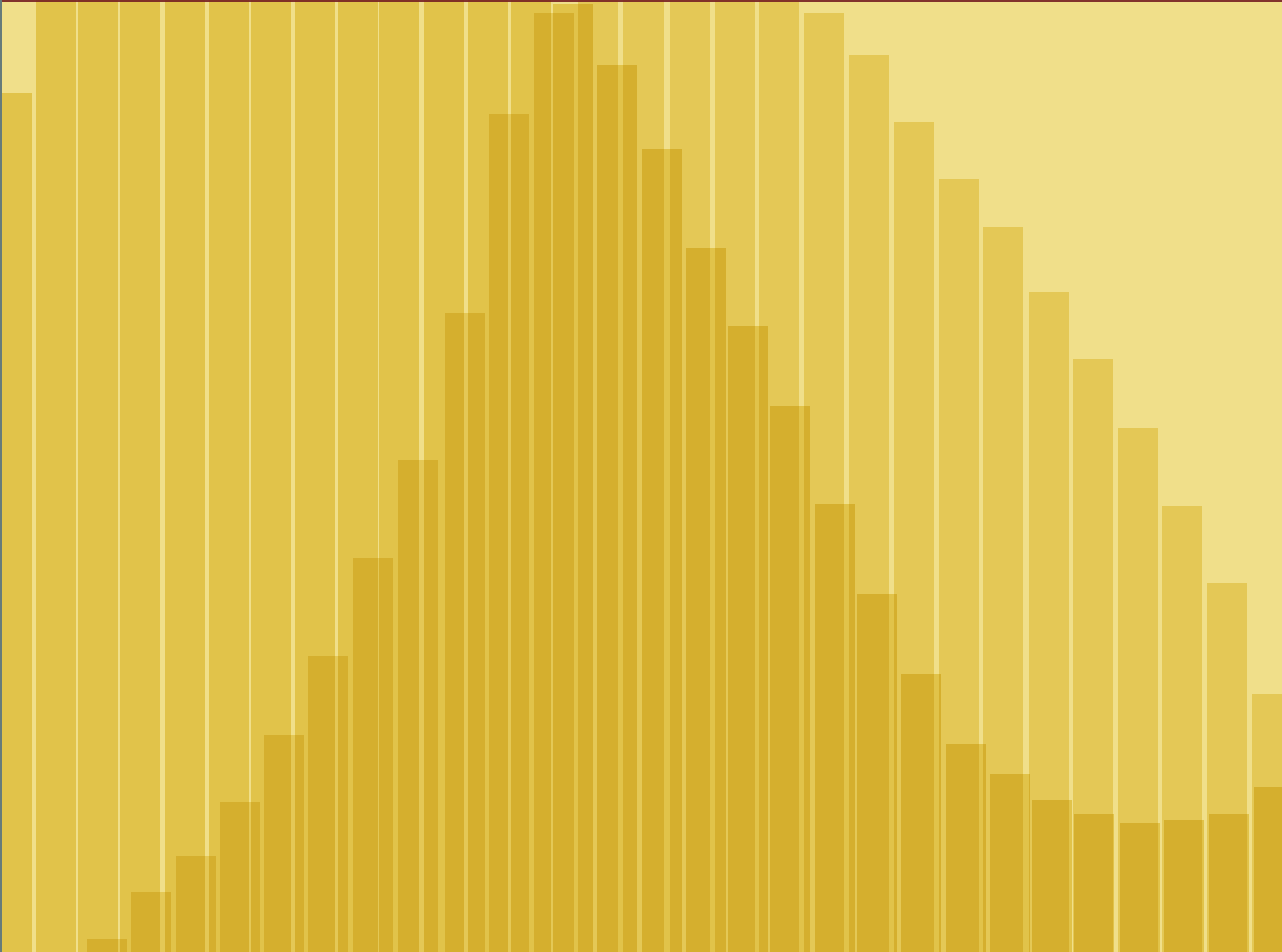


# Rising Tide II:

## Do Black Students Benefit as Grad Rates Increase?



**The Education Trust**

### TO THE POINT

- ▶ Many institutions celebrate improvements in student success. But overall gains often mask different outcomes for different groups of students. Nowhere do we see this more clearly than for black students.
- ▶ In the past decade, graduation rates for black students at four-year, public institutions have improved. But progress for other student groups has been faster, widening long-standing gaps.
- ▶ Some institutions, however, have effectively closed their gaps, providing a model for others to do the same.

More than two-thirds of four-year, public colleges and universities have increased graduation rates in the past decade. But overall improvements often mask different outcomes for different groups of students, and nowhere do we see this more clearly than for black students.

# Rising Tide II: Do Black Students Benefit as Grad Rates Increase?

BY ANDREW HOWARD NICHOLS, KIMBERLEE EBERLE-SUDRÉ, AND MEREDITH WELCH

Over the past year, a new wave of social activism, sparked by the Black Lives Matter movement, has forced Americans once again to confront the reality of racial discrimination — not, sadly, as a relic of our distant past, but as an ongoing experience for far too many Americans. And that includes American college students, who are demanding that leaders at many colleges and universities address racism on campus and other barriers to student success.

One prominent example is the University of Missouri, where student activists have confronted everyday acts of racism through protests and a hunger strike. Even the football team got involved, refusing to play until demands were met. Students have called for measures to improve the campus climate for black and marginalized students, including a curriculum that better embraces diversity, more programs that raise racial awareness, and more staff and faculty of color. The students also demanded that university leaders develop a plan to increase retention and graduation rates for students of color.

Judging from available data, the University of Missouri has a lot of work to do on those graduation rates. While rates among white students have improved modestly over the past decade, graduation rates for black students have declined slightly — widening the black-white graduation rate gap to a whopping 14.5 points.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, the University of Missouri is not alone. At four-year, public institutions across the country, graduation rates for black students have not improved as much as those of white students (*Figure 1*). As we discuss in *Rising Tide: Do Grad Rate Gains Benefit All Students?* more than two-thirds of four-year, public colleges and universities have increased graduation rates in the past decade. But overall improvements often mask different outcomes for different groups of students, and nowhere do we see this more clearly than for black students. Among the institutions we examined in that report, Latino and Native students made faster progress on average than their white peers, while black students made less progress.<sup>2</sup>

That's the impetus for taking a deeper look at the data for black students in this report. Among institutions that have increased their overall graduation rate, we ask whether black students are part of this improvement. Where black students are improving, we ask whether these improvements are at a pace fast enough to close gaps between black students and their white peers. And we explore what lessons can be learned from institutions that are improving graduation rates and closing gaps.

