

CASE
STUDY

#1

the
**GREAT
EIGHT**

*A Resource Guide Dedicated to Alabama's
Historically Black Community Colleges &
Predominantly Black Community Colleges
(HBCC/PBCC)*

1993-2023
30
YEARS
CHANGING THE NARRATIVE


alabamapossible 

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Introduction

The mission of this case study is to elevate the nation's first network that aims to create pathways to ensure and support adult learners of color receiving valuable credentials at Historically Black Community Colleges and Predominantly Black Community Colleges. Since their founding, these eight institutions have produced many of our nation's most outstanding professionals spanning across various workforce fields. Similar to their four-year university counterparts, HBCCs/PBCCs have historically been underfunded and under resourced.

Unlike their counterparts though, there is not a national network that advocates and supports HBCCs/PBCCs. Despite this, these schools continue to serve as academic pillars in their communities for people of all backgrounds to come and learn. These institutions have persevered through much adversity at both state and federal levels, which is why we must continue to advocate for and support them. The biggest posing question regarding HBCCs/PBCCs is if they adequately prepare individuals for the real world, and that answer is they certainly do! According to NCES, in the 2020-21 academic year, Black students received 43% of the 5,000 conferred associate degrees. This means that Black students are choosing community colleges which provide more options for entering into the workforce, than going the traditional route and taking the “normal time” of four years to complete a bachelor's degree.

Alabama Possible, in partnership with Complete College America and financial support from Lumina Foundation, Annie E. Casey Foundation, and ECMC Foundation, is committed to working with Alabama's eight HBCCs/PBCCs and providing them resources, so they can increase postsecondary transition and persistence as a strategy to remove barriers to prosperity.

This case study will highlight the strengths and challenges in the HBCCs/PBCCs and provide institutions with an in-depth look at tools to support their enrollment/transition rates, learning communities, retention rates, and graduate transitions/reverse transfer rates. These focus areas will be encompassed within a conceptual framework of intervention, prevention, and support strategies to fulfill our project's goal to increase postsecondary transition and persistence at the eight HBCCs/PBCCs as an approach towards removing barriers to prosperity. The research will also include nationwide best practices and incorporate them in the case study that will be published and disseminated among the eight institutions, so they may make informed decisions for their campuses, and will be distributed nationally as a resource for other institutions.

Alabama's 8 HBCCs/PBCCs, now affectionately known as “The Great Eight,” include the following institutions:

- 1** Bishop State Community College
- 2** Chattahoochee Valley Community College
- 3** Gadsden State Community College
- 4** H. Councill Trenholm State Community College
- 5** J.F. Drake State Community & Technical College
- 6** Lawson State Community College
- 7** Shelton State Community College
- 8** Wallace Community College Selma

The following pages consist of data regarding the demographics of each institution that include but isn't limited to enrollment/transition rates, learning communities, retention rates, and graduate transitions/reverse transfer rates. Because factors such as race, age, gender, and type of financial aid received impact students and data, they are included as well.

PREFERRED CITATION:

Houston, R., Mishra, M., Scott, C., Steave, J. (2023). The Great Eight: A Resource Guide Dedicated to Alabama's Historically Black Community Colleges and Predominantly Black Community Colleges, Case Study #1. Birmingham, AL: Alabama Possible.



Founded in 1927, **Bishop State Community College** is located in Mobile, Alabama and its mission is to promote career pathways through open access to an affordable, quality education in a diverse and inclusive environment.

Enrollment Characteristics

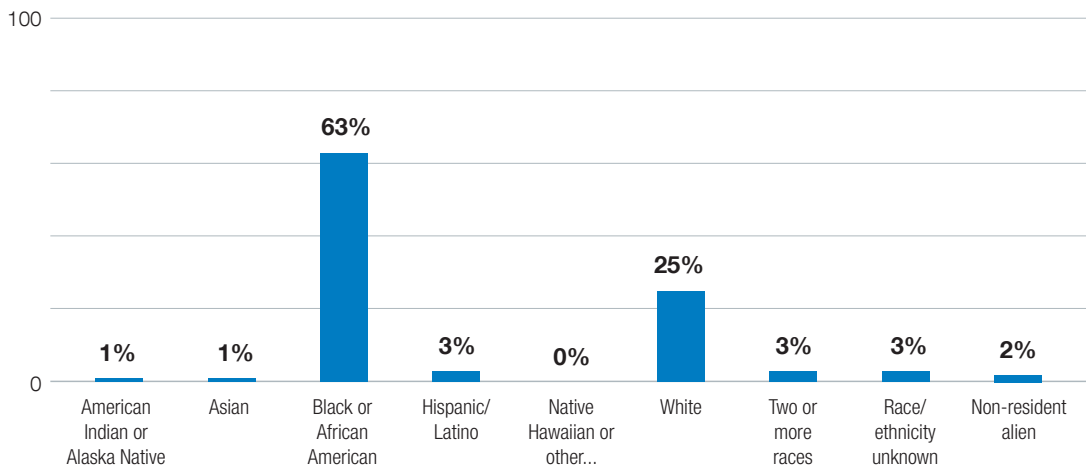
2,479 students enrolled in Fall 2021

187 undergraduate students transferred in



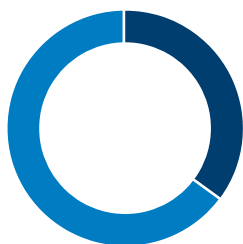
Student Race/Ethnicity

The majority of students at Bishop Community College are Black or African American students.



(from National Center for Education Statistics)

Student Age



65% of students are 24 and under

35% of students are 25 and over

Student Residence



94% of Bishop's students reside in state

6% reside out of state

Retention

This is the percentage of first-time students who return to the institution in the fall to continue their studies.
Students who started school in 2020 and returned in 2021:



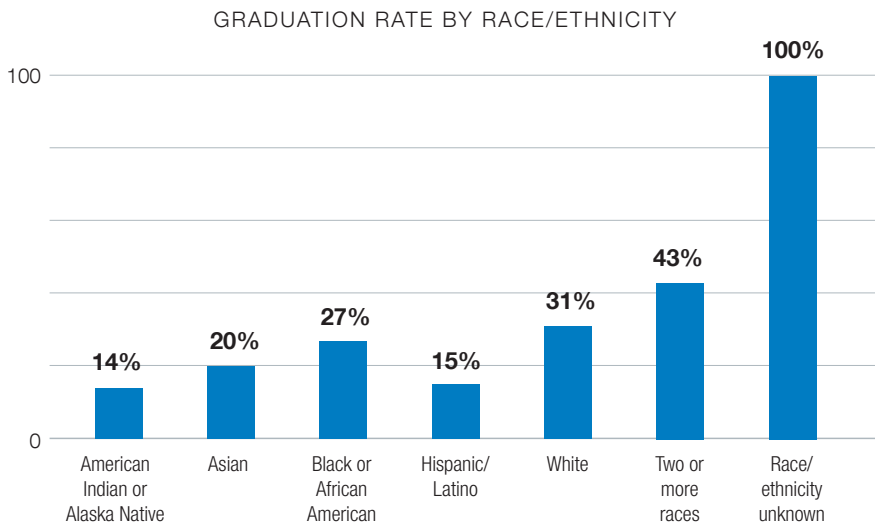
Graduation

Students who started school in the Fall of 2018:

- There's a 28% overall graduation rate and a 27% transfer-out rate of full-time students who graduated/transferred within a “normal time” of their program’s completion.
- At this institution, 33% of entering students were counted as “full-time, first-time” in 2021.

By Gender:

- While 36% of males graduate, only 19% of graduates are female.
- If we can identify the barriers that prevent female students from graduating, the network can help provide resources to fill in the gaps resulting in an increased graduation rate. When we analyze graduation rates by race, the disparities increase even more.



(from NCES)

Financial Aid

Type of Aid	# Receiving Aid	The total amount of aid received	Avg. amount of aid received
Grant or scholarship aid	1,293	\$6,758,419	\$5,227
Pell grants	1,045	\$4,276,484	\$4,092
Federal student loans	0	\$0	—

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

1 *Why choose Bishop?*

Bishop is dedicated to serving the residents of Mobile and Washington counties by offering one and two-year career programs that are designed to set students up for success whether they transfer to a four-year institution or immediately enter the workforce.

2 *How has Bishop State's history played a part in how they enroll students today?*

Historically, Bishop served Black students when many other campuses wouldn't. As schools began desegregating, Bishop continually welcomed students from all backgrounds and still does to this day.

3 *How does Bishop ensure they're providing quality learning environment with adequate resources for students?*

Bishop gives its students access to exceptional professors and state-of-the-art facilities to ensure that no matter what path a student chooses whether it be in health sciences or going back for their GED, Bishop provides a space for them to succeed.



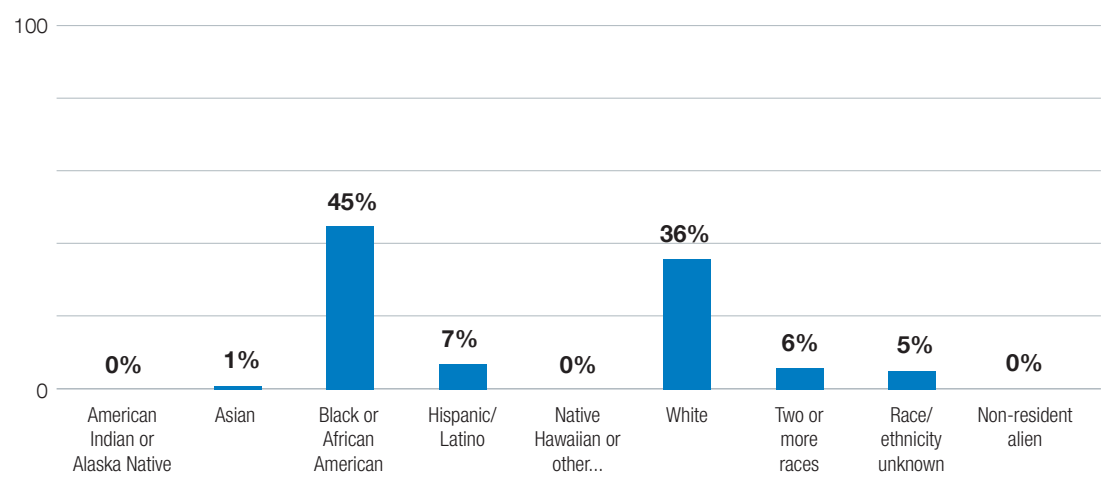
Chattahoochee Valley Community College, established by an act of the Alabama Legislature in 1973, is a public community college in Phenix City, Alabama. It serves residents of Russell County and parts of Bullock, Lee, Macon, and Barbour Counties, as well as the Columbus, Georgia metropolitan area.

Enrollment Characteristics

1,360 students enrolled in Fall 2021

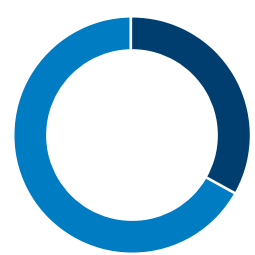


Student Race/Ethnicity



(from National Center for Education Statistics)

Student Age



67% of students are 24 and under
33% of students are 25 and over

First-to- Second Year Retention Rates for First-Time Students

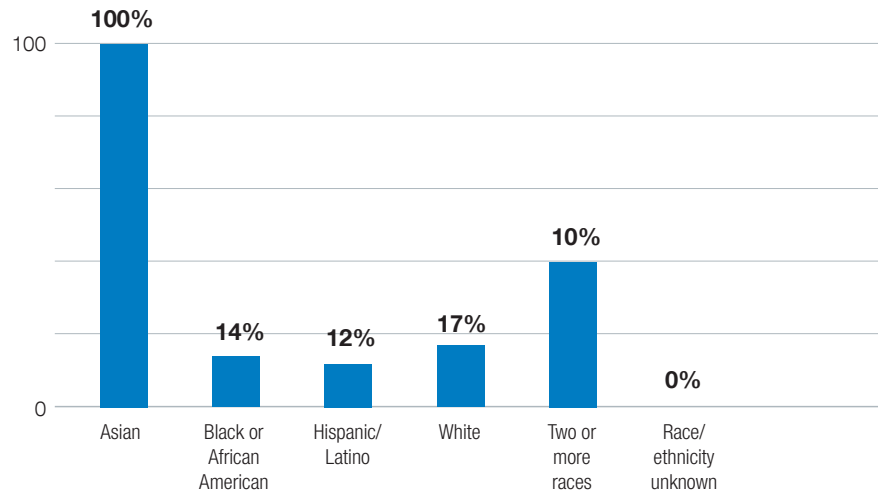
At this institution, 28% of entering students were counted as “full-time, first-time” in 2021.



Grad and Transfer-out rates for students who started school in the Fall of 2018

16% overall grad rate, and a 27% transfer-out rate

GRADUATION RATE BY RACE/ETHNICITY



(from NCES)

Financial Aid

Type of Aid	# Receiving Aid	The total amount of aid received	Avg. amount of aid received
Grant or scholarship aid	1,152	\$9,480,711	\$8,230
Pell grants	639	\$4,024,539	\$6,298
Federal student loans	329	\$1,862,918	\$5,662

FAQ's

1 *How does Chattahoochee ensure they provide well-rounded students?*

We are essentially gap-fillers in providing students with adequate resources and opportunities for them to be successful in their career paths and while in college as well. We offer clubs and other social organizations, honor societies, athletic teams, and many other aspects that allow students to get the full-college experience.

2 *With Chattahoochee being a fairly new institution in comparison to many older schools, how are you all ensuring to produce degreed, credentialed, and trained students?*

Higher education is a competitive industry, and we don't shy away from competition. Students come to Chattahoochee Valley Community College from other institutions because they know we'll get them where they need to be academically and professionally.

3 *Why choose Chattahoochee?*

Chattahoochee has a wide range of both degree and training programs to choose from for students of all backgrounds.

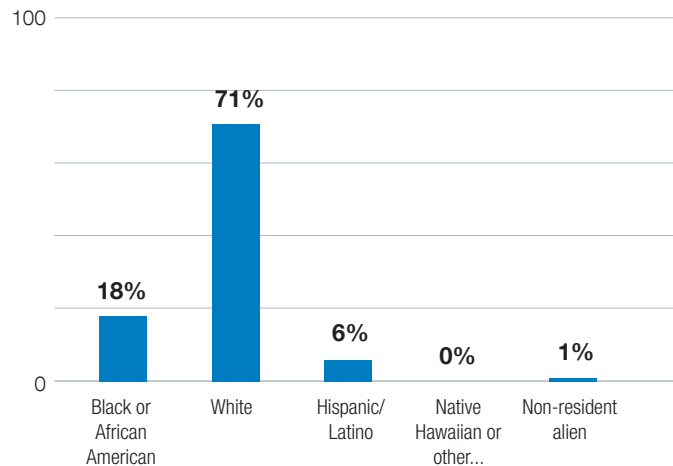


Gadsden State Technical Institute began in 1960 as the Gadsden Vocational Trade School, a private vocational training school for African Americans. Gadsden State is now a public, open-door comprehensive community college comprised of five campuses or educational centers in Calhoun, Cherokee, and Etowah counties. Gadsden State has a rich and illustrious history within the communities it serves. Administrators, faculty, and staff work together to prepare students for direct entry into the workplace or transfer to a four-year university.

Enrollment

4,308 students
enrolled in Fall 2021

Student Race/Ethnicity



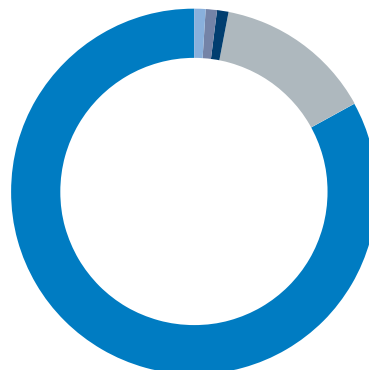
All Degrees Awarded by Gender/Race:

Male

Short Certification	339
Certification	226
Associate degree	291

Female

Short Certification	149
Certification	123
Associate degree	400



Degrees Awarded by Race

AA	275 (83%)
White	50 (15%)
Multiracial	2 (>1%)
Am. Indian	3 (>1%)
Asian	2 (>1%)

FAQ's

1 *How does Gadsden support Black and Brown students of color?*

Gadsden supports Black and Brown students by maintaining college-wide programs to facilitate cultural awareness and promoting college-wide discussion on diversity, inclusion, and equity issues through public forums.

2 *With so many college options to choose from, how does Gadsden set itself apart from other community colleges?*

Gadsden has five campuses to choose from, with plenty of resources to match. They pride themselves on preparing students from all backgrounds for success through quality education, innovative workforce development, inclusive community and global engagement.

3 *Why would someone be hesitant to attend an HBCC or PBCC?*

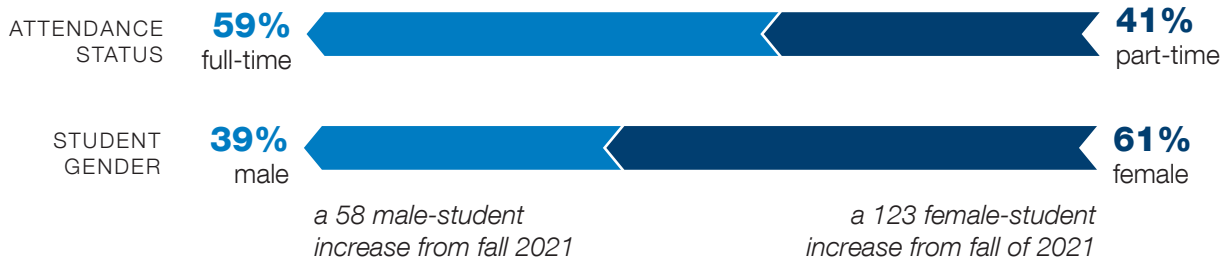
A person could be hesitant for many reasons, but it may arise from financial issues, timing, or the stigma surrounding two-year institutions. However, all these institutions still produce qualified and well-rounded professionals.



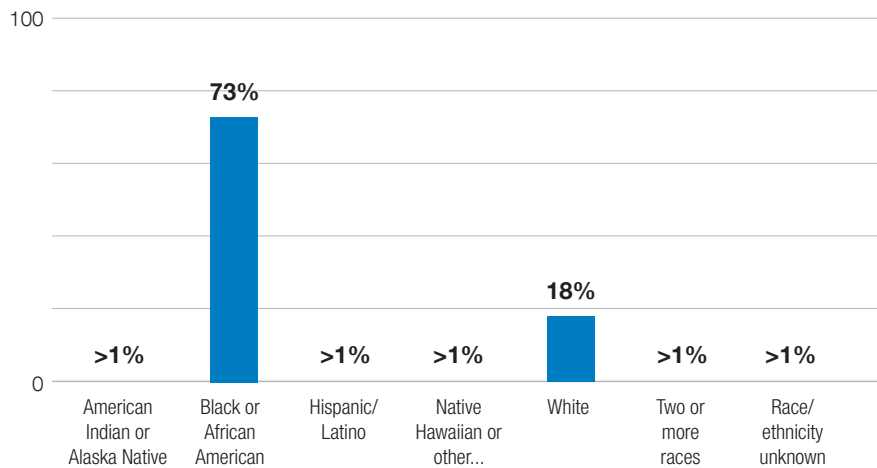
Founded in 1963, **H. Councill Trenholm State Technical College** was created by consolidating John M. Patterson State Technical College and H. Councill Trenholm State Technical College in April 2000. Their mission is to provide comprehensive and accessible educational opportunities, including academic transfer and technical programs, designed to promote economic development, enhance workforce development, and improve the quality of life for the community.

Enrollment Characteristics

1,984 students enrolled in Fall 2022



Student Race/Ethnicity

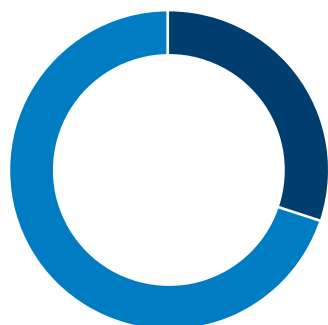


(from National Center for Education Statistics)

Income



Summer 2021-Spring 2022 Completions



By Gender

56.48%
Female

43.19%
Male



By Race

■ AA	206 (68%)
■ White	61 (20%)
■ Hispanic	14 (>1%)
■ Am. Indian	3 (>1%)
■ Asian	2 (>1%)

FAQ's

1 Can HBCCs/PBCCs adapt to modern times and the ever-changing needs of new students?

HBCCs/PBCCs were born out of an educational necessity and have been adapting to students' needs since their creation. We have moved mountains for our students, and still do, all while being under resourced and underfunded.

2 Why choose Trenholm?

Trenholm provides adult learning opportunities; civic, social cultural, and personal development; business and industry training; and support of economic development for the central Alabama region.

3 How does Trenholm meet the demand for new career paths?

Trenholm meets this demand by forging partnerships with four-year institutions, instilling new career and technical training programs, and ensuring our students have plenty of opportunities to succeed.



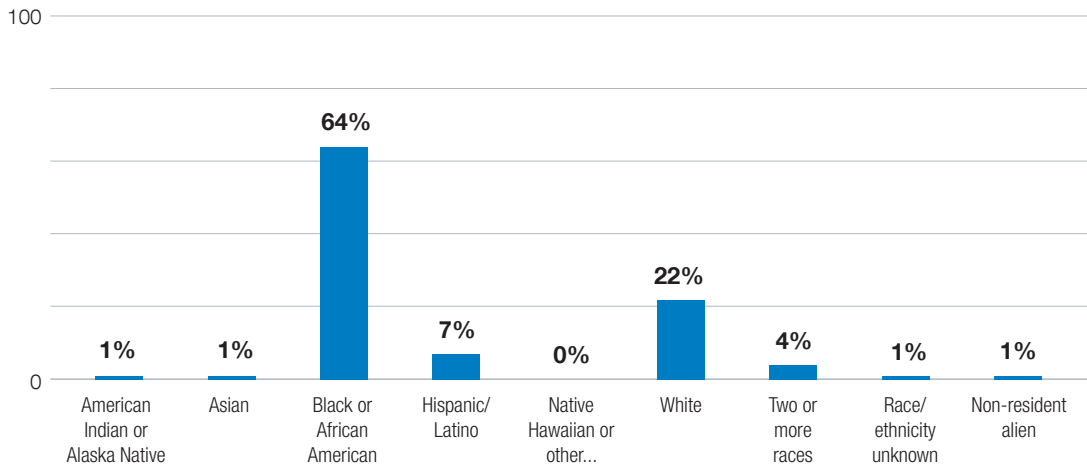
Founded in 1961, **J.F. Drake State Community & Technical College** is located in Huntsville, Alabama. Their mission is to offer flexible, affordable university transfer and technical degrees, certificates, adult and continuing education, and customized skills training to fulfill the diverse workforce needs of employers.

Enrollment Characteristics

872 students enrolled in Fall 2021



Student Race/Ethnicity



(from National Center for Education Statistics)

Student Age



53% of students are 24 and under
47% of students are 25 and over

Student Residence



92% of students are in-state
5% are out-of-state
3% have an unknown residence

reported from first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates from the fall of 2020

Retention

Out of students who started school in the fall of 2020:



At this institution, 16 percent of entering students were counted as “full-time, first-time” degree/certification-seeking students in 2021.

Graduation

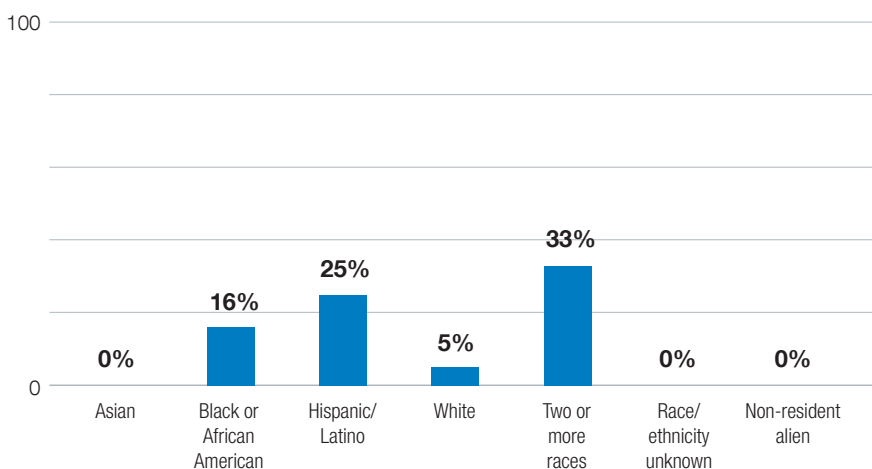
Overall graduation and transfer rates for students who started school in 2018:

- 14% overall graduation rate
- 16% transfer-out rate

By Gender:

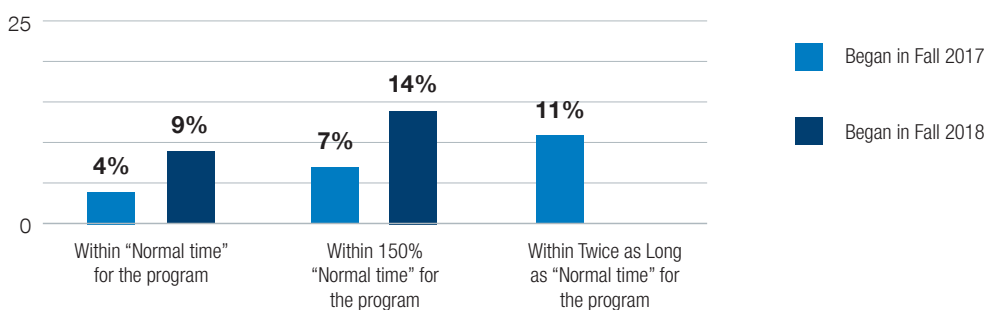
- 11% of male “full-time, first-time” graduated within the “normal time” to complete their program.
- 19% of female “full-time, first-time” graduated within the “normal time” to complete their program.

GRADUATION RATE BY RACE/ETHNICITY



(from NCES)

GRADUATION RATES FOR STUDENTS WHO STARTED SCHOOL IN FALL 2017 VS. FALL 2018 TO COMPLETION



Financial Aid

Type of Aid	# Receiving Aid	The total amount of aid received	Avg. amount of aid received
<i>Grant or scholarship aid</i>	697	\$2,510,357	\$3,597
<i>Pell grants</i>	373	\$1,807,174	\$4,845
<i>Federal student loans</i>	0	\$0	—

FAQ's

1 *Why choose Drake?*

Drake helps students “reimagine their future” by opening up spaces and opportunities that might not have previously been available to them.

2 *In a city with other two-year and four-year institutions, how does Drake set itself apart as a premier education leader?*

Drake does this by modernizing their facilities and expanding their professional network by partnering with four-year institutions to ensure students receive the best opportunities while at Drake and when they leave.

3 *What are some common misconceptions about HBCCs and PBCCs?*

Common misconceptions about HBCCS and PBCCs are that they don't prepare you for entering the workforce like four-year institutions, their degrees don't hold weight, and their curriculum isn't rigorous.

4 *What are some of the benefits of attending a community college?*

Many benefits of attending a community college include but aren't limited to, cost-effectiveness, class sizes, flexibility, and communal support.



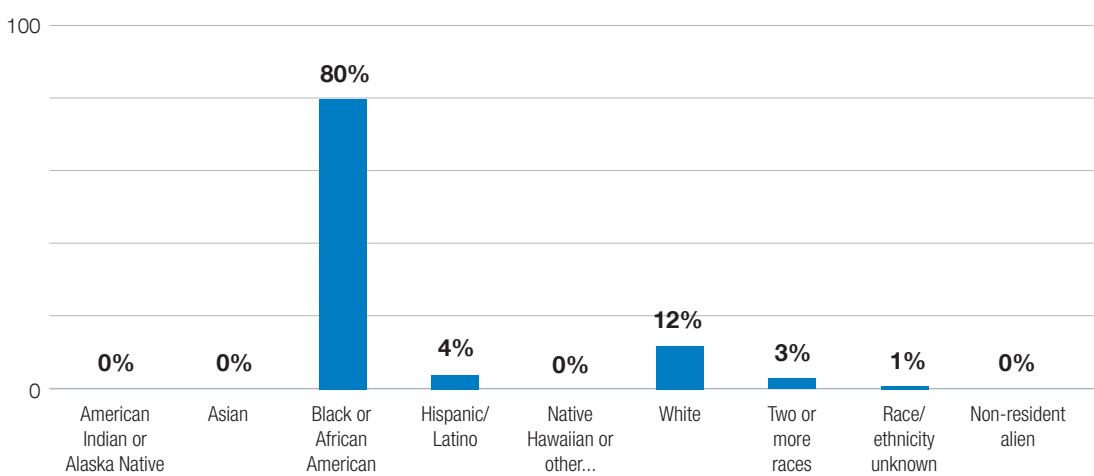
Founded in 1949, and located in the southwestern section of Birmingham, **Lawson State Community College** focuses on student success and provides affordable and accessible quality educational opportunities, promotes economic growth, and enhances the quality of life for the diverse communities it serves. Through innovative instruction and lifelong learning opportunities, the College prepares students for college transfer, gainful employment, and career advancement.

Enrollment Characteristics

3,094 students enrolled in Fall 2021

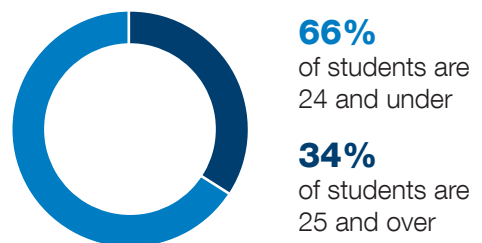


Student Race/Ethnicity

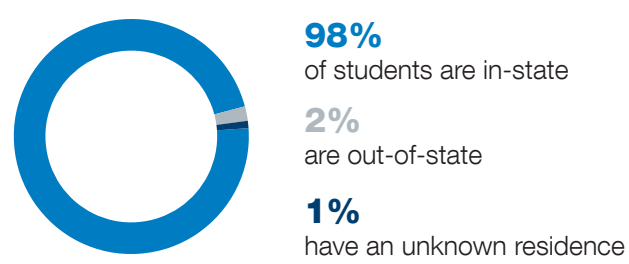


(from National Center for Education Statistics)

Student Age



Student Residence



reported from first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates from the fall of 2020

Retention

Of first-time students who started school in the fall of 2020:



Overall Graduation Rate and Transfer-out Rate

At this institution, 35% of entering students were counted as “full-time, first-time” in 2021.

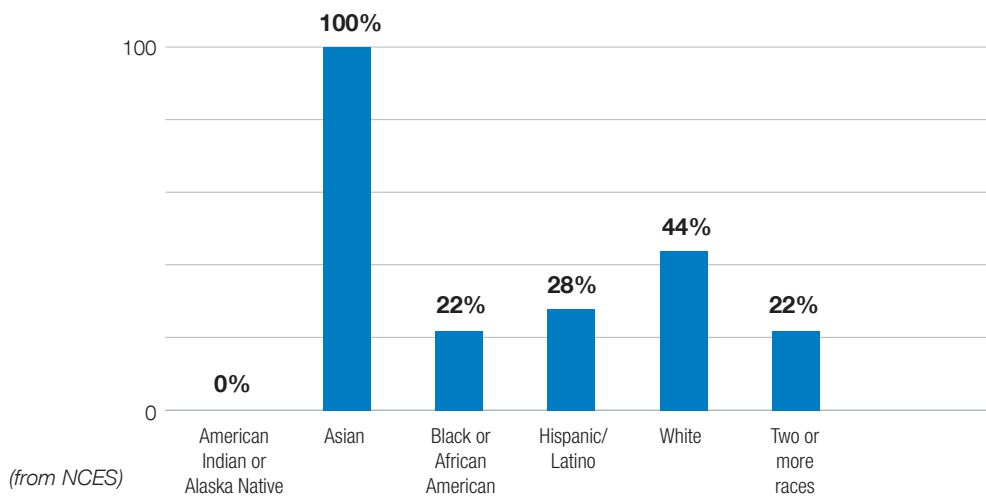
For students who started school in the fall of 2018:

- There’s a 25% overall graduation rate and a 15% transfer-out rate

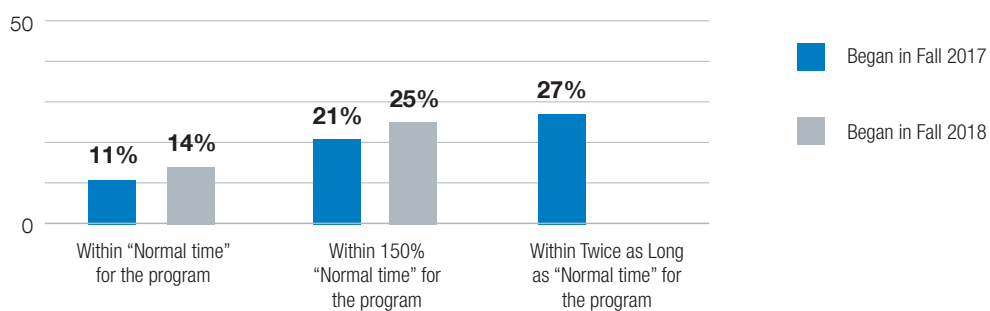
By Gender

- There’s a 29% overall graduation of males and 22% overall graduation of females

GRADUATION RATE BY RACE/ETHNICITY



OVERALL GRADUATION RATE BY STUDENTS WHO STARTED SCHOOL IN FALL 2017 VS. FALL 2018



Financial Aid

Type of Aid	# Receiving Aid	The total amount of aid received	Avg. amount of aid received
Grant or scholarship aid	2,554	\$14,509,098	\$5,681
Pell grants	1,736	\$8,380,423	\$4,827
Federal student loans	0	\$0	—

FAQ's

1 As an HBCC, what is the greatest threat to HBCCs on the state and national levels?

The greatest threat would likely be a lack of financial support and not enough advocacy and lawmaking on the state and federal legislative levels.

2 How is Lawson ensuring that the curriculum is challenging and still prepares students for their next steps?

Lawson is doing this by developing a student-centered instructional program that is focused on heightened engagement, innovative technologies, and varied modes of delivery.

3 How is Lawson preparing the students on their current academic paths for successful academic and career transitions?

Lawson's top performers come from all of their degree and training programs, which is why they ensure that their students receive adequate resources such as tutoring, schedule flexibility, and career counseling to ensure the students' success.

4 Why is there a lack of exposure concerning HBCCs/PBCCs?

Unlike their 4-year HBCU counterparts, who still face their own set of unique problems, 2-year HBCCs/PBCCs don't have many developmental and support networks to advocate on their behalf. That's why organizations like Alabama Possible and Complete College of America are so important because they are actively doing the work to support these institutions.



Founded in 1954, **Shelton State Community College** is a two-year community college located in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and is one of the largest two-year colleges in the state. They are a comprehensive institution committed to providing the community with innovative and accessible learning opportunities to advance academic excellence, cultural enrichment, workforce training, and economic development.

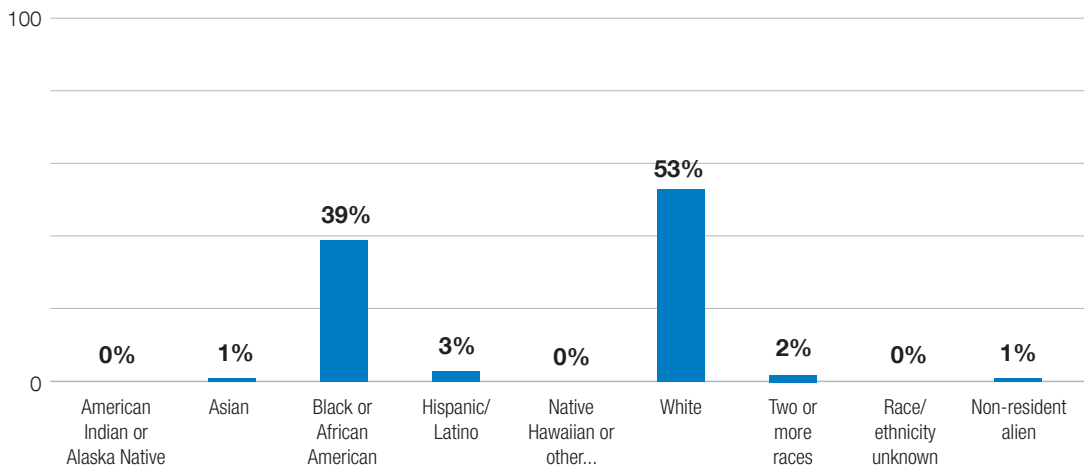
Enrollment

4,659 students enrolled in Fall 2021

464 students transferred in

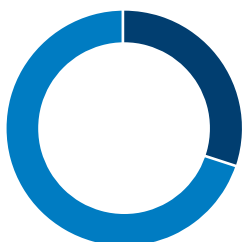


Student Race/Ethnicity



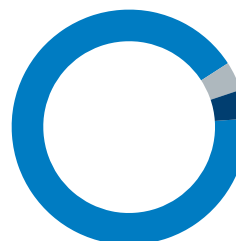
(from National Center for Education Statistics)

Student Age



70% of students are 24 and under
30% of students are 25 and over

Student Residence



92% of students are in-state
4% are out-of-state
4% have an unknown residence

reported from first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates from the fall of 2020

Retention

Out of first-time students who started school in the fall of 2020:



At this institution, 16 percent of entering students were counted as “full-time, first-time” degree/certification-seeking students in 2021.

Overall Graduation Rate and Transfer-out Rate

At this institution, 37% of entering students were counted as “full-time, first-time” in 2021.

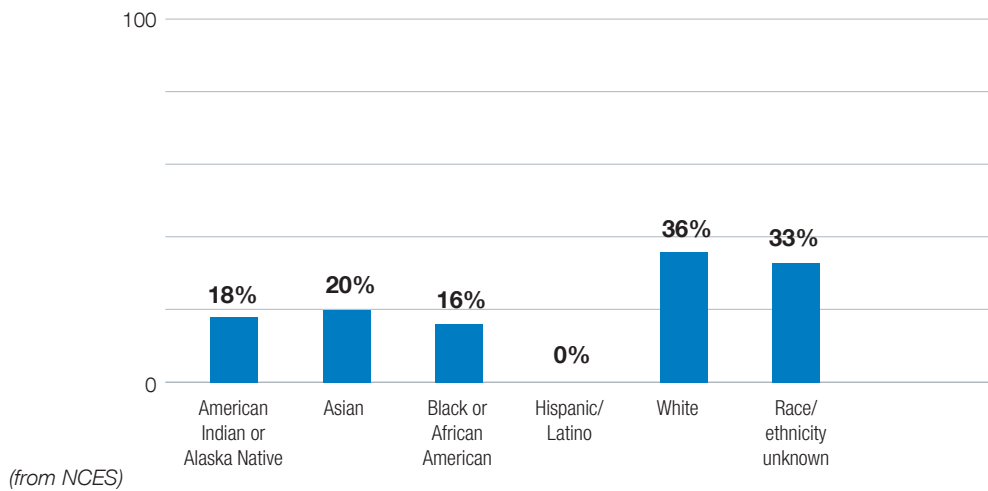
For students who started school in the fall 2018:

- There’s a 27% overall graduation rate and a 23% transfer-out rate.

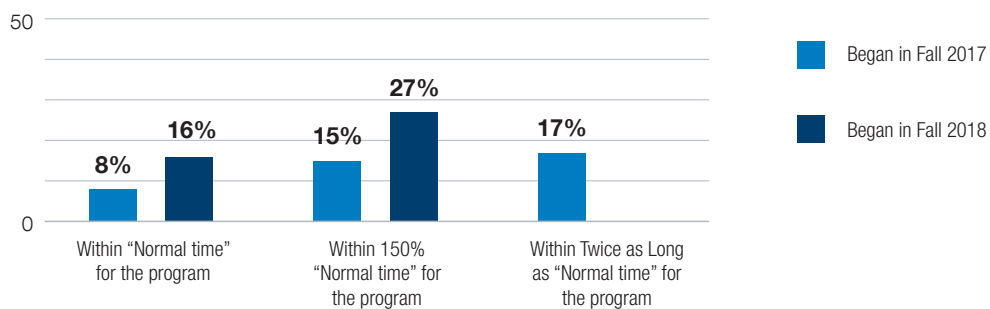
By Gender

- There’s a 32% overall graduation of males and 24% overall graduation of females.

