

The Educational Experience of Young Men of Color

A Review of Research,
Pathways and Progress

John Michael Lee Jr.
Tafaya Ransom
Foreword by Ronald A. Williams



Acknowledgments

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Foreword

Ronald A. Williams

Early in 2010, the College Board launched a report titled *The Educational Crisis Facing Young Men of Color*. This was the culmination of two years of qualitative research into the issue of the comparative and, indeed, in some cases, the absolute lack of success that males of color are experiencing traversing the education pipeline. These conversations, which we called Dialogue Days, engaged members of four groups — African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, Native Americans and Asian Americans — in a series of discourses designed to get at the issues confronting these young men as they followed or dropped out of the education pipeline. It was our hope, even if we had no new findings, to use the “voice” of the College Board to bring attention to this issue. Still, the findings in themselves were powerful reminders of the disparate opportunities available to different groups in the United States. Within a generation, the United States will be a much more diverse nation. In fact, in less than half a century, no racial or ethnic group will be a majority. We also knew that the fastest growing populations in the country were those minority groups with the lowest levels of educational attainment. We were assured by the data that if present levels of education and if current population trends hold, the U.S. will see a decline in the educational attainment of the country as a whole.

In order to regain the nation’s once-preeminent international position in educational attainment, we must begin to matriculate and graduate populations of American students who traditionally have been underrepresented at the postsecondary level. The educational achievement of minority males plays a significant role in this dialogue. Currently, just 26 percent of African Americans, 24 percent of Native Americans and Pacific Islanders, and 18 percent of Hispanic Americans have at least an associate degree. In addition, across the board in each racial group, young women are outperforming young men with respect to the attainment of high school diplomas, with even more pronounced disparities at the postsecondary level.

The report seeks to identify not only what we know but also what we don’t know about young men of color. It places this investigation within the context of President Obama’s call for the United States to retake its position as the world’s best educated nation. America cannot achieve this lofty goal without seriously engaging the issue of increased diversity on college campuses. It is also clear from the existing research, however, that the situation is much more complex than simply addressing the gender disparities now emerging. Young women of color, though performing better than young men, are themselves still in need of serious attention. This, therefore, cannot be seen as a zero-sum game. While greater attention needs to be paid to the growing disparity between young women and young men of color, clearly, we will have to devise ways of serving both populations well.

The research is heavily slanted toward the identification of problems in the respective communities and the effects of these issues on the young men’s academic performance. There is, on the other hand, a noticeable lack of solution-based research, even in relatively well-developed corpuses such as that dealing with African Americans. This is a weakness that needs to be corrected. Similarly, in smaller communities such as the Pacific Islanders and the Native Americans where the body of research is quite small, there is almost no disaggregation by gender, so there is little that can be definitively said about these groups. This has led to a dearth of policy responses.

It is our hope that this report will be the impetus for scholars to investigate more rigorously the issues affecting the academic performance of young men of color. We are particularly interested in research that identifies solutions to the problems, not that which identifies the problems all over again. The conversations we held in 2008 and 2009 on this issue clearly showed one thing: There is no lack of talent in communities of color or among the young men in these communities. It is our job to harness that talent, and our hope is that this report spurs us in this direction.

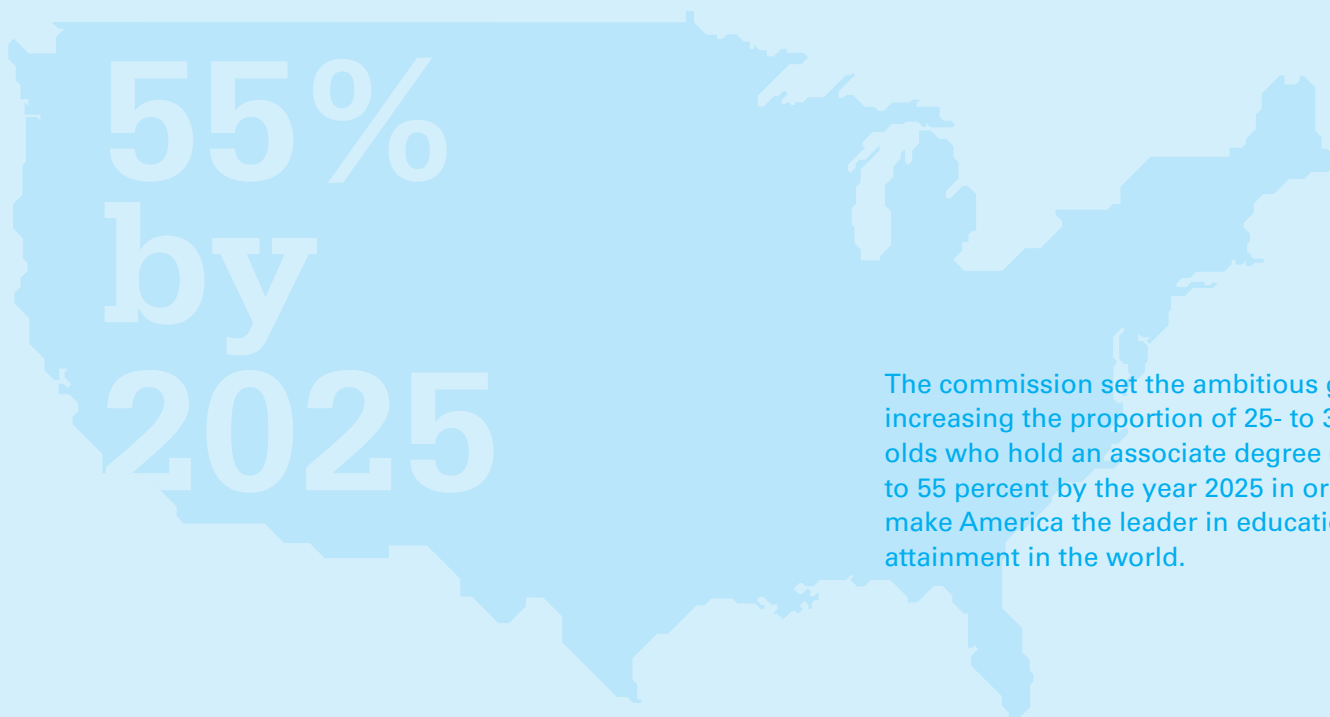
The College Completion Agenda

By 2008, the College Board and its members recognized that a number of issues clouded the educational landscape, posing formidable challenges to students enrolling and succeeding in college.

In response to these challenges, the College Board established the Commission on Access, Admissions and Success in Higher Education to study the educational pipeline from preschool to college as a single continuum and to identify solutions to increase the number of students who are prepared to succeed and graduate from college in the 21st century. The commission's 2008 report, *Coming to Our Senses: Education and the American Future*, painted a disheartening portrait of recent trends in education by U.S. students: Our international college and high school completion ranking had dropped dramatically; the proportion of adults with postsecondary credentials was not keeping pace with growth in other industrialized nations; and significant disparities in educational achievement existed for low-income and minority students. As such, the commission faced two key questions: What must be changed to improve the nation's education system? How will we know if these implemented changes are successful? In its report, the commission made 10 interdependent recommendations on steps necessary to reach its goal of ensuring that at least 55 percent of American young

adults earn a postsecondary degree or credential by 2025. This completion goal is not just about once again making the U.S. a leader in educational attainment. In fact, this agenda is about jobs and the future economy of the United States. We must have an educated workforce that can support the knowledge-based jobs of the future and improve the global competitiveness of the United States.

With the goal of increasing college completion, the College Board published the *College Completion Agenda* in July 2010, joining the Obama administration, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Lumina Foundation and other organizations in a commitment to ensure the economic success of America by once again making the U.S. the world leader in higher education attainment. The goal of ensuring that 55 percent of young Americans hold an associate degree or higher by the year 2025 is a daunting task, but the commission was adamant that this goal cannot be accomplished without a strong emphasis on closing the college completion gaps that exist for minorities in America.



The commission set the ambitious goal of increasing the proportion of 25- to 34-year-olds who hold an associate degree or higher to 55 percent by the year 2025 in order to make America the leader in educational attainment in the world.

Focusing on Minority Males

Early in 2010, the College Board issued the report *The Educational Crisis Facing Young Men of Color*. This was the culmination of two years of qualitative research into the comparative and, indeed, in some cases, the absolute lack of success that males of color are experiencing traversing the education pipeline.

These conversations, which we called Dialogue Days, engaged members of four groups — African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, Native Americans and Asian Americans — in a series of discourses designed to get at the issues confronting these young men.

The findings were powerful reminders of the disparate educational outcomes of different groups in the United States. Within a generation, the U.S. will be a much more diverse nation. In fact, in less than half a century, no racial or ethnic group will be a majority. We also knew that the fastest growing populations in the country were those minority groups with the lowest levels of educational attainment. We were assured by the data that if present levels of education and if current population trends hold, the U.S. will see a decline in the educational attainment of the country as a whole.

In order to regain the nation’s once-preeminent international position in the percentage of young adults with postsecondary credentials, we must begin to matriculate and graduate populations of American students who traditionally have been underrepresented at the postsecondary level. The educational achievement of young men of color demands significant dialogue; currently, just 26 percent of African Americans, 24 percent of Native Americans and Pacific Islanders, and 18 percent of Hispanic Americans have at least an associate degree. In addition, in each racial and ethnic group young women are outperforming young men with respect to the attainment of high school diplomas, with even more pronounced disparities at the postsecondary level.

Minority males holding an associate degree or higher

African Americans

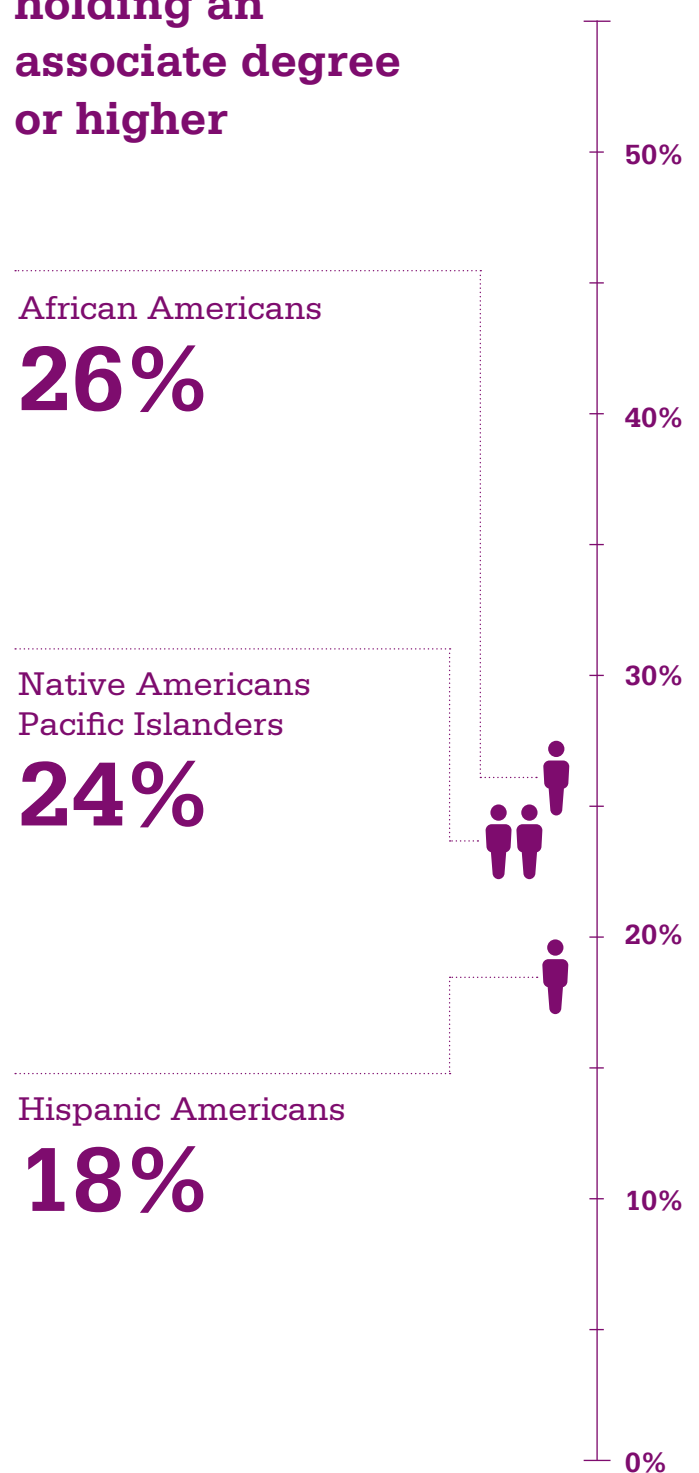
26%

Native Americans
Pacific Islanders

24%

Hispanic Americans

18%



About This Report

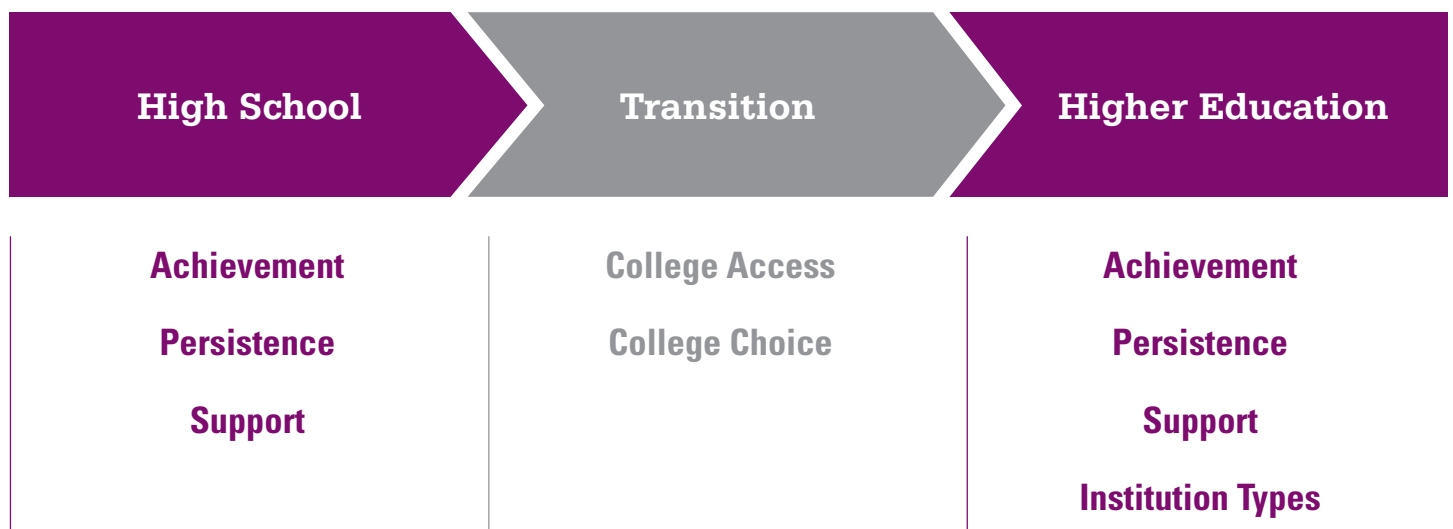
This report seeks to give a balanced view of the issues that exist for young men of color as identified by the research. Its particular value is that it looks at six distinct pathways that young men of color — and all students — take after high school and arranges the research in this way, and for the first time synthesizes the literature for males of all four minority groups — African Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Hispanics/Latinos and Native Americans and Alaska Natives in one place. In attempting to solve the crisis facing young men of color in the United States, we must rely on more than just outcome measures to find solutions. Data will help us identify the issues, but much more thought and research will be needed to find solutions. It is imperative that we build a body of literature about young men of color that will help us get to the “why” behind the data. This report synthesizes the available literature, data and case studies relating to minority male achievement.

Our goal is to isolate and identify the factors that contribute either to the persistence or to the attrition of young men of color from high school to higher education. Traditionally, research on African Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans and

Hispanics has been conducted in isolated communities of interest, concentrating on only one group at a time. Unfortunately, this has often put communities that may have much in common in a competition that often provides benefits to only one racial/ethnic group. By synthesizing the literature across each of these communities, this report seeks to find connections and intersections in the literature for each of these racial/ethnic groups. This study does not, however, ignore areas of divergence among these groups. This examination of the literature will note, in fact, the divergent needs of these communities and will seek to develop best practices that have been shown to be effective for persistence in high school and higher education by young men of color, as a whole and for subgroups.

Figure 1 shows the theoretical framework that guides this review of the literature and landscape. The review will examine the achievement and persistence of and support for young men of color in high school; investigate the transition between high school and higher education; explore achievement, persistence and support in higher education; and examine various institutional types in relation to these areas.

Figure 1
Literature and Landscape Framework



The Current Landscape

As of 2008, only 41.6 percent of 25- to 34-year-olds in the United States had attained an associate degree or higher. More alarmingly, only 30.3 percent of African Americans¹ and 19.8 percent of Latinos² ages 25 to 34 had attained an associate degree or higher in the United States, compared to 49.0 percent for white Americans and 70.7 percent for Asian Americans (Lee and Rawls 2010).

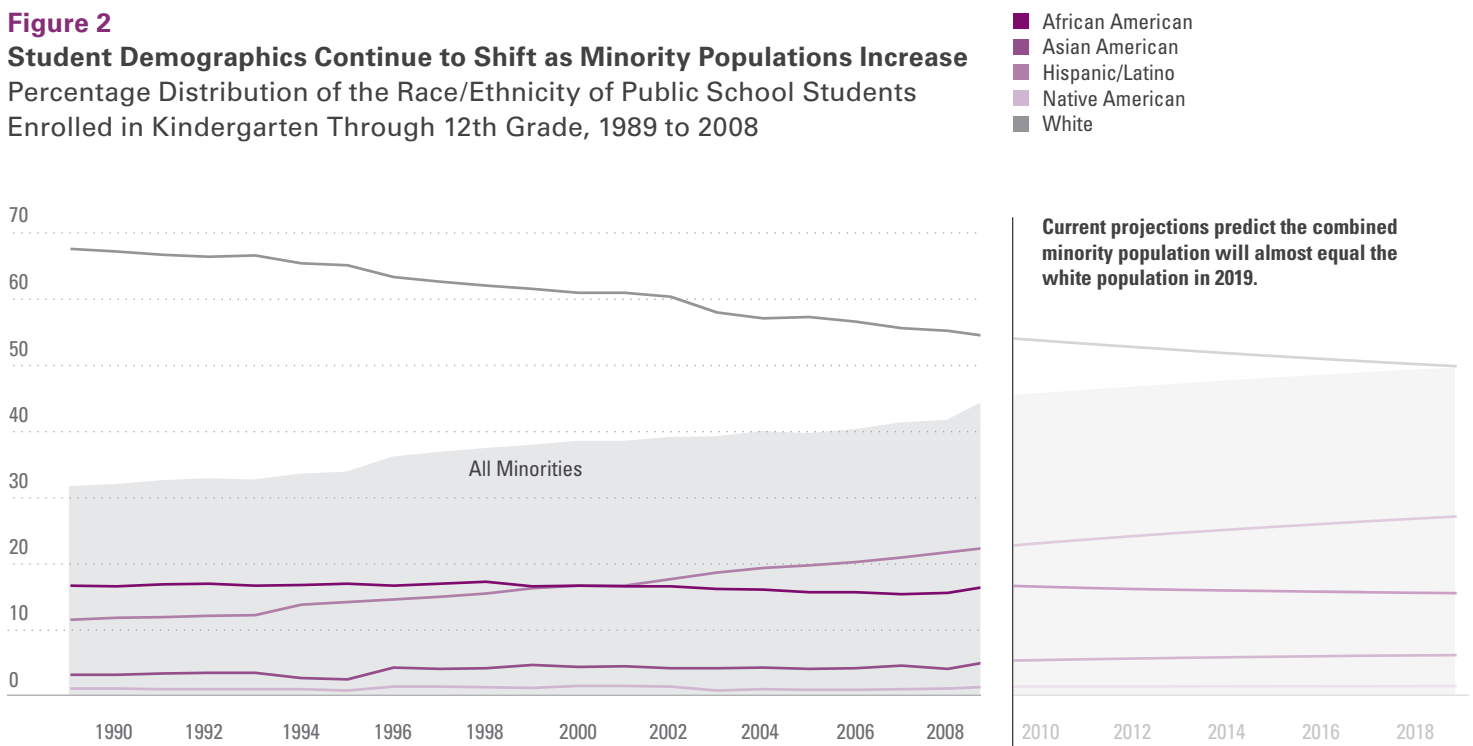
1 African Americans (also referred to as Black Americans or Afro-Americans) are citizens or residents of the United States who have origins in any of the black populations of Africa and include those of Caribbean descent.

2 Latinos and Hispanics are used interchangeably in this report. "Hispanic" is used in the United States to denote people who are of Spanish-speaking or ethnic origin (Hispanics and Latino Americans).

In order to once again become the leader in degree attainment, the United States will need to produce about 13.4 million additional college degrees by the year 2020 (Santiago 2010). The country continues to experience a dramatic demographic shift as the percentage of minorities (African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans and Native Americans) grows at an increasingly rapid rate. Minorities will soon become the majority of the population. **Figure 2** shows that the percentage of white Americans in the United States has declined over the last 19 years from 68 percent in 1989 to 55 percent in 2008. That year, for the first

time, more minorities than whites were born in the United States. The goal of ensuring the future global competitiveness of the United States cannot be met without the participation of all its citizens. Reaching our college attainment goal will require significant participation and contributions by all racial/ethnic groups. Latinos will need to earn 3.3 million additional degrees, while African Americans will need to earn an additional 1.9 million, Asian Americans an additional 800,000 and Native Americans an additional 94,000 by the year 2020 (Santiago 2010).

Figure 2
Student Demographics Continue to Shift as Minority Populations Increase
 Percentage Distribution of the Race/Ethnicity of Public School Students Enrolled in Kindergarten Through 12th Grade, 1989 to 2008



2008 Note: Estimates include all public school students enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Over time, the Current Population Survey (CPS) has had different response options for race/ethnicity. From 1989 through 2002, data on Asian and Pacific Islander students were not reported separately; therefore, Pacific Islander students are included with Asian students during this period.

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1988–2008.

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education," 1994-95 through 2007-08; and National Public Elementary and Secondary Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity Model, 1994–2007. (This table was prepared January 2010.)

Just as alarming as the college completion gaps that exist for minorities in America is the gender gap that persists in college completion. Historically, the term “gender gap” has been used to refer to the inherent prominence that men have in society, identifying how women have generally lagged in educational, economic and social achievement. Recent trends would suggest, however, that the term is developing a new connotation, generally describing how women are outperforming men in terms of educational achievement and attainment in society. Although there are still areas (e.g., compensation) in which men outpace women, there is evidence that in many areas the traditional gaps are shrinking and, in educational attainment at least, women are outperforming men. No state has reached the goal of 55 percent of adults ages 25 to 34 possessing an associate degree or higher (see **Figure 3**), but as **Figure 3** shows, nationally women ages 25 to 34 are substantially closer to achieving this goal than males.

Examining the educational attainment of young Americans by both race/ethnicity and gender, the data show that within each racial/ethnic group, males have lower degree attainment than women. Further, **Figure 4** shows that males within each race/ethnicity are less likely to gain access to college, more likely to drop out of high school, and less likely to complete college than their female counterparts. In short, women are driving the college completion rate of the entire nation, and men are detracting from the ability of the nation to reach the goal of once again becoming the educational leader in the world. If we are to reach this important national objective, we must explore ways to ensure that all males, especially members of minority groups, are able to earn college degrees at much higher rates.

