

# College Enrollment During the Pandemic: Insights into Enrollment Decisions Among Black Florida College Applicants

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## HELIOS EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Too many Black students in Florida find their postsecondary aspirations thwarted by numerous barriers to enrollment that are exceptionally difficult to overcome. These barriers often have little to do with students' academic preparedness. Instead, they manifest as a struggle to secure basic needs like housing and food, concerns about being able to afford college, or limited access to resources and supports to help them navigate the transition from high school to higher education.

The pandemic has heightened the challenges that many would-be college students face in making that transition. Understanding how those challenges are impacting college enrollment rates among Black students is essential to efforts—on the part of institutions, philanthropic and student-serving organizations, and policymakers—to provide timely support services and resources that can help to increase postsecondary enrollment and participation.

The research highlighted in this report provides valuable, nuanced insights regarding how non-academic factors have shaped enrollment patterns among Black Floridians who applied to college in Florida during the pandemic. The findings support compelling recommendations for institutions, educators, and policymakers in Florida to make a postsecondary education more affordable and accessible.

Helios Education Foundation is committed to supporting efforts that increase postsecondary participation and success for Black students in Florida. To this end, we prioritize efforts that illuminate the educational experiences of Black Floridians and actualize solutions to the most salient challenges they face.

Paul J. Luna  
President & CEO  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A college credential can expand the range of career opportunities available to young adults. However, existing barriers to enrollment for prospective students pose equity gaps in college access and success, particularly for Black college aspirants. In Florida, racial and ethnic disparities in college enrollment contribute to disparities in educational attainment. Only 31% of Black Floridians hold a college degree.<sup>1</sup> In this report, we examine the attainment gap by exploring various factors contributing to Florida college applicants' decisions to enroll.

This paper uses survey and enrollment information from two Florida community colleges (Hillsborough Community College and Miami Dade College) to identify factors related to college applicants' enrollment decisions. In the summer of 2021, nearly 15,000 applicants to the two colleges were surveyed about their pre-college experiences, and roughly 1,200 responded, resulting in a response rate of 8%. Of the respondents, 997 applicants identified as Black (i.e., African American, Black Hispanic, African, or West Indian/Caribbean).

Based on the findings from the survey, factors associated with college enrollment include:

- *Racial and ethnic background* – Black applicants were less likely to enroll compared to some of their peers. In addition, we found rates of enrollment varied within the population of Black applicants by ethnic background. Namely, African applicants were 31 percentage points less likely to enroll in college compared to African American applicants.
- *Applicants' financial background characteristics* – Applicants who experienced basic needs insecurity were 7 percentage points less likely to enroll in college compared to applicants who did not experience basic needs insecurity.
- *Concerns and expectations about paying for college* – Nine in ten applicants who expected to receive a Pell Grant enrolled in the fall semester. Applicants who expected to take out loans or use their savings to pay for college were 6 percentage points less likely to enroll in the fall semester compared to those who did not need to take out loans or use their savings. Among applicants who enrolled in the fall, those who expected to receive a public scholarship were 7 percentage points more likely to enroll in college at full-time status than those who did not expect to receive a public scholarship.
- *The use of pre-college supports* – 8 in 10 applicants who enrolled in the fall did so at full-time status if they received help understanding financial aid.

These findings illuminate the underlying factors that contribute to college applicants' enrollment decisions, particularly among Black applicants in Florida. Moreover, the data highlights the work that Florida education leaders, college access advocates, and practitioners can do to increase access to a college education.

## INTRODUCTION

A college education can improve financial stability and expand career opportunities for young adults. Yet, enrolling in college is an uncertain and difficult process for many prospective students, particularly for students of color.<sup>2</sup> In Florida, there is an alarming increase in the education attainment gap among different racial and ethnic groups.<sup>3</sup> The pandemic highlighted and exacerbated disparities in college enrollment. Nationally, enrollment in community colleges fell 11 percentage points for Black students between 2019 and 2020.<sup>4</sup> To ensure that there is more equitable college access, it is important to identify the underlying factors that contribute to whether prospective students, particularly Black applicants, decide to enroll in college after high school.

### Financial Barriers to College Enrollment

Even though Florida is home to some colleges with the most affordable tuition in the country, prospective college students face financial barriers that inhibit their ability to enroll and stay in college.<sup>5</sup> Many students worry about whether they will be able to afford college long-term.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, the high costs of college disproportionately impact students from historically minoritized racial and ethnic groups.<sup>7</sup>

To afford the rising costs of enrollment, which include more than tuition and fees, students often feel pressured to rely on financial resources such as student loans. Many Black college applicants are hesitant to take out loans and few plan to use loans to pay for college.<sup>8</sup> Hesitation about borrowing student loans and accruing debt leads applicants to engage in a tenuous cost-benefit analysis, often with limited information. In many cases, avoiding student loan debt and the associated stress outweighs the benefits of a college credential.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to the individual challenges that students face, students of color also face structural barriers in their access to resources. For instance, colleges that enroll a high number of students of color are often underfunded, which limits their means of supporting the students they serve.<sup>10</sup> While financial gaps by race occur in college, these gaps often emerge before enrollment. Students of color—especially Black students—experience the greatest disparities in pre-college savings.<sup>11</sup> Minimal or no college savings poses a financial barrier to attending college for many Black applicants.<sup>12</sup>

### Improving Access to College

Before starting college, many Florida high school students receive little to no support during the enrollment process, which leaves them unprepared for non-academic challenges in college.<sup>13</sup> Many high school graduates who aspire to attend college have trouble navigating complex financial aid packages, housing applications, and college payment plans.<sup>14</sup> Navigating these systems can be especially challenging for first-generation college students. Once on campus, students continue to struggle to find information on non-tuition supports such as

emergency aid funds and basic needs supports.<sup>15</sup> Difficulty finding information about supports prevents students from accessing critical resources that can help them stay in college.

To address the barriers to college enrollment, we identified key factors related to the enrollment decisions of community college-intending students. The current paper builds on findings presented in a recent brief by The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice and the Helios Education Foundation.<sup>16</sup> In that brief, we examined the financial barriers that Black Florida high school students faced in the summer before college and their enrollment plans. From those results, we identified potential risk factors that could be impeding college enrollment among Black applicants in Florida and potential opportunities for education stakeholders in Florida to support college-bound Black students. In this paper, we use results from the brief to examine whether the risk factors identified in the summer are associated with actual fall enrollment.

Specifically, this paper examines four research questions:

- When examining prospective students' enrollment outcomes, do enrollment rates differ by demographics?
- Does enrollment differ by prospective students' expectations about how they will pay for college?
- Is stress or worry about paying for college related to prospective students' enrollment outcomes?
- Is access to pre-college supports and academic advising associated with enrollment?

