

Diversity thoughts: Rural populations

August 3, 2018

Although this topic was requested by some of you in the Yakima area, it also applies to some of the South King County HealthPoint clinics, who draw some patients from Puyallup, Sumner, and Lake Tapps etc.

Here is just a partial introduction: Rural populations are even more under-served than impoverished Puget Sound, Vancouver, WA, or Spokane populations. Access to care is reduced and there can be a rural cultural barrier to seeking care. The account below is from WA state websites. The first one is an example of how rural versus urban status affects two Caucasian male Washingtonians.

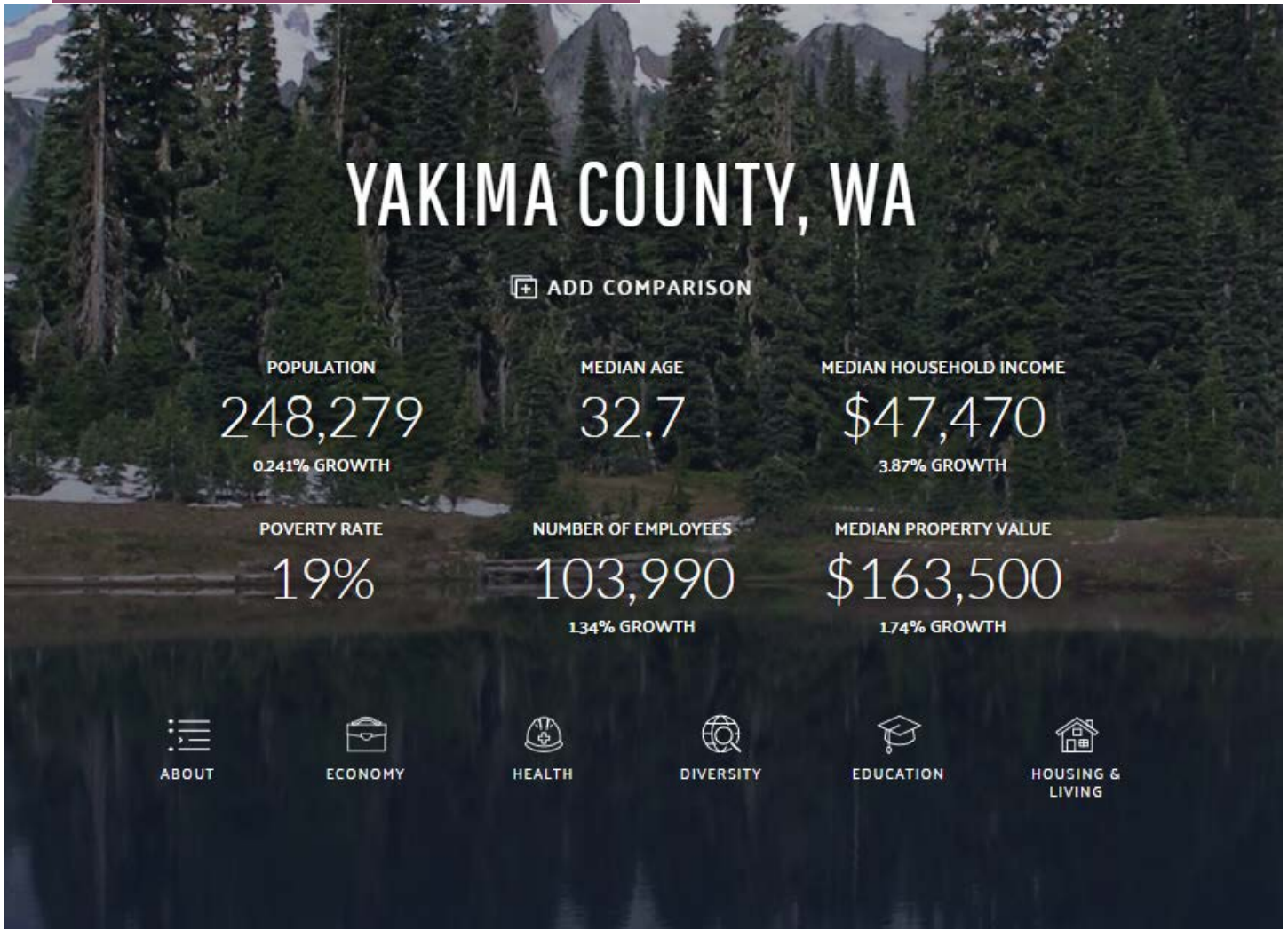
<https://www.hca.wa.gov/assets/program/RHIAC-report.pdf>

