

# TECHNOLOGY-BASED STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN CSA

Bahar Akman Imboden, Director of Research  
Melanie Nunez, Program Outreach Manager

Access paper here:

[http://www.inversant.org/docs/research/Inversant\\_CSA\\_program\\_brief\\_II\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.inversant.org/docs/research/Inversant_CSA_program_brief_II_FINAL.pdf)



# Speakers

**Bahar Akman Imboden**

Director of Research



**Melanie Nunez**

Program Outreach Manager



# AGENDA:

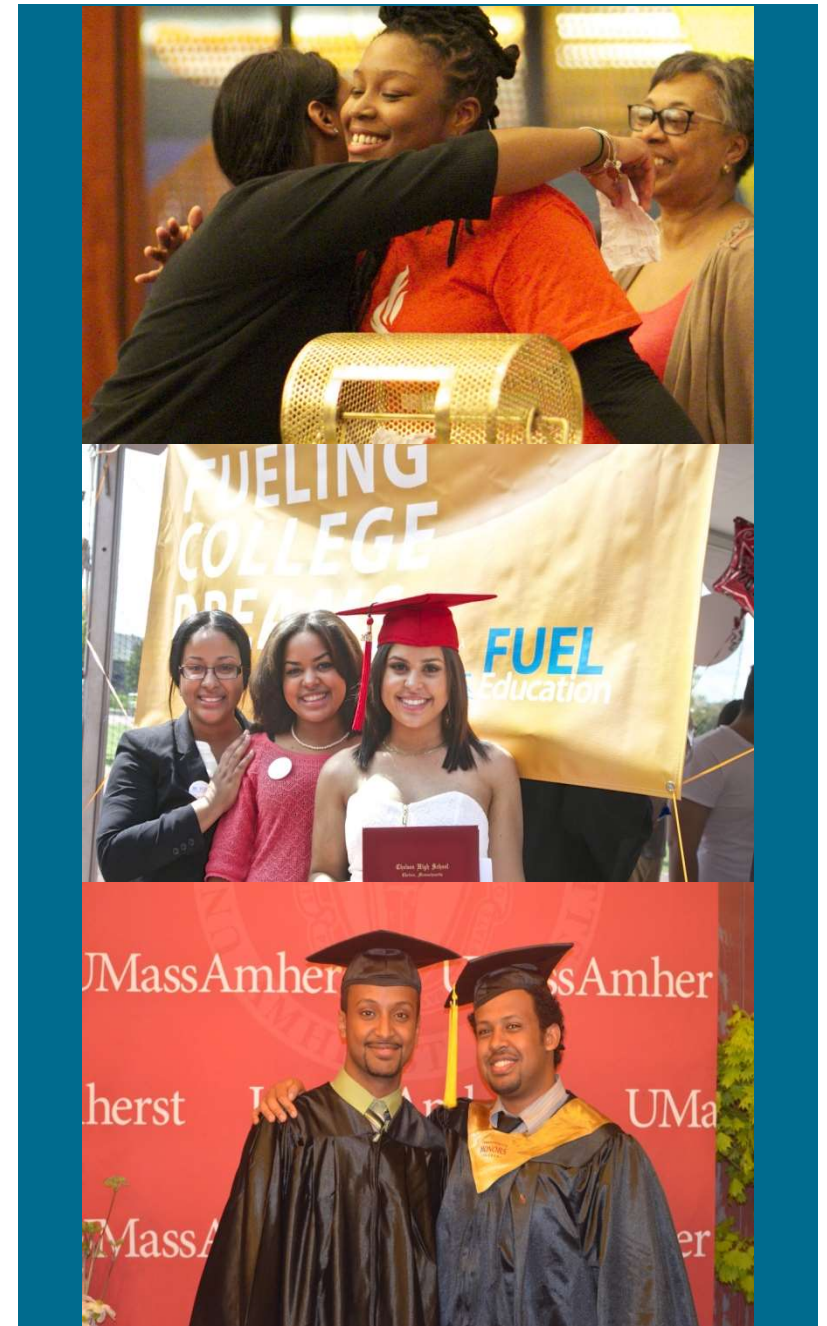
- Introduce Inversant
- Reasons for integrating technology-based outreach & communication strategies
- Tools, implementation, and tips
- Evaluation and reflections
- Q&A



# About Inversant

**Our history:** Founded in 2009 by economist Bob Hildreth with the mission of focusing on parental engagement as the foundation to strengthening economic prospect and education aspirations.

