

504ward/LSU Survey, 2010

Findings (N = 576 Completed Interviews)

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The Sample.

The 504ward Survey was conducted in early 2010 – mostly January – of subscribers of the professional networking website, <http://www.504ward.com>, “the home-base for the young talent – twenty and thirty-somethings – living in New Orleans.”

Eighty five percent of people who began the survey completed it: 675 people began the survey, and 576 people completed it. Here, we only present findings of the full completes.

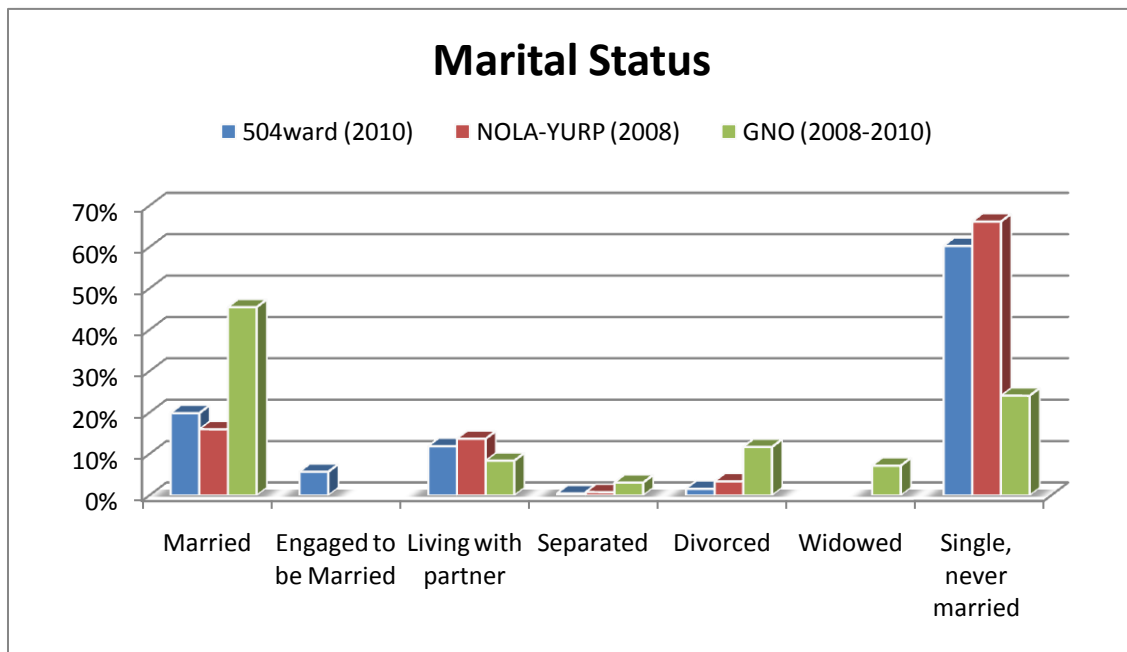
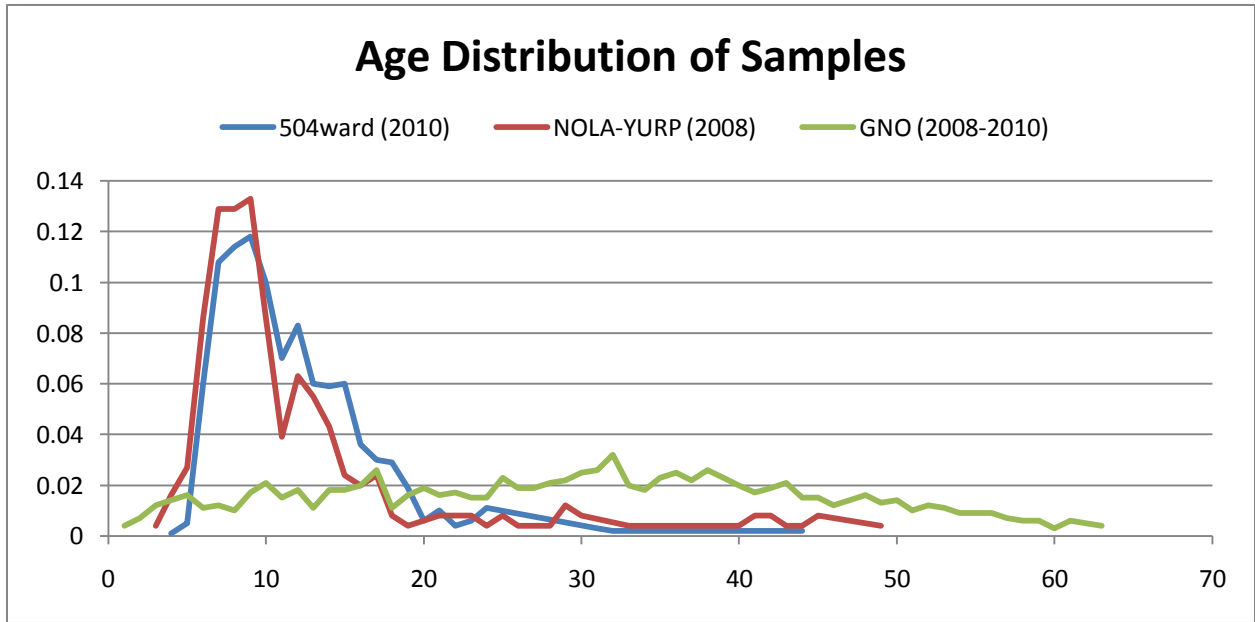
The sample is weighted or adjusted to compensate for the known tendency for women to be more willing to respond to surveys than men. The unadjusted proportion in the sample is 70/30 women to men; and the sample is weighted to 60/40. This proportion of women to men is typical of most surveys; whether the adjusted proportion accurately reflects the proportion of women to men among young professional newcomers is unknown. The sample is about 85 percent white, 8 percent African American, and the remainder Asian and other. There is no full information about the race of 504ward members, so it is unknown how accurate the sample is on race; and no adjustments were made. It seems likely, however, that the proportion of African Americans among the young professional newcomers is much lower than it is among the general population.

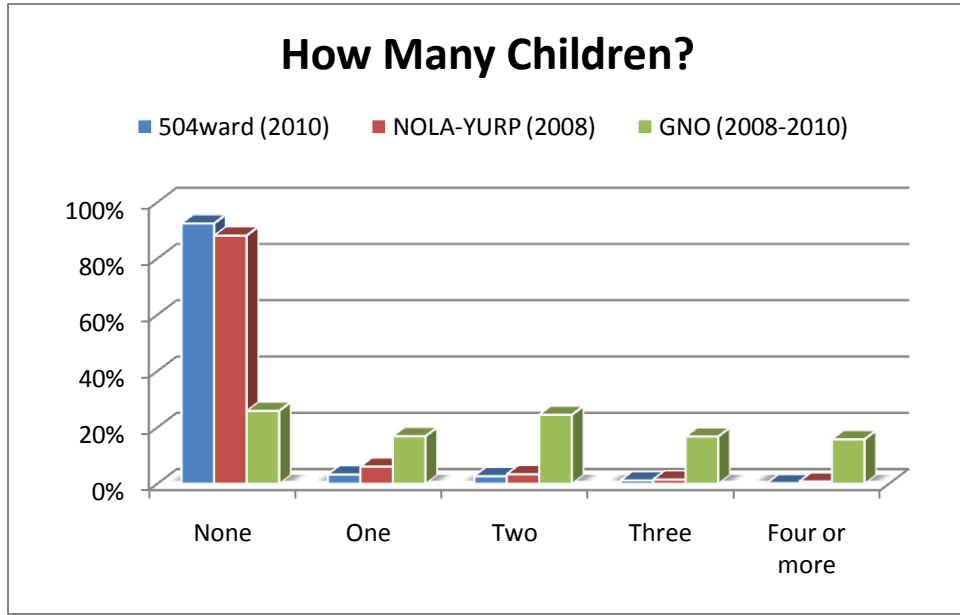
The 504ward sample is compared where possible to an earlier sample of young professional newcomers, conducted in summer, 2008 – the NOLA-YURPs (“Young Urban Rebuilding Professionals”) – collected through their then-website, <http://www.nolayurp.org>, as well as to a larger sample of the general population of Greater New Orleans. The general sample is part of an on-going sample, collected from the summer of 2006, through the summer of 2010, and includes over 6,400 interviews. The general sample was collected by mixed methods, especially because telephone land lines – the most common way to conduct interviews – were so incomplete and unreliable after the storm. Data collection was done over the internet, door-to-door and face-to-face, by distribution of paper questionnaires among selected groups and organizations, and including both people who have returned to Greater New Orleans and people who have not.

The general sample is also weighted or adjusted to approximate the joint age-gender-race proportions of the pre-Storm population of Greater New Orleans, according to pre-Storm Census statistics. After these adjustments, the proportion of women to men in the General sample was about 58/42. This probably over-estimates the true number of women in the general population (true numbers are very difficult to ascertain at present), but again, it is common in almost all surveys.

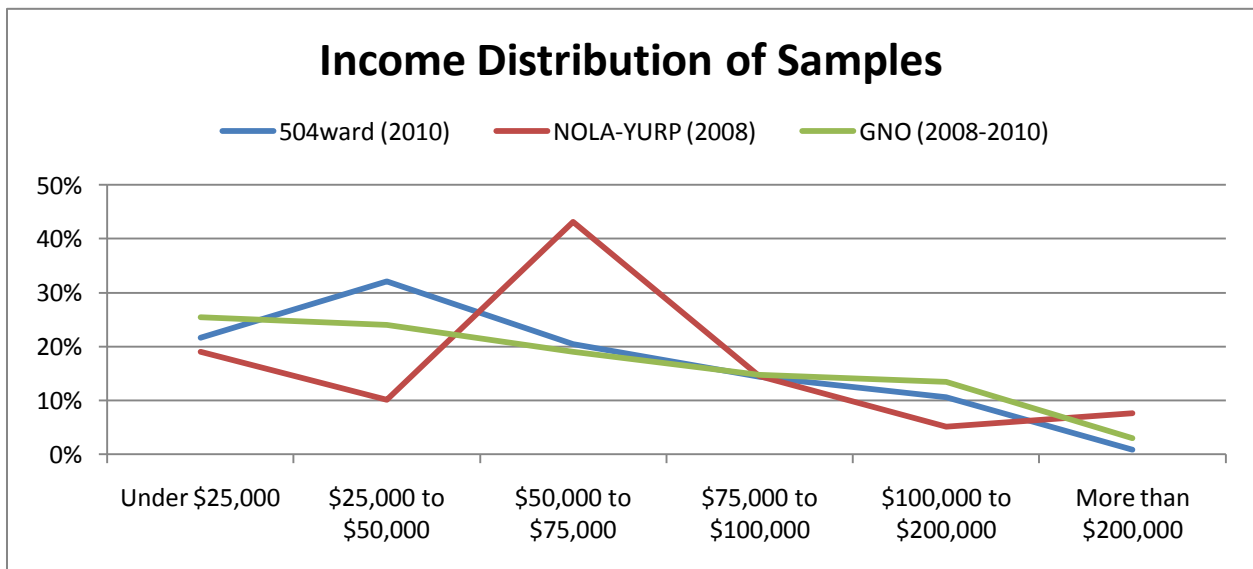
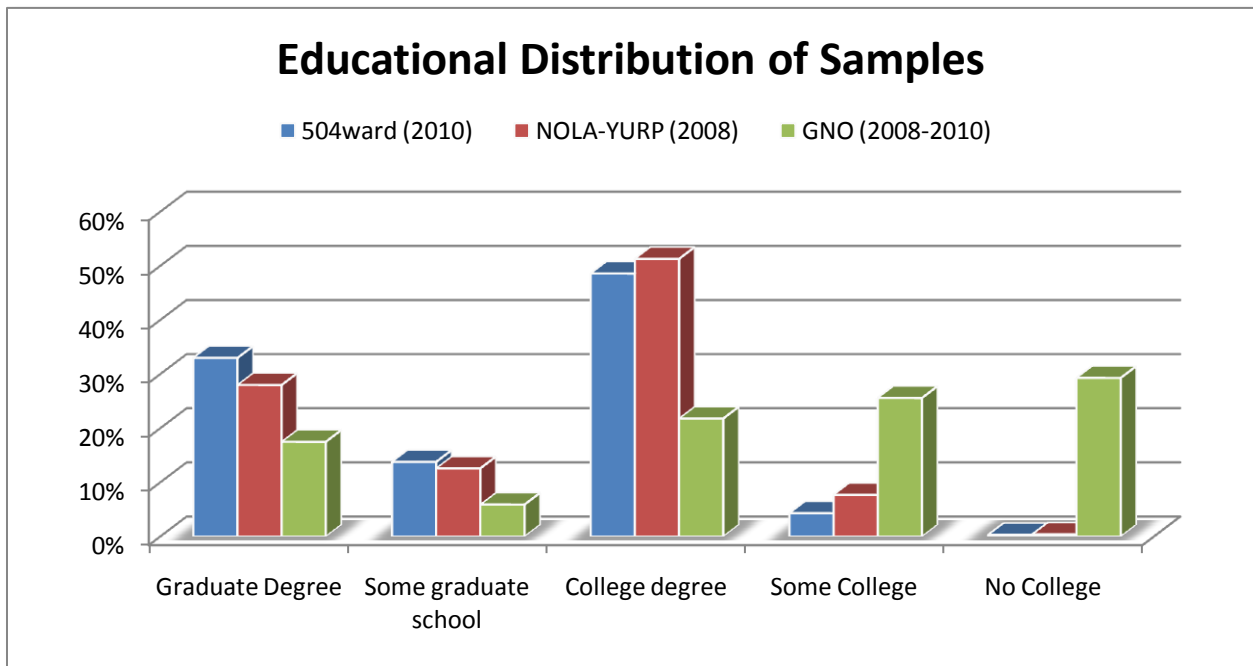
Finally, only about 3-5 percent of any of the samples are Latino. This proportion is not radically different from the pre-storm percentage of the general population, but it clearly does not capture the influx of Latinos since the storm. Thus, the 504ward sample represents mostly *non-Latino* newcomers, and indeed, it probably does not capture much of the overall population of construction workers who have come since the storm, whether Latino or not. Thus, the 504ward sample is composed of young professionals, not all young newcomers.

