



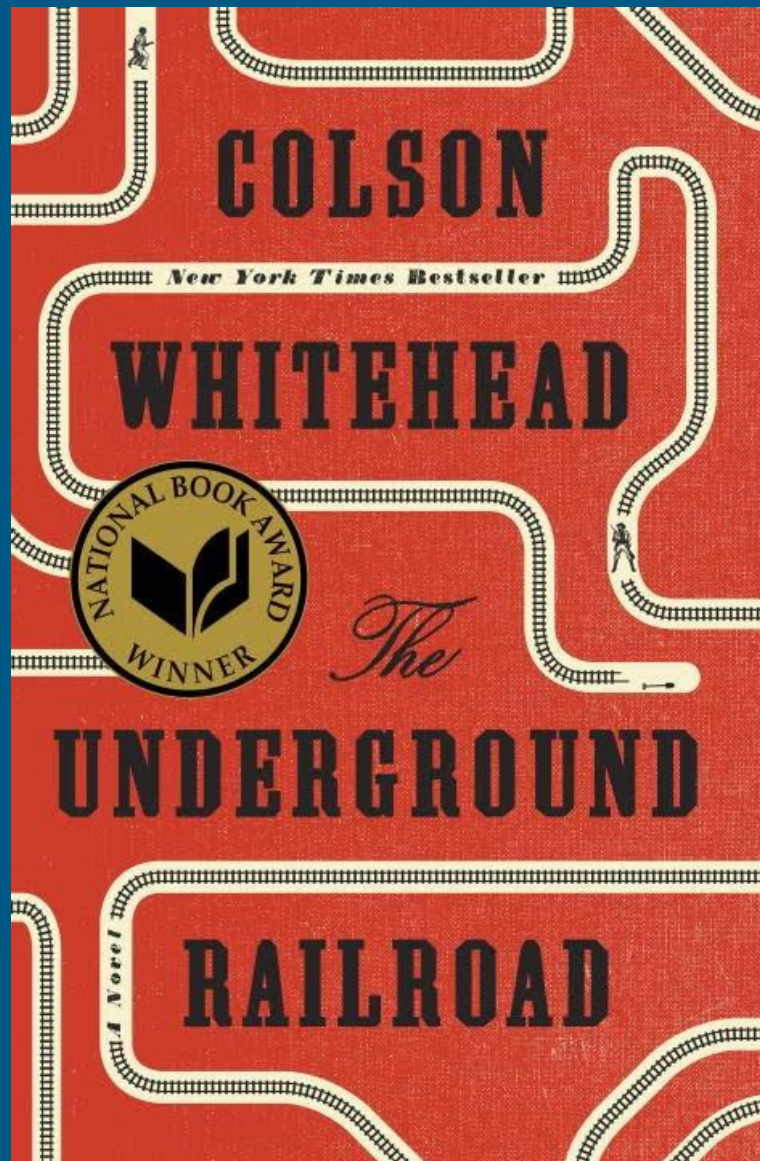
**MDC**

**FIFTY YEARS**

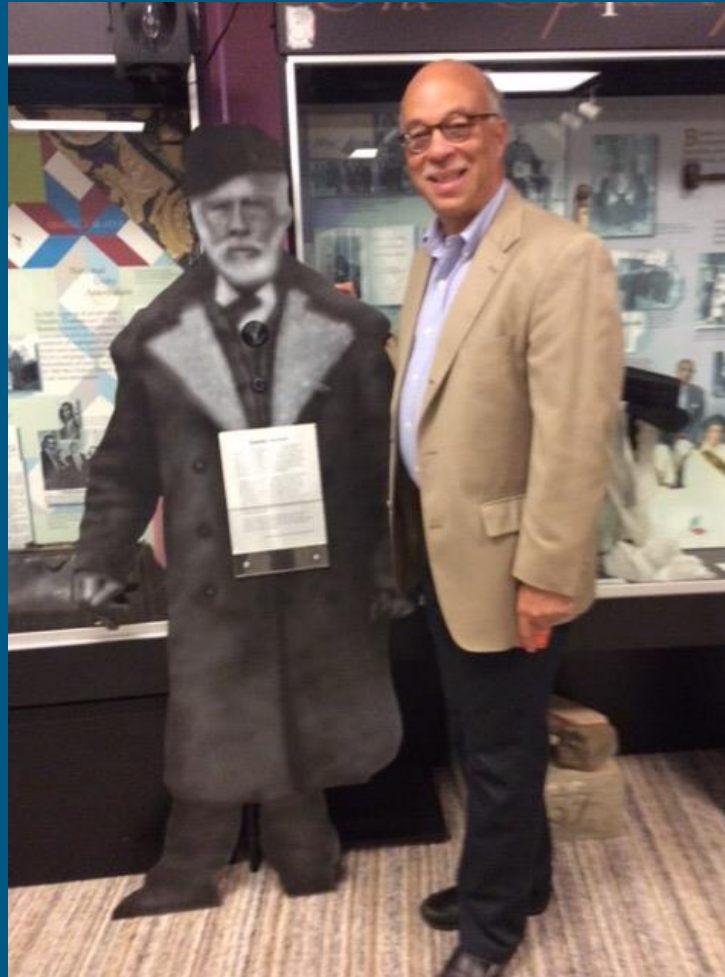
# The Underground Railroad: Visionary Leadership and the Pathway to Equity

National Center for Inquiry and Improvement  
A212 Cohort  
Phoenix, Arizona  
February 8, 2019

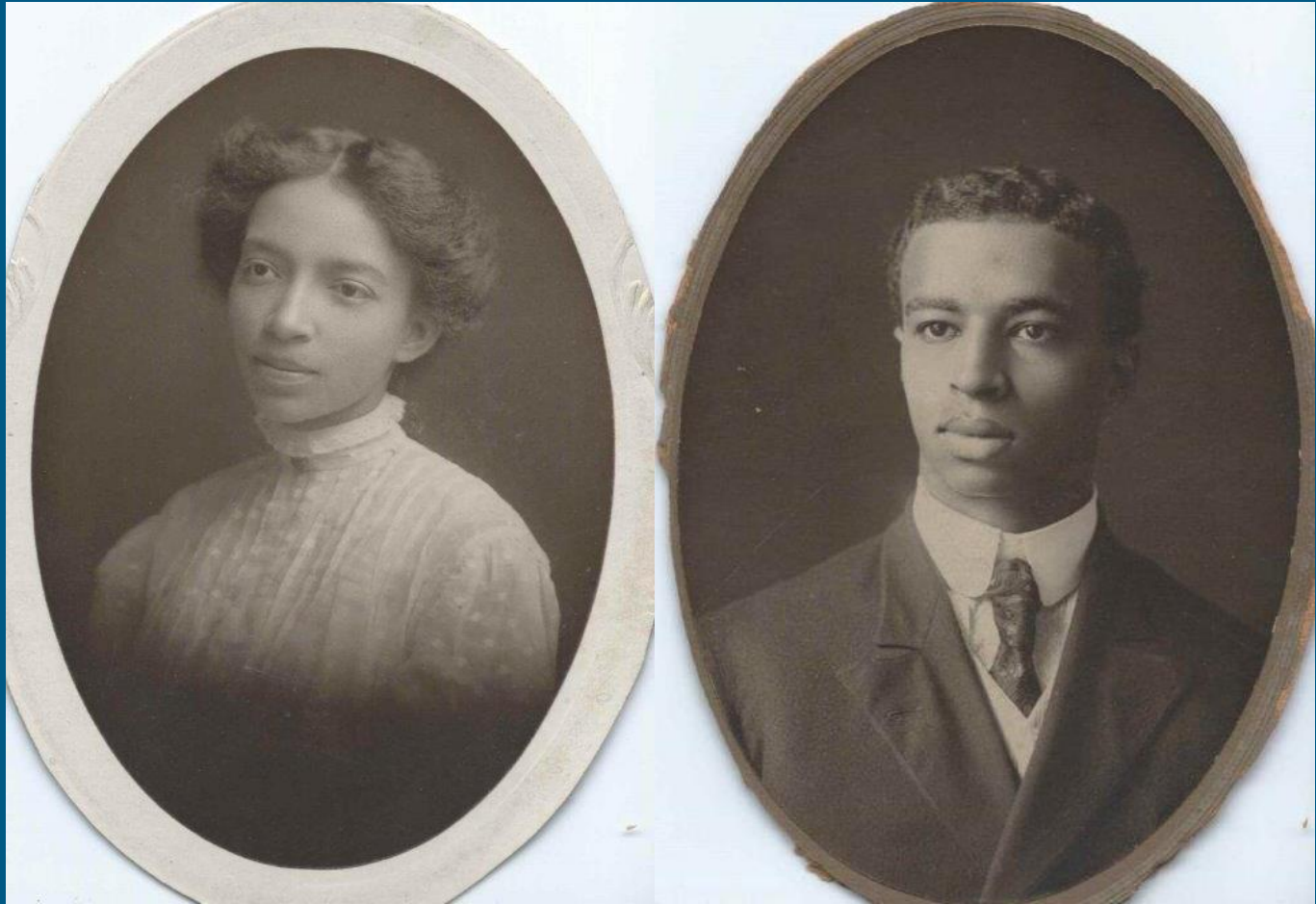
**David L. Dodson**  
President, MDC  
@MDCinc



