

# College Access Program Alumni Reflect on Their Experiences in the Program and Its Impact on Their Skills and College Outcomes



PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY PROGRAM (PUPP)

# ETS Research Report Series

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## RESEARCH REPORT

# College Access Program Alumni Reflect on Their Experiences in the Program and Its Impact on Their Skills and College Outcomes

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An evaluation of the Princeton University Preparatory Program (PUPP), a college access program for low-income and high-achieving public high school students, yielded favorable findings regarding the perceptions of program alumni. PUPP Alumni Survey respondents ( $N = 126$ ) reported that PUPP had positively impacted their development of academic and social–emotional skills and their knowledge of college admissions and financial aid application processes and that they attended and graduated from college, including selective colleges, after completing PUPP. Some PUPP alumni believe that the program made college attendance a reality for them, while others believe PUPP enabled them to attend a more selective college than they otherwise would have. Although alumni were not immune from continued challenges, both financial and academic, during college, they tended to attribute their college enrollment and graduation successes at least in part to the personalized supports and resources PUPP provided.

**Keywords** College access programs; minority students; access to education; high school graduates; selective colleges; college preparation; low-income students; cost of college; financial aid; college students; survey; cultural capital; social and emotional learning; alumni

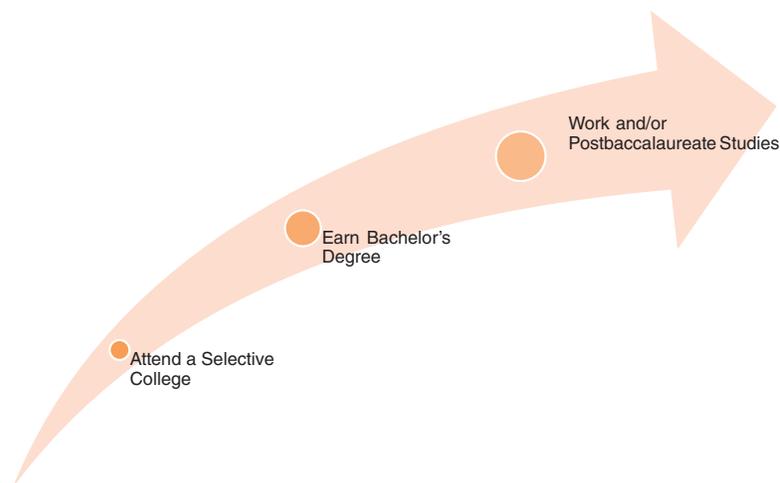
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Since 2001, each year, approximately 24 ninth-grade students from school districts within a 15-mile radius of Princeton University have been admitted to the Princeton University Preparatory Program, or PUPP, as it is commonly known. PUPP provides college preparation support for low-income, high-achieving students from six public high schools in the communities surrounding the university. PUPP was designed to prepare its high school student participants, known as PUPP scholars, to apply to and succeed at selective colleges and universities. It aims to prepare PUPP scholars through a high-touch, intensive, 3-year, year-round program focused holistically on developing skills across multiple domains—academic and social–emotional skills and cultural knowledge and familiarity—while also providing social support and mentoring and solutions for the challenges scholars' families face as a result of living in poverty.

Following a competitive application process, PUPP selects a cohort of 24 ninth graders each spring. Acceptance into PUPP is contingent on a student's academic record, state exam scores, a writing sample, a group interview, and household income. Scholars participate in PUPP activities from the summer prior to 10th grade through the summer prior to college. Summer activities include an overnight experiential leadership development retreat, a 6-week Summer Institute, college visits, college fairs, arts and cultural experiences, mentoring, and family supports. School-year activities include weekly academic enrichment sessions, academic advising, cultural experiences, multiday college tours for juniors and seniors, college fairs, mentoring, and family supports. Senior PUPP scholars are also provided with personalized guidance on their college admissions and financial aid applications. And PUPP alumni are supported through the transition from high school to college through Summer Bridge and other college orientation activities and throughout their college years through individualized guidance and alumni events. PUPP strives to implement many college access program practices with demonstrated effectiveness, including providing mentoring and personalized support and offering academically rigorous activities and advising for participants.

For the first 8 years of PUPP, applicants were drawn from three school districts: Princeton Public Schools, Ewing Public Schools, and Trenton Public Schools. In 2009, PUPP began serving students from two additional school districts: Lawrence Public Schools and Hamilton Township School District. Since the outset of PUPP, a total of 12 cohorts of PUPP

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**Figure 1** Goal trajectory for Princeton University Preparatory Program (PUPP) scholars at the time of the PUPP graduation.

scholars ( $N = 248$ ) have completed the program and are now PUPP alumni. Another 71 scholars are currently enrolled in the program.

When PUPP scholars receive their certifications at the PUPP Commencement Ceremony held each year in June, the goal is for each scholar to experience a successful postsecondary journey that will include college and then employment and possibly postbaccalaureate studies (see Figure 1). The PUPP Alumni Survey was designed, in part, to track and document the actual outcomes and trajectories of PUPP alumni (see Appendix A for a copy of the survey). The survey was also intended to gather alumni's reflections about the strengths and weaknesses of PUPP and about the influence that participating in PUPP had on them during and after high school.

We felt it was vital for the evaluation by Educational Testing Service (ETS) to capture the perspectives of PUPP alumni, who are likely to be best able to speak to how their PUPP experiences may have influenced their college and career outcomes and plans. It is also important to understand their insights about aspects of PUPP that worked well, potential areas for improvement in programming, how their PUPP experience may continue to affect them, and any suggestions they may have for future directions for PUPP.

Our original plan for data collection with PUPP alumni included only the administration of the PUPP Alumni Survey in January 2016. After we learned about plans to hold a PUPP alumni event, we spoke with the PUPP team, and together we decided to seize a unique opportunity to conduct focus groups with some of the PUPP alumni at the alumni event. The event was held on January 6, 2016, and was scheduled to coincide with the launch of the PUPP Alumni Survey. The net result is that we revised our study design into a dominant–less dominant design for the alumni data collection activities (Creswell, 1994). Administered in January and February 2016, the Web-based PUPP Alumni Survey is the dominant aspect of the design, and the in-person focus groups with alumni are the less dominant aspect of the design because they provide data from comparably fewer subjects. The findings of this survey are also summarized in the final PUPP evaluation report, which covers the findings from all of the PUPP evaluation activities conducted by ETS (Millett & Kevelson, 2018).

In this summary report, we present the findings of the 2016 PUPP Alumni Survey and the PUPP alumni focus groups, including our methodology, demographic data on PUPP alumni, and survey and focus group results.

### Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey

As of December 2015, 12 classes of PUPP scholars, from 2004 to 2015, had completed PUPP. The PUPP Alumni Survey<sup>1</sup> was designed to collect data from these PUPP scholar alumni about the ways in which their PUPP experiences may be influencing their post-program experiences, such as their postsecondary educational and work outcomes. As noted previously, we also sought to gather alumni's reflections on their PUPP experiences. The PUPP Alumni Survey was developed to address the following research questions:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of the PUPP alumni in 2016?
2. How do PUPP alumni describe or rate their experiences in PUPP?

3. What were PUPP alumni's educational experiences at the associate's and baccalaureate levels after completing PUPP?
4. What are PUPP alumni's perceptions of how their PUPP experiences influenced their college undergraduate experiences?
5. How did alumni finance their undergraduate education? Did they have to make choices about some college experiences based on finances?
6. How do PUPP alumni describe or rate their postbaccalaureate educational experiences? What are their educational aspirations?
7. How do PUPP alumni describe or rate their work experiences in their early post-degree years?
8. To what extent do PUPP alumni remain connected to the program?
9. What are the reflections of PUPP alumni on the value of various aspects of the program?

## Methods

### ***Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey Development***

Our approach to instrument development was to reformulate the nine research questions into survey sections. The survey sections were designed to include questions relating to the following:

- PUPP interest and experiences (why did alumni apply to PUPP, their experiences of program activities, their relationships with other PUPP scholars and PUPP staff, and their overall PUPP experience)
- educational experiences after PUPP (e.g., college enrollment, academic experiences, undergraduate degree completion)
- financing their college education
- additional education after earning their bachelor's degree
- employment experiences after earning their bachelor's degree
- alumni's ongoing connections to PUPP
- alumni's reflections on PUPP
- alumni's personal circumstances (e.g., marital status, income, children, ability to relocate for education)

Development of the PUPP Alumni Survey drew from various resources, including the PUPP surveys administered previously to PUPP alumni, the Princeton University 2011 Graduate School Survey, and established national surveys such as the High School Longitudinal Study of 2009, the Beginning Postsecondary Study, the National Post-secondary Student Aid Study, the Higher Education Data-Sharing Consortium Alumni Survey, and the Pew Research Center's 2015 Survey of American Parents and 2012 Gender and Generations Survey.

The PUPP Alumni Survey was developed through an iterative process including multiple rounds of reviews by ETS and PUPP staff and subsequent revisions. The evaluation team conducted two pilot tests (November 12 and 18) of the PUPP Alumni Survey. The pilot sessions included three activities designed to elicit feedback from pilot participants: (a) participants responding to survey questions for approximately 30 minutes, the expected survey completion time; (b) participants sharing their own observations about the survey overall and on specific questions; and (c) participants reviewing particular questions for clarity and the appropriateness of the response options.

The PUPP Alumni Survey was conducted as a Web survey using the Web Surveyor online survey platform. The survey was programmed and tested by ETS staff prior to its official launch.

### ***Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey Population***

To identify PUPP alumni who would be eligible to participate in the PUPP Alumni Survey, PUPP provided ETS researchers with a data file of all participants in PUPP through the class of 2015. The data file included 278 students, including 30 who had not completed PUPP because they had either been dismissed from the program, voluntarily withdrew from it, or moved out of the service area. After consultation with PUPP, these 30 students were excluded from the eligible PUPP Alumni Survey population. The net result was that 248 students were eligible to participate in the PUPP Alumni Survey (see Table 1). The cohort sizes ranged from a low of 17 students in 2005 to a high of 24 students in 2013.

**Table 1** Profile of Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Compared to Survey Respondents and Nonrespondents

	No. PUPP alumni	No. survey respondents	Respondents (%)	Nonrespondents (%)
Total	248	126	50.8	49.2
PUPP cohort				
2004	22	13	59.1	40.9
2005	17	8	47.1	52.9
2006	16	6	37.5	62.5
2007	19	10	52.6	47.4
2008	23	13	56.5	43.5
2009	20	9	45.0	55.0
2010	20	9	45.0	55.0
2011	22	11	50.0	50.0
2012	21	12	57.1	42.9
2013	24	10	41.7	58.3
2014	21	10	47.6	52.4
2015	23	15	65.2	34.8
Gender				
Female	157	87	55.4	44.6
Male	91	39	42.9	57.1
Race/ethnicity				
Asian	20	5	25.0	75.0
Black/African American	117	67	57.3	42.7
Hispanic/Latino	72	34	47.2	52.8
Missing	5	2	40.0	60.0
Multiracial	10	5	50.0	50.0
White	24	13	54.2	45.8
High school				
Ewing	52	24	46.2	53.8
Lawrence	14	9	64.3	35.7
Nottingham	13	8	61.5	38.5
Princeton	40	19	47.5	52.5
Trenton Central	91	44	48.4	51.6
Trenton West	38	22	57.9	42.1

Note. Data are from ETS tabulations of PUPP data. PUPP = Princeton University Preparatory Program.

Of the 248 alumni eligible to participate in the survey, 63% are female. Of the population, 47% self-reported at the time of admission to PUPP that they identify as Black or African American, 29% as Hispanic or Latino, 10% as White, 8% as Asian, and 4% as multiracial; 2% did not provide information. Furthermore, 37% graduated from Trenton Central High School, 21% from Ewing High School, 16% from Princeton High School, 15% from Trenton High School West,<sup>2</sup> 6% from Lawrence High School,<sup>3</sup> and 5% from Nottingham High School.<sup>4</sup>

### **Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey Administration**

At the outset of the study, we identified several potential obstacles to achieving the targeted 50% response rate: (a) connecting with a population of former students who may have changed their contact information, (b) generating interest in completing a survey regarding a college preparatory program several years after alumni earned their college degrees, and (c) survey communications being sent by a third-party organization (ETS) that is unfamiliar to alumni.

For several alumni, the home address information on file at PUPP was either missing or outdated. In collaboration with the PUPP team, in particular with the support of the PUPP Alumni Fellow, we worked to locate a valid e-mail address for each alumni. The PUPP team supported these efforts by posting to the PUPP group on Facebook to let alumni know about the upcoming survey administration and to request that they provide updated e-mail addresses to PUPP staff.

The evaluation team prepared personalized survey communications according to the Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2014) method. This method calls for repeated, personalized contacts with target respondents to build response rates. Both ETS and PUPP sent e-mails to alumni to encourage them to complete the PUPP Alumni Survey using the unique Web links provided in the e-mails. PUPP also sent reminders about the survey via Facebook and Twitter to promote survey participation.

**Table 2** High School Outcomes by Alumni Survey Respondent Status (2004–2015)

	Alumni Survey respondents <sup>a</sup>			Alumni Survey nonrespondents <sup>b</sup>		
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD
GPA***	125	3.368	0.5755	117	3.162	0.4346
Advanced Placement courses**	126	2.19	1.733	122	2.33	2.4273
SAT score (out of 2,400)*	86	1,653	228	73	1,651	278
SAT score (out of 1,600)	96	1,109	156	80	1,104	179
SAT Critical Reading score	96	544	89	80	544	96
SAT Mathematics score	96	565	85	80	560	96
SAT Writing score	86	558	93	73	549	102

Note. GPA data were not available for all respondents or nonrespondents, and not all alumni took the SAT examination. GPA = grade point average.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

<sup>a</sup> $N = 126$ . <sup>b</sup> $N = 122$ .

The PUPP Alumni Survey was launched on January 6, 2016. The launch date was planned to coincide with the PUPP alumni gathering held that evening. The online survey was in the field for 5 weeks, from January 6 through until February 12, 2016. Alumni who completed the PUPP Alumni Survey received a \$10 Visa gift card.

The PUPP Alumni Survey has 90 questions, although respondents were only asked to answer questions that applied to them specifically. Skip patterns were developed to ensure that respondents received only questions that applied to them. Of the 90 questions on the survey, 80 were closed-ended items (i.e., Likert scale, yes–no, and check all that apply) that used a forced choice format including the response option “prefer not to respond.” Eight items asked respondents to fill in an answer, such as the name of the university they first enrolled in after high school. Alumni had the option not to respond to these fill-in questions. Two additional open-ended survey questions gave alumni an opportunity to provide their insights on their PUPP experiences. Alumni also had the opportunity not to respond to both or either of the open-ended questions.

### **Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey Response Rates: Differences Between Respondents and Nonrespondents**

A total of 126 PUPP alumni participated in the PUPP Alumni Survey, resulting in a final response rate of 51%. Not only are there more females than males among the eligible pool, but a greater proportion of females (55%) than males (43%) responded to the survey. Survey participation also varied by racial and ethnic group membership, from a low of only 25% of Asian alumni responding to a high 57% of Black or African American alumni responding (see Table 1 for a complete breakdown). Graduates of each of the six PUPP partner high schools were well represented among the survey respondents; alumni participation ranged from a low of 46% of Ewing High School PUPP alumni to a high of 64% of Lawrence High School alumni.

We also compared the high school academic outcomes of PUPP Alumni Survey respondents with those of alumni who did not complete the survey (see Table 2). We found that PUPP Alumni Survey respondents had significantly higher high school grade point averages (GPAs;  $p < .001$ ). Survey respondents also had scores from the SAT<sup>®</sup> examination ( $p < .05$ ), for those who took the SAT when the maximum score was 2,400, that were statistically significantly higher than non-respondents' scores; however, given that the difference was only 2 points, it is not substantively significant. Non-respondents actually took significantly more *Advanced Placement*<sup>®</sup> courses in high school than did those who completed the PUPP Alumni Survey ( $p < .01$ ). There were no statistically significant differences in the SAT reading, mathematics, or writing scores between the two groups. There also were no statistically significant differences between the groups among alumni who took the SAT when the maximum score was 1,600. Overall, these differences indicate that those who took the survey may have been slightly higher achieving on some measures of academic performance than non-respondents. However, there were no differences in other measures, making it difficult to draw clear conclusions about differences in the academic performance of the two groups.

A review of the literature regarding response rates for alumni surveys indicated that alumni studies can be handicapped by bad contact information or decreased loyalty after graduation (Lambert & Miller, 2014), and response rates to national alumni surveys at the collegiate level typically range from 10% to 20% (Saunders & Stivason, 2010). The PUPP Alumni

Survey response rate exceeds these documented response rates for alumni studies, even though some of the PUPP alumni e-mail addresses may have been out of date or some alumni may not have even opened the survey e-mails. One noteworthy difference between the PUPP Alumni Survey and other studies of alumni is that, in this instance, the alumni are from a cocurricular program offered during the high school years rather than from a college or a national sample of college students.

We also reviewed response rates for online surveys specifically. A meta-analysis of response rates to 45 surveys using various media indicated that the average response rate for Web surveys ranges from 6% to 15%, or 11% lower than average response rates identified for either telephone or direct mail surveys (Lozar Manfreda, Bosnjak, Berzelak, Haas, & Vehovar, 2008). We concluded that we were fortunate to achieve such a high response rate in comparison to this average.

### **Analyses**

We tabulated item response frequencies for all closed-ended survey items and developed tables and figures to present results. We used a structured coding process to analyze the two open-ended (essay-type) survey questions, through which our qualitative coding team identified the overarching themes and subthemes of these responses.

### **Limitations**

Survey research has several limitations, including self-selection bias and social desirability bias, although the latter should be attenuated somewhat by the self-report format (Kreuter, Presser, & Tourangeau, 2008). It is also quite possible that those alumni who have not obtained, or are not on course to obtain, the educational credentials that are part of the explicit long-term mission of PUPP were less likely to complete the survey. It is also possible that those alumni who chose to respond to the survey have a more favorable view of PUPP than those who opted not to respond. Furthermore, the PUPP Alumni Survey only provides information from the specific point in time at which it was administered — winter 2016.

### **Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey Findings**

The PUPP Alumni Survey asked questions about PUPP alumni's lives in six areas: (a) high school experiences, (b) college experiences, (c) financing college, (d) employment, and (e) postbaccalaureate education. As noted above, the survey was also designed to gather alumni's reflections on their experiences in PUPP and on the strengths and weaknesses of the program, including possible areas for growth.

### **Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey Respondent Demographic Profile**

Table 3 presents the demographic profile of the 126 PUPP Alumni Survey respondents, overall and by groups of cohorts. These findings are based on respondents' answers to demographic questions in the survey. The first cohort group (2004–2007 PUPP graduates) represents early PUPP cohorts, within which alumni should have already completed college. The second cohort group (2008–2011 PUPP graduates) includes alumni from cohorts that completed PUPP at least 4 years ago. The third cohort group (alumni that graduated high school in 2012–2015) includes recent graduates who most likely have not completed college.

The following report sections summarize the results of the PUPP Alumni Survey for each of the topical areas addressed by the survey. These sections are followed by a summary of the findings of the two open-ended survey items designed to elicit detailed responses regarding alumni experiences in PUPP. After this, we present a summary of the alumni focus group methodology and findings. In the final section of the report, we summarize the overall findings from our mixed-method approach to collecting data from PUPP alumni.

### **Alumni Educational Plans**

In response to a question on when they decided they would attend college, 51% of survey respondents reported that they always knew they wanted to go to college (see Figure 2). Another 27% made the decision to go to college when they were in high school. An additional 21% reported deciding to attend college during elementary or middle school.