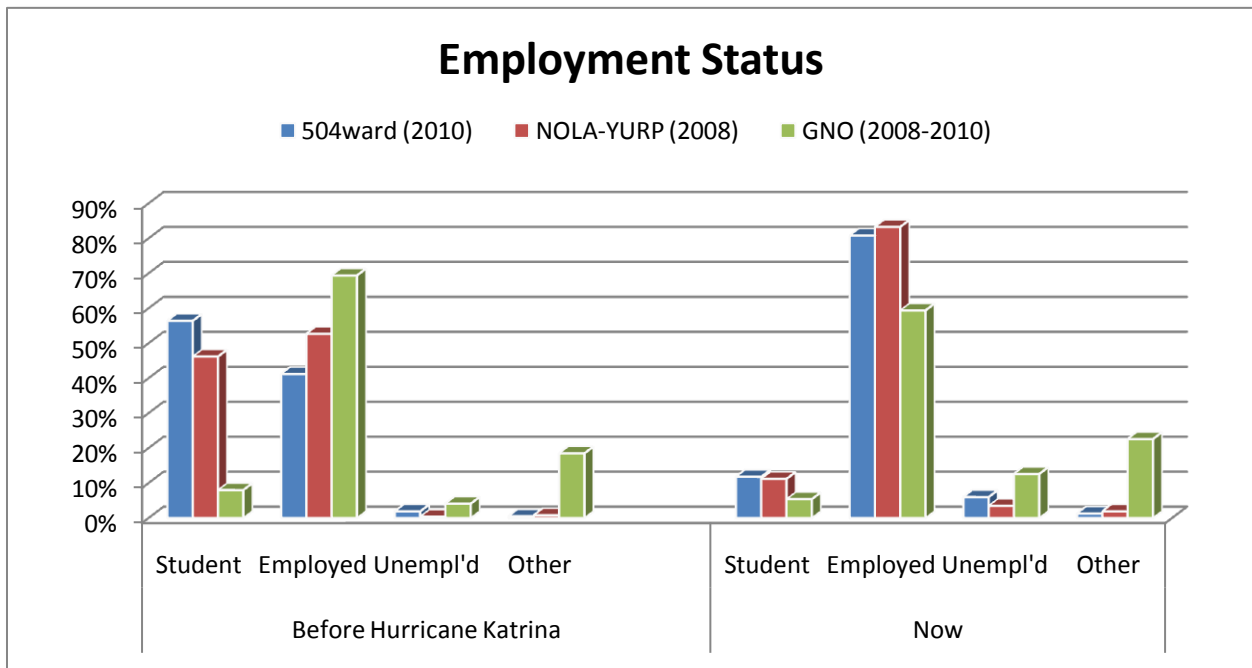
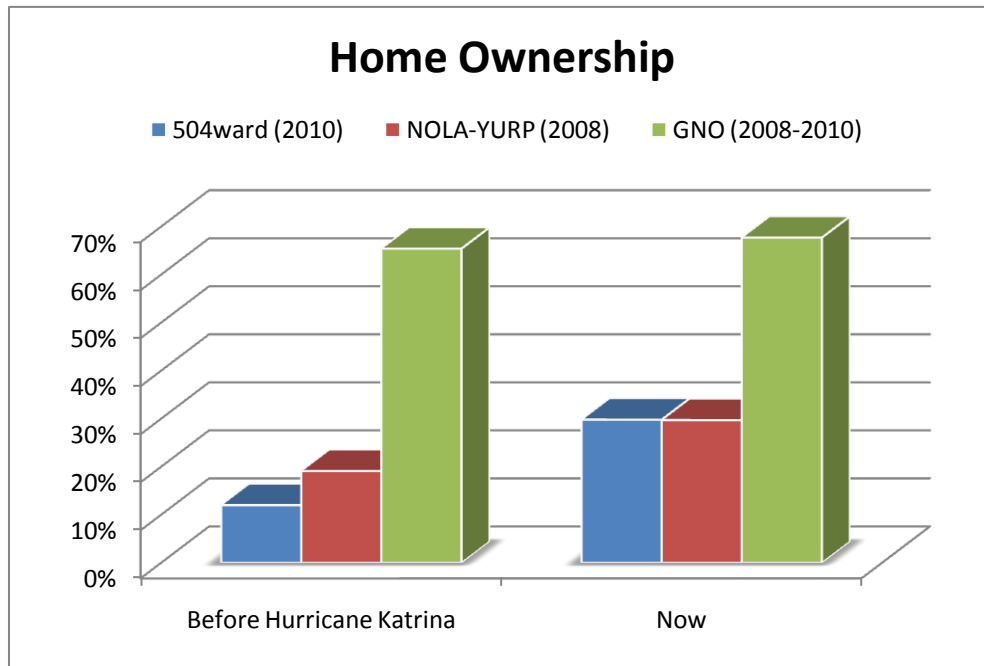
Age and Family Structure. As expected, 504ward respondents are a good deal younger than the general population. And as is typical of younger people, fewer are married or have children. Compared to the NOLA YURPs of 2008, they are a little older, and a few more of them are married.





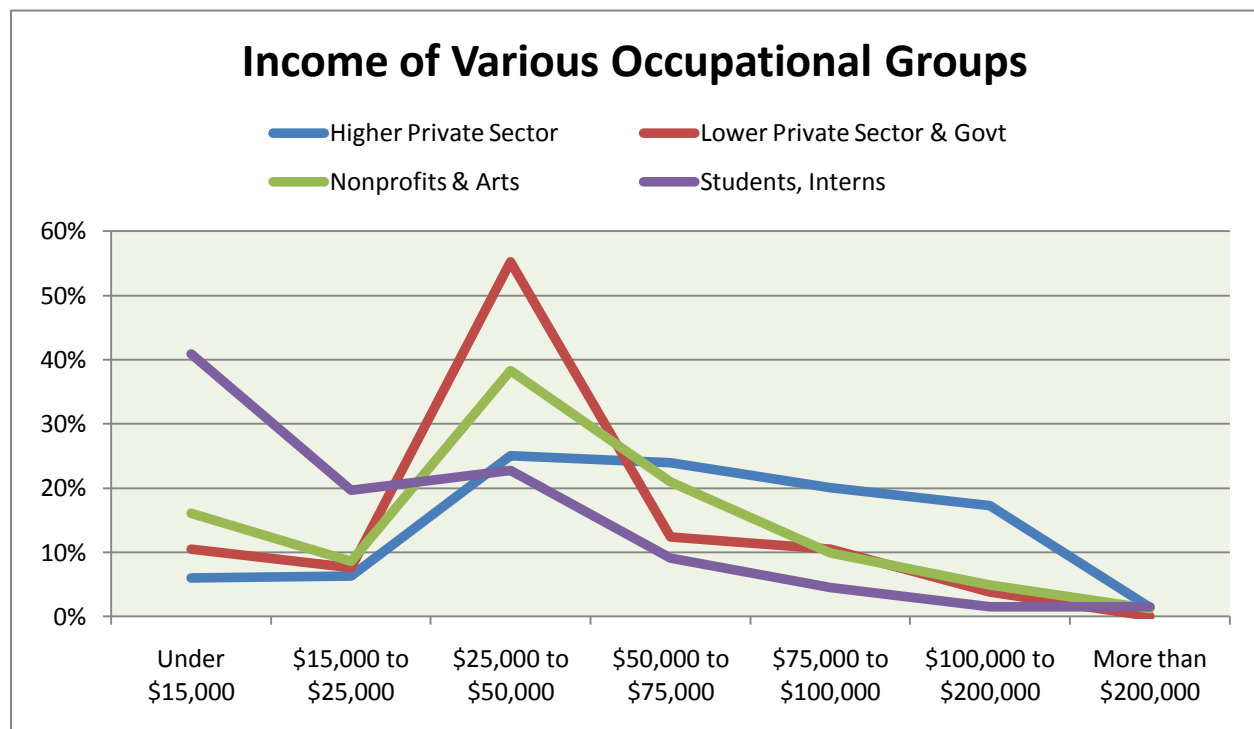
Education and Income. The 504ward respondents are young professionals, and they are much better educated than the general population. However, since they are just starting out, their income is not as high as the general population. Their income will probably rise above average as they become older and become more senior in their occupational fields – or change fields. They are also more seldom homeowners; and, as younger people, virtually none are retired. Many of them were students before the storm. Compared to the NOLA YURPs, 504ward respondents are somewhat better educated, but do not differ much by income, home ownership, or employment status. (The “bumps” in the YURP income curve at \$50-75K may be an anomaly, simply the product of a small sample.)