# Stanton



# Lillian and Norris



# Common factors that **advanced mobility** for Lillian and Norris

- Personal drive
- Launching-pad institutions that developed confidence and skill
- Family, educators, and mentors with a commitment to equity
- An economy that generated opportunity for educated people

# What factors **prevented** better odds for Lillian & Norris's peers?

- A weak Infrastructure of Opportunity
- Public policy that made advancement selective—not universal
- Lack of commitment to racial justice and equity

What factors would you add?

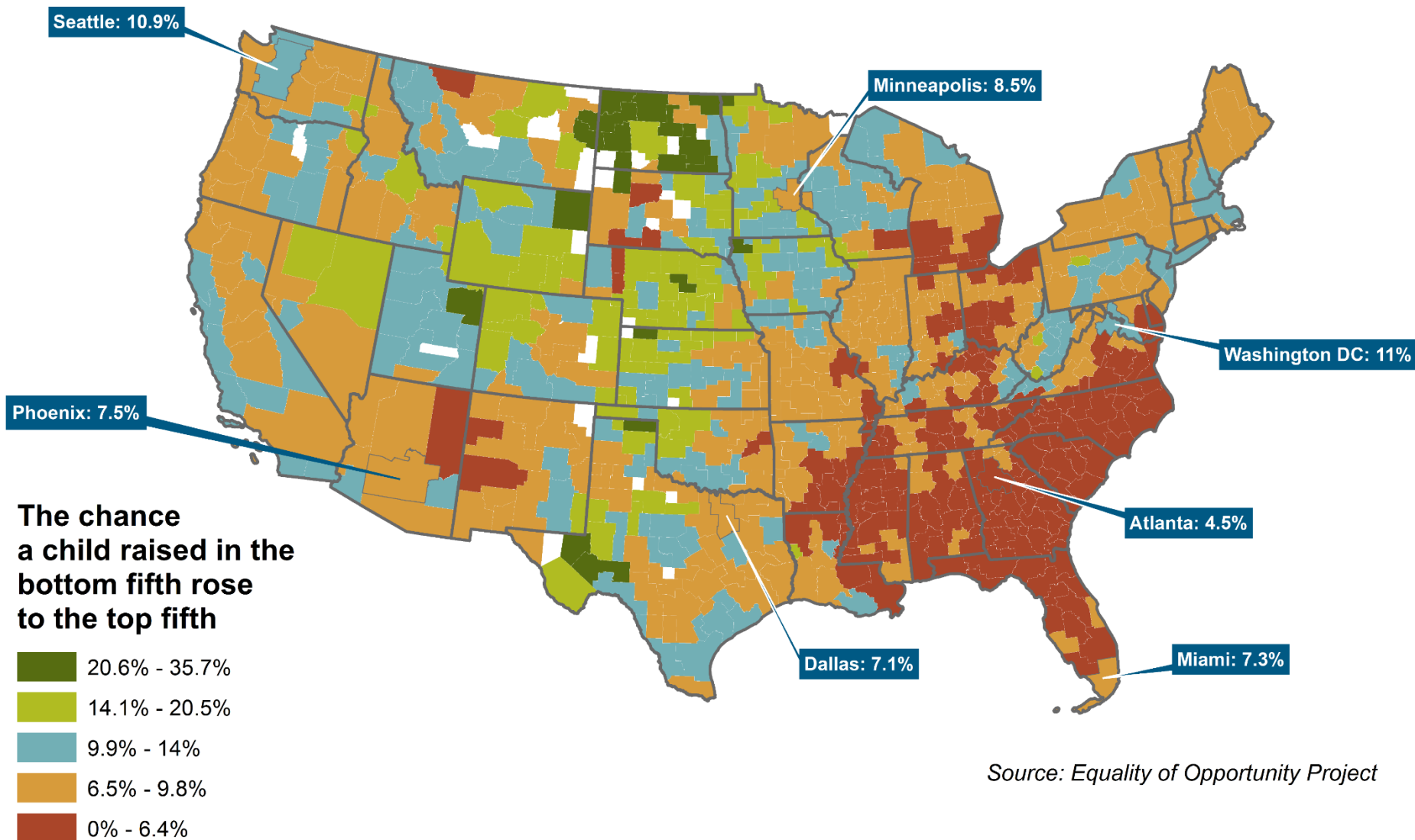
# Your Family's Mobility Story

- When was a commitment to equity apparent in the design or execution of the pathway your forbearers travelled?
- When was a commitment to equity lacking?
- Where did mobility depend on personal heroism without the support of others?



# Upward Mobility is Stalled

A national issue that requires place-based responses

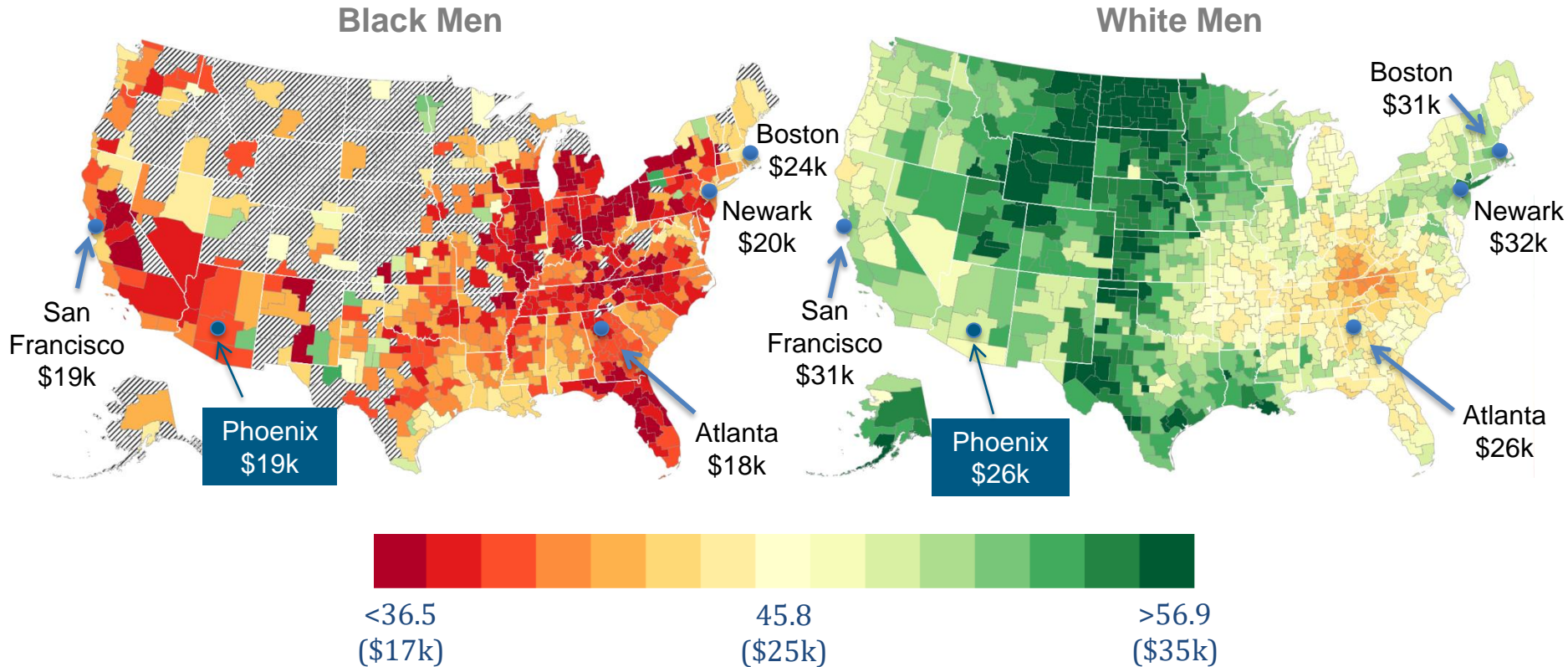


Source: Equality of Opportunity Project



# Upward Mobility is Stalled

Average Individual Income for Boys with Parents Earning \$25,000 (25<sup>th</sup> percentile)

