

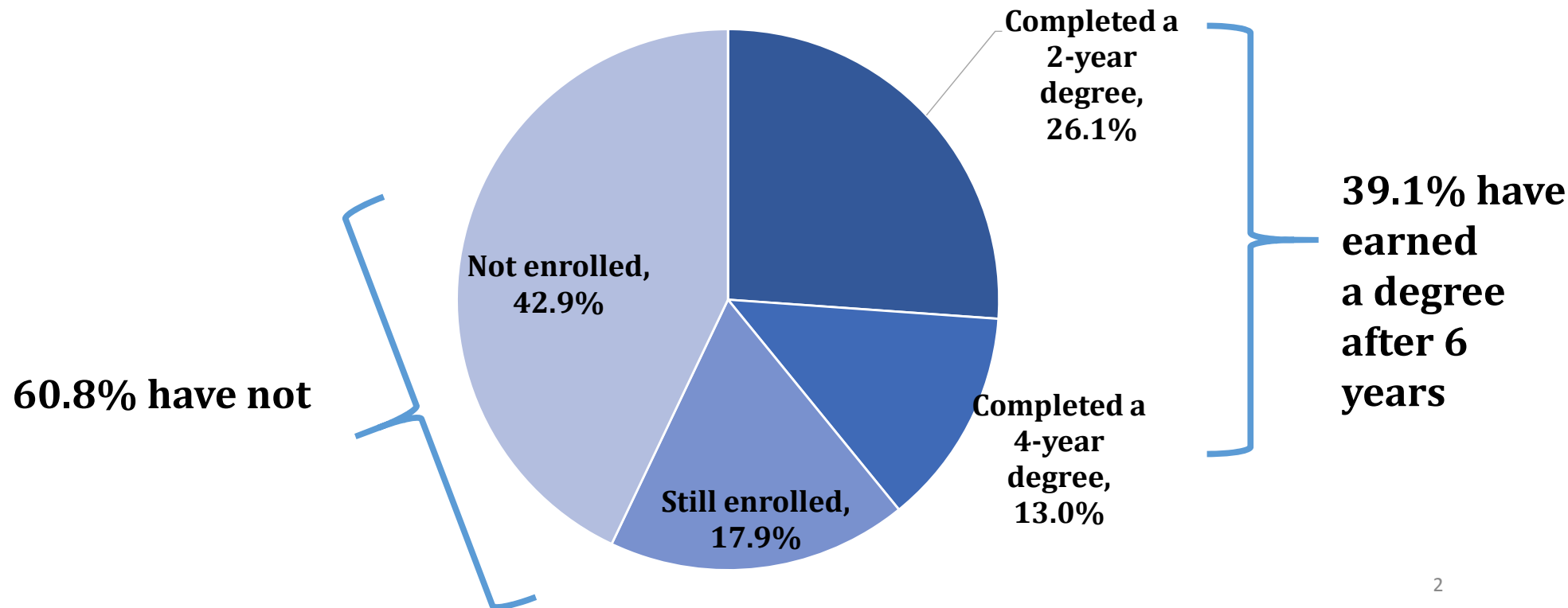
Reducing Food and Housing Insecurities and Improving Degree Completion

Jim Sullivan
Professor of Economics
University of Notre Dame & LEO



The Challenge

Community College Students 6-years after Enrollment

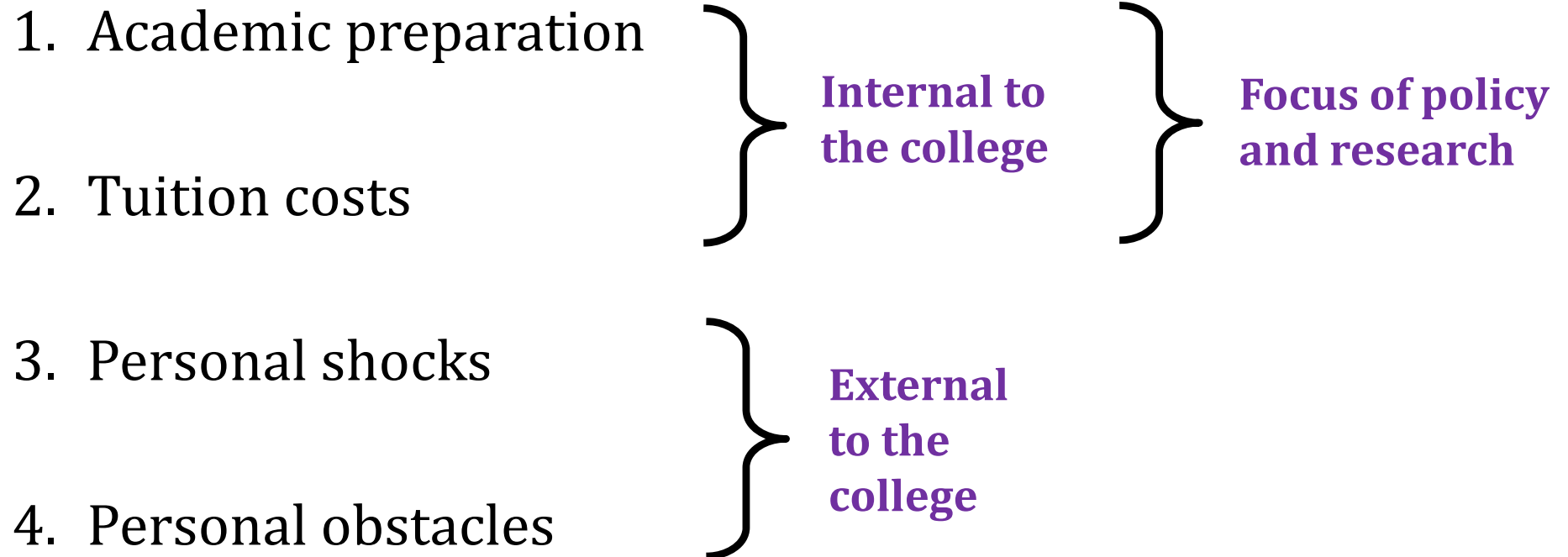


The Challenge

“...THE POLITICAL POPULARITY OF FREE COLLEGE IS OBVIOUS. YET WE HAVE PAID TOO LITTLE ATTENTION TO THE MAIN CRISIS IN US HIGHER EDUCATION – LOW COMPLETION RATES”

DAVID DEMING, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Reasons for low persistence & completion



Reasons for low persistence & completion

1. Academic preparation

Problem: Students are not academically prepared to succeed in college

Policy/programming response:

- Remedial classes
- Instructional reform
- Academic supports



Reasons for low persistence & completion

2. Tuition costs

Problem: Students are unable to afford the cost of school

Policy/programming response:

- Pell grants (\$30 billion)
- Other tuition assistance



Reasons for low persistence & completion

3. External shocks

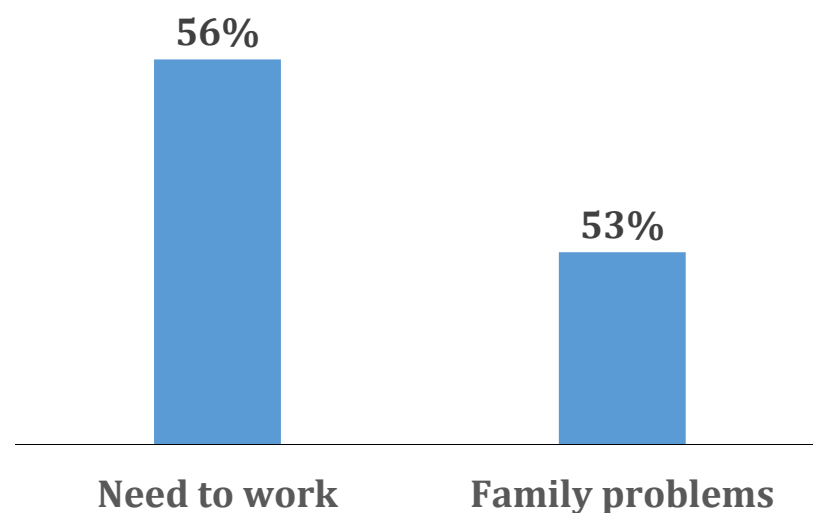
Problem: Life gets in the way

- 36% are food insecure
- 36% are housing insecure

Policy/programming response:

- Emergency aid
- Holistic services

Top reasons students give for dropping out:



Reasons for low persistence & completion

4. Personal obstacles

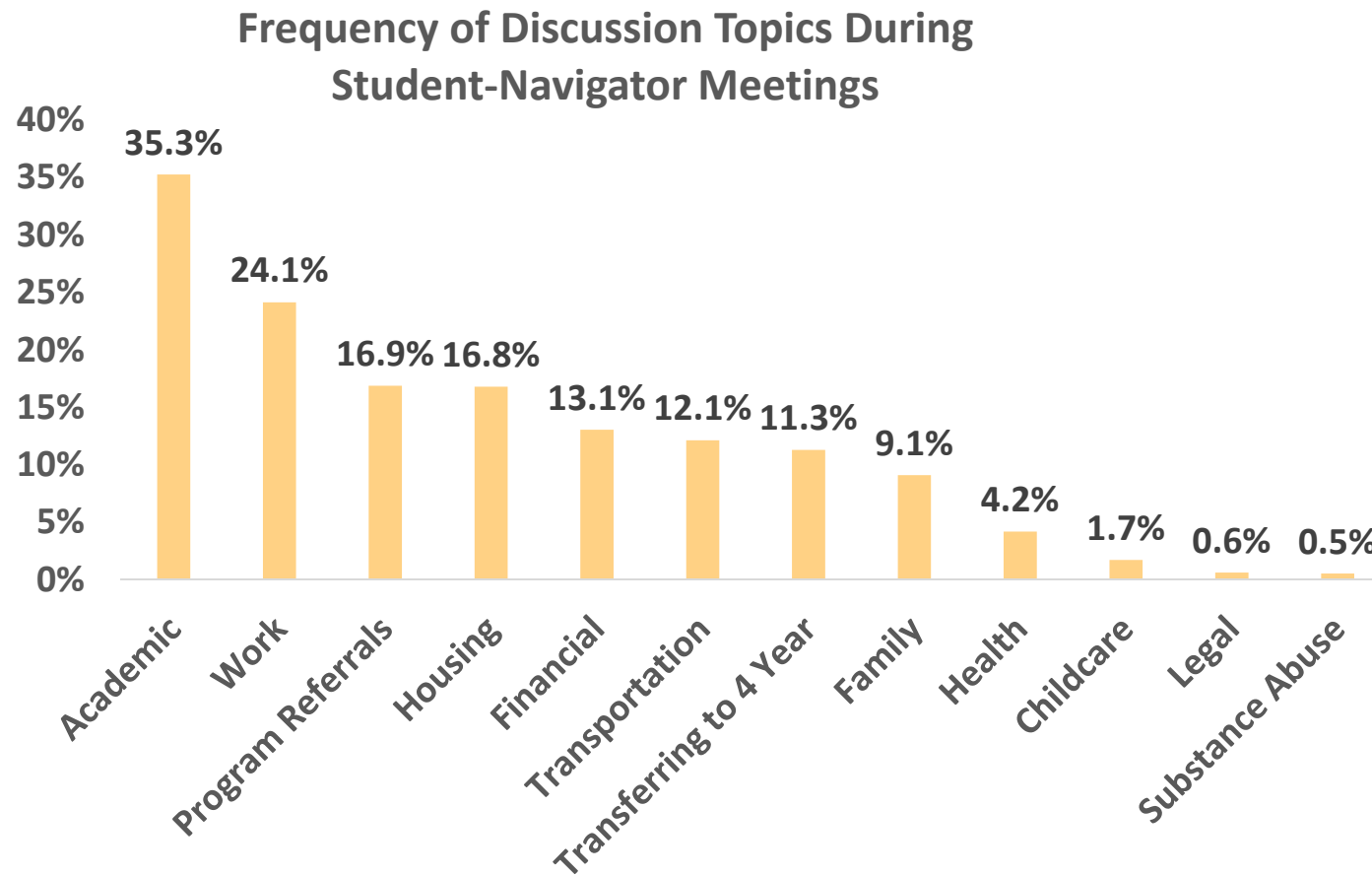
Problem:

- Navigating the system (lack key information)
- Self-efficacy (trouble staying on task, setting goals)
- Bandwidth (Mullinathian and Shafir, 2013)

Policy/programming response:

- Holistic services

Reasons for low persistence & completion



Opening Doors

- Key components
 1. Instructional reform (Linked classes, etc.)
 2. Financial incentives
 3. Students services
- Results: mixed

Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP)

- Key components
 1. Enhanced advising/tutoring
 2. Scheduling (i.e. blocked courses)
 3. Financial support (i.e. tuition waivers)
- Results: Doubled graduation rates!

Does Emergency Aid Work?

?

Some encouraging signs:

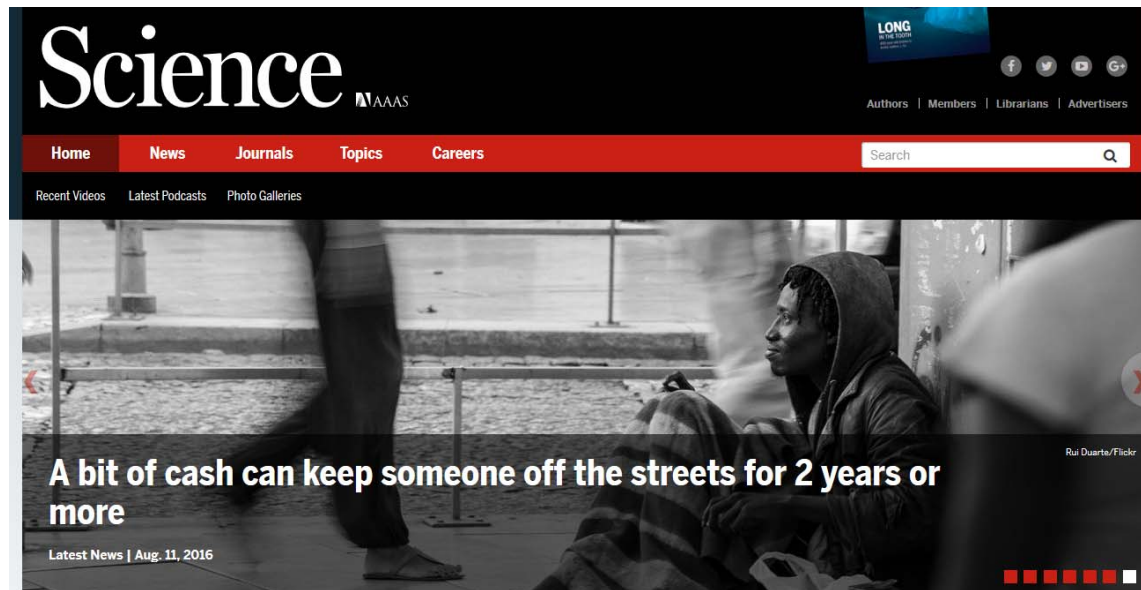
- It has worked in other contexts



WELCOME

I believe emergency aid can be a powerful tool to help students stay on track to graduate and achieve their academic and career goals.

Does Emergency Aid Work?



The impact of homelessness prevention programs on homelessness

William N. Evans,^{1,2,3} James X. Sullivan,^{1,3*} Melanie Wallskog⁴

Does Emergency Aid Work?

? → Yes!

Some encouraging signs:

- It has worked in other contexts
- Some strong suggestive evidence

Do Holistic Services Work?

A growing body of
experimental evidence
suggests yes.

Comprehensive Case Management



STAY THE COURSE



Description of *Stay the Course*TM

Principles:

- Strengths-based
- Customizable
- Holistic
- Long-term

Activities

- Goal setting and planning
- Resource connection
- Field trips, engagement events, graduation ceremonies







Description of *Stay the Course*TM

Cadence

- Weekly contact
- 2 meetings/month
- Student's complete action step every 3 weeks

Emergency Financial Assistance

- \$1,500 / student; \$500/ semester
- Non-academic, emergency needs



The Evaluation

Cohort 1



Two treatment arms:

- Stay the Course
- EFA only

Key Outcomes:

