



Unfulfilled Expectations of Recent College and High School Graduates in the United States

Carl Van Horn*

Professor and Director

John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, Rutgers University

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* Author of *Working Scared (Or Not at All): The Lost Decade, Great Recession, and Restoring the Shattered American Dream* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2013)

Education and Employment Status of Young Workers in the United States

- U.S. ranks 15th in proportion of adults with postsecondary degrees among OECD nations in 2009
- U.S. ranks 8th in proportion of adults with high school degrees among OECD nations in 2009
- 72% of young people who begin high school graduate

Education and Employment Status of Young Workers in the United States (cont.)

- 50% of young people who begin college obtain a BA/BS degree
- Unemployment rate for 16- to 19-year-olds in January 2013:

Overall: 20.8%

Black or African American: 37.8%

Hispanic or Latino: 26.5%

Recent High School and College Graduates Struggled to Find Full-time Jobs During the Recession Era

Employment Status	College	High School
Unemployed and looking for work	6%	30%
Unemployed and not looking for work	5%	14%
Working part time, not looking for full-time work	6%	8%
Working part time, looking for full-time work	6%	15%
Employed full time	51%	27%
Attending graduate school, not employed	6%	-
Attending graduate school, employed part time or full time	14%	-
Military	3%	2%
Self-employed	0%	3%
Volunteer	3%	1%

Recent High School Graduates, 2006 to 2011

- Only 27% were employed in full-time jobs
- Twice the level of unemployment 10 years ago
- Median hourly wage was \$9.25 — \$2.00 above federal minimum wage
 - Wages of high school graduates declined by 11% in 10 years

Recent High School Graduates, 2006 to 2011 (cont.)

- Of those who were working:
 - 75% in temporary jobs
 - 60% in part-time jobs
 - One in ten received health care and retirement benefits
- Most believe they will need additional education, but 40% reported they could not afford to attend college