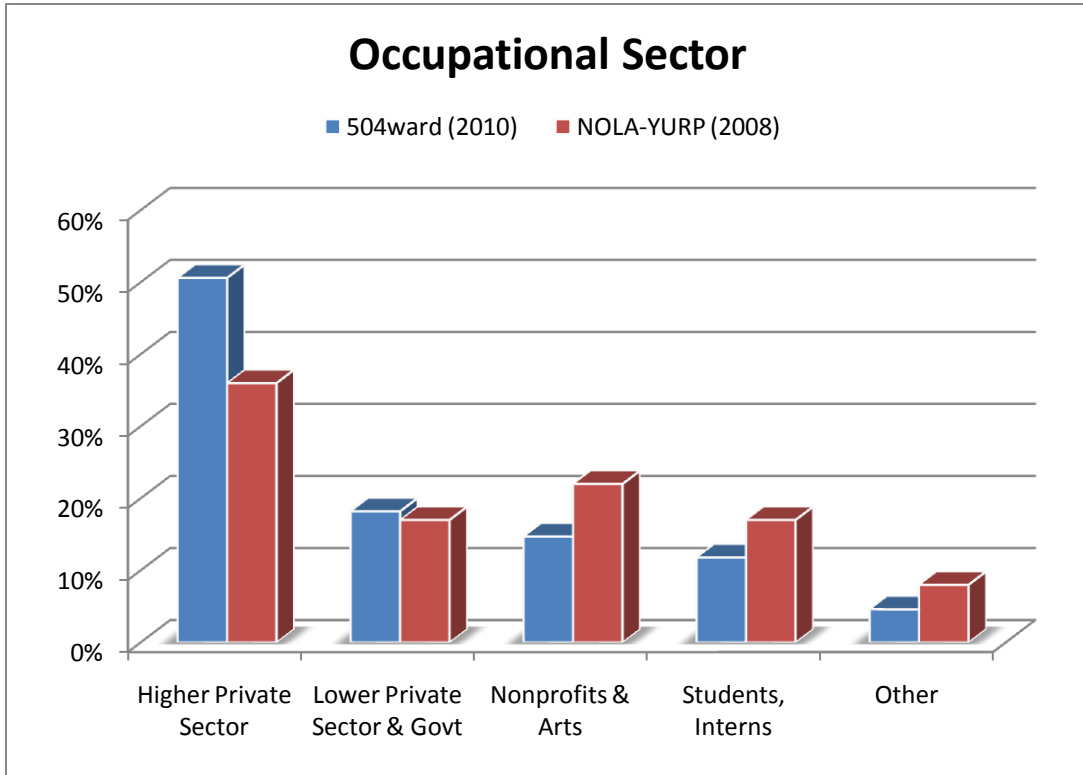




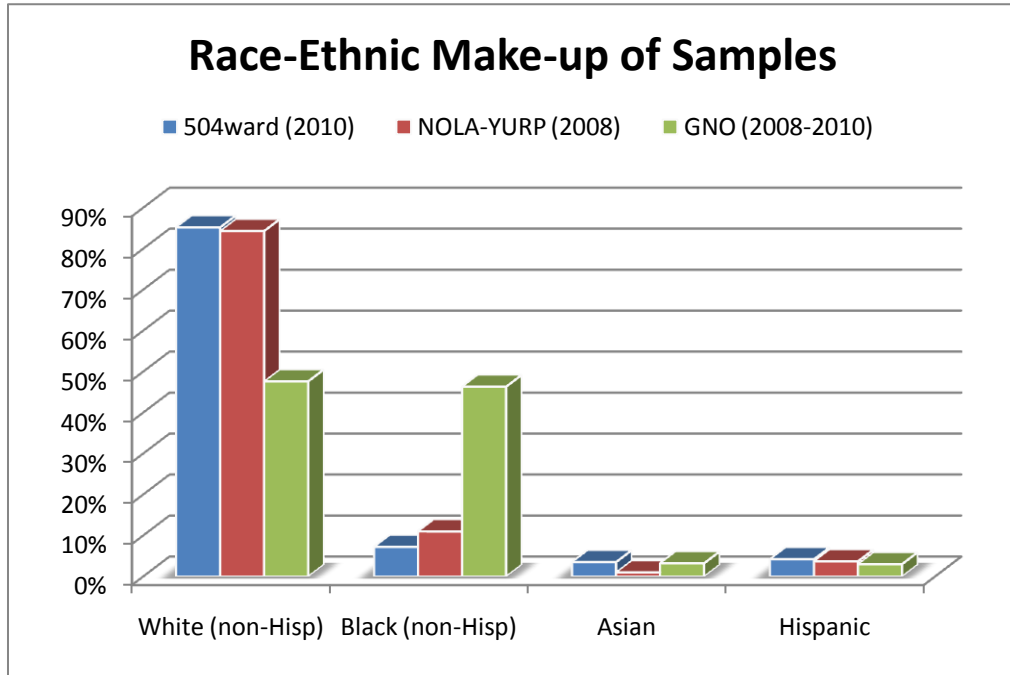
Occupation and Income. The 504ward respondents hold various occupations in the private, public, and nonprofit sectors; and some are students or interns. Their income varies widely, with private and public sector workers earning most, followed by those in nonprofits and the arts. Students and interns earn the least. The 504ward respondents seem to be more advanced occupationally than the YURPs: more are in the higher private sector, while fewer are in nonprofits, the arts, students, or internships. However, some of the occupations were hard to classify. (For instance, what exactly is a “Category Manager” or a “Match Support Specialist?”)

Higher Private Sector (51%)	Doctor (MD), incl Psychiatrist, Dentist (1%); Lawyer, incl Judge (5%); Professor, University Admin, Scientist (1%); Business Owner (2%); Manager or Exec, Business (14%); Finance, Accounting, Advertising, Insurance, Marketing (11%); Real Estate (2%); Sales, Retail (1%); Engineer (5%); Computers, IT, Web Devel (2%); Architect, Urban Planner (3%); Analyst, Consultant, Researcher, PR (5%)
Lower Private Sector & Govt (18%)	Secretary, Admin Asst (4%); Service Industry (1%); Blue-collar worker (1%); Medical Support, Nurse (0%); Teacher, Other Educ (9%); Psychology, Social Work, Therapy (2%); Government worker (1%)
Nonprofits & Arts (15%)	Community Organizer, Nonprofit (11%); Artist, Musician, Actor, Writer, Journalist, Arts Business (4%)
Students, Interns (12%)	Students, Interns (12%)
Other (5%)	Other (2%); Unemployed (3%)

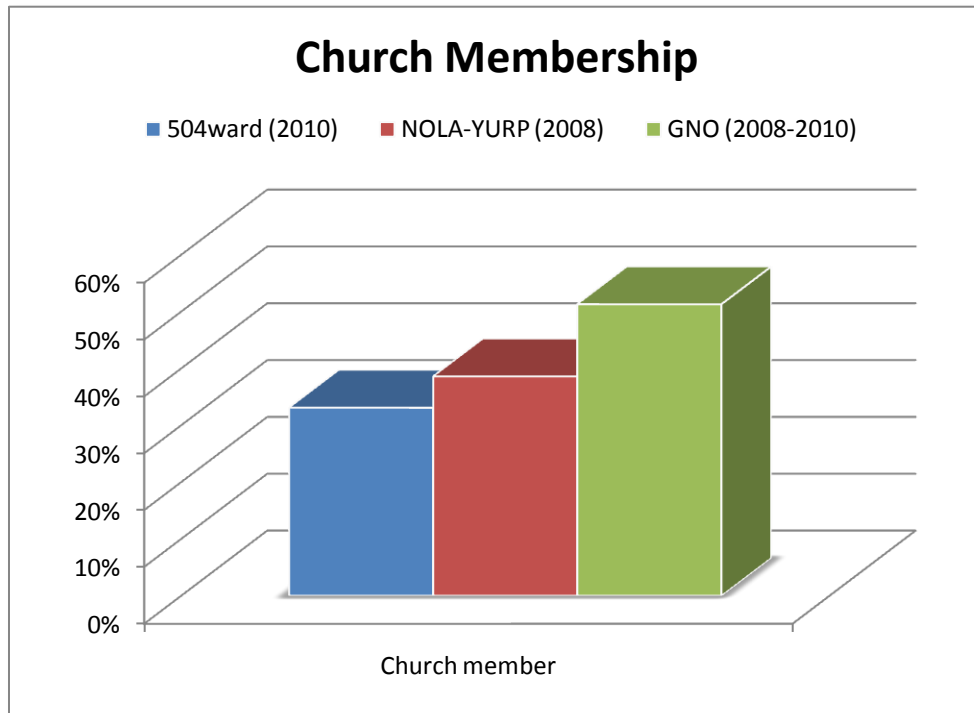




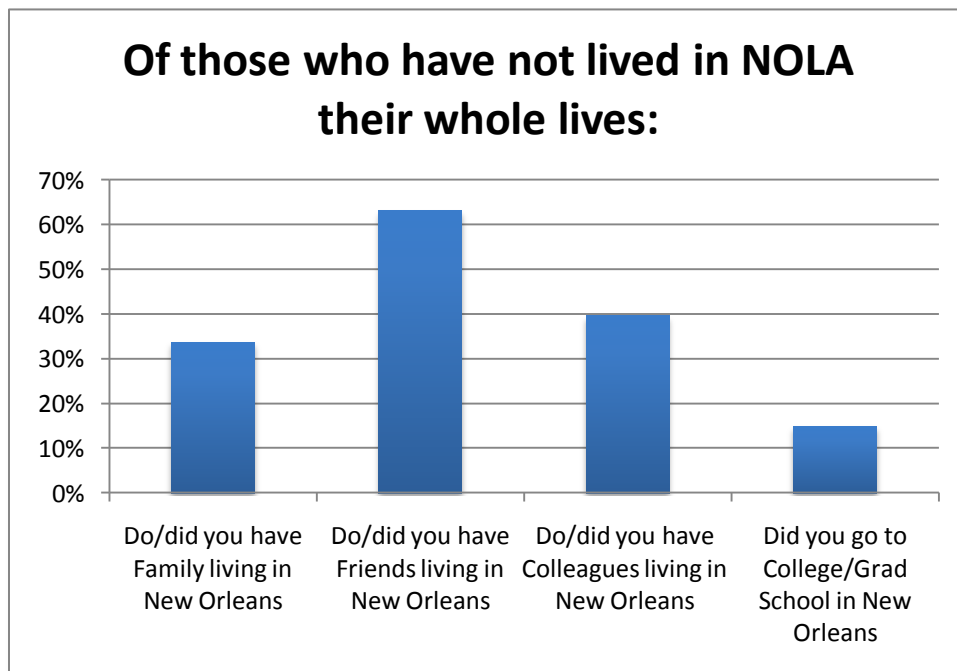
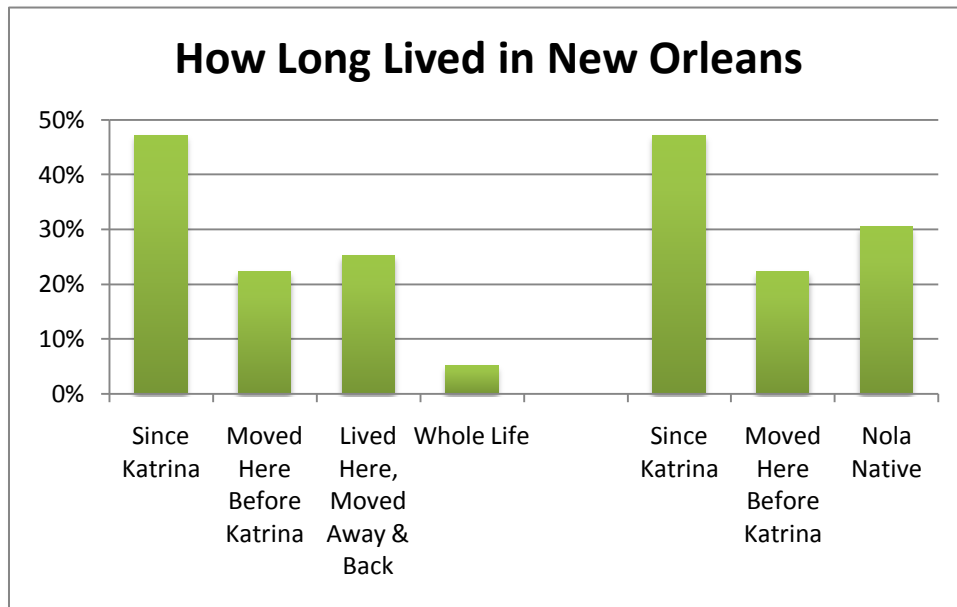
Race. A much larger percentage of the 504ward sample is white than the general sample. It was also true of the YURP sample, but it is unknown how well either reflects all young newcomers to the city.



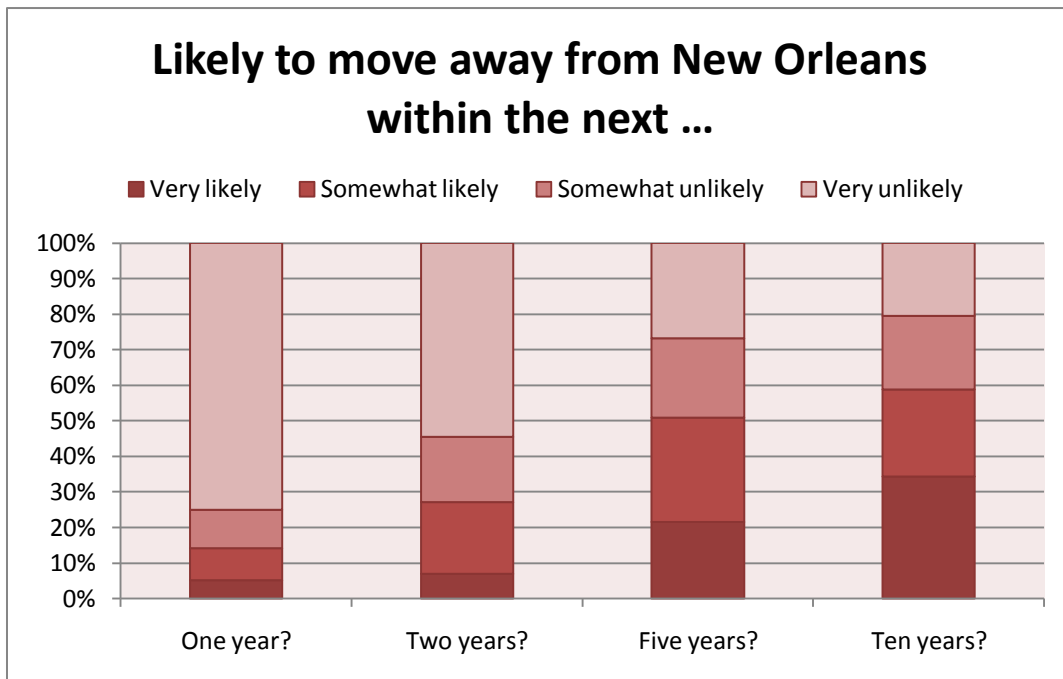
Religiosity. Again, not surprisingly, the young, well-educated 504warders and YURPs are much more secular than the general population. As measured by church membership, the general population is much more religious than the 504ward respondents or YURPs. Interestingly, somewhat more YURPs are church members than are 504ward respondents.

