



Top Gap Closers: Some Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities Have Made Good Progress in Closing Graduation-Rate Gaps

BY JENNIFER ENGLE AND CHRISTINA THEOKAS

Nearly all high school seniors today aspire to pursue higher education because they know that a college degree offers them the best opportunity to realize the American Dream. Indeed, college-going rates are up considerably for all students over the last 30 years.¹ At the same time, however, racial gaps in degree attainment actually have grown, even as more minority students find their way to college.

Today, among young adults 25 to 29 years-old, 37 percent of whites have earned a bachelor's degree. That's nearly twice the rate of African Americans (20 percent), and three times the rate of Hispanics (12 percent).²

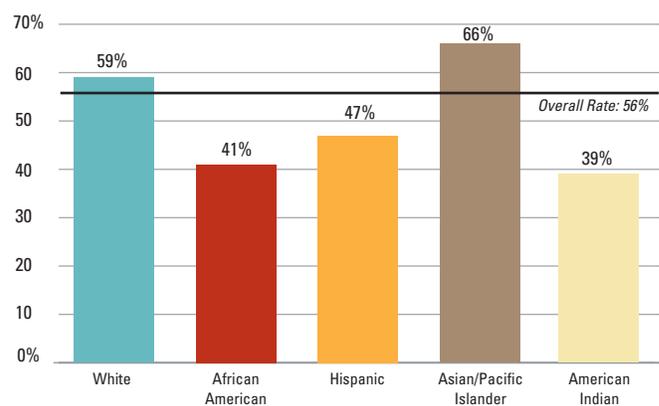
The gaps in degree attainment are partially due to the gaps in college-going rates, but they also reflect racial disparities in students' success once in college. About six in ten white and Asian students earn bachelor's degrees from the four-year institution they entered as freshmen within six years, but only four in ten underrepresented minority students do so.³ Some students go on to earn degrees at other institutions, but large gaps remain between groups (see Figure 1).

Some have come to think of gaps of this sort as inevitable. After all, aren't most minority students still educated in schools that get less of everything, from money to science labs to high-quality teachers?

It turns out, however, that by focusing on student success, many colleges have totally eliminated graduation-rate gaps, and others have narrowed them significantly. This brief identifies public colleges and universities that have narrowed if not closed the gaps between underrepresented minority students—African American, Hispanic, and Native American—and their white and Asian peers.

Our focus here is on public colleges and universities because two-thirds of minority students who attend a four-year college attend a public institution. Given their mission to serve the higher education needs of their states, these colleges must do their utmost to ensure that far more young Americans from minority backgrounds earn degrees. We want to shine a spotlight on those that are doing a particularly good job.

Figure 1: Six-Year Graduation Rates in Four-Year Colleges, 2007



Source: IPEDS.

SIMILAR INSTITUTIONS, BETTER RESULTS

Several factors can affect an institution's graduation rate, including size, student population, and available resources per student. To account for some of the main differences among public colleges, our analysis⁴ groups these colleges by Carnegie classification—Research, Master's, or Bachelor's.⁵ (College Results Online, discussed below, further refines these groupings.) But even after accounting for such factors, one thing remains clear: Similar institutions that serve similar students show wide disparities in bachelor-degree attainment. What individual colleges do to help students succeed, the data reveal, matters a lot.

Trends from 2002 to 2007 do not show much progress for public higher education institutions as a group. The average graduation-rate gap across all public colleges was 17.6 percent in 2002 and 15.8 percent in 2007 (see Figure 2). At that rate—reducing the gap by about 2 percentage points every five years—the gap won't close for 40 years!

But as always, these averages mask very different patterns. For example:

- In 8 percent of public colleges in this study, graduation rates for underrepresented minorities are as high or higher than those of white and Asian students. This means these institutions had no gap, or what we call a "negative gap," in either 2002 or 2007 (see Figure 3). These include such institutions as the **University**

of Maryland, Baltimore County and the **University of California, Riverside**. (Figure 6 lists these colleges.)

- Another 46 percent narrowed, or in some cases closed, the graduation gap between minority students and their peers during this period. Colleges that closed the gap include **Georgia State University** and the **University of South Florida** (see Figure 5).
- In 34 percent of all public institutions, the gaps between groups worsened (see Figure 3).

