

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY

# Applied Research Report



12/2016

## Seniors' Postsecondary Plans and Scholarships School Year 2015-16



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## Introduction

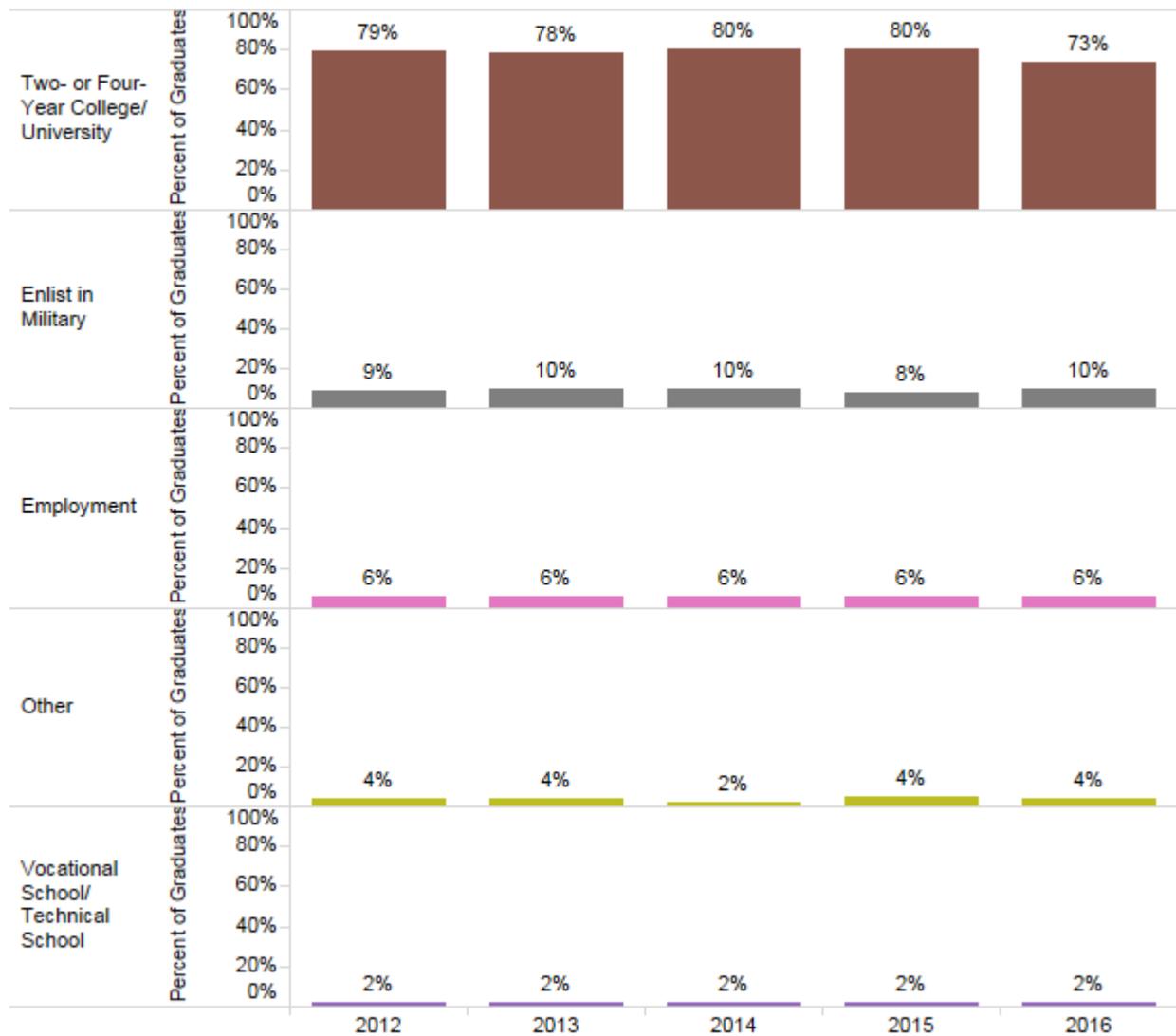
During their senior year, students attending Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools develop a postsecondary plan that denotes what they intend to do after graduating from high school. Seniors report whether they are planning to attend a four-year college/university, a two-year/community college, vocational/technical school, seek employment or an apprenticeship/on-the-job training, whether they plan to enlist in the military, or join Job Corps. In addition, seniors are also asked to report at the end of their senior year the scholarships, financial aid, and grant monies they have been offered as well as what scholarship monies they have accepted or are planning to accept. This report summarizes the postsecondary intentions and scholarship monies reported by seniors who graduated from a DoDEA high school in school year (SY) 2015–16.

All analyses in this report are based on those seniors who graduated from a DoDEA high school in SY 2015-16 (N= 2,755). Findings do not include seniors who may have been enrolled but withdrew before graduation or students who did not graduate. It should also be noted that the information contained in this report is self-reported by students and does not represent the absolute postsecondary status of DoDEA graduates or the totality of scholarship monies offered and accepted by students. In interpreting the data contained in this report, readers are encouraged to rely on the results of statistical tests measuring differences between groups rather than on the apparent magnitude of these differences. Some differences may appear to be large; however, they are not statistically different.

