BRAVEN

RUTGERS NEWARK



2026 Impact Report

2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR

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.

Oscar Alvarado

Spring 2025 Fellow

Oscar Alvarado

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK

Compliance Examiner, National Futures Association

Joshua Christie | Purpose Portraits



What does this report cover?

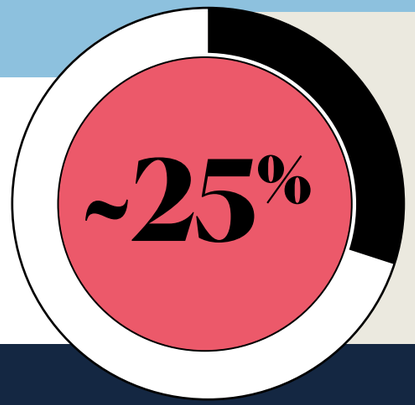
Across the country, Braven and our dedicated partners are turning the promise of economic mobility into reality, one Fellow at a time.

We're on a path to reach 80,000-100,000 students by 2032, at which point we'll welcome 25,000 new Fellows annually into a proven model that builds the career-readiness skills, networks, confidence, and experience that careers are built on.

To date, more than 17,000[1] Fellows have come through Braven's doors, and the momentum is only growing. This report takes a close look at what that momentum means in practice, through the lens of five questions that get to the heart of our work:

1. **Are our Fellows securing quality career outcomes that put them on the path to the American Dream?**
2. **Are we impacting more students while maintaining program quality?**
3. **Are we supporting Fellows to secure internships and complete college?**
4. **Are our Fellows developing the career readiness skills, networks, and confidence needed for success?**
5. **Are we building employer and higher education partnerships with true shared value?**

Why our work matters



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 enroll in graduate school.[2]

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

1.4 million students

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

~400k

GRADUATE & SECURE A STRONG JOB OR GAIN ADMISSION TO GRADUATE SCHOOL

~1 million

ARE NOT ON THE PATH TO THE AMERICAN DREAM



Angelina

Fall 2023 Fellow

Angelina Vertiz

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK

Master of Social Work Student, Advanced Standing Program at Rutgers University
&
Founder, LeadHer Roots

Joshua Christie | Purpose Portraits



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.

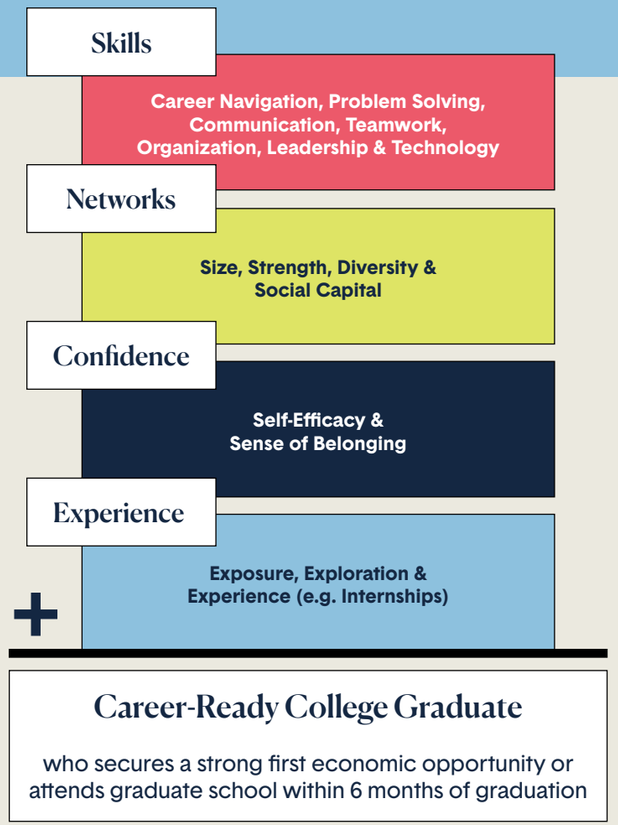
Vision

The next generation of leaders will emerge from everywhere.

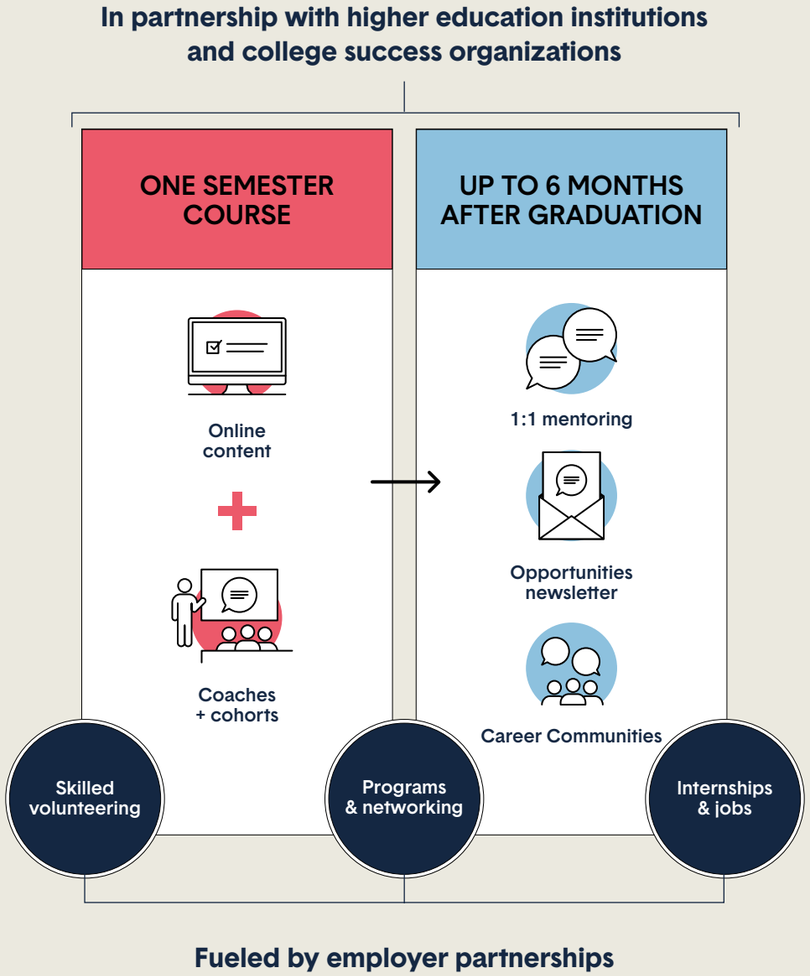
The Braven Equation

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

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







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

- Chicago State University
- The City College of New York
- DSU
- Illinois Tech — *Launched Fall 2026*
- Kean — *Launched Fall 2026*
- National Louis University
- Northern Illinois University
- Rutgers Newark
- San Francisco State University
- SJSU San José State University
- Spelman College — *A Choice to Change the World*
- UMass Lowell
- University of Mount Saint Vincent — *Launched Fall 2026*
- UNT University of North Texas



