THRIVING YOUTH STUDY DATA AND METHODS

METHODS APPENDIX

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Veronica Terriquez
UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center

Conducted across different regions of California, the Thriving Youth Study (TYS) seeks to understand the challenges and opportunities for young people as they and their communities recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. For Oxnard, the study includes an analysis of secondary survey data and original surveys of young adults collected from March 2023 through August 2023. It also includes in-depth follow-up interviews with a subsample of interview respondents. These interviews began in 2023 and continued in 2024. The study's research team is made up of scholars from Oxnard College, California State University, Channel Islands (CSUCI), and the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center (CSRC) as well as student researchers affiliated with the UCLA Labor Center. The team is led by Professor Veronica Terriquez, director of the CSRC, in partnership with Professor Karina Chavarria, CSUCI, and Professor Dolores Ortiz, Oxnard College.

Professors Terriquez and Chavarria trained students as research assistants through coursework offered at Oxnard College, CSU Channel Islands, and UCLA. Students from all three schools helped refine data collection instruments and collect data. Professor Ortiz sponsored coursework for two semesters at Oxnard College and also assisted with student training. Jose Negrete, Oxnard College alum and a graduate student in the UCLA Department of Urban Planning, managed student training and played a central role in coordinating Oxnard College students' data collection efforts.

Secondary Data Analysis

The CSRC conducted secondary data analysis to contextualize findings for Oxnard. The research teams utilized American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, 2018–22; 2022 California Health Interview Survey data; California Department of Education data, 2020–21; and the National Center

for Education Statistic's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), **2018-2022**. These data allowed for comparisons between the experiences of Oxnard's young adult residents and those of similar populations across California.

Original Surveys of Oxnard Young Adult Residents

The TYS survey contains rich and comprehensive data from Oxnard's young adult residents, and it includes a significantly sized sample from those with low-income backgrounds, who tend to be underrepresented in other studies. The TYS survey targeted young adults who were English, Spanish, Mixteco, and Zapoteco speakers and who had resided in Oxnard while in high school: Oxnard residents aged eighteen to thirty-four; Oxnard College students aged eighteen and above; and CSUCI Channel Island students aged eighteen and above. Survey topics covered demographics, household characteristics, high school experiences, postsecondary schooling, labor market experiences, health, and civic engagement. Additionally, study participants answered one or more questions related to their interest in Oxnard College's Employee Pipeline Program, which aims to connect Oxnard residents to local job opportunities that offer health benefits and above-average wages for individuals without a bachelor's degree. The City of Oxnard, Oxnard College, CSU Channel Islands, Clinicas del Camino Real, Future Leaders of America, Mixteco Indígena Community Organizing Project (MICOP), CAUSE, and other community stakeholders provided input about the survey. The survey questionnaire included previously validated questions from past studies as well as original questions. Student researchers at Oxnard College, CSU Channel Islands, and UCLA tested original questions and piloted the survey before it was launched.

Survey data collection took place online or in person, as noted in table 1. Oxnard College and CSUCI students completed a self-administered online survey in English. English-speaking nonstudents completed a self-administered survey online or participated in an in-person interview survey administered by a trained Oxnard College or UCLA student. Nonstudents who were Spanish, Mixteco, or Zapoteco speakers and not fluent in English participated in an in-person interview survey. Because of uneven literacy rates and overall low levels of education among nonstudents who were not fluent in English, this group was not given the option to complete a self-administered online survey.

Respondents typically took between fifteen and forty-five minutes to complete surveys. All study participants received a $20.00 gift card for their time. Respondents were also asked if they were willing to participate in a follow-up in-depth interview or survey.

Table A1. Survey Administration Modalities by Language, 2023

		Participant Population	
		Students from Oxnard College and CSUCI	**Nonstudents**
Language	**English**	Online	Online or in-person survey
	Spanish	N/A	Online or in-person survey
	Mixteco or Zapoteco	N/A	In-person survey

Source: Thriving Youth Study (Oxnard Survey), 2023

Survey Universes and Sample Sizes

Oxnard College: The Oxnard research team sought to collect surveys from a significant proportion of the student population aged eighteen and older, regardless of Oxnard residency. Research assistants recruited peers through campus canvassing efforts, in-class presentations, and personal networks. Oxnard College posted the survey on its social media websites and portals. Additionally, school administration sent three emails to all enrolled Oxnard College students (part-time and full-time) asking them to participate in the survey. The survey asked respondents to share their community college email address so that the research team could verify their eligibility and eliminate any duplicate responses. The research team focused on recruiting spring semester enrollees. The survey launched in March 2023 and closed in July 2023. The final sample size included 1,620 respondents out of 5,204 students, resulting in a response rate of 32.2 percent. Of the respondents, 260 resided outside the City of Oxnard and were excluded from the analyses for the reports on Oxnard residents, but they were included in the reports on Oxnard College.