Not all of the colleges that narrowed gaps did so in a way that signals real progress. Some colleges, for example, might have improved student success simply by becoming more selective. But because data to measure selectivity changes were incomplete, we could not control for that. Consequently, we eliminated from this study any college that grew more exclusive by serving significantly fewer minority students among incoming freshmen (a relative decline of 20 percent or more).⁶

Other colleges might have narrowed graduation-rate gaps because nonminority students did worse, not because minority students did better. As a result, our "Top Gap Closers" lists include only colleges that narrowed gaps by making gains in graduation rates among minority students, while either keeping graduation rates for nonminority students steady or by improving rates among these students as well.

Figure 2: Graduation Rate Gaps in Public Colleges and Universities by Carnegie Classification, 2002-07

	#	URM ¹ Six-Year Grad Rate 2002	Non-URM ² Six-Year Grad Rate 2002	URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2007	Non-URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2007	Average Gap 2002	Average Gap 2007	Gap Change 2002-07
Overall	317	38.2%	55.8%	43.2%	59.0%	17.6%	15.8%	1.8%
Research	129	45.4%	61.6%	49.9%	64.7%	16.2%	14.8%	1.4%
Master's	164	30.3%	45.7%	35.5%	48.8%	15.4%	13.3%	2.1%
Bachelor's	24	26.1%	37.2%	29.7%	40.6%	11.1%	10.9%	0.2%

¹ URM stands for underrepresented minority students and includes African-American, Hispanic, and Native American students.

² Non-underrepresented minority students include white and Asian students.

Sources: IPEDS and College Results Online data set. This analysis is limited to the public institutions that met the criteria for this study. See Note 4 on page 5 for more detail.



About College Results Online

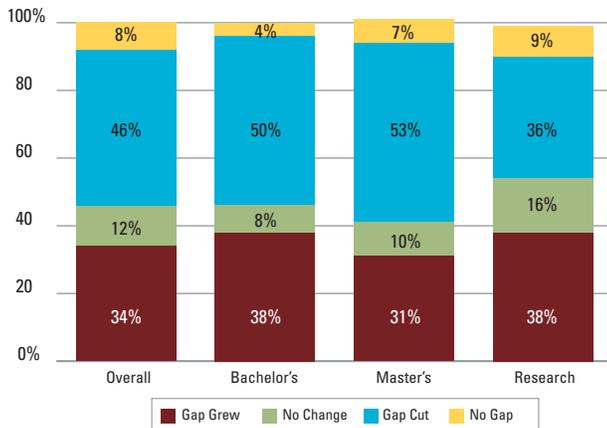
College Results Online (www.collegeresults.org) is an interactive tool designed to provide information about graduation rates for most four-year colleges and universities. CRO allows users to:

- Examine graduation rates and see how these rates have changed over time.
- Compare graduation rates of similar colleges serving similar students.
- Learn about colleges' track records in graduating diverse groups of students.

Some colleges do a much better job of graduating students than others. At many colleges, significant gaps exist in graduation rates between white students and students of color. But some colleges are proving that low graduation rates—especially for minority students—are not inevitable.

Changes in the Graduation-Rate Gap in Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities, 2002-07

Figure 3: Percentage of Public Colleges That Increased/Decreased Graduation-Rate Gap



Source: IPEDS and College Results Online data set.

Notes: This analysis is limited to the public institutions that met the criteria for this study. See Note 4 on page 5 for more detail. Also, in Figure 2, colleges whose 2007 gaps were within +/- 1 percent of their 2002 gaps were coded as "no change." Colleges with "no gaps" either had higher graduation rates for underrepresented minority students, or the difference between minority and nonminority graduation rates was within 1 percent. Totals may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

Collectively, these colleges cut graduation-rate gaps by 6.1 percentage points (see Figure 4). Across all gap closers, graduation rates for underrepresented minorities improved by 10.1 percentage points, while graduation rates for white and Asian students climbed by 4.1 points.

