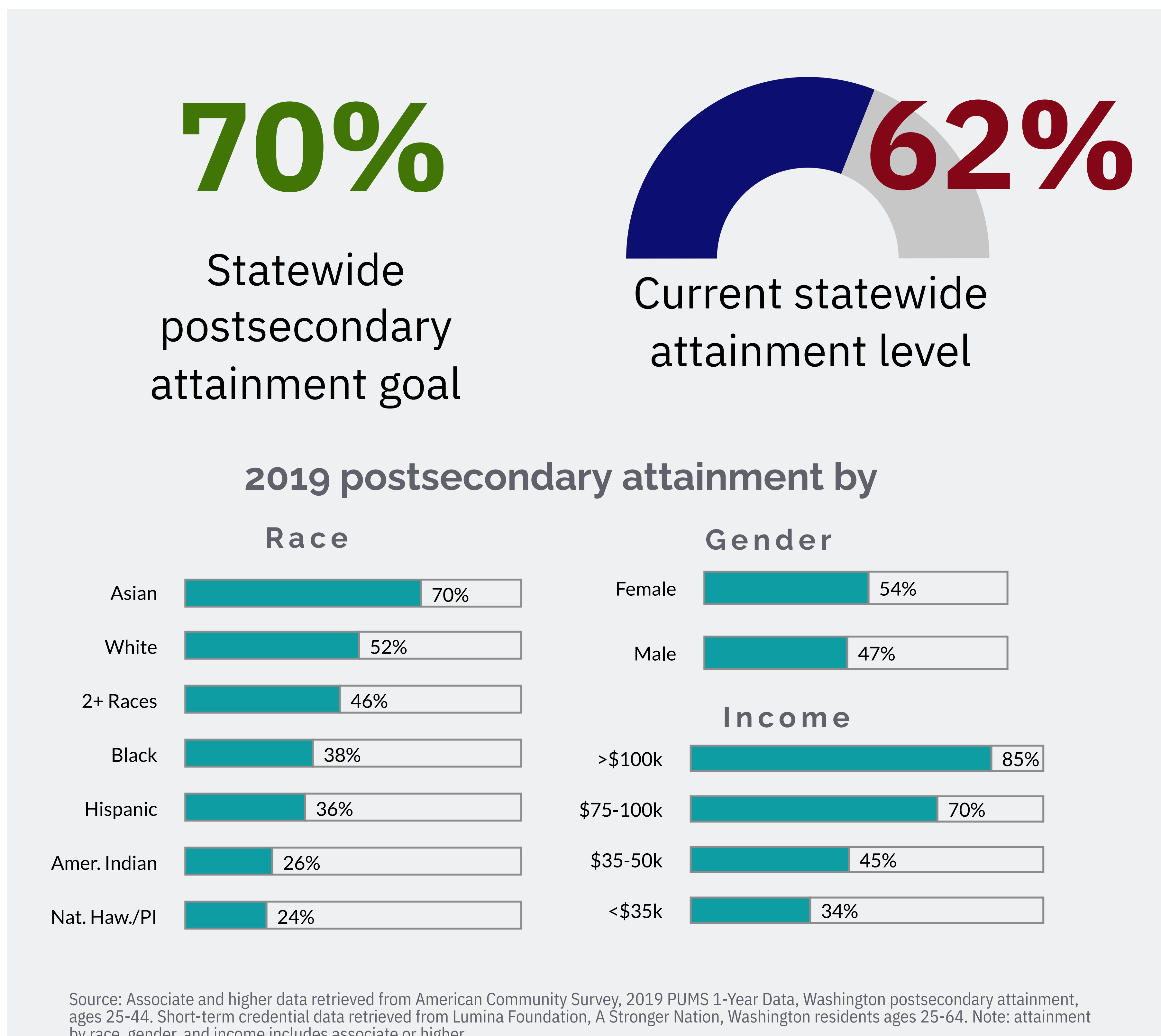


Equity in Education: Washington Profile

August 2022

Opportunity Gaps in Higher Education

Washington is working to increase educational attainment so that 70 percent of adults ages 25 to 44 have a postsecondary credential. However, there are persistent opportunity gaps in higher education in the state.

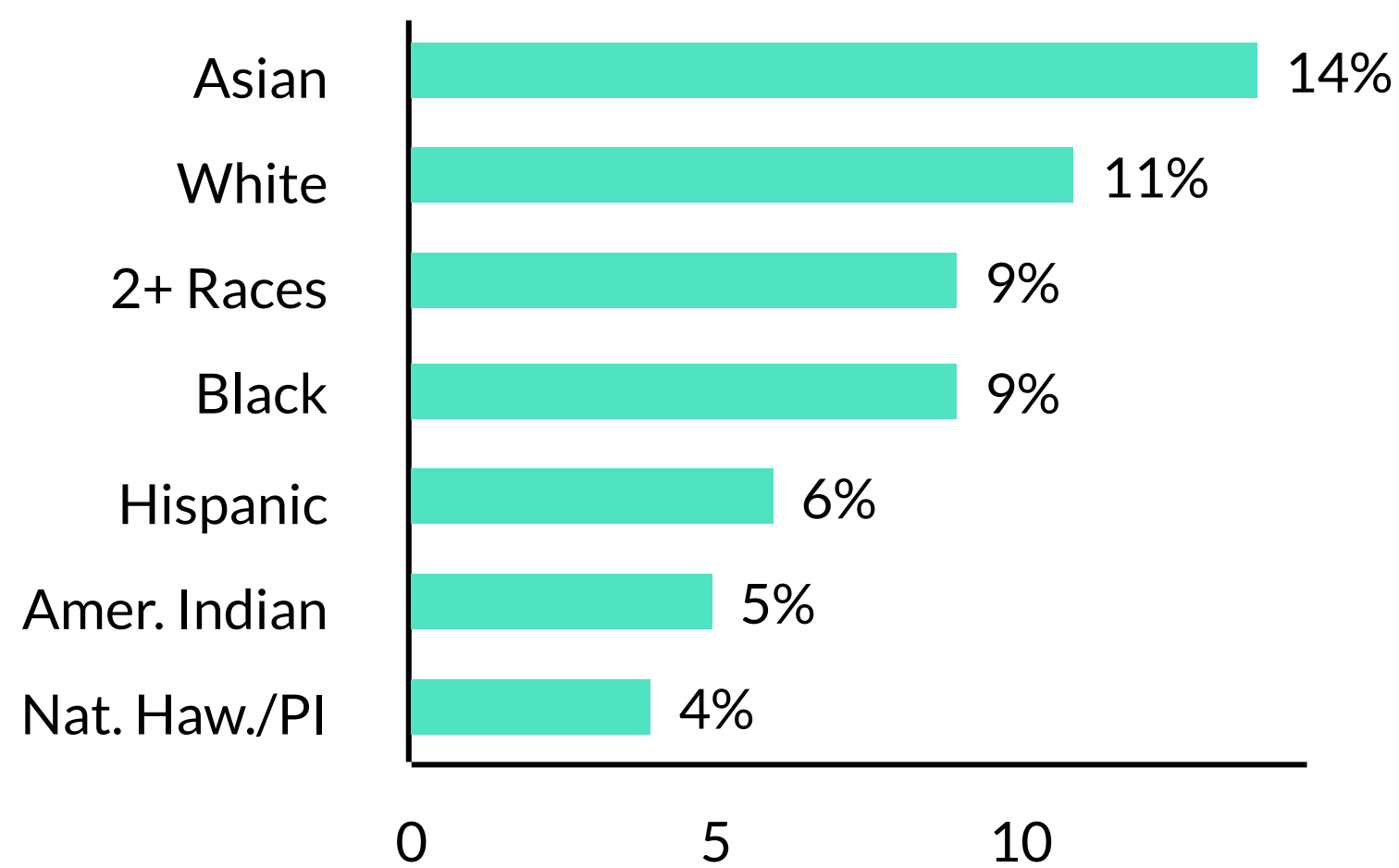


Ongoing inequities have limited the educational attainment of some groups in the state. Racial minorities and people with lower incomes tend to have lower educational attainment and are further from the state attainment goal. Equity gaps in educational attainment are the product of many disparities in student outcomes by gender, race, and income along the educational pipeline.

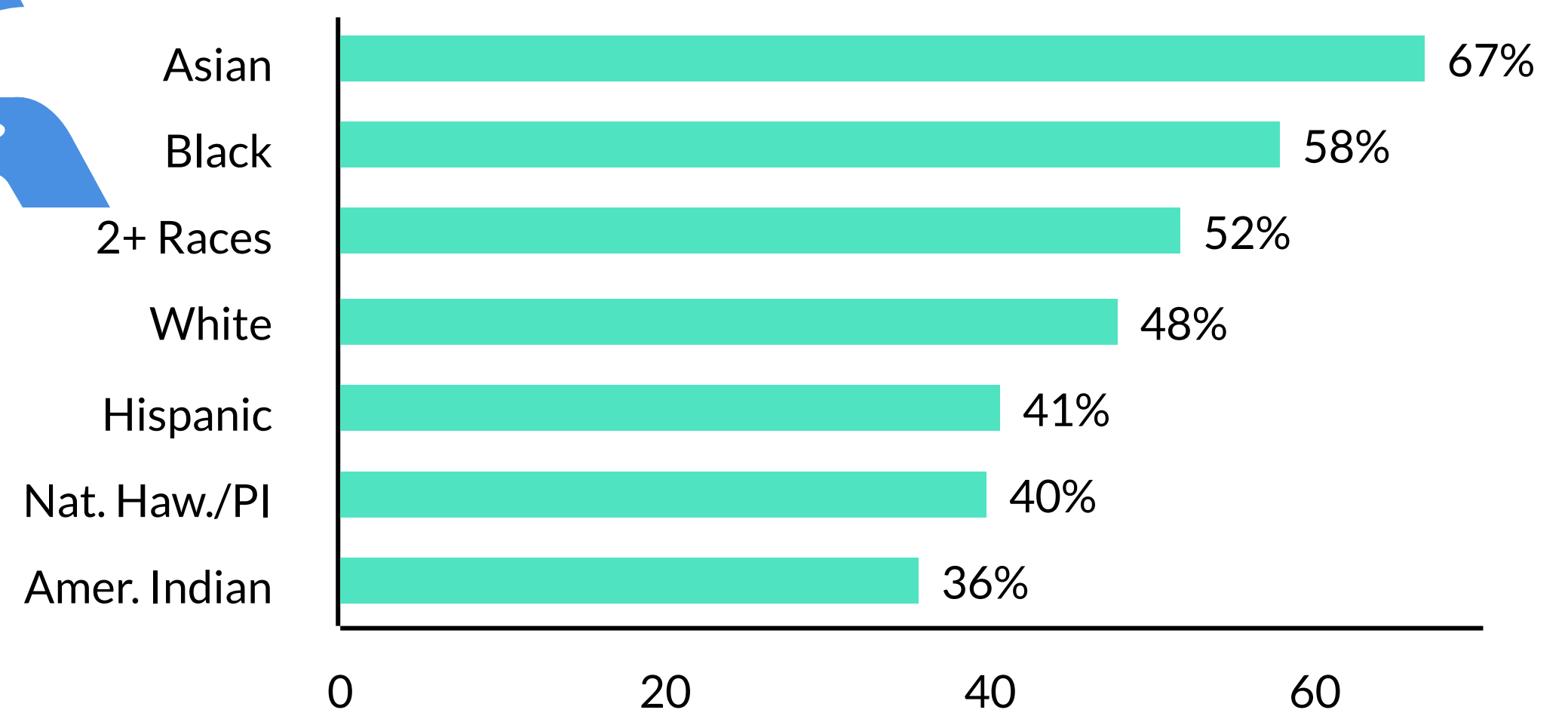
Opportunity Gaps in Postsecondary Access

Students of color and low-income students are less likely to participate in some dual credit programs, complete FAFSA, and graduate from high school.