Figure 3
More Women Are Earning Postsecondary Degrees than Men
 Percentage of Male and Female 25- to 34-Year-Olds with an Associate Degree or Higher in the United States, 2008

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2008

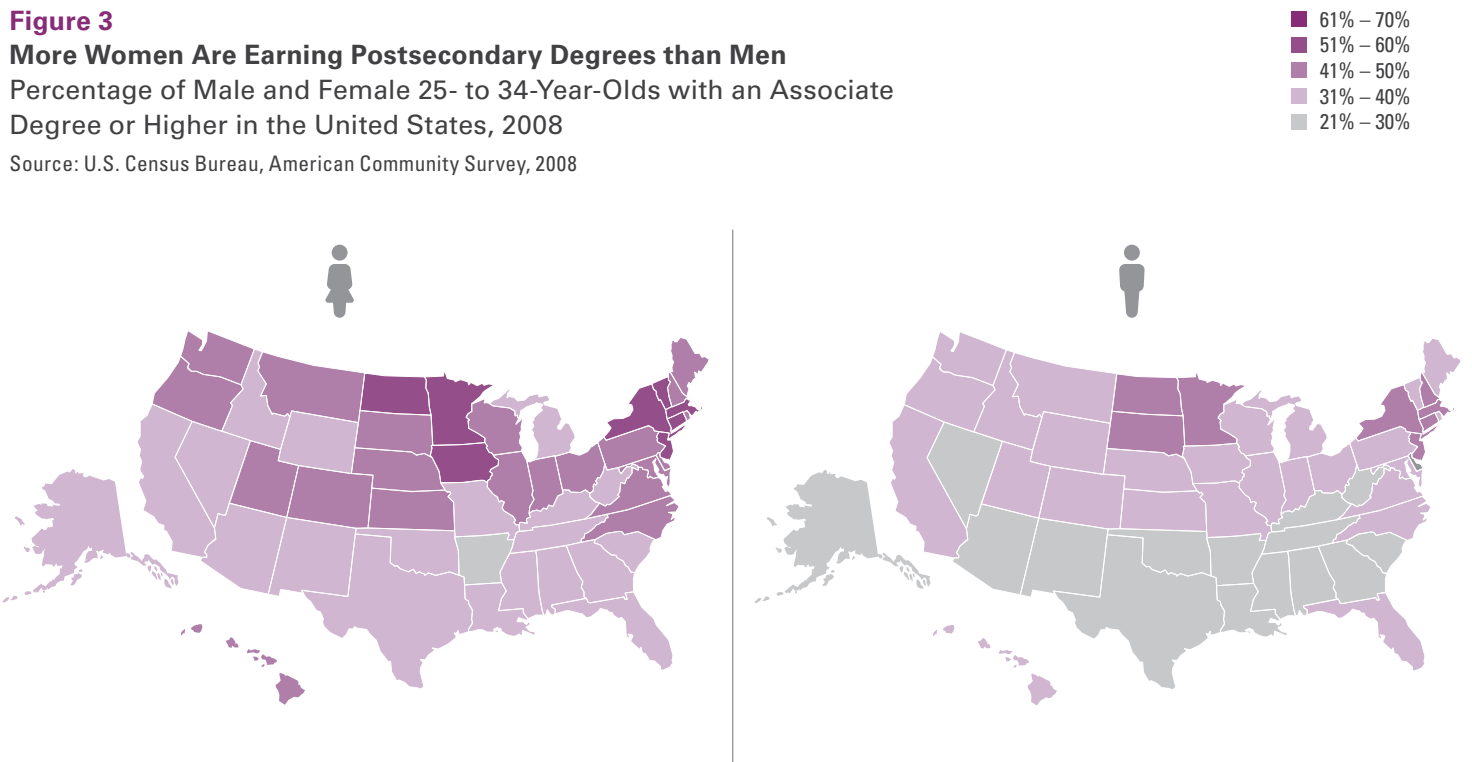


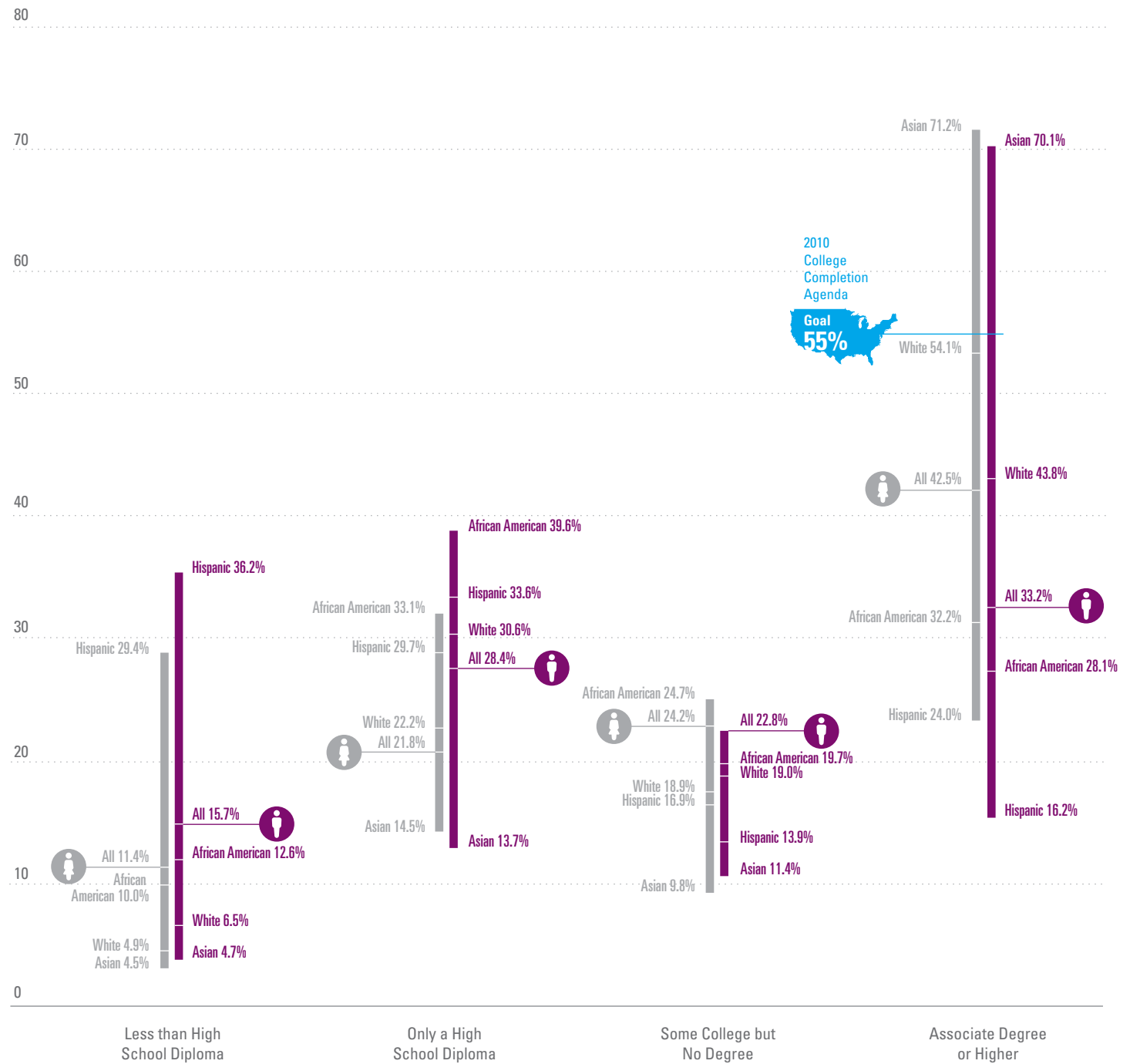
Figure 4

Disparities of Educational Attainment Across Gender and Racial/Ethnic Groups Are Greatest at the Postsecondary Level

Educational Attainment of 25- to 34-Year-Olds, by Race/Ethnicity and Gender

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2008

■ Male
■ Female



High School

Connecting students to college success and opportunity hinges first and foremost on their successful completion of high school.

Unfortunately for young men of color, their experiences and outcomes at this stage in the educational pipeline too often fail to position them for postsecondary success. In this section of the review, we survey the literature in order to excavate common themes related to the high school experiences of young men of color that ultimately establish their college readiness (or unreadiness). In developing a basic picture of these students in high school, we pay particular attention to three areas: achievement, persistence and support.

Achievement

Achievement in high school is measured by a number of outcomes: performance on standardized tests, grades, placement in gifted and talented or special education programs, etc.

With respect to students of color, the achievement discourse is often framed in terms of gaps in these measures between whites and non-whites. And, although the notion of the “achievement gap” — particularly as it pertains to African American and white students — is prominently featured on all sides of mainstream education reform debates, some scholars argue that this framing of the problem is itself problematic (Perry, Steele et al. 2003; Love 2004). In a critical race theory analysis, Love (2004) posits that the achievement gap is a form of “majoritarian” storytelling that fosters the perception of white intellectual superiority. She notes, for example, that even though students of certain Asian ethnicities consistently outperform whites on various achievement measures, such disparities are never couched in terms of an achievement gap (Love 2004). Perry, Steele and Hilliard (2003) suggest that the standard against which achievement disparities are assessed should be some measure of excellence for which all students should be striving rather than the performance of a norm group, which may in fact be mediocre.

Notwithstanding the importance of properly framing discussions about the academic achievement of minorities, and males in particular, racial and gender disparities must be acknowledged and addressed.

Percentage of 12th-graders, scoring at or above proficient in mathematics

36%

Asian Americans/
Pacific Islanders

8%

Latinos

6%

Native
Americans

6%

African
Americans

Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders

Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders are widely considered to be the academic standard to which all other students should aspire. Numerous reports that provide student achievement data by race/ethnicity seem to support this notion, as Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders are often cited as the highest-performing student group on a variety of achievement measures. For example, in their 2010 release of *Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups*, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reports that among 12th-graders, 36 percent of Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders scored at or above proficient in mathematics on the 2005 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) compared with 29 percent of whites, 8 percent of Latinos, 6 percent of Native Americans and 6 percent of African Americans. Reports also indicate that Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders take more mathematics and science courses in high school and have higher participation and performance in Advanced Placement® (AP®).

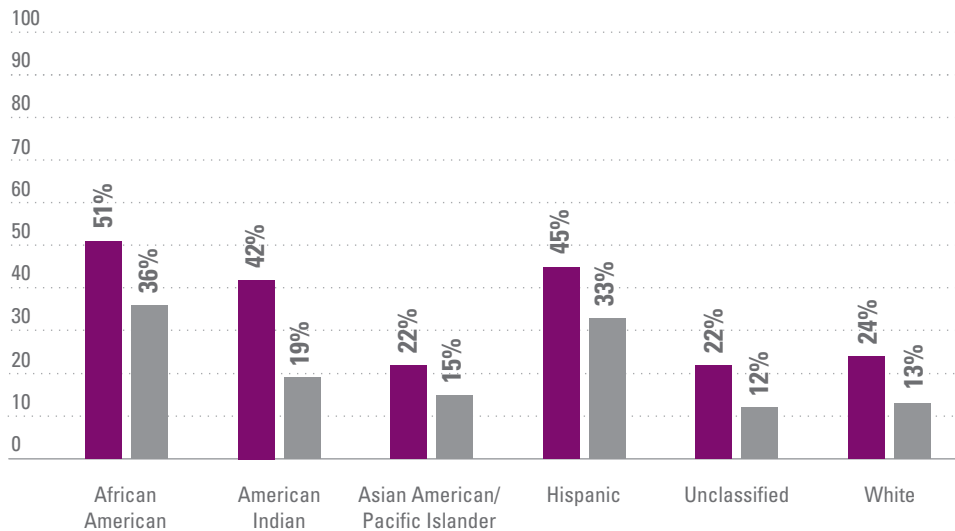
Despite these glowing accounts of Asian American/Pacific Islander achievement, and perhaps because of them, little scholarship exists that disaggregates achievement by Asian ethnicity, country of origin or nativity. Scholars have recently begun calling attention to the misleading, even destructive, effects of the “model minority myth” concerning Asian American/Pacific Islander students, which casts them as a homogeneous cadre of high achievers (Kim 1997; Olsen 1997; Lee and Kumashiro 2002; Teranishi 2002; Um 2003; Leung 2004). New research seeks to highlight the diversity and complexity buried within the Asian American/Pacific Islander label, which, when brought to the fore, reveals significant flaws in the model minority myth.

Of note, educational outcomes among Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders differ greatly by ethnicity, socioeconomic status, parental education, generation, immigration status and language — with East and South Asians demonstrating higher economic and educational attainment than Southeast Asians and Pacific Islanders (Kim 1997; Olsen 1997; Lee and Kumashiro 2002; Um 2003). For example, Kanaiaupuni and Ishibashi (2003) reported that Native Hawaiian students in Hawaii public schools have the lowest test scores of all major ethnic groups and are overrepresented in special education. Teranishi (2002) revealed disparities between Chinese and Filipino American high school students’ experiences and outcomes. And Um (2003) highlighted the invisibility of Southeast Asian students in educational discourse despite their relative underperformance.

Similarly, few disaggregated achievement data are available for Asian American/Pacific Islander high school students by ethnicity, and even less information exists in the way of gender-specific research on Asian American/Pacific Islander high school students. Lee and Kumashiro’s (2002) report for the National Education Association hinted at gender disparities among Asian American/Pacific Islander students, noting that immigrant girls have positive attitudes about education in the U.S. due to perceived opportunities for gender equality, while boys perceive a loss of status in the U.S. because “they lack qualities associated with the form of masculinity most often valued in U.S. society” (p. 7). However, more research is needed to understand how (or whether) these perceptions play out with respect to Asian American/Pacific Islander achievement.

Figure 5

Percentage of 12th-Graders Scoring Below Basic in Reading on NAEP in 2009, by Race/Ethnicity

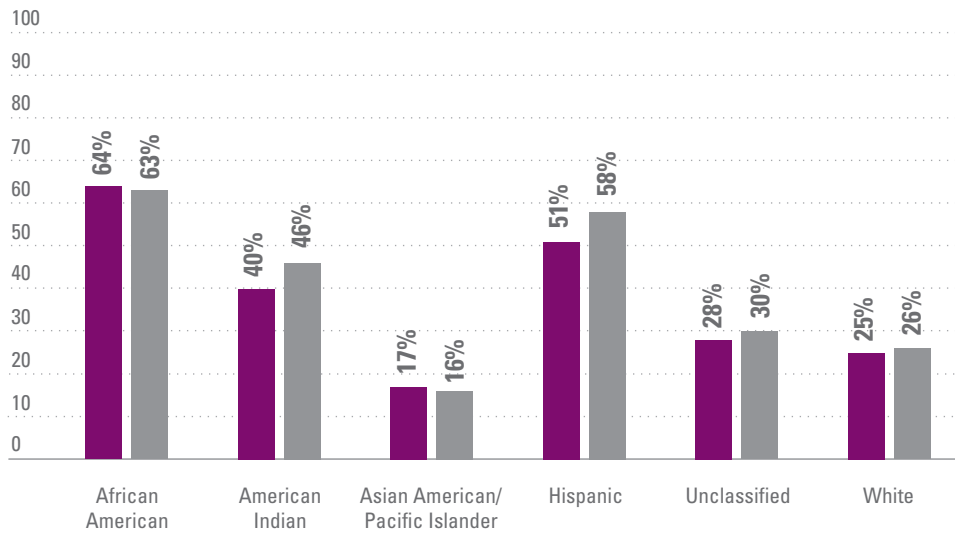


Note: Pacific Islander includes Native Hawaiian, and American Indian includes Alaska Native. Race categories exclude Hispanic origin unless specified. Details may not sum to totals because of rounding. Some apparent differences between estimates may not be statistically significant.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2009 Reading Assessment.

Figure 6

Percentage of 12th-Graders Scoring Below Basic in Mathematics on NAEP in 2009, by Race/Ethnicity



Note: Pacific Islander includes Native Hawaiian, and American Indian includes Alaska Native. Race categories exclude Hispanic origin unless specified. Details may not sum to totals because of rounding. Some apparent differences between estimates may not be statistically significant.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2009 Mathematics Assessment.

Native Americans

Similar to Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders, the literature is scant regarding the academic struggles of Native American high school students in general, and Native American males specifically (Jeffries, Nix et al. 2002). In fact, Jeffries, Nix and Singer (2002) were particularly critical of national reports, which they accused of ignoring Native Americans due to relatively low overall population numbers. Regarding achievement, DeVoe, and Darling-Churchill (2008) reported that a lower percentage of Native American high school graduates had completed a core academic track than whites, Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders or African Americans in 2005. Similarly, in 2007, a higher percentage of Native Americans ages 3 to 21 were served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act than any other race/ethnicity, suggesting an overrepresentation in special education programs (Devoe and Darling-Churchill 2008). In a study of Native American men at Harvard College, Bitsoi (2007) found that participants attributed their success to their families and their culture. The study also found that the families of these Native American men valued education (even if they were first-generation college students) and had parents who were active in their educational pursuits (Bitsoi 2007). These men were not afraid of the stigma of education though they still valued their cultural heritage and background (Bitsoi 2007).

African Americans and Hispanics

Together with Native Americans, African American and Hispanic high school students lag behind white and Asian American/Pacific Islander students on several achievement measures. In **Figure 5** and **Figure 6**, minority students made up a disproportionate share of the “below basic” scorers on the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Males generally lag behind their female counterparts in reading. However, while Native American, Hispanic and white men are further behind than women, Asian American/Pacific Islander and African American men are more proficient in mathematics than women. African American, Hispanic and Native American high school graduates also trail white and Asian American/Pacific Islander graduates in the number of mathematics and science courses taken (Aud, Fox et al. 2010). Clearly, the data indicate much room for improvement in closing achievement gaps for all students, but especially for racial/ethnic minority students. However, to better address achievement gaps for young men of color, improvements in data collection and reporting are necessary. Specifically, achievement data by race/ethnicity should be disaggregated by gender as well as by ethnicity/nativity (for Asian American/Pacific Islander and Hispanic students) to allow for deeper analyses and, ultimately, for more appropriate interventions.

Persistence

In the high school context, persistence can be measured by indicators that describe students' progress toward diploma/credential attainment.

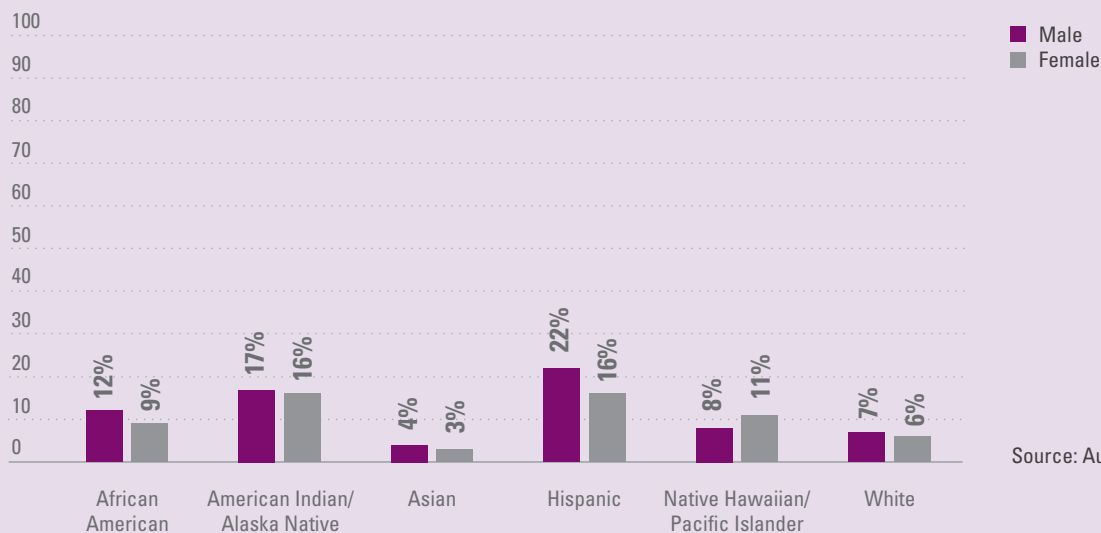
Aud, Fox and Ramini (2010) consider three specific measures of persistence: absenteeism; grade retention; and suspension and expulsion. They also consider high school status dropout and graduation rates.

However, with respect to young men of color, the broader literature on high school persistence is almost exclusively centered on high school dropout rates (Coladarci 1983; Jeffries, Nix et al. 2002; Soza 2007; Lys 2009; Meade, Gaytan et al. 2009). Although dropout rates among most racial/ethnic groups have declined over the past 30 years, minority dropout rates (particularly among males) remain disproportionately high (Aud, Fox et al. 2010).

Data from the National Center for Education Statistics displayed in **Figure 7** show that except for Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders, males in all racial/ethnic groups drop out of high school at higher rates than their female peers.

Figure 7

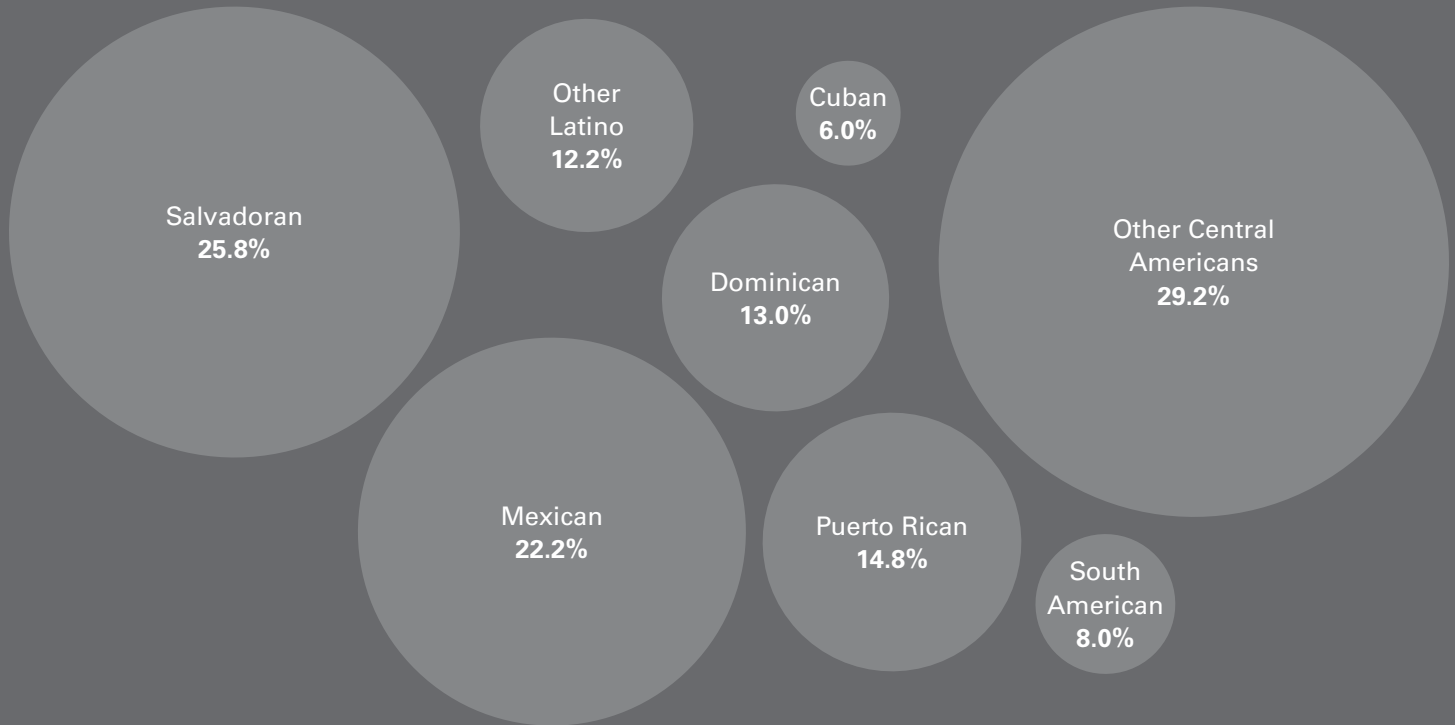
Status Dropout Rates (Percentage) of 16- to 24-Year-Olds, by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 2008



Source: Aud, et al., NCES, 2010

Dropout Rates Vary Significantly Within Traditional Race/Ethnicity Categories

Desegregating Latino dropout rates by ethnicity shows that the average dropout rate does not always tell the whole story. For example, in 2007 the 6.0 percent dropout rate for Cuban males is well below the Latino average of 19.9 percent, while the Salvadoran dropout rate is much higher at 25.8 percent.



Dropout Rates Are Higher for Foreign-Born Students Within Race/Ethnicity Groups Relative to Their Native-Born Peers

Further variance of dropout rates within racial/ethnic groups can be seen when the data are desegregated by nativity. Looking again at the Salvadoran population, the foreign-born Salvadoran dropout rate is 41.1 percent, versus a much lower dropout rate of 10.1 percent for native-born Salvadorans.

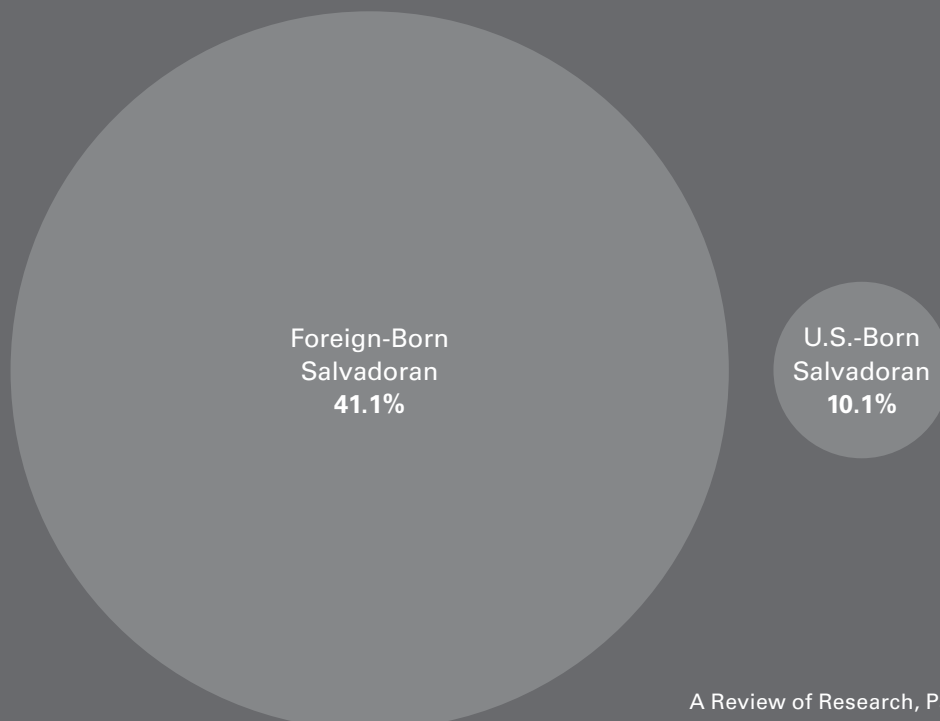


Table 1

Percentage of 16- to 24-Year-Old Hispanic Males Who Were High School Status Dropouts, by Nativity and Ethnicity, 2007

Ethnicity	Status dropout rate	Native-born dropout rate	Foreign-born dropout rate
Cuban	6.0	5.3	8.0
South American	8.0	5.4	9.8
Other Hispanic	12.2	11.3	18.8
Dominican	13.0	8.7	18.1
Puerto Rican	14.8	12.8	23.0
Mexican	22.2	12.1	38.8
Salvadoran	25.8	10.1	41.1
Other Central American	29.2	8.6	40.8
All Latino	19.9	11.5	34.3

Source: Aud, Fox & Ramani, NCES, 2010

Table 2

Percentage of 16- to 24-Year-Old Asian/Pacific Islander Males Who Were High School Status Dropouts, by Nativity and Ethnicity, 2007

Ethnicity	Status dropout rate	Native-born dropout rate	Foreign-born dropout rate
Filipino	1.2	0.4	1.7
Korean	1.3	1.3	1.4
Asian Indian	1.4	0.8	1.8
Japanese	2.6	2.6	2.6
Chinese	2.8	1.0	4.6
Vietnamese	4.0	3.9	4.1
Other Asian	6.8	4.8	9.7
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	7.6	5.5	12.0
All Asian / Pacific Islander	3.0	2.2	3.7

Source: Aud, Fox & Ramani, NCES, 2010

Latinos

As suggested by **Figure 7**, Latino males have consistently been more likely to drop out of high school than males of other ethnic groups (Soza 2007; Fry 2009). However, disaggregating Latino dropout rates by country of birth and/or ethnicity reveals the nuance embedded in the overall figures. For example, Fry (2009) reported a 2007 high school dropout rate for U.S.-born, 16-to-25-year-old Hispanic males of 12 percent, while foreign-born Hispanic males had a 37 percent dropout rate. Similarly, **Table 1** shows that in 2007, the status dropout rate of ethnic Salvadoran males (26 percent) was more than four times the dropout rate of Cuban males (6 percent).

Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders

In the same manner, disaggregating Asian American/Pacific Islander dropout rates by ethnicity and nativity challenges the model minority myth by exposing the disparities in persistence within this group. For instance, data on foreign-born “Other Asians” (which includes Cambodian, Hmong and others) and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders illustrate dropout rates three to four times higher than the aggregate “Asian” dropout rate. These nuances, illustrated in **Table 2**, have broad implications for the design and implementation of appropriate interventions.

Note: The highest dropout rate, for “Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander,” is only one-fourth the rate of the highest Latino group and is about the same as that of white males. Although this does not disprove the “model minority myth,” it illustrates the severity of the educational crisis among some ethnic groups, Latino immigrants in particular.

Even allowing for ethnic distinctions, the high school dropout rate of Hispanic males is considered to be at crisis level, especially given that recent and projected population surges among Latinos threaten to exacerbate the problem. Along these lines, Lys (2009) noted a shift in the way a high school dropping-out event is viewed by researchers and practitioners — from an individual failure to, more appropriately, a school failure. Her quantitative study of 74 Latino eighth-graders found that of those students whose home language was Spanish and who did not have a sibling who had dropped out, girls were more positive about their ability to complete high school. In their study of African American and Hispanic males in a

New York City high school cohort, Meade, Gaytan, Fergus and Noguera (2009) emphasized the academic dimensions of the dropout crisis. For example, the authors noted that more than half of African American and Hispanic males who entered high school performed below grade level in English and math, and noted that 67 percent of dropouts repeated the ninth grade. Soza (2007) underscored the structural and political dimensions of the problem as well as the societal implications of failing to address it. He noted the political climate surrounding immigration, and emphasized the failure of the school system in educating Latinos.

Native Americans

Similar to Hispanic males, high school persistence among Native American males deserves attention. In 2007, only Hispanic males ages 16 to 24 were more likely to have dropped out of high school than Native American males (Devoe and Darling-Churchill 2008). And the Native American male dropout rate actually exceeded that of native-born Hispanic males. However, due to their relatively low population numbers, the persistent Native American dropout crisis receives considerably less attention in both scholarly and policy spheres. Coldarci (1983) developed his empirical study of 46 Native American dropouts in response to a 60 percent Native American dropout rate in a Montana district that was 90 percent Native American. His work uncovered three important factors that had contributed to these students’ decisions to drop out: relationships with teachers, content of schooling (students perceived it to be irrelevant) and lack of parental support (Aud, Fox et al.)

Nearly 20 years later, Jeffries, Nix and Singer (2002) drew similar conclusions from their smaller study of Native Americans who had dropped out of traditional high schools. They noted that lack of comfort with the school environment, lack of education within the families of dropouts and poverty/financial responsibilities all influenced students’ decisions to drop out. With respect to persistence in high school, Native American males are more likely to be absent from school, suspended, expelled and repeat a grade than most other racial/ethnic groups (Devoe and Darling-Churchill 2008; Aud, Fox et al. 2010). However, African American males demonstrate the highest percentages in the latter three categories. In fact, in 2007, African American males were nearly twice as likely to be suspended and more than five times as

likely to be expelled as the next highest racial/ethnic group. Further, during the same year, 26 percent of African American males reported having repeated a grade compared with 12 percent of Hispanic males, 11 percent of white males and 7 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander males (Aud, Fox et al. 2010).

African Americans

There is a more substantial body of literature around the educational experiences and outcomes of African American males than for other ethnic groups. In the mid-1980s, education researchers, advocates and policy analysts began calling attention to the social, economic, health and educational crises facing African American males, whom they characterized with such new crisis terminology as “endangered species,” “at risk,” “marginal,” caught in an “epidemic of failure” or victims of “institutional decimation” (Garibaldi 1992; Davis and Jordan 1994; Noguera 1997; Fultz and Brown 2008). Fultz and Brown posited that although the historical literature clearly demonstrates that the role of African American men in American society had been troublesome since the age of slavery, there were no education policy initiatives targeted at this group until the final two decades of the 20th century.

The “endangered species” literature, particularly of the 1990s and into the early 2000s, unanimously describes a bleak context in which African American males disproportionately experience social and economic peril — as homicide victims/perpetrators, suicide victims, HIV/AIDS sufferers; with high rates of arrest/conviction/incarceration, high infant mortality, declining life expectancy and high unemployment (Noguera 2009). This research presents a number of similarly gloomy educational outcomes for African American males: high rates of suspension, expulsion and grade retention; low graduation rates; overrepresentation in special education; and disengagement. It attempts to frame the problem(s) in a novel way, to examine particular illustrative cases of the problem(s) and to propose solutions.

Framing the Problem

Researchers tend to agree that properly framing the severe educational problems African American males face will lead to more effective solutions; however, their explanations of these problems vary. Essays and reports geared toward framing these issues largely straddle the line between cultural and structural arguments, with others presenting some hybrid explanations. Culturalists focus on family and community dynamics, attitudes, behavior, and morals of African American males to understand their educational outcomes, and promote mentoring, positive role models and self-help as appropriate interventions. Alternatively, structuralists emphasize the systemic nature of the problems — focusing on the political economy, class structure and social geography — and prefer broader solutions such as government policy initiatives that expand opportunities, redesign schools and provide teacher professional development (Taylor 1993; Davis and Jordan 1994; Noguera 1997; Jordan and Cooper 2002). Of note, Polite (1994) proposed a structural framework for understanding and solving these problems based on chaos theory, which he borrowed from quantum physics. Besides cultural and structural perspectives, Noguera (1997) argues that framing these educational problems first and foremost in terms of race and gender may actually distort the issues, lead to ineffective solutions and result in greater marginalization.

Examining Illustrative Cases

Several empirical studies add to the understanding of African American males’ school experiences. Davis and Jordan (1994) used a nationally representative data set to examine how the context and structure of schools related to the academic success or failure of African American males. They found that teachers’ locus of control (i.e., when teachers do not view themselves as accountable for student performance), suspension, remediation, grade retention and socioeconomic status had a negative effect on African American high school males’ achievement and engagement. In a longitudinal study of a cohort of

115 African American males, Polite (1993, 1994) examined students' reflections on their high school experiences three years after their cohort graduation. His findings indicated that participants overwhelmingly perceived a lack of caring teachers and counselors, expressed regret and personal responsibility about their educational outcomes, were engaged in a "quest to reeducate themselves" and experienced dismal economic conditions after high school (p. 347). The late 1980s and 1990s also saw the introduction of the state- or district-level African American male task forces charged with examining the educational conditions and making recommendations to improve them (Etheridge 1992; Garibaldi 1992).

Recent Literature

The more recent literature related to the experiences of African American males in high school echoes the frameworks, findings and recommendations first put forth in the 1980s and 1990s. Reflecting a lack of progress, the context in which scholars present their work is still characterized by dismal statistics on the social and economic plight of African American males (Noguera 1997; Moore and Jackson 2006; Levin, Belfield et al. 2007; Whiting 2009). However, the research has grown in terms of approach and content. Of note, strands of the literature focus on the overrepresentation of African American males in special education and their underrepresentation in gifted education (Morris 2002; Moore, Henfield et al. 2008; Whiting 2009); others use critical race theory to examine the issues (Duncan 2002; Love 2004; Moore, Henfield et al. 2008). Likewise, more states and national organizations have focused attention on the education of African American males (Etheridge 1992; Holzman 2006). And perspectives from scholars in other disciplines have contributed to the literature (Levin, Belfield et al. 2007).

Support

Across racial/ethnic groups, the research literature consistently mentions the importance of supportive environments and relationships in fostering positive educational outcomes for high school students.

In analyses related to achievement, persistence and other measurable outcomes, scholars have noted disparities in teacher expectations, counselor engagement, parental involvement and other forms of support, which can profoundly shape students' attainment.

Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders

Although the “model minority” myth indicates otherwise, Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders are not universally well supported in their school, home and community environments. Studies have demonstrated that part of the vast diversity of this group is a wide range of parental expectations and involvement, which results from divergent cultural norms as well as generational and socioeconomic status (Kim 1997; Lee and Kumashiro 2002; Leung 2004). For example, Kim (1997) found that South Asian parents had the highest expectations and discussed grades and college with their children more than the other Asian ethnic groups included in her study, with Southeast Asian parents at the other end of the spectrum. Likewise, other Asian students had the highest educational aspirations and performance, and Southeast Asians the lowest.

The literature suggests that Southeast Asian students often have limited access to support and community resources, have few role models, and are stereotyped as low achievers (Um 2003). Teranishi’s (2002) comparative study of Chinese and Filipino students found that the Filipino students were “exposed to expectations, support and tracking that would guide them toward limited opportunities at best,” while the Chinese students were supported and encouraged to aspire and prepare for college (p. 152). Several reports also call attention to the need to better train educators to understand the diversity of Asian American/Pacific Islander students in order to more effectively support their academic pursuits (Lee and Kumashiro 2002; Um 2003). Asian American/Pacific Islander students could clearly benefit from interventions aimed at increasing the level of various forms of academic and social support to encourage college-going behaviors. Further research is needed to better define gender-specific issues related to support within this community of students.

Native Americans

Despite the dearth of literature on Native American males (and women) in high school, most studies cite thorny teacher–student relationships and lack of parental support as factors related to their high dropout rates (Jeffries, Nix et al. 2002). Similarly, most recommendations made with respect to curbing the high Native American male dropout rate include offering teacher professional development, providing academic and personal mentoring to students, and increasing parent and community involvement (Lys, 2009; Soza 2007; Meade, Gaytan et al. 2009).

African Americans and Latinos

Anderson’s (2004) study of an Upward Bound program designed to prepare high school students for college found that for African American and Hispanic males, the program actually failed to provide a supportive environment in which the students could address the difficult concerns with which they grappled. Instead, the program was mainly an additional academic burden for the students. Garrett and Antrop-Gonzalez (2010) noted that, among other things, high-achieving Hispanic males attributed their success to community and family support.

African Americans

The same themes arise in the literature on African American male high school students. Across the board — whether discussing dropout rates, overrepresentation in special education, suspension rates or achievement — researchers emphasize the role of supportive relationships and environments in addressing these problems (Duncan 2002; Jordan and Cooper 2002; 2007; Levin, Belfield et al. 2007; Fultz and Brown 2008; Moore, Henfield et al. 2008; Whiting 2009). Moreover, since African American males have been the focus of targeted education policy initiatives for over 20 years, many of the support mechanisms discussed in the literature have been implemented in various forms (Ogbu and Wilson 1990; Ascher 1991; Dalton 1996; Holland 1996; Jackson and Mathews 1999; Bailey and Paisley 2004; Beitler, Bushong et al. 2004; Mezuk 2009). Some commonly mentioned support interventions are cited in **Table 3** on the following page.

Over the years, these interventions have had varying degrees of success; the educational challenges facing African American high school males certainly persist despite these efforts. However, investing in research and programs to improve the educational outcomes of African American males is still a worthwhile venture. Levin, Belfield, Muennig and Rouse (2007) identified five proven interventions from the literature, targeted at improving high school graduation rates of African American males. And, based on the costs and outcomes associated with these interventions, the authors calculated a nearly 3:1 benefit-to-cost ratio for public investment in the programs. Likewise, the Schott Foundation’s A Positive Future for African American Boys Initiative annually recognizes high schools that are improving outcomes for African American males through their Awards for Excellence in the Education of African American Male Students program (Holzman 2006).

Table 3

Selected Support Interventions for African American High School Males

Intervention	References
Rites of passage/Manhood programs	Fultz & Brown, 2008; Ascher, 1991
All-male classrooms/Academies	Fultz & Brown, 2008; Maryland State Department of Education, 2007; Ascher, 1991
Parent education/Involvement	Levin, Belfield, Muennig, & Rouse, 2007; Maryland State Department of Education, 2007; Bailey & Paisley, 2004; Ascher, 1991
Counseling	Moore, Henfield, Owens, 2008; Holland, 1996; Beitler, Bushong, & Reid, 2004
Mentoring/Role models/Tutoring	Maryland State Department of Education, 2007; Bailey & Paisley, 2004; Jackson & Mathews, 1999; Beitler, Bushong, & Reid, 2004; Holland, 1996; Ogbu, & Wilson, 1990; Dalton, 1996
Safe haven	Ascher, 1991; Bailey & Paisley, 2004; Holland, 1996

Synopsis

Table 4 shows a summary of the findings from the literature on young men of color in high school. There were many findings around achievement that were common for males to many of the racial/ethnic groups. Low academic achievement, high grade-level repetition and overpopulation in special education programs were all factors that were found to impede achievement for African American, Latino and Native American males. Further, African American males also had underrepresentation in gifted programs, and Native American males were noted not to have access to a core academic curriculum. While Asian Americans were found to have high academic achievement in general, this high achievement was also found to mask the myriad problems that are faced by Asian American males. This is especially true for Southeast Asians.

In the persistence literature, high dropout rates were found to be a barrier to persistence for young men of color in all racial/ethnic groups. While the literature surrounding Asian American and Latino males was primarily focused in the area of dropouts, the literature surrounding African American and Native American males went much further. It noted additional barriers for African American and Native American males, including high rates of absenteeism and high numbers of suspensions/expulsions. The literature noted disengagement as a barrier for African

American males, while Native American males were found to be negatively impacted by the teacher–student relationships, the content of schooling, a lack of parental support, lack of comfort in the school environment and financial burdens.

The findings concerning support systems were similar for many of the racial/ethnic groups. The literature noted that males of all the racial/ethnic groups studied here experienced both a lack of support from family and a lack of community support and resources. These students lack many educational necessities, including support in schools, teacher expectations or caring teachers, caring counselors or counselor engagement, and positive teacher–student relationships. These function as barriers for African American, Asian and Native American males. Poverty was found to be a barrier for African American and Native American males, while Asian males had obstacles to support that included few role models and stereotype threat.

The high school literature shows that many of the barriers to high school success are shared by males of all racial/ethnic groups although specific obstacles still exist that are unique to some races and that have historical and social significance. Though these differences exist, these groups share many more barriers in common where they can benefit from common solutions.

Table 4
Findings from High School Literature

	African American	Asian American/ Pacific Islander	Latino	Native American/ Alaska Native
Achievement	Low Academic Achievement	High Academic Achievement	Low Academic Achievement	Low Academic Achievement
	High Grade Repetition	Model Minority Myth	Overpopulation in Special Education	High Grade Repetition
	Overpopulation in Special Education		High Grade Repetition	Overpopulation in Special Education
	Underrepresentation in Gifted Programs		View of Academic Achievement as Not Masculine	No Access to Core Academic Curriculum
	View of Academic Achievement as Not Masculine			
Persistence	High Absenteeism	High Dropout Rate	High Dropout Rate	High Absenteeism
	High Dropout Rate			High Dropout Rate
	High Number of Suspensions/Expulsions			High Number of Suspensions/Expulsions
	Disengagement			Teacher–Student Relationship
				Content of Schooling
				Lack of Parental Support
				Financial Responsibility
			Lack of Comfort in School Environment	
Support	Teacher–Student Relationship	Lack of Support in School	Community Support	Teacher–Student Relationship
	Teacher Expectations	Lack of Parental Expectations	Family Support	Teacher Expectations
	Teacher Locus of Control	Lack of Parental Support		Lack of Counselor Engagement
	Lack of Counselor Engagement	Lack of Community Resources		Lack of Parental Support
	Lack of Caring Teachers	Few Role Models		Parental Education
	Lack of Caring Counselors	Stereotype		Poverty
	Poverty	High Parental Expectations		
	Financial Responsibility			
	Lack of Parental Support			
	Lack of Supportive Environments			

Post- secondary Pathways

Six postsecondary pathways are currently available to high school graduates

1. Enrollment in a two-year or a four-year college or a vocational school
2. Enlistment in U.S. Armed Forces
3. Employment in U.S. workforce
4. Unemployment
5. Incarceration in state or federal prisons, or in local jails
6. Death

To positively impact the rates of college degree attainment of young men of color ages 25 to 34, it is important that an examination of the educational pipeline be conducted from high school to higher education to determine how it contributes to — or detracts from — their current college degree attainment rates.

While it would be ideal to look at this pipeline from preschool to higher education, longitudinal data that can be used to track students from early childhood to higher education nationally are not currently available. Therefore, the following analysis of the educational pathways of students who graduate from high school will exclude some 3.3 million high school dropouts (Lee and Rawls 2010). It has been suggested that halving the nation's dropout rate could lead to substantial economic benefits for our country in the form of increased earnings, home sales, tax revenue, new jobs, more human capital, increased economic growth, and major investments and spending (2010). However, an examination of the postsecondary pathways of minority male high school graduates ages 15 to 24, comparing and contrasting these pathways to those of white male and female high school graduates, can provide some insight into minority male college degree attainment.

For research purposes, each of the pathways is mutually exclusive and hierarchical. For example, if a high school graduate has a job and is enrolled in college, then that graduate is recorded only as an enrolled student and is not counted as a part of the employment category. However, in reality, individuals can step in and out of these pathways at any given point in time.

1.

Enrollment in a Two-Year or a Four-Year College or a Vocational School

While many high school students aspire to attend college, fewer students actually both apply and subsequently enroll in colleges and universities. As of 2007, 67.2 percent of all high school graduates enrolled in a two-year or four-year college immediately after completing high school (Lee and Rawls 2010). Though many students complete the process for admission to college, others find that certain factors, such as family finances, prevent them from enrolling in college. While 69.5 percent of white students who graduate from high school immediately enroll in college, only 55.6 percent of African American and 60.9 percent of Hispanic high school graduates enroll in a two- or four-year college immediately after completing high school.

Minority Males Ages 15 to 24 with a High School Diploma Enrolled in Secondary Education, 2008

33.4%

African American

61.1%

Asian

33.4%

Hispanic

8.0%

Native American

Figure 8 shows that about 6.3 million women ages 15 to 24 enroll in a two-year or four-year college or a vocational school compared to only 5.6 million males ages 15 to 24. Women make up about 53 percent of all students enrolled in two-year and four-year colleges or vocational schools; in contrast, women make up 50.7 percent of the total U.S. population. **Figure 9** shows that women make up about 56 percent of African American enrollment, 54 percent of Asian enrollment, 54 percent of Hispanic enrollment, 49 percent of Native American enrollment and 52 percent of white enrollment. These percentages are nearly identical among all racial/ethnic groups.

Figure 10 shows the distribution of 15- to 24-year-olds enrolled in college by school type (e.g., two-year college), gender and race/ethnicity. The chart shows that, overall, almost the same percentage of men and women access each level of higher education. Examining the data by race/ethnicity and gender for enrollment in four-year colleges and universities, slightly more men (61.7 percent), are enrolled in four-year colleges and universities than women (60.7 percent), yet there is great variation in access. Over 65 percent of African American men participating in higher education enroll in four-year universities, compared to 58.6 percent of African American women.

Figure 8
Number of 15- to 24-Year-Olds Enrolled in a Two-Year or a Four-Year College or a Vocational School, by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 2008

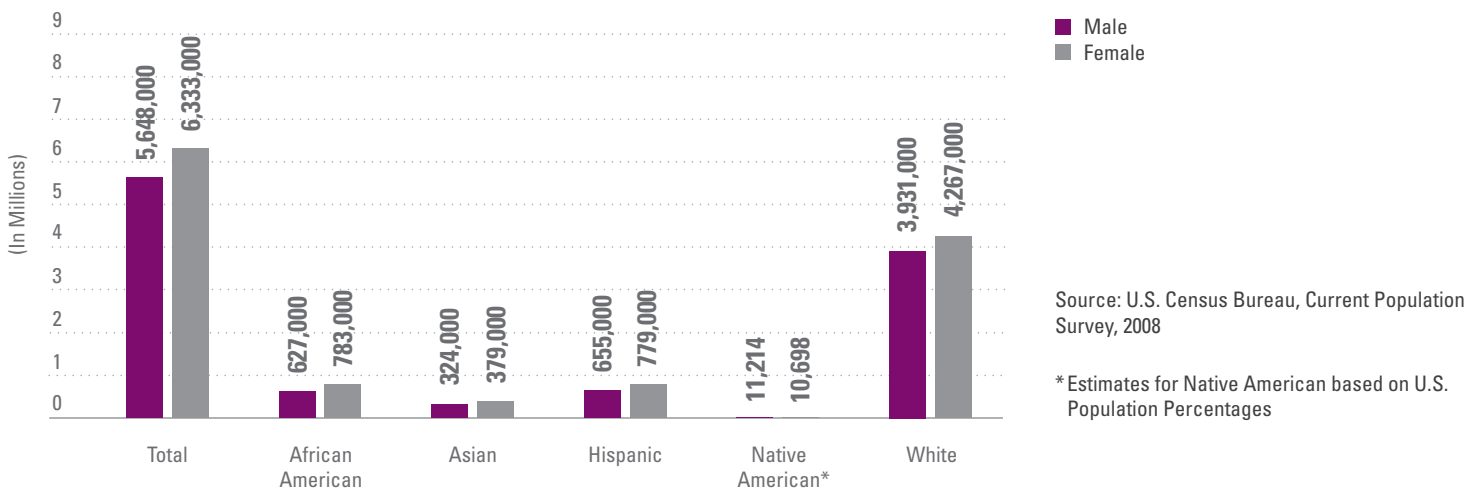
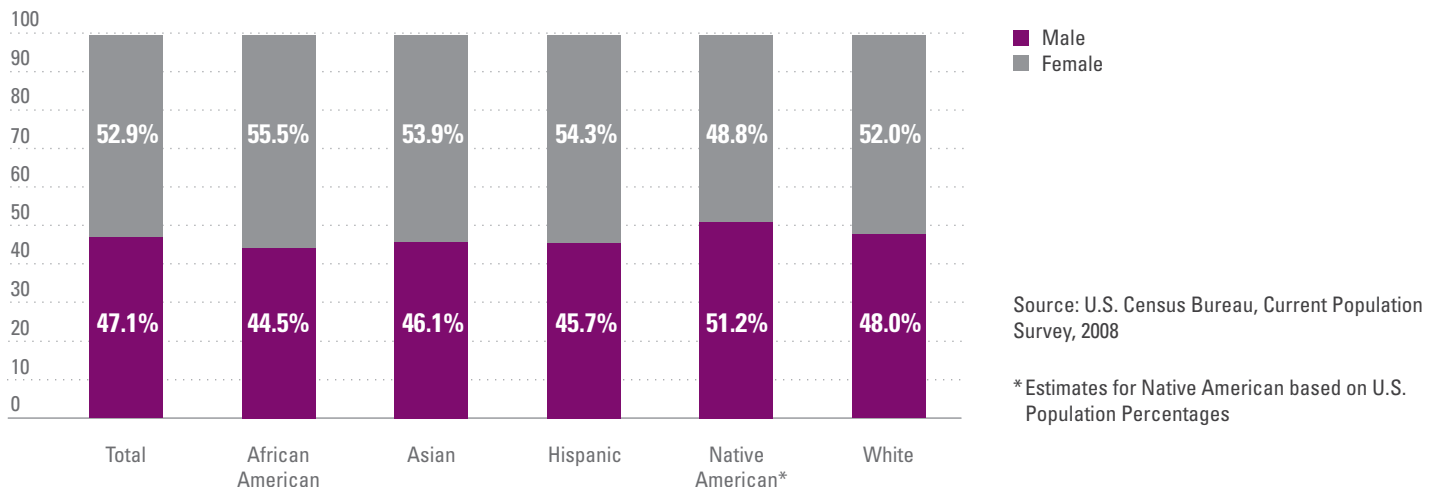


Figure 9
Percentage of 15- to 24-Year-Olds Enrolled in a Two-Year or a Four-Year College or a Vocational School, by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 2008



Similarly 63.1 percent of college-going white men gain access to four-year universities, compared to 62.8 percent for white women. Hispanic men and women access four-year universities at the same rate, while Asian women slightly outpace Asian males in access to four-year universities. The majority of Native American men (71.2 percent) are found in four-year institutions, compared to (65.6 percent) of Native American women.

Men and women also enroll in vocational schools at about the same rate, yet slightly more women (2.9 percent) are enrolled than men (2.7 percent). African American, Asian and Hispanic women all enroll in vocational schools in higher numbers than their male counterparts, yet the same is not true for white women, who lag white men in enrolling in vocational schools.

Overall, men and women enroll in two-year colleges at about the same rate. However, this distribution does not hold up when we look at gender across race/ethnicity. Only 29 percent of African American men in college are enrolled in two-year schools, compared to 33.2 percent of African American women. However, a higher percentage of Asian American, Hispanic and white men are enrolled in two-year colleges

Women significantly outpace men in graduate school enrollment. This is an expected trend, since women are more likely to graduate from college than men. African American, Hispanic and white women have higher concentrations in graduate schools than African American, Hispanic and white men. However, Asian American men and women are about evenly distributed in graduate schools.

