



# THE STEVE FUND

## COVID-19 TASK FORCE REPORT

Weekly Media Tracking for the COVID-19 Task Force

August 23 – 30, 2020

### Summary

A new study in the journal *Public Administration* finds increasing graduate rates associated with increase in faculty of color and women faculty. Two recent articles focus on mental health challenges among graduate students and two other articles focus on the additional challenges faced by first generation college students. #ScholarStrike – Academics plan a work stoppage for Sept. 8-9 for racial justice. The latest data from 2 regular studies are now available – the National College Health Assessment and the NCES information on persistence and graduation.

## Data / Reports

### [ACHA/National College Health Assessment - SPRING 2020](#)

The latest in the series of detailed data on college student health and mental health. It appears this information was mostly gathered prior to the pandemic. The data on mental health are very similar to results from last fall. (No breakdown by race/ethnicity.)

### [Pandemic tests an already-fragile college mental health system](#)

*CalMatters, Ethan Edward Coston, August 27, 2020*

California college students report dramatic increases in levels of worry about their finances, course loads and wellbeing as a result of the pandemic. (Chart at right compares levels of concern about a range of issues.)

### [The Many Forms of Postsecondary Inequity](#)

*Inside Higher Ed, Doug Lederman, August 25, 2020*

New federal data highlight differences in educational outcomes across many individual variables. The two most recent reports: "[Six-Year Persistence and Attainment](#)" and "[Six-Year Withdrawal, Stopout and Transfer Rates](#)"

Only about a quarter of first-time college students in 2011 who were Black (23%) and Hispanic (24%) had earned a bachelor's degree by 2017, compared to 55% of Asian students and 43% of white students.

### [3 COVID challenges hit first-generation students harder](#)

*University Business, Matt Zalaznick | August 24, 2020*

First generation students more likely to suffer mental health problems and food and housing insecurity. First-generation students have faced more severe financial hardships, more difficult home environments and greater difficulties adapting to distance learning, according to the [survey by the Student Experience in the Research University Consortium](#) based at UC Berkeley.

## Other Media

### Colleges

### [As students head back to college, virtually or in person, counseling centers hope to provide mental health support](#)

*Washington Post, Fran Kritz, August 24, 2020*

As colleges begin on-campus and virtual returns by students, counseling center directors hope "even students not previously engaged with the centers will drop by, tune in, check out websites or at least open email messages of support and suggestions the centers will be sending out to everyone."

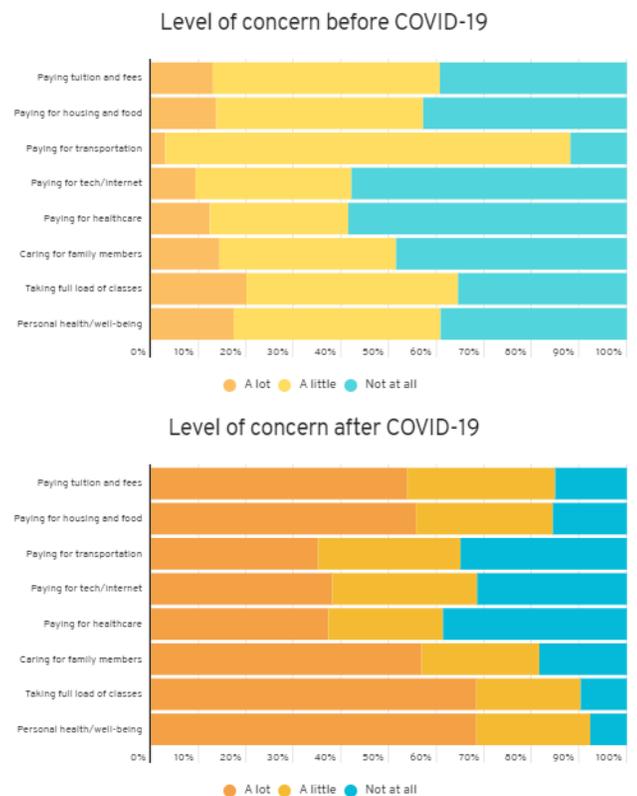
### [Report Sees Shift to Public Colleges During Pandemic](#)

*Inside Higher Ed, Scott Jaschik, August 25, 2020*

[A new report by Eduventures](#) -- consistent with [prior reports](#) -- finds that public institutions are gaining students during the coronavirus. The report shows a 6% increase in students choosing to attend an in-state public institution. Out-of-state public institutions were down by 5% in student choices. And private institutions were down by 3%. Many students strongly preferred close to their homes.

