Effects of My First Place on Labor Market and Postsecondary Educational Outcomes

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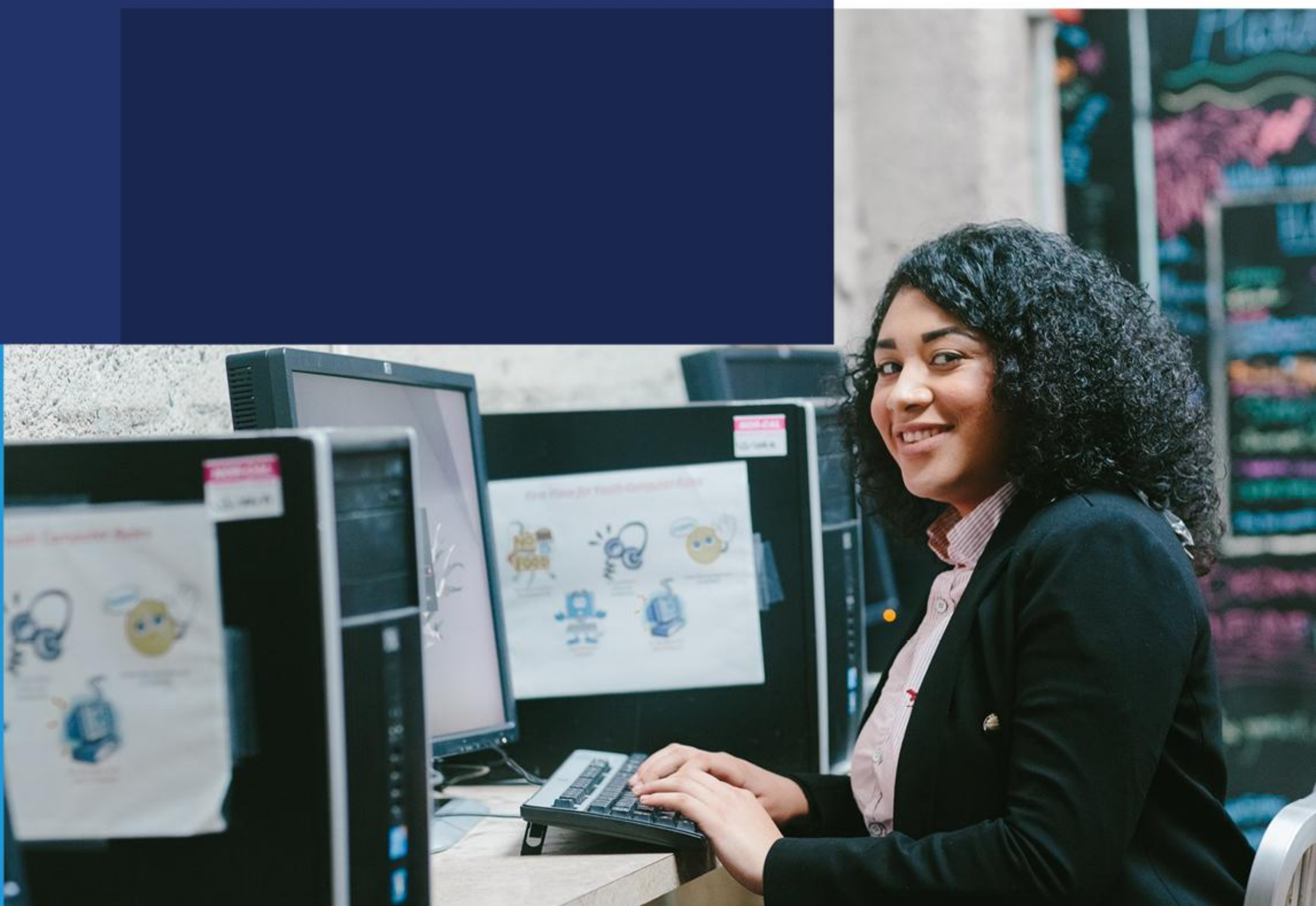

November 2025

July 2025

Recommended Citation

Dworsky, A., Griffin, A. M., & Van Drunen, M. (2025). *Effects of My First Place on labor market and postsecondary educational outcomes*. Chapin Hall.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank our partners at First Place for Youth for all their support.

Disclaimer

The viewpoints, interpretations, and opinions expressed in this report are solely those of the authors.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2008 Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act allowed states to extend the end of eligibility for federally funded foster care from 18 to 21 years old. California began implementing its version of extended foster care in 2012. Although studies have shown that staying in foster care beyond age 18 is associated with better outcomes for young adults across a range of domains, many young adults still struggle to support themselves after they age out. In part, this reflects that few programs have been shown to put young adults in extended foster care on a path towards lifelong self-sufficiency.

This report presents findings from an evaluation of My First Place (MFP), a program that provides fully subsidized transitional housing and intensive case management to 18- to 25-year-olds who are or were in extended foster care in 6 California counties. The evaluation focused on young adults' labor market and postsecondary educational outcomes.

Methodology

Sample. Our sample included 571 young adults who enrolled in and completed the program, 1,207 young adults who enrolled in but did not complete the program, and 820 young adults who were referred to the program but did not enroll.

Data sources. We analyzed aggregate employment and earnings data from the California Employment Development Department and college enrollment and graduation data from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC). We linked the NSC data to First Place for Youth data on the demographic and background characteristics of the young adults in our sample.

Analysis. We used chi-square tests to determine whether there were pre-existing differences between the three groups of young adults. We analyzed the employment and earnings data using descriptive statistics. We tested for between-group differences using chi-square tests, t-tests, and ANOVAs. We used the NSC data to measure college enrollment, semester completion, and credential attainment. We examined those outcomes descriptively and used chi-square tests to test for between-group differences. We used propensity score matching to create comparable treatment and comparison groups and estimated proportional hazard models to estimate the effects of program participation on postsecondary educational outcomes.

Between-Group Differences

Statistical tests revealed significant differences between groups with respect to county, gender, parenting status, history of homelessness, and legal system involvement.

Labor Market Outcomes

Employment

The "enrolled and completed" group had significantly higher employment rates than the "enrolled but did not complete" and the "did not enroll" groups before and after the program exit year. Additionally, young adults who enrolled in the program had significantly higher employment rates than young adults who did not enroll.

Earnings

The "enrolled and completed" group earned significantly more, on average, than the "enrolled but did not complete" and the "did not enroll" groups starting 1 year before program exit year and continuing after. Additionally, young adults who enrolled in the program earned significantly more, on average, than young adults who did not enroll.

Employment and earnings trajectories varied by exit cohort. Regardless of the exit cohort, the trajectories for the "enrolled and completed" group started at a higher level and showed more steady increases than the trajectories for the "enrolled but did not complete" and the "did not enroll" groups. However, the COVID-19 pandemic seemed to have more of an adverse impact on the "enrolled and completed" group than on either of the other two groups.

We found a number of statistically significant between-group differences in employment and earnings that were consistent across years. Young adults with more education were more likely to be employed and earned more, on average, than young adults with less education. Young adults with no history of homelessness were more likely to be employed (but did not earn more, on average, if they were employed) than young adults with a history of homelessness. Young adults in San Francisco/Alameda Counties were more likely to be employed and earned more, on average, than young adults in Los Angeles County and Solano County. Additionally, longer program stays, planned program exits, and exits to stable housing were all associated with higher employment rates and higher mean earnings.

Postsecondary Educational Attainment

Sixty-one percent of the young adults in our sample enrolled in college and 58% completed at least one semester. Most young adults who enrolled in college enrolled in a community college and the vast majority of schools in which they enrolled were located in California. Only 9% of the young people who enrolled in college earned a postsecondary credential.

We found a number of statistically significant between-group differences in our postsecondary educational outcomes. Women were significantly more likely to enroll in college, complete a semester, and earn a credential than young men. Latino/a young adults were less likely to enroll in college but more likely to earn a credential if they enrolled in college than Black young adults. Young adults in Los Angeles were less likely to enroll in college or complete at least one semester than young adults in any of the other counties.

At the bivariate level, MFP participants were more likely to enroll in college and complete at least one semester than non-participants, but many participants had enrolled in college or completed a semester prior to entering the program. Additionally, among young adults who enrolled in college, MFP participants were no more likely to earn a credential than non-participants.

Using the propensity score-matched groups, we found that MFP entry increased the hazard of first enrolling in college by 32% and first completing a semester by 39%. However, MFP entry had no effect on the hazard of first earning a credential. Our analysis also indicated that (1) the hazard of enrolling in college, completing a semester and earning a credential were higher for women than young men; (2) the hazard of enrolling in college and completing a semester were lower for young parents than for their non-parenting peers; and (3) the hazard of enrolling in college and completing a semester were higher for young adults the hazard of enrolling in college and completing a semester were higher for young adults from San Francisco/Alameda than for young adults from Los Angeles.

Discussion

The evaluation indicates that MFP participants who complete the program have higher employment rates and earnings before and after program exit compared to non-participants or those who did not complete the program. However, pre-existing group differences and program eligibility criteria complicate causal interpretations. Factors such as county, education, length of stay, exit type, and housing stability also influence labor market outcomes. MFP participation is linked to higher rates of college enrollment and semester completion but not to credential attainment among those who enroll in college.

Study limitations include the lack of individual-level employment and earnings data, potential inaccuracies in NSC data, and nonrandom enrollment in MFP, which propensity score matching only partially addresses.

Policy and Practice Implications

The findings suggest the importance of supporting youth in extended foster care through programs like MFP that provide housing stability and intensive case management to improve labor market and educational outcomes. Attention to county-level disparities, extended program engagement, and planned exits may enhance effectiveness. Further research is needed to understand barriers to credential attainment and refine program strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Young people aging out of foster care face significant challenges during the transition to adulthood.

For many years, state responsibility for youth in foster care ended at age 18. Whereas many young adults continue to depend on their families for financial and emotional support, 18-year-olds who aged out of foster care faced the transition to adulthood largely on their own.

In 2008, the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act amended Title IV-E of the Social Security Act by giving states the option to extend the eligibility cutoff for federally funded foster care from the birthday on which young people turn age 18 to the birthday on which they turn age 21. This shift in child welfare policy resulted from the confluence of several factors, including an evolving understanding of normative youth development, growing knowledge about the challenges faced by young people who age out of foster care, changing attitudes about the state's responsibilities to these young people as their "corporate" parent, and empirical evidence that extending foster care beyond age 18 leads to better youth outcomes (Courtney, 2009).

California was among the early adopters of federally funded extended foster care. The California Fostering Connections to Success Act was enacted in 2010, and the state began implementation of extended foster care in 2012, following a long and collaborative planning process that involved multiple stakeholder groups. Findings from the CalYOUTH Study, a longitudinal evaluation of extended foster care in California, indicate that the policy has had positive effects on a wide range of youth outcomes (Courtney et al., 2018). However, many young people continue to struggle after they age out of extended foster care.

In part, this reflects the limited evidence base for programs that improve the outcomes of young people in extended foster care and put them on a path towards lifelong self-sufficiency (Doucet et al., 2022; Taylor et al., 2024). This report describes findings from an evaluation of My First Place, a program for 18- to 24-year-olds who are in or aging out of extended foster care in one of six California counties (Alameda, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Santa Clara, and Solano). The evaluation measured the effects of the program on young adults' employment, earnings, and postsecondary educational attainment.

The report begins with a description of the My First Place program, the methods and data that were used, and the young adults who comprise our sample. This is followed by a presentation of the results that includes both narrative and visualizations. The report concludes with a discussion of the results, the limitations of the study, and the implications of our findings for policy and practice.

MY FIRST PLACE

My First Place (MFP) is a nationally recognized program run by First Place for Youth (FPFY) that provides transitional housing and intensive case management to young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 years old who are in, or were eligible for, extended foster care. The program focuses on helping young adults develop the knowledge, skills, and behaviors that support goal attainment in four key areas: housing, education, employment, and healthy living.

All young adults receive fully subsidized housing when they enter the program. The housing is chosen through a collaborative process that takes the young adult's needs, neighborhood safety, and proximity to school, work, transportation, and other community resources into account. Young adults receive a monthly stipend to cover basic needs as well as grocery and transportation cards. They are encouraged to contribute to a savings account that is paid out when they exit.

Once they are stably housed, young adults focus on their education and employment goals, build community, and develop skills in household management, financial literacy, interpersonal relations, and independent living that will promote self-sufficiency. While they are in the program, young adults meet weekly with a Youth Advocate and biweekly with an Education and Employment Specialist. They also identify and increase positive relationships with supportive adults.

The program includes three phases: engagement, skill building, and transition to independence (see Figure 1). Its approach to service delivery is trauma-informed and based on the principles of positive youth development, harm reduction, and cultural humility and responsiveness. Services are developmentally and culturally appropriate and delivered with lived experiences of the young adults the program serves in mind. Young adults are encouraged to reframe setbacks as opportunities for growth. They typically remain in the program for between 1 and 3 years.

Figure 1. My First Place Phases

METHODS

Our evaluation relied on data from three sources. We briefly describe the data from each of these sources below.

First Place for Youth

Chapin Hall received an Excel file from FPFY that contained anonymized but individualized data for three groups of young adults: those who enrolled in and completed the program, those who enrolled in but did not complete the program, and those who did not enroll in the program. Young adults are counted as having completed the program if they exited the program into stable housing and either (1) demonstrated educational progress while they were in the program (for example, by completing at least one semester of college or earning a lower-level vocational certificate) or (2) are employed and their wages increased by more than 3% annually since program entry. The first two groups included all the young adults who exited the program between 2015 and 2022. FPFY estimated an exit date for each young adult in the "did not enroll" group based on their referral date and the average length of stay in the program for their county. The Excel file included information about the young people's demographic and background characteristics, including county, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, parenthood, history of homelessness, and prior legal system involvement. For young people who enrolled in the program, it also included information about the length of time they were enrolled, their exit destination, and their termination reason.

Employment Development Department

With financial and technical support from Tipping Point Community, FPFY submitted records to the California Employment Development Department (EDD) that included young adults' names, birthdates, genders, and social security numbers. EDD matched those records with their quarterly wage data and returned a file that included aggregate data on employment (that is, the number and percentage of young adults who were employed each year) and the annual earnings of those who were employed (including mean, median, and standard deviation) for the years 2012 through 2022.[1] EDD defines employed as earning at least $1,500 in at least one quarter during the calendar year, and only earnings reported by an employer on a Wage and Tax Statement (Form W-2) are included. Income earned through freelancing, independent contracting, and self-employment is not included. Also, the EDD coded data as "missing" for a particular group of young adults if fewer than 7 of those young adults earned at least $1,500 in at least one quarter during the calendar year.

Exit Cohort

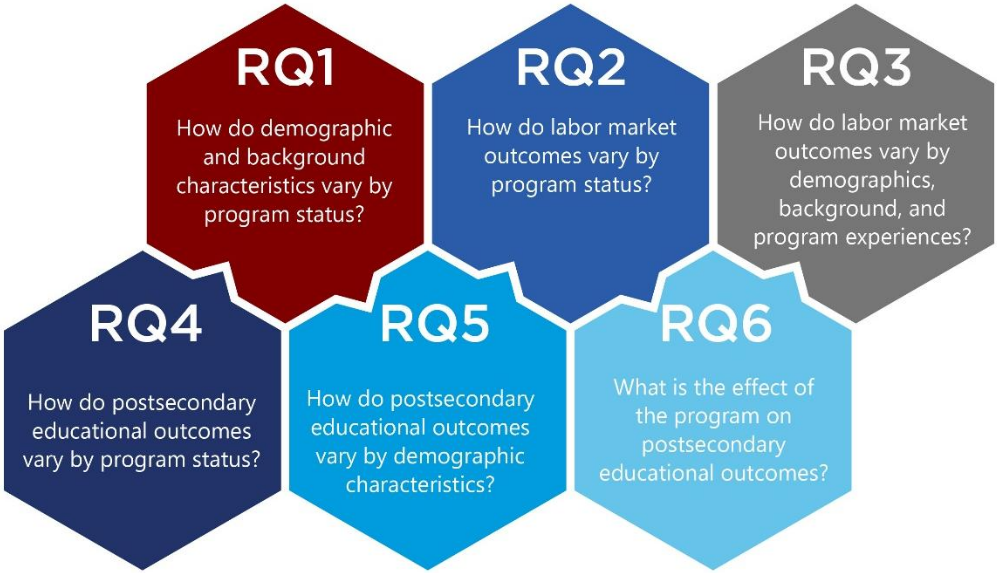
Young adults who exited the program in the same year are grouped together. Annual employment and earnings metrics were reported separately for each cohort. Earlier cohorts have more years of post-exit data than later cohorts, and later cohorts were too young to have been employed during the first few years for which data were shared.

Relative Year

Relative year is based on the year in which young adults exited the program (or would have exited the program if they had enrolled based on the county in which they lived). The year in which young adults exited the program is defined as Year 0. The 3 years before the year in which they exited are assigned negative values (that is, -3 to -1) and the 3 years after the year in which they exited are assigned positive values (that is, +1 to +3). Annual employment and earnings metrics were reported by relative year separately for young adults who completed the program, young adults who enrolled in but did not complete the program, and young adults who did not enroll in the program. The aggregate data were also reported separately by demographic characteristics (including county, race, gender, sexual orientation, parenting status), background characteristics (including homelessness history and legal system involvement), and program experiences (including length of time in the program, exit destination, and termination reason) for all the young adults who were enrolled, regardless of whether they completed the program.

National Student Clearinghouse

The National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) is a nonprofit organization that receives college enrollment and graduation data from more than 36,000 participating colleges and universities across the U.S. Through their Student Tracker for Outreach program, we obtained individual-level data on college enrollment and graduation. We provided the NSC with a file containing the names and birthdates of young adults in the MFP sample. The NSC matched the records we provided against its database and returned a file with college enrollment and graduation data through September 2024 for the young adults in our sample with matched enrollment records. Each record included enrollment start and end dates, the name of the postsecondary institution, the state in which the institution is located, and the type of institution (for example, public or private, 2-year or 4-year). Each record also indicated if the student had graduated that term and, if so, the credential they earned. We used the data from these three sources to address the following research questions (RQ):



Our approach to analyzing the data to address these research questions is described in the next section.

Analytic Approach

Group Characteristics

Before analyzing the employment and earnings data or the postsecondary education data, we examined whether the three groups of young adults (those who enrolled in and completed the program, those who enrolled in but did not complete the program, and those who did not enroll in the program) differed with respect to their demographic characteristics (such as county, age, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, parenthood) or background characteristics (such as homelessness history or legal system involvement). We also examined whether those who enrolled in and completed the program differed from those who enrolled in but did not complete the program with respect to the length of time they were enrolled, their exit destination, or their termination reason. Examining these differences was important because pre-existing between-group differences could potentially explain any differences we might observe in their post program labor market or postsecondary educational outcomes. We used chi-square tests for categorical variables and t-tests or ANOVAs for continuous variables.

Labor Market Outcomes

We used a two-step process to analyze the aggregate employment and earnings data. First, we visualized the aggregate data. Second, we used online statistical calculators to test whether between-group differences were statistically significant. We tested the differences in employment rates using chi-square tests.[2] We tested the differences in mean earnings using t-tests or ANOVAs.[3] To reduce the total number of significance tests, we combined some groups based on guidance provided by FPFY. To test for statistically significant differences in mean annual earnings between the newly created groups, we computed weighted means and pooled standard deviations. In the case of the relative year data, we limited the testing to the year in which young adults exited the program (that is, Year 0) and the first 3 years post exit (that is, Years +1, +2, and +3). Groups that were too small or not meaningful (for example, other and unknown) were excluded from the visualizations and significance testing.

Postsecondary Educational Attainment

We used a multi-step process to analyze the postsecondary educational data. First, we computed the percentage of young adults who ever enrolled in college, the percentage of young adults who completed at least one semester of college, and the percentage of young adults who earned a postsecondary credential. Young adults were counted as having completed at least one semester if they did not withdraw or take a leave of absence. Postsecondary credentials included certificates, associate's degrees, bachelor's degrees, and master's degrees. We also examined whether those percentages varied by gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, parenting status, cohort, county, and program status (that is, whether they had enrolled in MFP) and ran chi-square tests to determine whether the between-group differences were statistically significant.

Second, because enrollment in the program had not been randomized, any differences in outcomes could potentially be explained by differences between the two groups that are related to whether they enrolled or did not enroll in the program. We used propensity score matching (PSM) to create two comparable groups of young adults: a treatment group of young adults who had enrolled in the program and a comparison group of young adults who had not enrolled. We estimated propensity scores for all the young adults in both groups by regressing enrollment status (that is, whether they had enrolled in MFP) on an array of demographic characteristics, including gender, race/ethnicity, age, parenthood status, and county.[4] Then we matched treatment group members to comparison group members based on the similarity of their estimated propensity scores.[5] Once we identified our match comparison group, we tested whether the treatment and comparison groups were roughly equivalent on observable measures.

Third, because young adults in the treatment group could enroll in college, complete a semester of college, or earn a credential before they entered MFP, we could not use logistic regression to examine the effects of MFP on enrolling in college, completing a semester, or earning a credential.[6] Instead, we used survival analysis, a set of methods for analyzing "time to event" data. In this case, the event in question is first-time college enrollment. The proportional hazards model is one type of survival analysis. The hazard can be thought of as the instantaneous risk that an event will occur at a particular time, given that the event has not already occurred. Hazard models allow for right censoring, which occurs when the event in question does not occur before the end of the observation period (Allison, 1984). They can also incorporate time-varying covariates whose values change over time. In this case, MFP entry can be considered a time-varying covariate (that is, it is coded 0 prior to entry and coded 1 thereafter). This allows us to estimate the effect of the program on the hazard of enrolling in college, completing a semester, and earning a credential.[7]

To estimate the effect of the program on the hazard of enrolling in college, we calculated the number of days between each young adult's 16th birthday and the date on which they first enrolled in college (if they ever enrolled) or September 3, 2024, the last enrollment date recorded in the data. We used the young adults' 16th birthdays as a starting point because none of the young adults had enrolled in college before they turned 16. We then estimated a proportional hazard model predicting time to first college enrollment, where MFP entry was a time varying covariate, and the covariates are gender, race/ethnicity, county, and parenting status.

To estimate the effect of the program on the hazard of completing at least one semester, we calculated the number of days between each young adult's 16th birthday and the date on which they completed their first semester (if they completed at least one) or March 21, 2025, the last semester completion date recorded in the data. We then estimated a proportional hazard model predicting time to first semester completion, where MFP entry was a time varying covariate, and the covariates are gender, race/ethnicity, county, and parenting status.

Finally, to estimate the effect of the program on the hazard of earning a credential, we calculated the number of days between the first day on which a young adult enrolled in college and their first (or only) graduation date (if they earned a credential) or September 25, 2024, the last graduation date. This analysis was limited to the sample of young adults who enrolled in college.[8] We then estimated a proportional hazard model predicting time to graduation, where MFP entry was a time-varying covariate, and the covariates are gender, race/ethnicity, county, and parenting status.

SAMPLE

The sample included 2,418 young adults who belong to one of three groups: 571 young adults who enrolled in and completed the program; 1,027 young adults who enrolled in but did not complete the program; and 820 young adults who were eligible for and interested in the program but chose not to enroll or could not enroll because the program was at capacity (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Sample Composition

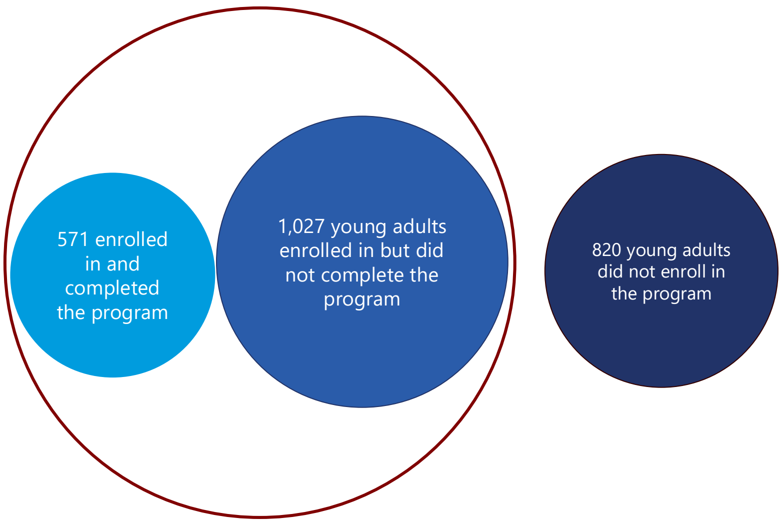


Table 1 presents information about the characteristics of the three groups of young adults. Most of the information comes from the intake forms that are completed when young adults are referred to the program. For young adults who enroll in the program, information about parenting status and legal system involvement is updated, as needed, while they are enrolled.

Together, Los Angeles and San Francisco/Alameda Counties accounted for a majority of the "enrolled and completed" and the "enrolled but did not complete" groups, while Los Angeles County accounted for almost two-thirds of the "did not enroll" group. A plurality of the young adults in all three groups are Black, and most of the young adults in all three groups are either Black or Latino. Young women comprised a majority of all three groups, but the ratio of young women to young men was higher in the "enrolled and completed" group than in the other two groups. About one in eight young adults in all three groups identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual, although data on sexual orientation were missing for 40% of the "did not enroll" group. Parents comprised about one-quarter of the "enrolled and completed" and the "enrolled but did not complete" groups, but only one in six young adults in the "did not enroll" group was a parent.[9] About half of all three groups reported a history of homelessness,[10] and about one in ten young adults in all three groups reported history of arrest or incarceration. However, data were far more likely to be missing for young adults in the "did not enroll" group than for young adults in either of the other two groups, and we do not know if the young adults for whom data are missing look similar to the young adults for whom we have data.

Table 1. Young Adult Characteristics by Group

	Enrolled & completed (*n* = 571)		Enrolled but did not complete (*n* = 1,027)		Enrolled (*n* = 1,598)		Did not enroll (*n* = 820)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
County								
Contra Costa	73	12.8	111	10.8	184	11.5	59	7.2
Los Angeles	202	35.4	397	38.7	599	37.5	531	64.8
San Francisco/Alameda	192	33.6	289	28.1	481	30.1	165	20.1
Santa Clara	64	11.2	106	10.3	170	10.6	64	5.7
Solano	40	7.0	124	12.1	164	10.3	18	2.2
Exit cohort								
2015	42	7.4	147	14.3	189	11.8	0	0
2016	44	7.7	157	15.3	201	12.6	60	7.3
2017	76	13.3	132	12.9	208	13.0	80	9.8
2018	97	16.9	121	11.8	218	13.6	155	18.9
2019	79	13.8	147	14.3	226	14.1	165	20.1
2020	63	11.0	97	9.4	160	10.0	159	19.4
2021	96	16.8	128	12.5	224	14.0	120	14.6
2022	74	12.9	98	9.5	172	10.8	81	9.9
Race/ethnicity								
Black	285	49.9	510	49.7	795	49.7	349	42.7
Latino	153	26.8	282	27.5	435	27.3	241	29.4
Multiracial	61	10.7	117	11.4	178	11.1	77	9.4
White	37	6.5	62	6.0	99	6.2	40	4.9
Other	13	2.3	19	1.9	32	2.0	21	2.6
Unknown	22	3.9	37	3.6	59	3.7	92	11.2
Gender								
Woman	357	62.5	561	54.6	918	57.5	446	54.4
Man	208	36.4	459	44.7	667	41.7	336	41.0
Nonbinary/Other	3	0.5	4	0.4	7	0.4	14	1.7
Unknown	3	0.5	3	0.3	6	0.4	24	2.9
Sexual orientation								
Straight	364	63.8	622	60.6	986	61.7	402	49.0
Lesbian, gay, or bisexual	73	12.8	124	12.1	197	12.3	91	11.1
Unknown/missing[a]	134	23.5	281	27.4	415	26.0	327	39.9

	Enrolled & completed (*n* = 571)		Enrolled but did not complete (*n* = 1,027)		Enrolled (*n* = 1,598)		Did not enroll (*n* = 820)	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Parent status								
Parent	137	23.9	247	24.1	384	24.0	137	16.7
Not a parent	434	76.0	778	75.8	1212	75.9	674	82.2
Missing	0	0.0	2	0.2	2	0.1	9	1.1
Homelessness history								
Ever homeless	279	48.9	575	55.9	854	53.4	388	47.3
Never homeless	288	50.4	426	41.5	714	44.7	220	26.8
Missing	4	0.7	26	2.5	30	1.9	212	25.9
Legal system involvement								
Ever arrested/incarcerated	49	8.6	125	12.2	174	10.9	88	10.7
Never arrested/incarcerated	462	80.9	774	75.4	1236	77.3	479	58.4
Missing	60	10.5	128	12.5	188	11.8	253	30.9

[a] Young adults in the earlier exit cohorts were not asked about their sexual orientation.