**Table 3** Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey Respondent Demographic Profile, January 2016

	Cohorts			Total	%
	2004–2007	2008–2011	2012–2015		
Gender					
Female	26	30	31	87	69
Male	11	12	16	39	31
Race/ethnicity <sup>a</sup>					
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	1	0	1	1
Asian or Asian American	3	2	1	6	4
Black/African American	18	24	28	70	50
Hispanic/Latino	6	12	17	35	25
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0
White	12	4	4	20	14
Other	0	4	1	5	4
Prefer not to respond	1	1	1	3	2
Age (years)					
18 and 19	0	0	23	23	18
20 and 21	0	1	21	22	17
22–24	0	26	3	29	23
≥25	36	14	0	50	40
Prefer not to respond	1	1	0	2	2
Marital status					
Married	9	5	0	14	11
Living with a partner	7	2	2	11	9
Divorced	0	0	0	0	0
Separated	0	0	0	0	0
Widowed	0	0	0	0	0
Never been married	21	35	44	100	79
Prefer not to respond	0	0	1	1	1
Children under age 18 years					
1	8	1	0	9	7
>1	2	2	1	5	4
No children	27	39	46	112	89
Prefer not to respond	0	0	0	0	0
Currently reside in New Jersey					
Yes	20	20	36	76	60
No	16	20	11	47	37
Missing data	1	2	0	3	2

Note.  $N = 126$ . Data are from ETS tabulations of Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey data.

<sup>a</sup>Multiple responses to this question were allowed.

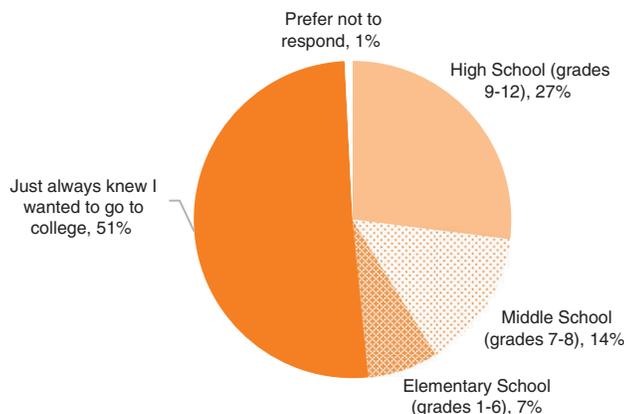
PUPP Alumni Survey respondents overwhelmingly reported that they plan to obtain graduate or professional degrees (see Figure 3). Forty-four percent reported that they aspire to earn a doctoral degree, including a PhD or EdD (30%) or doctoral-level professional degree such as an MD, DDS, DVM, or JD (14%). Thirty-eight percent plan to earn a master's degree, including a master of arts or science (22%), a professional master's degree such as a master of business administration (MBA, 12%), or another type of master's degree (4%). Twelve percent of those surveyed reported that they plan to earn only a bachelor's degree.

### Postsecondary Plans

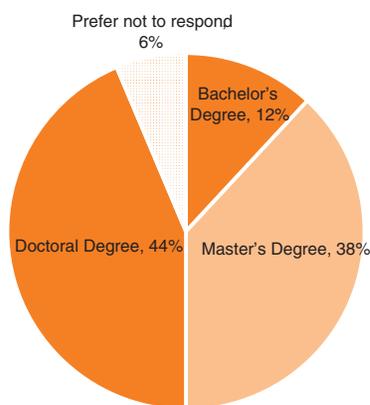
PUPP Alumni Survey participants were asked to indicate who had the most influence on their plans for after high school. The greatest proportion of respondents (38%) indicated that family members had the most influence on their planning, followed closely by another 33% of respondents who reported that PUPP staff had the greatest influence on their plans for after high school (see Figure 4). Twenty-one percent of survey participants said that they personally had the most influence on their own thinking about higher education. School personnel, including teachers and counselors, were mentioned as the greatest influence by 3% of respondents.

### Reasons for Applying to Princeton University Preparatory Program

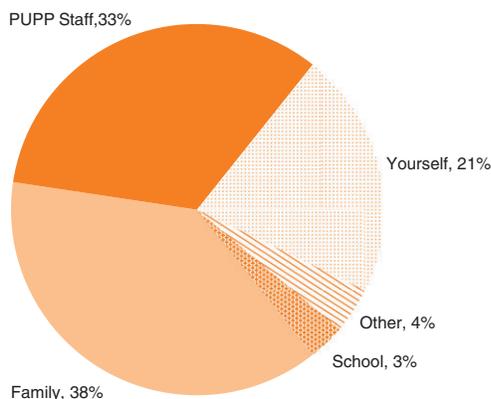
When asked to rank order the three most important reasons for applying to PUPP, 41% of PUPP Alumni Survey participants selected “I knew I wanted to go to a good college” as their number one reason for applying to PUPP. An



**Figure 2** Grade Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey participants reported that they decided to go to college ( $N = 126$ ).

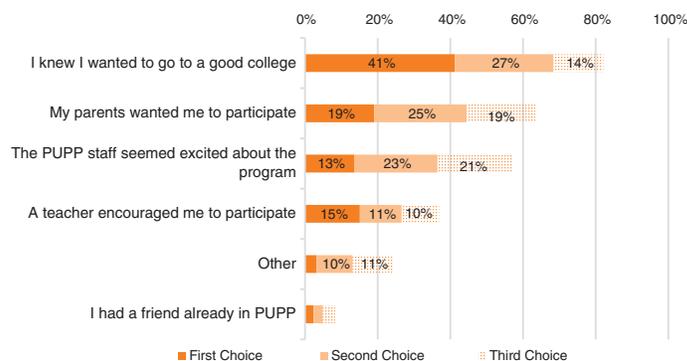


**Figure 3** Highest degree Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey respondents reported they plan to earn ( $N = 126$ ).



**Figure 4** Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey respondents described who had the most influence on their plans for postsecondary education ( $N = 126$ ).

additional 27% chose this option as their second most important reason for applying to PUPP, and 14% chose this as their third reason (see Figure 5). It seems that the expectation that PUPP helps its scholars gain entry into “good” colleges is a key motivator for applying to participate in the program. Among survey respondents, other popular reasons for applying for PUPP included parents wanting them to participate (19% first reason, 25% second reason, and 19% third reason), PUPP staff seeming excited about the program (13% first reason, 23% second reason, and 21% third reason), and a teacher encouraging participation (15% first reason, 11% second reason, and 10% third reason).



**Figure 5** Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey respondents reported the three most important reasons alumni applied to the Princeton University Preparatory Program (N = 126). Respondents who reported other or no further reasons are not included.

### College Experiences and Outcomes

The college experiences section of the survey was designed to provide information on alumni’s choices related to their postsecondary education. Items address college attendance, academic majors, college persistence, college selectivity levels, college transfers, and degree completion.

### College Enrollment and Degrees Earned

#### Immediate Enrollment

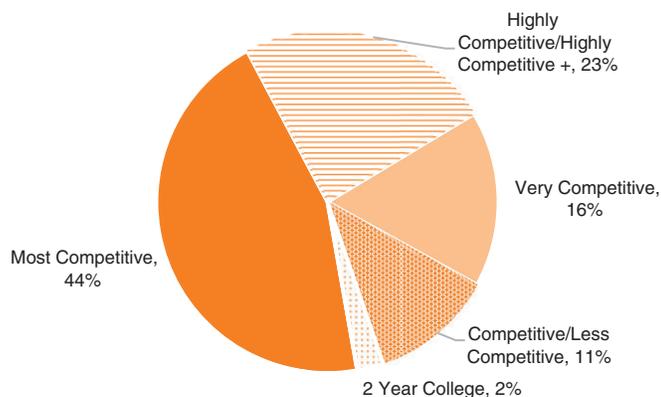
Ninety-eight percent of PUPP Alumni Survey participants reported that they attended college immediately after high school. Of the 99% of these respondents who reported in which state they enrolled in college, 44% reported enrolling in a college in New Jersey, whereas the other 53% attended out-of-state colleges. This is counter to the trend toward college students, especially first-generation students, attending college in-state and within 50 miles of home (Saenz et al., 2007).

When asked what was the most important reason for attending the first college they enrolled in, 41% of those surveyed indicated the cost (i.e., affordability or other financial concerns) was the biggest reason, while 29% reported that the reputation of the school was the most important factor in their decision. Other reasons survey respondents gave for their college enrollment decisions included the college’s location (9%) and personal or family reasons (5%). Fifteen percent of respondents chose the “other” response to this survey item. The reasons they provided in open-ended comments included the college’s degree offerings.

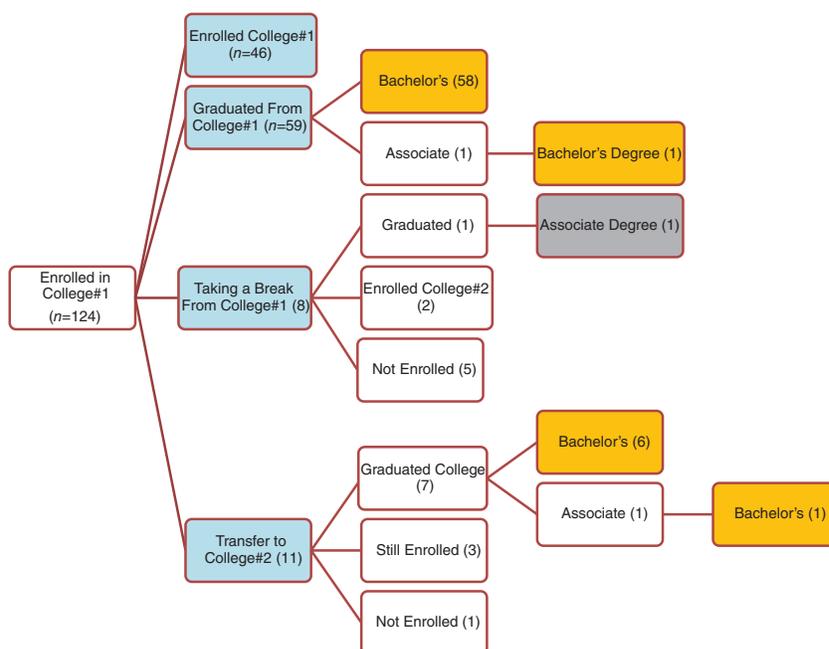
A majority of the colleges PUPP Alumni Survey respondents reported attending after high school were classified using the Barron’s Admissions Competitiveness Index (Barron’s Education Series, 2016) as being most competitive (44%) or highly competitive+/highly competitive (23%; see Figure 6). Colleges and universities in these categories included Brown University, Columbia University, Cornell University, Duke University, Haverford College, Johns Hopkins University, Lehigh University, New York University, Smith College, and Vassar College in the most competitive category and Allegheny College, Dickinson College, the College of New Jersey, Muhlenberg College, and Trinity College in the highly competitive +/highly competitive category. Another 16% of respondents enrolled at colleges or universities ranked as very competitive. An additional 11% attended colleges ranked as competitive or less competitive, and 2% enrolled at 2-year colleges.

#### Student Enrollment Pathways

Survey participants reported taking one of four pathways once they enrolled at their first college: 37% reported that they were still enrolled in the college where they first enrolled, 48% reported graduating from the college where they first enrolled, 5% reported that they took a break from the college where they first enrolled, and 9% reported that they transferred to a second college (see Figure 7).



**Figure 6** Selectivity of colleges and universities Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey respondents reported attending after high school ( $N = 124$ ). Figure does not include “prefer not to respond” responses ( $N = 2$ ).



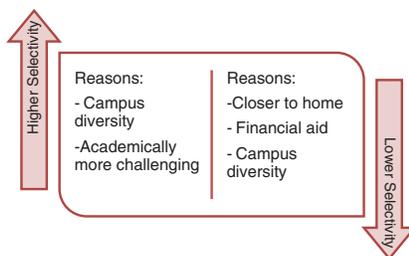
**Figure 7** Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey respondents’ pathways through college ( $N = 126$ ).

*Students Who Did Not Continue at Their First College*

Among survey participants who reported that they did not continue at their first college, a few reported that they took a break from college (5%), while others indicated that they transferred to another college (9%). Respondents cited two main reasons for taking a break from college for a semester or longer: (a) financial challenges and (b) not feeling that college was the right place for them at the time. Among those who transferred out of the college at which they first enrolled, a majority of the transfers reported were from more selective colleges to less selective colleges and universities. When asked the reasons for their transfer, survey respondents transferring to less selective colleges cited wanting to be closer to home or financial aid challenges, while those who transferred to more selective schools said they did so because the transfer colleges were more diverse or more academically challenging (see Figure 8).

*College Graduation*

As of winter 2016, 53% of PUPP alumni who reported that they had enrolled in college indicated that they had earned a bachelor’s degree, while another 1% of PUPP alumni indicated that they earned an associate degree. Forty-one percent



**Figure 8** Reasons respondents cited for transferring colleges, by direction of selectivity change. Two survey respondents transferred to more selective colleges, and seven survey participants transferred to less selective colleges.

**Table 4** Undergraduate Enrollment Status of Princeton University Preparatory Program (PUPP) Alumni Survey Respondents, Winter 2016

Enrollment status or degree attainment	N	%
Enrolled in college	51	41
Not enrolled in college	6	5
Earned an associate degree	1	1
Earned a bachelor’s degree <sup>a</sup>	66	53
Total	124	

Note. N = 126.

<sup>a</sup>Two PUPP alumni earned an associate degree prior to earning a bachelor’s degree. Two respondents did not answer the questions in the education section.

**Table 5** Selectivity Level of Colleges From Which Survey Respondents Reported Earning Bachelor’s Degrees, Excluding Those Who Transferred out of Their First College

Selectivity level	N	%
Less competitive	2	3
Competitive	6	10
Very competitive	5	9
Highly competitive	7	12
Highly competitive+	3	5
Most competitive	33	57

Note. N = 58. One additional respondent reported earning an Associate degree; all other respondents had either transferred to another school and were still enrolled or were no longer enrolled in any college.

of those surveyed reported that they were enrolled in college at the time, and 5% indicated that they were not currently enrolled (see Table 4).

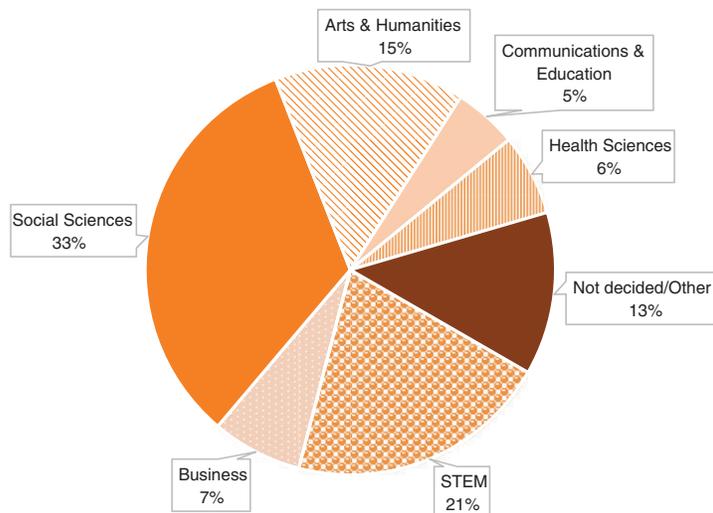
Among PUPP Alumni Survey respondents who reported earning a bachelor’s degree from the first college in which they enrolled after high school (N = 58), the majority (57%) earned their degrees from colleges or universities classified as most selective on the Barron’s Admissions Competitiveness Index (Barron’s Education Series, 2016). Another 17% reported graduating from colleges or universities classified as highly competitive + or highly competitive (see Table 5).

**College Major**

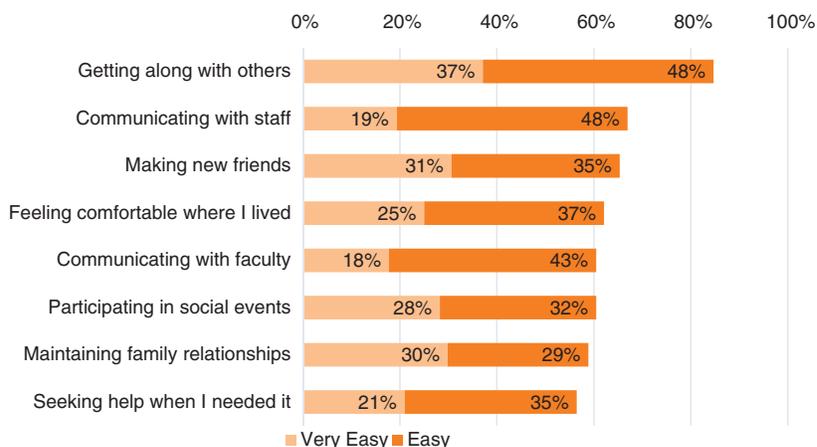
As shown in Figure 9, one-third of PUPP Alumni Survey participants (33%) reported that they chose an undergraduate major in the social sciences field. The science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields were also popular among survey participants (21%). Other majors reported by participants included arts and humanities (15%), business and management (7%), communications and education (5%), and the health sciences (6%).

**Ease of College Activities**

PUPP Alumni Survey respondents were asked to rate how easy or difficult certain college experiences and activities were for them. The majority of respondents indicated that all experiences and activities addressed by the survey items were



**Figure 9** Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey participants’ reports of undergraduate majors ( $N = 140$ ). Dual majors were coded for 14 scholars, although the actual number of respondents is 124. Some alumni in cohorts 2002–2015 may have reported their intended majors, while college graduates reported their actual majors.



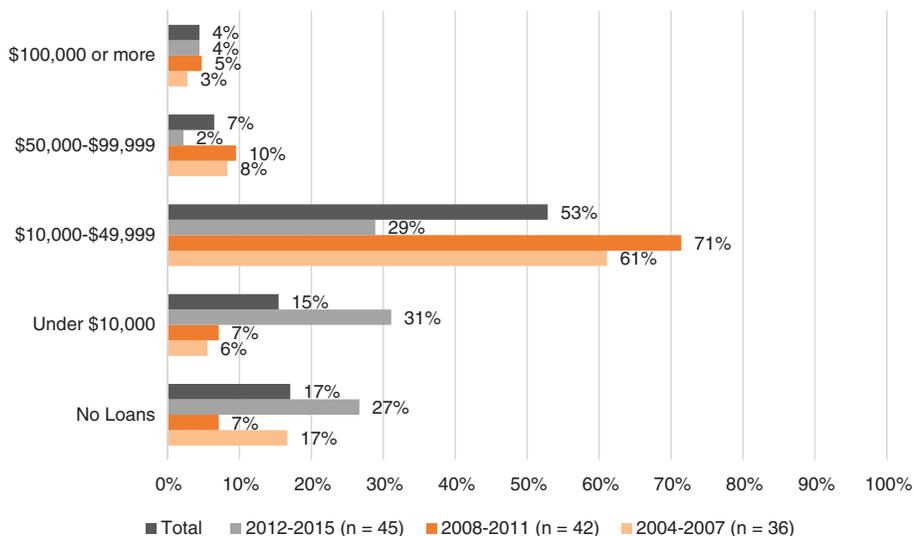
**Figure 10** Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey respondents reported ease or difficulty of college activities ( $N = 124$ ).

easy or very easy for them (see Figure 10). The greatest percentages of respondents indicated that the getting along with others (85%), communicating with staff (67%), and making new friends (66%) were easy or very easy. Other experiences described in this manner by respondents included feeling comfortable where they live (62%), communicating with faculty (61%), and maintaining family relationships (59%).