## Postsecondary Plans

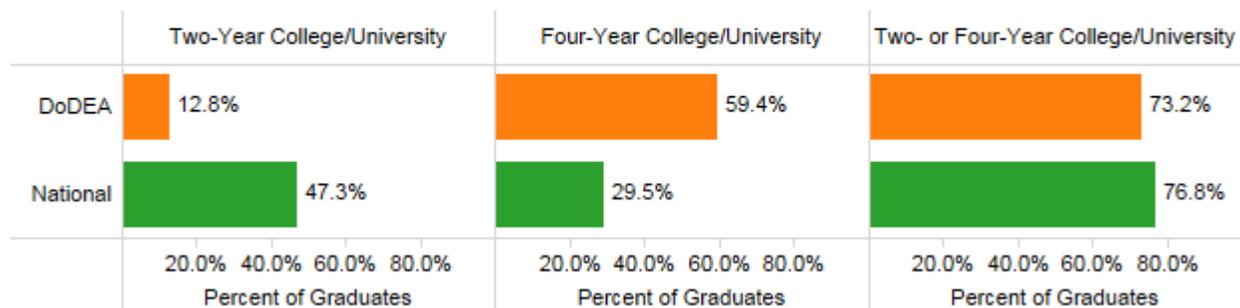
There were 2,755 students who graduated from a DoDEA high school in SY 2015-16. Of the students who graduated, approximately 95% (n = 2,626) had a documented postsecondary plan. Seventy-three percent of seniors reported that they planned to attend a two- or four-year college or university after graduation, 10% stated that they would be enlisting in the military, and 6% planned to seek employment (Figure 1). The overall percentage of SY 2015-16 graduates who stated they were planning to attend a two- or four-year college or university is slightly smaller than that of students nationally. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that approximately 77% of 2015 high school graduates were enrolled in a two- or four-year college or university. However, almost 60% of DoDEA seniors indicated that they planned to attend a four year college or university after graduation; this is twice the national rate (Figure 2).

**Figure 1. Postsecondary Plans of DoDEA Seniors, SY 2011-12 through 2015-16**



Note: Postsecondary plan data was missing for 5% of students in SY 2015-16. The 2016 column will not add to 100% since missing responses are not displayed.

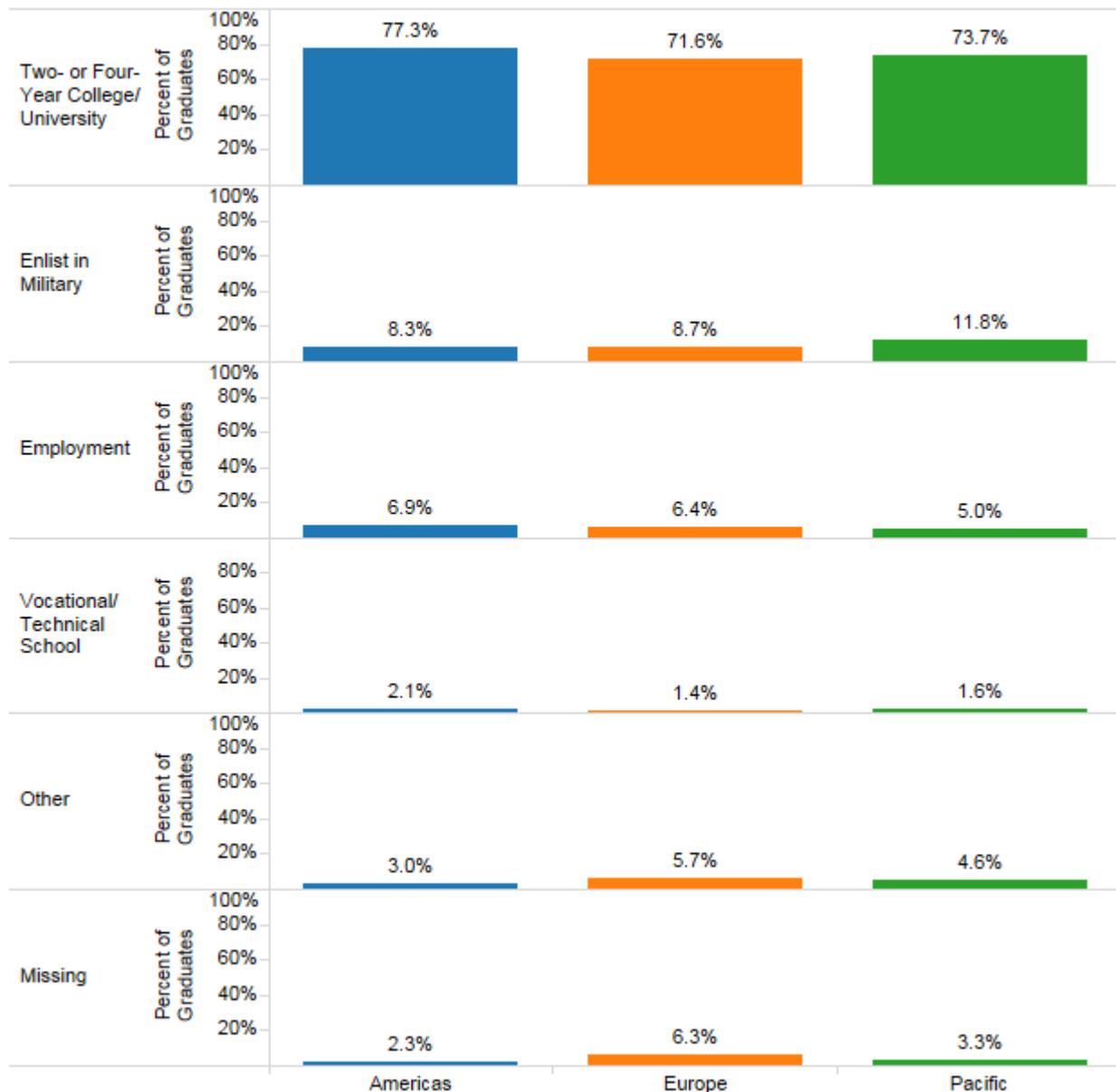
**Figure 2. Percentage of DoDEA Graduates Planning to Attend a Two- or Four-Year College or University as Compared to the National Average, SY 2015-16**



### Postsecondary Plans by Area

There were no significant differences between the Americas, Europe and the Pacific in the percentage of seniors who said that they would be attending a two- or four-year college/university after graduation. However, seniors attending schools in the Pacific were significantly more likely to report that they would be enlisting in the military after graduation when compared to students in Europe (Figure 3).

