

2022

# SOUTHWEST FLORIDA EDUCATIONAL AND WORKFORCE OUTCOMES REPORT

**FutureMakers  
Coalition**





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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.

The 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.



## 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 2020 and 2021 - include the timeframe when the COVID-19 pandemic greatly disrupted the region's school systems and broader economy. Therefore, changes in educational outcomes may reflect more the impact of the pandemic on how the data was collected rather than any improvement or decline in educational achievement.

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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 266,075 in 2020, representing 42.2 percent of the total working age population.*

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Demographics show that Southwest Florida 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 12.5 percent between 2013 and 2020. Similarly, the skilled workforce in the region increased approximately 21.7 percent in the same timeframe. In order to meet the 55 percent skilled workforce goal across the five Southwest Florida counties, 346,623 working age adults in the skilled workforce would have been needed, or approximately 80,000 more skilled working age adults in 2020. 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 an overall retreat in Aspiration and Preparation, Access and Entry, Persistence and Completion measures from the 2021 scores. As noted above, however, this regression in educational outcomes may reflect more the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on data collection rather than any actual decline in educational achievement. Selected outcomes are presented by race and ethnicity and by gender when available. Despite any impact COVID-19 may have had on school systems, 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 regarding racial, ethnic, and gender inequities. Rigorous definitions and more accurate means of measurement of inequities in education and in the workforce must be identified and developed. Data in this report indicate that inequity acts as a barrier to meeting the 55 percent goal by 2025 for Southwest Florida.

## Workforce Outcomes

The Workforce Now report indicates that of the 424,494 workers reported by the QCEW in 2021, Retail Trade was the largest industry, with 17.3 percent of all workers in the region. Accommodation and food services was the next largest industry (14.3 percent), followed by health care and social assistance (14.1 percent) and construction (13.6 percent). Retail trade and accommodation and food services were also among the lowest paying jobs in the region, with average annual wages of \$39,222 and \$28,588 respectively. The average annual wage for all industries in Southwest Florida was \$53,274 in 2021, up 7.7 percent from 2020.

Construction was by far the fastest growing industry in 2021, with employment growing by over 11,000 since 2017. Professional and Technical Services had the next highest growth (5,206 employment increase), followed by Health Care and Social Assistance (4,804 employment increase), Manufacturing (2,305 employment increase), and Transportation and Warehousing (2,074 employment increase).

Health Care and Social Assistance is projected to see the highest average annual growth between 2021 and 2029, adding 1,757 new jobs each year. Accommodation and Food Services had the next highest average annual growth (1,565 new jobs), followed by construction (972 new jobs), retail trade (908 new jobs) and government (903 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 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 over 250 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.

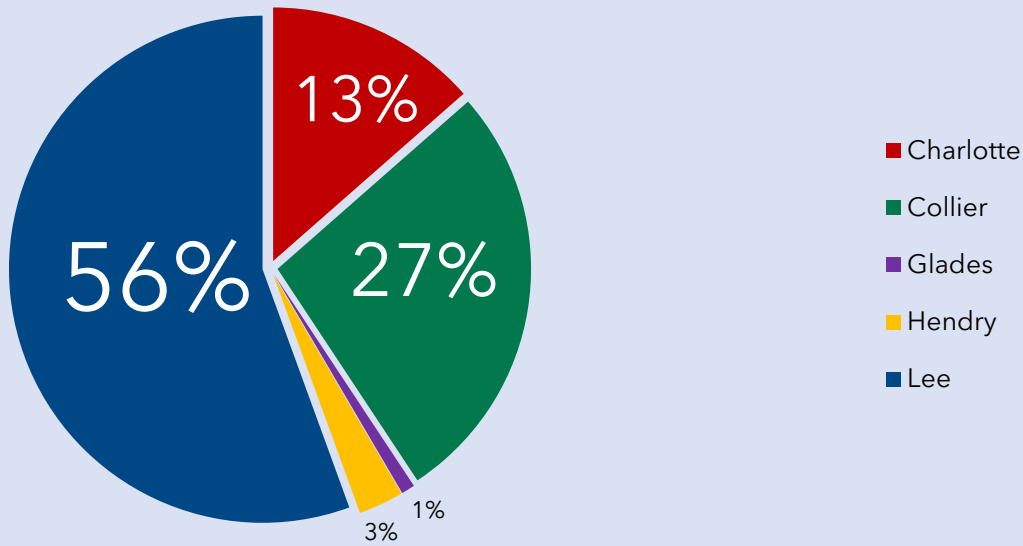
This report is one of a series created by FutureMakers Coalition with a view towards identifying opportunities and fostering outcomes to achieve the goal of 55 percent skilled working age adults in support of a diversified and resilient economy and improved quality of life for Southwest Florida. For 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.



**Chart 1-1: Population**

2021



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 1,408,499 in 2021, up 2.5 percent from the previous year, and up 21.3 percent from 2011. 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: Population**

Area	2011	2021	Percent Change	Share of Region Population
Charlotte	160,463	190,570	18.8%	13.5%
Collier	323,785	382,680	18.2%	27.2%
Glades	12,812	12,130	-5.3%	0.9%
Hendry	38,908	40,540	4.2%	2.9%
Lee	625,310	782,579	25.2%	55.6%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>	<b>1,161,278</b>	<b>1,408,499</b>	<b>21.3%</b>	--
<b>Florida</b>	<b>18,905,070</b>	<b>21,898,945</b>	<b>15.8%</b>	--

Source: Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research

## Working Age Population

Table 1-2 shows the working age population (residents between the ages of 25 and 64 years old) for the Southwest Florida region and the state of Florida. Southwest Florida had 630,233 working age residents in 2020, representing 45.8 percent of the total population. This percentage was below the state, where 51.4 percent of the total population was considered working age. Although the region's total number of working age adults increased between 2016 and 2020, the percent of the working age population compared to the total population has declined over the same period. Lee County had the most residents considered working age (355,324 residents, 47.0 percent of the total county population), followed by Collier County (167,591 residents, 44.2 percent of total county population), Charlotte County (79,563 residents, 42.8 percent of total county population), Hendry County (21,039 residents, 50.7 percent of total county population), and Glades County (6,706 residents, 48.7 percent of total county population).

### Table 1-2: Working Age Population

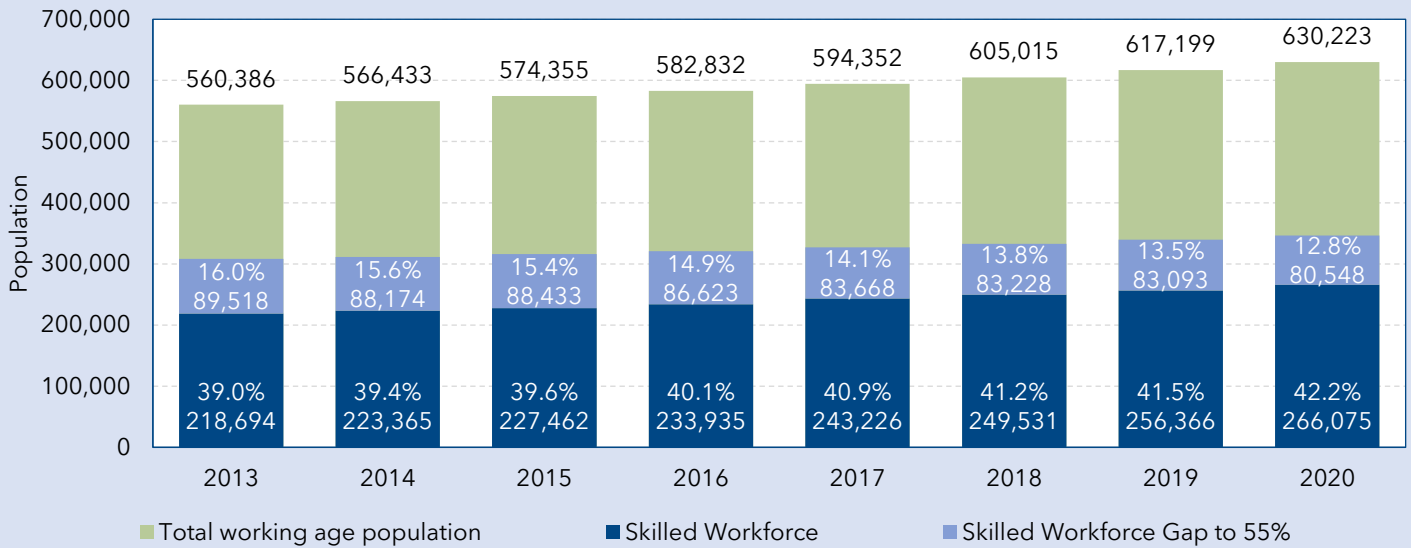
25 to 64 Years Old

Area	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Charlotte County					
Working age population	74,026	75,077	76,174	77,699	79,563
Percent of total population	43.6%	43.3%	43.0%	42.9%	42.8%
Collier County					
Working age population	157,747	160,715	162,431	164,923	167,591
Percent of total population	45.3%	45.0%	44.6%	44.4%	44.2%
Glades County					
Working age population	6,479	6,579	6,593	6,574	6,706
Percent of total population	48.3%	49.9%	49.3%	48.6%	48.7%
Hendry County					
Working age population	18,994	19,278	19,998	20,326	21,039
Percent of total population	49.5%	49.3%	49.8%	49.9%	50.7%
Lee County					
Working age population	325,586	332,703	339,819	347,677	355,324
Percent of total population	47.8%	47.5%	47.3%	47.1%	47.0%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>					
Working age population	<b>582,832</b>	<b>594,352</b>	<b>605,015</b>	<b>617,199</b>	<b>630,223</b>
Percent of total population	<b>46.6%</b>	<b>46.3%</b>	<b>46.1%</b>	<b>45.9%</b>	<b>45.8%</b>
<b>Florida</b>					
Working age population	<b>10,296,062</b>	<b>10,469,177</b>	<b>10,622,351</b>	<b>10,986,304</b>	<b>10,907,414</b>
Percent of total population	<b>51.6%</b>	<b>51.6%</b>	<b>51.6%</b>	<b>51.2%</b>	<b>51.4%</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

Note: Skilled workforce and gap rate above population value.

Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Skilled Workforce

Chart 1-2 and Table 1-3 show the skilled workforce for Southwest Florida.<sup>1</sup> The region had a skilled workforce of 266,075 in 2020, representing 42.2 percent of the total working age population. A 55 percent skilled workforce would have had 346,623 or just over 80,000 more skilled working age adults in 2020. 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. Lee County had the largest skilled workforce in the region, with 150,304 residents in 2020 (42.3 percent of total working age population). Collier County had the next largest skilled workforce pool (78,651 residents, 46.9 percent of total working age population), followed by Charlotte County (30,517 residents, 38.4 percent of total population). Hendry County and Glades County had skilled workforces of 5,298 and 1,304, respectively.

All five Southwest Florida counties had a lower percentage of skilled workforce than the state of Florida (48.7 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).



Despite the increase in the total working age population since 2013, Southwest Florida has made steady progress in closing the gap to achieve our 55 percent skilled workforce goal - from a gap of 89,518 skilled workers in 2013 to a gap of 80,548 skilled workers.

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

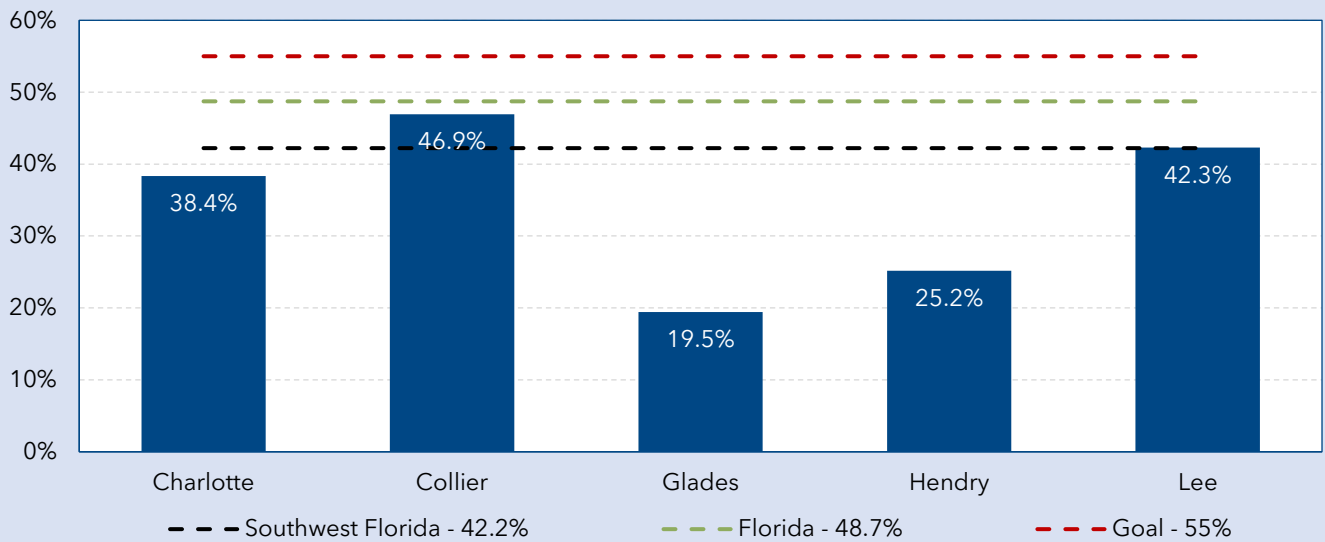
**Table 1-3: Skilled Workforce**

<b>Area</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
Charlotte County								
<i>Skilled workforce</i>	27,619	27,054	26,371	26,804	27,622	28,377	28,818	30,517
<i>Percent skilled workforce</i>	38.0%	37.1%	36.1%	36.2%	36.8%	37.3%	37.1%	38.4%
<i>Total working age population</i>	72,607	72,951	73,110	74,026	75,077	76,174	77,699	79,563
Collier County								
<i>Skilled workforce</i>	63,638	65,031	67,394	68,322	71,887	73,225	75,146	78,651
<i>Percent skilled workforce</i>	41.7%	42.2%	43.2%	43.3%	44.7%	45.1%	45.6%	46.9%
<i>Total working age population</i>	152,784	154,252	156,092	157,747	160,715	162,431	164,923	167,591
Glades County								
<i>Skilled workforce</i>	1,628	1,378	1,453	1,360	1,485	1,382	1,318	1,304
<i>Percent skilled workforce</i>	24.7%	21.2%	22.0%	21.0%	22.6%	21.0%	20.1%	19.5%
<i>Total working age population</i>	6,580	6,517	6,607	6,479	6,579	6,593	6,574	6,706
Hendry County								
<i>Skilled workforce</i>	4,008	4,014	3,863	3,806	3,856	3,920	4,388	5,298
<i>Percent skilled workforce</i>	21.2%	21.1%	20.1%	20.0%	20.0%	19.6%	21.6%	25.2%
<i>Total working age population</i>	18,873	19,045	19,213	18,994	19,278	19,998	20,326	21,039
Lee County								
<i>Skilled workforce</i>	121,800	125,887	128,381	133,643	138,376	142,626	146,696	150,304
<i>Percent skilled workforce</i>	39.3%	40.1%	40.2%	41.0%	41.6%	42.0%	42.2%	42.3%
<i>Total working age population</i>	309,542	313,668	319,333	325,586	332,703	339,819	347,677	355,324
<b>Southwest Florida</b>								
<i>Skilled workforce</i>	<b>218,694</b>	<b>223,365</b>	<b>227,462</b>	<b>233,935</b>	<b>243,226</b>	<b>249,531</b>	<b>256,366</b>	<b>266,075</b>
<i>Percent skilled workforce</i>	<b>39.0%</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>
<i>Total working age population</i>	<b>560,386</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>Florida</b>								
<i>Skilled workforce</i>	<b>4,404,724</b>	<b>4,500,929</b>	<b>4,629,843</b>	<b>4,743,912</b>	<b>4,894,546</b>	<b>5,038,695</b>	<b>5,168,614</b>	<b>5,315,171</b>
<i>Percent skilled workforce</i>	<b>44.4%</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>
<i>Total working age population</i>	<b>9,917,578</b>	<b>10,043,036</b>	<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>

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

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

Southwest Florida  
2020



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

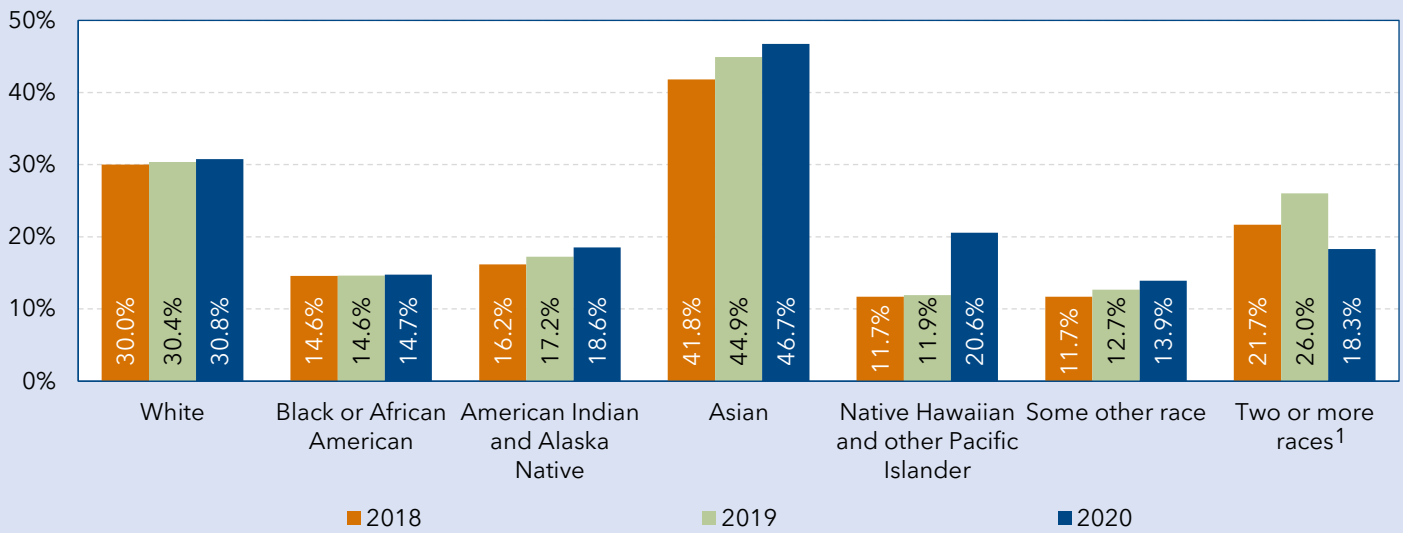
In summary, the working age population in the Southwest Florida region increased 12.5 percent between 2013 and 2020, while skilled workforce has increased 21.7 percent over the same period. However, progress toward the 55 percent goal is not uniform among the five Southwest Florida counties.



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 skilled workforce 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



<sup>1</sup>The U.S. Census Bureau provides the following definition for Some Other Race: Includes all other responses not included in the "White," "Black or African American," "American Indian or Alaska Native," "Asian," and "Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander" race categories described above. Respondents reporting entries such as multiracial, mixed, interracial, or Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish group (for example, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or Spanish) in response to the race questionnaire included in this category.

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>2</sup> In 2020, 30.8 percent of Southwest Florida residents who identified as White had at least a bachelor's degree, compared to 14.7 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 46.7 percent. The percent of residents with at least a bachelor's degree has generally increased each year since 2015 for most racial categories, although the differences in sample sizes among the presented races impact the calculations. It is important to point out this chart illustrates residents age 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>2</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**

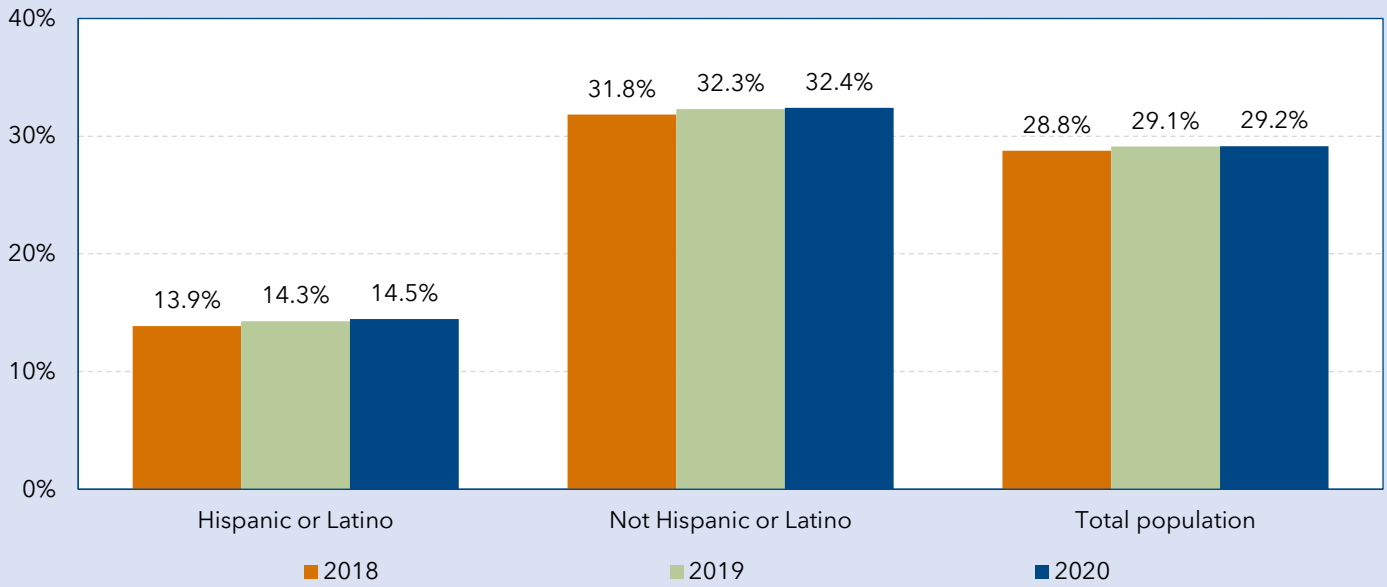
Percent of Total Population 25 and Over with at least a Bachelor's Degree

<b>Area</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
Charlotte County					
White	21.9%	22.8%	23.4%	23.8%	24.1%
Black or African American	15.8%	12.9%	15.9%	13.0%	14.8%
American Indian and Alaska Native	10.7%	11.6%	19.2%	14.2%	12.3%
Asian	35.4%	41.5%	39.7%	35.1%	40.4%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	14.8%	14.6%
Some other race	7.4%	17.0%	17.9%	29.0%	27.0%
Two or more races	20.1%	16.5%	19.7%	22.0%	21.7%
Collier County					
White	35.8%	36.6%	37.9%	37.9%	38.2%
Black or African American	10.9%	13.7%	13.2%	14.8%	16.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native	11.8%	15.1%	21.3%	20.7%	23.5%
Asian	39.1%	46.7%	48.8%	51.1%	50.2%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Some other race	10.1%	9.9%	11.0%	12.8%	10.7%
Two or more races	27.6%	29.2%	28.7%	34.3%	19.4%
Glades County					
White	10.0%	11.9%	10.7%	11.9%	12.9%
Black or African American	3.7%	7.6%	8.6%	8.5%	6.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native	4.4%	3.1%	2.0%	4.4%	5.9%
Asian	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	17.6%	20.0%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Some other race	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Two or more races	3.1%	5.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Hendry County					
White	9.5%	8.7%	8.8%	9.3%	9.3%
Black or African American	7.6%	6.6%	4.5%	4.2%	3.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native	10.6%	11.2%	10.8%	9.1%	3.2%
Asian	53.2%	40.1%	21.5%	21.7%	17.4%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Some other race	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Two or more races	17.4%	14.9%	5.9%	2.9%	9.9%
Lee County					
White	28.0%	28.5%	29.0%	29.4%	30.1%
Black or African American	15.2%	15.6%	15.9%	15.9%	15.4%
American Indian and Alaska Native	17.6%	20.0%	19.8%	24.5%	30.9%
Asian	34.7%	37.5%	40.2%	45.3%	47.5%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	23.6%	27.9%	18.1%	11.9%	26.4%
Some other race	10.4%	10.2%	12.2%	12.3%	14.9%
Two or more races	17.0%	19.1%	20.9%	25.9%	18.0%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>					
White	<b>28.7%</b>	<b>29.3%</b>	<b>30.0%</b>	<b>30.4%</b>	<b>30.8%</b>
Black or African American	<b>13.6%</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>14.6%</b>	<b>14.6%</b>	<b>14.7%</b>
American Indian and Alaska Native	<b>13.0%</b>	<b>14.2%</b>	<b>16.2%</b>	<b>17.2%</b>	<b>18.6%</b>
Asian	<b>36.0%</b>	<b>40.2%</b>	<b>41.8%</b>	<b>44.9%</b>	<b>46.7%</b>
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	<b>12.9%</b>	<b>20.5%</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	<b>11.9%</b>	<b>20.6%</b>
Some other race	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	<b>12.7%</b>	<b>13.9%</b>
Two or more races	<b>19.5%</b>	<b>20.6%</b>	<b>21.7%</b>	<b>26.0%</b>	<b>18.3%</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



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, 14.5 percent of Southwest Florida residents who identified their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino reported at least a bachelor’s degree in 2020, compared to 32.4 percent for residents who identified as Not Hispanic or Latino and 29.2 percent in the total population.



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 systemic barriers that still exist for the populations with lower attainment.





# Future Makers Coalition



Educational Outcomes



# Future Makers Coalition



## Aspiration and Preparation

	Indicator		Measure	Trending
	<b>Kindergarten Readiness</b> Percent Pre-K students considered ready for kindergarten	SWFL	48.3%	↓
		Florida	50.0%	↓
	<b>Third Grade Reading</b> Percent third grade students with satisfactory reading scores	SWFL	51.1%	↓
		Florida	53.0%	↓
	<b>High School Graduation Rates</b> High school graduation rate	SWFL	87.9%	↓
		Florida	90.1%	↑

## Overview

All three of the Aspiration and Preparation indicators (kindergarten readiness, third grade reading proficiency, high school graduation rates) in the Southwest Florida region declined from last year's report. Kindergarten readiness, the percent of pre-K students considered ready for kindergarten, slipped to 48.3 percent in 2021, down from the 51.1 percent measured in 2020. The third grade reading proficiency rate in Southwest Florida was 51.1 percent in the 2021-22 academic year, down from the 53.5 percent measured during the 2020-21 academic year. The Southwest Florida high school graduation rate was 87.9 percent during the 2020-21 academic year, down from the 89.8 percent recorded during the COVID-19 impacted 2019-20 academic year.



Recall that the spring 2019-20 K-12 statewide assessment testing was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic pursuant to Florida Department of Education Emergency Order No. 2020-EO-1 and the related disruption in in-person learning most certainly had an impact on the reported outcome measures in 2021. With the resumption in-person learning and the K-12 statewide assessment testing for the spring 2020-21, the decline in outcome measures reported in this 2022 report may represent more of a "return to normal" rather than an actual decline in academic achievement.



Data by race/ethnicity and by gender in the Southwest Florida region are also provided for both Third Grade Reading Proficiency and High School Graduation Rates in this report. Despite any negative impact from the COVID-19 pandemic, none of the reported races/ethnicities - White, Hispanic and Latino, and Black - achieved the 85 percent target rate for Third Grade Reading Proficiency. Only Southwest Florida students who identified as White achieved the 90 percent target rate for High School Graduation Rate (reaching a 91.8 percent rate). Hispanic and Latino and Black students fell just below the 90 percent target, achieving rates of 89.4 percent and 87.1 percent, respectively.

# FutureMakers in Action

*All Aboard the EXCEL Bus!*



In last year's Annual Report, we introduced the new Excellent Career Exploration Lab (EXCEL) Bus, commanded by FutureMaker Kelly Thawley, Career Specialist, Career & Technical Education, School District of Lee County. 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 fall of 2021 and drove to Lee County elementary schools throughout the 2021-22 school year. As of June 2022, 696 5th grade students experienced the EXCEL Bus! 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/>

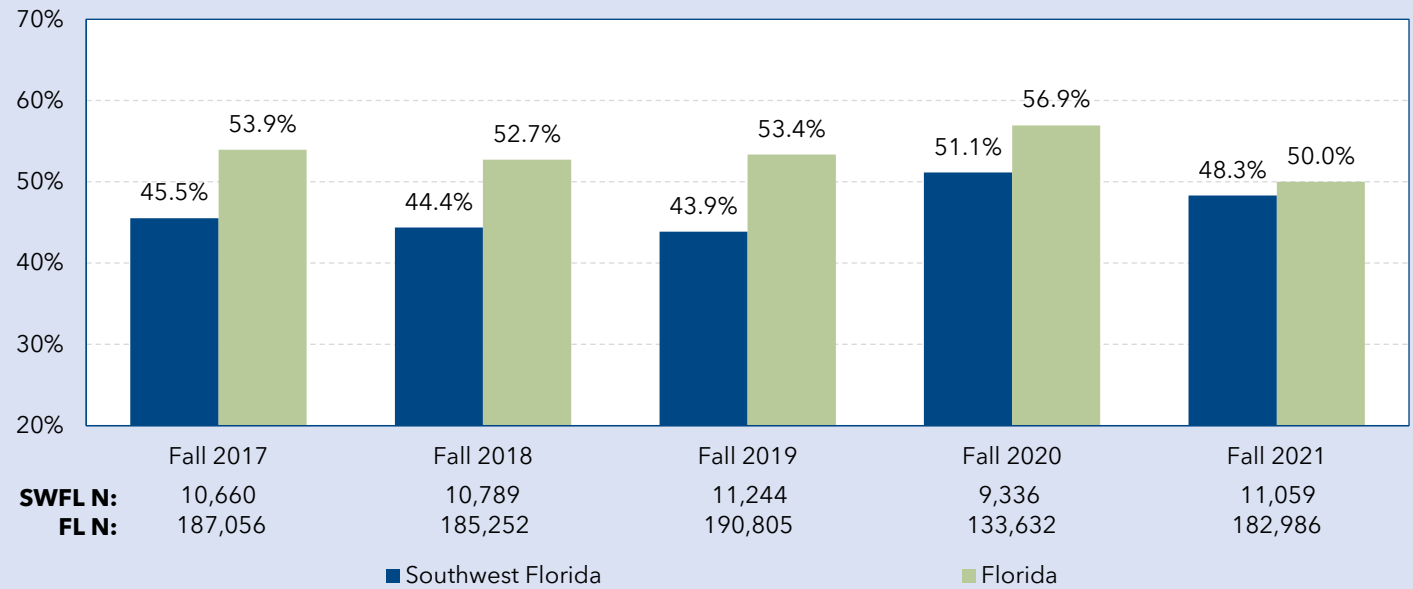
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**FutureMakers Coalition**

### Chart 2-1: Kindergarten Readiness

Percent scoring 500+ on Star Early Literacy Assessment



Source: Florida Department of Education  
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>3</sup> Kindergarten readiness is measured through the Star Early Literacy Assessment, a screener exam administered to kindergarten students during the first 30 days of the school year. Students that score a 500 or higher are considered “ready for kindergarten”.

In Fall 2020, 48.3 percent of total kindergarten students in Southwest Florida were considered ready for kindergarten.<sup>4</sup> This percentage was below the state of Florida, measured at 50.0 percent. The region slipped from Fall 2020, when 51.1 percent of kindergarten students were considered ready for kindergarten. Hendry County had the highest percentage in Fall 2020, with a kindergarten readiness rate of 70.3 percent.<sup>5</sup> Glades County was next highest at 51.2 percent, followed by Collier County (47.2 percent), Charlotte County (46.3 percent), and Lee County (46.3 percent).

<sup>3</sup> Special consideration should be given to Hendry County (and consequently, Southwest Florida) kindergarten readiness scores when comparing 2020 to previous years. This is because the county partnered with Digital Academy of Florida (DAOF), which is an online platform available to ALL students in Florida, to administer the assessment test. The 2020 spikes in Hendry County’s sample size and Kindergarten Readiness Score were a result of the data from their DAOF partner and is not truly indicative of students in Hendry County. The FutureMakers Data team reached out to Hendry County to obtain a more accurate picture of the county, with respect to kindergarten readiness scores. While these values are not reported in Table 2-1 and Chart 2-1, we provide these adjusted set of values in the footnotes below to reflect the true results for Hendry County and Southwest Florida.

<sup>4</sup> The 2020 adjusted values for Southwest Florida were 4,234 students ready for kindergarten out of a total of 8,784 students, giving the region a “ready for kindergarten” rate of 48.2 percent.

