

# SOUTHWEST FLORIDA EDUCATIONAL AND WORKFORCE OUTCOMES REPORT

2023

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**FutureMakers  
Coalition**

**WORKFORCE  
NOW**



**FLORIDA<sup>TM</sup>  
SOUTHWESTERN  
STATE COLLEGE**  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY

**FGCU**





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# About the Authors

## FutureMakers Coalition

FutureMakers is a collective impact initiative working along the cradle-to-career pathway to create a skilled and sustainable workforce pipeline. The pathway begins with early childhood learning and ends with post-high school credential attainment and career connections. The coalition focuses on systems change to connect untapped workforce with the education and training to fill in-demand jobs by removing attainment barriers and creating a culture of career exploration and aspiration from an early age.

FutureMakers Coalition aims to transform Southwest Florida's workforce by increasing the proportion of working-age adults with college degrees, workforce certificates, industry certifications and other high-quality credentials to 55 percent by 2025.



# FutureMakers Coalition

## Workforce Now

Workforce Now is a regional research initiative to identify current and future talent requirements for the five counties of Southwest Florida. The initiative is designed to provide better information on workforce gaps including skills, knowledge, and characteristics desired by regional employers. The plan is to provide a continuous stream of labor force information to employers and educational institutions and to look for ways to create dialogue and new partnerships between businesses and educational institutions. The quality of the regional workforce is a primary competitive factor in the region's ability to grow and prosper in a global marketplace.



# Executive Summary

## Educational Outcomes

FutureMakers Coalition aims to transform Southwest Florida's workforce by increasing the proportion of skilled working age adults with college degrees, workforce certificates, industry certifications and other high-quality credentials to 55 percent by 2025. This report is one of a series created by FutureMakers Coalition with a view towards identifying opportunities and fostering outcomes to achieve the goal of 55 percent skilled working age adults in support of a diversified and resilient economy, and an improved quality of life for Southwest Florida. Much of the information in this report was developed with the most recent available data from publicly available federal and state databases, which may take into account a lag time from the writing of this report. It is also important to note that the most recent available data in this year's report – primarily from 2021 and 2022 – include the timeframe immediately post the COVID-19 pandemic during which the region's school systems and broader economy were slowly recovering. In addition, the data may not reflect the impact from Hurricane Ian (on September 28, 2022). Therefore, the data to assess changes in educational outcomes (either an improvement or decline) should be carefully considered relative to these two major, disruptive events.

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*The available outcomes data indicate that Southwest Florida is making positive progress towards achieving the goal with an increase in the skilled workforce from 218,586 in 2013 (the baseline year), or 39.0 percent of the working age population, to 273,690 in 2021, representing 43.7 percent of the total working age population.*

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Demographics show that Southwest Florida's population is growing and at a faster rate than the State of Florida with primary growth occurring in the coastal counties of Southwest Florida. The working age population in the Southwest Florida region increased approximately 11.8 percent between 2013 and 2021. Similarly, the skilled workforce in the region increased approximately 25.2 percent in the same timeframe. Progress toward the 55 percent goal is not uniform among the five Southwest Florida counties. This observation suggests that FutureMakers Coalition and its network partners must not only maintain, but expand, their efforts to identify opportunities and to foster outcomes to achieve the goal of 55 percent in skilled working age adults in support of a diversified and resilient economy.

Educational outcomes suggest mixed results across the Aspiration and Preparation, Access and Entry, Persistence and Completion measures compared to the 2022 Annual Report. High school graduation rates in Southwest Florida showed a second year of decline, from a high of 89.9 percent in AY2020 to 85.8 percent in AY2022. Post-secondary and technical college fall enrollments both increased in the fall of 2021 over 2020, although the FASFA completion rate continued its decline to 32.8 percent in AY2023. The living wage (for a household with one adult and two children) in Southwest Florida continues to rise, increasing 9.7 percent to \$45.94. Selected outcomes are presented by race and ethnicity and by gender when available. Past trends across the races and ethnicities remained the same. In general, Southwest Florida's residents who identify as Black or Hispanic and Latino achieved worse educational outcomes, possibly suggesting that 1.) the long-standing systemic barriers still exist for the populations with lower attainment; and 2.) further efforts are needed to support our priority populations – adults with some college, but no degree; adults with no education post-high school, and traditional-age students who are at risk of not pursuing and completing education beyond high school. Businesses and education institutions must design and implement policies and procedures that support equitable outcomes for all and maximize opportunities for the untapped Southwest Florida workforce – the nearly 60 percent working age adults who do not currently hold a high-quality credential beyond high school. The information in this report lays the groundwork for additional research (including place-based research) and further evaluation to be developed by FutureMakers Coalition and its network partners. Rigorous definitions and more accurate means of measurement of to understand differences in education and in the workforce outcomes must be identified and developed in order to remove barriers to meeting the 55 percent goal by 2025 for Southwest Florida.

A new Regional Action Team was formed: The Resilience and Diversification Regional Action Team is focused on ensuring our region's workforce and economy are more diverse and resilient by cultivating a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem. Toward that end, entrepreneurial education is an indispensable cornerstone in the development of a thriving economy, especially in regions like Southwest Florida where small businesses and startups play an instrumental role. By cultivating an educational environment that emphasizes entrepreneurial skills and mindset from K-12 onwards, we can set the foundation for a more robust and adaptive future for Southwest Florida. Preliminary data are presented to describe the current Southwest Florida entrepreneurial ecosystem.

## Workforce Outcomes

The Workforce Now report indicates that of the 446,228 workers reported by the QCEW in 2022, Retail Trade was the largest industry, with 17.0 percent of all workers in the region. Accommodation and food services was the next largest industry (14.1 percent), followed by

construction (13.8 percent) and health care and social assistance (13.8 percent). Retail trade and accommodation and food services were also among the lowest paying jobs in the region, with average annual wages of \$41,500 and \$30,946 respectively. The average annual wage for all industries in Southwest Florida was \$56,735 in 2022, up 6.5 percent from 2021.

Construction was by far the fastest growing industry in 2022, with employment growing by over 10,000 since 2018. Professional and Technical Services had the next highest growth (5,977 employment increase), followed by Health Care and Social Assistance (4,823 employment increase), Administrative and Waste Services (4,440 employment increase), and Manufacturing (2,627 employment increase).

Construction is projected to see the highest average annual growth between 2022 and 2030, growing by 1,283 jobs over the next eight years. Health Care and Social Assistance had the next highest average annual growth (1,271 new jobs), followed by Accommodation and Food Services (824 new jobs), Government (699 new jobs) and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (587 new jobs). When combined, these five industries represent approximately two-thirds of all new jobs to be created over the next eight years.

The report also introduces a number of new topics for the reader, including an in-depth analysis on which industries represent competitive advantages for the region, how seasonality has played a role in the economy, and a detailed look into job openings by occupation and educational attainment levels, both in the short- and long-run.

# Introduction

FutureMakers Coalition aims to transform Southwest Florida's workforce by increasing the proportion of working age adults with college degrees, workforce certificates, industry certifications and other high-quality credentials to 55 percent by 2025.

FutureMakers work along the cradle-to-career pathway to create a skilled and sustainable talent pipeline. The pathway begins with early childhood learning and ends with post-high school credential attainment and career connections. The coalition focuses on systems change to connect untapped workforce with the education and training needed to fill in-demand jobs by removing attainment barriers and creating a culture of career exploration and aspiration from an early age.

The coalition has grown to 150 partner organizations and over 260 active FutureMakers representing business, education, government, nonprofits, philanthropy, residents, and students across Glades, Hendry, Collier, Lee, and Charlotte counties. The coalition understands that employers must draw from the region's talent pool. Working regionally enhances the coalition's ability to attract state and national funding and expertise. It also helps us share and coordinate best practices to maximize the knowledge and resources we already have.

This report is one of a series created by FutureMakers Coalition with a view towards identifying opportunities and fostering outcomes to achieve the goal of 55 percent skilled working age adults in support of a diversified and resilient economy and improved quality of life for Southwest Florida. For the purpose of this report, a skilled working age adult has a college degree, workforce certificate, industry certification, or other high-quality credential beyond high school. The report consolidates a summary of demographic information and educational outcomes, as well as the Workforce Now analyses, for the Southwest Florida region.

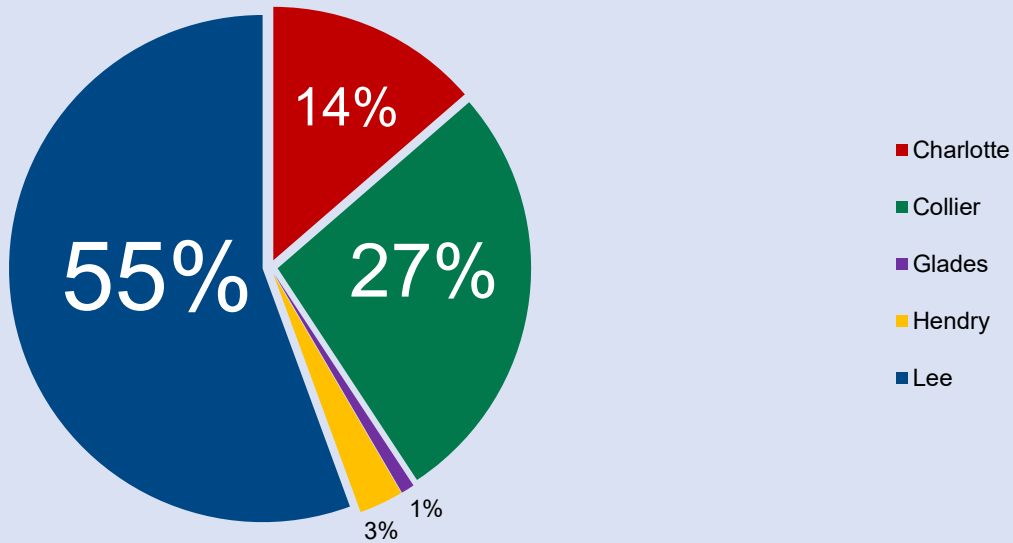
In 2020, Southwest Florida was designated a Talent Hub by the Lumina Foundation in partnership with The Kresge Foundation and joined 25 other Talent Hubs across the USA. These communities meet rigorous standards for creating environments that cultivate, attract, and retain talent, particularly among today's students, many of whom are adults, Black, Hispanic, or Native American, students from low-income households, or the first in their families to go to college.

In 2023, Florida Gulf Coast University and FutureMakers were awarded a \$23 million grant from the United States Department of Commerce to formalize and grow sector strategies by offer training to the untapped workforce. The four target industries for the Equitable Jobs Pipeline project are health care, manufacturing, PK-12 public education, and logistics. More than 1,700 local job seekers from underserved populations who face barriers to education, employment, and career advancement will be able to benefit from this program.



### Chart 1-1: Population

2022



Source: Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Demographics

### Population

Table 1-1 shows the population of each county in the Southwest Florida region, as well as the state of Florida. Southwest Florida’s population increased to 1,442,738 in 2022, up 2.4 percent from the previous year, and up 22.1 percent from 2012. The region’s population growth has exceeded the state growth since 2010. Ninety-six percent of the region’s population lives in coastal Lee, Collier, and Charlotte Counties. Additional population data are included in Appendix B.

**Table 1-1: Area Population**

Area	2012	2022	Percent Change	Share of Region Population
Charlotte	163,119	196,742	20.6%	13.6%
Collier	327,972	390,912	19.2%	27.1%
Glades	12,479	12,273	-1.7%	0.9%
Hendry	38,033	40,633	6.8%	2.8%
Lee	639,653	802,178	25.4%	55.6%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>	<b>1,181,256</b>	<b>1,442,738</b>	<b>22.1%</b>	--
<b>Florida</b>	<b>19,074,434</b>	<b>22,276,132</b>	<b>16.8%</b>	--

Source: Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research

## Population by Age

Table 1-2 presents a breakdown of the Southwest Florida population into two age groups: residents between the ages of 25 and 64 (working-age population) and those aged 65 and over (retirement age population). In 2021, Southwest Florida had 626,294 working age residents, representing 46.0 percent of the total population, which was lower than the state's working-age population of 51.6 percent. The region also had 415,411 retirement age residents, accounting for 30.5 percent of the population. This share was 10.1 percentage points greater than Florida, where only 20.4 percent of the population was retirement age.

Lee County had the largest number of working-age residents (354,516 residents, 47.1 percent of the total county population), followed by Collier County (165,587 residents, 44.4 percent of total county population), Charlotte County (80,051 residents, 43.3 percent of total county population), Hendry County (19,768 residents, 50.1 percent of total county population), and Glades County (6,372 residents, 52.3 percent of total county population).

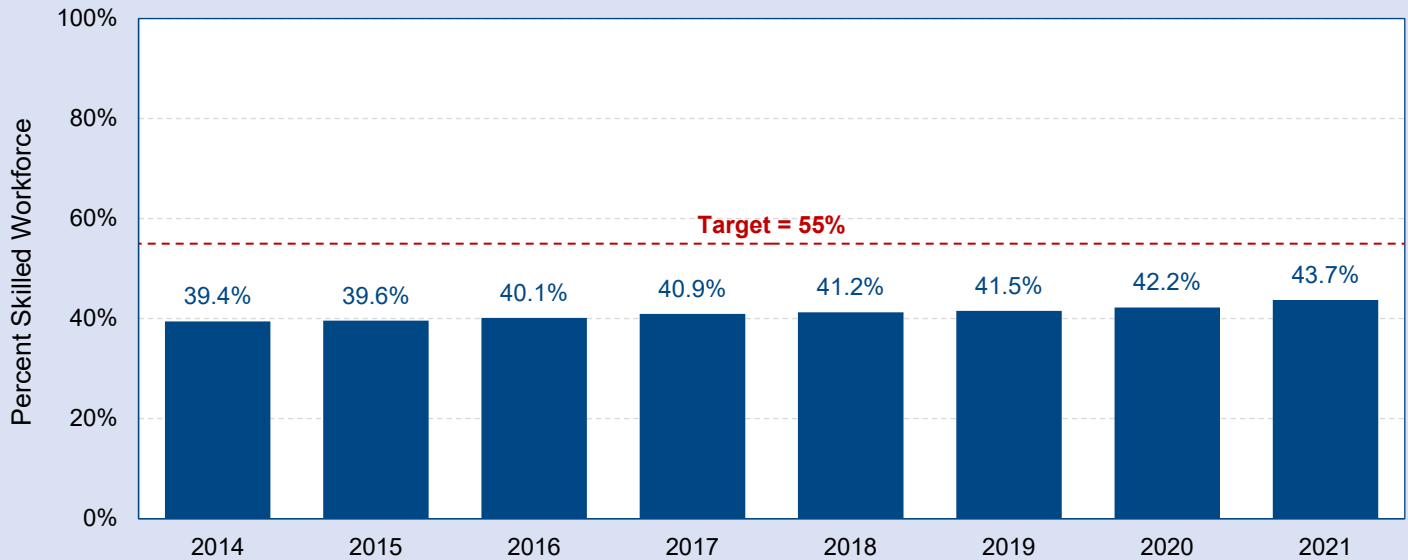
### Table 1-2: Population by Age

Area	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Charlotte County</b>							
<i>Working age population</i>	73,110	74,026	75,077	76,174	77,699	79,563	80,051
<i>Percent of total population</i>	44.1%	43.6%	43.3%	43.0%	42.9%	42.8%	43.3%
<i>Retirement age population</i>	61,100	63,824	66,342	69,046	71,735	74,548	73,664
<i>Percent of total population</i>	36.9%	37.6%	38.3%	39.0%	39.6%	40.1%	39.9%
<b>Collier County</b>							
<i>Working age population</i>	156,092	157,747	160,715	162,431	164,923	167,591	165,587
<i>Percent of total population</i>	45.8%	45.3%	45.0%	44.6%	44.4%	44.2%	44.4%
<i>Retirement age population</i>	98,086	103,042	107,599	112,279	117,197	122,024	119,479
<i>Percent of total population</i>	28.8%	29.6%	30.2%	30.9%	31.6%	32.2%	32.0%
<b>Glades County</b>							
<i>Working age population</i>	6,607	6,479	6,579	6,593	6,574	6,706	6,372
<i>Percent of total population</i>	49.8%	48.3%	49.9%	49.3%	48.6%	48.7%	52.3%
<i>Retirement age population</i>	3,312	3,475	3,315	3,463	3,638	3,885	3,315
<i>Percent of total population</i>	25.0%	25.9%	25.1%	25.9%	26.9%	28.2%	27.2%
<b>Hendry County</b>							
<i>Working age population</i>	19,213	18,994	19,278	19,998	20,326	21,039	19,768
<i>Percent of total population</i>	50.1%	49.5%	49.3%	49.8%	49.9%	50.7%	50.1%
<i>Retirement age population</i>	4,702	4,894	5,119	5,287	5,345	5,601	5,303
<i>Percent of total population</i>	12.3%	12.8%	13.1%	13.2%	13.1%	13.5%	13.4%
<b>Lee County</b>							
<i>Working age population</i>	319,333	325,586	332,703	339,819	347,677	355,324	354,516
<i>Percent of total population</i>	48.1%	47.8%	47.5%	47.3%	47.1%	47.0%	47.1%
<i>Retirement age population</i>	170,046	179,332	188,866	198,022	207,169	215,942	213,650
<i>Percent of total population</i>	25.6%	26.3%	27.0%	27.6%	28.1%	28.5%	28.4%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>							
<i>Working age population</i>	<b>574,355</b>	<b>582,832</b>	<b>594,352</b>	<b>605,015</b>	<b>617,199</b>	<b>630,223</b>	<b>626,294</b>
<i>Percent of total population</i>	<b>47.0%</b>	<b>46.6%</b>	<b>46.3%</b>	<b>46.1%</b>	<b>45.9%</b>	<b>45.8%</b>	<b>46.0%</b>
<i>Retirement age population</i>	<b>337,246</b>	<b>354,567</b>	<b>371,241</b>	<b>388,097</b>	<b>405,084</b>	<b>422,000</b>	<b>415,411</b>
<i>Percent of total population</i>	<b>27.6%</b>	<b>28.4%</b>	<b>28.9%</b>	<b>29.6%</b>	<b>30.1%</b>	<b>30.6%</b>	<b>30.5%</b>
<b>Florida</b>							
<i>Working age population</i>	<b>10,173,214</b>	<b>10,296,062</b>	<b>10,469,177</b>	<b>10,622,351</b>	<b>10,760,317</b>	<b>10,907,414</b>	<b>11,002,325</b>
<i>Percent of total population</i>	<b>51.8%</b>	<b>51.6%</b>	<b>51.6%</b>	<b>51.6%</b>	<b>51.5%</b>	<b>51.4%</b>	<b>51.6%</b>
<i>Retirement age population</i>	<b>3,650,991</b>	<b>3,797,625</b>	<b>3,926,889</b>	<b>4,064,376</b>	<b>4,205,428</b>	<b>4,347,912</b>	<b>4,346,965</b>
<i>Percent of total population</i>	<b>18.6%</b>	<b>19.1%</b>	<b>19.4%</b>	<b>19.7%</b>	<b>20.1%</b>	<b>20.5%</b>	<b>20.4%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates, Table B01001: Sex by Age

**Chart 1-2: Skilled Workforce**

Southwest Florida



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates, IPUMS  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Skilled Workforce

Chart 1-2 and Table 1-3 depict the skilled workforce for Southwest Florida.<sup>1</sup> Approximately 43.7 percent of the total working age population in Southwest Florida was considered skilled labor in 2021.<sup>2</sup> The skilled workforce in Southwest Florida has grown each year since 2013, when only 39.0 percent of the total working age population was skilled. Collier County had the largest skilled workforce rate in the region, measured at 48.8 percent of total working age population. Lee County had the next highest rate (43.5 percent), followed by Charlotte County (40.9 percent). Hendry County and Glades County had rates of 24.0 and 20.5 percent, respectively.

All five Southwest Florida counties had a lower percentage of skilled workforce than the state of Florida (49.7 percent). The region and each individual county, as well as the state of Florida, also remain below the 55 percent goal set (see Chart 1-3).



For the first time since the 2013 baseline report, the working age population in Southwest Florida fell slightly year over year, from 630,223 in 2020 to 626,294 in 2021, a decrease of approximately 0.6 percent.

<sup>1</sup> See the Methodology for more information on how skilled workforce is calculated.

<sup>2</sup> Delays in census processing due to Covid-19 may have impacted estimates produced in the 2020 and 2021 ACS. The reader should exercise caution when comparing results to past years. See [Population Controls for the 2021 ACS](#) for more information.

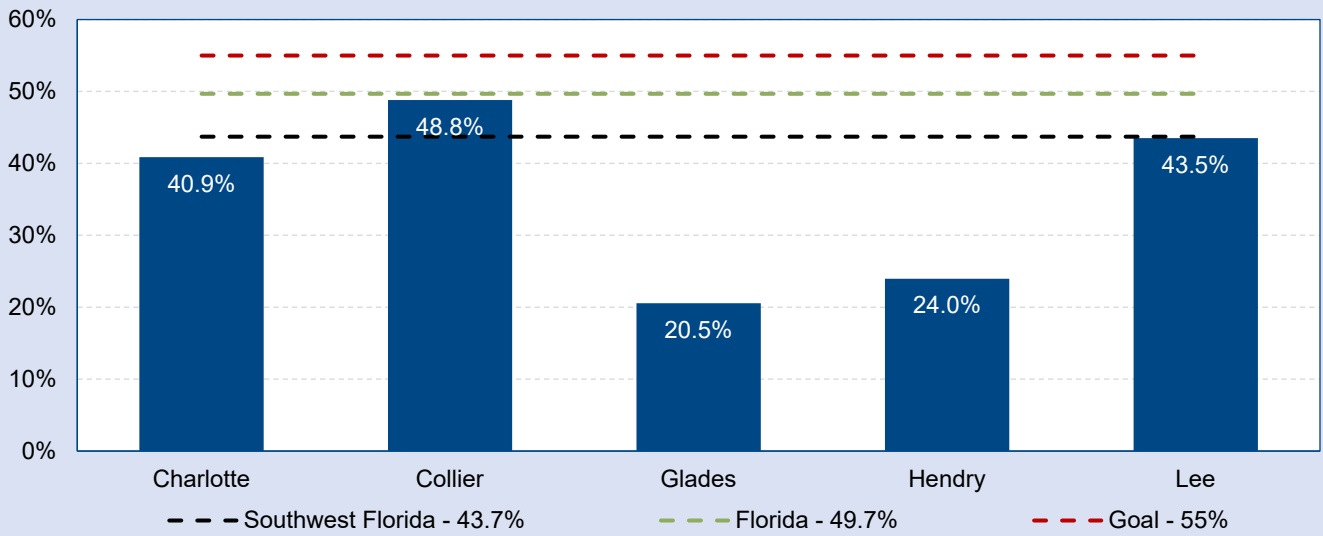
**Table 1-3: Skilled Workforce**

<b>Area</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Charlotte County	37.1%	36.1%	36.2%	36.8%	37.3%	37.1%	38.4%	40.9%
Collier County	42.2%	43.2%	43.3%	44.7%	45.1%	45.6%	46.9%	48.8%
Glades County	21.1%	22.0%	21.0%	22.6%	21.0%	20.0%	19.4%	20.5%
Hendry County	21.1%	20.1%	20.0%	20.0%	19.6%	21.6%	25.2%	24.0%
Lee County	40.1%	40.2%	41.0%	41.6%	42.0%	42.2%	42.3%	43.5%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>	<b>39.4%</b>	<b>39.6%</b>	<b>40.1%</b>	<b>40.9%</b>	<b>41.2%</b>	<b>41.5%</b>	<b>42.2%</b>	<b>43.7%</b>
<b>Florida</b>	<b>44.8%</b>	<b>45.5%</b>	<b>46.1%</b>	<b>46.8%</b>	<b>47.4%</b>	<b>48.0%</b>	<b>48.7%</b>	<b>49.7%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates, IPUMS

### Chart 1-3: Skilled Workforce by County

Southwest Florida  
2021



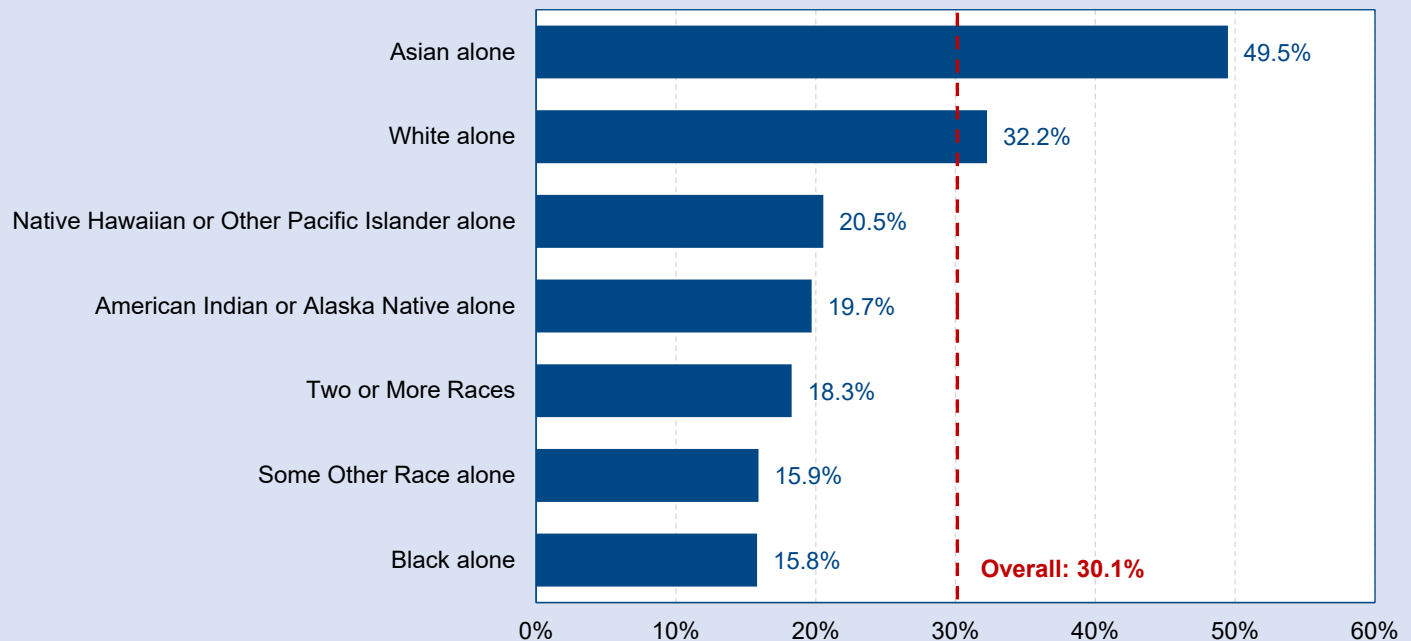
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates, IPUMS  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute



This observation suggests that FutureMakers Coalition and its network partners must not only maintain, but expand, their efforts to identify opportunities and to foster outcomes to achieve the goal of 55 percent skilled workforce goal in support of a diversified and resilient economy.

**Chart 1-4: Educational Attainment by Race**

Percent of Southwest Florida population 25 and over with at least a Bachelor's degree  
2021



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Educational Attainment by Race

Chart 1-4 and Table 1-4 shows the percent of the total population at least 25 years old that have obtained a bachelor's degree or higher, broken down by race.<sup>3</sup> In 2021, 32.2 percent of Southwest Florida residents who identified as White had at least a bachelor's degree, compared to 15.8 percent for residents who identified as Black. Residents who identified as Asian reported the greatest percentage of having at least a bachelor's degree at 49.5 percent.

It is important to point out this chart illustrates residents aged 25 years and older and does not solely represent the attainment of the skilled workforce (residents between the ages of 25 and 64 years old). Furthermore, it does not include those with high-quality credentials obtained in programs that require less than a bachelor's degree program.

<sup>3</sup> The U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey has two separate questions for race and ethnicity; for example, the respondent could have reported both Black as race and Hispanic or Latino as ethnicity. Therefore, the Hispanic and Latino data are presented separately in Chart 1-5 since that is how the U.S. Census Bureau collects the information.

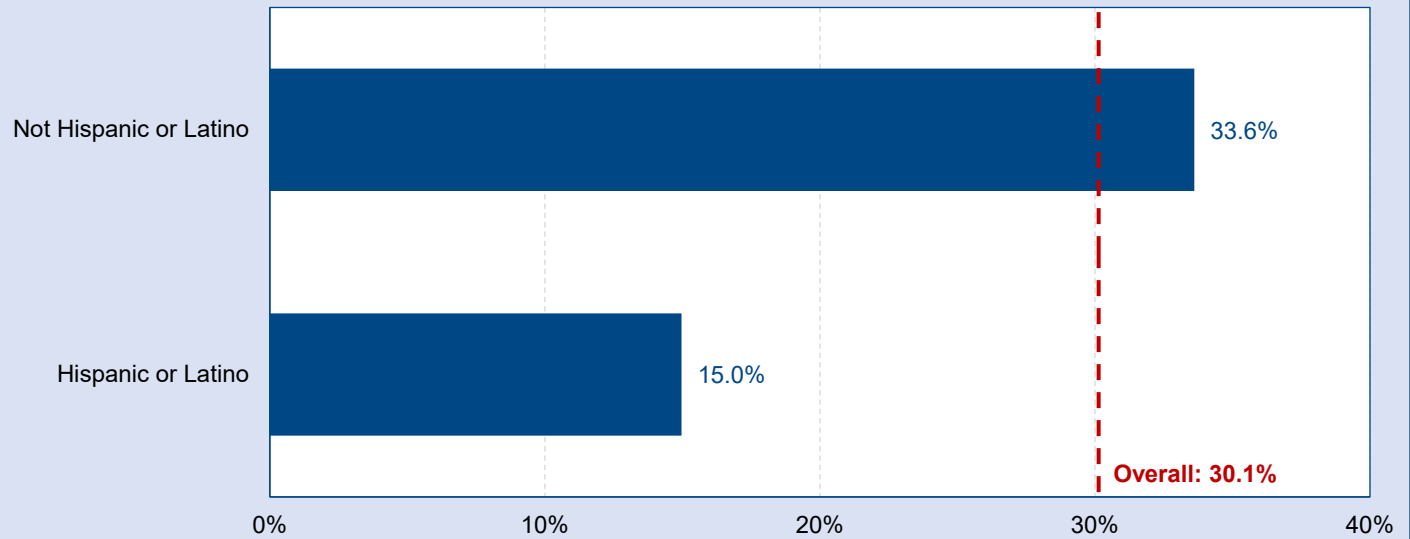
**Table 1-4: Educational Attainment by Race**Southwest Florida  
2021

<b>Race</b>	<b>Bachelor's degree or higher</b>	<b>Total population 25 and over</b>	<b>Percent with Bachelor's degree or higher</b>
White alone	278,478	863,519	32.2%
Black alone	10,097	63,908	15.8%
American Indian or Alaska Native alone	447	2,268	19.7%
Asian alone	7,987	16,142	49.5%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander alone	90	438	20.5%
Some Other Race alone	4,502	28,309	15.9%
Two or More Races	12,268	67,121	18.3%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>313,869</b>	<b>1,041,705</b>	<b>30.1%</b>

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates*

### Chart 1-5: Educational Attainment for Hispanic and Latino Population

Percent of Southwest Florida Population 25 and Over with at least a Bachelor's Degree  
2021



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year Estimates  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Educational Attainment for Hispanic and Latino Population

Like the data in Chart 1-4, Educational Attainment by Race, 15.0 percent of Southwest Florida residents who identified their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino reported at least a bachelor's degree in 2021, compared to 33.6 percent for residents who identified as Not Hispanic or Latino.



The data in Charts 1-4 and 1-5 suggest that the discrepancies in attaining at least a Bachelor's degree among the races and ethnicities represented by Southwest Florida's non-White residents may be the result of long-standing barriers that still exist for the populations with lower attainment.





# FutureMakers Coalition



Educational Outcomes






# FutureMakers Coalition

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## Aspiration and Preparation

Indicator	Measure	Measure	Trending
 <b>Kindergarten Readiness</b> Percent Pre-K students considered ready for kindergarten	SWFL	48.1%	N/A*
	Florida	49.2%	N/A*
 <b>Third Grade Reading</b> Percent third grade students with satisfactory reading scores	SWFL	47.0%	N/A*
	Florida	50.0%	N/A*
 <b>High School Graduation Rates</b> High school graduation rate	SWFL	85.8%	↓
	Florida	87.3%	↓

\*The assessment used to measure these indicators changed for the 2022-23 academic year to the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST), making comparisons to prior years difficult. See the accompanying sections for FAST data for these outcomes.

## Overview

Kindergarten readiness, the percent of pre-K students considered ready for kindergarten, was 48.1 percent in Fall 2022, 1.1 percentage points below the state. The third-grade reading proficiency rate in Southwest Florida was 47 percent in the 2022-23 academic year, down 3 percentage points from Florida. The Southwest Florida high school graduation rate was 85.8 percent during the 2021-22 academic year, down from the 88.0 percent recorded during the 2020-21 academic year.



Florida adopted a statewide Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring System known as the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) in the 2022-23 academic year. The FAST Star Early Literacy assessment now serves as the kindergarten readiness screener. As a result, the reader should exercise caution when drawing comparisons between results from Fall 2022 and results from prior years. See the accompanying sections for FAST data.

# FutureMakers in Action

All Aboard the EXCEL Bus!



The Excellent Career Exploration Lab (EXCEL) Bus, commanded by FutureMaker Kelly Thawley (Career Specialist, Career & Technical Education, School District of Lee County) continued its trek through Lee County during the 2022-23 school year. Between September 2022 and June 2023, **2,370** 5<sup>th</sup> grade students from **19** Lee County schools were able to explore a number of career options through a virtual learning experience. Each class spends roughly one hour on the bus exploring the role of self-awareness and self-reflection, likes versus dislikes, failure versus learning opportunities, the role of educational institutions, and possible career pathways. The thank-you note below from one of the students is just one of the many examples of how the EXCEL Bus is making career exploration fun!

Dear EXCEL career Bus teachers,  
Thank you for coming it was so much fun to see you for the first time ever you both are so nice. The things I learned from the career bus was I can be anything when I get older and I can be a police. I liked the police station the most because I saw the K9 dogs they work with. It gave me the idea to be a police woman the vr headset was cool I like the police dog videos the most.  
Sincerely Richelle ☺

The EXCEL Bus is a converted school bus that houses five interactive kiosks highlighting a different career path and bringing early career exploration directly to Lee County 5th graders. Kelly earned a Commercial Driver's License and hit the road in the beginning in the fall of 2021. Way to go, Kelly!

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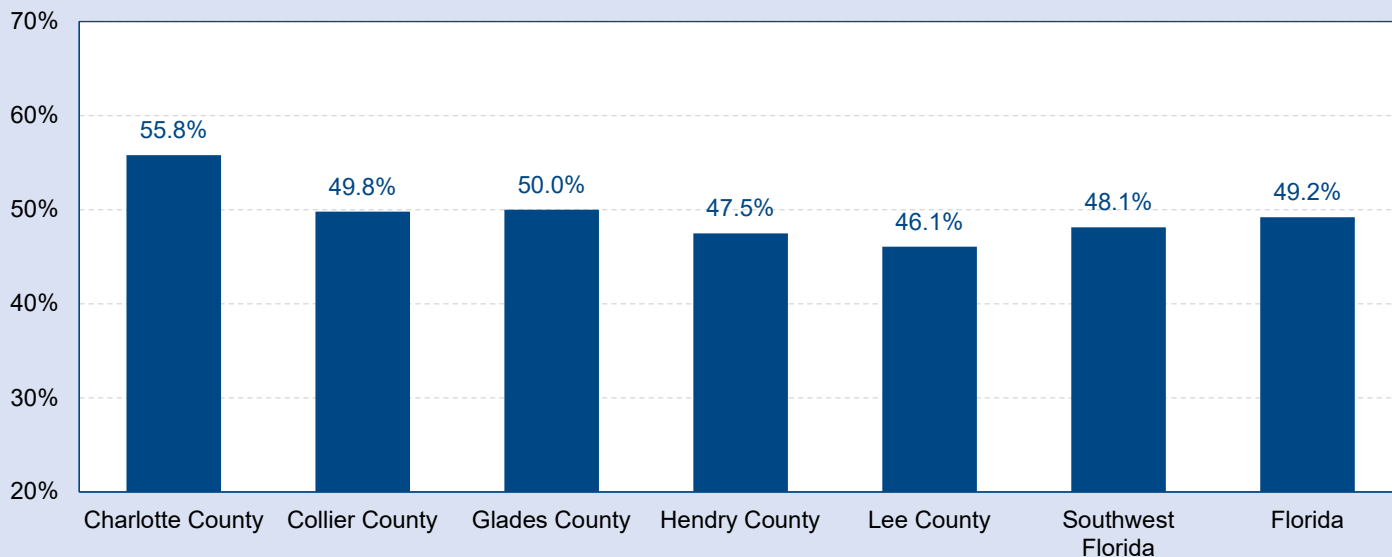
For more information on the program, visit the Florida College Access Network website:

<https://floridacollegeaccess.org/local-college-access-networks/expanding-career-exploration-in-southwest-florida/>

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### Chart 2-1: Kindergarten Readiness

Percent scoring 690+ on FAST Star Early Literacy assessment



Source: Florida Department of Education

Note: Hendry County results do not include information from Digital Academy of Florida.

Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Kindergarten Readiness

Chart 2-1 and Table 2-1 show kindergarten readiness for Southwest Florida, along with each of the five counties.<sup>4</sup> Kindergarten readiness is measured through the FAST Star Early Literacy assessment, a screener exam administered to kindergarten students during the first 30 days of the school year. Students that score a 690 or higher are considered “ready for kindergarten”.

In Fall 2022, 48.1 percent of total kindergarten students in Southwest Florida were considered ready for kindergarten. This percentage was below the state of Florida, measured at 49.2 percent. Charlotte County had the highest percentage in Fall 2022, with a kindergarten readiness rate of 55.8 percent. Glades County was next highest at 50.0 percent, followed by Collier County (49.8 percent), Hendry County (47.5 percent), and Lee County (46.1 percent).

<sup>4</sup> Florida adopted a statewide Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring System known as the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) in the 2022-23 academic year. The FAST Star Early Literacy assessment now serves as the kindergarten readiness screener. As a result, the reader should exercise caution when drawing comparisons between results from Fall 2022 and results from prior years.

**Table 2-1: Kindergarten Readiness**

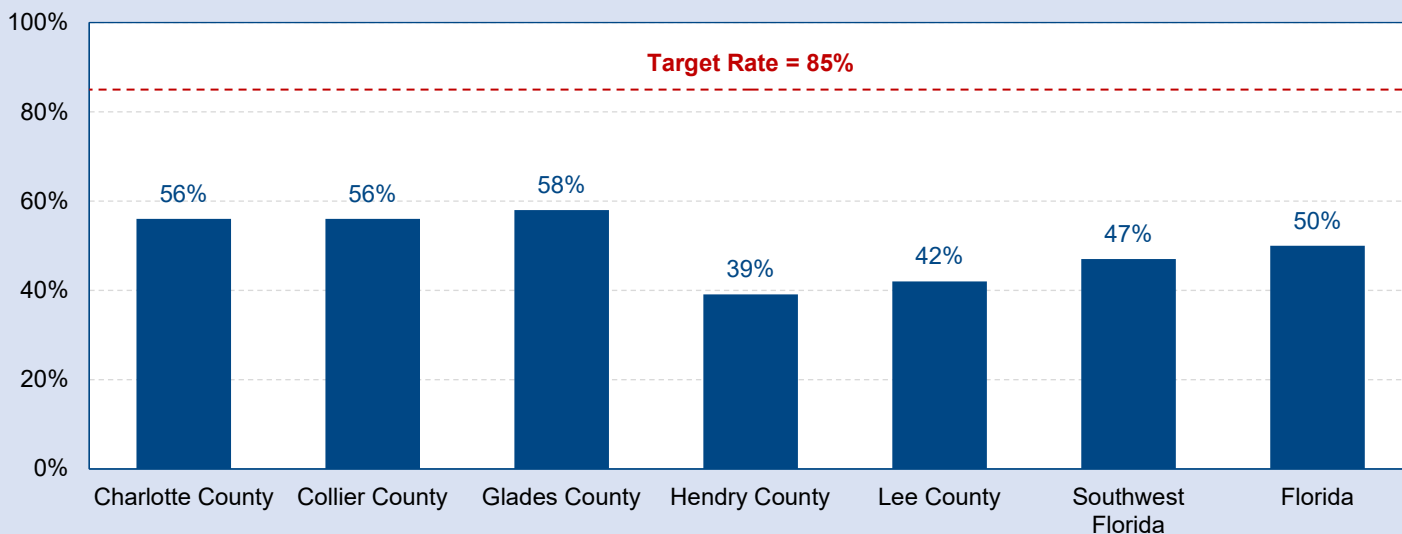
<b>Area</b>	<b>Number "ready for kindergarten"</b>	<b>Number of test takers</b>	<b>Percent "ready for kindergarten"</b>
Charlotte County	597	1,070	55.8%
Collier County	1,536	3,085	49.8%
Glades County	67	134	50.0%
Hendry County	226	476	47.5%
Lee County	2,958	6,422	46.1%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>	<b>5,384</b>	<b>11,187</b>	<b>48.1%</b>
<b>Florida</b>	<b>92,755</b>	<b>188,511</b>	<b>49.2%</b>

Source: Florida Department of Education

Note: Hendry County data does not include information from Digital Academy of Florida.

### Chart 2-2: Third Grade Reading Proficiency

Percent scoring 3 or above  
2022-23 Academic Year



Source: Florida Department of Education

Note: Hendry County results do not include information from Digital Academy of Florida.

Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Third Grade Reading Proficiency

Chart 2-2 and Table 2-2 show the third grade reading proficiency<sup>5</sup> (students scoring at least a 3 on the FAST PM3 exam) for Southwest Florida, along with each of the five counties. Southwest Florida had a third grade reading proficiency rate of 47 percent during the 2022-23 academic year. Third grade reading proficiency remains well below the 85 percent target rate.

None of the five Southwest Florida counties achieved the 85 percent target rate. Glades County had the highest rate of third grade reading proficiency at 58 percent during the 2022-23 academic year. Charlotte and Collier counties had the next highest reading proficiency (56 percent), followed by Lee County (42 percent), and Hendry County (39 percent).

**Note:** Southwest Florida third grade reading proficiency information by race and gender was not available for the 2022-23 academic year at the time of publication.

<sup>5</sup> Florida adopted a statewide Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring System known as the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) in the 2022-23 academic year. Results are based on provisional achievement level cuts that are linked to each assessment's respective 2021-2022 reporting scale, as required by s. [1008.34\(7\)\(d\)](#), Florida Statutes. Therefore, comparisons should not be made between the 2023 data and previous years' data.

**Table 2-2: Third Grade Reading Proficiency**

2022-23 Academic Year

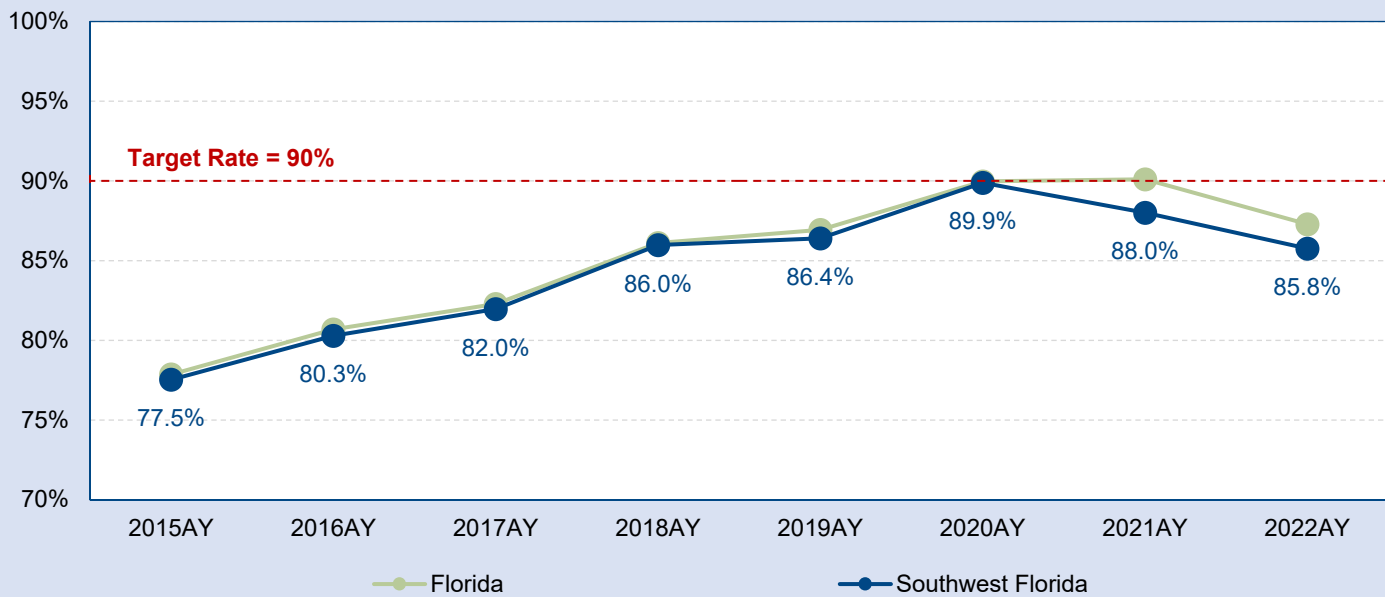
Area	Number of Students	Mean Scale Score	Percentage in Level 3 or Above
Charlotte County	1,231	301	56%
Collier County	3,527	301	56%
Glades County	181	302	58%
Hendry County	529	292	39%
Lee County	8,089	293	42%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>	<b>13,557</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>47%</b>
<b>Florida</b>	<b>221,504</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>50%</b>

Source: Florida Department of Education

Note: Hendry County information does not include information from Digital Academy of Florida.



**Chart 2-3: High School Graduation Rate**



Source: Florida Department of Education, Know Your Data Advanced Reports  
 Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## High School Graduation Rate

Chart 2-3 and Table 2-3 show the high school graduation rates for Southwest Florida, along with each of the five counties. Southwest Florida had a high school graduation rate of 85.8 percent during the 2021-22 academic year, down 2.2 percentage points from the prior academic year. The high school graduation rate for Southwest Florida was below the state, measured at 87.3 percent during the 2021-22 academic year.

Collier County (92.6 percent) was the only county to exceed the 90 percent target graduation rate during the 2021-22 academic year. Glades County had the next highest graduation rate (89.2 percent), followed by Charlotte County (87.9 percent), Hendry County (83.6 percent) and Lee County (82.5 percent).

**Table 2-3: High School Graduation Rate**

Area	2015AY	2016AY	2017AY	2018AY	2019AY	2020AY	2021AY	2022AY
<b>Charlotte County</b>								
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	1,040	1,091	1,111	1,273	1,188	1,272	1,248	1,206
<i>Cohort students</i>	1,377	1,410	1,371	1,453	1,375	1,407	1,373	1,372
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	75.5%	77.4%	81.0%	87.6%	86.4%	90.4%	90.9%	87.9%
<b>Collier County</b>								
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	2,600	2,794	2,995	3,101	3,312	3,501	3,461	3,287
<i>Cohort students</i>	3,083	3,223	3,394	3,376	3,605	3,796	3,737	3,592
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	84.3%	86.7%	88.2%	91.9%	91.9%	92.2%	92.6%	91.5%
<b>Glades County</b>								
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	46	47	44	57	74	69	51	58
<i>Cohort students</i>	57	60	54	61	81	77	65	65
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	80.7%	78.3%	81.5%	93.4%	91.4%	89.6%	78.5%	89.2%
<b>Hendry County</b>								
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	398	385	423	428	510	519	519	506
<i>Cohort students</i>	518	493	501	511	609	574	588	605
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	76.8%	78.1%	84.4%	83.8%	83.7%	90.4%	88.3%	83.6%
<b>Lee County</b>								
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	4,825	4,794	5,084	5,588	5,778	6,123	6,083	5,661
<i>Cohort students</i>	6,455	6,161	6,461	6,749	6,902	6,922	7,147	6,864
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	74.7%	77.8%	78.7%	82.8%	83.7%	88.5%	85.1%	82.5%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>								
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	<b>8,909</b>	<b>9,111</b>	<b>9,657</b>	<b>10,447</b>	<b>10,862</b>	<b>11,484</b>	<b>11,362</b>	<b>10,718</b>
<i>Cohort students</i>	<b>11,490</b>	<b>11,347</b>	<b>11,781</b>	<b>12,150</b>	<b>12,572</b>	<b>12,776</b>	<b>12,910</b>	<b>12,498</b>
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	<b>77.5%</b>	<b>80.3%</b>	<b>82.0%</b>	<b>86.0%</b>	<b>86.4%</b>	<b>89.9%</b>	<b>88.0%</b>	<b>85.8%</b>
<b>Florida</b>								
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	<b>155,714</b>	<b>159,672</b>	<b>168,042</b>	<b>180,411</b>	<b>184,509</b>	<b>188,088</b>	<b>185,758</b>	<b>180,228</b>
<i>Cohort students</i>	<b>199,971</b>	<b>197,886</b>	<b>204,212</b>	<b>209,520</b>	<b>212,240</b>	<b>209,041</b>	<b>206,154</b>	<b>206,484</b>
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	<b>77.9%</b>	<b>80.7%</b>	<b>82.3%</b>	<b>86.1%</b>	<b>86.9%</b>	<b>90.0%</b>	<b>90.1%</b>	<b>87.3%</b>

Source: Florida Department of Education, Know Your Data Advanced Reports

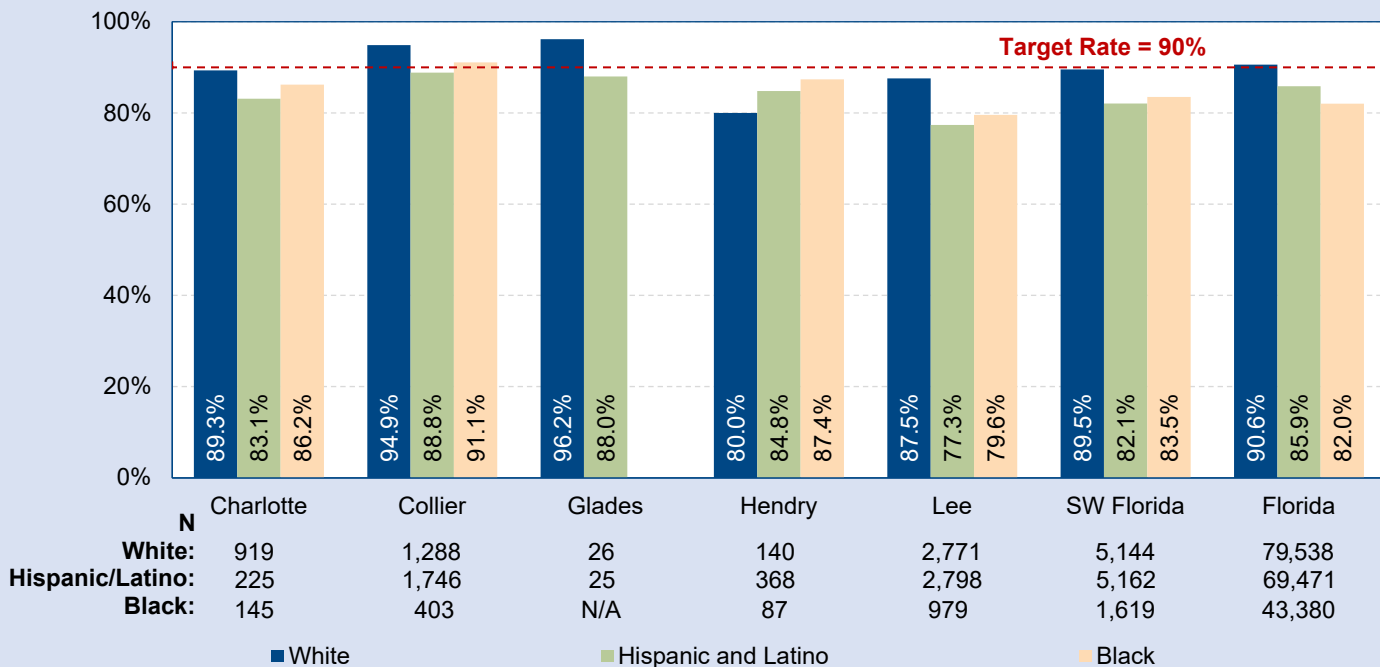
Note: Hendry County data does not include any information from Digital Academy of Florida.



High school graduation rates in Southwest Florida showed a second straight year of decline, from a high of 89.9 percent in AY2020 to 85.8 percent in AY2022. This trend was consistent across counties, except for Glades County, which observed an increase in high school graduation rate, from 78.5 percent in 2021AY to 89.2 percent in 2022AY.

**Chart 2-4: High School Graduation Rate by Race/Ethnicity**

2021-22 Academic Year



Source: Florida Department of Education, Know Your Data Advanced Reports  
 Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## High School Graduation Rate by Race/Ethnicity

Chart 2-4 and Table 2-4 shows high school graduation rates by race and ethnicity for the 2021-22 academic year. Southwest Florida students who identified as White had a high school graduation rate of 89.5 percent during the 2021-22 academic year, slightly below the target rate of 90 percent. Meanwhile students who identified as Black had a high school graduation rate of 83.5 percent, while students who identified as Hispanic and Latino had a high school graduation rate of 82.1 percent, both below the 90 percent target rate. For Florida, White students had a graduation rate (90.6 percent) slightly above the 90 percent target, while the graduation rates for Hispanic and Latino students (85.9 percent) and Black students (82.0 percent) were lower than the 90 percent target rate.



It is important to note that Hispanic and Latino and Black students make up more than half (59.3 percent) of the Southwest Florida student population. Improving high school graduation rates among students in these two demographic groups may support FutureMakers' 55 percent goal.

**Table 2-4: High School Graduation Rate by Race/Ethnicity**

2021-22 Academic Year

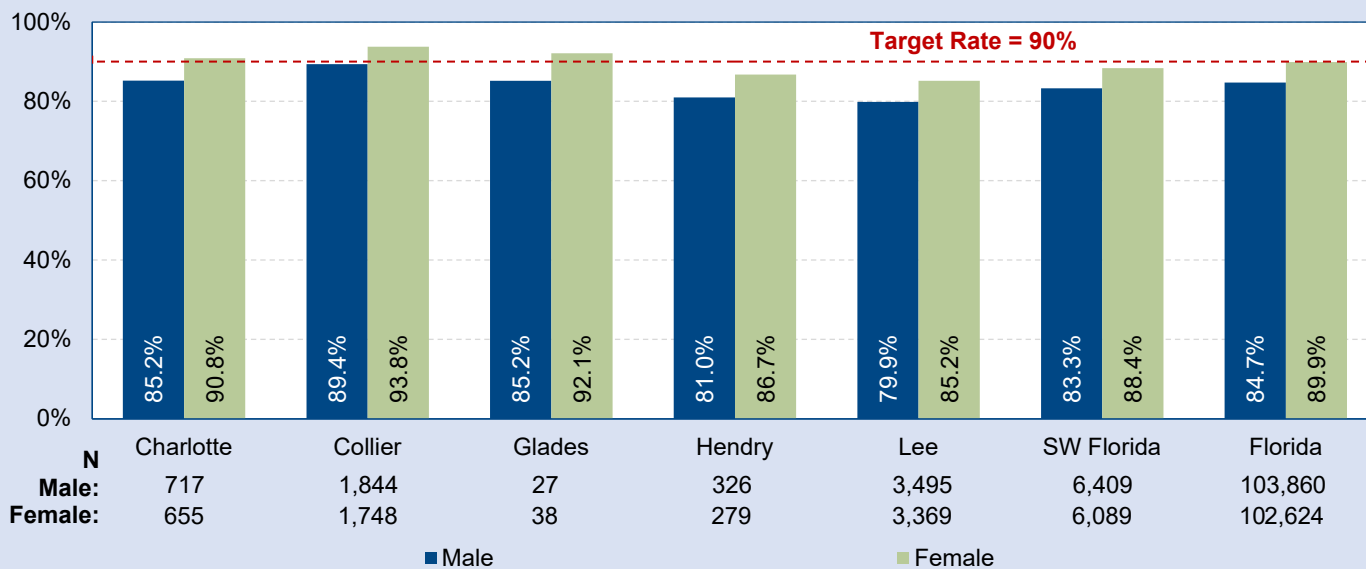
<b>Area</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Hispanic and Latino</b>	<b>Black</b>
<b>Charlotte County</b>			
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	821	187	125
<i>Cohort students</i>	919	225	145
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	89.3%	83.1%	86.2%
<b>Collier County</b>			
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	1,222	1,551	367
<i>Cohort students</i>	1,288	1,746	403
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	94.9%	88.8%	91.1%
<b>Glades County</b>			
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	25	22	N/A
<i>Cohort students</i>	26	25	N/A
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	96.2%	88.0%	N/A
<b>Hendry County</b>			
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	112	312	76
<i>Cohort students</i>	140	368	87
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	80.0%	84.8%	87.4%
<b>Lee County</b>			
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	2,426	2,164	779
<i>Cohort students</i>	2,771	2,798	979
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	87.5%	77.3%	79.6%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>			
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	<b>4,606</b>	<b>4,236</b>	<b>1,352</b>
<i>Cohort students</i>	<b>5,144</b>	<b>5,162</b>	<b>1,619</b>
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	<b>89.5%</b>	<b>82.1%</b>	<b>83.5%</b>
<b>Florida</b>			
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	<b>72,056</b>	<b>59,643</b>	<b>35,584</b>
<i>Cohort students</i>	<b>79,538</b>	<b>69,471</b>	<b>43,380</b>
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	<b>90.6%</b>	<b>85.9%</b>	<b>82.0%</b>

Source: Florida Department of Education, Know Your Data Advanced Reports

Note: N/A denotes that data was not available. Hendry County data does not include any information from Digital Academy of Florida.

### Chart 2-5: High School Graduation Rate by Gender

2021-22 Academic Year



Source: Florida Department of Education, Know Your Data Advanced Reports  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## High School Graduation Rate by Gender

Chart 2-5 and Table 2-5 shows high school graduation rate by gender for the 2021-22 academic year. Females in Southwest Florida had a high school graduation rate of 88.4 percent during the 2021-22 academic year, below the target rate of 90 percent. Meanwhile, male students had a high school graduation rate of 83.3 percent. Rates for both females and males were below the state of Florida, measured at 89.9 percent and 84.7 percent, respectively.

Females had a higher graduation rate than males in all five Southwest Florida counties as well. Collier County females had the highest graduation rate, measured at 93.8 percent, followed by Glades County (92.1 percent), Charlotte County (90.8 percent), Hendry County (86.7 percent) and Lee County (85.2 percent).



Male students continue to underachieve in high school graduation rate compared to female students. It would be interesting to further break down the gender data by race and ethnicity to ascertain whether a specific demographic of male students is driving this trend.

**Table 2-5: High School Graduation Rate by Gender**

2021-22 Academic Year

<b>Area</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Charlotte County		
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	611	595
<i>Cohort students</i>	717	655
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	85.2%	90.8%
Collier County		
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	1,648	1,639
<i>Cohort students</i>	1,844	1,748
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	89.4%	93.8%
Glades County		
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	23	35
<i>Cohort students</i>	27	38
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	85.2%	92.1%
Hendry County		
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	264	242
<i>Cohort students</i>	326	279
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	81.0%	86.7%
Lee County		
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	2,791	2,870
<i>Cohort students</i>	3,495	3,369
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	79.9%	85.2%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>		
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	<b>5,337</b>	<b>5,381</b>
<i>Cohort students</i>	<b>6,409</b>	<b>6,089</b>
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	<b>83.3%</b>	<b>88.4%</b>
<b>Florida</b>		
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	<b>87,994</b>	<b>92,234</b>
<i>Cohort students</i>	<b>103,860</b>	<b>102,624</b>
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	<b>84.7%</b>	<b>89.9%</b>

Source: Florida Department of Education, Know Your Data Advanced Reports

Note: N/A denotes that data was not available. Hendry County data does not include any information from Digital Academy of Florida.






# Future Makers Coalition

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## Access and Entry

Indicator	Measure	Trending	
 <b>Fall Enrollment</b> Postsecondary fall enrollment	SWFL	37,603	↑
	Florida	1,054,977	↓
 <b>Technical Education</b> Technical college fall enrollment	SWFL	4,786	↑
	Florida	94,856	↓
 <b>FASFA Completion<sup>6</sup></b> FAFSA completion rate	SWFL	32.8%	↓
	Florida	34.8%	↓

<sup>6</sup> FAFSA Completion rates were only available through April 14th, 2023 this year.

## Overview

Southwest Florida postsecondary fall enrollment and technical college fall enrollment improved in the fall of 2021 compared to the fall of 2020, although 2021 post-secondary fall enrollment still has not returned to its pre-COVID level in 2019. FAFSA completion rate in Southwest Florida (which was only available through April 14th, 2023) continues its downward trend, decreasing to 32.8 percent in 2023AY from 38.8 percent in 2022AY. It should be noted that postsecondary fall enrollment, technical college fall enrollment, and FASFA completion rate all decreased in the state of Florida.



As noted, FASFA completion continued its downward trend in 2023AY. The trends in Southwest Florida reflect a national trend of decreasing college enrollment as students are perhaps questioning the value of a post-secondary degree and foregoing college (and the related expenses) for the shorter-term gains in wages even among workers without a college degree.

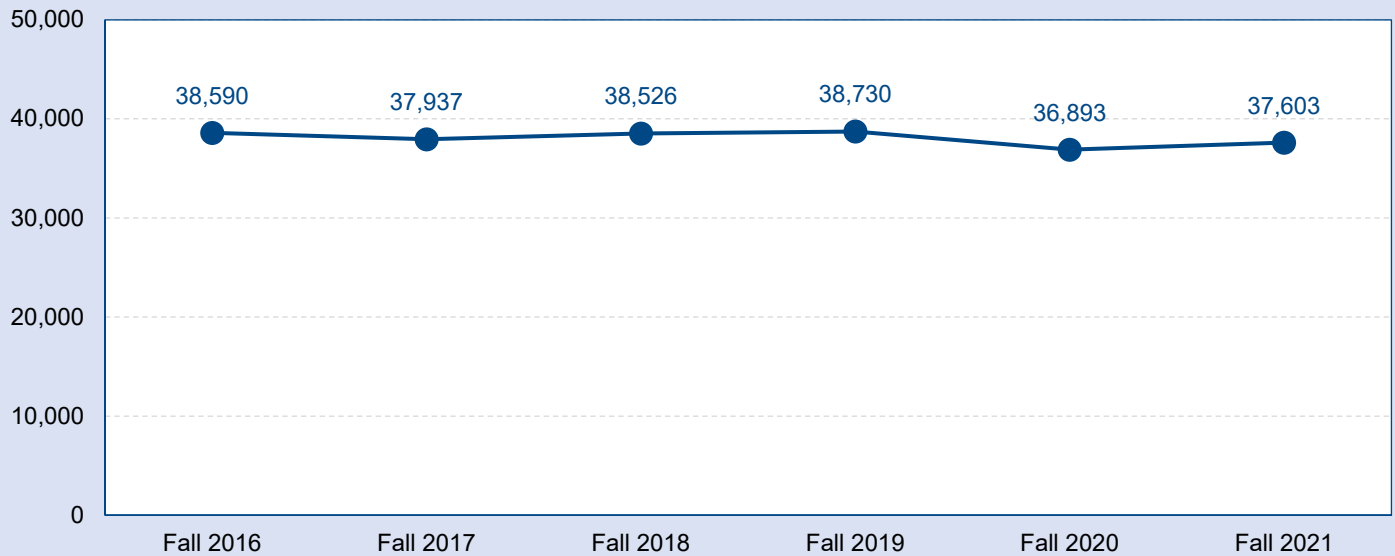


Data on postsecondary fall enrollment and technical college fall enrollment by race and ethnicity for Southwest Florida are also provided in this report. Between 2013 and 2023 in general, the region's Black and Hispanic and Latino populations represent a growing proportion of students enrolling in postsecondary training and degree programs, while the number of students identifying as White decreased. As the region's population changes, postsecondary education institutions will need to co-create policies and practices that ensure all students are achieving key education outcomes in order to achieve FutureMakers Coalition's 55 percent goal of skilled working age adults with college degrees, workforce certificates, industry certifications, and other high-quality credentials.



**Chart 2-6: Postsecondary Fall Enrollment**

Southwest Florida



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Postsecondary Fall Enrollment

Postsecondary fall enrollment data was obtained from the National Center for Education Statistics website.<sup>7</sup> Southwest Florida had a total postsecondary fall enrollment of 37,603 students in Fall 2021, up 1.9 percent from the previous fall. Fall enrollment for the region exceeded both the state (1.7 percent decrease) and the nation (1.6 percent decrease), both which decreased from Fall 2020 to Fall 2021.

**Table 2-6: Postsecondary Fall Enrollment**

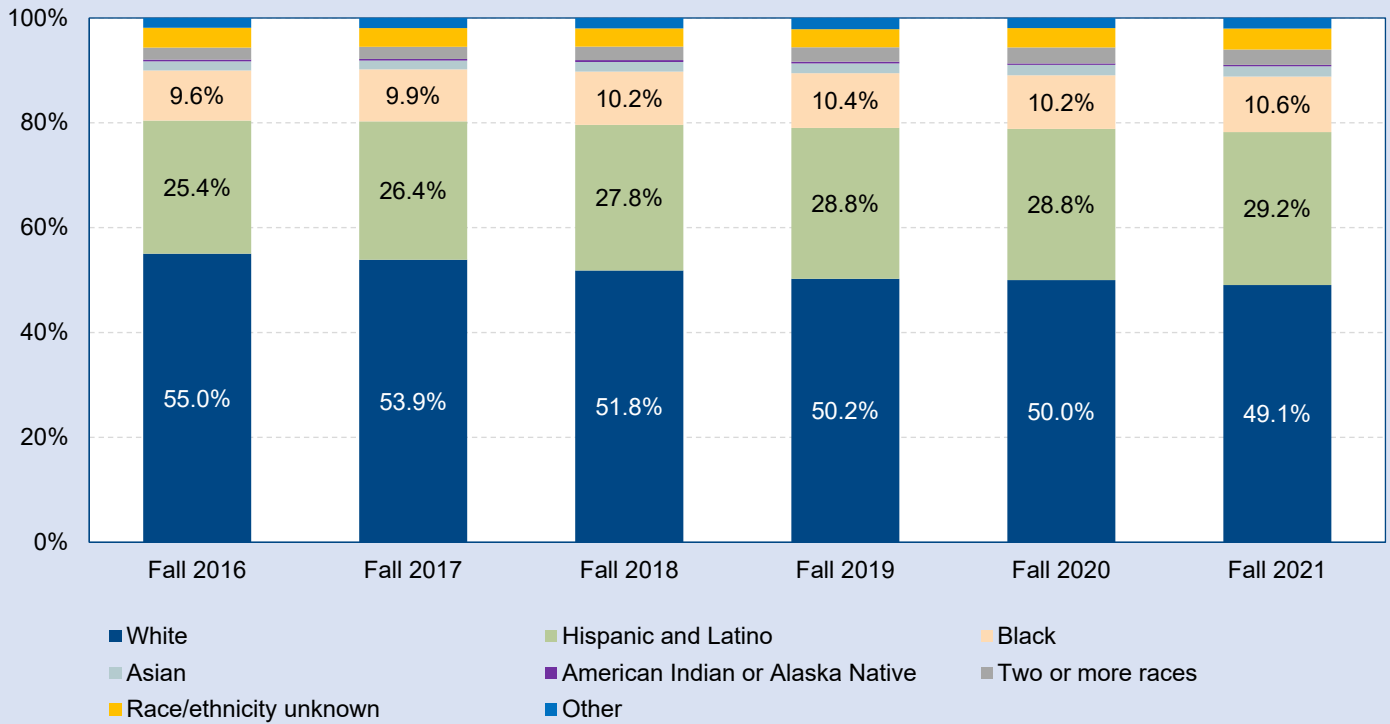
Area	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
Southwest Florida						
Fall enrollment	38,590	37,937	38,526	38,730	36,893	37,603
Percent change	--	-1.7%	1.6%	0.5%	-4.7%	1.9%
Florida						
Fall enrollment	1,128,019	1,125,301	1,116,833	1,108,594	1,073,607	1,054,977
Percent change	--	-0.2%	-0.8%	-0.7%	-3.2%	-1.7%
United States						
Fall enrollment	20,276,420	20,185,233	20,058,711	20,043,436	19,455,993	19,140,689
Percent change	--	-0.4%	-0.6%	-0.1%	-2.9%	-1.6%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

<sup>7</sup> See the Methodology for more information on how postsecondary institutes in Southwest Florida were identified.

### Chart 2-7: Postsecondary Fall Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Southwest Florida



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System  
 Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Postsecondary Fall Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Chart 2-7 and Table 2-7 display postsecondary fall enrollment by race and ethnicity for Southwest Florida. The proportion of students making up postsecondary fall enrollment who identify as White has steadily declined from 55.0 percent in Fall 2016 to 49.1 percent in Fall 2021, as the proportions of students identifying as Black or Hispanic and Latino enrolling in postsecondary education have increased during this same period. Of note, postsecondary fall enrollment among Hispanic and Latino students increased from 25.4 percent in Fall 2016 to 29.2 percent in Fall 2021. Smaller increases in postsecondary fall enrollment were seen among students who identified as two or more races and race/ethnicity unknown. Postsecondary fall enrollment has remained fairly constant for the region’s students identifying as Black, hovering around 10 percent between Fall 2016 to Fall 2021.



As the region’s population grows and our demographics change, postsecondary education institutions will need to adapt to accommodate the increased demand and rewrite policies and procedures that may be unintentionally creating barriers for some groups of students to achieve the 55 percent goal of skilled working age adults with college degrees, workforce certificates, industry certifications, and other high-quality credentials.

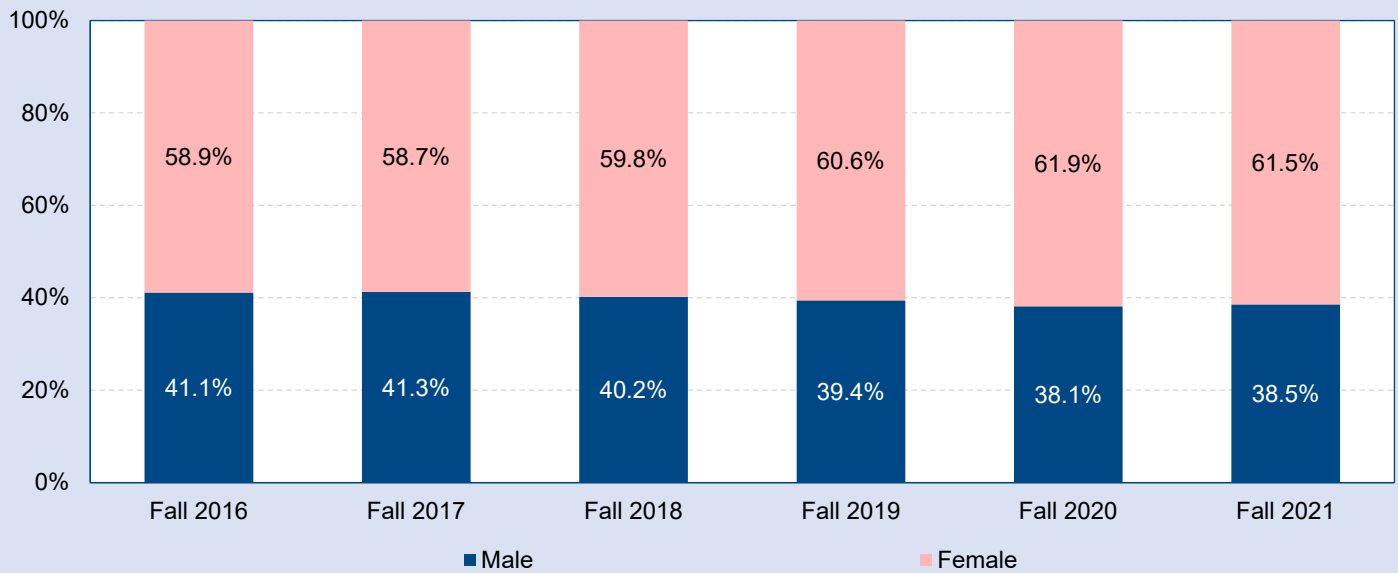
**Table 2-7: Postsecondary Fall Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity**

Southwest Florida						
Race/Ethnicity	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
White						
<i>Number of students</i>	21,241	20,438	19,974	19,460	18,446	18,453
<i>Percent of total</i>	55.0%	53.9%	51.8%	50.2%	50.0%	49.1%
Hispanic and Latino						
<i>Number of students</i>	9,791	10,015	10,692	11,150	10,641	10,969
<i>Percent of total</i>	25.4%	26.4%	27.8%	28.8%	28.8%	29.2%
Black or African American						
<i>Number of students</i>	3,688	3,760	3,921	4,040	3,775	3,976
<i>Percent of total</i>	9.6%	9.9%	10.2%	10.4%	10.2%	10.6%
Asian						
<i>Number of students</i>	680	645	701	718	732	733
<i>Percent of total</i>	1.8%	1.7%	1.8%	1.9%	2.0%	1.9%
American Indian or Alaska Native						
<i>Number of students</i>	120	107	141	135	97	106
<i>Percent of total</i>	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander						
<i>Number of students</i>	62	62	49	64	73	69
<i>Percent of total</i>	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
Two or more races						
<i>Number of students</i>	891	887	987	1,059	1,128	1,100
<i>Percent of total</i>	2.3%	2.3%	2.6%	2.7%	3.1%	2.9%
Race/ethnicity unknown						
<i>Number of students</i>	1,459	1,349	1,341	1,338	1,361	1,502
<i>Percent of total</i>	3.8%	3.6%	3.5%	3.5%	3.7%	4.0%
Nonresident alien						
<i>Number of students</i>	658	674	720	766	640	695
<i>Percent of total</i>	1.7%	1.8%	1.9%	2.0%	1.7%	1.8%
<b>Total Fall Enrollment</b>	<b>38,590</b>	<b>37,937</b>	<b>38,526</b>	<b>38,730</b>	<b>36,893</b>	<b>37,603</b>

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

**Chart 2-8: Postsecondary Fall Enrollment by Gender**

Southwest Florida



Source: National Center for Education Statistics  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Postsecondary Fall Enrollment by Gender

Chart 2-8 and Table 2-8 show postsecondary fall enrollment by gender for Southwest Florida. The region had 23,111 female students enrolled into a postsecondary institute during Fall 2021, representing 61.5 percent of total fall enrollment. The region also had 14,492 male students enrolled in Fall 2021, accounting for 38.5 percent of total fall enrollment during that year. The percent of male students enrolled in a postsecondary institution has declined 8.7 percentage points since Fall 2016.

