

Including First Generation College Students in EPSCoR Programs

Rationale and Trends

Jeanette L. Miller

Associate Director, Delaware Environmental Institute (DENIN)

University of Delaware

Delaware EPSCoR EOD Director

Yolanda Williams-Bey

Education Program Manager

Delaware Environmental Institute (DENIN)

Including First Generation Students



Photo: Lucy Arellano

Outline

- 1. Defining first generation as a term**
- 2. Characteristics of first generation students**
- 3. Benefits of college completion to individuals and society**
 - Earnings premium**
 - Health/longevity benefit**
- 4. Opportunities for EPSCoR projects**

Varying definitions

There is not a universal definition of the term first generation college student.

An undergraduate whose parents never enrolled in postsecondary education – US Department of Education

A student whose parents/guardians did not complete a bachelor's degree

Characteristics of first generation students

A first generation student is more likely to be:

Female

Older

A person with a disability

A member of an underrepresented group

A non-native English speaker

A single parent



Characteristics of first generation students

A first generation student may experience:



Less parental support

Family pressure to return home often

Mixed messages about changing identities

Low-income, first generation students



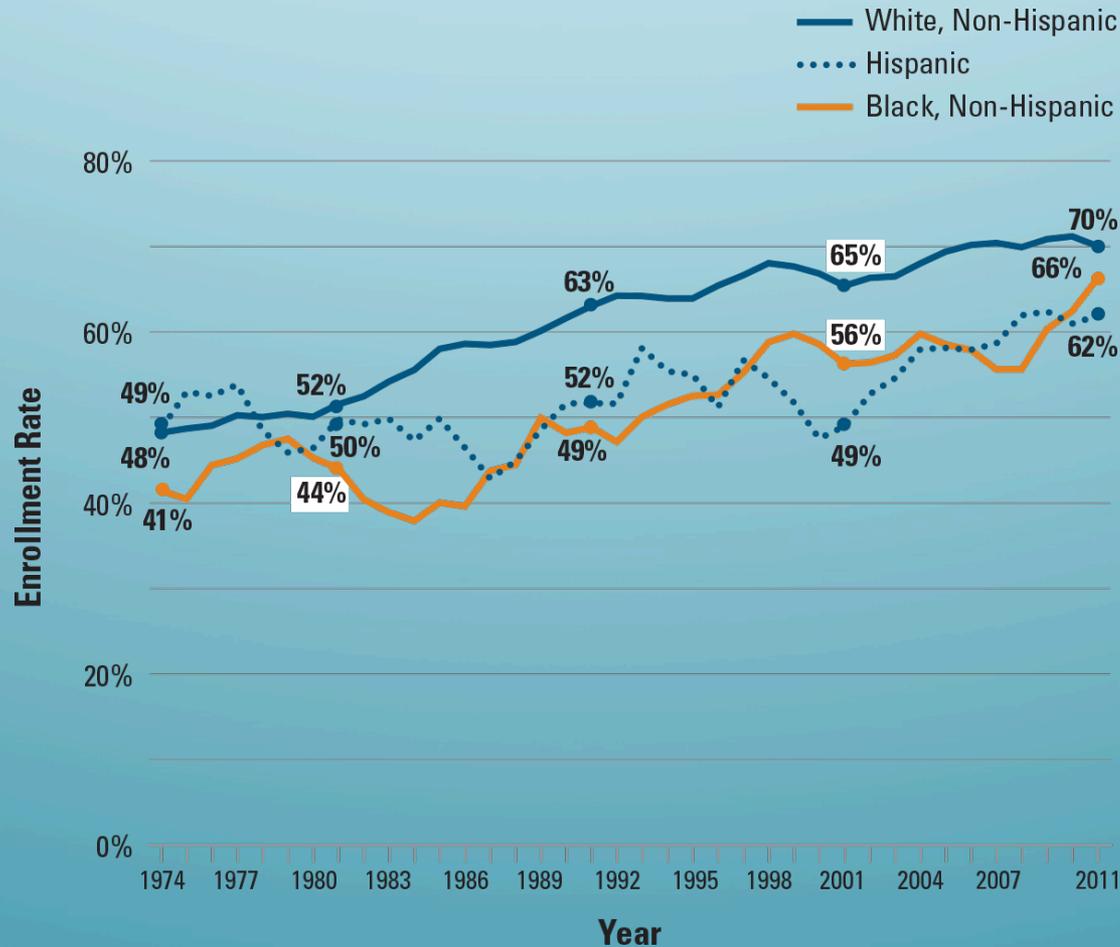
4.5 million students (24% of the undergraduate population)

