

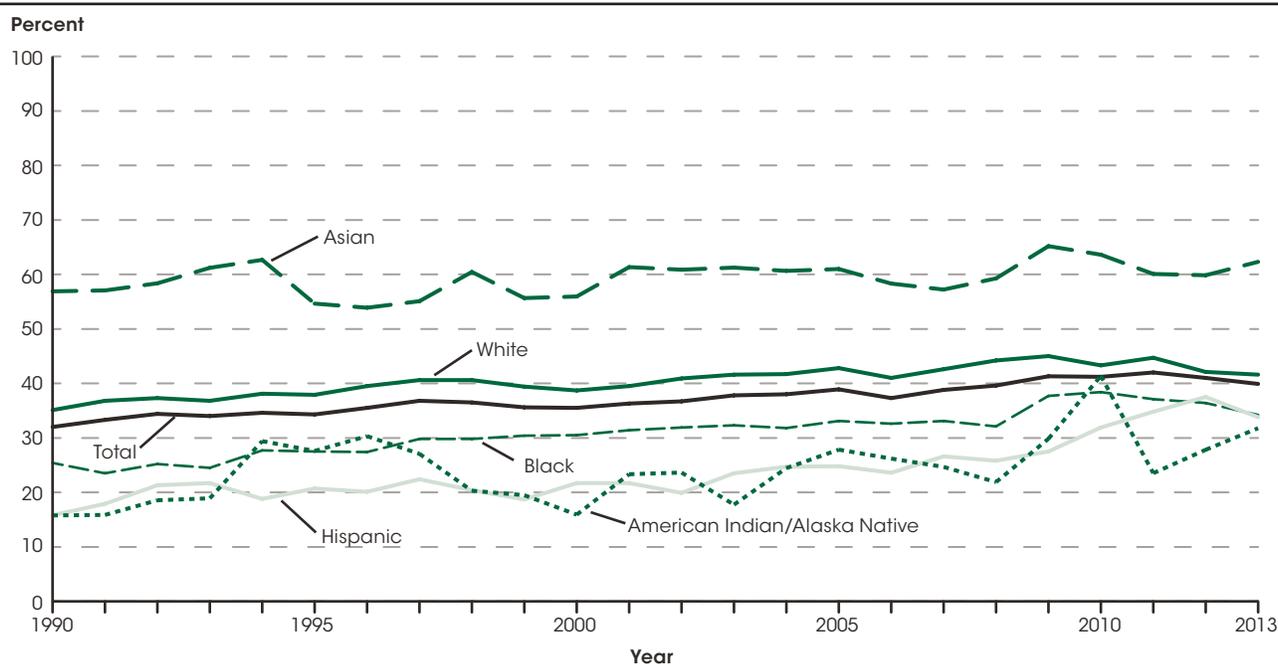
## College Participation Rates

*In 2013, a higher percentage of 18- to 24-year-old White females (45 percent) than of White males (38 percent) were enrolled in college. Black and Hispanic females were also enrolled in college at higher rates (38 and 39 percent, respectively) than were Black and Hispanic males (31 and 29 percent, respectively).*

The percentage of 18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in college has increased over the past two decades. Different factors have contributed to the rise in college participation, such as changes in the labor market and, more recently, the economic downturn.<sup>1</sup> College participation can be

measured by the percentage of the traditional college-age population enrolled in 2- or 4-year colleges. The total enrollment rate presented here is defined as the percentage of 18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in college.

**Figure 1. Enrollment rates of 18- to 24-year-olds in degree-granting institutions, by race/ethnicity: 1990-2013**



NOTE: After 2002, White and Black data exclude persons identifying as Two or more races. Prior to 2003, separate data on Pacific Islanders were not available. Data are based on sample surveys of the civilian noninstitutional population. Total includes other racial/ethnic groups such as Pacific Islanders and Two or more races, which are not separately shown. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1990-2013. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2014*, table 302.60.

The total college enrollment rate increased from 32 percent in 1990 to 40 percent in 2013. More recently, from 2003 to 2013, the total enrollment rate increased by 2 percentage points. In 2013, the college enrollment rate at 4-year colleges was 28 percent compared with 12 percent at 2-year colleges.