## **The Sample and Data**

To be eligible for this study, college applicants must have been a first-time applicant to one of two Florida community colleges, Hillsborough Community College (HCC) and Miami Dade College (MDC), by May 31, 2021. In addition, applicants had to be at least 18 years old by the time of recruitment (N = 15,065).

From June to July 2021, the two colleges partnered with The Hope Center to distribute a survey to the 15,065 college applicants: 7,871 applicants to HCC and 7,194 applicants to MDC. Out of all applicants, 1,213 responded to the survey. This survey's response rate (8%) is similar to the rate of other surveys conducted among high school seniors during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>17</sup>

Once surveys were finalized, the two colleges matched information from the surveys to their administrative database and shared the de-identified dataset with researchers at The Hope Center. Information from the colleges' administrative databases allowed us to observe enrollment at the two colleges.

## Analytic Approach

Studies on college enrollment indicate that applicants' background characteristics and expected financial challenges while in college likely influence their college enrollment decisions.<sup>18</sup> Based on extant research and our initial look at Florida college applicants' decisions to enroll in college, our analysis focused on four sets of factors which are directly aligned with our four research questions:

1. **Applicants' background characteristics** (i.e., race and ethnicity, gender, LGBT identity, parenting status, first-generation college-goer status, dependency status, financial role within their family, receipt of public benefits, and basic needs insecurity);
2. **Plans to pay for college** (i.e., use of Pell Grant, loans, scholarships, current job, future job, support from family and friends, savings);
3. **Concerns about paying for college** (i.e., stress about paying for expenses, stress about taking out loans, confidence in affording college); and
4. **Access to pre-college supports** (i.e., help deciding which college to attend, filling out college applications, writing a personal statement, applying for scholarships, filing for FAFSA, understanding financial aid, help adjusting to college, resources in college—health, mental health, food, or housing).

We began identifying potential factors related to enrollment by only examining student background characteristics. We then conducted subsequent analyses investigating additional factors potentially related to enrollment. In these additional analyses, we account for applicants' background characteristics as well as the college applied to by prospective students.

In addition, we conducted separate analyses to examine the variation in enrollment outcomes specific to Black applicants. These analyses only included Black applicants in the analytic sample (not shown, see web appendices).

For each set of factors studied, we conducted two sets of analyses using two different outcomes:

1. The likelihood of applicants enrolling in the fall semester
2. Among fall enrollees, the likelihood of applicants enrolling full-time or part-time

Enrollment in the fall semester was only captured among applicants who enrolled at either MDC or HCC. With exception of results presented in Table 1, results presented throughout this report are average estimates based on statistical models. For more details on our modeling approach, see web appendices.

## PATTERNS OF ENROLLMENT IN THE FALL

Among college applicants who participated in the summer survey, enrollment rates varied by applicants' race and ethnicity (Table 1). Among Black applicants, African applicants had the

lowest enrollment rates (62%) compared to African American (76%), Black Hispanic (82%), and West Indian or Caribbean applicants (85%). However, full-time enrollment rates were similar across the African American, Black Hispanic, and African applicants, between 72-75%.

Across racial and ethnic groups, enrollment rates were lowest among groups that had fewer applicants—namely among African, American Indian, and Indigenous students. In addition to racial and ethnic differences, enrollment rates differed by the college applied to by prospective students. While about three in four students who applied to HCC enrolled at the college, 87% of MDC applicants attended college. In addition, rates of full-time enrollment differed at the two colleges, with 81% of MDC students enrolling full-time compared to two-thirds of HCC students. In terms of gender differences, applicants enrolled at similar rates, with a difference of 1-2 percentage points among groups of applicants.

**TABLE 1 | FALL ENROLLMENT, BY APPLICANTS' BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS**

	Overall		Among Enrolled Students			
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Racial and Ethnic Categories</b>						
African American	165	76	118	72	47	28
Black Hispanic	51	82	37	73	14	27
African	16	62	12	75	4	25
West Indian or Caribbean	35	85	29	83	6	17
Latinx	608	85	480	79	127	21
White	441	84	330	75	110	25
Another Race	30	86	21	70	9	30
Asian	39	87	31	79	8	21
American Indian	7	70	6	86	1	14
Indigenous	7	70	5	71	2	29
Middle Eastern	15	88	11	73	4	27
<b>Gender</b>						
Female	645	82	484	75	160	25
Male	333	83	256	77	76	23
Non-Binary	21	81	16	76	5	24
<b>LGBT</b>						
LGBT	137	82	101	74	35	26
<b>Colleges</b>						
Miami Dade College	600	87	488	81	112	19
Hillsborough Community College	399	76	264	66	133	34

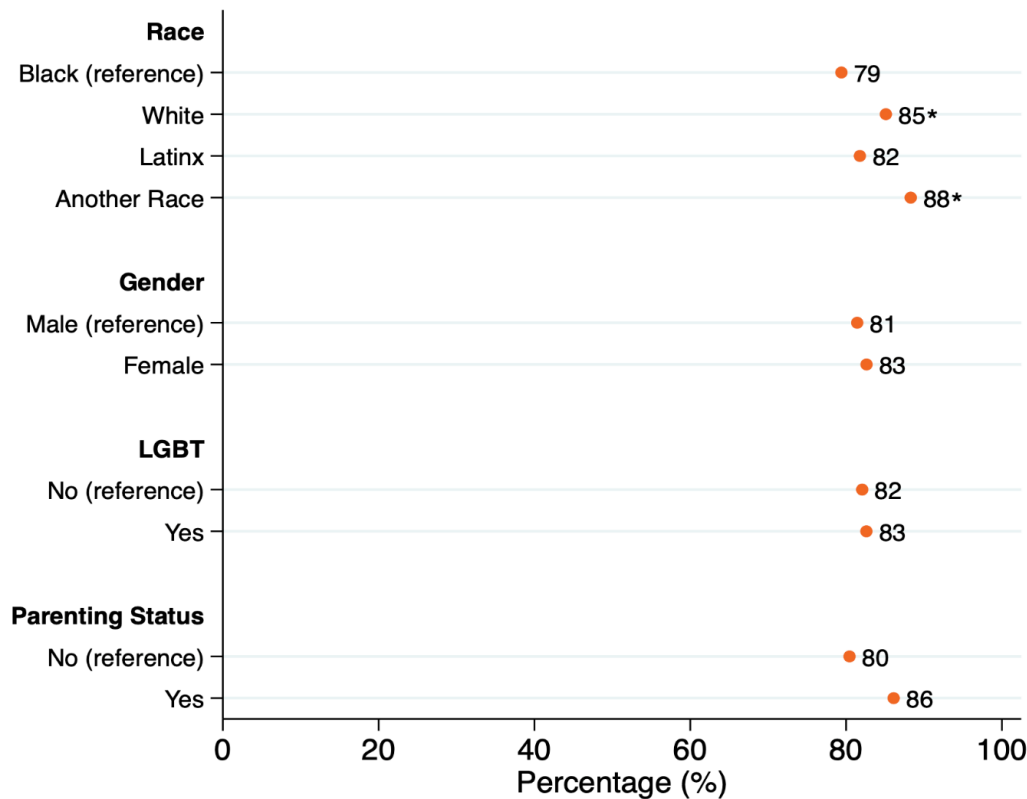
Source | 2021 Fall Plans for Attendance Survey and Admin Enrollment Data from Miami Dade College and Hillsborough Community College.