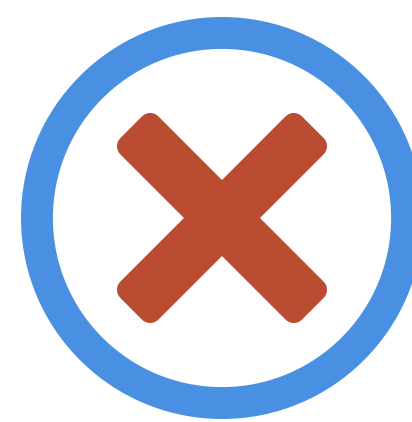
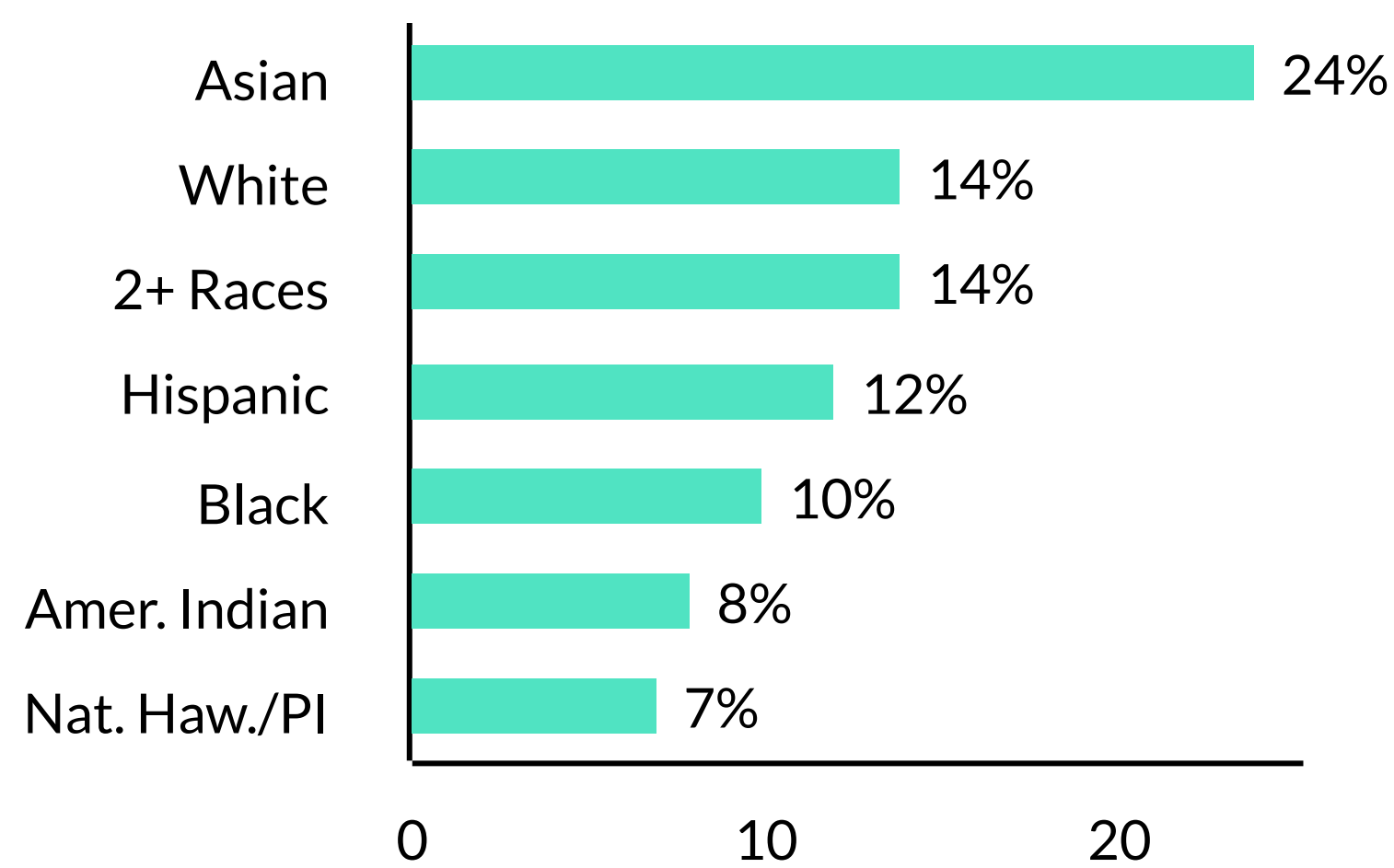
2020-2021 Running Start participation by race



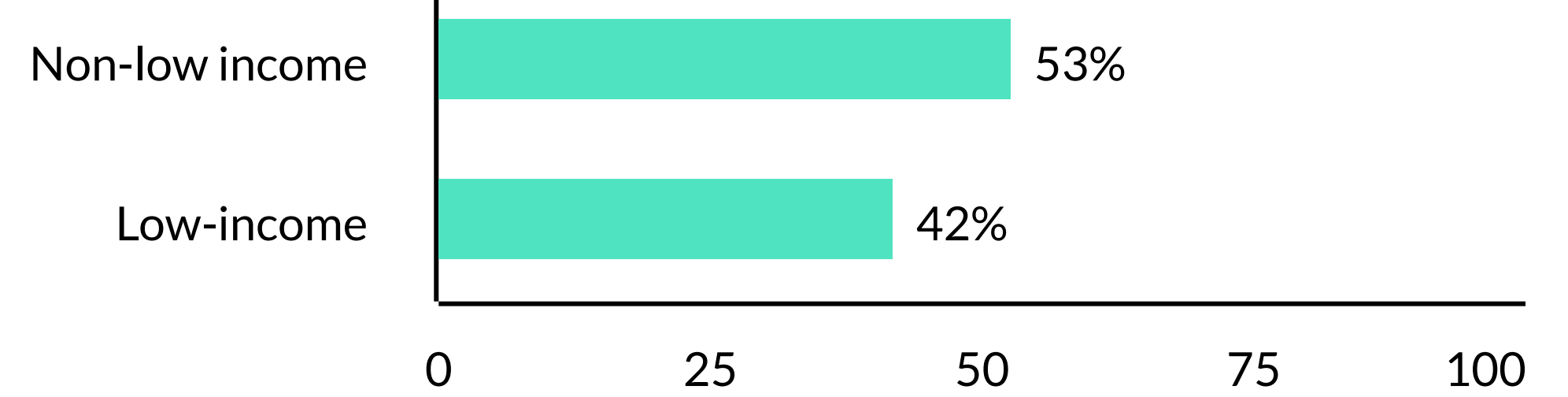
2021 FAFSA completion rate by race



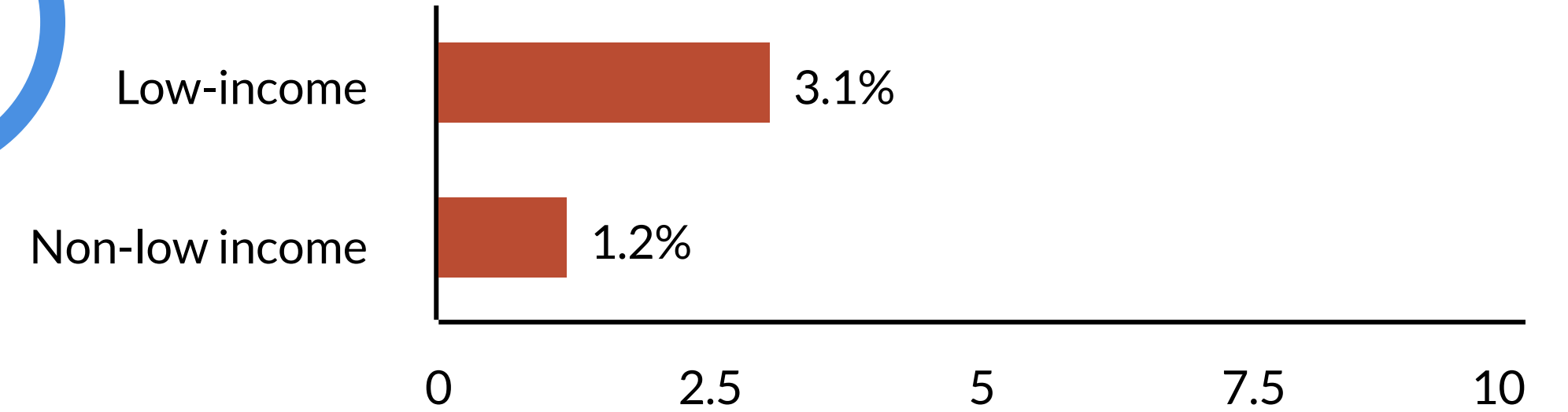
2020-2021 College in the High School participation by race



