From Learning to Earning

Eight-Year Findings from the ASAP Ohio Demonstration

APRIL 2025

Colin Hill
Kayla Warner
Colleen Sommo

Obtaining a degree from a community college is a strong pathway to numerous career opportunities for students from low-income backgrounds.[1] Unfortunately, graduation rates from community colleges are often very low, so many students do not reap the benefits of a degree. Within public two-year institutions, only 43 percent of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students graduate in six years.[2] With the goal of increasing the graduation rates of students who face many barriers to educational success, three community colleges in Ohio — Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, Cuyahoga Community College, and Lorain County Community College — implemented programs based on the Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) model. Designed by the City University of New York (CUNY), the ASAP model provides students with up to three years of financial, academic, and personal support and services that address multiple student challenges.

Over the past decade, MDRC has been evaluating the effectiveness of the ASAP Ohio programs using a randomized controlled trial. MDRC has previously disseminated findings after three and six years of follow-up. This brief extends the follow-up period to eight years, contains updated

mdrc
BUILDING KNOWLEDGE TO IMPROVE SOCIAL POLICY

academic and labor market findings, and examines whether the positive impacts that were found after six years have persisted.[3] After eight years, the program continues to have a positive impact on graduation: 46 percent of students in the program group earned a degree compared with 31 percent in the control group, an increase of 15 percentage points.[4] This sustained academic impact continues to drive significant impacts on earnings for the program group, which earned $3,337 more than the control group's average of $24,596 in Year 8 — an increase of 14 percent.

In a time of increasing public skepticism about the value of a college degree, these findings affirm the role of community colleges as a driver of economic mobility — and comprehensive student support programs like ASAP are an evidence-backed way to achieve that goal.[5]

About the Evaluation

The ASAP Ohio Demonstration began in 2014 as a collaborative effort between the three Ohio colleges, CUNY, MDRC, and the Ohio Department of Higher Education. The Ohio programs are closely based on the CUNY ASAP model, which was designed and implemented by CUNY and was found to nearly double three-year graduation rates in New York City.[6] MDRC's evaluation of the CUNY ASAP program found that within three years, 40 percent of ASAP students graduated in comparison with only 22 percent of control group students.[7] After eight years, CUNY ASAP demonstrated an impact of approximately 12 percentage points on associate degree attainment.[8]

The ASAP Model's First Replication

Following ASAP's success at CUNY, in 2015 the three Ohio colleges began implementing a replication of the model. To be eligible for the Ohio programs, students had to be newly enrolled (or had to have earned 24 or fewer credits), from a low-income background (defined as being eligible for a Pell Grant), seeking a degree, and willing to enroll full time in college in a three-year program. MDRC's evaluation used random assignment — a lottery-like process — to place interested and eligible students into either a program group, which had access to the program's services, or a control group, which did not.[9] Comparing the average outcomes of these two groups of students, such as graduation rates or annual earnings, provides an estimate of the causal effect of the program.

As designed, the Ohio program model required students to enroll full time and encouraged them to take any necessary developmental (that is, remedial) courses immediately; provided enhanced advising, tutoring, and career services; provided financial support to help students meet participation requirements and alleviate barriers to full-time study; and offered blocked courses and condensed schedules.[10]

The study comprises three cohorts: spring 2015, fall 2015, and spring 2016. A total of 1,501 students were in the study: 806 in the program group and 695 in the control group.[11] Almost one-half of the students in the sample are considered nontraditional, which is defined in this study as students who were 24 years or older, worked 35 hours or more per week, were parents, or had received a high

school equivalency (such as a GED certificate) rather than a high school diploma. For further information regarding the study sample, please refer to Supplementary Table S.1.

Prior Findings

After three years, the Ohio colleges' programs found similar success to the program at CUNY: 35 percent of the students in the Ohio program group had earned degrees compared with 19 percent of students in the control group.[12] The Ohio programs' graduation impacts persisted in Year 6 and the labor market findings revealed that program group students earned $2,045 more than control group students' annual average of $17,631 — an increase of 12 percent.[13]

Eight-Year Follow-Up

This brief extends the follow-up period to determine whether the impacts that were observed at six years persisted, given that the significant labor market impacts between the program and control groups only emerged after six years and some students were still enrolled or had transferred to a four-year institution. Perhaps most notably, the six-year point overlapped directly with the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic, a time when academic and professional environments transformed drastically. This brief (and a planned brief that will examine results after 10 years) covers a period further from the peak of the pandemic.

The evaluation of the Ohio programs relies on several data sources and includes baseline survey data, National Student Clearinghouse data, and Ohio unemployment insurance wage data.[14]

