



**2023-24 REPORT**

# Strong Workforce Program

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office | Sonya Christian, Chancellor





California  
Community  
Colleges

**SONYA CHRISTIAN**  
Chancellor

June 20, 2025

Secretary of the Senate  
Erika Contreras  
State Capitol, Room 305  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: 2023-2024 Report on the California Community Colleges Strong Workforce Program**

Dear Secretary Contreras:

Pursuant to Section 88826 of the Education Code, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and the Board of Governors for California Community Colleges is pleased to release the report on the California Community Colleges Strong Workforce Program.

This report provides an account of the Strong Workforce Program for 2023-24, including details on its key components, investments and outcomes, along with a discussion on efforts to coordinate across other initiatives and recommendations for the future.

For any questions regarding this report, please contact Anthony Cordova, Vice Chancellor for Workforce and Economic Development, at [acordova@cccco.edu](mailto:acordova@cccco.edu).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sonya Christian". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Sonya Christian, Chancellor

Enclosure: Report

CC:  
Sue Parker, Chief Clerk of the Assembly  
Office of Legislative Counsel



# STRONG WORKFORCE PROGRAM 2023-24

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Prepared By

**California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office**

Workforce and Economic Development



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2016, budget trailer bill legislation (Assembly Bill 1602) created the Strong Workforce Program (SWP) to expand and improve career technical education (CTE) at California community Colleges.

The Strong Workforce Program has been instrumental in creating and expanding high-quality CTE programs at California community colleges, preparing students for living-wage careers. SWP aligns with the strategic goals of initiatives including Vision 2030 and Governor Newsom's Roadmap for California Community Colleges, focusing on enhancing student success, closing equity gaps, and developing a skilled workforce to meet California's evolving economic needs.

College districts and regional consortia have strategically committed Strong Workforce funds across locally prioritized industry sectors. These investments have encompassed upgrading and modernizing existing programs, establishing new programs aligned with high-demand, high wage career pathways, developing seamless transitions within education and training systems, and strengthening partnerships with employers to align curriculum and training with real-world workforce demands.

The Chancellor's Office remains dedicated to preparing students for future jobs through the adoption of the Vision 2030 initiative, which is a framework for deliberate and intentional action — action for policy reform, fiscal sustainability, systems development and for practical reform in the field to support students, communities and the planet. As such, the Strong Workforce Program is instrumental in meeting Vision 2030's goal of preparing students to obtain living wage jobs.

Additionally, the Chancellor's Office is focused on leveraging data-driven strategies to evaluate program performance and address equity gaps through the inception of the Vision Aligned Reporting (VAR). The VAR is a new data collection method designed to facilitate the process of data reporting, collection and analysis as well as to assist the field with program collaboration and leveraging resources.

Furthermore, efforts continue in aligning planning processes with the Economic and Workforce Development program, ensuring a cohesive and coordinated approach to workforce development and student success. Continued funding support for the Strong Workforce Program remains essential to sustaining and enhancing these initiatives. By doing so, we can ensure that more students gain access to educational pathways leading to meaningful, high-quality employment and bolster California's economic competitiveness with a well-prepared workforce.

## **PROGRAM INVESTMENT AND RESULTS**

Since its inception, the Strong Workforce Program has invested over \$1 billion to strengthen CTE across California community colleges. These funds are strategically allocated based on regional workforce priorities and performance metrics, enabling each region to target resources toward industry sectors that drive local economic growth and address labor market demands.

### **STRONG WORKFORCE PROGRAM FUNDING**

In Fiscal Year 2023-2024, the Strong Workforce Program distributed a total of over \$275 million in funding (as shown in Table 1). The distribution approach ensures every region, regardless of size or economic status, has access to baseline funding. Incentive funding was included to recognize and motivate local and regional performance, promoting innovation and excellence in achieving Strong Workforce Program success metrics. Incentive funds are distributed to districts upon successful performance in meeting the SWP metrics and demonstrating continued efforts to supporting student success.

Overall, the SWP investment reflects a balanced strategy designed to boost economic resilience and competitiveness through targeted workforce initiatives across California.

Table 1: Fiscal Year 2023-24 Strong Workforce Program Investment by Region

Region	Regional Share Base Funding	Local Share Base Funding	Regional Share Incentive Funding	Local Share Incentive Funding	Total for Region	% SWP Program Funding
Bay Area	\$ 17,319,655	\$25,979,484	\$ 3,592,994	\$5,389,489	\$52,281,621	19%
Central Valley Mother Lode	\$ 11,965,719	\$17,948,577	\$ 2,157,363	\$3,236,045	\$35,307,703	13%
Inland Empire/ Desert	\$ 9,058,342	\$13,587,513	\$ 1,662,773	\$2,494,160	\$26,802,788	10%
Los Angeles	\$ 15,965,014	\$23,947,520	\$ 3,936,953	\$5,905,430	\$49,754,917	18%
North Far North	\$ 13,055,197	\$19,582,796	\$ 2,085,035	\$3,127,553	\$37,850,581	14%
Orange County	\$ 8,705,346	\$13,058,019	\$ 1,807,371	\$2,711,057	\$26,281,793	10%
San Diego/ Imperial	\$ 8,862,427	\$13,293,641	\$ 1,801,900	\$2,702,849	\$26,660,817	10%
South Central Coast	\$ 7,028,300	\$10,542,450	\$ 1,347,611	\$2,021,417	\$20,939,778	8%
Total	\$ 91,960,000	\$137,940,000	\$ 18,392,000	\$27,588,000	275,880,000	100%

INVESTMENT IN PRIORITY SECTORS

Regional consortia are required to develop a new Strong Workforce Regional Plan every four years, with annual updates, as a condition for receiving funding. Each regional plan must specify the participating community colleges, outline the consortium’s governance model, provide an analysis of regional labor market demand, list prioritized CTE programs for investment, and describe alignment with the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (Public Law 113-128). Through their plans, regions identify priority industry sectors for targeted investments.

Table 2 illustrates how Strong Workforce Program funding was distributed across various industry sectors by the regions. The data reveals significant variations in sectoral focus across California’s regions, reflecting the diverse economic and workforce needs of each area. Health consistently stands out as a priority across most regions, highlighting the growing demand for healthcare-related initiatives. Advanced Manufacturing and ICT/Digital Media are also key sectors, driving innovation and economic development in several areas. While some regions prioritize specific industries like agriculture or public safety, others show a broader distribution of focus. Sectors such as Clean Energy, Global Trade, and Life Sciences/Biotech receive minimal attention statewide, suggesting potential areas for future growth. These patterns underscore the importance of aligning Strong Workforce Program Education Code with regional strengths and opportunities.

Table 2: 2023-24 Strong Workforce Program Investments by Sector, by Region

Sector	Bay Area	Central Mother Lode	Inland Empire Desert	Los Angeles	North/ Far North	Orange County	San Diego/ Imperial	South Central Coast
Advanced Manufacturing	14%	22%	14%	3%	14%	11%	9%	22%
Advanced Transportation & Logistics	6%	6%	15%	3%	6%	9%	6%	7%
Agriculture, Water & Environmental Technologies	4%	15%	1%	3%	11%	2%	2%	8%
Business & Entrepreneurship	13%	7%	7%	7%	4%	7%	13%	10%
Clean Energy (Prop 39 related)	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Education & Human Development	7%	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%
Energy, Construction & Utilities	4%	3%	10%	6%	8%	7%	5%	4%
Global Trade	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Health	17%	20%	24%	14%	21%	16%	13%	10%
Information & Communication Technologies (ICT)/ Digital Media	17%	8%	7%	14%	4%	16%	16%	17%
Life Sciences/ Biotech	3%	1%	0%	2%	1%	6%	10%	0%
Public Safety	7%	7%	15%	1%	13%	3%	5%	5%
Retail/ Hospitality/ Tourism 'Learn and Earn'	2%	5%	3%	6%	3%	3%	4%	4%
Other <sup>1</sup>	7%	2%	0%	38%	13%	17%	14%	9%

1 “Other” refers to investments made not directly connected to a priority sector listed. The NOVA system allows applications submitted to list priority sectors or “other.”

To promote regional collaboration, Strong Workforce Program legislation allocates funding into two distinct streams: direct funding to local community college districts, comprising 60% of the allocation (referred to as the “local share”), and funding to eight regional consortia, representing 40% of the allocation (known as the “regional share”). These consortia, formed by the Workforce and Economic Development Division of the Chancellor’s Office, consist of administrative groupings of community college districts, designed to facilitate coordination and strategic planning within defined economic regions. The regional share is directed towards initiatives within the colleges service areas, with a focus on incentivizing collaborative efforts.

Investments made through Strong Workforce Program support the enhancement and development of CTE programs that adhere to industry standards, respond to job market needs, and promote students’ educational and career success. The regional share funding is utilized to link projects that foster cooperation between colleges, employers, and other educational and community entities. Regions may use these funds to drive cross-district initiatives, achieve economies of scale, and support labor market research and data analysis. Meanwhile, college districts are empowered to use the local share funding to address their individual priorities, provided they align with the broader regional plans.

Strong Workforce Program local investments cover areas, including:

- Upgrading current programs (such as curriculum development, equipment purchases, and the implementation of work-based learning opportunities).
- Establishing new programs leading to well-paying jobs in high-demand occupations (including credit, noncredit, not-for-credit and apprenticeship programs).
- Creating pathways to and from other education and training systems (such as K-12, adult education, apprenticeship) and the workforce (through activities like work-based learning and career services).
- Strengthening connections with employers that will help guide program development and create a supply of work-based learning opportunities and job placements.

Strong Workforce Program regional investments cover areas including:

- Customer relationship management platform tools designed to manage and analyze interactions with students and industry partners to enhance career technical education (CTE) outcomes.
- Data research platform systems that facilitate the collection and analysis of workforce data to inform program improvements and align with labor market needs.
- Contract services with community partners to collaborate on CTE projects and initiatives that support regional workforce development.
- Subscriptions/Memberships (e.g., Jobspeaker/NACCE) access to exclusive resources and networks that support CTE program development and student success.

- Software licensing that grants educational institutions the right to use software essential for delivering high-quality CTE programs.
- Marketing/Advertising Campaigns

## **STRONG WORKFORCE PROGRAM OUTCOMES**

The Strong Workforce Program is designed to generate meaningful and sustainable outcomes that benefit students, employers, and communities by strengthening the connection between education and the workforce, fostering economic mobility, and advancing regional economic development initiatives.

The Chancellor's Office identified a set of key metrics to assess the program's effectiveness in increasing student enrollment in high-quality CTE programs that lead to employment in high-demand, living-wage occupations. These metrics include:

1. Progress toward key outcomes, such as student advancement;
2. Increased program completion and transfer rates;
3. Employment in relevant industries and improved earnings.

Current results show that the Strong Workforce Program has achieved promising outcomes, enhancing both the quality and accessibility of CTE programs across California community colleges. By enhancing the quality and accessibility of CTE programs, the Strong Workforce Program supports the broader goals of Vision 2030, ensuring that students are well-prepared for successful careers and contributing to California's workforce development.

## **ENROLLMENTS**

CTE enrollments increased in 2022-2023, reflecting successful COVID-19 adaptation and recovery measures. SWP maintained its focus on aligning programs with high-demand sectors, such as healthcare, technology, and manufacturing. Its strategic funding and support ensured programs were better equipped to meet labor market needs and attract students.

Ongoing support for modern facilities, up-to-date equipment, and curricula aligned with industry needs is vital. SWP-backed initiatives to promote the value of CTE pathways can attract more students to high-paying, in-demand jobs. Continued collaboration with employers through SWP programs will keep training aligned with market demands and offer hands-on experiences. SWP has been instrumental in supporting CTE programs during and after the pandemic. Its targeted investments, industry partnerships, and student support initiatives have helped stabilize and grow CTE enrollments, ensuring that community colleges remain a critical pipeline for skilled labor. Continued legislative backing for the SWP will be essential to sustain and expand these gains, preparing a workforce that meets evolving market demands. Analysis of prior year data can be found in prior year [Legislative Reports](#).

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initiatives, achieve economies of scale, and support labor market research and data analysis. Meanwhile, college districts are empowered to use the local share funding to address their individual priorities, provided they align with the broader regional plans.

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## **ENROLLMENTS**

In the 2023–24 academic year, the Strong Workforce Program reached a significant milestone in advancing the state's workforce and economic development objectives. Career Technical Education (CTE) enrollment rose to nearly one million students, representing 54.2% of the total community college student population—the highest proportion in the program's history. This growth reflects the increasing demand for workforce-aligned education and the program's effectiveness in delivering high-quality, industry-relevant training.

SWP plays a critical role in strengthening California's economy by preparing students for high-demand, high-wage careers in priority sectors such as healthcare, advanced manufacturing, clean energy, and information technology. By aligning educational pathways with labor market needs, the program helps address skills gaps, supports regional economic development, and enhances the state's global competitiveness.