### Financing College

#### Alumni Financial Aid Receipt and Student Loan Debt

Ninety-nine percent of PUPP Alumni Survey participants reported receiving financial aid (e.g., grants, scholarships, student loans, and work–study jobs) during their undergraduate years. Alumni were asked how much money they borrowed to finance their undergraduate educations (see Figure 11). Seventeen percent of respondents reported taking out no loans. Another 15% of respondents reported taking out between \$1 and \$9,999 in loans, another 20% reported borrowing between \$10,000 and \$19,999, and another 17% reported borrowing \$20,000–\$29,999. Twenty-seven percent of survey participants reported borrowing more than \$30,000.



**Figure 11** Amount Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey participants reported borrowing to finance their undergraduate education, overall and by cohort ( $n = 123$ ). This does not include students who were unable to estimate the amount of debt and those who preferred not to respond.

We conducted additional analyses to explore whether loan debt may vary by year in PUPP, given that in the early years of the program, especially prior to the arrival of the current director in 2004, PUPP did not focus on minimizing student debt. We analyzed student loan debt levels for the first four PUPP cohorts (2004–2007), the second four PUPP cohorts (2008–2011), and the three cohorts that graduated most recently (2012–2015). The results show that PUPP graduates from more recent cohorts tend to have less student loan debt than those from earlier cohorts, as would be expected given the increased focus on minimizing debt in recent years. More 2012–2015 PUPP Alumni Survey respondents than respondents from earlier cohorts have no student loan debt (27% have no loans, compared with 7% of alumni graduating in 2008–2011 and 17% of alumni graduating in 2004–2007). Survey results show that 31% of recent PUPP graduates who do have loans owe less than \$10,000, whereas 29% owe between \$10,000 and \$49,999. In contrast, survey data from earlier cohorts show that higher percentages of PUPP alumni have higher amounts of student loan debt (7% of 2008–2011 graduates owe less than \$10,000, whereas 71% owe between \$10,000 and \$49,999; 6% of 2004–2007 graduates owe less than \$10,000, whereas 61% owe between \$10,000 and \$50,000). A minority of those with student loan debt have also completed a graduate degree or are currently enrolled in graduate school, which may have added to their debt.

According to the nationally representative Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) College Senior Survey (2015), approximately 37% of 2015 college seniors reported not having to utilize loans to pay for their college education, whereas 49% reported that they will graduate with some student loan debt. Among those who reported borrowing money, the median student loan debt was \$26,000, with approximately one-third (35%) of African American students reporting loan amounts greater than the median. While a higher portion of PUPP alumni report taking out some loans (83%), the median amount borrowed seems comparable. It is important to note that the larger HERI sample includes many students who are not from traditionally underrepresented groups.

### Working During College

Eighty-one percent of PUPP Alumni Survey respondents reported that they had a job for pay while they were enrolled in their undergraduate course work. Their jobs included working in the dining hall or library, being a residential assistant, and working in computer technician or sales positions. A majority of survey respondents reported that they used their earnings from their undergraduate employment for discretionary spending (58%), whereas 34% reported using their earnings for other expenses. Common examples of other expenses included books, supplies, groceries, and auto insurance. Only 4% of respondents reported using their undergraduate earnings for their families’ expenses. Only 3% of respondents reported spending their earnings on tuition and fees or room and board.

**Table 6** Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey Participants' Reports of Participation in Activities and on the Extent to Which Money Was a Factor in Their Participation

Undergraduate activity	Prefer not to respond (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	If alumni reported no (%)			
				Money major reason	Money a minor reason	Money not a reason	Prefer not to respond
Participate in a study abroad program	4	23	73	51	13	33	2
Participate in an unpaid internship	6	30	64	34	11	49	5
Be on a research project with faculty	9	23	68	12	4	80	5
Participate in academic or social clubs	3	81	15	11	11	79	0
Take as many classes as you would have liked	6	73	21	38	15	42	4
Have the living accommodations you wanted	2	85	13	69	13	19	0

Note.  $N = 124$ .

### Undergraduate Enrichment Opportunities

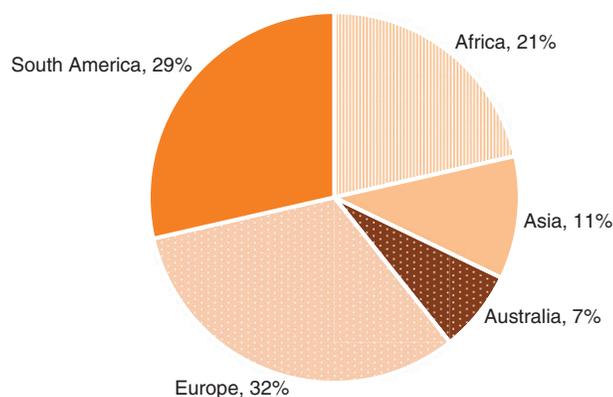
PUPP encourages its alumni to participate in undergraduate enrichment opportunities, such as study abroad programs, unpaid internships, undergraduate research, and academic and social clubs. These activities can come with actual costs or opportunity costs in terms of lost income from paid work. In the survey, we tried to uncover the impact of these costs on participation in enrichment opportunities. As the results in Table 6 show, money was indeed a major reason behind decisions not to participate in enrichment opportunities for some alumni.

#### Study Abroad Programs

Twenty-three percent of survey participants who attended college directly after high school reported participating in an undergraduate study abroad experience. Countries participants reported studying in included Argentina, Brazil, China, Denmark, Ghana, Japan, Senegal, Spain, and the United Kingdom. Thirty-two percent of the study abroad experiences reported were in Europe, 29% were in South America, and 21% were in Africa (see Figure 12). Among those who opted not to study abroad, just over half (51%) indicated that money was a major reason for this choice, and an additional 13% indicated that it was a minor reason for opting not to study abroad. For purposes of comparison, we found that the literature has indicated that students who enter college thinking there is a Very good chance they will study abroad come from higher socioeconomic status backgrounds than those with lower expectations of participating in these kinds of programs (Eagan et al., 2014).

#### Unpaid Internships

Thirty percent of PUPP Alumni Survey participants reported that they participated in unpaid internships during their undergraduate careers. Although recent research has suggested that unpaid internships do not necessarily increase the



**Figure 12** Continents in which Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey respondents reported participating in study abroad programs ( $N = 28$ ).

likelihood of obtaining paid employment (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2014), there remains a prevalent belief in the importance of opportunities accessed through unpaid internships. Of those who reported not participating in an unpaid internship, 34% said that money was a major reason for nonparticipation, and an additional 11% indicated that money was a minor reason.

#### *Working With Faculty on Research Projects*

Twenty-three percent of PUPP Alumni Survey participants reported that they worked with faculty on a research project during their undergraduate years. This rate is slightly lower than what was found on the 2015 College Senior Survey, in which approximately 41% of graduating seniors reported they had spent time working on a professor's research project—participation varied by academic major, with research participation being more common for science and engineering majors (Higher Education Research Institute, 2015). While 12% of respondents who said they did not work on faculty research projects cited money as a major reason (and 4% cited it as a minor reason), 80% reported that money was not a factor in their decision.

#### *Participation in Academic and Social Clubs*

A majority of survey respondents indicated that they participated in academic or social clubs (81%) during their undergraduate course work. The clubs included organizations for members of racial and ethnic groups, from Black student organizations and Nosotros (a Hispanic student group) to fraternities and sororities, club sports groups, and community service clubs. Although money was cited as at least a minor reason for not participating (22%) in these types of clubs, a majority of those who did not participate (79%) indicated that money was not a factor in their decision.

### ***Postbaccalaureate Experiences: Education and Work***

In this section, we examine the lives of PUPP alumni who earned a bachelor's degree in terms of their work and graduate school experiences.

#### *Postbaccalaureate Educational Experiences*

*Enrollment in postbaccalaureate educational programs.* Of the 66 alumni surveyed who indicated that they earned a bachelor's degree, 20% indicated that they are currently enrolled in postbaccalaureate degree programs ranging from associate degree to doctoral degree programs (see Figure 13). Approximately half of these alumni are enrolled in programs in New Jersey.

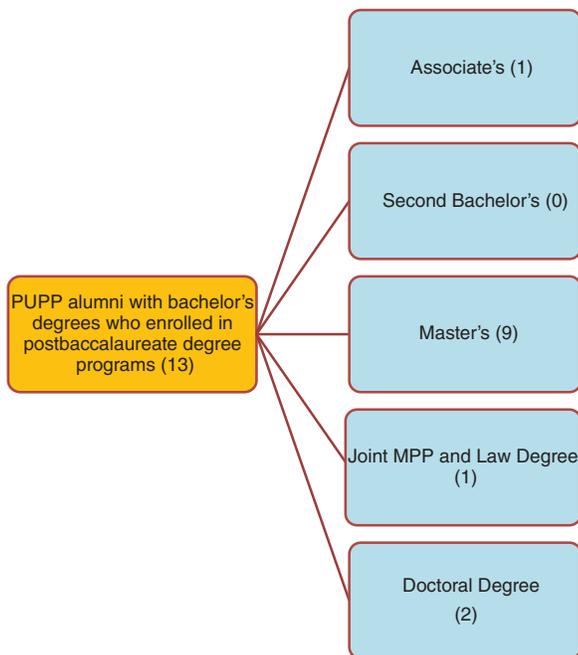
We asked survey respondents if they would be able to relocate for career or educational opportunities. Among alumni who have earned a bachelor's degree, 52% reported that they are able to relocate, 38% reported that they would prefer not to move but could if necessary, and 11% reported that it would be very difficult for them to relocate right now for a career or educational opportunity.

*Graduate degree attainment.* Sixteen PUPP Alumni Survey respondents reported that they have earned a postbaccalaureate degree in addition to a bachelor's degree (see Figure 14). Most of them have earned graduate degrees. Reported graduate degrees earned by PUPP Alumni Survey participants included master's of arts or science degrees (29%), other master's degrees (29%), law degrees (21%), and medical degrees (such as an MD, DDS, or DVM; 14%).

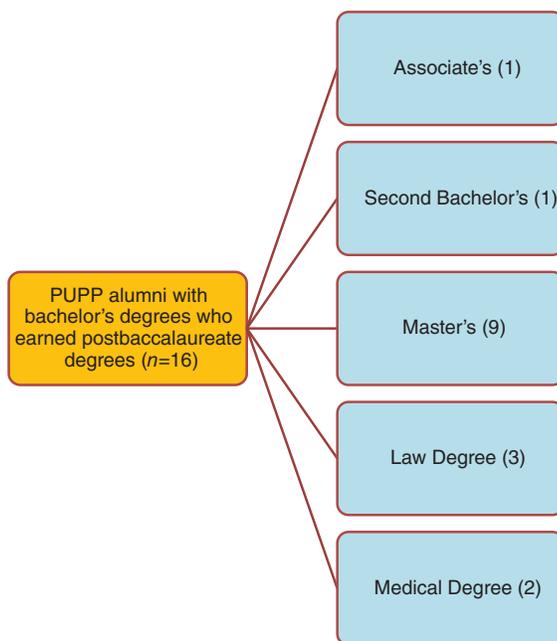
#### *Postbaccalaureate Employment*

The overwhelming majority (96%) of PUPP Alumni Survey participants who completed their undergraduate education said they work for pay. Eighty-three percent of those respondents indicated that they work full time, whereas 8% reported that they work part time. Only two respondents who earned a bachelor's degree reported not working, and one individual preferred not to respond to this survey question. They reported working at Fortune 500 companies, colleges and universities, not-for-profit organizations, and the government, including the military.

PUPP Alumni Survey participants who have earned a bachelor's degree reported working in a variety of careers (see Figure 15). The career field chosen by the greatest proportion of respondents was education and library sciences (21%);



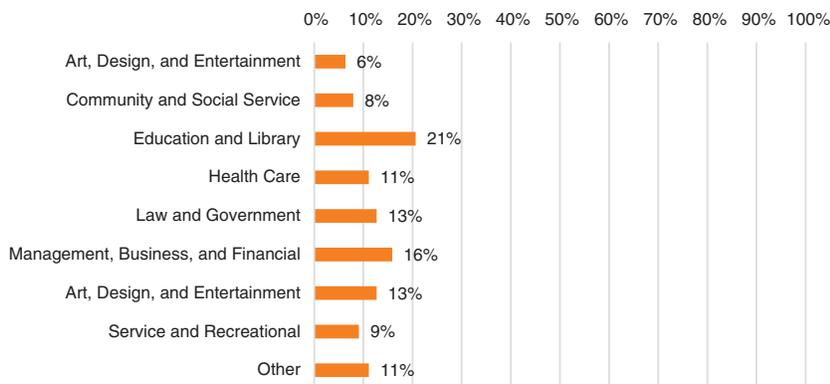
**Figure 13** Enrollment of Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey participants with bachelor’s degrees in postbaccalaureate degree programs ( $N = 13$ ).



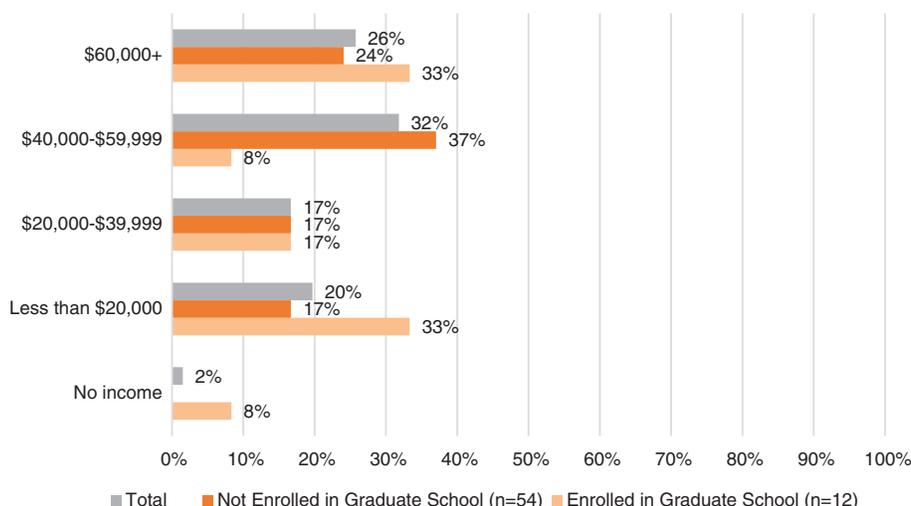
**Figure 14** Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey participants with bachelor’s degrees enrolled in postbaccalaureate programs, by degree type ( $N = 16$ ).

the next most common areas were management, business, and finance (16%), law and government (13%), art, design, and entertainment (13%), and health care (11%; see Figure 18). Eleven percent of PUPP Alumni Survey respondents with a bachelor’s degree reported working in a career not specified in the survey; examples included nonprofit work, sales, and customer service.

Among survey respondents who reported that they have completed a bachelor’s degree and are not enrolled in graduate school ( $n = 54$ ), 37% reported earning between \$40,000 and \$59,999, and 24% reported earning more than \$60,000 (see



**Figure 15** Types of careers reported by Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey participants who are currently employed and have completed a bachelor’s degree ( $n = 63$ ). No respondents reported careers in communications and media, natural resources, or protection services.

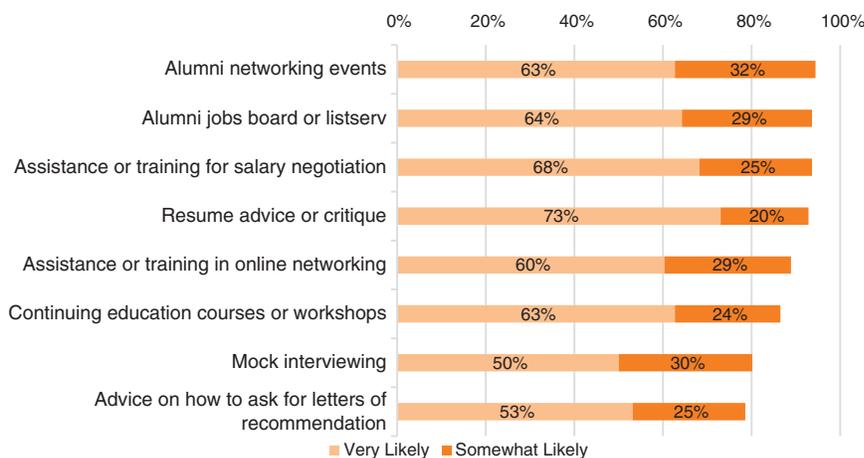


**Figure 16** Income reported by Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey participants who reported that they have completed a bachelor’s degree, by graduate school enrollment and overall ( $N = 66$ ).

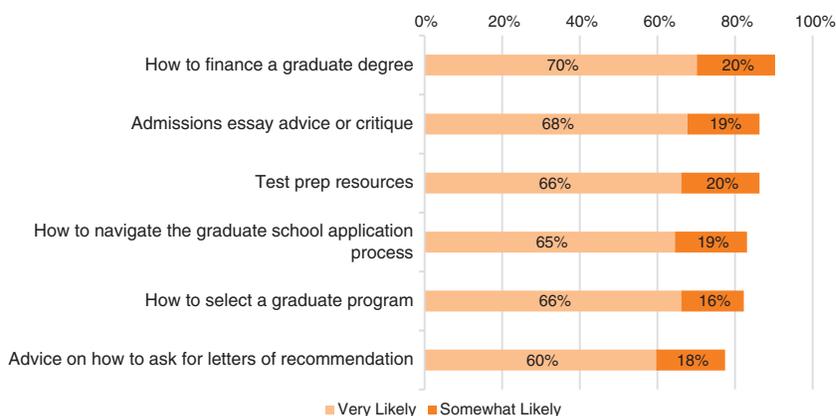
Figure 16). Among alumni who reported that they have completed a bachelor’s degree and are enrolled in graduate school ( $n = 12$ ), only 8% reported earning between \$40,000 and \$59,999. Another 17% reported making \$20,000 – \$39,999, one-third (33%) reported that they earn less than \$20,000, and one-third (33%) reported earning more than \$60,000. These findings indicate, as would be expected, that most PUPP Alumni Survey respondents enrolled in graduate school are earning less, on average, than respondents who earned a bachelor’s degree and have not opted to pursue any further education. A very small minority are earning more than \$60,000 while in graduate school, presumably because they are continuing to work full time and may be attending school part time.

In 2015, the average starting salary for a college graduate was \$50, 219, with STEM graduates averaging \$58,554 and social science majors averaging \$40,964 (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2016). A majority of survey respondents appear to be earning incomes in these ranges, despite the fact that the majority of respondents reported college majors and career fields in the social sciences, a field in which salaries tend to be lower than they are in some other fields requiring STEM degrees.

Whereas the earlier sections presenting PUPP Alumni Survey findings primarily focused on experiences with college and employment after PUPP, the next report section summarizes survey items on alumni’s current relationships with PUPP, the extent to which they might avail themselves of additional supports for alumni, and their reflections on their experiences in PUPP.



**Figure 17** Reported likelihood that Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey participants would utilize Princeton University Preparatory Program employment services (N = 126).



**Figure 18** Reported likelihood that Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey participants would utilize Princeton University Preparatory Program graduate school support services (N = 124).

**Alumni Interest in Potential Princeton University Preparatory Program Services for Alumni Postcollege**

*Interest in Potential Princeton University Preparatory Program Employment Supports*

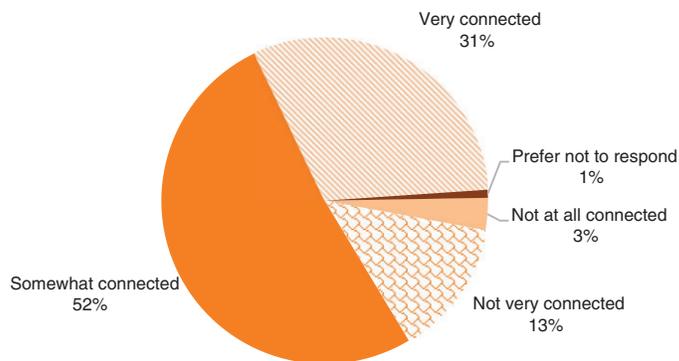
Most PUPP Alumni Survey respondents reported that they would be at least somewhat likely to use an array of PUPP employment supports (see Figure 17), including using an alumni job postings board (94%) and getting assistance or training in salary negotiation (94%) and advice on or critiques of their résumés (93%). Almost all respondents (94%) indicated that they would attend alumni networking events.