**Our mission:** To ensure that every low-to-moderate income family has the resources and understanding they need to achieve their goals for higher education.



# By the number



**1000**

FAMILIES



**1,200**

COLLEGE ACCOUNTS



**\$900,000**

IN SAVINGS



**350+**

STUDENT ALUMNI ENROLLED  
IN HIGHER EDUCATION



**30+**

COLLEGE GRADUATES



# Program Model

## Savings

- Family friendly bank accounts
- Various incentives to encourage short and long term saving behavior
- Reminders

## Education

- College focused financial education curriculum
- Monetary and non-monetary incentives to attend monthly learning circles

To learn more about the specific design of our program,  
please refer our paper titled:

[Building a CSA Program that Empowers Families to Invest in Higher Education](#)

# Why integrate tech-based outreach?

1. Testing high- and low-touch approach for parental engagement
2. Expanding our program to younger grades
3. Exploring scalability of our CSA program
4. Developing low-cost strategies to engage participants

# Tech-based strategies and tools





Online Portal

E-Newsletters

Sweepstakes  
Surveys

Text  
Messages

# Online Portal

## Purpose

### To increase scale and reach

- To reach more families without increasing costs
- To keep families informed and on track to reach the match goal

## Design

### Individualized portal to view progress

- Participants have unique usernames and IDs allowing them to view savings, incentives earned, and other program updates

## Data

### Online database

- Currently less than 15% monthly log-in rate.
- As we are piloting this initiative, we still must determine the benchmark

# Monthly E-Newsletters

## Purpose

To increase financial capability and savings

- To consolidate knowledge gained during workshops
- To reach out to busy families or those with younger kids who cannot/do not attend workshops

## Design

Bite-sized pieces and customized information

- Age appropriate information and activities
- Importance of language and site appropriate information to cater to the audience

## Data

Campaign monitor

- Open Rates
- Click Rates

# Monthly Sweepstakes Surveys

## Purpose

To cultivate a virtual college saver community

- To create the opportunity to share college saving stories
- To build excitement to increase click rate to e-newsletters

## Design

Monetary prize and interview

- Submit survey to enter \$100 monthly sweepstakes
- Winners are interviewed and their college savings & preparation stories are featured in next e-newsletter

## Data

Google survey and randomize app

- Response rate

# Text Messages

## Purpose

To foster regular savings habit

- To provide timely reminders and boost healthy long-term savings behavior
- To capitalize on the convenience of sending and receiving text messages

## Design

Incentives and positive messaging

- \$50 bonus for 6 consecutive deposits
- Importance of developing positive and encouraging messaging

## Data

Savings data

- Track savings behavior and change in deposit frequency
- Track whether the regular savings behavior persists after receiving the bonus