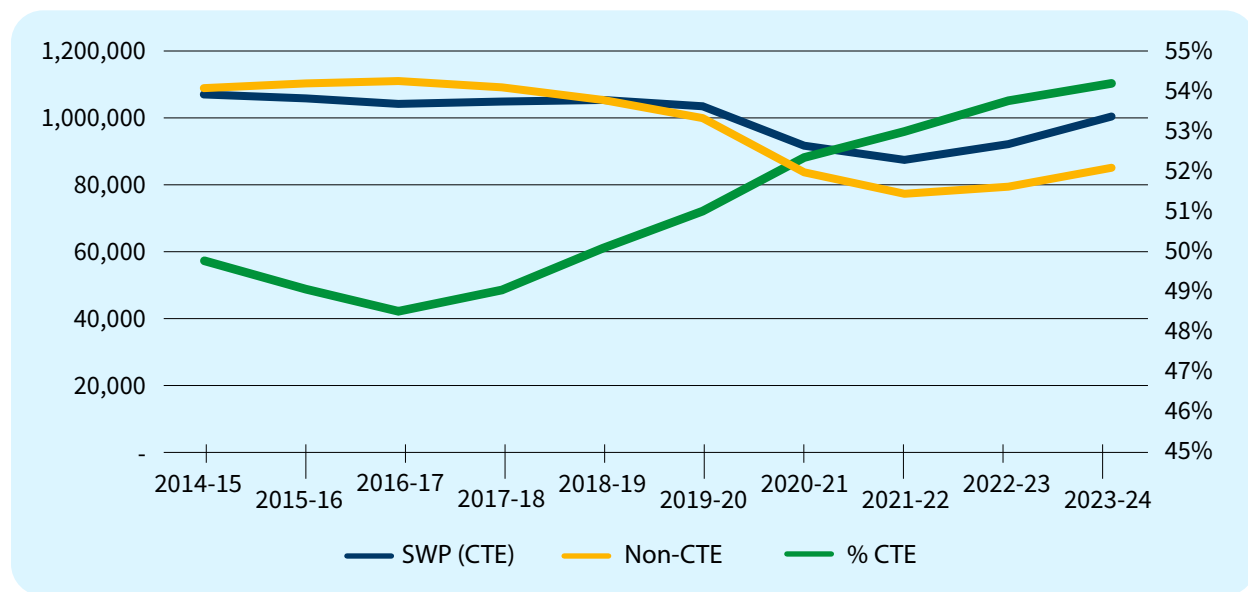
The economic impact of the SWP is multifaceted. It contributes to increased individual earning potential, reduces unemployment and underemployment, and supports a more resilient and adaptable workforce. Graduates of CTE programs are more likely to secure employment in their field of study, often with shorter time-to-employment and higher starting wages. These outcomes translate into stronger local economies, increased tax revenues, and reduced reliance on public assistance programs.



This progress is the direct result of sustained legislative investment and strategic policy leadership. Continued support for the Strong Workforce Program is essential to maintaining this momentum and ensuring that California remains at the forefront of innovation, equity, and economic opportunity. Analysis of prior year data can be found in prior year [Legislative Reports](#).

Figure 1 shows the number of students enrolled in CTE and non-CTE pathways. Note that while both pathways experienced steep drops during the pandemic and are now recovering, the CTE drop was significantly smaller.

**Figure 1: Student Enrollments by CTE Status**



## PROGRESS

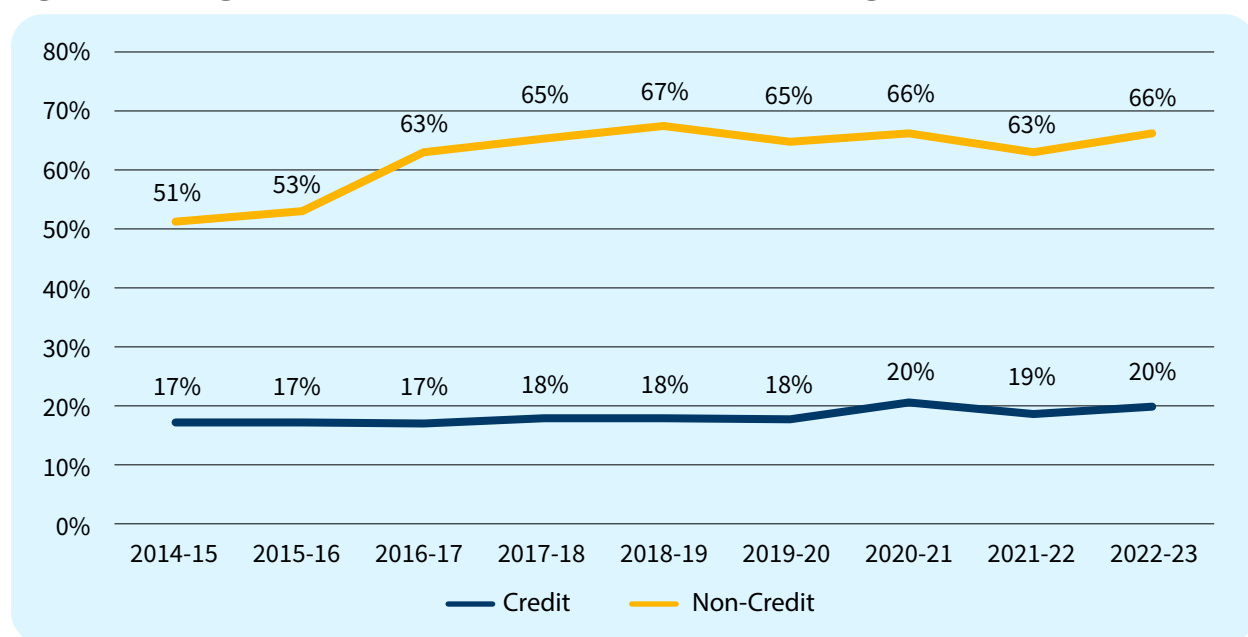
SWP metrics include two measures of student progress, one for measuring success for credit students and another for measuring success for noncredit students. Roughly 20% of for-credit students met the milestone of earning more than nine CTE units in the academic year. While this number is below a target, it is improving and reflects the part-time status of many California community college students. In general, the increase reflects a restoration of interest in and access to credit-bearing programs, driven by improved economic stability and continued demand for credentials linked to specific career paths.

In contrast, the percentage of noncredit students who completed a noncredit CTE course or workforce preparation course enrollment is 66% of the total in 2022-23. This indicates strong demand for flexible, non-degree training options tailored to upskilling, career changes, or rapid workforce entry. The increase signals a strong recovery and reaffirms the importance of flexible training programs as students re-engaged with opportunities aligned to immediate job market needs. These are shown in

**Table 1: Students Meeting CTE Goals by Credit Status**

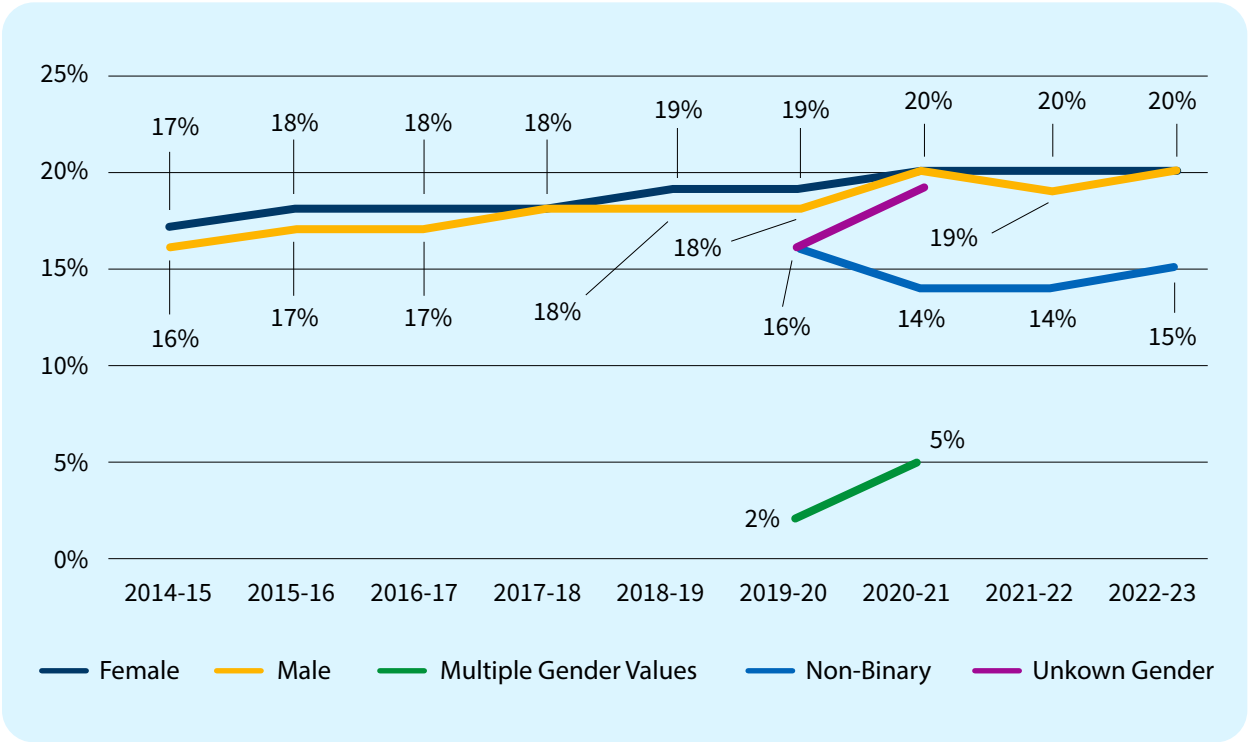
	Students Meeting Goal	Total Students	Percentage
Credit	180,586	915,976	20%
Noncredit	51,743	78,905	66%

The increasing success rates for students in noncredit (66%) and for-credit (20%) pathways show both strong program health and room for growth and improvement. The slight dip and subsequent rebound of both credit and non-credit enrollments highlight resilience and recovery facilitated by institutional adaptations and SWP-backed initiatives. Partnerships supported by the SWP ensured that both credit and non-credit CTE programs remained aligned with labor market needs, offering practical, relevant training options. SWP initiatives helped drive the recovery of non-credit enrollments through targeted support for high-demand sectors and flexible training models. Funding support remains critical to ensuring that these programs continue to address evolving labor market demands and provide accessible, meaningful career pathways for students. Analysis of prior year data can be found in prior year [Legislative Reports](#).

**Figure 2: Strong Workforce Student Credit and Noncredit Progress**

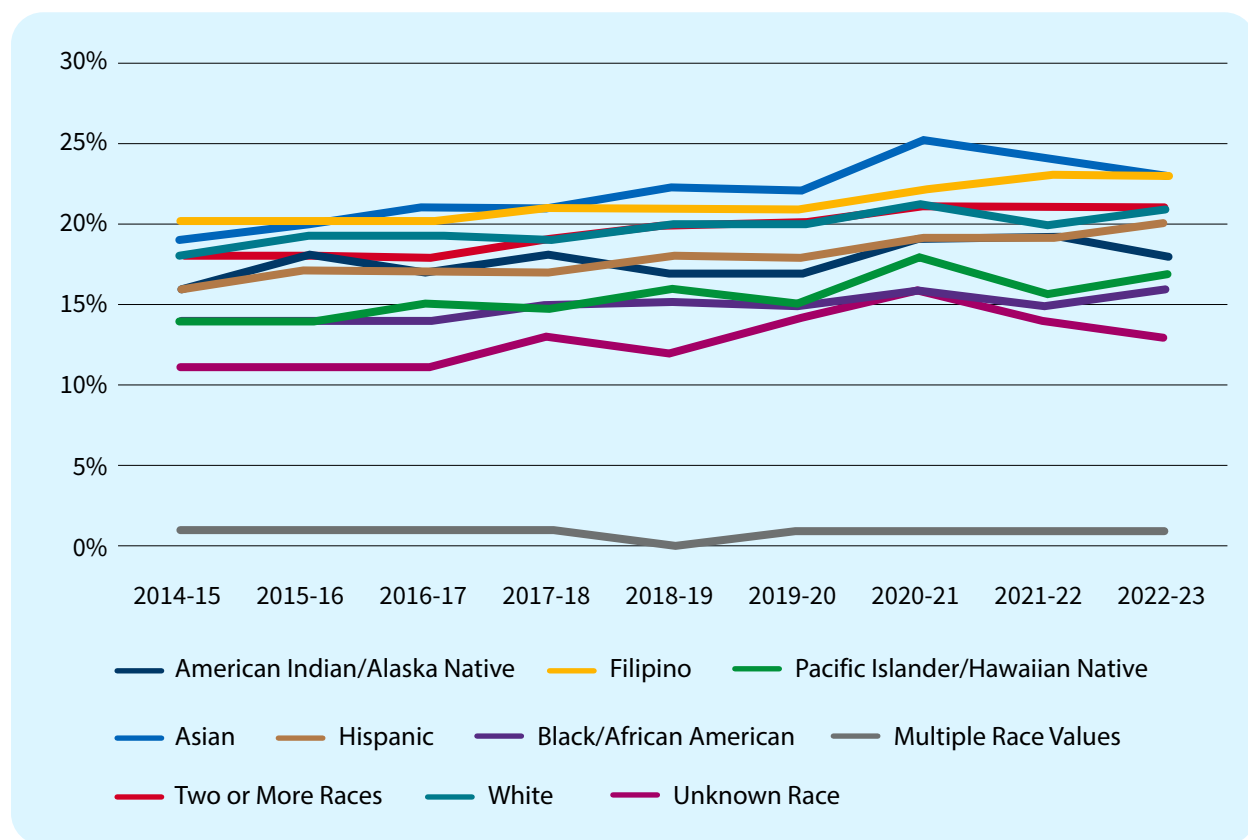
Figures 3 and 4 show few significant gaps in the for-credit metric by gender and race, though Black and Pacific Islander students may lag very slightly.

**Figure 3: Strong Workforce Student Credit and Noncredit Progress Earned 9+ CTE Units by Gender**



There is no significant gender gap in credit student progress metrics.