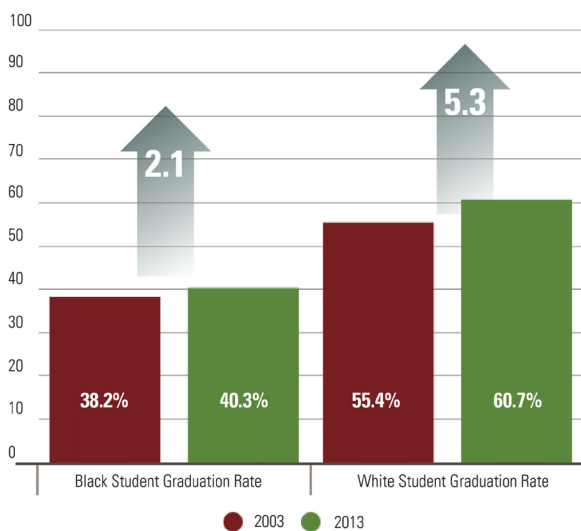
## ARE BLACK STUDENTS BENEFITING FROM IMPROVEMENTS IN GRAD RATES?

In this analysis, we looked at 232 institutions that have improved overall graduation rates during the past decade and had at least 30 first-time, full-time black students and 30 first-time, full-time white students.<sup>3</sup> (*See Methods for more details.*)

What we found is disappointing: In the last 10 years, graduation rates for black students at these institutions improved 4.4 percentage points compared with 5.6 points for white students (*Figure 2*). Moreover, because graduation rates for black students have shown less progress, the gap in completion between white and black students has grown. Graduation rates for black students must increase at a much faster pace if the long-standing gap between black students and their white peers is to close.

There is some good news, however, when we consider individual institutions. Almost 70 percent of institutions in our sample increased graduation rates for black students (*Figure 3a*). And almost half of those (47.2 percent) decreased gaps between black and white students (*Figure 3b*). Since so many

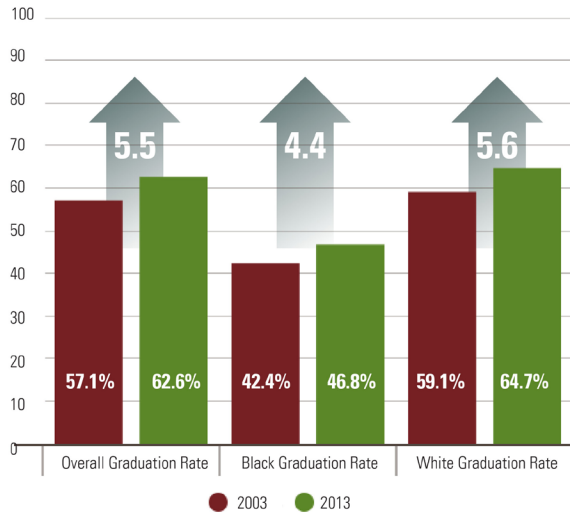
**Figure 1:** Change in Six-Year Graduation Rates at Four-Year, Public Institutions (2003-2013)



Source: Digest of Education Statistics 2013 Table 326.10 (years 1996-2007) and Digest of Education Statistics 2010, Table 341 (years 1996-2005); Education Trust analysis of IPEDS graduation rate data.

Andrew Howard Nichols is the director of higher education research and data analytics, Kimberlee Eberle-Sudré is a higher education policy analyst, and Meredith Welch is a former higher education research analyst at The Education Trust.

## Students at Four-Year, Public Institutions That Have Improved (2003-2013)



Notes: This analysis includes 232 institutions that showed improvement in their graduation rate over the past decade and had at least 30 first-time, full-time black and 30 first-time, full-time white students. Source: Education Trust analysis of IPEDS graduation rate data.

institutions effectively narrowed their gaps, it's reasonable to believe others could too if they worked at it.

Such efforts would be particularly important at the almost one-third (73) of institutions that didn't improve graduation rates for black students at all. And at the 39 institutions with both declining graduation rates for black students and widening gaps, leaders should be eager to learn from institutions making real gains for all of their students.

## INDIVIDUAL COLLEGES: THE GOOD AND THE BAD

### Public Colleges and Universities Making Big Gains for Black Students

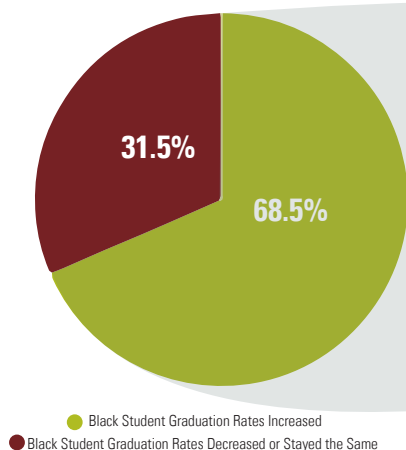
If more institutions are to produce gains in overall completion and close long-standing gaps between groups, we need to learn from institutions that are leading the way. In the sample, 52 institutions stood out for substantially improving overall graduation rates while also achieving gains for black students (See Table 1 in the Appendix). These institutions have:

- Increased the graduation rate for black students by 9.0 or more percentage points (i.e., two times the average increase for all institutions in the sample); and
- Reduced the graduation rate gap between black and white students.

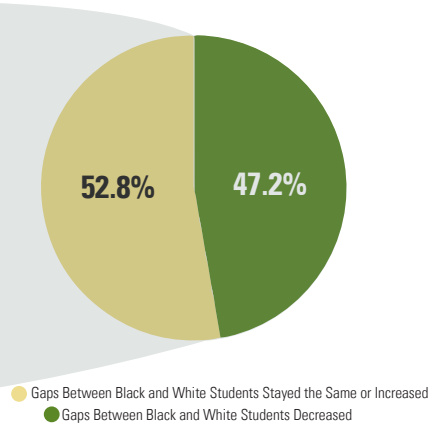
Among this group of colleges making gains for black students, The University at Buffalo is an exemplar.<sup>4</sup> Graduation rates for black students have been on an upward trend over the last decade, increasing by 20.1 points to 63.5 percent in 2013 (Figure 4). The institution has also improved rates for white students by 13.5 points to 72.3 percent. As a result, the gap between white and black students has decreased to 8.8 points (from 15.4 points in 2003).

