

Data-Based Research Shows Immigration Benefits to Country

Article By:

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As immigration advocates make the case for more immigration to the United States, they tend to focus on the ways immigrants participate in our consumer economy. When highly skilled immigrants come to the United States on employment-based work visas, they contribute to the economy by buying goods, taking out mortgages, and paying taxes. They also contribute by being entrepreneurs, creating jobs on their own, and creating jobs in existing businesses through the new skills they bring. In addition, they become important first responders or contribute by performing jobs that many U.S. workers do not undertake in agriculture, food services, hospitality, and construction. While some of these workers may impact the economy as a result of their use of public services — such as schools — eventually, those workers and their children become skilled members of our society who contribute much more to the economy than the initial costs to integrate them.

Professor Zeke Hernandez, of Wharton Business School, [has written a book](#) entitled: *The Truth About Immigration: Why Successful Societies Welcome Newcomers*, which was [highlighted in an article](#) by Trey Popp in *The Pennsylvania Gazette* (Zeke Hernandez and the Business Case for Immigration). Hernandez explored new and additional ways that immigrants contribute to our economy. He found that immigrants can be “magnets for investment” across borders. He used geographic data to trace and compare immigrant settlement patterns with locations where foreign corporations established U.S. operations, uncovering some interesting results.

For instance, he [tells the story](#) of a fast-food chain from Guatemala: Pollo Campero. Selling fried chicken, Pollo Campero started as a food cart and quickly expanded. During its expansion, Guatemalans also were immigrating to the United States to avoid civil war and civil strife. Even as this was happening, Pollo Campero was opening stores in Central American airports where immigrants would purchase large quantities of the chicken and bring them to the United States to share with friends and family. Eventually Pollo Campero decided to open a store in Los Angeles where there was a large Guatemalan population. Soon, they decided to franchise. The first franchisers were Hispanic but as the brand grew, the franchiser population broadened. Hernandez notes that several thousand jobs have been created without offering any tax subsidiaries or other incentives. All that was needed was the nexus of immigrants from Guatemala.

His examples go beyond food. Hernandez presents other studies including one about a German micro-chip manufacturer locating in an area of Pennsylvania where German pioneers had settled in the early 19th century and Mexican food factories in another Pennsylvania community that experienced an influx of Mexican immigrants. These companies opened operations in the United

States in places where they found a particular “community of trusted customers and employees.”

What is highlighted above is just a part of the book that has other interesting insights about immigration. One fundamental and overarching thesis is that immigration is good for the United States, not just good for the immigrant. It is good in ways that we may not have recognized previously.

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