

2026 Jobs Report



FALL 2023 FELLOW

RUTGERS
UNIVERSITY-NEWARK

Angelina Vertiz

BOLD Women's
Leadership Network
Fellow,
YWCA Northern
New Jersey

&

Founder,
LeadHer Roots

Together with our higher education and employer partners, we're proving what's possible when you empower the next generation of leaders with the skills, networks, confidence, and experience necessary to launch a strong career.



What does this report cover?

Alongside our dedicated partners, Braven is reigniting the promise of the American Dream.

To date, we have worked with more than 15,500¹ Fellows across the country, and our momentum continues to build. By 2032, we aim to serve 80,000-100,000 students, serving 25,000 new students each year through the Braven course.



FALL 2021 FELLOW
SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY
Nicholas Gomez
Test Engineer,
Lockheed Martin
© Joe Mazza Photography (San Francisco, CA)

In this report, we spotlight the stories of the exceptional undergraduate students we are privileged to serve and examine Braven's impact through two central questions:

1

Are our Fellows securing quality career outcomes that put them on the path to the American Dream?

2

Are we supporting Fellows on the path to internships and college completion?

Why our work matters



SPRING 2024 FELLOW
NATIONAL LOUIS UNIVERSITY
Ghassen Hattab
Business Development Representative,
Shamrock Trading Corporation
Chris Joyce

Only about one quarter of the low-income or first-generation college students who enroll in college each year will graduate and secure a strong first job or enter graduate school.²



That's about **one million students** every single year who aren't on the path to the American Dream.

GRADUATE & SECURE A STRONG JOB OR ENTER GRADUATE SCHOOL

ARE NOT ON THE PATH TO THE AMERICAN DREAM



LOW-INCOME OR FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENT ENROLLEES EACH YEAR

Mission

In collaboration with our higher education and employer partners, Braven empowers promising college students with the skills, networks, confidence, and experience necessary to transition from college to strong economic opportunities, which lead to meaningful careers and lives of impact.

Vision

The next generation of leaders will emerge from everywhere.



SPRING 2023 FELLOW

SPELMAN COLLEGE
Margaret Harris
Master in Public Health,
Emory University
Kat Goduco



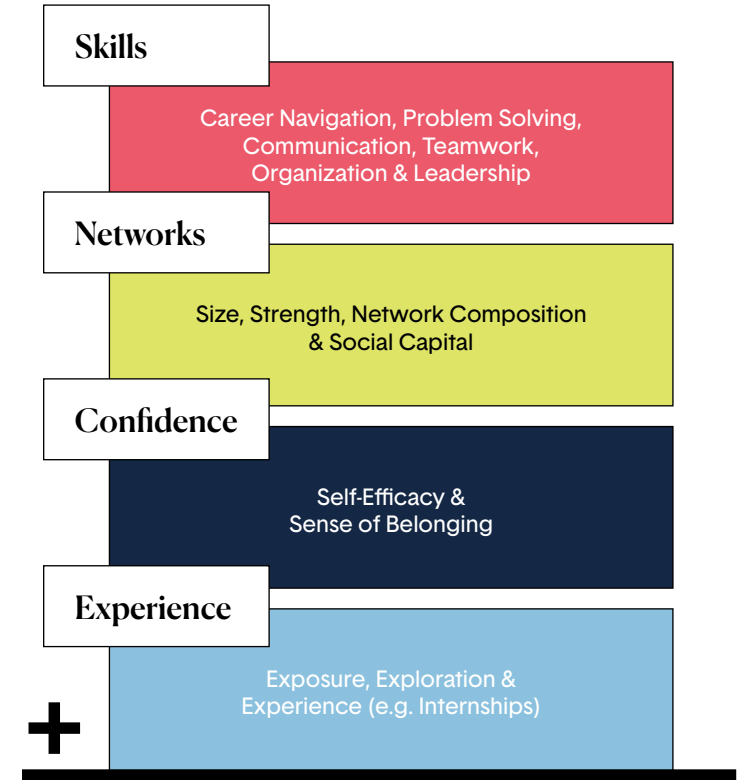
NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
Jesika Pabello
Registrar Associate,
Adtalem Global Education

FALL 2022 FELLOW

The Braven Equation

Braven provides career readiness for students earning a four-year degree, ensuring students graduate ready to secure a strong first opportunity.

The Braven Equation is the sum of four career-readiness factors—skills, networks, confidence, and experience—which add up to a career-ready college graduate.



Career-Ready College Graduate

who secures a strong first economic opportunity or attends graduate school within 6 months of graduation

The Braven Experience

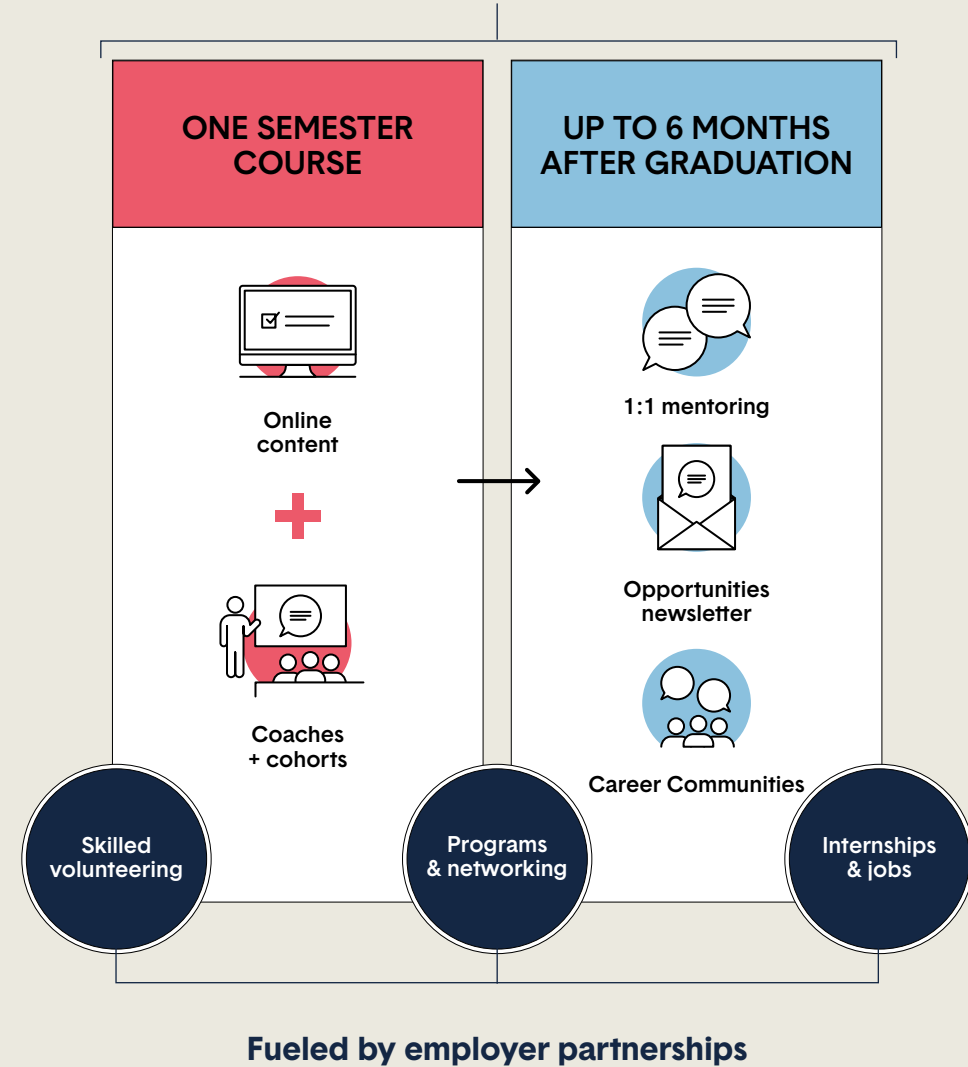
Braven equips promising college students on their paths toward quality economic opportunities through a semester-long, cohort-based course—developed with input from our higher education partners and faculty, employer partners, volunteers, and students—and support that extends beyond the course, continuing through six months after college graduation.

In our core higher education model, students take the course for credit. Students who come through BravenX via college success organizations receive a financial stipend in lieu of credit.

OUR HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERS



In partnership with higher education institutions and college success organizations



Are our
Fellows
securing
quality career
outcomes that
put them on
the path to
the American
Dream?

