

PATHWAYS

TO POSTSECONDARY SUCCESS

Maximizing Opportunities for Youth in Poverty



Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE) Seminar April 19, 2013

A Project of UC/ACCORD

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Agenda

- **Pathways Project Overview**
- **Developmental Education as a Barrier to Community College Success**
- **Questions**

Project Overview

Pathways to Postsecondary Success is a five-year set of mixed-methods studies focused on maximizing opportunities for low-income youth to earn higher education credentials.

The aims of the project are to advance research on poverty; to produce useful tools that improve educational opportunities; and shape the U.S. policy agenda on the relationships between poverty and postsecondary education.

Research Team

- Our team includes over 50 researchers and includes faculty, post doctoral researchers, graduate students, and undergraduates at 6 universities including UCLA, UCSD, UCI, USC, Sacramento State, and Penn State.

UCLA

UC San Diego



UCIRVINE

University of
Southern California



Research Focus

Study of low-income young adults and their postsecondary pathways to earn a credential with value in the labor market

What are their life experiences?

What systemic opportunities & obstacles exist in their pathway to PSE?

How might the systemic opportunities be maximized & obstacles minimized?

What statistical indicators could provide useful information about progress toward PSE?

Project Frameworks

- Challenge deficit models and connect institutional accountability with issues of poverty and PSE completion
- Importance of youth perspectives and their day-to-day experiences in schools and colleges
- Focus on important demographic groups in poverty: students of color, women & men, immigrants, and single-mothers
- Broaden definition of indicators beyond traditional outcomes