*Interest in Potential Princeton University Preparatory Program Graduate Education Supports*

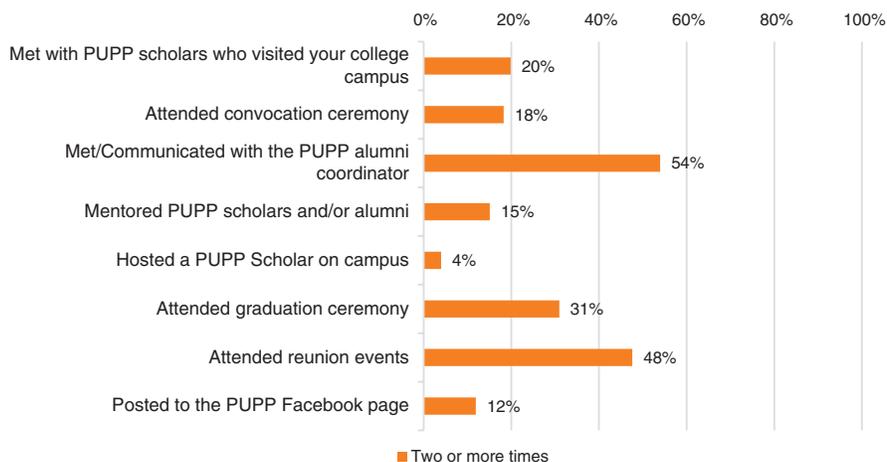
Most PUPP Alumni Survey participants also indicated that they would be at least somewhat likely to use PUPP graduate school enrollment and support services (see Figure 18), including information on how to finance a graduate degree (90%), test preparation resources (86%), admissions essay advice or critiques (86%), and information on how to navigate the graduate school application process (84%) and select a graduate degree program (82%).

*Ongoing Alumni Connections to Princeton University Preparatory Program*

*Feeling connected to Princeton University Preparatory Program.* A large majority of PUPP Alumni Survey respondents reported continuing to feel connected to the program (see Figure 19). Thirty-one percent of respondents described themselves as very connected to PUPP, and an additional 52% said they are somewhat connected. In contrast, 13% of



**Figure 19** Extent to which Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey respondents reported feeling connected to the Princeton University Preparatory Program (N = 126).



**Figure 20** Percentages of Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey respondents reporting participating in Princeton University Preparatory Program activities two or more times after graduating (N = 126).

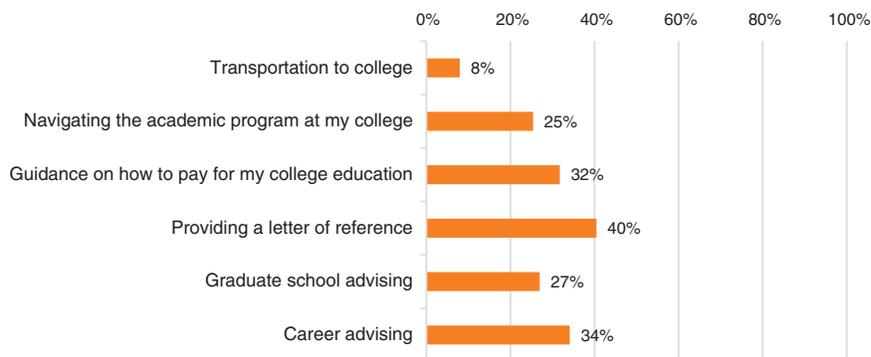
PUPP Alumni Survey respondents reported that they are not very connected to the program, and only 3% described themselves as not at all connected to PUPP. We should note that it is possible that those alumni who feel more connected to PUPP may have been more likely to complete the survey.

*Alumni participation in Princeton University Preparatory Program alumni activities.* PUPP Alumni Survey respondents reported participating in various PUPP alumni activities since graduating from high school and PUPP (see Figure 20). Alumni who participated in the survey reported that they had communicated with the PUPP Alumni Fellow (current or previous; 54%) and attended reunion events (48%) two or more times since graduating high school. Thirty-one percent of PUPP Alumni Survey respondents reported attending the PUPP graduation ceremony two or more times. These findings highlight the extent to which alumni remain connected to PUPP; they also touch on the possibility of PUPP encouraging alumni to give back to the program and leveraging their interest in doing so to support program expansions.

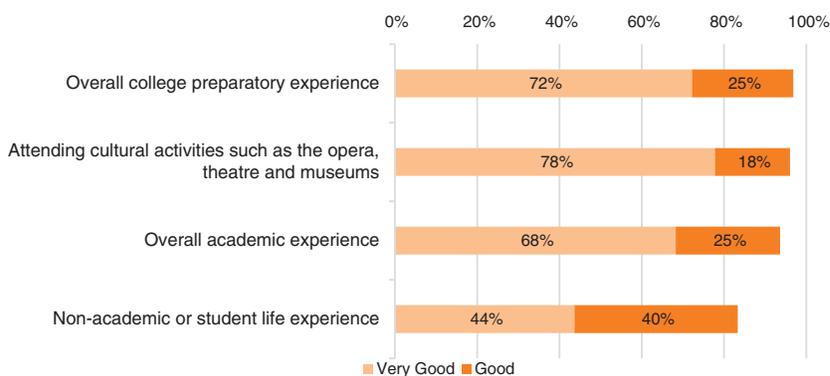
*Ongoing support from Princeton University Preparatory Program staff.* PUPP staff remain available to alumni and continue to offer them support and guidance after they graduate from the program (see Figure 21). Forty percent of PUPP Alumni Survey respondents reported that they asked PUPP staff to provide a letter of recommendation, 34% have asked for career advising, 32% have requested guidance on how to pay for their college education, 27% sought graduate school advising, and 25% requested help navigating the academic program at their college. Eight percent of those surveyed said they requested help with transportation to college.

*Reflections on Princeton University Preparatory Program*

According to the results of the PUPP Alumni Survey, PUPP alumni may tend toward favorable views of PUPP. However, we should also note that those alumni who opted to participate in the PUPP Alumni Survey may have more favorable



**Figure 21** Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey respondents who reported asking Princeton University Preparatory Program staff for support after program completion ( $N = 126$ ).

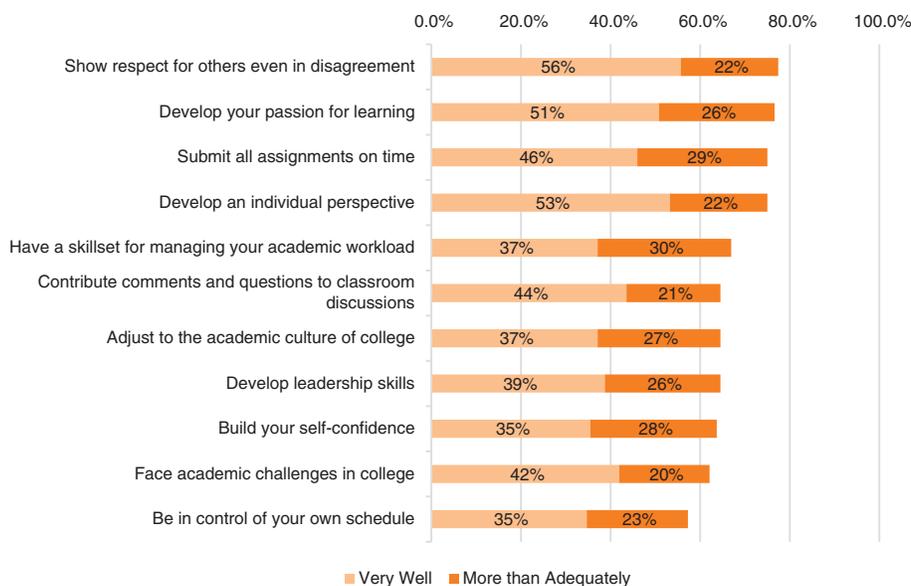


**Figure 22** Extent to which Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey respondents agreed with statements about the Princeton University Preparatory Program experience ( $N = 126$ ).

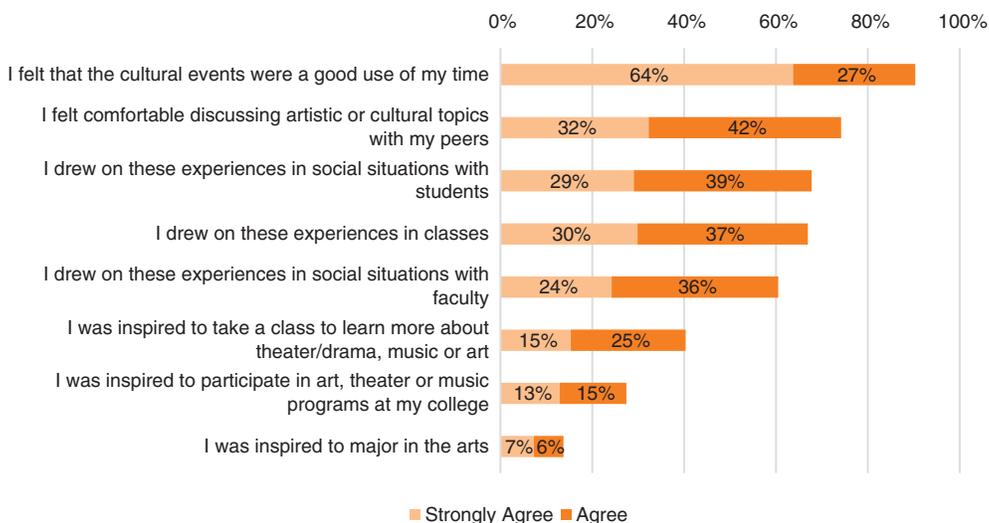
views of PUPP than alumni who opted not to participate. As the results in this section show, many of those surveyed reported that PUPP contributed to their skill development in multiple areas. PUPP Alumni Survey respondents tended to have positive views of PUPP activities and organizational practices. The survey results also show that 93% of alumni have recommended PUPP to another person, highlighting the extent to which alumni view PUPP as helpful and effective. The following sections present findings on various items designed to gather PUPP alumni’s reflections on PUPP staff and activities, and their influence on alumni.

*Quality of Princeton University Preparatory Program experiences.* PUPP Alumni Survey participants were asked to assess several aspects of their PUPP experience (see Figure 22). Ninety-seven percent reported that the overall college preparatory experience provided by PUPP was good or Very good. PUPP cultural activities, such as trips to attend operas, theatrical performances, and art museums, were rated good or Very good by 97% of respondents. The overall academic experience provided by PUPP was rated as good or Very good by 93% of participants. The nonacademic or student life experiences provided by PUPP were rated good or Very good by proportionally fewer respondents—84% rated these experiences good or Very good.

*Princeton University Preparatory Program prepared alumni for college.* Ninety-nine percent of PUPP Alumni Survey participants reported that it is mostly true to very true that PUPP created access and opportunity for them at best-fit colleges. Participants generally agreed that PUPP helped prepare them more than adequately or very well for college experiences and helped them build relevant skills and competencies (see Figure 23). Seventy-eight percent of survey respondents reported that PUPP prepared them to show respect for others even in disagreement, and 77% reported that it helped them develop a passion for learning. Participants also reported that PUPP helped them to develop the PUPP Priority Skills of developing an individual perspective (75%), submitting assignments on time (75%), and developing a skill set for managing their academic workload (67%). A majority of respondents said they thought PUPP helped them develop



**Figure 23** Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey participants’ views on how well the Princeton University Preparatory Program prepared them for college experiences (N = 124).

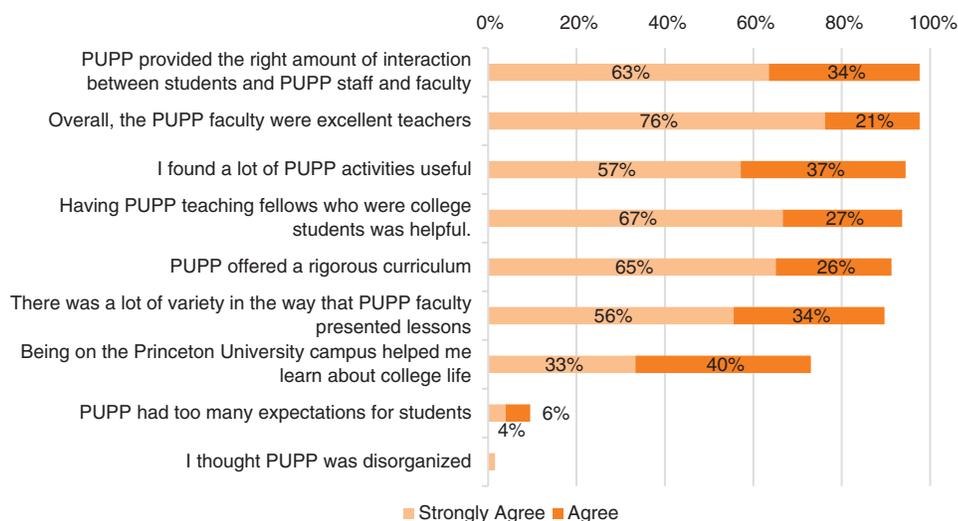


**Figure 24** Extent to which alumni say Princeton University Preparatory Program cultural experiences affected them (N = 124).

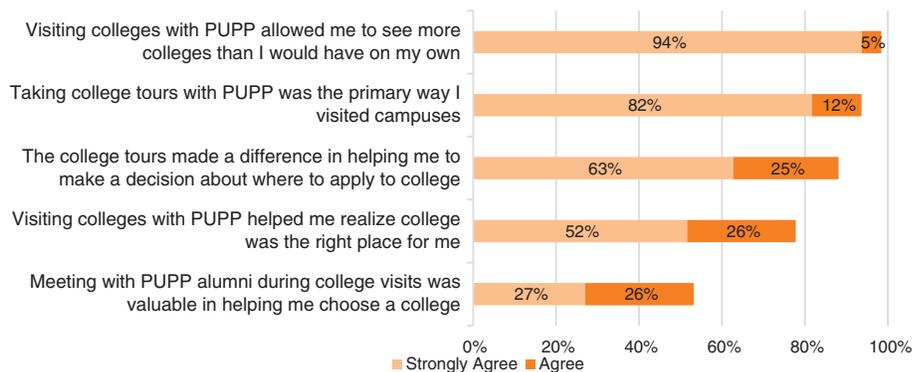
leadership skills, another PUPP Priority Skill (65%); adjust to the academic culture of college (65%); build self-confidence (63%); and face academic challenges in college (62%).

*Princeton University Preparatory Program cultural activities supported college experiences.* Many PUPP Alumni Survey participants agreed that PUPP cultural experiences contributed to their experiences in college (Figure 24). Most participants (91%) reported that they felt the cultural events were a good use of their time. Most survey respondents agreed that the excursions helped them feel comfortable discussing artistic or cultural topics with peers (74%). Many also reported that they drew on these experiences during social situations with students (68%) and faculty (60%). Additionally, responses indicated that the cultural experiences inspired a subgroup of participants to take a class to learn more about theater/drama, music, or art (40%); to participate in these kinds of programs at college (27%); and to major in the arts (14%).

*Princeton University Preparatory Program organizational practices and staff.* PUPP Alumni Survey participants were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with numerous statements about the organizational and staffing practices of PUPP (see Figure 25). Nearly all respondents agreed or Strongly agreed that PUPP faculty were excellent teachers (97%),



**Figure 25** Extent to which Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey respondents agreed with statements about the Princeton University Preparatory Program's organizational practices and staff ( $N = 126$ ).

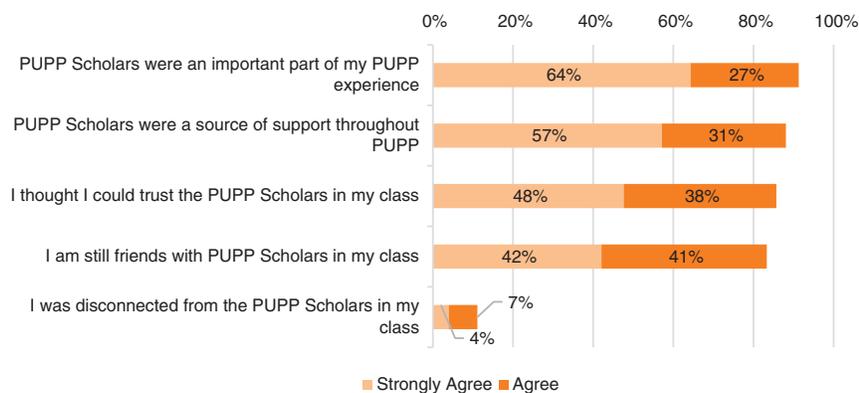


**Figure 26** Extent to which Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey respondents agreed with statements about Princeton University Preparatory Program college tours ( $N = 126$ ).

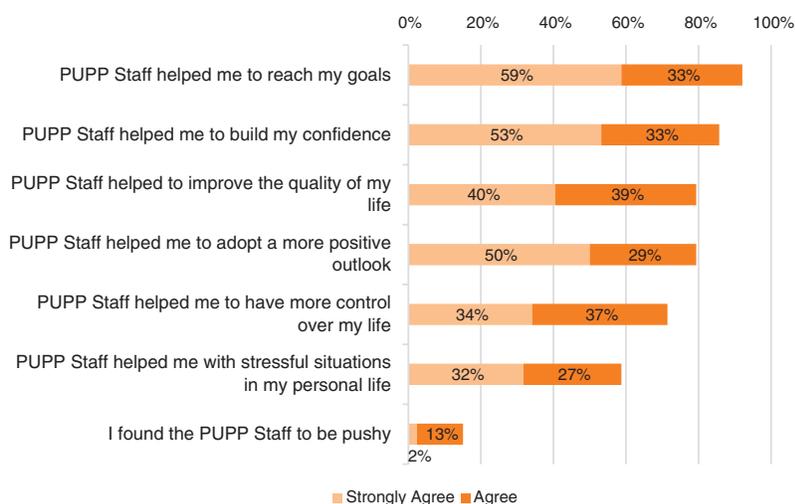
PUPP provided the right amount of interaction between student and PUPP staff and faculty (97%), having PUPP teaching fellows who were college students was helpful (94%), and many PUPP activities were useful (94%). Most respondents also agreed or Strongly agreed that PUPP offered a rigorous curriculum (91%), that there was variety in the way PUPP faculty presented lessons (90%), and that being on the Princeton University campus helped them learn about college life (73%). Ten percent of those surveyed reported that they thought PUPP had too many expectations for students, and only a few alumni selected that PUPP was disorganized (2%).

*Princeton University Preparatory Program college tours.* Overall, PUPP Alumni Survey participants generally agreed that the PUPP college tours had value to them (see Figure 26). Nearly all participants reported that they visited more colleges with PUPP than they would have been able to visit on their own (99%). Ninety-four percent of participants agreed that taking the college tours with PUPP was the primary way they visited colleges. The PUPP tours made a difference in helping many participants make a decision about where to apply for college (88%) and helped some participants realize that college was the right place for them (78%). Additionally, the chance to meet PUPP alumni during college visits was considered helpful for making college choices by 53% of survey respondents. Regarding this last finding, we should note that college tours did not include time with PUPP alumni until recent years.