Table 2 presents information that was only available for the two groups of young adults who enrolled in the program. In general, young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group stayed in the program longer than young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group. Unplanned or involuntary exits (that is, emergency exits, exiting because the program was unable to meet needs, and exiting because of program violation) were more common for young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group than for young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group. All the young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group exited to a stable housing situation compared to about three-quarters of the young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group. This is a function of the fact that young adults are only counted as having completed the program if they exit to stable housing. About half of the young adults who completed the program earned a 2- or 4-year college degree or an industry-recognized certificate compared to only one in five of the young adults who enrolled in the program but did not complete it. This may reflect the fact that one of the possible criteria for program completion is making "educational progress." Finally, young adults who completed the program were in the program for about 9.5 months (or 67%) longer and were almost a year older when they exited, on average, than young adults who did not complete the program.

Table 2. Program Experiences by Group

	Enrolled & completed (*n* = 571)		Enrolled but did not complete (*n* = 1,027)	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**
Length of time in program				
≤ 180 days	27	4.7	272	26.5
181 to 360 days	59	10.3	249	24.2
361 to 720 days	201	35.2	297	28.9
> 720 days	284	49.8	209	20.4
Termination reason				
Aged out	319	55.9	323	31.5
Voluntary exit	149	26.1	239	23.3
Emergency exit	14	2.5	109	10.6
Program unable to meet needs	8	1.4	25	2.4
Program violation	79	13.8	306	29.8
Other/missing data	0	0.0	1	0.1
Exit destination				
Market-rate apartment	160	28.0	130	12.6
Subsidized apartment	74	12.9	95	9.2
Transitional housing	62	10.9	113	11.0
Living with family/friends (stable)	275	48.2	423	41.2
Living with family/friends (unstable)	0	0.0	87	8.5
Detention/treatment facility	0	0.0	64	6.2
Homelessness	0	0.0	44	4.3
Unknown	0	0.0	71	6.9
Education				
Working towards high school diploma or GED	48	8.4	285	27.8
High school diploma or GED	73	12.8	270	26.3
Enrolled in postsecondary education program	90	15.8	160	15.6
Completed a semester of college	82	14.4	109	10.6
Earned lower level certificate or certificate of competency	152	26.6	144	14.0
Earned a 2- or 4-year college degree or industry-recognized certificate	127	22.1	59	5.7
	Mean	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**
Number of days in program	716.7	369.4	428.7	327.8
Age at entry (in years)	19.4	1.4	19.3	1.4
Age at exit (in years)	21.3	1.7	20.4	1.8

BETWEEN-GROUP DIFFERENCES

We tested whether the between-group differences in demographic and background characteristics were statistically significant.

County. Table 3 shows the breakdown of the young adults in the three groups by county. The "did not enroll" group includes a much higher percentage of young adults from Los Angeles County than either of the other two groups. Additionally, the "enrolled and completed" group includes a higher percentage of young adults from San Francisco/Alameda Counties than the "enrolled but did not complete" group, whereas the "enrolled but did not complete" group includes a higher percentage of young adults from Solano County than the "enrolled and completed" group. Chi-square tests indicated that the county-level differences between the "enrolled and completed" and the "did not enroll" groups ($\chi^2(4) = 121.46$, $p < .001$), between the "enrolled but did not complete" and the "did not enroll" groups ($\chi^2(4) = 149.68$, $p < .001$), and between the "enrolled and completed" and the "enrolled but did not complete" groups ($\chi^2(4) = 15.42$, $p = .004$) are statistically significant.

Table 3. County by Program Status

	Enrolled & completed (%; *n* = 571)	Enrolled but did not complete (%; *n* = 1,027)	Did not enroll (%; *n* = 820)
Contra Costa	12.8	10.8	7.2
Los Angeles	35.4	38.7	64.8
San Francisco/Alameda	33.6	28.1	20.1
Santa Clara	11.2	10.3	5.7
Solano	7.0	12.1	2.2

Race/ethnicity. Table 4 shows the breakdown of the young adults in the three groups by race/ethnicity. All three groups were predominantly young adults of color, and about half the young adults in all three groups were Black. Chi-square tests indicated that the between-group racial and ethnic differences are not statistically significant ($\chi^2(4) = 8.393$, $p = .396$).

Table 4. Race/Ethnicity by Program Status[a]

	Enrolled & completed (%; n = 571)	Enrolled but did not complete (%; n = 1,027)	Did not enroll (%; *n* = 820)
Black	*51.9*	51.5	47.9
Hispanic	27.9	28.5	33.1
Multiracial	11.1	11.8	10.6
White	6.7	6.3	5.5
Other	2.4	1.9	2.9

[a] Table 4 excludes young adults whose race/ethnicity was missing or unknown.

Gender. Table 5 shows the breakdown of young adults in the three groups by gender. Young women outnumber young men in all three groups, but this is most pronounced in the "enrolled and completed" group. Chi-square tests indicated that the gender differences between the "enrolled and completed" and "enrolled but did not complete" groups ($\chi^2(2) = 10.15$, $p = .006$), between the "enrolled and completed" and the "did not enroll" groups ($\chi^2(2) = 9.246$, $p = .010$), and between the "enrolled but did not complete" and the "did not enroll" groups ($\chi^2(2) = 9.30$, $p = .010$) are statistically significant.

Table 5. Gender by Program Status[a]

	Enrolled & completed (%; *n* = 571)	Enrolled but did not complete (%; *n* = 1,027)	Did not enroll (%; *n* = 820)
Woman	62.9	54.8	56.0
Man	36.6	44.8	42.3
Nonbinary	0.5	0.4	1.7

[a] Table 5 excludes young adults whose gender was missing or unknown. Gender identity was not consistently documented prior to 2020.

Sexual orientation. Table 6 shows the breakdown of young adults in the three groups by sexual orientation. The percentage of young adults who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual is about the same across the three groups. Chi-square tests indicated that the between-group differences in sexual orientation are not statistically significant ($\chi^2(1) = 0.799$, $p = .67$).

Table 6. Sexual Orientation by Program Status[a]

	Enrolled & completed (%; *n* = 571)	Enrolled but did not complete (%; *n* = 1,027)	Did not enroll (%; *n* = 820)
Straight	83.3	83.4	81.5
Lesbian, gay, or bisexual	16.7	16.6	18.5

[a] Table 6 excludes young adults whose sexual orientation was missing or unknown. Sexual orientation was not consistently documented prior to 2020.

Parenting status. Table 7 shows the breakdown of young adults in the three groups by parenting status. Chi-square tests indicated young adults in the "did not enroll" group were less likely to have been parents than young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group ($\chi^2(1) = 10.63$, $p = .001$) or young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group ($\chi^2(1) = 14.21$, $p < .001$). These differences could reflect the fact that for young adults in the "enrolled and completed" and the "enrolled but did not complete" groups, parenting status could change while they were enrolled in the program. For young adults in the "did not enroll" group, parenting status could not change after intake because no additional data were collected from those young adults.

Table 7. Parenthood by Program Status[a]

	Enrolled & completed (%; n = 571)	Enrolled but did not complete (%; n = 1,027)	Did not enroll (%; n = 820)
Non-parent	76.0	75.9	83.1
Parent	24.0	24.1	16.9

[a] Table 7 excludes young adults whose parenting status was missing or unknown.

History of homelessness. Table 8 shows the breakdown of young adults' history of homelessness in the three groups. Chi-square tests indicated that young adults in the "did not enroll" group were more likely to have experienced homelessness than young adults in both the "enrolled and completed" group ($\chi^2(1) = 25.52$, $p < .001$) and the "enrolled but did not complete" group ($\chi^2(1) = 6.39$, $p = .011$). Additionally, young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group were more likely to have experienced homelessness than young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group ($\chi^2(1) = 9.90$, $p = .002$).

Table 8. History of Homelessness by Program Status[a]

	Enrolled & completed (%, n = 567)	Enrolled but did not complete (%, n = 1,001)	Did not enroll (%, n = 608)
Never homeless	50.8	42.6	36.2
Ever homeless	49.2	57.4	63.8

[a] Table 8 excludes young adults whose homelessness history was missing or unknown.

Prior legal system involvement. Table 9 shows the breakdown of young adults in the three groups by prior legal system involvement. Chi-square tests indicated that young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group were less likely to have been involved in the legal system than young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group ($\chi^2(1) = 5.61$, $p = .018$) and young adults in the "did not enroll" group ($\chi^2(1) = 8.52$, $p = .004$).

Table 9. Legal System Involvement by Program Status[a]

	Enrolled & completed (%, n = 511)	Enrolled but did not complete (%. n = 899)	Did not enroll (%, n = 567)
Never arrested or incarcerated	90.4	86.1	84.5
Ever arrested or incarcerated	9.6	13.9	15.5

[a] Table 9 excludes young adults whose prior legal system involvement was missing or unknown.

We also compared the young adults who enrolled in and completed the program to the young adults who enrolled in but did not complete the program with respect to their length of stay, termination reason, and exit destination.

Length of stay. Table 10 shows the breakdown of young adults in the two groups by length of program stay. A chi-square test indicated that young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group tended to stay in the program longer than young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group ($\chi^2(3) = 237.06$, $p < .001$).

Table 10. Length of Stay in Program by Program Completion Status

Length of Stay	Enrolled & completed (%, *n* = 571)	Enrolled but did not complete (%, *n* = 1,027)
≤ 180 days	4.7	26.5
181 to 360 days	10.3	24.3
361 to 720 days	35.2	28.9
> 720 days	49.7	20.4

Termination reason. Table 11 shows the breakdown of young adults in the two groups by termination reason. A chi-square test indicated that young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group were more likely to experience a planned/voluntary exit than young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group ($\chi^2(1) = 110.46$, $p < .001$).

Table 11. Termination Reason by Program Completion Status[a]

	Enrolled & completed (%, *n* = 569)	Enrolled but did not complete (%, *n* = 1,003)
Planned/voluntary exit	82.2	56.0
Aged out	56.1	32.2
Voluntary exit	26.1	23.8
Unplanned/involuntary exit	17.8	43.9
Emergency exit	2.5	10.9
Program is unable to meet needs	1.4	2.5
Program violation	13.9	30.5

[a] Table 11 excludes young adults for whom data on their termination reason were missing.

Housing exit destination. Table 12 shows the breakdown of young adults in the two groups by housing exit destination. All the young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group exited into stable housing while about one in five young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group exited into an unstable housing situation. This difference is statistically significant ($\chi^2(1) = 133.52$, $p < .001$).

Table 12. Exit Destination by Program Completion Status

	Enrolled & completed (%, *n* = 571)	Enrolled but did not complete (%, *n* = 956)
Exit to stable housing	100.0	79.6
Market-rate apartment	28.0	13.6
Subsidized apartment	13.0	9.9
Transitional housing	10.9	11.8
Living with family/friends (stable)	48.2	44.2
Exit to unstable housing	0.0	20.4
Living with family/friends (unstable)	0.0	9.1
Detention/treatment facility	0.0	6.7
Homelessness	0.0	4.6

LABOR MARKET OUTCOMES

We examined the annual employment rate and the mean and median earnings of the three groups of young adults for the 3 years before the exit year (time = -3 to -1), the exit year (time = 0), and the 3 years after the exit year (time = +1 to +3). We repeated this analysis after combining the two groups of young adults who enrolled in the program (that is, the "enrolled and completed" group and the "enrolled but did not complete" group). We note where differences were statistically significant after applying the Bonferroni correction.

Employment and Program Status

Figure 3 shows the percentage of young adults who were employed each year relative to their exit year (time = 0) for each of the three groups. Chi-square tests indicated that employment rates varied by program status 3 years before the program exit year (Year -3; $\chi^2(2, n = 1{,}301) = 40.22$, $p < .001$), 2 years before the program exit year (Year -2, $\chi^2(2, n = 1{,}301) = 75.24$, $p < .001$), and 1 year before the program exit year (Year -1, $\chi^2(2, n = 1{,}301) = 92.76$, $p < .001$). Pairwise comparisons revealed that, in each of those years, young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group were significantly more likely to be employed than young adults in either the "enrolled but did not complete" group or the "did not enroll" group. Young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group were significantly more likely to be employed than young adults in the "did not enroll" group 1 year (but not 2 or 3 years) before the program exit year. This could reflect the fact that many of the young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group were not in the program 2 or 3 years before the program exit year, and hence, were no different from the "did not enroll" group with respect to their program exposure.

Chi-square tests indicated that employment rates varied by program status in the program exit year (Year 0; $\chi^2(2, n = 1{,}301) = 80.35$, $p < .001$), 1 year after the program exit year (Year 1; $\chi^2(2, n = 1{,}301) = 75.16$, $p < .001$), 2 years after the program exit year (Year 2; $\chi^2(2, n = 1{,}301) = 55.44$, $p < .001$), and 3 years after the program exit year (Year 3; $\chi^2(2, n = 1{,}301) = 41.79$, $p < .001$). Pairwise comparisons revealed that, in each of those years, young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group were significantly more likely to be employed than young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group and the "did not enroll" group. Although young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group were more likely to be employed than young adults in the "did not enroll" group, these differences were not statistically significant after applying a Bonferroni correction.

In sum, young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group were more likely to be employed both before and after their exit year than young adults in either of the other two groups.

Figure 3. Percentage Employed by Program Status: 3 Groups

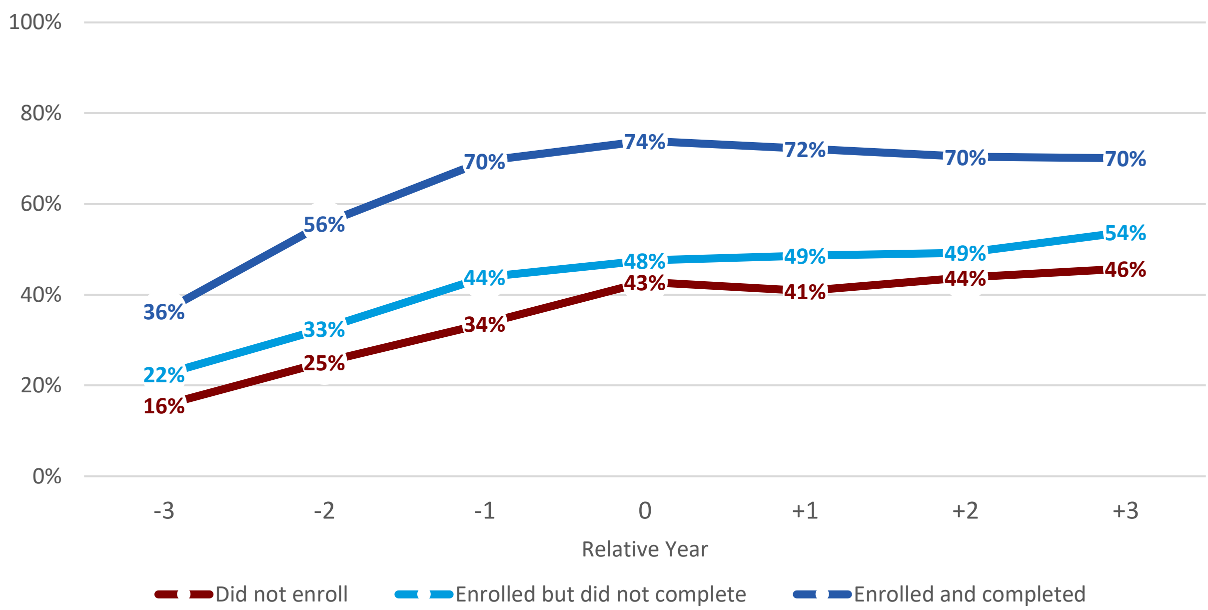
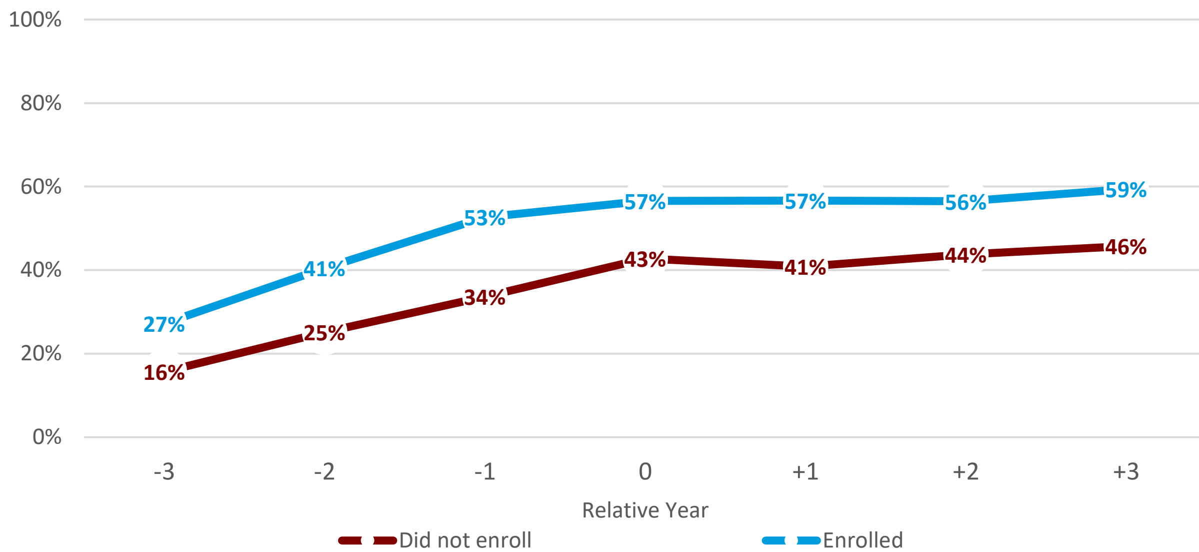


Figure 4 is similar to Figure 3, except that the "enrolled and completed" and the "enrolled but did not complete" groups are combined. Chi-square tests indicated that employment rates varied by program enrollment status 3 years before the program exit year (Year -3;, $\chi^2(2, n = 1{,}301) = 16.25$, $p < .001$), 2 years before the program exit year (Year -2; $\chi^2(2, n = 1{,}301) = 22.99$, $p < .001$), and 1 year before the program exit year (Year -1; $\chi^2(2, n = 1{,}301) = 33.09$, $p < .001$). In each of those years, young adults who enrolled in the program were significantly more likely to be employed than young adults who did not enroll.

Chi-square tests indicated that employment rates also varied by program status in the program exit year (Year 0;, $\chi^2(2, n = 1{,}301) = 17.29$, $p < .001$), 1 year after the program exit year (Year 1;, $\chi^2(2, n = 1{,}301) = 22.92$, $p < .001$), 2 years after the program exit year (Year 2;, $\chi^2(2, n = 1{,}301) = 14.65$, $p < .001$), and 3 years after the program exit year (Year 3; $\chi^2(2, n = 1{,}301) = 17.15$, $p < .001$). In each of those years, young adults who enrolled in the program were significantly more likely to be employed than young adults who did not enroll.

Figure 4. Percentage Employed by Program Status: 2 Groups



Earnings and Program Status

Figure 5 shows the mean annual earnings of young adults who were employed each year relative to their exit year for each of the three groups. ANOVAs revealed that the between-group differences in mean earnings were not statistically significant 3 years prior to the program exit year (Year -3;F(2, 477) = 2.36, *p* = .096), or 2 years prior to program exit year (Year -2; F(2, 477) = 2.97, *p* = .052). However, the between-group difference in mean earnings was statistically significant one year prior to program exit (Year -1) across the three groups (F(2, 624) = 8.19, *p* < .001). Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group earned significantly more, on average, than young adults in the "enrolled in but did not complete" group and the "did not enroll" group. Although young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group earned more, on average, than young adults in the "did not enroll" group, the differences in mean earnings between the two groups were not statistically significant.

ANOVAs revealed statistically significant differences in mean earnings in the program exit year (Year 0;, F(2, 691) = 13.24, *p* < .001), 1 year after the program exit year (Year 1; F(2, 686) = 7.83, *p* < .001), 2 years after the program exit year (Year 2; *F*(2, 693) = 10.05, *p* < .001, and 3 years after the program exit year (Year 3;, *F*(2, 728) = 11.78, *p* < .001. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that, in each of those years, young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group earned significantly more, on average, than young adults in the "enrolled in but did not complete" group and the "did not enroll" group. In Years 0, 1, and 2, young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group earned more, on average, than young adults in the "did not enroll" group, but the differences in mean earnings between the two groups were not statistically significant. In Year 3, the mean earnings of the two groups were about the same.

In sum, young adults who enrolled in and completed the program earned more, on average, starting 1 year before and continuing after the year in which they exited the program than young adults in either of the other two groups.

Figure 5. Mean Earnings by Relative Year and Program Status: 3 Groups

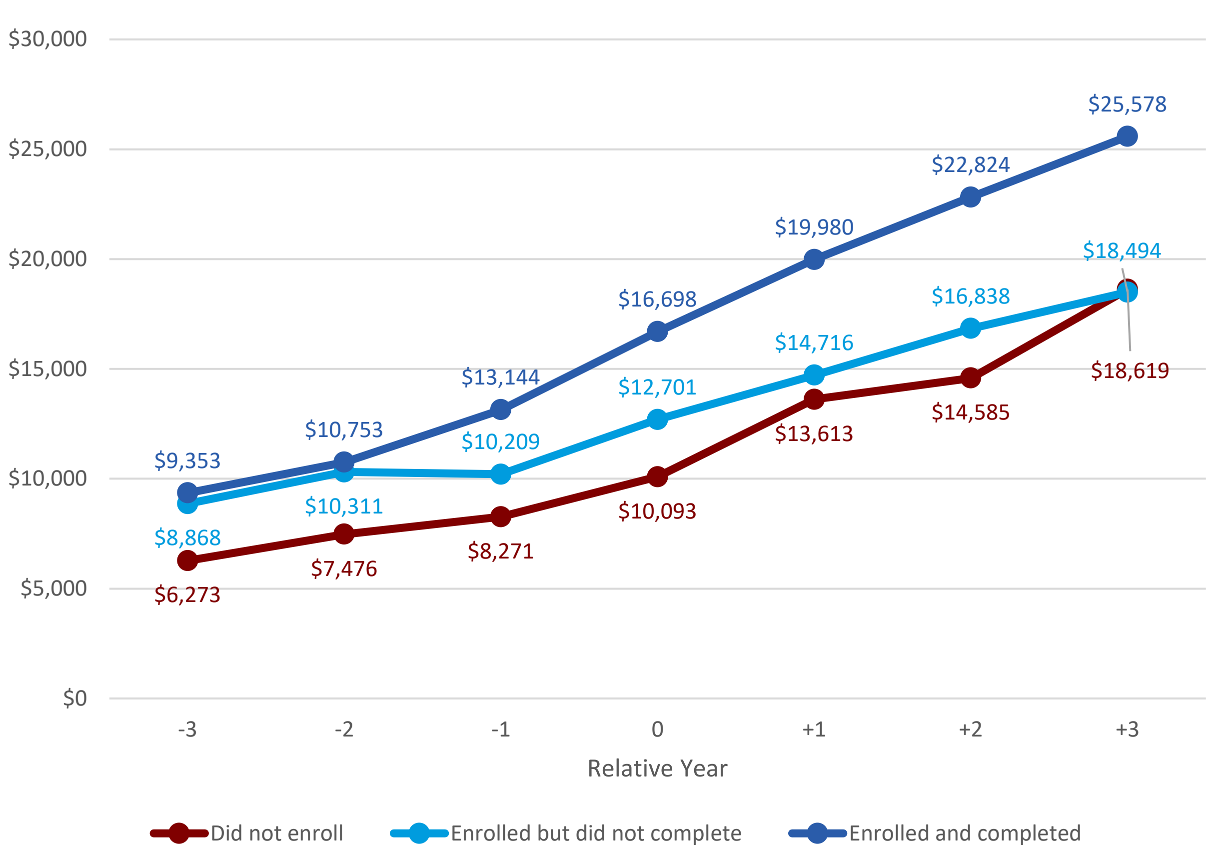


Figure 6 shows the mean earnings of the three groups after assigning a value of zero earnings to the young adults who were not employed in a given year. Including young adults with no earnings reduces the mean earnings of all three groups, but the pattern is the same. Young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group earned more, on average, than young adults in either of the other groups. In fact, because young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group were more likely to be employed than young adults in either of the other two groups, including young adults with zero earnings increases the between-group earnings gap.[11]

Figure 6. Adjusted Mean Earnings by Relative Year and Program Status: 3 Groups

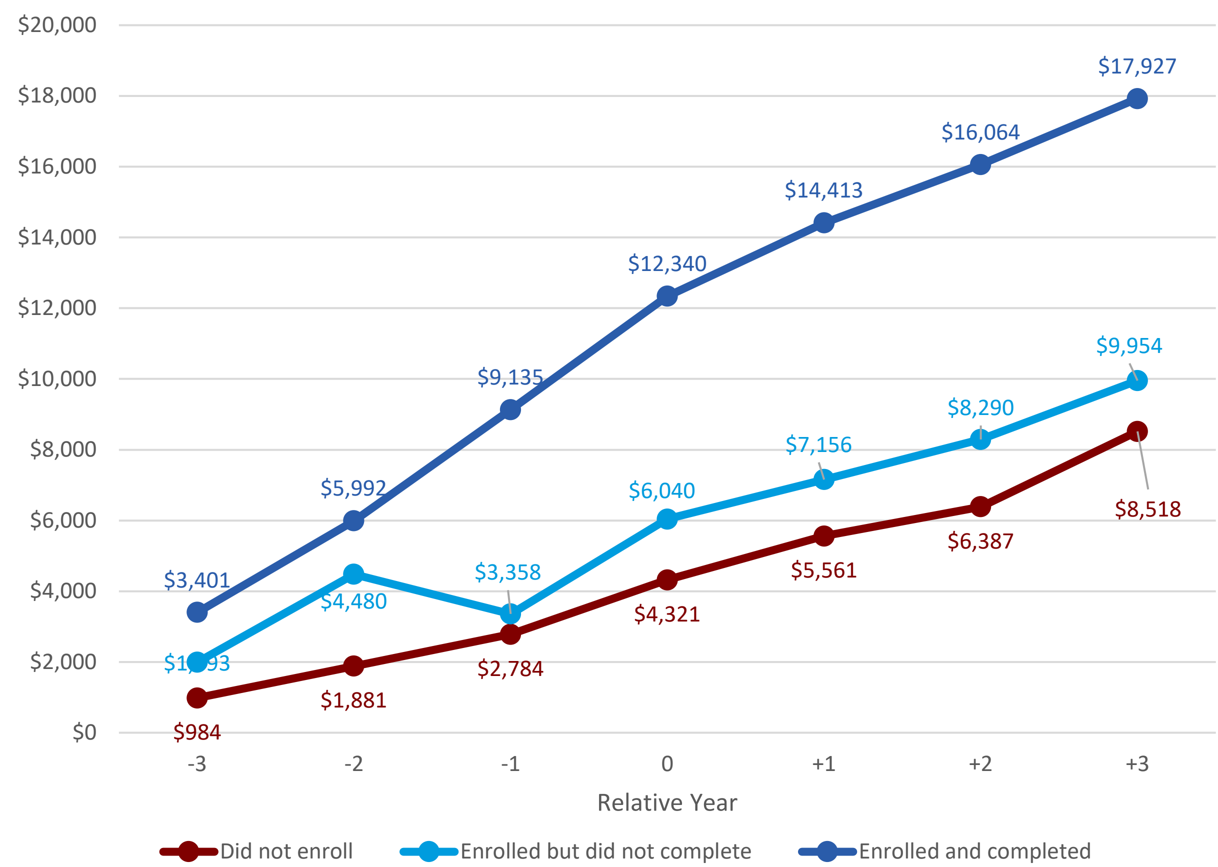


Figure 7 shows the median annual earnings of young adults who were employed each year relative to their exit year for each of the three groups. Once again, young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group earned more than young adults in either of the other two groups starting 1 year before and continuing after the year in which they exited the program.

