



A STRONGER NATION

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

A policy brief from Lumina Foundation



Minnesota

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 Minnesota stood at 45.1 percent. In 2014, the most recent year for which data are available, the rate reached 48.9 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 Minnesota, 4 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 52.9 percent.

As the data in this report make clear, increasing overall attainment is not the only challenge Minnesota 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 Minnesota by race and ethnicity.

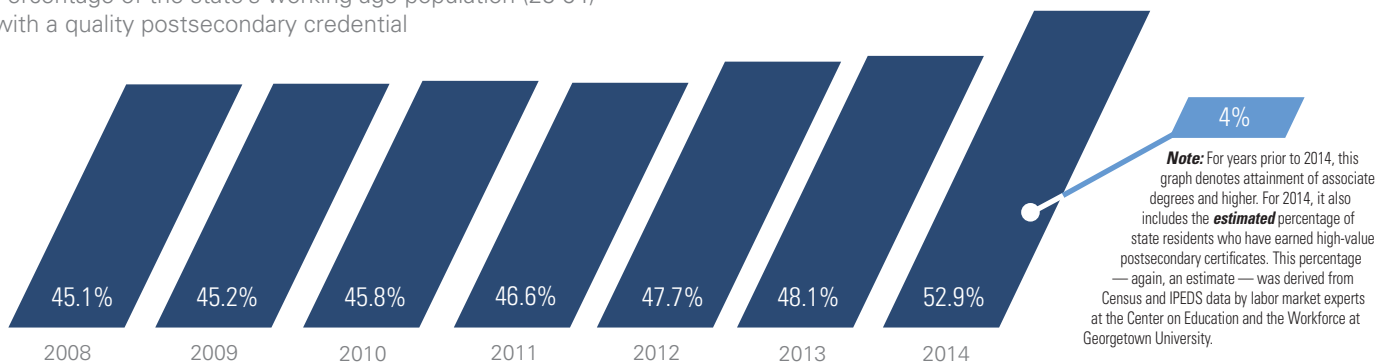
To date, 26 states have responded to the need to increase attainment by setting state attainment goals that meet Lumina's criteria for rigor and efficacy (i.e., the goal is quantifiable, challenging, long term, addresses gaps, and is in statute and/or a strategic plan). Minnesota is one of those 26 states.

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.

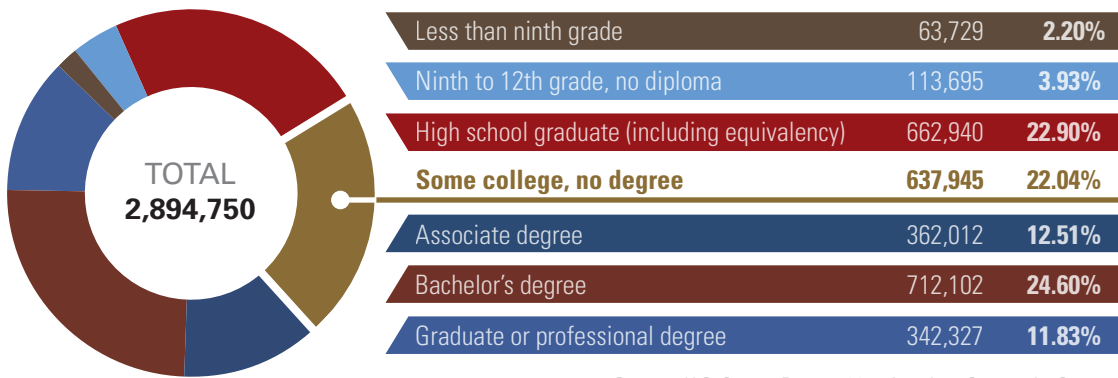
Lumina is working with state leaders from around the nation to expand postsecondary opportunity and success. More information on that work, including our full state policy agenda and additional data, is available on Lumina's Strategy Labs website (<http://strategylabs.luminafoundation.org/>).

Tracking the trend

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



Levels of education for Minnesota residents, ages 25-64

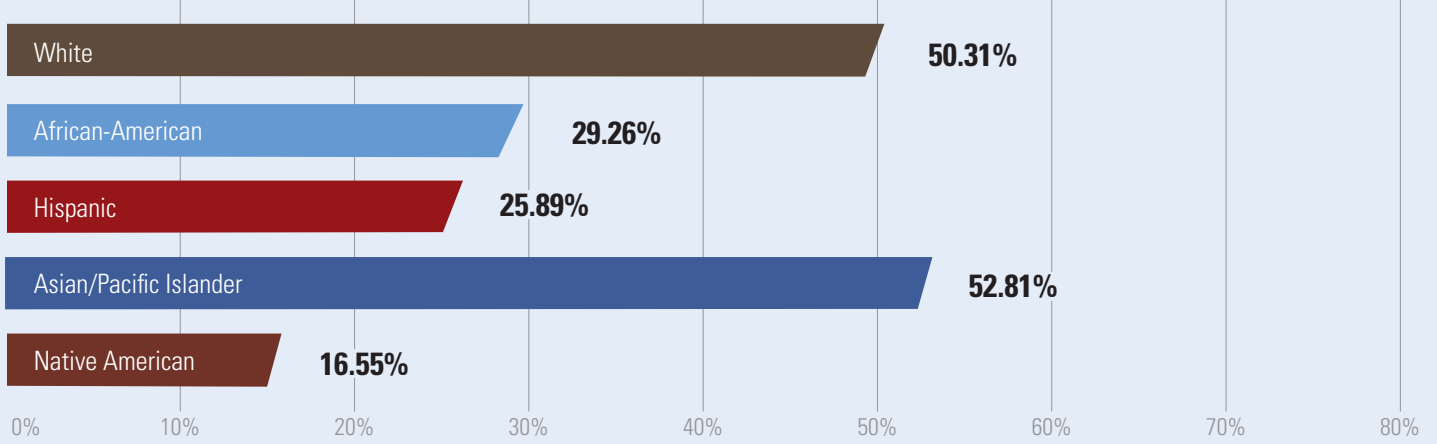


Estimated attainment of certificates: **4%**

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.

