



The Role of College Promise Programs In Promoting Labor Market Outcomes

Laura Perna

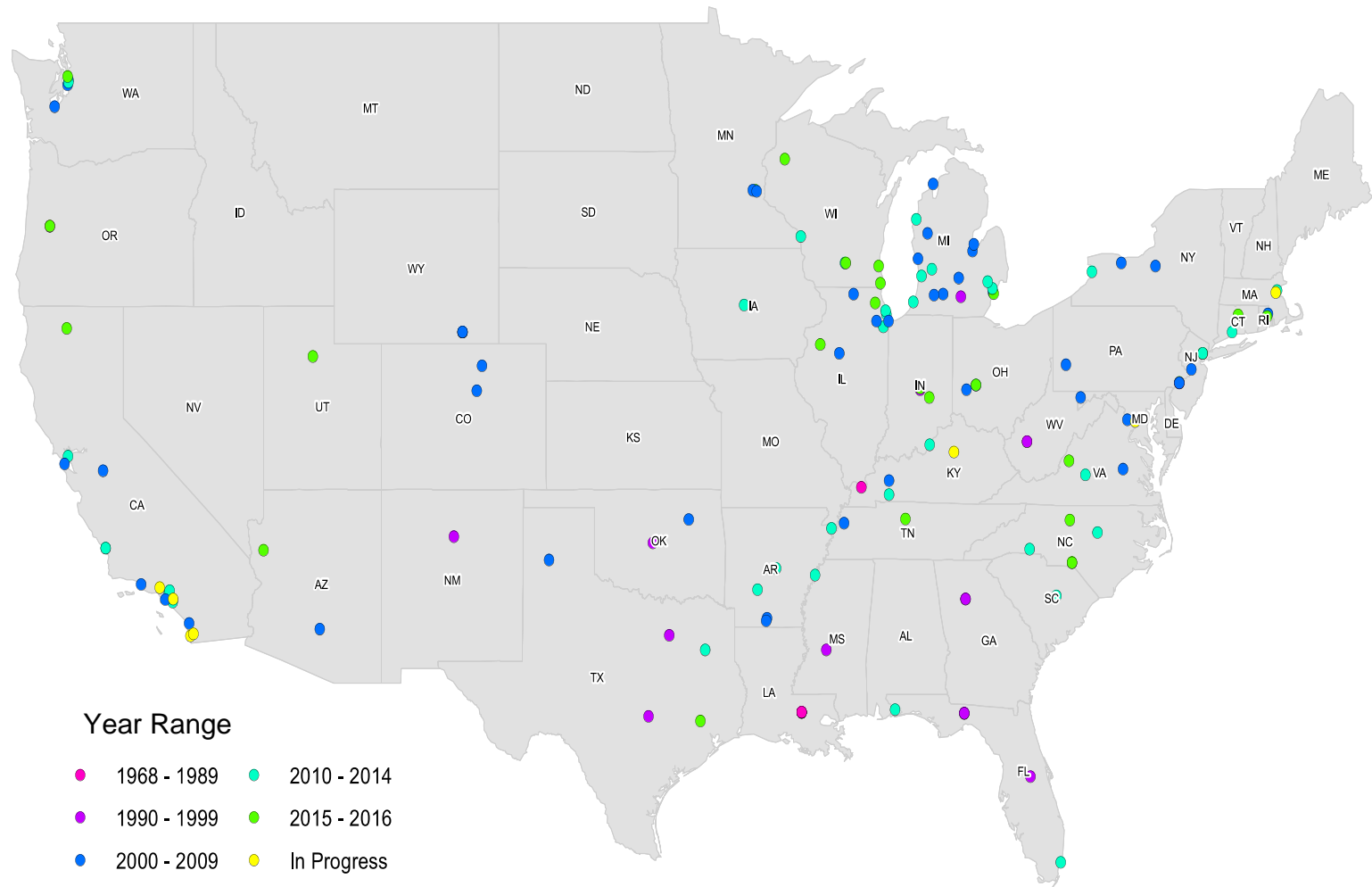
University of Pennsylvania

www.ahead-penn.org

@lauraperna1

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Promise Program Are Being Created Across the United States



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What is a Promise Program?