# Design tips

## Content

- Language
- Layout
- Multi-media
- Story
- Resources

## Delivery

- Incentives
- Timing
- Frequency
- Communications

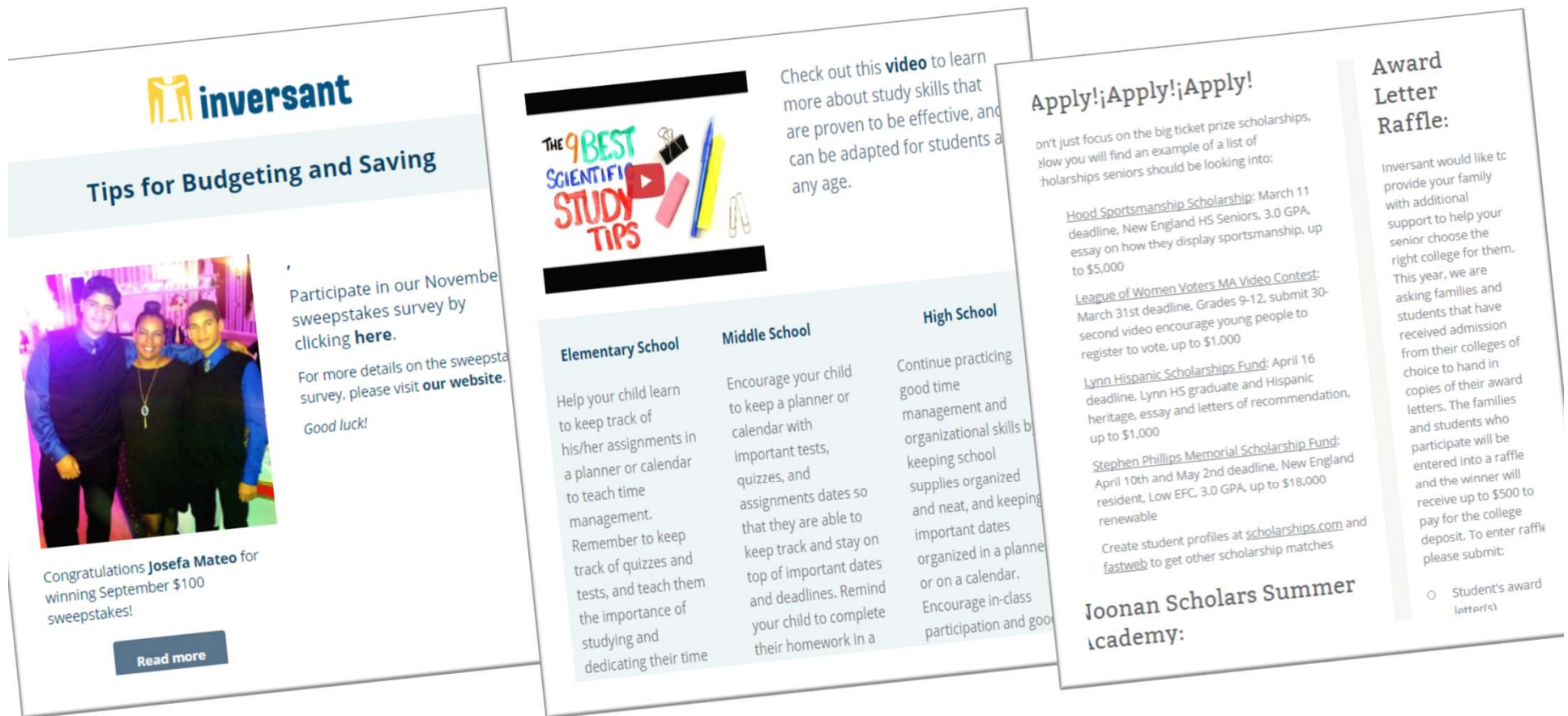


# EVALUATION

## E-newsletter Engagement Rates



# Examples of e-newsletters' content



The Sweepstake Survey Section



