A Rising Tide Lifts All Boats: The Power of Peer Networks to Build Community

The Council of Independent Colleges

Academic Leadership NOW&NEXT

2024 Institute for Chief Academic Officers and Their Teams // November 1–4, 2024
Hilton Portland Downtown // Portland, Oregon

Presenters

Mia Bertagnolli, Interim Provost,
Gonzaga University

Chrystal Bruce, Associate Dean of the School of STEM,
John Carroll University

Hala Schepmann, University Board Trustee and Professor of Chemistry,
Southern Oregon University

Chair

Sarah Kirk, Provost and Dean of Faculty,
Hobart and William Smith Colleges

NSF ADVANCE ASCEND Goals

- Increasing the advancement of mid-career women in STEM fields utilizing regional peer-to-peer networks for both faculty and administrators

- Creating agents of change by providing education, training and professional support that would equip

  ○ women faculty for promotion and leadership positions
  ○ administrators to develop inclusive campus policies and cultures

- Driving institutional transformation by identifying, developing, and pursuing goals that reduce obstacles and increase the retention and advancement of a diverse faculty in STEM

ASCEND: Advancing STEM Careers by Empowering Network Development

50 Institutions

3 Geographic Regions

75 Participants

17 Alliances

+

Monthly & Annual Meetings

Professional Development

Content Experts

Strategic Plan Development & Ongoing Assessment

➔

Individual Promotion and Institutional Change

The ASCEND Network

Build a cohesive leadership team, including support personnel

Create a safe, confidential space

Provide structure with flexibility

Ensure participants share a common thread

Building Capacity

Offer a variety of topics, speakers, and resources

Consider size of the group
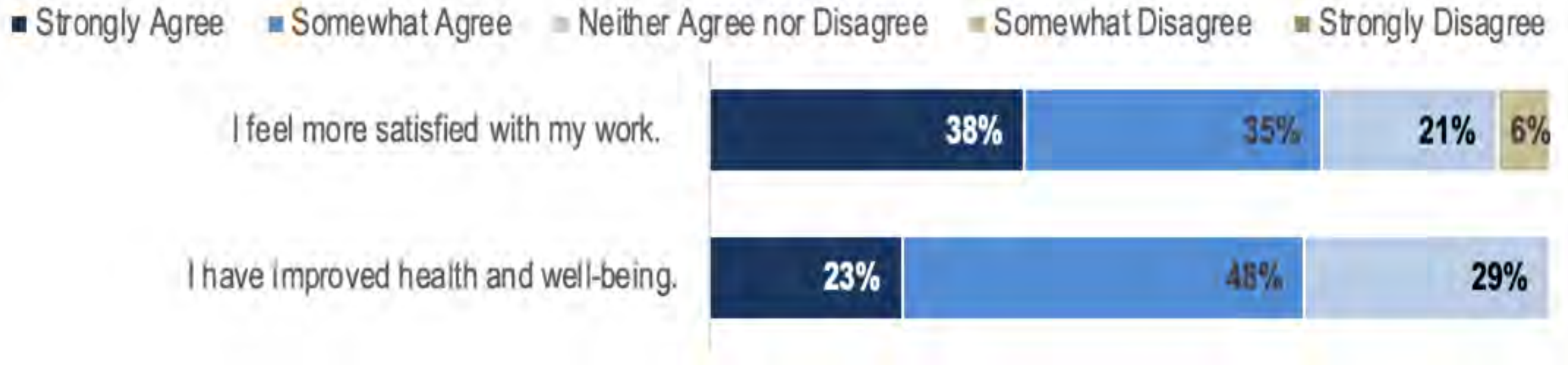
Encourage holistic support

Communicate frequently using a variety of modes

Creating a Community to Grow Leaders

Job Satisfaction and Well-Being

Due to my participation in ASCEND…..

Legend: Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Strongly Disagree

I feel more satisfied with my work. — 38% | 35% | 21% | 6%

I have improved health and well-being. — 23% | 48% | 29%

Source: 2024 Faculty Survey (n = 48)

