ILLINOIS EDUCATION AND CAREER
SUCCESS NETWORK

Success Network Policy Committee

Q3 Meeting

September 24, 2025

Welcome & Introductions

Please share in the chat:

- Your name and organization
- Your favorite back to school tradition

Agenda

Today's Policy Committee meeting will be recorded and shared online.

- Welcome & Introductions
- Illinois Workforce and Education Research Collaborative (IWERC) Report
- College & Career Pathway Endorsement (CCPE) Workgroup Memo
- State Policy Updates and Veto Session Preview
- Looking Ahead through SY 2025-26
- Wrap-Up and Announcements

September 24, 2025

PRECARIOUS PROSPECTS: COLLEGE COMPLETION AND THE BRIDGE TO EMPLOYMENT

Illinois Education [illegible] Outcomes & Work
Policy Committee

DPI

IWERC
ILLINOIS WORKFORCE AND EDUCATION RESEARCH COLLABORATIVE

UCHICAGO Consortium on School Research

AGENCY PARTNERS

- ISAC
- IDES
- ISBE

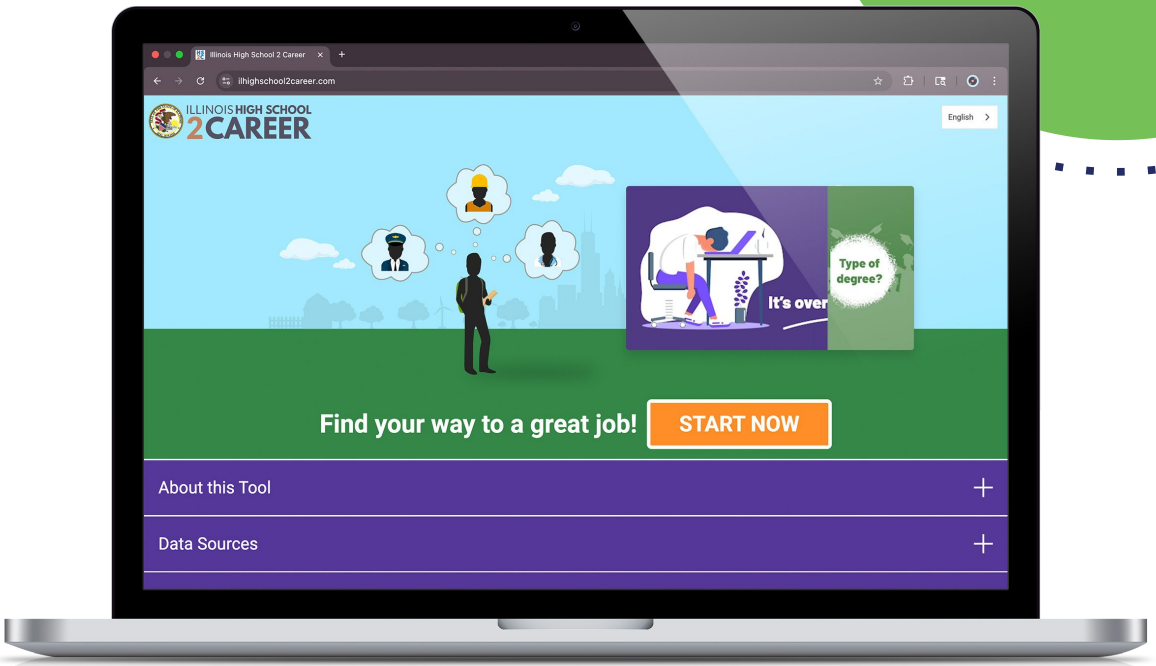

Photo Mockup Designed by D3images / Freepik

http://ilhighschool2career.com

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ILLINOIS HS2C DATASET

Sample: Senior classes of 2008-2012

Inclusion criteria:

Complete the FAFSA

Work in IL in a stable job 3 years after college

Who are we missing?

Just ¼ of student with only high school education

Students who worked outside of IL (including many of those who went to college out of state)

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STUDENTS FROM LOW-INCOME FAMILIES

Parent Earnings Quintile 5 (Q5)
Parent Earnings Quintile 4 (Q4)

Parent Earnings Quintile 3 (Q3)

Parent Earnings Quintile 2 (Q2)

Parent Earnings Quintile 1 (Q1)

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STUDENTS FROM LOW-INCOME FAMILIES

Students from middle and high income families

Parent Q5

Parent Q4

Parent Q3

Students from low income families

Parent Q2

Parent Q1

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RESEARCH QUESTIONS

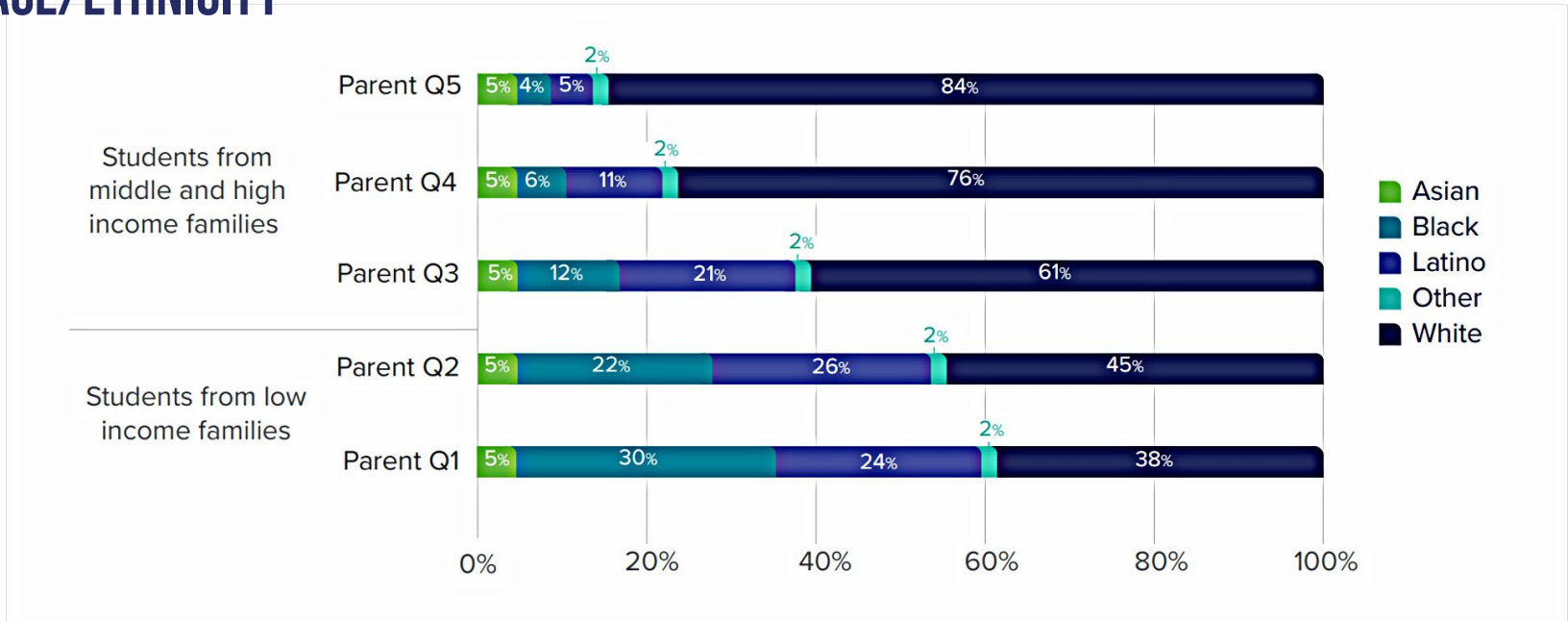
1. What were the **demographic characteristics** of students from low-income households?