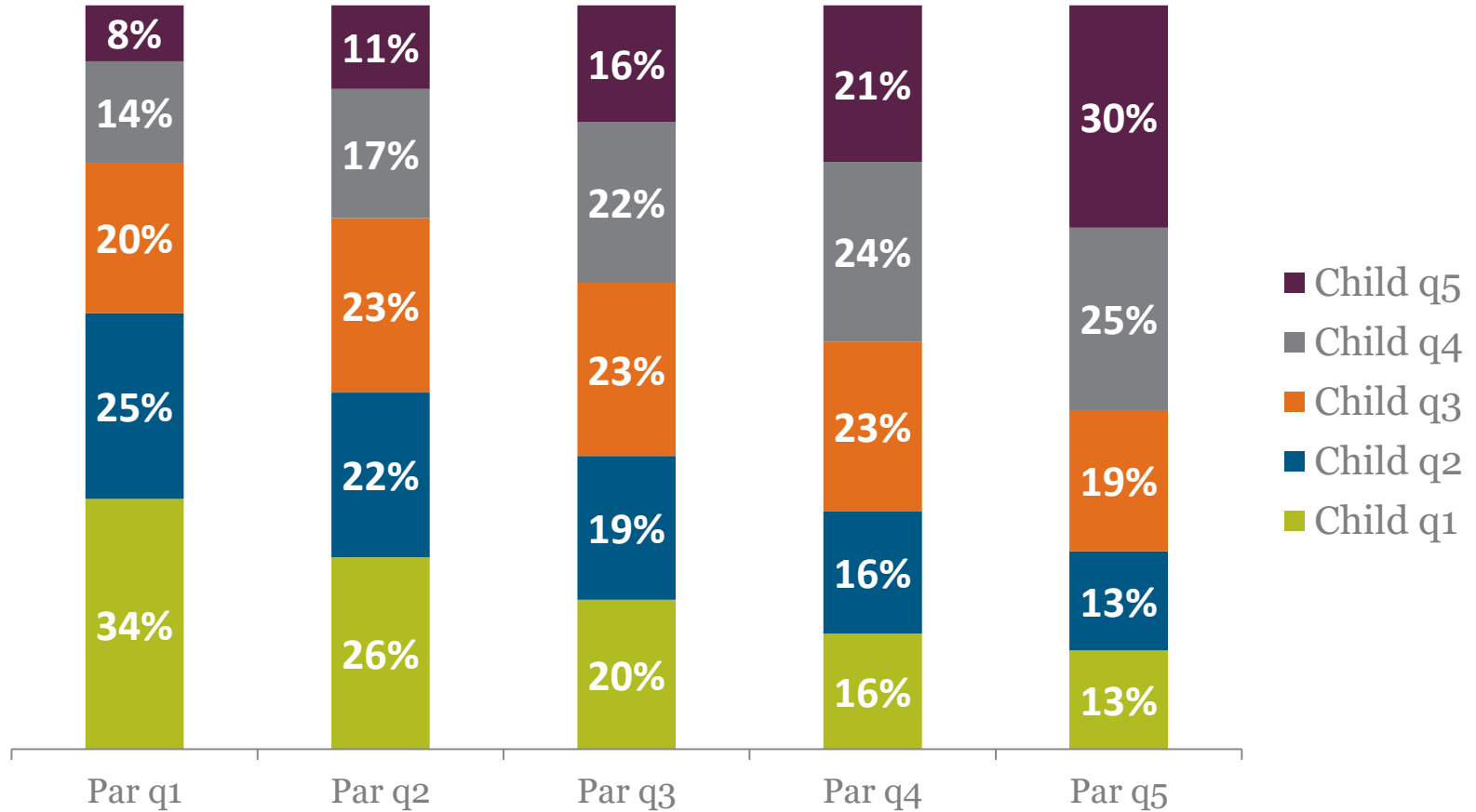


Note: Green = More Upward Mobility, Red = Less Upward Mobility; Grey = Insufficient Data

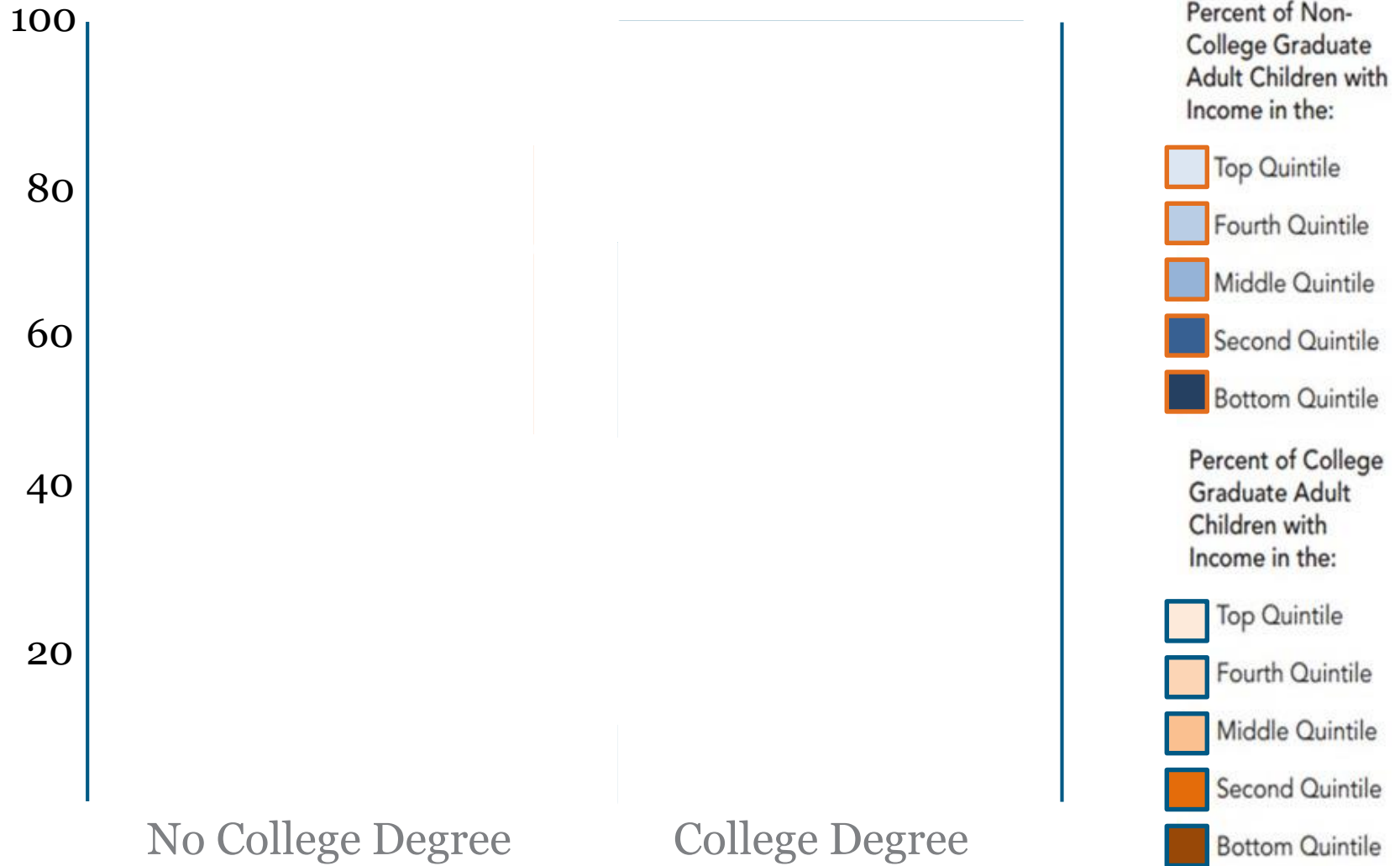
Source: Equality of Opportunity Project

# Economic Mobility in Phoenix, AZ

What are the chances a child raised in a given quintile of the income distribution will move to another quintile as an adult in the Phoenix area?