Academic Findings

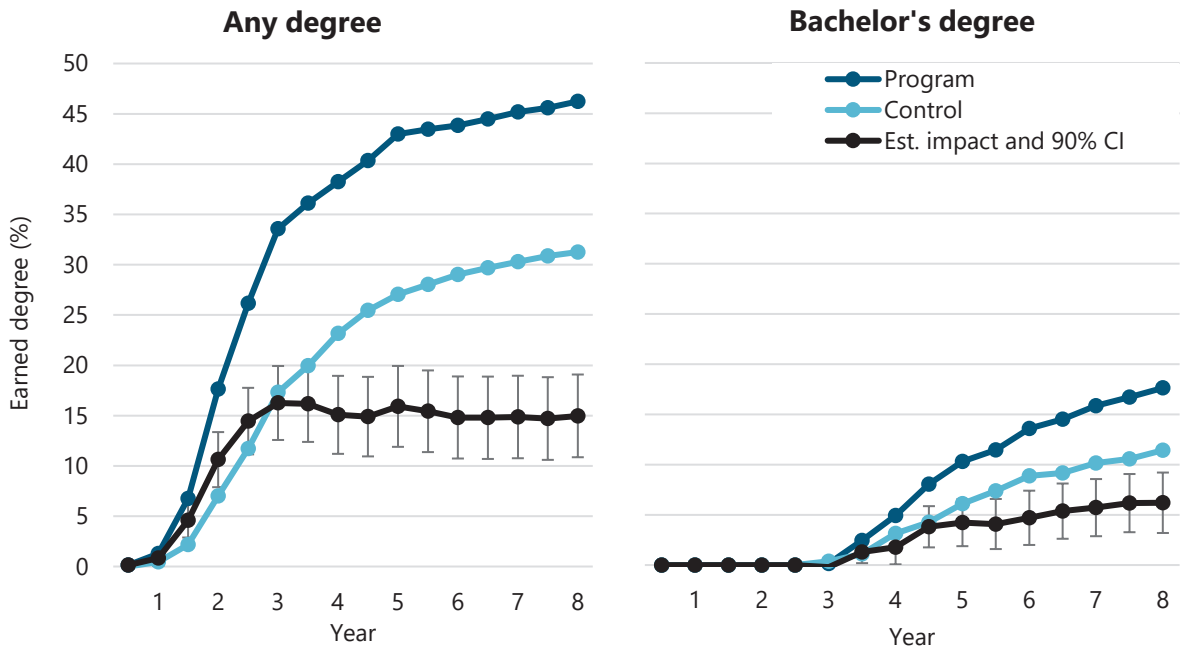
After eight years, the long-term impact on degree receipt persisted: Students in the program group earned degrees at much higher rates than their control group peers. With few students still enrolled in college, this finding suggests that the Ohio programs successfully enabled students to complete degrees who would not have otherwise done so.

Sustained Increase in Graduation Rates

After eight years, 46 percent of program group students had earned a degree compared with 31 percent of control group students, an estimated 15 percentage point effect of the program. (See Figure 1.) This effect signifies a nearly 50 percent increase in graduation rates, positioning the Ohio programs as some of the most effective postsecondary education initiatives to boost graduation rates among all rigorously evaluated programs.[15]

Notably, this impact has remained steady — around 15 percentage points — for five years. A program can increase graduation rates by (1) helping students earn degrees more quickly than they would have, or (2) helping students earn degrees that they would not have earned otherwise. Both

Figure 1. Eight-Year Impacts on Degree Receipt, by Year



SOURCE: MDRC calculations using data from the National Student Clearinghouse.

NOTES: Estimates are for the full sample of 1,501 students.

Estimates are adjusted by gender, race/ethnicity, age, parental status, weekly hours worked, financial dependence on parents, receipt of high school diploma, first-generation college student status, planned enrollment intensity at time of random assignment, number of developmental education requirements, institution of random assignment, cohort, and earnings in the two quarters before random assignment.

CI = confidence interval. A 90 percent confidence interval means that if this study were repeated many times, the true impact being estimated would fall within this range 90 percent of the time. If the confidence interval for an estimated impact does not contain zero, that estimated impact is called statistically significant.

outcomes have important academic and financial benefits. However, a program increasing graduation rates through only the former mechanism would see its impacts on graduation (and perhaps earnings, too) fade over time as the control group caught up.[16] The fact that the graduation rate impact has remained steady for so long indicates that the Ohio programs' impacts are driven primarily by the latter mechanism, allowing program participants to accumulate the benefits of a college degree over their lifetime.

While the main goal of the ASAP model is to help students earn an associate degree within three years, the Ohio programs improve students' outcomes beyond their time in community college. Figure 1 includes degree-earning trends for bachelor's degrees specifically, an exploratory outcome of interest given their substantially higher labor market returns (compared with associate degrees).[17] As Supplementary Table S.1 shows, over 80 percent of students reported that they planned to attain a bachelor's degree or higher. The Ohio programs helped students achieve this goal: After eight years,

17.6 percent of program group students had earned a bachelor's degree compared with 11.4 percent of control group students, a 6.2 percentage point impact. This finding is notable because students do not receive any additional support from the Ohio programs once they transfer to a four-year institution, indicating that the comprehensive model benefits students well beyond their time in the program, whether that is at another college or — as discussed in the next section — in the labor market.

Few Students Still Enrolled in School

Enrollment rates provide some insight into how many students may still be working toward a degree. By the end of Year 8 (that is, Semester 16), about 12 percent of program group and control group students were still enrolled in college, with about 5 percent at two-year institutions and 7 percent at four-year institutions. (See Supplementary Table S.2.) This is a sharp decline from the six-year point, when about 21 percent and 17 percent of the program and control group members were enrolled, respectively. With few students still enrolled and no meaningful differences in enrollment patterns, it is unlikely that the control group will significantly catch up in degree completion.

Labor Market Findings

After eight years, program group students continued to earn more than their control group counterparts despite being employed at similar rates, suggesting that the Ohio programs significantly increased students' earnings.