Section

1





New college graduates are experiencing an especially challenging labor market

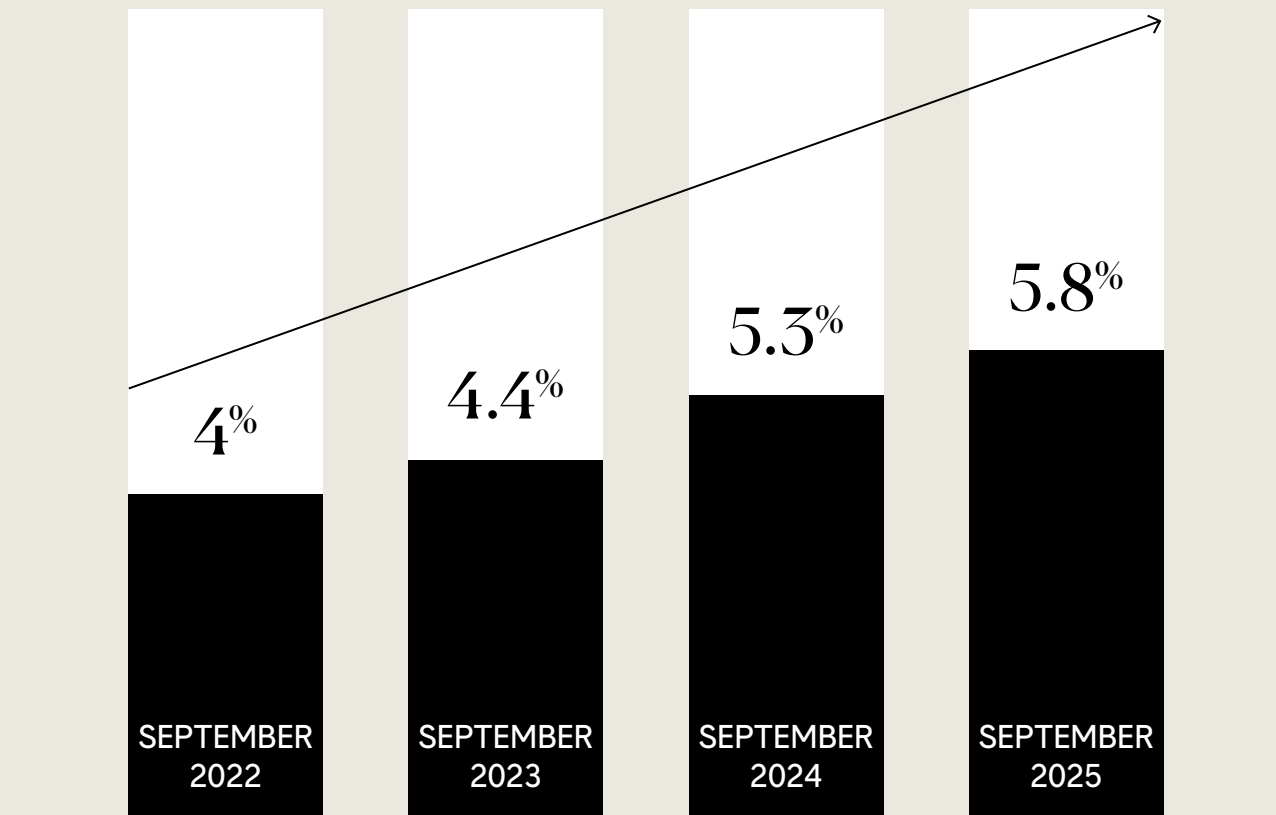
The entry-level market is tight. We have seen stagnation in entry-level job openings which, in part, is driving rising unemployment of recent graduates.

STAGNATION IN ENTRY-LEVEL JOB OPENINGS



Year-over-year, senior job titles are up 4%, while postings for junior titles are down 7%.³

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR NEW GRADUATES (AGED 22-27) ON THE RISE⁴





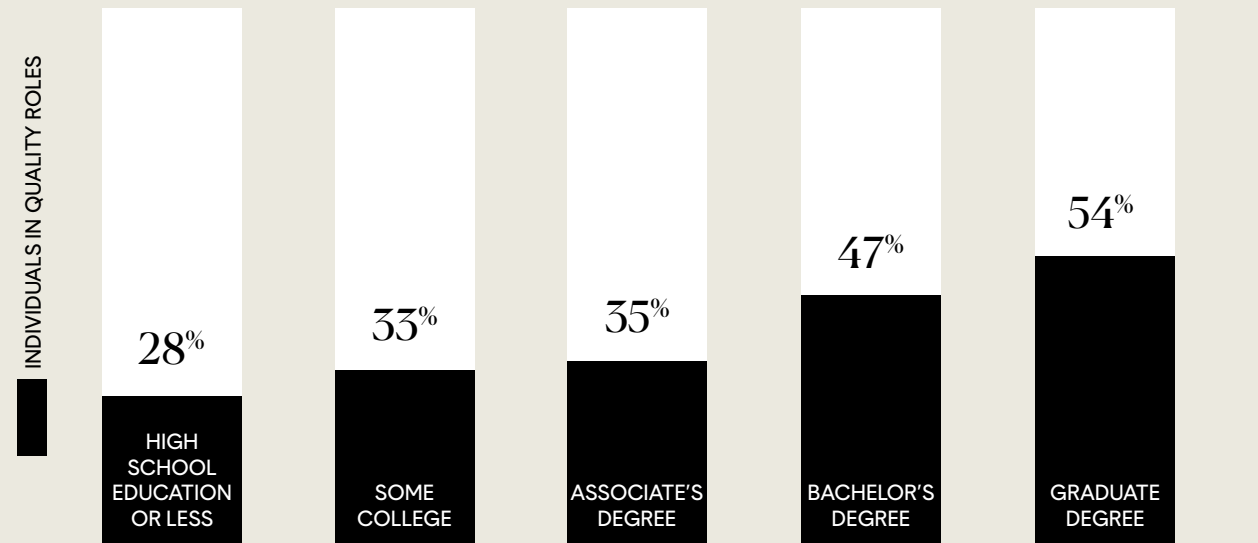
Pursuing the bachelor's degree is still the surest path to economic mobility

Compared to high school graduates, bachelor's degree holders have higher employment rates, greater job security, and earn more over their lifetime.

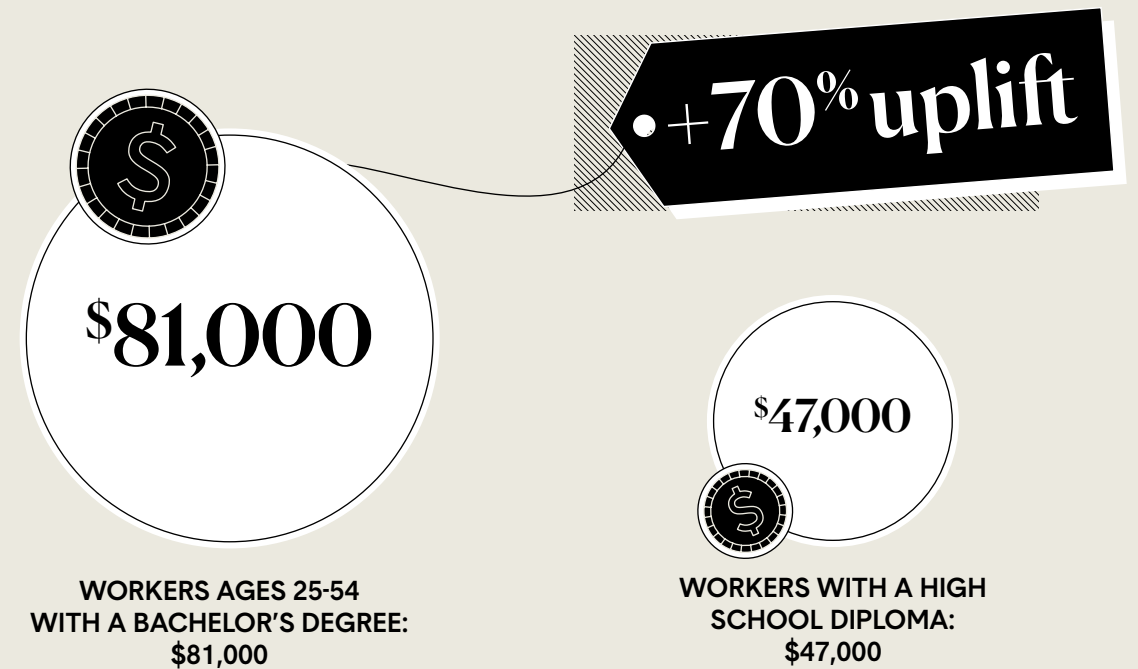
Workers with a four-year degree earn 70% more than workers with a high school diploma alone.

The bachelor's degree remains a strong predictor of job quality

According to The American Job Quality Study, employees with a bachelor's or graduate degree are more likely to have strong job quality than those with an associate's degree, some college, or a high school education or less.⁵



MEDIAN ECONOMIC OUTCOMES FOR WORKERS AGED 25-54 WITH A BACHELOR'S DEGREE⁶





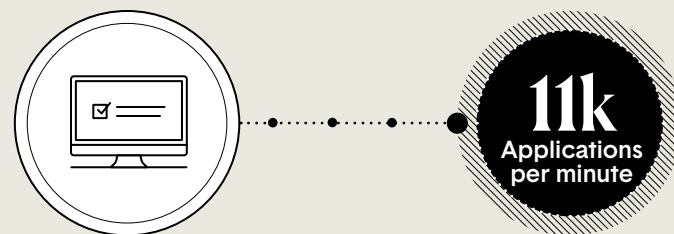
AI reshapes expectations for early-career talent

The challenge today is not the value of the degree itself, but ensuring students can successfully translate the skills they develop in college into the skills needed in entry-level positions.

Although the long-term effects of AI on job availability are still emerging, its influence on the job search experience and hiring practices is already evident.

Increase in job applications

AI is making it easier to apply to jobs. In June 2025, LinkedIn reported that the number of job applications surged more than 45% year-over-year, and the platform is clocking an average of **11,000 applications per minute**.⁷

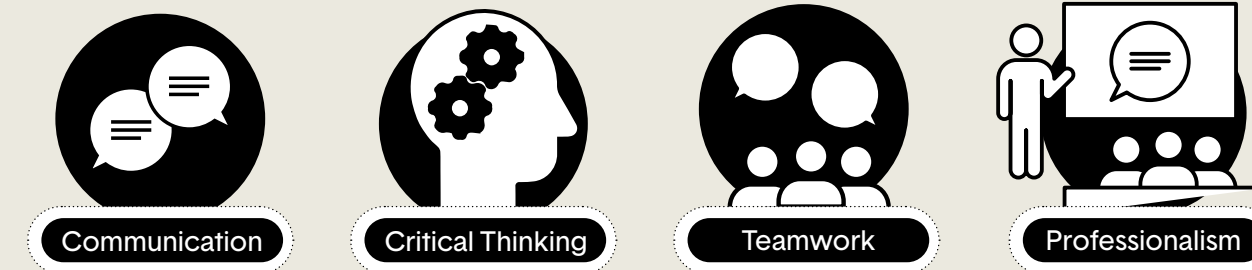


AI's impact on job hunting

Twenty-six percent of candidates say AI has made it harder to stand out due to increased competition. Among Gen Z, that number jumps to 45%.⁷

Employers are prioritizing human skill competencies to distinguish the strongest entry-level candidates in an increasingly competitive applicant pool.