<sup>5</sup> The 2020 adjusted values for Hendry County were 224 students ready for kindergarten out of a total of 438 students, giving the county a “ready for kindergarten” rate of 51.1 percent.



Note that the number of Southwest Florida students who took the Star Early Literacy Assessment dropped from 11,244 in 2019 to 9,336 in 2020, which may be due to the COVID-19 pandemic and parents deciding to wait a year to enroll their children in kindergarten. The observed increase in percent Kindergarten Readiness among this smaller number of Southwest Florida students in 2020 (51.1 percent) over 2019 (43.9 percent) may suggest that these students benefitted from more favorable family resources to better weather the pandemic. The number of Southwest Florida students who took the Star Early Literacy Assessment rebounded to 11,059 in "post-pandemic" 2021 with a resulting percent Kindergarten Readiness of 48.3 percent, which is an improvement over the 2019 "pre-pandemic" measure of 43.9 percent.

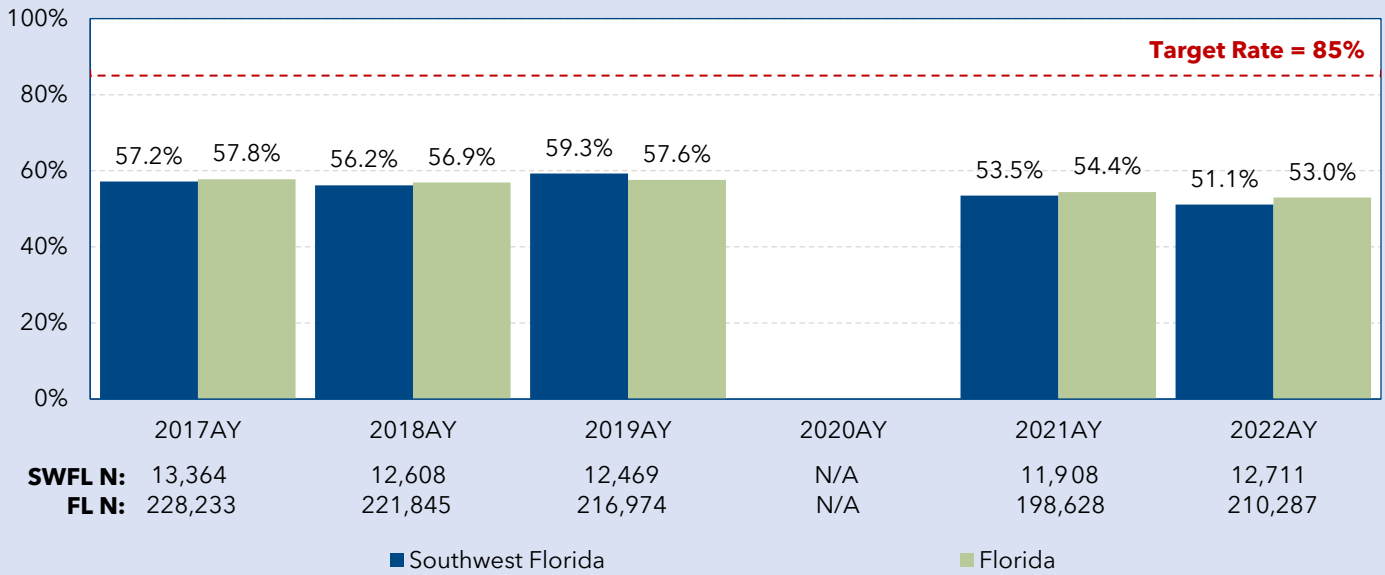
### Table 2-1: Kindergarten Readiness

Area	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021
Charlotte County					
<i>Number "ready for kindergarten"</i>	565	518	506	464	500
<i>Number of test takers</i>	1,029	975	1,076	921	1,079
<i>Percent "ready for kindergarten"</i>	54.9%	53.1%	47.0%	50.4%	46.3%
Collier County					
<i>Number "ready for kindergarten"</i>	1,319	1,404	1,395	1,273	1,410
<i>Number of test takers</i>	2,695	2,865	3,051	2,568	2,990
<i>Percent "ready for kindergarten"</i>	48.9%	49.0%	45.7%	49.6%	47.2%
Glades County					
<i>Number "ready for kindergarten"</i>	20	85	89	67	64
<i>Number of test takers</i>	31	128	154	112	125
<i>Percent "ready for kindergarten"</i>	64.5%	66.4%	57.8%	59.8%	51.2%
Hendry County					
<i>Number "ready for kindergarten"</i>	170	242	295	764	557
<i>Number of test takers</i>	476	413	494	990	792
<i>Percent "ready for kindergarten"</i>	35.7%	58.6%	59.7%	77.2%	70.3%
Lee County					
<i>Number "ready for kindergarten"</i>	2,778	2,539	2,649	2,206	2,812
<i>Number of test takers</i>	6,429	6,408	6,469	4,745	6,073
<i>Percent "ready for kindergarten"</i>	43.2%	39.6%	40.9%	46.5%	46.3%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>					
<i>Number "ready for kindergarten"</i>	<b>4,852</b>	<b>4,788</b>	<b>4,934</b>	<b>4,774</b>	<b>5,343</b>
<i>Number of test takers</i>	<b>10,660</b>	<b>10,789</b>	<b>11,244</b>	<b>9,336</b>	<b>11,059</b>
<i>Percent "ready for kindergarten"</i>	<b>45.5%</b>	<b>44.4%</b>	<b>43.9%</b>	<b>51.1%</b>	<b>48.3%</b>
<b>Florida</b>					
<i>Number "ready for kindergarten"</i>	<b>100,909</b>	<b>97,652</b>	<b>101,818</b>	<b>76,098</b>	<b>91,511</b>
<i>Number of test takers</i>	<b>187,056</b>	<b>185,252</b>	<b>190,805</b>	<b>133,632</b>	<b>182,986</b>
<i>Percent "ready for kindergarten"</i>	<b>53.9%</b>	<b>52.7%</b>	<b>53.4%</b>	<b>56.9%</b>	<b>50.0%</b>

Source: Florida Department of Education

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

Level 3 and above



Source: Florida Department of Education  
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>6</sup> (students scoring at least a 3 on the Florida Standard Assessments exam) for Southwest Florida, along with each of the five counties. Southwest Florida had a third grade reading proficiency rate of 51.1 percent during the 2021-22 academic year. Third grade reading proficiency declined from the 2020-21 academic year and remains well below the 85 percent target rate.

None of the five Southwest Florida counties achieved the 85 percent target rate. Collier County had the highest rate of third grade reading proficiency at 59.2 percent during the 2021-22 academic year. Charlotte County had the next highest reading proficiency (55.2 percent), followed by Lee County (47.7 percent), Glades County (43.1 percent), and Hendry County<sup>7</sup> (39.8 percent).

<sup>6</sup> Pursuant to Florida Department of Education Emergency Order No. 2020-EO-1, spring K-12 statewide assessment test administrations for the 2019-20 academic year were canceled.

<sup>7</sup> Hendry County data does not include information from the Digital Academy of Florida, which partners with families across the state.

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

<b>Area</b>	<b>2015AY</b>	<b>2016AY</b>	<b>2017AY</b>	<b>2018AY</b>	<b>2019AY</b>	<b>2020AY</b>	<b>2021AY</b>	<b>2022AY</b>
Charlotte County								
Students scoring 3 or above	557	600	748	647	699	N/A	630	628
Total students	1,107	1,045	1,138	1,032	1,006	N/A	1,018	1,137
Percent scoring 3 or above	50.3%	57.4%	65.7%	62.7%	69.5%	N/A	61.9%	55.2%
Collier County								
Students scoring 3 or above	1,870	1,890	2,173	2,073	2,141	N/A	2,026	2,023
Total students	3,555	3,677	3,810	3,541	3,487	N/A	3,361	3,416
Percent scoring 3 or above	52.6%	51.4%	57.0%	58.5%	61.4%	N/A	60.3%	59.2%
Glades County								
Students scoring 3 or above	86	86	92	90	93	N/A	59	69
Total students	166	181	160	164	151	N/A	154	160
Percent scoring 3 or above	51.8%	47.5%	57.5%	54.9%	61.6%	N/A	38.3%	43.1%
Hendry County								
Students scoring 3 or above	271	247	277	259	254	N/A	195	214
Total students	580	613	614	588	537	N/A	499	538
Percent scoring 3 or above	46.7%	40.3%	45.1%	44.0%	47.3%	N/A	39.1%	39.8%
Lee County								
Students scoring 3 or above	3,749	4,042	4,349	4,012	4,203	N/A	3,459	3,560
Total students	7,024	7,522	7,642	7,283	7,288	N/A	6,876	7,460
Percent scoring 3 or above	53.4%	53.7%	56.9%	55.1%	57.7%	N/A	50.3%	47.7%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>								
Students scoring 3 or above	<b>6,533</b>	<b>6,865</b>	<b>7,639</b>	<b>7,081</b>	<b>7,390</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>6,369</b>	<b>6,494</b>
Total students	<b>12,432</b>	<b>13,038</b>	<b>13,364</b>	<b>12,608</b>	<b>12,469</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>11,908</b>	<b>12,711</b>
Percent scoring 3 or above	<b>52.5%</b>	<b>52.7%</b>	<b>57.2%</b>	<b>56.2%</b>	<b>59.3%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>53.5%</b>	<b>51.1%</b>
<b>Florida</b>								
Students scoring 3 or above	<b>114,093</b>	<b>120,279</b>	<b>131,932</b>	<b>126,285</b>	<b>125,073</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>108,097</b>	<b>111,353</b>
Total students	<b>215,754</b>	<b>220,924</b>	<b>228,233</b>	<b>221,845</b>	<b>216,974</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>198,628</b>	<b>210,287</b>
Percent scoring 3 or above	<b>52.9%</b>	<b>54.4%</b>	<b>57.8%</b>	<b>56.9%</b>	<b>57.6%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>54.4%</b>	<b>53.0%</b>

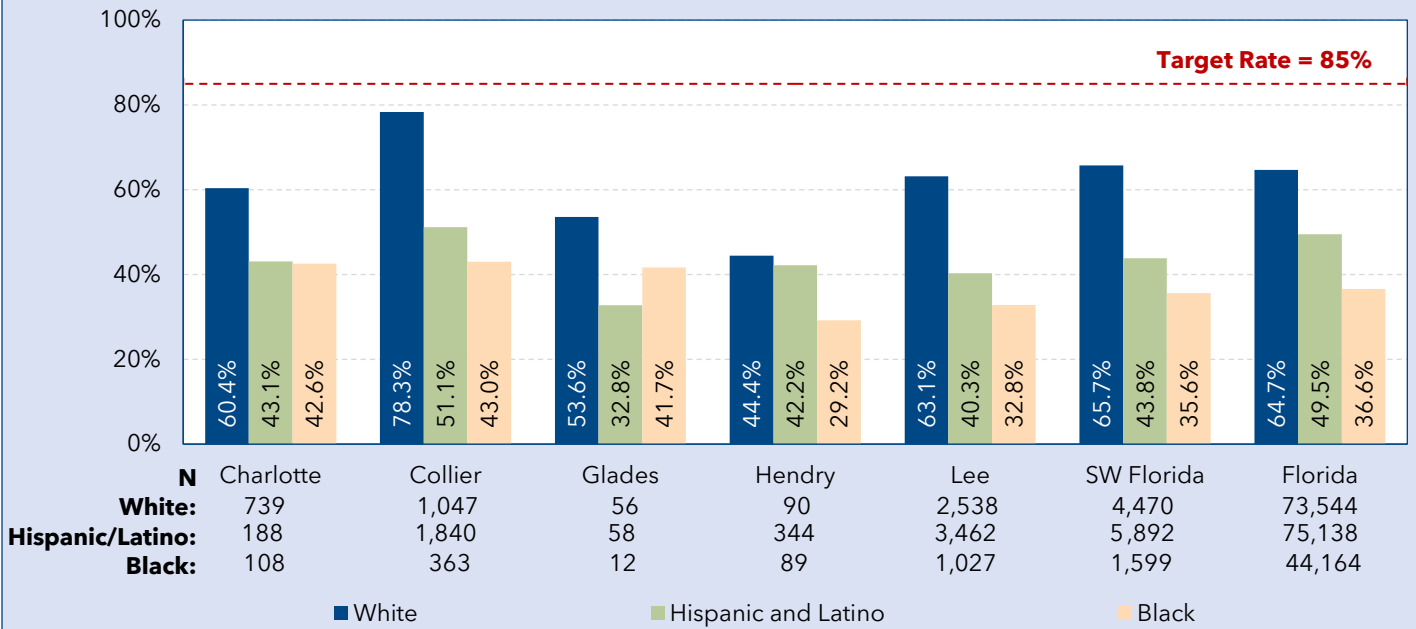
Source: Florida Department of Education

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



### Chart 2-3: Third Grade Reading Proficiency by Race/Ethnicity

Level 3 and above  
2021-22 Academic Year



Source: Florida Department of Education  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Third Grade Reading Proficiency by Race/Ethnicity

Chart 2-3 and Table 2-3 shows third grade reading proficiency by race and ethnicity for the 2021-22 academic year.<sup>8</sup> Southwest Florida third grade students who identified as White had the highest reading proficiency rate of 64.7 percent during the 2021-22 academic year, but still below the target rate of 85 percent. Meanwhile third grade students who identified as Hispanic and Latino had a reading proficiency rate of 43.8 percent, while students who identified as Black had a reading proficiency rate of 35.6 percent.

<sup>8</sup> Hendry County data does not include information from the Digital Academy of Florida, which partners with families across the state.

**Table 2-3: Third Grade Reading Proficiency by Race/Ethnicity**

2021-22 Academic Year

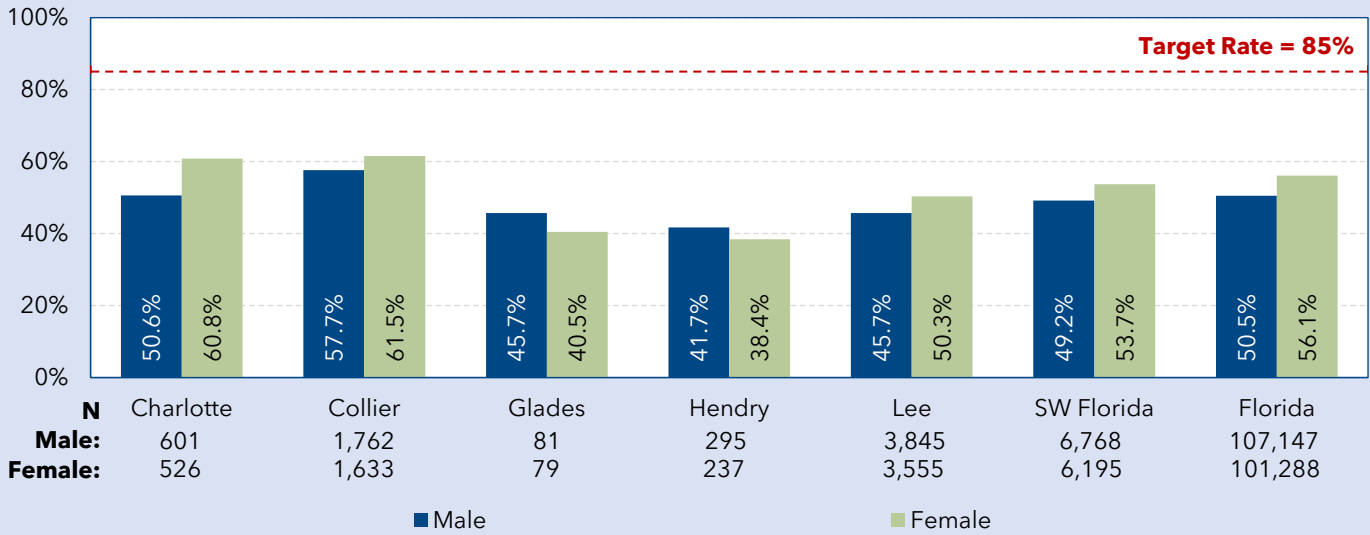
<b>Area</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Hispanic and Latino</b>	<b>Black</b>
Charlotte County			
<i>Students scoring 3 or above</i>	446	81	46
<i>Total students</i>	739	188	108
<i>Percent scoring 3 or above</i>	60.4%	43.1%	42.6%
Collier County			
<i>Students scoring 3 or above</i>	820	941	156
<i>Total students</i>	1,047	1,840	363
<i>Percent scoring 3 or above</i>	78.3%	51.1%	43.0%
Glades County			
<i>Students scoring 3 or above</i>	30	19	5
<i>Total students</i>	56	58	12
<i>Percent scoring 3 or above</i>	53.6%	32.8%	41.7%
Hendry County			
<i>Students scoring 3 or above</i>	40	145	26
<i>Total students</i>	90	344	89
<i>Percent scoring 3 or above</i>	44.4%	42.2%	29.2%
Lee County			
<i>Students scoring 3 or above</i>	1,602	1,396	337
<i>Total students</i>	2,538	3,462	1,027
<i>Percent scoring 3 or above</i>	63.1%	40.3%	32.8%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>			
<b><i>Students scoring 3 or above</i></b>	<b>2,938</b>	<b>2,582</b>	<b>570</b>
<b><i>Total students</i></b>	<b>4,470</b>	<b>5,892</b>	<b>1,599</b>
<b><i>Percent scoring 3 or above</i></b>	<b>65.7%</b>	<b>43.8%</b>	<b>35.6%</b>
<b>Florida</b>			
<b><i>Students scoring 3 or above</i></b>	<b>47,572</b>	<b>37,164</b>	<b>16,150</b>
<b><i>Total students</i></b>	<b>73,544</b>	<b>75,138</b>	<b>44,164</b>
<b><i>Percent scoring 3 or above</i></b>	<b>64.7%</b>	<b>49.5%</b>	<b>36.6%</b>

Source: Florida Department of Education

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

### Chart 2-4: Third Grade Reading Proficiency by Gender

Level 3 and above  
2021-22 Academic Year



Source: Florida Department of Education  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Third Grade Reading Proficiency by Gender

Chart 2-4 and Table 2-4 shows third grade reading proficiency by gender for the 2020-21 academic year.<sup>9</sup> Female third grade students in Southwest Florida had a reading proficiency rate of 55.7 percent during the 2020-21 academic year, below the target rate of 85 percent. Meanwhile, male third grade students had a reading proficiency rate of 50.7 percent. Rates for both females and males were below the state of Florida, measured at 58.0 percent and 51.3 percent, respectively.

Females had a higher reading proficiency rate than males in each of the five Southwest Florida counties as well. Charlotte County females had the highest third grade reading proficiency rate, measured at 64.9 percent, followed by Collier County (62.8 percent), Lee County (53.2 percent), Glades County (46.0 percent), and Hendry County (38.9 percent). The reading proficiency among females in all five Southwest Florida counties were below the target rate of 85 percent.

<sup>9</sup> Hendry County data does not include information from the Digital Academy of Florida, which partners with families across the state.

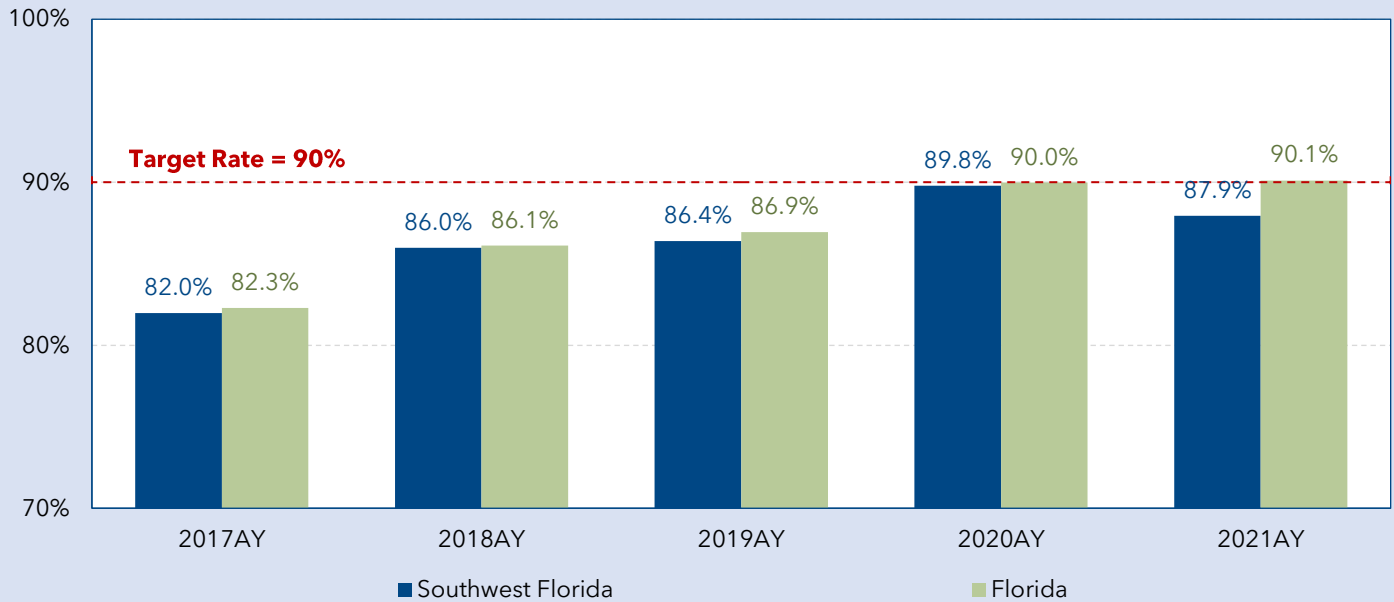
**Table 2-4: Third Grade Reading Proficiency by Gender**

2021-22 Academic Year

<b>Area</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Charlotte County		
<i>Students scoring 3 or above</i>	304	320
<i>Total students</i>	601	526
<i>Percent scoring 3 or above</i>	50.6%	60.8%
Collier County		
<i>Students scoring 3 or above</i>	1,016	1,005
<i>Total students</i>	1,762	1,633
<i>Percent scoring 3 or above</i>	57.7%	61.5%
Glades County		
<i>Students scoring 3 or above</i>	37	32
<i>Total students</i>	81	79
<i>Percent scoring 3 or above</i>	45.7%	40.5%
Hendry County		
<i>Students scoring 3 or above</i>	123	91
<i>Total students</i>	295	237
<i>Percent scoring 3 or above</i>	41.7%	38.4%
Lee County		
<i>Students scoring 3 or above</i>	1,758	1,789
<i>Total students</i>	3,845	3,555
<i>Percent scoring 3 or above</i>	45.7%	50.3%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>		
<b><i>Students scoring 3 or above</i></b>	<b>3,238</b>	<b>3,237</b>
<b><i>Total students</i></b>	<b>6,584</b>	<b>6,030</b>
<b><i>Percent scoring 3 or above</i></b>	<b>49.2%</b>	<b>53.7%</b>
<b>Florida</b>		
<b><i>Students scoring 3 or above</i></b>	<b>54,081</b>	<b>56,837</b>
<b><i>Total students</i></b>	<b>107,147</b>	<b>101,288</b>
<b><i>Percent scoring 3 or above</i></b>	<b>50.5%</b>	<b>56.1%</b>

Source: Florida Department of Education

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

**Chart 2-5: High School Graduation Rate**

Source: Florida Department of Education  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## High School Graduation Rate

Chart 2-5 and Table 2-5 show the high school graduation rates for Southwest Florida, along with each of the five counties.<sup>10</sup> Southwest Florida had a high school graduation rate of 87.9 percent during the 2020-21 academic year, down 1.9 percentage points from the prior academic year. The high school graduation rate for Southwest Florida was below the state, measured at 90.1 percent during the 2020-21 academic year.

Collier County (92.6 percent) and Charlotte County (90.9 percent) were the only two counties to exceed the 90 percent target graduation rate during the 2020-21 academic year. Hendry County had the next highest graduation rate (86.6 percent), followed by Lee County (85.1 percent) and Glades County (78.5 percent).

<sup>10</sup> The cancellation of state testing during the 2019-20 academic year due to COVID-19 may have led to artificially inflated graduation rates throughout the state.

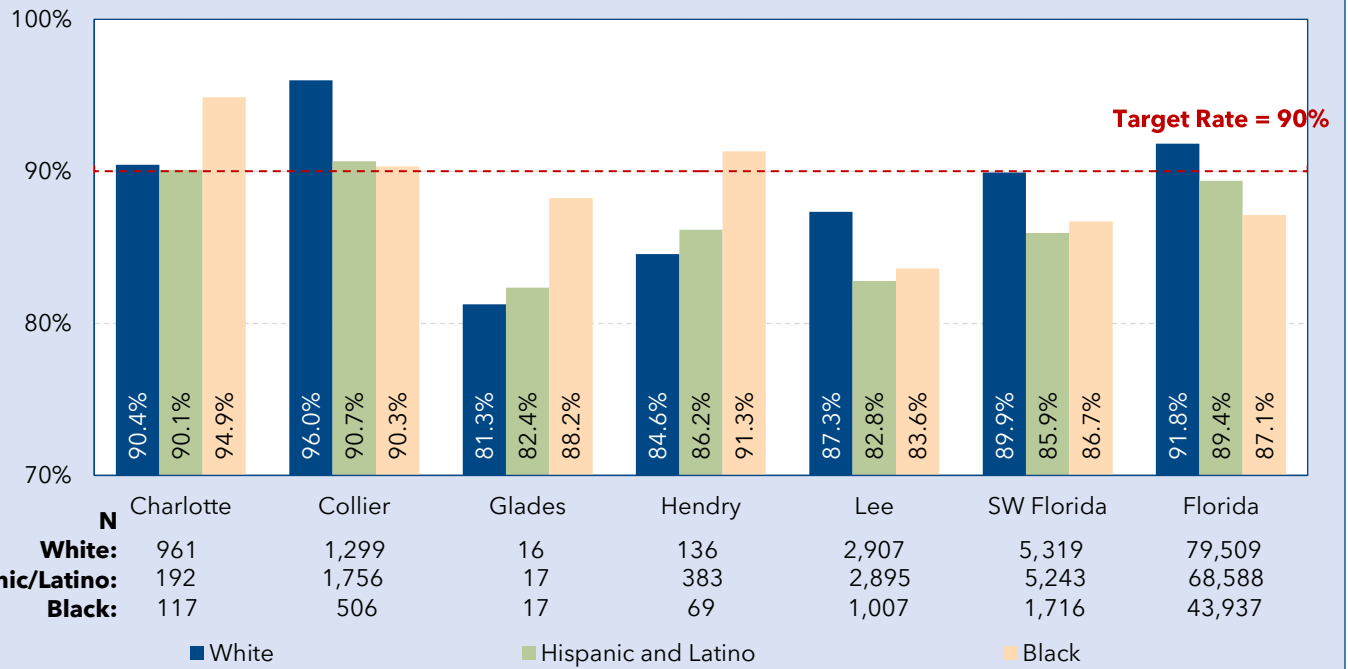
**Table 2-5: High School Graduation Rate**

<b>Area</b>	<b>2017AY</b>	<b>2018AY</b>	<b>2019AY</b>	<b>2020AY</b>	<b>2021AY</b>
Charlotte County					
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	1,111	1,273	1,188	1,272	1,248
<i>Cohort students</i>	1,371	1,453	1,375	1,407	1,373
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	81.0%	87.6%	86.4%	90.4%	90.9%
Collier County					
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	2,995	3,101	3,312	3,501	3,461
<i>Cohort students</i>	3,394	3,376	3,605	3,796	3,737
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	88.2%	91.9%	91.9%	92.2%	92.6%
Glades County					
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	44	57	74	69	51
<i>Cohort students</i>	54	61	81	77	65
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	81.5%	93.4%	91.4%	89.6%	78.5%
Hendry County					
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	423	428	510	519	519
<i>Cohort students</i>	501	511	609	587	599
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	84.4%	83.8%	83.7%	88.4%	86.6%
Lee County					
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	5,084	5,588	5,778	6,123	6,083
<i>Cohort students</i>	6,461	6,749	6,902	6,922	7,147
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	78.7%	82.8%	83.7%	88.5%	85.1%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>					
<b><i>Cohort graduates</i></b>	<b>9,657</b>	<b>10,447</b>	<b>10,862</b>	<b>11,484</b>	<b>11,362</b>
<b><i>Cohort students</i></b>	<b>11,781</b>	<b>12,150</b>	<b>12,572</b>	<b>12,789</b>	<b>12,921</b>
<b><i>Percent cohort graduates</i></b>	<b>82.0%</b>	<b>86.0%</b>	<b>86.4%</b>	<b>89.8%</b>	<b>87.9%</b>
<b>Florida</b>					
<b><i>Cohort graduates</i></b>	<b>168,042</b>	<b>180,411</b>	<b>184,509</b>	<b>188,088</b>	<b>185,758</b>
<b><i>Cohort students</i></b>	<b>204,212</b>	<b>209,520</b>	<b>212,240</b>	<b>209,041</b>	<b>206,154</b>
<b><i>Percent cohort graduates</i></b>	<b>82.3%</b>	<b>86.1%</b>	<b>86.9%</b>	<b>90.0%</b>	<b>90.1%</b>

Source: Florida Department of Education

### Chart 2-6: High School Graduation Rate by Race/Ethnicity

2020-21 Academic Year



Source: Florida Department of Education  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## High School Graduation Rate by Race/Ethnicity

Chart 2-6 and Table 2-6 shows high school graduation rates by race and ethnicity for the 2020-21 academic year. Southwest Florida students who identified as White had a high school graduation rate of 89.9 percent during the 2020-21 academic year, slightly below the target rate of 90 percent. Meanwhile students who identified as Black had a high school graduation rate of 86.7 percent, while students who identified as Hispanic and Latino had a high school graduation rate of 85.9 percent, both below the 90 percent target rate. For Florida, White students had a graduation rate (91.8 percent) slightly above the 90 percent target, while the graduation rates for Hispanic and Latino students (89.4 percent) and Black students (87.1 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 (56.7 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 2-6: High School Graduation Rate by Race/Ethnicity**

2020-21 Academic Year

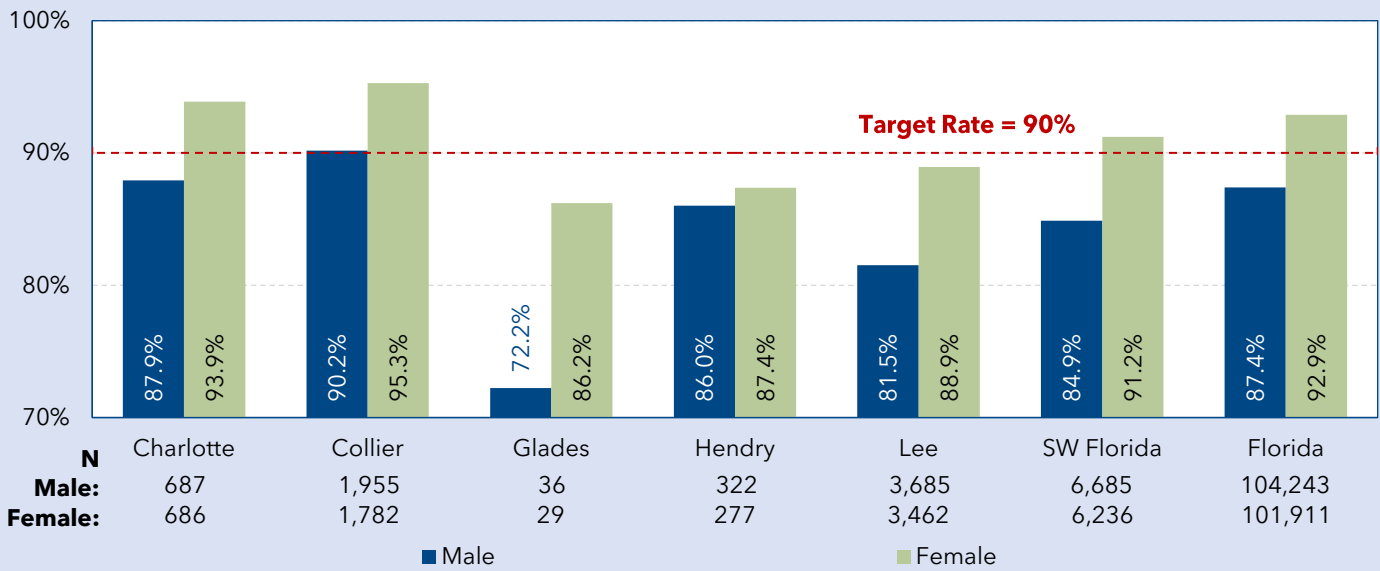
<b>Area</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Hispanic and Latino</b>	<b>Black</b>
Charlotte County			
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	869	173	111
<i>Cohort students</i>	961	192	117
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	90.4%	90.1%	94.9%
Collier County			
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	1,247	1,592	457
<i>Cohort students</i>	1,299	1,756	506
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	96.0%	90.7%	90.3%
Glades County			
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	13	14	15
<i>Cohort students</i>	16	17	17
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	81.3%	82.4%	88.2%
Hendry County			
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	115	330	63
<i>Cohort students</i>	136	383	69
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	84.6%	86.2%	91.3%
Lee County			
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	2,539	2,397	842
<i>Cohort students</i>	2,907	2,895	1,007
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	87.3%	82.8%	83.6%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>			
<b><i>Cohort graduates</i></b>	<b>4,783</b>	<b>4,506</b>	<b>1,488</b>
<b><i>Cohort students</i></b>	<b>5,319</b>	<b>5,243</b>	<b>1,716</b>
<b><i>Percent cohort graduates</i></b>	<b>89.9%</b>	<b>85.9%</b>	<b>86.7%</b>
<b>Florida</b>			
<b><i>Cohort graduates</i></b>	<b>72,998</b>	<b>61,310</b>	<b>38,276</b>
<b><i>Cohort students</i></b>	<b>79,509</b>	<b>68,588</b>	<b>43,937</b>
<b><i>Percent cohort graduates</i></b>	<b>91.8%</b>	<b>89.4%</b>	<b>87.1%</b>

Source: Florida Department of Education



### Chart 2-7: High School Graduation Rate by Gender

2020-21 Academic Year



Source: Florida Department of Education  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## High School Graduation Rate by Gender

Chart 2-7 and Table 2-7 shows high school graduation rate by gender for the 2020-21 academic year. Females in Southwest Florida had a high school graduation rate of 91.2 percent during the 2020-21 academic year, above the target rate of 90 percent. Meanwhile, male students had a high school graduation rate of 84.9 percent. Rates for both females and males were below the state of Florida, measured at 92.9 percent and 87.4 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 95.3 percent, followed by Charlotte County (93.9 percent), Lee County (88.9 percent), Hendry County (87.4 percent) and Glades County (86.2 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 2-7: High School Graduation Rate by Gender**

2020-21 Academic Year

<b>Area</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Charlotte County		
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	604	644
<i>Cohort students</i>	687	686
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	87.9%	93.9%
Collier County		
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	1,763	1,698
<i>Cohort students</i>	1,955	1,782
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	90.2%	95.3%
Glades County		
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	26	25
<i>Cohort students</i>	36	29
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	72.2%	86.2%
Hendry County		
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	277	242
<i>Cohort students</i>	322	277
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	86.0%	87.4%
Lee County		
<i>Cohort graduates</i>	3,004	3,079
<i>Cohort students</i>	3,685	3,462
<i>Percent cohort graduates</i>	81.5%	88.9%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>		
<b><i>Cohort graduates</i></b>	<b>5,674</b>	<b>5,688</b>
<b><i>Cohort students</i></b>	<b>6,685</b>	<b>6,236</b>
<b><i>Percent cohort graduates</i></b>	<b>84.9%</b>	<b>91.2%</b>
<b>Florida</b>		
<b><i>Cohort graduates</i></b>	<b>91,103</b>	<b>94,655</b>
<b><i>Cohort students</i></b>	<b>104,243</b>	<b>101,911</b>
<b><i>Percent cohort graduates</i></b>	<b>87.4%</b>	<b>92.9%</b>




Source: Florida Department of Education



# Future Makers Coalition



## Access and Entry

Indicator	Measure	Trending	
 <b>Fall Enrollment</b> Postsecondary fall enrollment	SWFL	36,893	↓
	Florida	1,073,398	↓
 <b>Technical Education</b> Technical college fall enrollment	SWFL	4,300	↓
	Florida	95,595	↓
 <b>FASFA Completion</b> FAFSA completion rate	SWFL	38.8%	↓
	Florida	43.0%	↓

## Overview

All three Access and Entry indicators (postsecondary fall enrollment, technical college fall enrollment, FAFSA completion rate) in the Southwest Florida region slipped from last year's report. Southwest Florida had a total postsecondary fall enrollment of 36,893 students in 2020, down 4.7 percent from the previous fall. Similarly, the region's 2020 technical college fall enrollment fell 7.5 percent from the prior year to 4,300 students. It should be noted that postsecondary fall enrollment and technical college fall enrollment in the state also declined, by 3.2 and 4.2 percent, in 2020.