Figure 10

Percentage of 15- to 24-Year-Olds Enrolled in a Two-Year or a Four-Year College or a Vocational School, by Race/Ethnicity, Gender and School Type, 2008

- Graduate School
- Four-Year
- Two-Year
- Vocational School

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2008

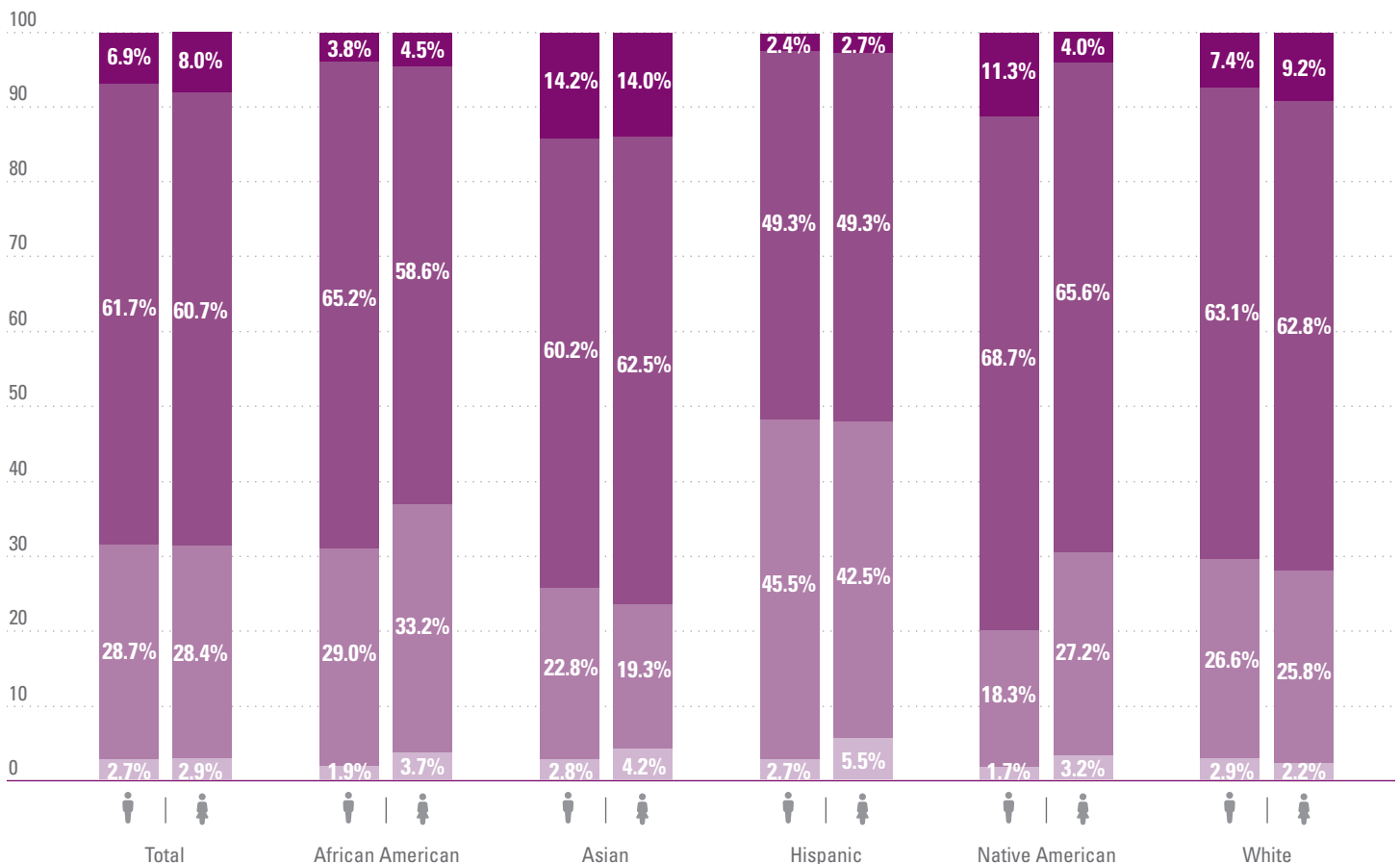
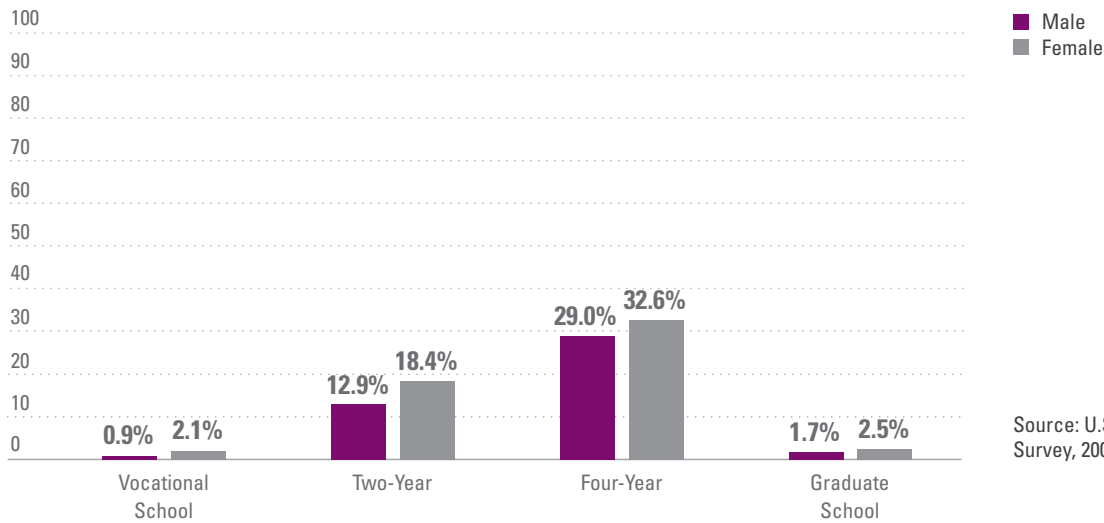


Figure 11

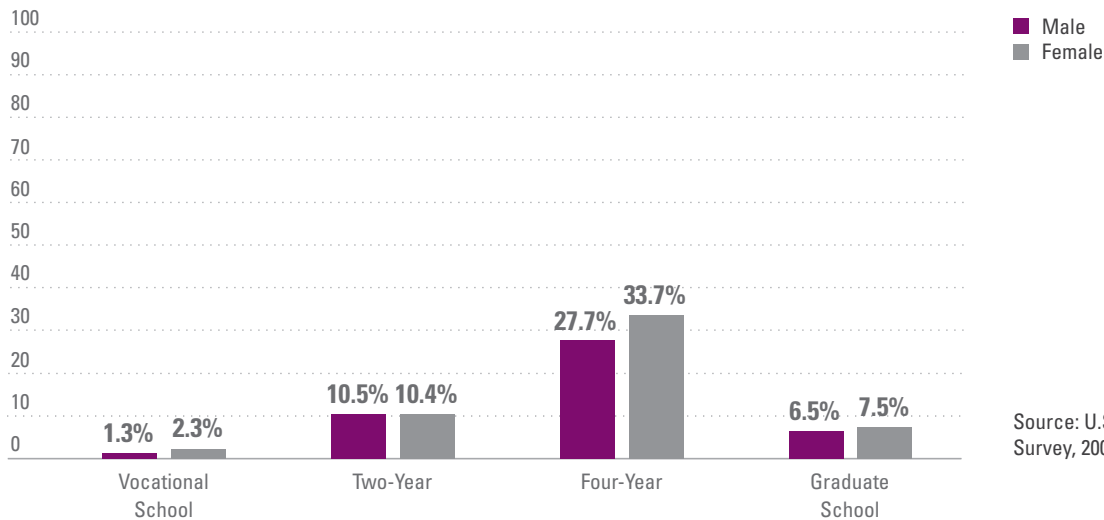
Percentage of African American 15- to 24-Year-Olds Enrolled in College, by Gender and School Type, 2008



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2008

Figure 12

Percentage of Asian American 15- to 24-Year-Olds Enrolled in College, by Gender and School Type, 2008



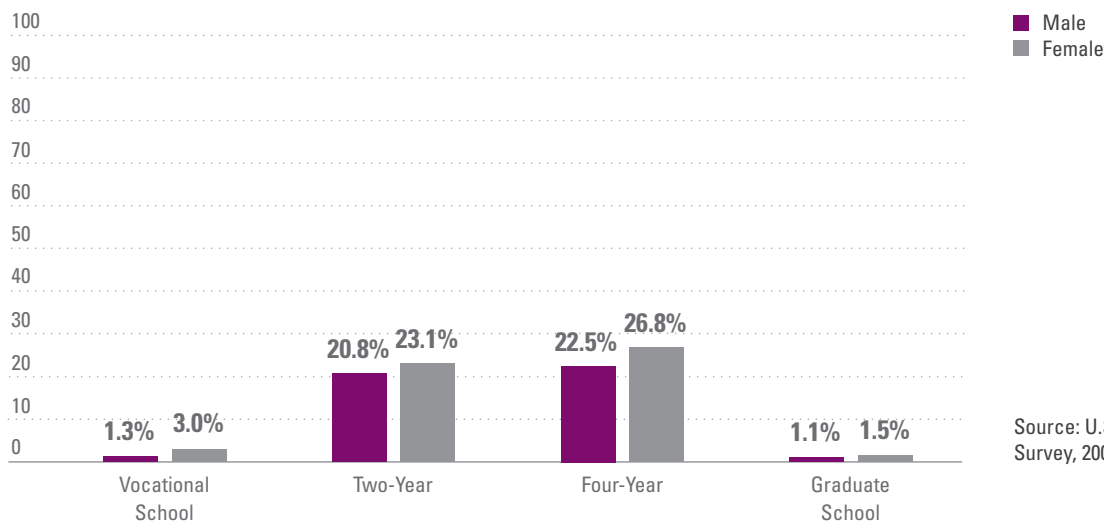
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2008

Figure 11 shows the percentage (of all) African American 15- to 25-year-olds enrolled in college by gender and school type. The data show that African American women have higher percentages of enrollment in every sector of college than African American men. **Figure 12** shows that Asian American women have higher percentages of enrollment in vocational schools, four-year colleges and graduate schools than Asian American men. However, Asian American men do have a slightly higher percentage of students enrolled in two-year colleges.

Figure 13 shows that Hispanic females have higher percentages of enrollment than Hispanic males in every sector of college. **Figure 14** shows that Native American men and women enroll in each sector at similar percentages. **Figure 15** shows that white women have higher percentages of enrollment in two-year colleges, four-year colleges and graduate schools than white men, but there are a slightly higher percentage of white men than white women in vocational schools.

The data show, in general, that women are outpacing men in college enrollment. It also demonstrates that the gender gap is even more pronounced for males of color.

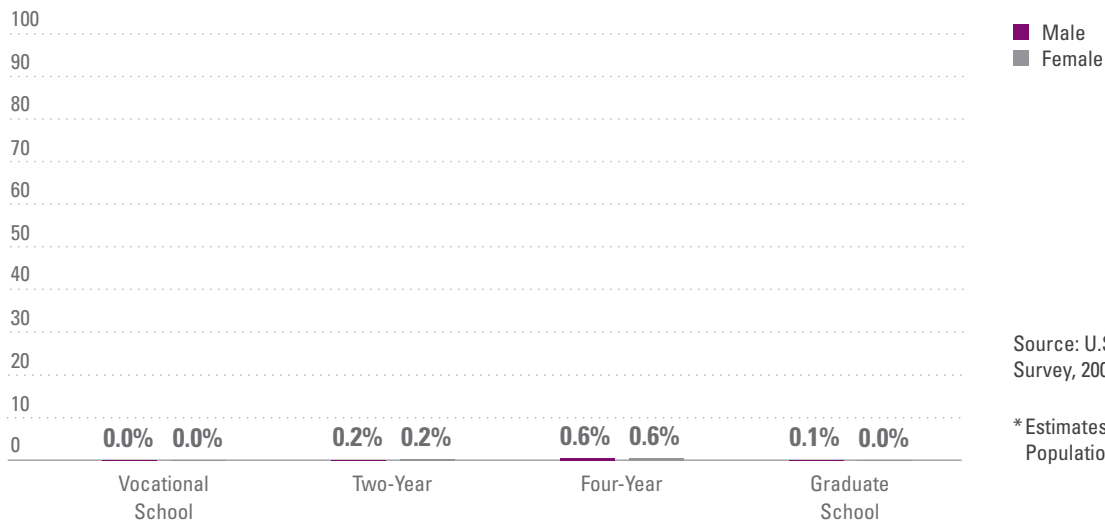
Figure 13
Percentage of Hispanic 15- to 24-Year-Olds Enrolled in College, by Gender and School Type, 2008



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2008

Figure 14

Percentage of Native American 15- to 24-Year-Olds Enrolled in College, by Gender and School Type, 2008

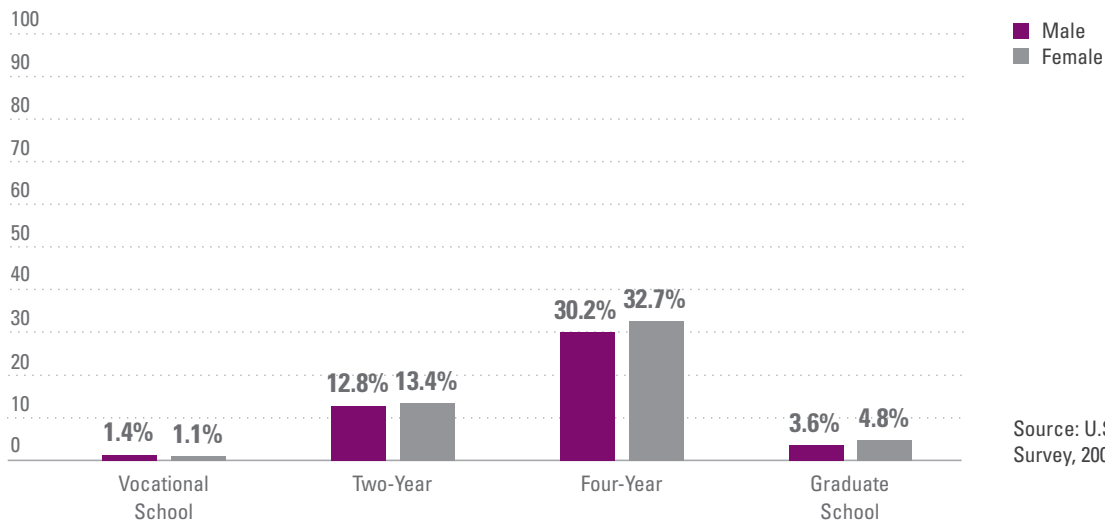


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2008

*Estimates for Native American based on U.S. Population Percentages

Figure 15

Percentage of White 15- to 24-Year-Olds Enrolled in College, by Gender and School Type, 2008



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2008

2.

Enlistment in U.S. Armed Forces

One of the postsecondary alternatives to going directly into college after high school is to enlist in the armed forces. Every year, more than 300,000 young men and women take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) in order to determine whether they are qualified to enter the U.S. Armed Forces (Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force or Coast Guard). Candidates are offered enlistment based on their performance on the ASVAB and other more specialized qualifications related to the specific needs of that branch of the military. Historically, joining the Armed Forces has been an option for many men, but increasingly women are choosing to serve in the military. Since 1973 (and the beginning of the all-volunteer military), the number of non-prior service accessions (enlistments) has decreased for every branch of service in the military, declining from about 406,000 accessions in 1973 to only a little over 172,000 accessions in 2008 (see **Figure 16**). The number of accessions by race/ethnicity has also decreased for whites and African Americans, but has increased for Hispanics and Others (see **Figure 16**).

Minority Males Ages 15 to 24 with a High School Diploma Enlisted in the Military, 2008

0.9%

African American

0.6%

Asian

1.1%

Hispanic

1.9%

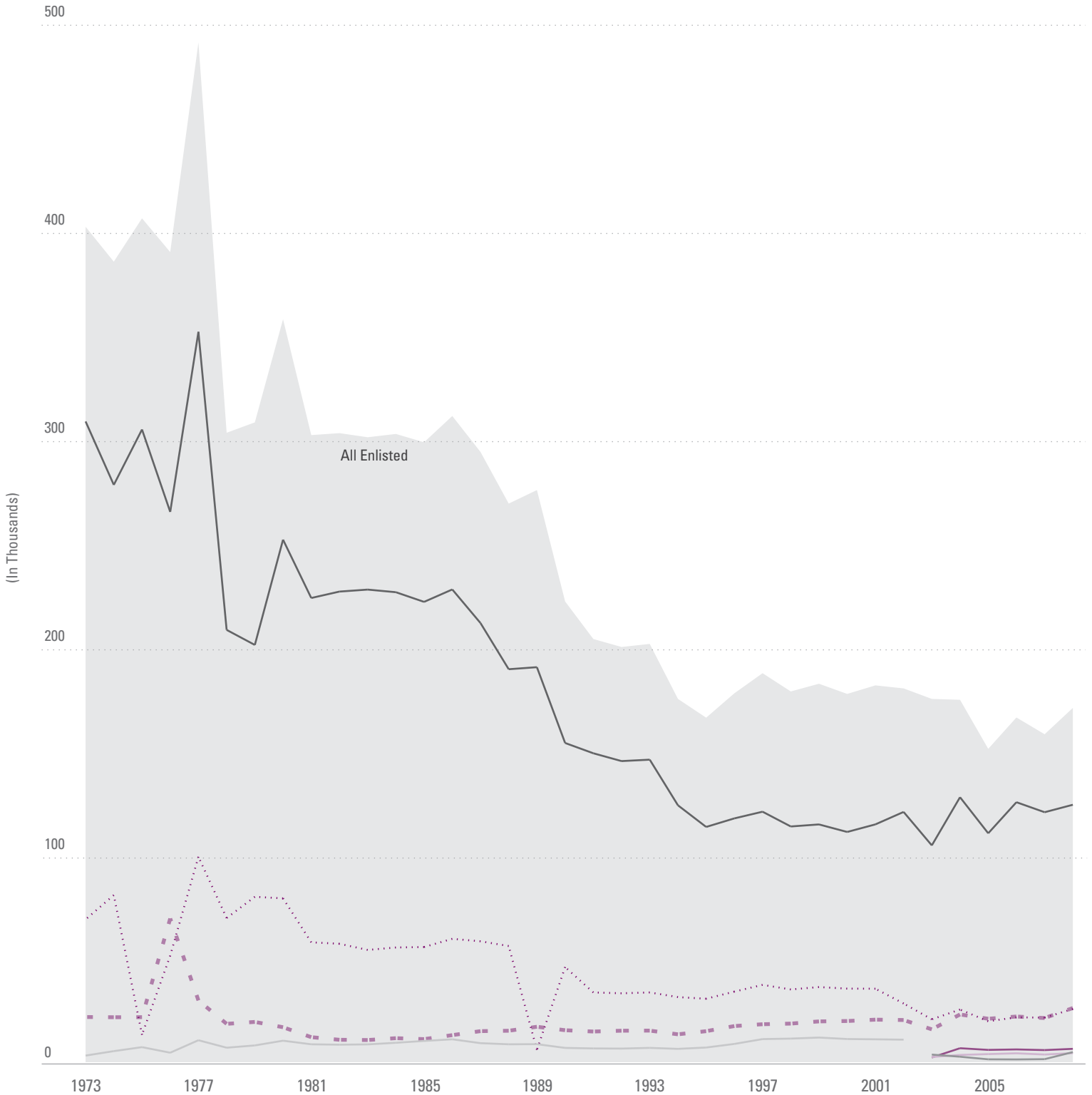
Native American

Figure 16

Non-Prior Service Active Component Enlisted Accessions, by Race/Ethnicity, 1973–2008

Source: U.S. Department of Defense, DMDC, 2008

- African American
- Asian
- Hispanic
- Native American
- White
- Two or More Races
- Other

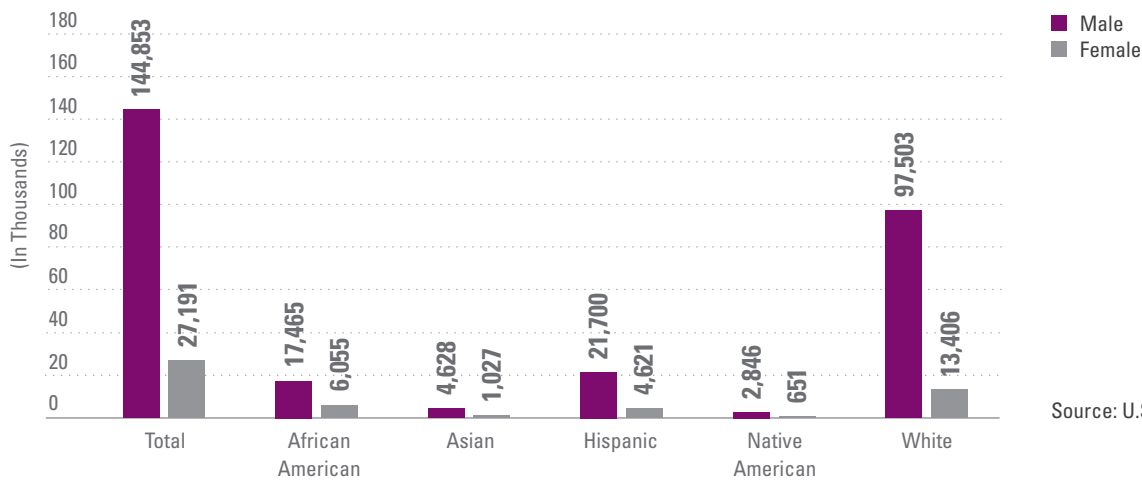


In 2008, there were a total of 172,054 18-to-24-year-old U.S. Armed Forces enlisted personnel in all branches of the military (see **Figure 17**), and 144,853 (84.2 percent) of these enlisted soldiers are men.

Figure 18 shows that men constitute 74.3 percent of African American enlisted personnel, 81.4 percent of

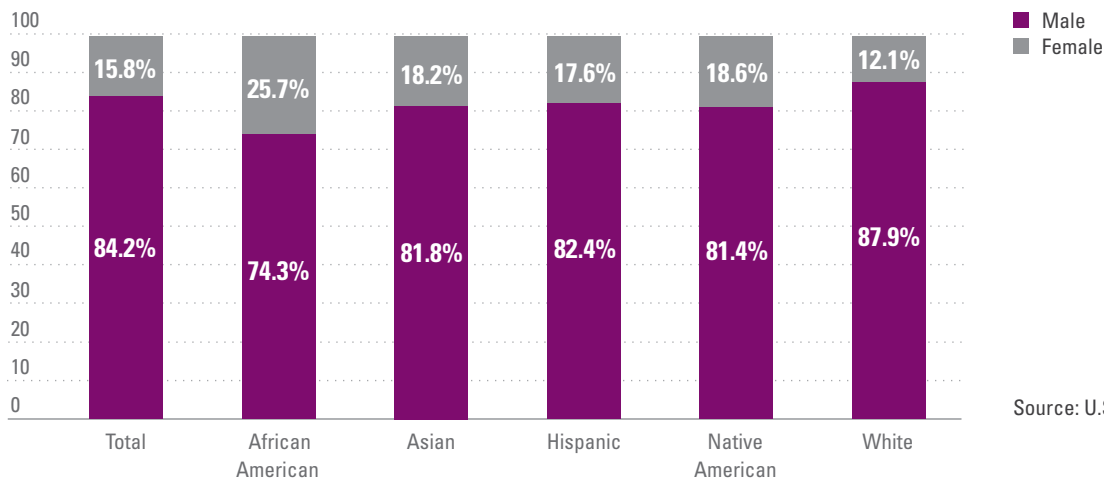
Native American enlisted personnel, 81.8 percent of Asian enlisted personnel, 82.4 percent of Hispanic enlisted personnel and 87.9 percent of white enlisted personnel. However, the data show that minority women, especially African Americans, are increasingly choosing the military as a postsecondary option.

Figure 17
Number of 18-to-24-Year-Old U.S. Armed Forces Enlisted Soldiers, by Gender and Race/Ethnicity, 2008



Source: U.S. Department of Defense, DMDC, 2008

Figure 18
Percentage of 18-to-24-Year-Old U.S. Armed Forces Enlisted Soldiers, by Gender and Race/Ethnicity, 2008



Source: U.S. Department of Defense, DMDC, 2008

3.

Employment in U.S. Workforce

For those high school graduates who do not enter college or the military, one of the available options is to gain lawful employment so that they can become productive citizens of society. In our knowledge economy, there are increasingly fewer jobs that do not require a postsecondary credential or a college degree, although there are still employment opportunities for those with no degree. In 2008, over 3.3 million 15- to 24-year-olds were employed (see **Figure 19**). Of those employed, 1,667,000 (49.3 percent) were male and 1,717,000 (50.7 percent) were women. It should be noted that postrecession numbers are worse for men, yet 2008 was the only year that data across all pathways were available.

Minority Males Ages 15 to 24 with a High School Diploma Employed, 2008

21.0%

African American

5.1%

Asian

13.6%

Hispanic

48.0%

Native American

Figure 20 shows that employment rates for 15-to-24-year-old African American males and females are almost equal, but Asian and Hispanic women are employed at significantly higher rates than their male peers. Among young Asians who are employed, 67.1 percent are women and 32.9 percent are men. Similarly, 58.4 percent of Hispanics who are employed

are women, while 41.6 percent are men. Men still account for the majority of those Native Americans and white Americans who are employed. Men comprise 52.8 percent of all white Americans and 53.1 of all Native Americans employed, while women account for 47.2 percent and 46.9 percent, respectively.