2. What postsecondary **degrees** did students from low-income households attain and in what **degree programs**? What **industries** did students from low-income households go on to work in?

3. How did students' career **earnings** vary by the income level of the households they grew up in?

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

RACE/ETHNICITY



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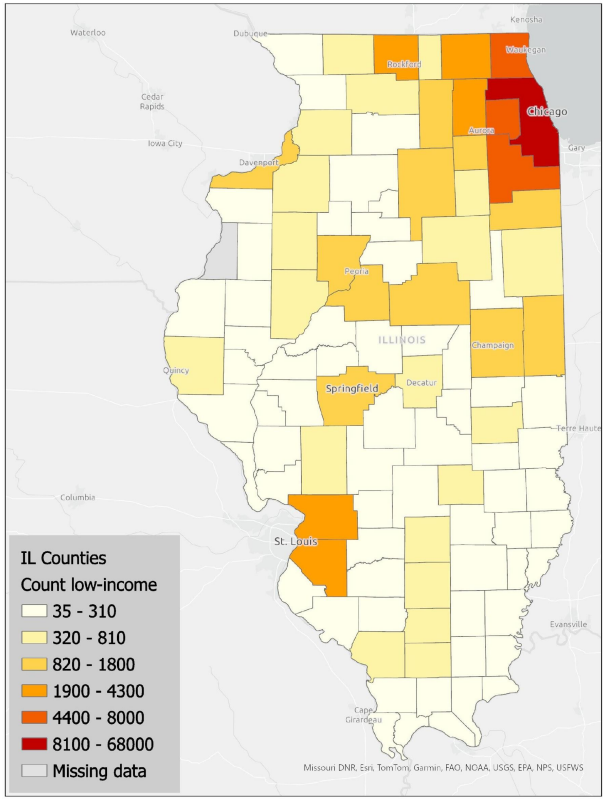
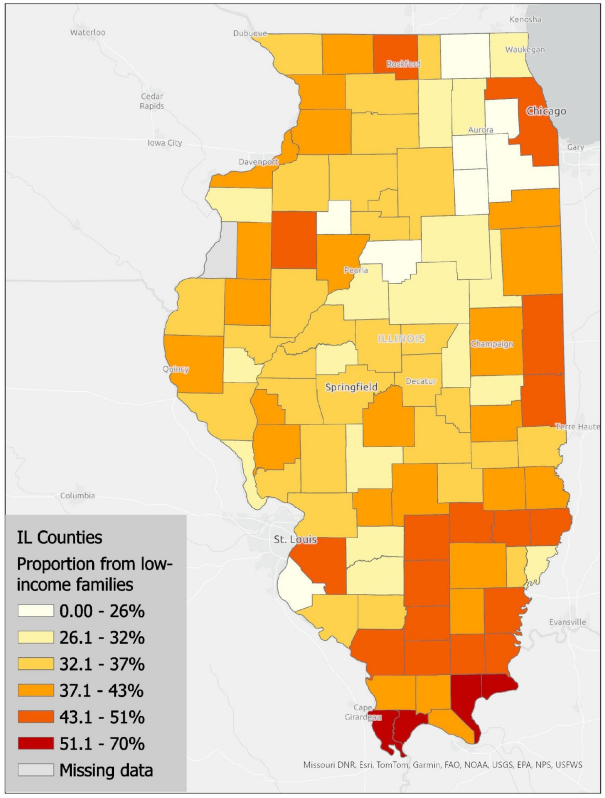
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

GEOGRAPHY





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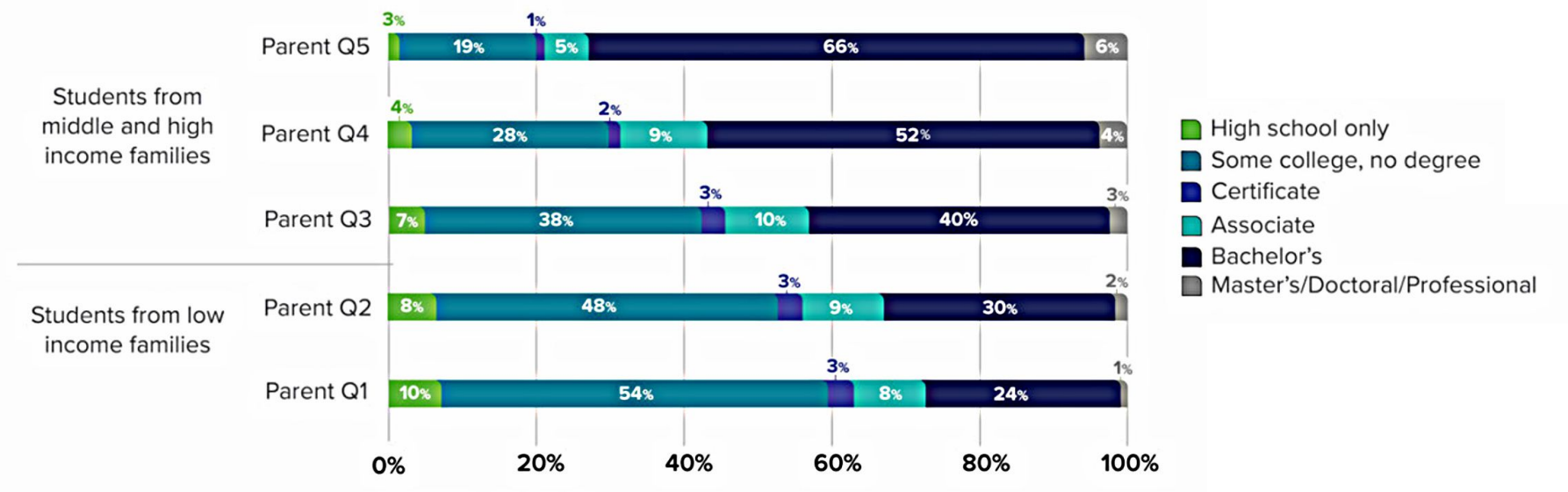
DEGREE LEVEL