Project Outcomes

1. Literature Review & JESPAR

2. National Analysis

3. California Young Adult Survey

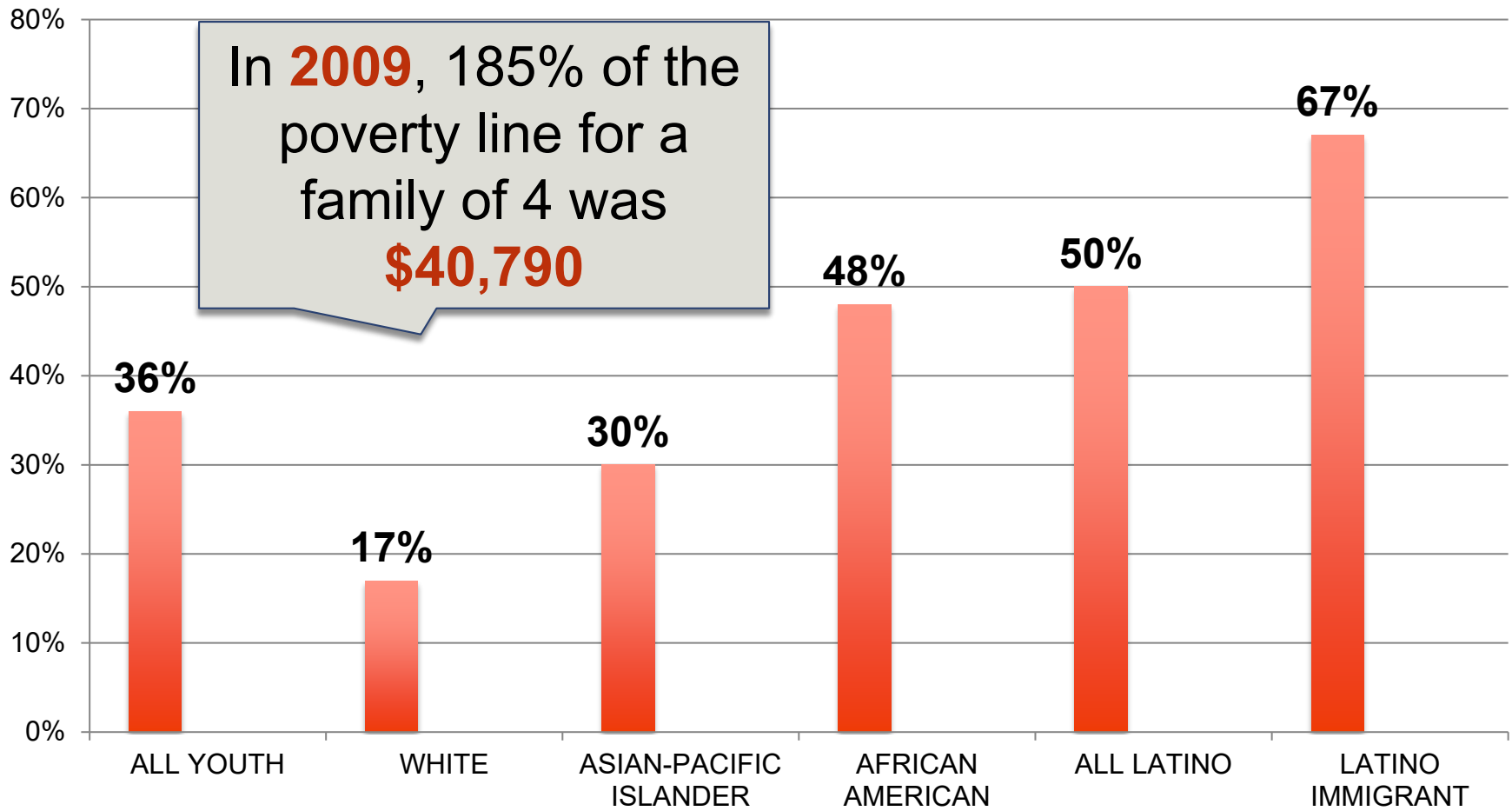
4. Case Studies

5. Indicators

A yellow outline map of the state of California, positioned on the right side of the page. The map is filled with a solid yellow color and has a thin black border.

CALIFORNIA'S YOUTH IN POVERTY

CALIFORNIA POVERTY 16-17 YEAR OLDS



SOURCE: 2007-09 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

Case Studies

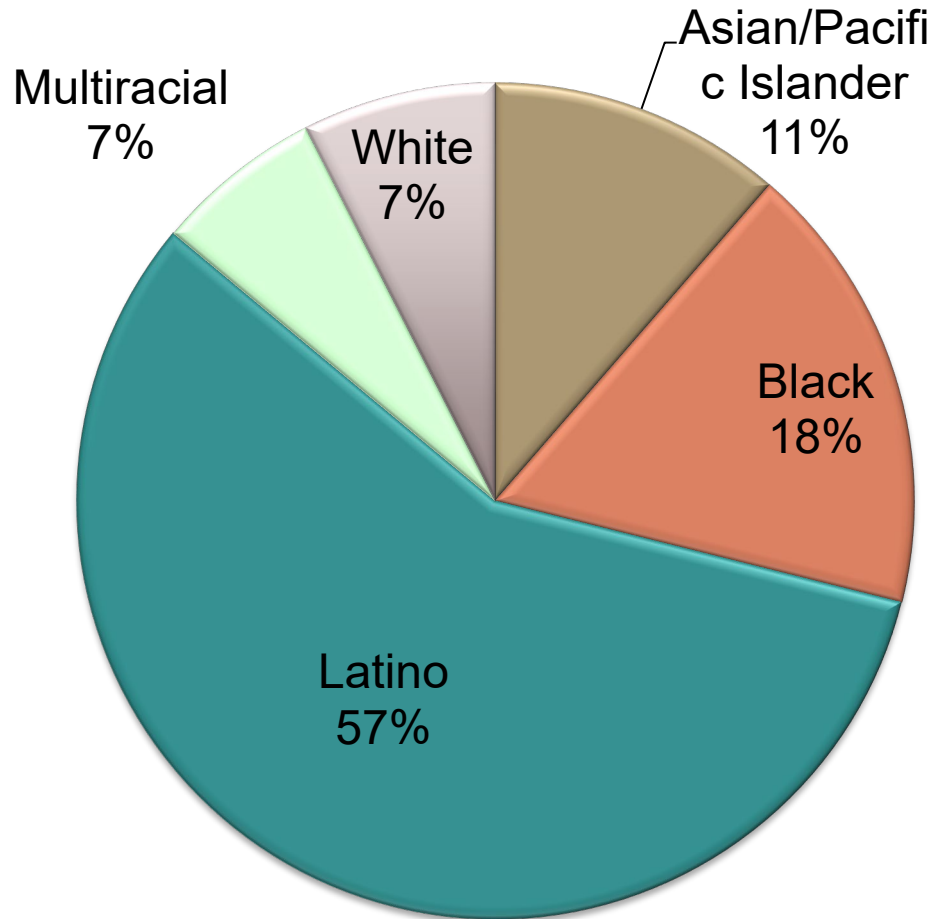
Youth Perspectives on Postsecondary Opportunity



Case Studies

Sites	1) Los Angeles 2) Riverside 3) San Diego
Targeted Institutions	Los Angeles: Community colleges (3) Riverside: Community college & Workforce Prep San Diego: High Schools (6)
Participants (ages 16-26*) *certificate programs 16-35 years	Primary: - Los Angeles: Low-SES Community College (CC) Students - Riverside: Low-income Women / Single-Mothers in CCs - San Diego: Low-income High School Junior & Seniors Secondary: Institutional Representatives
Number of Participants	80-100 per site
Data Sources	Primary: - 2 – 3 interviews with student participants over 2 year period - Interviews with institutional representatives Secondary: Shadow a select group of youth

Case Study Demographics



N=308

CONTEXT

California Community Colleges

Community College as...