During the 2021-22 academic year, the Southwest Florida region had 4,951 students complete a FAFSA application, giving the region a FAFSA completion rate of 38.8 percent - down from the 40.7 percent registered during the 2020-21 academic year. FAFSA completion rates in the state of Florida also decreased between these two academic years, from 44.2 to 43.0 percent.



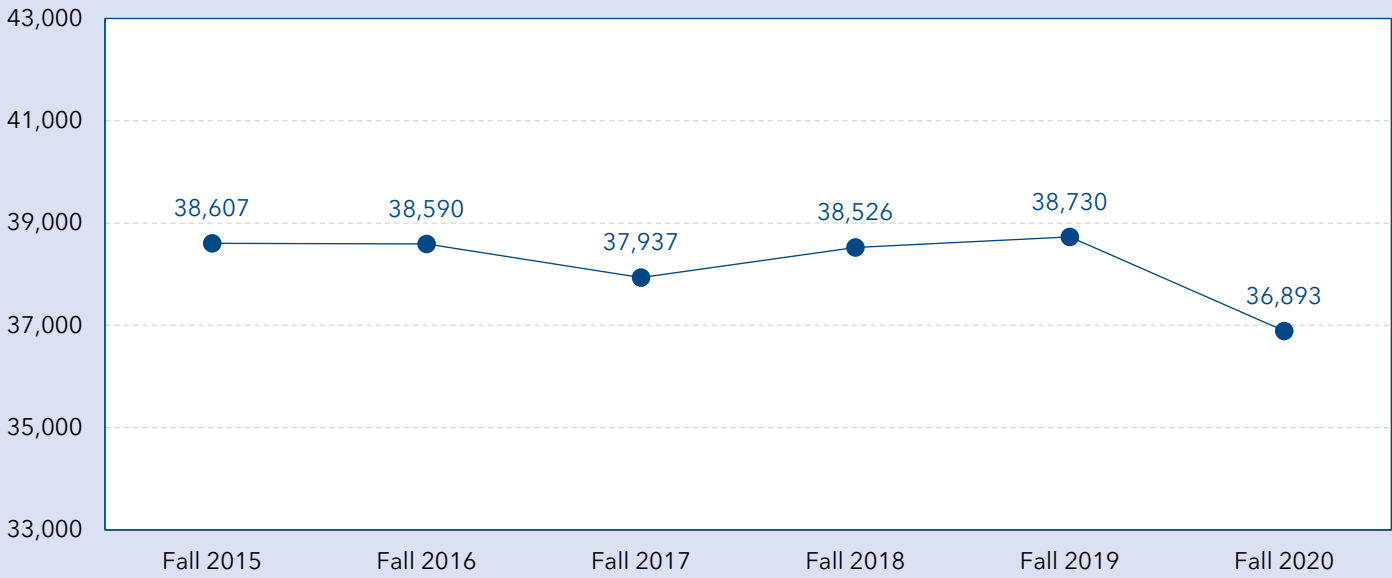
Postsecondary fall enrollment and technical college fall enrollment in 2020 fell most likely due to the uncertainty of learning options during the COVID-19 pandemic. FAFSA completion rates parallel these trends, with a slight rebound in 2021 as students resumed their higher education planning. However, FAFSA completion continued its downward trend in 2022. 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 2015 and 2020 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 equitable outcomes for all students 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 2-8: 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>11</sup> Southwest Florida had a total postsecondary fall enrollment of 36,893 students in Fall 2020, down 4.7 percent from the previous fall. The decline represents the largest decline in Fall enrollment over the past five years. It is important to note that Southwest Florida was significantly impacted by Hurricane Irma in 2017, which may have played a role in the decreased enrollment numbers. Fall enrollment in both the state (3.2 percent decrease) and the nation (3.0 percent decrease) also declined from Fall 2019 to Fall 2020.

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

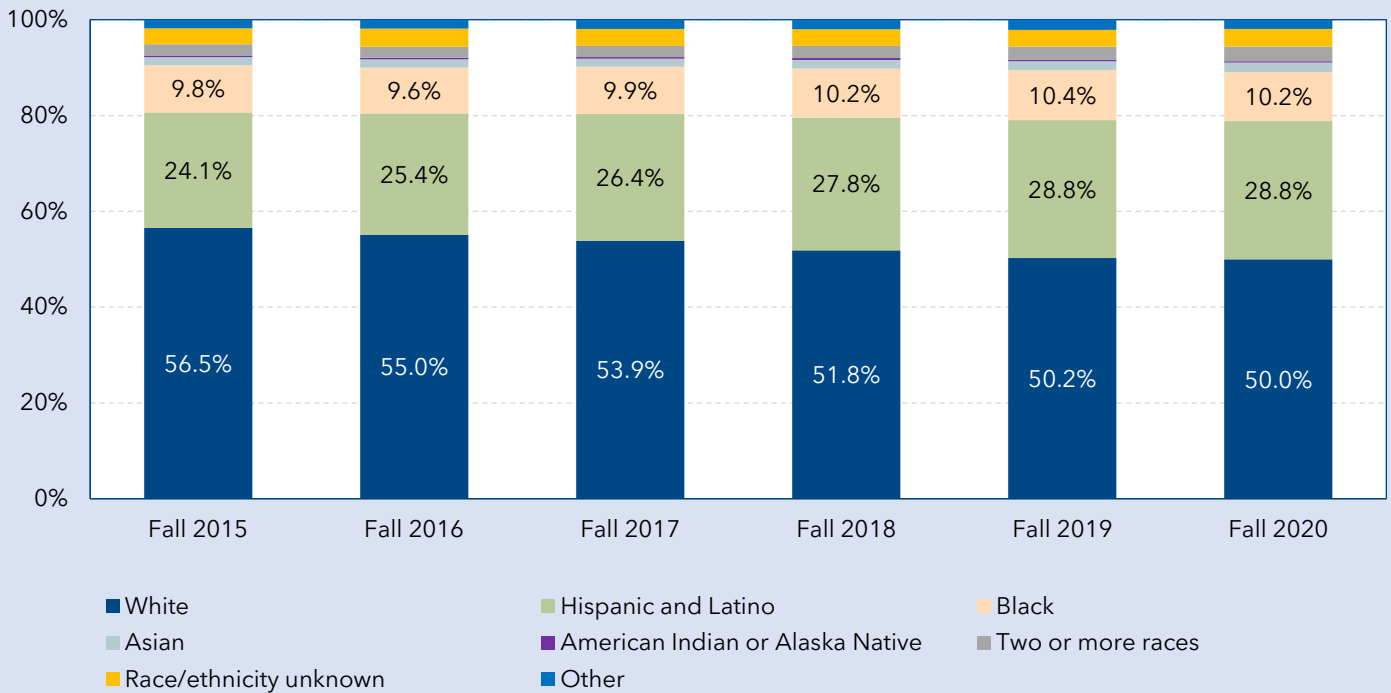
Area	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
Southwest Florida						
Fall enrollment	38,607	38,590	37,937	38,526	38,730	36,893
Percent change	--	0.0%	-1.7%	1.6%	0.5%	-4.7%
Florida						
Fall enrollment	1,136,278	1,128,019	1,125,301	1,116,833	1,108,594	1,073,398
Percent change	--	-0.7%	-0.2%	-0.8%	-0.7%	-3.2%
United States						
Fall enrollment	20,447,138	20,276,420	20,185,233	20,058,711	20,043,436	19,437,677
Percent change	--	-0.8%	-0.4%	-0.6%	-0.1%	-3.0%

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

<sup>11</sup> See the Methodology for more information on how postsecondary institutes in Southwest Florida were identified.

### Chart 2-9: Postsecondary Fall Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Southwest Florida



Note: For ease of reading, the percentages for White, Hispanic and Latino, and Black students only are provided. The percentages for the other races are listed in Table 2-9.

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 2-9 and Table 2-9 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 56.6 percent in Fall 2015 to 50.0 percent in Fall 2020, 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 24.1 percent in Fall 2015 to 28.8 percent in Fall 2020. 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 2015 to Fall 2020.



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 an inequitable system for students of color to achieve the 55 percent goal of skilled working age adults with college degrees, workforce certificates, industry certifications, and other high-quality credentials.

**Table 2-9: Postsecondary Fall Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity**

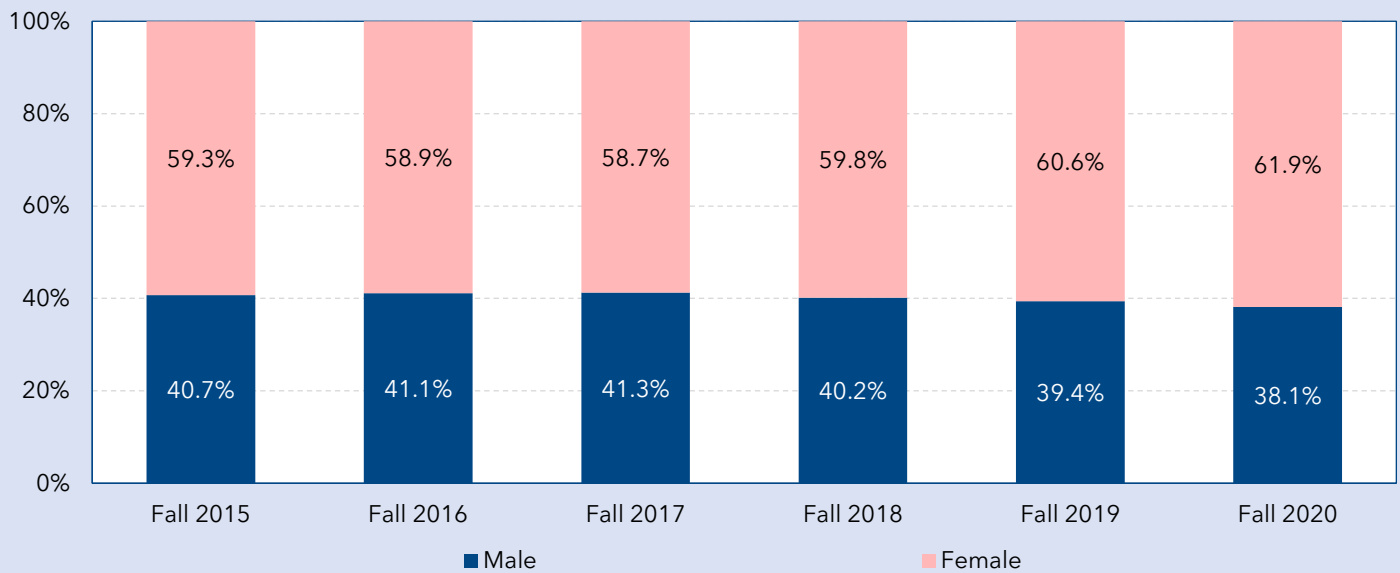
Southwest Florida

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Fall 2015</b>	<b>Fall 2016</b>	<b>Fall 2017</b>	<b>Fall 2018</b>	<b>Fall 2019</b>	<b>Fall 2020</b>
White						
<i>Number of students</i>	21,823	21,241	20,438	19,974	19,460	18,446
<i>Percent of total</i>	56.5%	55.0%	53.9%	51.8%	50.2%	50.0%
Hispanic and Latino						
<i>Number of students</i>	9,319	9,791	10,015	10,692	11,150	10,641
<i>Percent of total</i>	24.1%	25.4%	26.4%	27.8%	28.8%	28.8%
Black or African American						
<i>Number of students</i>	3,775	3,688	3,760	3,921	4,040	3,775
<i>Percent of total</i>	9.8%	9.6%	9.9%	10.2%	10.4%	10.2%
Asian						
<i>Number of students</i>	683	680	645	701	718	732
<i>Percent of total</i>	1.8%	1.8%	1.7%	1.8%	1.9%	2.0%
American Indian or Alaska Native						
<i>Number of students</i>	119	120	107	141	135	97
<i>Percent of total</i>	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander						
<i>Number of students</i>	60	62	62	49	64	73
<i>Percent of total</i>	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%
Two or more races						
<i>Number of students</i>	914	891	887	987	1,059	1,128
<i>Percent of total</i>	2.4%	2.3%	2.3%	2.6%	2.7%	3.1%
Race/ethnicity unknown						
<i>Number of students</i>	1,286	1,459	1,349	1,341	1,338	1,361
<i>Percent of total</i>	3.3%	3.8%	3.6%	3.5%	3.5%	3.7%
Nonresident alien						
<i>Number of students</i>	628	658	674	720	766	640
<i>Percent of total</i>	1.6%	1.7%	1.8%	1.9%	2.0%	1.7%
<b>Total Fall Enrollment</b>	<b>38,607</b>	<b>38,590</b>	<b>37,937</b>	<b>38,526</b>	<b>38,730</b>	<b>36,893</b>

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

**Chart 2-10: 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 2-10 and Table 2-10 show postsecondary fall enrollment by gender for Southwest Florida. The region had 22,825 female students enrolled into a postsecondary institute during Fall 2020, representing 61.9 percent of total fall enrollment. The region also had 14,068 male students enrolled in Fall 2020, accounting for 38.1 percent of total fall enrollment during that year. The percent of male students enrolled in a postsecondary institution has declined 2.6 percentage points since Fall 2015.

**Table 2-10: Postsecondary Fall Enrollment by Gender**

Southwest Florida

Gender	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
Male						
Number of students	15,732	15,873	15,651	15,482	15,271	14,068
Percent of total	40.7%	41.1%	41.3%	40.2%	39.4%	38.1%
Female						
Number of students	22,875	22,717	22,286	23,044	23,459	22,825
Percent of total	59.3%	58.9%	58.7%	59.8%	60.6%	61.9%
<b>Total Fall Enrollment</b>	<b>38,607</b>	<b>38,590</b>	<b>37,937</b>	<b>38,526</b>	<b>38,730</b>	<b>36,893</b>

Source: National Center for Education Statistics

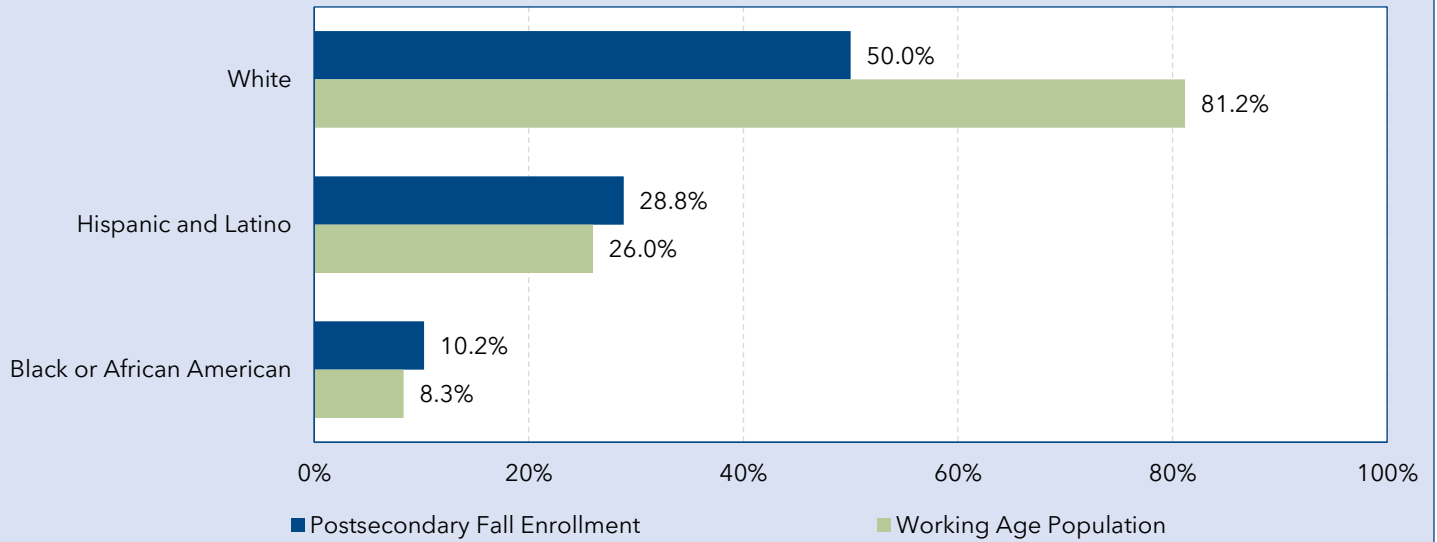


Perhaps as predicted by the high school graduation rate by gender data, postsecondary fall enrollment for male students has lagged behind fall enrollment for female students, decreasing from 40.7 percent in 2015 to 38.1 percent in 2020.



### Chart 2-11: Postsecondary Enrollment vs. Working Age Population

Southwest Florida  
2020



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 2-11 and Table 2-11 compare postsecondary enrollment and working-age population distributions by race and ethnicity in 2020. While working-age residents who identified as White encompassed 81.2 percent of the population in Southwest Florida, they accounted for only half of fall enrollment in 2020. Hispanic and Latino students represented 28.8 percent of total postsecondary fall enrollment, compared to 26.0 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 10.2 percent fall enrollment during that year.

**Table 2-11: Postsecondary Enrollment vs. Working Age Population**

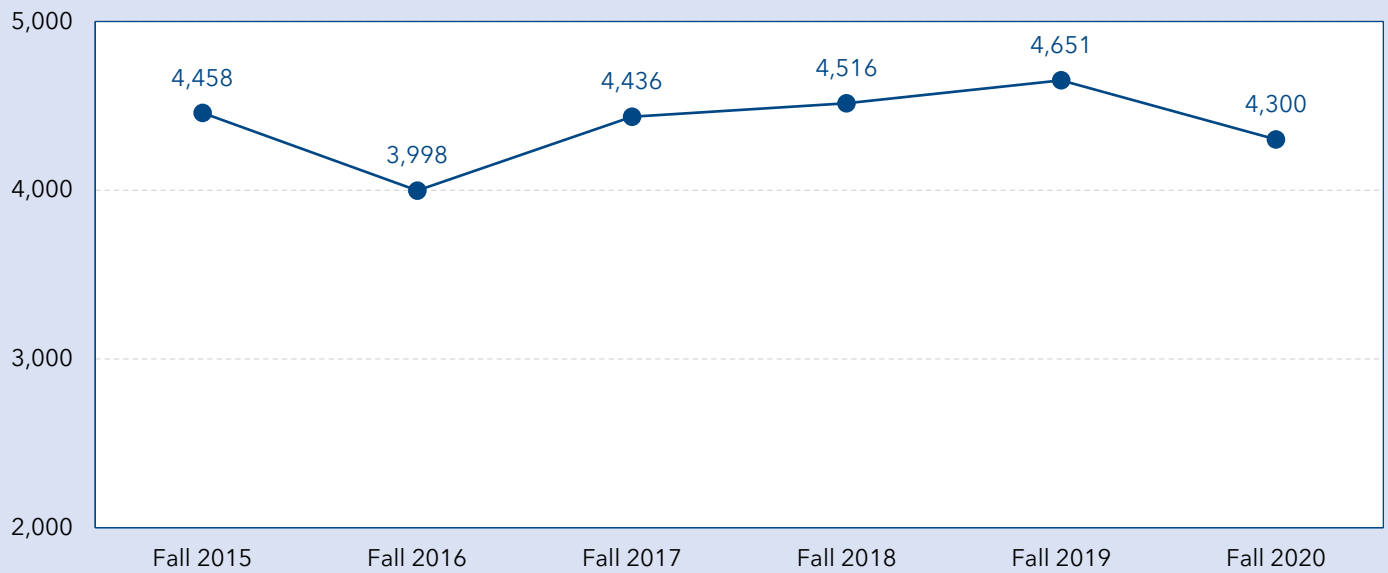
2020

Race/Ethnicity	Postsecondary Fall Enrollment	Working Age Population
White	50.0%	81.2%
Hispanic and Latino	28.8%	26.0%
Black or African American	10.2%	8.3%

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

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

Southwest Florida



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

## Technical College Fall Enrollment

Chart 2-12 and Table 2-12 shows fall enrollment data from technical colleges in Southwest Florida.<sup>12</sup> Technical colleges identified in the region had 4,300 students enrolled in Fall 2020. Enrollment slipped compared to Fall 2019, falling 7.5 percent.

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

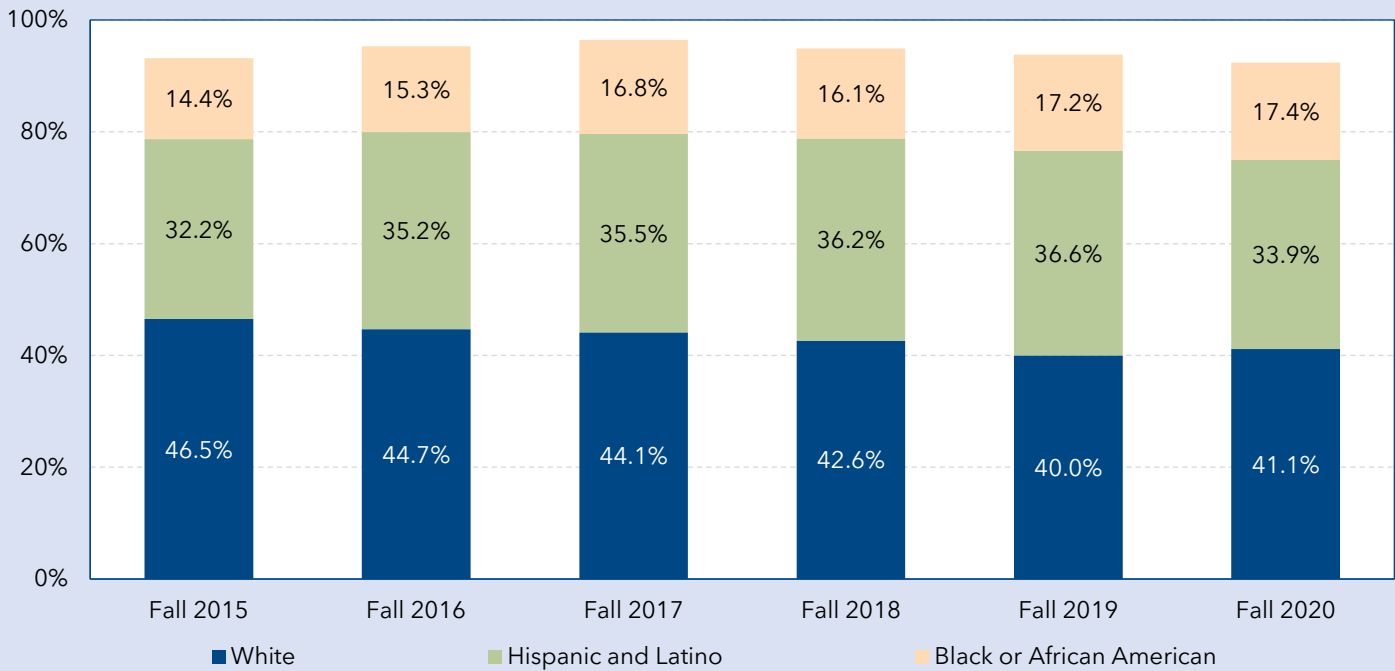
Area	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
Southwest Florida						
Fall enrollment	4,458	3,998	4,436	4,516	4,651	4,300
Percent change	--	-10.3%	11.0%	1.8%	3.0%	-7.5%
Florida						
Fall enrollment	129,559	117,765	120,153	110,482	100,954	96,720
Percent change	--	-9.1%	2.0%	-8.0%	-8.6%	-4.2%
United States						
Fall enrollment	6,911,804	6,476,138	6,325,726	6,117,400	5,961,378	5,278,695
Percent change	--	-6.3%	-2.3%	-3.3%	-2.6%	-11.5%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics

<sup>12</sup> See the Methodology for more information on how technical colleges in Southwest Florida were identified.

### Chart 2-13: 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 2-13 and Table 2-13 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 technical fall enrollment who identify as White has steadily declined from 46.5 percent in Fall 2015 to 41.1 percent in Fall 2020, as the proportions of students among Southwest Florida’s identifying as Hispanic and Latino or Black enrolling in technical colleges have increased during this same period. Technical college fall enrollment among Hispanic and Latino students has increased from 32.2 percent in Fall 2015 to 33.9 percent in Fall 2020. For students identifying as Black, technical college fall enrollment has increased from 14.8 percent in Fall 2015 to 17.4 percent in Fall 2020. Technical college fall enrollment has remained constant 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 an inequitable system for students of color 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 2-13: Technical College Fall Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity**

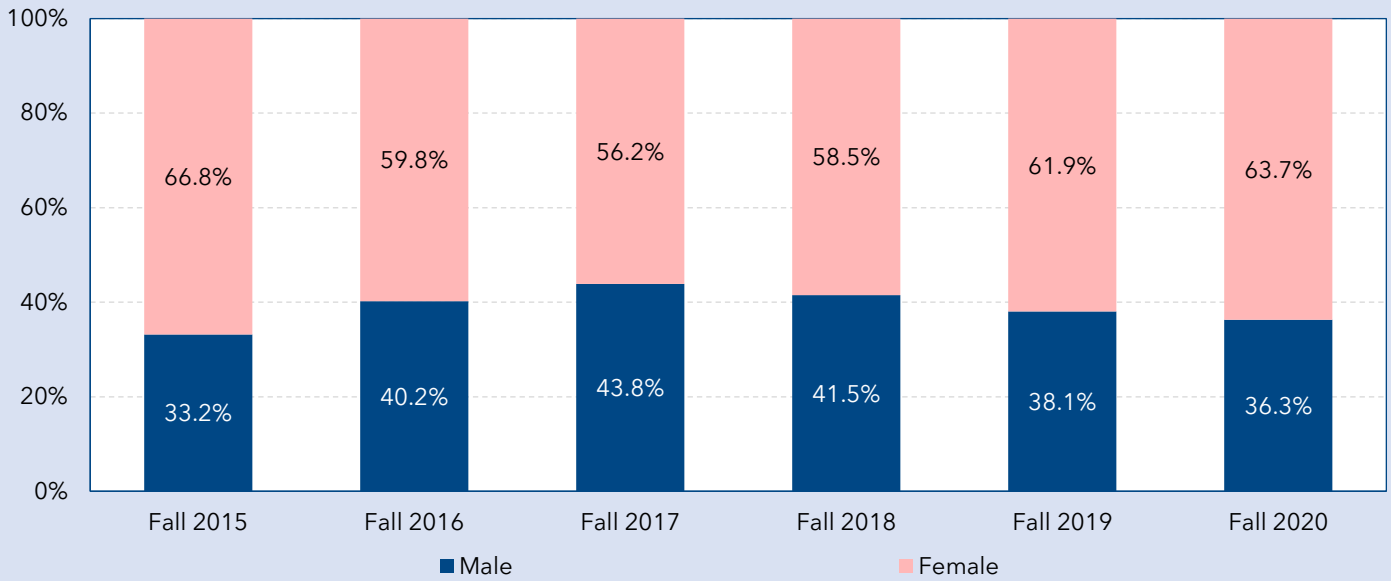
Southwest Florida

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Fall 2015</b>	<b>Fall 2016</b>	<b>Fall 2017</b>	<b>Fall 2018</b>	<b>Fall 2019</b>	<b>Fall 2020</b>
White						
<i>Number of students</i>	2,074	1,787	1,957	1,926	1,860	1,768
<i>Percent of total</i>	46.5%	44.7%	44.1%	42.6%	40.0%	41.1%
Hispanic and Latino						
<i>Number of students</i>	1,435	1,409	1,575	1,633	1,704	1,456
<i>Percent of total</i>	32.2%	35.2%	35.5%	36.2%	36.6%	33.9%
Black or African American						
<i>Number of students</i>	644	613	745	726	798	747
<i>Percent of total</i>	14.4%	15.3%	16.8%	16.1%	17.2%	17.4%
Asian						
<i>Number of students</i>	43	39	39	47	36	59
<i>Percent of total</i>	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%	1.0%	0.8%	1.4%
American Indian or Alaska Native						
<i>Number of students</i>	24	12	13	14	15	11
<i>Percent of total</i>	0.5%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander						
<i>Number of students</i>	11	13	8	6	6	24
<i>Percent of total</i>	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.6%
Two or more races						
<i>Number of students</i>	175	101	75	123	192	202
<i>Percent of total</i>	3.9%	2.5%	1.7%	2.7%	4.1%	4.7%
Race/ethnicity unknown						
<i>Number of students</i>	43	23	23	31	28	25
<i>Percent of total</i>	1.0%	0.6%	0.5%	0.7%	0.6%	0.6%
Nonresident alien						
<i>Number of students</i>	9	1	1	10	12	8
<i>Percent of total</i>	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%
<b>Total Fall Enrollment</b>	<b>4,458</b>	<b>3,998</b>	<b>4,436</b>	<b>4,516</b>	<b>4,651</b>	<b>4,300</b>

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

### Chart 2-14: 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 2-14 and Table 2-14 shows technical college fall enrollment by gender for Southwest Florida. The region had 2,739 female students enrolled into a technical college during Fall 2020, representing 63.7 percent of total fall enrollment. This percentage declined from Fall 2015 to Fall 2017, before improving each of the following three years. The region also had 1,561 male students enrolled in Fall 2020, accounting for 36.3 percent of total fall enrollment during that year.

