While Black students have made enrollment gains over the past two decades, there has been less progress in closing the degree attainment gap. Black students are also more likely to receive Pell Grants and take out federal student loans.

ENROLLMENT

- Between 2000 and 2010, total Black undergraduate enrollment increased by 73% (from 1.5 million students to 2.7 million).
  - However, between 2009 and 2019, the number of Black undergraduates who enrolled right after high school decreased from 2.5 million students to 2.1 million students.
- Of the 16.6 million total undergraduate students enrolled in the Fall of 2019, Black students made up 2.1 million students of the undergraduate population (12.7%) but they were not equally represented at different institution types.
  - Black students made up 12% of the student population at 4-year public institutions, 13% of the student population at 4-year private nonprofit institutions, and 29% of the student population at 4-year private for-profit institutions.
  - Only 15% of Black students attended a highly selective institution, and only 8% of Black students attended an elite research institution.

DEGREE ATTAINMENT

- In 2019, 29% of the Black population aged 25 to 29 held a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 45% of the white population in the same age range.
- Bachelor's degree attainment for Black people aged 25 to 29 has increased more slowly than among white people.
  - 29% of Black people aged 25 to 29 held a bachelor's degree or higher in 2019, up 11 percentage points from 18% in 2000. By comparison, degree attainment for white 25- to 29-year-olds increased from 34% to 45% during the same time period.
  - In 2019, approximately 40% of Black adults aged 25 to 29 had at least a two-year college degree, an increase from 26% in 2000. Among white adults, this level of degree attainment grew from 44% in 2000 to 56% in 2019.
- Black students earned 14% of all bachelor's degrees, 7% of all master's degrees, and 5% of all doctoral degrees conferred in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields in the 2018-19 academic year.
GRANTS, LOANS & DEBT

- 72% of Black students received Pell Grants in 2015-16, compared with 34% of white students. The average award for Black students was $5,000.
- In the 2015-2016 academic year, 71% of Black students took out federal student loans, compared with 56% of white students.
- In the 2015-16 academic year, Black students took out larger federal loans on average ($11,140) than Hispanic ($10,500), Asian ($10,940), and American Indian/Alaska Native ($9,210) students. On average, white students ($12,100) and Pacific Islander students ($12,560) took out slightly higher loan amounts than Black students.

SOURCES


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