Study Finds Women in California Outpace Men in College Enrollment, Completion

Blacks and Latinos have the widest gender gaps among ethnic groups

Los Angeles (December 20, 2013) – The Campaign for College Opportunity today released the third in a new series of research reports, “The State of Higher Education in California: The Gender and Racial Gap Analysis,” detailing the wide gaps between men and women in college preparation, enrollment and completion in California, with attention to the significant gap between Black and Latino men compared to their female counterparts.

California is home to more college-aged men than women. However, women of all ethnic groups are now outpacing men in the state in terms of enrollment and graduation from both the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) levels. The gaps in college achievement are widest among Black and Latino men and women, according to the report.

The education gap for Latino and Black men begins upon high school graduation, with 93 Black or Latino men graduating high school for every 100 Black or Latina females. The number of males across all ethnicities who complete the A-G requirements (courses required for admission consideration into the UC or CSU) is low – there is more than a 30% gap between the number of Black and Latina women and their male counterparts completing these requirements. The study also found that almost twice as many Black women enroll in the UC or CSU as Black men, and one-and-a-half times as many Latina women as Latino men.

The gender gap widens even more among college graduates. For every 100 Black women who graduate from the CSU, only 45 Black men do so. For every 100 Latinas who graduate from CSU, 51 Latino men do so. At the UC for every 100 Black women who graduate, only 46 Black men do so. Slightly more men than women, across all ethnic groups (except Latinos), enroll in community colleges, where there is not a major gap in completion rates – which are very low across the board for all students and have been in decline since 2006.

Young men of all ethnic groups not only are performing worse than their female peers but also worse than their fathers before them in terms of actual degree attainment, according to the report. Among the generation older than 55 years of age, men have higher levels of educational attainment than women. This trend shifts among the younger generation—women of all races/ethnicities between 25- and 34-years old are more likely than their male peers to have an associate degree or higher by an average of eight percentage points.
“These disparities must be narrowed so that California’s young men have the skills necessary to participate in the workforce and contribute to a robust economy for the state’s future,” said Michele Siqueiros, Executive Director of the Campaign for College Opportunity.

The study also noted that while Latinas and Black women fare better than their male counterparts, they still lag White and Asian/Pacific (API) Islanders females.

White females graduate from CSU within six years at a rate of 61 percent, compared to 47 percent of Latinas and 38 percent of Black women—gaps of 14- and 23-percentage points, respectively. API females graduate from UC within six years at a rate of 87 percent, compared to 77 percent of Latinas and 74 percent of Black women—gaps of 10- and 13-percentage points, respectively.

“The figures make clear that California must address the growing inequality in college enrollment and degree completion,” added Siqueiros. “This is not just a problem for men, or Blacks or Latinos; this imbalance affects all Californians. We all benefit when all of our young people have access to a college education and the tools to succeed and graduate.”


About Campaign for College Opportunity:
The Campaign for College Opportunity is a California non-profit organization focused on a single mission: to ensure that the next generation of California students has the chance to attend college and succeed in order to keep our workforce and economy strong. For more information, visit www.collegecampaign.org / Facebook.com/CollegeCampaign or follow @CollegeOpp.

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