**Figure 3. DoDEA 2016 Graduates' Postsecondary Plans by Area, SY 2015-16**



### Postsecondary Plans by Ethnicity and Race

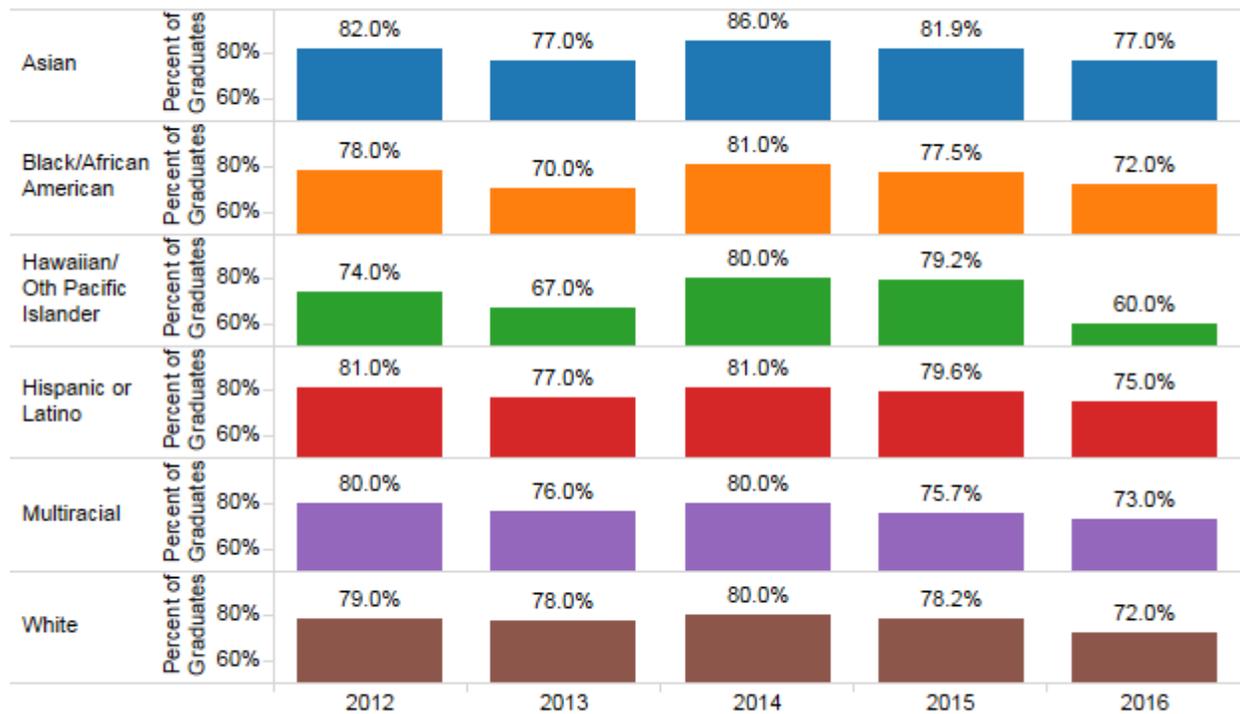
There were no significant differences in the percentage of seniors who said that they would be attending a two- or four-year college/university after graduation when disaggregated by race and ethnicity (Figure 4). The percentage of students planning to attend a two- or four-year university decreased across all racial groups when compared to last year's percentages. The SY 2015-16 results are the lowest reported percentages across all race and ethnicity subgroups in the past five years. The exception to this is that the percentage of Black/African American students who reported that they would attend a two- or four-year college or university in SY 2015-16 (72%) is slightly higher than the percentage reported in SY 2012-13 (70%)(Figure 5).

**Figure 4. DoDEA Graduates' Postsecondary Plans by Ethnicity and Race, SY 2015-16**



Note: Results for American Indian/Alaska Native students are not shown due to the small number of students in this group.

**Figure 5. Percentage of DoDEA Graduates by Race/Ethnicity Planning to Attend a Two- or Four-Year College/University, SY 2011-12 through 2015-16**

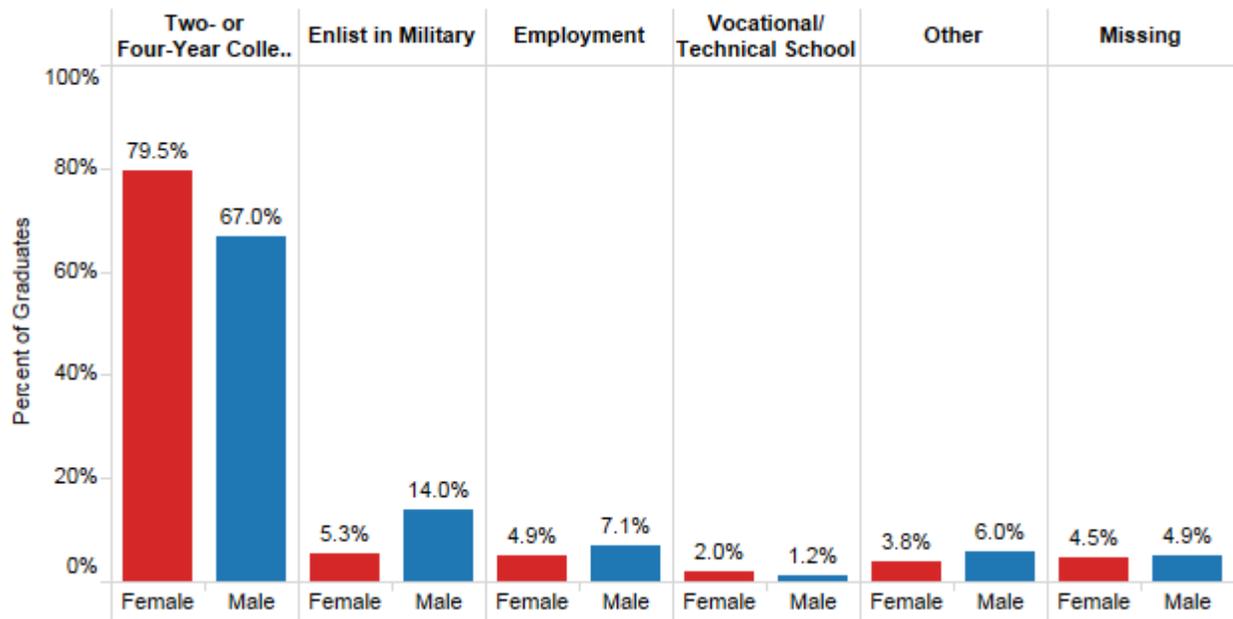


Note: Results for American Indian/Alaska Native students are not shown due to the small number of students in this group.