**Table 2-8: Postsecondary Fall Enrollment by Gender**

Southwest Florida

Gender	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
<b>Male</b>						
Number of students	15,873	15,651	15,482	15,271	14,068	14,492
Percent of total	41.1%	41.3%	40.2%	39.4%	38.1%	38.5%
<b>Female</b>						
Number of students	22,717	22,286	23,044	23,459	22,825	23,111
Percent of total	58.9%	58.7%	59.8%	60.6%	61.9%	61.5%
<b>Total Fall Enrollment</b>	<b>38,590</b>	<b>37,937</b>	<b>38,526</b>	<b>38,730</b>	<b>36,893</b>	<b>37,603</b>

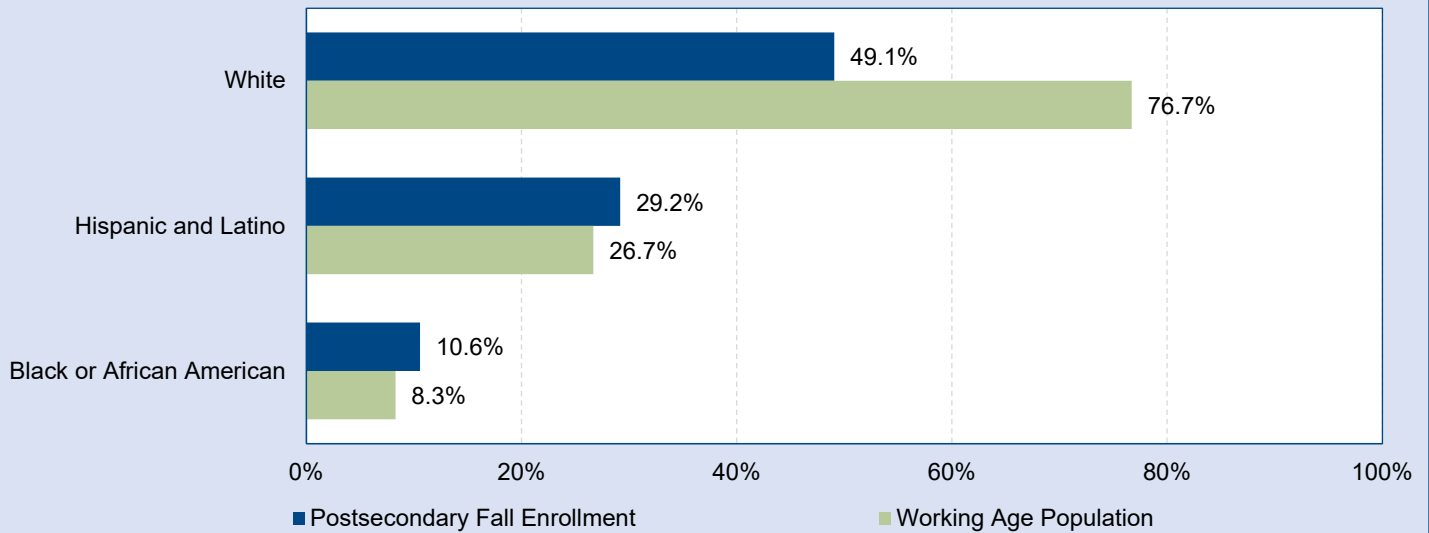
Source: National Center for Education Statistics



Perhaps as predicted by the trends over time in high school graduation rate by gender data, postsecondary fall enrollment for male students has lagged behind fall enrollment for female students during this time period.

### Chart 2-9: Postsecondary Enrollment vs. Working Age Population

Southwest Florida  
2021



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Postsecondary Fall Enrollment vs. Working Age Population by Race/Ethnicity

Chart 2-9 and Table 2-9 compare postsecondary enrollment and working-age population distributions by race and ethnicity in 2021. While working-age residents who identified as White encompassed 76.7 percent of the population in Southwest Florida, they accounted for slightly less than half of fall enrollment in 2021. Hispanic and Latino students represented 29.2 percent of total postsecondary fall enrollment, compared to 26.7 percent of the working age population. The region had a Black or African American working age population of 8.3 percent in 2020, slightly below 10.6 percent fall enrollment during that year.

### Table 2-9: Postsecondary Enrollment vs. Working Age Population

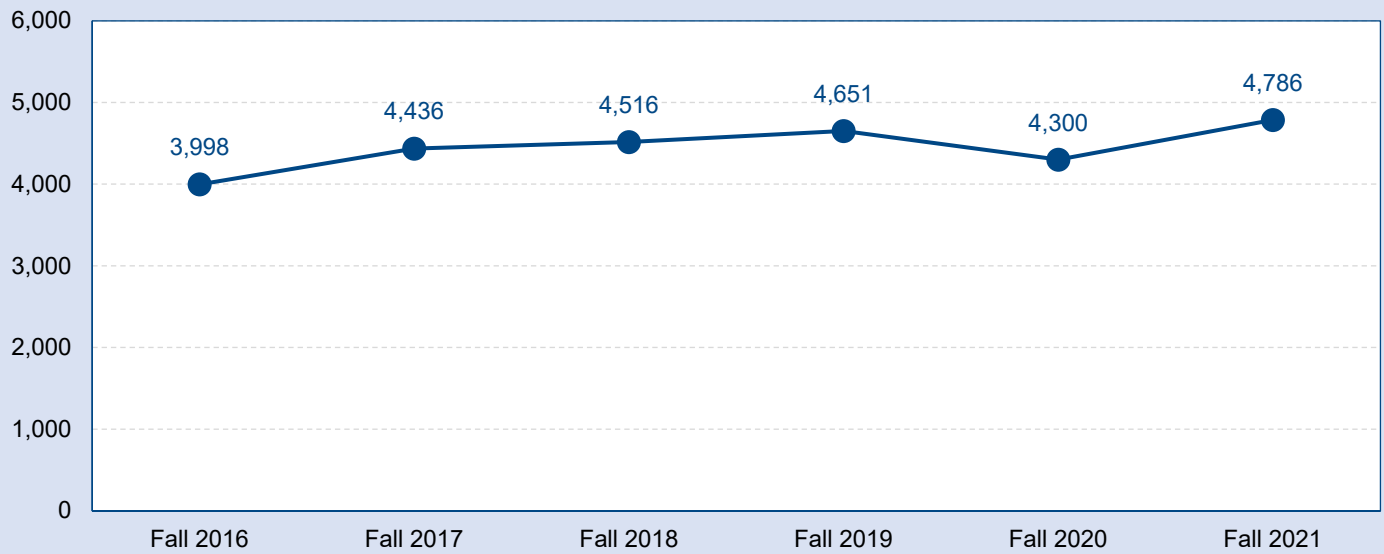
2021

Race/Ethnicity	Postsecondary Fall Enrollment	Working Age Population
White	49.1%	76.7%
Hispanic and Latino	29.2%	26.7%
Black or African American	10.6%	8.3%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

**Chart 2-10: Technical College Fall Enrollment**

Southwest Florida



Source: National Center for Education Statistics  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Technical College Fall Enrollment

Chart 2-10 and Table 2-10 shows fall enrollment data from technical colleges in Southwest Florida.<sup>8</sup> Technical colleges identified in the region had 4,786 students enrolled in Fall 2021. Enrollment rose compared to Fall 2020, improving 11.3 percent.

**Table 2-10: Technical College Fall Enrollment**

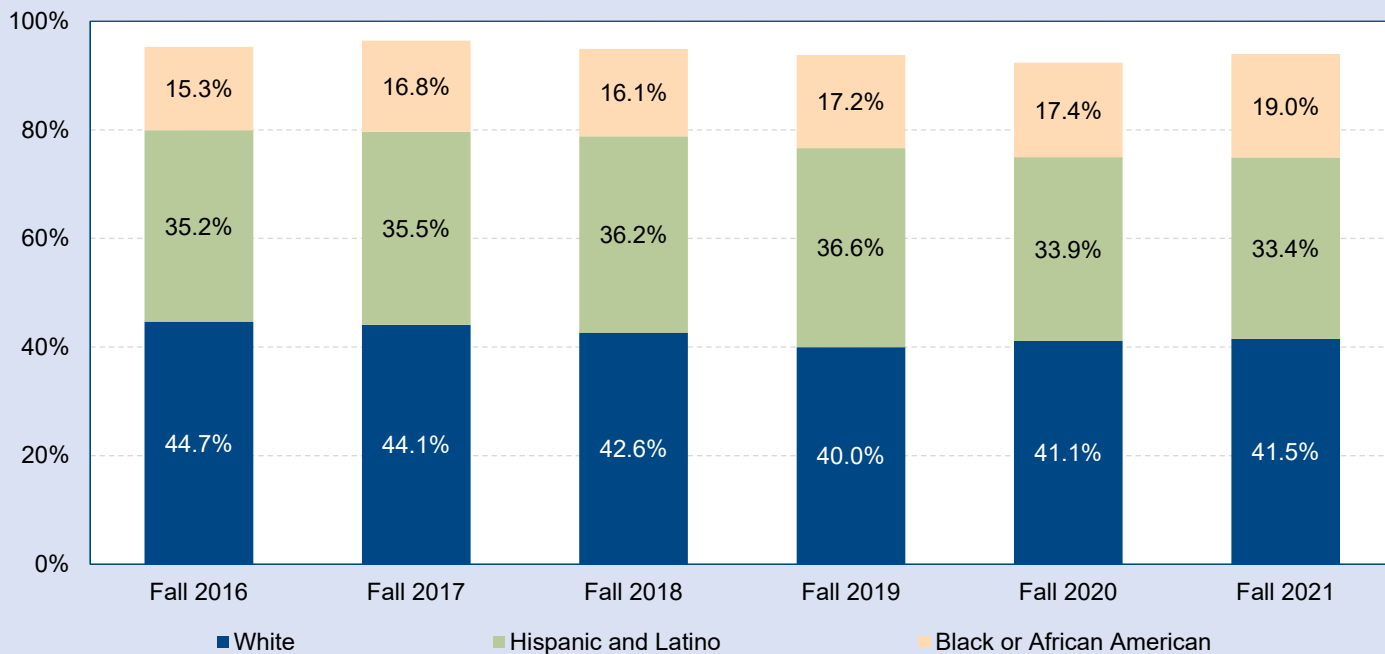
Area	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
Southwest Florida						
Fall enrollment	3,998	4,436	4,516	4,651	4,300	4,786
Percent change	--	11.0%	1.8%	3.0%	-7.5%	11.3%
Florida						
Fall enrollment	117,765	120,153	110,482	100,954	96,915	94,856
Percent change	--	2.0%	-8.0%	-8.6%	-4.0%	-2.1%
United States						
Fall enrollment	6,476,138	6,325,726	6,117,400	5,961,378	5,297,091	5,060,368
Percent change	--	-2.3%	-3.3%	-2.6%	-11.1%	-4.5%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics

<sup>8</sup> See the Methodology for more information on how technical colleges in Southwest Florida were identified.

### Chart 2-11: Technical College Fall Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Southwest Florida



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System  
 Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Technical College Fall Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Chart 2-11 and Table 2-11 display technical college fall enrollment by race and ethnicity for Southwest Florida. Like the trends seen in the total postsecondary fall enrollment statistics, the proportion of students making up fall technical college enrollment who identify as White has steadily declined from 44.7 percent in Fall 2016 to 41.5 percent in Fall 2021. Moreover, technical college fall enrollment among Hispanic and Latino students fell from 35.2 percent in Fall 2016 to 33.4 percent in Fall 2021. For students identifying as Black, technical college fall enrollment increased from 15.3 percent in Fall 2016 to 19.0 percent in Fall 2021. Technical college fall enrollment has remained consistent for the region’s students among the other races/ethnicities tracked by the National Center for Education Statistics.



As noted before, the region’s population growth will require technical colleges to adapt to accommodate the increased demand and rewrite policies and procedures that may be unintentionally creating barriers for some students in order to achieve the 55 percent goal of skilled working age adults with college degrees, workforce certificates, industry certifications, and other high-quality credentials.

**Table 2-11: Technical College Fall Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity**

Southwest Florida

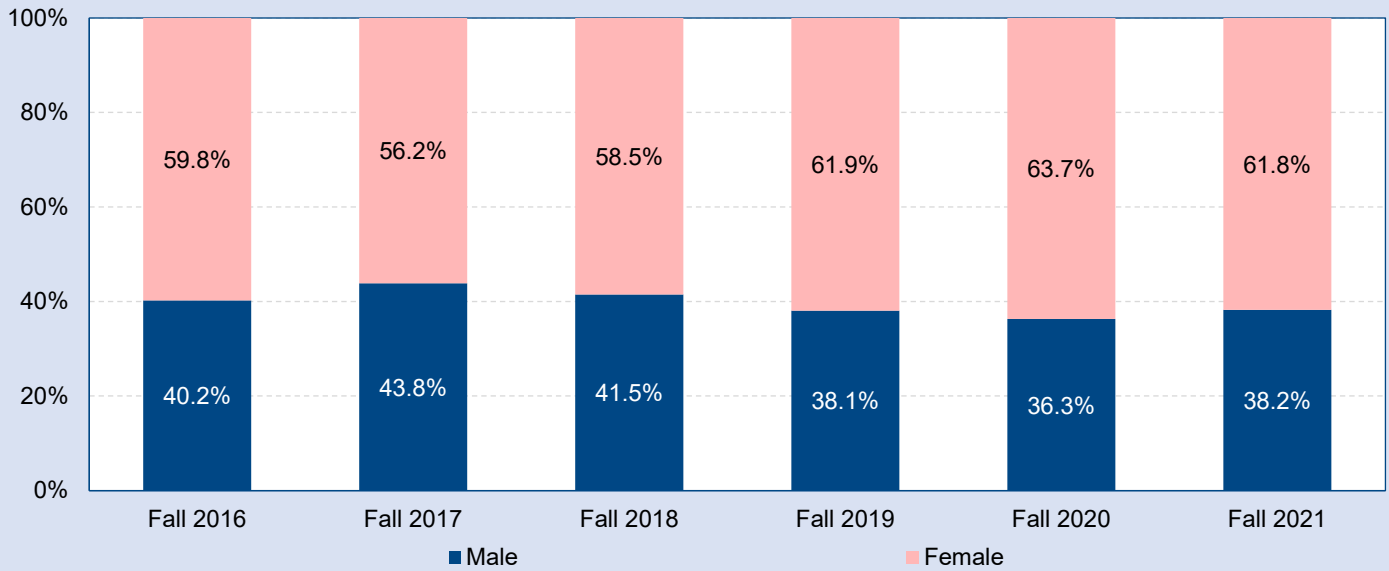
Race/Ethnicity	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
White						
<i>Number of students</i>	1,787	1,957	1,926	1,860	1,768	1,987
<i>Percent of total</i>	44.7%	44.1%	42.6%	40.0%	41.1%	41.5%
Hispanic and Latino						
<i>Number of students</i>	1,409	1,575	1,633	1,704	1,456	1,599
<i>Percent of total</i>	35.2%	35.5%	36.2%	36.6%	33.9%	33.4%
Black or African American						
<i>Number of students</i>	613	745	726	798	747	911
<i>Percent of total</i>	15.3%	16.8%	16.1%	17.2%	17.4%	19.0%
Asian						
<i>Number of students</i>	39	39	47	36	59	55
<i>Percent of total</i>	1.0%	0.9%	1.0%	0.8%	1.4%	1.1%
American Indian or Alaska Native						
<i>Number of students</i>	12	13	14	15	11	18
<i>Percent of total</i>	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander						
<i>Number of students</i>	13	8	6	6	24	12
<i>Percent of total</i>	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.6%	0.3%
Two or more races						
<i>Number of students</i>	101	75	123	192	202	155
<i>Percent of total</i>	2.5%	1.7%	2.7%	4.1%	4.7%	3.2%
Race/ethnicity unknown						
<i>Number of students</i>	23	23	31	28	25	45
<i>Percent of total</i>	0.6%	0.5%	0.7%	0.6%	0.6%	0.9%
Nonresident alien						
<i>Number of students</i>	1	1	10	12	8	4
<i>Percent of total</i>	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%
<b>Total Fall Enrollment</b>	<b>3,998</b>	<b>4,436</b>	<b>4,516</b>	<b>4,651</b>	<b>4,300</b>	<b>4,786</b>

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System



### Chart 2-12: Technical College Fall Enrollment by Gender

Southwest Florida



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System  
 Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Technical College Fall Enrollment by Gender

Chart 2-12 and Table 2-12 shows technical college fall enrollment by gender for Southwest Florida. The region had 2,957 female students enrolled into a technical college during Fall 2021, representing 61.8 percent of total fall enrollment. This percentage improved from Fall 2017 to Fall 2020 before slipping in 2021. The region also had 1,829 male students enrolled in Fall 2021, accounting for 38.2 percent of total fall enrollment during that year.

**Table 2-12: Technical College Fall Enrollment by Gender**

Southwest Florida

Gender	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
Male						
Number of students	1,608	1,945	1,873	1,770	1,561	1,829
Percent of total	40.2%	43.8%	41.5%	38.1%	36.3%	38.2%
Female						
Number of students	2,390	2,491	2,643	2,881	2,739	2,957
Percent of total	59.8%	56.2%	58.5%	61.9%	63.7%	61.8%
<b>Total Fall Enrollment</b>	<b>3,998</b>	<b>4,436</b>	<b>4,516</b>	<b>4,651</b>	<b>4,300</b>	<b>4,786</b>

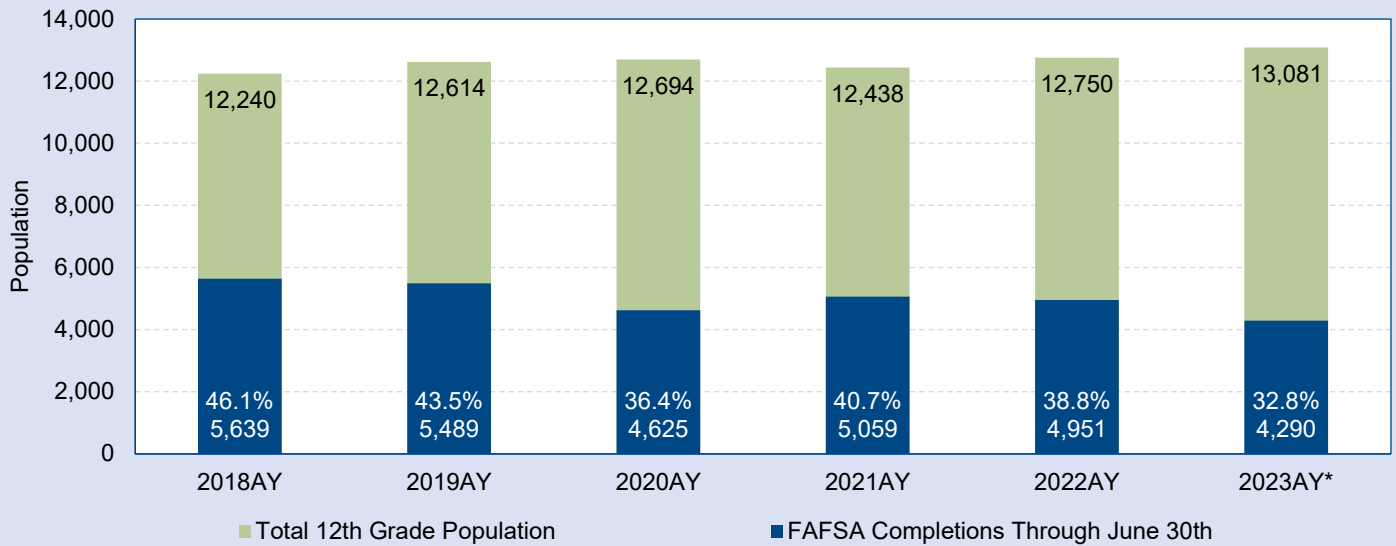
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System



Technical college fall enrollment for male students reversed a downward trend in 2021, increasing to 38.2 percent from 36.3 percent in 2020, but still lags behind enrollment for female students. To reach our 55 percent goal, the reasons for this gender disparity should be explored further.

### Chart 2-13: FAFSA Completion Rate

Southwest Florida



Source: Florida College Access Network (FCAN)

Note: FAFSA Completion Rate above population value. 2023AY data only for FAFSA Completions through April 14th

Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## FAFSA Completion Rate

Chart 2-13 and Table 2-13 show the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion rates for Southwest Florida and each of the five counties. Through April 14th, 2023, the region had 4,290 students complete a FAFSA application, for a FAFSA completion rate of 32.8 percent. The FAFSA completion rate has steadily declined since the 2016-17 academic year and remains below the state FAFSA completion rate of 34.8 percent in 2022-23.

Of the five Southwest Florida counties, only Glades County (44.1 percent) and Collier County (38.5 percent) had a higher FAFSA completion rate than the state. Hendry County had a completion rate of 31.9 percent, and Lee and Charlotte counties had completion rates of 30.8 and 30.6 percent, respectively.

**Table 2-13: FAFSA Completion Rate**

<b>Area</b>	<b>2018AY</b>	<b>2019AY</b>	<b>2020AY</b>	<b>2021AY</b>	<b>2022AY</b>	<b>2023AY*</b>
<b>Charlotte County</b>						
<i>Total 12th Grade Population</i>	1,400	1,354	1,335	1,205	1,308	1,301
<i>FAFSA Completions Through June 30th</i>	593	510	426	533	526	398
<i>FAFSA Completion Rate</i>	42.4%	37.7%	31.9%	44.2%	40.2%	30.6%
<b>Collier County</b>						
<i>Total 12th Grade Population</i>	3,049	3,290	3,482	3,413	3,336	3,205
<i>FAFSA Completions Through June 30th</i>	1,611	1,679	1,484	1,579	1,473	1,233
<i>FAFSA Completion Rate</i>	52.8%	51.0%	42.6%	46.3%	44.2%	38.5%
<b>Glades County</b>						
<i>Total 12th Grade Population</i>	69	74	63	51	53	59
<i>FAFSA Completions Through June 30th</i>	33	32	33	21	25	26
<i>FAFSA Completion Rate</i>	47.8%	43.2%	52.4%	41.2%	47.2%	44.1%
<b>Hendry County</b>						
<i>Total 12th Grade Population</i>	468	534	519	556	559	571
<i>FAFSA Completions Through June 30th</i>	224	197	145	182	191	182
<i>FAFSA Completion Rate</i>	47.9%	36.9%	27.9%	32.7%	34.2%	31.9%
<b>Lee County</b>						
<i>Total 12th Grade Population</i>	7,254	7,362	7,295	7,213	7,494	7,945
<i>FAFSA Completions Through June 30th</i>	3,178	3,071	2,537	2,744	2,736	2,451
<i>FAFSA Completion Rate</i>	43.8%	41.7%	34.8%	38.0%	36.5%	30.8%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>						
<i>Total 12th Grade Population</i>	<b>12,240</b>	<b>12,614</b>	<b>12,694</b>	<b>12,438</b>	<b>12,750</b>	<b>13,081</b>
<i>FAFSA Completions Through June 30th</i>	<b>5,639</b>	<b>5,489</b>	<b>4,625</b>	<b>5,059</b>	<b>4,951</b>	<b>4,290</b>
<i>FAFSA Completion Rate</i>	<b>46.1%</b>	<b>43.5%</b>	<b>36.4%</b>	<b>40.7%</b>	<b>38.8%</b>	<b>32.8%</b>
<b>Florida</b>						
<i>Total 12th Grade Population</i>	<b>199,571</b>	<b>203,306</b>	<b>199,139</b>	<b>196,883</b>	<b>204,189</b>	<b>205,886</b>
<i>FAFSA Completions Through June 30th</i>	<b>98,442</b>	<b>92,944</b>	<b>76,969</b>	<b>86,942</b>	<b>87,791</b>	<b>71,606</b>
<i>FAFSA Completion Rate</i>	<b>49.3%</b>	<b>45.7%</b>	<b>38.7%</b>	<b>44.2%</b>	<b>43.0%</b>	<b>34.8%</b>

Source: Florida College Access Network (FCAN)







Note: Hendry County information does not include information from Digital Academy of Florida. 2023AY data only through April 14th



# #FutureMakers Coalition



## Persistence and Completion

	Indicator		Measure	Trending
	<b>Retention</b> Percent of full-time cohort from previous fall still enrolled	SWFL	81.5%	↑
		Florida	79.1%	↓
	<b>On-time Completion</b> Percent completing within 150 percent of normal time at two- and four-year institutes	SWFL	48.7%	↓
		Florida	55.7%	↑
	<b>Business Partnerships</b> Percent employers working with postsecondary institutions	SWFL	75.3%	↑
	<b>Returning Adults</b> Percent employers offering education opportunities	SWFL	90.2%	↑
	<b>Living Wage</b> Hourly wage to support one adult and two children	SWFL	\$45.94	↑
		Florida	\$45.96	↑
	<b>Local Jobs</b> Percent of Southwest Florida graduates still working in Southwest Florida	SWFL	43.7%	↓

## Overview

First year retention rates increased in the Southwest Florida region from 77.0 percent in 2020 to 81.5 percent in 2021. However, on-time completion rates among students in the region who were pursuing postsecondary education decreased from 52.7 percent in 2020 to 48.7 percent in 2021. Among Southwest Florida businesses that answered the question “Do you currently partner with any of the following education institutions?”, 75.3 percent responded “yes” in 2023, up from 64.6 percent in 2022. The percentage of Southwest Florida employers that offer opportunities to working adults to return to complete a degree or certification increased to 90.2 percent in 2023 from 86.0 percent in 2022. Hourly living wages and the average hourly wage for an adult with two children also increased in the Southwest Florida region to \$45.94 in 2023 compared to \$41.87 in 2022.<sup>9</sup> Finally, the percentage of Southwest Florida graduates still working at local jobs in Southwest Florida decreased to 43.7% percent in 2023 compared to 45.8 percent in 2022.



Data illustrating on-time, postsecondary completion rates by race and ethnicity for Southwest Florida are also provided in this report. Between 2016 and 2021, on-time postsecondary complete rates follow similar patterns across the races and ethnicities, with Black and Hispanic/Latino students having lower completion rates than White students.

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<sup>9</sup> Living wage is defined as the local wage rate that allows residents to meet minimum standards of living. For more information on the living wage methodology, see the [MIT webpage](#).

# FutureMakers in Action

## *Stop Out Campaigns – FutureMakers Coalition’s Navigators*

In Fall of 2020, FutureMakers’ partners at Florida Gulf Coast University’s (FGCU) and Florida SouthWestern State College’s (FSW) piloted a project to identify, contact, and reenroll students who had previously stopped out prior to earning a degree. Furthermore, the pilot program used the opportunity better understand why students stopped out in order to remove barriers to completion and reduce the number of stop-outs going forward. Toward this end, students who stopped-out of their academic programs often cited a lack of financial support, a desire to focus on mental/physical health, and competing responsibilities as the primary reasons for their decisions. In addition to financial assistance, FGCU’s “Return to the Nest” and FSW’s “Second Look” campaigns have also implemented other support like coaching and improved communications to help returning students better navigate their pathways to graduation.

FutureMakers Coalition, in partnership with the Elsa and Peter Soderberg Charitable Foundation and the Lee County Industrial Development Authority (IDA), has expanded this effort to help increase the number of skilled workers in Southwest Florida. This partnership took the form of debt-forgiveness at FGCU and a fund to remove financial barriers to returning at FSW. In addition, FutureMakers Coalition’s Navigator program expanded to recruit and remove barriers for reconnectors (adults who need to return to education and training programs to get into a well-paying job). These collective advancements foster collaboration, articulation, peer learning, and results.

Since June 2022:

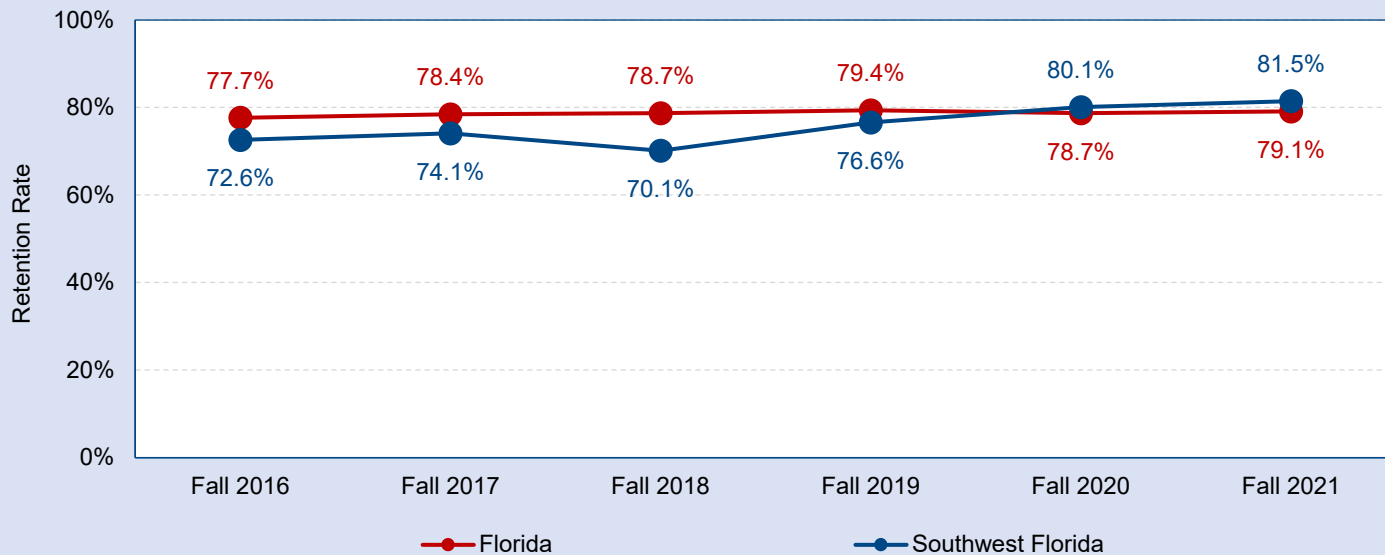
- 422 additional adults (276% increase) have a FutureMakers Coalition Navigator to walk alongside them as they reconnected with education and training programs.
- 622 stop-outs (1,183 total since the pilot project) have re-enrolled at FGCU and 212 degrees were awarded (386 total since the pilot project).
- FSW has supported the return of more than 157 (upwards of 1,300 total since the pilot) who had formerly stopped out and produced over a hundred graduates.
- 28 students, who would have otherwise been dropped for nonpayment, received financial support at FSW with Last Mile & Gap funding.
- 10 students received support to enter the new GED Pathway program (14 total enrolled).



FutureMakers Coalition remains committed to acting on the actionable data identified through this grant to continue to identify, contact, and support stop-out students.

### Chart 2-14: First Year Retention Rate

Percent of full-time cohort from previous fall still enrolled



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System  
 Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## First-Year Retention Rate

Chart 2-14 and Table 2-14 show the first-year retention rate for all full-time, first-time students enrolled in postsecondary institutions in Southwest Florida. Of the 3,959 full-time, first-time students enrolled during Fall 2020, 3,225 remained enrolled in Fall 2021, giving the region a first-year retention rate of 81.5 percent. The first-year retention rate for the region improved from the prior year and was higher than the national average (measured at 75.6 percent) and the state average of 79.1 percent.

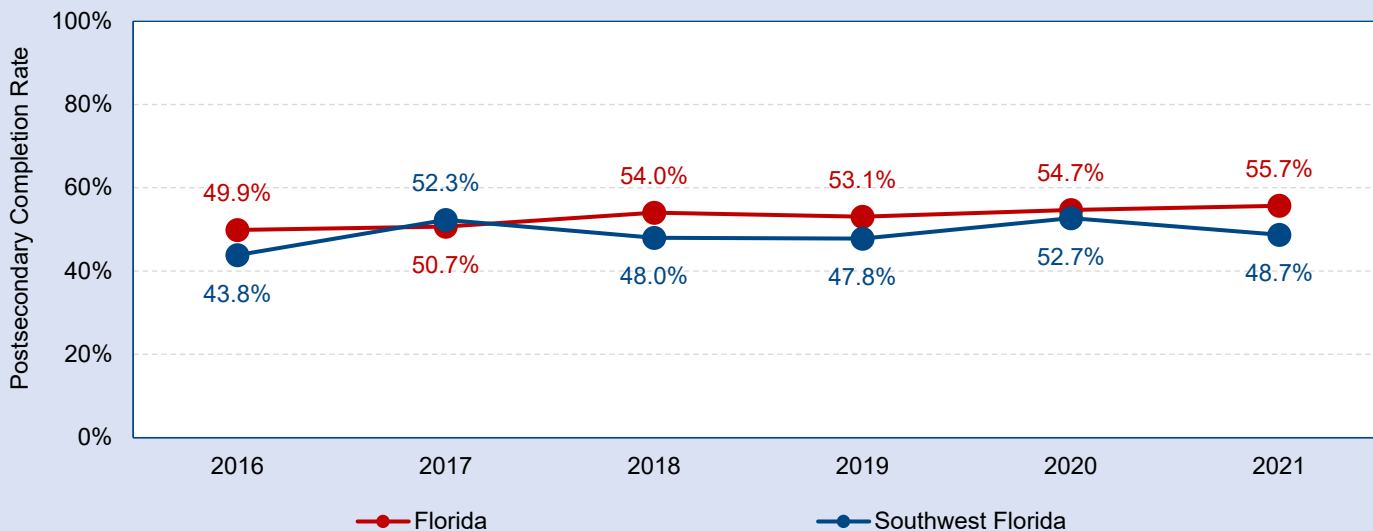
### Table 2-14: First Year Retention Rate

Area	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
<b>Southwest Florida</b>						
Full-time cohort from previous fall	4,276	3,979	4,067	4,587	4,277	3,959
Students still enrolled in fall	3,104	2,948	2,852	3,512	3,425	3,225
First-year retention rate	72.6%	74.1%	70.1%	76.6%	80.1%	81.5%
<b>Florida</b>						
Full-time cohort from previous fall	87,419	85,406	87,272	89,880	91,318	84,742
Students still enrolled in fall	67,883	66,987	68,688	71,335	71,855	67,039
First-year retention rate	77.7%	78.4%	78.7%	79.4%	78.7%	79.1%
<b>United States</b>						
Full-time cohort from previous fall	2,280,959	2,274,697	2,269,264	2,274,908	2,258,289	2,064,056
Students still enrolled in fall	1,714,022	1,714,471	1,712,996	1,730,114	1,709,758	1,559,510
First-year retention rate	75.1%	75.4%	75.5%	76.1%	75.7%	75.6%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

### Chart 2-15: Postsecondary Completion Rates

Two- and four-year institutes  
Percent completing within 150 percent of normal time



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Postsecondary Completion Rates

Chart 2-15 and Table 2-15 shows the completion rates for first-time, full-time students seeking a degree or certificate and enrolled in two- and four-year institutes in Southwest Florida. The cohort completion rate is calculated using the number of cohort completers in 150 percent of normal time as of August 31st of the reported year<sup>10</sup>. Two- and four-year institutes in the region had an on-time completion rate of 48.7 percent in 2021, down 4.0 percentage points from 2020. The completion rate remains below both the state (55.7 percent) and the nation (54.0 percent).

