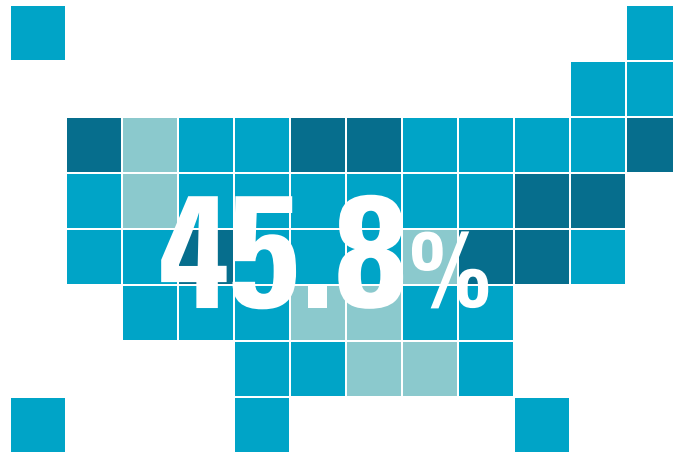


A STRONGER NATION

Learning beyond high school builds American talent



National Summary 2017



Lumina[™]
FOUNDATION

A Message from Lumina's President

In a time of profound change, our commitment is steadfast

We live in unsettling times. Millions of Americans are uneasy right now. They're anxious about the future ... unsure where they fit – or where their children will fit – in the demanding, ever-changing workforce. That unease, in large part, changed our political reality in the last election, and more changes are sure to come.

Still, we can take comfort in an important truth: Change, however unsettling, is inevitable. It may *feel* abnormal at times, but it's actually the norm – and it is necessary.



At Lumina Foundation, we've always embraced change. We see it as a positive force, a vital tool as we pursue our mission of increasing Americans' attainment of education beyond high school. That attainment mission has definitely *not* changed. Quite the contrary; it's more urgent than ever, given Americans' growing concerns about succeeding in the workplace and in life. That's why we at Lumina remain firmly committed to our mission – and to the specific, ambitious attainment goal that drives all of our work.

That goal, known as Goal 2025, calls for 60 percent of Americans to hold a degree, certificate or other high-quality postsecondary credential by 2025. We're more convinced than ever that reaching this goal is crucial if the nation hopes to build the talent it needs to succeed in coming decades.

And that's why change is critical. Everything we've learned in our work convinces us that the goal can't be reached without fundamental change in our nation's postsecondary education system. That's the reason Lumina has long pushed for a *redesigned* system – one that isn't built around institutions' needs, but is instead designed to meet the needs of each student; one that is based, not on how much time students spend in classrooms, but on what they actually learn and can do because of their programs.

This type of student-centered, learning-based system can only be built through new thinking, implemented with the help of new partners, and driven by a variety of new approaches. Recently, we at Lumina adopted a new, four-year strategic plan that lays out some of the steps we're taking to hasten this redesign process. For example:

- We're focusing on efforts to ramp up competency-based education – that is, academic programs in which students advance, not by earning conventional grades, but by demonstrating their attainment of certain skills or their achievement of specific learning outcomes.
- We're reaching out more broadly, and in new ways, to engage communities and employers. We want community and industry leaders to support the educational goals of individual students through traditional methods such as scholarships, mentoring programs and tuition assistance – but that's not all. We also want them to be full partners in the effort to reshape the system so that it better meets the needs of the 21st century economy.
- Also, we're emphasizing the value and importance of *all* high-quality postsecondary credentials, not just two- and four-year degrees. Such credentials include workforce-oriented certificate and certification programs, so long as those programs also offer clear pathways to further education, including degrees.

For us to succeed in each of these three areas – and really, in *any* of the areas of work outlined in our strategic plan – two tools are required: 1.) reliable data about the landscape in which we work and 2.) robust and collaborative partnerships with committed organizations and individuals.

This interactive website, *A Stronger Nation*, can help provide both of those tools. *A Stronger Nation* is all about data – data that can help forge productive partnerships all across the country. Using the most recent Census data, it tracks progress in degree attainment at several levels – nationally, in metropolitan areas, in all 50 states, and down to the county level. It also contains national data and state-specific estimates that show attainment of high-quality postsecondary certificates.

In short, *A Stronger Nation* provides evidence of how well – and where – Americans are learning and developing the talent the nation needs. Just as it has in printed reports of previous years, this latest edition of *A Stronger Nation* can serve as a valuable resource for anyone working in any state, county or metro area to increase postsecondary attainment.

However, there is a change this year – a change for the better, we think. This edition of *A Stronger Nation* was designed purposefully as an online publication, not as a static printed document. This makes for a far more dynamic and interactive publication – one in which you, the user, can manipulate the data to create a variety of useful displays. I encourage you to explore the website, and I hope you like the change.

What hasn't changed, though – what will never change – is the reason that we at Lumina do this work in the first place. We do it to empower and enable *all* Americans to develop the talent they need to build better lives. Equity and inclusion form the heart of our work, because we know the goal can never be reached if large swaths of the population – non-whites, religious minorities, immigrants, the rural working poor – are excluded.

Nor can we succeed without the continued efforts of our dedicated partners. My Lumina colleagues and I thank you for that partnership, and we look forward to working with you in the year ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. P. Merisotis', with a large, stylized initial 'J' and a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

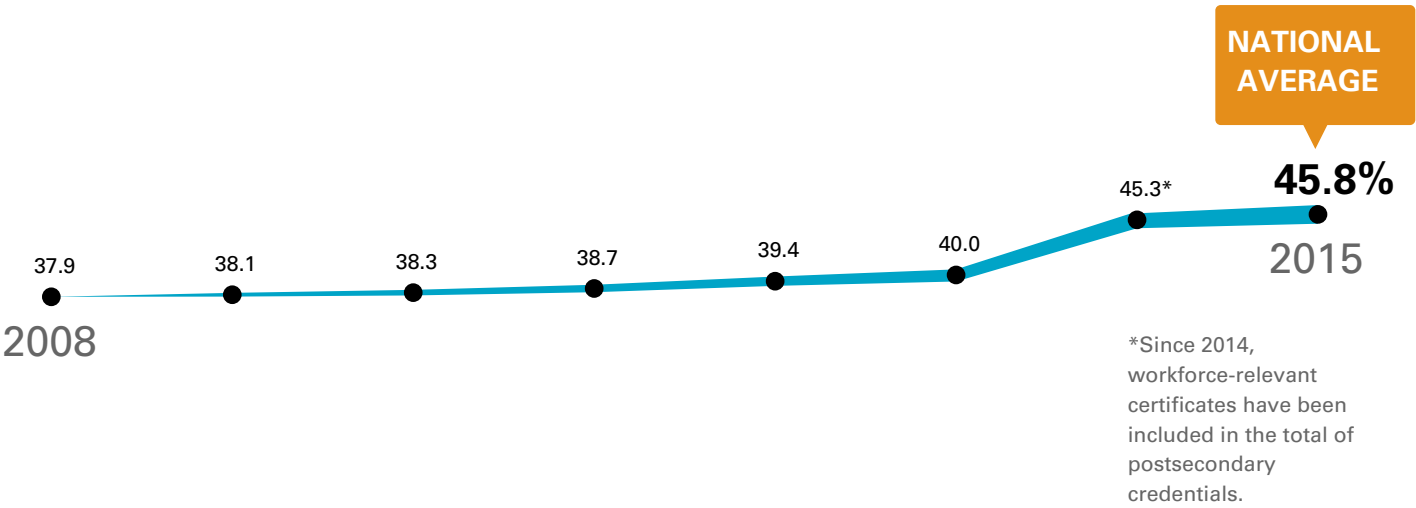
Jamie P. Merisotis
President and CEO
Lumina Foundation

Progress Toward Increasing Attainment

Our nation’s growing need for talent makes it essential that we meet a vital national goal – that is, by 2025, that 60 percent of Americans hold degrees, certificates or other high-quality postsecondary credentials. Since 2009, **Lumina Foundation has reported on the nation’s progress** toward this goal, both to focus attention on the ongoing need to increase education attainment and to hold ourselves accountable for the results of our work.