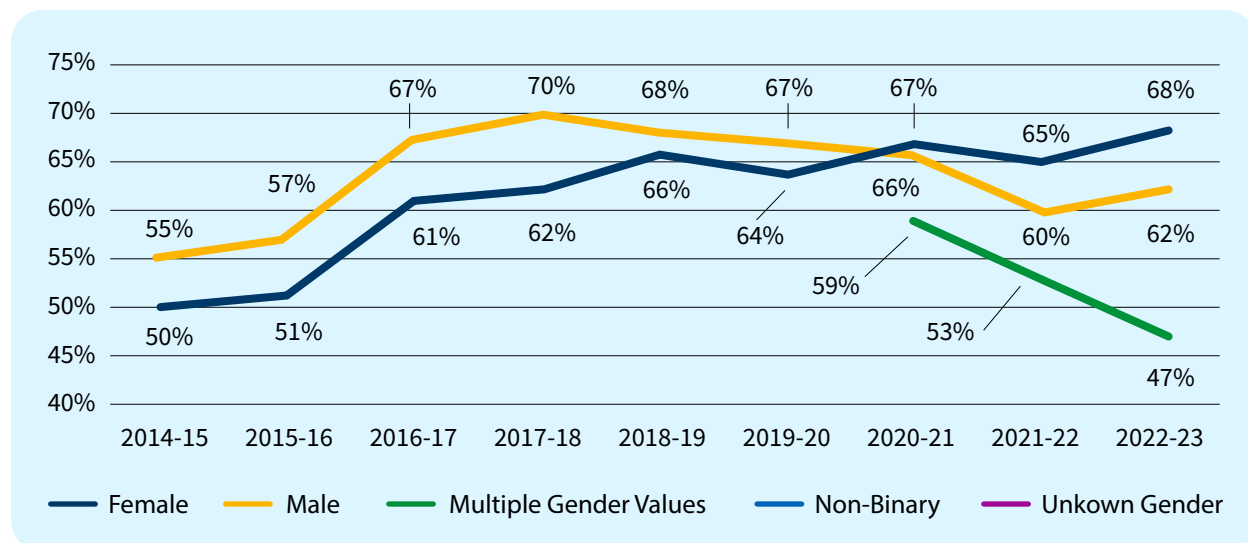
**Figure 4: Strong Workforce Student Credit and Noncredit Progress Earned 9+ CTE Units by Race**



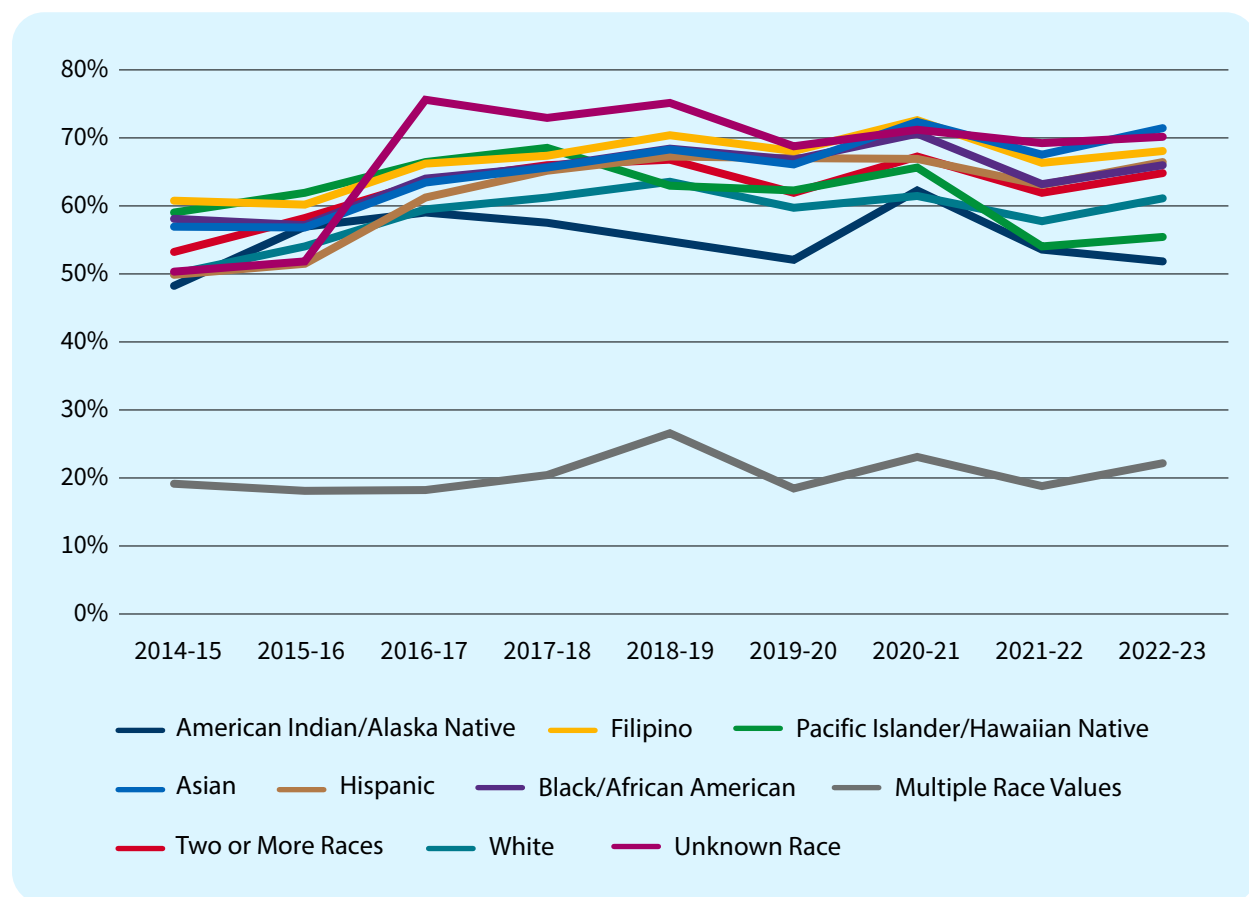
There are some differences in achievement by race/ethnicity (notably, Black and Pacific Islander students lag slightly).

Figures 5 and 6 show similar equity in the noncredit metric, with some slight lag for White and Pacific Islander students.

**Figure 5: Strong Workforce Student Credit and Noncredit Progress Completed Noncredit Milestone by Gender**



**Figure 6: Strong Workforce Student Credit and Noncredit Progress Completed Noncredit Milestone by Race**



While there are some differences in achievement by race/ethnicity (notably, White and Pacific Islander students lag slightly).

## CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT AND TRANSFER

In the 2022-2023 academic year, the Strong Workforce Program demonstrated significant progress in enhancing CTE across California community colleges. The number of awards and apprenticeships reached 80,531, reflecting a slight decrease from the previous year but maintaining a high level of achievement. The decrease is likely a lagging indicator from the impact of the Pandemic. This consistency underscores the program's ability to sustain robust enrollment and completion rates despite external challenges.

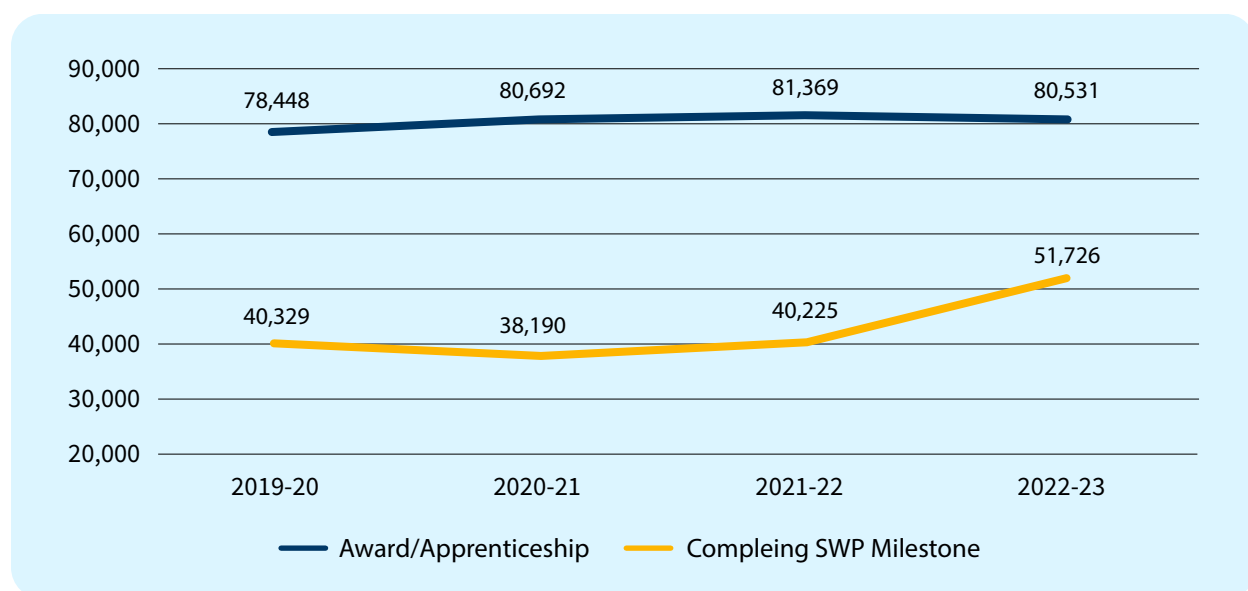
Moreover, the number of students completing SWP milestones saw a substantial increase, rising to 51,726 from 40,225 in the previous year. This 28.6% increase highlights the program's effectiveness in guiding students through critical stages of their educational and career pathways. The rise in milestone completions can be attributed to targeted initiatives aimed at improving student support services, curriculum alignment with industry needs, and enhanced faculty development.

The SWP's dual focus on local and regional collaboration has been pivotal in these achievements. By allocating 60% of funds to local community college districts and 40% to

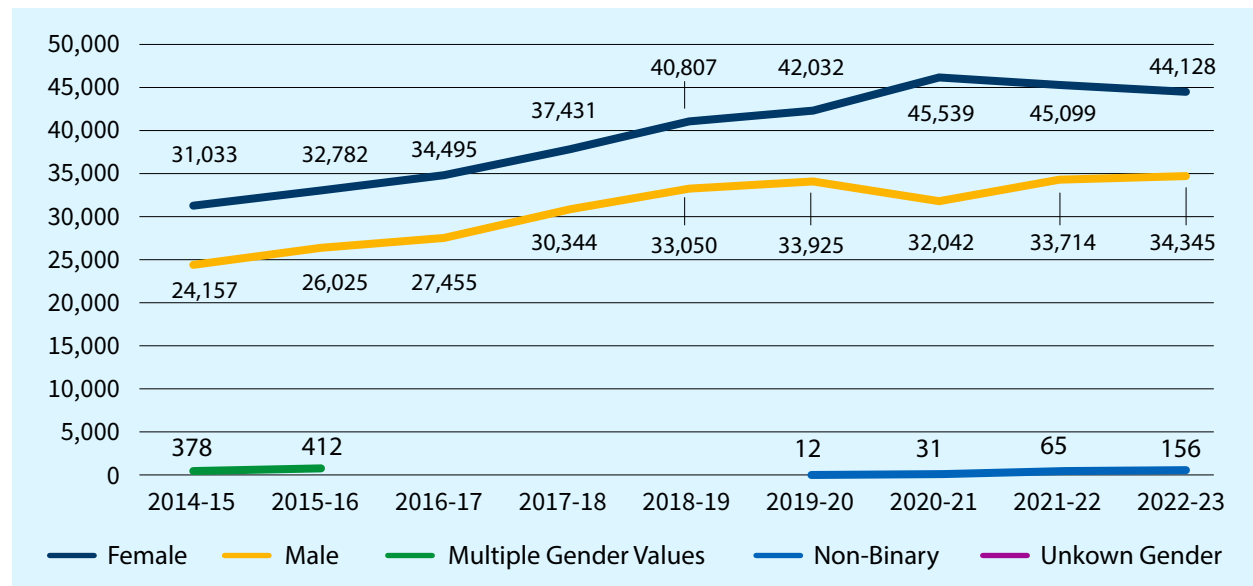
regional consortia, the program ensures that resources are effectively utilized to meet both local and regional workforce demands. This structure fosters partnerships between colleges, industry stakeholders, and workforce development boards, creating a cohesive approach to workforce education.

Overall, the 2022-2023 data indicates that the Strong Workforce Program continues to play a crucial role in developing a skilled workforce in California. The program's emphasis on data-driven outcomes, innovation, and equity has led to significant improvements in student success and workforce readiness. As the program evolves, ongoing efforts to adapt to changing labor market conditions and support underrepresented student populations will be essential to sustaining and building upon these successes.