Four times more likely to leave college after the first year, compared to students with neither risk factor

11% had completed bachelor's degrees after six years

Postsecondary enrollment has been increasing

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates of Recent High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity, 1974 to 2011



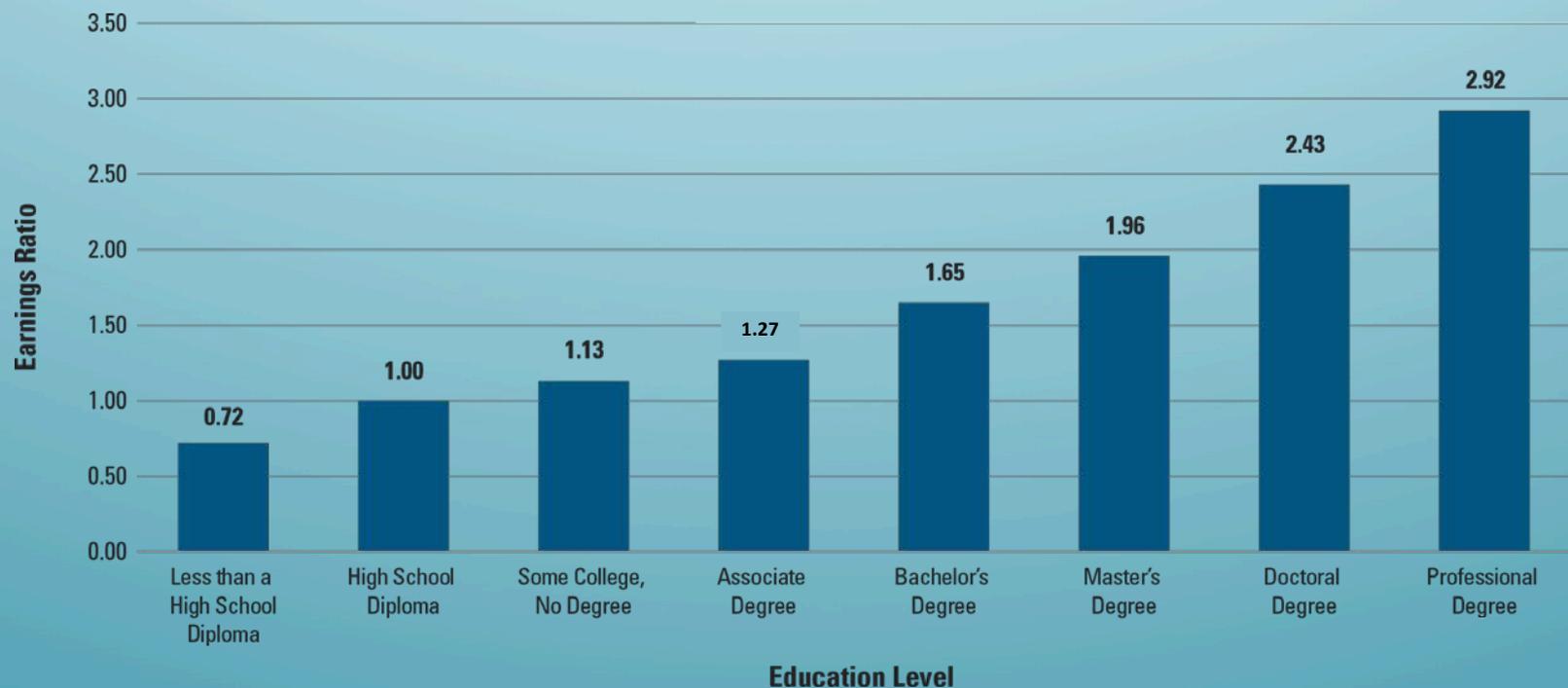
Benefits of postsecondary education



- Higher rates of employment and lifetime earnings
- Higher levels of engagement in civic activities, such as voting and volunteering
- Higher rates of living healthy lifestyles, including lower rates of smoking and obesity
- Increased likelihood of engagement in educational activities with one's children

The Earnings Premium

Expected Full-Time Lifetime Earnings Relative to High School Graduates, by Education Level

