



Scratching the Surface: De Facto Segregation by Race & Class in Virginia Higher Education



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Big Picture: High Averages Mask an Inequitable & Racially Unjust Higher Education System

Virginia has the 7th Highest Educational Attainment Level in the Country

Overall Rank ↕	State	Total Score ↕	'Educational Attainment' ▲	'Quality of Education' ↕
1	Massachusetts	81.54	1	3
5	Colorado	69.28	2	35
2	Maryland	78.30	3	1
3	Connecticut	72.50	4	5
4	Vermont	70.19	5	7
8	New Hampshire	67.47	6	16
6	Virginia	68.52	7	8

- Home to **nationally ranked individual public school districts and schools** that attract leading companies to the region.

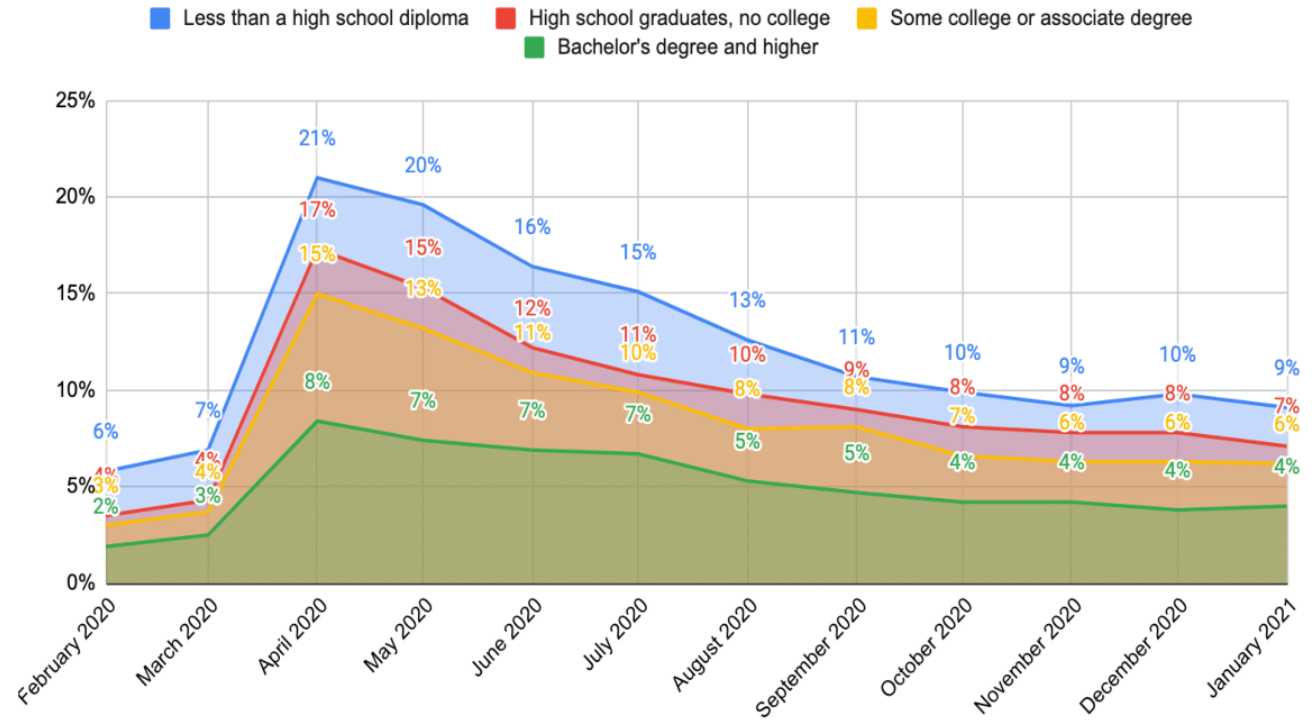


The Economic Benefits of Postsecondary Degree Have Never Been Clearer

- According to the Center on Employment and the Workforce, **67% of jobs in Virginia required a postsecondary degree in 2020.**
- During the pandemic, Americans without Bachelor's degrees have suffered significantly higher unemployment levels.