The good news is that progress has been made since 2009. In this year’s data (for 2015), degree attainment (associate and above) among working-age Americans (ages 25-64) reached **40.9 percent** – an increase of 0.5 percent from 2014. For the 25-34 population, degree attainment increased by 0.6 percent to **42.9 percent**. The attainment rate of high-quality postsecondary certificates is 4.9 percent, meaning that the overall postsecondary attainment rate among the working-age population is **45.8 percent**.¹

This increase in the attainment rate means that the number of American adults with quality postsecondary credentials increased by approximately 840,000 between 2014 and 2015 and by more than 5 million since 2008.

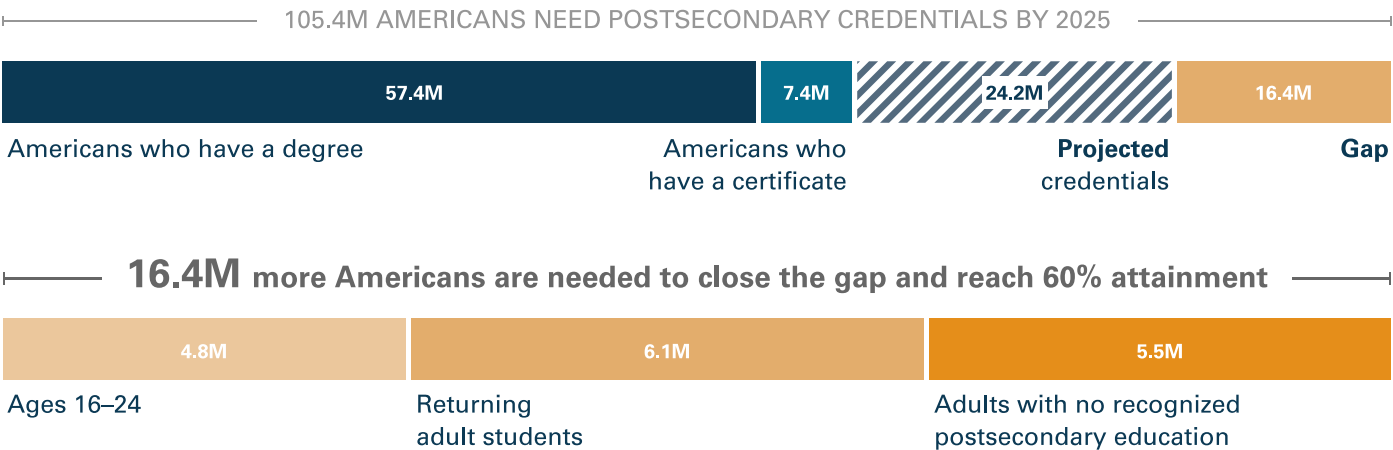


This progress didn’t occur by accident. Forty states have now adopted their own specific and challenging goals for increasing attainment, and some of these goals are even higher than 60 percent. Communities across the nation are developing and implementing plans to increase attainment, and many colleges and universities are focused on increasing the number of degrees and other credentials they award while narrowing or eliminating attainment gaps based on race, ethnicity, and income.

This is encouraging progress, but the need to increase postsecondary attainment is becoming even more urgent. Since 2011, the U.S. economy has added 11.5 million net new jobs for workers with postsecondary education but only 80,000 for those with a high school diploma or less.² True opportunity in America now depends on postsecondary learning, and people who lack quality postsecondary credentials continue to struggle. But opportunities for postsecondary success aren't equally shared, and this means millions of Americans can't fully contribute to the nation's well-being or reach their own goals. The fact that not all Americans have access to high-quality postsecondary learning – and that race, ethnicity, income and immigration status, among other factors, determine who does – is intolerable. This is why Lumina Foundation remains focused on increasing attainment to meet the goal that 60 percent of Americans hold high-quality postsecondary credentials by 2025.

The Road Map to 60% by 2025

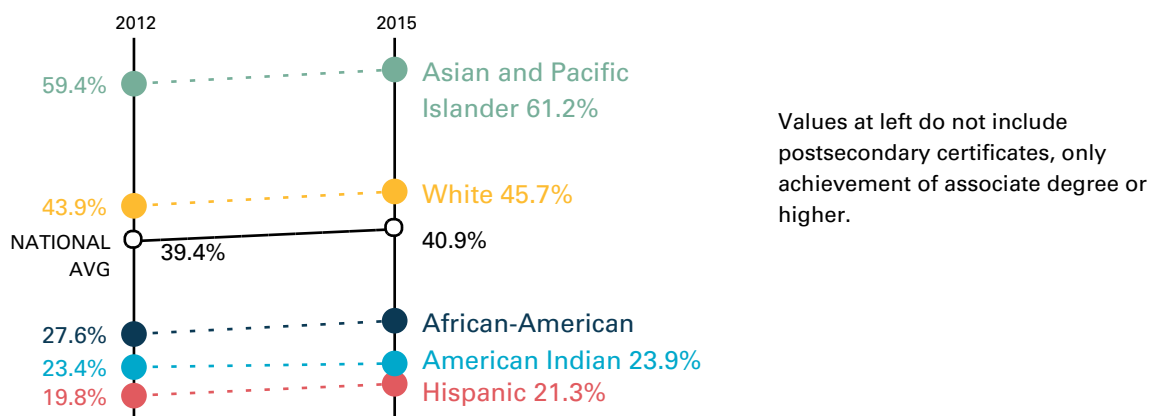
To reach 60 percent, 105.4 million people between ages 25 and 64 will need to hold a credential beyond high school by 2025. Nearly 65 million people between 18 and 54 already have one, and assuming trends continue, 24.2 million more will earn postsecondary credentials by 2025. To reach the nation's goal, **16.4 million more people must earn credentials by 2025**. Achieving this will mean educating millions of Americans who are not on track to obtain a credential beyond the high school diploma if the education system does not change.



Lumina's new strategic plan begins to lay out how more Americans could earn credentials. For states, communities and education providers that are developing plans to increase attainment, it will be helpful to examine more closely the populations of Americans whose attainment must increase. We must increase attainment among members of these populations – what we call "opportunity populations" – if we are to reach the goal.

- 1 The first opportunity population is **traditional-age students**, currently between the ages of 16 and 24, who are unlikely right now to complete postsecondary education. Lumina estimates that by 2025, **4.8 million of the 16.4 million additional credentials need to go to traditional-age students**. While this population gets the most attention from both policymakers and educators, it is not the largest or most critical for reaching the goal. Adult learners will produce most of the additional graduates needed to reach our attainment goal. Still, traditional-age students remain a key piece of the puzzle.

To produce these graduates from the population of traditional-age students, quality postsecondary education must be available to all prospective students. But availability is not enough; proven strategies that increase the success of students from underrepresented groups must be implemented on a wide scale. This is why the completion agenda – efforts to increase both the numbers of college graduates and rates of completion – is so important. In particular, our attainment goals will remain out of reach unless attainment increases significantly among African-Americans, Hispanics, and American Indians.



- 2 **Returning adult students** – those who have attended college but not obtained a credential – are the second opportunity population. By 2025, **6.1 million additional credentials** need to go to these adult learners.

Almost 19 million adults ages 35-64 have some postsecondary education but lack a high-quality credential; whether a degree or other high-value postsecondary credential. Many are Americans who are close to completing but have “stopped out” of college – meaning they are not enrolled and therefore not making progress toward a credential. Many have every intention of finishing, but the longer they stay out of college, the harder it is to come back and complete.

