What Works for Youth? Tracking Vocational Rehabilitation Outcomes

Presenters

Todd Honeycutt, Mathematica Policy Research
Ellen Fabian, University of Maryland
Meg Grigal, Institute for Community Inclusion

Discussant

Andrea Guest, Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Washington, DC

April 27, 2017

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CENTER FOR
STUDYING DISABILITY POLICY

Welcome

Moderator

Jody Schimmel Hyde

Mathematica Policy Research

About CSDP

Mathematica established the Center for Studying Disability Policy (CSDP) in 2007 to provide the nation's leaders with the data they need to shape disability policy and programs to fully meet the needs of all Americans with disabilities.

Today's Speakers

Todd Honeycutt

Mathematica

Meg Grigal

Institute for Community Inclusion, University of Massachusetts, Boston

Ellen Fabian

University of Maryland

Andrea Guest

Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Indicators of Success: Differences in the Long-Term Outcomes of Youth VR Applicants

Todd Honeycutt, Frank Martin, and Jeffrey Hemmeter

Center for Studying Disability Policy Forum Presentation

April 27, 2017

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Research Funded Through NIDILRR

- Research funded through Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Practices and Youth Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (http://vrpracticesandyouth.org/) of the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR)
- The Center conducts research and technical assistance to improve the delivery of VR agency services to youth
- The findings and conclusions expressed are solely those of the authors and do not represent the views of NIDILRR, the Social Security Administration (SSA), or any agency of the federal government

Research Goals

- Identify long-term outcomes for transition-age VR clients
- Examine how outcomes vary across initial educational attainment and employment status, as well as for other critical individual- and agency-level characteristics
- Inform VR policy and practice, particularly related to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Research Used Linked RSA and SSA Administrative Data

- Analysis sample included 570,146 transition-age youth ages 14 to 24 who applied to and were found eligible for VR from 2004 through 2007
- Data sources:
  - Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) data from fiscal years (FYs) 2004 through 2013
  - SSA's Disability Analysis File (DAF)
  - Master Earnings File (MEF)

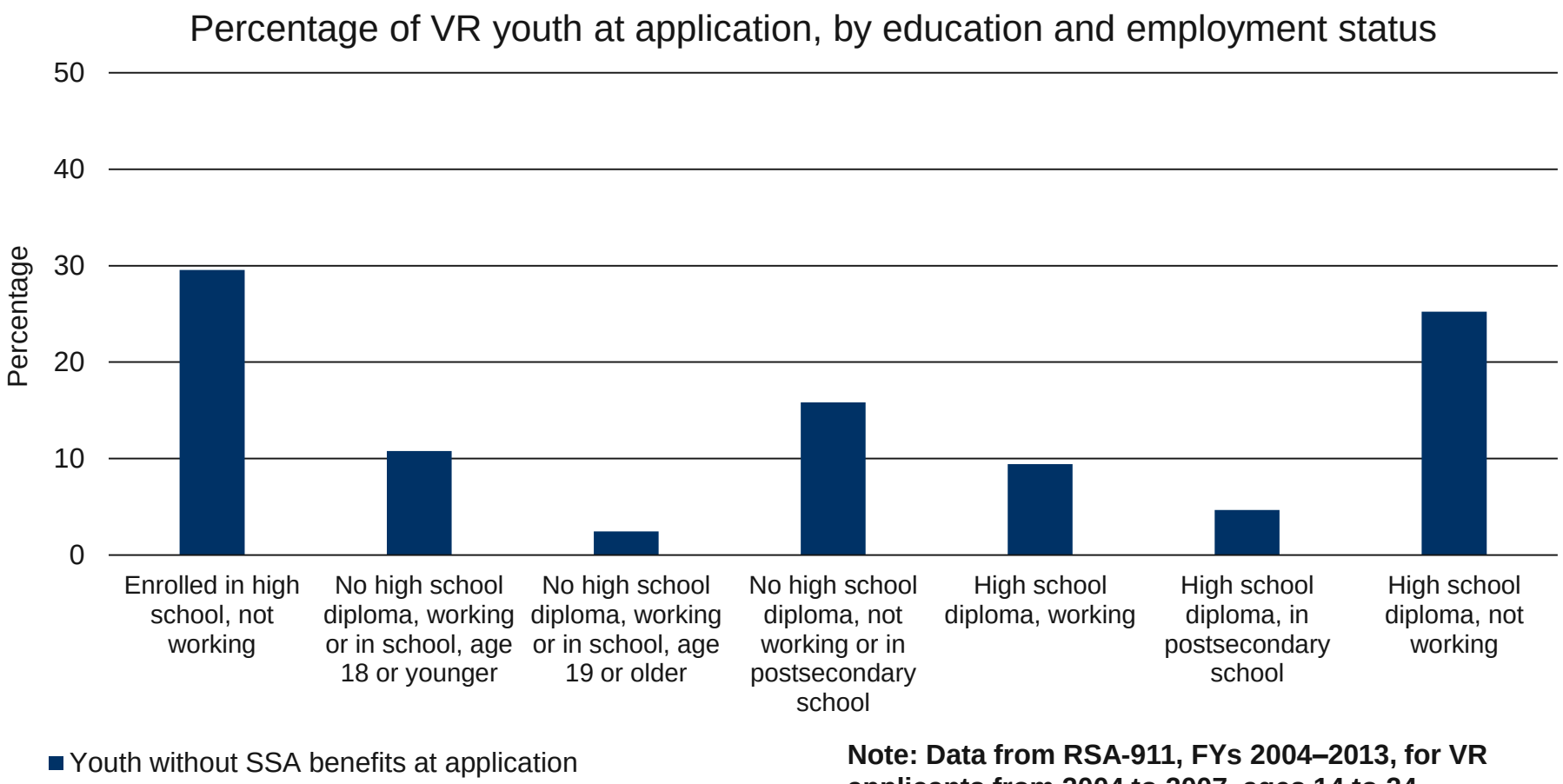
Key Variables

- **Independent variables**
  - Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) status at application
  - Education and employment status at application
  - VR closure status at exit
- **Outcome variables**
  - Earnings in the sixth calendar year after VR application
  - SSI and SSDI receipt within six years of VR application
  - SSA benefits forgone due to work within six years of VR application

Outcomes Across SSA Groups

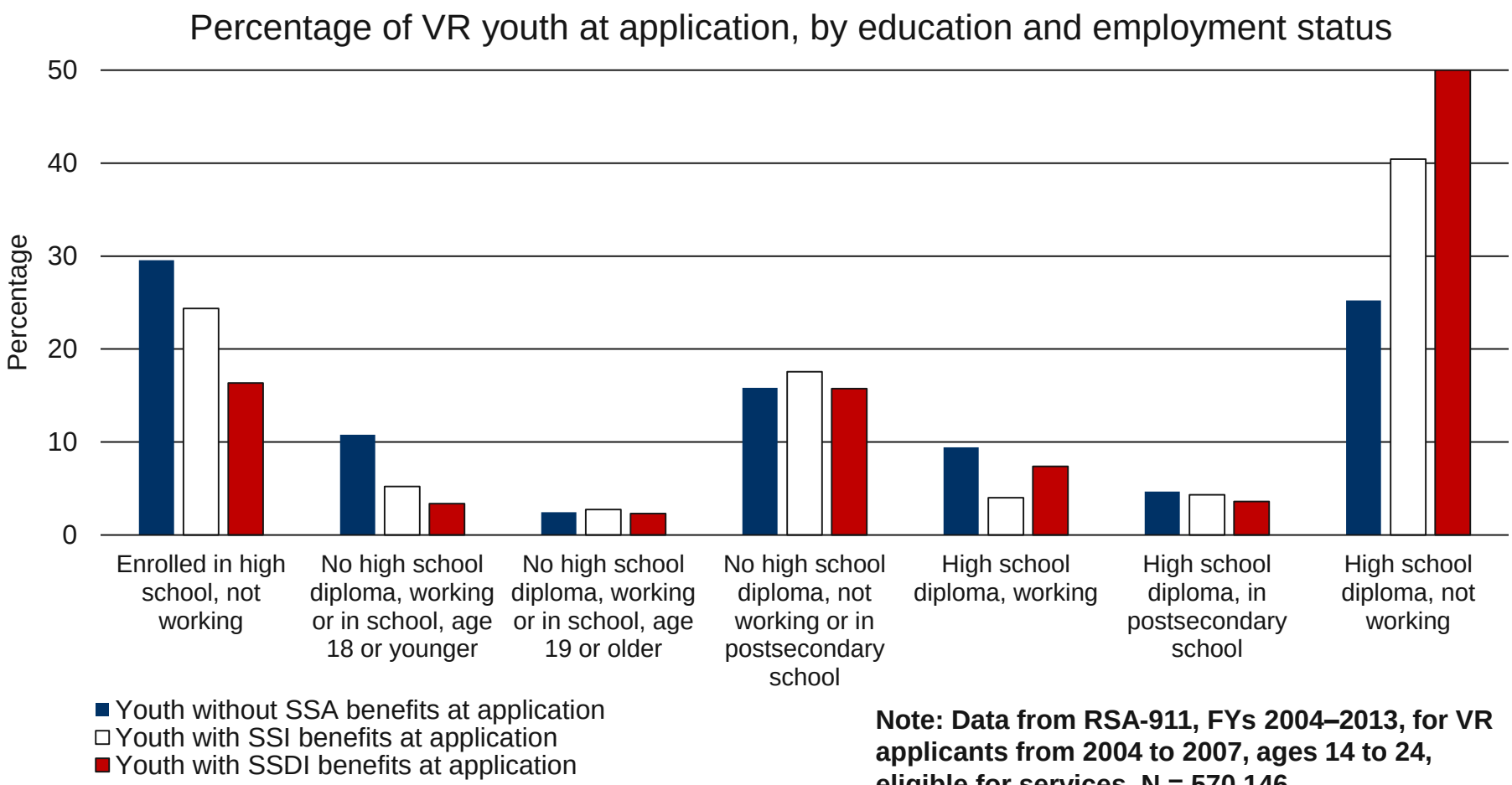
	Youth without SSA benefits at application	Youth with SSI benefits at application	Youth with SSDI benefits at application
Sample size	**420,615**	**130,417**	**42,035**
Earnings outcomes			
Earnings above $1,200 in the 6th calendar year after VR application	66.0%	31.5%	31.9%
Mean earnings in the 6th calendar year after VR application	$10,864	$3,145	$3,325
SSA outcomes			
Receipt of SSI within 6 years of VR application	7.2%	NA	NA
Receipt of SSDI within 6 years of VR application	6.8%	NA	NA
Any benefits foregone due to work within 6 years of VR application	NA	45.9%	11.7%
Amount of benefits foregone due to work within 6 years of VR application	NA	$2,349	$2,323

Youth Had Different Levels of Education and Employment Statuses at VR Application



Note: Data from RSA-911, FYs 2004–2013, for VR applicants from 2004 to 2007, ages 14 to 24, eligible for services. N = 570,146.