Meeting Goals: Promotion
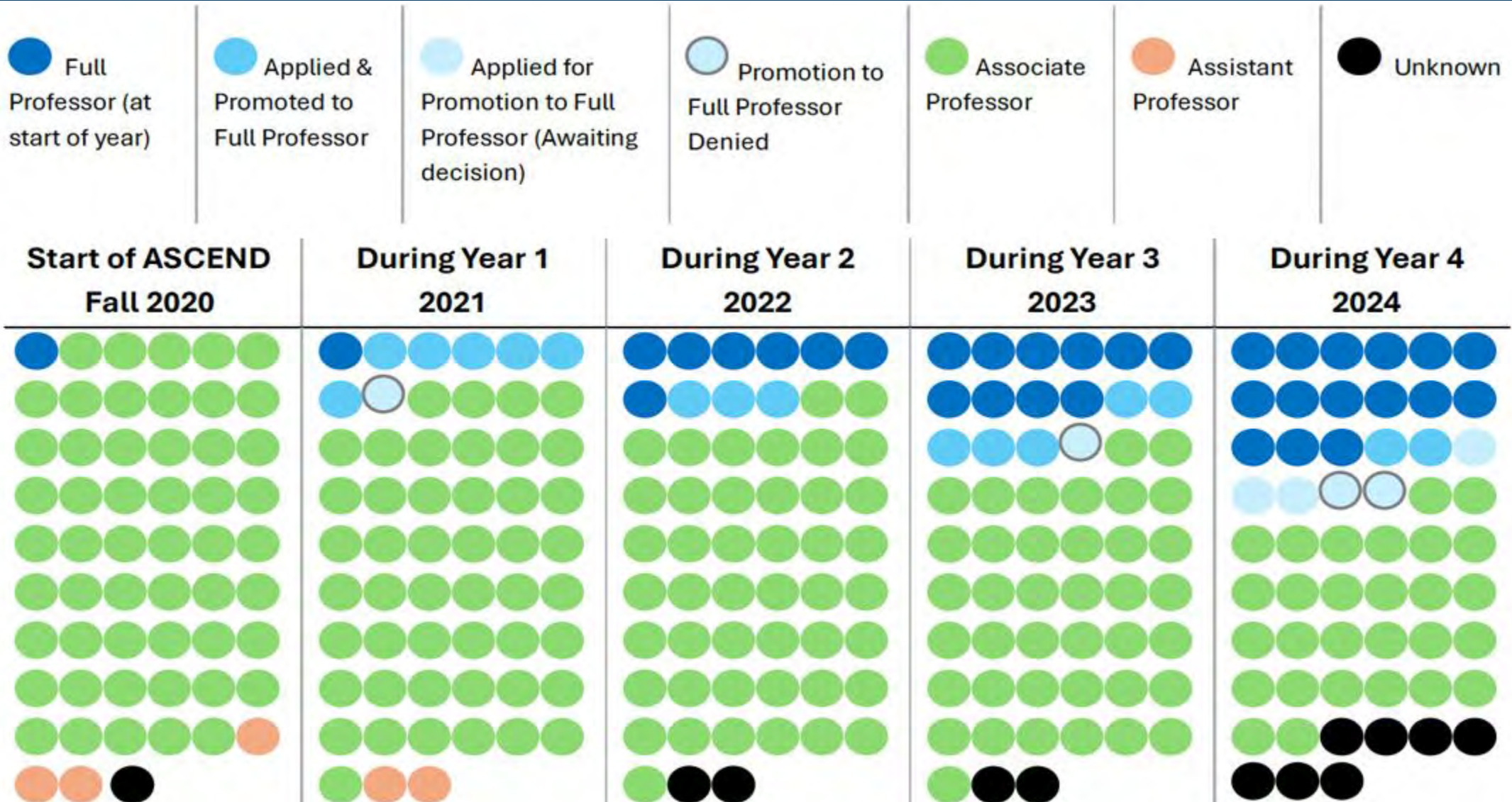
… and Advancement

"I've become more aware of **explicitly making goals and working to achieve them**. I've also become more aware of where I find **satisfaction in my career** and guiding my activities to align."

