

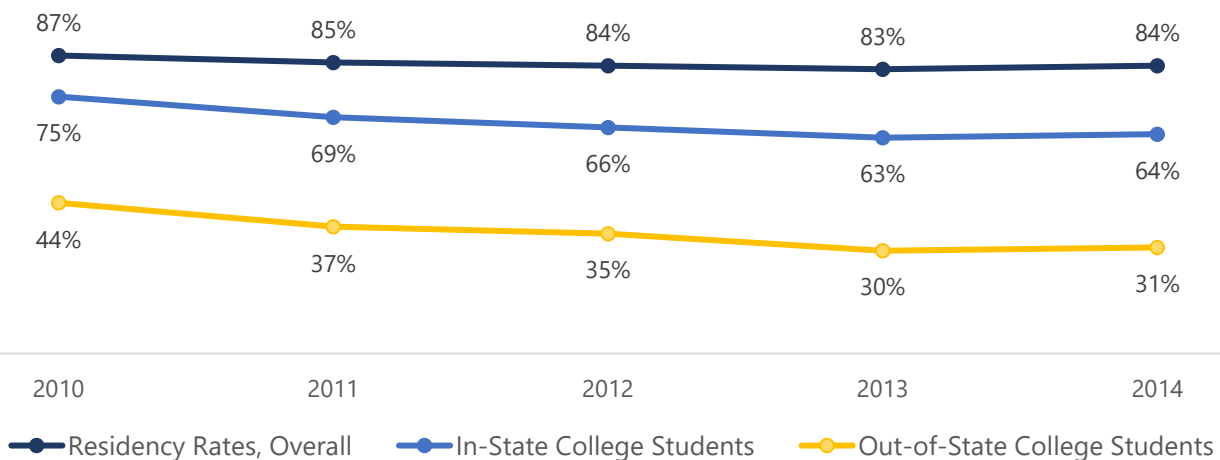
Alaska has the highest rate of population turnover from migration, and young adult Alaskans move the most (Sandberg, 2018). Over eighty percent of Alaska residents with a Bachelor’s degree or higher were from out-of-state (Figure 2). This brief answers key research questions about how often and for what reasons college-educated young adults move across state lines.

Where do Alaskans go after high school?

Thirty percent of the Class of 2017 first enrolled in college out-of-state since their graduation from high school (Becker, Alaska Higher Education Almanac, 2019).

Alaskans attending out-of-state colleges most frequently attend colleges in Washington, followed by Oregon, California, and Arizona. White, higher-income, and male students are more likely to attend out-of-state, and students whose parents went to college are also more likely than first-generation students to attend out-of-state. Alaska residency rates after leaving college are also declining, with 31% of Alaska high school graduates who attend out-of-state colleges returning as residents in 2014 compared with 44% in 2010. (Figure 1, Becker, Where Alaskans Go After Graduating from High School, 2018).

Figure 1. Alaska Residency Rates after Leaving College, Classes of 2006-2013



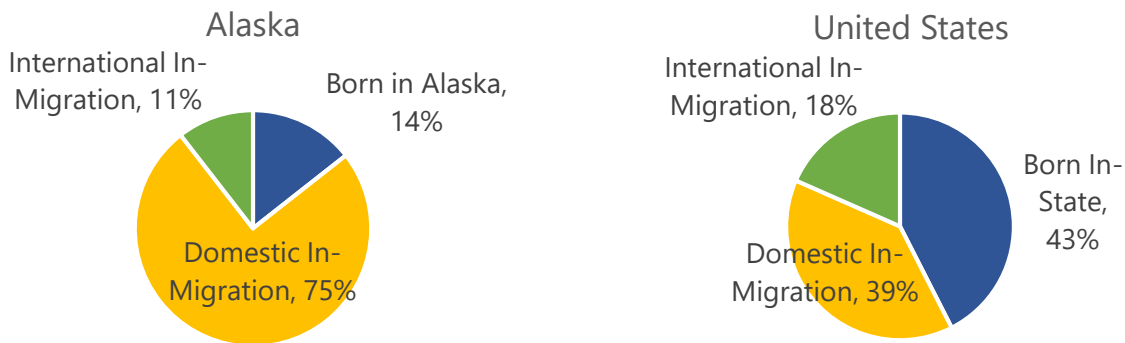
High-achieving students eligible for Alaska’s merit scholarship program, the Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS), are over twice as likely to attend out-of-state colleges, and have lower residency rates the year after leaving out-of-state colleges compared to ineligible students. However, APS recipients attending only Alaska institutions had the same residency rates as ineligible students (Becker, Alaska Performance Scholarship Outcomes Report, 2019).

What share of Alaska residents with a Bachelor’s degree or higher were born in Alaska?

Alaska ranks 48th in the proportion of our Bachelor’s degree or higher (aged 25-59) population during 2006-2010 who were born in-state. Figure 2 disaggregates the share of the total Bachelor’s degree or

higher population born in-state compared with the share of domestic in-migrants or foreign in-migrants (Hermalin & Neidert, 2014). In 2017, 20% of the approximately 100,000 residents with a Bachelor’s degree or higher were born in Alaska.

Figure 2. Composition of Alaska and US Population with a Bachelor’s Degree or Higher



How well does Alaska retain college-educated migrants, compared to other states?

Alaska has the lowest national retention rate overall, and the lowest retention rate among bachelor’s degree holders or higher in the country for age 25-59 measured between 2006-2010 (Hermalin & Neidert, 2014).

How well does Alaska attract college-educated migrants, compared to other states?

Alaska ranks near the bottom among the other states in the probability of attracting migrants with a bachelor’s degree or higher, attracting 0.32% of the total group of college-educated migrants during 2006-2010. States ranking lower than Alaska include North and South Dakota, Wyoming, and West Virginia (Hermalin & Neidert, 2014).

Why do college-educated adults move?

- Young, college-educated adults are moving across state lines less in recent years. Their interstate mobility rates declined between 2005-2015 from 12.7% to 10.4%, with much of the decline occurring during the Great Recession (Kelchen & Webber, 2018).
- Individual preferences and factors account for a substantial amount of the differences between who stays in or leaves a state. Single (non-married) students are more likely to leave, graduates of private universities and highly selective in-state institutions, students from the highest family income quartiles, students who applied to multiple colleges, White students, and male students have been found more likely to leave (Kodrzycki, 2001; Groen, 2004; Ishitani, 2010; Parsad & Gray, 2005).
- Access to state amenities, such as coastline or a better healthcare system, has been shown to impact migration decisions (Tornatzky, Gray, Tarant, & Zimmer, 2001; Kodrzycki, 2001).
- Expected income differences between the home state and the receiving state affect migration decisions, and distance and moving costs are also factors (Kennan, 2015).
- Looking at college majors, migration is influenced twice as much by the spatial density of jobs within related occupation as it is by wage returns to the college major (Ransom, 2016).

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