**Figure 7: Strong Workforce Student Credential Attainment and Transfer  
SWP Success Metrics**

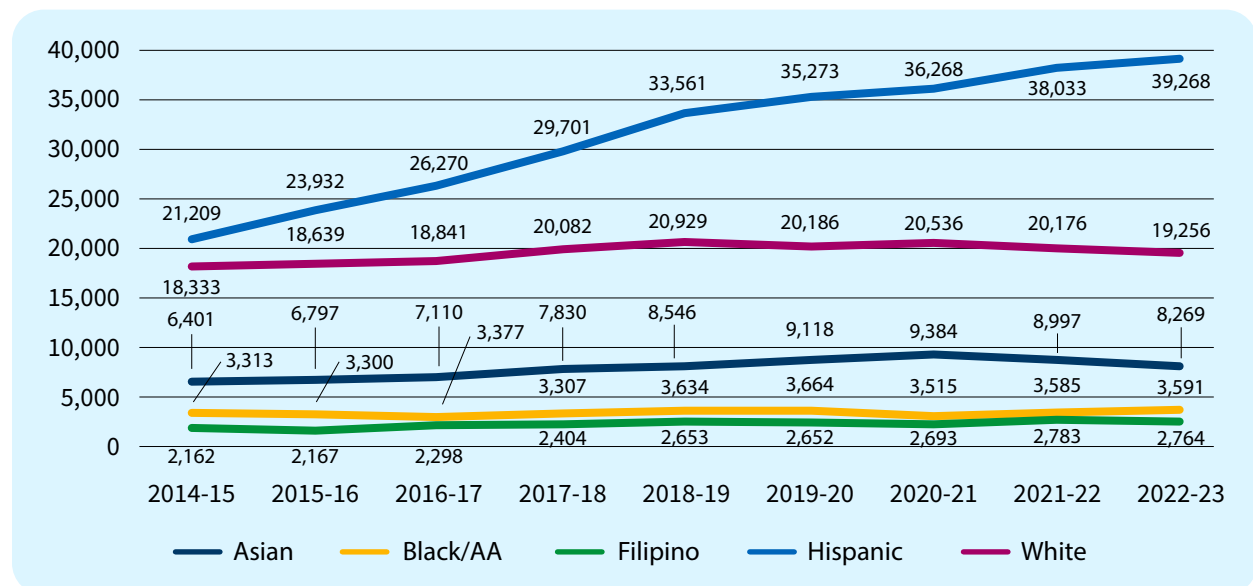


**Figure 8: Strong Workforce Student Credential Attainment and Transfer Awards/Apprenticeships by Gender**



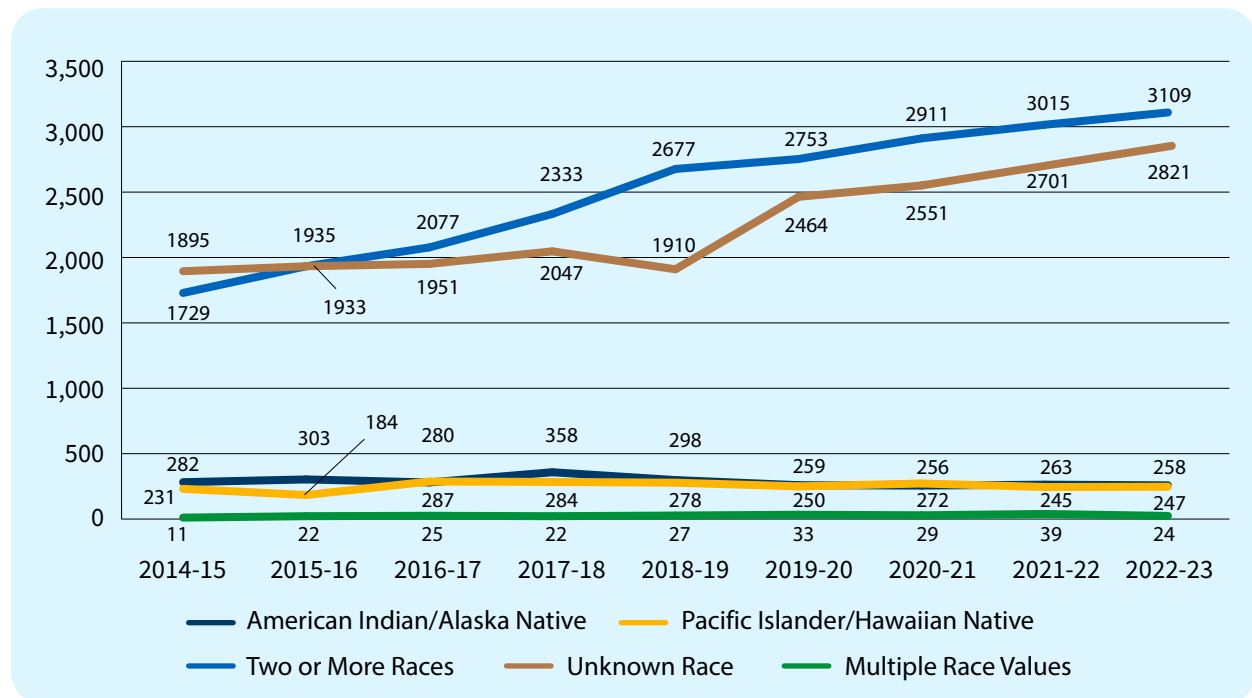
Male students underperform female students in completing award-bearing pathways. However, in recent years, male enrollment has been smaller than female enrollment, which may account for the gap.

**Figure 9: Strong Workforce Student Credential Attainment and Transfer Awards/Apprenticeships by Race (Large Groups)**



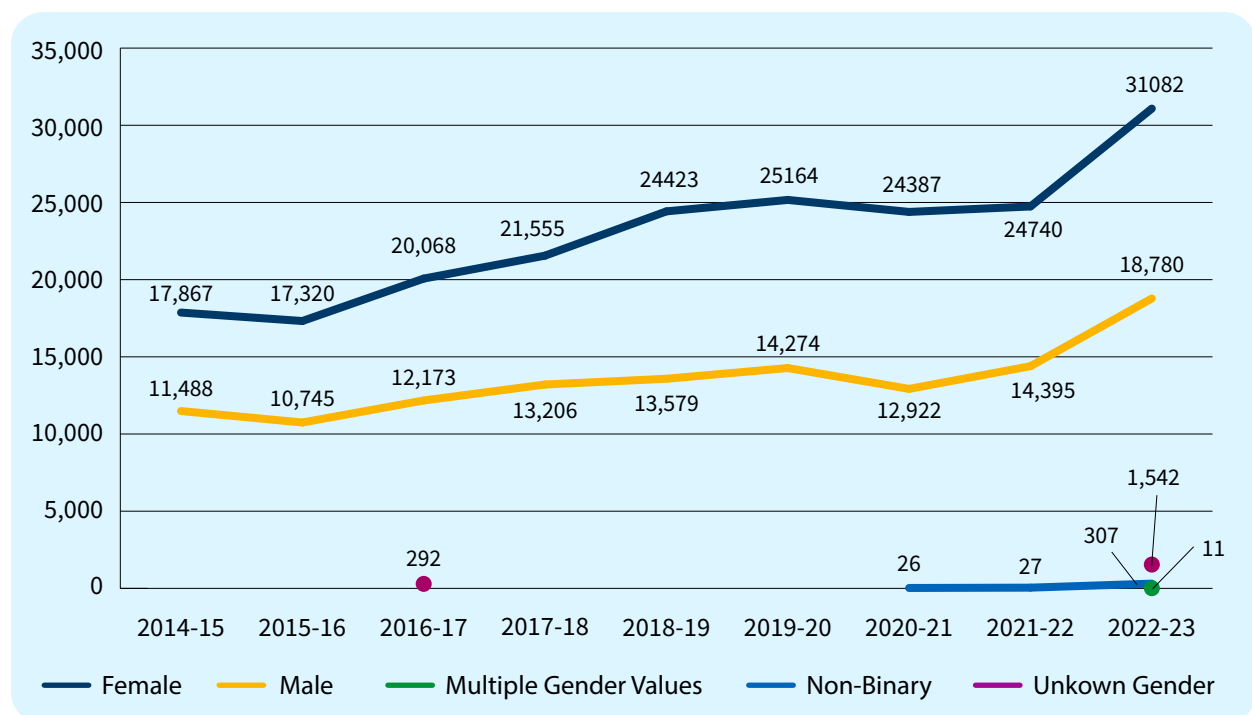
Hispanic students represent the largest group of students in the California Community Colleges system (nearly 50%), which explains why they earn more awards than other groups.

**Figure 10: Strong Workforce Student Credential Attainment and Transfer Awards/Apprenticeship by Race (Small Groups)**



As the two largest groups here are two or more races and race unknown (both of which have variable numbers of students), it can be difficult to draw conclusions. However other groups on this chart show steady or improving achievement.

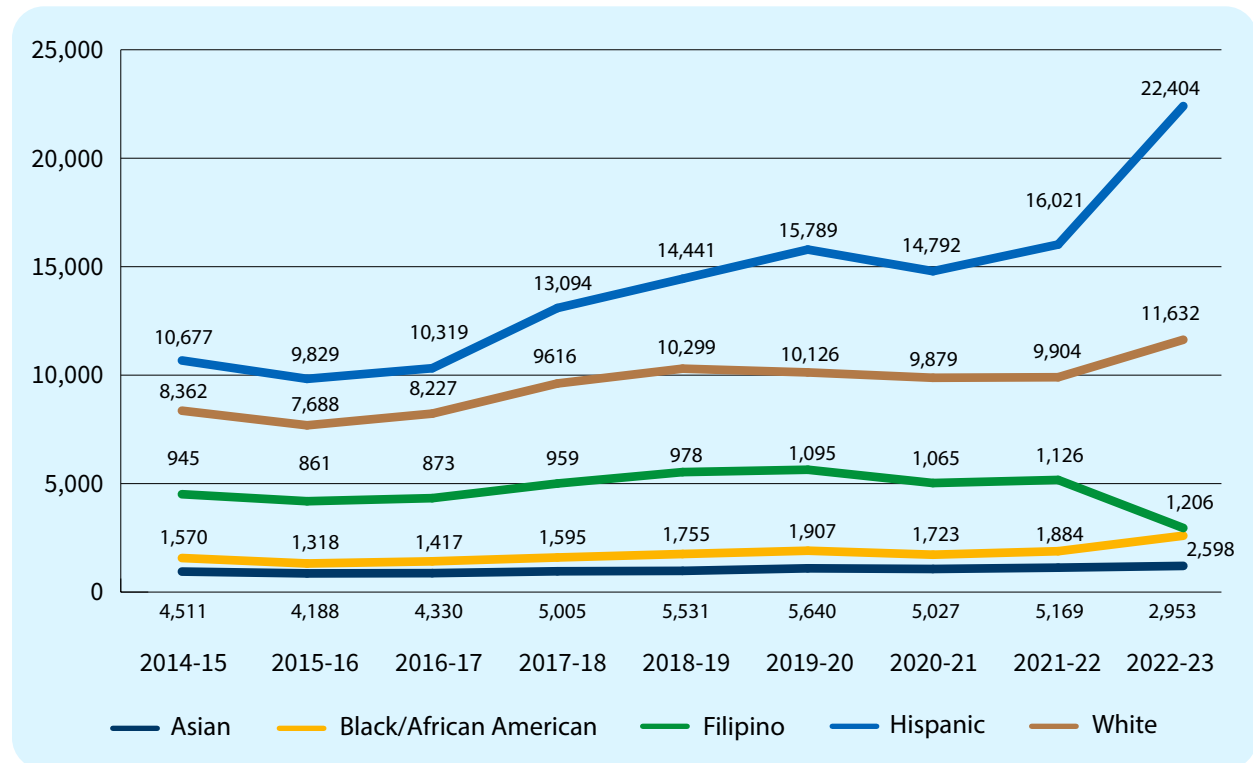
**Figure 11: Strong Workforce Student Credential Attainment and Transfer Completed WP Course by Gender**





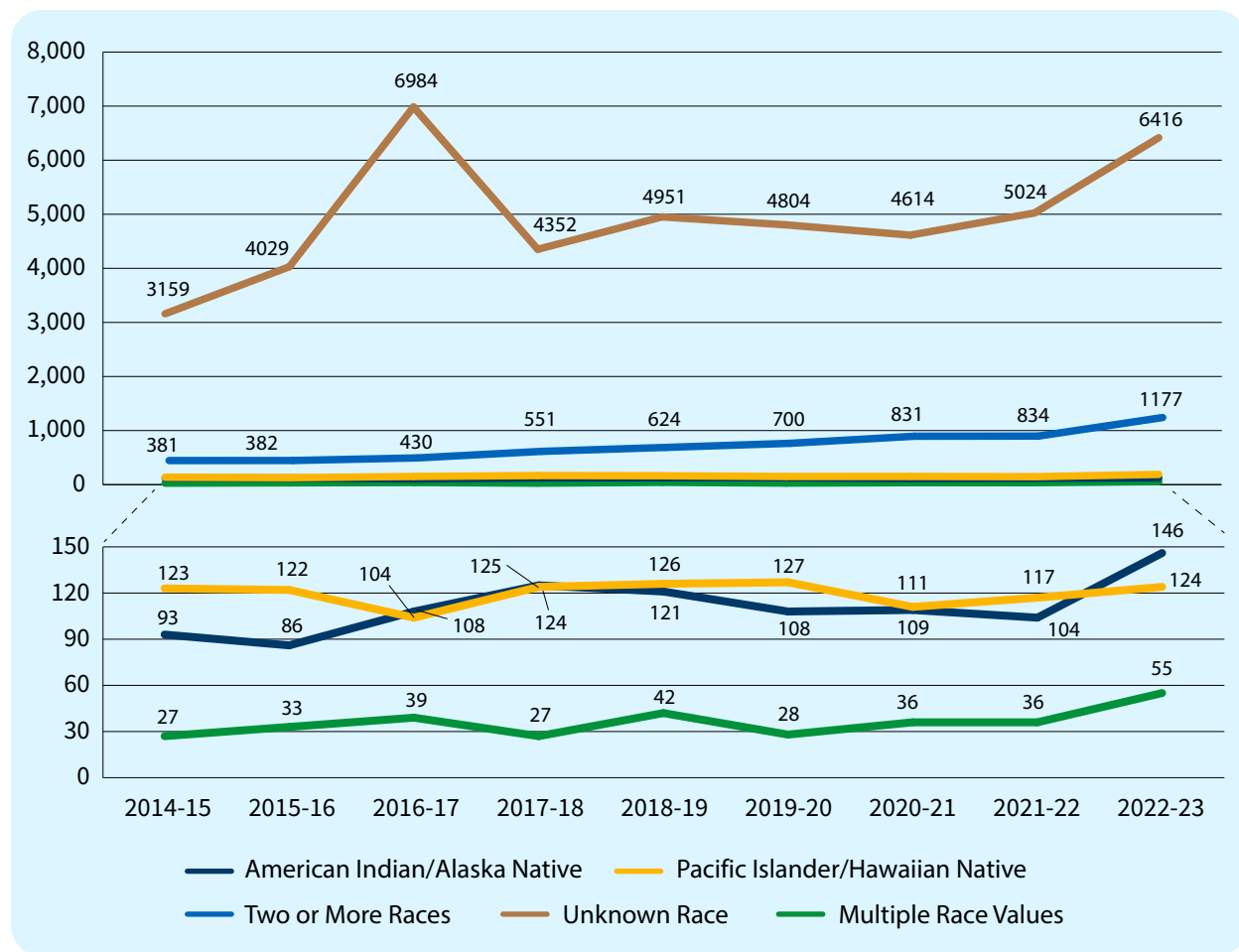
As explained in other charts, the widening gender gap can be explained by a widening enrollment gap. However, both groups are showing significant gains.