Figure 7. Median Earnings by Relative Year and Program Status

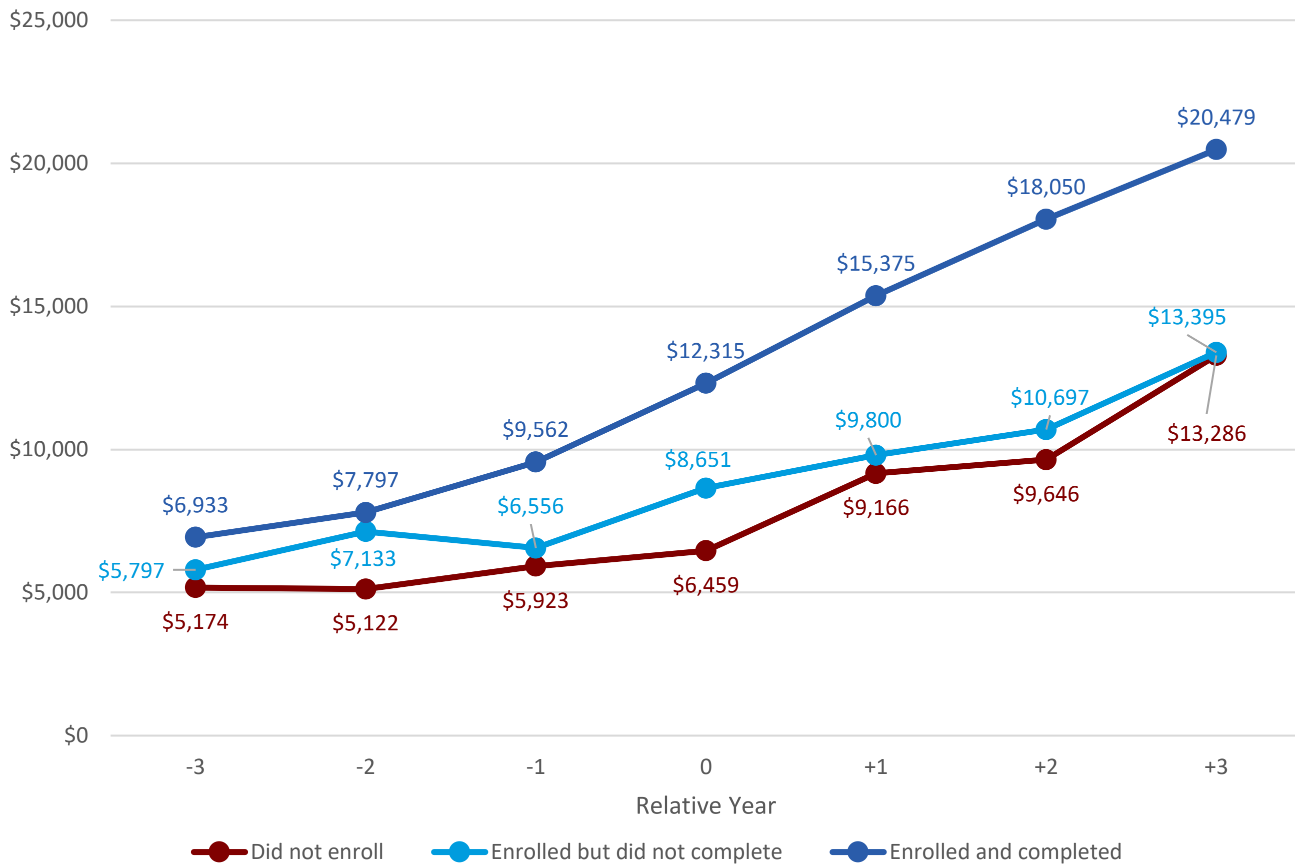
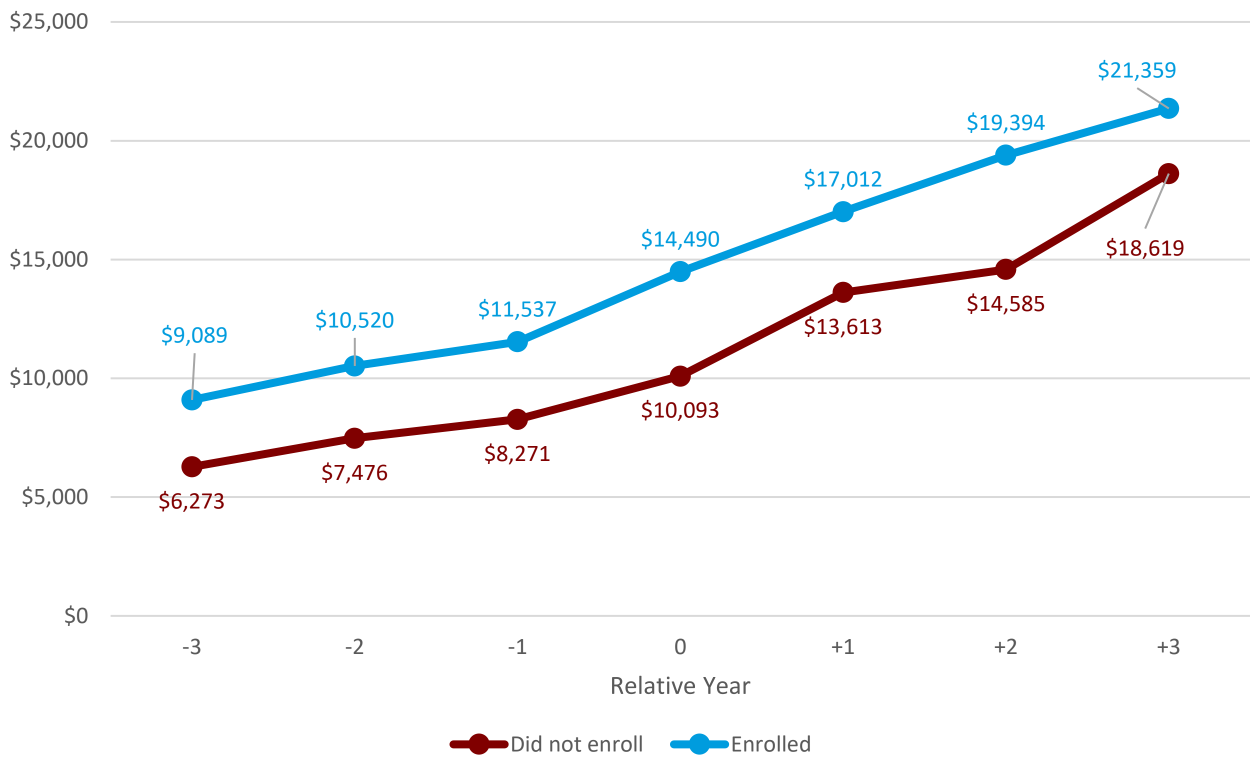


Figure 8 is similar to Figure 5 except that the "enrolled and completed" and the "enrolled but did not complete" are combined. T-tests indicated that young adults who enrolled in the program earned significantly more, on average, than young adults who did not enroll 3years before the program exit year (that is, Year -3;, $t(119.39) = -3.245$, p =.002), 2 years before the program exit year (Year -2;, $t(143.85) = -3.024$, p =.003), and 1 year before the program exit year (that is, Year -1;, t(220.22) = - 3.692, p <.001). Young adults who enrolled in the program also earned significantly more, on average, than young adults who did not enroll in the program exit year (that is, Year 0; t(263.88) = -4.39, p = <.001), 1 year after the program exit year (Year 1; t(265.72) = -2.48, p = .014), and 2 years after their program exit year (Year 2; t(269.77) = -3.172, p = .002). Although young adults who enrolled in the program were still earning more, on average, than young adults who did not enroll 3 years after their program exit year, the difference in earnings between the two groups was not statistically significant (t(244.42) = -1.776, p = .077).

Figure 8. Mean Earnings by Program Status: 2 Groups



Relationship between Labor Market Outcomes and Demographic and Background Characteristics

We examined whether the labor market outcomes of the young adults who enrolled in the program varied depending on their demographic or background characteristics.[12]

Gender

Figure 9 compares the employment rate of young women to the employment rate of young men relative to the year they exited the program.[13] Young women were significantly more likely to be employed than young men in their program exit year ($\chi^2(1, n = 987) = 4.82, p = .029$). However, this difference was no longer statistically significant at 1 year ($\chi^2(1, n = 987) = 0.89, p = .346$) or 2 years ($\chi^2(1, n = 987) = 1.64, p = .200$) after the year in which they exited.

Figure 9. Percentage Employed by Gender

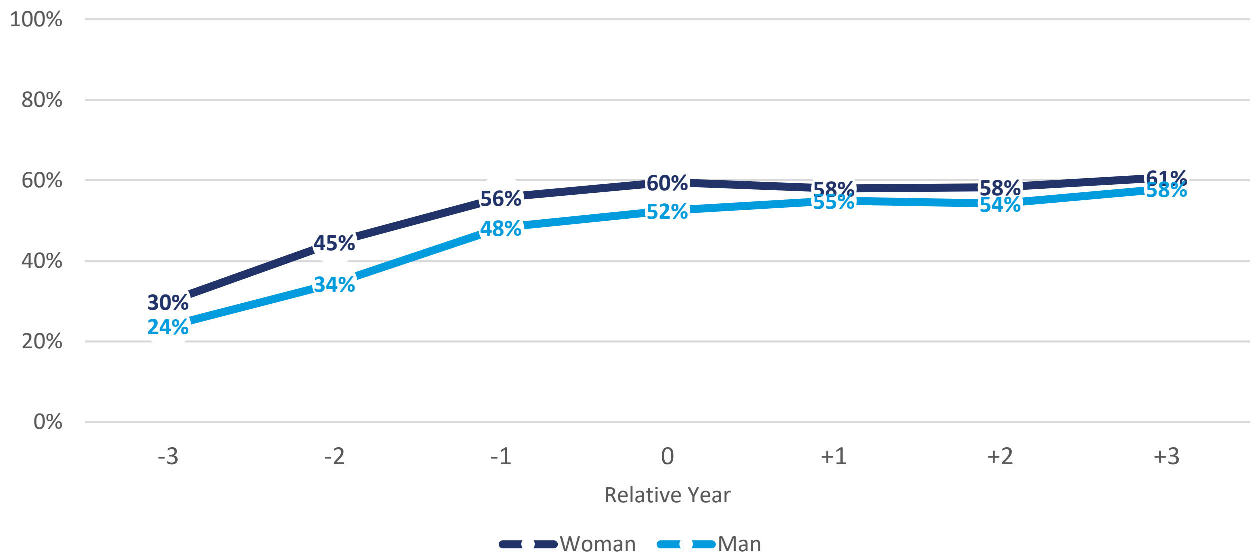
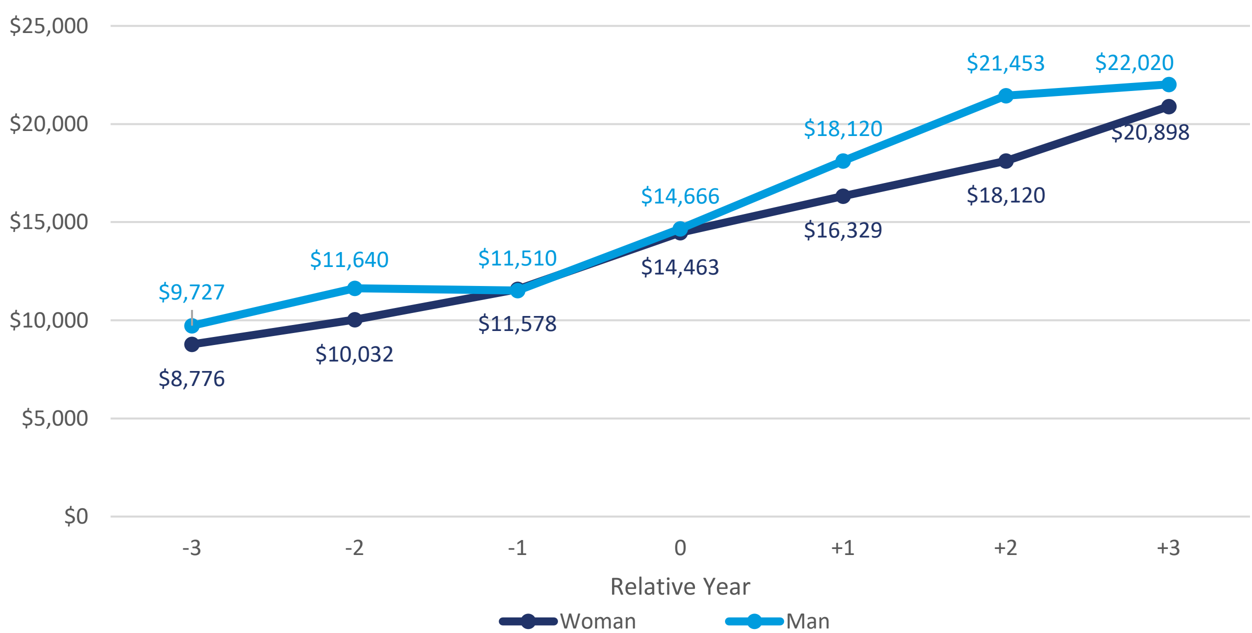


Figure 10 compares the mean earnings of employed young women to the mean earnings of employed young men relative to the year in which they exited the program. On average, young men earned more than young women at 1 year and 2 years after their program exit year. However, these differences were not statistically significant because the standard deviation for young men's earnings was much larger than the standard deviation for young women's earnings 1 year ($24,756 vs. $14,260) and 2 years ($26,221 vs. $15,496) after the year in which they exited.

Figure 10. Mean Earnings by Gender



Race

Figure 11 compares the employment rates of Black, Latino, White, and multiracial young adults relative to their program exit year.[14] Although the variation in employment rates was not statistically significant in the year young adults exited the program ($\chi^2(3, n = 948) = 1.674, p = .643$), it was statistically significant 1 year after their program exit year ($\chi^2(3, n = 948) = 10.452, p = .015$). Specifically, 1 year after their exit year, Latino young adults were more likely to be employed than White young adults ($\chi^2(1, n = 306) = 7.14, p = .045$). Although the variation in employment rates was also statistically significant 2 years after the year young adults exited the program ($\chi^2(3, n = 948) = 9.648, p = .022$), none of the between-group differences was statistically significant.

Figure 11. Percentage Employed by Race/Ethnicity and Relative Year

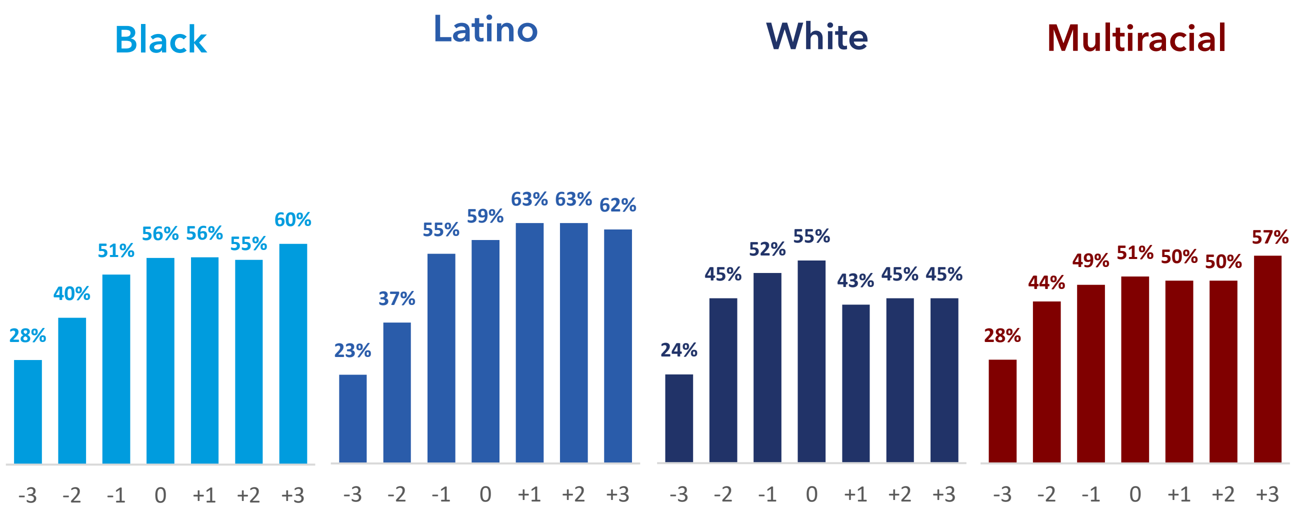
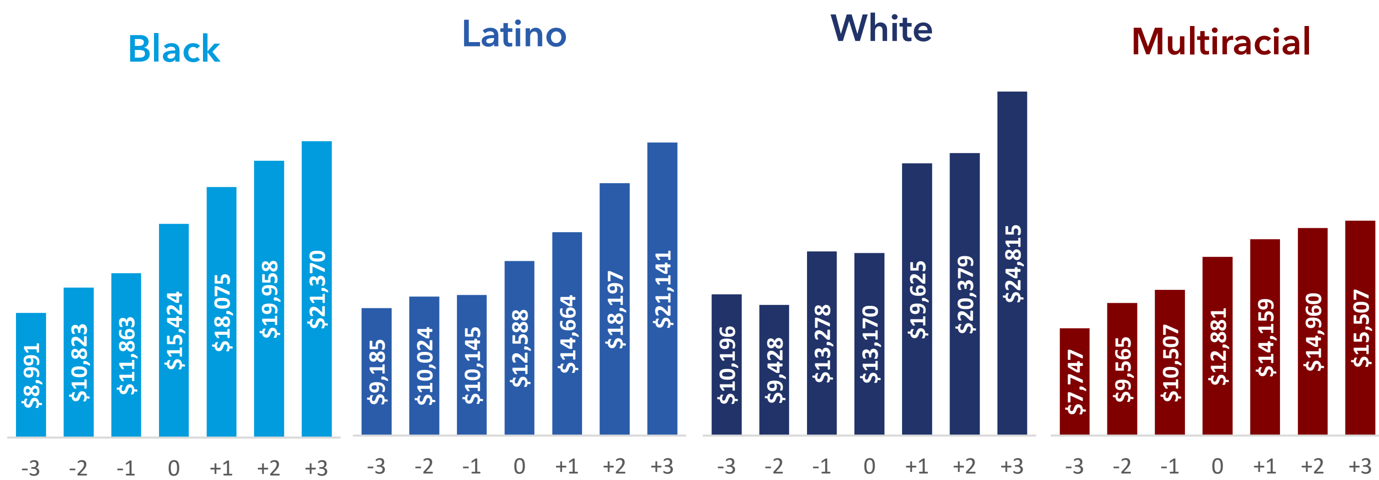


Figure 12 compares the mean earnings of employed Black, Latino, White, and multiracial young adults relative to their program exit year. The variation in mean earnings was not statistically significant in the year young adults exited the program (that is, year 0; $F(3, 529) = 1.85, p = .13$), 1 year after their program exit year ($F(3, 533) = 1.58, p = .193$), or 2 years after their program exit year ($F(3, 530) = 1.26, p = .288$).

Figure 12. Mean Earnings by Race/Ethnicity and Relative Year



Sexual Orientation

Figure 13 compares the employment rate of young adults identified who identified as straight to the employment rate of young adults who identified as lesbian, gay, or bisexual relative to their year of program exit.[15] Young adults who identified as lesbian, gay, or bisexual were as likely to be employed as young adults who identified as straight in the year they exited the program ($\chi^2(2, n = 731) = 4.1.64$, $p = .20$), 1 year after their program exit year ($\chi^2(2, n = 731) = 1.27$, $p = .259$), or 2 years after their program exit year ($\chi^2(2, n = 731) = 0.11$, $p = .818$).

Figure 13. Percentage Employed by Sexual Orientation and Relative Year

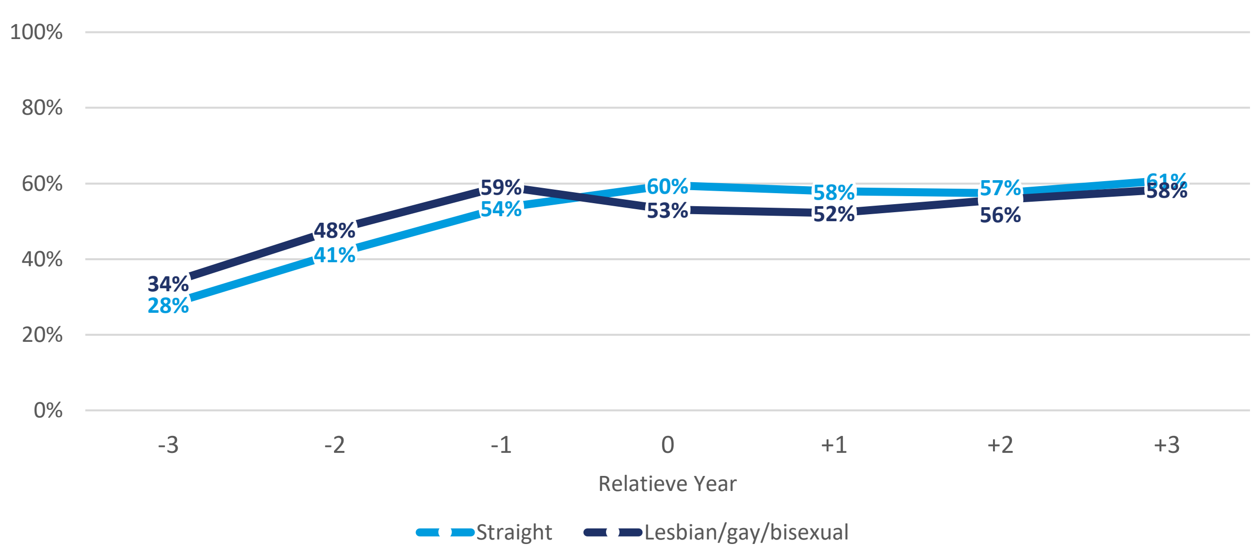
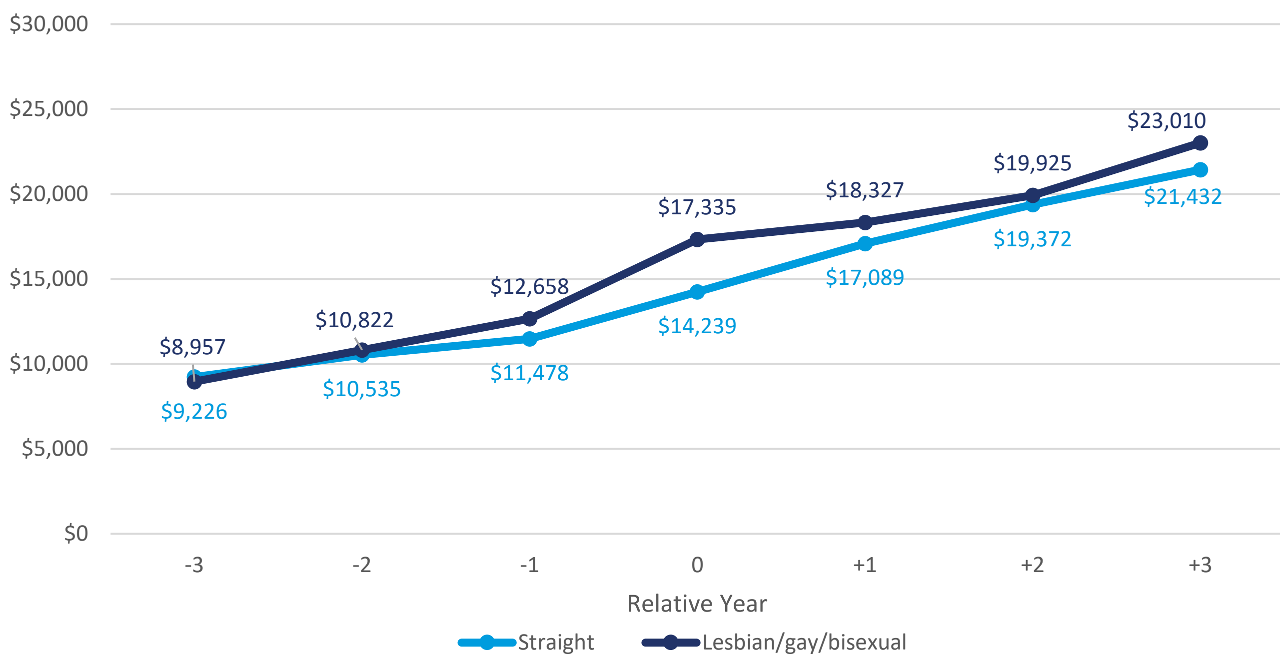


Figure 14 compares the mean earnings of employed young adults who identified as straight to the mean earnings of employed young adults who identified as lesbian, gay, or bisexual relative to their year of program exit. The mean earnings of young adults who identified as straight were not significantly different from the mean earnings of young adults who identified lesbian, gay, or bisexual in the year they exited the program ($t(75.87) = -1.57$, $p = .12$), 1 year after their program exit year ($t(107.43) = -0.582$, $p = .561$) or 2 years after their program exit year ($t(316.81) = -1.7$, $p = .819$).

Figure 14. Mean Earnings by Sexual Orientation and Relative Year



Parenthood

Figure 15 compares the employment rate of parenting young adults to the employment rate of non-parenting young adults relative to their year of program exit. Parenting young adults were as likely to be employed as non-parenting young adults in the year they exited the program, ($\chi^2(1, 995) = 0.04$, $p = .834$), 1 year after their program exit year ($\chi^2(1, 995) = 0.16$, $p = .687$), or 2 years after their program exit year ($\chi^2(1, 995) = 0.00$, $p = 1$).