### Table 2-15: Postsecondary Completion Rates

Two-year and four-year institutes

Area	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Southwest Florida</b>						
<i>Cohort completers in 150 percent of normal time</i>	2,524	3,125	2,849	2,973	3,218	2,575
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	5,759	5,978	5,939	6,223	6,104	5,288
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	43.8%	52.3%	48.0%	47.8%	52.7%	48.7%
<b>Florida</b>						
<i>Cohort completers in 150 percent of normal time</i>	91,258	89,184	90,810	76,778	76,441	77,593
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	182,993	176,048	168,120	144,698	139,849	139,307
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	49.9%	50.7%	54.0%	53.1%	54.7%	55.7%
<b>United States</b>						
<i>Cohort completers in 150 percent of normal time</i>	1,249,720	1,252,240	1,252,907	1,267,573	1,290,648	1,312,924
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	2,623,706	2,565,153	2,448,946	2,424,896	2,427,776	2,431,199
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	47.6%	48.8%	51.2%	52.3%	53.2%	54.0%

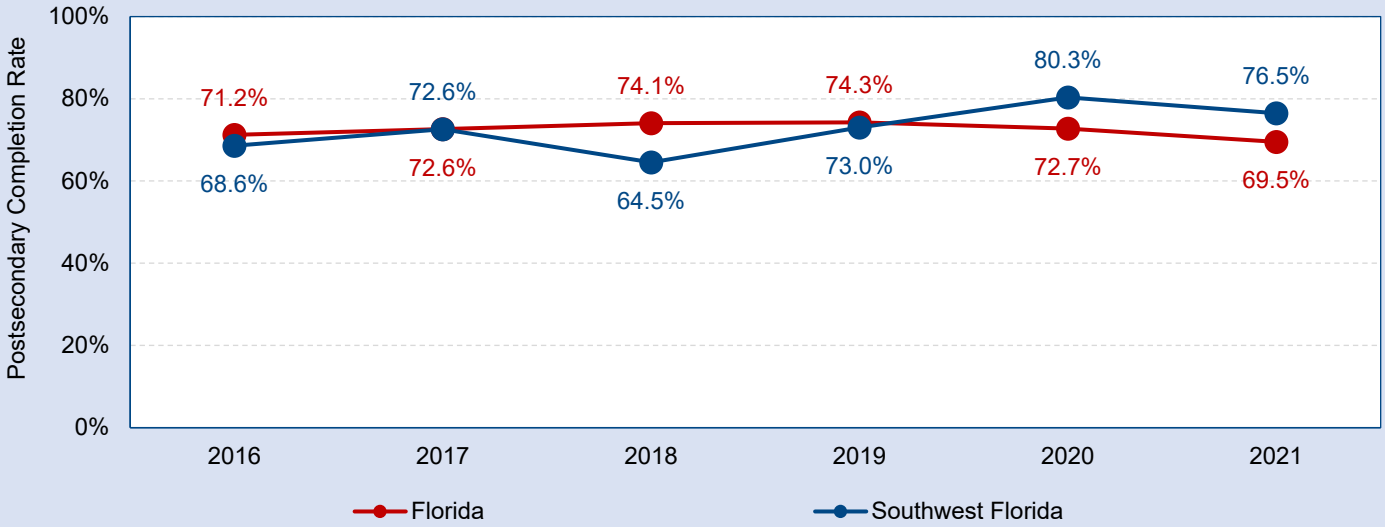
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

<sup>10</sup> See the Glossary for more information on how to interpret the completion rate.



### Chart 2-16: Postsecondary Completion Rates

Less than two year institutes  
Percent completing within 150 percent of normal time



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

Chart 2-16 and Table 2-16 shows the completion rates for first-time, full-time students seeking a degree or certificate and enrolled less-than two-year institutes in Southwest Florida. Less than two-year institutes in the region had an on-time completion rate of 76.5 percent in 2021, down 3.8 percentage points from 2020. The completion rate remains above both the state (69.5 percent) and the nation (68.5 percent).

### Table 2-16: Postsecondary Completion Rates

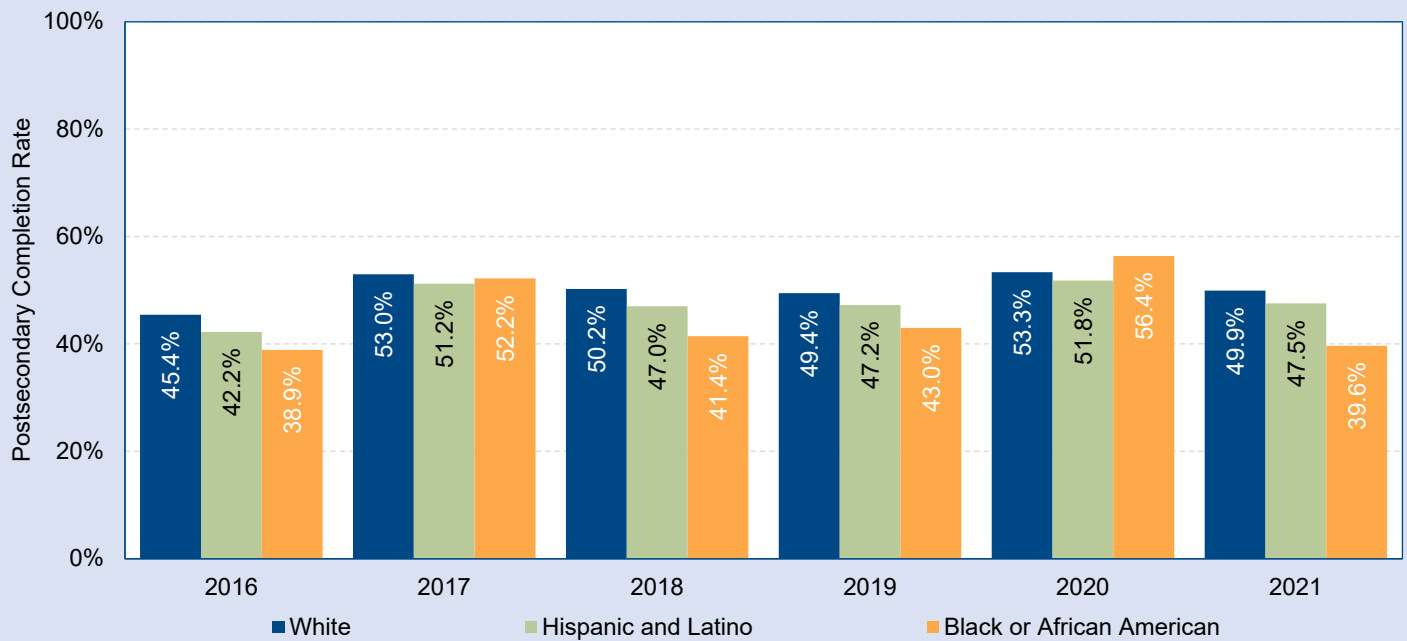
Less than two-year institutes

Area	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Southwest Florida</b>						
<i>Cohort completers in 150 percent of normal time</i>	491	405	304	620	560	887
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	716	558	471	849	697	1,160
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	68.6%	72.6%	64.5%	73.0%	80.3%	76.5%
<b>Florida</b>						
<i>Cohort completers in 150 percent of normal time</i>	10,720	10,518	11,303	9,688	9,964	9,978
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	15,048	14,481	15,258	13,046	13,697	14,353
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	71.2%	72.6%	74.1%	74.3%	72.7%	69.5%
<b>United States</b>						
<i>Cohort completers in 150 percent of normal time</i>	112,486	103,944	102,670	98,322	96,173	95,458
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	162,731	149,864	149,094	143,351	138,939	139,456
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	69.1%	69.4%	68.9%	68.6%	69.2%	68.5%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

### Chart 2-17: Postsecondary Completion Rates by Race/Ethnicity

Two- and four-year institutes  
Southwest Florida



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Postsecondary Completion Rates by Race/Ethnicity

Chart 2-17<sup>11</sup> and Table 2-17 show completion rates for first-time, full-time students seeking a degree or certificate and enrolled in two- and four-year institutes<sup>12</sup> by race and ethnicity for the region. Southwest Florida had a cohort completion rate of 48.7 percent in 2021. Students who identified as White had a slightly higher completion rate, measured at 49.9 percent during 2021. Students identifying as Hispanic and Latino had a lower completion rate (47.5 percent), along with students identifying as Black (39.6 percent).

<sup>11</sup> Data for the other races/ethnicities tracked by the National Center for Education Statistics do not appear in Chart 2-18 due to the small and highly variable sample sizes, making visual interpretations more difficult. These data are presented in Table 2-18.

<sup>12</sup> Information for less than two year institutes is not available by race and ethnicity.

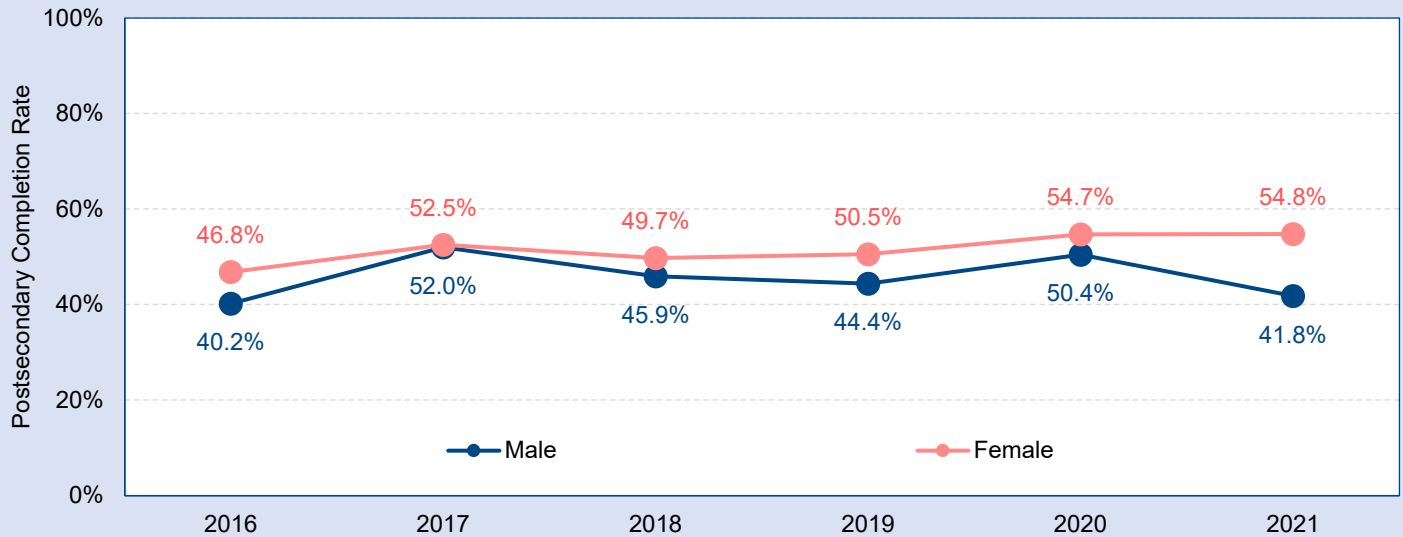
**Table 2-17: Postsecondary Completion Rates by Race/Ethnicity**Two-year and four-year institutes  
Southwest Florida

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
White						
<i>Number of cohort completers</i>	1,527	1,896	1,752	1,719	1,818	1,543
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	3,363	3,580	3,489	3,477	3,408	3,092
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	45.4%	53.0%	50.2%	49.4%	53.3%	49.9%
Hispanic and Latino						
<i>Number of cohort completers</i>	580	732	688	752	836	629
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	1,374	1,430	1,464	1,592	1,614	1,323
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	42.2%	51.2%	47.0%	47.2%	51.8%	47.5%
Black or African American						
<i>Number of cohort completers</i>	241	313	246	321	363	178
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	620	600	594	747	644	449
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	38.9%	52.2%	41.4%	43.0%	56.4%	39.6%
Asian						
<i>Number of cohort completers</i>	47	44	39	39	41	45
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	88	88	81	88	73	78
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	53.4%	50.0%	48.1%	44.3%	56.2%	57.7%
American Indian or Alaska Native						
<i>Number of cohort completers</i>	9	7	10	6	4	7
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	14	12	24	17	12	14
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	64.3%	58.3%	41.7%	35.3%	33.3%	50.0%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander						
<i>Number of cohort completers</i>	3	3	7	4	3	5
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	8	8	10	10	6	8
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	37.5%	37.5%	70.0%	40.0%	50.0%	62.5%
Two or more races						
<i>Number of cohort completers</i>	52	60	47	50	60	69
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	118	118	117	121	157	130
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	44.1%	50.8%	40.2%	41.3%	38.2%	53.1%
Race/ethnicity unknown						
<i>Number of cohort completers</i>	44	43	42	48	53	58
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	134	95	115	107	118	124
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	32.8%	45.3%	36.5%	44.9%	44.9%	46.8%
Nonresident alien						
<i>Number of cohort completers</i>	21	27	18	34	40	41
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	40	47	45	64	72	70
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	52.5%	57.4%	40.0%	53.1%	55.6%	58.6%
<b>Total</b>						
<i>Number of cohort completers</i>	<b>2,524</b>	<b>3,125</b>	<b>2,849</b>	<b>2,973</b>	<b>3,218</b>	<b>2,575</b>
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	<b>5,759</b>	<b>5,978</b>	<b>5,939</b>	<b>6,223</b>	<b>6,104</b>	<b>5,288</b>
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	<b>43.8%</b>	<b>52.3%</b>	<b>48.0%</b>	<b>47.8%</b>	<b>52.7%</b>	<b>48.7%</b>

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

### Chart 2-18: Postsecondary Completion Rates by Gender

Two-year and four-year institutes  
Southwest Florida



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Postsecondary Completion Rates by Gender

Chart 2-18 and Table 2-18 shows completion rates for first-time, full-time students seeking a degree or certificate and enrolled in two- and four-year institutes<sup>13</sup> by gender for the region. Southwest Florida had a cohort completion rate of 48.7 percent in 2021. Females had a higher completion rate, measured at 54.8 percent during 2021, while male students had a lower completion rate (41.8 percent).

### Table 2-18: Postsecondary Completion Rates by Gender

Two-year and four-year institutes  
Southwest Florida

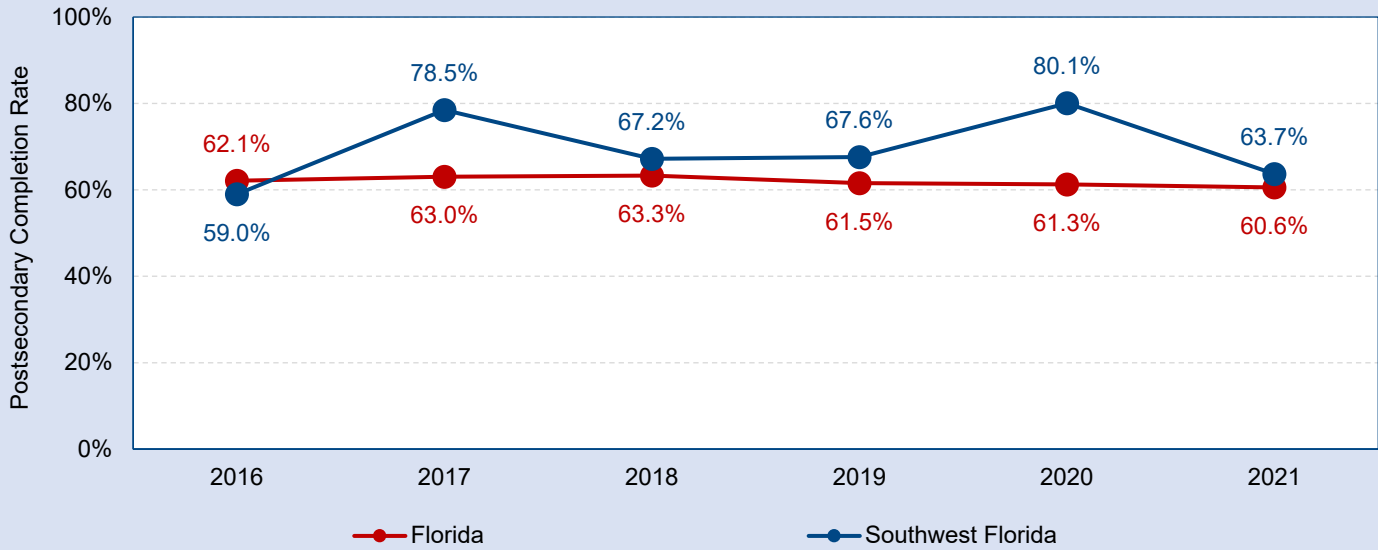
Gender	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Male</b>						
Number of cohort completers	1,039	1,380	1,245	1,235	1,429	1,032
Adjusted cohort size	2,586	2,655	2,713	2,783	2,833	2,470
Cohort completion rate	40.2%	52.0%	45.9%	44.4%	50.4%	41.8%
<b>Female</b>						
Number of cohort completers	1,485	1,745	1,604	1,738	1,789	1,543
Adjusted cohort size	3,173	3,323	3,226	3,440	3,271	2,818
Cohort completion rate	46.8%	52.5%	49.7%	50.5%	54.7%	54.8%
<b>Total</b>						
Number of cohort completers	2,524	3,125	2,849	2,973	3,218	2,575
Adjusted cohort size	5,759	5,978	5,939	6,223	6,104	5,288
Cohort completion rate	43.8%	52.3%	48.0%	47.8%	52.7%	48.7%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

<sup>13</sup> Information for less than two year institutes is not available by race and ethnicity.

### Chart 2-19: Technical College Completion Rates

Percent completing within 150 percent of normal time



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Technical College Completion Rates

Chart 2-19 and Table 2-19 shows completion rates for all first-time, full-time students enrolled at technical colleges in Southwest Florida.<sup>14</sup> The region had 1,163 cohort completers in 2021, resulting in a 63.7 percent cohort completion rate. The completion rate fell from 2020 but was still higher than both the state (60.6 percent) and the nation (41.8 percent).

**Table 2-19: Technical College Completion Rates**

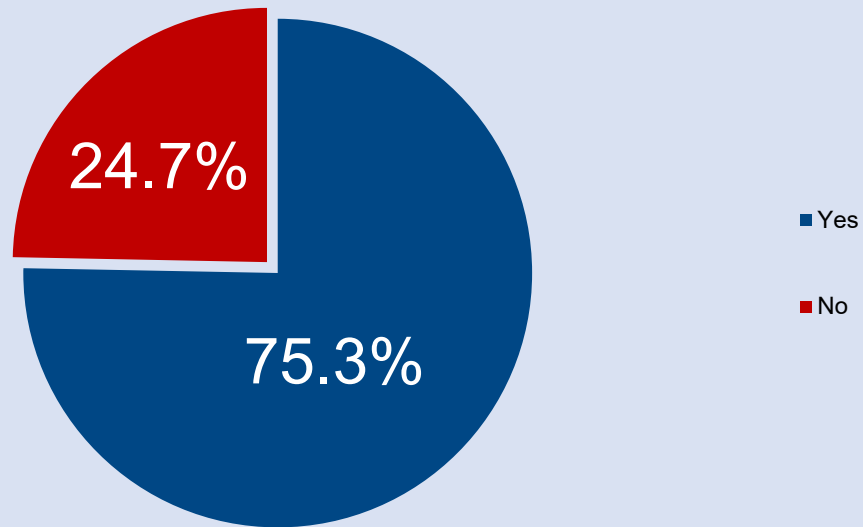
Area	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Southwest Florida</b>						
Number of cohort completers	1,291	1,600	1,226	1,527	1,493	1,163
Adjusted cohort size	2,188	2,039	1,825	2,259	1,865	1,827
Cohort completion rate	59.0%	78.5%	67.2%	67.6%	80.1%	63.7%
<b>Florida</b>						
Number of cohort completers	38,755	40,096	44,345	28,261	27,298	27,301
Adjusted cohort size	62,404	63,615	70,044	45,923	44,568	45,071
Cohort completion rate	62.1%	63.0%	63.3%	61.5%	61.3%	60.6%
<b>United States</b>						
Number of cohort completers	385,754	370,689	360,071	346,417	343,912	344,173
Adjusted cohort size	1,000,347	939,949	894,935	855,544	830,512	823,824
Cohort completion rate	38.6%	39.4%	40.2%	40.5%	41.4%	41.8%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

<sup>14</sup> See the Methodology for more information on how technical colleges in Southwest Florida were identified.

### Chart 2-20: Business-Education Partnerships

Does your organization currently collaborate or partner with one or more of Southwest Florida’s educational institutions to assist in finding, recruiting, and/or training qualified employees?



Source: FutureMakers Coalition Workforce Survey  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

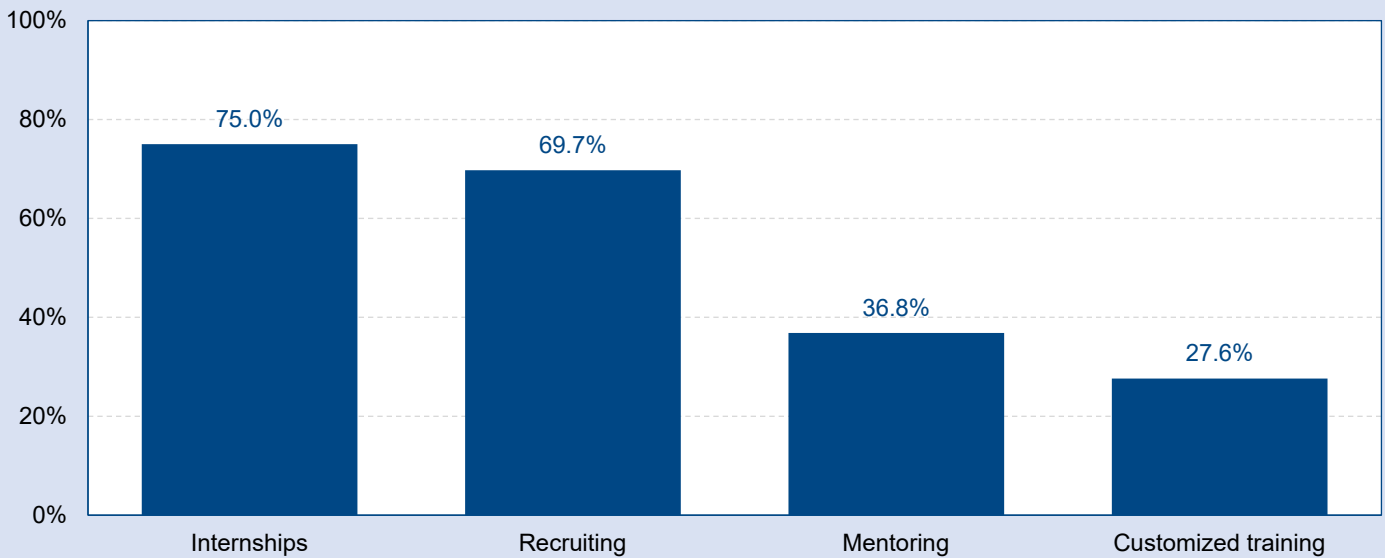
## Business-Education Partnerships

Chart 2-20 shows the results from a survey question relating to business-education partnership activities.<sup>15</sup> In 2023, 75.3 percent of respondents said that they partnered with a Southwest Florida educational institution in finding, recruiting, and/or training qualified employees, while 24.7 percent said they did not partner with a local educational institution.

<sup>15</sup> See the Methodology for more information on the FutureMakers Coalition Workforce Survey.

### Chart 2-21: Business-Education Partnerships Activities

If you partner with a local educational institute, what kinds of activities do you engage in with them?



Source: FutureMakers Coalition Workforce Survey  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

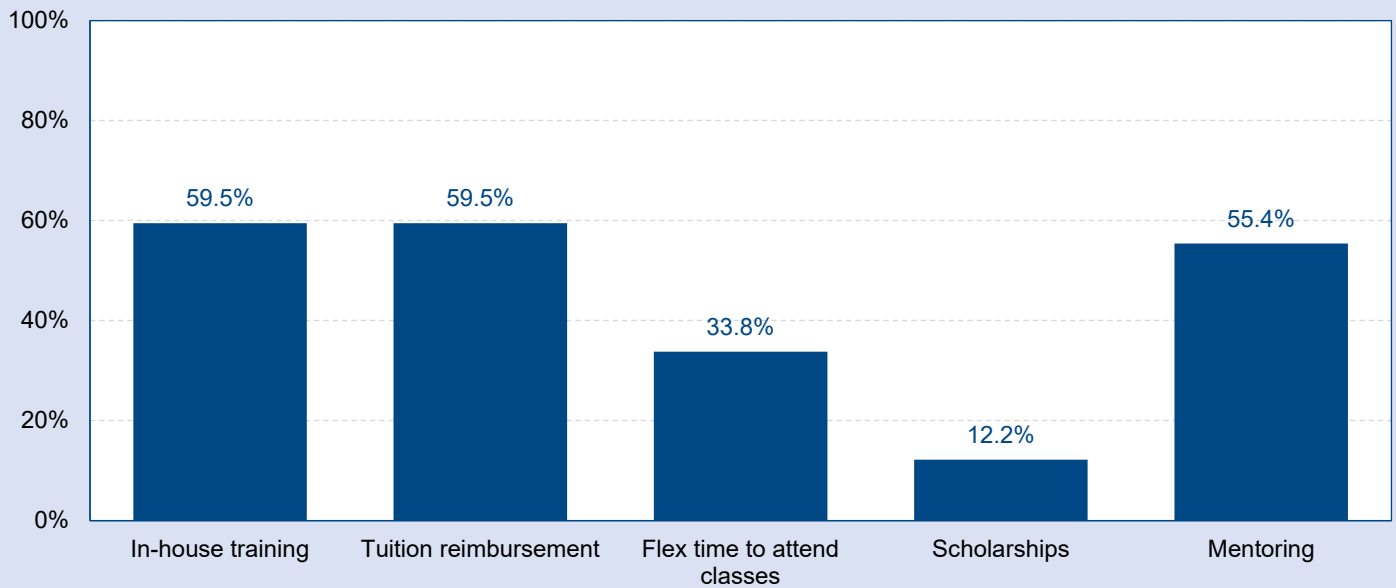
## Business-Education Partnership Activities

Chart 2-21 shows the results from a survey question relating to types of business-education partnership activities.<sup>16</sup> Of the respondents that said they partnered with a local educational institute, 75.0 percent said their business offered internships and 69.7 percent provided recruiting programs. Furthermore, 36.8 percent of respondents said they offered mentoring programs and 27.6 percent indicated they offered customized training.

<sup>16</sup> See the Methodology for more information on the FutureMakers Coalition Workforce Survey.

### Chart 2-22: Educational Support Offerings

If you offer educational support, tell us more about what you offer.



Source: FutureMakers Coalition Workforce Survey  
 Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Educational Support Offerings

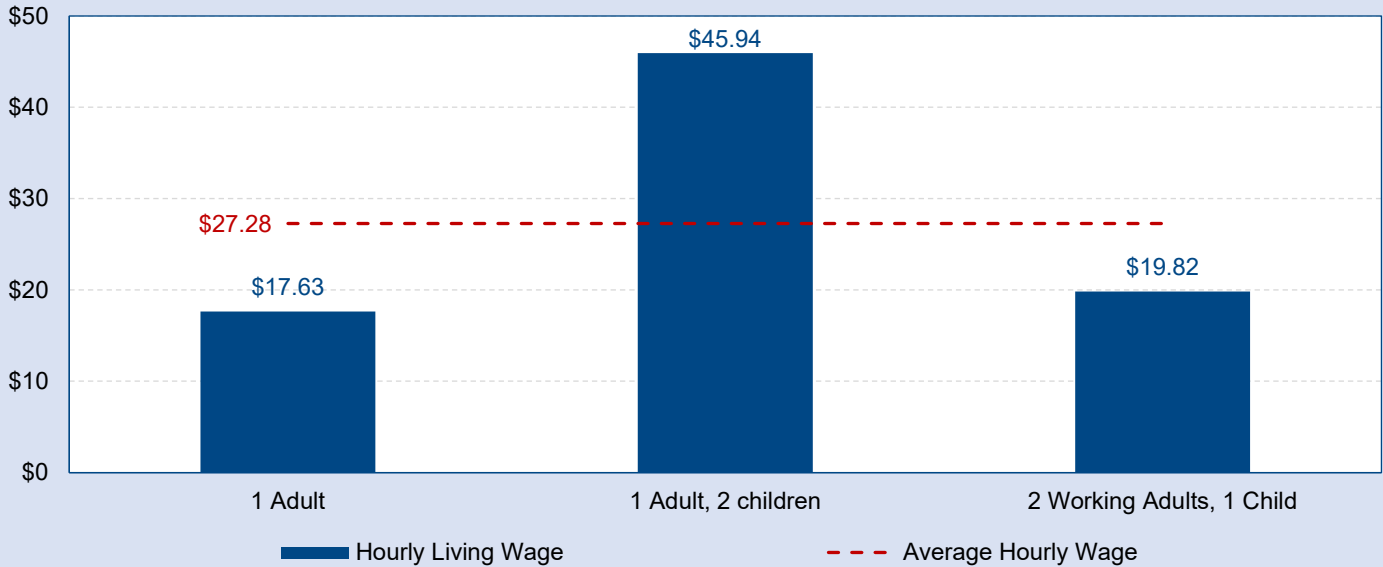
Chart 2-22 shows the results from a survey question relating to educational support.<sup>17</sup> Ninety percent of the 82 responding employers stated that their firm offered some sort of educational support for their employees. Of the respondents that said they offered educational support, 59.5 percent said their business offered in-house training, while 59.5 percent offered tuition reimbursement. Furthermore, 55.4 percent of respondents said they offered mentorship opportunities, 33.8 percent indicated they offered flex time to attend classes and 12.2 percent said they offered scholarships.

<sup>17</sup> See the Methodology for more information on the FutureMakers Coalition Workforce Survey.



### Chart 2-23: Hourly Living Wage

Southwest Florida



Source: MIT Living Wage Calculator; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages  
 Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute.

## Living Wage

Chart 2-23 show living wage estimates for Southwest Florida. Living wages are obtained from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) living wage calculator and are updated annually by the MIT research team. Living wage is defined by MIT as the wage needed to cover basic family expenses (basic needs budget) plus all relevant taxes. Values reported by MIT are in December 2022 dollars.

Living wages shown in Table 2-20 sample the hourly rate full-time working adults in a household must earn to pay regional average food, clothing, medical care, child care and other expenses, and county average housing and transportation costs. In reality these costs vary by and within each county. Southwest Florida living wages are estimated for household combinations of 1-2 working adults and 0-3 children by computing the average of each of the five counties, weighted by the 2022 population distribution. The table also provides average hourly wages earned in each area and are obtained from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.

A living wage for a single adult in Southwest Florida is \$17.63 in 2022, slightly below the state average of \$17.72. Furthermore, a single adult supporting two children has to earn \$45.94 in Southwest Florida (compared to \$45.96 in Florida), and two working adults with one child have a living wage of \$19.82 (versus \$19.91 for the state). While average hourly wages in Southwest Florida exceeded living wages for a single adult and two adults with a child, they remain below the living wage threshold for a single adult supporting two children.

**Table 2-20: Living Wage**

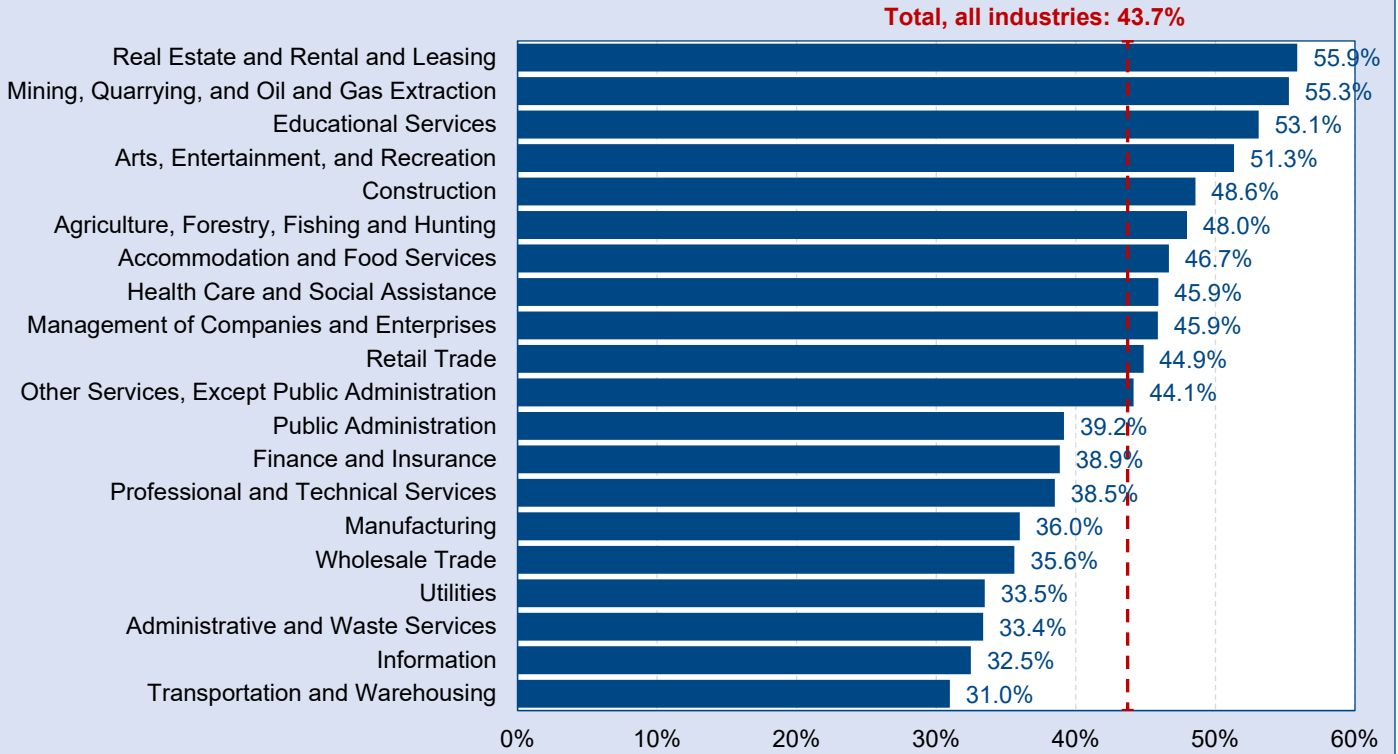
2022

Area	1 Adult	1 Adult, 2 children	2 Working Adults, 1 Child	Average Hourly Wage
Charlotte	\$16.58	\$44.76	\$19.27	\$23.21
Collier	\$18.52	\$48.87	\$21.00	\$30.16
Glades	\$15.66	\$41.42	\$17.92	\$25.22
Hendry	\$15.31	\$41.06	\$17.72	\$23.51
Lee	\$17.60	\$45.11	\$19.51	\$26.47
<b>Southwest Florida</b>	<b>\$17.63</b>	<b>\$45.94</b>	<b>\$19.82</b>	<b>\$27.28</b>
<b>Florida</b>	<b>\$17.72</b>	<b>\$45.96</b>	<b>\$19.91</b>	<b>\$30.64</b>

Source: MIT Living Wage Calculator; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

### Chart 2-24: Graduation Retention Rates by Industry

Percent of graduates from SWFL post-secondary institutes that work in SWFL



Source: RERI analysis of data obtained from Lightcast, obtained on July 6, 2023  
 Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Graduation Retention Rates by Industry

Lightcast provides an estimate of the retention rates for graduates in Southwest Florida, broken down by industry. This estimation is based on the analysis of reported information from online employment profiles like LinkedIn and Indeed. The data used for this report was obtained on July 6, 2023.

Of the 60,710 SWFL graduates found online, 26,535 of them were employed in Southwest Florida, giving the region a graduation retention rate of 43.7 percent. The real estate and rental and leasing industry has done the best job at keeping Southwest Florida graduates employed locally, with 55.9 percent of graduates employed in the industry working in the region. Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction was close behind the real estate industry, with a graduation retention rate of 55.3 percent, followed by the educational services industry (53.1 percent). Furthermore, 51.3 percent of SWFL graduates that worked in the arts, entertainment and recreation industry were employed in region, as were 48.6 percent of employees in the construction industry.

