



# Knocking at the College Door

## Projections of High School Graduates

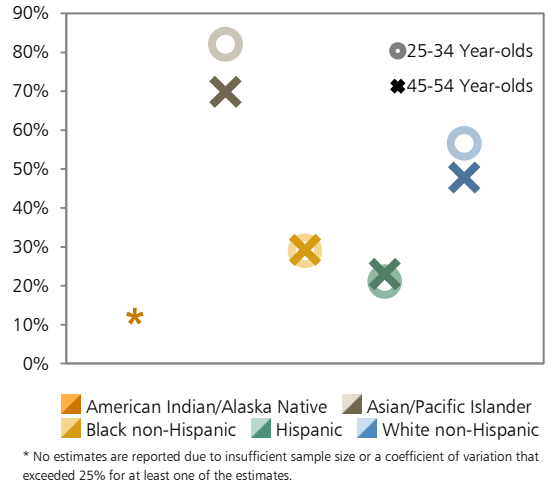
### NEW JERSEY

National and regional trends mask important variation among states in the supply of high school graduates. This profile provides brief indicators for New Jersey related to: current levels of educational attainment, our projections of high school graduates into the future, and two common barriers to student access and success – insufficient academic preparation and inadequate finances.

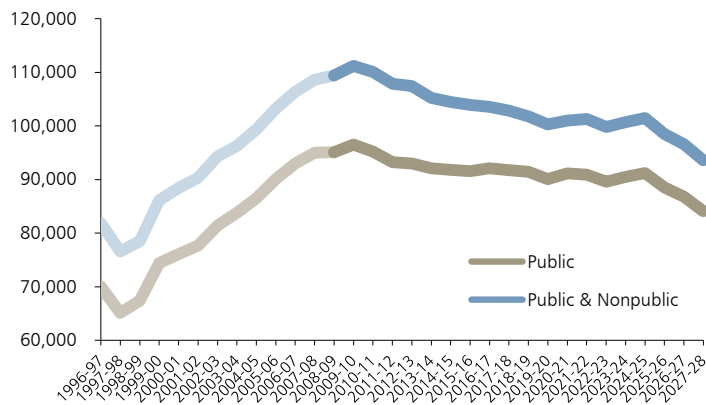
#### Educational Attainment by Race/Ethnicity<sup>1</sup>

Workforce projections suggest a growing demand for well-educated labor, so that younger adults need to be as well as or more educated than older adults given how much longer they will need to be employed. In New Jersey between 2008 and 2010, 47.2% of younger working-age adults (aged 25-34) had earned postsecondary degrees, slightly more than the 43.7% of older adults (aged 45-54). Additionally, large gaps in educational attainment exist among racial/ethnic groups, especially for younger adults.

- More younger Asians/Pacific Islanders and White non-Hispanics adults had degrees than their older counterparts, 12.1 and 8.8 percentage points more, respectively.
- About 29% of younger Black non-Hispanics had earned a postsecondary degree compared to only 21.1% of younger Hispanics.
- This evidence suggests that the gulf in educational attainment at the postsecondary level among racial/ethnic groups in New Jersey is widening.



#### Production of High School Graduates



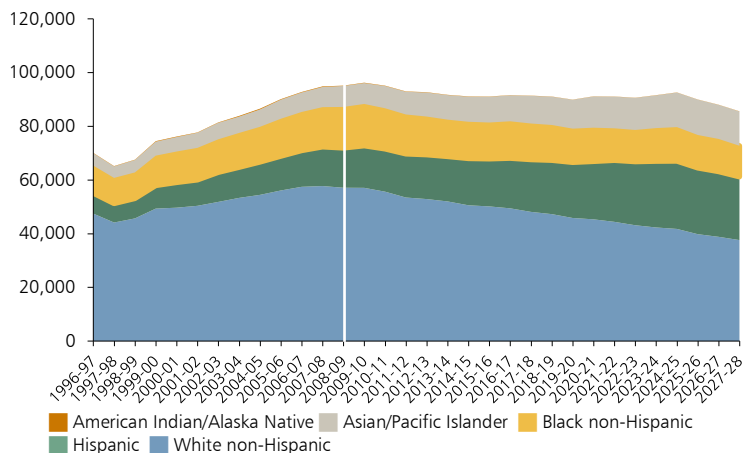
New Jersey's production of high school graduates went into high gear starting in 1997-98 but that continuous growth is about to reverse itself.