"Jacob and Michael are both native Washingtonians, both are in their mid-20s, and both love the outdoors. They are quite similar in many respects, with one main distinction that has impacted the course of their lives. Jacob is from a small rural town in eastern Washington, and Michael lives in Seattle. Jacob struggles to find work as he grew up in near poverty and never completed any formal education. Due to the stress of his life, he battles depression and he smokes. He has trouble dealing with health care issues because there is limited access to health care providers in his home town. Michael, on the other hand, graduated from a four-year university and has steady work. Michael did have a short bout of depression, but he was able to access a therapist and get the support that he needed. In general Jacob is:

- More likely to be food insecure than Michael.
- More likely to become obese and get diabetes than Michael.
- More likely to be uninsured than Michael.
- Less likely to have access to homecare and hospice services.
- Less likely to have access to a primary care physician, a mental health specialist, and a dentist than Michael.
- More likely to cost the health care system and his community more over his lifetime.

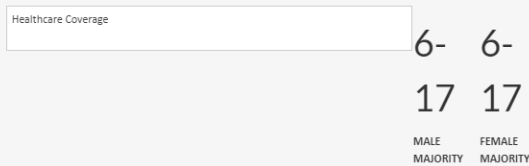
While this may be a fictitious story, it is a common one in many communities. Jacob is more likely to die younger than Michael simply due to the fact the Jacob is from a small town in a rural community. The question is, do we in Washington State believe that our ZIP code should determine our health, or do we believe that everyone should be able to live anywhere in our state and have an equal opportunity to live a healthy life? Rural realities Residents in rural communities are, as a group, older and sicker than residents in urban areas. They have higher rates of obesity and substance abuse. At the same time, they have less access to health care and as a result their conditions are often diagnosed later with more serious findings. To address this problem, access to quality health care must be increased and sustained in rural areas of our state." (retrieved 8/1/18)

See <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/yakima-county-wa/> for better detail.



Insurance Coverage by Age and Gender

The closest comparable data for the county of Yakima County, WA is from the public use microdata area of Sunnyside & Grandview Cities PUMA, WA.



Yakima County, WA residents 6-17 years of age are the largest age group with Healthcare Coverage in Washington. The age groups most likely to have health care coverage are 6-17 and 6-17, for men and women respectively. Nationally, 6-17 (for men) and 6-17 (for women) are the age groups most likely to have coverage.

Dataset: ACS 1-year Estimate

Source: Census Bureau

18-2425-3435-4445-5455-6465-746-1775 +

Rural populations in the Yakima area include the native peoples the area is named for, as well as migrant workers and permanent immigrants, mostly from Mexico, as well as Euro-Americans.

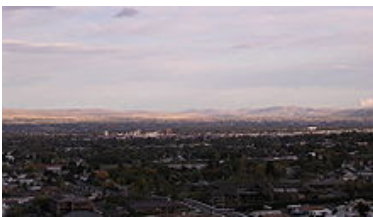
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yakama><https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yakama>

This is just an intro to the Yakama people. there is more about the different groups and languages further down in the Wikipedia article.

"The **Yakama** is a [Native American tribe](#) with nearly 10,851 members, inhabiting [Washington state](#). Yakama people today are enrolled in the [federally recognized tribe](#), the [Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation](#). The [Yakama Indian Reservation](#), along the [Yakima River](#), covers an area of approximately 1.2 million acres (5,260 km²). Today the nation is governed by the Yakama Tribal Council, which consists of representatives of 14 tribes.