Youth Had Different Levels of Education and Employment Statuses at VR Application



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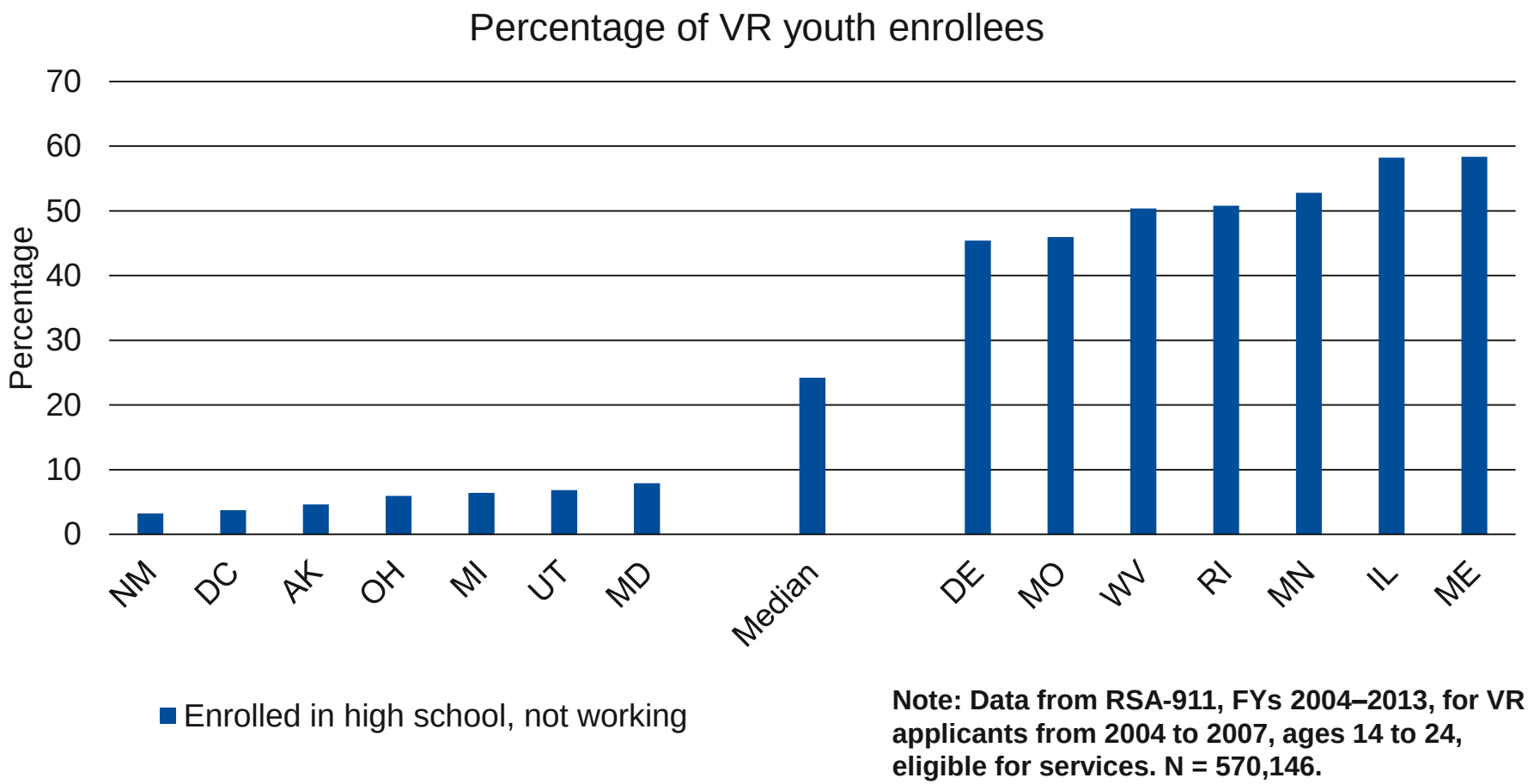
Education and Employment Status Varied Across States



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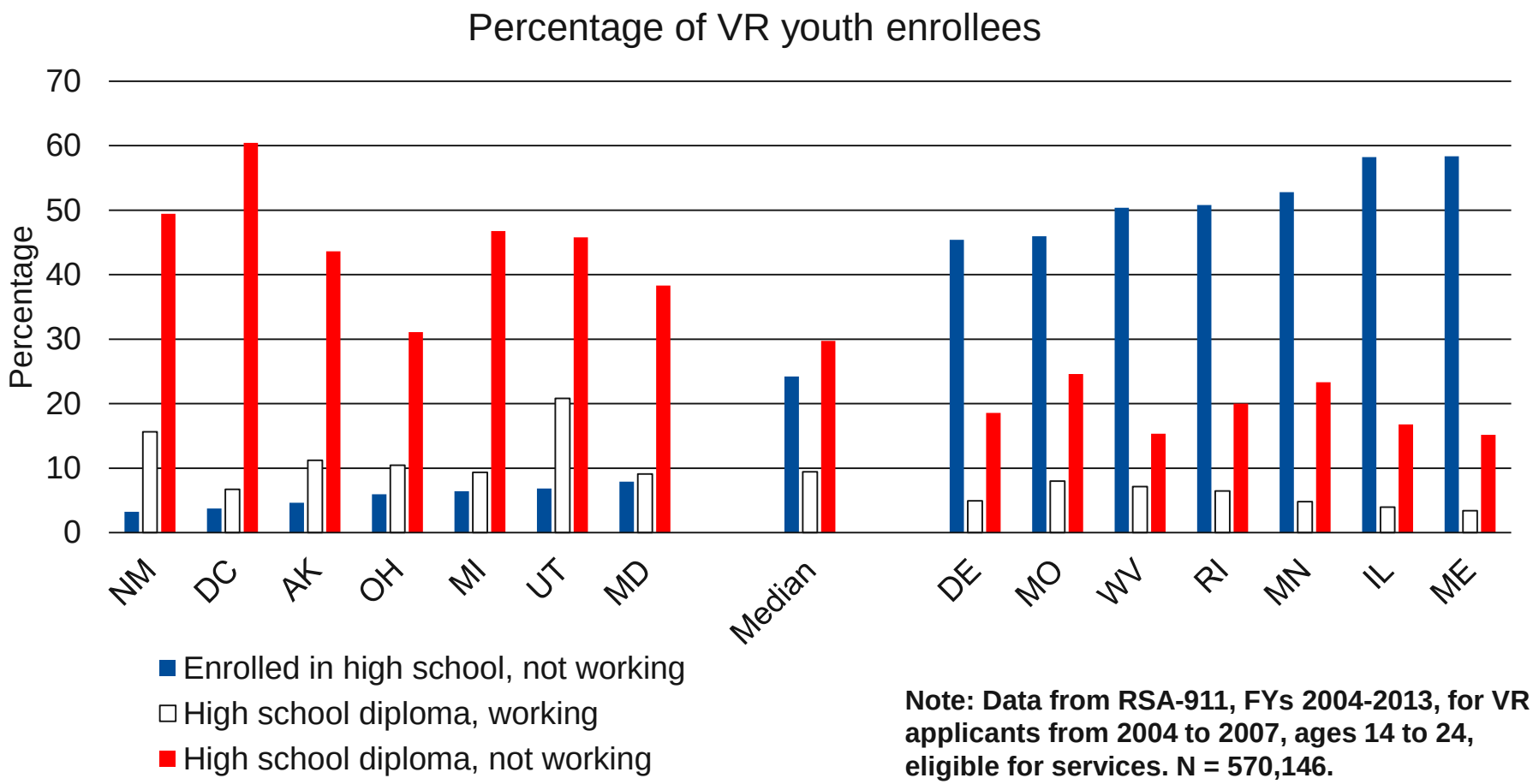
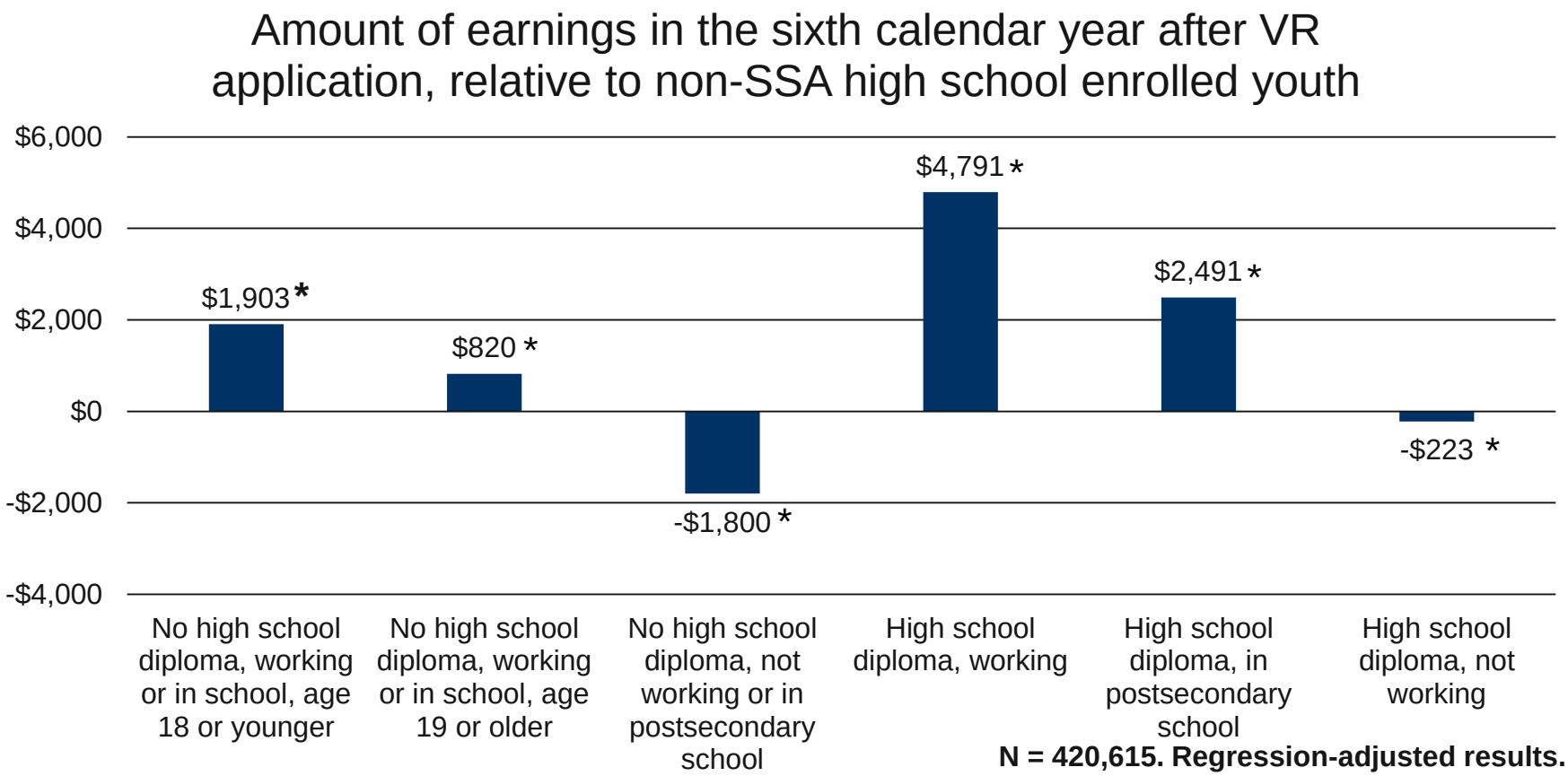


