

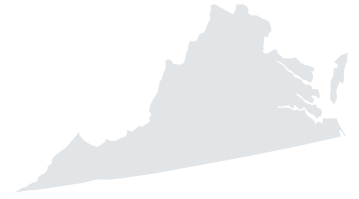


A STRONGER NATION

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


A policy brief from Lumina Foundation

Virginia



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 Virginia stood at 43.4 percent. In 2014, the most recent year for which data are available, the rate reached 46.6 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 Virginia, 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 50.6 percent.

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

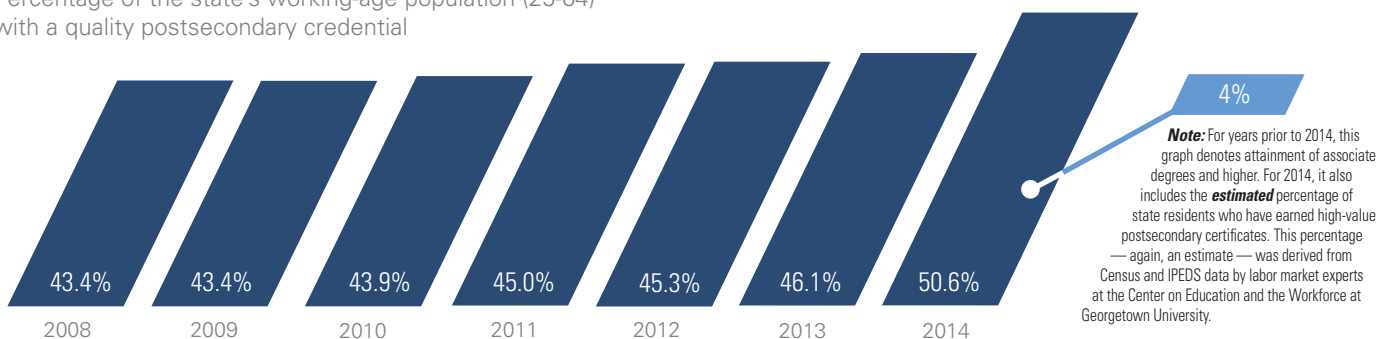
To date, 26 states have responded to the need to increase attainment by setting state attainment goals that meet Lumina's criteria for rigor and efficacy (i.e., the goal is quantifiable, challenging, long term, addresses gaps, and is in statute and/or a strategic plan). Virginia is one of those 26 states.

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.

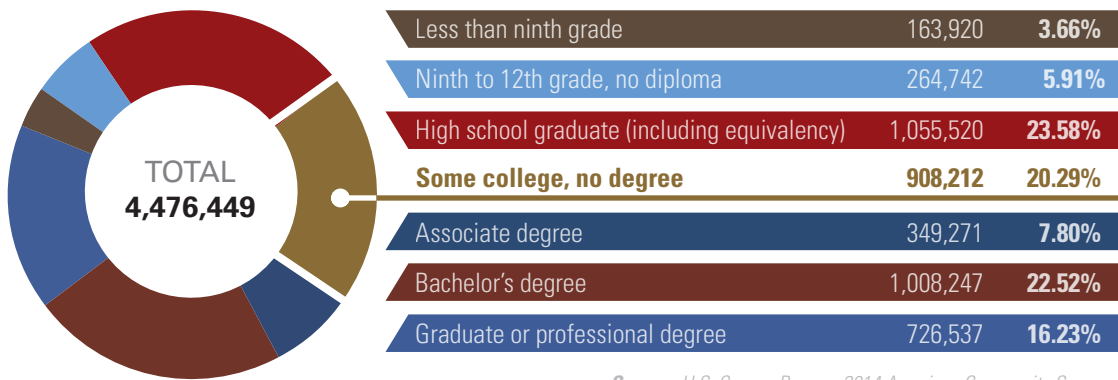
Lumina is working with state leaders from around the nation to expand postsecondary opportunity and success. More information on that work, including our full state policy agenda and additional data, is available on Lumina's Strategy Labs website (<http://strategylabs.luminafoundation.org/>).