Notes | N = 1,213. Within the table, N represents the number of applicants who enrolled in college, enrolled in full-time status, or enrolled at part-time status. Racial and ethnic categories are not mutually exclusive, except for the following: Applicants who identified as either African American, Black Hispanic, African, or West Indian/Caribbean are only included in the estimates for Black applicants. Applicants who identified as Latinx are not included in estimates for White. For the LGBT group, students were included if they identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

## BACKGROUND FACTORS RELATED TO FALL ENROLLMENT DECISIONS

Enrollment outcomes differed by college applicants' background characteristics. In fall 2021, Black applicants were 6 percentage points less likely to enroll at MDC or HCC compared to White applicants and 9 percentage points less likely to enroll than applicants belonging to another racial group (Figure 1). We also examined whether ethnic differences occurred within the sample of Black applicants and found that African Americans were more likely to enroll compared to African applicants (not shown, see web appendices).

**FIGURE 1 | LIKELIHOOD OF ENROLLING IN COLLEGE IN THE FALL BY APPLICANTS' DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS (AMONG ALL APPLICANTS)**





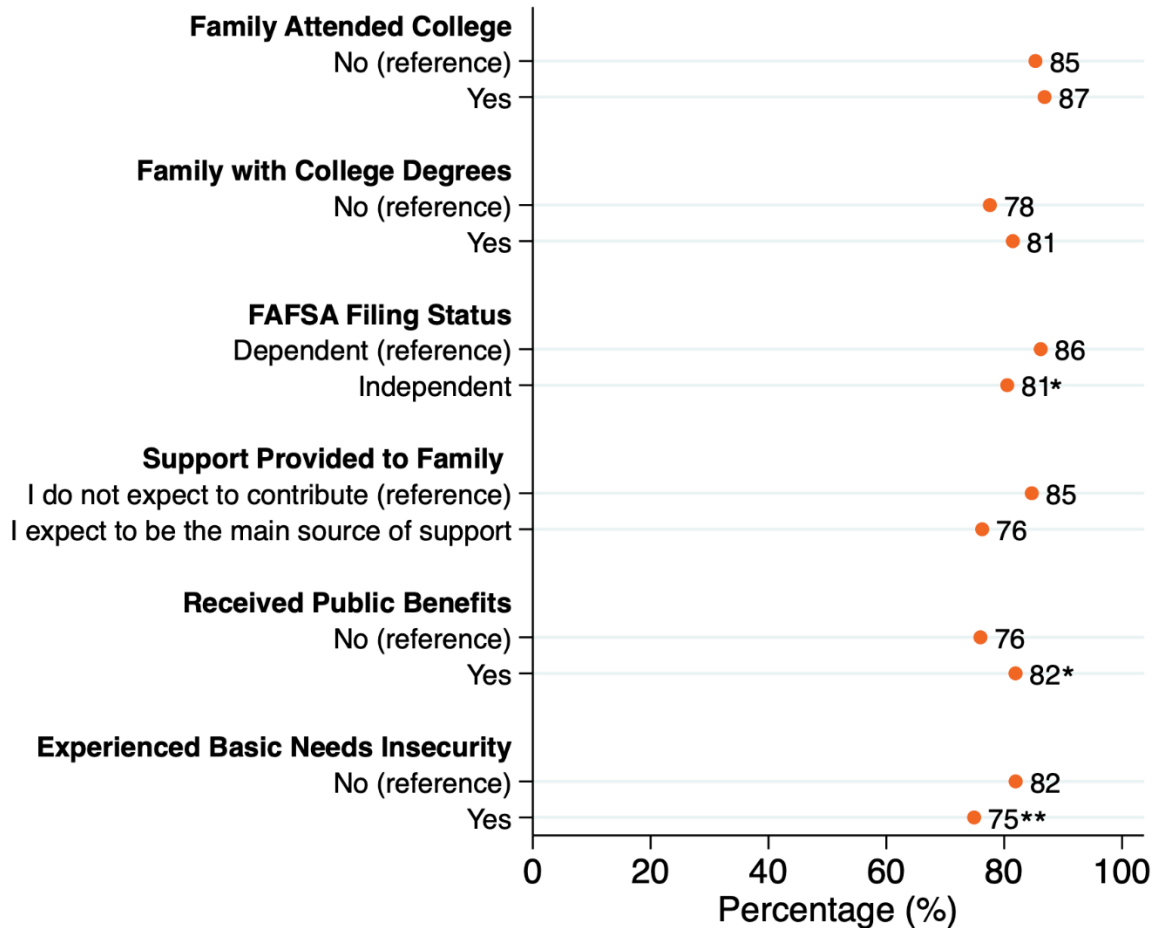
\*p < .10 \*\*p < .05 \*\*\*p < .01.

Source | 2021 survey of new college applicants to Miami Dade College and Hillsborough Community College. Enrollment outcomes were reported by the colleges.

Notes | N = 1,213. Percentages represent the marginal means for different student groups based on logistic regression estimates controlling for applicants' background characteristics and college (MDC or HCC). The term "reference" refers to the group within each category to which other groups in the same category are compared. For the LGBT group, students were included if they identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

Patterns of enrollment also differed by college applicants' financial status (Figure 2). Applicants who filed as dependent on the FASFA were 5 percentage points more likely to enroll in the fall semester than applicants who filed as independent. Students' basic needs insecurity status—measured by whether the student experienced food insecurity, housing insecurity, or homelessness—was associated with enrollment outcomes.<sup>19</sup> While only 23% of applicants experienced basic needs insecurity (not shown, see web appendices), only three in four applicants who experienced basic needs insecurity enrolled in college in contrast to 82% of applicants who did not experience basic needs insecurity. Applicants who received public benefits like SNAP or WIC were more likely to enroll in college than those who did not (82% vs 76%, respectively).