Another institution that can serve as an example for its peers is The Ohio State University.<sup>5</sup> Since 2003, graduation rates for both black and white students have improved. However, rates for black students have increased faster than those of white students, up 31.1 percentage points (compared with 20.5 points for white students). As a result, the graduation rate gap has decreased by nearly half — from 22.5 points to 11.9 points (Figure 5). (For more on the best practices at Ohio State and Texas

**Figure 3a:** Percent of Four-Year, Public Institutions Increasing Graduation Rates for Black Students (2003-2013)



**Figure 3b:** Percent of Four-Year, Public Institutions Decreasing Gaps Between Black and White Students (2003-2013)

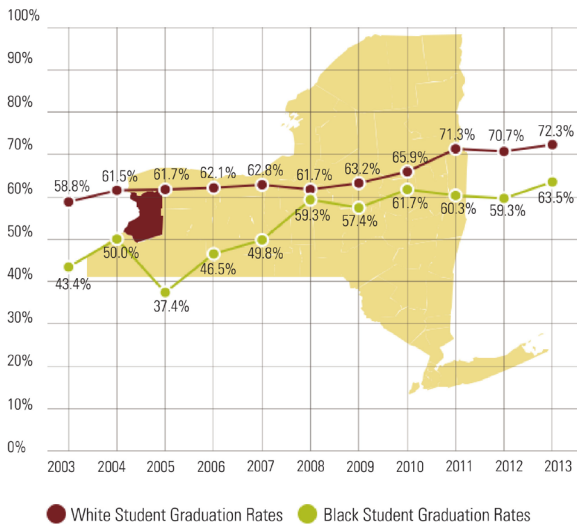


Notes: This analysis includes 232 institutions that showed improvement in their graduation rate over the past decade and had at least 30 first-time, full-time black students and 30 first-time, full-time white students. Additionally, a decrease in graduation rate is defined as less than -1 percentage point, and an increase in graduation rate is defined as more than 1 percentage point. Source: Education Trust analysis of IPEDS graduation rate data.

Tech University, another top-gaining institution, see the features on pages 6-9.)

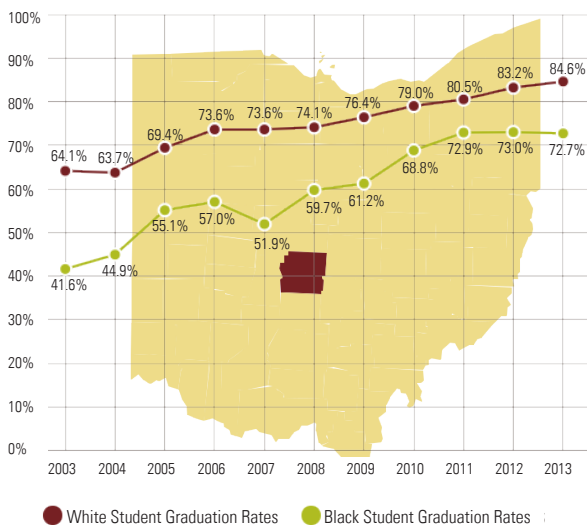
While black student success at these two institutions, and others on our list of top-gainers, is noteworthy, it's also important to emphasize that these institutions still have more work to do to completely eliminate gaps between their black and white students.

**Figure 4:** Graduation Rates for Black and White Students at the University at Buffalo (2003-2013)



Source: Education Trust analysis of IPEDS graduation rate data.

**Figure 5:** Graduation Rates for Black and White Students at the Ohio State University (2003-2013)



Source: Education Trust analysis of IPEDS graduation rate data.

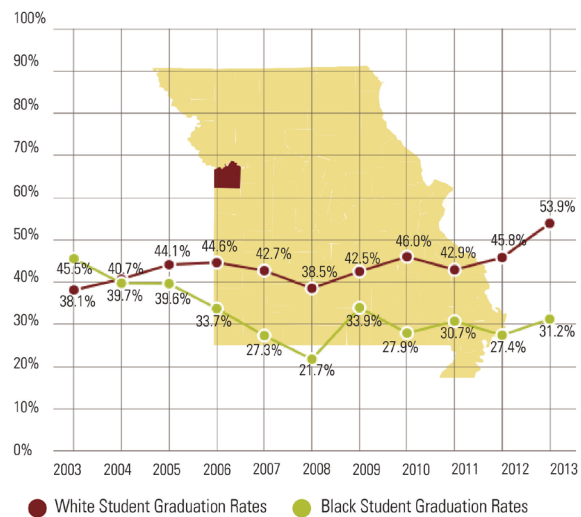
## Public Colleges and Universities With Widening Gaps

On the other end of the spectrum are a set of institutions that improved overall graduation rates, but saw graduation rates for black students decline and gaps between black and white students widen (See Table 2 in the Appendix). The 27 institutions in this category have:

- Declining graduation rates for black students; and
- Graduation rate gaps between white and black students that widened by at least 8.0 percentage points (i.e., the average gap increase for schools with declining graduation rates for underrepresented minority students).<sup>6</sup>

One example is the University of Missouri–Kansas City.<sup>7</sup> Despite having increases in its overall graduation rate of approximately 10 percentage points over the last 10 years, the gap between white and black student graduation rates has grown to 22.7 percentage points. In 2003, the graduation rate for black students was 7.4 percentage points *higher* than that of white students (Figure 6). At that time, the black student graduation rate was 45.5 percent and the rate for white students was 38.1 percent. However, by 2013, the graduation rate for black students fell to 31.2 percent while that of white students rose to 53.9 percent.

**Figure 6:** Graduation Rates for Black and White Students at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (2003-2013)

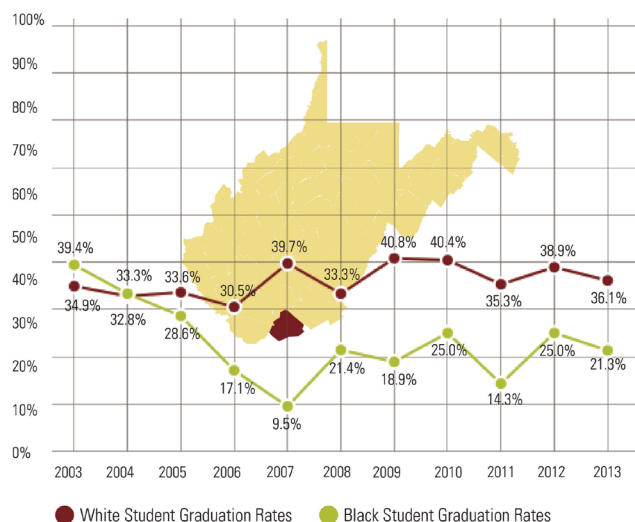


Source: Education Trust analysis of IPEDS graduation rate data.