Growing Gains in Annual Earnings

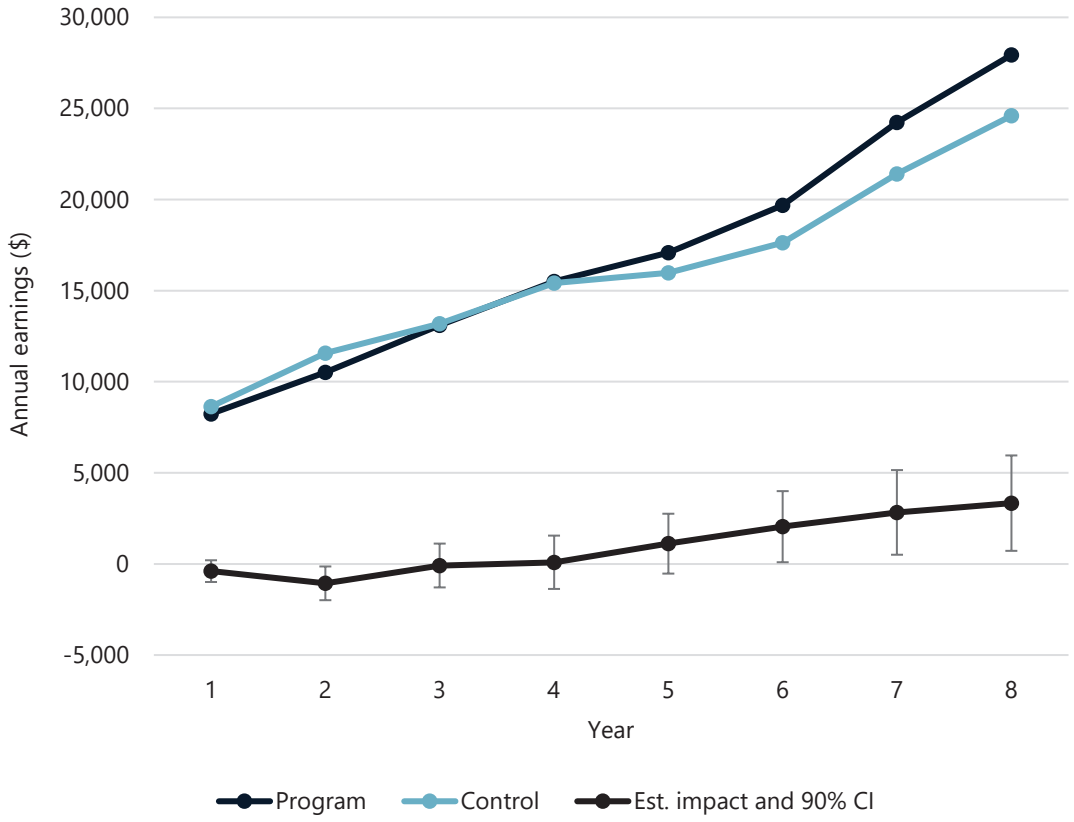
In Year 8, the program group earned an average of $3,337 more than the control group, a 14 percent increase. This increase is larger than the one observed at the six-year period ($2,045, or 12 percent). Figure 2 shows that the impact on earnings has been gradually increasing since Year 4, and Supplementary Table S.3 shows it has been statistically significant since Year 6. Among the entire sample, the program group earned an average of $27,934 and the control group earned an average of $24,596.

The labor market returns that are associated with a college degree are well documented.[18] The large impacts on degree completion, including the growing impact on the completion of bachelor's degrees, likely drive the increase in program group students' earnings.

Similar Employment Rates

The Ohio programs could increase students' earnings in two ways — by increasing their employment rates and by increasing how much they earn when working — both of which have positive implications for their economic mobility. For instance, if students in the program group were employed at higher rates, then even if the average earnings of the employed program group students were identical to those of employed control group students (that is, an increase in employment but no change in earnings), there would be a difference in earnings when looking at the full sample.

Figure 2. Eight-Year Impacts on Annual Earnings



SOURCE: MDRC calculations using Ohio unemployment insurance wage records.

NOTES: Estimates are for a sample of 1,482 students. Out of 1,501 students in the analysis, 19 (11 in the program group and 8 in the control group) did not provide a Social Security number, and therefore were not included in the wage records request. These students have missing data for all labor market outcomes.

Estimates are adjusted by gender, race/ethnicity, age, parental status, weekly hours worked, financial dependence on parents, receipt of high school diploma, first-generation college student status, planned enrollment intensity at time of random assignment, number of developmental education requirements, institution of random assignment, cohort, and earnings in the two quarters before random assignment.

CI = confidence interval. A 90 percent confidence interval means that if this study were repeated many times, the true impact being estimated would fall within this range 90 percent of the time. If the confidence interval for an estimated impact does not contain zero, that estimated impact is called statistically significant.