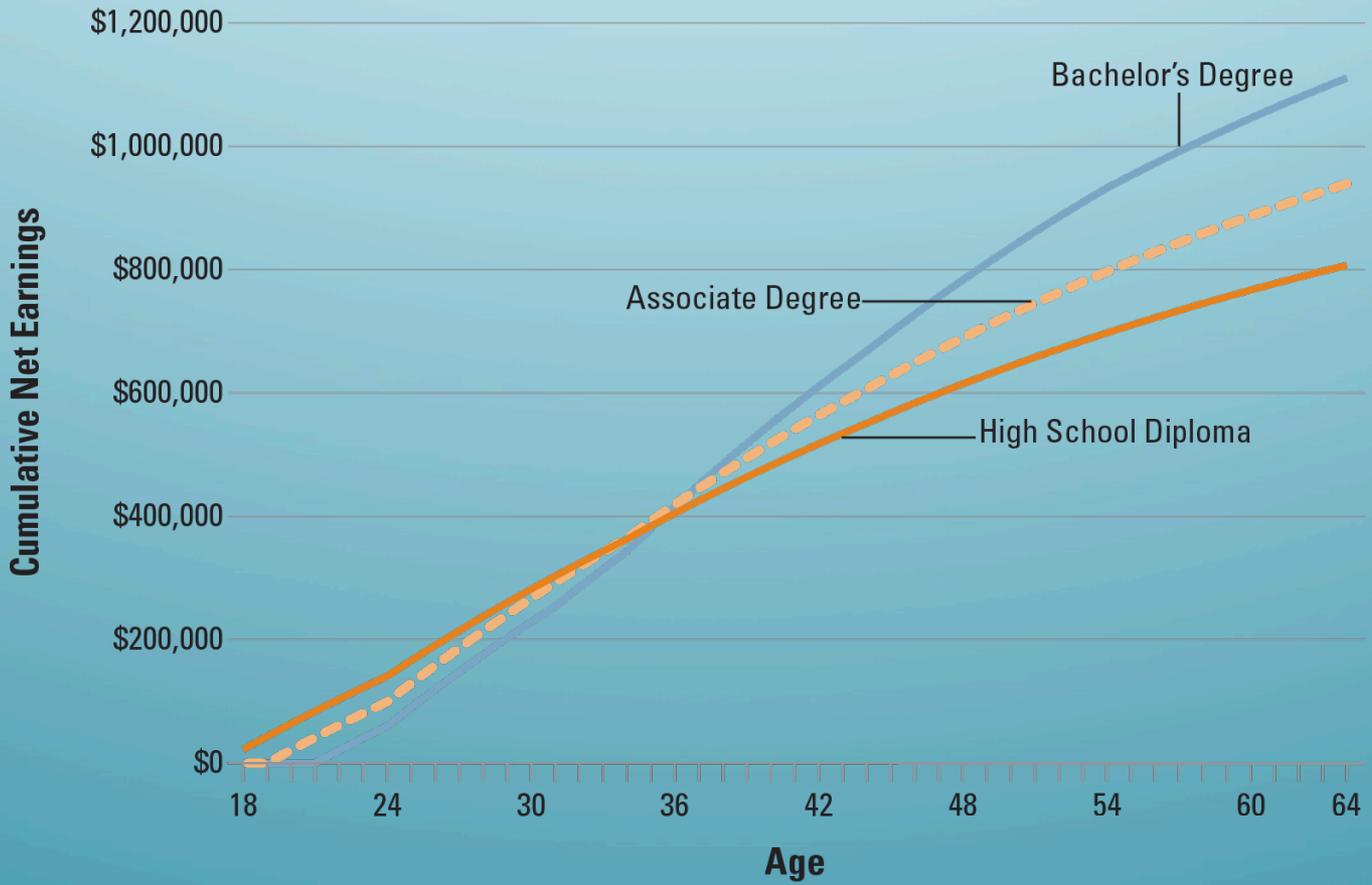


Source: Baum, Ma & Payea (2013) Education Pays 2013: The Benefits of Higher Education for Individuals and Society. The College Board

Higher net earnings, even with loans



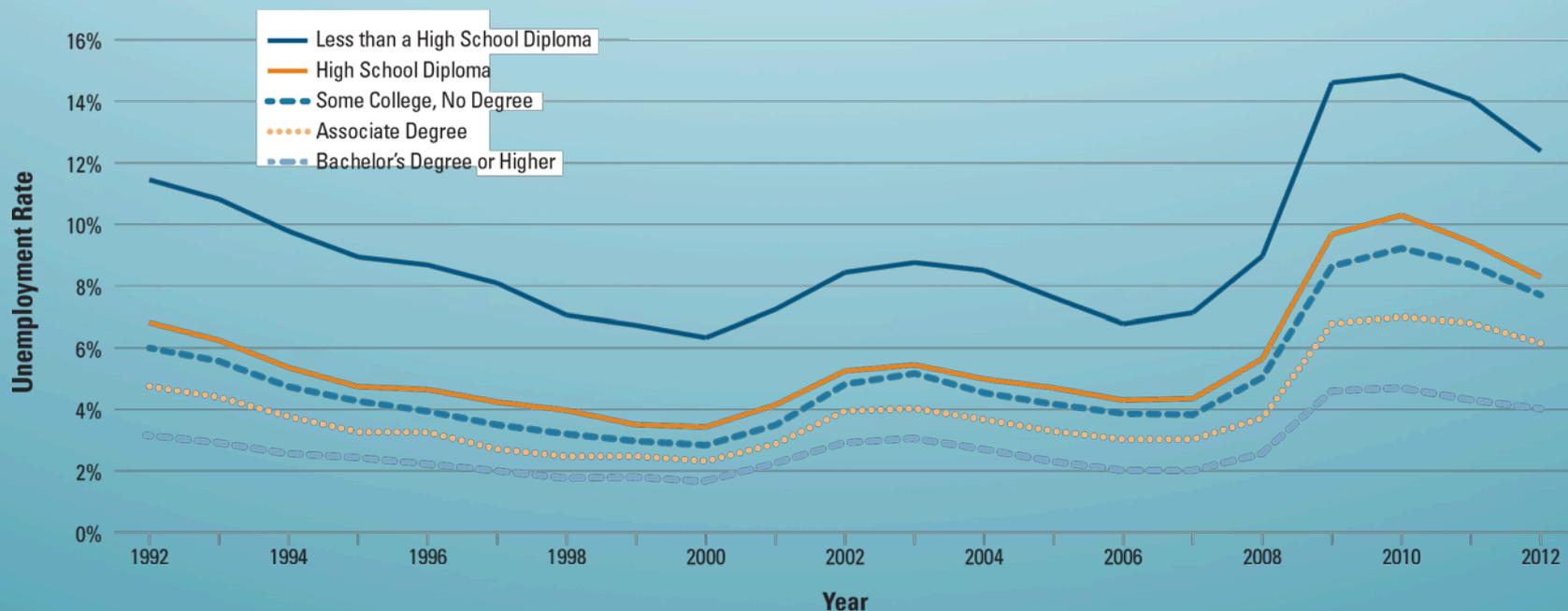
Estimated Cumulative Full-Time Earnings (in 2011 Dollars) Net of Loan Repayment for Tuition and Fees, by Education Level



SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012, Table PINC-03; Baum and Ma, 2012; calculations by the authors.