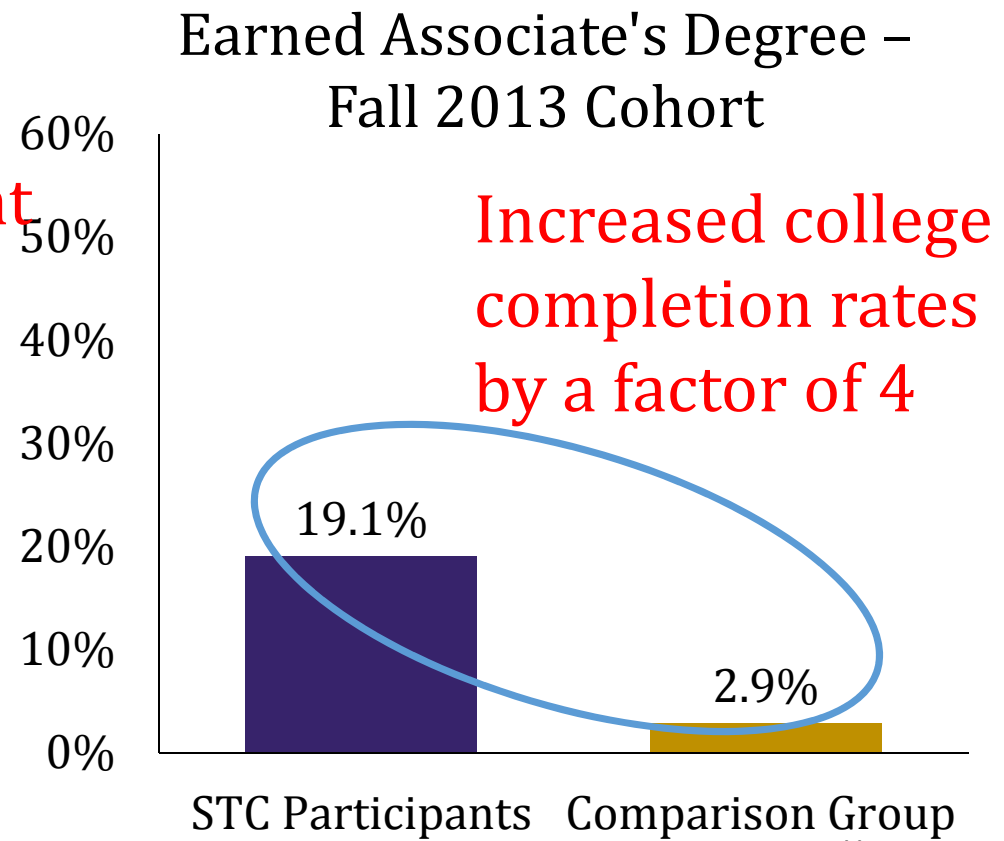
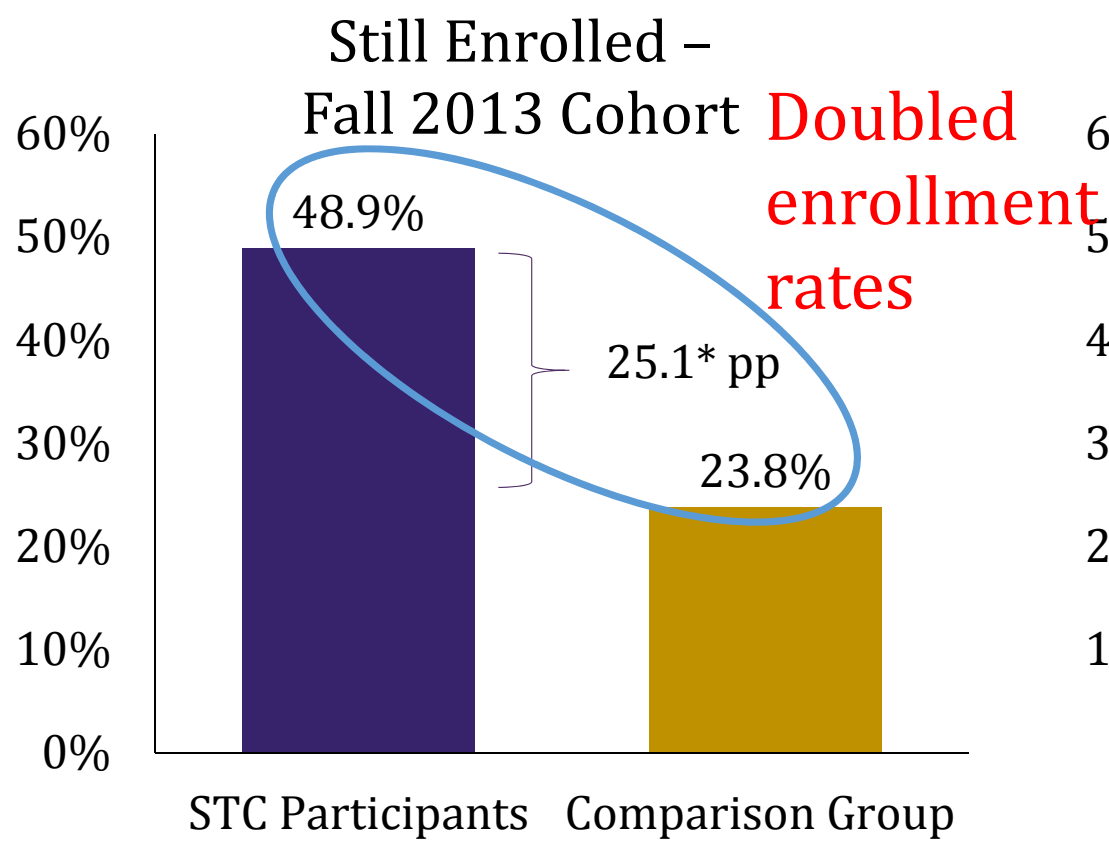
- Still actively enrolled
- Earned a degree



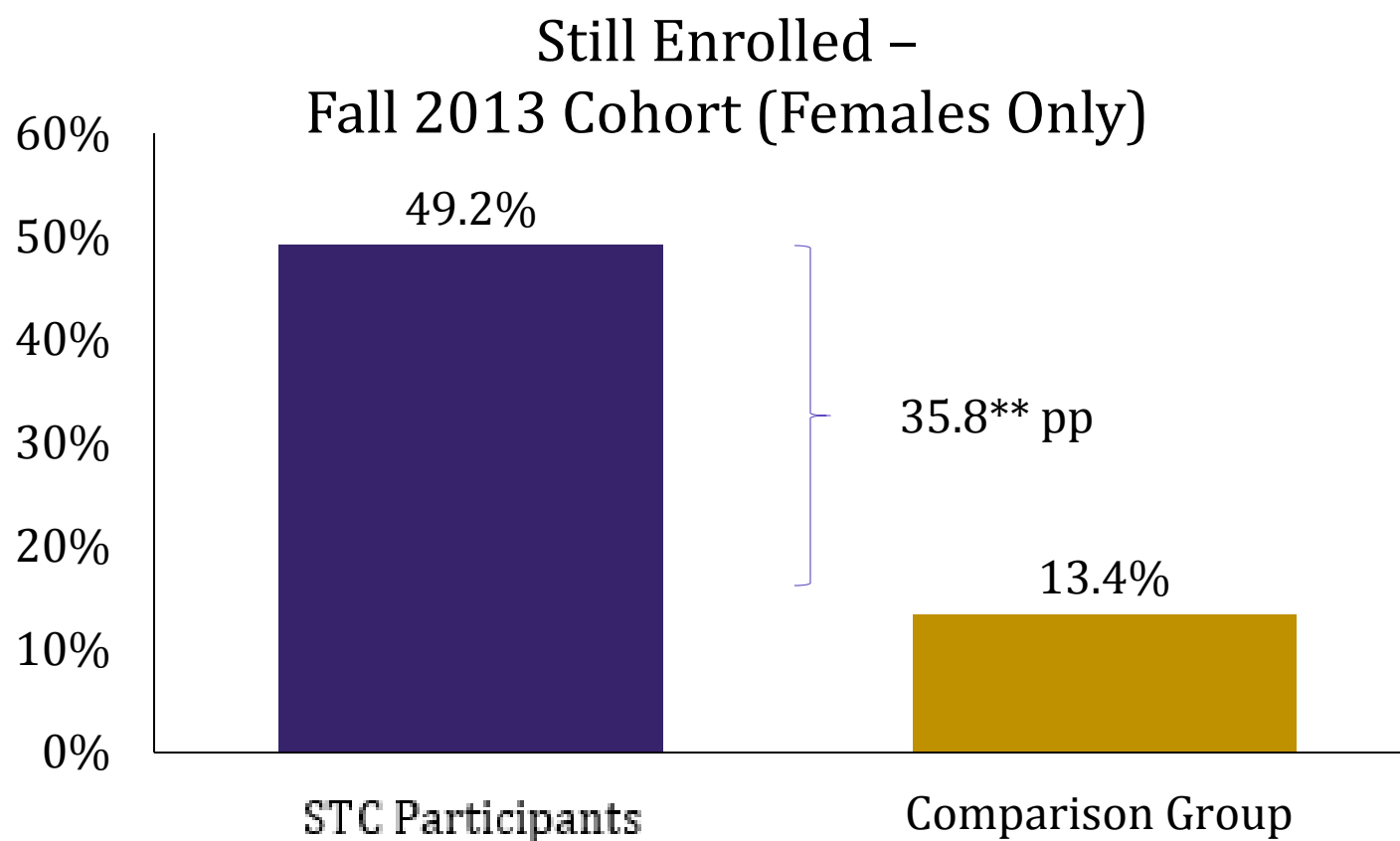
WILSON SHEEHAN
LAB FOR ECONOMIC
OPPORTUNITIES

