



# A STRONGER NATION

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



A policy brief from Lumina Foundation



# Michigan

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 Michigan stood at 35.7 percent. In 2014, the most recent year for which data are available, the rate reached 39.3 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 Michigan, 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 43.3 percent.

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

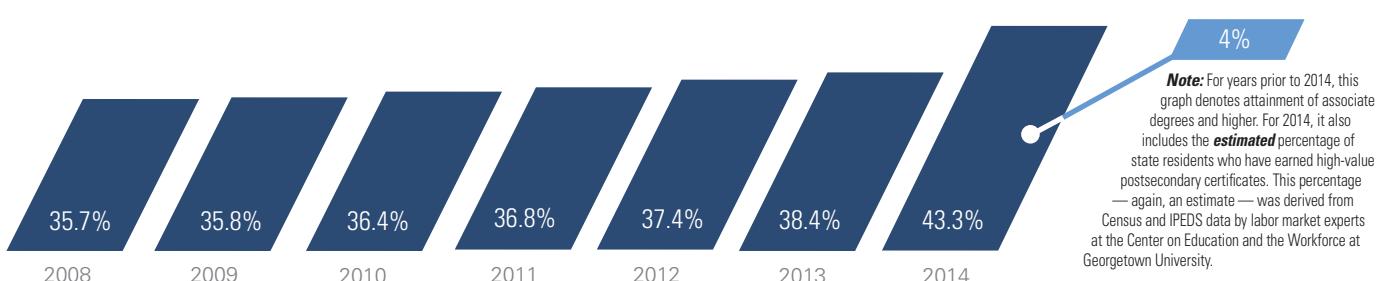
To date, 26 states have responded to the need to increase attainment by setting state attainment goals that meet Lumina's criteria for rigor and efficacy (i.e., the goal is quantifiable, challenging, long term, addresses gaps, and is in statute and/or a strategic plan). Our analysis shows that Michigan has not set a goal that meets Lumina's criteria; we urge state leaders to do so.

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.

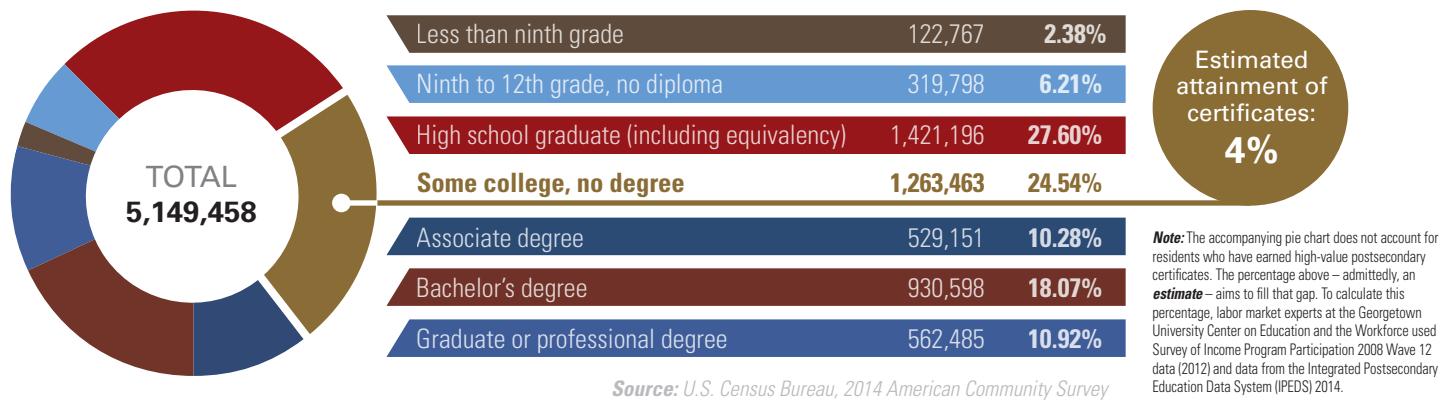
Lumina is working with state leaders from around the nation to expand postsecondary opportunity and success. More information on that work, including our full state policy agenda and additional data, is available on Lumina's Strategy Labs website (<http://strategylabs.luminafoundation.org/>).

## Tracking the trend

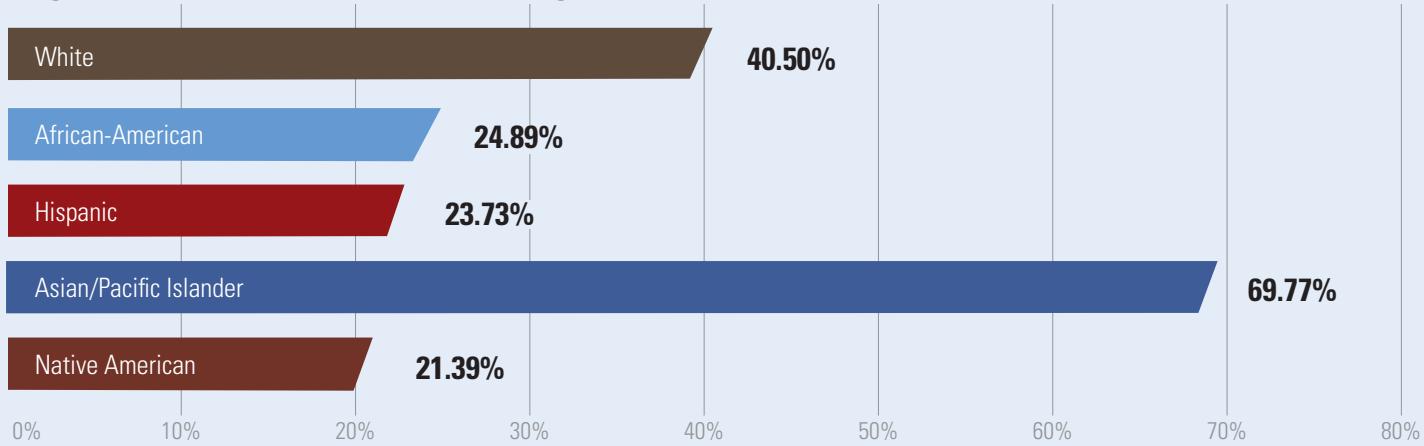
Percentage of the state's working-age population (25-64) with a quality postsecondary credential



