



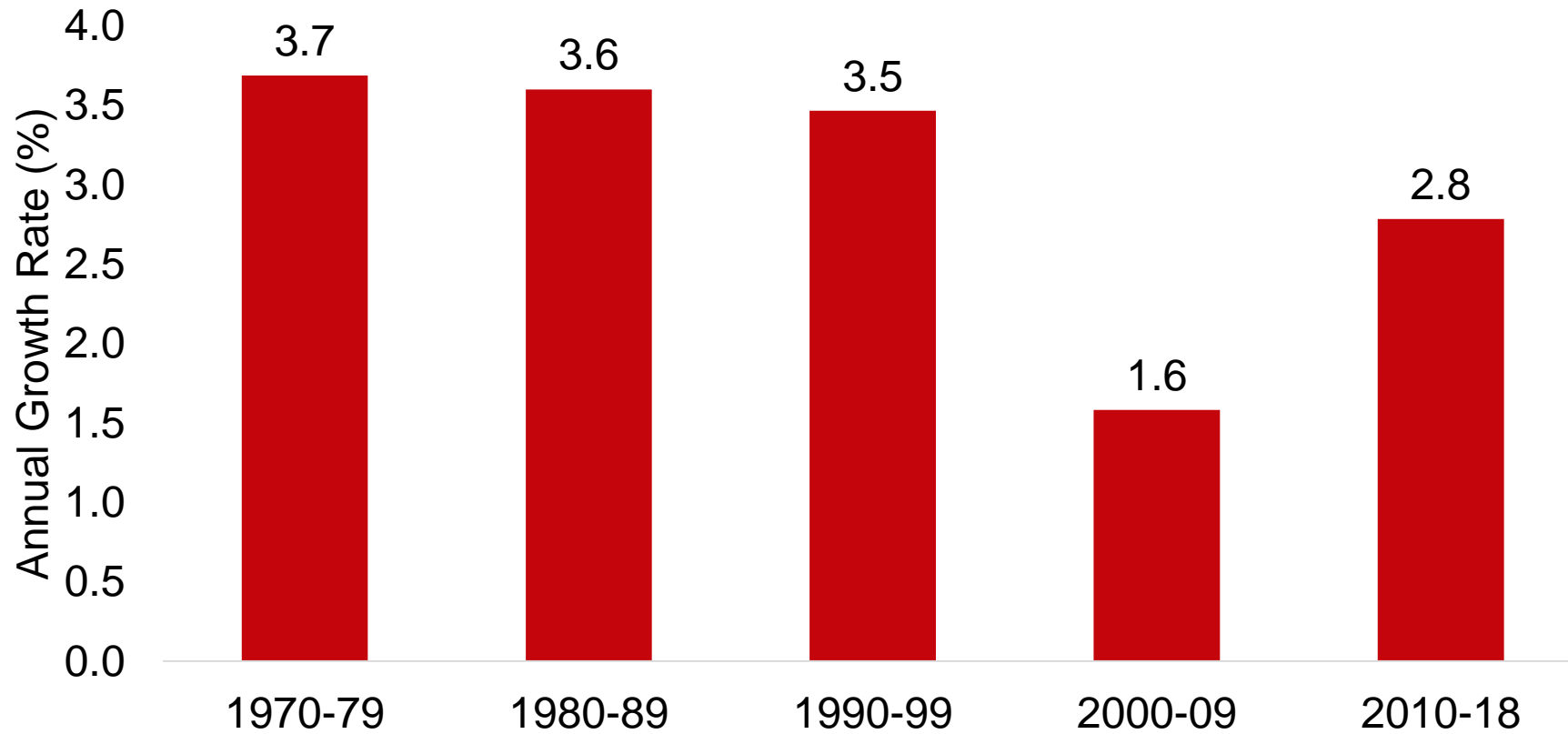
# Unequal Growth/Unequal Outcomes

Chancellor Rebecca Blank  
University of Wisconsin–Madison  
November 11, 2018  
APLU Annual meeting



**Economic growth is important**


# Annual Real GDP Growth Rates



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, based on chained (2012) dollars