Note: Data from RSA-911, FYs 2004-2013, for VR applicants from 2004 to 2007, ages 14 to 24, eligible for services. N = 570,146.

Youth Working at Application Had Better Long-Term Outcomes

- **Relative to high school enrolled youth:**
  - **Youth with at least a high school diploma and working at VR application consistently had the best long-term outcomes**
  - **Youth enrolled in postsecondary school had somewhat better outcomes**
  - **Youth without a high school diploma and neither working nor in school had consistently poor outcomes**

Non-SSA Youth Working or in Postsecondary School Had Highest Earnings Levels



N = 420,615. Regression-adjusted results. Reference group regression-adjusted mean: $13,314. * *p* < 0.05.

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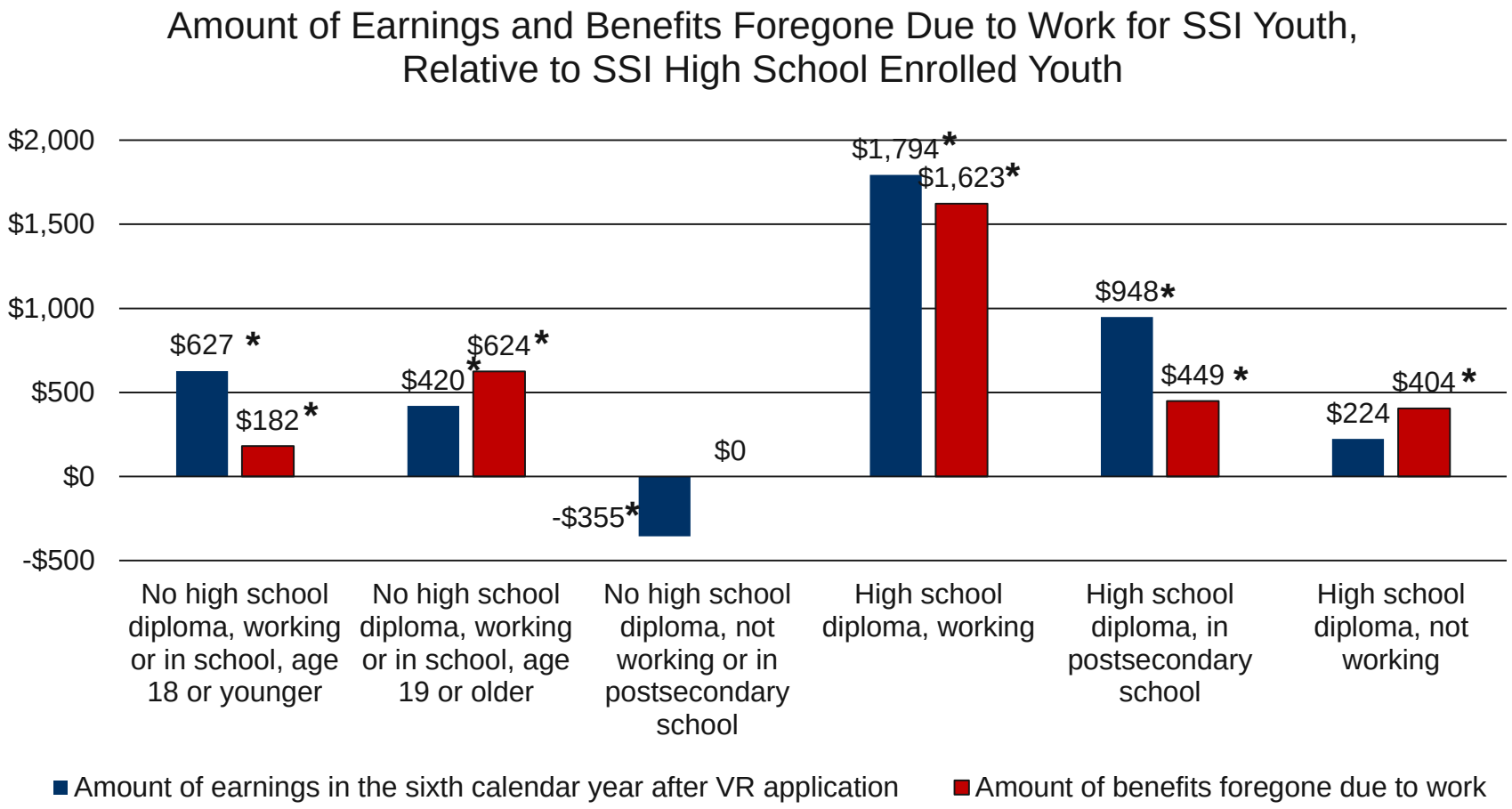
SSI Youth Working Had Higher Earnings and SSI Reductions



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N = 130,417. Regression-adjusted results. Reference group regression-adjusted means: $2,934 (earnings in sixth calendar year) and $4 (benefits foregone due to work). * *p* < 0.05.

Exiting from VR with Employment Correlated with Better Outcomes

- **Compared with youth who exited from VR after receiving services but without employment:**
  - **Youth who exited with employment had consistently better long-term outcomes**
  - **Youth who exited before receiving services had somewhat better outcomes**
- **Consistent findings across SSA groups**
  - **But youth with SSI or SSDI benefits more frequently exit *without* employment**

Limitations

- **Selection issues**
  - **Results are not causal**
  - **Individuals self-select to apply for VR services**
- **Limited measures available in administrative data**
  - **No school enrollment measure separate from employment measure**
- **Youth received VR services for varying durations**

Considerations for Providing VR Service

- Successful VR exit associated with long-term earnings and SSA outcomes, no matter the youth's SSA status
- High school dropouts not working typically had among the poorest outcomes
- Youth already working had relatively better outcomes
- We can identify outcomes for different types of youth, but still have little information on what specific VR services and programs might result in better outcomes

Implications for WIOA

- Some VR agencies could be better prepared to deliver pre-employment transition services
  - They already work with large proportions of high school youth
- Targeting in-school youth risks crowding out services to other types of youth (or adults)
- Providing more services to in-school or out-of-school youth could result in different short- and long-term outcomes overall for the agency

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Rehabilitation Research & Training Center

What Works in Youth Transition: Evaluation of a Model Program

Richard Luecking, UMD
Ellen Fabian, UMD
Kara Contreary, Mathematica

Purpose of the Study

- To determine whether a career-oriented transition program for students with disabilities improved VR services and outcomes for participants

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MSTC: A Career-Focused Transition Model

The Maryland Seamless Transition Collaborative (MSTC) incorporated five best or empirically supported practices drawn from transition research:

- Work-based learning experiences (both paid and nonpaid) aligned with students' career goals
- At least one paid employment experience before school exit, aligned with students' career goals
- Student Referral to VR two years before school exit
- System linkages and collaboration operationalized via a local LEA inter-agency team (included: VR, LEA, adult service providers, and postsecondary education staff)
- Ensuring each student linked to job, postsecondary education, and/or adult services at school exit