**Table 2-21: Graduation Retention Rates by Industry**

Graduates from SWFL post-secondary institutes that work in SWFL

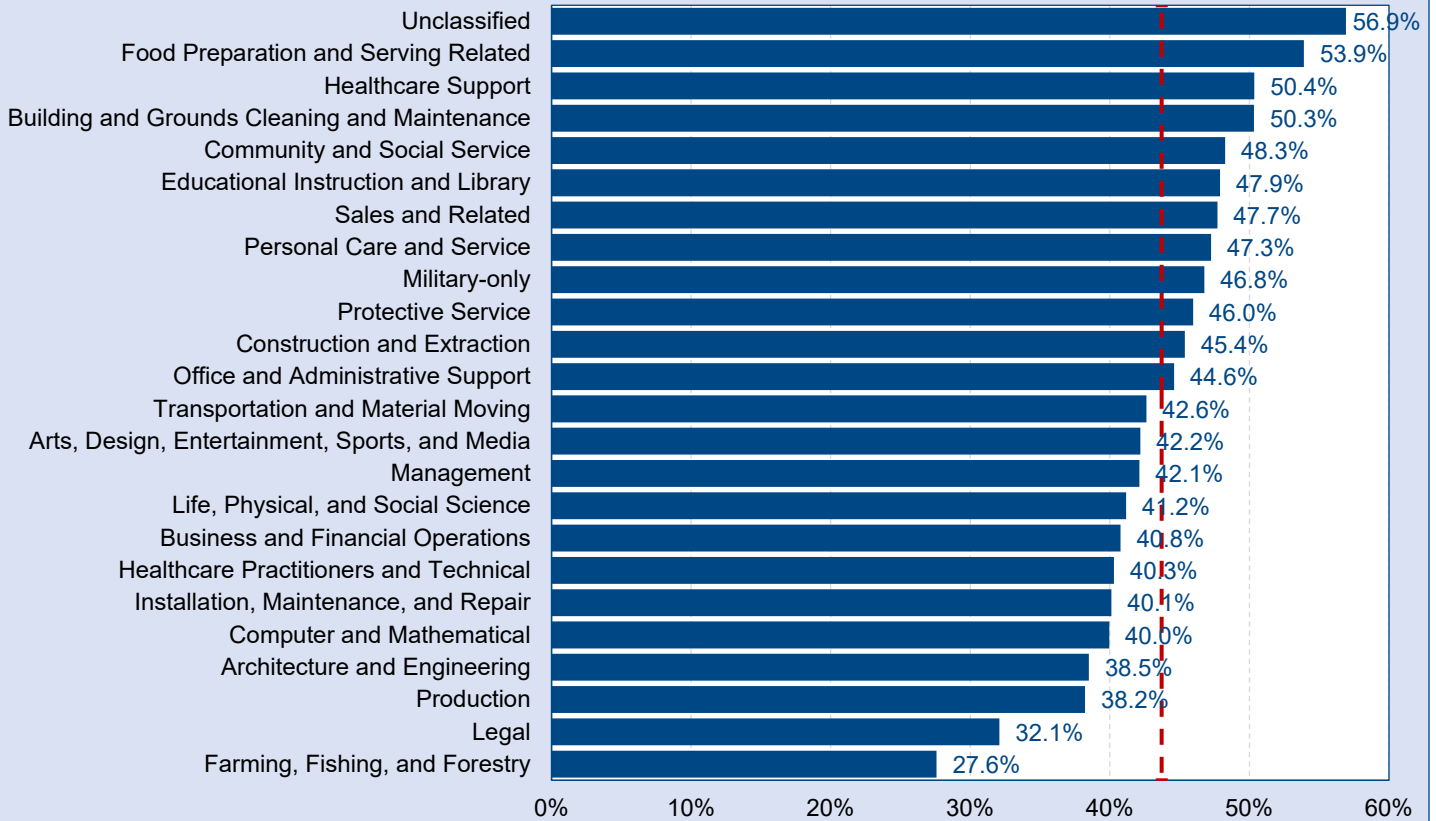
<b>Industry</b>	<b>Graduated in SWFL</b>	<b>Graduated and employed in SWFL</b>	<b>Retention Rate</b>
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,808	1,010	<b>55.9%</b>
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	76	42	<b>55.3%</b>
Educational Services	4,955	2,631	<b>53.1%</b>
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	787	404	<b>51.3%</b>
Construction	1,538	747	<b>48.6%</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	123	59	<b>48.0%</b>
Accommodation and Food Services	1,819	849	<b>46.7%</b>
Health Care and Social Assistance	4,970	2,282	<b>45.9%</b>
Management of Companies and Enterprises	170	78	<b>45.9%</b>
Retail Trade	3,237	1,452	<b>44.9%</b>
Unknown	23,474	10,378	<b>44.2%</b>
Other Services, Except Public Administration	1,237	546	<b>44.1%</b>
Public Administration	1,295	507	<b>39.2%</b>
Finance and Insurance	2,700	1,049	<b>38.9%</b>
Professional and Technical Services	5,019	1,932	<b>38.5%</b>
Manufacturing	2,676	963	<b>36.0%</b>
Wholesale Trade	1,177	419	<b>35.6%</b>
Utilities	239	80	<b>33.5%</b>
Administrative and Waste Services	1,286	429	<b>33.4%</b>
Information	1,333	433	<b>32.5%</b>
Transportation and Warehousing	791	245	<b>31.0%</b>
<b>Total, all industries</b>	<b>60,710</b>	<b>26,535</b>	<b>43.7%</b>

Source: RERI analysis of data obtained from Lightcast, obtained on July 6, 2023

### Chart 2-25: Graduation Retention Rates by Occupation

Percent of graduates from SWFL post-secondary institutes that work in SWFL

Total, all occupations: 43.7%



Source: RERI analysis of data obtained from Lightcast  
 Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Graduation Retention Rates by Occupation

Lightcast also provides an estimate of the retention rates for graduates in Southwest Florida broken down by occupation. The data used for this report was obtained on July 6, 2023.

The occupation with the highest graduate retention rates in Southwest Florida was the food preparation and serving related group, with 53.9 percent of all graduates in this field staying in the area. This was followed by healthcare support (50.4 percent), building and grounds cleaning and maintenance (50.3 percent), community and social service (48.3 percent) and educational instruction and library (47.9 percent).

**Table 2-22: Graduation Retention Rates by Occupation**

Graduates from SWFL post-secondary institutes that work in SWFL

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Graduated in SWFL</b>	<b>Graduated and employed in SWFL</b>	<b>Retention Rate</b>
Unclassified	8,366	4,762	<b>56.9%</b>
Food Preparation and Serving Related	1,217	656	<b>53.9%</b>
Healthcare Support	852	429	<b>50.4%</b>
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	153	77	<b>50.3%</b>
Community and Social Service	1,757	848	<b>48.3%</b>
Educational Instruction and Library	3,211	1,538	<b>47.9%</b>
Sales and Related	4,816	2,298	<b>47.7%</b>
Personal Care and Service	855	404	<b>47.3%</b>
Military-only	62	29	<b>46.8%</b>
Protective Service	807	371	<b>46.0%</b>
Construction and Extraction	357	162	<b>45.4%</b>
Office and Administrative Support	5,705	2,545	<b>44.6%</b>
Transportation and Material Moving	847	361	<b>42.6%</b>
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Management	2,394	1,010	<b>42.2%</b>
Management	14,449	6,086	<b>42.1%</b>
Life, Physical, and Social Science	787	324	<b>41.2%</b>
Business and Financial Operations	5,794	2,362	<b>40.8%</b>
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	3,928	1,583	<b>40.3%</b>
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	556	223	<b>40.1%</b>
Computer and Mathematical	3,456	1,381	<b>40.0%</b>
Architecture and Engineering	1,078	415	<b>38.5%</b>
Production	743	284	<b>38.2%</b>
Legal	1,530	491	<b>32.1%</b>
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	29	8	<b>27.6%</b>
<b>Total, all industries</b>	<b>60,710</b>	<b>26,535</b>	<b>43.7%</b>




Source: RERI analysis of data obtained from Lightcast, obtained on July 6, 2023



# #FutureMakers Coalition



## Resilience and Diversification\*

Indicator	Measure	Value	Trending
 <b>Start-Up Businesses</b> Number of start-up businesses up to two-years old	SWFL	<b>12,531</b>	Baseline
 <b>Start-Up Employees</b> Number of employees at start-up businesses up to two-years old	SWFL	<b>96,580</b>	Baseline
 <b>Longevity</b> Proportion of ongoing businesses and employees after 3 to 5 years	Businesses	<b>TBD</b>	
	Employees	<b>TBD</b>	

\* These data are a preliminary attempt to describe the current Southwest Florida entrepreneurial ecosystem. The Data & Reporting Team is continuing to explore the available data sources to determine the best methods to estimate the Resilience and Diversification Team outcomes.

## Background

The new Resilience & Diversification Regional Action Team is focused on ensuring our region's workforce and economy are resilient by cultivating a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem. Toward that end, entrepreneurial education is an indispensable cornerstone in the development of a thriving economy, especially in regions like Southwest Florida where small businesses and startups play an instrumental role. These enterprises not only create a dynamic economic atmosphere but also fortify the economic resilience of the area. By cultivating an educational environment that emphasizes entrepreneurial skills and mindset from K-12 onwards, we can set the foundation for a more robust and adaptive future for Southwest Florida. There are several compelling reasons to embed entrepreneurial education deeply within the region's educational infrastructure:

- **Economic Diversification:** Southwest Florida's economic vitality is intrinsically linked to the diversity of its industries. With a stronger emphasis on entrepreneurial education, students are equipped to explore and enter a broader array of sectors, thus diversifying and strengthening the region's economic base.
- **Cultivating a Growth Mindset:** Entrepreneurial education fosters a growth mindset in students. They are encouraged to see failures as learning opportunities, to be persistent, and to approach problems with innovative solutions. This mindset is invaluable not just for starting businesses but in myriad aspects of life.
- **Stimulating Local Economy:** By nurturing homegrown entrepreneurs, we ensure a continuous influx of local businesses that cater to the unique needs and characteristics of the Southwest Florida region. This not only boosts the local economy but also creates job opportunities and retains talent within the region.
- **Skill Development:** Entrepreneurial education equips students with a versatile set of skills – from critical thinking and problem-solving to financial literacy and leadership. These skills are transferable and beneficial even for those who do not pursue entrepreneurship, making them more adaptable in the evolving job market.
- **Building Community Networks:** When entrepreneurial mindsets are nurtured from a young age, it leads to the establishment of a supportive community of innovators, mentors, and investors. This ecosystem is essential for budding entrepreneurs to thrive and for the continuous exchange of ideas.
- **Empowering the Youth:** Empowerment comes from the knowledge that one has the tools and abilities to shape their future. By giving students the tools to create, innovate, and drive change, we're fostering a generation that believes in its potential to make a difference.
- **Future-proofing the Economy:** The future landscape of business and work is unpredictable. By fostering entrepreneurial skills, we are ensuring that the next generation is not just equipped to find jobs but to create them, adapting to whatever the future holds.

These reasons provide a firm foundation upon which the Resilience and Diversification Action Team can work toward the following goals.

- To enhance entrepreneurship Education in K-12 schools in all five counties in Southwest Florida.
- To increase the number of entrepreneurship programs offered and students studying entrepreneurship in all major universities and the five technical colleges in Southwest Florida.
- To increase the number of entrepreneurship programs offered to adults outside of universities and colleges.
- To develop the Southwest Florida Startup Community.
- To improve the Southwest Florida entrepreneurial ecosystem.

To measure the team's progress over time, two key outcomes were identified. These metrics will be reported on a routine basis in the annual Educational and Workforce Outcomes Report.

- The number of new businesses started in the region – and by county.
- The number of employees at startups and the business longevity – by industry, by type of startup.

In addition, the team may also present as appropriate a number of other possible data from local sources:

- The number of students exposed to entrepreneurship – elementary, middle, and high school, and universities and technical colleges (disaggregated).

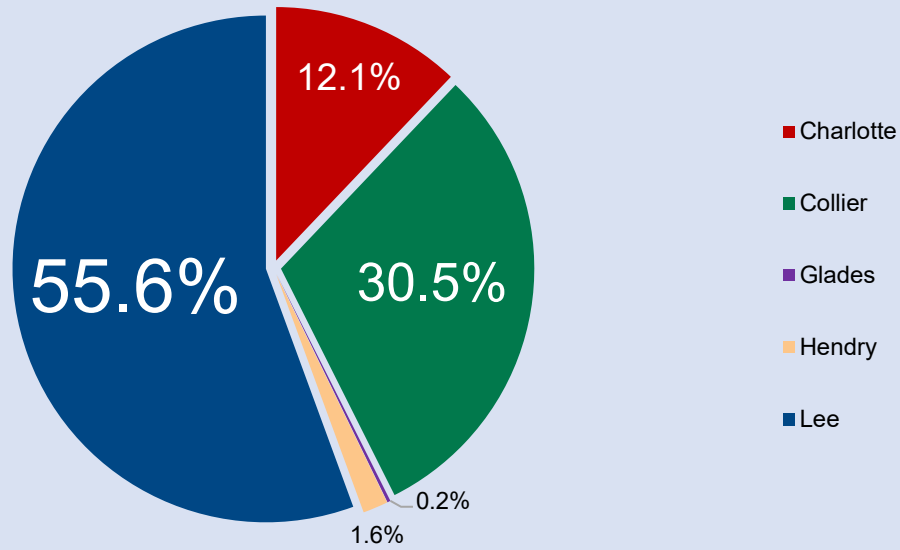


- The number of districts and schools that have structured entrepreneurship programs offered – elementary, middle, high school, and universities and colleges.
- The number of entrepreneurship programs offered outside schools, especially in underserved and disadvantaged communities.
- The number of schools that participate in local or regional entrepreneurship competitions – K-12 level and university/college level.
- The number of pitch events offered in the Southwest Florida region.
- The assets density and available resources and support – by county, by city.

Enhancing entrepreneurial education in K-12 and beyond is more than just an educational upgrade; it's a strategic investment in Southwest Florida's future. By embedding these skills and values early on, we are ensuring that the future viability, vibrancy, and resilience of the Southwest Florida economy is in competent and innovative hands.

### Chart 2-26: Start-Up Businesses

Proportion of businesses up to two-years old, by county (N = 12,531)  
June 2023



Source: Lightcast, obtained June 2023

## Start-Up Businesses

As of June 2023, there were 12,531 start-up businesses (defined as businesses up to 2-years old) in the 5-county Southwest Florida region. A little more than half (55.6 percent) of the start-up businesses were in Lee County. Glades County accounted for only 0.2 percent of start-up businesses (Chart 2-26).

In future annual reports, the proportion of start-up businesses filtered by race/ethnicity and gender will be presented.



The Lightcast data as currently sorted is not able to differentiate between “entrepreneurial start-ups” and a new store opened in the 5-county region by a large national chain (for example). The new chain store would be considered a “start-up” in the current Lightcast definition, even though that national chain may have been around for decades as a corporation.

## Start-Up Businesses by Industry

The top-10 start-up businesses in Southwest Florida by industry name (Table 2-23) accounted for approximately 35.6 percent (4,459/12,531) of all regional start-up businesses. The number of employees among the top-10 start-up businesses in the region accounted for approximately 24.6 percent (23,736/96,850) of all start-up business employees in Southwest Florida. Full-service restaurants were the largest regional employers among the top-10 start-up businesses with approximately 29.5 percent (6,994/23,736) of the total employees among the top-10 start-up businesses.

These data are a preliminary attempt to describe the current Southwest Florida entrepreneurial ecosystem. The Data & Reporting Team is continuing to explore the available data sources to determine the best methods to estimate the Resilience and Diversification Team outcomes.

**Table 2-23: Top 10 Industries for Start-Up Businesses**

NAICS Code	Industry Name	Number of Establishments	Number of Employees
561990	All Other Support Services	1,011	4,189
111000	Crop Production	766	1,587
621111	Offices of Physicians (except Mental Health Specialists)	473	3,508
722511	Full-Service Restaurants	373	6,994
236116	New Multifamily Housing Construction (except For-Sale Builders)	360	928
531210	Offices of Real Estate Agents and Brokers	343	1,448
812112	Beauty Salons	306	1,057
811412	Appliance Repair and Maintenance	294	1,246
561720	Janitorial Services	291	1,305
541618	Other Management Consulting Services	242	1,474
--	<b>Overall</b>	<b>4,459</b>	<b>23,736</b>

Source: Lightcast, obtained June 2023



The North American Industry Classification System Code (NAICS) 561990 includes establishments primarily engaged in providing day-to-day business and other organizational support services such as (but not limited to) bartering services, bottle exchanges, inventory taking services, contract meter reading services, umber grading services, and diving services on a contract or fee basis. Future reports will attempt to better identify the “all other support services” that are relevant to the Southwest Florida region.

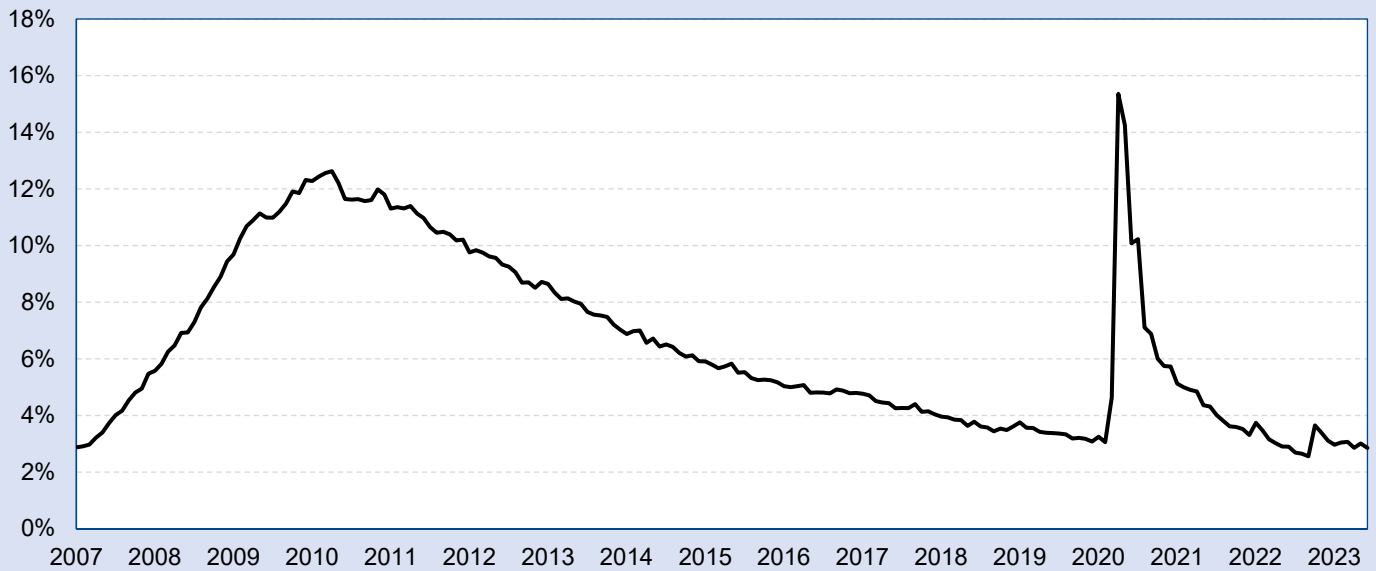


## Workforce Outcomes



### Chart 3-1: Unemployment Rate

Southwest Florida



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics. Seasonally adjusted by the RERI.  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

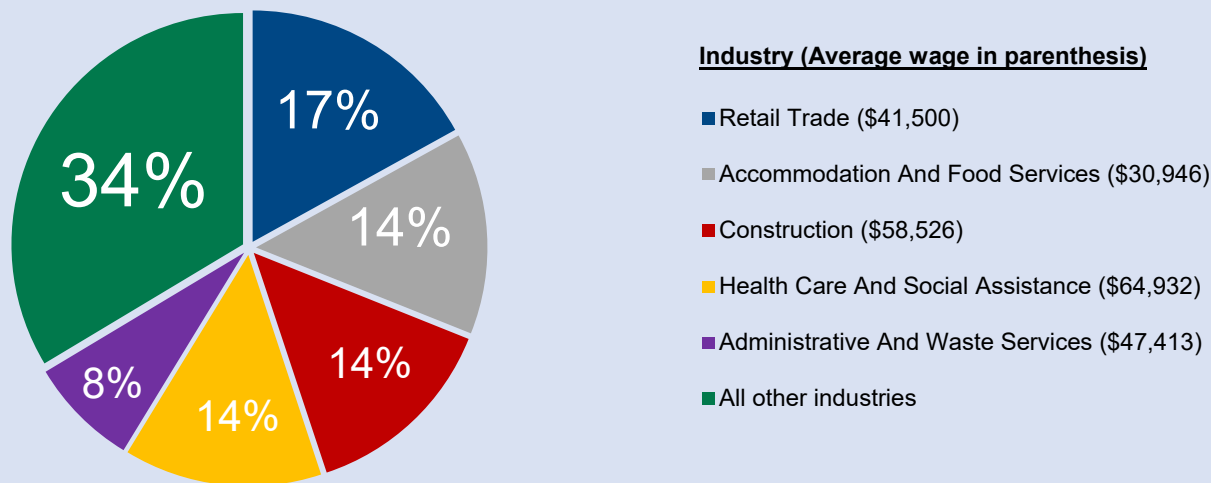
## Unemployment Rate

Chart 3-1 shows the seasonally unemployment rate for Southwest Florida since January 2007.<sup>18</sup> The unemployment rate for the region in June 2023 was 2.9 percent, unchanged from the June 2022 measure but 0.1 points below the May 2023 measure.

<sup>18</sup> All seasonal adjustments performed by the Regional Economic Research Institute.

### Chart 3-2: Employment by Industry

Southwest Florida  
2022



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Employment by Industry

Chart 3-2 and Table 3-1 shows an employment breakdown by industry and is provided by the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW).<sup>19</sup> Retail trade was the largest industry in Southwest Florida in 2022, with an average monthly employment of 75,696, representing 17.3 percent of all employment in the region.

The second largest industry employer was accommodation and food services, with 62,909 employees and 14.3 percent of regional employment. The third largest industry was the construction industry at 61,764, representing 13.8 percent of the region’s employment. Close behind was health care and social assistance with 61,692 employees (13.8 percent of the region’s employment). The top four industries comprised 58.7 percent of the region’s workforce in 2021, a slight dip from 2021 (which reported 59.1 percent of the regions workforce). The fifth largest industry was administrative and waste services, employing 34,224 workers (7.7 percent of the region’s workforce).

Southwest Florida has a comparative advantage in weather (sunshine and mild winter temperatures), beaches, and recreational activities. These quality-of-life characteristics are drivers that support the key industries in Southwest Florida, such as retail trade, health care, accommodation and food services, construction, and support services. Population growth has been a strong driver of wealth for the region, creating the need for housing, recreation, and services.

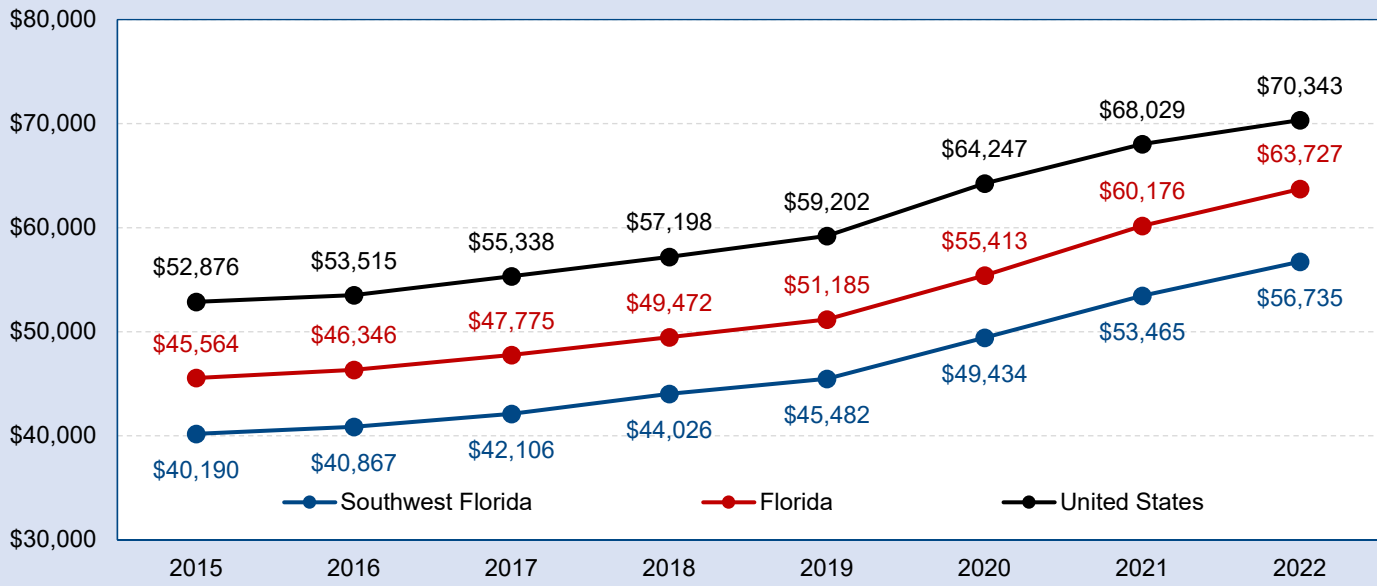
<sup>19</sup> QCEW data is based on employees covered by the Florida unemployment insurance, so it does not include workers who are self-employed. All figures represent employment from the private sector only.

**Table 3-1: Employment by Industry**Southwest Florida  
2022

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Average Monthly Employment</b>	<b>Percent of Total Employment</b>
Retail Trade	75,696	17.0%
Accommodation and Food Services	62,909	14.1%
Construction	61,764	13.8%
Health Care and Social Assistance	61,692	13.8%
Administrative and Waste Services	34,224	7.7%
Professional and Technical Services	27,590	6.2%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	18,242	4.1%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	17,228	3.9%
Manufacturing	14,445	3.2%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	13,613	3.1%
Wholesale Trade	13,313	3.0%
Finance and Insurance	12,722	2.9%
Transportation and Warehousing	9,825	2.2%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	7,623	1.7%
Educational Services	5,229	1.2%
Information	4,508	1.0%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	3,095	0.7%
Utilities	1,233	0.3%
Unclassified	759	0.2%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	517	0.1%
<b>Total All Industries</b>	<b>446,228</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

**Chart 3-3: Average Annual Wages**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Average Annual Wages

Chart 3-3 shows how average annual wages have changed over time.<sup>20</sup> The average annual wage in Southwest Florida was \$56,735 in 2022, an increase of 6.1 percent over 2021. While average annual wages have grown considerably since 2019 (up 24.7 percent), they continued to trail behind both the state average (\$63,727 in 2022) and national average (\$70,343).

Collier County had the highest average annual wage in Southwest Florida in 2022, measured at \$62,734. Lee County had the second highest average annual wage in the region (\$55,051 in 2022), followed by Glades County (\$52,465), Hendry County (\$48,283) and Charlotte County (\$48,283). Complete results by county can be found in Table 3-2.

<sup>20</sup> All figures represent average annual wages from the private sector only. Values are not adjusted for inflation.



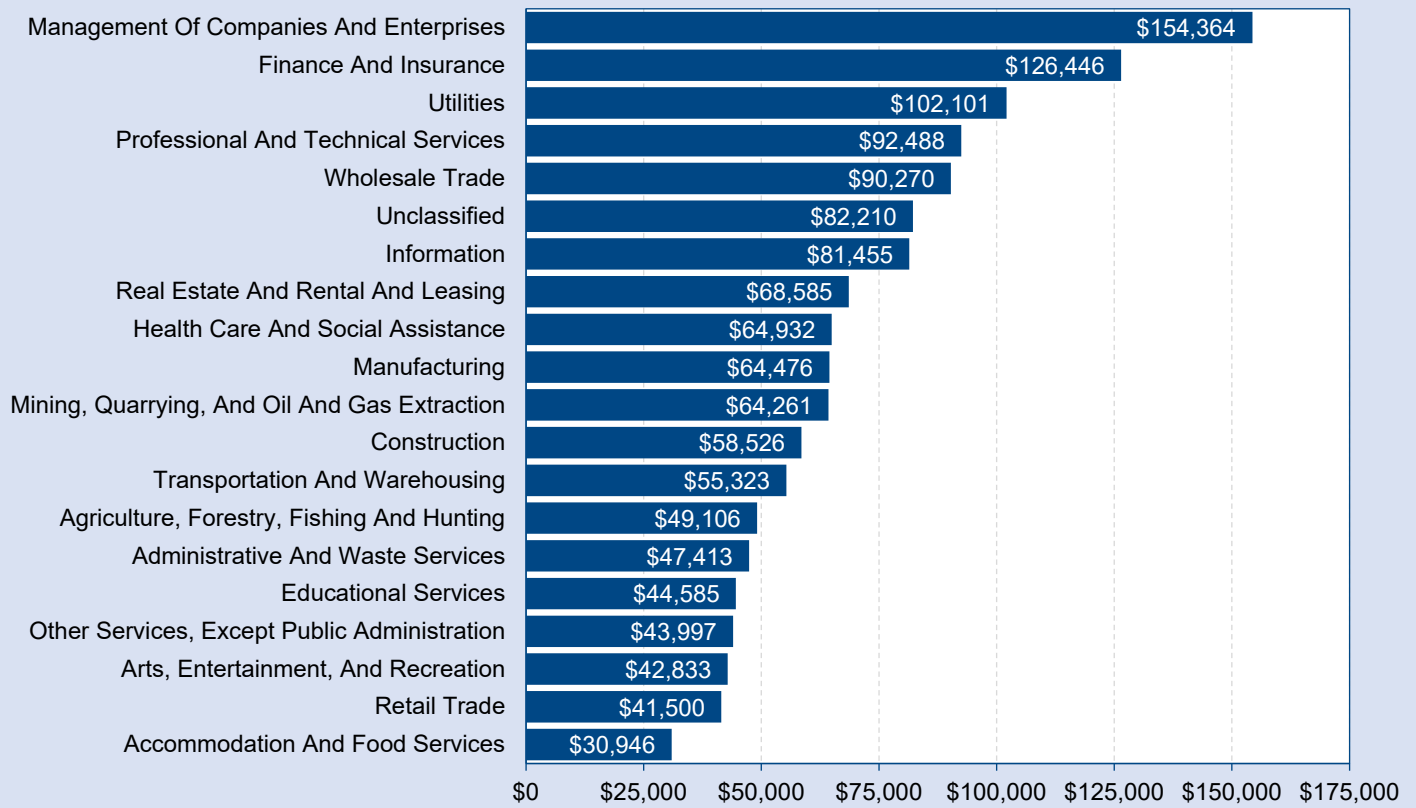
**Table 3-2: Average Annual Wages**

<b>Area</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Charlotte County</b>								
<i>Average annual wage</i>	\$34,303	\$35,061	\$36,423	\$37,715	\$39,205	\$42,125	\$47,193	\$48,283
<i>Percent change</i>	N/A	2.2%	3.9%	3.5%	4.0%	7.4%	12.0%	2.3%
<b>Collier County</b>								
<i>Average annual wage</i>	\$44,302	\$44,610	\$45,565	\$48,021	\$49,533	\$54,324	\$59,858	\$62,734
<i>Percent change</i>	N/A	0.7%	2.1%	5.4%	3.1%	9.7%	10.2%	4.8%
<b>Glades County</b>								
<i>Average annual wage</i>	\$39,164	\$40,680	\$41,756	\$42,642	\$44,645	\$47,356	\$47,220	\$52,465
<i>Percent change</i>	N/A	3.9%	2.6%	2.1%	4.7%	6.1%	-0.3%	11.1%
<b>Hendry County</b>								
<i>Average annual wage</i>	\$36,611	\$36,141	\$35,858	\$40,342	\$39,098	\$41,991	\$44,549	\$48,900
<i>Percent change</i>	N/A	-1.3%	-0.8%	12.5%	-3.1%	7.4%	6.1%	9.8%
<b>Lee County</b>								
<i>Average annual wage</i>	\$39,014	\$39,933	\$41,391	\$42,959	\$44,480	\$48,210	\$51,232	\$55,051
<i>Percent change</i>	N/A	2.4%	3.7%	3.8%	3.5%	8.4%	6.3%	7.5%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>								
<i>Average annual wage</i>	<b>\$40,190</b>	<b>\$40,867</b>	<b>\$42,106</b>	<b>\$44,026</b>	<b>\$45,482</b>	<b>\$49,434</b>	<b>\$53,465</b>	<b>\$56,735</b>
<i>Percent change</i>	N/A	1.7%	3.0%	4.6%	3.3%	8.7%	8.2%	6.1%
<b>Florida</b>								
<i>Average annual wage</i>	<b>\$45,564</b>	<b>\$46,346</b>	<b>\$47,775</b>	<b>\$49,472</b>	<b>\$51,185</b>	<b>\$55,413</b>	<b>\$60,176</b>	<b>\$63,727</b>
<i>Percent change</i>	N/A	1.7%	3.1%	3.6%	3.5%	8.3%	8.6%	5.9%
<b>United States</b>								
<i>Average annual wage</i>	<b>\$52,876</b>	<b>\$53,515</b>	<b>\$55,338</b>	<b>\$57,198</b>	<b>\$59,202</b>	<b>\$64,247</b>	<b>\$68,029</b>	<b>\$70,343</b>
<i>Percent change</i>	N/A	1.2%	3.4%	3.4%	3.5%	8.5%	5.9%	3.4%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. Collected from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.

### Chart 3-4: Average Annual Wages by Industry

Southwest Florida  
2022



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. Collected from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Average Annual Wages by Industry

Southwest Florida had an average annual wage of \$56,735 in 2022. The management of companies and enterprises industry had the largest average annual wage in Southwest Florida, measured at \$154,364 (as shown in Chart 3-4 and Table 3-3).

The finance and insurance industry had the second highest average annual wages in 2022 (\$126,446), followed by the utilities industry (\$102,101), professional and technical services industry (\$92,488), and wholesale trade industry (\$90,270). The unclassified industry had the sixth highest average annual wage in 2021 (\$82,210), followed by information (\$81,455), real estate and rental and leasing (\$68,585), health care and social assistance (\$64,932), and manufacturing (\$64,476) to round out the top 10. Only one industry (health care and social assistance) in the top five highest employment in Southwest Florida was ranked in the top 10 in average annual wages in 2022.

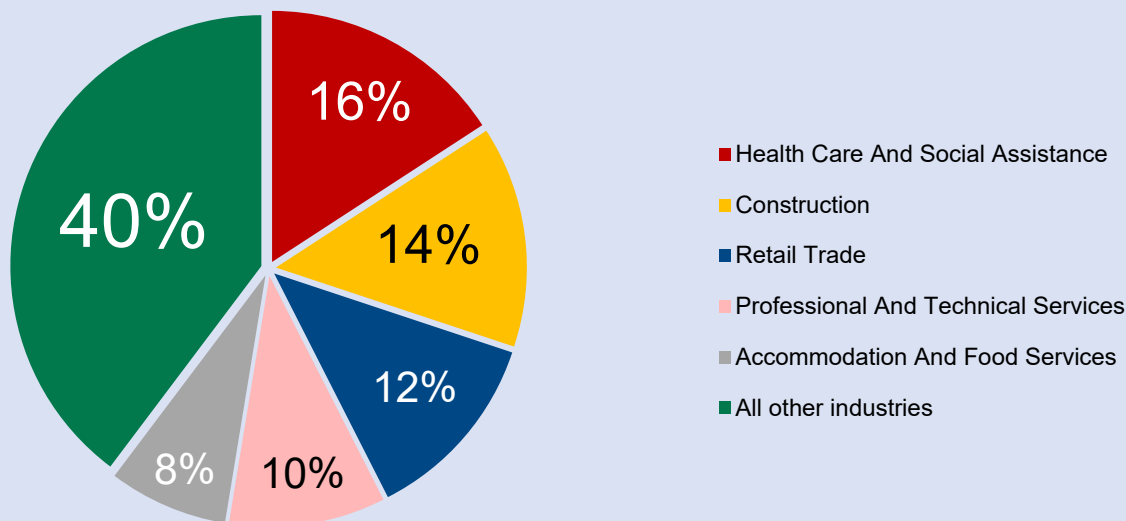
**Table 3-3: Average Annual Wages by Industry**Southwest Florida  
2022

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Average Annual Wage</b>
Management of Companies and Enterprises	\$154,364
Finance And Insurance	\$126,446
Utilities	\$102,101
Professional and Technical Services	\$92,488
Wholesale Trade	\$90,270
Unclassified	\$82,210
Information	\$81,455
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	\$68,585
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$64,932
Manufacturing	\$64,476
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	\$64,261
Construction	\$58,526
Transportation and Warehousing	\$55,323
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	\$49,106
Administrative and Waste Services	\$47,413
Educational Services	\$44,585
Other Services, Except Public Administration	\$43,997
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	\$42,833
Retail Trade	\$41,500
Accommodation and Food Services	\$30,946
<b>Total All Industries</b>	<b>\$56,735</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. Collected from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.

### Chart 3-5: Total Wages by Industry

Southwest Florida  
2022



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. Collected from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Total Wages by Industry

The largest contribution to total wage income is health care and social assistance—with annual wage expenditures exceeding \$4.0 billion—representing 15.8 percent of total wage expenditures in Southwest Florida. Construction was the next largest industry in terms of total wage expenditure, with 14.3 percent of the region’s total annual wage and expenditures of \$3.6 billion. The third largest industry measured by total wage expenditures was retail trade, with 12.4 percent of the total regional wage expenditures at \$3.1 billion. Professional and technical services was the fourth largest industry as measured by total wages at \$2.6 billion or 10.1 percent of the region’s total wage expenditures. Finally, accommodation and food services was fifth in terms of total wage expenditures, with \$1.9 billion or 7.7 percent of the region’s total wage expenditures. The total wage expenditures by industry are shown in Chart 3-5 and Table 3-4.