These include:⁸



These are closely aligned with the six career-readiness skills Braven helps students develop in the Accelerator course:

- *Career navigation*
- *Leadership*
- *Organization*
- *Communication*
- *Teamwork*
- *Problem solving*

In 2025, 1,306⁹ Braven Fellows graduated from our core partner schools.

66% students from low-income backgrounds¹⁰

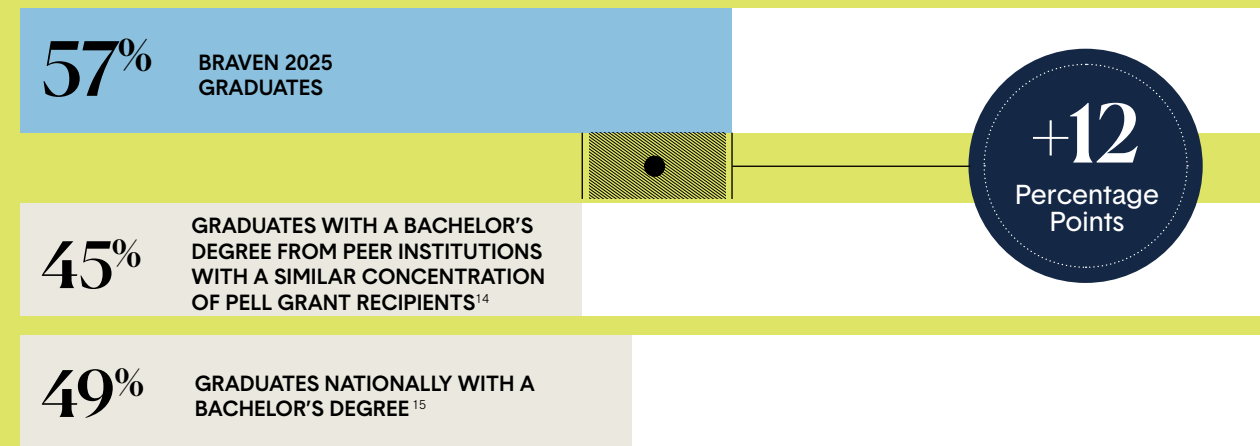
45% first-generation college students¹¹

FALL 2023 FELLOW
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK
Asare Bampoe-Parry
Claims Examiner, The Chubb Corporation & Graduate Student, Master of Science in Business of Fashion, Rutgers Business School



Braven Fellows secured quality opportunities after college

+12
This new class is outpacing their peers nationally in quality outcome attainment¹² by 12 percentage points (57%¹³ vs 45%¹⁴) within six months of graduation.



This year across our core model higher education partner sites, quality opportunity attainment ranged from 41% to 69%. As we scale, we will continue to learn from and address these differences to ensure that Fellows remain on the path to economic mobility.

We are proud of the achievements of our graduates who hail from various institutions and are launching their careers into local labor markets that vary in industry composition and varied economic strength.

Of the 1,306 Braven Fellows who graduated from college in 2025,

79%

are employed or enrolled in graduate school

70%

secured quality or pathway outcomes

SPRING 2025 FELLOW

SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY

Olympia Pereira

Instructional Aid for UMOJA,
Chabot College

Joe Mazza Photography (San Francisco, CA)

The strength of roles our 2025 graduates secured



2025 BRAVEN GRADUATES

HOW WE DEFINE QUALITY ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES:

QUALITY OUTCOME

a full-time role that requires a bachelor's degree and includes some combination of promotion pathways, employee benefits, and a market-competitive starting salary, or enrollment in graduate school

PATHWAY OUTCOME

a role that does not require a bachelor's degree but helps students' financial sustainability, is aligned with career interests, and will likely lead to more career-accelerating possibilities through skill development

NON-QUALITY OUTCOME

a role that does not require a bachelor's degree, offers limited runway to additional career-accelerating opportunities, and is not aligned with students' career interests

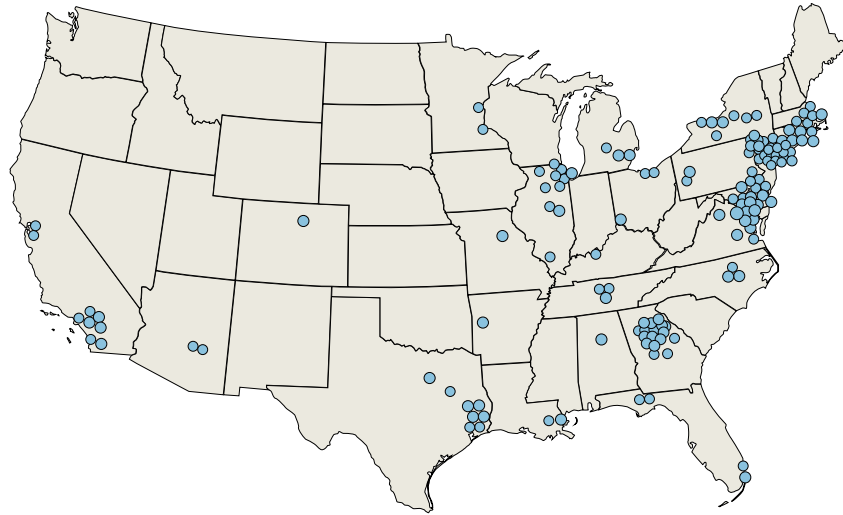
57%
QUALITY ROLES OR GRADUATE SCHOOL

13%
PATHWAY ROLES

9%
NON-QUALITY

21%
UNEMPLOYED

Fellow enrollment in graduate school



Enrollment in graduate school is one of the ways Braven defines a quality outcome.

1. Agnes Scott College
2. Alfred University
3. American University
4. Arizona State University
5. Augusta University
6. Aurora University
7. Bank Street College of Education
8. Barry University
9. Baruch College
10. Baylor University
11. Boston University
12. Brooklyn College
13. Brown University
14. California State University, Long Beach
15. Capella University
16. Carnegie Mellon University
17. Case Western Reserve University
18. Central Georgia Technical College
19. City University of New York
20. Clark Atlanta University
21. Columbia University
22. DePaul University
23. Drexel University
24. Duke University
25. Emory University
26. Emory University Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing
27. Emory University Rollins School of Public Health
28. Emory University School of Medicine
29. Faulkner University
30. Fisk University
31. Florida A&M University
32. Florida State University
33. George Washington University
34. Georgetown University

35. Georgetown University Law Center
36. Georgia College & State University
37. Georgia Institute of Technology
38. Georgia State University
39. Grand Canyon University
40. Harvard University
41. Howard University
42. Howard University School of Law
43. Hult International Business School
44. Illinois Institute of Technology
45. Illinois State University
46. Johns Hopkins University
47. Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
48. Kean University
49. Kennesaw State University
50. La Sierra University
51. Lamar University
52. Lehman College
53. Loyola University Chicago
54. Massachusetts Institute of Technology
55. Meharry Medical College
56. Mercer University
57. Mercy University
58. Michigan State University
59. Mitchell Hamline School of Law
60. Montclair State University
61. Morehouse College
62. Morehouse School of Medicine
63. Morgan State University
64. National Louis University
65. New Jersey Institute of Technology
66. New York University
67. New York University Tisch School of the Arts
68. Newman University
69. Northeastern University
70. Northern Illinois University
71. Northwestern University
72. Old Dominion University
73. Palo Alto University
74. Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine
75. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
76. Rice University
77. Russell Sage College
78. Rutgers Business School

79. Rutgers New Jersey Medical School
80. Rutgers School of Public Health
81. Rutgers University-New Brunswick
82. Rutgers University-Newark
83. Saint Joseph's University Philadelphia College of Pharmacy
84. San Diego State University
85. San Jose State University
86. Savannah College of Art and Design
87. Seton Hall University
88. Seton Hall University School of Law
89. Sotheby's Institute of Art
90. Southern Illinois University - Carbondale
91. Southern University Law Center
92. Spalding University
93. State University of New York at Brockport
94. Stevens Institute of Technology
95. Stony Brook University
96. Syracuse University
97. Teachers College, Columbia University
98. Temple University
99. Texas Southern University
100. The City College of New York
101. Towson University
102. Tufts University
103. Tufts University School of Medicine
104. Tulane University
105. University of Alabama at Birmingham
106. University of Arkansas
107. University of California, Irvine
108. University of California, Los Angeles
109. University of California, San Diego
110. University of Cincinnati
111. University of Colorado Boulder
112. University of Connecticut
113. University of Delaware
114. University of Georgia
115. University of Houston
116. University of Houston Law Center
117. University of Illinois at Chicago

118. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
119. University of Maryland
120. University of Maryland, Baltimore County
121. University of Massachusetts Boston
122. University of Miami
123. University of Michigan School of Public Health
124. University of Michigan, Ann-Arbor
125. University of Missouri
126. University of Mount Saint Vincent
127. University of North Carolina Adams School of Dentistry
128. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
129. University of Pennsylvania
130. University of Pittsburgh
131. University of Rochester
132. University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry
133. University of Southern California
134. University of Texas at Dallas
135. University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston
136. University of the District of Columbia
137. University of Virginia
138. Vanderbilt University
139. Virginia Commonwealth University
140. William & Mary
141. Yale Law School
142. Yale School of Public Health
143. Yale University

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

144. Alliance Manchester Business School
145. Imperial College London
146. King's College
147. McGill University
148. Nanjing University
149. St. Matthew's University
150. University of Kent
151. University of Manchester
152. University of Oxford

27%

27% of the 2025 graduates went on to graduate school within six months of graduation.¹⁶

Building career wealth & health



FALL 2022 FELLOW

SPELMAN COLLEGE

Naomi Wagner

Voter Education and Outreach Coordinator,
Fulton County Government

Kat Goduco

A high quality first job helps individuals build long-term wealth and health. Braven defines a strong first job as one that requires a bachelor's degree and is full-time, and also includes some combination of promotion pathways, employee benefits, and a market-competitive starting salary.