# Education makes a difference



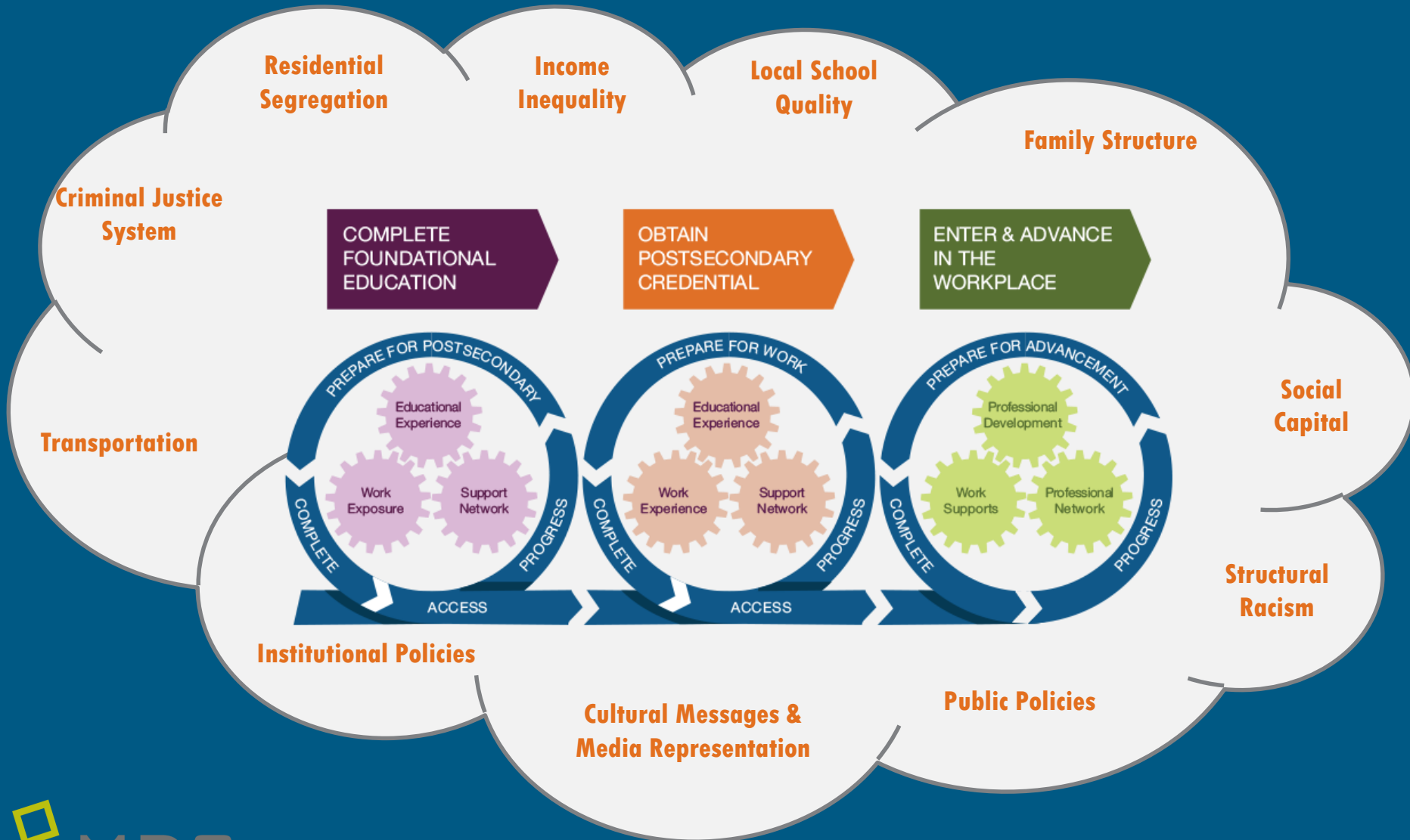
# Community Colleges as Drivers of Mobility

**Top 10 Community Colleges with highest rates of upward mobility among students born to low-income parents**

Postsecondary Institution	Location	Mobility Rate
Glendale Community College	Los Angeles, CA	7.1%
Laredo Community College	Laredo, TX	6.7%
CUNY Borough Of Manhattan Community College	New York, NY	6.1%
Texas State Technical College - Harlingen	Brownsville, TX	6.1%
CUNY Laguardia Community College	New York, NY	6.1%
CUNY Bronx Community College	New York, NY	5.9%
Southwest Texas Junior College	Uvalde, TX	5.7%
Queensborough Community College-CUNY	New York, NY	5.5%
Kingsborough Commmunity College/CUNY	New York, NY	5.0%
Imperial Valley College	Yuma, CA	4.8%
Phoenix Metro Community Colleges	Phoenix, AZ	1.4%