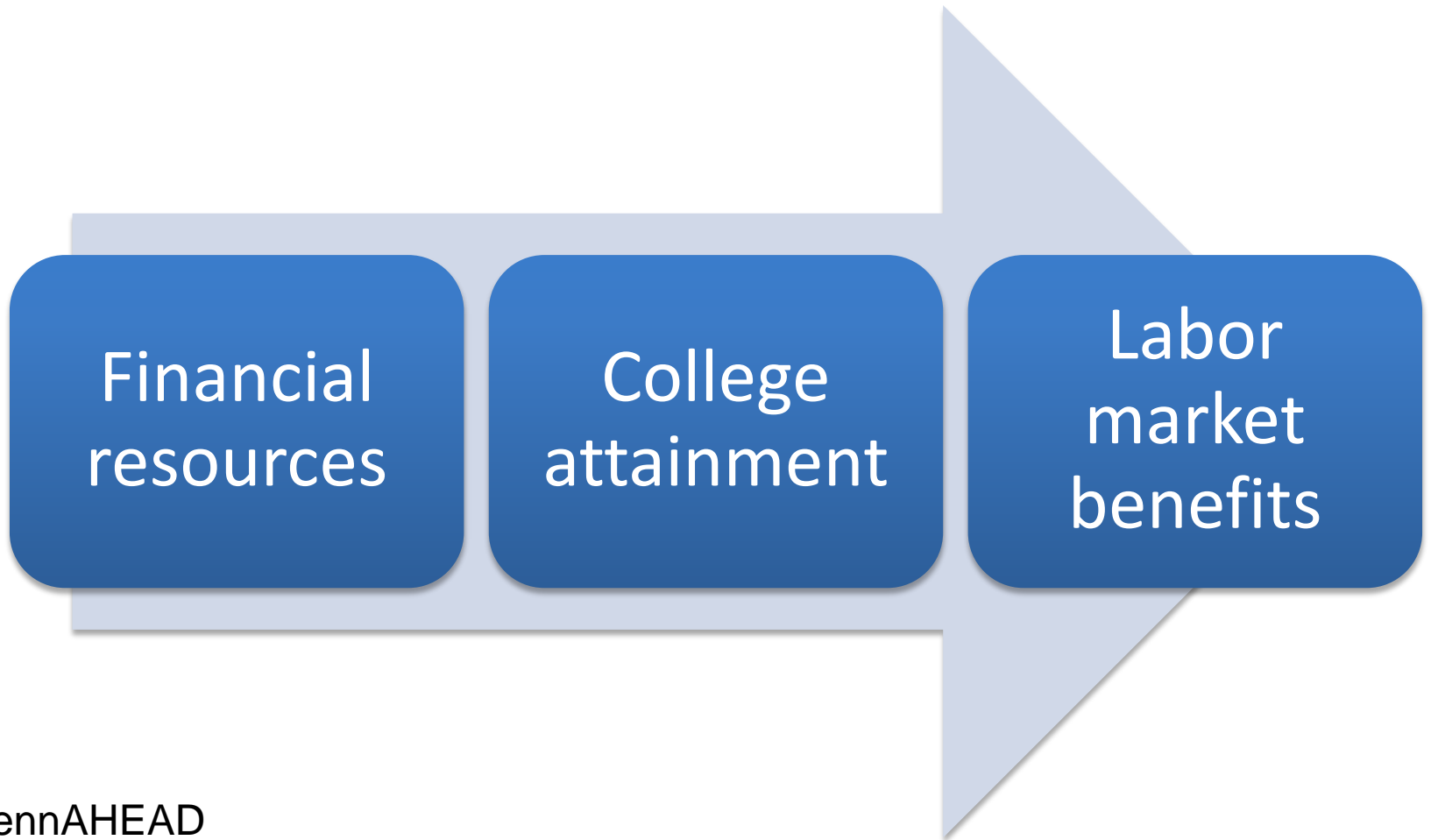
Working definition:

- Incentivize attainment by rewarding students in a particular place who satisfy specified criteria

