There’s a landslide of evidence demonstrating the impact of Optimism on things that matter. Here are some of the key findings:

Academics/Performance

* 1st yr. Optimists had a greater prob. of completing law school and had higher salaries a decade later (Carver & Scheier, 2014)
* Optimists had:
  + Higher grades in their 1st year of college (even when controlling for scholastic ability)
  + More specific goals
  + Actively sought out more academic advising (Peterson and Barrett, 1987)
* Optimism predicted student dropout rates (Kamen & Seligman, 1987).
* Pessimism predicted quitting for officers in boot camp and the first year of training at West Point (Schulman, 1995)
* Optimists are more likely to be high achievers and not quit than pessimists (Schulman 1995)
* Optimism precedes, predicts, and is one of the causes of achievement. It seems to predict performance above and beyond ability (Schulman, 1995).
* Even when controlling for student intelligence levels, students with higher hope and optimism achieved higher levels of academic performance (Curry et al., 1999; Curry et al., 1997)
* Higher levels of optimism result in higher levels of academic performance (Chemers et al., 2001)
* Higher hope and academic optimism can lead to stronger grade performance (Bressler et al., 2010)
* Pessimists misremember past performance in a more negative light than what they actually accomplished (Gibson & Sanbonmatsu, 2004)
  + After failure, pessimists remembered fewer near successes compared to optimists
* In an academic advisor/advisee setting, pessimistic students gave their advisors lower likeability ratings (Goodmon et al., 2015)
* Optimism associates with better adjustment to college and better performance (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1992) (Chemers et al., 2001)
* Optimism and specifically, academic optimism are associated with increased retention in college, increased motivation, and decreased distress (Solberg Nes et al., 2009)
  + Academic optimism is associated with better GPA
  + The impact of optimism on retention is mediated by relationships among optimism and motivation, performance, and adjustment
* Greater levels of optimism predicted greater life satisfaction among law students at the end of the semester (Rand et al., 2011)
* For undergraduates across their first semester of college, optimists became significantly less stressed, depressed, lonely, and more socially supported than pessimists (Scheier & Carver, 1991)
* Optimistic college students in the final weeks of the semester reported developing significantly fewer physical symptoms than their pessimistic counterparts (Scheier & Carver, 1985)
* In a study of military cadets, optimism was strongly related with ratings of leadership efficacy by instructors, peers, and trained observers (Chemers et al., 2000)
* Optimistic high school students demonstrated higher levels of career planning and exploration, were more decided about their career decisions, and had more career-related goals than their pessimistic counterparts (Creed et al., 2002)
  + Those with higher levels of pessimism had lower levels of career and decision-making knowledge, were more career indecisive, and reported lower levels of school achievement
* Research supports the link between positive emotion and enhanced cognitive functioning
  + Subjects induced to be in a good mood are more likely, compared to those in a bad mood or control group, to use efficient and rapid problem solving strategies (Isen & Means, 1983).