**Table 2-14: Technical College Fall Enrollment by Gender**

Southwest Florida

Gender	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
Male						
Number of students	1,480	1,608	1,945	1,873	1,770	1,561
Percent of total	33.2%	40.2%	43.8%	41.5%	38.1%	36.3%
Female						
Number of students	2,978	2,390	2,491	2,643	2,881	2,739
Percent of total	66.8%	59.8%	56.2%	58.5%	61.9%	63.7%
<b>Total Fall Enrollment</b>	<b>4,458</b>	<b>3,998</b>	<b>4,436</b>	<b>4,516</b>	<b>4,651</b>	<b>4,300</b>

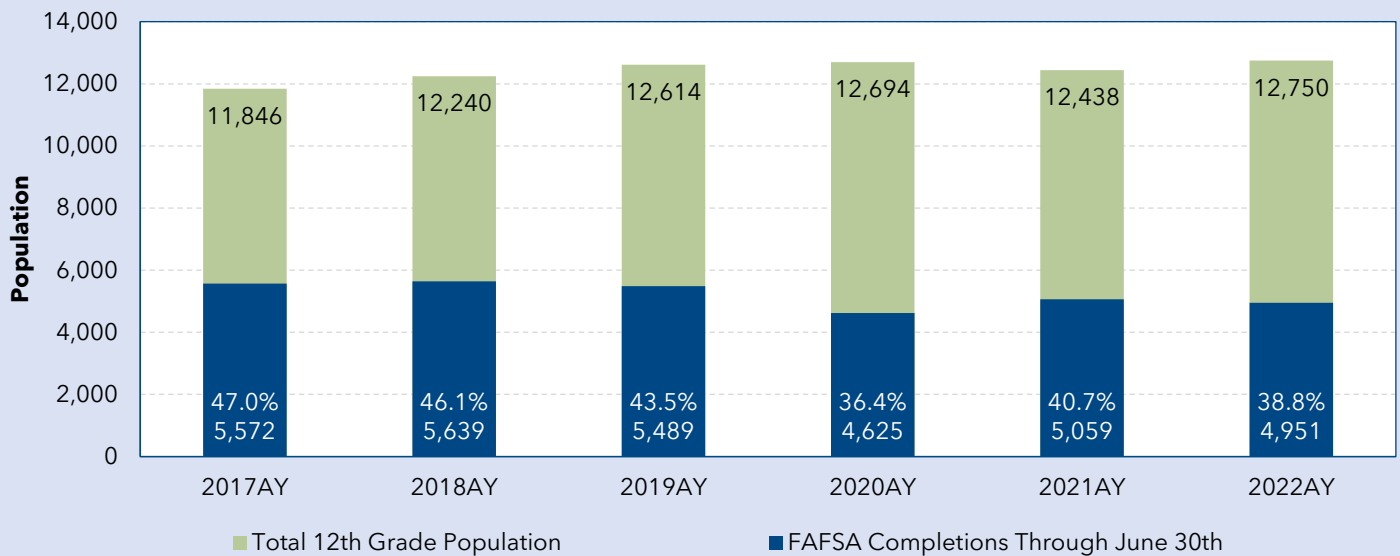
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System



Similar to postsecondary fall enrollment, technical college fall enrollment for male students consistently lags behind fall enrollment for female students. To reach our 55 percent goal, the reasons for this gender disparity should be explored further.

### Chart 2-15: FAFSA Completion Rate

Southwest Florida



Source: Florida College Access Network (FCAN)

Note: FAFSA Completion Rate above population value.

Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## FAFSA Completion Rate

Chart 2-15 and Table 2-15 show the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion rates for Southwest Florida and each of the five counties. During the 2021-22 academic year, the region had 4,951 students complete a FAFSA application, for a FAFSA completion rate of 38.8 percent. The FAFSA completion rate has steadily declined since the 2016-17 academic year and remains below the state FAFSA completion rate of 43.0 percent in 2021-22.<sup>13</sup>

Of the five Southwest Florida counties, only Glades County (47.2 percent) and Collier County (44.2 percent) had a higher FAFSA completion rate than the state. Charlotte County had a completion rate of 40.2 percent, and Lee and Hendry counties had completion rates of 36.5 and 34.2 percent, respectively.

<sup>13</sup> One possible explanation, as suggested by a National Student Clearinghouse Research Center survey, is that just over one-third of COVID-19 pandemic high school graduates have become “disrupted students” - choosing not to pursue their desires for more education at this time. Survey results published in the June 2021 Florida College Access Network newsletter:

<https://floridacollegeaccess.org/news/concerned-worried-and-anxious-recent-high-school-grads-explain-why-they-disconnected-from-education-after-high-school/>

**Table 2-15: FAFSA Completion Rate**

<b>Area</b>	<b>2017AY</b>	<b>2018AY</b>	<b>2019AY</b>	<b>2020AY</b>	<b>2021AY</b>	<b>2022AY</b>
<b>Charlotte County</b>						
<i>Total 12th Grade Population</i>	1,338	1,400	1,354	1,335	1,205	1,308
<i>FAFSA Completions Through June 30th</i>	538	593	510	426	533	526
<i>FAFSA Completion Rate</i>	40.2%	42.4%	37.7%	31.9%	44.2%	40.2%
<b>Collier County</b>						
<i>Total 12th Grade Population</i>	3,031	3,049	3,290	3,482	3,413	3,336
<i>FAFSA Completions Through June 30th</i>	1,606	1,611	1,679	1,484	1,579	1,473
<i>FAFSA Completion Rate</i>	53.0%	52.8%	51.0%	42.6%	46.3%	44.2%
<b>Glades County</b>						
<i>Total 12th Grade Population</i>	54	69	74	63	51	53
<i>FAFSA Completions Through June 30th</i>	24	33	32	33	21	25
<i>FAFSA Completion Rate</i>	44.4%	47.8%	43.2%	52.4%	41.2%	47.2%
<b>Hendry County</b>						
<i>Total 12th Grade Population</i>	490	468	534	519	556	559
<i>FAFSA Completions Through June 30th</i>	259	224	197	145	182	191
<i>FAFSA Completion Rate</i>	52.9%	47.9%	36.9%	27.9%	32.7%	34.2%
<b>Lee County</b>						
<i>Total 12th Grade Population</i>	6,933	7,254	7,362	7,295	7,213	7,494
<i>FAFSA Completions Through June 30th</i>	3,145	3,178	3,071	2,537	2,744	2,736
<i>FAFSA Completion Rate</i>	45.4%	43.8%	41.7%	34.8%	38.0%	36.5%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>						
<b><i>Total 12th Grade Population</i></b>	<b>11,846</b>	<b>12,240</b>	<b>12,614</b>	<b>12,694</b>	<b>12,438</b>	<b>12,750</b>
<b><i>FAFSA Completions Through June 30th</i></b>	<b>5,572</b>	<b>5,639</b>	<b>5,489</b>	<b>4,625</b>	<b>5,059</b>	<b>4,951</b>
<b><i>FAFSA Completion Rate</i></b>	<b>47.0%</b>	<b>46.1%</b>	<b>43.5%</b>	<b>36.4%</b>	<b>40.7%</b>	<b>38.8%</b>
<b>Florida</b>						
<b><i>Total 12th Grade Population</i></b>	<b>194,763</b>	<b>199,571</b>	<b>203,306</b>	<b>199,139</b>	<b>196,883</b>	<b>204,189</b>
<b><i>FAFSA Completions Through June 30th</i></b>	<b>95,871</b>	<b>98,442</b>	<b>92,944</b>	<b>76,969</b>	<b>86,942</b>	<b>87,791</b>
<b><i>FAFSA Completion Rate</i></b>	<b>49.2%</b>	<b>49.3%</b>	<b>45.7%</b>	<b>38.7%</b>	<b>44.2%</b>	<b>43.0%</b>

Source: Florida College Access Network (FCAN)







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



# Future Makers Coalition



## Persistence and Completion

Indicator	Measure	Trending
 <b>Retention</b> First-year retention rates	SWFL	<b>77.0%</b> ↑
	Florida	<b>78.5%</b> ↓
 <b>On-time Completion</b> Percent completing within 150 percent of normal time	SWFL	<b>52.7%</b> ↑
	Florida	<b>54.8%</b> ↑
 <b>Business Partnerships</b> Percent employers working with postsecondary institutions	SWFL	<b>64.6%</b> ↑
 <b>Returning Adults</b> Percent employers offering education opportunities	SWFL	<b>86.0%</b> ↓
 <b>Living Wage</b> Hourly wage to support one adult and two children	SWFL	<b>\$41.87</b> ↑
	Florida	<b>\$42.01</b> ↑
 <b>Local Jobs</b> Percent of Southwest Florida graduates still working in Southwest Florida	SWFL	<b>45.8%</b> ↑



## Overview

Among the six Persistence and Completion indicators, all but returning adults increased from last year's report. First year retention rates increased in the Southwest Florida region from 76.6 percent in 2019 to 77.0 percent in 2020. On-time completion rates among students in the region who were pursuing postsecondary education also increased from 47.8 percent in 2019 to 52.7 percent in 2020. Among Southwest Florida businesses that answered the question "Do you currently partner with any of the following education institutions?", 64.6 percent responded "yes" in 2022, up from 51.8 percent in 2021. The percentage of Southwest Florida employers that offer opportunities to working adults to return to complete a degree or certification decreased from 87.0 percent in 2021 to 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 \$41.87 in 2022 compared to \$38.12 in 2020.<sup>14</sup> Finally, the percentage of Southwest Florida graduates still working at local jobs in Southwest Florida increased slightly to 45.8 percent in 2022 compared to 44.8 in 2021.



Data illustrating on-time, postsecondary completion rates by race and ethnicity for Southwest Florida are also provided in this report. Between 2015 and 2020, on-time postsecondary complete rates follow similar patterns across the races and ethnicities, although for the first time during this time period, Black students had a higher on-time completion rate in 2020 (56.4 percent) compared to White students (53.3 percent) and Hispanic and Latino students (51.8 percent).

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<sup>14</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: <https://livingwage.mit.edu/pages/about>

# FutureMakers in Action

## *Stop Out Campaigns - Back on Track*

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.

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. FGCU's "Return to the Nest" and FSW's "Second Look" campaigns aim to remove the financial barriers for students who stopped out of their academic programs before completing a degree, including debt-forgiveness and decreasing opportunity costs. In addition to financial assistance, both institutions have also implemented other Support like coaching and improved communications to help returning students better navigate their pathways to graduation.

As of February 2022, more than 1,800 students have been readmitted and 1,494 reenrolled. Sixteen percent (240) have already earned a degree - these are degrees that otherwise would not have been added. Finally, 53 students benefited from an average of approximately \$1,200 each in debt forgiveness.

Critical to our work is an expansion of our efforts to remove systemic and financial barriers to ensure those students who previously stopped out before earning a degree finish what they started. This expansion includes additional efforts over the next three years to identify opportunities to permanently reduce and remove unnecessary barriers by changing policies and practices. This also includes further development of FutureMakers Graduate! Southwest Florida Navigator services.



**FutureMakers Coalition**

# FutureMakers in Action

*FutureMakers Graduate! Southwest Florida Navigator Services: With a Little Help from My Friends*



Graduate! Southwest Florida is a free program of FutureMakers Coalition. Navigators are a neutral third party working together with all schools to support adults through completing GED, English as a Second Language, skills/trade certificates, micro-credentials, or degree programs. Navigators have been specially trained to meet the unique needs of adult learners when trying to finish or return to school. Navigators work alongside adult learners as they overcome barriers and navigate completing their education to start or grow a career. As of July 2022, the Navigators are currently supporting 139 adults (and counting!) in returning to school to advance their careers and fill in demand jobs, which result in a generational change for their families.

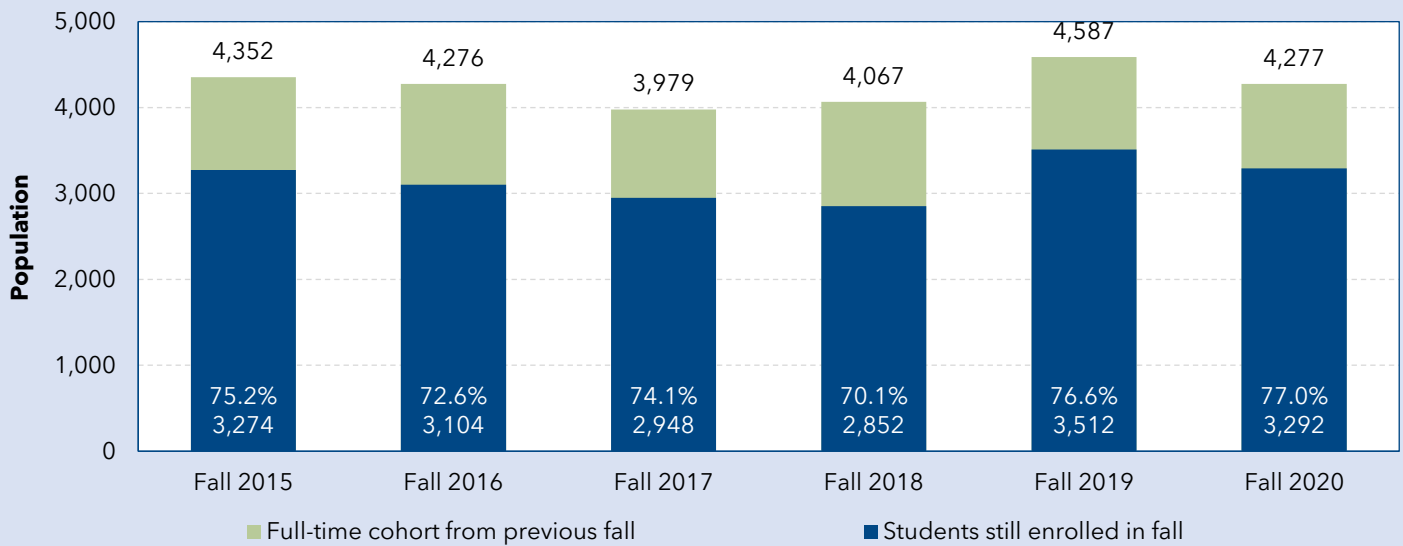
Beginning in January 2022, Navigators presented information about the program to schools, employers, and community resources all over Southwest Florida. They have organized a Resume Writing Workshop, an Empowerment Series, a Mock Interview Training, and a Financial Aid Workshop. Navigators have also attended second chance job fairs, career exploration events, career fairs, education fairs, health, and community expos. Perhaps most importantly, Navigators want to create systematic change to dissolve problems for the future, such as ensuring tutorials are available in other languages for English Language Learners enrolling in English as a Second Language (ESL) programs and helping newly released inmates transition into society and lessen the barriers to education and employment. The ultimate goal is to empower FutureMaker partners in all sectors to connect Navigators with whomever may benefit from the service.



**FutureMakers Coalition**

### Chart 2-16: First Year Retention Rate

Southwest Florida



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System  
 Note: First year retention rate above population value.  
 Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## First-Year Retention Rate

Chart 2-16 and Table 2-16 show the first-year retention rate for all full-time, first-time students enrolled in postsecondary institutions in Southwest Florida. Of the 4,277 full-time, first-time students enrolled during Fall 2019, 3,292 remained enrolled in Fall 2020, giving the region a first-year retention rate of 77.0 percent. The first-year retention rate for the region improved from the prior year and was higher than the national average (measured at 75.7 percent) but was below the state average of 78.5 percent.

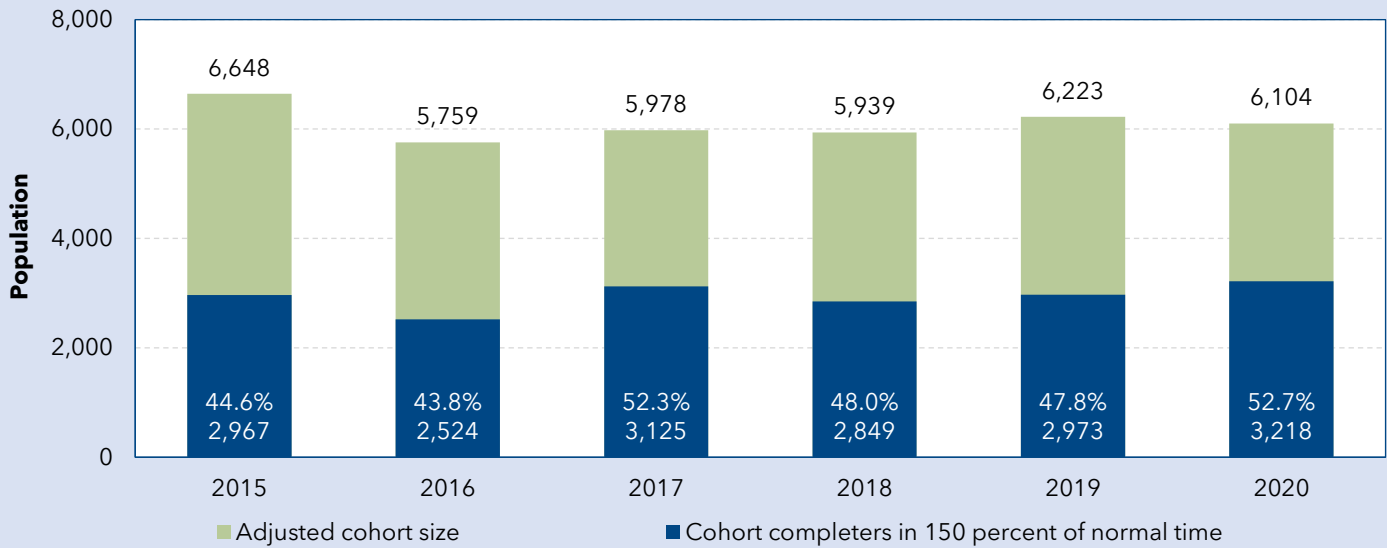
**Table 2-16: First Year Retention Rate**

Area	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
Southwest Florida						
Full-time cohort from previous fall	4,352	4,276	3,979	4,067	4,587	4,277
Students still enrolled in fall	3,274	3,104	2,948	2,852	3,512	3,292
First-year retention rate	75.2%	72.6%	74.1%	70.1%	76.6%	77.0%
Florida						
Full-time cohort from previous fall	89,537	87,419	85,406	87,272	89,880	91,335
Students still enrolled in fall	68,603	67,883	66,987	68,688	71,335	71,730
First-year retention rate	76.6%	77.7%	78.4%	78.7%	79.4%	78.5%
United States						
Full-time cohort from previous fall	2,322,108	2,280,959	2,274,697	2,269,264	2,274,908	2,258,445
Students still enrolled in fall	1,727,453	1,714,022	1,714,471	1,712,996	1,730,114	1,709,433
First-year retention rate	74.4%	75.1%	75.4%	75.5%	76.1%	75.7%

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

### Chart 2-17: Postsecondary Completion Rates

Southwest Florida



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

Note: Postsecondary completion rate above population value.

Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Postsecondary Completion Rates

Chart 2-17 and Table 2-17 shows the completion rates for first-time, full-time students seeking a degree or certificate and enrolled in postsecondary institutions 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>15</sup>. The region had a postsecondary on-time completion rate of 52.7 percent in 2020, an increase of 4.9 percentage points from 2019. Despite the improvement, the completion rate remains below both the state (54.8 percent) and the nation (53.2 percent).

**Table 2-17: Postsecondary Completion Rates**

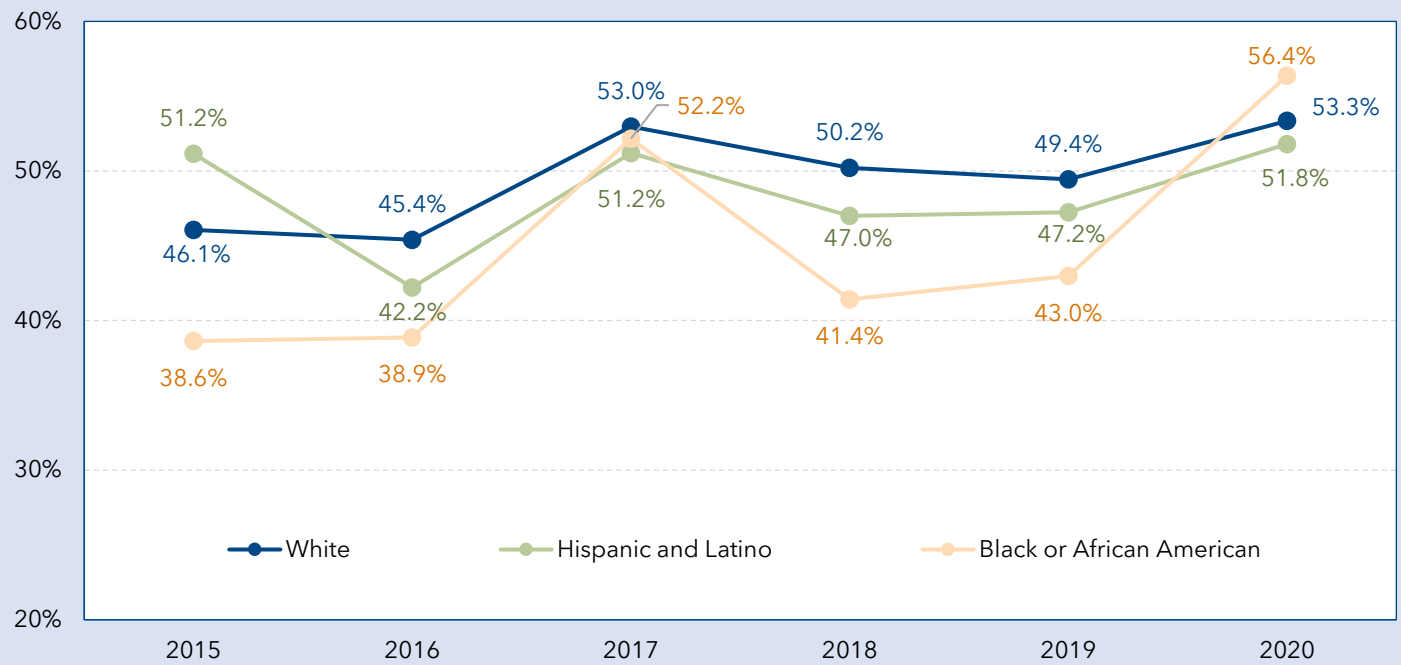
Area	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Southwest Florida						
Cohort completers in 150 percent of normal time	2,967	2,524	3,125	2,849	2,973	3,218
Adjusted cohort size	6,648	5,759	5,978	5,939	6,223	6,104
Cohort completion rate	44.6%	43.8%	52.3%	48.0%	47.8%	52.7%
Florida						
Cohort completers in 150 percent of normal time	85,562	91,258	89,184	90,810	76,778	78,029
Adjusted cohort size	170,911	182,993	176,048	168,120	144,698	142,259
Cohort completion rate	50.1%	49.9%	50.7%	54.0%	53.1%	54.8%
United States						
Cohort completers in 150 percent of normal time	1,244,261	1,249,720	1,252,240	1,252,907	1,267,573	1,293,021
Adjusted cohort size	2,678,401	2,623,706	2,565,153	2,448,946	2,424,896	2,431,128
Cohort completion rate	46.5%	47.6%	48.8%	51.2%	52.3%	53.2%

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

<sup>15</sup> See the Glossary for more information on how to interpret the completion rate.

### Chart 2-18: Postsecondary Completion Rates by Race/Ethnicity

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 2-18<sup>16</sup> and Table 2-18 show completion rates for full-time, first-time students by race and ethnicity for the region. Southwest Florida had a cohort completion rate of 52.7 percent in 2020. Students who identified as White had a slightly higher completion rate, measured at 53.3 percent during 2020. Students identifying as Hispanic and Latino had a lower completion rate (51.8 percent), while students identifying as Black had a higher completion rate (56.4 percent).

<sup>16</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.

**Table 2-18: Postsecondary Completion Rates by Race/Ethnicity**

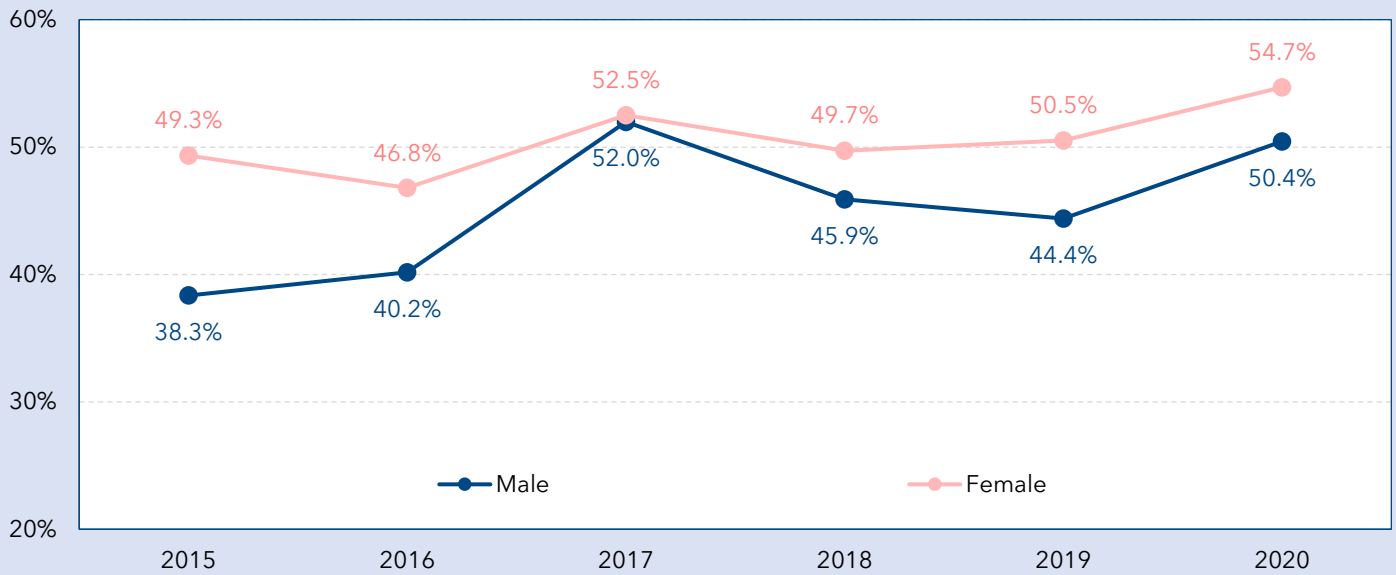
Southwest Florida

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
White						
<i>Number of cohort completers</i>	1,739	1,527	1,896	1,752	1,719	1,818
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	3,775	3,363	3,580	3,489	3,477	3,408
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	46.1%	45.4%	53.0%	50.2%	49.4%	53.3%
Hispanic and Latino						
<i>Number of cohort completers</i>	729	580	732	688	752	836
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	1,425	1,374	1,430	1,464	1,592	1,614
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	51.2%	42.2%	51.2%	47.0%	47.2%	51.8%
Black or African American						
<i>Number of cohort completers</i>	265	241	313	246	321	363
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	686	620	600	594	747	644
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	38.6%	38.9%	52.2%	41.4%	43.0%	56.4%
Asian						
<i>Number of cohort completers</i>	42	47	44	39	39	41
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	85	88	88	81	88	73
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	49.4%	53.4%	50.0%	48.1%	44.3%	56.2%
American Indian or Alaska Native						
<i>Number of cohort completers</i>	12	9	7	10	6	4
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	45	14	12	24	17	12
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	26.7%	64.3%	58.3%	41.7%	35.3%	33.3%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander						
<i>Number of cohort completers</i>	0	3	3	7	4	3
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	3	8	8	10	10	6
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	0.0%	37.5%	37.5%	70.0%	40.0%	50.0%
Two or more races						
<i>Number of cohort completers</i>	47	52	60	47	50	60
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	71	118	118	117	121	157
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	66.2%	44.1%	50.8%	40.2%	41.3%	38.2%
Race/ethnicity unknown						
<i>Number of cohort completers</i>	104	44	43	42	48	53
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	505	134	95	115	107	118
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	20.6%	32.8%	45.3%	36.5%	44.9%	44.9%
Nonresident alien						
<i>Number of cohort completers</i>	29	21	27	18	34	40
<i>Adjusted cohort size</i>	53	40	47	45	64	72
<i>Cohort completion rate</i>	54.7%	52.5%	57.4%	40.0%	53.1%	55.6%
<b>Total</b>						
<b><i>Number of cohort completers</i></b>	<b>2,967</b>	<b>2,524</b>	<b>3,125</b>	<b>2,849</b>	<b>2,973</b>	<b>3,218</b>
<b><i>Adjusted cohort size</i></b>	<b>6,648</b>	<b>5,759</b>	<b>5,978</b>	<b>5,939</b>	<b>6,223</b>	<b>6,104</b>
<b><i>Cohort completion rate</i></b>	<b>44.6%</b>	<b>43.8%</b>	<b>52.3%</b>	<b>48.0%</b>	<b>47.8%</b>	<b>52.7%</b>

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

### Chart 2-19: Postsecondary Completion Rates by Gender

Southwest Florida



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

## Postsecondary Completion Rates by Gender

Chart 2-19 and Table 2-19 shows completion rates for full-time, first-time students by gender for the region. Southwest Florida had a cohort completion rate of 52.7 percent in 2020. Females had a higher completion rate, measured at 54.7 percent during 2020, while male students had a lower completion rate (50.4 percent).

**Table 2-19: Postsecondary Completion Rates by Gender**

Southwest Florida

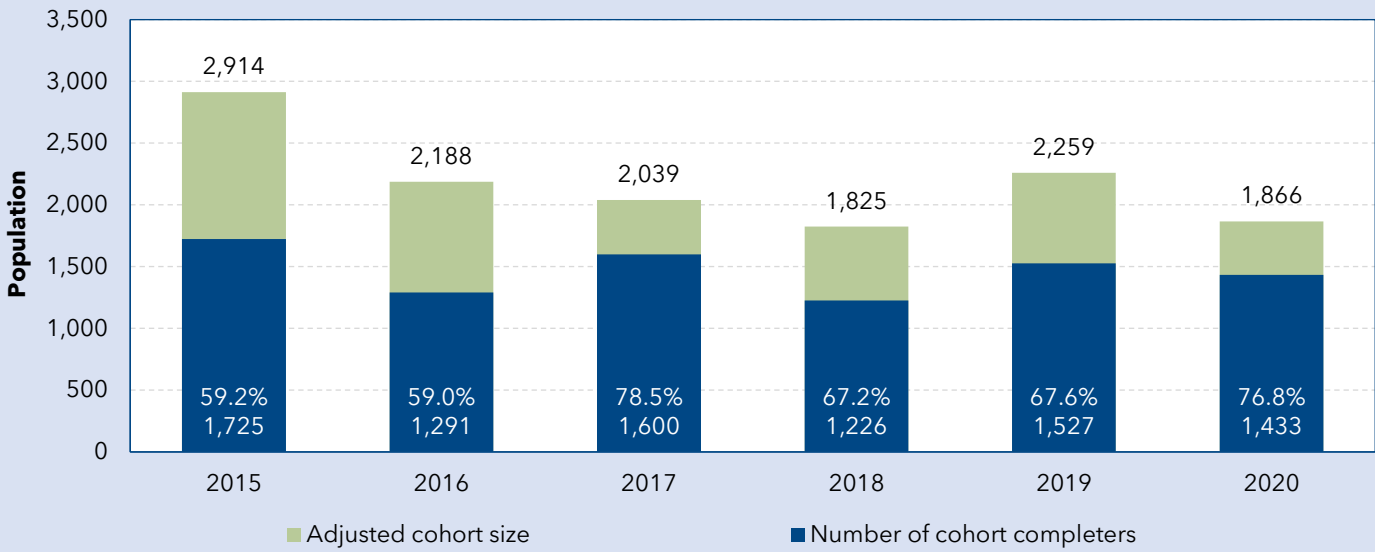
Gender	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Male</b>						
Number of cohort completers	1,091	1,039	1,380	1,245	1,235	1,429
Adjusted cohort size	2,845	2,586	2,655	2,713	2,783	2,833
Cohort completion rate	38.3%	40.2%	52.0%	45.9%	44.4%	50.4%
<b>Female</b>						
Number of cohort completers	1,876	1,485	1,745	1,604	1,738	1,789
Adjusted cohort size	3,803	3,173	3,323	3,226	3,440	3,271
Cohort completion rate	49.3%	46.8%	52.5%	49.7%	50.5%	54.7%
<b>Total</b>						
Number of cohort completers	<b>2,967</b>	<b>2,524</b>	<b>3,125</b>	<b>2,849</b>	<b>2,973</b>	<b>3,218</b>
Adjusted cohort size	<b>6,648</b>	<b>5,759</b>	<b>5,978</b>	<b>5,939</b>	<b>6,223</b>	<b>6,104</b>
Cohort completion rate	<b>44.6%</b>	<b>43.8%</b>	<b>52.3%</b>	<b>48.0%</b>	<b>47.8%</b>	<b>52.7%</b>

Source: National Center for Education Statistics



### Chart 2-20: Technical College Completion Rates

Southwest Florida



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System  
 Note: Technical college completion rate above population value.  
 Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Technical College Completion Rates

Chart 2-20 and Table 2-20 shows completion rates for all first-time, full-time students enrolled at technical colleges in Southwest Florida. The region had 1,433 cohort completers in 2020, resulting in a 76.8 percent cohort completion rate. The completion rate improved from 2019 and was significantly higher than both the state (53.7 percent) and the nation (39.7 percent).