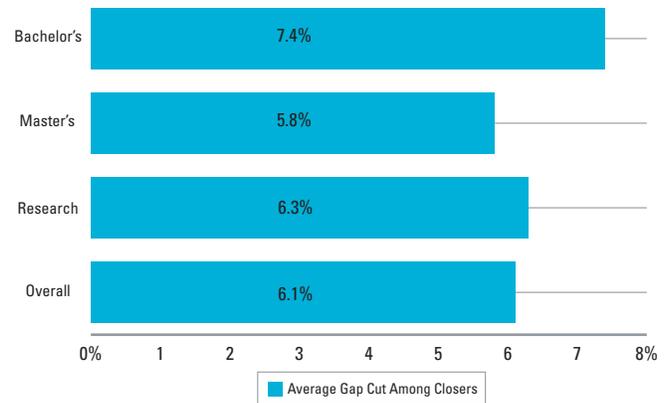
Among the top gap closers (see Figures 7-9), some colleges cut gaps by half or more, reducing gaps by ten, 15, or 20 percentage points. The six colleges in Figure 5 closed their gaps completely and, in some cases, reversed them so that minority students at these institutions are now outperforming their peers.

Among the colleges that completely closed graduation-rate gaps from 2002 to 2007, three—the **University of South Florida**, **Eastern Kentucky University**, and **SUNY College at Old Westbury**—are part of state higher education systems participating in the Access to Success (A2S) Initiative, a nationwide effort to cut gaps in college-completion rates in half by 2015. (For more information, visit www.edtrust.org/issues/higher-education/access-to-success.)

MAKING GAP CLOSING A TOP PRIORITY

Although the A2S Initiative is just getting off the ground, the past performance of some colleges within participating systems has proved it is possible for similar institutions to achieve the initiative's ambitious goals. In the California State University system, **Cal State, Sacramento** and **Cal State, Northridge** both cut graduation-rate gaps in half

Figure 4: Average Decrease in Graduation-Rate Gap Among Public Colleges That Narrowed Gaps



from 2002 to 2007 (see Figure 8). **Cal State, Northridge**, located in the San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles, enrolls nearly 30,000 undergraduates, about 40 percent of whom are minorities (mostly Hispanic). According to *The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education Magazine*, Northridge ranks fifth in the nation in the number of degrees awarded to Hispanic students—and first in California.

Historically, the institution has had relatively low graduation rates, both overall and for minority students. But the university's graduation rates have improved steadily, with overall rates increasing from 30.2 percent in 2002 to 40.5 percent in 2007. Among minority students, rates increased from 21.5 percent to 35.4 percent; rates among white and Asian students rose from 38.4 percent to 44.7 percent. As a result, Northridge cut its graduation-rate gap from 16.9 percent in 2002 to 9.3 percent in 2007.

According to Harold Hellenbrand, provost and vice president for academic affairs, three key components drive Northridge's success: leadership, data, and policy. "It starts with institutional focus, and that comes from our president," says Hellenbrand. Jolene Koester, Northridge's president, has made improving first-year retention rates and graduation rates one of her top priorities, and she has effectively communicated this message to faculty and staff, garnering their support and buy-in.

Second, top administrators at CSU, Northridge routinely use data. Through close collaboration with the university's institutional research office, Hellenbrand care-

fully tracks student progress and frequently presents data to faculty and administrators. He also diligently compares Northridge's data with those of other institutions and often calls on his peers in colleges and universities that are doing better to find out ways they are helping students succeed.

Finally, Northridge administrators reviewed their own academic and other policies and found that some contributed to high dropout rates—for example, lax policies about how many times students can repeat courses, when students can declare and change majors, and when students must take remedial courses. “These policies were well intended to accommodate students,” says Hellenbrand, “but ended up delaying their progress.”

Among the campuses that make up the **University System of Maryland**, three have made large improvements in minority graduation rates since 2002: the flagship **University of Maryland, College Park**, the **University of Maryland, Baltimore County**, and **Towson University**, which is one of the top “gap closers” (see Figure 8).