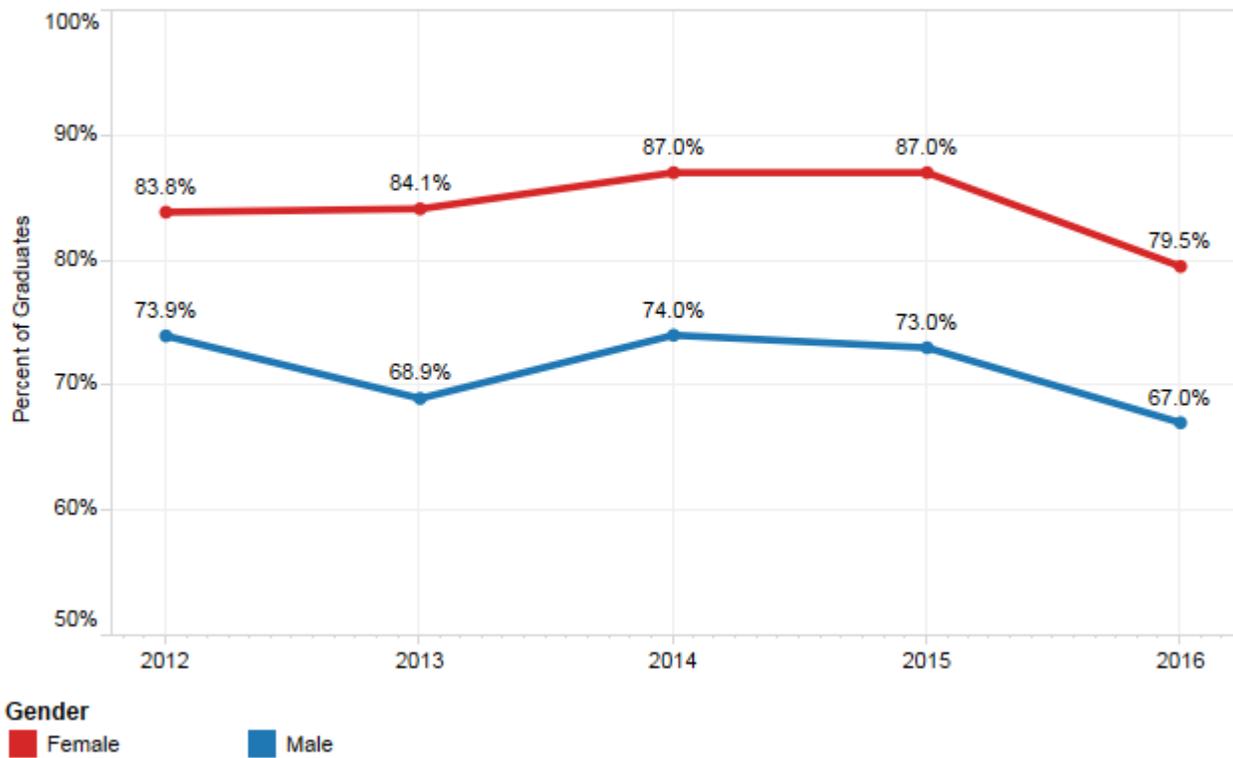
### Postsecondary Plans by Gender

Female students are significantly more likely to report that they will be attending a two- or four-year college/university after graduation than are male students. Male students are significantly more likely to report that they will be enlisting in the military, seeking employment or engaging in some “other” activity after graduating when compared to female students (Figure 6). The percentage of students planning to attend a two- or four-year university decreased for both males and females when compared to last year’s percentages. The SY 2015-16 results are the lowest reported percentages for males and females in the past five years (Figure 7).