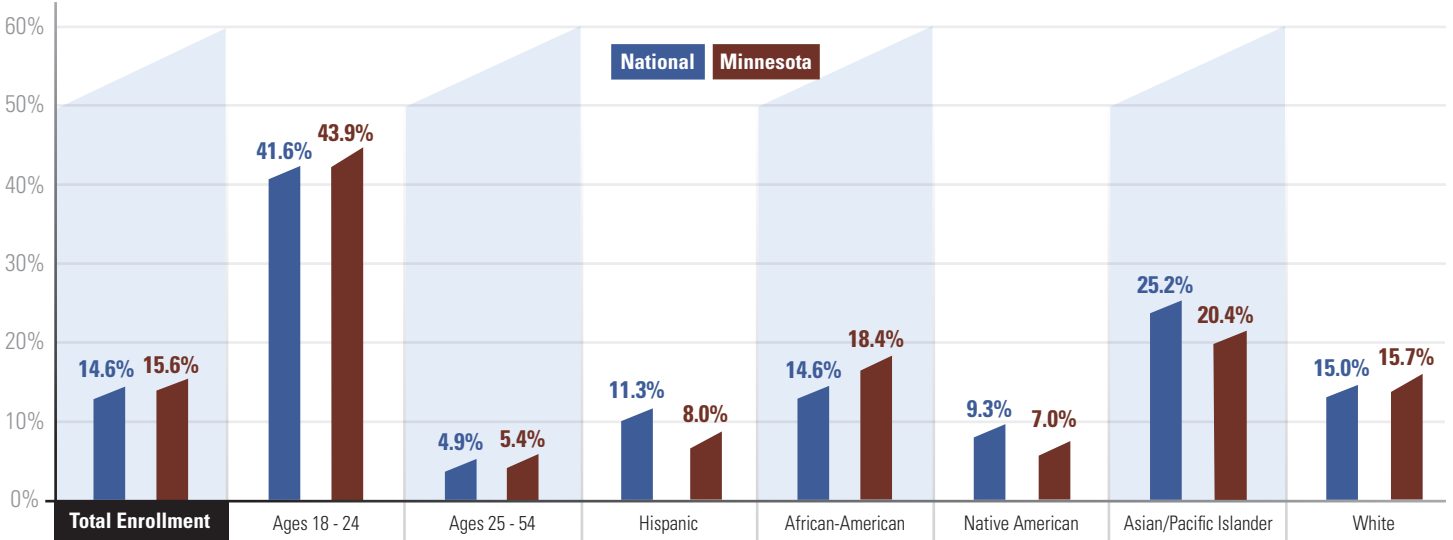
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey

Degree-attainment rates among Minnesota 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 Minnesota 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 Minnesota residents (ages 25-64) with at least an associate degree, by county

Aitkin	30.30	Cook	49.79	Itasca	35.48	Martin	33.98	Pope	39.83	Swift	33.77
Anoka	42.20	Cottonwood	32.28	Jackson	38.09	Meeker	33.62	Ramsey	50.23	Todd	29.72
Becker	36.62	Crow Wing	37.99	Kanabec	26.09	Mille Lacs	30.20	Red Lake	32.98	Traverse	43.00
Beltrami	40.60	Dakota	53.90	Kandiyohi	39.58	Morrison	31.83	Redwood	31.52	Wabasha	35.44
Benton	36.04	Dodge	42.31	Kittson	37.03	Mower	33.31	Renville	31.73	Wadena	31.30
Big Stone	34.83	Douglas	46.48	Koochiching	32.73	Murray	35.23	Rice	39.09	Waseca	33.48
Blue Earth	44.73	Faribault	33.46	Lac qui Parle	36.94	Nicollet	46.18	Rock	35.69	Washington	56.09
Brown	36.52	Fillmore	34.87	Lake	38.97	Nobles	26.73	Roseau	29.80	Watonwan	31.31
Carlton	35.73	Freeborn	31.38	Lake of the Woods	24.12	Norman	34.77	St. Louis	42.24	Wilkin	42.36
Carver	59.25	Goodhue	38.47	Le Sueur	35.61	Olmsted	55.60	Scott	53.08	Winona	42.37
Cass	30.76	Grant	39.76	Lincoln	38.92	Otter Tail	41.15	Sherburne	41.53	Wright	43.33
Chippewa	38.17	Hennepin	57.82	Lyon	42.34	Pennington	36.13	Sibley	30.48	Yellow Medicine	36.39
Chisago	37.27	Houston	42.03	McLeod	37.62	Pine	23.80	Stearns	42.12		
Clay	48.77	Hubbard	37.50	Mahnomen	24.85	Pipestone	31.72	Steele	38.32		
Clearwater	28.46	Isanti	29.93	Marshall	34.51	Polk	38.61	Stevens	51.05		

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



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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.