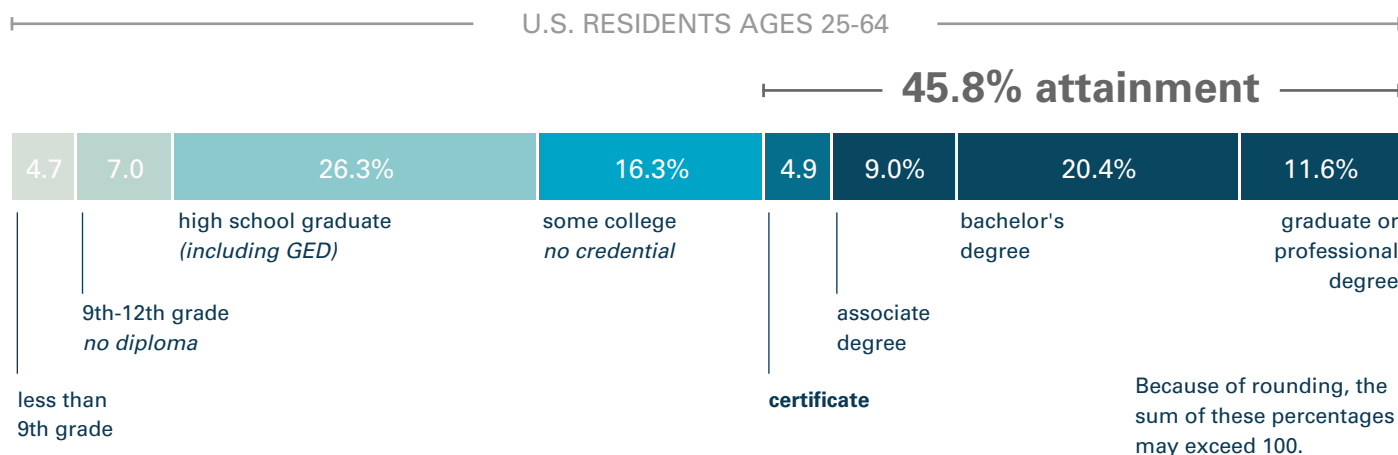
With the right supports, many of these returning adults could be put back on a pathway to completion, including those who are close to earning a credential or who have, in fact, completed the requirements for one but have not been awarded it. Others are further from completion, have moved away from the institution where they began their postsecondary studies, have credits from multiple institutions, or now need to obtain a different credential from the one they originally sought. We need to think more creatively about how to reach these Americans so they have pathways to a quality credential. For example, many of these Americans have obtained college-level learning on the job, in the military, or through public service. We need large-scale systems to recognize that learning so it can be applied to credentials. Postsecondary attainment would likely increase significantly if competency-based learning and other innovative approaches designed to meet the needs of these adult learners were implemented at scale.

- 3 The last opportunity population is the largest, but the most underserved, of all the populations whose attainment must increase if we are to reach the goal. These are the 43.8 million Americans, **ages 25-64, with no recognized postsecondary education**. We believe that, by 2025, **5.5 million of the additional credentials** could go to individuals from this population.

Currently, these Americans have little or no realistic chance to obtain high-quality postsecondary credentials that lead to further education and employment. Millions are workers who have been displaced from middle-class jobs and, due to a lack of postsecondary skills, face enormous difficulty finding jobs that offer the level of income and benefits they once had. Some are recent immigrants with low levels of education and limited proficiency in English. Some are incarcerated. All, however, are individuals who need postsecondary credentials to build better lives for themselves and their families. There is a strong equity imperative to provide meaningful postsecondary learning to these adults who are disproportionately poor and members of underrepresented racial and ethnic groups.

It is wrong to write these Americans off; there are effective ways to get many of them on a pathway to quality postsecondary credentials. For most, the initial pathway will lead to postsecondary certificates and industry-recognized certifications – credentials that demonstrate the skills that can help them quickly obtain good jobs. High-quality certificates – postsecondary credentials usually awarded by educational institutions – can offer pathways to good jobs and further education and could play a larger role as a first step on the ladder to better lives.

Industry-recognized credentials based on competencies and skills also play a key role in expanding postsecondary opportunity. Today, 3.3 million Americans between the ages of 25 and 64 hold a job-related certification as their highest postsecondary credential. Although certifications often lead to good jobs, many do not yet offer clear pathways to degrees and other recognized postsecondary credentials. Where those who hold certifications lack a clear path to further postsecondary education, they remain vulnerable to the next economic downturn or disruption. Strong pathways are essential to assure that certificates and certifications expand opportunity and do not become a lower-quality default credential only for members of traditionally underserved groups.



Are We On Track to Reach the Goal?

The attainment numbers are moving up, but is this progress sufficient to reach the goal? In a word, no. But the way forward is becoming clear, and the work to be done has started. While there are reasons for optimism, it is important to recognize the enormity of the task ahead.

To start with, some of the indicators for the traditional-age student population are encouraging. Despite a reduction in overall college enrollment with the strengthening economy, enrollment by traditional-age students appears to have stabilized after several years of decline and in spite of an ongoing decrease in the number of high school graduates.

Another promising sign is that postsecondary completion rates are up across the board.⁴ More students are completing, whether they attend a two-year or four-year institution, transfer, or study full- or part-time. However, other indicators are not as encouraging. Enrollment for adult students fell by 3.7 percent in Fall 2016, continuing the pattern of the last several years. While this reduction clearly reflects the ongoing economic recovery and improving job market and is to be expected, significant increases in adult postsecondary enrollment and completion are needed to increase attainment to 60 percent. Further, most of the decline in adult enrollment has occurred in for-profit institutions that serve adults with little or no postsecondary learning; this makes the task of developing alternative options for adults who lack postsecondary credentials an even higher priority.

Another troubling sign is that the attainment gap based on income seems to be widening. In recent years, low-income students have seen the greatest reduction in enrollment of any group. This means that access to postsecondary education, which has always been dependent on income, is now even less equal than in the past.⁵ Given the connection between postsecondary attainment and income inequality, widening gaps in college success based on income are rightly considered a national crisis.

Reaching the Goal

While increasing postsecondary attainment is urgent, more and more Americans – including policymakers, community leaders and educators – see the need for action. In addition, we have a much better understanding of the shifts in policy and practice needed to increase attainment; this makes our path to the goal more clear.

In our strategic plan, Lumina outlines a national agenda for creating a postsecondary learning system that can reach the 60 percent goal – that is, that 60 percent of Americans hold high-quality postsecondary credentials by 2025.⁶ The postsecondary learning system must do all of the following:

- Address the root causes of inadequate attainment.
- Make the meaning of postsecondary credentials clear to all.
- Recognize all learning, however and wherever it is obtained.
- Eliminate arbitrary limits on postsecondary opportunity, irrespective of how individuals enter the system or the path through it they choose.
- Place the student, not the institution, at the center.

Over the four years of the strategic plan, Lumina will focus on five interconnected priorities for action – big ideas about how to reach the goal by meeting the needs of the opportunity populations described above. Those five priorities are:

- 1 **A postsecondary learning system where the top priorities are completion of quality credentials, affordability, and closing equity gaps.** Communities, colleges and universities, other postsecondary providers, and policymakers must work together to implement evidence-based approaches that dramatically improve results for students.
- 2 **A new, national system of transparent, high-quality postsecondary credentials.** Emerging approaches offer new ways to expand postsecondary opportunity and increase attainment through clearer linkages between credentials and careers; smoother transitions between education providers; and innovative, flexible pathways for all types of learners.

- 3 **National expansion of competency-based learning.** Well-designed, high-quality competency-based programs – along with other innovative delivery models such as completion colleges and open-source online programs – can help many more Americans obtain high-quality postsecondary credentials.
- 4 **Pathways to initial credentials.** Postsecondary certificates (non-degree credentials usually issued by community colleges and other higher education institutions) and postsecondary certifications (industry-recognized credentials that represent demonstrated skills and knowledge in demand by employers) are valuable postsecondary credentials that can serve as this first rung on the ladder of economic opportunity.
- 5 **An integrated quality assurance system for postsecondary learning.** Through new tools and approaches that have been developed in the last few years, quality assurance systems can ensure that all credentials awarded by postsecondary institutions represent skills and knowledge that can be understood by policymakers and the public and recognized across education providers and employers.