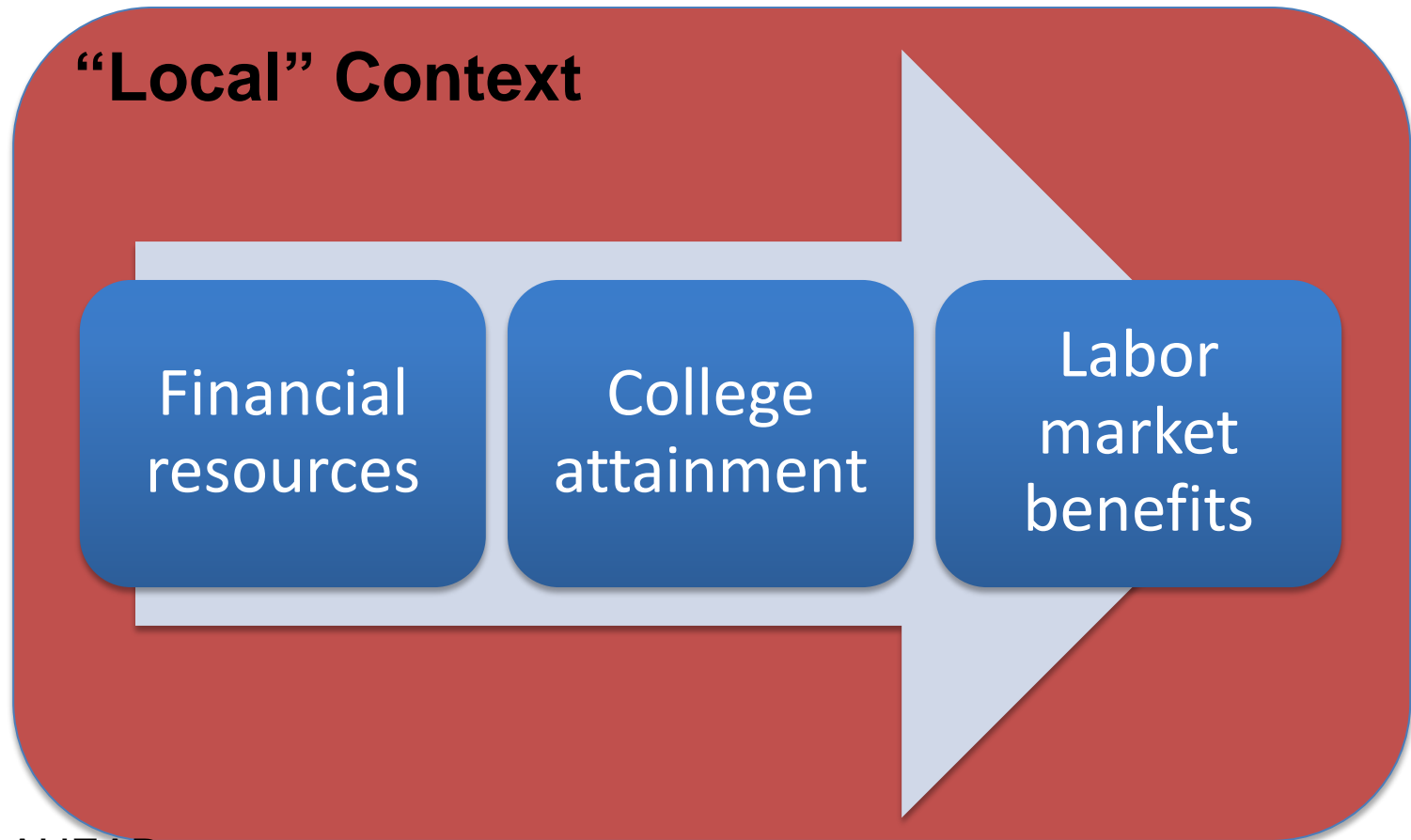
Questions:

- What is being “promised”? What is the “reward”?
- What is required to get the promised reward?
- Who is eligible for the promised reward?