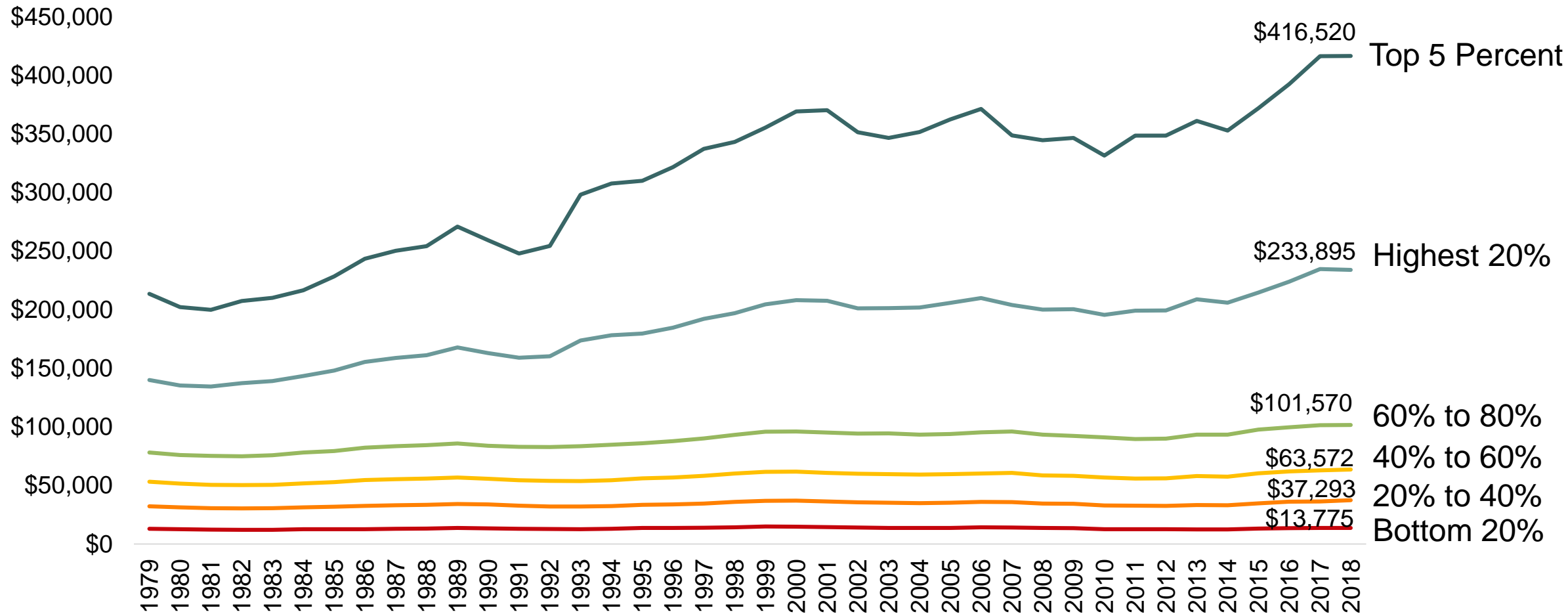


**No single institution in our nation  
is more important to long-term  
economic growth than the public  
research university**



**In recent decades, economic growth has translated into income growth only among those in the top half of the income distribution**

# Mean Household Income Within Quintiles



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1968 to 2018 Annual Social and Economic Supplements  
2018 Dollars