**Figure 6. DoDEA Graduates' Postsecondary Plans by Gender, SY 2015-16**



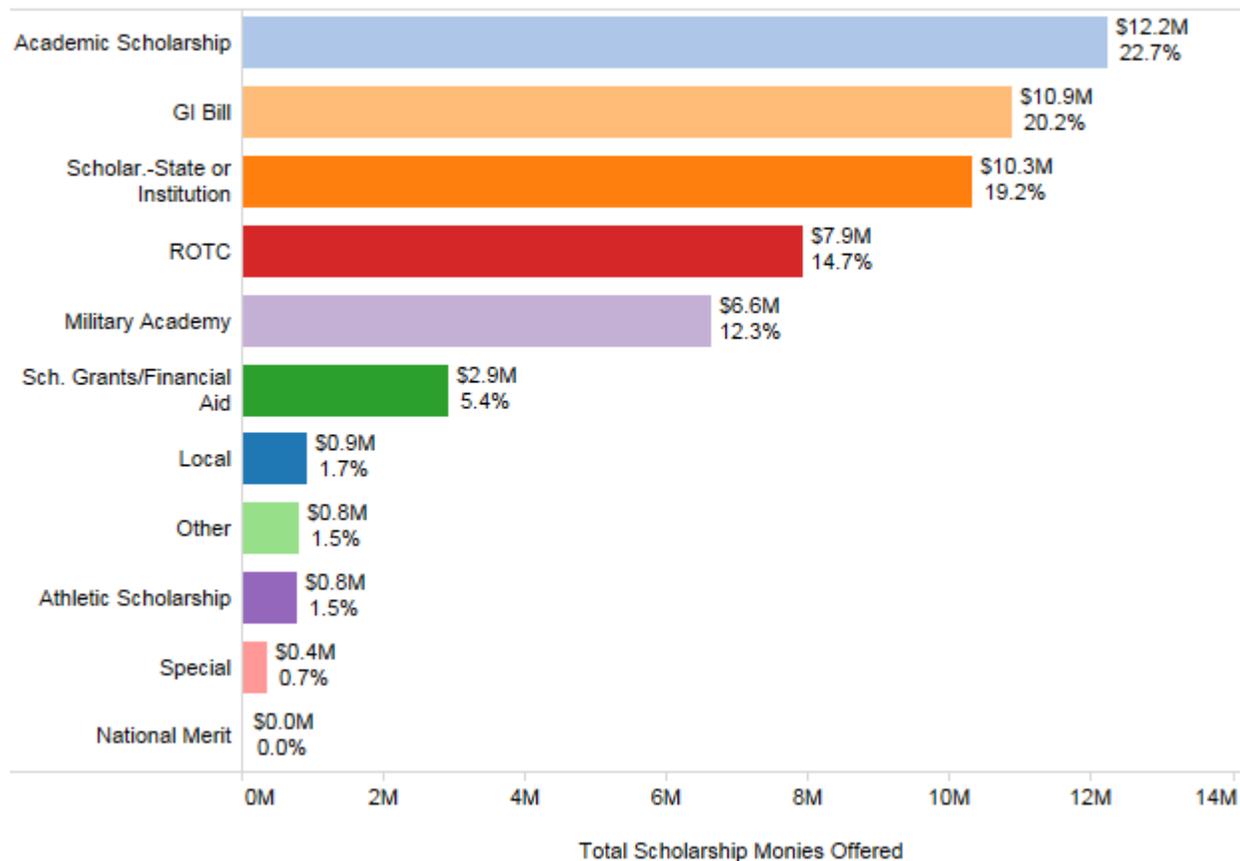
**Figure 7. DoDEA Graduates Planning to Attend a Two- or Four-Year College/University by Gender, SY 2011-12 through 2015-16**



### Types of Scholarships Offered and Accepted

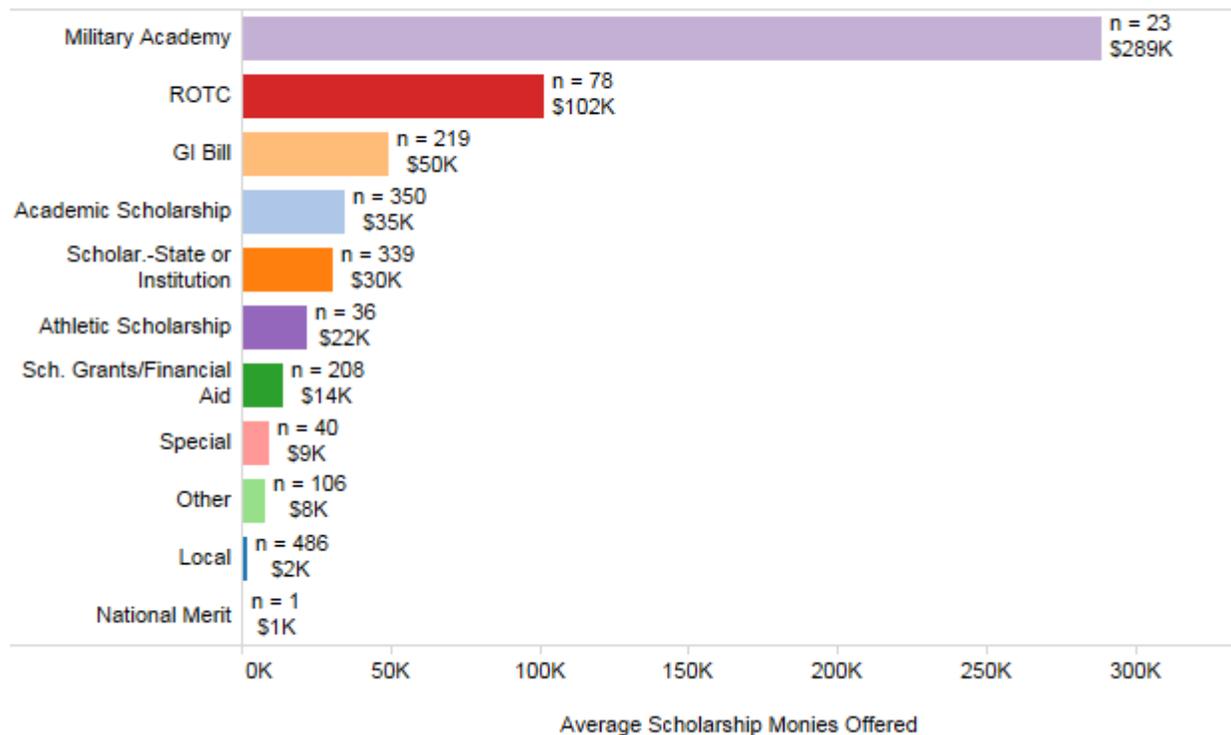
DoDEA graduates were offered 1,876 scholarships and grants, totaling approximately \$54 million in aid in SY 2015-16, which is an increase of almost \$13 million when compared to what was reported by seniors in SY 2014-15. DoDEA graduates accepted 79% (n = 1,491) of the scholarships and grants offered in SY 2015-16. Academic scholarships were the largest source of scholarship monies offered, totaling approximately \$12.2 million dollars and accounting for almost 23% of scholarship monies offered (Figure 8).