**Figure 12: Strong Workforce Student Credential Attainment and Transfer Completed WP Course by Race (Large Groups)**



While most groups show significant improvement (most notably the Hispanic group), the Asian group had a decline in the last year. This will be monitored in future years.

**Figure 13: Strong Workforce Student Credential Attainment and Transfer Completed WP Course by Race (Small Groups)**



As the two largest groups here are two or more races and race unknown (both of which have variable numbers of students), it can be difficult to draw conclusions. However other groups on this chart show steady or improving achievement.

## EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS

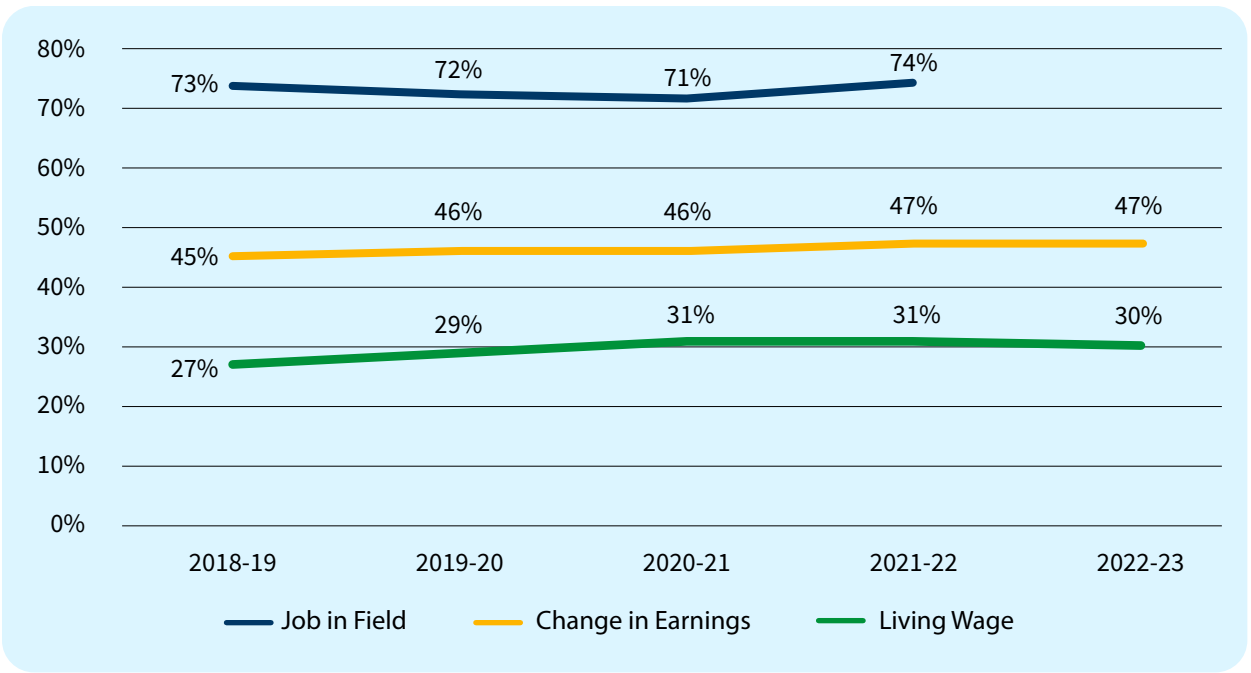
The Strong Workforce Program continued to make significant strides in enhancing employment and earnings outcomes for students enrolled in Career Technical Education (CTE) programs across California community colleges. The percentage of students securing jobs in their field of study experienced a slight decline, increasing to 74% from the previous year. The notable increase highlights the program's continued effectiveness in aligning educational pathways with labor market demands, ensuring that students are equipped with the skills and knowledge required by employers. This alignment is crucial for ensuring that students are equipped with the skills and knowledge required by employers, thereby facilitating smoother transitions into the workforce.

Additionally, the median change in earnings for SWP students after program completion remained steady at 30%, a slight decrease from the previous year. This stability underscores the program’s ongoing impact on elevating students’ economic prospects, enabling them to achieve higher income levels post-graduation. The focus on high-demand, high-wage career pathways has been instrumental in driving these outcomes, as it ensures that students are prepared for roles that offer substantial financial benefits.

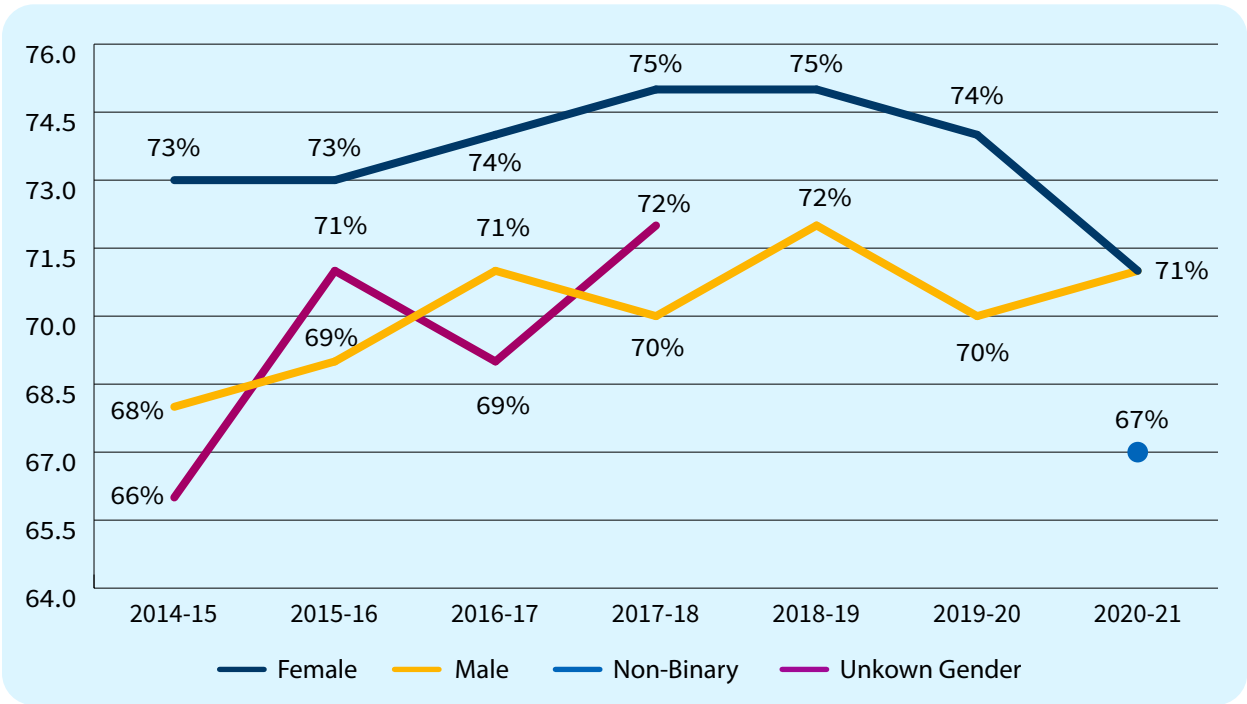
The proportion of students attaining a living wage also showed a steady increase, reaching 47% in 2021-2022. This metric is particularly significant as it highlights the program’s success in not only providing employment opportunities but also in supporting students to achieve financial stability and self-sufficiency. The emphasis on living wage attainment aligns with the broader goals of the SWP to lift low-wage workers into high-skill jobs that offer sustainable livelihoods.

Overall, the 2021-2022 data indicates that the Strong Workforce Program continues to play a pivotal role in enhancing employment and earnings outcomes for CTE students. The program’s data-driven approach, coupled with its emphasis on innovation and regional collaboration, has been key to its success. As the program evolves, ongoing efforts to adapt to changing labor market conditions and support underrepresented student populations will be essential to sustaining and building upon these achievements. Analysis of prior year data can be found in prior year [Legislative Reports](#).

**Figure 14: Strong Workforce Student Employment and Earnings**  
**SWP Employment and Earnings**

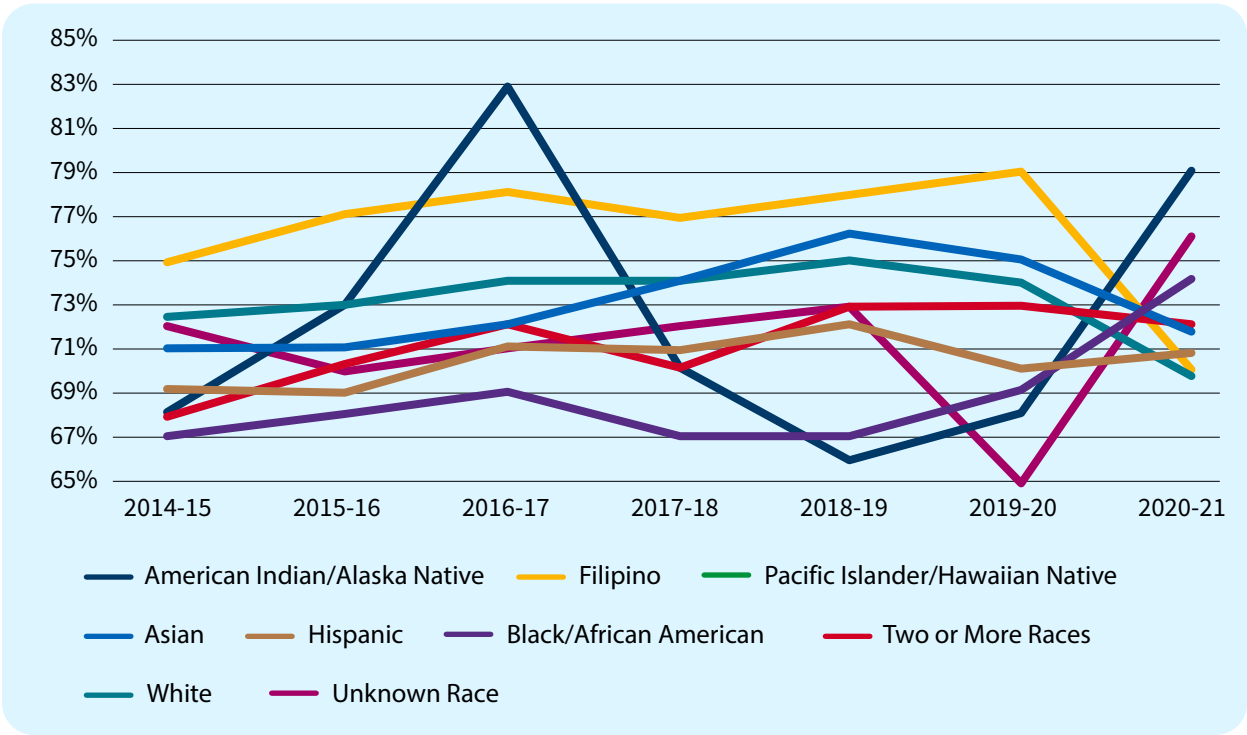


**Figure 15: Strong Workforce Student Employment and Earnings**  
**Job in Field by Gender**



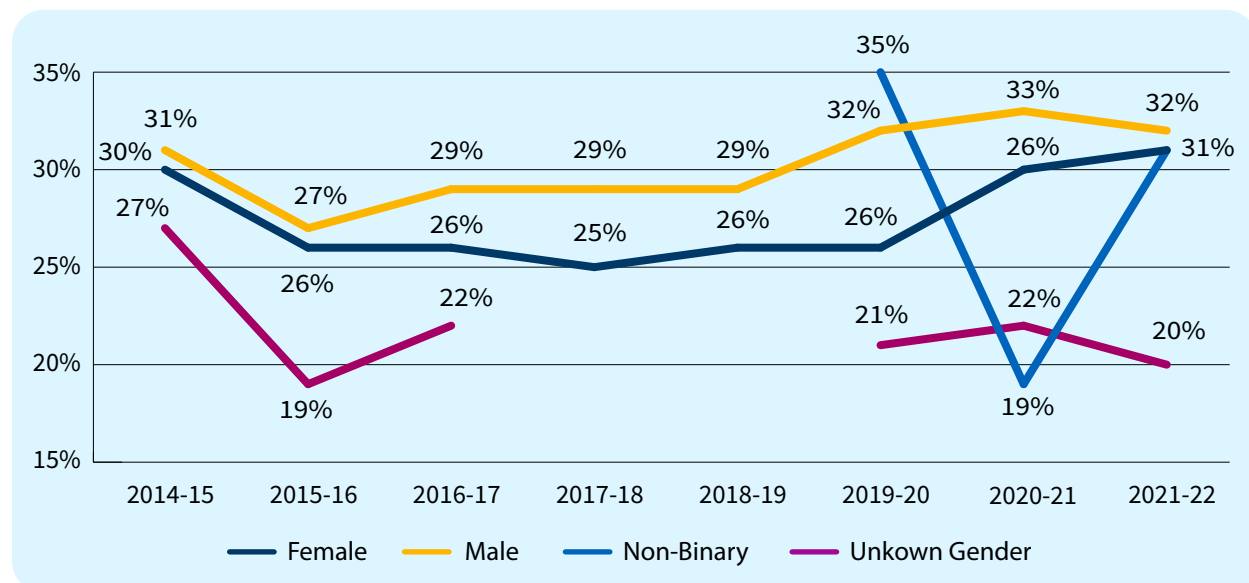
While there has been a small historical lag by male students, that has narrowed recently.