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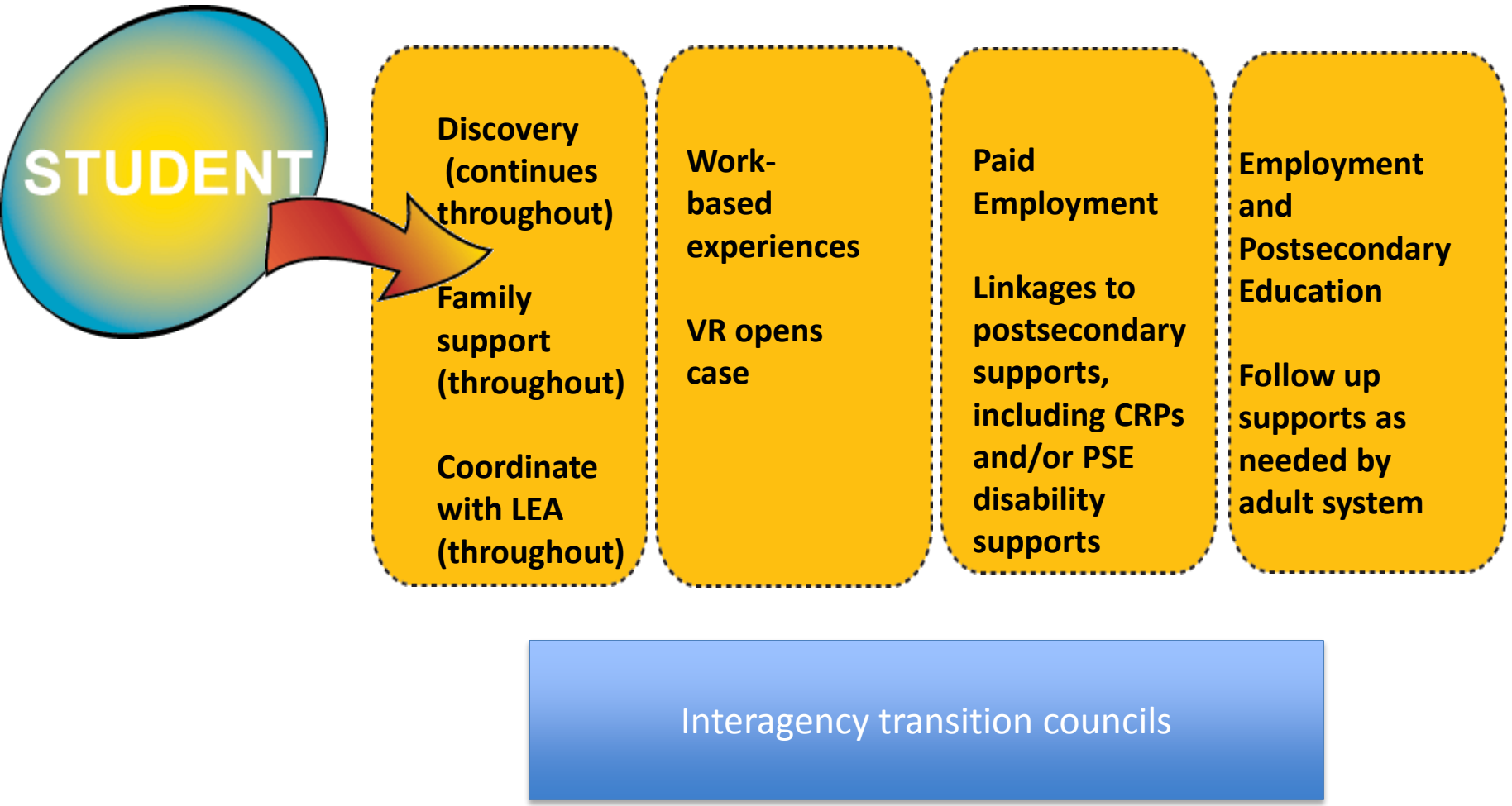
MSTC Services Flow Chart



Implementation of MSTC MODEL

- Led by Maryland Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) (2007–2012) in conjunction with TransCen, Inc.
- Implemented via a competitive proposal process in 11 county LEAs
- Students with individualized education programs/eligible for DORS were enrolled at each of the 11 sites
- Fidelity across implementation sites provided by technical assistance and monitoring by TransCen, in conjunction with DORS

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Study Methods

- MSTSC was implemented as a demonstration project – all students who consented were enrolled in the treatment condition
- To conduct an evaluation study, we used a statistical method to generate a comparison group of non-MSTC students over same time period in same LEA districts who were eligible for and received VR services
- Used propensity-score analyses to generate comparison sample
- Retrieved data from DORS AWARE case management system for both MSTC and comparison group of non-MSTC students

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MSTC Participants (n = 377 across 11 sites)

- Male = 70%
- Average age = 17.6 years
- Non-Hispanic white = 61%; Non-Hispanic black = 36%
- 23% receive SSI at VR application
- Disability:
  - Intellectual = 14%
  - Psychiatric/behavioral = 14%
  - Specific learning disability = 20%
  - Autism = 18%
  - Other = 34%

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Research Question 1

- How did MSTC students compare with non-MSTC students on VR service use and service cost?

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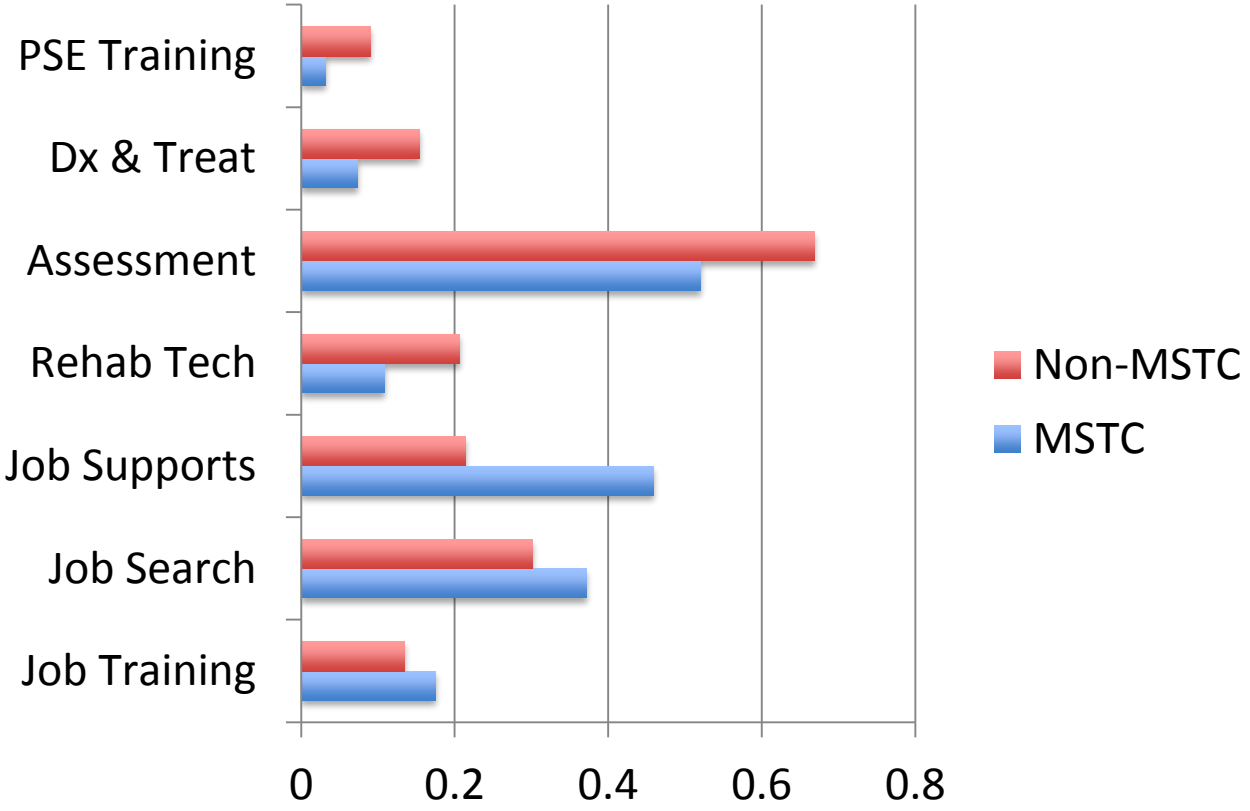
VR Service Use for MSTC and Non-MSTC Students



Graph represents inverse propensity-score weighted means (scale = 0 – 1.0).

Results: Key Findings for RQ 1

Compared with matched comparison group of other VR service recipients in the same counties, **MSTC participants** were *significantly* likely to:

- Receive *more* job training, job search assistance, and on-the-job support services ($p < .001$)
- Receive *less* assessment and diagnosis or treatment services ($p < .001$)
- Have *lower* overall VR service costs ($2,728 versus $3,925)

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Research Question 2

- How did MSTC students compare with non-MSTC students on VR closure outcomes?

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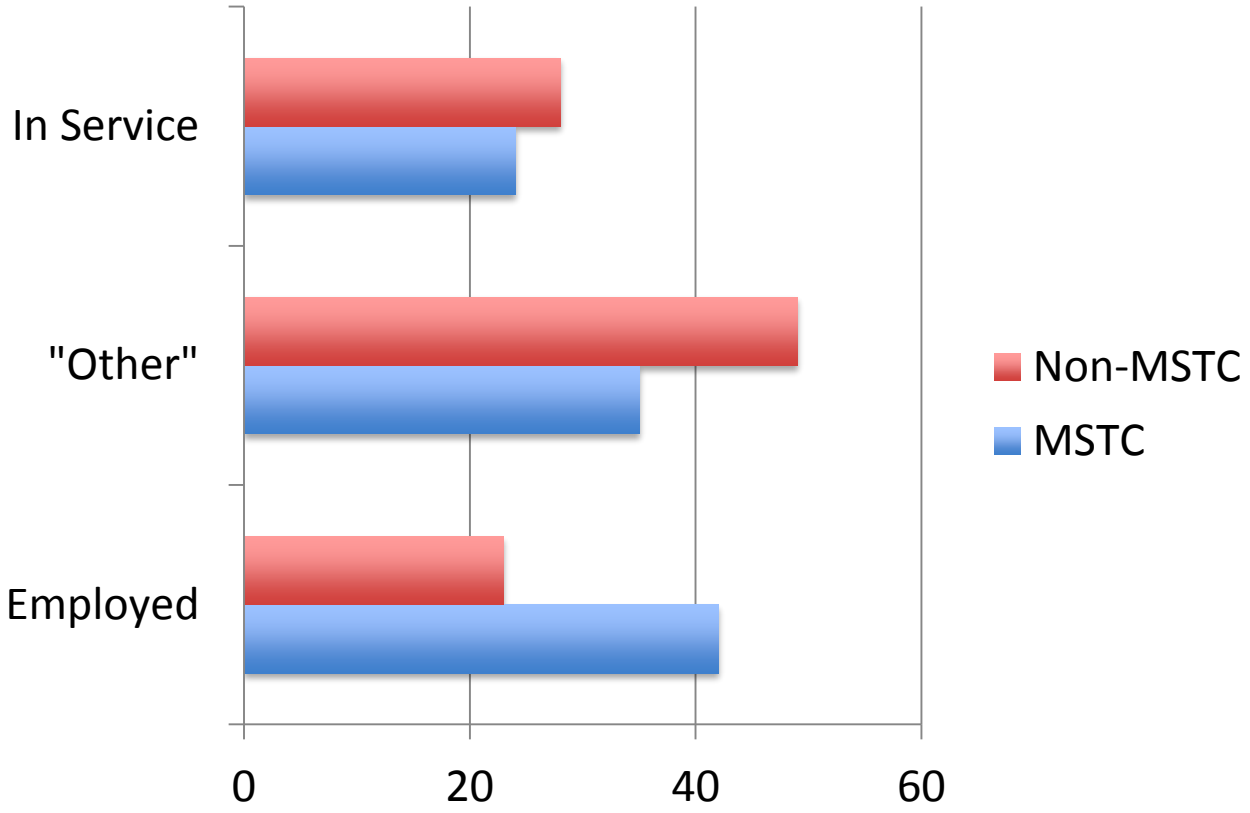
VR Service Outcomes (in %)



Results: Key VR Outcome Findings

Compared with matched comparison group of VR service recipients in the same counties, **MSTC participants**

- Were significantly *more* likely to be closed in VR with employment (42 versus 23%)
- Were significantly *less* likely to be closed in VR as "other" (35 versus 49%)
- Earned slightly *less* per hour—$8.07 versus $8.60 (for those employed at closure)

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Discussion

- The MSTC model incorporated 5 empirically supported practices in youth transition and demonstrated better VR outcomes for less service cost
- Several elements of the MTSC model are now embedded in the pre-employment transition practices (pre-ETS) authorized under WIOA of 2014
- Service system collaboration between VR & LEA on pre-ETS now required under WIOA

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Implications and Next Steps

- State and local VR offices can implement MSTC model components executing memorandums of understanding with LEAs and CRPs to authorize pre-ETS services for students who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR
- State and local VR offices can collaborate with LEAs, CRPs, and other adult service providers to establish interagency transition councils to monitor pre-ETS implementation and progress
- Maryland DORS received a 5-year RSA grant to conduct a randomized controlled trial or a career-focused transition model based on MSTC components

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More Background on MSTC

Luecking, D., & Luecking, R. (2015). Translating research into a seamless transition model. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals,38,*4-13.

