



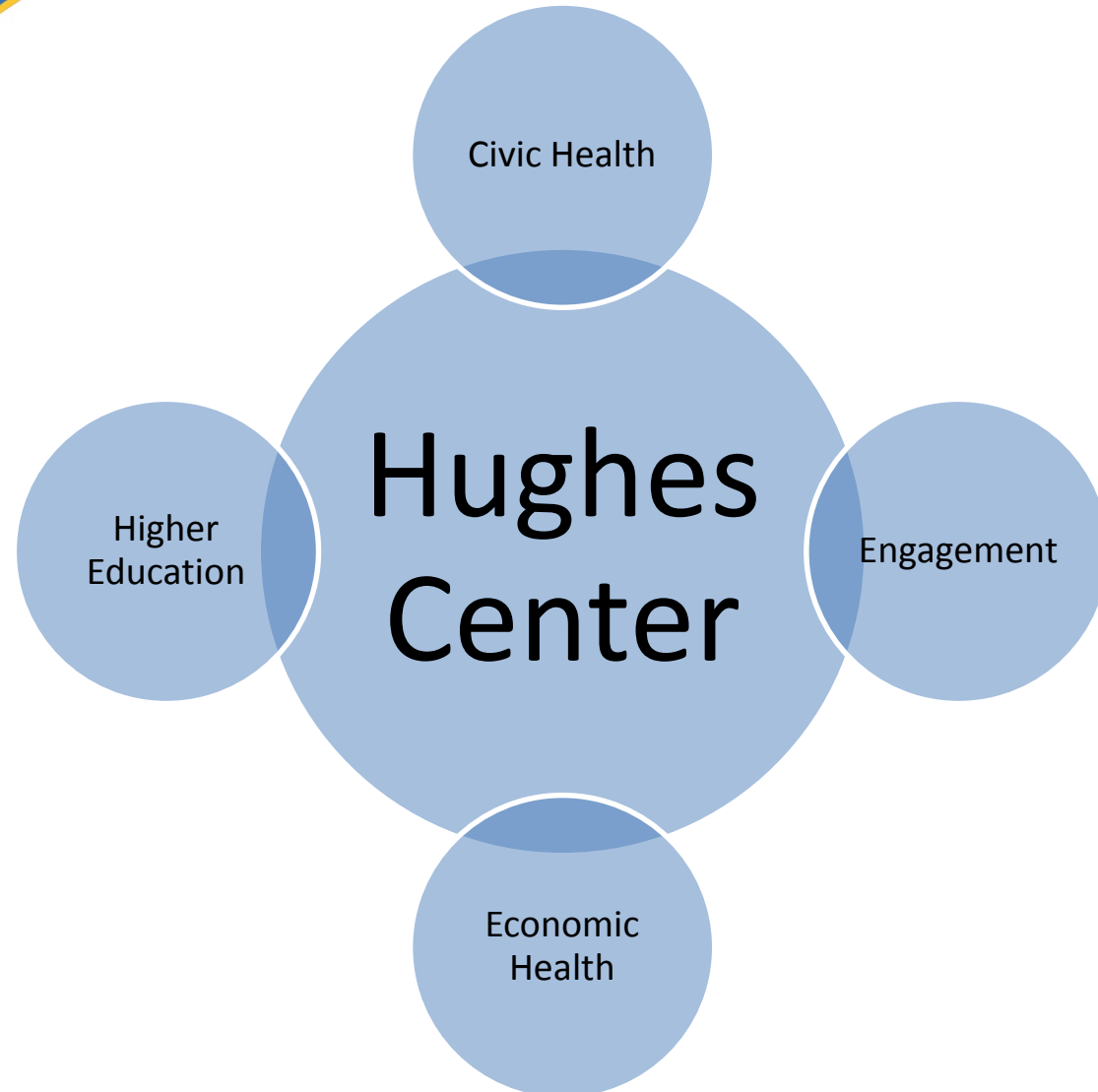
**STOCKTON** | WILLIAM J. HUGHES  
UNIVERSITY | CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY

# William J. Hughes

- U.S. House of Representatives, 2<sup>nd</sup> District (N.J.) 1974-94
- U.S. Ambassador to Panama, 1995-99
- Distinguished Visiting Professor at Stockton College



- Promote civic life through engagement, education and research.
- Role of higher education:
  - Job skills and citizenship skills
- Economic health and civic health are linked.



- Higher Education Strategic Information and Governance (HESIG)
- Debates, symposia, lectures and panel discussions
- Civic education with iCivics
- Congress-to-Campus Program
- Hughes Center Honors
- Legislator-in-Residence Program

# Public Opinion Research

- Stockton Polling Institute, part of the Hughes Center
- Conducts over 10,000 completed interviews per academic year
- Employees 125 students
- Public opinion surveys, regional and statewide

# External Clients

- Economic Analysis for Windfarm Company
- Marketing Research – Survey of Small Businesses
- Brand Awareness Survey for HERO Campaign for Designated Drivers

## Civic and Economic Health

- Civic Health Index
- Civic Education and Awareness
- Higher Education Affordability and Accessibility
- Economic Inequality
- Geographic Inequality

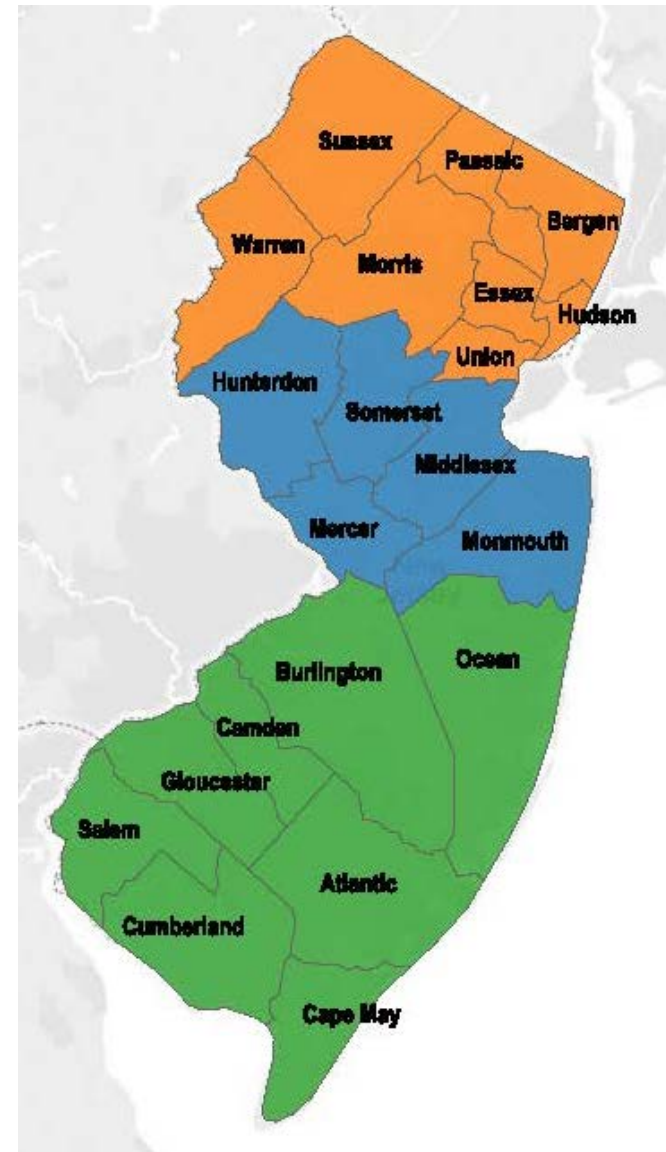


- Civic and Political Engagement Assessment Project
  - Tracking Stockton students' civic engagement while at Stockton and after they graduate.
  - Multi-year study

- “Understanding the United States Constitution and the Supreme Court: A Survey of New Jerseyans.”
- Civic education and participation