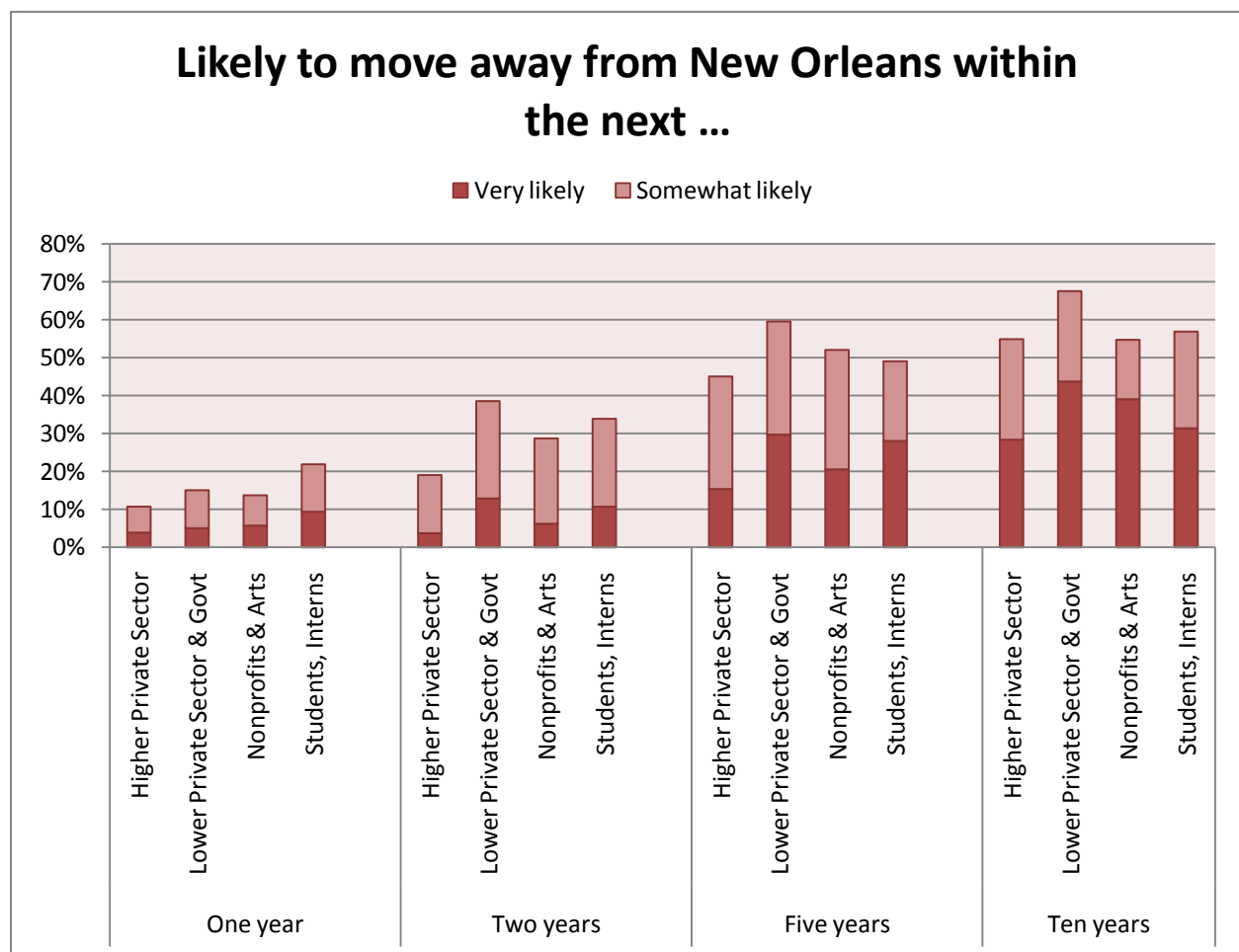
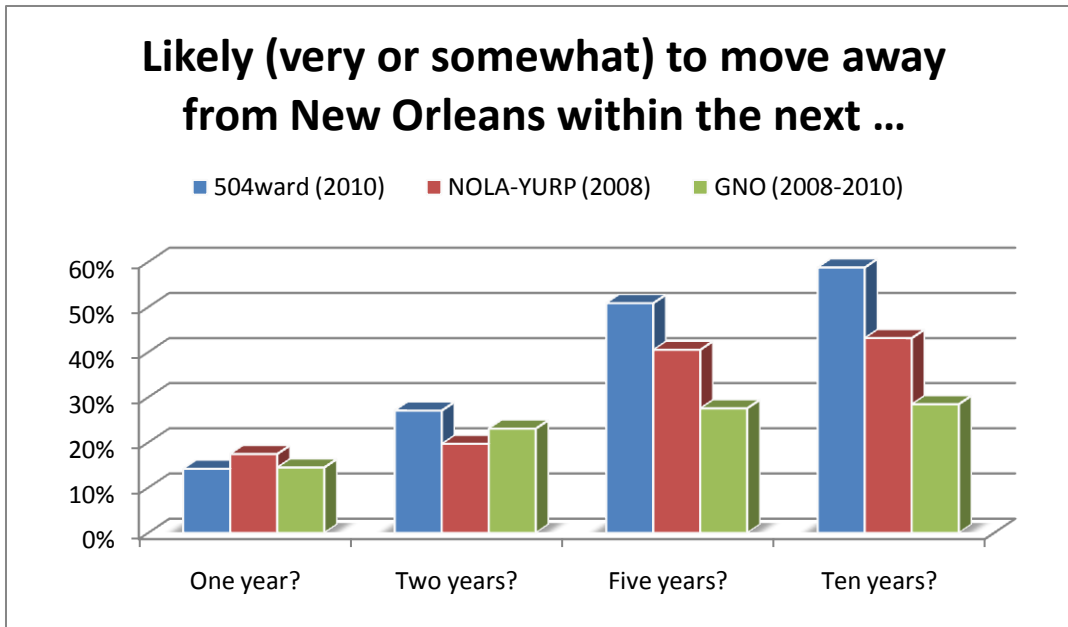


NOLA Newcomers. Most 504ward respondents are relative newcomers to New Orleans. Almost half of them came since Hurricane Katrina, and almost a quarter of them came prior to the storm. Roughly a third of them are New Orleans natives, but most of them left (often for college) and then came back. The biggest draw was friends who moved to New Orleans before them, and to a lesser extent, colleagues. About a third had family in the city, and only 15 percent came for college or grad school and stayed on.

