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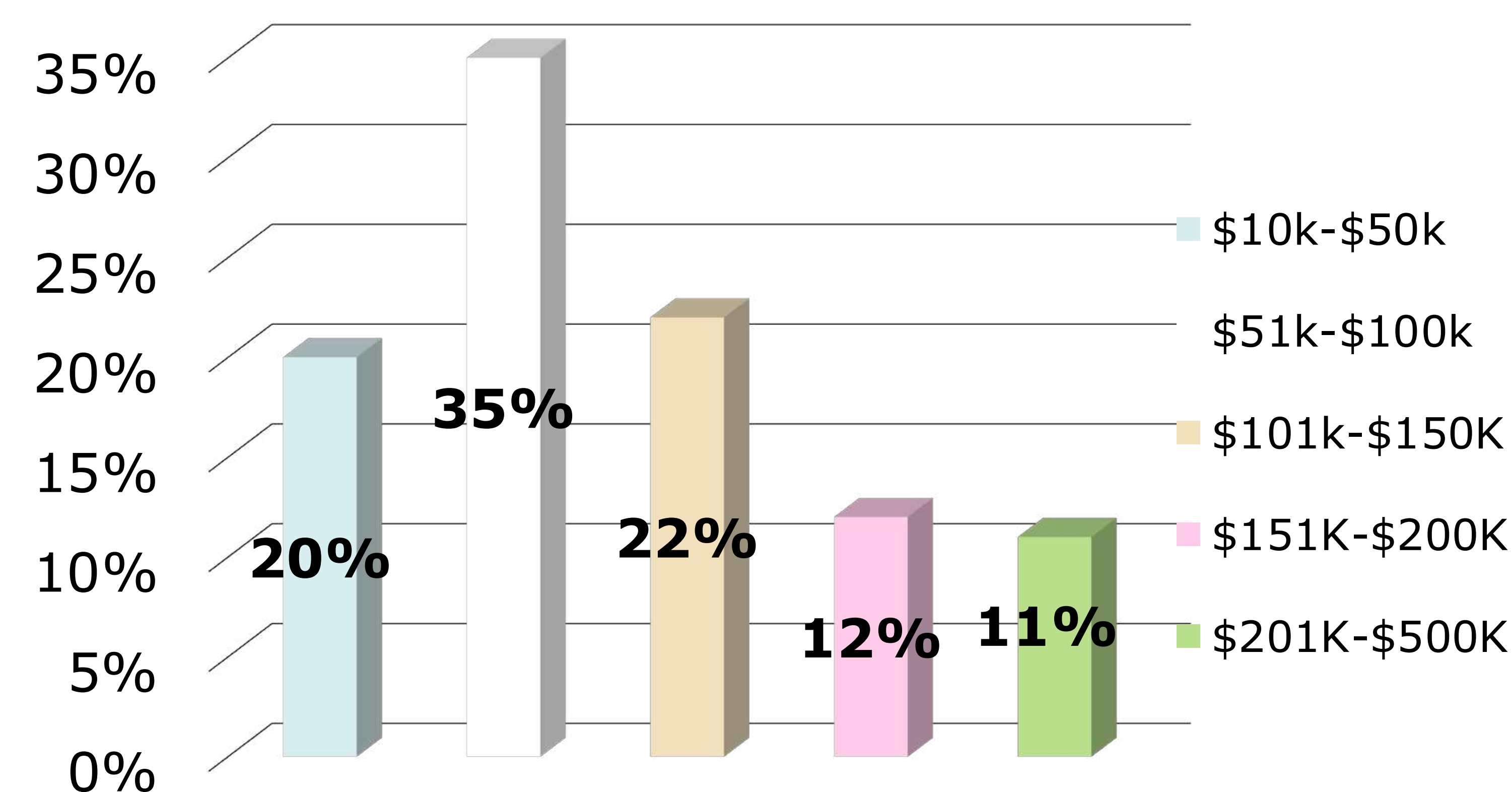
## INTRODUCTION

This study examines income differences between white alumni and alumni of color in the School of Journalism & Media Studies (JMS) at SDSU.

Public relations students in the fall 2015 JMS 581 class, instructed by Dr. David Dozier, contributed to this study. The data analysis outlines the broad issue of underrepresentation of minorities in the JMS field.

This study not only documents the income disparity but also shows the mechanisms for how that income disparity exists.

## FINDINGS



## HYPOTHESES

- White alumni earn higher incomes, on average, than alumni of color.
- White alumni have more professional work experience than alumni of color.
- Alumni with more professional experience earn higher incomes than those with less professional experience.
- Public relations majors (including military PAOs) report higher incomes than do other majors.
- White alumni majored in public relations more frequently than alumni of color.
- Media studies majors report lower incomes than do other majors.
- Alumni of color majored in media studies more frequently than white alumni.
- White alumni earn higher incomes than alumni of color, after controlling for the influence of PR/media studies major and years of professional work experience. **[DISCONFIRMED]**

## METHODS

### POPULATION

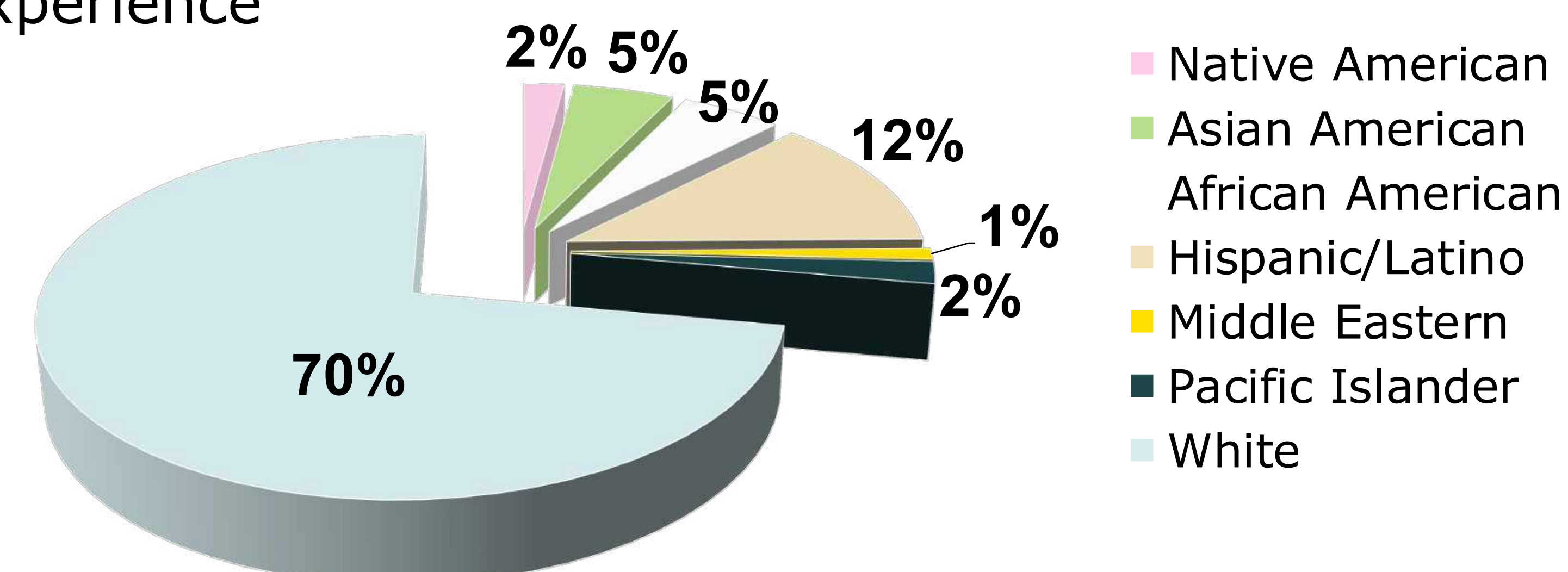
Alumni of the School of JMS from 1950-2015

### PROCEDURE

- Forty-one face-to-face qualitative depth interviews were conducted between August-September 2015
- Findings of the depth interviews were synthesized into an online questionnaire distributed to alumni
- Respondents were solicited by e-mail addresses obtained from the School of JMS
- Final sample size was 973, with a four percentage point margin of error
- Completion rate for the valid sample was 22.5%

