



FY  
**18**

# Testimony before House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development

January 20, 2017

Marilyn J. Cargill, VP and Thomas A. Little, VP & General Counsel  
Vermont Student Assistance Corporation



Creating opportunities  
for all Vermont  
students,  
but especially for  
those  
—of any age—  
who believe that  
the doors to  
education and training  
are closed to them.



# Nondegree grant: use

## In FY16

- 1,179 adult students used nondegree grants to access training programs
- 111 adult students received grants for driver's education
- 467 adult students received nondegree grants to take college-level courses



# FY2016 nondegree survey

**Section E.605(e) of the FY 2017 Appropriations Act (H. 875, Act 172) directed VSAC to study the outcomes of its nondegree grant awards**

VSAC conducted a survey of nondegree grant recipients to collect information on the impact of this grant program on:

- employment
- salary and
- ongoing college attendance

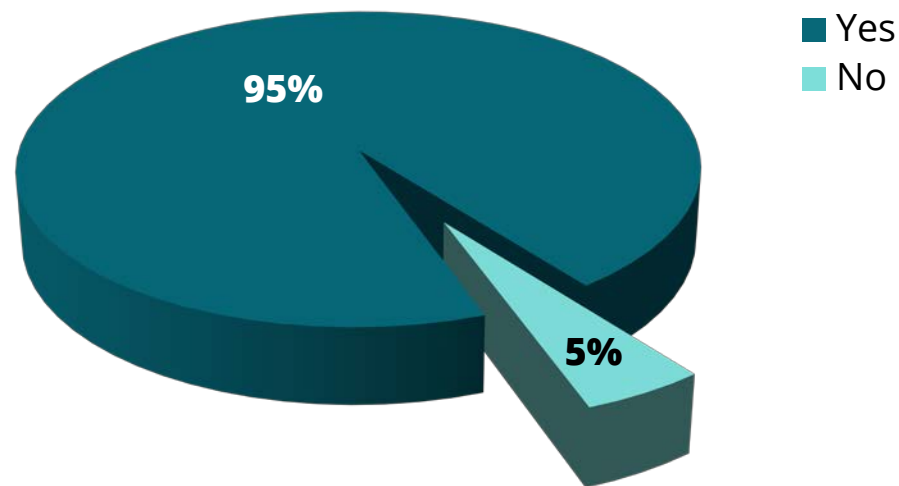
Today, the average nondegree grant recipient is:

- 33 years old
- female
- lives in a household of two
- household income of \$20,444

# Nondegree grant: changing lives

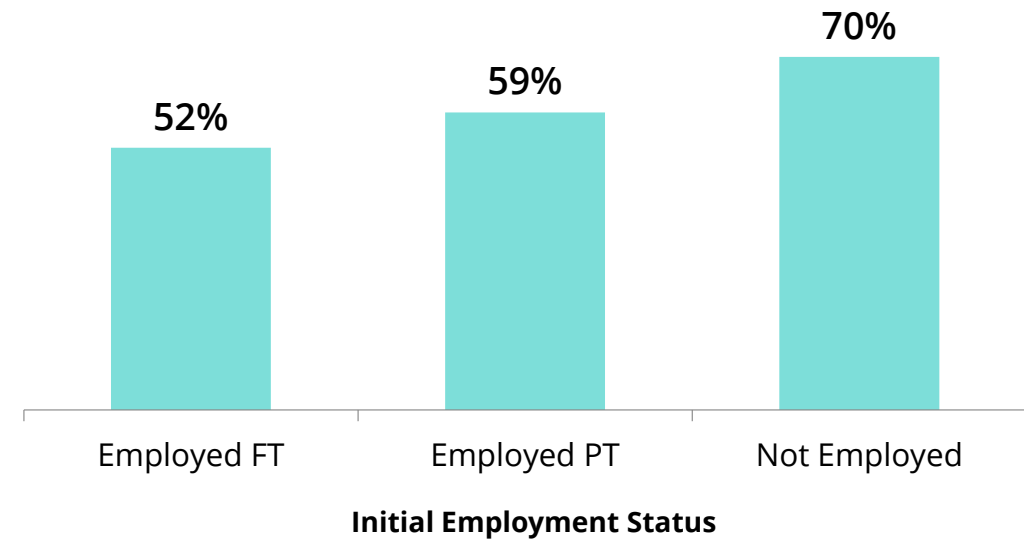
Overwhelmingly report they gained skills that will help them in their current or future jobs