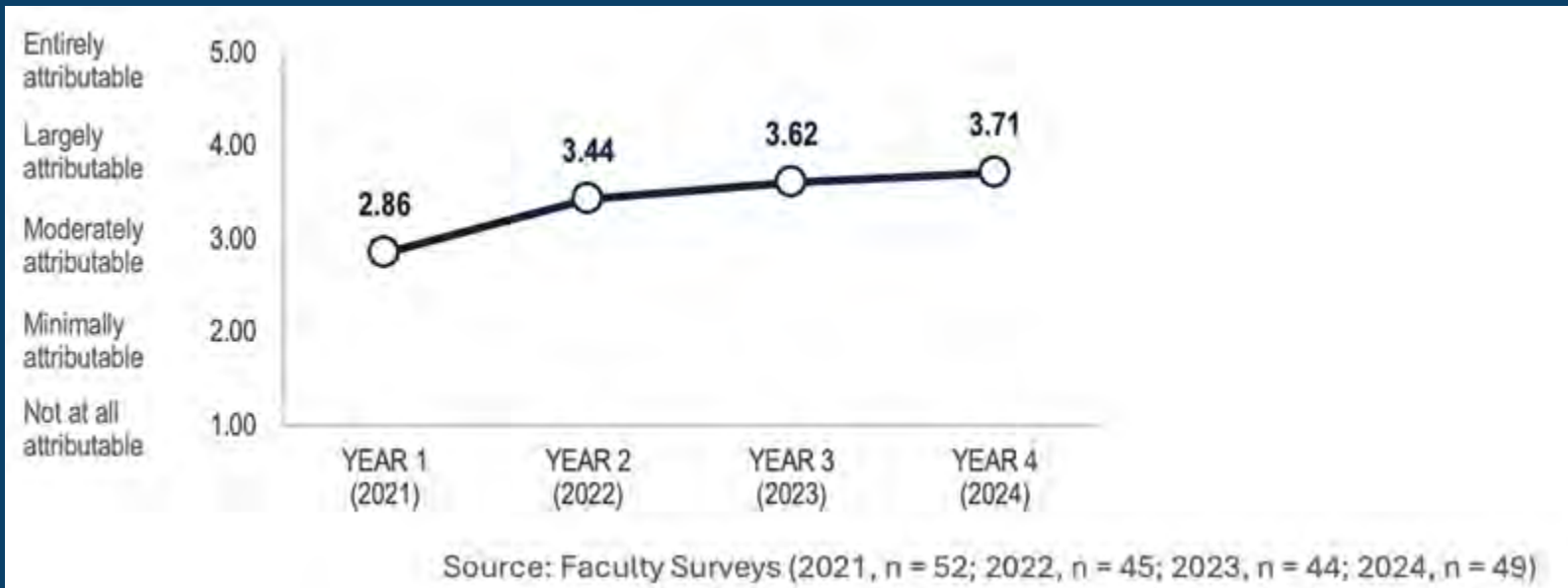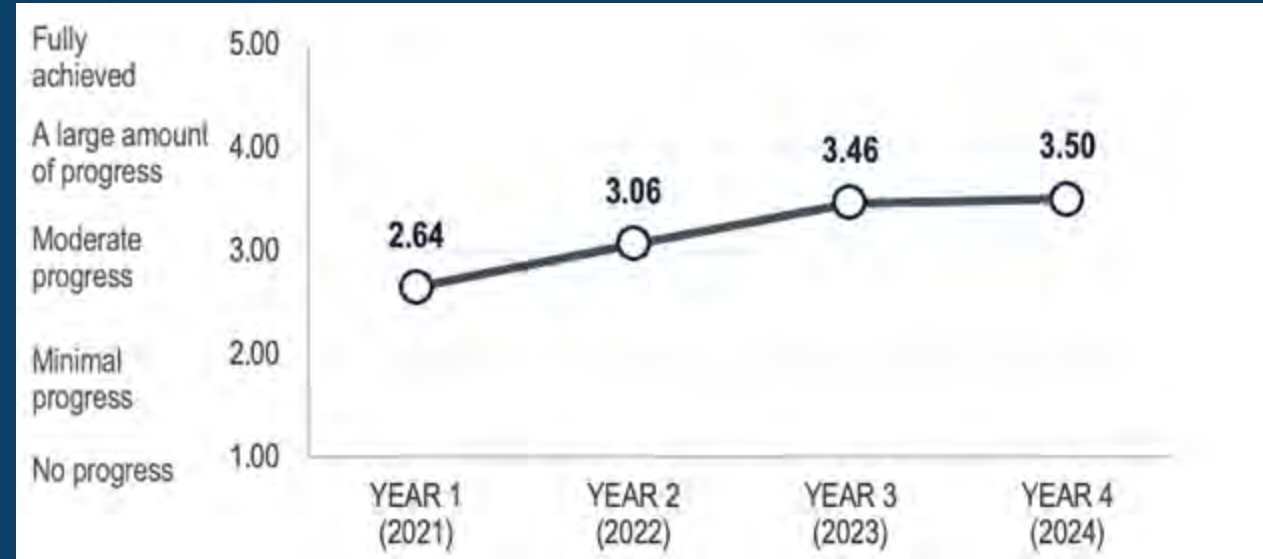# Learning New Leadership Strategies

How would you describe your progress toward achieving the goal during this past year?

Fully achieved	5.00
A large amount of progress	4.00
Moderate progress	3.00
Minimal progress	2.00
No progress	1.00

2.64 — YEAR 1 (2021)
3.06 — YEAR 2 (2022)
3.46 — YEAR 3 (2023)
3.50 — YEAR 4 (2024)

Entirely attributable	5.00
Largely attributable	4.00
Moderately attributable	3.00
Minimally attributable	2.00
Not at all attributable	1.00

2.86 — YEAR 1 (2021)
3.44 — YEAR 2 (2022)
3.62 — YEAR 3 (2023)
3.71 — YEAR 4 (2024)

Source: Faculty Surveys (2021, n = 52; 2022, n = 45; 2023, n = 44; 2024, n = 49)

To what degree would you attribute any progress that you made toward achieving this goal to your participation in ASCEND?