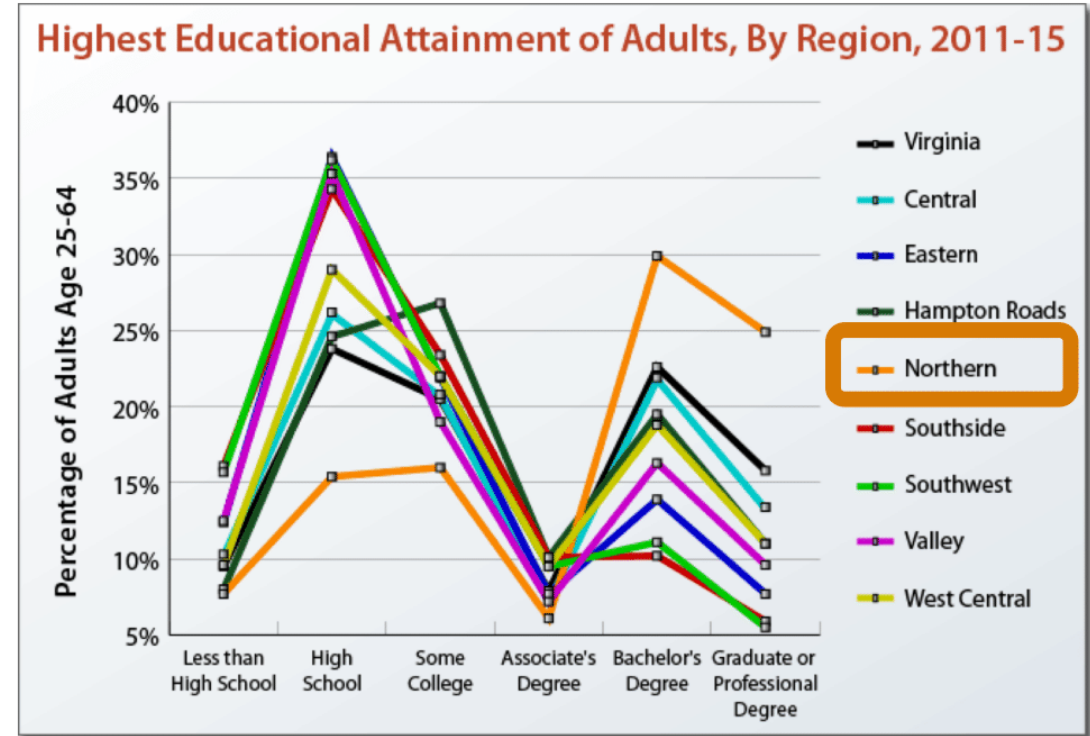
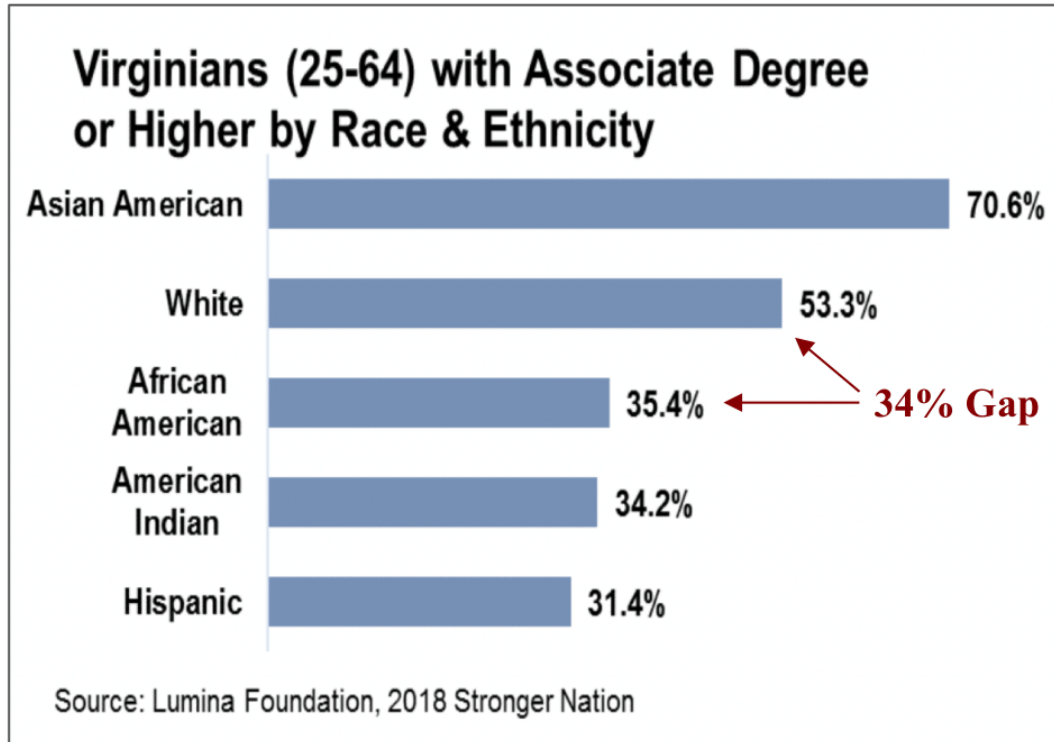
Unemployment Rates during the Pandemic by Level of Educational Attainment (25 and older)

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics



Not Everyone Is Seeing the Benefits of Virginia Higher Education

Postsecondary degrees are **unevenly distributed** across the Commonwealth **by race and region**. Some 55% of Northern Virginians hold a bachelor's degree or higher; 30% higher than the next closest region.