**Gained Skills that Could Help in Current or Future Job**



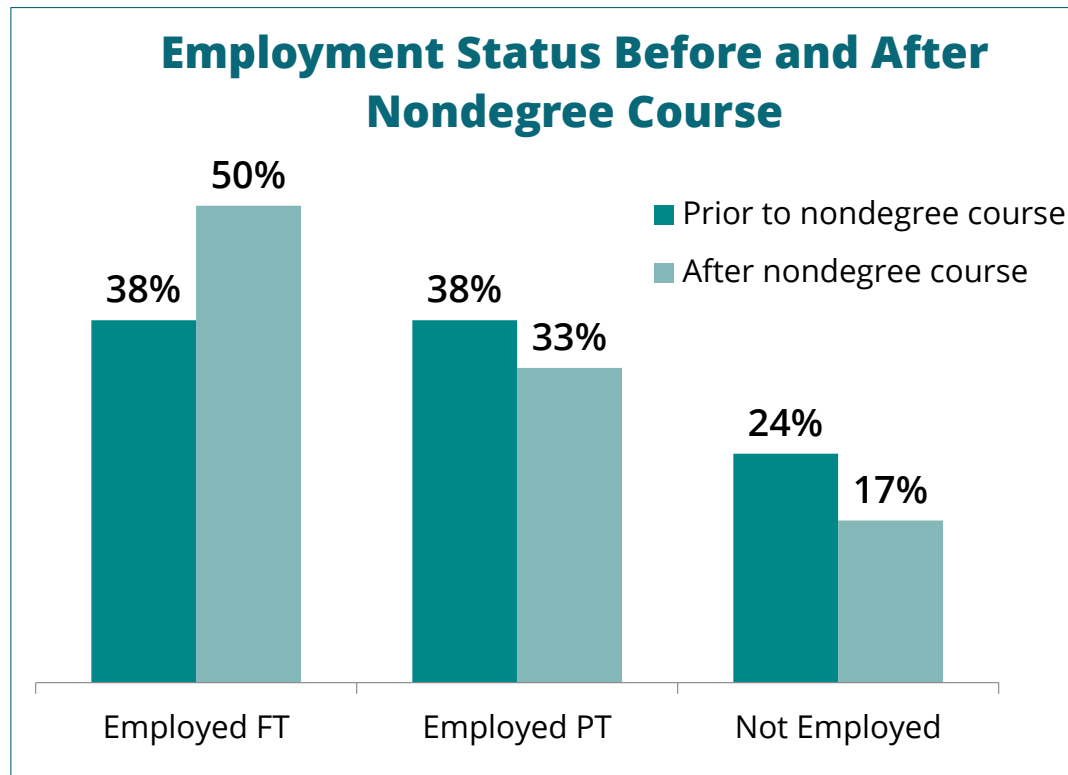
Increased earnings after completing the course, regardless of their initial employment status