Figure 15. Percentage Employed by Parenting Status and Relative Year

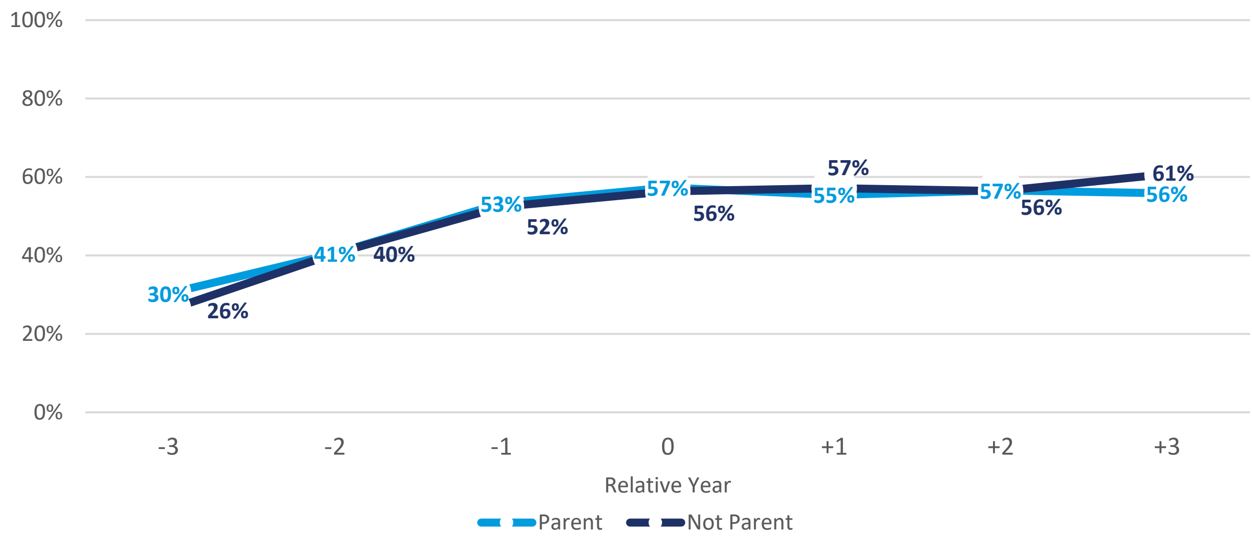
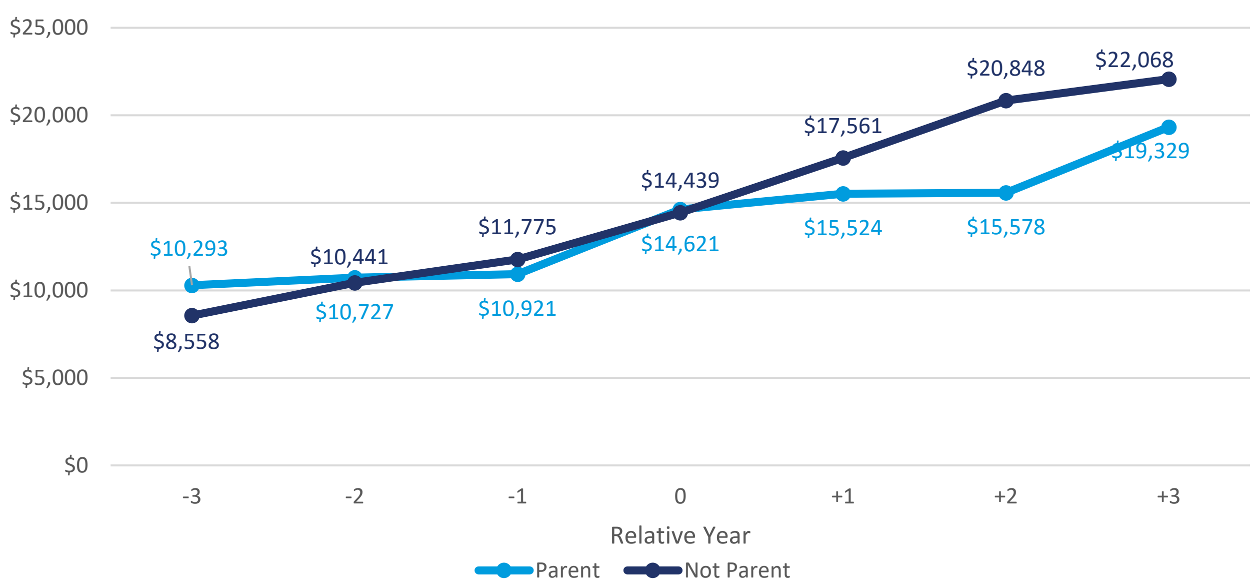


Figure 16 compares the mean earnings of employed young adults identified as parents to the percentage of employed young adults identified as non-parents, relative to their year of program exit. The mean earnings of parenting young adults were not significantly different from the mean earnings of non-parenting young adults in the year they exited the program ($t(257.51) = -0.183$, $p = .855$) or 1 year after their program exit year ($t(280.32) = -1.852$, $p = .061$). However, 2 years after their year of program exit, parents who were employed earned significantly less than non-parents who were employed ($t(426.3) = -4.681$, $p < .001$).

Figure 16. Mean Earnings by Parenting Status and Relative Year



Education Level

Figure 17 compares the employment rates of young adults with varying levels of education: (1) those who were working towards a high school diploma or GED; (2) those who had completed high school or who were enrolled in a postsecondary education program but had not completed a semester; (3) those who had completed a semester of postsecondary education or earned a lower level certificate (LLC) or certificate of competency (CC); and (4) those who had an industry recognized certificate or at 2- or 4-year college degree at program exit relative to their program exit year.[16]

Chi-square tests revealed employment rates varied significantly by education level in the program exit year ($\chi^2(3, N = 995) = 43.39, p < .001$), 1 year after the program exit year ($\chi^2(3, N = 995) = 35.06, p < .001$), and 2 years after the program exit year ($\chi^2(3, N = 995) = 36.67, p < .001$). Pairwise comparisons indicated that, in all 3 years, young adults who had an industry recognized certificate or at 2- or 4-year college degree were significantly more likely to be employed than young adults in each of the other three groups. Also, young adults who had completed a semester of postsecondary education or earned an LLC/CC were significantly more likely to be employed than young adults who were working toward a high school diploma or GED. Differences in employment rates between the other groups were not statistically significant.

Figure 17. Percentage Employed by Education Level and Relative Year

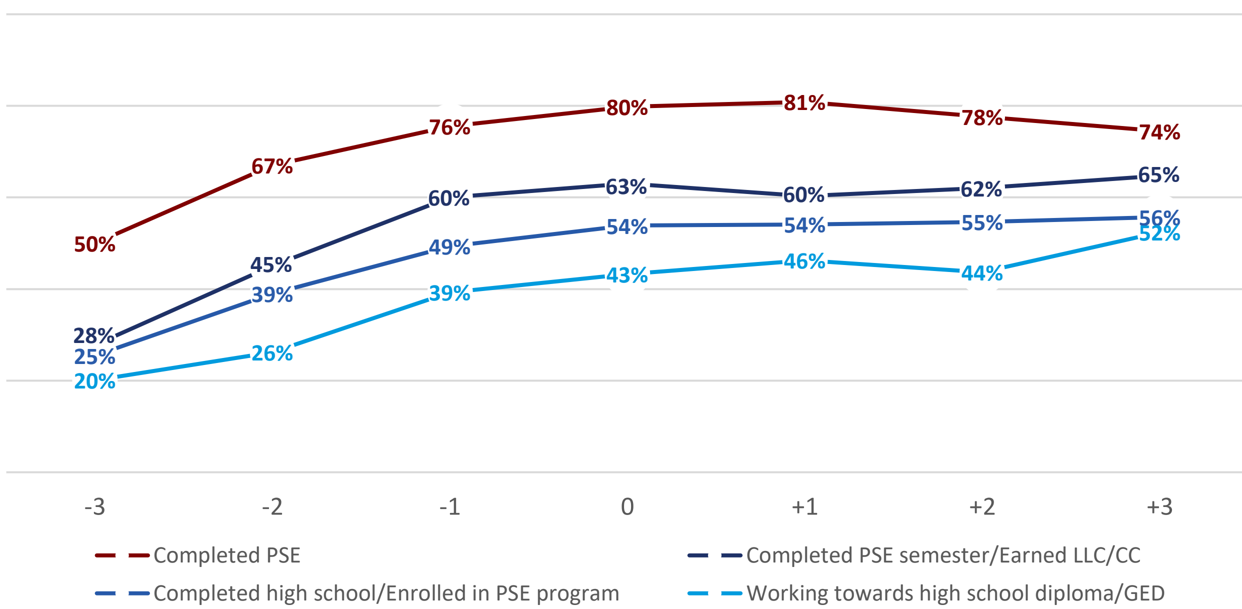
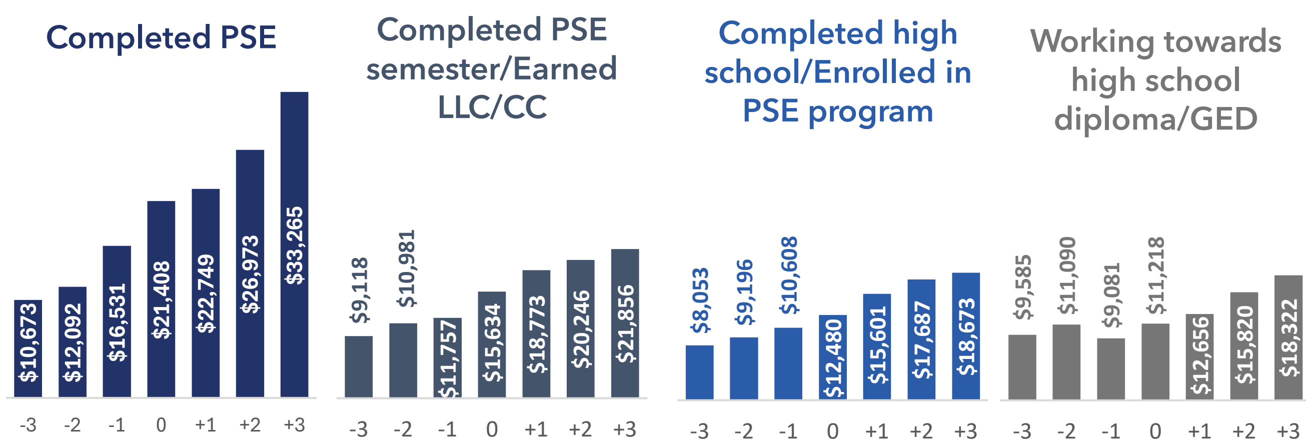


Figure 18 compares the mean earnings of employed young adults with different education levels at program exit relative to their program exit year. Mean earnings varied significantly by education level in the year of program exit ($F(3, 562) = 11.05, p < .001$), 1 year after the program exit year ($F(3, 562) = 5{,}13, p = .002$), and 2 years after the program exit year ($F(3, 561) = 5{,}13, p = .002$). Post hoc comparisons using Tukey's HSD test indicated that, in all three years, young adults who had an industry recognized certificate or at 2- or 4-year college degree earned significantly more than young adults who were working toward a high school diploma or GED and young adults who had completed high school or who were enrolled in a postsecondary education program but had not completed a semester. Young adults who had an industry recognized certificate or at 2- or 4-year college degree also earned significantly more than young adults who had completed a semester of postsecondary education or earned an LLC/CC, but this was only the case in their program exit year. Additionally, young adults who had completed a semester of postsecondary education or earned an LLC/CC earned significantly more than young adults who were working toward a high school diploma or GED in their program exit year and 1 year after their program exit year. Differences in mean earnings between the other groups were not statistically significant.

Overall, these results show clear and persistent employment and earnings advantages for young adults who had an industry recognized certificate or at 2- or 4-year college degree and, to a lesser extent, for young adults who had completed a semester of postsecondary education or earned an LLC/CC.

Figure 18. Mean Earnings by Education Level and Relative Year



Homelessness History

Figure 19 compares the employment rate of young adults with and without a history of homelessness relative to their year of program exit. Young adults with a history of homelessness were as likely to be employed as young adults with no homelessness history in the year they exited the program ($\chi^2(1, n = 978) = 1.560, p = .212$). However, young adults with no homelessness history were significantly more likely to have been employed than young adults with a history of homelessness 1 year after their program exit year ($\chi^2(1, n = 978) = 8.65, p = .003$) and 2 years after their program exit year ($\chi^2(1, n = 978) = 5.54, p = .019$).

Figure 19. Percentage Employed by Homelessness History

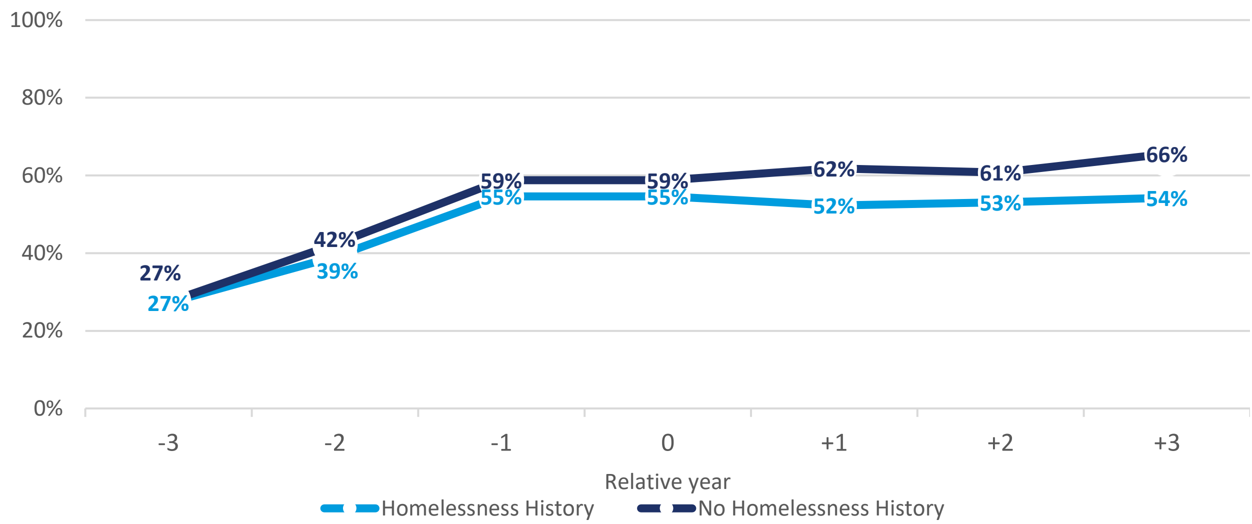
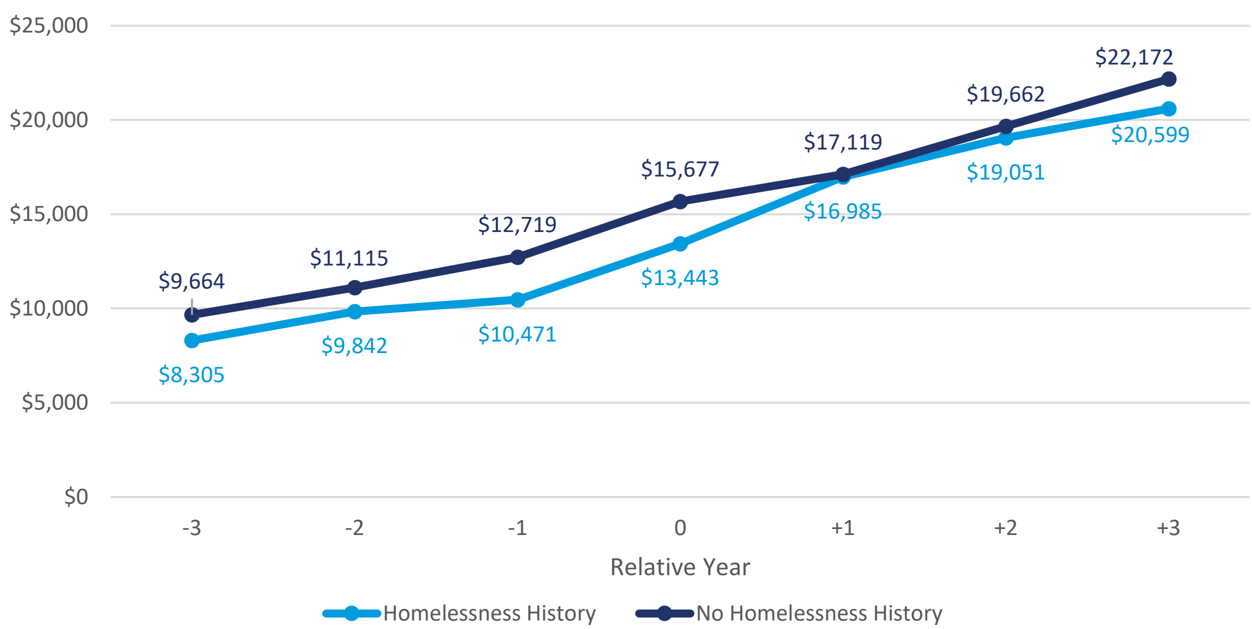


Figure 20 compares the mean earnings of employed young adults with and without a history of homelessness relative to their program exit year. The difference in mean earnings between young adults with a history of homelessness and young adults with no homelessness history was not statistically significant in the year they exited the program ($t(536.04) = -1.94$, $p = .053$), 1 year after their program exit year ($t(491.09) = -0.082$, $p = .935$), or 2 years after their program exit year ($t(518.88) = -0.35$, $p = .726$).

Figure 20. Mean Earnings by Homelessness History and Relative Year



County

Figure 21 compares the employment rates of young adults in each county relative to their program exit year. Chi-square tests revealed that employment rates varied significantly across counties in the year of program exit ($\chi^2(4, n = 1{,}004) = 21.59, p < .001$), 1 year after the year of program exit ($\chi^2(4, n = 1{,}004) = 16.14, p < .001$), and 2 years after the year of program exit ($\chi^2(4, n = 1{,}004) = 15.77, p = .003$). Pairwise comparisons indicated that in all three years, young adults in San Francisco/Alameda Counties were significantly more likely to be employed than young adults in Los Angeles County. Additionally, young adults in San Francisco/Alameda Counties were significantly more likely to be employed than young adults in Solano County 2 years after the year of program exit. No other differences in employment rates between counties were statistically significant.

Figure 21. Percentage Employed by County and Relative Year

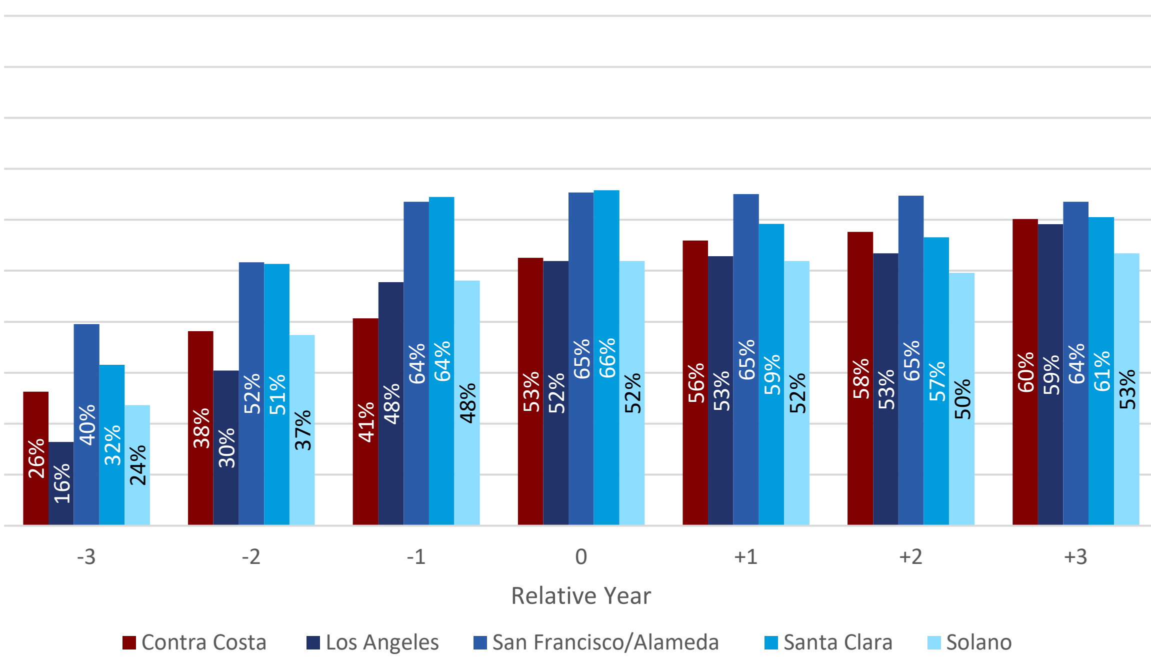
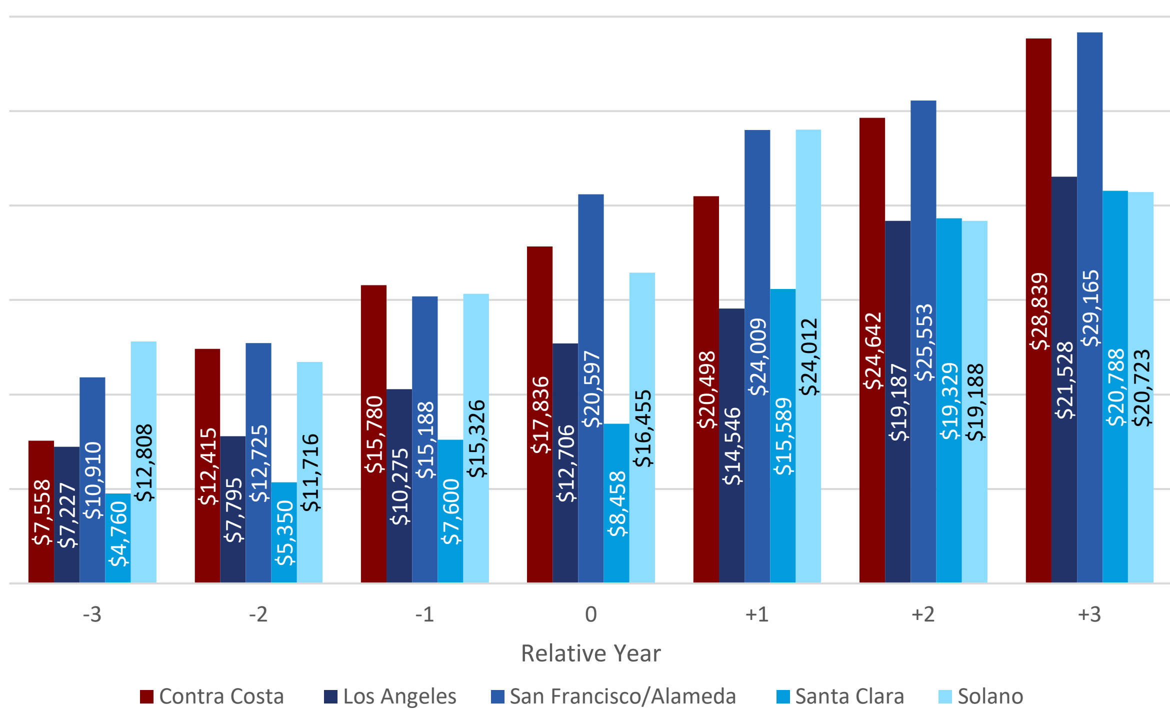


Figure 22 compares the mean earnings of employed young adults in each county relative to their year of program exit. ANOVAs indicated that mean earnings varied by county in the program exit year ($F(4, 564) = 9.02, p < .001$), 1 year after the program exit year ($F(4, 565) = 3.01, p = .018$), and 2 years after the program exit year ($F(4, 559) = 3.29, p = .011$). Post hoc comparisons indicated that, in all three years, young adults in San Francisco/Alameda Counties earned significantly more than young adults in Los Angeles County. Young adults in San Francisco/Alameda Counties also earned significantly more than young adults in Santa Clara County and Solano County in the year they exited the program. No other county-level differences in mean earnings were statistically significant.

Figure 22. Mean Earnings by County and Relative Year



Relationship between Labor Market Outcomes and Program Experiences

We also examined whether the employment rates or earnings of young adults who enrolled in the program varied by length of stay, termination reason, or exit destination.

Length of Stay in Program

Figure 23 shows the relationship between employment rates and length of stay in the program relative to the year of program exit. Chi-square tests revealed that employment rates varied significantly by length of stay in the program exit year ($\chi^2(3, n = 995) = 64.558$, $p = .212$), 1 year after the program exit year ($\chi^2(3, n = 995) = 44.30$, $p < .001$), and 2 years after the program exit year ($\chi^2(3, n = 995) = 44.33$, $p < .001$). Pairwise comparisons indicated that, in all 3 years, young adults who stayed in the program for at least 2 years were significantly more likely to be employed than young adults who stayed in the program for less than two years. Additionally, young adults who stayed in the program for between 1 and 2 years were significantly more likely to be employed 1 year after their program exit year than young adults who stayed in the program for less than 1 year. They were also significantly more likely to be employed 2 years after their program exit year than young adults who stayed in the program for between 6 months and 1 year. No other differences in employment rates were statistically significant.

Figure 23. Percentage Employed by Length of Stay and Relative Year

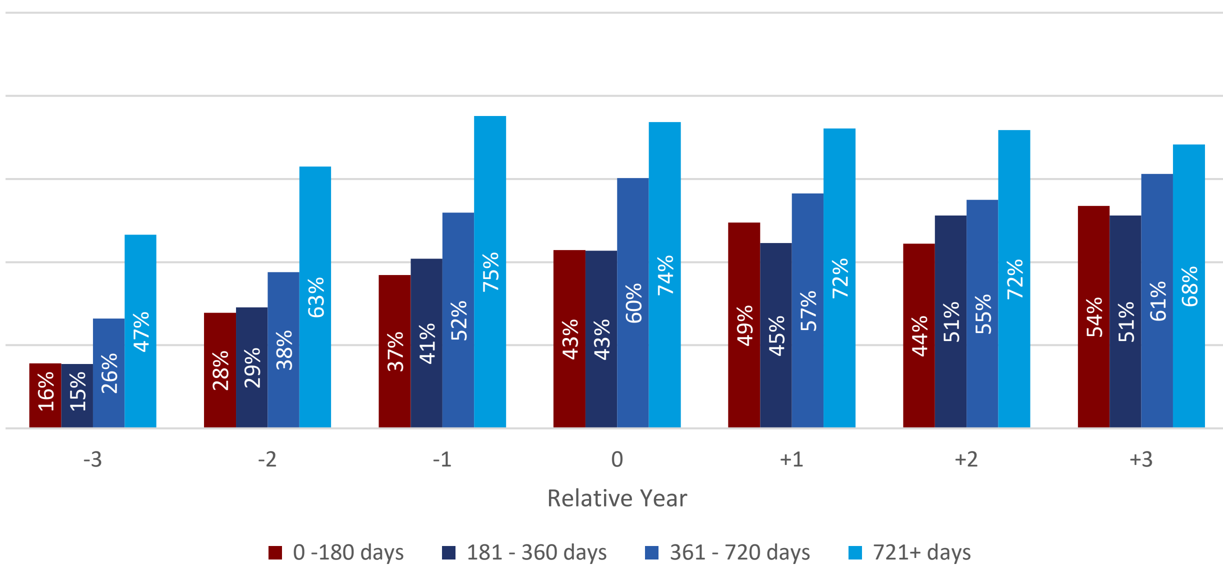
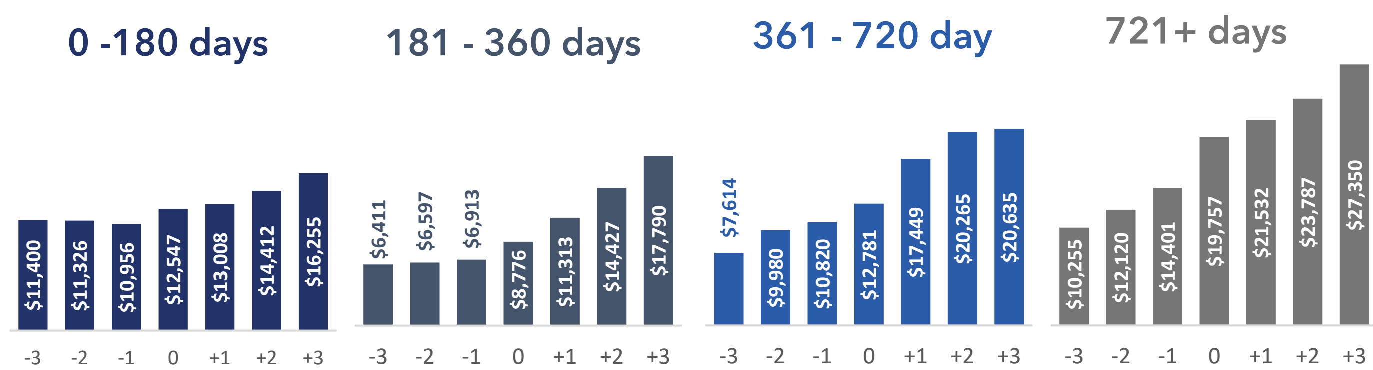


Figure 24 shows the relationship between the mean earnings of employed young adults and their length of stay in the program relative to their year of program exit. ANOVAs indicated that mean earnings varied by length of stay in the program exit year ($F(3, 559) = 18.46$, $p < .001$), 1 year after the program exit year ($F(3, 431) = 7.58$, $p < .001$), and 2 years after the program exit year ($F(3, 558) = 7.15$, $p < .001$). Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that young adults who stayed in the program for at least 2 years earned significantly more in the year they exited the program than young adults who stayed in the program for less than 2 years They also earned significantly more 2 years after the year in which they exited the program than young adults who stayed in the program for no more than 1 year . Additionally, young adults who stayed in the program for between 1 and 2 years earned significantly more in all 3 years than young adults who stayed in the program for between 6 months and 1 year. None of the other differences was statistically significant.