Towson University is a regional public university just north of Baltimore that serves about 15,000 undergraduates. Although Towson has a predominately white enrollment, it has a strong record of serving minority students well. From 2002 to 2007, graduation rates for minority students improved from 47.3 percent to 64.4 percent. Towson's minority students now graduate at rates much higher than the national average of 41.9 percent for all public institutions, and the university has the highest

minority graduation rates among the 15 “most similar institutions” identified in College Results Online. Over the same period, Towson nearly closed its graduation-rate gap, narrowing it from 11.1 percent in 2002 to 3.2 percent in 2007.

Towson, along with the 11 other Maryland campuses, participates in a systemwide initiative called Closing the Achievement Gaps. According to John Wolfe, associate vice chancellor for academic affairs at the University System of Maryland, Towson has succeeded by targeting robust academic and other support programs at critical points in students' college careers. Some examples:

- Easing the transition to college through first-year orientation, advising, and special courses.
- Increasing financial security for underserved student groups through supplemental aid and other support programs.
- Conducting early assessment and intervention for students the university deems likely to experience academic problems.
- Providing ongoing “intentional advising” and continued academic support for students throughout their college years.

Towson's retention programs generally are available to all students, but the university targets some programs to minority students, including outreach efforts and scholarship and support programs for students in the nearby Baltimore City and Baltimore County public schools. Having learned from its success in nearly closing the graduation-

Figure 5: Public Colleges Among Top Gainers That Completely Closed Graduation-Rate Gaps, 2002-07

	Undergrad Enrollment Fall 2006	% URM Among Undergrads Fall 2001	% URM Among Undergrads Fall 2006	URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2002	Non-URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2002	URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2007	Non-URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2007	Non-URM-URM Gap 2002	Non-URM-URM Gap 2007	Gap Change 2002-07
Eastern Kentucky University (KY)	13,623	5.5	5.1	13.8	34.6	38.5	39.3	20.8	0.8	20.0
SUNY College at Old Westbury (NY)	3,411	46.0	46.8	19.9	29.0	38.8	32.7	9.1	-6.1	15.2
University of Montevallo (AL)	2,463	15.2	15.4	35.8	43.9	51.3	48.8	8.1	-2.5	10.6
Georgia State University (GA)	19,109	36.5	34.7	32.3	37.5	50.7	45.5	5.2	-5.2	10.4
University of South Florida (FL)	34,438	23.1	24.7	40.9	47.5	50.3	48.9	6.6	-1.4	8.0
George Mason University (VA)	18,221	17.0	14.8	46.5	49.8	62.2	58.7	3.3	-3.5	6.8

Source: IPEDS and College Results Online data set.

rate gap facing minority students, Towson now is focusing gap-closing efforts on similar challenges confronting first-generation and low-income students.

STRONG LEADERS CREATE PROGRESS

Progress in closing gaps is not limited to colleges and universities within large state higher education systems. For example, **Montclair State University**—a public comprehensive in northern New Jersey that enrolls more than 12,000 undergraduates—cut its graduation-rate gap by more than half from 2002 to 2007. Montclair serves a relatively diverse student body; about 28 percent of students are racial minorities, and 27 percent come from low-income families. From 2002 to 2007, the minority graduation rate improved from 40.9 percent to 54.9 percent. The graduation-rate gap between minority and nonminority students also narrowed considerably from 21.9 to 8.5 points, making Montclair one of the top gap closers in this study. Today, Montclair has the highest graduation rate for underrepresented minority students among the 15 most similar institutions identified in College Results Online.

As with Cal State, Northridge, the improvement at Montclair can be largely credited to its top leadership. When President Susan Cole arrived on campus in 1998, she identified improving retention and graduation rates as her main objective, according to Joan Ficke, senior vice provost for academic affairs. To accomplish this objective,

Montclair has created a strong network of support services and programs for students. The major focus is on the transition to college, but that intentionally extends beyond the first year. Provost Willard Gingerich says the effectiveness of these programs has much to do with the close collaboration between the academic and student affairs staff at Montclair, which may not be typical at other institutions.

Further, Montclair's efforts to improve student success aren't only focused outside the classroom. "We are a university that started as a teacher-training institution, and we retain that commitment to the classroom experience," says Ficke. Faculty are on the front lines with respect to retention at Montclair, which the university reinforces by putting equal weight on teaching and research in the hiring process and through a semester-long orientation program for new hires. According to Gingerich, "There is a visceral sense of responsibility for student success among the faculty and the staff."