1

SECTION 1

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

National Statistics

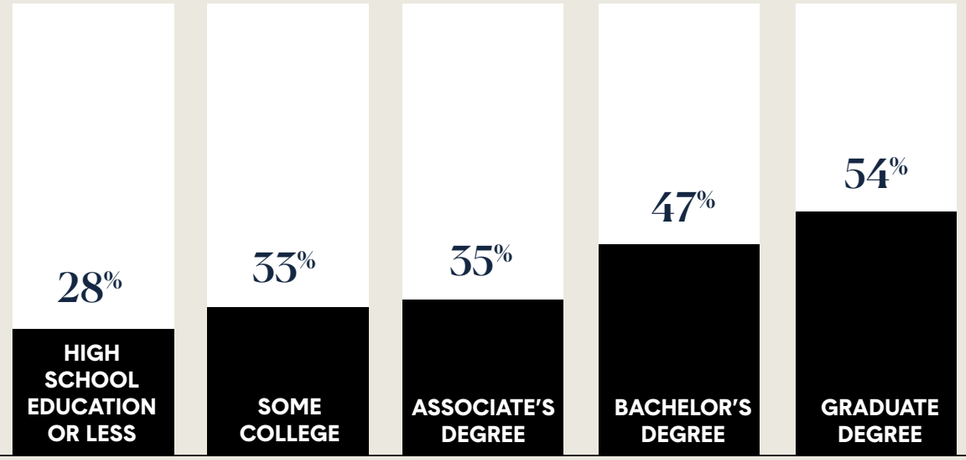
Pursuing the bachelor's degree is still the surest path to economic mobility

A bachelor's degree holder is still employed at a higher rate, has greater job security once employed, and earns more than workers with a high school diploma alone.

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

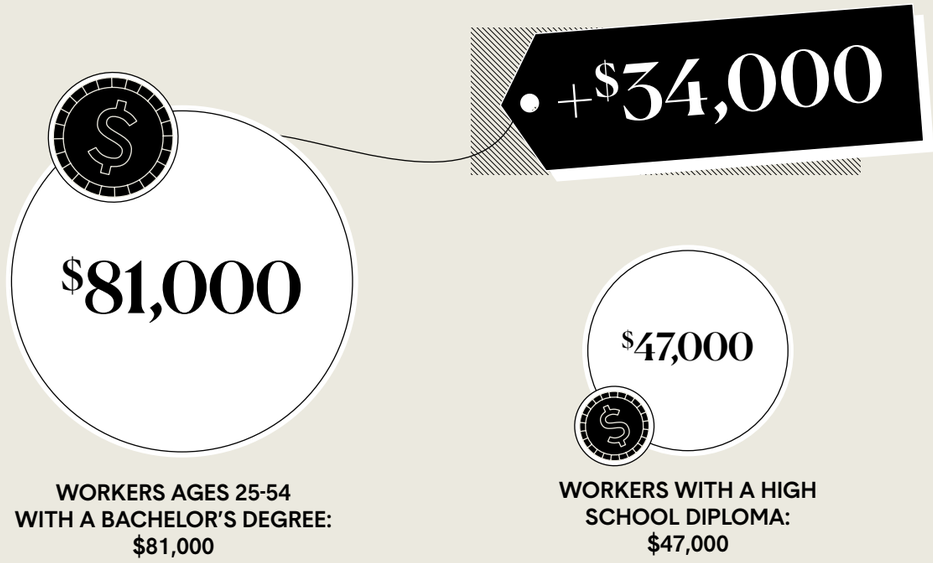
Employees with a bachelor's or graduate degree are more likely to have quality jobs than those with an associate's degree, some college, or a high school education or less.[3]

PERCENTAGE OF DEGREE COMPLETERS IN QUALITY JOBS



Workers with a four-year degree earn 72% more than workers with a high school diploma alone.

MEDIAN ECONOMIC OUTCOMES
FOR WORKERS AGES 25-54 WITH A BACHELOR'S DEGREE[4]



WORKERS AGES 25-54 WITH A BACHELOR'S DEGREE: $81,000

WORKERS WITH A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA: $47,000



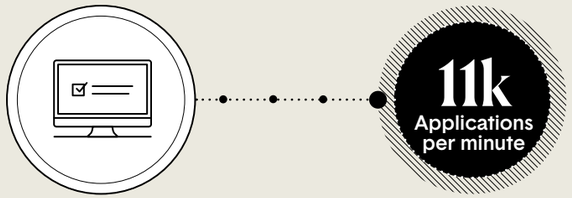
The opportunity: Translating degrees into career-launching opportunities

The challenge today is not the value of the degree itself, but ensuring students can successfully translate it into career-launching opportunities.

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

In June 2025, Linkedin reported that the number of job applications increased by more than 45%, and the platform is clocking an average of 11,000 applications per minute. [5]

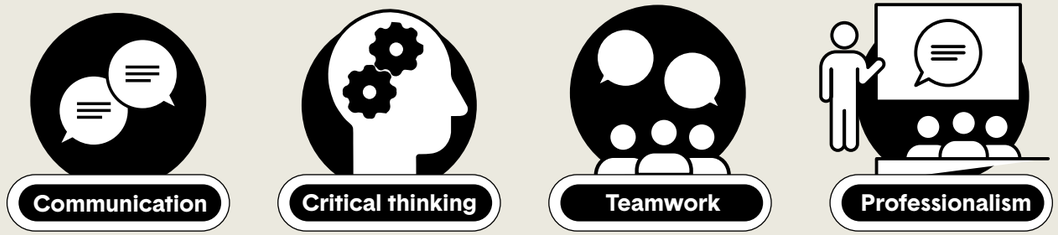


AI's impact on job hunting

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%. [5]

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

These include: [6]



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

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

RU-N Braven Fellows secured quality opportunities after college

In 2025, 153 Braven Fellows graduated from Rutgers University-Newark

This new class is outpacing their peers nationally in quality outcome attainment [7] **by 24 percentage points** (69% [8] vs 45% [9]) within six months of graduation.

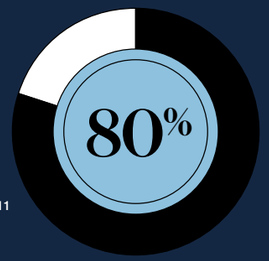
69% RU-N BRAVEN 2025 GRADUATES

+24 percentage points

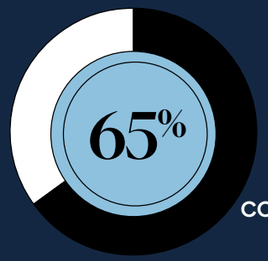
45% GRADUATES WITH A BACHELOR'S DEGREE FROM PEER INSTITUTIONS WITH A SIMILAR CONCENTRATION OF PELL GRANT RECIPIENTS [9]

49% GRADUATES NATIONALLY WITH A BACHELOR'S DEGREE [10]

RU-N Braven Class of 2025 demographics



STUDENTS FROM LOW-INCOME BACKGROUNDS [11]



FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS [12]