Priorities for Action

More details on these five priorities for action and additional information about Lumina's <https://www.luminafoundation.org/strategic-plan>

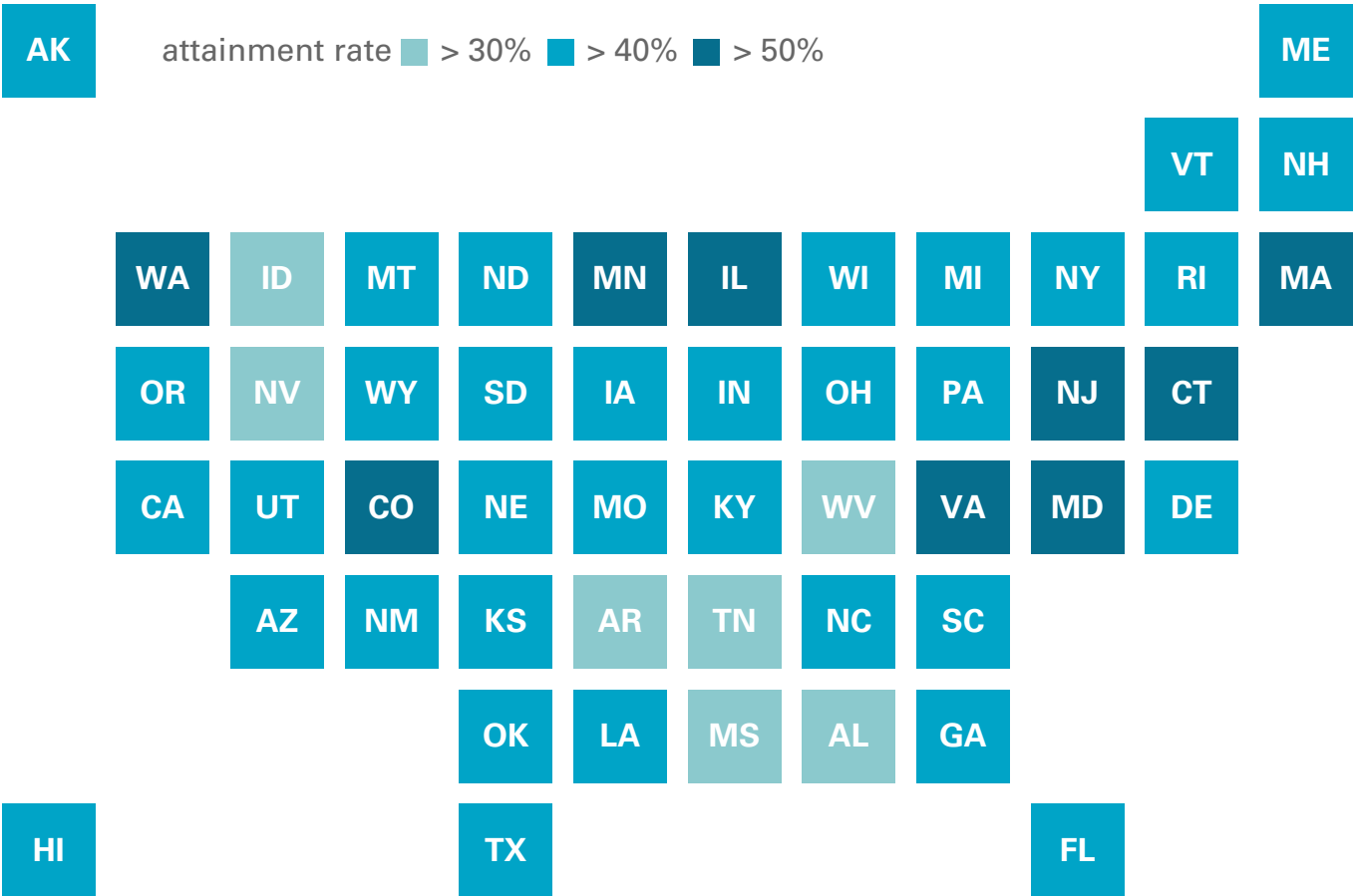
Footnotes

- 1 Lumina's estimate of the attainment rate of high-quality certificates (those leading to further education and employment) comes from a survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago in January and February 2016.
- 2 *America's Divided Recovery: College Haves and Have-Nots*, Center on Education and the Workforce, 2016.
- 3 *Current Term Enrollment Estimates – Fall 2016*, National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, December 2016.
- 4 *Completing College: A National View of Student Attainment Rates – Fall 2010 Cohort*, National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, December 2016.
- 5 *Where Have All the Low-Income Students Gone?* American Council on Education, The Presidency, Terry Hartle and Chris Nellum, Winter 2016.
- 6 <https://www.luminafoundation.org/files/resources/lumina-strategic-plan-2017-to-2020.pdf>

State-by-State Educational Attainment

Not only is the acquisition of knowledge and skills paramount in our economy, the opportunity to participate fully in American life – to hold good jobs, be active citizens, raise families and contribute to building safe and prosperous communities – requires some form of learning beyond high school. **The national rate of educational attainment beyond high school for working-age Americans is 45.8 percent.** The share of residents across states with education beyond high school varies widely, but every state must improve. So far, **40 states** have set attainment goals that meet Lumina’s criteria for rigor and efficacy (i.e., the goal is quantifiable, challenging, long term, addresses gaps, and is in statute and/or a strategic plan).

Explore each state’s attainment rate below. Attainment percentages here reflect workforce certificates along with other post-high school credentials for residents ages 25 to 64.




































State-by-State Comparisons

For generations, Americans could reach the middle class with a high school education or less. Today, millions of the jobs that made this possible have been replaced by technology or through global competition, particularly in industries as diverse as energy, manufacturing, and mining. Meanwhile, the skill requirements for all types of jobs continue to increase. **Today's remaining good jobs require postsecondary-level talent** backed by credentials that signify the acquisition of such knowledge and skills.

Compare education levels across states below. Attainment percentages here reflect workforce-relevant certificates as well as degrees held by state residents ages 25 to 64.*

sorted by NAME ▼▲

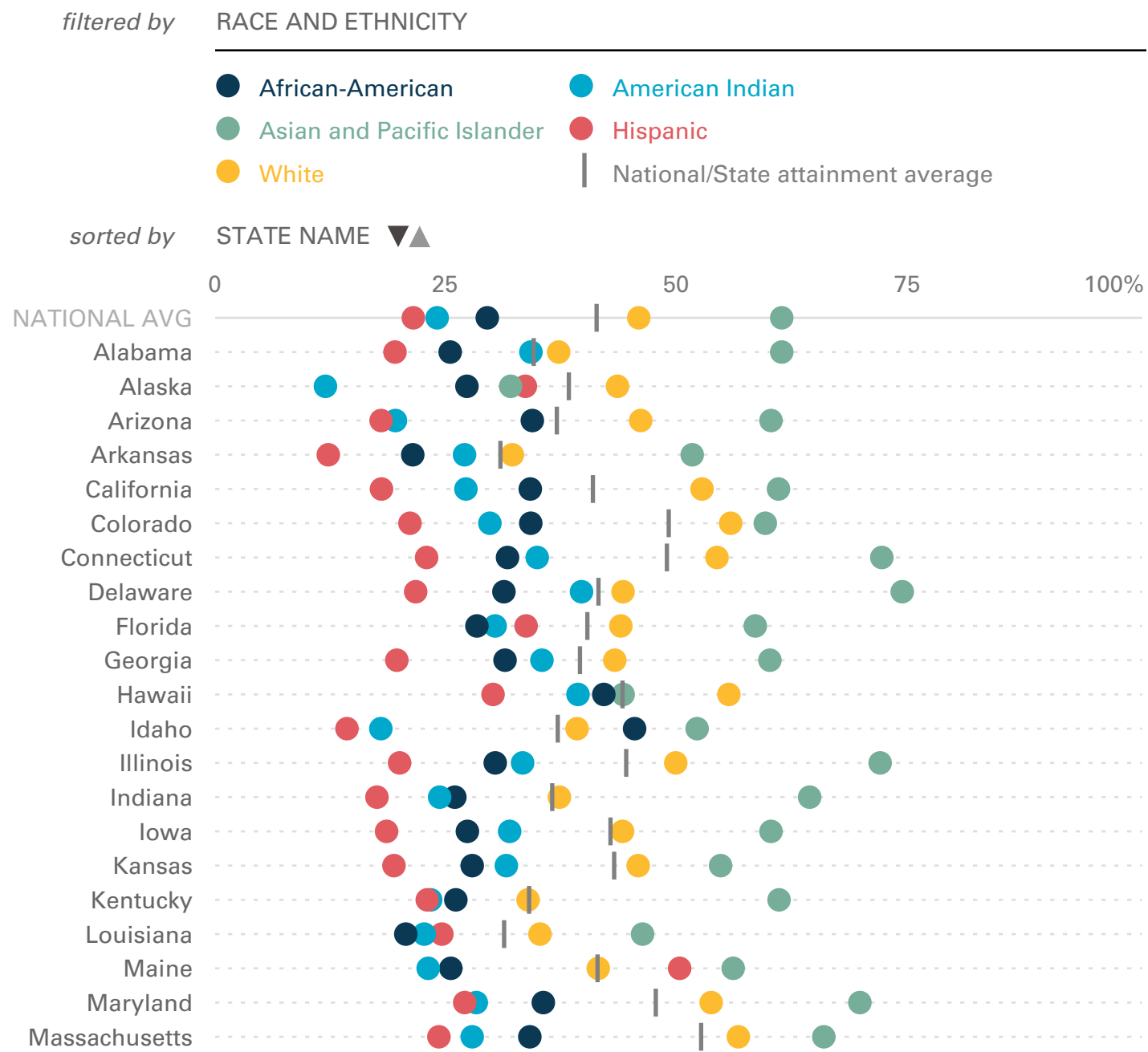
Attainment	State	Population	Pop. Rank	Attainment	State	Population	Pop. Rank
 37.1%	Alabama	4,858,979	24	 46.4%	Iowa	3,123,899	30
 44.9%	Alaska	738,432	48	 49.8%	Kansas	2,911,641	34
 48.6%	Arizona	6,828,065	14	 43.6%	Kentucky	4,425,092	26
 39.5%	Arkansas	2,978,204	33	 45.9%	Louisiana	4,670,724	25
 47.5%	California	39,144,818	1	 43.0%	Maine	1,329,328	42
 54.7%	Colorado	5,456,574	22	 50.3%	Maryland	6,006,401	19
 53.5%	Connecticut	3,590,886	29	 55.2%	Massachusetts	6,794,422	15
 44.1%	Delaware	945,934	45	 43.4%	Michigan	9,922,576	10
 46.9%	Florida	20,271,272	3	 53.5%	Minnesota	5,489,594	21
 47.1%	Georgia	10,214,860	8	 36.6%	Mississippi	2,992,333	32
 45.7%	Hawaii	1,431,603	40	 42.5%	Missouri	6,083,672	18
 38.7%	Idaho	1,654,930	39	 42.9%	Montana	1,032,949	44
 50.1%	Illinois	12,859,995	5	 47.0%	Nebraska	1,896,190	37
 41.1%	Indiana	6,619,680	16	 35.6%	Nevada	2,890,845	35