*Princeton University Preparatory Program peer relationships.* PUPP Alumni Survey respondents also completed items assessing the extent to which they agreed with statements about their perceptions of their relationships with their fellow scholars during their time in PUPP. A majority of those surveyed reported positive perceptions of their peer scholars (see Figure 27). Ninety-one percent agreed or Strongly agreed that other PUPP scholars were an important part of their PUPP



**Figure 27** Extent to which Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey participants agreed with statements about Princeton University Preparatory Program scholars (N = 126).

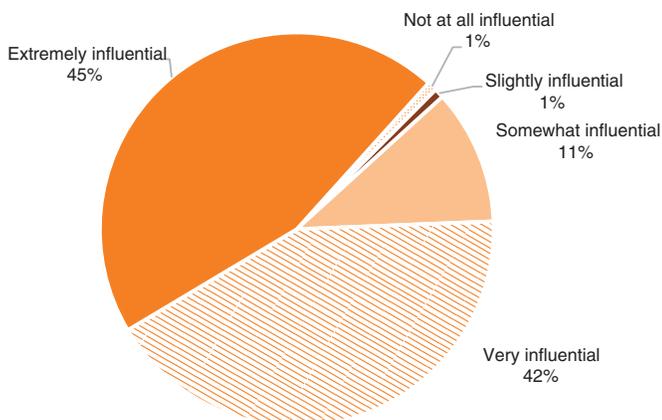


**Figure 28** Extent to which Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey respondents agreed with statements about Princeton University Preparatory Program staff (N = 126).

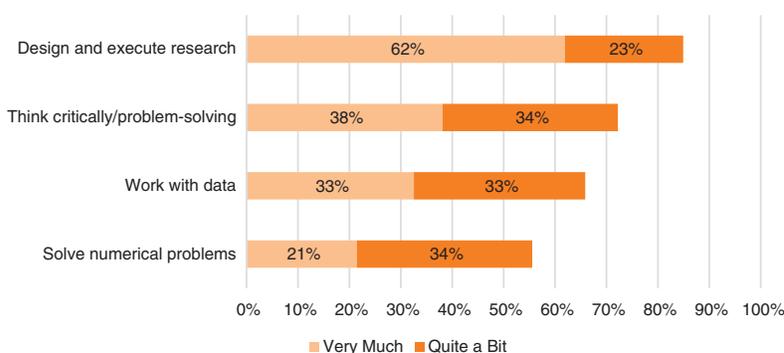
experience, whereas 88% agreed that their peer scholars were an important source of support and 86% agreed that they thought they could trust their fellow scholars during their time in PUPP. A large majority (83%) agreed that they are still friends with some of their PUPP peers, highlighting the strength and importance of these relationships. However, a small minority (11%) agreed that they felt disconnected from the other scholars in their class, indicating that there is room for improvement in the extent of peer bonding and support that occurs during PUPP. It is possible that some scholars need additional support to develop close relationships with their peer scholars during PUPP.

*Alumni perceptions of Princeton University Preparatory Program staff.* In general, PUPP Alumni Survey participants agreed that relationships with PUPP staff were helpful to them (see Figure 28). Respondents reported that they agreed or Strongly agreed that PUPP staff helped them to reach their goals (92%), build confidence (86%), improve the quality of their lives (79%), adopt a more positive outlook (79%), and have more control over their lives (71%). Additionally, nearly 59% of respondents reported that PUPP staff helped them address stressful personal situations.

These findings seem to indicate that PUPP staff are invested and involved in the lives of PUPP scholars and alumni and that they provide mentoring and social support as the program design specifies they should. However, the survey findings also indicate that a small minority of participants have negative impressions of PUPP staff’s involvement in their lives, as indicated by the fact that 15% of alumni reported that they agreed that PUPP staff were pushy during their time in PUPP. It is unclear whether these are the same respondents who also reported that PUPP staff helped them. Taken together, these findings highlight the possibility that PUPP may want to consider how involved it should be in some participants’ lives.



**Figure 29** Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey respondents’ ratings of how influential Princeton University Preparatory Program staff were to them during the program (N = 126).



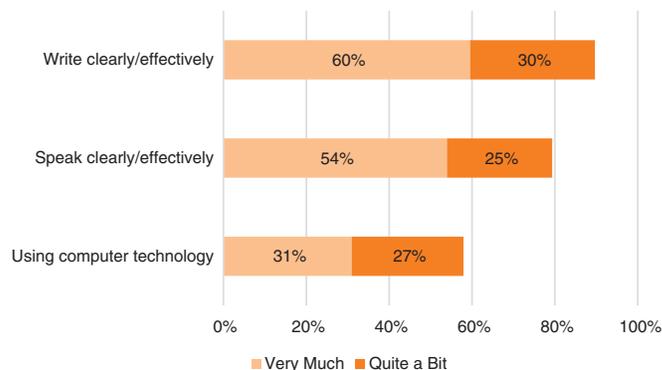
**Figure 30** Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey respondents rated how much their Princeton University Preparatory Program experiences contributed to their Princeton University Preparatory Program Priority Skills in the area of critical thinking (N = 126).

*Alumni perceptions of Princeton University Preparatory Program staff influence.* The majority of PUPP Alumni Survey respondents reported that the PUPP staff were very or extremely influential to them during their PUPP years (see Figure 29). Forty-five percent indicated that PUPP staff were extremely influential to them, 42% reported that PUPP staff were very influential, and 11% indicated that PUPP staff were somewhat influential to them. These findings may indicate that PUPP alumni who found PUPP staff “pushy” also reported that PUPP staff were at least somewhat influential to them during their PUPP years.

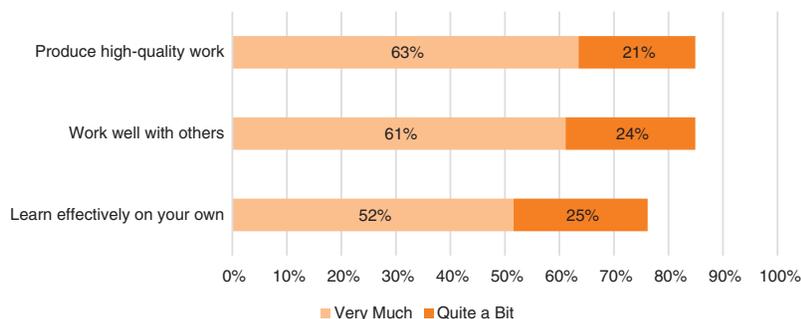
*Alumni perceptions of Princeton University Preparatory Program contributions to alumni social–emotional skills.* To gather data on alumni’s perceptions of PUPP’s impact on their social–emotional skills, particularly those captured by the PUPP Priority Skills, the PUPP Alumni Survey asked respondents to rate the extent to which PUPP contributed to their skill development in specific areas. The PUPP Priority Skills encompass five skill areas theorized to be important for college and career readiness: knowledge acquisition, critical thinking, communication, external attitudes and behaviors, and internal attitudes and behaviors. As noted earlier, the majority of survey participants agreed or Strongly agreed that PUPP had contributed to the knowledge acquisition skills of submitting assignments on time (75%) and developing a skill set for managing their academic workload (67%).

The majority of PUPP Alumni Survey respondents reported that PUPP contributed quite a bit or very much to their critical thinking skills (see Figure 30). These included the specific critical thinking skills of problem solving (85%), designing and executing research (72%), solving numerical problems (66%), and working with data (55%).

The majority of PUPP Alumni Survey respondents also indicated that PUPP had contributed quite a bit to their communication skills related to writing clearly/effectively (90%), speaking clearly/effectively (79%), and using computer technology (58%; see Figure 31).



**Figure 31** Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey respondents rated how much their Princeton University Preparatory Program experiences have contributed to their Princeton University Preparatory Program Priority Skills in the area of communication ( $N = 126$ ).



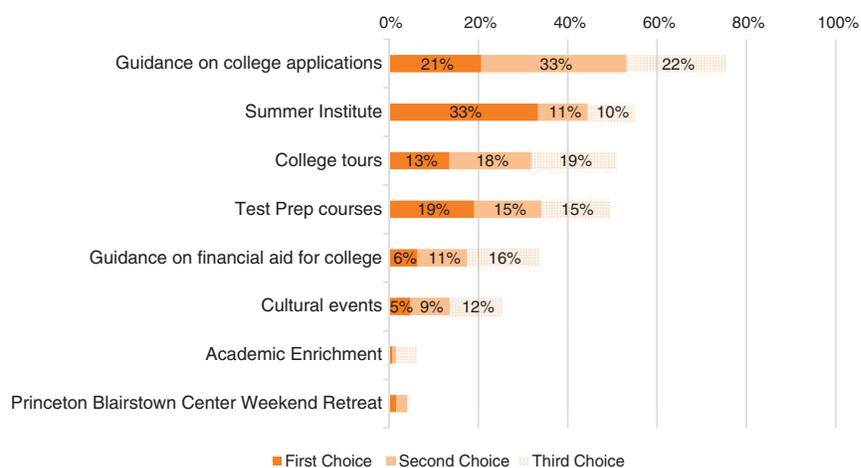
**Figure 32** Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey respondents rated how much their Princeton University Preparatory Program experiences have contributed to their Princeton University Preparatory Program Priority Skills in the area of internal and external attitudes and behaviors ( $N = 126$ ).

The majority of PUPP Alumni Survey participants indicated that PUPP helped them develop skills related to the PUPP Priority Skills labeled internal and external attitudes and behaviors (see Figure 32). They indicated that PUPP contributed quite a bit or very much to their ability to produce high-quality work (84%), to work well with others (85%), and to learn effectively on their own (77%). As noted earlier, 65% of those surveyed also reported that PUPP contributed to their leadership skills, another PUPP Priority Skill in this category.

*Alumni perceptions of the most important Princeton University Preparatory Program activities.* When asked to rank order the three most important PUPP activities (see Figure 33), 33% of alumni ranked the PUPP Summer Institute as their first choice, with an additional 11% selecting the summer program as their second choice. Twenty-one percent of alumni selected guidance on college applications as the most important PUPP activity, whereas an additional 33% ranked this guidance as the second most important PUPP activity. The PUPP college tours and college entrance exam preparation activities (also known as “test prep”) were also commonly ranked as important to alumni.

*Importance of Princeton University Preparatory Program being provided free of charge.* PUPP is offered at no financial cost to students and their families. PUPP covers the cost of transportation to campus, books and supplies, all of the PUPP field trips, and test preparation courses. We asked alumni how important it was that PUPP did not charge any fees for them to participate in the program. Ninety-eight percent of all alumni surveyed ( $N = 126$ ) reported that it was very important that PUPP did not charge any fees for its services, while another 2% responded that it was somewhat important that PUPP is provided free of charge.

*Princeton University Preparatory Program access and success.* Eighty-nine percent of all PUPP Alumni Survey respondents ( $N = 126$ ) reported that it is very true for them that PUPP is creating access and opportunity for low-income, high-achieving students to succeed at the best-fit college for them. Another 10% reported that this statement is mostly true to them. These findings indicate that the vast majority of alumni surveyed feel that PUPP is meeting its mission to provide college access and opportunities for low-income, high-achieving youth. The findings from open-ended comments



**Figure 33** The three most important Princeton University Preparatory Program activities, according to Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Survey respondents ( $N = 126$ ).

(discussed in the next section) provide further evidence of PUPP's positive influence on its participants, both during and after their PUPP years.

### ***Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Voices: Open-Ended Survey Comments***

The PUPP Alumni Survey included two open-ended survey items designed to gather details about the experiences of PUPP alumni during their years in PUPP. The first open-ended item asked alumni to tell their PUPP stories, while the second item asked them to describe how PUPP did or did not change their lives. A total of 122 PUPP Alumni Survey respondents provided their PUPP stories, and all 126 survey respondents described how PUPP did or did not change their lives. Their responses ranged from a few words to one or two paragraphs of text. We analyzed their responses for overarching themes. Because the overarching themes of the responses were similar across both questions, we opted to analyze the responses using the same set of codes.

Coding was conducted by two trained researchers through an iterative process in which all responses were reviewed multiple times by each coder. Codes were refined through repeated discussions and with the guidance of the principal investigator.

We present the overarching themes of alumni's open-ended responses in this section, along with direct quotations from PUPP alumni to provide contextual details about alumni experiences in the words of alumni themselves. We found that many PUPP Alumni Survey respondents' responses to the open-ended survey items addressed multiple themes, emphasizing how PUPP had helped them in multiple ways. Given that PUPP aims to holistically address scholars' needs in multiple areas of their lives, from academic skills to social support to college application guidance, this was not a surprising finding. One example is the following quotation, which highlights how PUPP influenced the alum's life in multiple ways. This comment also emphasizes the value of the social support and mentoring PUPP provided:

PUPP has influenced every part of my life. The people I met there introduced me to the idea that I could imagine whatever I wanted for myself; that no dream was impossible. They believed in me and my potential. I found this nowhere else—not in my friends, my family, or my high school teachers or counselors (despite their admission that I was at the top of my class). This gave me the courage to envision my plans to attend a selective college that cared about its students. The preparation and knowledge that they gave me from being on the Princeton campus, having academic preparation, insights into crafting a competitive college application, and personal invitation into the academic world by Princeton professors who I could call my friends, was invaluable to my having the confidence to implement the plans to carry out my vision. More than 10 years later, I still rely on PUPP to stir the belief in my heart that I can not only envision a life for myself that is self-directed and virtuous, but also, craft it for myself.

Many open-ended comments, such as the following, speak to how PUPP may have changed the life trajectories of alumni:



college and noticed that many of my peers have not yet developed many of the skills that I learned through PUPP. PUPP also helped me become more comfortable with myself. Throughout high school I was usually the quiet kid who didn't have many friends. When I got to college I was much more confident with myself because of all the experiences I got through PUPP.

Academically, it exposed me to people with different experiences, people from outside of Trenton (and its education system), in a sustained academic environment. And it required me to think in ways I hadn't been asked to before. I had to analyze, synthesize, investigate, and evaluate things on a level that my regular academic classes didn't often require. And write REALLY long papers. So I had the tools I needed to do well in college (including my first laptop, a used IBM I got from the program, so I could actually do my work).

Some alumni also highlighted how enriching they found the PUPP arts and cultural events to be. Alumni noted,

PUPP opened so many doors for me. Doors that I had no idea existed before. The cultural excursions and activities will always stay with me. They were extremely educational and made me think about other people's situations in life. I feel extremely grateful for all the knowledge I was able to acquire thanks to PUPP.

PUPP helped me understand the college process and become adequately prepared for it in a way I would not have been able to without it. It also exposed me to an arts and culture world that I would not have had access to, which helped me fit in more in a college with a demography of mostly upper-middle-class White students. This really changed my life in the sense that it literally opened up a whole new world for me.

PUPP allowed me to attend college as well as exposed me to opportunities (operas, Broadway shows, etc.) and resources (academic support, test prep, etc.) that springboarded me into the college success I am currently experiencing.

Furthermore, many alumni emphasized that PUPP activities had supported their personal development, including their development of social-emotional skills:

The Summer Institute filled my summers with expanding my knowledge and increasing my understanding of how I learn. I would start the school year feeling fresher than my peers who spent their summers vacationing or working. Specifically, the course on Electrical Engineering introduced me to a field of study I didn't even know existed and started me on the path that I am continuing to take today. Finally, my group of friends in high school was culturally homogeneous, and my PUPP cohort was completely different from them. I felt like by the time I arrived to college, I was culturally and academically educated.

PUPP helped me gain confidence with participating in discussions and with public speaking. PUPP has also exposed me to things that I would have never gotten the opportunity to do. This includes the college tours and the cultural excursions.

I am a much more put together and a more polished person through PUPP. I have more confidence, I am more articulate, I am more motivated that I can do anything I put my mind to. ... It makes you feel so good because you excelled in a prestigious environment and were invested into. That feeling of being invested into makes you want to work harder.

Socially and culturally, I think is where PUPP really changed me. PUPP forced us to be leaders and speakers, to know how to present ourselves, ask questions, engage with people/places we might normally be intimidated by, envision ourselves in places we hadn't considered before. My sense of the world I inhabited was a lot smaller before I started PUPP, but it grew, and with it so did my comfort in navigating it. I was really timid as a freshman, but that really wasn't an option in PUPP. So my PUPP story isn't just academic or college related. Through PUPP, in a lot of ways, is where I discovered what I'm good at (and what I'm not) and was pushed to embrace challenges. And it's where I built the social and cultural capital I needed to code-switch, to thrive in a world outside of my segregated community.

Some alumni comments highlighted the positive influence of the social support PUPP provided. Some of these comments specifically addressed the influence of PUPP faculty and staff mentoring and how the program enabled peers to bond and create supportive relationships. The following PUPP story exemplifies both subthemes:

My experience with PUPP has been amazing, and even now as an [alum], I do not regret spending my summers in the institution. The summer retreats allowed me to connect with my fellow scholars and TAs [teaching assistants] outside of the classroom. We created bonds and shared memories during the retreats, and learned about each other's stories. In the classroom, we learned how to interact in a college setting. It was important for us as a cohort to notice each other's strengths and include each other in discussions. The 4 years I spent with PUPP were very important to my college admissions process mostly. I wouldn't have gotten through it so easily without my PUPP advisors, the admissions classes, application/essay writing courses, and college tours. I owe so much of my success so far in college to this wonderful program and will continue to recommend it to my family and friends. I still feel a connection to PUPP even as an [alum], I can comfortably talk to the PUPP staff, my fellow cohort members, and still feel very welcome to PUPP events and gatherings.

Other alumni comments addressing this theme included the following:

My participation in PUPP allowed me to form strong friendships with people my age who came from racial and class backgrounds similar to my own, which I was not able to do in public schools. Also, the fact that members of the PUPP staff and faculty shared my background allowed me to see myself in a collegiate environment, and doing similar kinds of academic and education work. I think my participation in PUPP really allowed me to expand my horizons and see even more paths as possible for myself.

PUPP was there to help prepare me for college through academic support, college guidance, cultural enrichment, and in other ways. By being in PUPP, I was given the tools needed to be successful before, during, and after college. I also gained lasting friendships and relationships with great people who I know I can go to for anything. It was an awesome experience that I recommend to high school students.

#### *Princeton University Preparatory Program Made College Attendance a Reality*

The second major theme that emerged from the analysis of PUPP alumni's open-ended comments highlights how PUPP made college attendance a reality for PUPP scholars. Several alumni expressed that they may not have made it to college without PUPP:

PUPP meant opportunity for me. I had a goal to attend college, but I did not know where to start. PUPP gave me a path to follow and support while I followed the path.

If it weren't for PUPP, I wouldn't have gone to college. I would have been lost in the application process without the help I received. Had PUPP not been there for me, I wouldn't have had anyone to turn to for guidance. Thank you, Dr. Klugman!

Living in the low-income, socioeconomically disadvantaged city of Trenton, New Jersey, it was difficult to envision college; PUPP aided in culminating this vision and made college a reality for me. During my time in the program I was provided with knowledge, insight, and guidance that I would not have been privy to elsewhere. Through rigorous college preparation courses, cultural enrichment excursions, and counseling throughout the entire college application process, college went from a vision to reality for me. The personal relationships established with other PUPP scholars and PUPP faculty aided in my personal and academic development. PUPP was a pivotal opportunity in helping me grow as a person.

Several subthemes emerged among those who expressed that PUPP helped them to attend college. One subtheme highlighted how helpful PUPP's college application and financial aid application guidance was, particularly given their families' lack of familiarity with these processes. The following responses illustrate this theme. The third response also speaks to PUPP's effectiveness in helping to prepare scholars for the rigors of college and exposing them to the arts and cultural experiences:

I would have never gone to college without the guidance of PUPP. I also would not have been blessed to graduate undergrad and graduate school without any debt. What I lacked from family support, PUPP was able to provide for me.

PUPP created an environment that was safe and welcoming. I was challenged and respected. If it were not for PUPP I would not be attending [the College of New Jersey], and for free. I would not have known how to apply to college and what to do when submitting the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid] since I am in a different situation than others.