Many Yakama people engage in ceremonial, subsistence, and commercial fishing for [salmon](#), [steelhead](#), and [sturgeon](#) in the Columbia River and its tributaries within land ceded by the tribe to the [United States](#). Their right to fish is protected by treaties and has been re-affirmed in late 20th-century court cases such as *United States v. Washington* (the [Boldt Decision](#), 1974) and *United States v. Oregon* ([Sohappy v. Smith](#), 1969)."

More about Yakima's geography and ethnic composition below: retrieved 8/3/18 from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yakima, Washington](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yakima,_Washington)



Yakima, Washington as seen from the west.

The city of Yakima is located in the Upper Valley of Yakima County. The county is geographically divided by [Ahtanum Ridge](#) and Rattlesnake Ridge into two regions: the Upper (northern) and Lower (southern) valleys. Yakima is located in the more urbanized Upper Valley, and is the central city of the Yakima Metropolitan Statistical Area.

The cities of Selah and Union Gap lie immediately to the north and south of Yakima. In addition, the unincorporated suburban areas of West Valley and Terrace Heights are considered a part of greater Yakima. With these cities included in the immediate area, population within 20 miles of the city is over 123,000. Other nearby cities include Moxee, Tieton, Cowiche, Wiley City, Tampico, Glead, and Naches in the Upper Valley, as well as Wapato, Toppenish, Zillah, Harrah, White Swan, Parker, Buena, Outlook, Granger, Mabton, Sunnyside, and Grandview in the Lower Valley. As of the 2013, the estimated population of the metropolitan area is 247,044.

Bodies of water

The primary irrigation source for the Yakima Valley, the [Yakima River](#), runs through Yakima from its source at [Lake Keechelus](#) in the [Cascade Range](#) to the [Columbia River](#) at [Richland](#). In Yakima, the [river](#) is used for both fishing and recreation. A 10-mile (16 km) walking and cycling trail, a park, and a wildlife sanctuary are located at the river's edge.

The [Naches River](#) forms the northern border of the city. Several small lakes flank the northern edge of the city, including Myron Lake, Lake Aspen, Bergland Lake (private) and Rotary Lake (also known as Freeway Lake). These lakes are popular with fishermen and swimmers during the summer.

Climate

Yakima has a [semi-arid climate](#) ([Köppen BSk](#)) with a [Mediterranean](#) precipitation pattern. Winters are cold, with December the coolest month, with a mean temperature of 28.5 °F (−1.9 °C).^[10] Annual average snowfall is 21.7 inches or 0.55 metres,^[10] with most occurring in December and January, when the snow depth averages 2 to 3 inches or 0.051 to 0.076 metres. There are 22 afternoons per year in which the high does not surpass freezing, and 2.3 mornings where the low is 0 °F (−17.8 °C) or lower.^[10] Springtime warming is very gradual, with the average last freeze of the season May 13. Summer days are hot, but the [diurnal temperature variation](#) is large, exceeding 35 °F (19.4 °C), sometimes reaching as high as 50 °F (27.8 °C) during that season; there are 34 afternoons of 90 °F (32.2 °C)+ highs annually and 3.2 afternoons of 100 °F (37.8 °C)+ highs. Autumn cooling is very rapid, with the average first freeze of the season occurring on September 30. Due to the city's location in a [rain shadow](#), precipitation, at an average of 8.22 inches or 209 millimetres annually, is low year-round,^[10] but especially during summer. Extreme temperatures have ranged from −25 °F (−31.7 °C) on February 1, 1950, to 110 °F (43.3 °C) on August 10, 1971.^[11]