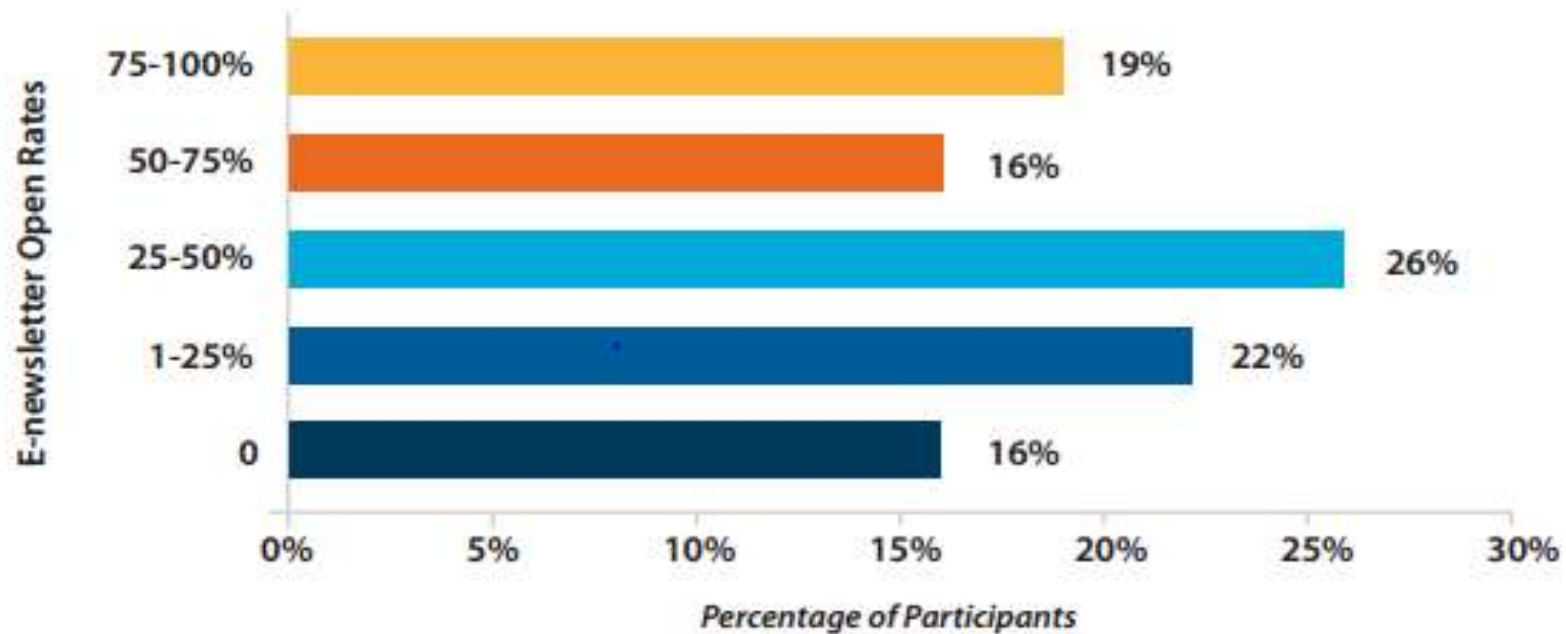
Video on Study skills followed by age appropriate tips on the subject

Senior's e-newsletter on merit scholarships

# Engagement Rates with e-newsletters

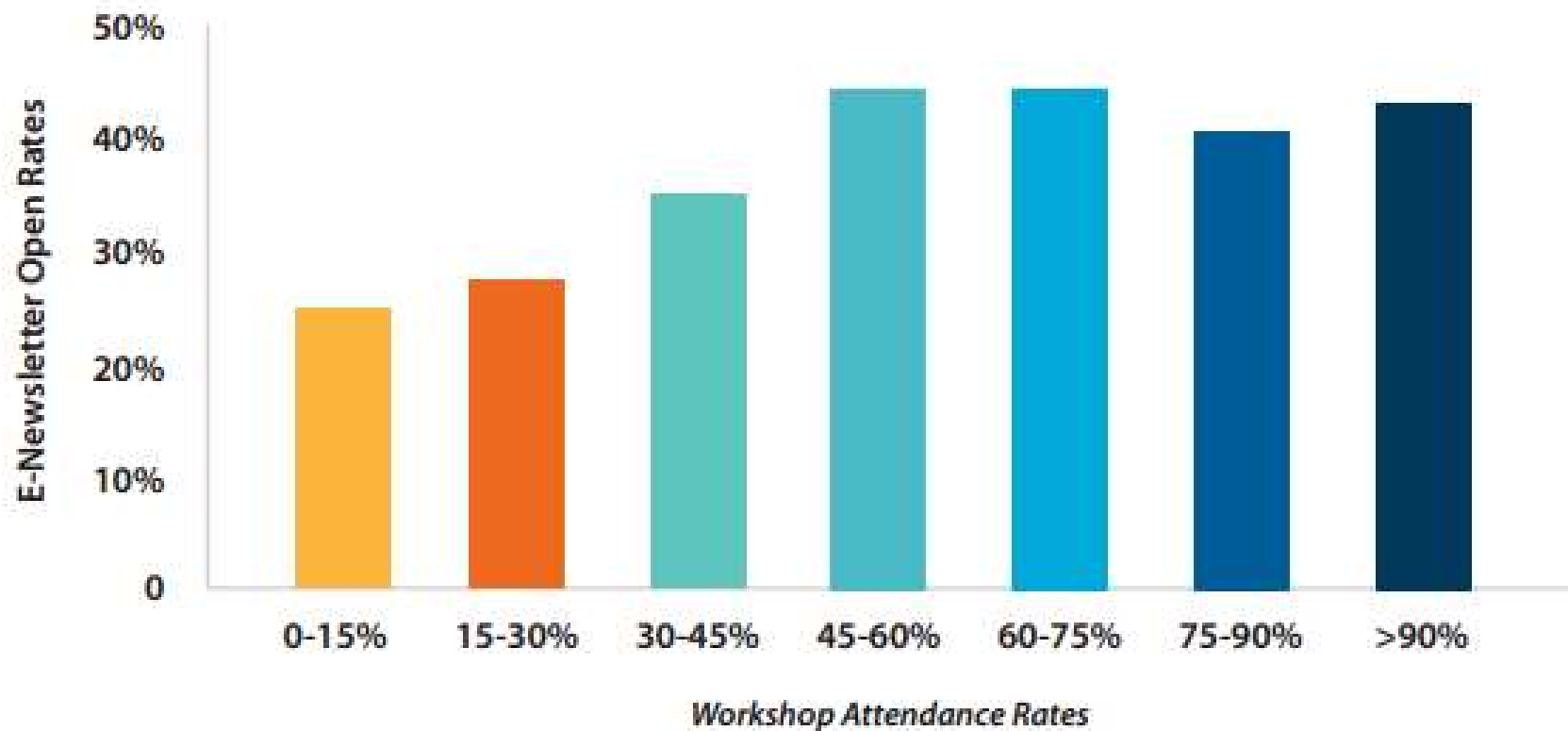
- The average open rate per month is 40%