Fabian, E., Dong., S., Simonsen, M., Luecking, D., & Deschamps, A. (2016). Service system collaboration in transition: An empirical exploration of its effects on rehabilitation outcomes for students with disabilities. *Journal of Rehabilitation, 82*, 3-10.

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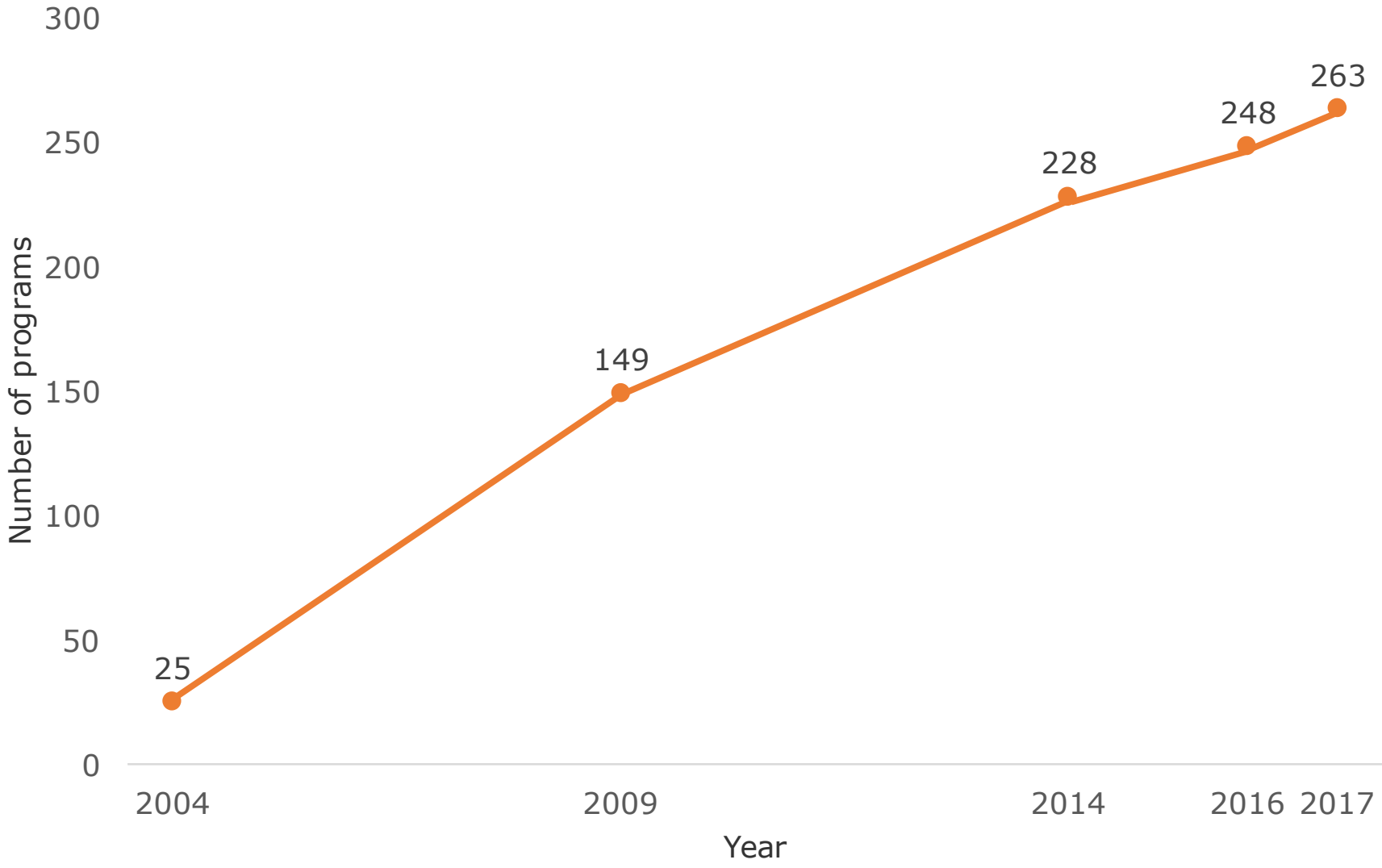
Increasing Opportunities.

The Role and Impact of Vocational Rehabilitation in Inclusive Higher Education for Students with Intellectual Disability and Autism

Meg Grigal Frank Smith John Shepard
Institute for Community Inclusion
University of Massachusetts Boston

Higher Education Programs Enrolling Students with Intellectual Disability in the United States



Source: Think College Program Database http://programs.thinkcollege.net.

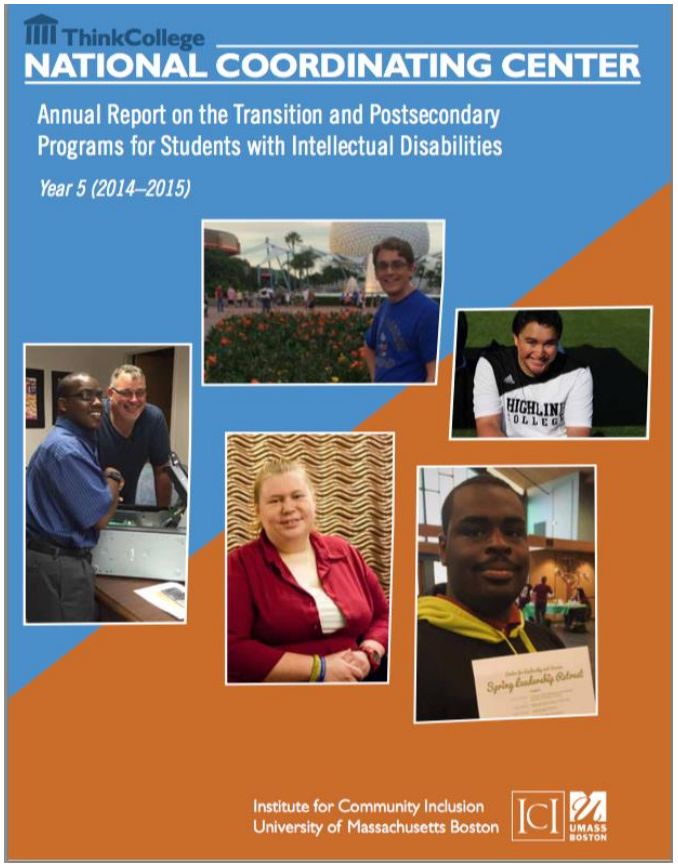
Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA) Provisions Related to Students with Intellectual Disability (ID)

- **Model demonstration programs:** Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability (TPSIDs) authorized to enable institutions of higher education (IHEs) to create or expand high quality inclusive programs for students with ID
- **National Coordinating Center (NCC):** Authorized to provide technical assistance, coordination between and evaluation of TPSID projects, and create recommended model standards for programs through an accreditation work group
- **Federal student aid:** Eligibility for Pell grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, and work-study jobs

National Coordinating Center TPSID Data

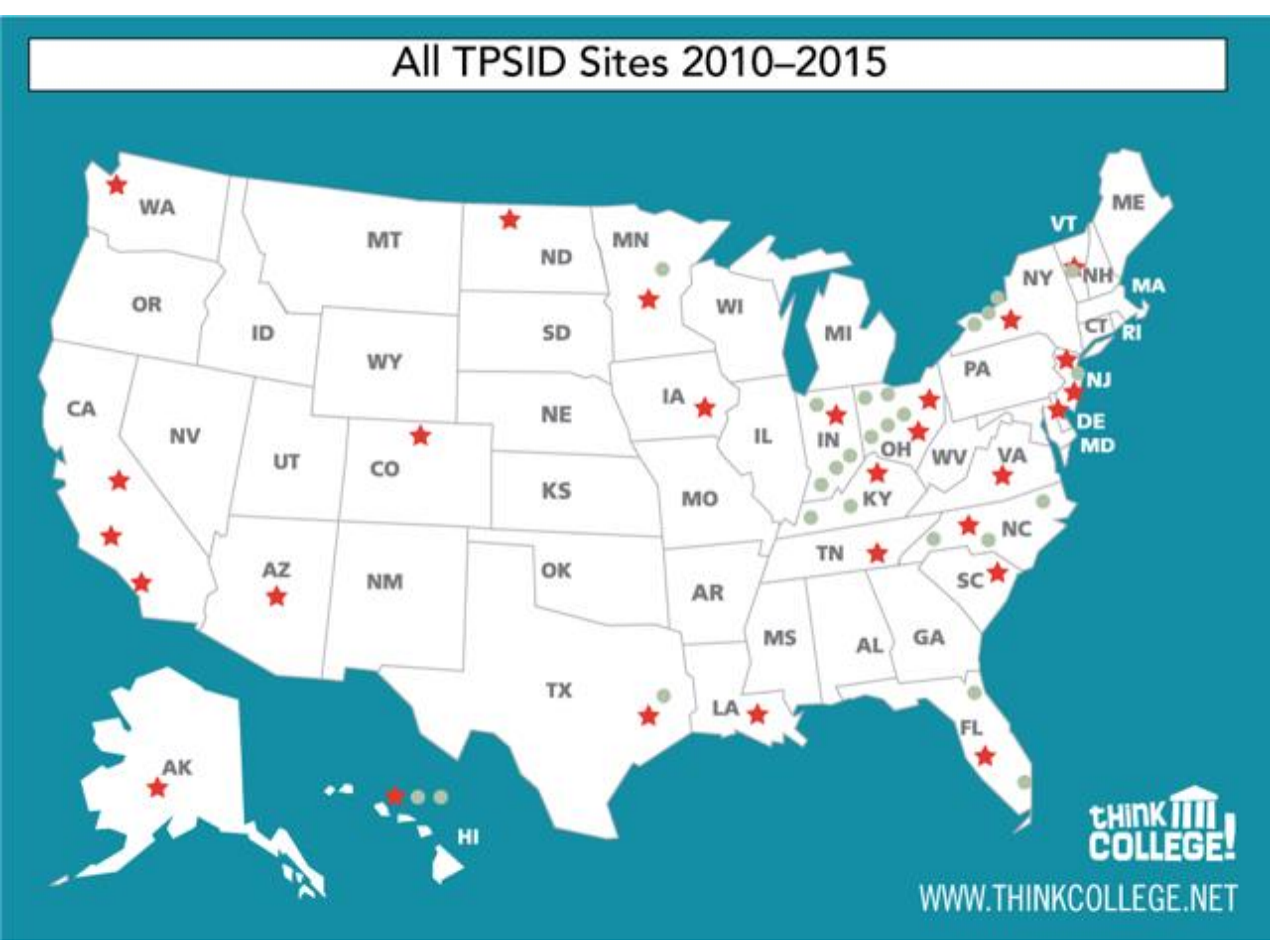
The NCC collected data in 2010–2015 from 57 IHEs hosting TPSIDs serving 2,245 students