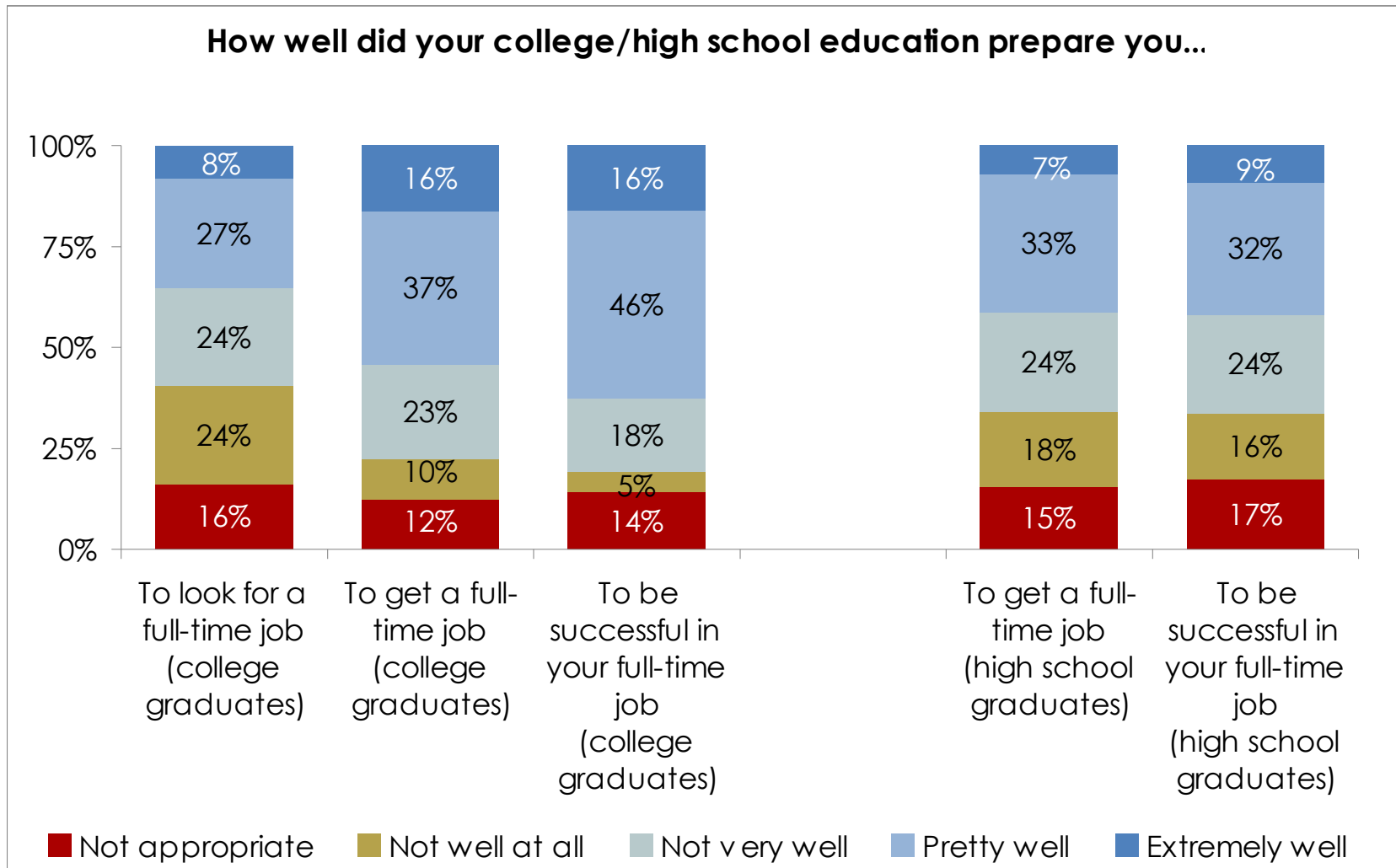
Recent College Graduates, 2006 to 2011

- Only half of recent college graduates were employed full time
 - 15% worked part time
 - 20% in graduate school
- Combined unemployment and underemployment rate is the highest level in more than a decade
- Median earnings: \$30,000 before recession; \$27,000 thereafter
 - Wages of college graduates declined by 5.4% in the past decade