Source: "Virginia Performs," (2015), Commonwealth of Virginia

COLLEGE ENROLLMENT IN VIRGINIA:
SEGREGATED BY RACE & CLASS
(“ISLANDS OF PRIVILEGE” & “ENGINES OF INEQUALITY”)

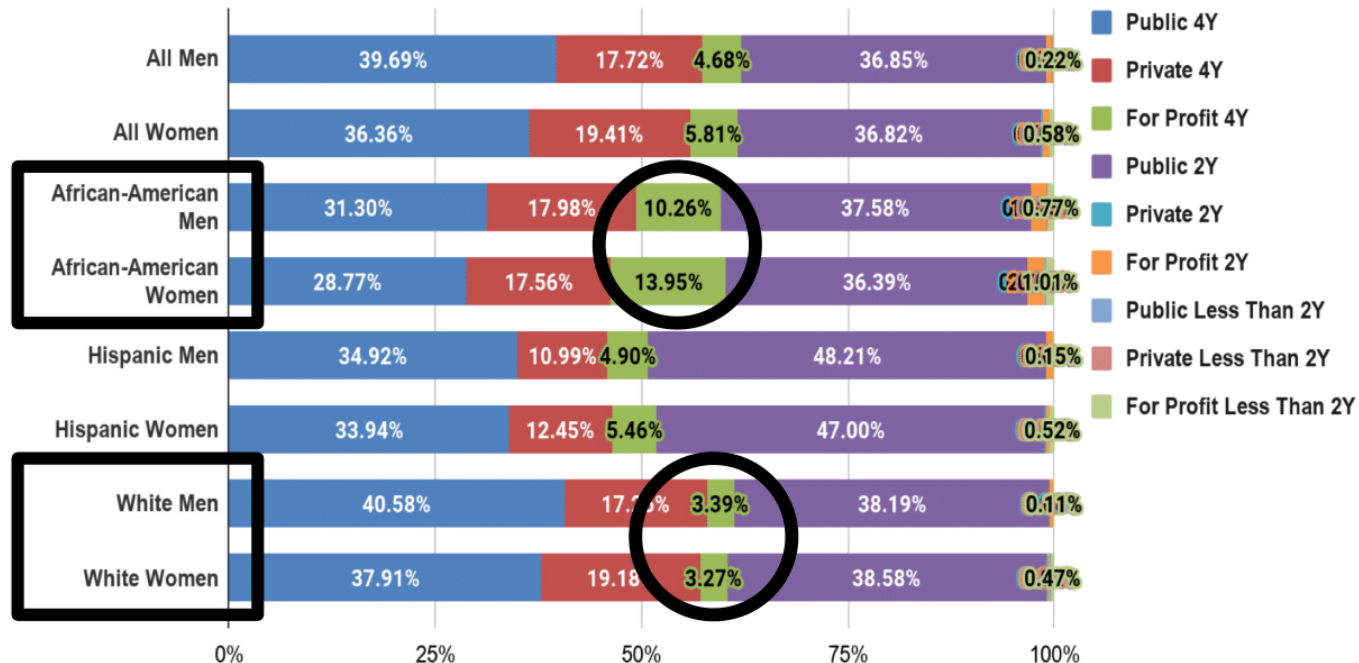
De Facto Racial Segregation

Among Virginia's Higher Education Sectors

- Including out-of-state students, Virginia **Black males** enroll in **for-profit** four-year institutions **three times the rate** as their white male counterparts.
- Including out-of-state students, Virginia **Black females** enroll in **for-profit** four-year institutions at **four times the rate** as their white female counterparts.

Enrollment in Virginia IHEs by Race and Ethnicity, 2018

Source: IPEDS



De Facto Racial Segregation

Among Virginia's Higher Education Sectors

Virginia's **Hispanic** high school graduates are **40 percent more likely** to enroll in **community college** than their white peers.

