

Executive Summary

The Undereducated American

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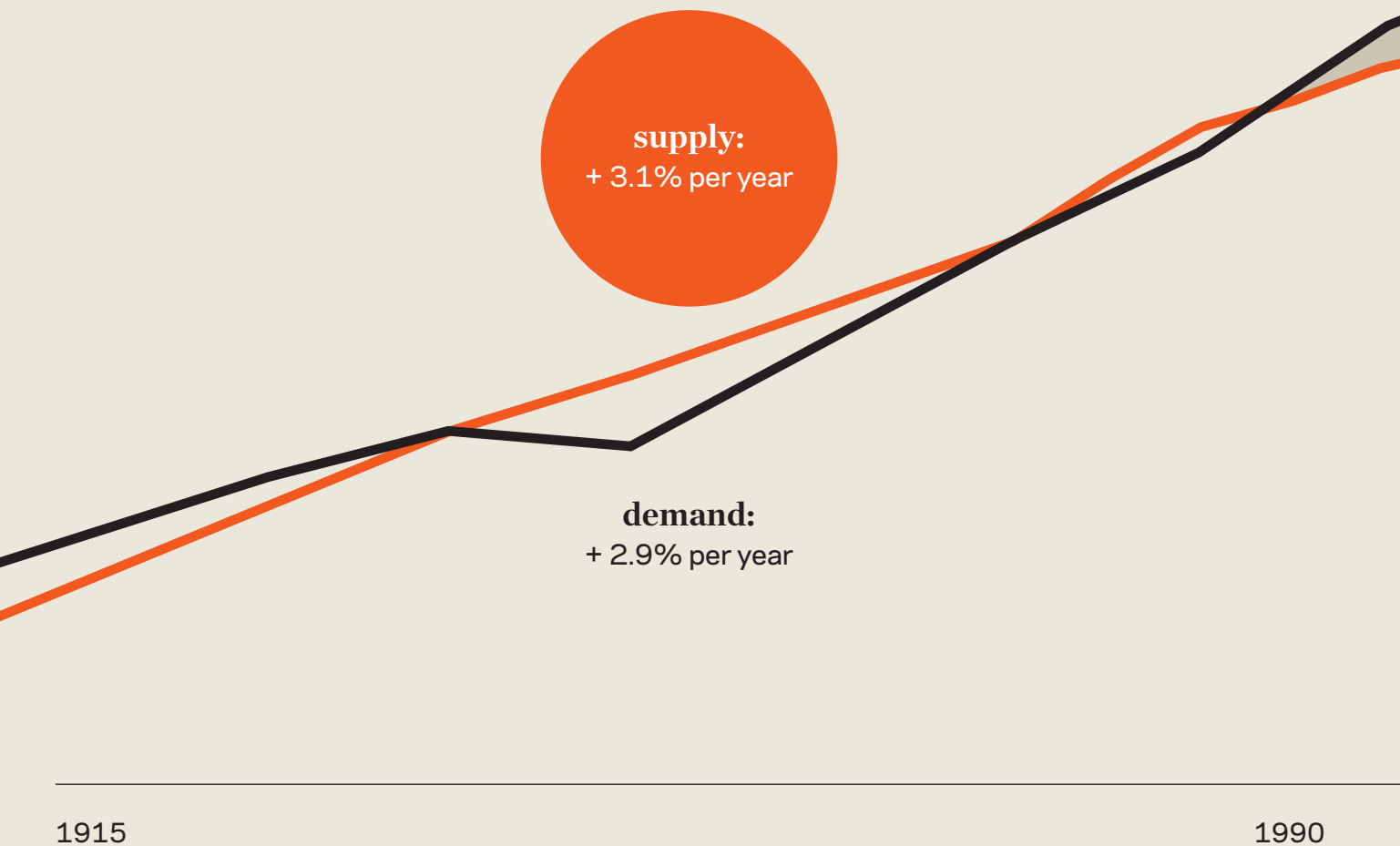
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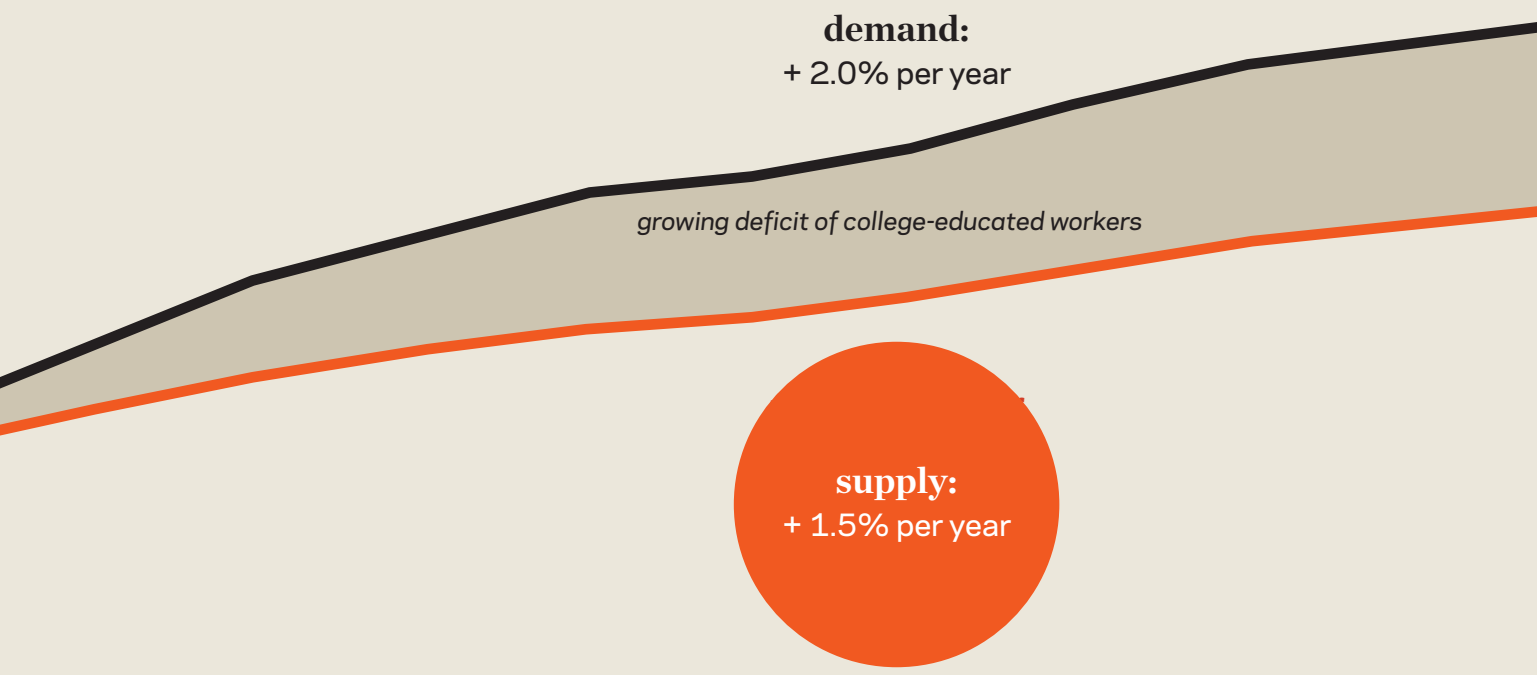


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The United States has been underproducing college-going workers since 1980. Supply has failed to keep pace with growing demand, and as a result, income inequality has grown precipitously.

From 1915 to 1980, supply grew in tandem with demand. But, starting in 1990, the share of college-educated young people in the workforce rose very slowly.



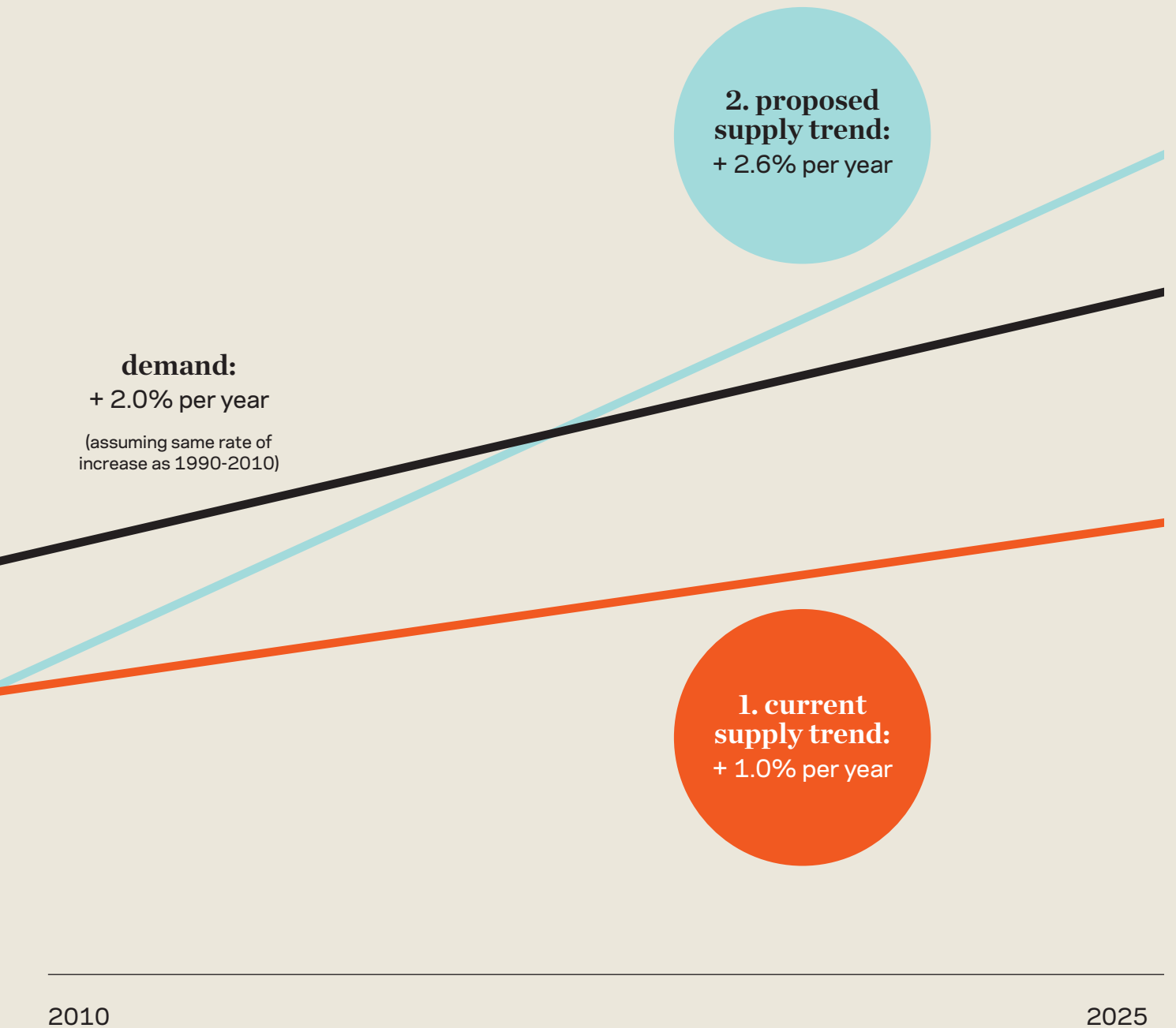


demand:
+ 2.0% per year

growing deficit of college-educated workers

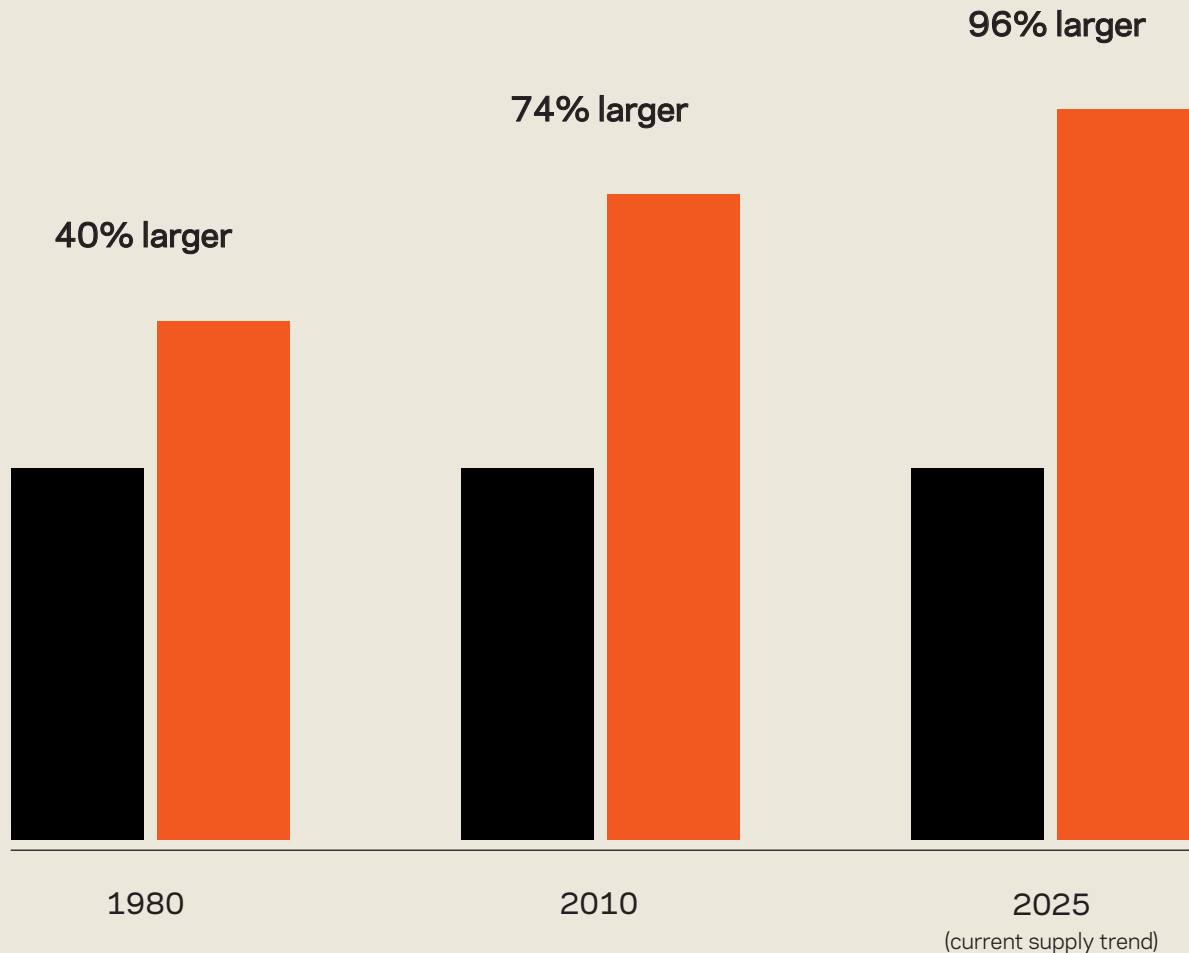
supply:
+ 1.5% per year

Looking ahead to the year 2025, there are two potential paths forward.



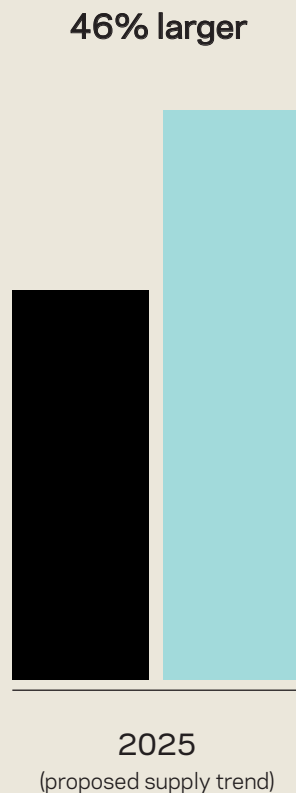
If we continue to underproduce college-educated workers, the large and growing gap between the earnings of Americans of different educational attainment will grow even wider.

- High school earnings
- Bachelor's degree earnings



What's the solution? If we were to add **20 million** postsecondary-educated workers to the workforce, income inequality would decline.

- High school earnings
- Bachelor's degree earnings



Adding an additional 20 million postsecondary-educated workers over the course of the next 15 years is not impossible. It will make our level of educational attainment comparable with other developed nations, help us meet the economy's need for efficiency, and reverse the growth of income inequality.

Acknowledgments

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For the full report of *The Undereducated American*,
please access cew.georgetown.edu/undereducated.

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The Undereducated American is comprised of a full report and an executive summary. Both can be accessed online at cew.georgetown.edu/undereducated.

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