6 Semester Results Cohort 1

Impact of STC After 6 Semesters

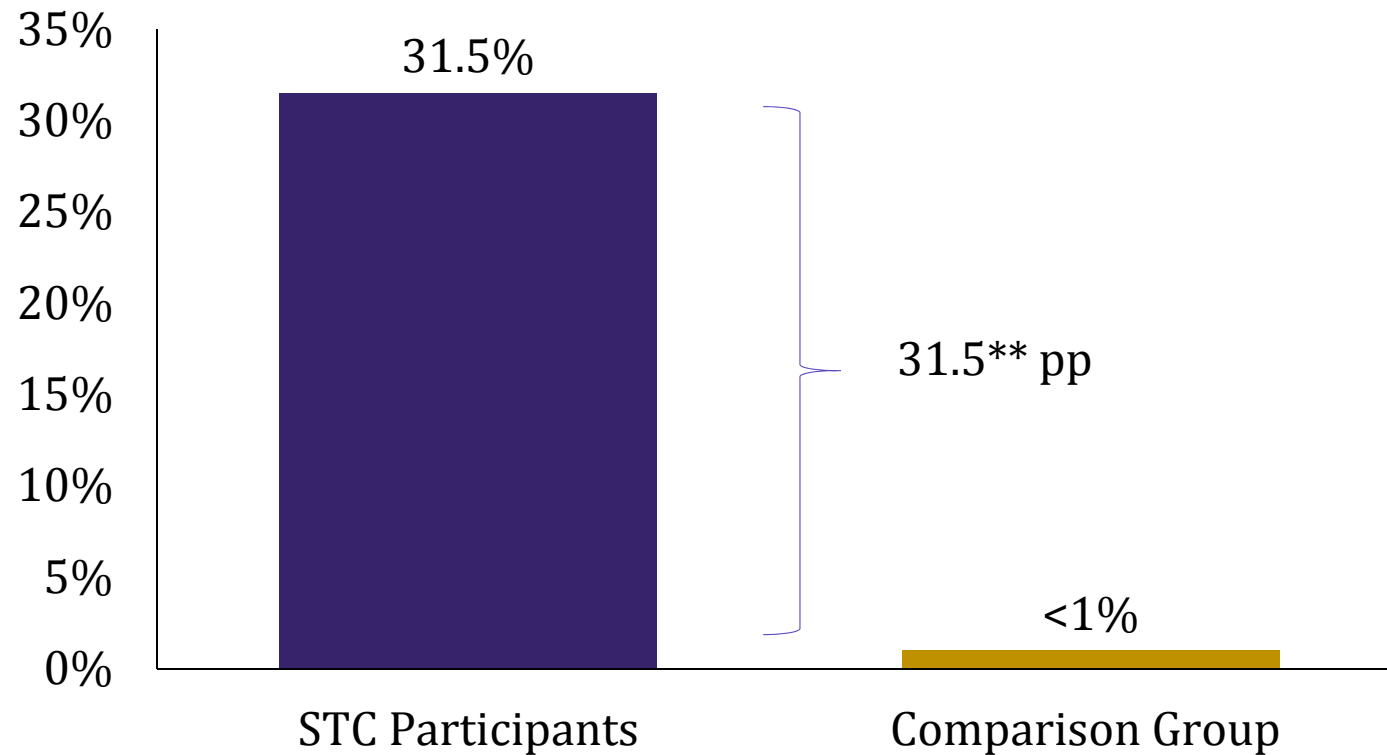


Impact of STC After 6 Semesters

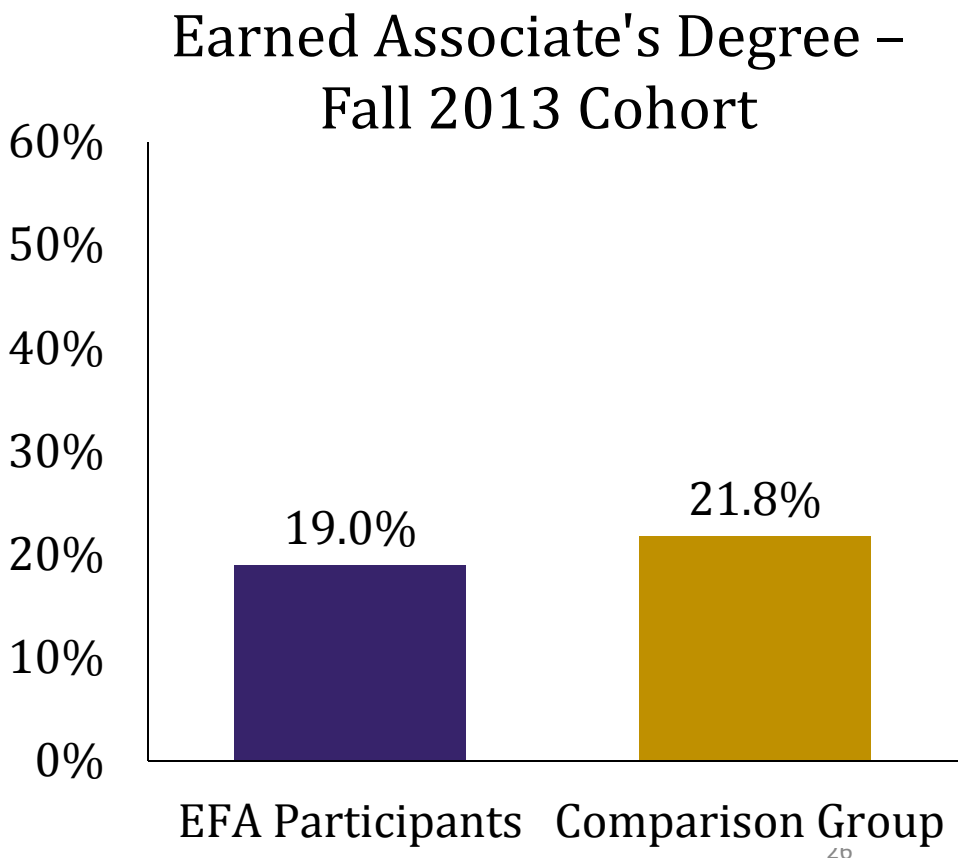
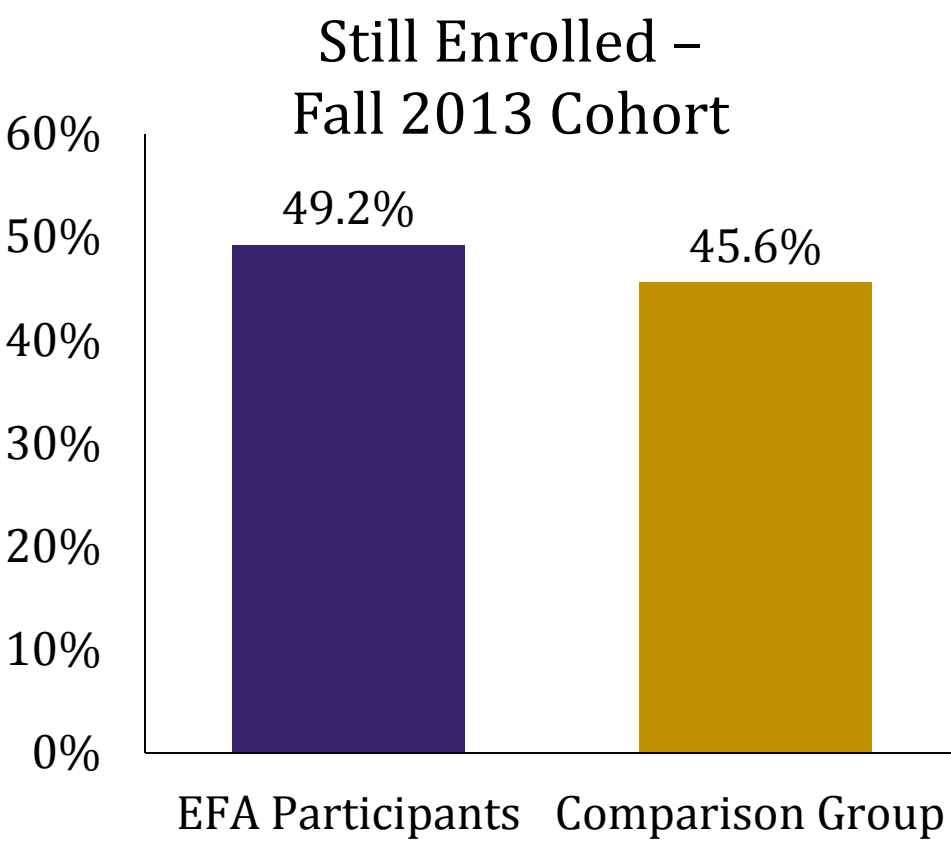


Impact of STC After 6 Semesters

Earned Associate's Degree - Fall 2013 Cohort (Females Only)