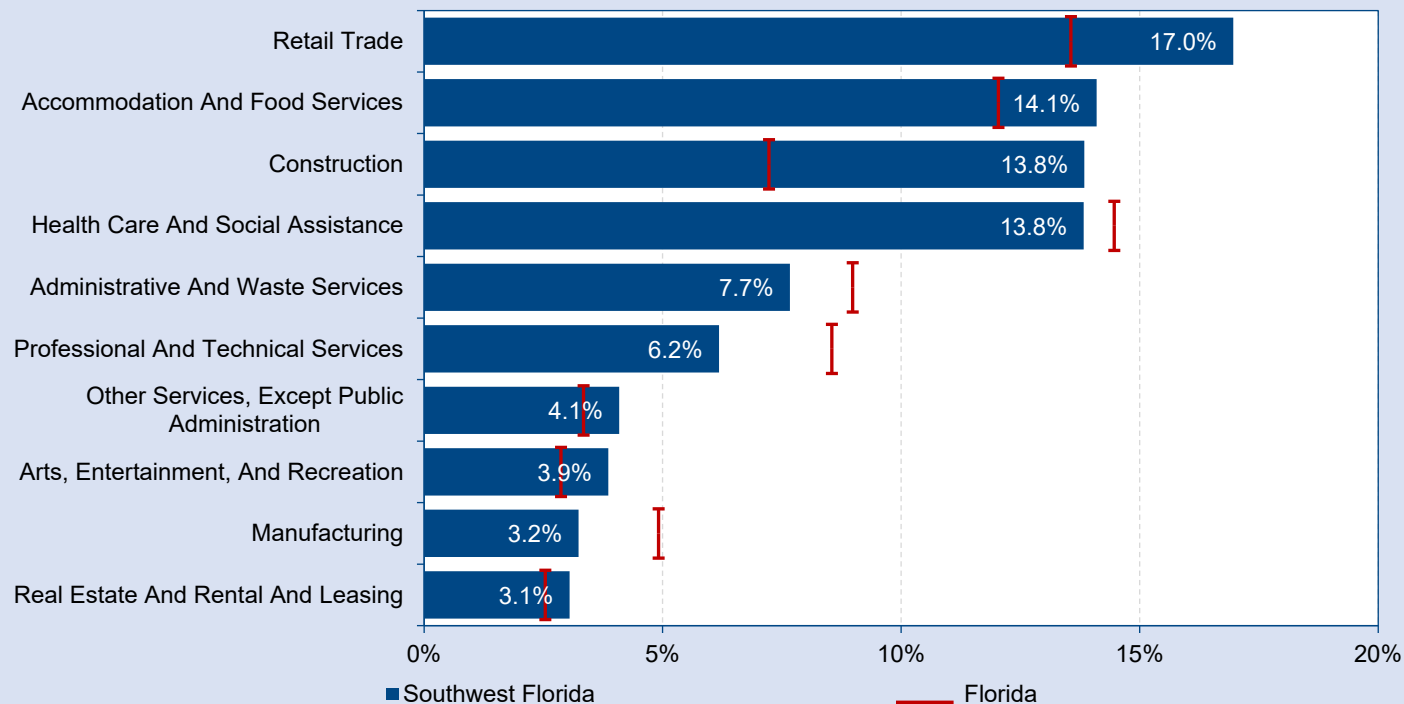
**Table 3-4: Total Wages by Industry**Southwest Florida  
2022

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Total Wages</b>	<b>Percent of Total Wages</b>
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$4,005,794,283	<b>15.8%</b>
Construction	\$3,614,812,464	<b>14.3%</b>
Retail Trade	\$3,141,403,587	<b>12.4%</b>
Professional and Technical Services	\$2,551,717,872	<b>10.1%</b>
Accommodation and Food Services	\$1,946,781,615	<b>7.7%</b>
Administrative and Waste Services	\$1,622,692,520	<b>6.4%</b>
Finance and Insurance	\$1,608,586,689	<b>6.4%</b>
Wholesale Trade	\$1,201,748,588	<b>4.7%</b>
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	\$933,672,268	<b>3.7%</b>
Manufacturing	\$931,346,251	<b>3.7%</b>
Other Services, Except Public Administration	\$802,588,967	<b>3.2%</b>
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	\$737,923,060	<b>2.9%</b>
Transportation and Warehousing	\$543,538,459	<b>2.1%</b>
Management of Companies and Enterprises	\$477,807,040	<b>1.9%</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	\$374,317,115	<b>1.5%</b>
Information	\$367,231,044	<b>1.5%</b>
Educational Services	\$233,144,334	<b>0.9%</b>
Utilities	\$125,932,737	<b>0.5%</b>
Unclassified	\$62,383,351	<b>0.2%</b>
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	\$33,217,453	<b>0.1%</b>
<b>Total All Industries</b>	<b>\$25,316,639,697</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Bureau of Labor Statistics

### Chart 3-6: Employment Share by Industry

Southwest Florida vs. Florida  
2022



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. Collected from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Southwest Florida vs. State of Florida Employment

Southwest Florida had a higher share of employees working in construction, retail trade, accommodation and food services, arts, entertainment, and recreation, agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting, other services (except public administration), real estate and rental and leasing, mining quarrying and oil and gas extraction, and utilities when compared to the State of Florida. Southwest Florida’s comparative advantage as a preferred location for tourism and retirement certainly helps to explain why the region differs from the state. The largest positive differentials between Southwest Florida and the state include construction (6.6 percentage points greater than the state of Florida), retail trade (3.4 percentage points), accommodation and food services (2.1 percentage points), arts, entertainment, and recreation (1.0 percentage points), and agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting (0.9 percentage points).

The largest negative differentials between the region and the state include transportation and warehousing (2.5 percentage points below Florida), finance and insurance (2.5 percentage points), professional and technical services (2.4 percentage points), manufacturing (1.7 percentage points), and wholesale trade (1.5 percentage points). Complete results can be found in Table 3-5.

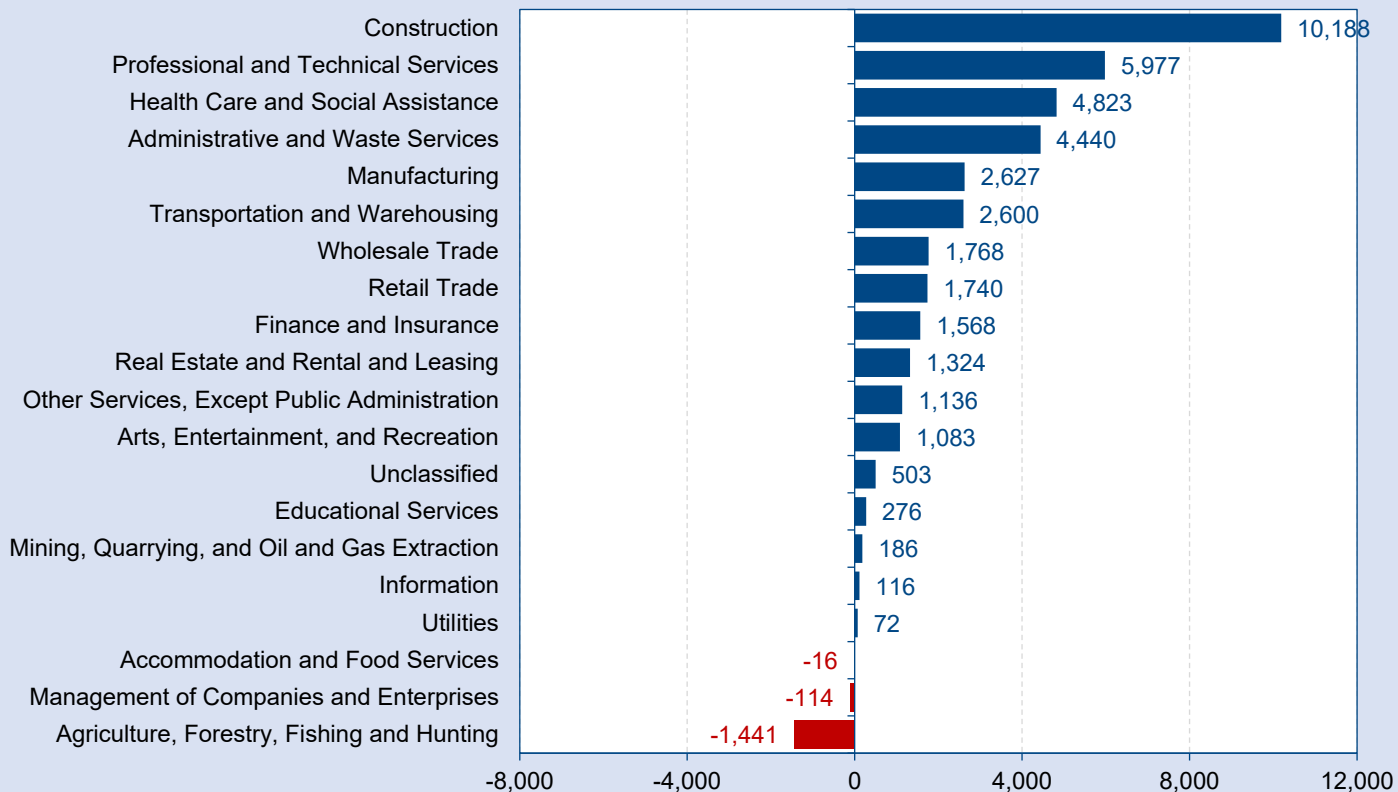
**Table 3-5: Employment Share by Industry**Southwest Florida vs. State of Florida  
2022

<b>Industry Title</b>	<b>Florida</b>	<b>Southwest Florida</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Construction	7.2%	13.8%	<b>6.6%</b>
Retail Trade	13.6%	17.0%	<b>3.4%</b>
Accommodation and Food Services	12.0%	14.1%	<b>2.1%</b>
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2.9%	3.9%	<b>1.0%</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	0.8%	1.7%	<b>0.9%</b>
Other Services, Except Public Administration	3.3%	4.1%	<b>0.7%</b>
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2.5%	3.1%	<b>0.5%</b>
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0.0%	0.1%	<b>0.1%</b>
Utilities	0.3%	0.3%	<b>0.0%</b>
Unclassified	0.2%	0.2%	<b>-0.1%</b>
Health Care and Social Assistance	14.5%	13.8%	<b>-0.6%</b>
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1.5%	0.7%	<b>-0.8%</b>
Information	1.9%	1.0%	<b>-0.9%</b>
Educational Services	2.2%	1.2%	<b>-1.0%</b>
Administrative and Waste Services	9.0%	7.7%	<b>-1.3%</b>
Wholesale Trade	4.5%	3.0%	<b>-1.5%</b>
Manufacturing	4.9%	3.2%	<b>-1.7%</b>
Professional and Technical Services	8.5%	6.2%	<b>-2.4%</b>
Finance and Insurance	5.3%	2.9%	<b>-2.5%</b>
Transportation and Warehousing	4.7%	2.2%	<b>-2.5%</b>

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Bureau of Labor Statistics

### Chart 3-7: Industry Employment Growth

Southwest Florida  
2018 to 2022



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. Collected from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.

Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

### Fastest and Slowest Growth Industries

Most industries in Southwest Florida grew between 2018 to 2022, as shown Chart 3-7. The industries with the most growth between 2018 to 2022 included construction (10,188 employees, 19.8 percent increase), professional and technical services (5,977 employees, 27.7 percent increase), health care and social assistance (4,823 employees, 8.5 percent increase), administrative and waste services (4,440 employees, 14.9 percent increase), and manufacturing (2,627 employees, 22.2 percent increase). Over the same period, the industries experiencing negative growth included agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (1,441 employee decline, 15.9 percent decrease), management of companies and enterprises (114 employee decline, 3.6 percent decrease), and accommodation and food services (16 employee decline, less than 0.1 percent decrease).



**Table 3-6: Industry Employment Growth**

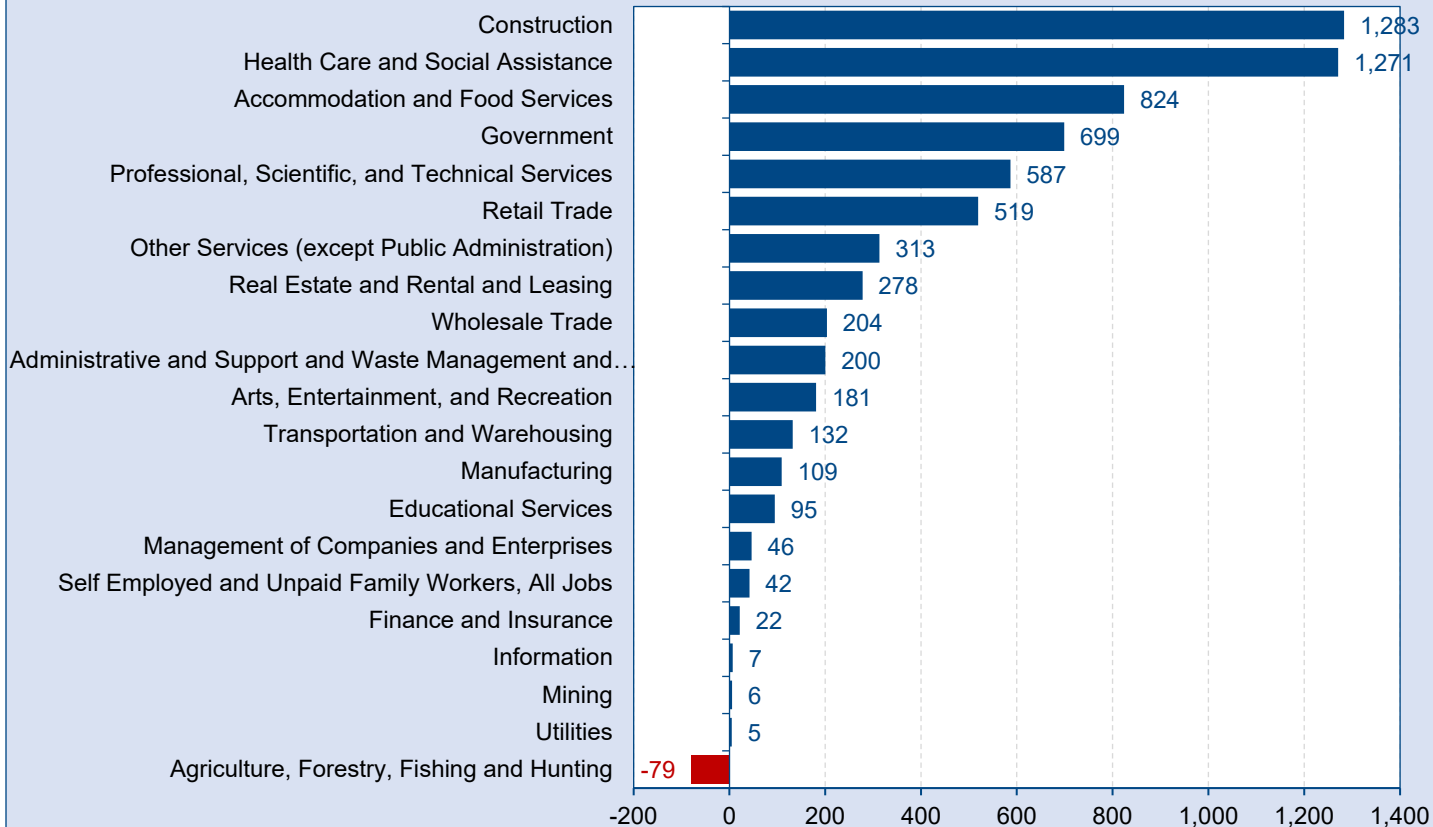
Southwest Florida

Industry	2018	2022	Growth	Percent
Construction	51,576	61,764	10,188	19.8%
Professional and Technical Services	21,613	27,590	5,977	27.7%
Health Care and Social Assistance	56,869	61,692	4,823	8.5%
Administrative and Waste Services	29,784	34,224	4,440	14.9%
Manufacturing	11,818	14,445	2,627	22.2%
Transportation and Warehousing	7,225	9,825	2,600	36.0%
Wholesale Trade	11,545	13,313	1,768	15.3%
Retail Trade	73,956	75,696	1,740	2.4%
Finance and Insurance	11,154	12,722	1,568	14.1%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	12,289	13,613	1,324	10.8%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	17,106	18,242	1,136	6.6%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	16,145	17,228	1,083	6.7%
Unclassified	256	759	503	196.5%
Educational Services	4,953	5,229	276	5.6%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	331	517	186	56.2%
Information	4,392	4,508	116	2.6%
Utilities	1,161	1,233	72	6.2%
Accommodation and Food Services	62,925	62,909	-16	0.0%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	3,209	3,095	-114	-3.6%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	9,064	7,623	-1,441	-15.9%
<b>Total, All Industries</b>	<b>407,370</b>	<b>446,228</b>	<b>38,858</b>	<b>9.5%</b>

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Bureau of Labor Statistics

### Chart 3-8: Projected Industry Employment Growth

Southwest Florida  
2022 to 2030



Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, 2022 to 2030 Employment Projections  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Projected Industry Employment Growth

Each year, the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity provides an employment forecast by industry, which is shown in Chart 3-8 and Table 3-7.<sup>21</sup> The construction industry is projected to be the fastest-growing industry in Southwest Florida, adding an average of 1,283 employees each year from 2022 to 2030. Health care and social assistance is projected to gain the second largest number of employees, adding 1,271 per year. This is followed by accommodation and food services at 824 employees per year, government at 699 employees per year, and professional, scientific and technical services at 587 employees per year.

<sup>21</sup> Unlike QCEW data, projections from the FDEO include employment from both the private sector and public sector.

**Table 3-7: Projected Industry Employment Growth**

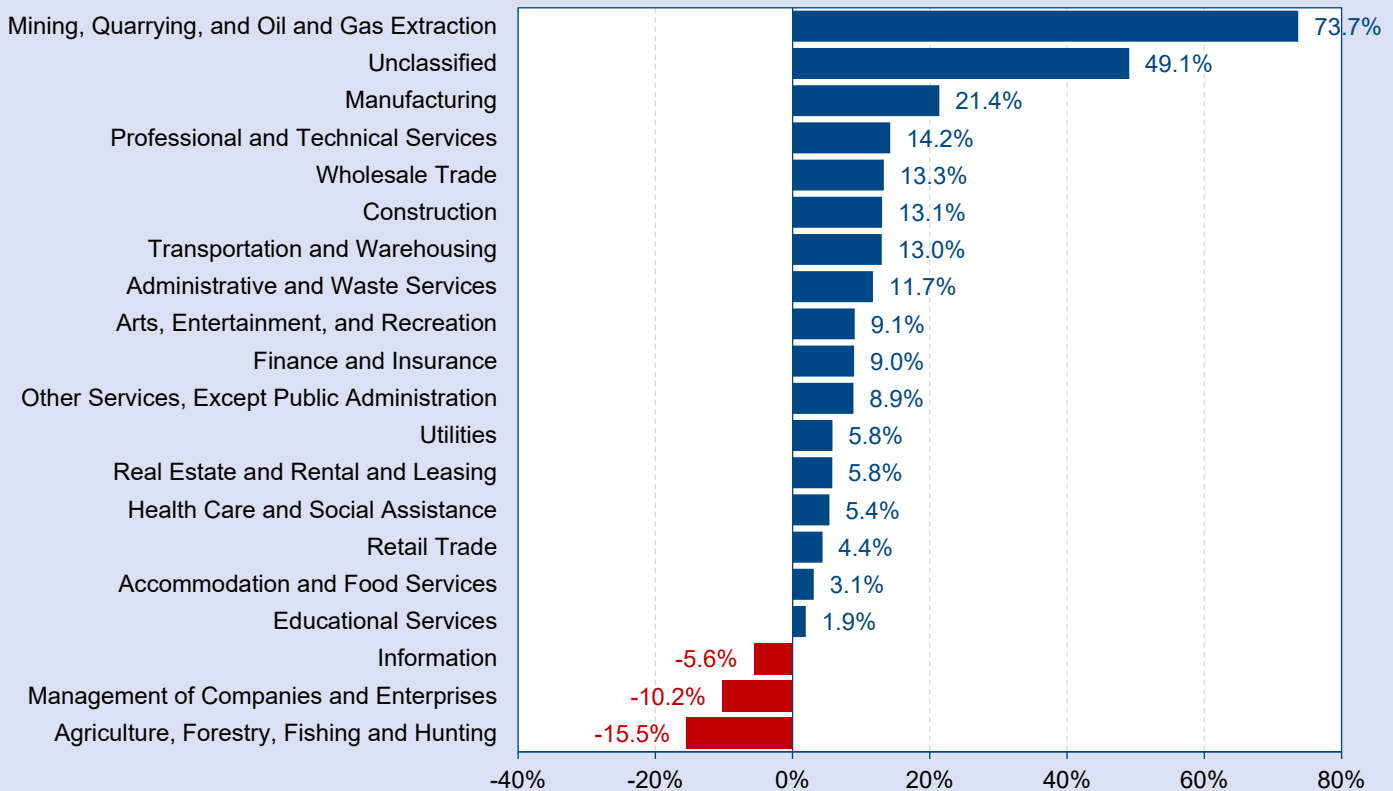
Southwest Florida

Industry	2022	2030	Average Annual Growth	Average Annual Percentage Growth
Construction	61,755	72,022	1,283	2.1%
Health Care and Social Assistance	76,759	86,927	1,271	1.7%
Accommodation and Food Services	65,867	72,459	824	1.3%
Government	66,345	71,937	699	1.1%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	31,197	35,892	587	1.9%
Retail Trade	75,037	79,192	519	0.7%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	21,884	24,391	313	1.4%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	13,386	15,612	278	2.1%
Wholesale Trade	14,584	16,213	204	1.4%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	35,760	37,363	200	0.6%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	17,068	18,515	181	1.1%
Transportation and Warehousing	9,409	10,466	132	1.4%
Manufacturing	13,931	14,805	109	0.8%
Educational Services	5,753	6,512	95	1.6%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	3,262	3,633	46	1.4%
Self Employed and Unpaid Family Workers, All Jobs	44,152	44,487	42	0.1%
Finance and Insurance	13,557	13,729	22	0.2%
Information	4,973	5,029	7	0.1%
Mining	420	466	6	1.4%
Utilities	1,272	1,311	5	0.4%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	7,834	7,200	-79	-1.0%
<b>Total, All Industries</b>	<b>570,705</b>	<b>622,709</b>	<b>6,501</b>	<b>1.1%</b>

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Bureau of Labor Statistics

### Chart 3-9: Competition Effect

Southwest Florida  
2018 to 2022



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. Collected from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Shift-Share Analysis

A shift-share analysis decomposes regional growth into different components: external factors (interest rates, nation’s growth, etc) and internal factors (infrastructure, human capital, etc). This method focuses on the region’s production structure and compares the observed growth to a theoretical growth (if the region grew at a rate similar to the reference unit, such as the nation). The difference in the observed and theoretical growth shows us how dynamic the region is and can be differentiated between a structural component (industrial composition) and differential component (comparative advantages).<sup>22</sup>

- **National Growth Effect:** portion attributed to national growth. Equals the theoretical change – if the region grew at the same rate as the nation.
- **Industry Mix Effect (proportion effect):** portion attributed to performance of specific industry. Derives from the presence in the region of sectors with more marked dynamics at national level due to increasing demand in those sectors.
- **Competition Effect (differential shift):** portion attributed to regional influences. Derives from the regional economy’s capacity to develop each of its sectors at greater average rates than those achieved by the corresponding national sectors.

Chart 3-9 presents the results of the shift-share analysis for Southwest Florida by competition effect. Most industries in Southwest Florida had a positive competition effect, indicating industries that were outpacing national trends. Leading the charge was the mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction industry (73.7 percent increase from 2018 to 2022), unclassified (49.1 percent increase), manufacturing (21.4 percent increase), professional and technical services (14.2 percent increase), and wholesale trade (13.3 percent increase). Industries with negative competition effects included agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, (15.5 percent decline from 2018 to 2022), management of companies and enterprises (10.2 percent decline) and information (5.6 percent decrease). Complete results can be found in Table 3-8.

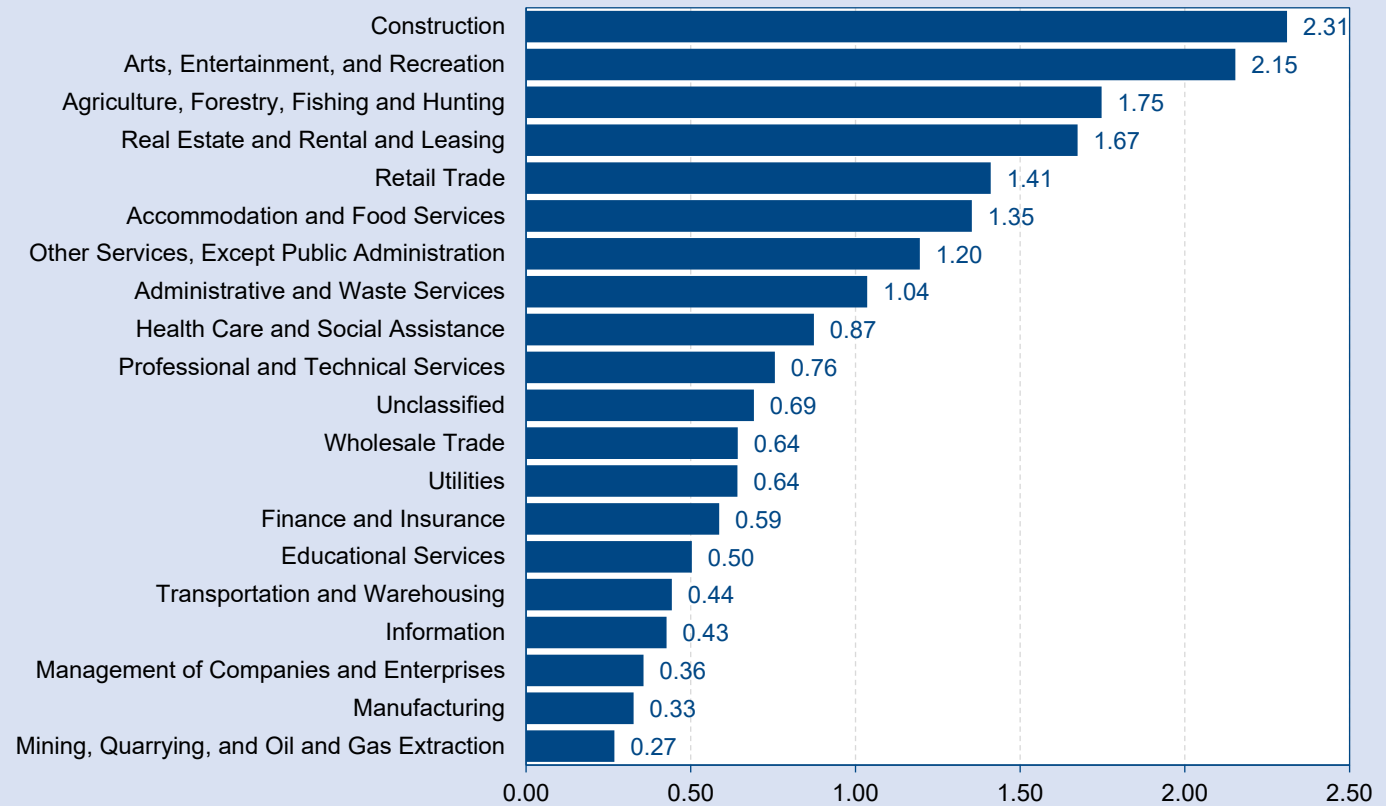
<sup>22</sup> See the methodology for more information on how the shift-share analysis is calculated.

**Table 3-8: Shift-Share Analysis**

Southwest Florida

Industry	2018	2022	Percent Change	National Share	Industry Mix	Competition Effect
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	331	517	56.2%	3.3%	-20.8%	<b>73.7%</b>
Unclassified	256	759	196.5%	3.3%	144.1%	<b>49.1%</b>
Manufacturing	11,818	14,445	22.2%	3.3%	-2.5%	<b>21.4%</b>
Professional and Technical Services	21,613	27,590	27.7%	3.3%	10.1%	<b>14.2%</b>
Wholesale Trade	11,545	13,313	15.3%	3.3%	-1.3%	<b>13.3%</b>
Construction	51,576	61,764	19.8%	3.3%	3.4%	<b>13.1%</b>
Transportation and Warehousing	7,225	9,825	36.0%	3.3%	19.7%	<b>13.0%</b>
Administrative and Waste Services	29,784	34,224	14.9%	3.3%	-0.1%	<b>11.7%</b>
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	16,145	17,228	6.7%	3.3%	-5.7%	<b>9.1%</b>
Finance and Insurance	11,154	12,722	14.1%	3.3%	1.8%	<b>9.0%</b>
Other Services, Except Public Administration	17,106	18,242	6.6%	3.3%	-5.6%	<b>8.9%</b>
Utilities	1,161	1,233	6.2%	3.3%	-2.9%	<b>5.8%</b>
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	12,289	13,613	10.8%	3.3%	1.7%	<b>5.8%</b>
Health Care and Social Assistance	56,869	61,692	8.5%	3.3%	-0.2%	<b>5.4%</b>
Retail Trade	73,956	75,696	2.4%	3.3%	-5.3%	<b>4.4%</b>
Accommodation and Food Services	62,925	62,909	0.0%	3.3%	-6.4%	<b>3.1%</b>
Educational Services	4,953	5,229	5.6%	3.3%	0.3%	<b>1.9%</b>
Information	4,392	4,508	2.6%	3.3%	5.0%	<b>-5.6%</b>
Management of Companies and Enterprises	3,209	3,095	-3.6%	3.3%	3.4%	<b>-10.2%</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	9,064	7,623	-15.9%	3.3%	-3.7%	<b>-15.5%</b>
<b>Total, All Industries</b>	<b>407,370</b>	<b>446,228</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>6.2%</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

**Chart 3-10: Location Quotient**Southwest Florida Relative to United States  
2022

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. Collected from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.

Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Location Quotient

Location quotients are a statistical measure used to measure the importance of an industry within a geographical area compared to a larger reference area (such as the nation). Quotients in this section are calculated using employment in Southwest Florida and comparing them to both the state of Florida and United States as a whole.<sup>23</sup>

- A LQ > 1 indicates that the region is specialized in the industry compared to the national average. Because of the higher concentration of employment, these industries often export goods and services outside of the region.
- A LQ < 1 indicates that the region is not specialized in the industry compared to the national average. Because their relative importance is lower, this can highlight a weakness within a regional economy.

Chart 3-10 depicts the location quotients for Southwest Florida in 2022, relative to the United States. The construction industry had the highest location quotient (measured at 2.31), indicating that this industry was approximately 2.3 times more concentrated in Southwest Florida compared to the nation as a whole. The arts, entertainment and recreation industry had the second highest location quotient (2.15), followed by agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (1.75), real estate and rental and leasing (1.67), and retail trade (1.41). The industries with the lowest location quotient included mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extract (0.27), manufacturing (0.33), management of companies and enterprises (0.36), information (0.43) and transportation and warehousing (0.44). Complete results of location quotients relative to both Florida and the United States can be found in Table 3-9.

<sup>23</sup> See the methodology for more information on how the location quotient is calculated.

**Table 3-9: Location Quotient**

Southwest Florida

Industry	SWFL Employment	Florida		United States	
		Employment	Loc. Quotient	Employment	Loc. Quotient
Construction	61,764	600,170	1.91	7,709,969	<b>2.31</b>
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	17,228	238,228	1.35	2,307,112	<b>2.15</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	7,623	66,714	2.13	1,258,231	<b>1.75</b>
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	13,613	210,772	1.20	2,344,740	<b>1.67</b>
Retail Trade	75,696	1,125,397	1.25	15,472,659	<b>1.41</b>
Accommodation and Food Services	62,909	999,281	1.17	13,403,691	<b>1.35</b>
Other Services, Except Public Administration	18,242	277,492	1.22	4,401,081	<b>1.20</b>
Administrative and Waste Services	34,224	745,780	0.85	9,531,701	<b>1.04</b>
Health Care and Social Assistance	61,692	1,201,112	0.96	20,354,295	<b>0.87</b>
Professional and Technical Services	27,590	709,612	0.72	10,534,478	<b>0.76</b>
Unclassified	759	19,154	0.74	316,492	<b>0.69</b>
Wholesale Trade	13,313	376,264	0.66	5,973,527	<b>0.64</b>
Utilities	1,233	23,462	0.98	554,030	<b>0.64</b>
Finance and Insurance	12,722	442,725	0.53	6,257,031	<b>0.59</b>
Educational Services	5,229	180,310	0.54	2,996,562	<b>0.50</b>
Transportation and Warehousing	9,825	391,508	0.47	6,405,308	<b>0.44</b>
Information	4,508	155,243	0.54	3,048,152	<b>0.43</b>
Management of Companies and Enterprises	3,095	126,060	0.46	2,504,211	<b>0.36</b>
Manufacturing	14,445	408,085	0.66	12,754,302	<b>0.33</b>
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	517	3,981	2.42	555,656	<b>0.27</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

## FGCU Seasonality Index

Southwest Florida is often characterized as experiencing seasonal fluctuations in employment levels throughout the year. However, fluctuations in employment levels are different for each industry, with some industries facing severe fluctuations from one month to the next, while others exhibiting little to no fluctuation. In this section, we analyze how Southwest Florida compares with other workforce regions in the state.<sup>24</sup>

Table 3-10 ranks the workforce regions from most seasonal to least seasonal in 2022. The index represents the average seasonal variation in employment the region experienced each month, with higher values representing more seasonality. Southwest Florida exhibited the highest seasonal fluctuation in 2022, with an index of 1.8 percent. This percentage indicates that on average, the difference in employment between the seasoned and unseasoned data was 1.8 percent each month. The Okaloosa Walton workforce region (1.7 percent) and Gulf Coast workforce region (1.6 percent) had the second and third highest index in 2022.

### Table 3-10: FGCU Seasonality Index

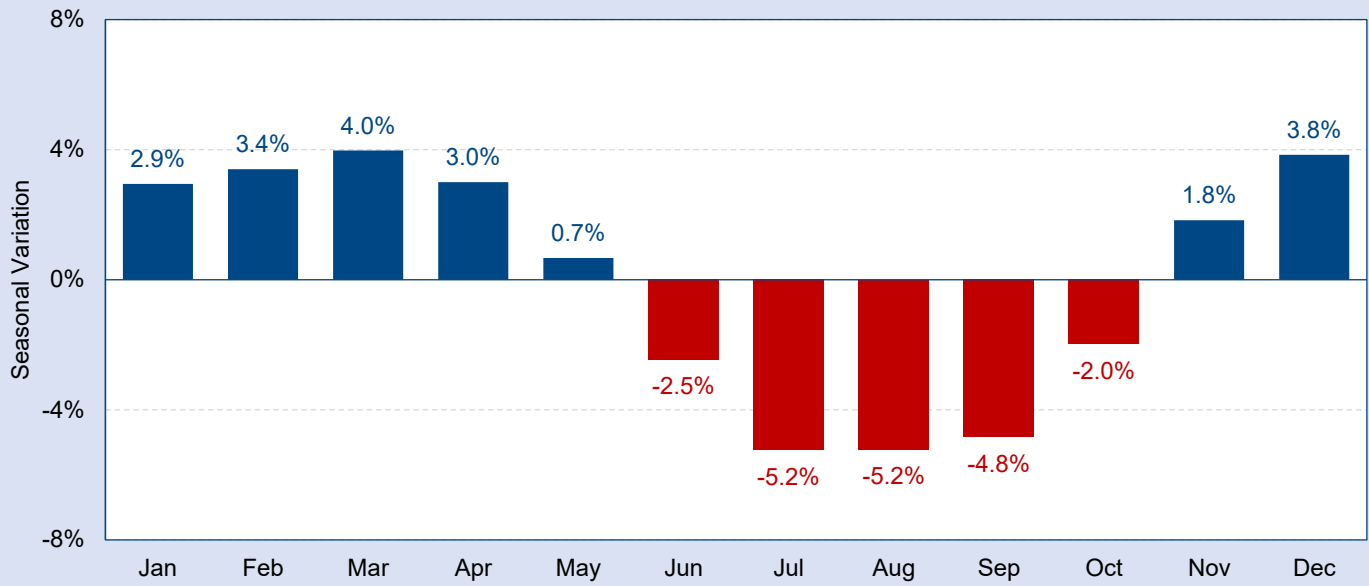
2022		
Rank	Workforce Region	MSV
1	<b>Southwest Florida</b>	<b>1.8%</b>
2	Okaloosa Walton	1.7%
3	Gulf Coast	1.6%
4	Heartland	1.4%
5	Capital Region	1.0%
6	Suncoast	0.9%
7	North Florida	0.8%
8	North Central Florida	0.8%
9	Palm Beach County	0.8%
10	Research Coast	0.8%
11	South Florida	0.6%
12	Broward	0.6%
13	Tampa Bay	0.6%
14	Escarosa	0.6%
15	Polk	0.5%
16	Northeast Florida	0.5%
17	Pasco Hernando	0.5%
18	Citrus Levy Marion	0.5%
19	Florida Crown	0.4%
20	Chipola	0.4%
21	Central Florida	0.4%
22	Pinellas	0.4%
23	Flagler Volusia	0.4%
24	Brevard	0.3%

Source: RERI Analysis of QCEW data obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

<sup>24</sup> See Issue Brief 2022-05 on the RERI website for more information on how the index was calculated.