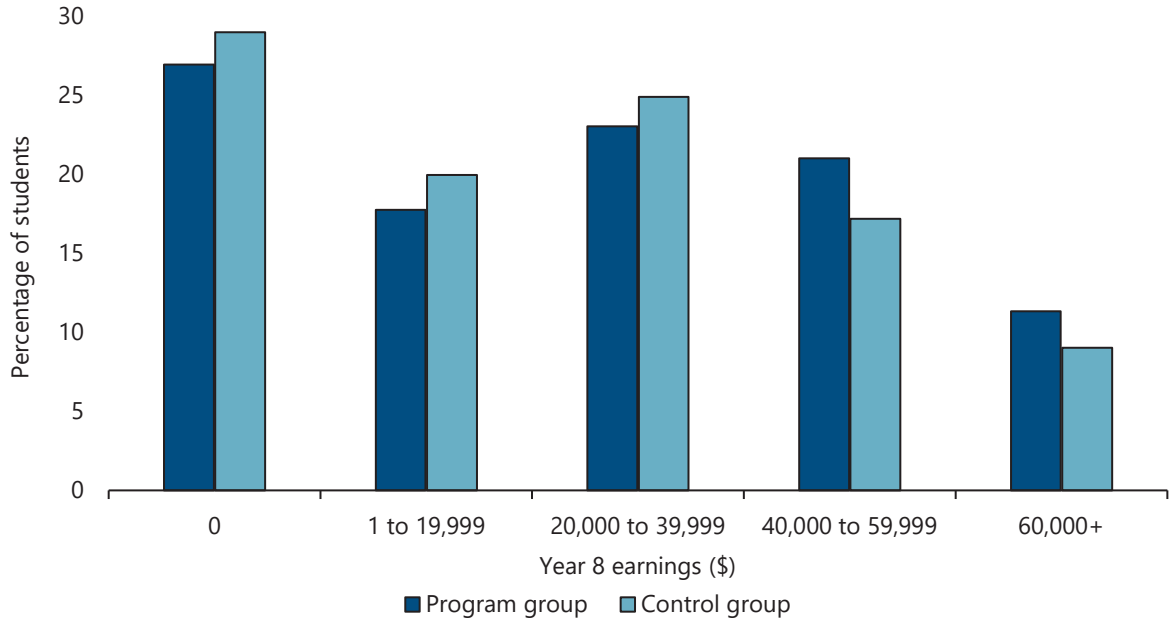
However, it does not appear that the Ohio programs' effects on employment rates are the main driver of the impacts on average earnings. The Ohio programs do not substantially increase employment rates. As shown in Supplementary Table S.3, about 73 percent of program group students were employed in Year 8 compared with 71 percent of control group students. Program group students were slightly more likely to be employed, but this difference is not statistically significant. This finding suggests that the Ohio programs increased earnings primarily through other mechanisms, either by allowing students to secure higher-paying jobs, work more hours, or both.[19] As an

example, among the students with any employment in Year 8, program group students still outearn their control group peers: They earn an average of $38,180 compared with control group students' $34,730, a difference of $3,450. (See Supplementary Table S.4.) While it is not possible to examine occupational differences between the research groups with the data in this study, the comprehensive support offered by the ASAP model, in combination with the labor market returns associated with having a degree, may play an important role in helping students secure higher-paying jobs.

Interpreting the Experimental Effects on Earnings

Amid waning public confidence in the value of a college education, there has been a renewed interest in the return-on-investment of a college degree.[20] In this context, it is noteworthy that throughout the evaluation the average annual earnings for each research group were less than $30,000, which may seem concerningly low at first glance. (See Supplementary Table S.3.) But these estimates are for the *entire* study sample, including students who were not working at all and students who were working part time. Figure 3 illustrates that over a quarter of the sample had no earnings in Year 8. These students could have earned money elsewhere, earned money from jobs that were not covered by Ohio unemployment insurance wage data, or been unemployed.[21] It also shows that the Ohio programs shifted the distribution of annual earnings for program group students: 32 percent earned at least $40,000 in Year 8, compared with 26 percent of control group students. A living wage for a single person with no dependents in Ohio is $42,400, so this shift implies that comprehensive student support programs like the Ohio programs improve students' economic mobility.[22]

Figure 3. Distribution of Earnings in Year 8, by Research Group



(continued)

Figure 3 (continued)

SOURCE: MDRC calculations using Ohio unemployment insurance wage records.

NOTES: Estimates are for a sample of 795 control group students and 687 program group students, with a total of 1,482 students. Out of 1,501 students in the analysis, 19 (11 in the program group and 8 in the control group) did not provide a Social Security number, and therefore were not included in the wage records request. These students have missing data for all labor market outcomes.

Estimates are adjusted by gender, race/ethnicity, age, parental status, weekly hours worked, financial dependence on parents, receipt of high school diploma, first-generation college student status, planned enrollment intensity at time of random assignment, number of developmental education requirements, institution of random assignment, cohort, and earnings in the two quarters before random assignment.

Earnings are rounded to the nearest dollar.

It is also important to note that while many other organizations collect and publish data on the labor market returns that are associated with college degrees, they are not necessarily comparable to the experimental averages reported here because they are based on much more restricted samples, such as people who have completed a degree or are currently working.[23]