2021 FAFSA completion rate by income



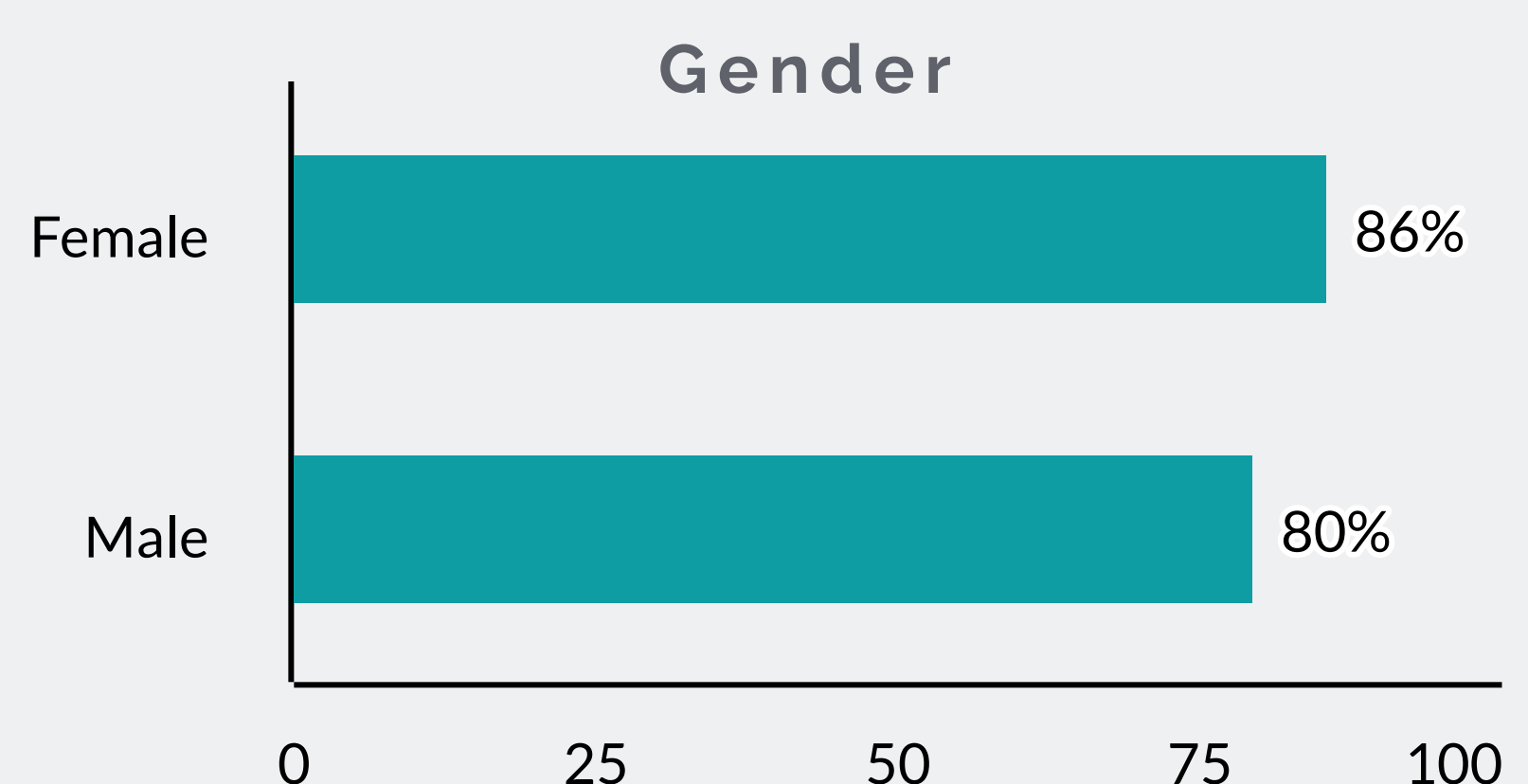
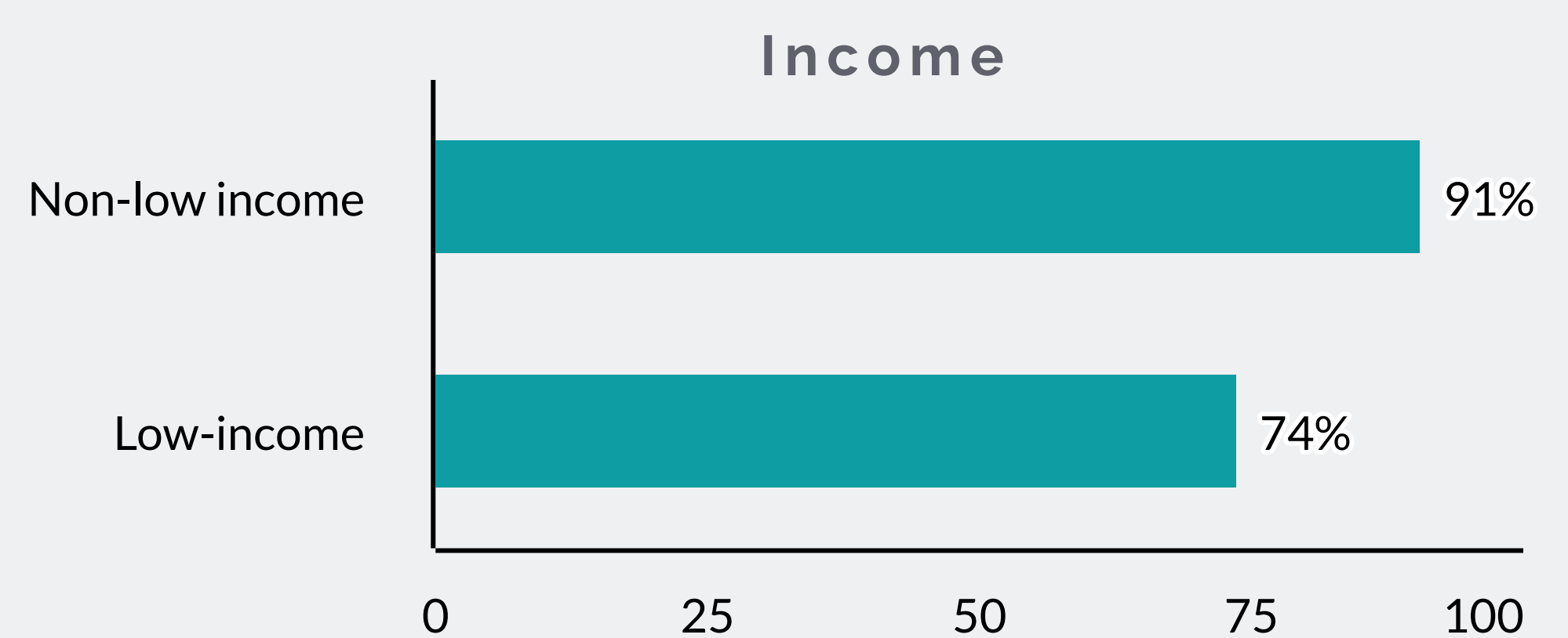
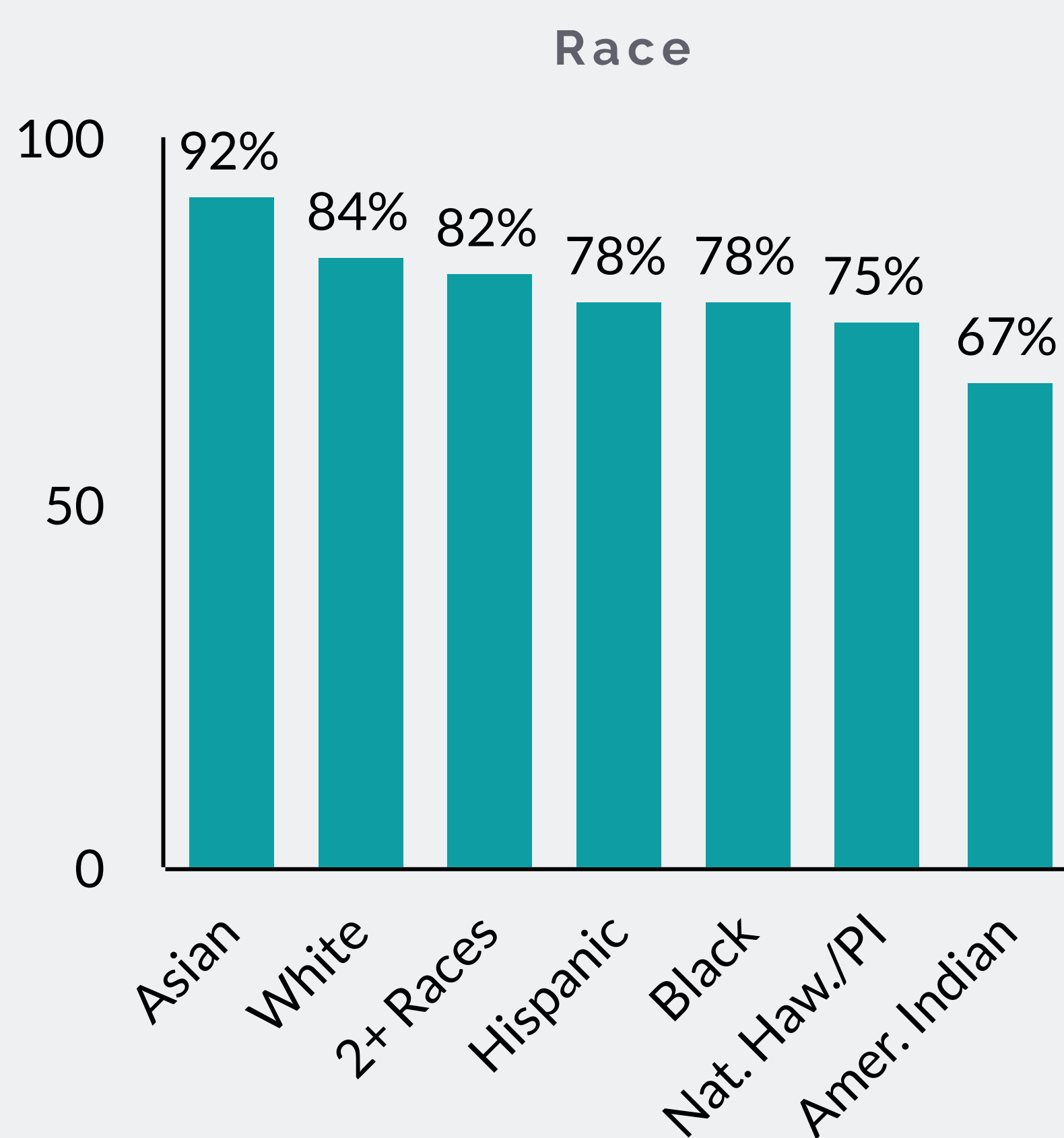
2021 FAFSA error rate by income



Source: OSPI Washington School Report Card, Running Start, College in the high school participation by race, academic year 2020-2021

Source: WSAC Research analysis of Washington FAFSA Completion Portal, FAFSA completion rate by gender, academic year 2020-2021