Due to ASCEND...

I feel better equipped to navigate professional challenges.
- Strongly Agree: 48%
- Somewhat Agree: 46%
- Neither Agree nor Disagree: 6%

I feel better prepared to hold leadership positions.
- Strongly Agree: 50%
- Somewhat Agree: 33%
- Neither Agree nor Disagree: 17%

Legend: Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Strongly Disagree
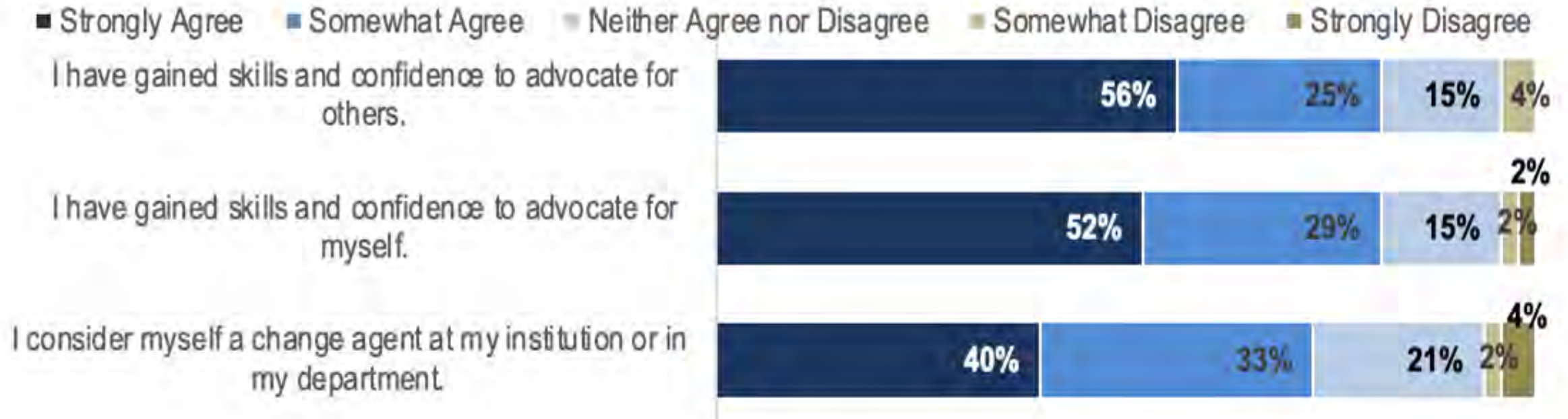
Source: 2024 Faculty Survey (n = 48)

Leadership Development

"I have new respect and also **interest in leadership positions**. I also have established connections and have resources that make me **feel more prepared** in my current position, and **more knowledgeable** about how to manage my career going forward."

Institutional Impact

Due to my participation in ASCEND…

Legend: ■ Strongly Agree ■ Somewhat Agree Neither Agree nor Disagree Somewhat Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree

Statement	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I have gained skills and confidence to advocate for others.	56%	25%	15%	4%	
I have gained skills and confidence to advocate for myself.	52%	29%	15%	2%	2%
I consider myself a change agent at my institution or in my department.	40%	33%	21%	2%	4%

Source: 2024 Faculty Survey (n = 48)

Empowering Individual Advancement and Institutional Transformation

"The gist of it is ….. You should think about what benefit it's going to have for you personally, for your students, for your institution, and think at multiple levels of the stakeholders, not just you….. your voice and your values…And whatever project I decide to continue should be something that I really want to do and that I think is going to give me the most benefit and be sustainable for what I want to do… NSF ASCEND has definitely helped me frame what I'm doing in this other perspective that I didn't have before."

"Learning about the practices of other institutions has helped me put my institution's practices into perspective and gives me ideas about suggestions I can pose to make improvements at my institution."

Identify & Address Institutional Needs

- ❖ Briefly introduce yourself and share your role at your institution.

- ❖ Share a need you would like to address through network development.

- ❖ What efforts could you/have you put in place to build those networks or supports?

Share out your ideas

ACTION PLAN	Build Network	Create Community	Design Structures to Achieve Your Goal	Employ and Advance Your Goal
Aims				
Needed Resources				
Critical Considerations				

A Comprehensive Guide To Creating And Nurturing Inter-Institutional Alliances

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Panel Q&A

Having fun then...
and now!

In Appreciation

Advisory Board

Graciela Lacueva * John Carroll University

Becky Wai-Ling Packard * Mount Holyoke College

Florastina Payton-Stewart * Xavier University

Karinna Vernaza * Gannon University

John Wheeler * Furman University

Project Coordinator

Laura Cunningham * John Carroll University

Thank you for attending this session!

The Council of Independent Colleges

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