Impact of EFA After 6 Semesters

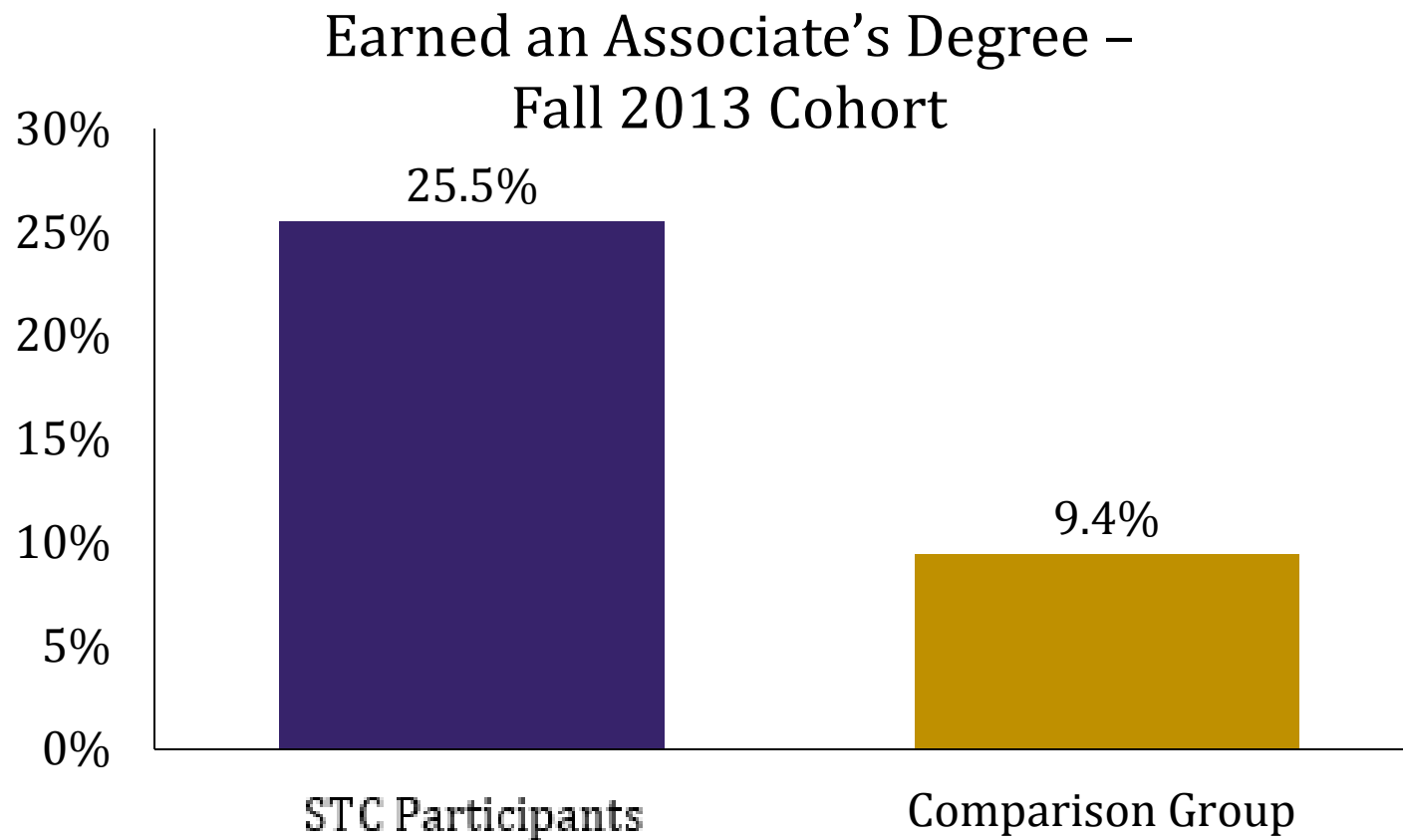




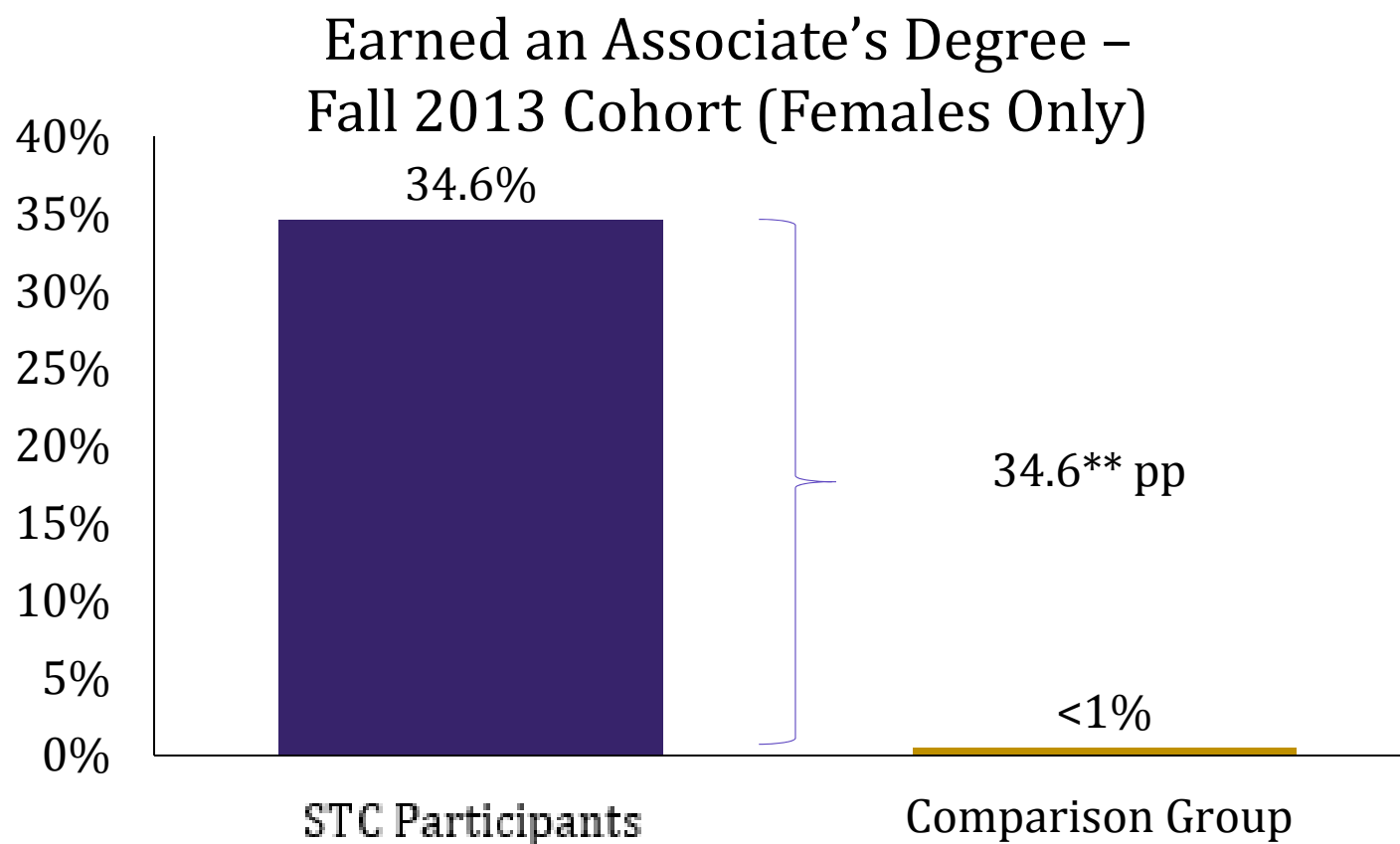
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8 Semester Results Cohort 1

Impact of STC After 8 Semesters



Impact of STC After 8 Semesters



Is the Investment Worth It?