Distribution of e-newsletters open rate



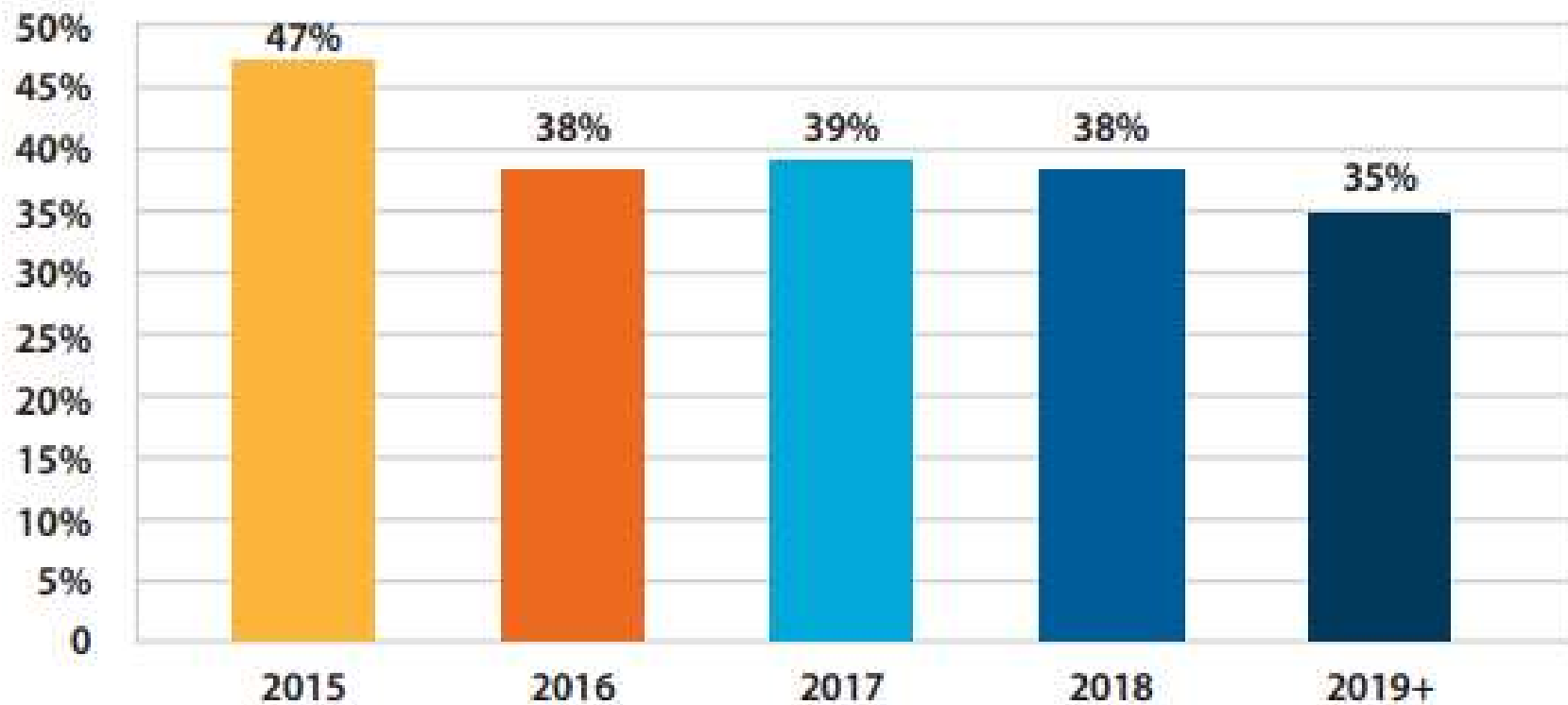
\* Among participants who receive the e-newsletters

