



At a Glance

“Postsecondary Success Among Adult Population”

April 2012

By the year 2020, all students in South Carolina will graduate with the knowledge and skills necessary to compete successfully in the global economy, participate in a democratic society, and contribute positively as members of families and communities. (EOC 2020 Vision)

To compete successfully in the global economy involves for many South Carolinians the prerequisite of earning a postsecondary vocational certificate, associate degree or higher. According to projections made by the United States Census Bureau, between 2008 and 2018 the fastest-growing, highest-paying jobs will require education beyond high school. The total number of jobs in the United States is projected to increase by 19 percent (1.2 million jobs) by 2018 for people with associate’s degrees, 17 percent (3.1 million jobs) for those with bachelor’s degrees, and another 13 percent (1.2 million jobs) for those with a postsecondary vocational certificate. Is South Carolina on track to prepare our students for the next step, college and careers?

The Lumina Foundation for Education has as its mission “to expand access and success in education beyond high school, particularly among adults, first-generation college going students, low-income students and students of color.” The specific goal of the Foundation is that by the year 2025, **60 percent of Americans will have a high-quality postsecondary credential**. Lumina “defines high-quality credentials as degrees and certificates that have well-defined and transparent learning outcomes which provide clear pathways to further education and employment.”

Lumina has also identified three critical outcomes that must also occur if the 2025 goal is to be obtained:

PREPARATION: Students are prepared academically, financially and socially for success in education beyond high school.

SUCCESS: Higher education attainment rates are improved significantly.

PRODUCTIVITY: Higher education productivity is increased to expand capacity and serve more students.

In March of 2012 the Lumina Foundation issued a special report, *A Stronger Nation Through Higher Education*, documenting the progress of the nation and each state toward meeting the 2025 goal using census data from the 2010 American Community Survey. At the national level, “the percentage of Americans between the ages of 25 and 64 -- working-age adults,” holding “a two- or four-year college degree” was 38.3 percent in 2010 as compared to 37.9 million in 2008.” However, Lumina projects that “at the current pace, less than 47 percent of Americans will have at least an associate degree by 2025. Labor experts say that means we will be more than 23 million degree holders below the total needed to make workforce demands.”

The report also tracks the percentage of adults within each state and within each county. The following charts analyze South Carolina’s performance with other states and document the percentage of working-age adults with at least an associate degree by county in South Carolina. Table 1 ranks each state by the percentage of the state’s working-age population with at least an associate degree in 2010, then by the same percentage in 2009 and 2008. Massachusetts leads the nation followed by Colorado and Connecticut. South Carolina ranks 37th in the country. Comparing states in the Southeast, South Carolina

ranks below North Carolina, Florida, and Georgia but above Tennessee, Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas.

Table 1
Percentage of the State's Working-age Population (25-64)
with at Least an Associate Degree

Rank	State	2008	2009	2010
1	Massachusetts	49.6	50.2	50.5
2	Colorado	45.3	45.8	46.0
3	Connecticut	46.6	46.4	45.8
4	Minnesota	45.1	45.2	45.8
5	New Hampshire	46.0	44.6	45.8
6	New Jersey	44.6	44.5	45.3
7	North Dakota	45.2	43.7	44.9
8	Maryland	43.9	44.4	44.7
9	New York	43.8	44.6	44.1
10	Vermont	43.6	44.2	44.1
11	Virginia	43.4	43.4	43.9
12	Washington	42.0	42.3	42.5
13	Nebraska	40.5	41.2	42.0
14	Hawaii	42.3	42.9	41.6
15	Illinois	40.8	41.4	41.3
16	Rhode Island	41.4	42.6	41.2
17	South Dakota	39.4	38.6	40.8
18	Kansas	40.5	40.0	40.5
19	Montana	37.7	38.3	40.0
20	Iowa	38.8	40.1	39.7
21	Utah	40.3	39.2	39.7
22	Wisconsin	38.0	38.2	39.1
23	California	38.6	38.7	38.8
24	Maine	36.8	38.6	38.8
25	Oregon	38.6	39.8	38.6
26	Pennsylvania	37.9	37.8	38.6
27	North Carolina	36.9	37.9	37.6
28	Delaware	37.0	38.6	37.4
29	Alaska	36.3	35.1	37.3
30	Wyoming	36.0	34.9	37.3
31	Florida	36.8	36.4	36.5
32	Michigan	35.7	35.8	36.4
33	Georgia	36.2	36.2	36.1
34	Missouri	34.9	34.9	35.8
35	Ohio	34.9	34.7	35.8
36	Arizona	34.4	34.8	35.1
37	South Carolina	34.4	34.9	34.8

Rank	State	2008	2009	2010
38	Idaho	34.8	34.3	34.7
39	Texas	33.3	33.2	33.7
40	Indiana	33.4	33.0	33.2
41	New Mexico	33.4	33.9	33.1
42	Tennessee	31.3	31.8	31.9
43	Oklahoma	31.3	31.7	31.7
44	Alabama	31.6	31.7	31.5
45	Kentucky	29.2	30.5	30.0
46	Mississippi	29.3	28.9	29.9
47	Nevada	30.1	30.4	29.5
48	Louisiana	27.0	28.1	28.2
49	Arkansas	26.5	27.0	27.9
50	West Virginia	25.6	26.4	26.1
Nation		37.9		38.3

Source: *A Stronger Nation Through Higher Education*, http://www.luminafoundation.org/publications/A_stronger_nation.pdf and U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey

The report also documents the educational attainment of each county in South Carolina (Table 2). Statewide, there are 2,439,427 residents between the ages of 25 and 64. Of these adults, approximately 22 percent or 530,911 have gone to college but have not obtained a two- or four-year- degree.

Table 2

% of Adults with at Least an Associate Degree	
Abbeville	27.58
Aiken	32.42
Allendale	19.06
Anderson	29.72
Bamberg	35.13
Barnwell	21.55
Beaufort	42.36
Berkeley	29.13
Calhoun	30.63
Charleston	47.56
Cherokee	19.30
Chester	21.31
Chesterfield	20.39
Clarendon	20.44
Colleton	20.07
Darlington	24.50
Dillon	17.07
Dorchester	36.66
Edgefield	23.95

% of Adults with at Least an Associate Degree	
Fairfield	25.41
Florence	31.28
Georgetown	31.09
Greenville	40.86
Greenwood	33.51
Hampton	18.58
Horry	33.18
Jasper	14.30
Kershaw	29.16
Lancaster	26.51
Laurens	23.59
Lee	14.20
Lexington	38.57
Marion	22.21
Marlboro	13.07
McCormick	26.58
Newberry	29.33
Oconee	32.04
Orangeburg	25.08
Pickens	34.64
Richland	46.72
Saluda	21.96
Spartanburg	32.00
Sumter	28.91
Union	23.53
Williamsburg	18.24
York	38.70

Source: *A Stronger Nation Through Higher Education*, http://www.luminafoundation.org/publications/A_stronger_nation.pdf. and U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.