**Figure 16: Strong Workforce Student Employment and Earnings**  
**Job in Field by Race**



While this graph shows a lot of changes, there are no consistent and significant lags by any group.

**Figure 17: Strong Workforce Student Employment and Earnings**  
**Change in Earnings by Gender**



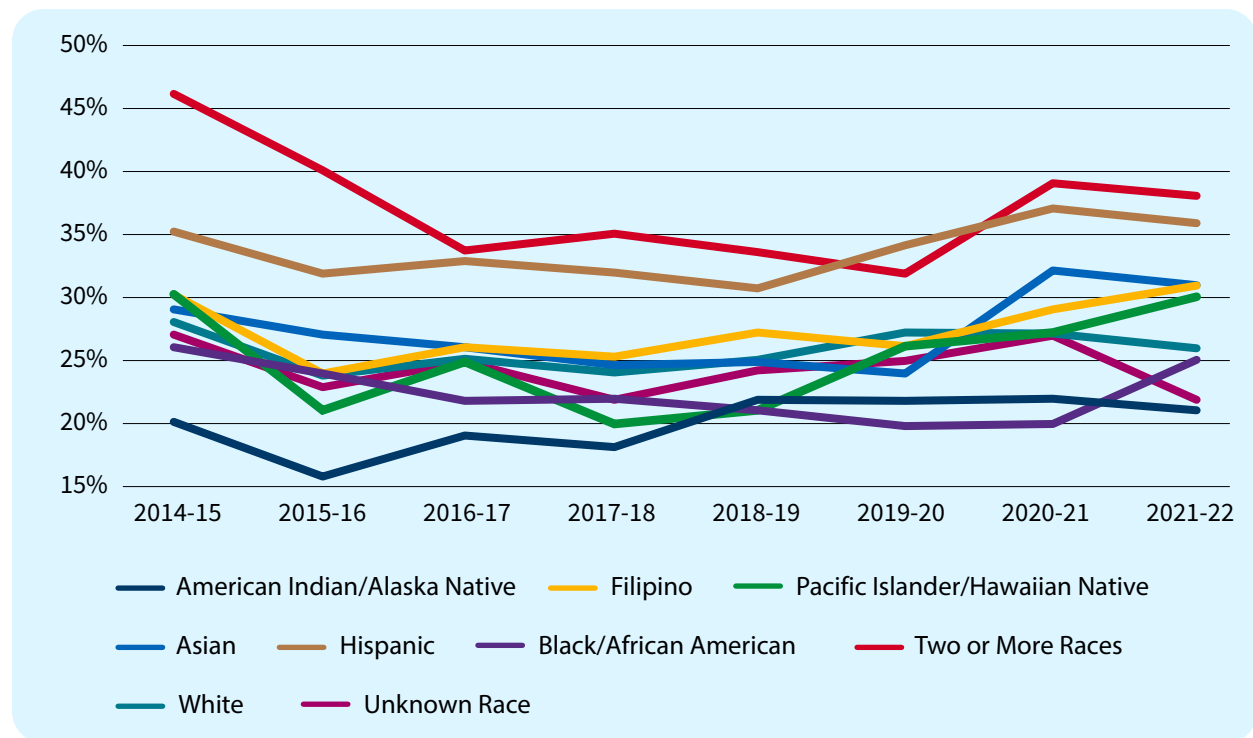
While there has been a small historical lag by male students, that has narrowed recently.

The Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 deals with the rights of data privacy of people engaged in getting an education. This law requires educational institutions to establish procedures to protect the identity and achievement of individual students and to ensure that any public data reporting could not be analyzed to uncover information about individual students. The Chancellor's Office procedures related to FERPA involve suppressing data in any report where either or both of the following conditions are true:

1. The number of students being reported on is less than 20.
2. The number of students in a group that is less than 20 could be inferred by analyzing the data that is present for all other groups.

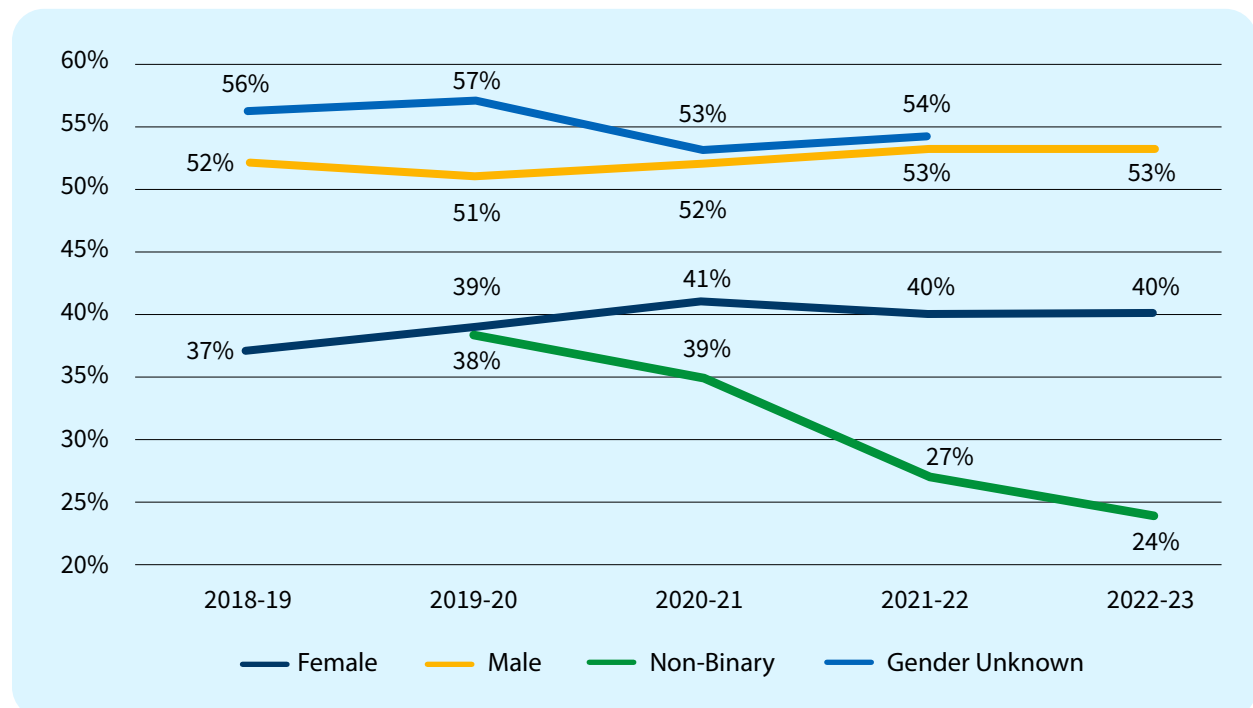
As a result of this, readers of this report may notice that there are some gaps in the data reported for some groups. This is particularly true for some of our smaller gender groups, like non-binary, multiple gender values reported, or gender unknown. These students have not been erased, but FERPA prevents us reporting on their progress on some of the metrics in some of the years.

**Figure 18: Strong Workforce Student Employment and Earnings**  
**Change in Earnings by Race**



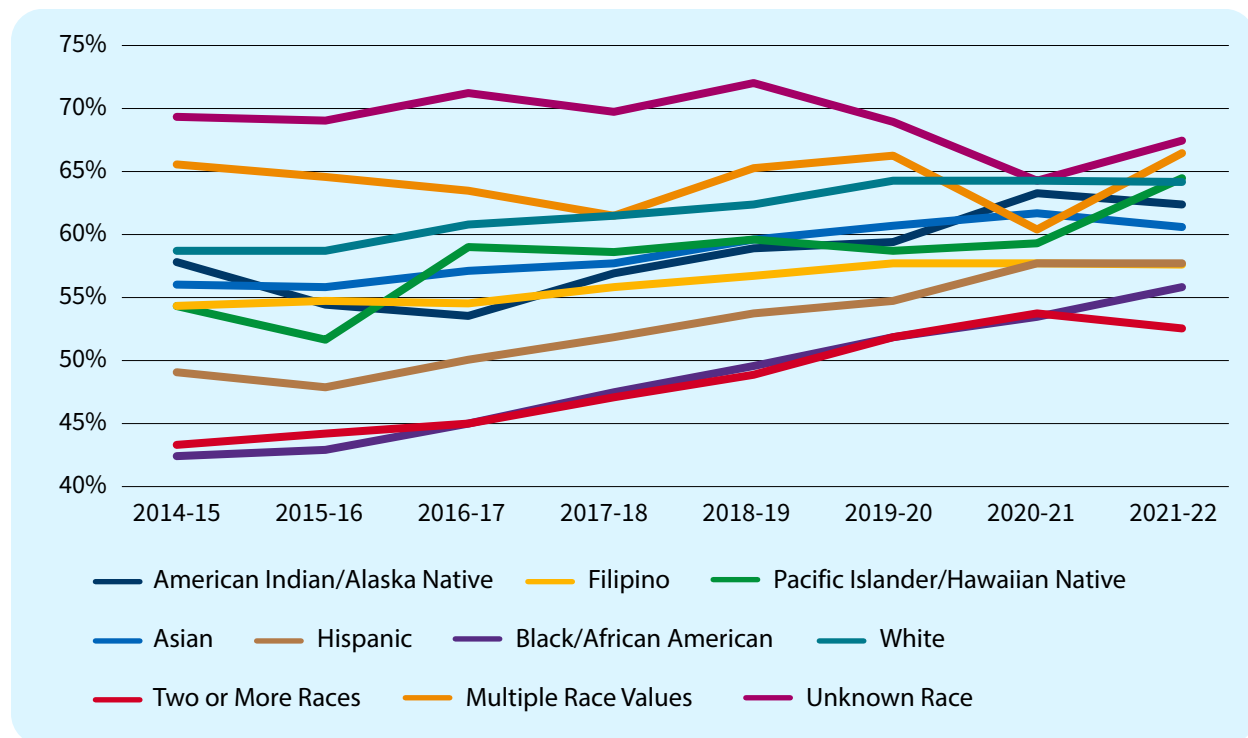
The Hispanic, Asian and Filipino groups show small advantages in this metric over other groups.

**Figure 19: Strong Workforce Student Employment and Earnings**  
**Living Wage by Gender**



There is no significant gender gap between male and female. The sample size for the other gender groups is not consistently large enough to establish significance across multiple years.

**Figure 20: Strong Workforce Student Employment and Earnings**  
**Living Wage by Race**



All gaps by race in this metric are narrowing to a point of low significance.

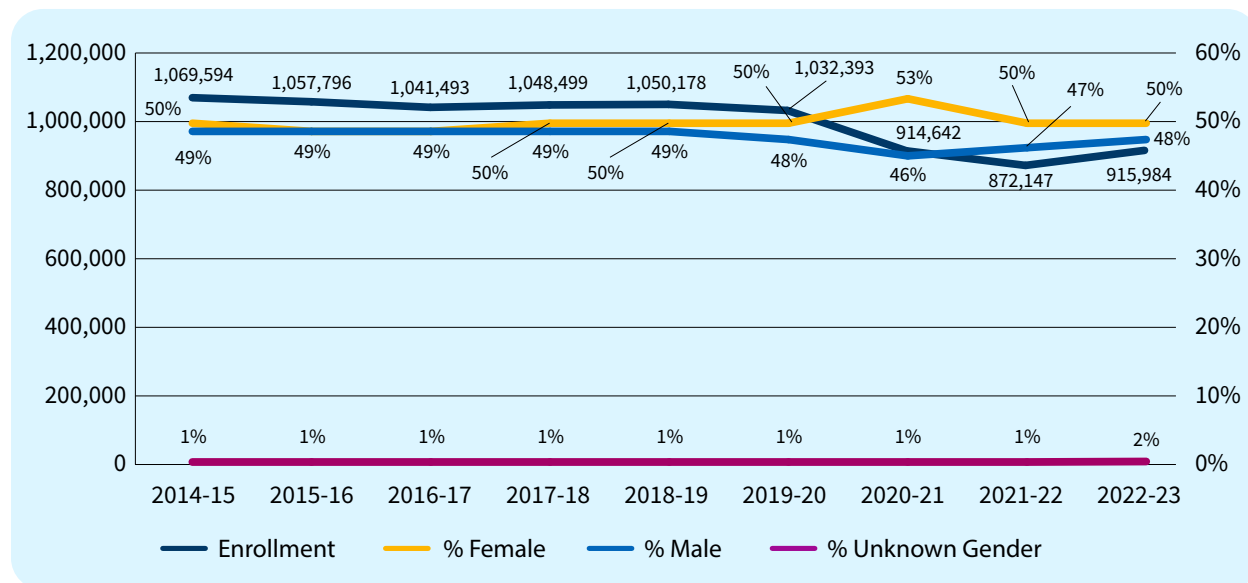
## STRONG WORKFORCE STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

The Strong Workforce Program continued to support Economically Disadvantaged Students (EDS) across California community colleges, demonstrating both challenges and successes. The total enrollment for 2022-2023 was 915,984, showing a recovery from the previous year's decline. However, the percentage of EDS slightly decreased to 69%, down from 70% in 2021-2022. Despite this minor reduction, the absolute number of EDS increased to 635,770, indicating a growing need for targeted support and resources for this demographic.