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Priyal

Spring 2023 Fellow

Priyal Patel

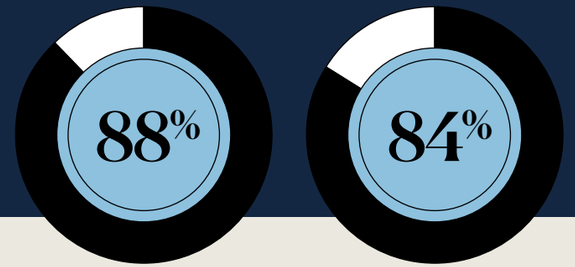
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK

Program Integrity Analyst, Zizatek

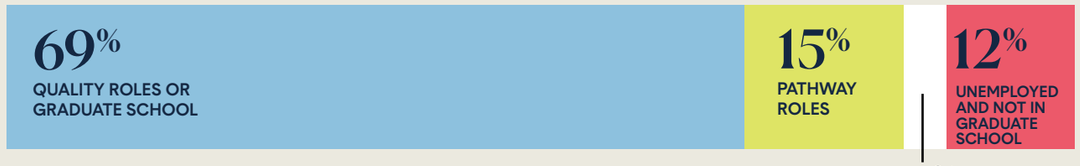


The strength of roles that RU-N Braven 2025 graduates secured

Of the 153 Braven Fellows who graduated from Rutgers University-Newark in 2025,



2025 RU-N Braven Graduates



HOW WE DEFINE QUALITY ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Quality role: 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 role: 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

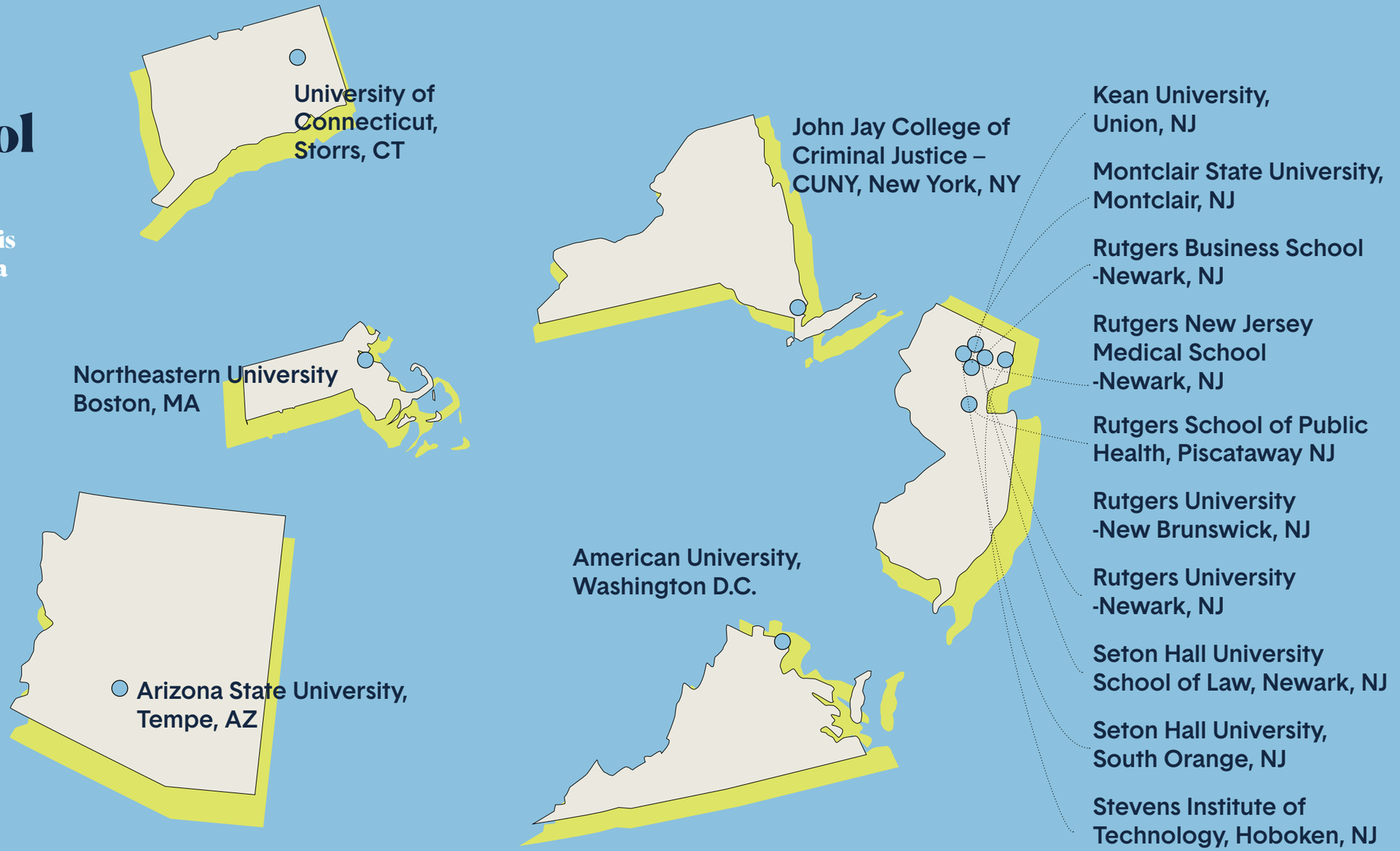
Non-quality role: a role that does not require a bachelor's degree, offers limited runway to additional career-accelerating opportunities, and is not aligned with students' career interests

RU-N Fellow enrollment in graduate school

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

21%

21 percent of our 2025 Rutgers University-Newark graduates went on to graduate school within six months of graduation.[13]



Victoria

Spring 2025 Fellow

Victoria Alegunlade

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK

Tax Intern, Deloitte

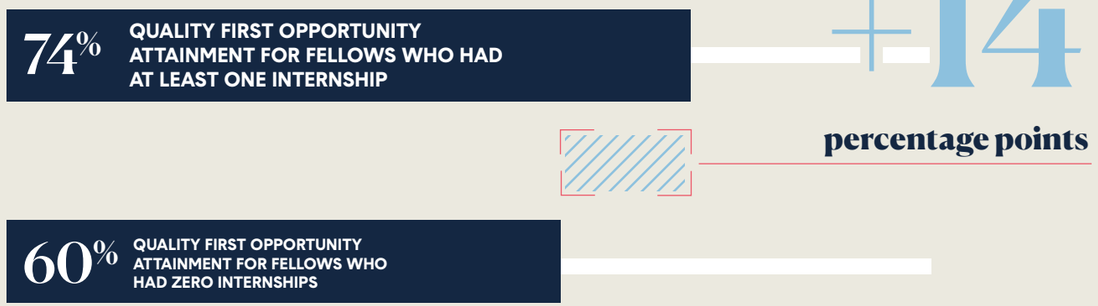
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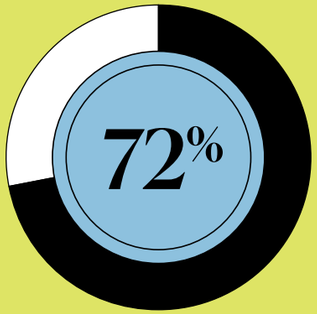
Internships often lead to strong first opportunities after college

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

The influence of internships on post-graduate success is underscored by our data: Braven Fellows nationwide who have completed at least one internship in college have a 14 percentage points higher quality first opportunity attainment rate compared to other Braven Fellows (74% vs 60%). [14]



The American Dream in action



OF RU-N BRAVEN 2025 GRADUATES ARE PELL GRANT RECIPIENTS



Nationally, 85% of Pell Grant recipients come from families with annual incomes below $50,000 annually, and 63% of those come from families earning less than $30,000 annually. [15]

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

The Braven Equation in action

With Braven's help, Asare Bampoe-Parry built the foundation to get on the path to the American Dream.