Six months post-graduation, Braven Fellows in the class of 2025 of our core higher education partners are out earning the national average salary for early college graduates.

\$58,299

Mean salary of **employed** 2025 Braven graduates in the first 6 months after college graduation^{17,19} Compared to a national average of \$43,018 of recent college graduates aged 23-24 who were employed in 2024

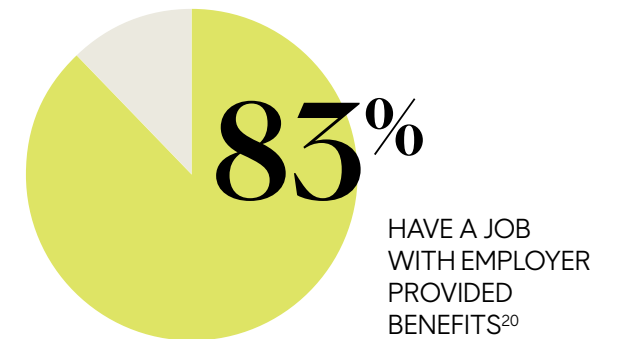
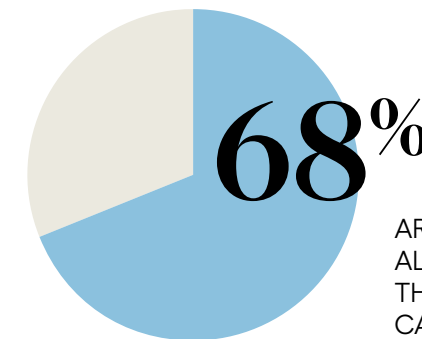
+\$15.3k

\$65,365

Mean salary of **full-time employed** 2025 Braven graduates in the first 6 months after college graduation^{18,19} Compared to a national average of \$50,476 of recent college graduates aged 23-24 who worked full-time in 2024

+\$14.9k

RECENT BRAVEN GRADUATES

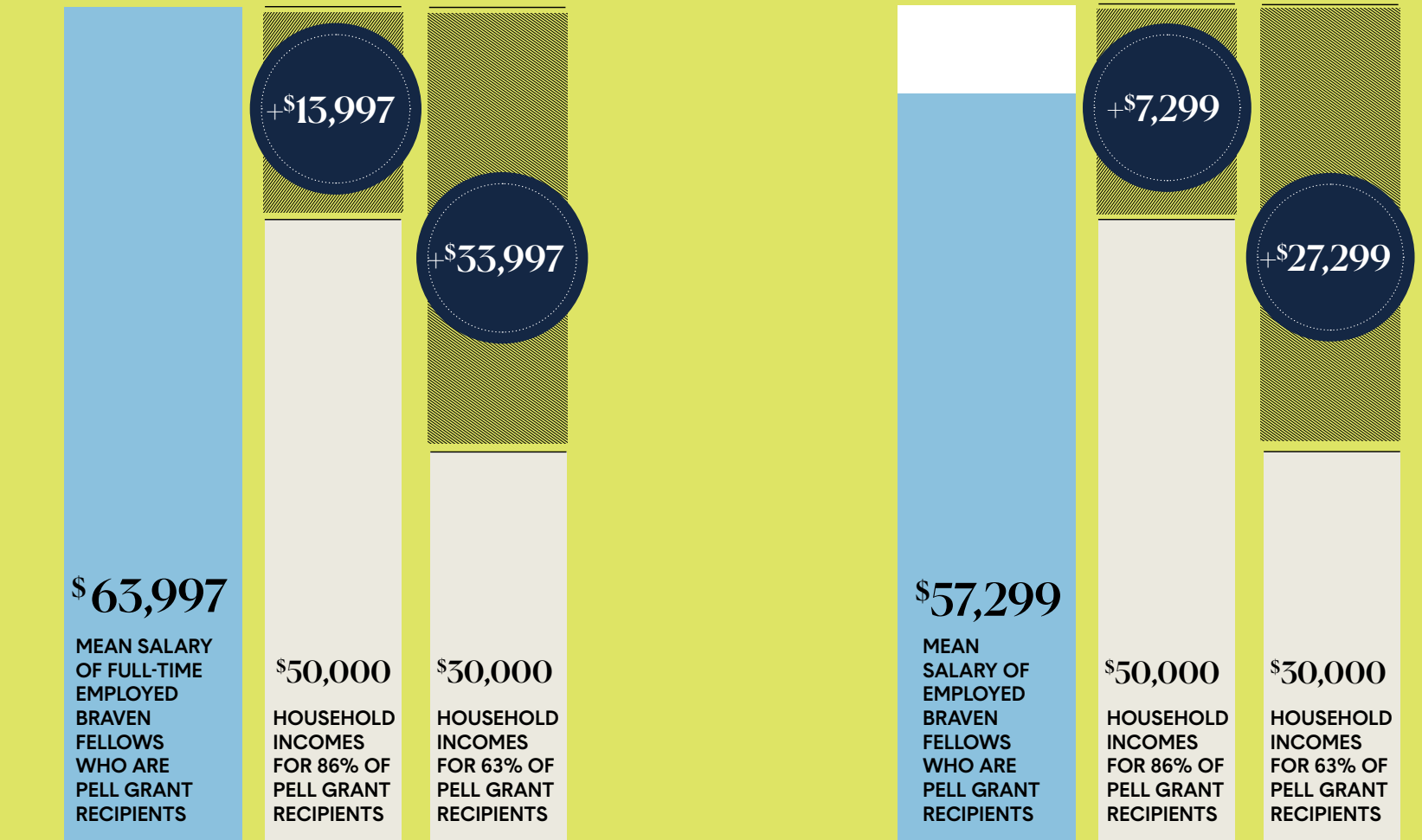


The American Dream in action

Nationally, 63% of Pell Grant recipients come from families with annual incomes below \$30,000, and 85% come from families earning less than \$50,000 annually.²¹

In their first job out of college, Braven Fellows nationwide are individually outearning most families who receive the Pell Grant.

58%
of Braven 2025 graduates are Pell Grant recipients



MOST POPULAR INDUSTRIES FOR BRAVEN FELLOWS NATIONALLY



EDUCATION



BANKING & FINANCE



HEALTH

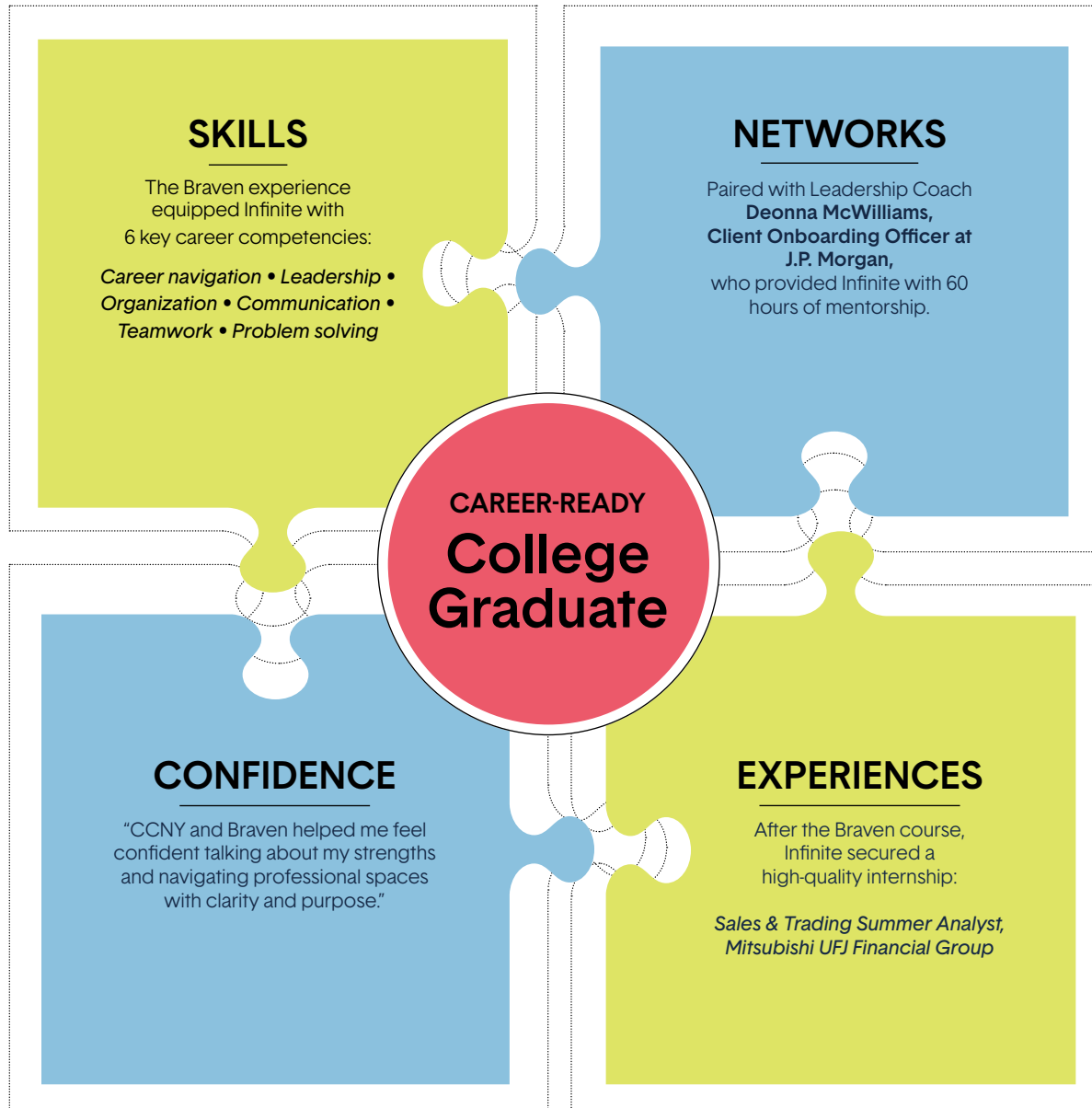


NONPROFIT



RETAIL

With Braven’s help, Infinite Clovie built the foundation to get on the path to the American Dream.