**How do we assure more workers can benefit from economic growth?**

**1. Improve jobs**

**2. Provide greater economic support to low-wage workers**

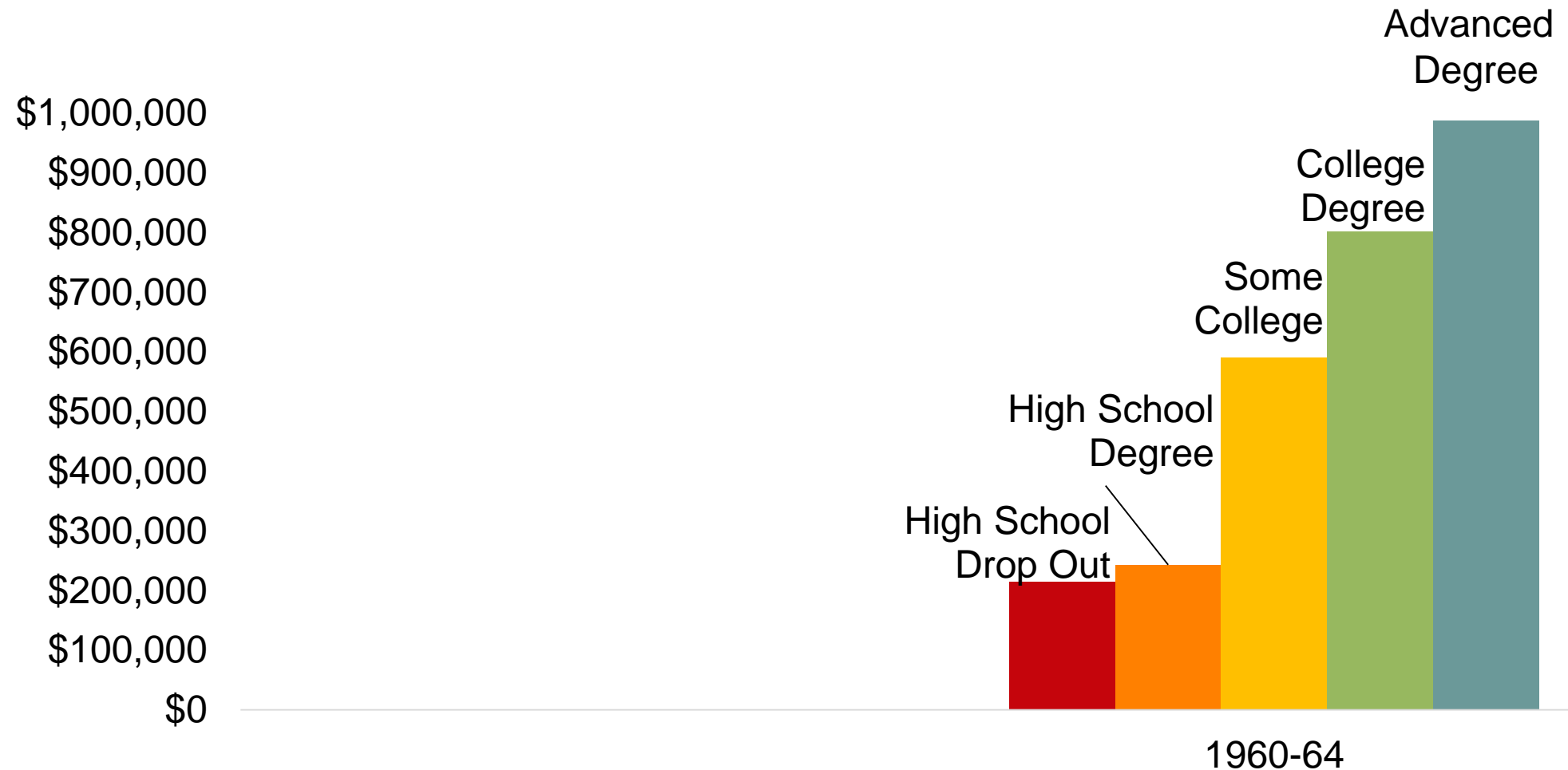
**3. Improve workers/Increase skill levels**