Where 2018 VA Public School Graduates Enrolled in College

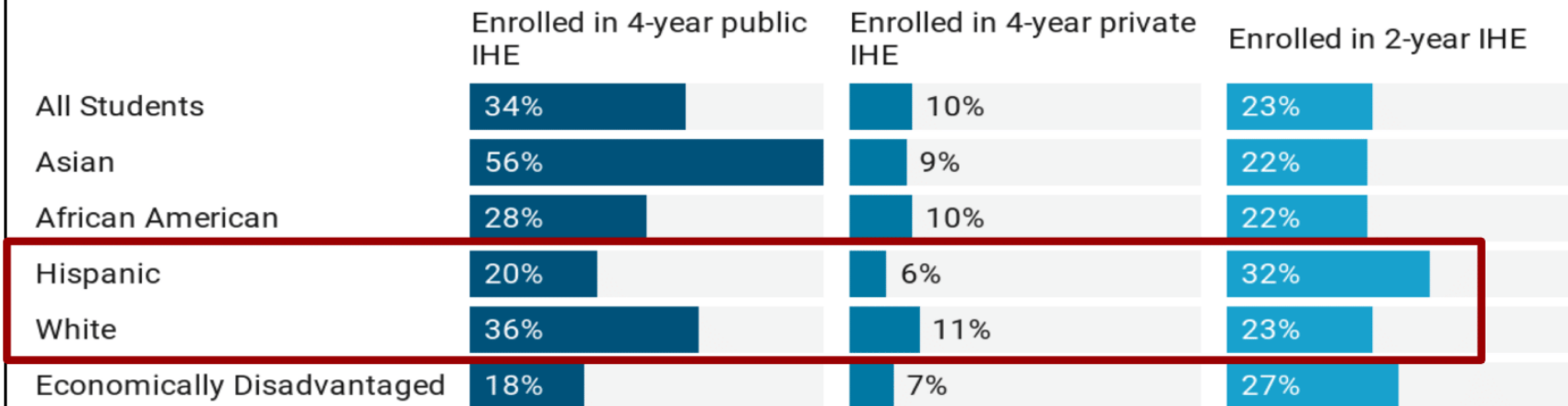


Chart: ERN • Source: VA DOE • Created with Datawrapper

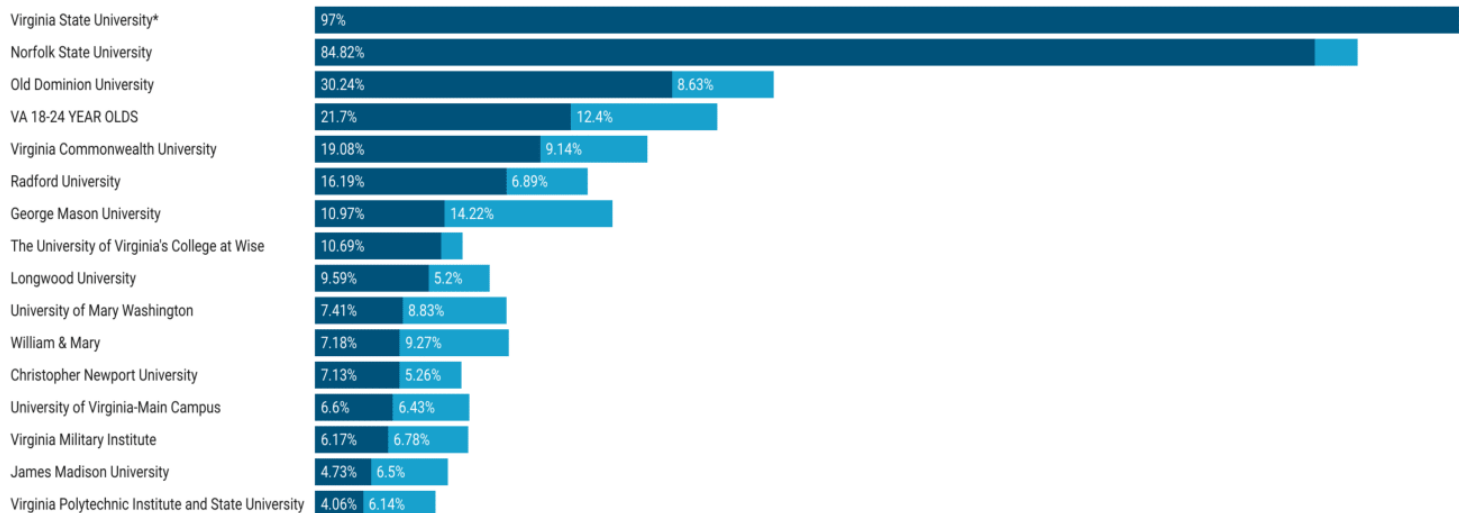
“Islands of Privilege” Among Virginia’s Public Colleges

- 22% of Virginia high school students are Black. At **Virginia Tech & James Madison**, 4% and 4.6% are Black.
- At **peer institutions with similar admissions standards**, like Rutgers and the University of South Carolina or Ole Miss, **Black enrollment is two to three times higher.**

Underrepresented Minority Enrollment at VA Public 4-Year Institutions (2016-18)

3-year enrollment averages calculated from IPEDS; VA demographics drawn from US Census data.