Costs

- Cost per student/year = \$1,880
- Three-year cost = \$5,640

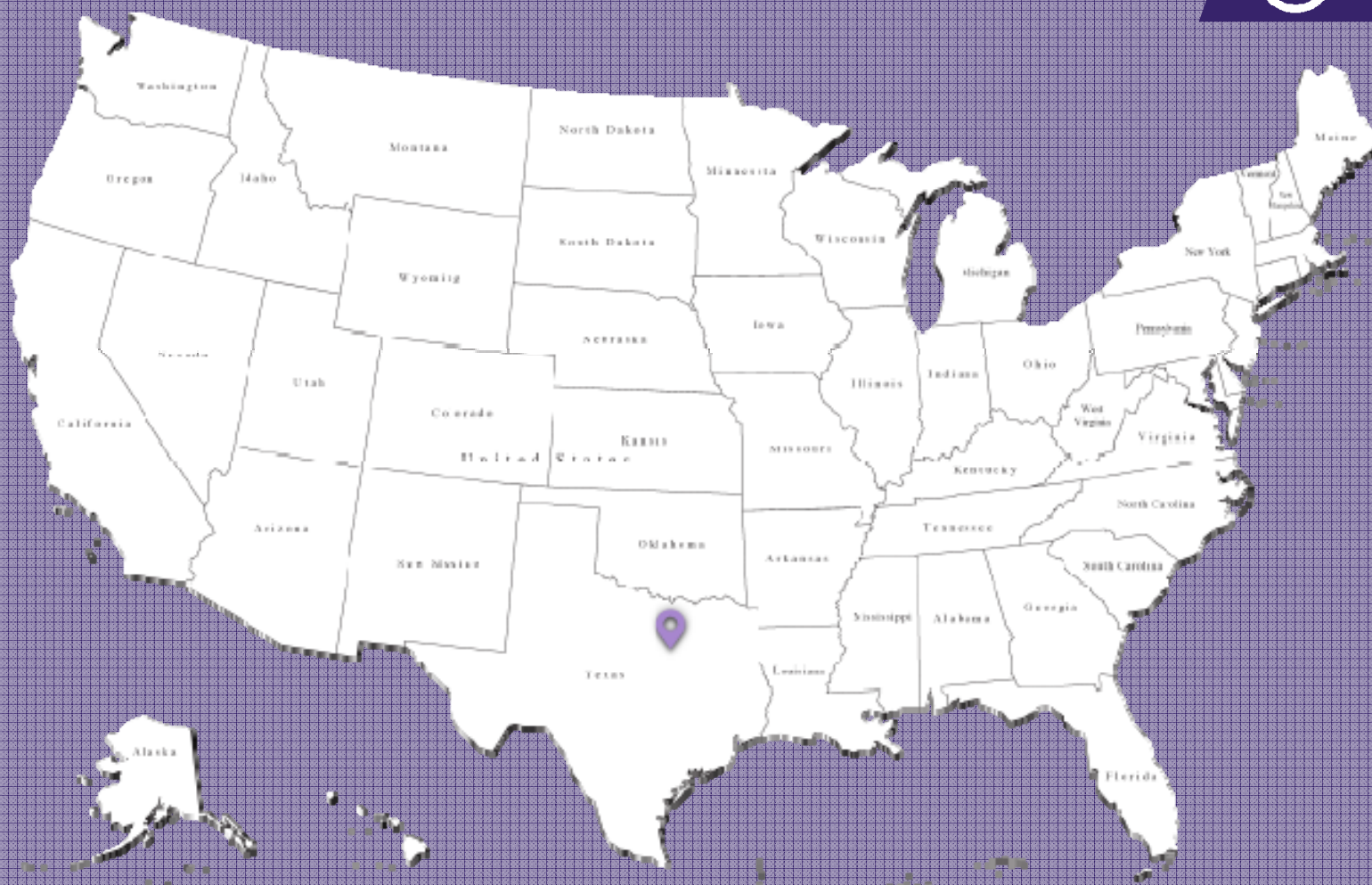
Return

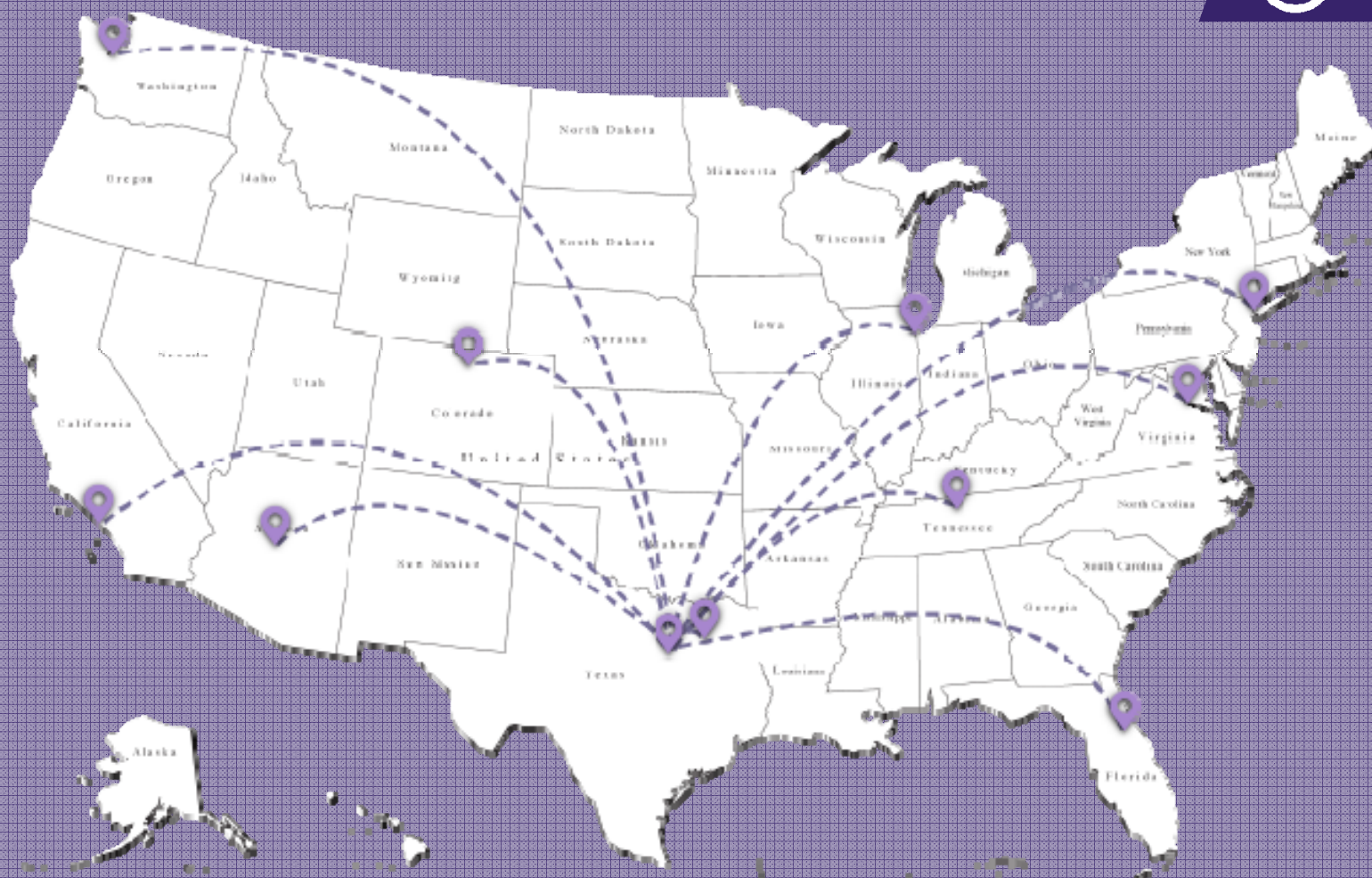
- Effects for persistence and completion imply an increase in earnings of \$1,326 per year

Breakeven

- Added earnings exceed cost of program after 4.25 years in workforce after schooling

Key to broad impact:
Scale and replicate!





- Targeting assistance effectively is essential
- Offer more comprehensive services
- Generate the evidence of impact



