



What Women (and Men) Want: Credit For What They Know

Dana Ague, Ed.D

Manager, Office of Degree Acceleration,
Walden University

Reena Lichtenfeld, Ed.D.

Vice President, Consulting Services, RNL

Agenda

1. Situation (then and now)
2. Birth of the Office of Degree Acceleration at Walden University
3. Current State of ODA and ROI
4. Next Steps for ODA
5. Q & A



Situation (Then & Now)

Situation

The Workforce and Education

- “In 2013, Georgetown University’s Center for the Workforce & Education reported that by the year 2020, the U.S. would be short approximately 5 million workers who hold post-secondary credentials, with 65% of all jobs requiring a credential beyond the high school diploma (Carnevale, Smith & Strohl, 2013). There are approximately 96.5 million adults in the current workforce over the age 25 who have only a high school credential and either some or no postsecondary degree or credential (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013)”



“Furthermore, “out of the jobs created in the recovery [since the 2008-09 recession], 8.4 million have gone to those with a bachelor’s degree or higher, while high school jobs only grew by 80,000” (Carnevale, Jayasundera, & Gulish, 2017)”



Birth of the
Office of Degree
Acceleration

Office of Degree Acceleration Timeline



PLA offerings included:
portfolios,
credit by exam and
certification
reviews

Increased
workflow by
over 1000%

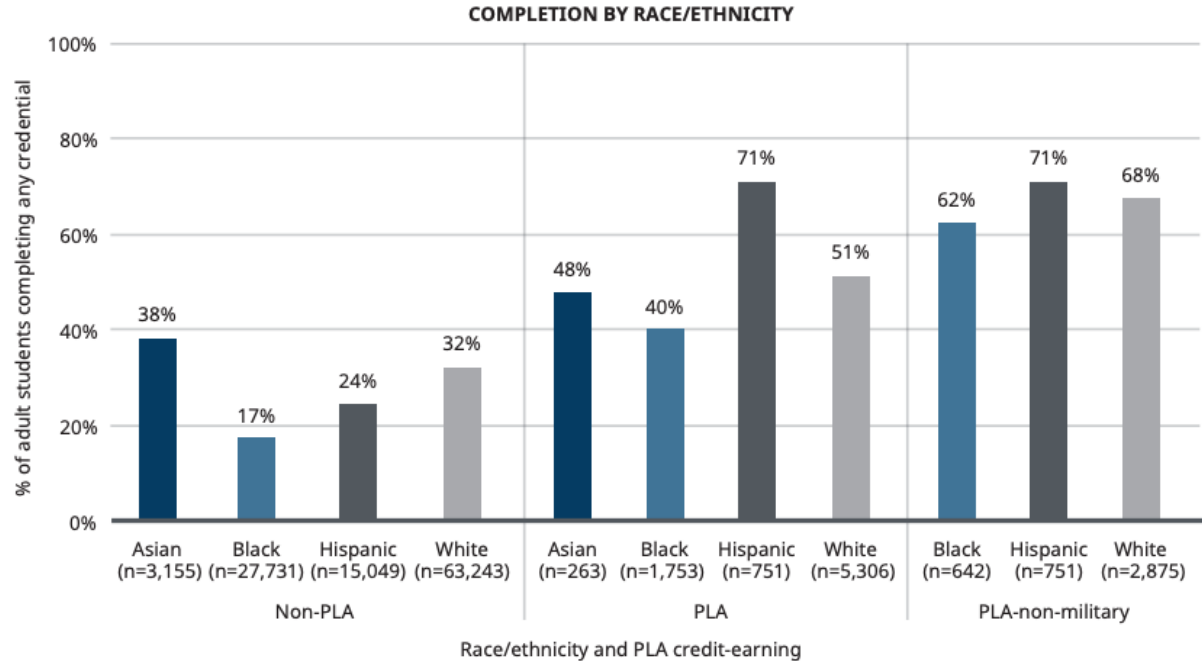


Current State of ODA and ROI

PLA as a Driver of Student Outcomes

- The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning’s 2020 report, *The PLA Boost*, found that “PLA students were more likely to complete college credentials than non-PLA students—this was true for adult students of all races, ethnicities, and income levels” (CAEL, 2020, p. vii) along with other benefits:

- \$1,500 - \$10,200 per student savings
- 9 – 14 months per student average time savings



Impact of PLA on Undergraduates at Walden

PLA is associated with high success rates among Walden undergraduates: *“Students who earn PLA credits are statistically more likely to retain and graduate and have higher GPAs. They are 3 times more likely to retain and graduate than students who do not earn PLA credit”* (internal communication, Walden Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, 2020)

PLA & Alternative Credit	Graduated/enrolled	
	N	%
No PLA/Alternative Credit	9,967	37.6%
PLA/Alternative Credit	796	69.4%
Total	10,763	39.0%