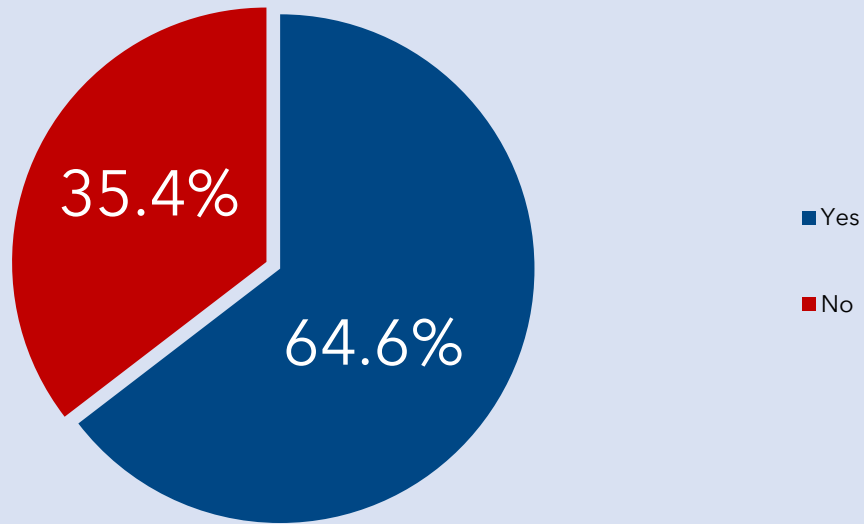
**Table 2-20: Technical College Completion Rates**

Area	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Southwest Florida						
Number of cohort completers	1,725	1,291	1,600	1,226	1,527	1,433
Adjusted cohort size	2,914	2,188	2,039	1,825	2,259	1,866
Cohort completion rate	59.2%	59.0%	78.5%	67.2%	67.6%	76.8%
Florida						
Number of cohort completers	53,803	55,925	55,911	59,779	42,484	42,268
Adjusted cohort size	105,974	109,394	105,920	106,927	81,073	78,661
Cohort completion rate	50.8%	51.1%	52.8%	55.9%	52.4%	53.7%
United States						
Number of cohort completers	488,438	457,776	438,046	423,461	407,573	408,539
Adjusted cohort size	1,359,854	1,247,439	1,173,850	1,083,773	1,046,851	1,028,240
Cohort completion rate	35.9%	36.7%	37.3%	39.1%	38.9%	39.7%

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

**Chart 2-21: 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

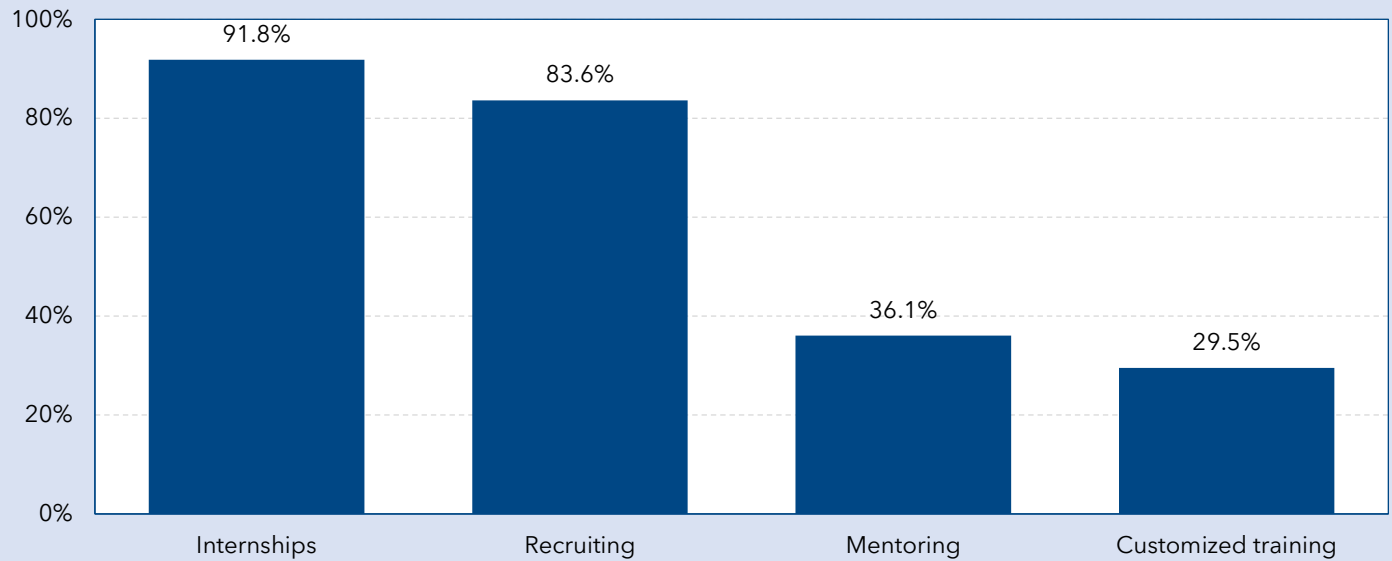
## Business-Education Partnerships

Chart 2-21 shows the results from a survey question relating to business-education partnership activities.<sup>17</sup> In 2022, 64.6 percent of respondents said that they partnered with a Southwest Florida educational institution in finding, recruiting, and/or training qualified employees, up from the 51.8 percent reported in the 2021 survey.

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

**Chart 2-22: 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

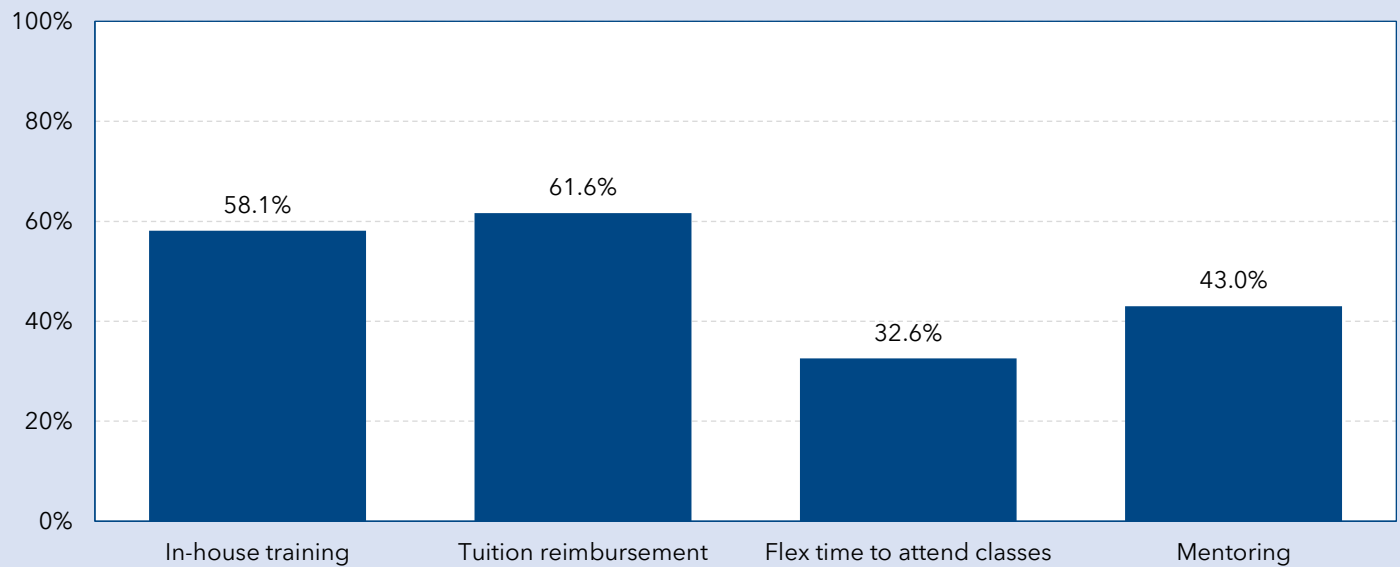
## Business-Education Partnership Activities

Chart 2-22 shows the results from a survey question relating to types of business-education partnership activities.<sup>18</sup> Of the respondents that said they partnered with a local educational institute, 91.8 percent said their business offered internships and 83.6 percent provided recruiting programs. Furthermore, 36.1 percent of respondents said they offered mentoring programs and 29.5 percent indicated they offered customized training.

<sup>18</sup> See the Methodology for more information on the FutureMakers Coalition Workforce Survey.

**Chart 2-23: Educational Support Offerings**

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



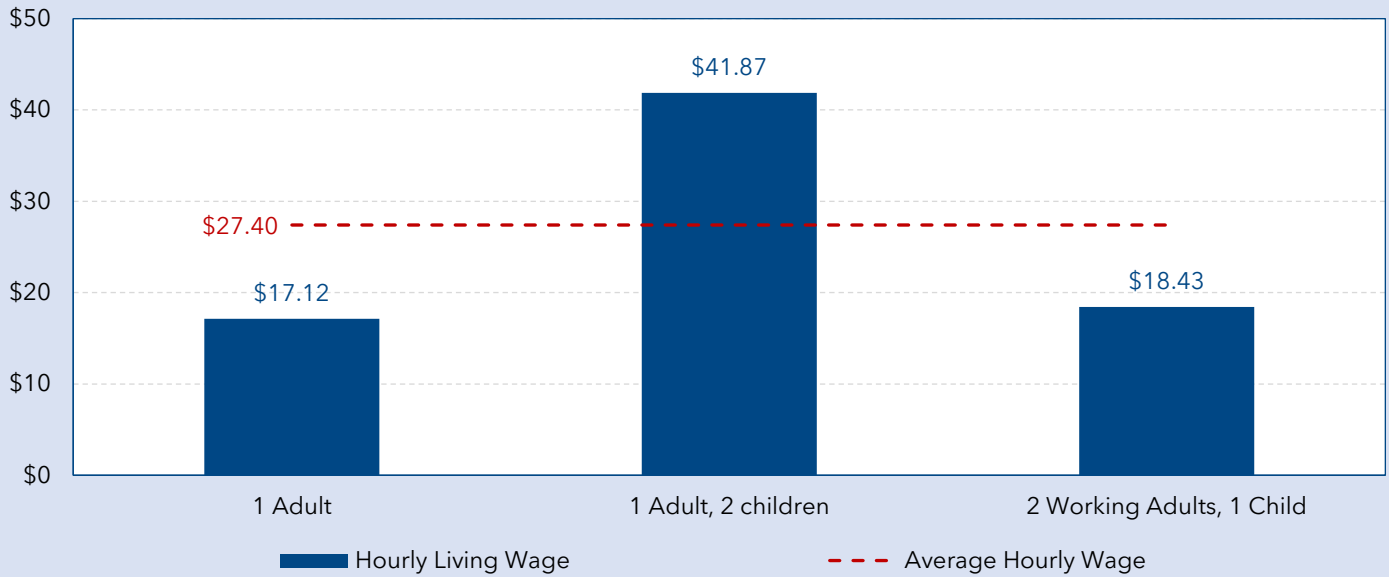
Source: FutureMakers Coalition Workforce Survey  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Educational Support Offerings

Chart 2-23 shows the results from a survey question relating to educational support. Eighty-six percent of the 86 responding employers stated that their firm offered some sort of educational support for their employees. Of the respondents that said they offered educational support, 58.1 percent said their business offered in-house training, while 61.6 percent offered tuition reimbursement. Forty-three percent of respondents said they offered mentorship opportunities, while 32.6 percent indicated they offered flex time to attend classes.

**Chart 2-24: 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 2-24 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 wages shown in Table 2-21 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 population distribution in 2021 (the latest year population data is available). The table also provides average hourly wages earned in each area and are obtained from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. All wage values are posted in 2022 dollars, with average annual wages inflated using Chained Consumer Price Index (CPI).

A living wage for a single adult in Southwest Florida is \$17.12 in 2022, slightly below the state average of \$17.24. Furthermore, a single adult supporting two children has to earn \$41.87 in Southwest Florida (compared to \$42.01 in Florida), and two working adults with one child have a living wage of \$18.43 (versus \$18.57 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 2-24: Living Wage**

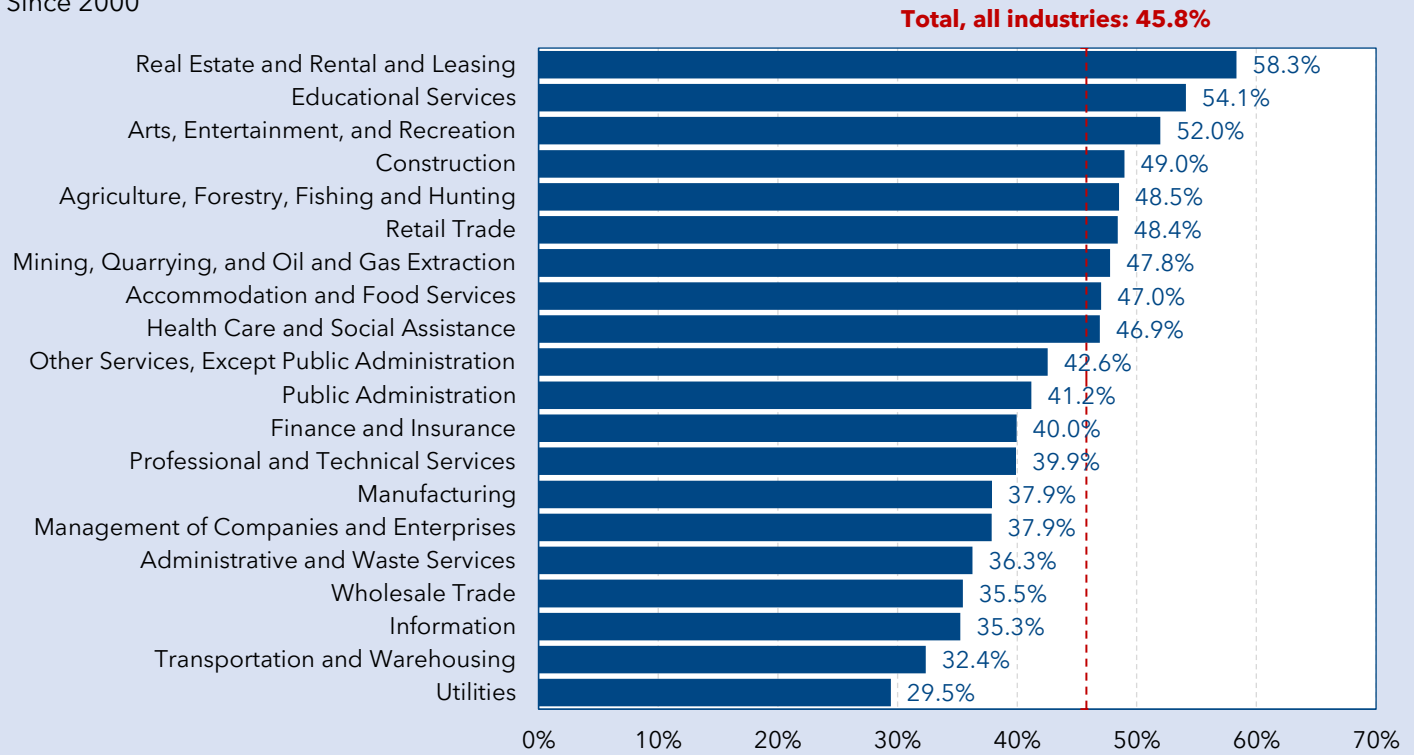
2022

Area	1 Adult	1 Adult, 2 children	2 Working Adults, 1 Child	Average Hourly Wage
Charlotte	\$16.34	\$40.84	\$17.91	\$24.22
Collier	\$17.42	\$43.68	\$19.18	\$30.68
Glades	\$15.42	\$38.03	\$16.70	\$24.26
Hendry	\$15.10	\$37.75	\$16.53	\$22.85
Lee	\$17.29	\$41.51	\$18.31	\$26.25
<b>Southwest Florida</b>	<b>\$17.12</b>	<b>\$41.87</b>	<b>\$18.43</b>	<b>\$27.40</b>
<b>Florida</b>	<b>\$17.24</b>	<b>\$42.01</b>	<b>\$18.57</b>	<b>\$30.97</b>

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

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

Percent of graduates from SWFL post-secondary institutes that work in SWFL Since 2000



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

## Graduation Retention Rates

An estimate of the retention rates for SWFL graduates is provided by Lightcast. This proxy is obtained by analyzing reported information through online employment profiles such as LinkedIn and Indeed, and dates back to 2000. The current report breaks the analysis down by providing retention rates by industry. Of the 67,872 SWFL graduates found online, 31,077 of them were employed in Southwest Florida, giving the region a graduation retention rate of 45.8 percent. The real estate and rental and leasing industry has done the best job at keeping Southwest Florida graduates employed locally, with 58.3 percent of graduates employed in the industry working in the region. Educational services was close behind the real estate industry, with a graduation retention rate of 54.1 percent, followed by the arts, entertainment, and recreation industry (52.0 percent). Forty-nine percent of SWFL graduates that worked in the construction industry were employed in region, as were 48.5 percent of employees in the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting industry.

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

Graduates from SWFL post-secondary institutes that work in SWFL since 2000

<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	1,519	886	<b>58.3%</b>
Educational Services	5,308	2,872	<b>54.1%</b>
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	887	461	<b>52.0%</b>
Construction	1,554	761	<b>49.0%</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	134	65	<b>48.5%</b>
Retail Trade	3,642	1,763	<b>48.4%</b>
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	90	43	<b>47.8%</b>
Unknown	29,479	13,899	<b>47.1%</b>
Accommodation and Food Services	1,976	929	<b>47.0%</b>
Health Care and Social Assistance	5,149	2,415	<b>46.9%</b>
Other Services, Except Public Administration	1,363	580	<b>42.6%</b>
Public Administration	1,187	489	<b>41.2%</b>
Finance and Insurance	2,803	1,120	<b>40.0%</b>
Professional and Technical Services	5,062	2,020	<b>39.9%</b>
Manufacturing	2,547	965	<b>37.9%</b>
Management of Companies and Enterprises	206	78	<b>37.9%</b>
Administrative and Waste Services	1,456	528	<b>36.3%</b>
Wholesale Trade	1,193	423	<b>35.5%</b>
Information	1,296	457	<b>35.3%</b>
Transportation and Warehousing	763	247	<b>32.4%</b>
Utilities	258	76	<b>29.5%</b>
<b>Total, all industries</b>	<b>67,872</b>	<b>31,077</b>	<b>45.8%</b>

Source: RERI analysis of data obtained from Lightcast



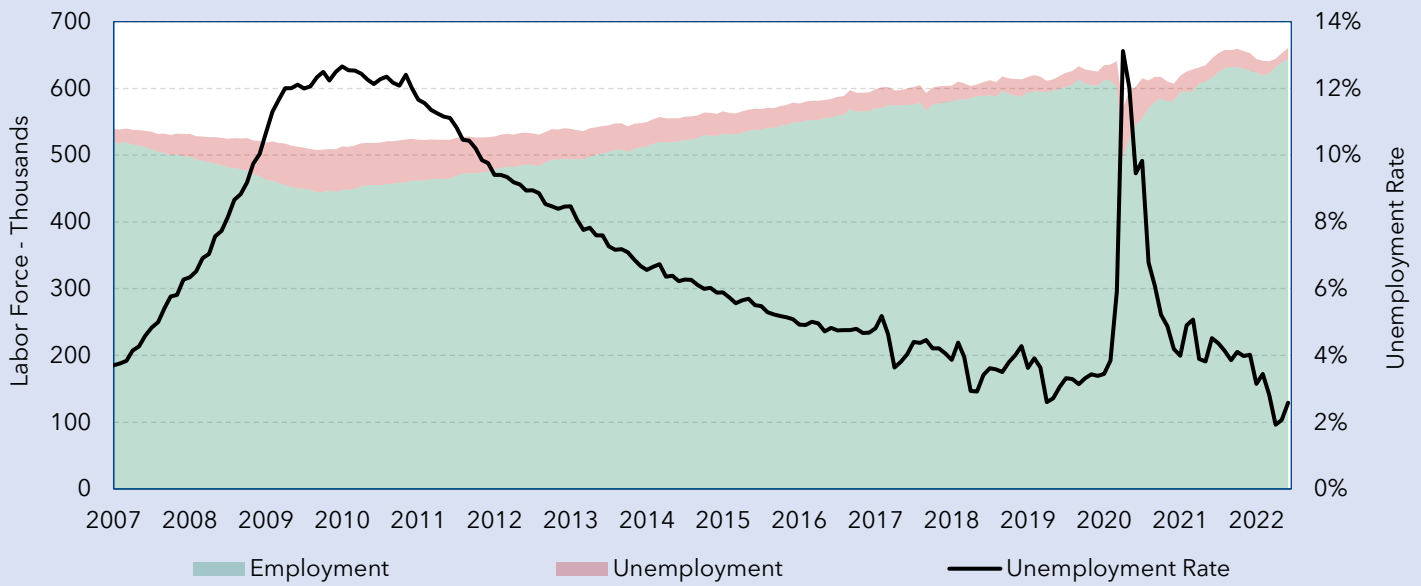


## Workforce Outcomes



### Chart 3-1: Unemployment Rate

Southwest Florida

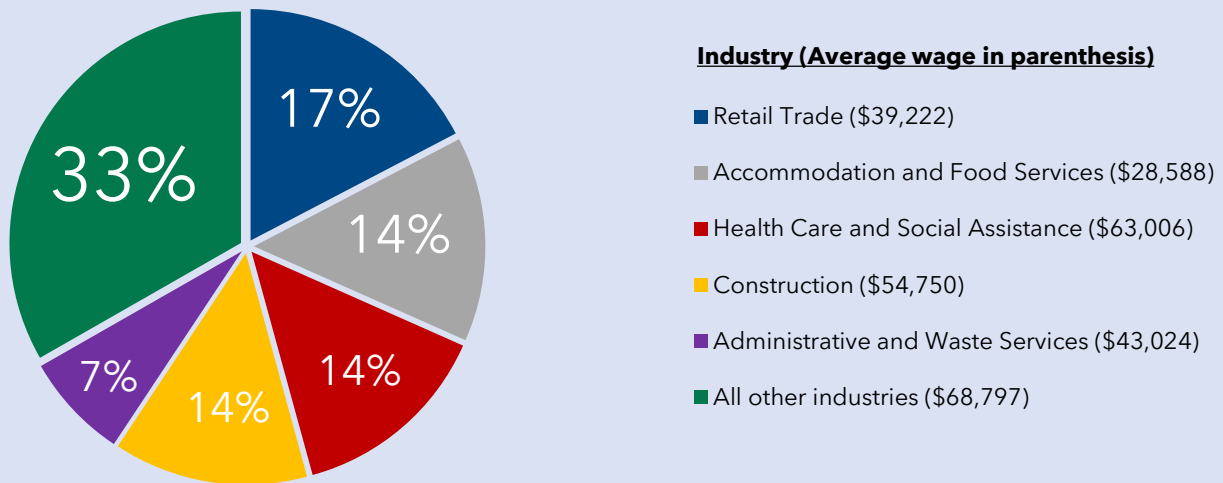


Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics. Seasonally adjusted by the RERI.  
 Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Labor Force and Unemployment Rate

Chart 3-1 shows the seasonally adjusted labor force and unemployment rate for Southwest Florida since January 2007.<sup>19</sup> The unemployment rate for the region in June 2022 was 2.6 percent, down 1.9 percentage points from the June 2021 measure but 0.5 points above the May 2022 measure.

<sup>19</sup> All seasonal adjustments performed by the Regional Economic Research Institute.

**Chart 3-2: Employment by Industry**Southwest Florida  
2021

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>20</sup> Retail trade is the largest industry in Southwest Florida in 2021, with an average monthly employment of 73,617, representing 17.3 percent of all employment in the region.

The second largest industry employer was accommodation and food services, with 60,716 employees and 14.3 percent of regional employment. The third largest industry was health care and social assistance at 59,837, which represents 14.1 percent of the region's employment. Construction was the fourth largest industry with 57,678 employees (13.6 percent of the region's employment). The top four industries comprised 59.3 percent of the region's workforce in 2021, a slight dip from 2020 (which reported 59.5 percent of the regions workforce). The fifth largest industry was administrative and waste services, employing 31,461 workers (7.4 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.

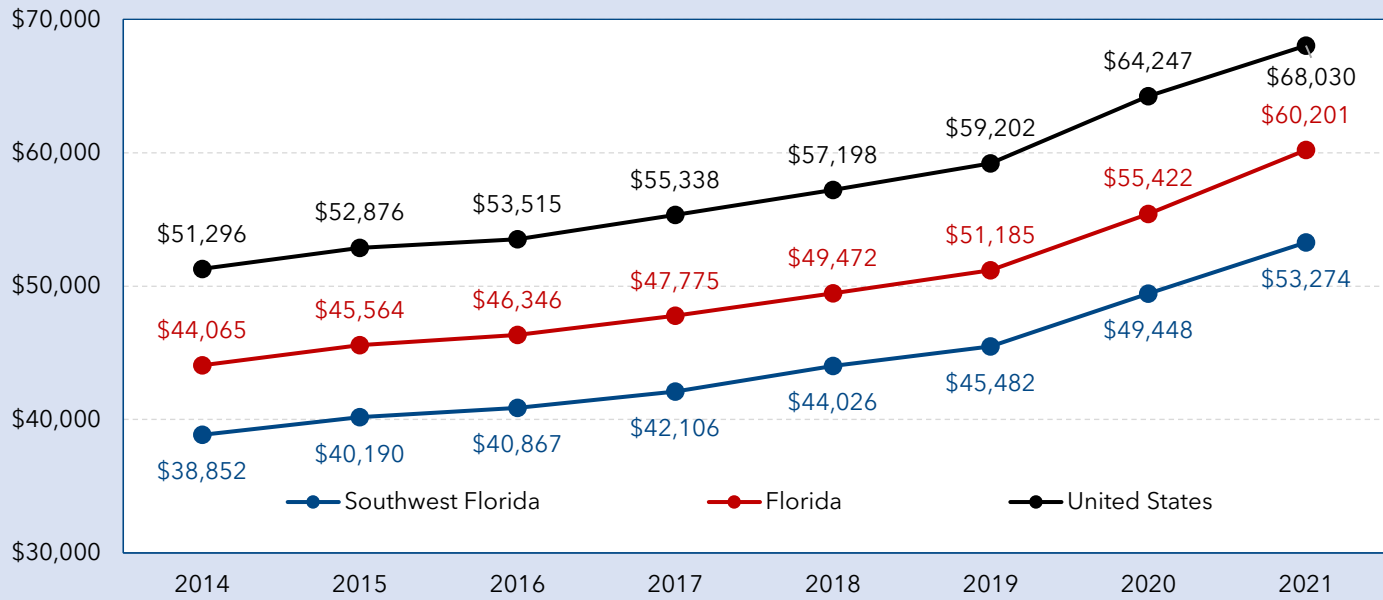
<sup>20</sup> QCEW data is based on employees covered by the Florida unemployment insurance, so it does not include workers who are self-employed. All figures represent employment from the private sector only.

**Table 3-1: Employment by Industry**Southwest Florida  
2021

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Average Monthly Employment</b>	<b>Percent of Total Employment</b>
Retail Trade	73,617	17.3%
Accommodation and Food Services	60,716	14.3%
Health Care and Social Assistance	59,837	14.1%
Construction	57,678	13.6%
Administrative and Waste Services	31,461	7.4%
Professional and Technical Services	25,812	6.1%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	17,522	4.1%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	15,989	3.8%
Manufacturing	13,413	3.2%
Wholesale Trade	12,813	3.0%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	12,764	3.0%
Finance and Insurance	12,164	2.9%
Transportation and Warehousing	8,754	2.1%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	8,121	1.9%
Educational Services	4,804	1.1%
Information	4,265	1.0%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	2,893	0.7%
Utilities	1,201	0.3%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	407	0.1%
Unclassified	267	0.1%
<b>Total, All Industries</b>	<b>424,494</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>21</sup> The average annual wage in Southwest Florida was \$53,274 in 2021, an increase of 7.7 percent over 2020. While average annual wages have grown considerably since 2019 (up 17.1 percent), they continued to trail behind both the state average (\$60,201 in 2021) and national average (\$68,030).

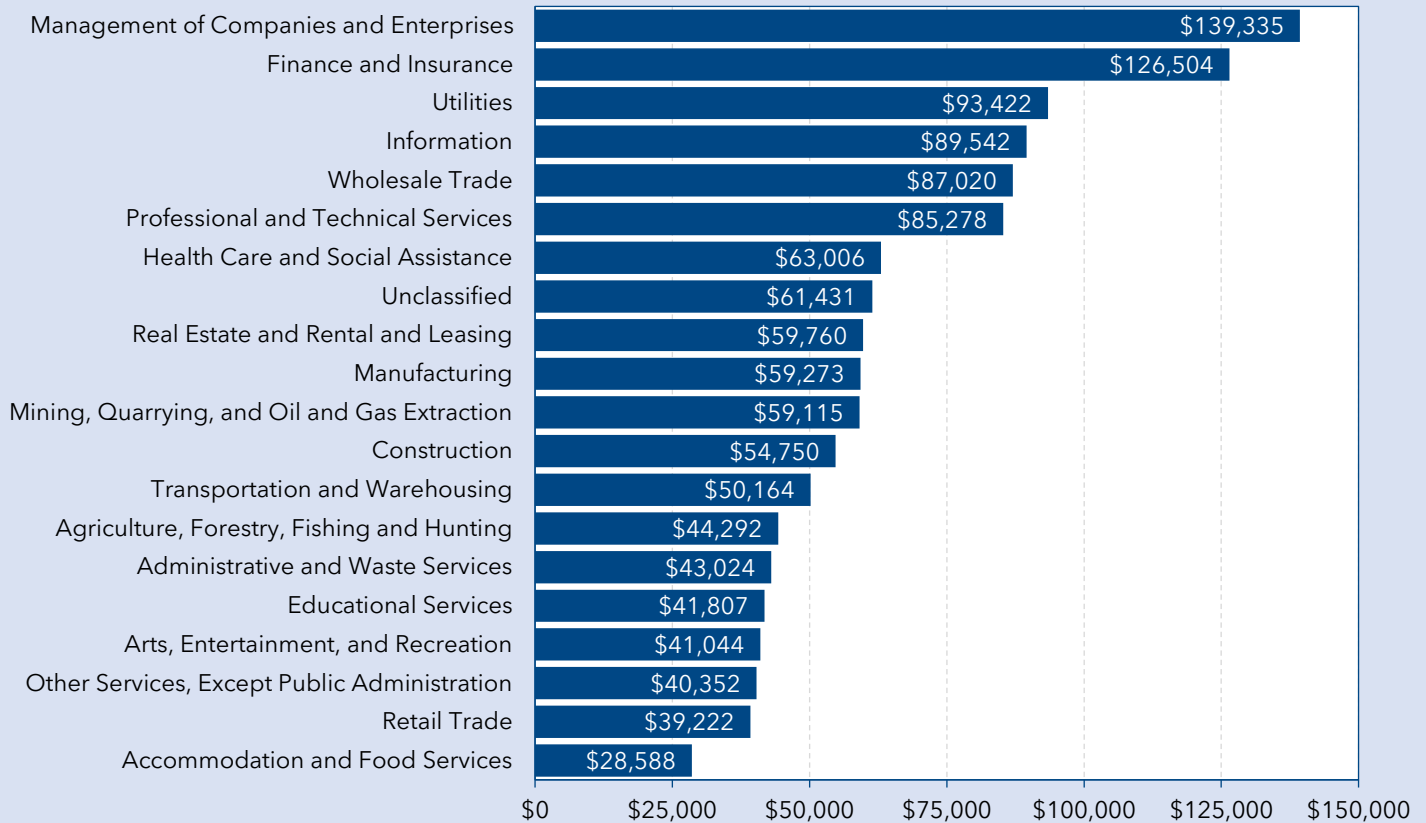
Collier County had the highest average annual wage in Southwest Florida in 2021, measured at \$59,643. Lee County had the second highest average annual wage in the region (\$51,036 in 2021), followed by Glades County (\$47,160), Charlotte County (\$47,081) and Hendry County (\$44,427). Complete results can be found in Table 3-2.