Data included course enrollment, credentials attainment, and employment during and after participation



The TPSID National Coordinating Center at Think College is a project of the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston.
The Center is funded by the Office of Postsecondary Education Grant #P407B100002.

All TPSID Sites 2010–2015

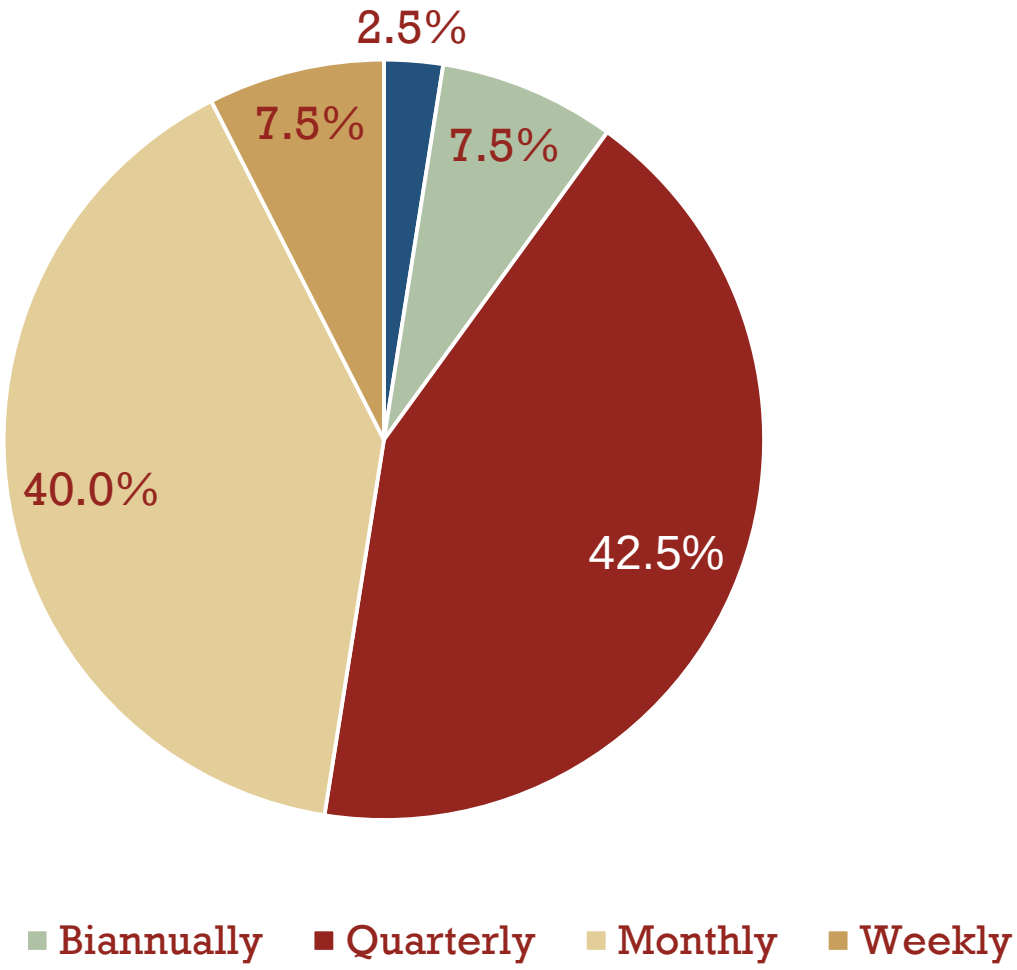


Phase I: Secondary Analysis Year 5 TPSID Data

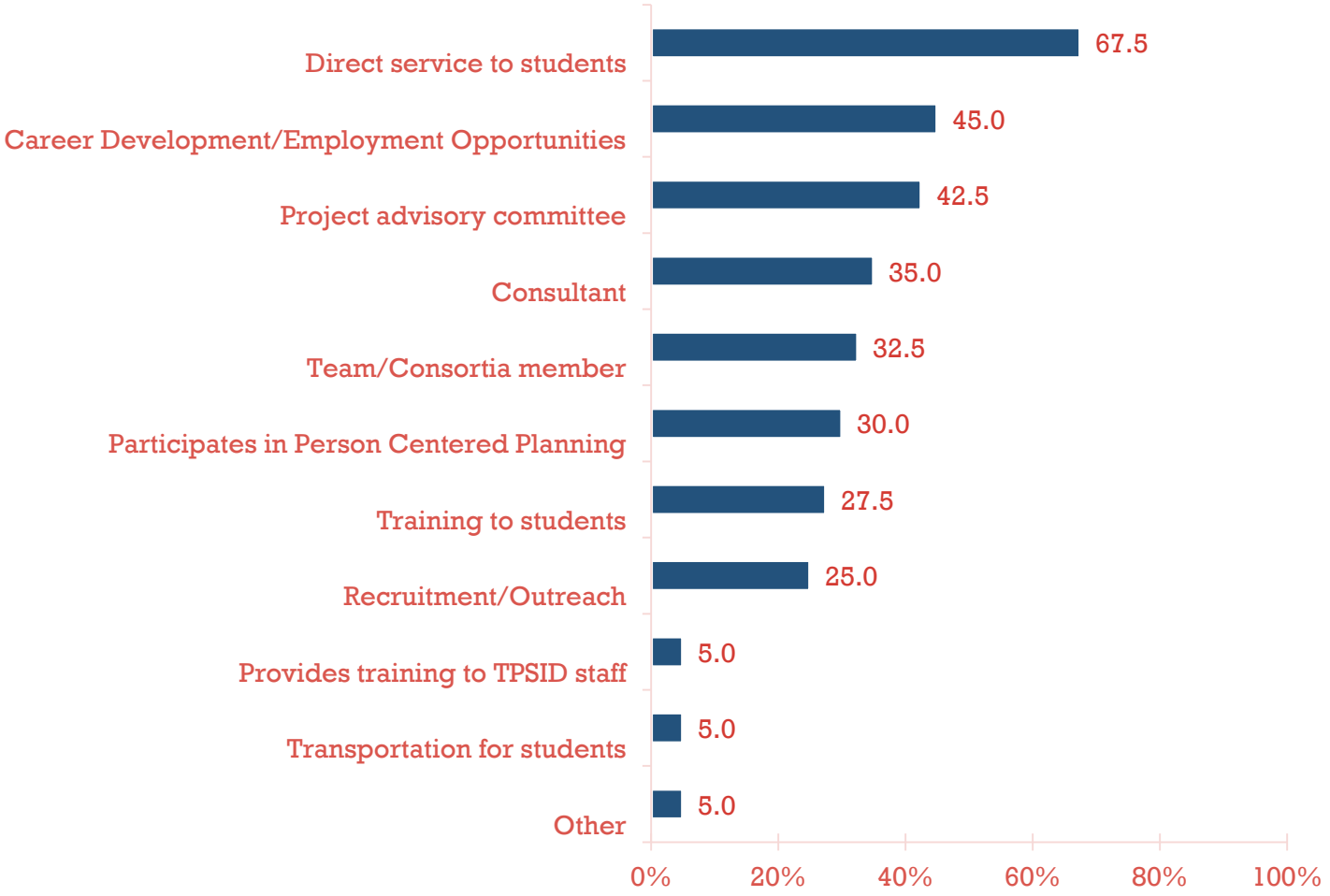
- RQ1 - What is the frequency of interaction and role of VR agencies partnering with TPSIDs serving students with intellectual disability and autism (ID/A) and do these differ based on the characteristics of the IHE or program?
- RQ 2 – Did partnership status between TPSID programs and VR agencies affect students' outcomes?