CSU Channel Island Students: The CSUCI research team targeted CSUCI students aged eighteen and over who had attended high school in Oxnard. CSUCI provided Professor Chavarria the list of eligible students, after which she and her research assistants conducted email and in-person outreach to invite them to take the survey. The research team launched the CSUCI survey in May 2023. A total of 241 out of 1,040 eligible students had completed the survey by December 2023, resulting in a 23 percent response rate. Professor Chavarria collected additional surveys during the 2024 spring semester, but these additional surveys are not included in the analyses presented in this report.

City of Oxnard: The Oxnard research team also targeted Oxnard young adults (aged eighteen to thirty-four) who were not enrolled in college at the time. The sample included current high students aged eighteen and over. Participant recruitment relied on nonrandom methods. Student researchers recruited study participants at Clinicas del Real sites (which serve very low-income residents) and, working with local nonprofit organizations, canvassed at community events and in selected neighborhoods. Student researchers also tapped into personal networks to recruit study participants. The team made extra efforts to reach low-income residents by canvassing the La Colonia and Southwinds neighborhoods and tapping into networks of agricultural workers. To verify their eligibility as Oxnard residents, respondents were asked to list their zip code. Student researchers then administered the survey to eligible respondents in person or shared the survey QR code with them. To avoid spam responses to the online survey, researchers recorded participants' names and contact information to verify the eligibility of individuals who completed the online survey. In order to protect confidentiality, only trained members of the survey team had access to the names of survey participants. The nonstudent sample contained 1,530 respondents, including 1,072 who spoke English, 321 who spoke Spanish, and 131 who spoke Mixteco or Zapoteco.

SURVEY DATA METHODOLOGY

Data Cleaning

The research team used STATA software to clean raw survey data. The majority of questions asked in the survey were Yes/No. Responses were coded as 1 for "Yes," 0 for "No," and 7 for "Don't Know," while missing responses were coded as 9. For questions that asked a respondent to mark all answers that applied, each option was coded as a Yes/No, with "1" indicating that the respondent had selected that option and "0" that they did not. Research assistants recoded and grouped open-ended questions (e.g., about their job aspirations, employer, etc.). The survey also used scales to measure levels of civic participation, food insecurity, health status, and mental health; the questionnaire lists the numeric coding associated with each of the responses. Respondents were instructed to leave questions that did not apply to them blank (or "." in STATA) to exclude them from the analytic sample.

There is very little missing data in the completed surveys. However, twenty records were eliminated from final samples because of an abundance of missing responses. All eliminated surveys came from online questionnaires, suggesting that a relatively small number of unsupervised respondents sought to finish the survey quickly by skipping questions in order to receive a

gift card. In contrast, the social pressure of the in-person interview surveys likely contributed to fewer missing responses.

Sampling Weights for City of Oxnard

In the data analysis the research team applied sampling weights to the city's young adult population and Oxnard College students. For Oxnard residents, we relied on the ACS 2018-22 five-year estimates to calculate sampling weights so that estimates would generally reflect the city's population. The ACS sample for Oxnard comprised only 462 respondents, producing a sampling error of +/-2.86 percentage points. We recognize that the ACS likely undercounts Oxnard's very poor Indigenous residents, producing bias in TYS estimates.

In spite of the limitations of using the ACS for population estimates, the ACS dataset still proved helpful in making the TYS more reflective of Oxnard's population. As with most other surveys, adjustments were made to compensate for the comparatively low response rates of men vis-à-vis women. Estimates from the large student sample that resulted from the targeted recruitment at Oxnard College and CSUCI were also weighted. These student populations contain a greater number of women and nonimmigrant Latinxs than is found in the general population. Furthermore, the average age of students tends to be lower than that of the general young adult population (aged eighteen to thirty-four).