**Chart 3-11: SWFL Seasonal Variation by Month**



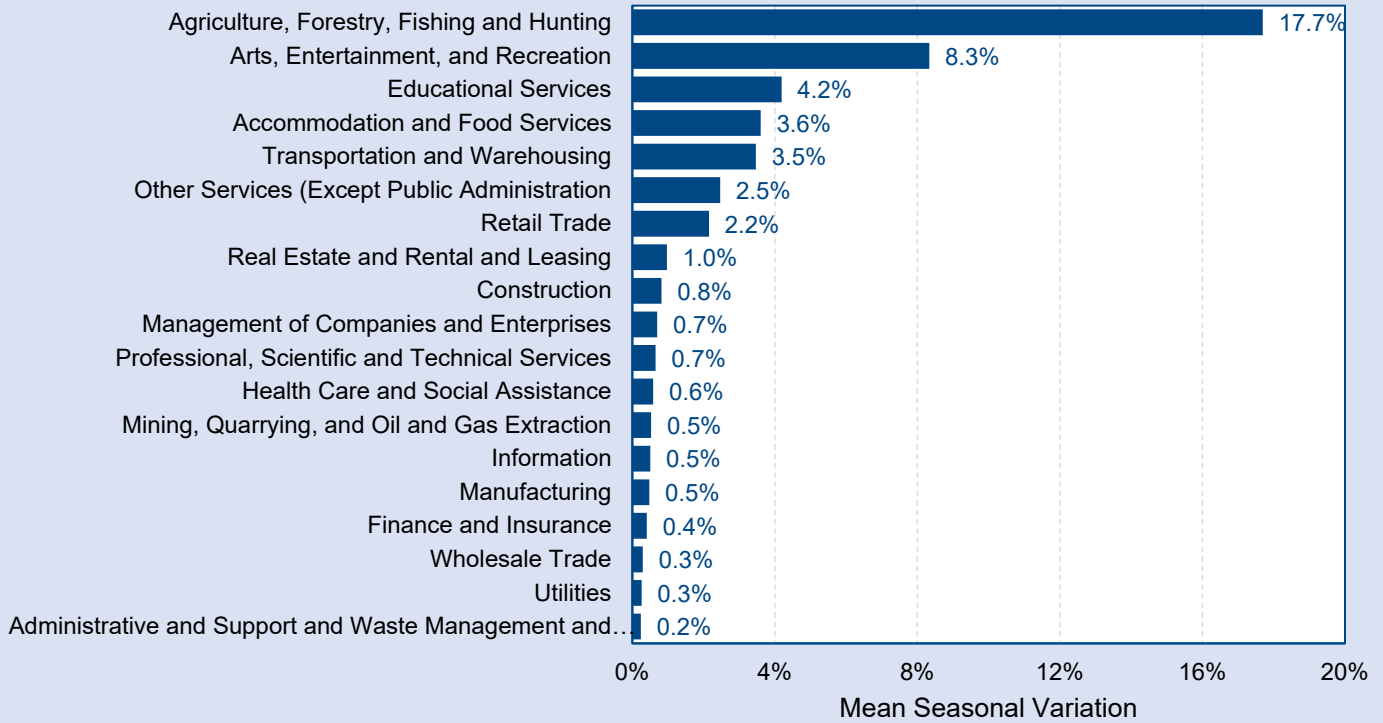
Source: Source: RERI Analysis of QCEW data obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics  
 Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Seasonality by Month

Chart 3-11 shows the average percent differences between the observed value and the seasonal values, by month, in Southwest Florida from 1990 to 2022. November through April tend to be the months considered “in season” for the region, and employment data backs this up. On the other hand, June through October tend to be the off-season months for the region, when firms shutdown and temporarily cut back on employment as demand for goods and services decline.

### Chart 3-12: FGCU Seasonality Index by Industry

Southwest Florida  
2022



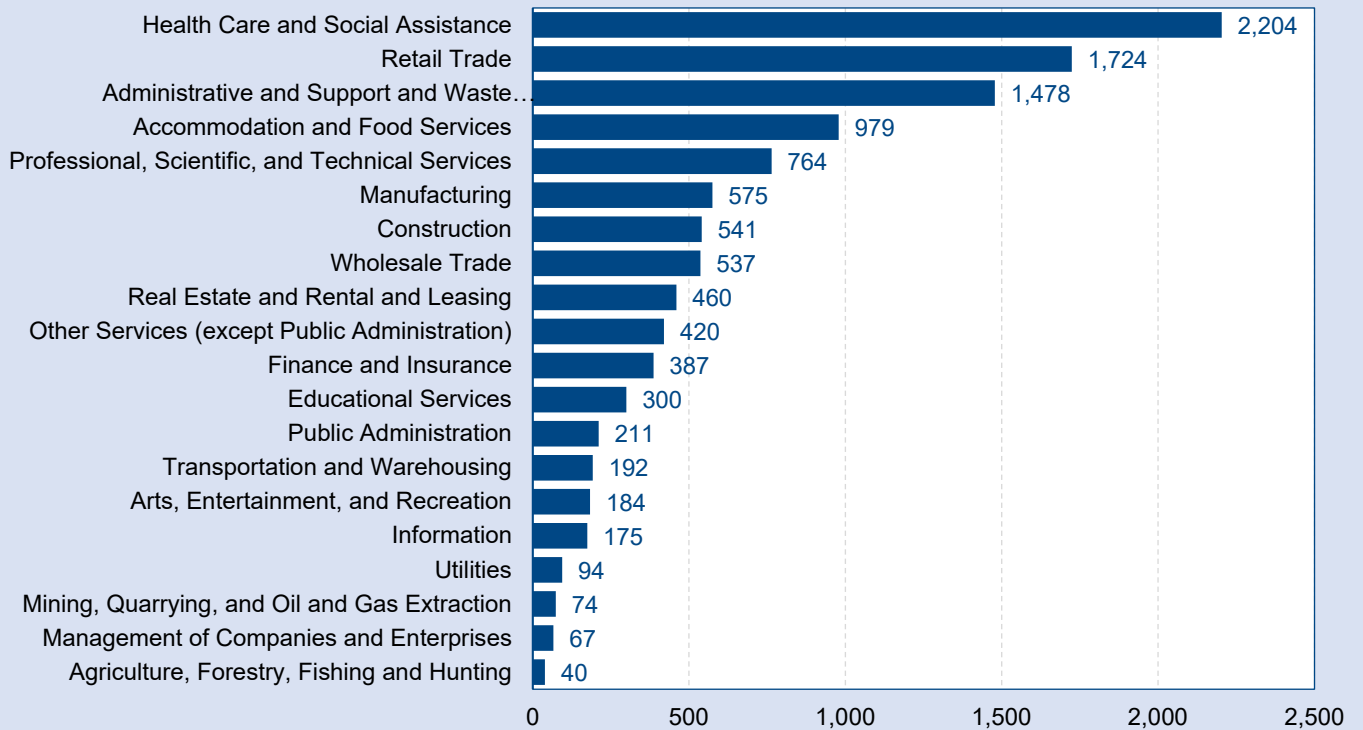
Source: RERI Analysis of QCEW data obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Seasonality by Industry

Chart 3-12 shows the industries that exhibited the highest seasonality in Southwest Florida. The agriculture industry had the highest seasonality in 2022 (17.7 percent), followed by the arts, entertainment, and recreation (8.3 percent), educational services (4.2 percent), accommodation and food services (3.6 percent), and transportation and warehousing (3.5 percent).

**Chart 3-13: Unique Job Postings by Industry**

Southwest Florida  
July 2022 to June 2023



Source: RERI Analysis of data from Lightcast  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Unique Job Postings by Industry

Chart 3-13 depicts the average number of unique job postings per month, by industry, in Southwest Florida from July 2022 to June 2023.<sup>25</sup> Health care and social assistance had the most number of unique job postings over the 12-month period, average 2,204 unique job postings per month. This was followed by retail trade (1,724 unique job postings per month), administrative and support and waste management services (1,478 postings), accommodation and food services (979 postings) and professional, scientific, and technical services (764 postings).

<sup>25</sup> See the glossary for more information on unique job postings.

**Table 3-11: Unique Job Postings by Industry**Southwest Florida  
July 2022 to June 2023

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Industry</b>	<b>Average Unique Postings</b>
1	Health Care and Social Assistance	2,204
2	Retail Trade	1,724
3	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	1,478
4	Accommodation and Food Services	979
5	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	764
6	Manufacturing	575
7	Construction	541
8	Wholesale Trade	537
9	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	460
10	Other Services (except Public Administration)	420
11	Finance and Insurance	387
12	Educational Services	300
13	Public Administration	211
14	Transportation and Warehousing	192
15	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	184
16	Information	175
17	Utilities	94
18	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	74
19	Management of Companies and Enterprises	67
20	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	40

Source: RERI Analysis of data from Lightcast

### Chart 3-14: Unique Job Postings by Occupation

Southwest Florida  
July 2022 to June 2023



Source: RERI Analysis of data from Lightcast  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Unique Job Postings by Occupation

Table 3-12 shows the 10 occupations with the most unique job postings, by occupation, in Southwest Florida from July 2022 to June 2023. Registered nurses had the most job openings between July 2022 and June 2023, with an average of 1,175 openings per month. Retail salespersons was the next highest occupation (596 job postings), followed by first-line supervisors of retail sales workers (404 postings), sales representatives, wholesale and manufacturing (388 postings), and customer service representatives (376 postings). Three of the top 10 occupations required a less than a high school diploma, one required a high school diploma or equivalent, five required postsecondary education, and one occupation required an associate’s degree.

**Table 3-12: Unique Job Postings by Occupation**

Southwest Florida  
July 2022 to June 2023

Occupation	Average Unique Postings	Minimum Education
Registered Nurses	1,175	Associates
Retail Salespersons	596	HS/GED
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	404	PSAV
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	388	PSAV
Customer Service Representatives	376	PSAV
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	288	PSAV
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	235	Less HS/GED
Waiters and Waitresses	234	Less HS/GED
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	230	PSAV
Fast Food and Counter Workers	227	Less HS/GED

Source: RERI Analysis of data from Lightcast

### Chart 3-15: Adult Vocational Unique Job Postings

Southwest Florida  
July 2022 to June 2023



Source: RERI Analysis of data from Lightcast  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Unique Job Postings by Educational Attainment

The study identified which occupations have the most job openings, broken down by the minimal educational requirement including:

- ✓ Postsecondary adult vocational
- ✓ Associate's degree
- ✓ Bachelor's degree
- ✓ Master's degree or higher

### Postsecondary Adult Vocational Job Openings

Table 3-13 shows the top 10 occupations with the most unique job postings in Southwest Florida from July 2022 to June 2023 for occupations requiring at least postsecondary adult vocational training. First-line supervisors of retail sales workers had the most unique job postings with an average of 404 postings per month, followed by wholesale and manufacturing sales representatives (388 openings), customer service representatives (376), maintenance and repair workers (288), and secretaries and administrative assistants (230).

**Table 3-13: Adult Vocational Unique Job Postings**

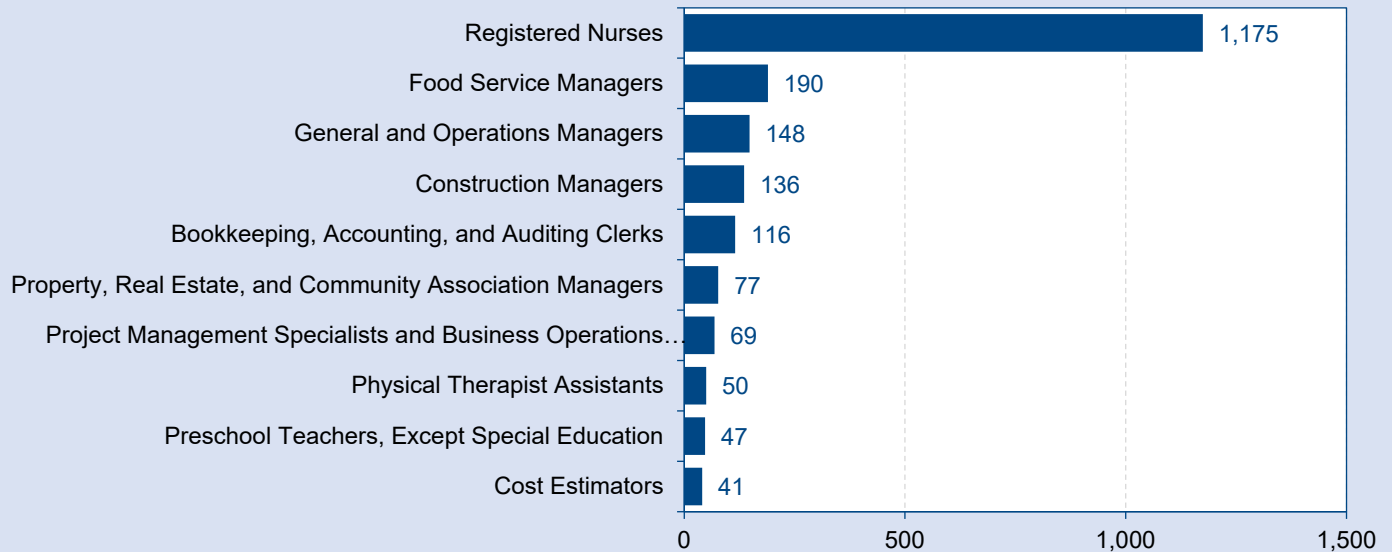
Southwest Florida

Occupation	Average Unique Postings
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	404
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	388
Customer Service Representatives	376
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	288
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	230
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	215
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	174
Nursing Assistants	169
Security Guards	153
Medical Dosimetrists, Medical Records Specialists, and Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other	152

Source: RERI Analysis of data from Lightcast

### Chart 3-16: Associate's Degree Unique Job Postings

Southwest Florida  
July 2022 to June 2023



Source: RERI Analysis of data from Lightcast  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

### Associate's Degree Job Openings

Table 3-14 shows the top 10 occupations with the most unique job postings in Southwest Florida from July 2022 to June 2023 for occupations requiring at least an associate's degree. Registered nurses had the most job postings with 1,175, followed by food service managers (190), general and operations managers (148), construction managers (136), and bookkeeping, accounting and auditing clerks (116).

**Table 3-14: Associate's Degree Unique Job Postings**

Southwest Florida

Occupation	Average Unique Postings
Registered Nurses	1,175
Food Service Managers	190
General and Operations Managers	148
Construction Managers	136
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	116
Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers	77
Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other	69
Physical Therapist Assistants	50
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	47
Cost Estimators	41

Source: RERI Analysis of data from Lightcast



### Chart 3-17: Bachelor's Degree Unique Job Postings

Southwest Florida  
July 2022 to June 2023



Source: RERI Analysis of data from Lightcast  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

### Bachelor's Degree Job Openings

Table 3-15 shows the top 10 occupations with the most unique job postings in Southwest Florida from July 2022 to June 2023 for occupations requiring at least a Bachelor's degree. Medical and health services managers had the most job postings with 214, followed by personal services and entertainment and recreation managers (163), sales managers (97), financial managers (82), and accountant and auditors (74).

**Table 3-15: Bachelor's Degree Unique Job Postings**

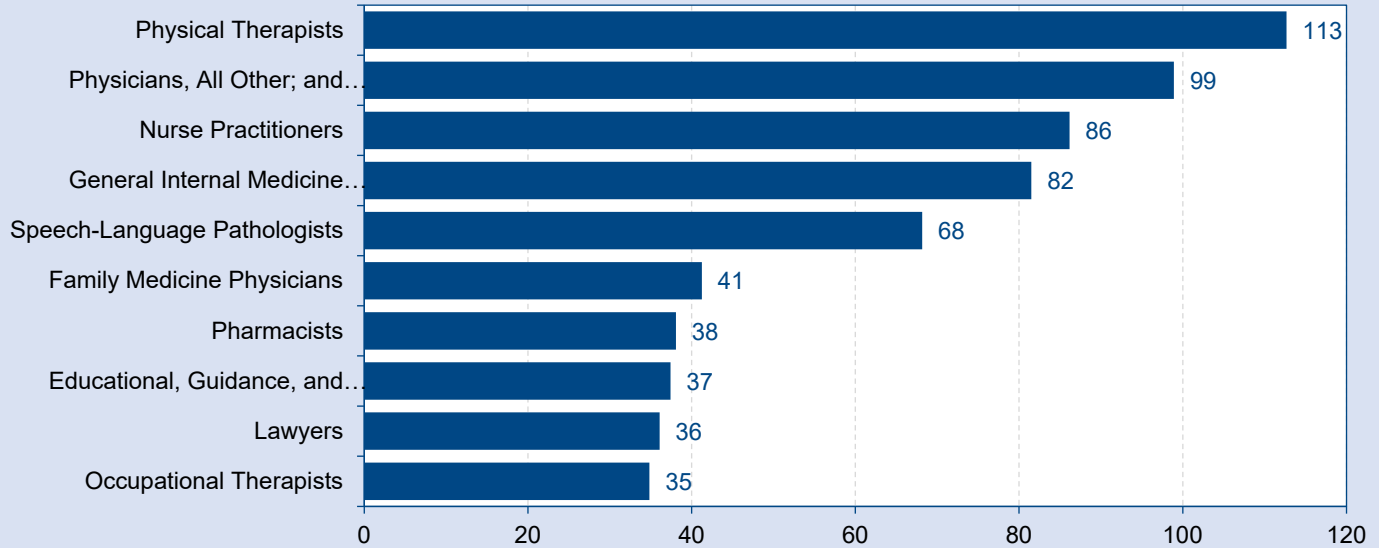
Southwest Florida

Occupation	Average Unique Postings
Medical and Health Services Managers	214
Personal Service Managers, All Other; Entertainment and Recreation Managers, Except Gambling; and Managers, All Other	163
Sales Managers	97
Financial Managers	82
Accountants and Auditors	74
Human Resources Specialists	70
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	69
Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents	67
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	57
Marketing Managers	47

Source: RERI Analysis of data from Lightcast

### Chart 3-18: Master's Degree or Higher Unique Job Postings

Southwest Florida  
July 2022 to June 2023



Source: RERI Analysis of data from Lightcast  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

### Master's Degree or Higher Job Openings

Table 3-16 shows the top 10 occupations with the most unique job postings in Southwest Florida from July 2022 to June 2023 for occupations requiring a Master's degree or higher. Physical therapists had the most job postings with 113, followed by physicians, all other (99), nurse practitioners (86), general internal medicine physicians (82) and speech-language pathologists (68).

**Table 3-16: Master's Degree or Higher Unique Job Postings**

Southwest Florida

Occupation	Average Unique Postings
Physical Therapists	113
Physicians, All Other; and Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	99
Nurse Practitioners	86
General Internal Medicine Physicians	82
Speech-Language Pathologists	68
Family Medicine Physicians	41
Pharmacists	38
Educational, Guidance, and Career Counselors and Advisors	37
Lawyers	36
Occupational Therapists	35

Source: RERI Analysis of data from Lightcast

### Chart 3-17: Short-term Job Openings for STEM Occupations

Southwest Florida  
July 2022 to June 2023



Source: RERI Analysis of data from Lightcast  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Short-term Job Openings for STEM Occupations

Table 3-17 shows the 10 STEM occupations with the most unique job postings in Southwest Florida from July 2022 to June 2023. Registered nurses had the most unique job postings, with an average of 1,175 postings per month. Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses had the next most job openings (215 postings), followed by medical and health services managers (214 postings), medical dosimetrists and medical record specialists (152 postings), and physical therapists (113 postings). Three of the top 10 STEM occupations required a postsecondary adult vocational education, one required an associate’s degree, two required a bachelor’s degree and four required at least a master’s degree.

**Table 3-17: Unique Job Postings for STEM Occupations**

Southwest Florida

Occupation	Average Unique Postings	Minimum Education
Registered Nurses	1,175	Associates
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	215	PSAV
Medical and Health Services Managers	214	Bachelors
Medical Dosimetrists, Medical Records Specialists, and Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other	152	PSAV
Physical Therapists	113	Master's or Higher
Physicians, All Other; and Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	99	Master's or Higher
Nurse Practitioners	86	Master's or Higher
General Internal Medicine Physicians	82	Master's or Higher
Computer User Support Specialists	77	PSAV
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	69	Bachelors

Source: RERI Analysis of data from Lightcast

## Long-term Employment Growth by Occupation

The forecast in Table 3-18 provides additional information about projected occupational demands for the Southwest Florida region. Information is presented for the top 10 growth occupations along with the 2021 median hourly wage and educational requirements. The top 10 employment growth occupations include restaurant cooks (2,500 new positions by 2030), construction laborers (1,531 new positions), retail salespersons (1,487 new positions), home health and personal care aides (1,267 new positions), stockers and order fillers (1,206 new positions), roofers (1,057 new positions), general and operations managers (977 new positions), waiters and waitresses (896 new positions), registered nurses (885 new positions), and carpenters (879 new positions).

The top 10 growth occupations primarily reflect expected increases in retail, tourism, food preparation, construction, and health care. Two of the top growth occupations require less than a high school degree, two requires a high school degree or GED, four require adult vocational training, and two requires an associate's degree. Median wages varied from \$13.34 per hour to \$37.56 per hour and were highly correlated with the required minimum education.

A complete list of the top 50 long-term annual employment growth occupations in Southwest Florida can be found in Appendix A.

### Table 3-18: Long-Term Employment Growth Occupations

2022 to 2030

Occupation	2022	2030	Growth	Percent Growth	2021 Median Hourly Wage	Minimum Education
Cooks, Restaurant	10,037	12,537	<b>2,500</b>	24.9%	N/R	PSAV
Construction Laborers	10,154	11,685	<b>1,531</b>	15.1%	\$17.64	Less HS/GED
Retail Salespersons	22,301	23,788	<b>1,487</b>	6.7%	\$13.63	HS/GED
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	4,805	6,072	<b>1,267</b>	26.4%	\$13.34	PSAV
Stockers and Order Fillers	7,797	9,003	<b>1,206</b>	15.5%	\$14.29	HS/GED
Roofers	3,849	4,906	<b>1,057</b>	27.5%	N/R	PSAV
General and Operations Managers	8,712	9,689	<b>977</b>	11.2%	\$37.56	Associates
Waiters and Waitresses	15,376	16,272	<b>896</b>	5.8%	N/R	Less HS/GED
Registered Nurses	9,951	10,836	<b>885</b>	8.9%	\$36.30	Associates
Carpenters	7,640	8,519	<b>879</b>	11.5%	\$19.22	PSAV

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Employment Projections

Note: Numbers not reported denoted by N/R

## Long-term Employment Growth by Educational Attainment

The study looked at long-run occupational growth by identifying the fastest-growing occupations by the minimal educational requirement including:

- ✓ Post-secondary adult vocational
- ✓ Associate's degree
- ✓ Bachelor's degree
- ✓ Master's degree or higher

The tables in this section present information employment growth between 2022 and 2030, as well as median wages for 2021.

### Postsecondary Adult Vocational

The top 10 projected long-run growth occupations requiring a minimum of postsecondary adult vocational training include restaurant cooks (2,500 new positions between 2022 and 2030), home health and personal care aides (1,267 new positions), roofers (1,057 new positions), carpenters (879 new positions), maintenance and repair workers (727 new positions), medical assistants (642 new positions), nursing assistants (606 new positions), construction and maintenance painters (548 new positions), wholesale and manufacturing sales representatives (493 new positions), and heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (482 new positions). The top 20 growth occupations for adult vocational, along with the median wage can be found in Table 3-19.

**Table 3-19: Adult Vocational Long-term Growth Occupations**  
2022 to 2030

Ranking	Occupation	2022	2030	Growth	Percent Growth	2021 Median Hourly Wage
1	Cooks, Restaurant	10,037	12,537	<b>2,500</b>	24.9%	N/R
2	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	4,805	6,072	<b>1,267</b>	26.4%	\$13.34
3	Roofers	3,849	4,906	<b>1,057</b>	27.5%	N/R
4	Carpenters	7,640	8,519	<b>879</b>	11.5%	\$19.22
5	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	7,008	7,735	<b>727</b>	10.4%	\$18.09
6	Medical Assistants	3,998	4,640	<b>642</b>	16.1%	\$17.94
7	Nursing Assistants	4,976	5,582	<b>606</b>	12.2%	\$14.41
8	Painters, Construction and Maintenance	4,741	5,289	<b>548</b>	11.6%	N/R
9	Sales Rep., Wholesale & Manufacturing, Except Tech. & Scientific Products	4,391	4,884	<b>493</b>	11.2%	\$24.67
10	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	4,398	4,880	<b>482</b>	11.0%	\$19.68
11	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	6,015	6,495	<b>480</b>	8.0%	\$18.21
12	Electricians	2,790	3,269	<b>479</b>	17.2%	\$23.04
13	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	2,998	3,404	<b>406</b>	13.5%	\$22.93
14	Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	4,124	4,491	<b>367</b>	8.9%	N/R
15	Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	3,271	3,636	<b>365</b>	11.2%	\$17.56
16	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	2,416	2,745	<b>329</b>	13.6%	\$22.92
17	Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	1,579	1,908	<b>329</b>	20.8%	N/R
18	Real Estate Sales Agents	4,672	4,990	<b>318</b>	6.8%	N/R
19	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	4,423	4,726	<b>303</b>	6.9%	\$22.60
20	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	2,215	2,507	<b>292</b>	13.2%	\$22.77

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Employment Projections

Note: Numbers not reported denoted by N/R.

## Associate's Degree

The top 10 projected long-run growth occupations requiring an associate's degree include general and operations managers (977 new positions from 2022 to 2030), registered nurses (885 new positions), supervisors of construction workers (873 new positions), project management specialists (605 new positions), construction managers (501 new positions), teaching assistants (345 new positions), preschool teachers (232 new positions), bookkeeping, accounting and auditing clerks (212 new positions), physical therapist assistants (196 new positions) and property, real estate and community association managers (194 new positions). The top 20 growth occupations requiring an associate's degree, along with the median wage can be found in Table 3-20.

### Table 3-20: Associate's Degree Long-term Growth Occupations

2022 to 2030

Ranking	Occupation	2022	2030	Growth	Percent Growth	2021 Median Hourly Wage
1	General and Operations Managers	8,712	9,689	977	11.2%	\$37.56
2	Registered Nurses	9,951	10,836	885	8.9%	\$36.30
3	Supervisors of Construction and Extraction Workers	5,758	6,631	873	15.2%	\$29.50
4	Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other	5,544	6,149	605	10.9%	N/R
5	Construction Managers	3,152	3,653	501	15.9%	\$39.91
6	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	2,978	3,323	345	11.6%	\$28,906
7	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	1,599	1,831	232	14.5%	\$13.80
8	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	5,522	5,734	212	3.8%	\$18.66
9	Physical Therapist Assistants	751	947	196	26.1%	N/R
10	Property, Real Estate & Community Assoc. Mgr.	3,024	3,218	194	6.4%	\$28.57
11	Social and Community Service Managers	806	989	183	22.7%	\$29.39
12	Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	869	1,051	182	20.9%	N/R
13	Respiratory Therapists	809	975	166	20.5%	N/R
14	Postsecondary Teachers, All Other	1,022	1,181	159	15.6%	N/R
15	Dental Hygienists	831	990	159	19.1%	\$37.29
16	Cost Estimators	1,175	1,316	141	12.0%	N/R
17	Food Service Managers	1,947	2,075	128	6.6%	\$36.49
18	Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	1,601	1,711	110	6.9%	\$28.44
19	Occupational Therapy Assistants	430	538	108	25.1%	N/R
20	Recreation Workers	1,078	1,176	98	9.1%	\$14.13

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Employment Projections

Note: \* Denotes average annual wage when a median wage is not available. Numbers not reported denoted by N/R.

## Bachelor's Degree

The top 10 projected long-run growth occupations requiring a bachelor's degree include market research analysts (647 new positions from 2022 to 2030), accountants and auditors (619 new positions), software developers and software quality assurance analysts and testers (548 new positions), elementary school teachers (510 new positions), medical and health services managers (387 new positions), management analysts (320 new positions), secondary school teachers (291 new positions), financial managers (246 new positions), middle school teachers (231 new positions), and human resources specialists (199 new positions). The top 20 growth occupations requiring a bachelor's degree, along with the median wage can be found in Table 3-21.

**Table 3-21: Bachelor's Degree Long-term Growth Occupations**  
2022 to 2030

Ranking	Occupation	2022	2030	Growth	Percent Growth	2021 Median Hourly Wage
1	Market Research Analysts & Marketing Specialists	2,815	3,462	647	23.0%	\$28.91
2	Accountants and Auditors	4,292	4,911	619	14.4%	\$30.56
3	Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	2,620	3,168	548	20.9%	N/R
4	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Ed.	4,464	4,974	510	11.4%	\$61,221*
5	Medical and Health Services Managers	1,423	1,810	387	27.2%	\$46.45
6	Management Analysts	2,272	2,592	320	14.1%	\$38.07
7	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	2,463	2,754	291	11.8%	\$61,221*
8	Financial Managers	1,508	1,754	246	16.3%	\$49.32
9	Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	1,997	2,228	231	11.6%	\$60,666*
10	Human Resources Specialists	1,642	1,841	199	12.1%	\$26.97
11	Physician Assistants	505	647	142	28.1%	N/R
12	Personal Service Managers, All Other; Entertainment and Recreation Managers, Except Gambling	1,423	1,561	138	9.7%	N/R
13	Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	800	928	128	16.0%	\$23.62
14	Substitute Teachers	966	1,094	128	13.3%	N/R
15	Logisticians	336	460	124	36.9%	\$23.35
16	Sales Managers	1,075	1,197	122	11.3%	N/R
17	Substitute Teachers, Short-Term	746	860	114	15.3%	N/R
18	Computer and Information Systems Managers	662	749	87	13.1%	N/R
19	Civil Engineers	901	986	85	9.4%	N/R
20	Administrative Services Managers	769	851	82	10.7%	N/R

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Employment Projections

Note: \* Denotes average annual wage when a median wage is not available. Numbers not reported denoted by N/R.

## Master's Degree or Higher

The top 10 projected long-run growth occupations requiring at least a master's degree include nurse practitioners (429 new positions between 2022 and 2030), lawyers (318 new positions), physical therapists (181 new positions), child, family, and school social workers (149 new positions), educational and vocational counselors (147 new positions), dentists (119 new positions), speech-language pathologists (105 new positions), veterinarians (104 new positions), ophthalmologists and all other physicians (103 new positions), and occupational therapists (78 new positions). The top 20 growth occupations requiring at least a master's degree, along with the median wage can be found in Table 3-22.

### Table 3-22: Master's Degree and Higher Long-term Growth Occupations

2022 to 2030

Ranking	Occupation	2022	2030	Growth	Percent Growth	2021 Median Hourly Wage
1	Nurse Practitioners	868	1,297	429	49.4%	\$48.19
2	Lawyers	3,115	3,433	318	10.2%	\$47.29
3	Physical Therapists	1,343	1,524	181	13.5%	\$46.21
4	Child, Family, and School Social Workers	670	819	149	22.2%	\$22.80
5	Educational, Guidance, School, and Vocational Counselors	855	1,002	147	17.2%	\$36.96
6	Dentists, General	767	886	119	15.5%	\$63.38
7	Speech-Language Pathologists	524	629	105	20.0%	\$39.51
8	Veterinarians	482	586	104	21.6%	N/R
9	Physicians, All Other and Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	1,747	1,850	103	5.9%	N/R
10	Occupational Therapists	687	765	78	11.4%	N/R
11	Operations Research Analysts	257	328	71	27.6%	N/R
12	Healthcare Social Workers	663	728	65	9.8%	N/R
13	Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychologists	463	501	38	8.2%	N/R
14	Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary	130	168	38	29.2%	N/R
15	Nursing Instructors and Teachers, Postsecondary	121	154	33	27.3%	N/R
16	Family Medicine Physicians	536	568	32	6.0%	N/R
17	Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists	151	181	30	19.9%	N/R
18	Counselors, All Other	406	432	26	6.4%	N/R
19	Pharmacists	915	939	24	2.6%	\$63.02
20	Chiropractors	338	361	23	6.8%	N/R

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Employment Projections

Note: Numbers not reported denoted by N/R.



## Long-term Employment Growth for STEM Occupations

The forecast in Table 3-23 provides information about projected occupational demands for STEM occupations in the Southwest Florida region. Information is presented for the top 10 growth occupations along with the 2021 median hourly wage and educational requirements. The top 10 STEM occupations by employment growth include registered nurses (885 new positions between 2022 and 2030), software developers and software quality assurance analysts and testers (548 new positions), nurse practitioners (429 new positions), medical and health services managers (387 new positions), licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses (182 new positions), veterinary technologists and technicians (182 new positions), physical therapists (181 new positions), computer user support specialists (181 new positions), respiratory therapists (166 new positions), and dental hygienists (159 new positions).

The top 10 STEM occupations were primarily focused on the healthcare practitioners and technical occupation group. Two of the top STEM occupations required adult vocational training, four required an associate's degree, two required a Bachelor's degree and two required at least a Master's degree. Median wages varied from \$22.92 per hour to \$48.19 per hour.

A complete list of the top 50 long-term annual employment growth STEM occupations in Southwest Florida can be found in Appendix A.

**Table 3-23: Long-Term Employment Growth for STEM Occupations**  
2022 to 2030

Occupation	2022	2030	Growth	Percent Growth	2021 Median Hourly Wage	Minimum Education
Registered Nurses	9,951	10,836	885	8.9%	\$36.30	Associates
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	2,620	3,168	548	20.9%	N/R	Bachelors
Nurse Practitioners	868	1,297	429	49.4%	\$48.19	Master's or Higher
Medical and Health Services Managers	1,423	1,810	387	27.2%	\$46.45	Bachelors
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	2,416	2,745	329	13.6%	\$22.92	PSAV
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	869	1,051	182	20.9%	N/R	Associates
Physical Therapists	1,343	1,524	181	13.5%	\$46.21	Master's or Higher
Computer User Support Specialists	1,664	1,842	178	10.7%	N/R	PSAV
Respiratory Therapists	809	975	166	20.5%	N/R	Associates
Dental Hygienists	831	990	159	19.1%	\$37.29	Associates

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Employment Projections

Note: Numbers not reported denoted by N/R.

# Appendix A: Additional Employment Projections

## Long-Term Employment Growth by Occupation

Below is a list of the top 50 long-term employment growth occupations identified between 2022 and 2030.

### Table A-1: Top 25 Long-Term Employment Growth Occupations

2022 to 2030

Occupation	2022	2030	Change	Percent Change	2021 Median Hourly Wage	Minimum Education
Cooks, Restaurant	10,037	12,537	2,500	24.9%	N/R	PSAV
Construction Laborers	10,154	11,685	1,531	15.1%	\$17.64	Less HS/GED
Retail Salespersons	22,301	23,788	1,487	6.7%	\$13.63	HS/GED
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	4,805	6,072	1,267	26.4%	\$13.34	PSAV
Stockers and Order Fillers	7,797	9,003	1,206	15.5%	\$14.29	HS/GED
Roofers	3,849	4,906	1,057	27.5%	N/R	PSAV
General and Operations Managers	8,712	9,689	977	11.2%	\$37.56	Associates
Waiters and Waitresses	15,376	16,272	896	5.8%	N/R	Less HS/GED
Registered Nurses	9,951	10,836	885	8.9%	\$36.30	Associates
Carpenters	7,640	8,519	879	11.5%	\$19.22	PSAV
Supervisors of Construction and Extraction Workers	5,758	6,631	873	15.2%	\$29.50	Associates
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	12,193	13,062	869	7.1%	\$14.64	Less HS/GED
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	5,657	6,384	727	12.9%	\$13.35	Less HS/GED
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	7,008	7,735	727	10.4%	\$18.09	PSAV
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	6,712	7,409	697	10.4%	\$14.39	Less HS/GED
Market Research Analysts & Marketing Specialists	2,815	3,462	647	23.0%	\$28.91	Bachelors
Medical Assistants	3,998	4,640	642	16.1%	\$17.94	PSAV
Accountants and Auditors	4,292	4,911	619	14.4%	\$30.56	Bachelors
Nursing Assistants	4,976	5,582	606	12.2%	\$14.41	PSAV
Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other	5,544	6,149	605	10.9%	N/R	Associates
Passenger Vehicle Drivers, Except Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	2,927	3,517	590	20.2%	N/R	Less HS/GED
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	2,620	3,168	548	20.9%	N/R	Bachelors
Painters, Construction and Maintenance	4,741	5,289	548	11.6%	N/R	PSAV
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	6,566	7,083	517	7.9%	\$13.78	Less HS/GED
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Ed.	4,464	4,974	510	11.4%	\$61,221*	Bachelors

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Employment Projections

Note: \* Denotes average annual wage when a median wage is not available. N/R denotes information was not reported.

