feminine hygiene products).^{lxxviii}
- 69,172 Average per capita income in dollars for Asians (+9.6% from previous year, +35% over last 10 years).^{lxxix}
- 79,400 Number of total jobs lost in 2020, which is a 6.9% drop.^{lxxx}
- 88,886 Average per capita income in dollars for Whites (+6.8% from previous year, +26% over last 10 years).^{lxxxi}
- 95014 ZIP code for a Cupertino community that had 948 reported COVID-19 cases, with a per capita income of \$72,186.^{lxxxii}
- 95127 ZIP code for an East San José community that had 7,380 reported COVID-19 cases, with a per capita income of \$31,775; at the same time, the people in this Zip code had COVID-19 tests for 1/7th of the population compared to the above 95014 ZIP code.^{lxxxiii}
- 119,454 Total number of reported COVID-19 cases out of a population of 1.9 million.^{lxxxiv}
- 134,000 Number of undocumented residents, with people from: Mexico representing the largest group (48%); India, the 2nd largest group (17%); China/Hong Kong, the 3rd largest group (9%); and Philippines, the 4th largest group (4%).^{lxxxv}
- 172,000 Number of estimated families that have zero or negative assets, which means that about 18% of households have no savings.^{lxxxvi}
- 197,050 Number of households facing risk of eviction or mortgage nonpayment, up from an estimated 12,000 people who were housing insecure in 2018.^{lxxxvii}
- 254,532 Salary in dollars needed to buy a median priced home in the San José metro area.^{lxxxviii}
- 500,000 Number of clients that Second Harvest of Silicon Valley provides groceries to each month, which is double the amount before the pandemic.^{lxxxix}

- 531,400 Cost in dollars to house a juvenile offender annually, up 184% in past 10 years.^{lxxx}
- 1,450,000 Median sales price in dollars for an existing single-family home, up 9% in past year.^{lxxxii}
- 21,000,000 Number of square feet of commercial space under construction, a record high, as tech companies increase their footprint.^{lxxxii}
- 26,000,000,000 Dollar amount of venture capital funding in 2020, a record high.
- 108,000,000,000 Net worth in dollars of Sergey Brin, co-founder, Google, up \$45 billion from last year.^{lxxxiii}
- 112,000,000,000 Net worth in dollars of Larry Page, co-founder, Google, up \$42 billion from last year.^{lxxxiv}
- 124,000,000,000 Net worth in dollars of Mark Zuckerberg, CEO, Facebook, up \$48 billion from last year.^{lxxxv}
- 571,000,000,000 Net worth in dollars of top 10 richest Silicon Valley moguls (all White men), up 130% in past year.^{lxxxvi}
- 2,000,000,000,000 Market value of Apple in dollars, the first company to reach \$2 trillion, doubling in value in past year.^{lxxxvii}

CITATIONS

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