## FINDINGS

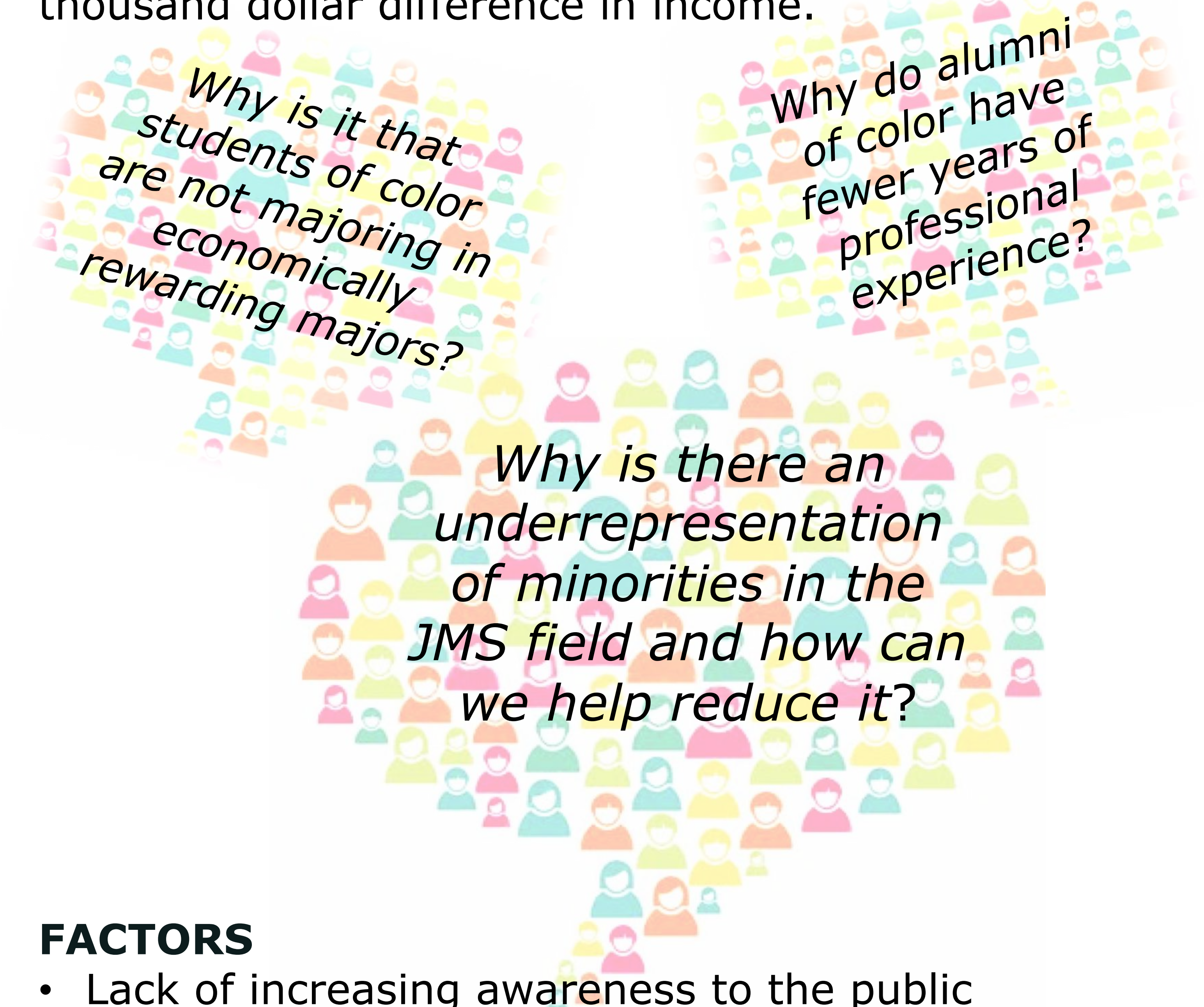
- White alumni earn higher incomes, on average, than alumni of color (This is explained, in part, because white alumni have more professional work experience than alumni of color, leading to higher incomes)
- White alumni earn higher incomes, on average, than alumni of color
- White alumni majored in PR more than alumni of color, while alumni of color majored in media studies more frequently
- Unadjusted average annual income for white alumni is \$118,815 annually, while the average for alumni of color is \$103,426
- [HYPOTHESIS h]** After controlling for the influences of choice of major and professional experience, the adjusted annual income for white alumni is \$117,706; adjusted income for alumni of color is \$109,238
- While not statistically significant, alumni of color in the sample earn \$8,468 less per year than their white counterparts, after controlling for major and years of experience



## DISCUSSION

The current study aims to examine that alumni of color have fewer years of professional experience, are more likely to major in the lower-paying media studies major and less likely to major in the higher-paying public relations major.

Hypothesis h determines that even when we control these three factors and make both alumni equal in terms of professional experience, there is still an \$8 thousand dollar difference in income.



### FACTORS

- Lack of increasing awareness to the public
- No role models for students to look up to, leading to a lack of identification with a professional in their field of choice
- Unpaid internships

### POSSIBLE FACTORS

- Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation (GSP) test requirement
- Discrimination

Educating minority ethnic and low socioeconomic communities about the career options in JMS and encouraging students of minority to major more in PR will shrink the gap of experience/income in the JMS field. Recruiting students of minority at a young age will increase awareness and attract a more ethnically diverse ratio of future professionals. Eliminating unpaid internships would offer students of lower income access to the opportunities of learning about JMS fields.