Figure 24. Mean Earnings of Employed Young Adults by Length of Stay and Relative Year



Termination Reason

Figure 25 compares the employment rate of young adults whose program exits were and were not planned relative to their year of program exit.[17] Chi-square tests indicated that young adults whose program exits were planned were more likely to be employed than young adults whose program exits were unplanned. That was true in the year they exited the program ($\chi^2(1, N = 972) = 45.65, p < .001$), 1 year after the year they exited ($\chi^2(1) = 38.33, p < .001$), and 2 years after the year they exited ($\chi^2(1) = 34.48, p < .001$).

Figure 25. Percentage Employed by Termination Reason and Relative Year

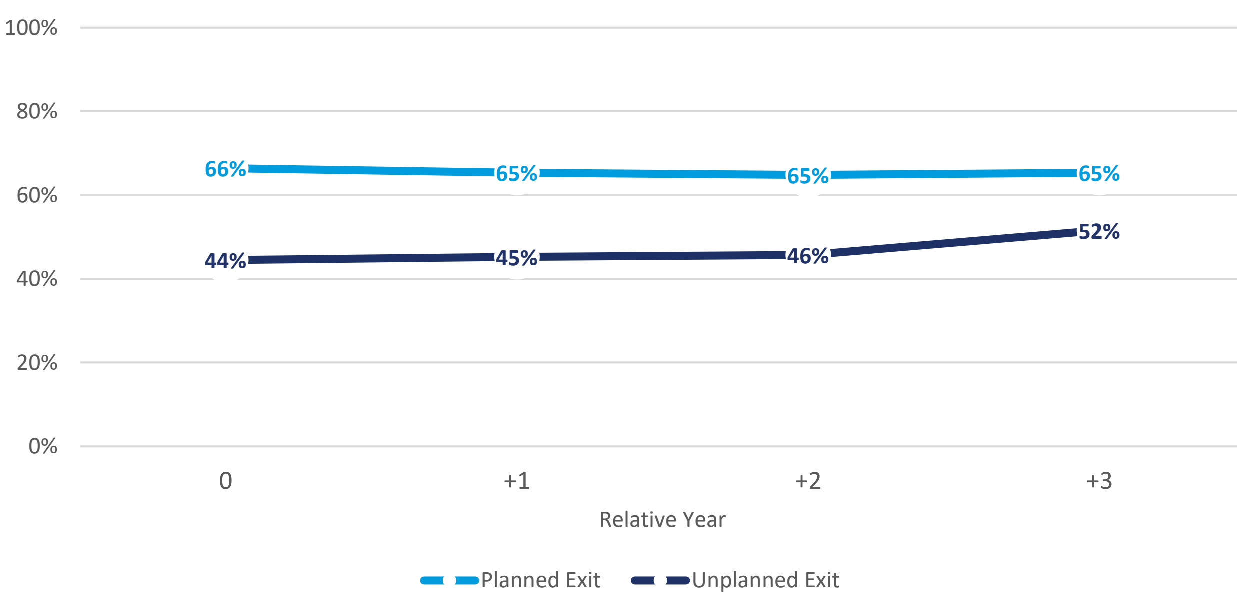
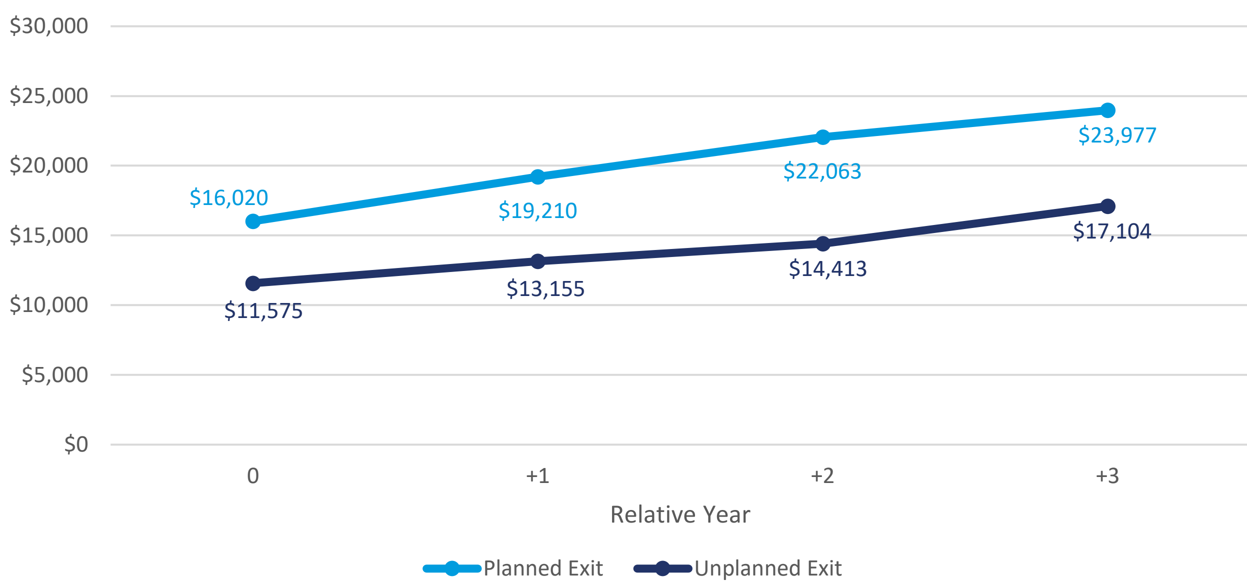


Figure 26 compares the mean earnings of employed young adults whose program exits were and were not planned relative to their program exit year. T-tests indicated that young adults whose program exits were planned earned significantly more than young adults whose program exits were unplanned. That was true in the year they exited the program ($t(376.94) = 3.79$, $p < .001$), 1 year after the year they exited the program ($t(526.28) = 4.11$, $p < .001$), and 2 years after the year they exited the program ($t(524.76) = 4.83$, $p < .001$).

Figure 26. Mean Earnings by Termination Reason and Relative Year



Exit Housing Destination

Figure 27 compares the employment rate of young adults who did and did not exit the program to stable housing relative to their year of program exit.[18] Chi-square tests indicated that young adults who exited to stable housing were significantly more likely to be employed than young adults who exited to unstable housing. That was true in the year they exited the program ($\chi^2(1, N = 942) = 47.70$, $p < .001$), 1 year after the year they exited ($\chi^2(1, N = 942) = 22.08$, $p < .001$), and 2 years after the year they exited ($\chi^2(1, N = 942) = 23.06$, $p < .001$).

Figure 27. Percentage Employed by Exit Housing Destination and Relative Year

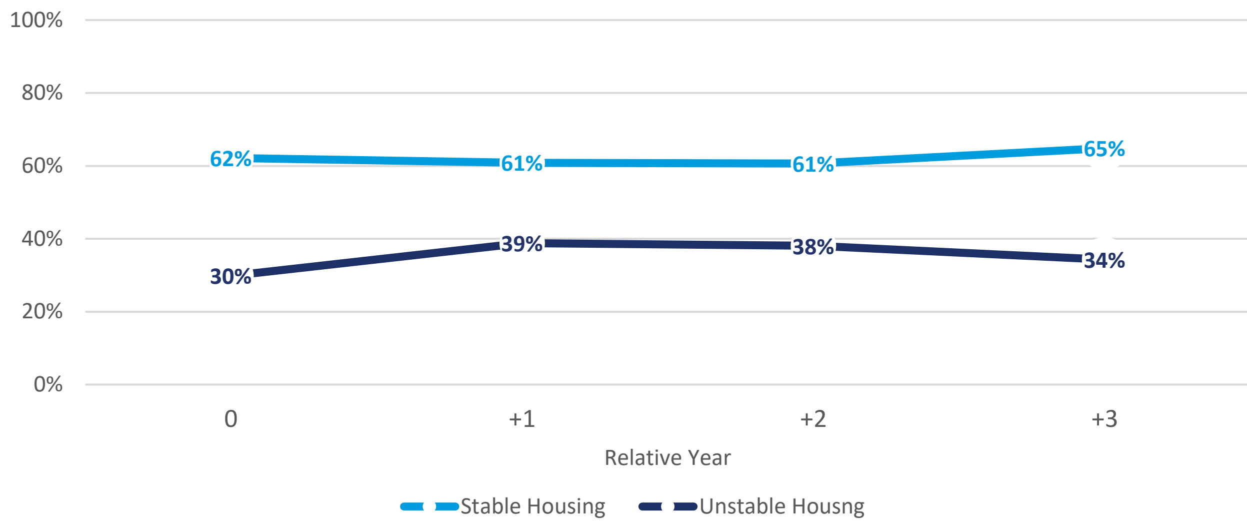
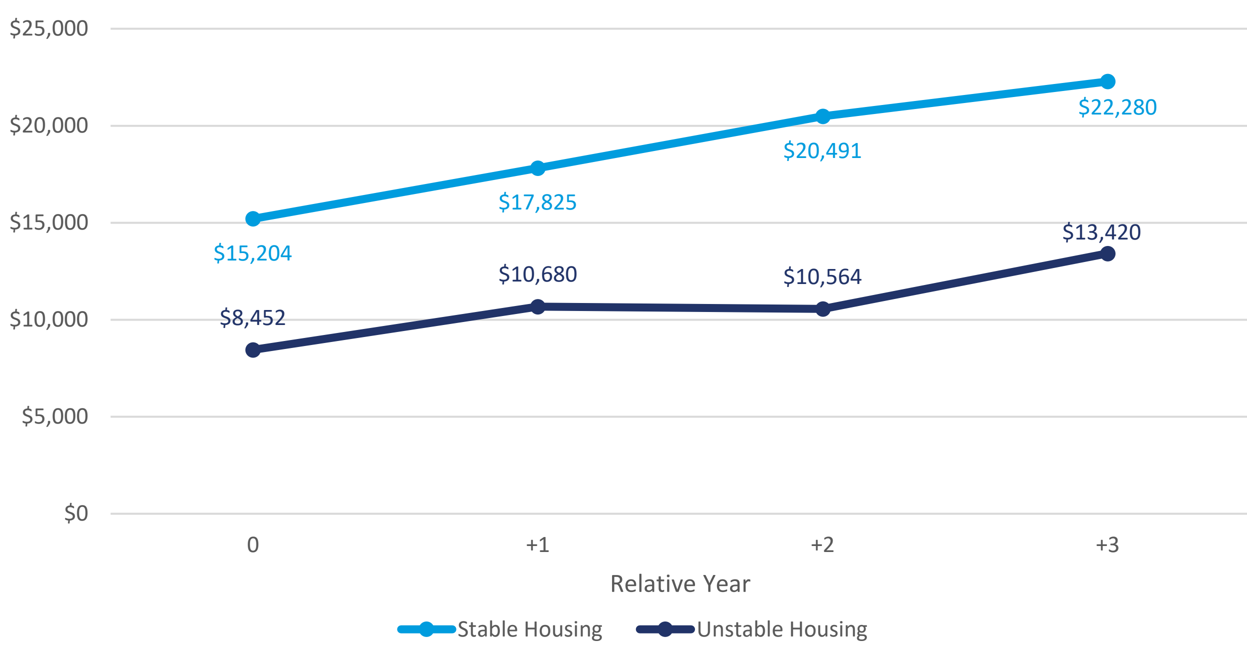


Figure 28 compares the mean earnings of employed young adults who did and did not exit to stable housing relative to their year of program exit. T-tests indicated that young adults who exited to stable housing earned significantly more than young adults who exited to unstable housing. That was true in the year they exited the program ($t(59) = -4.592$, $p < .001$), 1 year after the year they exited ($t(89.25) = -3.798$, $p < .001$), and 2 years after the year they exited ($t(89.25) = -4.646$, $p < .001$).

Figure 28. Mean Earnings by Exit Destination and Relative Year



Labor Market Outcomes by Exit Cohort

Figures 29 through 31 show the employment trajectories for each exit cohort from 2011 through 2022. Earlier cohorts (for example, 2015–2017) have more years of data than later cohorts (for example, 2021–2022) because young adults in the later cohorts were too young to have employment records during some of those years. To ensure that outliers did not unduly influence the results, an exit cohort's mean earnings were only graphed for a particular calendar year if at least nine young adults in that exit cohort were employed that year.

Figure 29 shows the employment trajectories of the young adults who enrolled in and completed the program by exit cohort year. The employment rate of each cohort tended to increase for a few years and then plateau. The employment rate of some cohorts fell between 2019 and 2020 or 2021 and then rebounded. This trend likely reflects the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 29. Percentage Employed by Cohort for the "Enrolled and Completed" Group

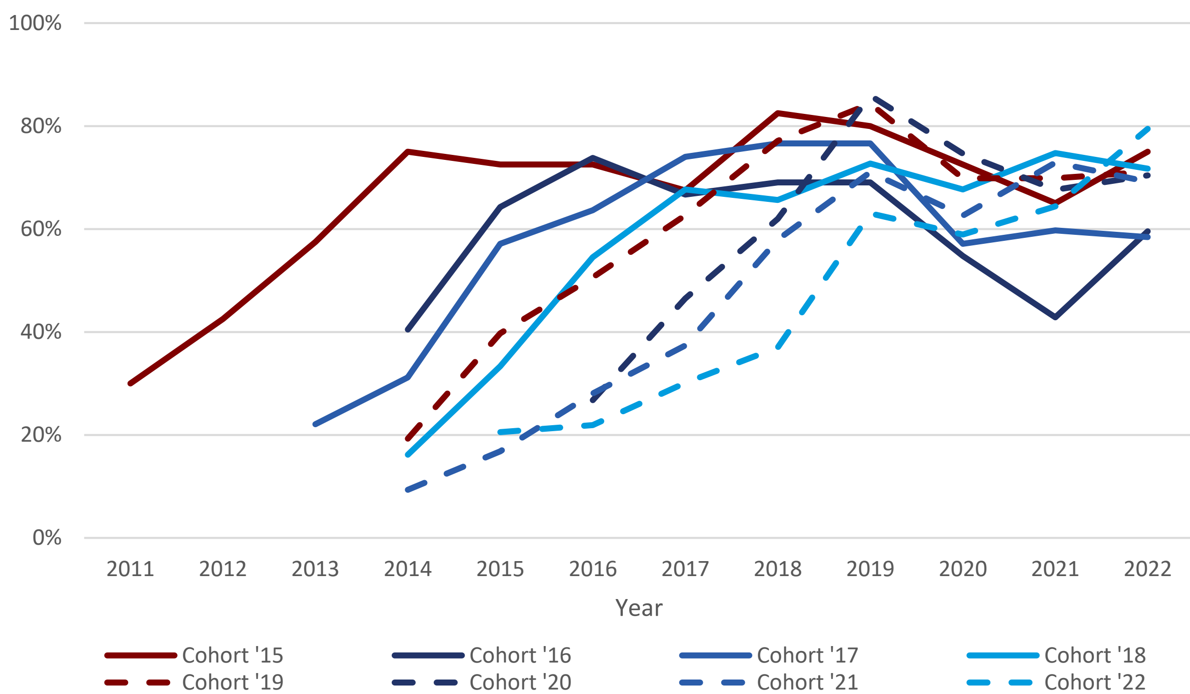


Figure 30 shows employment trajectories of the young adults who enrolled in but did not complete the program by exit cohort year. The employment rates of this group increase more gradually and are consistently lower than the employment rates of the "enrolled and completed" group. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic appears to have had less effect on their employment rates.

Figure 30. Percentage Employed by Cohort for the "Enrolled but Did Not Complete" Group

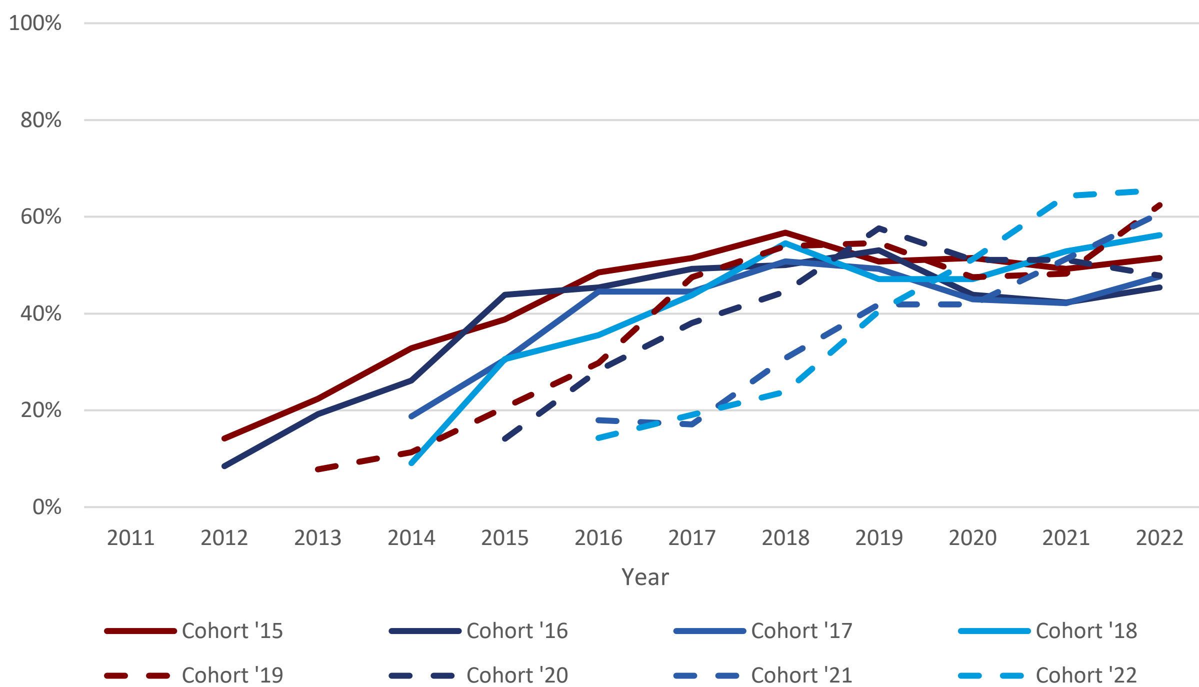
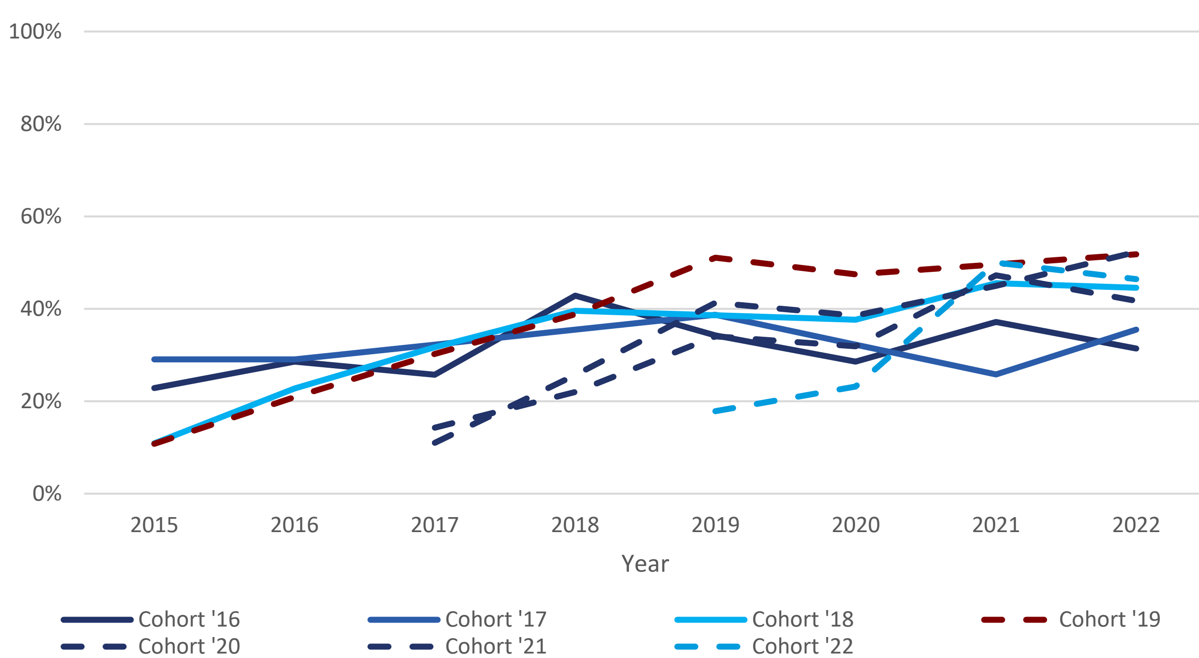


Figure 31 shows the employment trajectories of the young adults who did not enroll in the program by exit cohort year.[19] The employment rates of this group show less of an upward trend and are consistently lower than the employment rates of the other two groups.

Figure 31. Percentage Employed by Cohort for the "Did Not Enroll" Group



Figures 32 through 34 show the mean earnings of employed young adults in each exit cohort from 2011 through 2022. Earlier cohorts (for example, 2015–2017) have more years of data than later cohorts (for example, 2021–2022) because young adults in the later cohorts were too young to have employment records for some of those years.

Figure 32 shows the mean earnings of employed young adults who completed the program, by exit cohort year. Across all cohorts, earnings generally increased over time.

Figure 32. Mean Salary by Cohort for the "Enrolled and Completed" Group

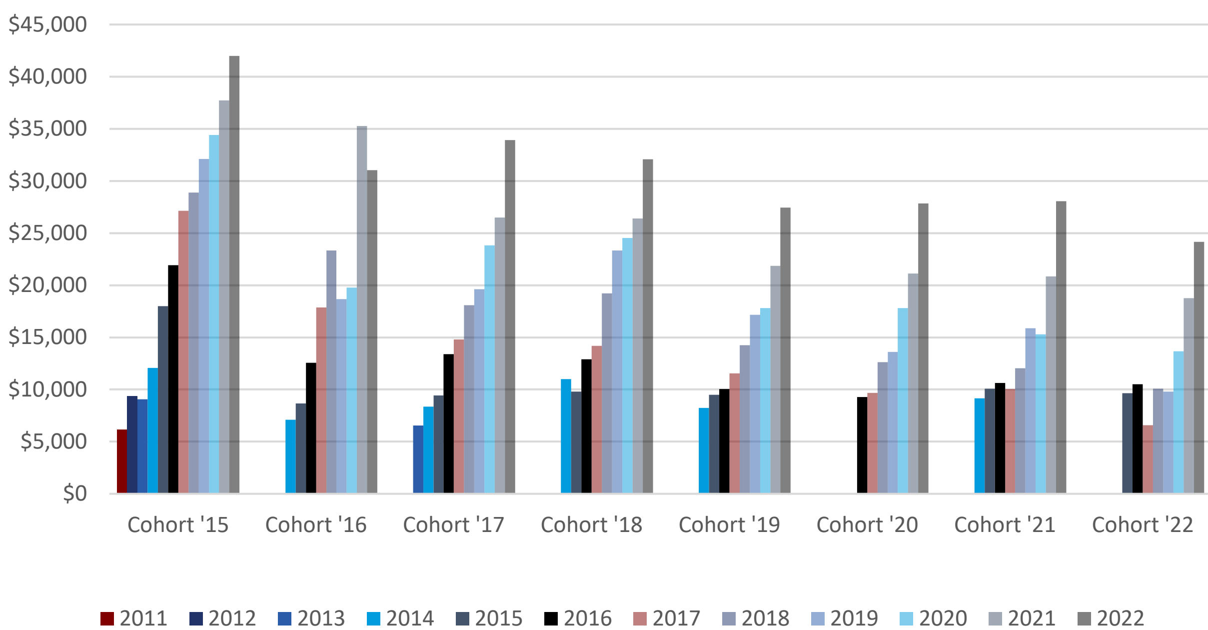


Figure 33 shows the mean earnings of employed young adults who enrolled in but did not complete the program by exit cohort year.[20] The mean earnings of this group are consistently lower than the mean earnings for the "enrolled and completed" group, and their earnings show less of a steady upward trajectory.