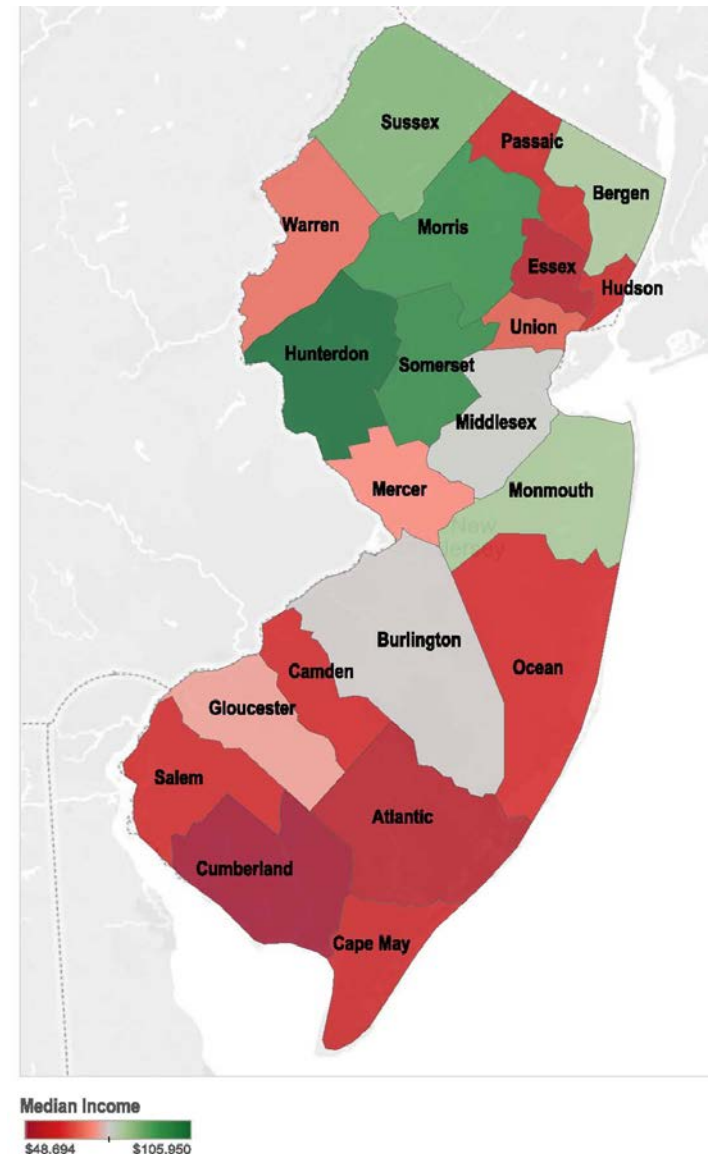
- Ties to American Democracy Project initiative, part of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.
- Survey data of NJ residents to proposed policies to remedy economic inequalities provided by Stockton Polling Institute

Economic  
Opportunity  
and  
Quality of Life  
in  
Southern  
New Jersey

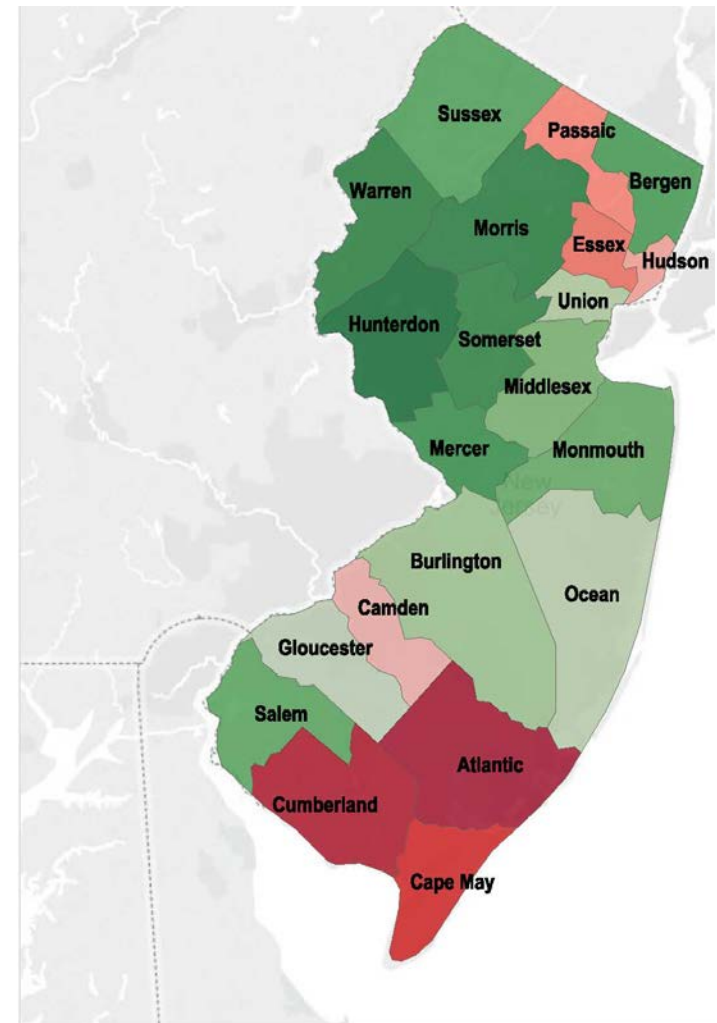


# Median HH Income

- Three counties (Cumberland, Atlantic and Essex) have half of the MHHI of the top county (Hunterdon).
- Cumberland County \$48,694
- Hunterdon County, \$105,950.



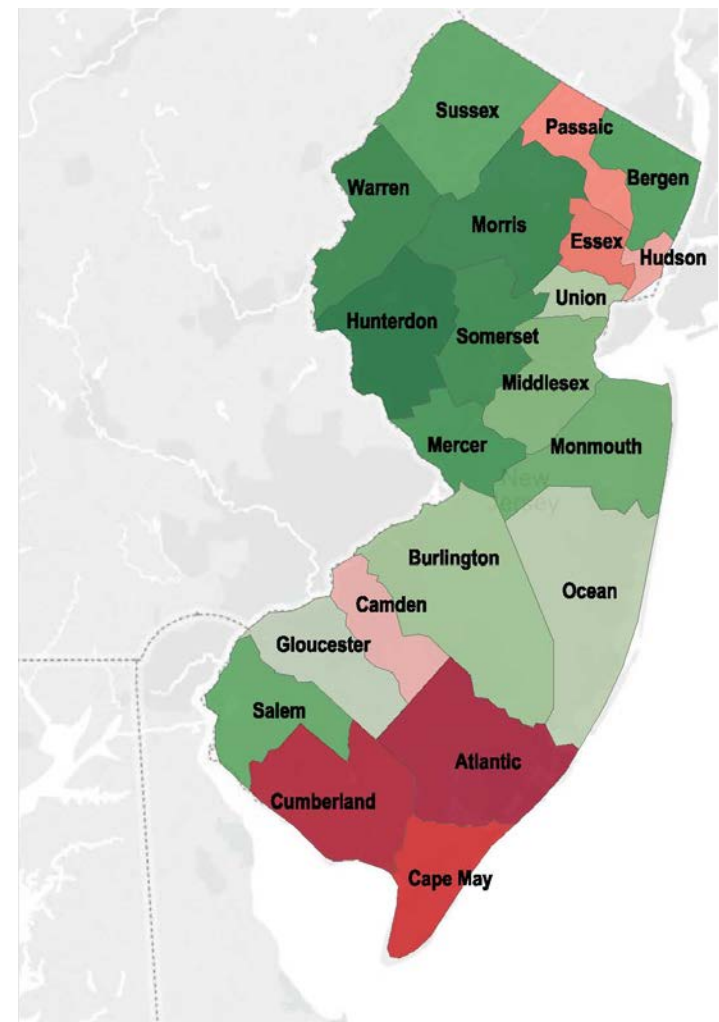
- NJ - 10.9 % live below the federal poverty threshold.
- Cumberland 18.5%
- Hunterdon 3.8%



Percent Unemployed  
5.3% 10.9%

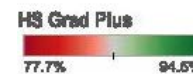
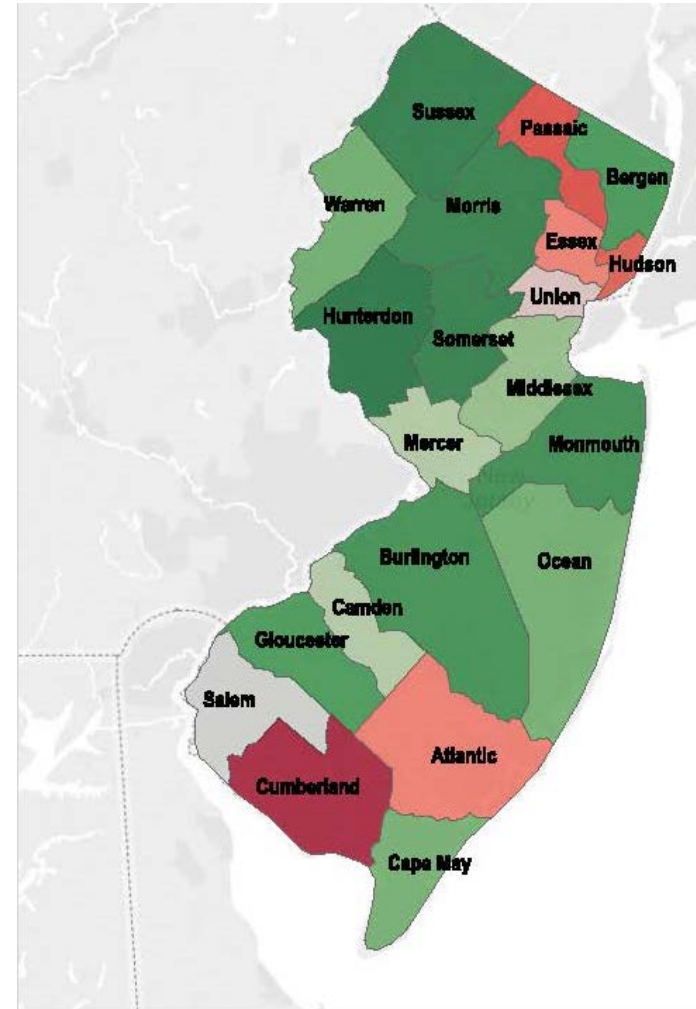
# Unemployed

- Hunterdon County has the lowest unemployment rate at 5.3 %
- Cumberland 10.7 %
- Atlantic 10.9 %
- More than double Hunterdon's level.