Skills

The Braven experience equipped Asare with 7 key career competencies: **career navigation • leadership • organization • communication • teamwork • problem solving • technology**

Networks

Leadership Coach **Soumitra Sharma, Client Onboarding Officer at JPMorgan,** who provided Asare with **60 hours of mentorship.**

Confidence

"Rutgers-Newark and Braven worked together to provide a clear roadmap for navigating professional opportunities. Through workshops, mock interviews, a capstone project and most importantly, resume support, **I gained the confidence** and skills needed to present myself effectively to employers."

Experiences

During the Braven course, Asare secured a high-quality internship: **Project Management Intern, The Chubb Corporation**



Career-Ready College Graduate

Asare Bampoe-Parry

Fall 2023 Fellow

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK

Claims Project Manager, The Chubb Corporation & Entrepreneurship Intern, Rutgers Business School

Joshua Christie | Purpose Portraits

How the job market is shaping up for the Class of 2026

The picture for the Class of 2026 is more nuanced than the headlines suggest. Hiring projections have turned upward and more graduates are finding work more quickly, but unemployment remains elevated.

Encouraging signs for the Class of 2026

Employers project hiring for the Class of 2026 to be up 5.6% compared to last year, according to the spring update from the National Association of Colleges and Employers. [16]

Top industries hiring: [16]

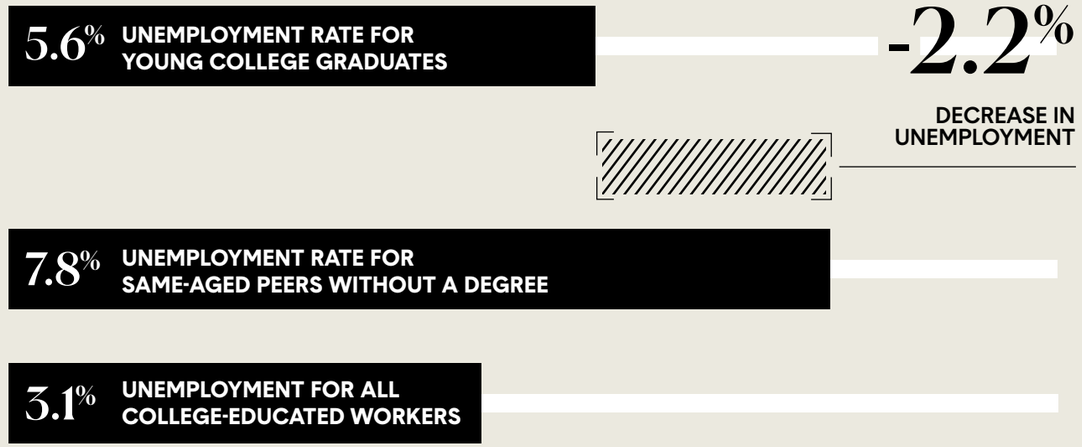
- INFORMATION
- ENGINEERING SERVICES
- WHOLESALE TRADE
- CONSTRUCTION
- MISCELLANEOUS PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Top 5 industries decreasing hiring: [16]

- UTILITIES
- COMPUTER & ELECTRONICS MANUFACTURING
- MISCELLANEOUS MANUFACTURING
- FOOD & BEVERAGE MANUFACTURING
- CHEMICAL (PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING)

The college degree makes a difference

Young college graduates faced a 5.6% unemployment rate as of December 2025—higher than the 3.1% for all college-educated workers, but meaningfully lower than the 7.8% facing their same-aged peers without a degree. [17]



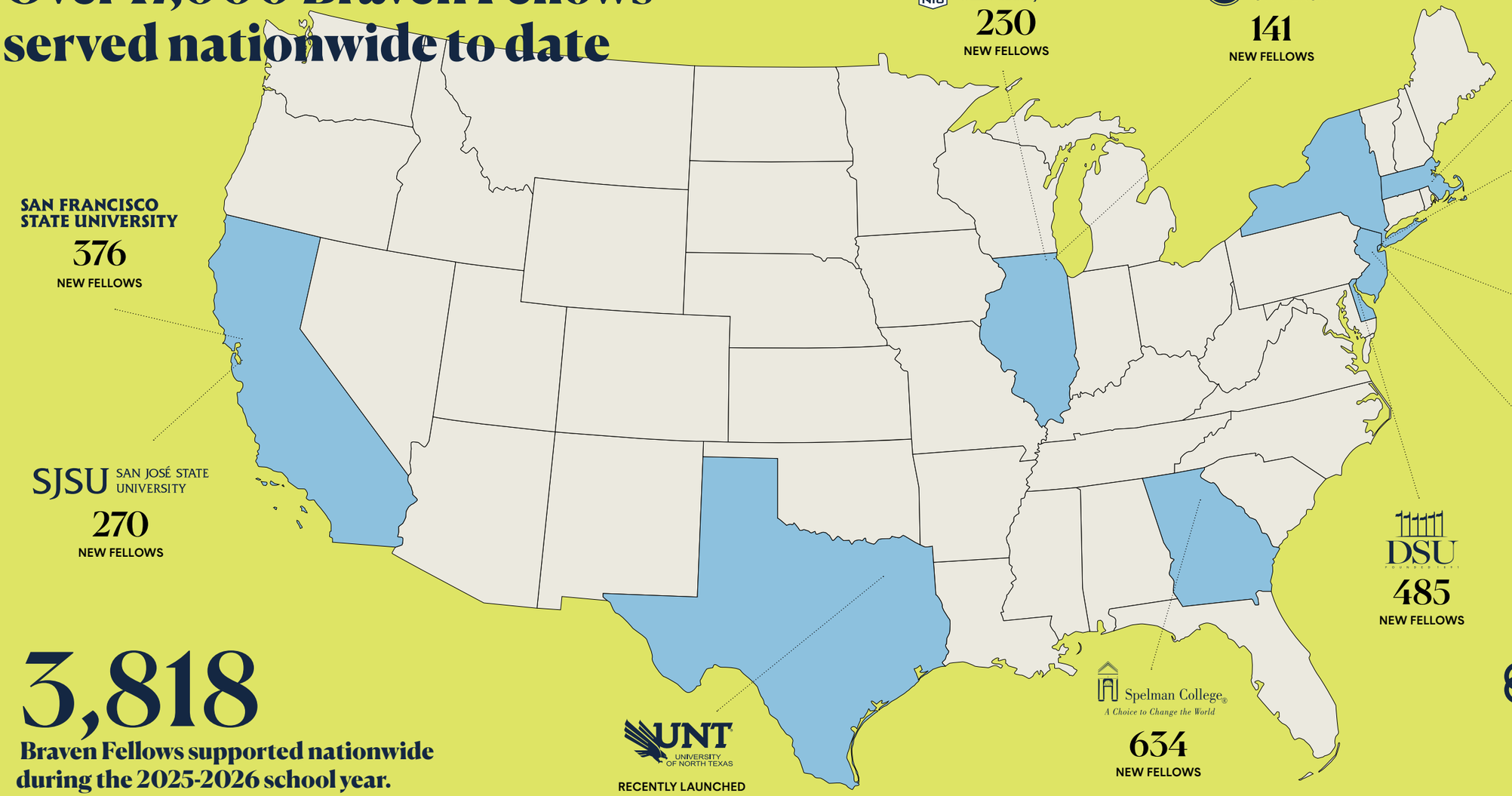


2

SECTION 2

Are we impacting more students while maintaining program quality?

