

# Building California's Public Health Workforce



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**Thank You**

## **Covid has shown us just how decimated the U.S. governmental public health workforce has become**

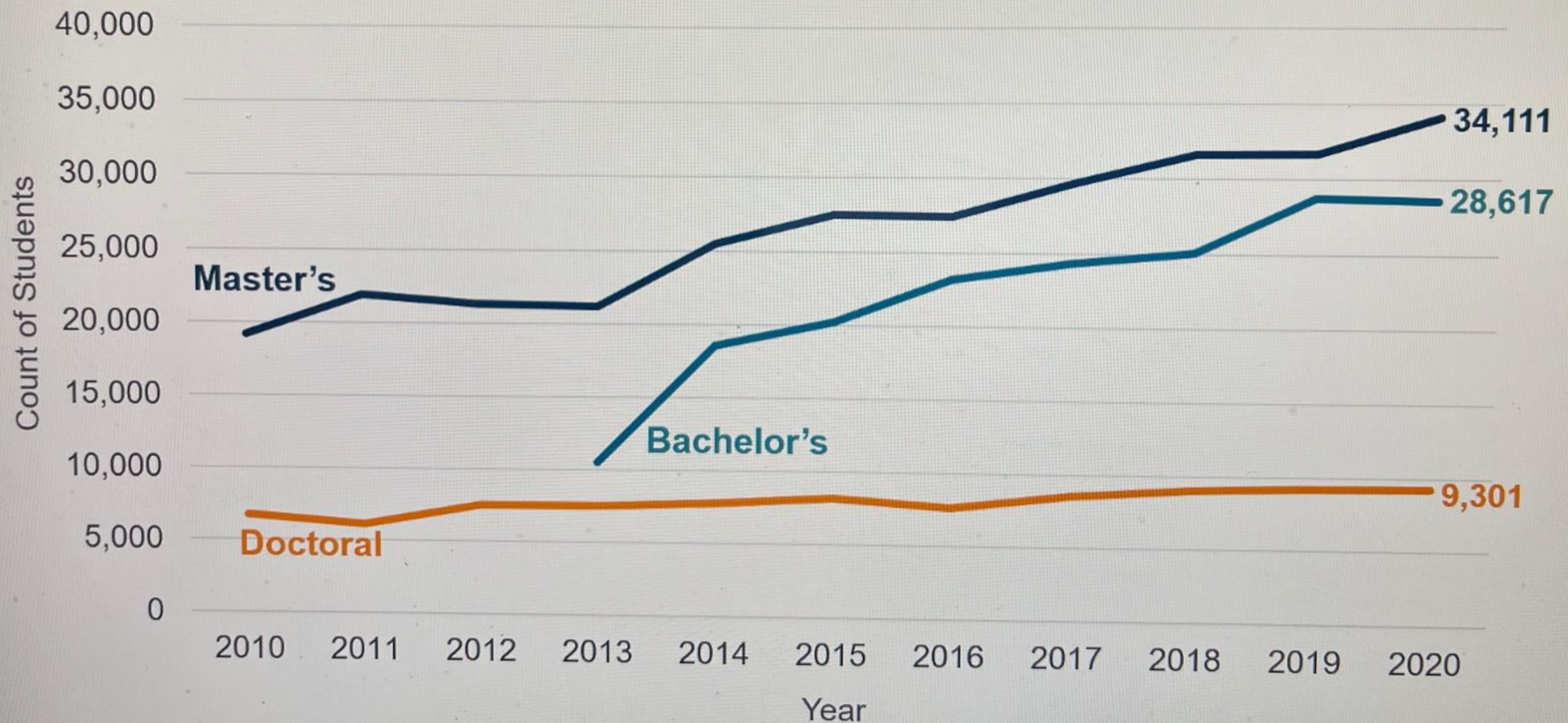
- **U.S. state and local health departments have lost 50,000 staff in the past decade**
- **State & local governmental public health workforce = 197,000 (compared to 1 million doctors in U.S.)**
- **50% considering leaving or retiring by 2023**

Leider JP, Coronado F, Beck AJ, Harper E. Reconciling Supply and Demand for State and Local Public Health Staff in an Era of Retiring Baby Boomers. *Am J Prev Med.* 2018;54:334-340.

Bogaert K, Castrucci BC, Gould E, Sellers K, Leider JP. Changes in the State Governmental Public Health Workforce: Demographics and Perceptions, 2014-2017. *J Public Health Manag Pract.* 2019;25:S58-S66.

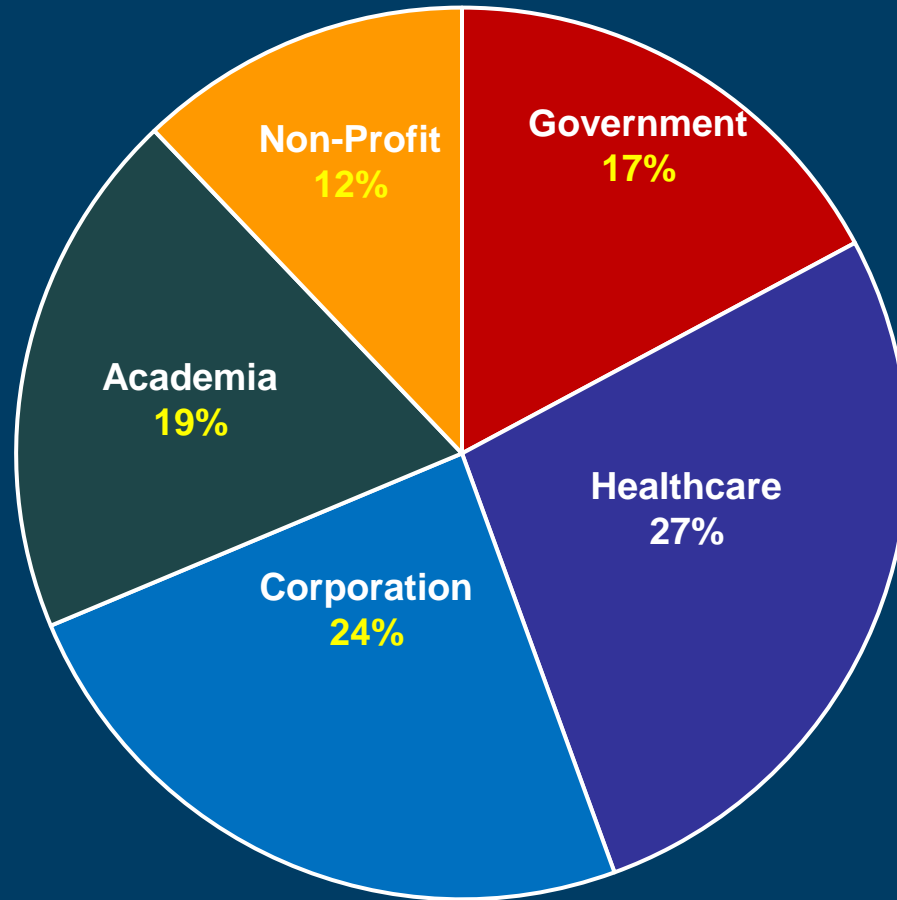
# Good News: More students are getting a public health degree

Students by degree level, 2010-2020



## Bad News:

Less than 1 in 6 graduates are going into governmental public health



# Facilitators & Deterrents to Employment in Governmental Public Health

## What Graduates Liked

- **Job security (84.7%)**
- **Competitive benefits (82.2%)**
- **Identifying with the mission of the organization (82.2%)**

## What Graduates Didn't Like

- **Inability to innovate (19.2%)**
- **Uncompetitive salary (17.8%)**
- **Lack of autonomy/employee empowerment (15.3%)**

# Public Health Graduates: Deterrents to Employment in Governmental Public Health

**TABLE 4**

**Qualitative Themes and Quotes About Governmental Public Health Application and Hiring Process**

Theme	Participant Quote
Application process burdensome/onerous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The federal process in particular is too onerous.”—<i>Federal applicant</i></li> <li>• “The centralized application process was burdensome. It was hard to weed through all of the jobs to find those relevant to me.”—<i>Local applicant</i></li> <li>• “Seemingly automated system so you have to know the buzz words.”—<i>Federal applicant</i></li> <li>• “An exam was mentioned as a requirement for many positions. I did not apply for those.”—<i>State applicant</i></li> </ul>
Process too slow/too long	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Someone was hired before they even received my resume because of how long the review process takes. There are LOTS [sic] of jobs I would LOVE to have, but I cannot afford to wait 6 months.”</li> <li>• “The application process takes too long and has too much red tape.”—<i>State applicant</i></li> <li>• “I received a call back to interview for a governmental public health position almost 2 months after I initially applied.”—<i>Federal, State, and Local applicant</i></li> </ul>
Nepotism/connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “There is a common belief that to get hired in a governmental job you have to ‘know someone’ and I did not have any connections so I applied to fewer jobs.”—<i>Federal applicant</i></li> <li>• “When applying for these jobs, I felt that I was just one of thousands applying with no way to differentiate myself unless I knew someone in the hiring office. I felt that the positions I applied for were likely being filled from within. I am not confident that anyone ever looked at my resume or any application materials.”—<i>State applicant</i></li> </ul>
Poor communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “There is no feedback as to whether (your application) was reviewed or processed, accepted, or rejected. It takes a very long time to process and in the interim I got another job offer which I took without waiting to hear whether I would get an interview or not.”—<i>State applicant</i></li> <li>• “The worst part is the waiting and hearing back, which I feel like doesn’t happen very often.”—<i>Federal and State applicant</i></li> <li>• “The application status never gets updated.”—<i>Federal, State, and Local applicant</i></li> <li>• “Difficult and bureaucratic process with no feedback and little chance of getting an interview.”—<i>Federal and Local applicant</i></li> </ul>
Governmental public health not innovative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “There were not a lot of jobs that interested me. I want to be on the cutting edge of my field, which does not describe governmental public health.”</li> </ul>

# Building Pipeline to Governmental Public Health

- **Offer more (paid) internships**
  - Graduates who interned at governmental public health are 3 times more likely to work there than those who didn't
- **Streamline hiring process**
  - 55% of graduates sought employment at governmental public health; only 17% got hired
- **Strengthen academic health departments**
  - Graduate internships
  - Post-graduate governmental public health residency
  - Joint appointments for junior faculty (e.g. K-award in governmental public health)
  - Exchange program for senior faculty & executives (e.g. sabbatical in local health departments in exchange for detail in school of public health)