Theory of Change: Financial Aid Programs



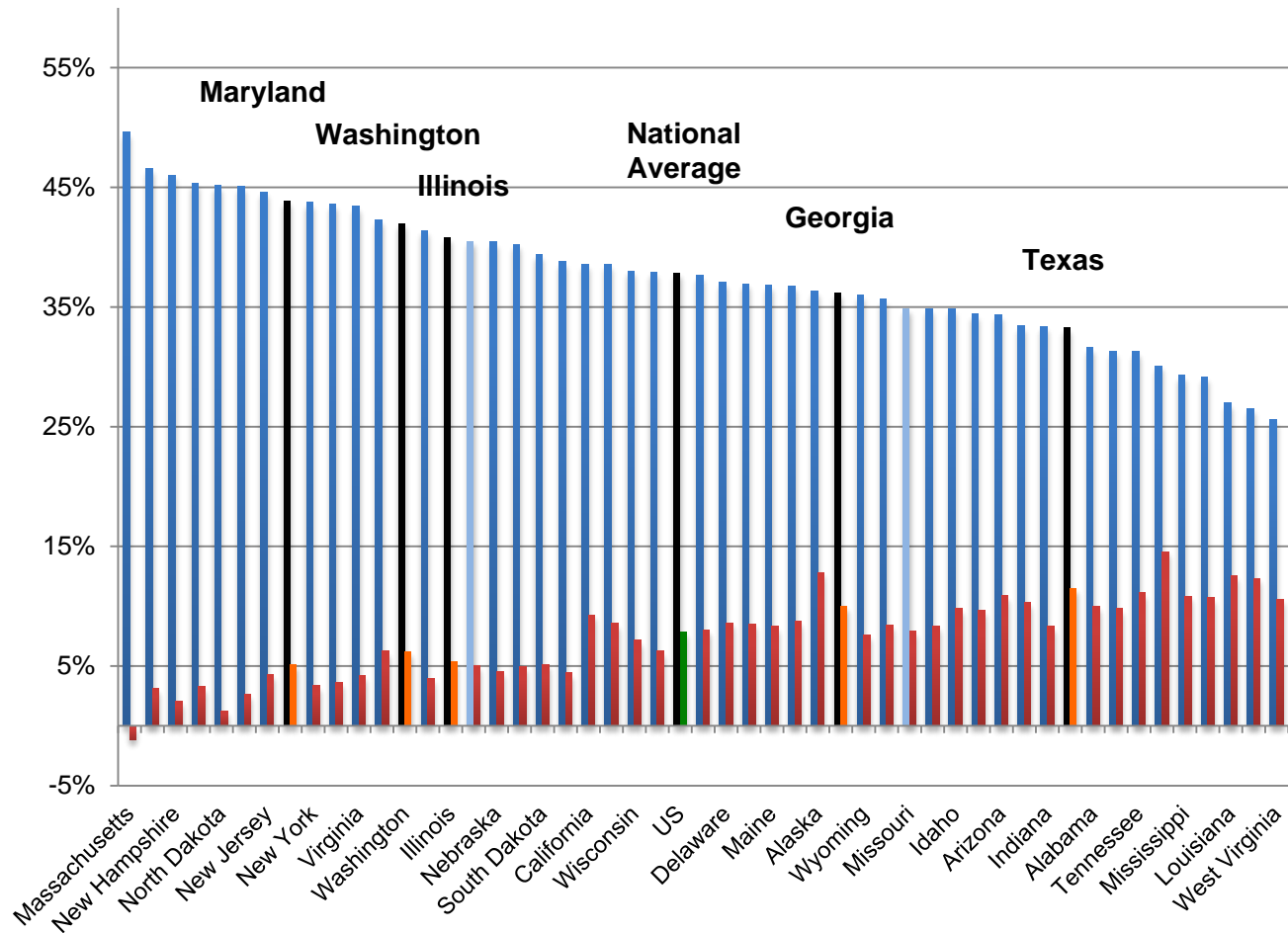
Theory of Change: College Promise Programs



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College Attainment Varies by State: 2008