The Braven Equation in action

FALL 2023 FELLOW

THE CITY COLLEGE OF NEW YORK

Infinite Clovie

Business Oversight Analyst,
Barclays

Kyle James (Put You On Stage)

Are we
supporting
Fellows on
the path to
internships?

Section

2a

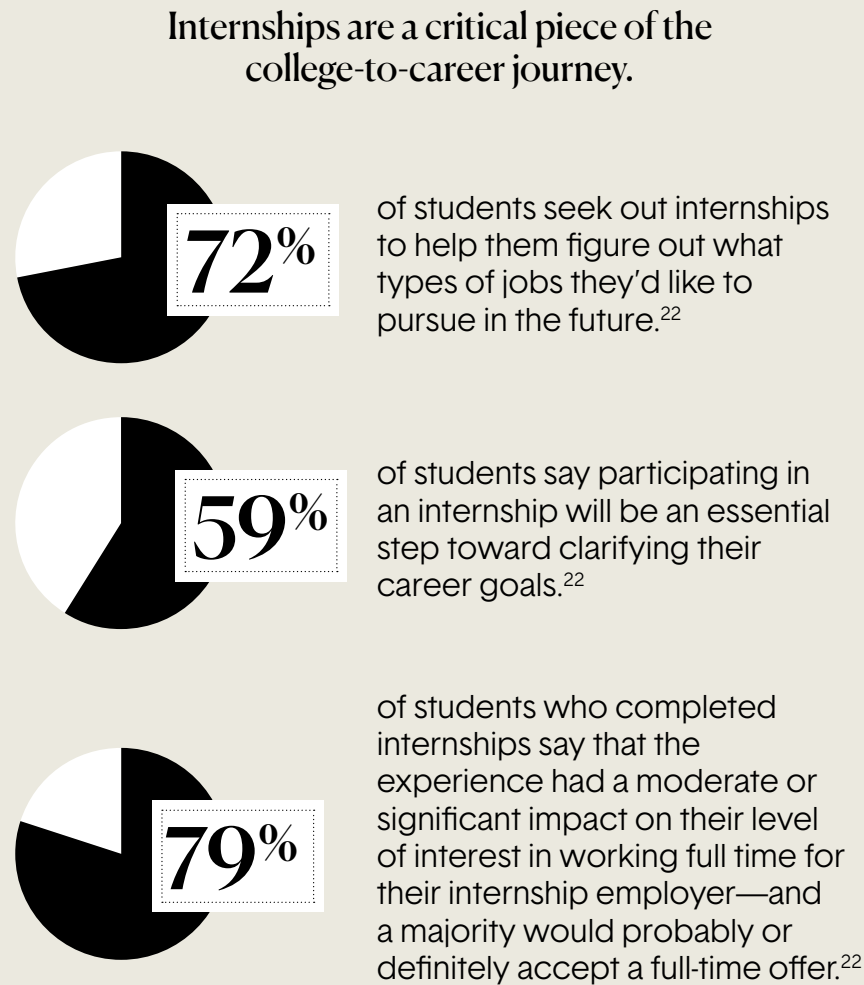




Students are facing greater competition for internships

Internships help students chart their futures, but fewer opportunities and rising competition make them harder to secure.

According to Handshake's Internship Index 2025:

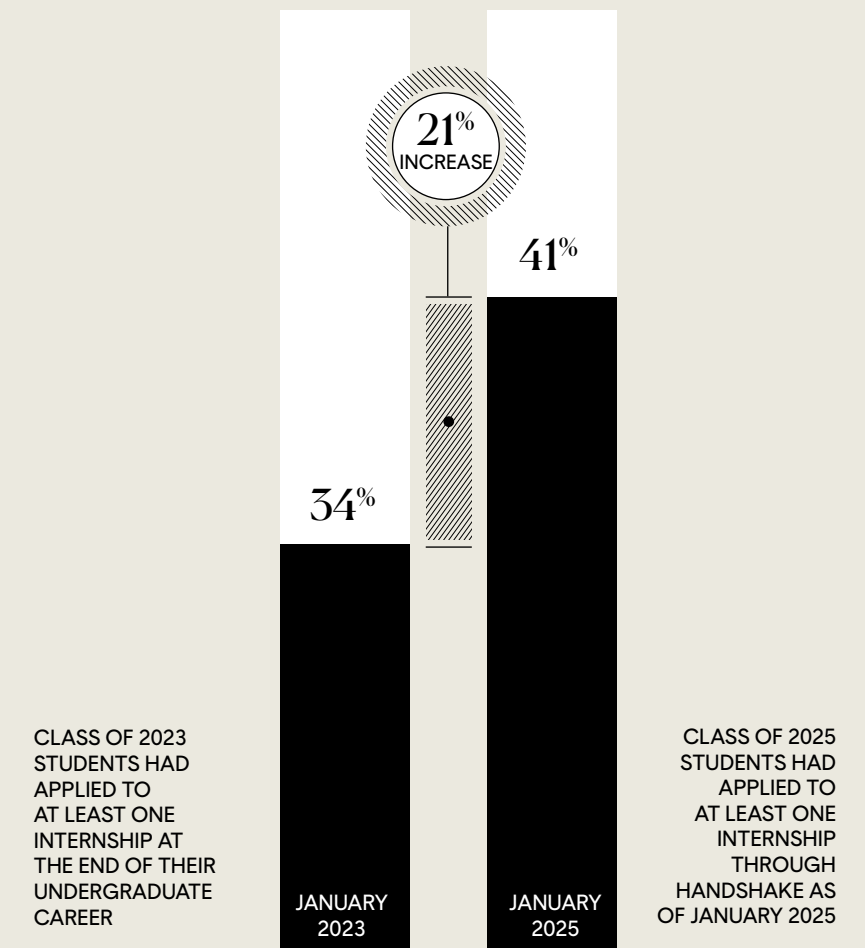


Internship demand is outpacing availability.

Internship postings declined more than 15% between January 2023 and January 2025. Meanwhile, internship applications surged.



INCREASE IN INTERNSHIP APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED²²





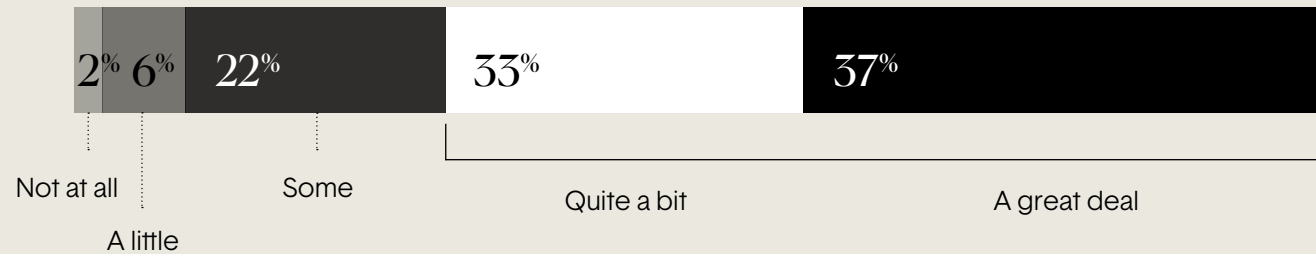
Paid internships increase networks & mentorship

The National Survey of Work-Based Learning from Strada Education Foundation and the Center for College Workforce Transitions found that paid internships have positive career value in several domains including social capital and mentorship.

NETWORKS



To what extent do you think your experience expanded your professional network?

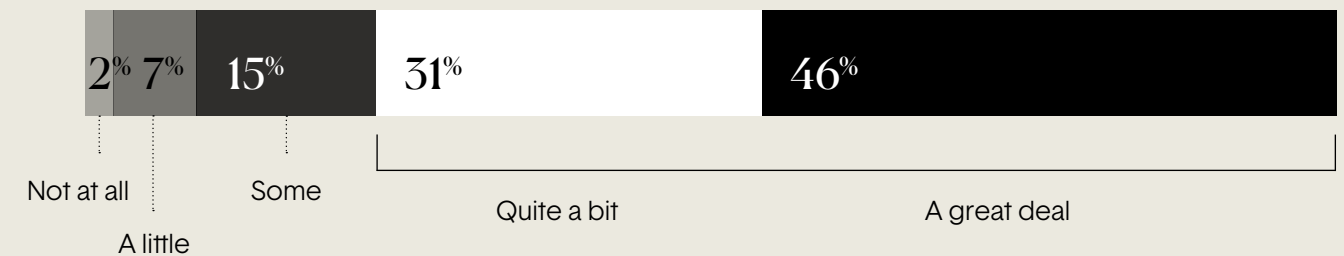


Seven in 10 students reported that paid internships substantially expanded their professional networks²³

MENTORSHIP



To what extent did your supervisor provide mentorship to support your career goals?



