For the U.S. to regain the top ranking in the world for college degree attainment, Latinos will need to earn 5.5 million degrees by 2020.

To reach the degree attainment goal by 2020, New Jersey can: 1) close the equity gap in college completion; 2) increase the number of degrees conferred; and, 3) scale up programs and initiatives that work for Latino and other students.

The following is a framework for tracking Latino degree attainment in New Jersey.

**STATE RANKING**
New Jersey had the 7th largest Latino population in the U.S.¹

**K-12 POPULATION**
In New Jersey, 20% of the K-12 population was Latino.²

**STATE POPULATION**
In New Jersey, 18% of the state population was Latino.³

Projections show a continued increase.

**MEDIAN AGE**
The median age of Latinos in New Jersey was 30, compared to 42 for White non-Hispanics.⁴

**DEGREE ATTAINMENT**
In New Jersey, 22% of Latino adults (25 to 64 years old) had earned an associate degree or higher, compared to 45% of all adults.⁵

---

**Equity Gap in Degree Completion**
Closing the equity gap in college completion can be tracked by the 3 measures provided below. Alone, none of these measures capture the entire “story” of equity in degree completion. However, in combination, they provide a useful picture of the equity gap in degree attainment between Latino and white cohorts in New Jersey in a single year (2007-08) and the persistence of the gap over time (2006-08).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Jersey</th>
<th>2007-08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Latinos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation Rates</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completions per 100 FTE Students</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completions Relative to the Population in Need</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Graduation rates** - Total graduation within 150% percent of program time for first-time, full-time freshman

**Completions per 100 FTE students** – Total undergraduate degrees and certificates awarded per 100 full-time equivalent students (incorporates part-time students)

**Completions Relative to the Population in Need** – Total undergraduate degrees and certificates awarded per 1,000 adults aged 18 to 44 relative to the adult population with no college degree

---

¹ U.S. Census 2010, American Fact Finder, Demographic Profile Summary. [http://factfinder2.census.gov](http://factfinder2.census.gov)


⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey. [www.census.gov/acs](http://www.census.gov/acs)

**Degrees Conferred**

Another metric to benchmark college completion is to track the progress of total degrees awarded over time. This measure may be the result of an increase in overall enrollment numbers rather than an increase in rates of completion. From 2005-06 to 2007-08,

- the number of Hispanics who earned an undergraduate degree in New Jersey increased about 14% from 2006-08, while all other race/ethnic groups increased 6%.
- New Jersey had one of the largest increases in degrees conferred to Latinos over 3 years among the top 10 states enrolling Latinos.


**Examples of What Works for Latino Students**

There are institutions in New Jersey showing success in enrolling, retaining, and graduating Latino students. The following is an example of an institutional program with evidence of effectiveness in serving Latino students nominated for Examples of Excelencia.

**The Clave Latino Male Empowerment Program – Union County College**

The Clave Latino Male Empowerment Program is a program that includes learning communities, monthly lecture series, professional development opportunities, and a social/professional support network for students studying business and economics. The mission of the program is to increase participation of Latino males in activities and professional development, increase retention rates of Latino males in the education and business majors by at least 5%, and establish a social/professional network for Latino males. A total of 85 students participated in the program, with retention rates increasing about 92% from fall to spring. During the first year, the Center for Student Success/Institution had a track record of offering successful learning communities, paired with courses, as the primary tool for retaining students; planned mentoring also proved to be an effective tool in the retention of Latino males. ([http://www.ucc.edu/](http://www.ucc.edu/))

For more information on institutional programs improving Latino student success in higher education, access Excelencia in Education’s Growing What Works database at [http://www.edexcelencia.org/examples](http://www.edexcelencia.org/examples)

**Ensuring America’s Future partners in New Jersey:**

The ASPIRA Association: [http://www.aspira.org/](http://www.aspira.org/)
Educational Testing Service: [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)