**FIGURE 2 | LIKELIHOOD OF ENROLLING IN COLLEGE IN THE FALL BY APPLICANTS' EDUCATIONAL AND FINANCIAL BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS (AMONG ALL APPLICANTS)**



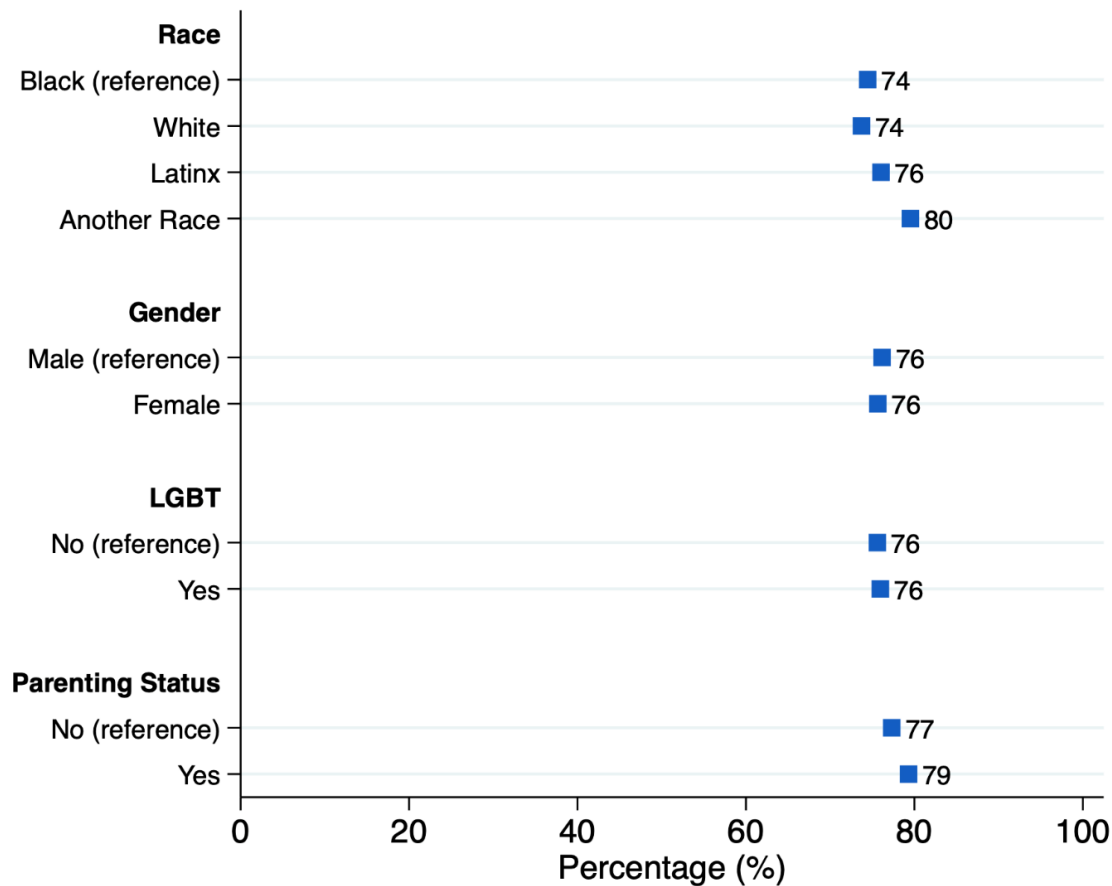
\*p < .10 \*\*p < .05 \*\*\*p < .01.

Source | 2021 survey of new college applicants to Miami Dade College and Hillsborough Community College. Enrollment outcomes were reported by the colleges.

Notes | N = 1,213. Percentages represent the marginal means for different student groups based on logistic regression estimates controlling for applicants' background characteristics and college (MDC or HCC). The term "reference" refers to the group within each category to which other groups in the same category are compared.

Among applicants who enrolled in college, their demographic background characteristics were not associated with a greater likelihood of enrolling at full-time status (Figure 3). Among the subsample of Black applicants, West Indian applicants were more likely to enroll full-time compared to African American applicants (not shown, see web appendices).

**FIGURE 3 | LIKELIHOOD OF ENROLLING AT FULL-TIME STATUS BY APPLICANTS' DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS (AMONG ALL ENROLLED STUDENTS)**



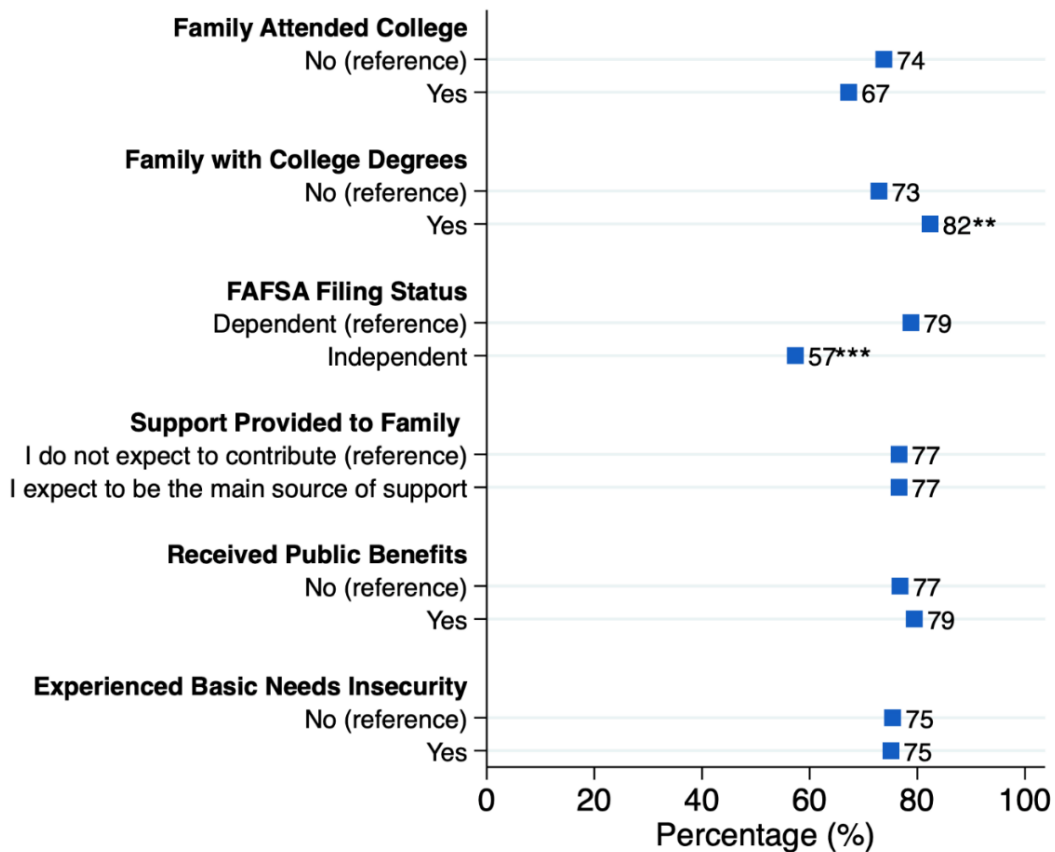
\*p < .10 \*\*p < .05 \*\*\*p < .01.