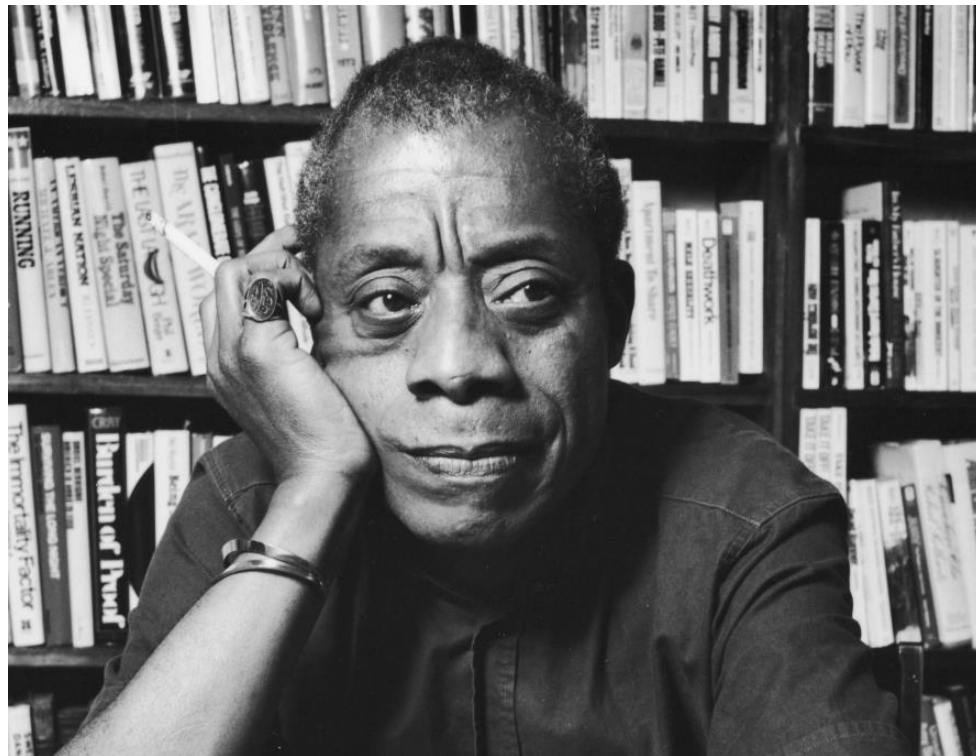
Source: Opportunity Insights

# The Infrastructure of Opportunity

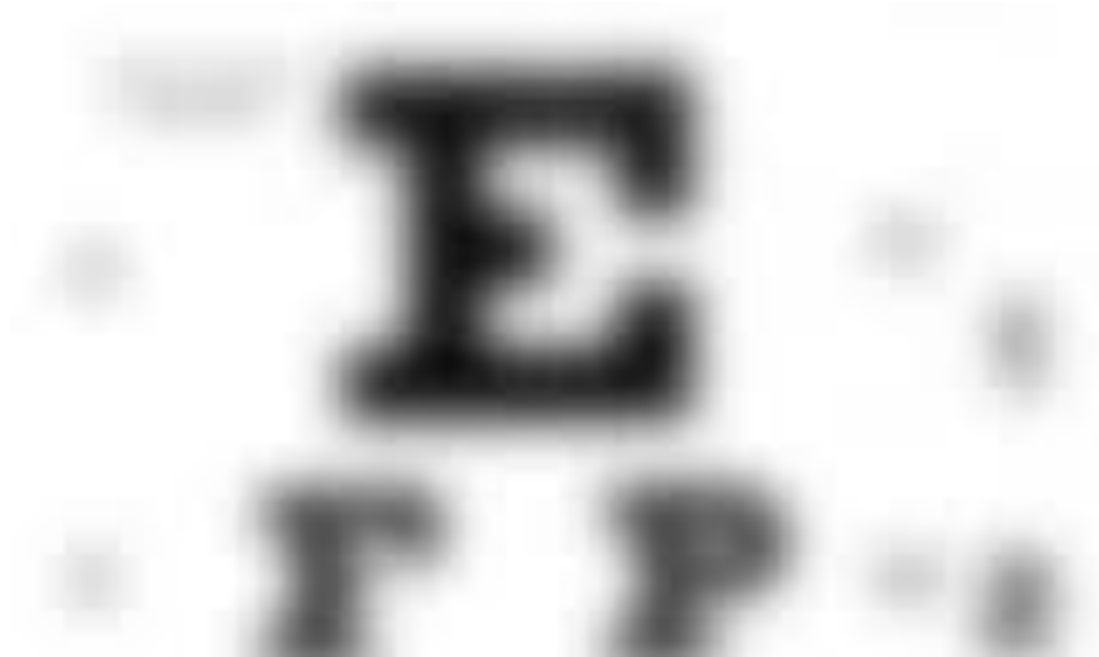


“Not Everything that is faced can be changed,  
but nothing can be changed unless it is faced.”

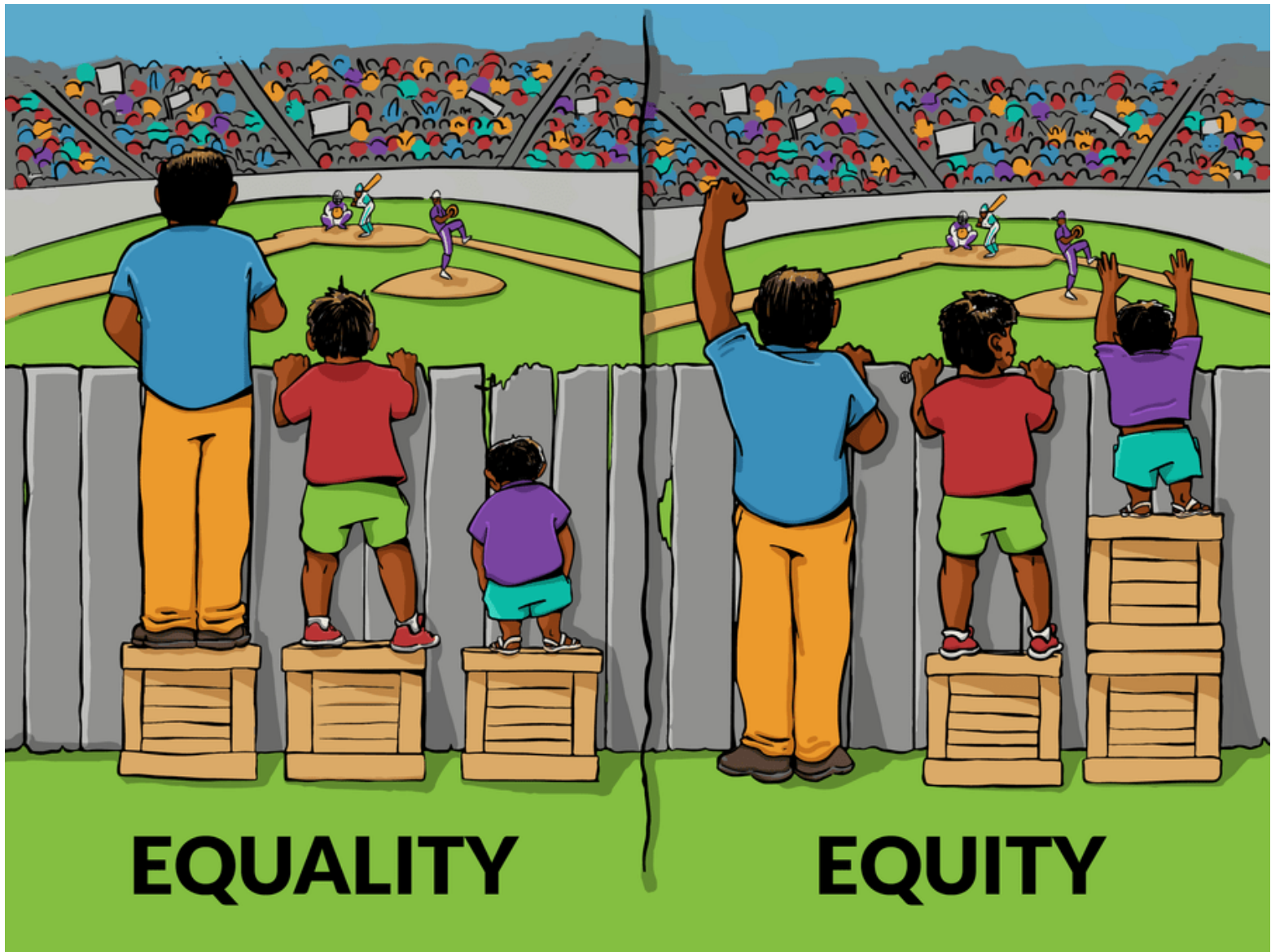
*-James Baldwin*



# Bringing Equity Into Focus



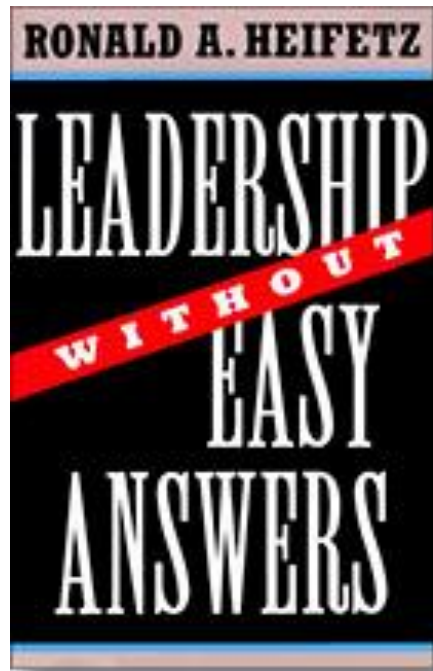




# What is Equity?

- Equity is both an outcome and an input. As an outcome it means having an **unimpeded playing field** where everyone has an equal chance to succeed.
- As an input it means **treating people in ways appropriate to their situation**, recognizing the external forces that limit their full humanity and success.
- Practicing equity in an organizational setting requires addressing the **policies and practices** that keep the playing field unequal.
- Achieving equity often requires going **beyond equality**.

