



**SCHOLARS**  
STRATEGY NETWORK

## Reassessing Education and the American Dream

**Henry A. J. Ramos**, The New School  
**Ofronama Biu**, Urban Institute

As the start of another school year arrives, millions of Americans will head off to college with the dream of getting a degree that will help them achieve economic security. But such dreams will not become reality for everyone.

Historical structures and outcomes undercut the long-held assumption that a good education offers a meaningful pathway out of poverty and second-class citizenship for people of color. In fact, **new research shows** that the higher people of color go up the socioeconomic ladder, the wider the gap in their earnings relative to white people.