■ Percent African-American ■ Percent Hispanic



*During the period under review, Virginia State's reporting of enrollment data to IPEDS and SCHEV was incomplete, so a 3-year average cannot be attained during it. We have submitted 2020 SCHEV enrollment data instead.

Chart: ERN • Source: IPEDS/SCHEV • Created with Datawrapper

“Islands of Privilege” Among Non-Profit, Private Colleges

In 2019, over 18,000 **Black students** graduated from Virginia high schools. **Washington & Lee** Enrolled Just **Four** of them.



Undergraduate Enrollment at VA Private 4-Year Institutions (2016-18)

3-year enrollment averages calculated from IPEDS; VA demographics drawn from US Census data.

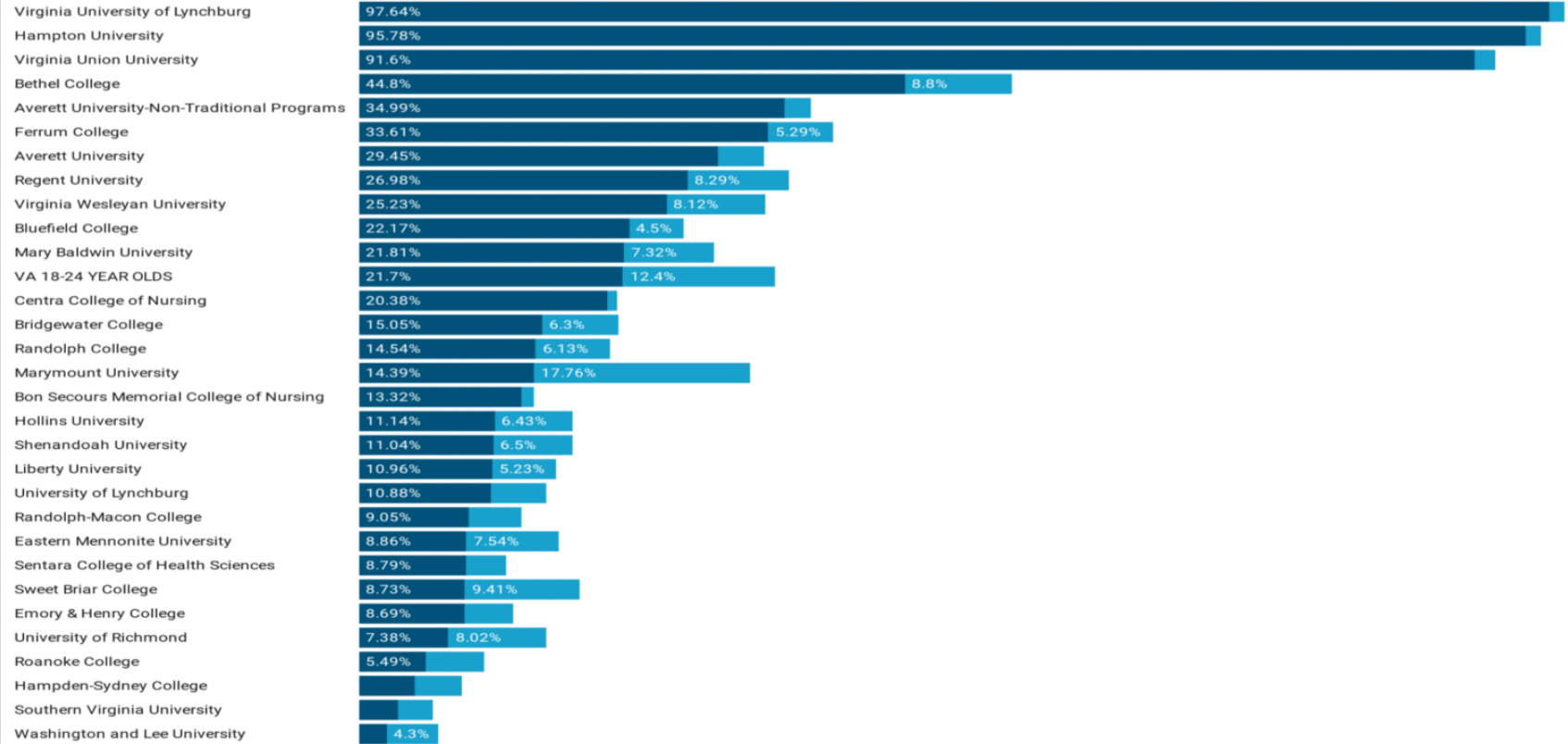


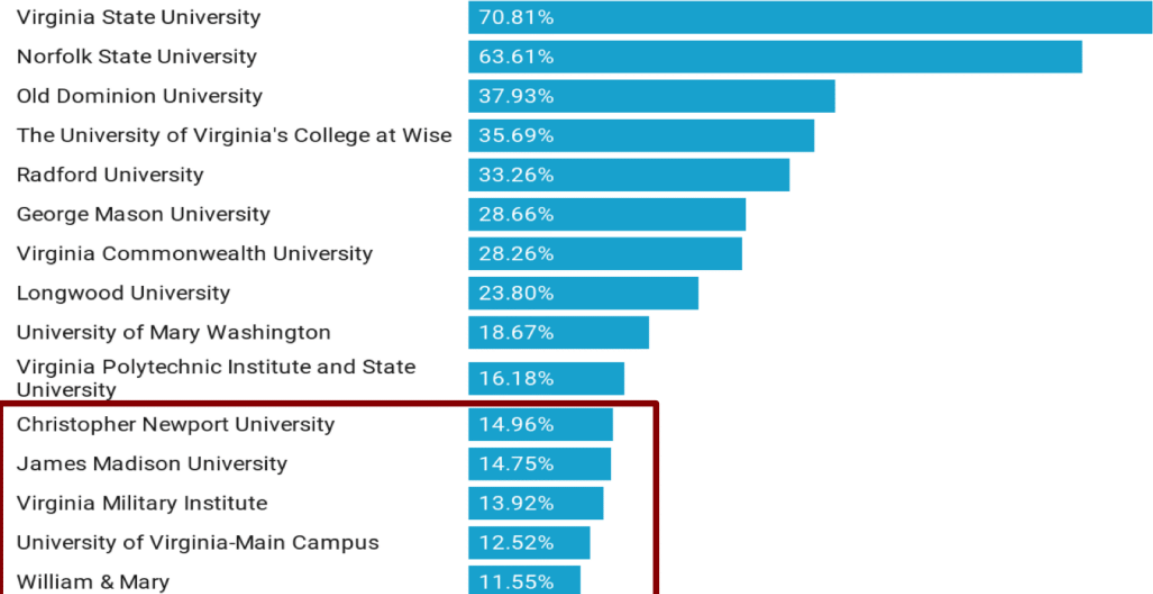
Chart: ERN • Created with Datawrapper

De Facto Economic Segregation Among Virginia's Public Colleges

- **Five of Virginia's *Public* Colleges** and Universities Rank in the **Bottom 5% of all** Public and Private Colleges Nationwide when it comes Pell Grant student enrollment