W I L S O N S H E E H A N

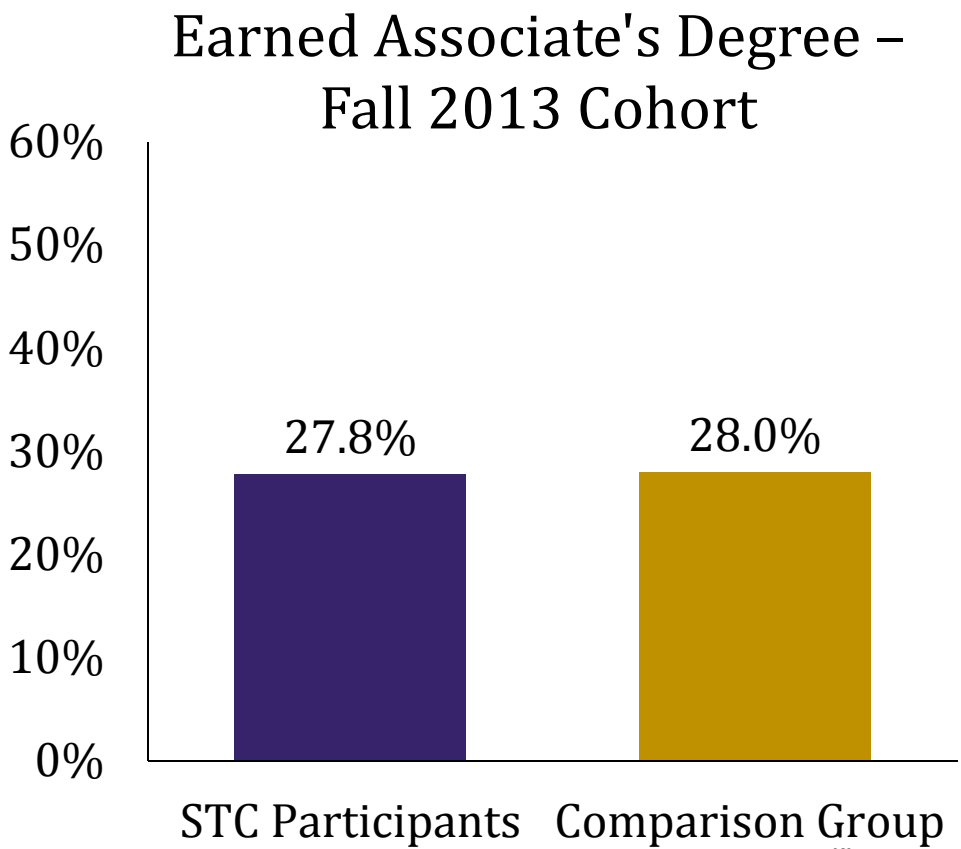
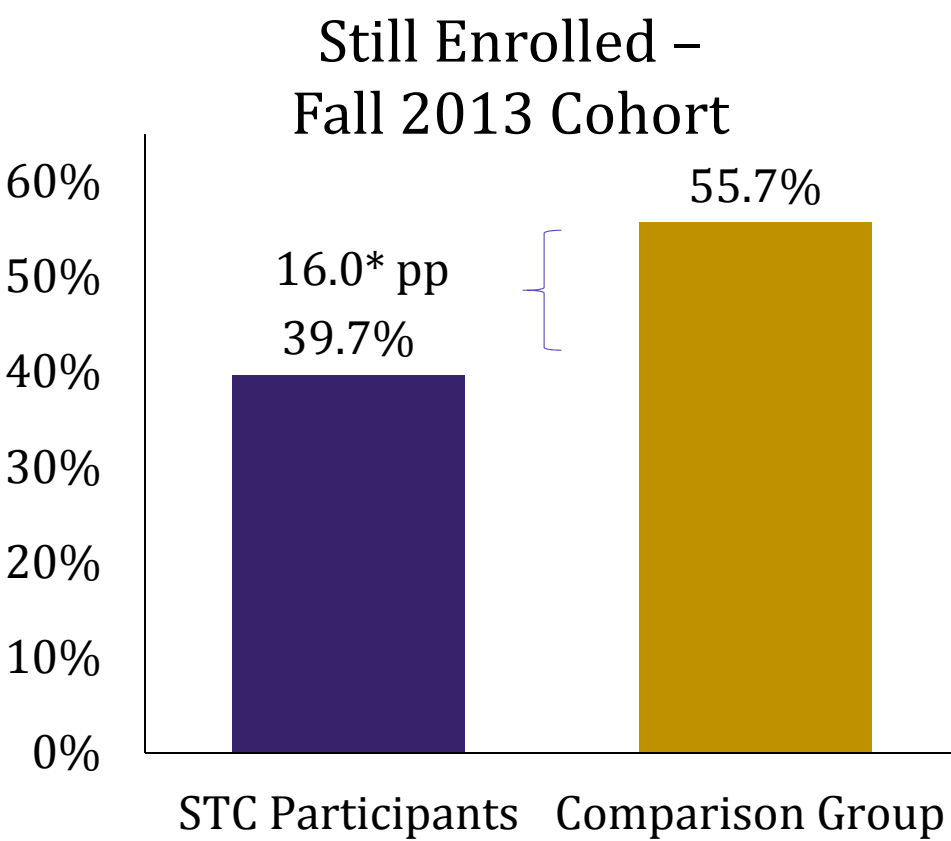
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EXTRA SLIDES

Key Takeaways

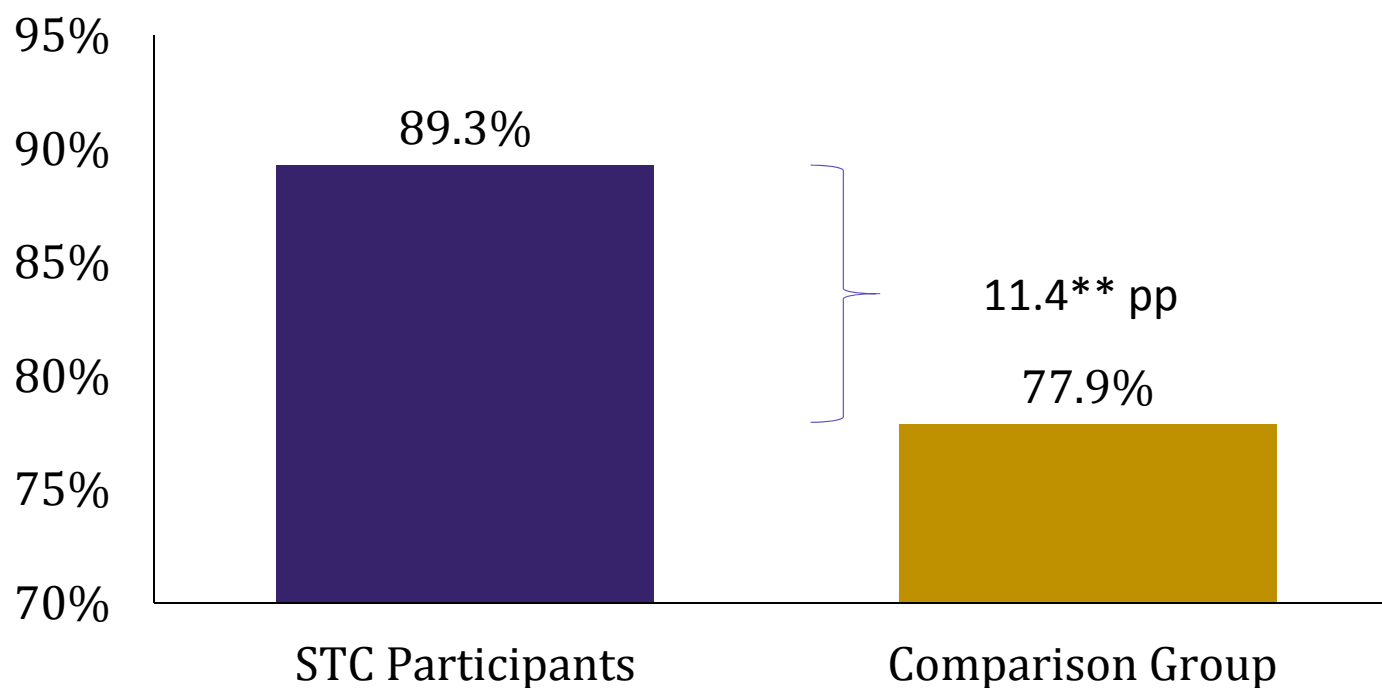
- Long term evidence suggests the positive impact of STC persists
- STC evidence is fueling a broad debate about financial assistance only vs. financial assistance with case management
- Too early to draw strong conclusions from results for newest cohort, but there are reasons to be optimistic