## Worries about health, finances

California college students report dramatic increases in levels of worry about their finances, course loads and wellbeing as a result of the pandemic.



Source: Spring 2020 COVID-19 Student Survey by the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC)

### [How the striking lack of diverse leadership at UNC is exacerbating its covid-19 crisis](#)

*Washington Post, Valerie Strauss, August 26, 2020*

Two faculty members at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill discuss how the university ignored pleas from faculty and students of color to revise reopening plans to provide more protection. They also discuss how the lack of diverse leadership at the school and in higher education across the country is exacerbating the pandemic.

### [#ScholarStrike Professors are planning a work stoppage and virtual, public teach-in on police violence and racism next month.](#)

*Inside Higher Ed, Colleen Flaherty, August 28, 2020*

Three headline-making images from the past week sparked an upcoming strike for racial justice -- what could be the biggest collective action by academics in recent memory.

### [Alternative Credentials on the Rise](#)

*Inside Higher Ed, Paul Fain, August 27, 2020*

A growing body of evidence has found strong consumer interest in recent months in skills-based, online credentials that are clearly tied to careers, particularly among adult learners from diverse and lower-income backgrounds, whom four-year colleges often have struggled to attract and graduate.

### [Plantation Politics on Today's Campuses](#)

*Inside Higher Ed, Dian D. Squire, Bianca C. Williams and Frank Tuitt, August 28, 2020*

Explores how some academic institutions use ideologies and strategies from the past to control, repress and surveil Black people. The current moment of political transformation makes glaringly obvious that in order for Black lives to truly matter in higher education, and for Black people to be safe, substantial reimagining and restructuring of academic institutions must take place.

### [Thoughts on Creating an Inclusive Environment in Online Classes](#)

*Inside Higher Ed, Ray Schroeder, August 26, 2020*

In preparing for the fall term, most colleges and universities are responding to the renewed public consciousness about equality, inclusiveness and fairness for all students.

## **College Students**

### [Increasing graduation rates of students of color with more faculty of color](#)

*WILEY (via EurekAlert), August 19, 2020*

A new analysis published in *Public Administration* found that student graduation rates improve as more faculty employed by a college or university share sex and race/ethnic identities with students. The analysis focuses on the concept of intersectionality, which seeks to understand how aspects of a person's social and political identities--such as gender, race, class, sexuality, ability, and physical appearance--may combine to create aspects of discrimination and privilege.

### [Going Remote Makes It Harder For Colleges To Reach First-Generation Students](#)

*The Verge, Justine Calma@justcalma Aug 19, 2020.*

There are more roadblocks than ever for students to overcome. And if these students fall through the cracks, universities and the fields in which those students would have entered, like health care, lose out on the talent and diverse perspectives first-generation students have to offer.

### [College and the Black Lives Matter Movement: How to Find a School That Values Diversity and Antiracist Policies](#)

*Money, Mallika Mitra, August 25, 2020*

It's important to get information about how much a college supports its minority students and promotes

antiracism before picking a school. Here's how: Question the messaging; find statistics; assess the community and the curriculum.

### **College Students Signed Leases, Paid Rent and Moved in for the Fall Semester. Then Campus Closed Again**

*Money, Charlotte West, August 24, 2020*

It's an issue that could affect tens of thousands of students in college towns around the country. In recent weeks, a handful of universities where many students live off-campus, including Johns Hopkins and the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, have canceled most in-person instruction.

### **Some Student Athletes Playing a Leading Role When It Comes to Social Justice Advocacy**

*Diverse Issues in Higher Ed, Lois Elfman, August 20, 2020*

Across the country, present and past collegiate student-athletes are finding their voices on issues related to racism.

### **Thee Mental Health Toll of Going Back to School during a Pandemic**

*Teen Vogue, Will Kubzansky, August 26, 2020*

Along with the physical risk of COVID-19, the mental health toll can't be overlooked. The ever-increasing numbers of us who live with mental illnesses could face an unthinkable challenge in an environment already poorly equipped to help students cope with their mental health.

### **Medical experts warn that mental health of college athletes, and especially Black athletes, is being overlooked.**

*USA Today, Josh Perter, August 26, 2020*

Hainline emphasized the issue during an online symposium focusing in part on COVID-19 and the return to sports. He said an NCAA survey of more than 37,000 athletes showed that Black athletes are disproportionately affected by mental health issues.

