

SAAB Student Survey: Results from 1st Administration

Introduction

The Student African American Brotherhood (SAAB) assists men of color to excel academically, socially, culturally, professionally, and in the community. Through the formation of chapters on college campuses as well as middle and high schools, SAAB’s goal is for men of color to take full advantage of their academic years and better understand and practice their responsibilities, rights, and privileges as citizens of this country.

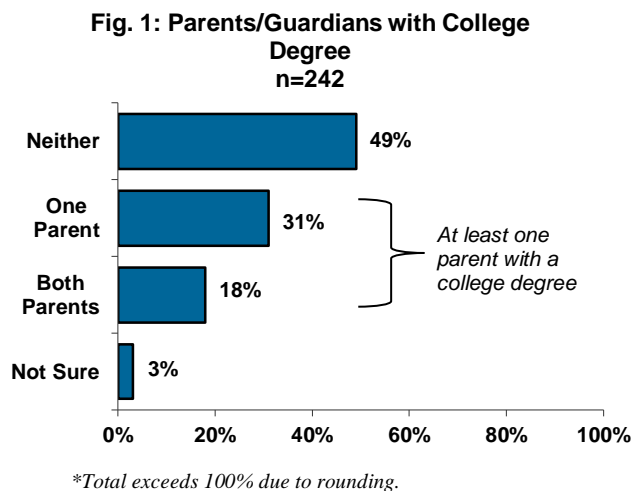
The SAAB Student Survey is an online survey that was developed to help SAAB improve the college experience and graduation rates of its college-going members. It measures the thoughts and feelings of SAAB members on topics including: satisfaction with SAAB, self-confidence, educational aspirations, and sense of belonging to their college or university. By surveying SAAB members twice a year, the survey intends to measure changes in how members feel and think about these topics.

This memo presents the results of the first administration of the SAAB Student Survey, taken by 242 SAAB members across 18 collegiate chapters¹ between July 1 and December 31, 2010. The data presented herein provide a point-in-time snapshot of the characteristics of SAAB members. The intent of sharing this information is to deepen SAAB’s (and other stakeholders’) understanding of who is joining SAAB, including their aspirations, needs, and satisfaction with SAAB.

Findings

Demographics

SAAB members who participated in the survey were predominantly African American (92%). Six percent self-identified as Latino/Hispanic, followed by a handful of Asian/Pacific Islanders (1%), and Caucasian or “other” students (less than 1% each).



On average, SAAB members were 21 years old. Most (96%) had never been married, and most (92%) had no children. Only 3% of students reported being international students on their campuses (an additional 2% were not sure of their international status).

Members were evenly split in terms of their status as a first-generation college student. As shown in Figure 1, 49% were first-generation students, not having a parent or guardian with a college degree. The same percentage, 49%, had at least one parent/guardian with a degree.

¹ A list of participating chapters and the % of students who participated from each is included as Appendix A.

Length of Time in SAAB

Most students who completed the survey were new to SAAB. Almost half (47%) reported that the current academic period was their first with SAAB, and another 38% were in either their second or third academic period with their chapter (18% and 20%, respectively).

Enrollment and Progression through College

The majority (68%) of SAAB members who completed the online survey attended 4-year institutions, with the other 32% attending 2-year institutions. Almost all students (93%) were enrolled on a full-time basis. Students reported doing well academically—about half (53%) said that their grades have been mostly A’s, B’s, or a combination of A’s and B’s; another one-third (32%) said they have received mostly B’s and C’s.