Over 17,000 Braven Fellows served nationwide to date



Northern Illinois University
230
NEW FELLOWS

National Louis University
141
NEW FELLOWS

UMass Lowell
RECENTLY LAUNCHED

The City College of New York
630
NEW FELLOWS

San Francisco State University
376
NEW FELLOWS

Lehman College | CUNY
1,088
FELLOWS

SJSU San José State University
270
NEW FELLOWS

Rutgers Newark
495
NEW FELLOWS

DSU
485
NEW FELLOWS

UNT University of North Texas
RECENTLY LAUNCHED

Spelman College
A Choice to Change the World
634
NEW FELLOWS

BRAVEN
481
NEW FELLOWS

3,818

Braven Fellows supported nationwide during the 2025-2026 school year.

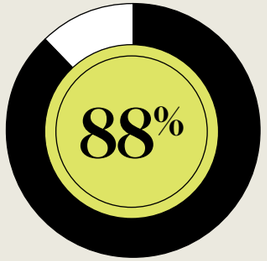
2025-2026 Rutgers University-Newark Braven Fellow Class

495 Fellows completed the Braven course in the 2025-2026 school year at Rutgers University-Newark.

RUTGERS NEWARK

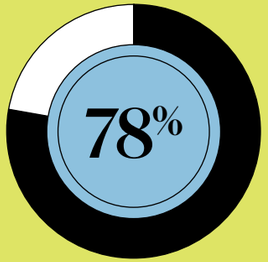


COURSE PASS RATE [18]

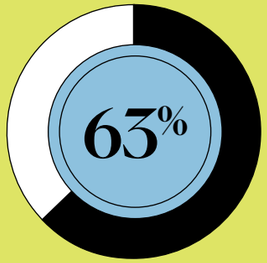


AVERAGE FINAL GRADE

2025-2026 RU-N Fellows are:



STUDENTS WHO COME FROM LOW-INCOME BACKGROUNDS



FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS

74% of RU-N Fellows who take the Braven Accelerator Course feel Braven has improved their chances of landing a job a great deal or quite a bit.

51

Net Promoter Score (NPS):
A widely used customer satisfaction metric on a scale of -100 to 100 that measures how likely a Fellow would recommend Braven to a friend. Above 0 is good, above 20 is favorable, and above 50 is excellent.

TOP 5 MAJORS

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

BIOLOGY

PSYCHOLOGY

FINANCE

SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT



3

SECTION 3

Are we supporting Fellows to secure internships and complete college?



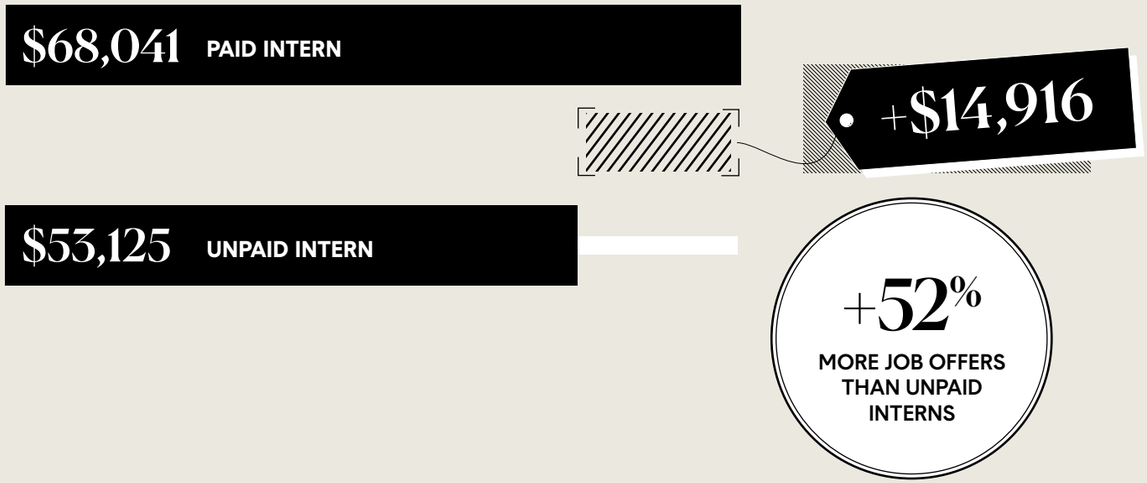


Quality internships during college make a difference

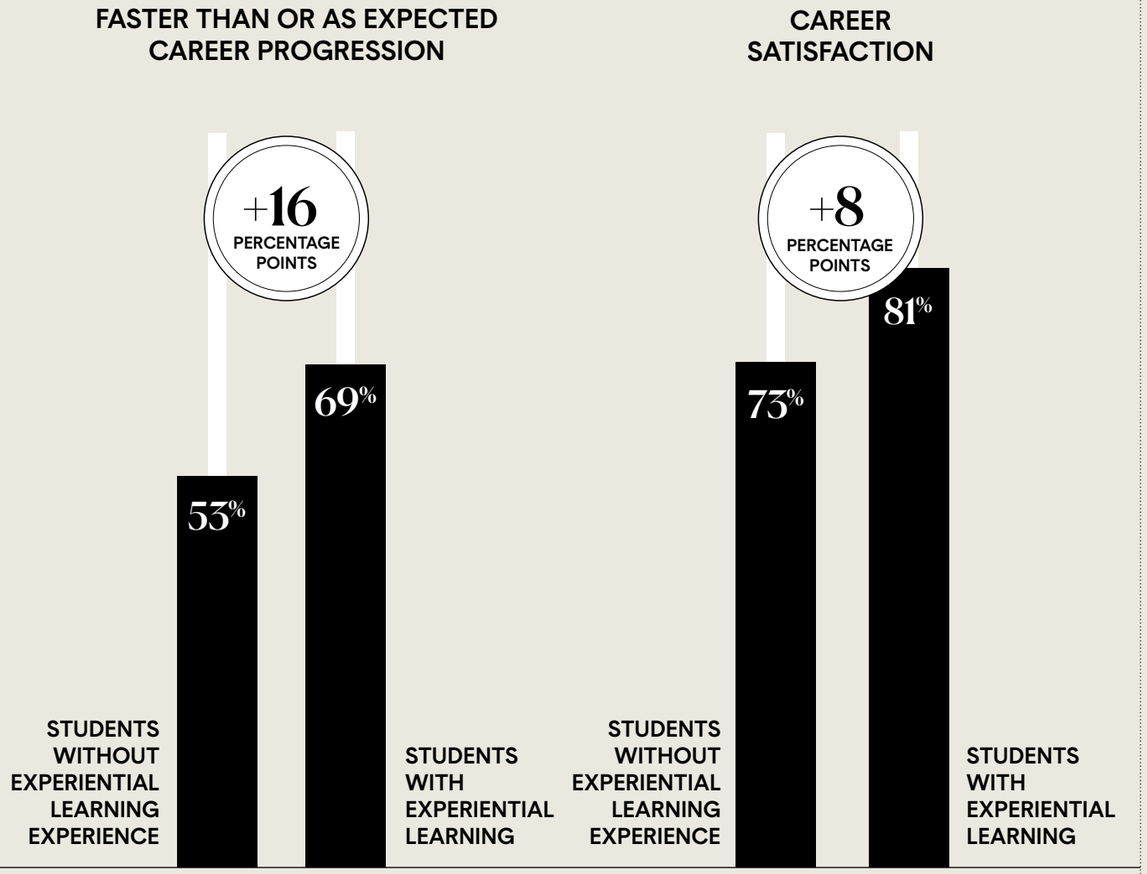
Internships are a critical piece of the college-to-career journey, but the quality of internships matters.