Source | 2021 survey of new college applicants to Miami Dade College and Hillsborough Community College. Enrollment outcomes were reported by the colleges.

Notes | N = 997. Percentages represent the marginal means for different student groups based on logistic regression estimates controlling for applicants' background characteristics and college (MDC or HCC). The term "reference" refers to the group within each category to which other groups in the same category are compared. For the LGBT group, students were included if they identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

Moreover, aspects of applicants' financial status and family educational background were associated with full-time enrollment. Namely, applicants who filed for FAFSA as dependent were more likely to enroll full-time, at a rate of 22 percentage points higher than those who filed as independent (Figure 4). In addition, those who had a family member with a college degree were more likely to enroll full-time, at a rate of 82%, in comparison to 73% of students who did not have a family member with a college degree. Black applicants who expected to contribute to some family bills enrolled full-time 27 percentage points more than those who did not expect to contribute to the bills (not shown, see web appendices).

**FIGURE 4 | LIKELIHOOD OF ENROLLING AT FULL-TIME STATUS BY APPLICANTS' EDUCATIONAL AND FINANCIAL BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS (AMONG ALL ENROLLED STUDENTS)**



\*p < .10 \*\*p < .05 \*\*\*p < .01.

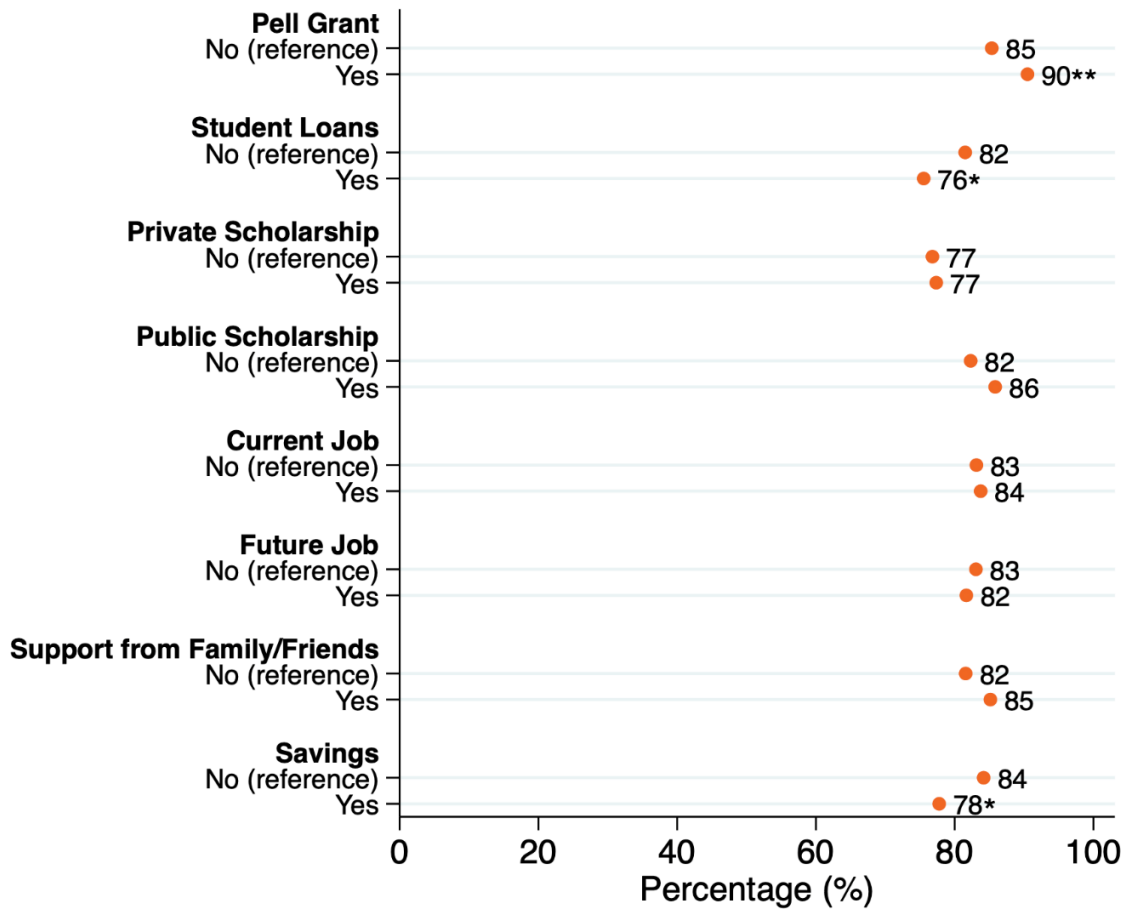
Source | 2021 survey of new college applicants to Miami Dade College and Hillsborough Community College. Enrollment outcomes were reported by the colleges.

Notes | N = 997. Percentages represent the marginal means for different student groups based on logistic regression estimates controlling for applicants' background characteristics and college (MDC or HCC). The term "reference" refers to the group within each category to which other groups in the same category are compared.

## FINANCIAL PLANS AND FALL ENROLLMENT DECISIONS

In addition to inquiring about applicants' background characteristics, the survey included questions about their financial planning for college. Nine in ten applicants who expected to receive a Pell Grant enrolled in the fall semester at either MDC or HCC (Figure 5). Meanwhile, applicants who expected to use their savings or take out loans enrolled at lower rates than those who did not anticipate using these financial resources to pay for college.