**Those who have benefited from economic growth are primarily those with college degrees**

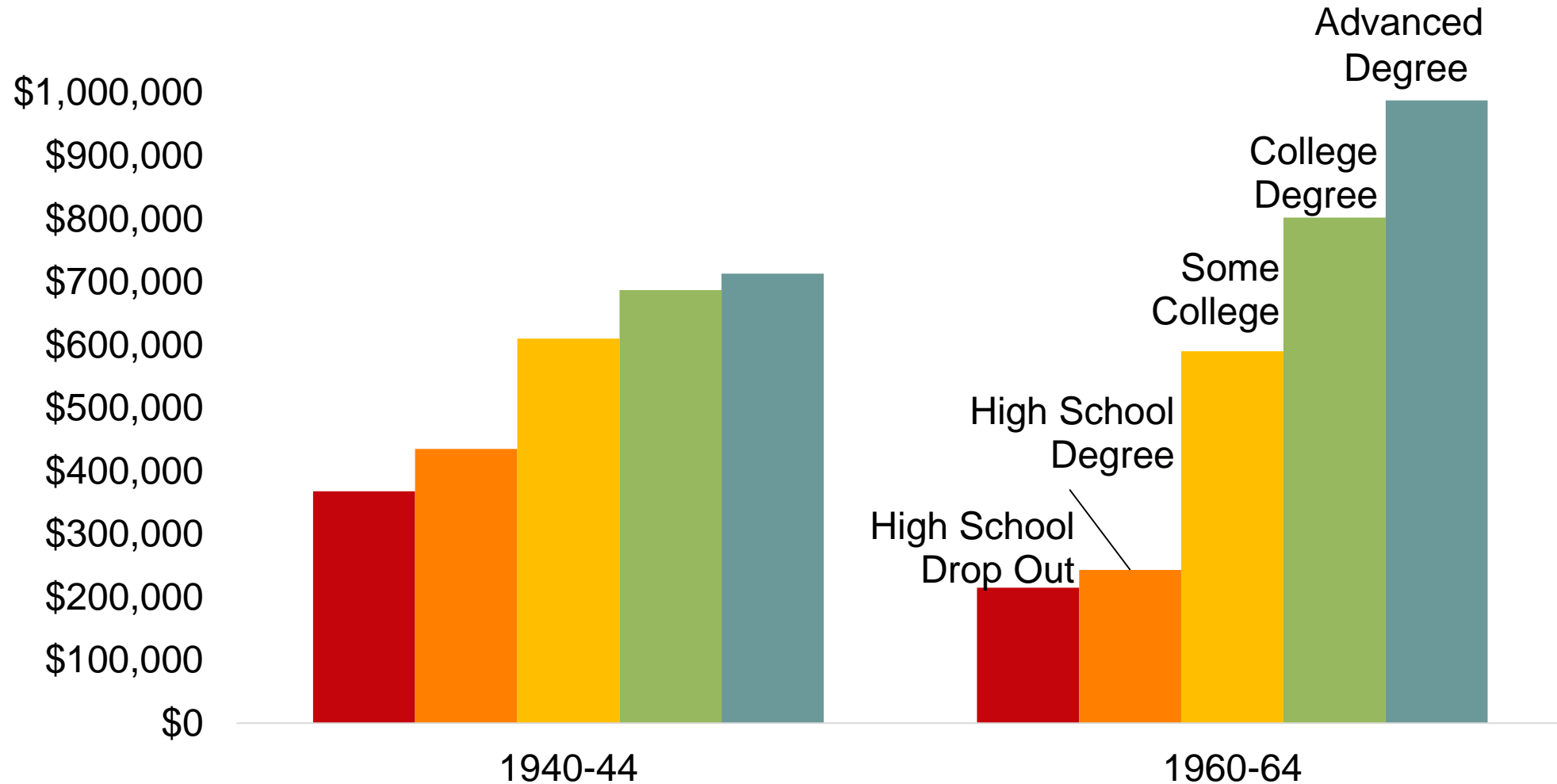


# Male Median Cumulative Earnings by Birth Cohort and Education, Ages 43-47




Source: Educational Attainment and Earnings Inequality Among US-Born Men, Urban Institute

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**If we raise skills by providing post-high school education to more citizens, we can stimulate greater economic growth, with broader benefits**