Similarly, graduation rates for black students at Concord University have decreased drastically over the last 10 years (Figure 7).<sup>8</sup> The current graduation rate for black students is only 21.3 percent, and that is 18.1 percentage points below what it was in 2003, when it was at its peak. In 2003 the graduation rate for black students exceeded the rate for white

students, but the completion gap that currently separates these students is 14.8 percentage points.

**Figure 7: Graduation Rates for Black and White Students at the Concord University (2003-2013)**



Source: Education Trust analysis of IPEDS graduation rate data.

### Similar Colleges Can Have Different Outcomes

When universities are confronted with disparities in graduation rates among black and white students, officials often blame the students they enroll, saying they come in underprepared, or that the institution lacks the resources that could help them do better. So we dug into the database of similar colleges in College Results Online (collegeresults.org) to look at trends among peer institutions. Once again, we found institutions that serve similar students but have divergent trends over the past decade — reminding us that what institutions do to serve the students they admit matters ... a lot.

Returning to the Mizzou example, graduation rates for black students have barely budged over the last 10 years (dropping less than 1 percentage point to 56.8 percent) (Table 3). Yet for white students, graduation rates grew by 3 points to 71.4 percent, and the gap has now climbed to 14.6 points (up from 10.6 points in 2003).

However, when we look at a peer institution, North Carolina State University, we see different results. Even though both institutions are similar in size, have similar admission requirements, and serve nearly identical percentages of students who receive Pell and identify as black, NC State has a better track record of success for their black students. In the last decade, graduation rates for black students at NC State have increased 12.5 points, reaching 64.2 percent. This has also led to a smaller gap (10.0 points) between white and black students.

**Table 3: Peer Institutions**

	University of Missouri	North Carolina State
Carnegie Classification	Research Very High	Research Very High
Median SAT/ACT Score, 2013	1,165	1,181
Full-Time Equivalent Undergrad Enrollment, Fall 2013	25,772	22,825
Percent of Pell Recipients Among Freshmen, 2013	22.6%	21.0%
Percent Black Students, 2013	8.2%	7.7%
White Graduation Rate, 2003	68.0%	69.3%
White Graduation Rate, 2013	71.4%	74.2%
Black Graduation Rate, 2003	57.4%	51.7%
Black Graduation Rate, 2013	56.8%	64.2%
Change in Gap Between White and Black Students	▲ 3.8	▼ 7.6

Note: Graduation rates are based on three-year averages. See Methods for details. Source: Education Trust analysis of College Results Online database.

Similarly, when we look at Rutgers University–New Brunswick and Purdue University, we see two institutions that enroll similar students (Table 4). Both have similar admission requirements, are of similar size (more than 30,000 students), and enroll a similar percentage of black students.

Yet when we look at their graduation rates for black students, we see very different outcomes. Even though it serves a larger percentage of Pell Grant recipients, Rutgers showed larger gains in student success, particularly for black students. Graduation rates have grown by 11.9 points in the last decade, reaching 72.5 percent. Rutgers has also reduced the gap between black and white students to 8.1 points (down from 13.4 points in 2003). On the other hand, gaps at Purdue University have doubled over the last 10 years. Graduation rates for white students grew by 6.4 points to 72.2 percent, yet graduation rates for black students fell by 5.0 points to 52.5 percent. As a result, the gap more than doubled to 19.7 points.

**Table 4: Peer Institutions**

	Rutgers University–New Brunswick	Purdue University–Main Campus
Carnegie Classification	Research Very High	Research Very High
Median SAT/ACT Score, 2013	1,195	1,199
Undergrad Enrollment, Fall 2013	30,556	30,001
Percent of Pell Recipients Among Freshmen, 2013	29.5%	19.0%
Percent Black Students, 2013	7.4%	3.3%
White Grad Rate, 2003	74.0%	65.8%
White Grad Rate, 2013	80.6%	72.2%
Black Grad Rate, 2003	60.6%	57.5%
Black Grad Rate, 2013	72.5%	52.5%
Change in Gap Between White and Black Students	▼ 5.3	▲ 11.4

Note: Graduation rates are based on three-year averages. See Methods for details. Source: Education Trust analysis of College Results Online database.

## INSTITUTIONS MUST BE INTENTIONAL ABOUT SUCCESS

Our findings suggest that we need to pay closer attention to colleges and universities that post increases in graduation rates. That is, we shouldn't accept wholesale that increases in overall graduation rates lead to gains for all student populations. The institutions in our sample all witnessed increases in overall completion rates over the past decade, but 31.5 percent showed no gains for black students. And even though 68.5 percent showed some improvement for black students, such success was not significant enough nor did it occur fast enough to close long-standing gaps between black students and their white peers.

Fortunately, there are institutions that are working to change this narrative, providing an example for others to follow. At The University at Buffalo, The Ohio State University, North Carolina State, and Rutgers University–New Brunswick, graduation rates improved for all students, and increases were greater for black students, which narrowed gaps in completion. These institutions illustrate that demographics aren't destiny and that what colleges do with and for their students plays a pivotal role in student success. ■

## ENDNOTES

1. This is based on their three-year average graduation rate. Please see the Methods section for more information on how this was calculated.
2. Kimberlee Eberle-Sudré, Meredith Welch, and Andrew H. Nichols, *Rising Tide: Do College Grad Rate Gains Benefit All Students?* (Washington, D.C.: The Education Trust, December 2015).
3. Prior to publication, we discovered a significant error with the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga's 2004 graduation rate reported in IPEDS. Under our methodology, this data error caused the institution to appear as if its graduation rate had improved over the past decade when, in fact, it had not. The numbers in this report are based on a sample of 232 institutions, which includes Chattanooga. But the sample should be 231 institutions. We want to acknowledge this, even though removing Chattanooga from the sample has an insignificant impact on the findings.
4. At The University at Buffalo, 13.7 percent of students are underrepresented (6.7 percent black, 6.8 percent Latino, and 0.3 percent Native).
5. At The Ohio State University, 9.4 percent of students are underrepresented (6.1 percent black, 3.1 percent Latino, and 0.2 percent Native).
6. Underrepresented minority students (URM) includes African American, Latino, and Native (i.e., American Indian and Alaska Native) students.
7. At the University of Missouri–Kansas City, 21.3 percent of students are underrepresented (14.9 percent black, 6 percent Latino, and 0.4 percent Native).
8. At Concord University, 7.0 percent of students are underrepresented (5.7 percent black, 1.0 percent Latino, and 0.2 percent Native).