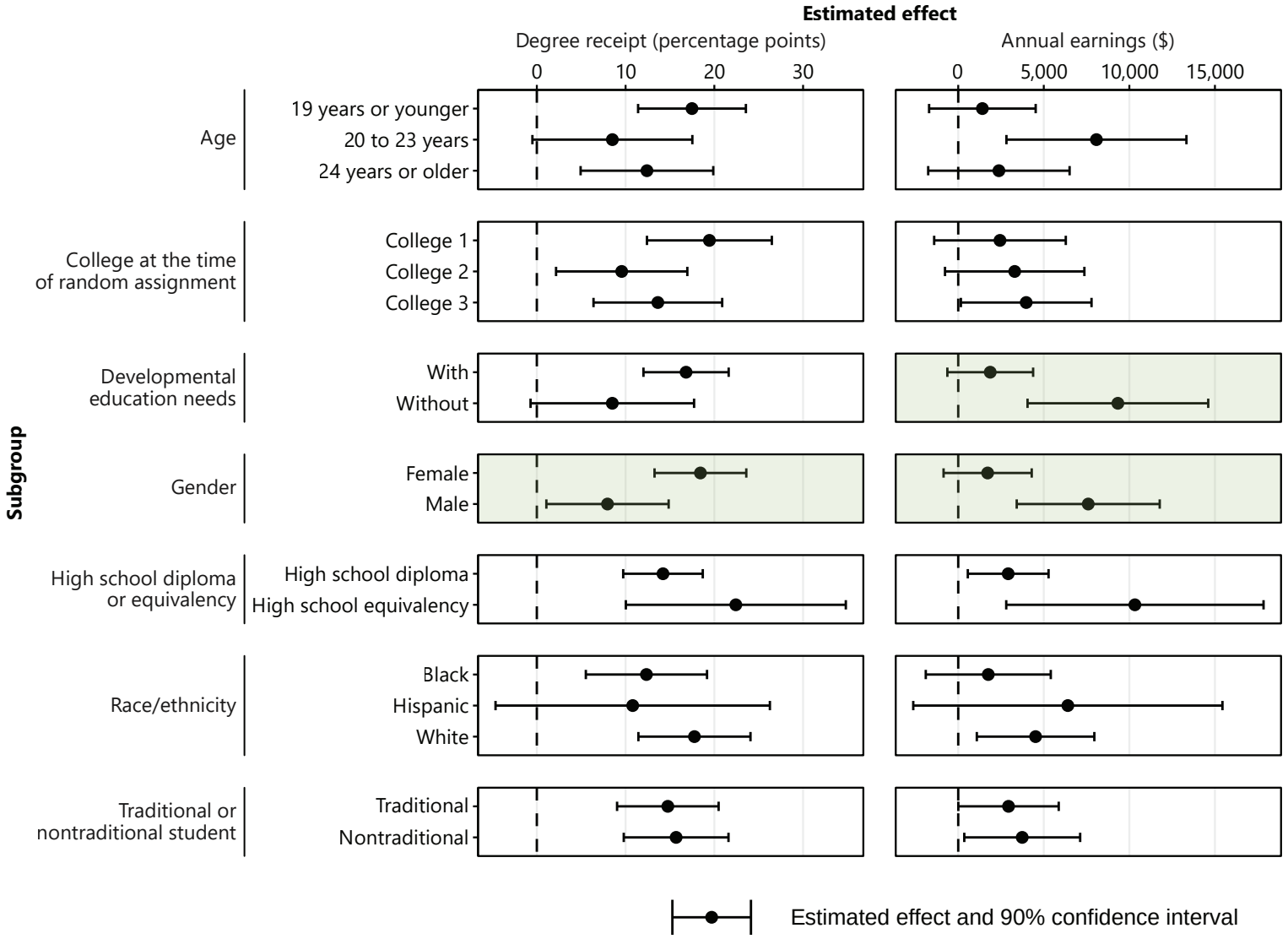
Subgroup Findings

As the interest in replicating the ASAP model grows, it is important to understand if there are significant differences in the effectiveness of the program for specific student populations. As shown in Figure 4, the Ohio programs were generally effective at increasing graduation rates and annual earnings for a wide range of demographic subgroups: Even where there are differences in the estimated effects of the Ohio programs among subgroups of students, estimated effects are positive for all the subgroups that were explored. It is particularly noteworthy that the programs had consistently positive impacts at the three colleges in the study, despite serving different student populations and geographic areas — further highlighting the replicability of the ASAP model. All subgroup findings should be interpreted with caution given sample size limitations and the number of subgroups that were tested. While the individual impact estimates have a lot of uncertainty, as illustrated by the 90 percent confidence intervals in Figure 4, the general patterns are nonetheless of interest.

Impacts on Graduation Rates by Subgroup

The Ohio programs were generally effective at increasing graduation rates for students in a wide range of demographic subgroups. (See Supplementary Table S.5.) Among the subgroups that were examined, the most significant difference in estimated impacts was between men and women: The programs increased graduation rates by 8 percentage points for men and 18 percentage points for women. While this difference was also observed at the six-year point and warrants further exploration, it should be interpreted with caution since there is not a clear reason to expect that the programs would work better for women than for men.[24]

Figure 4. Eight-Year Impacts on Degree Receipt and Annual Earnings, by Subgroup



(continued)

Figure 4 (continued)

SOURCES: MDRC calculations using baseline information form data and placement test data from the study colleges, Ohio unemployment insurance wage records, and National Student Clearinghouse data.

NOTES: Estimates are adjusted by gender, race/ethnicity, age, parental status, weekly hours worked, financial dependence on parents, receipt of high school diploma, first-generation college student status, planned enrollment intensity at time of random assignment, number of developmental education requirements, institution of random assignment, cohort, and earnings in the two quarters before random assignment.

The highlighted sections signify statistically significant differences between subgroups.

Out of 1,501 students in the analysis, 19 (11 in the program group and 8 in the control group) did not provide a Social Security number and therefore were not included in the wage records request. These students have missing data for all labor market outcomes.

A 90 percent confidence interval means that if this study were repeated many times, the true impact being estimated would fall within this range 90 percent of the time. If the confidence interval for an estimated impact does not contain zero, that estimated impact is called statistically significant.

Respondents who said they were Hispanic and chose a race are included only in the "Hispanic" category.

Nontraditional students are defined as those who were 24 years or older, worked 35 or more hours per week, had children, or had not received a high school diploma and were not enrolled in high school at the time of random assignment. Students are listed as nontraditional if they fit any of these characteristics.

Impacts on Annual Earnings by Subgroup

Like with graduation rates, the estimated impacts on annual earnings were consistently positive for the subgroups. (See Supplementary Table S.6.) The most significant differences in estimated impacts occurred between men and women and between students who had developmental education needs and those who did not.