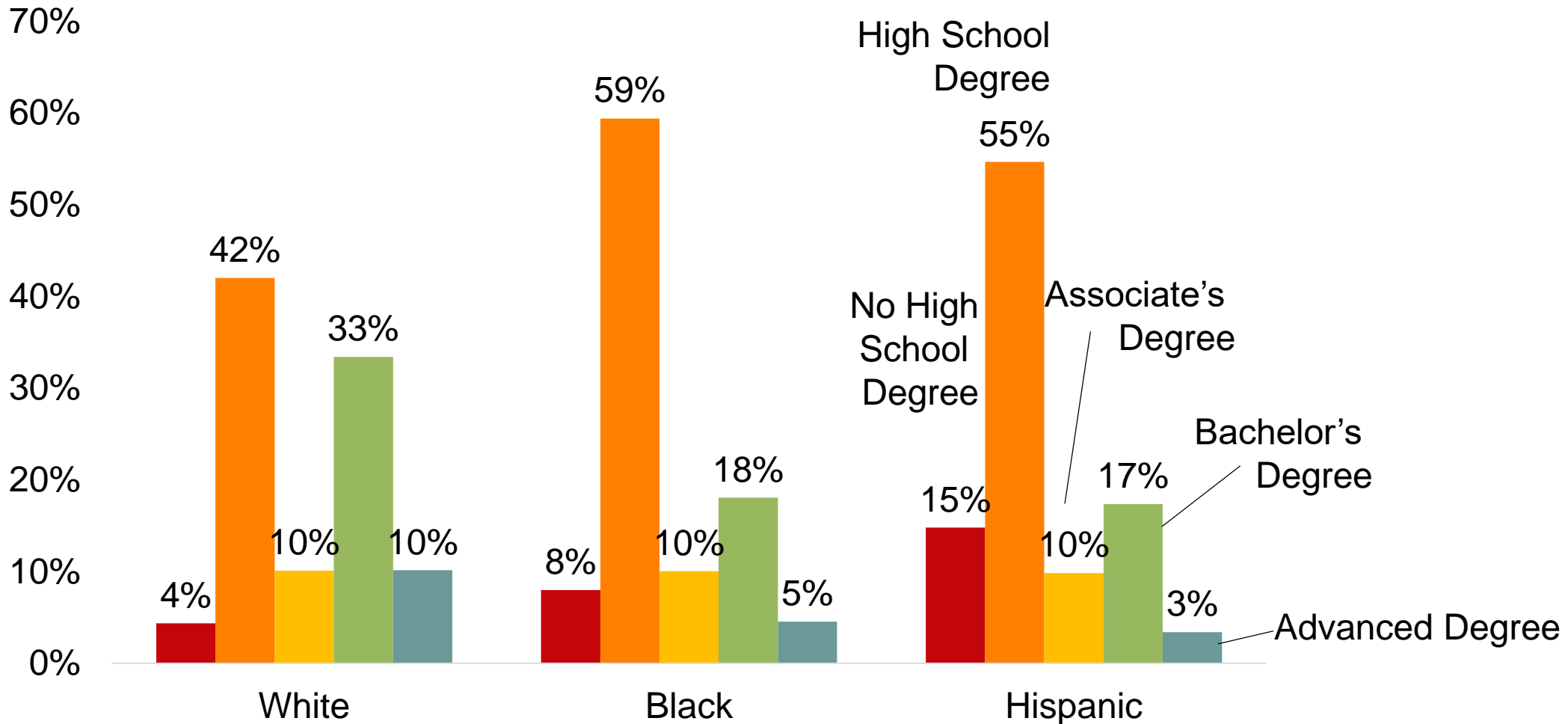
**Even students on the margin benefit from higher education**




**The need to increase skills is even more important when you look at the inequalities in access and completion of higher education by group**