The last opportunity to “get it together”



The first meaningful experience with school engagement



A means of building a new self-identity and higher self-esteem



A way to broaden world-view and build interest in new lines of work and interest areas

Barriers to Community College Success

The Latina/o Case

CONTEXT

Community College Pathways

WHY A NON-LINEAR PATHWAY

CASE

Latina/o Developmental Education

Critical Transitions

- Our project focuses on the critical transitions that students encounter in and through community college.
- Two critical transitions at students include placement testing and developmental education, or “remedial” courses.

Students' Experiences with Developmental Education Courses

- Students feel stuck in developmental education courses, often spending 2-3 years before taking college level courses
- While some students found the courses to be helpful refreshers, most felt as though they were repeating middle or high school coursework
- Students encountered ineffective pedagogy

Student Voices about Placement Tests

They never told me “if you didn’t score high enough you were not going to be able to take a lot of classes.”

I didn’t know what to study from. It was a “what do you know” kind of test.

It disappointed me because I already took that class in high school so I don’t want to take it again and pay for it.

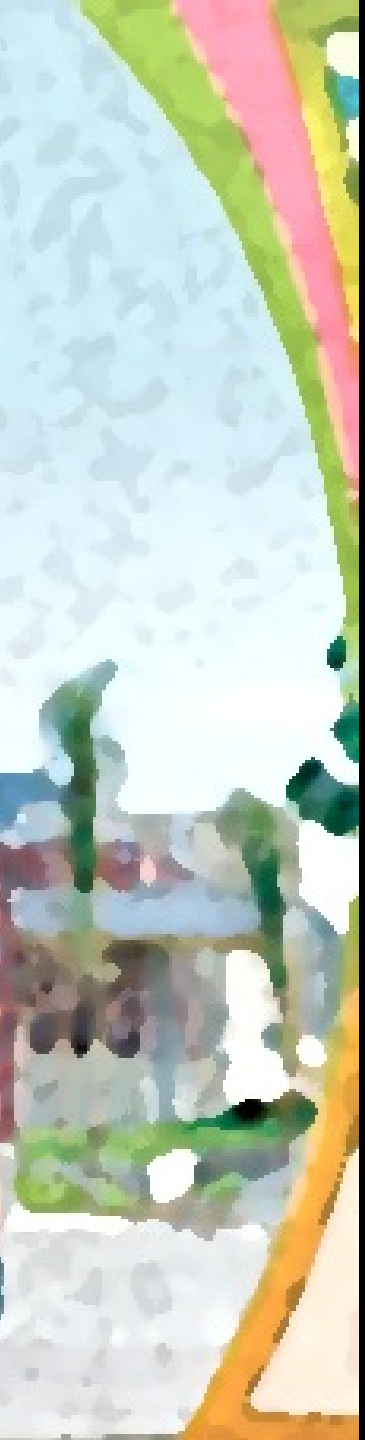
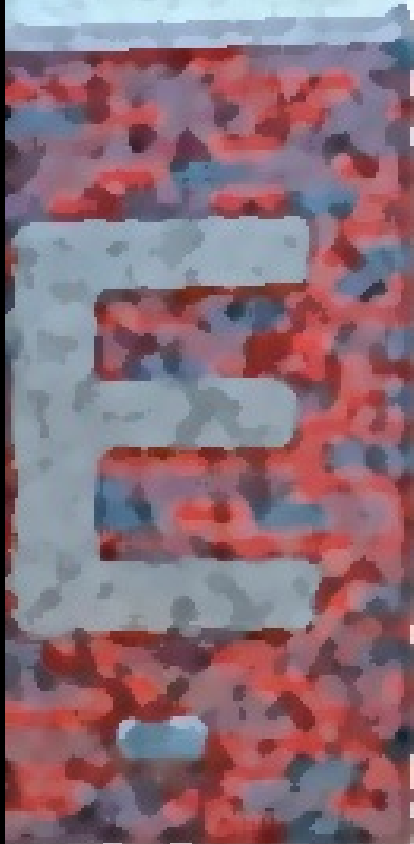
Student Voices on Developmental Education

It could be three to four years to transfer from a community college and that's kind of scary ... I feel I haven't progressed!

English 28 was like middle school English ...I already did all of that.

There was a time in Math 40, my brother's in seventh, sixth grade. And we were taking the same class!

HOPE



THANK YOU

**For more information:
<http://pathways.gseis.ucla.edu/>**