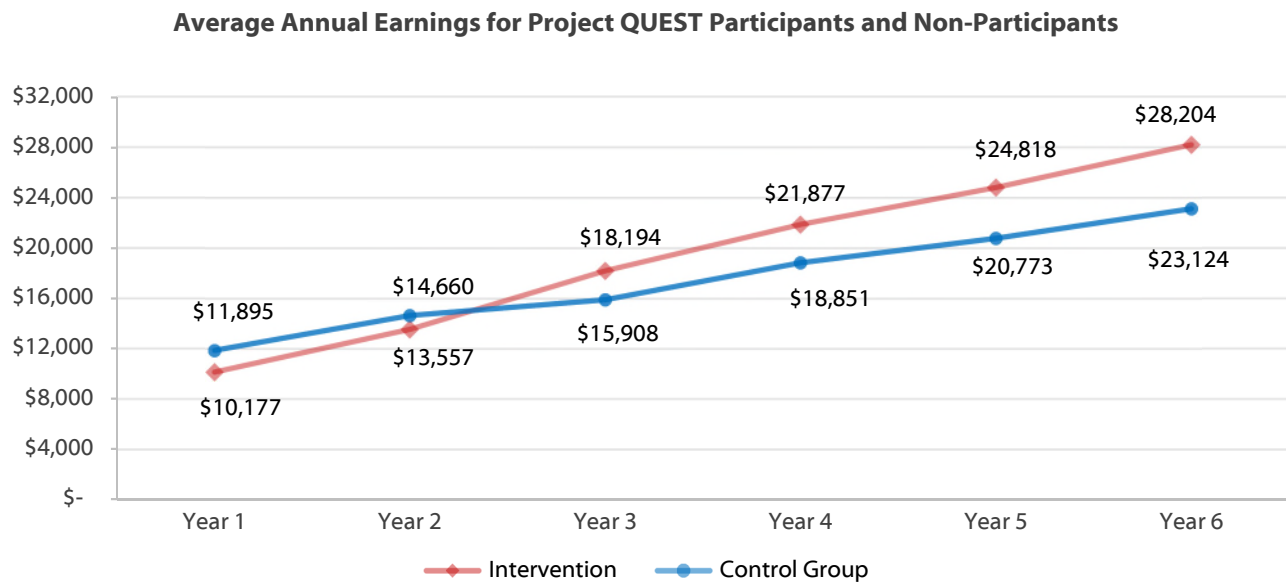


Interventions to Provide Support and Skills Training Improves Employment Outcomes for Students in Some Two-year Programs



Given cost pressures at colleges, identifying interventions that can have the greatest impact on student success is vital. Research using random controlled trials provides meaningful insight into the extent to which various interventions are effective in promoting desired outcomes.

Project Quest is a San Antonio, Texas organization aimed at helping low-income residents complete job-focused higher education programs and become gainfully employed. The organization provides students in specific technical and skill-based programs with a comprehensive suite of support and resources including financial assistance, remedial instruction for placement tests, personal and academic counseling, weekly meetings with a focus on life and study skills, and job placement assistance throughout the student's time pursuing a degree and employment.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of these resources, Project Quest conducted a randomized trial among students who started services with Project Quest between 2006 and 2008 and followed them for six years. The evaluation focused on those pursuing skilled technical positions in medical fields (e.g., registered nurses, licensed vocational nurses, sonography technicians, etc.). Students who completed the program saw long-term gains in wages and employment, with participants earning over \$5,000 annually, on average, and experiencing a 15% higher level of year-round employment compared to the control group. These gains were primarily realized during the last half of the six-year observation period.

Source: Economic Mobility Corporation, Inc., Escalating Gains: Project QUEST's Sectoral Strategy Pays Off, April 2017 (<https://economicmobilitycorp.org/escalating-gains-project-quests-sectoral-strategy-pays-off/>).