More than three-quarters of students reported high levels of career-focused mentorship²³

Encouraging levels of internship attainment for Braven Fellows



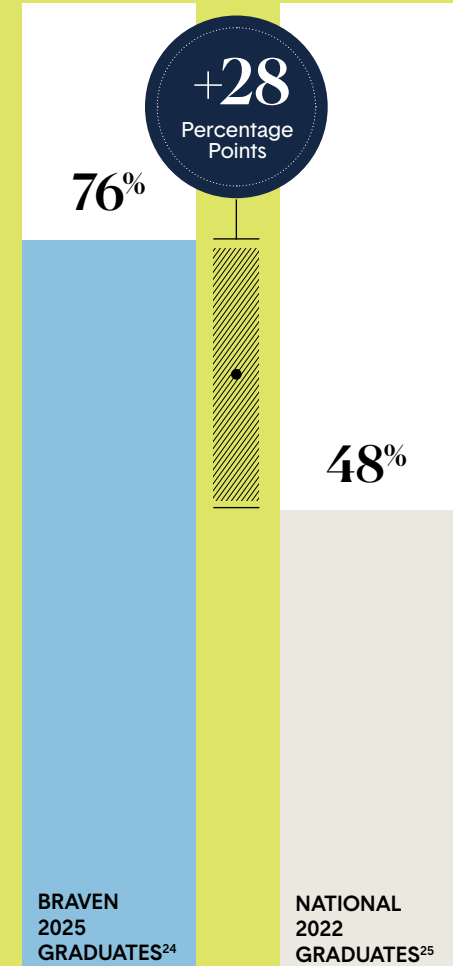
SPRING 2022 FELLOW

SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY
Yorlenny Santiago
 Intern,
 County of Santa Clara

Joe Mazza Photography (San Francisco, CA)

Compared with graduates nationally, Braven 2025 graduates were 28 percentage points more likely to have at least one internship during their college experience.

For college students, internships serve as critical proof points of experience that open professional doors.



Are we
supporting
Fellows on the
path to college
completion?

Section
2b



Encouraging levels of graduation

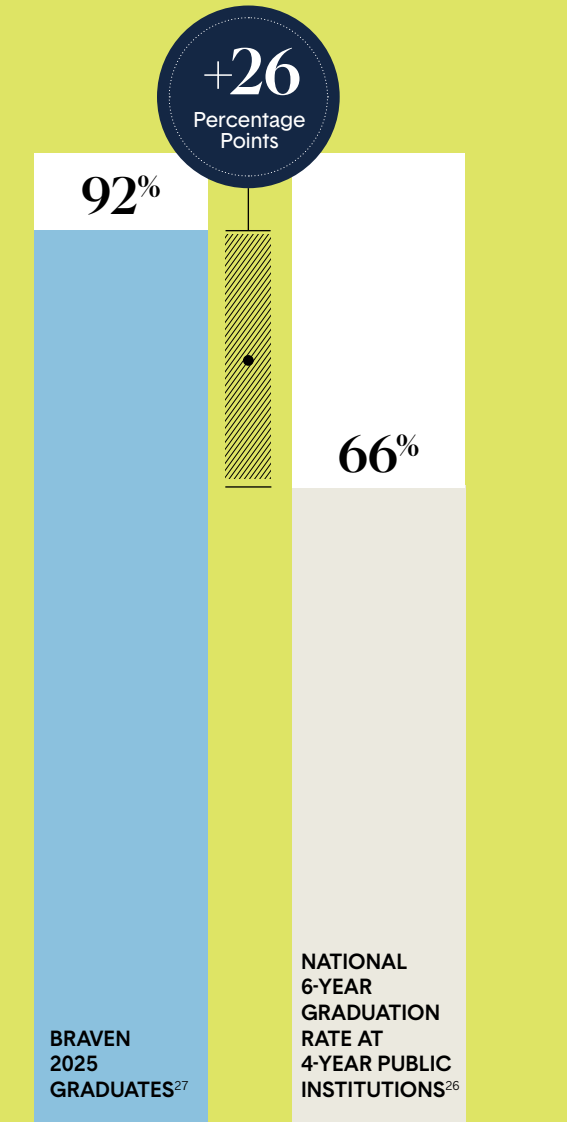


FALL 2023 FELLOW
SPELMAN COLLEGE
SaRee Grimes
Spelman Leadership Fellow,
Alliance Theatre
Kat Goduco

Nationally, less than 7 in 10 students graduate within six years of college enrollment.²⁶

Braven Fellows, who typically join us during their sophomore or junior year, are graduating at encouraging rates.

BRAVEN FELLOWS ACHIEVED A 92% SIX-YEAR ON-TIME GRADUATION RATE²⁷



HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERS & EMPLOYER PARTNERS

Higher Education Partners

Chicago State University (BravenX)
 The City College of New York
 Delaware State University
 National Louis University
 Northern Illinois University
 Rutgers University - Newark
 San Francisco State University (launched Fall 2024)
 San José State University
 Spelman College
 University of Massachusetts Lowell (launched Spring 2026)
 University of North Texas (launched Spring 2026)

BravenX Partners

5 Strong Scholars Foundation
 Achieve Atlanta
 Arkansas Commitment
 Ascend Public Schools
 Associated Colleges of Illinois
 Augustana College
 Breakthrough Kent Denver
 Carmen Schools of Science & Technology
 Chicago Scholars
 Chicago State University
 City Year Chicago
 Coney Island Prep Public Schools
 Cooperman College Scholars
 Coral Academy of Science Las Vegas
 Cristo Rey Network
 DREAM Charter School
 DSST Public Schools
 Evanston Scholars
 Excel Academy Charter School
 Excellence Community Schools

Freedom Preparatory Academy Charter Schools
 IDEA Public Schools
 Judson University
 KIPP Metro Atlanta
 KIPP Forward
 KIPP NJ
 Lehman College
 LISA Academy
 National Association for Urban Debate Leagues
 Newark Youth Career Pathways Program
 North Central College
 Noble Schools
 Rivet School
 SEEDS
 The Academy Charter School
 The Wight Foundation
 Uncommon Schools
 Uplift Education
 UtmostU

Employer Partners

LEAD
 (\$250K+ and programmatic support)
 Adobe
 Apollo Opportunity Foundation
 Barclays
 Blackstone Charitable Foundation
 Capital One
 Deloitte
 JPMorgan Chase Foundation
 LinkedIn
 Morgan Stanley
 NBA Foundation
 Prudential Foundation

ANCHOR
 (\$100K+ and programmatic support)
 Allstate
 Brooks Brothers & The Golden Fleece Foundation

CIBC Foundation
 Cognizant US Foundation
 The College Board
 Salesforce
 San Jose Sharks Foundation

KEYSTONE
 (\$25K+ and programmatic support)
 Audible
 Berkshire Hathaway
 Specialty Insurance
 Blackbaud
 CBRE
 CME Group Foundation
 Cornerstone Research
 Nerdwallet
 Northern Trust
 nvp
 Panasonic North America
 Pathward N. A.
 PwC
 Ripple
 Silver Lake
 Taco Bell Foundation
 UBS
 United Airlines

INNOVATION
 (\$10K+ and programmatic support)
 Anonymous
 Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey
 J&L Companies
 M&T Bank
 Neuberger Berman

IMPACT
 (\$5K+ and/or programmatic support)
 1Huddle
 Bain and Company
 Brown Advisory
 Carvertise
 Catalina
 Chicago Sky Foundation
 Choose New Jersey
 Cisco

City Year
 Cramer-Krasselt
 Devil's Youth Foundation
 Enkey.ai
 Equal Space
 Exelixis
 Goodman Theatre
 Google
 Hacker Dojo
 Harris Blitzer Sports & Entertainment
 Hispanic Foundation of Silicon Valley
 IQVIA
 Jacobs Levy Equity Management
 Medline
 Micron Technology, Inc.
 National Black Arts Festival
 National Coalition of 100 Black Women
 NetApp
 NJPAC
 Northwestern Medicine
 On-Target Supplies and Logistics
 Philadelphia 76ers
 SAP Americas
 San Francisco Chamber of Commerce
 Staffmark
 Student Leadership Network
 Sutter Health
 Synchrony
 Teach For America
 Texas Instruments
 The Clorox Company
 Unacast
 Vanguard
 Visa
 Wells Fargo
 Wu Yee Children's Services
 Young Invincibles

PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORTERS (\$10K+)

A Better Chicago Fund, a Fund of the Robert R. McCormick Foundation
 Abrams Foundation
 Akila Grewal
 Allan & Gill Gray Philanthropies
 Anonymous (x14)
 Arbor Rising
 Arrow Impact
 Arthur & Toni Rembe Rock
 Axim Collaborative
 Ballmer Group
 Bennett/Raccach Foundation
 Blue Meridian Partners
 Carnegie Corporation of New York
 Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation
 Charles & Helen Schwab Foundation
 Charles Ashby Lewis & Penny Bender Sebring
 Charles Hayden Foundation
 Charter School Growth Fund
 Chicago Community Trust
 College Futures Foundation
 Crankstart Foundation
 Crown Family Philanthropies
 Cynthia Bowman
 David Cohen & Kristen Argo
 Deloitte Foundation
 Ellie's Foundation Fund
 Finnegan Family Foundation
 Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation
 Give for the Future Fund
 Give Forward Foundation
 Grace & Steve Voorhis
 Gray Foundation
 Harriet Watkins

