THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
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Shorter Training, Smaller Rewards?

Training Outcomes for Youth WIOA Individual Training Account Recipients

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Prior Research Findings

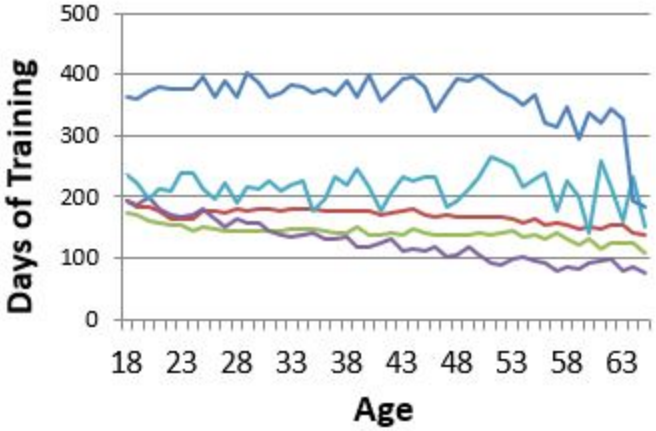
- Growing interest in non-degree credentials – certifications/certificates, apprenticeships, licenses, and much more!
- Non-degree credentials associated with labor market rewards (e.g., Kleiner and Krueger 2010; Xu and Trimble 2016; Albert 2017).
- Short-term and non-degree credentials characterized by some of the same inequalities seen across higher education (e.g., New America reports; Kim and Chatterji 2020).
- Credential quality *appears to be* related to labor market outcomes (Crawford and Sheets 2015; Taylor and Soares 2020).
- Danger of tracking disadvantaged individuals into dead-end credentials and careers.

Summary of Methods

1. Population: WIOA Individual Training Accounts
2. WIOA PIRL dataset (Q2 2018)
3. Calculation of length of training
4. Regression analysis predicting post-completion earnings for different segments of youth population
5. Analysis of healthcare sector, variables of policy interest

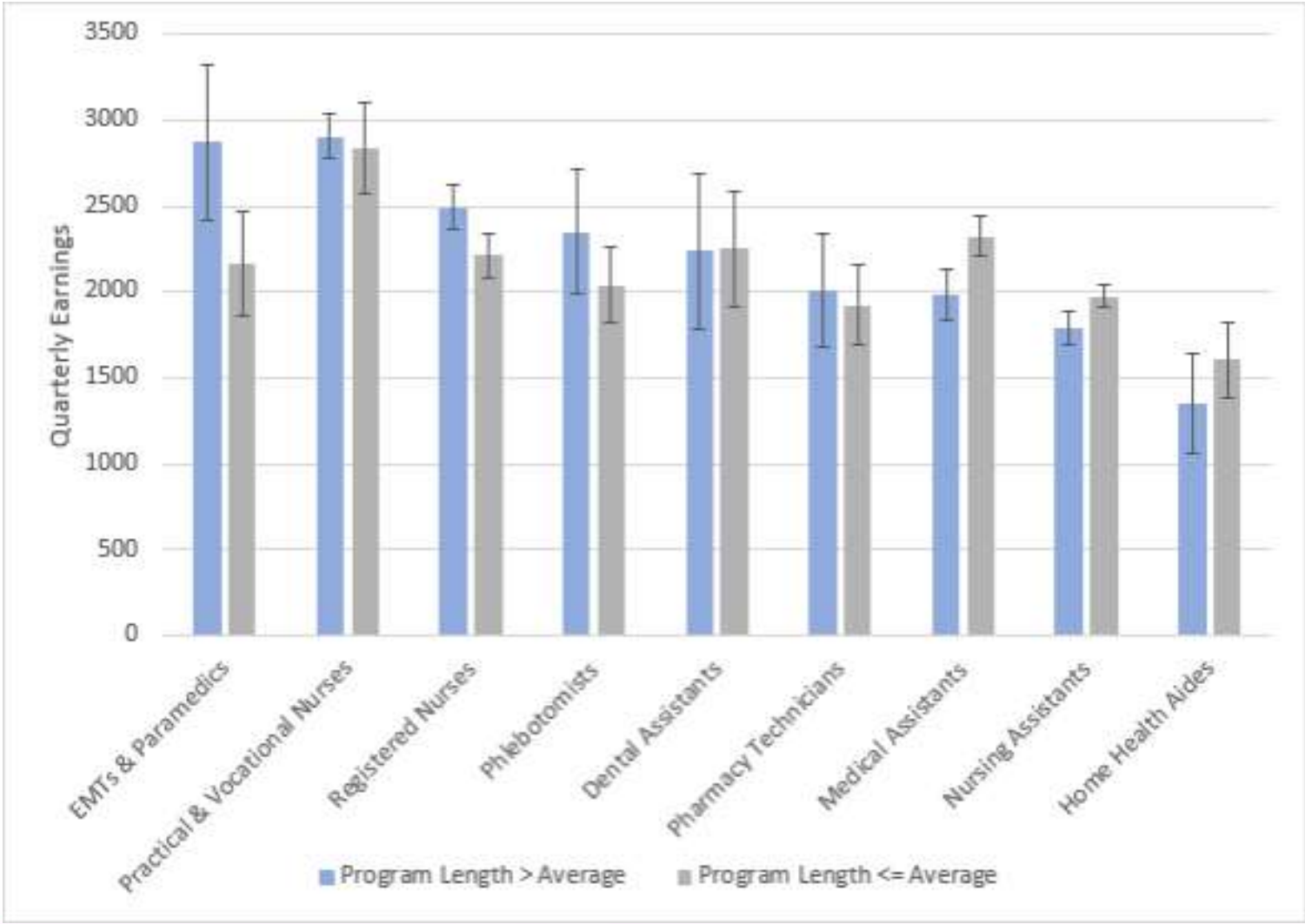
Results

- Variation in training duration by age
- Shorter programs = lower post-completion earnings
- Not uniform across occupations
- Former TANF, homeless youth experience lower post-completion earnings



Policy Implications

1. Emphasis on short-term credentials risks leading individuals to miss programs that yield better long-term outcomes.
2. Longer programs may provide return on investment that exceeds direct costs.
3. Need remains for better data, including for individuals not covered by WIOA and training provider characteristics.
4. Potential value of TrainingProviderResults.gov.

COVID-19

- Many common training choices are hard-hit by COVID and may not recover for years (e.g., culinary, clerical).
- Healthcare occupations are hit-and-miss in terms of relationship between duration and earnings.
- Lack of data on virtual vs. in-person is a barrier to research.