The Strong Workforce Program has made a direct impact through focused interventions, such as fiscal support, industry-relevant training, and strategic partnerships with employers. These efforts have been instrumental in sustaining access and opportunities for EDS even amidst significant economic disruptions. To further strengthen its mission, SWP must continue refining and expanding its outreach and retention strategies for economically disadvantaged students, ensuring equitable pathways to workforce training and economic advancement.

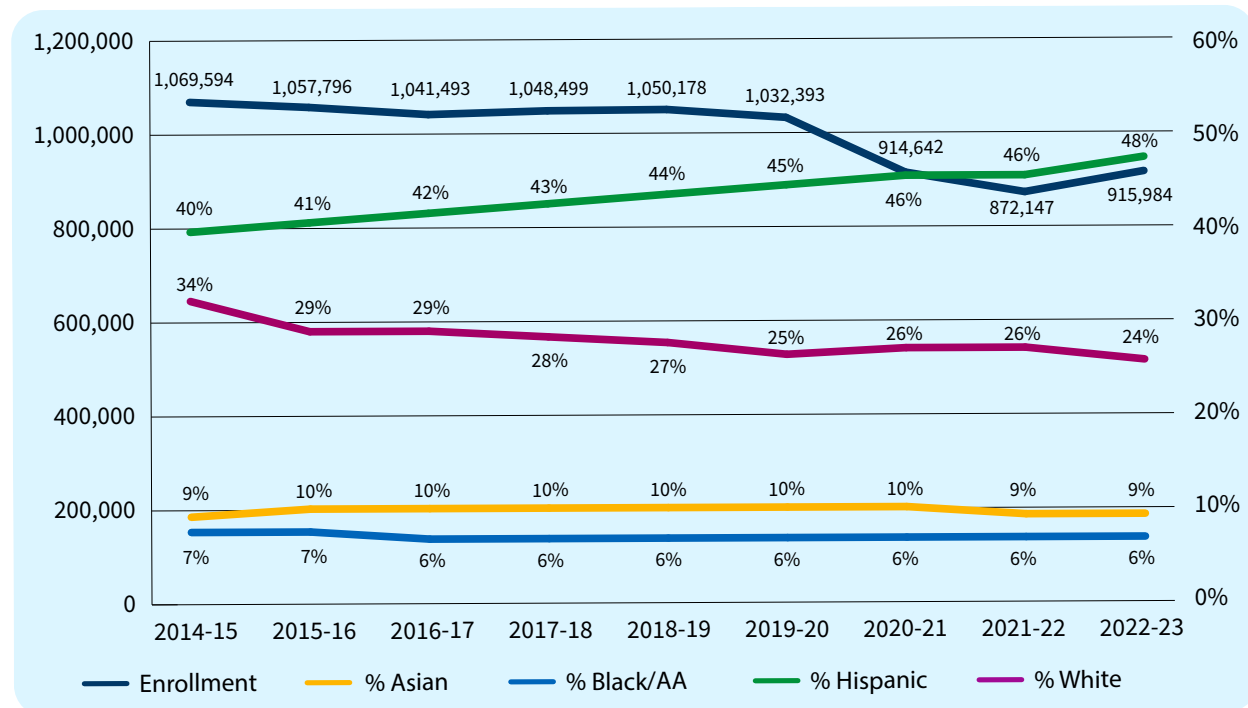
Continued funding support is essential for amplifying these efforts and maximizing the program's reach and impact, particularly for vulnerable communities striving for greater economic stability and opportunity. Analysis of prior year data can be found in prior year [Legislative Reports](#).

**Figure 21: Economically Disadvantaged Strong Workforce Students  
SWP Enrollment and Gender**



The pandemic seems to have created a gender gap, but it has rebounded.

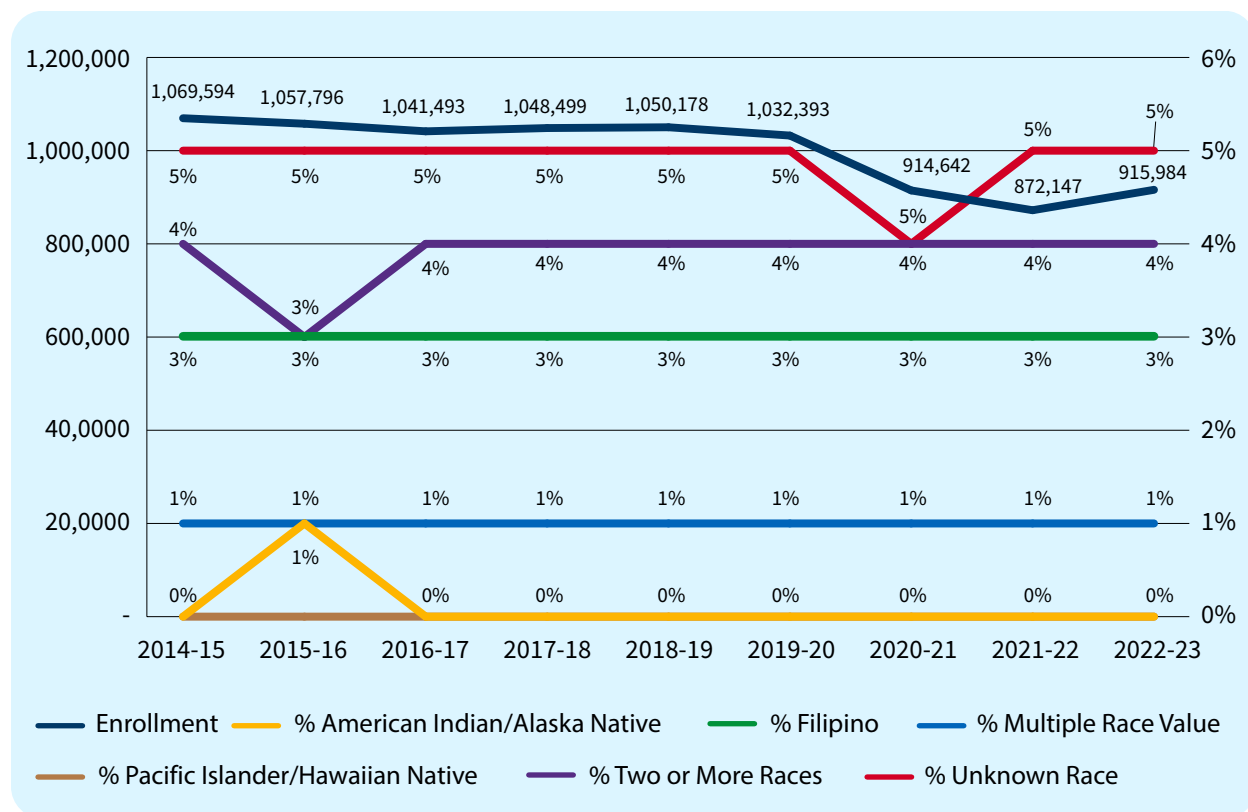
**Figure 22: Economically Disadvantaged Strong Workforce Students  
SWP Enrollment and Race (Large Groups)**



Over time, the percentage of Hispanic students has grown, while the percentage of White students has declined.



**Figure 23: Economically Disadvantaged Strong Workforce Students  
SWP Enrollment and Race (Small Groups)**



## EMPLOYER OUTCOMES

The Strong Workforce Program did not collect employer outcome data for this report. The Chancellor's Office will determine specific employer outcome metrics we want to measure and work with the Regional Consortia to collect this data in a uniform manner. While most regions report robust partnerships with employers and significant job-placement efforts, the reporting on this is not yet standardized and does not paint a comprehensive picture of the state landscape at this time. The Chancellor's Office is working with the Regional Consortia to determine the appropriate metrics and reporting structures to be able to do this in the near future.

## LOOKING FORWARD

The Strong Workforce Program stands at a strategic point, poised to build on its successes and tackle new challenges and opportunities within the evolving labor market. As the program looks ahead, it must adapt and expand its focus to maintain its impact on workforce development, while addressing economic and societal shifts. The following key priorities will shape the program's direction:

- Modernizing Facilities and Technology:** Continued investment in state-of-the-art training facilities, equipment, and emerging technologies is critical for preparing students for in-demand careers, particularly in high-growth sectors like healthcare, information technology, and advanced manufacturing. Modernized tools and resources enhance hands-on learning and ensure students develop skills that meet current industry standards.

- **Hybrid and Flexible Learning Models:** The pandemic underscored the importance of adaptable education models. Moving forward, the SWP should support the expansion of hybrid learning environments that blend online theoretical instruction with in-person, hands-on experiences. This approach will increase access for diverse learners, including those managing work, family, and education responsibilities.
- **Strengthening Industry Partnerships:** Collaboration with industry partners remains essential for aligning educational programs with workforce needs. The SWP can deepen partnerships with employers to offer internships, apprenticeships, and job placement opportunities, ensuring training programs remain relevant and students gain critical real-world experience and industry connections.
- **Addressing Equity Gaps:** SWP has demonstrated its commitment to serving economically disadvantaged and underserved populations. As the program moves forward, enhancing outreach, retention, and support initiatives for these groups is paramount. This includes reducing barriers to entry, offering targeted support services, and ensuring equitable access to training programs and career pathways.
- **Developing Career Pathways for High-Demand Sectors:** SWP will continue to focus on building robust career pathways aligned with high-demand, high-wage fields. Expanding programs that offer stackable credentials will enable students to progress from entry-level positions to advanced roles. Alignment with regional and state economic needs ensures graduates contribute to California's innovation and economic growth.
- **Promoting the Value of Career and Technical Education:** Increasing public awareness of the value of CTE pathways is key to attracting students and diversifying enrollment. Outreach efforts will emphasize the strong earning potential, job stability, and rewarding careers available through CTE, engaging students, parents, and the broader community in understanding its benefits.
- **Data-Driven Decision Making:** Leveraging data to measure student outcomes, industry alignment, and program effectiveness is vital for continuous improvement. Emphasizing metrics such as employment rates, wage growth, and skills attainment will ensure accountability and provide insights for refining and enhancing SWP initiatives.
- **Sustained Legislative and Financial Support:** SWP's success has been driven by strategic investments and strong legislative backing. Continued stable funding is crucial to maintain and expand program offerings, enhance faculty and staff development, and respond to evolving workforce demands. This support will allow SWP to remain agile, innovative, and responsive.

## FUTURE WORK AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The Chancellor's Office continues to expand opportunities within the Strong Workforce Program to enhance students' career mobility and foster a culture of continuous learning. The office introduced a career mobility framework focused on supporting students as lifelong learners, offering reskilling and upskilling opportunities, and providing access to career pathways that deliver living wages and upward social mobility. SWP funding remains critical, enabling colleges to prioritize programs that drive career advancement and facilitate continuous skill development.

Recent updates to Section 55253, of title 5 regarding the repeatability of work experience education courses will significantly bolster strong workforce program efforts. By allowing students to repeat these courses, the regulations enhance skill development and provide greater flexibility in educational pathways. This repeatability ensures that students can gain extensive hands-on experience, aligning their education with current industry standards and technological advancements. It is particularly advantageous for non-traditional students who may require additional time to achieve proficiency in certain skills, thereby improving job placement rates and fostering stronger partnerships with employers. Furthermore, the policy supports higher student retention and completion rates by offering personalized learning experiences tailored to individual career goals and industry needs. Overall, the repeatability of work experience education courses ensures that students are well-prepared, skilled, and equipped to meet the demands of the job market, thereby reinforcing the effectiveness and impact of workforce programs.

Additionally, the Chancellor's Office is aligning the planning processes of the Strong Workforce Program and Economic and Workforce Development program to foster streamlined, coordinated, and evidence-based plans across regions and colleges. This alignment aims to strengthen the impact and reach of both programs, ensuring that workforce training initiatives remain responsive to regional needs and continue to prepare students for the demands of the evolving labor market.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

After a comprehensive review of the Strong Workforce Program (SWP) plans and progress reports and engaging with community college leadership, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance program outcomes and student success:

- **Expand Continuous Learning Opportunities**

Community colleges should utilize the Chancellor's Office Vision 2030 framework and Strong Workforce Program funding to support career development for students across all stages of their working lives. This includes:

- Broadening career and technical education (CTE) opportunities for dually enrolled K-12 students.
- Creating seamless pathways from Adult Education noncredit programs to credit-bearing CTE courses.
- Increasing upskilling and reskilling opportunities for adult learners to adapt to the changing workforce.

- **Enhance Work-Based Learning Experiences**

Work-based learning has proven to deliver significant benefits for students. Colleges should:

- Create or expand work-based learning opportunities, such as internships, apprenticeships, and cooperative education programs.
- Align CTE curricula with industry standards, ensuring that students gain the skills and knowledge required by employers.
- Provide professional development for faculty to help integrate work-based learning into their teaching.
- Use data and metrics to track student outcomes and improve work-based learning programs.