Notably, men had higher estimated earnings impacts than women ($7,597 and $1,720, respectively) — the opposite of the graduation rate findings. This finding is unexpected. One potential driver of this difference is that there is a large positive impact of 8 percentage points on men's employment in Year 8, whereas there is a very small negative impact of 1 percentage point on women's employment, as shown in Supplementary Table S.8. This finding could indicate that the programs were more effective at matching men to jobs than women or signify occupational differences between men and women, but it is difficult to assess the mechanism for this difference.

A similar pattern exists for the developmental-needs subgroup: Students without developmental needs had larger estimated impacts than students with developmental needs ($9,330 and $1,871, respectively). Many factors could contribute to this difference: For instance, it is possible that this finding is a result of students who enter the program with developmental needs taking longer to earn their degrees and reap the labor market benefits. It is also possible that students with developmental needs sought credentials with lower labor market returns. These (and other) possibilities warrant further investigation and will be explored more in MDRC's future research.

It is worth noting that, by looking at seven subgroups and two outcomes, a reasonable explanation for the observed differences in impacts could be estimation error. The more subpopulations and outcomes researchers examine, the more likely they are to observe differential effects by chance. Thus, these findings should be taken lightly until replicated.

Discussion

In April 2023, the research team published a brief presenting six-year impacts on the outcomes shown here, and the findings were promising: The Ohio programs increased both degree completion and annual earnings. As the first long-term follow-up study of the ASAP Ohio Demonstration and the first experimental look at the labor market impacts of any programs based on the CUNY ASAP model, it was important to understand whether these promising trends persisted. That is the focus of this brief.

All evidence points to the Ohio programs having sustained academic and economic benefits after eight years: From the six-year point, the impacts of the central outcomes that were examined were either maintained or they increased. The Ohio programs continue to show improved educational and economic outcomes for students from low-income backgrounds. The core goal of the ASAP model is to increase three-year graduation rates, so it is particularly notable to see positive economic impacts from a completion-focused program.

These findings, however, have some important limitations. MDRC's evaluation only captures wages that were earned in Ohio, meaning that earnings from students who were employed outside of Ohio are not included.[25] In a separate study, MDRC plans to address this limitation by analyzing national wage data.[26] Additionally, unemployment insurance wage data do not include information about the type or consistency of employment, leaving open questions about whether the Ohio programs may have impacted earnings by (for example) making program group students more likely to be employed full time rather than part time, or in permanent rather than temporary jobs.

The sustained success of the Ohio programs is notable, but just one piece of an ever-growing evidence base for the CUNY ASAP model. Adaptations of the model are now active at over 40 institutions in seven states, with many programs showing similarly strong results for academic outcomes despite operating in substantially different contexts and with varied student populations.[27] For instance, an adaptation at Westchester Community College (which MDRC is evaluating) and a baccalaureate version of the model called Accelerate, Complete, and Engage that was initially implemented at John Jay College of Criminal Justice (which CUNY and Metis Associates are evaluating) both had large graduation impacts.[28]

Through a separate study—in collaboration with the Community College Research Center and CUNY—MDRC will be publishing long-term academic and (for the first time) labor market impacts of the original CUNY ASAP evaluation in late 2025 or early 2026.[29] The next report on the Ohio programs will cover ten-year findings and be published in 2027. In interpreting labor market outcomes, it is important to acknowledge that they could vary over time based on the local economic context. Therefore, this brief and the forthcoming publications will make valuable contributions to the nascent evidence base on the labor market impacts of the ASAP model.

Notes and References

1. Clive Belfield and Thomas Bailey, *The Labor Market Returns to Sub-Baccalaureate College: A Review* (Center for Analysis of Postsecondary Education and Employment, 2017).
2. Richard Fry and Anthony Cilluffo, "A Rising Share of Undergraduates Are from Poor Families, Especially at Less Selective Colleges" (website: https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2019/05/22/a-rising-share-of-undergraduates-are-from-poor-families-especially-at-less-selective-colleges/, 2019); National Center for Education Statistics, "Undergraduate Graduation Rates" (website: https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=40, 2022).
3. This study prespecified two confirmatory outcomes: receiving a degree (excluding certificates) and annual earnings. A confirmatory outcome is one that is believed to be a main indicator of the success of the Ohio programs. Exploratory outcomes, on the other hand, are not the main indicators of success but still provide useful evidence and could be subject to future rigorous testing. All outcomes and subgroup analyses except the two confirmatory outcomes noted above are considered exploratory. For further explanation of confirmatory and exploratory outcomes please refer to Peter Z. Schochet, *Technical Methods Report: Guidelines for Multiple Testing in Impact Evaluations* (National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, 2008). Additionally, Supplementary Table S.7 presents p-values for the confirmatory outcomes that were adjusted using the Westfall-Young method, which accounts for the increased false discovery rate when testing multiple hypotheses. The impact preanalysis plan for this study is publicly available on the Open Science Foundation website: Cynthia Miller, Colleen Sommo, and Kriti Singh, "ASAP Ohio: Long-Term Follow-Up Analysis Plan" (website: osf.io/735nq, 2022).
4. The confirmatory outcome for this study excludes certificates. Certificates are earned from nondegree programs that are typically short term (often one year or less) and offer specialized skills-based training for a particular vocation.
5. Jessica Blake, "Doubts About Value Are Deterring College Enrollment," *Inside Higher Ed* (website: https://www.insidehighered.com/news/students/retention/2024/03/13/doubts-about-value-are-deterring-college-enrollment, 2024).
6. Susan Scrivener, Michael J. Weiss, Alyssa Ratledge, Timothy Rudd, Colleen Sommo, and Hannah Fresques, *Doubling Graduation Rates: Three-Year Effects of CUNY's Accelerated Study in Associate Programs for Developmental Education Students* (MDRC, 2015).
7. Scrivener et al. (2015).
8. Gilda Azurdia and Katerina Galkin, *An Eight-Year Cost Analysis from a Randomized Controlled Trial of CUNY's Accelerated Study in Associate Programs* (MDRC, 2020).
9. The average impact of a program is unknowable; however, it can be estimated. In the case of a randomized controlled trial, it can be estimated by measuring the difference between the average outcome of the program group and the average outcome of the control group. The control group serves as an excellent proxy for what would have happened to the program group had it not been offered the program. An estimate of the average impact of a program is considered statistically significant when it is very likely that the true (unknowable) impact of the program is positive. All impacts reported in this brief are characterized as statistically significant when the p-value is less than the 10 percent level, as prespecified in the study's analysis plan. The p-value is the probability of obtaining the observed results if the actual impact were zero.
10. "Enhanced" advising uses lower caseloads to provide students support in a range of academic and personal topics. For further details regarding the different roles of MDRC and its partners in this evaluation, random assignment, the Ohio program model components, and program implementation, please refer to the three-year report: Cynthia Miller, Camielle Headlam, Michelle Manno, and Dan Cullinan, *Increasing Community College Graduation Rates with a Proven Model: Three-Year Results from the Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) Ohio Demonstration* (MDRC, 2020).