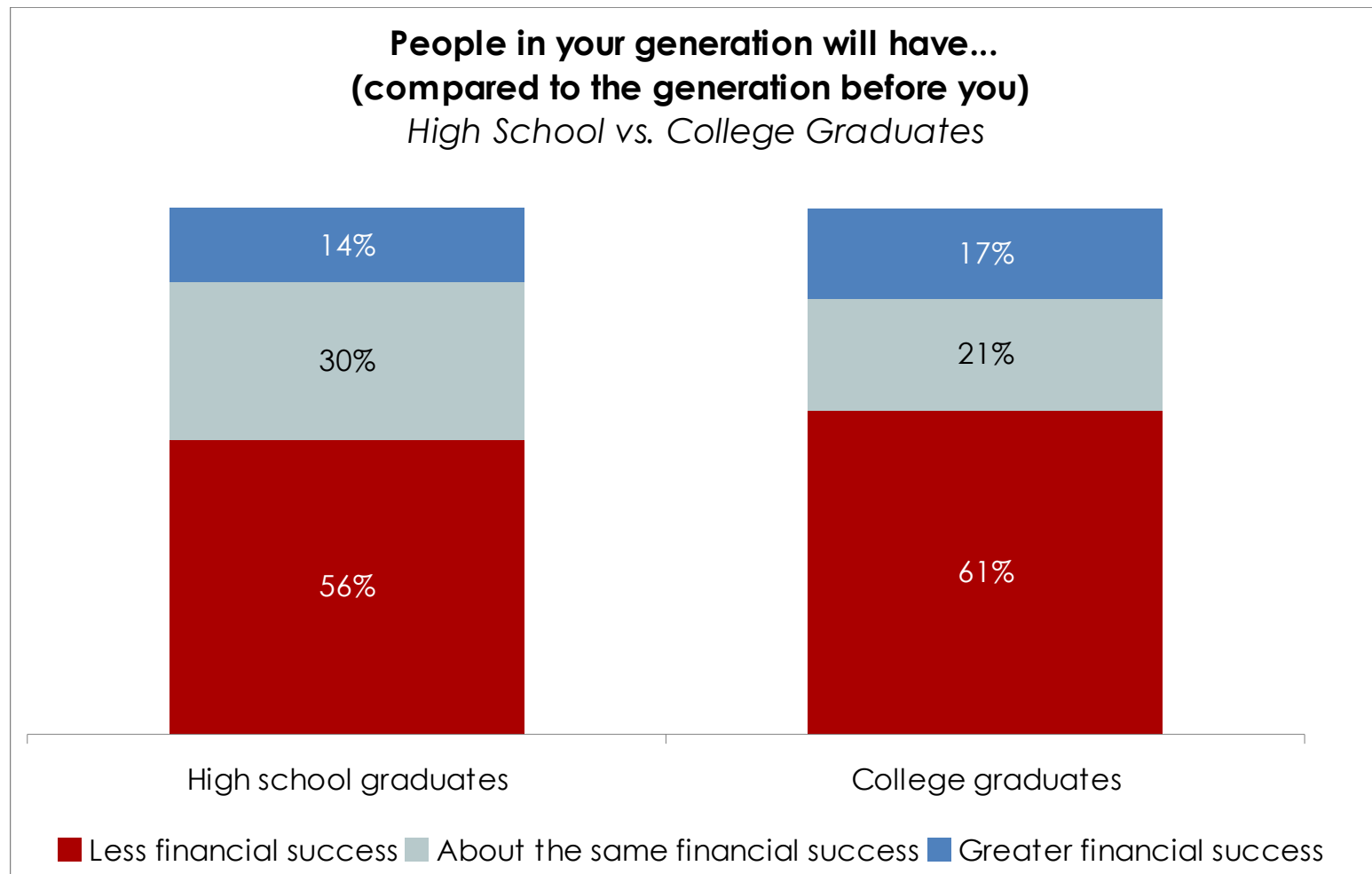
Recent College Graduates, 2006 to 2011 (cont.)

- 40% are working in jobs that do not require a college degree
- More than 75% worked full- or part-time jobs during college years
- Average student debt: \$20,000 — more for those who attend private colleges
- Most of those enrolled in graduate school are borrowing additional funds

Young Graduates are Not Sure they are Well Prepared for Work



Young Graduates Doubt they will do Better than the Previous Generation



Potential Policy Directions

- Increase completion rate — degree attainment
- Integrate academic, financial, and career information and advice
 - Transparency

Potential Policy Directions (cont.)

- Prepare high school and college students for jobs and careers
 - Increase internships and cooperative education programs
- Greater alignment between educational preparation and employers' needs
- Better preparation of students in core competencies

Sources

- National surveys of recent high school and college graduates, 2006 to 2011, conducted by the Heldrich Center.
- C. Van Horn, C. Zukin, and C. Stone, *Chasing the American Dream: Recent College Graduates and the Great Recession* (New Brunswick, NJ: Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, Rutgers University, 2012).
- C. Van Horn, C. Zukin, M. Szeltner, and C. Stone, *Left Out. Forgotten? Recent High School Graduates and the Great Recession* (New Brunswick, NJ: Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, Rutgers University, 2012).
- C. Van Horn, *Working Scared (Or Not at All): The Lost Decade, Great Recession, and Restoring the Shattered American Dream* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2013).

Contact Information

Carl E. Van Horn, Ph.D.
Professor and Director
John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce
Development, Rutgers University
www.heldrich.rutgers.edu

vanhorn@rutgers.edu
732.932.4100 x6305