The public colleges and universities highlighted in this brief offer evidence that graduation-rate gaps between minority students and their peers are not inevitable. Where leaders really focus, closely monitor data, and call their campuses to action when problems arise, student success rates rise—and they rise especially fast for the groups of students that have lagged behind.

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NOTES

- ¹ National Center for Education Statistics. *The Digest of Education Statistics, 2008*. Table 201: Recent high school completers and their enrollment in college, by race/ethnicity: 1960 through 2007.
- ² National Center for Education Statistics (2009). *The Condition of Education, 2009*. Indicator 23.
- ³ Knapp, Laura G., Janice E. Kelly-Reid, and Scott A. Ginder. "Enrollment in Postsecondary Institutions, Fall 2007; Graduation Rates, 2001 and 2004 Cohorts; and Financial Statistics, Fiscal Year 2007" (NCES 2009-155). Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, 2009. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2009/2009155.pdf>.
- ⁴ The sample for this analysis includes public four-year institutions with complete graduation-rate data in both study years (2002 and 2007) and with a cohort of at least 30 underrepresented minority students and 30 non-underrepresented minority students, the minimum number of cases required by accepted statistical standards. The sample also excludes institutions that served significantly fewer underrepresented minority students—a relative decline of 20 percent or more—among incoming freshmen in the study years (incoming 1996 and 2001) in order to eliminate

institutions whose graduation rates improved as a result of serving fewer minority students. Also, institutions are grouped by their 2000 Carnegie code to correspond with their classification during the study period; a small number of institutions have changed classifications since then.

- ⁵ For more than three decades, the Carnegie Classification has been the leading framework for describing institutional diversity in American higher education. It has been widely used in the study of higher education, both as a way to represent and control for institutional differences and in the design of research studies to ensure adequate representation of sampled institutions, students, or faculty. <http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/>

- ⁶ In our sample for these analyses, colleges with a relative decline of 20 percent or more in the percentage of underrepresented minorities among incoming freshmen fell beyond one standard deviation among all public colleges on this measure, indicating that they experienced declines that were much greater than the sample average.

Figure 6: Non-HBCU Public Colleges Where Graduation Rates for Minority Students Equal or Exceed Rates of Other Students, 2002 and 2007

	Undergrad Enrollment Fall 2006	% URM Among Undergrads Fall 2001	% URM Among Undergrads Fall 2006	URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2002	Non-URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2002	URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2007	Non-URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2007	Non-URM - URM Grad Rate Gap 2002	Non-URM - URM Grad Rate Gap 2007
Georgia Southern University (GA)	14,483	28.3	23.2	37.9	35.5	49.5	43.5	-2.4	-6.0
University of North Carolina at Pembroke (NC)	5,158	45.0	49.0	40.0	28.5	36.7	31.7	-11.5	-5.0
University of Maryland, Baltimore County (MD)	9,416	18.9	18.9	54.2	53.9	63.5	59.7	-0.3	-3.8
Texas A&M University-Commerce (TX)	5,165	22.7	30.3	33.8	33.7	40.6	36.9	-0.1	-3.7
Winthrop University (SC)	5,111	27.5	29.5	59.4	53.7	60.6	57.3	-5.7	-3.3
Francis Marion University (SC)	3,514	32.2	45.4	45.1	37.3	44.4	41.6	-7.8	-2.8
Florida Atlantic University (FL)	21,082	28.8	34.5	41.5	36.8	38.2	36.7	-4.7	-1.5
University of North Carolina at Greensboro (NC)	13,024	21.6	22.8	51.5	46.8	50.8	50.0	-4.7	-0.8
Florida International University (FL)	31,712	66.8	74.6	44.7	39.9	48.8	48.2	-4.8	-0.6
East Carolina University (NC)	18,587	16.5	18.5	59.5	53.6	54.6	54.4	-5.9	-0.2
The University of Texas of the Permian Basin (TX)	2,713	40.8	43.2	29.4	17.5	33.8	34.1	-11.9	0.3
Sam Houston State University (TX)	13,778	24.9	27.0	33.3	34.8	43.3	44.0	1.5	0.7
The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (TN)	7,544	19.9	22.3	44.1	44.2	41.3	42.0	0.1	0.7
University of North Texas (TX)	26,637	20.2	24.8	37.7	38.0	43.6	44.4	0.3	0.8
University of California, Riverside (CA)	14,792	27.4	32.4	65.2	66.4	65.1	66.0	1.2	0.9
University of Massachusetts-Lowell (MA)	8,648	4.8	10.1	44.6	44.7	44.8	45.8	0.1	1.0*
The University of Texas at El Paso (TX)	16,561	73.9	78.1	23.5	22.6	28.0	29.2	-0.9	1.2*
SUNY Stony Brook (NY)	14,847	17.5	17.9	53.6	54.5	58.5	60.0	0.9	1.5*