2021 high school graduation rate



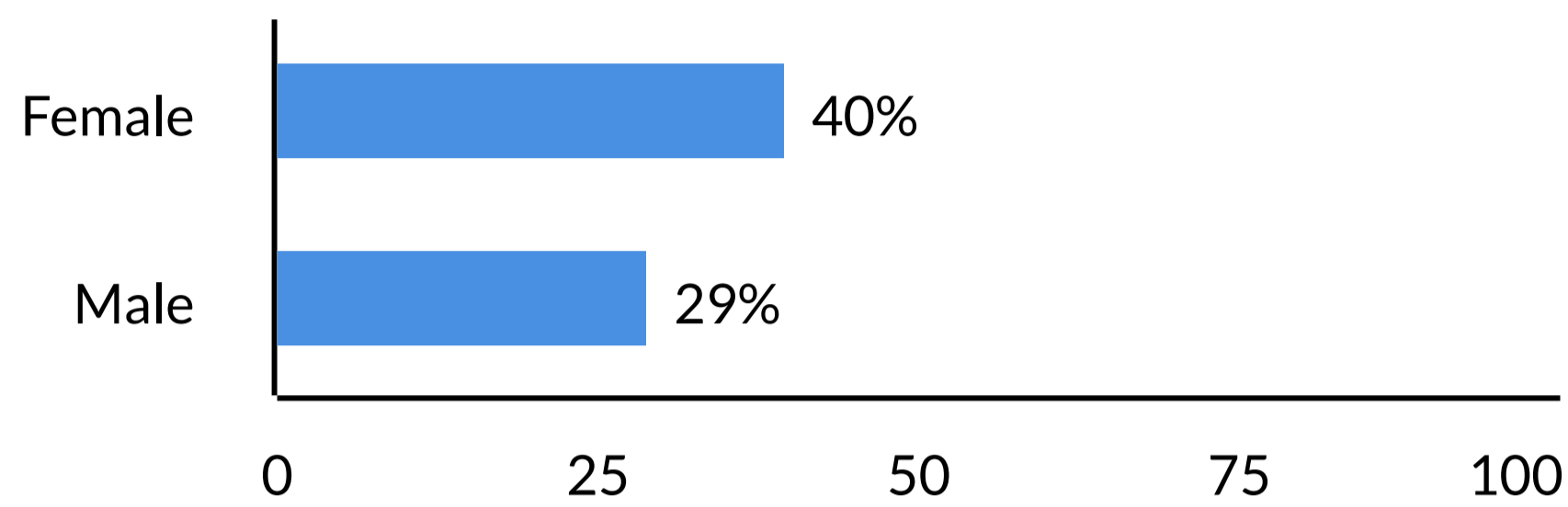
Source: OSPI Washington School Report Card, four-year graduation rates by race, income, and gender, academic year 2020-2021

Opportunity Gaps in Postsecondary Enrollment

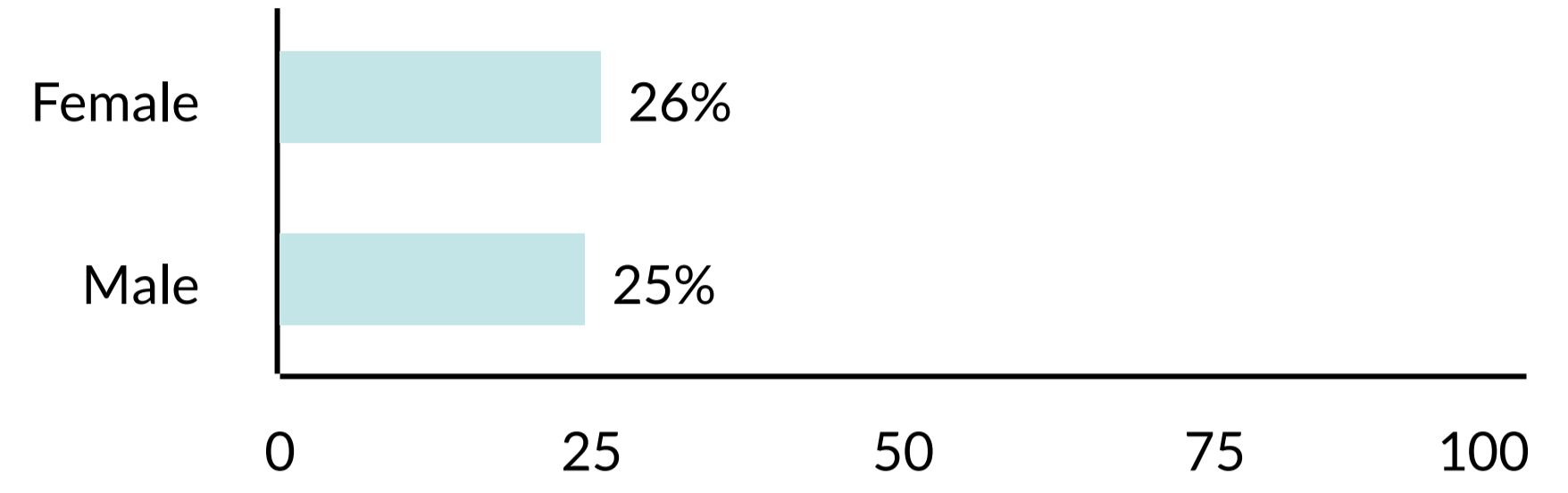
Students of color and low-income students are less likely to enroll at 4-year postsecondary institutions within a year of high school graduation.