- There were 43% more graduates, about 32,878 more, on 2008-09 than in 1997-98
- After peaking in 2009-10 at over 111,000, New Jersey's graduating class is projected to will decline consistently through 2019-20, by about 10% or 11,000 graduates.
- Nonpublic schools have contributed robustly to the total number of graduates historically. But their production is also projected to fall substantially, by about 31% between 2008-09 and 2020-21, and over this timeframe they will decline from 13% of all graduates to less than 10%.

#### Public High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity

Mirroring the pattern of public graduating classes in many other states, White non-Hispanics in New Jersey are in the midst of a projected long-term decline, projected to fall about 21% through 2019-20 from their peak in 2007-08.

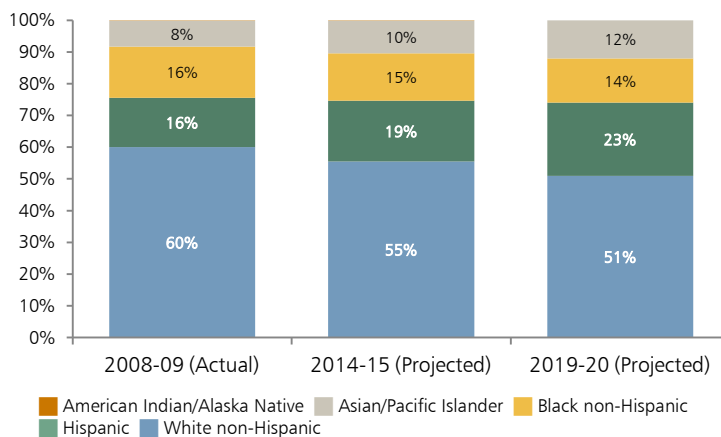
- Black non-Hispanics are projected to decline about 3,000 off their peak of about 15,500 in 2009-10.
- Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander graduate increases will partially offset the erosion. Hispanics show continuous increases up to about 25,000 graduates through 2024-25, and Asians/Pacific Islanders may reach about 13,000 graduates through 2025-26.
- Between 2008-09 and 2019-20, both Asians/Pacific Islanders are expected to grow by about 40%.



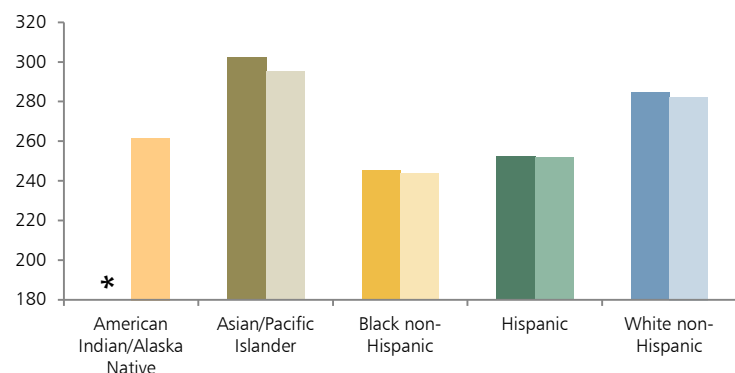
## Composition of Public High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity

Rapid increases in Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander graduates and swift decreases in White non-Hispanic graduates will reconfigure the racial/ethnic composition of New Jersey's public high school graduating classes.

- White non-Hispanics are projected to fall below 50% of the class for the first time in 2020-21, from 60% in 2008-09.
- The Hispanic share is projected to grow from 16% in 2008-09 to a quarter of all graduates by 2021-22.
- The proportion of Asians/Pacific Islanders will climb 4 percentage points to 12% by 2019-20.
- The Black non-Hispanic share will shrink modestly by about two percentage points over that same timeframe.



## Composite Math and Reading Scores by Race/Ethnicity<sup>2</sup>



Note: New Jersey in darker shades; U.S. in lighter shades. \*Reporting standards were not met and no score is available.

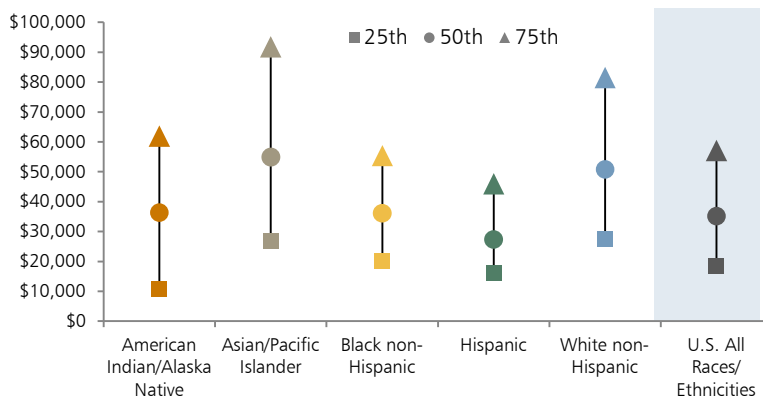
Academic preparation is a major factor in access to and success in college. One indicator of readiness comes from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) math and reading scores for twelfth graders in 2009.

- Black non-Hispanics and Hispanics had substantially lower composite scores, 245.3 and 252.2, respectively, than White non-Hispanics and Asians/Pacific Islanders.
- At 302.2, Asians/Pacific Islanders scored significantly higher than White non-Hispanics, whose composite score was 284.9.
- All racial/ethnic groups in New Jersey, except American Indians/Alaska Natives for whom state-level data were unavailable, performed equally well as they did nationwide.

## Annual Income by Race/Ethnicity<sup>3</sup>

A second major barrier is access to the financial resources needed to pay for college. In New Jersey from 2006 to 2010, the statewide median income for the working-age population (25-64) was \$43,934, compared with \$35,147 for the nation.

- The median income of Asians/Pacific Islanders was \$54,917, higher than any other racial/ethnic group in the state, and about 56% more than the national median.
- A quarter of Hispanics earned less than about \$16,000. Their median income of \$27,372 was roughly equivalent to the least-wealthy quarter of White non-Hispanics. The median income for Black non-Hispanics was \$36,095.



Projections of high school graduates are from WICHE, *Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates*, 2012. 1996-97 to 2008-09 are actual reported graduates and 2009-10 to 2027-28 are projections. The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems supplied the data used in the first and last figures. State-level estimates for those figures are only reported for a racial/ethnic group when the coefficients of variation for all estimates do not exceed 25% and sample size is 50 or greater. Readers should understand that estimates for small samples can be imprecise due to large standard errors. WICHE provides relevant data tables at <http://wiche.edu/knocking-8th/technicalNotes>.

<sup>1</sup>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-10 American Community Survey (ACS) Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) File. Average annual percent of population aged 25-34 and 45-54 with an Associate's degree or higher in 2008-10.

<sup>2</sup>Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2009 and 2011 Mathematics and Reading Assessments, generated using the NAEP Data Explorer. <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/>. Notes: Composite scores are the average of the Math and Reading scores for 12th graders tested in 2009; Math scores (0 to 300) were converted to fit the Reading scale of 0 to 500.

<sup>3</sup>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-10 American Community Survey Five-Year Public Use Microdata Sample File. Note: Percentiles for wage/salary income were calculated for persons age 25-64 with positive earnings; unemployed persons with \$0 income were also included. Figures are in 2010 dollars. Native Hawaiians are included in Asian/Pacific Islander.

For more information email [knocking@wiche.edu](mailto:knocking@wiche.edu) or contact Peace Bransberger, Research Analyst, 303.541.0257, [pbransberger@wiche.edu](mailto:pbransberger@wiche.edu), or Brian Prescott, Director of Policy Research, 303.541.0255, [bprescott@wiche.edu](mailto:bprescott@wiche.edu). Visit <http://wiche.edu/knocking> to obtain the full publication and download these projections as [graphs](#) or [data files](#).