Prospects for lifetime employment

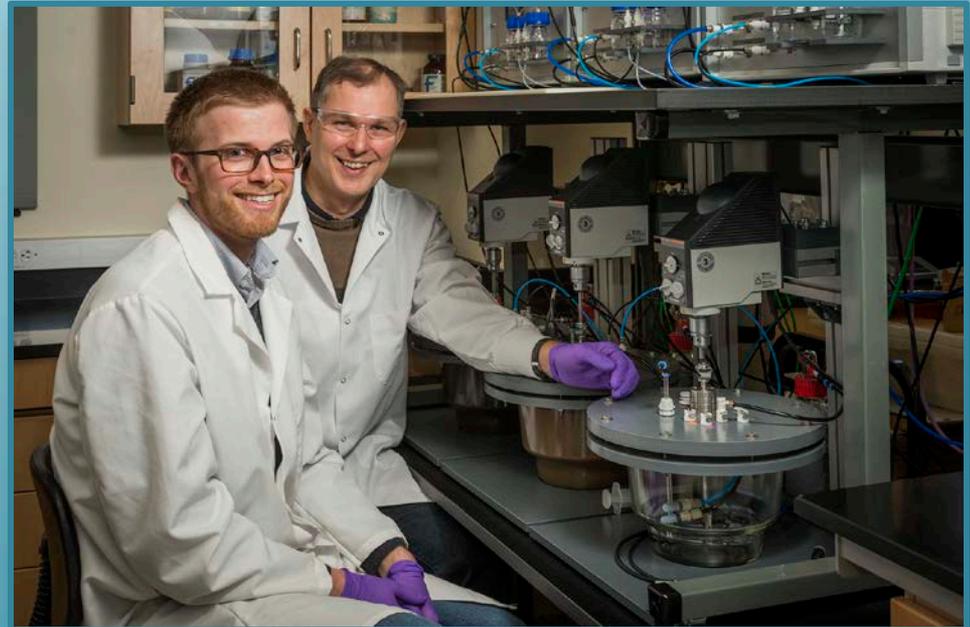
Unemployment Rates Among Individuals Ages 25 and Older, by Education Level, 1992–2012



The longevity premium

For all racial and ethnic groups, having an additional four years of education beyond high school yields a pronounced longevity advantage.

Having a postgraduate degree produces an even greater advantage.



Opportunities

Including first generation status as a demographic tracked in EPSCoR projects provides several opportunities:



Projects have an additional dimension by which to document broader impacts and broadening participation

Identifying and tracking first generation students allows projects to ensure that first generation students receive the mentoring and support needed to persist, and reap the benefits of a college degree.

Thank you



1a. RII-3 Goals

- **Manage the grant for long-term sustainability**
- **Build competitive research teams**
- **Integrate new initiatives into the fabric of our institutions**



2a. Delaware Environmental Institute



Mission: Conduct research and coordinate partnerships that integrate environmental science, engineering, social science, and policy in order to provide solutions and strategies that address environmental challenges.

Director: Don Sparks



Research



Education



Partnerships



Events

2a. Center for Integrated Biological and Environmental Research

Mission: Serve as a regional hub in environmental and life sciences that identifies funding opportunities, provides students with opportunities for research, coordinates core facilities at DSU, and integrates research and outreach activities with partner institutions.

Director: Venu Kalavacharla

