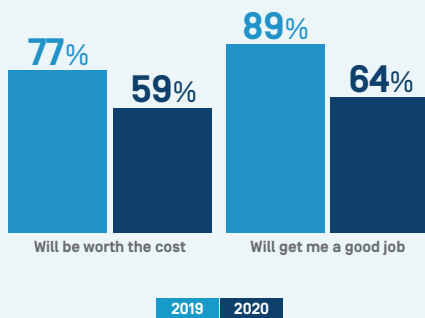


WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

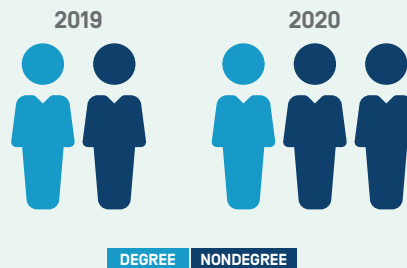
Millions of Americans are aspiring adult learners — individuals without college degrees who are seriously considering enrolling in additional education. Looking specifically at adults ages 25 to 44, we see their interest in enrolling has increased since the onset of COVID-19. Our new findings, however, reveal they are also less confident about the value of additional education than they were a year ago, they face critical barriers to enrollment, and they do not clearly understand how to connect their education to careers. Comparing their perspectives from a year ago with the present, we can see what has — and hasn't — changed for aspiring adult learners and what they care about most in their education.

The nationally representative Public Viewpoint survey, with more than 17,000 responses collected between March 25 and Sept. 3, is intended to provide insights to the education and training providers, policymakers, employers, and individual Americans who are navigating the COVID-19 crisis. This week's analysis integrates additional data from the Strada-Gallup Education Consumer Survey from spring 2020 as well as the Aspiring Adult Learners Survey conducted in fall 2019.

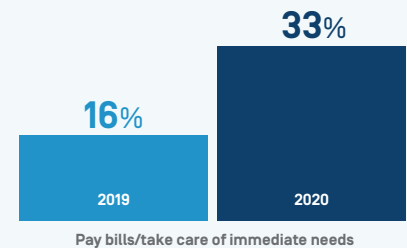
Adults considering enrolling in education are **less likely than a year ago** to believe it will be **worth the cost** and **get them a good job**.



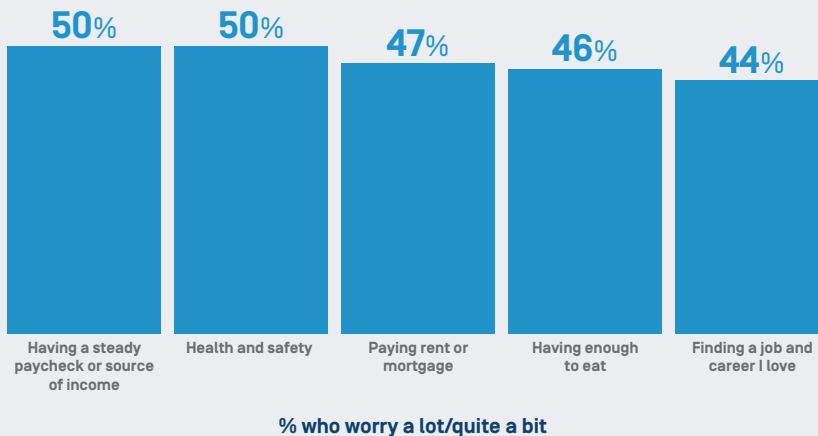
2 in 3 (**68%**) adults considering enrolling in education **prefer nondegree pathways**, up from 1 in 2 (**50%**) a year ago.



The portion of Americans without degrees who cite the **ability to pay bills and take care of immediate needs** as the primary benefit of education has **doubled since a year ago**.



For adults without degrees, **worry about finding a satisfying career** ranks nearly as high as worries about needs such as **having enough to eat** or **paying rent**.



Fewer than 1 in 3 adults without degrees say they **understand available career pathways, valuable skills, and details about potential education programs** "very well."



* Survey fielded regularly March 25 through Sept. 3 by Heart+Mind Strategies on behalf of the Center for Consumer Insights.