Figure 19
Number of 15- to 24-Year-Olds Employed, by Gender and Race/Ethnicity, 2008

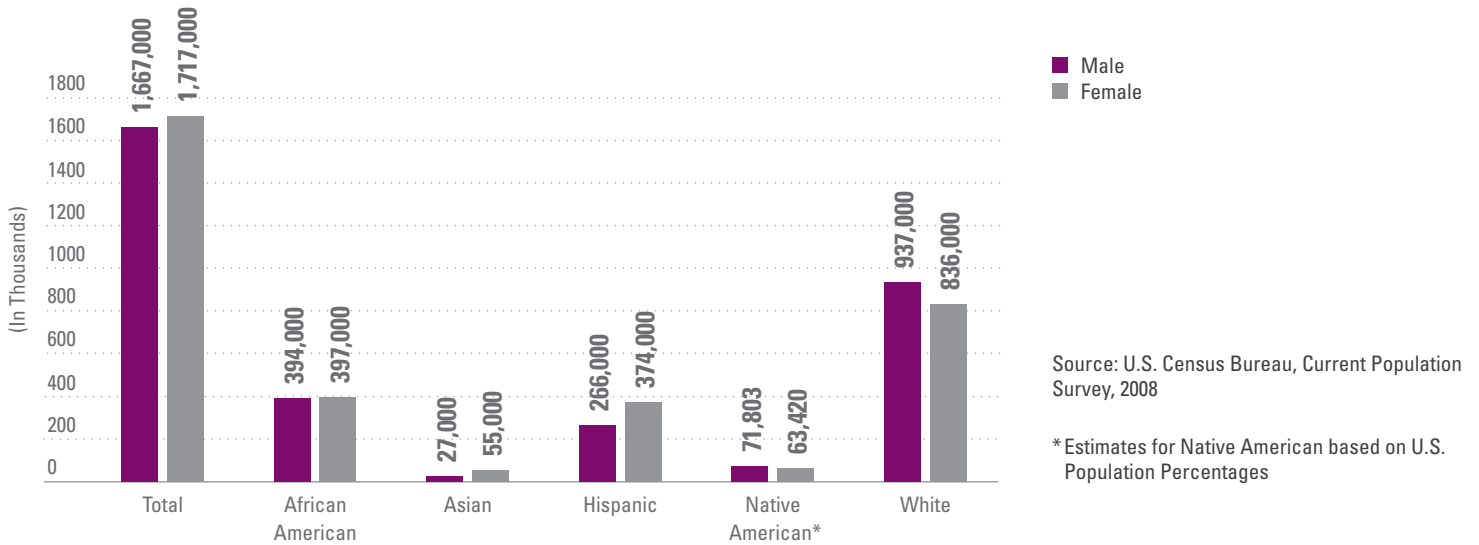
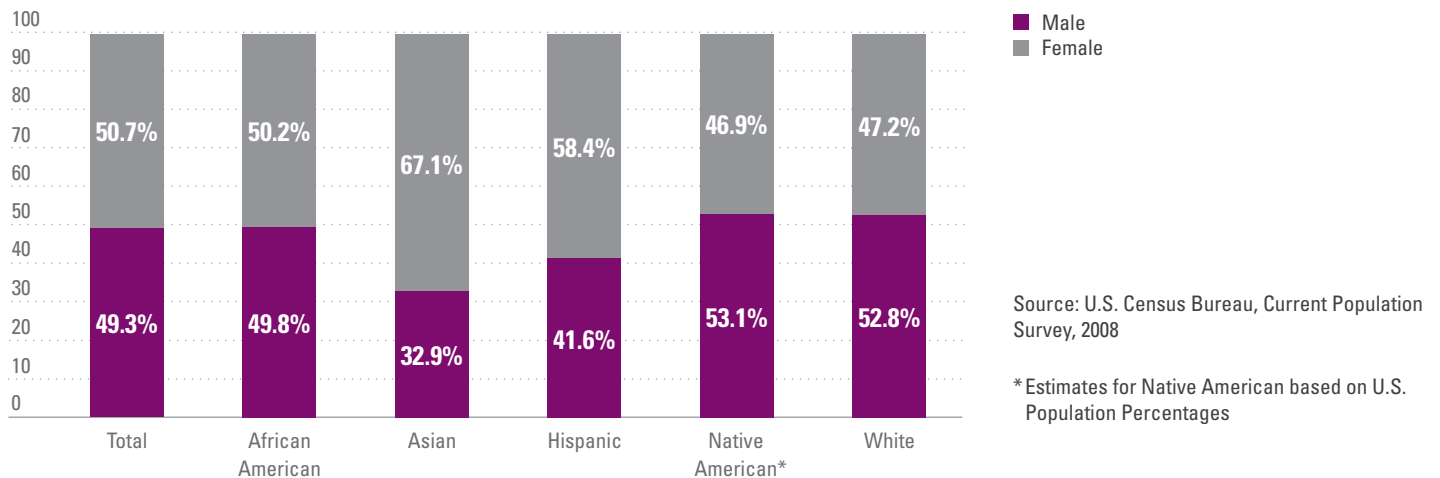


Figure 20
Percentage of 15- to 24-Year-Olds Employed, by Gender and Race/Ethnicity, 2008



4.

Unemployment in the United States

Although many high school graduates who do not attend college or enlist in the military find jobs, many more do not. In 2008, more than 9.4 million 15-to-24-year-old high school graduates, including 5 million men (53.1 percent) and 4.4 million women (46.9 percent), were unemployed in the United States (see **Figure 21**). Again, it is important to keep in mind that 2008 was the only year that data across all pathways were available, yet postrecession unemployment numbers are worse for both men and women.

Minority Males Ages 15 to 24 with a High School Diploma Unemployed, 2008

34.4%

African American

29.8%

Asian

46.5%

Hispanic

39.2%

Native American

Figure 22 shows that more African American, Asian, Latino and white men are unemployed than their female counterparts. Among unemployed African Americans, 52.6 percent are men and only 47.4 percent are women. Similarly, 59.0 percent of unemployed Asians are men, while only 41.0 percent are women. Hispanics follow this trend, with 57.0 percent of

unemployed Hispanics being men, compared to 43.0 percent being women. In contrast, Native American women (52.0 percent) are more likely to be unemployed than Native American men (48.0 percent). Men comprise 52.2 percent of all unemployed white Americans, while women account for 47.8 percent.

Figure 21
Number of 15- to 24-Year-Olds Unemployed, by Gender and Race/Ethnicity, 2008

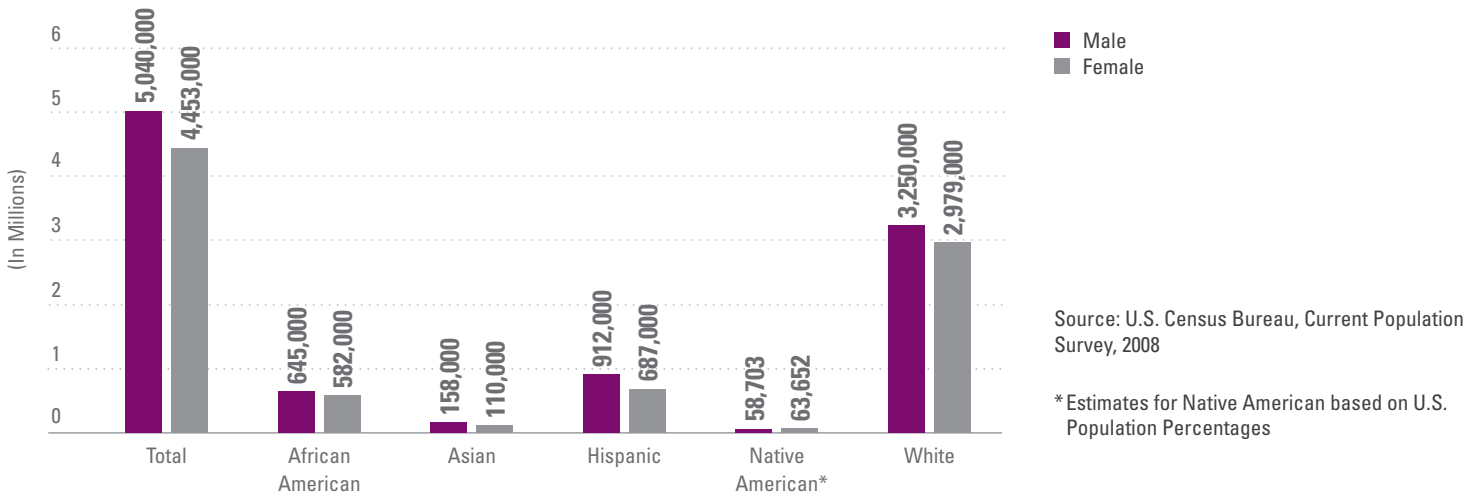
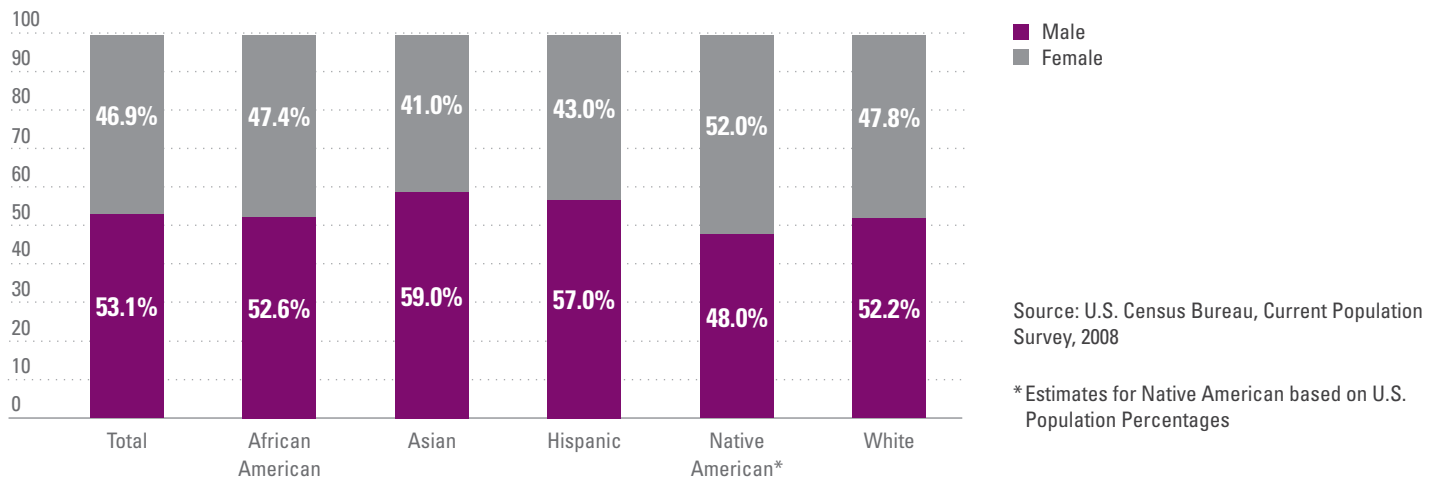


Figure 22
Percentage of 15- to 24-Year-Olds Unemployed, by Gender and Race/Ethnicity, 2008



5.

Incarceration

One of the most unfortunate destinations for high school dropouts, students and graduates ages 18 to 24 is incarceration in state or federal prisons or local jails. This is, however, a real possibility for young people across the country. Since 2000, the number of 18- to 24-year-olds incarcerated at the local, state and federal levels has risen from about 1.4 million in 2000 to about 1.6 million in 2008 (see **Figure 23**). **Figure 24** shows increasing incarceration rates of 18-to-24-year-old men and women. Over 475,000 18- to 24-year-olds were incarcerated in 2008, with males accounting for 92.4 percent of all inmates. In contrast, only 36,300 women in the same age group (7.6 percent) were incarcerated in 2008 (see **Figure 25**).

Minority Males Ages 15 to 24 with a High School Diploma Incarcerated, 2008

9.9%

African American

3.4%

Asian

5.2%

Hispanic

2.7%

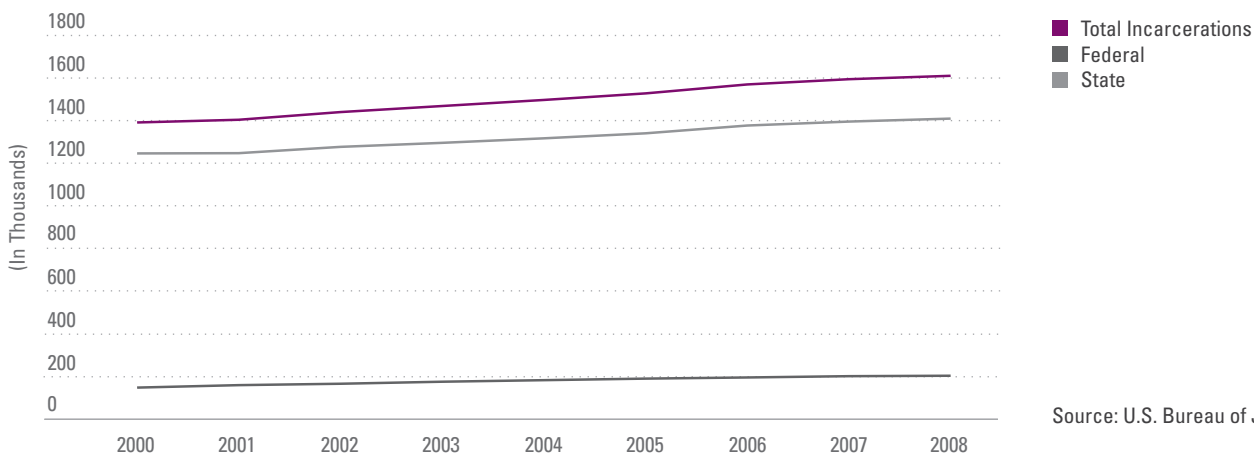
Native American

Figure 26 shows that 94.6 percent of all African Americans, 93.0 percent of all Hispanics, 91.1 percent of all Native Americans and 89 percent of all whites imprisoned in federal or state prisons or local jails are men. **Figure 27** shows that of the 18-to-24-year-old men who are imprisoned, 42.2 percent are African American, 4 percent are Asian American, 23.1 percent are Hispanic, 0.9 percent are Native American and

29.7 percent are white. This is an alarming statistic considering that African American males make up only about 7 percent of the population of the United States. African American men are disproportionately incarcerated here in the United States; more must be done to change this alarming trend. Similarly, Hispanics are also disproportionately incarcerated, considering that they make up just 8 percent of the

Figure 23

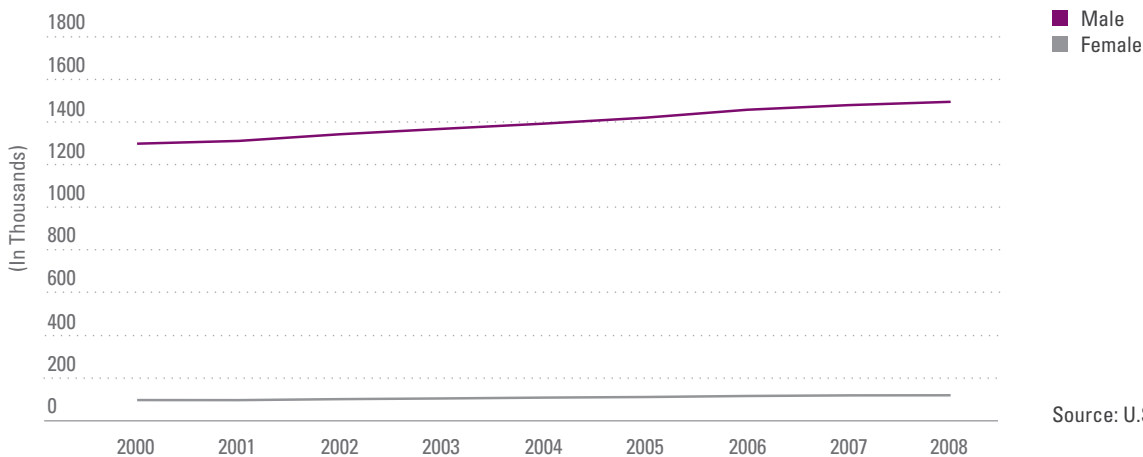
Prisoners Under the Jurisdiction of State or Federal Prisons, Imprisonment Rates and Incarceration Rates, December 31, 2000–2007, and June 30, 2007 and 2008



Source: U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2008

Figure 24

Estimated Number of Male and Female Inmates Held in State or Federal Prisons, or in Local Jails, by Gender, June 30, 2000–2008

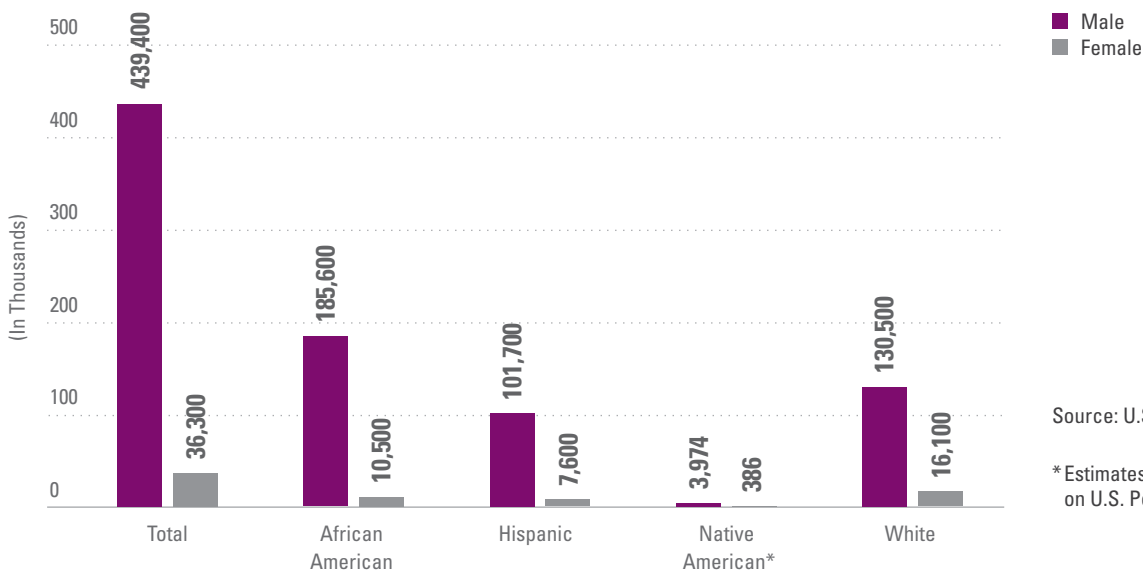


Source: U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2008

U.S. population. Among incarcerated women ages 18 to 24, 28.9 percent are African American, 4.7 percent are Asian American, 20.9 percent are Hispanic, 1.1 percent are Native American and 44.4 percent are white (see **Figure 27**). Again, African American and Hispanic women are disproportionately incarcerated relative to their percentage of the U.S. population, although less so than men. **Figure 28** shows that since

2000 there has been an increase in the number of incarcerations for all races/ethnicities and genders with the exception of African American women. It would be interesting to find out what is driving down the imprisonment rate of African American women, because this could lead to a solution that might also work for all women and men.

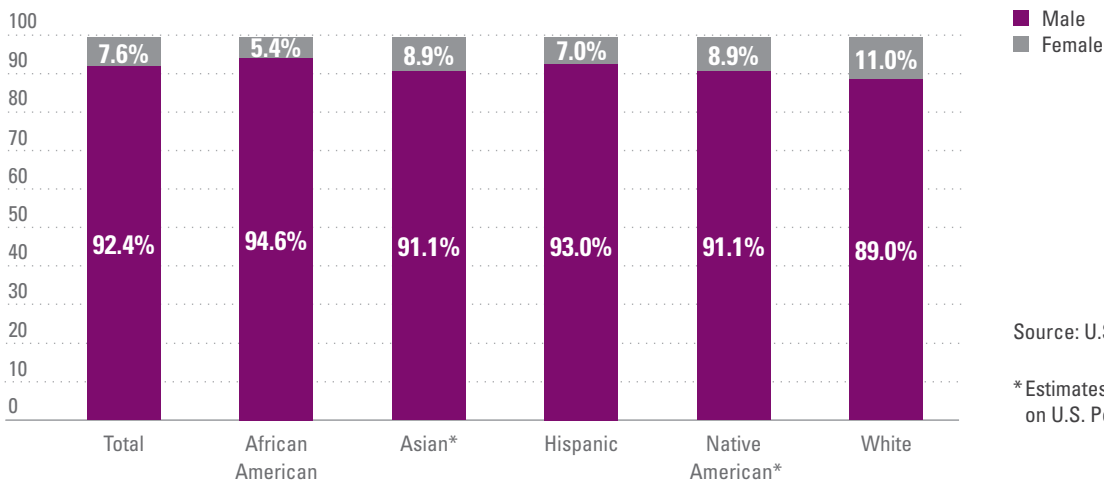
Figure 25
Number of 18-to-24-Year-Old Inmates in State or Federal Prisons, or in Local Jails, by Gender and Race/Ethnicity, 2008



Source: U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2008

*Estimates for Asian and Native American based on U.S. Population Percentages

Figure 26
Percentage of African American, Hispanic and White 18-to-24-Year-Old Inmates in State or Federal Prisons, or in Local Jails, by Gender, 2008

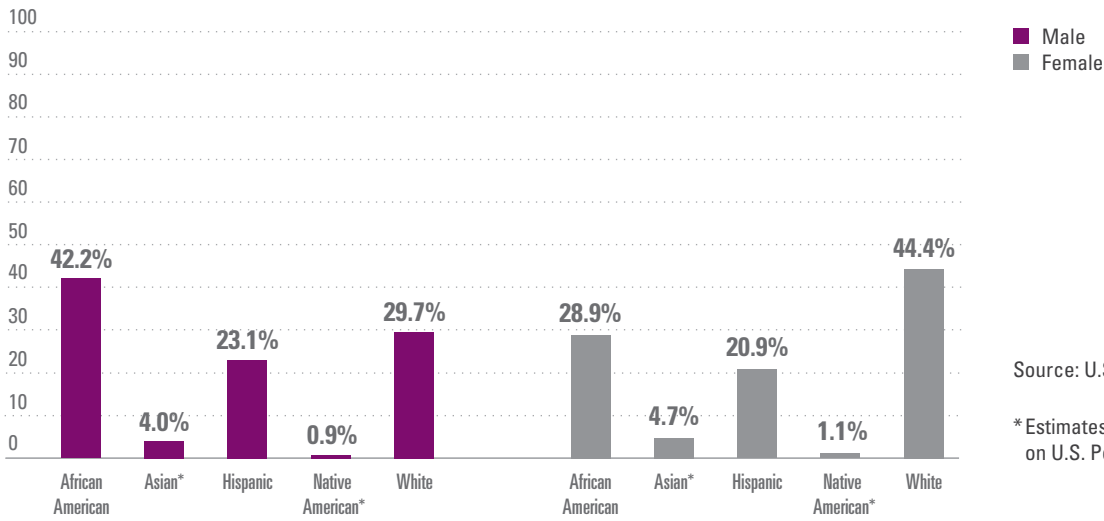


Source: U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2008

*Estimates for Asian and Native American based on U.S. Population Percentages

Figure 27

Percentage of Male and Female 18-to-24-Year-Old Inmates in State or Federal Prisons, or in Local Jails, by Race/Ethnicity, 2008

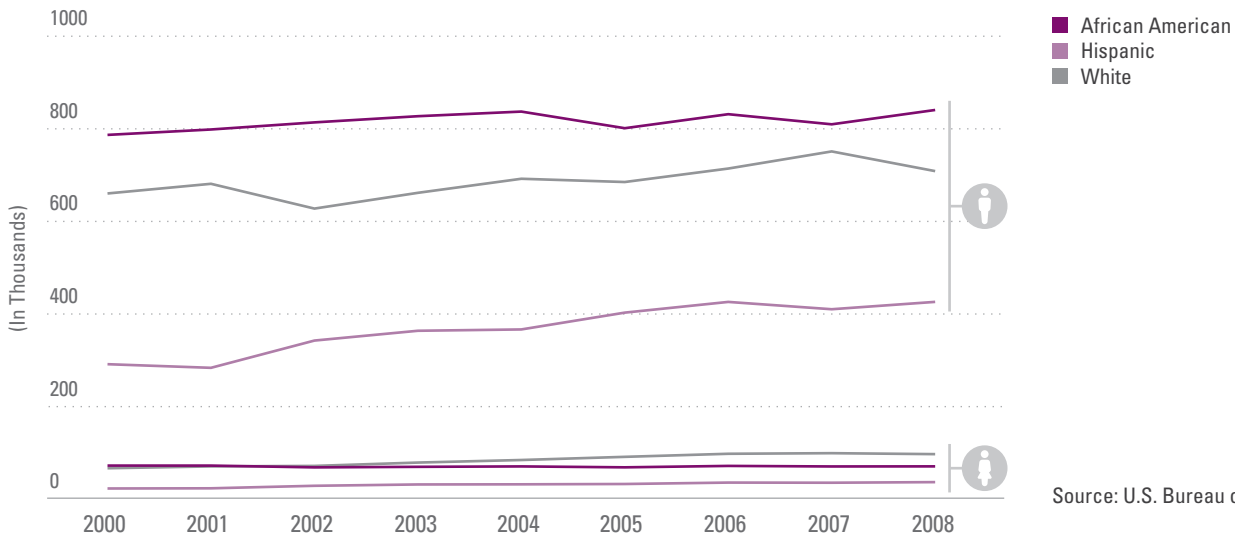


Source: U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2008

*Estimates for Asian and Native American based on U.S. Population Percentages

Figure 28

Estimated Number of Inmates Held in State or Federal Prisons, or in Local Jails, by Gender, Race and Hispanic Origin, June 30, 2000–2008



Source: U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2008

6.

Death

An early death — natural or violent — is a real possibility for today's youth; 34,887 18- to 24-year-olds died in 2008. Of these, 26,070 (74.7 percent) were males, while 8,817 (25.3 percent) were females (see **Figure 29**). **Figure 30** shows that among 18- to 24-year-olds who died in 2008, 77.5 percent of African Americans, 71.5 percent of Asians, 79.4 percent of Hispanics, 71 percent of Native Americans and 72.6 percent of whites were men; and 22.5 percent of African Americans, 28.5 percent of Asians, 20.6 percent of Hispanics, 29 percent of Native Americans and 27.4 percent of whites who died were women.