Pell Enrollment at 4-Year Public Universities in Virginia

2018: 3-Year Averages

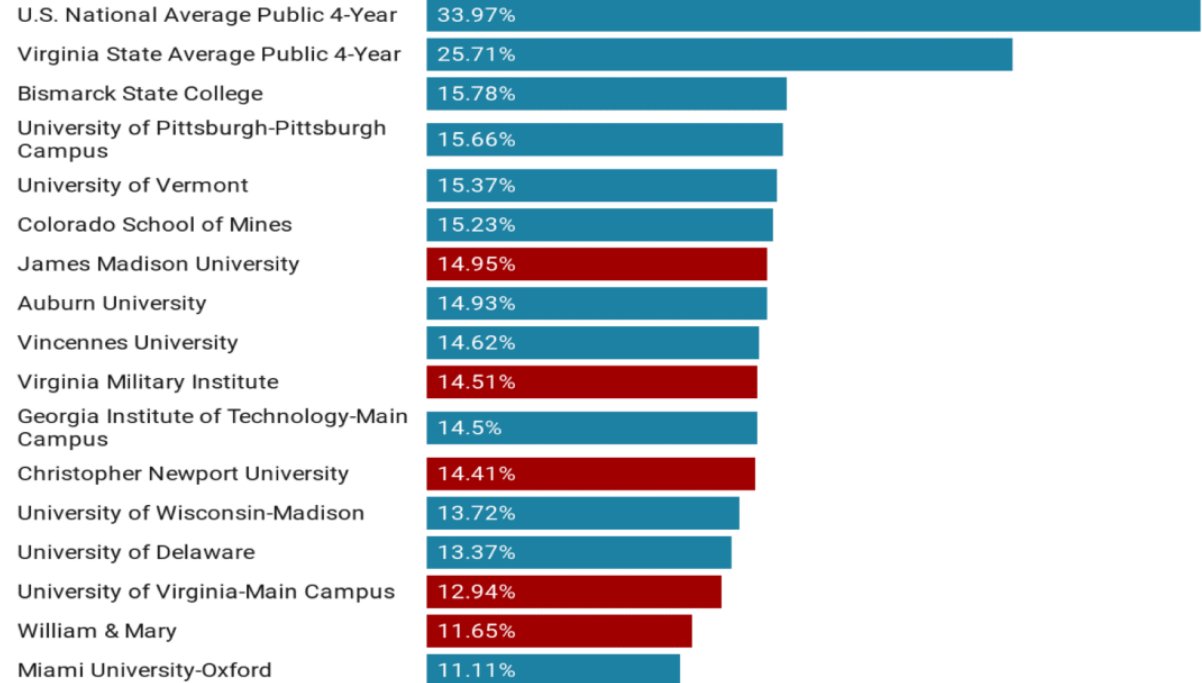


Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems (IPEDS)
Created with Datawrapper

Public Colleges That Operate as “Engines of Inequality”

- **One-third of the nation’s 15 worst public colleges** on working class and low-income student access are **located in Virginia.**

Bottom 15 Schools Nationally on Pell Enrollment: Public 4-Year

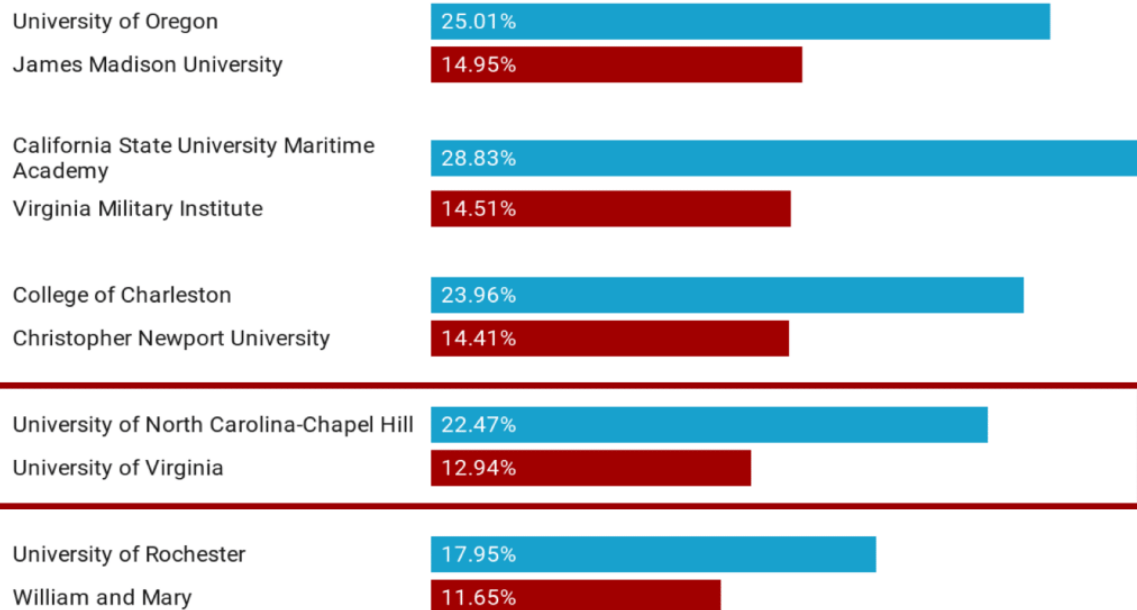


Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems • Created with Datawrapper

Virginia's "Engine of Inequality" Public Colleges **all Compare Unfavorably to Peer Institutions** on Socioeconomic Diversity

Pell Enrollment 4-Year Public vs. Peer Institutions

All Undergraduates: 2018: 3-Year Average



Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems (IPEDS) • Created with Datawrapper