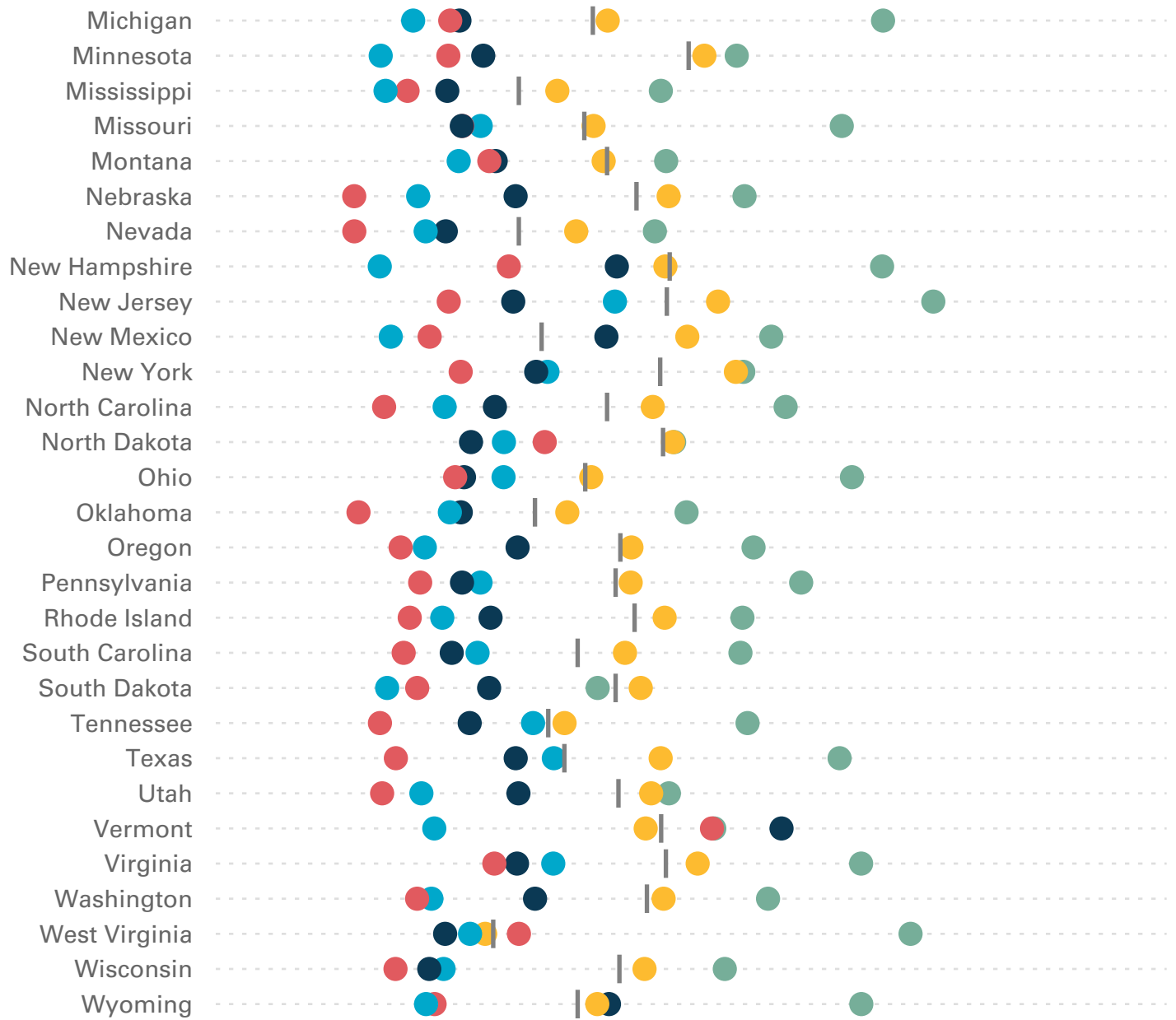
 49.5% New Hampshire 1,330,608 41	 41.8% South Carolina 4,896,146 23
 50.2% New Jersey 8,958,013 11	 43.8% South Dakota 858,469 46
 43.0% New Mexico 2,085,109 36	 39.7% Tennessee 6,600,299 17
 49.5% New York 19,795,791 4	 41.4% Texas 27,469,114 2
 45.9% North Carolina 10,042,802 9	 48.1% Utah 2,995,919 31
 48.8% North Dakota 756,927 47	 47.6% Vermont 626,042 49
 43.6% Ohio 11,613,423 7	 51.1% Virginia 8,382,993 12
 40.3% Oklahoma 3,911,338 28	 52.1% Washington 7,170,351 13
 46.3% Oregon 4,028,977 27	 32.9% West Virginia 1,844,128 38
 44.8% Pennsylvania 12,802,503 6	 47.2% Wisconsin 5,771,337 20
 45.8% Rhode Island 1,056,298 43	 45.8% Wyoming 586,107 50

Exploring Race and Ethnicity

Expanding Americans' opportunity to earn meaningful credentials after high school will be essential to reducing inequality in many aspects of American life. While modest progress has been made since 2008, educational attainment rates for African-American, Hispanic, and American Indian students continue to lag significantly behind those of whites and Asian-Americans.