Note: These colleges are listed here because their underrepresented minority graduation rate, in both 2002 and 2007, was either higher than their nonminority rate or the gap between them was less than 1 percent in both years. Some Historically Black Colleges or Universities (HBCUs) also met this criteria in 2002 and 2007 but are not listed here because the mission of these institutions is specifically focused on underrepresented populations.

* Although these colleges have gaps slightly above 1 percent, they are included here because they had no gap in 2002, and their gap increased by less than 1 percent in 2007.

Sources: IPEDS and College Results Online data set.

Figure 7: Top Graduation-Rate Gap Closers Among Public Research Institutions, 2002-07

	Undergrad Enrollment Fall 2006	% URM Among Undergrads Fall 2001	% URM Among Undergrads Fall 2006	URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2002	Non-URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2002	URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2007	Non-URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2007	Non-URM - URM Gap 2002	Non-URM - URM Gap 2007	Gap Change 2002-07
University of Missouri-St Louis (MO)	12,459	12.5	15.7	16.5	39.6	33.3	44.1	23.1	10.8	12.3
Georgia State University (GA)	19,109	36.5	34.7	32.3	37.5	50.7	45.5	5.2	-5.2	10.4
Missouri University of Science and Technology (GA)	4,515	6.7	7.1	42.1	56.7	57.5	62.1	14.6	4.6	10.0
University of Utah (UT)	23,983	4.4	6.0	29.6	50.1	46.6	57.5	20.5	10.9	9.6
Iowa State University (IA)	20,440	4.7	5.5	42.0	66.4	51.8	67.2	24.4	15.4	9.0
University of Wisconsin-Madison (WI)	29,639	4.7	6.3	48.9	77.6	60.4	80.2	28.7	19.8	8.9
University of Louisville (KY)	14,995	15.0	14.7	19.9	35.7	37.1	44.9	15.8	7.8	8.0
University of South Florida (FL)	34,438	23.1	24.7	40.9	47.5	50.3	48.9	6.6	-1.4	8.0
George Mason University (VA)	18,221	17.0	14.8	46.5	49.8	62.2	58.7	3.3	-3.5	6.8
University of Kansas (KS)	20,822	6.0	8.3	42.3	58.4	50.8	60.2	16.1	9.4	6.7

Note: This table includes research institutions for which the change in the graduation-rate gap exceeds the average among all research institutions that narrowed such gaps from 2002 to 2007. Also, institutions are grouped by their 2000 Carnegie code to correspond with their classification during the study period. A small number of institutions have changed classifications since then. Sources: IPEDS and College Results Online data set.

Figure 8: Top Graduation-Rate Gap Closers Among Public Master's Institutions, 2002-07