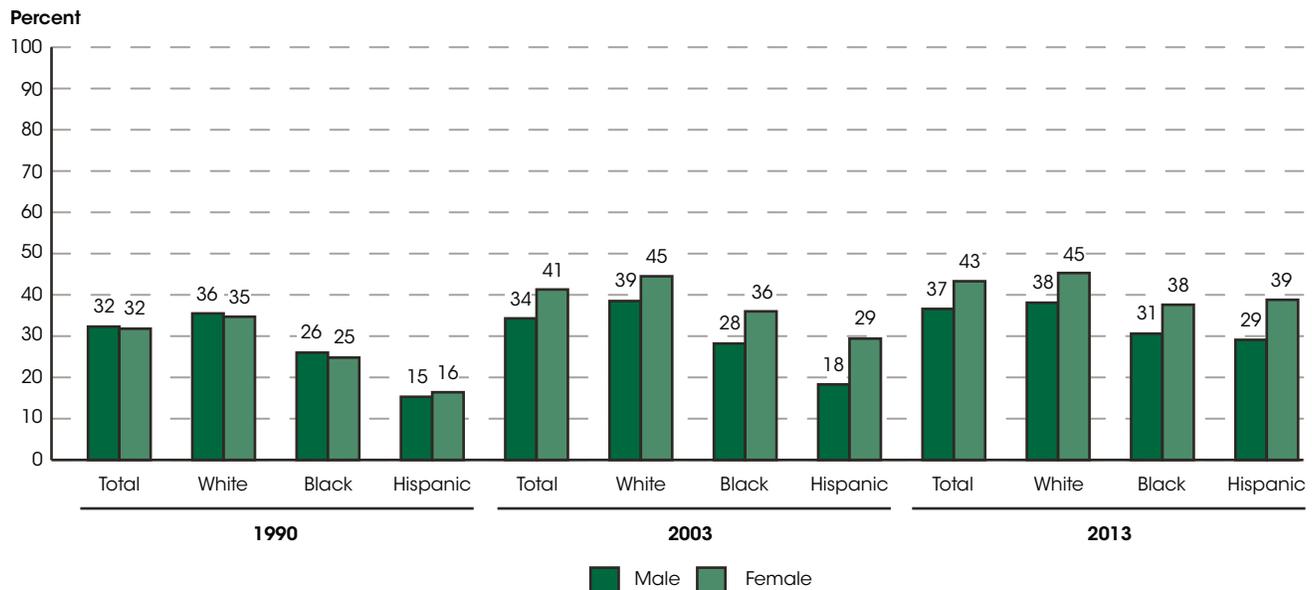
From 1990 to 2013, the college enrollment rate for 18- to 24-year-olds increased for Whites (from 35 to 42 percent), Blacks (from 25 to 34 percent), Hispanics (from 16 to

34 percent), and American Indians/Alaska Natives (from 16 to 32 percent). The college enrollment rate for Asian young adults in 1990 was not measurably different from the rate in 2013 (62 percent). Enrollment rates for 18- to 24-year-old Hispanics (34 vs. 23 percent) and American Indians/Alaska Natives (32 vs. 18 percent) were also higher in 2013 than in 2003. The 2013 rates for White, Black, and Asian young adults were not measurably different from the 2003 rates.

The 2013 college enrollment rate for 18- to 24-year-old Asians (62 percent) was higher than that for their White (42 percent), Black (34 percent), and Hispanic (34 percent) peers—a pattern that has held for the past two decades. The 2013 enrollment rate for Asians was also higher than that for their Pacific Islander (33 percent) and American Indian/Alaska Native (32 percent) peers and for their peers of Two or more races (45 percent). In addition,

the 2013 enrollment rate for White young adults was higher than the rates for Black and Hispanic young adults, and the 2013 enrollment rate for young adults of Two or more races was higher than the rates for Black and Hispanic young adults. The enrollment rates for Blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians/Alaska Natives were not measurably different from each other.

**Figure 2. Enrollment rates of 18- to 24-year-olds in degree-granting institutions, by race/ethnicity and sex: 1990, 2003, and 2013**



NOTE: After 2002, White and Black data exclude persons identifying as Two or more races. Data are based on sample surveys of the civilian noninstitutional population. Total includes other racial/ethnic groups not separately shown. Data for Pacific Islanders and Two or more races are not shown for 2003 and 2013. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity.  
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October 1990, 2003, and 2013. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2014*, table 302.60.

The college enrollment rate for 18- to 24-year-old females was higher in 2013 (43 percent) than in 1990 (32 percent). White (45 vs. 35 percent), Black (38 vs. 25 percent), and Hispanic (39 vs. 16 percent) females all had higher college enrollment rates in 2013 than in 1990. The college enrollment rate for 18- to 24-year-old males was also higher in 2013 (37 percent) than in 1990 (32 percent). This same pattern was found for Hispanic males (29 vs. 15 percent). However, college enrollment rates for White males and Black males in 2013 were not measurably different from the rates in 1990.

In 2013, higher percentages of 18- to 24-year-old females than of males were enrolled in college overall (43 vs. 37 percent) and among Whites (45 vs. 38 percent), Blacks (38 vs. 31 percent), and Hispanics (39 vs. 29 percent). In comparison, in 1990 there were no measurable differences between the college enrollment rates of males and females overall or among Whites, Blacks, or Hispanics.

**Endnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> Fry, R. (2009). *College Enrollment Hits All Time High, Fueled by Community College Surge*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center.

**Reference tables:** *Digest of Education Statistics 2014*, table 302.60

**Glossary:** Racial/ethnic group