Partnership Status and Role

Frequency of Interaction of VR Agencies Partnering with IHEs to Serve Students with ID/A



Role of VR Agencies Partnering with IHEs Serving Students with ID/A

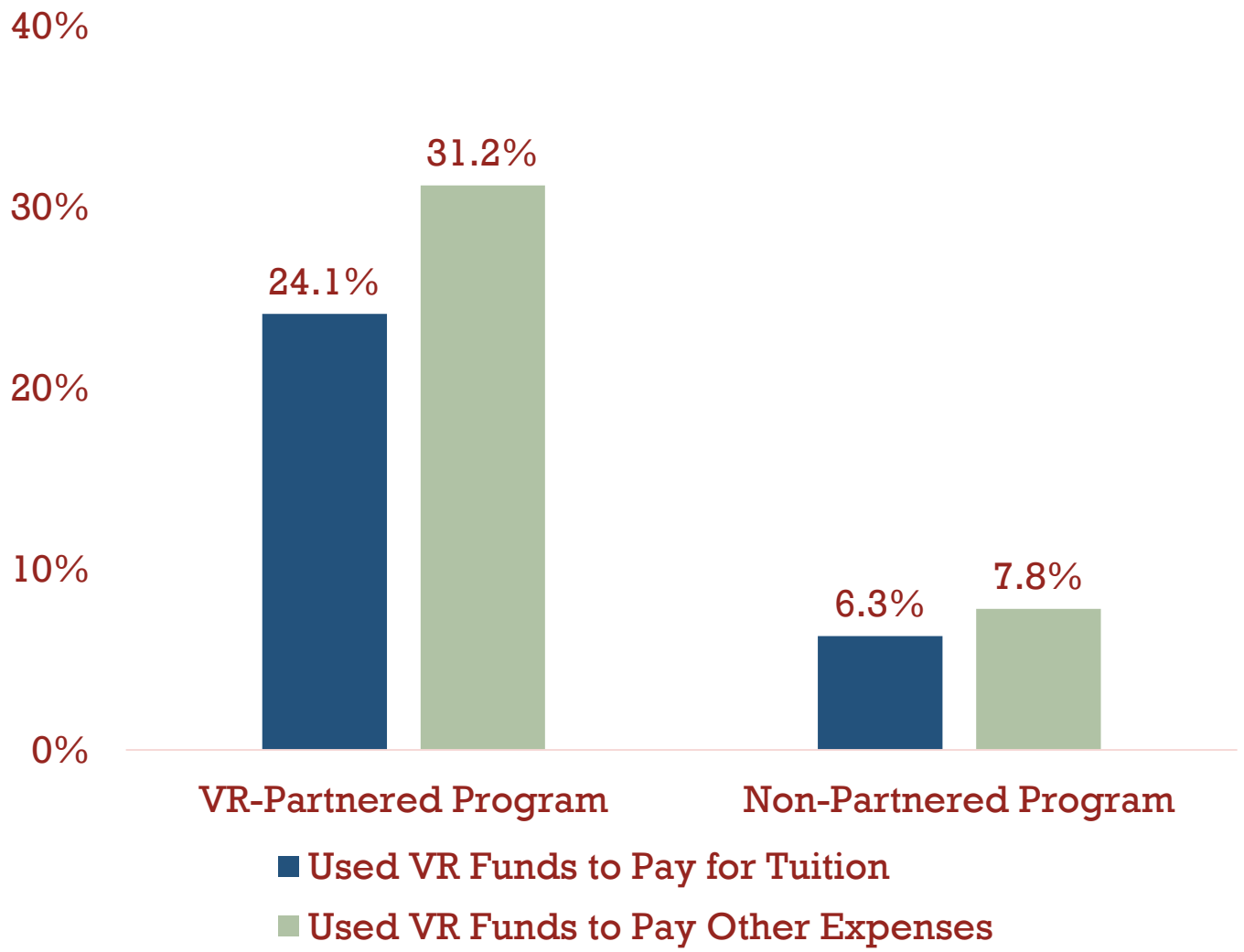


Student Differences in VR Partnered Programs

- Younger students
- Dually enrolled students
- Racially diverse students

VR Financial Support

VR Financial Support for Students

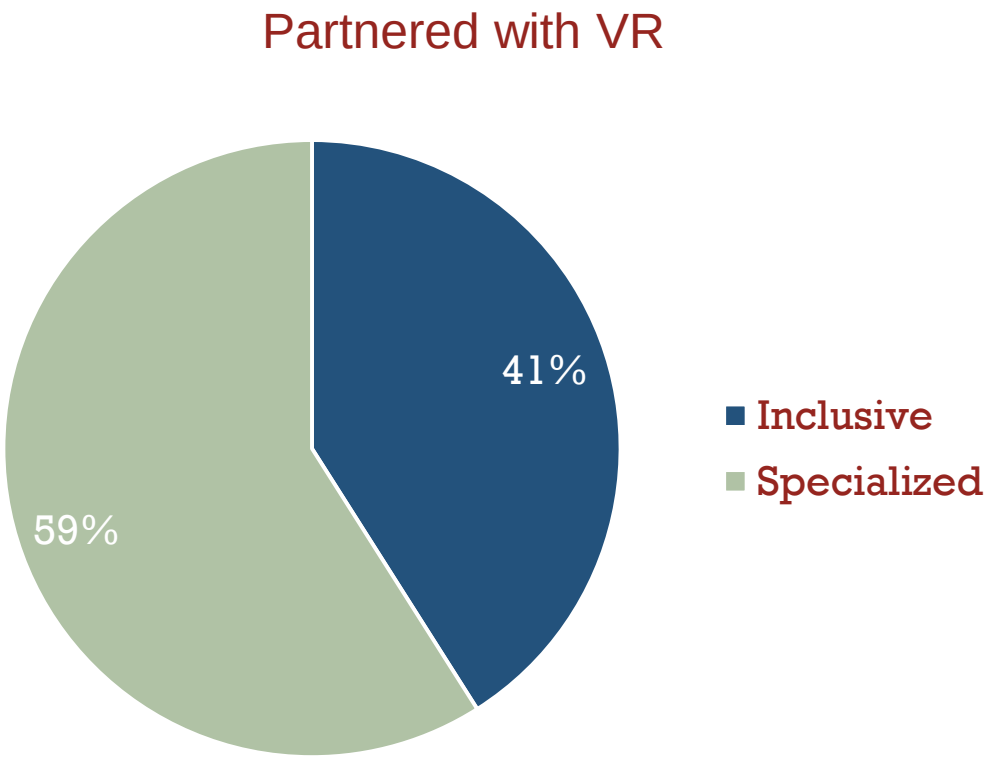


It’s Not Just About the $$

- Engagement and connection with student
- Engagement with program, IHE staff, and peers
- Understanding of course impact on career choice and path
- Use of campus or program resources to support employment

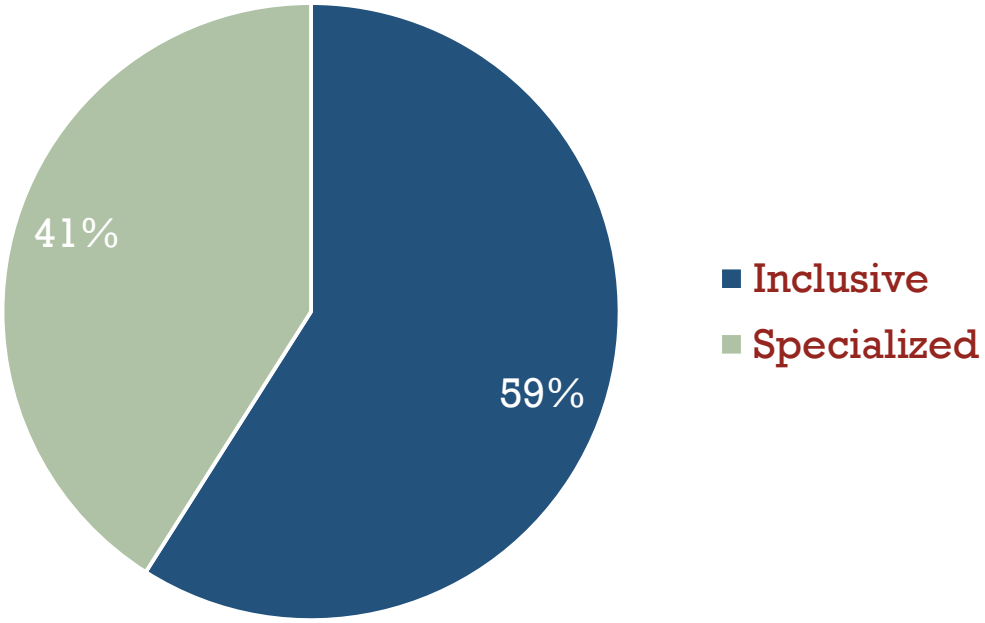
Inclusive Course Access

Inclusive Course Access Based on VR Partnership Status



Inclusive Course Access Based on VR Partnership Status

Did not partner with VR



“VR’s more interested in paying for specialized courses at this point, and we’re more interested in not having any.”

TPSID Program Staff

The Friction Between

Specialized courses

- Pre-existing
- Focuses on job skills
- Segregates students

Inclusive course work

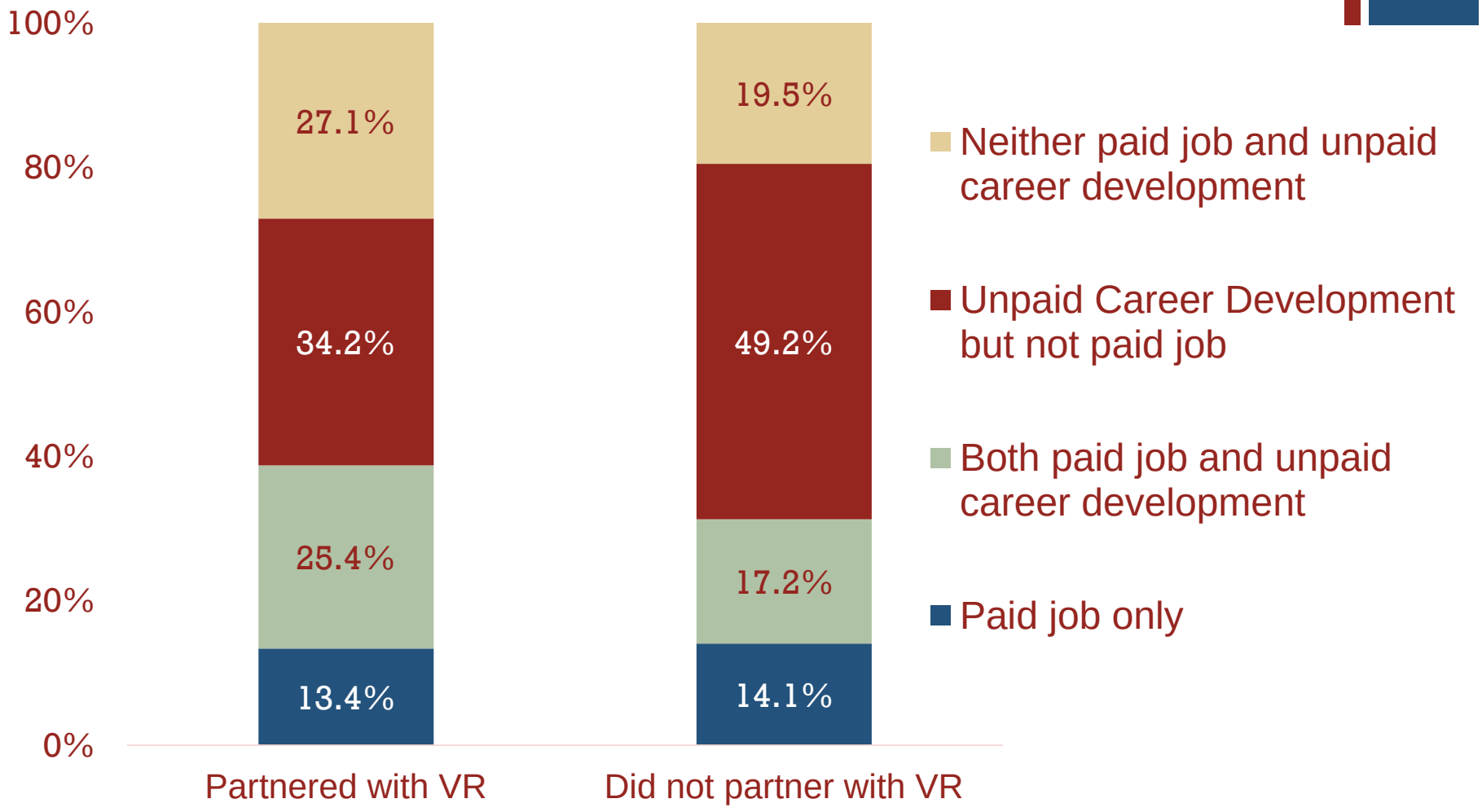
- Relates to person-centered plan and course of study
- Indirectly relates to job skills
- Provides opportunity for inclusive learning

“You know a fast closure isn’t necessarily the best use of this college experience. It really does take more flexibility and time for a better employment outcome.”