According to National Association of Colleges and Employers, students who take part in a paid internship secure more job offers and earn more than those who participate in unpaid internships. [19]

AVERAGE STARTING SALARIES:



Additionally, those who participated in experiential learning experiences reported faster than expected career progression and higher rates of career satisfaction. [19]



Encouraging levels of internship attainment for RU-N Braven Fellows

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

Compared with graduates nationally, Rutgers University-Newark Braven 2025 graduates were 23 percentage points more likely to have at least one internship during their college experience.

71% RU-N BRAVEN 2025 GRADUATES

48% NATIONAL 2022 GRADUATES [20]

+23 percentage points





The Braven experience drives meaningful increase in internship attainment

In the 2025-2026 school year, RU-N Braven Fellows saw a 14 percentage point uplift in internship attainment between the start and end of the Accelerator course, speaking to an important element of the immediate impact of the Braven experience. [22]

Internships are a key step toward strong career outcomes.

FELLOWS WHO HAD AT LEAST ONE INTERNSHIP

37% AT THE START OF THE ACCELERATOR

51% BY THE END OF THE ACCELERATOR

+14 percentage points

The Capitol Hill Fellowship: Creating pathways into public service

Originally launched in 2024 in partnership with the Sheila Y. Oliver Center at Rutgers University-Newark, today the Capitol Hill Fellowship includes 11 undergraduate Braven Fellows from seven university partners. These Fellows are placed in congressional offices or policy organizations in Washington D.C.

The Program is designed to give Braven Fellows access to public service careers through a comprehensive nine-week Fellowship experience. Fellows receive fully covered housing, transportation, a professional wardrobe stipend, and a generous living allowance. They also receive personalized coaching, mentorship, and career development support from Braven and higher education partners.



Karolinna Abella
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK
Rep. Lois Frankel (FL-22)



Daniel Cortez
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK
LatinoJustice PRLDEF



Kelsey Deleon
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK
Rep. Frank Pallone Jr. (NJ-06)



Azajah Green
SPELMAN COLLEGE
Rep. Nikema Williams (GA-05)



Adrian Henry
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK
Rep. Herb Conaway Jr. (NJ-03)



Julie Jang
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK
House Committee on Education and the Workforce



Amanda Miranda
CITY COLLEGE OF NEW YORK
Rep. Nydia Velázquez (NY-07)



Brandon J. Poplar
DELAWARE STATE UNIVERSITY
Rep. Haley Stevens (MI-11)



Yama Sekandar
SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY
Rep. Sam Liccardo (CA-16)



Lillian Smith
WOFFORD COLLEGE
The International Conservation Caucus Foundation (ICCF Group) and the Center for AI and Digital Policy



Stephanie Toxqui
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK
House Committee on Education and the Workforce

Proof point: Karen Perez's journey

2022 — Starts her journey at Rutgers University-Newark (RU-N).

2024 — Takes the Braven Accelerator at RU-N. Her Leadership Coach was Halimat Oshun, a RU-N Braven alumna.

2025-2026 — Serves a senior year internship at OSHE (Office of the Secretary of Higher Education).

Spring 2026 — Graduates from RU-N with a BA from the School of Public Affairs and Administration.

Summer 2026 — Interns in the Office of Representative Analilia Mejía (NJ-11) and in July, began work as a Staff Assistant for U.S. Senator Andy Kim (NJ).



When I started college, I never would have thought or could have imagined that I would intern on Capitol Hill, let alone now work for a senator. The CPRA/ Braven Capitol Hill program completely changed my trajectory and led me directly to where I am today. I am extremely grateful for all of the advice and help I received from all of you along the way. It would not have been possible without Braven's help and preparation.

Karen Perez

Spring 2024 Fellow

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK

Staff Assistant, U.S. Senator Andy Kim (NJ)

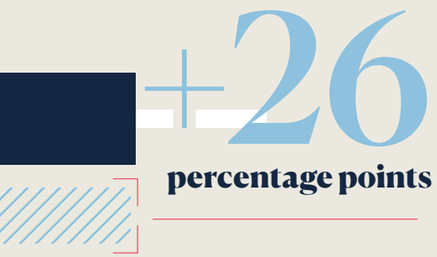
Remon Atala

Encouraging levels of graduation

Nationally, only about 7 in 10 students graduate within six years of college enrollment.[23]

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

RU-N Braven Fellows achieved a 92% six-year on-time graduation rate.[24]





Eboni Bugg

Spring 2023 Fellow

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK

Senior Program Coordinator, Rutgers University-Newark myRUN

Joshua Christie | Purpose Portraits



SECTION 4

Are our Fellows developing the career readiness skills, networks, and confidence needed for success?

Growth in career-readiness skills

The Braven experience focuses on the following seven career-readiness skills:

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

Why these career-readiness skills? They are:

1. Grounded in what research says is needed to successfully secure a strong first opportunity
2. In high-demand from employers (however, employers report recent graduates have not sufficiently developed these skills)
3. Aligned with other career-readiness frameworks such as the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) career-readiness competencies and the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U)'s VALUE rubrics

In 2025-2026, RU-N Braven Fellows achieved an average Accelerator course pass rate of 97% and an average final grade of 88%, demonstrating strong career-readiness skill mastery.