# How Do we Make Progress on Equity?



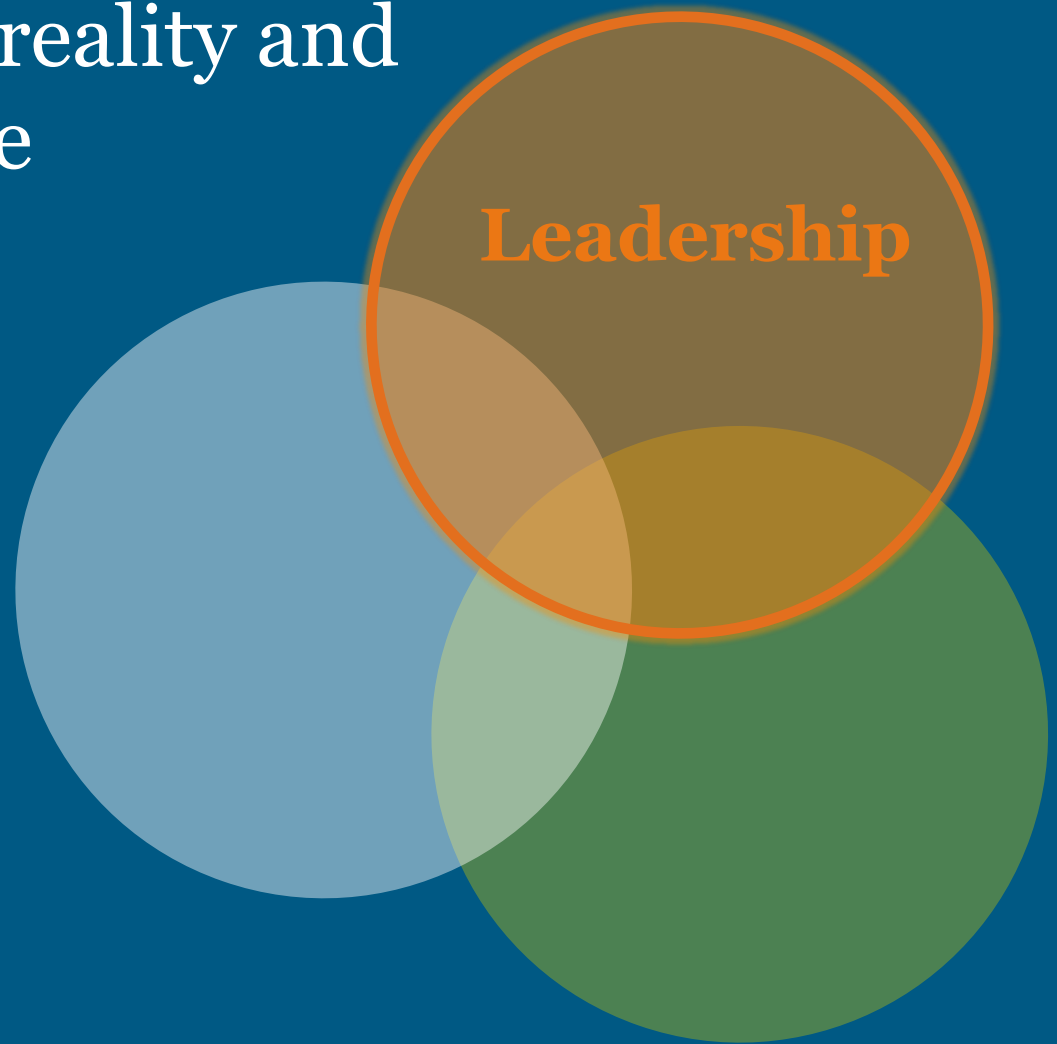
**Adaptive challenges:** problems that arise when our ideals are challenged by the reality of current circumstances and that test the limits of “current technological know-how or routine behavior.”

*-Ron Heifetz, Harvard Professor*

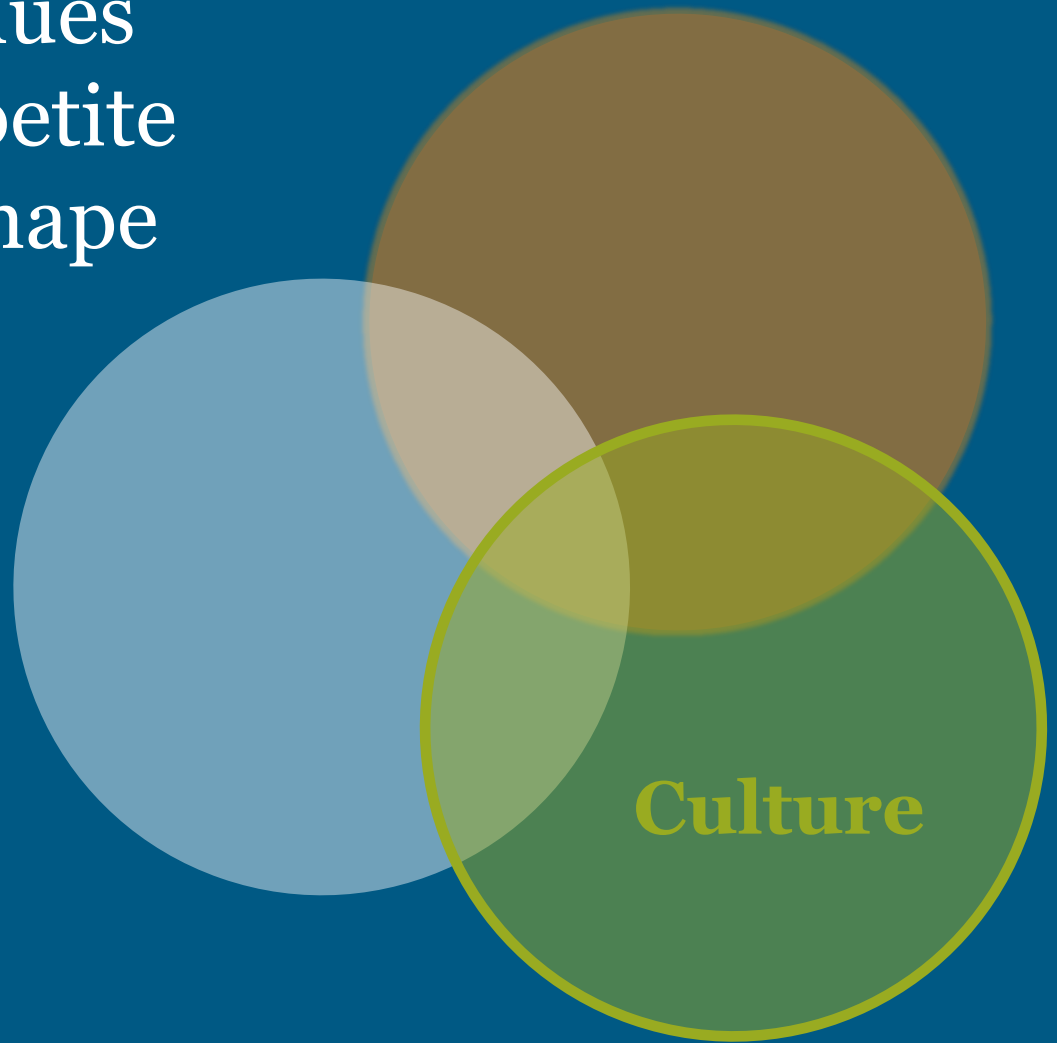
# To realize a strong Infrastructure of Opportunity will require attention to:

- Leadership
- Culture
- Systems

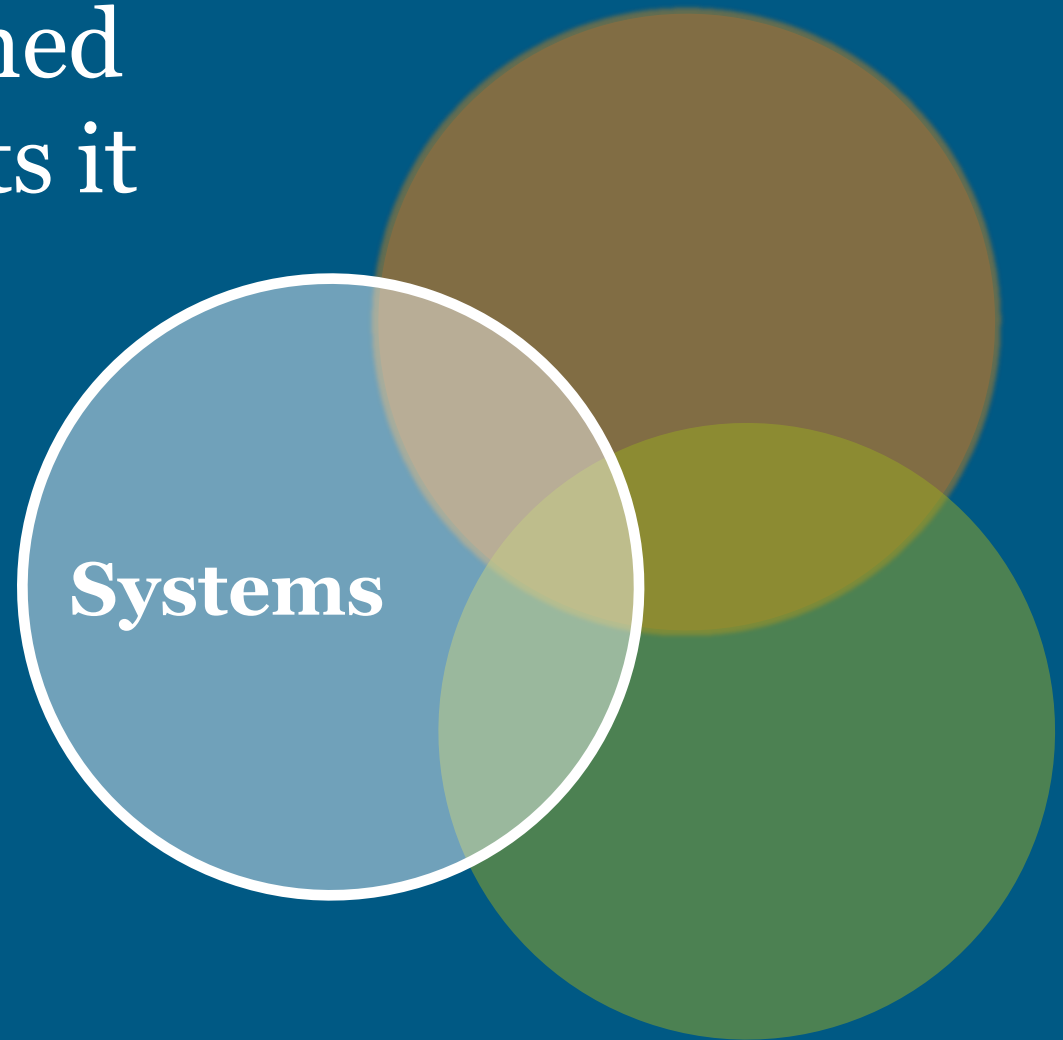
Leaders act to close the gap  
between current reality and  
the desired future



Community habits,  
attitudes, and values  
influence the appetite  
for change and shape  
individual and  
system behavior



Every system is  
perfectly designed  
to get the results it  
produces





# Systems Change Defined

***Shifting the conditions that are holding the problem in place.***

## Six Conditions of Systems Change

Policies

Practices

Resource  
Flows

Relationships  
& Connections

Power  
Dynamics

Mental  
Models

**Structural  
Change**

*(explicit)*

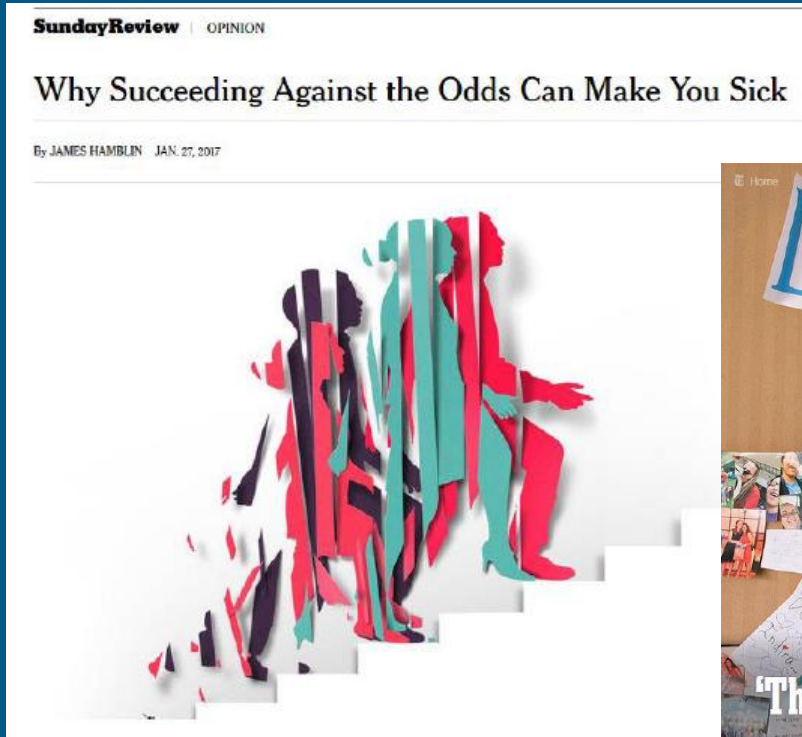
*(semi-explicit)*

**Transformative  
Change**  
*(implicit)*

# Vigilant attention to equity is needed to ensure persistence along guided pathways.

- In what aspects of your college's **systems, practice, and culture** will attention to equity be particularly necessary as you implement?
- What does this mean for your leadership?

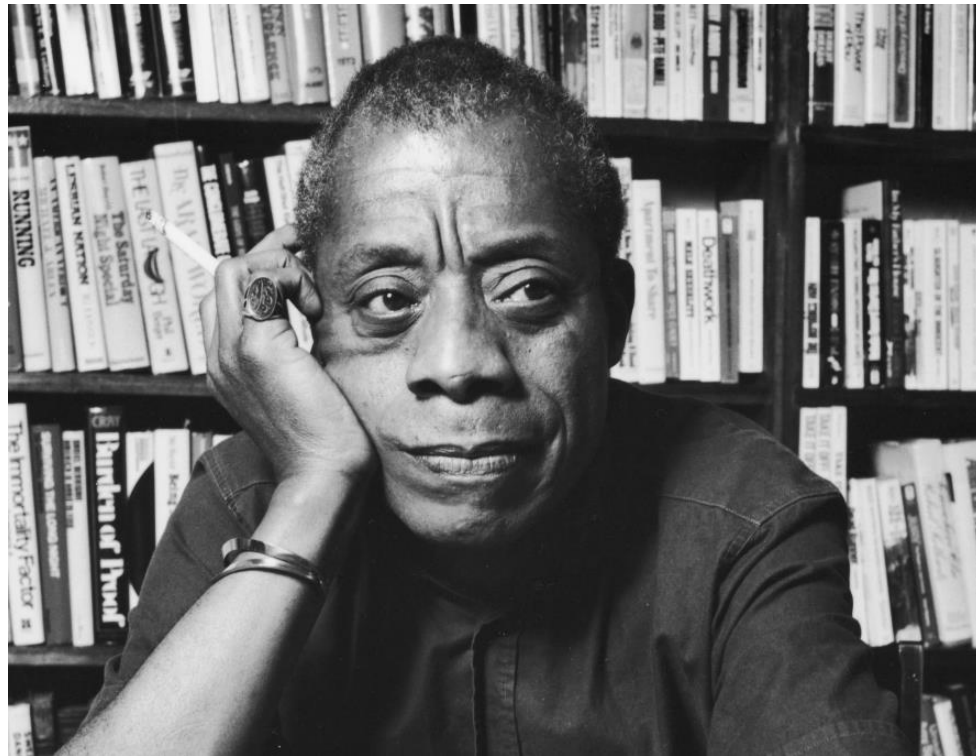
# Heroism is *not* a solution to persistence



## Attention to equity in design & execution is

“Not Everything that is faced can be changed,  
but nothing can be changed unless it is faced.”

*-James Baldwin*



# The American Dream





# MDC

FIFTY YEARS

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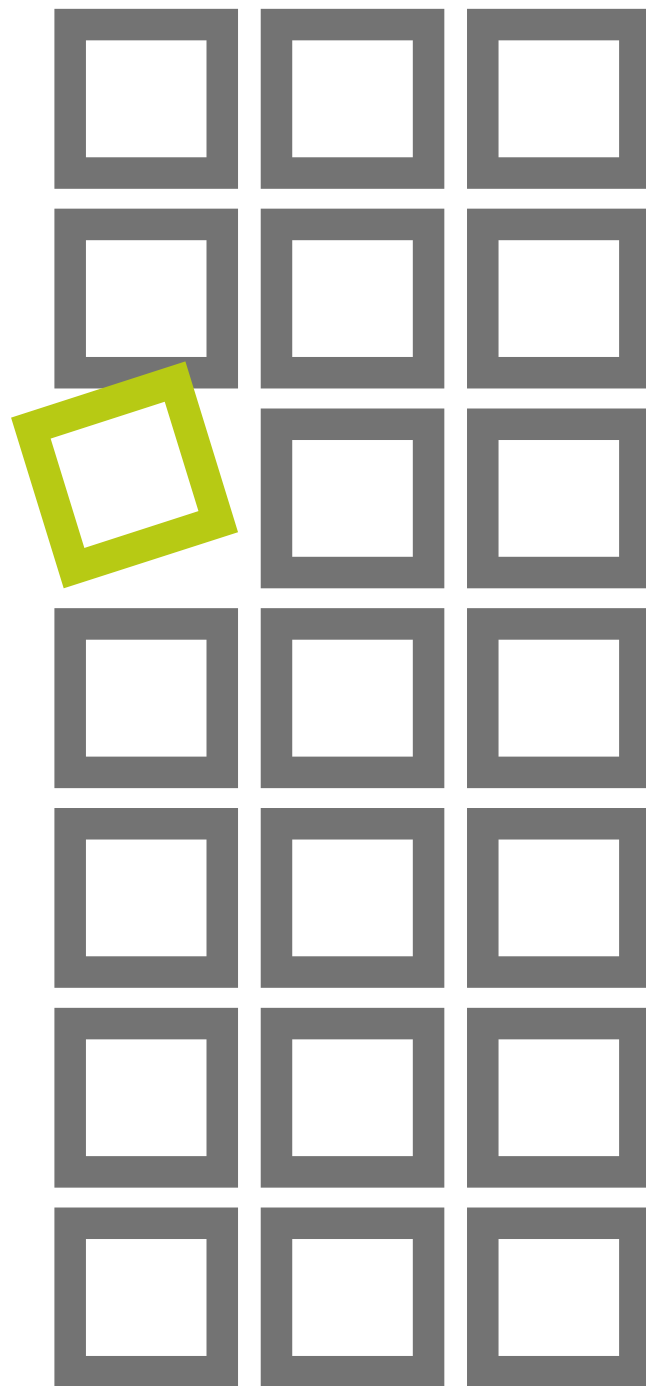
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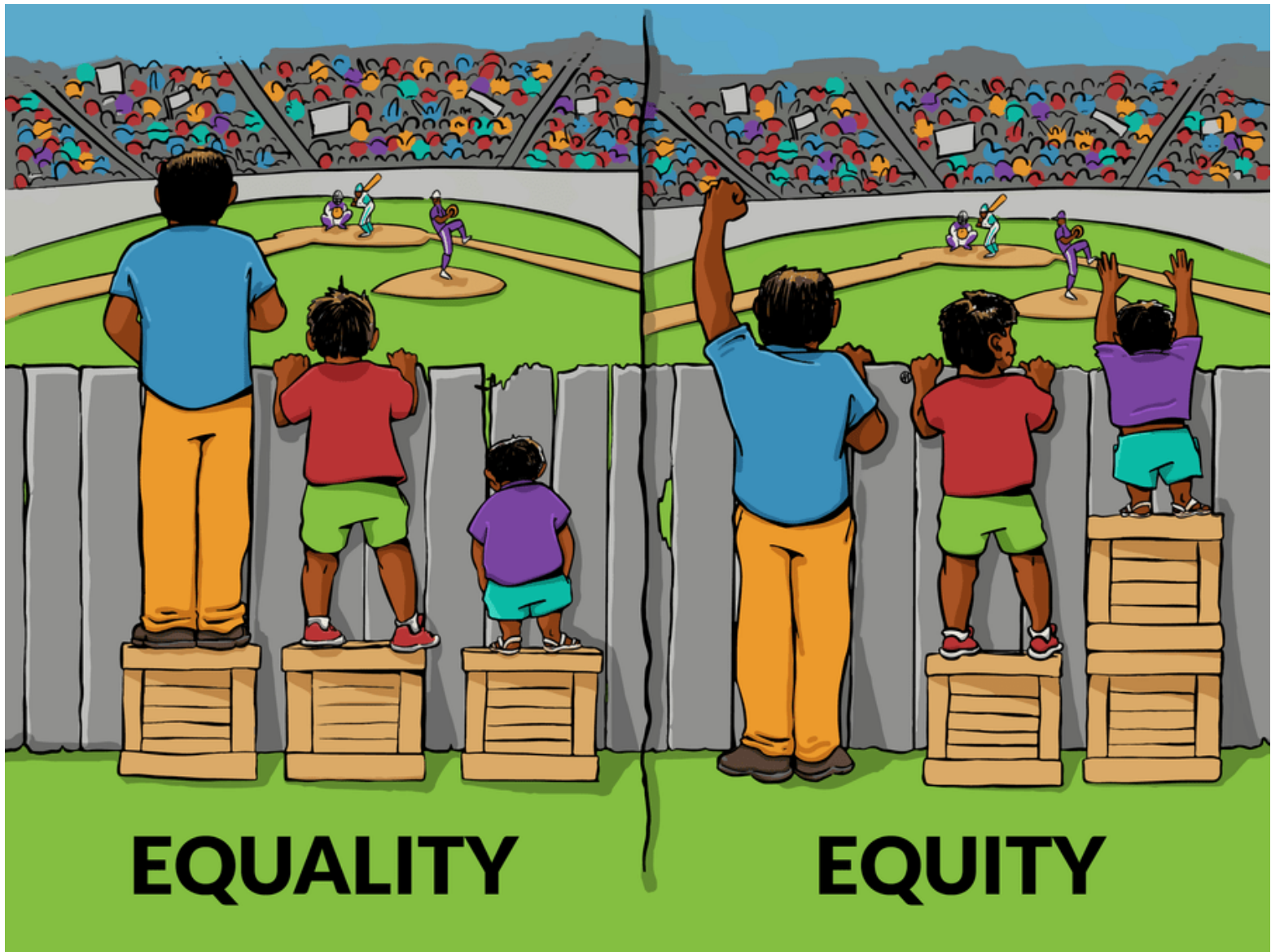
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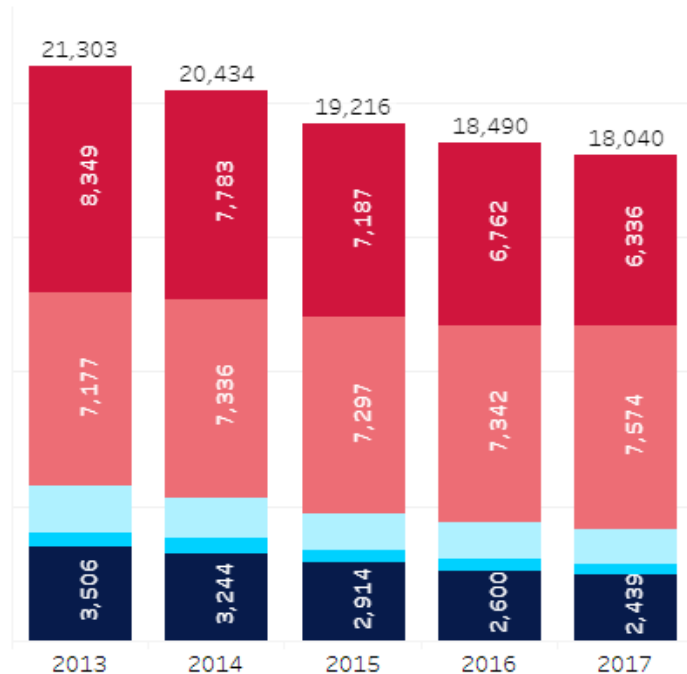




# FALL NEW TO COLLEGE COHORT



Cohort Size



Next Term Persistence Rate