Figure 33. Mean Salary by Cohort for the "Enrolled but Did Not Complete" Group

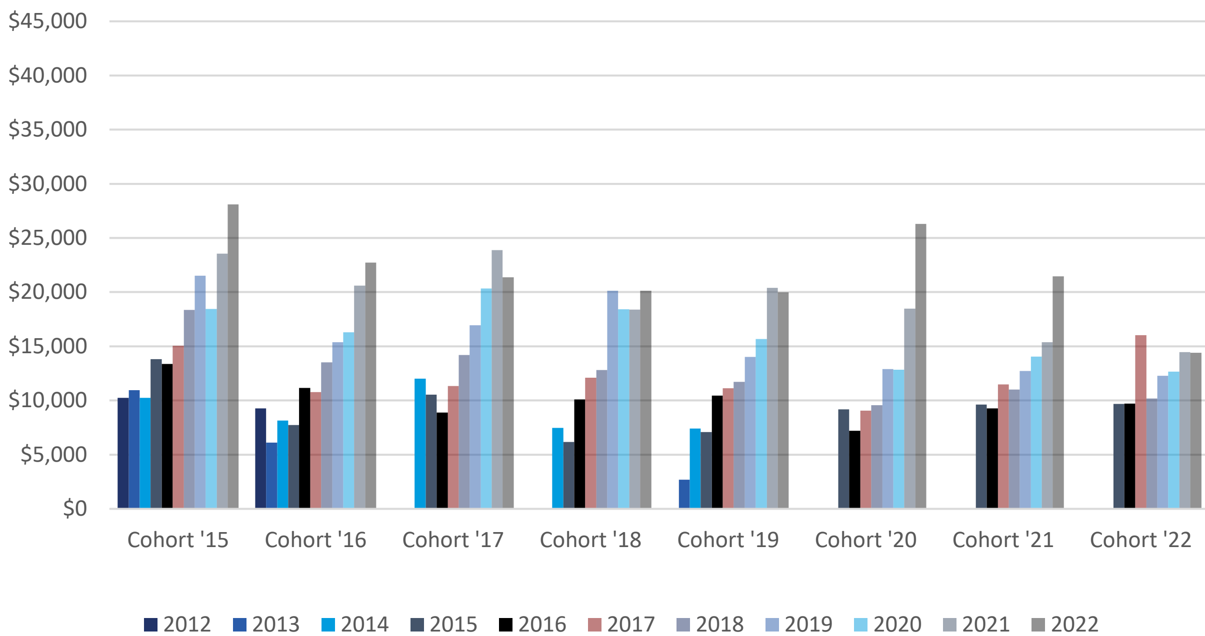
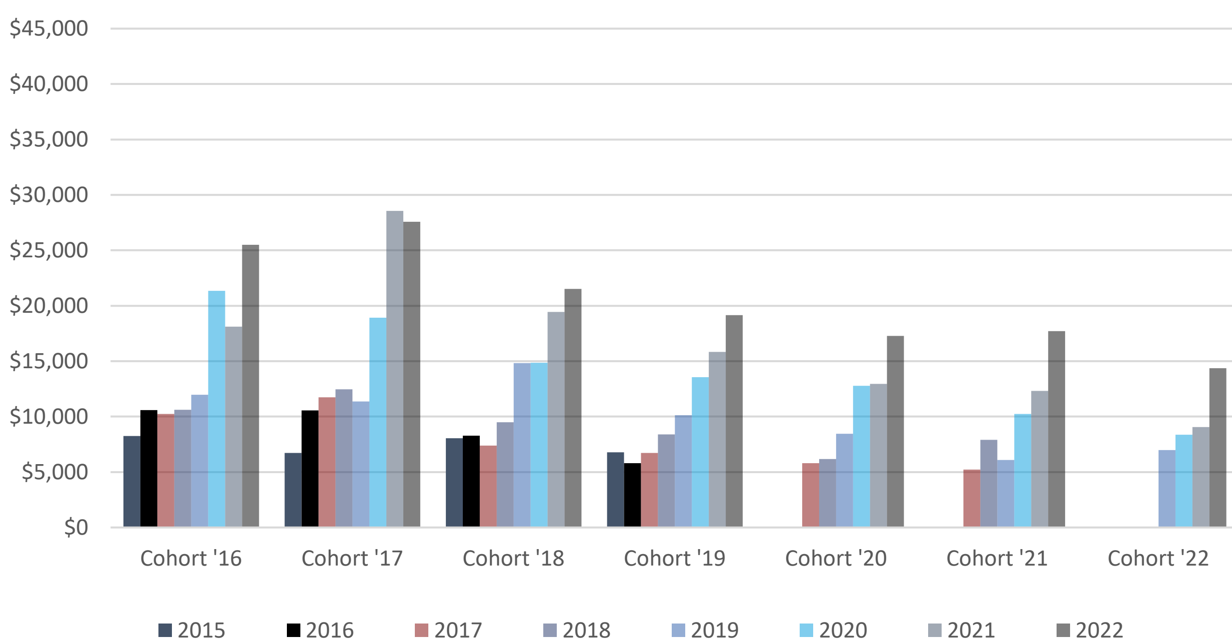


Figure 34 shows the mean earnings of employed young adults who did not enroll in the program by exit cohort year.[21] The mean earnings of this group are also consistently lower than the mean earnings for the "enrolled and completed" group, and their earnings show less of a steady upward trajectory.

Figure 34. Mean Salary by Cohort for the "Did Not Enroll" Group



POSTSECONDARY EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

Our analysis of the NSC data focused on three main outcomes: college enrollment, semester completion, and earning a credential.

College Enrollment

Sixty-one percent of the young adults whose records we shared with the NSC ever enrolled in college, and 58% completed at least one semester (see Figure 35).

Figure 35. College Enrollment and Semester Completion

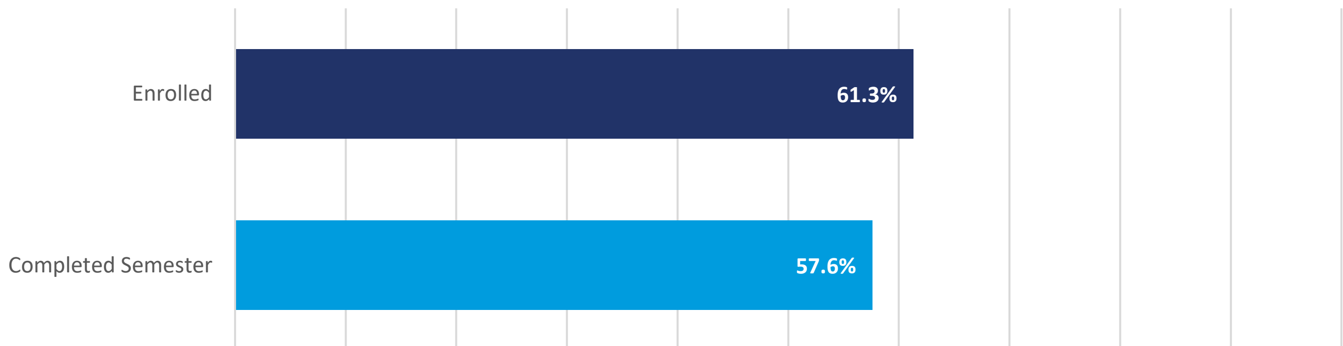


Figure 36 shows the type of schools in which young adults enrolled. The bottom bar shows the types of school in which those young adults enrolled when each school in which a young adult enrolled is counted once. Eighty-four percent of their enrollments (n = 2,374) were in 2-year public colleges (that is, community colleges). The middle bar shows the number of young adults who ever enrolled in each type of school. Seventy-eight percent (n = 1,389) of the young adults ever enrolled in community college. The top bar shows the first type of school in which young adults enrolled. Eighty-nine percent (n = 1,302) of the young adults first enrolled in a community college.

Figure 36. Type of School Young Adults Enrolled In

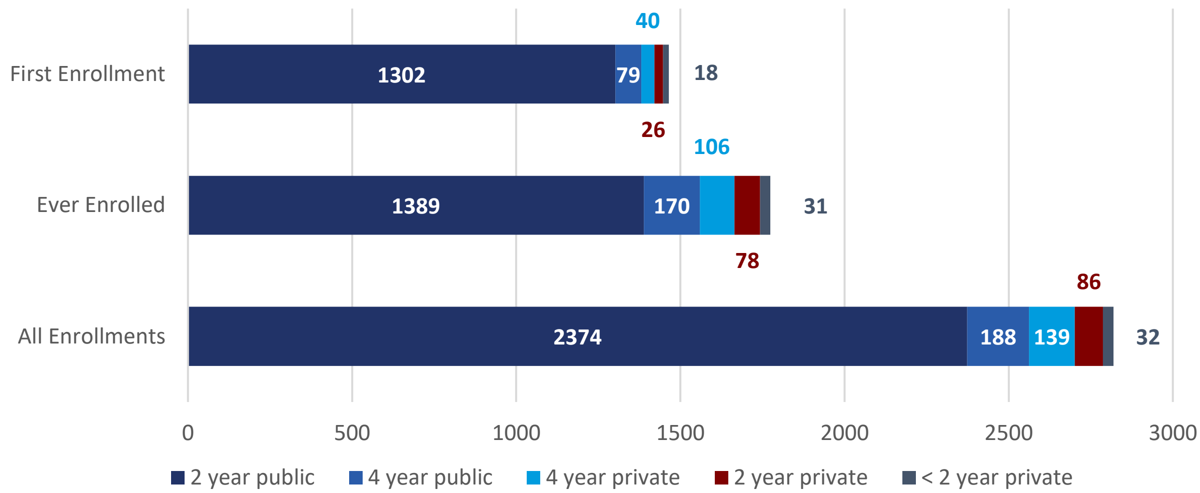
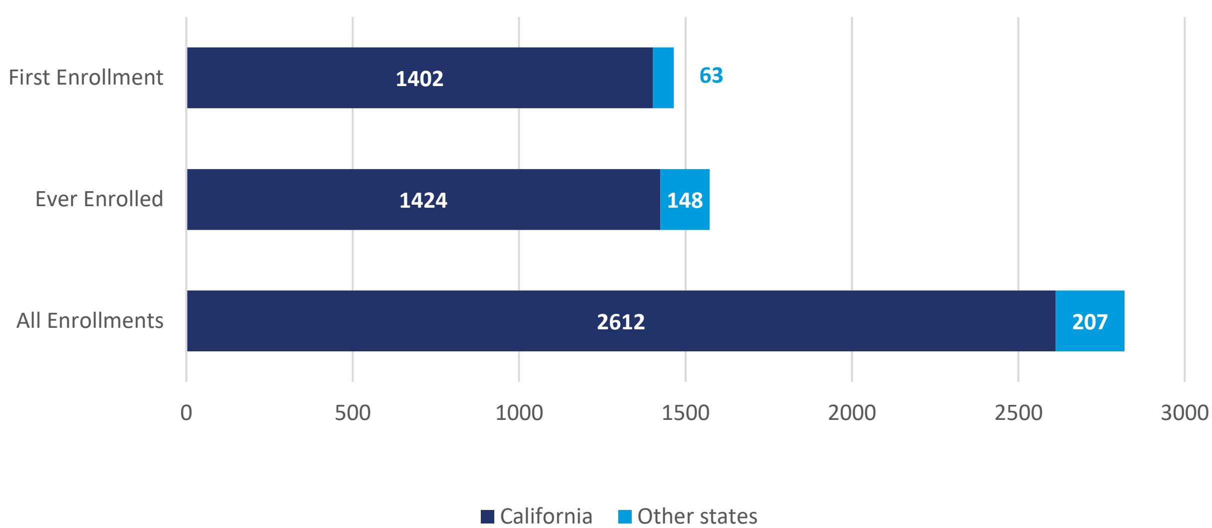


Figure 37 shows the location of the schools in which young adults enrolled. The bottom bar shows the location of the schools in which young adults enrolled when each school in which a young adult enrolled is counted once. Ninety-three percent of enrollments (*n* = 2,612) were in schools located in California. The middle bar shows the location of the schools in which young adults enrolled when each young adult is counted as enrolling in a school in that location only once, even if the young adult enrolled in more than one school in that location. Eighty percent (*n* = 1,424) of the young adults enrolled in a school in California. The top bar shows the location of the first school in which young adults enrolled. Ninety-six percent (*n* = 1,402) of the young adults first enrolled in a school in California.

Figure 37. School Location

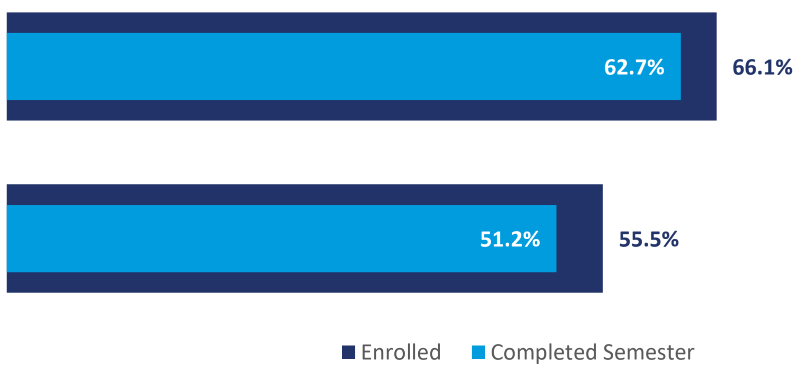


We examined the relationship between college enrollment and demographic characteristics.

Gender

We found large gender differences in both college enrollment and semester completion (see Figure 38). Young women were significantly more likely to have enrolled in college than young men ($\chi^2(1, n = 2{,}340) = 27.0668$, $p < .0001$).[22] Young women were also significantly more likely to have completed at least one semester than young men ($\chi^2(1, n = 2{,}340) = 31.3962$, $p < .0001$).

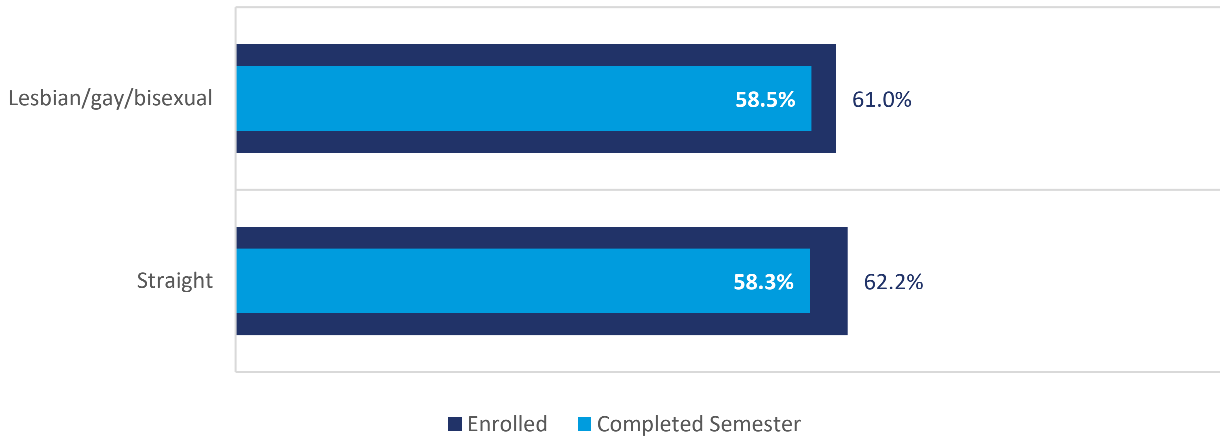
Figure 38. College Enrollment and Semester Completion by Gender



Sexual Orientation

We did not find differences in college enrollment or semester completion related to sexual orientation (see Figure 39). Young adults who identified as straight and young adults who were identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual were equally likely to have enrolled in college ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}657) = .1404$, p = .7079) and equally likely to have completed at least one semester ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}657) = .0032$, p = .9549).

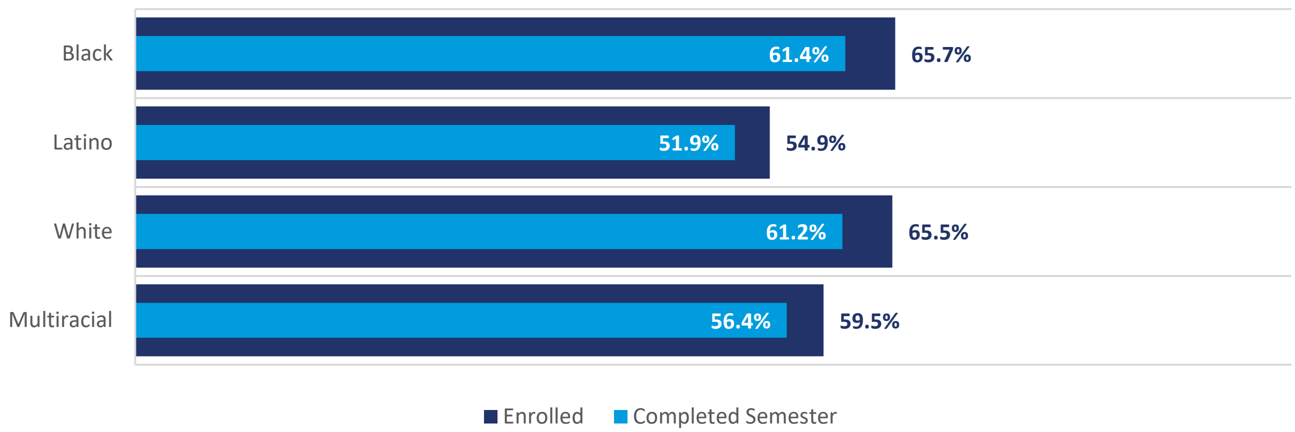
Figure 39. College Enrollment and Semester Completion, by Sexual Orientation



Race/Ethnicity

We found racial/ethnic differences in both college enrollment ($\chi^2(1, n = 2{,}190) = 22.2528$, $p < .0001$) and semester completion ($\chi^2(1, n = 2{,}190) = 16.4624$, $p = .0009$).[23] These differences can be seen in Figure 40. Post hoc comparisons indicated that Latino young adults were less likely to have enrolled in college than Black young adults ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}799) = 20.9154$, $p < .0001$) or White young adults ($\chi^2(1, n = 806) = 5.2595$, $p = .0218$). Post hoc comparisons also indicated that Latino young adults were less likely to have completed at least one semester than Black young adults ($\chi^2(1, n = 2{,}389) = 76.6292$, $p < .0001$) or White young adults ($\chi^2(1, n = 2{,}389) = 3.9791$, $p = .0461$). However, only the differences between Black young adults and Latino young adults were statistically significant after applying the Bonferroni correction (p = < .0001 for college enrollment and p = .0005 for semester completion).

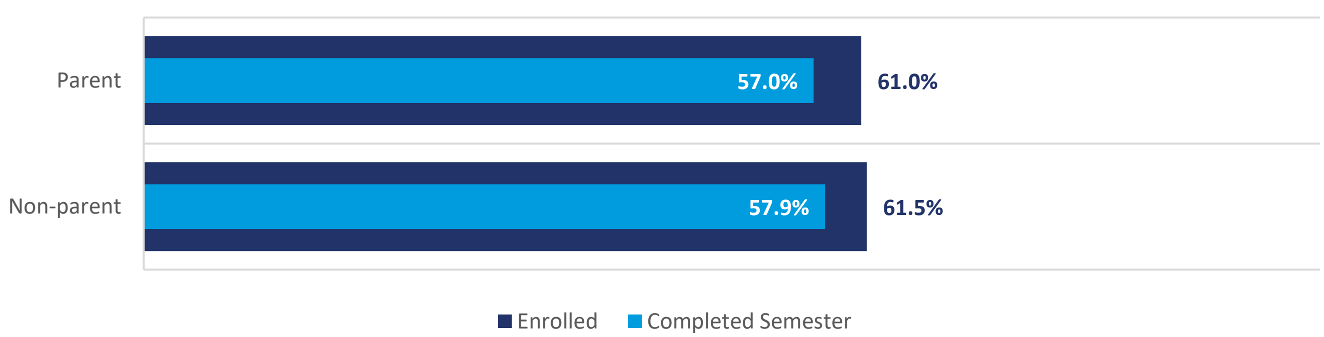
Figure 40. College Enrollment and Semester Completion by Race/Ethnicity



Parenting Status

We did not find differences in college enrollment or semester completion related to parenting status (see Figure 41). Parents and non-parents were equally likely to have enrolled in college ($\chi^2(1, n = 2{,}379) = .0375$, $p = .8464$) and to have completed at least one semester ($\chi^2(1, n = 2{,}379) = .1582$, $p = .6908$).[24]

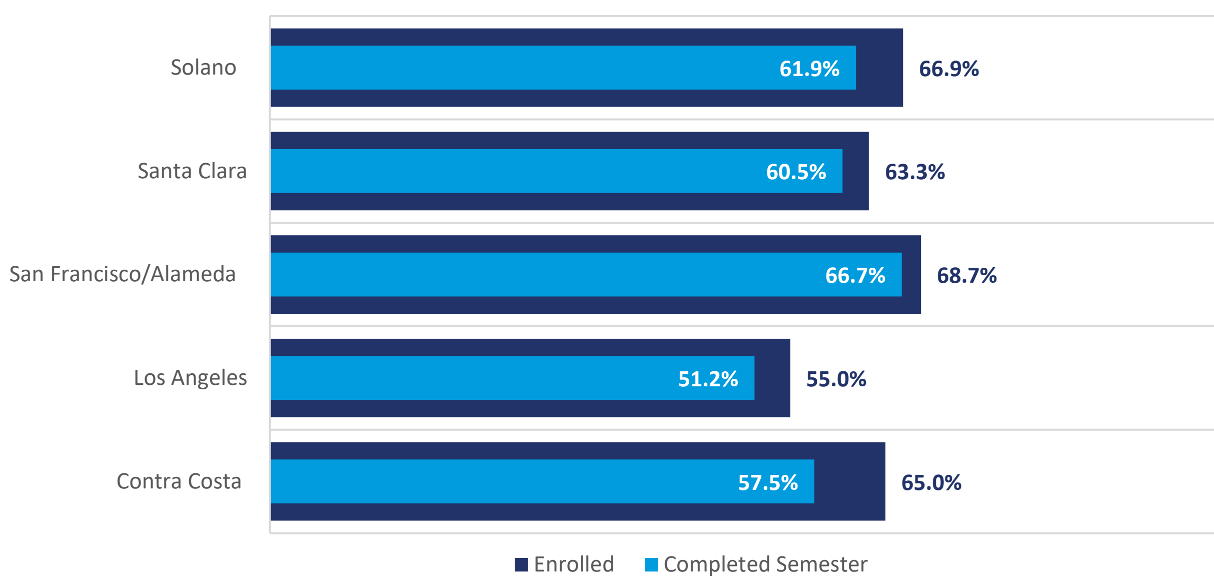
Figure 41. College Enrollment and Semester Completion by Parenting Status



County

We found county-level differences in both college enrollment ($\chi^2(4, n = 2{,}389) = 37.9320, p < .0001$) and semester completion ($\chi^2(4, n = 2{,}389) = 42.7649, p < .0001$). This difference can be seen in Figure 42. Post hoc comparisons indicated that young adults in Los Angeles County were less likely to have enrolled in college than young adults in Solano County ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}291) = 8.9663, p = .0027$), Santa Clara ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}325) = 5.0444, p = .0247$), San Francisco/Alameda Counties ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}753) = 32.2416, p < .0001$), and Contra Costa County ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}350) = 8.1120, p = .0044$). However, the difference between young adults in Los Angeles County and young adults in Santa Clara County was no longer statistically significant once the Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons was applied. Post hoc comparisons also indicated that young adults in Los Angeles County were less likely to have completed at least one semester than young adults in Solano County ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}291) = 7.1571, p = .0075$), Santa Clara County ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}325) = 6.2410, p = .0125$), and San Francisco/Alameda Counties ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}753) = 40.1246, p < .0001$). Additionally, young adults in Contra Costa County were less likely to have completed at least one semester than young adults in San Francisco/Alameda Counties ($\chi^2(1, n = 883) = 6.4630, p = .0110$). The difference between young adults in Los Angeles County and young adults in Santa Clara County was not statistically significant after applying the Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons.

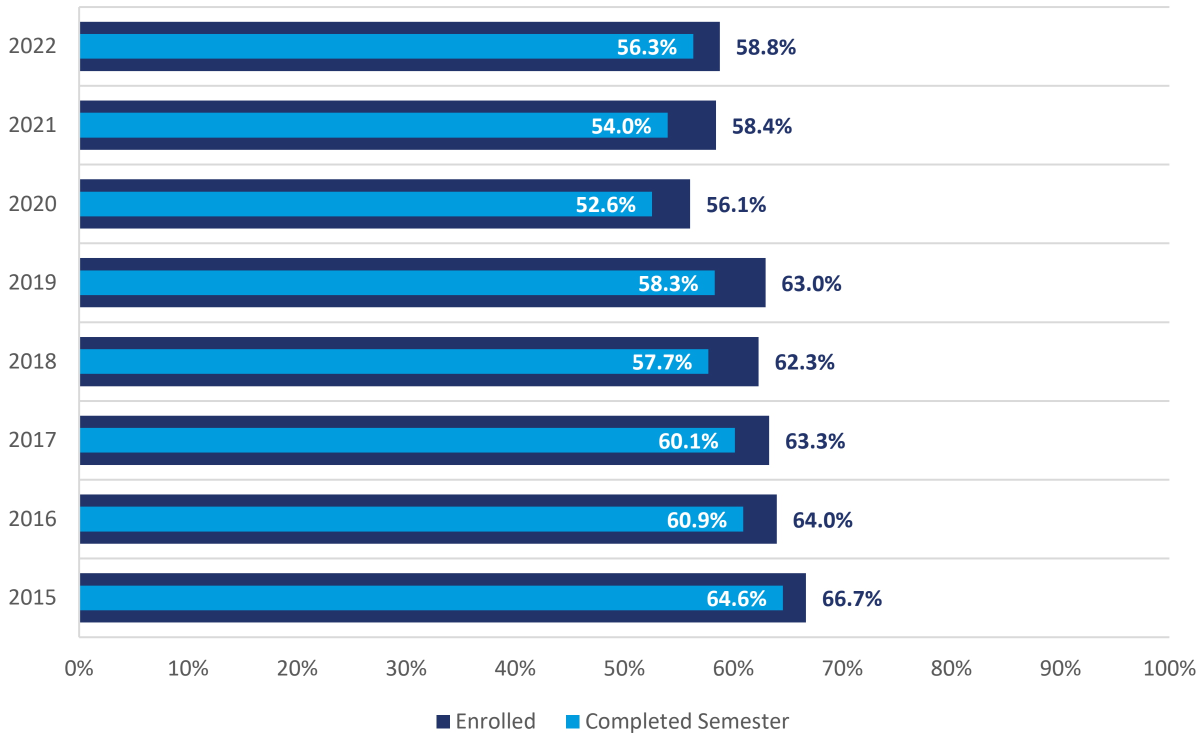
Figure 42. College Enrollment and Semester Completion by County



Exit Cohort

We did not find differences in college enrollment or semester completion across exit cohorts (see Figure 43). Although early exit cohorts tended to have higher enrollment rates than later cohorts, this difference was not statistically significant ($\chi^2(7, n = 2{,}389) = 9.6759, p = .2077$). Likewise, although earlier exit cohorts tended to have higher semester completion rates than later cohorts, this difference was not statistically significant ($\chi^2(7, n = 2{,}389) = 11.0113, p = .1381$).

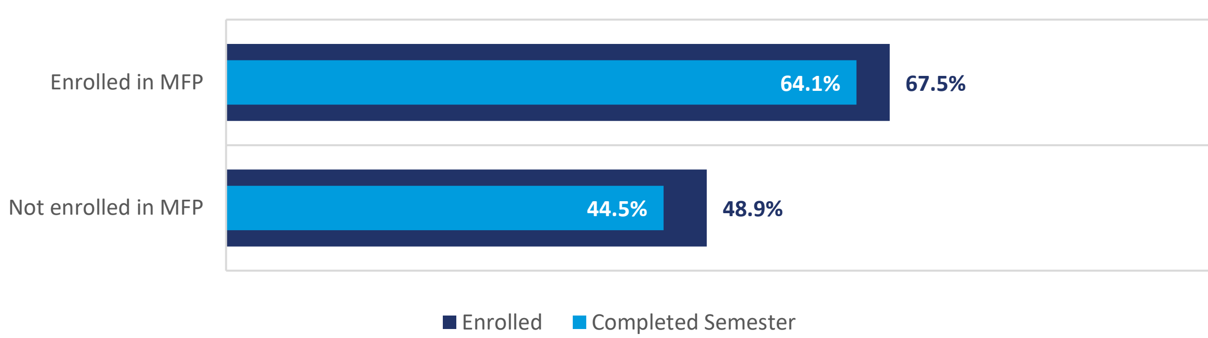
Figure 43. College Enrollment and Semester Completion by Exit Cohort



Program Status

Compared to young adults who did not enroll in MFP, young adults who enrolled in MFP were significantly more likely to have enrolled in college ($\chi^2(1, n = 2,389) = 76.6292, p < .0001$) and to have completed at least one semester ($\chi^2(1, n = 2,389) = 83.6043, p < .0001$). These differences can be seen in Figure 44.