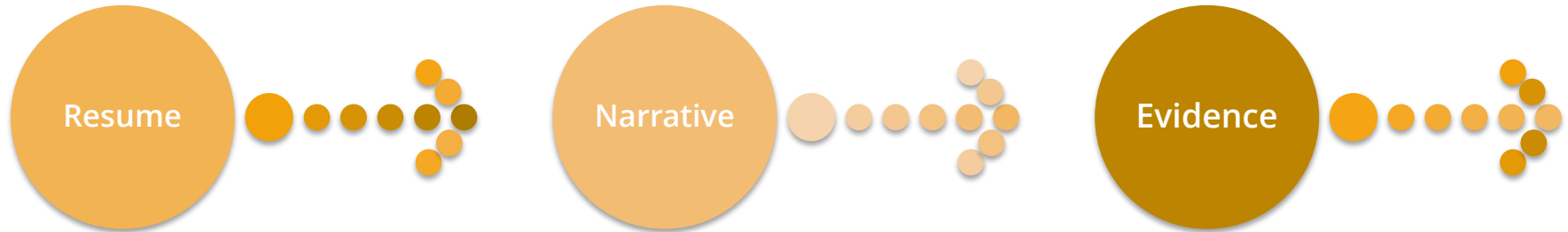
PLA & Alternative Credit	Graduated	
	N	%
No PLA/Alternative Credit	1,573	27.2%
PLA/Alternative Credit	122	58.9%
Total	1,695	28.3%

Types of Prior Learning Credit

- ▶ Prior Learning Portfolio
- ▶ Credit by Exam
- ▶ Certain types of certifications/trainings
- ▶ ACE military credits
- ▶ Can earn up to 90 credits of prior learning

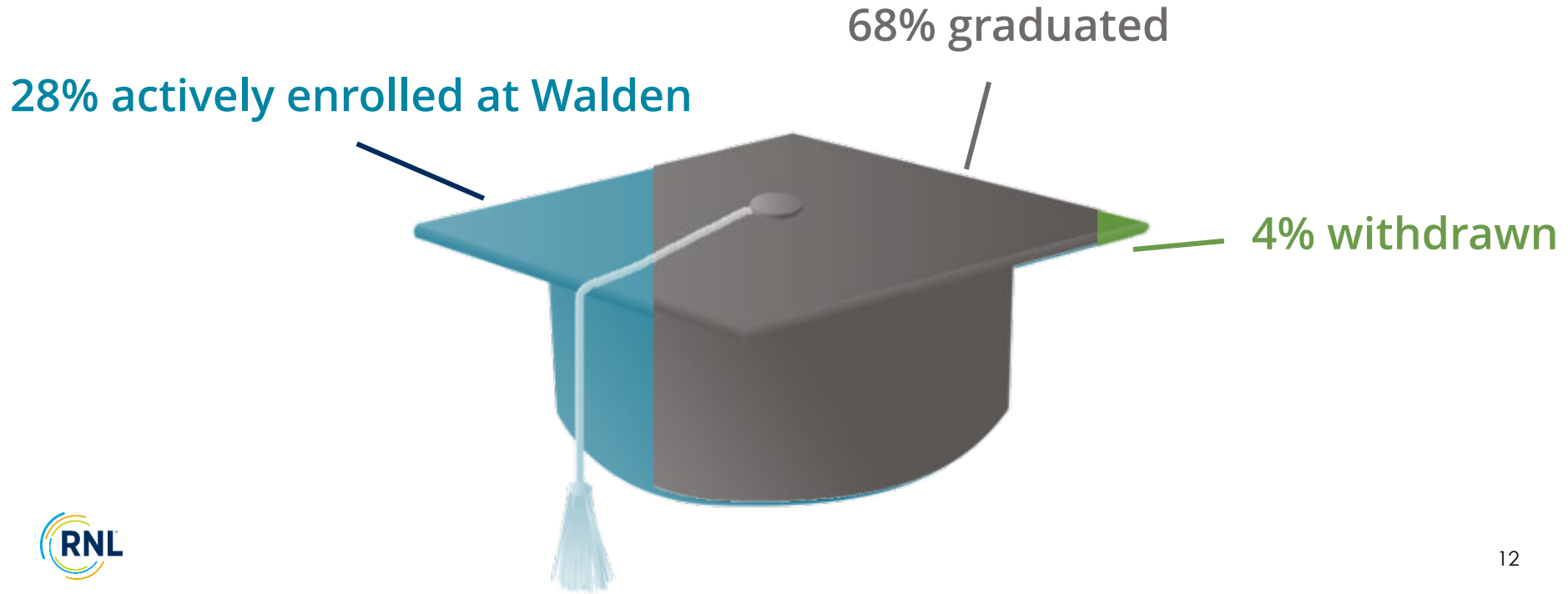
Prior Learning Portfolio

- ▶ Portfolio Goal: To show college-level learning through experience for a course as a way to earn credit for that course
- ▶ Portfolio Cost: \$150 for faculty portfolio assessor review



By the Numbers

- ▶ Small or large, the ODA is almost always able to provide some kind of degree acceleration option for students – 99% pass rate for students who attempt a portfolio!



Credit by Exam

- Some experiential learning can also be used to “test out” of certain courses
- CLEP, DSST (DANTES), ECE (UEXCEL)
 - The cost typically ranges from \$85-\$110 per exam
 - Practice exams and study materials available
 - Students take these exams at a local testing center



Alternative Credit Courses

- ▶ Self-paced and cost-effective courses taken with partner institutions
- ▶ Typically used for fulfilling General Education, LL Elective, and/or LL Core courses
- ▶ StraighterLine, Sophia Learning, Saylor





Next Steps for ODA

What's Next?

- PLA Marketplace Concept
 - One stop shop for all things PLA where prospective and current students can explore and self-assess their prior learning options
- Challenge Exams
 - Work product based



Q & A

Thank You!



Dana Ague,
Manager, Office of Degree
Acceleration, Walden University
Dana.Ague@mail.waldenu.edu



Reena Lichtenfeld, Ed.D.
Vice President
Consulting Services, RNL
Reena.Lichtenfeld@Ruffalonl.com