Impact100 Essex
 Irene Esteves
 Joe & Cheryl Della Rosa
 John & Wendy Cozzi
 John Greenwood
 John Matthew Sobrato & Andie Sobrato
 Kasey McJunkin
 Ken Ohashi & Adam Freed
 Leon & Toby Cooperman Family Foundation
 Linda & Brian Sterling
 Lisa & Joseph Amato
 Longwood Foundation
 LuLuMa Foundation
 Lynn and Sengal Selassie
 MacKenzie Scott
 M&T Weiner Foundation
 Mansueto Foundation
 Marc and Jeanne Malnati Family Foundation
 McCance Family Foundation
 Michael & Susan Dell Foundation
 MR Macgill
 New Profit, Inc.
 Nicholas Colucci
 Origami Works Foundation
 Osa Foundation
 Paul M. Angell Family Foundation
 Paula Sneed & Lawrence Bass
 Prosper Road Foundation
 Rachel Kohler
 René Kern
 Ron & Kathy Sonenthal
 Sarah Peter
 Schreiber Philanthropy
 Schultz Family Foundation
 Shellye Archambeau
 Siegel Family Endowment
 Siragusa Family Foundation
 Sobrato Family Foundation
 Square One Foundation

Steve & Sue Mandel
 Strada Education Foundation
 Stupski Foundation
 Support New Jersey Fund
 Susan & Thomas Dunn
 Susan Grant
 Tammy & Bill Crown
 The Berghorst Foundation
 The Carson Family Charitable Trust
 The Cleveland Avenue Foundation for Education
 The Gilliam Foundation
 The Ichigo Foundation
 The Jeffrey H. and Shari L. Aronson Family Foundation
 The Joseph Pedott Charitable Fund at The Chicago Community Foundation
 The Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund
 The Mayer and Morris Kaplan Family Foundation
 The MCJ Amelior Foundation
 The Mellen Charitable Foundation
 Tipping Point Community
 Valhalla Foundation
 Victoria Foundation
 Vivo Foundation
 William and Charlene Glikbarg Foundation
 Younger Family Fund

A big thank you to our National Board of Directors:

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 David S. Levy
 Shalinee Sharma
 Elizabeth Thompson
 Harry L. Williams
 Charlie Wolfson

Delaware State University Fellows are defining success in many different fields

A big thank you to our Delaware Board of Directors: *Jeff Carper, Mac Macleod, and Tamara Smith.*



Fellow perspectives on the Braven experience

"Mock interviews and professional feedback helped me confidently articulate my academic background and unique skill set. Overall, the course helped me understand how to align my passion for law and music into a professional brand that is authentic, well-rounded, and career-ready."



FALL 2025 FELLOW
DELAWARE STATE UNIVERSITY
Ro-Sean Nelson
Freelance Assistant/ Office Intern,
The Academy Charter School
Emir Lake

"DSU and Braven strengthened my professional skills through resume building, interview preparation, and practical project-based learning. It expanded my professional network by connecting me with mentors, coaches, and peers who offered guidance and support throughout the experience. Additionally, I gained confidence, clarified my career goals, and better understood how to position my experiences and strengths for future opportunities."



SPRING 2024 FELLOW
DELAWARE STATE UNIVERSITY
Lanasia Johnson
Wealth Management Operations Analyst I,
Morgan Stanley
Emir Lake

"Before Braven, I didn't know what went into having professional brand. I learned basic interview skills and was able to practice presenting to a panel of judges. DSU and Braven helped me grow immensely through these experiences."



SPRING 2025 FELLOW
DELAWARE STATE UNIVERSITY
Madison Braithwaite
Cohort Member,
Disney College Program
Emir Lake

Delaware program & impact

767 Fellows have completed the Accelerator course since our Spring 2024 launch.



SPRING 2024 DSU FELLOW

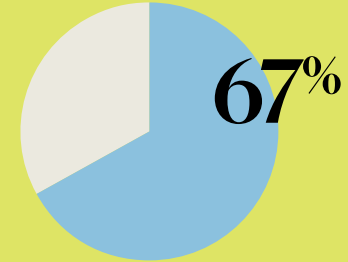
DELAWARE STATE UNIVERSITY

Brandon Poplar

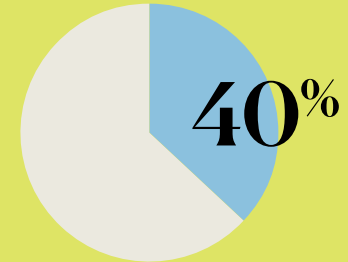
Senior Associate Emerging Leadership Development Program, Vanguard

Emir Lake

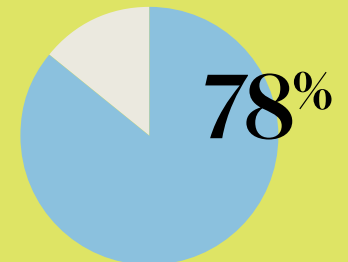
2025 DELAWARE STATE UNIVERSITY FELLOWS



STUDENTS FROM LOW-INCOME BACKGROUNDS¹⁰



FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS¹¹



AVERAGE COURSE GRADE

MOST POPULAR MAJORS FOR DSU FELLOWS



SOCIAL SCIENCES



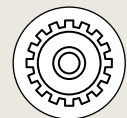
SCIENCE, MATH & TECHNOLOGY



BUSINESS



HEALTH & MEDICINE



ENGINEERING

BravenX overview



BravenX program & impact

BravenX is a 14-week virtual fellowship experience that equips participants with the skills, networks, confidence, and experience necessary to launch a strong career.



FALL 2021 BRAVENX FELLOW

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO

Julianna Wilson

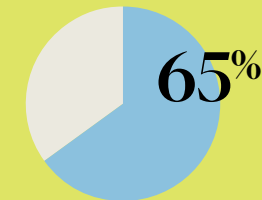
Native Speaking Teacher,
HESS International Educational



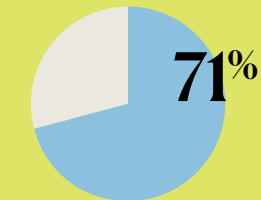
2025 BRAVENX GRADUATES

This program is fully virtual and identical in length, content, and cohort structure as our for-credit university model. However, it is made possible through partnerships with college access and success organizations.

Braven helps empower their college students to build the foundation for their careers. BravenX Fellows earn a financial stipend upon completion of the program in lieu of academic credit. In some cases, BravenX is added as a scholarship requirement.



BRAVENX GRADUATES SECURED QUALITY OR PATHWAY OUTCOMES²⁸



BRAVENX GRADUATES EMPLOYED OVERALL OR ENROLLED IN GRADUATE SCHOOL

51%
QUALITY ROLES OR GRADUATE SCHOOL

14%
PATHWAY ROLES

6%
NON-QUALITY

29%
UNEMPLOYED

BravenX: Building career wealth & health



WINTER 2025 FELLOW

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Naja Thompson

Outreach Intern,
Cook County Department of Human Rights and Ethics

Chris Joyce

A high quality first job helps individuals build long-term wealth and health. Braven defines a strong first job as one that requires a bachelor's degree and is full-time, and also includes some combination of promotion pathways, employee benefits, and a market-competitive starting salary.

Six months post-graduation, BravenX Fellows in the class of 2025 are outearning the national average salary for early college graduates.

\$57,940

Mean salary of employed 2025 BravenX graduates in the first 6 months after college graduation

Compared to a national average of \$43,018 of recent college graduates aged 23-24 who were employed in 2024¹⁹

+\$14.9k

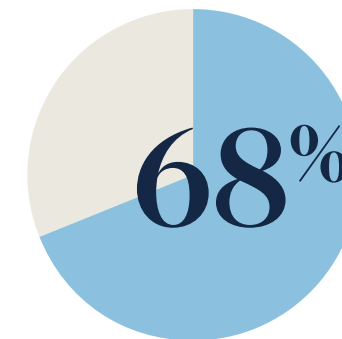
\$63,940

Mean salary of full-time employed 2025 BravenX graduates in the first 6 months after college graduation

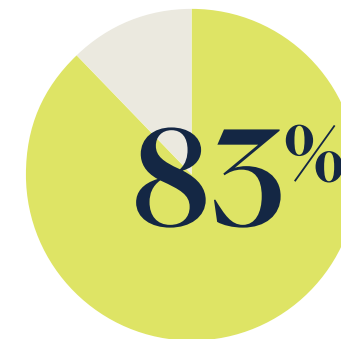
Compared to a national average of \$50,476 of recent college graduates aged 23-24 who worked full-time in 2024¹⁹

+\$13.5k

RECENT BRAVEN GRADUATES NATIONALLY



ARE IN ROLES ALIGNED WITH THEIR LONG-TERM CAREER INTEREST²²



HAVE A JOB WITH EMPLOYER PROVIDED BENEFITS²²

Encouraging levels of internship attainment for BravenX Fellows

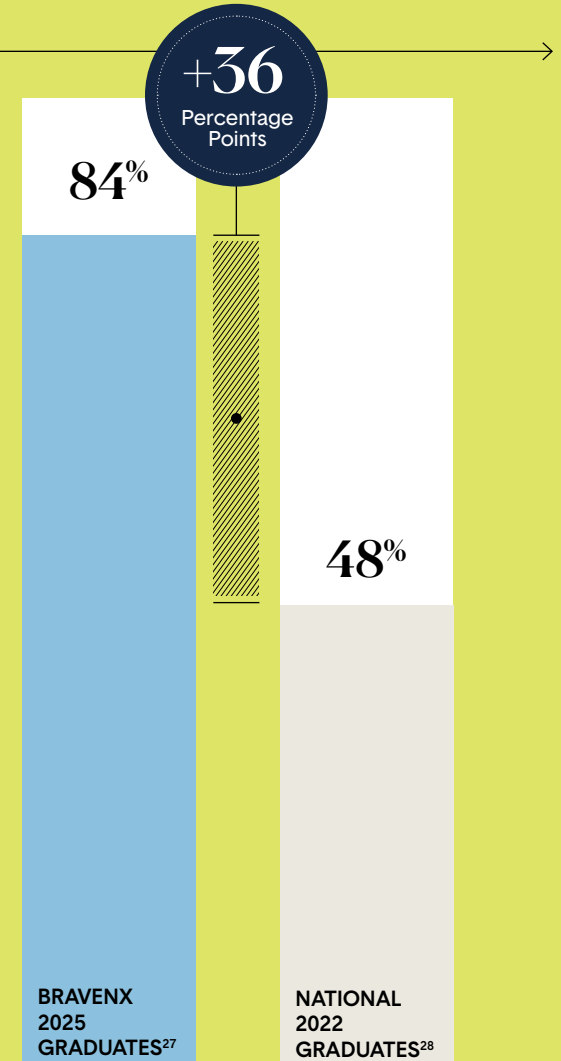


UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO
Tania Garcia
 Corporate Strategy & Business Development
 Intern, CME Group
 Chris Joyce

SPRING 2025 FELLOW

Compared with graduates nationally, BravenX 2025 graduates were 36 percentage points more likely to have at least one internship during their college experience.