Percent of Adults Age 25 and Older with at Least an Associate's Degree

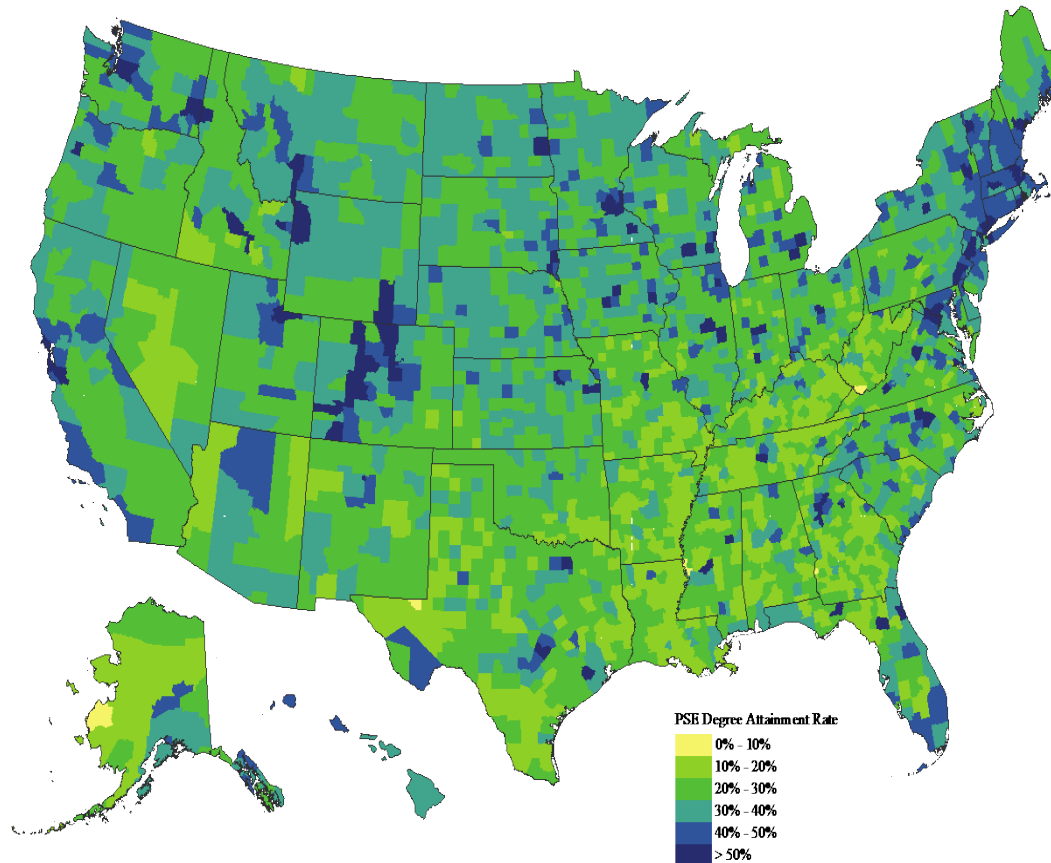


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Source: Perna & Finney (2014). *The Attainment Agenda*. Analyses by NCHEMS.

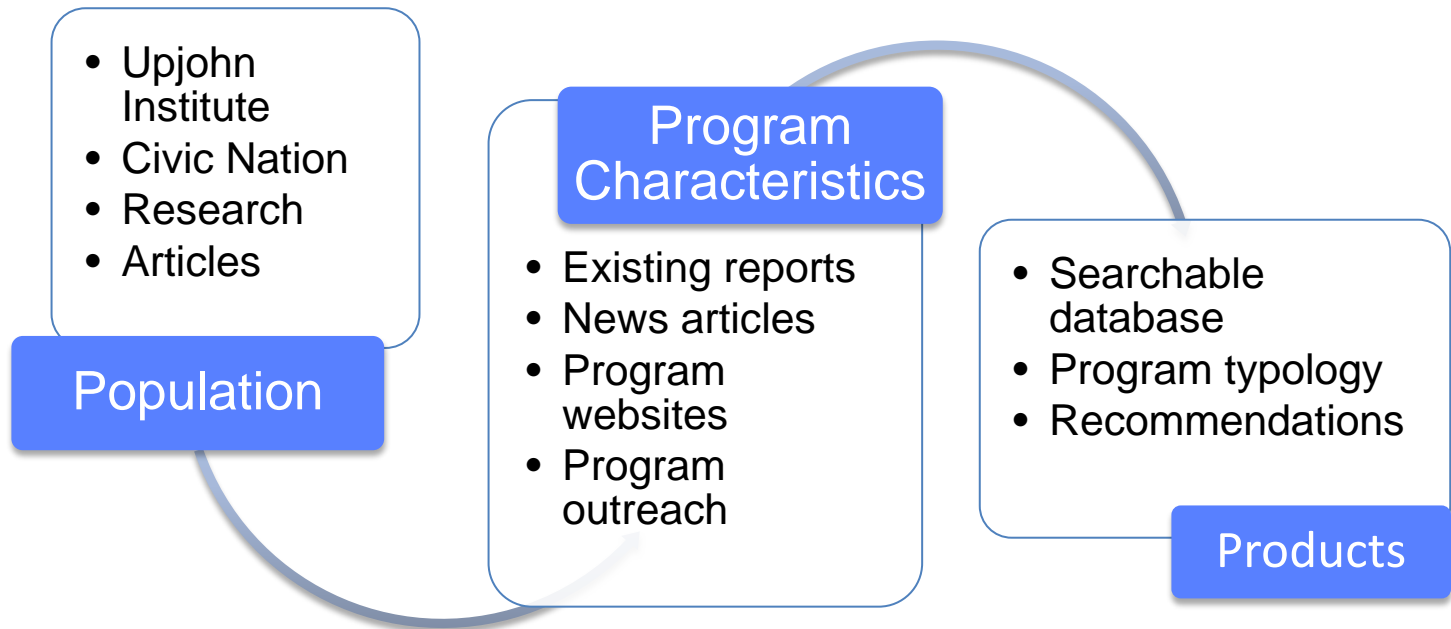
College Attainment Varies by County: 2015

Percent of Adults Age 25 and Older with at Least an Associate's Degree



Source: Ruiz, R., & Perna, L. W. (forthcoming). The Geography of College Attainment: Dismantling Rural 'Disadvantage.' Analysis of data from the American Community Survey.