Compare educational levels across states among five racial and ethnic groups. Attainment here is shown as the percentage of people 25 to 64 with at least an associate degree.*





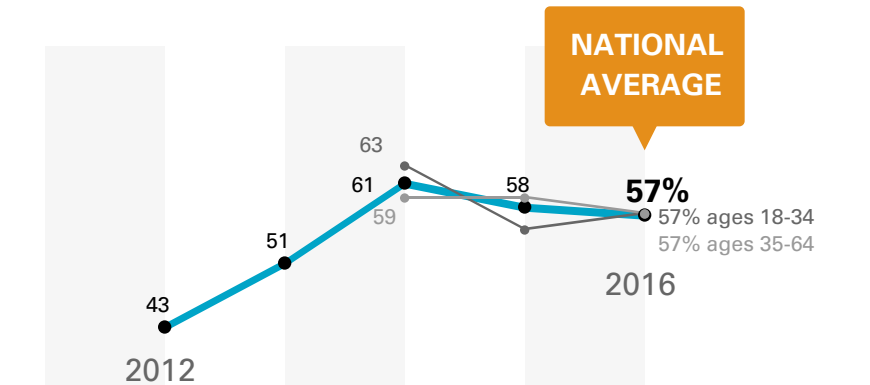
Factors Critical to Reaching the Goal

Lumina Foundation is focused on results, and reaching the 2025 goal requires monitoring national indicators of progress. We concentrate on four metrics – or indicators of progress – to inform us about movement toward outcomes likely to boost educational attainment and close gaps in achievement by race, ethnicity, and income. We are looking for increases in:

AGE

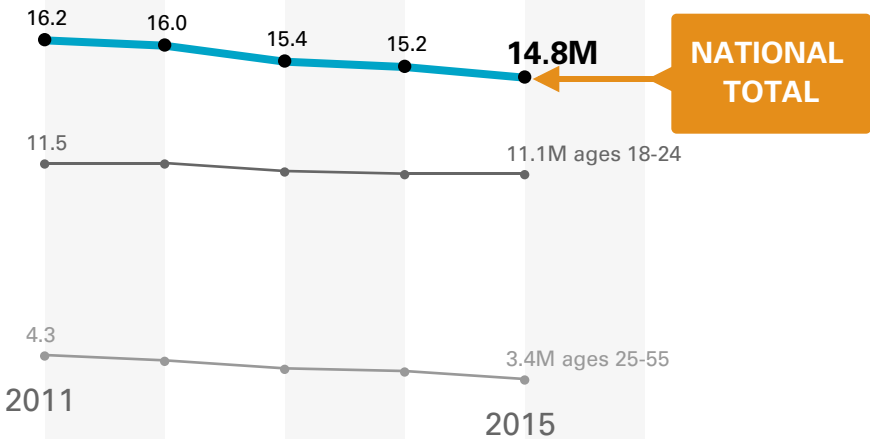
Awareness

The share of Americans who believe it is important to increase the number of working-age Americans with college degrees, workforce certificates and other high-quality credentials beyond high school.



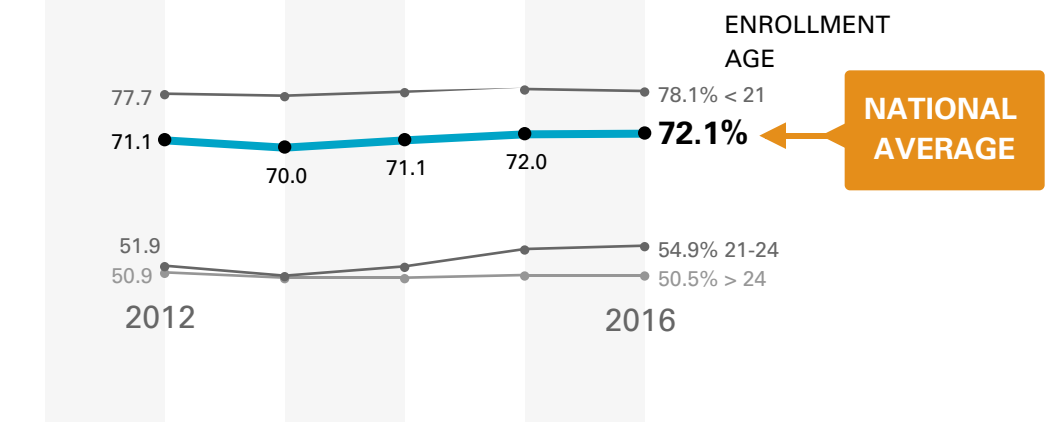
Enrollment

Total enrollment in higher education of people who have not yet earned degrees or other credentials.



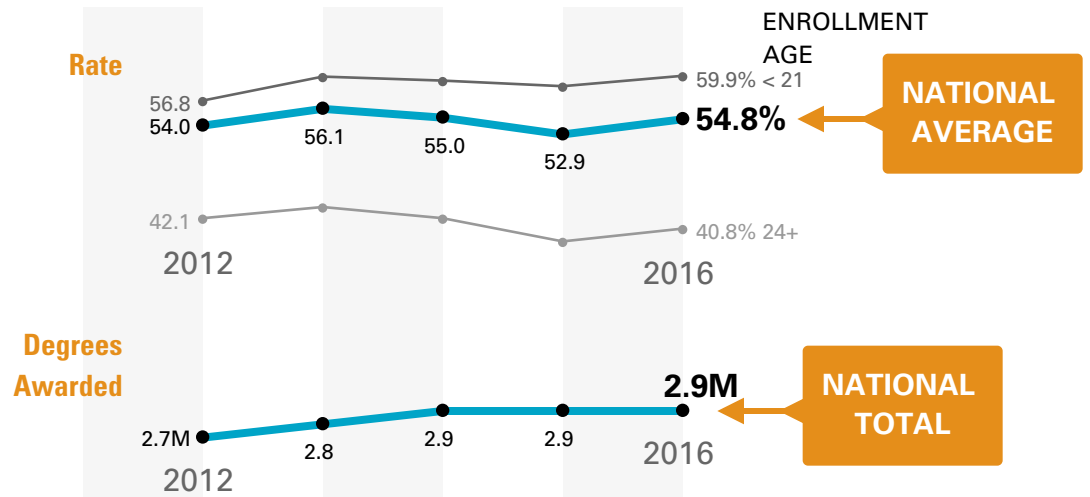
Persistence

The rate at which students continue from their first year of college to their second year.



Completion

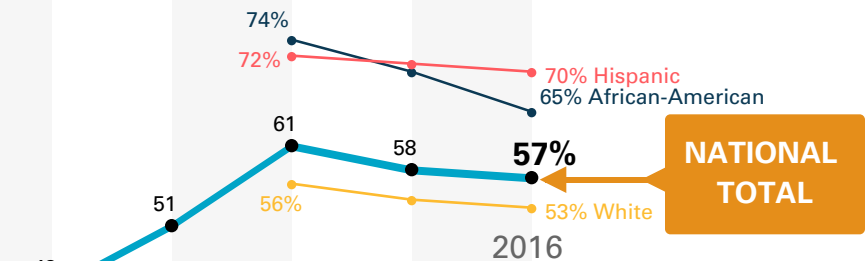
The annual rate of degrees awarded to enrolled students.