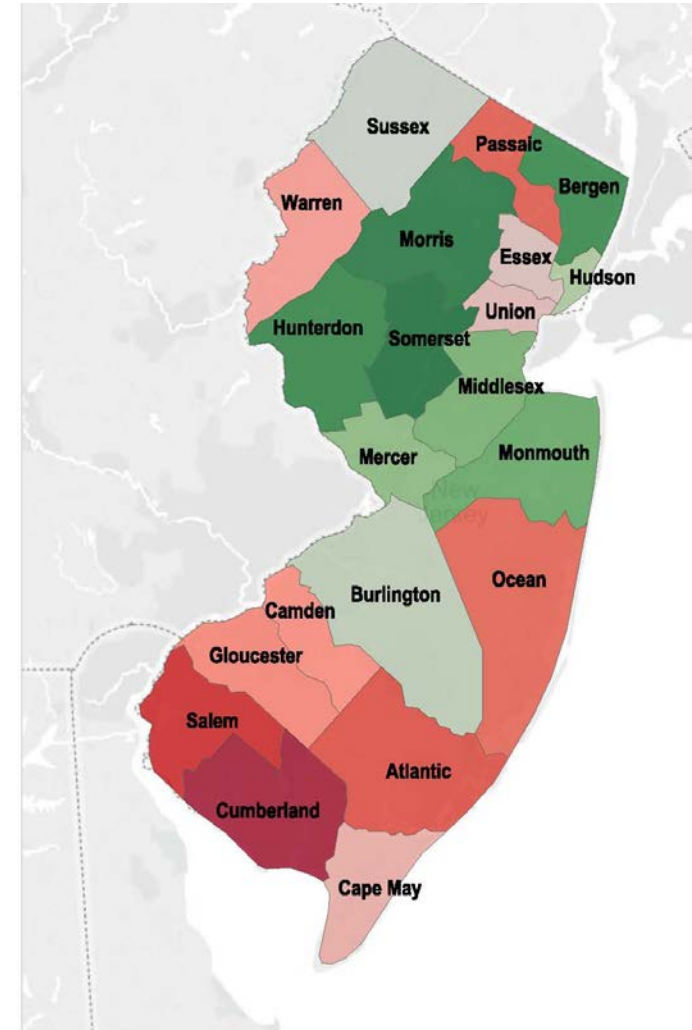
Percent Unemployed  
5.3% 10.9%

- Percentage of high school graduates
- Hunterdon County has the highest (94.5 %)
- Cumberland anchors the low end of the scale (77.7 %).





- Somerset County 51.4 %
- More than double
  - Passaic (25.3 %)
  - Atlantic (25.4 %)
  - Salem (20.5 %)
- More than triple that of Cumberland (14.7 %).



*Thanks*

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# *“Finding Solutions, Building Public Trust in an Era of Change”*

A Grant Report to The ETS Center for Advocacy and Philanthropy  
- November 2014

**HESIG**

*Higher Education Strategic Information and Governance*

## ***Special Thanks to:***

- ETS Center for Advocacy & Philanthropy
- NJ Secretary of Higher Education
- New Jersey City University
- Stockton Polling Institute

### **Mission Statement**

*HESIG serves as an agent for constructive higher education policy change, by recommending strategic policy action aligned with a public agenda to serve the public good. Guiding principles include: enhancing college access, affordability, college completion, productivity, accountability, and building new partnerships to achieve these ends.*

## *“Finding Solutions, Building Public Trust in an Era of Change”*

**PURPOSE:** To identify policy reforms and “best practices” to help close college achievement gap

- MEANS:**
- Convene two “Executive Roundtables” at Stockton University and New Jersey City University, Spring 2014
  - Conduct statewide survey of citizens to measure needed changes

## *Questions Guiding Roundtable Discussions*

1. How should higher education define its purposes and value during an era of rapid change, and in light of a changing student population?
2. How do colleges and universities productively engage policy makers and citizens regarding concurrence about outcomes and the public benefits of college, to build stronger public trust and support for constructive policy change?
3. What school, college and state-level practices and policies need to be changed; and what partnerships need to be expanded or created to meet the challenges of college access, affordability, and completion?
4. What measures of value should be applied regarding the ability to synthesize and apply information, inform effective decision making, work collaboratively toward a common outcome, and communicate effectively and confidently?

## *Roundtable Advice*

- Provide students with more practical experience tied to academic studies
- Help students develop effective interpersonal and workplace skills
- Partner with schools on higher order skills needed to succeed in college
- Collaborate with business on internships and program content
- Increase cooperation with community colleges on programs and credit transfer
- Involve community leaders in defining outcomes
- Tie college outcomes to broader state needs and quality of life beyond jobs