PUPP essentially made college a reality by demystifying the application process, financial aid, SAT, etc. I knew that I would attend some college for 4 years after high school, but PUPP translated that thought into action. PUPP also afforded the opportunity to strengthen writing and speaking skills, which were very much utilized in college. The cultural expeditions also broadened my thought and interests in the arts, which was useful having attended a liberal arts university.

Another subtheme that emerged among alumni comments on PUPP's support for college attendance was that PUPP led alumni to consider a broader range of colleges than they may have otherwise considered. The following responses exemplify this outcome; the second response also highlights the importance of the social system PUPP provided:

I would not have known about the college I went to if it hadn't been for PUPP, and I may not have even gotten into that school without PUPP. This school was absolutely the best fit for me and it is because of my college that I am where I am today.

I got into a great school that I would not even have known about if I didn't get the opportunity to tour it with PUPP, and I got a great financial aid package. I also know that I will forever have the wonderful support system of PUPP—I know I can always go to Dr. K and other PUPP staff for help/guidance. I also met fellow scholars who are amazing friends, who I would have never had the opportunity to meet without PUPP.

#### *Princeton University Preparatory Program Helped Scholars Attend More Selective Colleges*

The third major theme of alumni's open-ended responses highlighted how PUPP not only helped alumni to attend college but specifically helped them to attend a selective college or university. Some alumni explained that they would not have gone to such a selective school without PUPP. The quotations that follow exemplify this belief:

I just wanted to go to college since I was very young. However, I did not have the cultural or social capital to really prepare for the process. Without PUPP I would still be in a university, but I probably would not be in Princeton. They take in students and equip them with the knowledge they need to navigate the higher educational system. We were all intelligent, motivated, and capable students; we just needed guidance.

PUPP changed my trajectory. I always thought college was just something you did after high school. All of my teachers always said so (to me anyway), but no one ever told me that applying was a process with its own convoluted language and policies that I'd have to navigate. . . . I am a first-generation college graduate, raised by a single mother. There was no one in my daily life outside of school with a college degree, so I didn't know I wasn't prepared. I applied for PUPP after listening to Dr. Klugman's presentation, because he made it sound good and I thought, "Why not?" I doubt I would have presented strongly enough to get into Columbia University if not for PUPP, and I certainly wouldn't have considered applying!

Looking back at my time at PUPP, I see it as a program that essentially helped me strive for the highest academic level I could achieve. I believe that, because of the type of student I was in high school, I probably would have gone to college regardless of PUPP. BUT, at the same time, I don't think I would have found a school as great as Duke University and have been accepted if it was not for PUPP and the help that the program provided me. The program essentially cut down on the major economic stress that came with testing and applying to colleges. It was also through PUPP that I got to see colleges outside of the two or three institutions that were close by to me. If I

could sum up what PUPP gave me in one sentence, I'd say that it gave me opportunities that I didn't know existed, even though all these opportunities were just in reach.

Some alumni who commented that PUPP helped them get into a selective college specified that PUPP's guidance with the application process was what enabled them to attend a more selective college. The following comment exemplifies this subtheme and also highlights the importance of the exposure to role models PUPP provided:

Before PUPP, I did not think that I would be able to get into a top-ranked school, let alone how to apply or even pay for one if I did. They helped me change my perspective and change my possibilities by helping me navigate through the admissions process and see other students like myself, who are in very similar situations, go to some of the best schools in the country and be successful.

Another comment highlighting how PUPP's college application guidance provided access to selective schools including the following:

I obtained my BA from Syracuse University on a full scholarship and obtained an MPA from Princeton University (also on a full scholarship). I attribute 100% of this to the instruction/mentoring I received through PUPP (i.e., navigating the college admissions process; applying for financial aid; asking for letters of recommendation; taking SAT preparation courses; identifying which classes to take while in high school).

Other alumni who commented that PUPP helped them get into a selective college noted that PUPP's support for the financial aid application process was crucial in enabling them to attend a selective college and to graduate without substantial, or even any, student loan debt. One such response was the following, which also highlights the positive influences of PUPP's support for college preparation and the program's provision of alumni mentoring:

PUPP instilled more confidence in me—I applied to more selective schools and I felt much more prepared for my work there, even though my high school education was severely lacking compared to many of my peers. Also just financially—even though I have some loans for my education, I think the knowledge of financial aid alone was a huge benefit to me. Now as an alum, PUPP has supported my graduate school application process both in a mentoring capacity and a financial capacity, and it is truly a blessing to know that I have PUPP as a support system even 5 years out of the program.

#### *Princeton University Preparatory Program Scholars Expressed Gratitude and Attributed Their Success to the Princeton University Preparatory Program*

Some alumni responses to the two open-ended survey questions did not address the overarching themes exemplified by many other responses or did not specifically address PUPP activities. Rather, these responses expressed gratitude for PUPP's positive influence on their lives, often attributing their success to PUPP. Examples include the following:

PUPP helped build the foundation for my educational and professional career. I can connect almost every stage of my career to someone or an activity I completed in PUPP. PUPP provided the necessary skills and network to pursue my goals.

I learned a lot from the PUPP experience academically, culturally, and socially. It was vital to my college selection process, and enriched me with the knowledge I needed to succeed in college. Hindsight is always 20/20, and now I can see how effective and amazing this program was.

For me PUPP is not simply a preparatory program; instead it is the backbone that allowed me to succeed through all of my hardships. Thanks to PUPP, I am now a happy college student who feels prepared and excited to take on life's challenges. PUPP prepared my cohort members not only for the years of high school, but more importantly for all the years that follow.

Other open-ended responses highlighted how PUPP made alumni aware of opportunities and helped them aspire to reach their goals:

PUPP made me more open to the world, and showed me the opportunities I could not see by myself. It gave me an aspiration to be greater than my environment.

## Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Focus Groups

### Focus Group Methodology

On January 6, 2016, two focus groups were conducted with PUPP alumni during the annual PUPP alumni event on the Princeton University campus. The groups were scheduled to coincide with the alumni event, based on the expectation that the event would provide a unique opportunity to speak with many alumni who live outside of the Princeton area. The goal of the focus groups was to better understand alumni experiences at two different points in their lives: during college and postcollege.

### Sample

A convenience sampling approach was used in which the PUPP director encouraged alumni in attendance at the event to participate in one of the two groups. Alumni from early PUPP cohorts were invited to participate in one group, whereas alumni from more recent cohorts were invited to participate in a different group, based on the expectation that alumni perspectives may differ based on time since PUPP graduation.

Participants in the focus group for recent alumni included seven current (as of that date) college students. The group comprised four males and three females from the following PUPP cohorts: 2012 ( $N = 1$ ), 2013 ( $N = 2$ ), 2014 ( $N = 3$ ), and 2015 ( $N = 1$ ). Participants in the focus group for early alumni included five alumni who had graduated from college. This group comprised one male and four females from the following PUPP cohorts: 2004 ( $N = 1$ ), 2005 ( $N = 1$ ), 2006 ( $N = 2$ ), and 2007 ( $N = 1$ ).

### Focus Groups

Each focus group participant was asked to sign a consent form agreeing to participate in the focus group and agreeing to be recorded. Participants were given name tags and were asked to introduce themselves at the beginning of each respective session. The principal investigator on the evaluation conducted both focus groups, using the alumni focus group protocols (see Appendix B) that had been developed by ETS researchers and PUPP team members through an iterative process. Participants were asked questions about their experiences in PUPP, their reflections on how well PUPP prepared them for their transition to college, and what their college experiences were like. They were also asked to provide suggestions for improvements to the program. Each alumni was given a \$30 gift card for participating.

### Data Analysis

Analysis of focus group data was conducted using the NVivo 10 qualitative data analysis software package. Analysis of the focus group data was conducted using a coding process in which patterns in the data were noted and relationships or differences between these patterns were identified. Themes and subthemes were created by clustering conceptually related data, taking into account the logic and frequency of the patterns in the data. This process included regrouping data that may have been prematurely grouped. In addition, data were shuttled back and forth between first-level (main theme) and second-level (subtheme) groupings. To obtain a visual perspective of the results, a hierarchical tree was built displaying the different levels of data as main themes and subthemes. Direct quotations from alumni were used to provide evidence for the existence of a theme or subtheme and any relationships that existed between them.

### Limitations

Focus group research is not without its limitations. First, it is not possible to generalize the results to the wider population of PUPP alumni. The alumni who attend alumni events could differ in their experiences and suggestions from the larger

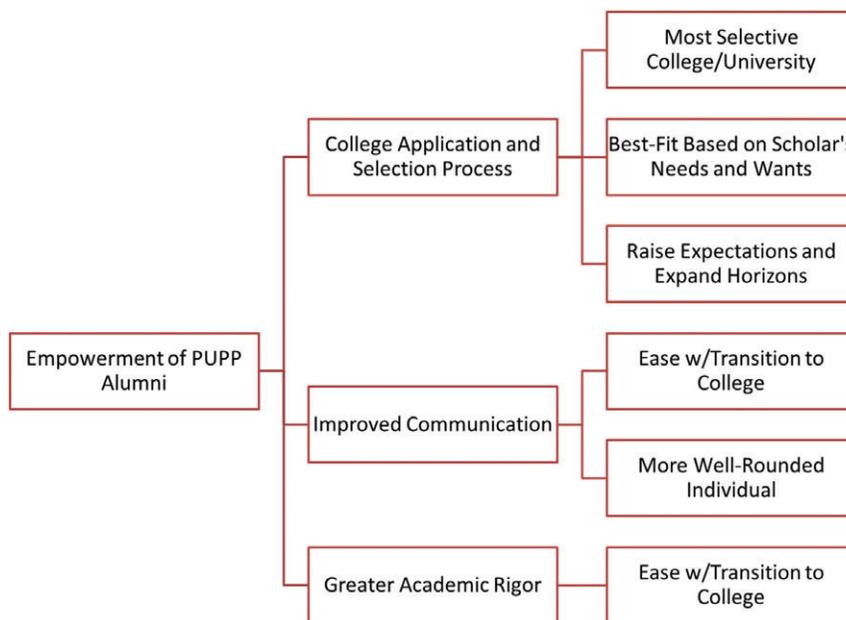


Figure 35 Alumni focus group Overarching Theme 1: Empowerment of alumni.

corpus of alumni, including in how favorable they are toward the PUPP program. Second, we need to acknowledge that our own subjective feelings about PUPP may influence our analyses and presentation of the findings.

### Key Focus Group Findings

Three overarching themes emerged in our analysis of the focus group findings. The first theme highlighted the extent to which PUPP empowered alumni to succeed in college and beyond by providing the various supports and services composing the PUPP model (see Figure 35).

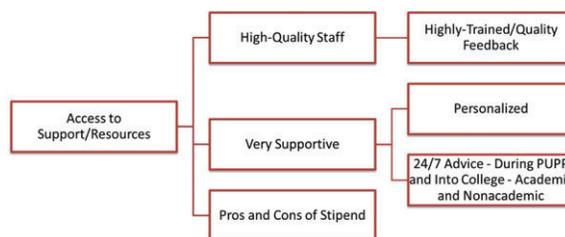
In the focus groups, PUPP alumni credited PUPP with empowering them to select and apply to selective colleges that seemed to be a good fit for their needs and interests. One participant noted,

The PUPP program essentially took me from being Mercer County Community College, public school, state, staying within my comfort zone. It pushed me to something further, which was [a selective university]. ... It's always a great expectation just to go to college, but I feel like PUPP really reinforces that it's not just the expectation that you will go to college, but that you'll go to the best college that you want to go to, that you feel most comfortable at, and where you think you will do the most good or learn the most as a student of that college or university.

Alumni comments suggested that PUPP had expanded the pool of colleges to which they had applied, in addition to raising their expectations for their own success and for the selectivity of the colleges they might be accepted to. Focus group participants described how PUPP college tours and advising opened their eyes to possibilities they had not previously considered, often because their high school guidance counselors had suggested only local schools. One alumni noted when discussing the college tours,

That component alone is really big, because you get to see colleges on the east coast in the north, on the east coast in the south, and kind of get a feel for a lot of colleges in the city, urban, and rural environments, that kind of thing. Immediately, you kind of get an idea of which school you'd be most comfortable at.

Alumni focus group participants also described how PUPP helped them to think about factors such as what size university would be best for them based on a list of PUPP-approved colleges and universities that provide substantial financial aid to low-income students.



**Figure 36** Alumni focus group Overarching Theme 2: Access to support and resources.

Furthermore, alumni focus group participants reported that PUPP empowered them to succeed by helping them to develop skills in two areas critical for college success: cultural knowledge and studying. They reported that their PUPP cultural experiences helped to ease their transition into college and made them more well-rounded individuals. One participant noted,

What I didn't know was that a lot of other students [in my college] have gone to Broadway and seen those plays. I just thought it was something PUPP just made us do for no reason. Now, when I overhear people talking, or when people are in a discussion, talking about Broadway shows that they've seen, it's really interesting that I can also talk to them about it. I feel like I can engage with the community now because of watching those Broadway [shows] or those operas. It makes me think of myself as more of an educated, cultured individual now that I can actually communicate with other people about this Broadway play that I've seen.

Similarly, another participant explained how all of the PUPP experiences enable participants to connect with individuals from different cultural backgrounds once they get to college:

Being that culturally open and forced into situations you may not be comfortable with or may not know completely, and then learning about them slowly through interaction, that, in my opinion, is the real purpose of all those activities, whether they be history lessons or Broadway shows. They allow you and they give you the tools to build that cultural rapport with other people, even if you may not come from the same background.

Alumni focus group participants also explained that the academically rigorous experiences they encountered in PUPP eased their transition into college by preparing them for college-level work. This notion is exemplified by the following comments:

I think just mentally, the idea of always focusing on your work is something that I was forced to do [during the PUPP Summer Institutes]. Maybe that translates back to when I was in school. If people thought they had a lot of work, I can realize that I've had a lot of pressure even during summer. Even now, though this may be a lot of work, I can handle it, because I've shown that I have the potential to work even when I'm tired, or even when I don't want to.

When you're in college, you're seeing the subtle effects that [the PUPP experiences] had on you when you're in classrooms and you're able to be actively engaged in a three-hour lecture, because you had this experience in PUPP before with your three-hour sociology class that you did not want to sit through.

The PUPP alumni focus groups also revealed a second important theme, which is the importance of the support and resources PUPP provided (see Figure 36). In focus groups, PUPP alumni repeatedly emphasized how supportive and helpful the PUPP staff were for them and how excellent the teaching staff was. The following comments exemplify this sentiment:

I honestly feel like they're some of the best teachers I have ever seen at the high school level. They find people who love to teach who, in my opinion, who will take the time to care about you, whether it's over summer, or sometimes during the actual school year.

In terms of writing, they make you dig deep into yourself. They have great writing teachers, that make you pull exactly what you're trying to say, and put it on paper. You develop a personal relationship with the instructor. We

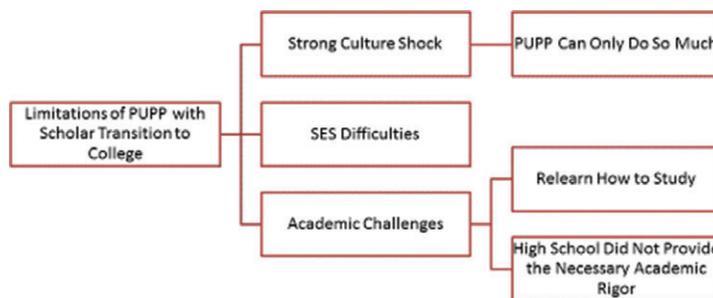


Figure 37 Alumni focus group Overarching Theme 3: Limits of Princeton University Preparatory Program preparation and support.

had Dr. Fabian and I remember our last session, especially when he said this is the last summer, we kind of all got teary-eyed. You develop this personal relationship with Dr. Fabian, where he knows something special about everybody in the room.

PUPP alumni focus group participants also noted how PUPP staff provided a much more personalized level of support than high school teachers or guidance counselors. One participant noted,

[My high school guidance counselor] just didn't really understand me, and I feel like that's a very important thing when you're confiding in someone for what you're going to do post-high school graduation. You should know about them. You should know their aspirations, what they want, what their family means, so you can know how to properly guide them to the right place.

Focus group participants also spoke about how they continued to receive support from PUPP in college, as exemplified by the comments of one participant:

I talked to Ms. Felder-Snipes about feeling uncomfortable in certain spaces, because being a math major, you don't have many people that look like you in your classrooms. Basically, in a nutshell, what she told me, because of course she can't bring a PUPP cohort to me, she sort of, you know, "Find your cohort within your school, because you're not the only one going through this, I'm sure." That's what I did.

Many alumni focus group participants also discussed how they were appreciative of the financial support PUPP provided, including PUPP's coordination of fee waivers for college entrance exams and the stipend they received during each summer they were in PUPP. However, some alumni also reported that the stipend was too small to make up for the income their family lost due to their inability to work at a part-time job while participating in the Summer Institute.

A third theme that emerged from the focus groups was the limits of PUPP's efforts to prepare scholars for the transition to a selective college or university (see Figure 37). Many alumni focus group participants acknowledged the limits of PUPP's efforts to prepare them to enter and succeed in a selective college or university, given the reality of the disparities between their home life experiences and those of their mostly middle- and upper-class peers in college. These respondents reported that they still experienced culture shock when they arrived at college, despite the efforts PUPP made to prepare them for the stark differences between their college and home lives. One focus group participant explained,

You have all these things where you feel like you don't belong. You feel like, "I'm not supposed to be here. This position is supposed to be for a White male." Dealing with these emotions and not feeling like you belong, I feel like were something PUPP could really not prepare me for. That's just something I had to deal with on my own, learning that, yeah, I might not come from a private prep school, but I'm here for a reason. After I realized that, the second semester was easier for me to handle, because I started to be more confident in my abilities.

Alumni focus group participants also described facing many financial challenges during college. Although they generally received financial aid packages that covered almost all or all of their college and living expenses, they still struggled to

cover all expenses and often had to decline social or educational enrichment opportunities because they could not afford to participate.

Some PUPP alumni focus group participants also noted that they had to relearn how to study when they arrived at college, despite the academically rigorous experiences they had in PUPP. One noted,

College studying and PUPP studying were two different things. PUPP taught you adequate study habits, but not for the workload we have in college. It's sort of the time management in practice, because PUPP sort of taught us how to do it with this guideline. This is what I have to do. This is the playbook, but can I run the play?

Furthermore, many participants emphasized that their high schools had not provided academically rigorous experiences that would prepare them for the challenges of college course work. They described how high school courses were easy compared to their college courses and how the fact that it was easy to get As gave them a false sense of security. They noticed a different level of academic preparedness among their fellow college students who had attended private high schools or prep schools.

### Summary of Findings

Alumni generally reported positive views on PUPP staff and programming, and many indicated that PUPP had positively impacted their development of multiple skills and competencies. However, it is possible that PUPP Alumni Survey respondents had more favorable views of PUPP than nonrespondents; thus the results must be interpreted with caution.

PUPP Alumni Survey respondents generally reported that they attended and graduated from college after completing PUPP. Many reported attending and earning degrees from colleges and universities considered selective, according to commonly used college rankings. Indeed, according to the qualitative data collected for this study, some PUPP alumni believed that the program made college attendance a reality for them, while others believed PUPP enabled them to attend a more selective college than they otherwise would have. Although alumni were not immune from continued challenges, both financial and academic, during college, they tended to attribute their college enrollment and graduation successes at least in part to the supports and resources PUPP provided. These findings seem to indicate that PUPP is meeting its goal of helping to prepare low-income, high-achieving students to enroll and succeed in selective colleges and universities. They also highlight the fact that PUPP may have helped some students attend college who may otherwise not have done so.