ETHNICITY

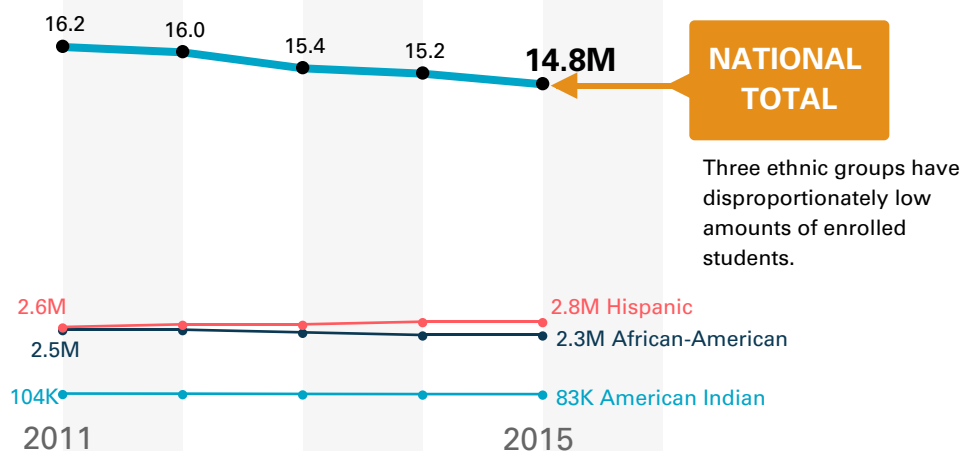
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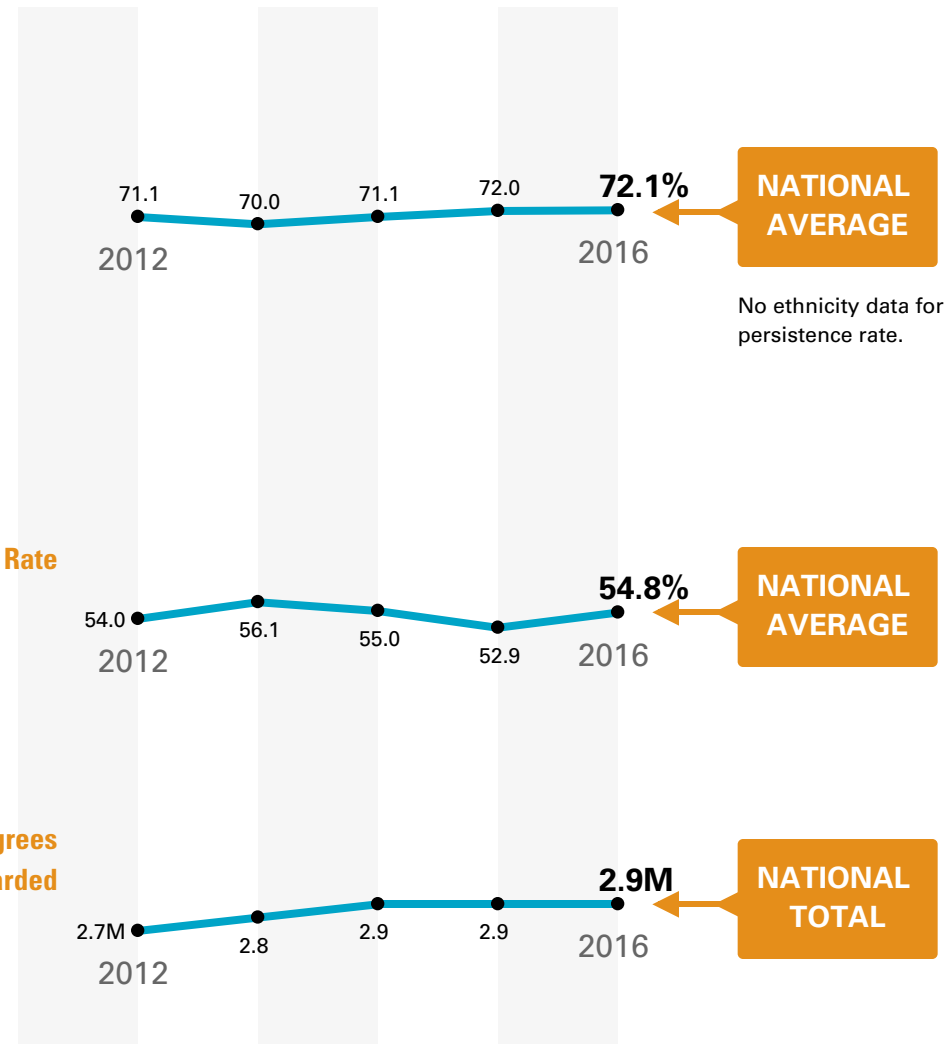
Enrollment

Total enrollment in higher education of people who have not yet earned degrees or other credentials.



Persistence

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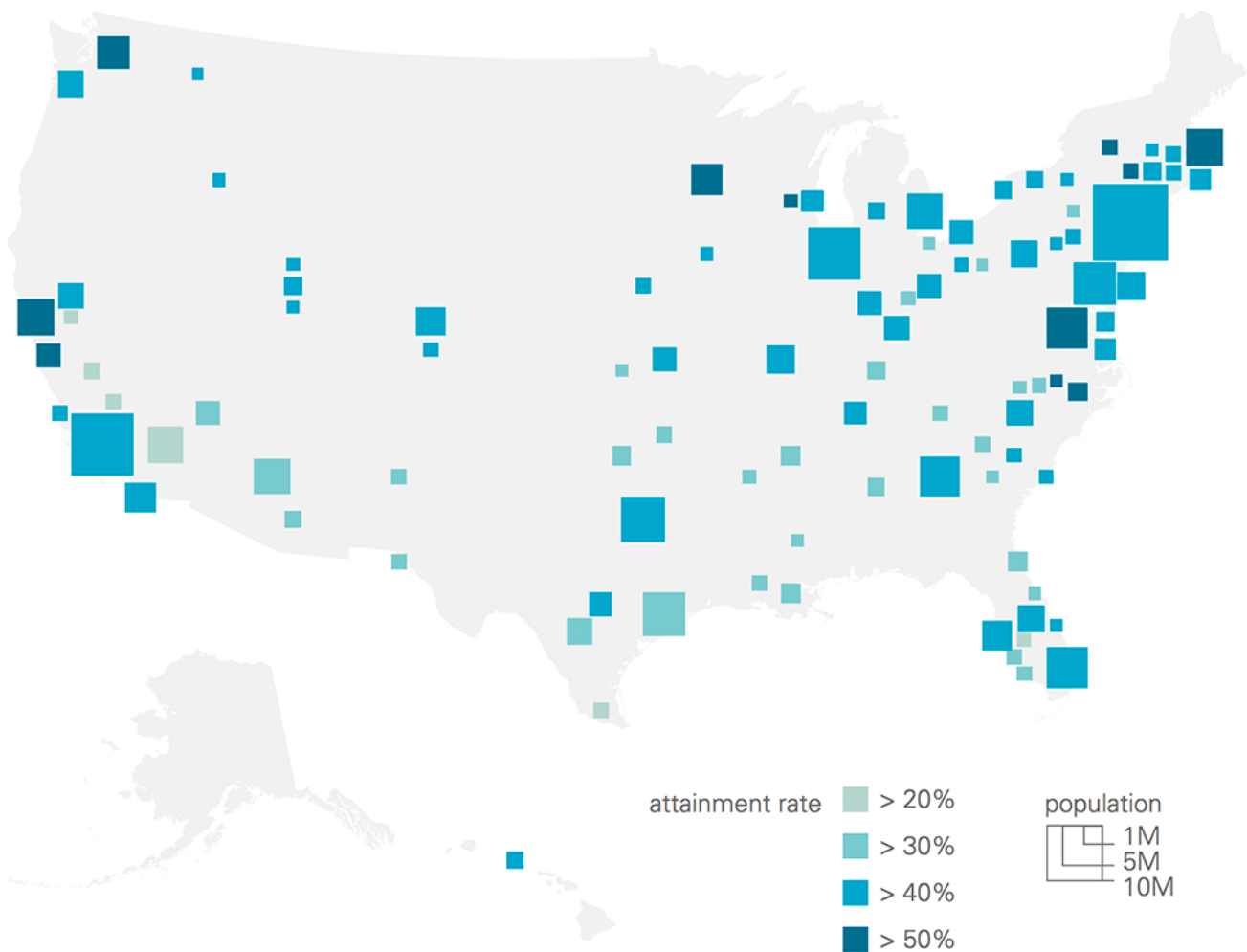


To determine equity gaps, each metric is broken down wherever possible by age, race, and ethnicity. Each metric is reported for the most recent year that data are available and for prior years.

Metro Areas are Drivers of the 60% Goal

The national rate of educational attainment beyond high school is 45.8 percent. However, it is the nation’s population centers – the so-called Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) – that truly drive progress. By looking closely and comparatively at attainment in the nation’s **100 most populous metro areas**, we can identify trends and trouble spots that can help shape the work to build America’s talent.

Percentages here show the proportion of residents, ages 25 to 64, with at least an associate degree.



















































Comparing Metro Areas

























Eight of every 10 Americans now live in cities or suburbs. To boost postsecondary attainment and reach the 2025 goal, we must focus our attention on these regions, if only because they contain most of our nation’s students. But it’s not just a numbers game. The fact is, metro areas are proving to be especially fertile ground for the kinds of broad, locally based collaborations that can boost education attainment.