## *College Value Poll Key Findings*

Consistent views among roundtable executives & citizens

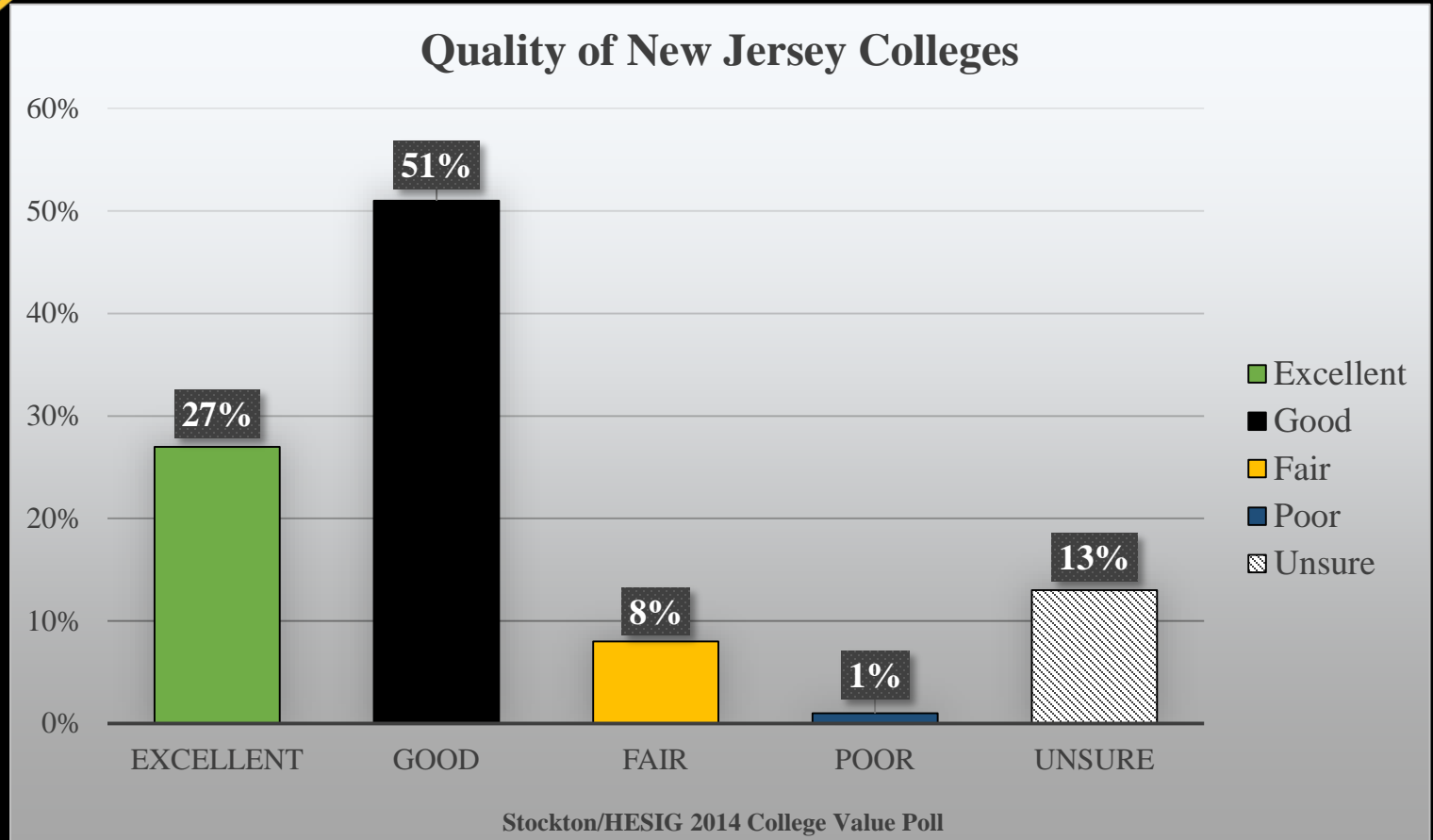
*May 13-23, May 27-June 1, 2014*

*801 NJ telephone interviews*

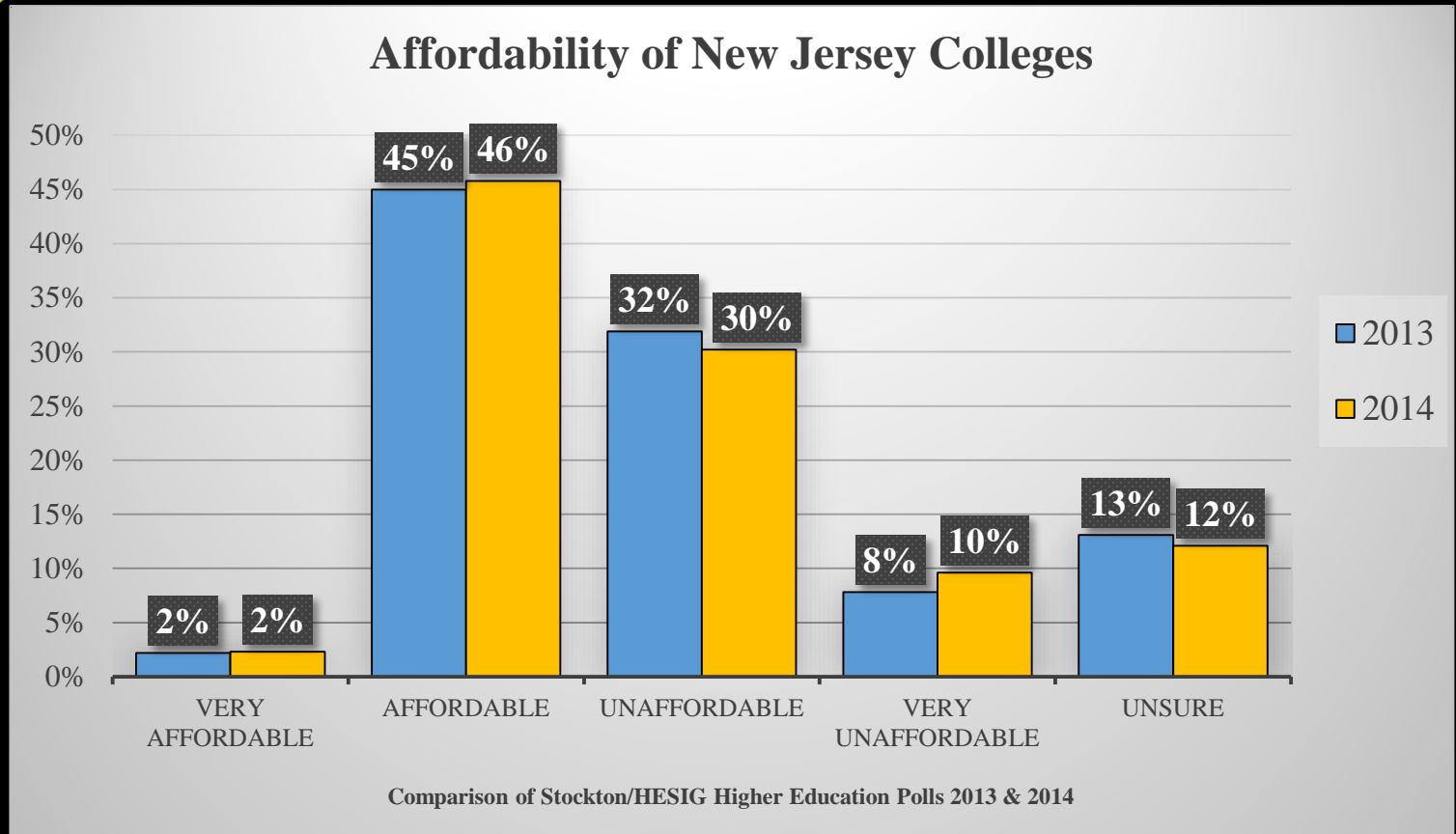
*MOE (+/-) 3.5%*



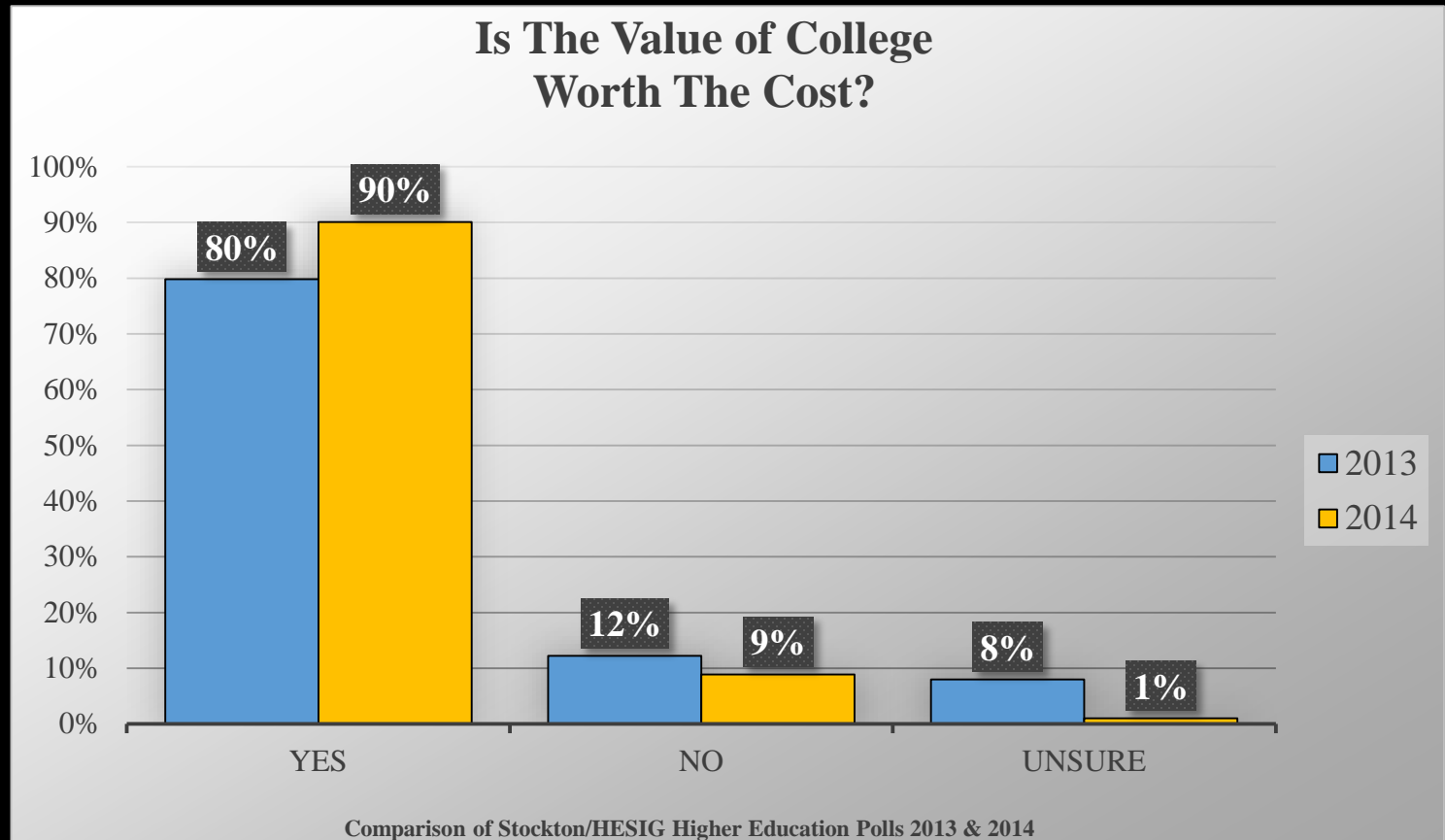
78% say NJ colleges are good or excellent