<sup>21</sup> All figures represent average annual wages from the private sector only.

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

<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								
Average annual wage	\$33,170	\$34,303	\$35,061	\$36,423	\$37,715	\$39,205	\$42,144	\$47,081
Percent change	N/A	3.4%	2.2%	3.9%	3.5%	4.0%	7.5%	11.7%
Collier County								
Average annual wage	\$43,181	\$44,302	\$44,610	\$45,565	\$48,021	\$49,533	\$54,370	\$59,643
Percent change	N/A	2.6%	0.7%	2.1%	5.4%	3.1%	9.8%	9.7%
Glades County								
Average annual wage	\$36,822	\$39,164	\$40,680	\$41,756	\$42,642	\$44,645	\$47,375	\$47,160
Percent change	N/A	6.4%	3.9%	2.6%	2.1%	4.7%	6.1%	-0.5%
Hendry County								
Average annual wage	\$34,442	\$36,611	\$36,141	\$35,858	\$40,342	\$39,098	\$42,342	\$44,427
Percent change	N/A	6.3%	-1.3%	-0.8%	12.5%	-3.1%	8.3%	4.9%
Lee County								
Average annual wage	\$37,550	\$39,014	\$39,933	\$41,391	\$42,959	\$44,480	\$48,191	\$51,036
Percent change	N/A	3.9%	2.4%	3.7%	3.8%	3.5%	8.3%	5.9%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>								
Average annual wage	<b>\$38,852</b>	<b>\$40,190</b>	<b>\$40,867</b>	<b>\$42,106</b>	<b>\$44,026</b>	<b>\$45,482</b>	<b>\$49,448</b>	<b>\$53,274</b>
Percent change	<b>N/A</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>8.7%</b>	<b>7.7%</b>
<b>Florida</b>								
Average annual wage	<b>\$44,065</b>	<b>\$45,564</b>	<b>\$46,346</b>	<b>\$47,775</b>	<b>\$49,472</b>	<b>\$51,185</b>	<b>\$55,422</b>	<b>\$60,201</b>
Percent change	<b>N/A</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>3.5%</b>	<b>8.3%</b>	<b>8.6%</b>
<b>United States</b>								
Average annual wage	<b>\$51,296</b>	<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>\$68,030</b>
Percent change	<b>N/A</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>3.5%</b>	<b>8.5%</b>	<b>5.9%</b>

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  
2021

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 \$53,274 in 2021. The management of companies and enterprises industry had the largest average annual wage in Southwest Florida, measuring at \$139,335 (as shown in Chart 3-4 and Table 3-3).

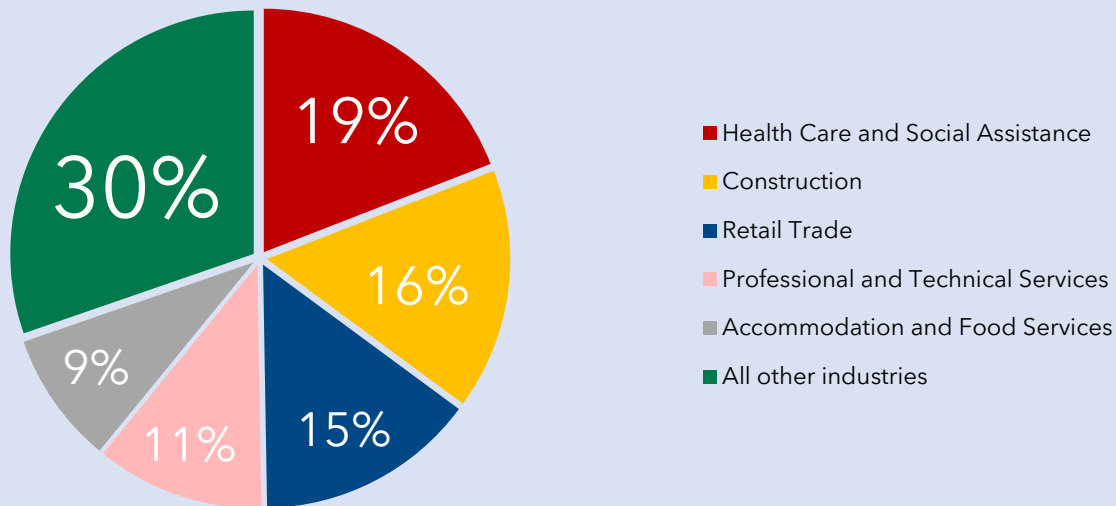
The finance and insurance industry had the second highest average annual wages in 2021 (\$126,504), followed by the utilities industry (\$93,422), information industry (\$89,542), and wholesale trade industry (\$87,020). The professional and technical services industry had the sixth highest average annual wage in 2021 (\$85,278), followed by health care and social assistance (\$63,006), unclassified (\$61,431), real estate and rental and leasing (\$59,760), and manufacturing (\$59,273) 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 2021.

**Table 3-3: Average Annual Wages by Industry**Southwest Florida  
2021

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Average Annual Wage</b>
Management of Companies and Enterprises	\$139,335
Finance and Insurance	\$126,504
Utilities	\$93,422
Information	\$89,542
Wholesale Trade	\$87,020
Professional and Technical Services	\$85,278
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$63,006
Unclassified	\$61,431
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	\$59,760
Manufacturing	\$59,273
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	\$59,115
Construction	\$54,750
Transportation and Warehousing	\$50,164
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	\$44,292
Administrative and Waste Services	\$43,024
Educational Services	\$41,807
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	\$41,044
Other Services, Except Public Administration	\$40,352
Retail Trade	\$39,222
Accommodation and Food Services	\$28,588
<b>Total, all industries</b>	<b>\$53,274</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  
2021

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 \$3.7 billion—representing 19.1 percent of total wage expenditures in Southwest Florida. Construction was the next largest industry in terms of total wage expenditure, with 16.0 percent of the region’s total annual wage and expenditures of \$3.2 billion. The third largest industry measured by total wage expenditures was retail trade, with 14.6 percent of the total regional wage expenditures at \$2.9 billion. Professional and technical services was the fourth largest industry as measured by total wages at \$2.2 billion or 11.2 percent of the region’s total wage expenditures. Finally, accommodation and food services was fifth in terms of total wage expenditures, with \$1.7 billion or 8.8 percent of the region’s total wage expenditures. The total wage expenditures by industry are shown in Chart 3-5 and Table 3-4.

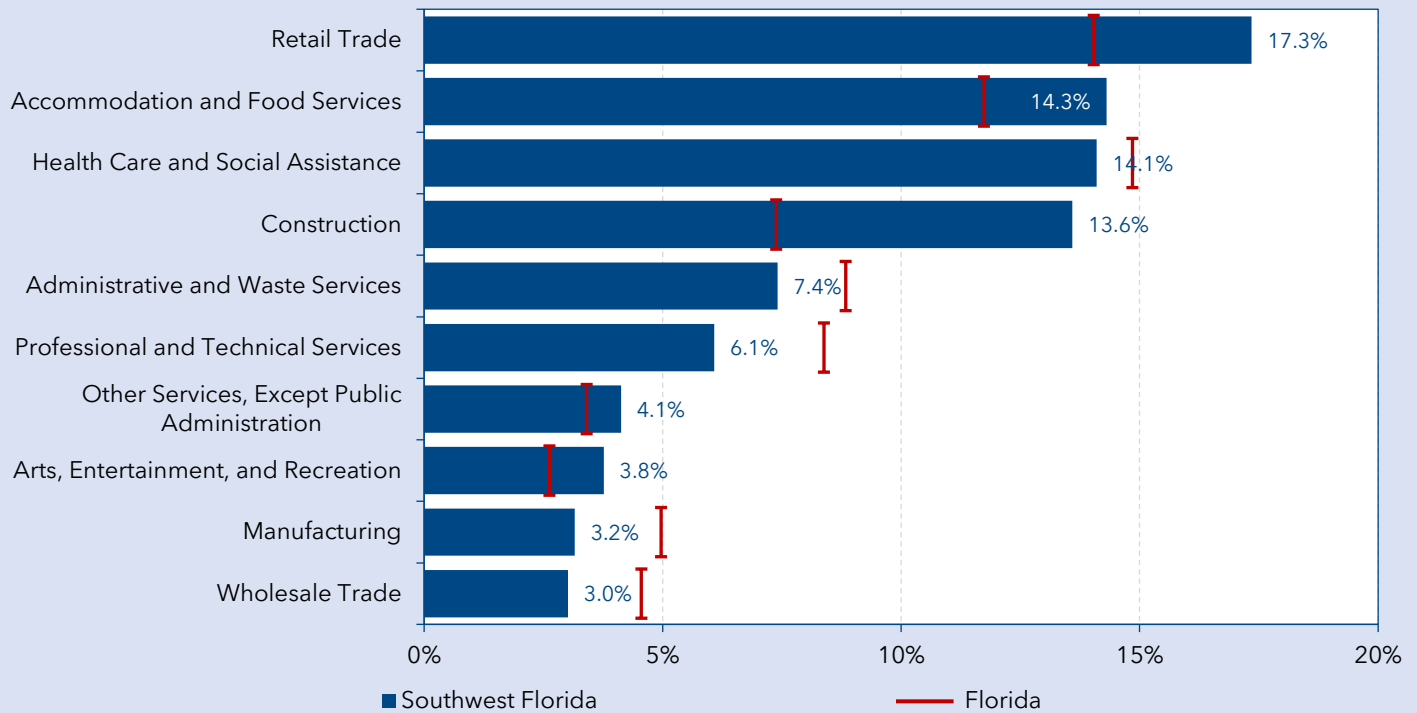
**Table 3-4: Total Wages by Industry**Southwest Florida  
2021

Industry	Total Wages	Percent of Total Wages
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$3,773,788,007	19.1%
Construction	\$3,165,660,482	16.0%
Retail Trade	\$2,890,278,229	14.6%
Professional and Technical Services	\$2,210,462,635	11.2%
Accommodation and Food Services	\$1,737,181,230	8.8%
Finance and Insurance	\$1,538,283,877	7.8%
Administrative and Waste Services	\$1,357,626,333	6.9%
Wholesale Trade	\$1,116,999,330	5.7%
Manufacturing	\$795,746,735	4.0%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	\$765,133,233	3.9%
Other Industry Sectors	\$413,595,981	2.1%
<b>Total, All Industries</b>	<b>\$19,764,756,072</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  
2021



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 has a higher percentage of employees in retail trade, accommodation and food services, construction, arts, entertainment, and recreation, agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting, other services (except public administration), and real estate and rental and leasing 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 (6.2 percent greater than the state of Florida), retail trade (3.3 percent), accommodation and food services (2.6 percent), arts, entertainment, and recreation (1.1 percent), and agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting (1.0 percent).

The largest negative differentials between the region and the state include transportation and warehousing (2.6 percent below Florida), finance and insurance (2.5 percent), professional and technical services (2.3 percent), manufacturing (1.8 percent), and wholesale trade (1.5 percent). Complete results can be found in Table 3-5.

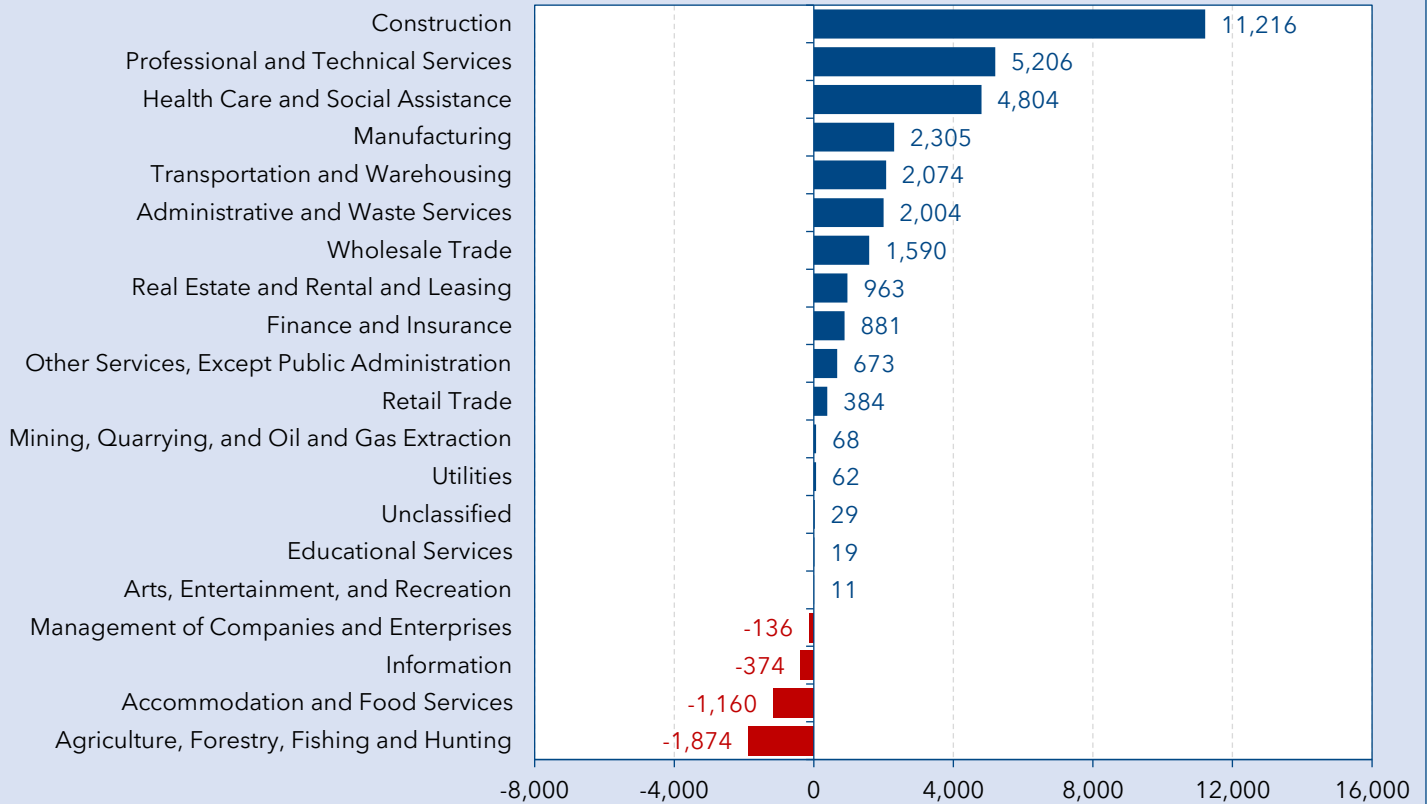
**Table 3-5: Employment Share by Industry**Southwest Florida vs. State of Florida  
2021

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Florida</b>	<b>Southwest Florida</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Construction	7.4%	13.6%	<b>6.2%</b>
Retail Trade	14.0%	17.3%	<b>3.3%</b>
Accommodation and Food Services	11.7%	14.3%	<b>2.6%</b>
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2.6%	3.8%	<b>1.1%</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	0.9%	1.9%	<b>1.0%</b>
Other Services, Except Public Administration	3.4%	4.1%	<b>0.7%</b>
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2.5%	3.0%	<b>0.5%</b>
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0.0%	0.1%	<b>0.0%</b>
Utilities	0.3%	0.3%	<b>0.0%</b>
Unclassified	0.1%	0.1%	<b>0.0%</b>
Health Care and Social Assistance	14.8%	14.1%	<b>-0.8%</b>
Information	1.8%	1.0%	<b>-0.8%</b>
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1.5%	0.7%	<b>-0.8%</b>
Educational Services	2.1%	1.1%	<b>-1.0%</b>
Administrative and Waste Services	8.8%	7.4%	<b>-1.4%</b>
Wholesale Trade	4.6%	3.0%	<b>-1.5%</b>
Manufacturing	5.0%	3.2%	<b>-1.8%</b>
Professional and Technical Services	8.4%	6.1%	<b>-2.3%</b>
Finance and Insurance	5.4%	2.9%	<b>-2.5%</b>
Transportation and Warehousing	4.6%	2.1%	<b>-2.6%</b>

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

### Chart 3-7: Industry Employment Growth

Southwest Florida  
2017 to 2021



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 2017 to 2021, as shown Chart 3-7. The industries with the most growth between 2017 to 2021 included construction (11,216 employees, 24.1 percent increase), professional and technical services (5,206 employees, 25.3 percent increase), health care and social assistance (4,804 employees, 8.7 percent increase), manufacturing (2,305 employees, 20.8 percent increase), and transportation and warehousing (2,074 employees, 31.0 percent increase). Over the same period, the industries with the lowest (or negative) growth included agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (1,874 employee decline, 18.7 percent decrease), accommodation and food services (1,160 employee decline, 1.9 percent decrease), information (374 employee decline, 8.1 percent decrease), management of companies and enterprises (136 employee decline, 4.5 percent decrease), and arts, entertainment, and recreation (11 employee increase, 0.1 percent increase).

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

Southwest Florida

<b>Industry</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>Growth</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Construction	46,462	57,678	<b>11,216</b>	24.1%
Professional and Technical Services	20,606	25,812	<b>5,206</b>	25.3%
Health Care and Social Assistance	55,033	59,837	<b>4,804</b>	8.7%
Manufacturing	11,108	13,413	<b>2,305</b>	20.8%
Transportation and Warehousing	6,680	8,754	<b>2,074</b>	31.0%
Administrative and Waste Services	29,457	31,461	<b>2,004</b>	6.8%
Wholesale Trade	11,223	12,813	<b>1,590</b>	14.2%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	11,801	12,764	<b>963</b>	8.2%
Finance and Insurance	11,283	12,164	<b>881</b>	7.8%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	16,849	17,522	<b>673</b>	4.0%
Retail Trade	73,233	73,617	<b>384</b>	0.5%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	339	407	<b>68</b>	20.0%
Utilities	1,139	1,201	<b>62</b>	5.5%
Unclassified	238	267	<b>29</b>	12.3%
Educational Services	4,785	4,804	<b>19</b>	0.4%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	15,978	15,989	<b>11</b>	0.1%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	3,029	2,893	<b>-136</b>	-4.5%
Information	4,639	4,265	<b>-374</b>	-8.1%
Accommodation and Food Services	61,876	60,716	<b>-1,160</b>	-1.9%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	9,994	8,121	<b>-1,874</b>	-18.7%
<b>Total, All Industries</b>	<b>395,752</b>	<b>424,494</b>	<b>28,742</b>	<b>7.3%</b>

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

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

Southwest Florida  
2021 to 2029



Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, 2021 to 2029 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>22</sup> The health care and social assistance industry is projected to be the fastest-growing industry in Southwest Florida, adding an average of 1,757 employees each year from 2021 to 2029. Accommodation and food services is projected to gain the second largest number of employees, adding 1,565 per year. This is followed by construction at 972 employees per year, retail trade at 908 jobs per year, and government at 903 employees per year.

<sup>22</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**

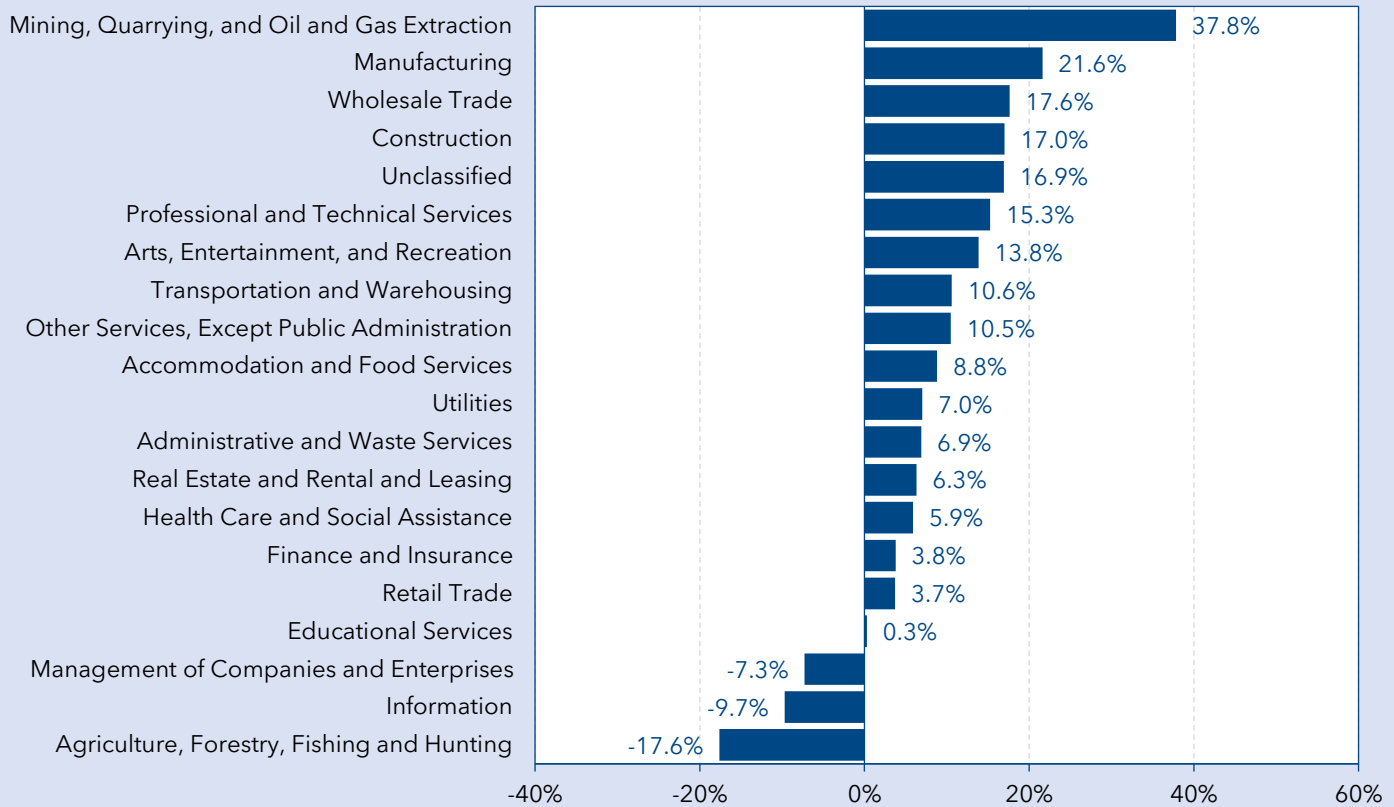
Southwest Florida

<b>Industry</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2029</b>	<b>Average Annual Growth</b>	<b>Average Annual Percentage Growth</b>
Health Care and Social Assistance	75,245	89,298	1,757	2.3%
Accommodation and Food Services	62,297	74,815	1,565	2.5%
Construction	56,144	63,917	972	1.7%
Retail Trade	72,094	79,354	908	1.3%
Government	65,398	72,624	903	1.4%
Professional and Technical Services	25,987	31,169	648	2.5%
Administrative and Waste Services	33,192	37,693	563	1.7%
Self Employed and Unpaid Family Workers, All Jobs	40,799	44,548	469	1.1%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	16,193	18,695	313	1.9%
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	20,192	22,669	310	1.5%
Transportation and Warehousing	8,573	10,878	288	3.4%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	12,475	14,731	282	2.3%
Wholesale Trade	13,921	15,460	192	1.4%
Educational Services	5,652	6,761	139	2.5%
Finance and Insurance	12,632	13,671	130	1.0%
Manufacturing	12,859	13,736	110	0.9%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	3,075	3,602	66	2.1%
Information	4,357	4,641	36	0.8%
Mining	399	434	4	1.1%
Utilities	1,220	1,176	-6	-0.5%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	8,270	7,193	-135	-1.6%
<b>Total, All Industries</b>	<b>538,465</b>	<b>611,699</b>	<b>9,154</b>	<b>1.7%</b>

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

### Chart 3-9: Competition Effect

Southwest Florida  
2017 to 2021



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>23</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.

<sup>23</sup> See the methodology for more information on how the shift-share analysis is calculated.



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 (37.8 percent increase from 2017 to 2021), manufacturing (21.6 percent increase), wholesale trade (17.6 percent increase), construction (17.0 percent increase), and the unclassified industry (16.9 percent increase). Industries with negative competition effects included agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, (17.6 percent decline from 2017 to 2021), information (9.7 percent decline) and management of companies and enterprises (7.3 percent decrease). Complete results can be found in Table 3-8.

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

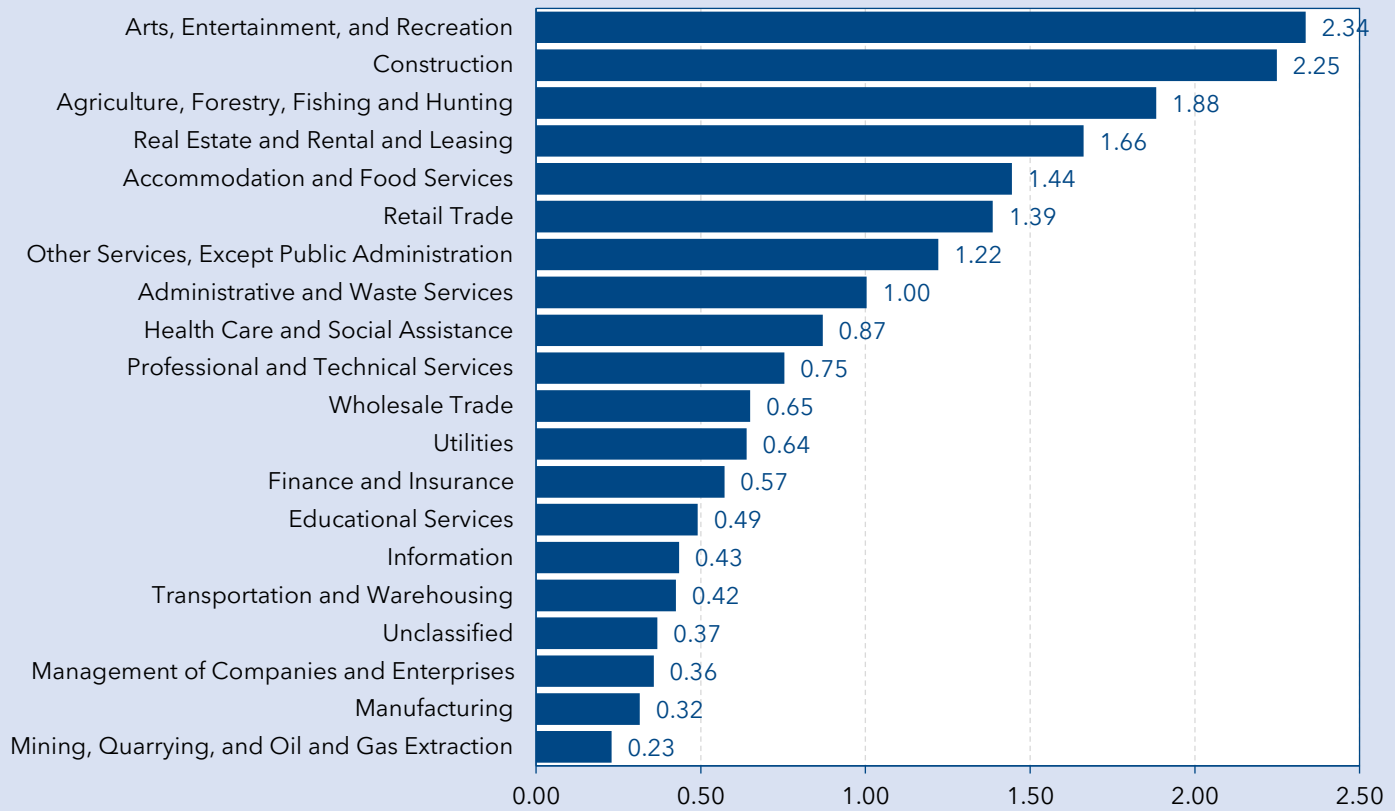
Southwest Florida

Industry	2017	2021	Percent Change	National Growth	Industry Mix	Competition Effect
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	339	407	20.0%	0.3%	-18.1%	<b>37.8%</b>
Manufacturing	11,108	13,413	20.8%	0.3%	-1.1%	<b>21.6%</b>
Wholesale Trade	11,223	12,813	14.2%	0.3%	-3.7%	<b>17.6%</b>
Construction	46,462	57,678	24.1%	0.3%	6.9%	<b>17.0%</b>
Unclassified	238	267	12.3%	0.3%	-4.9%	<b>16.9%</b>
Professional and Technical Services	20,606	25,812	25.3%	0.3%	9.7%	<b>15.3%</b>
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	15,978	15,989	0.1%	0.3%	-14.0%	<b>13.8%</b>
Transportation and Warehousing	6,680	8,754	31.0%	0.3%	20.2%	<b>10.6%</b>
Other Services, Except Public Administration	16,849	17,522	4.0%	0.3%	-6.8%	<b>10.5%</b>
Accommodation and Food Services	61,876	60,716	-1.9%	0.3%	-10.9%	<b>8.8%</b>
Utilities	1,139	1,201	5.5%	0.3%	-1.8%	<b>7.0%</b>
Administrative and Waste Services	29,457	31,461	6.8%	0.3%	-0.3%	<b>6.9%</b>
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	11,801	12,764	8.2%	0.3%	1.6%	<b>6.3%</b>
Health Care and Social Assistance	55,033	59,837	8.7%	0.3%	2.6%	<b>5.9%</b>
Finance and Insurance	11,283	12,164	7.8%	0.3%	3.8%	<b>3.8%</b>
Retail Trade	73,233	73,617	0.5%	0.3%	-3.5%	<b>3.7%</b>
Educational Services	4,785	4,804	0.4%	0.3%	-0.1%	<b>0.3%</b>
Management of Companies and Enterprises	3,029	2,893	-4.5%	0.3%	2.5%	<b>-7.3%</b>
Information	4,639	4,265	-8.1%	0.3%	1.4%	<b>-9.7%</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	9,994	8,121	-18.7%	0.3%	-1.4%	<b>-17.6%</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  
2021



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 is 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>24</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 2021, relative to the United States. The arts, entertainment and recreation industry had the highest location quotient (measured at 2.34), indicating that this industry was approximately 2.3 times more concentrated in Southwest Florida compared to the nation as a whole. The construction industry had the second highest location quotient (2.25), followed by agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (1.88), real estate and rental and leasing (1.66), and accommodation and food services (1.44). The industries with the lowest location quotient included mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extract (0.23), manufacturing (0.32),

<sup>24</sup> See the methodology for more information on how the location quotient is calculated.

management of companies and enterprises (0.36), unclassified (0.37) and transportation and warehousing (0.42). Complete results of location quotients relative to both Florida and the United States can be found in Table 3-9.

**Table 3-9: Location Quotient**

2021

Industry	SWFL	Florida		United States	
	Employment	Employment	Loc. Quotient	Employment	Loc. Quotient
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	15,989	205,157	1.43	1,977,729	<b>2.34</b>
Construction	57,678	576,429	1.84	7,413,458	<b>2.25</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	8,121	68,410	2.18	1,246,927	<b>1.88</b>
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	12,764	196,166	1.20	2,219,856	<b>1.66</b>
Accommodation and Food Services	60,716	916,557	1.22	12,151,343	<b>1.44</b>
Retail Trade	73,617	1,096,330	1.24	15,345,787	<b>1.39</b>
Other Services, Except Public Administration	17,522	266,145	1.21	4,146,306	<b>1.22</b>
Administrative and Waste Services	31,461	690,195	0.84	9,056,359	<b>1.00</b>
Health Care and Social Assistance	59,837	1,159,679	0.95	19,867,994	<b>0.87</b>
Professional and Technical Services	25,812	654,582	0.73	9,894,940	<b>0.75</b>
Wholesale Trade	12,813	355,780	0.66	5,695,101	<b>0.65</b>
Utilities	1,201	22,877	0.97	543,373	<b>0.64</b>
Finance and Insurance	12,164	419,295	0.53	6,146,600	<b>0.57</b>
Educational Services	4,804	167,100	0.53	2,827,338	<b>0.49</b>
Information	4,265	139,078	0.56	2,838,225	<b>0.43</b>
Transportation and Warehousing	8,754	361,675	0.45	5,958,600	<b>0.42</b>
Unclassified	267	8,170	0.60	209,516	<b>0.37</b>
Management of Companies and Enterprises	2,893	114,986	0.46	2,341,133	<b>0.36</b>
Manufacturing	13,413	387,951	0.64	12,299,558	<b>0.32</b>
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	407	3,770	1.98	512,611	<b>0.23</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>25</sup>

Table 3-10 ranks the workforce regions from most seasonal to least seasonal in 2021. The index represents the average seasonal variation in employment the region experienced each month, with higher values representing more seasonality. Southwest Florida exhibited the 3rd highest seasonal fluctuation in 2021, with an index of 1.6 percent. This percentage indicates that on average, the difference in employment between the seasoned and unseasoned data was 1.6 percent each month. Only the Heartland workforce region (1.7 percent) and Okaloosa Walton workforce region (1.6 percent) had a highest index than Southwest Florida.

**Table 3-10: FGCU Seasonality Index**

2021

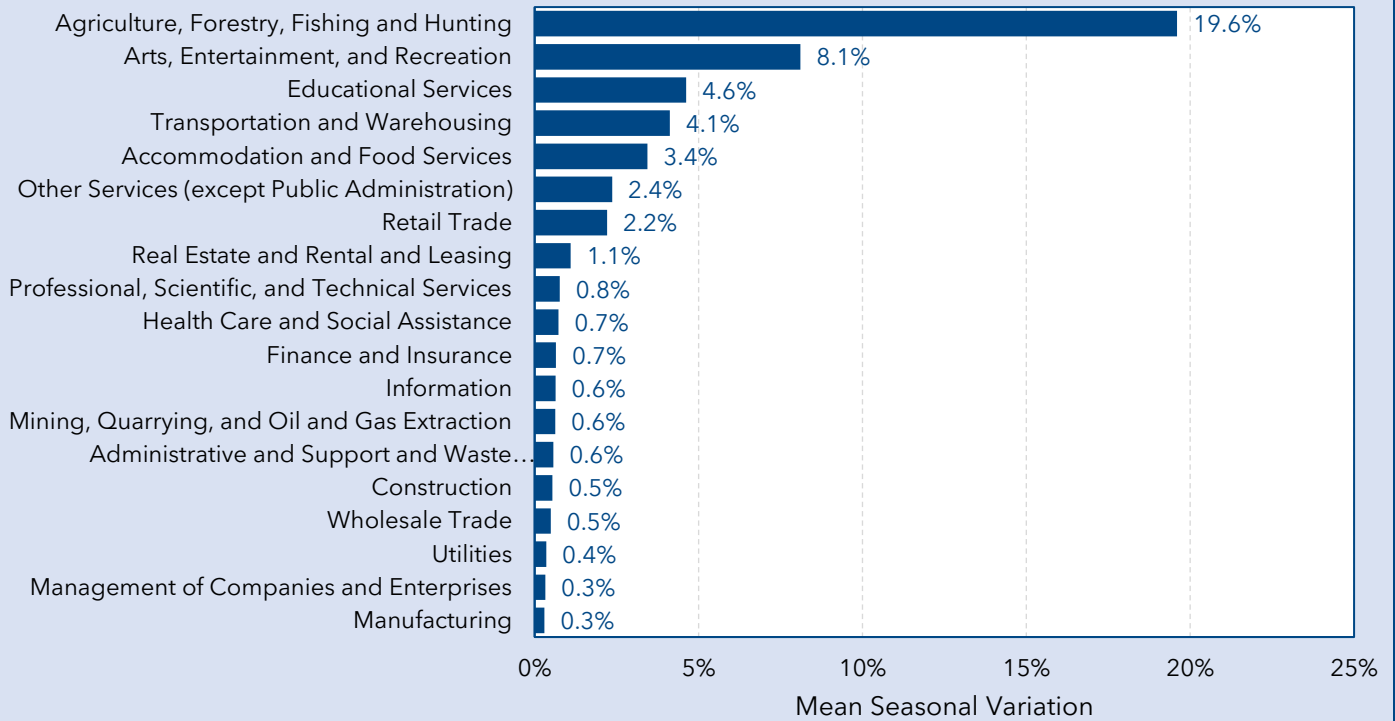
Rank	Workforce Region	Index
1	Heartland	1.7%
2	Okaloosa Walton	1.6%
<b>3</b>	<b>Southwest Florida</b>	<b>1.6%</b>
4	Gulf Coast	1.4%
5	Suncoast	1.2%
6	Research Coast	1.0%
7	Capital Region	0.9%
8	Palm Beach County	0.9%
9	Polk	0.8%
10	Tampa Bay	0.8%
11	North Central Florida	0.8%
12	Florida Crown	0.7%
13	Northeast Florida	0.6%
14	South Florida	0.6%
15	Flagler Volusia	0.6%
16	Broward	0.5%
17	Citrus Levy Marion	0.5%
18	North Florida	0.5%
19	Central Florida	0.5%
20	Pasco Hernando	0.5%
21	Escarosa	0.5%
22	Chipola	0.4%
23	Pinellas	0.3%
24	Brevard	0.3%

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

<sup>25</sup> The methodology used to calculate the seasonality index is different from previous studies. See Issue Brief 2022-05 for more information on how the index was calculated and why the index was changed.

### Chart 3-11: FGCU Seasonality Index

Southwest Florida  
2021



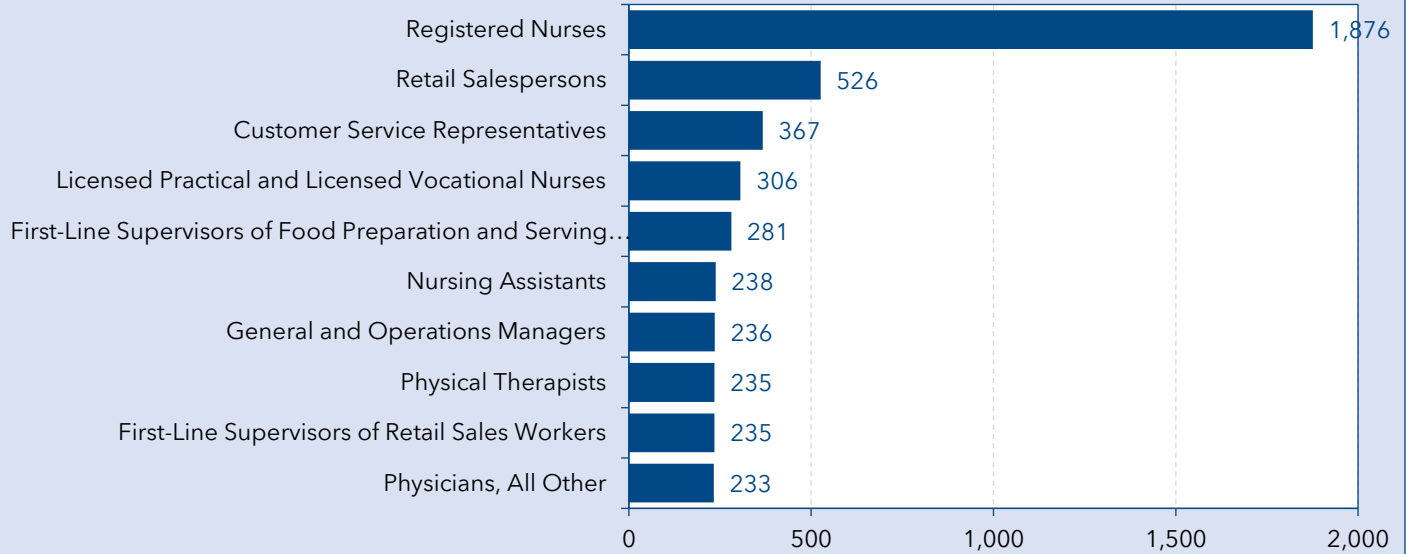
Source: RERI Analysis of QCEW data obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Seasonality by Industry

Chart 3-11 shows the industries that exhibited the highest seasonality in Southwest Florida. The agriculture industry had the highest seasonality in 2021 (19.6 percent), followed by the arts, entertainment, and recreation (8.1 percent), educational services (4.6 percent), transportation and warehousing (4.1 percent), accommodation and food services (3.4 percent), and retail trade (2.2 percent).

### Chart 3-12: Short-term Job Openings by Occupation

Southwest Florida  
July 2022



Source: EmployFlorida. Data retrieved July 19th, 2022.  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Short-term Job Openings by Occupation

Short-term job openings data is obtained from Employ Florida, an online tool designed to help connect employers and job seekers in Florida. The website provides area profiles on the labor market for each of the workforce region and is updated on a daily basis. Information in the table below was captured from the Employ Florida website on July 19, 2022.

Table 3-11 shows the 10 occupations with the most job openings in Southwest Florida. Registered nurses had the most job openings posted on the Employ Florida website, with 1,876 openings. Retail salespersons was the next highest occupation (526 job postings), followed by customer service representatives (367 postings), licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses (306 postings), and first-line supervisors of food preparation and serving workers (281 postings). Only one of the top 10 occupations required a high school diploma, five required postsecondary education, and two each occupations required an associate’s degree and at least a master’s degree.

**Table 3-11: Short-term Job Openings by Occupation**

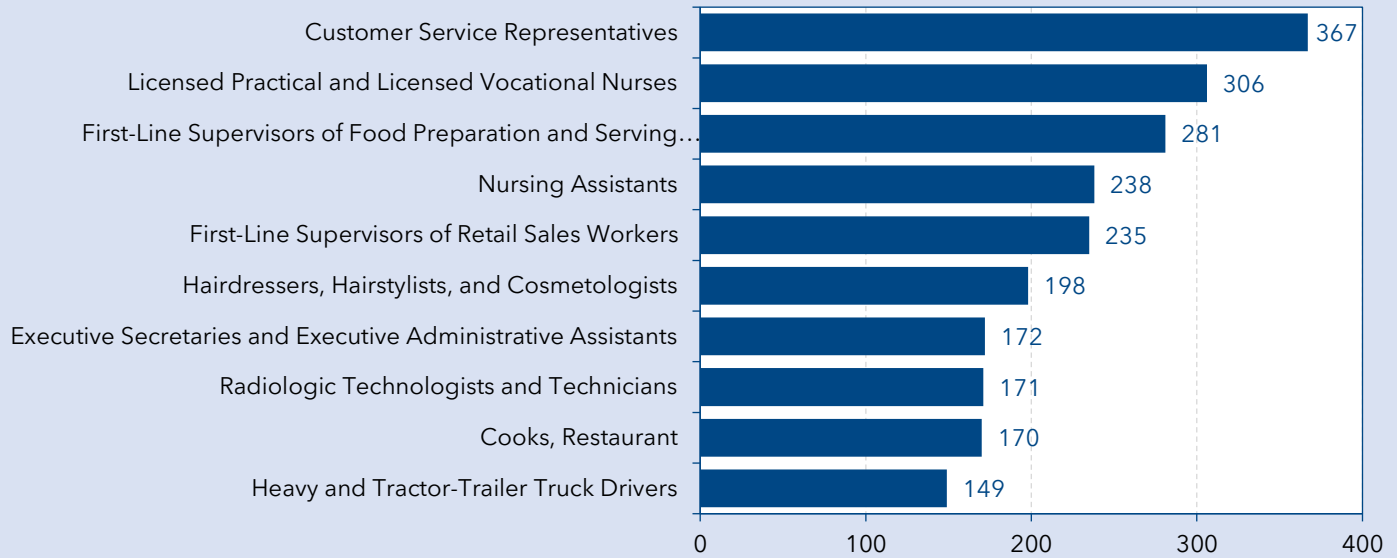
Southwest Florida

Occupation	Job Openings	Minimum Education
Registered Nurses	1,876	Associates
Retail Salespersons	526	HS/GED
Customer Service Representatives	367	PSAV
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	306	PSAV
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	281	PSAV
Nursing Assistants	238	PSAV
General and Operations Managers	236	Associates
Physical Therapists	235	Master's Degree or Higher
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	235	PSAV
Physicians, All Other	233	Master's Degree or Higher

Source: EmployFlorida. Data Retrieved July 19th, 2022.

**Chart 3-13: Adult Vocational Job Openings**

Southwest Florida  
July 2022



Source: *EmployFlorida*. Data retrieved July 19th, 2022.  
Prepared by the *Regional Economic Research Institute*

## Short-term Job Openings 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 3-12 shows the top 10 occupations with the most job openings in Southwest Florida for occupations requiring at least postsecondary adult vocational training. Customer service representatives had the most job openings with 367, followed by licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses (306 openings), first-line supervisors of food preparation and serving workers (281), nursing assistants (238), and first-line supervisors of retail sales workers (235).

**Table 3-12: Adult Vocational Job Openings**

Southwest Florida

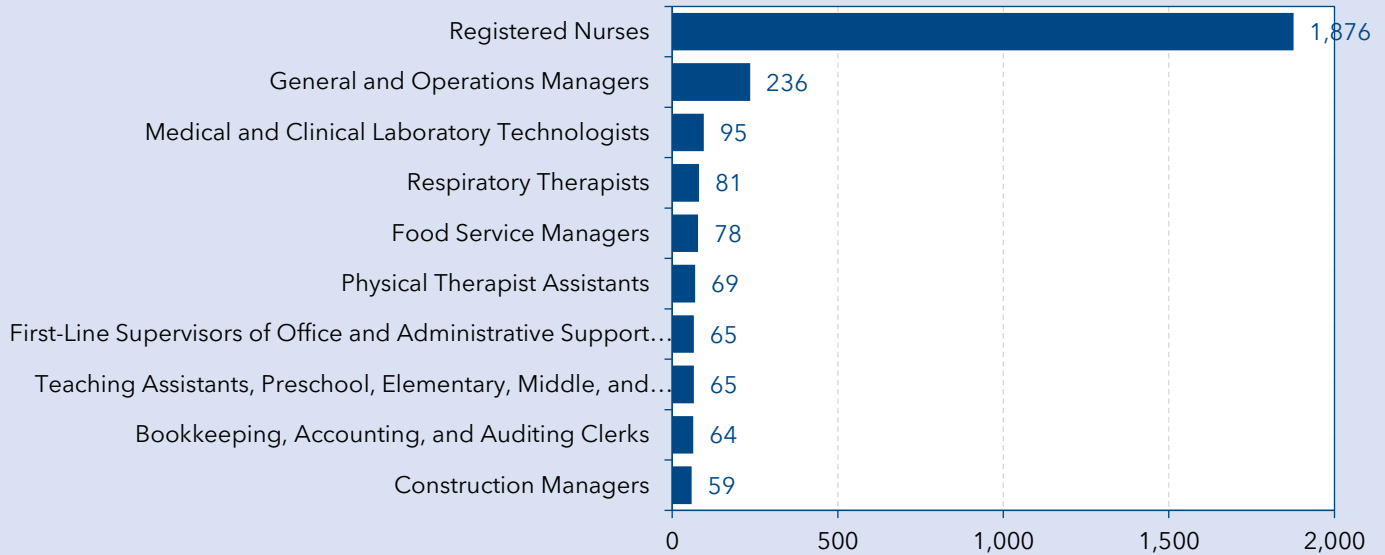
<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Job Openings</b>
Customer Service Representatives	367
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	306
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	281
Nursing Assistants	238
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	235
Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	198
Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants	172
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	171
Cooks, Restaurant	170
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	149

Source: *EmployFlorida*. Data Retrieved July 19th, 2022.



### Chart 3-14: Associate's Degree Job Openings

Southwest Florida  
July 2022



Source: EmployFlorida. Data retrieved July 19th, 2022  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

#### Associate's Degree Job Openings

Table 3-13 shows the top 10 occupations with the most job openings in Southwest Florida for occupations requiring at least an associate's degree. Registered nurses had the most job openings with 1,876, followed by general and operations managers (236), medical and clinical laboratory technologists (95), respiratory therapists (81), and food service managers (78).

**Table 3-13: Associate's Degree Job Openings**

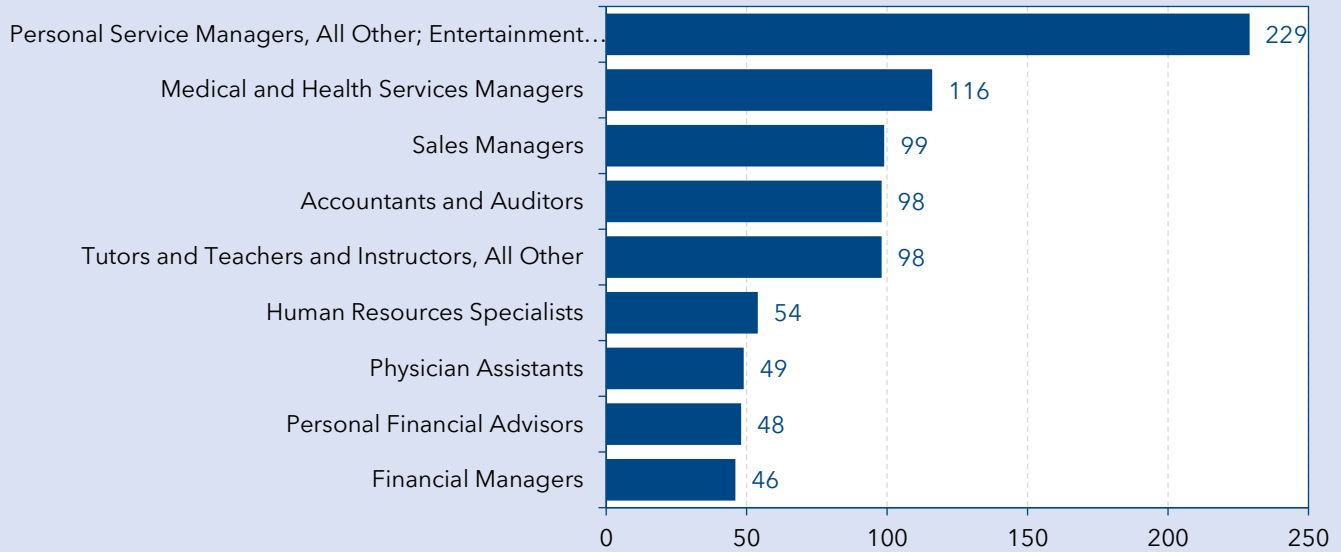
Southwest Florida

Occupation	Job Openings
Registered Nurses	1,876
General and Operations Managers	236
Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technologists	95
Respiratory Therapists	81
Food Service Managers	78
Physical Therapist Assistants	69
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	65
Teaching Assistants, Preschool, Elementary, Middle, and Secondary School, Except Special Education	65
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	64
Construction Managers	59

Source: EmployFlorida. Data Retrieved July 19th, 2022.

### Chart 3-15: Bachelor's Degree Job Openings

Southwest Florida  
July 2022



Source: EmployFlorida. Data retrieved July 19th, 2022  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

### Bachelor's Degree Job Openings

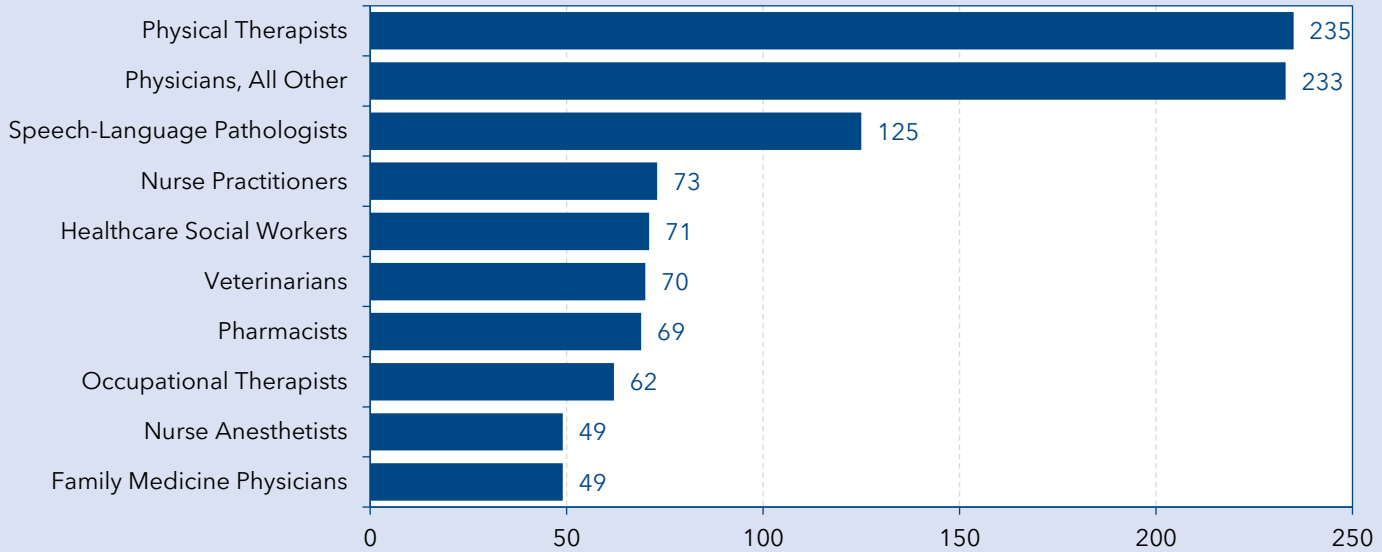
Table 3-14 shows the top 10 occupations with the most job openings in Southwest Florida for occupations requiring at least a Bachelor's degree. Personal service managers had the most job openings with 229, followed by medical and health service managers (116), sales managers (99), accountants and auditors (98), and teachers and instructors (98).

Bachelor's Degree Job Openings	
Southwest Florida	
Occupation	Job Openings
Personal Service Managers, All Other; Entertainment and Recreation Managers, Except Gambling; and Managers, All Other	229
Medical and Health Services Managers	116
Sales Managers	99
Accountants and Auditors	98
Tutors and Teachers and Instructors, All Other	98
Human Resources Specialists	54
Physician Assistants	49
Personal Financial Advisors	48
Financial Managers	46
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	45

Source: EmployFlorida. Data Retrieved July 19th, 2022.

### Chart 3-16: Master's Degree or Higher Job Openings

Southwest Florida  
July 2022



Source: EmployFlorida. Data retrieved July 19th, 2022  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

### Master's Degree or Higher Job Openings

Table 3-15 shows the top 10 occupations with the most job openings in Southwest Florida for occupations requiring a Master's degree or higher. Physical therapists had the most job openings with 235, followed by physicians, all other (233), speech-language pathologists (125), nurse practitioners (73) and healthcare social workers (71).

**Table 3-15: Master's Degree or Higher Job Openings**

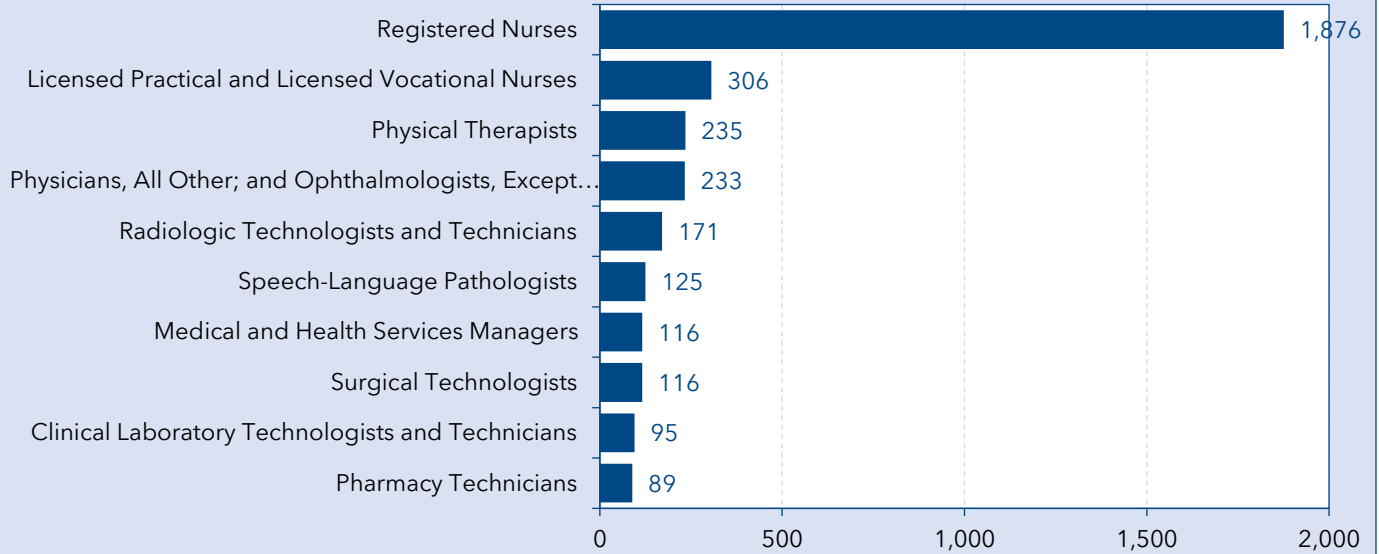
Southwest Florida

Occupation	Job Openings
Physical Therapists	235
Physicians, All Other	233
Speech-Language Pathologists	125
Nurse Practitioners	73
Healthcare Social Workers	71
Veterinarians	70
Pharmacists	69
Occupational Therapists	62
Nurse Anesthetists	49
Family Medicine Physicians	49

Source: EmployFlorida. Data Retrieved July 19th, 2022.

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

Southwest Florida  
July 2022



Source: EmployFlorida. Data retrieved July 19th, 2022.  
Prepared by the Regional Economic Research Institute

## Short-term Job Openings for STEM Occupations

Table 3-16 shows the 10 STEM occupations with the most job openings in Southwest Florida. Registered nurses had the most job openings posted on the Employ Florida website, with 1,876 openings. Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses had the next most job openings (306 postings), followed by physical therapists (235 postings), all other physicians (233 postings), and radiologic technologists and technicians (171 postings). Four of the top 10 STEM occupations required a postsecondary education, two required an associate’s degree, one required a bachelor’s degree and three required at least a master’s degree.

**Table 3-16: Short-term Job Openings for STEM Occupations**

Southwest Florida

Occupation	Job Openings	Minimum Education
Registered Nurses	1,876	Associate’s
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	306	PSAV
Physical Therapists	235	Master’s or Higher
Physicians, All Other; and Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	233	Master’s or Higher
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	171	PSAV
Speech-Language Pathologists	125	Master’s or Higher
Medical and Health Services Managers	116	Bachelor’s
Surgical Technologists	116	PSAV
Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	95	Associate’s
Pharmacy Technicians	89	PSAV

Source: EmployFlorida. Data Retrieved July 19th, 2022.

## Long-term Employment Growth by Occupation

The forecast in Table 3-17 provides additional information about projected occupational demands for the Southwest Florida region.<sup>26</sup> Information is presented for the top 10 growth occupations along with the 2020 median hourly wage and educational requirements. The top 10 employment growth occupations are retail salespersons (3,598 new positions by 2029), restaurant cooks (3,196 new positions), landscaping and groundskeeping workers (2,821 new positions), waiters and waitresses (2,512 new positions), fast food and counter workers (2,490 new positions), registered nurses (1,548 new positions), home health and personal care aides (1,440 new positions), construction laborers (1,439 new positions), general and operations managers (1,251 new positions), and janitors and cleaners (1,084 new positions).

The top 10 growth occupations primarily reflect expected increases in retail, tourism, food preparation, construction, and health care. Five of the top growth occupations require less than a high school degree, one requires a high school degree or GED, two require adult vocational training, and two requires an associate's degree. Median wages varied from \$10.38 per hour to \$37.67 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 3-17: Long-Term Employment Growth Occupations**  
2021 to 2029

Occupation	2021	2029	Growth	Percent Growth	2020 Median Hourly Wage	Minimum Education
Retail Salespersons	21,310	24,908	<b>3,598</b>	16.9%	\$12.33	HS/GED
Cooks, Restaurant	9,404	12,600	<b>3,196</b>	34.0%	\$15.36	PSAV
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	13,273	16,094	<b>2,821</b>	21.3%	\$14.74	Less HS/GED
Waiters and Waitresses	15,030	17,542	<b>2,512</b>	16.7%	\$11.12	Less HS/GED
Fast Food and Counter Workers	11,570	14,060	<b>2,490</b>	21.5%	\$10.38	Less HS/GED
Registered Nurses	10,334	11,882	<b>1,548</b>	15.0%	\$34.14	Associates
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	4,671	6,111	<b>1,440</b>	30.8%	\$12.32	PSAV
Construction Laborers	9,774	11,213	<b>1,439</b>	14.7%	\$16.04	Less HS/GED
General and Operations Managers	8,373	9,624	<b>1,251</b>	14.9%	\$37.67	Associates
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	6,315	7,399	<b>1,084</b>	17.2%	\$14.41	Less HS/GED

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Employment Projections

<sup>26</sup> Beginning in 2018, the Bureau of Labor Statistics introduced a new methodology for producing occupation growth projections. The old method used for occupation estimations attempted to project occupational openings due economic growth, as well as replacement openings due to employees exiting the labor force. However, the estimations did not consider openings that occurred when employees moved from one occupation to another, and often resulted in an undercounting of total needed replacements. The new method is designed to provide better estimates by using demographic and other longitudinal data from Current Population Survey monthly data, and to account for openings that result as employees move from one occupation to another. Therefore, it is important to exercise caution when comparing projected occupational growth figures in this section and the next section to previous Workforce Now reports.

## 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 2021 and 2029, as well as median wages for 2020.

### Postsecondary Adult Vocational

The top 10 projected long-run growth occupations requiring a minimum of postsecondary adult vocational training are restaurant cooks (3,196 new positions between 2021 and 2029), home health and personal care aides (1,440 new positions), general maintenance and repair workers (1,001 new positions), carpenters (978 new positions), medical assistants (919 new positions), first-line supervisors of food preparation and serving workers (902 new positions), nursing assistants (830 new positions), construction and maintenance painters (679 new positions), first-line supervisors of retail sales workers (597 new positions), and roofers (575 new positions). The top 20 growth occupations for adult vocational, along with the median wage can be found in Table 3-18.

**Table 3-18: Adult Vocational Long-term Growth Occupations**  
2021 to 2029

Ranking	Occupation	2021	2029	Growth	Percent Growth	2020 Median Hourly Wage
1	Cooks, Restaurant	9,404	12,600	<b>3,196</b>	34.0%	\$15.36
2	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	4,671	6,111	<b>1,440</b>	30.8%	\$12.32
3	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	6,577	7,578	<b>1,001</b>	15.2%	\$18.50
4	Carpenters	7,402	8,380	<b>978</b>	13.2%	\$20.27
5	Medical Assistants	3,848	4,767	<b>919</b>	23.9%	\$17.34
6	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	5,025	5,927	<b>902</b>	18.0%	\$17.55
7	Nursing Assistants	5,178	6,008	<b>830</b>	16.0%	\$14.90
8	Painters, Construction and Maintenance	4,212	4,891	<b>679</b>	16.1%	\$17.38
9	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	6,508	7,105	<b>597</b>	9.2%	\$19.31
10	Roofers	3,495	4,070	<b>575</b>	16.5%	\$15.35
11	Real Estate Sales Agents	3,560	4,134	<b>574</b>	16.1%	\$23.89
12	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	3,829	4,396	<b>567</b>	14.8%	\$19.15
13	Customer Service Representatives	9,454	9,996	<b>542</b>	5.7%	\$15.59
14	Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	3,614	4,146	<b>532</b>	14.7%	\$14.97
15	Insurance Sales Agents	2,271	2,775	<b>504</b>	22.2%	\$24.10
16	Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	3,405	3,879	<b>474</b>	13.9%	\$15.99
17	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	2,682	3,141	<b>459</b>	17.1%	\$21.66
18	Sales Rep., Wholesale & Manufacturing, Except Tech. & Scientific Products	4,068	4,520	<b>452</b>	11.1%	\$29.38
19	Supervisors of Landscaping, Lawn Service & Groundskeeping Workers	1,727	2,099	<b>372</b>	21.5%	\$26.14
20	Electricians	2,579	2,903	<b>324</b>	12.6%	\$21.60

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Employment Projections

## Associate's Degree

The top 10 projected long-run growth occupations requiring an associate's degree are registered nurses (1,548 new positions from 2021 to 2029), general and operations managers (1,251 new positions), first-line supervisors of construction workers (740 new positions), project management specialists (591 new positions), construction managers (527 new positions), first-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers (448 new positions), property and real estate managers (366 new positions), preschool teachers, excluding special education (235 new positions), food service managers (228 new positions) and teaching assistants, except postsecondary (220 new positions). The top 20 growth occupations requiring an associate's degree, along with the median wage can be found in Table 3-19.