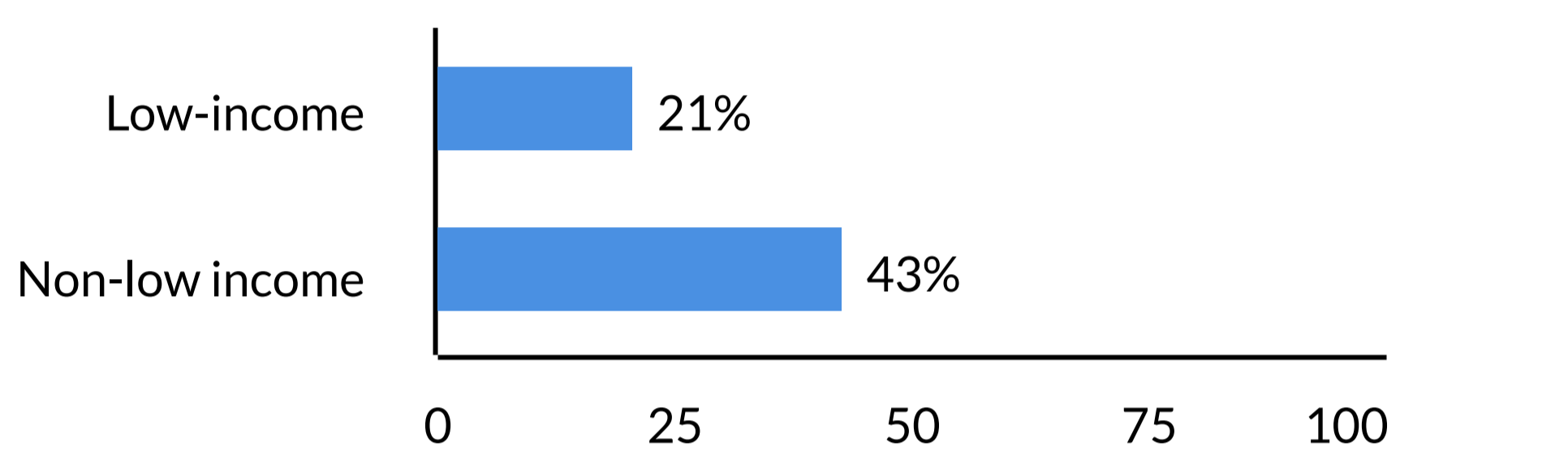
All 4-year direct enrollment by gender



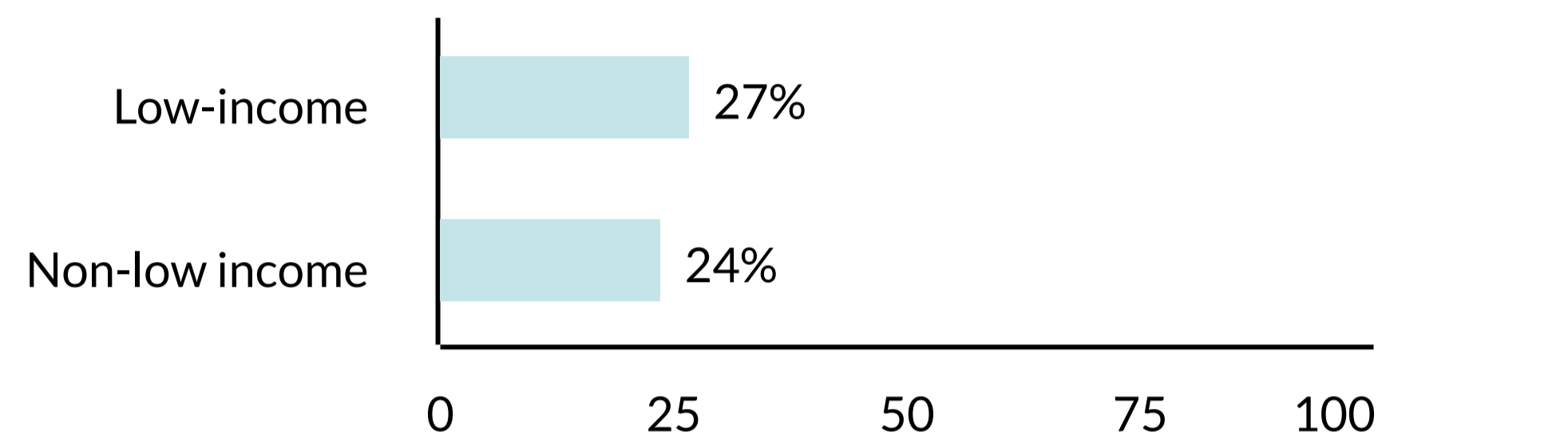
All 2-year direct enrollment by gender



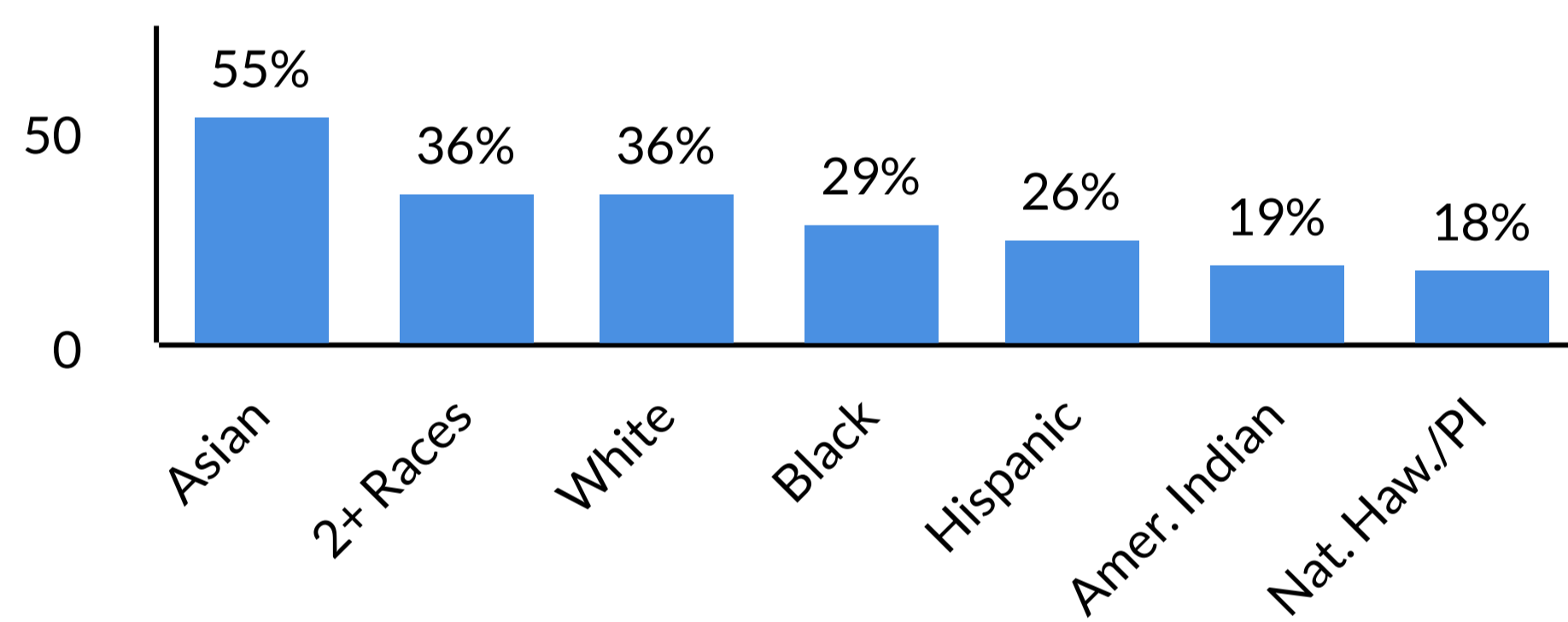
All 4-year direct enrollment by income



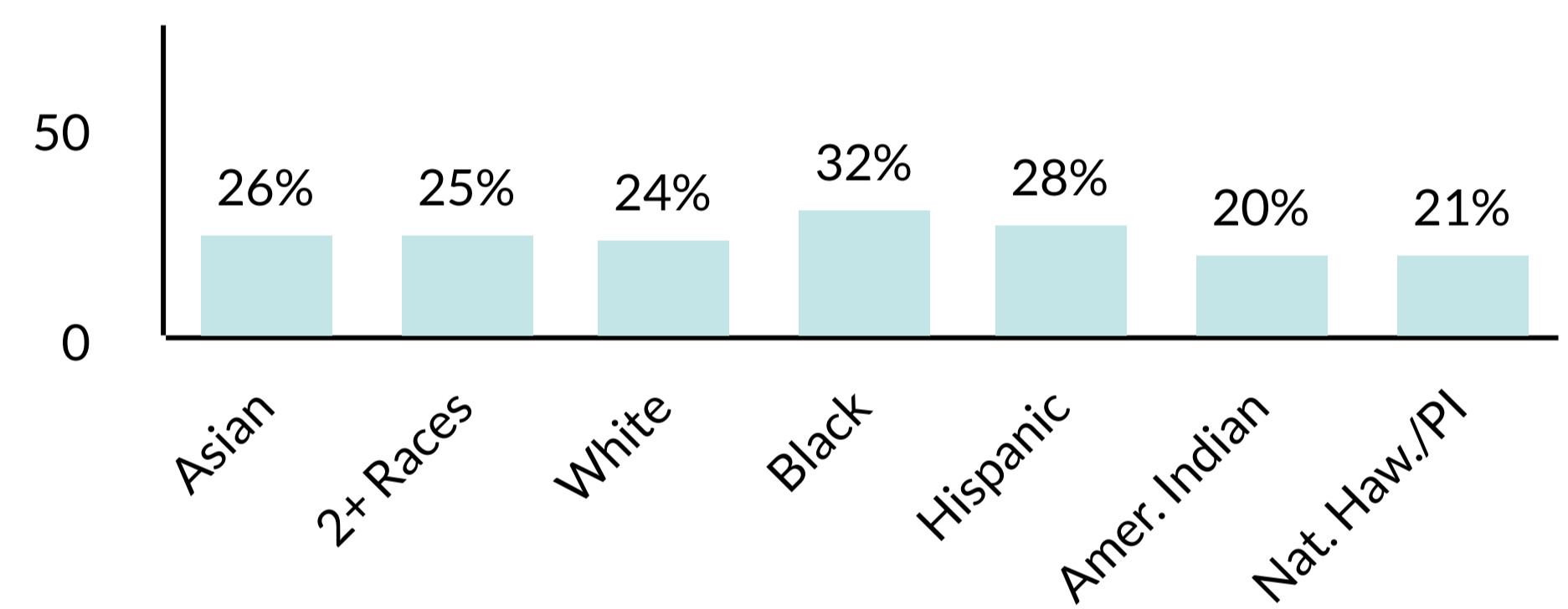
All 2-year direct enrollment by income



All 4-year direct enrollment by race



All 2-year direct enrollment by race



Source: Education Research and Data Center (ERDC), Washington postsecondary enrollment during first year after graduation, 2019 graduates, by gender, FRPL status, and race



Who is enrolled in public 4-year institutions?

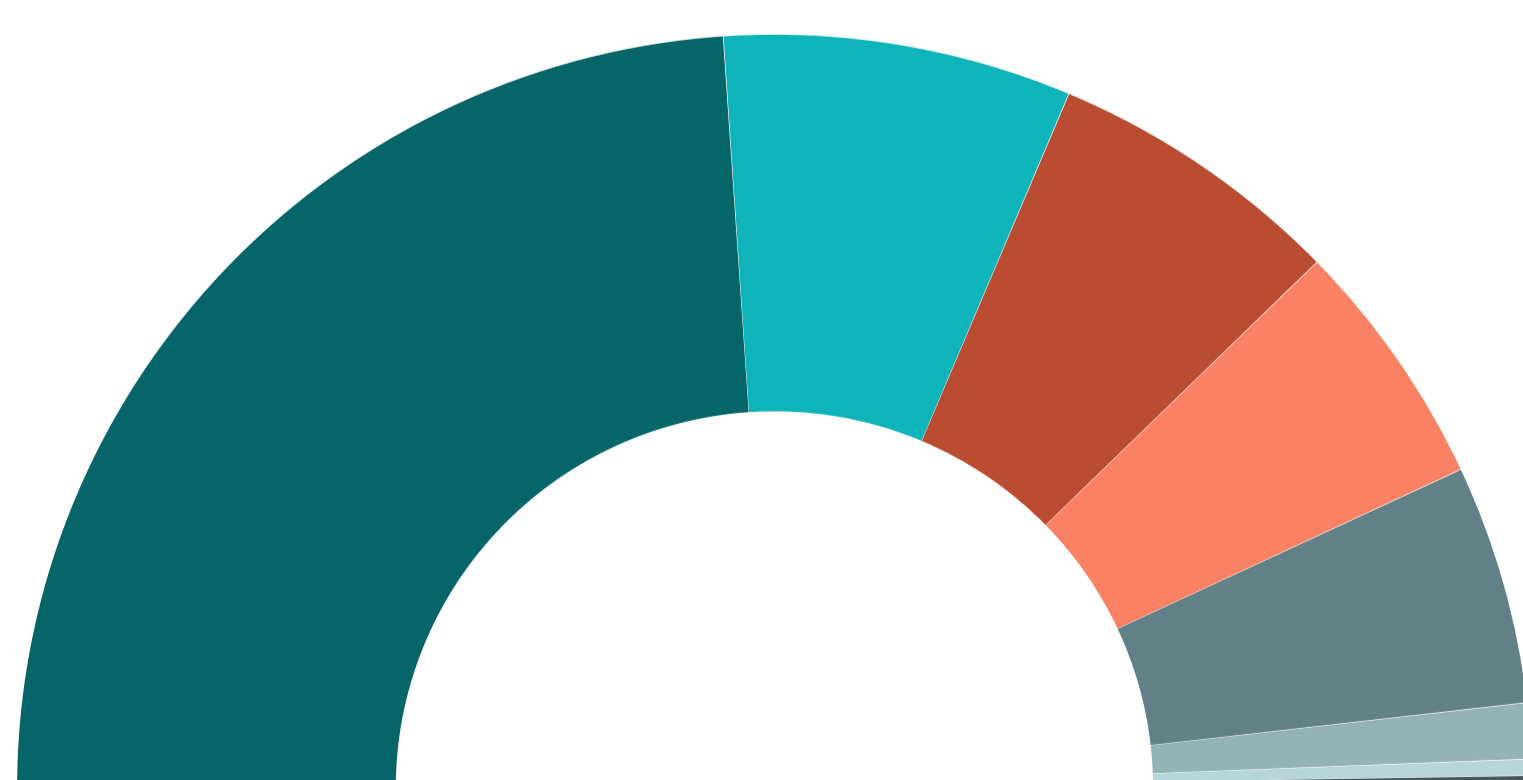
Fall 2020 undergraduate headcount

Gender



Male Female

Race



White (47.85%) Not reported (14.89%)
 Hispanic (12.69%) Asian (10.69%)
 2+ Races (10.29%) Black (2.4%)
 Nat. Haw./PI (0.7%) Amer. Indian (0.5%)

Who is enrolled in public 2-year institutions?

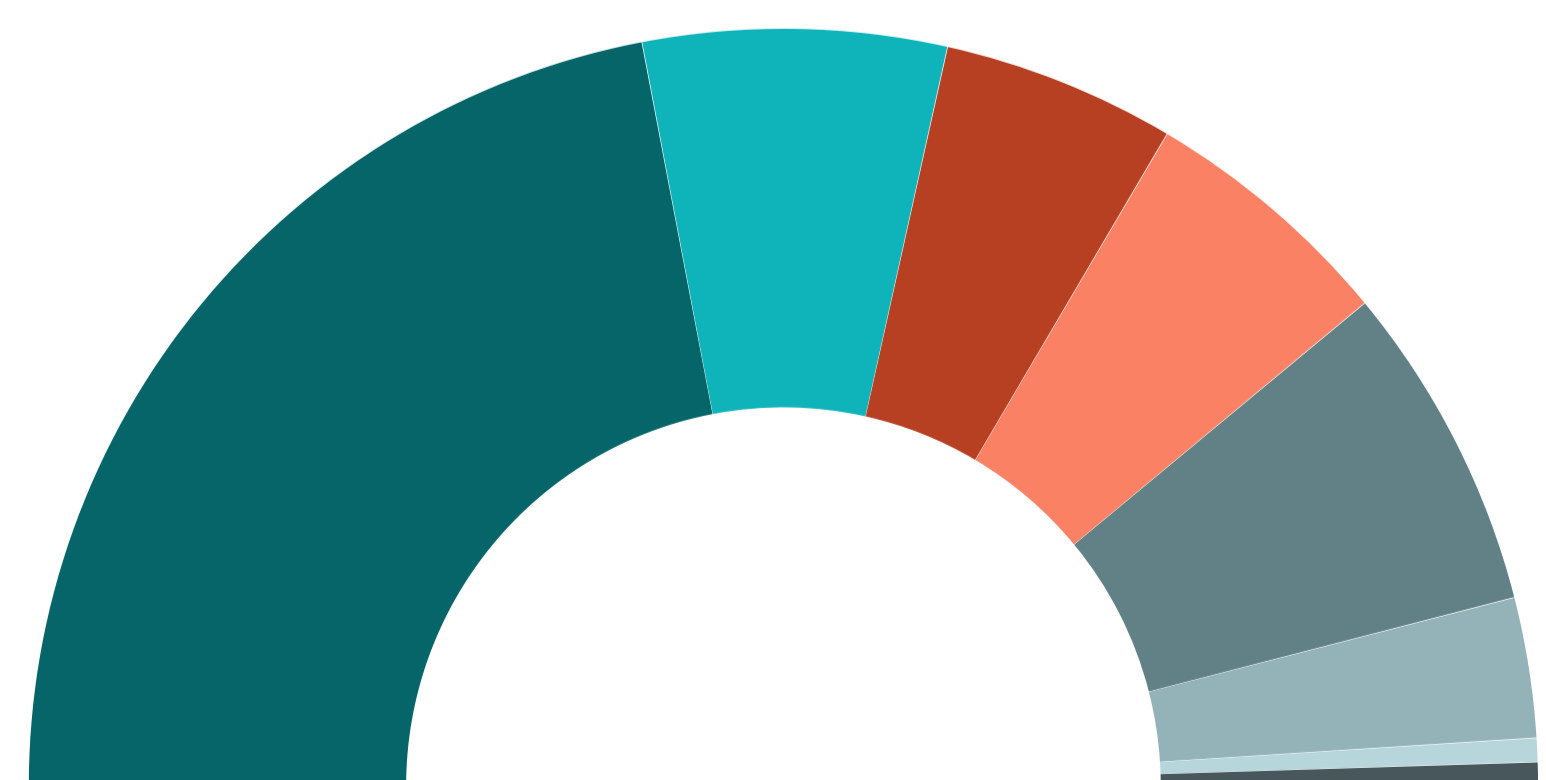
Fall 2021 undergraduate headcount

Gender



Male Female Unknown

Race



White (44%) Not reported (13%)
 Hispanic (10%) Asian (11%)
 2+ Races (14%) Black (6%)
 Nat. Haw./PI (1%) Amer. Indian (1%)

Source: WSAC Research calculation of Unit Record Report annual financial aid data and ERDC Washington public 4-year institutions unduplicated fall headcount by gender, race, Fall 2020

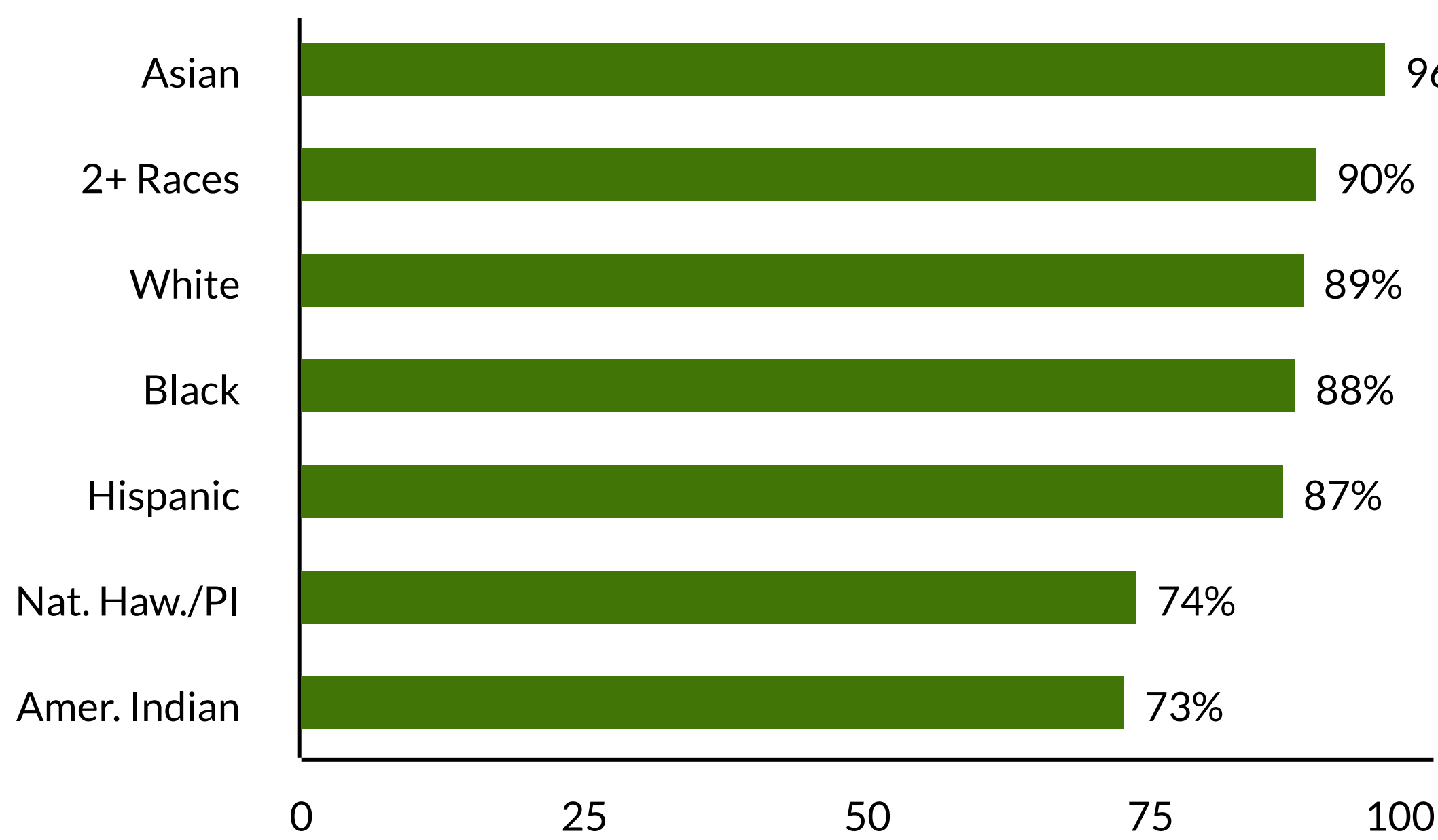
Source: State Board of Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), Washington public 2-year institutions unduplicated fall headcount by gender, race, Fall 2021

Opportunity Gaps in Postsecondary Success

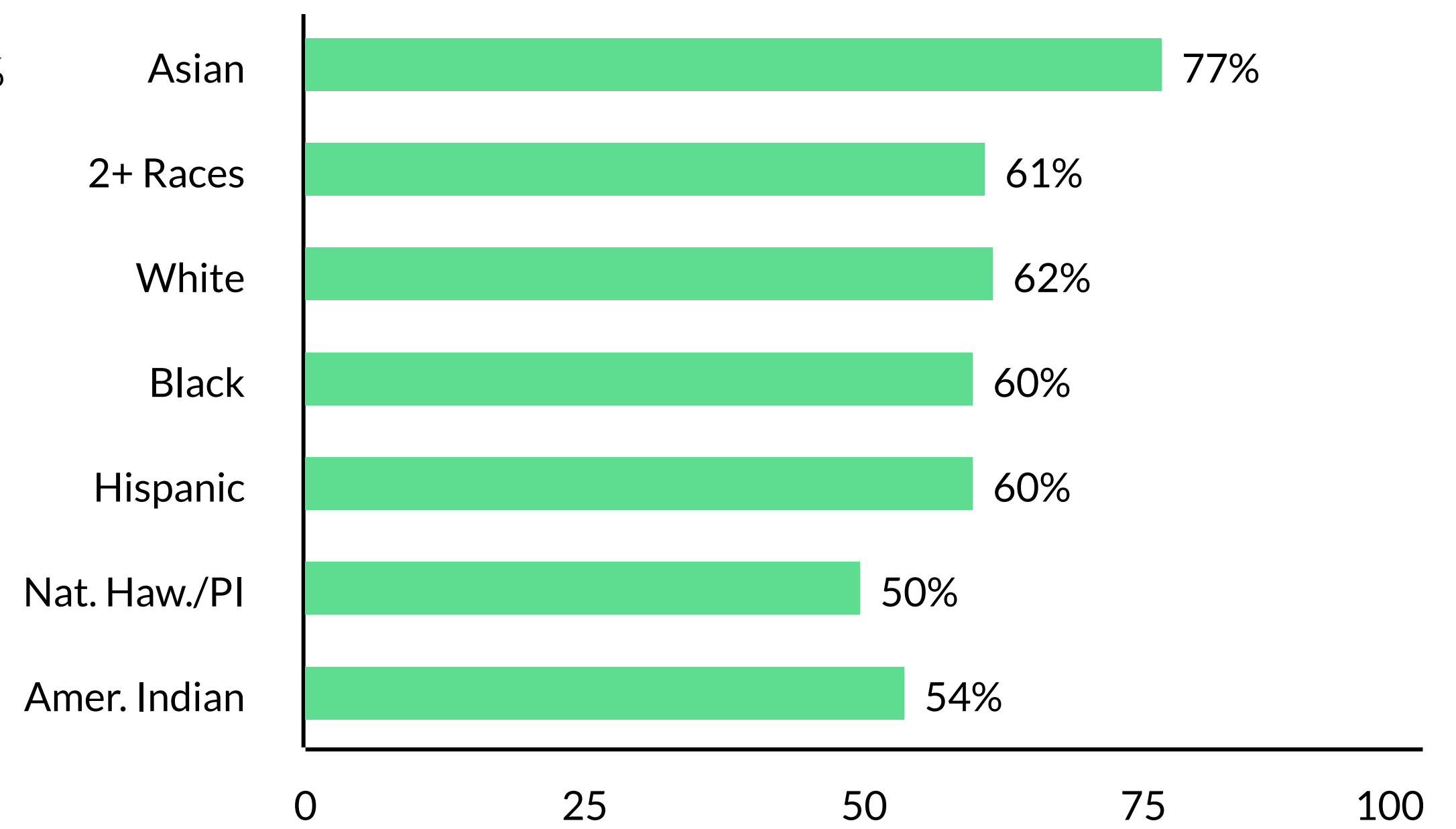


Students of color and low-income students are less likely to **persist** beyond their first year of college.

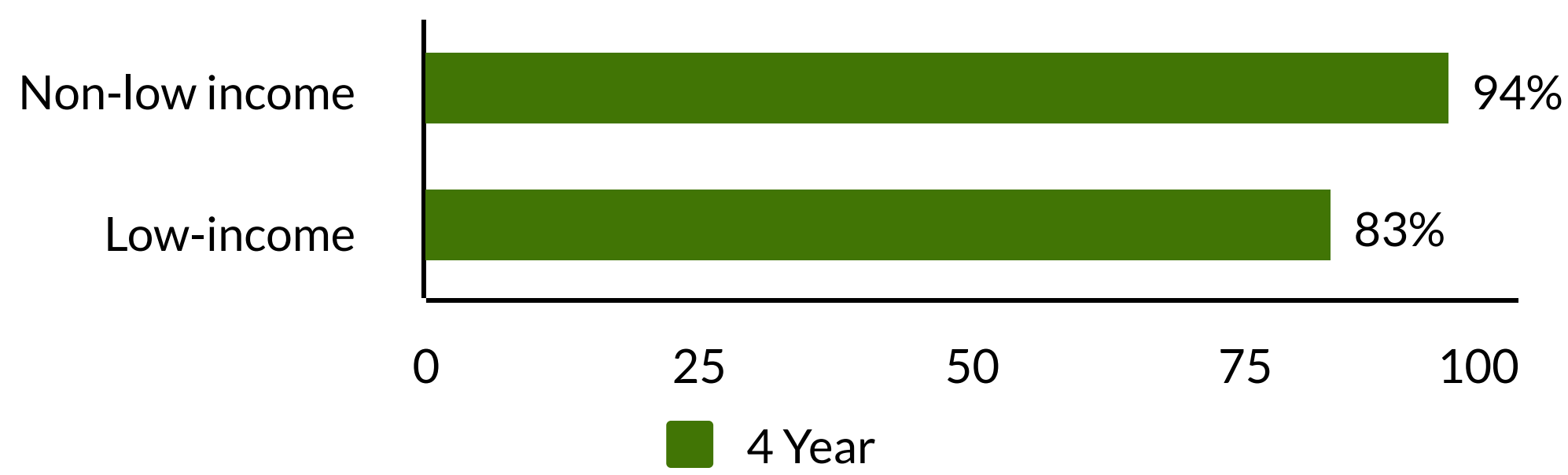
4-year persistence rates by race



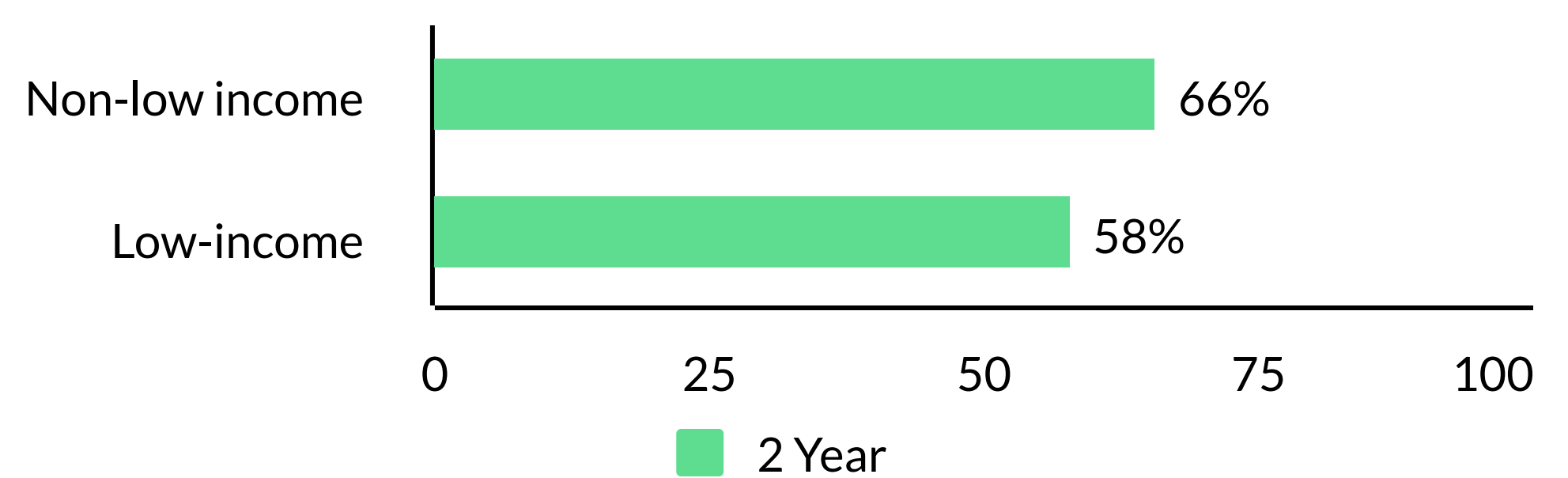
2-year persistence rates by race



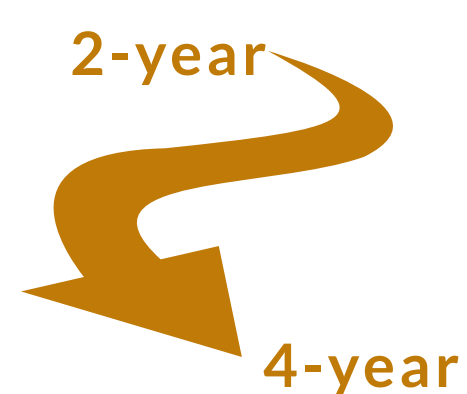
4-year persistence rates by income



2-year persistence rates by income

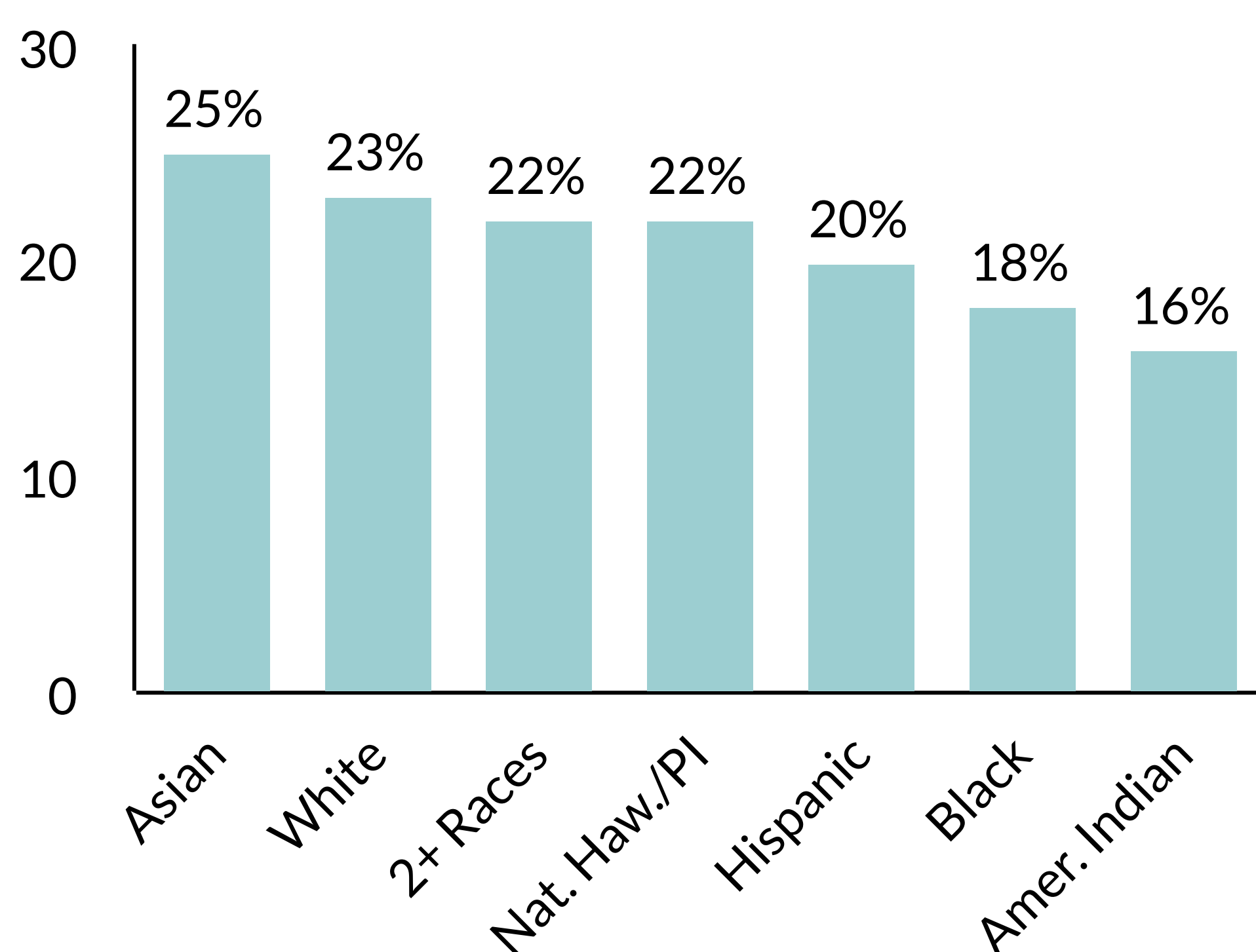


Source: Education Research and Data Center (ERDC), persistence rates for 2019 Washington high school graduates, by race and by FRPL

