

# First-generation College Graduates' Employment and Finances



**One year** after earning a bachelor's degree in academic year 2015–16, **80%** of both **first-generation** and **continuing-generation** graduates **were employed**, but fewer **first-generation** graduates had a job that requires a bachelor's degree.



Job requires a bachelor's degree

**44%** of **first-generation** college graduates  
**52%** of **continuing-generation** college graduates



Worked at a for-profit company

**51%** of **first-generation** college graduates  
**59%** of **continuing-generation** college graduates



Worked for a nonprofit company or organization

**16%** of **first-generation** college graduates  
**14%** of **continuing-generation** college graduates

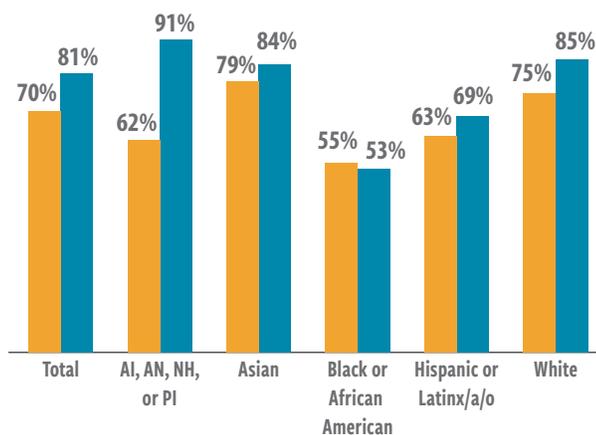


Worked for local, state, or federal government

**19%** of **first-generation** college graduates  
**14%** of **continuing-generation** college graduates

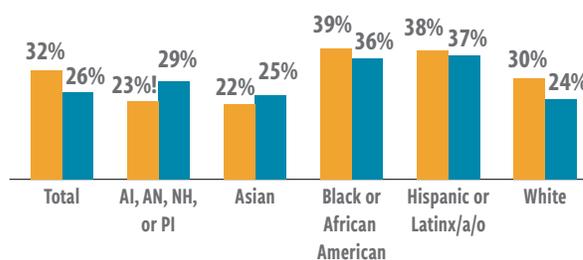
**First-generation** college graduates were **less confident** than **continuing-generation** graduates that they **could come up with \$2,000** if an unexpected need arose. Black or African American graduates were least confident.

Percentage who reported that they could come up with \$2,000 if an unexpected need arose within the next month, by race/ethnicity



**More first-generation** college graduates than **continuing-generation** graduates **took a job** instead of enrolling in additional education **for financial reasons**, but this gap differed by race/ethnicity.

Percentage who took a job instead of enrolling in additional education due to the cost of undergraduate and graduate education, by race/ethnicity



■ First-generation College Graduates ■ Continuing-generation College Graduates

“AI, AN, NH, or PI” refers to American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, or other Pacific Islander. “!” means interpret the statistic with caution due to a large standard error. Fact sheet represents individuals who received a bachelor's degree in academic year 2015–16 from a Title IV postsecondary institution. A first-generation college student/graduate is an individual whose parents do not have a bachelor's or higher degree. A continuing-generation college student/graduate is an individual who has at least one parent with a bachelor's or higher degree. Job characteristics statistics describe those who were employed a year after earning a bachelor's degree. Financial status was measured as of June 2017. Percentages are rounded. Data source is U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2016/17 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B:16/17). B&B:16/17 was released in 2019 and is the most recent cohort of B&B. Total sample size is 19,490. Weighted sample size (population size) is 2 million. Fact sheet produced by RTI International.