**FIGURE 5 | LIKELIHOOD OF ENROLLING IN COLLEGE IN THE FALL BY APPLICANTS' PLANS TO PAY FOR COLLEGE (AMONG ALL APPLICANTS)**



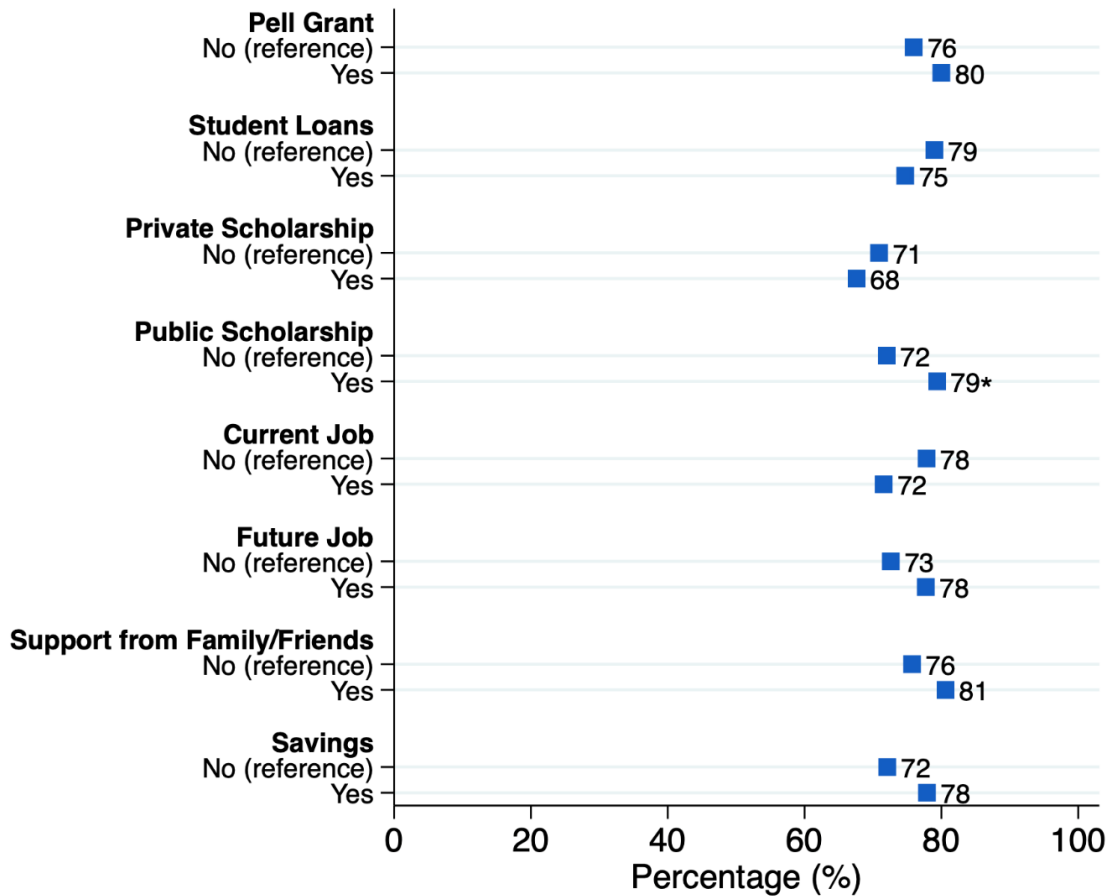
\*p < .10 \*\*p < .05 \*\*\*p < .01.

Source | 2021 survey of new college applicants to Miami Dade College and Hillsborough Community College. Enrollment outcomes were reported by the colleges.

Notes | N = 1,213. Percentages represent the marginal means for different student groups based on logistic regression estimates controlling for applicants' background characteristics and college (MDC or HCC). The term "reference" refers to the group within each category to which other groups in the same category are compared.

Among students who enrolled in the fall, their full-time enrollment status was associated with only certain aspects of how applicants planned to pay for college (Figure 6). Expectations of receiving a public scholarship were associated with a higher likelihood of enrolling in college full-time compared to applicants who did not have these expectations. Notably, among Black applicants, those who planned to pay for college using a Pell Grant, private scholarship, or support from friends and family were more likely to enroll at full-time status than those who did not anticipate receiving these supports (not shown, see web appendices).

**FIGURE 6 | LIKELIHOOD OF ENROLLING IN COLLEGE AT FULL-TIME STATUS BY APPLICANTS' PLANS TO PAY FOR COLLEGE (AMONG ALL ENROLLED STUDENTS)**



\*p < .10 \*\*p < .05 \*\*\*p < .01.

Source | 2021 survey of new college applicants to Miami Dade College and Hillsborough Community College. Enrollment outcomes were reported by the colleges.

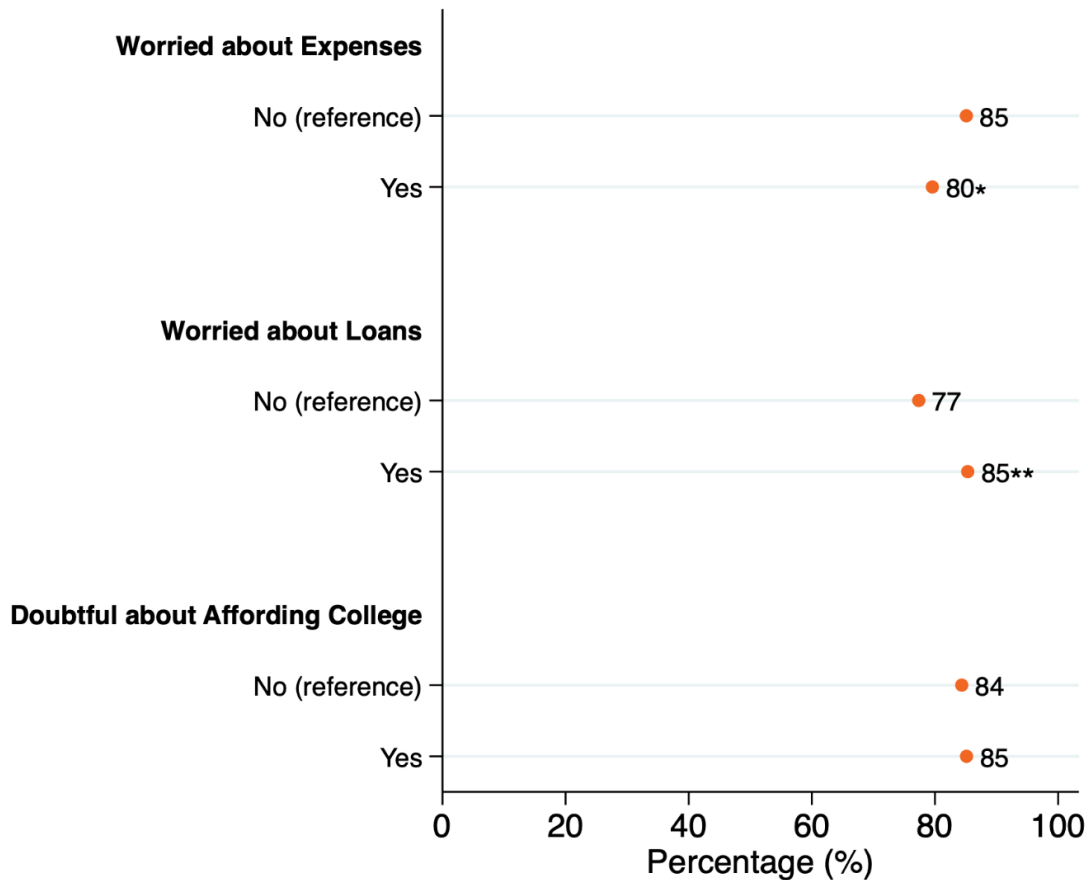
Notes | N = 997. Percentages represent the marginal means for different student groups based on logistic regression estimates controlling for applicants' background characteristics and college (MDC or HCC). The term "reference" refers to the group within each category to which other groups in the same category are compared.