# E-Newsletters are good complement to the curriculum of Learning Circles



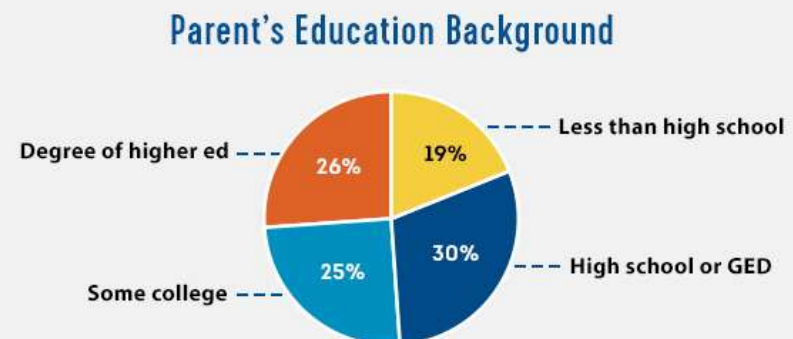
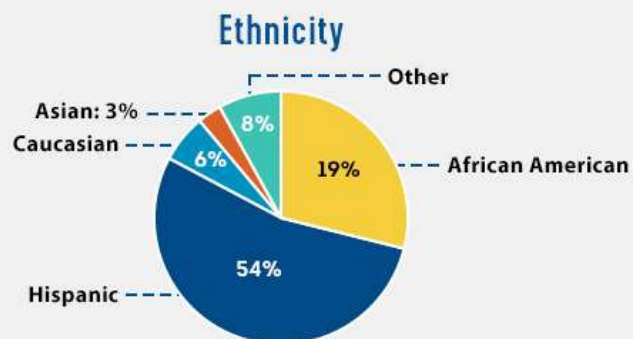
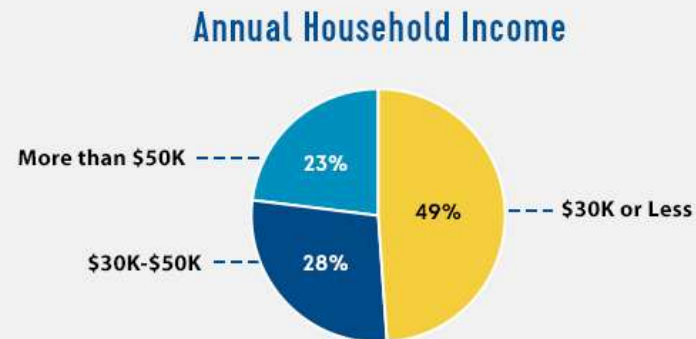
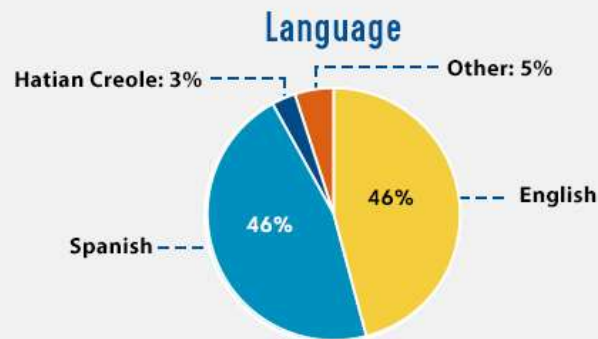
# E-newsletters most read by families of Seniors

E-newsletter open rates by cohorts



# 30% of our participants did not provide us with an email address

Are Demographic Factors Barriers to accessing and engaging with technology-based outreach?