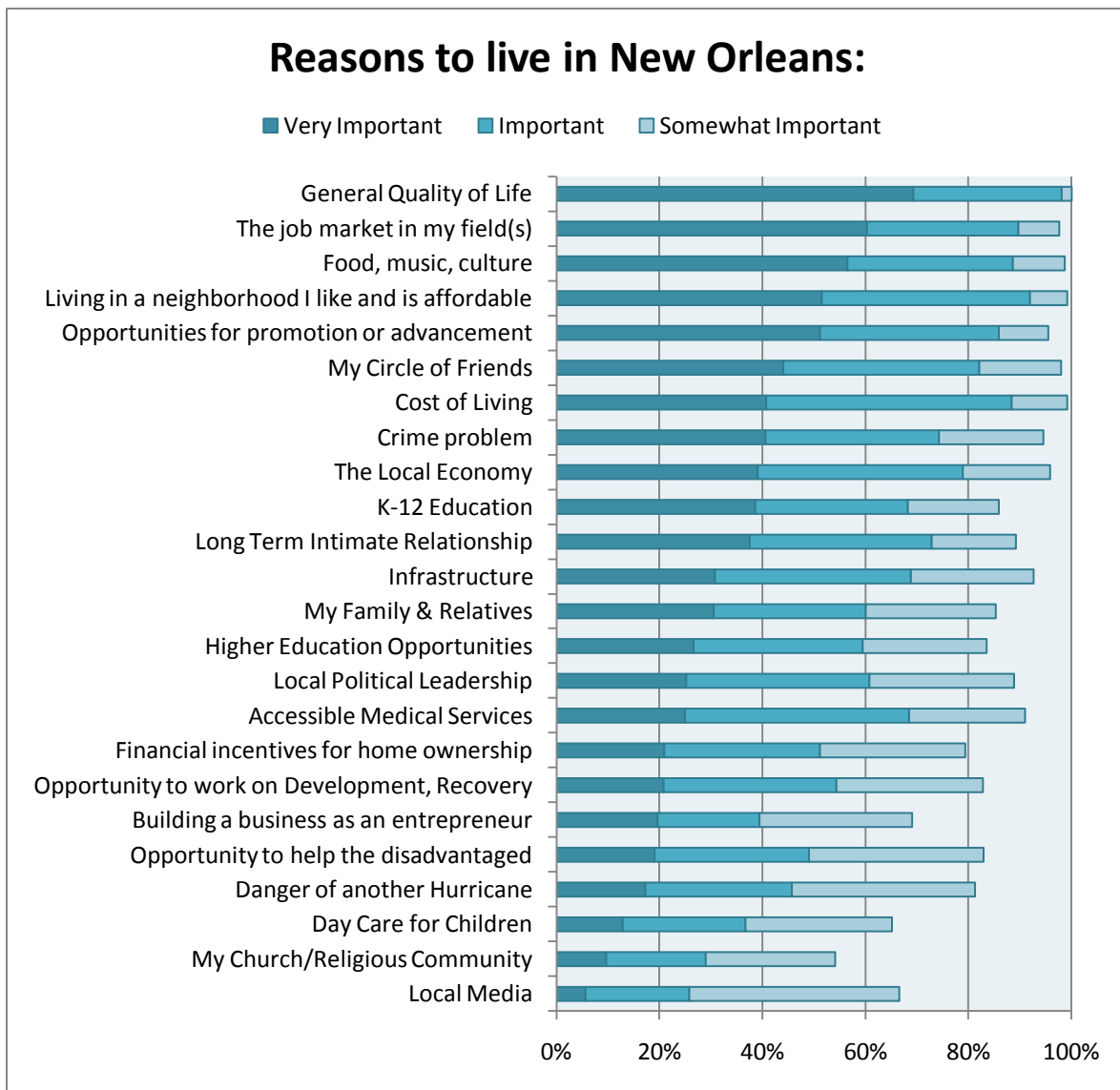


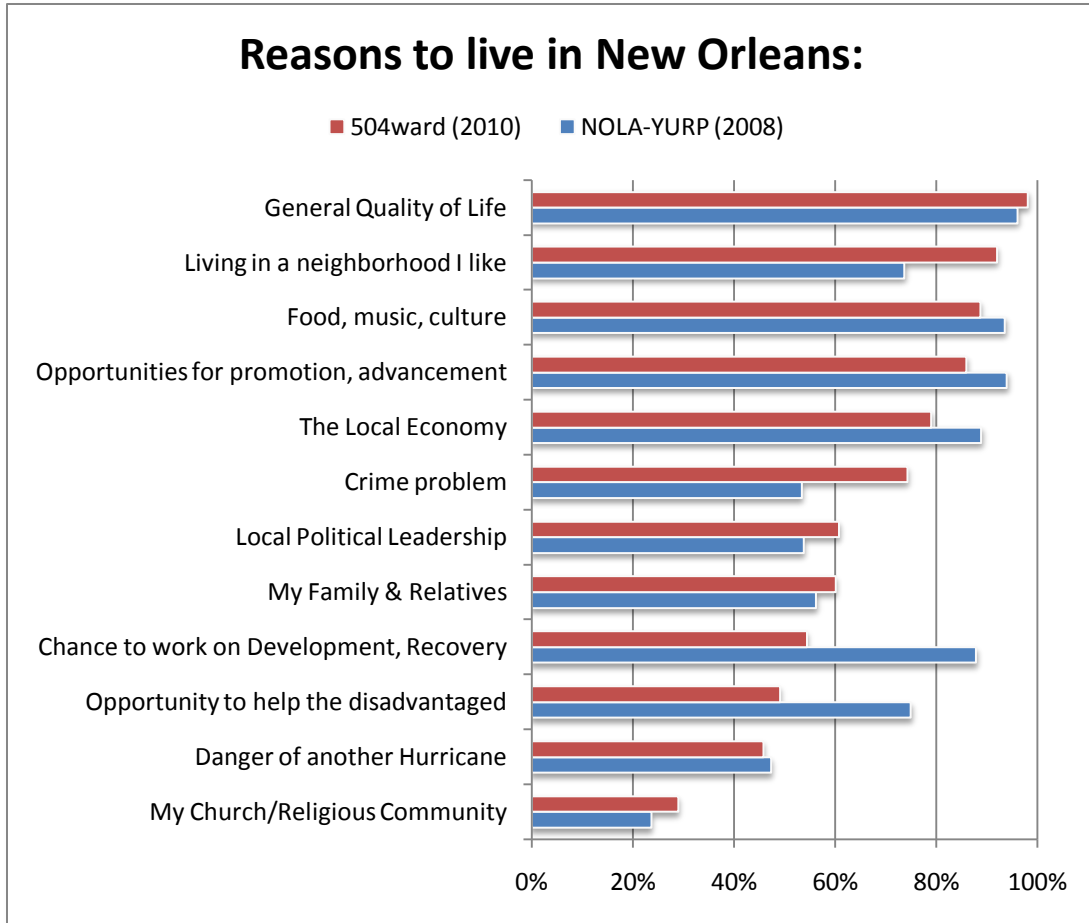
Intention to Stay. The young professional newcomers to the city are rather less committed to staying in New Orleans than the general population. Their commitment is about the same as the general population over the coming year or two, but then drops off significantly in a five or ten-year window. Indeed, the 504ward respondents express somewhat less commitment to staying over the longer term than the NOLA YURP respondents. On the other hand, 504ward respondents in the higher private sector are more likely to stay than those in the lower private sector or government, nonprofits or the arts, or students and interns. Perhaps this is one more step toward stability for young newcomers who choose to stay more for business reasons than for idealism.



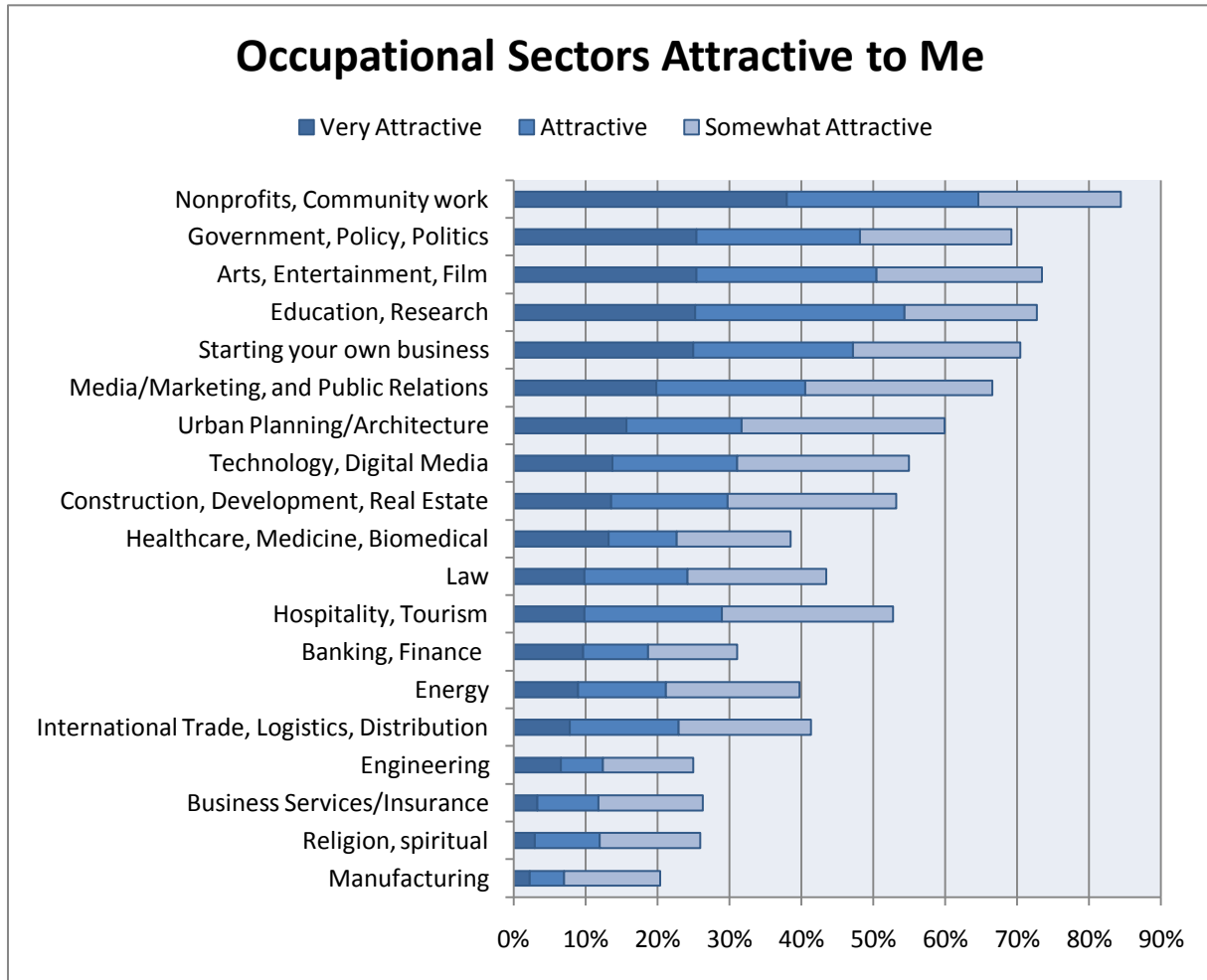


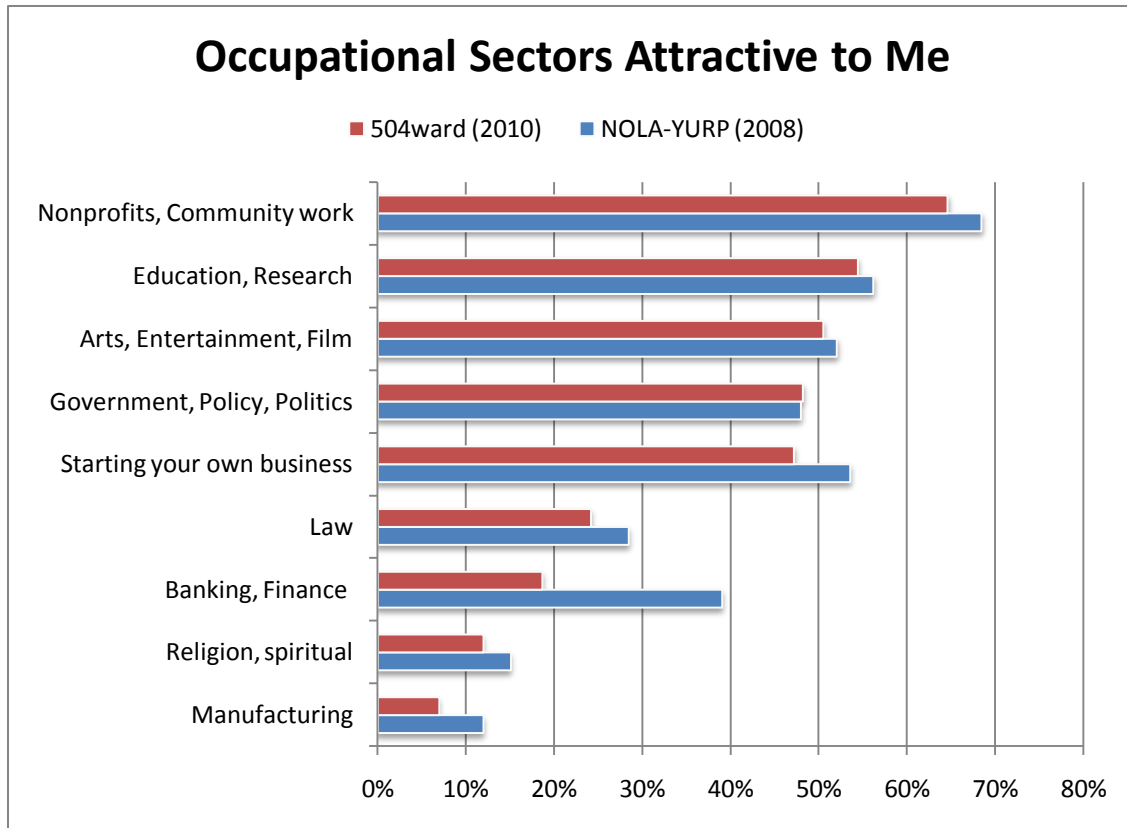
Reasons for Staying or Leaving. We asked 504ward respondents their reasons for deciding whether to stay in New Orleans or leave. Their strongest reasons tended to be shorter-term quality of life considerations, plus job opportunities in their field. Factors that affect longer-term plans are less important, including family, education, church, home ownership, or building a business. Significantly, while the NOLA YURP respondents were motivated by opportunities to work on recovery or help the disadvantaged, idealistic reasons do not play a large role for the more business-oriented 504ward respondents.



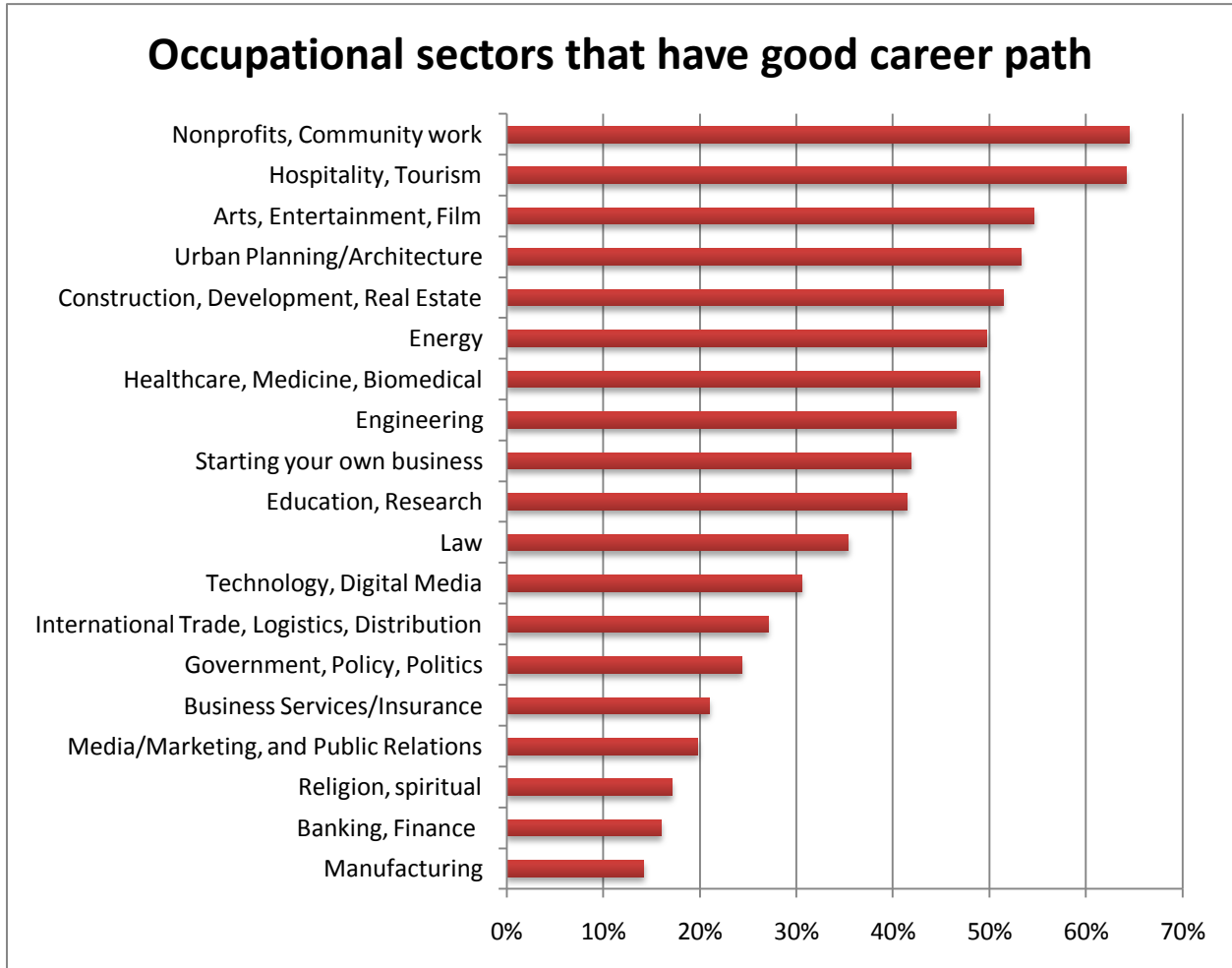


Occupational Aspirations. We also asked survey respondents what occupations are attractive to them. Interestingly, while there appeared to be some fall-off in idealism in the previous questions among 504ward respondents, as compared to the YURPs, young people continue to be attracted to non-business occupational fields. The top 504ward picks were nonprofit, government, arts, and education, followed by new-economy fields and starting your own business. Old-economy fields like manufacturing or energy trail far behind. And there are few differences here between 504ward and NOLA YURP respondents.