Career Navigation



- Reflects on strengths, values, and interests
- Explores multiple career options
- Takes career actions such as making plans, creating a portfolio, and building networks

Teamwork



- Works effectively towards shared goals
- Navigates differences
- Holds self and others accountable for deliverables

Technology



- Evaluates the ethical considerations of GenAI to guide its use
- Explores and applies GenAI strategies in the career-navigation process
- Develops proficiency with essential technological tools in your desired career field

Communication



- Presents ideas clearly and purposefully
- Listens actively to understand and asks questions
- Demonstrates empathy and respect

Leadership



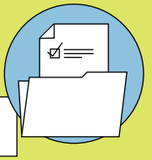
- Leads from values
- Grounds in purpose and assets
- Learns continuously from feedback and reflection

Problem Solving



- Defines the problem and identifies root causes
- Designs potential solutions
- Tests and implements solutions

Organization



- Plans and prioritizes tasks
- Monitors progress and adjusts when faced with challenges
- Gets things done

Networks and social capital

Extensive research has illustrated the importance of networks and social capital in career navigation and success. [25]

Braven supports students to build strong networks by connecting students to professionals and helping students build the skills necessary to mobilize those networks to advance their career goals.

To measure students' networking skills and how they activate their social capital, we leverage resources from the Search Institute.

In the 2025-2026 school year, Braven RU-N Fellows showed statistically significant growth [26] across all the following measures:

+32%

NETWORKING SELF-EFFICACY

The degree to which an individual purposefully uses relationships within their social network to reach their goals.

+22%

SELF-INITIATED SOCIAL CAPITAL

Refers to the degree to which an individual actively builds relationships and uses the relationships and the resources they have to reach their goals.

Growth in confidence

Each semester, Braven measures growth in self-efficacies from the start to the end of the Braven Accelerator.

Self-efficacy is a person's belief in their ability to succeed in various situations and is associated with academic and lifetime success. It is not typically measured through traditional assessments like standardized tests, but plays a large role in explaining job search, career search behaviors, and career outcomes.

In the 2025-2026 school year, Braven Fellows showed statistically significant growth in Job-Search Self-Efficacy and Career Self-Efficacy. [26]

+53%

JOB-SEARCH SELF-EFFICACY

Refers to students' confidence in their ability to successfully complete the steps of the job search process.

+19%

CAREER SELF-EFFICACY

The degree to which an individual feels they can successfully reach their career goals.



5

SECTION 5

Are we building employer and higher education partnerships with true shared value?

Employer spotlight: Teach For America

Braven's collaboration with Teach For America (TFA) helps open doors to the American Dream while also ensuring their alumni and staff stay proximate to the communities they care about and continue to develop leadership skills as they advance in their careers.

TFA Employee & Alumni Volunteerism during the 2025-2026 school year

Teach For America

7 LEADERSHIP COACHES

14 PROFESSIONAL MENTORS

28 MOCK INTERVIEWERS

~900 VOLUNTEER HOURS

Building the pipeline during the 2025-2026 school year

38 2026 BRAVEN GRADUATES ACCEPTED INTO THE TFA CORPS

20 BRAVEN FELLOWS IN COLLEGE ACCEPTED INTO TFA IGNITE

Programmatic highlights from the 2025-2026 school year

CAPSTONE CHALLENGE SPONSOR

Teach For America's Reinvention Lab served as a Capstone Partner for BravenX in Spring 2026, asking Fellows to explore how young people can showcase digital media skills.

8 Events co-hosted for Braven Fellows

"At Teach For America, we know that the future of this country depends on who has access to opportunity, and Braven is getting that right. The talent that comes through Braven's programs is remarkable: driven, prepared, and deeply committed to making a difference in their communities. Their work is not just developing the next generation of professionals; it's building the next generation of leaders our nation needs."

— Aneesh Sohoni
Chief Executive Officer, Teach For America



Powering Career Readiness at Rutgers University-Newark



"So, what are you going to do with that degree?" We've all heard it, and it can be really disheartening for a young person to hear. With the Braven partnership, our students learn to find the answer, no matter what their passions and talents are. It opens up the world."

-Carsten Holm, PhD
Director of Partnerships and Engagement,
Academic Foundations Center, Rutgers University-Newark

"Uplifting the students we are privileged to serve through career development and social mobility work takes real commitment—and Braven brings that in equal measure. It's that shared investment that turns partnership into impact."

-Toi K. Tyson, M.A.
Executive Director,
Office of Career Resources and Exploration,
Rutgers University-Newark





Braven and Rutgers University–Newark have partnered since 2015 to help students build the skills, networks, confidence, and experiences needed to launch strong careers. Today, Braven serves more than 500 Rutgers–Newark students annually through the Leadership and Career Accelerator, working closely with the university's Office of Career Resources and Exploration (CRE) to keep the Accelerator integrated into Rutgers–Newark's broader career ecosystem. Our Professors of Record, Carsten Holm, Director of Partnerships & Engagement within the Academic Foundations Center, and Toi Tyson, Executive Director and Assistant Dean of Career Resources and Exploration, work together to ensure that students successfully complete our course and connect with essential campus resources.

2025-2026 Braven National Faculty Council

The Braven National Faculty Council is a distinguished collective of faculty leaders from Braven's partner institutions.

Faculty have deeply informed our model from the start. Launched in FY25, the Council formalized that engagement, bringing educators' voices directly into the evolution of our curriculum. In its second year, the Council expanded to include participation across eight of our partner institutions and deepened its impact—delivering substantive guidance on AI ethics and Capstone design, and strengthening alignment between the Capstone Challenge and AAC&U's high-impact practices.

City College of New York



Naomi Nwosu-Stewart
Assistant Vice President of Enrollment Management



Renata Miller
Dean of the Division of Humanities and the Arts & Professor of English

Delaware State University

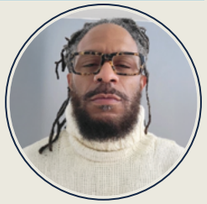


Kimeu Boynton
Associate Professor in Sociology and Criminal Justice & Interim Assistant Dean of the College of Humanities, Education, and Social Sciences



Phyllis Brooks Collins
Founding Program Director and Assistant Professor for the Integrated Studies Program

National Louis University



David O'Neale Corbin Jr.
Senior Student Success Coach



Natasha Kohl
Director of the Undergraduate Honors Program & Director of the University Writing Initiative



Uzoma Obidike
Director and Assistant Professor of Undergraduate Career Development

Spelman College



Anastasia Valecce
Associate Professor of Spanish (Hispanic Studies)

Northern Illinois University



Alicia Schatteman
Vice Provost for Academic Affairs & Professor



Andrea Radasanu
Director of the University Honors Program, Assistant Vice Provost for Student Enhancement

Rutgers University-Newark



Hyacinth Miller
Assistant Teaching Professor in the Departments of Africana Studies and Political Science & Study Abroad Director



Kaleena Rogers
Associate Director of Practicum Education

San José State University



Mary Currin-Percival
Associate Professor of Political Science; Director, Institute for Public Affairs and Civic Engagement (IPACE); Founding Director, SJSU Votes



Ryan Skinnell
Professor of Rhetoric & Writing; Director of First-Year Writing



Yolanda Wiggins
Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology & Interdisciplinary Social Sciences