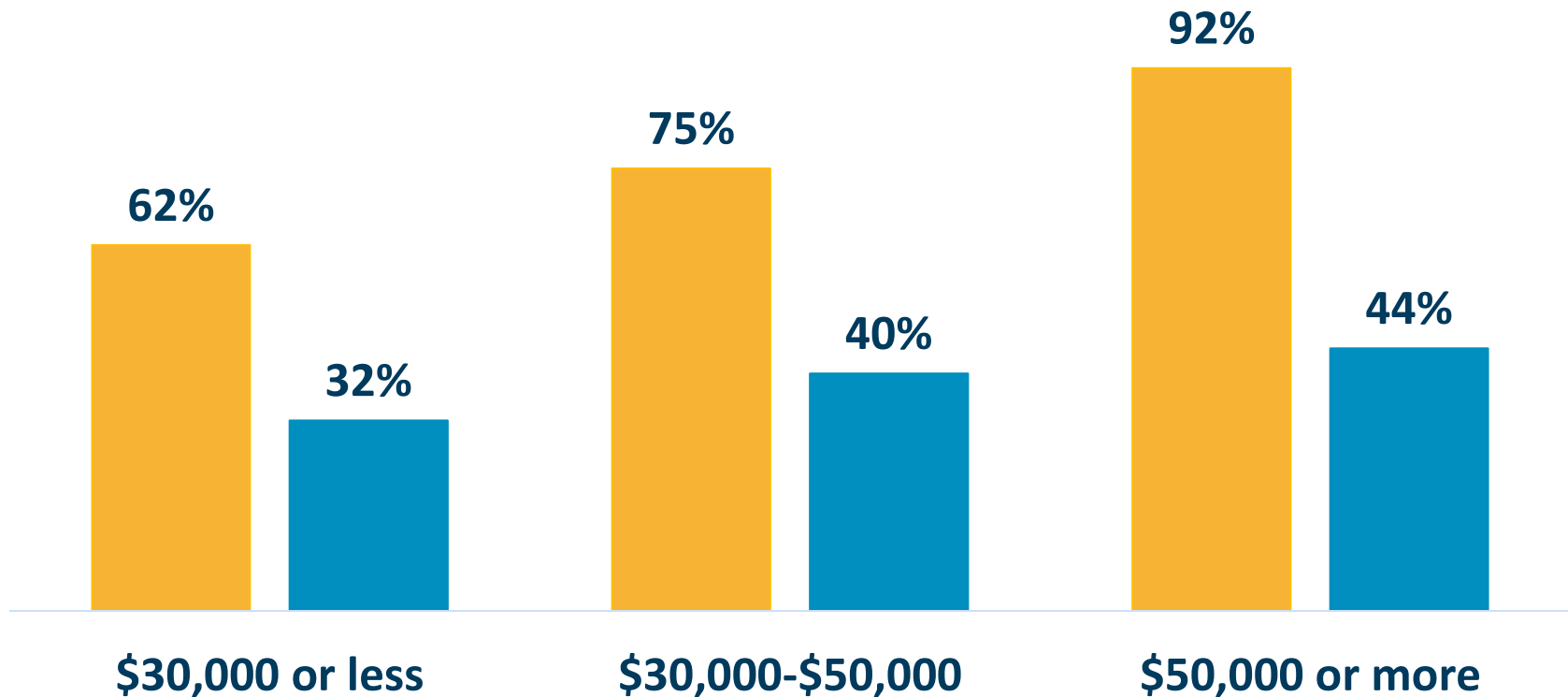




# Familial Income, Access, & Engagement

EMAIL ON FILE & NEWSLETTER OPEN RATES ACCORDING TO FAMILIAL INCOME

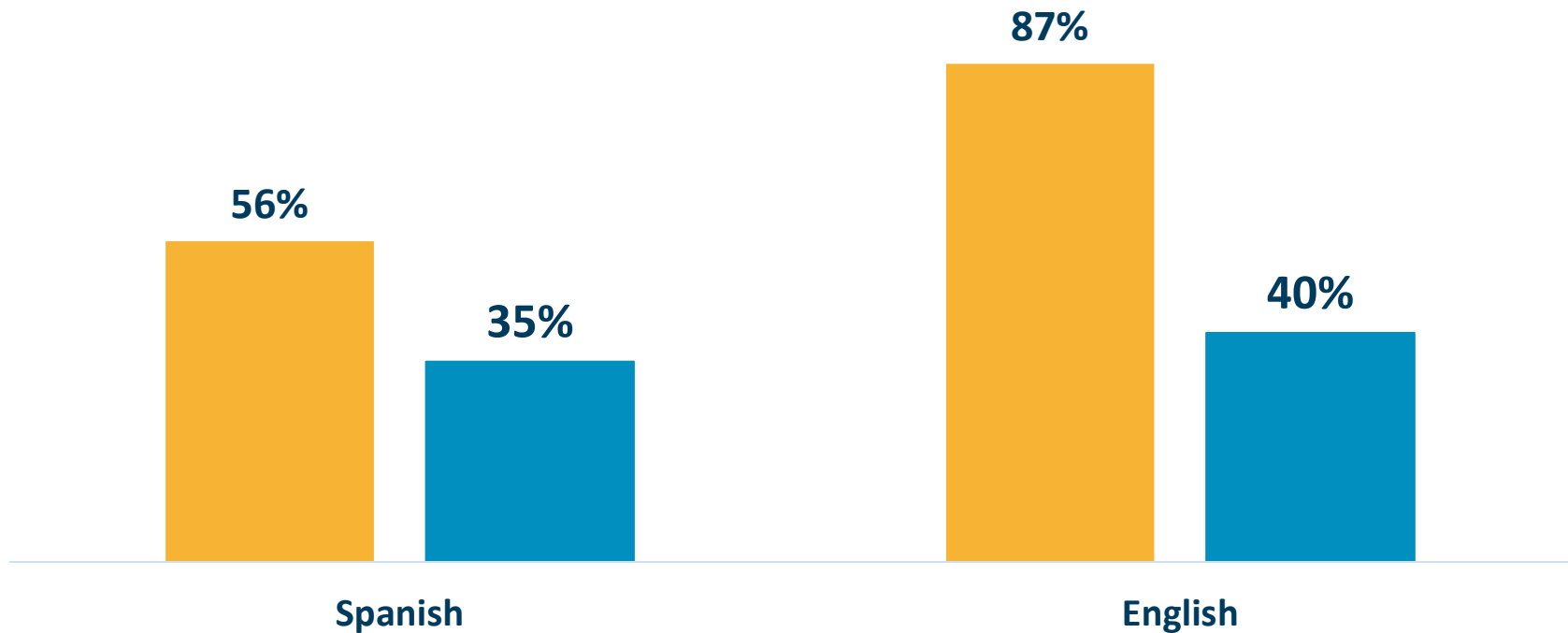
■ % of email on file   ■ E-newsletter open rates



# Primary Language at Home, Access, & Engagement

EMAIL ON FILE & NEWSLETTER OPEN RATES ACCORDING TO FAMILIAL INCOME

■ % of email on file ■ E-newsletter open rates



# Moving forward

- Develop measures geared to closing the demographic gaps in accessing online outreach
- Establish whether demographic factors will be more pronounced when seeking to develop engagement with the portal

# Questions to be explored

## Barriers

- Will demographic barriers decrease with younger generation of parents who are growing up with the internet?
- Will smart phones alleviate some of the barriers?

## Target audience and coverage

- Are the e-newsletters useful for families who do not attend learning circles?
- Can the portal be an effective platform to deliver our curriculum?

## Savings

- Will engagement with tech-based outreach strategies impact the frequency of savings or amount saved?

# Questions?

**Also feel free to contact us with additional questions:**

Bahar Akman Imboden: [b.akman@Inversant.org](mailto:b.akman@Inversant.org)

Melanie Nunez: [m.nunez@Inversant.org](mailto:m.nunez@Inversant.org)

**To access paper which this webinar was based on:**

[http://www.inversant.org/docs/research/Inversant\\_CSA\\_program\\_brief\\_II\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.inversant.org/docs/research/Inversant_CSA_program_brief_II_FINAL.pdf)