Impact of EFA After 8 Semesters

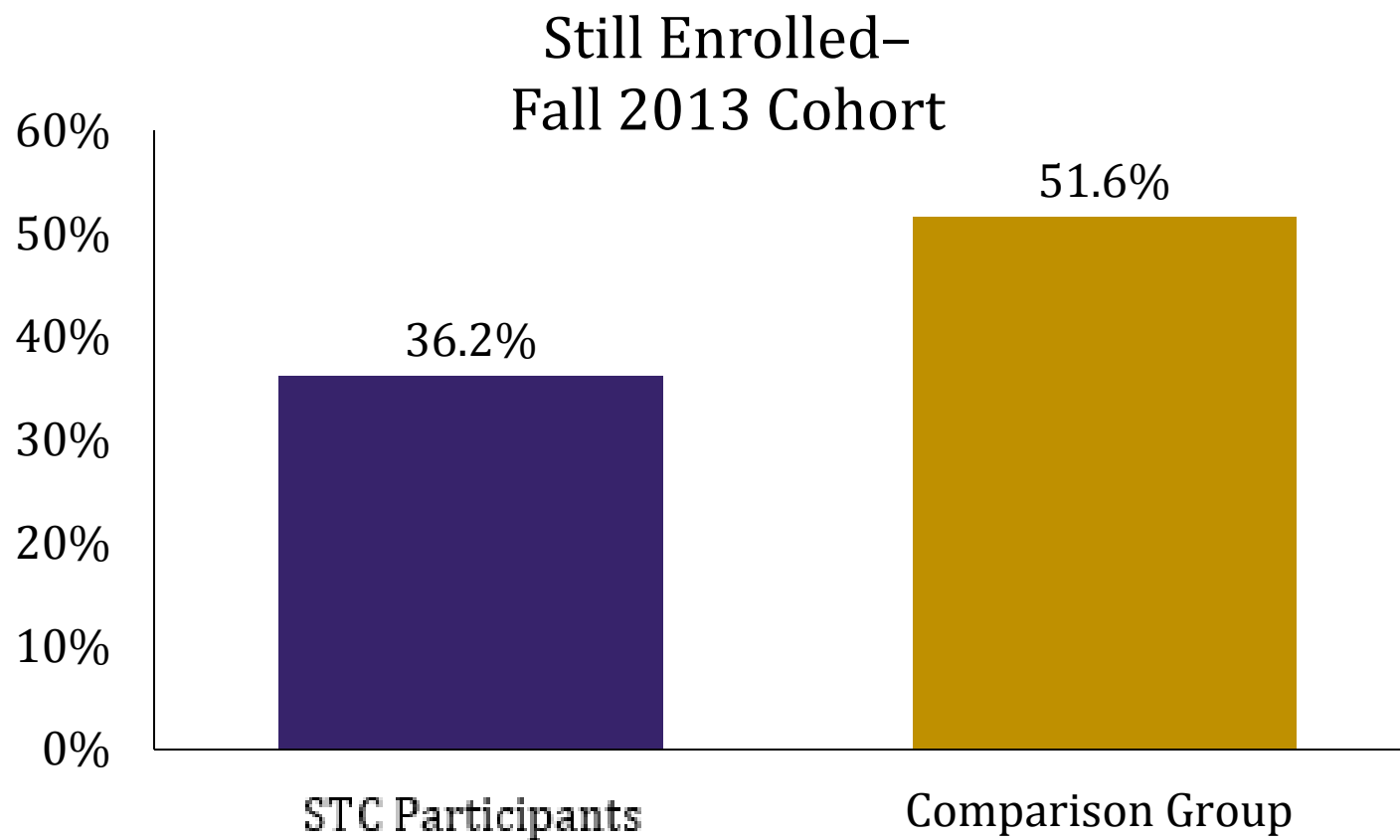


Impact of STC After 2 Semesters

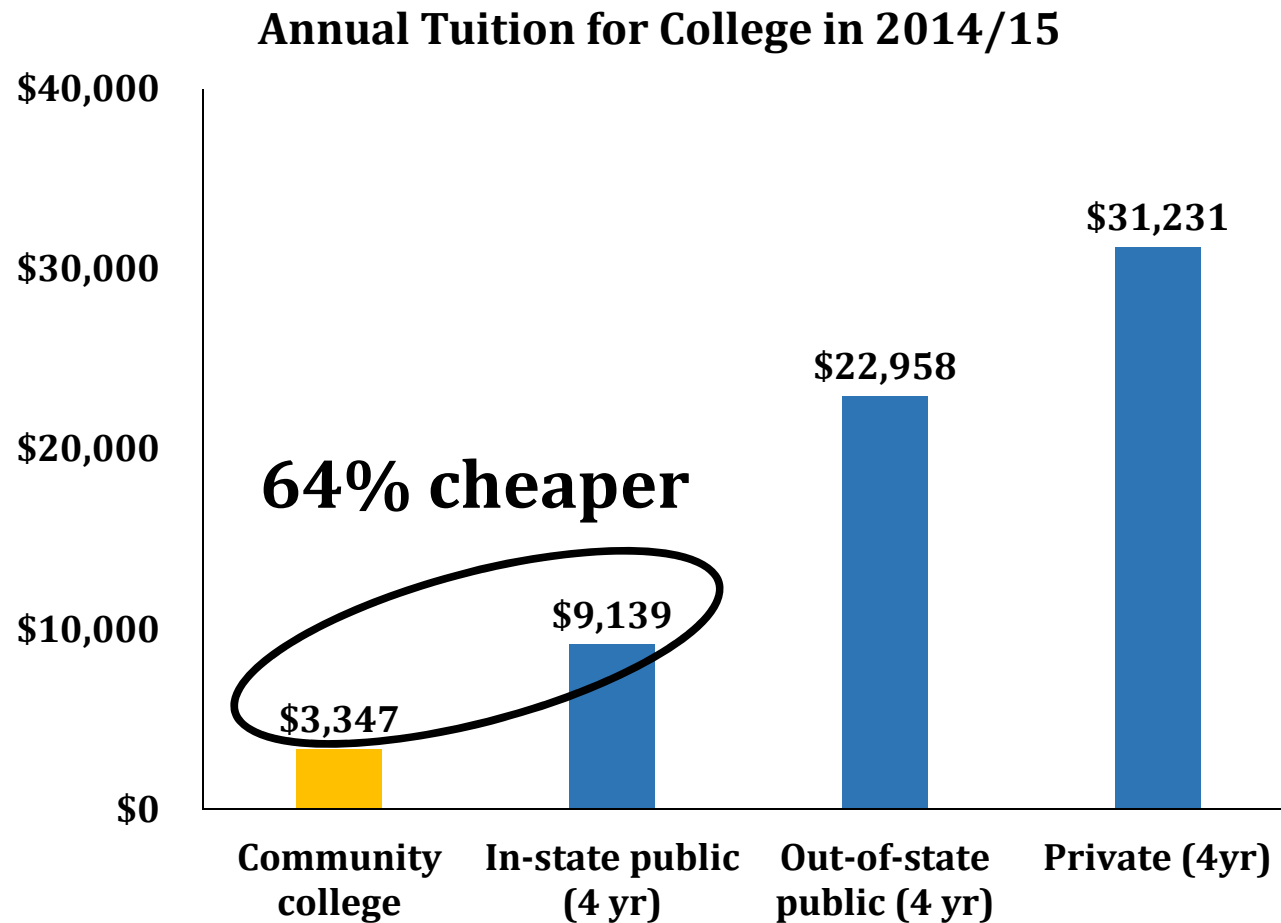
Still Enrolled in School -
Fall 2015, Spring 2016, and Fall 2016
Cohorts Combined



Impact of STC After 8 Semesters

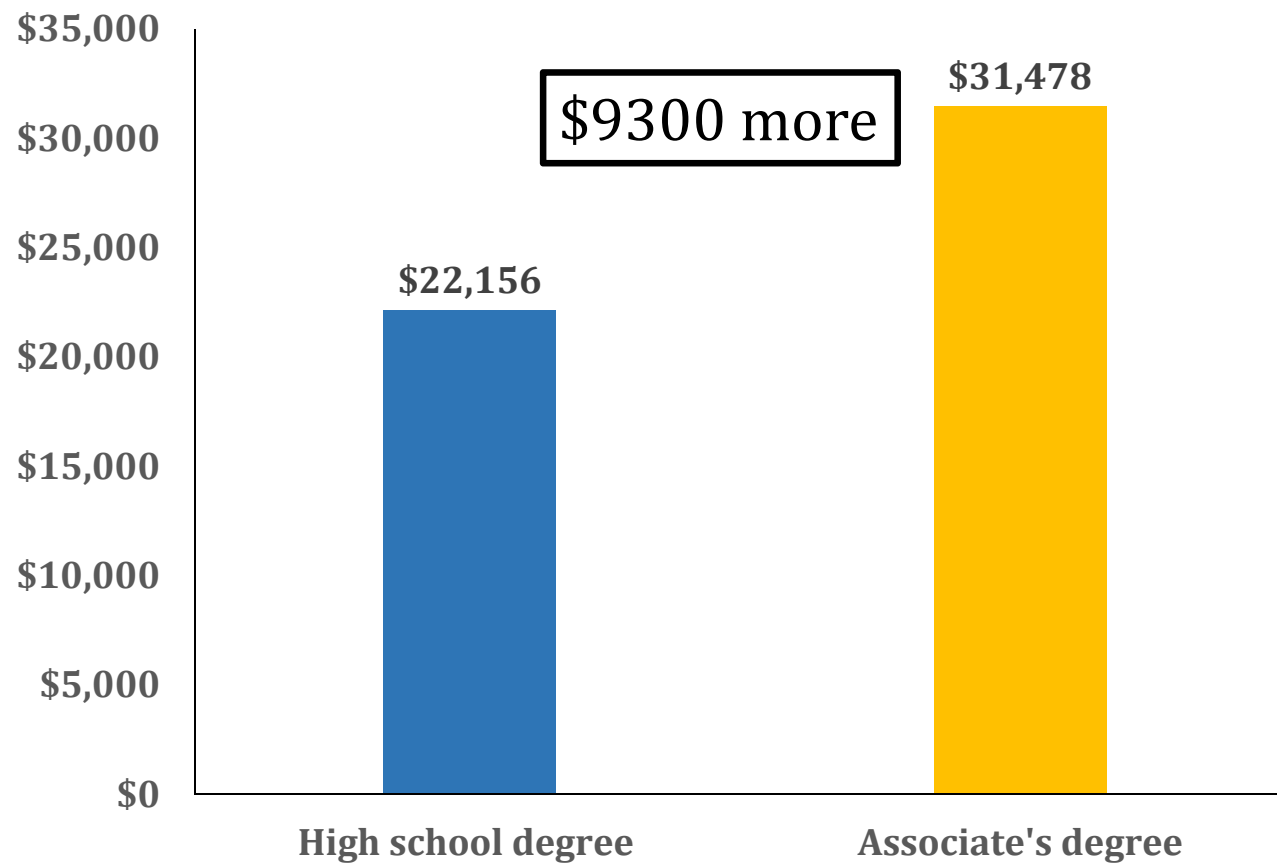


Significance: Low cost



Significance: High returns

Earnings of Adults ages 25-40



Significance: High returns

Unemployment Rates of Adults ages 25-40

