



A STRONGER NATION

In Illinois, postsecondary learning builds the talent that helps us rise



A policy brief from Lumina Foundation



Illinois

The need to increase postsecondary attainment — the number of Americans who hold degrees and other high-quality credentials — has never been clearer. State leaders are responding to the growing global demand for talent by setting goals and enacting policies to increase attainment. Like Lumina Foundation, states have come to understand the scope of the effort required. Much is left to be done, but real progress is being made through the efforts of those who are committed to assuring that millions more Americans benefit from postsecondary education.

Lumina began reporting the attainment rate (associate degree and higher) in 2008. That year, the rate in Illinois stood at 40.8 percent. In 2014, the most recent year for which data are available, the rate reached 49.6 percent.

However, the degree attainment rate doesn't tell the whole story. Lumina has always said that other postsecondary credentials — including certificates and certifications — should count toward national and state goals for attainment, with one important caveat. To count, non-degree credentials should be of high quality, which we define as having clear and transparent learning outcomes leading to further education and employment.

This year, for the first time, we have nationally representative data on the number of Americans who hold high-quality postsecondary certificates; we now feel confident we can count these credentials toward attainment goals. In states, we are able to use estimates from the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce on the number of residents who hold high-quality certificates as their highest earned credential. In Illinois, 6 percent of residents between the ages of 25 and 64 hold a high-quality certificate. This brings the state's overall postsecondary attainment rate to 49.6 percent.

As the data in this report make clear, increasing overall attainment is not the only challenge Illinois faces. There are also significant gaps in attainment that must be closed. While current systems work very well for many students, more postsecondary credentials must be earned by Americans who, by definition, are *post-traditional* learners. Compared with current students, they will be older; more will be African-American, Hispanic and Native American; and they will have lower incomes. Most will be first-generation students. The data in this report show the extent of the attainment gaps in Illinois by race and ethnicity.

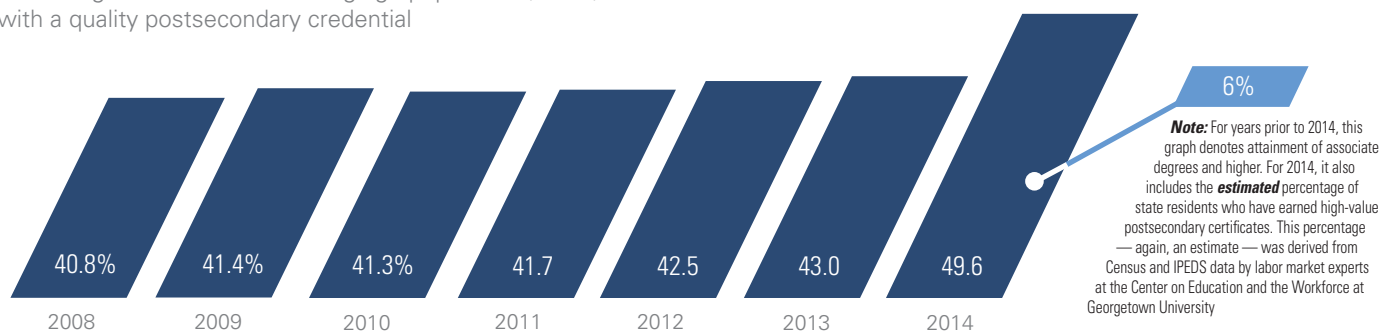
To date, 26 states have responded to the need to increase attainment by setting state attainment goals that meet Lumina's criteria for rigor and efficacy (i.e., the goal is quantifiable, challenging, long term, addresses gaps, and is in statute and/or a strategic plan). Illinois is one of those 26 states.

There is much more that states can do to increase attainment. It begins with assuring that all prospective students, including working adults, have access to affordable programs that lead to quality credentials. State policies such as outcomes-based funding can encourage colleges and universities to direct resources to approaches that increase student success. States can also help assure that students get full recognition for *all* of their learning — whether it was obtained in an institution, in the military or on the job — and can apply it to further education and credentials.