11. A total of 1,522 students were randomly assigned: 819 in the program group and 703 in the control group. For further details regarding sample size and students who were excluded from the study following random assignment, please refer to Supplementary Figure S.1.
12. Miller, Headlam, Manno, and Cullinan (2020).
13. As shown in Supplementary Table S.3, the estimated impact on Year 6 annual earnings is $2,045, slightly larger than the previously published estimate of $1,948 in the six-year research brief. This discrepancy is the result of expected changes to historical wage records in more recent data deliveries, which often occur as older records are updated. All impact estimates are reported using the most recent data, which are presumed to be more accurate. For previously reported impact estimates, see Colin Hill, Colleen Sommo, and Kayla Warner, *From Degrees to Dollars: Six-Year Findings from the ASAP Ohio Demonstration* (MDRC, 2023).
14. Before random assignment, students filled out a baseline information form that collected baseline demographic characteristics and other relevant background information. The information obtained from this form is used to describe the sample, document that the characteristics of the program and control groups were similar at the beginning of the study, and define subgroups of interest. Data from the National Student Clearinghouse, which cover nearly all postsecondary institutions in the United States, were used to observe academic outcomes, including enrollment, transfer rates, and graduation rates. The Ohio unemployment insurance wage data provide labor market outcomes, including employment and earnings. While the degree data include data from all 50 states, the unemployment insurance wage data only include Ohio.
15. See, for example, Eric P. Bettinger and Rachel B. Baker, "The Effects of Student Coaching: An Evaluation of a Randomized Experiment in Student Advising," *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 36, 1 (2014): 3–19; Andrew C. Carr and Benjamin L. Castleman, *The Bottom Line on College Advising: Large Increases in Degree Attainment* (Annenberg Insititute at Brown University, 2021); Sara Goldrick-Rab, Douglas N. Harris, Robert Kelchen, and James Benson, *Need-Based Financial Aid and College Persistence: Experimental Evidence from Wisconsin* (Institute for Research on Poverty, 2012); Alexander K. Mayer, Reshma Patel, Timothy Rudd, and Alyssa Ratledge, *Designing Scholarships to Improve College Success* (MDRC, 2015); Howard Rolston and Douglas Walton, *Valley Initiative for Development and Advancement (VIDA): Six-Year Impact Report* (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, 2022); Susan Scrivener and Michael J. Weiss, *More Guidance, Better Results? Three-Year Effects of an Enhanced Student Services Program at Two Community Colleges* (MDRC, 2009); Michael J. Weiss, Mary G. Visher, Evan Weissman, and Heather Wathington, "The Impact of Learning Communities for Students in Developmental Education: A Synthesis of Findings from Randomized Trials at Six Community Colleges," *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 37, 4 (2015): 520–541. For a discussion of empirical benchmarks for interpreting causal effects like these, see Michael Lachanski, Michael Weiss, and Colin Hill, "THE-RCT Empirical Benchmarks" (website: https://public.mdrc.org/empirical-benchmarks/, 2023); Michael J. Weiss, Marie-Andree Somers, and Colin Hill, "Empirical Benchmarks for Planning and Interpreting Causal Effects of Community College Interventions," *Journal of Postsecondary Student Success* 3, 1 (2023): 14–59.
16. Michael J. Weiss, Rebecca Unterman, and Dorota Biedzio, *What Happens After the Program Ends? A Synthesis of Post-Program Effects in Higher Education* (MDRC, 2021).
17. Judith Scott-Clayton, *Early Labor Market and Debt Outcomes for Bachelor's Degree Recipients: Heterogeneity by Institution Type and Major, and Trends Over Time* (Community College Research Center, 2016).
18. Belfield and Bailey (2017); Veronica Minaya and Judith Scott-Clayton, *Labor Market Trajectories for Community College Graduates: New Evidence Spanning the Great Recession* (Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University, 2017); Scott-Clayton (2016).