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DPI IWERC

INDUSTRY

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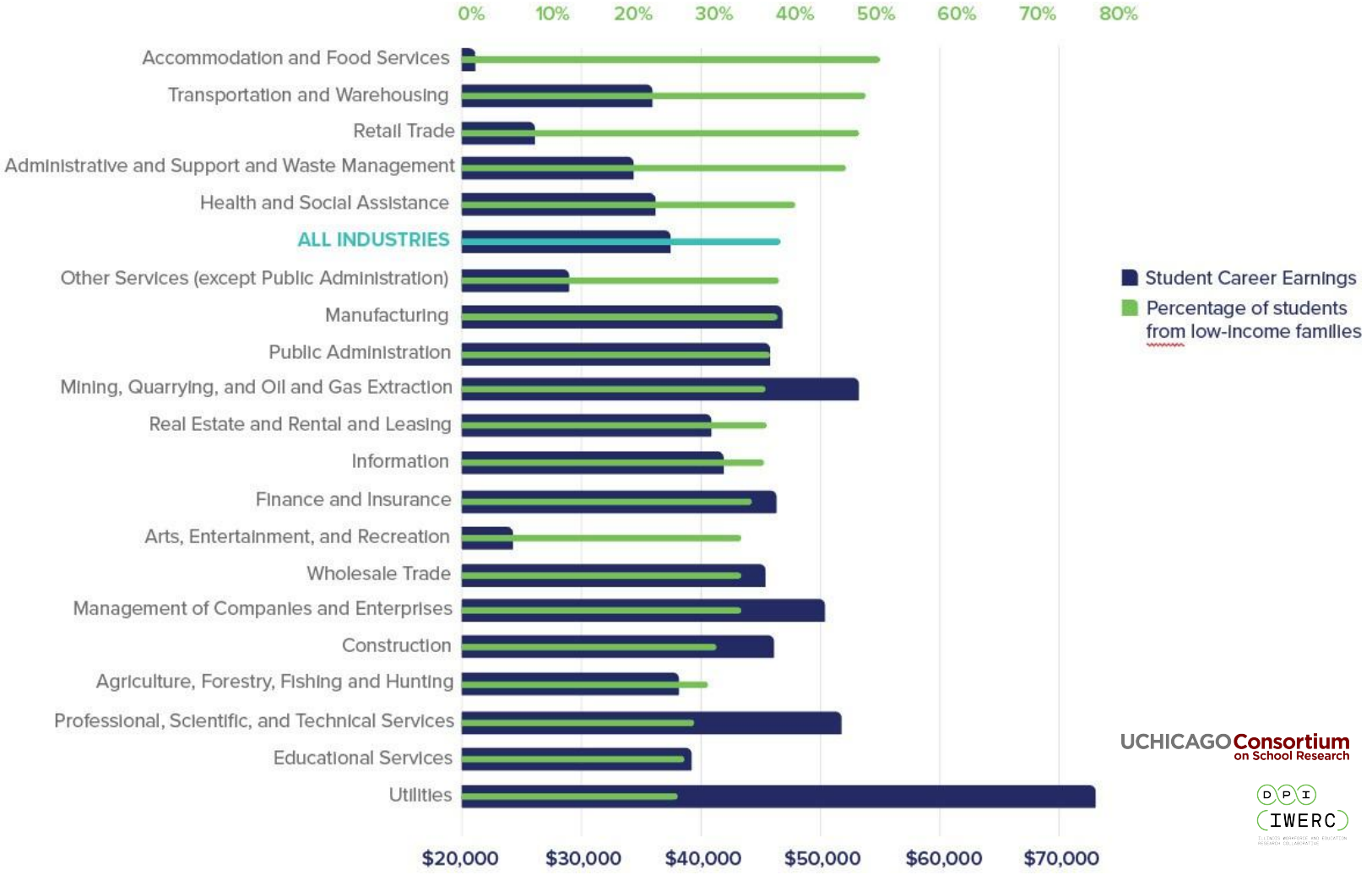
INDUSTRY



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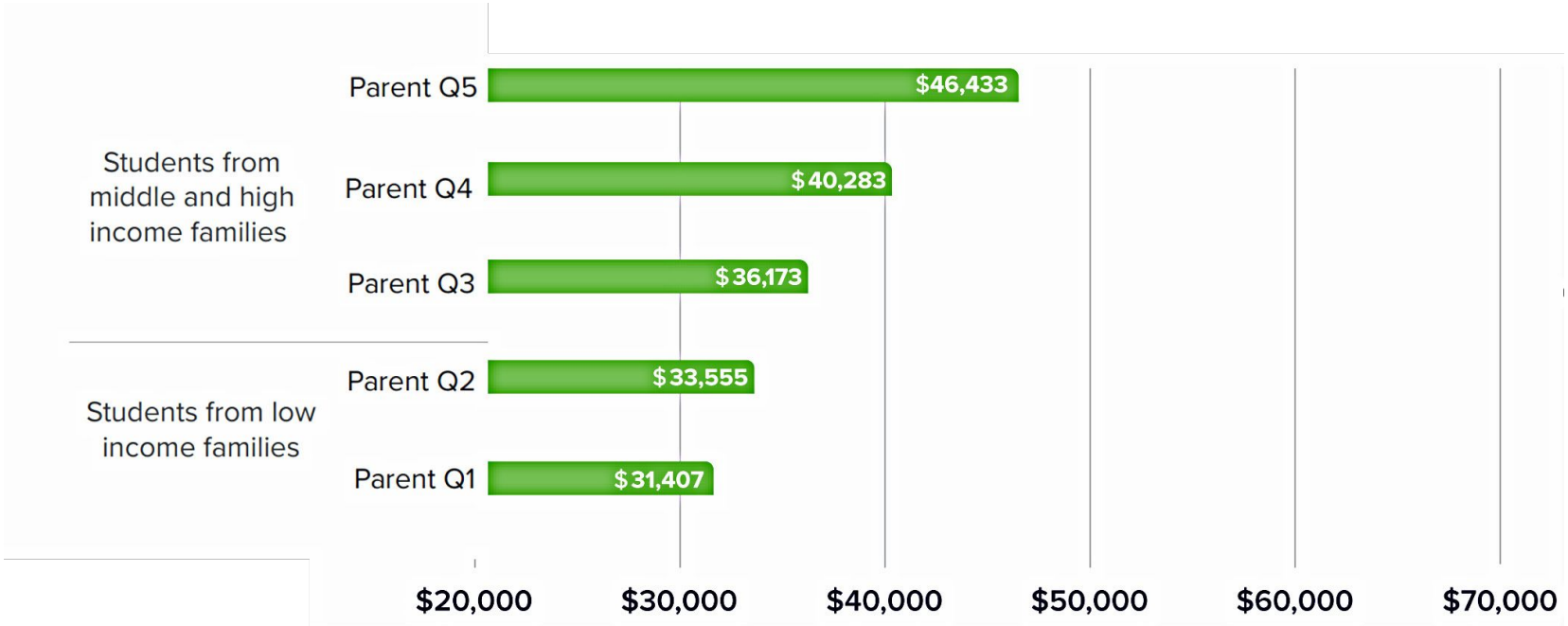
AVERAGE SOCIOECONOMIC EARNINGS DISPARITIES



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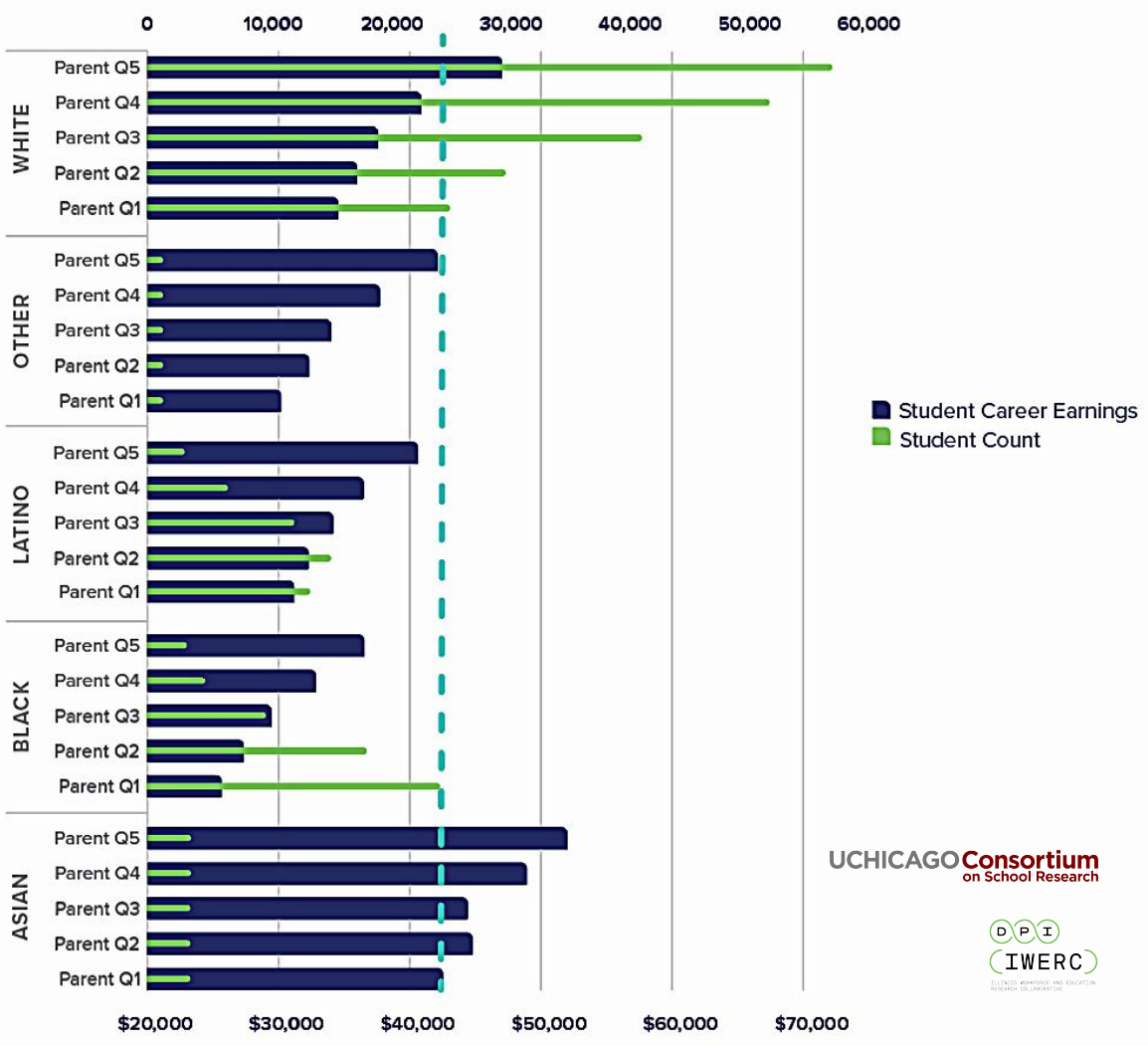
AVERAGE SOCIOECONOMIC EARNINGS DISPARITIES BY RACE



