

## Opportunities for College-Educated Adults

The United States has been “underproducing college-educated workers for decades,” according to a [recent report](#) by Georgetown University’s Center on Education and the Workforce. Two distinct problems, “a problem of efficiency and a problem of equity,” result. The United States does not have the educated workers to meet the demand and is “losing out on the productivity that more postsecondary-educated workers contribute to our economy.” Additionally, the scarcity of postsecondary-educated workers has “driven up the cost of postsecondary talent precipitously, exacerbating inequality.” As a result, as the United States loses its “global lead position in percentage of the workforce with postsecondary credentials, we have become the global industrialized leader in income inequality.”

To resolve these two dilemmas, the United States needs to add an “additional 20 million postsecondary-educated workers to the economy” by 2025 (instead of the additional 8 million that will be produced if current trends continue) and to increase degree attainment rates. Of these 20 million, the report proposes 15 million would attain bachelor’s degrees, 1 million would attain associate degrees, and 4 million would have attended some college but not earned a degree.

Many of the shortages of postsecondary-educated workers occur in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics—the STEM fields. Another recent study by the Center on Education and the Workforce, [What’s It Worth? The Economic Value of College Majors](#), examined the monetary yields for graduates in 171 majors sorted into 15 different categories (covering 90 percent of the undergraduate degrees granted). Of the undergraduate majors surveyed in the study, slightly less than 20 percent were STEM majors. That is a smaller percentage than majored in business alone. What is more, the median salary for students with bachelor’s degrees in the STEM fields is competitive with the earnings of students in other fields. The median earnings for students with graduate degrees in the STEM fields exceed those of graduate-degree holders in most other fields.

Opportunities abound for students who attain degrees in these STEM fields, but shortages persist. These opportunities will be the subjects of future articles in *OVAE Connection*.

## Report Highlights Need for More Adults to Complete College

A recent report from the [Center for Law and Social Policy \(CLASP\)](#) and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) finds that just as the economy is demanding that more workers have some postsecondary education or training, our nation’s traditional source of such workers—high school graduates—is leveling off. This trend reveals the growing need to help more adults complete college credentials in order to meet the goals of helping more workers survive economic downturns, helping more employers meet their needs for skilled workers, and competing internationally for high-skilled, high-wage jobs.

The report finds that there will be no national growth in the number of high school graduates over the next decade. In some states the number of high school graduates will decline by as much as 20 percent. Meanwhile, in nearly half the states the demand for college-educated workers will grow two to three times faster than the demand for high school graduates or dropouts. Between 2009 and 2019, adult enrollments in college are expected to increase more than twice as much as enrollments of traditional-age students (22.6 percent versus 9.7 percent).

For more detailed information, including graphics showing state-by-state changes in jobs by education level, unemployment rates by level of education, high school graduates over the past decade and future needs, as well credentials required for reaching key national goals around international competitiveness and employers’ workforce needs, please access the full report, [Not Just Kid Stuff Anymore: The Economic Imperative for More Adults to Complete College](#).

## U.S. Department of Labor Announces Green Jobs Innovation Fund Grants

[The U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration](#) recently awarded \$38 million in Green Jobs Innovation Fund grants to serve workers in 19 states and the District of Columbia. This grant program is part of an effort to help provide workers with the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to succeed in green industry jobs. The Green Jobs Innovation Fund was authorized under the *Workforce Investment Act* to assist workers in receiving job training in green industry sectors. These funds aid organizations with existing career training programs to leverage registered apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeship programs and community-based partnerships, in order to build sustainable green career pathways.

The grants will serve employers by providing participants with the training they need for the industry-recognized credentials. For more information on the Green Jobs Innovation Fund Grant, including grantees, their locations, and areas served, please access the [full news release](#).