# Mentoring Toward Success

BY MANDY ZATYNSKI

A five-hour drive from major cities like Dallas and Albuquerque, Texas Tech University in small-town Lubbock can be a hard sell for young adults from other parts of the state. Because of this, university leaders have historically focused their energies on traversing the state to get more students enrolled. In the early 2000s, however, they started to take note of how many students were leaving without a degree — particularly among black and Latino populations. Graduation rates for both groups of students hovered around 40 percent at the time, more than 10 percentage points below the graduation rate for white students.

University leaders polled students who left to find out why, and responses generally fell into one of four categories: Students felt they weren't academically prepared enough to continue, they couldn't afford it, they didn't feel supported by the institution, or they didn't like the city.

And that was the impetus leaders needed to create Mentor Tech.<sup>1</sup>



Photos courtesy of Texas Tech University

Mentor Tech organizes about 60 workshops each year that focus on academics and career and personal development for underrepresented students. It also facilitates connections with the city's churches and other community groups, so students gain a better sense of familiarity with the small town of Lubbock. It hosts an annual fundraising banquet to raise money for scholarships, generally given to the most financially needy students in sums of \$500 to \$1,000. And it partners with campus centers — like the writing center



to offer writing workshops or the career center to host a networking reception for students with local professionals.

But the heart — and success — of Mentor Tech lies in its mentoring relationships between students and faculty. Students are paired with faculty based on preferences regarding ethnicity, gender, hobbies, and career and academic interests. From there, they are required to be in touch at least once weekly — which can include email and social media — but twice a month, they must meet in person. Faculty mentors can help with coursework when necessary, but more often, they serve as an unbiased adult in students' lives, says Cory Powell, director of Mentor Tech. "The mentors we match them with commit to assisting them with navigating the system, sharing the unwritten rules of culture, connecting them with resources, being that listening ear, being that caring arm, and sometimes being that voice of correction to help them bounce back from failure," Powell says.

Powell also praises the program for its consistency and stability. Because students and mentors are constantly in touch, students know they have someone in their corner. "Ultimately, the thing that makes it successful is you're giving them someone who says, 'I'm here for you. Regardless of whatever it is, you can come and talk to me,'" Powell says. "When students are having those difficulties or they're second-guessing themselves, there's someone who can reassure them that it's possible."

Beyond mentoring, students involved in Mentor Tech must attend four events (workshop or social) each semester. (On average, they offer two events per week.) Workshops are designed based on students' needs. For example, in the



first month of the semester, workshops focus on managing time, identifying learning styles, learning how to interact with faculty, and utilizing the library and other resources on campus — all things aimed at acclimating students to campus life.

“You can throw it together, and kids will know it’s not genuine,” says Paul Frazier, associate vice president of the Division of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Community Engagement. Take the time to deliver what students need, though, and they’ll come. (Free food doesn’t hurt, either, he joked.) Social events have academic or career purpose, too, like inviting local working professionals to share with students how to create resumes and interview for jobs like theirs.



Perhaps then it’s no wonder that a program that started with just 46 underrepresented students in 2002 now includes more than 1,000 students (45 percent of whom are black) — and a waiting list. Mentor Tech officials reach out to all newly admitted underrepresented students each spring, and it’s up to those students to enroll. Often within four to six weeks, however, Mentor Tech reaches its capacity (about 125 new students per year).

But officials do their best not to turn anyone away, as the percentage of black and Latino students enrolling at Texas Tech has nearly doubled in the last decade (to 6 percent and 19 percent, respectively). Anyone on a waiting list for a faculty mentor is still welcome to attend workshops and social events organized by Mentor Tech. Once they’re in, students can stay involved for as long as they’d like — Mentor Tech saw one student through four degrees (two bachelor’s, a master’s, and a law degree).

“We want to make it as hard as possible for [students] to fail,” says Powell.

And so far, that has been the case for many more students since the program started in 2002. Among black students on campus, graduation rates are now 56 percent — 19 percentage points higher than a decade ago. (For Latinos, the graduation rate is 53 percent, an increase of 13 percentage points in the same time frame.) And among Mentor Tech students, the first-year retention rate is 88 percent — 6 percentage points higher than the university’s first-year retention rate for underrepresented students. ■

1. Mentor Tech is officially named The Lauro Cavazos and Ophelia Powell-Malone Mentoring Program after, respectively, the university’s first undergraduate to become president and the first African American undergraduate.

# No One Strategy for Success, But Rather, A Continuous Line of Support

BY MANDY ZATYNSKI

Since 2003, graduation rates for black students at Ohio State have increased by 25.6 percentage points — nearly six times the average growth in our analysis — and the gap in graduation rates between black and white students has narrowed by 8.6 percentage points. Such success is the result of a three-pronged approach to boosting retention and completion among black students on campus. It begins in middle school.

Through the university's longstanding Young Scholars Program, first-generation, low-income middle-schoolers in nine cities across the state are connected to college early on. YSP staff make sure students — of whom about 75 percent are black — are taking a college-prep curriculum that will get them into Ohio State or another university. Throughout high school, they also work with students on study skills and preparation for standardized tests needed for admission. "[Students] begin to think of themselves as college students well before they get here — and capable of college work," says Sharon Davies, chief diversity officer.



Photos courtesy of Ohio State University

If YSP students continue on to Ohio State, they receive a need-based scholarship (this year's award averaged \$15,605) per year for four years; are enrolled in a three-week summer bridge program; meet monthly with a success coach; and connect weekly with an upperclassman peer mentor. Success coaches make sure students get the services they need, and peer mentors help them acclimate. Additionally, a study skills course in the fall requires students to learn and practice strategies for success. For example, before midterms, they're given study tips and tactics to use in their preparations for exams. Afterward, they share how they did and reflect on what worked and didn't. "So they're not just taking exams," says Rochelle Woods, YSP director, "but they're understanding what they did or didn't do that had an impact on that grade."