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AVERAGE SOCIOECONOMIC EARNINGS DISPARITIES BY GENDER

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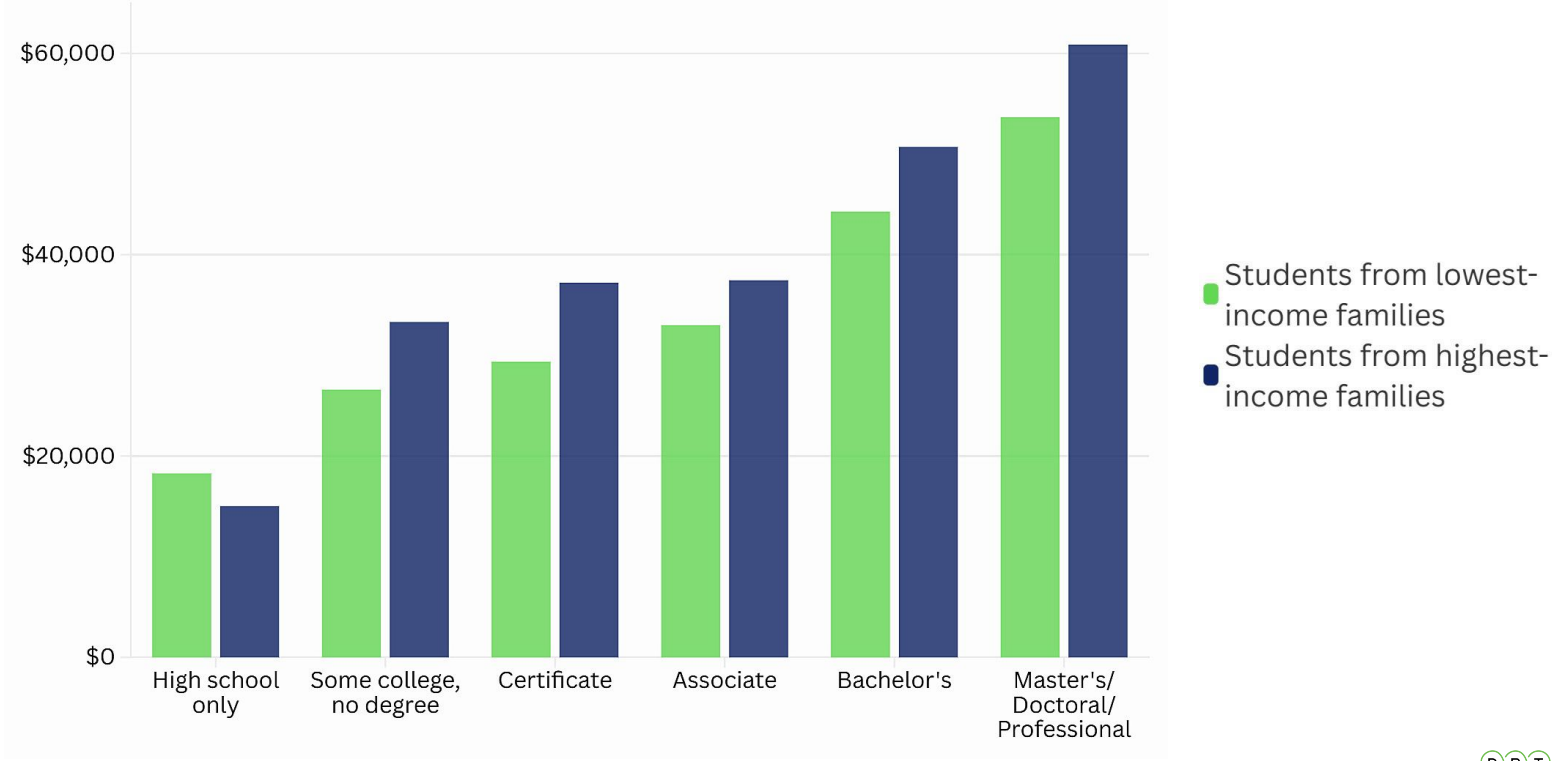
AVERAGE SOCIOECONOMIC EARNINGS DISPARITIES BY DEGREE LEVEL