	Undergrad Enrollment Fall 2006	% URM Among Undergrads Fall 2001	% URM Among Undergrads Fall 2006	URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2002	Non-URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2002	URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2007	Non-URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2007	Non-URM - URM Gap 2002	Non-URM - URM Gap 2007	Gap Change 2002-2007
Eastern Kentucky University (KY)	13,623	5.5	5.1	13.8	34.6	38.5	39.3	20.8	0.8	20.0
Worcester State College (MA)	4,626	8.4	8.2	9.1	37.1	30.6	39.1	28.0	8.5	19.5
Wayne State College (NE)	2,748	5.0	6.1	14.0	47.8	32.5	48.0	33.8	15.5	18.3
Appalachian State University (NC)	13,447	4.3	5.4	44.2	60.9	61.0	62.8	16.7	1.8	14.9
Montclair State University (NJ)	12,365	26.7	28.3	40.9	62.8	54.9	63.4	21.9	8.5	13.4
University of Southern Indiana (IN)	9,298	4.1	6.2	4.7	30.3	18.7	31.4	25.6	12.7	12.9
Western Oregon University (OR)	4,183	7.8	9.6	26.3	41.1	42.3	45.4	14.8	3.1	11.7
California State University, Sacramento (CA)	23,928	20.8	23.1	22.3	41.5	36.1	43.9	19.2	7.8	11.4
Kutztown University of Pennsylvania (PA)	9,189	6.2	11.5	27.9	47.6	46.9	55.5	19.7	8.6	11.1
University of Montevallo (AL)	2,463	15.2	15.4	35.8	43.9	51.3	48.8	8.1	-2.5	10.6
CUNY Brooklyn College (NY)	12,111	36.5	37.8	28.7	46.9	41.8	50.4	18.2	8.6	9.6
Emporia State University (KS)	4,458	8.0	9.3	25.0	45.4	35.1	47.0	20.4	11.9	8.5
Northwestern State University of Louisiana (LA)	8,248	31.2	34.5	18.9	31.5	34.7	39.4	12.6	4.7	7.9
Towson University (MD)	15,374	11.7	13.7	47.3	58.4	64.4	67.6	11.1	3.2	7.9
California State University, Northridge (CA)	28,491	35.5	38.7	21.5	38.4	35.4	44.7	16.9	9.3	7.6
Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania (PA)	7,877	4.7	8.5	37.1	62.3	44.4	62.6	25.2	18.2	7.0
Ferris State University (MI)	11,413	12.1	7.8	5.6	30.2	20.9	39.2	24.6	18.3	6.3
University of Minnesota-Duluth (MN)	10,076	2.9	2.9	16.7	44.4	28.6	50.1	27.7	21.5	6.2
SUNY at Buffalo (NY)	9,314	15.8	18.6	32.1	39.5	42.3	43.5	7.4	1.2	6.2
Western Connecticut State University (CT)	5,384	12.3	13.1	24.7	36.0	33.3	38.5	11.3	5.2	6.1

Note: This table includes institutions for which the change in the graduation-rate gap exceeds the average among all master's institutions that narrowed such gaps from 2002 to 2007. Also, institutions are grouped by their 2000 Carnegie code to correspond with their classification during the study period. A small number of institutions have changed classifications since then. Sources: IPEDS and College Results Online data set.

Figure 9: Top Graduation-Rate Gap Closers Among Public Bachelor's Institutions, 2002-07

	Undergrad Enrollment Fall 2006	% URM Among Undergrads Fall 2001	% URM Among Undergrads Fall 2006	URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2002	Non-URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2002	URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2007	Non-URM Six-Year Grad Rate 2007	Non-URM - URM Gap 2002	Non-URM - URM Gap 2007	Gap Change 2002-07
SUNY College at Old Westbury (NY)	3,411	46.0	46.8	19.9	29.0	38.8	32.7	9.1	-6.1	15.2
University of South Carolina, Aiken (SC)	3,241	23.5	28.6	24.6	36.1	38.4	40.6	11.5	2.2	9.3

Note: This table includes institutions for which the change in the graduation-rate gap exceeds the average among all bachelor's institutions that narrowed such gaps from 2002 to 2007. Also, institutions are grouped by their 2000 Carnegie code to correspond with their classification during the study period. A small number of institutions have changed classifications since then. Sources: IPEDS and College Results Online data set.



The Education Trust

The Education Trust promotes high academic achievement for all students at all levels—pre-kindergarten through college. We work alongside parents, educators, and community and business leaders across the country in transforming schools and colleges into institutions that serve all students well. Lessons learned in these efforts, together with unflinching data analyses, shape our state and national policy agendas. Our goal is to close the gaps in opportunity and achievement that consign far too many young people—especially those who are black, Latino, American Indian, or from low-income families—to lives on the margins of the American mainstream.



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