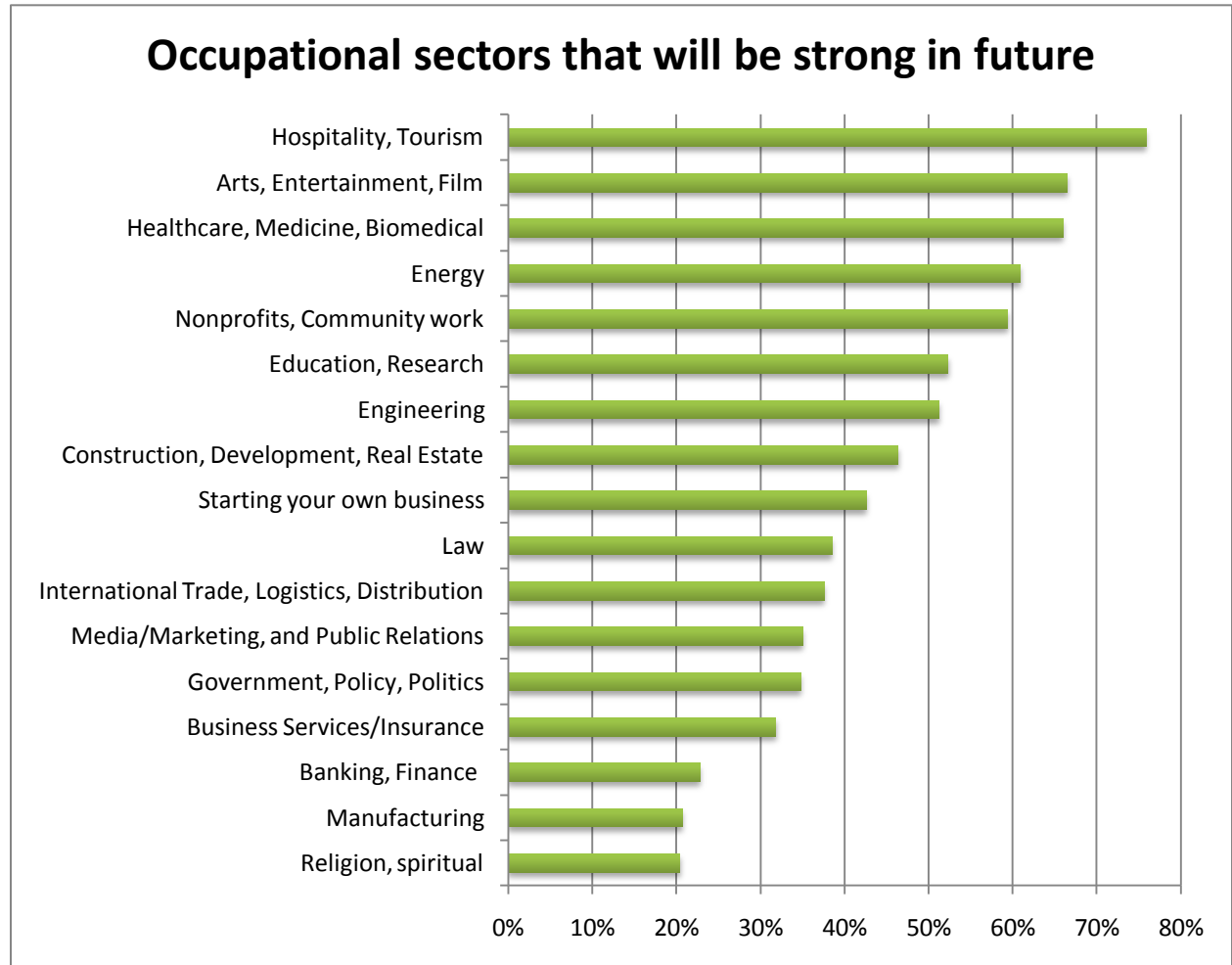


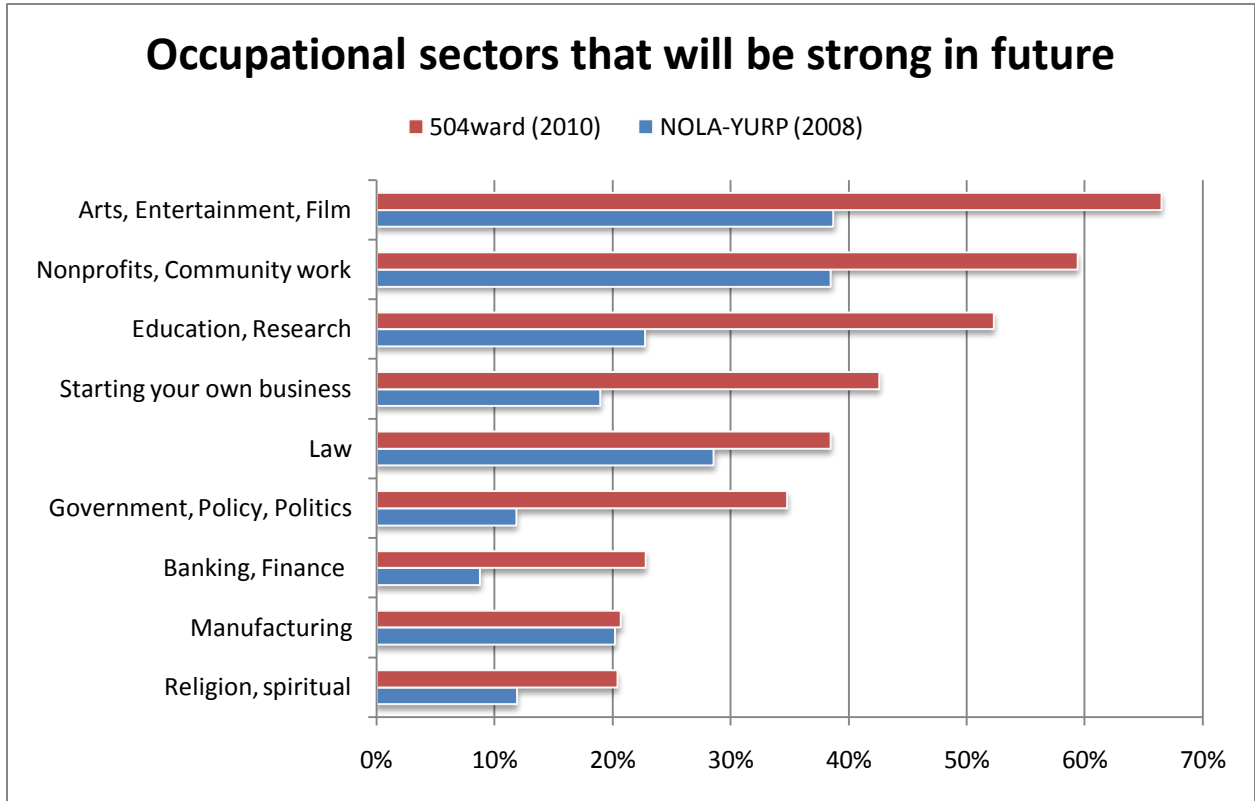


Career Opportunities. 504ward respondents believe that many of their favorite occupational sectors have good career paths, especially nonprofit work, the arts, and some new-economy fields. But they are less optimistic about career prospects in government or media/marketing, which are otherwise attractive to them.