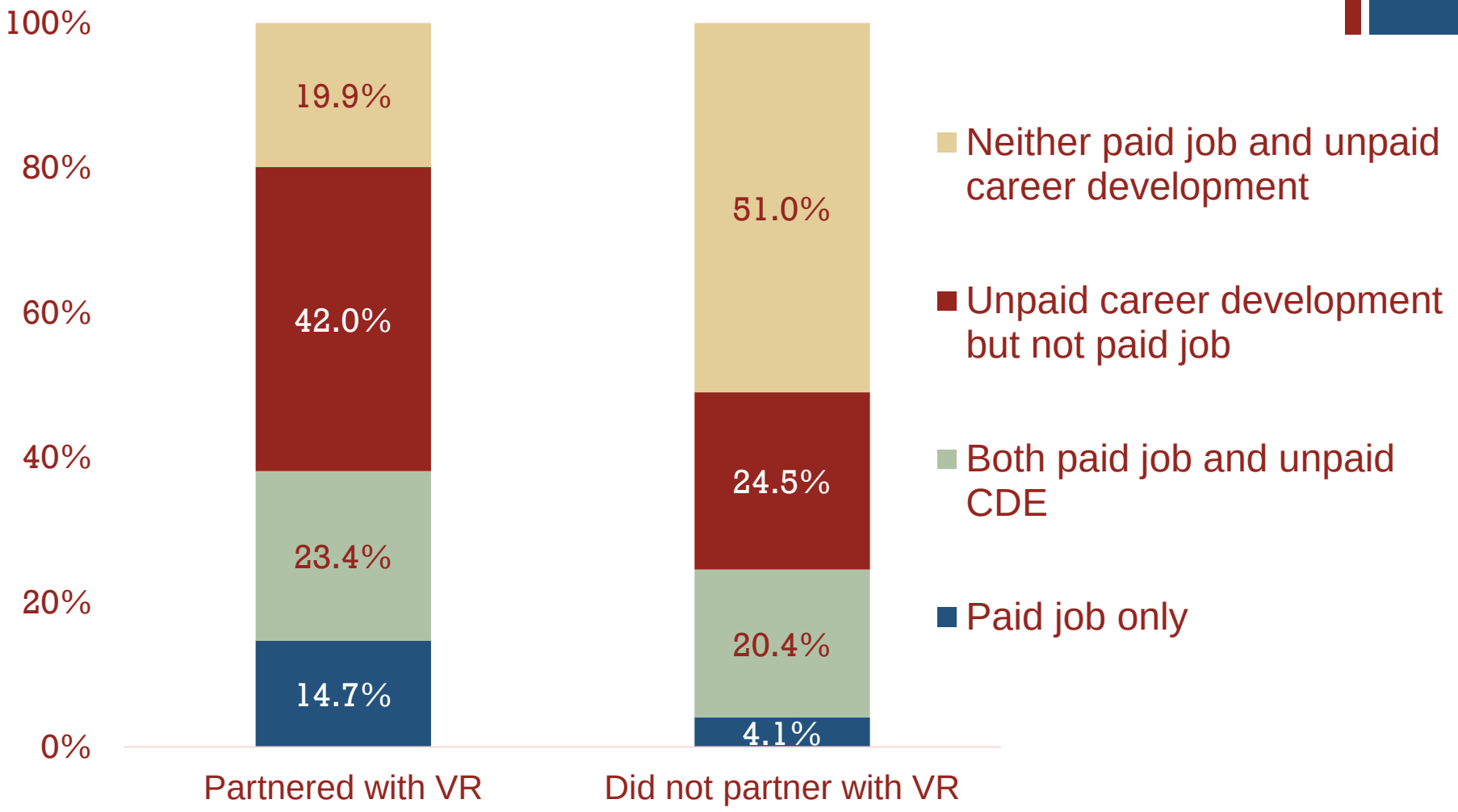
TPSID Program Staff

Career Development and Employment

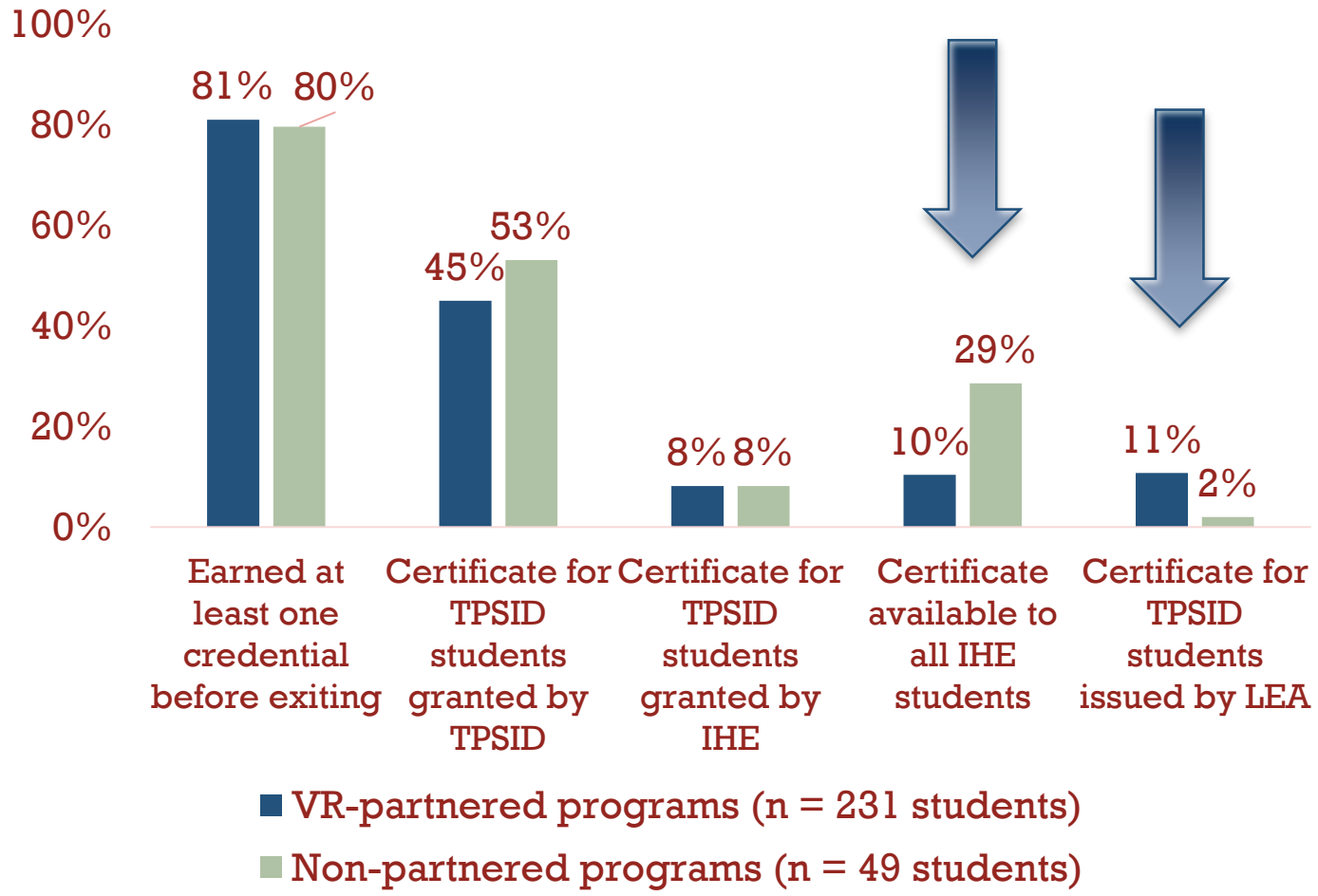
Student Career Development and Employment, by VR Partnership Status While Enrolled



Student Employment Outcomes, by VR Partnership Status Within 90 Days of Exit



Credential Attainment, by VR Partnership Status



Primary Findings Summary

- Partnership status significantly affected the use of VR funds to pay for tuition and nontuition expenses for enrolled youth
- Programs that partnered with VR were more likely to have students enrolled in segregated classes
- Partnership status affected career development and employment at exit and type of credential attained

Implications of IHE/VR Partnerships in TPSIDs

- Impact on inclusive course access
- Employment outcomes
- Inconsistent guidance on funding between states, and, in some cases, counselors
- Engagement with dually enrolled students and pre-ETS

Phase II: Digging Deeper

- Case studies
- Effective IHE/VR partnerships
- 4 states
- IHE faculty and staff, VR professionals, and students and families
- Site visits (summer and fall 2017)

Want to learn more?

www.thinkcollege.net

Need Advice? Think College can help...

thinkcollegeTA@gmail.com

thank you!

Discussant

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Audience Q&A

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Institute for Community Inclusion, University of Massachusetts, Boston

Ellen Fabian

University of Maryland

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Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Save the Date

A webinar on identifying and evaluating investments to strengthen disability employment services

June 22, 2017

More information coming soon on Mathematica's website!

www.mathematica-mpr.com

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