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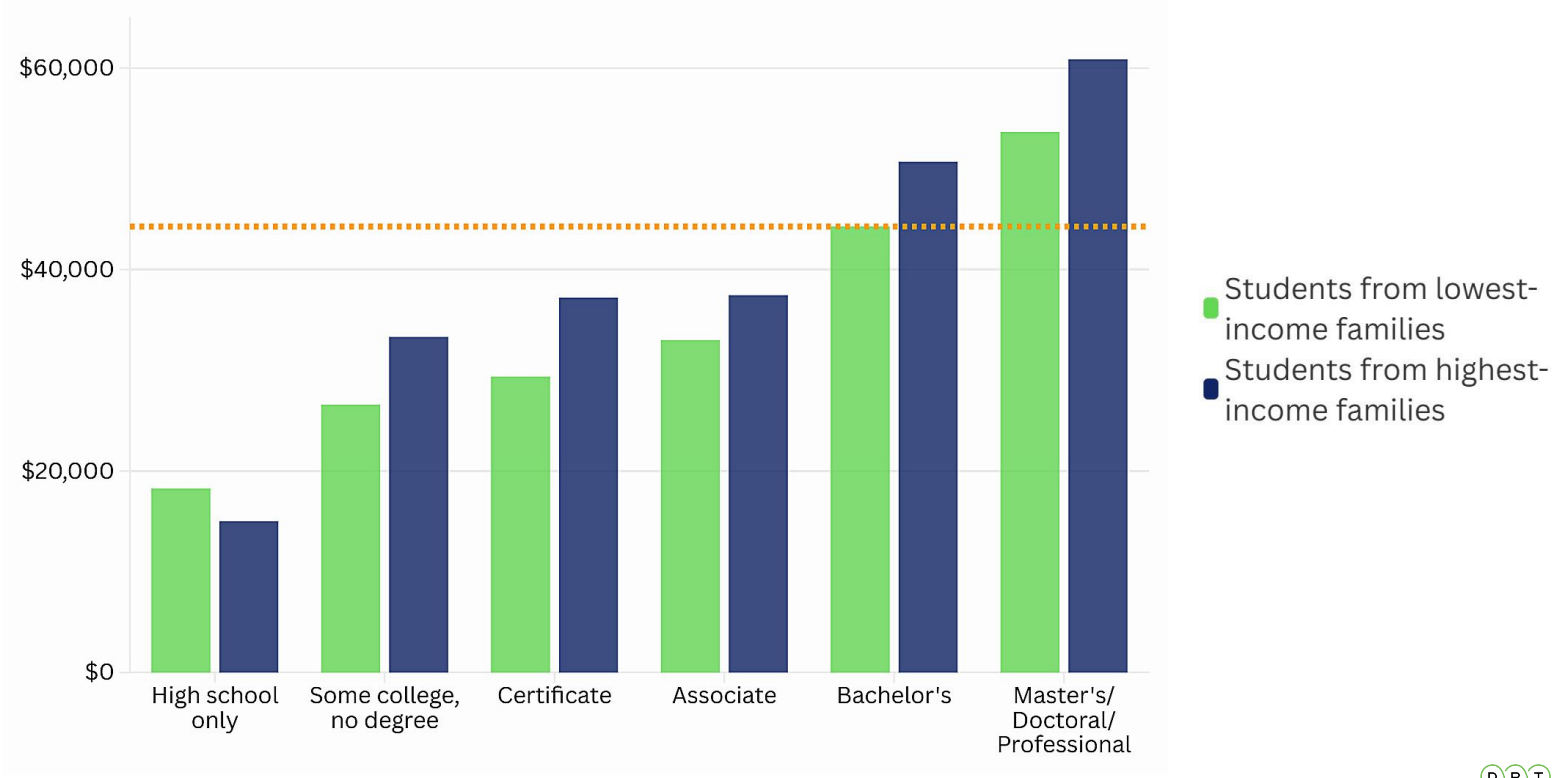
AVERAGE SOCIOECONOMIC EARNINGS DISPARITIES BY DEGREE LEVEL



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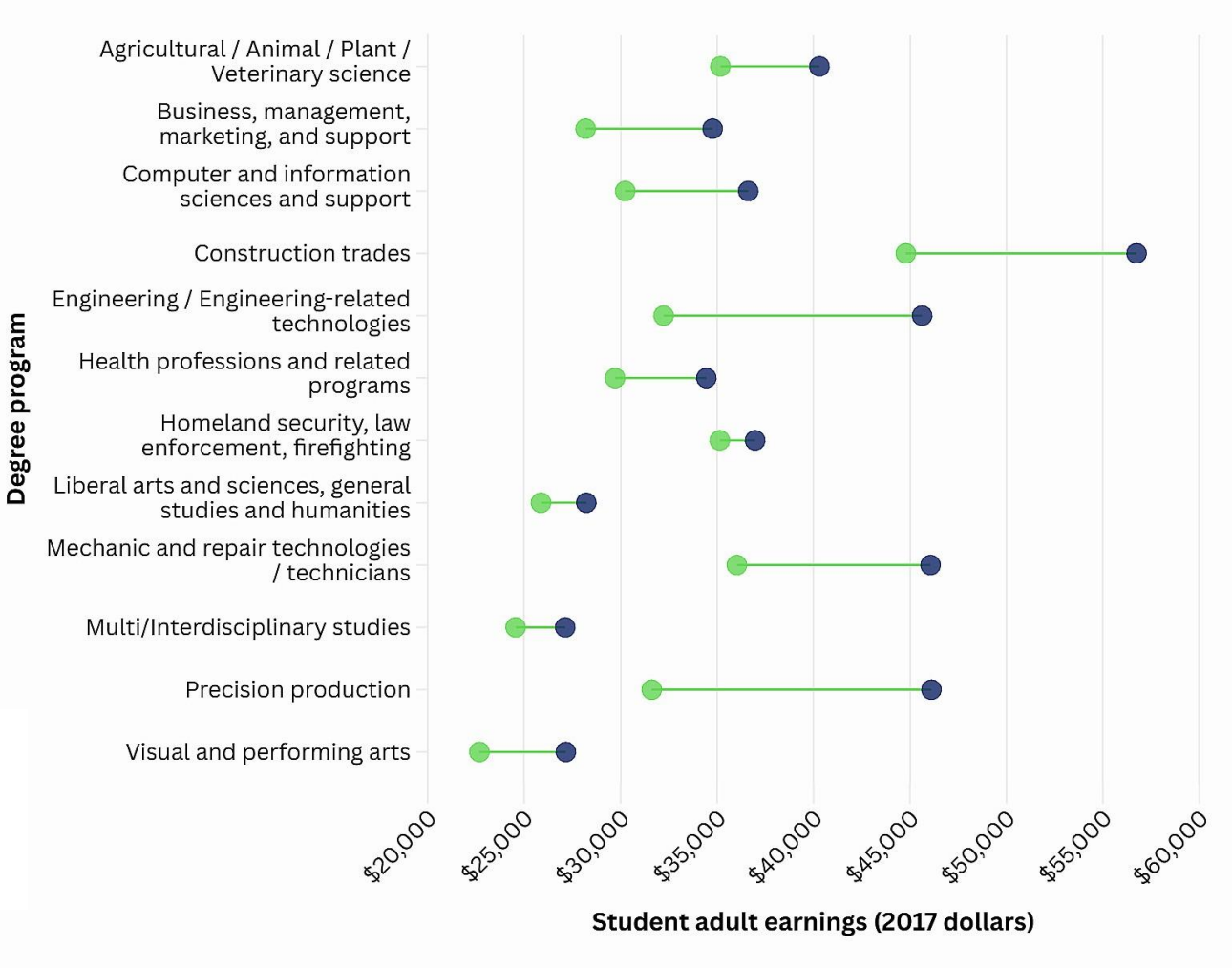
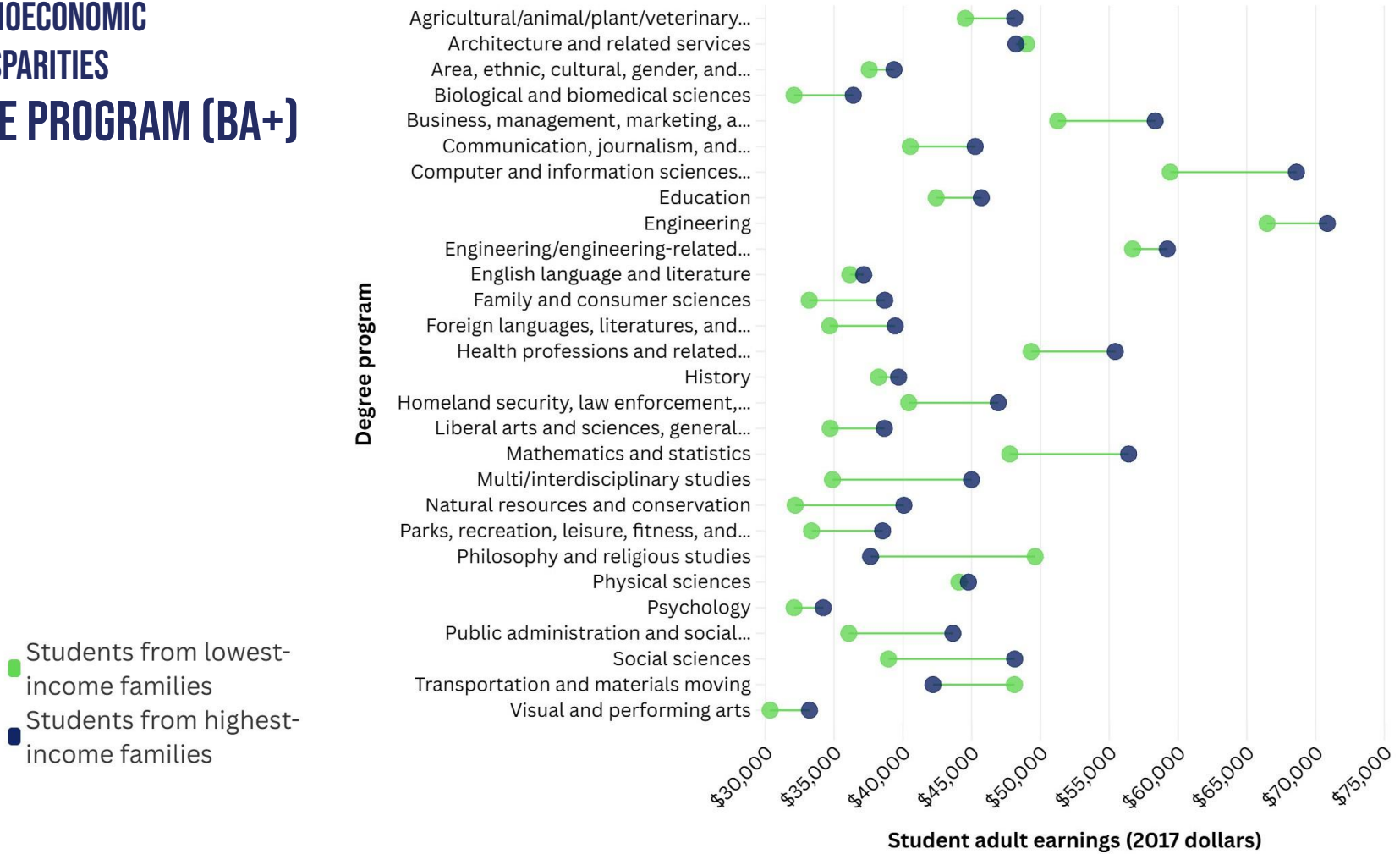
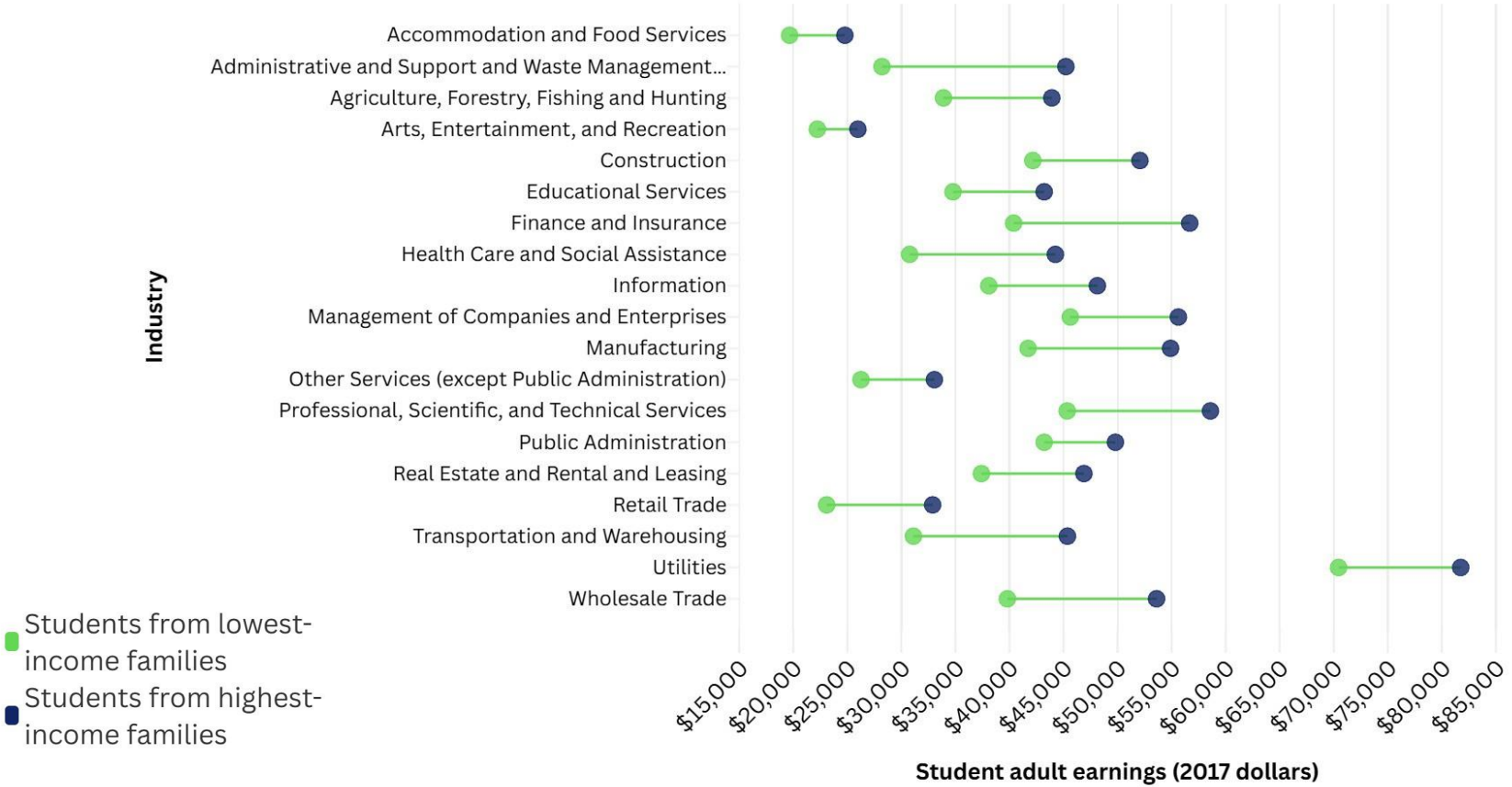
AVERAGE SOCIOECONOMIC EARNINGS DISPARITIES BY DEGREE PROGRAM (AA AND CERTIFICATES)



AVERAGE SOCIOECONOMIC EARNINGS DISPARITIES BY DEGREE PROGRAM (BA+)



AVERAGE SOCIOECONOMIC EARNINGS DISPARITIES BY INDUSTRY



TAKEAWAYS AND NEXT STEPS

Students who earned higher educational degrees went on to earn more, on average. This was true for students of all economic backgrounds.

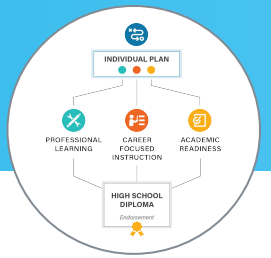
Specific degree program and industry mattered — some were higher-earning than others for all student groups.

Students from lower-income families were less likely to attain higher degrees or work in higher-earning industries.

Even with the same educational degree, degree program or industry of employment, students from lower-income families earned less than those from higher-income families, on average.

CCPE Workgroup Memo

Elevating Key Challenges in CCPE



Challenge #1

Partnerships for Success

- Rural distances and employer availability
- Marketing to industry
- Dual credit partnerships and credentialing
- Communicating CCPE, expanding awareness

Challenge #2

Operations of Implementation

- Funding and grants
- High counselor caseloads
- Scheduling/60 hour requirement for career development experiences
- Ownership of components
- Time and data intensive
- Transportation

Challenge #3

Student Recruitment, Access and Equity

- Recruitment practices
- District resourcing determines access
- Student characteristics impacting their pathway access (ex., unpaid teacher or CNA pathways more female)
- Currency for students

Challenge #4

CCPE Approval Process

- Cumbersome application process, particularly in team-based challenges
- Data collection and application component parts delay implementation

“Implementing CCPE is the work of shifting human systems.”

-CCPE workgroup member, director of innovation and learning at a large suburban district

Promising Local Practices to Address CCPE Challenges

Facilitating partnerships is "the work of shifting human systems"

- Consider a continuum approach for industry participation (Continuums for IT, Health Sciences, Education, Manufacturing)
- Bring multiple partners to the table to create shared vision and goals (use the Career Development Experience Toolkit to get started)

Start with what you have and build trust with existing partners

- Value proposition: young, local talent accelerated toward a career with professional learning & school-based accountability
- Generate buy-in from teachers to empower them as CCPE champions by creating plug-and-play templates for things like Team Based Challenges

Where employer partners are few and far between, creativity is key

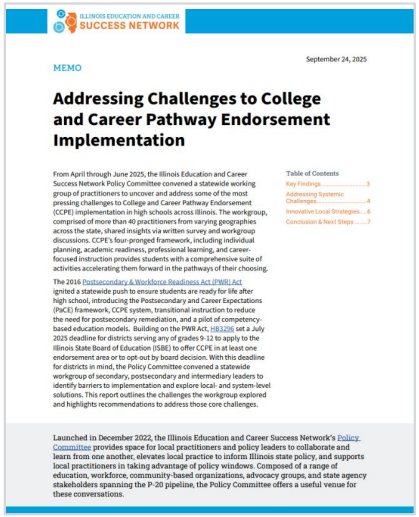
- Consider virtual or school-based career development experiences (see examples of virtual here and school-based here)
- Check out the ISBE Work-Based Learning Employer Database

Systems Recommendations to Address Implementation Challenges

Approval and Operations	• **Multi-year** approval timeline • Align CCPE **applicant platform** to other similar programs like CTE • Consider flexibility within the 60-hour CDE requirement, such as a **competency-based model** • Utilize existing student-facing supports like **ISACorps** for advising • Create a **portability code** for CCPE completers to smooth postsecondary transition
Student Access and Equity	• Create **student-centered currency** (examples) • Launch a **comprehensive evaluation** of CCPE at its current scale to assess student participation, pathway availability, and outcomes
Partnerships	• Create a **'Model Business Partnership'** template for districts to use, creating standard language & messaging for industry and postsecondary partners • Target **micro grants** to districts with few area employer partners to develop virtual or school-based career development experiences • Support educator **dual credit credentialing** with targeted funding for key pathway dual credit courses • Establish **a CCPE module** for new businesses within DCEO and IDFPR licensure processes to increase awareness and engagement

Elevating CCPE Recommendations

- Recommendations shared with practitioners at the ISAC College Changes Everything Conference in July 2025
- Success Network to promote recommendations and identify opportunities for implementation with agency partners (ICCB, ISBE)



ILLINOIS EDUCATION AND CAREER SUCCESS NETWORK

September 24, 2025

MEMO

Addressing Challenges to College and Career Pathway Endorsement Implementation

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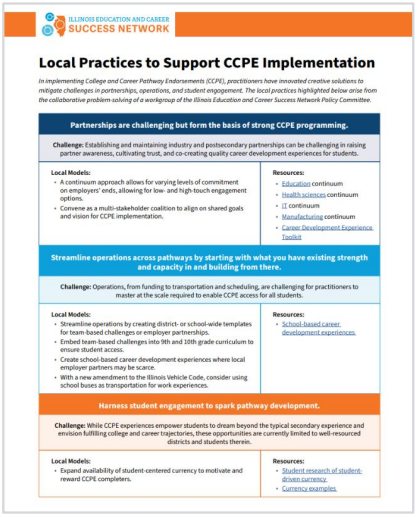
From April through June 2025, the Illinois Education and Career Success Network Policy Committee convened a statewide working group of practitioners to uncover and address some of the most pressing challenges to College and Career Pathway Endorsement (CCPE) implementation in high schools across Illinois. The workgroup, comprised of more than 40 practitioners from varying geographies across the state, shared insights via written survey and workgroup discussions. CCPE's four-pronged framework, including individual planning, academic readiness, professional learning, and career-focused instruction provides students with a comprehensive suite of activities accelerating them forward in the pathways of their choosing.

The 2016 Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness Act (PWR) Act ignited a statewide push to ensure students are ready for life after high school, introducing the Postsecondary and Career Expectations (PaCE) framework, CCPE system, transitional instruction to reduce the need for postsecondary remediation, and a pilot of competency-based education models. Building on the PWR Act, HB3296 set a July 2025 deadline for districts serving any of grades 9-12 to apply to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to offer CCPE in at least one endorsement area or to opt-out by board decision. With this deadline for districts in mind, the Policy Committee convened a statewide workgroup of secondary, postsecondary and intermediary leaders to identify barriers to implementation and explore local- and system-level solutions. This report outlines the challenges the workgroup explored and highlights recommendations to address those core challenges.

Launched in December 2022, the Illinois Education and Career Success Network's Policy Committee provides space for local practitioners and policy leaders to collaborate and learn from one another, elevates local practice to inform Illinois state policy, and supports local practitioners in taking advantage of policy windows. Composed of a range of education, workforce, community-based organizations, advocacy groups, and state agency stakeholders spanning the P-20 pipeline, the Policy Committee offers a useful venue for these conversations.



ILLINOIS EDUCATION AND CAREER SUCCESS NETWORK

Local Practices to Support CCPE Implementation

In implementing College and Career Pathway Endorsements (CCPE), practitioners have innovated creative solutions to mitigate challenges in partnerships, operations, and student engagement. The local practices highlighted below arise from the collaborative problem-solving of a workgroup of the Illinois Education and Career Success Network Policy Committee.

Partnerships are challenging but form the basis of strong CCPE programming.

Challenge: Establishing and maintaining industry and postsecondary partnerships can be challenging in raising partner awareness, cultivating trust, and co-creating quality career development experiences for students.

Local Models:
- A continuum approach allows for varying levels of commitment on employers' ends, allowing for low- and high-touch engagement options.
- Convene as a multi-stakeholder coalition to align on shared goals and vision for CCPE implementation.

Resources:
- Education continuum
- Health sciences continuum
- IT continuum
- Manufacturing continuum
- Career Development Experience Toolkit

Streamline operations across pathways by starting with what you have existing strength and capacity in and building from there.

Challenge: Operations, from funding to transportation and scheduling, are challenging for practitioners to master at the scale required to enable CCPE access for all students.

Local Models:
- Streamline operations by creating district- or school-wide templates for team-based challenges or employer partnerships.
- Embed team-based challenges into 9th and 10th grade curriculum to ensure student access.
- Create school-based career development experiences where local employer partners may be scarce.
- With a new amendment to the Illinois Vehicle Code, consider using school buses as transportation for work experiences.

Resources:
- School-based career development experiences

Harness student engagement to spark pathway development.

Challenge: While CCPE experiences empower students to dream beyond the typical secondary experience and envision fulfilling college and career trajectories, these opportunities are currently limited to well-resourced districts and students therein.

Local Models:
- Expand availability of student-centered currency to motivate and reward CCPE completers.

Resources:
- Student research of student-driven currency
- Currency examples

Access the full memo and one-pager of district-level promising practices at ilsuccessnetwork.org/policy-committee & share with relevant stakeholders

State Policy Updates and Veto Session Preview

New Resources

Updated Model Programs of Study Guides (published August 2025)

Companion Guide (published August 2025)
What to know before reading

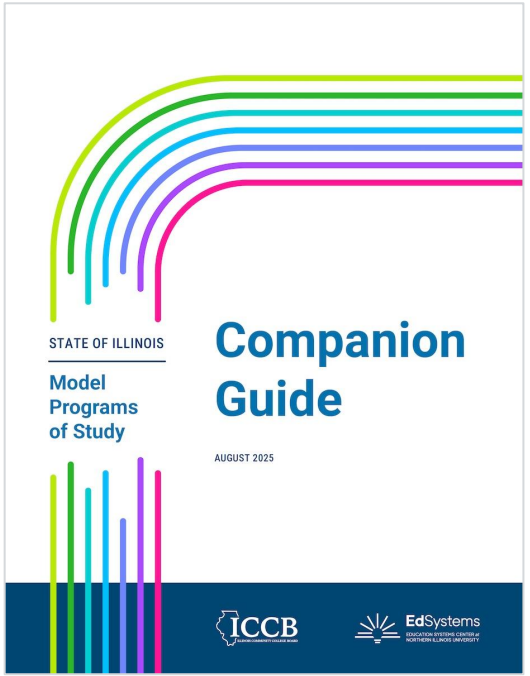
- Policy context
- Differentiating a career pathway, a program, and a program of study
- Key components of a program of study
- The intersection of CTE, dual credit, and work-based learning

Support for design and implementation

- A step-by-step process for understanding labor market information
- Implementation guidance and reflection questions
- Strategies for addressing student access gaps

Identifying Next Steps

- A comprehensive implementation checklist



Dual Credit Quality Act (DCQA) Amendment

- Public Act 104-0012
- Ongoing Inter-Agency Collaboration
  - ISBE, ICCB, & IBHE all participated in the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC) Midwestern Dual Enrollment Policy Workshop in July
  - Multiple discussions reviewing DCQA Amendment & identifying implications for Dual Credit Committee, rule-making, resource development, & procedural changes
  - Shared goal is alignment across secondary & postsecondary
- Dual Credit Committee
  - Formed & has met once
  - ICCB website forthcoming

ISBE: Proficiency Cut Scores Changes

- ISBE adopted unified performance levels and “right-sized” proficiency benchmarks
  - Includes changes to cut scores and alignment across different proficiency measurements
  - Updated to include ACT measures
  - Impacts proficiency, College & Career Readiness Indicator, automatic acceleration, & more
- **What’s next**:
  - Will be included in October 2025 Illinois Report Card Release
  - Student Growth Percentile forthcoming for high schools
- "Measurement for Student Success: ISBE’s New Proficiency Scores and What They Mean for How We Measure Student Readiness" (EdSystems post)

Looking ahead to Veto Session

- October 14–30
- Potential relevant topics:
  - Adequate & equitable funding for higher ed
  - Community college baccalaureate

Key ISAC Updates

FAFSA Designee (Public Act 104-0013): Beginning SY 25-26, each high school must designate a point of contact for FAFSA-related issues and communications who will also participate in relevant trainings.

School Day FAFSA Support (Public Act 104-0014): Beginning SY 25-26, each public high school must offer help during the school day for students to complete their portion of the FAFSA or Alternative Application. The school may determine the format for this help (e.g., in class, in a workshop).

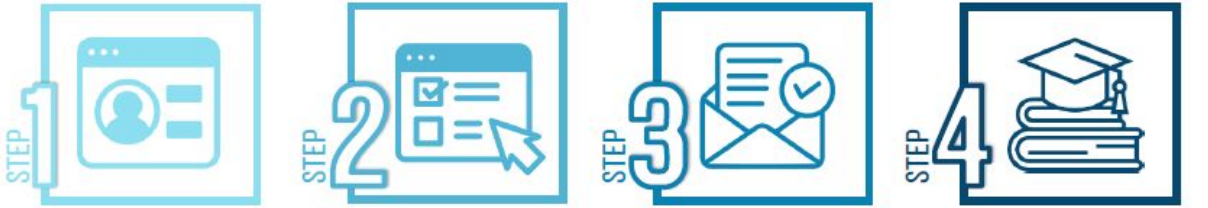
One Click College Admit (Website):

- Illinois' FREE direct admissions program into public universities & community colleges for general admission
- Removes traditional barriers: no essays, no application fees
- Eligibility is based on student's high school GPA
- This year two versions will be available:
  - 1.0 Class of 2026 (current seniors)
    - This will no longer be available after the 2025-2026 school year
  - 2.0 Class of 2027 (current juniors)
    - After the 2025-2026 school year, this will be the only direct admissions program administered by the State of Illinois

CLASS OF 2026

ONE CLICK COLLEGE ADMIT

The easy, stress-free way to be admitted to Illinois public universities and community colleges! Follow the steps below to start watching the admission offers roll in!



IT'S THAT EASY!

Illinois Public Universities

- Chicago State University
- Eastern Illinois University
- Governors State University
- Northeastern Illinois University
- Northern Illinois University
- Southern Illinois University Carbondale
- Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
- Western Illinois University

Illinois Community Colleges

- List can be found on oneclickadmit.org

OneClickCollegeAdmit.org

CLASS OF 2027

ONE CLICK COLLEGE ADMIT

The easy, stress-free way to be admitted to Illinois public universities and community colleges. No fees and no essays! Just complete the Opt-in Form and get ready to receive admission offers next fall!

How it works:

OPT IN Fall of your **JUNIOR** year, your parent/guardian completes the Opt-In form, so you can participate in the program

MATCH Your GPA is matched with the GPA admission requirements at partner public universities and community colleges.

RECEIVE Fall of your **SENIOR** year, you will receive college admission offers right to your inbox.

ACCEPT Accept offers from any university/community college you are interested in attending. **IT'S THAT EASY!**

Illinois Public Universities

- Chicago State University
- Eastern Illinois University
- Governors State University
- Illinois State University
- Northeastern Illinois University
- Northern Illinois University
- Southern Illinois University Carbondale
- Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
- University of Illinois Chicago*
- University of Illinois Springfield
- University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign*
- Western Illinois University

Illinois Community Colleges

- List can be found on oneclickadmit.org

Awareness and Outreach

OneClickCollegeAdmit.org

Looking Ahead Through SY26

Policy Committee Topics for SY25-26

- Chronic absenteeism
- Changes to CTE Career Clusters
- Illinois Report Card Data
- Dual Credit Quality Act
- High school graduation requirements
- Workforce Pell and high-quality credentials

What other topics would you like to see covered?

What types of work would you like to hear about from a Leadership Community?

Are there topics you would like to present on?

Additional Resources & Upcoming Events

What We're Reading

Online, On Purpose: A Framework for Building Impactful Dual Enrollment Experiences Through Online College Course (National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships – NACEP)

What Helped, What Didn't: Honest Feedback from Manufacturing Pathway Students (EdSystems)

Artificial Intelligence Resources (Illinois Learning Technology Center)

From Accountability to Opportunity Transforming High School Measurement (Ed Strategy Group – ESG)

Governor Playbook: Future-Ready Pathways (All4Ed)

Upcoming Events & Opportunities

October 7, 3 p.m.: To&Through Spotlight: Sparking Engagement in the Middle Grades (Register)

October 27, 12 p.m.: I-WIN Community of Practice: Team-Based Challenges (Register)

November 12, 12 p.m.: I-WIN Roundtable: Developing Regional Employer Partnerships (Register)

December 3, 9:30 a.m.: Success Network Policy Committee Quarterly Meeting (Register)

Ongoing: ISAC Professional Development Series (Register)

Open Surveys:

- Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) CTE Accessibility Hub Survey
- Illinois Education and Care under Federal Policy Shifts Survey

Save the Date

13th Annual Conference

@ Moraine Valley Community College, Palos Hills, Illinois

Thursday, February 26, 2026

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SUCCESS NETWORK

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SUCCESS NETWORK

Please fill out our Exit Survey.

See you at the Q4 Policy Committee meeting: December 3, 9:30–11 a.m.

Thank You!

Advance ILLINOIS
EVERY STUDENT WORLD READY

EdSystems
EDUCATION SYSTEMS CENTER at NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

ISAC
Illinois Student Assistance Commission