Climate data for Yakima, Washington (1981–2010 normals)													
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Record high °F (°C)	68 (20)	69 (21)	80 (27)	92 (33)	102 (39)	108 (42)	109 (43)	110 (43)	100 (38)	91 (33)	73 (23)	67 (19)	110 (43)
Average high °F (°C)	38.6 (3.7)	46.3 (7.9)	56.2 (13.4)	63.8 (17.7)	72.4 (22.4)	79.5 (26.4)	87.9 (31.1)	86.8 (30.4)	78.0 (25.6)	63.9 (17.7)	47.9 (8.8)	35.8 (2.1)	63.1 (17.3)
Average low °F (°C)	23.3 (−4.8)	25.9 (−3.4)	30.1 (−1.1)	34.4 (1.3)	41.9 (5.5)	48.3 (9.1)	53.3 (11.8)	51.8 (11)	43.5 (6.4)	34.1 (1.2)	26.8 (−2.9)	21.3 (−5.9)	36.2 (2.3)
Record low °F (°C)	−21 (−29)	−25 (−32)	−1 (−18)	18 (−8)	25 (−4)	30 (−1)	34 (1)	35 (2)	24 (−4)	4 (−16)	−13 (−25)	−17 (−27)	−25 (−32)
Average precipitation inches (mm)	1.13 (28.7)	.78 (19.8)	.62 (15.7)	.55 (14)	.58 (14.7)	.62 (15.7)	.21 (5.3)	.26 (6.6)	.36 (9.1)	.53 (13.5)	1.05 (26.7)	1.53 (38.9)	8.22 (208.7)
Average snowfall inches (cm)	5.5 (14)	2.5 (6.4)	.7 (1.8)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	.1 (0.3)	3.4 (8.6)	9.4 (23.9)	21.7 (55.1)
Average precipitation days	9.5	7.5	6.4	5.8	6.2	5.2	2.4	2.3	3.2	4.7	8.6	10.1	71.9
Average snowy days	4.3	2.2	.7	.1	0	0	0	0	0	.1	1.7	6.2	15.3

Source: NOAA (extremes 1946–present)^[10]

2010 census

As of the [census](#) of 2010, there were 91,067 people with 33,074 households, and 21,411 families residing in the city. The [population density](#) was 3,350.5 people per square mile. There were 34,829 housing units at an average density of 1,281.4 per square mile. The racial makeup of the city was 67.1% [Caucasian](#), 1.7% [African](#)

[American](#), 2.0% [Native American](#), 1.5% [Asian](#), 0.1% [Pacific Islander](#), 23.3% from [other races](#), and 4.4% from two or more races. 41.3% were [Hispanic](#) or [Latino](#), of any race.^{[14][15]} 19.1% of the population had a bachelor's degree or higher.^[16]

There were 33,074 households of which 33.2% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 44.7% were [married couples](#) living together, 15.7% had a female householder with no husband present, 6.3% had a male householder with no wife present, and 35.3% were non-families. 28.7% of all households were made up of individuals and 11.9% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.68 and the average family size was 3.3.

28.3% of the population was under the age of 18 and 13.1% were 65 years or older. The median age was 33.9 years. 50.7% of the population was female.

The median household income was \$39,706. The [per capita income](#) was \$20,771. 21.3% of the population were below the [poverty line](#).

Despite having an over 40% Hispanic population, Yakima had never elected a Hispanic to the city council due to the at-large election method. After resisting efforts to voluntarily redistrict, Yakima was sued by the ACLU in Federal Court and lost on summary judgement. The 2015 election then had councilmembers elected by districts, two having Latino majorities.^[17] On November 3, 2015, three Hispanic candidates were elected to the city council for the first time in history. In addition to the redistricting ordered by the court, the [Democratic Party](#) conducted an aggressive door-to-door campaign to increase voter turnout in the Hispanic majority districts.^[18]

Demographics

Historical population			
Census	Pop.		%±
1890	1,535		—
1900	3,154		105.5%
1910	14,082		346.5%
1920	18,539		31.7%
1930	22,101		19.2%
1940	27,221		23.2%
1950	38,486		41.4%
1960	43,284		12.5%
1970	45,588		5.3%
1980	49,826		9.3%
1990	54,827		10.0%
2000	71,845		31.0%
2010	91,067		26.8%
Est. 2016	93,986	^[12]	3.2%

U.S. Decennial Census^[13]
 2015 Estimate^[3]