Our Project



Acknowledgements

Research Team:

- Laura Perna and Elaine Leigh
- Roman Ruiz, Kata Orosz, Steph Carroll, Glen Casey, Vanessa Khoo, Devon Hernandez, Ashley Napier, Destiny McLennan

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- Civic Nation
- Sage Scholars
- Penn-Wharton Public Policy Initiative

Searchable Database of Promise Programs

<http://www.ahead-penn.org/creating-knowledge/college-promise>

The banner features the PennGSE logo on the left, which includes the University of Pennsylvania crest and the text 'Graduate School of Education PennGSE'. On the right, there is a navigation menu with the following items: 'Creating KNOWLEDGE', 'Improving PRACTICE', 'Engaging GLOBALLY', 'Leading the CONVERSATION', 'About AHEAD', and 'What's AHEAD'. The main content area contains a dark blue circle with the text 'College Promise Programs', followed by the text 'A comprehensive catalog of College Promise programs in the United States'. To the right of this text is the PennAHEAD logo, which includes the University of Pennsylvania crest and the text 'PennAHEAD Alliance for Higher Education and Democracy'.

College Promise Programs

With financial support from [Civic Nation](#), this project is designed to advance research-based understanding of College Promise programs in the United States.

What is a College Promise program?

Over the last decade—but especially in the past few years—programs with the "promise" label have been advanced at local, state, and federal levels. These programs are designed to increase college attainment in particular places. The Kalamazoo Promise program,

COLLEGE PROMISE PROGRAMS

Home

[Search for Promise Programs](#)

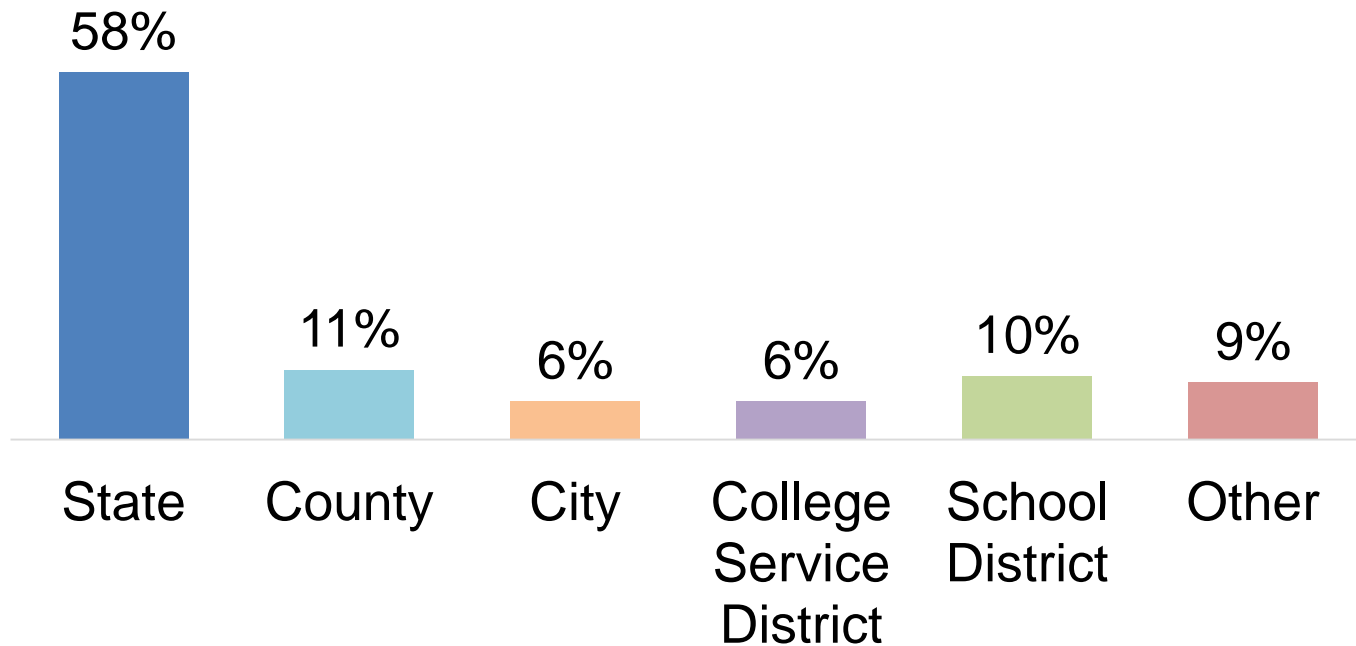
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Varying Definitions of “Place”



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In Progress: A Typology of Promise Programs

What are meaningful “types” of programs?