Tracking the trend

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



Levels of education for Virginia residents, ages 25-64

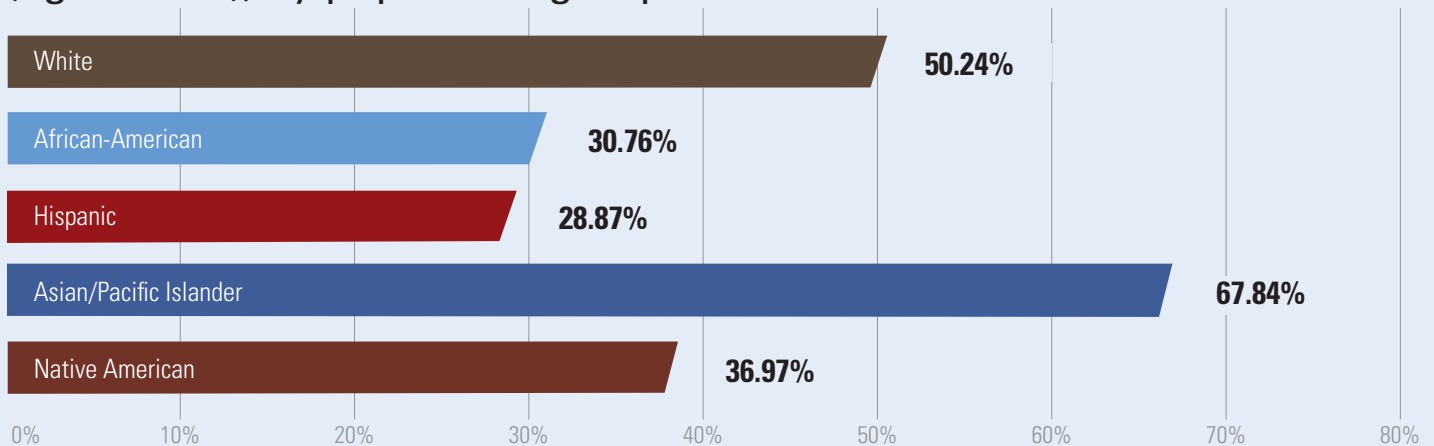


Estimated attainment of certificates: **4%**

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.

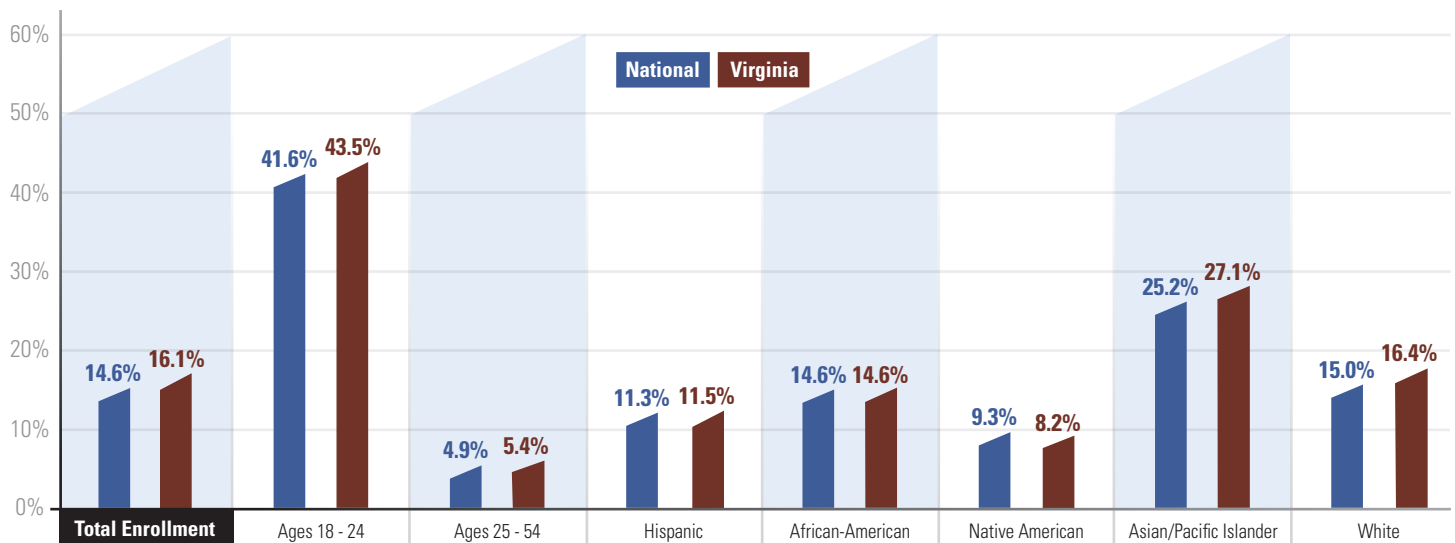
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey

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



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

College enrollment among Virginia 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 Virginia residents (ages 25-64) with at least an associate degree, by county and city

Accomack	24.80	Culpeper	29.91	James City Co	51.28	Powhatan	36.95	Wise	21.76	Lynchburg	41.58
Albemarle	61.43	Cumberland	23.45	King and Queen	18.67	Prince Edward	28.00	Wythe	27.31	Manassas	36.57
Alleghany	28.53	Dickenson	18.78	King George	41.26	Prince George	28.31	York	55.89	Manassas Park	35.15
Amelia	23.58	Dinwiddie	22.65	King William	26.27	Prince William	46.84			Martinsville	28.35
Amherst	29.12	Essex	17.87	Lancaster	34.19	Pulaski	29.58	CITIES		Newport News	35.15
Appomattox	24.61	Fairfax	66.14	Lee	18.20	Rappahannock	38.05	Alexandria	67.19	Norfolk	34.23
Arlington	77.90	Fauquier	43.49	Loudoun	66.44	Richmond	18.88	Bristol	29.39	Norton	34.29
Augusta	29.41	Floyd	28.55	Louisa	25.86	Roanoke	48.98	Buena Vista	24.23	Petersburg	20.96
Bath	26.32	Fluvanna	37.26	Lunenburg	19.98	Rockbridge	30.29	Charlottesville	55.67	Poquoson	46.93
Bedford*	36.72	Franklin	28.91	Madison	30.75	Rockingham	31.73	Chesapeake	41.47	Portsmouth	29.22
Bland	24.50	Frederick	38.68	Mathews	32.86	Russell	23.54	Colonial Heights	27.94	Radford	52.45
Botetourt	39.22	Giles	28.29	Mecklenburg	24.78	Scott	22.28	Covington	19.14	Richmond	42.23
Brunswick	23.31	Gloucester	35.53	Middlesex	35.24	Shenandoah	26.93	Danville	30.99	Roanoke	33.24
Buchanan	17.07	Goochland	47.75	Montgomery	55.19	Smyth	25.77	Emporia	24.21	Salem	44.72
Buckingham	16.64	Grayson	23.00	Nelson	34.26	Southampton	22.86	Fairfax	61.98	Staunton	41.41
Campbell	29.66	Greene	32.92	New Kent	35.62	Spotsylvania	36.92	Falls Church	81.44	Suffolk	37.63
Caroline	26.70	Greensville	13.07	Northampton	28.79	Stafford	46.59	Franklin	25.66	Virginia Beach	45.15
Carroll	24.68	Halifax	26.05	Northumberland	27.17	Surry	27.49	Fredericksburg	42.63	Waynesboro	25.79
Charles City Co	18.10	Hanover	48.75	Nottoway	20.03	Sussex	11.54	Galax	21.82	Williamsburg	53.75
Charlotte	25.29	Henrico	49.50	Orange	30.39	Tazewell	25.84	Hampton	34.80	Winchester	36.1
Chesterfield	46.78	Henry	26.44	Page	18.52	Warren	28.69	Harrisonburg	42.77		
Clarke	44.09	Highland	21.59	Patrick	23.25	Washington	36.23	Hopewell	19.29		
Craig	22.26	Isle of Wight	36.81	Pittsylvania	25.74	Westmoreland	22.26	Lexington	60.66		

* This year's figure for Bedford County incorporates the attainment rate among residents of the Town of Bedford. In prior years, the town's rate was listed separately.

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



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.