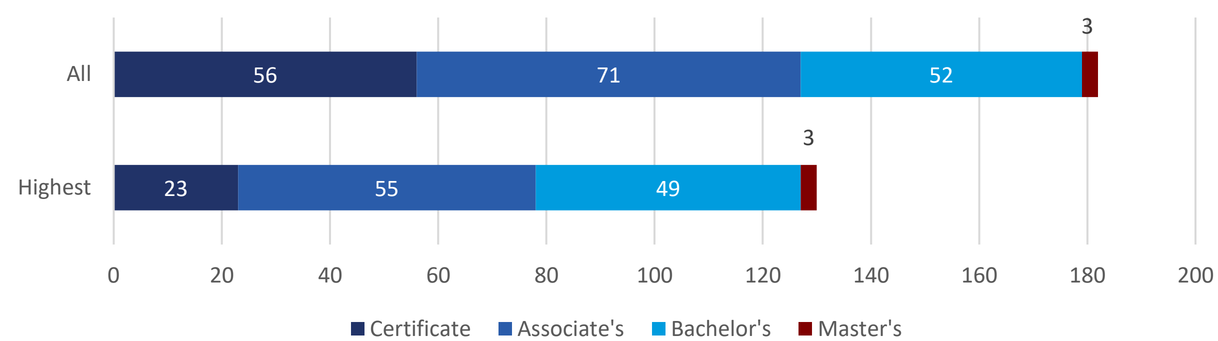
Figure 44. College Enrollment and Semester Completion by Program Status



Postsecondary Credentials

Overall, 130 young adults earned a postsecondary credential. These young adults represent 5% of the sample or 9% of the young adults who enrolled in college. Figure 45 shows the number of young adults who received each type of credential and the highest credential that young adults received. Fifty-six young adults earned a certificate, 71 earned an Associate's degree, 52 earned a Bachelor's degree, and 3 earned a Master's degree.[25] The highest credential earned was a certificate for 23 young adults, an Associate's degree for 55 young adults, a Bachelor's degree for 49 young adults, and a Master's degree for 3 young adults.

Figure 45. Postsecondary Credentials Earned

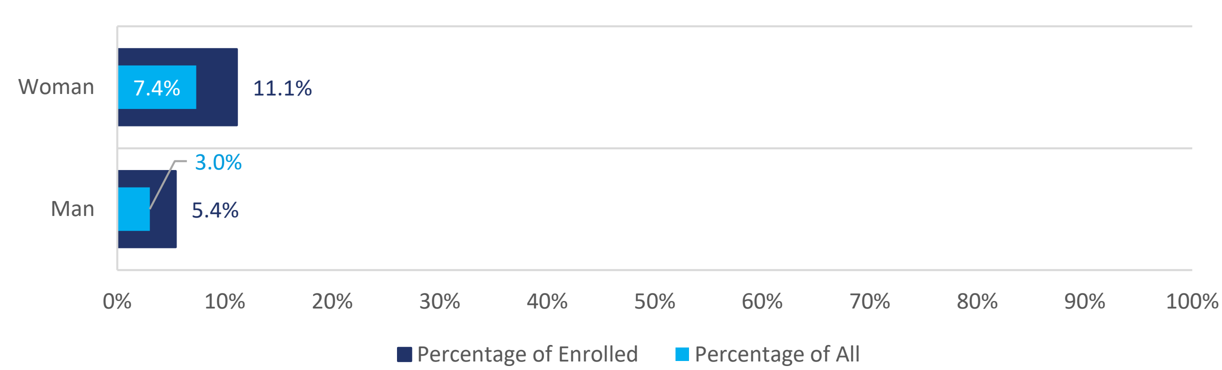


We examined the relationship between postsecondary educational attainment and demographic characteristics. The following sections detail our findings.

Gender

Young women were more likely to have earned a postsecondary credential than young men (see Figure 46). This was true for both the entire sample ($\chi^2(1, n = 2{,}340) = 20.5605, p < .0001$) and for the subsample of young adults who enrolled in college ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}441) = 133.4654, p = .0002$).

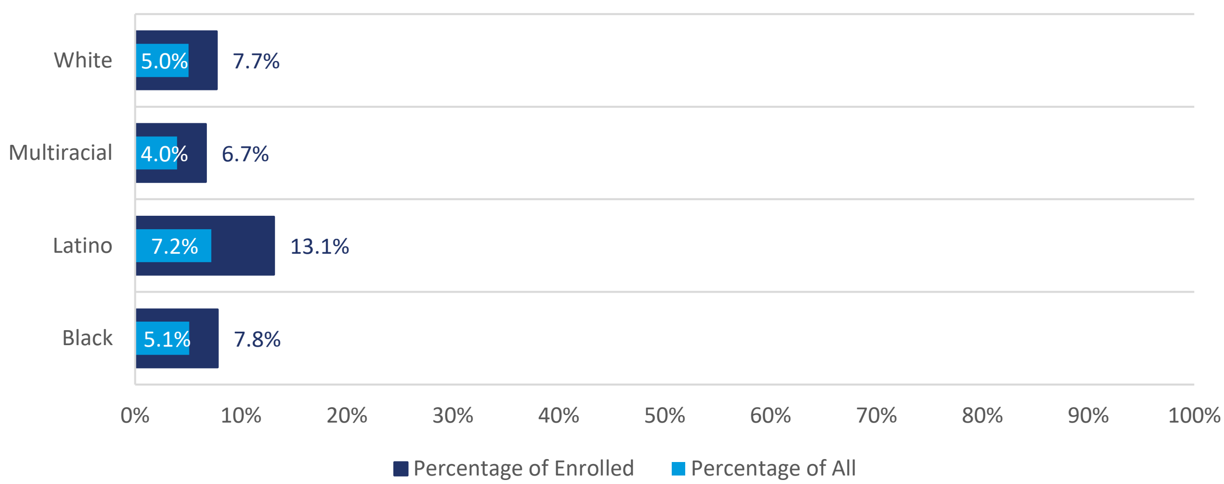
Figure 46. Earned Postsecondary Credential by Gender



Race/Ethnicity

The relationship between postsecondary educational attainment and race/ethnicity is complex (see Figure 47). Looking first at the entire sample, young adults were equally likely to earn a postsecondary credential regardless of their race or ethnicity ($\chi^2(3, n = 2{,}190) = 5.0392, p = .1689$). However, we did find racial and ethnic differences in the percentage of young adults who earned a postsecondary credential among young adults who enrolled in college ($\chi^2(3, n = 1{,}351) = 9.9492, p = .0190$). Post hoc pairwise comparisons indicate that Latino young adults were more likely to have earned a postsecondary credential than Black young adults ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}110) = 8.034, p = .0046$) and multiracial young adults ($\chi^2(1, n = 516) = 4.4339, p = .0352$). However, only the difference between Black young adults and Latino young adults was statistically significant after applying a Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

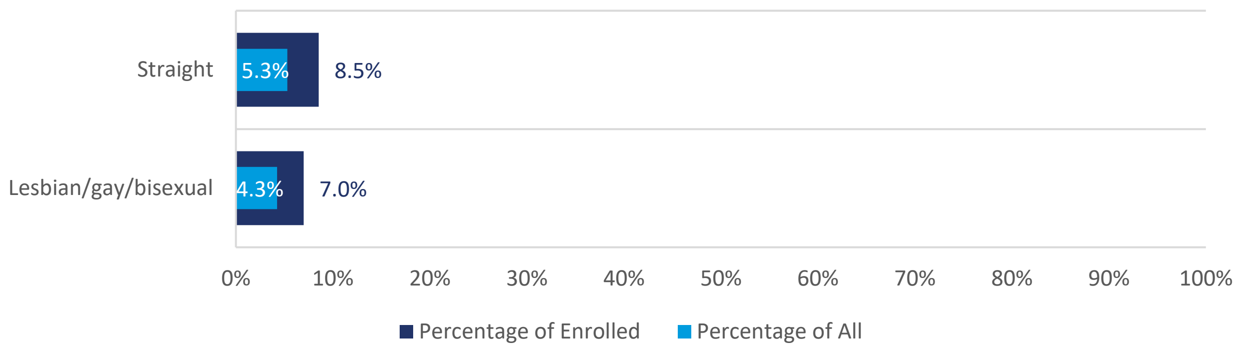
Figure 47. Earned Postsecondary Credential by Race/Ethnicity



Sexual Orientation

We found no relationship between postsecondary educational attainment and sexual orientation. (see Figure 48). Lesbian, gay, and bisexual young adults were as likely to earn a postsecondary credential as straight young adults regardless of whether we looked at the entire sample ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}657) = .5339, p = .4650$) or at the subsample of young adults who enrolled in college ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}027) = .4598, p = .4977$).

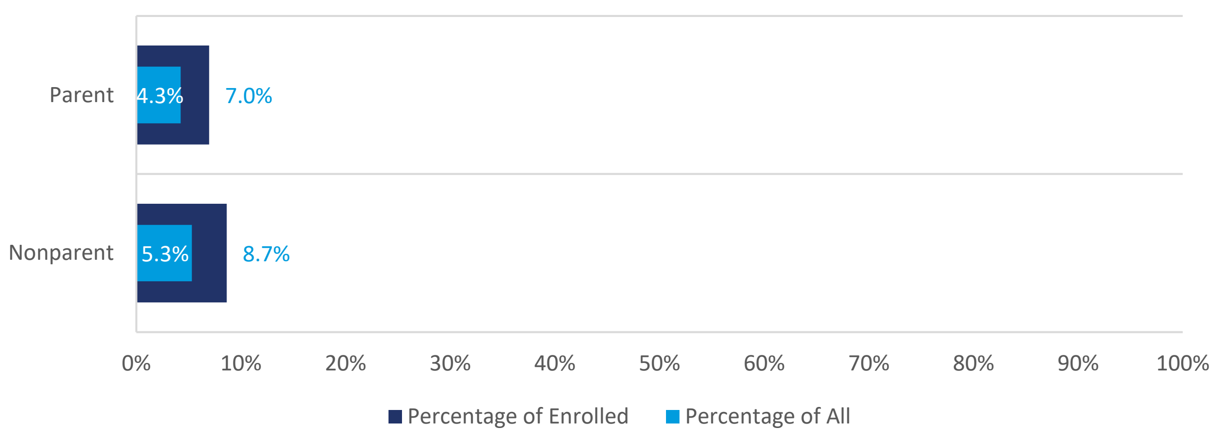
Figure 48. Earned Postsecondary Credential by Sexual Orientation



Parenting Status

We found no relationship between postsecondary educational attainment and parenting status. (see Figure 49). Lesbian, gay, and bisexual young adults were as likely to earn a postsecondary credential as straight young adults regardless of whether we looked at the entire sample ($\chi^2(1, n = 2{,}379) = .2540, p = .6142$) or at the subsample of young adults who enrolled in college ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}460) = .2274, p = .6335$).

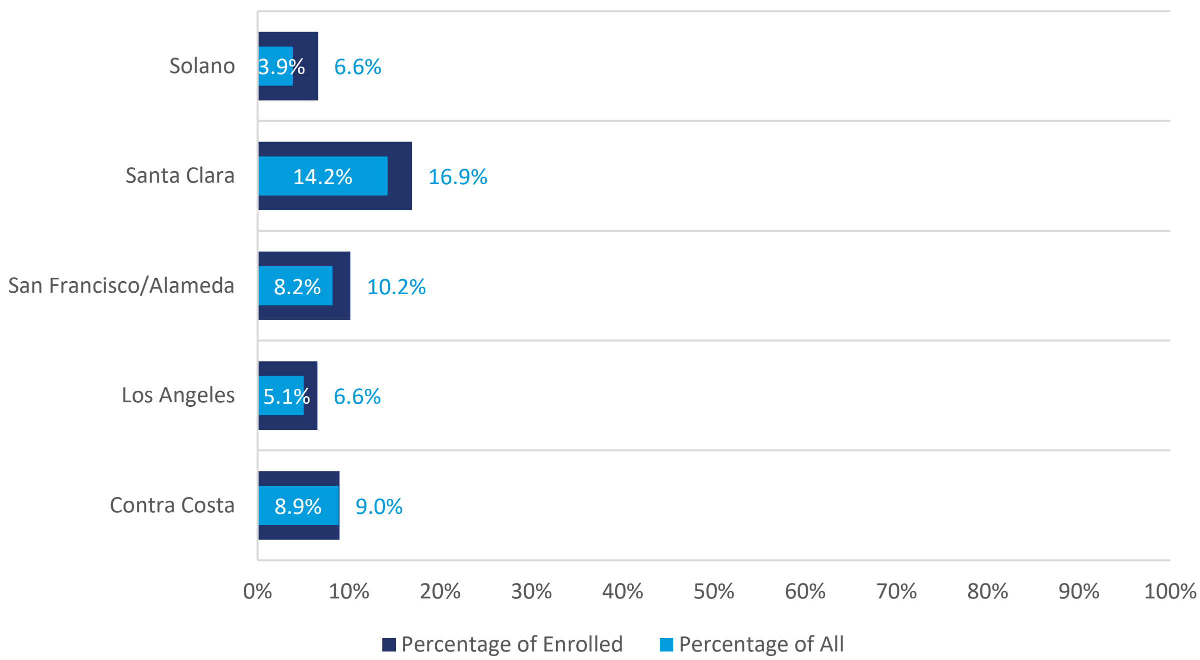
Figure 49. Earned Postsecondary Credential by Parenting Status



County

The percentage of young adults who earned a postsecondary credential did vary by county (see Figure 50). This was true for the entire sample ($\chi^2(4, n = 2{,}389) = 22.2986, p = .0002$) and for the subsample of young adults who enrolled in college ($\chi^2(4, n = 1{,}465) = 16.8158, p = .0023$). Looking first at the entire sample, post hoc comparisons indicated that young adults from Santa Clara County were more likely to have earned a postsecondary credential than young adults from Los Angeles County ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}325) = 20.0156, p < .0001$) and Solano County ($\chi^2(1, n = 396) = 5.3675, p = .0205$). Additionally, young adults from San Francisco/Alameda Counties were more likely to have earned a postsecondary credential than young adults from Los Angeles County ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}753) = 10.1704, p = .0014$). The difference between young adults from Santa Clara County and young adults from Solano County was no longer statistically significant after applying a Bonferroni correction for multiple tests. Looking at the sample of young adults who enrolled in college, post hoc comparisons indicated that young adults from Santa Clara County were more likely to have earned a postsecondary credential than young adults from Los Angeles County ($\chi^2(1, n = 746) = 15.4204, p < .0001$), Solano County ($\chi^2(1, n = 257) = 6.4044, p = .0114$), and Contra Costa County ($\chi^2(1, n = 292) = 4.1368, p < .0420$). Additionally, young adults from San Francisco/Alameda Counties were more likely to have earned a postsecondary credential than young adults from Los Angeles County ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}052) = 4.5311, p = .0333$) and Solano County ($\chi^2(1, n = 578) = 4.5388, p = .0331$). However, only the difference between young adults from Santa Clara County and young adults from Los Angeles County was statistically significant after applying a Bonferroni correction for multiple tests.

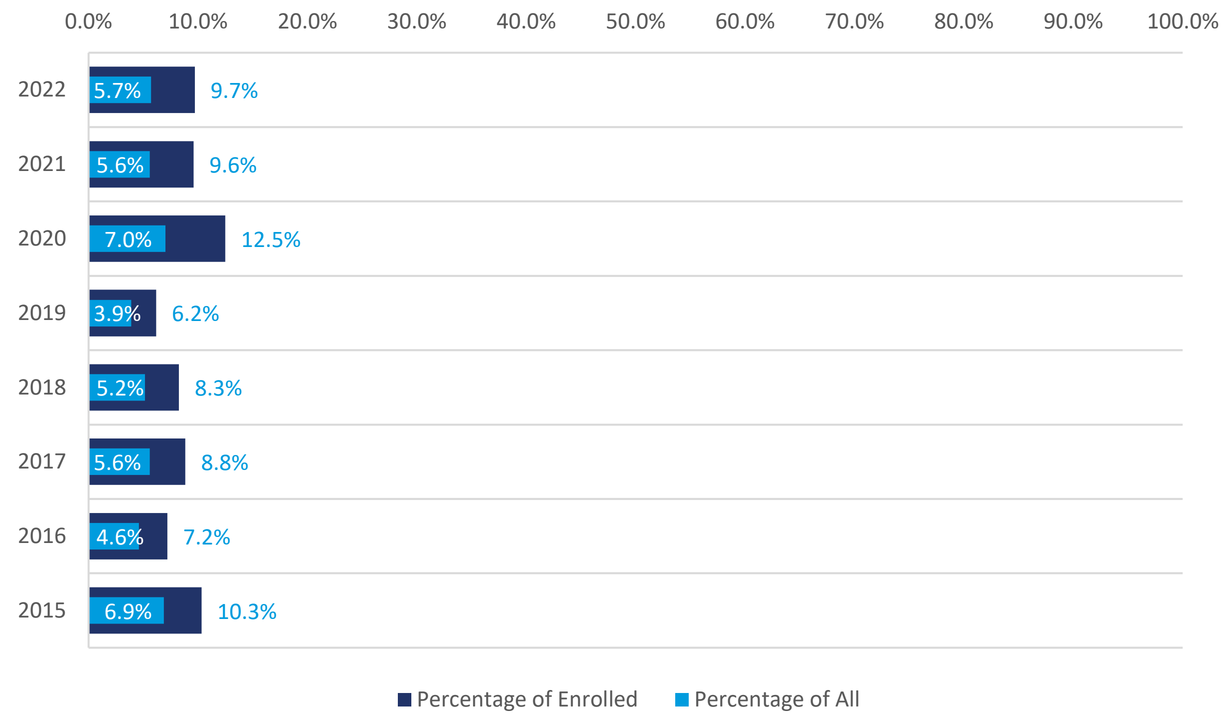
Figure 50. Earned Postsecondary Credential by County



Cohort

We found no relationship between postsecondary educational attainment and exit cohort (see Figure 51). Young adults were equally likely to have earned a postsecondary credential regardless of the year in which they exited, whether we looked at the entire sample ($\chi^2(1, n = 2{,}389) = 4.5562, p = .7139$) or at the subsample of young adults who enrolled in college ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}465) = 6.3306, p = .5017$).

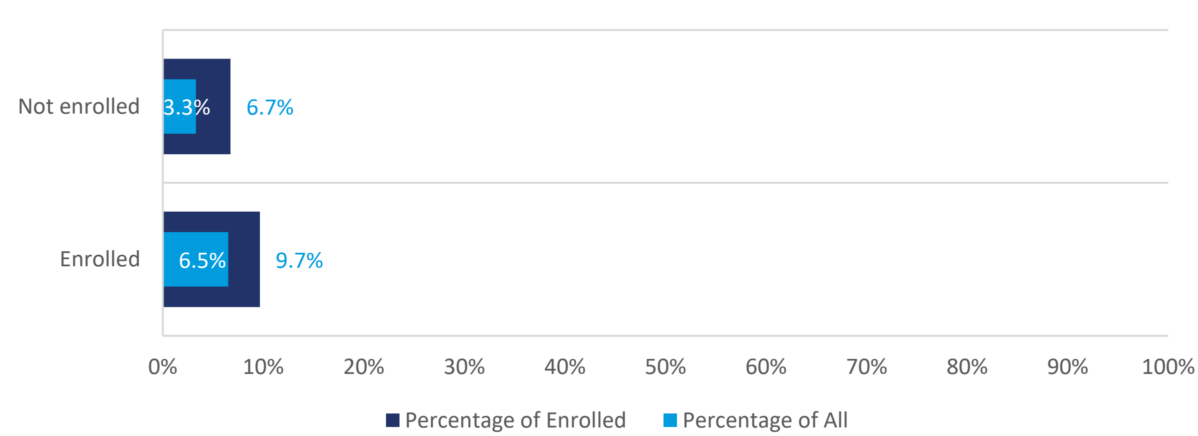
Figure 51. Attainment of a Postsecondary Credential by Exit Cohort



Program Status

The relationship between postsecondary educational attainment and program status was also complex (see Figure 52). Looking first at the entire sample, young adults who enrolled in MFP were more likely to have earned a postsecondary credential than young adults who did not enroll in MFP ($\chi^2(1, n = 2{,}389) = 10.6692$, $p = .0011$). However, that relationship was no longer statistically significant among young adults who had enrolled in college ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}465) = 3.0215$, $p = .0822$).

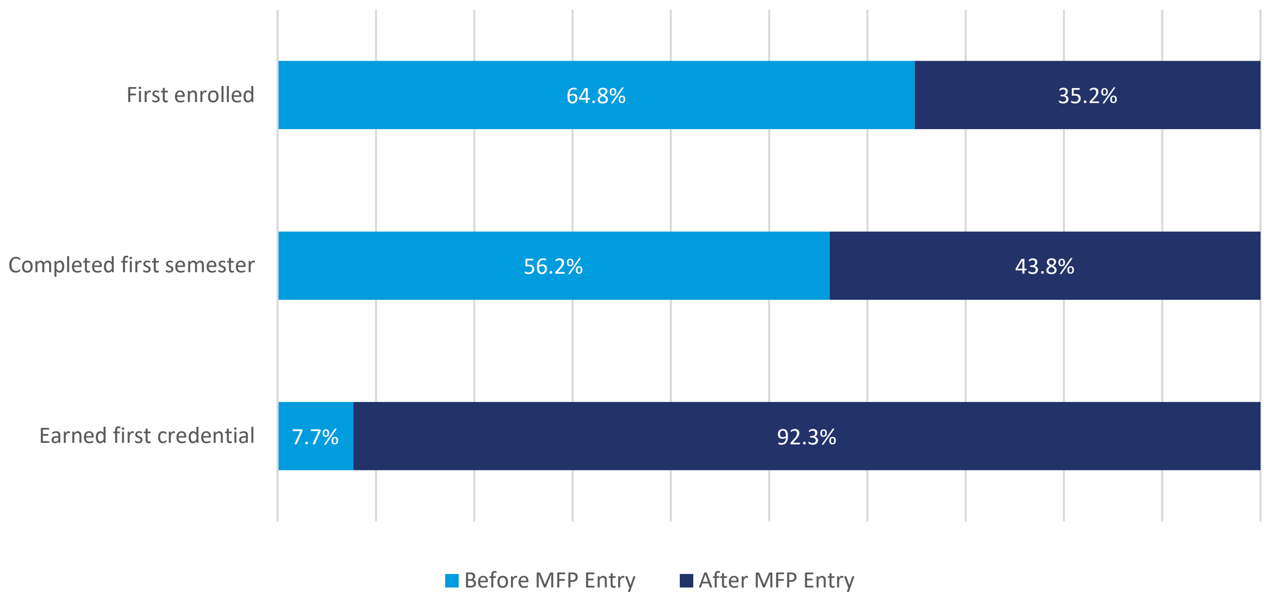
Figure 52. Postsecondary Educational Attainment by Program Status



Timing of Postsecondary Educational Outcomes

Figure 53 shows the timing of three key outcomes relative to MFP entry for the young adults who participated in the program. Sixty-five percent of the 1,078 MFP program young adults who enrolled in college first enrolled in college before they entered the program and 56% of the 1,025 MFP program young adults who completed at least one semester completed their first semester before they entered the program. However, only 8% of the 104 MFP young adults who earned a credential earned their first, and in many cases, only credential before they entered the program.

Figure 53. Timing of Postsecondary Educational Outcomes



Effect of Program on Postsecondary Educational Attainment

Table 13 compares the young adults who enrolled in MFP and the young adults who did not enroll in MFP before and after PSM. PSM eliminated all but one of the statistically significant differences between the two groups. After PSM, the group of young adults who enrolled in the program included proportionately fewer parents than the group of young adults who did not enroll in the program, even though parent status was one of the variables included in the model we used to generate the propensity scores.

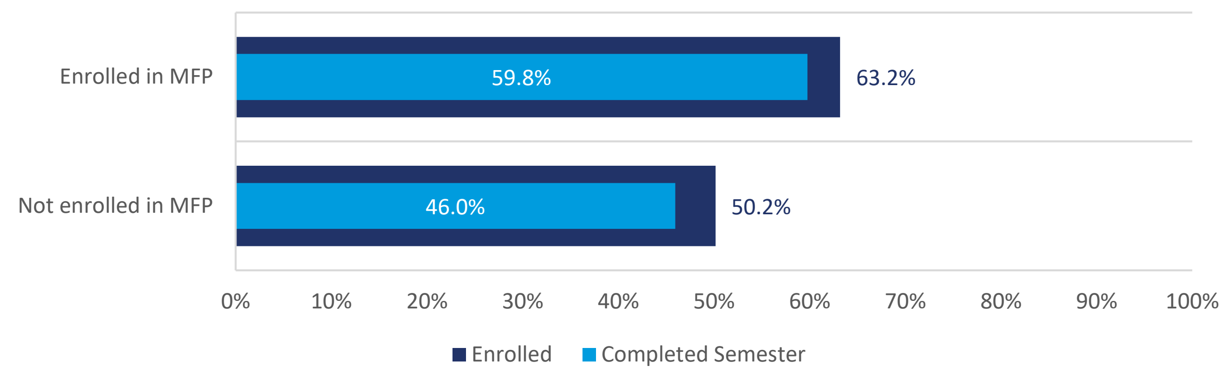
Table 13. Results of Propensity Score Matching Balance Test

	Unmatched			Matched		
	Did not enroll (%, *n* = 791)	Enrolled (%, *n* = 1,598)	*p*	Did not enroll (%, *n* = 644)	Enrolled (%, *n* = 644)	*p*
Gender						
Man	41.2	41.7	<.0001	41.5	40.7	0.5429
Woman	54.2	57.5		56.4	58.1	
Nonbinary	1.6	0.4		1.1	0.5	
Unknown	2.9	0.4		1.1	0.8	
Race						
Black	42.6	49.8	<.0001	46.1	48.5	0.8888
Latino	29.3	27.2		30.0	29.2	
White	5.1	6.2		5.0	4.7	
Multiracial	9.4	11.1		10.1	10.1	
Other	2.7	2.0		2.8	3.0	
Unknown	11.0	3.7		6.1	4.7	
Parent						
No	82.0	75.8	0.0001	81.8	77.0	0.0326
Yes	16.9	24.1		18.2	23.0	
Unknown	1.0	0.1				
County						
Contra Costa	7.1	11.5	<.0001	7.9	7.9	1.0000
Los Angeles	64.6	37.5		60.3	60.3	
SF/Alameda	20.5	30.1		23.8	23.8	
Santa Clara	5.7	10.6		5.9	5.9	
Solano	2.2	10.3		2.2	2.2	
Cohort						
2015	0.0	11.8	<.0001	0.0	0.3	0.2515
2016	7.6	12.6		8.4	10.6	
2017	9.9	13.0		9.8	13.2	
2018	19.1	13.6		20.2	19.9	
2019	20.2	14.1		20.8	18.5	
2020	19.5	10.0		14.3	12.3	
2021	14.5	14.0		16.6	16.2	
2022	9.2	10.8		9.9	9.2	

Program Status

Figures 54 and 55 are similar to Figures 44 and 52, respectively, except that they are based on the propensity score-matched sample. Young adults in the propensity score-matched sample who enrolled in MFP were significantly more likely to have enrolled in college ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}288) = 22.3109, p < .0001$) and significantly more likely to have completed at least one semester ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}288) = 24.6808, p < .0001$) than young adults in the propensity score-matched sample who did not enroll in MFP.

Figure 54. College Enrollment and Semester Completion by Program Status: Propensity Score-Matched Sample



Young adults in the propensity score-matched sample who enrolled in MFP were no more likely to have earned a postsecondary credential than young adults in the propensity score-matched sample who did not enroll in MFP ($\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}288) = 2.6883, p = .1011$). Participation in MFP was also not associated with earning a credential among young adults in the propensity score-matched sample who enrolled in college ($\chi^2(1, n = 730) = .6051, p = .4366$).