**Percentage who Reported Increased Earnings after Nondegree Course**

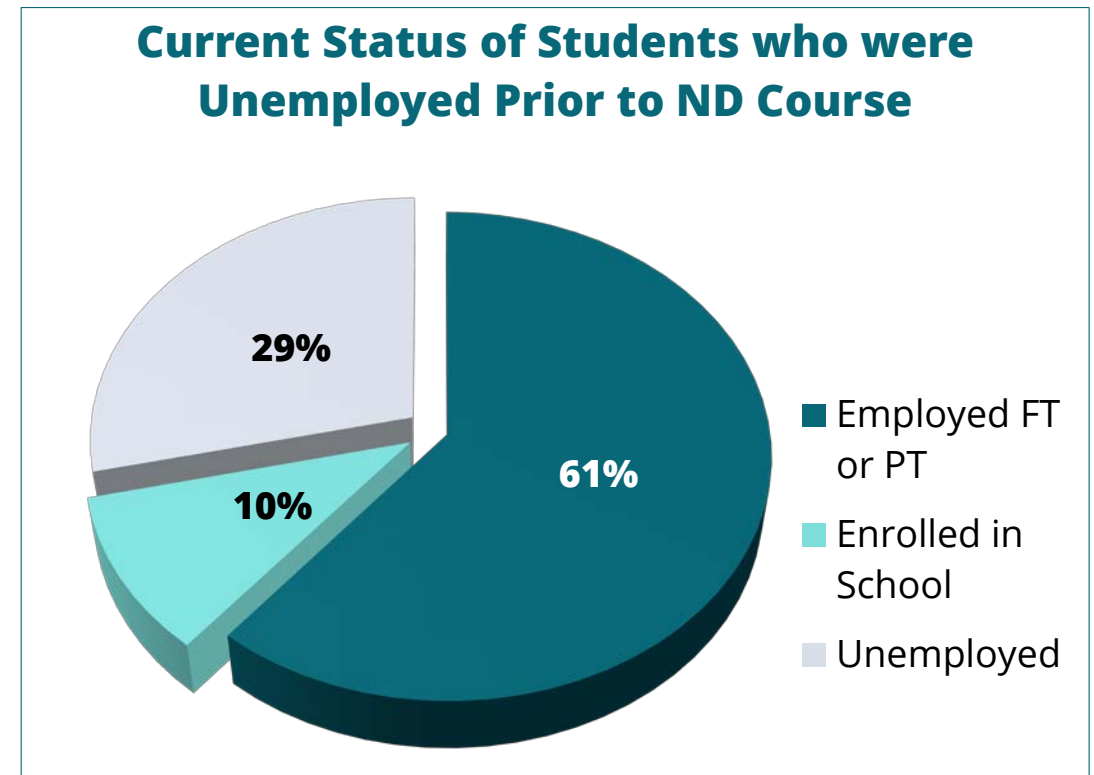


# Nondegree grant: changing futures

Full-time employment among recipients increased from 38 percent to 50 percent, a 31 percent increase



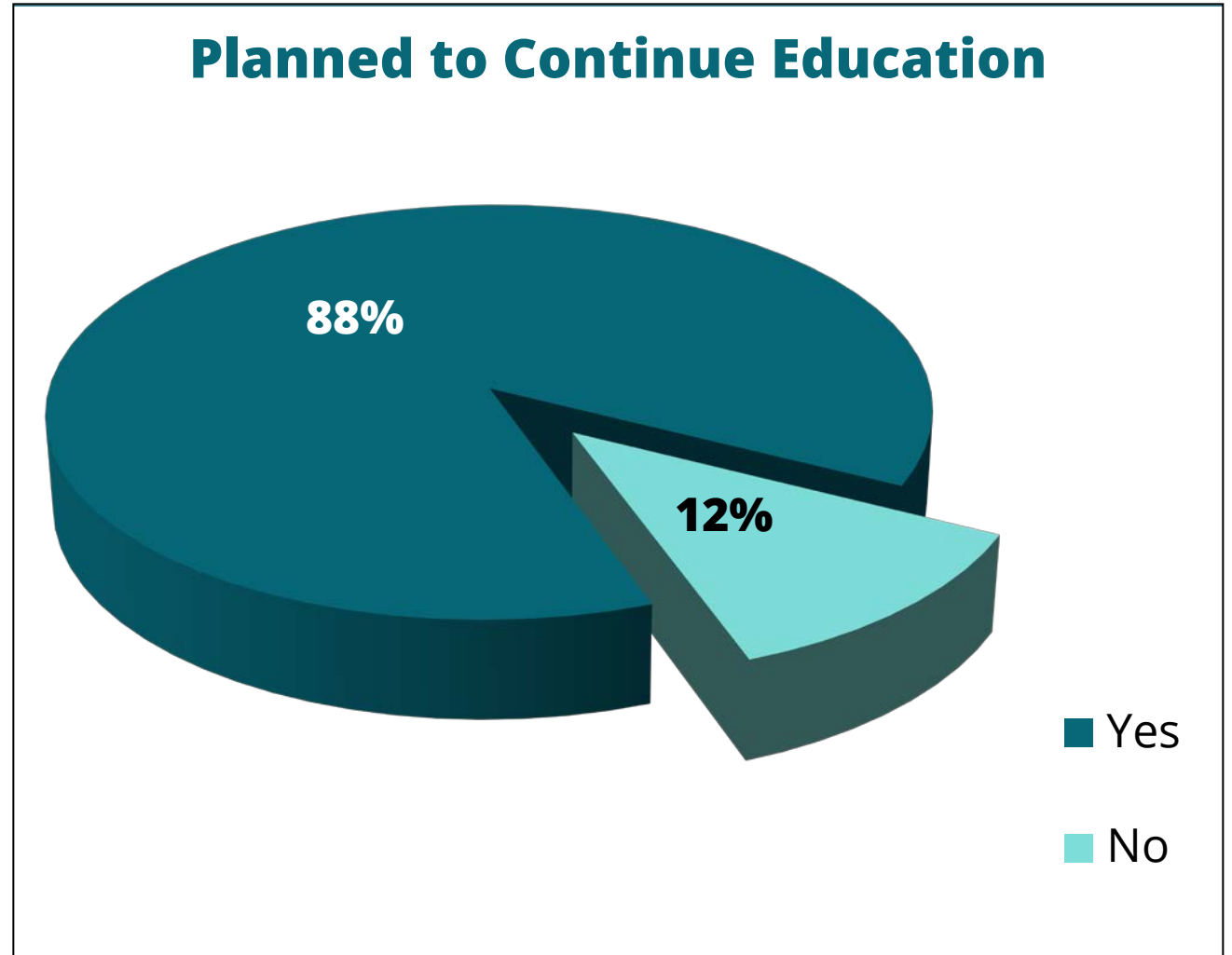
7 out of 10 unemployed adult students were either working or in school after completing the nondegree course