- **Improve Use of Data and Research**

The Strong Workforce Program has enhanced the use of data for decision-making. To further this progress:

- The Chancellor's Office launched Vision-Aligned Reporting (VAR) as a new method for California community colleges to collect and report data that mainly focuses on information that provides streamlined visibility to promote cross-functional discussions about how programs can collaborate and leverage resources, address equity gaps, and increase equitable student outcomes.
- The Chancellor's Office has reinvested in establishing eight (8) regional Centers of Excellence (COE) with the intent to provide leadership and create opportunities to assist colleges and communities to better understand and contextualize labor market data, community/regional demographics as well as to identify and address workforce training and data needs.
- Regional and local practitioners should leverage resources and training provided by the Chancellor's Office to better understand labor market trends and student outcomes.
  - Community college leaders and faculty should utilize the expanded data resources to identify successful strategies and areas requiring improvement.

## **BUDGET CONSIDERATION**

The current funding formula for the Strong Workforce Program aligns well with program activities and goals. No changes to the SWP funding formula are recommended currently.

These recommendations aim to ensure the continued success of the Strong Workforce Program in meeting student and workforce development needs across California.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Strong Workforce Program has demonstrated positive outcomes in enhancing the accessibility and quality of CTE programs, with enrollments in CTE courses increasing and students showing gains in noncredit student progress, credential attainment, employment and earnings. Strong Workforce Program's forward trajectory is contingent on innovation, collaboration, equity, and responsiveness to labor market demands. Strategic investments in modern facilities, flexible learning models, industry-aligned training, and targeted support for underserved populations will ensure that the SWP remains a cornerstone of California's workforce development strategy. This continued commitment will empower individuals, drive economic growth, and ensure that the state's workforce is equipped to meet future demands.

APPENDIX

Figure 1: Student Enrollments by CTE Status

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Total Students	2150012	2155288	2145546	2138357	2097963	2021426	1748998	1647655	1706536	1845371
SWP (CTE)	1,069,602	1,057,801	1,041,503	1,048,512	1,050,194	1,032,405	914,635	872,158	915,978	999,374
Non-CTE	1,080,410	1,097,487	1,104,043	1,089,845	1,047,769	989,021	834,363	775,497	790,558	845,997
% CTE	49.7%	49.1%	48.5%	49.0%	50.1%	51.1%	52.3%	52.9%	53.7%	54.2%

Figure 2: Strong Workforce Student Credit and Noncredit Progress

		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Credit	Overall	17%	17%	17%	18%	18%	18%	20%	19%	20%
Non-Credit	Overall	51%	53%	63%	65%	67%	65%	66%	63%	66%

Figure 3: Strong Workforce Student Credit and Noncredit Progress | Earned 9+ CTE Units by Gender

		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Credit	Female	17%	18%	18%	18%	19%	19%	20%	20%	20%
	Male	16%	17%	17%	18%	18%	18%	20%	19%	20%
	Multiple Gender Values	-	-	-	-	-	2%	5%	-	-
	Non-Binary	-	-	-	-	-	16%	14%	14%	15%
	Unknown Gender	-	-	-	15%	-	16%	19%	-	-

Figure 4: Strong Workforce Student Credit and Noncredit Progress | Earned 9+ CTE Units by Race

		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Credit	American Indian/Alaska Native	16%	18%	17%	18%	17%	17%	19%	19%	18%
	Asian	19%	20%	21%	21%	22%	22%	25%	24%	23%
	Black/AA	14%	14%	14%	15%	15%	15%	16%	15%	16%
	Filipino	20%	20%	20%	21%	21%	21%	22%	23%	23%
	Hispanic	16%	17%	17%	17%	18%	18%	19%	19%	20%
	Multiple Race Values	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
	Pac Islander/Hawaiian Native	14%	14%	15%	15%	16%	15%	18%	16%	17%
	Two or More Races	18%	18%	18%	19%	20%	20%	21%	21%	21%
	White	18%	19%	19%	19%	20%	20%	21%	20%	21%
	Unknown Race	11%	11%	11%	13%	12%	14%	16%	14%	13%

Figure 5: Strong Workforce Student Credit and Noncredit Progress | Completed Noncredit Milestone by Gender

		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Noncredit	Female	50%	51%	61%	62%	66%	64%	67%	65%	68%
	Male	55%	57%	67%	70%	68%	67%	66%	60%	62%
	Multiple Gender Values	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31%
	Non-Binary	-	-	-	-	-	-	59%	53%	47%
	Unknown Gender	-	-	69%	-	-	-	-	-	71%

Figure 6: Strong Workforce Student Credit and Noncredit Progress | Completed Noncredit Milestone by Race

		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Noncredit	American Indian/Alaska Native	48%	56%	59%	58%	55%	52%	62%	54%	52%
	Asian	57%	57%	63%	66%	68%	66%	72%	68%	71%
	Black/AA	58%	57%	64%	67%	70%	67%	70%	64%	66%
	Filipino	60%	60%	66%	67%	70%	68%	72%	67%	68%
	Hispanic	50%	52%	61%	65%	67%	67%	67%	63%	66%
	Multiple Race Values	19%	18%	18%	21%	27%	19%	23%	19%	22%
	Pac Islander/Hawaiian Native	59%	62%	66%	68%	63%	62%	66%	54%	55%
	Two or More Races	53%	58%	63%	66%	67%	62%	67%	62%	65%
	White	50%	53%	59%	61%	63%	60%	61%	58%	61%
	Unknown Race	50%	52%	75%	73%	75%	69%	71%	69%	70%

Figure 7: Strong Workforce Student Credential Attainment and Transfer | SWP Success Metrics

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Award/Apprenticeship	56645	60533	63807	69690	76009	78448	80692	81369	80531
Completing WP Milestone	29852	28452	32833	35452	38871	40329	38190	40225	51726

Figure 8: Strong Workforce Student Credential Attainment and Transfer | Awards/Apprenticeships by Gender

		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Award/Apprenticeship	Female	31033	32782	34495	37431	40807	42032	45539	45099	44128
	Male	24157	26025	27455	30344	33050	33925	32042	33714	34345
	Multiple Gender Values	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Non-Binary	-	-	-	-	-	12	31	65	156
	Unknown Gender	378	412	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Figure 9: Strong Workforce Student Credential Attainment and Transfer | Awards/Apprenticeships by Race (Large Groups)

		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Award/Apprenticeship	Asian	6401	6797	7110	7830	8546	9118	9384	8997	8269
	Black/AA	3313	3300	3277	3307	3634	3664	3515	3535	3591
	Filipino	2162	2167	2298	2404	2653	2652	2693	2783	2764
	Hispanic	21209	23932	26270	29701	33561	35273	36268	38033	39268
	White	18333	18639	18841	20082	20929	20186	20536	20176	19256

Figure 10: Strong Workforce Student Credential Attainment and Transfer | Awards/Apprenticeship by Race (Small Groups)

		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Award/Apprenticeship	American Indian/Alaska Native	282	303	280	358	298	259	256	263	258
	Multiple Race Values	11	22	25	22	27	33	29	39	24
	Pac Islander/Hawaiian Native	231	184	287	284	278	250	272	245	247
	Two or More Races	1729	1935	2077	2333	2677	2753	2911	3015	3109
	Unknown Race	1895	1933	1951	2047	1910	2464	2551	2701	2821



Figure 11: Strong Workforce Student Credential Attainment and Transfer | Completed WP Course by Gender

		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Completing WP Milestone	Female	17867	17320	20068	21555	24423	25164	24387	24740	31082
	Male	11488	10745	12173	13206	13579	14274	12922	14395	18780
	Multiple Gender Values	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
	Non-Binary	-	-	-	-	-	-	26	47	307
	Unknown Gender	-	-	292	-	-	-	-	-	1542

Figure 12: Strong Workforce Student Credential Attainment and Transfer | Completed WP Course by Race (Large Groups)

		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Completing WP Milestone	Asian	4511	4188	4330	5005	5531	5640	5027	5169	2953
	Black/AA	1570	1318	1417	1595	1755	1907	1723	1884	2598
	Filipino	945	861	873	959	978	1095	1065	1126	1206
	Hispanic	10677	9829	10319	13094	14441	15789	14792	16021	22404
	White	8362	7688	8227	9616	10299	10126	9879	9904	11632

Figure 13: Strong Workforce Student Credential Attainment and Transfer | Completed WP Course by Race (Small Groups)

		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Completing WP Milestone	American Indian/Alaska Native	93	86	108	125	121	108	109	104	146
	Multiple Race Values	27	33	39	27	42	28	36	36	55
	Pac Islander/Hawaiian Native	123	122	104	124	126	127	111	117	124
	Two or More Races	381	382	430	551	624	700	831	834	1177
	Unknown Race	3159	4029	6984	4352	4951	4804	4614	5024	6416

Figure 14: Strong Workforce Student Employment and Earnings | SWP Employment and Earnings

		2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Job in Field	Overall	73%	72%	71%	74%	-
Change in Earnings	Overall	45%	46%	46%	47%	47%
Living Wage	Overall	27%	29%	31%	31%	30%

Figure 15: Strong Workforce Student Employment and Earnings | Job in Field by Gender

		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Job in Field	Female	73%	73%	74%	75%	75%	74%	71%	-
	Male	68%	69%	71%	70%	72%	70%	71%	-
	Multiple Gender Values	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Non-Binary	-	-	-	-	-	-	67%	-
	Unknown Gender	66%	71%	69%	72%	-	-	74%	-

Figure 16: Strong Workforce Student Employment and Earnings | Job in Field by Race

		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Job in Field	American Indian/Alaska Native	72%	70%	71%	72%	73%	65%	76%	-
	Asian	71%	71%	72%	74%	76%	75%	72%	-
	Black/AA	67%	68%	69%	67%	67%	69%	74%	-
	Filipino	75%	77%	78%	77%	78%	79%	70%	-
	Hispanic	69%	69%	71%	71%	72%	70%	71%	-
	Multiple Race Values	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Pac Islander/Hawaiian Native	68%	73%	83%	70%	66%	68%	79%	-
	Two or More Races	68%	70%	72%	70%	73%	73%	72%	-
	White	72%	73%	74%	74%	75%	74%	71%	-
	Unknown Race	71%	-	-	74%	74%	71%	70%	-

Figure 17: Strong Workforce Student Employment and Earnings | Change in Earnings by Gender

		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Change in Earnings	Female	30%	26%	26%	25%	26%	26%	30%	31%
	Male	31%	27%	29%	29%	29%	32%	33%	32%
	Multiple Gender Values	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Non-Binary	-	-	-	-	-	35%	19%	32%
	Unknown Gender	27%	19%	22%	-	-	21%	22%	20%

Figure 18: Strong Workforce Student Employment and Earnings | Change in Earnings by Race

		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Change in Earnings	American Indian/Alaska Native	27%	23%	25%	22%	24%	25%	27%	22%
	Asian	29%	27%	26%	24%	25%	24%	32%	31%
	Black/AA	26%	24%	22%	22%	21%	20%	20%	25%
	Filipino	30%	24%	26%	25%	27%	26%	29%	31%
	Hispanic	35%	32%	33%	32%	31%	34%	37%	36%
	Multiple Race Values	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Pac Islander/Hawaiian Native	31%	21%	25%	20%	21%	26%	27%	30%
	Two or More Races	46%	40%	34%	35%	33%	32%	39%	38%
	White	28%	24%	25%	24%	25%	27%	27%	26%
	Unknown Race	20%	16%	19%	18%	22%	22%	22%	21%

Figure 19: Strong Workforce Student Employment and Earnings | Living Wage by Gender

		2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Living Wage	Female	37%	39%	41%	40%	40%
	Male	52%	51%	52%	53%	53%
	Non-Binary	-	38%	39%	27%	24%
	Gender Unknown	56%	57%	53%	54%	-

Figure 20: Strong Workforce Student Employment and Earnings | Living Wage by Race

		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Living Wage	American Indian/Alaska Native	58%	55%	54%	57%	59%	60%	64%	63%
	Asian	56%	56%	57%	58%	60%	61%	62%	61%
	Black/AA	42%	43%	45%	47%	50%	52%	54%	56%
	Filipino	55%	55%	55%	56%	57%	58%	58%	58%
	Hispanic	49%	48%	50%	52%	54%	55%	58%	58%
	Multiple Race Values	66%	65%	64%	62%	66%	67%	61%	67%
	Pac Islander/Hawaiian Native	55%	52%	59%	59%	60%	59%	60%	65%
	Two or More Races	43%	44%	45%	47%	49%	52%	54%	53%
	White	59%	59%	61%	62%	63%	65%	65%	65%
	Unknown Race	70%	70%	72%	71%	73%	70%	65%	68%

Figure 21: Economically Disadvantaged Strong Workforce Students | SWP Enrollment and Gender

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Enrollment	1,069,594	1,057,796	1,041,493	1,048,499	1,050,178	1,032,393	914,642	872,147	915,984
% Female	50%	49%	49%	50%	50%	50%	53%	50%	50%
% Male	49%	49%	49%	49%	49%	48%	46%	47%	48%
% Unknown Gender	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%

Figure 22: Economically Disadvantaged Strong Workforce Students | SWP Enrollment and Race (Large Groups)

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Enrollment	1,069,594	1,057,796	1,041,493	1,048,499	1,050,178	1,032,393	914,642	872,147	915,984
% Asian	9%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	9%	9%
% Black/AA	7%	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%
% Hispanic	40%	41%	42%	43%	44%	45%	46%	46%	48%
% White	34%	29%	29%	28%	27%	25%	26%	26%	24%

Figure 23: Economically Disadvantaged Strong Workforce Students | SWP Enrollment and Race (Small Groups)

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Enrollment	1069594	1057796	1041493	1048499	1050178	1032393	914642	872147	915984
% American Indian/Alaska Native	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
% Filipino	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
% Multiple Race Values	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
% Pacific Islander/Hawaiian Native	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
% Two or More Races	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%
% Unknown Race	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%

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