GRADUATION RATE BY RACE/ETHNICITY



OVERALL GRADUATION RATE BY STUDENTS WHO STARTED SCHOOL IN FALL 2017 VS. FALL 2018



Financial Aid

Type of Aid	# Receiving Aid	The total amount of aid received	Avg. amount of aid received
<i>Grant or scholarship aid</i>	2,125	\$9,218,165	\$4,338
<i>Pell grants</i>	1,426	\$6,837,644	\$4,795
<i>Federal student loans</i>	0	\$0	—

FAQ's

1 How is Shelton meeting the demand for people to complete workforce development and trade courses?

Shelton has a unique variety of both, and they meet the demand by properly preparing their students in all endeavors to not only start the courses but complete and graduate as well.

2 How does Shelton support students pursue careers in nontraditional fields?

Shelton recently reopened their Perkins Scholarship, which is a scholarship that supports students who want to pursue a career in a field where one gender comprises less than 25 percent of the individuals employed in that occupation or field.

3 Does Shelton offer flexible classes for students with nontraditional backgrounds?

Yes, Shelton offers eLearning courses, which are online and built around an individual's schedule, that is built for people who may not have the time to attend traditional/on-campus style classes.



Founded in 1963, the mission of **Wallace Community College Selma** is to provide high-quality, learning-centered educational opportunities and services through diverse instructional-delivery modes that are responsive to individual, community, state, and global needs.

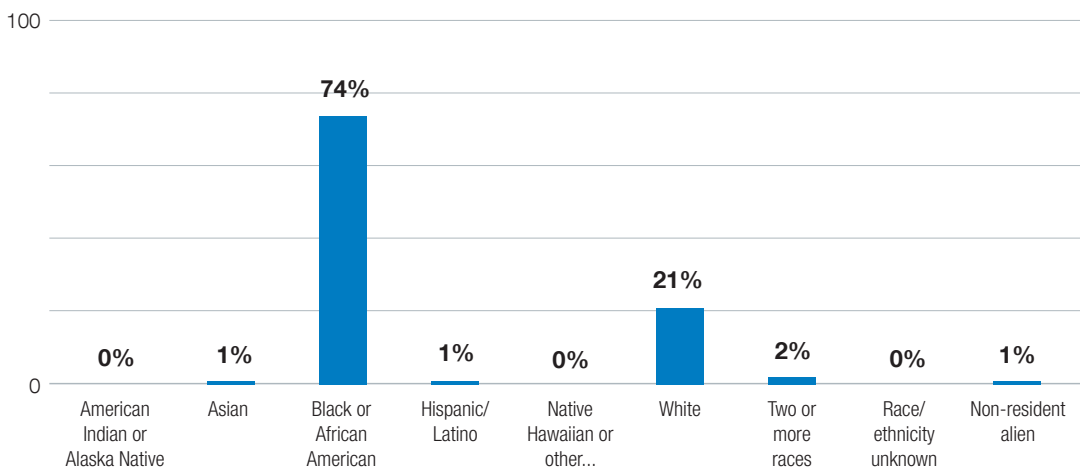
Enrollment Characteristics

1,831 students enrolled in Fall 2022

Undergrad transfer-in enrollment



Student Race/Ethnicity



(from National Center for Education Statistics)

Income

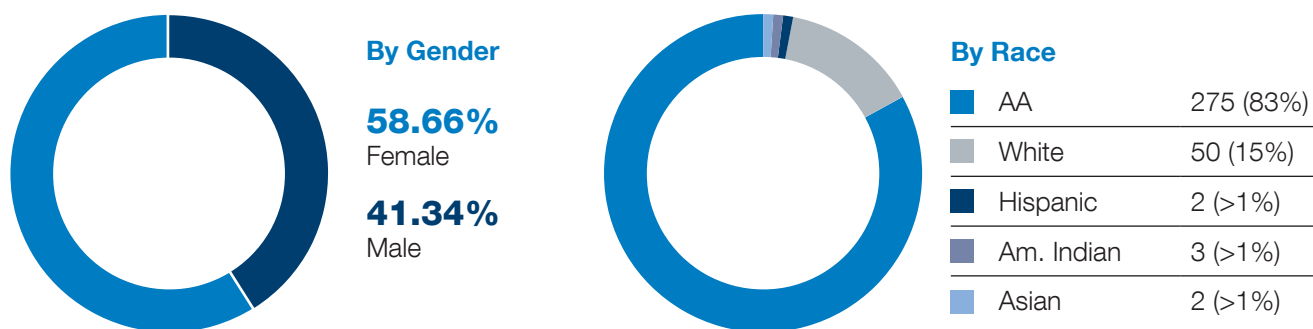


Retention of Fall 2020 students

Full-time: 179
Part-time: 56
Total: 235

Number of students still enrolled at institution in Fall 2021/SP 2022/SU 2022: 145

Summer 2021-Spring 2022 Completions



FAQ's

1 *How does Wallace combat the stigma two-year colleges face while also dealing with challenges as an HBCC?*

Wallace beats the stigma time and time again by producing educated and well-rounded professionals in every endeavor. The challenges they face as an HBCC are tough, but with support from the community and non-profits like Alabama Possible and Complete College America, they aren't fighting alone.

2 *Why choose Wallace?*

As a primary postsecondary education and training resource, WCCS also serves as a cultural center, a major employer, and an economic catalyst for providing employers with an educated and well-trained workforce.

3 *How does Wallace help prepare students for graduation and future careers?*

Wallace focuses on improving students' success. They ensure students have all that they require by connecting them with student success counselors as well as academic and career opportunities geared toward various programs students are enrolled in.

References

1 *Bishop State Community College*

<https://www.bishop.edu/>

2 *Chattahoochee Valley Community College*

<https://www.cv.edu/>

3 *Gadsden State Community College*

<https://www.gadsdenstate.edu/>

4 *H. Councill Trenholm State Community College*

<https://www.trenholmstate.edu/>

5 *J.F. Drake State Community & Technical College*

<https://drakestate.edu/>

6 *Lawson State Community College*

<https://www.lawsonstate.edu/>

7 *National Center for Education Statistics*

<https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

8 *Shelton State Community College*

<https://www.sheltonstate.edu/>

9 *Wallace Community College- Selma*

<https://www.wccs.edu>

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30
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This document made possible with financial support from ECMC Foundation