But only 50% see college as affordable

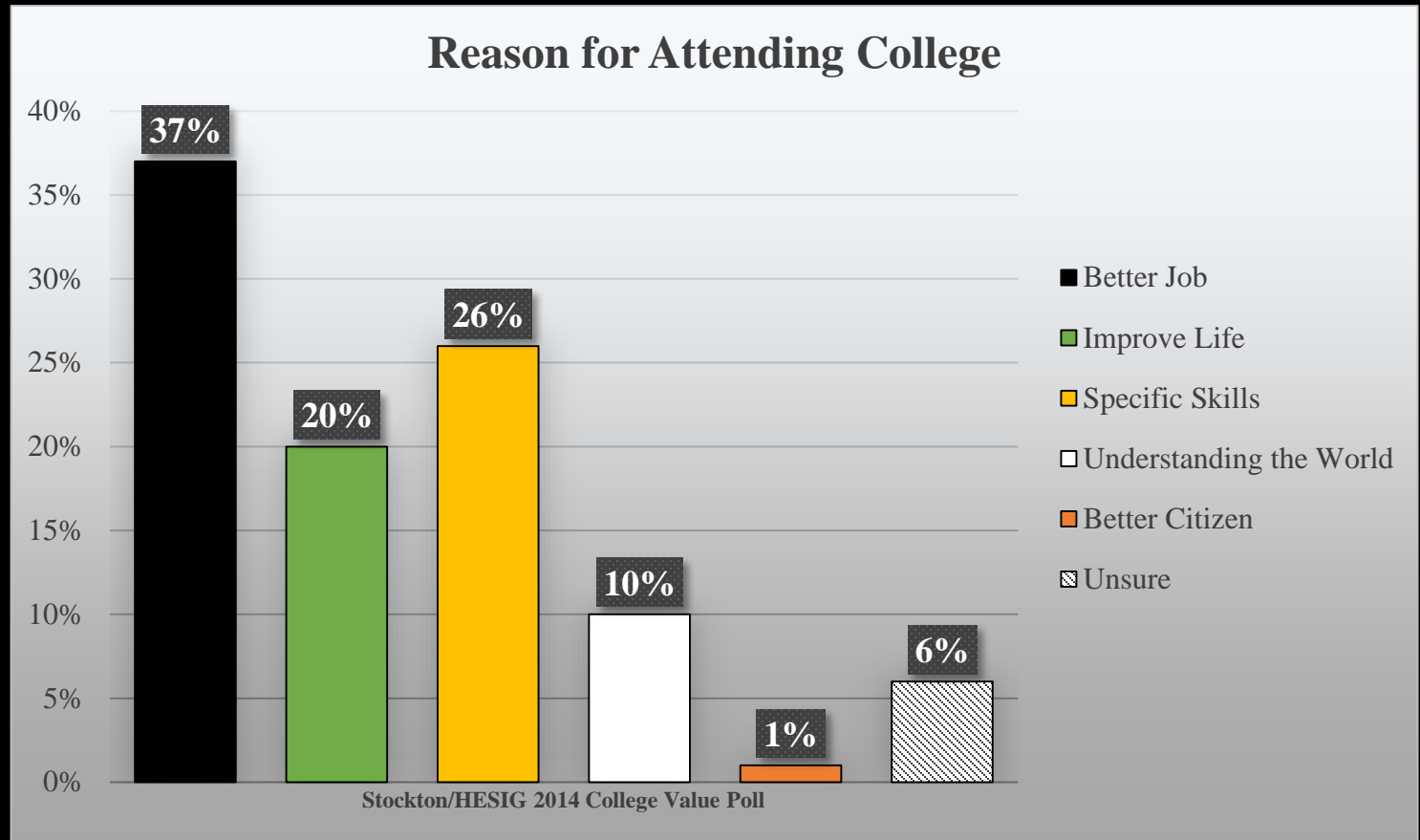


90% of those who attended college find that the value of college is worth the cost



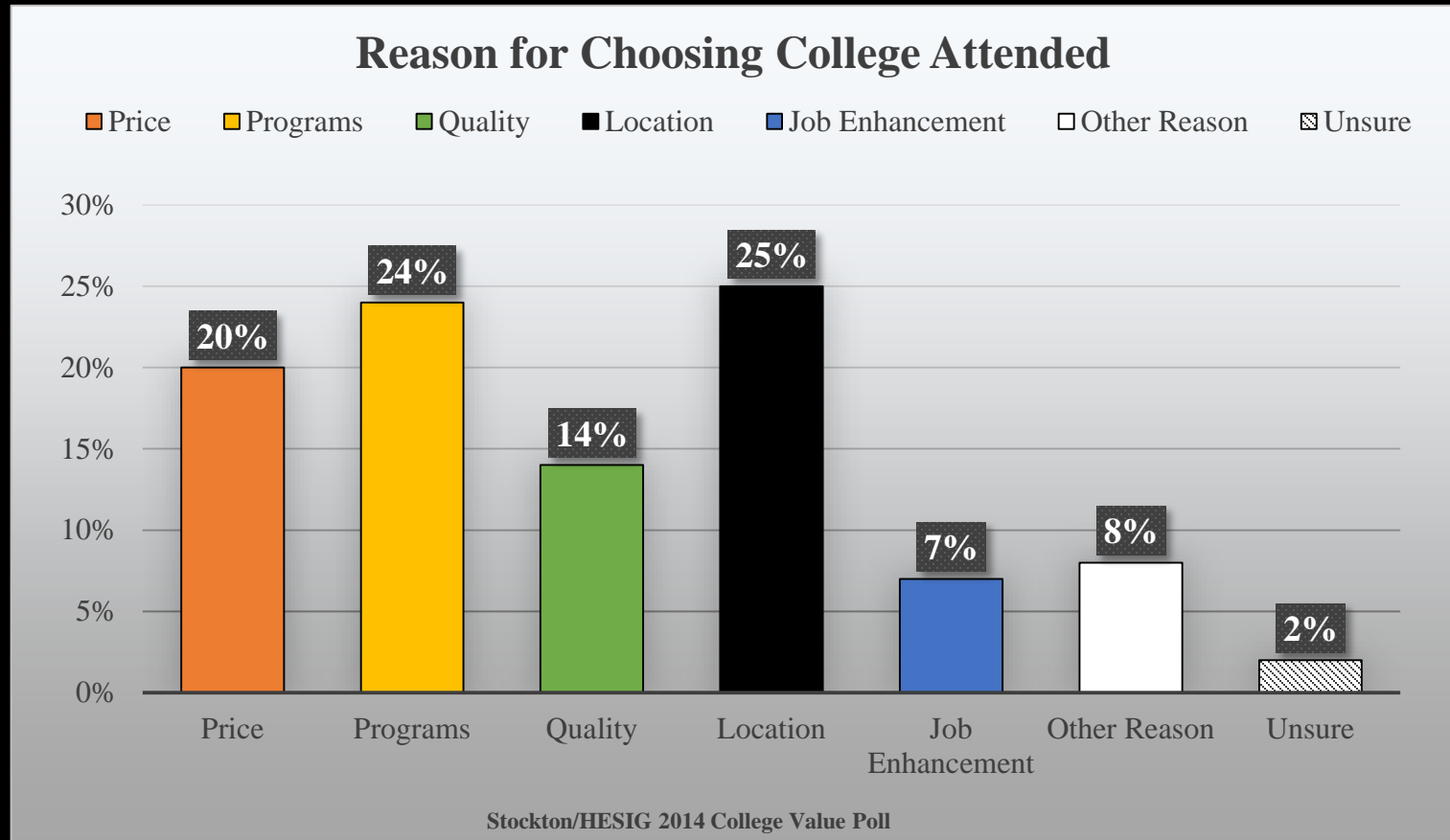
# Reason for Attending College

Top reasons are a better job (37%); gaining specific skills (26%)



