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WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Research and reports related to our survey can be found at our website

<http://norc.gatesscholarsresearch.org>

WSA Longitudinal Survey and Tracking Study

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Address Correction Requested



WSA LONGITUDINAL SURVEY AND TRACKING STUDY

N E W S L E T T E R

Fall 2008

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Welcome to the Washington State Achievers (WSA) Longitudinal Survey and Tracking Study newsletter! In this issue we'll fill you in on some important upcoming activities and share some key findings from the study. If you have any questions about the newsletter or any aspect of this research, please contact us at wsa@norc.org or call us toll-free at 1-866-810-6672.

Let's make a strong finish, Cohorts V and VII!

If you are in Cohort V or VII and have not yet completed this year's survey, you still have a few weeks left — up until October 31st. Just log in at the address for your cohort listed below.

Cohort V: <https://websurvey.norc.org/wsac5>

Cohort VII: <https://websurvey.norc.org/wsac7>

If you need help with your PIN and password, contact us at wsa@norc.org or toll free at 1-866-810-6672. Once you complete the survey, we'll send you \$25 as a token of our gratitude. Your participation in this study is voluntary.



Help to Make a Difference... Complete a Survey!

Every time you complete a survey, you help to make a difference. The more responses we receive, the more meaningful this data becomes. Whether you used the scholarship or not, your continued participation is extremely important.

After all identifying information has been removed from your survey responses, it becomes part of the Washington State Achievers dataset, which is the oldest and most extensive of its kind. This dataset is a valuable resource for researchers, policymakers, and other educational professionals.

Already researchers have used the WSA dataset to produce important articles on educational access, financial aid, and school reform. In 2008 seven new researchers have begun to work with the data, examining issues such as college retention, transfer patterns, educational support programs, and ways to improve academic performance. Such research informs regional and national discussions on education and helps policy makers and administrators to formulate strategies and devise programs to improve education at all levels.

Without your participation, this work would not be possible. Thanks!

You're next, Cohort III...

Next spring the second follow-up survey for Cohort III will begin. In May look for a letter and e-mail from us which will contain a PIN and password to access the survey online. If you've moved, please pass along your new contact information so that you can participate in the survey.

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Study Results

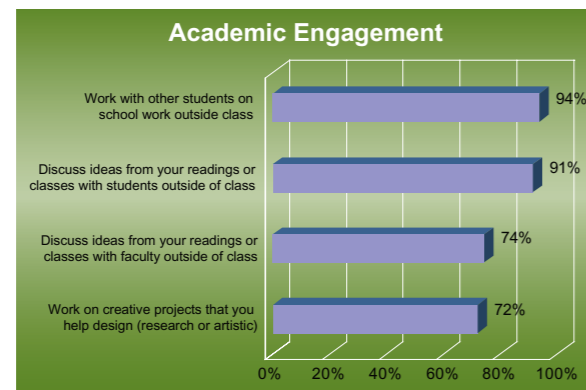
The Cohort V baseline survey, which was administered in 2006, asked respondents a series of questions to learn how involved they were in their communities socially, intellectually, and as citizens.

Academic Engagement

A large majority of Cohort V Achievers reported that they spent time with other students outside of class either doing coursework (94 percent) or discussing ideas from course readings (91 percent). In addition, about one third said that they discussed ideas from readings with faculty outside of class (74 percent) or were engaged with a creative project (71 percent).

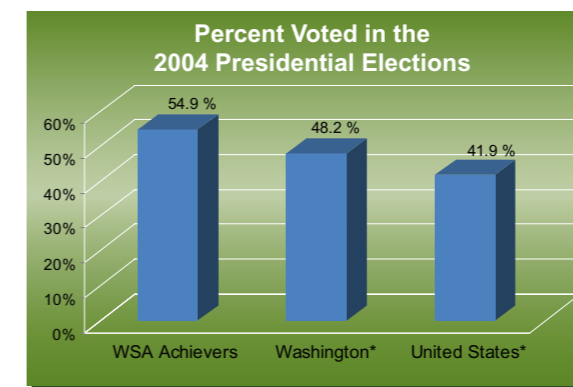
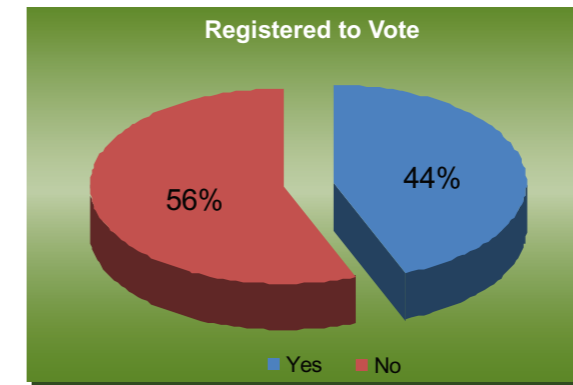
Community Engagement

In 2006 Cohort V Achievers reported on the ways in which they were involved in their communities. Among the most popular were tutoring sessions, community service activities, and residence hall events. Cohort V Achievers participated in events sponsored by a fraternity or sorority at lower rates.



Civic Engagement

In addition to high rates of academic and community engagement, Cohort V Achievers demonstrate a strong sense of civic responsibility and exercised their right to vote. In 2006 44 percent of Cohort V Achievers reported that they were registered to vote. According to the survey, 39 percent voted in municipal and state elections in 2005, and 55 percent voted in the 2004 presidential election. This proportion exceeds the national and state average.



*State and national voting statistics from U.S. Census Bureau: Current population Survey, November 2004. Source: Cohort V Baseline Survey (2006)

Staff Profiles

We ask you a lot of questions about yourselves—it's only fair that we tell you a little bit about us. Here are some profiles of a few people who work on the WSA study at NORC.

Patricia Cloud came to the project in 2004. She has worked in several areas, such as coding, transcript consent forms, and publications. Most recently she has used her background in library science to design and develop the Gates Scholars research dissemination site, <http://norc.gatesscholarsresearch.org>.

Greg Wolniak is a research scientist who began working on the study in 2006. With expertise in higher education research and statistics, he analyzes survey data and writes main findings reports that present important results from each survey round.

Bill Drewett. As a survey director, Bill's primary role on the project is to manage data coding. In addition, Bill works on project scheduling and helps with the qualitative research. He joined the project in 2006.

Michele Zimowski is a senior survey methodologist who has been working on the WSA study since it began in 2002. She provides technical advice on many critical areas of the project such as study design, questionnaire development, and data analysis.

Important Contact Information

Have you moved or are you planning to move? Please provide us with your new contact information (address, phone number, e-mail) so that you can continue to participate in this WSA research.

E-mail: wsa@norc.org

Phone: 1-866-810-6672

Mail: NORC, 1155 E. 60th Street, Chicago, IL 60637

Confidentiality Statement: All individual survey responses in this study are strictly confidential. Names and identifying information are removed from the data files. Our research is focused on averages and overall patterns, not on individual responses. We do try to keep up-to-date contact information for each respondent so that we can conduct surveys in future years. Your personal information is kept in a secure location and will never be shared with anyone outside this study.