

# First-generation College Students in 2020

## DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT

**26%**

of undergraduates had parents with no postsecondary education.

**54%**

of undergraduates had parents who did not have a bachelor's degree. This is the definition of first-generation that is used in this fact sheet.

**60%**

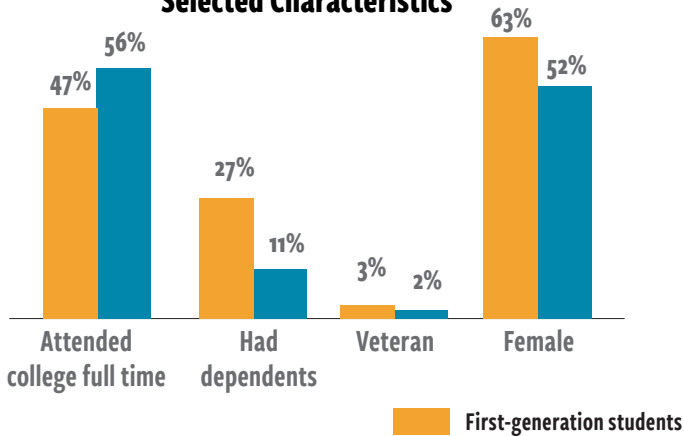
of undergraduates whose parents did not have a bachelor's degree were also the first sibling in their family to go to college.

### MEDIAN PARENTAL INCOME OF FINANCIALLY DEPENDENT STUDENTS

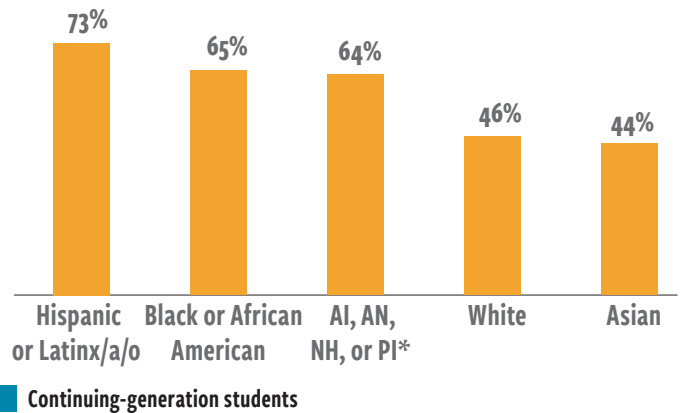
First-generation students' parents' median income was **\$41,000** in both 2016 and 2020.

Continuing-generation students' parents' income increased from **\$90,000** in 2016 to **\$103,000** in 2020.

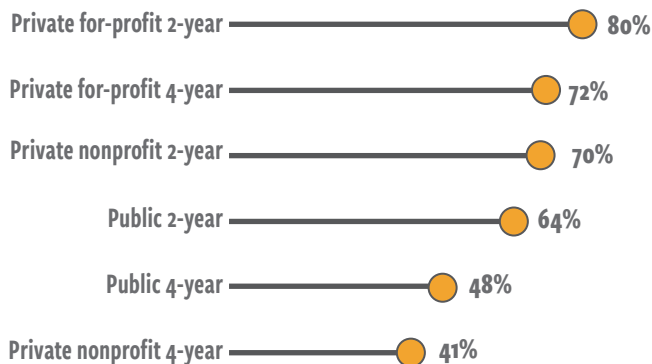
Percentage of Undergraduates with Selected Characteristics



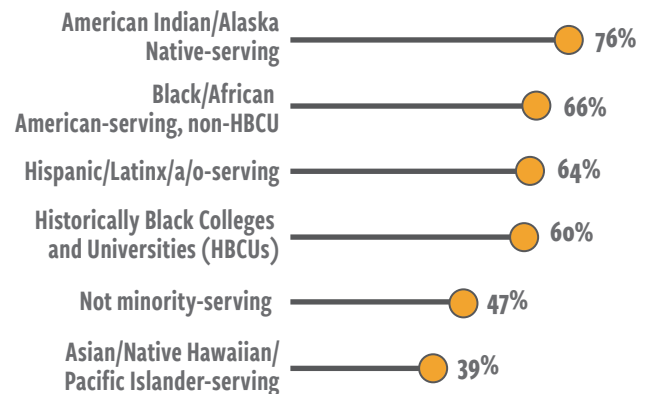
Percentage of Undergraduates who were First-generation, by Race/ethnicity



Dependents who were First-generation, by College Sector



Percentage of Undergraduates who were First-generation, by Type of Minority-serving Institution



\*"AI, AN, NH, or PI" is American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, or other Pacific Islander. First-generation student is defined as an undergraduate whose parents do not have a bachelor's degree. Parents' median income is based on financially dependent students only. Fact sheet represents undergraduate students enrolled in Title IV eligible postsecondary institutions in academic year 2019–20. Race/ethnicity categories are mutually exclusive. NASPA recognizes that each racial identity is defined by diverse populations. While aggregation is a useful tool to understand patterns, there are opportunities for continued study to disaggregate the data further. Percentages are rounded. Data sources are 2019–20 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:20), National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, and 2015–16 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:16), National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education. NPSAS:20 was released in 2023 and is the most recent iteration of NPSAS. The number of survey respondents was about 81,000, representing a population of 17.1 million undergraduates. Fact sheet produced by RTI International.