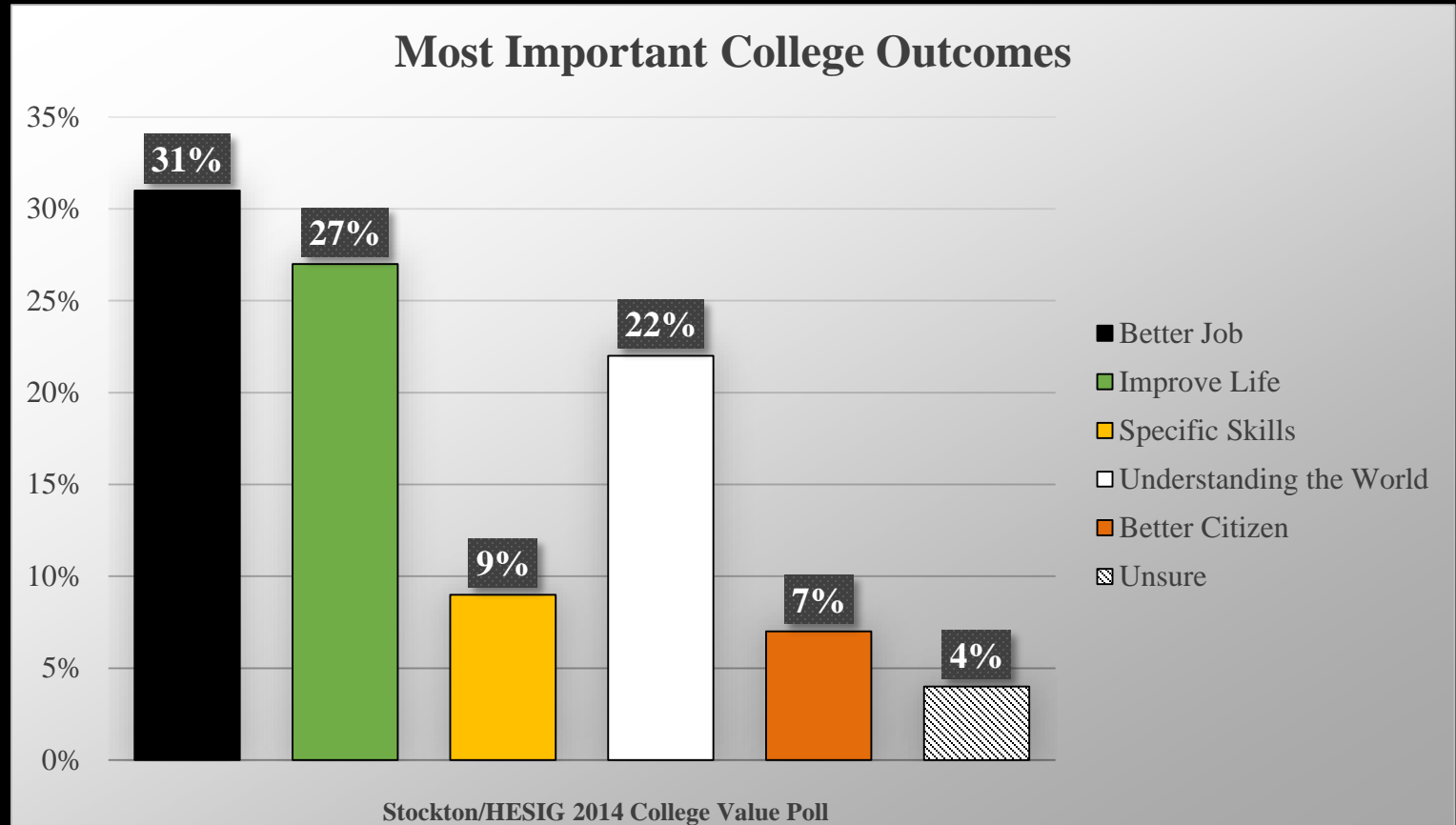
## Reason for Choosing a College

Location (25%); program offering (24%) ; price (20%); and quality (14%)



## Top College Outcomes

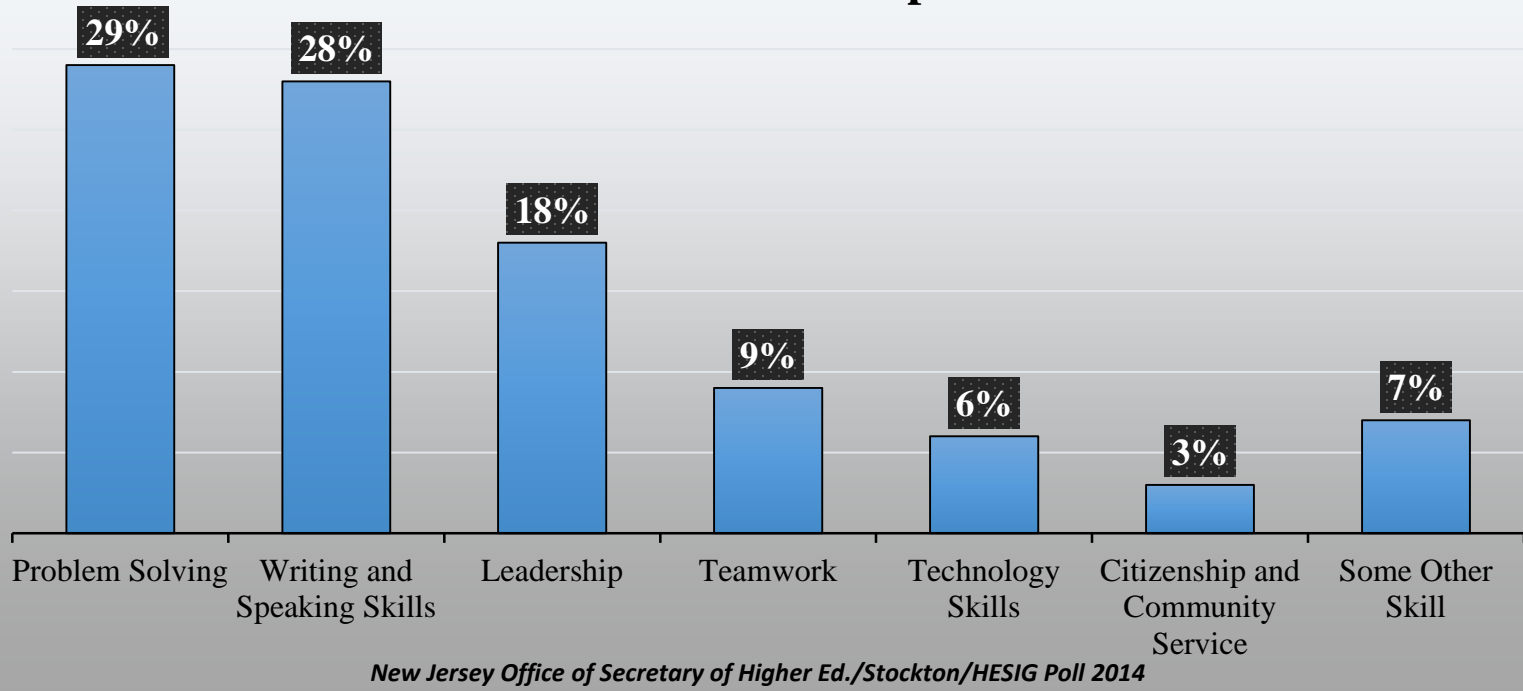
Top college outcomes include: getting a better job (31%) and improving quality of life (27%)



## Most Important Skills

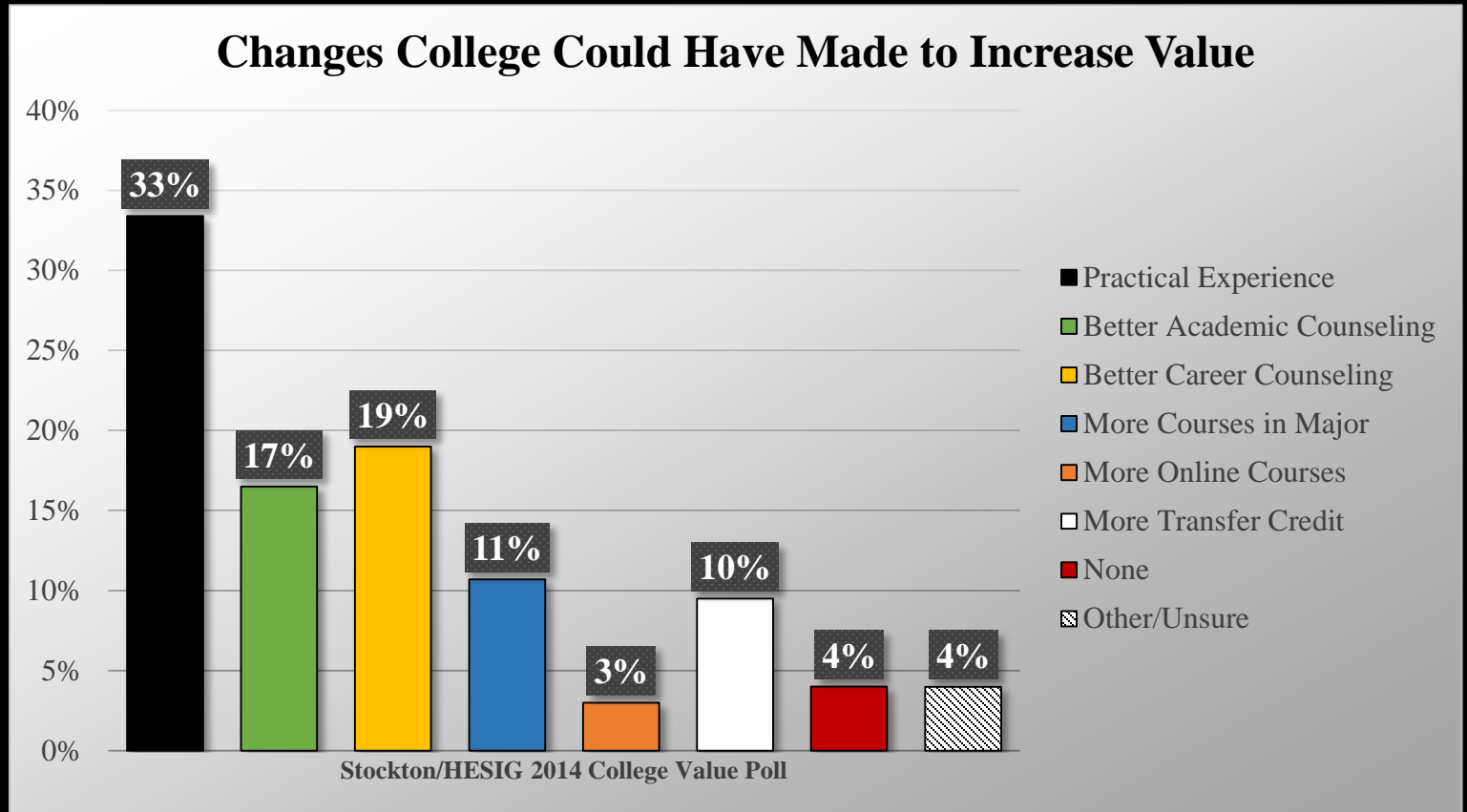
Problem solving, writing, and communicating are viewed as among the most important skills and abilities gained from college