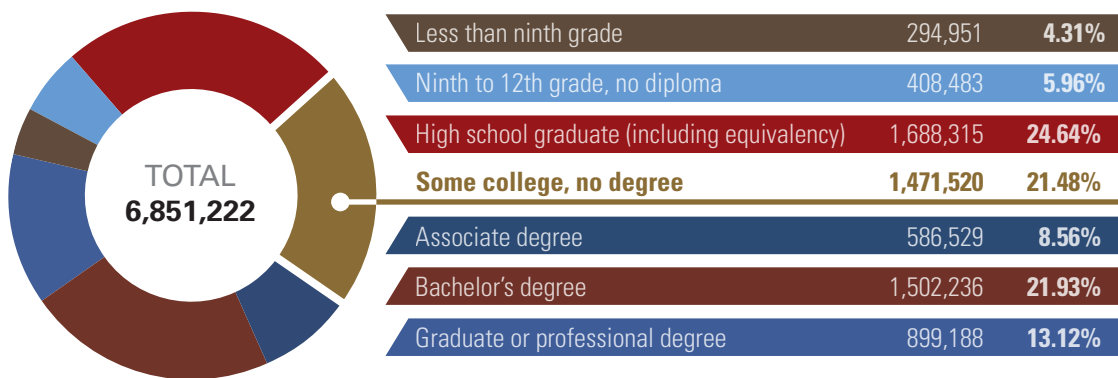
Lumina is working with state leaders from around the nation to expand postsecondary opportunity and success. More information on that work, including our full state policy agenda and additional data, is available on Lumina's Strategy Labs website (<http://strategylabs.luminafoundation.org/>).

Tracking the trend

Percentage of the state's working-age population (25-64) with a quality postsecondary credential



Levels of education for Illinois residents, ages 25-64

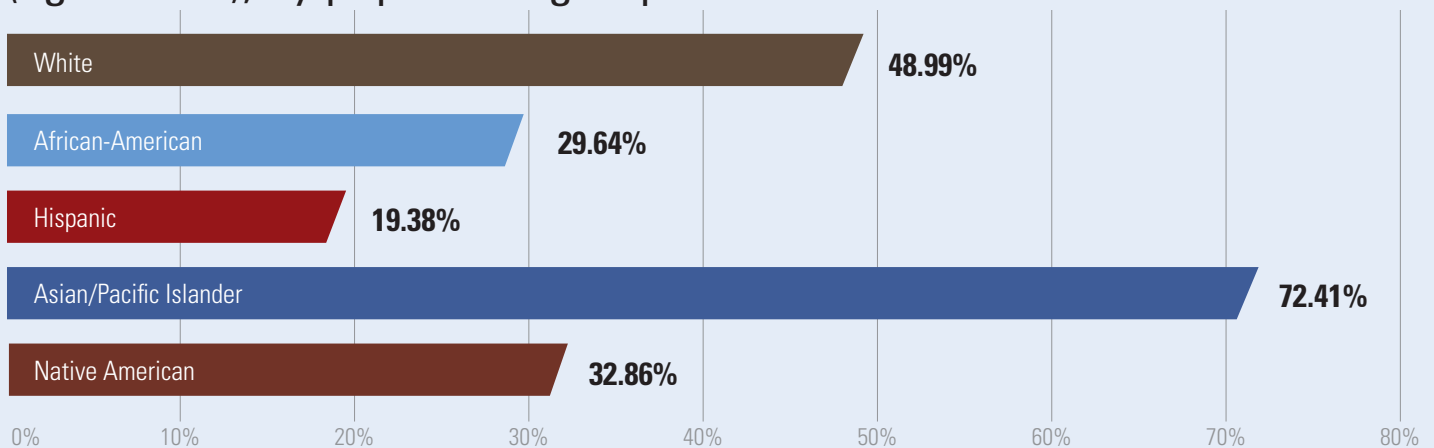


Estimated attainment of certificates: **6%**

Note: The accompanying pie chart does not account for residents who have earned high-value postsecondary certificates. The percentage above – admittedly, an **estimate** – aims to fill that gap. To calculate this percentage, labor market experts at the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce used Survey of Income Program Participation 2008 Wave 12 data (2012) and data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) 2014.