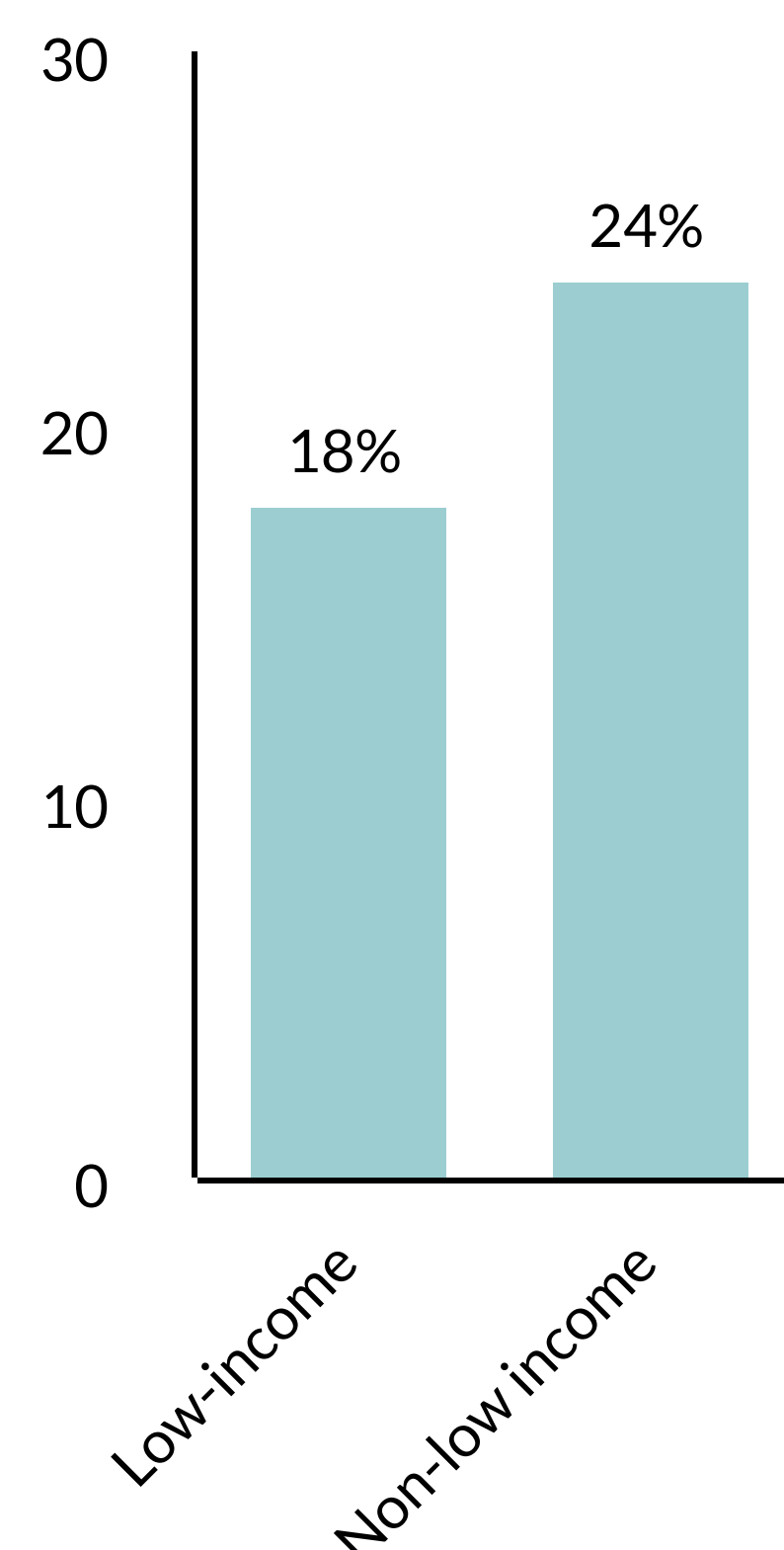


Students of color and low-income students are less likely to **transfer** from public 2-year to public 4-year institutions than their peers.

Transfer rates by race



Transfer rates by income



Source: Education Research and Data Center (ERDC) calculation of Washington public 2-year academic transfer student headcount in academic year 2016-2017 and Washington public 4-year institution transfer student enrollment in academic year 2018-2019, by race. Note: transfer rate is for CTC students who declared an intention to transfer when they first enrolled in 2016-2017.

Opportunity Gaps in Postsecondary Success (cont'd)

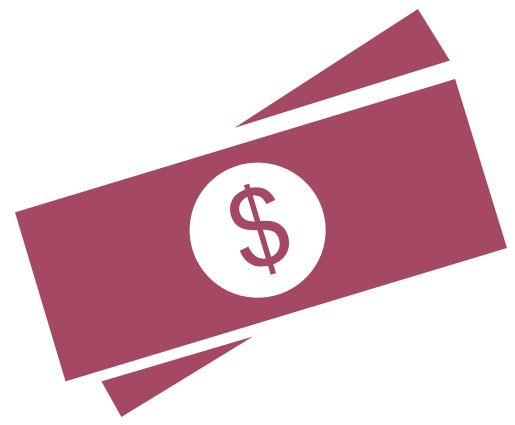


In 2020, males, students of color, and low income students had lower postsecondary graduation rates.



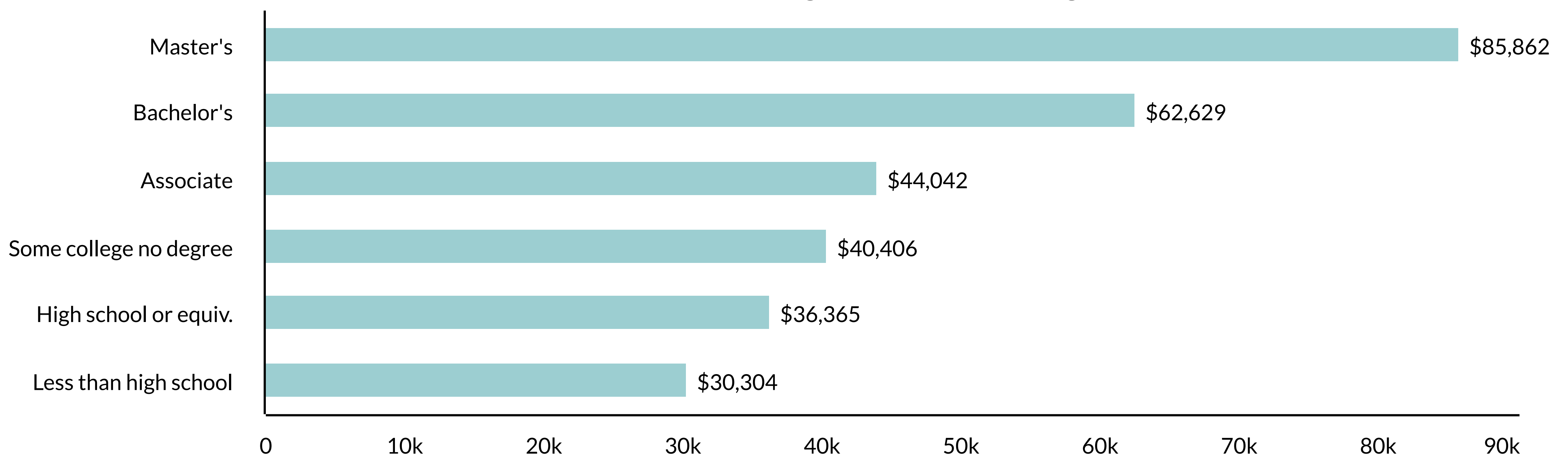
Source: National Center for Education Statistics Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Washington graduation rates within 150% of normal time (within 3 years for 2-year institutions, within 6 years for 4-year institutions), Fall 2014 cohort for 4-year and Fall 2017 cohort for 2-year, by race

Measuring Equity in Labor Market Outcomes



Higher education is correlated with **higher income**—those with higher educational attainment are more likely to be employed in high-paying jobs.

Median earnings in Washington

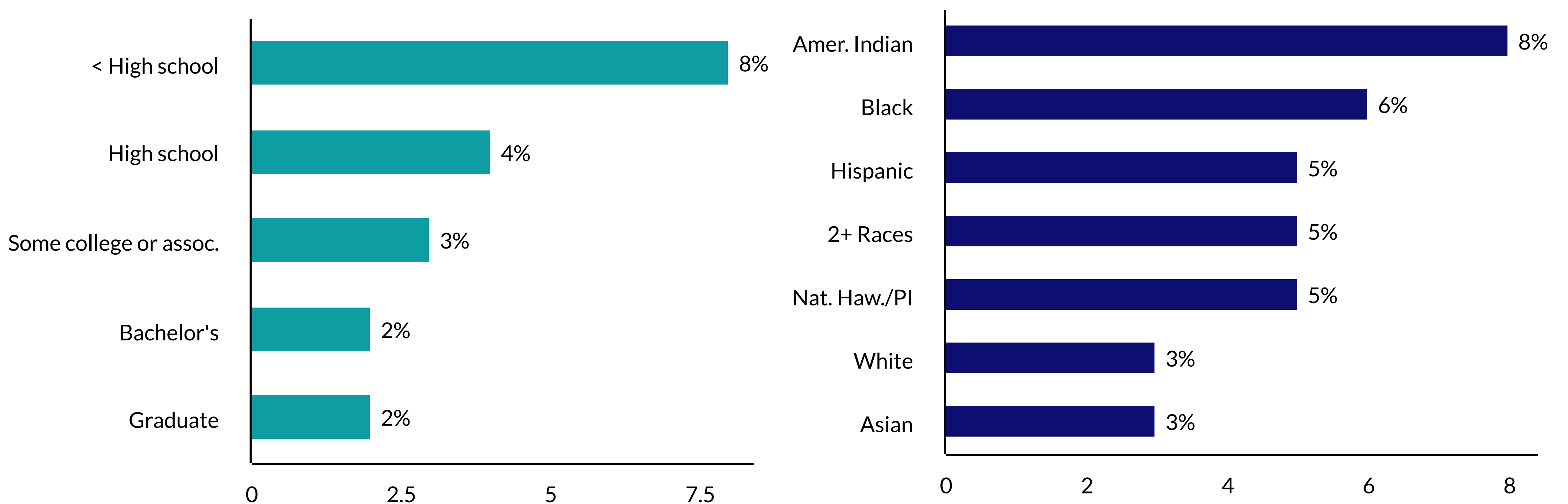


Source: WSAC calculation of American Community Survey, 2019 PUMS 1-Year Data, Washington annual median total person's income by educational attainment



The **unemployment rate** is higher for those with lower levels of educational attainment and people of color.

Washington unemployment rate (May 2022)



Source: Burning Glass Technologies calculation of LAUS and ACS data, Washington unemployment rate May 2022, by educational attainment and race

Closing Equity Gaps in Washington

There are no quick fixes to address equity gaps in education. However, there are some promising strategies to improve educational outcomes for students who have been historically underrepresented in higher education, including students of color and low-income students. Innovative and intentional strategies to address equity gaps in education will improve outcomes for students in Washington and help the state meet its educational attainment goal.

Evidence from research can help address equity gaps in postsecondary education.

Several WSAC publications present evidence from research to improve equity in our state. Visit the links below for further reading:



[What Evidence from Research Tells Us: Closing Racial Equity Gaps in K-12 Postsecondary Transitions - Research Spotlight \(2021\)](#)



[Equity Landscape: Exploring Equity Gaps in Washington Postsecondary Education \(2020\)](#)



[What Evidence from Research Tells Us: Closing Equity Gaps in Postsecondary Access and Completion \(2020\)](#)