### Most Important Skill or Ability Which Colleges Help Students Develop



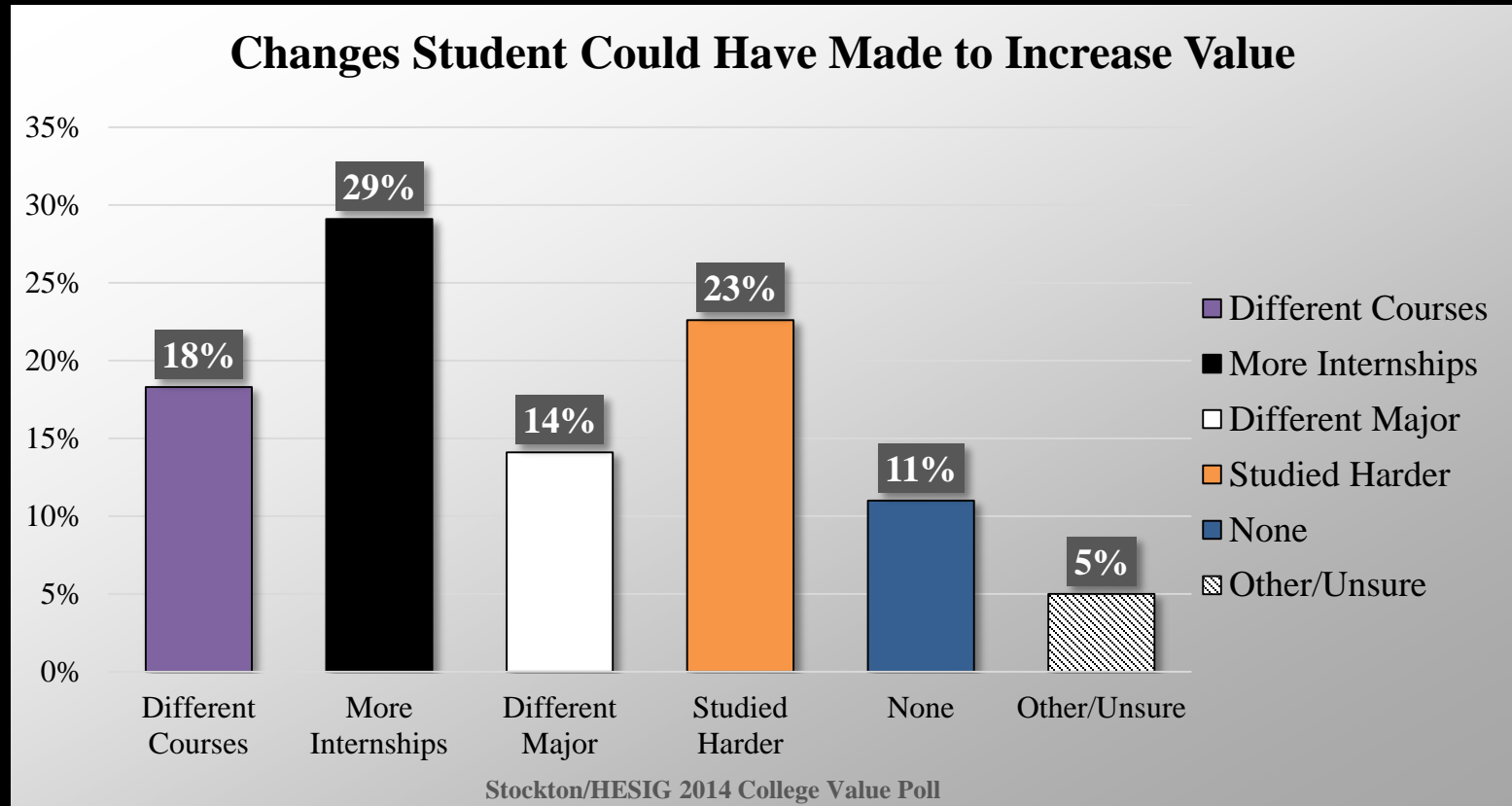
## Best Way to Increase College Value

Respondents' top answers were for colleges to provide more practical experiences, such as internships (33%)





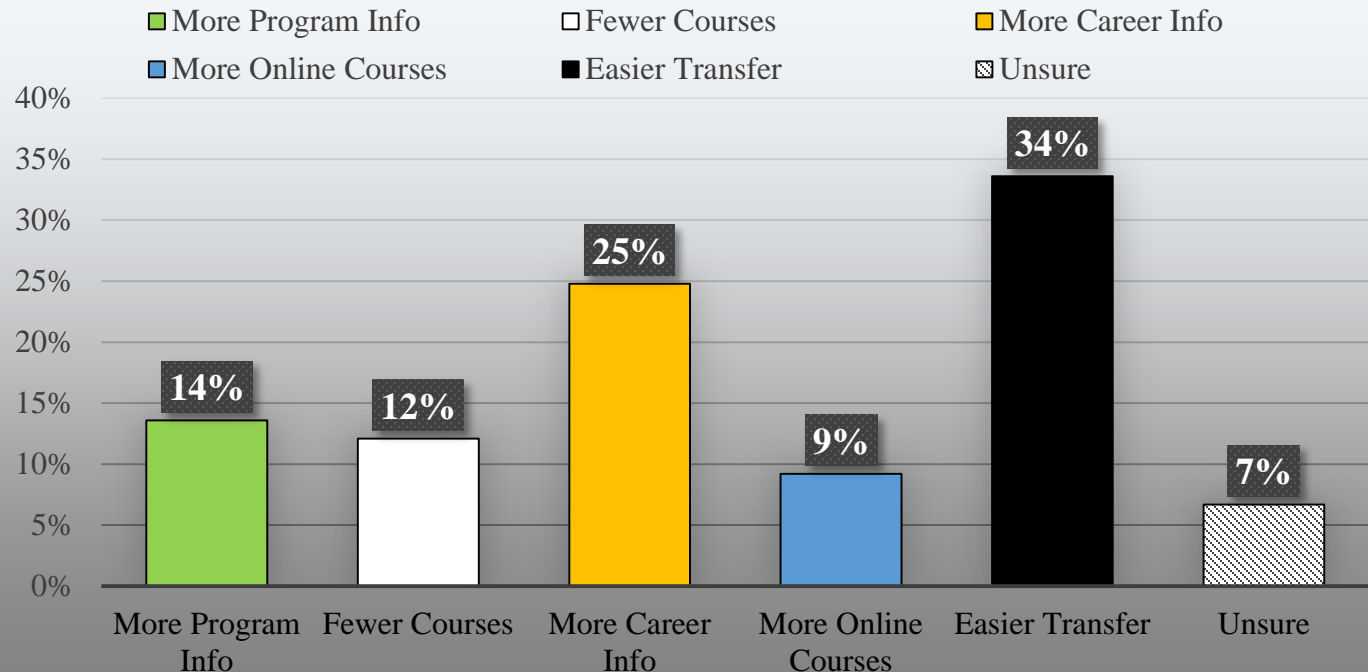
And, for students to find more work and internship experiences (29%)



## Top Reasons for Helping to Reduce Time to Finish A Degree

Easier credit transfer (34%); more information about jobs and careers (25%)