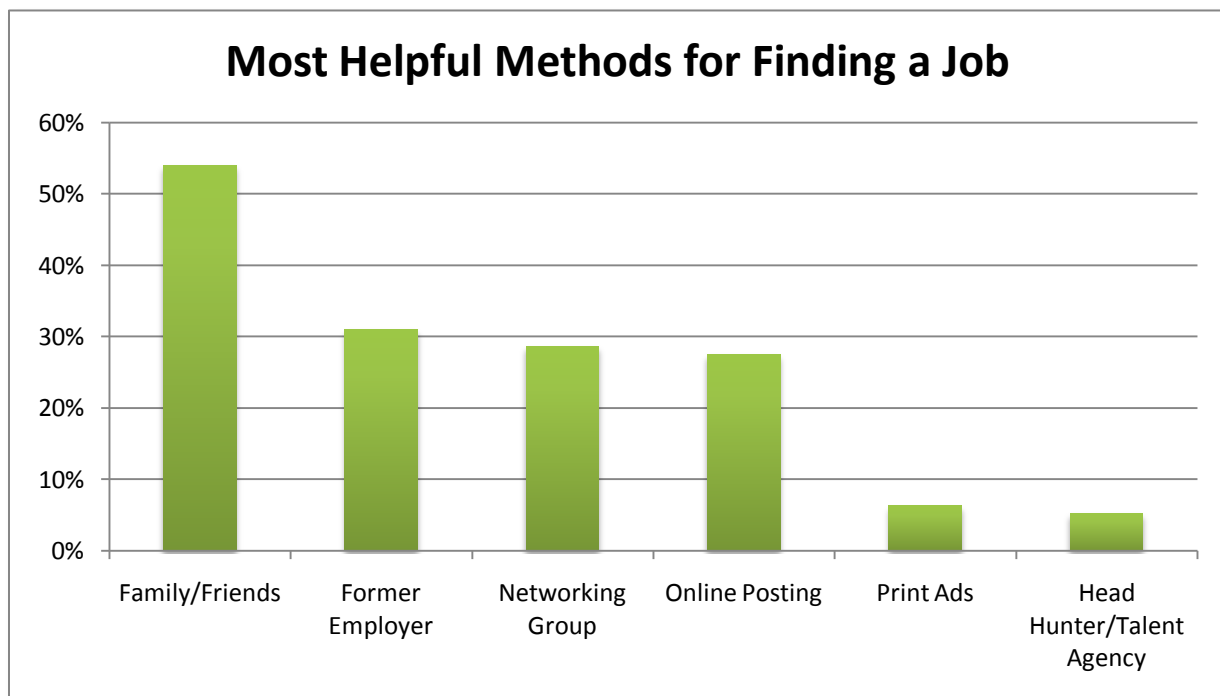


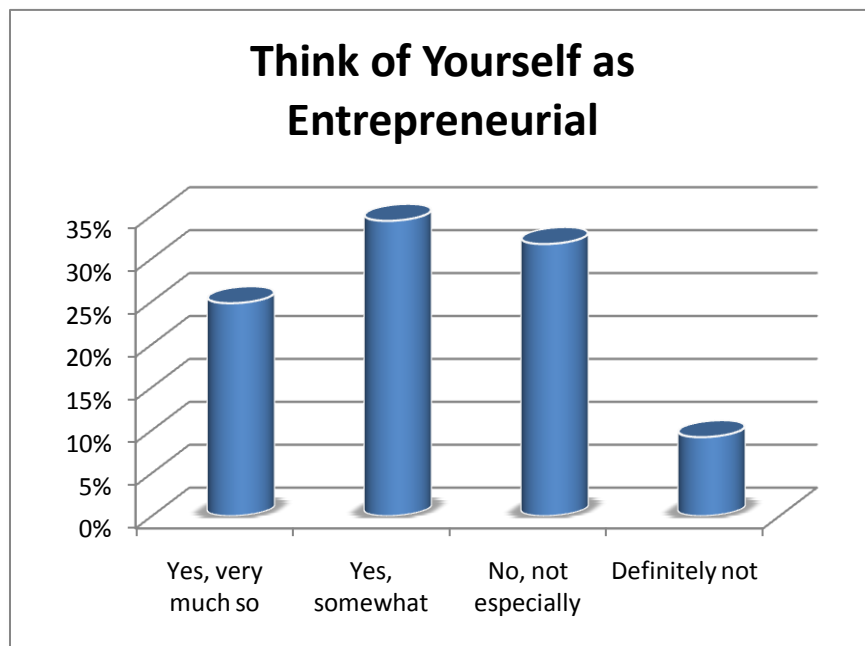
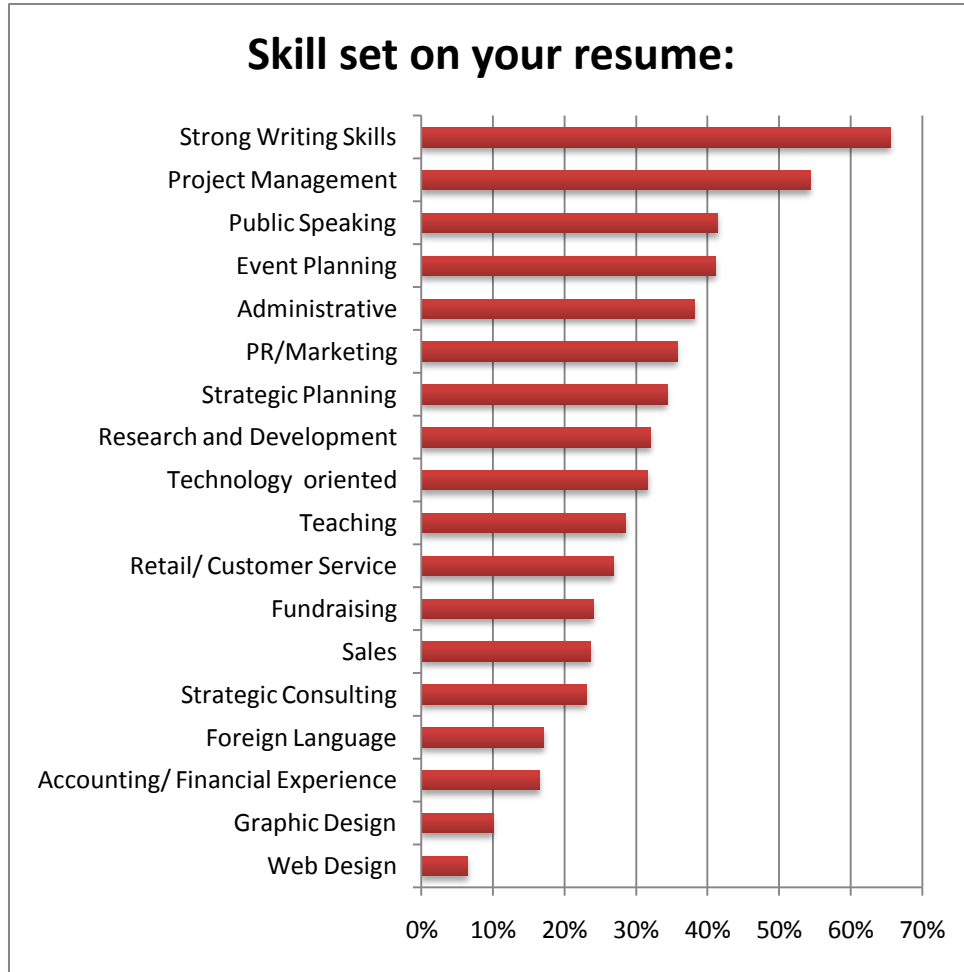
Occupational sectors with a strong future. Again, 504ward respondents believe that many of their favorite occupational sectors are good prospects for future growth, but with a number of significant differences. Even though they are not the most popular fields, tourism, healthcare, energy, and engineering are perceived as fields with strong futures. Overall, 504ward respondents are much more optimistic than NOLA YURPs about future prospects for most occupational sectors – perhaps because they are slightly more mature and career-oriented overall; or perhaps because New Orleans’ prospects have firmed up somewhat in the past two years of recovery.



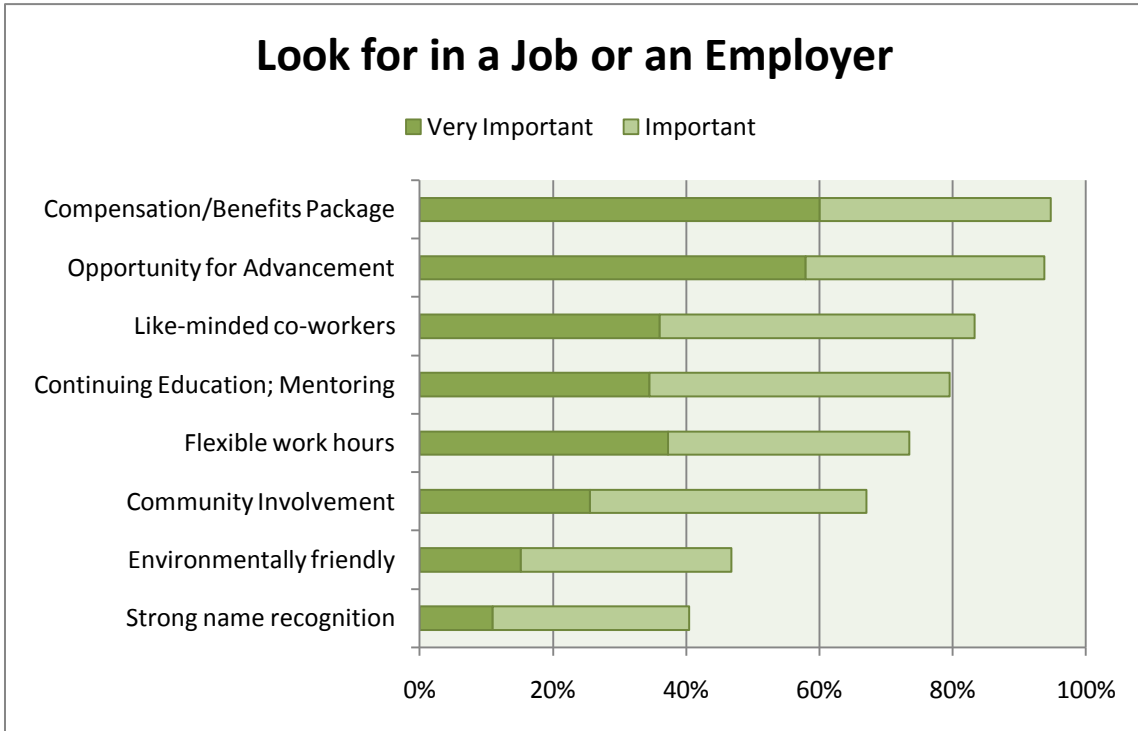


Finding and getting a job. In the opinion 504ward respondents, the best way to find a job is through informal connections: family, friends, and former employers. (This squares with well-established research on social networks in job-seeking. See Mark Granovetter, *Getting a Job: A Study of Contacts and Careers*, 1974.) As for more formal methods, new media – networking groups and online posting – are viewed as much more effective than old media – print ads or talent agencies. As for the skills 504ward respondents believe they can offer, they are heavy on the informal and interpersonal, and light on specialized training. Thus, 504ward respondents stress strong writing skills, project management, public speaking, and event planning, but not foreign languages, accounting/ financial experience, graphic design, or web design skills. Three fifths of 504ward respondents think of themselves as very (25%) or somewhat (34%) entrepreneurial.

