

The Campaign for

# College Opportunity

## “Return On Investment” Ethnic Snapshot

### Introduction

A landmark study by UC Berkeley researchers titled, “Return on Investment: Educational Choices and Demographic Change in California’s Future” looks at the state’s demographic future and the return on investment for expanding college opportunity. ***The study finds that for every dollar spent increasing the number of students attending college and completing degrees, the state gets three dollars in net return on that investment.***

The report also provides critical demographic projections for the State’s future population. During the 1990s, California became a minority-majority state as the non-Hispanic White population fell below 50%. By 2000, the population of California was ***47% non-Hispanic Whites, 32% Latino, 12% Asian, and 7% African American.*** The California population is expected to grow to 43 million by the year 2020 and to 55 million by the year 2050, with most of this growth driven by increases in minority populations.

This sheet provides a few quick snapshots at some of the trends in the African American, Latino and the Asian Pacific Islander population. For more detailed snapshots for each of these ethnic groups, visit our website at [www.collegecampaign.org](http://www.collegecampaign.org)

### Key Findings:

Among 18-24 year olds, ***28% of African Americans lack a high school diploma and only 40% report any college attendance.*** Although African Americans have college-going rates comparable to non-Hispanic Whites, they have ***extremely high drop out rates from college as a group and earn Baccalaureate degrees at one of the lowest rates amongst all ethnic groups.*** ***Only 45% of 18 year-old African Americans are expected to go to a public college in California, only 19% will reach a public 4-year university and only 9% earn a Baccalaureate Degree there.***

***Latinos are the fastest growing population, growing by more than two-thirds from 2000-2020.*** Growth in the Latino population is striking for all age groups in the state, but this growth is particularly critical among the college-going age group (18-24 year olds). In this age group, ***Latinos are most likely to have no high school diploma and least likely to have entered college.*** ***Less than one third of 18 year-old Latinos are expected to go to a public college in California, only 15% will enter a public 4-year university and only 10% will earn a Baccalaureate Degree there.***

***The Asian and Pacific Islander population has grown tremendously in the past few decades. Their levels of college-going and rates of degree completion are the highest amongst all ethnic groups, including non-Hispanic Whites. Nearly 80% of 18-year old Asians are expected to go to a public college and nearly 43% will earn a Baccalaureate Degree there.***

### Conclusion

The study makes it clear that the return on investment is very positive for the state. For ***every dollar spent increasing the number of students attending college and completing degrees, the state gets three dollars in net return on that investment.*** This snapshot provides sobering information to focus attention on encouraging higher rates of high school graduation for Latinos and African Americans, and improving the success of those who do graduate from high school and enroll in college. We must continue to encourage and support college participation and success amongst Whites and Asian/Pacific Islanders and we must increase college participation and success amongst all our young adults. Given what we know about the positive return on investment, the future workforce needs and the growing number of young adults, this information is a call to action.