**Figure 8. Scholarships Offered to DoDEA Graduates in SY 2015-16, Total Dollars by Scholarship Type**



The average amount of money awarded by scholarship type varies greatly. For example, military academy scholarships averaged \$289K, while the average academic scholarship was \$35K (Figure 9). Therefore, the overall contribution of each scholarship type depends on whether one is considering the number of scholarships or the sum of scholarship monies. For example, the amount of scholarship monies awarded through local scholarships accounts for only 1.7% (\$900K) of scholarship monies awarded, but they account for almost 26% of all scholarships awarded (Figure 10).

**Figure 9. Scholarships Offered to DoDEA Graduates in SY 2015-16, Average Scholarship Award by Type**



**Figure 10. Number and Percent of Scholarships Offered to DoDEA Graduates by Scholarship Type, SY 2015-16**

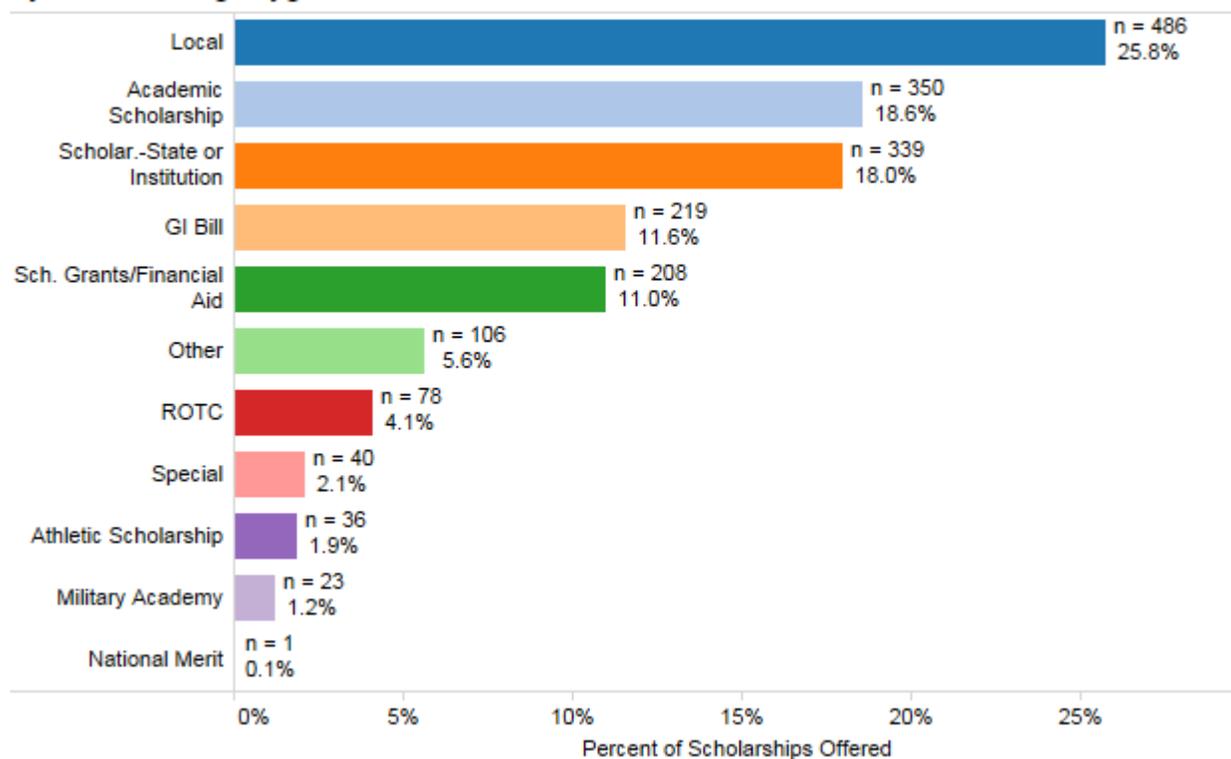


Table 1 details the average scholarship monies offered and accepted by graduates in each of the three DoDEA areas. Academic scholarships were the largest source of monies for graduates in DoDEA Americas and Pacific, while the largest source of monies for graduates in Europe was GI Bill scholarships. Direct comparisons of the total monies offered and accepted among the three areas should not be made due to differences in number of students. Graduates in DoDEA Americas were offered approximately 17.5 million less in scholarships than students in Europe, but there were more than three times as many graduates in Europe (n=1,397) than in DoDEA Americas (n=432).

**Table 1. Scholarship Monies Offered and Accepted by Area**

Scholarship Type	DoDEA Americas		DoDEA Europe		DoDEA Pacific	
	Offered	Accepted	Offered	Accepted	Offered	Accepted
Academic Scholarship	\$2,663,612	\$1,037,812	\$4,392,416	\$3,071,120	\$5,190,221	\$3,604,971
Athletic Scholarship	\$93,214	\$85,214	\$304,150	\$299,150	\$389,100	\$300,100
GI Bill	\$460,695	\$460,695	\$8,555,998	\$7,757,490	\$1,867,709	\$1,839,809
Local	\$78,700	\$78,700	\$611,720	\$445,914	\$249,700	\$244,400
Military Academy	\$1,004,000	\$1,004,000	\$2,920,000	\$2,170,000	\$2,725,000	\$587,500
National Merit					\$1,000	\$1,000
Other	\$12,700	\$12,700	\$474,819	\$404,069	\$333,700	\$187,850
ROTC	\$1,665,388	\$900,800	\$2,560,722	\$2,028,722	\$3,711,297	\$2,441,297
Sch. Grants/Financial Aid	\$398,346	\$284,126	\$2,092,368	\$1,543,890	\$438,937	\$408,807
Scholar.-State or Institution	\$2,473,136	\$301,154	\$4,221,335	\$3,002,109	\$3,631,175	\$1,802,645
Special	\$39,600	\$33,600	\$298,900	\$263,600	\$30,200	\$30,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,889,391</b>	<b>\$4,198,801</b>	<b>\$26,432,428</b>	<b>\$20,986,064</b>	<b>\$18,568,039</b>	<b>\$11,448,579</b>

Table 2 shows the percentage of graduates offered at least one scholarship and the average amount per scholarship recipient broken down by area, race/ethnicity, and gender. Overall, one-third (n=908) of DoDEA's graduates were offered at least one scholarship, a rate similar to that found in previous years. DoDEA Americas graduates were offered approximately \$32K more in scholarships per graduate on average than graduates in Europe; this difference is statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ). Male students were offered approximately \$16K more in scholarship monies than were female students; this difference is statistically significant at the  $p < .05$  level. There were no significant differences in the average amount of monies offered to students when disaggregated by race and ethnicity.