# Inequality in Educational Achievement, 2018

## Percentage of the Population 25-29 Years Old



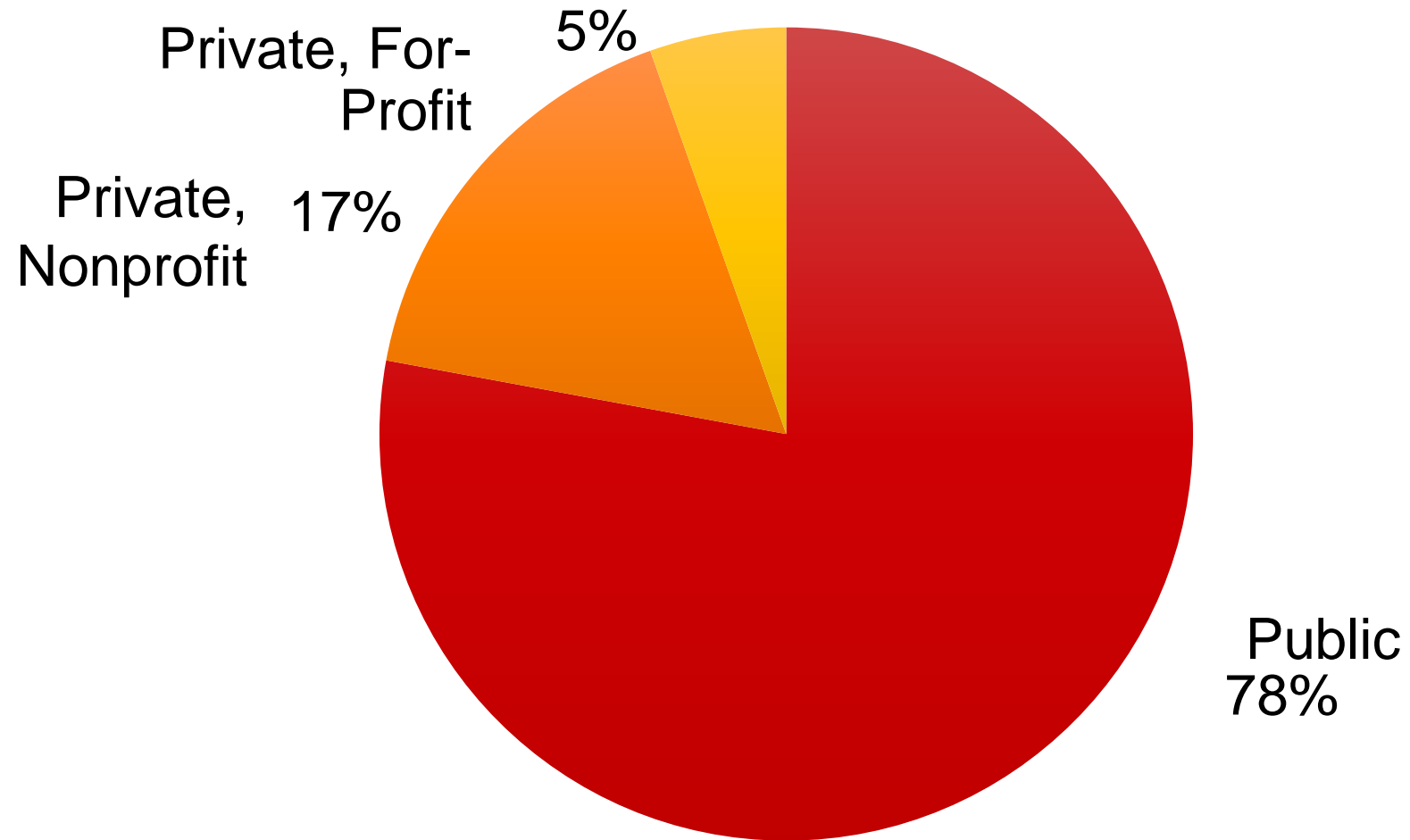


**Key point #1: It's largely not initial access, but completion that is the problem. 90% of high school grads start some post-high school training.**



**Key point #2: This is largely about completion at public schools. The elite privates are pretty irrelevant.**

# Total Undergraduate Fall Enrollment All Degree-Granting Institutions 2016



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics





**Getting students to complete and graduate is not a huge mystery.**

**Four major components:**

- **Affordability**
- **Teaching/curriculum**
- **Advising/counseling**
- **Support of family/friends**

# Affordability

- **Necessary but not sufficient**
- **Linked to time to completion**
- **Simple messaging matters**

# Side comment on Student Debt

- **Not a global problem; focused in for-profit & 2-yr schools**
- **Greatest defaults among those with less debt**
- **4-year publics have seen only modest debt increases**

**Economics comment: Debt is a good thing when used correctly!**

# Teaching/Curriculum


- **We do a bad job of teacher training and support**
- **Coherent curriculum matters, which must be well communicated**

# Advising/Mentoring

- **Expect four year completion**
- **Target extra help to low income/first gen students**
- **Use new technologies to coach**
- **Establish strong transfer programs from 2-year schools**
- **Don't forget career advising**



**Budget cuts and public attacks on higher education are not helpful in getting any of this done.**



**If we want the U.S. to thrive in the decades ahead we need to support public institutions of higher education and they need to be accountable for student completion**

**THANK YOU.**