Minority Males Ages 15 to 24 with a High School Diploma Deceased, 2008

0.3%

African American

0.1%

Asian

0.2%

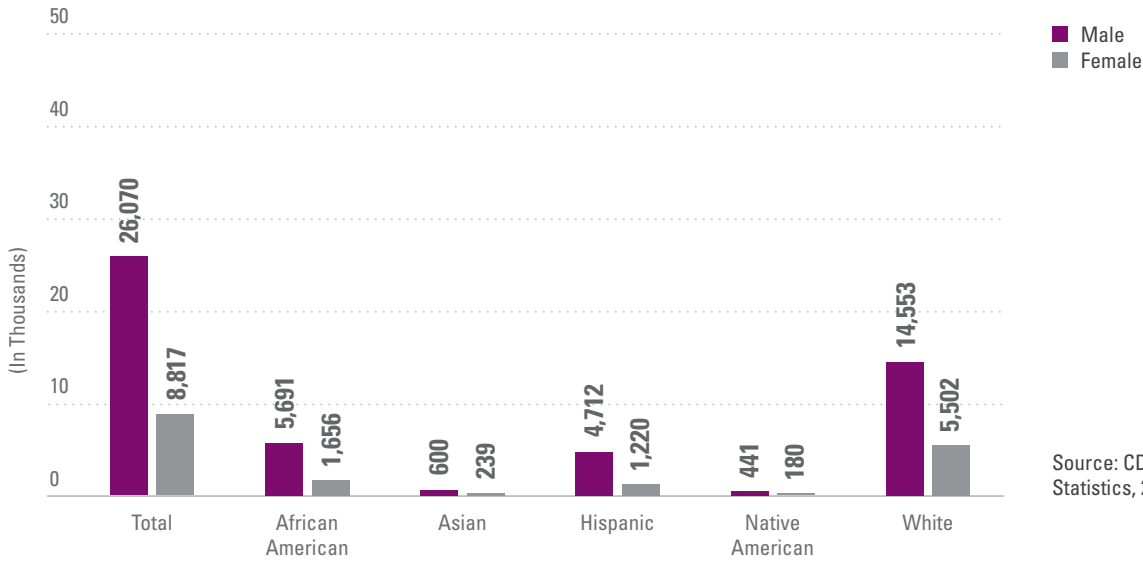
Hispanic

0.3%

Native American

Figure 29

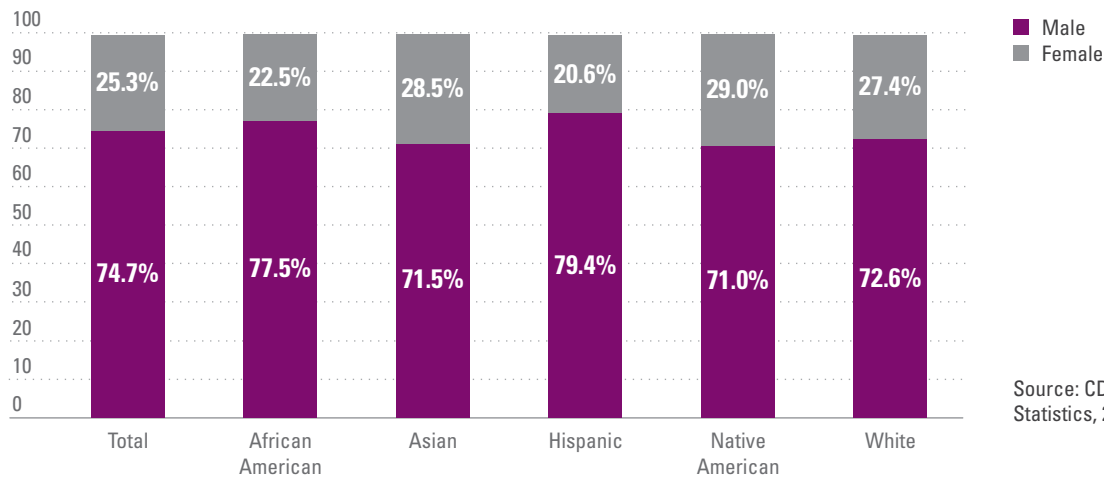
Number of 15-to-24-Year-Old Deaths, by Gender and Race/Ethnicity, 2007



Source: CDC, National Center for Health Statistics, 2010

Figure 30

Percentage of 15-to-24-Year-Old Deaths, by Gender and Race/Ethnicity, 2007



Source: CDC, National Center for Health Statistics, 2010

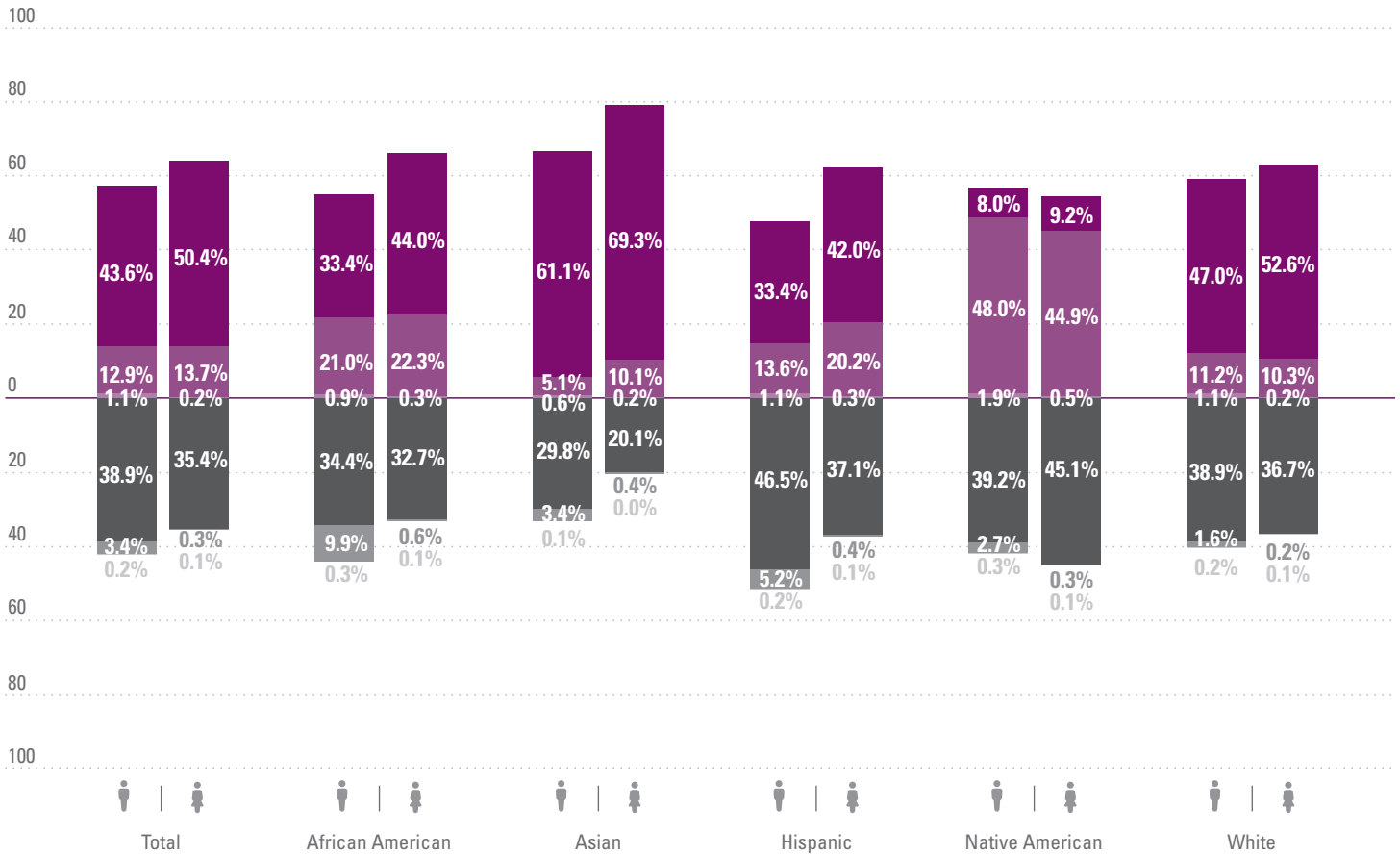
Figure 31

Postsecondary Pathways for High School Graduates, Ages 15 to 24, 2008*

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, CPS, 2008; U.S. Department of Defense, DMDC, 2008; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2008; CDC, National Center for Health Statistics, 2010

- Enrolled in Postsecondary Education
- Employed
- Military
- Not Employed
- Incarcerated (Federal, State and Local)
- Deaths

*Mortality statistics are from 2007.



Synopsis

The data of these six postsecondary pathways leads to an unmistakable conclusion: There is an educational crisis for young men of color in the United States.

Figure 31 is a summary of each of the postsecondary pathways available to high school students ages 15 to 24 as of 2008. It shows that men, especially minority men, lag behind their female counterparts in college access, educational attainment and employment.

Minority men outpace their female counterparts only in negative postsecondary outcomes: unemployment, incarceration and death. Incarcerations were also very significant for African American, Asian American, Hispanic and Native American males. The postsecondary pathways data show that 10 percent of African American males, 3 percent of Asian American males, 5 percent of Hispanic males and 3 percent of Native American males are incarcerated. Prisons and jails have become a significant destination for African American and Hispanic males. Unfortunately, unemployment is the most likely destination for those African American and Hispanic males who do not end up either dead or incarcerated. Collectively, the pathway data show that more than 51 percent of Hispanic males, 45 percent of African American males, 42 percent of Native American males and 33 percent of Asian American males ages 15 to 24 will end up unemployed, incarcerated or dead. It has become an epidemic, and one that we must solve by resolving the educational crisis facing young men of color.

Higher Education

Given the range of achievement and persistence outcomes among high school students and the various support mechanisms that either hinder or foster such outcomes, college opportunity and success remain elusive for far too many young adults, particularly young men of color.

This section surveys the literature on young men of color in higher education — highlighting college access and participation, persistence and support, and institution types to understand the challenges these students face and how they might be addressed.

College Access and Participation

Although, as has been described previously, high school students' academic experiences and outcomes vary greatly, 92 percent of all high school seniors expect to continue their education after graduation (Chen, Wu et al. 2010).

Based on a nationally representative sample of high school seniors in the class of 2003-04, women (95 percent) are more likely than males (89 percent) to aspire to postsecondary education. Disaggregating by race/ethnicity, Asians (96 percent) and African Americans (94 percent) are more likely than whites (92 percent), Latinos (91 percent) and Native Americans (85 percent) to have postsecondary aspirations (Chen, Wu et al. 2010).

Change in Minority Male Enrollment in Colleges and Universities, 1990–2008



Yet these postsecondary expectations go unmet for a large portion of high school graduates. For example, in 2008, the rate at which high school graduates enrolled in two- or four-year higher education institutions immediately after high school was 69 percent (although this figure represented a 41 percent increase since 1980)(Aud, Fox et al. 2010). Moreover, racial disparities in the rate of immediate transition to college have persisted for more than 20 years, with African Americans and Latinos enrolling at lower rates than whites (Aud, Fox et al. 2010).

Certainly, for several reasons, not all students desire or are able to enroll in college immediately after completing high school (i.e., by the following fall). Therefore, while these rates of immediate enrollment of high school graduates in higher education provide some indication of college-going behaviors, a more useful look at college participation would consider the percentage of traditional college-age young adults who are enrolled in two- and four-year colleges and

universities. In 2008, for instance, 40 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds were enrolled, a 54 percent overall increase in participation over 28 years (Aud, Fox et al. 2010). **Table 5** shows this indicator over time, disaggregated by gender and race/ethnicity.

As shown in **Table 6**, it is clear that across all racial/ethnic groups, participation in higher education among 18- to 24-year-olds has increased over the past two decades. Also of note, since the mid-1990s women have consistently participated in higher education at higher rates than males for all racial/ethnic groups, with the exception of Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders.

Expanding the view of enrollment provides additional insights. For example, considering total undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting institutions regardless of age, the increasing diversity of American higher education becomes more apparent, as shown in **Figure 32**. With the white student share of undergraduate enrollment decreasing from 82 percent in 1976 to

Table 5
Percentage of 18- to 24-Year-Olds Enrolled in Colleges and Universities, by Race/Ethnicity and Gender

	African American		Asian American/ Pacific Islander		Hispanic		Native American/ Alaska Native		White	
	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀
1990	25.8	24.7	59.2	54.9	15.4	16.4	8.4	21.7	35.6	34.7
1995	26.0	28.7	55.7	53.7	18.7	23.0	27.4	27.8	37.0	38.8
2000	25.1	35.2	59.0	52.8	18.5	25.4	12.8	20.5	36.2	41.3
2005	28.2	37.6	62.0	59.0	20.7	29.5	25.7	29.5	39.4	46.1
2006	28.1	36.9	58.2	55.8	20.0	27.6	18.1	35.9	37.9	44.1
2007	32.2	34.0	56.5	55.7	20.7	33.0	11.8	34.5	39.6	45.7
2008	29.7	34.2	53.8	61.1	23.0	28.9	18.7	24.3	41.7	46.9

Source: Aud, Fox, & Ramani, NCES, 2010

Table 6

Enrollment in Minority-Serving, Degree-Granting Institutions, by Race/Ethnicity, 2007

Minority-Serving Institution	Percentage of Total Enrollment	Percentage of Total [Minority] Enrollment
Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU)	1.7	10.6 (African American)
Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI)	13.4	49.8 (Latino)
Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCU)	0.1	7.3 (Native American/Alaska Native)

Source: Aud, Fox, & Ramani, NCES, 2010

63 percent in 2008, other racial/ethnic groups have gradually boosted their presence in degree-granting institutions, reflective of the nation’s broader demographic shifts (**Figure 33**).

For all racial/ethnic groups, female enrollment has grown more than male enrollment. Among African American undergraduates, the percentage of females has been above 60 percent since 1990. Likewise, the enrollment gender gap for Native Americans and Latinos, though lower than that of African Americans, is also troubling (Devoe and Darling-Churchill 2008; Aud, Fox et al. 2010). Such gender disparities beg the question of why males (and especially young men of color) are falling behind in higher education access and participation.

Institution Types

Figure 34 below shows that across racial/ethnic groups, the majority of college students are enrolled in public institutions, with greater portions of African Americans, Latinos and Native Americans at two-year public institutions compared to four-year colleges. Among Asian American/Pacific Islander students, enrollment at two-year institutions is increasing faster than enrollment at four-year institutions (National Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Research in Education 2008).

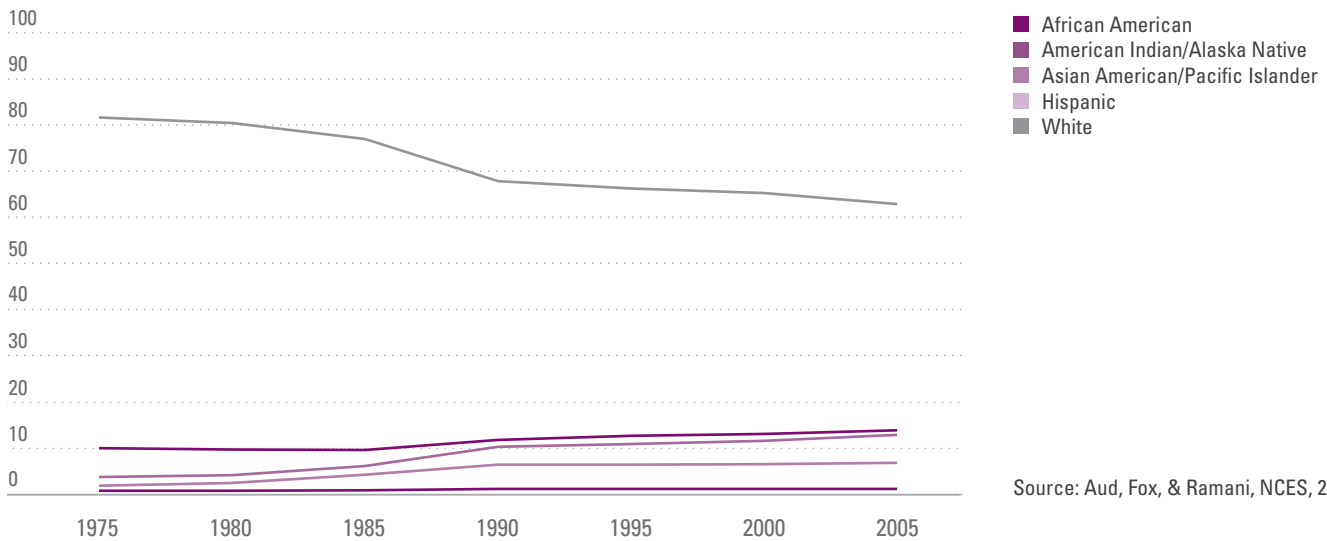
Several studies point to the high concentration of Latino students in two-year institutions and their low transfer rates to four-year institutions (Solorzano, Villalpando et al. 2005; Saenz and Ponjuan 2009). According to Solorzano, Villalpando and Oseguera (2005), while more than 70 percent of Latinos want to transfer from two-year to four-year institutions, only 7 to 20 percent actually do.

For-Profit Institutions

Also of interest is the large number of minority students who attend for-profit institutions. Public and private not-for-profit universities have failed to provide access to many students from underserved populations, many of whom aspire to attend four-year colleges and universities. The inability of these students to access nonprofit institutions has created a market for students who aspire to a bachelor’s degree, and for-profit colleges and universities have seized the opportunity to serve them (Lynch and Engle 2010; Lynch, Engle et al. 2010). Through the use of aggressive recruitment practices and wraparound services that encourage students to take on massive amounts of debt, these institutions have been successful in attracting a significant number of students — especially African Americans (Lynch, Engle et al. 2010). They are often motivated by the financial aid that students bring, which serves as a subsidy to these colleges and universities.

Figure 32

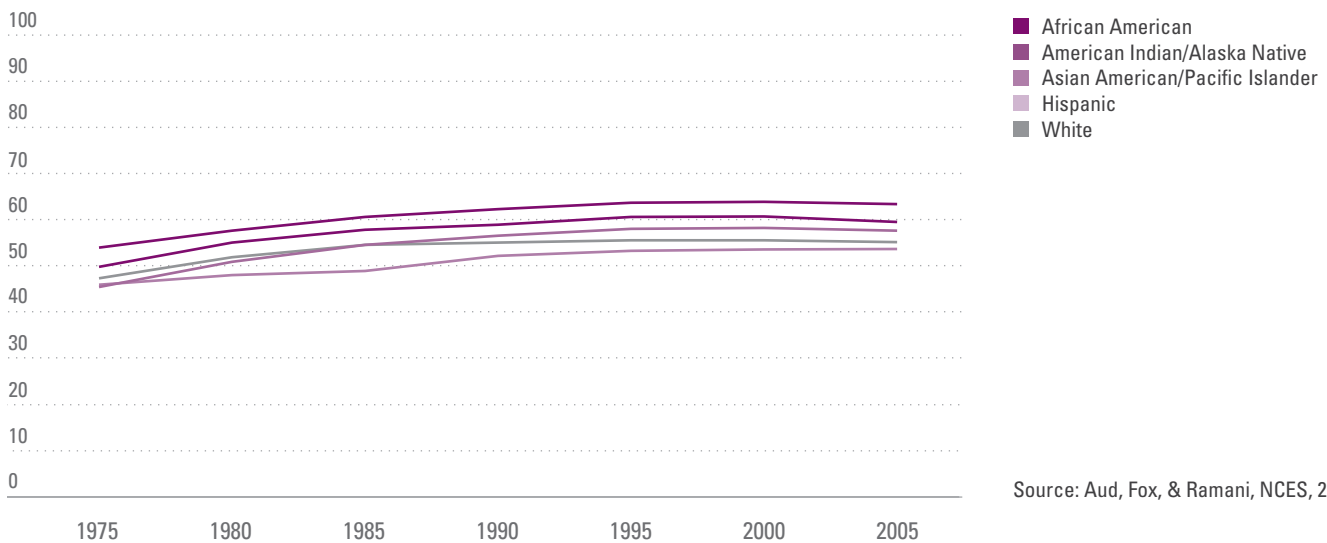
Percentage Distribution of Undergraduate Fall Enrollment in Degree-Granting Institutions, by Race/Ethnicity



Source: Aud, Fox, & Ramani, NCES, 2010

Figure 33

Female Percentage of Undergraduate Fall Enrollment in Degree-Granting Institutions, by Race/Ethnicity



Source: Aud, Fox, & Ramani, NCES, 2010

For-profit colleges have grown dramatically over the last decade, far outpacing growth in other sectors of postsecondary education. Nonprofit colleges and universities grew about 20 percent from 1998–1999 through 2008–2009, compared to 236 percent at for-profit institutions over the same time period (Lynch and Engle 2010). **Figure 34** shows that for-profit institutions enroll 15 percent of African Americans, 8 percent of Hispanics, 9 percent of Native Americans, and 6 percent of Asians and whites. Although for-profit colleges enroll high numbers of low-income and minority students, the graduation rate at these colleges and universities is 22 percent (Lynch, Engle et al. 2010), below the 56.1 percent graduation rate at four-year nonprofit colleges and universities and the 27.8 percent graduation rate at two-year institutions (Lee and Rawls 2010).

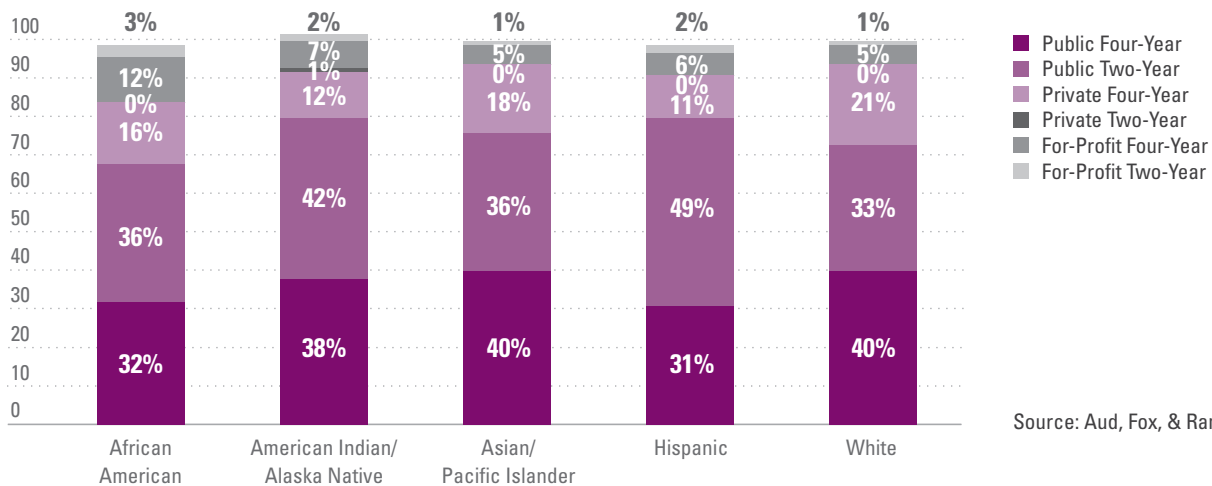
The Role of Minority-Serving Institutions

The role of minority-serving institutions in providing access and contributing to outcomes for minority students is important. While these institutions are not the sole provider of education for minority students, they do educate significant numbers of them.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) have years of history that has shaped their place in American higher education. There are currently 103 historically black colleges and universities (51 private, 52 public) in 19 states, Washington, D.C., and the U.S. Virgin Islands. HBCUs are defined by federal law as institutions of higher education with the principal mission of educating African Americans. These

Figure 34
Percentage Distribution of Enrollment in Degree-Granting Institutions, by Race/Ethnicity and Institution Type, 2008



Source: Aud, Fox, & Ramani, NCES, 2010

colleges must have been founded before 1964 (Willie and Edmonds 1978; Redd 1998; Brown 2004; Hale 2006). It should be noted that there are numerous additional “majority black colleges and universities” (MBCUs) (e.g., Medgar Evers College in New York) that are not designated as HBCUs, even though these institutions primarily serve African American students. Unlike Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs), designation as an HBCU is both a function of historical mission and founding. While the number of HSIs can grow according to enrollment, the number of HBCUs cannot grow because the statute requires the institutions to have been founded before 1964. If the designation for HBCUs were based on the percentage of African American students enrolled, the number of institutions designated as HBCUs would almost double.

HBCUs emerged as a product of segregation, places to educate African Americans when they could not attend predominantly white institutions (Willie and Edmonds 1978; Brown 2004). African Americans were restricted by law from obtaining a college education in the South, and often by social custom elsewhere in the United States. **Table 6** shows that HBCUs represent 1.7 percent of the total enrollment among degree-granting institutions. Although HBCUs represent only 3 percent of all institutions in the United States, they produce 28 percent of all bachelor’s degrees awarded to African Americans — despite the fact that HBCUs enroll only 10.6 percent of all African Americans matriculating in higher education (Gasman, Baez et al. 2007).

Hispanic-Serving Institutions

Title V of the Higher Education Act designates colleges and universities where Hispanic students make up 25 percent or more of the full-time undergraduate enrollment as Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs). Unlike HBCUs, designation as an HSI is a function of enrollment rather than historical mission and founding (Santiago 2010). This allows the number of HSIs to expand as Hispanic enrollments grow (Kelly, Schneider et al. 2010; Santiago 2010). Hispanic-serving institutions enroll 13.4 percent of all students in higher education, but almost half (49.8 percent) of all

Hispanic students attend HSIs. While HSIs represent about 10 percent of all degree-granting colleges and universities, these institutions produce almost 40 percent of all degrees earned by Hispanic students (Santiago 2006; Santiago 2010).

Tribal Colleges and Universities

Tribal colleges were created in the last 30 years to respond to the higher education needs of Native Americans across the United States (1998; Consortium 1999). These institutions account for only 0.1 percent of the enrollment in all colleges and universities, but account for 7.3 percent of the enrollment of Native Americans and Alaska Natives. Tribal colleges and universities (TCUs) are unique institutions in that they combine cultural relevance and personal attention in order to encourage Native Americans to enroll in higher education (1998; Consortium 1999). Attendance can, however, be a challenge to this population, which is often geographically isolated with many barriers that can prevent access to education. According to the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (1999), severe unemployment, by some estimates as high as 70 percent, and income disparities for Native Americans serve as barriers to higher education. Native Americans also have lower high school completion rates than the total U.S. population. This challenge is especially acute on reservations. As a result, both Native American participation in postsecondary education and degree attainment are very low. In fact, Native Americans constitute only 1 percent of all students in higher education, with Native American males only accounting for 0.4 percent (Statistics 2010).

Native Americans have had a contentious history with education in America. The passage of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 was instrumental in acknowledging Native American sovereignty and self-determination for tribal nations. However, along with this legislation, the federal government shifted its treaty and trust responsibilities to state governments. Many Native Americans were being forced to attend government boarding schools and trade schools

hundreds of miles away from their homelands; it was the beginning of forced assimilation and the attempted termination of Native American culture and language (Bitsoi 2007). As a result, families were uprooted and torn apart by this policy, and there was a disastrous loss of native languages and cultures (Bitsoi 2007). According to the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (1999), “the history of Native American education over the last several hundred years is one of compulsory Western methods of learning, recurring attempts to eradicate tribal culture, and high dropout rates by Native American students at mainstream institutions.” In the 1960s, this caused tribal leaders to rethink tribal education, and this led to the establishment of the first tribal college by the Navajo Nation, Diné College (1998; Consortium 1999). Today, there are 32 tribal colleges and universities, including 36 tribally chartered colleges and three federally chartered Indian colleges in 12 states (2010). The tribally controlled institutions were chartered by one or more tribes and are locally managed while the federally chartered institutions are governed by national boards (1998).

Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs)

Created in 2008, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (preferably pronounced ANA-pee-zee) are federally designated colleges and universities recognized for having at least a 10 percent Asian American and Pacific Islander student population, as well as a significant percentage of low-income students (2010; 2011). AANAPISIs are eligible to apply for grant funds from the U.S. Department of Education to develop programs and services that improve the retention and success rates of Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander students. Currently, 16 AANAPISIs have been identified by the U.S. Department of Education (2011). Through the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, \$5 million per year from 2010 to 2020 has been allocated for new AANAPISI designations (2010).

Latinos

To examine the issues related to Hispanic male access and participation, as well as other outcomes in higher education, consideration of the extant literature on both the condition of all Latinos in higher education and males specifically is warranted.