For college students, internships serve as critical proof points of experience that open professional doors.



1. 15,563 Fellows have completed the Braven Accelerator course to date; this includes core sites (City College of New York, Delaware State University, Northern Illinois University, Rutgers University-Newark, San José State University, and Spelman College) and non-core sites (BravenX, San Francisco State University, Lehman College, and National Louis University).
2. The percentage of students not on the path to the American Dream is an estimate of the percentage of Pell-Grant or first-generation students who have graduated but have not secured a quality job post college. This cohort is based on the latest data available and is the total fall 2022 enrollment of first-time degree/certificate-seeking students in degree-granting postsecondary institutions (NCES 2023 Digest of Education Statistics table 305.10) and the total fall 2021 enrollment of 2YR > 4YR transfers (NSC Research Center Fall 2023 Transfer and Progress Report). Based on this cohort, the percent of students not on path to the American Dream is calculated leveraging the following sources: "Percentage of Undergraduates Receiving Pell Grant in 2022-2023" NCES 2023 IPEDS Trends Generator; "Number of Full-Time, First-Time Degree/Certificate-Seeking Undergraduate Students... by Type of Aid Received" NCES 2020 IPEDS Data Explorer table 20; "Total Undergraduate Fall Enrollment in Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions, by Attendance Status, Sex of Student, and Control and Level of Institution: Selected Years, 1970 through 2031" NCES 2023 Digest of Education Statistics table 303.70; Trends in First-Generation Students: College Access, Persistence, and Postbachelor's Outcomes NCES 2018 First Generation Students Report; Trends in Pell Grant Receipt and the Characteristics of Pell Grant Recipients: Selected Years, 2003–2004, 2015–2016 NCES 2019 IPEDS Trends Generator; NACE 2025 First Destination Survey and September 2025 Federal Reserve Bank of New York Underemployment Rate.
3. "The Labor Market for Recent College Graduates: Unemployment Rates for Recent College Graduates versus Other Groups." Federal Reserve Bank of New York, 2024, www.newyorkfed.org/research/college-labor-market/#:~:explore=unemployment. Accessed 24 Feb. 2025.
4. Shrivastava, Allison. "September 2025 Labor Market Update: The Squeeze on New Entrants Mirrors a Marketwide Decline." Hiring Lab, 25 Sept. 2025, www.hiringlab.org/2025/09/25/september-labor-market-squeeze-on-new-entrants/. Accessed 24 Feb. 2026.
5. Blankenship, Molly, et al. The American Job Quality Study: 2025 State of the U.S. Labor Force. Jobs for the Future / Families and Workers Fund / Gallup, Oct. 2025, www.jff.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/AmericanJobQualityReport_Final_10142025.pdf. Accessed 24 Feb. 2026. For the accompanying graph, a quality job is defined as one that allows workers to meet their basic financial needs, feel safe and respected, grow their skills, have a voice in decisions that affect them, and exercise some control over their time and work.
6. Morris, Catherine, et al. The Major Payoff: Evaluating Earnings and Employment Outcomes Across Bachelor's Degrees. Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2025, cew.georgetown.edu/major-payoff. Accessed 24 Feb. 2026.
7. Kessler, Sarah. "The Rise of the Robot Job Seeker." The New York Times, 21 June 2025, www.nytimes.com/2025/06/21/business/dealbook/ai-job-applications.html. Accessed 24 Feb. 2026.
8. Job Outlook 2025. National Association of Colleges and Employers, Jan. 2025, naceweb.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/2025-publication/research-report/2025-nace-job-outlook-jan-2025.pdf. Accessed 24 Feb. 2026.
9. 1306 Fellows are from the following core sites: City College of New York, Delaware State University, Northern Illinois University, Rutgers University-Newark, San Jose State University, and Spelman College.
10. Low-income means the Braven Fellow identifies as low-income or a Pell Grant recipient.
11. First-generation means the Braven Fellow identifies as a student who is the first in their immediate family to attend or graduate from a four-year college or university.
12. Braven defines quality outcome attainment using the following methodology:
 - a. Quality outcome: Fellow enrolls in graduate school or secures a job that requires a BA/BS, is full-time, and is paid.
 - b. Part-quality outcome: Fellow secures a job that is paid, aligns with long-term career interests, and meets at least one of the criteria below:
 - i. Requires a bachelor's degree
 - ii. Is full-time
 - iii. Offers employer-provided benefits
 - iv. Earns >35k per year
 - v. Builds record of achievement/resume
 - vi. Builds transferable skills, especially within career interests
 - c. Not quality: Fellow secures a job that is paid, but does not meet the criteria of a part-quality or quality job.
 - d. Unemployed: Fellow is unemployed.
13. 57% is the percentage of Fellows who secured a quality job or enrolled in graduate school. All outcome percentages are based on Fellows for which their post-graduation outcome is known (87% or 1136 out of the total 1306 Fellows at core sites' outcome is known).
14. Braven's 45% peer benchmark is calculated by taking the NACE 2024 full-time employment rate for students at institutions with a high concentration of Pell Grant recipients (40-60%) from the NACE 2025 First Destination Survey, adjusting it for underemployment (using Federal Reserve of New York and U.S. Census data), and adding the percentage of students pursuing graduate school education.
15. Braven's 49% national benchmark is calculated by taking the NACE 2024 full-time employment rate from the NACE 2025 First Destination Survey, adjusting it for underemployment (using Federal Reserve of New York and U.S. Census data), and adding the percentage of students pursuing graduate school education.
16. 27% is the percentage of Fellows who enrolled in graduate school. This percentage is based on Fellows for which their post-graduation outcome is known (87% or 1136 out of the total 1306 Fellows at core sites' outcome is known).
17. Braven employed salary average is the approximated salary average for Class of 2025 Braven Fellows at core sites who secured any job (quality, part-quality, or not quality).
18. Braven full-time employed salary average is the approximated salary average for Class of 2025 Braven Fellows at core sites who secured a quality job.
19. U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey. Data filtered by age (AGEP 23-24), income (PINCP > \$1), hours worked (WKHP > 35 or WKHP > 0), employment status (ESR Civilian employed, at work), and educational attainment (SCHL Bachelor's degree). U.S. Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs>.
20. Data is based on 380 Post-Accelerator Fellow survey responses pooled from Fall 2021 - Fall 2025 across both core and non-core sites.
21. National Student Aid Profile: Overview of 2024 Federal Programs. National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, 2024, https://www.nasfaa.org/uploads/documents/2024_National_Profile.pdf. Accessed 24 Feb. 2026.
22. Handshake Internships Index 2025. Handshake, Mar. 2025, joinhandshake.com/themes/handshake/dist/assets/downloads/network-trends/Handshake-Internships-Index-2025.pdf. Accessed 24 Feb. 2026.
23. Building Better Internships: Evidence from the National Survey of College Internships. Strada Education Foundation / University of Wisconsin-Madison, June 2024, cdn.prod.website-files.com/677c52f82e5471a3732ea25/679a75b6bb2ab5a398044a74_Building-Better-Internships-Full-Report-Updated-June-2024.pdf. Accessed 24 Feb. 2026.
24. Internship attainment rate is for the following core sites: The City College of New York, Delaware State University, Northern Illinois University, Rutgers University-Newark, San Jose State University, and Spelman College.
25. Clayton, Dave, et al. From College to Career: Students' Internship Expectations and Experiences. Strada Education Foundation, 17 May 2023, www.strada.org/reports/from-college-to-career-students-internship-expectations-and-experiences. Accessed 24 Feb. 2026.
26. The National Comparison represents the six-year graduation rate for the 2018 cohort of full-time, first-time Pell Grant recipients at four-year public Title IV institutions. This rate is adjusted to account for year-over-year persistence from freshman through junior year. Data is synthesized from the NCES IPEDS Data Explorer (2024), the Digest of Education Statistics (2021), and American Institutes for Research (2023).
27. Six-year graduation rate of Braven Fellows includes students who enrolled as first-time freshmen at SJSU and RU-N, not including those who took Braven as seniors, transfers, or international students. SJSU and RU-N are the only core sites included in the six-year graduation rate calculation because they have reached a threshold of graduates to date (200+) for which we have both valid enrollment and graduation data.
28. 51% is the percentage of Fellows who secured a quality job or enrolled in graduate school. All outcome percentages are based on Fellows for which their post-graduation outcome is known (70% or 209 out of the total 298 BravenX Fellows' outcome is known).

Notes