Figure 55. Postsecondary Educational Attainment by Program Status

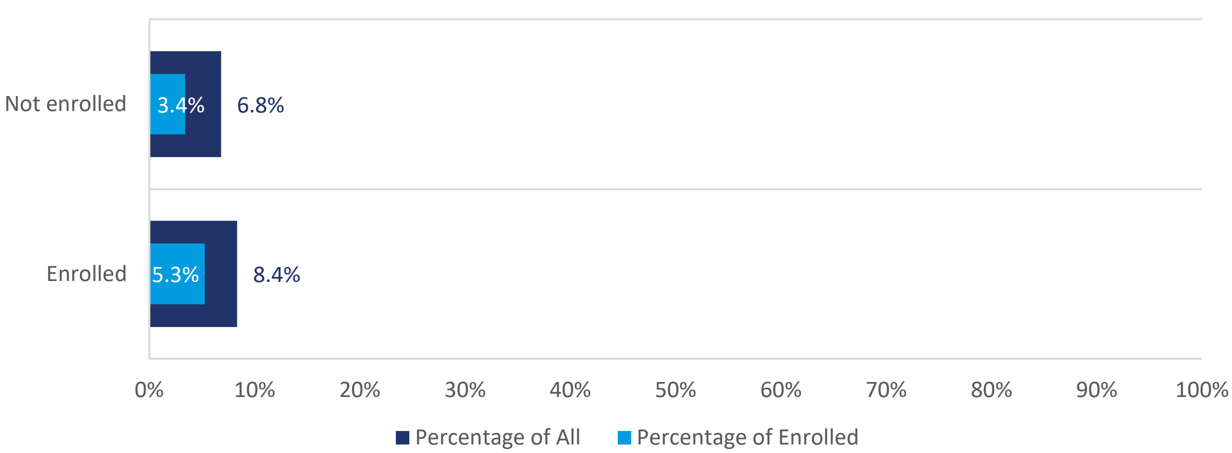


Table 14 shows the results of a proportional hazard model predicting first college enrollment using the propensity score-matched sample. The model included a time-varying covariate that was initially coded 0 for all the young adults. The value of that covariate switched to 1 on the date of enrollment for young adults who enrolled in MFP. Consistent with the results of our bivariate analysis, MFP enrollment increased the hazard of first college enrollment by 32%. Also consistent with the results of our bivariate analysis, the hazard of first college enrollment was significantly higher for young women than for young men and for young adults from San Francisco/Alameda Counties than for young adults from Los Angeles County. Although our bivariate analysis revealed no differences in college enrollment related to parenting, the results shown in Table 14 indicate that the hazard of first college enrollment was lower for young parents than for their non-parenting peers. Importantly, and contrary to our bivariate analysis, the hazard of first college enrollment did not vary by race/ethnicity.

Table 14. Parameter Estimates from Model Predicting Time to First College Enrollment

	Parameter Estimate	Hazard Ratio	*p*
MFP enrollment	0.274	1.32	0.0076
Black	-0.076	0.93	0.6600
Latino	-0.280	0.76	0.1165
Multiracial	-0.291	0.75	0.1522
Other race/ethnicity	0.042	1.04	0.8765
Nonbinary	0.203	1.23	0.6563
Woman	0.290	1.34	0.0004
Parent	-0.222	0.80	0.0264
Contra Costa	0.280	1.32	0.0524
San Francisco/Alameda	0.236	1.27	0.0119
Santa Clara	0.165	1.18	0.3303
Solano	0.135	1.14	0.6084
2015	-0.314	0.73	0.7635
2016	-0.099	0.91	0.5891
2017	-0.089	0.92	0.6129
2018	0.027	1.03	0.8621
2019	0.102	1.11	0.5129
2020	0.059	1.06	0.7263
2021	-0.035	0.97	0.8266

Table 15 shows the results of a proportional hazard model predicting first semester completion using the propensity score-matched sample. The model included a time-varying covariate that was initially coded 0 for all the young adults. The value of that covariate switched to 1 on the date of enrollment for young adults who enrolled in MFP. Consistent with the results of our bivariate analysis, MFP enrollment increased the hazard of first semester completion by 39%. Also consistent with the results of our bivariate analysis, the hazard of first semester completion was significantly higher for young women than for young men and for young adults from San Francisco/Alameda Counties than for young adults from Los Angeles County. Although our bivariate analysis revealed no differences in semester completion related to parenting, the results shown in Table 15 indicate that the hazard of first semester completion was lower for young parents than for their non-parenting peers. Importantly, and contrary to our bivariate analysis, the hazard of first semester completion did not vary by race/ethnicity.

Table 15. Parameter Estimates from Model Predicting Time to First Semester Completion

	Parameter Estimate	Hazard Ratio	*p*
MFP enrollment	0.328	1.389	0.0007
Black	-0.098	0.907	0.5873
Latino	-0.259	0.772	0.1627
Multiracial	-0.292	0.747	0.1672
Other race/ethnicity	0.030	1.030	0.9144
Nonbinary	0.277	1.319	0.5438
Woman	0.309	1.362	0.0003
Parent	-0.253	0.776	0.0148
Contra Costa	0.127	1.135	0.4197
San Francisco/Alameda	0.273	1.314	0.0045
Santa Clara	0.108	1.114	0.5471
Solano	0.179	1.196	0.4977
2015	-0.258	0.772	0.8049
2016	-0.036	0.964	0.8475
2017	-0.054	0.948	0.7675
2018	0.025	1.026	0.8756
2019	0.083	1.086	0.6073
2020	0.096	1.100	0.5808
2021	-0.048	0.953	0.7756

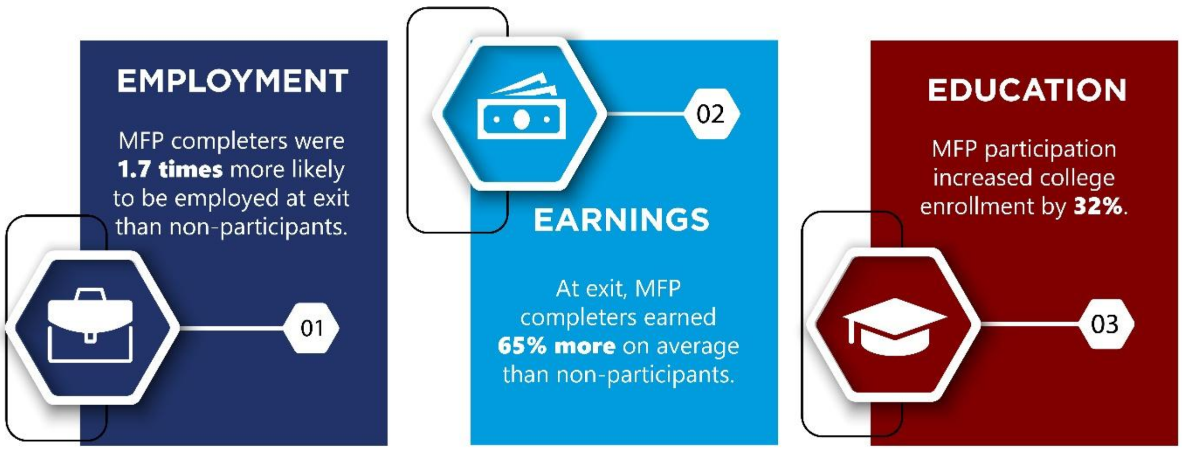
Table 16 shows the results of a proportional hazard model predicting first credential attainment using the propensity score-matched sample. The model included a time-varying covariate that was initially coded 0 for all the young adults. The value of that covariate switched to 1 on the date of enrollment for young adults who enrolled in MFP. Consistent with the results of our bivariate analysis, MFP enrollment did not affect the hazard of first credential attainment. Also consistent with the results of our bivariate analysis, the hazard of first credential attainment was significantly higher for young women than for young men. Importantly, and contrary to our bivariate analysis, the hazard of first credential attainment did not vary by race/ethnicity.

Table 16. Parameter Estimates from Model Predicting Time to First Credential Attainment

	Parameter Estimate	Hazard Ratio	p
MFP enrollment	0.020	1.020	0.9449
Black	-0.433	0.649	0.4397
Latino	0.102	1.107	0.8562
Multiracial	0.021	1.021	0.9752
Other race/ethnicity	-0.294	0.745	0.7375
Woman	0.837	2.308	0.0129
Parent	-0.557	0.573	0.1481
Contra Costa	-0.080	0.923	0.8841
San Francisco/Alameda	0.246	1.279	0.4582
Santa Clara	0.749	2.115	0.1073
2016	-1.462	0.232	0.0239
2017	-1.592	0.203	0.0161
2018	-0.906	0.404	0.0963
2019	-1.313	0.269	0.0239
2020	-0.541	0.582	0.3366
2021	-0.866	0.421	0.1445

DISCUSSION

Figure 56. MFP Participation Improves Employment, Earnings, and Education Outcomes



We undertook this study to examine the effects of MFP on the labor market and postsecondary educational outcomes of young adults. Our analysis of labor market outcomes compared the employment rates and earnings of three groups of young adults: those who enrolled in and completed the program, those who enrolled in but did not complete the program, and those who did not enroll in the program. We limited most of our analyses to the year in which young adults exited the program (or would likely have exited if they had enrolled) and the 2 years following that exit year.

Our findings related to employment are clear and consistent. Young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group were significantly more likely to be employed than young adults in either the "enrolled but did not complete" group or the "did not enroll" group in each of the 3 years before the year in which they exited the program, in the year they exited the program, and in each of the 3 years after the year in which they exited the program. For example, in the year they exited the program, young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group were 1.6 times more likely to be employed than young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group and 1.7 times more likely to be employed than young adults in the "did not enroll" group. Similarly, in the third year after they exited the program, young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group were 1.3 times more likely to be employed than young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group and 1.5 times more likely to be employed than young adults in the "did not enroll" group.

We observed a similar pattern when the "enrolled and completed" and the "enrolled but did not complete" groups were combined, although the gaps between the groups were smaller. Young adults in the "enrolled" group were significantly more likely to be employed than young adults in the "did not enroll" group in each of the 3 years before the year in which they exited the program, in the year they exited the program, and in each of the 3 years after the year in which they exited the program.

Our findings related to earnings are also clear and consistent. Employed young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group earned significantly more, on average, than employed young adults in the "enrolled in but did not complete" group and the "did not enroll" group. This trend started 1 year before the year in which they exited the program and continued through the third year after the year in which they exited. For example, in the year they exited the program, young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group earned 31% more, on average, than young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group and 65% more, on average, than young adults in the "did not enroll" group. Similarly, in the third year after they exited the program, young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group earned 38% more, on average, than young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group and 37% more, on average, than those in the "did not enroll" group.

The pattern was similar when the "enrolled and completed" and the "enrolled but did not complete" groups were combined. Employed young adults in the "enrolled" group earned significantly more, on average, than employed young adults in the "did not enroll" group in each of the 3 years before the year in which they exited the program, in the year they exited the program, and in the first 2 years after the year in which they exited the program. Although young adults in the "enrolled" group earned about $2,700 more, on average, than young adults in the "did not enroll" group 3 years after the year in which they exited the program, this difference was not statistically significant.

How much the program contributed to the differences we observed in post exit labor market outcomes is difficult to say for two reasons. First, as already noted, differences in labor market outcomes between young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group and young adults in the other two groups were already present pre-exit. The differences in employment rates continued post-exit but narrowed a bit. The differences in mean earnings also continued post-exit, but the gaps began to widen. In either case, the pre-exit differences in employment and earnings between young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group and young adults in the other two groups make it difficult to draw conclusions about the effects of the program on labor market outcomes, especially using aggregate data.

Second, 65% of the young adults in the "did not enroll" group were in Los Angeles County compared to 38 percent of the young adults in the "enrolled" group. This difference is important because young adults in Los Angeles County are primarily non-minor dependents in extended foster care; young adults in the other counties include more of a mix of non-minor dependents and former non-minor dependents. This means that young adults in the "enrolled" group were older, on average, than the young adults in the "did not enroll" group, and age tends to be positively correlated with employment and earnings among young adults.

Although our primary focus was on the differences in labor outcomes related to program enrollment and completion, we also examined the relationship between labor market outcomes and other factors. These analyses revealed differences related to county, education level, length of stay in the program, exit type (that is, planned vs. unplanned), and exit destination (that is, stable or unstable). First, young adults in San Francisco/Alameda were significantly more likely to be employed and earned more, on average, if they were employed than young adults in Los Angeles. Second, young adults who had completed postsecondary education were significantly more likely to be employed and earned more, on average, if they were employed than young adults who had completed less education. Third, young adults who stayed in the program for at least 2 years were significantly more likely to be employed than young adults who stayed in the program for less than 2 years. Staying in the program longer was also associated with higher earnings, but not as consistently. Fourth, young adults whose program exits were planned were more likely to be employed and earned more, on average, if they were employed than young adults whose program exits were unplanned. Finally, young adults who exited to stable housing were significantly more likely to be employed and earned more, on average, if they were employed than young adults who exited to unstable housing.

Most of our analyses of labor market outcomes focused on employment and earnings relative to the year in which young adults exited the program (or would likely have exited the program if they had enrolled). However, we also examined the labor market trajectories of young adults who exited in the program (or would have exited the program if they had enrolled) by exit cohort for each of the three groups (that is, the "enrolled and completed," "enrolled but did not complete," and "did not enroll" groups). The employment and earnings trajectories of the three groups look quite different.

Generally speaking, within the "enrolled and completed" group, the employment rate of each cohort increased steadily for a few years and then plateaued. For some, but not all, of the exit cohorts in this group, we also observed what appears to be a temporary effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment. The employment rates of the exit cohorts in the "enrolled but did not complete" group increased more gradually and were consistently lower than the employment rates of the "enrolled and completed" group. The COVID-19 pandemic also appears to have had less effect on their employment. The employment rates of the "did not enroll" group show even less of an upward trend and are consistently lower than the employment rates of the other two groups. Looking at the mean earnings of the "enrolled and completed" group, we see that mean earnings generally increased over time across all the exit cohorts. The mean earnings of the exit cohorts in the other two groups are consistently lower than the mean earnings of the exit cohorts in the "enrolled and completed" group and their earnings show less of a steady upward trajectory.

Our findings regarding postsecondary educational attainment suggest that many young people who age out of extended foster care do pursue some type of postsecondary education. Sixty-one percent of the young adults enrolled in college, and 58% completed at least one semester. Consistent with the results of prior studies, we found that the vast majority of young adults who pursued postsecondary education enrolled in a community college, even if they later enrolled in a 4-year school. Also consistent with prior studies, we found that only 9% of the young adults who enrolled in college earned a postsecondary credential, even though we defined credentials broadly to include certificates as well as associate or bachelor's degree.

Young adults who enrolled in MFP were significantly more likely to have enrolled in college and more likely to have completed at least one semester than young adults who did not enroll in MFP. However, about two-thirds of the MFP participants who enrolled in college did so for the first time before they entered the program. Similarly, over half of the MFP participants who completed at least one semester completed their first semester before program entry. Thus, their first college enrollment and semester completion cannot be attributed to their program enrollment. Moreover, although young adults who enrolled in MFP were more likely to have earned a postsecondary credential than young adults who did not enroll in MFP, this was largely driven by the fact that young adults who enrolled in MFP were significantly more likely to have enrolled in college. Among young adults who enrolled in college, MFP participants were more likely to have earned a credential than non-participants, but the difference was not statistically significant.

We also examined the relationship between postsecondary educational attainment and other factors. Consistent with trends in the broader population (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022a; 2022b; 2022c), young women were significantly more likely to have enrolled in college, completed at least one semester, and earned a credential than young men. The relationship between postsecondary educational attainment and race/ethnicity was less straightforward. Latino young adults were less likely to have enrolled in college than Black young adults. However, if they enrolled in college, Latino young adults were more likely than Black young adults to have earned a postsecondary credential. We also observed county-level differences in postsecondary educational attainment. Young adults in Los Angeles County were, in general, less likely to have enrolled in college, less likely to have completed a semester, and less likely to have earned a credential than young adults in the other counties. However, not all of those differences were statistically significant.

Because enrollment in MFP was not randomized, we estimated the effects of the program on our postsecondary educational outcomes using propensity score-matched treatment and comparison groups. Consistent with the results of our bivariate analysis, we found that MFP participation increased the hazard of first college enrollment by 32% and increased the hazard of first semester completion by 39%. Also, consistent with the results of our bivariate analysis, we found that the hazard of first college enrollment and the hazard of first semester completion were significantly higher for young women than for young men and for young adults from San Francisco/Alameda than for young adults from Los Angeles. Although our bivariate analysis revealed no differences in college enrollment or semester completion related to parenting, the hazard of first college enrollment and the hazard of first semester completion were lower for young parents than for their non-parenting peers. Importantly, and contrary to our bivariate analyses, we found no relationship between race/ethnicity and the hazard of first college enrollment or the hazard of first semester completion. Finally, consistent with our bivariate analysis, we found no relationship between MFP enrollment and the hazard of first credential attainment. The hazard of first credential attainment was significantly higher for young women than young men. However, contrary to trends in the general population, where wide gaps in graduation rates by race/ethnicity persist (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022b; 2022c), the hazard of first credential attainment did not vary by county or race/ethnicity.

Limitations

We wish to acknowledge several limitations of our study. Some of these limitations are related to the fact that we only had access to aggregate data on employment and earnings. Having only aggregate data on employment and earnings limited the analyses we could run and the relationships we could examine. Additionally, because performing tests for statistical significance with aggregate data can be quite cumbersome, we limited our statistical testing to the year in which young adults exited the program (or would likely have exited if they had enrolled) and the 2 years following that exit year (with a few exceptions).

Other limitations are related to the data we received from the NSC. We do not know the extent to which those data include false positives (that is, young adults who did not enroll in college matched to NSC records) or false negatives (that is, young adults who did not enroll in college not matched to NSC records). Although nearly all colleges and universities in the U.S. report enrollment and graduation data to the NSC,[26] the NSC does not receive data from institutions with postsecondary education programs that lead to vocational or industry-recognized certificates, which MFP encourages participants to pursue. Thus, it is possible that the program is having a larger impact on postsecondary educational attainment than our results suggest. Moreover, the lack of information in the NSC data about credit accumulation makes it difficult to measure progress toward a credential. Finally, as already noted, pre-existing differences between the "enrolled and completed," "enrolled but did not complete," and "did not enroll" groups make it difficult to draw conclusions about the effects of MFP on labor market outcomes. Although our analysis of postsecondary educational attainment used propensity score-matched groups, PSM is an imperfect substitute for randomization.

Implications for Policy, Practice and Future Research

Employment and Earnings

Our findings on employment and earnings have two main implications for policy and practice. First, we found that after exiting the program, young adults in the "enrolled" group were significantly more likely to be employed and earned significantly more, on average, if they were employed than young adults in the "did not enroll" group. Some of these differences can probably be attributed to (1) pre-exit differences in employment and earnings between the two groups and (2) the high percentage of young adults from Los Angeles in the "did not enroll" group. However, young adults who enrolled in the program may also have benefited from the support the program provides, not only while they were in the program, but also after they exited. Thus, additional investments in programs like MFP may improve the labor market outcomes of young people in extended foster care.

Second, we found that after exiting the program, young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group were significantly more likely to be employed and earned significantly more, on average, if they were employed than young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group. These differences are not surprising for at least two reasons. One is that they mirror differences that existed between the two groups prior to exit. The other is that young people are counted as completing the program if they exit to stable housing and experience an annual increase in wages of at least 3%. Although young adults are also counted as completing the program if they exit to stable housing and demonstrate "educational progress," the enrolled and completed group includes all the young adults who experienced an annual wage increase of at least 3% and exited to stable housing.

Although these findings were not surprising, they do suggest that increasing the percentage of young adults who successfully complete the program could improve post exit labor market outcomes. In part, this may mean encouraging young adults to remain in the program for at least 2 years. Young adults in the "enrolled and completed" group stayed in the program about 9 months longer, on average, than young adults in the "enrolled but did not complete" group (that is, 23.5 months compared to 14.1 months), and longer program stays were associated with higher rates of employment and higher earnings. Although our analyses cannot speak to the reasons for these associations, they do suggest that programs like MFP should identify and implement strategies that promote longer program stays.

Postsecondary Education

Although our data are agnostic as to why participation in MFP had a positive effect on college enrollment and semester completion, at least two explanations are worth considering. One possibility is that MFP participants benefited from the support they received from their Education and Employment Specialist and Youth Advocate. These professionals may have provided them with encouragement or helped remove barriers to enrollment, such as by assisting with financial aid applications. To the extent that these "light touch" interventions are effective, child welfare systems need to think about how they can continue to provide support to young people after they age out of extended foster care by, for example, contracting with nonprofit organizations like First Place for Youth. Not all young people would avail themselves of these supports, but they would be a valuable resource for those who need them.

Paying for these additional supports could be a challenge. The Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (Chafee program) provides funds that states can use to prepare young people in foster care for the transition to adulthood and to support them during that transition. Under the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) of 2018, states that have extended foster care until age 21 can seek approval from the Children's Bureau to use their federal Chafee dollars to fund services for young people who aged out of foster care until their 23rd birthday. However, that approval does not come with additional funding. In essence, this means that states must provide services to a larger population with the same amount of funds. One solution would be for Congress to increase the annual authorization for the Chafee program and allocate that increase to states that choose to provide services to young people who age out of extended foster care.

Another potential explanation for why MFP participation was associated with an increase in college enrollment and semester completion is that all the MFP participants had stable housing, and hence, were better able to concentrate on pursuing their postsecondary educational goals. Consistent with this explanation, research suggests that young people whose housing is unstable may have less cognitive capacity to focus on their education and may face a variety of barriers to enrolling or persisting in school (Bowers & O'Neill, 2019; Hallett & Freas, 2018; Silva et al., 2017). Thus, MFP may help improve the postsecondary educational outcomes among young people who are or were in extended foster care by providing them with fully subsidized housing. This is important given the high rate of homelessness and housing instability among young people who have aged out of foster care. However, additional research is needed to determine whether participation in other programs that provide young people who have aged out of extended foster care with fully subsidized housing is associated with higher rates of college enrollment or semester completion.

Although participation in MFP had a positive effect on college enrollment and semester completion, it had no effect on earning a postsecondary educational credential. One explanation for this null finding is that MFP participants "aged out" of the program or exited for other reasons before they were able to complete the requirements for a certificate or degree. This implies that allowing longer stays in the program might lead to higher rates of degree or certificate attainment. Another possibility is that the supports that enabled MFP participants to enroll in college and complete at least one semester are different from the supports needed to persist in college long enough to earn a certificate or degree. In either case, increasing postsecondary educational attainment among this population is likely to require longer-term, targeted supports. Additional research is needed to determine what those supports should be.

Improving the postsecondary educational outcomes of young people in extended foster care is important because postsecondary educational attainment is positively correlated with employment and earnings among young people who age out of extended foster care. In fact, some research suggests that the effects of postsecondary educational attainment on employment and earnings are more pronounced among young people who age out of foster care than among their peers in the general population. Moreover, completing at least some college is associated with an increased likelihood of being employed and higher earnings, although to a much lesser degree than having a 2- and especially a 4-year degree (Okpych & Courtney, 2014).

Finally, our findings highlight the need to pay attention to county-level disparities in young adults' labor market and postsecondary educational outcomes. Young adults in San Francisco/Alameda were more likely to be employed, earned more, on average, when they were employed than young adults in Los Angeles. Compared to young adults in Los Angeles, young adults in San Francisco/Alameda were also more likely to enroll in college and complete at least one semester. Although some of these disparities are likely due to the higher proportion of young adults in Los Angeles who are non-minor dependents, other factors may also have played a role. Understanding the source of these disparities and addressing them could increase the program's effectiveness.

Conclusion

Evidence shows MFP helps young adults build stronger foundations for work and education.

The findings from our evaluation highlight the promise of programs like MFP for improving the labor market and postsecondary educational outcomes of young people transitioning out of extended foster care. We found positive associations between program enrollment and post exit labor market outcomes. We also found evidence of program effects on college enrollment and semester completion, but not on credential attainment. Taken together, these findings provide support for continued investments in programs like MFP for young adults transitioning out of extended foster care.

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National Center for Education Statistics (2022a). Digest of education statistics. Table 302.60. Percentage of 18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in college, by level of institution and sex and race/ethnicity of student: 1970 through 2022

National Center for Education Statistics (2022b). Digest of education statistics. Table 326.10. Graduation rate from first institution attended for first-time, full-time bachelor's degree-seeking students at 4-year postsecondary institutions, by race/ethnicity, time to completion, sex, control of institution, and percentage of applications accepted: Selected cohort entry years, 1996 through 2017

National Center for Education Statistics (2022c). Digest of education statistics. Table 326.20. Graduation rate from first institution attended within 150 percent of normal time for first-time, full-time degree/ certificate-seeking students at 2-year postsecondary institutions, by race/ethnicity, sex, and control of institution: Selected cohort entry years, 2000 through 2018

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ENDNOTES

[1] Due to EDD conventions for protecting privacy, employment and earnings data based on sample sizes of less than five were not reported.

[2] Chi-square test were calculated using R.

[3] https://statpages.info/anova1sm.html

[4] We did not include sexual orientation, homelessness history, or legal system involvement in the model because data were missing for a nontrivial percentage of the young adults.

[5] We experimented with different matching algorithms. Based on the balance diagnostics, we used a one-to-one greedy matching algorithm. With this algorithm, one treatment group member is randomly selected and matched to the comparison group member with the closest propensity score (even if that comparison group member would be a better match for a subsequent treatment group member). We also required that the absolute difference in propensity scores between the matched pairs be below 0.2 (that is, the caliper distance). Treatment group members were excluded from the matched sample if no comparison group member had a propensity score whose difference from the treatment group member's propensity score was within the caliper distance.

[6] Logistic regression is used to estimate the effect of one or more covariates on the odds of experiencing a binary outcome.

[7] The proportional hazards model does not require the specification of a baseline hazard function. Rather, it assumes that the ratio of the hazard for the treatment group to the hazard for the comparison group remains constant (that is, proportional) over time.

[8] We recognize that limiting the analysis to the sample of young adults who ever enrolled in college does introduce the potential for sample selection bias. Sample selection occurs whenever the observation of one outcome measure is conditional on the value of another. In this case, earning a credential can only be observed for young adults who enroll in college. Sample selection can lead to biased parameter estimates.

[9] Data provided by FPFY indicate that young women who were parents were 2.5 times more likely to be living with their children than young men who were parents.

[10] Young adults were counted as homeless if they exited to sheltered or unsheltered homelessness.

[11] Because we could not calculate adjusted standard deviations with the aggregate data, we could not determine whether the observed group differences are statistically significant.

[12] The aggregate data did not allow us to examine differences in employment or earnings among young adults who did not enroll in the program.

[13] Young adults who did not identify as a woman or a man were excluded from the analysis because the sample sizes were too small.

[14] Young adults whose race or ethnicity was not Black, Latino, White, or multiracial were excluded from the analysis because the sample sizes were too small.

[15] Young adults who were not identified as straight or lesbian, gay, or bisexual were excluded from the analysis because the sample sizes were too small.

[16] We collapsed the six education categories into four by combining "completed a semester of college" and "earned an LLC/CC" into a single category and combining "earned a high school diploma or GED" and "enrolled in a postsecondary education program but did not complete a semester" into a single category.

[17] We collapsed the five termination reasons into two categories: planned (i.e., completed/aged out and voluntary exit) and unplanned (i.e., emergency exit, program unable to meet needs, and program violation).

[18] We collapsed the seven exit housing destinations into two categories: stable housing (i.e., subsidized and unsubsidized housing rental/ownership, stably living with family or a friend, and another transitional housing provider) and unstable housing (i.e., unstably living with family or a friend, homeless, and detention or treatment facility).

[19] Data were not available for the 2015 exit cohort.

[20] Too few young adults had earnings in 2011 for EDD to report the mean.

[21] Data were not reported for 2011 through 2014 because the number of young adults with earnings was too small.

[22] The number of nonbinary young adults (n = 20) is too small to draw any conclusions about their college enrollment.

[23] We excluded other racial groups from the analysis because the sample sizes were too small.

[24] Parenting status can change over time, and we do not know whether the parents had been enrolled in college before or after their children were born.

[25] Some young adults earned more than one certificate or associate's degree. They are only counted once.

[26] The NSC reports that 97 percent of students in public and private postsecondary educational institutions are enrolled in "participating" institutions.