Our findings also highlight the high level of support and personalization PUPP provides for its scholars. Many PUPP Alumni Survey respondents reported feeling very supported by PUPP staff and well connected to their peer scholars, both during and after PUPP. However, a small minority of alumni reported that they did not feel connected to the other scholars in their cohorts, and a few alumni agreed that PUPP staff were “too pushy,” indicating that there may be room for improvement in some PUPP social supports and relationships.

Many PUPP Alumni Survey respondents also reported continuing to feel connected to PUPP and to their former peer scholars. These findings highlight the strength of the PUPP social network, which could be leveraged to provide ongoing support for alumni and networking supports for current scholars. If these practices are already occurring informally, PUPP leaders may want to consider making them a formal part of the PUPP model.

### Acknowledgments

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a survey. This work also would not have been possible without the ETS PUPP evaluation team. Erick Rojas and Daniel Fishtein worked on several activities, including instrument development, pilot testing, testing the online survey, soliciting participation in the survey, and assisting us with coding the responses to the short questions. Nimmi Devasia prepared the survey data files and conducted the analyses. Erick Rojas also conducted the analysis of the alumni focus groups, with the guidance of the principal investigator.

## Notes

- 1 See Appendix A: Princeton University Preparatory Program (PUPP) Alumni Survey
- 2 The first PUPP student from Trenton Central West High School graduated in 2008. In subsequent years, two or more students from this high school have graduated from PUPP.
- 3 The first PUPP cohort from Lawrence High School graduated in 2012.
- 4 One student from the PUPP 2010 cohort graduated from Nottingham High School. Starting with the 2012 cohort, three or more students from Nottingham High School graduated with each cohort.

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## Appendix A: Princeton University Preparatory Program (PUPP) Alumni Survey

Please copy and paste your unique student ID number to ensure accuracy. This number can be found in the email inviting you to complete the survey. \_\_\_\_\_

### The PUPP Alumni Survey

We are delighted that you are participating in the Princeton University Preparatory Program (PUPP) Alumni Survey. This survey explores the post-high school experiences of PUPP scholars with the goal of informing new developments in PUPP. This survey will take 20–30 minutes to complete, depending on your experiences and comments.

Participation in the PUPP Alumni Survey is completely voluntary. You may choose not to answer any questions by selecting “Prefer not to respond” or leaving open-ended questions blank. You may also exit the survey at any time without penalty.

All responses to this survey are strictly confidential. The PUPP Alumni Survey is part of the external evaluation of PUPP, which is being conducted by Educational Testing Service (ETS). Completed surveys are submitted directly to ETS. Your personal information will be removed from the data. Results of this research will only be reported in aggregate form. *Your responses will not be used in any way that would allow others to identify you personally.*

Thank you for contributing to this research. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the lead researcher, Senior Research Scientist Catherine M. Millett, Ph.D., at [pupp@ets.org](mailto:pupp@ets.org).

[Select “Yes, I Agree” or “No, I Refuse” to continue.]

[If Refuse, GO TO Refused page]

### General Instructions

The PUPP Alumni Survey will take 20–30 minutes to complete, depending on your experiences and comments. You may leave the survey and return to it later. When you want to exit the survey, click SAVE at the bottom of your screen. A custom link for you to resume the survey from where you saved it will pop up. Make sure to keep your new custom survey link so that you will be able to retrieve your responses when you resume the survey later.

### Name Confirmation

- i. Are you [FILL: First Name] [Fill: Last Name]?
- Yes
  - No [GO TO NOT PUPP Participant page]

### High School and PUPP

In this section, we are interested in learning about your high school experiences as well as your experiences in PUPP.

1. Approximately, what grade were you in when you decided to go to college?

---

High school (Grades 9–12)  
 Middle school (Grades 7–8)  
 Elementary school (Grades 1–6)  
 Just always knew I wanted to go to college  
 Prefer not to respond

---

2. Who had the most influence on your thinking about your education immediately after high school, if anyone?

---

A counselor  
 A teacher  
 Your parents  
 Another family member  
 A PUPP staff member or PUPP teacher  
 Someone else (specify)  
 Yourself  
 No one  
 Prefer not to respond

---

3. What were the three most important reasons you decided to apply to PUPP? (You may leave blank if you prefer not to respond)

---

○

---

I had a friend already in PUPP  
 A teacher encouraged me to participate  
 I had a sibling or family member already in PUPP  
 My parents wanted me to participate  
 The PUPP staff seemed excited about the program  
 I knew I wanted to go to a good college  
 Other: Please specify [Text Box]  
 No further reasons

---

4. Please tell us if you agree or disagree with the following statements about PUPP:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Prefer not to respond
PUPP provided the right amount of interaction between students and PUPP staff and faculty						
PUPP had too many expectations for students						
PUPP offered a rigorous curriculum						
I thought PUPP was disorganized						
Overall, the PUPP faculty were excellent teachers						
Having PUPP teaching fellows who were college students was helpful.						
There was a lot of variety in the way that PUPP faculty presented lessons						
Being on the Princeton University campus helped me learn about college life						
I found a lot of PUPP activities useful						

5. Thinking back to the college tours you went on during your time with PUPP, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Prefer not to respond
Taking college tours with PUPP was the primary way I visited campuses						
The college tours made a difference in helping me to make a decision about where to apply to college						
Meeting with PUPP alumni during college visits was valuable in helping me choose a college						
Visiting colleges with PUPP helped me realize college was the right place for me						
Visiting colleges with PUPP allowed me to see more colleges than I would have on my own						

6. Thinking back to your experiences with PUPP scholars from the PUPP Class [FILL: Year], please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Prefer not to respond
PUPP scholars were an important part of my PUPP experience						
I am still friends with PUPP scholars in my class						
PUPP scholars were a source of support throughout PUPP						
I was disconnected from the PUPP scholars in my class						
I thought I could trust the PUPP scholars in my class						

7. Thinking back to the PUPP staff, please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Prefer not to respond
PUPP staff helped me to reach my goals						
PUPP staff helped me with stressful situations in my personal life						
I found the PUPP staff to be pushy						
PUPP staff helped to improve the quality of my life						
PUPP staff helped me to adopt a more positive outlook						
PUPP staff helped me to have more control over my life						
PUPP staff helped me to build my confidence						

8. Looking back on your time at PUPP, how would you assess each of the following aspects of your experience at PUPP?

	Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good	Prefer not to respond
Overall academic experience						
Overall college preparatory experience						
Nonacademic or student life experience						
Attending cultural activities such as the opera, theater, and museums						

**Educational Experiences After PUPP**

In this section, we are interested in learning about your educational experiences after completing PUPP.

9. What year did you graduate high school?

	[Year Pull Down Menu]
	2004
	2005
	2006
	2007
	2008
	2009
	2010
	2011
	2012
	2013
	2014
	2015

10. Did you attend a college or university at any point after high school?

Yes	[GO TO Q11]
No	[GO TO Q30]
Prefer not to respond	[GO TO Q30]

11. How many colleges or universities did you attend after high school?

Number [Pull Down Menu]

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10

12. In what month and year did you begin the first college or university after high school?

Month [Pull Down Menu]

Year [Pull Down Menu]

January	2016
February	2015
March	2014
April	2013
May	2012
June	2011
July	2010
August	2009
September	2008
October	2007
November	2006
December	2005
	2004

13. What college or university did you first attend? (You may leave blank if you Prefer not to respond)

---

Institution name

---

City

---

State [Pull Down Menu]

---

Field of study of [Pull Down Menu]  
 undergraduate major(s). Select all that apply.  
 If you have not yet declared a major, please select your intended major(s).

- Biological Sciences (e.g., Biology, Biochemistry, Environmental Science, Neuroscience/Biopsychology)
- Business and Management (e.g., Accounting, Business Administration, Finance, Marketing)
- Communications (e.g., Journalism, Mass Communication, Speech, Speech Pathology)
- Education (e.g., Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Special Education)
- Engineering (e.g., Chemical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering)
- Fine and Performing Arts (e.g., Architecture, Art, Dance, Music, Theater)
- Health Sciences (e.g., Exercise Science, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health)
- Humanities (e.g., Classics, English, Modern Languages & Literature, Philosophy)
- Physical Sciences, Mathematics, and Computer Science (e.g., Astronomy, Chemistry, Earth Sciences, Physics)
- Social Sciences (e.g., Anthropology, Economics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology)
- Not decided yet
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree program [Pull Down Menu]  
 Associate (AA or AS)  
 Bachelor (BA or BS, bachelor of fine arts or bachelor of architecture)  
 Joint bachelor of arts and master's  
 Joint bachelor of science and master's  
 Prefer not to respond

---

14. What was the most important reason you decided to attend [Fill: Institution name]?

---

---

- Reputation of school
- Cost (affordable/other financial reasons)
- Location
- Personal/family reasons
- Other (please specify):
- Prefer not to respond

---

15. Are you still enrolled at [Fill: Institution name]?

---

---

Yes	[GO TO Q28]
No	[GO TO Q16]
Prefer not to respond	[GO TO Q28]

---

16. Why are you no longer enrolled at [Fill: Institution name]?

---

---

I graduated	[GO TO Q17]
I took a break	[GO TO Q19]
I transferred to a different college or university	[GO TO Q20]
Other [Please specify]	[GO TO Q26]
Prefer not to respond	[GO TO Q26]

---

17. What degree did you earn at [Fill: Institution name?]

---

Degree awarded	[Pull Down Menu]
	Associate (AA or AS)
	Bachelor (BA, BS, bachelor of fine arts, or bachelor of architecture)
	Joint bachelor of arts and master's
	Joint bachelor of science and master's
	Prefer not to answer

---

18. What year did you earn your degree from [Fill: Institution name] ?

---

Year	[Pull Down Menu]
	2015
	2014
	2013
	2012
	2011
	2010
	2009
	2008
	2007
	2006
	2005
	2004

---

*IF Graduated GO TO Q28*

19. There are many reasons why someone might take a break from school for a semester or longer. Please indicate the most important reason that you took a break: (You may leave blank if you prefer not to respond)

---

○

---

I recently started a family	GO TO Q28
There was a family emergency	GO TO Q28
Too busy with work right now	GO TO Q28
I was offered a job	GO TO Q28
A college education wasn't necessary for the job I wanted	GO TO Q28
Unable to afford the costs of attending the college or university	GO TO Q28
I felt that college was not the right place for me at this time	GO TO Q28
Other _____ [SPECIFY]	GO TO Q28
Prefer not to respond	GO TO Q28

---

20. Please tell us about the college or university where you transferred to?

---

Institution name

---

City

---

State [Pull Down Menu]

---

Field of study of undergraduate major(s). Select all that apply.  
 If you have not yet declared a major, please select your intended major(s).

[Pull Down Menu]

Biological Sciences (e.g., Biology, Biochemistry, Environmental Science, Neuroscience/Biopsychology)

Business and Management (e.g., Accounting, Business Administration, Finance, Marketing)

Communications (e.g., Journalism, Mass Communication, Speech, Speech Pathology)

Education (e.g., Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Special Education)

Engineering (e.g., Chemical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering)

Fine and Performing Arts (e.g., Architecture, Art, Dance, Music, Theater)

Health Sciences (e.g., Exercise Science, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health)

Humanities (e.g., Classics, English, Modern Languages & Literature, Philosophy)

Physical Sciences, Mathematics, and Computer Science (e.g., Astronomy, Chemistry, Earth Sciences, Physics)

Social Sciences (e.g., Anthropology, Economics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology)

Not decided yet

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree program [Pull Down Menu]

Associate (AA or AS)

Bachelor (BA, BS, bachelor of fine arts, or bachelor of architecture)

Joint bachelor of arts and master's

Joint bachelor of science and master's

Prefer not to respond

---

21. Please indicate the **most** important reason that you transferred to [Fill Transfer C/U]?

---

---

This was my first choice college

The financial aid is better than the first college I attended

This college offers a major that I want to study

This college is closer to home

The campus is more diverse

Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

Prefer not to respond

---

22. Are you still enrolled at [Fill Transfer C/U]?

---

---

Yes	[GO TO Q22a]
No	[GO TO Q23]
Prefer not to respond	[GO TO Q26]

---

22a. What is your anticipated year of completion?

---

[Pull Down Menu]

2016

2017

2018

2019

2020

2021

2022

---

23. Why are you no longer enrolled at [Fill Transfer C/U]?

---

---

I graduated	[GO TO Q24]
I took a break	[GO TO Q26]
I transferred to a different college or university	[GO TO Q26]
Other [Please specify]	[GO TO Q26]
Prefer not to respond	[GO TO Q26]

---

24. What degree did you earn at [Fill Transfer C/U]?

---

Degree awarded	[Pull Down Menu]
	Associate (AA or AS)
	Bachelor (BA, BS, or bachelor of fine arts)
	Joint bachelor of arts and master's
	Joint bachelor of science and master's
	Prefer not to respond

---

25. What year did you earn your degree from [Fill Transfer C/U]?

---

Year	[Pull Down Menu]	GO TO Q 28
	2015	
	2014	
	2013	
	2012	
	2011	
	2010	
	2009	
	2008	
	2007	
	2006	
	2005	
	2004	

---

26. Since completing the PUPP program, have you earned an associate or a bachelor degree?

---

---

Yes, I earned an associate degree	[GO TO Q27]
Yes, I earned a bachelor degree	[GO TO Q27]
No	[GO TO Q28]
Prefer not to respond	[GO TO Q28]

---

27. Please tell us about the college or university where you earned your degree?

---

Institution name

---

City

---

State [Pull Down Menu]

---

Field of study of [Pull Down Menu]  
 undergraduate  Biological Sciences (e.g., Biology, Biochemistry, Environmental Science, Neuroscience/Biopsychology)  
 major(s). Select all that apply.  Business and Management (e.g., Accounting, Business Administration, Finance, Marketing)  
 Communications (e.g., Journalism, Mass Communication, Speech, Speech Pathology)  
 If you have not yet declared a major, please select your intended major(s).  Education (e.g., Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Special Education)  
 Engineering (e.g., Chemical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering)  
 Fine and Performing Arts (e.g., Architecture, Art, Dance, Music, Theater)  
 Health Sciences (e.g., Exercise Science, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health)  
 Humanities (e.g., Classics, English, Modern Languages & Literature, Philosophy)  
 Physical Sciences, Mathematics, and Computer Science (e.g., Astronomy, Chemistry, Earth Sciences, Physics)  
 Social Sciences (e.g., Anthropology, Economics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology)  
 Not decided yet  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree program [Pull Down Menu]  
 Associate (AA or AS)  
 Bachelor (BA, BS, bachelor of fine arts, or bachelor of architecture)  
 Joint bachelor of arts and master's  
 Joint bachelor of science and master's  
 Prefer not to respond

---

28. How easy or difficult were the following activities for you when you arrived at college?

---

	Very difficult	Difficult	Neutral	Easy	Very easy	Prefer not to respond
--	----------------	-----------	---------	------	-----------	-----------------------

---

Seeking help when I needed it  
 Getting along with others  
 Making new friends  
 Communicating with faculty  
 Maintaining family relationships  
 Feeling comfortable where I lived  
 Participating in social events  
 Communicating with staff

---

29. Based on what you know now, how well do you think your experience at PUPP prepared you to:

---

	Very poorly	Less than Adequately	More than Adequately	Very well	Prefer not to respond
--	-------------	----------------------	----------------------	-----------	-----------------------

---

Face academic challenges in college  
 Submit all assignments on time  
 Contribute comments and questions to classroom discussions  
 Have a skill set for managing your academic workload  
 Adjust to the academic culture of college  
 Develop your passion for learning  
 Build your self-confidence  
 Be in control of your own schedule  
 Develop leadership skills  
 Show respect for others even in disagreement  
 Develop an individual perspective

---

30. Based on what you know now, to what extent did your experience at PUPP contribute to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas:

	Very little	Some	Quite a bit	Very much	Prefer not to respond
Write clearly/effectively					
Solve numerical problems					
Speak clearly/effectively					
Work with data					
Think critically/problem-solving					
Use computer technology					
Learn effectively on your own					
Work well with others					
Produce high-quality work					
Design and execute research					

SKIP pattern, dependent on answer to Q10

- If YES to Q10— Proceed to Q31
- If NO to Q10— Proceed to Q 64
- If PREFER NOT TO RESPOND to Q10— Proceed to Q64

31. Please select a response that best describes how participating in arts and cultural activities in PUPP affected your experiences in college.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Not sure/not applicable	Prefer not to respond
I drew on these experiences in classes							
I drew on these experiences in social situations with faculty							
I drew on these experiences in social situations with students							
I was inspired to major in the arts							
I felt that the cultural events were a good use of my time							
I was inspired to take a class to learn more about theater/drama, music, or art							
I was inspired to participate in art, theater, or music programs at my college							
I felt comfortable discussing artistic or cultural topics with my peers							

### Financing Your College Education

32. Did you receive any financial aid (e.g. grants, scholarship, student loan or work-study job) at any point while you were an undergraduate?

Yes	[GO TO Q33]
No	[GO TO Q34]
Prefer not to respond	[GO TO Q34]

33. What was the total amount you borrowed to finance your education while you were an undergraduate?

- No loans
- \$1 – \$9,999
- \$10,000 – \$19,999
- \$20,000 – \$29,999
- \$30,000 – \$39,999
- \$40,000 – \$49,999
- \$50,000 – \$74,999
- \$75,000 – \$99,999
- \$100,000 – \$149,999
- \$150,000 or more
- More than \$0 but unable to estimate the amount
- Prefer not to respond

34. Did you have a job for pay while you were an undergraduate?

- Yes [GO TO Q35]
- No [GO TO Q37]
- Prefer not to respond [GO TO Q37]

35. Please briefly describe your job:

[Text Box]

36. Please indicate what you spent your earnings from this job on (mark all that apply)?

- Room and board
- Tuition and fees
- Discretionary (entertainment, clothes, cosmetics, etc.)
- Technology (phones and computers)
- Your family’s expenses
- Other expenses (specify)
- Prefer not to respond

37. Did you participate in a study abroad program while you were an undergraduate?

- Yes [GO TO Q38]
- No [GO TO Q39]
- Prefer not to respond [GO TO Q40]

38. Where did you study abroad?

[Text Box] [GO TO 40]

39. If not, please indicate if money was a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason in your decision to not participate:

- Money was a major reason
- Money was a minor reason
- Money was not a reason
- Prefer not to respond

40. Did you participate in an unpaid internship while you were an undergraduate?

---

---

Yes	[GO TO Q42]
No	[GO TO Q41]
Prefer not to respond	[GO TO Q42]

---

41. If not, please indicate if money was a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason in your decision to not participate?