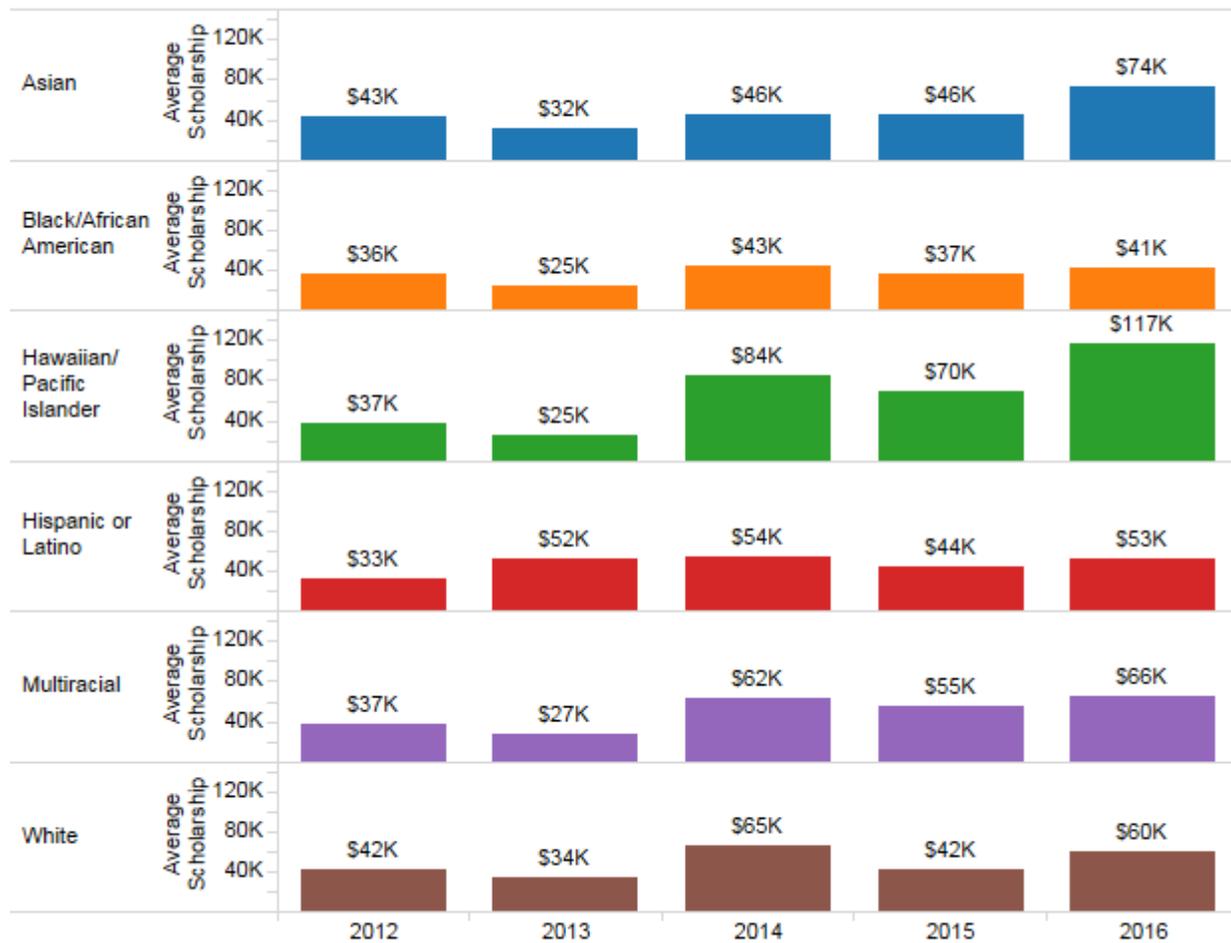
**Table 2. Percentage of Seniors Offered at Least One Scholarship and Average Monies Offered Per Recipient**

		Total Number of Graduates SY 2015-16	Percentage Offered at Least One Scholarship	Average Monies Offered per Recipient
<b>Area</b>	DoDEA Americas	432	25.0%	\$82,309
	DoDEA Europe	1,397	37.3%	\$50,734
	DoDEA Pacific	926	30.1%	\$66,896
<b>Gender</b>	Male	1,389	27.6%	\$68,676
	Female	1,366	38.4%	\$52,699
<b>Race and Ethnicity</b>	White	1,192	32.2%	\$59,796
	Black/African American	349	32.7%	\$41,275
	Hispanic or Latino	535	27.5%	\$52,944
	Asian	262	30.9%	\$73,959
	Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	65	27.7%	\$117,088
	Multiracial	346	32.7%	\$65,870
<b>DoDEA Total</b>	<b>All Graduates</b>	<b>2,755</b>	<b>33.0%</b>	<b>\$59,456</b>

Figure 11 shows the average scholarships and aid offered to DoDEA graduates for the past five years by race and ethnicity. There were no statistically significant differences in the average amount of aid awarded per student when disaggregated by race and ethnicity. In general, the average scholarship per graduate was above SY 2014-15's rate. On average, Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander students followed by multiracial students received the most aid, on average, per student. Black/African American and Hispanic students received the least aid, on average, per student. The gap between White and minority students, while not statistically significant, has persisted over time. African American and Hispanic students receive less scholarship monies per recipient than White students.