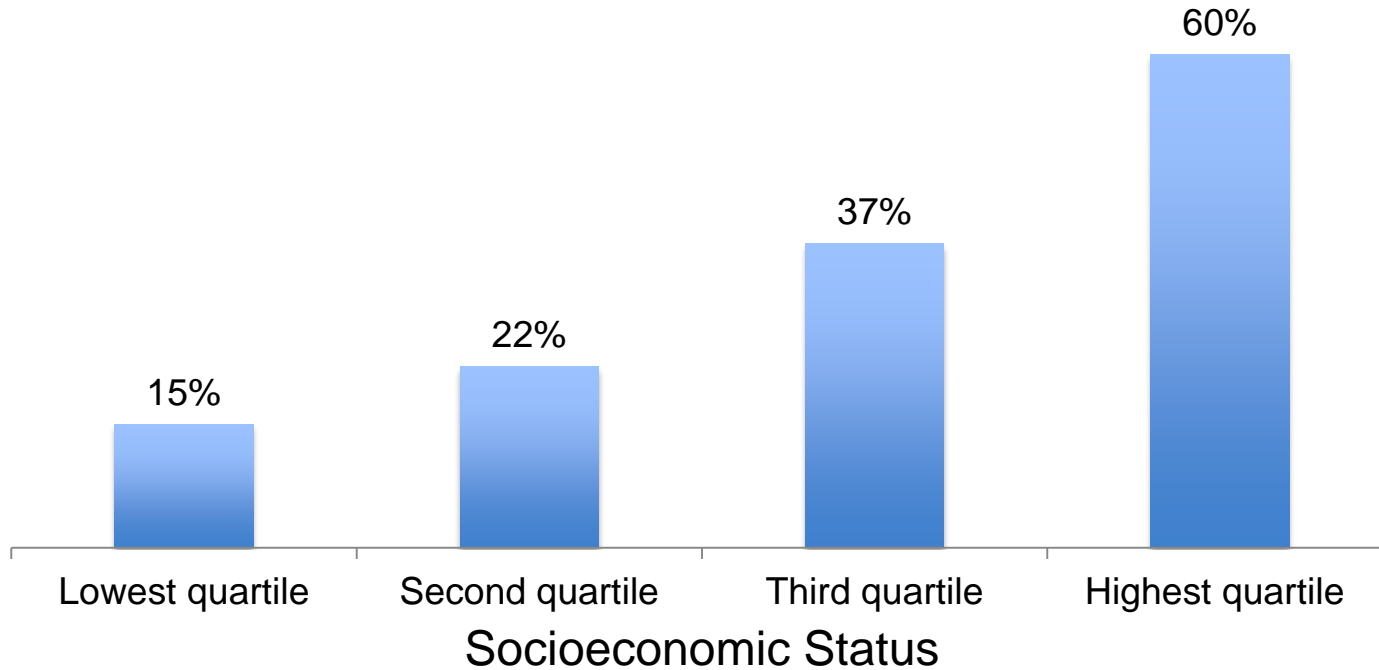
What are characteristics of different program types?

Will College Promise Programs Promote Labor Market Outcomes?

- Do programs increase higher education attainment for individuals who would not otherwise enroll in college?
- What higher education outcomes do they promote?
 - Community college? Four-year degree?
- Do they promote local economic development and/or produce other benefits for communities?
- What are the intended and unintended effects of programs for other stakeholders (e.g., K12 schools, higher education institutions)?

Reduce Gaps in Attainment

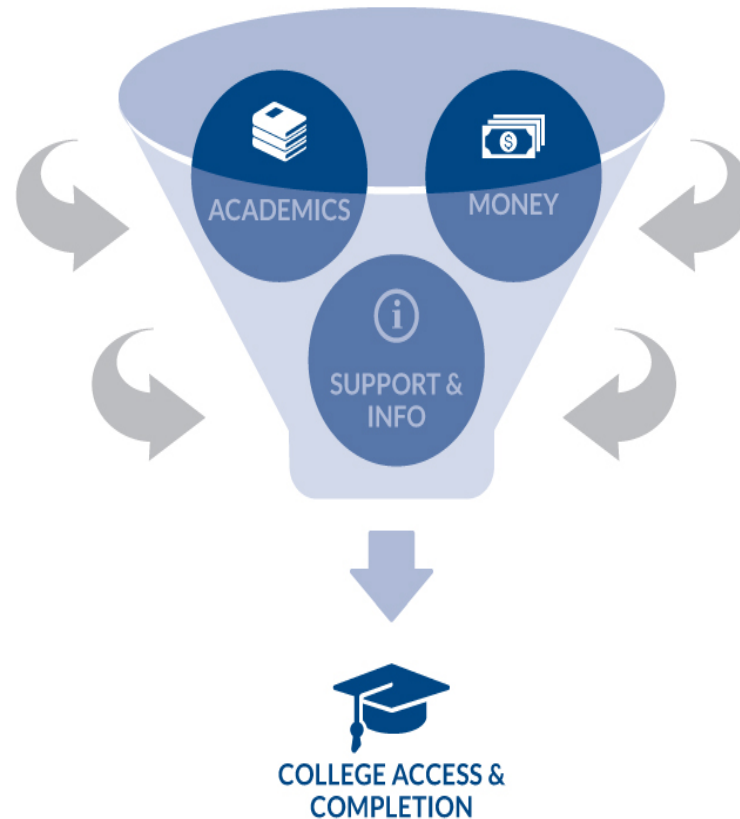
Bachelor's Degree Attainment of 2002 10th Graders by 2012