Solorzano, Villapando and Oseguera (2005) conducted an analysis of the educational progress of Latino undergraduates using critical race theory as a guiding framework. In part as a response to growing anti-affirmative action sentiment and increasing pressure for race-neutral/color-blind policies, the authors presented evidence of myriad educational inequities faced by Latinos to counter the notion that race is or will soon become irrelevant to educational policy making. Noting the cumulative effect of inadequate academic preparation and overrepresentation at two-year institutions, Solorzano, Villapando and Oseguera (2005) contend that Latino participation in higher education has not kept pace with the broader increase in the Latino population. Saenz and Ponjuan (2009) carried this idea further, exploring why Hispanic male representation in higher education continues to slide relative to Latina females. They noted gender differences in educational experiences starting with early childhood education, cultural and gender norms in Latino communities, and alternative career paths as factors that potentially inhibit Latino males’ access to higher education. Looking at enrollment in school for all Latino age groups, Saenz and Ponjuan (2009) reported that the clearest evidence of a gender gap first emerges in the 18-to-19-year-old cohort and persists in all older cohorts. This finding is noteworthy, as it indicates the importance of the years that traditionally constitute the transition to college.

Similar to the research on Latinos in high school, several higher education studies emphasize ethnic subgroup differences among Latinos. These relate to differences in postsecondary access and participation (Solorzano, Villalpando et al. 2005; Saenz and Ponjuan 2009; Schwartz, Donovan et al. 2009; Morales 2010).

For instance, based on data from the Freshman Survey of the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), Mexican Americans have the most pronounced enrollment gender gap at four-year institutions, followed by an aggregate category of “other Latinos,” and then Puerto Ricans (Saenz and Ponjuan 2009). Yet few national data sets are available that allow researchers to examine disaggregated enrollment (or other educational outcomes) for Latino students or the factors related to enrollment.

Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders

The “model minority” myth discussed with regard to Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in high school is a similarly pervasive misconception with respect to Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in higher education. This oversimplified notion of Asian students leads to a veritable catch-22. That is, due to the widely held belief that Asian American/Pacific Islander students are not underrepresented in higher education, do not require resources or support, and do not face race-related challenges, there is a lack of funding for research on this (actually, these widely disparate) student group(s) (Museus and Kiang 2009). In fact, Museus and Kiang pointed out that in the past 10 years, only 1 percent of articles in the top five peer-reviewed higher education journals focused on Asian American/Pacific Islander students. While research could ultimately uncover the rich heterogeneity of the educational experiences of Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders and uncover the disparities that exist between subgroups, the absence of research instead perpetuates the mythology.

One misconception about Asian American/Pacific Islander enrollment in higher education is that these students are taking over U.S. institutions. However, the increase in Asian American/Pacific Islander enrollment mirrors that of other student groups. The entire population of Asian American/Pacific Islander students is concentrated at a small percentage of institutions,

and students have a wide range of scores on college entrance exams (National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education 2008; Teranishi 2004; Teranishi, Behringer et al. 2009). Using data from the Higher Education Research Institute’s CIRP survey, Teranishi, Ceja, Antonio, Allen and McDonough (2004) found that the college choice processes of Asian American/Pacific Islander students differed by ethnicity and socioeconomic status, with ethnicity having the stronger impact. Chinese and Korean students were more likely to choose selective, private and four-year institutions than Filipinos and Southeast Asians. Likewise, using critical race theory to examine Asian American/Pacific Islander students in a number of topical areas, Teranishi, Behringer, Grey and Parker (2009) noted that with respect to access to postsecondary education, many of the challenges Asian students face are obscured by the model minority myth. A 2007 U.S. Government Accountability Office report cited several Asian student subgroup differences in academic experiences that can translate to differences in access and participation. These differences included academic preparedness, ability to pay for school, employment and family obligations.

Native Americans

As with many other topical areas in education, research on Native Americans’ access and participation in higher education is sparse. In 2008, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) released a detailed report, Status and Trends in the education of American Indians and Alaska Natives, which provided useful data on a range of indicators about Native Americans in the educational pipeline. However, few scholars have examined Native American students’ college-going behaviors. Brayboy (2000, 2005b) discussed the challenges of conducting higher education research within this community of students and offered a theoretical framework based on critical race theory to guide such investigations.

African Americans

Though African American undergraduate enrollment has risen from 10 percent of all undergraduates in 1976 to 14 percent in 2008, African American males are simply not enrolling in college in the same proportions as African American women and their white male counterparts (Patton 1988; LaVant, Anderson et al. 1997; Harper 2006; Harper 2006; Strayhorn 2008a). In 2008, African American men represented 5 percent of all undergraduates in the United States, the same proportion in 1976 (Harper 2006a). Over the last 25 years, African American men have made no progress in higher education attainment. In addition, African American males represent 3 percent of all graduate students in higher education today; this is also unchanged from 1976 (Harper 2006b). The progress that has been made by African Americans in accessing higher education has been made by women. Although African American women represented 5 percent of total undergraduate enrollment in 1976, they represent 9 percent of enrollment in 2008.

African American male youths either do not have access to, or are discouraged from participating in, college-preparatory work in high school (Strayhorn 2008a). Many teachers and counselors fail to direct African American males toward college enrollment or discourage them altogether (Ogbu and Wilson 1990; Strayhorn 2008b). This lack of preparation and encouragement in high schools often leads to the dismal rate of higher education enrollment experienced by African American males. They are more likely to be underrepresented in the Advanced Placement classroom, and are almost absent from gifted education programs (Moore and Jackson 2006; Palmer and Strayhorn 2008). African American males also are overwhelmingly concentrated in special education courses, and are tracked into low academic ability classrooms (Palmer and Strayhorn 2008; Martin, Fergus et al. 2010). It is no wonder that African American males often graduate from high school without being college or career ready.

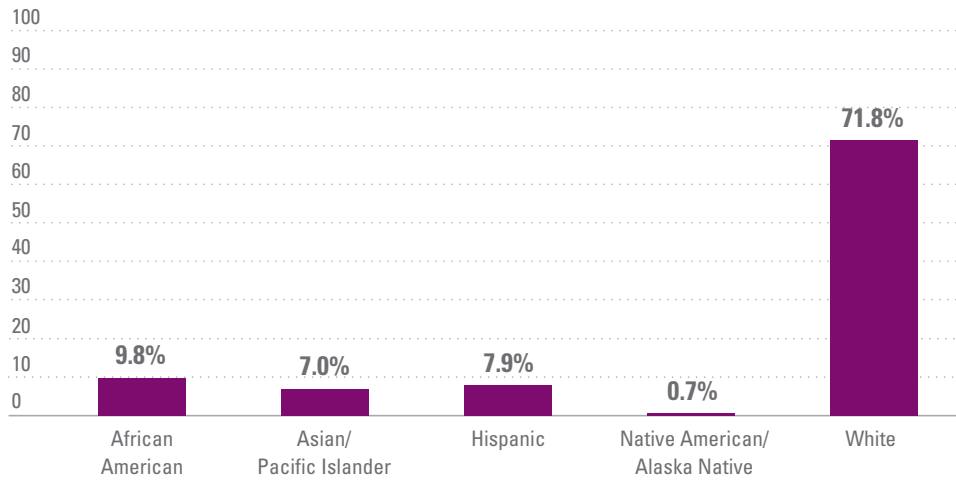
Achievement, Persistence and Support

Persistence is perhaps one of the most widely used measures of college student success.

For more than 40 years, countless studies have examined the factors that lead to various forms of student departure and related institutional efforts to encourage student persistence (Guiffrida 2006; Tinto 2006). Yet even though persistence research on underrepresented minorities and diverse institutional settings is emerging, relatively few studies focus specifically on young men of color. Nevertheless, developing an understanding of the persistence processes of minority male college students and the support strategies that can foster persistence is imperative to improving their educational outcomes.

Figure 35

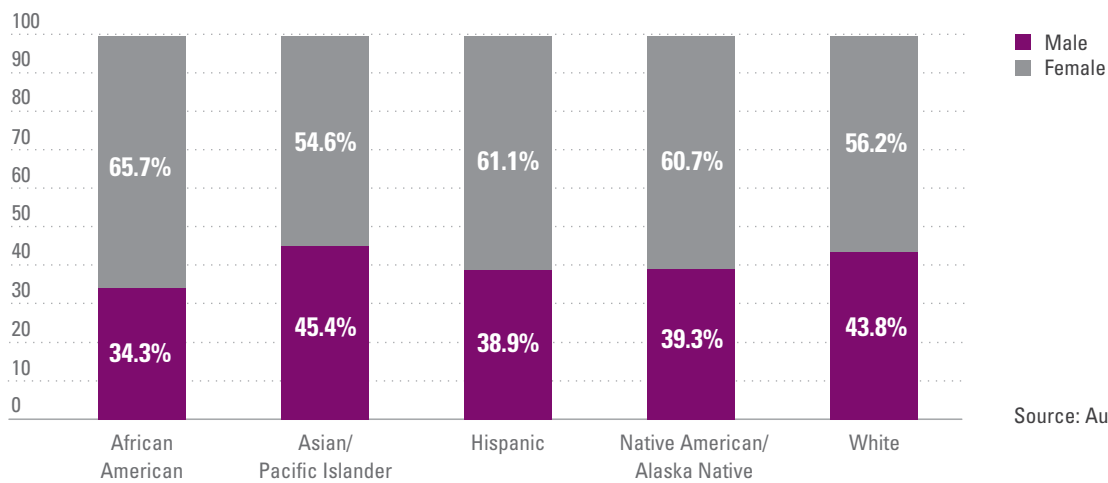
Percentage Distribution of Bachelor's Degrees Awarded, by Race/Ethnicity, 2007-08



Source: Aud, Fox, & Ramani, NCES, 2010

Figure 36

Percentage Distribution of Bachelor's Degrees Awarded, by Gender and Race/Ethnicity, 2007-08



Source: Aud, Fox, & Ramani, NCES, 2010

While overall graduation from colleges and universities has increased across racial/ethnic groups in recent years, degree completion has not kept pace for minority male students. For example, although African Americans comprised as much as 14 percent of undergraduate enrollment at degree-granting institutions between 2000 and 2008, in 2008, they accounted for only 10 percent of bachelor’s degrees awarded (Aud, Fox et al. 2010). **Figure 35** shows the overall distribution of bachelor’s degrees by race for 2007-08.

Just as the gender gap in enrollment in higher education persists across racial/ethnic groups, NCES data indicate a gender gap in degree completion as well. **Figure 36** shows that women earn more degrees than their male peers (Devoe and Darling-Churchill 2008; Aud, Fox et al. 2010). African American males accounted for only 34 percent of bachelor’s degrees awarded to all African Americans. That the degree completion gender gap is actually larger than the enrollment gender gap for racial/ethnic minorities suggests that persistence and/or retention strategies targeting minority male students must be strengthened.

Native Americans

While the low retention of Native Americans in postsecondary education is inarguable, the lack of research on the college experiences of Native Americans combined with insufficient representation of this population in national and longitudinal research databases makes examining the factors that affect their persistence difficult. Several studies, however, cite persistence factors that help keep Native American students in school or attrition factors that push them out (Gloria and Kurpius 2001; Brayboy and McKinley 2005; Larimore and McClellan 2005; Lundberg 2007). These factors are outlined in **Table 7** below.

This research suggests that Native Americans are among the least likely to graduate from college for a host of reasons. Among them is the nontraditional approach to higher education that many Native Americans take, which often includes full-time work and part-time school, stopping out, transferring and valuing family responsibilities over school (Larimore and McClellan 2005; Lundberg 2007). Gloria and Kurpius (2001) found that self-beliefs, social support and comfort in the university environment are all significant predictors of Native American student

Table 7
Summary of Factors Affecting Persistence and Attrition of Native American College Students

Persistence Factors	Attrition Factors
Support from family	Inadequate academic preparation
Support from institution’s faculty/staff	Vague educational/vocational goals
Institutional commitment to diversity	Financial problems/obligations
Personal commitment	Adjusting to environment/campus
Connection to homeland/culture	Racism
	Nontraditional approach (stopping out, part time, transfer, etc.)

Source: Aud, Fox, & Ramani, NCES, 2010

persistence, with social support being the most significant. Consistent with Gloria and Kurpius (2001), Larimore and McClellan (2005) noted that student services are especially critical for Native American students and should be extended to the students' families. These services include monitoring and ongoing support and even providing employment opportunities for students — all toward the goal of encouraging persistence to graduation. Brayboy's (2005) findings from an ethnographic study of two Native American Ivy League students confirmed the importance of maintaining strong ties to home communities/culture in fostering Native American persistence. "The first step in helping Native American students develop in college is for student affairs professionals and faculty to educate themselves about the values and traditions of the individual Native American student" (Torres and Bitsoi 2011).

Latinos

Many of the same themes around the persistence of Native American students are repeated in the persistence literature on Latino students in general and males specifically. For example, several studies note that academic underpreparedness, low socioeconomic status, different social and cultural capital, family obligations, ethnic identity, and campus climate influence Latino attrition (Strayhorn 2008; Saenz and Ponjuan 2009). Considering Latino males specifically, scholars cite cultural misfit, sense of self, gender roles and lack of mentors as important factors in the persistence quandary (Gloria, Castellanos et al. 2009; Morales 2010).

Latino issues researchers have focused on how campus climate, students' sense of belonging to that community and the means of coping with issues of campus environments affect persistence of Latino students. Yosso, Smith, Ceja and Soloranzo (2009) looked at how racial microaggressions (subtle degradations and putdowns that demean ethnic identity, doubt expressed about students' academic merit, and the dismissal of their cultural knowledge) shape campus environments and the ways in which Latino undergraduates respond. The authors found

that students responded to institutional, interpersonal and racial joke microaggressions through community building and developing strategies for navigating their institutional environments. Gloria, Castellanos, Scull and Villegas (2009) also found that Latino males developed active coping strategies to deal with perceived barriers and cultural challenges on campus, noting that foreign-born students perceived more barriers than native-born students. Strayhorn (2008) found that Latino students' interactions with diverse peers positively influenced their sense of belonging at their institutions. Guardia's and Evans's (2008) study of Latino fraternity members at a Latino-serving institution suggested that enhancing ethnic identity through the fraternity experience enriched Latino males' college experiences.

To improve Latino male persistence, the literature suggests improving the campus racial climate, offering culturally appropriate retention/support programming, providing financial aid and on-campus employment opportunities, and adding programs to help students stay connected to family and mentoring. Of note, cultural and family messages related to gender roles and the concept of *familismo* (or strong identification with/sense of responsibility to family) create a unique milieu around Latino male college persistence and support (Guardia and Evans 2008; Gloria, Castellanos et al. 2009; Saenz and Ponjuan 2009; Schwartz, Donovan et al. 2009).

Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders

Research relevant to the persistence and support of Asian American/Pacific Islander college students primarily deals with the identity, psychological health and well-being of students and campus climate. Alvarez (2002) highlighted the varying degrees to which students actually identify with being Asian American, noting the importance of student affairs practitioners developing an understanding of this aspect of Asian student development. Teranishi, Behringer, Grey and Parker (2009) reiterated this sentiment with their assertion that the impact of race on Asian American students is often ignored.

The limited research on Asian American students' racial experiences is overshadowed by a focus on psychological issues. Along these lines, Cress and Ikeda (2003) examined how Asian American students' perceptions of campus climate affect mental health and depression, finding that Asian American students report higher levels of depression but were less likely to seek help. Asian American males were more likely to suffer from depression than women. Ramanujan (2006) also reported that Asian males were under unique pressures to succeed and were among the least likely to seek help. Researchers suggest culturally sensitive approaches to supporting the mental health of Asian American/Pacific Islander students, such as the Asian American Campus Climate Task Force created at Cornell University in response to a disproportionately high suicide rate among Asian students (Cress and Ikeda 2003; Ramanujan 2006; National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education 2008; Teranishi, Behringer et al. 2009).

Other studies specifically examine gender and ethnicity differences in Asian American/Pacific Islander student persistence (Brandon 1990; Gloria and Ho 2003). According to Brandon, degree attainment by Asian American women whose home language was not English was significantly higher than that of their male counterparts. Gloria and Ho (2003) found that social support was the strongest predictor of persistence among 160 Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Pacific Islander and Vietnamese students. This study also noted differences between subgroups, which again indicated a need for ethnicity-specific research.

African Americans

The research on persistence and support for African American males in higher education has been investigated by many authors (Fries-Britt 1997; Fries-Britt 1998; Fries-Britt and Turner 2001; Fries-Britt and Turner 2002; Harper 2004; Cuyjet 2006; Harper and Gasman 2008; Palmer and Gasman 2008). These studies have examined the academic success of African American college students and

have sought to identify the challenges to success for African American males. Many of these studies have found that supportive faculty, campus environments and peers are important for the success of African American students (Strayhorn 2008a; Strayhorn 2008b; Strayhorn 2008c; Davis and Jordan 1994; LaVant, Anderson et al. 1997; Glenn 2004; Harper 2004; Cuyjet 2006; Harper 2007; Harper and Gasman 2008; Palmer and Gasman 2008). For example, Harper (2006) found that peers played a significant role in collegiate success for African American males, and that peer mentors helped these students get acclimated to college. In addition, Palmer and Gasman (2008) found that encouragement from faculty and administrators plays an important role in academic success for African American males. The study also stressed the importance of mentors and role models in African American males' success.

In addition to studies that found factors for persistence relevant to African American males, some researchers found significant factors that lead to attrition for these students (Harper 2007; Harper and Nichols 2008; Harris, Mmeje et al. 2005; Watkins, Green et al. 2007; Palmer, Davis et al. 2009). For example, Harper (2007) found that forced classroom participation and certain faculty teaching styles can have a negative impact on African American males. Further, Palmer, Davis and Hilton (2009) found that many African American males face challenges that include a lack of financial support, failure to seek support services, and difficulty navigating home and school.

Synopsis

Table 8 shows a summary of the findings from the higher education literature on young men of color. In the area of college access and participation, many findings were common to males of many racial/ethnic groups. Male participation in higher education lags that of women across all racial/ethnic groups; and low academic achievement, high grade repetition and overpopulation in special education programs were all factors that were found to impede access to and participation in higher education for African American, Latino and Native American males. Further barriers to college access and enrollment by African American males include being discouraged from attending college by teachers and counselors, underrepresentation in gifted programs, lack of participation in college-preparatory courses, and underrepresentation in Advanced Placement courses. Asian Americans were found to have high academic achievement in general, yet the model minority myth faced by Asian American males also impeded their access and participation in college.

The higher education achievement and persistence literature shows that male persistence in college and in degree attainment across all racial/ethnic groups is lower than that of women. Forced classroom participation, lack of financial support, failure to seek support services, and difficulty navigating home and school all served as barriers to persistence for African American males in higher education. Asian American males are hindered in college persistence by mental health issues. These issues included depression and internal and external pressures to succeed in college (and for which these students often fail to seek help or support). Latino males have a variety of obstacles that inhibit their ability to persist in higher education. These obstacles include academic underpreparedness, family obligations, ethnic identities, social and cultural

misfit, and microaggressions. Native American males were noted to have several barriers to higher education persistence. These roadblocks include students working full time, enrolling in college part time, and stopping in and out of college. These obstacles are present because Native American males value family responsibilities over school.

Support in higher education was a topic that received much attention in the higher education literature, and the findings show factors that cause or influence attrition or persistence in higher education for young men of color. Across all racial/ethnic groups, supportive campus climates are shown to be important for student success. For African American males, the literature talks about the importance of supportive faculty, supportive campus environments and supportive peers to their academic success. African American students have developed several coping strategies that include community building, interactions with diverse peers, and involvement in fraternities and other clubs and organizations. Similarly, the findings for Asian American and Pacific Islander males show that a lack of supportive campus environments and a lack of support in general can lead to the attrition of these students. The research on Latino males found that these students lack supportive campus environments, mentors and a sense of belonging to the campus community. Similar to African American students, Latino students have also been forced to resort to developing coping strategies to survive in these unsupportive environments. Native American and Alaska Native students have been shown to thrive in higher education when they have strong institutional support, institutional commitment to diversity, and a connection to homeland and culture. Native American and Alaska Native students have also shown great perseverance when they have personal commitment, self-beliefs and social support.

Table 8
Findings from Higher Education Literature

	African American	Asian American/ Pacific Islander	Native American/ Alaska Native	Latino
College Access and Participation	Male Participation in Higher Education Lags that of Women	Male Participation in Higher Education Lags that of Women	Male Participation in Higher Education Lags that of Women	Male Participation in Higher Education Lags that of Women
	Lack of Teacher and Counselor Encouragement to Enroll in College	Model Minority Myth	Low Academic Achievement	Low Academic Achievement
	Discouragement to Attend College by Teachers and Counselors	High Academic Achievement	High Grade Repetition	Overpopulation in Special Education
	Lack of Participation in College-Preparatory Courses		Overpopulation in Special Education	High Grade Repetition
	Low Academic Achievement		No Access to Core Academic Curriculum	
	High Grade Repetition			
	Overpopulation in Special Education			
	Underrepresentation in Gifted Programs			
Underrepresentation in Advanced Placement				
Achievement Persistence	Males Lag Women in Degree Attainment	Males Lag Women in Degree Attainment	Males Lag Women in Degree Attainment	Males Lag Women in Degree Attainment
	Males Lag Women in Persistence in College	Males Lag Women in Persistence in College	Males Lag Women in Persistence in College	Males Lag Women in Persistence in College
	Forced Classroom Participation	Mental Health Issues	Working Full Time	Underpreparedness
	Lack of Financial Support	Depression	Part-Time Enrollment in College	Low-Socioeconomic Status
	Failure to Seek Support Services	Pressure to Succeed	Stopping In and Out of College	Different Social and Cultural Capital
	Difficulty Navigating Home and School	Does Not Seek Help or Support	Transferring	Family Obligations
			Valuing Family Responsibilities Over School	Ethnic Identity
			Cultural Misfit	
			Sense of Self	
			Gender Roles	
			Microaggressions	

Table 8 (continued)

Findings from Higher Education Literature (Continued)

	African American	Asian American/ Pacific Islander	Native American/ Alaska Native	Latino
Support	Supportive Faculty	Lack of Supportive Campus Climate	Support from Family	Lack of Mentors
	Supportive Campus Environments	Lack of Support	Support from Institution	Lack of Supportive Campus Climate
	Supportive Peers		Institutional Commitment to Diversity	Lack of Belonging to Campus Community
	Interactions with Diverse Peers		Personal Commitment	Community Building
	Involvement in Fraternities and Other Clubs and Organizations		Connection to Homeland and Culture	Developing Coping Strategies
	Lack of Mentors		Self-Beliefs	Interactions with Diverse Peers
	Lack of Supportive Campus Climate		Social Support	
	Lack of Belonging to Campus Community		Comfort in the University Environment	Involvement in Fraternities and Other Clubs and Organizations

From Research to Recommendations

The literature shows that males of all racial/ethnic groups share many barriers to success and the factors that support persistence, although obstacles still exist that are specific to specific races/ethnicities. It is also clear that no “easy” button can be pressed to solve the problems facing young men of color overnight. Rather, this is a daunting task that will take efforts at the national, state and local levels. This is not a problem that can be fixed by government alone, but must also involve states, local school districts, two-year and four-year colleges and universities, and community organizations at every level. Further, more research must be done across all racial/ethnic groups to identify the best policies, programs and practices that support students from high school to college completion.

The challenge will be to create and sustain policies, programs and practices in an environment of diminishing resources. This will require us to come up with creative ways to address college completion for minority students that are both effective and efficient. The question is not whether we can afford to make these necessary changes; we must ask whether we can afford to not make closing the achievement gap among young men of color a national priority.

The following recommendations are offered to address the myriad educational problems that young men of color face — from broad to specific, cultural to structural. These solutions are multifaceted, and include policy, research, institutional and community approaches. Each of these recommendations is vitally important in changing the discourse and the results for men of color in the United States.

Recommendation 1

Policymakers must make improving outcomes for young men of color a national priority.

As noted before, there is no one-size-fits-all solution to dealing with the issues faced by men of color. Policymakers cannot create a single policy that will fix all the problems facing young men of color.

However, several policy initiatives have been created by federal, state and local policymakers that are aimed at improving outcomes for young men and women of color.

White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics

On Oct. 19, 2010, President Obama signed Executive Order 13555, renewing the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, which demonstrates the president's strong support for the critical role Hispanics play in the overall prosperity of the nation and highlights the administration's commitment to expanding education opportunities and improving education outcomes for all students. The White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans was established in September 1990 by President George H.W. Bush to provide advice and guidance to the secretary of education on education issues related to Hispanics and to address academic excellence and opportunities to the Hispanic community. While this initiative is not focused exclusively on males, it is a great example of how a policy initiative can be used to galvanize the nation toward a goal.

Through this initiative, the White House will work directly with communities nationwide in public-private partnerships, linking together key individuals and organizations from within and outside the education system to increase capacity and announce community-wide education initiatives. President Obama also formed a Presidential Advisory Commission and national network of community leaders that will provide real-time input and advice on the development, implementation and coordination of education policy and programs that impact the Hispanic community. In addition, a federal interagency working group has been formed to exchange resources and address issues impacting the lives of Hispanics nationwide, including housing, health, finance, employment and education, among others.

Further Information: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/list/hispanic-initiative/index.html>

State of the African American Male (SAAM)

The Congressional Black Caucus Foundation launched the State of the African American Male (SAAM) initiative in 2003, under the leadership of Rep. Danny Davis, to take a proactive stance in determining policy initiatives to facilitate the economic and social well-being, and the wellness of black men in the United States SAAM facilitates dialogue between individuals

and organizations and addresses the issues significantly affecting African American males. SAAM seeks to better understand some of the historical, psychological, economic and social challenges prohibiting upward mobility for many African American males.

SAAM also seeks to assess the impact of the larger society on the current condition of African American males, and the role it should play in empowering these men and boys to overcome barriers. SAAM seeks to address issues affecting African American males in five areas:

- Health
- Education
- Economic empowerment
- Criminal justice
- Civic participation

In making these discoveries, SAAM hopes to inspire action that will generate legislative, policy and social changes that will dissolve barriers to success for African American males and empower these men and boys to seek and obtain the resources that they need to overcome the obstacles that remain.

Further Information: <http://www.iamsaam.org/>

University System of Georgia's African American Male Initiative

The African American Male Initiative (AAMI) of the University System of Georgia (USG) is aimed at increasing the number of African American males enrolled in the state's colleges and universities. The goal of the program is to increase the recruitment, retention and graduation of young black men within the USG through strategic intervention at both the K-12 and higher education levels.