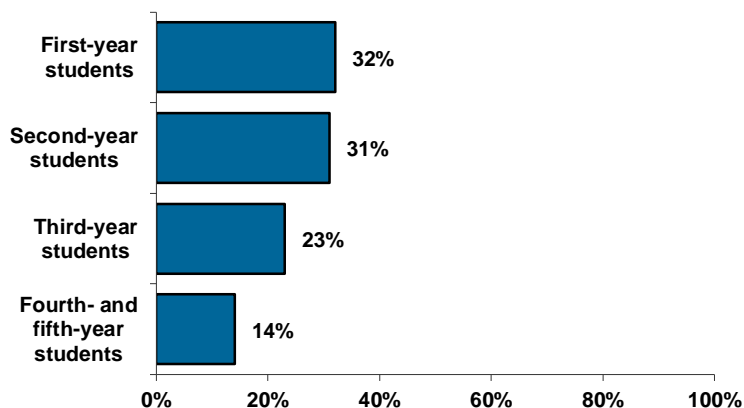
What Members Like about SAAB

“SAAB helps me focus and bring others together like me. I feel as though I belong to something special, and being so close to graduation I understand how this group has helped me get there.”

—SAAB member

In terms of their progression through school, Figure 2 shows that the majority of students were in their first or second year at their institution, with approximately one-third of members (32%) in their first year, and another one-third (31%) in their second year. Students in their third year accounted for a slightly smaller percentage of the whole (23%), and fourth and fifth year students comprised the remaining 14% of members. However, the high percentage of first- and second-year students is reflective of the fact that one-third of students who completed the survey attended 2-year institutions, as mentioned above. When looking *only* at students who attended 4-year institutions, SAAB members were more evenly distributed across first-year students (27%), second-year students (27%), and third-year students (26%), with the remaining 20% in their fourth or fifth years.

Fig. 2: Length of Time Attending Institution
n=242



The majority of SAAB members (73%) took a traditional path to college, reporting that they went directly from high school to college without taking any time off since first enrolling. Some students (15%) did, however, take some time off between high school and college. An additional 5% took time off after enrolling in college, and another 7% reported taking time off *both* between high school and college *and* after enrolling in college. Members’ paths to/through college varied in terms of the type of institution they attended. Almost

one-half (45%) of students attending 2-year institutions took time off (either between high school and college or since enrolling), while only 18% of students at 4-year institutions took time off. In

addition, first-generation college students were slightly more likely to have taken time off, particularly between high school and college (22% of first-generation students compared to 9% among students who have a parent/guardian with a college degree).

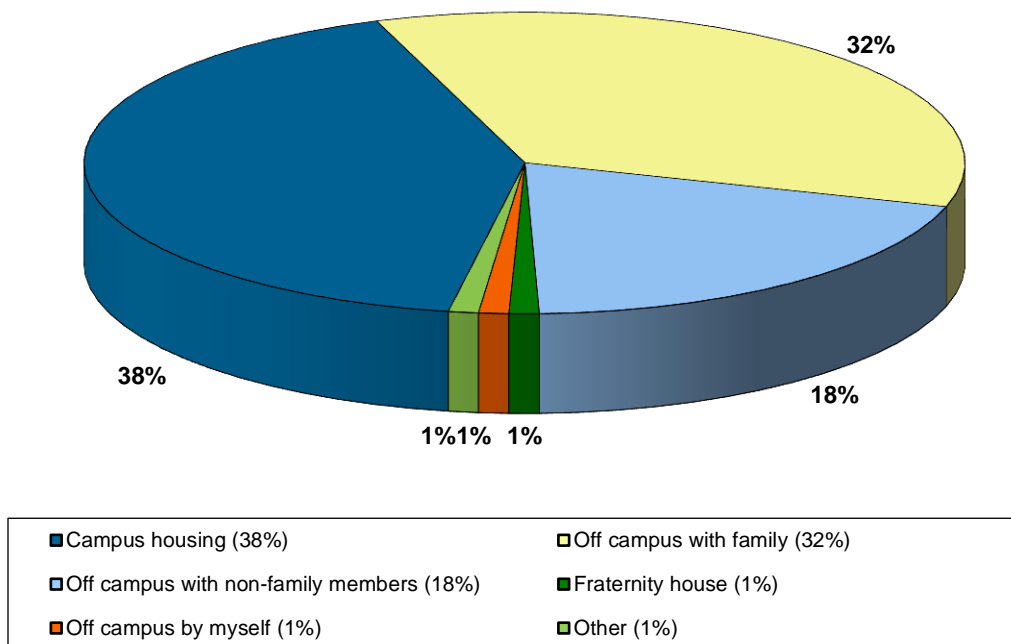
In order to gauge the degree to which finances may challenge their progression through college, SAAB members were asked whether they had any concern about their ability to pay for their college education. Most students (69%) had at least some concern about their ability to pay for college. Specifically, 55% indicated “some” concern, and 15% reported “A lot, I am not sure I have enough funds to complete college.”