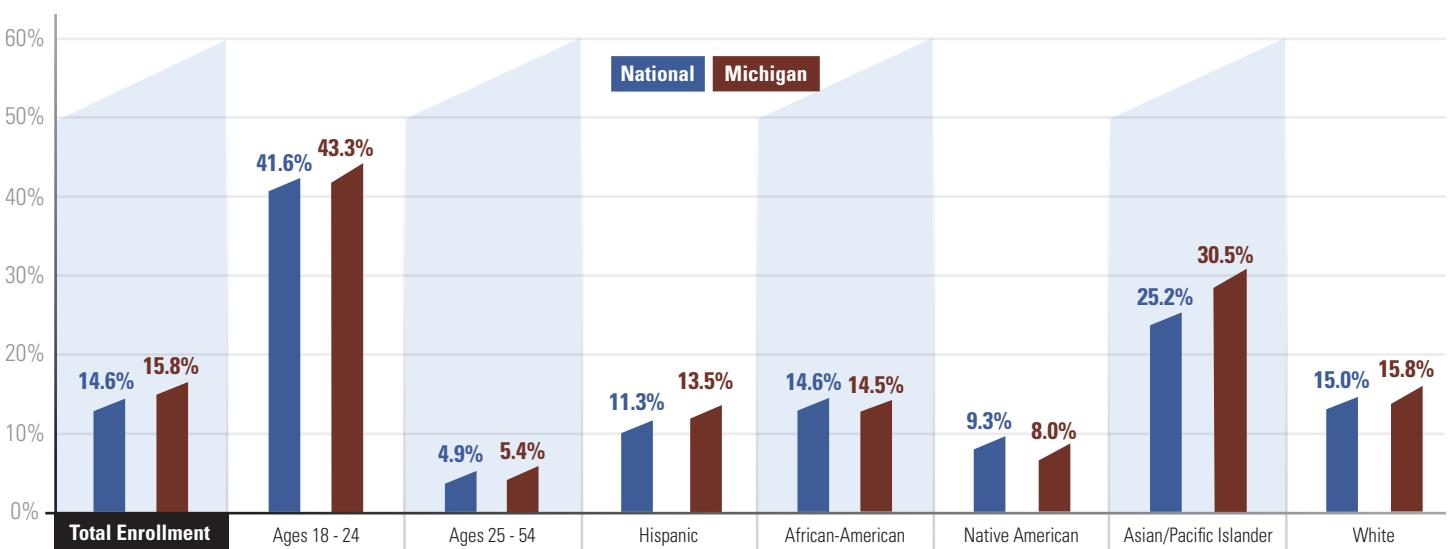
## Levels of education for Michigan residents, ages 25-64



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



## College enrollment among Michigan residents, ages 18-54



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

Alcona	23.99	Charlevoix	34.92	Gratiot	23.36	Lake	16.30	Missaukee	24.37	Presque Isle	26.74
Alger	26.75	Cheboygan	25.99	Hillsdale	24.75	Lapeer	28.37	Monroe	31.30	Roscommon	22.28
Allegan	29.76	Chippewa	27.36	Houghton	42.77	Leelanau	49.53	Montcalm	23.89	Saginaw	33.28
Alpena	31.61	Clare	20.27	Huron	27.00	Lenawee	30.65	Montmorency	21.72	St. Clair	29.84
Antrim	31.11	Clinton	43.81	Ingham	47.36	Livingston	45.51	Muskegon	29.48	St. Joseph	24.56
Arenac	21.10	Crawford	27.49	Ionia	25.31	Luce	21.43	Newaygo	22.99	Sanilac	22.89
Baraga	18.01	Delta	34.32	Iosco	23.91	Mackinac	26.62	Oakland	54.65	Schoolcraft	22.95
Barry	30.53	Dickinson	35.04	Iron	30.91	Macomb	36.93	Oceana	26.89	Shiawassee	28.67
Bay	32.91	Eaton	37.63	Isabella	36.51	Manistee	29.79	Ogemaw	22.29	Tuscola	26.39
Benzie	33.18	Emmet	43.88	Jackson	29.43	Marquette	41.05	Ontonagon	30.23	Van Buren	29.15
Berrien	36.54	Genesee	31.35	Kalamazoo	46.43	Mason	33.11	Osceola	23.26	Washtenaw	60.97
Branch	22.73	Gladwin	23.73	Kalkaska	19.86	Mecosta	33.45	Oscoda	16.64	Wayne	31.29
Calhoun	30.49	Gogebic	30.24	Kent	43.87	Menominee	30.13	Otsego	32.31	Wexford	28.58
Cass	28.17	Grand Traverse	41.64	Keweenaw	37.97	Midland	46.47	Ottawa	42.44		

*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.