San Francisco State University



Jeff Duncan-Andrade
Professor of Latina/o Studies and Race and Resistance Studies; Founder of the Roses in Concrete Community School

HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERS & EMPLOYER PARTNERS

Higher Education Partners
Chicago State University
City College of New York
Delaware State University
Illinois Institute of Technology (launching Fall 2026)
Kean University (launching Fall 2026)
University of Mount Saint Vincent (launching Fall 2026)
National Louis University
Northern Illinois University
Rutgers University-Newark
San Francisco State University
San José State University
Spelman College
The University of Massachusetts Lowell
University of North Texas

BravenX Partners
Academy Charter High School
Achieve Atlanta
Associated Colleges of Illinois
At The Table NYC
Augustana College
Birmingham Promise
CARA NYC
Camino Nuevo Charter Academy
Carmen Schools of Science & Technology
Chicago Scholars
City Year
Common Ground
Foundation
Coney Island Prep Public Schools
Cooperman College Scholars
Cristo Rey Network
Daniel Murphy Scholarship Fund
Delta Sigma Phi
Dream Charter School
Eagle Academy Foundation
East Harlem Tutorial Program
El Dorado Promise
Eureka College
Excel Academy Charter School
Excellence Community Schools
Fidelity Scholars
Hendrix College
Horatio Alger Association
IDEA Public Schools
Illinois College
KIPP Forward (Post-Secondary Success Collaborative)
KIPP Massachusetts
Knox College
LISA Academy
Meeting Street Scholarship Fund
Millikin University
North Central College
Prospect Schools
Quincy University
Rivet School
Rockford University
SEEDS
The Noble Network of Charter Schools
The Wight Foundation
Tulsa Honor Academy
Uncommon Schools
University Settlement
Uplift Education
UtmostU

Employer Partners

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

ANCHOR
($100K+ and programmatic support)
CIBC Foundation
Cognizant US Foundation
The College Board

KEYSTONE
($25K+ and programmatic support)
Audible
Berkshire Hathaway Specialty Insurance
Blackbaud
nvp
Panasonic North America
Pathward N. A.
PwC
Synchrony Financial
Synchrony
Taco Bell Foundation
UBS
United Airlines

INNOVATION
($10K+ and programmatic support)
J&L Companies
Mars Wrigley
PwC

IMPACT
($1K+ and/or programmatic support)
Bain and Company
Brown Advisory
Catalina
Choose New Jersey
Cisco
Cortaditos
Devils Youth Foundation
Equal Space
Harris Blitzer Sports & Entertainment
Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey
IQVIA
Jacobs Levy Equity Management
L'Oréal
Micron Technology, Inc.
NJPAC
Philadelphia 76ers
Teach For America
Unacast
Visa

PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORTERS ($10K+)

Anonymous
Arbor Rising
Deloitte Foundation
Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation
Impact100 Essex
John & Wendy Cozzi
Leon and Toby Cooperman Family Foundation
Linda & Brian Sterling
Lisa & Joseph Amato
Lynn & Sengal Selassie
M&T Weiner Foundation
Susan & Thomas Dunn
The Barberry Foundation
The Cargill Foundation
The MCJ Amelior Foundation

A big thank you to our New Jersey Board of Directors:

Lisa Amato
Rina Desai
Susan Dunn
Ryan Hill
Matt Iversen
Harry Li
Jackie Rider
Lynn Selassie
Solomon Steplight

ENDNOTES

1. 17,404 Fellows have completed the Braven Accelerator course to date; this includes core sites from FY2026 (BravenX, City College of New York, Delaware State University, Northern Illinois University, Rutgers University-Newark, San Francisco State University, San Jose State University, and Spelman College) and non-core sites (National Louis University, University of Massachusetts Lowell, and University of North Texas).

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. 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, https://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.

4. 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.

5. Kessler, Sarah. "The Rise of the Robot Job Seeker." The New York Times, 21 June 2025, https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/21/business/dealbook/ai-job-applications.html. Accessed 24 Feb. 2026.

6. Job Outlook 2025. National Association of Colleges and Employers, Jan. 2025,https://naceweb.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/2025/publication/research-report/2025-nace-job-outlook-jan-2025.pdf. Accessed 24 Feb. 2026.

7. 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.

8. 69% is the percentage of Rutgers University-Newark Fellows who secured a quality job or enrolled in graduate school. All outcome percentages are based on Rutgers University-Newark Fellows for which their post-graduation outcome is known (80% or 123 out of the total 153 Rutgers University-Newark graduates in FY2025 has a known outcome).

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. Low-income is defined as whether the student is Pell-eligible as determined by partner college roster files or Braven Fellow self-report data.

12. First-generation is defined as the Braven Fellow identifying as a student who is the first in their immediate family to attend or graduate from a four-year college or university.

13. 21% is the percentage of Rutgers University-Newark Fellows who enrolled in graduate school. This percentage is based on Fellows for which their post-graduation outcome is known (80% or 123 out of the total 153 Rutgers University-Newark graduates in FY2025 has a known outcome).

14. Fellow internship attainment is derived from a combination of Fellow self-report data, LinkedIn profiles, and Braven staff report from ongoing career coaching conversations.

15. 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.

16. Job Outlook 2026: Spring Update. National Association of Colleges and Employers, Apr. 2026, https://naceweb.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/2026/publication/research-report/2026-job-outlook-report-spring-update.pdf. Accessed 25 July 2026.

17. The Labor Market for Recent College Graduates. Federal Reserve Bank of New York, https://www.newyorkfed.org/research/college-labor-market#--:explore:unemployment. Accessed 25 July 2026.

18. Course Pass Rate represents the percentage of students who received an A-D out of the total number of students enrolled at the end of the semester. This value does not include students who withdrew throughout the semester.

19. The 2024 Student Survey Report, Four-Year Schools: Executive Summary. National Association of Colleges and Employers, Sept. 2024, https://naceweb.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/2024/publication/executive-summary/2024-nace-student-survey-executive-summary-four-year.pdf. Accessed 25 July 2026.

20. Clayton, Dave, et al. From College to Career: Students' Internship Expectations and Experiences. Strada Education Foundation, 17 May 2023,https://www.strada.org/reports/from-college-to-career-students-internship-expectations-and-experiences. Accessed 24 Feb. 2026.

21. Change in internship attainment is measured by the percentage of students who self-reported at least one internship at the beginning of the Braven course on the pre-accelerator survey and comparing it to the percentage of students who self-reported at least one internship at the end of the Braven course on the post-accelerator survey.

22. 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).

23. Six-year graduation rate of RU-N Braven Fellows includes students who enrolled as first-time freshmen, not including those who took Braven as seniors, transfers, or international students. RU-N is included in the six-year graduation rate calculation because the university reached a threshold of graduates to date (200+) for which we have both valid enrollment and graduation data.

24. Boat, A. A., Syvertsen, A. K., & Scales, P. C. (2021). The role of social capital in promoting work readiness among opportunity youth. Children and Youth Services Review, 131, 106270. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2021.106270

25. Search Institute (2021). Social capital assessment and learning for equity measures: User manual. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute.