



WE CONNECT, PART 5: WYOMING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT AND AWARDS

RESEARCH & PLANNING • WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE SERVICES
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Many factors affect a student's decision to continue his or her education after high school. Recent studies show that the cost of postsecondary education and the financial aid packages a school offers have become two of the leading factors in this decision (Eagan, et al., 2013), but the proximity of the postsecondary institution to the student's home is also important. Research indicates nearly 80% of first year, full-time students in 2014 attended a school within 500 miles of their homes, and 54% attended schools within 100 miles of their homes (Supiano, 2015). An increasing number of new college students indicate they intend to transfer schools at least once during their college careers, and many of them expect to spend extra time to complete their degrees, a consideration which can also affect college choice (Eagan, et al., 2014).

The purpose of this publication is to identify the states in which Wyoming high school students enroll in postsecondary institutions and the states from which they receive postsecondary degrees or certificates, regardless of high school graduation status or college type. This publication is intended to introduce a feature of the National Student Clearinghouse database, which contains a wealth of data regarding postsecondary choices of Wyoming high school students. The report also provides a foundation for future research about recipients of the Wyoming Hathaway Scholarship. The Hathaway Program was instituted in 2006, partly with the intention of

Table 1: Total Number and Percentage of Wyoming High School Students from the Class of 2007 Who Enrolled in a Postsecondary Institution Between 2006 and 2014 by Geographic Location

	Enrolled in a Postsecondary Institution	
	N	%
In-State	1,785	31.9
Out-of-State	873	15.6
Both In-State and Out-of-State	770	13.8
Subtotal, all students who enrolled in a postsecondary institution at least once between 2006 and 2014	3,428	61.2
Never enrolled in a postsecondary institution	2,170	38.8
Total	5,598	100.0

Source: Custom Extract from Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) Project.

Table 2: Number and Percentage of Wyoming High School Students From the Class of 2007 Who Received at Least One Postsecondary Award Between 2006 and 2014 by Geographic Location

	Received at Least One Postsecondary Award	
	N	%
In-State	1,031	18.4
Out-of-State	705	12.6
Both In-State and Out-of-State	93	1.7
Subtotal, all students who received at least one postsecondary award between 2006 and 2014	1,829	32.7
Did not receive a postsecondary award	3,769	67.3
Total	5,598	100.0

Source: Custom Extract from Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) Project.

providing Wyoming students the financial means to attend Wyoming colleges while ultimately increasing the number of Wyoming high school graduates who work in the state after pursuing their postsecondary education. Future research

will examine the college choices of all high school senior classes from 2006 to present in order to identify any changes in the proportion of students who attend school in-state compared to those who leave the state for their postsecondary education. In addition, future research will also examine the work experiences of these students after they finish attending a postsecondary institution.

The Research and Planning (R&P) section of the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services has access to Wyoming student records beginning with 2006. This publication focuses on students who were part of the *Class of 2007*: “the population segment enrolled at any time and who would normally be expected to graduate in the reference year [in this case, the 2006/07 school year] whether they graduated or not” (Holmes, 2015).

As shown in Table 1 (see page 1), there were 5,598 students in the Class of 2007. Of those, nearly one-third (1,785, or 31.9%) enrolled solely in a Wyoming postsecondary institution, while 15.6% (873) enrolled in only out-of-state schools. Another 13.8% (770) enrolled

in both Wyoming and out-of-state schools in the eight-year period between 2006 and 2014. Overall, nearly two-thirds (3,428, or 61.2) of the students from the Class of 2007 enrolled in at least one institution during the eight years following their expected high school graduation year, compared to 38.8% (2,170) who did not. On the other hand, only one-third of the students (1,829, or 32.7%) received at least one postsecondary award (see page 3 for the definition of postsecondary award) between 2006 and 2014 (see Table 2, page 1). Of these, 18.4% (1,031) received at least one postsecondary award from a Wyoming school, 12.6% (705) received a postsecondary award from an out-of-state school, and 1.7% (93) received postsecondary awards from both in-state and out-of-state schools. A total of 3,769 students (67.3%) from the Class of 2007 did not earn a postsecondary award by 2014.

Methodology

This publication focuses on the students who enrolled in a postsecondary institution and on those who received a postsecondary degree or certificate from a postsecondary institution. All levels of certificates

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and degrees are included, from one-year certificates to doctoral or professional degrees, and all postsecondary programs, from cosmetology to medicine and law. For the purposes of this publication, postsecondary certificates and degrees are referred to as *postsecondary awards*. In order to analyze the number of Wyoming students who enrolled in a postsecondary institution and the number who received

a postsecondary award, two data sets were used. The first was the Wyoming Department of Education 684 Student Enrollment File (WDE 684). This file contains student demographics, enrollment, and graduation status for all students who attended a Wyoming secondary institution from the 2006/07 school year to present. The second dataset, the National Student Clearinghouse database, contains enrollment and graduation status, postsecondary institution name and state, and degree type and program for all Wyoming students who attended any U.S. postsecondary institution. These datasets were provided to R&P by the Wyoming Department of Education under a memorandum of understanding as part of the U.S. Department of Labor Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) grant that was awarded to R&P in 2013. For more information about the WDQI grant,

Postsecondary Awards

For the purposes of this publication, the term *postsecondary awards* refers to degrees and certificates from postsecondary institutions. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Postsecondary non-degree awards
 - Nursing assistants, emergency medical technicians and paramedics, and hairstylists
- Associate's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Doctoral or professional degree

WDE databases, or methodologies used to analyze data from the databases, please see http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/education_we_connect.htm.

All data in this publication represent students who were part of the Class of 2007, regardless of whether or not they graduated from high school. Student information from the WDE 684 file was linked to postsecondary data from the National Student Clearinghouse

database with the student's Wyoming Integrated Statewide Education Record Identifier (WISER ID) number, which is assigned to each student as he or she starts school in Wyoming by the Wyoming Department of Education.

Total postsecondary enrollments, for the purposes of this publication, are based on a count of the calendar year and the state in which the postsecondary institution was located for each student who had an enrollment record in the National Student Clearinghouse database. Regardless of how many institutions the student attended in each state per year, he or she was counted one time in that state and year.

These enrollments were then categorized into three geographic types: Wyoming Postsecondary Institutions, Only

(*Wyoming*); Other State Postsecondary Institutions, Only (*Other*); and Both Wyoming and Other State Institutions (*Both*). Depending on where the student attended school, he or she could be counted in all three categories over time.

This concept is illustrated in Table 3. For example, if Student A enrolled at the University of Wyoming in 2009, the University of Wyoming and Colorado State University in 2010, Colorado State University, only, in 2011, and Colorado State University and the University of Utah in 2012, then that student would be counted once in the Wyoming table in 2009, twice in the both tables in 2010 (once for Colorado and once for Wyoming), once in the other table for 2011 (once for Colorado), and twice in the other table for 2012 (once for Colorado and once for Utah).

The second part of this publication examines the number of students who earned an award from a postsecondary institution by the state in which the institution was located. As with student enrollments, each student was counted once in the state from which he or she received a postsecondary award, regardless of how many awards they received in that state. Again, each student

could be counted in more than one state. These data are divided into the same three geographic types: Wyoming, other, and both, and is displayed both by year and by total students who received a postsecondary award between 2007 and 2014.

Enrollment

As shown in Tables 4A-4D (see pages 5 and 6), slightly more than half of the total 5,598 Wyoming high school students from the Class of 2007 (2,942, or 52.6%) enrolled in at least one postsecondary institution between 2006 and 2014: 38.6% (2,163) enrolled in Wyoming institutions, 10.7% (601) enrolled in institutions in other states, and 3.2% (178) enrolled in both. The number of enrolled students declined every year, and by 2014, only 19.9% (1,112) of the Class of 2007 was enrolled in any postsecondary institution.

The largest proportion of the Class of 2007 was enrolled only in Wyoming institutions in most years (see Table 4A). In 2007, nearly two out of every five students (2,163, or 38.6%) were enrolled only in a Wyoming postsecondary institution. This dropped to a quarter of all students in 2011 (1,433, or 25.6%) and

Table 3: Postsecondary Enrollment of Hypothetical Student A from the Class of 2007, 2009-2011

Distinct Enrollments for Student A								
	Wyoming Postsecondary Institutions Only					Both Wyoming and Other State Institutions		
	Year	WY	CO	MT	NE	UT	WY	CO
2009 University of Wyoming		X						
2010 University of Wyoming Colorado State University							X	X
2011 Colorado State University			X					
2012 Colorado State University University of Utah			X			X		
Total distinct enrollments for Student A = 6.								

one in 10 students in 2014 (509, or 9.1%).

In comparison, as shown in Table 4B, 10.7% (601) of these students were enrolled only in an out-of-state postsecondary institution in 2007; that proportion

increased every year through 2011, where it peaked at 15.4% (861). The largest percentage of students who enrolled only in an out-of-state school did so in the states

(Text continued on page 7)

Tables 4A-4E: Number and Percentage of Wyoming High School Students from the Class of 2007 Who Enrolled in a Postsecondary Institution Between 2006 and 2014 by Calendar Year and Geographic Location¹ (Total N = 5,598)

		Calendar Year								
		2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Table 4A: Enrollment in Wyoming Postsecondary Institutions Only										
Count and % of Students by Year²	N	843	2,163	2,002	1,783	1,621	1,433	1,051	750	509
	%	15.1	38.6	35.8	31.9	29.0	25.6	18.8	13.4	9.1
Table 4B: Enrollment in Other State Postsecondary Institutions Only										
Count and % of Students by Year²	N	30	601	753	737	834	861	681	639	572
	%	0.5	10.7	13.5	13.2	14.9	15.4	12.2	11.4	10.2
Arizona	N	ND	15	31	42	39	44	34	43	35
	%	ND	2.5	3.9	5.5	4.6	4.9	4.9	6.5	6.0
California	N	ND	24	30	27	26	29	20	25	24
	%	ND	4.0	3.8	3.5	3.0	3.2	2.9	3.8	4.1
Colorado	N	ND	67	97	106	103	107	82	86	80
	%	ND	11.1	12.3	13.9	12.1	11.9	11.7	13.0	13.7
Idaho	N	ND	41	67	60	70	64	49	37	29
	%	ND	6.8	8.5	7.9	8.2	7.1	7.0	5.6	5.0
Montana	N	ND	57	59	46	60	63	43	37	28
	%	ND	9.5	7.5	6.0	7.0	7.0	6.1	5.6	4.8
North Dakota	N	ND	26	21	22	25	31	19	14	14
	%	ND	4.3	2.7	2.9	2.9	3.5	2.7	2.1	2.4
Nebraska	N	ND	35	43	34	39	45	41	33	27
	%	ND	5.8	5.5	4.5	4.6	5.0	5.8	5.0	4.6
South Dakota	N	ND	58	70	62	70	75	54	37	30
	%	ND	9.7	8.9	8.1	8.2	8.4	7.7	5.6	5.1
Utah	N	22	82	115	104	128	141	122	94	71
	%	71.0	13.6	14.6	13.7	15.0	15.7	17.4	14.2	12.2
Washington	N	ND	23	34	35	36	35	23	23	22
	%	ND	3.8	4.3	4.6	4.2	3.9	3.3	3.5	3.8
Total, Remaining States	N	6	173	219	223	257	264	214	232	223
	%	19.4	28.8	27.9	29.3	30.1	29.4	30.5	35.1	38.3
Total, All Other States	N	31	601	786	761	853	898	701	661	583
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

¹Enrollments based on state and year. If a student enrolled in school in one state or more than one state, they were counted once in each state for each year, regardless of how many schools they enrolled in each year. Students may be counted in a different category each year. For example, if a student attended the University of Wyoming in 2006, the University of Wyoming and Colorado State University in 2007, and Colorado State University in 2008, they would be counted in the Wyoming-only category in 2006, in the both In-State and Out-of-State category in 2007, and the Out-of-State Only category in 2008.

²This is a count of the total number of students in the cohort that counted in the enrollment type each year. The distinct count of students by year in each category will add to the total number of students in the cohort for each year.

³This is the total of students who attended a postsecondary institution in another state. This number will be equal to or greater than the number of students counted in the row for students that enrolled in a Wyoming school during the same year.

ND: Data are nondisclosable due to the small number of people in that particular cell.

Source: Custom Extract from Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) Project.

(Table continued on page 6)

(Table continued from page 5)

Tables 4A-4E: Number and Percentage of Wyoming High School Students from the Class of 2007 Who Enrolled in a Postsecondary Institution Between 2006 and 2014 by Calendar Year and Geographic Location¹ (Total N = 5,598)

		Calendar Year									
		2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	
Table 4C: Enrollment in Both Wyoming and Other State Postsecondary Institutions											
Count and % of Students by State and Year (students could be counted once each in more than one state each year)	Count and % of Students by Year²	N	0	178	109	132	80	101	66	54	31
		%	0.0	3.2	1.9	2.4	1.4	1.8	1.2	1.0	0.6
	Wyoming	N	0	178	109	132	80	101	66	54	31
		%	0.0	3.2	1.9	2.4	1.4	1.8	1.2	1.0	0.6
	Arizona	N	0	25	13	13	16	12	11	ND	ND
		%	0.0	14.0	11.8	9.8	20.0	11.3	16.4	ND	ND
	California	N	0	20	14	24	ND	5	ND	6	ND
		%	0.0	11.2	12.7	18.0	ND	4.7	ND	11.1	ND
	Colorado	N	0	32	8	11	8	8	ND	ND	ND
		%	0.0	17.9	7.3	8.3	10.0	7.5	ND	ND	ND
	Idaho	N	0	13	9	12	6	14	6	ND	ND
		%	0.0	7.3	8.2	9.0	7.5	13.2	9.0	ND	ND
	Montana	N	0	16	11	13	9	5	ND	ND	ND
		%	0.0	8.9	10.0	9.8	11.3	4.7	ND	ND	ND
	North Dakota	N	0	6	7	5	ND	11	8	6	ND
		%	0.0	3.4	6.4	3.8	ND	10.4	11.9	11.1	ND
	Nebraska	N	0	ND	5	ND	ND	8	7	10	7
		%	0.0	ND	4.5	ND	ND	7.5	10.4	18.5	21.9
	South Dakota	N	0	9	7	8	7	ND	ND	ND	ND
		%	0.0	5.0	6.4	6.0	8.8	ND	ND	ND	ND
	Utah	N	0	13	ND	6	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
	%	0.0	7.3	ND	4.5	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	
Washington	N	0	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	
	%	0.0	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	
Total, Remaining States	N	0	36	29	33	19	35	18	13	9	
	%	0.0	20.1	26.4	24.8	23.8	33.0	26.9	24.1	28.1	
Total, All Other States ³	N	0	179	110	133	80	106	67	54	32	
	%	0.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	

Table 4D: Total, Enrollment in at Least One Postsecondary Institution

Count and % of Total Students Enrolled by Year²	873	2,942	2,864	2,652	2,535	2,395	1,798	1,443	1,112
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Table 4E: No Postsecondary Institution Enrollment Record

Count and % of Students by Year²	4,725	2,656	2,734	2,946	3,063	3,203	3,800	4,155	4,486
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¹Enrollments based on state and year. If a student enrolled in school in one state or more than one state, they were counted once in each state for each year, regardless of how many schools they enrolled in each year. Students may be counted in a different category each year. For example, if a student attended the University of Wyoming in 2006, the University of Wyoming and Colorado State University in 2007, and Colorado State University in 2008, they would be counted in the Wyoming-only category in 2006, in the both In-State and Out-of-State category in 2007, and the Out-of-State Only category in 2008.

²This is a count of the total number of students in the cohort that counted in the enrollment type each year. The distinct count of students by year in each category will add to the total number of students in the cohort for each year.

³This is the total of students who attended a postsecondary institution in another state. This number will be equal to or greater than the number of students counted in the row for students that enrolled in a Wyoming school during the same year.

ND: Data are nondisclosable due to the small number of people in that particular cell.

Source: Custom Extract from Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) Project.

(Text continued from page 5)

surrounding Wyoming. In particular, a large proportion enrolled in schools in Colorado and Utah. For example, in 2008, 14.6% (115) of the 753 students who attended out-of-state schools enrolled in schools in Utah while another 12.3% (97) enrolled in schools in Colorado. In addition to the states neighboring Wyoming, a sizeable proportion of these students enrolled in schools in Arizona, California, and Washington.

A small proportion of students from the Class of 2007 enrolled in postsecondary institutions in both Wyoming and another state (see Table 4C). In 2007, that proportion was 3.2% (178) and by 2010 only 1.4% (80) was enrolled in schools in both Wyoming and another state. Only 0.6% (N=31) of the students from the Class of 2007 was enrolled in schools in both by 2014.

In the years immediately following high

school, Arizona, California, and Colorado were popular destinations for those students who enrolled in postsecondary institutions in both Wyoming and another state. In 2007, 14.0% (25) of the 178 students who enrolled in both in- and out-of-state schools enrolled in school in Arizona, 11.2% (20) enrolled in schools in California, and 17.9% (32) enrolled in schools in Colorado. In 2014, 21.9% (7) of the 31 students enrolled in both an out-of-state school in addition to a Wyoming school were enrolled in schools in Nebraska.

Postsecondary Awards

Nationally, 949,000 associate’s degrees, 1.9 million bachelor’s degrees, 778,000 master’s degrees, and 178,000 doctoral or professional degrees are projected to be awarded during the 2014/15 school year (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). In comparison, Table 5 shows the number of students from the Class of 2007

Table 5: Number and Percentage of Wyoming High School Students From the Class of 2007 Who Received a Postsecondary Award By Calendar Year and Geographic Location, 2006-2014^{1,2} (Total N = 5,598)

		Calendar Year							
		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Students Who Earned an Award from a Wyoming Postsecondary Institution, Only	N	ND	22	162	85	357	352	213	103
	%	ND	0.4	2.9	1.5	6.4	6.3	3.8	1.8
Students Who Earned an Award from Other State Postsecondary Institutions Only	N	ND	ND	44	62	330	192	167	109
	%	ND	ND	0.8	1.1	5.9	3.4	3.0	1.9
Total, Students Who Received at Least One Postsecondary Certificate or Degree	N	ND	ND	206	147	687	544	380	212
	%	ND	ND	3.7	2.6	12.3	9.7	6.8	3.8
No Postsecondary Award Earned	N	ND	ND	5,392	5,451	4,911	5,054	5,218	5,386
	%	ND	ND	96.3	97.4	87.7	90.3	93.2	96.2

¹Count is based on state and year. If a student received a postsecondary award from a school in one state or more than one state, they were counted once in each state for each year, regardless of how many schools they received awards from each year. Students may be counted in a different category each year. For example, if a student received an award from the University of Wyoming in 2006, the University of Wyoming and Colorado State University in 2007, and Colorado State University in 2008, they would be counted in the Wyoming-only category in 2006, in the both In-State and Out-of-State category in 2007, and the Out-of-State Only category in 2008.

²Due to confidentiality issues, students who earned a postsecondary award in both Wyoming and another state are not included in this table. Similarly, the states where students received a postsecondary award are not displayed due to confidentiality issues.

ND: Data are nondisclosable due to the small number of people in that particular cell.

Source: Custom Extract from Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) Project.

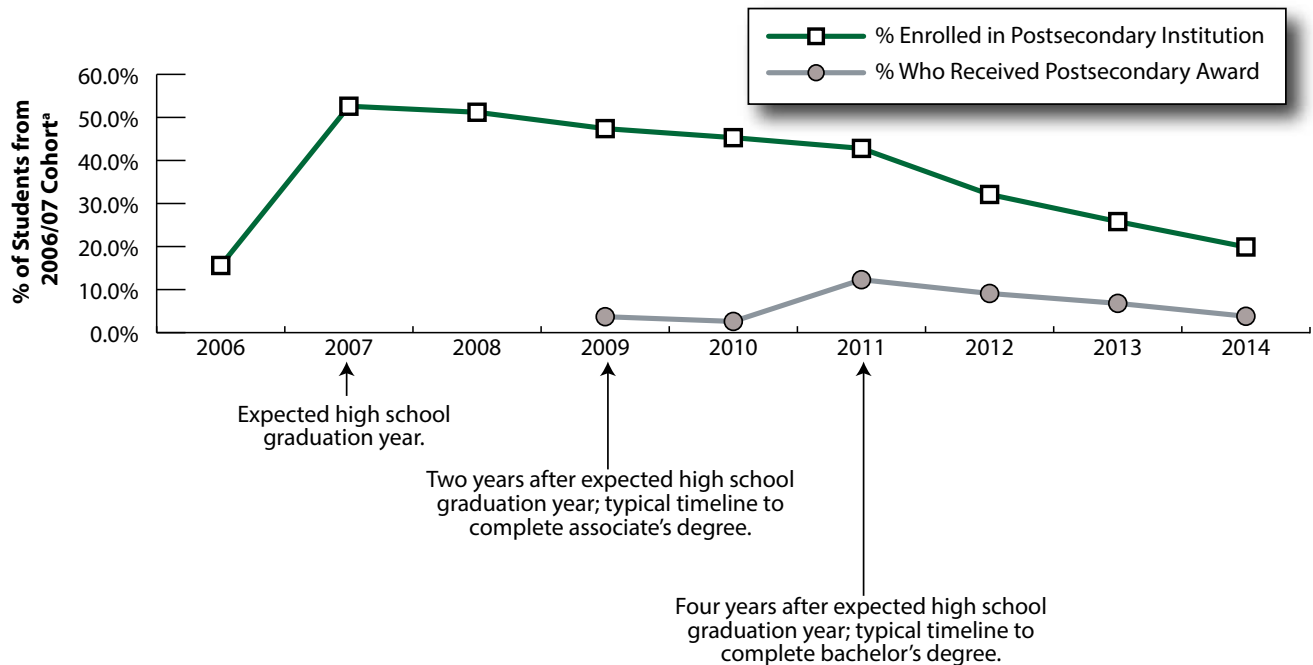
who earned a postsecondary award by geographic location and year during the eight years since completing high school. As noted in the methodology, a student can be counted in a different geographic area each year. Due to confidentiality issues because of a comparatively small number of students who received an award during this time period, however, the data in these tables are displayed only for those who received awards in Wyoming only and out-of-state only, as well as the total number of students who received an award each year and the number of students who did not receive an award each year.

A larger proportion of students who received a postsecondary award did so in Wyoming rather than out-of-state each year except 2014 (see Table 5). In 2009, two years after students from the Class of 2007

were expected to complete high school, 206 students (3.7%) received a postsecondary award (see Table 5). This number dropped slightly in 2008, and then peaked at 687 (12.3%) in 2011 and 544 (9.7%) in 2012. This follows the typical path that students who attend college take, wherein associate's degrees take approximately two to four years to complete while bachelor's degrees take approximately four to six years to complete (Complete College America, 2011).

Figure 1 shows the proportion of students from the Class of 2007 who enrolled in a postsecondary institution by year compared to the proportion of students who received a postsecondary degree by year, regardless of geography. As shown in this figure, the proportion of students who enrolled in a postsecondary institution was largest in 2007, the same year that

Figure 1: Percent of Wyoming High School Class of 2007 Who Enrolled In At Least One Postsecondary Institution and Percent of Wyoming High School Class of 2007 Who Received At Least One Postsecondary Award by Year, 2006-2014



^aWyoming high school students expected to graduate at the completion of the 2006/07 school year, regardless of graduation status. Also referred to as the *Class of 2007*. Source: Custom Extract from Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) Project.

students from this class were expected to graduate from high school. The proportion then declined each year through 2014. This decline became more pronounced after 2011, which was four years after expected high school graduation and the typical amount of time required to receive a bachelor's degree. In comparison, there were peaks in the proportion of students who received a postsecondary award: 2009 (two years after expected graduation, the typical time it

takes to complete an associate's degree) and 2011 (four years after expected graduation, the typical time it takes to complete a bachelor's degree). This does not necessarily mean that these students actually received associate's or bachelor's degrees in those years, but rather that it fits into the typical timetable for those types of degrees. Future research will examine the types of degrees these students received and the amount of time it took to complete those degrees.

Tables 6A-6E: Number and Percentage of Wyoming High School Students From the Class of 2007 Who Received a Postsecondary Award Between 2006 and 2014 by Geographic Location (1) (Total N = 5,598)

	N	%
Table 6A: Wyoming Postsecondary Institution Only		
Count and Percent of Students ²	1,031	18.4
Table 6B: Other State Postsecondary Institution Only		
Count and Percent of Students ²	705	12.6
Arizona	32	4.3
California	17	2.3
Colorado	91	12.2
Idaho	58	7.8
Montana	45	6.0
North Dakota	32	4.3
Nebraska	28	3.8
South Dakota	73	9.8
Utah	101	13.6
Washington	32	4.3
Total, Remaining States	236	31.7
Total	745	100.0

	N	%
Table 6C: Both Wyoming and Other State Postsecondary Institutions³		
Count and Percent of Students ²	93	1.7
Wyoming	93	
Arizona	ND	ND
California	ND	ND
Colorado	13	13.8
Idaho	ND	ND
Montana	10	10.6
North Dakota	ND	ND
Nebraska	10	10.6
South Dakota	6	6.4
Utah	8	8.5
Washington	ND	ND
Total, Remaining States	33	35.1
Total ⁴	94	100.0

Table 6D: Total Students Who Received a Postsecondary Award

Count and Percent of Students ²	1,829	32.7
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Table 6E: No Postsecondary Award Received²

Count and Percent of Students ²	3,769	67.3
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¹Count is based on state. If a student received a postsecondary award in one state or more than one state, they were counted once in each state, regardless of how many awards they received in each state. If the student is categorized as having both in-state and out-of-state awards, this indicates that they received awards from both Wyoming schools and out-of-state schools at some point during their college career.

²This is a count of the total number of students in the cohort that received an award from a postsecondary institution between 2006 and 2014. The distinct count for students by year in each category will add up to the total number of students in the Class of 2007 each year.

³Includes all students that received a postsecondary award from at least one Wyoming school and one out-of-state school during the entire course of their college career. For example, if a student received a degree or certificate from both UW and CSU, they would be counted once in WY and once in CO.

⁴This is the total number of students who received at least one postsecondary award in another state. This number will be equal to or greater than the number of students who attended a Wyoming institution in the same year.

ND: Data are nondisclosable due to the small number of people in that particular cell.

Source: Custom Extract from Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) Project.

Tables 6A-6D show the number of individual students who received a postsecondary award at any point between 2006 and 2014 by geographic location. These tables are slightly different from Table 5 in that they present the total number of students who earned at least one award from any postsecondary institution based on their entire postsecondary history rather than what they accomplished each year.

In total, 1,829 individual students from the Class of 2007 earned at least one postsecondary award in Wyoming, another state, or both between 2006 and 2014. However, there were 1,870 counts of students who earned postsecondary awards when those who earned awards in multiple states are considered. In other words, 1,829 individuals from the Class of 2007 earned a combined 1,870 postsecondary awards between 2006 and 2014. Overall, 58.1% (1,031) of those students earned at least one award in Wyoming only (see Table 6A). Of the 745 instances of students who earned a postsecondary award in at least one state other than Wyoming, 13.6% (101) did so in Utah, 12.2% (91) did so in Colorado, and 9.8% (73) did so in South Dakota (see Table 6B). Figure 2 (see page 11) provides a visual representation of the data in Tables 6A and 6B, and clearly shows that the largest number of students who received a postsecondary award outside Wyoming did so in a border state.

A total of 93 students from the Class of 2007 earned at least one award in both Wyoming and another state, with students being counted 94 times in other states (see Table 6C). The largest proportions of students who earned these degrees graduated in Colorado (13, or 13.8%), Montana (10, or 10.6%), and Nebraska (10, or 10.6%) in addition to Wyoming.

Discussion

Overall, the largest proportion of students in the Class of 2007 enrolled only in Wyoming postsecondary institutions. The largest percentage of those students enrolled in school in 2007, the same year as the expected high school graduation; that percentage declined every year after. In contrast, the proportion of students who enrolled only in out-of-state schools increased somewhat between 2007 and 2011 before declining. This may be due to many factors, such as a student moving to another state and working to gain residency in order to make attendance more affordable before attending school.

A large percentage of students who attended or received an award from an out-of-state postsecondary institution did so in states bordering Wyoming, such as Utah, Colorado, and Montana, or other states in the West, such as Arizona and Washington. As indicated by Supiano (2015), proximity to home probably explains some of this; also, the majority of these states belong to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), which offers programs such as the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) program and the Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP) that allow students to attend schools outside their home state at a discounted rate. For example, the WUE program allows undergraduate students to attend many out-of-state postsecondary institutions in the WICHE region for 150% of that state's resident tuition rate (WICHE; 2015). It is possible, also, that some students attend out-of-state postsecondary institutions because the program of study that they are interested in is not offered in Wyoming.

A substantial number of students from

the Class of 2007 (2,170, or 38.8%) did not pursue a postsecondary education at any time during the seven years after expected high school graduation. An even greater number (3,769, or 67.3%) did not earn a postsecondary award during that time. As noted by Harris (2015), people do not follow a set path of life events, and work, marriage, and childbirth may influence an individual's decision to go to college, especially directly after high school graduation. Some of these students may return for further education at a later stage in their lives. Future research may analyze the pathways that

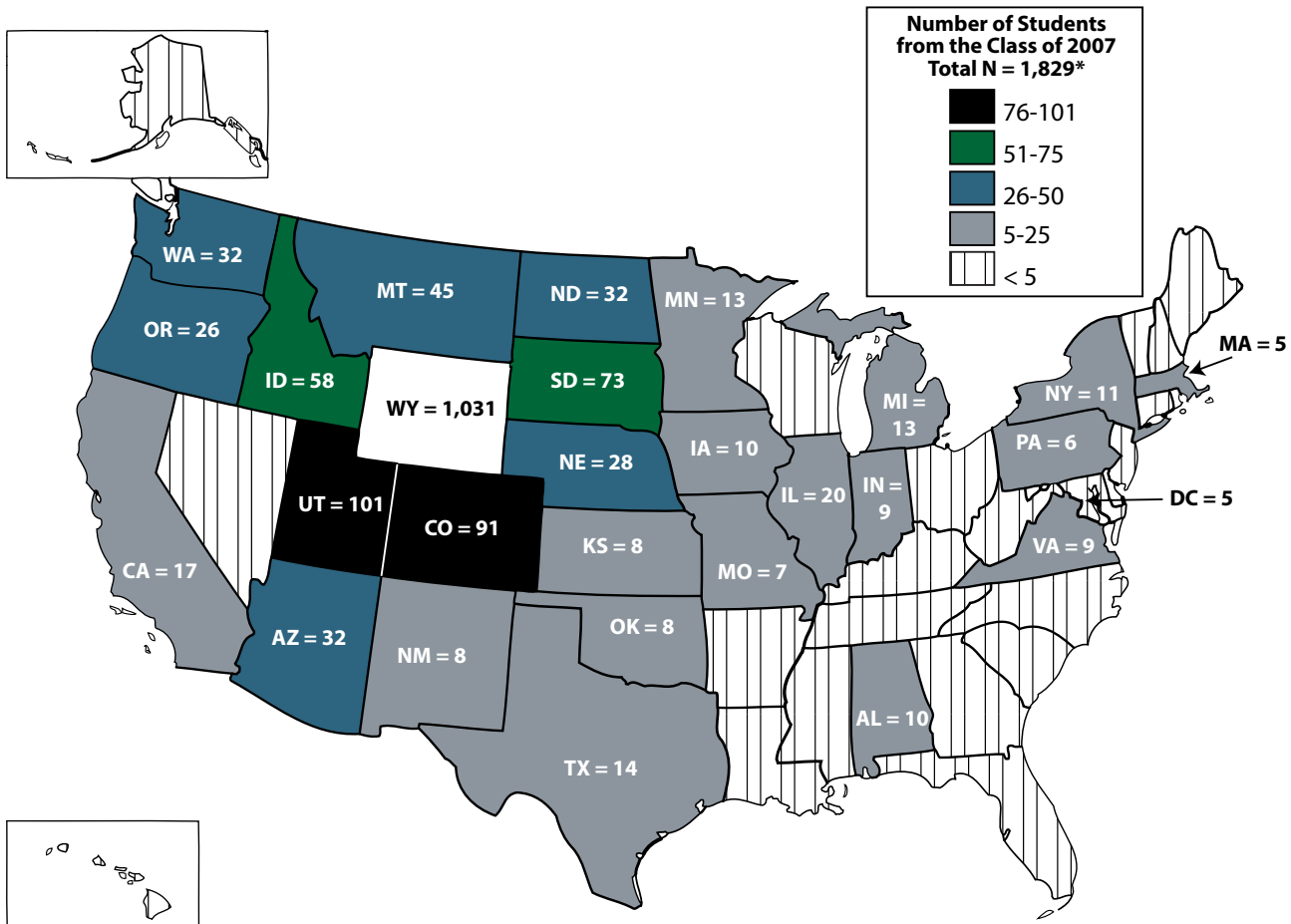
Wyoming students take that may lead to a postsecondary education.

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Figure 2: Total Number of Wyoming High School Students from the Class of 2007 Who Received at Least One Postsecondary Award by State, Between 2006 and 2014



Source: Custom Extract from Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) Project.
 Does not include students who earned degrees in both Wyoming and another state.
 * Total number of degrees will equal 1,870. See Tables 6A-6B.

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