## STRESS ABOUT PAYING FOR COLLEGE AND FALL ENROLLMENT DECISIONS

College applicants who expressed stress or worries about incurring expenses were less likely to enroll in college than their peers (Figure 7). Meanwhile, worries about loans did not deter applicants from enrolling in the fall. Eighty-five percent of applicants who were worried about loans enrolled compared to 77% of those who were not worried. However, nearly half of all

applicants who were worried about loans did not intend to use them to pay for college (not shown, see web appendices).

**FIGURE 7 | LIKELIHOOD OF ENROLLING IN COLLEGE IN THE FALL BY APPLICANT CONCERNS ABOUT PAYING FOR COLLEGE (AMONG ALL APPLICANTS)**



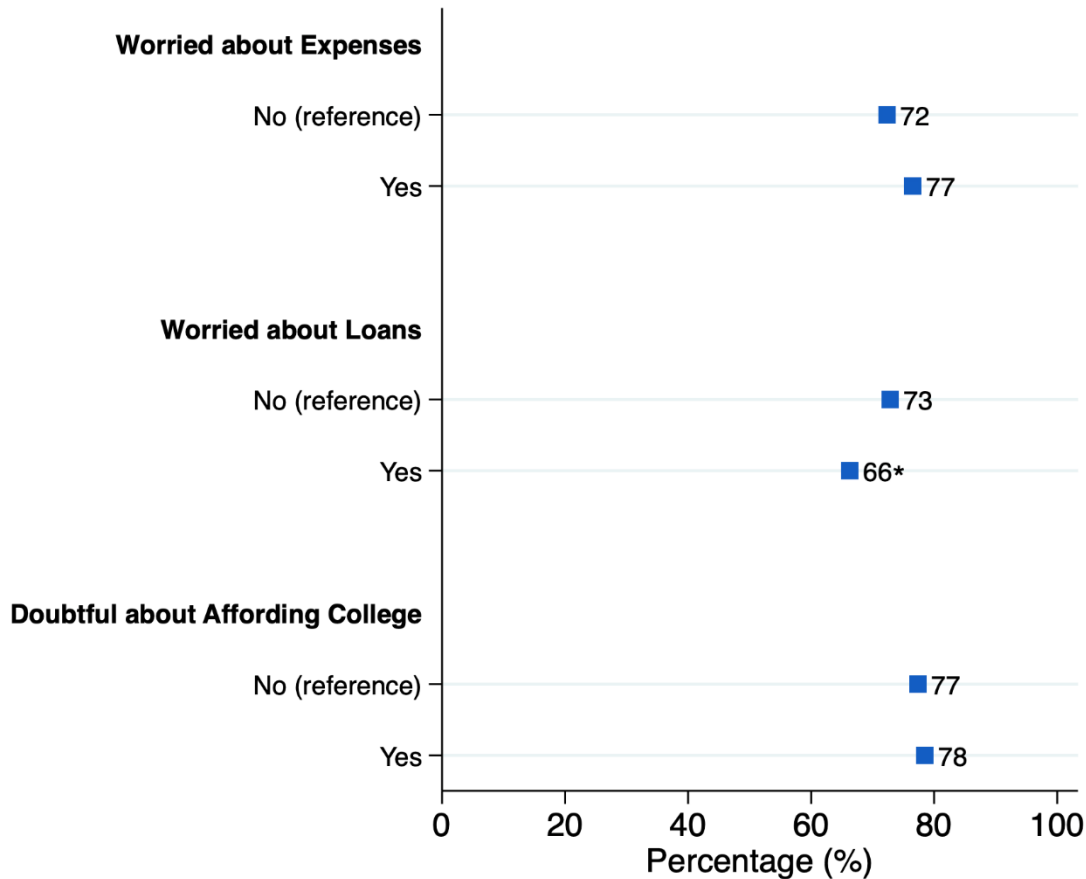
\*p < .10 \*\*p < .05 \*\*\*p < .01.

Source | 2021 survey of new college applicants to Miami Dade College and Hillsborough Community College. Enrollment outcomes were reported by the colleges.

Notes | N = 1,213. Percentages represent the marginal means for different student groups based on logistic regression estimates controlling for applicants' background characteristics and college (MDC or HCC). The term "reference" refers to the group within each category to which other groups in the same category are compared.

In terms of full-time enrollment among applicants, we observed the opposite effect (Figure 8); applicants who enrolled in the fall were less likely to enroll full-time if they were worried about loans (66%) compared to those who were not worried (73%).

**FIGURE 8 | LIKELIHOOD OF ENROLLING IN COLLEGE AT FULL-TIME STATUS BY APPLICANTS' CONCERNS ABOUT PAYING FOR COLLEGE (AMONG ALL ENROLLED STUDENTS)**



\*p < .10 \*\*p < .05 \*\*\*p < .01.

Source | 2021 survey of new college applicants to Miami Dade College and Hillsborough Community College. Enrollment outcomes were reported by the colleges.

Notes | N = 1,213. Percentages represent the marginal means for different student groups based on logistic regression estimates controlling for applicants' background characteristics and college (MDC or HCC). The term "reference" refers to the group within each category to which other groups in the same category are compared.