19. The data source used for these analyses only contains the number of weeks that were worked in a given quarter and no information about how many hours were worked. Therefore, it is not possible to fully explore whether increased hours of work could be driving the positive earnings impacts.
20. Blake (2024).
21. The data used for this study only include earnings from employment covered by Ohio's unemployment insurance laws. Some types of employment are excluded, including work-study, clerical, and federal jobs. See Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, "Covered and Excluded Employment" (website: https://jfs.ohio.gov/job-services-and-unemployment/unemployment/for-employers/covered-and-excluded-employment, 2025).
22. A living wage represents the amount a full-time worker needs to cover the cost of basic needs (such as food, childcare, health care, and housing): Amy K. Glasmeier,"Living Wage Calculator" (website: https://livingwage.mit.edu/states/39, 2025).
23. For example, the U.S. Department of Education's College Scorecard calculates median (not mean) earnings among individuals that were federally aided, were working, and were not enrolled in school. The U.S. Census Bureau's Postsecondary Employment Outcomes Explorer includes only degree completers and drops people who (1) earn less than the equivalent of full-time work at the prevailing federal minimum wage, or (2) have two or more quarters with no earnings in the reference year. Ohio's Workforce Success Measures Dashboard only includes students who are employed and not currently enrolled in school. For more information on these data sources, see Ohio Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation, "Workforce Success Measures Dashboard: Community Colleges" (website: https://workforcesuccess.chrr.ohio-state.edu/community-college, 2025); U.S. Census Bureau, "Postsecondary Employment Outcomes (PSEO) Help and Documentation" (website: https://lehd.ces.census.gov/data/pseo_documentation.html, 2025); U.S. Department of Education, "College Scorecard: Glossary" (website: https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/data/glossary, 2025).
24. The direction of this differential impact by gender aligns with what was observed in CUNY at the six-year point, although in that study the difference was much smaller (2.5 percentage points) and not statistically significant. See Michael J. Weiss, Alyssa Ratledge, Colleen Sommo, and Himani Gupta, "Supporting Community College Students from Start to Degree Completion: Long-Term Evidence from a Randomized Trial of CUNY'S ASAP," *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 11, 3 (2019): 253–297.
25. According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, community college graduates stay in Ohio at high rates, ranging from 88 percent one year after graduation to 79 percent ten years after graduation. See Ohio Department of Higher Education, "Census Postsecondary Employment Outcomes (PSEO) Retention Data" (website: https://highered.ohio.gov/data-reports/data-and-reports-sa/data-employment/census-pseo-retention-data, 2024).
26. Institute of Education Sciences, "Ten-Year Follow-Up of Two RCTs of CUNY's ASAP Model — Educational and Labor Market Outcomes" (website: https://ies.ed.gov/funding/grantsearch/details.asp?ID=5964, 2024).
27. Sakshee Chawla and Katherine J. Giardello, *Exploring a New Frontier for National ASAP Replication Scaling* (State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, 2024); City University of New York, "Evaluation" (website: https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/student-success-initiatives/asap/evaluation/, 2024); City University of New York, "Replication" (website: https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/student-success-initiatives/asap/replication/, 2024).
28. Michael Scuello and Diana Strumbos, *Evaluation of Accelerate, Complete, Engage (ACE) at CUNY John Jay College of Criminal Justice* (Metis Associates, 2024); Stanley Dai, Kayla Warner, Colleen Sommo, *Charting Pathways: Three-Year Findings From the Viking ROADS Demonstration* (MDRC, 2025).
29. Institute of Education Sciences (2024).

Acknowledgments

We are very grateful for the tremendous dedication of the staff members and students from the three Ohio colleges. We would like to thank our partners in the state of Ohio, including the Ohio Department of Higher Education and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. We are also grateful for the continued partnership of the City University of New York (CUNY) ASAP team. We would also like to thank the many MDRC staff members who contributed to this brief: Cynthia Miller, Jillian Verrillo, and Michael Weiss provided insightful comments on early drafts; Natalie Hussein, Rebekah O'Donoghue, and Cyrette Saunier assisted with fact-checking; Jillian Verrillo edited the document and Ann Kottner and Carolyn Thomas prepared it for publication.

This long-term follow-up of the ASAP Ohio Demonstration is made possible by support from Arnold Ventures.

The following organizations support dissemination of MDRC publications and our efforts to communicate with policymakers, practitioners, and others: Arnold Ventures, Ascendium Education Group, Yield Giving/MacKenzie Scott, and earnings from the MDRC Endowment. Contributors to the MDRC Endowment include Alcoa Foundation, The Ambrose Monell Foundation, Anheuser-Busch Foundation, Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Ford Foundation, The George Gund Foundation, The Grable Foundation, The Lizabeth and Frank Newman Charitable Foundation, The New York Times Company Foundation, Jan Nicholson, Paul H. O'Neill Charitable Foundation, John S. Reed, Sandler Foundation, and The Stupski Family Fund, as well as other individual contributors.

The findings and conclusions in this report do not necessarily represent the official positions or policies of the funders.

For information about MDRC and copies of our publications, see our website: www.mdrc.org.

New York
200 Vesey Street, 23rd Flr.
New York, NY 10281
Tel: 212 532 3200

Washington, DC
750 17th Street, NW
Suite 501
Washington, DC 20006

Oakland
475 14th Street, Suite 750
Oakland, CA 94612
Tel: 510 663 6372