Employment and Living Situation

The majority (62%) of SAAB members reported having some type of employment, in the form of a part-time job (33%), work study or internship (30%), or full-time employment (4%).²

As shown in Figure 3 below, the most commonly reported living situation was for members to be living on campus (38%), followed closely by living off campus with family members (32%). However, this result varied by institution type. Among students at 2-year institutions, the majority (61%) reported living off campus with family members. Among students at 4-year institutions, living situations varied: almost one-half (47%) lived on campus, 23% lived off campus with non-family members, and 18% lived off campus with family.

Fig. 3: Place of Residence
n=242



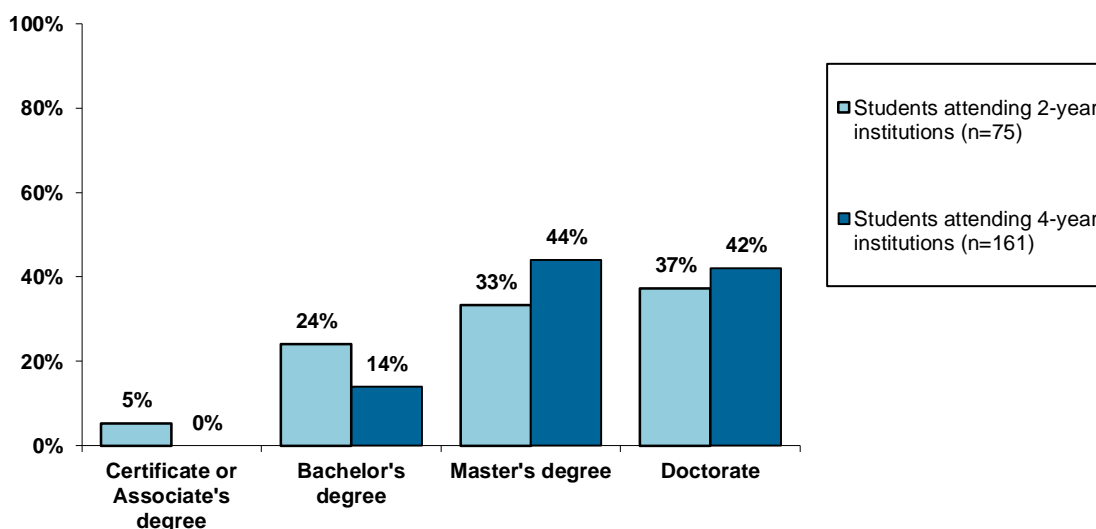
² Students could select more than one employment option, so the total percentage is greater than 62%.

Pride and Aspirations

SAAB members reported high levels of pride in being in college. Using a 5-point scale ranging from strong disagreement (1) to strong agreement (5), SAAB members were asked how they felt about the statement: “I am proud to be a man of color in college.” Ninety-one percent (91%) of members agreed or strongly agreed.

When asked about the highest degree they hope to obtain, 98% of members had their sights set on a bachelor’s degree or higher. Forty percent (40%) aspired to a master’s degree and 41% aspired to a doctorate level degree (MD, PhD, JD, etc.). When disaggregated by institution type, educational aspirations look a little different. Figure 4 shows that students attending 4-year institutions reported slightly higher interest than those attending 2-year institutions in obtaining master’s degrees or doctorates.