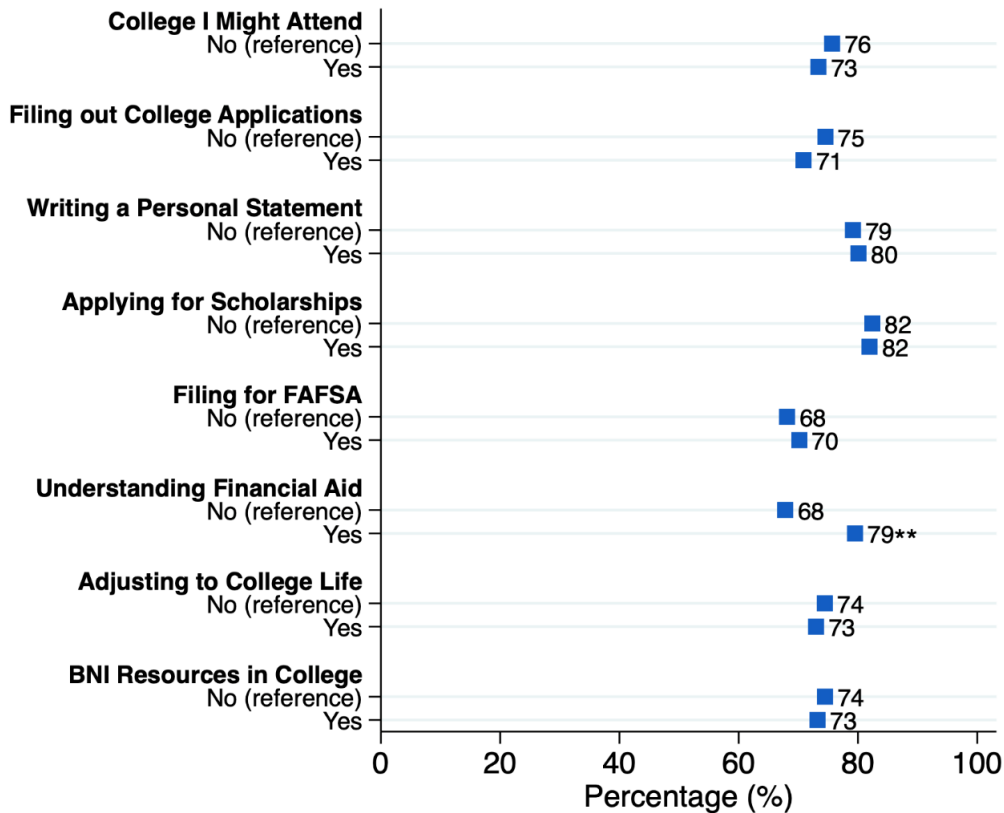
## THE ROLE OF SUPPORTS IN FALL ENROLLMENT DECISIONS

To improve applicants' access to college, it is important to understand whether pre-college supports were associated with applicants' enrollment decisions. While we tested for differences in the use of a variety of pre-college supports among Florida college applicants, there were no meaningful differences in rates of enrollment between those who accessed supports and those who did not (not shown, see web appendices). However, we observed that applicants who enrolled in the fall and received help understanding financial aid were more



likely to enroll at full-time status than those who did not, with a difference of 11 percentage points (Figure 9).

**FIGURE 9 | LIKELIHOOD OF ENROLLING IN COLLEGE AT FULL-TIME STATUS BY APPLICANTS' ACCESS TO PRE-COLLEGE SUPPORTS (AMONG ALL ENROLLED STUDENTS)**



\*p < .10 \*\*p < .05 \*\*\*p < .01.

Source | 2021 survey of new college applicants to Miami Dade College and Hillsborough Community College. Enrollment outcomes were reported by the colleges.

Notes | N = 997. BNI stands for basic needs insecurity. Percentages represent the marginal means for different student groups based on logistic regression estimates controlling for applicants' background characteristics and college (MDC or HCC). The term "reference" refers to the group within each category to which other groups in the same category are compared.

## IMPLICATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The cost of college is a major concern for college applicants, even among those who took the important step of applying for enrollment in the summer before attending college. Applicants who were already experiencing financial burdens or expecting to face financial challenges in affording college were less likely to enroll in the fall and less likely to enroll for full-time status. Black applicants experienced lower enrollment rates than White applicants. Within the group of

ethnically diverse Black applicants, enrollment was higher for those who expected to receive certain financial supports. In addition, Black applicants were less likely to enroll full-time if they anticipated contributing some financial support to their families.

The results of this paper highlight the underlying factors that contribute to college applicants' enrollment decisions, particularly among Black applicants in Florida. For there to be more equitable access to college education in Florida, education stakeholders in the state will need to strengthen financial aid advising as well as provide information on and access to non-tuition supports for college applicants.

Colleges can conduct targeted and personalized outreach to prospective students to reduce stress and increase awareness in the following areas:

- Financial aid resources (college, state, and federal) available to students and eligibility requirements
- Processes for accessing college, state, and federal aid, including key timelines and milestones
- Availability and associated eligibility requirements of non-tuition supports available at the college or within the community, like emergency aid<sup>20</sup>

Education leaders, college access advocates, and practitioners should consider the following practices when engaging in outreach efforts to prospective students:

- Center equity by ensuring that outreach messaging is free from bias and that the messages resonate with all students.
- Promote a culture of care by engaging staff, faculty, and your board to advance basic needs efforts as part of your institution's strategic plan.

Implications for state and federal policy include:

- Provision of non-tuition-based financial supports is one way that colleges can increase enrollment rates, particularly among Black prospective students.

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- Communications: Rjaa Ahmed, Nicole Hacker, Atif Qarni, Joshua Rudolph, Sahar Siddiqi

## FUNDER DISCLOSURE

The findings and conclusions contained within are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect positions or policies of our funders.

## SUGGESTED CITATION

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## ABOUT THE HOPE CENTER

The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice is an action research center transforming higher education into a more effective, equitable, and impactful sector using a powerful combination of applied scientific research, technical assistance to colleges and universities, policy advising with state and federal governments, and strategic communications. We believe that students are humans first and that their basic needs are central conditions for learning. We are redefining what it means to be a student-ready college with a national movement centering #RealCollege students' basic needs.

To learn more about the report's authors, visit [hope4college.com/team/](https://hope4college.com/team/). For media inquiries, contact Editorial Director, Nicole Hacker, at [nicole.hacker@temple.edu](mailto:nicole.hacker@temple.edu).

## ABOUT HELIOS EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Helios Education Foundation is dedicated to enriching the lives of individuals in both Arizona and Florida by creating opportunities for success in college education. Fundamental beliefs in Community, Equity, Investment, and Partnership propel student supports and guide the foundation's strategic investments. While all students benefit from the transformational power of education, Helios focuses on serving first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented students, thus addressing the education equity gap that often prevents these students from realizing their potential. Learn more at [www.helios.org](https://www.helios.org).



## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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