### **Mental health has long been a challenge for grad students. COVID-19 has made it harder.**

*Philadelphia Inquirer, Bethany Ao, August 24, 2020.*

Graduate students, who already experience rates of anxiety and depression six times greater than the general population, are coping with a shrinking job market and huge changes to their workplaces as a result of the pandemic, leading some to call for a systemic change in how mental health is addressed in academia.

### **Graduate students: Mind your mental health this fall amid pandemic stress**

*Chicago Sun Times, Ryan Lane, Aug 28, 2020*

Graduate students are facing many pressing issues as they evaluate their fall 2020 plans. But they can't overlook the pandemic's potential toll on their mental well-being. Grad students still might not know whether they can continue their studies. That could affect things like fellowship funding and employment stipends. It also could lead to noneducational consequences, like losing access to health insurance.

### **Guest opinion: A. Marie Ranjbar: Foreign college students face 'invisible wall'**

*DAILY CAMERA, A. Marie Ranjbar, August 21, 2020*

International students at U.S. universities have faced unprecedented obstacles under President Donald Trump's administration and, unless we put an end to it, we will only hurt our Colorado communities.

### **Black Student Activists Plan to Continue the Momentum of the Black Lives Matter Movement on Campus This Fall**

*Diverse Issues in Higher Ed, Sara Weissman, August 24, 2020*

It was a grueling spring semester for Black student activists. After the police killings of George Floyd,

Breonna Taylor and others, Black students across the nation protested and petitioned for campus police reforms, new campus building names, faculty diversity training and more — all amid a global pandemic disproportionately hitting communities of color.

## **Mental Health**

### **[The Extra Stigma of Mental Illness for African-Americans](#)**

*New York Times, Dana Givens, Aug. 25, 2020*

In my Black community, therapy was stigmatized as something for people who could not handle challenges

It is important that we don't merely start the conversation but continue it by taking action, which is seeking out treatment. The myth of the strong Black man and Black woman has convinced many of us that we are unbreakable even when we are suffering.

### **[Young Adults' Pandemic Mental Health Risks](#)**

*New York Times, Perri Klass, M.D., August 24, 2020*

In a new C.D.C. survey, 18- to 24-year-olds reported the highest levels of symptoms of anxiety and depression, and a quarter of them said they had seriously considered suicide. (Reporting based on the recent [CDC MMWR](#) report.)

### **[Rutgers University Study Finds Young People of Color Suffer PTSD from Viewing Publicized Police Killings of Unarmed Black People](#)**

*Urban Health Today, Robert Dillard -August 28, 2020*

A Rutgers University study shows most college students of color show symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after watching social media videos of unarmed Black men being killed by police. The study was published in the Journal of Black Studies.

## **Other**

### **[Seeds Of Fortune: Financially Empowering Young Women Of Color](#)**

*Forbes, Kelly Anne Smith, August 19, 2020*

A 2019 survey from the TIAA Institute found African American adults answered 38% of its Personal Finance Index questions correctly, compared to 55% of white respondents. Walker is the founder and CEO of Seeds of Fortune, a nonprofit scholars program that financially empowers young women of color. To date, Seeds of Fortune has graduated 80 scholars, has an online network of over 300 members and has helped young women of color secure over \$8 million in scholarships awarded to its scholars.

### **[Now is the time for philanthropy to invest in promoting college success](#)**

*EdSource, Jennifer Nguyen, August 23, 2020*

At a time when people without college degrees are losing their jobs in unprecedented numbers, we need to invest more — not less — in opportunities for students to complete a postsecondary degree. Philanthropy has a vital role in meeting these challenges.

### **[Pacific Islanders Have The Highest COVID-19 Death Rate In Hawaii](#)**

*Civil Beat / Anita Hofschneider / August 24, 2020*

Filipinos in Hawaii have the next-highest death rate, composing 24% of deaths but only 16% of the population. Non-Hawaiian Pacific Islanders make up 16% of Hawaii's coronavirus deaths even though they are only 4% of the population, according to newly released data from the Hawaii Department of

Health.

**[COVID-19 exposes how Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders face stark health care disparities](#)**

*UCLA Newsroom, Elaiza Torralba | August 25, 2020*

The impact on the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, or NHPI, community is devastating, and without accurate data, we only know a small piece of the story. Currently, NHPIs are seeing infection rates up to five times that of white people in Los Angeles County

**[New Guidelines Aim to Break Down Racial and Gender Disparities in Education for Young Girls of Color](#)**

*Diverse Issues in Higher Ed, Sarah Wood, August 26, 2020*

The Education Trust and the National Women's Law Center (NWLC) released a guide recommending ways to create safer learning environments for young females of color.

*This information was curated and analyzed by Debbie Cohen.*