Compare degree attainment across the 100 most populous U.S. metro areas. Attainment is shown here as the percentage of Americans ages 25 to 64 with at least an associate degree.*

sorted by NAME ▼▲

Attainment	Metro Area	Population	Pop. Rank	Attainment	Metro Area	Population	Pop. Rank
40.6%	Akron	704,243	78	46.1%	Buffalo-Cheektowaga-Niagara Falls	1,135,230	50
50.3%	Albany-Schenectady-Troy	881,830	62	33.9%	Cape Coral-Fort Myers	701,982	79
39.1%	Albuquerque	907,301	60	43.4%	Charleston-North Charleston	744,526	75
40.0%	Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton	832,327	69	43.6%	Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia	2,426,363	22
45.0%	Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell	5,710,795	9	45.4%	Chicago-Naperville-Elgin	9,551,031	3
34.3%	Augusta-Richmond County	590,146	92	42.3%	Cincinnati	2,157,719	28
49.1%	Austin-Round Rock	2,000,860	33	40.6%	Cleveland-Elyria	2,060,810	31
22.5%	Bakersfield	882,176	61	48.3%	Colorado Springs	697,856	80
46.7%	Baltimore-Columbia-Towson	2,797,407	21	41.7%	Columbia	810,068	71
34.4%	Baton Rouge	830,480	70	44.3%	Columbus	2,021,632	32
38.8%	Birmingham-Hoover	1,145,647	49	40.3%	Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington	7,102,796	4
40.7%	Boise City	676,909	81	39.3%	Dayton	800,909	72
55.6%	Boston-Cambridge-Newton	4,774,321	10	32.7%	Deltona-Daytona Beach-Ormond Beach	623,279	89
54.6%	Bridgeport-Stamford-Norwalk	948,053	57	49.8%	Denver-Aurora-Lakewood	2,814,330	19

 49.5%	Des Moines-West Des Moines	622,899	90	 35.2%	Memphis	1,344,127	42
 40.4%	Detroit-Warren-Dearborn	4,302,043	14	 41.2%	Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach	6,012,331	8
 53.1%	Durham-Chapel Hill	552,493	98	 44.9%	Milwaukee-Waukesha-West Allis	1,575,747	39
 30.9%	El Paso	838,972	68	 52.6%	Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington	3,524,583	16
 27.5%	Fresno	974,861	56	 41.6%	Nashville-Davidson--Murfreesboro--Franklin	1,830,345	36
 42.1%	Grand Rapids-Wyoming	1,038,583	52	 44.2%	New Haven-Milford	859,470	65
 38.1%	Greensboro-High Point	752,157	74	 35.2%	New Orleans-Metairie	1,262,888	46
 38.0%	Greenville-Anderson-Mauldin	874,869	63	 47.5%	New York-Newark-Jersey City	20,182,305	1
 40.9%	Harrisburg-Carlisle	565,006	96	 38.4%	North Port-Sarasota-Bradenton	768,918	73
 48.6%	Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford	1,211,324	47	 40.3%	Ogden-Clearfield	642,850	86
 45.9%	Honolulu Urban	998,714	54	 37.2%	Oklahoma City	1,358,452	41
 38.0%	Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land	6,656,947	5	 45.4%	Omaha-Council Bluffs	915,312	59
 42.1%	Indianapolis-Carmel-Anderson	1,988,817	34	 41.8%	Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford	2,387,138	24
 39.5%	Jackson	578,777	94	 40.9%	Oxnard-Thousand Oaks-Ventura	850,536	66
 39.4%	Jacksonville	1,449,481	40	 41.8%	Palm Bay-Melbourne-Titusville	568,088	95
 44.5%	Kansas City	2,087,471	30	 44.8%	Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington	6,069,875	7
 37.3%	Knoxville	861,424	64	 38.7%	Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale	4,574,531	12
 28.6%	Lakeland-Winter Haven	650,092	84	 47.0%	Pittsburgh	2,353,045	26
 30.5%	Las Vegas-Henderson-Paradise	2,114,801	29	 46.0%	Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro	2,389,228	23
 37.4%	Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway	731,612	76	 41.5%	Providence-Warwick	1,613,070	38
 40.1%	Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim	13,340,068	2	 48.7%	Provo-Orem	585,799	93
 38.0%	Louisville/Jefferson County	1,278,413	43	 54.6%	Raleigh	1,273,568	44
 56.0%	Madison	641,385	87	 43.1%	Richmond	1,271,334	45
 23.1%	McAllen-Edinburg-Mission	842,304	67	 27.7%	Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario	4,489,159	13

 47.8%	Rochester	1,081,954	51	 27.9%	Stockton-Lodi	726,106	77
 42.0%	Sacramento--Roseville--Arden-Arcade	2,274,194	27	 45.5%	Syracuse	660,458	82
 41.3%	Salt Lake City	1,170,266	48	 40.4%	Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater	2,975,225	18
 35.7%	San Antonio-New Braunfels	2,384,075	25	 37.6%	Toledo	605,956	91
 45.5%	San Diego-Carlsbad	3,299,521	17	 38.9%	Tucson	1,010,025	53
 54.6%	San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward	4,656,132	11	 36.9%	Tulsa	981,005	55
 56.4%	San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara	1,976,836	35	 40.4%	Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News	1,724,876	37
 36.4%	Scranton--Wilkes-Barre--Hazleton	558,166	97	 56.3%	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria	6,097,684	6
 50.2%	Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue	3,733,580	15	 38.5%	Wichita	644,610	85
 40.8%	Spokane-Spokane Valley	547,824	100	 37.3%	Winston-Salem	659,330	83
 42.3%	Springfield	631,982	88	 45.1%	Worcester	935,536	58
 43.9%	St. Louis	2,811,588	20	 31.1%	Youngstown-Warren-Boardman	549,885	99

Again, the nation's **metropolitan areas are well suited for increasing attainment levels** to reach the 60 percent goal by 2025. They are natural sites for the collaborative efforts necessary for students to succeed. They are home to active coalitions of business, community, education, and philanthropic leaders.

Data Sources

Data sources for *A Stronger Nation* are listed below, along with links and additional information.

Attainment and Enrollment Rates

U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS): One-year Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS). County-level and metro-regional data are from ACS five-year estimates (2011-2015). College enrollment percentages reflect the enrollment of non-degree-holding students, ages 18 to 54, at public and private two- and four-year institutions.

- U.S. Census Bureau: <http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs>

Persistence and Completion Rates

Student retention rates (persistence) and degree-completion rates were collected by the National Student Clearinghouse. Graduate degrees awarded were analyzed by the National Center for Education Statistics and IPEDS.

- National Student Clearinghouse, 2016: <http://www.studentclearinghouse.org/>
- National Center for Education Statistics: <https://nces.ed.gov/>
- Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System Completion Survey 2014-2015: <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/Home/UseTheData>

Awareness

Data that track public opinion about the importance of earning credentials come from a Gallup-Lumina Foundation survey conducted in 2016.

Population

U.S. Census Bureau Population Division: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population April 1, 2010, to July 1, 2015.

- U.S. Census Bureau Annual Population Estimates: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=PEP_2015_PEPANNRES&src=pt

Inclusion of Certificates

Attainment rates for both 2014 and 2015 include the estimated percentage of working-age Americans who have earned high-value postsecondary certificates – not just associate degrees and above, as *A Stronger Nation* reported in previous years. This estimated percentage was derived by polling a nationally representative sample of Americans ages 25 to 64. The survey was conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago, an independent research institution.

At the state level, the estimated percentage of state residents who have earned high-value certificates was derived from U.S. Census and IPEDS data by labor market experts at Georgetown University’s Center on Education and the Workforce.

- NORC at the University of Chicago: <http://www.norc.org>
- Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System: <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/Home/UseTheData>
- Georgetown University’s Center on Education and the Workforce: <https://cew.georgetown.edu/>

Defining Metro Areas

Metro-area data in *A Stronger Nation* are those that apply to the nation’s Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs). The term MSA refers to “a large population nucleus, together with adjacent communities having a high degree of social and economic integration with that core.” MSAs comprise one or more entire counties, except in New England, where cities and towns are the basic geographic units. The federal Office of Management and Budget defines MSAs by applying published standards to Census Bureau data.

Lumina Foundation is an independent, private foundation in Indianapolis that is committed to making opportunities for learning beyond high school available to all. We envision a system that is easy to navigate, delivers fair results, and meets the nation's need for talent through a broad range of credentials. Our goal is to prepare people for informed citizenship and for success in a global economy.



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