Fig. 4: Educational Aspirations by Institution Type

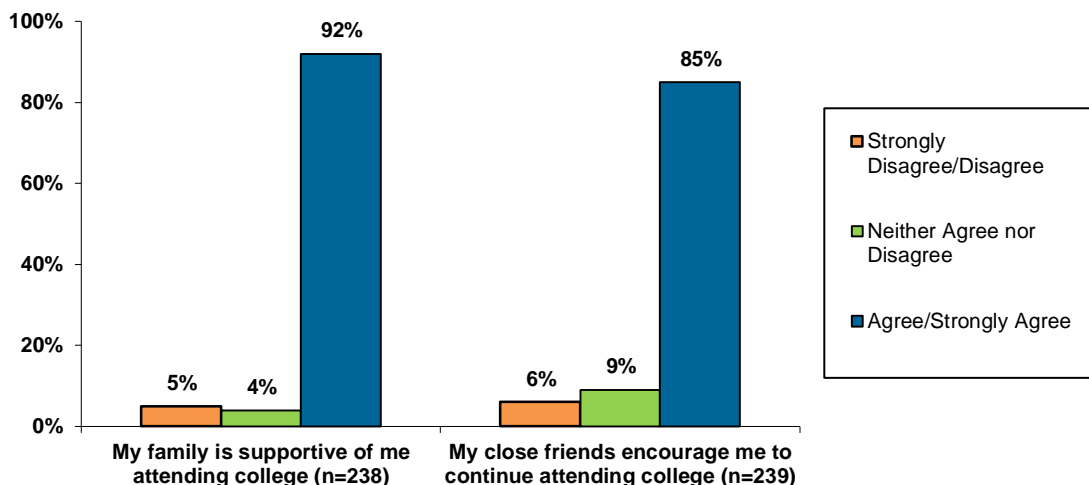


Support for College Completion

Family and friends can play a critical role in college students’ persistence, particularly when times become challenging. As shown in Figure 5 on the next page, SAAB members overwhelmingly reported that their parents and friends are supportive of their college attendance. Specifically:

- 92% of students agreed or strongly agreed that their family is supportive of them attending college.
- 85% of students agreed or strongly agreed that their close friends encourage them to continue attending college.

Fig. 5: Support for College Completion



Feelings of Belonging and Support on Campus

Two key goals of SAAB are to provide members with resources and supports to succeed in college, and to increase students’ sense of belonging to the schools they attend. Helping students navigate their schools and connecting them to others on campus (e.g., peers, faculty, and staff) increases the likelihood that students will persist in and complete college.

As shown below in the tables below, on a scale of 1 to 5 (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree), SAAB members reported feeling a strong sense of belonging to their institutions, and a high level of support from others on campus.

Sense of belonging

	Average Rating (scale of 1-5)
I feel a sense of belonging to this school.	4.1
I am happy to be at this school.	4.2
I see myself as part of the school community.	4.2