This on-campus support — particularly during this type of "make-or-break" transition for students — is the second prong in Ohio State's strategy, and it extends beyond YSP students. The Todd A. Bell National Resource Center on the African American Male, a campus-based research hub established in 2005, brings students to campus before the fall

semester begins to give them time to orient themselves and establish an inner circle. The Early Arrival Program began as a one-day orientation, but it has since grown to three days — and now involves about one-third of all black men who enroll at Ohio State.



"We start with the premise that if you matriculate at Ohio State, you have the cognitive ability to be successful," says James Moore, director of the Bell Center. "So we focus on skill and will. We know that competence produces confidence, but confidence doesn't produce competence."

"Everything we do is a reinforcement of scholastic achievement," Moore says.

But on-campus support doesn't end with freshman year. Each year, for example, a weekend retreat at Deer Creek State Park — funded by the university — gives freshman and upperclassman women of color (predominantly black) an opportunity to connect in an off-campus environment and talk about career aspirations and strategies for success. Sponsored by the Leadership Initiatives for Women of Color, or LIWOC (established in 2012 to offer similar supports and resources as the Bell Center does for men), the retreat also



gives university leaders — including faculty of color who also attend — the chance to hear directly from students about their own experiences and challenges on campus.

Last fall's retreat was especially poignant, says assistant provost Yolanda Zepeda, drawing 100 students (nearly double the attendance of previous years), in light of protests around racial injustice that were occurring across the country. "Ohio State is a really big place," Zepeda says, "and it can be alienating for students, especially when they're a small part of the student population and they have to really do some work to find one another and build those connections. LIWOC really pays attention to helping students develop skills that support their own success but that also support the success of their sisters."



With increasing graduation rates for black students and a narrowing gap between black and white students, the university's focus on black students has paid off. It's progress that Ohio State leaders are happy to see on the Columbus campus, but it's progress they want to see nationwide.

And that's the third prong in Ohio State's strategy: to serve as a hub for research, discussion, and sharing of best practices that attract, retain, and encourage college completion among

black students nationwide. To that end, the Bell Center hosts the National Black Male Retreat, inviting students and leaders from across the country to convene to talk about educational and social challenges facing black men in college. Discussion topics are as diverse as managing money to interacting with police. In the center's ongoing quest to serve as a national resource, information is packaged in hopes that participants will take it back to their campuses and cities.

Because, as Ohio State leaders say, improving achievement among black students should not only be the prerogative of one university or city, but the collective attention and efforts of a nation wanting a stronger, sustainable workforce. ■

## METHODS

For the colleges and universities included in this report, we calculated the change in six-year graduation rates from 2003 to 2013. We took several measures to minimize the impact of large year-to-year fluctuations in graduation rate data for institutions with smaller cohorts.

First, we used three-year averages to assess institutional graduation rate change, instead of solely relying on the difference between the 2003 and 2013 graduation rates. We defined the 2003 graduation rate for an institution as the weighted average of its 2003, 2004, and 2005 graduation rates.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, we defined the 2013 graduation rate as the weighted average of the 2011, 2012, and 2013 graduation rates.<sup>2</sup> Institutional change over the decade was calculated by subtracting the weighted average of the 2003, 2004, and 2005 graduation rates from the weighted average of the 2011, 2012, and 2013 graduation rates. Although this results in a more conservative estimate of change in time, it minimizes the impact of outliers on graduation rate performance, which could unfairly skew results.

Second, we only included institutions that had an average three-year graduation rate cohort size of 50 students or more in 2003 and 2013.

Together, these measures ensured that we were able to fairly assess graduation rate improvement and avoid the effect of unusual variations in the data.

These institutions also met the following criteria:

- Are categorized as four-year public or nonprofit bachelor's degree-granting institutions,
- Received Title IV financial aid dollars,
- Are located within the 50 states or District of Columbia,
- Enrolled students in both academic years 2002-03 and 2012-13, and
- Had a fall 2007 freshman class where 40 percent were initially enrolled full-time.<sup>3</sup>

In our companion paper, *Rising Tide: Do College Grad Rate Gains Benefit All Students?* we found 328 public institutions with improved graduation rates over the past decade. Of those, we identified 232 institutions with graduation cohorts of at least 30 first-time, full-time black students and 30 first-time, full-time white students. These are the institutions used in this analysis.

This differs from the companion paper, which included institutions with a cohort size of at least 50 underrepresented students and 50 white students. We did this to account for size limitations at institutions with smaller populations of black students than of underrepresented students. For the analysis in this paper, the graduation rates for white and black students were constructed in the same way described above (i.e., using three-year averages), and institutions with small cohort sizes and/or missing data were excluded from the analysis.<sup>4</sup>

Historically Black Colleges and Universities were excluded from the group of 232 institutions, which enrolled 357,888 first-time, full-time students enrolled in academic year 2012-2013; of those, 59,234 are black.

The data used for this analysis were pulled from IPEDS in March 2015. Any changes to the data made afterward are not reflected in this report.

## ENDNOTES

1. The three-year weighted average graduation rate for 2003 was calculated by dividing the sum of all students in the 2003, 2004, and 2005 completer cohorts by the sum of all students in the 1997, 1998, and 1999 entering cohorts.
2. Institutions that had missing data for more than one of the three years included in the weighted average calculation for the 2003 and 2013 institutional graduation rates were not included in the sample.
3. Institutions that were that were classified as special interest (Carnegie Classification of 24 or 32) or service schools (Geographic Code = 0) were excluded due to their specialized or nontraditional academic offerings.
4. Additionally, institutions were only included if they had at least two of three years of graduation rate data for both underrepresented and white students and at least 30 first-time, full-time black students and 30 first-time, full-time white students in their graduation rate cohorts.

# APPENDIX

**Table 1: Institutions That Are Improving Grad Rates Overall, Closing Gaps, and Making Big Gains for Black Students**

Institution	State	3-Year Average Graduation Rate for Black Students (2013) <i>(Percentage)</i>	10-Year Change in Black Student Graduation Rates (2003-2013) <i>(Percentage Point)</i>	3-Year Average Overall Graduation Rate (2013) <i>(Percentage)</i>	10-Year Change In Overall Graduation Rate (2003-2013) <i>(Percentage Point)</i>	3-Year Average Graduation Rate for White Students (2013) <i>(Percentage)</i>	10-Year Change in White Student Graduation Rates (2003-2013) <i>(Percentage Point)</i>	10-Year Change In Gaps Between Black and White Students (2003-2013) <i>(Percentage Point)</i>
San Diego State University	CA	61.5	▲ 30.0	65.9	▲ 18.3	68.3	▲ 14.9	▼ -15.1
Armstrong Atlantic State University	GA	38.9	▲ 24.2	33.1	▲ 13.0	31.7	▲ 10.1	▼ -14.1
East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania	PA	42.3	▲ 21.0	57.3	▲ 7.7	59.2	▲ 7.5	▼ -13.6
California State University-Chico	CA	40.1	▲ 18.4	57.4	▲ 5.2	61.5	▲ 5.9	▼ -12.5
SUNY College at Old Westbury	NY	41.6	▲ 13.5	35.7	▲ 9.9	24.7	▲ 1.0	▼ -12.5
CUNY City College	NY	42.0	▲ 11.1	41.4	▲ 8.5	42.7	▼ -1.2	▼ -12.3
University of North Carolina Wilmington	NC	66.6	▲ 18.0	68.9	▲ 7.4	69.6	▲ 7.1	▼ -10.9
Miami University-Oxford	OH	68.6	▲ 10.5	80.7	▲ 0.4	81.4	-0.2	▼ -10.7
California State Polytechnic University-Pomona	CA	48.4	▲ 19.9	51.2	▲ 6.8	56.7	▲ 9.4	▼ -10.6
California State University-Fullerton	CA	42.9	▲ 11.7	51.6	▲ 3.2	55.1	▲ 1.4	▼ -10.3
University of Nebraska-Lincoln	NE	53.4	▲ 13.7	66.0	▲ 4.5	67.0	▲ 3.6	▼ -10.0
CUNY John Jay College of Criminal Justice	NY	46.6	▲ 10.5	42.2	▲ 8.5	38.3	▲ 0.8	▼ -9.7
CUNY Brooklyn College	NY	49.9	▲ 17.0	51.1	▲ 10.4	56.1	▲ 7.6	▼ -9.4
Rhode Island College	RI	31.0	▲ 9.3	43.4	▲ 0.6	45.5	-0.1	▼ -9.4
Rutgers University-Newark	NJ	65.4	▲ 14.6	65.3	▲ 10.7	66.2	▲ 6.0	▼ -8.6
Ohio State University-Main Campus	OH	72.9	▲ 25.6	81.9	▲ 17.7	82.8	▲ 17.0	▼ -8.6
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor	MI	78.6	▲ 9.5	90.0	▲ 4.0	91.5	▲ 1.4	▼ -8.1
North Carolina State University at Raleigh	NC	64.2	▲ 12.5	72.6	▲ 5.6	74.2	▲ 4.8	▼ -7.7
University at Buffalo	NY	61.1	▲ 17.7	71.1	▲ 12.6	71.4	▲ 10.6	▼ -7.1
University of Maryland-College Park	MD	75.0	▲ 14.7	82.7	▲ 9.2	84.7	▲ 7.7	▼ -7.0
Buffalo State SUNY	NY	47.5	▲ 14.8	48.0	▲ 8.1	49.7	▲ 7.8	▼ -7.0
University of Iowa	IA	55.4	▲ 10.9	70.1	▲ 4.4	70.8	▲ 4.3	▼ -6.6
Marshall University	WV	39.0	▲ 9.4	44.7	▲ 4.6	45.0	▲ 3.3	▼ -6.1
University of Nevada-Reno	NV	43.3	▲ 9.1	52.2	▲ 2.5	53.2	▲ 3.3	▼ -5.9
California State University-Long Beach	CA	48.2	▲ 17.0	57.1	▲ 11.9	62.8	▲ 11.3	▼ -5.7
University of Louisiana at Lafayette	LA	33.1	▲ 13.3	43.4	▲ 9.9	45.6	▲ 7.7	▼ -5.6
Rutgers University-New Brunswick	NJ	72.8	▲ 11.0	78.6	▲ 6.9	79.1	▲ 5.8	▼ -5.2
Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania	PA	48.4	▲ 16.4	61.2	▲ 10.7	62.8	▲ 11.2	▼ -5.2
University of West Georgia	GA	43.0	▲ 12.6	39.7	▲ 8.8	38.6	▲ 7.4	▼ -5.2
University of Washington-Seattle Campus	WA	71.0	▲ 13.4	80.8	▲ 8.0	81.6	▲ 8.2	▼ -5.2
University of California-Santa Barbara	CA	72.2	▲ 9.3	80.3	▲ 4.4	83.1	▲ 4.4	▼ -4.9
University of Oregon	OR	58.0	▲ 10.2	66.6	▲ 4.9	68.0	▲ 5.6	▼ -4.6
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	NC	83.2	▲ 10.9	89.5	▲ 6.8	91.2	▲ 6.6	▼ -4.3
Georgia State University	GA	53.4	▲ 16.1	50.5	▲ 13.1	47.1	▲ 11.9	▼ -4.2
Texas Tech University	TX	52.8	▲ 10.2	60.8	▲ 6.5	62.3	▲ 6.0	▼ -4.2
Wichita State University	KS	27.6	▲ 11.6	43.8	▲ 7.6	46.0	▲ 7.4	▼ -4.2
University of South Carolina-Columbia	SC	66.3	▲ 11.2	71.8	▲ 8.5	72.6	▲ 7.1	▼ -4.1
University of Arkansas	AR	49.7	▲ 11.0	59.8	▲ 7.2	60.6	▲ 6.9	▼ -4.0
Washington State University	WA	53.8	▲ 9.2	66.5	▲ 5.3	67.8	▲ 5.4	▼ -3.8
Virginia Commonwealth University	VA	54.6	▲ 16.0	55.4	▲ 13.2	55.0	▲ 12.2	▼ -3.8
Tennessee Technological University	TN	43.3	▲ 10.9	50.9	▲ 6.9	51.6	▲ 7.1	▼ -3.8
San Francisco State University	CA	37.8	▲ 11.2	46.4	▲ 6.7	44.8	▲ 7.7	▼ -3.5
University of Oklahoma-Norman Campus	OK	57.1	▲ 14.4	66.8	▲ 11.3	68.5	▲ 11.1	▼ -3.3
Nicholls State University	LA	26.4	▲ 15.2	40.6	▲ 12.9	44.5	▲ 11.9	▼ -3.3
University of Nebraska at Omaha	NE	25.2	▲ 9.4	43.7	▲ 6.3	45.8	▲ 6.5	▼ -2.9
Southern Polytechnic State University	GA	41.5	▲ 15.3	36.3	▲ 12.8	34.5	▲ 12.7	▼ -2.7
Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College	LA	57.9	▲ 9.5	65.8	▲ 7.8	66.7	▲ 7.2	▼ -2.3
San Jose State University	CA	36.5	▲ 10.3	47.2	▲ 7.7	50.7	▲ 8.2	▼ -2.0
Georgia Institute of Technology-Main Campus	GA	68.0	▲ 9.6	80.2	▲ 7.6	80.5	▲ 7.6	▼ -2.0
University of Central Florida	FL	60.9	▲ 11.5	65.0	▲ 9.8	65.9	▲ 9.6	▼ -1.9
CUNY Hunter College	NY	43.4	▲ 9.6	47.4	▲ 11.4	47.0	▲ 8.0	▼ -1.5
California State University-Northridge	CA	33.0	▲ 12.3	46.6	▲ 11.6	55.1	▲ 11.3	▼ -1.0