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Source: Cahalan, M., Perna, L.W., Yamashita, M., Ruiz, R., & Franklin, K. (2016). *Indicators of Higher Education Equity in the United States*. Washington, DC: The Pell Institute and Penn AHEAD.

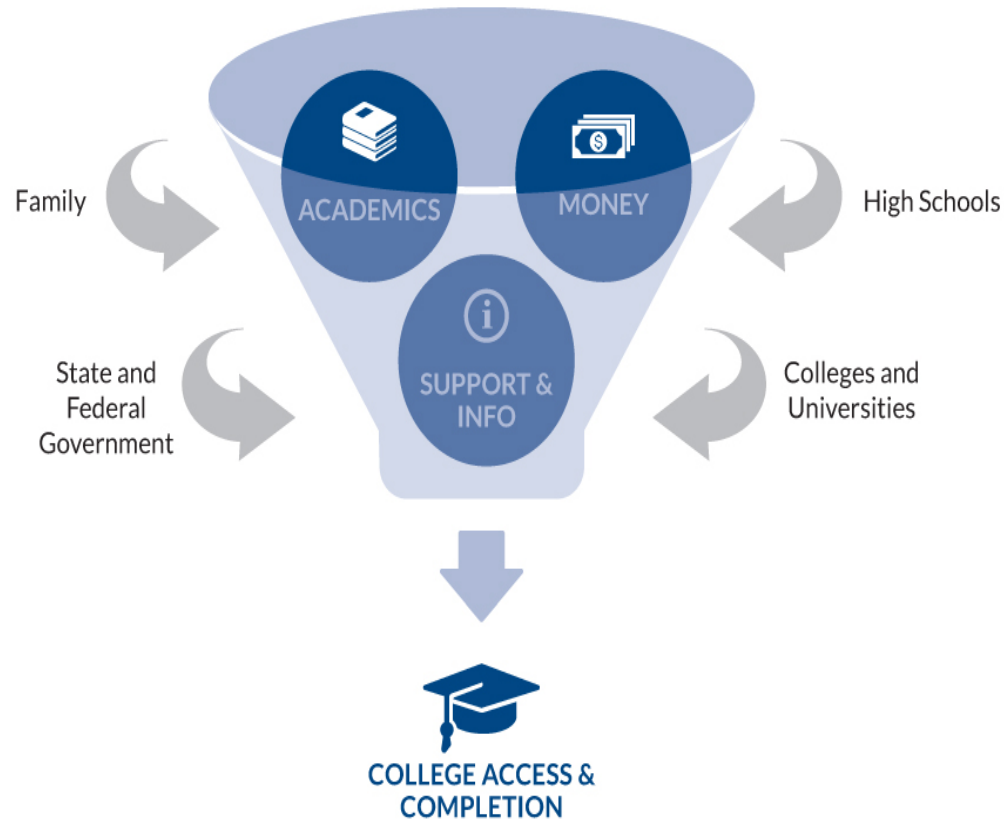
Recognize the Multiple Barriers to College Attainment



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Source: Derived from Perna, L. W. (2006). Studying college choice: A proposed conceptual model. In J. C. Smart (Ed.), *Higher Education: Handbook of theory and research*, Vol. XXI (pp. 99-157). Springer.

Recognize the “Place” or Contexts in Which Students Are Embedded



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Source: Derived from Perna, L. W. (2006). Studying college choice: A proposed conceptual model. In J. C. Smart (Ed.), *Higher Education: Handbook of theory and research*, Vol. XXI (pp. 99-157). Springer.

Next Steps

- Research Conference: “Improving Research-Based Knowledge of College Promise Programs”
- October 19-20, 2017, University of Pennsylvania
- Support from the
 - Education Research Conferences Program of the American Educational Research Association (AERA)
 - WestEd
 - College Promise Campaign
 - PennAHEAD

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Alliance for Higher Education and Democracy

Learn More

<http://ahead-penn.org/creating-knowledge/college-promise>

Contact Us

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