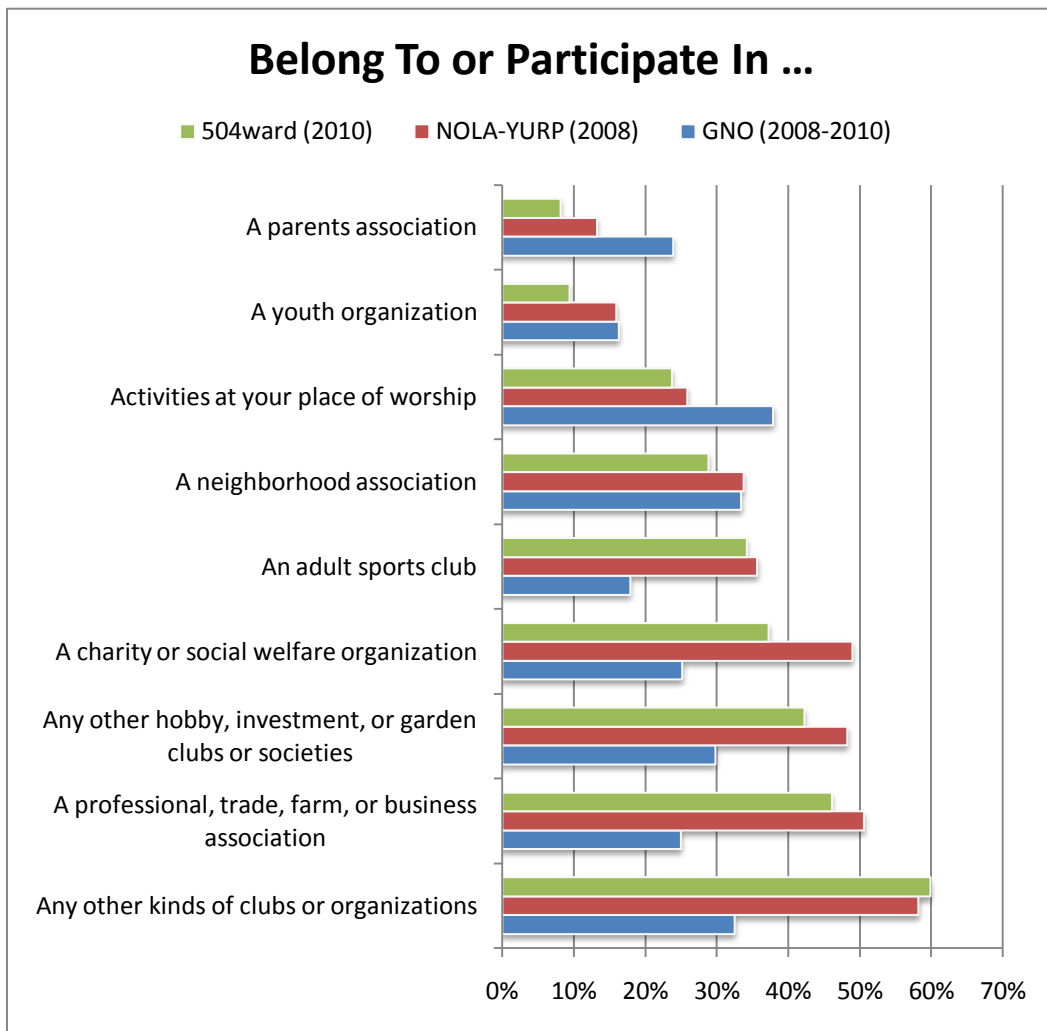


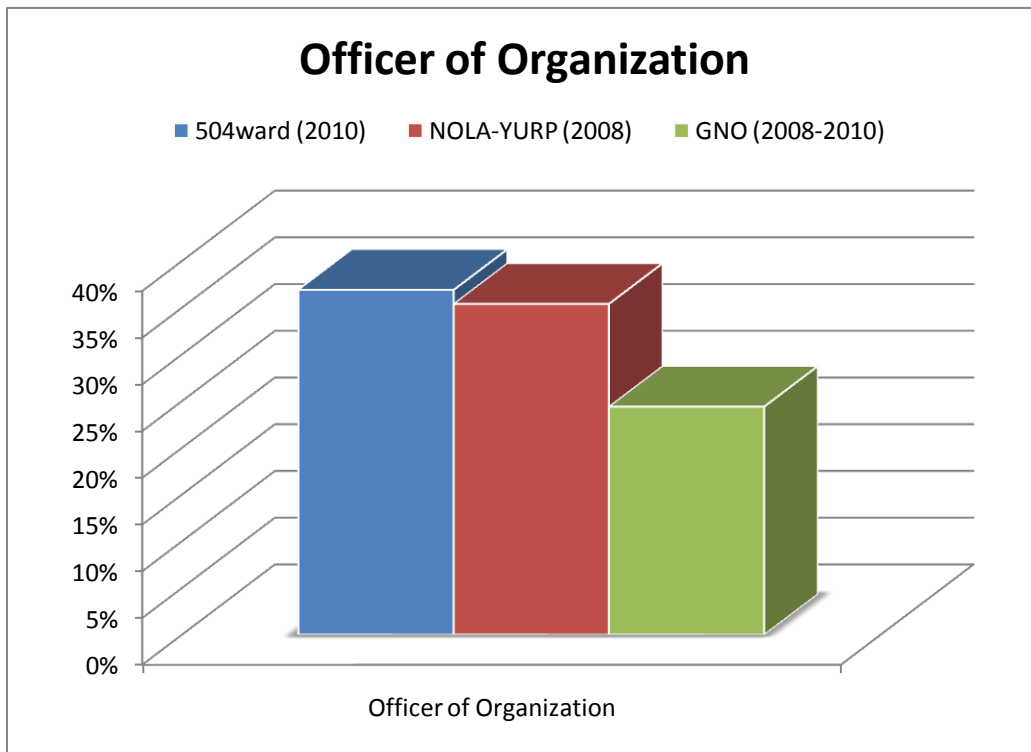
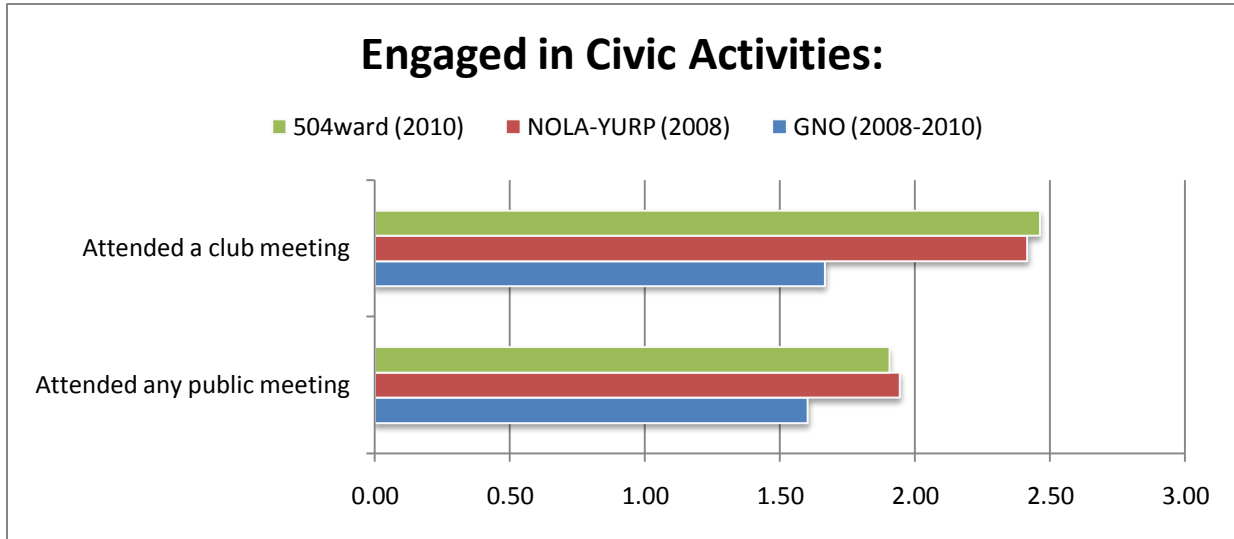


Look for in a Job or an Employer. 504ward respondents are solidly materialist in what they look for in a job. Pay and promotion opportunities are by far the most important factors. Well down the list are strong name recognition, environmental friendliness, or community involvement in the job or employer.

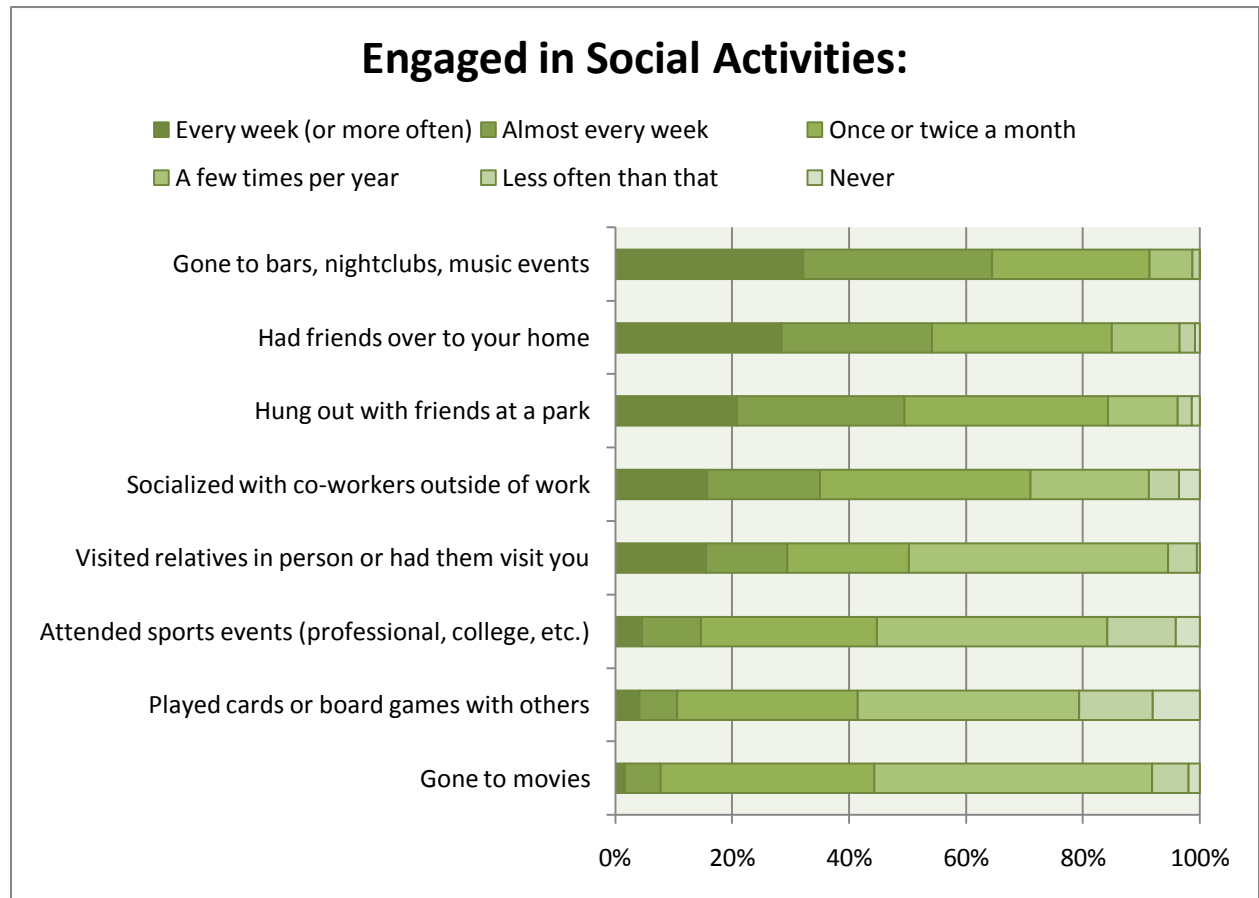


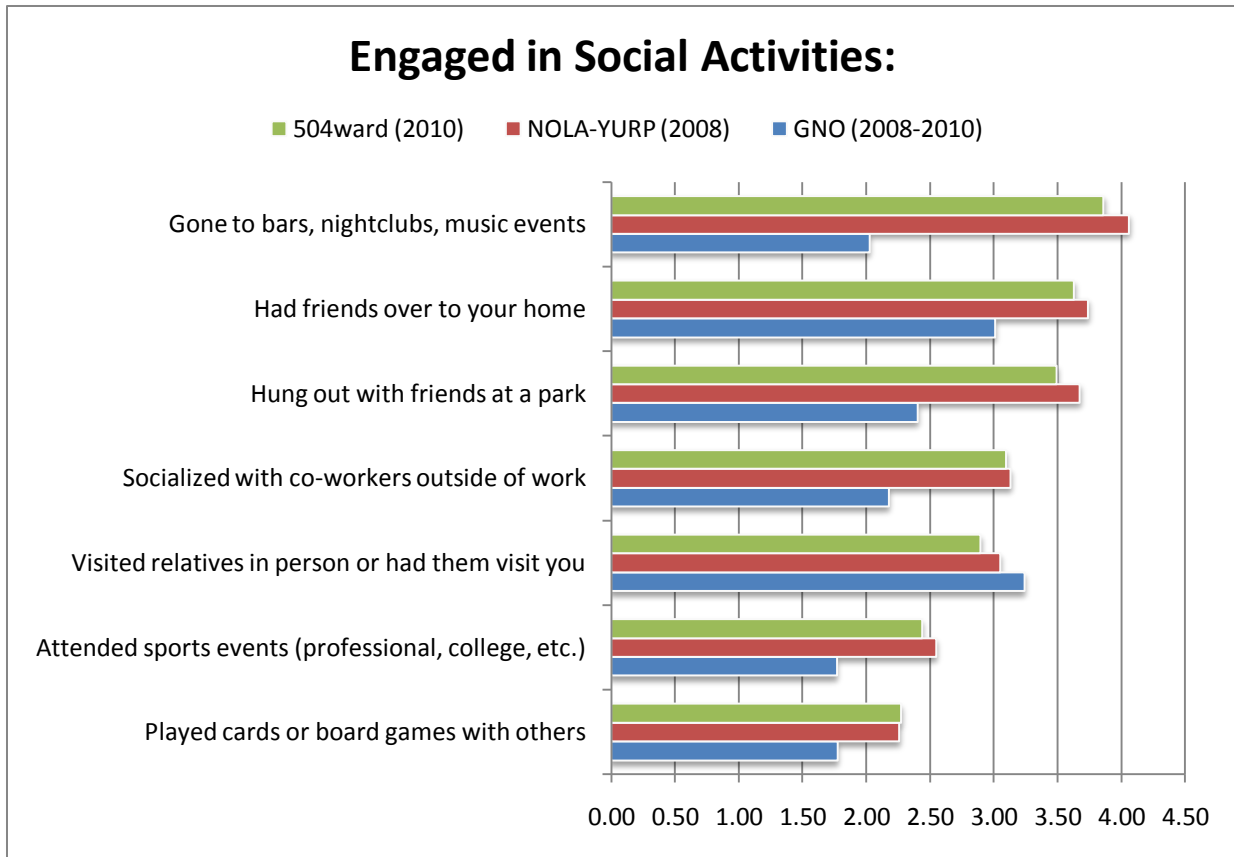
Civic Participation. 504ward members are highly engaged in civic affairs. Civic engagement is high in post-Katrina New Orleans, and these young professionals are generally as, or more, engaged than the general population – except as parents or at their place of worship. The NOLA YURPs have a similar profile to the 504ward respondents, but perhaps show a bit more idealism. The YURPs are 10 points more likely to take part in a charity or social welfare organization. This parallels the YURPs’ greater likelihood to be employed in nonprofits or to be students. 504ward respondents and YURPs are also more likely to be civic leaders – officers of an organization – than are members of the general sample.





Informal Socializing. The 504ward respondents are also very sociable. They see friends and work colleagues somewhat more than do members of the general population – in a city known for its socializing. But as newcomers, they visit with relatives somewhat less often than long-term residents.





Sources of Information. 504ward respondents get their information in new ways, as is typical of the younger generation. Eighty percent say the internet is very important for them. Word of mouth is also important, while newspapers, radio, and TV are less important. (Social networking websites – as a specific form of internet usage – are cited about as much as are the traditional media.) Still, seventy percent of respondents read a newspaper at least sometimes – 20 percent every day – and sixty percent watch TV at least two hours a day (i.e., forty percent one hour or less). So while traditional media usage is down, it is not gone.