Using a statistical technique known as raking, we applied iterative post-stratification weights to match the marginal distributions of each survey sample to adjust for imbalances in sex,

Kick-off event at Oxnard College for Thriving Youth Study Oxnard, Spring 2023

school enrollment status, age group, and Latinx nonimmigrants. According to ACS estimates, men slightly outnumber women in Oxnard's population. At the same time, women are overrepresented among residents who are enrolled in school. Hence, to develop weights we used an interaction between sex at birth (a binary variable) and student status to divide the population into four groups: (1) male nonstudents (2) male students; (3) women nonstudents; (4) women students. We recognize that using sex at birth does not adequately account for individuals' gender identities. However, the ACS does not contain a measure for gender that is comparable to the measure used in the TYS, which allows for gender self-identification.

Given the concentration of younger respondents within our sample, we also made adjustments for the following three age groups: eighteen to twenty-one, twenty-two to twenty-six, and twenty-seven to thirty-four. Additional adjustments were made based on whether respondents identified as (1) Latinx nonimmigrants (native-born); (2) Latinx immigrants (foreign-born); (3) non-Latinx respondents. Sample sizes for non-Latinx respondents in the ACS were too small to develop reliable estimates for other racial groups or for US nativity of non-Latinx respondents.

The TYS survey gathers the experience and perspectives of a significant number of low-income residents who have comparatively low levels of education. Yet sampling weights do not eliminate bias in the TYS nonrandom sample of residents who were not in school: as noted above, recruitment was conducted via students' networks, snowball sampling, and targeting two very-low-income neighborhoods. Moreover, the fact that the survey was conducted in four languages excluded residents who did not speak English, Spanish, Mixteco, or Zapoteco. Furthermore, students who attended colleges and universities other than Oxnard College and CSU Channel Island were excluded. Hence, findings should be interpreted with caution.

It is important to note that the question asking respondents about interest in Oxnard College's Employee Pipeline Program was skipped by a subsample of respondents. Skip patterns did not bias results. Separate sampling weights were calculated using the above methods for 2,320 eligible respondents and then applied to produce weighted results.

Sampling Weights for Oxnard College Students

This study includes a separate report that focuses on Oxnard College students aged eighteen and older, including those who reside outside the city. The research team used the enrollment data from the spring 2023 semester to calculate weights. We used the raking method to match the survey sample to known population margins across four key variables: race, gender, age, and attendance type (fully online

Table A2. ACS and TYS S0ampling Distributions for City of Oxnard's Young Adults, 2023

Population group	ACS estimates	TYS unweighted survey sample	TYS weighted survey estimates
	Proportion (se*)	**Proportion**	**Proportion (se*)**
Sex and school enrollment			
Male nonstudents	0.4241 (.0282)	0.1842	.4241 (.0122)
Male students	0.0829 (.0143)	0.1605	.0829 (.0041)
Female nonstudents	0.3699 (.0280)	0.3161	.3699 (.0106)
Female students	0.1231 (0.186)	0.3392	.1231 (.0045)
Age group			
18–21	0.2193 (.0286)	0.4344	.2193 (.0075)
22–26	0.2884 (.0243)	0.2802	.2884 (.0100)
27–34	0.4923 (.0247)	0.2854	.4923 (.0116)
Latinx/Hispanic and immigrant identity			
Latinx/Hispanic nonimmigrant	0.5472 (.0233)	0.6770	.5471 (.0117)
Latinx/Hispanic immigrant	0.2463 (.0262)	0.1701	.2463 (.0105)
Non-Hispanic	0.2066 (.0286)	0.1529	.2066 (.0103)
Unweighted sample size	462	3,031	3,031

*Standard error.