# Nondegree grant: changing future generations

---

The vast majority of students who used a nondegree grant to complete a college course found that they were successful taking college-level courses and planned on continuing their education



# Nondegree program challenges

---

Increasing demand makes funding unpredictable

- Students unable to plan
- Education and training providers unable to know if/when to run a class

**Result:** Limits the number of Vermonters who can take advantage of this program







# Appendix

# Vermont nondegree grant program: a brief history

---

**1982:** The Vermont General Assembly creates the first nondegree grant program in the country; applicants needed to be receiving unemployment benefits to receive a grant

**1984:** The program was expanded to include under-employed Vermonters, opening up the program to applicants who were working but not receiving a livable wage and to applicants from families receiving state assistance

**2016:** More than 35,600 nondegree grants awarded since the inception of the program. The nondegree grant has nearly doubled the numbers of awards over the last decade



# Nondegree grant: purpose

---

## **An accredited training program that increases employability**

*CDL licenses*

*Certification as childcare providers*

*Training that gains entry into health professions such as LNA, massage therapy and medical transcription*

*Training to enter into fitness professions, culinary arts, etc.*

## **Driver's education programs**

*For low-income adult students to complete the driver's education they need to acquire a Vermont driver's license. Vermont's lack of widespread public transportation is a significant barrier to employment in most areas of the state of Vermont outside of Chittenden County.*

## **Nondegree courses at colleges and universities**

*For applicants who are trying to decide if they are capable of successfully tackling college-level work*

*Applicants who have prerequisites that they need to take before they can be admitted to a college*

# VSAC serves adult students

In addition to Vermont's **nondegree grant**, VSAC supports adult students with other programs:

- A federally-funded **Educational Opportunity Center** grant allows VSAC to work with adults who want to enter, or continue a program of study
- **The Vermont National Guard Education Assistance Program** helps our members of the Guard pursue their education while they serve





## Pathways to Postsecondary Education & Training

PreK-6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th	Postsecondary
VHEIP — VT's 529 college savings plan							
Naviance							
PLP training							
GEAR UP							GEAR UP scholarships
Talent Search							
School counselor training							
			Roadmaps to College website & e-mail communications to students and parents				VT Grants from VSAC
				College Pathways			
					Paying for College nights		VSAC's Advantage Loans
					Forms nights		
					FAFSA completion		
					Dual enrollment stipends		GUIDE
						Early college stipends	
				Intro to College Studies			
				Remedial vouchers			Career & financial aid at CCV sites
Lamoille Aspirations Initiative							
Bellows Falls Aspirations Initiative							
Hazen Union Aspirations Initiative							
							Educational Opportunity Centers for adult learners

# VSAC: A statewide leader and partner

VSAC serves as the coordinating agency for **70x2025vt.org**, the state's postsecondary education completion efforts

Leads **FAFSA Completion Initiative**

Administers the **Chafee Education and Training Voucher** for AHS and **the Health Incentive Scholarship** for the Vermont Department of Health

Awarded grants through the **McClure Foundation** and **Lumina Foundation**

Conducts the **Senior Survey**, a statewide survey of high school graduates' postsecondary plans and enrollment

Provides **professional development** workshops and events for secondary and postsecondary education and financial aid professionals