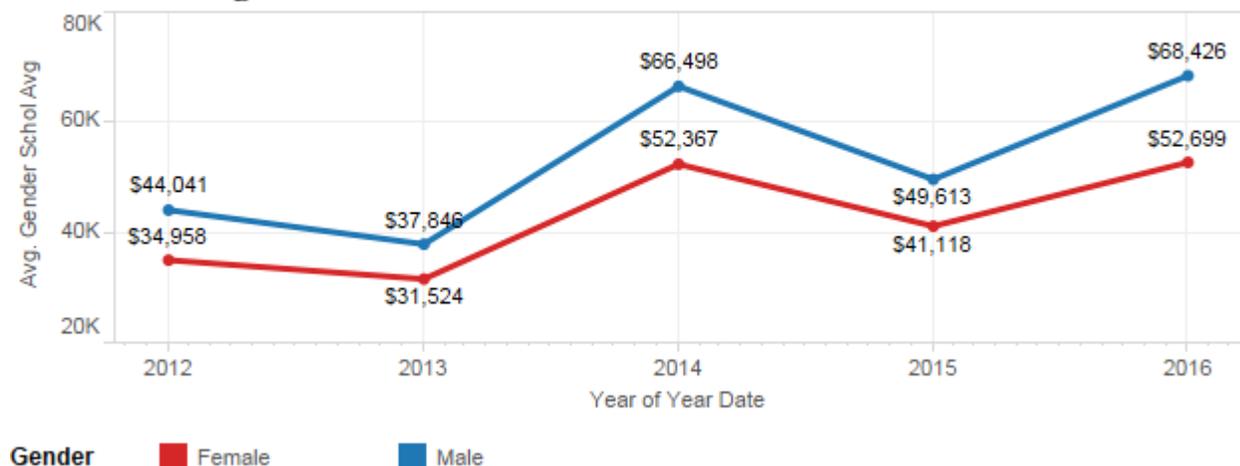
Figure 12 describes the average scholarship monies offered per recipient for male and female students. Male students were offered significantly more in scholarship monies, grants and other financial aid than female students. The amount of scholarship monies offered to male and female students increased in SY 2015-16 when compared to the average amount awarded per recipient in SY 2014-15. The average scholarship monies offered to male students increased by approximately \$17K from SY 2014-15, and average scholarship monies offered to females students increased by approximately \$11.5K.

**Figure 11. Average Scholarship Monies Offered per Recipient by Race and Ethnicity, SY 2011-12 through 2015-16**



Note: Results for American Indian/Alaska Native students are not shown due to the small number of students in this group.

**Figure 12. Average Scholarship Monies Offered per Recipient by Gender, SY 2011-12 through 2015-16**



## Graduation Rates

Approximately 97% of DoDEA's seniors graduated in SY 2015-16, a rate higher than the national graduation rate of 82% (Education Week, 2016). However, caution should be used when comparing DoDEA's graduation rate to the national rate due to differences in calculation methods. DoDEA's graduation rate is based on the percentage of seniors enrolled in the spring semester who graduate at the end of the school year. States are required to report graduation data based on a four-year cohort; this number represents the percentage of students who entered high school in ninth grade and graduated on time four years later.

## Summary and Recommendations

Seventy-three percent of seniors reported that they planned to attend a two- or four-year college or university after graduation, a figure that is slightly smaller than the 77% of 2015 national graduates students nationally who were enrolled in a two- or four-year college or university. However, almost 60% of DoDEA seniors indicated that they planned to attend a four-year college or university after graduation, which is double the national rate. There were no significant differences in the percentage of graduates who reported that they would be attending a two- or four-year college or university after graduation when disaggregated by race and ethnicity or the DoDEA area where they were enrolled in high school. However, female students were significantly more likely to report that they would be attending a two- or four-year college or university when compared to their male counterparts.

DoDEA graduates were offered 1,876 scholarships and grants, totaling approximately \$54 million in aid in SY 2015-16, an increase from SY 2014-15. Overall, one-third (n=908) of DoDEA's graduates were offered at least one scholarship, and 79% of the scholarships and grants offered were accepted. Academic scholarships were the largest source of scholarship monies offered, totaling approximately \$12.2 million dollars and accounting for almost 23% of monies offered.

There are limitations to the data used in the analyses presented in this report. The data used are self-reported plans of DoDEA seniors and, while self-report data provide a general sense of students' future plans, they do not accurately depict what students actually do after high school graduation. To gain insight and provide validity to the plans reported by students, DoDEA should analyze and report on data that are available from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC). The NSC provides information about the actual college enrollment and degree completion information for high school graduates. These data indicate if students initiated or completed their four-year college/university or two-year/community college aspirations. Furthermore, analyzing and reporting this data will enhance stakeholders' understanding of college readiness/preparedness for DoDEA students.

It is imperative that DoDEA continue efforts to ensure that accurate and reliable data are provided by schools, districts, and areas. Continuing to request that schools provide postsecondary plans and scholarship data as a part of the end-of-year process increases the amount and accuracy of the data provided. The collection of precise and consistent data ensures that stakeholders and policymakers are making decisions based on the most accurate information.

## References

Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016). *Labor force status of 2015 high school graduates and 2014-15 high school dropouts 16 to 24 years old by school enrollment, educational attainment, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity*, October 2015. Retrieved December 1, 2016 from <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/hsgec.t01.htm>.

Education Week (2016). *Diplomas Count 2016 Map: Graduation Rates by State, Student Group*. Retrieved December 1, 2016 from Edweek.org: <http://www.edweek.org/ew/dc/2016/map-graduation-rates-by-state-demographics.html?intc=EW-DC16-TOC>.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Dr. Shanea Ruh at [shanea.ruh@hq.dodea.edu](mailto:shanea.ruh@hq.dodea.edu).

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