### Best Way to Reduce the Time to Degree

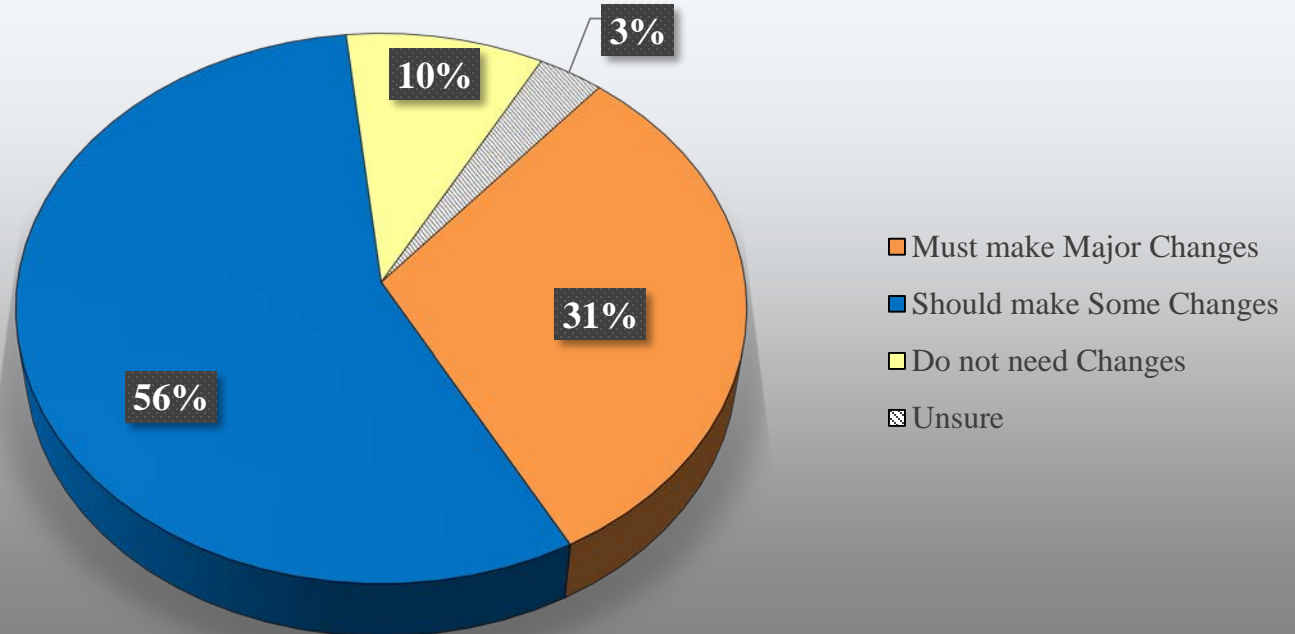


Stockton/HESIG 2014 College Value Poll

## Need for Change

87% say that major or some change is needed in the way colleges do business, to increase value

**Do Colleges Need to Change?**

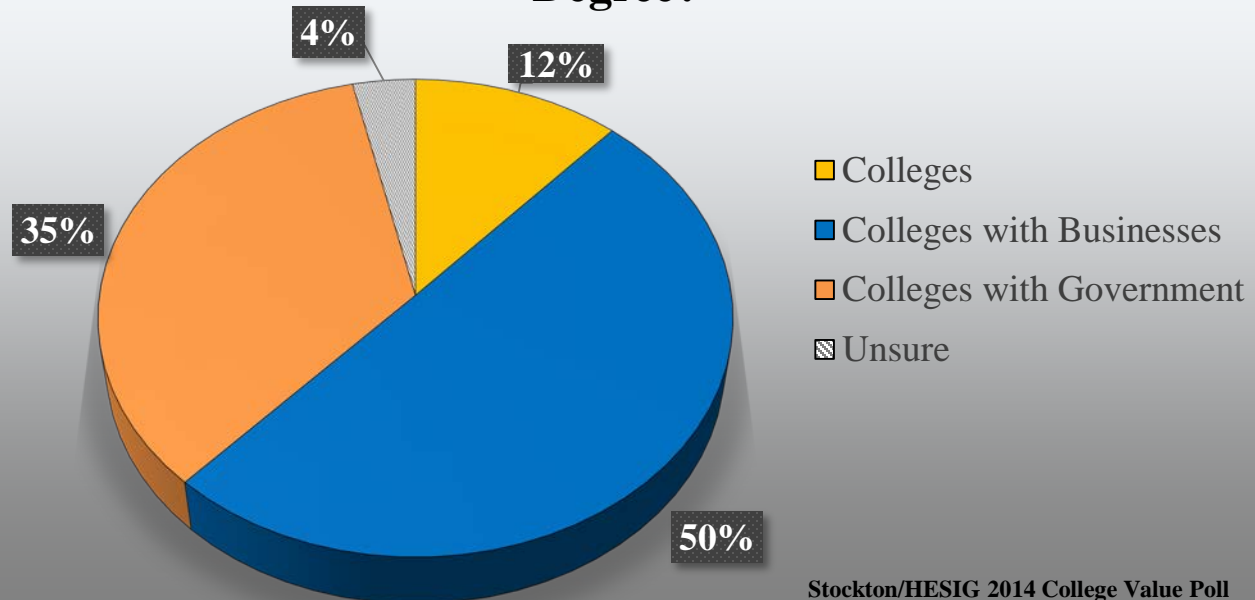


Stockton/HESIG 2014 College Value Poll

## Who Should Be Responsible For Changes

50% of respondents say that colleges working with businesses should take responsibility for change in practices to increase value, favored over colleges in partnership with government (35%) or colleges alone (12%)

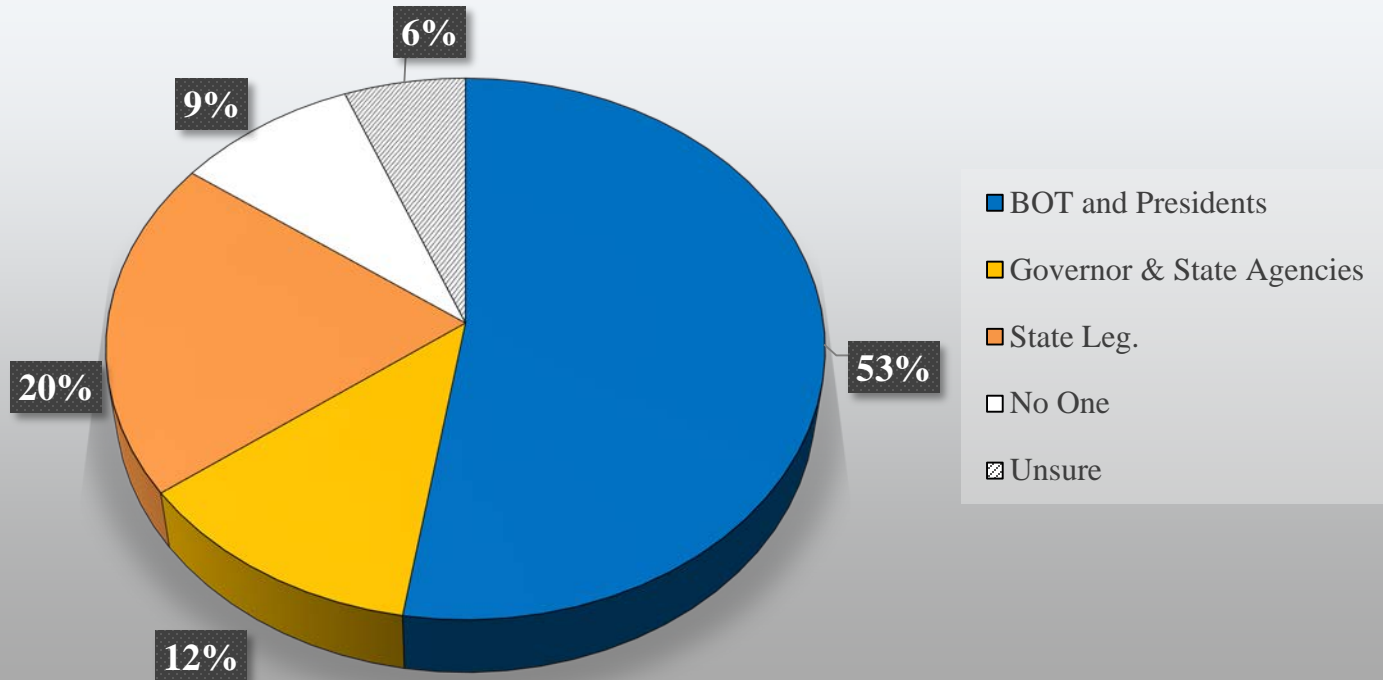
### Who Is Responsible for Increasing The Value of A College Degree?



Stockton/HESIG 2014 College Value Poll

# Who do you Trust to Make Changes

Who Do You Trust to Improve College Access, Affordability, and Quality?



Stockton/HESIG 2014 College Value Poll

## *Some Key Recommendations*

- Broaden partnerships to teach subjects and skills needed to succeed in college and workforce
- Cooperate with community colleges on credit transfer to shorten time to degree completion
- Expand business partnerships to build programs create internships
- Reduce required degree credits (Gen. Ed.) and grant more credit for prior experience
- Teach and measure explicit skill/ability (ELO) sets across disciplines
- Require intensive academic advising, career counseling
- Reform state funding and, student financial aid policy to meet needs of students across programs and institutional types

## *Next Steps*

### *2015-2016*

- Continue partnerships with ETS, NJ Secretary of Higher Education and others
- Conduct a 2<sup>nd</sup> survey of NJ undergraduates on counseling/advising professionals on academic success and career readiness reform
- Hold two regional conferences on findings, including policy makers and opinion leaders
- Host meetings with leaders of each segment of NJ higher education, business leaders and others on need to change in policy and practice

## *Anticipated Outcomes*

- Tools to help close the college achievement/completion gap, aligned with a broader public agenda
- Resource material to better align policy and practice in areas of admissions, student financial aid, and advising/counseling to increase college outcomes
- Strengthen a network of leaders to share information about best practice related to college value and outcomes
- Improve responsiveness and accountability of postsecondary education



**Thank you**

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[www.stockton.edu/hughescenter/hesig](http://www.stockton.edu/hughescenter/hesig)