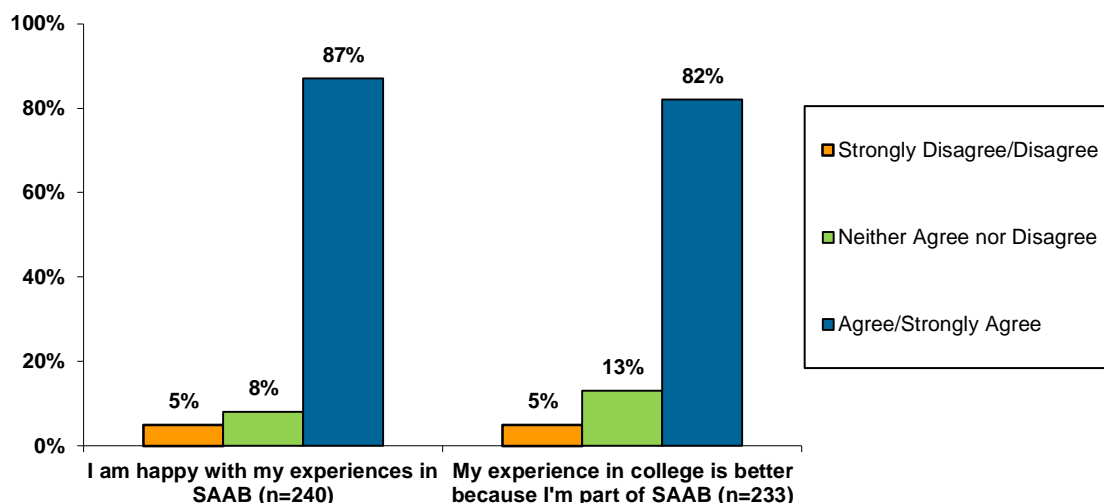
Resources and supports at school

	Average Rating (scale of 1-5)
I am able to find the resources and information that I need in order to succeed here.	4.3
There are faculty or staff here who I can go to if I have a problem.	4.4
There are other SAAB members here who I can go to if I have a problem.	4.3
There are other students here who care about me.	4.4
There are faculty or staff here who care about me.	4.3

Satisfaction with SAAB

The majority of members reported high satisfaction with SAAB. Figure 6 shows that most (87%) reported being happy with their experiences with the chapter, and a high percentage (82%) also credited SAAB with making college a better experience.

Fig. 6: Satisfaction with SAAB



Members’ comments to open-ended survey questions also indicated satisfaction with SAAB. Their responses to questions about what they like most about the organization, as well as what they would change, provided more detail about why they feel satisfied.

What members like most about SAAB

Members overwhelmingly reported feeling a close bond or sense of community with other SAAB members, and also mentioned the amount of support that others in SAAB offer them. Words like “brotherhood,” “connection,” and “community” were often used to describe students’ experiences. One student summarized this sentiment well, stating, “I enjoy the sense of a brotherhood. It is important as a minority to have a group of like-minded students as a support group. They can aid, push, and help you reach your goals on and off campus.”

Developing as a leader

“I...get to better myself...in becoming a better leader not only at school but in my community.”

—SAAB member

In addition to the strong bond SAAB has created for many students, additional themes about what students like most about SAAB included:

- The professional nature of the organization and focus on developing professionals
- Opportunities to develop and exercise leadership skills
- Networking opportunities
- The organization’s focus on academic success

What members would change about SAAB

Many students reported that they would not change anything about SAAB. Among those who did report a change they would like to see, several stated a desire to see their chapter connect with others outside of the chapter, for example the broader campus community or other chapters. One student would like to see SAAB make a “stronger impact on the student body,” while another student expressed a desire to “communicate with other SAAB members nationally and internationally.” Additional feedback for changing SAAB varied greatly depending on the chapter, and included creating more structure, increasing membership, and offering financial support or scholarships to members.

Appendix A: SAAB chapters included in this report

<i>School</i>	<i>Percent of total students in this report</i>
Lone Star College-North Harris	10.7%
Wilberforce University	10.0%
Georgia Highlands College	9.1%
Georgia Southern University	9.1%
University of Louisville	8.7%
Indiana University Northwest	8.3%
University of Texas-Austin	6.2%
North Carolina Central University	5.4%
Stony Brook University	5.4%
Gordon College	4.6%
Clayton State University	3.7%
Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College	2.9%
South Georgia College	2.9%
Augusta State University	2.5%
Macon State College	1.7%
Southwestern College	1.7%
University of Akron	1.7%
Atlanta Metropolitan College	1.2%
<i>Not Reported (did not answer question about institution attended)</i>	4.6%