---

---

Money was a major reason  
 Money was a minor reason  
 Money was not a reason  
 Prefer not to respond

---

42. Did you work with faculty on a research project while you were an undergraduate?

---

---

Yes	[GO TO Q44]
No	[GO TO Q43]
Prefer not to respond	[GO TO Q44]

---

43. If not, please indicate if money was a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason in your decision to not participate:

---

---

Money was a major reason  
 Money was a minor reason  
 Money was not a reason  
 Prefer not to respond

---

44. Did you participate in academic or social clubs while you were an undergraduate?

---

---

Yes	[GO TO Q45]
No	[GO TO Q46]
Prefer not to respond	[GO TO Q47]

---

45. Please tell us what academic or social club(s) you participated in?

[Text Box] [GO TO 47]

46. If not, please indicate if money was a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason in your decision to not participate:

---

---

Money was a major reason  
 Money was a minor reason  
 Money was not a reason  
 Prefer not to respond

---

47. Did you take as many classes as you would have liked while you were an undergraduate?

---

---

	Yes	[GO TO Q49]
	No	[GO TO Q48]
	Prefer not to respond	[GO TO Q49]

---

48. If not, please indicate if money was a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason in your decision to not take as many classes as you would have liked:

---

---

	Money was a major reason	
	Money was a minor reason	
	Money was not a reason	
	Prefer not to respond	

---

49. Did you have the living accommodations you wanted while you were an undergraduate?

---

---

	Yes	[If YES to Q15 GO TO Q63]
	No	[If NO or PREFER NOT TO RESPOND to Q15 GO TO Q51]
	Prefer not to respond	[GO TO Q50]
		[If YES to Q15 GO TO Q63]
		[If NO or PREFER NOT TO RESPOND to Q15 GO TO Q51]

---

50. If not, please indicate if money was a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason in your choice of living accommodations:

---

---

	Money was a major reason	
	Money was a minor reason	
	Money was not a reason	
	Prefer not to respond	

---

*If YES to Q15 — GO TO Q63*

**Additional Education**

51. Are you currently enrolled in any degree programs (associate, bachelor, master, professional, or doctoral)?

---

---

	Yes, full time	[GO TO Q52]
	Yes, part-time	[GO TO Q52]
	No	[GO TO Q57]
	Prefer not to respond	[GO TO Q57]

---

52. Please tell us about the additional degrees that you are pursuing now by filling in the chart below: If you are pursuing more than one additional degree please list the first

---

Institution name		
City		
State		
Field of study	[Pull Down Menu]	
Actual/Expected graduation month	[Pull Down Menu]	Prefer not to respond
Actual/Expected graduation year	[Pull Down Menu]	Prefer not to respond

---

Field of study [Pull Down Menu]

- Accounting
- American Sign Language
- Anthropology
- Archaeology
- Architecture
- Art History
- Biological/Life Sciences
- Biology
- Business
- Chemistry
- Clinical Psychology
- Communications/Media
- Computer Science
- Cultural Studies
- Dance
- Dental Hygiene/Medicine
- Early Childhood Development
- Earth Sciences
- Economics
- Education
- Engineering
- English
- Environmental Studies
- Foreign Language
- Forensic Psychology
- Health-Related Field
- Higher Education Administration
- History
- Humanities
- Industrial/Organizational Psychology
- Information Systems
- International Business
- International Relations
- Journalism
- Language and Literature
- Law
- Mathematics
- Medicine
- Music/Jazz/Popular Music
- Nursing

- Philosophy
- Photography
- Physics
- Political Science/Government
- Psychology
- Public Health
- Public Policy
- Recreation, Parks Admin, Leisure
- Social Work
- Sociology
- Statistics
- Theater/Drama
- Theology/Religion
- Urban Studies
- Veterinary Medicine
- Women’s Studies
- Zoology
- Other: Please describe the specific field of study of your graduate program.

53. What type of degree are you pursuing?

- Associate degree
- Bachelor degree (BA, BS, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Architecture)
- Master of arts or sciences (MA, MS, MFA)
- Master of business
- Master of engineering
- Other professional master’s
- Other master’s degree
- Law degree (LLB, JD)
- Medical degree (MD)
- Other medical degree (DDS, DVM)
- Doctoral degree (PhD, EdD)
- Other degree [Specify]
- Prefer not to respond

54. Are you currently enrolled in another degree program?

- |                       |             |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| Yes                   | [GO TO Q55] |
| No                    | [GO TO Q57] |
| Prefer not to respond | [GO TO Q57] |

55. Please tell us about the additional degrees that you are pursuing now by filling in the chart below

Institution name		
City		
State		
Field of study	[Pull Down Menu]	
Actual/Expected graduation month	[Pull Down Menu]	Prefer not to respond
Actual/Expected graduation year	[Pull Down Menu]	Prefer not to respond

56. What type of degree are you pursuing?

- Associate degree
- Bachelor degree (BA, BS, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Architecture)
- Master of arts or sciences (MA, MS, MFA)
- Master of business
- Master of engineering
- Other professional master's
- Other master's degree
- Law degree (LLB, JD)
- Medical degree (MD)
- Other medical degree (DDS, DVM, etc.)
- Doctoral degree (PhD, EdD)
- Other degree
- Prefer not to respond

57. Have you earned any additional degrees?

- Yes [GO TO Q58]
- No [GO TO Q63]
- Prefer not to respond [GO TO Q63]

58. Please tell us about the institution and field of specialization where you earned your degree by filling out the chart below: If you have earned more than one additional degree please begin with the first. (You may leave blank if you prefer not to respond)

Institution name		
City		
State	[Pull Down Menu]	
Field of specialization	[Pull Down Menu]	SEE BELOW
Actual graduation month	[Pull Down Menu]	Prefer not to respond
Actual graduation year	[Pull Down Menu]	Prefer not to respond

59. What type of degree program did you earn?

- Associate degree
- Bachelor's degree (BA, BS, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Architecture)
- Master of arts or sciences (MS, MS, MFA)
- Master of business
- Master of engineering
- Other professional master's
- Other master's degree
- Law degree (LLB, JD)
- Medical degree (MD)
- Other medical degree (DDS, DVM, etc.)
- Doctoral degree (PhD, EdD)
- Other degree
- Prefer not to respond

60. Have you earned any OTHER additional degrees?

Yes	[GO TO Q61]
No	[GO TO Q63]
Prefer not to respond	[GO TO Q63]

61. Please tell us about your degree program.

Institution name		
City		
State	[Pull Down Menu]	
Field of specialization	[Pull Down Menu]	
Actual graduation month	[Pull Down Menu]	Prefer not to respond
Actual graduation year	[Pull Down Menu]	Prefer not to respond

62. What type of degree did you earn?

- Associate degree
- Bachelor's degree (BA, BS, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Architecture)
- Master of arts or sciences (MS, MS, MFA)
- Master of business
- Master of engineering
- Other professional master's
- Other master's degree
- Law degree (LLB, JD)
- Medical degree (MD)
- Other medical degree (DDS, DVM, etc.)
- Doctoral degree (PhD, EdD)
- Other degree
- Prefer not to respond

63. If PUPP were to offer workshops or services to help you pursue graduate studies, how likely or unlikely would you be to utilize the following?

	Very unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Somewhat likely	Very likely	Prefer not to respond
How to select a graduate program					
How to navigate the graduate school application process					
How to finance a graduate degree					
Test prep resources					
Admissions essay advice or critique					
Advice on how to ask for letters of recommendation					

64. What is the highest degree that you plan to earn?

✓

- Associate degree
- Bachelor's degree (BA, BS, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Architecture)
- Master of arts or sciences (MA, MS, MFA)
- Master of business
- Master of engineering
- Other professional master's
- Other master's degree
- Law degree (LLB, JD)
- Medical degree (MD)
- Other medical degree (DDS, DVM, etc.)
- Doctoral degree (PhD, EdD)
- Prefer not to respond

**Employment**

65. Are you currently working for pay or profit? (Working includes being self-employed, on a postdoctoral appointment, or any type of paid or unpaid leave, including vacation.)

○

- Yes [GO TO Q67]
- No [GO TO Q66]
- Prefer not to respond [GO TO Q70]

66. What are your reason for not working?

✓

- Seeking a position [GO TO Q70]
- Continuing my education [GO TO Q70]
- Family responsibilities [GO TO Q70]
- Suitable job not available [GO TO Q70]
- Do not need or want to work [GO TO Q70]
- Prefer not to respond [GO TO Q70]

67. What type of position do you currently have (mark all that apply)?

○

- Enrolled in full-time degree program (e.g. MA, MBA, JD, MD, PhD) and receiving stipend [GO TO Q68]
- Postdoctoral appointment [GO TO Q68]
- Employed full-time [GO TO Q68]
- Employed part-time [GO TO Q68]
- Self-employed [GO TO Q68]
- Other (specify) [GO TO Q68]
- Prefer not to respond [GO TO Q70]

68. Who is your principal employer?

---

Employer name	[Text Box]
Department/Division	[Text Box]
City/Town	[Text Box]
State	[Pull Down Menu]
Postal/Code	[Text Box]
Country	[Pull Down Menu]

---

69. What is your current career? [Respondents will select one general career area from the list below and will then be able to select one of the specific careers within that area from a drop-down menu (those shown in parenthesis below).]

---

[Pull Down Menu]

- Art, Design, and Entertainment (e.g., architect, artist, entertainer, gallery worker, graphic designer, interior designer, museum curator, music/film industry, photographer)
- Communications and Media (e.g., broadcasting, editor, journalist, media production, public relations, publisher, writer)
- Community and Social Service (e.g., clergy, community organizer, philanthropy or nonprofit worker, social activist, social work)
- Education and Library (e.g., librarian or archivist, preschool-secondary administration, preschool-secondary teacher, postsecondary administration/staff, postsecondary teacher or researcher, school counselor)
- Health Care (e.g., clinical psychology/psychiatry, dentist, dietician, nurse, optometrist, pharmacist, physical/occupational/speech therapy, physician, veterinarian)
- Law and Government (e.g., diplomat, foreign service, government worker, international relations, judge, lawyer, other legal services, politics, public policy)
- Management, Business, and Financial (e.g., accounting, actuary, advertising, executive, finance, human resources, insurance, management, real estate, recruiting, retail services, sales)
- Natural Resources (e.g., agricultural worker, conservationist, environmental scientist)
- Protection Services (e.g., law enforcement officer, military occupations)
- Science, Technology, and Engineering (e.g., computer programmer/analyst, engineer, information systems, lab technician, scientific researcher)
- Service and Recreational (e.g., chef, food service industry, hospitality, sports and recreation, travel/tourism)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

---

70. If PUPP were to offer workshops or services to help you secure employment, how likely or unlikely would you be to utilize the following?

---

	Very unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Somewhat likely	Very likely	Prefer not to respond
Alumni networking events					
Alumni jobs board or listserv					
Assistance or training in online networking					
Resume advice or critique					
Mock interviewing					
Assistance or training for salary negotiation					
Continuing education courses or workshops					
Advice on how to ask for letters of recommendation					

---

**PUPP Connections**

71. How connected do you feel to PUPP?

---

---

Not at all connected  
Not very connected  
Somewhat connected  
Very connected  
Prefer not to respond

---

72. Since completing PUPP, how often have you participated in the following activities?

---

PUPP sponsored events	Never	Once	Two or more times	Prefer not to respond
Met with PUPP scholars who visited your college campus				
Attended convocation ceremony				
Met/Communicated with the PUPP alumni coordinator				
Mentored PUPP scholars and/or alumni				
Hosted a PUPP scholar on campus				
Attended graduation ceremony				
Attended reunion events				
Posted to the PUPP Facebook page				

---

73. After completing high school, did you ever go back to work for PUPP?

---

Yes, as an alumni fellow  
Yes, as PUPP faculty  
Yes, as a teaching assistant  
Yes, as a teaching assistant liaison  
Yes, as an intern  
No

---

74. Since completing PUPP, have you asked PUPP to help you with any of the following activities:

---

	Yes	No	Prefer not to respond
Transportation to college			
Navigating the academic program at my college			
Guidance on how to pay for my college education			
Providing a letter of reference			
Graduate school advising			
Career advising			

---

**PUPP Experience Reflections**

75. Looking back to your PUPP experience, how influential were PUPP staff to you?

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Not at all influential  
Slightly influential  
Somewhat influential  
Very influential  
Extremely influential  
Prefer not to respond

---

76. Would you say completing the PUPP program was:

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Definitely not worth the effort  
Probably not worth the effort  
Probably worth the effort  
Definitely worth the effort  
Prefer not to respond

---

77. Looking back on your experiences with PUPP, please choose the three most important activities to you from the list below.

---

Number

---

	Six-and-a half-week summer institute
	Weekly academic enrichment during the school year
	College tours
	Test prep courses
	Guidance on financial aid for college
	Guidance on college applications
	Cultural events
	Princeton Blairstown Center Weekend Retreat
	No further activities

---

78. Looking back to your PUPP experience, how important was it that PUPP did not charge any fees to participate?

---

---

Not at all important  
Not very important  
Somewhat important  
Very important  
Prefer not to respond

---

79. Have you recommended PUPP to anyone?

---

---

Yes  
No  
Prefer not to respond

---

80. Q80a — PUPP prides itself on creating access and opportunity for low-income/high-achieving students to succeed at the best fit college. How true is this for you?

- False
- Mostly false
- Mostly true
- Very true
- Prefer not to respond

Q80b — Tell us your PUPP story:

- [Text Box]

81. Over the years, PUPP alumni have claimed that PUPP “changed” their lives. In what ways did PUPP change or not change your life?

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### Demographics

82. Please enter the zip code where you currently reside \_\_\_\_\_

[Text Box]

83. Are you able to relocate for career or educational opportunities?

- Yes, I am able to relocate
- I would prefer not to move, but could if necessary
- It would be very difficult for me to relocate right now
- Prefer not to respond

84. How do you describe your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Prefer not to respond

85. Which of the following best describes you? (select all that apply)

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Asian American
- Black or African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Prefer not to respond

86. Please mark the range below that most closely approximates your total 2015 income from your primary position (including overtime), before taxes and other deductions?

- No income
- \$0 – \$9,999
- \$10,000 – \$19,999
- \$20,000 – \$29,999
- \$30,000 – \$39,999
- \$40,000 – \$49,999
- \$50,000 – \$59,999
- \$60,000 – \$69,999
- \$70,000 – \$79,99
- \$80,000 – \$89,99
- \$90,000 – \$99,99
- \$100,000 and above

87. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- High school
- Some college
- Associate degree
- Bachelor’s degree (BA, BS, BFA, B.Arch)
- Master of arts or sciences (MS, MS, MFA, MBA, M.Eng., other master’s)
- Law degree (LLB, JD)
- Medical degree (MD)
- Other medical degree (DDS, DVM, etc.)
- Doctoral degree (PhD, EdD)
- Other degree
- Prefer not to respond

88. How old are you?

[Enter age in years]

89. Are you currently married, living with a partner, divorced, separated, widowed, or have you never been married?

- Married
- Living with a partner
- Divorced
- Separated
- Widowed
- Never been married
- Prefer not to respond

90. Do you have any children under age 18?

One child under 18  
 More than one  
 No  
 Prefer not to respond

**Follow-Up Surveys**

We would like to update your information to help us communicate with you in the future. This is important to continue to follow-up with PUPP scholars to learn about your continuing educational and career achievements. Providing this information is completely voluntary, and you may choose to leave the form below blank.

Your first name  
 Last name  
 Street address 1  
 Street address 2  
 City  
 State [Pull Down Menu]  
 Zip code  
 Preferred email address  
 Phone number (please include area code)

THANK YOU!

Thank you again for taking the time to share your post-PUPP experiences and program reflections in this research. Receiving your feedback provides valuable insights and the capability to assess what PUPP is doing well, and where improvement would better support students like you.

You will receive a follow-up email early next week containing information to order the gift card of your choice on [giftcertificates.com](http://giftcertificates.com)

Stay connected with PUPP on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/PUPPALumniGroup/>

**Refused Page**

The following content is on the landing page for those who refuse to participate in the survey:

You have selected that you do not wish to do our survey. If this is in error, please hit the back button on your browser and check your answer. Thank you for your interest in the PUPP Alumni Survey.

Stay connected with PUPP on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/PUPPALumniGroup/>

**Not PUPP Participant Page**

The following content is on the landing page for those who are not PUPP participants:

Our records list you, [FILL: First Name] [Fill: Last Name] as a PUPP alumni. If this is in error, please notify Daniel Fishtein at [pupp@ets.org](mailto:pupp@ets.org). We would be happy to work with you so that you can participate in the PUPP Alumni Survey.

**Appendix B: Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Focus Group Protocol, Early Cohorts, January 6, 2016**

Priority Area: Knowledge Acquisitions, Critical Thinking, Communication, Aptitudes/Behaviors Intern/Ext

**Introduction**

1. Please tell us your first name, what high school you attended, and when you graduated.
2. What are you doing now?

**High School Information**

3. Tell me about your high school experience. What was your high school like?
4. Who helped you get ready to apply to college? Was there a counselor or teacher, or a program or service, that helped you prepare for college admissions?

**Princeton University Preparatory Program Experience**

5. How do you describe PUPP to people?
6. Tell me about the PUPP staff—how did they work with you to get ready for college?
7. What was the PUPP academic experience like for you?
8. What was your experience like with the other PUPP scholars?
9. Thinking back to when you were in high school, what services did PUPP provide to your parents or families?

**College Transition**

10. How did you pick your undergraduate college?
11. In what ways, if any, did PUPP help you move from being a high school student to a college student?
12. How did the first term at college go?
13. What was easy for you at college? What was hard?
14. As part of PUPP, you may have attended a number of cultural activities, including plays and the opera. Do you think these experiences helped you at college? If so, how?
15. Even with financial aid, students can find it hard to pay for costs at college—textbooks, fun with friends, transportation home. Was this the case for you?
16. Did any of you take a break from college or transfer to another college? What led you to make this decision?
17. What did you expect from PUPP, once you graduated from high school and entered college?
18. PUPP's stated goal is to help students enroll at selective colleges. What are your thoughts about this goal now that you have gone to college?
19. What is your connection with PUPP now? What do you expect from PUPP, now that you have graduated from college and are working or attending graduate school?

**Reflections**

20. Have you recommended PUPP to students like you?
21. What are your thoughts on the summer stipend you received as a PUPP scholar?
22. PUPP is offered at “no cost” to students or your families, though we understand that there are trade-offs, for example, sometimes parents have to take off from work to attend events and students are not allowed to work during the Summer Institute. What are your thoughts on the value of the program?
23. Moving forward, do you have suggestions for PUPP?
24. Any final thoughts as we end? Is there anything you would like to talk more about or add?

**Princeton University Preparatory Program Alumni Focus Group Protocol, Recent Cohorts, January 6, 2016**

Priority Area: Knowledge Acquisitions, Critical Thinking, Communication, Aptitudes/Behaviors Intern/Ext

**Introduction**

1. Please tell us your first name, what high school you attended, and when you graduated.
2. What are you doing now?

**High School Information**

3. Tell me about your high school experience. What was your high school like?
4. Who helped you get ready to apply to college? Was there a counselor or teacher, or a program or service, that helped you prepare for college admissions?

**Princeton University Preparatory Program Experience**

5. How do you describe PUPP to people?
6. Tell me about the PUPP staff—Dr. Klugman, Mr. Wilson, Ms. Felder-Snipes, and Ms. Ramirez. How did they work with you to get ready for college?
7. What was the PUPP academic experience like for you?
8. What was your experience like with the other PUPP scholars?
9. Thinking back to when you were in high school, what services did PUPP provide to your parents or families?

**College Transition**

10. How did you pick your college?
11. In what ways, if any, did PUPP help you move from being a high school student to a college student?
12. How did the first term at college go?
13. What has been easy for you at college? What has been hard?
14. As part of PUPP, you may have attended a number of cultural activities, including plays and the opera. Do you think these experiences helped you at college? If so, how?
15. Even with financial aid, students can find it hard to pay for costs at college—textbooks, fun with friends, transportation home. Has this been the case for you?
16. Did any of you take a break from college or transfer to another college? What led you to make this decision?
17. What did you expect from PUPP, once you graduated from high school and entered college?
18. PUPP's stated goal is to help students enroll at selective colleges. What are your thoughts about this goal now that you have gone to college?
19. What is your connection with PUPP now?

**Reflections**

20. Have you recommended PUPP to students like you?
21. What are your thoughts on the summer stipend you received as a PUPP scholar?
22. PUPP is offered at “no cost” to students or your families, though we understand that there are trade-offs, for example, sometimes parents have to take off from work to attend events and students are not allowed to work during the Summer Institute. What are your thoughts on the value of the program?
23. Moving forward, do you have suggestions for PUPP?
24. Any final thoughts as we end? Is there anything you would like to talk more about or add?

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