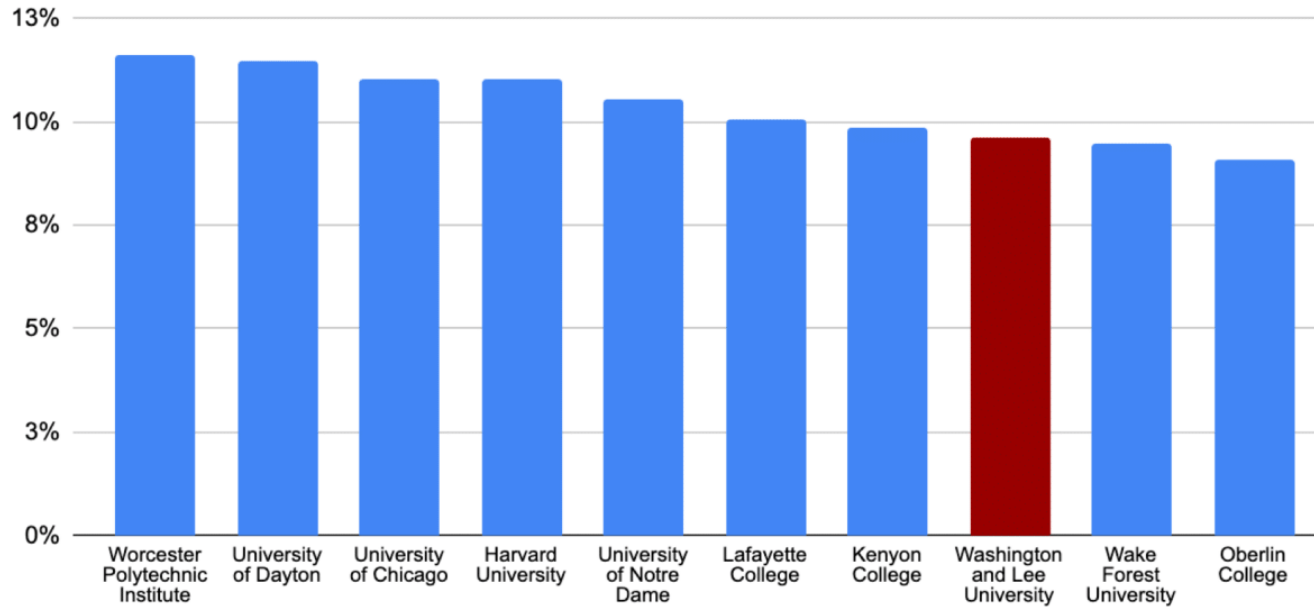
- Each Pairing of Colleges at the Left Compares Institutions of Higher Education with **Similar Admissions Standards, Similar Median SAT/ACT scores, and Similar incoming Freshman Median High School GPA.**



**UNC nearly 2X
Better than UVa**

Washington & Lee is the Third Worst College in the Country in Terms of Socioeconomic Diversity

Bottom 10 Schools Nationally on Pell Enrollment: Private 4-Year



Washington & Lee and the University of Richmond Compare Unfavorably to Peer Institutions on Socioeconomic Diversity

Pell Enrollment 4-Year Private vs. Peer Institutions

All Undergraduates: 2018: 3-Year Average



Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems • Created with Datawrapper

Note: Above peer institutions, identified by Education Trust, College Results Online, all have similar admissions standards, similar median SAT/ACT scores, and similar incoming freshman median high school GPA. www.collegeresults.org

Higher Ed Access Policy Options for Virginia Lawmakers

1. Goal Setting

- Require every four-year college to set low-income, working class, and middle class student enrollment level goals. Three years from now, no Virginia college should be in the bottom 5% on Pell Grant student enrollment

2. Admissions Reform

- Ban the legacy preference
- Ban binding early decision
- Require all public colleges to go SAT/ACT test-optional
- Require all public colleges to create supplemental, class-based affirmative action policies

3. Accountability for College Leaders

- Link college president compensation and contract renewal to institution success in meeting racial and socioeconomic enrollment goals.
- Condition all Virginia higher education Board re-appointments (including UVa's Board of Visitors) on institution success in meeting racial and socioeconomic enrollment goals.

4. Reparations for Institution Finances –

- Create a new, multi-year stream of funding dedicated exclusively to Virginia's public HBCUs that have been historically discriminated against in terms of public finance, service, and opportunities.

Higher Ed Access Policy Options Context

1. Goal Setting

- SCHEV's strategic plan says equity should be the centerpiece of Virginia higher education policy
- Pending federal legislation sets a minimum 15% Pell enrollment goal. Endorsed by NEA among other groups.

2. Admissions Reform

- Bill banning legacy preference passed the Colorado House last week; Reporting law enacted in California
- Binding early decision was ended voluntarily by UVa in the early 2000s, but reinstituted 5 years later
- Most four-year colleges already have gone SAT/ACT test optional this year, because of the pandemic
- As a *supplement* to race-based affirmative action, others have called for class-based affirmative action as well (notably former Princeton President Bill Bowen)

3. Accountability for College Leaders

- UNC system has proposed linking president compensation to college success on various metrics

4. Reparations for Institution Finances

- Maryland just settled a multi-year long class action case brought by its HBCUs in the form of a ten-year stream of dedicated funding for those colleges in the amount of approximately \$14 million per institution per year.

More Information on or Recommendations for Virginia Higher Education? Contact:

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