### Table 3-19: Associate's Degree Long-term Growth Occupations

2021 to 2029

Ranking	Occupation	2021	2029	Growth	Percent Growth	2020 Median Hourly Wage
1	Registered Nurses	10,334	11,882	<b>1,548</b>	15.0%	\$34.14
2	General and Operations Managers	8,373	9,624	<b>1,251</b>	14.9%	\$37.67
3	Supervisors of Construction and Extraction Workers	5,267	6,007	<b>740</b>	14.0%	\$29.85
4	Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other	3,475	4,066	<b>591</b>	17.0%	\$29.10
5	Construction Managers	3,063	3,590	<b>527</b>	17.2%	\$38.06
6	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	5,965	6,413	<b>448</b>	7.5%	\$25.23
7	Property, Real Estate & Community Assoc. Mgr.	2,772	3,138	<b>366</b>	13.2%	\$28.89
8	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	1,824	2,059	<b>235</b>	12.9%	\$13.16
9	Food Service Managers	1,740	1,968	<b>228</b>	13.1%	\$33.68
10	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	2,847	3,067	<b>220</b>	7.7%	\$29,728*
11	Recreation Workers	1,215	1,414	<b>199</b>	16.4%	\$13.62
12	Respiratory Therapists	761	957	<b>196</b>	25.8%	\$28.69
13	Physical Therapist Assistants	628	823	<b>195</b>	31.1%	\$30.36
14	Postsecondary Teachers, All Other	1,094	1,282	<b>188</b>	17.2%	\$42,959*
15	Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	1,371	1,556	<b>185</b>	13.5%	\$28.61
16	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	5,267	5,444	<b>177</b>	3.4%	\$20.31
17	Computer System Analysts	671	825	<b>154</b>	23.0%	\$37.75
18	Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	805	929	<b>124</b>	15.4%	\$18.41
19	Dental Hygienists	807	926	<b>119</b>	14.7%	\$36.31
20	Cost Estimators	1,110	1,226	<b>116</b>	10.5%	\$29.74

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Employment Projections

Note: \* Denotes average annual wage when a median wage is not available.

## Bachelor's Degree

The top 10 projected long-run growth occupations requiring a bachelor's degree include market research analysts (678 new positions from 2021 to 2029), software developers and software quality assurance analysts and testers (578 new positions), management analysts (543 new positions), accountants and auditors (461 new positions), medical and health services managers (378 new positions), elementary school teachers, except special education (323 new positions), financial managers (319 new positions), personal service managers (244 new positions), substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors (221 new positions), and human resources specialists (186 new positions). The top 20 growth occupations requiring a bachelor's degree, along with the median wage can be found in Table 3-20.

**Table 3-20: Bachelor's Degree Long-term Growth Occupations**  
2021 to 2029

Ranking	Occupation	2021	2029	Growth	Percent Growth	2020 Median Hourly Wage
1	Market Research Analysts & Marketing Specialists	2,186	2,864	<b>678</b>	31.0%	\$23.63
2	Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	1,612	2,190	<b>578</b>	35.9%	\$42.25
3	Management Analysts	2,445	2,988	<b>543</b>	22.2%	\$33.93
4	Accountants and Auditors	3,457	3,918	<b>461</b>	13.3%	\$29.50
5	Medical and Health Services Managers	1,124	1,502	<b>378</b>	33.6%	\$49.41
6	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Ed.	4,467	4,790	<b>323</b>	7.2%	\$66,693*
7	Financial Managers	1,437	1,756	<b>319</b>	22.2%	\$48.94
8	Personal Service Managers, All Other; Entertainment and Recreation Managers, Except Gambling	2,557	2,801	<b>244</b>	9.5%	\$39.43
9	Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	826	1,047	<b>221</b>	26.8%	\$21.91
10	Human Resources Specialists	1,387	1,573	<b>186</b>	13.4%	\$24.67
11	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	2,525	2,707	<b>182</b>	7.2%	\$68,427*
12	Physician Assistants	462	635	<b>173</b>	37.4%	\$49.79
13	Substitute Teachers	1,053	1,222	<b>169</b>	16.0%	\$34,501*
14	Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	2,141	2,296	<b>155</b>	7.2%	\$65,192*
15	Sales Managers	1,026	1,180	<b>154</b>	15.0%	\$49.24
16	Community & Social Service Specialists, All Other	684	834	<b>150</b>	21.9%	\$17.95
17	Computer and Information Systems Managers	623	751	<b>128</b>	20.5%	\$52.85
18	Administrative Services Managers	797	920	<b>123</b>	15.4%	\$41.87
19	Personal Financial Advisors	1,042	1,159	<b>117</b>	11.2%	\$33.13
20	Marketing Managers	504	610	<b>106</b>	21.0%	\$47.79

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Employment Projections

Note: \* Denotes average annual wage when a median wage is not available.



## Master's Degree or Higher

The top 10 projected long-run growth occupations requiring at least a master's degree include nurse practitioners (388 new positions between 2021 and 2029), lawyers (237 new positions), physicians, all other (234 new positions), physical therapists (223 new positions), child, family and school social workers (182 new positions), educational and vocational counselors (127 new positions), healthcare social workers (103 new positions), family medicine physicians (90 new positions), dentists (86 new positions), and operations research analysts (80 new positions). The top 20 growth occupations requiring at least a master's degree, along with the median wage can be found in Table 3-21.

**Table 3-21: Master's Degree and Higher Long-term Growth Occupations**  
2021 to 2029

Ranking	Occupation	2021	2029	Growth	Percent Growth	2020 Median Hourly Wage
1	Nurse Practitioners	658	1,046	<b>388</b>	59.0%	\$44.15
2	Lawyers	2,527	2,764	<b>237</b>	9.4%	\$46.36
3	Physicians, All Other and Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	1,752	1,986	<b>234</b>	13.4%	N/R
4	Physical Therapists	1,222	1,445	<b>223</b>	18.2%	\$44.42
5	Child, Family, and School Social Workers	672	854	<b>182</b>	27.1%	\$19.15
6	Educational, Guidance, School, and Vocational Counselors	844	971	<b>127</b>	15.0%	\$28.92
7	Healthcare Social Workers	543	646	<b>103</b>	19.0%	\$27.36
8	Family Medicine Physicians	633	723	<b>90</b>	14.2%	N/R
9	Dentists, General	730	816	<b>86</b>	11.8%	\$69.54
10	Operations Research Analysts	199	279	<b>80</b>	40.2%	\$27.80
11	Speech-Language Pathologists	401	478	<b>77</b>	19.2%	\$44.79
12	Veterinarians	439	516	<b>77</b>	17.5%	\$47.55
13	Pharmacists	979	1,051	<b>72</b>	7.4%	\$62.19
14	Occupational Therapists	525	597	<b>72</b>	13.7%	\$45.98
15	Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychologists	509	565	<b>56</b>	11.0%	\$26.36
16	Nursing Instructors and Teachers, Postsecondary	215	269	<b>54</b>	25.1%	\$77,307*
17	Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary	215	265	<b>50</b>	23.3%	N/R
18	Counselors, All Other	212	257	<b>45</b>	21.2%	\$16.42
19	Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	223	260	<b>37</b>	16.6%	\$16.66
20	Curators	56	83	<b>27</b>	48.2%	\$23.48

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 3-22 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 2020 median hourly wage and educational requirements. The top 10 STEM occupations by employment growth include registered nurses (1,548 new positions by 2029), software developers and software quality assurance analysts and testers (578 new positions), licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses (459 new positions), nurse practitioners (388 new positions), medical and health services managers (378 new positions), computer user support specialists (292 new positions), pharmacy technicians (276 new positions), all other physicians and ophthalmologists (234 new positions), physical therapists (223 new positions), and medical dosimetrists and medical records specialists (199 new positions).

The top 10 STEM occupations were primarily focused on the healthcare practitioners and technical occupation group. Four of the top STEM occupations required adult vocational training, one required an associate's degree, two required a Bachelor's degree and three required at least a Master's degree. Median wages varied from \$18.18 per hour to \$49.41 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 3-22: Long-Term Employment Growth for STEM Occupations

2021 to 2029

Occupation	2021	2029	Growth	Percent Growth	2020 Median Hourly Wage	Minimum Education
Registered Nurses	10,334	11,882	<b>1,548</b>	15.0%	\$34.14	Associates
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	1,612	2,190	<b>578</b>	35.9%	\$42.25	Bachelor's
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	2,682	3,141	<b>459</b>	17.1%	\$21.66	PSAV
Nurse Practitioners	658	1,046	<b>388</b>	59.0%	\$44.15	Master's or Higher
Medical and Health Services Managers	1,124	1,502	<b>378</b>	33.6%	\$49.41	Bachelor's
Computer User Support Specialists	1,585	1,877	<b>292</b>	18.4%	\$22.59	PSAV
Pharmacy Technicians	1,910	2,186	<b>276</b>	14.5%	\$15.89	PSAV
Physicians, All Other and Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	1,752	1,986	<b>234</b>	13.4%	N/R	Master's or Higher
Physical Therapists	1,222	1,445	<b>223</b>	18.2%	\$44.42	Master's or Higher
Medical Dosimetrists, Medical Records Specialists, and Health Technologists and Technicians, all other	1,197	1,396	<b>199</b>	16.6%	\$18.18	PSAV

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 2021 and 2029.

**Table A-1: Top 25 Long-Term Employment Growth Occupations**  
2021 to 2029

Occupation	2021	2029	Growth	Percent Growth	2020 Median Hourly Wage	Minimum Education
Retail Salespersons	21,310	24,908	<b>3,598</b>	16.9%	\$12.33	HS/GED
Cooks, Restaurant	9,404	12,600	<b>3,196</b>	34.0%	\$15.36	PS Adult Voc
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	13,273	16,094	<b>2,821</b>	21.3%	\$14.74	Less HS/GED
Waiters and Waitresses	15,030	17,542	<b>2,512</b>	16.7%	\$11.12	Less HS/GED
Fast Food and Counter Workers	11,570	14,060	<b>2,490</b>	21.5%	\$10.38	Less HS/GED
Registered Nurses	10,334	11,882	<b>1,548</b>	15.0%	\$34.14	Associate's
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	4,671	6,111	<b>1,440</b>	30.8%	\$12.32	PS Adult Voc
Construction Laborers	9,774	11,213	<b>1,439</b>	14.7%	\$16.04	Less HS/GED
General and Operations Managers	8,373	9,624	<b>1,251</b>	14.9%	\$37.67	Associate's
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	6,315	7,399	<b>1,084</b>	17.2%	\$14.41	Less HS/GED
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	6,577	7,578	<b>1,001</b>	15.2%	\$18.50	PS Adult Voc
Carpenters	7,402	8,380	<b>978</b>	13.2%	\$20.27	PS Adult Voc
Medical Assistants	3,848	4,767	<b>919</b>	23.9%	\$17.34	PS Adult Voc
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	5,025	5,927	<b>902</b>	18.0%	\$17.55	PS Adult Voc
Nursing Assistants	5,178	6,008	<b>830</b>	16.0%	\$14.90	PS Adult Voc
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	5,526	6,333	<b>807</b>	14.6%	\$13.79	Less HS/GED
Supervisors of Construction and Extraction Workers	5,267	6,007	<b>740</b>	14.0%	\$29.85	Associate's
Stockers and Order Fillers	7,361	8,101	<b>740</b>	10.1%	\$13.65	HS/GED
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	5,090	5,790	<b>700</b>	13.8%	\$11.84	Less HS/GED
Painters, Construction and Maintenance	4,212	4,891	<b>679</b>	16.1%	\$17.38	PS Adult Voc
Market Research Analysts & Marketing Specialists	2,186	2,864	<b>678</b>	31.0%	\$23.63	Bachelor's
Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers	3,277	3,933	<b>656</b>	20.0%	\$9.81	Less HS/GED
Office Clerks, General	11,921	12,564	<b>643</b>	5.4%	\$16.75	HS/GED
Bartenders	3,606	4,240	<b>634</b>	17.6%	\$11.05	Less HS/GED
Cashiers	14,160	14,775	<b>615</b>	4.3%	\$11.62	HS/GED

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Employment Projections

**Table A-2: Ranked 26-50 Long-Term Employment Growth Occupations**  
2021 to 2029

Occupation	2021	2029	Growth	Percent Growth	2020 Median Hourly Wage	Minimum Education
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	6,508	7,105	<b>597</b>	9.2%	\$19.31	PS Adult Voc
Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other	3,475	4,066	<b>591</b>	17.0%	\$29.10	Associate's
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	1,612	2,190	<b>578</b>	35.9%	\$42.25	Bachelor's
Passenger Vehicle Drivers, Except Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	2,962	3,538	<b>576</b>	19.4%	\$16.08	Less HS/GED
Roofers	3,495	4,070	<b>575</b>	16.5%	\$15.35	PS Adult Voc
Real Estate Sales Agents	3,560	4,134	<b>574</b>	16.1%	\$23.89	PS Adult Voc
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	3,829	4,396	<b>567</b>	14.8%	\$19.15	PS Adult Voc
Receptionists and Information Clerks	4,953	5,517	<b>564</b>	11.4%	\$15.01	HS/GED
Management Analysts	2,445	2,988	<b>543</b>	22.2%	\$33.93	Bachelor's
Customer Service Representatives	9,454	9,996	<b>542</b>	5.7%	\$15.59	PS Adult Voc
Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	3,614	4,146	<b>532</b>	14.7%	\$14.97	PS Adult Voc
Sales Representatives of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, and Travel	3,173	3,702	<b>529</b>	16.7%	\$26.73	HS/GED
Construction Managers	3,063	3,590	<b>527</b>	17.2%	\$38.06	Associate's
Insurance Sales Agents	2,271	2,775	<b>504</b>	22.2%	\$24.10	PS Adult Voc
Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	2,309	2,808	<b>499</b>	21.6%	\$11.53	Less HS/GED
Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	3,405	3,879	<b>474</b>	13.9%	\$15.99	PS Adult Voc
Food Preparation Workers	4,411	4,880	<b>469</b>	10.6%	\$13.63	Less HS/GED
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	2,250	2,719	<b>469</b>	20.8%	\$12.13	Less HS/GED
Accountants and Auditors	3,457	3,918	<b>461</b>	13.3%	\$29.50	Bachelor's
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	2,682	3,141	<b>459</b>	17.1%	\$21.66	PS Adult Voc
Sales Rep., Wholesale & Manufacturing, Except Tech. & Scientific Products	4,068	4,520	<b>452</b>	11.1%	\$29.38	PS Adult Voc
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	5,965	6,413	<b>448</b>	7.5%	\$25.23	Associate's
Dishwashers	2,933	3,350	<b>417</b>	14.2%	\$11.79	Less HS/GED
Nurse Practitioners	658	1,046	<b>388</b>	59.0%	\$44.15	Master's or Higher
Medical and Health Services Managers	1,124	1,502	<b>378</b>	33.6%	\$49.41	Bachelor's

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Employment Projections

## Long-Term Employment Growth by STEM Occupations

Below is a list of the top 50 long-term employment growth STEM occupations identified between 2021 and 2029.

**Table A-3: Top 25 Long-Term Employment Growth STEM Occupations**  
2021 to 2029

Occupation	2021	2029	Growth	Percent Growth	2020 Median Hourly Wage	Minimum Education
Registered Nurses	10,334	11,882	<b>1,548</b>	15.0%	\$34.14	Associate's
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	1,612	2,190	<b>578</b>	35.9%	\$42.25	Bachelor's
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	2,682	3,141	<b>459</b>	17.1%	\$21.66	PS Adult Voc
Nurse Practitioners	658	1,046	<b>388</b>	59.0%	\$44.15	Master's or Higher
Medical and Health Services Managers	1,124	1,502	<b>378</b>	33.6%	\$49.41	Bachelor's
Computer User Support Specialists	1,585	1,877	<b>292</b>	18.4%	\$22.59	PS Adult Voc
Pharmacy Technicians	1,910	2,186	<b>276</b>	14.5%	\$15.89	PS Adult Voc
Physicians, All Other and Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	1,752	1,986	<b>234</b>	13.4%	N/A	Master's or Higher
Physical Therapists	1,222	1,445	<b>223</b>	18.2%	\$44.42	Master's or Higher
Medical Dosimetrists, Medical Records Specialists, and Health Technologists and Technicians, all other	1,197	1,396	<b>199</b>	16.6%	\$18.18	PS Adult Voc
Respiratory Therapists	761	957	<b>196</b>	25.8%	\$28.69	Associate's
Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	1,371	1,556	<b>185</b>	13.5%	\$28.61	Associate's
Physician Assistants	462	635	<b>173</b>	37.4%	\$49.79	Bachelor's
Computer System Analysts	671	825	<b>154</b>	23.0%	\$37.75	Associate's
Radiologic Technologists	872	1,008	<b>136</b>	15.6%	\$28.98	PS Adult Voc
Computer and Information Systems Managers	623	751	<b>128</b>	20.5%	\$52.85	Bachelor's
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	805	929	<b>124</b>	15.4%	\$18.41	Associate's
Dental Hygienists	807	926	<b>119</b>	14.7%	\$36.31	Associate's
Sales Rep., Wholesale & Manufacturing, Technical & Scientific Products	730	845	<b>115</b>	15.8%	\$30.10	PS Adult Voc
Family Medicine Physicians	633	723	<b>90</b>	14.2%	N/A	Master's or Higher
Dentists, General	730	816	<b>86</b>	11.8%	\$69.54	Master's or Higher
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	343	426	<b>83</b>	24.2%	\$36.30	PS Adult Voc
Operations Research Analysts	199	279	<b>80</b>	40.2%	\$27.80	Master's or Higher
Speech-Language Pathologists	401	478	<b>77</b>	19.2%	\$44.79	Master's or Higher
Veterinarians	439	516	<b>77</b>	17.5%	\$47.55	Master's or Higher

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Employment Projections

Note: N/A denotes information was not available.

**Table A-4: Ranked 26-50 Long-Term Employment Growth STEM Occupations**  
2021 to 2029

Occupation	2021	2029	Growth	Percent Growth	2020 Median Hourly Wage	Minimum Education
Industrial Engineers	395	469	<b>74</b>	18.7%	\$40.34	Bachelor's
Surgical Technologists	402	475	<b>73</b>	18.2%	\$24.26	PS Adult Voc
Pharmacists	979	1,051	<b>72</b>	7.4%	\$62.19	Master's or Higher
Occupational Therapists	525	597	<b>72</b>	13.7%	\$45.98	Master's or Higher
Health Info Technologists, Medical Registrars, Surgical Asst, Healthcare Practitioners and Tech Workers, all other	416	482	<b>66</b>	15.9%	\$25.77	PS Adult Voc
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	506	567	<b>61</b>	12.1%	\$33.76	Associate's
Web Developers and Digital Interface Designers	320	379	<b>59</b>	18.4%	\$25.29	PS Adult Voc
Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychologists	509	565	<b>56</b>	11.0%	\$26.36	Master's or Higher
Computer Occupations, all other	427	482	<b>55</b>	12.9%	\$24.49	PS Adult Voc
Nursing Instructors and Teachers, Postsecondary	215	269	<b>54</b>	25.1%	\$77,307*	Master's or Higher
Civil Engineers	681	734	<b>53</b>	7.8%	\$41.53	Bachelor's
Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary	215	265	<b>50</b>	23.3%	N/A	Master's or Higher
Opticians, Dispensing	347	392	<b>45</b>	13.0%	\$26.50	Associate's
Ophthalmic Medical Technicians	246	289	<b>43</b>	17.5%	\$17.73	PS Adult Voc
Computer Network Support Specialists	274	314	<b>40</b>	14.6%	\$27.08	PS Adult Voc
Urban and Regional Planners	188	226	<b>38</b>	20.2%	\$31.00	Bachelor's
Biological Technicians	162	199	<b>37</b>	22.8%	\$19.46	Associate's
Dietitians and Nutritionists	263	300	<b>37</b>	14.1%	\$31.05	Bachelor's
Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologists	247	284	<b>37</b>	15.0%	\$34.87	PS Adult Voc
Architectural and Engineering Managers	238	274	<b>36</b>	15.1%	\$71.27	Bachelor's
Database Administrators and Architects	172	207	<b>35</b>	20.3%	\$37.15	Associate's
Biomedical Engineers	162	196	<b>34</b>	21.0%	\$39.01	Bachelor's
Cardiovascular Technologists and Technicians	223	253	<b>30</b>	13.5%	\$18.95	PS Adult Voc
Environmental Scientists and Specialists, Including Health	300	329	<b>29</b>	9.7%	\$21.58	Bachelor's
Mechanical Engineers	230	257	<b>27</b>	11.7%	\$34.58	Bachelor's

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Employment Projections

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

# Appendix B: Additional Demographic Data

## Population Growth

Southwest Florida had a population of 1,408,499 in 2021, up 2.0 percent from 2020. Only two of the five counties saw population increase from 2020 to 2021, with Lee County having the highest growth rate (4.3 percent) followed by Charlotte County (1.4 percent). Hendry County (1.0 percent decline), Collier County (1.2 percent decline) and Glades County (10.9 percent decline) all saw decreases in population over the same period.

**Table B-1: Population Growth**

Area	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Charlotte County					
Population	172,720	177,987	181,770	187,904	190,570
Percent change	--	3.0%	2.1%	3.4%	1.4%
Collier County					
Population	357,470	367,347	376,706	387,450	382,680
Percent change	--	2.8%	2.5%	2.9%	-1.2%
Glades County					
Population	13,087	13,002	13,121	13,609	12,130
Percent change	--	-0.6%	0.9%	3.7%	-10.9%
Hendry County					
Population	39,057	39,586	40,120	40,953	40,540
Percent change	--	1.4%	1.3%	2.1%	-1.0%
Lee County					
Population	698,468	713,903	735,148	750,493	782,579
Percent change	--	2.2%	3.0%	2.1%	4.3%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>					
Population	<b>1,280,802</b>	<b>1,311,825</b>	<b>1,346,865</b>	<b>1,380,409</b>	<b>1,408,499</b>
Percent change	--	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>
<b>Florida</b>					
Population	<b>20,484,142</b>	<b>20,840,568</b>	<b>21,208,589</b>	<b>21,555,986</b>	<b>21,898,945</b>
Percent change	--	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>

Source: Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research

## Population Projections

Southwest Florida is projected to gain over 300,000 residents over the next decade and a half, with a population of 1,721,924 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.

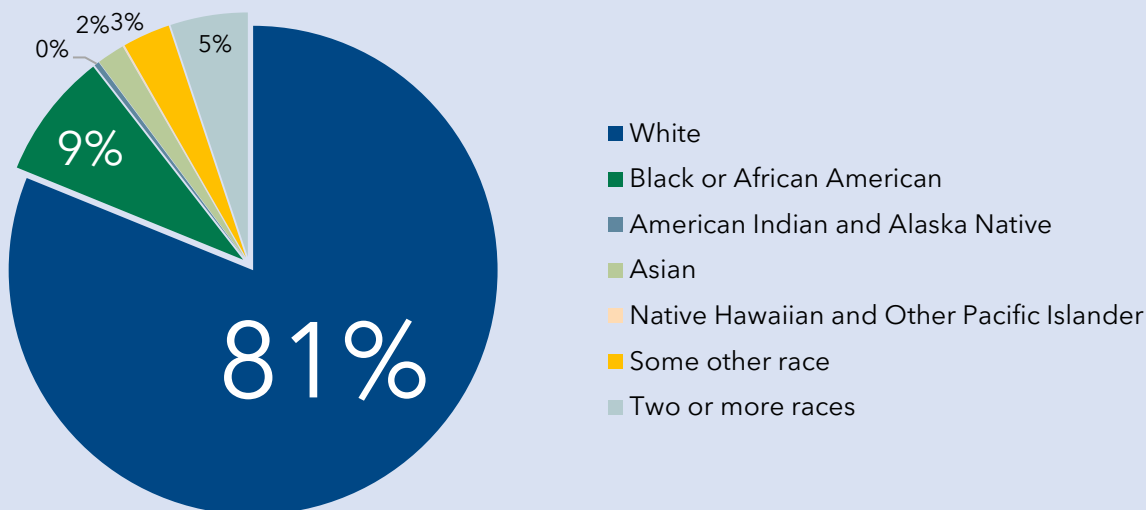
### Table B-2: Population Projections

Area	2020	2021	2025*	2030*	2035*
Charlotte County					
Population	187,904	190,570	203,019	215,720	225,795
Percent change	--	1.4%	6.5%	6.3%	4.7%
Collier County					
Population	387,450	382,680	408,227	433,868	455,130
Percent change	--	-1.2%	6.7%	6.3%	4.9%
Glades County					
Population	13,609	12,130	12,462	12,714	12,865
Percent change	--	-10.9%	2.7%	2.0%	1.2%
Hendry County					
Population	40,953	40,540	41,967	43,416	44,463
Percent change	--	-1.0%	3.5%	3.5%	2.4%
Lee County					
Population	750,493	782,579	851,592	924,486	983,671
Percent change	--	4.3%	8.8%	8.6%	6.4%
<b>Southwest Florida</b>					
<b>Population</b>	<b>1,380,409</b>	<b>1,408,499</b>	<b>1,517,267</b>	<b>1,630,204</b>	<b>1,721,924</b>
<b>Percent change</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>7.7%</b>	<b>7.4%</b>	<b>5.6%</b>
<b>Florida</b>					
<b>Population</b>	<b>21,555,986</b>	<b>21,898,945</b>	<b>23,164,008</b>	<b>24,471,129</b>	<b>25,520,837</b>
<b>Percent change</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>5.8%</b>	<b>5.6%</b>	<b>4.3%</b>

Source: Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research

Note: \* indicates population projections.



**Chart B-1: Working-Age Population by Race**Southwest Florida  
2020

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 2020, 81.2 percent of the working-age population was White, the highest proportion in Southwest Florida. This portion declined significantly from 2019 (measured at 85.0 percent) and was fueled largely by both a decline in total number of White population (down from 524,603 in 2019 to 511,472 in 2020) and an increase in the population identifying as two or more races (8,209 to 32,292 over the same period).

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

Southwest Florida

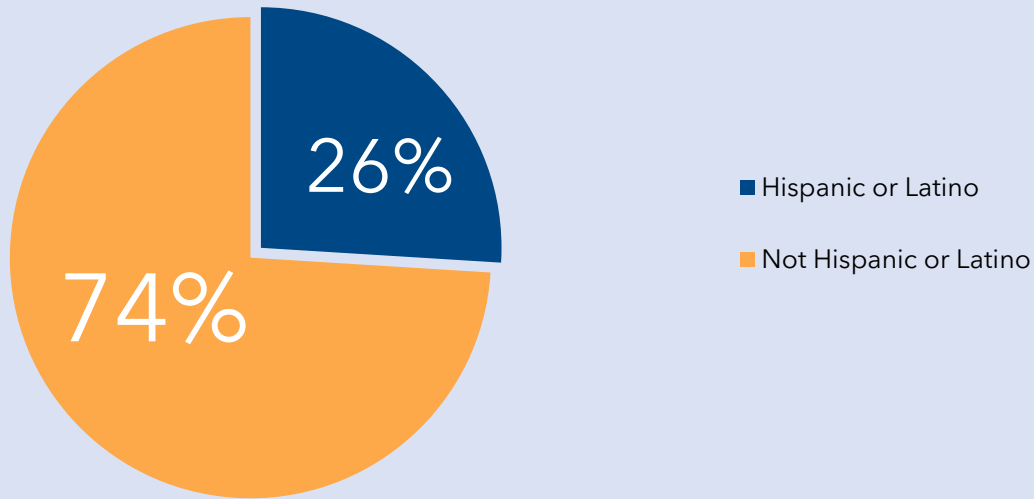
<b>Race</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
White								
<i>Count</i>	477,278	481,788	489,948	498,594	507,535	516,874	524,603	511,472
<i>Percent of total</i>	85.2%	85.1%	85.3%	85.5%	85.4%	85.4%	85.0%	81.2%
Black or African American								
<i>Count</i>	44,257	45,881	47,201	48,221	49,907	50,724	52,423	52,514
<i>Percent of total</i>	7.9%	8.1%	8.2%	8.3%	8.4%	8.4%	8.5%	8.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native								
<i>Count</i>	2,344	2,185	2,172	2,082	2,017	2,023	1,991	2,058
<i>Percent of total</i>	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Asian								
<i>Count</i>	8,725	9,187	9,719	9,849	9,948	10,423	10,918	11,606
<i>Percent of total</i>	1.6%	1.6%	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.8%	1.8%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander								
<i>Count</i>	131	126	90	208	251	326	352	396
<i>Percent of total</i>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Some other race								
<i>Count</i>	21,352	20,987	18,667	17,074	17,139	16,986	18,703	19,885
<i>Percent of total</i>	3.8%	3.7%	3.3%	2.9%	2.9%	2.8%	3.0%	3.2%
Two or more races								
<i>Count</i>	6,299	6,279	6,558	6,804	7,555	7,659	8,209	32,292
<i>Percent of total</i>	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%	1.2%	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%	5.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>560,386</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>

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  
2020



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 74.0 percent of the total working-age population in Southwest Florida, down from the 74.8 percent measured in 2019. This percentage has consistently declined since 2013, when 79.0 percent of the total working-age population did not identify as Hispanic and Latino.

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

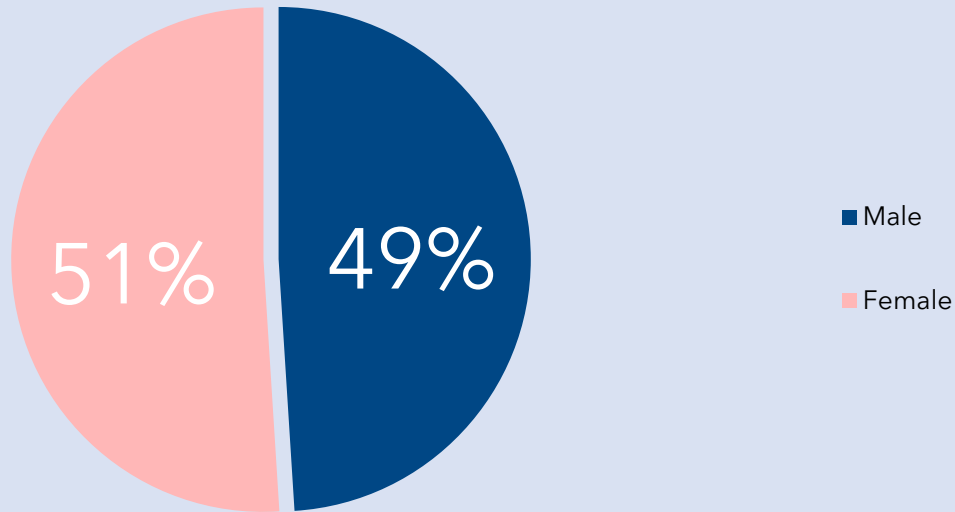
Southwest Florida

Hispanic/Latino	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Hispanic or Latino								
Count	117,937	122,815	127,873	133,214	140,465	147,580	155,803	163,743
Percent of total	21.0%	21.7%	22.3%	22.9%	23.6%	24.4%	25.2%	26.0%
Not Hispanic or Latino								
Count	442,449	443,618	446,482	449,618	453,887	457,435	461,396	466,480
Percent of total	79.0%	78.3%	77.7%	77.1%	76.4%	75.6%	74.8%	74.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>560,386</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>

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  
2020



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 51.0 percent of the total working-age population in Southwest Florida, unchanged from 2019. This percentage has remained consistent since 2013, slipping only 0.1 percentage points over the eight-year period.

**Table B-4: Working Age Population by Gender**

Southwest Florida

Gender	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Male								
Count	274,113	276,477	280,391	284,470	290,112	295,821	302,387	308,873
Percent of total	48.9%	48.8%	48.8%	48.8%	48.8%	48.9%	49.0%	49.0%
Female								
Count	286,273	289,956	293,964	298,362	304,240	309,194	314,812	321,350
Percent of total	51.1%	51.2%	51.2%	51.2%	51.2%	51.1%	51.0%	51.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>560,386</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>

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.

# 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>27</sup>. For the 2019-20 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)

<sup>27</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.

- 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).

## Technical Colleges

Southwest Florida technical colleges are also identified through IPEDS. The following institutes were classified as technical colleges in the region for the 2019-20 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 through the use of other variables. For this study, the research team defines a technical college as a less-than-4-year Title IV postsecondary institute.<sup>28</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 2022, the survey was made available to Southwest Florida businesses and organizations on the FutureMakers Coalition website and various social media posts between mid-April and the end of June 2022. The survey received 110 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  $g_i$  is the employment growth rate of industry  $i$  in region  $j$ . We can define each of the three components as:

<sup>28</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*.

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

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

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

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:

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

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).

**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."

**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.

**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."