The genesis of the AAMI program can be traced to a USG benchmarking initiative undertaken in 2001. The systemwide review examined every aspect of USG's performance, from fiscal operations to enrollment data. When the enrollment data was scrutinized further, there were two underrepresented groups in the system: nontraditional students and black males. In fact, there was a disproportionate African American female-to-male enrollment ratio of nearly 2:1. According to fall 2002 enrollment data, African

American women constituted 68 percent of USG's black enrollment — 35,873 black females compared to 17,068 black males. The question then became: What are the barriers to African American male enrollment and retention in Georgia's then 34 public colleges and universities?

In one of its first major activities at the university, the AAMI will host a statewide "Best Practices" conference to showcase successful and effective strategies that have been used at the state and national levels to accomplish the program's goals. Since the program's inception, the gap between African American male and African American female annual enrollment growth within the USG has closed. In fall 2002, black female enrollment growth increased 9.5 percent over the previous fall, compared to an enrollment growth of 7.2 percent for black males for the period. By fall 2004, the black female enrollment growth was 2.8 percent, nearly on par with the black male percentage increase of 2.9. In fall 2005, the black male enrollment growth of 3.1 percent was nearly triple that of the black female enrollment increase of 1.4 percent. That closing of the gap continued in fall 2007, when the black female increase was 4.4 percent compared to the black male increase of 7.4 percent — significantly reversing the negative trend. The program results have led to this being considered a model program for the nation.

Further Information: <http://www.usg.edu/aami/>

City University of New York (CUNY) Black Male Initiative

In May 2004, the Board of Trustees of The City University of New York unanimously approved its Master Plan 2004–2008, and this comprehensive planning document included the "Chancellor's Initiative on the Black Male in Education." In fall 2004, Chancellor Goldstein established a University Task Force on the Black Male Initiative, and charged it with developing recommendations that would include a series of action-oriented projects to help black males overcome the inequalities that lead to poor academic performance in the K–12 system, the attendant weak enrollment, retention and graduation from institutions

of higher education, and the high rates of joblessness and incarceration. The Task Force proposed nine major recommendations, including:

1. Provide strong university leadership on the challenges facing black youth and men
2. Strengthen the school-to-college pipeline to enable many more black male students to move into higher education
3. Increase admission and graduation rates at CUNY colleges
4. Improve teacher education to prepare professionals for urban education
5. Improve employment prospects for black males
6. Contribute to the reduction of the incarceration rate for black men
7. Establish an Institute for the Achievement of Educational and Social Equity for Black Males
8. Involve experts in the implementation of the recommendations
9. Establish benchmarks and hold colleges accountable for implementing these recommendations

CUNY was awarded funding from the New York City Council and began to implement some of the aforementioned recommendations. Fifteen demonstration projects that were designed to improve the enrollment and/or graduation rates of students from underrepresented groups, particularly black males, were funded. Funding was also allocated to increase opportunities for individuals without a high school diploma to enroll in GED courses oriented toward college preparation; to provide support for formerly incarcerated individuals to enroll in college; and to survey workforce development opportunities in New York City's construction industry. All programs and activities of the Black Male Initiative (BMI) are open to all academically eligible students, faculty and staff, without regard to race, gender, national origin or other characteristic. Now, in its fourth year, the CUNY BMI program continues to grow, building on the successes of the past three years.

Further Information: <http://www.cuny.edu/academics/initiatives/bmi.html>

Recommendation 2

Increase community, business and school partnerships to provide mentoring and support to young men of color.

Businesses and community organizations can play a vital role in helping young men of color. Some of the solutions that these organizations can implement include providing incentives/rewards for children of employees who do well in school, releasing parents to attend teacher conferences, and providing mentors for students in both K–12 and higher education. These actions could significantly transform local communities. In addition, the role of mentors in guiding men of color to success in both high school and college has been well documented and noted. Community-based empowerment programs are another way to help reach students and provide them with much of the academic and social support they need.

There are several model programs of successful collaborations between businesses and community-based organizations with schools that are aimed specifically at men of color.

100 Black Men of America

The mission of 100 Black Men of America, Inc. is to improve the quality of life within our communities and enhance educational and economic opportunities for all African Americans. The organization mentors youth through a worldwide network of chapters. Across the United States and internationally, 100 Black Men of America, Inc. and 100 Black Men International are positively impacting the lives of tomorrow's leaders through its organization's signature programs, such as Mentoring the 100 Way and Collegiate 100. Chapters also deliver unique, innovative mentoring initiatives that are locally relevant and that change the lives of tens of thousands of youth annually.

Mentoring the 100 Way is a holistic mentoring program that addresses the social, emotional and cultural needs of children ages 8 to 18. Members of the 100 are trained and certified to become mentors, advocates and role models for the youth within their communities. Through chapter-operated, one-on-one and group mentoring efforts, 100 members forge relationships that positively impact youth. The program focuses on building essential skills needed to become productive, contributing citizens.

The Collegiate 100 is an auxiliary organization to 100 Black Men. The Collegiate 100 membership is drawn primarily from male African American college students through chapters on university campuses across the United States. The purpose of the Collegiate 100 is to implement the mentoring and tutoring programs of 100 Black Men. Participants assist the parent organization with the development of the social, emotional, educational and physical needs of youth who have few or no positive role models in the communities in which they live. 100 Black Men also provides scholarship, health and wellness, economic empowerment, and leadership programs in the communities they serve.

Further Information: <http://www.100blackmen.org>

Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ)

The Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) is one of the most extensive community-school collaborations in the history of the United States. A remarkably ambitious venture, it boasts that although a black boy born in 2001 stood a 33 percent chance of going to prison, the same child stood a 100 percent chance of being on grade level in kindergarten for the sixth straight year if he attended the Harlem Gems preschool. HCZ is a unique, innovative, community-based organization offering education, social services and community-building services to children and families. It wraps a comprehensive array of child and family services around schools in an entire neighborhood — parenting classes, job training, health clinics, charter schools — and is convinced that schools reflect what is going on in the communities around them. Many of the thousands of students in these schools show impressive achievement gains.

HCZ replaces the "pipeline to prison" (seven neighborhoods in New York City provide 75 percent of the state's prisoners, according to participants in the African American Dialogue Day) with a "conveyor belt" of good experiences: prenatal programs for mothers, foreign languages in preschool, charter schools with longer school days and years, psychological and financial counseling for parents, alternatives to hitting children for discipline, summer camps, a community center, truancy prevention programs, and after-school programs in the arts, computers and karate. The program's sponsors argue that spending an additional \$3,500 per child on these services annually is a lot cheaper than the \$50,000 it costs to keep the same child behind bars.

Further information: www.hcz.org

Chinese Mutual Aid Association’s BBB Program

Chicago’s Chinese Mutual Aid Association (CMAA) offers a number of after-school programs for toddlers, children and adolescents. Of particular interest is the Boys Breaking Barriers (BBB) program, an effort to increase the self-esteem and leadership skills of boys within the uptown and neighboring communities. Meeting twice weekly and serving youth ages 12 to 18, the program is designed to articulate and explore issues important to young men in a manner geared toward their interests, to increase their self-confidence, to improve their interpersonal communication skills, and to build and sustain a support network. BBB features a mentoring program that brings adult mentors and young people together regularly as part of the BBB program. A nearly identical program is also operated for girls and young women ages 12 to 18 – Young Women Warriors (YWW).

Further information: www.chinesemutualaid.org/

XY-Zone

The XY-Zone (denoting the male chromosome) is a Communities in Schools program that operates in six Central Texas high schools, enrolling large numbers of young Hispanic students. It works with male teens to help them prepare for success in school and life by emphasizing responsibility and community awareness, by providing health information, and by supporting positive relationships with parents, peers, adult mentors and partners. The XY-Zone provides participants with job readiness services, support groups, mentors, community service projects and peer education. The program facilitates group discussions around issues associated with men’s health information and adolescent pregnancy. Of the 4,000 students that Communities in Schools served in 2004, 97 percent remained in school, 90 percent advanced to the next grade level and 88 percent improved their grades.

Further information:
www.cisaustin.org/page-xy-zone.cfm

SafeFutures Youth Center (SFYC)

SFYC aims to create a caring extended family atmosphere and provide the highest-quality services to fully develop the potential of everyone who enters. The young men strive to become advocates for themselves and their community by engaging in dialogues, cultivating respect for self and others, developing self-discipline, and enhancing personal growth with the intent of being assets to the community. Aggression Replacement Training (ART) provides creative ways to help youth attach words to feelings in dealing with aggression in group settings, while practicing conflict resolution and moral reasoning techniques in confrontational situations. Other programs encourage mentoring, tutoring and homework completion, youth leadership and community building, and resiliency training to avoid becoming trapped by drugs and violence.

Further information: www.sfyc.net

Recommendation 3

Reform education to ensure that all students, including young men of color, are college and career ready when they graduate from high school.

While the support of government, businesses and communities is needed to solve the challenges facing men of color, schools, teachers, counselors and parents play vital roles in supporting young men of color. Schools can find ways to redesign and reinvent themselves to serve a more diverse set of students. Significant reform is necessary to increase student achievement and to close achievement gaps that exist based on race, ethnicity, gender, disability and English language status.

There are several examples of successful schools that have implemented innovative programs, which aimed specifically at men of color. These programs are showing evidence of improved educational outcomes for young men of color.

Urban Prep Academies (Chicago, Ill.)

The Urban Prep Academies is a network of public high schools for young men that seeks to create citizens of integrity through a partnership between students, administrators, teachers, parents, mentors and community supporters. It stresses academic excellence, leadership, character development, mentoring, integrity and community service. The mission of Urban Prep is to provide a high-quality and comprehensive college-preparatory educational experience to young men that results in its graduates attending and succeeding in college. The schools are a direct response to the urgent need to reverse the often abysmal graduation and college completion rates among African American males in the urban center. Most Urban Prep students come to the three academies from economically disadvantaged households, and many are reading three or more years below grade level.

Despite these circumstances, Urban Prep remains committed to preparing all of its students for college and life. Urban Prep students routinely outperform students from neighborhood and district schools. For example, on the ACT exam, Urban Prep students achieved an average composite score of 16.5, which is three points higher than the average composite score of neighborhood schools and one point above the average for African American boys across the district. The Urban Prep motto is “We Believe,” and this motto is a constant reminder that Urban Prep students will not fall into the trap of negative stereotypes and low expectations. Instead, Urban Prep ensures that its students believe in their potential and in their ability to exceed that potential. The Urban Prep family (teachers, administrators, staff, board of directors, community members and donors) also believe in these young men, and in their important and long-lasting role in the lives of these students.

Further Information: <http://www.urbanprep.org/>

Eagle Academy for Young Men (Bronx, N.Y.)

The Eagle Academy for Young Men is a grades 9–12 public school for young men that seeks to create citizens of integrity through a partnership between students, administrators, teachers, parents, mentors and community supporters. It stresses academic excellence, leadership, character development, mentoring, integrity and community service.

Eagle Academy emphasizes leadership and character development with an academically rigorous curriculum that includes AP classes, exposure to cultural institutions and colleges and universities, and professionals as mentors. It also requires an Academy “contract,” which sets clear standards for behavior, personal accountability and personal responsibility. Each student signs the contract, which is read at the opening day convocation, as a reaffirmation of the students’ commitment to themselves and the school’s mission. Eagle Academy is sponsored by 100 Black Men, Inc., a community-based organization of minority professionals, which also provides a Saturday institute offering academic and life-skills training.

Further information: www.eagleny.org/home.aspx

The Puente Project

The Puente Project is an award-winning program that for more than 25 years has improved the college-going rate of tens of thousands of California’s educationally underrepresented students. A collaboration between the University of California and the California Community College system, it aims to increase the number of educationally disadvantaged students (many of whom are Hispanic) who enroll in four-year colleges and universities, earn degrees, and return to the community as mentors to and leaders of future generations. It is interdisciplinary in approach, with writing, counseling and mentoring components. It now involves 33 high school sites and 59 community college sites throughout the state. Puente staff train high school and community college instructors and counselors to implement a program of rigorous instruction, focused academic counseling and mentoring by members of the community. The model provides students with individual, culturally sensitive, academic and career counseling designed to help each of them graduate and enroll in a four-year institution. Puente’s program currently benefits about 14,000 students annually. Puente is open to all students.

Further information: www.puente.net

Recommendation 4

Improve teacher education programs and provide professional development that includes cultural- and gender-responsive training.

It is important that teachers receive professional development on successful strategies that will allow them to provide culturally sensitive approaches to ensuring positive outcomes for young men of color. This training should include culturally responsive instruction, diversity training, and training in college and career readiness for all teachers and counselors. Student-centered approaches should improve outcomes for young men of color; these approaches should include academic and personal mentoring, personal counseling, positive role models and culturally based programs. Schools should seek to increase the number of male teachers in order to provide role models for young men.

It is imperative that schools create a college-going culture for all students. Minority male students will need help with goal setting, creating postsecondary plans, and navigating the financial aid and admission processes. Schools should provide support for students between high school graduation and college enrollment to ensure that they make a successful transition. This support can come in the form of summer bridge programs, hotlines that help students discover solutions to daunting tasks and questions, or transportation to schools.

There are several examples of model teacher and counselor education programs that provide training, including cultural and gender responsive instruction, and they produce teachers that are ready to educate the growing populations.

Educators for Social Responsibility (ESR)

Educators for Social Responsibility (ESR) is a nonprofit organization that works directly with educators to implement systemic practices that create safe, caring and equitable schools so that all young people succeed in school and life, and help shape a safe, democratic and just world. Founded in 1982, ESR is a national leader in school reform and provides professional development, consultation and educational resources to adults who teach young people in preschool through high school. ESR offers professional development to teachers and counselors in the subjects of social and emotional learning, diversity education, character education, and conflict resolution.

Further Information:

<http://esnational.org/professional-services/>

Florida A&M University Teachers for a New Era Program

The Florida A&M University Teachers for a New Era (TNE) initiative aims to achieve a radical redesign of teacher education and the improvement of teaching and learning. The program has been funded for five years by the Carnegie Foundation. The Carnegie grants aid universities in preparing educators to teach the “millennial generation.” The initiative fully embraces the university’s mission to “provide an enlightened and enriched academic, intellectual, moral, cultural ... student-centered environment conducive to the development of highly qualified individuals who are prepared and capable of serving as leaders and contributors in our ever-evolving society.” TNE is also committed to the institution’s mission of “inspirational teaching, exemplary research, and meaningful public and community service through creative partnerships at the local, state, national and global levels.” Central to the operation of TNE are the university core values of scholarship, excellence, fiscal responsibility, accountability, collaboration, service, integrity, collegiality and ethics.

Florida A&M University TNE has also implemented clinical practices through its Teacher Induction Center. This center, housed at Nims Middle School in Tallahassee, supports teachers who graduate from Florida A&M and other universities for three years beyond graduation. The Teacher Induction Center provides instructional practices and mentor coaching and several training programs on classroom management and instruction.

Further Information:

<http://www.famu.edu/index.cfm?tne&AboutTNE>

Call Me MISTER (Mentors Instructing Students Toward Effective Role Models) Program

Call Me MISTER is a program run by Clemson University in South Carolina that directly addresses the shortage of males in teaching. By providing support so that young men can obtain a bachelor’s degree and a teaching credential, the program expects each MISTER to teach for one year for each year of support. The program recruits young high school men from underserved, disadvantaged and at-risk communities and expects them to return to these schools. The project provides: (1) tuition assistance through loan forgiveness programs; (2) an academic support system to help assure student success; and (3) a cohort system for social and cultural support. Participating academic institutions include 13 colleges in South Carolina and five partner universities in Florida, Georgia, Missouri, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

Further information: www.clemson.edu/hehd/departments/education/research-service/callmemister

Recommendation 5

Create culturally appropriate persistence and retention programs that provide wraparound services to increase college completion for men of color.

Higher education plays a vital role in ensuring the success of young men of color. To reach the shared goal of increasing attainment among men of color, two- and four-year colleges and universities should strengthen persistence and retention strategies that are aimed at retaining men of color in college and increasing their graduation rates. This requires that more institutions provide research-based solutions to aid students. Higher education institutions must have an institutional commitment to diversity, and they must be intentional in their commitment by devoting time, attention and the required resources. Also, there must be constant engagement and active participation by everyone — faculty, student affairs professionals, staff, administrators and students.

Numerous examples of persistence and retention programs aimed at young men of color have been implemented at colleges and universities across the country. Some of these programs are showing evidence of improved educational outcomes for young men of color with increased persistence and graduation rates for the students who are targeted by these programs.

Todd A. Bell National Resource Center on the African American Male at Ohio State University

In 2002, national and local research studies were conducted about the performance of African American male students in college: These led concerned administrators at Ohio State University (OSU) to implement an experimental effort to better understand and, if possible, to improve retention and graduation rates for this subpopulation of undergraduates. The resulting program, which came to be known as the Black Male Initiative, represented a joint effort by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (formerly the Office of Minority Affairs), the Office of Student Affairs, and interested individual members of the faculty and staff. Regular group meetings, frequent personal interaction with individual undergraduates, invited guest speakers and academic support services each played a role, along with information gleaned from the experience of other schools and researchers.

Significant improvements in student satisfaction, performance and retention to graduation were quantitative measures of the program's success. The first year retention rate of African American males in 2002 was 78.1 percent, compared to 82.6 percent for African American females. By 2008, the first-year retention rates for African American males had increased to 91.2 percent, compared to 88.1 percent for African American females. Further, the second-year retention rate increased from 67.1 percent in 2002 to 84.7 percent in 2008. As a result, OSU continues to see an increase in the graduation rates of African American males, yet the full impact of the program will not be known until 2012 when the program's first cohort of students graduates.

So that the campus as a whole might benefit from the lessons learned through the Black Male Initiative, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion established a centralized location to concentrate efforts to increase the retention and graduation rates of African American men. The establishment of this center was approved in 2004, and the Todd A. Bell National Resource Center on the African American male was opened in 2005.

Further Information: <http://oma.osu.edu/current-students/bell-resource-center/>

Multicultural Student Retention Services (MSRS) at Kennesaw State University

The mission of Multicultural Student Retention Services is to provide essential resources, services and opportunities to aid in the retention and academic persistence of historically underrepresented minority students at Kennesaw State University. MSRS was founded initially by faculty in response to the low enrollment of minority students at KSU. Today, MSRS still exists to provide minority students the support needed to complete their educational experience at KSU. The Kennesaw State University MSRS also has an African American Male Initiative that exists in partnership with faculty, staff and students to focus on increasing enrollment, retention and graduation rates of black men at KSU through mentoring, leadership development, and the celebration of academic and leadership achievements. Since the inception of the MSRS, the minority student population of KSU has increased from 15 percent to 21 percent of the entire student population.

Further Information:

http://www.kennesaw.edu/stu_dev/msrs/

Recommendation 6

Produce more research and conduct more studies that strengthen the understanding of the challenges faced by males of color and provide evidence-based solutions to these challenges.

There are several areas of future research that are important to advancing the knowledge of, and creating solutions, for the challenges faced by young men of color. It is our hope that this report will be the impetus for scholars to investigate more rigorously the issues affecting the academic performance of young men of color. We are particularly interested in research that identifies and validates solutions rather than identifying the problems all over again.

Data must be disaggregated at the federal, state and local levels for all students in all schools.

The availability of data is a key element that is missing for all students, including young men of color. There is a need to get more data that can be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, country of origin, citizenship status, first language and best language; these data may disentangle part of the web of mysteries that still exist regarding men and women of color. There is also a need to collect and disaggregate data by smaller ethnic subpopulations. This is especially true for Asian American/Pacific Islander and Hispanic/Latino students, where these disaggregations can illuminate new findings that may be helpful in improving outcomes for these students.

Future research must increase our understanding of the educational experiences of young men of color, especially for Native Americans, Hispanics and Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders.

One of the main findings of this literature and landscape review is there is simply not enough research available that concerns men of color, especially Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders and Native Americans/Alaska Natives. Only slightly more information exists for Latinos. Though African American men have received the lion's share of attention with regard to men of color, much of the research that has been done is not evidence based and has not proven to be effective in solving the problems for African Americans. More and better research and data are needed in relation to men of color that will help to design better and more culturally sensitive interventions and strategies that will help these students with college readiness and completion.

Future research must examine high achievement among men of color.

A survey of the literature on achievement for minority high school males — particularly African Americans, Latinos and Native Americans — reveals an overwhelming focus on underachievement, as suggested by the previous findings. While there is a plethora of research on the educational and social condition of young men of color, there is still a need to expand this research to include studies of high-achieving men of color. This may uncover more factors that contribute to persistence in education for men of color. Although identifying high-achieving young men of color and understanding the factors that contribute to their success could provide helpful insights into addressing underachievement, few studies actually consider high-achieving young men of color (Morris 2002; Harper 2004; Harper 2005; Harper and Quaye 2007; Harper and Nichols 2008; Whiting 2009; Garrett, Antrop-Gonzalez et al. 2010).

Rather, the literature — however well intentioned — seems to reflect the broad acceptance (and expectation) of academic underachievement as a given for young men of color (Duncan 2002; Noguera 2009). Relative to African American males, Duncan (2002) used critical race theory in explaining how their academic marginalization is [inappropriately] “understood as natural” (p. 140). And given the preponderance of bad news, one might be left with the impression that all African American, Latino and Native American males struggle academically. Yet, Noguera (2009) pointed out, “the good news is that not all African American males [or Latino males or Native American males] are at risk” (p. 434). Therefore, just as one might study successful schools or interventions to discover best practices that could be replicated and scaled, researchers might give more consideration to young men of color who are “beating the odds” academically.

Future research must identify the factors that contribute to the success of high minority and high poverty schools that defy the odds.

Annually, the College Board Inspiration Awards celebrate the extraordinary commitment of educators and communities to their students' futures. Each spring the College Board presents Inspiration Awards to three of America's most improved secondary schools. Award-winning schools are recognized for their outstanding college-preparation programs and partnerships among teachers, parents and community organizations. Through their dedication and commitment, these school communities have opened doors to higher education for students facing economic, social and cultural barriers by:

- Improving their academic environment
- Creating a college-going culture
- Helping a significant proportion of students realize the promise of higher education

The 2010 Inspiration Awards recognized three exceptional high schools for helping underserved students achieve access to higher education.

The winners were:

- Medgar Evers College Preparatory School, Brooklyn, N.Y.
- Green Run High School, Virginia Beach, Va.
- Hogan Preparatory Academy, Kansas City, Mo.

The Inspiration Awards were created to celebrate America's most remarkable schools and to share their stories as inspiration for educators, parents and communities to do all we can to connect young people with college success. However, more research must be done to find out how and why these schools are successful, and to find scalable solutions for other schools throughout the country.

It is the goal of this report to serve as the impetus for policymakers, businesses, communities, schools, teachers, counselors, two- and four-year colleges and universities, and scholars to address the issues

affecting the academic performance of young men of color. The College Board is particularly interested in research, partnerships and collaborative efforts leading to viable solutions to the challenges that are currently experienced by young men of color. This must be done to improve the nation's education system, and to reach the goal of ensuring that at least 55 percent of young Americans earn a postsecondary degree or credential by 2025. This goal cannot be accomplished unless we tackle and solve the problems faced by young men of color. This completion goal is not just about once again making the U.S. a leader in education attainment, nor is it simply an equity agenda. Instead, the goal of eradicating the disparities that exist for minorities — especially men of color — is about jobs and the future of the American economy and competitiveness. We must have a diverse, educated workforce that is prepared for the knowledge-based jobs of the future and that will lead the United States through the challenges of the future.

Future research must find evidence-based solutions for improving educational opportunities for young men of color at every level.

As this study has shown, the research is heavily slanted toward the identification of problems in the respective communities. However, there is a deficiency of solution-based research. This is even the case with African American research, though a plethora of studies and research has been conducted in this group. This weakness must be corrected for all groups, especially for smaller communities such as Pacific Islanders and Native Americans, for which the body of studies and research is quite small and there is little disaggregation by gender. This has led to a lack of policy responses in many of these communities.

Conclusion

The United States must be poised to regain our once-preeminent international position in educational attainment, and we must begin to matriculate and graduate populations of American students who traditionally have been underrepresented at the postsecondary level. This will require that we change the narrative surrounding young men of color from one of dismal college completion rates to one where all students excel in college completion regardless of their race/ethnicity.

Across the board in each racial group, young women are outperforming young men with respect to the attainment of high school diplomas, with even more pronounced disparities at the postsecondary level. Yet we must not forget that young women of color are themselves still in need of serious attention, thus we must learn to serve both populations well. The nation must recommit to improving outcomes for young men of color, and we must make this a national priority. Policymakers can play a leading role in developing solutions to the problems faced by young men of color, such as creating policy initiatives and providing monetary encouragement to incentivize improving outcomes for minority males of color.

We must then move forward with creating more community-school partnerships that can provide support to young men of color. Community-based organizations can work with businesses and communities to increase community involvement, and to improve school and community collaboration. Community-based empowerment programs are a way to help reach young men of color, and provide them with much of the academic and social support that is needed by students.

Though active engagement by these policymakers and the involvement of the community are important, they alone cannot provide all the change that we seek for young men of color. In fact, they must be accompanied by educational reforms that ensure that

all students (including young men of color) graduate from high school and are college and career ready. Schools must be prepared to close the achievement gaps that exist for all students, whether they are by race, ethnicity, gender, etc. Further, we must ensure that quality teachers who are ready to deal with the unique challenges of young men of color are available. This includes ensuring that all teachers have access to cultural- and gender-responsive training, and that they have the best strategies available to ensure the academic success of young men of color.

It will also be important that academic and social support services for these students extend beyond their high school experiences. Colleges and universities must be sure to provide culturally appropriate persistence and retention programs that provide these services to young men of color, ensuring that they do not just access higher education but successfully complete college with an associate degree or higher. With these support structures in place across the academic pipeline, together we can ensure that young men of color are successful.

Last but not least, researchers and institutions must be committed to conducting more studies that strengthen the understanding of the challenges faced by young men of color and then provide evidence-based solutions to these challenges. This includes ensuring that collected data can be disaggregated into smaller subpopulations. Also, further research must focus on solutions that can be used to successfully increase graduation rates among young men of color.

It is our hope that this report will be the impetus for policymakers, educators, counselors, businesses, community organizations, institutions and scholars to investigate and innovate solutions to help solve the issues affecting the performance and outcomes of young men of color. The College Board believes that by focusing on the outlined recommendations we can create positive outcomes for young men of color.

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Young Men of Color

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