▲ Indicates an increase in graduation rates from 2003-2013. ▼ Indicates a decrease in gaps between black and white students from 2003-2013. ▼ Indicates a decrease in white graduation rates from 2003-2013.

**Table 2: Institutions That Are Improving Grad Rates Overall But Have Widening Gaps and Declining Grad Rates for Black Students**

Institution	State	3-Year Average Graduation Rate for Black Students (2013) <i>(Percentage)</i>	10-Year Change in Black Student Graduation Rates (2003-2013) <i>(Percentage Point)</i>	3-Year Average Overall Graduation Rate (2013) <i>(Percentage)</i>	10-Year Change In Overall Graduation Rate (2003-2013) <i>(Percentage Point)</i>	3-Year Average Graduation Rate for White Students (2013) <i>(Percentage)</i>	10-Year Change in White Student Graduation Rates (2003-2013) <i>(Percentage Point)</i>	10-Year Change In Gaps Between Black and White Students (2003-2013) <i>(Percentage Point)</i>
Texas A & M University-Commerce	TX	29.7	▼ -12.9	39.8	▲ 4.0	45.1	▲ 10.1	▲ 23.0
University of Missouri-Kansas City	MO	30.1	▼ -11.1	47.3	▲ 3.6	50.4	▲ 9.4	▲ 20.5
Morehead State University	KY	26.7	▼ -14.3	44.5	▲ 2.4	45.1	▲ 2.7	▲ 17.0
Millersville University of Pennsylvania	PA	35.3	▼ -12.0	63.2	▲ 0.5	69.8	▲ 4.0	▲ 16.0
University of Central Arkansas	AR	23.4	▼ -11.7	40.9	▲ 1.5	44.7	▲ 4.3	▲ 16.0
Concord University	WV	20.7	▼ -12.6	35.7	▲ 1.6	36.7	▲ 3.0	▲ 15.5
University of Alabama in Huntsville	AL	37.5	▼ -9.5	47.1	▲ 3.1	47.0	▲ 4.6	▲ 14.1
Auburn University at Montgomery	AL	21.3	▼ -8.3	30.1	▲ 1.0	34.9	▲ 5.7	▲ 14.0
Rowan University	NJ	47.0	▼ -5.5	69.5	▲ 7.8	73.4	▲ 8.4	▲ 13.9
Kansas State University	KS	26.7	▼ -12.8	58.2	▲ 0.1	60.8	▲ 0.6	▲ 13.4
Kutztown University of Pennsylvania	PA	32.2	▼ -5.7	54.5	▲ 4.6	57.6	▲ 7.2	▲ 12.9
College of Charleston	SC	53.5	▼ -2.1	65.5	▲ 8.6	67.1	▲ 10.0	▲ 12.1
Auburn University	AL	45.7	▼ -7.1	67.5	▲ 2.8	71.0	▲ 5.1	▲ 12.1
Wright State University-Main Campus	OH	24.5	▼ -9.1	40.9	▲ 0.6	44.3	▲ 2.4	▲ 11.5
Lamar University	TX	22.5	▼ -2.4	32.8	▲ 2.2	39.5	▲ 8.4	▲ 10.8
Arizona State University-Tempe	AZ	40.1	▼ -4.8	57.9	▲ 4.0	60.7	▲ 5.4	▲ 10.2
University of Southern Indiana	IN	13.8	▼ -3.3	38.4	▲ 5.7	40.3	▲ 6.9	▲ 10.2
Ball State University	IN	42.8	▼ -4.7	57.5	▲ 4.9	58.8	▲ 5.3	▲ 10.0
Purdue University-Main Campus	IN	49.9	▼ -5.6	69.6	▲ 2.8	71.4	▲ 4.2	▲ 9.8
University of California-Davis	CA	67.9	▼ -7.7	81.4	▲ 0.6	84.1	▲ 1.8	▲ 9.5
University of Southern Mississippi	MS	38.7	▼ -5.1	47.3	▲ 0.5	52.6	▲ 4.4	▲ 9.5
University of Toledo	OH	19.9	▼ -3.7	46.3	▲ 3.0	52.1	▲ 5.5	▲ 9.2
Missouri State University-Springfield	MO	42.7	▼ -4.0	54.4	▲ 4.8	55.7	▲ 5.0	▲ 9.0
Indiana University-Purdue University-Fort Wayne	IN	11.2	▼ -4.2	25.0	▲ 3.7	26.2	▲ 4.5	▲ 8.7
Northern Illinois University	IL	30.2	▼ -5.3	53.7	▲ 1.2	61.2	▲ 3.3	▲ 8.6
Kean University	NJ	37.5	▼ -4.8	48.3	▲ 2.6	53.8	▲ 3.6	▲ 8.4
Saginaw Valley State University	MI	16.3	▼ -3.1	38.6	▲ 3.8	42.1	▲ 5.2	▲ 8.3

▲ Indicates an increase in graduation rates from 2003-2013.

▼ Indicates a decrease in black graduation rates from 2003-2013.

△ Indicates an increase in gaps between black and white students from 2003-2013.

Note: The numbers included in these tables are based on three-year averages of graduation rates. The text of the report relies on single-year rates (not averages), so we can show the yearly progress (or lack thereof). Therefore, the numbers in the tables and the text are different. See Methods for more information.



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