Note: Non-Hispanics are individuals who did not identify as Latinx/Hispanic and did not have family roots in Mexico or Central America.

or taking at least one in-person course). Male-identified students remain underrepresented among the student population, especially among older age groups. Latinx/Hispanic students are disproportionately represented among the younger students. Because of this, we calculated sampling weights that specifically accounted for uneven distributions of the student population by age group, male/nonmale gender identification, and Hispanic ethnicity. Sampling weights also accounted for the nonbinary population since these individuals were overrepresented in the survey sample. Student researchers conducted extensive survey outreach on the Oxnard College campus, resulting in a high representation of those taking in-person courses in the survey sample. Therefore, in calculating sampling weights we adjusted for

Table A3. Oxnard College Enrollments and TYS Sampling Distributions, Spring 2023

Population group	Oxnard College enrollment	TYS unweighted survey sample	TYS weighted survey estimates
	Proportion	Proportion	Proportion (se*)
Age group, gender, and Hispanic ethnicity			
18–21 male non-Hispanic	0.0438	0.0389	0.0438 (0.0054)
22–26 male non-Hispanic	0.0231	0.0136	0.0231 (0.0049)
27–34 male non-Hispanic	0.0177	0.0056	0.0177 (0.0058)
35+ male non-Hispanic	0.0179	0.0093	0.0179 (0.0046)
18–21 nonmale non-Hispanic	0.0346	0.0630	0.0346 (0.0035)
22v26 nonmale non-Hispanic	0.0215	0.0210	0.0215 (0.0037)
27–34 nonmale non-Hispanic	0.0187	0.0210	0.0187 (0.0032)
35+ nonmale non-Hispanic	0.0324	0.0210	0.0324 (0.0055)
18–21 male Latinx/Hispanic	0.1887	0.1747	0.1887 (0.0102)
22–26 male Latinx/Hispanic	0.0838	0.0562	0.0838 (0.0083)
27–34 male Latinx/Hispanic	0.0402	0.0259	0.0402 (0.0061)
35+ male Latinx/Hispanic	0.0287	0.0154	0.0287 (0.0056)
18–21 nonmale Latinx/Hispanic	0.2164	0.3296	0.2164 (0.0092)
22–26 nonmale Latinx/Hispanic	0.0902	0.0975	0.0902 (0.0070)
27–34 nonmale Latinx/Hispanic	0.0738	0.0611	0.0738 (0.0072)
35+ nonmale Latinx/Hispanic	0.0685	0.0463	0.0685 (0.0076)
Age group			
18–21	0.4835	0.6262	0.4835 (0.0133)
22–26	0.2186	0.1883	0.2186 (0.0113)
27–34	0.1505	0.1136	0.1504 (0.0107)
35 and older	0.1475	0.0920	0.1475 (0.0110)
Gender			
Man	0.4440	0.3395	0.4439 (0.0136)
Woman	0.5399	0.6290	0.5400 (0.0135)
Nonbinary	0.0161	0.3150	0.0161 (0.0023)
Latinx/Hispanic			
Non-Hispanic	0.2098	0.1932	0.2097 (0.0116)
Latinx/Hispanic	0.7902	0.8068	0.7903 (0.0116)
Distance learning			
Coursework all online	0.4192	0.3660	0.4192 (0.0134)
Took at least one in-person class	0.5808	0.6340	0.5808 (0.0134)
Population/sample size	5,024	1,620	1,620

*Standard error.

Note: Non-Hispanics are individuals who did not identify as Latinx/Hispanic and did not have family roots in Mexico or Central America.

individuals who took at least one course in person versus those who were enrolled only in online coursework. Because these weights were applied, and because of the relatively high response rate, we consider our results to be representative of the Oxnard student population aged eighteen and over. (The TYS excludes minors, including students under the age of

eighteen who are concurrently enrolled in high school and college.)

CSU Channel Islands
The TYS targeted CSUCI students who had attended high school in Oxnard. At the time of this report, data collection is ongoing. Similar to the Oxnard College sample, the CSUCI survey sample will be weighted so that it reflects the student population.

INTERVIEW SAMPLE AND RECRUITMENT

Led by Professor Chavarria, the research team conducted follow-up interviews with a subsample of forty Oxnard residents who had not attained a bachelor's degree. Informed by the results of survey data analysis, these interviews sought to better under-stand the labor market experiences of residents. Completed in English and Spanish, each interview lasted between thirty and forty-five minutes and focused on the participants' job experiences, caretaking responsibilities, healthcare, and transportation. Inter-views were recorded and primarily

conducted in person in a public space such as a coffee shop or library. At the end of each interview, participants were compensated with a $30.00 gift card. Interviews were transcribed, and Dedoose qualitative coding software was used to code transcripts into broad themes. The research team then exported thematic excerpts to identify emerging subthemes. For the sake of brevity, the research team incorporated summaries of interview findings into their reports. Future publications will elaborate on interview findings.

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