## Table A-2: Ranked 26-50 Long-Term Employment Growth Occupations

2022 to 2030

Occupation	2022	2030	Change	Percent Change	2021 Median Hourly Wage	Minimum Education
Construction Managers	3,152	3,653	501	15.9%	\$39.91	Associates
Sales Rep., Wholesale & Manufacturing, Except Tech. & Scientific Products	4,391	4,884	493	11.2%	\$24.67	PSAV
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	4,398	4,880	482	11.0%	\$19.68	PSAV
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	6,015	6,495	480	8.0%	\$18.21	PSAV
Electricians	2,790	3,269	479	17.2%	\$23.04	PSAV
Sales Representatives of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, and Travel	3,800	4,276	476	12.5%	\$24.15	HS/GED
Fast Food and Counter Workers	11,723	12,191	468	4.0%	\$11.09	Less HS/GED
Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers	3,747	4,189	442	11.8%	N/R	Less HS/GED
Nurse Practitioners	868	1,297	429	49.4%	\$48.19	Master's or Higher
Office Clerks, General	13,247	13,663	416	3.1%	\$17.48	HS/GED
Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	2,998	3,404	406	13.5%	\$22.93	PSAV
Medical and Health Services Managers	1,423	1,810	387	27.2%	\$46.45	Bachelors
Counter and Rental Clerks	1,710	2,091	381	22.3%	\$14.27	HS/GED
Bartenders	3,873	4,243	370	9.6%	N/R	Less HS/GED
Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	4,124	4,491	367	8.9%	N/R	PSAV
Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	3,271	3,636	365	11.2%	\$17.56	PSAV
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	2,978	3,323	345	11.6%	\$28,906*	Associates
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	2,416	2,745	329	13.6%	\$22.92	PSAV
Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	1,579	1,908	329	20.8%	N/R	PSAV
Management Analysts	2,272	2,592	320	14.1%	\$38.07	Bachelors
Lawyers	3,115	3,433	318	10.2%	\$47.29	Master's or Higher
Real Estate Sales Agents	4,672	4,990	318	6.8%	N/R	PSAV
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	4,423	4,726	303	6.9%	\$22.60	PSAV
Nonfarm Animal Caretakers	1,426	1,728	302	21.2%	N/R	Less HS/GED
Driver/Sales Workers	2,313	2,606	293	12.7%	\$11.27	HS/GED

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Employment Projections

Note: \* Denotes average annual wage when a median wage is not available. N/R denotes information was not reported.

## Long-Term Employment Growth by STEM Occupations

Below is a list of the top 50 long-term employment growth STEM occupations identified between 2022 and 2030.

**Table A-3: Top 25 Long-Term Employment Growth STEM Occupations**  
2022 to 2030

Occupation	2022	2030	Change	Percent Change	2021 Median Hourly Wage	Minimum Education
Registered Nurses	9,951	10,836	885	8.9%	\$36.30	Associates
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	2,620	3,168	548	20.9%	N/R	Bachelors
Nurse Practitioners	868	1,297	429	49.4%	\$48.19	Master's or Higher
Medical and Health Services Managers	1,423	1,810	387	27.2%	\$46.45	Bachelors
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	2,416	2,745	329	13.6%	\$22.92	PSAV
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	869	1,051	182	20.9%	N/R	Associates
Physical Therapists	1,343	1,524	181	13.5%	\$46.21	Master's or Higher
Computer User Support Specialists	1,664	1,842	178	10.7%	\$23.05	PSAV
Respiratory Therapists	809	975	166	20.5%	N/R	Associates
Dental Hygienists	831	990	159	19.1%	\$37.29	Associates
Physician Assistants	505	647	142	28.1%	N/R	Bachelors
Pharmacy Technicians	1,848	1,988	140	7.6%	\$17.64	PSAV
Medical Dosimetrists, Medical Records Specialists, and Health Technologists and Technicians, all other	1,355	1,480	125	9.2%	N/R	PSAV
Dentists, General	767	886	119	15.5%	\$63.38	Master's or Higher
Sales Rep., Wholesale & Manufacturing, Technical & Scientific Products	887	1,002	115	13.0%	N/R	PSAV
Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	1,601	1,711	110	6.9%	\$28.44	Associates
Speech-Language Pathologists	524	629	105	20.0%	\$39.51	Master's or Higher
Veterinarians	482	586	104	21.6%	N/R	Master's or Higher
Physicians, All Other and Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	1,747	1,850	103	5.9%	N/R	Master's or Higher
Computer and Information Systems Managers	662	749	87	13.1%	N/R	Bachelors
Civil Engineers	901	986	85	9.4%	N/R	Bachelors
Occupational Therapists	687	765	78	11.4%	N/R	Master's or Higher
Radiologic Technologists	954	1,026	72	7.5%	\$29.12	PSAV
Operations Research Analysts	257	328	71	27.6%	N/R	Master's or Higher
Computer System Analysts	618	685	67	10.8%	\$40.41	Associates

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Employment Projections

Note: \* Denotes average annual wage when a median wage is not available. N/R denotes information was not reported.

## Table A-4: Ranked 26-50 Long-Term Employment Growth STEM Occupations

2022 to 2030

Occupation	2022	2030	Change	Percent Change	2021 Median Hourly Wage	Minimum Education
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	412	476	64	15.5%	N/R	PSAV
Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	985	1,042	57	5.8%	N/R	PSAV
Industrial Engineers	459	508	49	10.7%	N/R	Bachelors
Information Security Analyst	132	176	44	33.3%	N/R	PSAV
Web Developers and Digital Interface Designers	415	457	42	10.1%	N/R	PSAV
Computer Occupations, all other	481	522	41	8.5%	N/R	PSAV
Health Info Technologists, Medical Registrars, Surgical Asst, Healthcare Practitioners and Tech Workers, all other	494	533	39	7.9%	N/R	PSAV
Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychologists	463	501	38	8.2%	N/R	Master's or Higher
Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary	130	168	38	29.2%	N/R	Master's or Higher
Nursing Instructors and Teachers, Postsecondary	121	154	33	27.3%	N/R	Master's or Higher
Family Medicine Physicians	536	568	32	6.0%	N/R	Master's or Higher
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	566	596	30	5.3%	\$37.21	Associates
Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists	151	181	30	19.9%	N/R	Master's or Higher
Mechanical Engineers	217	246	29	13.4%	\$38.80	Bachelors
Surgical Technologists	359	388	29	8.1%	N/R	PSAV
Ophthalmic Medical Technicians	265	291	26	9.8%	N/R	PSAV
Opticians, Dispensing	327	352	25	7.6%	N/R	Associates
Pharmacists	915	939	24	2.6%	\$63.02	Master's or Higher
Database Administrators and Architects	244	267	23	9.4%	N/R	Associates
Biomedical Engineers	156	179	23	14.7%	N/R	Bachelors
Electrical Engineers	201	224	23	11.4%	N/R	Bachelors
Chiropractors	338	361	23	6.8%	N/R	Master's or Higher
Dietitians and Nutritionists	323	346	23	7.1%	N/R	Bachelors
Architectural and Engineering Managers	206	227	21	10.2%	\$72.81	Bachelors
Cardiovascular Technologists and Technicians	309	329	20	6.5%	N/R	PSAV

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Employment Projections

Note: \* Denotes average annual wage when a median wage is not available. N/R denotes information was not reported.

# Appendix B: Additional Demographic Data

## Population Growth

Southwest Florida had a population of 1,442,738 in 2022, up 2.4 percent from 2021. All five counties saw population increase from 2021 to 2022, with Charlotte County having the highest growth rate (3.2 percent) followed by Lee County (2.5 percent), Collier County (2.2 percent), Glades County (1.2 percent) and Hendry County (0.2 percent).

### Table B-1: Population Growth

Area	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Charlotte County					
<i>Population</i>	178,251	181,708	186,847	190,570	196,742
<i>Percent change</i>	--	1.9%	2.8%	2.0%	3.2%
Collier County					
<i>Population</i>	360,455	367,578	375,752	382,680	390,912
<i>Percent change</i>	--	2.0%	2.2%	1.8%	2.2%
Glades County					
<i>Population</i>	11,988	11,960	12,126	12,130	12,273
<i>Percent change</i>	--	-0.2%	1.4%	0.0%	1.2%
Hendry County					
<i>Population</i>	38,773	39,122	39,619	40,540	40,633
<i>Percent change</i>	--	0.9%	1.3%	2.3%	0.2%
Lee County					
<i>Population</i>	724,796	743,871	760,822	782,579	802,178
<i>Percent change</i>	--	2.6%	2.3%	2.9%	2.5%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>					
<i>Population</i>	<b>1,314,263</b>	<b>1,344,239</b>	<b>1,375,166</b>	<b>1,408,499</b>	<b>1,442,738</b>
<i>Percent change</i>	--	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>
<b>Florida</b>					
<i>Population</i>	<b>20,840,568</b>	<b>21,208,589</b>	<b>21,555,986</b>	<b>21,898,945</b>	<b>22,276,132</b>
<i>Percent change</i>	--	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>

Source: Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research

## Population Projections

Southwest Florida is projected to gain approximately 300,000 residents over the next 13 years, with a population of 1,737,203 by the year 2035. The growth rate for Southwest Florida is expected to continue to outpace the Florida population growth rate over the same period.

### Table B-2: Population Projections

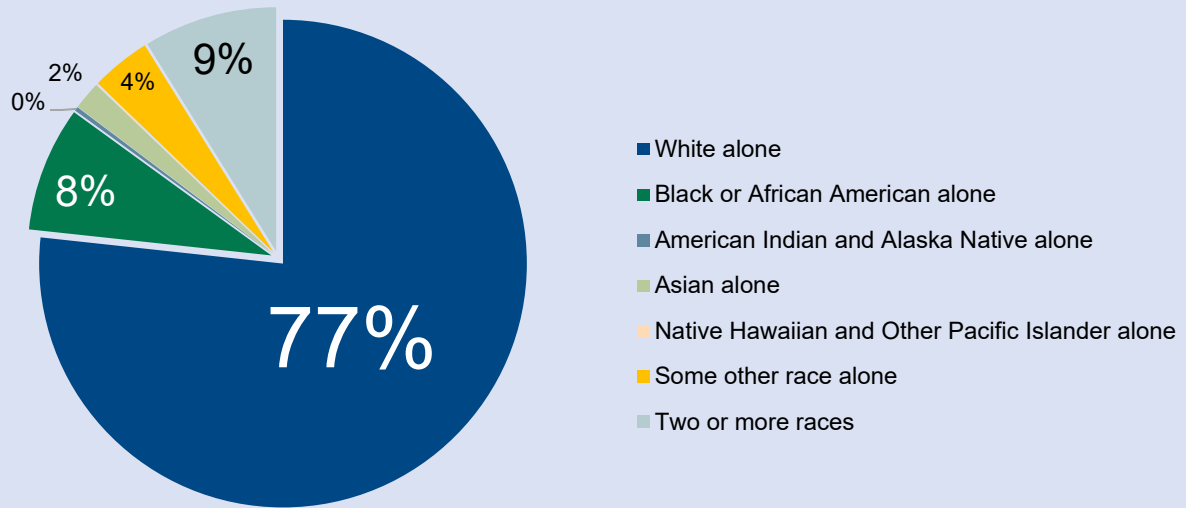
Area	2021	2022	2025*	2030*	2035*
Charlotte County					
<i>Population</i>	190,570	196,742	206,608	220,913	232,142
<i>Percent change</i>	--	3.2%	5.0%	6.9%	5.1%
Collier County					
<i>Population</i>	382,680	390,912	409,784	436,860	459,459
<i>Percent change</i>	--	2.2%	4.8%	6.6%	5.2%
Glades County					
<i>Population</i>	12,130	12,273	12,343	12,412	12,502
<i>Percent change</i>	--	1.2%	0.6%	0.6%	0.7%
Hendry County					
<i>Population</i>	40,540	40,633	41,628	42,970	44,000
<i>Percent change</i>	--	0.2%	2.4%	3.2%	2.4%
Lee County					
<i>Population</i>	782,579	802,178	852,471	927,733	989,100
<i>Percent change</i>	--	2.5%	6.3%	8.8%	6.6%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>					
<i>Population</i>	<b>1,408,499</b>	<b>1,442,738</b>	<b>1,522,834</b>	<b>1,640,888</b>	<b>1,737,203</b>
<i>Percent change</i>	--	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>5.6%</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	<b>5.9%</b>
<b>Florida</b>					
<i>Population</i>	<b>21,898,945</b>	<b>22,276,132</b>	<b>23,218,811</b>	<b>24,588,452</b>	<b>25,675,568</b>
<i>Percent change</i>	--	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>4.4%</b>

Source: Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research

Note: \* indicates population projections.

### Chart B-1: Working-Age Population by Race

Southwest Florida  
2021



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates  
 Note: "Working-age population" defined as population between the ages of 25 and 64.  
 Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Working Age Population by Race

In 2021, 76.7 percent of the working-age population was White alone, the highest proportion in Southwest Florida. The population consisting of two or more races had the next highest share of working-age adults (8.9 percent), followed by the Black or African American alone population (8.3 percent) and the some other race alone category (3.9 percent).

### Table B-3: Working Age Population by Race

Southwest Florida  
2021

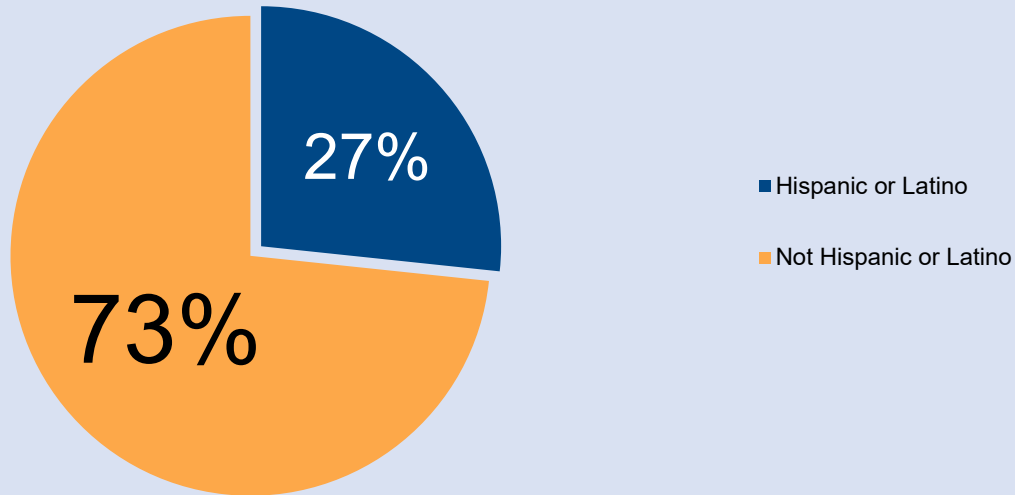
Race/Ethnicity	Count	Percent of Total
White alone	480,454	76.7%
Black or African American alone	51,896	8.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1,672	0.3%
Asian alone	11,728	1.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	388	0.1%
Some other race alone	24,691	3.9%
Two or more races	55,465	8.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>626,294</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates  
 Note: "Working-age population" defined as population between the ages of 25 and 64.



### Chart B-2 Working-Age Population for Hispanic and Latino Population

Southwest Florida  
2021



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates  
 Note: "Working-age population" defined as population between the ages of 25 and 64.  
 Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Working Age Population for Hispanic and Latino Population

The non-Hispanic and Latino population represented 73.3 percent of the total working-age population in Southwest Florida in 2021, while the remaining 26.7 percent identified as Hispanic or Latino.

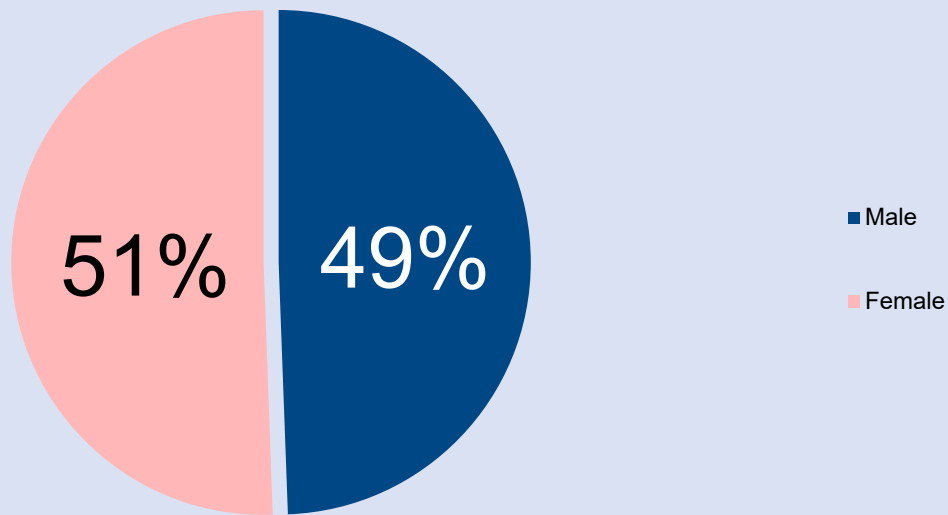
**Table B-4: Working Age Population for Hispanic and Latino Population**

Southwest Florida 2021		
Hispanic/Latino	Count	Percent of Total
Hispanic or Latino	167,056	26.7%
Not Hispanic or Latino	459,238	73.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>626,294</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates  
 Note: "Working-age population" defined as population between the ages of 25 and 64.

### Chart B-3: Working Age Population by Gender

Southwest Florida  
2021



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates  
 Note: "Working-age population" defined as population between the ages of 25 and 64.  
 Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Working-Age Population by Gender

The female population represented 50.6 percent of the total working-age population in Southwest Florida, down 0.4 percentage points from 2020. This percentage has remained relatively stable since 2014, slipping only 0.6 percentage points over the eight-year period.

**Table B-5: Working Age Population by Gender**

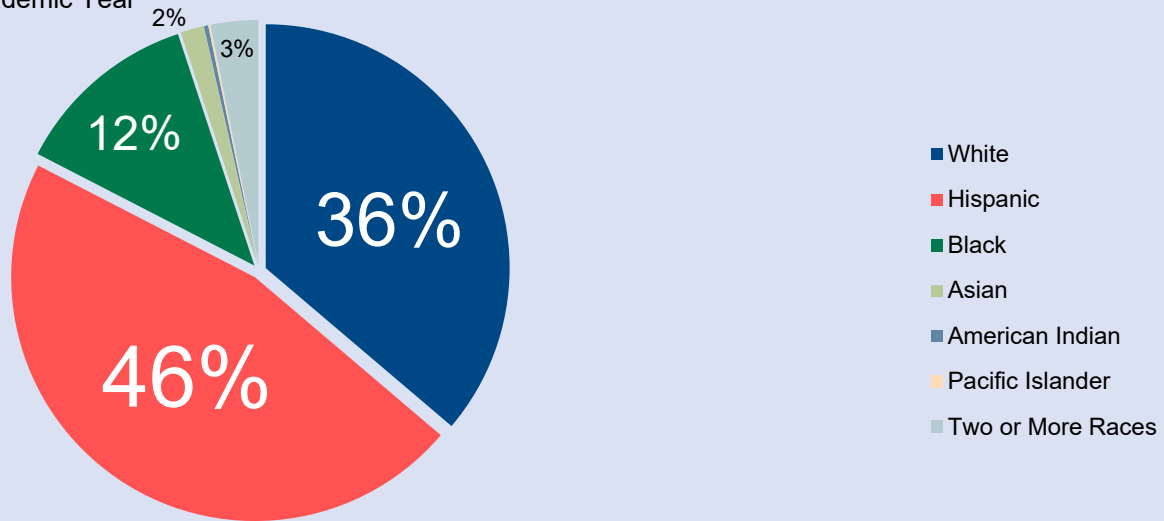
Southwest Florida

Gender	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Male								
Count	276,477	280,391	284,470	290,112	295,821	302,387	308,873	309,485
Percent of total	48.8%	48.8%	48.8%	48.8%	48.9%	49.0%	49.0%	49.4%
Female								
Count	289,956	293,964	298,362	304,240	309,194	314,812	321,350	316,809
Percent of total	51.2%	51.2%	51.2%	51.2%	51.1%	51.0%	51.0%	50.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>566,433</b>	<b>574,355</b>	<b>582,832</b>	<b>594,352</b>	<b>605,015</b>	<b>617,199</b>	<b>630,223</b>	<b>626,294</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates  
 Note: "Working-age population" defined as population between the ages of 25 and 64.

### Chart B-4: K-12 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Southwest Florida  
2022-23 Academic Year



Source: Florida Department of Education, Know Your Data Advanced Reports  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## K-12 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

The Hispanic population in the K-12 schools represented approximately 46.4 percent of the total student population in 2023AY, up 3.0 percentage points from the 2019AY. On the other hand, the white population dipped 2.7 percentage points over the same period.

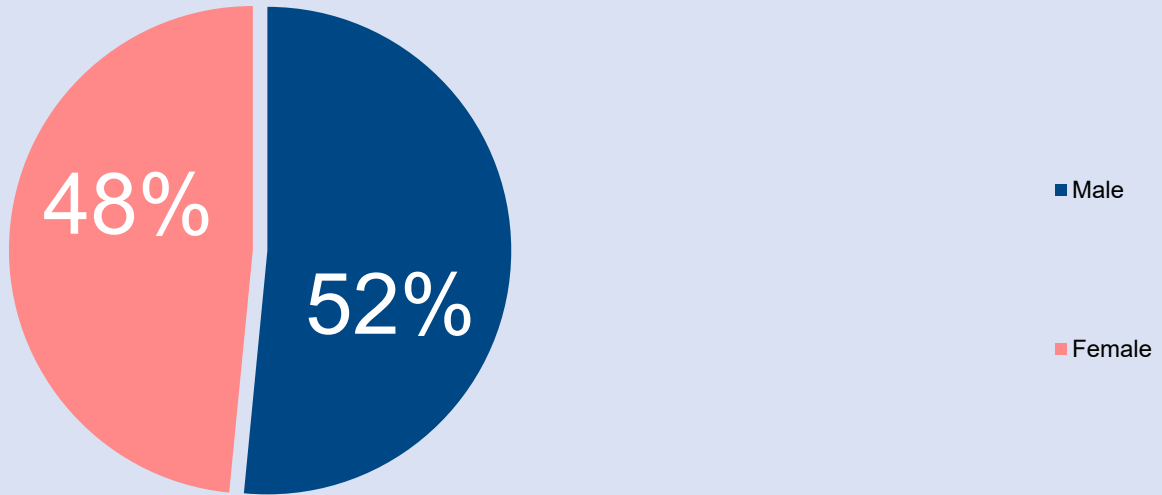
### Table B-6: K-12 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Southwest Florida					
Race/Ethnicity	2019AY	2020AY	2021AY	2022AY	2023AY
<b>White</b>					
Number of students	64,856	63,897	61,877	63,168	62,848
Percent of total	38.9%	37.9%	37.4%	37.1%	36.2%
<b>Hispanic</b>					
Number of students	72,378	74,705	74,241	77,139	80,460
Percent of total	43.4%	44.3%	44.9%	45.3%	46.4%
<b>Black</b>					
Number of students	21,533	21,640	21,064	21,348	21,443
Percent of total	12.9%	12.8%	12.7%	12.5%	12.4%
<b>Asian</b>					
Number of students	2,631	2,572	2,546	2,624	2,674
Percent of total	1.6%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%
<b>American Indian</b>					
Number of students	673	615	554	513	492
Percent of total	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
<b>Pacific Islander</b>					
Number of students	155	144	140	161	168
Percent of total	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
<b>Two or More Races</b>					
Number of students	4,659	4,924	5,008	5,250	5,467
Percent of total	2.8%	2.9%	3.0%	3.1%	3.2%
<b>Total K-12 Enrollment</b>	<b>166,885</b>	<b>168,497</b>	<b>165,430</b>	<b>170,203</b>	<b>173,552</b>

Source: Florida Department of Education, Know Your Data Advanced Reports

### Chart B-5: K-12 Student Enrollment by Gender

Southwest Florida  
2022-23 Academic Year



Source: Florida Department of Education, Know Your Data Advanced Reports  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## K-12 Student Enrollment by Gender

Both genders have remained relatively consistent between the 2019AY and 2023AY. During this latest academic year, approximately 51.5 percent of all students were male, while 48.5 percent of students were female.

**Table B-7: K-12 Student Enrollment by Gender**

Southwest Florida					
Gender	2019AY	2020AY	2021AY	2022AY	2023AY
Male					
Number of students	86,196	87,274	85,483	87,857	89,449
Percent of total	51.6%	51.8%	51.7%	51.6%	51.5%
Female					
Number of students	80,689	81,223	79,947	82,346	84,103
Percent of total	48.4%	48.2%	48.3%	48.4%	48.5%
<b>Total K-12 Enrollment</b>	<b>166,885</b>	<b>168,497</b>	<b>165,430</b>	<b>170,203</b>	<b>173,552</b>

Source: Florida Department of Education, Know Your Data Advanced Reports

# Methodology

## Skilled Workforce

Skilled workforce is measured in two parts: the first part is obtaining the percent of the working population with at least an associate's degree. This information is gathered directly from the American Community Survey 5-year estimates. The second part requires identifying the portion of the working population that does not hold an associate's degree, but instead hold some form of high-quality credential. The data team used a study from the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce to help define a high-quality credential holder. The study states that high school graduates receive a 20 percent wage premium from possessing a certificate. Therefore, we define a high-quality credential holder as an individual with "some college" education experience and is making at least 20 percent higher than the median income of a high school graduate in their county. This data is not readily available in any of the American Community Survey tables and must be estimated through public use microdata.

The public use microdata used to calculate this is obtained from the IPUMS website, which gathers American Community Survey public use microdata and makes it readily available for the public. One drawback to public use microdata is that it is only provided for areas that contain at least 100,000 people, so IPUMS data for Glades and Hendry County are not available for direct calculation of high-quality credentials. To work around this drawback, the research team calculates the percent of "some college" population identified to hold a high-quality credential in Charlotte, Collier, and Lee County, and use this percentage to extrapolate the number of high-quality credential holders by multiplying it by the "some college" population in Glades and Hendry County.

## Postsecondary Institutes

Southwest Florida postsecondary institutions were identified through the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), a system of interrelated surveys conducted annually by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). IPEDS gathers information from every college, university, and technical and vocational institution that participates in the federal student financial aid programs.

Postsecondary institutions in Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, and Lee County were selected if the institutes' primary campus was in one of the five counties<sup>26</sup>. For the 2020-21 academic year, nineteen postsecondary institutes were identified:

Charlotte Technical College	Cape Coral Technical College	Florida Academy
Lorenzo Walker Technical College	Florida Gulf Coast University	Paul Mitchell the School-Ft Myers
Florida SouthWestern State College	Ave Maria School of Law	Lee Professional Institute
Fort Myers Technical College	Ave Maria University	The Training Domain
Sunstate Academy	Cozmo Beauty School	Premiere International College
Southern Technical College	Immokalee Technical College	
Hodges University	The Salon Professional Academy-Ft Myers	

In addition, historical data from 2014-15 to 2018-19 academic years may contain information for postsecondary institutes that were either no longer operating or data was no longer available in the 2019-20 academic year. These institutes include:

- Wolford College (2015 to 2017)
- ITT Technical Institute-Fort Myers (2015 to 2017)
- Heritage Institute-Ft Myers (2015 to 2016)
- Regency Beauty Institute-Fort Myers (2015 to 2016)
- Med-Life Institute-Naples (2016 to 2017)

Postsecondary institutions in Florida were chosen based on the physical state the institutes' primary campus was located in. Finally, postsecondary institutes in the United States were chosen if their institutes' primary campus was located somewhere in the 50 states (excluding U.S. territories).

<sup>26</sup> Because of this, some institutes with a primary campus outside of Southwest Florida (such as Keiser University which has a campus located in Fort Myers) cannot be included in the regional analysis.

## Technical Colleges

Southwest Florida technical colleges are also identified through IPEDS. The following institutes were classified as technical colleges in the region for the 2020-21 academic year:

Charlotte Technical College	Immokalee Technical College	Lee Professional Institute
Lorenzo Walker Technical College	The Salon Professional Academy-Ft Myers	Florida Academy
Fort Myers Technical College	Paul Mitchell the School-Ft Myers	Premiere International College
Southern Technical College	The Training Domain	Cape Coral Technical College
Cozmo Beauty School	Sunstate Academy	

Because IPEDS does not contain a variable for indicating if a postsecondary institute is a technical college, the research team estimates technical college enrollment and completion rates for the state and the nation using variables available through IPEDS. For this study, a technical college is defined as a less-than-4-year Title IV postsecondary institute.<sup>27</sup>

## FutureMakers Workforce Employer Survey

Part of the report uses data from the Workforce Employer Survey, an annual survey sent out by the FutureMakers Coalition. The goal of the survey is to inform its Southwest Florida network (specifically the education partners) about employer needs and opportunities to better work together to ensure the desired qualified workforce is available to the region's employers.

In 2023, the survey was made available to Southwest Florida businesses and organizations on the FutureMakers Coalition website and various social media posts between early July and early September 2023. The survey received 102 responses over the roughly two-month period.

## Shift-Share Analysis

A shift-share analysis was performed using data from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW). The analysis decomposes changes in employment levels within a region into one of three components: *national growth (N)*, *industry mix (P)*, and *competition effect (D)*. Between two periods (0 and 1), employment growth can be modelled as:

$$e_{ij}^1 = e_{ij}^0 * (1 + g_{ij})$$

$$e_{ij}^1 - e_{ij}^0 = [e_{ij}^0 * G] + [e_{ij}^0 * (G_i - G)] + [e_{ij}^0 * (g_{ij} - G_i)]$$

Where  $e_{ij}$  represents employment in industry  $i$  in region  $j$ ,  $G$  is the employment growth rate for the nation,  $G_i$  is the employment growth rate for industry  $i$  in the nation, and  $g_{ij}$  is the employment growth rate of industry  $i$  in region  $j$ . We can define each of the three components as:

$$N = e_{ij}^0 * G$$

$$P = e_{ij}^0 * (G_i - G)$$

$$D = e_{ij}^0 * (g_{ij} - G_i)$$

Substituting  $N$ ,  $P$  and  $D$  into the model yields:

$$e_{ij}^1 - e_{ij}^0 = N + P + D$$

## Location Quotients

Location quotients were calculated using data from the QCEW. The analysis calculates the relative importance of an industry within a region compared to a reference region. Location quotients are modelled as:

<sup>27</sup> This definition is borrowed from a 2008 study from the National Center for Education Statistics, titled *Postsecondary Career/Technical Education: Changes in the Number of Offering Institutions and Awarded Credentials from 1997 to 2006*.

$$LQ_{ij} = \frac{e_{ij}/e_j}{e_i/e}$$

Where  $e_{ij}$  is the employment level of industry  $i$  in region  $j$ ,  $e_j$  is total employment in region  $j$ ,  $e_i$  is the employment level of industry  $i$  in the reference region, and  $e$  is total employment in the reference region. For this analysis, two reference regions are used: the state of Florida and the United States.

## FGCU Seasonality Index

The FGCU Seasonality Index is calculated based on the Mean Seasonal Variation (MSV). The MSV represents the average absolute difference between an unseasoned variable and seasoned variable over a length of time. In formal terms, the MSV is defined as follows:

$$MSV = \left( \sum_{t=1}^T \left| \frac{U_t - S_t}{S_t} \right| \right) / T$$

Where  $U_t$  is the unseasoned variable in time  $t$ ,  $S_t$  is the seasoned variable in time  $t$ , and  $T$  is the length of the period. For this study, the primary variable used is monthly private employment from the QCEW, making  $T = 12$ .

# Glossary

**Academic year (AY):** The period that represents a year of activity for a school district or postsecondary institution. The definition of what period varies:

*Public school districts:* The academic year varies from district to district, but typically starts in the beginning of August and ends in late July when including the summer months.

*Postsecondary institutions:* 12-month period extending from July 1st of the preceding year to June 30th of the reported year. For example, "2020AY" would represent the 12-month period starting on July 1st, 2019 and ending June 30th, 2020.

**Adjusted cohort:** A specific group of students established for tracking purposes, adjusted for allowable exclusions and transfers. Students may be excluded from the cohort for one of the following reasons: (1) death or total and permanent disability; (2) service in the armed forces (including those called to active duty); (3) service with a foreign aid service of the federal government, such as the Peace Corps; or (4) service on official church missions.

**Cohort completers in 150 percent of normal time:** According to the IPEDS Glossary, completers in 150 percent of normal time are "Students who completed their program within 150% of the normal (or expected) time for completion." See "normal time to completion" definition below for more information.

**Cohort graduates:** The number of students within a cohort that graduate with a standard diploma within four years of their first full year of enrollment in ninth grade in Florida.

**Cohort students:** A group of students enrolled in the public school system established for the purposes of calculating graduation and dropout rates. This group of students is initially created by determining the number of first-time ninth graders enrolling within a school district. Adjustments are made to this cohort over time to account for (1) incoming transfer students based on their grade level and year of entry; (2) remove deceased students; and (3) remove students who withdrew to attend school in another state, private school, or a home-education program.

**Employment:** According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, a person is considered employed "if they did any work at all for pay or profit during the survey reference week. This includes all part-time and temporary work, as well as regular full-time, year-round employment. Individuals also are counted as employed if they have a job at which they did not work during the survey week, whether they were paid or not, because they were:

- On vacation
- Ill
- Experiencing childcare problems
- On maternity or paternity leave
- Taking care of some other family or personal obligation
- Involved in a labor dispute; or
- Prevented from working by bad weather

**Fall enrollment:** According to the IPEDS Glossary, fall enrollment represents "the number of students enrolled in the fall at postsecondary institutions. Students reported are those enrolled in courses creditable toward a degree or other recognized postsecondary credential; students enrolled in courses that are part of a vocational or occupational program, including those enrolled in off-campus or extension centers; and high school students taking regular college courses for credit."

**First-time student:** According to the IPEDS Glossary, a first-time student is "A student who has no prior postsecondary experience attending any institution for the first time at the undergraduate level." This means that the student is first-time in terms of postsecondary education (or the student is not known to have attended another postsecondary institution). There are two exceptions: (1) students who attended any institution for the first time the summer prior to entering your institution in the fall term are to be counted as "first-time", as are (2) students who entered with advanced standing (college credits earned before graduation from high school).

**Four-year institute:** According to the IPEDS Glossary, a four-year institute is "A postsecondary institution that offers programs of at least 4 years duration or one that offers programs at or above the baccalaureate level. Includes schools that offer postbaccalaureate certificates only or those that offer graduate programs only. Also includes free-standing medical, law or other first-professional schools."

**Full-time student:** According to the IPEDS Glossary, a full-time undergraduate student is "A student enrolled for 12 or more semester credits, or 12 or more quarter credits, or 24 or more clock hours a week each term."

**Less than 2-year institute:** According to the IPEDS Glossary, a less than two-year institute is "A postsecondary institution that offers programs of less than 2-years duration below the baccalaureate level. Includes occupational and vocational schools with programs that do not exceed 1800 clock hours."



**Normal time to completion:** According to the IPEDS Glossary, the normal time to completion is “The amount of time necessary for a student to complete all requirements for a degree or certificate according to the institution’s catalog. This is typically 4 years (8 semesters or trimesters, or 12 quarters, excluding summer terms) for a bachelor’s degree in a standard term-based institution; 2 years (4 semesters or trimesters, or 6 quarters, excluding summer terms) for an associate’s degree in a standard term-based institution; and the various scheduled times for certificate programs.”

**Kindergarten readiness:** Determined through the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS), a student is considered “ready for kindergarten” if they score at least a 500 on the Star Early Literacy assessment.

**Retention Rate:** According to the IPEDS Glossary, the retention rate is “a measure of the rate at which students persist in their educational program at an institution, expressed as a percentage. For four-year institutions, this is the percentage of first-time bachelors (or equivalent) degree-seeking undergraduates from the previous fall who are again enrolled in the current fall. For all other institutions this is the percentage of first-time degree/certificate-seeking students from the previous fall who either re-enrolled or successfully completed their program by the current fall.”

**Third grade reading proficiency:** Determined through the Florida Standards Assessments (FSA) English Language Arts (ELA) tests, a third grade student is considered proficient at reading if they score at least a three on the FSA ELA test.

**Two-year Institute:** According to the IPEDS Glossary, a two-year institute is “A postsecondary institution that offers programs of at least 2 but less than 4 years duration. Includes occupational and vocational schools with programs of at least 1800 hours and academic institutions with programs of less than 4 years. Does not include bachelor’s degree-granting institutions where the baccalaureate program can be completed in 3 years.”

**Unemployment:** According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, a person is classified as unemployed “if they do not have a job, have actively looked for work in the prior 4 weeks, and are currently available for work.”

**Unique Job Postings:** Obtained from Lightcast, unique job postings refer to the number of deduplicated job vacancy advertisements scraped from over 45,000 websites. Deduplication is the process of identifying duplicate job postings and only counting one of the duplicates.