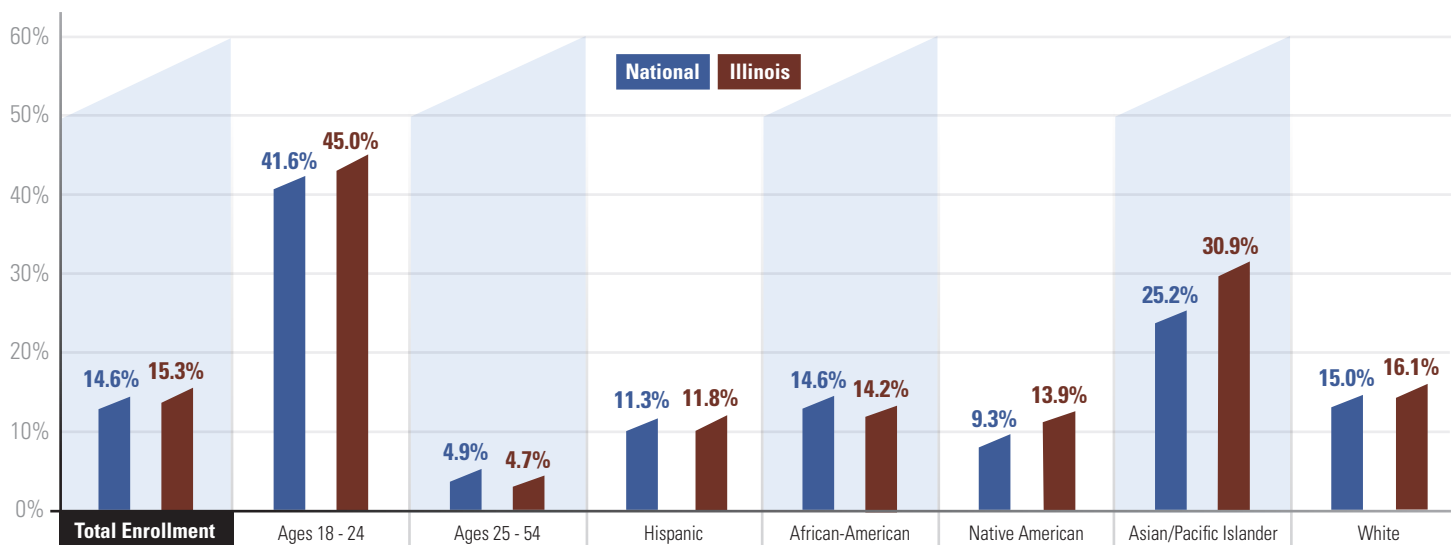
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey

Degree-attainment rates among Illinois residents (ages 25-64), by population group



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012, 2013, and 2014 American Community Survey One-Year PUMS Files

College enrollment among Illinois residents, ages 18-54



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey One-Year Public Use Microdata Sample

Note: These percentages reflect the enrollment of non-degree-holding students, ages 18-54, at public and private, two-year and four-year postsecondary institutions

Percentage of Illinois residents (ages 25-64) with at least an associate degree, by county

Adams	33.73	Cumberland	30.96	Hardin	25.15	Lee	28.62	Morgan	32.09	Scott	21.59
Alexander	15.67	DeKalb	43.09	Henderson	28.95	Livingston	25.66	Moultrie	26.77	Shelby	29.86
Bond	28.42	De Witt	28.66	Henry	34.72	Logan	26.16	Ogle	32.77	Stark	33.19
Boone	30.36	Douglas	26.67	Iroquois	28.21	McDonough	45.61	Peoria	42.77	Stephenson	30.09
Brown	21.92	DuPage	57.20	Jackson	46.23	McHenry	43.70	Perry	26.52	Tazewell	39.27
Bureau	28.71	Edgar	29.36	Jasper	36.77	McLean	53.99	Piatt	39.62	Union	35.23
Calhoun	32.61	Edwards	34.37	Jefferson	28.66	Macon	33.91	Pike	24.14	Vermilion	25.80
Carroll	26.71	Effingham	39.29	Jersey	31.78	Macoupin	28.86	Pope	26.65	Wabash	38.24
Cass	19.25	Fayette	24.91	Jo Daviess	33.48	Madison	37.59	Pulaski	25.54	Warren	33.24
Champaign	54.27	Ford	27.94	Johnson	29.18	Marion	29.07	Putnam	30.01	Washington	38.98
Christian	24.47	Franklin	26.56	Kane	40.91	Marshall	32.84	Randolph	20.47	Wayne	30.89
Clark	34.15	Fulton	28.64	Kankakee	28.22	Mason	24.70	Richland	39.99	White	30.31
Clay	29.12	Gallatin	23.15	Kendall	45.21	Massac	31.13	Rock Island	34.22	Whiteside	30.30
Clinton	37.69	Greene	22.77	Knox	31.80	Menard	35.59	St. Clair	38.86	Will	43.97
Coles	37.91	Grundy	31.01	Lake	51.01	Mercer	29.19	Saline	27.55	Williamson	35.75
Cook	44.57	Hamilton	28.58	LaSalle	28.67	Monroe	40.45	Sangamon	44.25	Winnebago	31.57
Crawford	35.71	Hancock	31.06	Lawrence	20.95	Montgomery	24.25	Schuyler	29.63	Woodford	42.85

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-14 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



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FOUNDATION

Lumina Foundation is an independent, private foundation committed to increasing the proportion of Americans with degrees, certificates and other high-quality credentials to 60 percent by 2025. Lumina's outcomes-based approach focuses on helping to design and build an equitable, accessible, responsive and accountable higher education system while fostering a national sense of urgency for action to achieve Goal 2025.